PSALM 3

✠ This psalm is written in the form of a Lament. In a lament psalm, a petitioner addresses God directly on the occasion of some calamity. The form of address (be it personal or corporate) presents a complaint which is underlain with an expression of trust in God. Because of this trust, there is a confident request for help and salvation. It generally involves a form of thanksgiving as well. The common elements of lament psalms are : address ; complaint ; trust ; deliverance ; assurance ; praise. A lament is the most numerous sort of psalm. Because of the nature of these psalms, they may fit more than one type.

✣ See Psalms 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 16, 21, 24, 25, 27, 30, 34, 37, 38, 40, 41, 42, 43, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 62, 63, 68, 69, 70, 73, 76, 78, 79, 82, 84, 85, 87, 89, 93, 101, 108, 118, 119, 122, 124, 128, 129, 136, 138, 140, 141, 142, 143.

✠ This psalm is the first of the Six Psalms of Matins : Psalms 3, 37, 62, 87, 102, 142. It is an ancient morning psalm.

✠ Lucreţia Vasilescu informs us that in Book One (except Psalms 1 and 2), in Hebrew, the Tetragrammaton יהוה (YHWH but written from right to left) predominates. This is the Name of the God of Israel, as given to Moses at the Exodus, which is always pronounced as *Adonai*, "The LORD". This is found also to be the case in Books Four and Five.

✠ Saint Athanasius reminds us that all the psalms in one or another manner refer to Christ ; however, in Psalm 3 and Psalm 108, we are made particularly aware of the malice of the religious authorities and of the betrayal by those close to Him. Likewise, Saint Athanasius informs us that we may sing this psalm while bearing our own afflictions in mind. He says that we can use this psalm when we are persecuted by our own family and opposed by many.

✠ Saint Augustine strongly opines that this psalm can be understood not only as Christ Himself praying to the Father, but also as the whole Body of Christ (the Church) praying to the Father.

✣ *The Orthodox Study Bible* note refers rather to Christ Himself praying to the Father in verses 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9. It adds that this psalm makes prophetic reference to Jesus the Christ, the Son of David by human descent (see Matthew 1:1 ; Romans 1:3).

✠ Saint Jerome informs us that this psalm can pertain to the Prophet David ; it can pertain to Christ, and through Him to all the saints.

"Passion, Death, Resurrection of Christ"

"*A morning prayer for protection and salvation*"

---

1 A psalm by David, when in the wilderness he ran away from the face of his son Absalom.

V 1 About the Inscription : in this psalm and in many other psalms, verse 1 is the Inscription. However,

there are also many other psalms in which verse 1 includes both the Inscription and the first verse of the psalm itself.

✠ This psalm is the first of fourteen psalms with a historical Inscription : Psalms 7 ; 17 ; 29 ; 33 ; 50 ; 51 ; 53 ; 55 ; 56 ; 58 ; 59 ; 62 ; 141.

✠ In the Masoretic (Hebrew) text, the Inscription is : "A psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son". Some versions of the Septuagint Greek (LXX) lack "*in the wilderness*", thus making it the same as the Masoretic text.

✠ Saint Jerome mentions that there are many who insist that the inscriptions do not belong to the psalms, and that he is amazed that anyone would say that there could be anything in the Scriptures without reason. He then asks that, since our Saviour said that not one jot nor tittle (the smallest Hebrew letter, and a tiny apostrophe-like hook) would be lost from the Law, then how much more shall not one word or syllable be lost. See Matthew 5:18.

✠ About "*wilderness*" : the Greek noun ἔρημος, *erēmos*, translated as "wilderness", can also mean "desert". The adjective means "desolate", "solitary". The concept of wilderness, throughout the Psalter, does not necessarily suggest a place in which there is nothing at all growing. Such a place is a wild and uncultivated region which may have some (perhaps minimal) vegetation, and which is inhabited only by wild animals. It is not completely barren as is a desert. "Wilderness", or "desert" may be used in modern times to refer also to the northern forests.

✣ See 5 Moses 32:10 (Matins Canticle 2) ; Psalms 28:8 ; 54:8 ; 62:1, 2 ; 64:13 ; 67:8 ; 74:7 ; 77:15, 19, 40, 52 ; 94:8 ; 105:9, 14, 26 ; 106:4, 33, 35 ; 135:16.

