

PSALM 24

✠ This psalm is written in the form of a Lament.

✧ See the note about “lament” in the introduction to Psalm 3.

✠ Cassiodorus perceives three sections in this psalm : verses 1-5 ; verses 6-11 ; verses 12-22.

✠ The NAB notes that the pleas of verses 1-2 and 16-22 are mixed with expressions with confidence in God who forgives and guides.

✠ This psalm is an acrostic, following the Hebrew alphabet (seen here at the left margin). In this psalm, a new Hebrew letter is used for each couplet, as in Psalm 33. Some use the word “alphabetic” for this sort of acrostic. This psalm is the first such acrostic psalm in the Psalter.

✧ Cassiodorus addresses the matter of the acrostic foundation of this psalm. He points out that there are two types of acrostics in the Psalter. One sort uses the complete Hebrew alphabet as its foundation and the other sort omits certain letters from this foundation. In this psalm, he says that the sixth and the nineteenth letters are omitted. He further reminds us that in the Lamentations of Jeremiah, the acrostic foundation is the Hebrew alphabet repeated four times. Cassiodorus also shows us that in this psalm there are three sections. In the first (five letters), the Church asks to know the Lord’s intentions, and His ways. In the second (six letters), She asks for the kindness bestowed on the holy ancestors from the beginning. In the third (nine letters), She desires to keep the Lord’s commandments, and to receive eternal reward.

✧ Further to the comment of Cassiodorus about the Lamentations of Jeremiah, the RSV notes about the Lamentations that in Chapters 1, 2, and 4, each of the twenty-two stanzas begins with a different Hebrew letter. Chapter 3 has three verses for each letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Chapter 5 has one verse for each of the Hebrew letters.

✧ The NAB notes that the verses of this psalm are loosely associated [because of the acrostic ; see the note on Psalm 9].

✠ This psalm is read fully at the Third Hour, and at Great Compline.

✠ Saint Athanasius recommends that we lift our hearts to the Lord and sing Psalm 24 at those times when we are surrounded by enemies.

✠ Saint Augustine teaches us that in this Psalm of David, Christ speaks in the person of the Church. This psalm addresses matters which pertain to those who are turning to God.

✧ Alternatively, *The Orthodox Study Bible* indicates that this psalm may be understood as Christ’s priestly intercession on behalf of the Church, the New Israel.

“Supplication of the repentant sinner”

“A prayer for guidance, forgiveness and redemption”

“The covenant consciousness” [See verse 14.]

V 1 About the Inscription : in the Masoretic (Hebrew) text, the Inscription is : “Of David”.

✧ Bishop Theodoret of Cyrrhus affirms that this psalm is by the Prophet David, and Cassiodorus expands on this to say that this psalm may be applied to a Christian’s way of life.

✧ This psalm is the fourth psalm of fourteen having an historical inscription. See the note on the inscription of Psalm 3.

[Πρὸς σέ, Κύριε, ἤγα Ad te, Domine, levavi]

To You, O LORD, have I raised my soul, O my God.

✧ About “*Lord*” : see the note about “*Lord*” on Psalm 1:2.

✧ About “*raised my soul*” : Saint Athanasius advises us that when we are surrounded by enemies, we take care to raise our souls to God in this psalm, and we will see the evil-doers dispersed.

✧ See the Anaphora of the Divine Liturgy (“we lift them up”).

✧ Both Saints Theophan the Recluse and John of Kronstadt show us that the essence of prayer consists in lifting up both the heart and the mind towards God.

✧ Cassiodorus and Bishop Theodoret of Cyrrhus affirm the trustworthiness of the Merciful Lord, and confidence that He hears and acts righteously on the appeal.

✧ Arnobius the Younger of Gaul emphasises the importance of detachment to things of this world, while keeping the attention on the Lord with His help.

✧ See Psalms 85:4 ; 142:8.

✧ About “*soul*” : see verses 13, 20 ; see the note about “*soul*” on Psalm 3:3.

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

2 ⲁ In You do I trust./ May I not be put to shame,/ nor let my enemies laugh at me.

