

## **O LORD, DO NOT REBUKE ME IN YOUR ANGER...**

### **Contemplations on Psalm 6**

**Author:** His Holiness Pope Shenouda III

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Fr Macarius Wahba

Diocese of Melbourne

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The sixth Psalm is from the Morning Hour Psalms.

It is also from the Psalms of repentance, like Psalm 50(51).

It is also a cry to God, from a person in trouble, like Psalm 12(13) “How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?” and like Psalm 3 “Lord, how they have increased who trouble me!”

It is suitable to a person who is in tribulation from his enemies, and to a person who is in spiritual toil from sin and from Satan...

He expresses the emotions that pass through the hearts of many, asking for mercy from God.

The Church took great care with this Psalm, repeating it in some of the prayers of the Agbia: In the Morning Prayer, in the Veil Prayer for the monks and in the Midnight Prayer...

It is also from the Psalms that start with explaining the toil and trouble of the oppressing enemies, but it ends with joy. The person praying feels that, during his prayer, God has received and accepted it; which calls for joy and praise.

In this, it resembles Psalm 3 and also Psalm 12 – the same spirit the same answer.

I delivered these contemplations in this Psalm late in 1968, in the Friday night meetings. The contemplations remained in audio cassettes till God willed that it be published after 27 years, and reach your hands, dear reader.

It is one of the Psalms that was the subject of our contemplations at that time. We have published part of it, and I hope that the rest is on its way to you, with God’s will.

**Pope Shenouda III**

**April 1995**

**O Lord, Do Not Rebuke me in Your Anger (Psalm 6)**

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 You, O Lord... how long?

Return, O Lord, deliver me! Oh, save me for your mercies' sake!

For in death there is no remembrance of You; in the grave who will give You thanks?

I am weary with my groaning; all night I make my bed swim; I drench my couch with my tears.

My eye wastes away because of grief; it grows old because of all my enemies.

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.

Let my enemies be ashamed and greatly troubled; let them turn back and be ashamed suddenly. Alleluia.

## **O Lord, Do Not Rebuke me in Your Anger**

### **Do Not Rebuke me in Your Anger**

This Psalm is one of the well known Psalms of repentance.

And because of the care that the church gives to it, she has placed it in the Morning Prayer, Midnight Prayer and in the Prayer of the Veil that the monks pray. At the start of this Psalm, David says:

**“O Lord, do not rebuke me in Your anger, nor chasten me in Your hot displeasure.”**

Here, he confesses his sin and confesses that he is worthy of rebuke and chastening, but he asks that this is not done in a harsh way.

He says to the Lord “do not rebuke me in Your anger;” for he is a weak person, not able to bear the anger of God... if You chasten me Lord in Your anger, You might annihilate nor keep me. This same meaning was said by Jeremiah the prophet: “O Lord, correct me, but with justice; not in Your anger, lest You bring me to nothing.” (Jeremiah 10:24)

He does not excuse himself from rebuke, but he says “do not rebuke me in Your anger,” for “it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” (Hebrews 10:31)

When the Lord was fiercely angry at the sins of people, He drowned the world with the flood. Then He returned and had compassion, and placed a sign, so that He will not destroy all flesh again upon the earth (Genesis 9:15). Then He was angry and burned the city of Sodom (Genesis 19). The Lord was angry with Pharaoh and drowned him and all his soldiers in the Red Sea (Exodus 14:28) And the Lord was angry with Korah, Dathan and Abiram, so the earth swallowed them up while alive (Numbers 16:32).

† † †

**And we sin every day, and maybe our sins are like the sins of these people.**

And we cry to the Lord and say: Do not rebuke us in Your anger.

Lord, if You deal with us in Your anger, then no one will be saved. We pray to the Lord in the prayers of the Great Lent and say “If You deal with us, O Lord, justly, we will find no excuse.” Therefore David says to the Lord “do not rebuke me in Your anger.”

**Rebuke has its blessings, and we can benefit from it.**

But Lord, do not rebuke in Your anger, nor in Your hot displeasure.

† † †

We have an amazing example of the Lord Jesus Christ rebuking Peter the Apostle, who denied, cursed and blasphemed; saying about the Lord ‘I do not know the Man.’ But the Lord rebuked him lightly and calmly, not in anger nor in hot displeasure. He said to him “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these? ...Feed My lambs... Tend My sheep.” He repeated the question three times (John 21: 15-17).

He did not publicly remind him of his denials and sins... He did not hurt him or embarrass him.

**God does not wound the feelings of people, nor hurt their hearts.**

Except in extreme necessity, He is exactly like the kind physician, who in all care heals the sick person, not in harshness or in displeasure.



**God does not rebuke many of the sins...**

For example, Abraham the Patriarch, said about Sarah that she is his sister, so that Abimelech, king of Gerar, took her for himself... (Genesis 20:2). What is the rebuke that he received from the Lord? The Lord rebuked Abimelech and did not rebuke Abraham; although it is true that Abraham received rebuke from Abimelech who said to him “What have you done to us? How have I offended you, that you have brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? You have done deeds to me that ought not to be done.” (Genesis 20:9) But God did not say anything to him; it is enough what he had received.

**The human being is the only one who increases rebuke.**

“He who increases rebuke destroys himself,” like the wise man said. He also loses his friends, which is what happens practically in life.

Lord, do not rebuke me in Your anger... Rebuke me as You rebuked Peter. And if the matter requires anger, then do not let Your anger last forever. We pray to God and say “Take away Your anger from us.” David follows his prayer and says:

**Nor chasten me in Your hot Displeasure**

Chasten me O Lord... For what father does not chasten his son?! ... And those who do not accept chastening are illegitimate and not sons (Hebrews 12:8).

Chasten me for chastening is for my benefit, and I deserve it, for I have committed what rightly deserves chastising and more. But do not chastise me in Your hot displeasure, but chastise me according to what I can bear.

Your chastisement, O Lord, I will accept gratefully.

**Have Mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak**

“Have mercy” is the most common expression used in the church and her prayers. There is not one prayer in the Matins Raising of Incense, nor in the Vesper Raising of

Incense or in the Psalms that does not have the expression “have mercy.” And we repeat it many times when we say “kerieleyson.”

Have Mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak ... And also because Your heart is so great that it accommodates every sin... no matter its type.

