

END OF PSALM 76

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.

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: 76

**The faithful have recourse to God in trouble of mind,
with confidence in His mercy and power.**

1. I cried to the Lord with my voice; to God with my voice; and he gave ear to me.
2. In the day of my trouble I sought god, with my hands lifted up to him in the night: and I was not deceived. My soul refused to be comforted:
3. I remembered God, and was delighted, and was exercised; and my spirit swooned away.
4. My eyes prevented the watches: I was troubled, and I spoke not.
5. I thought upon the days of old: and I had in my mind the eternal years.
6. And I meditated in the night with my own heart: and I was exercised, and I swept my spirit.
7. Will god then cast off forever? Or will he never be more favorable again?
8. Or will he cut off his mercy forever, from generation to generation?
9. Or will God forget to show mercy? Or will he in his anger shut up his mercies?
10. And I said: Now have I begun: this is the change of the right hand of the Most High,
11. I remembered the works of the Lord: for I will be mindful of thy wonders from the beginning.
12. And I will meditate on all thy works: and will be employed in thy inventions.

Continued >

(continued from the preceding page)

13. **Thy way, O God, is in the holy place: who is the great God like our God?**
14. **Thou art the God that dost wonders. Thou hast made thy power known among the nations:**
15. **With thy arm thou hast redeemed thy people the children of Jacob and of Joseph.**
16. **The waters saw thee, O God: the waters saw thee: and they were afraid: and the depths were troubled.**
17. **Great was the noise of the waters: the clouds sent out a sound. For thy arrows pass;**
18. **The voice of thy thunder in a wheel. The lightnings enlightened the world: the earth shook and trembled.**
19. **Thy way is in the sea, and thy paths in many waters: and thy footsteps shall not be known.**
20. **Thou hast conducted thy people like sheep, by the hand of Moses and Aaron.**

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: 76

EXPLANATION OF THE PSALM

1. "I cried to the Lord with my voice; to God with my voice; any he gave ear to me." The effusions of soul of a holy person expressing how heavily the delay and the dangers of his pilgrimage here below bear on him. For he says, "I cried with my voice;" not through a message, nor through my friends, nor even with my tongue, but with my voice; with the whole power of my body, I cried to God. He says he cried to the Lord, and to God, because he saw no created being or thing could confer on him what he wanted; and therefore, without applying to anyone he appeals directly to God himself. He says, "I cried," because seeing him in a strange country, far removed from God, he required to speak with a loud and an impassioned voice, to transmit it from the abyss in which he lay to the elevation on which God was placed; "and he gave ear to him;" his prayer then was heard.

2. "In the day of my trouble I sought God, with my hands lifted up to him in the night: and I was not deceived. My soul refused to be comforted." He tells here why and how he sought and found God. "In the day of my trouble I sought God." During my lifetime, which, according to Job, is "a warfare;" that is, according to St. Paul, a constant "wrestling with our vices and concupiscence, as well as with the Principalities and powers of the air;" hence, he exclaims, "who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" "With my hands to him in the night." In the night of this life I stretched out my hands to him, seeking to grasp and hold him; and I was not deceived. This life does not deserve the name of day, but of night; "for we walk by

20. "Thou hast conducted thy people like sheep, by the hand of Moses and Aaron." The object of all the wonderful works of God in Egypt and the Red Sea was to free his people, and introduce them to the land of promise, which he did through Moses and Aaron, the first pastors of the synagogue. "Thou has conducted by people like sheep;" brought the people, as you would so many sheep, through the desert, into the land of promise, as it were, to the richest pastures, with the greatest ease, the greatest love, and untiring providence "by the hand of Moses and Aaron;" under the guidance and authority of Moses and Aaron, two most excellent leaders.

Ascension, was so exalted as to fulfill what is written of him in Psalm 71, "all the kings of the earth shall adore him: all nations shall serve them."

16. "The waters saw thee, O God: the waters saw thee: and they were afraid, and the depths were troubled." He now describes the separation of the waters of the Red Sea, when God delivered his people from the slavery of Pharaoh, and he does it in a poetical manner, investing the water with fear and trembling, as if they felt such at the presence of God, as he says also in Psalm 113, "the sea saw and fled."

"The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee." The waters of the Red Sea, at thy command, were dried up as if they had seen thy Majesty, and ran away in fear and reverence, "and the depths were troubled." It was not only on the surface, but in the very lowest bottom, that the waters, affrighted at your presence, disappeared.

17. "Great was the noise of the waters: the clouds sent out a sound. For thy arrows pass." Having described God's wonderful doings in the separation of the waters of the Red Sea, he now speaks of the return of the waters, and the storm to destroy the Egyptians, which, too, was a wonderful work, "great was the noise of the waters." Great confusion and roaring of the waters succeeded, when, at God's command, the waters that stood up like two walls, while God's people were passing through, fell in with a tremendous crash, to drown and suffocate the Egyptians, as also when "thy arrows pass," your lightning shot like arrows at them.

