

17. "They shall remember thy name throughout all generations. Therefore shall people praise thee for ever; yea, for ever and ever." He concludes the Psalm by saying that those spiritual nuptials he has so lauded, and the fruit of the nuptials, would tend to the glory of God. For, says he, the sons who will supply the place of their fathers will become fathers in turn, and "will remember thy name;" will celebrate your grace and power, "throughout all generations." St. John Chrysostom remarks that this prophecy applies to David's own Psalms, that we now see celebrated and chanted all over the world. "Therefore shall people praise thee forever; yea, for ever and ever." From the fact of the apostles and their successors, the Bishops, being always sure to "remember his name," to chant and proclaim his praise, the Prophet justly infers that the people entrusted to their care will do so too, and that "for ever, yea, for ever and ever;" that is, both here and hereafter.

**END OF PSALM 44**

## 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: 44**

**The excellence of Christ's kingdom and the endowments of His Church.**

1. My heart hath uttered a good word: I speak my works to the king: my tongue is the pen of a scrivener that writeth swiftly.
2. Thou art beautiful above the sons of men: grace is poured abroad in thy lips; therefore hath God blessed thee forever.
3. Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O thou most mighty.
4. With thy comeliness and thy beauty set out, proceed prosperously, and reign. Because of truth and meekness and justice: and thy right hand shall conduct thee wonderfully.
5. Thy arrows are sharp: under thee shall people fall, into the hearts of the king's enemies.
6. Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: the scepter of thy kingdom is a scepter of uprightness.
7. Thou hast loved justice, and hated iniquity: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.
8. Myrrh and stacte and cassia perfume thy garments, from the ivory houses: out of which:

**Continued >**

(Continued from preceding page)

9. The daughters of king's have delighted thee in thy glory. The queen stood on thy right hand, in gilded clothing: surrounded with variety.
10. Harken, O daughter, and see, and incline thy ear and forget thy people and thy father's house.
11. And the king shall greatly desire thy beauty: for he is the Lord thy God, and him they shall adore.
12. And the daughters of Tyre with gifts, yea, all the rich among the people, shall entreat thy countenance.
13. All the glory of the king's daughter is within in golden borders,
14. Clothed round about with varieties. After her shall virgins be brought to the king: her neighbors shall be brought to thee.
15. They shall be brought with gladness and rejoicing: they shall be brought into the temple of the king.
16. Instead of thy fathers, sons are born to thee: thou shalt make them princes over all of the earth.
17. They shall remember thy name throughout all generations. Therefore shall people praise thee forever; yea, forever and ever.

*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: 44**

#### **EXPLANATION OF THE PSALM**

1. "My heart hath uttered a good word: I speak my works to the king: my tongue is the pen of a scrivener that writeth swiftly." This verse forms a preface to the rest of the Psalm. In it the Prophet tells us that the whole proceeded from the mere inspiration of the Holy Ghost, without any corporation on his part. For, though the whole of the holy Scripture is the word of God, and dictated by the Holy Spirit, there is, however, a great difference between the prophecies therein and the historical part, or the epistles. In the prophecies, the holy writers exercised neither their reflection, nor their memory, nor their reasoning powers; but they, simply, either wrote or spoke what God dictated to them, as Baruch testifies of Jeremias, when he said, "with his mouth he pronounced all these words, as if he were reading to me." But when sacred writers undertook a history, or an epistle, God inspired them with the desire to write, and so directed them, that they should write correctly, and

celestial brides who have consecrated their virginity to God." Her neighbors shall be brought to thee; that is, the only virgins that shall be introduced will be those that were neighbors to thee, by reason of acknowledging thy true Church.

15. "They shall be brought with gladness and rejoicing: they shall be brought into the temple of the king." He informs us of the joy consequent on such a number of nuptial feasts. The virgins will be "brought with gladness and rejoicing," introduced to the nuptial feast, amidst the great joy and applause of the whole heavenly Jerusalem. He, perhaps, here alludes to the Canticle which virgins alone were entitled to sing there. "And they sung as it were a new canticle before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the ancients; and no man could say the canticle, but those hundred forty-four thousand who were purchased from the earth. These are they who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These follow the Lamb, whithersoever he goeth." Happy souls that follow the Lamb in the virginal path, and in joy and gladness chant the new canticle, unknown to the fathers of old, and which can be chanted by none other than themselves, and in such jubilation will be introduced to the celestial tabernacle, which may be called a palace from its magnificence, and a temple from its holiness.

