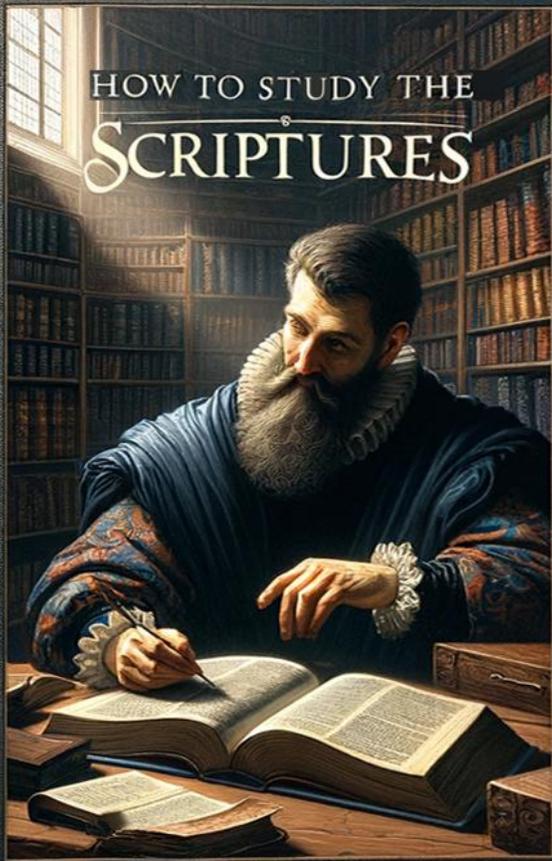


HOW TO STUDY THE SCRIPTURES



ISAAC AMBROSE

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By ISAAC AMBROSE, Minister of the GOSPEL.

Matth. 12.50.

Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

John 13.17.

If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

John 15.14.

Yea e my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

Luke 17.10.

When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do.

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SECT. 1.

Of the nature of Reading the Scriptures, what it is.

The second Duty in reference to secret, private, and public Ordinances is Reading the holy Scriptures, which is nothing else but a kind of holy conference with God, wherein we inquire after, and He reveals unto us Himself and His will. When we take in hand, therefore, the Book of Scriptures, we cannot otherwise conceive of ourselves than as standing in God's presence, to hear what He will say unto us. So much the Prophet seems to imply when he expresses his consulting with God's Word by that phrase of going into the sanctuary of God (i.e.) in going in unto God; as going into the Sanctuary is termed 2 Sam. 7.18. So by reading the Word, we come in unto God; we stand in the presence of God to inquire at His mouth.

English Translation of Latin: i.e., that is.

SECT. 2.

Of fit times and seasons for Reading the Scriptures.

There is a season for every purpose under the Sun, says Solomon; the observation of which not only adds grace to every good action but many times facilitates the work itself we have in hand. Now the times and seasons most convenient for this duty of reading the Scriptures, are (besides the Sabbath) left to Christian wisdom; only we have general commands to be frequent and diligent in meditation of the Word, Josh. 1.8. Psal. 119.97. and the particular times may be either uncertain and occasional or constant and set.

For the first, we may have occasions to read the Scriptures to resolve us in doubts, Psal. 73.17. to comfort us in afflictions, Psal. 119.50. to direct us in matters of advice, Psalm 119.24. to guide us in our way, Psal. 119.105. to assist us in temptations, Eph. 6.17. Such or the like occasions may make us have recourse to the word extraordinarily.

For the second, respect must be had both to order and proportion; for the former, viz. Order, godly men have accustomed to begin the day with religious exercises, as with prayer, Psa. 5.3.—55.17.—88.13. Now although Prayer and the Reading of the Word are two distinct exercises, yet they mutually help one another, and consequently are fit to be joined together. And as we must thus begin the day, so it is very fit to close up the day with the same duties. The evening was David's time, Psal. 55.17. and Isaac's time, Gen. 24.63. For the latter, viz. Proportion of time to be allotted for this exercise, it must indifferently respect both the duty, that we read all Scripture, and the person that undertakes it; for more time is required of Husbands, Parents, Magistrates, Ministers, than of others; though all must set apart some time for this duty. But that I may generally commend the practice of this order and proportion to all, I shall compose a Calendar, to show how we may read all the Scriptures over in a year.

SECT. 3.

Of the manner of preparation before the Reading of the Scriptures.

There is a double preparation necessary, both before the undertaking and before the performance of the duty:

1. For the undertaking of the work, we need to be prepared with a firm and constant resolution before we start, partly because of the sluggishness of our carnal natures towards holy duties and our inconsistency in persevering and completing them to the end, and partly because we know how dangerous it is to put one's hand to the plough and look back. Now, the reasons upon which our hearts must be settled in the firmness of such resolution must be drawn from—
2. The recognition of our own blindness and ignorance, as we, of ourselves, do not possess the knowledge or understanding of a man, as Agur acknowledges.
3. The assurance that this is the means ordained by God to help us out of ignorance: "We have a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in our hearts."
4. The delight that we may find in the use of it. This delight drew holy David to the continual meditation of it, as the sweetness of the word arising from its suitability to his sanctified nature overcame David.

5. A person's heart (thus confirmed with a full purpose and settled resolution to undertake and continually engage in the study of the holy Scriptures) must be more specifically prepared for the work itself by:

- Cleansing the heart of all excess and wrongdoing, of all worldly thoughts and cares, of all restless passions such as anger, fear, joy, sorrow, etc.
- Revering God before whom we stand, knowing that He can discover all our failings, as He knows our very thoughts from afar, and especially since He has all our ways before Him. He is not one who will pardon our deliberate transgressions. Such considerations will lead us to receive the Word with the trembling heart that God values so much.
- Stirring up in ourselves a spiritual appetite for the word, similar to what Job found in himself, esteeming the words of God's mouth more than his necessary food, and like David, who opened his mouth, panted, and longed for His commandments. This appetite arises from our recognition of our emptiness (for the full soul loathes the honeycomb) and from the suitability of the word to provide us with whatever we lack and hunger for, as it is the nourishment of our souls.
- Awakening our faith; to achieve this, we must consider that it is the word of Him who speaks righteousness, whose faithfulness endures for all generations. God has made it powerful for salvation, mighty through Him to overthrow strongholds, and has promised that it will not return empty but will surely accomplish the purpose for which it was sent.
- Softening the heart and making it pliable; for this purpose, we must set aside our own wills and wisdom, which harden our hearts against God's counsel, and seek the Spirit of tenderness, referred to as "The opening of the heart" in Acts 16.14.

- Raising our hearts to God in prayer, asking Him to open our eyes, enlarge our hearts, incline our hearts to His testimonies, keep us faithful to the end, and, according to His promise, send His Spirit to lead us into all truth. A brief yet effective prayer for this purpose, as a conclusion to our preparations for reading the Word, expressing our dependence on Him alone to prosper us in the use of His own ordinance, rarely goes unanswered.

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SECT. 4.

Of the necessary Duties in Reading of the Scriptures.

The duty now before us is good for our spiritual growth, and we should observe the following particulars:

1. At the beginning of our Bible reading or when starting a new book in the Bible, it's beneficial to review an Analytical Table. This helps us understand the purpose and direction of the Holy Spirit, making it easier to remember. Towards this end, I have included such a table at the end of this chapter, which serves the intended purpose well.
2. We should pay close attention to what we read. There are good reasons for this attention: 1. Due to the authority and wisdom of the Speaker. A child must listen to their father (Prov. 4.1.), and a subject must attentively consider the words of a ruler (Job 29.21.), yet none of them is our Creator as God is (Isa. 63.4.), nor did they make us as He did (Psal. 100.3.). Therefore, He deserves greater respect from us. 2. Because of the subject matter that the Scriptures contain. Not only for the weight and importance of the profound mysteries revealed therein but also

because these scriptures hold our evidence and guidance, which we and our children must follow.

3. We must keep Jesus Christ in mind while reading the Scripture as the ultimate purpose, focus, and essence of it. What are the entire Scriptures but the spiritual swaddling clothes of the holy child Jesus? 1. Christ is the Truth and Essence of all the Types and Shadows. 2. Christ is the core and substance of the Covenant of Grace in all its administrations. In the Old Testament, Christ is veiled, while in the New Covenant, He is revealed. 3. Christ is the center and meeting place of all the promises; in Him, all the promises of God are "Yes" and "Amen." 4. Christ is the reality signified, sealed, and presented in the Sacraments of the Old and New Testaments. 5. Scripture genealogies lead us to the true lineage of Christ. 6. Scripture chronologies reveal to us the times and seasons of Christ. 7. Scripture laws are our schoolmaster to lead us to Christ, the Moral law by correcting, the Ceremonial law by directing. 8. Scripture Gospel is Christ's light, by which we know Him; Christ's voice, by which we hear and follow Him; Christ's cords of love, by which we are drawn into sweet union and communion with Him. Indeed, it is the power of God for salvation to all who believe in Christ Jesus. Therefore, think of Christ as the very essence, core, soul, and focus of the entire Scriptures.
4. We should take note of special passages where we find things represented that are either weightier in themselves or more relevant to our personal use and circumstances. I do not deny that all God's testimonies are wonderful in themselves (Psal. 119.129.), pure (ver. 140.), profitable for understanding (ver. 130.), cleansing our ways (ver. 9.), and making the man of God

complete for every good work (2 Tim. 3.16.). However, some things in Scripture are more important than others, and some are more useful for certain individuals, times, and situations. To this end, I have included some headings or common topics for observing such profitable things at the end of this chapter.

5. We should give our approval and assent to what we read, both because it is the truth of God and because until our judgment approves it, we cannot truly believe it or bring our hearts to obey it sincerely and genuinely. It is true that every godly person always assents to every truth of God revealed to them, yet the firmness of that assent is not always the same because the evidence by which they acknowledge it is not always equally clear. But when it shines clearly to us, when we discern the glory and beauty of those heavenly mysteries, and taste their goodness, we cannot help but fill our hearts with admiration, joy, and desire (Psal. 119. v. 97, 111, 131, 162). Note that sometimes these spiritual raptures may seize a person while they are reading the Scriptures, just as the disciples' hearts burned within them while our Saviour talked with them on the road to Emmaus. If this happens, the heart opens itself to embrace and draw in that captivating object, which will naturally compel the soul to pause. These pauses often enhance rather than hinder our progress, as a godly spirit, invigorated by such sweet refreshments, gains increased enthusiasm and is thereby strengthened to continue with much greater vigour in this holy exercise.

SECT. 5.

Of Duties after reading the Scriptures.

The purpose of studying the Scriptures is not merely knowledge but practice. Therefore, after we have read any portion of the Scriptures, we must be particularly careful to:

1. Reflect on and contemplate the things we have read, and meditate on them earnestly.
2. Seek out the true sense and meaning of the words, along with the purpose to which they are directed. If our own understanding is inadequate, it may be beneficial to refer to other people's writings or engage in discussions.
3. Identify and apply what is of particular relevance to ourselves in such a way as if we were personally addressed in any command, reproof, promise, warning, consolation, or similar passages. This is the most effective way to awaken and stir up our affections, as demonstrated by the exemplary conduct of King Josiah (2 Chron. 34.20, 21).
4. Work these truths into our hearts until they ignite our emotions. This is best achieved by:

1. By appropriating them unto ourselves; for that which affects us, is that which most nearly concerns us.
2. Believing what we read as unquestionably true. This is how David believed (Psal. 119.138, 151, 160).
3. Developing a love for God's counsel that we embrace through faith, appreciating its purity, completeness, righteousness, and

especially its incredible benefit to us in revitalizing the spirit, imparting wisdom, and converting the soul. These remarkable qualities of the Word inevitably make these divine counsels exceedingly precious to us and lead our souls to take great delight in them.

