

END OF PSALM 135

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: 135

God is to be raised for His wonderful works.

1. Praise the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever.
2. Praise ye the God of gods: for his mercy endureth forever.
3. Praise ye the Lord of lords: for his mercy endureth forever.
4. Who alone doth great wonders: for his mercy endureth forever.
5. Who made the heavens in understanding: for his mercy endureth forever.
6. Who established the earth above the waters: for his mercy endureth forever.
7. Who made the great lights: for his mercy endureth forever.
8. The sun to rule the day: for his mercy endureth forever.
9. The moon and the stars to rule the night: for his mercy endureth forever.
10. Who smote Egypt with their firstborn: for his mercy endureth forever.
11. Who brought out Israel from among them: for his mercy endureth forever.
12. With a mighty hand and with a stretched out arm: for his mercy endureth forever.
13. Who divided the Red Sea into parts: for his mercy endureth forever.
14. And brought out Israel through the midst thereof: for his mercy endureth forever.
15. And overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea: for his mercy endureth forever.
16. Who led his people through the desert: for his mercy endureth forever.
17. Who smote great kings: for his mercy endureth forever.
18. And slew strong kings: for his mercy endureth forever.
19. Sehon king of the Amorrhites: for his mercy endureth forever.
20. And Og, king of Basan: for his mercyn endureth forever.
21. And he gave their land for an inheritance: for his mercy endureth forever.
22. For an inheritance to his servant Israel: for his mercy endureth forever.
23. For he was mindful of us in our affliction: for his mercy endureth forever.
24. And he redeemed us from our enemies: for his mercy endureth forever.
25. Who giveth food to all flesh: for his mercy endureth forever.
26. Give glory to the God of Heaven: for his mercy endureth forever.
27. Give glory to the Lord of lords: for his mercy endureth forever.

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: 135

EXPLANATION OF THE PSALM

1. "Praise the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever."
2. "Praise ye the God of gods: for his mercy endureth forever."
3. "Praise ye the Lord of lords: for his mercy endureth forever." In these three first verses the Trinity is praised, by reason of the works that have been wrought by it. In the first verse, we find the name consisting of four letters in the Hebrew, that belongs to God alone, and is never applied to any created being, the meaning of which is that he exists, as God himself explained in Exodus, when he said, "I am who am." And since existence and perfection are convertible and synonymous terms, and everything that exists on itself is perfect, and everything that is supreme is supremely perfect, perfection is, therefore, here united absolutely to one already absolute. "Praise the Lord." Render your tribute of praise to him who independently exists, "for he is good," absolutely so; and he is not only absolutely good, but "his mercy endureth forever and ever;" for he that is so essentially good has no mixture of evil are of misery in him; and he alone, therefore, can remove the miseries and misfortunes of others, and actually does remove them, and will forever. Nonexistence is a great misery; and while God upholds the existence of certain things for eternity, he is merciful to them forever; and when he renders the holy angels and men happy for eternity; he displays eternal mercy to them, not by removing the misery of unhappiness that was, but which would have been, had he not conferred eternal happiness on them. Now, this first need of praise may be applied to the Father, he being the source of existence, which he communicates to the Son by generation, and to the Holy Ghost by procession, in which the Son is united with him. The second tribute of praise is given to the Son, in the second verse, for he is called "the God of gods." Angels and men are called gods, but they are created gods, and all of you the sons of the Most High;" but the only begotten Son of God is God of gods, being the natural Son of God, while all others are only adopted sons, and, therefore, as much inferior to God the Son as anything created is to its maker. And though the gods alluded to deserve the name to some extent, in respect of those beneath them, still, in respect of the only begotten Son of God, they are mere creatures. Praise ye, therefore the God of gods, that is to say, the only begotten Son of God, through whose mercy you are allowed to share in the name. "For his mercy endureth forever." For in union with the Father, he removes all miseries from his creatures. The third tribute of praise may be applied to the Holy Ghost. Lordship implies free

will, and they who do as they please are called lords, while they who must have needs, submit to the will of another are called servants. Now, the liberty of the Holy Ghost is boundless, as we read, 2 Corinthians 3, “where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty;” and in John 3, “the Spirit breatheth, where he will;” and in 1 Corinthians 12, “but all these things, one and the same Spirit worketh, dividing to everyone according as he will.” David, therefore, says, “praise ye the Lord of lords;” praise ye the Holy Ghost, the increase and omnipotent love, “for his mercy endureth forever.”

4. “Who alone doth great wonders: for his mercy endureth forever.” The expression, “praise ye the Lord,” is to be prefixed to this verse, as well as to all the remaining verses of the Psalm. He now begins the praise God, by reason of his great and wonderful works; works that no one else could produce, such as the creation, for in other matters God has employed the angels, and even other creatures. His mercy is praised especially in these works, because, as we have already stated, God did nothing from necessity, as if he needed creatures, all was done through his great and unspeakable mercy.

