

PSALM 26

✠ This psalm is written in the form of a Song of Trust.

✧ About “song of trust “ : see the note about “psalm of trust” in the introduction to Psalm 10.

✠ The NAB informs us that although this psalm has always been presented as a single psalm, the content allows for the possibility that it be treated as though it were two psalms. That is, at verse 7 there is a complete shift in tone.

✠ This psalm is used (verse 1) as the prokeimenon at Holy Baptism. It is used (verse 1) as the prokeimenon of the the Ninth Royal Hour of Theophany, and also at the Great Blessing of Waters. It is read fully at the Service of the Twelve Psalms. It is used (verse 1) as the Prokeimenon of the Divine Liturgy on Lazarus Saturday. It is used (verse 1) as the Prokeimenon of the Divine Liturgy on Bright Saturday.

✠ Saint Athanasius recommends that we sing Psalm 26 on occasions when we feel that there is nothing holy left, and that our surroundings seem to be bleak, and especially when we perceive that this situation has become long and drawn-out, and when we are hard-pressed and harassed by enemies. In addition to singing Psalm 11, the singing of this psalm can help us to take refuge in the Lord and to remember that God has not forgotten us.

✠ *The Orthodox Study Bible* indicates that this psalm may be taken to refer to Holy Baptism.

“Confident prayer of the Church, illumined by Christ”

“Contemplation of the Divine Beauty and Goodness”

“The believing heart does not shrink in fear”

1 Of David. Before the anointing.

V 1 About the first part of the Inscription : the Masoretic (Hebrew) text gives only “Of David”. “Of David” gives the same meaning as “By David”. “Before the anointing” is lacking in the Masoretic (Hebrew) text.

✧ About “*of David*” : see Psalms 25:1 ; 27:1 ; 144:1.

✠ About “*anointing*” : Saint Athanasius is of the opinion that this Davidic anointing can point forward also to the Christian Anointing with Baptism (Chrismation).

✧ Saint Augustine reminds us that in the time of the Old Covenant, it was only the king and the priests who were anointed. [There was a distinction in that the high-priest would have oil poured all over him.] However, both the kingship and the priesthood anticipated Jesus Christ Himself, who was to be both King and High Priest. He was called the Christ, because He was the Anointed One. Since that time, unlike the Old Covenant, all those who are made members of the Body of Christ in Baptism and Chrismation in the New Covenant are appropriately anointed on many parts of the body.

✧ Cassiodorus explains that King David wrote no psalm before the first anointing, and therefore that this reference is to the second anointing (see 2 Kingdoms 5:3).

✧ Bishop Theodoret of Cyrrhus gives an explanation regarding the anointing, as follows :

The history of the Kings indicates that the Prophet David had been anointed thrice : first, in Bethlehem by the prophet Samuel (1 Kingdoms 16:13) ; secondly, in Hebron by the tribe of Judah after the removal of Saul (2 Kingdoms 2:4) ; and thirdly, in Hebron, by all the tribes after the death of Mephibosheth (2 Kingdoms 5:3). He says that it is clear that the Prophet uttered this psalm before accepting the second election, and before the conduct of affairs was openly entrusted to him.

✧ See the note about "*christ*" on Psalm 2:2.

[Κύριος φωτισμός μου Dominus illuminatio]

The LORD is my Illumination and my Saviour ;/ whom shall I fear ?/ The LORD is the Protector of my life ;/ of whom shall I be afraid ?

✧ About "*Lord*" : see verse 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14 ; the note about "*Lord*" on Psalm 1:2.

✧ About "*Illumination*" : in this psalm, "*Illumination*" is used as a sort of title for the Lord. For other examples of this sort of usage, see the notes on Psalm 17:2, 3.

✧ According to Bishop Diodorus of Tarsus, the various tribulations suffered by the Israelites cause them to live in a sort of darkness ; however, the Lord's support was both their light and their support.