4. Deliberating and deciding on the means to put everything into practice, particularly for those duties presented to us while reading the Word or a portion of it at a specific time.
5. Evaluating our conduct, measuring how closely it aligns with the standard, and acknowledging any shortcomings. On one hand, this encourages us to conform our practice to the Law and rejoice in God's grace at work within us with gratitude. On the other hand, it humbles and saddens us for our failures, driving us to turn to Christ to restore our peace. Then we can better watch over our ways in the future, as David does (Psal. 119.131, 132, 133, 176).

SECT. 6.

A Calendar designed to demonstrate how we might read through the Scriptures in various ways within a year.

When it comes to reading the Scriptures, we discussed the importance of allocating a specific amount of time for this exercise. To help us read the entire Bible or Scriptures over the course of a year, I have created a calendar that illustrates various approaches.

1. By reading three chapters or more in the Old Testament and two or more in the New every day.
2. By reading three chapters a day and additional sections from the Psalms.
3. By strictly reading three chapters a day from those that provide the most edification.
4. By reading two chapters a day, covering most of the Old Testament and the entirety of the New.
5. By reading only one chapter a day from the principal books and using it as a guide for the rest.

However, every individual can, with a little effort, discover this calendar or another one that is more beneficial to them. Therefore, not to unnecessarily extend this book, I will leave it to the reader. I would like to emphasize that, regardless of the chosen format, it would be profitable to read at least one Psalm every morning and one chapter, in order of those that provide the most edification, every evening. This has become the consistent practice of a weaker Christian in their family devotions.

SECT. 7.

Of the Analysis of the whole Bible, and especially (as in the first place) of the Old Testament.

In Section 4, when discussing the reading of Scripture, we mentioned an Analytical Table, which helps us understand the purpose and direction of the Holy Spirit and aids in remembering them with ease and pleasure. To serve this purpose, I have included this Analysis of:

1. The entire Bible.
2. The various parts.

The complete Bible is divided into two Testaments:

Old. New.

1. Christ divides the Old Testament into:

the Law. the Prophets.

1. The Law is found in the Pentateuch of Moses, contained in this verse — Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

Within this are:

1. The target audience of the Law, to whom it was to be delivered, specifically to the Church in its original form, in Genesis.
2. The promulgation of the Law, which was delivered either collectively, both the Ecclesiastical and Civil Law, in Exodus. Individually, the Law Ecclesiastical and Civil, in Leviticus. Concerned with governance, in Numbers.
3. The reiteration of the Law after its initial delivery in Deuteronomy.
2. The Prophets are:
 3. Historical, narrating past events, including Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther.
 4. Doctrinal, providing guidance for faith and present life, such as Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon.

5. Prophetic, foretelling future events, like Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

Regarding Ezra, Tobit, Judith, parts of Esther, Wisdom, and Ecclesiasticus: These books are ecclesiastical but not part of the Canon.

SECT. 8.

§. 1. Of the Pentateuch or Books of the Law.

Genesis deals with the Church, to whom the Law was to be given.

Genesis contains:

1. The Creation of the Church, including:
2. The creation of the vast world in which it would exist. [Chapter 1]
3. The creation of humankind, the smaller world, of which it was to be: His Happiness. [Chapter 2] His Misery. [Chapter 3]
4. The Establishment of the Church, which must be considered in the context of two worlds:
5. The ancient world before the flood, where we contemplate: The spread of sin and its consequences. [Chapter 4] The preservation

of the Church. [Chapter 5] The foretold condemnation of the wicked world. [Chapter 6] Its execution. [Chapter 7]

6. The new world after the flood in the time of four men:

7. Noah, in whom we reflect on: His deliverance from the deluge. [Chapter 8] His blessing from God. [Chapter 9] His descendants, both when they were: Unified. [Chapter 10] Dispersed, from whom God chose His Church. [Chapter 11]

8. Abraham, where we consider: His calling in the first part of Chapter 12. His journey: To Egypt in the latter part of Chapter 12. To Canaan. [Chapter 13] His interactions and actions: With Lot. [Chapter 14] With God, who: Promised him offspring. [Chapter 15] Granted him a child and [Chapter 16] Made a covenant with him. Regarding this Covenant, we examine:

9. Its form. [Chapter 17]

10. Its outcomes: On God's part, through the communication of His plans and secrets. [Chapter 18] Benefits in: Rescuing Lot. [Chapter 19] Aiding Abraham. [Chapter 20] Granting him Isaac. [Chapter 21]

11. On Abraham's part, he is praised for his: Obedience and faith in offering Isaac. [Chapter 22] Love and justice in burying Sarah. [Chapter 23] Providence and piety in arranging Isaac's marriage. [Chapter 24]

3. Isaac; in him, consider: His descendants or kin. [Chapter 25] His journeys and difficulties. [Chapter 26] His prophecies

concerning the state of the Church regarding his two Sons.
[Chapter 27]

4. Jacob; in him, consider his journey: To Mesopotamia, where note: His journey there. [Chapter 28] His arrival and marriage. [Chapter 29] His wealth and children. [Chapter 30] To Canaan, where: His journey there. [Chapter 31] His arrival and his encounter with Esau. [Chapter 32, 33] His suffering and grief due to: Dinah's rape. [Chapter 34] Rachel's death. [Chapter 35, 36] Joseph's sale. [Chapter 37] Judah's incest. [Chapter 38] To Egypt, where he went along with:
5. His Sons Joseph, in whom we see his: Affliction. [Chapter 39, 40] Elevation and promotion. [Chapter 41] His other brothers. [Chapter 42, 43, 44]
6. Himself, during which we find: His summoning by Joseph. [Chapter 45] His journey there. [Chapter 46] His stay, during which he: Holds conversations. [Chapter 47] Bestows blessings. [Chapter 48] Prophecies. [Chapter 49] Passes away. [Chapter 50]

§. 2. Exodus deals with the giving of the Law to the Church, covering both the Ecclesiastical and Political aspects.

Exodus contains:

I. The liberation of the people to whom the Law was to be given.

1. The reason behind it, the oppression by the Egyptians. [Chapter 1]

2. The individual responsible for achieving it (Moses), whose:
 3. Birth is detailed. [Chapter 2]
 4. Calling is explained. [Chapter 3]
 5. Assistant, Aaron, is introduced. [Chapter 4]
 6. Messages to the King of Egypt are conveyed. [Chapter 5, 6]
 7. Miracles performed in Egypt, affirming his calling. [Chapter 7]
Confounding the king. [Chapter 8, 9, 10, 11]
 8. The actual deliverance, including the people's:
 9. Departure from Egypt. [Chapter 12]
 10. Confirmation of it through signs and rituals. [Chapter 13]
 11. Passage through the Red Sea. [Chapter 14]
 12. Thanksgiving after their safe crossing. [Chapter 15]
 13. The consequences of their deliverance:
 14. Provision of food and necessities, such as quails and manna.
[Chapter 16]
 15. Defense and protection against their enemies, like the Amalekites. [Chapter 17]
 16. Administration of justice based on Jethro's advice. [Chapter 18]
- II. The delivery of the Law itself to the people; here, consider:
1. How it was given by God, including:

2. The preparations preceding it. [Chapter 19]
 3. Its parts or categories:
 4. Moral, written on two stone tablets. [Chapter 20]
 5. Judicial. [Chapter 21, 22, 23]
 6. Ceremonial: Feasts. [Chapter 24] Tabernacles and instruments. [Chapter 25, 26, 27] Priests and their attire. [Chapter 28, to 31]
 7. How it was received and obeyed by the people:
 8. Moral Law:
 9. Their transgression with the golden calf. [Chapter 32]
 10. Reconciliation with God through Moses' prayer. [Chapter 33]
 11. Restoration of the Law by the finger of God. [Chapter 34]
 12. Ceremonial Law, which includes the construction of the Tabernacle, starting from [Chapter 35, to the end].
- §. 3. Leviticus deals with holy observances and individuals.
1. Sacrifices or offerings; their
 2. Types or categories, distinguished by their Material, from which they are made: Animals. [Chapter 1] Inanimate objects. [Chapter 2] Occasions for which they were presented:
 3. Good offerings to God. [Chapter 3]

4. Atonement for sins committed by people. [Chapter 4, 5]
5. Regulations concerning them. [Chapter 6, 7]
6. Persons
7. Public; namely, the Priests, their
8. Consecration to their Office. [Chapter 8]
9. Execution of their Office. [Chapter 9]
10. Misconduct in their Office. [Chapter 10]
11. Private, concerning their Sanctification.
12. Individual, pertaining to one person; here, observe the means by which one can become impure—namely,
13. Dietary restrictions. [Chapter 11]
14. Childbirth. [Chapter 12]
15. Leprosy. [Chapter 13, 14]
16. Bodily discharges. [Chapter 15]
17. Collective, involving the entire community, in matters
18. Essential, about which consider:
19. Laws regarding
20. Atonement for sins, including Regular procedures. [Chapter 16]
Extraordinary cases. [Chapter 17]

21. Regulations concerning their way of life:
22. Family matters, such as marriages. [Chapter 18]
23. Civil matters, including their conduct. [Chapter 19, 20]
24. Religious matters: here, consider
25. Individuals. [Chapter 21]
26. Objects. [Chapter 22]
27. Times, Days. [Chapter 23, 24] Years. [Chapter 25]
28. The binding nature of these laws, enforced through Promises and Threats. [Chapter 26]
29. Voluntary offerings, in the final chapter. [Chapter 27]

§. 4. Numbers, primarily consisting of Political Laws, occasioned by the mustering of the people for their journey to Canaan.

Numbers. This account includes

1. Their preparation for the journey, which involved
2. The census or numbering of the people, which was either Civil, for the individuals who were
3. Numbered. [Chapter 1]
4. Organized. [Chapter 2] Religious, for the Priests who were
5. Numbered. [Chapter 3]
6. Organized. [Chapter 4]
7. Laws given to them, which are either Applicable to all, pertaining to sanctity in matters Compulsory. [Chapter 5]

- Voluntary. [Chapter 6] Specifically for the
8. Laity; namely, the Tribes. [Chapter 7]
 9. Clergy; namely, the Priests and Levites. [Chapter 8]
 10. The method of their
 11. Sanctification and organization. [Chapter 9]
 12. Progress or journey. [Chapter 10]
 13. Their travels, which are marked by a narrative of eight instances of the people's complaints:
 14. Due to the length of their journey. [Chapter 11]
 15. Due to their dissatisfaction with the Manna.
 16. Due to the jealousy of Miriam and Aaron against Moses. [Chapter 12]
 17. Due to the rebellion of the Spies who Complained. [Chapter 13] were afflicted. [Chapter 14] reconciled. [Chapter 15]
 18. Due to the Conspiracy of three Levites, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. [Chapter 16]
 19. Due to the people's anger at the previous judgments; in which They complained. [Chapter 17] They reconciled Individuals. [Chapter 18] Method. [Chapter 19]
 20. Due to the lack of water. [Chapter 20]
 21. Due to the weariness of the journey. [Chapter 21]
 22. Their encampments or residence as they neared Canaan, with two narratives concerning
 23. The People who were to inherit, considered as
 24. Conquerors of their Enemies. Chapter 22.
 25. Encountering Magic Arts, Balaam. [Chapter 22, 23, 24.]
 26. Afflicted by Idolatry and fornication. [Chapter 25]
 27. Reconciled, and once more numbered. [Chapter 26]
 28. Provided with a new Leader. [Chapter 27]
 29. Educated about sacred matters Compulsory. [Chapter 28, 29.] Voluntary. [Chapter 30]
 30. The Inheritance itself, considered

31. In a part of it
32. Conquered. [Chapter 31]
33. Distributed. [Chapter 32] In a digression, their journeys are listed in a single account. [Chapter 33]
34. The entirety, which includes
35. The Borders or Division of the Land. [Chapter 34]
36. The Law regarding the inheritance of the Priests. [Chapter 35] People. [Chapter 36]

§. 5. Deuteronomy is a Reiteration of the Law.

