

Meditations And Disquisitions
Upon The
Hundred And Thirtieth Psalm
Sir Richard Baker

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MEDITATIONS AND DISQUISITIONS

UPON THE

HUNDRED AND THIRTIETH PSALM.

WHO would think but it were Jonah that is speaking here? ¹ [ver. 1], for he indeed was in one depth in the whale's belly, and in another depth in the bottom of the sea, and might therefore justly have said, *Out of the depths have I cried to thee, O God.*² But what is this, my soul, to David or to thee? for neither he was, nor thou, God be thanked, art in either of these depths; and what depths, then, for either him or thee out of which to cry to God? But is there not a depth of sin, and a depth of misery by reason of sin, and a depth of sorrow by reason of misery? In all which, both David was, and I, God help me, am deeply plunged; and are not these depths enough out of which to cry? And yet, perhaps, none of these depths that David means; but there are depths of danger—a danger of body and a danger of soul, and out of these it seems that David cried; for the danger of his body was so deep that it had brought him to death's door, and the danger of his soul so deep that it had almost brought him to the gates of despair; and had he not just cause then to say, *Out of the depths have I cried to thee, O God?* And yet there is a depth besides these that must help to lift us out of these—a depth of devotion, without which depth our crying out of other depths will never be heard. For devotion is a fire that puts a

¹ Jonah i. 15—17. Ps. cxxx. 1: "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD."

heat into our crying, and carries it up into *cælum empyreum*—the heaven of fire, where God himself is.¹ And now join all these depths together—the depth of sin, of misery, of sorrow, the depth of danger, and the depth of devotion,—and then tell me if David had not, if I have not, as just cause as ever Jonah had to say, Out of the depths have I cried to thee, O God.

Indeed, to cry out of the depths hath many considerable circumstances to move God to hear: it acknowledgeth his infinite power when no distance can hinder his assistance; it presents our own faith when no extremity can weaken our hope; it magnifies God's goodness when he, the Most High, regards the most low; it expresseth our own earnestness, seeing crying out of depths must needs be a deep cry; and if each of these single be motive sufficient to move God to hear, how strong must the motive needs be when they are all united? and united they are all in crying out of the depths; and therefore now that I cry to thee out of the depths, be moved, O God, in thy great mercy be moved to *hear my voice*² [ver. 2].

It is cause enough for God not to hear some because they do not cry—cause enough not to hear some that cry because not out of the depths; but when crying and out of the depths are joined together, it was never known that ever God refused to hear; and therefore now that I cry to thee out of the depths, be pleased, O God, in thy great mercy be pleased to hear my voice.

But could David, being in such depths, find no fitter body to cry to than to cry to God, who is in such a height? Might he not better for the danger of his body have cried to his physician, and for the danger of his soul to his ghostly father, who were near about him, than to cry to God who was so far off? O my soul, if God be far off,³ who can be near that is able to help? what strength is in the arm of man,⁴ if God's hand be not joined to it? God may be pleased, and often-

what hope? Not a hope in man; not a hope in ourselves; not a hope in our own merits. No, my soul, only a hope in the merits of Christ, for this only is to hope in the Lord; yet think not that it is thy hope that redeems thee; hope, indeed, makes thee capable of redeeming, but it is the Lord himself that is thy Redeemer. Let Israel hope in the Lord, and the Lord shall redeem Israel from all his sins: whether sins of omission or of commission, whether sins of infirmity or of ignorance, whether sins of wilfulness or of presumption, they shall all be comprised within the charter of this redemption. And then consider how plentiful this redemption is besides; for to be redeemed from all iniquities draws after it an exemption from all the miseries that iniquities draw after them; from the unquietness of the flesh, from the frights of the world, from the terrors of hell, from the tyranny of Satan; which exemption, or rather which redemption, God grant us, as I hope he will, seeing with him is mercy, for his mercies' sake.

