

8. "Who is this King of Glory? The Lord who is strong and mighty: the Lord mighty in battle." He introduces him to the Princes of the heavenly Jerusalem as King, "Who is this King of Glory?" not that the angels, on the day of his ascension, were ignorant of Christ's being the King of Glory, but to express their admiration at the novelty of human flesh ascending to the highest heavens, not as a guest or a stranger, but as the Lord of a glorious and everlasting community. The Prophet answers, that Christ is the King of Glory, the Lord most valiant and powerful, who showed his power in battle against the prince of darkness, whom he conquered, despoiled, and left in chains.

9. "Lift up your gates, O ye princes, and be ye lifted up, O eternal gates: and the King of Glory shall enter in.

10. "Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts he is the King of Glory." The Prophet imagines some hesitation on the part of the angels in opening the gates, and he, therefore, second time thunders. "Lift up your gates, O ye princes, and be ye lifted up, O eternal gates," thereby giving us to understand the great novelty of the matter, to find a terrestrial rising above celestial bodies — human flesh soaring above the angelic spirits themselves, to the amazement, wonder, and admiration of all nature. The angels ask again, "Who is this King of Glory?" "The Lord of Hosts he is the King of Glory," is the reply. At the sound of that most familiar name, they at once open, and with joy receive the King of Glory. "Lord of hosts" is the peculiar title of the Creator, and never applied to any one in the Scriptures, but to God exclusively. The Hebrew word has been sometimes translated God of armies, as God really is, presiding over his armies of angels, that are innumerable and most powerful; and besides, having all created beings serving under him, as we read in Psalm 148, "fire, hail, snow, ice, stormy winds which fulfill his word." Pharaoh had a fair experience of his being the God of armies, when not only the angels were brought to war upon him, but even the minutest animals, such as frogs, flies, and gnats, and along with them things inanimate, such as hail, fire, darkness, pestilence, and the like. Some have translated "Lord of Hosts," "Lord of virtues;" but those who do, take "virtues" in the same sense as "Hosts," and not in the sense of what is generally understood by virtues, namely, good moral actions or qualities.

### END OF PSALM 23

## You are Psalms

Some people think you never get discouraged, but the fact is, when you do, you know where to run. Your prayers are open and honest because you realize that God already knows your heart, He's just waiting to hear you spill it. And when you do, what starts out as heavy ends up becoming a song of praise. You may struggle... and often you do... but each time, you grow in your understanding of God's faithfulness. You're just a song waiting to happen.

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## PSALMS (SONGS OF PRAISE)

TRUST  
IN THE  
LORD *and do good;*  
*dwell in the land and*  
*enjoy safe pasture.*  
PSALM 36: 3

### PSALM NUMBER: 23

*Who are they that shall ascend to heaven;  
Christ's triumphant ascension thither.*

1. The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof: the world, and all they that dwell therein.
2. For he hath founded it upon the seas; and hath prepared it upon the rivers.
3. Who shall ascend into the mountain of the Lord: or who shall stand in his holy place?
4. The innocent in hands, and clean of heart, who hath not taken his soul in vain, nor sworn deceitfully to his neighbor.
5. He shall receive a blessing from the Lord, and mercy from God his Savior.
6. This is the generation of them that seek him, of them that seek the face of the God of Jacob.
7. Lift up your gates, O ye princes, and be ye lifted up, O eternal gates; and the King of Glory shall enter in.
8. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord who is strong and mighty: the Lord mighty in battle.
9. Lift up your gates O ye princes, and be ye lifted up, O eternal gates: and the King of Glory shall enter in.
10. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, he is the King of Glory.

*The Psalms are songs of praise and cover a period of about 1000 years, from the time of Moses (ca. 1400 B.C.) to the Israelites' return from exile (ca. 450 B.C.). They deal with selected events of that period and provide us with the thoughts and feelings of those who went through the experiences recorded. After being made a Cardinal by Pope Clement VIII, Saint Robert Bellarmine, prepared for posterity his very own commentary on each of the Psalms. Enclosed are his interpretations on each of the Psalms.*

