

May the Lord Answer you...

Contemplations on Psalm 19(20)
(First Psalm in Third Hour Prayer)

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Introduction

I was traveling to London in late January 1969 to solve a problem with one of the servants, when I was a Bishop for Education.

And this Psalm traveled with me...

It was a source of contemplations for me in the plane, England, Cairo, and in Germany when I passed through there on my return.

Then these contemplations were delivered in the Grand Cathedral over three sessions, besides the main spiritual lecture.

This was on Friday 26 February, 5 March and 12 March 1969. After this, I delivered Contemplations on Psalm 22(23) "The Lord is my Shepherd," the second Psalm in the Third Hour.

Finally, God has allowed these contemplations to be published.

I place them before you, to be with you in your private prayers and while you pray the Psalms of the Third Hour.

Pope Shenouda III

Psalm Nineteen "20"

May the Lord answer you

May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble;

May the name of the God of Jacob defend you;

May He send you help from the sanctuary, and strengthen you out of Zion;

May He remember all your offerings, and accept your burnt sacrifice.

May He grant you according to your heart's desire, and fulfill all your purpose.

We will rejoice in your salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners.

May the Lord fulfill all your petitions.

Now I know that the Lord saves His anointed;

He will answer him from His holy heaven with the saving strength of His right hand.

Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.

They have bowed down and fallen; but we have risen and stand upright.
Save, Lord! May the King answer us when we call.
Alleluia.

The Psalm “May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble,” is one of the comforting Psalms that fills the heart with hope and makes you feel that God is with you.

All These Chant To You

Imagine that there is an **angel from heaven**, speaking to you and saying: May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble. Listen to this expression from the mouth of your guardian angel...

Imagine **David the prophet**, while he is in the Paradise of joy, sending you a special message, saying to you: Do not fear or worry in all your tribulations, may the Lord answer you in the day of trouble.

Imagine this comforting expression coming to you from God, from the mouth of **any person sent from heaven**. Or that it is an expression coming to you from the **spirits of the Saints**.

Imagine that the **Holy Bible itself** is saying to you: May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble... In the midst of your toils, in the midst of the troubles of life around you, God looks to you, and sees, and answers...

Consider this Psalm to be a message of peace to you from the **Church**. A message of comfort from the Church to you. A message that calms you and gives joy to your heart.
Imagine that **one of the fathers, the Priests**, prays on your head this blessing “May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble.”

Feel that it is a **promise from God** directed to you during prayer, as an expression of comfort, hope and encouragement. A true and faithful promise from the promises of God. In it, the Divine Inspiration says to you “May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble; may the name of the God of Jacob defend you.”

Or at least you may **comfort yourself** saying to yourself and to your heart that awaits help “May the Lord answer you.”... This is exactly what David the prophet did when he spoke to himself and said: “Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God...”

Say this Psalm **with all faith**, and with it, encourage yourself at the time of tribulation, so that you do not lose hope, be upset or suffer. Feel that just as the expressions of this Psalm were fulfilled in the past, that they will also be fulfilled today and always, and with every believer in his tribulation...

You can also pray this Psalm for the sake of your beloved ones...

You can pray it for other people... If you know that a person is in trouble, stand before God, as if you are directing these words to the person in trouble, and say to him “May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble.”...It is an expression of prayer for every troubled soul, asking help for it from the Lord.

May the Lord answer your prayer, your fasting, your offerings, your subjection...

Just like He answered the prayers, fastings and subjection of the Ninevites; and just as He answered the prayers, fastings and subjection of Esther and her people... And the examples are many.

Your tears before God are reserved and kept in a bottle with him and will not return empty, but the Lord will answer just as he answered the tears of Monica, the mother of Augustine and just as He answered the tears of Hannah and her vow and granted her a son, Samuel.

Therefore, be assured that God does not change. So just as He treated those, He will treat you also. Trust in His mercy, compassion and love, and you will see amazing things from Him.

If God answers at all times, then how much more during trouble, when the person is in need and has no help. This is why the Church prays for all those who are in trouble.

She prays for those who are in prisons or dungeons, and those who are in exile or captivity, or those who are held in bitter bondage... And she prays for every troubled soul, for the sick and for the travelers...

She prays for the fainthearted and for those in the storm so the Lord will be a comfort to the first and harbor for the latter.

And she prays for the paralytic and those cast out, and for those who have no one to remember them. She says to the Lord, "the hope of those who have no hope and the help of those who have no helper." She says to every troubled person the expression of the Psalm "May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble..."

It is a Psalm from David, and a Psalm for David.

Some of the writers comment that it is a song for the king as he goes out to battle.

The priests sang this Psalm to him. The people also chant it to him as a blessing from them all to the king, or as a prayer for the Lord to be with him, answer him and grant him victory...

You also are a king, and have battles...

You reign over this thought, heart, soul, emotions, time and life. And in all these you have battles and trouble...

It is beautiful to see the people praying for the king, **and the Church continually does this by prayers for the leaders.** And Paul the Apostle calls for prayer for all those who are in a position of responsibility (I Timothy 2:2). So they say to him "May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble..."

In the Day of Trouble

When we say in our prayers "May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble," we are admitting that trouble or troubles exist.

The life of believers and saints is not always easy, nor always happy, joyous or calm! No, it's actually the opposite. In this life, there are trials and problems...

It is like what the Bible says, "Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution." (II Timothy 3:12) And the Lord called us to enter from the narrow gate, walk the difficult road, and said to us "In the world you will have tribulation..." (John 16:33)

But in the midst of tribulation, there is a comforting word which is "May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble; may the name of the God of Jacob defend you..."

A person might say: Is it suitable for me, as a spiritual person, to seek God in the day of trouble and tribulation. Does this not imply that if there was no trouble or tribulation, that I would not have sought God?!

In the relationship between me and God, there must be a relationship of love, and not a relationship of asking at the time of trouble!

The answer is that this is a very high standard that we cannot conclude that everyone has reached, whereas being religious is for all levels of people, and not only for the educated elite. Despite this, if the spiritual person falls into trouble, then from whom shall he ask? Is it not from God?!

The relationship of love does not disallow requesting. The son requests from his father who loves him.

And the Lord Himself said "Seek and you shall find." With regards to trouble, He also said "Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me." (Psalm 50:15)

And all the Saints sought after the Lord in their troubles, and the Lord answered them.

It is not strange for the spiritual person to ask. The Lord Christ even rebuked His saintly disciples for not asking by saying to them "Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask and you will receive, that your joy may be full." (John 16:24)

God answers us at the time of tribulation. But what is God's stand from tribulations coming upon His children?

God does not forbid tribulations from His children, nor temptation or adversary. Instead He gives victory over tribulations, and grants forbearance and solution...

God does not spoil His children by keeping temptations and tribulations away from them. Instead He allows these and grants with these, comfort, patience and help. And in the depth of trouble, the angel places his hand upon the shoulder of the believer saying to him: Do not fear my beloved, this trouble will not be victorious over you, but "May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble..."

God will listen to your prayer, He will hear the beats of your heart. He knows your toil more than you do, and will answer you.

Let us not forget also that trials and tribulations have their benefits...

Imagine, my beloved brethren, that the great Saint Abba Paula the First Hermit, has, in the Paradise of the Fathers, one expression only, and this saying is:

“Whoever flees from tribulation, flees from God.”

For he flees from the virtues that God desires to grant him through the tribulation.

Therefore do not ask from the Lord to lift away the tribulation from you, but ask to receive its blessings.

Ask from Him to make the tribulation end with good, and in it to give you patience and strength as well as the benefit that His wisdom intends from the tribulation. In reality, you do not know what is of benefit to you; for the tribulation to be lifted or to remain...

This makes us ask: What is meant by the words “May the Lord answer you?”

Meaning of ‘May the Lord Answer you’

“May the Lord answer you” means that He will do good for you...

He will solve your problems and arrange all your matters. He will grant what suits you, whether what suits you is what you asked, or is different in some aspects, or the complete opposite... What does this mean? It means that you must remember this spiritual principle:

God grants you what is for your good, and not what you ask, unless what you ask is for your good... This is because many times you ask for what does not benefit you...

If you seek the kingdom of God, then the Lord will answer you without doubt, for this kingdom coincides with the will of God and is beneficial for you. I say this for many have requests that have no relationship with the kingdom, that might be detrimental to them or might even be against the will of God. We shall give examples of this...

Paul the Apostle asked that the Lord takes away from him the thorn given to him in the flesh (II Corinthians 12:7-9). So the Lord gave him what benefited him and not what he asked for. It was more beneficial for the thorn to remain, lest he is exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations. If the Lord rescued him from that thorn, then this would not have been to his benefit spiritually...

At one time, a monk fell into severe trouble, and he continued to pray that the Lord lift away this war. **Because of his persistence, the Lord lifted away the battle from him. Then he started to fall and be engulfed in vanity and false glory. He went to his spiritual father and told him his story. He said to him “Go, my son, and ask from the Lord to return the trial to you. But to grant you, with the trial, help and strength to be victorious, for trials are beneficial to the person...”** Therefore, the expression “May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble” does not always mean for the trouble to cease...

The Lord's answer is not unlimited according to our request, otherwise it would mean that we can direct the Divine will according to our whims!!

In actual fact, if you want the Lord to answer you, then you must ask well and your request be according to His will. Our teacher James the Apostle says:

"You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss..." (James 4:3)

Even in our daily life and in our relationships with people, many times we ask for matters thinking they are beneficial while they are detrimental. I will give you some examples:

* Your tooth might bother you and cause you great pain that you are unable to bear. You go to the physician, while you are in extreme pain, and say "Please pull out this tooth for it's very painful"... But the wise physician might not answer your request, and prefers not to pull the tooth out. All he might do is clean it and fill it and by this alleviates your pain and rescues the tooth as well. By this, he did you more good than you requested, and you leave very grateful despite that he did not do what you requested...

It would have been better that you ask the physician to comfort you from the pain you have without telling him the way and the method. But to leave the matter to his wisdom and he can arrange the matter with care and love, while you are submitting to the work of his care?!

* Another example: You might have a burn, so you go to the doctor and say to him: "Please put ointment on this burn and bandage it." But the doctor might see that it is better to leave the burnt area unwrapped...

Will you complain that the doctor did not answer your request?! No, he did answer but with wisdom. You are not the one who directs him to the solution but he is the one who directs you... Likewise with God: You ask of Him something, and with all mercy and love he answers you, but in a way that He sees and in a time that His wisdom establishes. He knows what is for your good. Every time you make a request, He says to you: I have heard your request and I will give to you, but leave me to arrange it...