✠ According to Saint Gregory of Nyssa, this struggle with Absalom relates to our struggle with evil. See his further comments on the subject in his *Commentary on the Inscriptions of the Psalms*. See 2 Kingdoms chapters 15-18.

✣ According to Saint Augustine, these words regarding King David's plight have a resonance in our Lord's Passion.

[Κύριε, τί ἐπληθύνθησαν Domine, quid multiplicati ?]

2 O LORD, why have those afflicting me multiplied ?/ Many are rising against me ;

V 2 About "*O Lord ... those afflicting me*" : Saint Athanasius advises that if we are persecuted by our own people and we have many rising against us, then we ought to sing (or at least to say) Psalm 3.

✣ Saint Didymus the Blind of Alexandria comments that, as King David, those who follow the Lord's righteousness and give no cause for hate, will have enemies for no reason. Our Saviour consoles us by saying : "*Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake*" (Matthew 5:11). This is what happened when, for no reason, King David had many enemies (such as Saul and Absalom and their companions). For no cause, they attacked the righteous man who had often shown them great hospitality and generosity.

✣ Father P Reardon draws our attention to the fact that struggle with adversaries is a constant theme throughout the whole Psalter. The adversaries of King David were many and various, and it is so with many others. The main concern of Christians, however, is the struggle with spiritual adversaries who perpetually attack the believers throughout their lives on earth, as we are clearly reminded by the Apostle Paul (see Ephesians 6:12). He correctly warns that if anyone should dare to think that this struggle is too violent to be kept in print, then that one has already given up the struggle.

✣ See the note about "*enemies*" on Psalm 5:9.

✠ About "*Lord*" : see the note about "*Lord*" on Psalm 1:2.

✠ About "*afflicting*" (and other verb forms) : see Psalms 12:5 ; 17:7 ; 22:5 ; 26:2, 12 ; 30:10 ; 43:8 ; 55:2 ; 59:14 ; 68:18, 20 ; 77:42 ; 80:15 ; 88:43 ; 101:3 ; 105:11 42, 44 ; 106:6, 13, 19, 28 ; 107:13 ; 118:157 ; 119:1 l ; 142:12 ; Jonah 2:3 (Matins Canticle 6) ; Habakkuk 2:16 (Matins Canticle 4) ; Isaiah 26:16 (Matins Canticle 5). See the note about "*affliction*" (noun) on Psalm 4:2.

✠ About "*many ... me"* : Saint Augustine reminds us that at the Passion of the Saviour, the "*many*" included not only the expected adversaries, but also one of His disciples.

✣ See Psalms 55:3 ; 118:157.

---

3 many are saying to my soul :/ "There is no salvation for him in his God".

Pause

V 3 About this verse : this verse is related to the words of Psalm 21:9, and to the references in the Gospels to the Passion of Christ.

✣ See the note on Psalm 21:9 ; see also Psalm 70:11.

✠ About "*soul*" : this translates the Greek word ψυχή, *psychē*, which translates the Hebrew word נפש, *nephesh*. It refers to a living, breathing, conscious body, rather than to an immortal soul. In this perception, inherited into Christian understanding, there is an identity between the body and the soul, and they exist together. One does not exist without the other. Thus, according to 1 Moses 2:7 and 2:19, God did not embody a soul, but rather, the body became a soul. Body and soul together make a single, united whole, and as in 1 Moses 1:20, humans and animals, and everything that has life have their being in the same way. This perception is reflected in 1 Corinthians 15:45. "Soul" may represent the whole person, the life of a person, the mind of a person. It some senses, there is an overlapping sort of relationship with "spirit". It is averred that it is in the "spirit" that the image and likeness of God are found, and it is this which also distinguishes human beings from other creatures.

✣ Saint Theophan the Recluse explains the body is made of earth. This body is not dead, but it is given a living soul. Into this soul, there is breathed a spirit, the spirit from God. This spirit is intended to know God, to worship Him, to seek and to taste Him, and to have its joy in Him alone.

✣ Metropolitan Kallistos (Ware) adds that the soul is the basic principle of life, that which makes

the body live. The body, the soul and the spirit each have their own way of knowing : the body through the senses, the soul through the intellect, the spirit through the conscience given by God. He further explains that the heart involves all three aspects.