¹ 1 Tim. vi. 16. ² Ps. cxxx. 2: "Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications." ³ Ps. xxii. 1: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? *why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?*" ⁴ Jer. xvii. 5: "Cursed be the man that . . . maketh flesh his arm." Cf. Ps. cxxvii. 1.

in God and hope in Israel meet together, then mercy, which was at first but a motive to the hope, becomes a promoter of the hope, to the causing of redemption. Did Jacob wrestle with an angel, and prevail, when he was but Jacob, and shall he not prevail with God, by hoping in God, when he is Israel; and if prevailing with an angel he got a blessing, though joined with halting, shall he not, prevailing with God, get redemption, and that joined with plenty? Oh let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy and plenteous redemption, and he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

But though God's redemption be plenteous, yet it seems not to be general; general indeed of all, for of all iniquities; but not general to all, for to none but to Israel; and not to all Israel neither, but only to those of Israel that hope in the Lord; for if they be Israelites, and do not hope; or if they hope, and be not Israelites, it will not serve: they must be both, or as good be neither; at least there will follow no certainty of redemption. And, alas, then what good will this be to me? for were not Israelites all Jews? and must I be a Jew, or can I look for no redemption? O my soul, that which Israel was in David's time, Christians are in our time: Jews were then, Christians are now, the people and Church of God; and as to have been an Israelite then, so to be a Christian now, is a great degree of capacity for obtaining of redemption: let hope in the Lord be added, and then the capacity will be perfected. Let Israel hope in the Lord, and the Lord will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

But is not Israel the spouse of Christ,¹ without spot or wrinkle?² and if no spots, then what iniquities? and if no iniquities, what need of redeeming? It is so, indeed, in intentions and in endeavours: in intentions so resolute, in endeavours so absolute, that it may well be said it is so; but yet, while Israel is in the flesh, it is not, it cannot be without iniquities—without many iniquities, yet such as from which, if there be hope in Israel, there shall be redemption in God. No failing of this hope if there be not a failing in hope; but

¹ Isa. liv. 5. Cf. 2 Cor. xi. 2.

² Eph. v. 27.

times is, to use these for his instruments; but if God's hand be not the first mover, and set them a-working, alas, of themselves they are altogether inactive, and of no operation. And therefore out of the depths have I cried to thee, O Lord—to thee and to no other: Lord, hear my voice. I doubt not of thy power to hear my voice, who I know art able to hear my silence; I only doubt of thy will, Seeing thou doest whatsoever thou wilt in heaven and in earth;¹ and I doubt not of thy will neither to hear prayer, seeing prayer is the most acceptable sacrifice that can be offered to thee;² I doubt only of thy will to hear my prayer, seeing I am one of polluted lips, and thou endurest nothing that is unclean. Yet I have some hope in my heart, seeing thou lovest the heart; and my prayer coming from thence, I may hope at least that for my heart's sake thou wilt be gracious to me and hear my prayer. But, alas, my heart is not cleaner than my lips; or rather, it is the uncleanness of my heart that makes my lips polluted; and what hope, then, of thy hearing my prayer, when my lips that deliver it, and my heart that sends it, are both of them unclean? And art thou not now, O my soul, in a greater depth than ever Jonah was? a depth out of which thou canst never be heard cry, unless thou call to heaven for another depth to help thee. That *abyssus* may *abyssum vocare*, one depth may call upon another;³ for heaven hath its depth too; as it is said, *cælumque profundum*—the depth of God's mercy. And this is the depth that only can make our cry to be heard out of all other depths; and therefore out of this depth of thy mercy be pleased, O God, to incline thine ear and to hear my voice. But when thou hearest my voice, O hear it not as thou didst see Cain's sacrifice—see it and not regard it, hear it and not attend it;⁴ but let thy ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication, for then I know thou canst not but commiserate my estate, for the voice of my supplication is an humble voice, and thou givest grace to the humble;⁵ it is a complaining voice, and thou art pitiful