16. "Instead of thy fathers, sons are born to thee: thou shalt make them princes over all the earth." Having hitherto dilated on the dignity and the ornamentation of the bridegroom and the bride, he now comes to the fruit of the marriage; saying, that a more prosperous issue will come from it, that will govern the entire world. It is doubtful, though, whether he here addresses the bridegroom or the bride, but most probably the latter; because, he had advised her to forget her people and father's house; and now, by way of consoling her for having left them, he promises her an abundance of children, and predicts that the fruit of the union between the Church and her heavenly spouse will be most prosperous and happy. "Instead of thy fathers sons are born to thee." Instead of your fathers, who are now dead, that is, instead of the patriarchs and prophets, and fathers, you have left behind, and you have been ordered to forget; "sons are born to thee;" that is, apostles and disciples of Christ, able to teach, and make laws for the entire world; therefore, "thou shalt make them princes over all the earth." And, in fact, the apostles, the first children of the Church, made laws for the whole world, a thing never accomplished by any one temporal monarch. For, as St. John Chrysostom remarks, the Romans could not impose laws on the Persians, nor the Persians on the Romans; while the apostles imposed laws upon both, and upon all other nations. And, as in the first age of the Church, the patriarch fathers had the apostles as sons; thus, in the following age the apostles as fathers had the Bishops as sons; who, though they may not be severally so, are, as a body, princes over the whole world; and, thus, by means of the succession of Bishops, the Church always has sons born to her for the fathers, for her to place in their position and dignities.

your Lord, will be brought under subjection to him, and will come to you, “and entreat your countenance,” will by your intercession, moving you not only by words and entreaties, but by gifts and presents: “all the rich among the people,” because, if the rich take up anything, consent or agree to it, the whole body generally follow them. “The daughters of Tyre,” the women of the city, meaning the whole city, but the women are specially named as generally having more immediate access to the queen, and more so than men have to the king; and as the bride here does not represent a single individual, but the Church, which is composed of men and women, so by the daughters of Tyre we understand, all the Gentiles, be they men or women. Tyre was a great city of the Gentiles, bounding the land of promise, and renowned for its greatness and riches, and is therefore made here to represent all the Gentiles. “With gifts,” the offerings which the converted Gentiles offered to build or to ornament churches, or to feed the poor, or for other pious purposes. “Shall entreat thy countenance;” some will have it, that thy countenance means the countenance of Christ, but the more simple explanation is, to refer to the Church. The expression is a Hebrew one, which signifies, to intercede for, or to deprecate one’s anger: thus Saul says, in 1 Kings 13, “and I have not appeased the face of the Lord;” and in Psalm 94, “let us preoccupy his face and thanksgiving;” and in Psalm 118, “I entreated thy face with all my heart.” Entreating the face is an expression taken from the fact of looking intently on the face of the person we seek to move, and judging from its expression, whether we are likely to succeed or to be refused.

13. “All the glory of the king’s daughter is within in golden borders.”

14. “Clothed round about with varieties. After her shall virgins be brought to the king: her neighbors shall be brought to thee.” Having spoken at such length of the beauty of the bride, for fear anyone may suppose those beauties were beauties of the person, he now states that all those beauties were interior, regarding the mind alone. “All her glory,” whether as regards her person or her costly dress, are all spiritual, internal, and to be looked for in the heart alone. Hence St. Peter admonishes the women of his time to take the bride here described, as a model in the decoration of their interior. “Whose adorning let it not be the outward plaiting of the hair, or the wearing of gold, or the putting on of apparel, but the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptibility of a quiet and meek spirit, which is rich in the sight of God.” We are not, however, hence justified in censuring the external decorations of the Church, and the altars, on the occasion of administering the sacraments, and on great festivals, for question is here, not of material edifices, but of men, who are the people of God, and members of Christ, whose principal ornament and decorations should consist in their virtues; from which virtues, however, good works ought to spring, “that those who see them, may glorify our Father who is in heaven,” as our Savior says. The “golden borders” most appositely represent charity, which is compared to gold, as being the most precious and valuable of all the virtues. We have already explained the variegated vestment, for which vestment the apostle seems to speak, when he says, “put ye on the bowels of mercy, benignity, humility, modesty, patience. After her shall virgins be brought to the king.” Though there is only one spouse of Christ, one only beloved by him, the universal Church, there are a certain portion specially beloved by him, enjoy certain perogatives; and they are those who have dedicated their virginity to God, in the hope of being better able to please them; of whom the apostle says, “he that is without a wife, is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God. But he that is with a wife, is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife: and he is divided. And the unmarried woman and the virgin thinketh on the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit. But she that is married thinketh on the things of the world, how she may please her husband.” Of such the Prophet now speaks, and in these verses extols that virginity so precious in the sight of Christ, the virgin “who feedeth among the lilies.” After her shall virgins be brought to the king. “Next to his principal bride, the Church, shall rank all those