1. Preparation of the People to receive the Law through Moses
2. Recounting God's blessings to them during peacetime. [Chapter 1]
3. Their successful experiences in warfare. [Chapter 2, 3.]
4. Counsel. [Chapter 4, 5.]
5. Promulgation of the Law delivered to the people.
6. The presentation of it.
7. The explanation of it, specifically
8. The Moral Law, generally. [Chapter 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.] in detail. [Chapter 12, 13.]
9. Ceremonial Law. [Chapter 14, 15, 16]
10. Judicial Law, as it pertained to All. [Chapter 17] Distinctly for Priests. [Chapter 18] People. [Chapter 19] War. [Chapter 20]

- Civil justice. [Chapter 21, to 27.]
11. Confirmation of the Law after its delivery— Through
 12. Signs. [Chapter 27]
 13. Promises and Threats. [Chapter 28]
 14. Renewal of the Covenant. [Chapter 29, 30.]
 15. The Selection of a new Leader. [Chapter 31]
 16. Prophecies. [Chapter 32, 33.] [Chapter 34] 4. The Conclusion of all through the death of Moses.

Up to this point, we've discussed the Law.

Now, let's delve into the Prophets, which are categorized as either Historical, known as the Anterior Prophets. Doctrinal, referred to as the Hagiographa. Prophetic, called the Posterior Prophets.

SECT. 9.

§. 1. Prophets of a Historical Nature.

Joshua: Consider — Joshua contains

1. His calling to the Leadership. [Chapter 1]
2. His actions during his Leadership,
3. During War; where note

4. The sending of the Spies. [Chapter 1]
5. Their miraculous crossing of the Jordan River, with the consequences. [Chapter 3, 4, 5.]
6. The besieging and capture of Jericho. [Chapter 6, 7.]
7. The victory at Ai. [Chapter 8]
8. Making a covenant with the Gibeonites unknowingly. [Chapter 9]
9. Victory over five Kings. [Chapter 10]
10. Battles with the remaining Canaanites. [Chapter 11]
11. A summary of all these events. [Chapter 12]
12. During Peace,
13. Division of the Land. [Chapter 13, to 21.]
14. The dismissal of the Trans-Jordanian tribes. [Chapter 22]
15. Celebration of a national assembly. [Chapter 23]
16. The death of Joshua. [Chapter 24] §. 2. Judges: A Chronicle of the Jews under the Rule of Judges. Judges contains
17. The reasons behind this form of Governance. [Chapter 1, 2.]
18. An account of the People's condition
19. Under various Judges, Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar. [Chapter 3] Deborah. [Chapter 4, 5.] Gideon. [Chapter 6, 7, 8.] Abimelech.

[Chapter 9] Jephthah. [Chapter 10, 11, 12.] Samson. [Chapter 13, to 17.]

20. In times without Judges; including their grievous sins and Civil Wars. [Chapter 17] §. 3. Ruth, a Moabite woman; Her Piety. Ruth contains
21. Her Conversion. [Chapter 1]
22. Her Conduct. [Chapter 2]
23. Her Marriage,
24. Sought. [Chapter 3]
25. Celebrated. [Chapter 4] §. 4. Up to this point, we have discussed the state of the Jews under Judges: Now, their condition under Kings until the Captivity.
26. When the Kingdom was united, it is recorded in the Books of Samuel, where the Kings are either
27. Chosen, 1 Samuel.
28. Succeeding, 2 Samuel.
29. When the Kingdom was divided, it is documented in the Books of Kings, featuring Solomon, 1 Kings. Other Kings, 2 Kings.
30. Both states are more extensively explored in the Books of Chronicles.

§. 5. First Book of Samuel. Jewish State under Elected Kings. 1
Samuel contains

1. A period of governmental change during Samuel's days, whose birth is described [Chapter 1, & part 2.]
2. The reason for this change, namely, the wickedness of the Sons of Eli, which is Threatened. [Chapter 2, 3.] Punished. [Chapter 4, 5, 6, 7.] Samuel's Sons. [Chapter 8]
3. The stories of the Kings.
4. Saul; his
5. Election, as he was Summoned. [Chapter 9] Confirmed by
6. Inauguration. [Chapter 10]
7. Consent of the People. [Chapter 11]
8. Samuel's resignation. [Chapter 12]
9. Rejection, with the true causes of it. [Chapter 13, 14, 15]
10. David, his Prosperity, His anointing as King. [Chapter 16] Victory over Goliath. [Chapter 17] Adversity,
11. His exile and banishment,
12. The cause of it. [Chapter 18]
13. The types of it, namely, In his own Country. [Chapter 19, 20.] Outside of it, among Philistines. [Chapter 21] Moabites. [Chapter 22]

14. His persecutions; in which
15. The severity is evident,
16. By the various places to which he fled. [Chapter 23, to 27.]
17. Fleeing to his enemies, with whom he lived. [Chapter 27, to 30.]
18. The end of them. [Chapter 31] § 6. Second Book of Samuel under Successive Kings. 2 Samuel contains
19. The news of Saul's death. [Chapter 1]
20. The unlawful successor of Saul, Ishbosheth, whose Rise to power. [Chapter 2] Downfall. [Chapter 3, 4.]
21. The rightful successor (David), whose Inauguration. [Chapter 5] Rule Prosperous,
22. In Religious matters. [Chapter 6, 7.]
23. In War. [Chapter 8]
24. In Political affairs. [Chapter 9, 10.] Troubled, with his transgressions
25. Committed. [Chapter 11]
26. Acknowledged. [Chapter 12]
27. Punished with consequences, Internal. External.
28. Internal or domestic consequences,
29. Amnon's incest. [Chapter 13]

30. Absalom's rebellion, The cause. [Chapter 14] Commencement. [Chapter 15] Progress. [Chapter 16] Resolution. [Chapter 17, 18, 19]
31. External and public consequences,
32. The types of it,
33. Ziba's rebellion. [Chapter 20]
34. Famine. [Chapter 21]
35. The outcomes, Positive, such as Thanksgiving. [Chapter 22] Prophecy. [Chapter 23] Negative. [Chapter 24]

§. 7. The Books of Kings treat of the Kingdom as divided. 1 Kings contains

1. The expansion of the Kingdom under Solomon, wherein
2. His coronation as King. [Chapter 1]
3. Governance of the Kingdom. [Chapter 2, 3.]
4. Administration, including his Achievements in his Family. [Chapter 4] Construction projects. [Chapter 5, to 9.] Wealth. [Chapter 10]
5. The decline:
6. Occasion or causes, Sins of Solomon. God's justice. [Chapter 11]
7. Instigators of it,

8. Authors of the division, Rehoboam and Jeroboam: [Chapter 12, 13, 14]
9. Their successors, whose reigns are briefly summarized [Chapter 15] Elaborated further in the reign of Ahab. §. 8. The Second Book of Kings; concerning the decline of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah. 2 Kings contains
10. Their continued defection together.
11. Of the Kings of Israel individually, Ahaziah. [Chapter 1] Joram. [Chapter 2, to 9.] Jehu. [Chapter 9, 10.] Joash. [Chapter 11, 12.] Jehoahaz-Joash. [Chapter 13]
12. Of both Kingdoms together. [Chapter 14, to 18.]
13. A specific account of the decline of the Kingdom of Judah,
14. Their deterioration. [Chapter 18, to 22.]
15. Their restoration. [Chapter 22, 23.]
16. Their ultimate destruction. [Chapter 24, to the end] §. 9. The First Book of Chronicles. 1 Chronicles contains
17. The inception of the Kingdom of Israel, including
18. The genealogy of the world from Adam to Jacob. [Chapter 1]
19. Particularly, the nation of Israelites divided into 12 Tribes. [Chapter 2, to 9.]
20. The governance of the Kingdom
21. Under Saul. [Chapter 9, 10.]

22. Under David, whose Accession Actions are described.
23. David's assumption of the throne, His coronation. [Chapter 11]
His followers. [Chapter 11, 12] Attention to Religion. [Chapter 13]
Consolidation of his rule. [Chapter 14]
24. David's actions,
25. During the course of his reign, Good, in terms of Religion and
God's service. [Chapter 15, 16, 17] Warfare. [Chapter 18, 19, 20]
Evil. [Chapter 21]
26. In the later years of his reign, in his old age.
27. Renewed dedication to Religion. [Chapter 22, to 26.]
28. Plans for the welfare of the nation. [Chapter 27]
29. A royal assembly shortly before his death and its outcomes.
[Chapter 28, 29.] §. 10. The Second Book of Chronicles. 2
Chronicles contains
30. The expansion of the Kingdom under Solomon, including his
31. Virtues. [Chapter 1]
32. Construction projects, both Sacred. [Chapter 2, to 7.] Civil.
[Chapter 8]
33. State and death. [Chapter 9]
34. The decline during the reigns of Rehoboam. [Chapter 10, 11, 12.]
Abia. [Chapter 13.] Asa. [Chapter 14, 15, 16.] Jehoshaphat.
[Chapter 17, 18, 19, 20.] Joram. [Chapter 21.] Ahaziah. [Chapter
22.] Joash. [Chapter 23, 24.] Amaziah. [Chapter 25.] Uzziah.

[Chapter 26.] Jotham. [Chapter 27.] Ahaz. [Chapter 28.] Hezekiah. [Chapter 29, to 33.] Manasseh. [Chapter 33.] Amon. [Chapter 33.] Josiah. [Chapter 34, 35.] Jehoahaz. Jehoiachim. Jeconiah. [Chapter 36.] Zedekiah.

§. 11. Ezra, concerning the return of the People from Babylon.

1. Regarding the manner of it. [Chapter 1, 2.]
2. Concerning its purpose: the restoration of Religion and Government. [Chapter 3]
3. Regarding the obstacles,
4. Erected by the Samaritans. [Chapter 4]
5. By the Governors of the Land of Canaan. [Chapter 5]
6. Overcome by
7. Cyrus. [Chapter 6]
8. Ezra, whose Journey. [Chapter 7, 8.] Reformation he accomplished. [Chapter 9, 10.] §. 12. Nehemiah deals with
9. The restoration of the buildings, including the
10. Causes of it. [Chapter 1, 2.]
11. The work itself, which was Commenced. [Chapter 3] Hindered. [Chapter 4, 5, 6.] Completed. [Chapter 7]
12. Reformation, both Political and Ecclesiastical. [Chapter 7, to 14.]
- §. 13. Esther recounts the story of the miraculous deliverance of the Jews.
13. The means of it; namely, Esther. [Chapter 1, 2.]
14. The manner of it,
15. The severity of the danger. [Chapter 3, 4]
16. The stages of the deliverance,
17. The Queen's intercession. [Chapter 5]
18. Thwarting Haman's scheme. [Chapter 6, 7.]

19. Confirmation of the deliverance.
20. Reversal of the Decree. [Chapter 8]
21. Punishment of the adversaries. [Chapter 9]
22. The peace of the Jews. [Chapter 10] Up to this point, we have covered the Legal and Historical Books.

Now, let's turn our attention to the Dogmatical or Sapiential Books, which revolve around either

A specific subject, as in Job. A general theme, such as David's Psalms. Solomon's Proverbs. Ecclesiastes. Song of Solomon.

SECT. 10.

§. 1. Dogmatical Prophets.