¹ Ps. cxxxv. 6: "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places." Ps. cxvi. 17: "I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord." Cf. Ps. l. 14.
² Ps. xlii. 7.
³ Gen. iv. 3—5.
⁴ Jas. iv. 6.

to men in misery; ¹ it is a groaning voice, and thou delightest in a contrite heart. ² Oh, therefore, Let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication, but let not thine eyes be intentive ³ to the stains of my sin; for *If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who should stand* [ver. 3], or who should be able to abide it? ⁴ Did not the angels fall when thou markedst their follies? ⁵ Can flesh, which is but dust, ⁶ be clean before thee, when the stars, which are of a far purer substance, are not? ⁷ Can anything be clean in thy sight which is not as clean as thy sight? and can any cleanness be equal to thine? Alas, O Lord, we are neither angels nor stars, and how then can we stand when those fell? ⁸ how can we be clean when these be impure? If thou shouldst mark what is done amiss, there would be marking-work enough for thee as long as the world lasts; for almost what action of man is free, if [not] from stain of sin, at least from defect of righteousness? Oh therefore mark not anything in me, O God, that I have done, but mark that only in me which thou hast done thyself; mark in me thine own image; and then thou mayest look upon me, and yet say still, as once thou saidst, *Et erant omnia valde bona* [And all things were very good]. ⁹

But how vain is this thought, as though God, who sees all things, should not see sins; or as though sins were such slight things with him that he could pass them over, and not mark them! Is there inadvertency or connivance in God, that either he should not see iniquities, or, seeing them, should not observe them, or, observing them, should wink at them? Alas, my soul, I desire not that his eye, which seeth all things, should not see them; I desire not that his wisdom, which observeth all things, should not observe them: I only desire that his justice, which censures all things, should not censure them; for his censuring is the marking that I am afraid of; and if of this marking, O God, thou wilt be pleased to excuse me, neither thy

¹ Jas. v. 11. ² Ps. li. 17: "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." ³ Intent, or closely bent upon. ⁴ Vulg. "Quis sustinebit," who shall bear it. ⁵ Job iv. 18: "His angels he charged with folly." ⁶ Ps. ciii. 14. ⁷ Job xv. 15: "The heavens are not clean in his sight." ⁸ Jude 6; Rev. vi. 13. ⁹ Gen. i. 31.

anchor of faith, ¹ the ark of Noah, ² the dove that bringeth the olive-branch of peace, ³ the porter of the keys of Paradise, and the ladder of Jacob by which we climb up into heaven. ⁴

But what good is it to Israel that with God there is redemption, if Israel be not able to pay the ransom? what good to me that there is redemption to be had, if I have not wherewithal to have it, nor means to come by it? O my soul, let Israel hope in the Lord, and the *Lord shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities* ⁵ [ver. 8]. Israel shall need but to hope; and as for the ransom, he that provided a ram for Abraham to offer, instead of his son Isaac, ⁶ he will look to that himself, he will be our purveyor for the ransom; O my soul, the ransom himself.

No cause can be more forcible to produce an effect than mercy is a motive forcible to breed hope; and seeing there is in God not only mercy but plenteous redemption, oh let not Israel be so unworthy to hinder hope from waiting upon mercy, and to keep them asunder whom God would have to be joined together; for though God's mercy be a forcible motive to move hope, yet it moves it not, but *mediante Israele* [by Israel's means]. It lies much in the hand of Israel whether he will hope or no; oh, then, let not Israel be either so wilful to cross God's motive, or so fearful to distrust it. Let Israel hope in the Lord, for with him there is mercy and plenteous redemption.