without any errors, but yet in such manner as to oblige them, at the same time, to exercise their own memory and genius, in recording such transactions, and in digesting the order and the manner of so writing, as the author of the Maccabees testifies in chapter 2 of the Second Book, worth reading, but too long to quote here. David, then, when he chanted God’s praises in the Psalms, or deplored his own calamities, or that of his people, drew upon his memory and his talents, and did not compose without some trouble; but when he comes to prophecy, as he does in this Psalm, he claims no part whatever therein beyond the mere service of his pen or of his tongue. Such is the essence of this preface, which was more clearly put by him in 2 Kings 23, where he says, “the Spirit of the Lord hath spoken by one, and his word by my tongue.” He, therefore, says, “my heart hath uttered a good word;” that is, my mind, from the fullness and abundance of the divine light and heavenly revelations, has given to men this Psalm, containing “a good word;” that is, a most grateful and saving word to all mankind. To understand the passage fully, we must go into details. First, observe the word the Prophet uses, “hath uttered,” which, if translated literally, would have been, “belched up,” to show that this Psalm was not composed by him, nor left to his discretion; but, like wind that is involuntarily cast off the stomach, that he was obliged to give it out whether he would or not. Secondly, the Prophet wished to express that he was not giving out all that God had revealed to him, but only a part; for, though belching is a sign of repletion, it is small in itself; for the prophets see many things, “of which it is not lawful for man to speak;” and, therefore, Isaias said, “my secret to myself;” and those who have had revelations from God, confess that they could not find words to express what they saw; and hence, perhaps, the Prophet says, “my heart hath uttered a good word;” not good words, in the plural number. Thirdly, the Psalm is called a “good word,” because it does not predict any misfortune, such as the sacking of the city, or the captivity of the people, as the other prophecies do; but, on the contrary, all that is favorable and pleasant, and likely to bring great joy and gladness. Fourthly, in describing the emanation of this “good word” from the heart of David, he has regard to the production of the word eternal, and seeks to take us by the hand to lead us to understand the generation of the divine word, produced, not as sons are ordinarily produced, by generation, nor by election, nor chosen from a number of sons; but born of his father, the word of his mind, his only word, and, therefore, supremely excellent and good; so that the expression, “good word,” may be peculiarly applied to him. “I speak my works to the King.” Some will have these words to mean: I confess my sins to God; or, I speak those verses of the king; or, I dedicate my works to the king; or, I address the king; which explanations I won’t condemn; but the one I offer will agree better, I think that with what went before and what follows; for, in my opinion, this second sentence of the verse is only an explanation of the first part, and assigns a reason for his having said, “my heart hath uttered a good word;” just as if he said: “I simply attribute all my acts to my King, who was God, and claim nothing for myself; therefore, I have not said, ‘I have written this Psalm;’ but, ‘my heart hath uttered a good word;’ because the thing did not proceed from me, but from the fullness of my illumination;” which he explains more clearly in the next sentence, where he says, “my tongue is the pen of a scrivener that writeth

swiftly;" that means, my tongue has certainly produced this Psalm, but not as my tongue, nor as a member of my body that is moved at my pleasure; but as the pen of the Holy Ghost, as if of a "scrivener that writeth swiftly." He says, (observe) that his tongue is the pen of a scrivener that writeth swiftly, and not the tongue of a spirit that speaketh swiftly; because he means to show that his tongue was like a pen, a mere instrument in announcing the prophecy, and not part of a whole, like the members of the body; "that writeth swiftly," to give us to understand that the Holy Ghost needs no time to consider what, how, and when matters are to be written; for they only write slowly who required to consider what they are to write, and how they will give expression to their ideas.