† † †

**Have mercy on me, O Lord, for if You do not have mercy on me, then no one else will have mercy on me except You.**

If Your heart has been shut, then I will not find another heart. Your mercy is the cover behind which I hide so that my sins are not manifest. Your mercy is the foundation of redemption... It is the foundation of salvation.

† † †

**Have mercy on me, O Lord, means change my sins to be upon the head of Christ.**

And this great sacrificed Saviour, will wipe my sins by His precious Blood.

If David said “have mercy on me” before the redemption, having great hope that this redemption will happen, then we have a greater hope after redemption has been accomplished... Therefore Lord, count me amongst those for whose sake You have shed Your Blood.

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...

† † †

**There is a great difference between the harsh David and the weak David.**

Between David who girded his sword, and asking his servants to also gird their swords, to go and kill Nabal the Carmelite for not giving him anything on the day of shearing his sheep (I Samuel 25:13, 22). He said very harsh words, which made Abigail come quickly to rescue the situation.

All this was in his harshness, and God rewarded him in the temptation.

Then David sinned, and was contrite and repented, drenching his couch with his tears. And this great king, this great leader and great prophet knew that it is possible to have inside him a weak heart that can desire and fall.

**Thus he was contrite and said have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak.**

I am not David, who in great strength was able to kill Goliath... And I am not David who threatened Nabal the Carmelite. Now I am the weak man before You... So have mercy upon me, O Lord.

## God with the weak

### The Lord always has mercy upon the weak.

As for the great, harsh, rough and violent person; he is far from the mercy of God. Our God is the God of the weak... "God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty." (I Corinthians 1:27) The strong person relies on his strength. As for the weak person, he is the one next to whom God stands.

† † †

**Even the strong ones that God chose**, they stood before Him as if weak, each one of them saying 'Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak.'

Take an example that shows us the importance of feeling weak: Elijah, the great prophet who was rough. He once commanded that fire come from Heaven and consume the fifty (II Kings 1:10). Elijah seized the prophets of Baal, who numbered four hundred and fifty, and executed them (I Kings 18:40). As if God was saying to Elijah: This rough way may bother you, My son...

What did God do? He permitted that Queen Jezebel threaten Elijah, who feared and went to the wilderness. God met him there and said to him "what are you doing here, Elijah?" So he said to Him in fear, they have "... killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life." (I Kings 19:14) Finally, you are able to fear, O Elijah...!!

† † †

**God allows even the valiant men to sometimes fear or be weak, because He desires the lowly and contrite heart...**

The person, who stands as a weak person before God, is the one who is able to stand in strength before people... As for those who feel in themselves that they are valiant, God distances Himself from them.

† † †

There are verses about this topic in the Book of Isaiah the prophet, chapter 2. He says:

"For the day of the Lord of hosts shall come upon everything proud and lofty, upon everything lifted up – and it shall be brought low – upon all the cedars of Lebanon that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan; upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up; upon every high tower, and upon every fortified wall... **The loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be brought low; the Lord alone will be exalted in that day...**" (Isaiah 2:12-17)

† † †

The valiant men who are proud of their strength, authority and harshness... each of them sees that he can strike and subject others, and they can punish and over-power. Is this person not fearful of the verse that says “for the day of the Lord of hosts shall come upon everything proud and lofty... The loftiness of men shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be brought low; the Lord alone will be exalted in that day...” words that have depth and meaning...

This lofty and haughty person must be lowly before God and say to Him: Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak...

You might be a high tower in your job... You might be a cedar of Lebanon before people, but you must be humble and say: Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak. For the Lord is able to crush the cedar of Lebanon, and able to cut the oaks of Bashan, and the Lord alone will be exalted in that day...

† † †

**Reality, my brethren, is that when we follow the dealings of the Lord Christ with people, we find that He was very compassionate and very kind upon the weak and lowly, and very strict in dealing with the harsh.**

Christ has never stood against a weak person. He used to gather the weak, protect them and have compassion upon them.

† † †

The woman caught in adultery; He rescued her and said to her “Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.” (John 8:11) It suffices what she has received of subjection and embarrassment. As for the harsh people who exposed her and dragged her to judgment, He wrote for them their sins on the ground, and said to them “he who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.” (John 8:7) They started to be ashamed and left, one after the other.

Why did they leave in shame? For the Lord fulfilled the same verse “... the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be brought low...” As if He is saying to them “lower your heads somewhat and enough haughtiness. You are also sinners under judgment...! Enough running after stoning this woman or anyone else...Each one of you is in need of saying: Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak.

† † †

**If you want God to have mercy on you for you are weak, have mercy on the weak.**

You say to Him: Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak. He answers you: Where is this weakness? Is in this haughtiness and greatness weakness?! Is in this superiority weakness?... When you are weak, then I will have mercy on you... Can anyone say: Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am valiant!? Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am righteous!? No, for this attitude does not help in your asking for mercy from God.

† † †

David was subject before God, as if he was saying:

**I am not the valiant person who has killed Goliath, but I am the weak person who has been killed by the sin with Bathsheba.**

And it killed the purity in him, although God later returned to him the joy of His salvation.

† † †

The Lord Christ was compassionate with the sinners and tax-collectors. He was compassionate with the woman who washed His feet with her tears more than the Pharisee who was righteous in his own eyes, and who judged her in his mind.

God did not rebuke her upon one sin, instead He mentioned her love and contrite state and said to her your sins are forgiven. As for the proud Pharisee, the Lord revealed to him that this sinful woman was better than him (Luke 7:36-48). Therefore, there is no need for superiority. It would have been preferable to say, as in the Psalm, “Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak.” As he was not weak at that time, the Lord rebuked him, and said to him **“I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet... You gave Me no kiss... You did not anoint My head with oil.”** You did not perform any of the hospitable or loving duties, and all your work was to judge in your heart. Therefore “the loftiness of man shall be bowed down and the haughtiness of men shall be brought low; the Lord alone will be exalted in that day.”

† † †

**The Lord Christ was compassionate with the tax-collector who confessed his sin and asked for mercy for his soul,** more than the Pharisee who stood in pride of his virtues in his prayers. The tax-collector left justified more than that Pharisee (Luke 18:9-14).

† † †

The Lord Christ was also compassionate with the gentiles, Samaritans and the man born blind who they cast out of the synagogue. He met him and revealed Himself to him, and invited him to the faith (John 9:35-38).

