

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: 19

A prayer for the king.

1. **May the Lord hear thee in the day of tribulation: may the name of the God of Jacob protect thee.**
2. **May he send thee help from the sanctuary: and defend thee out of Sion.**
3. **May he be mindful of all thy sacrifices, and may thy whole burnt offering be made fat.**
4. **May he give thee according to thy own heart; and confirm all thy counsels.**
5. **We will rejoice in thy salvation; and in the name of our God we shall be exalted.**
6. **The Lord fulfill all thy petitions: now have I known that the Lord hath saved his anointed. He will hear him from his holy heaven: the salvation of his right hand is in powers.**
7. **Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will call upon the name of the Lord our God.**
8. **They are bound, and have fallen: but we are risen, and are set upright. O Lord, save the king: and hear us in the day that we shall call upon thee.**

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: 19

EXPLANATION OF THE PSALM

1. "May the Lord hear thee in the day of tribulation: may the name of the God of Jacob protect thee." Whereas David does not mention any one's name, there is no doubt, but he addresses himself to him on whom all the longings of the just and the predictions of the prophets were centered. And, as if he were beholding Christ on the approach of his passion, arming himself with prayer, on coming forward to fight with the devil, he exclaims, "May the Lord hear thee in the day of tribulation:" that is, in your passion, when, as the apostle has it, Heb. 5, "Who offering up prayers and supplications, with a strong cry and tears, to him that was able to save him from death, was heard for his reverence." He was heard, however, not by escaping death, but by dying that he may destroy death; and by rising, restore life; and so that shame may be turned into glory, and mortality into immortality, as he says himself, John 17, "Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son;" and this is the hearing of which the Prophet speaks, on which the following bears, "May the name of the God of Jacob protect thee." By the word "name," we are to understand the invocation, as we have in the last chapter of Mark. "In my name they will cast out devils." It may also signify power or authority, as John 5, "I have come in the name of my Father." Or it may simply mean, God himself; for in the Scriptures the word "name" is used for the person to whom it belongs, as when St. Peter, Acts 4, says, "For there is no other name under heaven, given to men, whereby we must be saved." He adds, "the name of the God of Jacob," to signify the people of God, of whom Christ is the head; as if he said: May the God of his people protect thee; for if the head be protected, the whole body of the people will be consequently saved. We

7. "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will call upon the name of the Lord our God." He goes on with the account of Christ's victory, as he had foreseen, saying: "Some trust in chariots and some in horses." Some of the enemy trusted in armed chariots, some in ferocious horses, by which he comprehends all the instruments or weapons that were formerly used in war or for fight. "But we," with Christ for our head and king, do not confide so much in horses or in chariots, as we do "In the name of the Lord our God."

8. "They are bound, and have fallen: but we are risen, and are set upright. O Lord, save the king: and hear us in the day that we shall call upon thee." He shows how much more profitable it is to put one's trust in God, than in horses and chariots. They who did, "Are bound, and have fallen; we who trusted in God are risen, and set upright." See the wonderful change! Before the victory of Christ, the enemy of the human race bore himself aloft, as if in chariots and horses, and trampled on man, prostrate through original sin; in like manner, the princes of the Jews, Herod and Pilate, and other visible enemies of Christ, in their Insolence, insulted the suffering Christ and his humble disciples, but soon after, "The former were bound, and have fallen;" while the later "have risen, and set upright," and will remain forever. "O Lord, save the king, and hear us in the day, that we shall call upon thee." He concludes, by uniting the first and last verses. Having commenced with "May the Lord hear thee in the day of tribulation," he confirms it, by directing his prayer to God. "O Lord, save the king" from his tribulation; and us too, "In the day we shall call upon thee;" that is, in our tribulation, when we shall invoke none but thee.

END OF PSALM 19

seek protection from the enemies' weapons, for fear we may be hurt by them; and then, indeed, they would have been truly hurtful, could they have obstructed Christ's Resurrection, his name, or his religion, or the extension or propagation of his church.

2. "May he send thee help from the sanctuary: and defend thee out of Sion." The sanctuary means Sion, as will presently appear, and was called holy by reason of the Ark of the Testament being placed on it. But another Sion, the heavenly one, would seem to be intended here, that of which the apostle speaks, Heb. 12, "But you are come to Mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, that heavenly Jerusalem." Sion is introduced here to show that God beholds everything, as if from some elevated lookout, (for such is the meaning of the word Sion,) whence he can easily behold Christ in his struggles, and supply him with reinforcements; and a place so high, from whence everything can be so easily seen, is not the mountain bearing that name, but the celestial Sion and thus, "May he send thee help from the sanctuary," means, from the highest heavens whence he beholds all things; "And defend thee out of Sion," that is, from his lofty watch tower, from which he observes you.

