

LENT - The Seven Penitential Psalms

Psalm 6

O Lord, rebuke me not in Thy indignation, * nor chastise me in Thy wrath.
Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak: * heal me, O Lord, for my bones are troubled.
And my soul is troubled exceedingly: * but Thou, O Lord, how long?
Turn to me, O Lord, and deliver my soul: * O save me for Thy mercy's sake.
For there is no one in death, that is mindful of Thee: * and who shall confess to Thee in hell?
I have labored in my groanings, every night I will wash my bed: *
I will water my couch with my tears.
My eye is troubled through indignation: * I have grown old amongst all my enemies.
Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity: * for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping.
The Lord hath heard my supplication: * the Lord hath received my prayer.
Let all my enemies be ashamed, and be very much troubled: *let them be turned
back, and be ashamed very speedily.

Psalm 31

Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven * and whose sins are covered.
Blessed is the man to whom the Lord hath not imputed sin, * and in whose
spirit, there is no guile.
Because I was silent my bones grew old; * whilst I cried out all day long.
For day and night Thy hand was heavy upon me: *
I am turned in my anguish, whilst the thorn is fastened.
I have acknowledged my sin to Thee, * and my injustice I have not concealed. I said I will
confess against myself my injustice to the Lord: * and Thou hast forgiven the wickedness of
my sin.
For this shall every one that is holy pray to Thee * in a seasonable time.
And yet in a flood of many waters, * they shall not come nigh unto him. Thou art my
refuge from the trouble which hath encompassed me: * my joy, deliver me from them
that surround me.
I will give thee understanding, and I will instruct thee in this way, in which thou shalt go: * I will fix my
eyes upon thee.
Do not become like the horse and the mule, * who have no understanding.
With bit and bridle bind fast their jaws, * who come not near unto thee.
Many are the scourges of the sinner, * but mercy shall encompass him that hopeth in the Lord.
Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye just, * and glory, all ye right of heart.

Psalm 37

Rebuke me not, O Lord, in Thy indignation; * nor chastise me in Thy wrath.

For Thy arrows are fastened in me: * and Thy hand hath been strong upon me.
There is no health in my flesh, because of Thy wrath: * there is no peace for
my bones, because of my sins.
For my iniquities are gone over my head: * and as a heavy burden are become heavy upon me. My sores are
putrefied and corrupted, * because of my foolishness.
I am become miserable, and am bowed down even to the end: * I walked
sorrowful all day long.
For my loins are filled with illusions; * and there is no health in my flesh.
I am afflicted and humbled exceedingly: * I roared with the groaning of my heart.
Lord, all my desire is before Thee, * and my groaning is not hidden from Thee.
My heart is troubled, my strength hath left me, * and the light of my eyes itself is not with me.
My friends and my neighbors * have drawn near and stood against me.
And they that were near me stood afar off: * and they that sought my soul used violence.
And they that sought evils to me spoke vain things, * and studied deceits all day long.
But I, as a deaf man, heard not: * and as a dumb man not opening his mouth.
And I became as a man that heareth not: * and that hath no reproofs in his mouth.
For in Thee, O Lord, have I hoped: * Thou wilt hear me, O Lord my God.
For I said: Lest at any time my enemies rejoice over me: * and whilst my feet are
moved, they speak great things against me.
For I am ready for scourges: * and my sorrow is continually before me.
For I will declare my iniquity: * and I will think for my sin.
But my enemies live and are stronger than I: * and they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied.
They that render evil for good, have detracted me, * because I followed goodness.
Forsake me not, O Lord my God: * do not Thou depart from me.
Attend unto my help, * O Lord, the God of my salvation.

Psalm 50

Have mercy on me, O God, * according to Thy great mercy.
And according to the multitude of Thy tender mercies * blot out my iniquity.
Wash me yet more from my iniquity, * and cleanse me from my sin.
For I know my iniquity, * and my sin is always before me.
To Thee only have I sinned, and have done evil before Thee: * that Thou mayst be justified in Thy
words, and mayst overcome when Thou art judged.
For behold I was conceived in iniquities; * and in sins did my mother conceive me. For behold
Thou hast loved truth: * the uncertain and hidden things of Thy wisdom Thou hast made manifest
to me.
Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed: * Thou shalt
wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow. To my hearing Thou shalt
give joy and gladness: * and the bones that have been humbled shall rejoice.
Turn away Thy face from my sins, * and blot out all my iniquities.
Create a clean heart in me, O God: * and renew a right spirit within my bowels.
Cast me not away from Thy face; * and take not Thy holy spirit from me.
Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, * and strengthen me with a perfect spirit.

I will teach the unjust Thy ways: * and the wicked shall be converted to Thee. Deliver me from blood, O God, Thou God of my salvation: * and my tongue shall extol Thy justice.