As for those who are harsh, the Lord leaves them till they cease their harshness, trying to guide them. He rebuked the priests and elders, and likewise the scribes and Pharisees, for they were very harsh in their strictness. He also rebuked them for their roughness, saying to them:

“But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.” – “... and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice

and mercy and faith.” (Matthew 23:13, 23) He also rebuked them for their harshness, for they killed the prophets (Matthew 23:31).

He thus rebuked them “For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.” (Matthew 23:4)

† † †

**But are these heavy commandments not Your commandments, O Lord?**

He says: No, for my commandments are not burdensome (I John 5:3)... “For My yoke is easy and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:30) I do not place heavy burdens upon people ... “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.” (John 16:12) Therefore, there is no need for it at present.

† † †

Likewise were also the Apostles of the Lord, in His style. When they met together in their council at Jerusalem for the sake of accepting the gentiles, they said “... we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God, but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled, and from blood.” (Acts 15:19, 20, 28)

And Paul the Apostle, who is kind and does not also want to burden the people says “And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it...” (I Corinthians 3:1-2)

† † †

**The Lord chose the weak Jacob over the harsh Esau; and He chose the weak Joseph, who had his brothers conspire against him and sold him as a slave.**

He chose Jacob who used to cry out to Him and say “I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant... Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and attack me and the mother with the children.” (Genesis 32:10-11) And thus it was God that said “Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated.” (Romans 9:13) And it was said to his mother before they were born that “the older shall serve the younger.” (Genesis 25:23; Romans 9:12)

† † †

The Lord was with the young Joseph, whom his brothers cast into the pit then sold him to the Ishmaelite (Genesis 37:20, 29).

And He was with the weak Joseph in the scheme he faced with Potiphar’s wife, and was falsely imprisoned for (Genesis 39:19, 20)... Joseph was lifted by the Lord and

made a father to Pharaoh, an overseer to his entire household and in charge of all the land of Egypt (Genesis 45:8).

Thus God made him victorious over his weak brothers who sold him, and made them come and kneel before him (Genesis 43:26, 28).

† † †

**And God stood with the weak Moses.**

Moses who had a heavy tongue and could not speak, God stood with him against the great Pharaoh and gave him victory over Pharaoh. It was Moses who said to God “I am not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant...” (Exodus 4:10)... ‘Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?’ (Exodus 3:11)... “How then shall Pharaoh heed me, for I am of uncircumcised lips?” (Exodus 6:12)

This humble and lowly Moses, about whom the Bible said “Now the man Moses was very humble, more than all men who were on the face of the earth.” (Numbers 12:3)

**This Moses, God said to him “See, I have made you as God to Pharaoh ...” (Exodus 7:1)**

That is, as a master to him. About Aaron his brother, He said to him “Now you shall speak to him and put words in his mouth... And he himself be as a mouth for you, and you shall be to him as God.” (Exodus 4:15, 16) That is, he is the source of inspiration that he inspires him with what to say of words.

It was even so that God was with Moses against his brother Aaron and sister Miriam, for what they said about him after his marriage to the Ethiopian woman. So the Lord defended him and said about him that “he is faithful in all My house. I speak with him face to face, even plainly...” (Numbers 12:7) And He struck Miriam with leprosy for she spoke to him...

† † †

**Who amongst the people, can place in the two plates of the scale, the weak Moses and the fierce Pharaoh?!**

And say, who amongst these two, shall win?!

Pharaoh, in the beginning stages, used his authority and fierceness as he liked. He subjected the people, till Moses intervened for their sake. In pride, Pharaoh said “Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, not will I let Israel go.” (Exodus 5:2)

As for the end: The weak, calm and humble Moses was victorious over the proud Pharaoh.

† † †

**It was the same with the three kind youth, whom they carried in all harshness and cast them bound into the fire.**

The Lord was with these weak ones in the fire, and not one hair of their heads was burned, and even the smell of the fire did not come upon them. Instead the flames of the raging fire burned the harsh people who cast them there... When they brought them out, Nebuchadnezzar said “Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who sent His angel and delivered His servants...” Then the king promoted them in the province of Babylon (Daniel 3:28, 30).

† † †

Likewise the Lord rescued the weak Daniel who was cast into the lion’s den by the harsh people who plotted against him. As for those who accused him falsely, Darius the king ordered that they “...cast them into the den of lions-them, their children, and their wives; and the lions overpowered them, and broke all their bones in pieces before they even came to the bottom of the den.” (Daniel 6:20-24)

† † †

**God also was with the weak and young David, when he stood before the great man Goliath.**

This giant, when he saw David, despised him and made fun of him, considering him as a child. As for David, he was placing the pebble in the sling, and every drop of his blood crying out to God with the expression “Have mercy on me O Lord, for I am weak.” God was with his weakness and gave him victory over Goliath, for the battle is the Lord’s as David said. He also said to Goliath “...I came to you in the name of the Lord of hosts...This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand...” (I Samuel 17:45-47)

† † †

**Saint Anthony the Great used the word “weak”**

When the devils attacked him in the wilderness, he said to them: “You are strong, what do you desire from me who is weak?... I am weaker than being able to fight the least of you.” When they read these prayers that are full of humility, they disappeared like smoke, but in the Saint’s depth was the expression “Have mercy on me O Lord for I am weak.”

† † †

**O Lord, I am weak before You.**

And I am weak before Satan, who is “like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.” (I Peter 5:8) But my strength is in You “The Lord is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation.” (Psalm 18:14)

I am also weak before myself. Therefore, I continually seek Your help.

And I am weak before people, before "...oppressors (who) have sought after my life; they have not set God before them." (Psalm 54:3)

† † †

**Therefore, let each one of you my brethren be on guard, if he finds himself in a position of strength or in a state of harshness.**

Or even in a state of feeling proud, as if saying: I will work; I will chastise; I will give them a lesson.

**Take care my brother if you have been handed authority. Be on guard for yourself... Be on guard from yourself. Reject the youth of power, authority and harshness. But in your prayer say:**

Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak. Do not put anyone's fate in my hand nor put my own fate into anyone's hand. Do not give any person the power with which to step on me, I say: Lord, do not give me power with which I step upon another.

Continually grant me that I can be victimized and not the victimizer, to be crucified and not the crucifier, to be defeated and not the victorious. It is then that You will be with me. Do not grant me to be victorious over people, but to be victorious over myself before You.

Let each one fear power, pride and greatness, for "the day of the Lord of hosts shall come upon everything proud and lofty, upon everything lifted up- and it shall be brought low..."