Therefore, be assured, be patient and do not force your knowledge upon God. Do not request a matter and insist on the way and time and enter into details!!

Do not be restless, for God will answer you in the day of trouble, but in His way and not yours, unless your way is His way.,,

* Another example is the wrong requests, and these come from Saints!!

Abraham the patriarch did not lose hope that he would receive offspring from Sarah. He asked from the Lord saying "Oh, that Ishmael might live before You." (Genesis 17:18)

Abraham, the father of fathers and prophets, requested something against the will of God...!

Thus God did not answer his request and answered him saying "No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son... I will establish My covenant with him"... God answered Abraham's request with regards

to granting him an offspring, blessing his offspring and granting him the covenant and promises... but not in the manner that Abraham suggested...

*** Also Jonah the prophet, who asked from the Lord a wrong request, and He did not answer him!**

Jonah called for the destruction of Nineveh, and they repented and God accepted their repentance and they were not destroyed. Jonah was grieved for his words were unfulfilled, and he asked from the Lord saying "Therefore now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live!" (Jonah 4:3) Jonah repeated this request again in 4:8.

God did not accept Jonah's request, and his life was not taken from him, for it was not for his good to leave the world in this state of resentment, gloominess, and self-centeredness, rejecting God's will and grief over the salvation of people!!

Although God did not accept the literal request of Jonah, in reality, He answered the true request he had in the depth of his soul...

The expression "take my life from me" means "I am grieved and want You to make up with me." And this is what God actually did, and did not accept literally his wrong request that he made in a state of gloominess...

So do not be upset if you request something from God and feel that He did not answer. **Maybe its answer is in its non-acceptance...**

* We can add to the examples of Abraham and Jonah the example of Paul the Apostle, when he asked the Lord to remove the thorn that was given to him in the flesh...

* In the same way, you might ask from the Lord to heal a sick person, and the person is not healed but dies. Do not be grieved and think that the Lord did not answer you in the day of trouble!

Maybe many angels are holding crowns and are awaiting the exit of his soul from this vain world, to lead it to paradise. And you, by your prayers, want to keep this sick person tied to the world!!

And just as God and the angels rejoiced at the departure of this sick person to paradise, for "this is far better," (Philippians 1:24) this person's soul also rejoiced at leaving the body. He found the place he went to much more sublime and glorious, and rested for eternity from the pains of the flesh... At the same time, the souls of the righteous also rejoiced at receiving him, and congratulated him for completing his struggle on earth.

Amongst all this rejoicing, you remained sad for your prayers were not answered!! It was actually answered by not being accepted...

You must believe that God is more compassionate upon us than we are upon ourselves, and that He is aware of what is for our good... Many times, the compassion in our hearts is earthly compassion and is relative to humanity, which differs greatly to Divine relativity that is deep in its love and wisdom...

I wish that all of our requests that we ask God, would be in agreement to God's good will. I also wish that we do not trust our human understanding greatly. For every time that we see our

requests not being answered, let us comprehend that behind this is Divine wisdom, that if we don't understand now, we shall later...

The Holy Bible is full of examples of God's answer in the day of trouble. Amongst these, we can mention the following:

Daniel when he was cast into the lions' den.

The three young youths when they were cast into the fiery furnace.

Jonah, when he was in the belly of the whale, and prayed to the Lord.

Moses and the people when they were before the Red Sea, and the enemy behind them.

Esther when she was going to meet King Ahasuerus.

Elijah the prophet, during the famine, and when he was exiled by Jezebel.

David the prophet when he was being pursued by King Saul seeking his life.

The righteous Joseph in the pit, in the trial and in prison.

Peter the Apostle when he was in prison awaiting his fate.

There are many other examples that cannot be counted, and in which the saying of the Psalm "May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble" is verified...

Many also are the examples in history and the lives of individuals.

It is hard to count them, but we can mention the following amongst them:

Saint Athanasius the Apostolic as he fled and hid for the faith, or as he stood before the council convened by the Arians in Tyre to judge him when they falsely accused him of many matters and presented false witnesses...

Or Saint Alexandros Patriarch of Constantinople who was ordered by the Emperor to accept Arius in the communion of the church. So he and some of the saints spent the night in prayer... And Arius died that night, when his entrails were poured out in a public lavatory... The Lord answered in the day of trouble.

The examples in this area require a separate book in which someone can collect the stories of God's acceptance in the history of the Church, or in the stories of the Saints, or in the life of individuals from the people; and it can be a book of comfort and strengthening of faith...

May the Lord Answer You

The Lord is the One who answers you, and not human strength.

David the Prophet realized this truth and said "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes." (Psalm 117:8-9) He concentrated on the Lord by saying "The Lord is my strength... The right hand of the Lord does valiantly. The right hand of the Lord is exalted." (Psalm 117:14, 15, 16)

The Lord is the One who answers, helps and rescues. Therefore the Bible said:

"Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength... (Jeremiah 17:5)

If you stand alone in all your troubles, and if your friends and loved ones leave you, do not be upset... "May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble."

Our father Abraham, when the Lord delayed in answering him, resorted to ways like with Hagar (Genesis 16) and Keturah (Genesis 25); and he did not benefit from all these human ways. And the righteous Joseph, while in prison, resorted to help from the cup-bearer and asked him to mention him before Pharaoh (Genesis 40:14). The Bible says that he forgot Joseph (Genesis 40:23).

The answer is from the Lord, and only from the Lord...

In the Lord's answer to you at the time of trouble, we remember two matters:

(a) Ask for what suits the will of God so He can answer you.

(b) Remember examples from the Lord's answers to His children so you can trust and be comforted.

Meaning of Time of Trouble

It is possible that the time of trouble is the time of trial, pain or the hour of temptation...

And it's possible that the day of trouble is the day of death...

And it's possible that the time of trouble is the hour of standing before the Just Judge on the day of judgment.

In your trouble, the Lord will remember you, especially if there is no solution.

As matters become complex, and it appears that there is no way out, the Lord will look upon you and show that He has many solutions. David the prophet experienced this trouble and said:

"I pour out my complaint before Him; I declare before Him my trouble. When my spirit was overwhelmed within me... In the way in which I walk they have secretly set a snare for me. Look on my right hand and see, for there is no one who acknowledges me; refuge has failed me; no one cares for my soul. I cried out to You, O Lord: I said, "You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living. Attend to my cry, for I am brought very low..." (Psalm 42:2-6)

The expression "trouble" entails all the wars of Satan and the evil people:

The Church summarizes it in her saying: "All envy, temptation, all the work of Satan, the counsel of wicked men and the rising up of enemies, hidden and manifest, take away from us, and from all Your people..."

The strikes of Satan are uncountable, he is like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour (I Peter 5:8). He strikes from the right and from the left. He tempts the body with desires as he tempts the mind with thoughts. He fights the spirit with blasphemy and doubts and he fights with harshness and without mercy. In all his wars, the Church stands by each child from her children, whispering in his ear "May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble."

Likewise with the plots and counsel that arise against people.

That from which David cried out saying: "Lord, how they have increased who trouble me! Many are they who rise up against me. Many are they who say of me, "There is no help for him in God."" (Psalm 3:1-2) In all this, he hears this comforting expression "May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble," so David answers "... the Lord sustained me... I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around."

The time of trouble can also be the hour of the spirit leaving the body... and what trouble?!

At the hour of the spirit leaving the body, one might say "Lord have mercy, Lord forgive, Lord absolve, Lord pardon..." His fate will be settled, and the period of his test has ended. Therefore he says this prayer from his whole heart, from his depth, with all honesty and all repentance... and the Lord answers in the day of his trouble.

And there is one who asks the same and is not answered, for it is not a new request, not from the heart and not from repentance. And God knows well that if the life of this one is extended on earth, he will remain in his sins...

And it is possible that the day of trouble is the day of battle with sin...

The day in which trouble comes from within, and not from without, from your thought, from your heart, from your senses, from your desires, from your nature... Or it might come to you from within and without together: From outside as wars and offences, and from within through invitation and acceptance; or from within through weakness, submission and lack of power to resist...

The day of trouble might be the day of your arrogance or pride in yourself, or the day of your doubts, or the day of your lukewarmness... It is a difficult day spiritually...

In all this you need help from above, you need grace to support you and you need power from the Holy Spirit.

You need the prayer of the Saints to support you in your struggle and fight, so that you are able to resist till bloodshed, fighting against the sin (Hebrews 12:4), knowing that you do not fight alone, but the Lord is with you in the day of your trouble, so that you do not fall...

It is possible that this expression can be understood in another way...

For the expression “the day of your trouble” can mean the whole life if it’s all pain.

It was said about the Lord Christ Himself that He is “A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” (Isaiah 53:3) “Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.” (Verse 4) Troubles have never left Him.

Anyhow, no matter the type of trouble or how long it lasts, ask from the Lord and He will answer you in the day of trouble.

With regards to the Lord and His feelings that are full of compassion towards humanity, how beautiful is the saying of the Bible:

“In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the Angel of His Presence saved them...” (Isaiah 63:9)

Points about Acceptance of Requests

1- The first advice we offer you, so that you reach acceptance, is:

Work towards what helps this acceptance, for without doubt, you have a role to play.

Do not sleep closing your eyes then cry out saying “Oh Lord answer.” Instead work with God, for yourself, so you can fulfill the answer... You might ask from the Lord and be upset with the Lord, and the reason is you, that you have not worked with Him...

The Lord’s acceptance to you does not mean that you become lazy and slothful...

Therefore struggle and toil and expend all that you can. Work with God, join in with the Holy Spirit and submit your whole will. And remember the saying of the Bible:

“Cursed is he who does the work of the Lord deceitfully...” (Jeremiah 48:10)

Therefore in some cases, non-acceptance is not caused by God, but by us. We are the ones that cause our fall into trouble through our wrong actions. And we are the ones that cause this non-acceptance by not putting our hands with God in the work to come out of this trouble. We were not strong in heart, steadfast in faith nor active in the Divine work. We could not keep watch with Him for one hour, nor cast our nets into the depth as He commanded, nor be with Him under the cloud, nor mark the lintels of our doors with the Blood of the Passover as He commanded, nor have we put on the full armor of God (Ephesians 6).

2- Maybe the answer sometimes requires patience and waiting on the Lord...

It’s possible that God has appointed a time to answer, according to His wisdom, and His hour has not yet come. We must be patient, but without restlessness, tribulation or hopelessness. But according to what David the prophet said “Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the Lord!” (Psalm 27:14) He explained his personal experience

in this and said “My soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning...” (Psalm 130:6) The Lord will answer, but in the fullness of time.