2. "Thou art beautiful above the sons of men: Grace is poured abroad in thy lips; therefore hath God blessed thee forever." He now commences the praises of Christ, praising him, first, for his beauty; secondly, for his eloquence; as well as for his strength and vigor; thirdly, for the qualities of his mind; lastly, for his royal dignity and power, to which he adds his external beauties, such as the grandeur of his palaces and robes. He begins with beauty, for he is describing a spouse; and, as regards a spouse, eloquence takes precedence of beauty, strength of eloquence, virtue; of strength, and divinity of virtues; and, therefore, he says, "thou art beautiful above the sons of men." The sentence, though, seems abrupt and obscure, when he does not say who is that beautiful person; but, as we remarked before, his reason for beginning with, "my heart hath uttered a good word," to let us see that he only uttered some of what he saw, and not the entire; and thus the meaning is: no wonder, Christ, thou shouldst be called beloved, for "thou art beautiful above the sons of men." Observe, he says, "above the sons of men;" not above the Angels, because God the Son did not become an angel, but man; as if he said: you, my beloved, art man, but "beautiful above the sons of men;" and so he was; for, as regards his divinity, his beauty was boundless; as regards the qualities of his soul, he was more beautiful than any created spirit; and as regards the beauty of his glorified body, "it is more beautiful than the sun;" and "the sun and moon admire his beauty." Next comes, "Grace is poured abroad in thy lips," an encomium derived from the graces of his language, thereby adding to that derived from his beauty; and he says, "it is poured abroad in thy lips," to show that the beauty of Christ's language was natural and permanent, and not acquired by study or practice; for we read in the Gospel, Luke 4, "and they wondered at the words of grace that proceeded from his mouth;" and, in John 7, "never did man speak like this man." Saints Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, and especially Saint Matthew, felt the force of his words, the secret power in them that cause them, by a simple call, to abandon their all, and follow him. What is more wonderful! The sea, the winds, fevers and diseases, nay, even the very dead, felt the power of his voice; which, after all, must appear no great wonder, when we consider that it was the divine and substantial word that spoke in his sweetest and most effective accents, in the flesh he had assumed; "therefore hath God blessed thee forever." No wonder you should "be beautiful," and that "grace should be on thy lips," because "God hath blessed thee forever."

particularly the Blessed Virgin, who, together with being his mother according to the flesh, is his spouse according to the spirit, and holds the first place among the members of the Church. It is, then, most appropriately used in the festivals of the Blessed Virgin, and of other virgins, to whom, with great propriety, the Church says, "come, spouse of Christ." David, then, addressing Christ, says, "the queen stood on thy right hand." Thy spouse, who, from the fact of her being so, is a queen, stood by thee, "on thy right hand," quite close to thee, in the place of honor, on thy right hand, "in gilded clothing," in precious garments, such as become a queen. Take up now the several words. The word "stood," in the perfect, instead of the future tense, is used here, a practice much in use with the prophets, who see the future as if it had actually passed; and, as St. Chrysostom remarks, she stood, instead of being seated, as queens usually are, to imply her inferiority to God, for it is only an equal, such as the Son, that can sit with him; and, therefore, the Church, as well as all the heavenly powers, are always said to stand before God. The word, in Hebrew, implies standing firmly; as if to convey that the bride was so sure, safe, and firm in her position that there could be no possible danger of her being rejected or repudiated.

10. "Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thy ear: and forget thy people and thy father's house." He now addresses the Church herself; in terms of the most pious and friendly admonition. He calls her "daughter," either because he speaks in the person of God the Father, or as one of the fathers of the Church. It applied to the Blessed Virgin, it requires no straining of expression, she being truly the daughter of David. "Hearken, O daughter," hear the voice of your spouse, "and see," attentively consider what you hear, "and incline thy ear;" humbly obey his commands, "and forget thy people and thy father's house," that you may the more freely serve your spouse, and forget the world and the things that belong to it, for the church has been chosen from the world, and has come out from it; and though it is still in the world, it ought no more belong to it then does its spouse. By the world, is very properly understood the people who love the things of the world, which same world is the mansion of our old father Adam, who was driven into it from Paradise. The word "forget" has much point in it, for it implies that we must cease to love the world so entirely and so completely, as if we had totally forgotten that we were ever in it, or that it had any existence.

