

## PROBLEMS OF LIFE.

*XXVIII. The Riddle of Life.*

## PSALM 73.

- M.* Truly, God is good to Israel,—to those who are pure in heart.
- C.* Yet my feet almost gave way ; my steps had well nigh slipped :
- For I was envious of the proud, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked,  
 For they have no pains even to their death ; their bodies are in full health.
- They have not the woes of other men, neither are they smitten like other men.
- Therefore pride encircleth their neck as a collar ; violence covereth them as a garment.
- From their bosom issueth their iniquity ; the designs of their hearts burst forth.
- Therefore his people walk in their ways, and they drink from full fountains.
- And then say, “ How doth God know ? how can there be knowledge with the Most High ? ”
- Behold these are the ungodly ! yet they are ever prosperous ; they heap up riches.
- Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain ; in vain have I washed my hands in innocence.
- If I should resolve to speak like them, surely I should be treacherous to the family of Thy children.
- So when I studied to know this, it was painful to my eyes ;
- Until I went into the sanctuary of God, and considered what was their end.

Behold ! Thou hast set them on slippery places ;  
Thou castest them down into unseen pits.

How are they brought to desolation in a moment,  
and utterly consumed with sudden destruction !

As a dream when one awaketh, Thou, O Lord !  
when Thou risest, wilt make their vain show a  
derision.

When my heart was vexed and I was pierced in my  
reins :

Then was I stupid and without understanding ; I  
was like one of the brutes before Thee.

Yet I am ever under Thy care ; by my right hand  
Thou dost hold me up.

Thou wilt guide me with Thy counsel, and at last  
receive me in glory.

Whom have I in heaven but Thee, and whom on  
earth do I love in comparison with Thee ?

Though my flesh and my heart fail, God is the  
strength of my soul, and my portion for ever.

For, lo ! they who are far from Thee perish ; Thou  
destroyest all who estrange themselves from  
Thee.

But it is good for me to draw near to God ; I put  
my trust in the Lord, my God, that I may  
declare all Thy works.

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XXIX. *The Ways of Providence.*

PSALM 37.

- M.* Be not thou angry on account of the wicked, nor be  
envious of those who do iniquity.
- C.* Trust in the Lord, and do good ; abide in the land,  
and delight in faithfulness.

Place thy delight in the Lord, and He will give thee thy heart's desires.

Commit thy way to the Lord ; trust in Him, and He will give thee success !

He will cause thy justice to shine forth like the light, and thy righteousness like the noonday's brightness.

Hope thou patiently on the Lord, and in Him place thy trust !

Be not angry on account of the prosperous,—on account of him that deviseth deceit !

Cease from anger ; give not way to wrath ; be not provoked, so as to do evil !

Yet a little while and the wicked shall be no more ; thou mayest look for his place, and he will not be found.

But the meek shall inherit the land, and delight in the fulness of prosperity.

Better is the little of the righteous man than the great abundance of the wicked ;

The Lord careth for the life of the upright, and their inheritance shall endure for ever.

They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, and in the days of famine they shall have enough.

The wicked borroweth and repayeth not ; but the righteous is merciful and bountiful.

The steps of a good man are directed by the Lord ; who delighteth himself in his way.

Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord holdeth him by the hand.

I have been young, and now am old ; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his offspring begging bread.

He is ever merciful and lendeth, and his offspring shall be blessed.

Depart from evil and do good ; so thou shalt dwell in the land for ever.

The mouth of the righteous uttereth wisdom, and his tongue speaketh what is right.

The law of his God is in his heart ; his footsteps shall not slip.

Mark the righteous man, and behold the upright, that posterity is to the man of peace !

*XXX. Divine Justice.*

PSALMS 82 and 12.

*M.* God standeth in His assembly, He judgeth in the midst of the mighty ones.

*C.* How long will ye judge unjustly, and favor the cause of the wicked ?

Defend the poor and the fatherless ; do justice to the wretched and the needy !

Deliver the poor and the destitute ; save them from the hand of the wicked !

