

END OF PSALM 82

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: 82

A prayer against the enemies of God's church.

1. O God, who shall be like to thee? Hold not thy peace; neither be thou still, O God.
2. For lo, thy enemies have made a noise; and they that hate thee have lifted up the head.
3. They have taken a malicious counsel against thy people, and have consulted against thy saints.
4. They have said: Come and let us destroy them, so that they be not a nation: and let the name of Israel be remembered no more.
5. For they have contrived with one consent: they have made a covenant together against thee.
6. The tabernacles of the Edomites and the Ishmaelites: Moab, and the Agarens,
7. Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalec: the Philistines, with the inhabitants of Tyre.
8. Yea, and the Assyrian also is joined with them: they are come to the aid of the sons of Lot.
9. Do to them as thou didst to Madian and to Sisara: as to Jobin at the brook of Cisson.
10. Who perished at Endor; and became as dung for the earth.
11. Make their princes like Oreb, and Zeb, and Zebbee, and Salmana. All their princes,
12. Who have said: Let us possess the sanctuary of God for an inheritance.
13. O my God, make them like a wheel; and as stubble before the wind:
14. As fire which burneth the wood; and as a flame burning mountains:
15. So shalt thou pursue them with thy tempest and shall trouble them in thy wrath.
16. Fill their faces with shame: and they shall seek thy name, O Lord.
17. Let them be ashamed and troubled forever; and let them be confounded and perish.
18. And let them know that the Lord is thy name: thou alone art the Most High over all the earth.

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: 82

EXPLANATION OF THE PSALM

1. "O God, who shall be like to thee?: Hold not thy peace; neither be thou still, O God." The Prophet, assuming the person of the people, prays to God that, as he is more powerful than all their enemies, he should no longer defer taking vengeance on their persecutors. "O God, who shall be like to thee?" No one can be compared in power and strength to you, the only all-powerful. Therefore, "hold not thy peace;" have no further patience with them; wreak the vengeance they deserve on them, in which no one can resist you. St. Augustine very properly applies this passage to Christ, who, while in this world, seemed like other men, but will have no one like him on the day of judgment, "when he shall appear in the glory of his Father, and sit on the throne of his majesty." Who also, during his passion, was silent, and, "like a meek lamb," restrained himself; but will not be silent on the day of judgment, not suppress his most just anger when he shall say, "go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire."
2. "For lo, thy enemies have made a noise and they that hate thee have lifted up the head." A strong reason is offered here for God's being no longer silent, and that is, because his enemies, assembling in a great body, and from various nations, raised a most unusual tumult; and they who had hitherto been enemies in private, now openly professed themselves as such. The expression, "have made a noise," signifies, in the Hebrew, the discontented growl of a multitude. "Have lifted up the head," St. Augustine says, refers to the Antichrist, who will be the head of Christ's enemies; for, when he shall appear, many, who did not dare to profess themselves enemies of the Church, will openly attach themselves to the Antichrist, will boldly "lift up their own head," and will also lift up the common head of all the wicked, the Antichrist.
3. "They have taken a malicious counsel against thy people, and have consulted against thy saints."
4. "They have said: come and let us destroy them, so that they be not a nation: and let the name of Israel be remembered no more." He now explains the greatness of the danger, so that God may not wait or defer his help any longer, inasmuch as the enemy were not preparing for a raid or an incursion, but for the thorough annihilation and complete desolation of the Church of God. Hence it is probable that this was fulfilled to some extent, as it were, in type and figure in the time of the Maccabees; for, we read in the first book of the Maccabees, that all the nations around assembled to destroy the house of Jacob. It refers, however, principally to

the time of the Antichrist, for then all the wicked will, simultaneously, with all their might, endeavor to destroy the strongholds of the saints. "They have taken a malicious counsel against thy people;" by malicious counsel we are to understand one not only full of craft, but also taken in private, such being the force of the Hebrew; as such will the counsels of the Antichrist; private, because he will take counsel with the devil, whom he worships in private; and crafty, for he will pretend to be Christ, in order to deceive Christians; and, at the same time, in order to seduce the Jews, he will introduce circumcisions and other rites of theirs. "And have consulted against thy saints." They have entered into a wicked conspiracy against the faithful, who have been sanctified by the blood of your only begotten Son. "Let us destroy them so that they be not a nation;" utterly crush and annihilate them; "and let the name of Israel be remembered no more;" no trace of their name, no recollection of themselves.

5. "For they have contrived with one consent: they have made a covenant together against thee."

6. "The tabernacles of the Edomites, and the Ishmaelites: Moab, and the Agarens."

7. "Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalec: the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre."

8. "Yea, and the Assyrian also is joined with them: they are come to the aid of the sons of Lot." An enumeration of the nations who sought to extinguish God's people. "For they have contrived with one consent." All the enemies of Israel unanimously conspired; "they have made a covenant together against thee;" entered into a common treaty against your people. Here they are: first, the tabernacles of the Edomites; that is, the whole body of them. The Edomites were the descendants of Esau, who was also called Edom. Secondly, the Ishmaelites, the descendants of Ishmael the son of Abraham by Agar his handmaid. Thirdly, Moab, the people sprung from Moab, the son of Lot. Fourthly, the Agarens, the people coming from Agar, the handmaid of Abraham, but from another husband, to whom she was married, after having been dismissed by Abraham. Fifthly, Gebal, the people descended from Gebal, but whether that be the name of a place or a person is quite uncertain, as the name occurs in no one part of the Scriptures. Sixthly, Ammon, the people sprung from Ammon, the son of Lot, and brother of Moab; both of whom Lot begot from his daughters. Seventhly, Amalec, the people descended from Amalec, the grandson of Esau. Eighthly, the Philistines, frequent mention of whom is made in the book of Kings. Ninthly, with the inhabitants of Tyre, a town of extensive commerce. Tenthly, the Assyrians, who came to aid the sons of Lot, viz., the Moabites and Ammonites, against the Jews. Those ten different nations or people represent the nations that fought against the Jews, or rather, the multitude of the eastern barbarians, who, with the Antichrist, will hereafter raise up a bitter persecution against the Church.