✣ See 2 Moses 15:19 (Matins Canticle 1) ; Psalms 6:4, 5 ; 7:3, 6 ; 9:24 ; 10:1, 5 ; 12:3 ; 15:10 ; 16:9, 13 ; 18:8 ; 21:21, 30 ; 22:3 ; 23:4 ; 24:1, 13, 20 ; 25:9 ; 26:12 ; 27:3 ; 29:4 ; 30:8, 10, 14 ; 32:19, 20 ; 33:3, 23 ; 34:3, 4, 7, 9, 12, 13, 17, 25 ; 37:13 ; 38:12 ; 39:15 ; 40:5 ; 41:2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 12 ; 42:5 ; 43:26 ; 48:9, 16, 19 ; 53:5, 6 ; 54:14, 19 ; 55:7, 14 ; 56:2, 5, 17 ; 58:4 ; 61:2, 6 ; 62:2, 6, 9, 10 ; 63:2 ; 65:9, 16 ; 68:2, 11, 19, 21, 33 ; 69:3 ; 70:10, 13, 23 ; 71:13, 14 ; 73:19 ; 76:3 ; 77:18, 50 ; 83:3 ; 85:2, 4, 13, 14 ; 87:4, 15 ; 88:49 ; 93:17, 19, 21 ; 96:10 ; 102:1, 2, 22 ; 103:1, 35 ; 104:18 ; 105:15 ; 106:5, 9, 18, 26 ; 108:20, 31 ; 114:4, 7, 8 ; 118:20, 25, 28, 81, 109, 129, 167, 175 ; 119:2, 6 ; 120:7 ; 122:4 ; 123:4, 5, 7 ; 129:5, 6 ; 130:2 ; 137:3 ; 138:14 ; 140:18 ; 141:5, 8 ; 142:3, 6, 8, 11, 12 ; 145:1 ; Habakkuk 3:2 (Matins Canticle 4) ; Jonah 2:6, 8 (Matins Canticle 6) ; Daniel 3:39 (Matins Canticle 7) ; Daniel 3:86 (Matins Canticle 8) ; Luke 1:47 (Matins Canticle 9, Part 1). See the note about "*spirit*" on Psalm 30:6.

✠ About "*no salvation*" : see verse 9 (positive).

✠ About "*God*" : this translates the Hebrew word, אל (El), which in its plural form "elohim" also means "God", but also may mean "Mighty One". There is a tendency to use this word more impersonally, but especially considering the meaning "Mighty One", and the frequent reference to "God of Jacob" and "God of Israel", which both indicate a personal relationship, such a usage is mistaken. See the note about "*Lord*" on Psalm 1:2.

✣ See verse 8 ; see 2 Moses 15:2 (Matins Canticle 1) ; 5 Moses 32:3, 4, 8, 15, 17, 18, 30, 31, 43 (Matins Canticle 2) ; I Kingdoms 2:1, 2, 3 (Matins Canticle 3) ; Psalms 4:2 ; 5:3, 5, 11 ; 7:2, 4, 7, 10, 11 ; 9:18, 25, 33, 34 ; 12:4 ; 13:1, 2, 5 ; 16:6 ; 17:3, 7, 8, 22, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 47, 48 ; 18:2 ; 19:2, 6, 8 ; 21:2, 3, 11 ;

23:5, 6 ; 24:1, 5, 22 ; 26:9 ; 27:1 ; 28:1 ; 19:3, 9, 13 ; 30:3, 6, 15 ; 32:12 ; 34:23, 24 ; 35:2, 7, 8 ; 36:31 ; 37:16, 22 ; 29:4, 6, 9, 18 ; 40:14 ; 41:2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12 ; 42:1, 2, 4, 5 ; 43:2, 5, 9, 10, 21, 22 ; 44:3, 7, 8 ; 45:2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12 ; 46:2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 ; 47:2, 4, 9, 10, 11, 15 ; 48:8, 16 ; 49:1, 3, 6, 7, 14, 16, 22 ; 50:3, 12, 16, 19 ; 51:7, 9, 10 ; 52:2, 3, 6, 7 ; 53:3, 4, 5, 6 ; 54: 2, 15, 16, 20, 24 ; 55:2, 5, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13 ; 56:2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 12 ; 57:7, 12 ; 58:2, 6, 10, 11, 14, 18 ; 59:3, 8, 12, 14 ; 60: 2, 6, 8 ; 61:2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12 ; 62:2, 12 ;