Job contains A Dialogue:

1. The occasion, his
2. Prosperity. [Chapter 1]
3. Adversity. [Chapter 2]
4. Suffering. [Chapter 3]
5. The participants, and so take note of the speeches of The Disputants, Eliphaz. [Chapter 4, 5.] Job. [Chapter 6, 7.] Bildad. [Chapter 8] Job. [Chapter 9, 10.] Zophar. [Chapter 11] Job. [Chapter 12, 13, 14] Eliphaz. [Chapter 15] Job. [Chapter 16, 17.] Bildad. [Chapter 18] Job. [Chapter 19] Zophar. [Chapter 20] Job. [Chapter 21] Eliphaz. [Chapter 22] Job. [Chapter 23, 24.] Bildad. [Chapter 25] Job. [Chapter 26, to 32.] The Moderators,

6. Elihu. [Chapter 32, 33.]
7. God. [Chapter 34, to 41.] An Epilogue. [Chapter 42] §. 2. The Psalms are divided by the Hebrews into five Books.
8. From Psalm 1 to the end of Psalm 41, concluded with Amen and Amen.
9. From Psalm 42 to the end of Psalm 72, sealed with Amen and Amen.
10. From Psalm 73 to the end of Psalm 89, concluded with Amen and Amen.
11. From Psalm 90 to the end of Psalm 106, ending with Amen, Hallelujah.
12. From Psalm 107 to the end of Psalm 150, concluding with Hallelujah. This division seems to arise from the unique closure of these five Psalms.

Others divide them into two parts, some

Directed from Man to God, such as the Praying and Thanksgiving Psalms. Directed from God to Man, including The Exhortatory Consolatory Didactical Prophetical Psalms. For a more precise and orderly approach, the reader may find some guidelines at the end of this Chapter to better understand the Psalms when reading them.

§. 3. Proverbs contains Rules of life,

1. General, about piety, wherein
2. What we must do. [Chapter 1, 2, 3, 4.]
3. What we must avoid. [Chapter 5, to 10.]

4. Special, and thus the life of man is guided by various Rules, Political. Economical. [Chapter 10, to the end,] Moral. §. 4. Ecclesiastes addresses
 5. The vanity of all earthly things, demonstrated through Solomon's observations in His own circumstances. [Chapter 1, 2.] Conditions of all kinds of people. [Chapter 3, to 10.]
 6. Rules to be followed in this futile existence of ours. [Chapter 10, 11, 12] §. 5. Song of Solomon. Descriptions of the love between Christ and his Church, In dialogues
 7. Between Christ and the Church. [Chapter 1]
 8. Church and Christ. [Chapter 2]
 9. Church. [Chapter 3]
 10. Christ. [Chapter 4]
 11. Church. [Chapter 5]
 12. Church and Christ. [Chapter 6]
 13. Church. [Chapter 7, 8.] These are the Dogmatical Books: Now come the Prophets
- Four major. Twelve minor.

Sect. 11

§. 1. Of Prophets Prophetical. Isaiah contains Prophecies

1. Legal,
2. Reproving and correcting sins Of the Jews. [Chapter 1, to 11.]
With comfort to the Elect. [Chapter 11, 12.]
3. Threatening
4. Enemies of God's people, The particular Nations threatened.
[Chapter 13, to 24.] The general uses of these threatenings.
[Chapter 24, to 28.]
5. Israelites. [Chapter 28]
6. Jews themselves, whose captivity is denounced with mixed
comforts in Christ. [Chapter 29, to 36.]
7. Historical. [Chapter 46, to 40.]
8. Evangelical, concerning their
9. Deliverance from, and preservation in Captivity. [Chapter 40, to
49.]
10. Kingdom of Christ, about which he makes eight Sermons or
Speeches
11. Of Christ. [Chapter 49, 50, 51.]
12. Of God. [Chapter 52]
13. Of the prophets expounding
14. Story of Christ. [Chapter 53]
15. Fruit of his Kingdom. [Chapter 54]
16. Of God Promising. [Chapter 55] Exhorting. [Chapter 56, 57.]
17. Of the Prophets Reproving hypocrisy. [Chapter 58, 59.] Exciting
the Church. [Chapter 60]
18. Of Christ. [Chapter 61, 62.]
19. Of the Church. [Chapter 63, 64, 65.]
20. Lastly of God. [Chapter 66]

§. 2. Jeremiah contains

1. A Prologue concerning the Prophet's calling. [Chapter 1]

2. Sermons concerning the
3. Jews, either in Judea, in the reign of Josiah. [Chapter 2, to 21.] Zedekiah. [Chapter 21, to 25.] Jehoiachim. [Chapter 25, 26, 27] Zedekiah again. [Chapter 28, to 35.] Jehoiachim again. [Chapter 35, 36.] Zedekiah again. [Chapter 37, to 43.] Egypt. [Chapter 43, to 46.]
4. Enemies of the Jews. [Chapter 46, to 52.]
5. An Epilogue Historical. [Chapter 52]

§. 3. Lamentations contain the mournings of this Church. [Chapter 1] Prophet. [Chapter 2] Church. [Chapter 3] Prophet. [Chapter 4] Church. [Chapter 5]

§. 4. Ezekiel contains

1. The Preface, which concerns
2. God, and His majesty. [Chapter 1]
3. The Prophet, and his Fearfulness. [Chapter 2] Confirmation. [Chapter 3]
4. Prophecies themselves, which contain
5. Objurgation, or reproof of the impiety of the Jews, with their judgments, in 17 Sermons from [Chapter 4, to 25.]
6. Comminations against the enemies of the Jews, in eight Sermons, from [Chapter 25, to 34.]
7. Exhortations and encouragements to the Jews, to Repentance, and Hope of delivery, in six Sermons. [Chapter 34, to 40.]
8. Consolations in one continued Prophecy of their Spiritual deliverance by Christ in visions. [Chapter 40, to the end.]

§. 5. Daniel contains

1. A History of things done in the Kingdoms both of the Babylonians and [Chapter 1, to 7.] Persians.
2. A Prophecy of things to be done,
3. Many calamities to be executed. [Chapter 7, to 12.]
4. Final deliverance and glory of the Elect. [Chapter 12]

§. 6. Hosea is

1. Parabolical; and so the Prophecy is Propounded. [Chapter 1] Applied. [Chapter 2] Repeated. [Chapter 3]
2. Plain; and so is either a
3. Commination or invective, in three Sermons,
4. In Chapter [Chapter 4]
5. In Chapter [Chapter 5, 6, 7.]
6. In Chapter [Chapter 8, 9, 10.]
7. Consolation. [Chapter 11, to 14.]

§. 7. Joel contains

1. A Commination of Famine. [Chapter 1]
2. An Exhortation to Repentance. [Chapter 2]
3. A Consolation to penitents. [Chapter 3]

§. 8. Amos contains

1. A Commination against
2. Enemies of God's people. [Chapter 1]
3. Jews and Israelites, and that in Plain words, against their Idolatry. [Chapter 2] Violence. [Chapter 3] Indignity, pride, Inhumanity, luxury [Chapter 4, 5, 6.] In a threefold type. [Chapter 7, 8, 9. to the end.]

4. A Consolation, from the 11th verse of the 9th Chapter.

§. 9. Obadiah

1. Doth testify to [Chapter 12 ver.]
2. Dehorts to [Chapter 17 ver.]
3. Comforts [Chapter to the end.]

§. 10. Jonah Describes the two callings of Jonah; in the

First, the Manner of it. [Chapter 1] Effect of it, Prayer. [Chapter 2]
Second, His Sermons to the Ninevites, and their Repentance.
[Chapter 3] The effect of their Repentance in Jonah [Chapter 4]

§. 11. Micah contains five Sermons.

1. Threatening against the whole Kingdom. [Chapter 1, 2.]
2. Threatening against the Magistrates. [Chapter 3]
3. Consolations in God and the Messiah. [Chapter 4, 5.]
4. Commination. [Chapter 6]
5. Consolation again. [Chapter 7]

§. 12. Nahum. Nahum threatens destruction to the Assyrians, which is

1. Propounded. [Chapter 1]
2. The means shown. [Chapter 2]
3. The cause of their sins. [Chapter 3]

§. 13. Habakkuk. Habakkuk contains a

Dialogue betwixt God and the Prophet. [Chapter 1, 2.] Prayer.
[Chapter 3]

§. 14. Zephaniah. Zephaniah contains three Sermons,

1. A Commination. [Chapter 1]
2. An Exhortation. [Chapter 2]
3. A mixture of both. [Chapter 3]

§. 15. Haggai. Haggai

First, Exhorts to build the Temple. [Chapter 1] Secondly, comforts with Prophecy of Christ's Kingdom. [Chapter 2]

§. 16. Zachariah contains

1. Types and visions,
2. Hortatory, Generally to all the People. [Chapter 1, 2.] Specially unto the Priests. [Chapter 3, 4.]
3. Monitory. [Chapter 5, 6.]
4. Consolatory. [Chapter 6]
5. Speeches and Sermons,
6. Doctrinal, of things present, about God's service. [Chapter 7, 8.]
7. Prophetical, of things that concern Christ's Incarnation. [Chapter 9, 10.] Passion. [Chapter 11, 12, 13.]

§. 17. Malachi. Malachi

1. Chides for
2. Perfidiousness in God's service. [Chapter 1]
3. Pollution of marriage, and blasphemy. [Chapter 2]
4. Comforts in the Promise of Christ. [Chapter 3] His forerunner. [Chapter 4]

SECT. 12.

§. 1. The New Testament contains Books

1. Historical; viz. Four Evangelists and Acts.
2. Doctrinal, in Epistles of Paul, James, Peter, John, Jude.
3. Prophetical, in the Revelation. The Books for memory's sake, are comprised in these verses,

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts, Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, Peter, John, Jude, Revelation. Of Books Historical. Matthew speaks of Christ in his

1. Person, as of Birth. [Chapter 1] Education. [Chapter 2]
2. Office,
3. In his preparation for his Office through his Forerunner, John the Baptist. [Chapter 3] Himself, who was Baptized. [Chapter 3] Tempted. [Chapter 4]
4. Execution of his Office.
5. Prophetical in teaching, whose doctrine is
6. Briefly propounded. [Chapters 5, 6, 7]
7. Largely expounded and confirmed; and so he
8. Teaches and confirms by Miracles of all sorts. [Chapters 8, to 19]
9. Reproves and refutes the practice and doctrine of the Pharisees. [Chapters 19, to 24]
10. Foretells and prophesies the destruction of the city and the world. [Chapters 24, 25]
11. Sacerdotal, in his Passion and Sacrifice for the sins of the world. [Chapters 26, 27]
12. Regal, in respect of the beginning and manifestation of it. [Chapter 28]

§. 2. Mark treats of

1. Christ's life, and herein of his Forerunner. [Chapter 1]
2. Sayings and doings,
3. Before his transfiguration, and so reports both his Oracles. [Chapter 2] Miracles. [Chapter 2, to 9]
4. In his transfiguration. [Chapter 9]
5. After it, and that Before he entered the City. [Chapter 10] In his entrance, Disputation. [Chapter 12] Prediction. [Chapter 13]
6. Christ's death, where
7. Antecedents before it. [Chapter 14]
8. Manner of it. [Chapter 15]
9. Consequents after it. [Chapter 16]

§. 3. Luke treats of Christ's

1. Life
2. Private, wherein
3. His conception. [Chapter 1]
4. His birth and education. [Chapter 2]
5. Public, in preaching the Gospel, where his
6. Preparation to it. [Chapter 3]
7. Performance of it, and that either Alone by Teaching. [Chapter 4] Doing. [Chapter 5] With others, viz. his Apostles, whom he Calls and instructs. [Chapter 6, 7, 8] Sends. [Chapter 9] Seventy Disciples. [Chapter 10]
8. Death:
9. Antecedents of it: where consider the things he did and spake,
10. In his journey to Jerusalem, where he taught of Inward worship of God, Prayer. [Chapter 11] Faith. [Chapter 12] Repentance, in