✧ See Psalms 43:4 ; 77:14 ; 89:8 ; 138:11 ; 2 Corinthians 4:6. See also Psalms 4:7 ; 17:29 ; 35:10 ; 42:3 ; Micah 7:8 ; John 8:12 ; 2 Corinthians 4:6 ; Hebrews 6:4 ; 10:32.

✧ About "*Saviour*" : see the notes on Psalm 23:5.

✧ About "*fear*" / "*be afraid*" : see the note about "*I shall not fear*" on Psalm 3:7 ; see also Romans 8:31, 35.

✧ About "*fear*" : see the notes about "*fear*" on Psalms 13:5 ; 14:4.

✧ Cassiodorus, Origen, and Saint Leo I all remind us that through our fear of the Lord (that is respect, or awe for the Lord) all obstacles, including fear, are overcome, with the help of angels provided by the Lord. 1 John 4:8 and 1 John 4:18 are implied : “God is love” ; “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear” [...].

✧ About “*Protector*” : in this psalm, “*Protector*” is used as a sort of title for the Lord. For other examples of this sort of usage, see the notes on Psalm 17:2, 3.

2 When those doing bad things drew near against me to eat my flesh/ –
 those afflicting me and my enemies –/ they became weak, and they fell.

V 2 About “*eat my flesh*” : Saint Augustine assures us that when we are attacked in many and pervasive ways, there is an interior part of ourselves in Christ which may not be touched by any enemy, even though we be completely destroyed. This interior part is where Christ dwells, and where our hope in resurrection in Christ remains. He cites 1 Corinthians 15:53 to emphasise this important point.

✧ Bishop Theodoret of Cyrrhus comments that when enemies surround us like voracious animals ready to eat us alive, they will find themselves to be the ones who are destroyed. Saint Ambrose of Milan adds that whatever enemies may do to our flesh, they cannot harm our soul, protected by the Lord.

✧ Metropolitan Bartholomew (Anania) tells us that this phrase taken literally is most likely a metaphor for “slander”.

✧ The NAB explains that the enemies are compared to voracious beasts, as shown in Psalms 7:3 ; 16:12 ; 21:14, 17.

✧ See the note about “*teeth*” on Psalm 3:8.

✧ About “*afflicting*” : see verse 12 ; see the note about “*afflicting*” on Psalm 3:2.

✧ About “*enemies*” : see the note on Psalm 5:9.

✧ About “*became weak*” : see the note about “*became weak*” on Psalm 9:4.

✧ About “*they fell*” : see Psalm 17:39.

3 If an army were to be drawn up against me,/ my heart shall not fear./ If
 a war were to rise up against me,/ in this do I hope.

V 3 About “*If an ... against me*” : Saint Augustine reflects that the camp of an army is well-fortified, but there is no stronger fortification than God Himself.

✠ About “*heart*” : see the note on Psalm 4:3.

✠ About “*not fear*” : Saint Augustine exhorts us to have no fear of anything but only to be God-fearing.

✧ See the note about “*fear*”/”*be afraid*” on verse 1.

✠ About “*war*” : Saint Augustine emphasises that there is no-one who can take away from us what the Almighty has given to us.

✠ About “*in this do I hope*” : Saint Augustine expresses that King David’s hope is in the petition which he is preparing. He is determined to maintain this hope even though he be persecuted by the whole world.

✧ Bishop Theodoret of Cyrrhus comments that because we already have a strong experience of Divine Assistance, Even though a multitude of enemies attack, we may be confidently armed with this hope.

✧ Origen writes that the steadfast faithfulness of a soul keeping the Lord’s commandments gives uncreated freedom. Further, he suggests that these words may refer to Jesus the Christ, who was/is not subject to fear.

✧ The word “*this*” may also possibly refer back to the first two sentences of this psalm.

✠ About “*hope*” : see the note on Psalm 4:6.

4 One thing I asked of the LORD ; this I shall seek out :/ to dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life,/ to contemplate the delight of the LORD,/ and to visit His holy temple ;

V 4 About “*one thing*” : that there are three parts of the “*one thing*” emphasises the importance of the “*one thing*”. This construction is also a Hebrew poetic device.