63:2, 8, 10 ; 64:2, 6, 10 ; 65:3, 5, 8, 10, 16, 19, 20 ; 66:2, 4, 6, 7, 8 ; 67:2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 25, 27, 29, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36 ; 68:2, 4, 6, 7, 14, 30, 31, 32, 33, 36 ; 69:2, 5, 6 ; 70:3, 4, 11, 12, 17, 18, 19, 22 ; 71:1, 18 ; 72:1, 11, 17, 26, 28 ; 73: 1, 8, 10, 12, 22 ; 74:2, 6, 8, 10 ; 75:2, 7, 10, 12 ; 76:2, 3, 4, 10, 14, 15, 17 ; 77:7, 8, 10, 18, 19, 22, 31, 34, 35, 41, 56, 59 ; 78:1, 9 ; 79;4, 5, 8, 15, 20 ; 80:2, 5, 11 ; 81;1, 8 ; 82:2, 13, 14 ; 83:3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 ; 84:5, 7, 9 ; 85:2, 10, 12, 13 ; 86:3 ; 87:2 ; 88:7, 8, 27 ; 89:1, 17 ; 90:1, 2 ; 91:14, 16 ; 93:1, 7, 22, 23 ; 94:1, 3, 7 ; 97:3, 4 ; 98:5, 8, 9 ; 99:1, 3 ; 103:1, 33 ; 104:7 ; 105:14, 21, 47, 48 ; 106:11 ; 107:2, 6, 8, 12, 14 ; 108:1, 26 ; 112:5 ; 113:7, 10, 11 ; 114:5 ; 117:27, 28 ; 121:9 ; 122:2 ;

131:2, 5 ; 133:1 ; 134:2 ; 135:2, 26 ; 138:17, 19, 23 ; 139:7 ; 143:1, 9, 15 ; 144:1 ; 145:2 5, 10 ; 146:1, 7 ;

147:1 ; 149:6 ; 150:1 ; Habakkuk 3:18, 19 (Matins Canticle 4) ; Isaiah 26:9, 12, 13 (Matins Canticle 5) ; Jonah 2:3, 7 (Matins Canticle 6) ; Daniel 3:26, 45, 51, 52 (Matins Canticle 7) ; Luke 1:47 (Matins Canticle 9, Part 1) ; Luke 1:68, 78 (Matins Canticle 9, Part 2).

---

4 But You, O LORD, You are my Support,/ my Glory, and the One

exalting my head.

V 4 About this verse : Saint Augustine allows these words to be attributed not only to our Saviour, but also, from a different perspective, to the Church. He includes the following lines in this attribution, and likewise most of the words of this psalm. He further says that no member of the Church could attribute such "*support*", "*glory*" or any other virtue to anyone other than Christ Himself, the Head of the Body of Christ, and certainly not to oneself.

⁜ The RSV comments that an expression of trust such as is found in this verse is a common element in other psalms which are laments.

✠ About "*Support*" (noun) : in this context, this word is used, as is "*Glory*", as a sort of title for the Lord.

⁜ See notes about capitalisation on Psalm 17:2, and about "*Support*" on Psalm 17:3.

⁜ See Psalms 17:3, 19 ; 21:1, 20 ; 41:10 ; 45:8, 12 ; 53:6 ; 58:10, 17, 18 ; 61:3, 7 ; 82:9 ; 83:6 ; 88:19, 27 ; 90:2 ; 107:9 ; 108:12 ; 118:114 : 143:2. See also the note about "*support*" on Psalm 3:6.

✠ About "*Glory*" : this word translates the Greek word δόξα, *doxa*, which in ecclesiastical usage generally means "splendour", "effulgence", "resplendence", "adoration", "praise", "worship". It may also be used as "*teaching*", "judgement". The English word is derived from the Latin "gloria", which means"fame", "renown". The word can be used to describe the manifestation of God's presence. There is yet more background in the several Hebrew words which are translated as "*glory*", such as : כבד, *kavod*, and הוד, *hod*. "Kavod" meant "importance", "weight", "deference", or "heaviness", and it was translated to the Greek by "doxa".

⁜ In this verse, "*Glory*" is used as a sort of title for the Lord. In this Psalter, "*glory*" appears several times together with "*honour*", "*magnificence*", or "*riches*". See notes about capitalisation on Psalm 17:2.