V 2 Metropolitan Bartholomew (Anania) interprets this verse as meaning , “May I not be humiliated (pointed at with sneering) ; may I not have hoped in vain ; may I not be seen to have prayed without being heard”.

✧ Origen assures us that the various testings we face in life are like refining fires, which purify us from sin, and overcome temptations.

✧ About “*trust*” : see the note on Psalm 2:12.

- ✠ About “*not be put to shame*” : see verses 3, 20 ; see also the note on Psalm 21:6.
 - ✠ About “*enemies*” : see verse 19 ; see also the note on Psalm 5:9.
 - ✠ About “*laugh*” (human) : Cassiodorus points out that it is enemies who laugh to scorn when they see that the hope or trust of a righteous person is not fulfilled. He cautions us that laughing at any one person is the trait of a foe [and a Christian ought not to be the foe of anyone].
 - ✧ See the note about “*laugh*” on Psalm 2:4 ; see 1 Moses 18:10-15 ; Psalm 51:8.
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3 λ Indeed, all those waiting for You shall not be put to shame./ Let them be put to shame – those uselessly doing lawlessness.

V 3 About “*waiting for You*” (waiting for the Lord) : Bishop Theodoret of Cyrillus interprets this in terms of the hope and confidence which can be ours when we see that the Lord does, indeed, help those who trust in Him, and that He confounds the lawless.

- ✧ Cassiodorus encourages us to wait with hope for the Lord in the midst of our endurance of evil, and never to forget His mercy.
 - ✧ Saint Jerome of Bethlehem helps us understand that the psalmist seeks justice/righteousness in order to tell of mercy.
 - ✧ See verses 5, 21 ; see also Psalms 26:14 ; 32:20 ; 36:9, 34 ; 39:2 ; 51:11 ; 54:9 ; 68:7 ; 118:166 ; 105:13 ; 129:5.
 - ✠ About “*not be put to shame*” : see the note on verse 2.
 - ✠ About “*be put to shame*” : see the note on Psalm 6:11.
 - ✠ About “*uselessly*” : see Psalm 30:7.
 - ✠ About “*doing lawlessness*” : see also the note about “*those working lawlessness*” on Psalm 5:6.
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4 τ Make Your ways known to me, O LORD,/ and teach me Your paths :

V 4 About “*make Your ways known*” : see Psalm 142:8 .

- ✧ Theodore of Mopsuestia reminds us that the purpose of knowing the ways of the Lord is so that one may walk in them. In effect, this expresses the way of life of Orthodox Christians.
- ✠ About “*ways*” : Saint Ambrose explains that the ways of the Lord are those courses in life which follow the foot-steps of Christ, who revealed to us that He is the Way (John 14:6). It is the good way, the way which opens the Kingdom of Heaven to those who believe. He also reminds us that there is an opposite, lawless, way.
 - ✧ Saint Augustine amplifies this verse as he asks that the Lord teach him His narrow ways known only to the few, not the broad ways leading many to destruction [see Matthew 7:13-14]. See the

note on Psalm 22:3.

✧ About the two ways mentioned by the two saints, see the note about the two ways on Psalm 1:6.

✧ About “*Your ways*” : see verses 9, 10, 12 ; see the note about “*ways*” on Psalm 15:11.

✧ About “*teach*” : see verses 5, 9 ; see the note about “*teaching*” on Psalm 17:35.

✧ About “*paths*” : see the note about “*paths*” on Psalm 8:9.

✧ Saint Augustine reminds us that these paths are, in fact, the narrow paths (Matthew 7:13-14).

5 𐤇 lead me on the way to Your truth, and teach me ;/ for You are God, my Saviour,/ and for You have I waited the whole day long.

V 5 About this verse : Saint Augustine, through the voice of the fallen Adam, interprets this verse as a plea to God from fallen mankind, that the Lord Himself guide us into and on the right path, since we are incapable of finding it without Him. We wander in the fog without Him until He shall meet us and personally guide us home (Luke 15:11-32). Throughout all earthly time, prodigal human beings have been seeking the Lord, His mercy, and His enabling our reconciliation with Him.

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

✧ About “*truth*” : see verse 10 ; see also the note about “*truth*” on Psalm 5:10.