✧ See Luke 10:42.

✠ About “*Lord*” : see the note about “*Lord*” on verse 1.

✠ About “*seek out*” : see the note on Psalm 9:11.

✠ About “*house of the Lord*” : see the note about “*house of the Lord*” on Psalm 22:6.

✠ About “*to dwell in the house of the Lord*” : Bishop Theodoret of Cyrrhus reminds us that this desire to be constantly in the Presence of the Lord was expressed in his recovery of the Tabernacle, bringing it to Jerusalem, and his establishment of the worship of the Lord in it. He refers us to the books of Paralipomenon (Chronicles) for the details.

✧ Saint Bede of Jarrow exhorts us to use the Lord's love and strength to come to the fulfilment of this desire. Further, he reminds us that Jesus the Christ, the Saviour, being the Way, showed us the way to live in the way that we human beings were created to live ; and that, being focussed on the Lord's love, and living in the protection of His Temple, we will be protected from all assaults.

✧ About "*all the days of my life*" : Saint Augustine explains to us that the Prophet David is so burning with the love of the Lord that he wishes to be constantly in the presence of the Lord's love and forever. Saint Augustine adds that the "*days*" are not our regular earthly days, but rather days of the Kingdom of Heaven which are equivalent to years or even eons. If we ask the Lord for this, would He not give it ?

✧ About "*contemplate*" : Saint Augustine comments that the Prophet David wishes always to contemplate the Lord in peace without threats from enemies, without distraction by temptations, and without suffering imposed by enemies. He would be able to focus only on the bliss which is the Lord Himself.

✧ This word is used to translate the Greek word θεωρέω, *theoreō*. Although this word is frequently translated by others with the understanding that it means "looking at" or "beholding" something or someone (always this, "*videre*" in Latin), this sense cannot always apply, such as when one contemplates ideas or principles and the like. The understanding of Plato was that contemplation could be a function of the mind, which is related directly to the heart. If we "*contemplate the delight of the Lord*", we are in our heart and mind engaging in an encounter which goes far beyond words and the mere work of the eyes. Contemplating as a spectator always implies a distance, where as contemplation as encounter removes all distance. See the translations of Archimandrites Lazarus (Moore) and Placide (Deseille).

✧ See Psalms 63:9 ; 65:18 ; 72:3.

✧ About "*delight*" (noun) : see the note about "*delight*" on Psalm 1:2.

✧ About "*temple*" : see the note about "*temple*" on Psalm 5:8.

5 for He has hidden me in His tent in a day of my bad things ;/ He has sheltered me in a secret place of His tent./ On a rock has He exalted me ;

V 5 About "*hidden*" : see the note about "*hid*" on Psalm 9:16.

✧ About "*tent*" : Saint John Chrysostom rhetorically asks why we seem generally to be ready to spend a fortune in order to build what is merely a temporary house here on the earth, when with much less expense we can receive an imperishable and brilliant home in Heaven.

✧ "*Tent*" is a metaphor for the Temple, since the "*tent*" was its predecessor. "*Tabernacle*" is a common synonym which is used in Old Covenant translations.

✧ See verse 6 ; see also the note about "*tent*" on Psalm 14:1.

✠ About “*sheltered*” : see the note about “*shelter*” on Psalm 16:8.

✠ About “*bad things*” : this word translates the one Greek Septuagint word κακά, “kaka”. Its meaning is simply as given here.

✠ About “*secret place*” : Saint Augustine shows that the Prophet David has great confidence in the Lord who will receive him and shelter him in safety and peace as He has always done throughout the troubles of his life. He refers us Colossians 3:3. He equates the “*hidden place*” with Christ the High Priest in whom we are hidden and protected. He refers us to Hebrews 9:3, 7.

✧ See the note on Psalm 9:29.

✠ About “*rock*” : Saint Augustine explains that the Prophet David here acknowledges that it is the Lord who has exalted him upon a rock. Saint Augustine adds that this rock is a forward allusion to the Incarnate Lord Jesus Christ who is, Himself, our Rock.

