

God, once for all, in one word, comprising everything. The two things announced to David are God's power and mercy, for us to fear the one, and love the other; and, secondly, that he will "render to every man according to his works;" that his power will not unjustly oppress anyone nor will his mercy obstruct his justice; and they who seriously reflect on those two points, "and set their hearts on them" may be called the truly wise.

END OF PSALM 61

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: 61

**The Prophet encourages himself and all others to trust in God,
and serve Him.**

1. Shall not my soul be subject to God? For from him is my salvation.
2. For he is my God and my Savior: he is my protector; I shall be moved no more.
3. How long do you rush in upon a man? You all kill, as if you were thrusting down a leaning wall, and a tottering fence.
4. But they have thought to cast away my price: I ran in thirst: they blessed with their mouth, but cursed with their heart.
5. Be thou, O my soul, subject to God: for from him is my patience
6. For he is my god and my Savior: he is my helper, I shall not be moved.
7. In god is my salvation and my glory: he is the God of my help, and my hope is in God.
8. Trust in him, all ye congregation of people: pour out your hearts before him: God is our helper forever.
9. but vain are the sons of men, the sons of men are liars in the balances: that by vanity they may together deceive.
10. Trust not in iniquity, and cover not robberies: if riches abound, set not your heart upon them.
11. God hath spoken once, these two things have I heard, that power belongeth to God.
12. And mercy to thee, O Lord; for thou wilt render to every man according to his works.

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: 61

EXPLANATION OF THE PSALM

1. "Shall not my soul be subject of God? For from him is my salvation." A just man, fiercely assailed by various concupiscence's, every one of which contend for a mastery over him, in his brave struggle, explains, "shall not my soul be subject to God?" Is it not better and fitter for me to serve God than be a slave to avarice, pride, or concupiscence? "For from him is my salvation." Those evil passions and desires offer me nothing but death everlasting; but God promises, and will certainly confer, eternal happiness, if I remain faithful to him.

2. "For he is my God and my Savior: he is my protector; I shall be moved no more." My salvation not only depends on him, but "he is my God and my Savior." The Hebrew has the word "rock" for God, to signify that in this world he is the rock we are to build upon, to take refuge on, and in the other world to be our Savior. In both he will be our protector here to defend us, hereafter to crown us; and, therefore, "I shall be moved no more." I will not be much concerned or troubled, but remain firm, however grievous the temptations may be.

3. "How long do you rush in upon a man? You all kill, as if you with thrusting down a leaning wall, and a tottering fence." Having spoken of himself, he now turns to deplore the dreadful ruin of souls by the evil spirits through the agency of the various concupiscence's. In truth, nobody can calculate the numbers brought to ruin by the evil spirits, through the agency of avarice, ambition, lust, anger, envy, as such evil passions. Full of indignation, therefore, against the evil spirits, he exclaims, "how long do you rush in upon a man?" Will you never cease from persecuting man? "You will kill;" you would seek to destroy souls in various places and by various means, but with one common object. "As if a leaning wall and a tottering fence;" waging war upon poor, fallen human nature, so weak and corrupt, that it may aptly be compared to a tumbling wall and a rotten fence. A beautiful description of the malice and power of the demons, as well as all of the frailty and weakness of human nature; for, in truth, since his fall, man may be compared to a tottering wall or heap, that requires the very smallest push to tumble it; for he is frail, and, as Genesis 8, has it, "prone to evil from his youth;" and, therefore, the apostle justly exclaims, "unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And he immediately answers the question thus, "the grace of God by Jesus Christ our Lord."

4. "But they have thought to cast away my price: I ran in thirst: they blessed with their mouth, but cursed with their heart." He returns to the subject he began with, and shows that the object of our spiritual enemies, in their attacks upon the just, is to deprive them of the everlasting rewards for which they envy them, and which they themselves lost through their own fault. "But they have thought to cast away my price." They tempt, assault, excite my concupiscence to balk me of "my price;" that price by which I was redeemed, and thus deprive me of the dignity and general honor of everlasting glory. But I, on the contrary, "ran in thirst." The more they sought to keep me back, the more ardently and thirstily I ran; for "the prize of the supernal vocation," Phil. 3; "they blessed with their mouth, but cursed with their heart." Their words were those of kindness, gently alluring to enjoy the present, and yield to pleasure; but, meanwhile, "they cursed with their heart," knowing those very pleasures to be poisoned to the soul, and the most direct means of marring me in the pursuit of eternal happiness.