18. "The voice of thy thunder in a wheel. Thy lightning's enlightened the world; the earth shook and trembled." The voice of your thunder rattled in the wheels of Pharaoh's chariots, and upset them. "Thy lightning's enlightened the world." The Prophet adds, that such vengeance inflicted on Pharaoh was made known not only to the Jews then present, but even, like lightning in heaven, was made known to the whole world, and caused great fear and commotion among the nations far removed, the truth of which we read in Joshua 2, where Rahab says, "we heard that the Lord dried up the waters of the Red Sea at your approach, and we were very much afraid." – "The lightning's enlightened the world;" your lightning's, signs, and miracles, enlightened not only the Jews and Egyptians then and there, but the whole world heard of them, they were known far and near; and, therefore, "the earth shook and trembled;" its inhabitants were frightened and alarmed, and began to fear the people of Israel.

19. "Thy way is in the sea, and thy paths in many waters: and thy footsteps shall not be known." He now plainly describes the passage of the children of Israel, under God's guidance, through a new and unusual path, through the middle of the sea, without wetting their feet. "Thy way is in the sea;" you have discovered a new and unheard of way through the sea for your people; "and thy paths in many waters;" made a path for the same people through the deep-sea, "and thy footsteps shall not be known;" for you have brought your people through that passage in this sea in so wonderful a manner that nobody could ever discover a trace of said passage.

faith, and not by sight," 2 Cor. 5; and we, therefore, require the light of Scripture, shining light a lamp in a dark place." In the nighttime we succeed better by groping with our hands, than by searching with our eyes; hence, the apostle says, that men were created "that they should seek God; if happily they may feel after him, or find him." Now, to seek God with one's hands in the night, means nothing more than to seek God in this dark exile of ours, by good works, by observance of the Commandments, and by holiness of life; and it often happens that they who seek God in such manner will attain the object of their wishes, a thing they could never accomplish by reading and study; for, the testimony of a good conscience, patience in sufferings, frequent victories over temptation, cause the soul to feel a certain divine and interior sweetness, that is a sort of testimony to its being a child of God. "My soul refused to be comforted." As he was not deceived in his search for God, his soul refused all human consolation, knowing how empty it was. "My soul refused to be comforted." Though the pleasures of the world surrounded me, I could not enjoy them, knowing what consequent sorrow they always entailed.

3. "I remember God, and was delighted, and was exercised: and my spirit swooned away." However, that I should not be without comfort in some shape, "I remembered God," who deceives nobody, in whom alone that solid joy, that no one can deprive us of, is to be found. "And I was delighted." Here is the great secret of God's wisdom, that in this our exile, the recollection of God delights us more than the carnal pleasures around us; and, if the recollection of God delights us so much in the midst of the carnal allurements about us, how much more will not the actual presence of God delight us, when those allurements of the flesh shall have passed away? "And was exercised, and my spirit passed away." After calling God the mind, and the pleasure I derive from doing so, I turned to meditation, and talked over with myself the miseries of our exile, and the joys of heaven until it fainted away in my desires for it.

4. "My eyes prevented the watches: I was troubled, and I spoke not." He explains the meaning of the expression, "I was exercised," by saying, "my eyes prevented the watches;" that is, I rose at night for meditation, before the military watches turned out for guard. We have a similar phrase in Psalm 118, "my eyes to thee have prevented the morning, that I might meditate on thy words." "I was troubled and I spoke not;" he was terribly confused from meditating on the dangers of this life, but did not attempt to say one word, knowing that the judgments of God, however occult, are always most just.

5. "I thought upon the days of old: and I had in mind the eternal years." Such was the subject of my meditation when I got up for the watch, "the days of old;" the days of this life, from the beginning to the end; and "the eternal years" of futurity, that do not pass away, but remained fixed and permanent; thus, he thought not only of the things of the present day, that presently grow old and perish, but also of what we shall be doing and engaged in for the years of eternity, that always remain in the same state. Reflections worthy of occupying one in meditation during the whole night.

6. "And I meditated in the night with my own heart: and I was exercised, and I swept my spirit." The same idea repeated and inculcated. I spent, he says, long nights turning the thing in my mind "and I was exercised" in my thoughts and my reflections, "and I swept my spirit." I put my mind to and fro, as if I were sweeping it with a broom. Like the woman in the Gospel, who swept the whole house diligently in search of the lost piece of money; so he searched his spirit, and brushed it up, as with a broom, in search of the hidden truth.

7. "Will God then cast off forever? Or will he never be more favorable again?"

8. "Or will he cut off his mercy forever, from generation to generation?"