✧ See the notes on Psalm 140:6 ; see 5 Moses 32:13 (Matins Canticle 2) ; Psalms 39:3 ; 60:3 ; 77:15, 16, 20 ; 80:17 ; 103:12, 18 ; 104:41 ; 113:8 ; 117:22 ; 136:9 ; Isaiah 8:14 ; 28:16 ; Daniel 2:34, 35, 45 ; Matthew 21:42, 44 ; Mark 12:10 ; Luke 20:17 ; Acts 4:11 ; Romans 9:33 ; 1 Corinthians 10:4 ; 1 Peter 2: 4, 6, 7, 8.

✠ About “*exalted*” : see verse 6 ; see also the note on Psalm 7:7.

6 and now, behold, He has exalted my head over my enemies./ I
 surrounded His tent,/ and I sacrificed in it a sacrifice of a shout of joy ;/
 I shall sing and I shall chant to the LORD.

V 6 About “*exalted my head*” : Saint Augustine comments that the Prophet David recognises that even before arriving in the house of the Lord where he would prefer always to be, the Lord has already lifted up his head. However, he meanwhile must endure suffering from enemies. Saint Augustine then shows us that this phrase looks forward towards the Incarnation, and to Christ, who is our Head. We, as the did Prophet, suffer attacks from others. Nevertheless, in Christ, we are already with the Lord in that very place of bliss.

✧ Saint Bede of Jarrow reflects that all we Christians are now able to understand this phrase in the context of Christ who is the Head of the Church, the Body of Christ, of all the saints. He constantly distributes the Grace of the Holy Spirit to each believer in accordance with their capacity to receive. He distributes this Grace not only generally to the whole Church, but also to each believer, so that each one of us may confidently say this phrase.

✧ See the note on verse 5.

✠ About “*enemies*” : see the note about “*enemies*” on Psalm 5:9.

✠ About “*tent*” : see the note on verse 5.

- ✧ About “*sacrificed*” (verb) : see the note about “*sacrifice*” (verb) on Psalm 4:6.
- ✧ About “*sacrifice*” : see the notes about “*sacrifice*” (noun) on Psalm 19:4.
- ✧ About “*sacrifice of a shout of joy*” : Saint Gregory exclaims that it is astonishing that we human beings are not constantly praising, since everything that exists constantly invites us to praise God.
 - ✧ Saint Augustine shows us that as the Prophet David, we offer to the Lord sacrifices of joyful shouts, of praise, of gladness, of thanksgiving. However, these all express a joy which cannot be expressed by words. In the Lord’s tent, we offer overflowing and inexpressible gladness, with wordless cries of joy. Every item and detail of all creation draws us to praise the Creator ; and not only the details, but also the beauty and light which unite all. All creation praises the Creator, and all creation invites us to do the same. If human words have so much difficulty adequately expressing gratitude and praise about the visible creation, and yet more difficulty with the invisible parts such as angels, then how much more is it beyond words adequately to praise the Creator Himself ? Rejoicing alone remains when there are no longer any words.
 - ✧ Saint Prosper of Aquitaine comments that there is no sweeter sacrificial fragrance than for a human being to follow Christ, to make an offering of a holy life, and to offer the Lord golden deeds.
 - ✧ This expression is a close (but more intense) relative of “*sacrifice of praise*”. See the note on Psalm 49:14.
 - ✧ See the notes on Psalm 18:2.
- ✧ About “*sacrifice*” (noun) : see the notes about “*sacrifice*” (noun) on Psalm 19:4.
- ✧ About “*shout of joy*” : see the notes on Psalms 46:2 ; 80:2 ; see also Psalms 32:3 ; 46:6 ; 65:1 ; 94:1, 2 ; 99:1.
- ✧ About “*sing ... chant*” : Saint Augustine emphasises that in the future, in the Kingdom of Heaven, when we contemplate the Lord in incorruptibility (1 Corinthians 15:54), we shall without anxiety sing and “play the lyre” to the Lord.
 - ✧ The explanation clarifies that singing and chanting to the Lord were often accompanied by playing upon the psaltery (lyre).
- ✧ About “*sing*” : see the note about “*sing*” on Psalm 12:6.
- ✧ About “*chant*” : see the note about “*chant*” on Psalm 7:18.
- ✧ About “*Lord*” : see the note about “*Lord*” on verse 1.