✧ About “*teach*” : see verse 4.

✧ About “*for You are ... day long*” : Cassiodorus points out that there are two elements which characterise good Christians : that we believe that God is our Saviour, and that we are ready to wait for Him throughout our lives.

✧ About “*God, my Saviour*” : see the note on Psalm 23:5.

✧ About “*God*” : see verse 1.

✧ About “*waited*” : see the note about “*waiting for You*” on verse 3.

6 𐤇 Remember Your compassions, O LORD, and Your mercies,/ for they are from the age.

V 6 About this verse : Cassiodorus explains that this verse begins the second section of this psalm, in which is kept the memory of the constant kindness of the Lord throughout the ages.

✧ About “*compassions*” : see Psalms 39:12 ; 50:3 ; 68:17 ; 76:10 ; 78:8 ; 102:4 ; 105:46 ; 118:77, 156 ; 144:9. See also the note about “*have compassion*” on Psalm 4:2. See also the note about “*compassionate*” (adjective) on Psalm 85:15.

✧ About “*mercies*” : Cassiodorus (with reference to Saint Augustine) reminds us that we cannot attain God’s Grace by our own merits. The Lord’s mercy has been active from before Creation, and the Church constantly

praises the Lord for His continual giving of mercy. Further, the giving of this mercy is a free gift. There are no preconditions on our part.

✧ Evagrius of Pontus comments that, in contrast to the way of humans, when God is mindful of rational nature, He is already in that very nature.

✧ See verses 7, 10 ; see also the note about “*mercy*” on Psalm 5:8.

✧ About “*for they are from the age*” : see Psalms 102:17 ; 135 ; Wisdom of Sirach 51:8 ; Jeremiah 40:11.

7 n The sin of my youth and my ignorance, do not remember ;/ but do remember me, in accordance with Your mercy,/ for the sake of Your loving-kindness, O LORD.

V 7 About this verse : see Romans 12:21.

✧ About “*sin of my youth*” : Bishop Diodore of Tarsus (Cilicia) takes these words in the context of the history of the People of Israel, and their betrayal in Egypt (when they worshipped idols). He takes this as a petition of the whole people to the Lord that He not remember these sins ; but rather, even now, to be merciful and forgiving in love, just as He was then. At that time, He was merciful even without having been asked.

✧ See Job 13:26.

✧ About “*sin*” : see verses 11, 18. See also the note about “*sin*” on Psalm 9:36.

✧ In the Greek, “*ignorance*” is in the plural.

✧ See Psalms 72:22 ; 73:4.

✧ About “*the sin ... do not remember*” : see Psalm 78:8 ; Isaiah 64:8.

✧ About “*remember me ...*” : see the note on Psalm 9:13.

✧ About “*mercy*” : see the note on verse 6.

✧ About “*loving-kindness*” : see the note “*loving-kindness*” on Psalm 13:1.

8 v Gracious and upright is the LORD./ Because of this, He will give a law for those sinning in the way.

V 8 About this verse : Cassiodorus concentrates on the sweetness of the Lord, who both excels in kindness, and awaits the conversion of the sinner. The Lord’s mercy falls on both the righteous and the unrighteous (Matthew 5:45). He gives life to those who are undeserving of it, and He humbles the proud so that they can come to wisdom, understanding and repentance. His giving a law is an example of this care. The law of goodness was given for the time of our earthly life not for punishment, but rather for the sake of correcting errors.

✧ About “*gracious*” : this word translates the Greek word *χρηστός*, *chrēstos*. This word is very closely related to the word for “*loving-kindness*” : see the note on Psalm 13:1.

✧ Saint Augustine reminds us that the graciousness of the Lord is limitless in mercy and in His ability to forgive.

✧ See Psalms 33:9 ; 51:11 ; 68:17 ; 85:5 ; 99:5 ; 105:1 ; 106:1 ; 108:21 ; 111:5 ; 118:39, 68 ; 144:9.

✧ About “*upright*” : Saint Augustine reminds us that the Lord is “*upright*” because after having shown His limitless mercy, and without conditions, He is righteous in His assessment of the whole person at the Last Judgement.