9. "Or will God forget the show mercy? Or will he in his anger shut up his mercies?" Here is the subject of his meditation, and the cause of his agitation during the night. Looking at the countless number of sinners, was scarcely one to be found doing good, he said to himself, "will God consign all men to eternal perdition? Where, then, is his infinite mercy?" But from such interrogatory, he draws the very contrary conclusion, asserting that the time for the redemption of mankind would come, when not only the remnants of the Jews, but even the multiple of the Gentiles, would be saved. He says, therefore, "will God then cast off forever?" Will God cast off forever from his mercy, and leave in their blindness and their infidelity, such a multitude of the human race? In other words, he would not cast them off, but he will visit them in his own time. "Or will he never be more favorable again?" That means, will he not add his mercy to his anger, so that he may begin to look with more favor on those whom he sees now so the hate. He says he will be pacified, for the next verse he has, "or will he cut off his mercy forever, from generation to generation?" "Will he withdraw his mercy from man forever?" He would not. "Or will God forget the show mercy? Or will he in his anger shut up his mercies?" He will not forget, nor shut up his mercy; for it is easier for God to repress his anger than his mercy; and, therefore, however justly he may be angry with sinners, in his anger he will not withhold his mercy but will pour it out to mitigate his anger.

10. "And I said: now have I begun: this is the change of the right hand of the Most High." The Prophet having both foreseen and foretold the redemption of man, he says that he began thereon to draw his breath after the grief and sorrow that previously held them captive. "And I said, now have I begun;" began to breathe, when by meditation and watching's, I ascertained that God's mercy would be poured out on the human race. "This is the change of the right-hand of the Most High;" the change which I foresee and foretell, that of God's anger into mercy, of man's wickedness to holiness, of his captivity to redemption, of everlasting punishment to eternal glory, is a wonderful change, that no one, but Christ, who is the right hand of the Most High, could accomplish, for it was he who appeased the Father's anger, by turning it to mercy; it was he that justified the wicked, redeemed the captive, and glorified the wicked; and, what is more wonderful, right-hand of the Most High effected this change, by changing himself to a certain extent; for his right-hand was weakened, in order to strengthen us; and "when he was in the form of God he took the form of a servant."

11. "I remembered the works of the Lord: for I will be mindful of thy wonders from the beginning."

12. "And I will meditate on all thy works: and will be employed in thy inventions." The Prophet now breathing in the hope of a future redemption, says he will call to mind the wonderful works of the Lord, and proceeds to relate some of them, saying: hitherto I called to mind some of the wonderful things the Lord did in Egypt for our fathers, but now, O Lord, I will call up all your wonderful works from the beginning of the world, "and I will meditate on all your works," your works of justice and mercy, of power and wisdom; of nature and grace; and will be employed in your inventions;" turning over in my mind, with profound admiration, the secret counsels and wonderful designs struck out by your wisdom for the salvation of the human race.

13. "Thy way, O God, is in the holy place: who is the great God like our God?" He now begins to praise those wonderful works of God on which he was accustomed to reflect, saying first in general, that the works of God are holy, great, and admirable; that is, that they are done with holiness, power, and wisdom, he himself being holy, omnipotent, and wise. "Thy way, O God, is in the holy place;" your action or your works, which may be looked upon as your way to us, are all done in holiness, for you do nothing but what is right and just; "who was the great God like our God?" Not only are our God and his way holy, but he is also great, and great are his works.

14. "Thou art the God that dost wonders. Thou hast made thy power known among the nations." You are not only holy and great in your works, but they are also wonderful, by reason of the depth of wisdom displayed in them. "Thou hast made thy power known among the nations." He now descends to a special, great, and wonderful work of God, the deliverance of his people from Egypt, and says he has made known his power, not only to the people of Egypt, but to all the other nations that heard of the plagues of Egypt.

15. "With thy arm thou hast redeemed thy people the children of Jacob and of Joseph." By your own power and strength, for you need no help from anyone, you have delivered your people, the descendants of Jacob and Joseph. Joseph and his father are named, because the people of Israel consisted of thirteen tribes, eleven of whom sprung from eleven sons of Jacob, and two, that of Ephraim and Manassas, from the sons of Joseph. In a spiritual sense, God "made his power known" to all nations, when he delivered them from the power of the devil, "with the arm," meaning Christ, of whom Isaias says, "the arm of the Lord, to whom it is revealed?" St. Augustine says that in God's people two families are to be found, the children of Jacob and the children of Joseph, who are the Jews, and the converted Gentiles. By the children of Jacob we understand the carnal Israelites; by the children of Joseph, they who are regenerated in Christ. Joseph, sold by his brethren through envy, humbled everywhere at first, but ultimately exalted, represents Christ, who, through the envy of the Jews, was cast out of the synagogue, sold and humbled, but in the end, through his Resurrection and