† † †

**Before us is the example of Sennacherib King of Assyria.**

He was very proud of his strength, and sent people to threaten Hezekiah King of Judah with all pride. What can Hezekiah do before this very great army, and before the threats of Sennacherib? Hezekiah felt his weakness, tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth and went into the house of the Lord...and he prayed to Him saying: open Your eyes, O Lord, and see, and hear the words of Sennacherib...Now therefore, O Lord our God, I pray, save us from his hand (II Kings 19:1-9). And Hezekiah sent messengers to Isaiah, the Lord's prophet; and the feelings of Hezekiah were saying: Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak...

Thus was the word of Isaiah the prophet to Sennacherib saying "Whom have you reproached and blasphemed? Against whom have you raised your voice, and lifted up your eyes on high? Against the Holy One of Israel." (II Kings 19:22)...And it came to pass on a certain night that the angel of the Lord went out, and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and when people arose early in the morning, there were corpses-all dead." (II Kings 19:35) After Sennacherib returned to Nineveh, his children struck him with the sword and he died.

† † †

All these weak people stood before God, chanting with the saying of the Psalm:

**“All my bones shall say, “Lord, who is like You, delivering the poor from him who is too strong for him, yes, the poor and the needy from him who plunders him?” (Psalm 35:10)**

This is because the weak, poor and needy say from their depths: “Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak.” As for the strong, they are weak.

**Even sin does not control except the strong.**

Thus, the Bible says about sin “For she has cast down many wounded, **and all who were slain by her were strong men.**” (Proverbs 7:26)

Amongst the examples of the strong, is the one who is not on guard from sin, and says: This is not for me this sin. It is simple, fighting the beginners! As for the weak, he is on guard from it and says: Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak. This is the one who is saved...

† † †

There is an expression that I once wrote in my notes. It is:

**Satan said to God: Leave for me the strong, for I will look after them. As for the weak, these I fear. For they know their weakness. They fight me with Your strength, and over-power me.**

The weak one is he who cries out to You saying at all times; Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak... This one I have no control over... For every time he cries out, You come and stand by him and fight for him and therefore I cannot conquer him.

† † †

**David was always crying out to the Lord to protect him from the strong.**

So he says “Save me, O God, by Your name...for strangers have risen up against me, and oppressors have sought after my life...” (Psalm 54:1-2) I have nothing before me, except to say: “Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak.”...This is because the Lord is more mighty than all the strong.

**God is against the strong who have pride in their strength, or those who feel that they are strong, or those who rely on their strength.**

† † †

Look at what the Lord says in the Book of Amos: “Yet it was I who destroyed the Amorite before them, whose height was like the height of the cedars, and he was as strong as the oaks; yet I destroyed his fruit above and his roots beneath.” (Amos 2:9)

It is not logical that God will search for the poor to destroy them, but He will destroy those who are elevated with their status to heaven.

When the temple was being built, Zerubbabel was in need of help from God. This Divine help came to him in the Book of Zechariah the prophet saying:

“Not by my might nor my power, but by My spirit, says the Lord of hosts.”

**“Who are You, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain!” (Zechariah 4:6)**

It is from the Lord of hosts that strength comes to the weak person. Thus the righteous Job says to God “How have you helped him who is without power? How have you saved the arm that has no strength?” (Job 26:2)

† † †

In your prayers, my blessed son, when you arrive at the expression “Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak,” **enter into the depth of your soul and crush the idols that are set up in the temple of your soul.**

The first idol you should crush is your ego...your great and strong and mighty ego in your eyes, which is beautiful in your eyes, which is able to be elevated and is able to direct and you carry out it's direction; which can also strike and over-power...Crush your ego...crush it...

**When your ego changes to dust and ashes, then God will stand by your side.**

And when God stands by your side, whisper in His ear with this beautiful praise “Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak.”

### **The Example of Job**

Job, the great prophet, when he was proud of his righteousness and greatness, he was cast into trials and strikes...when he chanted and said: “Oh, that I were as in months past...when my steps were bathed with cream, and the rock poured out rivers of oil for me! When I went out to the gate by the city, when I took my seat in the open square...The voice of nobles was hushed, and their tongue stuck to the roof of their mouth. When the ear heard, then it blessed me, and when the eye saw, then it approved me...I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my justice was like a robe and a turban.” (Job 29:1-4)

And also in his pride of strength and righteousness, he said “I broke the fangs of the wicked, and plucked the victim from his teeth.” (Job 29:17)... He was repeating the expression “I, I,…”

† † †

**When Job was saying these expressions, the Lord rebuked him, for “he was righteous in his own eyes.” (Job 32:1, 38:2)**

But finally, he rejected himself and said to the Lord “Therefore, I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.” (Job 42:6)...When he reached dust and ashes, then the Lord lifted from him the temptation... “And the Lord restored Job’s losses...Indeed the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.” (Job 42:10)

For when he reached dust and ashes, he reached, at the same time, to the saying of David: “Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak.”

In times of old, he had honour and greatness. In this, he said “The young men saw me and hid, and the aged arose and stood; the princes refrained from talking, and put their hand on their mouth.” (Job 29:8-9) But now, he is dust and ashes...he finally arrived to his truth.

† † †

My advice to every person: Forget your strength and forget the pride that you are in, or that you desire.

**If you are given authority, then do not use it...I mean do not use it in a way that will elevate yourself.**

Do not over-power others... Do not place anyone under your feet... Do not boast above anyone. Do not attempt to always be victorious or win at all times or reveal in every circumstance your personality and strength... Do not crush anyone... But instead be humble before everyone, and before God say what David said: “Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak.”

### **The Weakness of David and His Oppression**

**In reality, David the prophet, in his Psalms, spoke frequently about his weakness and oppression; and especially before the strength of his enemies and their power...**

Not only did he do this in Psalm 6, but in many other Psalms also. In the last Psalm of the Psalms of the Morning Hour Prayer, he says:

“For the enemy has persecuted my soul; he has crushed my life to the ground; he has made me dwell in darkness, like those who have long been dead... Deliver me, O Lord, from my enemies; in You I take shelter... For Your righteousness’ sake bring my soul out of trouble.” (Psalm 143)

He does not stand before God as a powerful person who is victorious over his enemies, instead as a weak person facing the danger of his enemies- his enemies who persecuted him, oppressed him and made him dwell in darkness like those who have long been dead.