- Causes moving to it. [Chapter 13] Hindering of it. [Chapter 14]
Effects of it. [Chapter 15] Outward worship, where
11. What we must avoid Abuse of riches. [Chapter 16] Scandal. [Chapter 17]
 12. What we must do. [Chapter 18]
 13. When he came to Jerusalem, how he was
 14. Received. [Chapter 19]
 15. Disputed. [Chapter 20]
 16. Prophesied. [Chapter 21]
 17. Manner of his death. [Chapter 22, 23]
 18. Consequents after it. [Chapter 24]

§. 4. John treats of Christ's

1. Person. [Chapter 1]
2. Office: which he performed in his journey to three Feasts:
3. Of the Passover,
4. In Cana, from whence he sent out. [Chapter 2]
5. While he abode at the Feast. [Chapter 3]
6. In his return by Samaria. [Chapter 4]
7. Of Pentecost, where
8. He cured the Palsy. [Chapter 5]
9. Fed the people. [Chapter 6]
10. Of Tabernacles, where note
11. His coming to Jerusalem. [Chapter 7]
12. His abode there, his Disputation. [Chapter 8] Works. [Chapter 9] Sermon. [Chapter 10]
13. His departure thence. [Chapter 11]
14. To the Celebration of the true Passover, about his death.
15. What went before it,
16. His deeds,
17. Entrance to the City. [Chapter 12]

18. Washing his Disciples' feet. [Chapter 13]
19. His speeches,
20. At supper time. [Chapter 14]
21. As they went to the garden
22. Monitory. [Chapter 15]
23. Consolatory. [Chapter 16]
24. Supplicatory. [Chapter 17]
25. The manner of it. [Chapter 18, 19]
26. Consequents of it; viz. his appearance to his disciples,
Conversing in Judea. [Chapter 20] Fishing in Galilee. [Chapter
21]

§. 5. Acts, A History of the Apostles.

1. A general of all,
2. Of their assembling. [Chapter 1]
3. Of their gifts. [Chapter 2]
4. Of their sayings. [Chapter 3]
5. A special,
6. Peter, with John and others. [Chapter 4, 5]
7. Stephen. [Chapter 6, 7]
8. Philip. [Chapter 8]
9. Peter alone, his
10. Miracles. [Chapter 9]
11. Doctrine, Propounded. [Chapter 10] Defended. [Chapter 11]
12. Imprisonments and deliverance. [Chapter 12]
13. Paul and his travels,
14. With Barnabas. [Chapter 13, 14]
15. With Silas, of whose
16. Departure, whereof the first Council at Jerusalem. [Chapter 15]

17. Abode
18. In Asia. [Chapter 16]
19. In Greece. [Chapter 17]
20. Return. [Chapter 18]
21. For the Ephesians, where
22. From whence he went. [Chapter 18, to 23]
23. By what place. [Chapter 19, 20]
24. Whither he came.
25. To Jerusalem, and what befell him there. [Chapter 21, 22, 23]
26. To Caesarea, and what was done under Felix. [Chapter 24]
Festus. [Chapter 25] Agrippa. [Chapter 26]
27. At Rome. [Chapter 27, 28]

SECT. 13.

§. 1. Of Books Doctrinal.

§. 1. Epistle to the Romans treats of

1. Justification. [Chapter 1, 2, 3, 4, 5]
2. Sanctification. [Chapter 6, 7, 8]
3. Predestination. [Chapter 9, 10, 11]
4. Good works. [Chapter 12, to 16]

§. 2. I Corinthians.

1. He reproves for
2. Schisms and factions, and hearkening to ambitious Teachers.
[Chapter 1, 2, 3, 4]
3. Incest and fornication. [Chapter 5]

4. Going to Law. [Chapter 6]
5. He disputeth about
6. Marriage. [Chapter 7]
7. Things indifferent. [Chapter 8, 9, 10]
8. Sacrament of Supper. [Chapter 11]
9. Right use of Spiritual gifts. [Chapter 12, 13, 14]
10. Resurrection. [Chapter 15]
11. He concludeth about Collections, and matters of Salvation. [Chapter 16]

§. 3. II Corinthians. He

1. Apologizeth for himself against divers aspersions. [Chapter 1, 2, 3, 4, 5]
2. Exhorteth them to
3. Holy life, and patience, and shunning needless society with the wicked. [Chapter 6]
4. To avoid judging ill of him. [Chapter 7]
5. To mercy and liberality. [Chapter 8, 9]
6. To sincere respect of him and his Apostleship. [Chapter 10, 11, 12]
7. Concludeth. [Chapter 13]

§. 4. Galatians. He

1. Reproves their backsliding. [Chapter 1]
2. Intreats of Justification. [Chapter 2, 3, 4]
3. Exhorts to good works. [Chapter 5, 6]

§. 5. Ephesians treats

1. Of matter of Faith. [Chapter 1, 2, 3]
2. Of Works. [Chapter 4, 5, 6]

§. 6. Philippians.

1. A narration of his
2. Love to them.
3. Afflictions. [Chapter 1]
4. Desire of death.
5. He exhorts
6. To love and humility. [Chapter 2]
7. To wariness and progress, Assurance, and [Chapter 3] Sanctity.
8. He concludes with Particular Exhortations. [Chapter 4] General Commendations.

§. 7. Colossians Treats of matters of Faith. [Chapter 1, 2] Life. [Chapter 3, 4]

§. 8. I Thessalonians treats

1. Of their Conversion. [Chapter 1]
2. Of the means of it. [Chapter 2]
3. Of the fruits of it, his Love to them, and [Chapter 3] Care for them.
4. Directions for their lives. [Chapter 4]

§. 9. II Thessalonians.

1. He comforts. [Chapter 1]
2. He Prophecieth. [Chapter 2]
3. He exhorteth. [Chapter 3]

§. 10. I Timothy.

1. He confuteth the Erroneous Doctors. [Chapter 1]
2. He exhorteth about Prayer and apparel. [Chapter 2]

3. Informeth concerning the duty of Bishops and Deacons. [Chapter 3]
4. Prophecieth of the last and evil times. [Chapter 4]
5. Ordereth Church-Governors. [Chapter 5]
6. Taxeth several abuses. [Chapter 6]

§. 11. II Timothy.

1. He exhorteth him to perseverance
2. In the duties of his calling. [Chapter 1]
3. In Christian warfare. [Chapter 2]
4. Prophecieth. [Chapter 3]
5. Chargeth about Preaching, and so concludeth. [Chapter 4]

§. 12. Titus. He treats of Ministers. [Chapter 1] Hearers. [Chapter 2, 3.]

§. 13. Hebrews treats of

1. Christ, and so of his
2. Person, in His Divine Nature. [Chapter 1] His Human Nature. [Chapter 2]
3. Office,
4. Prophet. [Chapter 3, 4]
5. Priest. [Chapter 5, to 10]
6. Of the duties of Christians, and so of Faith. [Chapter 11] Holy life. [Chapter 12, 13]

§. 14. James treats

1. Of patience, right hearing the Word, and true Religion. [Chapter 1]
2. Of love, and Justification by Works. [Chapter 2]

3. Of the tongue and wisdom. [Chapter 3]
4. Of contentions and presumption. [Chapter 4]
5. Of oppression, and swearing, and prayer and admonition. [Chapter 5]

§. 15. I Peter hath in it matter of

1. Consolation. [Chapter 1, to 13th verse]
2. Exhortation, from verse 13 of the 1st Chapter to verse 8 of the 3rd Chapter.
3. Dehortation, from verse 8 of the 3rd Chapter to the end of the 3rd Chapter. And these again are handled,
4. Exhortation. [Chapter 4, to verse 12]
5. Consolation, from verse 12 onwards. [Chapter 4, to the end]
6. Dehortation implicitly, with the Conclusion. [Chapter 5]

§. 16. II Peter

1. Exhorts to holiness. [Chapter 1]
2. Threatens wicked Teachers and Apostates. [Chapter 2]
3. Prophecieth of the day of Judgment. [Chapter 3]

§. 17. First Epistle of St. John.

1. Of the benefits of Christ. [Chapter 1]
2. Of the office of Christians in Love. [Chapter 2, 3, 4.] Faith. [Chapter 5]

SECT. 14.

Of the Book Prophetical. Revelation contains

1. History of the state of the Churches then. [Chapter 1, 2, 3.]
2. Mystery or Prophecy
3. Of the World. [Chapter 4, to 10.]
4. Of the Church, in her
5. Battles. [Chapter 10, to 17.]
6. Victories. [Chapter 17, 18, 19, 20]
7. Triumphs and eternal Glory. [Chapter 21, 22.]

SECT. 15.

Of heads or common places of observations for profitable things.

I previously stated (Sect. 4) that when reading the Scriptures, it would be beneficial for our spiritual growth to observe specific passages where we encounter teachings that are either of greater significance in themselves or more applicable to our personal needs and circumstances. To that end, I shall now provide some categories or common topics for the observation of such valuable insights. I am aware that some people suggest the following four points for this purpose:

1. Every Christian following this guidance should create a small notebook of a sheet or two, writing the title they intend to observe at the top of each page.

2. They should focus on passages that are glaringly obvious, those that are so clear that they capture the heart's attention.
3. Under each title, they should record only the Book, Chapter, and Verse, without including the exact words, as that could become tiresome in the long run. They may choose to transcribe the most significant passages only after completing a portion of their task or at the end of the year.
4. They should not expect immediate benefits from this practice within the first week or month. Instead, they should consider how much it will enrich them by the end of the year. Undoubtedly, after gathering these insights, they would not part with their collections for a great price, especially considering the good they may bring in times of adversity. I will share the experience of a humble Christian, the most unworthy servant of Christ, in the following section and paragraphs.

SECT. 16.

Commonplaces observed by one in his private Reading of the
Scriptures.

1. Places where, in reading the Scriptures, he found tangible comfort:

Exod. 14:13, 19:4, 5, 24:10, 11, 17, 34:6, 7, 8. Numb. 14:18. Deut. 5:29, 10:15. 1 Sam. 30:6. 2 Sam. 12:13. 2 Kings 20:5. 2 Chron. 12:12, 15:4, 20:21, 22, 27, 28. Job 5:11, 17, 18, 19, 33:25, 26. Prov. 3:12. Psal. 27:13, 14, 31:7, 37:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 32, 33, 34, 57

(entire), 119:103, 138:7, 8, 139:17. Isa. 29:19, 30:18, 19, 40:1, 2, 42:3, 48:18, 49:2, 13, 14, 15, 16, 52:9, 54:7, 8, 9, 10, 55:7, 57:15, 16, 18. Jer. 1:9, 31:3, 9, 20. Hosea 6:1, 2, 11:8. Mic. 7:18, 19, 20. Mat. 5:11, 12, 10:26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32. Mark 2:17. Luke 6:22, 23. Rom. 8:18, 31, 32. 2 Cor. 7:6. Eph. 5:8. Col. 1:13, 4:3. 2 Tim. 3:11. Heb. 10:35, 36, 37, 38, 12:5, 6, 7, 8. James 5:20. 1 John 3:12.

2. Places where, in reading, he found rebuke for corruption in his nature or practice:

Numb. 14:11. 1 Sam. 12, 13. 2 Chron. 32:26. Psal. 119:75. Isa. 56:11, 57:17, 59:11, 12. Jer. 6:13. Ezek. 34:2, 3, 4. Hosea 7:10. Mark 7:21, 22, 23. Luke 12:15. Rom. 7:23, 24. Ephes. 5:4. 1 Pet. 2:1. Rev. 2:5, 3:15, 16, 17, 19.