✧ See the note on Psalm 7:11.

✧ About “*give a law*” : keeping in mind the giving of the Law (in 2 Moses, chapters 19-34 and 5 Moses, chapters 5-10), Saint Augustine stresses that the Lord gave a law for those who had chosen to follow Him.

✧ Diodore of Tarsus says that this means that the Lord corrects sinners so as to bring them to uprightness. He encourages us to keep our minds and hearts on and in the Lord, so that we may see the benefit from the Lord in all events, and never waver.

✧ Monk Evagrius of Pontus, the solitary, adds also that if one has overcome irascibility, one has mastered the demons ; but if one suffer from this passion, that one is a stranger to the Saviour.

✧ Bishop Theodore of Mopsuestia reminds us that mercy is usual with the Lord, who is constantly concerned with righteousness.

✧ Metropolitan Bartholomew (Anania) explains that this means that the Lord will provide the opportunity for our reformation (repentance), and for a return to the right path.

✧ See verse 12 ; see also the note on Psalm 16:11 ; see Psalms 26:11 ; 77:5 ; 83:7 ; 118:33, 102.

✧ About “*sinning in the way*” : see the note about “*way of sinners*” on Psalm 1:1.

9 › He will lead the meek on the way in fair-judgement ;/ He will teach the meek His ways.

V 9 About “*lead ... on the way*” : see the note on Psalm 5:9.

✧ About “*meek*” : the correct definition of this word includes the positive and active meanings such as “good”, “cheerful”, “forbearing”, “kind”, “not resentful”. The popular, passive connotation (that it means “deficient in spirit and courage”, “submissive”, “not violent or strong”, “soppy”, “milquetoast”) is an inaccurate and false distortion.

✧ Cassiodorus states clearly that the “meek” do not include those who are proud and inflated.

✧ See Psalms 33:3 ; 36:11 ; 44:5 ; 75:10 ; 89:10 ; 146:6 ; 149:4 ; Matthew 5:5 ; see also *The Orthodox Study Bible* note on Matthew 11:28-30.

✧ About “*fair-judgement*” : see the note about “*fair-judgement*” on Psalm 1:5.

✧ About “*He will teach the meek His ways*” : Saint Athanasius teaches us that our Saviour teaches by the example of His life, than which there is no greater example. In Matthew 11:29, He exhorted us to learn from Him. In His own life, true meekness is to be seen, which consists of forbearance, love for human beings, goodness, courage, mercy, and righteousness. This comes from fully contemplating the human life of Christ,

as did the Apostle Paul. He likewise encouraged the imitation of goodness (1 Corinthians 11:1).

✧ Saint Augustine comments that the Lord will not teach His ways to those who wish to govern themselves, and who go their own way at their own speed ; nor the egotistical ; nor those who refuse to bear the easy yoke (Matthew 11:30). [They are unteachable, because they are not meek.]

✧ Saint Barsanuphius of Optina explained to a disciple that, as it is written here, meekness is required in us in order that we be teachable by the Lord. It is crucial to cultivate meekness in our lives. It is clear that the Lord Himself teaches us what are His life-giving ways, and we cannot receive His teaching unless we have become meek (with His help).

✧ Evagrius comments that if a person is noted for irascibility (anger), then it means that he has been mastered by the demons ; he has become a slave to this passion, and a stranger to the ways of Christ. If a person does not exhibit any anger, then it means that this person has mastered the demons ; he is free from passions, and he has learnt the ways of the Saviour.

✧ About “*teach*” : see verse 4.

✧ About “*His ways*” : see verses 4, 10, 12 ; see also the note about “*ways*” on Psalm 15:11.

10 ☞ All the ways of the LORD are mercy and truth,/ to those seeking out His Covenant and His testimonies.

V 10 About this verse : Saint Augustine explains that in every way, the Lord seeks to unite to Himself those who are willing, through mercy and truth. He says that the Lord forgives sins, and He assesses what is good in a person. He further speaks of the First Advent of the Lord as His coming in mercy, and of the Second Advent of the Lord as His coming in truth, that is, judgement. Those who understand that they have been set free without consideration of their own worthiness or merit eschew pride, and they are mindful of the coming Judgement. They recognise the Lord’s mercy and righteousness, and through the study of the Law, the Prophets and the Evangelists, they seek to be conformed to Him.