† † †

Then what do you benefit from these Psalms? How do you practice them in your life? And in what way? And what do you mean by the word ‘your enemies’?

**As for its application in dealings with people, your enemies are foes and opposition, or in your spiritual life, your enemies are the devils, thoughts and desires.**

The opposition, the opposing of all good, has persecuted my soul. His war against me has been long...he has subjected me in falling into sin and with my inability to fight him. He has made me dwell in darkness, and darkness is the life of sin, being far from the true light. This is what people loved, more than the light, "because their deeds were evil." (John 3:19) and those who live in this darkness, at their end they will "be cast out into outer darkness," (Matthew 8:12) where "there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matthew 25:30)

This is the spiritual death (Luke 15:24; Revelation 3:1) which leads to the eternal death. It is the fate of those who sit in darkness, being like dead to the end of ages.

† † †

This is how David spoke about the might of his enemies who subjected him. In Psalm 20, he says about them "some trust in chariots and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God."...I am not like those mighty ones, the owners of chariots – as was Pharaoh with his chariots – but I will be edified in the name of the Lord, just like I stood before Goliath in the name of the Lord of hosts (I Samuel 17:45).

† † †

In the first Psalm of the Psalms of the Sixth Hour, we say with David "Hear my prayer, O God...For strangers have risen up against me, and oppressors have sought after my life; they have not set God before them." (Psalm 54)

These are strangers to the Kingdom, and oppressors equipped with all the weaponry of the opposition of good. They sought after my life to destroy it; they have not set You before them. But as for me, "I have set the Lord always before me; because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved." (Psalm 16:8)

**Before the might of my enemies I will place before it the might of God.**

† † †

David follows on about the might of his enemies, in the second Psalm of the Psalms of the Sixth Hour Prayer, by saying "God shall send forth His mercy and His truth. My soul is among lions; I lie among the sons of men who are set on fire." (Psalm 57)... God saved his soul from amongst the lions while he lies down in fear and apprehension...

He continues on in the same Psalm and says "...Whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword... they have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down; they have dug a pit before me; into the midst of it they themselves have fallen."

**Whenever I remember the might of my enemies, O Lord, and their plot against me, I also remember with this Your interfering to rescue me.**

I will forget their teeth with which they spoke against me, in the fierce manner of a sharp sword. And I will forget the net that they have prepared before me with which they desire to capture me with. And I will forget the pit that they have dug before me to fall into... I will only remember Your mercy that made them fall into the traps they set for me...

† † †

David explains the extent of the harshness and how they have surrounded him like fire, so he says in Psalm 118 (from the Psalms of the Sunset Prayer):

“They surrounded me, yes, they surrounded me... They surrounded me like bees; they were quenched like a fire of thorns...”

**What was your situation, O David, before all this danger?**

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.”

“I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord.”

**I will not talk about my weakness, nor about their strength, but about the work of the Lord with His rescue and His salvation.**

† † †

And so David concludes his words about the strength of his enemies and their harsh attacks upon him with this beautiful song:

“The Lord is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation.”

We remember this deep expression in its beauty and sing it during Holy Week, remembering all what the Lord Christ faced of passion and tribulations. This became for us strength and salvation, with which we praise the Lord with, for He is our strength and salvation.

† † †

We also remember a Psalm of David, also from the Psalms of the Sunset Prayer, in which he 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, when their wrath was kindled against us.” (Psalm 124:2-3)... Was it to this extent that you were weak before them, O David? And to this extent they were stronger than you?!

He answers “Blessed be the Lord, who has not given us as prey to their teeth”... Were they like devouring beasts then?! Yes, but the Lord interfered “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...”

It is as if David is saying: Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak. I am like a small weak bird that falls into the snare of the fowlers. If Your mercy does not encompass me, I will fall into their hands. One fowler can beat me, then how much more a number of fowlers!!

† † †

He also says to the Lord in a Psalm from the Psalms of the Prayer before Sleeping:

“I cry out to the Lord with my voice; with my voice to the Lord I make my supplication... I pour out my complaint before Him; I declare before Him my trouble. When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then You knew my path. 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...” (Psalm 142)

† † †

**This prayer is a cry of a soul in distress. Before it is the snare of the enemy, and there is no escape and no one asks about it. The only help is God.**

Therefore the road of the Saints is not easy. It is a difficult road and the door is narrow; along with the attacks of the enemy and the multitude of offences, troubles and grief. This David cries to the Lord in the same Psalm saying “Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are stronger than I.” Here he confesses his weakness and that his enemies are stronger. Therefore he says I have cried to You O Lord. He and I will cry and say: Have mercy on me O Lord for I am weak...

† † †

God had anointed him as a king, but the kingdom was not authority, greatness and honour, but “Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all.” (Psalm 34:19)

David did well with all these tribulations that surrounded him from all sides. He also did well with the multitude of enemies in his life. So he said:

**Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head.” (Psalm 69:4)**

† † †

Did the matter stop at the hatred of those to you, and their ill-feelings towards you? No, but their hatred extended to attacks. Thus he said:

**“The plowers plowed on my back; they have made their furrows long.” (Psalm 129)**

This is David, who stands before God as a weak person. His enemies were more proud than him... he is not like them in their strength... and their number was greater than the hairs of his head. They persecuted him and extended their iniquity. It has been a long time that they have plowed on his back... Truly, he stands before God as a weak person asking His help and saying to Him “Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak.”

† † †

While he was under the persecution of these sinners against him, he has complete faith, by experience, that God will save him from them and over-power them. So he says:

**“The Lord is righteous; He has cut in pieces the cords of the wicked.”**

He also says “For the scepter of wickedness shall not rest on the land allotted to the righteous...” (Psalm 125) they can be subjected to the strikes of this scepter from the wicked, but it shall not rest upon them. That is, the matter will not continue like this, for the Lord will eventually intervene, and take away this scepter.

† † †

But when will the Lord take it away? He may leave it for a long time, including the bitter pain that comes from those sinners who have prolonged their iniquity, till David complains and says, “When will You execute judgment on those who persecute me?...” ... “My eyes fail from searching Your word, saying, “When will You comfort me?”” (Psalm 119); till he cries out and says:

**“They almost made an end of me on earth...” (Psalm 119:87)**

And in another translation “In a short while, they would have consumed me upon earth...”

This is David, who used to say in the Psalm “Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak.”