He answered our father Abraham, but after some time, during which Abram was fought with hopelessness, so he took Hagar, and Sarah laughed in her heart because of how the promise of the Lord could be fulfilled (Genesis 18:12). But the promise of the Lord was fulfilled despite the length of time.

We also notice that the children that God allowed to be born after a period of barrenness and after a long wait for the Lord to answer, were all very kind: whether it was Isaac who carried the wood of the offering, or Samuel who anointed kings with ointment, or John the Baptist who was the greatest among those born of women, or the righteous Joseph who is an example of purity and success, who also took two tribes, double his brothers...

Be assured that the prayer you offer is kept with God and will not be lost.

It is stored with Him and He will fulfill it as long as it coincides with His will, but in good time. It is exactly like a seed that you put in the ground, and remains for days, weeks or even months, without finding anything that sprouts upon the face of the earth. But it has not died, it is stored in a safe place, awaiting the work of plants and the season of sprouting. Its time of growth might be lengthy, like the palm tree seed for example (the pip of dates). It might remain a number of months under the ground, after which you will see like a small blade above the ground, which is the start of the palm tree that is to rise above the ground. **Therefore, it is good to place the seed in the ground and do not worry about the time of its appearance, and do not hurry it... Likewise also in your prayer and its answer.**

Your prayer has been heard by God, it is in His thought and heart as well as in His will. Therefore leave it and do not worry about its acceptance. It is enough that it has entered into the presence of God. It is sufficient for you that God has heard it.

About this matter alone, David used to sometimes pray and say “Hear my prayer O Lord”... “Let my prayer come before You.”

As long as the Lord has heard the prayer, then be assured.

3- The matter therefore requires faith that if God hears, He will answer.

David the prophet was confident in this matter, having faith in the answer while he is still praying. In the sixth Psalm, he starts his prayer by saying “O Lord, do not rebuke me in Your anger, nor chasten me in Your hot displeasure. Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak; O Lord, heal me, for my bones are troubled. My soul also is greatly troubled.” But at the end of his prayer, he says “Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity; for the Lord has heard my supplication; the Lord will receive my prayer.” (Psalm 6) He trusted, as he prayed, that his prayer is heard and accepted. Therefore he rebuked his enemies who gloated at him.

In his trust of the answer, he used to say “I cried to the Lord with my voice, and He heard me from His holy hill.” (Psalm 3:4) I wish that you can repeat this verse of the Psalm to give you comfort.

Thus David did not speak to God only, instead he spoke and he heard His voice, that is, he heard the voice of His answer... by faith.

Look at what he said: "I will hear what God the Lord will speak, for He will speak peace to His people and to His saints; but let them not turn back to folly." (Psalm 85:8)

Many are the examples that the Psalms carry about this spiritual experience in the Lord's answer, and in the trust that the praying person has in this answer. Now is not the time to list these examples, so let us turn to another point...

4- Many are the cases in which the Lord answers without our asking.

God, as a Father, knows the needs of His children. He knows their troubles and its difficulties as well as their need for salvation. Therefore He answers to the trouble they are in, and not only to the prayer offered for the trouble. He sent Moses the prophet to save His people enslaved by Pharaoh, without these people asking for salvation from slavery...

The wages of the laborers that were kept back by fraud cry out to God before the cries of the reapers (James 5:4). And even if the reapers do not cry out, then the injustice itself will rise up to God "Who executes justice for the oppressed," (Psalm 146:5) even without crying out to Him. The Lord brings justice upon the earth, and sets the balance amongst people, and does not expect from them to offer complaints... He knows...

There are even troubles that the Lord rescues you from without you even knowing it. They were plotted against you, and the Lord looked from His heaven, and spoiled the plan of your enemies without you knowing it, and also without you praying.

Therefore, the Lord answers your needs before He answers your prayers.

He knows your needs, and grants you without you asking. Just like the father does with his little children, who do not know how to ask. The Psalm says "The Lord preserves the simple." (Psalm 116:6)

It is just like what the faithful shepherd does with the lost sheep. He searches for it, rescues it from what it's in, and returns it to the flock without it asking. Its mere state requires a response...

With the same situation, God responds to the state of the earth. He brings down to it from heaven what it needs of rain and shines upon it what it requires of light and heat, without the earth asking.

5- The type of answer to trouble differs with God from one case to the other:

There are cases to which God responds with an immediate answer, in the same instance of the request. There are cases with which delay is not suitable, as in the case of Peter when he fell into the water, and as in the cases of the three young men in the fiery furnace, Daniel in the lions' den, parting of the Red Sea, and striking of the rock to gush out water.

There are other cases that take some time, like leaving Jonah in the belly of the whale for three days and like in bringing rain from heaven in the seventh prayer of Elijah the prophet, and not from the first prayer- this example teaches us perseverance in prayer.

There are many other examples that take a long time and that teach patience, like the response to Abraham in giving him an offspring from Sarah.

This is with regards to time. There is also a difference with regards to the type of the Lord's acceptance of prayers, and this matter depends on the wisdom of the Lord and His outlook on matters...

What else?...

6- There is a response, through which the Lord means to grant a crown to the person praying.

Or for the Lord to grant him glories from this trouble, as the Lord did with the martyrs, confessors and heroes of the faith. So the expression "May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble" means that the Lord will glorify you in the trouble and accept you before Him as an offering... the offering that is placed on the fire, and the fire keeps on working in it, till it rises to the Lord as a good aroma, and God will smell it in acceptance (Leviticus 1, 6).

Like a quantity of incense placed in the censor, while the incense submits to it, till it is changed to a sweet aroma, rising to the Lord, and remains bearing the trouble till its last grain, to the last breath.

Here, the grains of incense never object to the fire; and if one grain goes far away, we bring it to the coals with the spoon to burn, for its glory is in its burning. This is its message, to offer itself as a sweet aroma in the Church, and to rise upwards. And the Lord's response to it means its acceptance as an offering, acceptance as a sweet aroma, and its acceptance as being worthy of the prepared crowns and glories.

This is an example of great Saints of a particular type, and not for all...

The Lord's acceptance to the martyrs on the day of their trouble, was not to rescue them from martyrdom, but to give them patience in pain and strength to complete it so they can receive the glory prepared for them. Just as they suffered with Him, they will also be glorified with Him.

The Lord Christ, while on the Cross in the day of His trouble, was accepted by the Father not in rescuing Him from the Cross, like how some who were gathered cried out, but in the acceptance of receiving Him as a Sacrifice of Love, as redemption for the sins of the world, and in glorifying Him as the Redeemer who redeemed the whole world. This is why the Lord, on His way to Golgotha, said: "And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was." (John 17:5)

In every trouble, the Lord responds in a way that suits His wisdom and love.

And as long as the Lord responds to you, then do not worry or be restless...

Let your heart be full of peace and rejoice in your prayer. Imagine that David the Prophet places his hand on your shoulder, while you pray the Psalms of the Third Hour, and whispers in your ear saying "May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble." And you, with all joy and assurance, say blessed are You, O Lord in all Your good promises and in all Your faithful and true promises.

I, O Lord, will hold onto this expression every time I fall into trouble, and I will reason with You through it... You did say "let us reason together..." (Isaiah 1:18)... So let it be. You promised that You will answer in the day of trouble, and Your promise is true and faithful. I will hold to Your promise with all my faith, assurance and trust in You as a Philanthropic God and as a God who, when He promises, will fulfill...

The Psalm says "May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble; may the name of the God of Jacob defend you." What are the depths of this second part:

The Name of the God of Jacob Defend you

You are in a spiritual warfare, and the Bible says to you "may the name of the God of Jacob defend you." What is meant by the expression "defend you?"

This does not mean that He will continually defend you from your enemies, those who oppose you or those who persecute you, hidden or seen. It is possible that He will defend you against yourself.

He can give you victory over the beast hiding inside you. To make you victorious over your nature, over your soul and over your outbursts, whether you have fear or hopelessness, boredom and non-steadfastness, restlessness, envy, arrogance, pride or jealousy...

He will give victory to your spirit over your body, and your mind over your whims.

To make the wisdom in you victorious over the outbursts, and the sacrifice in you victorious over the ego.

It is not merely a victory over people, for the Bible says "... he who rules his spirit (is better) than he who takes a city." (Proverbs 16:32)

He will give you victory over all the desires that are offered to you, like the desires of sin that were offered to the righteous Joseph; or the desires of position, wealth, haughtiness, or worldly glory that were offered to the martyrs and confessors. Also He will give you victory in the area of fear. The Lord will make your heart a strong fortress. As He said in His promise to Jeremiah the prophet when he feared his enemies that were more haughty: "For behold, I have made you this day a fortified city and an iron pillar, and bronze walls against the whole land... They will fight against you, but they shall not prevail against you. For I am with you, says the Lord, to deliver you." (Jeremiah 1:18, 19)

Or like what the Lord said to Saint Paul the Apostle "Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; for I am with you, and no one will attack you or hurt you." (Acts 18:9, 10)

If there is a promise from God that He will give a person victory, then even if the whole world arises against him, then he is assured.

In this regard, David the prophet says "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?... Though an army may encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, in this I will be confident." (Psalm 27:1, 3)

The Lord is with His children, answering them, saving them from every trouble and giving them victory "For the scepter of wickedness shall not rest on the land allotted to the righteous..." (Psalm 125:3)

This does not mean that He will totally wipe out pain from them, for pain has its blessings, but He will eventually give them victory, after they bear it for His name's sake.

He will allow the scepter to come upon them, but He will not allow it to "rest". He will allow pain, but He will not allow defeat. Strikes might befall them, and if they receive them with courage, forbearance and patience, then they will be victorious eventually... Like what has happened in the ages of martyrdom. The Church went through the oceans of pain, blood and torture, and she was victorious at the end. Neither swords, prisons or doubts were able to prevail over her.

Satan takes his chance and tempts the children of God, and uses all his weaponry. But the Lord puts a limit on him, and judges over all his works. In this David the prophet says: "Many a time they have afflicted me from my youth... yet they have not prevailed against me... The plowers plowed on my back; they made their furrows long. The Lord is righteous; He has cut in pieces the cords of the wicked." (Psalm 129:2-3)... That is, He breaks their hurt, so that they do not remain enemies forever...

"May the name of the God of Jacob defend you." May he defend you in your spiritual wars and in your troubles.

This war might be from one side only...

They may "fight against you," (Jeremiah 1:19) without you fighting against them, but they will not prevail against you... As David said "They surrounded me, yes, they surrounded me... they surrounded me like bees; they were quenched like a fire of thorns..." (Psalm 118:11, 12) What was the result? He says, "You pushed me violently, that I might fall, but the Lord helped me... The right hand of the Lord is exalted; the right hand of the Lord does valiantly." (Psalm 118:13, 16)

By defense here, it is not meant the destruction of your enemies, but most likely it means being saved from your enemies, and escaping from their snares that are set for you.