7 Hear, O LORD, my voice with which I have cried out ;/ have mercy on me,
and hear me.

V 7 About “*Lord*” : see the note about “*Lord*” on verse 1.

✠ About “*voice ... cried out*” : Saint Augustine comments that, with the Prophet David, we make our prayers and petitions now, during the times of our need. Thus, he encourages us to pray now, and without ceasing. However, this time and need for prayer will pass away and yield to constant praise in the future.

✠ The direction of the psalm now changes from speaking about what God has done for King David, to the Prophet David’s direct petition for continuing aid. So ought we all to give thanks for His mercies at all times, and to ask for His help in everything, and always.

✠ About “*cried out ... hear me*” : see the note about “*cried out ... listen*” on Psalm 3:5.

✠ About “*have mercy*” : see the note on Psalm 6:3.

✠ About “*hear me*” : see the note about “*will hear ... cry out*” on Psalm 4:4.

8 To You my heart said :/ “My face has sought You out”./ Your Face, O LORD, shall I seek.

V 8 About “*heart*” : see the note about “*heart*” on Psalm 4:3.

✠ About “*My face has ... I seek*” : Saint Augustine comments that these words amplify the previous word “*contemplate*” in verse 4. He adds that if we sought only to see the sun because our joy was there, then only the physical eyes would be needed. However, it is the heart that seeks to see the Lord’s Face, to see Him who offers Himself to the eyes of the heart, and who is Himself light (1 John 1:5). It is only with a cleansed and clean heart that we can see the Lord’s Face (Matthew 5:8). Indeed, this is the one thing which we ought continually to do : to seek the Lord’s Face.

✧ Arnobius the Younger of Gaul reminds us that such words, frequently expressed between human beings, are of far greater intensity and depth when referred to the relationship with the Lord.

✧ Bishop Diodorus of Tarsus suggests that these words include a plea to the Lord that even when we sin, He correct us, and bring us back into harmony with His love, and that He not abandon us.

✧ Metropolitan Bartholomew (Anania) explains that here, God and Man are looking at each other like lovers, and meet in the holy embrace of ineffable joy. He also shows the different order and meaning in the Hebrew (Masoretic) text : “‘Seek My face’ ; Your Face, Lord, will I seek”.

✧ The repetition of the phrase in the past and in the future is a poetic intensification.

✠ About “*sought You out*” : see the note about “*seek out*” on Psalm 9:11.

✠ About “*Face ... seek*” : see the note on Psalm 23:6.

- ✠ About “*face*” : see the note on Psalm 4:7.
 - ✠ About “*Lord*” : see the note about “*Lord*” on verse 1.
 - ✠ About “*seek*” : see the note about “*seek*” on Psalm 4:3.
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9 Do not turn Your Face away from me,/ and do not in anger incline away from Your bond-servant./ Be my Helper : do not cast me off utterly,/ and do not abandon me, O God, my Saviour ;

V 9 The four-fold repetition of “*do not*” is a form of poetic repetition for strong emphasis.