They are without knowledge and without understanding ; they walk in darkness ;

Therefore all the foundations of the land are shaken.

I have said, Ye are sons of God, and all of you children of the Most High ;

But ye shall die like men, and fall like the rest of the princes.

Arise, O God ! judge the earth ! for all the nations are Thy possession.

Help, O Lord ; for the goodly man ceaseth ; the faithful are failing among men.

They speak falsehood one to another ; with flattering lips, with a double heart do they speak.

May the Lord punish all the flattering lips, and the tongue which speaketh proud things !

Who say, With our tongues will we prevail ; our lips are our reliance ; who is lord over us ?

The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest of men are exalted.

For the oppression of the poor and the sighing of the wretched,

Now will I stand up, saith the Lord ; I will set in safety him whom they puff at.

The words of the Lord are pure ; like silver purified in a furnace on the earth, seven times refined.

Thou, O Lord ! wilt watch over them ; Thou wilt preserve them from this generation forever.

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## THE DISCIPLINE OF SORROW.

*XXXI. In the Day of Trouble.*

PSALMS 6 and 120.

- M.* O Lord ! rebuke me not in Thy anger ; chasten me not in Thy hot displeasure !
- C.* Have pity upon me, O Lord ! for I am weak ; heal me, O Lord ! for my heart trembles !
- My soul, also, is sore troubled ; and Thou, O Lord ! how long ?
- Return, O Lord ! and deliver me ; O save me according to Thy mercy !

I am weary with my groaning ; all the night I  
drench my pillow with my tears.

My eye is wasted with grief ; it hath become old  
because of all my troubles.

I cry unto the Lord with my voice ; with my voice  
to the Lord do I make my supplication.

I pour out my complaint before Him ; I declare be-  
fore Him my distress.

May the Lord hear thee in the day of trouble ; may  
the name of the God of Jacob defend thee !

May He send thee help from His sanctuary, and  
strengthen thee out of Zion !

May He have regard to all thy offerings, and ac-  
cept thy sacrifice !

May He grant thee thy heart's desire, and fulfill all  
thy purposes !

We will rejoice in Thy protection, and in the name  
of our God will we set up our banners, when  
the Lord hath fulfilled all thy petitions.

Now I know that the Lord helpeth His anointed ;  
and aideth him with the saving strength of  
His right hand.

Some glory in chariots, and some in horses, but we  
in the name of the Lord our God.

The Lord will save us ! may He hear us when we call !

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*XXXII. Prayer for Help.*

PSALM 31.

- M.* In Thee, O Lord ! do I trust ; let me never be put to  
shame ; according to Thy goodness deliver me !
- C.* Bow down Thy ear to me ; help me speedily ! be to  
me a strong rock, a high fortress, for my de-  
liverance.

For Thou art my rock and my high fortress ; be  
also my guide, and lead me, for Thy name's  
sake !

Draw me out of the net which my enemies laid  
for me, for Thou art my strength !

Into Thy hand I commit my life ; Thou wilt deliver  
me, O Lord, Thou God of Truth !

I will be glad and rejoice in Thy mercy, that Thou  
hast looked upon my trouble, and hast had  
regard to my distress.

Have mercy upon me, O Lord ! for I am in trouble !  
my face is consumed with grief ; yea, my  
spirit and my body.

For my life is wasted with sorrow, and my years  
with sighing ;

My strength faileth by reason of my affliction, and  
my bones are consumed on account of all my  
troubles.

But I trust in Thee, O Eternal ! I say, Thou art  
my God ! My destiny is in Thy hand.

Let Thy face shine upon Thy servant, and save me  
through Thy mercy !

Let me not be put to shame, O Lord ! for I have  
called upon Thee ;

Let lying lips be put to silence, which speak proud  
things with haughtiness and contempt !

O how great is Thy goodness, which Thou treas-  
urest up for them that fear Thee ;

Which Thou showest to them that trust in Thee,  
before the sons of men !

Thou hidest them in the secret place of Thy pres-  
ence from the machinations of men ;

Thou shelterest them in Thy pavilion from the  
violence of tongues.