† † †

And you, what contemplations take place in your mind, in regards to what David says about his weakness in the Psalms?

**You can, in your spiritual wars, keep crying to God about the might of the evil spirits that have prolonged their iniquity against you...**

The army of Satan who have persecuted you without a cause, prolonged their iniquity and almost made an end of you on earth... Cry out because of the harsh and pressing

thoughts that desire your fall, and seek your soul to destroy it... Say in this situation “Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak.”

Whether you are fought by a sin, which you cannot resist... or if you are in trouble, which you are unable to escape from... In both cases, say with David “Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak.”

† † †

David, after the great sin that he fell in (II Samuel 11), felt his weakness even more. At first, it was said about him that he was “a mighty man of valor.” (I Samuel 16:18) And the women sang to him with dancing, with tambourines, with joy and with musical instruments, saying, “Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.” (I Samuel 18:6-7)... But now, he is not defeated by thousands or ten thousands, but by one woman, and he fell into sin and was subjected...

**In fact, just as sin subjected him, we can likewise say that he also benefited from this subjection.**

Thus, we see him say, in the great Psalm, “it is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I may learn your statutes.” (Psalm 119:71) What is the spiritual good that he gained?

Above all, he started to feel that he is weak, and this is a beautiful type of humility of the soul. Thus he says in his sixth Psalm “Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak.” I am weak and in need of mercy from God.

### **My Soul also is Greatly Troubled**

And what does he say after that? He says:

**“O Lord, heal me, for my bones are troubled. My soul also is greatly troubled.”**

He started to feel that he is sick, physically and spiritually, for sin and its results has its effects on both the body and the spirit. With regards to the body, he says:

“...for my bones are troubled...” If the body shivers, this would be a simple matter. But for the strong and hard bones to be troubled- the whole skeletal structure- this indicates that his whole body is on the verge of being lost...

And not only his body, but he says “My soul is greatly troubled”

† † †

**The troublesome soul was compensation and reverse reaction to the pleasure of sin that his soul gained from sin...**

Sin is not a mere satisfaction for the desire of the body, but it has its harsh reverse action on the soul later, when the conscience that was asleep awakens and when Nathan the prophet says to him “You are the man!... Why have you despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in His sight?... However, because by this deed

you have given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme...” (II Samuel 12:7-14)

And thus when he comprehended the depth of the sin, his soul started to cry... he even says “I am weary with my groaning...”

### **How Long?**

He did not suffice with this, but in the depth of the trouble of his soul, he said to the Lord:

**“But You, O Lord - how long? Return, O Lord, deliver me! Oh, save me for Your mercies’ sake!”**

This expression “save me” indicates that he is, in his own viewpoint, dead... Of course, by this he means the moral death and the spiritual death. As the father said at the return of his lost son “...for this my son was dead and is alive again...” (Luke 15:24) And as the Lord said to the Angel of the Church of Sardis “...that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.” (Revelation 3:1)

Therefore David explains himself as being weak, sick, his bones are troubled and agitated, disturbed, distressed, weeping and dead...

† † †

**God left him till his cup was full and he was finished, and his soul was subjected.**

Finally, his eyes were open and the cover before him was removed. He felt the truth about himself- that he is nothing before himself... He saw himself weak, sick and in need of the mercy of God... His circumstances have now changed... The cover has been removed from the valiant man... “If they are weighed on the scales, they are altogether lighter than vapour.” (Psalm 62:9) Where is the great valiant man?! A mere look that he cast upon his neighbour from his roof (II Samuel 11:2), and his whole structure collapsed. Truly, the person is nothing ...“certainly every man at his best state is but vapour...” (Psalm 39:5, 11)... Just looks only...

† † †

Where is that valiant man, the man of war?! Where is the man of the flute and harp?! The lute that he played, and Saul would calm down after being taken by an evil spirit?! Where is the man of prayers, that from his prayers of the Psalms we still learn?! Where... Where...? What is left of him is troubled bones, a distressed soul and a voice crying to God and saying:

**“But You, O Lord- how long? Return, O Lord, deliver me!”...**

Till when will I remain in this inner toil and this engulfing grief? Till when will I have this faint- heartedness and feel this shame?! The memories of sin disturb me... Till when will You leave me like this? Return, O Lord, and deliver me. Grant me the joy of Your salvation... “Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.” ... “Oh, save me for Your mercies sake!”

† † †

**“My soul also is greatly troubled.” That is, he lost his inner peace.**

For sin can never have peace with it... “There is no peace,” says the Lord, “for the wicked.”” (Isaiah 48:22) Where are your praises and songs David?! Where is your wonderful harp?... “We hung our harps upon the willows in the midst of it... How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a foreign land?!” (Psalm 137:2,4) ...Sin has made me in a state of foreigner-ship from God...

† † †

**“My soul also is greatly troubled.” Truly, the pain of the soul is more difficult than the pain of the flesh.**

Therefore, he says to the Lord “Return, O Lord, deliver me!” You return to me, if I am not able to return to You... And deliver me, for my deliverance is in Your hand only... You are the only one who can comfort me. For I know well that “against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight.” So save me for Your mercies’ sake.

**David, by reaching the humility of the soul, has by this, reached God.**

† † †

He stood before God and spoke to Him frankly and explained to Him his state after the sin, and sought His mercy. He said to Him “But You, O Lord, how long?” I have fallen Lord, but You... Where are You?

**“My enemies reproach me, while they say to me all day long, “Where is your God?”” (Psalm 42:10)**

No matter how far I go from You, do not go far from me Lord. No matter how weak I am, You are the One who supports my weakness. And if I have fallen, You are the One who raised me from my fall. And if sin has destroyed me, return and save me for Your mercies’ sake. Let it be according to Your mercy, O Lord, and not according to my sins.

† † †

We can enter into David’s heart and imagine his feelings...

Here, he did not say “How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever?” (Psalm 13:1) Nor did he say “Why do You stand afar off, O Lord? Why do You hide in times of trouble?” (Psalm 10:1) ...Instead, in this Psalm, he says “...how long...” Then he is quiet!! He was overcome and could not continue the expression... You, O Lord, understand what I mean...

**What I expect from You Lord is that You intervene. Do not leave me.**

Do not leave me to my weak soul, nor leave me to my strong enemies. And do not leave me to my troubled bones, nor to my distressed soul.

He says to Him "...how long?" For it has been a long time and the matter is heavy. David felt the need for God.