In this, David the prophet says "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us... Then they would have swallowed us alive... Blessed be the Lord, who has not given us as prey to their teeth... Our soul has escaped as a bird from the snare of the fowlers. The snare is broken, and we have escaped. Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth." (Psalm 124:2, 3, 6, 7)

The children of God never attack anyone. The one who offers the other cheek, and walks the second mile, can never attack another. Therefore the defense that is meant by the Psalm is the victory in wars and attacks that come from others, and the Lord saves His children from them.

Also, this victory was tried by our fathers the Anchorites and hermits in the desert.

They lived in almost complete isolation, in the wilderness, deserts, and holes of the mountains. With this, they were exposed to severe wars from the devils, as in what happened to Saint Anthony for example.

He faced wars in doubts, fear, horrific sights and sometimes by being hurt. He faced wars in his thoughts and offences. Some of the hermits were fought by false scenes and revelations, by dreams from the devils, alongside wars of boredom, envy and sadness as well as wars of pride... In all this, the saying of the Psalm "may the name of the God of Jacob defend you" rang in their ears.

"Defend you" is because God does not want defeat for His children...

God wants you to always be victorious and triumphant...

Some understand humility in a wrong way, thinking that the humble person must always be defeated! No, the humble person is the victorious person. And every time he is victorious, he does not shine by his victory, nor is puffed up, nor is his soul proud on the inside; and it's possible that he might be defeated from his enemies according to the outward appearance, but he is victorious internally.

God always wants to lead us "in triumph." (II Corinthians 2:14)

He desires that we struggle always in our spiritual lives and to be victorious. Therefore, the saints who have perfected the faith, and struggled well upon the earth, and left in righteousness to their place of rest in paradise, are called "The Victorious Church". As for us who are still on earth, we are called "The Struggling Church." If we attain victory in our struggles, then we will be joined to the choirs of "The Victorious Church," whose victory is the name of the God of Jacob.

This victory, or this triumph, is a distinguished term in the Book of Revelation:

Many are the promises that God has granted to the seven Churches for the victorious:

- * To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life.
- * He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.
- * He who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name will be written which no one knows except he who receives it.
- * He who overcomes... I will give power over the nations - He shall rule them with a rod of iron... and I will give him the morning star.
- * He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

* He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. And I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem...

* To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His Throne.

They are rewards for those who overcome, even the whole of heaven is the dwelling place for those who overcome, who are victorious over Satan, the world, materialistic matters, the flesh and the ego.

This is what the Spirit says to the Churches, and He who has ears to hear, let him hear...

God desires that you are always victorious, continually triumphant. The Apostle says "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." (Romans 12:21)

Victory is a characteristic of the children of God, and the Book of Revelation explained how these have overcome the great dragon, that serpent of old. Saint John says "Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren... And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death..." (Revelation 12:10, 11)

Therefore, overcoming is not by their strength, but by the blood of the Lamb.

True, it is as the Psalm says "may the name of the God of Jacob defend you..."

It is not the might of the believer who fights, but the power of God that works with him and in him. We find this matter very clear in the story of David and Goliath. David said to him "You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts." ... "This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand." ... "That all the earth may know that there is a God." ... "For the battle is the Lord's." (I Samuel 17:45-47)

As long as the battle is the Lord's, then the sword and spear will not give you victory. The name of the God of Jacob will give you victory. And if God gives you victory, then live triumphantly, rich by His power, grace and the work of His Spirit. So live strongly and do not weaken.

This power and this victory were mentioned by Saint John the Apostle when he wrote to the young men saying "I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one." (I John 2:14)

It is the strength of God that gives the believer victory in his battles.

Therefore Saint John also says to his children "You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world." (I John 4:4)

He who is in you is the Spirit of God who works with you. He is the name of God by whom you were called. He is the power from high, for "you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you..." (Acts 1:8)

Therefore when you pray the expression of the Psalm "May the name of the God of Jacob defend you," it's as if you are also praying and saying: Grant me, O Lord, this power by Whom I will be victorious. Work in me and with me, O Lord. As you overcame the world, overcome it another time in my life. It was said about You "Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah... has prevailed."

Do not let the world become victorious and take one of Your children, that is, myself. Instead, You overcame the world, and save me, so that I rejoice in the saying of the Psalm "may the name of the God of Jacob defend you."

It is a Psalm that fills the heart with zeal and hope. If you pray it with depth, it will lift you up and will never make you submit to sin, nor have the spirit of failure. And in every type of struggle that you have, the spirit of failure will not engulf you, instead the spirit of hope and trust in God's help comes to you. This trust will also be given by you to those around you, even for the feeble knees and weak hands; and for the smoking flax and bruised reed. You will say to each of those souls "May the name of the God of Jacob defend you."

What is important in victory is that it is a true victory...

Cain was able to strike Abel, kill him, and get rid of him, his righteousness and God's acceptance of him. Was Cain really victorious over Abel, or was he truly defeated?! Cain was badly defeated before the sin of envy and jealousy, before the sin of anger and hatred, and before the sin of cruelty, harshness, enmity and murder. He was unable to gain the virtue of love, and could not overcome the sin that lies at the door, that ruled over him. This made him lose his righteousness and his brother as well as God's love and acceptance. It made him fearful and a fugitive, restless in soul...! Is this victory?! Without doubt, no.

Therefore we must understand victory in its correct meaning, and must not rejoice except in true victory.

The true victory is to be victorious over sin... victorious over Satan. To be victorious inside yourself firstly...

To be victorious over your longings, lusts and desires. To be victorious over being rough, which fights you and compels you into carelessness with others. To be victorious over greediness, the self and love of yourself. To be victorious over the world, materialism and the flesh...

This is the victory that God wants for you... And if you are victorious internally, then the whole world cannot overcome you, for the pure heart is an unconquerable fortress. The world might fight you, but will not overpower you, for true defeat is that on the inside. If your inside is whole, pure and connected to God, then "no one will attack you to hurt you." (Acts 18:10) "They will fight against you, but they shall not prevail against you," (Jeremiah 1:19) for the Lord will lead you in the procession of His victory... the name of the God of Jacob will defend you.

And victory, my brethren, brings joy and comforts the conscience...

With it, the person forgets all his toil. And there is joy in heaven for the person who is victorious over himself, with one who repents.

The lost son, when he returned to himself and analyzed himself, was victorious over the vanity that lived in him for awhile. He returned to his father who said "we should make merry and be glad..." This joy was revealed in heaven, so that the heavenly would share with the earthly...

And you, my brother, when you are victorious, remember that the victory does not come back to you; it does not come back to your intention and strength of will, but to God who works in them. Therefore, the One who makes you victorious is the God of Jacob.

But why did the Divine Inspiration say the God of "Jacob" specifically?

Why was it not said, for example, the God of Isaac or the God of Noah?... The word "Jacob" points to a deep spiritual meaning, which encourages us... Our father Jacob was a weak and simple person, and the might against him was great. He was a humble, kind-hearted man, before him stood the harshness and inhumanity that was inside his brother Esau, who insisted saying "I will kill my brother Jacob." (Genesis 27:41) Against him also was the deception of his uncle Laban, who married him to Leah instead of Rachel, changed his wages ten times, and pursued him even when he left his home...

Jacob was weak and fearful when he wanted to meet Esau. He was afraid that Esau might strike him, his wives and his children when he divided them into three groups, each group coming and kneeling before Esau and appeasing him with a soft word. Jacob himself knelt down seven times before he drew near to his brother, saying "... to find favor in the sight of my lord." (Genesis 33:8) He prayed to God before this meeting saying: "Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and attack me and the mother with the children. For You said, 'I will surely treat you well...'" (Genesis 32:11, 12)

Therefore, the God of Jacob is the God of the weak who are unable to defend themselves.

God of the meek who stand before the mighty who are proud of their strength.

God of the bird, before who the snare of the fowler has been set.

God of our father Anthony, upon who the devils attacked, so he said to them in humility "I am weak to fight the least of you."

It is very good that Saint David the prophet remembered our father Jacob who fled from a strength harsher than him, seeking the mercies of God, and obeying the advice of Saint Rebekah his mother who said to him "... flee to my brother Laban... stay with him... until your brother's fury turns away, until your brother's anger turns away from you..." (Genesis 27:43, 44, 45)

This is the example that stood before David in his Psalm.

He did not seek the mercy of the God of Samson, who by his strength was able to defeat a city, despite that his strength was also from God... Instead he placed before himself the weak Jacob who has no power nor sword except prayer.

Jacob, despite his weakness, was able to fight with God, and did not leave Him till he received a blessing from Him (Genesis 32:26), and it was said that he struggled with God and men and overcame (Genesis 32:28).

Jacob, who in his weakness, had revelations, promises and spiritual experiences, and said "For I have seen God face to face..." (Genesis 32:30) With this revelation, promises and experiences, the power of God was what made his weakness victorious. The promises of God comforted him in all his troubles, thus, it was good what the Divine Inspiration said to David "May the name of the God of Jacob defend you."

May the God of this person who did not know how to defend himself defend you and He defended him in all cases... He defended him from Laban and from Esau, as He defended him also in the case of his son Joseph, and he finally saw him and rejoiced in him.

The God of the poor and weak will give you victory if you stand before Him in weakness like they did...

It is therefore so beautiful that the Church, in the Midnight Prayer, intercedes through the Priest for the sake of "the weak and incapable, and those who have no one to remember them."

The God of the person who was sick and lay beside the pool for 38 years, not having a person to put him in the pool, so the Lord Himself came, healed him and raised him, give you victory...

May the God of Jacob, who is kind and calm, who carries no sword to defend himself, but waits for the salvation of the Lord "The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace," (Exodus 14:14) give you victory. Maybe because of Jacob's meekness, God loved him, even before he was born (Romans 9:11-13). He loved him among "whom He foreknew." (Romans 8:29)

And thus "God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty..." (I Corinthians 1:27)

He was able to give victory to these weak, not only as He gave victory to Jacob, but also He gave victory to the Apostles, those poor fishermen, who were afraid and hid in the upper room. He gave them strength to spread the word of faith that was resisted by the Roman authority, the philosophical schools and the Jewish leaders.

Struggle with this loving God, just as our father Jacob struggled with Him. Hold onto Him and take from Him blessing and grace, just as our father Jacob also did. And also take from Him Divine promises... Then you will see how the Lord will answer you in the day of trouble, and the name of the God of Jacob will defend you.