11. "And the king shall greatly desire thy beauty: for he is the Lord thy God, and him they shall adore." He assigns a reason why the bride should leave her people and her father's house, and be entirely devoted to the love of her heavenly spouse, and to his service, for thus "the king shall greatly desire thy beauty," and wish to have thee above him. And since the principal beauty of the bride is interior, as will be explained in a few verses after this one, consisting in virtue, especially in obedience to the commandments, or in love of which all the commandments turn; he therefore adds, "for he is the Lord thy God;" that is to say, the principal reason for his so loving your beauty, which is based, mainly on your obedience, is, because "he is the Lord thy God." Nothing is more imperatively required by the Lord from his servants, or by God from his creatures, than obedience. And for fear there should be any mistake about his being the absolute Lord and true God, he adds, "and him they shall adore," that is to say, your betrothed is one with whom you cannot claim equality, he is only so by grace, remaining still your Lord, and the Lord of all creatures, who are bound to adore him.

12. "And the daughters of Tyre with gifts, yea all the rich among the people, shall entreat thy countenance." Having stated that the bridegroom would be adored, he now adds, that the bride too would get her share, would be honored as a queen, by presents and supplications. "And the daughters of Tyre with gifts, yea, all the rich among the people, shall entreat thy countenance;" the daughters of the Gentiles, heretofore enemies to

virtue, of resolute patience, of humble obedience, and ardent love, he, therefore, brings in myrrh, bitter, but odoriferous, to represent patience; aloes, also bitter, though aromatic, to represent humility and obedience: of which St. Paul says, "he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death;" and, finally, cassia, warm and odoriferous, to represent that most ardent love that caused him to pray even for his persecutors, while they were nailing him to the cross. All these aromas flowed "from the garments and the ivory houses" of Christ. The "garments" mean Christ's humanity, that covered his divinity, as it were, with a garment or a veil; and the "ivory houses" represent the same humanity, which, like the fair temple of ivory, afforded a residence to the divinity. It is not unusual in the Scriptures to call human nature by the name of garment and house; thus, in 2 Cor. 5, he unites them when he says, "for we know if our earthly house of this habitation be dissolved, that we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in heaven. For in this also we groan, desiring to be clothed over with our habitation, which is from heaven, yet so that we may be found clothed, not naked. For we also who are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: because we should not be unclothed, but clothed over; that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life." Here we have this mortal body of ours called a house and a tabernacle as also a garment, with which "we would not be unclothed, but clothed;" and the heavenly house, in turn, a garment and a habitation. So with the human nature of Christ, that diffused such sweet odors of the virtues, it may be called a garment, and a house of ivory at the same time; unless one may wish to refer the garment to his soul, and the house of ivory to his body, which Christ himself seems to have had in view when he said to the Jews, "destroy this temple, and in three days I will build it up again." The word "Ivory houses," being in the plural number, is an objection of no great value, for the Prophet calls it a noun of multitude; just as we call a large establishment the buildings, though there, in reality, is only one object before our mind. "Out of which the daughters of kings have delighted thee in thy glory;" that is, from which perfumes, exhaling from the vestments and ivory houses of thy humanity; "the daughters of kings;" whether it means the royal and exalted souls, or multitudes of people from various kingdoms; "have delighted thee," as they "ran after thee to the odor of thy ointments." For Christ is greatly delighted when he sees multitudes of the saints, attracted by his odors, running after them; and, in fact, anyone, once they get but the slightest sense of such odors as flow from the patience, humility, and love of Christ, cannot be prevented from running after them, and will endure any amount of torments sooner than suffer themselves to be separated from him, explaining, with the apostle, "who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" And in this respect do the daughters of kings, when they run after the odor of his ointments, especially delight our Lord, because they do it to honor him, with the pure intention of glorifying him. The martyrs glorified God wonderfully when, by their sufferings, they ran after their master, to which himself alluded when he predicted Peter's suffering, on which the Gospel remarks, "signifying by what death he should glorify God." "The queen stood on thy right hand in gilded clothing, surround with variety." The prophecies hitherto regarded the bridegroom; he now turns to the bride, by which bride, as all commentators allow: is meant the Church; for St. Paul to the Ephesians 5, lays down directly that the church is the bride of Christ. The principal meaning of the passage, then, is to take the bride as designating the Church. Any faithful, holy soul even, may be intended by it;