† † †

**The truth is that God sometimes answers quickly, and sometimes delays!**

He has His wisdom in answering quickly, and His wisdom in delaying.

With regards to answering quickly, He gives us an amazing example in Isaiah 65:24, where the Lord says "It shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer it..." Truly this is amazing. But it is not strange that God gives many times before we ask.

And He says "...and while they are still speaking..." that is, before they finish what they are saying, that I will hear them... For I hear what is in the heart, before the tongue utters it...

† † †

Maybe, O Lord, You answer this quickly to the righteous who have not sinned to You, or to those who have not angered You with their deeds. But as for me, I am not one of those. I am ashamed to lift my face to You. Therefore, my bones are troubled and my soul is distressed greatly... This is why You have been patient with me. But how long, O Lord?

Maybe there is in your eyes David some tears stored there that I want to squeeze out. Maybe there are some groans that you have not yet uttered... Maybe there is some contrition that you need for your repentance to be complete. This is why I am patient with you... Patient till you say "All night I make my bed swim; I drench my couch with my tears..."

How long, O Lord? For how long will I continue being oppressed from my enemies attacks (Psalm 42:9). From the oppression of those who grieve me saying "There is no help for him in God." (Psalm 3) ...Maybe the reason is you David.

† † †

God always intervenes in the appropriate time. We might think that He has delayed and the matter is not as such.

**Return, O Lord, deliver me!**

**Return, O Lord, deliver me!**

Since he is asking the Lord to return, it means that he feels that he is alone. He feels that God is far from him, He has departed from him, and he has become a foreigner to God. And that God is not working with him. Thus he says:

Return, O Lord, deliver me! Let my troubled bones remain so, for it is not the flesh that troubles me. It is my soul that is exceedingly distressed... Give it some peace... some comfort, and do not leave my soul in its distressed state.

In the trial of the righteous Job, You gave permission to Satan to strike his body, but You forbade him with regards to Job's soul so as not to touch it... (Job 2:6). And my soul is greatly distressed... Return, O Lord, deliver me!

† † †

He feels alone and as a stranger with God. It is as if he is saying:

**Where is Your first love O Lord? Where is Your comfort of old?**

Where is Your face? Why have You turned Your face away from me and I have become distressed?

Maybe this is also what Job felt at the time of his oppression. So he said: "Oh, that I were as in months past, as in the days when God watched over me; when His lamp shone upon my head, and when by His light I walked through darkness... when the friendly counsel of God was over my tent... When my steps were bathed with cream, and the rock poured out rivers of oil for me!" (Job 29:2-6)

Thus David says: Return, O Lord.

Return to Your relationship with me, like in the days when You chose me from amongst my brothers. And You sent Samuel the Prophet to pour upon me the oil of anointment and Your Holy Spirit came upon me (I Samuel 16:13)...And now return, deliver me and save me...

† † †

Now and again, he says: "O Lord"... For if he resorts to anyone else, he will not find help, comfort nor hope.

This was David's style always. He says in another Psalm "The Lord is for me among those who help me; therefore I shall see my desire on those who hate me. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in men. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes." (Psalm 118:7-9)

† † †

He says to the Lord "...save me." Why? He says:

**"For in death there is no remembrance of You; in the grave who will give You thanks."**

**Oh, save me for Your Mercies Sake!**

**Oh save me for Your mercies' sake...**

Yes, for Your mercies' sake, and not because of my worthiness, nor for my repentance, or prayer, or tears. Save me for Your mercies' sake, because You are compassionate and kind.

It is a strong excuse to which David holds onto strongly - that is, the mercy of God...

If David had held onto the worthiness of his repentance, then God would have said to him: You do not deserve anything. For your sin is directed against God, and with this, it is unlimited, and no matter how much you repent, your repentance is limited...

Instead, when he holds onto God's mercy, God's mercy is great, and David knows this very well. For when he was given a choice between three punishments, after he sinned and numbered the people, David said "Please let us fall into the hand of the Lord, for His mercies are great; but do not let me fall into the hand of man." (II Samuel 24:14)

† † †

He says to Him: And You, O Lord till when?

**He has repeated the word "Lord" many times in this Psalm:**

He says: "O Lord, do not rebuke me in Your anger..."

"Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak."

"O Lord, heal me, for my bones are troubled."

"But You, O Lord-how long?"

And at end of the Psalm, he says "For the Lord has heard the voice of my weeping. The Lord has heard my supplication; the Lord will receive my prayer..."

Seven times in this Psalm that is only ten verses.

**Truly that "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe." (Proverbs 18:19)**

**God always intervenes in the appropriate time. We might think that he delays, but the matter is not like that.**

We might think that God has forgotten us, or that He has hidden Himself from us, and the heart cries out saying "Make haste to help me..." (Psalm 70:1,5) what we see as delay, is merely awaiting for the appropriate time to work for our sake.

The people groaned from the yoke of slavery, God saw this and was compassionate. But He was patient and said I will not deliver you yet... Why? For “the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.” (Genesis 15:16) The cup of wrath is not yet complete against your enemies. The time will come when I scatter them before you, and this for them will be right and worthy. Then “all things work together for good to those who love God...” (Romans 8:28)

† † †

**We say to Him: And You, O Lord, till when? And we have complete trust that He will come...**

Even if it's in the fourth watch of the night (Matthew 14:25) or even if it's the fourth day after the death of Lazarus (John 11:17), He will come... He will “come quickly!” (Revelation 3:11) Therefore “Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the Lord!” (Psalm 27:14) Not with a restless soul, but be of good courage. Be firm and strengthened with faith.

† † †

David follows on in his Psalm by saying to the Lord:

**For in Death there is no Remembrance of You**

Amidst sin and toil, he started to remember death. No doubt that the remembrance of death is beneficial....

He wants to be assured that the Lord has revived him spiritually before he dies. Many people say that they want to die. But the important thing is that the person is assured of his eternal fate before he dies. Is the person sure of himself, that if he dies, where will he go?!

† † †

Who is the one who desires death? It is the person who can say with Saint Paul the Apostle:

**“...having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.”  
(Philippians 1:23)**

He knows that after death he will be with Christ. He will be with Him in paradise (Luke 23:43). Therefore, he sees this is far better.

As for David, he still feared death. This is why he says: “For in death there is no remembrance of You; in the grave who will give You thanks?”

**I want to remember You now, and give You thanks now, before I die.**

With regards to the expression “...in the grave who will give You thanks...,” what is meant is those who are dead in sins...