⁜ See the note on Psalm 144:11 ; see also 2 Moses 15:7 (Matins Canticle 1) ; 24:16 ; 1 Kingdoms 2:8 (Matins Canticle 3) ; Psalms 8:6 ; 16:15 ; 18:2 ; 20:6 ; 23:7, 8, 9, 10 ; 25:8 ; 28:1, 2, 3, 9 ; 29:13 ; 44:14 ; 48:15, 17, 18 ; 56:6, 8, 9, 12 ; 61:8 ; 62:3 ; 65:2 ; 67:35 ; 70:8 ; 71:19 ; 72:24 ; 78:9 ; 83:12 ; 84:10 ; 95:3, 7, 8 ; 96:6 ; 101:16, 17 ; 103:31 ; 105:20 ; 107:2, 3, 6 ; 111:3, 9 ; 112:4 ; 113:9 ; 137:5 ; 144:5, 12 ; 149:5, 9 ; Habakkuk 2:14 ; Zechariah 2:9 ; Isaiah 26:10 (Matins Canticle 5) ; Daniel 3:43, 52, 53 (Matins Canticle 7) ; John 1:14 ; 2:11 ; 11:4, 40 ; 12:41 ; 17:5, 22, 24 ; 2 Corinthians 3:18 ; Hebrews 1:3 ; 2 Peter 1:17. See the note about "*glory*" on Psalm 7:6.

✠ About "*exalting my head*" : see Psalm 26:6.

✠ About "*exalting*" : see 1 Kingdoms 2:1 (Matins Canticle 3) ; Psalms 7:7 ; 17:47 ; 20:14 ; 26:5, 6 ; 29:2 ; 33:4 ; 45:11 ; 56:6, 12 ; 63:8 ; 65:17 ; 88:17, 18, 20, 25 ; 91:11 ; 93:2 ; 96:9 ; 107:6, 8 ; 111:9 ; 117:16 ; 130:1, 2 ; 139:9 ; 148:13 ; Isaiah 33:10 ; Luke 1:52 (Matins Canticle 9, Part 1).

---

5 With my voice I cried out to the LORD,/ and He listened to me from His holy mountain.

Pause

V 5 About "*with my voice*" : Saint Augustine explains that this does not refer merely to the human voice or vocalisation. Rather, it refers to the voice of the heart. Although it is not heard by human ears, the Lord hears the voice as though it were shouting. With such a voice, Susanna was heard by the Lord (see Susanna verses 42-44, otherwise Daniel 13:42-44). Further, he reminds us that the Saviour directed us to pray inaudibly in our hearts (see Matthew 6:6).

✣ See Psalms 76:2 ; 141:2.

✠ About "*voice*" : see Psalms 5:3, 4 ; 9:6 ; 17:7 ; 18:4 ; 25:7 ; 26:7 ; 27:2, 6 ; 30:23 ; 41:5, 8 ; 43:17 ; 45:7 ; 46:2, 6 ; 54:4, 18 ; 57:6 ; 63:2 ; 65:8, 19 ; 73:23 ; 76:2, 18, 19 ; 85:6 ; 92:3, 4 ; 97:5, 6 ; 101:6 ; 103:7, 12 ; 114:1 ; 117:15 ; 118:149 ; 129:2 ; 139:7 ; 140:1 ; 141:2 ; Jonah 2:3, 10 (Matins Canticle 6) ; Habakkuk 3:10, 16 (Matins Canticle 4). See the note about "*voice*" (God's voice) on Psalm 17:14.

✠ About "*cried out*" and "*listened*" : these verbs appears in various forms and combinations throughout the Psalter. "*Cried out*" appears as "*called out*" ; and "*listened*" appears as "*hear*", "*give ear*" , "*heed*", "*give heed*". They do not all express in translation precisely the same Greek words, although the sense is similar. Particularly with regard to the synonyms for "*listen*", it is important to understand that whether we ask Him or not, the Lord does indeed pay attention to our calls and cries.

✣ Saint Athanasius draws our attention to the fact that God responded to the cries of the Patriarchs, and of Moses (2 Moses chapters 32, 33). He responded likewise to the Prophets Elijah (3 Kingdoms chapter 18) and Elisha (4 Kingdoms chapters 2, 3).

✣ See the notes on Psalm 4:2 and 4:4 ; see also 2 Moses 3:7 ; 22:26 ; 4 Moses 20:16 ; 5 Moses 26:7 ; 2 Chronicles 20:9 ; Psalms 16:6 ; 17:7 ; 19:10 ; 26:7 ; 30:23 ; 33:7, 18 ; 54:17 ; 76:2 ; 85:7 ; 90:15 ; 98:6 ; 101:3 ; 114:1, 2 ; 119:1 ; 129:1, 2 ; 137:3 ; 140:1 ; Jonah 2:3 (Canticle 6) ; Isaiah 30:19 ; Hebrews 5:7 ; James 5:4. See also the note about "*call ... saved*" on Psalm 17:4.