He will give you victory in troubles, that is, he will not leave the trouble to attack you alone.

For He will be with you during the trouble. God will enter the situation and will not leave you alone, making Himself a party in the situation. Whoever attacks you will be as if attacking God Himself. Therefore it was said "In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the Angel of His Presence saved them." (Isaiah 63:9) Whoever persecutes you will be as if directing the persecution

to God. Thus the Lord said to Saul of Tarsus "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me..." (Acts 9:4) He considered that whatever is directed to His children is directed to Himself personally... As He said to them "He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me." (Luke 10:16) If your passion is a fellowship in His passion, then He will look at your passion as if it is His own passion.

He is the One who came to carry our pain and not only our sins (Isaiah 53:4), He will never leave those who are suffering, but will stand by them and support them.

He calls each person who is in trouble, to come to Him and find rest. He said to all "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28) Therefore hold onto His true promise and come to Him to give you rest. He gives comfort to the heavy laden, even to those who do not come to Him, He is compassionate to them when He sees their burdens. Was He not compassionate, when He saw the people "weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd." (Matthew 9:36)

God does not abandon people in their troubles...

From the outside, He will not leave you to the problem; and on the inside, He will not leave you to the feeling of abandonment.

The mere feeling that God is not with you in trouble, is a deeper trouble than all that bothers you. Therefore, God makes a balance between the trouble on the outside and the peace He gives you by His help or promises. By His mercy, He will undo your trouble, will never add to your troubles, nor take a negative stand against you...

We will give you some examples from the Bible:

* The sinful woman who was caught in adultery. Without doubt, on the outside she suffered severe trouble through judgment, embarrassment, humiliation, harshness from those who brought her to Him, and their threats to her in sentencing her to death and fulfilling the law literally with her... But the Lord did not join with those harsh people, and did not judge with their judgment. Instead, He shamed those who judged her, and put them under the same judgment, saving her from them and so they left her. Then He said to the woman "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more." (John 8:11) He did this and saved her, without her asking.

Therefore the expression "May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble," carries the meaning He will answer to your needs, and not only answer your prayers...

God only knows that you are in need of help, so He offers it to you, whether you ask or not. There are problems that are coming at you and you do not know, and therefore do not ask, but God answers not only your prayers, but also answers the situation as He knows it well and the way to solve it.

* Also the weeping woman who wet His feet with her tears in the house of Simon the Pharisee. The Pharisee objected and judged her in his heart and considered her mere touches to the feet of Christ as bold and sinful. As for the Lord, He defended her and explained to the Pharisee that this woman has virtues that surpass the Pharisee...

* This example reminds us of the story of the Shunamite woman. When her son died, she hurried to the man of God Elisha to help her and she held his feet. So his disciple Gehazi rebuked her and desired to send her away. Elisha the prophet stopped him and defended the woman saying "Let her alone; for her soul is in deep distress." (II Kings 4:27) He was patient with the woman till he heard her complaint, and went with her to raise her son. If Elisha the prophet was this gentle and kind of heart, then how much more God Himself?!

The best times that God is with you are the times of trouble.

The time that you need Him, and which you say to Him "There is no supporter in our tribulations and adversities, but You." At this time, you will find God near you... Either to strengthen you and save you, or either to comfort you and give you patience to bear it. And in your patience there is victory, as an introduction to the final victory that the Lord sees.

Making you victorious does not mean to place your enemies under your feet, but to place them inside your heart... So that peace exists between you and them, or to give you grace in their eyes, or that He makes them leave you in peace... At least so that you do not receive any harm from them...

The way God gives you victory differs in its types...

He might allow one of the angels, or a spirit from the spirit of the saints to enter your situation, or even send a saint to save you, whether in a visible or invisible way. A miracle might happen, and God might intervene in a way that glorifies His name. This victory might also appear to be very natural, but God's hand appears in it very clearly. He might give you victory inside yourself, by changing your thoughts and feelings, or by making peace fill your heart...

What is important is that the name of the God of Jacob will give you victory. Let us contemplate here on the power of the name of God:

Name of the God of Jacob

The name of God has its power, awesomeness and great ability. Thus the wise man said:

"The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe." (Proverbs 18:10)

If you remember this verse, and continually keep it in your mind, then undoubtedly it will propel you to make the name of the Lord always on your tongue; and take from its power a help that will be with you in every trouble. Thus the Psalmist, in the second Psalm of the Sunset Prayer (Psalm 118) says: "All the nations surrounded me... they surrounded me, yes, they surrounded me; but in the name of the Lord I will destroy them." (Verses 10, 11)

Truly the name of the Lord is powerful, to the extent that the devils are terrified from it. Because of their fear, they come out from people. The disciples returned to the Lord with joy saying:

"Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." (Luke 10:17)

Because of the power of the name of the Lord, even upon the lips of those who are not saved, some of them they say to the Lord on the last day "... have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?" (Matthew 7:22) Here, the power of the Lord's name appears.

Thus we see the Psalmist, in first Psalm of the Sixth Hour, say:

"Save me, O God, by Your name." (Psalm 54:1)

The name of the Lord has power for salvation, for it casts out demons.

And in the story of the servant girl in Phillipi, who was possessed with a spirit of divination, and how Saint Paul the Apostle cast it out of her, the Bible says that Paul "turned and said to the spirit, 'I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.' And he came out that very hour." (Acts 16:18)

And in the name of the Lord also, the saints performed miracles.

We see this matter clearly in the story of the healing of the lame man asking for alms at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful. Saint Peter had no money to give him, so he said to the lame man "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk... So he, leaping up, stood and walked..." (Acts 3:6, 8) In the name of the Lord the miracle was performed. And the examples are many...

Therefore keep the name of the Lord upon your tongue always, so that the Lord will give you strength and comfort.

We suffer in our lives if we are far from the name of the Lord, and consequently by being far from feeling His presence with us and His work for us. Thus David says:

"Oh, how I love Your name, O Lord. It is my meditation all the day." (Psalm 119)

He meditates on the name of the Lord all day and feels joyful and that the Lord is with him; and that the Lord will defend him in the day of trouble, and give him victory. How does this happen?... The Psalm says:

**May He Send you Help from
the Sanctuary, and Strengthen
you out of Zion**

He will send you help... He will send who will rescue you and not leave you alone. This is why we remember this Divine help, in the beginning of The Thanksgiving Prayer, by saying "Let us give thanks to the beneficent and merciful God... for He has helped us." It is continual help, that we remember every day and every hour.

God will send you help, for He knows Your weakness and your circumstances.

He knows Your problems and your needs. He follows your wars with Satan, your relationships with people, and the feelings of your inner self. He comprehends well the state that you are in, from every angle, all the complications that come before you and the rising up of enemies, hidden and manifest. He listens to your prayers and hears your groans and sees the bitterness of your soul...

As long as God knows all that surrounds you, then be assured...

Undoubtedly He will send to you the solution, and will send to you help, as a compassionate God and a loving Father to His children; for this is His work as a Good Shepherd who looks after His flock.

However, some might not rely on God, and resort to human strength to come out of their trouble, or resort to human help.

Sometimes, human help is not void of sins and wrongs...

In your trouble, help might come to you from the people of the world. They might have pity on you and want your comfort from your troubles, no matter the means. Maybe some will try to solve your problem by a lie, a plot or by human cleverness! He might say to you that this problem can be solved with a bribe, or an untruthful word, or with a false witness... Many are the human solutions. In all this, you do not feel that you have come out of your trouble in a holy way.

As for God, He will send you help in a holy way.

The ways of God are Divine, all pure and blessed, opposite to the ways of the world that bother the conscience. Many are the wrong plots and wrong advice that might bring a quick result, but does not suit the Divine will. We will mention some examples.

Ahab the king received help from Jezebel, that was the cause of his destruction.

Ahab desired to possess the field of Naboth the Jezreelite, and when Naboth refused to give the inheritance of his fathers, Ahab entered into a problem with himself. He could not stop his desire to possess this field. When his wife Jezebel saw him in his trouble, she offered help and intelligence: He can accuse Naboth the Jezreelite with blasphemy, bring false witnesses upon him, judge him and kill him, then inherit his land. And this advice brought the required result, and Ahab inherited the land. But the voice of God came to him saying: "In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, dogs shall lick your blood, even yours." (I Kings 21:19) The advice of Jezebel, that she thought was help to her husband, was the cause of his destruction, for its source was not the Lord, and was not help from the sanctuary.

In the same way was the advice that Balaam offered to Balak, and the advice that Ahithophel was about to give to Absalom to destroy David.

In your troubles, it is very easy for Satan to offer you help.

And the Psalm calls you to solve your problems only upon God's hands, and from His sanctuary and in a pure way even if it's delayed a little while.

It is very easy for Satan, when he sees you in trouble, to volunteer to offer you help, and will suggest to you solutions. Like when he saw the Lord Christ hungry after His long fast upon the mountain, so Satan came to offer help “command that these stones become bread.” (Matthew 4:3)... You can gain the whole world with bread, and they will follow You. And You can spread Your teachings with authority, with the temptation of the kingdom. You can have this with glamorous miracles by casting Yourself from the mountain and the angels will carry You, and people will see this and follow You... In all this, there is no redemption nor carrying the sins of the people... And the Lord Christ rejected this help and considered it a temptation from Satan, for it does not agree with the will of the Father, and it is not from Him nor from His sanctuary.

A help from His sanctuary makes you feel that God’s hand is there in it, and it might come in a way that you do not expect at all.

You will feel that God will “strengthen you out of Zion.” And Zion is the city of the great king, the city of David, the symbol of God’s reign and a symbol for blessing. So the expression “strengthen you out of Zion” means out of His king-ship, His kingdom, His strength, His blessing and His righteousness. In a way that makes you feel the hand of God has entered into the situation, and it is what has solved the problem.

I will give you a practical example, a story which happened 15 years ago:

One of the Metropolitans did not have a place for the diocese, and he lived in two rooms adjacent to the Church. It was natural and very important and vital for the service to build a diocese. So he struggled to collect money and buy a house to build a diocese. But the house had tenants in it, and it was not easy to evacuate them from the house. He also didn’t have enough money to demolish the house and rebuild it according to what is required. And how can he obtain a permit to demolish when the house is not old or subject to falling? And where would he get a permit to build? The Metropolitan had no option except to pray and leave the matter to God, for he cannot do anything.

