

hath been bountiful to thee.”

8. “For he hath delivered my soul from death: my eyes from tears; my feet from falling.” He now explains the extent of the bounty spoken of in the preceding verse: deliverance from death and life everlasting. “My eyes from tears,” a life subject to no trouble, with all blessings in abundance, “for God wiped away all tears from their eyes;” and, finally, “my feet from falling;” that is, he will give me not only a happy life, but even a secure and everlasting one, from which I can never fall. He will thus deliver me from the sorrows of death, and the perils of the pit, and place me in the security and eternity of a most happy life.

9. “I will please the Lord in the land of the living.” He concludes the Psalm by saying, that as he is to enjoy, in security, a life of the best and sweetest sort, a thing that will be very pleasing to him, he will do all in his power to please the Lord “in the land of the living,” where all enjoy life to the fullest extent, and thus please the living God in all possible ways and manners; for while we are in this pilgrimage many are dead, and they who live, live, according to the spirit, and not according “to the body which is dead,” whence he exclaims, “who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Romans 7.

END OF PSALM 114

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: 114

The prayer of a just man in affliction, with a lively confidence in God.

1. I have loved, because the Lord will hear the voice of my prayer.
2. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me: and in my days I will call upon him.
3. The sorrows of death have compassed me: and the perils of hell have found me. I met with trouble and sorrow:
4. And I called upon the name of the Lord. O Lord, deliver my soul.
5. The Lord is merciful and just, and our God showeth mercy.
6. The Lord is the keeper of the little ones: I was humbled, and he delivered me.
7. Turn, O my soul, into thy rest: for the Lord hath been bountiful to thee.
8. for he hath delivered my soul from death; my eyes from tears; my feet from falling.
9. I will please the Lord in the land of the living.

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: 114

EXPLANATION OF THE PSALM

1. "I have loved, because the Lord will hear the voice of my prayer." His soul burning with desire for the Lord, absolutely says, "I have loved," and does not say whom, taking it for granted that all others are equally in love with one so deserving of love, and, therefore, that they know whom he means. In like manner, when Mary Magdalene, at the sepulcher, was asked, "whom seekest thou?" She answered, "Sir, if thou hast taken him away, tell me," without saying for whom she was looking, or for whom she was weeping, supposing that everyone shared in her love as well as in her sorrow, and knew the object of both. And, in fact, when we all seek for happiness, which, without any sprinkling of evil, we can find in God alone, as St. John intimates, when he says, "God is light, and in him there is no darkness;" man should absolutely love God alone, and when they hear the expression, "I have loved," they ought to understand it as applying to the love of the supreme good alone. David, however, from the reasons he assigns, leaves it pretty clear that, when he said, "I have loved," he meant God only; for he adds, "because the Lord will hear the voice of my prayer;" that is, I have loved the Lord, because he is kind and merciful, and from his natural kindness will hear the voice of my prayer. What reasons have we not for loving him, when the supreme being, who wants nothing from us, is so ready to hear the prayers of his vilest servants, so that we can safely assure ourselves of being heard? This is expressed more clearly in Psalm 85, where he says, "for thou, O Lord, art sweet and mild, and plenteous in mercy to all that call upon thee." The meaning, then, is: I have loved the Lord, because I am certain that he will hear the voice of my prayer.

2. "Because he hath inclined his ear unto me: and in my days I will call upon him." He now tells us how he learned that God would hear his prayer. I know it thus, because himself inspired me, invited me, when "he inclined his ear unto me;" for, why incline his ear unless he were prepared to hear me? Now, God inclines his ear to us when he inspires us with a desire for prayer, for we would not pray at all were not God, by his previous grace, good enough to give us a desire for prayer. David, then, accustomed to such internal calls, and feeling himself internally inspired with a desire for prayer, understood that God's ear was inclined to him, and he, therefore, also adds, "and in my days I will call upon him;" that is, while the days of grace are shining on me, while I have light to see God's ear inclined to me, I will not let the opportunity pass, but I will call up on the Lord. He calls the days in which he got the light of previous grace, "my days;" for when the light of grace departs, the day is succeeded by the night, that night "in which no man can work."