✠ About "*holy mountain*" : see the note on Psalm 2:6.

---

6 As for me, I lay down and I slept ;/ I awoke, for the LORD will support me.

V 6 About "*As for me, I lay down and I slept ; I awoke, for the LORD will support me*" : according to Saint Augustine, that this psalm is to be understood as spoken in the Person of Christ is demonstrated in these words. Here, sleeping and waking are to be taken in the context of our Saviour's Passion and Resurrection. Saint Augustine points out that the use of "I" demonstrates that our Saviour voluntarily lay down His life, and that no-one took it from Him. It was of His own volition that He took every step of the Passion. It was of His own will that He stretched out His arms on the Cross (see John 10:17-18). This is a device of prophetic utterance. Saint Augustine stresses this fact by commenting that if it were otherwise, the simple statement by King David that he fell asleep and later awoke would appear to be somewhat silly.

✣ Bishop Eusebius of Cæsarea likewise pointedly mentions that this is a prophetic statement which points to the Death and Resurrection of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. He adds that when these events (including the Descent into Hadēs) had been accomplished, and when Christ had set free the captives, the time of prophecy came to an end.

✠ About "*lay down*" or lie down : see 3 Moses 26:6 ; Psalms 4:9 ; 56:5 ; 67:14 ; 103:22 ; Proverbs 3:27.

✠ About "*slept*" ("*sleep*", "*slumber*") : see Psalms 4:9 ; 12:4 ; 40:9 ; 43:24 ; 75:6, 7 ; 77:65 ; 118:28 ; 120:3.

✣ About "*slept*" : there are numerous references in the Scriptures to sleep as being a metaphor for the sleep of death. Such a concept is found in the Church's hymnography (see John 11:11-15 ; 1 Thessalonians 4:13).

✠ About "*awoke*" ("*awake*" and variants) : see Psalms 7:7 ; 34:23 ; 43:24 ; 56:9 ; 58:5 ; 72:20 ; 77:65 ; 79:3 ; 107:3 ; Isaiah 26:19 (Matins Canticle 5).

✠ About "*support*" : see Psalms 17:36 ; 19:3 ; 39:12 ; 40:13 ; 47:4 ; 62:9 ; 68:30 ; 88:22, 44 ; 106:17 ; 117:13 ; 118:116 ; 138:13 ; Luke 1:54 (Matins Canticle 9, Part 1). See also Psalm 3:4 (noun).

---

7 I shall not fear myriads of people,/ who together are setting upon me round about.

V 7 About "*I shall not fear ...*" : Saint Augustine encourages us all not to fear those who desire to eradicate Christianity, since the warm glow of love has been kindled (as though by oil) by the blood of the multitude of those who have been killed for the sake of Christ. In His Love is Life.

✣ Bishop Eusebius of Cæsarea predicts that there will be multitudes of jealous adversaries who will attempt to impede and block the progress of Christians towards salvation in Christ. He exhorts us all never to fear and never to yield to their ploys, but to trust the Lord.

✣ Cassiodorus writes as though these words were the words of Christ Himself. He did not fear the multitudes of adversaries, nor death itself, because He was aware that having trampled death by His Death, He would rise for the sake of the life of the whole world.

✣ See Psalms 22:4 ; 26:1, 3 ; 45:3 ; 48:6, 17 ; 54:20 ; 55:4, 5, 12 ; 63:5 ; 90:5 ; 111:7, 8 ; 117:6. See also (noun) the note about "*no fear*" on Psalm 13:5.

✠ About "*myriad*" : 1 myriad is equal to 10,000. This word came into the English language in the 16th century, and it generally implies such a large number as to be virtually uncountable.

✠ About "*people*" : see the note about "*peoples*" on Psalm 2:1.

✠ About "*together ... setting upon*" : this translates the Greek word συνεπιτίθημι, *synepitithēmi*, which means "join in attacking".

✣ See 5 Moses 32:27 (Matins Canticle 2).