3. Places that guided him in his particular calling:

Job 33:23, 24. Isa. 49:4, 5, 50:4, 52:11, 58:1, 62:1, 6, 7. Jer. 15:19, 23:22, 48:10. Ezek. 3:1, 18, 19, 20, 21, 33:2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 34:10. Mal. 2:7. Mat. 10:16, 17, 18. Acts 20:20, 21, 23. 1 Cor. 1:5, 14:1, 12. 2 Cor. 4:5, 6, 7, 6:3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12:15. Phil. 2:3. 1 Thess. 1:5. 2 Thess. 2:3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17. 1 Tim. 1:4, 4:12.

4. Places containing moving passages that touched his heart:

Gen. 22:1 to 20. Gen. 24:31, 33, 50, 52, 33:10, 11, 43:14, 16, 30, 44:13, 16, 31, 45:3, 9, 14, 24, 26, 27, 28, 48:11, 12, 50:10, 11. Deut. 5:29. Judges 7:15, 20, 22. Ruth 2:10, 3:10, 18. 1 Sam. 17:30 to the end, 18:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 20:41, 42, 24:16, 17, 18, 19, 25:23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35. 2 Sam. 15:25, 26, 30. Isa. 57:17, 18. Jer. 31:20. Jonah 2:7. Mark 9:24. John 11:35.

5. Places that offer solace against the burden of daily infirmities, inner temptations, and spiritual afflictions:

Gen. 15:1. Exod. 34:6, 7. Psal. 18:6, 23:4, 5, 6, 34:18, 11:24. Hosea 6:1, 2. Mic. 7:19. Luke 17:4. John 17:20. Rom. 6:14, 16, 20. 1 Cor. 10:13. 2 Thess. 3:3. 1 Tim. 1:15. Heb. 4:15, 16. 1 Pet. 5:10. 1 John 1:9, 2:1, 12, 5:18.

6. Places that strengthen his heart against the fear of falling away:

1 Kings 6:13. Job 8:20. Psal. 15:5, 16:8, 37:24, 27, 28, 31, 89:33, 34, 35, 94:14. Isa. 54:10. Jer. 31:3, 33:20, 21, 25, 26, 32:39, 40, 41. Hosea 2:19, 20. Luke 22:32. John 6:39, 13:1, 14:6, 17, 22, 23, 26. Rom. 8:35, 39, 11:29, 1 Cor. 1:8, 9. Eph. 1:13, 14, 4:30. Phil. 1:6. 1 Thess. 5:23, 24. 2 Thess. 3:3. Heb. 13:5. 1 Pet. 2:6. 1 John 3:9, 5:4.

7. Promises that console him in the face of outward difficulties:

Gen. 41:43. Exod. 4:31, 23:25. Judges 13:23. 2 Chron. 25:9. Psal. 23:1, 2, 37:25, 119:165. Pro. 1:33, 3:8, 10. Isa. 58:8. Dan. 6:16. Luke 21:18. John 16:33. Rom. 1:17, 2 Cor. 4:17, 18, 2 Tim. 2:12. Heb. 13:5, 6. 1 Pet. 3:14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 4:12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19. Rev. 2:10.

8. Places that elucidate his privileges in Christ, superior to those of the wicked in the world:

Gen. 3:15, 7:1, 23, 12:3, 15:6, 26:4, 28:14, 32:28. Exod. 19:4, 5, 6. Num. 23:21, 24:5, 6. Deut. 26:18, 19, 33:29. 1 Sam. 12:22. 2 Chron. 15:4, 16:9. Job 5:19 to 27. Psal. 32:7, 33:18, 19, 34:4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and so forth. Isa. 9:6, 40:31, 41:10, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 53:11, 54:11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. Jer. 33:8. Lam. 3:32. Ezek. 11:19.

Dan. 6:23. Zech. 2:8. Mal. 4:2. Mat. 1:21, 10:30, 11:28, 28:20. Luke 11:13-19, 10:21, 18. John 1:12, 16, 29, 10:28, 3:16, 17, 14:16, 17, 17, 19, 24. Acts 13:39, 27:34. Rom. 4:5, 8:30, 33, 10:4. 1 Cor. 1:30. 2 Cor. 5:19, 21. Gal. 3:13, 4:4, 5, 6. Eph. 1:3, 4, 6, 7, 2:14, 16, 3:25. Phil. 3:21. Col. 1:21, 3:4. 1 Thess. 5:23, 24. 1 Tim. 1:15. Tit. 2:14. Heb. 1:3, 9:12, 26. 1 John 1:7, 2:2, 3:1, 2, 5. Rev. 1:5, 13.

9. Places difficult to comprehend, for which he sought and endeavored to find resolution, including all the Titles of the Psalms, especially those of Psalms 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 16, 22, 30, 34, 38, 39, 4, 45, 46, 50, 53, 56, 57, 60, 72, 88, 90, 92, 119, 120, etc.
10. Several other categories he noted in his private little Book, which I shall mention for the imitation of others:
 - Places that exemplify Experiences (or the word written in our hearts) as the best Commentary.
 - Places that present various points of Religion that a Christian can confidently rely on, living and dying in the assurance of them.
 - Places that justify a strict aversion to the slightest sin.
 - Places that demonstrate that the godly have endured all sorts of hardships, reproaches, and slander.
 - Memorable Sayings or Choice Sentences.
 - Promises of the Churches flourishing in the last times.

Above all, I consider those related to our individual circumstances most precious and uniquely useful.

SECT. 17.

Of the use of these Collections.

The use of them is diverse, according to the several heads: Now the first head was, Places that in reading, he found sensible comfort and rapture of heart in? The use hereof is not only for the present, but while he lives in any distress, for then he may have recourse to these places, as to so many wells of joy; and if in his grief, one, or two, or ten will not comfort him, yet it may please God that some of them will have spirit and life in them; besides, it cannot but marvelously establish his faith, when he remembers in how many distinct places of Scripture the Lord was pleased to comfort his soul.

The second head was, Places that in reading, he found rebuke of corruption in his nature or practice: The use hereof is to open his eyes, and to let him see the Anatomy of his corruptions, and plainly to perceive what things are in his nature, that God has a quarrel against; so that now it is time, that as such a one is guided by the finger of God to know his corruptions, so he should go to the Spirit of God for mortification.

The third head was, Places that directed him in his particular calling: The use hereof is to consider the several Texts, as the crowing of Cocks, which ring in his ears: When will you arise? why do you tarry so long? why do you stir so slowly? See how the Sun rejoices as a Giant to run his race, why then do you not sharpen yourself to the work which God has laid on you? It may be you meet with many troubles, disgraces, oppositions, but what then? Is not this God's command? Is not this a service to the Lord Jesus? Does not the Lord assist? And is not He a sufficient Paymaster? It may be your labor is in vain, your work is without fruit, and what then? Is not labor your

duty? And good success God's work? What have you to do with thoughts about the blessing and success of your labors? Look you to the duty, view the Texts well, and obey them, and leave the blessing of your endeavors to the good will and pleasure of God; lay aside all care of the event, and roll your burden upon the Lord, who will sustain you: Thus these Texts cry upon you to submit to God's direction, and to depend therein upon His help and assistance. This is the double duty we all owe, First, To ask counsel at the word, and to follow the determination of it; for a true heart is ever obediential, subjecting itself to the will of God, as the rule of holiness, acknowledging His sovereignty, subscribing to His wisdom as most absolute, and to His ways as most true, just, and merciful. Secondly, To put over all our businesses into God's hands, and in a manner out of our own, trusting in Him for the ability to the work, and for good success to come by them.

The fourth head was, Places containing passages that even melted his heart: The use hereof is to call such passages to remembrance in times of mourning, only be sure that our affections prove spiritual, and not merely natural: I make no question but David's longing after God, Psalm 42:1, 21, his panting after the word, Psalm 119:140, his delight in the sweetness of it, Psalm 119:103, his trembling at God's presence, Psalm 119:120, his grief for the breach of his Law, Psalm 119:136, were spiritual affections; for they were raised by spiritual objects, so it is good for us to see to our affections, that they be raised by spiritual objects, and then they will prove singularly useful; it may be indeed that when a Christian peruses over again the same Texts, he shall not have the like operation as before; all the godly find by their own experience, that those instructions, reproofs, and consolations, which at sometimes awaken, wound, and revive their spirits, at another time move them nothing at all; sometimes the spiritual sense is benumbed, and they hear only by the hearing of the

ear; but at other times, when those senses are awakened, they taste, and see, and feel the same, and consequently are affected, as Job was in that place, Job 42:5. So if at any time we find these meltings stirred in us by a spiritual object, and that they are answerable to God's dealings with us, then we can rejoice or mourn seasonably, when God calls us to either, Eccles. 7:14 I take this to be a holy and happy use made of those places.

The fifth head was, Places that hold forth comforts against the burden of his daily infirmities, inward temptations, and afflictions of spirit: The use hereof is (when such a particular temptation comes) to eye the promises, and to betake the soul unto the Lord for succor promised: This is the voice of Faith, Be of good courage, here is a word of comfort, and there is help enough in heaven; the Devil may thrust sore at thee, but he shall not get the victory, for God is with thee; no question, but for these sins the Lord bestows on thee a pardon of course, only be vigilant and watchful at all times, in all places, upon all occasions, against all sins, with all the degrees thereof, specially against sin of constitution, calling, company, corrupt education: Indeed, this is the property of faith, both to rest on the promises, and to keep waking, for nothing is more wisely fearful than faith, nor more cautious and circumspect than holy fear.

The sixth head was, Places that establish his heart against the fear of falling away: The use hereof is, in case of any such doubt, to learn and think upon these precious places, that we may be settled in believing our perseverance. This will encourage and quicken us in our Christian course, establish us in well-doing, and hearten us against the greatest difficulties: Their objection, who say, The doctrine of assurance of not falling away, doth set open a door to all licentiousness, is most false; for the more assurance of salvation in a man's soul, the more fear and trembling in a man's course; he who is

best assured, hath most power of God's Spirit, and the stronger the Spirit of God is within, the more holiness and fruits of grace are without.

The seventh head is, Promises that comforted him against outward crosses: The use hereof, is to live by faith in afflictions; for then is faith in these promises the only stay and support of the heart: I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living:—This is my comfort in my affliction, for thy word hath quickened me: In daily and lighter trials, a man of mild and patient temper, may hold up the head, but when one deep calleth unto another, and the waves flow over our head, when nature yieldeth, and the heart fainteth, then to stand fast, and be of good courage, is the only property of faith, which is grounded upon the rich mercy of God, made over to us in these precious promises. I cannot deny, but distrust many times wrings from a Christian such voices as these, Were it anything but this I could bear it; but now if in conscience of his impotency, he will seek to Christ to make him able, and he will fasten himself upon him by a true and lively faith in these promises, he may find strength enough through his might, whereby to bear that comfortably, which otherwise he may find most intolerable. Faith drives a man out of himself, as not able to bear the least cross as he ought, and through the power of God, it enableth him to bear that best with which God is pleased to try him.

The eighth head is, Places that hold forth his privileges in Christ, above all the wicked in the world: The use hereof is, 1. To believe and to rejoice in them: All these privileges are mine, will a soul say, the Lord hath given them for my portion, how then should I glory in God, triumph over death, sin and hell, through my Saviour? 2. To live unto him who hath bestowed them on the soul: And now, O Israel (after all his kindness) what doth the Lord require of thee, but

to fear the Lord thy God, and to love him and serve him with all thy heart, and to keep his Commandments? Oh (saith the soul) how should I now think much of Christ? and speak much of Christ? and converse much with Christ? and do much for Christ? and suffer much for the Lord Jesus Christ? and if I cannot do much, how should I desire and will to do much, which is accepted as if I did it? how should I continually go to him, to enable me to do more than of myself I can do? nay, how should I mourn and lament for what I have not done, either through want of ability or will: This is the use of such glorious privileges, to believe in Christ, and to live unto Christ.