✧ Bishop Theodoret of Cyrrihus comments that everything having to do with the Lord and His acts are tempered with mercy and truth. He gives mercy to those who repent, and to those who have not fallen, He proclaims their virtue in truth. For those who do not repent, He sends remedies rooted in truth.

✧ See Tobit 3:2.

✧ About “*the ways*” : see verses 4, 9, 12 ; see also the note about “*ways*” on Psalm 15:11.

✧ About “*mercy*” : see the note on verse 6.

✧ About “*truth*” : see the note on verse 5.

✧ About “*seeking out*” : the dictionary meaning understands that this implies searching hard for and finding a specific person or thing, and that the finder will therefore keep what is found. See the note on Psalm 9:11.

✧ About “*Covenant*” : see verse 14. See also Psalms 43:18 ; 49:5, 16 ; 54:21 ; 73:20 ; 77:10, 37 ; 88:4, 29, 35, 40 ; 102:18 ; 104:8, 10 ; 105:45 ; 110:5, 9 ; 131:12 ; Daniel 3:37 (Matins Canticle 7) ; Luke 1:72 (Matins Canticle 9, Part 2) ; Hebrews 13:20.

✠ About “*testimonies*” : “laws” (as in the Decalogue on two tablets), “witnesses”, “precepts of God”, “profession of faith” are all underlying concepts.

✧ See the note on Psalm 18:8.

11 𐤁 For the sake of Your Name, O LORD,/ be propitious to my sin, for it is great.

V 11 About “*for the sake of Your Name*” : see the note on Psalm 22:3 ; see also 1 John 2:12.

✠ About “*propitious*” : Saint Augustine explains that the Lord forgives the sins we commit before we come to our encounter with, knowledge of, and belief in Him. He also forgives the sins that we commit afterwards, since there is no shortage of traps for those on the way.

✧ See the note on Psalm 129:4. See also 3 Kingdoms 8:32, 34 ; Psalms 48:8 ; 64:4 ; 77:38 ; 78:9 ; 98:8 ; 102:3 ; 105:30.

✠ About “*sin*” : see the note on verse 7.

12 𐤁 Who is the Man fearing the LORD ?/ He will give a law for him for the way which he has chosen.

V 12 About this verse : Cassiodorus mentions that this verse begins the third section of this psalm, in which the fear of the Lord is primary.

✠ About “*fearing the LORD*” : see verse 14 ; see also the notes about “*fear*” on Psalms 2:11 ; 14:4 ; 18:10.

✠ About “*give a law*” : see verse 8.

✠ About “*the way*” : see verses 4, 9, 10 ; see also the note about “*ways*” on Psalm 15:11.

13 𐤁 His soul shall abide amongst good things,/ and his seed shall inherit the earth.

V 13 About this verse : Pseudo-Athanasius explains that the one who fears the Lord, His seed (which is good works) will cause him to inherit the spiritual land. This one will acquire humility, and labour with the forgiveness of sins.

✧ Cassiodorus interprets that after the separation of soul and body at death, the perfect promised blessedness of the Resurrection does not come immediately. Nevertheless, the soul does dwell in good things, and does feast on the unshakeable delight of home in their future reward.

✠ About “*His soul ... things*” : see the conclusion of memorial and funeral services, following “Memory eternal”.

- ✧ About “*soul*” : see verse 1.
 - ✧ About “*good things*” : see the note on Psalm 4:7.
 - ✧ About “*seed*” (good) : see Psalms 36:25 ; 68:37 ; 101: 29 ; 111:2 ; 125:6.
 - ✧ About “*inherit the earth*” : see 1 Moses 15:7 ; 5 Moses 11:8, 9 ; Psalm 36:9, 11, 22, 29, 34 ; Isaiah 60:21 ; Matthew 5:5.
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14 ▢ The LORD is the Strength of those fearing Him,/ and His Covenant shall show this to them.