But though there be mercy with God, and hope in Israel, must it necessarily follow that God will redeem Israel? O my soul, as necessarily as any effect doth follow the cause; for though hope in Israel be not a cause, but only a motive, for God to redeem, yet it is a motive that seems in operation to have the place of a cause, but a cause only *mediante misericordia Dei* [by God's mercy]; for as mercy in God moves not Israel to hope, but *mediante Israele*, so hope in Israel moves not God to redeem, but *mediante misericordia Dei*, of the mere mercy and goodness of God, but when mercy

¹ Heb. vi. 19. ² Gen. vi. 14. ³ Gen. viii. 11. ⁴ Gen. xxviii. 12. ⁵ Ps. cxxx. 8: "And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities." ⁶ Gen. xxii. 13.

foundation of the world.¹ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son² to be a ransom for us; and this I am sure is a plenteous redemption.

But how may this redemption be obtained?—how, my soul, but by being a true Israelite, by putting thy trust and hoping in God?—for if thou canst be plenteous in this hope, thou mayest be sure of this plenteous redemption, and God will never mark thy iniquities, nor impute thy sins unto thee.

But is hoping in God so scarce a commodity that I may not have of it as much as I list, and be plenteous in hoping as God is in redeeming? O my soul, take heed of presuming: I doubt lest I may find thee another Peter—talk what wonders thou wilt do, while there is no danger, but when it comes to the trial be frightened with a question,³ and blown away from thy hope with less breath than a feather. For say God should deal with thee as he did with Job, take away all thy children at a blow, all thy goods at once,⁴ wouldst thou continue to hope in God still? But say he should visit thee with boils and botches all thy body over,⁵ and make thee a laughingstock to thine enemies, a loathing to thy friends, wouldst thou continue to hope in God still? But say he should give leave to have thy body be burnt, thy flesh torn in pieces, and thy bones to be racked, wouldst thou yet continue to hope in God still? Let me then try thee another way: say thou shouldst see Christ apprehended by the soldiers, beaten and buffeted by the people, judged and condemned by the high priests,⁶ wouldst thou continue to hope in Christ still? But say thou shouldst see him hanging on the cross, crying out, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?⁷ and in that agony giving up the ghost,⁸ wouldst thou yet continue to hope in Christ still? O my soul, if thou canst do this I shall then say thou art a true Israelite indeed, but rather thou shalt hear Christ say, as he said to the centurion, I have not found such faith, no, not in Israel.⁹ O blessed hope, the

¹ Rev. xiii. 8. ² John iii. 16; Rom. viii. 32; 1 John iv. 10. —60. ³ Job i. 23—19. ⁴ Mark xv. 15—26. ⁵ Job ii. 7. ⁶ Matt. xviii. 10. Ps. xxii. 1. ⁷ Matt. xxvii. 50. ⁸ Matt. viii. 10. ⁹ Luke xxii. 57; Mark xv. 34;

seeing my iniquities with thy all-seeing eye, nor thy observing them with thy all-knowing wisdom, shall ever hurt me.

It seems we do not stand, but because God doth not mark; for if he should mark what is done amiss, who were able to stand? and therefore our standing is not by any affirmative in ourselves, but only by a negative in God. He marks not our falls, and, not marking them, imputes them not;¹ and our falls not imputed, we are reputed to stand. Oh, then, deny me not this negative, O God, not to mark what I do amiss; or, if needs it must be an affirmative, let it be in him of whom thou hast affirmed that in him thou art well pleased.²

But if God should not mark what we do amiss, we indeed should stand; but then his fear would fall, for who would fear him that marks not what we do? O my soul, his mercy will supply that fear; for his not marking is out of his mercy: and *there is mercy with him, that he may be feared*³ [ver. 4]. O blessed mercy, that preserves the fear that is due to God's justice, and yet keeps iniquities from being marked by his justice. O happy fear, that stands more in awe of God's mercy than of his justice; and is more exercised in not committing of sins than in considering the punishment that is due to our sins.