3. "The sorrows of death have compassed me: and the perils of hell have found me. I met with trouble and sorrow."

4. "And I called upon the name of the Lord. O Lord, deliver my soul." He now tells us on what his prayers turned; on the dangers and temptations in regard of his eternal salvation, the

only subject worth the notice of a soul that truly loves God. In Psalm 17, we find similar expressions, which evidently apply to the temporal difficulties that then surrounded David, so that we are forced here to apply them to his spiritual troubles. When he says, then "the sorrows of death have compassed me," he means, I am tormented with such dreadful temptations that I am compelled to cry out with the apostle, "who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" He explains it more fully, when he says, "the perils of hell have found me;" for it is through fear of that peril the greatest of all perils, that those near death conceive the greatest fear and alarm. In the Hebrew the expression is, "the narrow ways of hell," giving us the idea of one walking on the edge of a precipice, in danger every moment of falling, and of being dashed to pieces, unless they tread with the greatest care and caution; and such is the way of salvation, difficult and narrow, so that they who walk without extreme caution run every risk of being precipitated into hell. Hence the apostle warns us, "see, therefore, brethren, how you walk circumspectly." – "I met with trouble and sorrow." Many persons, engrossed by the prosperity of this world, are compassed by the snares of death, and the perils of hell, without perceiving it; and the more they are compassed by such perils, the less they reflect on them, and thus they are insensible to fear or trouble. David reflected on them, and his reflections brought him to know where he was; and, therefore, in fear and trembling he declares, "I met with trouble and sorrow," while the world, and its pleasures, and enjoyments were smiling on me. I perceived that I was compassed by the chains and sorrows of death, and that I was exposed to the perils of the pit; and, therefore, in my grief and sorrow "I called upon the name of the Lord;" and I said, "O Lord deliver my soul" from the pains of death, and the dangers of hell.

5. "The Lord is merciful and just, and our God showeth mercy." To show what good hope he had in God, he assigns a reason for having had such hope, because "the Lord is merciful and just, and our God showeth mercy;" the Lord is merciful, because he goes before sinners, and inspires them with the idea of penance and prayer, "for he first loved us," as the apostle says. He is also just, for the next no one go un-chastised, as St. Paul says, "he scourgeth every son whom he receiveth," and he pardons those who do not pardon themselves, and not only forgives their sins, but makes them his heirs.

6. "The Lord is the keeper of little ones: I was humbled, and he delivered me." God, as was stated a while ago, is a God of mercy, but especially the little ones that fear him, which is more clearly expressed in Psalm 102, where he says, "for according to the height of the heaven above the earth: he hath strengthened his mercy toward them that fear him." As a father hath compassion on his children, so hath the Lord on them that fear him." We have the same in the Canticle of the Virgin, "and his mercy is from generation to generation to them that fear him;" and as the last words of the previous verse, "our God showeth mercy;" which mercy, according to the Hebrew, is that of a father, he now tells us to whom such mercy is extended, and says it is to the little ones, the meek, and the humble, who had a filial fear of God. "The Lord is to keeper of little ones." The Lord in his fatherly mercy protects his little ones, as he would so many tender children, for whom he had prepared an everlasting inheritance. And as David, through the inspirations of the Holy Ghost, knew himself to be one of them, he adds, "I was humbled;" I endeavored to be a little one, and "he delivered me," or rather, he will deliver me, as it is in the Hebrew.

7. "Turn, O my soul, into thy rest: for the Lord hath been bountiful to thee." The just man, so delivered, now congratulates himself on the acquirement of such a blessing. "Turn, O my soul, into thy rest." Hasten on the wings of desire to the place of true and everlasting rest, to the heavenly Jerusalem, to the real Abraham's bosom, "for the Lord