The ninth head is, Places hard to be understood, of which he desired and endeavored after resolution: The use hereof, is specified in the very Title itself; and the resolution of the hard Texts cited (viz. those Titles of several Psalms) was by industry found out thus.

PSALM 3. The Title is, A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.

In which three things are contained, 1. The Author thereof, David, King of Israel, who composed it. 2. The kind of the Psalm; which word [Psalm] is a word generally applicable to all those spiritual hymns, without particular application to the Ceremonies of persons, time, or manner of singing, as many others are: It was usually delivered to the whole Choir, on the Sabbaths and Festival days, to be sung by voice, and to be fitted to the instruments, used to be played upon in the Temple. 3. The expression of the time and occasion of the composing thereof; (i.) when he fled from Absalom: the story is set down in 2 Sam. 15. Many were the troubles wherewith this good King was afflicted, especially after his sin in the matter of Uriah, but

never any so grievous, as to be driven out of his own Kingdom by his own Son, and his subjects to fall away from him, and to follow his enemy, that sought his life and Throne.

Hereupon he makes his sorrowful complaint unto God in this Psalm, and appoints it to be sung in the Church for his own comfort, and instruction to himself and the whole Church in such times of calamities.

And to this his pathological moan, he joins this word [Selah] as a note of the attention of the mind, and stop or pause in the song.

For understanding the meaning and use of the word [Selah] note, that Selah is a Hebrew word, and signifies as much as Amen, forever, semper, in sempiternum, in seculo, &c. < in non-Latin alphabet > , in aeternum.

Jerome observes, that the Jews used one of these three words in the end or conclusion of their writings or sentences, or in the end of their prayers, Amen, Selah, or Salem, which signifies peace: And it is noted to be a word to express an affirmation, or giving assent to that which is prayed or said, as Amen is, or else it imports a wish, vow or desire, that the thing spoken be certain, or may be forever, (i.) that it may be performed: And it is to be noted, that it is usually placed, when some special thing, worthy attention or observation, is spoken or delivered, or some desire to be performed, whether it be in the end, or in any sentence of the Psalm, Prayer, &c. that by a little stop or pause of the breath, the matter, worth or excellency of the thing may be better considered: And you shall not find it in any part of the Scripture, saving in the Psalms, and in the prayer of the Prophet Habakkuk, Hab. 3.3. whereupon it's observed by Drusius and others, to be a word of note, used in those ditties and music, to make a stop or stay, that the matter uttered may be better minded by the hearers,

either to affirm it by their assent, or to desire the performance of what is sung by that intermission, which seems to be most probable because the Greek Translators of the Hebrew Bible express the word Selah by the Greek word < in non-Latin alphabet > , which signifies a stop, or intermission, and so comes to be used in the Psalmody, and is rithmi Commutatio, a change of the note, or vicissitudo canendi, or as some say, alterius sensus exordium.

PSALM 4. To the chief Musician on Niginoth, a Psalm of David.

The meaning is this: The Kingly Prophet David composed this Psalm and delivered it to be sung and played in the Congregation to the one who was the chief Overseer, Master, and set over the rest of that music or consort, upon the instrument called Niginoth, which sounded by playing with the hand. To understand this better, we may observe that some instruments used in the Jewish Temple were < in non-Latin alphabet > windy, such as sounded by breath and motion of the fingers; such as Organs that are blown with bellows and all hollow instruments like Trumpets, Rams' horns, Cornets, etc., which the Priests and Levites used in the holy Ordinances, from the Hebrew word Nechiloth, which signifies bored through or hollow.

Others were pulsatilia, such as were played upon with the fingers only, either by a quill or otherwise; such as the Harp, Dulcimer, etc., which had strings. Of this sort was the instrument in the Title of this Psalm called Niginoth. Now, for each of these several kinds of instruments, there was one who excelled in playing them, appointed Overseer, or chief of the consort, to direct those under him in the song. There was also someone appointed as the chief of the singers for the song. Hence, when the Psalm was committed to be sung to the master of that Order, it was said, "To the chief Musician" or "to him that excelleth": A Psalm of David.

PSALM 5. To the chief Musician upon Nehiloth, a Psalm of David.

The Title of this Psalm may be understood by what is said in the Title of the fourth Psalm, differing only in the name of the instrument, which was one of those that were hollow and sounded by breath, as the Hebrew word shows, as mentioned before, etc. Some of the Hebrew Writers say it was a Musical instrument whose sound was like the buzzing of Bees, or in regard to their multitude, which are like an army in number. Also, because the master of that Choir was appointed to pray for all Israel as for all the Armies of the Israelites, against the Armies of the enemies that came against them in multitude and noise like a swarm of Bees. Therefore, he gives the Title, "Super exercitus Psalmus Davidis," etc. But this is improper as the Title has no conformity with the substance of the Psalm and is not approved by our Interpreters, etc. But the first is followed.

PSALM 6. To the chief Musician on Niginoth upon Sheminith, a Psalm of David.

The meaning of this Title may be understood by what was said before in the fourth Psalm, except that here [upon Sheminith] is added, signifying that it was played with the eighth time note or strain and sung with a very clear and high voice. We can better understand it by what is said in 1 Chron. 15.21. Mattithiah, Eliphaleh, and others were set over the base and tenor, which is the Sheminith or the Eights, or Diapason, as Musicians call it. So the meaning is that this Psalm was to be ordered by the chief Musician of that consort to be sung and played upon the instrument Niginoth with the highest and utmost strain of sound and voice, or an instrument of ten strings.

PSALM 7. Shiggaion of David, which he sang unto the Lord, concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite.

This was a Psalm of David, sung according to an ordinary song, the beginning of which was Shiggaion. For it is customary for us to create songs to be sung according to the tune of some that were composed before.

Tremellius and some others, from the Hebrew word, which signifies to wander, etc., entitle it "Ode erratica," a wandering sonnet, because it is mixed and consists of various forms and distinctions of voice and sound in skillful playing, joined to complete the music, as we see in "Prick-song."

When it is said, "Concerning the words of Cush," it indicates the occasion of the Psalm. Namely, that when David was most unjustly slandered by his enemies, especially by Cush, etc., he makes his complaint to God in this Psalm, asking Him to avenge his innocence, etc., and to be delivered from the persecution of Saul and his flatterers, such as this Cush was. "Words" here refers to accusations, etc. Who this Cush was is doubtful. Jerome asserts it to be Saul and provides his reasons for it. Others (which I think is more probable) believe it to be some Courtier of Ethiopia whom Saul entertained in his Court and who was his special favorite, as if he had been of his family or stock (for Cush is the name of Ethiopia). This man, out of hatred for David and flattery towards Saul, falsely accused him to Saul and plotted all the mischief he could against him.

PSALM 8. To the chief Musician upon Gittith, a Psalm of David.

The Title of this Psalm is variously given. Some thus, "To the chief Musician, pro torcularibus," for wine-dressers; as if it were a prayer for the fruitfulness of that fruit, etc. Others suggest that it was composed by David in the City of Gath when he was banished. Still, others claim that this kind of instrument was invented and used there. What is most probable and agrees with the Scripture is that

Gittith was an instrument which Jeduthun and his posterity, who were chief of the third Class or Order of Musicians, used to play. The custody of this instrument was entrusted to Obed-Edom the Gittite and his family, who were of the posterity of Jeduthun. They, for their time, ministered and used them in the holy service (1 Chron. 16.37, 38).

PSALM 9. To the chief Musician on Muth-Labben, a Psalm of David.

"Muth-Labben" was the beginning of a tune after which this Psalm was to be sung by the Choir. It contains a Thanksgiving for his victory and for the death of Goliath, the Champion of the Philistines against Israel. Some read the Title thus: "Magistro Symphoniae de morte illius bellatoris Goliath," etc. which is typically applied to Christ as a song of joy for the Church and Saints of God, for Christ's triumphant victory over the Tyranny of Satan and his Kingdom of sin and death. Some divide the words and make "Muth-Labben" two distinct words and interpret it to mean "Victori, super mortem filii, Psalmus David," as if David had made it for the death of his son, as Seldan suggested. However, this sense is not favored by Augustine, who argues from the substance of the Psalm that David did not mourn and rejoice for his son's death, so the first interpretation is best.

PSALM 16. The Title is, Michtam of David, a golden or excellent Psalm.

The meaning is that it is a Psalm made by David to be sung after a certain tune known among the Jews, which was named Michtam and was highly esteemed, even compared to Gold. The beginning of this tune was "Michtam." Alternatively, it could be referring to a musical instrument of special esteem among them.

PSALM 22. To the chief Musician on Ajeleth Shahar;

The hind of the morning. Some take "Ajeleth Shahar" to be the name of some common song or the beginning of some ordinary tune to which this Psalm was sung. This is the Geneva note, which may be the case. However, Tremellius, Lyra, and others interpret it differently, and I believe their interpretation is more accurate. They explain these Hebrew words to mean "in or at the dawning of the day," equivalent to saying "between the break of day and sunrise." This is because at that time, the comforting light or shine of the day begins to break forth.

The meaning of the Title is that David composed this Psalm and appointed it to be sung in the Church by the Priests and Levites every morning as soon as the day began to break. According to the Law and Custom, it was their duty to perform their Ministry in the Choir and sing Psalms at that time (1 Chron. 9.33). The Lord ordained this service in the Church so that their faith and expectation of Christ might be daily renewed and remembered. The prophesied Kingdom and sufferings of Christ are represented in this Psalm, as if looking forward to the dawn of a new day when Christ would visit them.

PSALM 30. Title: A Psalm or song of David, at the dedication of the House of David, which he composed to be sung at the dedication of his House.

This Title reveals the occasion of this song and the time when it was used. It was most likely composed when David had completed the construction of his house made of Cedar on Mount Zion. Many reputable authors find this explanation plausible and support it.

Alternatively, it might have been composed when David returned safely to his house after Absalom's rebellion, during which Absalom defiled it by committing incestuous acts with his father's concubines. To cleanse the house of all impurity, David dedicated it to the Lord, praying for its sanctification and purification so that it would be blessed and acceptable to God (2 Sam. 16.22). This is the opinion held by the learned Tremellius, and the content of the Psalm supports this interpretation. The dedication of a house had significance according to the Law (Deut. 20.5). It involved consecrating the house to the Lord, separating it from wickedness and sinful uses, and acknowledging gratitude for the completed work. It also included prayers and sacrifices to seek God's continued blessings in the house.

PSALM 34. A Psalm of David, when he changed his behavior before Abimelech, and he departed.

This Title indicates the occasion for the Psalm rather than a particular ceremony. The story is recorded in 1 Samuel 21.13. In summary, David, while fleeing from Saul, sought refuge with Achish, King of Gath, who is referred to as Abimelech here. To ensure his safety, David feigned madness before Abimelech, as if he had lost his senses. This ruse allowed him to escape the danger he faced, as those around the King decided to let him go. In response to this deliverance, David composed this Psalm as an expression of gratitude. It's worth noting that the King is called Abimelech in this context, which was a common title for the kings of that region, similar to Pharaoh for the Egyptians or Caesar for the Romans. In the book of Samuel, he is more specifically referred to as Achish, King of Gath.

PSALM 38. Title: A Psalm of David to bring to remembrance.

This is a Psalm that David composed to be sung by the Choir on the Sabbath. He did so after the Lord had afflicted him with sickness and severe chastisements. The purpose was to remind himself and others among God's children who might be in a similar situation of their sins, which had led to these afflictions. Some believe that the sin mentioned here is related to the matter of Uriah. Additionally, it serves as an admonition of God's goodness, as He had delivered David from these punishments and pardoned his sin. Some also apply this Psalm to the agonies of Christ and His triumphant victory over sin and death.