And the hand of God started to work. The house was overlooking the road opposite to the train tracks, and the council wanted to expand the road and beautify it for it was at the entrance of the city. The expansion of the street meant the demolition of part of the house bought by the Metropolitan and also the evacuation of its dwellers. Thus the problem of the tenants and the demolition was solved. With the expansion of the street and the council taking a part of the land belonging to the diocese, the Metropolitan was re-compensated with money to help him build. And because the council wanted to expand the road the road and beautify it quickly, they offered all that was required to the owner with regards to permits for building and buying the materials as well as offering them loans as well. And the monetary problem was solved...

The diocese was built and all obstacles were resolved, and the hand of God intervened in a way that the Metropolitan would not have thought of. In a few short months, the Metropolitan sat in his new diocese without it costing much. Truly: May He send you help from the sanctuary, and strengthen you out of Zion.

As soon as God starts to solve the problem, the blessing comes.

And you will find that “all things work together for good to those who love God...” (Romans 8:28) God is able to bring “out of the strong... something sweet.” (Judges 14:14) He can change the problems to solutions. May you take this verse “May He send you help from the sanctuary, and strengthen you out of Zion,” as a source of spiritual contemplation in regards to personal human experiences, and what you know of stories from people that you know or stories that you read about the saints or from Church history.

I wish that you would send me this information, in an envelope titled “May He send you help from the sanctuary.” If you know of any true story, send it in detail. With this, we can publish a book on the topic of “May He send you help from the sanctuary.”

I know a lot in this field, but time is passing by in contemplation of only two verses from this Psalm, and I do not know how or when it will end. Therefore, I ask you that you allow me to pass quickly to the other points...

In many instances, the person finds all the doors closed except for one only that is open... And it appears that God’s hand has opened it, God’s hand, “He who opens and no one shuts...” (Revelation 3:7) And as God has opened this door, this does not mean that He will send an angel or one of the saints for this purpose... No, He might use any normal person. What is important is that God’s will is fulfilled, and God’s help comes, and that you feel that God’s hand is working with you and that He has sent you help from His sanctuary, from His heaven and from His throne...

The people of the world are not used to attributing to God the help that comes to them or to others! They attribute it to natural matters. As for the expression ‘hand of God,’ they do not understand it or use it. As for you who lives in the faith, and trust that God manages your life, then the help that comes to you, you attribute it to God, and particularly the one that is connected with this one door that is open...

You might be unsettled because of a problem, and you have taken a thousand precautions for it, then you find it is solved in a way you never would have thought of, so you feel the hand of God, and feel that God answered you in the day of trouble... “May He send you help from the sanctuary, and strengthen you out of Zion.” But what else?

May He Remember all your Offerings, and Accept your Burnt Sacrifice

All the offerings and sacrifices that you have offered to God previously, He will remember them for you in the day of trouble.

God does not forget the cold cup of water, nor forgets the two mites of the widow, or the small portion of flour that the widow of Zarephath of Sidon offered to Elijah.

Every good work you do is kept safely with God, written in the Book of Life. Do not think that He will forget any toil you do for His sake, or His Church or His saints, or for any poor and needy person. He says to you "you did it to Me." (Matthew 25:40) He remembers all your offerings, and says to you "I know your works, your labor, your patience... and have labored for my name's sake and have not become weary." (Revelation 2:2, 3)

God is not unjust to forget the labor of love (Hebrews 6:10).

Every labor of love that you do before the Lord, is a sacrifice of love and not forgotten before Him. God does not forget one tear drop that you have shed before Him, but are put into His bottle (Psalm 56:8)

He does not forget one step that you have taken towards the Church, or in a visitation, or to solve a problem. He does not forget the smile that you have smiled in the face of a depressed person, or a word of comfort that you said to comfort a grieved person.

All the good that you do is stored there with Him, kept and treasured.

He will remember all this for you in the day of trouble. Every love and compassion you offer people is kept safe before God, and in the day of your trouble, His promise moves and works for your sake. God can never forget your labor, love, service and your past help to others. Did not the Bible say "their works follow them?" (Revelation 14:13) Therefore your good works will follow you.

Not only at the time of death that their "works follow them," but also at the time of trouble. Every good work that you have done, will intercede for you in the day of your trouble.

God said "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." (Matthew 5:7)... Therefore the mercy that you offered in the past, will intercede for you in the day you need mercy. And if in the tribulation of others, you helped in solving their trouble, then God will remember this for you in the day of your trouble and send you help from His sanctuary, and remember all your offerings.

Poor is the person who does not offer good to anyone in his life.

And even poorer is the person who has treated another with harshness and roughness. He will find before him the verse that says "...with the same measure you use, it will be measured back to you." (Matthew 7:2) Likewise with the person who takes a negative stand in regards to the pain of others, as if it's not his responsibility, or that the matter does not concern him! Before this person, the saying of the Divine Inspiration, in the Book of Proverbs (21:13) stands:

"Whoever shuts his ears to the cry of the poor will also cry himself and not be heard."

If this is the case, then let us increase the work of good and mercy, and give of it to all who are in need, so that when we stand before God, it intercedes for us in the day of trouble, knowing that the wages of every good work is not lost, whether in heaven or on earth.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." (I Corinthians 15:58)

Don't you dare to trust the general saying which says "the white coin comes in handy for the black day!" No, nothing will help you except the mercies of God who will remember all your offerings. Where are your offerings and sacrifices then so that God will remember them for you in that day? If you have not started in doing good, then start from now...

And God will remember your offerings, not only at the time of trouble, but He will remember them also with regards to your family and your loved ones.

Like what He did with Solomon, for the sake of David his father. So he said "Nevertheless, I will not do it (tear the kingdom away) in your days, for the sake of your father David." (I Kings 11:12) He also gave him a tribe for the sake of David... The good that David did in his life and the mercy with which he had upon the house of Saul, was all remembered by God, and He had mercy on Solomon the son of David...

This is why we sometimes hear those who say: May God keep this person safe because of the good that his father does... Because of the offerings of the fathers, God had mercy on their children.

God remembers the offerings of our fathers the saints, and has mercy on us because of them.

And thus we say in our prayers "... do not deprive us of Your mercy for the sake of Your beloved Abraham, Your servant Isaac and Israel Your saint." (segments of the Ninth Hour Prayer)

Many are the sayings of God in the Bible "For the sake of Abraham My servant" ... "For the sake of David My servant" ... What Abraham and David did had its effects which remain over the ages.

We have lived in a good world because of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The Lord remembered their offerings and sacrifices, and kept us safe because of them. He does not forget the labor of our fathers the saints, and continues to protect us for the sake of the fathers. Likewise, what you offer of offerings and sacrifices will have its effect for generations. And the Lord will remember all your offerings and sacrifices for you, your children, and their children...

But what is the difference between offerings and sacrifices?

The sacrifice is everything that was slaughtered for the Lord. And the offering is also a sacrifice. But what is the difference? The difference is that in some sacrifices, the priest ate from it, or the person presenting it. And from others, the friends of the person presenting it ate from it (like in the peace sacrifice). With the sin sacrifice, for example, the person presenting it receives forgiveness (according to symbolism). And the peace sacrifice is a sign of joy that covers all.

As for the offering, it was to please God, a pleasant aroma to the Lord (Leviticus 1). Therefore it was the altar alone and the fire of God alone. No one can eat of it. The fire keeps consuming it till it becomes ashes, a sign that God's justice has taken its rights from sin.

The sin of man had two results: angering God's heart, whom we have broken His commandments; and the destruction of the person who sinned. And the offering was symbolic of appeasing God, and the sacrifice of sin was symbolic of saving the person from his sins. And the Lord Christ fulfilled both roles together upon the Cross.

And here, in the expressions of the Psalm, what do we understand?

Your offerings are all that you do to please the heart of God alone; and your sacrifices are all the good you do for others and for the salvation of your soul.

All this is remembered by God for you in the day of your trouble... He remembers all of it...

He remembers what you offer of tithes, first-fruits, vows, coverings, reading books, oil and altar utensils. And what you offer of money or sacrifices that you have promised for Saint's feasts. So he remembers every act of righteousness that you do unto others.

He also remembers the spiritual sacrifices...

As the Psalmist says in the Psalm "Let my prayer be set before You as incense, the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice." (Psalm 141:2) It is possible that your sacrifices and offerings are especially yourself, as the Apostle says "I beseech you therefore, brethren... that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." (Romans 12:1)

As for the spiritual sacrifices, the Bible says, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit." (Psalm 51:17)

God will remember all your sacrifices, whether spiritual or materialistic, or by intention.

Just as He remembers your prayers (from the spiritual sacrifices), your tithes and vows (from the materialistic sacrifices), He will also remember your holy intention and desire to give. Thus the Priest prays in the Litany of Oblations so that God remembers "those in abundance or those in scarcity, hidden or manifest." What also? He says to the Lord "Those who desire to offer to You but have none..."

As for you, when you arrive to this expression in the Psalm:

Be contrite in soul, and say: Lord, where are my sacrifices and offerings?

I have not offered You anything till now... Our father Abraham offered his only son, and the widow offered from her needs. But as for me, what have I offered? Nothing...

Be aware not to mention anything, like the Pharisee did, lest Satan of the vain glory steal it from you. And if you remember in your mind something that you have offered, say to the Lord: And this is not from me, but "from Your hand," and everything is for God, from God and given to God...

Here we mention a beautiful expression of the Psalm that has its depth, which is:

And Accept Your Burnt Sacrifice
[In the Arabic Translation: Fatted Sacrifice]

That is, God considers it a worthy sacrifice, looking at it more highly than it deserves.

No matter how small is the amount you offer (in your own sight or in the sight of others), God will consider it more highly, more than what should be offered, just as He did with regards to the two mites of the widow, the tears of the sinful woman who wet His feet and the contrite comment that the Canaanite woman said. The Lord praised all these before everyone, and considered their sacrifice very precious...

The Lord values greatly the work of His children and magnifies it and magnifies them because of it, to the extent that He remembers the cold cup of water that is not laborious. It is like the general saying "An onion of the beloved is a lamb." God does this in His dealings with us...

God does not only not forget the work of good that we do, but also praises it, magnifies it and gives it value. How deep is the Lord's love and His compassion.

Be assured that in the last day, God will be the One who mostly defends your good deeds, values them and magnifies them...

Therefore, do not boast vainly, nor mention your good deeds before Him or before others. Instead forget them so that God will remember them for you, in the day of your trouble and in the last day, all that you have forgotten of good deeds that you did.

God will greatly value what the Church has offered to Him from human examples:

*** Look at Jonah for example:**

God considered him a great prophet, and made for him a book in the Holy Bible in his name... Despite that Jonah disobeyed the Lord and fled to Tarshish and the boat was struck because of him. He grieved till death when the Ninevites were saved at his calling, for his word was unfulfilled nor carried out, and he said "It is better for me to die than to live." And the Lord rebuked him saying "Is it right for you to be angry?" (Jonah 4:1-4)

Despite this, the Lord praised this great evangelist and said that the Ninevites repented because of Jonah's call. And the Lord magnified the call of Jonah which he did after disobedience and fleeing, which were not remembered against him. And when he was in the belly of the whale, he prayed and was answered...

