

deceive us in another shape, they allure by persuading us to go after some good of no value, and thereby lose one of great value. "Their heart is vain" within, and they are perverse without. They relish nothing, desire nothing, and can, therefore, speak of nothing but what is vain. And he repeats the same in the following verse, but inverting the order of it. "Their heart is an open sepulcher," being a repetition of, "their heart is vain;" and "they dealt deceitfully with their tongues," being a repetition of, "there is no truth in their mouth." In making use then, of the words, "throat," "open sepulcher," he implies that the mouth, throat, and tongue, being the members wherewith speech is pronounced or issued, are, as it were, the mouth of the sepulcher; and that the soul or heart, the seat of the bad, foul, horrid thoughts and desires, like fetid and putrid corpses, and exhaling the foul odors of sinful language from the interior of the sepulcher. And he therefore adds, "They dealt deceitfully with their tongues;" that is, my enemies, having no truth in their hearts, not only say what is false, but also what is deceitful, because they would, under the show of rectitude, persuade me to what is bad. "Judge them, O Lord," etc. This must be taken more as a prophecy than an imprecation. It means that the enemies of the just will not only be excluded from the inheritance, but they will be condemned to eternal punishment, and will accomplish none of the objects they seek for. "Judge them" is more significant in the Hebrew, which makes it, "condemn them." "Let them fall from their devices," that is, let them be disappointed in the hope they had of perverting the elect. "According to the multitude of their wickedness cast them out." that is, their sins will drive them from the inheritance into everlasting darkness: "for they have provoked thee, O Lord," that is to say, because when they thought themselves they were injuring others, it was in reality God they injured, as we have in 1 Kings 8, "They have not cast you, but me out;" and in Acts 5, "You have not lied to men, but to God."

11. "But let all them be glad that hope in thee: they shall rejoice forever, and thou shalt dwell in them. And all they that love thy name shall glory in thee."

12. "For thou wilt bless the just, O Lord, thou hast crowned us, as with a shield of thy good will." The happy inheritance of the just, as promised in the Psalm, is here predicted. "Let them all be glad that hope in thee," that is to say, though the just are now engaged in a laborious contest, let them rejoice in hope; not putting their hope in the vanities of this world, but in the true God, through whom, in the proper time, they will exult forever in his praise. "And thou shalt dwell in them," making them, as it were, your habitation; they will, therefore, be in God, as he is in them; and he will be all unto all in them. And this external praise and exultation will arise from the immense internal joy and glory which will be their lot. "For all they that love thy name shall glory in thee:" namely, all the truly just, love making them the just, the friends, the sons of God. Their glory will arise from "your blessing the just," that is, from your blessing every just man; and with the blessing, conferring favors on them, by giving them the crown of glory they deserve. And as the benevolence of God, who elected us before the foundation of the world, is the root of all good inasmuch as from it proceed vocation, justification, merit, and glory itself, he thus concludes, "O Lord, thou hast crowned us as with a shield of thy good will." I acknowledge, O Lord, that all our happiness comes from thy grace and goodness, which, like the shield of the soldier, surrounds and protects us. The same idea is expressed in Psalm 102, "Who crowneth thee with mercy and compassion."

END OF PSALM 5

**FOR MORE PAMPHLETS ON PSALMS AND OTHER READINGS
PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.pamphletstoinspire.com**

PSALMS (SONGS OF PRAISE)

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

PSALM NUMBER: 5

A prayer to God against the iniquities of men.

1. Give ear; O Lord, to my words, understand my cry.
2. Harken to the voice of my prayer, O my King and my God.
3. For to thee will I pray: O Lord, in the morning thou shalt hear my voice.
4. In the morning I will stand before thee, and will see: because thou art not a God that willest iniquity.
5. Neither shall the wicked dwell near thee: nor shall the unjust abide before thy eyes.
6. Thou hatest all the workers of iniquity: thou wilt destroy all that speak a lie. The bloody and the deceitful man the Lord will abhor.
7. But as for me in the multitude of thy mercy, I will come into thy house; I will worship towards thy holy temple, in thy fear.
8. Conduct me, O Lord, in thy justice: because of my enemies, direct my way in thy sight.
9. For there is no truth in their mouth: their heart is vain.
10. Their throat is an open sepulcher: they dealt deceitfully with their tongues: judge them, O God. Let them fall from their devices: according to the multitude of their wickedness cast them out: for they have provoked thee, O Lord.
11. But let all them be glad that hope in thee: they shall rejoice forever, and thou shalt dwell in them. And all they that love thy name shall glory in thee.
12. For thou wilt bless the just. O Lord, thou hast crowned us, as with a shield of thy good will.