- ✠ About “*turn ... away*” : see the note about “*turned His Face*” on Psalm 9:32.
 - ✠ About “*Face*” : see verse 8.
 - ✠ About “*anger*” : see the notes about “*anger*” on Psalm 2:5.
 - ✠ About “*incline away*” : see the note on Psalm 140:4 ; see also Psalms 33:15 ; 36:27 ; 118:51, 157.
 - ✠ About “*bond-servant*” : see the note on Psalm 18:12.
 - ✠ About “*Helper*” : see the note about “*Helper*” on Psalm 9:10.
 - ✧ In this case, “*Helper*” is used as a sort of title for the Lord. See the notes on Psalm 17:2, 3.
 - ✠ About “*cast me off utterly*” : this is sometimes translated as “*forsake*” or “*reject*”. The NETS translates this rare and graphic verb ἀποσκορακίζω, *aposkorakidzō*, as “*damn*”. Albert Pietersma notes that it literally means “*throw to the crows*”.
 - ✧ This rare word is difficult to convey in English. The crows are, in fact, carrion crows. Aristophanes used it as a strong imprecation. Sometimes it implies an instrument of torture. The meaning is very strongly negative.
 - ✠ About “*utterly*” : this word (also in adjective form, “*utter*”) means completely, extremely.
 - ✠ About “*abandon*” : see verse 10. See also the note about “*abandon*” on Psalm 9:11.
 - ✠ About “*God, my Saviour*” : see the notes on Psalm 23:5.
 - ✠ About “*God*” : see the note about “*God*” on Psalm 3:3.
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10 for my father and my mother abandoned me,/ but the LORD has taken me to Himself.

V 10 About this verse : Saint Augustine shows us that the Prophet David has made himself as a child with regard to his relationship with the Lord. The Lord is, then, both his father and his mother. He is the Prophet's father [and with him, ours], since He created us ; He calls us ; He directs and rules us. He is the Prophet's mother [and with him, ours], since He cherishes and nourishes us ; He feeds us with milk, and He holds us in His arms. Saint Augustine then prays that the Lord, indeed, take us into His arms in order to console us with earthly necessities, and to bless us with what is eternal. Saint Augustine further clarifies that even when parents give things to the child, it is ultimately the Lord who is giving everything through them.

✧ About God as "*father*" : Isaiah 63:16 ; Jeremiah 38:20.

✧ About God as "*mother*" : Psalm 21:11 ; Isaiah 49:15.

✧ About "*Lord*" : see the note about "*Lord*" on verse 1.

11 Give me a law, O LORD, according to Your way,/ and lead me on the way,
on a straight path, because of my enemies.

V 11 About "*give me ... way*" : Saint Augustine explains that this request for a law in fact means the request for a law in the Lord's Christ, because He is Himself the Way (John 14:6). Therefore, this law is moderated by both mercy and blessing (Psalm 84:7). If we falter with regard to this law, we may be forgiven ; but we must never abandon the Way. Saint Bishop Theodoret of Cyrrhus and Arnobius the Younger of Gaul express similar perceptions.

✧ About "*give me a law*" : see the note about "*give a law*" on Psalm 24:8.

✧ About "*Lord*" : see the note about "*Lord*" on verse 1.

✧ About "*way*" : see the note about "*ways*" on Psalm 15:11.

✧ About "*lead me on the way*" : see the note on Psalm 5:9.

✧ About "*straight path*" : Saint Athanasius comments that King David is praying that the evangelical law may be made clear to him, because this law is the "*straight path*".

✧ See the note about "*make straight*" on Psalm 5:9.

✧ About "*path*" : see the note about "*paths*" on Psalm 8:9.

✧ About "*enemies*" : see verse 6.

12 Do not give me over to the souls of those afflicting me ;/ for unrighteous witnesses rose up against me,/ and their unrighteousness lied to itself.

V 12 About this verse : Bishop Diodorus of Tarsus explains that the Lord simultaneously makes us better, and He protects us from attacks.

✠ About “*do not ... afflicting me*” : Saint Augustine interprets this verse from the perspective of the Prophet David, of Christ the Saviour, and of the martyrs. He summarises the request that although our bodies may be attacked, our hearts and souls be protected and sheltered.

✠ About “*soul*” : see the notes on verse 1 ; see also the note about “*soul*” on Psalm 3:3.

✠ About “*afflicting*” : see the note on verse 2.

✠ About “*unrighteous witnesses ...itself*” : Saint Augustine comments that if the unrighteous make false allegations and anyone acquiesce to the allegations, then that one becomes unrighteous and false also, and a participant in the lie. The prayer remains that we remain steadfast and true to the Lord.