*** And the righteous Job:**

How the Lord magnified this offering, and said about him twice "... there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man..." (Job 1:8, 2:3)

Despite that Job cursed his day (Job 3) and contended greatly with the Lord, to the extent that he said to Him "Show me why You contend with me. Does it seem good to You that You should oppress... Although you know that I am not wicked, and there is no one who can deliver from Your hand...Cease! Leave me alone, that I may take a little comfort..." (Job 10:2, 3, 7, 20)

Despite this, God did not relent from praising Job, to the extent that, after all this contention and even more, He said to Job's three friends "... you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has. Now therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, go to My servant

Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and My servant Job shall pray for you. For I will accept him, lest I deal with you according to your folly; because you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has." (Job 42:7-8)

*** Jacob the Patriarch:**

Despite that he deceived his father Isaac, and that he refused to give food to his hungry brother unless he sells his birth-right, and despite his fears... the Lord magnified this offering. And He appeared to Jacob more than once, blessed him, gave him victory, granted him the promises and came from his offspring...

If God therefore honors the Saints, then we must honor them also.

We must not despise the sacrifices of others, when God magnifies them...

I wish that we respect every good work that any person does and praise him and encourage him, no matter how small it may seem, for this is God's way, who honors the sacrifices...

Saint Bishoy used to fast for days at a time, and one time for twenty one days. He saw a young man beginning his monastic life who fasted for only one day and was unable to bear this and walked with shaking legs. So he asked God concerning him and the Lord said "His reward is like yours exactly, for if he had received the same grace that you have received, he would have fasted for 21 days like yourself..." And thus God magnified the sacrifice of this young beginner and considered it like the sacrifices of the great Saint Bishoy.

How amazingly kind God is... He remembers all your offerings and accepts your burnt sacrifices. And what else?

May He grant you according to your heart's desire, and fulfill all your purpose...

According to all that is in your heart and thoughts, the Lord will grant it to you! This is the greatest request a person can make, and more powerful than he expects. But is this matter open totally, or does it have conditions? Let us see...

May the Lord grant you according to your heart's desire on the condition that your heart with God is undefiled.

It is not logical if your heart is full of sinful desires and defiled emotions and then the Lord will grant you according to your heart's desire!! And also it is not logical that the Lord fulfills all your purpose, if your purpose is sinful and does not coincide with God's will or His good management!!

God will grant you according to your heart's desire if you are seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness. But if your heart is attached to worldly or materialistic matters or to sin, then the blessing that this Psalm says here is far from you, and God will not grant you according to your heart's desire...

Therefore your heart must be pure, and then the Lord will grant you according to your heart's desire. May the words of this Psalm be an invitation to purity of heart.

In your pure requests, hold onto this verse as a promise from God's promises, and contend with it. Say to Him: Grant me, O Lord, according to my heart, for You have so promised, as long as my heart loves You; and fulfill my purpose as long as it is according to Your purpose, otherwise, may it be Your will.

In any case, it is a comforting expression, when the Spirit says to the person who is praying while in trouble: May He grant you according to your heart's desire, and fulfill all your purpose.

This expression was heard by Hannah, Samuel's mother, while she was barren and she prayed weeping and fasting and bitter in soul. So Eli the priest said to her "Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition which you have asked of Him." (I Samuel 1:17) So she left comforted, and believed in the word, leaving her grief and breaking her fast by eating.

It is a word of comfort and it is so beautiful to say it to everyone who is in trouble. It would be so beautiful if the Priest would pray this upon the head of the person who comes to him seeking God's mercies. He can pray this aloud so it is heard and the person is comforted...

It is a comforting expression, but in order for you to be truly comforted, listen to this advice:

Next to the expression "May He grant you according to your heart's desire, and fulfill all your purpose," put the following verse from the Bible:

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength." (Deuteronomy 6:5)

If you love God from all your heart, and love His ways and commandments, then God will grant you according to your heart's desire, and God will be dwelling in your heart.

But if your heart is far from God, and if you ask of Him something wrong or something not according to the Lord's will, then the angels will pray for you so that God will enlighten your wisdom and make you understand His ways. And as the wise man said "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death." (Proverbs 14:12) Truly this Psalm asks for you so that God will "fulfill all purpose," but next to it we add the saying of the Bible "There are many plans in a man's heart, nevertheless the Lord's counsel - that will stand." (Proverbs 19:21)

The expression "May He grant you according to your heart's desire," reminds us of the Lord Christ's saying to His Saintly Disciples: "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you." (John 15:7)

Therefore this abiding in the Lord and in His commandments is a condition for the answer. The person, while abiding in the Lord, does not ask except for what pleases the Lord... Therefore it is an invitation for us to purify our hearts before prayer, so that we do not ask except for what pleases God, and the Lord will grant us according to our hearts.

It is a promise from God, which also requires faith in our hearts.

And as the Bible says, "...all things are possible to him who believes." (Mark 9:23)

With this faith we pray, and with it we benefit from the prayer in the Psalm.

They are comforting words, which have their effect in David's believing heart, and so he said:

**We Will Rejoice in Your Salvation,
and in the Name of our God
we will set up our Banners**

This means that we confess to You and thank You. We admit Your goodness, comfort, compassion and kind work with us.

David heard the promises of the Lord, and believed them and therefore began to be thankful about them.

He thanks the Lord for what He will do, as if He has already done it...

We will rejoice in Your salvation... As long as You said that You will send help from Your sanctuary and strengthen us from Zion, then it is good for me to rejoice in this salvation, thank You for it and say "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits." (Psalm 103:2) What is so nice about David is that in the depth of his belief in the answer, and his assurance of this answer, he changes the prayer into thanksgiving, as if everything has been fulfilled...

He asks, and in faith feels that God has granted him what he asked for. So he thanks Him in the same prayer of request. Many of David's Psalms are of this type...

In the Sixth Psalm for example, he starts by saying "O Lord, do not rebuke me in Your anger...Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak...Return, O Lord, deliver me! Oh, save me for Your mercies' sake!" Then he feels the acceptance of his prayer and says at the end of the Psalm "Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity; for the Lord has heard the voice of my weeping. The Lord has heard my supplication; the Lord will receive my prayer..."

He is of the type of our father Jacob who held onto the Lord and would not leave Him till He blessed him and gave him what he requested. And when his heart is comforted, David says to Him "we will rejoice in Your salvation..."

We confess that You have saved us, comforted our hearts and mended our broken spirits as well as saving us from our problems. Here we see David not sufficing with thanksgiving for salvation, but extends beyond this by saying:

**And in the Name of our God we
will set up our Banners!**

He sought salvation, and by faith felt that he received this salvation, and this is why he went further...to increase and growth and said "in the name of our God, we will set up our banners!"

One of the reasons why David was so assured of this was that the name of God was upon his lips all the time.

In the beginning of the Psalm, he comforted himself by saying "May the name of the God of Jacob defend you," and here he says "And in the name of our God we will set up our banners!" After this, he says "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God." Truly, the name of the Lord makes the person feel that there is strength next to him, which defends and saves, and therefore they are assured... He trusts that this is not only from the negative side when he is rescued from his troubles, but also from the positive side that he will set up our banners, meaning to increase. He repeats this concept of increasing twice in the same Psalm...

I wish, that in your prayers, you would remember this increase, and take an account of yourself.

You are not only required to live the life of virtuousness, but to also grow in it; to increase in the fruit of the Spirit; to increase in your love of God and people. And as you grow in holiness, you also grow in humility, and say "Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me." (Philippians 3:12)

And if you do not have this growth, then rebuke yourself for this and struggle with all your might, and with the work of grace in you to keep on "reaching forward to those things which are ahead," (Philippians 3:13) according to the saying of the Apostle.

And if you are unable to grow, then at least stay where you are and keep what you have; and be aware not to go backward, and leave your first love...

David, who said "in the name of our God we will set up our banners!" knew well that this growth also needs Divine help, and therefore said:

May the Lord Fulfill all your Petitions

He now shifts from the past and present, and enters into expectations of the future; and his aspirations for the future that he has placed into God's hand...

God is the One who gives... He shall give to all. Just as He gave him a part of his heart's request, and promised him salvation, He will continue the rest for him so that he receives all that he has asked of God. And here appears the overflow and completeness of the gift.

Sometimes God grants us all that we ask at once, according to His richness, abundance, hospitality and love. And sometimes He gives us a little at a time, so that we keep our connection to Him and continue in asking. And every time the heart receives something from God, we say to Him "May the Lord fulfill all your petitions."

You might ask for repentance from God, and He will grant you this, while the angels pray saying "May the Lord fulfill all your petitions." Repentance is not everything ... there is purity and holiness. And in holiness, you will also hear "May the Lord fulfill all your petitions," for the road is still long before you; for you are requested to be perfect "Be perfect just your Father in heaven in

perfect." And perfection has no limits, thus you continue in asking, and the Lord fulfills all your petitions.

David did not only ask for salvation, but also for growth – growth that leads to perfection. He said in his heart about this request for growth (or his heart said to himself): "May the Lord fulfill your petitions."

In the flood of joy in the Lord's promises, he said:

**Now I Know that the Lord Saves
His Anointed; He will Answer
Him from His Holy Heaven**

"Now I know" ... Now, during prayer, while he is standing there asking...

He knew while he was standing praying, that the Lord has saved him, saved his anointed, and answered him. Thus he admitted before God in His salvation.

We might ask: How did David know about this answer? Maybe he felt it in his heart. Maybe he knew it by faith. Or maybe God, who accepted this, made him feel the answer. Maybe God inspired him with it and made him understand it... Or that David had his "senses exercised," (Hebrews 5:14) to see what is not seen, or by faith which is "the evidence of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1)

This makes us feel that prayer is not merely words, but hearing as well.

You talk to God in your prayer, then by your heart, not your ears, you hear His voice answering. Our Saint David was trained in hearing. Thus he says in one of his Psalms "I will hear what God the Lord will speak, for He will speak peace to His people..." (Psalm 85:8)

Maybe this hearing requires patience in prayer... Unfortunately, one might speak to the Lord in his prayer, then leaves quickly before he hears what the Lord God says... God might speak, but not everyone who has ears to hear, hears...

Now I know that the Lord saves his anointed.

