

grave." If this be not a corruption of the sacred text, we have none. I have demonstrated most clearly in the "controversies," that the words in this passage and in Acts 2, signify, both in the Hebrew and in the Greek, not "corpse" and "grave," but "soul" and "hell," and can signify nothing else.

END OF PSALM 15

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: 15

Christ's future victory and triumph over the world, and death.

1. Preserve me, O Lord, for I have put my trust in thee.
2. I have said to the Lord, thou art my God, for thou hast no need of my goods.
3. To the Saints, who are in his land, he hath made wonderful all my desires in them.
4. Their infirmities were multiplied: afterwards they made haste. I will not gather together their meetings for blood offerings: nor will I be mindful of their names by my lips.
5. The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup: it is thou that wilt restore my inheritance to me.
6. The lines are fallen unto me in goodly places: for my inheritance is goodly to me.
7. I will bless the Lord, who hath given me understanding: moreover my reins also have corrected me even till night.
8. I set the Lord always in my sight: for he is at my right hand, that I be not moved.
9. Therefore my heart hath been glad, and my tongue hath rejoiced: moreover my flesh also shall rest in hope.
10. Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; nor wilt thou give thy holy one to see corruption.
11. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life, thou shalt fill me with joy with thy countenance: at thy right hand are delights even to the end.

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: 15

EXPLANATION OF THE PSALM

1. "Preserve me, O Lord, for I have put my trust in thee." Which may be supposed to be said by Christ or by any sincere Christian; that is, guard, protect me from the impending trouble, for in thee alone, and in no created being, have I put my trust, which is evident from what follows: for,
2. "I have said to the Lord, thou art my God, for thou hast no need for my goods." I have confessed to the Lord, and said from my heart: "Thou art my God," varying the expression from the Lord, "for thou has no need of my goods," but I rather have need of thine; you, in nowise, depend on me, I entirely depend on you; you are, therefore, my only true and supreme Lord, and, therefore, in thee alone I hope and confide. These expressions proceed from the Prophet in the person of Christ; at the time he was not only man, but liable to suffering and death.
3. "To the Saints, who are in his land, he hath made wonderful all my desires in them." "As God has no need of my goods," I will seek to confer them on his elect, and of which friendly intentions God is witness, for "He has made wonderful all my desires in them;" that is, all my benevolence and good will towards his saints and his elect. God is said to have made the benevolence of Christ to the elect wonderful, by declaring it both through the prophets, through the various figures of the Old Testament, as well as by the miracles of Christ and his apostles; and wonderful was Christ's love for his elect, when he laid down his life for them.

10. "Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; nor wilt thou give thy holy one to see corruption." This is explained by the apostles Peter and Paul, Acts 2 and 13; and though, strictly speaking; it applies to Christ alone, whose soul was not left in hell, meaning the limbo of the holy fathers; nor did his body in the sepulcher undergo any putrefaction, yet we can all apply it to ourselves, inasmuch as we are members of Christ, and through him, as the apostle has it, "God has raised us up together," Eph. 2; and because our souls will not be left in hell, meaning purgatory, nor will our flesh see corruption.

11. "Thou hast made known to me the ways of life, thou shalt fill me with joy with thy countenance: at thy right hand are delights even to the end." The complete promise of the inheritance is here explained. "Thou hast made known to me the ways of life;" you have "taught me the way" of returning to life from death. A most beautiful metaphor, by which the mode of resurrection is called a way unknown up to that time, because nobody to that time, with the exception of Christ, had truly risen. And he adds, you have not only taught me the way of rising from the dead, but "Thou wilt fill me with joy with thy countenance;" making me glorious, immortal, and happy, by showing me your countenance; because, from the beatific vision, in which consists essential happiness, glory even redounds on the body, which glory was the only one that Christ had not always; for his soul had such glory from the time of his conception, "at thy right hand are delights even to the end." Not content with conferring glory on me, you will place me on your right hand in heaven, where the glory will be everlasting. All which apply to the elect too, in a certain sense; to whom God shows the road to life when he teaches them that the observance of his law is joy," when he shows himself to them, "face to face;" when, with his right hand he offers them delights even unto the end; "when he places them on his right hand, and with his right hand fills them, as if from an inexhaustible fountain, with delights interminable." We may here note the incredible rashness of Theodore Bera, "You will not leave my soul in hell;" "You will not leave my body in the

8. "I set the Lord always in my sight: for he is at my right hand, that I be not moved." From the intelligent and affectionate manner in which he praised God, in the preceding verse, it is quite clear God must have been always before his eyes, for the soul is more where it loves, than where it animates. "For he is at my right hand, that I be not moved;" nor was I deceived in having God always before my eyes; that is, the eyes of my heart; for he is really always on my right hand, as if he were protecting my side, and preceding me, like a brave auxiliary; that I may not be disturbed from my path, but persist and persevere to the very end.