5. “Who made the heavens in understanding: for his mercy endureth forever.” The heavens, as we know, was God’s first work; and he made them “in understanding,” that is to say, in or by his wisdom, “for his mercy endureth forever;” because it was his will to bring the heavens out of nothing, and at the same time to prepare an everlasting home for men and angels.

6. “Who established the earth above the waters: for his mercy endureth forever.” Another principal work of God was the earth. For, “in the beginning God made the heavens and the earth.” The heavens were made as a palace for immortals, the earth as a mansion for mortals. The air and the water are intermediate elements for the use of man. Now, he says “the earth was established above the water;” not that the water was below, in the bottom of the globe, but that the surface of the earth was, to a great extent, higher than the surface of the water, so as to enable man and other animals to live on its surface. Of the earth’s being in the depths of the world David writes in Psalm 103, “who hast founded the earth upon its own bases, it shall not be moved forever and ever.” The earth, therefore, so held the water in its caverns and depths as to lie beneath the water in some places, and to rise above it in others. God’s mercy is seen here in three different ways – first, in regard of the earth, which he brought out of nothing, secondly, in respect to the water, for which he provided a fixed and permanent place; and, thirdly, in respect to man, on whom he bestowed the earth so denuded of water, and still sufficiently irrigated by it, as to tender it habitable, fit for cultivation, and fruitful.

7. “Who made the great lights: for his mercy endureth forever.”

8. “The sun to rule the day: for his mercy endureth forever.”

9. “The moon and the stars to rule the night: for his mercy endureth forever.”

His third great and wonderful work was the creation of the sun, moon, and stars, that belong to both heaven and earth, inasmuch as they adorn the heavens and benefit the earth. He calls them "great lights," as in fact, they are greater than we can well imagine, whereas the stars, that, by reason of their distance, seem so diminutive to us, are much larger than our globe. The sun is said to rule the day and the moon and stars the night, because the afford light both by day and by night to man, to follow his avocations, as is recorded in Genesis. Mention is made in Genesis of two great lights only, the sun and moon, because the two shed more light on the earth than all the stars together; still David calls even the stars great lights, because, in fact, they are; and, if we believe astronomers, and even larger than the moon.

10. "Who smote Egypt with their firstborn: for his mercy endureth forever."

11. "Who brought out Israel from among them: for his mercy endureth forever."

12. "With a mighty hand and with a stretched out arm: for his mercy endureth forever."

13. "Who divided the Red Sea into parts: for his mercy endureth forever."

14. "And brought out Israel through the midst thereof: for his mercy endureth forever."

15. "And overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea: for his mercy endureth forever."

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17. "Who smote great kings: for his mercy endureth forever."

18. "And slew strong kings: for his mercy endureth forever."

19. "Sehon king of the Amorrhites: for his mercy endureth forever."

20. "And Og, king of Basan: for his mercy endureth forever."

21. "And he gave their land for an inheritance: for his mercy endureth forever."

22. "For an inheritance to his servant Israel: for his mercy endureth forever." God is praised in these verses for his works of providence, all of which are recorded in Exodus and in the previous Psalm. Question may be raised, though, how such acts as the destruction of the Egyptians, the slaying of the firstborn, and of the kings, can be called "works of mercy?" when they appear to be acts of justice rather than of mercy. They were, certainly, acts of justice, in regard of the wicked, who were stricken and slain; but in respect to God's people, they were acts of mercy; and, as the delivery of the people was the principal object intended by God, all those acts are in consequence attributed to his mercy. God sometimes shows his mercy even to the

wicked, by shortening their time in this world, thus preventing them of an accumulation of sin, and the treasuring up, in consequence, of a greater amount of punishment "on the day of anger and the just judgment of God."

23. "For he was mindful of us in our affliction: for his mercy endureth forever."

24. "And he redeemed us from our enemies: for his mercy endureth forever." These verses may refer to the delivery of the Jews from the slavery of Pharaoh, the Philistines, and Nabuchodonosor; as also to the delivery of the Church from the persecution of tyrants and heretics and, finally, with the greatest propriety, to the delivery of the elect from the captivity of the devil, and all the dangers of this world.

25. "Who giveth food to all flesh: for his mercy endureth forever." The Prophet now includes those who suffer no persecution, for fear they may imagine they were exempt from the obligation of praising the Lord. He, therefore, says, "praise the Lord" everyone of you, without exception, because it is he who supports and preserves every living creature, especially man, and that because "his mercy endureth forever."

26. "Give glory to the God of heaven: for his mercy endureth forever."

27. "Give glory to the Lord of lords: for his mercy endureth forever." He concludes by repeating the two last verses of the first three, for by the "God of heaven" he evidently intends the "God of gods," for he is called the God of heaven, as being the only true God, as Psalm 95 has it, "for all the gods of the Gentiles are devils, but the Lord made the heavens;" and as also because, seated as he is in the highest heavens, as on his throne, he proves from this fact that he is the God of gods.