PSALM 39. Title: To the chief Musician, even to Jeduthun, a Psalm of David.

[Magistro Symphoniae Jeduthim.] This Psalm was composed by David and designated to be sung and accompanied by instruments for Jeduthun, who, owing to his exceptional musical skill, held the position of chief in his Order. He was the forefather of those belonging to his lineage who prophesied with harps to offer thanks and praise to the Lord, as noted in 1 Chronicles 25.3.

PSALM 42. Title: To the chief Musician, Maschil, for the sons of Korah.

This is a Psalm entrusted to the sons, or descendants, of Korah. It appears that Heman, who was likely their leader, belonged to this group, serving as the head of the third Class or Order of Musicians responsible for the holy service, as mentioned in 1 Chronicles 25.5. All of these musicians were under the guidance of their forefather Heman, who performed with cymbals, psalteries, harps, and other instruments in the house of the Lord. The use of the word "Maschil" in the beginning of this Psalm suggests that it was intended for

instruction, not only for the performers but also for the listeners, in accordance with the meaning of the word.

Some have speculated that this Psalm was composed by the sons of Korah after their ancestor Korah's rebellion against Moses. According to this theory, after their repentance, God granted them the spirit of prophecy, enabling them to compose various Psalms, including this one, which contains prophecies about Christ and other future events. However, Augustine disagrees with this notion, and it does not align with the content of the Psalm. Furthermore, the presence of the Hebrew letter Lamed, indicating the Dative case, suggests that David composed this Psalm for the sons of Korah to perform with their music rather than it being their own creation. David, during his exile, likely wrote this Psalm to express his grief and zeal for the House and Temple. It was intended to strengthen his faith and confidence in God during his time of distress, and he handed it over to Heman and his sons for use in their musical worship.

PSALM 45. Title: To the chief Musician, Shoshannim, for the sons of Korah, Maschil, a song of loves. Shoshannim was an instrument among the Jews with six strings, resembling the lily, which has six leaves or stems.

It was therefore known as Hexachorda. This Psalm, delivered by David, was intended to be sung and played by the sons of Korah on this instrument. It begins with the word "Maschil," signifying its purpose to instruct God's people regarding the spiritual marriage and love between Christ and His Church. This love is symbolized by Solomon's marriage to Pharaoh's daughter and serves as an example of the perfect love that should exist between a husband and wife. Hence, it is called "a song of loves," reminiscent of Solomon's Song of

Songs. Some distinguish between a "Song" and a "Psalm" by noting that the former involves instruments followed by voice, while the latter begins with the voice or lyrics followed by instruments.

PSALM 46. Title: To him that excelleth upon Alamoth, or the chief Musician for the sons of Korah upon Alamoth.

Some interpret "Alamoth" as the name of a song tune, but I understand it differently, in line with the best interpretations. Here, it refers to an instrument rather than a tune. This Psalm, assigned by David, was meant to be sung and accompanied by an instrument called "Alamoth." In 1 Chronicles 15.10, it is explicitly mentioned that Zachariah played the psalteries upon Alamoth. In this context, they began by playing this instrument and then proceeded to sing the Psalm or hymn.

PSALM 50. Title: A Psalm of Asaph. Some believe it is named so because Asaph was its author, possessing the gift of prophecy.

However, this reasoning is weak, as all the other psalms were also inspired by a prophetic spirit. Augustine and other learned theologians suggest that it is called so not because Asaph composed it, but because it was entrusted to him and his descendants to be sung, as stated in 1 Chronicles 25.2.

PSALM 53. Title: To the chief Musician upon Mahalath Maschil.

Jerome believes that "Mahalath" signifies a tune for the entire choir or company of singers, and that David appointed it to be sung by the entire group of Levites, and so on. However, others interpret it more aptly as an instrument, one that produces sound through breath and

blowing, owing to its hollowness. The rest of the title's meaning has been explained earlier.

PSALM 56. Title: To the chief Musician upon Jonath Elem Rechokim Michtam of David, when the Philistines took him in Gath.

The words in this title have a dual meaning in the original text and can be interpreted metaphorically as "a dumb Dove" (as Jonath signifies) in a distant or foreign land, as Jerome suggests. Alternatively, they may signify "a soul suffering violence" in a foreign land, a more accurate interpretation. David applies this title to himself during his great distress, likening himself to a silent dove in a distant land. When he was driven out of Judea, his homeland, by Saul, who sought his life, and was forced to seek refuge among the Philistines in Gath, David endured the suffering with patience, meekness, and silence. He neither sought revenge, even though he had the opportunity, nor displayed impatience but instead turned to God in silence, as if he were a dumb dove mourning. This Psalm can also be applied to Christ, of whom David was a type.

A better interpretation, approved by Junius, relates it to the soul's suffering violence while enclosed by a multitude or band of Philistines, who were enemies both to David and his God. Some read the words as "To the Master of the Harmony," which conveys the same sense as "To him that excelleth" or "chief Musician." "Michtam of David" signifies the preciousness of this Psalm, akin to gold.

PSALM 57. Title: To the chief Musician, Altaschith Michtam of David, when he fled from Saul in the cave or into the cave.

The general notes in this title suggest that the words are either the beginning of the song, "Destroy not," or words uttered by David in his extremity, restraining and controlling his emotions, etc.

"Michtam of David" means that this was the golden or excellent sonnet composed and delivered by David to the Levites to be sung, following the tune of the Psalm beginning with "Altaschith." David composed it when he was in a state of profound fear and danger of death in the cave of Adullam or En-gedi. He had been driven there by Saul and was surrounded by Saul's guards, with death seemingly imminent in the cave or destruction if he attempted to leave. In response to this peril, David prays that he would not be destroyed, serving as the inspiration for this song. The story can be found in 1 Samuel 22 and 24.

PSALM 60. Title: To the chief Musician upon Shushan-Eduth, Michtam of David, to teach when he strove with Aram, Naharim, and Aram Zobah, when Joab returned and smote of Edom in the valley of salt, twelve thousand.

"Shushan-Eduth" is either the name of an instrument to be played when singing this Psalm or the beginning of a song, named after the tune David intended for this Psalm. Alternatively, "Michtam" signifies an excellent song that can be sung either to the instrument or tune "Shushan-Eduth" or that of "Michtam."

Some titles have it as "Magistro Symphoniae in hexacorda," which means an instrument with six strings upon which David wanted this Psalm to be played. It serves as a testimony to the entire Church of his faith and the victory granted by God over the Aramites of Mesopotamia and the other Aramites residing in Zobah. The word "in testimonium" in the title further explains the time and occasion for the composition of this Psalm. For more details about the time and occasion, you can refer to the story in 2 Samuel 8 and 1 Chronicles 18.

PSALM 72. Title: A Psalm for Solomon, or of Solomon.

This does not imply that Solomon authored it; rather, it pertains to him or was composed on his behalf by his father, David. When David was on the verge of death, he commended his son Solomon, who was to become king, to God.

PSALM 88. Title: A Psalm or Song for the sons of Korah, to the chief Musician upon Mahalath Leannoth, Maschil of Heman the Ezrahite.

Heman and Ethan were brothers endowed with an excellent spirit of prophecy and wisdom, and they were compared to Solomon in this regard (1 Kings 4:31). Heman composed this Psalm, and Ethan wrote the next one. They entrusted these Psalms to be sung and played by the sons of Korah, led by their chief, to the tune of "Mahalath-Leannoth," which some believe to be the beginning of a song after which this Psalm should be sung. Others suggest it might refer to an instrument to accompany the tune. Due to the excellence of the content, these Psalms were to be preserved as a form of lamentation for the Church during times of private or singular distress (as in this Psalm) or in times of affliction or persecution of the Church or Commonwealth (as in the next).

It's worth noting that some experts in the Hebrew language suggest that the word "Mahalath" has various meanings, signifying both a musical instrument, a choir or company of musicians, or infirmity. Each of these interpretations can apply in this context, referring to the instrument called "Mahalath" to be played and sung by the entire company of Levites, both vocally and instrumentally, during times of affliction for the people or others.

PSALM 90. Title: A prayer of Moses, the man of God.

It is believed that this psalm or prayer was composed by Moses, for himself and the people, during a time when the spies returned from exploring the Land of Canaan and brought back a negative report, leading to the Lord's threat that they would not enter the Promised Land.

PSALM 92. Title: A psalm or song for the Sabbath day.

This psalm was intended to be sung and used in the worship of God in the congregation on the Sabbath day when the people gathered for public church activities.

Some Hebrew scholars suggest that Moses made it to commemorate the Creation, but the Title does not specify the author.

This psalm, along with Psalms 113, 114, 115, 116, and 117, known as the Hallelujah or praises of God, were sung during the Passover and are the psalms or hymns mentioned in the Gospel during the celebration.

PSALM 119. In Psalm 119, David uses ten different names or appellations to express God's revealed will.

He refers to it as God's Law, His Way, His Word, His Precepts, His Commandments, His Judgments, His Statutes, His Promises, His Righteousness, and His Testimonies. Notably, in this lengthy psalm, containing twenty-two sections corresponding to the Hebrew alphabet, there is not one verse (except for one, verse 122) where one or more of these ten words or names is not mentioned. This consistency reflects David's deep affection and love for God's holy Word.

PSALM 120. Title: A Song of Degrees. The title of this Psalm relates more to the manner of singing than the content of the Psalm itself, and there are various opinions regarding the reason for this title.

Some believe that this title, along with the next 14 Psalms, was given because they were sung in a high and prominent place. Others think it signifies the raising or lifting up of the voice while singing to ensure better audibility among the people, as suggested by Calvin. Some say these Psalms were sung by the priests and Levites following the form and melody of a known and esteemed song that began with this title.

In later interpretations, some suggest that the term signifies the excellence of these Psalms compared to others, as places that require ascent are often considered the best. Therefore, the word is used in the plural, "degrees," signifying the most excellent songs. The Hebrews sometimes use plurals to denote the superlative degree of excellence, as seen in the titles "A Song of Songs" and "God of gods."

Carolus Siggonius de rep: Hebreorum, whose judgment aligns more with the truth, understands the title to mean that these Psalms were sung by the priests and Levites on the stairs leading from the great Court or Porch, where the people gathered, into the inner part of the Temple, accessible only to the priests. On feast days, the Levites would sing these 15 Psalms, one on each stair, as they ascended into the Temple's inner Court, pausing on each stair. This practice gave these Psalms the title "Songs of Degrees" or "Songs of Ascents."

This ceremonial practice served as an outward means of preparing people for worship, urging them to approach God with cheerful and uplifted hearts, renewed in faith. Cyprian noted a similar practice in the Church liturgy of his time, where the Deacon called upon the

people to "lift up their hearts unto God" with the phrase "Sursum corda."

Observations.

It can be observed that in Titles, many things may appear strange and challenging to us because we are not familiar with the specific instruments, forms of singing, or tunes used in those times. We do not know whether they were the same as the ones we use today or bore some resemblance to ours in terms of playing by hand or by breath. For example, "Decem-chorda," an instrument with ten strings, might resemble the lute we use. "Cymbals" might be similar to our cornets. However, we have no more knowledge of their instruments, tunes, or songs than other foreign nations and languages have of ours, especially those to whom we and our language are unknown.

Furthermore, when it is mentioned in some Titles that a psalm is to be sung after a particular tune, it is similar to our practice of saying, "This is to be sung according to such a psalm." Neither their psalms nor ours have a unique tune for each one; rather, the tune of one can be related to another.

This concludes our discussion of challenging passages in the Psalms, which the weaker Christian sought resolution for. Regarding other difficult passages in Scripture, I have intentionally omitted them as they would significantly expand this book. This marks the end of the discussion on reading the Word.

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