But is this not a mistaking in David to say, There is mercy with God, that he may be feared; all as one to say, There is severity with him, that he may be loved? for if we cannot love one for being severe, how should we fear him for being merciful? Should it not, therefore, have been rather said, There is justice with thee, that thou mayest be feared? seeing it is justice that strikes a terror and keeps in awe; mercy breeds a boldness, and boldness cannot stand with fear, and therefore not fear with mercy. But is there not, I may say, an active fear, not to offend God, as well as a passive fear for having offended him? and with God's mercy may well stand the active fear, though not so well, perhaps, the passive fear, which is incident properly to his justice.

¹ 2 Cor. v. 19. ² Mark i. 11. ³ Ps. cxxx. 3: "But *there* is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared."

There is a common error in the world, to think we may be the bolder to sin because God is merciful; but, O my soul, take heed of this error, for God's mercy is to no such purpose; it is not to make us bold, but to make us fear: the greater his mercy is, the greater ought our fear to be, for there is mercy with him that he may be feared; that unless we fear, he may choose whether he will be merciful or no; or rather, we may be sure he will not be merciful, seeing he hath mercy for none but for them that fear him; ¹ and great reason, for to whom should mercy show itself but to them that need it? and if we think we need it, we will certainly fear. Oh, therefore, most gracious God, make me to fear thee, that thou mayest be merciful to me; but rather, be merciful to me that I may fear thee, for as thou wilt not be merciful to me unless I fear thee, so I cannot fear thee unless thou first be merciful to me.

Indeed mercy, I may say, keeps state, and hath fear attendant upon her—to say truly, more than justice, for fear would never wait upon justice if it were not for punishment, where it waits upon mercy for very love. The fear that attends justice is a servile fear, and waits not but constrained, and as it were in chains; the free and noble fear is never seen waiting but upon mercy, for mercy breeds reverence, where the rigour of justice breeds but stubbornness; and if justice perhaps have the knee of fear, yet none but mercy hath her heart. Neither yet is mercy so at a beck, and so easily won, as some perhaps imagine. He had need go warily to work that gets her favour; for if he presume, she never looks towards him; and if he despair, she turns her face from him: and must there not needs be fear when there is such caution? Did mercy ever show itself but to the penitent? and can there be repentance where there is no fear? And indeed what should I fear but that which can forgive—which justice cannot do, only mercy can; and therefore most justly is it said of David here, There is mercy with thee, that thou mayest be feared; because there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest

¹ Luke i. 50: "And his mercy is on them that fear him."

to be admitted and be made partaker of it; but without this wedding garment, no admittance.

But when it is said, It shall be easier for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment than for some other,¹ is not this a mercy to Sodom and Gomorrha? and if God's mercy be no more than so, it seems we may do ill enough, for all his mercy? But is it not that this is a qualifying indeed of the rigour of God's justice, but not properly a mercy; or, if a mercy (because God's mercy is over all his works²) yet not a mercy that hath fellowship with redemption, and then farthest of all from a plenteous redemption. For this plenteous redemption leaves behind it no more relics of sin than Moses left hoofs of beasts behind him in Egypt.³ It redeems not only from the fault, but from the punishment and in the punishment; not only a *tanto*, but a *toto* [not only from such, but also from all (sin and penalty)]; not only from the sense but from the fear of pain; and in the fault, not only from the guilt, but from the stain; not only from being censured, but from being questioned. Or is it meant by a plenteous redemption that not only he leads captivity captive, but gives gifts unto men?⁴ For what good is it to a prisoner to have his pardon, if he be kept in prison still for not paying his fees? but if the prince, together with the pardon, send also a largess,⁵ that may maintain him when he is set at liberty, this, indeed, is a plenteous redemption; and such is the redemption that God's mercy procures unto us. It not only delivers us from a dungeon, but puts us in possession of a palace; it not only frees us from eating bread in the sweat of our brows,⁶ but it restores us to Paradise,⁷ where all fruits are growing of their own accord; it not only clears us from being captives, but endears us to be children; and not only children, but heirs; and not only heirs, but coheirs with Christ,⁸ and who can deny this to be a plenteous redemption? Or is it said a plenteous redemption in regard of the price that was paid to redeem us? for we are redeemed with a price, not of gold or precious stones, but with the precious blood of the Lamb slain before the

¹ Matt. x. 15.