V 14 About “*Strength*” : in this case, “*Strength*” is used as a sort of title for the Lord ; see the notes on Psalm 17:2, 3.

- ✧ Archimandrite Lazarus (Moore) comments, using the metaphor of a blood-transfusion that our strength is renewed by a love-transfusion from the Lord.
 - ✧ About “*fearing Him*” : Saint Augustine explains that fear seems to be a trait of those who are weak ; however, if we fear the Lord, we have the strength of His Name and its mighty support.
 - ✧ Cassiodorus writes : “Fear of people breeds lack of confidence, but fear of God yields the support of hope”.
 - ✧ See verse 12.
 - ✧ About “*Covenant*” : see the note on verse 10 ; see also Isaiah 54:10 ; Matthew 26:28.
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15 y My eyes are always towards the LORD ;/ for He will draw my feet out of the snare.

V 15 About this verse : Saint Augustine and Cassiodorus remind us that we need not fear what traps there may be on the ground as we steadfastly keep our eyes on the Lord. The Lord will always protect us.

- ✧ About “*my eyes are always towards the LORD*” : Saint John of Kronstadt exhorts us frequently to examine the state of our heart, and to determine where the eyes of the heart are looking. Frequently we forget or neglect to keep the focus of the heart on the Lord alone, and we become distracted by trusting in temporal and corruptible things, and we look to the Lord only in troubles. It is crucial that we take the Lord’s help to become increasingly focussed on Him and His love alone. Only then will we receive deep peace in our hearts, illumination of our minds, active and holy love in our will, and rescue from the snares of enemies.
 - ✧ See 2 Chronicles 20:12 ; Psalms 122:1-2 ; 140:8.
 - ✧ About “*snare*” : see the note on Psalm 9:16.
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16 9 Look attentively upon me, and have mercy on me ;/ for I, myself, am an only-begotten one, and poor.

V 16 About the first portion of this verse : see Psalms 85:16 ; 118:132.

✠ About “*look attentively*” : see the note on Psalm 12:4.

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

✠ About “*poor*” : see the note on Psalm 9:19.

17 9 The afflictions of my heart have been multiplied ;/ O lead me out of my anguish.

V 17 About “*afflictions*” : see verse 22 ; see also the note about “*affliction*” on Psalm 4:2.

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

✠ About “*anguish*” : in this psalter, the translation of the word ἀνάγκη, *anangkē*, *anguish*, depends in part on the context. In this verse, the word means “*anguish*”, the result of affliction. Its meaning may also be “*distress*”, “*necessity*”, “*squeezed as in throttling*”, “*strangulation*”.

✧ “*Grievous necessity*” is the translation of the Latin word used by Saint Augustine, and he comments that is necessary to persevere unto the end so as to be saved (Matthew 10:22).

✧ See Psalms 30:8 ; 106:6, 13, 19, 28 ; 118:143.

18 7 See my humiliation and my trouble,/ and forgive all my sins.

V 18 About this verse : Saint Barsanuphius of Optina cites Saint Barsanuphius the Great as he teaches that in order to be saved, it is essential both to labour and to humble ourselves, as this verse indicates. Forgiveness and salvation come through our doing both. Humility in disposition about everything is the required fundamental. The supplement of work is both manual and liturgical.

✧ Lowliness or humility refer to our keeping ourselves aware that others come before us.

✠ About “*humiliation*” : see the note on Psalm 9:14 ; see also the note about “*been humbled*” on Psalm 114:6.

✠ About “*trouble*” : see the note on Psalm 9:28. The Greek word κόπος, *kopos*, translated as “*trouble*” may also be translated sometimes as “*work*”, “*labour*”.

✠ About “*forgive*” : Protopresbyter Alexander D Schmemmann, in the context of Forgiveness Sunday, exhorts us : “*Let us forgive one another. Let us not think about why. There is enough to think about. Let us do it. Right now, in a kind of deep breath, say : ‘Lord, help us to forgive. Lord, renew all these relationships’.* What a chance is given here for love to triumph ! – for unity to reflect the Divine unity, and for everything essential to return as life itself. What a chance ! Is the answer we give today yes or no ? Are we going to that

forgiveness ? Are we gladly accepting it ? Or is it something which we do just because it is on the calendar – today, you follow forgiveness ; tomorrow, let's do ... ? No ! this is the crucial moment. This is the beginning of Lent. This is our spring 'repair' because reconciliation is the powerful renewal of the ruin".