9. "Do to them as thou didst to Madian and to Sisara: as to Jabin at the brook of Cisson." The Prophet now predicts, in the shape of an imprecation, the extermination of those nations who fought against the Maccabees, and particularly of the Antichrist and his army, comparing them to other persecutors who met a similar end. "Go to them as thou didst to Madian." Scatter and rout them as you formally scattered the Midianites in a time of Gideon, Judges 6 and 7; "as to the Sisara," the leader of King Jabin's army; "as to Jabin at the brook of Cisson;" and as you destroyed Jabin himself, the King of Chanaan, near the torrent called Cisson, Judges 4 and 15. The Prophet quotes these especially, their defeat having been miraculous, having been conquered by a few, and rather through fear inspired by God than by the bravery of the Jews.

10. "Who perished at Endor: and became as dung for the earth." They were conquered at Endor, Joshua 16, and became as dung for the earth, for their bodies remained unburied and rotted, thereby enriching the ground; being thus reduced from the height of glory to the depth of infamy.

11. "Make their princes like Oreb, and Zeb, and Zebbee and Salmana. All their princes." He reverts to Gideon's history, who not only routed the Army of the Midianites, but soon after killed two of their princes, Oreb and Zeb; in two of the kings, Zebbee and Salmana, Judges 7 and 8.

12. "Who have said: let us possess the sanctuary of God for an inheritance." All these princes and kings said: let us possess the sanctuary of God, as if it were our own, and came to us by inheritance; that place that was sanctified by God as his own dwelling place. The Jerusalem alluded to here means the Church of God; which the Antichrist will endeavor to subdue and lead captive will all his might.

13. "O my God, make them like a wheel; and as stubble before the wind." The Prophet describes the instability and the death of the wicked, by most appropriate simile. A wheel when rolling down a precipice is constantly turning about, cannot stop for moment, and is ultimately smashed in pieces. Straws carried by the wind are repeatedly tossed to and fro, until they ultimately disappear; and so, the Prophet predicts God will deal with the wicked persecutors of the just; as, in fact, we learn from daily experience, for nothing is more uncertain than the prosperity of the wicked, and their end is death everlasting.

14. "As fire which warmeth the wood; and as a flame burning mountains."

15. "So shalt thou pursue them with thy tempest; and shalt trouble them in thy wrath." He prophesied that the wicked would be punished, their uncertainty in this world, and their utter destruction in the next; he now predicts the quickness and the ease with which God will punish them; for, though he did so in the previous verse, where he said they would be scattered like the straws blown about by the wind, he now likens God's anger to a raging fire that destroys the trees of the forest, and the herbage of the plains. "As fire which burneth the wood;" the trees of the forest, many of which are withered, readily take fire, and extend the conflagration; "and as

a flame burning mountains," especially when the grass is dry in parching seasons. "So shalt thou pursue them with thy tempest;" you would just as easily pursue and destroy them; which he explains by adding, "and shalt trouble them in thy wrath;" tempest and wrath being the same, for both signify the just judgment of God, which, like a vehement irresistible storm, will strike down, confound, and scatter the wicked.

16. "Fill their faces with shame: and they shall seek thy name, O Lord."

17. "Let them be ashamed and troubled forever; and let them be confounded and perish."

18. "And let them know that the Lord is thy name: thou alone art the Most High over all the earth." In the conclusion of the Psalm he prophesies that some of his persecutors would be so taught by the scourges inflicted on them, that they would be converted; as will many of the Jews, who will ultimately acknowledge their error, and in shame will be brought to God. Some will persevere and remain obdurate, but they, too, will be confounded, and will, even against their will, be brought to know the singular power of God, and that he is the true Lord of all things. "Fill their faces which shame;" with confusion, that when they understand the disgraceful position in which they have placed themselves "they shall seek thy name;" call upon you to help them. But as to those who will not be moved by such scourges, but get rather, like Pharaoh, to be more hardened, "let them be ashamed and troubled;" filled with eternal confusion; for "let them be confounded and perish." "And let them know," (against their will,) that the Lord is thy name." Having now learned it by experience, let them understand that the name of the Lord belongs to you exclusively, that all things depend on your nod, and are subservient to you; while you serve nobody, and want nothing, having everything within yourself. While all those who are called Lords, have usurped a name that does not belong to them; or at least, who deserve no such name, while they need many things; and must, therefore, yield to many necessities; "thou alone art the Most High overall the earth." Let them also know that your power is preeminently beyond that of all the princes of the earth; nor is there one who can cope with you, or be in any wise compared to you. This prophecy is already fulfilled to some extent, but will be thoroughly accomplished on the day of judgment.