3. "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O thou most mighty." From the praise of his beauty and his eloquence, he now comes to extol his bravery; and, by a figure of speech, instead of telling us in what his bravery consists, he calls upon him to "gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O thou most mighty;" as much as to say: come, beloved of God, who art not only most beautiful and graceful, but also most valiant and brave; come, put on thy armor; come, and deliver your people; and he tells us in the following verse was sort of armor he means, saying:

4. "With thy comeliness and thy beauty set out, proceed prosperously, and reign. Because of truth and meekness and justice: and thy right hand shall conduct thee wonderfully." The words, "with thy comeliness and thy beauty," may be connected with the preceding verse, and the reading would be, "gird thy sword upon thy thigh, and thy comeliness and thy beauty;" or they can be connected with what follows; thus, "with thy comeliness and thy beauty set out, proceed prosperously, and reign;" but, in either reading, the meaning is the same; namely, that Christ has no other arms but "his beauty and his comeliness." To understand which we must remember, that true and perfect beauty, as St. Augustine says, is the beauty of the soul that never stales, and pleases the eye not only of men, but even of Angels, aye, even of God, who cannot be deceived. For, as ordinary beauty depends on a certain proportion of limb, and softness of complexion; thus the beauty of the soul is made up of justice, which is tantamount to the proportion of limb, and wisdom, which represents beauty of complexion; for his shines like light, or rather, as we read in Wisd. 7, "being compared with the light she is found before it." The soul, then, that is guided in its will by justice, and in its understanding by wisdom, is truly beautiful. For these two qualifications make it so, and through them most dear to God; and are, at the same time, the most powerful weapons that Christ used in conquering the devil. For Christ contended with the devil, not through his omnipotence, as he might have done, but through his wisdom and his justice; subduing his craft by the one, and his malice by the other. The devil, by his craft, prompted the first man to anger God by his disobedience; and thereby to deprive God of the honor due to him, and all mankind of eternal life; uniting malice with his craftiness, and prompted thereto, moreover, by envy, seeing the place from which he had fallen was destined for man; but the wisdom of Christ was more than a match for such craft, because, by the obedience he, as man, tendered to God, he gave much greater honor to him than he had lost by the disobedience of Adam; and by the same obedience secured a much greater share of glory for the human race than they would have enjoyed, had Adam not fallen. With that, Christ, by his love, (which is the essence of true and perfect justice,) conquered the envy and malice of the devil, for he loved even his enemies, prayed on the very cross for his persecutors, chose to suffer and to die, in order to reconcile his enemies to God, and to make them from being enemies, his friends, brethren, and coheirs; and all that is conveyed in the expression, "in thy comeliness and thy beauty;" that is to say, in the comeliness of thy wisdom, and the beauty of thy justice, guided and armed with the sword, and the bow set out, proceed prosperously and reign; which means, advance in battle against the devil, prosper in the fight, and after having conquered and subdued the prince of

this world, take possession of your kingdom, that you may forever after rule in the heart of man, and through faith and love. "Because of truth and meekness and justice, and thy right hand shall conduct thee wonderfully." He tells us why Christ should reign, and that is because he has the qualities that belong to a king; truth, meekness, and justice, from which we learn, that a king should be truthful and faithful to what he says, and just in what he does; which attributes are applied to God himself, in Psalm 144, "the Lord is faithful in all his words, and holy in all his works;" but, as there is a certain roughness of severity consequent on all justice, and is like a blemish on it, with Christ's justice, which is more perfect, he couples meekness. For Christ is meekly just, judging, to be sure, with the strictest justice, but without harshness, or moroseness, conciliating instead of repelling those whom he judges. "And thy right hand shall conduct thee wonderfully." By governing in such temper you will see your kingdom increase to a wonderful extent, and you will need no external aids, for your own "right-hand," your own strength and bravery will suffice "to thee wonderfully," and so extend your kingdom until you shall have "put all your enemies under your footstool."