✧ Saint Augustine expands the request for forgiveness to include the sins of youth and ignorance committed before coming to the Faith, and also all the current ones committed through weakness or the dark clouds that obscure this life.

✧ See the note on Psalm 31:5 ; see also Psalm 84:3 ; Luke 1:77 (Matins Canticle 9, Part 2).

✧ About "*sins*" : see the note on verse 7.

19 7 See my enemies, for they have multiplied,/ and with an unrighteous hatred they hated me.

V 19 About "*enemies*" : Saint Augustine reminds us that there is no lack of enemies, since they are both outside and inside the Church. Although we love them, they hate us.

✧ Cassiodorus explains that although there are those who are enemies towards Him, the Lord always seeks them and encourages their turn of heart. He reminds us that when our Saviour merely turned and looked at the Apostle Peter, Peter immediately repented of his fear and wept (see Luke 22:61-62).

✧ See verse 2.

✧ About "*unrighteous*" : see the note about "*unrighteous*" on Psalm 17:49.

✧ About "*hatred*" : see Psalms 108:3, 5 ; 138:22.

✧ About "*hated*" : see the note about "*hate*" on Psalm 10:5.

20 ψ Watch over my soul, and rescue me./ May I not be put to shame,/ for I have hoped on You.

V 20 About this verse : remembering the Lord's consistent love and mercy, we ask the Lord to guard us.

✧ About "*watch over*" : see the note on Psalm 11:8.

✧ About "*soul*" : see verse 1.

✧ About "*rescue*" : see the note about "*rescue*" on Psalm 6:5.

✧ About "*May I not be put to shame*" : see the note on verse 2.

✧ About "*hoped*" : Evagrius of Pontus explains to us that hope does not bring shame. Hope comes from uprightness, and uprightness comes from patience. Patience develops as a result of the trials which we receive from the enemy.

✧ See the note on Psalm 4:6.

21 ת The guileless and the upright were cleaving to me,/ for I waited for You, O LORD.

V 21 About "*the guileless*" : see the note about "*guilelessness*" on Psalm 7:9.

✠ About "*the upright*" : see Psalms 32:1 ; 106:42 ; 110:1 ; 111:2, 4 ; 139:14. See also the note about "*upright*" (adjective) on Psalm 18:9.

✠ About "*cleaving*" : see the note on Psalm 21:16.

✠ About "*waited*" : see the note on verse 3. Cassiodorus adds that the Church adheres to the Lord, and it is for this reason because of the love that is active in this adherence, that the guileless and upright cleave to Her.

✧ Bishop Theodore of Mopsuestia (Cilicia) writes : "Placing my hope on You, I took pains to be such a person that innocent people might associate with me, and take pleasure in my company".

22 O God, redeem Israel from all his afflictions.

V 22 About this verse : Bishop Theodoret of Cyrrhus points out that it is part of the responsibility of a believing and responsible king to pray for his people. It is for this reason that the King and Prophet David intercedes for his people, as well as for himself. Their welfare and salvation are intertwined. Bishop Theodoret adds, in the context of the divided people of Israel at that time, "If I were to enjoy your aid [...], and prove stronger than my adversaries, Israel itself would obtain peace by putting an end to civil strife, and would revel in Your good things".

✠ About "*God*" : see verse 1.

✠ About "*redeem Israel*" : Saint Augustine makes an extension from Israel to the Church, and he prays that the Lord redeem the Church from all the troubles that she has to endure both from the outside and from the inside.

✧ See the notes on Psalm 7:3.

✠ About "*Israel*" : see the note about "*Israel*" on Psalm 13:7.

✠ About "*afflictions*" : see verse 17.

O Most Gentle God, free us from all our anguish.

We raise our spirits to You.

We ask that You forget the faults of our youth,

and our former ignorance ;

and, if we have carelessly fallen short,

mercifully pardon us. — Roman