5. "But be thou, O my soul, subject to God: for from him is my patience."

6. "For he is my God and my Savior: he is my helper, I shall not be moved."

7. "In God is my salvation and my glory: he is the God of my help, and my hope is in God." He now repeats the two first verses, to show the greatness of the temptations by which he was assailed; and that he so confided in God that he was in no way afraid of them. "But the thou, O my soul, subject to God." However the enemy may rage do you, my soul, in silence and subjection, be obedient to God." "For from him is my patience;" say nothing, for he will certainly help you. "For he is my God;" this is word for word in the Hebrew with verse 2, which we see. In verse 7 he concludes by saying he expects everything from God; that is, our true end, and the means to obtain it. Our true end consists in being delivered from all evils, and the possession of the supreme good; salvation implying the one, and glory of the other: the means are God's assistance and our own hope, as they are properly named in the text, "in God is my salvation and my glory." From God I expect salvation and deliverance from all harm, and eternal glory, the supreme good; for when we shall see God, and become like him, and perfectly united to him, we shall be truly safe and happy.

8. "Trust in him, all the congregation of people: pour out your hearts before him: God is our helper forever." He now exhorts everyone to the practice of that virtue, that God had so bounteously and gratuitously granted him to practice; first reminding them to put their trust in God alone, and not in anything created. "Trust in him, all ye congregation of people;" including every family, assembly, people, all men, not only Jews, but Gentiles. "Pour out your hearts before him." Make a sincere and open confession of your sins and wretchedness; make all your wants known to him; pray to him to have mercy on you, as Anna did, when she said, "I have poured forth my soul in the sight of the Lord;" and, as a matter of course, "God is our helper forever;" there is no doubt but he will help you.

9. "But vain are the sons of men, the sons of men are liars and the balances: that by vanity they may together deceive." Conscious of the smallness of the number that would follow his advice, he, therefore, inveighs now against the multitude of the wicked, saying, the greater part of men are quite devoid of true wisdom though they apparently abound in it; but it is that wisdom designated by the Scriptures as "the prudence of the flesh;" and, therefore, most men are vain, senseless, and imprudent; because "they are liars in the balances;" in false and fraudulent weights and measures. This observation applies not only to those who are engaged in trade and commerce, but to all mankind; for we, all of us gifted with reason, get that reason as a sort of balance or measure wherewith to distinguish real from apparent good, and then to choose the one, and reject the other. Now, the greater part of mankind, in doing so, miserably deceived themselves and others, by making use of such false measures, and what is worse, by doing so willfully. No one can deny that the greatest evil that can befall man is to commit sin, and thereby deserve hell's torments; and that the greatest good that can be secured is grace in this life, and happiness in the next; and yet, when we come to weigh to measure one with the other in the balance, temporal gain will generally preponderate; and to secure it, the risk of eternal punishment will be incurred. "That by vanity they made together deceive;" though lies and vanity assumed various shapes and forms, they agree on one point, in deceit.

10. "Trust not in iniquity, and cover not robberies: if riches abound, said not your heart upon them." He comes again to exhort, and especially against avarice, it being "the root of all evil;" secret frauds being expressed by the word "iniquity," and open wrongs by the term "robberies;" and he goes father, in prohibiting even an affection for riches, saying, "If riches abound, set not your heart on them." St. Augustine beautifully remarks that they who rob, see their plunder, but they do not see who, at the very moment, robs themselves; that is, the devil, who robs them of their soul. The same Augustine and Basil remark, that when riches abound, they begin to overflow and run away, and the blind and the covetous look only to their abundance, and never consider their flowing, not perceive it. We are, therefore, reminded "not to set our heart on them," for fear it, too, may flow with them, and be lost. When riches abound, then, having our hearts firmly and securely fixed on God, we should take care to let the riches flow, but to flow to advantage; like the prudent farmer, who directs the course of the stream to irrigate and enrich his land, but will be most careful in not allowing it to carry himself along.

11. "God hath spoken once, these two things have I heard, that power belongeth to God."

12. "And mercy to thee, O Lord; for thou wilt render to every man according to his works." He concludes by assigning a reason for not wishing for riches, and for guarding against all manner of sin;