✠ About "*round about*" : see Psalms11:9 ; 17:12 ; 33:8 ; 49:3 ; 75:12 ; 77:28 ; 78:3, 4 ; 88:9 ; 96:2, 3 ; 124:2 ; 127:3. See also the note about "*round about*" on Psalm 30:14. See also the note about "*encompassed me round about*" on Psalm 17:6. See also the note about "*round about*" on Psalm 88:8.

---

8 Arise, O LORD ; save me, O my God./ Because it is You that

have smitten all those who vainly are at enmity with me,/ You shattered the teeth of sinners.

V 8 About "*arise*" : Cassiodorus draws our attention to the fact that God does not in any way sleep. This word is simply used as a metaphor.

✣ See the note about "*arise*" on Psalm 9:33 ; see also 4 Moses 10:34 ; 5 Moses 32:38 (Matins Canticle 2) ; Psalms 7:7 ; 9:20 ; 11:6 ; 16:13 ; 34:2 ; 43:24, 27 ; 67:2 ; 73:22 ; 81:8 ; 101:14 ; 131:8 ; Isaiah 26:19 (Matins Canticle 5) ; 33:10.

✠ About "*save*" : see the note about "*save*" on Psalm 6:5 ; see also Psalms 7:2, 3 ; 11:2 ; 17:4, 28, 42 ; 19:7, 10 ; 21:6, 9, 22 ; 27:9 ; 29:4 ; 30:3, 8, 17 ; 32: 16, 17 ; 33:7, 19 ; 35:7 ; 36:40 ; 43:4, 7, 8 ; 53:3 ; 55:8 ; 56:4 ; 58:3 ; 59:7 ; 67:21 ; 68:2, 15, 36 ; 69:1 ; 70:2, 3 ; 71:4, 13 ; 75:10 ; 79:3, 4, 8, 20 ; 85:16 ; 97:1 ; 105:8, 10, 21, 47 ; 106:13, 19 ; 107:7 ; 108:26, 31 ; 114:6 ; 117:25 ; 118:94, 117, 146, 173 ; 137:7 ; 144:19.

✠ About "*God*" : see verse 3.

✠ About "*smitten ... enmity*" : Saint Augustine explains that these words are a prophetic reference to the downfall of the devil and his angels at the Resurrection of Christ.

✠ About "*smitten*" : see 5 Moses 32:39 (Matins Canticle 2) ; Psalms 59:2 ; 68:27 ; 77:51, 66 ; 104: 33, 36 ; 134:8, 10 ; 135:10, 17.

✠ About "*vainly*" : see the note about "*futility*" on Psalm 4:3.

✠ About "*at enmity*" : see Psalm 34:19.

✠ About "*You shattered the teeth*" : see Psalm 57:7.

✠ About "*shattered*" : see the note about "*shatter*" on Psalm 2:9.

✠ About "*teeth*" : this word is used in this verse as a metaphor for weapons or strength. The weapons may be words. In this regard, see the note about "*eating*" on Psalm 13:4 ; see Psalms 56:5 ; 57:7 ; Galatians 5:15.

✣ Saint John Chrysostom, in discussing Great Lent, cautions us : "For what good is it if we abstain from birds and fishes, but bite and devour our brothers ?" [see Galatians 5:15] He adds that to satisfy the passion of anger, we may be tempted to bite another in a spiritual or metaphorical manner. He adds that however bad biting be, the strong passion of malice (which is savage ferocity) can tempt us to devour the other. In other words, we sink our fangs in the soul of the other.

✣ Saint Augustine comments that the breaking of teeth represents the dissolving of the arguments of sinful leaders, through whom believers could be cut off from the Church. The teeth also represent the blasphemous words of sinners which would tear people away from the Lord.

✣ Bishop Eusebius of Cæsarea and Bishop Theodoret of Cyrrhus both comment that the blasphemous words and other negative comments of enemies are destroyed. When the teeth of animals, indicative of strength, are removed, the animal becomes vulnerable.

✣ Saint Basil the Fool (†1557) of Moscow rebuked Tsar Ivan IV ("The Terrible") in the midst of Great Lent, as he presented the tsar with a large piece of raw beef, and asked him why he would bother abstaining from meat when he was murdering men.