The word anointed has three meanings:

1- The anointed of the Lord, that is, those who are anointed for the Lord's service, like some of the kings for example. And David was anointed for the Lord, anointed by Samuel the Prophet with the holy oil (I Samuel 16).

2- The Christ ... the Lord Christ. Of course, He is distinguished from the other anointed ones. The Divine inspiration, in the Book of Isaiah, said about Him "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted..." (Isaiah 61:1) The Lord Christ was anointed as a King, Prophet and Priest. It was

said that He has been anointed with the “oil of gladness more than Your companions.” (Hebrews 1:9)

3- Every Christian person that has been anointed with the Holy Chrism and has become holy for the Lord and a dwelling place for His Holy Spirit. From the spiritual side, and not from the literal side, he has become anointed for the Lord. You can take the expression of the Psalm upon yourself, the “Lord saves his anointed,” that is, the one who He has anointed with the Chrism after coming out of the Baptism, is His...

Now I know that the Lord saves his anointed, that is, has been offered salvation.

He will answer him from His holy heaven.

The One who answers is He “who abides in the highest and looks upon the lowly” ... the One who looks to the work of His hands, and “raises the poor from the dust and lifts the beggar from the ash heap.” (I Samuel 2:8; Psalm 113:7) He always saves, for He desires that all are saved... The Psalmist comprehended this truth and said “For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now I will arise, says the Lord; I will set him in the safety for which he yearns.” [grant salvation openly] (Psalm 12:5)

He is in His heaven, but He is not far from us... “The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit.” (Psalm 34:18) He answers them from His holy heaven - this heaven that all look to when they say “Our Father who art in heaven.” And how does He answer them? The Psalmist says:

**With the Saving Strength
of His Right Hand**

He is the Mighty and Powerful God, who conquers in battles, saves with strength. Thus the praying person says to Him, in one of the Psalms of the Third Hour Prayer, “Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O Mighty One, with Your glory and Your majesty.” (Psalm 45:3)

This is why we always sing with the Might of God who is able to do all things. In the Trisagion we say “Holy God, Holy Almighty...” We rely on this might of God, by which we are victorious. We say “with men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.” (Matthew 19:26; Mark 10:27)

But the strength of God is for salvation with regards to His children...

He is not like the people of the world who use strength for fear or destruction; instead His strength is for salvation. With this strength, He parted the Red Sea, and saved from slavery a contrite people. And with this strength, He shut the mouths of the lions in the den and saved Daniel. With this strength, He rebuked the sea and its waves were calm and saved His disciples’ boat from the storm... I need time to present the examples of the strength of the Lord in His salvation, when He saved with fortified hands.

This salvation, with regards to the children of God, might be to strike their oppressors, like when the Lord struck Amalek and the army of Sennacherib to save... As for David, he speaks about the strength of God with regards to himself: With saving strength...

He attributes salvation to the Lord's right, to His mighty hand.

He is therefore confessing the Lord's rescue of him and says in Psalm 118: "The right hand of the Lord does valiantly. The right hand of the Lord is exalted; the right hand of the Lord does valiantly. I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord..." (Psalm 118:15-17) The hand of the Lord intervenes in the situation with might, and causes salvation with strength which is the strength of His right's salvation.

David sees the power of the enemy clearly before him, but also sees the right of the Lord and says:

Some Trust in Chariots, and Some in Horses

"Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God." What is the power of chariots and horses before the name of the Lord?! Nothing at all.

This reminds us of David's saying to Goliath the giant "You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts." (I Samuel 17:45) Yes, what is the value of these weapons - the sword, spear and javelin before the name of the Lord of hosts, and the strength of His right's salvation?!

Gehazi, the disciple of Elisha, was afraid when he saw "horses and chariots and a great army" surrounding the city. But the great prophet comforted his disciple by his saying "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them. And Elisha prayed... Then the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha." (II Kings 6:14-17) It is the holy power that the Lord sent for protection, having sent help from His sanctuary.

David, the experienced man, did not fear the horses and chariots of the enemy.

The horses and chariots might be symbolic of Satan and all his power.

For our enemies, the demons, are strong. Satan is like a roaring lion and wants to devour whoever he can. He is powerful and harsh. In the story of the righteous Job, he brought down fire that burned the cattle and children, and a strong wind that destroyed the corners of the house and it fell (Job 1). He is an angel who has lost his purity but has not lost his strength. And in the last days, he will "exalt and magnify himself above every god" (Daniel 11:36)... "The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs and lying wonders..." (II Thessalonians 2:9)

But we look to all the power of the devils and say "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God."

Some fear chariots and horses for the name of the Lord is not with them.

They stand alone in battle, and do not take the name of the Lord with them. But the Bible teaches us that Joshua was fighting and Moses was lifting up his hands to God praying. And Joshua won

the battle with the power of these two uplifted hands, for by them, God entered the arena of the war "for the battle is the Lord's." (I Samuel 17:47)

We cannot look at the power of the enemy and forget the power of God.

Do not look only at Goliath without remembering the name of the Lord of hosts. Do not look at the Red Sea and forget the staff of Moses. And do not think of the desolate wilderness without contemplating the cloud that covers you by day and pillar of fire that guides you by night. Do not be horrified by the den full of hungry lions, but contemplate the angel of God as he shuts the mouths of the lions. When the Psalm says "The floods have lifted up their voice," it says immediately after this "The Lord on high is mightier..." (Psalm 93)

Elisha the prophet continues to pray his famous prayer: Open O Lord, the eyes of the young man to see that those who are with us - that is, the angels - are more... And Moses the prophet continues to stand with his staff, saying to the fearful, "Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord... The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace." (Exodus 14:14)

Those who do not possess horses or chariots, possess the name of the Lord.

The Lord who "has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty." (I Corinthians 1:27) He chose the smooth stone of David to shame with it the sword and javelin of Goliath. He chose the uneducated fishermen to share by them the wisdom and philosophy of the Gentiles...

Remember that your strength is not in horses or chariots, but in God Himself. Therefore, always say with the Psalmist:

My strength and my praise is the Lord who has become my salvation.

What was the strength of Saint Mark when he entered to preach in the land of Egypt?!

Many were the horses and chariots that arose against him: Before him, he had the god of Pharaonic Egypt with the leadership of Ra, the Greek gods that came in the days of Alexander and Ptolemy - their greatest god being Zeus and the Roman gods that came in the days of Octavian Caesar and their greatest was Jupiter... And there was the widespread of Judaism in all the suburbs of Alexandria.

Also before Saint Mark stood the paganistic philosophy, and the power of their philosophy and persuasion, the pagan school of Alexandria and the library of Alexandria that had hundreds of thousands of books... There was also the Roman authority with its strength, harshness and protection of paganism... So true, some trust in chariots and some in horses... Despite this, Saint Mark fulfilled his message and spread the word, and stood saying "But we will remember the name of the Lord our God."

Another example is Jeremiah the prophet, whom the Lord sent, despite his young age, to witness to the truth before "the kings of Judah, against its princes, against its priests, and against the people of the land." (Jeremiah 1:18) They would fight against him and he will stand before them. They will be with chariots O Lord, and the others will be with horses, and I do not know how to speak for I

am a youth (Jeremiah 1:6). But the Lord said to him "Do not say 'I am a youth'... Do not be afraid of their faces... For behold, I have made you this day a fortified city and an iron pillar, and bronze walls against the whole land..." (Jeremiah 1) Thus Jeremiah witnessed to the Lord while before him was the expression "But we will remember the name of the Lord our God."

You also, do not be afraid of the strength of the enemy, for the Lord will support you.

If the devils see you terrified, they will attack you and know that you have fallen as a snare to their teeth. But if they see you strong in heart, they will fear the faith in you and the power of God that is with you.

With this strength, and with this faith, you shall be victorious and say:

**They have Bowed Down and Fallen;
But we have Risen and
Stand Upright**

Truly "May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble; may the name of the God of Jacob defend you."

The strange thing is that David says these words while standing praying and asking. But through his deep faith is being answered, he sees the request fulfilled before himself, having great faith in God's work. So he does not speak about what is to happen in future tense, but in past tense, as if it has already happened!

And the expression "But we have risen and stand upright" means that previously we were fallen...

That is, the situation is reversed. We, who were fallen, have risen. As for the enemies who were victorious at first they have bowed down and fallen...

This is the style of life, which God's children live. At first, they may be met with wars, tribulations and offenses, and taste pain, tribulation and trouble; and even sometimes fall, for "a righteous man may fall seven times and rise again." (Proverbs 24:16) And as David the prophet said "Many a time they have afflicted me from my youth... Many a time they have afflicted me from my youth... The plowers plowed on my back; they made their furrows long." Yet he comments about this by saying "Yet they have not prevailed against me." (Psalm 129)

What is important at the end is the end of the believer's war with the enemy of good.

In this, the Bible says "... considering the outcome of their conduct." (Hebrews 13:7)

Do not look at the beginning of the problem, but at its end.

Do not look at the shame of Golgotha and lose hope, but look at the end... to the glories of the resurrection, ascension, sitting at the right hand of the Father, and the Second Coming upon the clouds with strength and great glory.

Every time a problem meets you, say "God exists," and say "It will eventually finish."

The problem will not continue forever. It has a time frame in which it will finish... The pains of the righteous Job, despite its harshness, ended when the time came "And the Lord restored Job's losses..." (Job 42:10) And he said "But we have risen and stand upright."

Your enemies who have bowed down and fallen are the devils, who are envious of all God's grace to you, and come to you with chariots and horses to make you fall. But the Bible says, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. (Luke 10:18)

You can take the expression "have bowed down and fallen" also about problems and troubles.

All the problems that surround you have fallen and finished. The Lord has solved them, and you have risen and stand upright. You have risen from under this heavy yoke, that has bent your back and you have stood upright finally when you have responded to your Beloved who says, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)

All this was seen by the Psalmist, by faith, while he prayed. Then he turned to reality and said:

**Save, Lord! May the King
Answer us when we Call**

We see Your salvation, believe in it, and thank you for it... This does not stop us from praying for its fulfillment practically, to change from faith to something seen.

This is why we remind You O Lord with what we said previously "Save, Lord! May the King answer us when we call," and "it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21, Romans 10:13)

These are some of the contemplations on Psalm "May the Lord answer you..."

Its topic is lengthy, and we can finish it in contemplations of other Psalms, with the will of God.

This Psalm:

A Psalm of request, blessing and comfort. The Bible offers it to everyone who is in tribulation or trouble. In it, the Psalm says to this person:

May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble.

It is also a Psalm full of faith, in which the request is changed to thanksgiving, in trust in the work of the Lord and His answers.

May you read it, keep it by heart, pray it and comfort others with it.

Pope Shenouda III