

suffered unjust persecution, may now “execute the judgment” that was long since “written” like a decree or a resolution, deeply engraved on a pillar, one that could not be changed or erased. “This glory is to all his saints,” the glory of sitting with Christ on the clouds, and judging the world; and its ruler will be the peculiar privilege of the saints, as St. Paul has it, “know you not that the saints shall judge this world? And if the world shall be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters?” Truly, therefore, “is this glory to all his saints.”

END OF PSALM 149

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: 149

The church is particularly bound to praise God.

1. Sing ye to the Lord a new canticle: let his praise be in the church of the saints.
2. Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: and let the children of Sion be joyful in their king.
3. Let them praise his name in choir: let them sing to him with the timbrel and the psaltery.
4. For the Lord is well pleased with his people: and he will exalt the meek unto salvation.
5. The saints shall rejoice in glory: they shall be joyful in their beds.
6. The high praises of God shall be in their mouth: and two-edged swords in their hands.
7. To execute vengeance upon the nations, chastisements among the people.
8. To bind their kings with fetters, and their nobles with manacles of iron.
9. To execute upon them the judgment that is written: this glory is to all his saints. Alleluia.

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: 149

EXPLANATION OF THE PSALM

1. "Sing ye to the Lord a new canticle: let his praise be in the church of the saints." This first verse is directed to those he addressed in the last verse of the preceding Psalm, when he said, "a hymn to all his saints, to a people approaching to him;" for these three last Psalms are so connected, and one appears to be such a continuation of the other, that they appear to form one Psalm, which, perhaps, is the reason that the three are read under one antiphon in the end of Lauds. He, therefore, says, O you saints, the people approaching to God, "Sing to the Lord a new canticle;" let other creatures sing a canticle for their creation, which is an old canticle, but sing you a canticle for your regeneration, justification, glorification, which is "a new canticle," on a new subject, and to be chanted by new men. "Let his praise be in the church of the saints;" a reason assigned for having asked them to sing in such manner, being as much as to say: you saints, "sing ye to the Lord a new canticle," because it is but meet that God's praise should be heard, especially in the congregation of the saints.

2. "Let Israel rejoice in him that made him, to let the children of Zion be joyful in their king." This new canticle is calculated to inspire great joy; for it announces the favor of perfect happiness, and springs from more ardent love. Israel, the chosen people of God, therefore, that sings this new canticle, rejoice in singing "in him that made him;" in their Creator, who not only called them into existence, but endowed them with grace, thus giving them not only existence, but to be Israel. "And let the children of Zion be joyful in their king," which is no more than a repetition of the above.

3. "Let them praise his name in choir: let them sing to him with the timbrel and the psaltery." Not content with singing this new canticle with joy and gladness, they will blend instrumental with vocal music, so that their hands, as well as their tongues, or in other words, their actions, as well as their words, shall be directed to God's praise and glory. The following Psalm would seem to indicate that the "choir" named here is a musical instrument as well as the timbrel and the psaltery; but it may also signify a number of voices in concert, and in such sense it has been understood by the fathers.

4. "For the Lord is well pleased with his people: and he will exalt the meek unto salvation." The reason for singing this new canticle is because the Lord hath been well pleased with his people, that is to say, loved them from eternity, from his own

pure kindness, which goodwill of God is the foundation and primary source of all our blessings; for predestination, vocation, justification, glorification, all are owing to God's having been "well pleased with his people;" and, touching on this, the Lord himself said, "fear not, little flock; for it hath pleased your Father to give you a kingdom." This good pleasure of God is frequently alluded to by St. Paul, and it justly forms the subject of the new canticle;" and he will exalt the meek unto salvation;" God not only resolved in his mind to deal thus kindly with his people, but he will carry it into immediate effect, because "he will exalt the meek unto salvation," he will exalt to the highest degree possible, to eternal happiness, his meek and humble people, as being true members of him who said, "I am meek and humble of heart."

5. "The saints shall rejoice in glory: they shall be joyful in their beds." He now describes the future glory of the elect, for which they are with all their hearts to sing this new canticle. "The saints shall rejoice in glory," to which none but the truly just arrive, and at the same time "shall be joyful in their beds," in that place of supreme rest, "from henceforth now, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors," Apoc. 14. Thus, "the saints in glory" shall rest from their labors, but not from their praise; they will "be in their beds," to rest there, but not to sleep.

6. "The high praises of God shall be in their mouth: and two-edged swords in their hands." The Saints in their supreme felicity will not be altogether idle, for they will find occupation in chanting God's praise and brandishing their swords, and the latter refers to the judiciary power with which they will be invested on the last day, to strike down all their persecutors, according to Deuteronomy 32, "if I shall whet my sword as the lightning, and my hand take hold on judgment."

7. "To execute vengeance upon the nations, chastisements among the people." The use the Saints will make of the two-edged swords will be to wreck vengeance on their enemies on the day of judgment, to chastise them and to reproach them with their iniquities, for "then shall the just stand the great constancy against those that have afflicted them."

8. "To bind their kings with fetters, and their nobles with manacles of iron." Having said that "the two-edged swords" represent the judiciary power entrusted to the saints on the last day, it will not appear strange they should use such power "to execute vengeance," and "to bind kings in fetters," for such power includes the one as well as the other, and both will be fully exercised on the last day, when, in union with Christ, they will pass sentence on the Antiochuses, the Herods, the Neros, the Diocletians, and the other infidel princes, and will say, "having bound their hands and feet, cast them into the exterior darkness."

9. "To execute upon them the judgment that is written: this glory is to all his saints. Alleluia." The Prophet now explains clearly why he said "to execute vengeance," and "to bind kings in fetters." That the saints, who on earth have