5. "Thy arrows are sharp: under thee shall people fall, into the hearts of the king's enemies." He tells us how the right hand of Christ will conduct him so wonderfully in extending his kingdom, because "the arrows" that you will let fly at them "are sharp," and will, therefore, penetrate "into the hearts of the king's enemies;" your enemies will fall before you, and will be subdued by you. The arrows here signify the word of God, or the preaching of his word, for such are the instruments Christ generally uses in extending his kingdom; hence, he says in Psalm 2, "but I am appointed king by him over Sion his holy mountain, preaching his commandment." The word of God is called a sword, an arrow, a mallet, and various other instruments, for it has some similarity to them all. It is called a sharp arrow, for it wonderfully sinks into the heart of man, much deeper than the words of the most eloquent orator, as the apostle, Heb. 4, says, "for the word of God is living and effectual; and more penetrating than any two edged sword." The words, "under thee shall people fall," should be read as if in a parenthesis; and they will only fall, and not be killed; they will only die to sin that they may live to justice; that they may be subject to Christ, to be subject to whom is to reign.

6. "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: the scepter of thy kingdom is a scepter of uprightness." He now comes to the supreme dignity of the Messiah, openly calls in God, and declares his throne will be everlasting. This passage is quoted by St. Paul to the Hebrews, to prove that Christ is as much above the angels, as is a master over his servant; or the Creator above the creature. He then, says, "thy throne, O (Christ) God," will not be a transient one, as was that of David, or Solomon, but will flourish "forever and ever."

7. "Thou hast loved justice, and hated iniquity: therefore God, thy God had anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." This verse may be interpreted in two ways, according to the force we put upon the word "therefore" in it. It may signify the effect produced, and the meaning would be: as you have loved justice and hated iniquity, by being "obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross," therefore

God anointed thee with the oil of gladness, that glorified thee, "and gave thee a name that is above every name, that at thy name every knee should bend, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and in hell." Such glorification is properly styled "the unction of gladness;" because it puts an end to all pain and sorrow; "above thy fellows," has its own signification; for, though the angels have been, and men will be, glorified, nobody ever was, or will be, exalted to the right hand of the Father; and nobody ever got, or will get, a name above every name, with the exception of Christ, who is the head of men and angels, and is at the same time God and man. In the second exposition, the word "therefore" is taken to signify the cause, and the meaning would be: you loved justice and hated iniquity, because God anointed you with the oil of spiritual grace in a much more copious manner than he gave it to anyone else; and hence it arose that your graces were boundless, while all others got it in a limited manner, and only through you. Such is the explanation of St. Augustine, who calls our attention to the repetition of the word of God in this verse, and says, the first is the vocative, the second the nominative case, make in the meaning to be: "O Christ God! God your Father has anointed thee with the oil of gladness. The anointing, of course, applies only to his human nature.

8. "Myrrh and stacte and cassia perfume thy garments, from the ivory houses: out of which:

9. "The daughters of kings have delighted thee in thy glory. The queen stood on thy right hand, in gilded clothing: surrounded with variety." A very difficult and obscure passage. The words need first to be explained. Myrrh is a well known bitter aromatic perfume. Stacte is a genuine term for a drop of anything, but seems to represent aloes here, which is also a bitter, but odoriferous gum, but different from myrrh; for we read in the Gospel, of Nicodemus having bought a hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes for the embalment of Christ. Cassia is the bark of a tree, highly aromatic also. By houses of ivory are meant sumptuous palaces, whose walls are inlaid or covered with ivory; just as Nero's house was called golden, and the gates of Constantinople the Golden Gates, not because they were solid gold, but from the profusion of gilding on them; and thus is interpreted the expression in 3 Kings 22, "the ivory house built by Achab;" and, in Amos 3, "the ivory houses will be ruined." The expression "daughters of kings," means the multitudes of various kingdoms; for the holy Scriptures most commonly use the expression, daughter of Jerusalem, daughter of Babylon, daughter of the Assyrians, of Tyre, to designate the people of those places; or the words may be taken literally to mean daughters of princes; that is, holy, exalted souls, for the whole sentence is figurative. To come now to the meaning. These aromatic substances represent the gift of the Holy Ghost, who diffuses a wonderful odor of sanctity; and the Prophet having in the previous verse spoken of the unction of Christ, when he said, "therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee," he now very properly introduces the myrrh, aloes, and cassia, in explanation of the beautiful odors consequent on such anointing, of which St. Paul speaks, 2 Corinthians 2, when he says, "for we are unto God the good odor of Christ." And as Christ, in his passion, especially exhaled the strongest odors of