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: 5

Explanation of the Psalm

1. "Give ear, O Lord, to my words, understand my cry."

2. "Hearken to the voice of my prayer, O my king and my God." In three ways one is not heard by another: either because the words are not heard; or because the words are not understood; or because the person to whom they are addressed is otherwise engaged. God sees everything, understands everything, and looks after everything; but he is said, sometimes, to see not, to understand not, to abandon everything, because he so despises the intercessor as if he did not see, understand, or care about his prayers. Therefore, the holy Prophet, when about to pray, commences by asking that God may see, understand, and attend to him. Now God despises the suppliant as if he did not see him or hear him, when the one who puts up the prayer, puts it up in so distracted a way that he does not actually feel what he is saying, or prays so coldly that his prayer cannot possibly ascend. In such cases God holds himself as if he did not know what was wanted, when the petitioner himself did not seem to know, in his asking for things of no possible use to him, however urgent and ardent he may have been in asking for them. Then finally, God is like one paying no attention to the suppliant, when the suppliant is unworthy of being heard, by reason of his want of humility, confidence, or other requisites; or by reason of the sinful state in which he is still, and his having no idea of penance. The Prophet then, inspired by the Holy Ghost, with consummate skill asks God for the gift of perfect prayer; that is to say, that when he shall pray, his prayers may not be repulsed, but that they may be heard, understood, and attended to adding, "My King," for a king is supposed to hear his people; and "My God," raising up an additional claim as a creature, and therefore depending on his Creator for everything.

3. "For to thee will I pray; O Lord, in the morning thou shalt hear my voice."

4. "In the morning I will stand before thee, and will see: because thou art not a God that willest iniquity." I will not only pray, but I will stand up in contemplation in the morning, before the cares of the world obtrude; and the principal subject of my meditation shall be your hatred of sin; your great regard for innocence and justice. Therefore, you being justice and the light, if I wish to please you, I must aim at justice and innocence, and hate iniquity."

5. "Neither shall the wicked dwell near thee, nor shall the unjust abide before thy eyes." God not only hates sin, but sinners too; and therefore, the wicked shall receive not hospitality from him: "Nor shall the unjust abide before thy eyes;" that is; you will not look long upon them with an eye of clemency. He may look upon them for a while with eye of clemency and give them much of the goods of this world; but such will not be of long continuance, for in a sort time he will fling them from his face unto eternal perdition.

6. "Thou hatest all the workers of iniquity: thou wilt destroy all that speak a lie. The bloody and deceitful man the Lord will abhor." God's hatred of evil, or evil doers, is not only negative, but he positively hates, seeks to destroy them, and actually will do so. As sin is committed by act, word, thought, or desire, each is here enumerated: first, the "Workers of iniquity;" secondly, they that "Speak a lie;" thirdly, "The bloody and the deceitful."

7. "But as for me in the multitude of thy mercy, I will come into thy house; I will worship towards thy holy temple, in thy fear." After saying, that in the morning he would meditate on the hatred God bears to sin and to sinners, he now tells us the fruit of such meditation, saying, "But as for me, in the multitude of thy mercy" as much as to say, relying on thy great mercy, and not on my own strength, to avoid sin, "I will come into thy house," the house of prayer. "I will worship towards thy holy temple," that is to say, I will throw myself prostrate in presence of thy tabernacle, "in thy fear," for in fear and trembling will I implore your assistance.

8. "Conduct me, O Lord, in thy justice: because of my enemies, direct my way in thy sight." From God's house he now puts up the prayer that God may lead him in his justice; that is, through the paths of justice, by causing him to keep all his commandments, and thus to avoid all sin; which is the same as "Direct my way in thy sight;" in other words, make me walk the straight road, having God always before me. And he makes therein special mention of his enemies; for divine grace is needed against them, to direct, to protect, to anticipate, and to follow up the number of enemies who lie in wait for us, and seek to lead us to sin, be they demons or mortals, making use of threats or allurements. He includes in the word enemies all those who however friendly they may appear to be, come in the way of our salvation. For, "Man's domestics are his enemies." The meaning, then, is: Make me walk the straight road before thee. We should always ask the grace of God to walk in the way of his commandments.

9. "For there is no truth in their mouth: their heart is vain."

10. "Their throat is an open sepulcher: they dealt deceitfully with their tongues: judge them, O God. Let them fall from their devices: according to the multitude of their wickedness cast them out: for they have provoked thee, O Lord." He assigns a reason for his praying for help against his insidious enemies, namely, their purpose of injuring him, and the difficulty of avoiding their stratagems. "There is no truth in their mouth," he says, because, when they want to deceive, they terrify, seeking to make one avoid some trifling evil, that thereby they may be led into a greater one; when they want to