✧ Bishop Theodoret of Cyrrihus gives historical comments in indicating that Doeg the Idumæan, attending the royal mules, had reported the flight of David to Saul, and that “*unrighteous witnesses*” includes him.

✠ About “*unrighteous witnesses*” : see Psalm 34:11 ; see also Matthew 26:59-60 ; Mark 14:56-59 ; Acts 6:13.

✠ About “*unrighteous*” : see the note on Psalm 17:49.

✠ About “*witness*” : this word translates the Greek word μάρτυς, *martyrs*, which means “witness”. It may refer to a witness for God, or to a witness in court.

✧ See Psalm 34:11.

✠ About “*their unrighteousness ... itself*” : Bishop Theodoret of Cyrrihus indicates that the unrighteous witness turned back onto the unrighteous witnesses themselves.

✠ About “*lied*” (verb) : see the note about “*lied*” on Psalm 17:45.

13 I believe that I shall see the good things of the LORD in the land of the living.

V 13 About this verse : Saint Augustine comments that there is expressed a strong hope in seeing and participating in the eternal “*good things*” of the Lord after the end of this life, and that the Lord will rescue the Prophet David from the temporal land of the dying so as to make this possible.

✧ Despite all the adversity and temptation which are faced by the Prophet David, he retains confidence that in the Lord's love and mercy, he will already see and experience in this transient life (the temporal meaning of "*land of the living*") the "*good things*" of the Lord which are eternal. He has further hope that the Lord will rescue him from the land of the dying and permit him to see these "*good things*" also in the eternal "*land of the living*".

✧ About "*good things*" : see the note about "*good things*" on Psalm 4:7.

✧ About "*Lord*" : see the note about "*Lord*" on verse 1.

✧ About "*land of the living*" : Bishop Theodoret of Cyrrhus is of the opinion that the "*land of the living*" refers to the future life anticipated in the Kingdom, in which there is no death, no corruption, no sadness.

✧ This phrase means primarily, our life on the earth, this present life, despite the continuous experience of death. The eternal life in the eternal Kingdom, although very important, is in this context a secondary meaning. The eternal life in the Kingdom is prepared for during this transitory life. Our proper behaviour in obedience to the Lord in this transitory life prepares for the eternal life in the Kingdom.

✧ See Psalms 51:7 ; 114:9 ; 141:6.

14 Wait for the LORD : take courage, and let your heart become strong ;/ and wait for the LORD.

V 14 About "*wait for the Lord*" : Saint Cyril of Jerusalem encourages us that the Holy Spirit is constantly supporting us (Romans 8:26), and encouraging us to "*wait for the Lord*" in the midst of all our trials and tribulations (Wisdom of Sirach 2:14). He reminds us that our present sufferings are slight compared to the glory promised and to come (Romans 8:18), and that the martyrs are our example regarding how we ought to live. Further, he explains that the Holy Spirit is called "*Comforter*" because He strengthens us, encourages us, enables us, teaches us, and supports us. He also gives us patience in everything, and strength for all our labours.

✧ See the note about "*waiting for You*" on Psalm 24:3.

✧ About "*Lord*" : see the note about "*Lord*" on verse 1.

✧ About "*take courage ... the Lord*" : Saint Augustine encourages us to be steadfast and firm in our faith and to have constant confidence in the Lord. He reminds us that the joy and life to come are worth all the difficulties of the present life.

✧ Bishop Theodoret of Cyrrhus reminds us that the mind which has become strong in the Lord is enabled to overcome all difficulties and trials, and in victory awaits the Lord with hope and joy.

✧ Evagrius of Pontus explains that strength of heart can come only when there is no distortion nor tainting through false doctrines and impure thoughts.

✧

✧ About “*heart*” : see the note about “*heart*” on Psalm 4:3.

✧ About “*strong*” : see the note about “*strong*” on Psalm 7:12.

O God, the Help of all, defend us from the camps,
and preparations of the enemy ;
that, remaining perpetually in Your home,
we may behold Your Face in spiritual contemplation. — Roman