## **PSALM NUMBER: 23**

### **EXPLANATION OF THE PSALM**

1. "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof: the world, and all they that dwell therein." David proposes proving that of the immense family of the human race, Christ alone, and a few, very few others, as compared with the crowd, will enter God's most holy and happy house; and for fear people may think they were not God's creatures, but belonged to some other creator, as the Marcionists and Manicheans afterwards thought, he premises those two verses, in which he lays down that God is the creator and Lord of the entire world, and of everything in it. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof;" that is, everything that is on or in it, and fills it. The second part of the verse explains the first, in which he states that it is principally to man he alludes, for to man alone the words, "that dwell therein," can be applied.
2. "For he hath founded it upon the seas; and hath prepared it upon the rivers." He proves God to be Lord of the earth, and of all that dwell thereon, because it was he created the earth, and made it out-top the waters so as to be habitable; for had he not made it higher than the sea and the rivers, they would have rushed in upon and overwhelmed it. God, then, having made the earth habitable, it follows that he is the Lord of all, both because man was made from the earth, and to the earth will return; and because man holds the earth here not as its Lord and master, but as a husbandman placed there by God to till and cultivate it.
3. "Who shall ascend into the mountain of the Lord: or who shall stand in his holy place?" Whereas all men are servants and husbandmen of God, and all equally till the land which is God's. "Who shall ascend into the mountains of the Lord:" Will there be any one, and who will he be, worthy of ascending to the place where God is said peculiarly to dwell?
4. "The innocent in hands, and clean of heart, who hath not taken his soul in vain, nor sworn deceitfully to his neighbor." There will; they will ascend into the mountain of the Lord who have the four conditions here specified: first, they must be "Innocent in hands;" must have committed no sin. Second, must be "Clean of heart," free from sinful thoughts or desires. Third, "Who hath not taken his soul in vain;" who not only has neither done nor thought any evil, but has done and thought everything that God could require of him, in order to obtain the end for which he was created. Fourth, "Nor sworn deceitfully to his neighbor;" easily understood. And thus the man who seeks to be worthy of "ascending into the mountain of the Lord," must be perfect in every respect in his heart, in his language, in his actions, in the perfect discharge of all the duties that appertain to his

station in life. Such conditions are to be found in Christ alone. He is the only one of whom it can be said, "Who did not sin, neither was guile found in his mouth;" and as David says, in Psalm 13, "There is none that doth good, no not one;" and Isaias, "We have all strayed like sheep;" and St. Paul, Rom. 3, "All have sinned and need the glory of God;" and, therefore, the Lord himself justly says, John 3, "And no man hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended from heaven, the son of Man, who is in heaven." All others are terrestrials, sprung from the earth. He alone is celestial, come from heaven; holy, innocent, unpolluted, set aside from sinners, and by his Ascension, higher than the heavens. And it was not Christ alone that was to ascend to the mountain of the Lord, but his body too, the Church, which he "Cleansed with his blood, that he might present it to himself, a glorious church; not having spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish," Eph. 5; and, therefore, in the next verse, he says:

5. "He shall receive a blessing from the Lord, and mercy from God his Savior." "He," that is, Christ, "shall receive a blessing from the Lord," favors in abundance, "and mercy from God his Savior," for his body, the Church, in whose regard he is the Savior, because life everlasting in the kingdom of heaven, though justice to Christ, is mercy to the faithful; for, though the just deserve eternal life, by reason of God's goodness, their own merits have the effect, through God's mercy only, and thus are truly called the gifts of God. Hence, in Psalm 102, we have, "Who crowneth thee with mercy and compassion;" and in Rom. 6, "For the wages of sin is death: but the grace of God, everlasting life."

6. "This is the generation of them that seek him, of them that seek the face of the God of Jacob." The Prophet now declares that the one he spoke of "The innocent in hands," the "clean of heart, who shall ascend into the mountain of the Lord," and "shall receive a blessing," and "mercy from God:" He is Christ, the head, and not only the head, but the head with the body of the Church. "This is the generation of them that seek him;" that means, he that ascends to heaven, is the generator of those that are regenerated in Christ, whose principal study is to seek God, to thirst for a sight of his face, and to make for his holy mountain, with all their strength. And, in fact, a unique and perhaps characteristic sign of the elect of God, is to have a longing desire for their home, their country — heaven. The generation of the children of this world seek everything in preference to God, dread nothing more than death; and, if they got their choice, would prefer living always in this world, to "being dissolved and being with Christ."

7. "Lift up your gates, O ye princes, and be ye lifted up, O eternal gates: and the King of Glory shall enter in." The holy Prophet, having foreseen that one would be found worthy of "going up into the mountain of the Lord," namely, Christ, declares that he will go up at once, and that the eternal gates of heaven will be opened to him. And in a poetic strain he at once addresses now the "Princes" of heaven, the angels; then the "gates" themselves; orders the angels to open, and the gates to be opened, nay, even spontaneously to admit the approaching King of Glory. He makes use of the words, "Lift up," and "be ye lifted," to show these are not ordinary gates, hanged to a wall or a post, but to the roof or ceiling, to show they should be raised up for admission.