3. "May he be mindful of all thy sacrifices: and may thy whole burnt offering be made fat." Since our Lord, when about to combat the enemy of the human race, had recourse not only to prayer, but also to sacrifice; that is, not only prayed in words, but sacrificed in reality, and, as he had alluded to his prayer by the expression, "May the Lord hear thee;" he now touches on the sacrifice by saying, "May he be mindful of all thy sacrifices." May he not despise them, but may he remember and regard them; "and may thy whole burnt offering be made fat." May it be acceptable, as acceptable as the holocaust of fatted animals, for the fatter the better; and the more perfect an animal is, the more valuable is the holocaust. Hence, Dan. 3, "And as in the thousands of fat lambs, so let our sacrifice be made in thy sight this day that it may please thee." Now, Christ offered many sacrifices, and at last a holocaust, and therefore the

Prophet says, "May he be mindful of all thy sacrifices." The many sacrifices are his numerous sufferings for the glory of God, whilst among us; the holocaust is that in which he ultimately offered himself up entirely, by dying on the cross; and thus, the meaning is: May the Lord always remember the passion and death of Christ. This would appear to be rather a prophecy than a prayer; in God's sight, the passion of Christ, even from the beginning of the world, was always before him; is now, and ever will be before him; and is the source of infinite blessings to us.

4. "May he give thee according to thy own heart; and confirm all thy counsels." The object of both prayer and sacrifice declared, that is, may God hear thee, and accept of thy sacrifice; that you may come at the end you seek, and accomplish what you desire, and that there may be no one to mar you therein. "May he give thee according to thy own heart." Give you your wish, your heart's desire, "And confirm all thy counsels:" carry out all your plans further all your wishes, confirm all your desires; thus the meaning will be: May God hear thee, and receive thy sacrifice; that you may upset the machinations of the devil, redeem man from bondage, and give eternal life to those that believe in thee; for that such was the desire of Christ's heart, on such did his whole wisdom and deliberations turn, is evident from the gospel, John 3, "For this purpose the Son of God appeared, that he might destroy the works of the devil:" and St. Paul, 1 Tim. 1, "Christ came into this world to save sinners:" and the Lord himself says, Luke 19, "The son of Man came to seek and save what was lost."

5. "We will rejoice in thy salvation; and in the name of our God we shall be exalted." When our prayer shall have been granted, when you shall have conquered the enemy, "We will rejoice" interiorly as well as exteriorly, "In thy salvation;" that is, for your safe return from the war, in which safety we also share. "And in the name of our Lord," who granted such a victory, "We shall be exalted," we shall consider and look upon ourselves as great and wonderful, not by reason of our own merit, but by reason of the great God to whom we belong.

6. "The Lord fulfill all thy petitions: now have I known that the Lord hath saved his anointed. He will hear him from his holy heaven: the salvation of his right hand is in powers." Another repetition of his good wishes. "May the Lord," therefore, "fulfill all thy petitions," from which so many blessings are to follow. "Now have I known that the Lord hath saved his anointed. He will hear him from his holy heaven; the salvation of his right hand is in powers." I am, therefore, emboldened in asking again, that the Lord may hear thee, may grant all your petitions; because, by a divine revelation, I now know that they will all be granted. "For I have known that the Lord hath saved," that he certainly will save his Christ, and by predestination has already saved him, raised him from the dead, placed him in heaven, and stretched his enemies under his feet, "He will hear him from his holy heaven." Having stated that he saved him, he now explains, that he meant by salvation, a previous decree, not yet put into execution, but one that will certainly be carried out; "for he will hear him from his holy heaven," and thus "The Lord will save his Christ." "The salvation of his right hand is in powers." This may be explained in two senses. The word "powers" may mean power and strength, (and the Hebrew favors such meaning,) and then it will read, Christ, "The salvation of his right hand," will appear in great power; or the word powers may mean, princes and kings (and the Greek and Latin favor such meaning,) and then the meaning would be: He will hear him from his holy heaven, and in his powers; because, in appointing princes and rulers, or protecting them afterwards, "The salvation of his right hand" is peculiarly necessary. For though princes may seem to have many safeguards, such as horses, chariots, arms and soldiers, fortresses and munitions, all these are nothing, if "The salvation of the right hand" of God be not there too with them: and he, therefore, with great propriety, adds in the next verse,