² Ps. cxlv. 9.

³ Exod. x. 26.

⁴ Eph. iv. 8.

⁵ A free gift,

⁶ Gen. iii. 19.

⁷ Rev. ii. 7.

⁸ Gal. iv. 7.

⁹ Gal. iv. 7.

LORD, for with the LORD there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption [ver. 7]. But what cause of hoping in the Lord can this be to Israel, that with God there is mercy, seeing the mercy that is with God is that he may be feared? Can Israel hope when Israel must fear? O my soul, if Israel had not feared, Israel could not hope; but now that Israel hath feared, now Israel may hope; for as the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,¹ so hope in the Lord is the progress; but no progress in wisdom but from this beginning; and as mercy in God was just cause before to fear, so the same mercy in God is just encouragement now to hope; and he is no true Israelite that confesses not with me that the meditation of God's mercy, and of his plenteous redemption, is the sole anchor of his hope,² the whole cordial of his comfort, in all tempests of temptations, in all afflictions of his troubled soul. When I think upon my sins, how numerous, how ponderous they are, that with their multitude overwhelm me with their weight, press me down to the gates of despair, oh then what an anchor of hope it is to remember that with God there is mercy and plenteous redemption! When I think upon the agonies of death, which I know I must suffer, when upon the horrors of hell, which I have deserved to suffer, oh then what a cordial of comfort it is to consider that with God there is mercy and plenteous redemption! When I think upon the loss of Paradise, and how happy we might have been if we had not sinned, how wretched we are now by having sinned, oh what a joy I take in meditation of this, that in mercy he sent his Son to restore that was lost,³ and that with him there is plenteous redemption! But what! so plenteous as though God kept open house of redemption, that every one, though continuing in his sins, may come and take it at his pleasure? No, my soul; but this redemption is solemnized at the marriage of the Lamb, and none comes there without a wedding garment;⁴ and this wedding garment is a firm hope in God, a steadfast faith in Christ, that whosoever comes in this garment is very like, or rather he may be sure,

¹ Job xxviii. 28; Prov. i. 7.² Heb. vi. 19.³ Luke xix. 10.⁴ Matt. xxii. 11.

show mercy. And yet, O gracious God, I cannot so well say I fear thy mercy as I fear thee for thy mercy, because I love thee for thy mercy; for love is never without fear: *Res est solliciti plena timoris amor* [Love is a thing that is full of anxious fear].

This waiting of fear upon mercy, makes me, O God, to wait upon thee; and therefore, *I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope* [ver. 5]. If there were not mercy with God, to what end should I wait upon him? for after all the service I could do, to the uttermost of my power, a small error at last might, for want of mercy, overthrow it all. But God is no such master, for there is mercy with him; and specially towards his servants that wait upon him. He will wink at faults in a servant that he would never bear at a stranger's hands: it is cause enough for him to pardon my faults, that I am his servant and wait upon him. And yet I cannot more say I wait upon him than I wait for him. Nothing but himself can be object sufficient to satisfy my soul; my base body perhaps would wait upon him, for the pleasures of the flesh, or for the glory of the world; but my soul is too noble to have such mean designs: it waits for himself, and for nothing but himself; for how should it but wait for him, that came at first from him; how wait for anything besides him, when all things else are nothing without him?