O Lord, Thou wilt open my lips: * and my mouth shall declare Thy praise.

For if Thou hadst desired sacrifice, I would indeed have given it: * with burnt offerings

Thou wilt not be delighted.

A sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit: * a contrite and humbled heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise. Deal favorably, O Lord, in Thy good will with Sion; * that the walls of Jerusalem may be built up.

Then shalt Thou accept the sacrifice of justice, oblations, and whole burnt offerings: * then shall they lay calves upon Thy altar.

Psalm 101

Hear, O Lord, my prayer: * and let my cry come to Thee.

Turn not away Thy face from me: * in the day when I am in trouble, incline Thy ear to me. In what day soever I shall call upon Thee, * hear me speedily.

For my days are vanished like smoke: * and my bones are grown dry like fuel for the fire.

I am smitten as grass, and my heart is withered: * because I forgot to eat my bread.

Through the voice of my groaning, * my bone hath cleaved to my flesh.

I am become like to a pelican of the wilderness: * I am like a night raven in the house.

I have watched, * and am become as a sparrow all alone on the housetop.

All the day long my enemies reproached me: * and they that praised me did swear against me. For I did eat ashes like bread, * and mingled my drink with weeping.

Because of Thy anger and indignation: * for having lifted me up Thou hast thrown me down.

My days have declined like a shadow, * and I am withered like grass.

But Thou, O Lord, endurest forever: * and Thy memorial to all generations. Thou shalt arise and have mercy on Sion: * for it is time to have mercy on it, for the time is come.

For the stones thereof have pleased Thy servants: * and they shall have pity on the earth thereof.

And the Gentiles shall fear Thy name, O Lord, * and all the kings of the earth Thy glory. For the Lord hath built up Sion: * and He shall be seen in His glory.

He hath had regard to the prayer of the humble: * and He hath not despised their petition.

Let these things be written unto another generation: * and the people that shall be created shall praise the Lord:

Because He hath looked forth from His high sanctuary: * from Heaven the Lord hath looked upon the earth.

That He might hear the groans of them that are in fetters: * that He might release the children of the slain:

That they may declare the name of the Lord in Sion: * and His praise in Jerusalem.

When the people assemble together, * and kings, to serve the Lord.

He answered Him in the way of his strength: * Declare unto me the fewness of my days.

Call me not away in the midst of my days: * Thy years are unto generation and generation. In the beginning, O Lord, Thou foundedst the earth: * and the Heavens are the works of Thy hands.

They shall perish but Thou remainest: * and all of them shall grow old like a garment:

And as a vesture Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed. *

But Thou art always the selfsame, and Thy years shall not fail.

The children of Thy servants shall continue: * and their seed shall be directed forever.

Psalm 129

Out of the depths I have cried to Thee, O Lord: * Lord, hear my voice.

Let Thy ears be attentive * to the voice of my supplication.

If Thou, O Lord, wilt mark iniquities: * Lord, who shall stand it.

For with Thee there is merciful forgiveness: * and by reason of Thy law, I
have waited for Thee, O Lord.

My soul hath relied on His word: * my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

From the morning watch even until night, * let Israel hope in the Lord.

Because with the Lord there is mercy: * and with Him plentiful redemption.

And He shall redeem Israel * from all his iniquities.

Psalm 142

Hear, O Lord, my prayer: give ear to my supplication in Thy truth: * hear me in Thy justice.

And enter not into judgment with Thy servant: * for in Thy sight no man living shall be justified.

For the enemy hath persecuted my soul: * he hath brought down my life to the earth. He hath made
me to dwell in darkness as those that have been dead of old: * and my spirit is in anguish within
me: my heart within me is troubled.

I remembered the days of old, I meditated on all Thy works: * I meditated
upon the works of Thy hands.

I stretched forth my hands to Thee: * my soul is as earth without water unto Thee.

Hear me speedily, O Lord: * my spirit hath fainted away.

Turn not away Thy face from me, * lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit.

Cause me to hear Thy mercy in the morning; * for in Thee have I hoped.

Make the way known to me, wherein I should walk: * for I have lifted up my soul to Thee. Deliver me
from my enemies, O Lord, to Thee have I fled: * teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God.

Thy good spirit shall lead me into the right land: * for Thy name's sake, O Lord,
Thou wilt quicken me in Thy justice.

Thou wilt bring my soul out of trouble: * and in Thy mercy Thou wilt destroy my enemies. And Thou wilt cut
off all of them that afflict my soul: * for I am Thy servant.

For those interested in a deeper understanding of the psalms, we recommend ***A Commentary of
The Book of Psalms Translated from the Latin of Saint Robert Bellarmine*** by Ven. John
O'Sullivan, D.D. Archdeacon of Kerry. (Loreto Publications, 2011)