✣ The Fathers frequently remind us that words can leave worse and more prolonged wounds than a mere physical injury. Directly or indirectly, in the context of the word "*teeth*", they refer to the use of caustic or cutting words which we use against one another. The particular literary device or manner of speaking is that of "sarcasm". The standard dictionaries remind us that this word means "a sharp, bitter, or cutting expression or remark ; a bitter gibe or taunt". It is a relative of "irony" (in which words are used with opposite meanings implied). When using sarcasm, ridicule or mockery is applied with harshness, frequently with crudeness, with contemptuousness, and for destructive purposes. These details reveal the word's origin in the Greek language. The root is from the word σαρκάζω, *sarkazō*, which means "to tear flesh". It is precisely for this reason that we are warned against speaking or even thinking in such a manner. The result is the destruction of the other person, and it is also the expression of the Apostle John's words : "*Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him*" (1 John 3:15).

---

9 Salvation is of the LORD,/ and upon Your people is Your blessing.

V 9 About "*salvation*" : Saint Augustine considers that the first phrase is directed towards everyone. It serves as a warning that no-one dare presume to believe or say that any but the Lord can bring salvation (see Romans 7:24-15). The second phrase is a prayer to the Lord which asks for the blessing of His people.

✣ See the note about "*salvation*" on Psalm 11:6 ; see also 2 Moses 15:2 (Matins Canticle 1) ; 2 Kingdoms 2:1 (Matins Canticle 3) ; Psalms 9:15 ; 12:6 ; 13:7 ; 17:3, 36, 47 ; 19:6, 7 ; 20:2, 6 ; 21:2 ; 32:17 ; 34:3, 9 ; 36:39 ; 37:23 ; 39:11, 17 ; 41:6, 12 ; 42:5 ; 49:23 ; 50:14, 16 ; 52:7 ; 59:13 ; 61:2, 8 ; 66:3 ; 68:24, 30 ; 69:5 ; 70:15 ; 73:12 ; 77:22 ; 84:8, 10 ; 87:2 ; 88:27 ; 90:16 ; 95:2 ; 97:2, 3 ; 105:4 ; 107:13 ; 115:4 ; 117:14, 15, 21, 28 ; 118:41, 81, 1123, 155, 166, 174 ; 131:16 ; 139:8 ; 143:10 ; 145:3 ; 149:4 ; Jonah 2:10 (Matins Canticle 6) ; Habakkuk 3:8, 13 (Matins Canticle 4) ; Isaiah 12:2 ; 26:18 (Matins Canticle 5) ; 40:5 ; 49:6 ; 51:5, 6, 8 ; 63:8 ; Jeremiah 3:23 ; Luke 1:69, 77 (Matins Canticle 9, Part2) ; 2:30. See also the note about "*salvations*" on Psalm 17:51.

✠ About "*Your* (His, My) *people*" : see 2 Moses 15:13, 16 (Matins Canticle 1) ; 5 Moses 32:9, 36, 43 (Matins Canticle) ; Psalms 13:7 ; 27:8, 9 ; 28:11 ; 43:13 ; 47:10 ; 49:4, 7 ; 52:7 ; 59:5 ; 67:8, 36 ; 71:2, 3 ; 76:16, 21 ; 77:20, 52, 62 ; 78:13 ; 80:9, 12, 14 ; 82:4 ; 84:3, 7, 9 ; 88:20 ; 93:5, 14 ; 99:3 ; 104:24, 25, 43 ; 105:4, 40 ; 110:6, 9 ; 112:8 ; 115:5, 9 ; 124:2 ; 134:12, 14 ; 135;15 ; 148:14 ; 149:4 ; Habakkuk 3:13 (Matins Canticle 4) ; Luke 1:68, 77 (Matins Canticle 9, Part 2).

✠ About "*blessing*" (noun) : this translates the Greek word εὐλογία, *eulogia*, which means "good word", "well said", "blessing", "a bestowed blessing". This word is translated into Latin literally as "benedictio".

✣ See 1 Moses 12:2 ; Psalms 20:4, 7 ; 23:5 ; 36:26 ; 83:7 ; 108:17 ; 128:8 ; 132:3 ; Proverbs 10:23 ; Isaiah 19:24 ; see also the notes on Psalms 5:13 (verb) ; 17:47 (adjective). See also the note by Saint Nikolaj (Velimirović) on Psalm 31:1.

✠ This verse gives a mirror image of concepts, if not precise words, as a poetic intensification, as in a chiastic construction.

O Lord, pour out Your blessing upon Your people ;
that, fortified by Your Resurrection,
we may not be afraid of the thousands of corrupting
adversaries that surround us. — Roman