And it waits not for him without hope, nor without good ground of hope, for in his word do I hope—his word a more certain ground than the ground I go upon; and have I not his word for the ground of my hope—for the hope of my waiting? Did he not give his word to Abraham, that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed?¹ And what do I wait for but this seed? Did he not give his word to Moses that he would raise up a prophet like to him,² who, as he delivered the Israelites from the bondage of Egypt, should deliver all true Israelites from the bondage of Satan? And whom do I wait for but this Prophet? Oh, then, my soul, seeing thy hope is so

¹ Gen. xii. 3.² Deut. xviii. 15.

certain, let thy hope be certain; possess thyself in patience,¹ and let no troubles of the world disquiet thee; let no fears of the flesh dismay thee, for thou hast the word of God, a sure anchor, to hold by; and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry,² that thou mayest be sure thy waiting cannot be long; but how long soever, never be frustrate.

And now, O my soul, what do I live for but only to wait upon God, and to wait for God? To wait upon him, to do him service, and to wait for him, to be enabled to do him better service; to wait upon him, as being Lord of all; and to wait for him, as being the rewarder of all; to wait upon him whose service is better than any other command, and to wait for him whose expectation is better than any other possession. Let others, therefore, wait upon the world, for the world; I, O God, will wait upon thee, for thee, seeing I find more true contentment in this waiting than all the world can give me in enjoying; for how can I doubt of receiving reward by my waiting for thee when my waiting for thee is itself the reward of my waiting upon thee? And therefore my soul waiteth; for if my soul did not wait, what were my waiting worth? no more than I were worth myself, if I had not a soul; but my soul puts a life into my waiting, and makes it become a living sacrifice. Alas, my frail body is very unfit to make a waiter: it rather needs to be waited upon itself: it must have so much resting, so often leave to be excused from waiting, that if God should have no other waiters than bodies, he would be left oftentimes to wait upon himself: but my soul is *Divine particula aurea* [a portion of the Divine breath], endued with all qualities fit for a waiter; and hath it not received its abilities, O God, from thee? and to whom then should it address its waiting but only to thee? And therefore my soul waiteth, and is so intentive in the service that it waits *more than they that watch for the morning*³ [ver. 6].

It may seem scarce credible that any waiting should be more intentive than theirs that watch for the morning, who

¹ Luke xxi. 19. ² Hab. ii. 3; Heb. x. 37. ³ Ps. cxxx. 6: "My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I say more than they that watch for the morning."

not only suffer not their eyes to sleep, but not their eyelids to slumber;¹ whose ears are listening to every voice of the cock, and of the clock; whose eyes keep continual sentinel about the east, to mark if but any dawning of day may be perceived; and most of all seeing they then watch when it is the heaviest time of all to sleep; yet as intentive as their watching is, it seems David is much troubled there should be any comparison made between his watching and theirs; and therefore he doubles his assertion. I say more than they that watch for the morning, for must there not be a proportion between the cause and the effect? If my cause of watching be more than theirs, shall not my watching be more than theirs? They that watch for the morning have good cause, no doubt, to watch for it, that it may bring them the light of day; but have not I more cause to watch, who wait for the light that lighteth every one that comes into the world?² They that watch for the morning wait but for the rising of the sun to free them from darkness, that hinders their sight; but I wait for the rising of the Sun of Righteousness³ to dispel the horrors of darkness that afflict my soul. They watch for the morning that they may have light to walk by; but I wait for the Dayspring from on high, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.⁴ But though there may be question made of the intentiveness⁵ of our watching, yet of the extensiveness⁶ there can be none, for they that watch for the morning watch at most but a piece of a night; but I have watched whole days and whole nights, and may I not then justly say, I wait more than they that watch for the morning?

But what means David to stand magnifying his own watching so much, as if there were none that watched but he; and to talk so much of his hope in God, and not to tell any cause of his hope? Is it, that with overwatching himself, he forgets what he is saying? No, my soul, for he is now about to tell the cause of his watching; and whom this hope concerns, as well as himself: *Let Israel hope in the*

¹ Ps. cxxii. 4. ² John i. 9. ³ Mal. iv. 2. ⁴ Luke i. 79. ⁵ Intensity, fixedness. ⁶ Extent, duration.