9. "Therefore my heart hath been glad, and my tongue hath rejoiced: moreover my flesh also shall rest in hope." He now tells what that "great inheritance" is that God is "to restore" to him and to others, who have chosen God. "Therefore," because the "Lord is on my right hand," a most faithful helper and protector, "my heart hath been glad," with that true and solid joy of which our Lord speaks in the gospel, when he says, "Your heart shall rejoice, and nobody shall take your joy from you." "And my tongue hath rejoiced," because eternal joy is wont to show itself externally; moreover my flesh also shall rest in hope;" that is, my soul shall rejoice, and my flesh shall sleep in secure and placid death, being in certain expectation of a very speedy resurrection.

4. "Their infirmities were multiplied: afterwards they made haste. I will not gather together their meetings for blood offerings: nor will I be mindful of their names by my lips." The effect of the benevolence of Christ towards his elect; they who, by reason of the grievous wounds of sin, so as to be unable to walk, when healed by the grace of God now began to run in the way of the commandments. "Their infirmities are multiplied;" that is, their spiritual infirmities and diseases; hence the apostle, Rom. 5, "When we were as yet infirm, Christ suffered for us;" and, in a few verses after, in explanation of the passage, he says: "When we were sinners." The Hebrew for "infirmity" is made by many translators to stand for "idols;" such is not its signification; it properly means infirmity accompanied with pain, and may be figuratively applied to idols; because idols are infirm and powerless, or because they make sinners of men, and thus infirm. "Afterwards they made haste," which means, the very weakest among them, made so by the multiplicity of their sins, but afterwards, restored by grace, became so strong "as to exult in running their way." Such was the case in the infancy of the Church, when the converts so hastened to the scaffold. "I will not gather together their meetings for blood offerings;" I do not approve of their "meetings for blood offerings;" and, therefore, I will not call them together, "nor will I be mindful of their names by my lips;" I will not only refuse to call such meetings together, but I will not even speak or make mention of such meetings. The connection between this latter part and the beginning of the verse now appears, for he assigns a reason why the elect, after having fallen into a number of sins, and especially idolatry, made such haste "in running in the way of the Lord;" because, in consequence of their having the most thorough abhorrence of idols and of their worship, so much so, as not to allow their name even to be mentioned; he therefore cleansed the elect in Christ from the sin of idolatry, and thus made them saints, "To run in the way of his commandments."

5. "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup: it is thou that wilt restore my inheritance to me." Having declared his detestation of idols and of sin, he adds his reason for so doing: because he places all his happiness in God alone. An expression most becoming the Redeemer who, entirely "separated from sinners," and in thorough union with God the Father, places all his happiness in him. A thing we, too, as far as we are able, are bound to. "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance;" that is, the portion which came to me by inheritance, my whole, my all, my everything; "and of my cup;" a repetition of the idea, for the word "cup," from being divided among the guests, is often made to signify the inheritance which is divided among the children. If you will, "inheritance" may signify substantial wealth, or valuables, and "cup," delicacies; when the meaning would be that all my substantial and refined pleasures are fixed in God alone; "it is thou that wilt restore my inheritance to me." These words are supposed to have been used by Christ, while yet a mortal, before he had got full possession of his inheritance. When we use them, we hold all happiness in God in desire, but not yet in actual possession. That possession is in God's keeping, and he will hand it over to us on the last day, as he did to Christ on the day of his Resurrection. St. Paul alludes to this when he says, "For I know whom I have believed; and I am certain that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him, against that day."

6. "The lines are fallen unto me in goodly places: for my inheritance is goodly to me." By a simile drawn from an inheritance in this world, he declares the superiority of that in eternity, for those who seek God and his glory. When an inheritance was divided among a family, the fields were measured with lines, and divided, and lots were cast for the several divisions; and the lines were said to fall in goodly

places, when the best part of the land was had by lot. The meaning, then, is: I have obtained the best part of the inheritance by a most fortunate cast or lot, "for my inheritance is goodly to me;" a mere repetition of the same. He alludes to the division by lot; that he may remind us that the principle of the inheritance comes from predestination, and predestination in our regard is a sort of lot; whence St. Paul, Eph. 1, says, "In whom we are also called by lot;" and Col. 1, "To be partakers of the lot of the saints."

7. "I will bless the Lord, who hath given me understanding: moreover my reins also have corrected me even till night." Thanks to God for having inspired him with the thought, and inflamed him with the desire of choosing so valuable an inheritance. "I will bless the Lord." I will praise him, the author of such a blessing, "who hath given me understanding," who makes me know, and prudently choose the inheritance; "moreover my reins also have corrected me even till night." Reins or loins, in the Scriptures signify affections, or desires; whence the expression, "Searching the heart and reins;" and, "prove my heart and my reins;" the heart signifying the thoughts; the reins, the affections; "night" means the time of tribulation; and day, that of prosperity: the expression "correct me," would be more properly translated by the word "instructed." Thus the sense will be: not only in prosperity, but in adversity, my whole affections, inflamed to love God, instructed me in a most urgent manner to bear my sufferings patiently, hoping for the best always from Almighty God.