About this, the Apostle said “And you...who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked...” (Ephesians 2:1-2) Therefore David says:

**Save me... For in death there is no remembrance of You.**

Grant me that I be alive in You, that is, save me from death, the death of sin, and from the sin that has, as its wages, death. (Revelation 6:23).

If I become alive in You, then I will live forever, for in death there is no remembrance of You. Those who are dead in sins do not remember You here on earth, for there are other matters that occupy them from You. And also, when they go to Hades, they will not give thanks to You.

† † †

**Here, we can mention types of death.**

Firstly, the death of the body, which is the separation of the body from the soul.

Secondly, there is the moral death, which is the loss of the Divine image, the loss of the spiritual nature that distinguishes the children of God from the people of the world. About these, the apostles said “In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest...” (1 John 3:10)

Thirdly, the spiritual death, which is the separation of the spirit from God. This is what was meant by the Apostles in the expression “...dead in trespasses and sins...” (Ephesians 2:1,5)

Fourthly, the eternal death or eternal destruction, about which the Lord said in regards to the fate of the evil “...these will go away into everlasting punishment...” (Matthew 25:46) This is the casting into the lake of fire and brim-stone (Revelation 20:10) ... “into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (Matthew 25:30)

† † †

\* The ones who end up with the eternal death are those about whom the Lord said “...you will die in your sin, where I go you cannot come.” (John 8:21) They do not remember God, nor give thanks to Him. They are in outer darkness, outside the fellowship of God and His saints, being in the lake of fire and brimstone.

\* And those who are in the moral death, or in the spiritual death, also do not remember God nor give thanks to Him, for they are in the life of sin. They have before them a chance for repentance, while they are on earth. If they repent, then the saying of the father is suitable to them “...for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found...” (Luke 15:24)

Repentance, to them, is considered as a resurrection from the dead, the death of sin.

\* As for the death of the body, depending on its type, is the connection with God. If the person dies in the state of sin, then this expression is suited to him “For in death there is no remembrance of You...”

† † †

But for the person who dies in his righteousness, then the prayers of the church for him are suitable, saying to the Lord:

**“For there is no death for Your servants, but a departure.”**

**Those, in their death, remember God and give thanks to Him.**

**For they are with Him in paradise, then in the Kingdom.**

Those, of course, after death, praise God and give thanks to Him in spirit, which is alive after death. As for the body, it changes to dust. In these dead bodies, there is no praise to God, except after the Resurrection, when they will arise as spiritual heavenly bodies (1 Corinthians 15:44, 49). Then they will remember God and give thanks to Him after they are united with their spirits.

† † †

This bodily death, in righteousness, is praised by the Apostle. About it, he says “...For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” (Philippians 1:21) He also says “...knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.” (II Corinthians 5:6-8)

He is pleased in death, being absent from the body, and being present with the Lord.

**As for you, in your prayers, try to reach fellowship with God, before you die.**

† † †

After David mentions death, and how those who are dead do not remember God nor give thanks to Him, he says to the Lord:

**I am Weary with my Groaning**

**“I am weary with my groaning; all night I make my bed swim...”**

He groans with difficulty, for practically, the one who groans much becomes weary after a time of groaning, and is unable to continue to bear it...

It was once said about David and his companions, that when the Amalekites burned the city of Ziklog and they took captive the women as well as the men and children... that David and his men “lifted up their voices and wept, until they had no more power to weep.” (I Samuel 30:4)... A harsh expression...

**Truly, the person can cry and increase in their crying, till a time comes when he is weary from crying, and has no more power to cry!!**

This is what David did... he was groaning over his sins, till he became weary from his groaning. He remembered his desire and his adultery. He remembered how he plotted against Uriah the Hittite to go to his home, to cover his own sin, and how this man was more noble and better than him (2Samuel 11:10-11). He also remembered how he plotted to kill Uriah in the war, so that he will not know what happened... and he did actually kill him.

He also remembered that he did not care in causing the death of Uriah, and even sent to Joab, the commander of the army saying to him "Do not let this thing displease you, for the sword devours one as well as another." (1Samuel 11:25)

### **David's Weeping**

**David wept, but he did not weep seeking forgiveness, but after he received forgiveness!**

He offered repentance and repentance forgives the sin. But this forgiveness does not cancel that the sin has been carried out and the matter was done, for it has its spiritual effect on the person, who cannot ignore it...

With regards to David, he received forgiveness for his sin previously, when Nathan the prophet explained to him the depth of the sin, so David said "I have sinned against the Lord." And Nathan said to David "The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die." (2Samuel 12:13) That is, He has transferred it to the account of Christ who will blot it out with His Blood, and you will be forgiven, and you shall not die. Therefore, why did David weep?

**He wept in grief and because of the effect, for he has come down to the level, to do all that he did...**

He grieved because he angered God. And also because he grieved the Holy Spirit who came upon him the day he was anointed... He also grieved because he lost his sublimity and purity, and lost his righteousness, chastity and cleanliness. He lost his noble nature and his spiritual position was lowered...

With regards to the forgiveness, his sin was forgiven. But inside himself there was a voice saying: How can you do all this?! Where was my mind? And where was my conscience?! Thus his sin was always before him (Psalm 51), never leaving his sight or memory, always reminding him that he lost his divine image that he had; and that he did not keep the honour of the anointing that he received from the Holy Spirit. Thus his bones are troubled and his soul also is greatly troubled.

† † †

He says: "All night I make my bed swim; I drench my couch with my tears."

**And why does he make his bed swim every night, and not by day?**

By day, he is busy with many matters... He is busy with the kingly duties, the army and judiciary, in dealing with people and with those who oppose him. He is busy with the pressures of the kingdom and does not have time to cry over his sins... and maybe this does not even cross his mind...

But by night, when he retreats with himself far from the circle of work, and when he is alone, he gives an account of himself, remembering his sins and weeping...

† † †

So he says “All night I make my bed swim; I drench my couch with my tears...”

**If he had said I make my covers swim with my tears, then the matter would be acceptable, but he says I make my bed swim... I drench my couch.**

This indicates the excessive crying that does not cease, which does not only wet the covers, but his couch and makes his bed swim with tears...it is unusual crying, tears that have no peace and do not have limits... Every detail of his sin needs crying, and upon his couch, his sin is always before him (Psalm 51).

† † †

Yes, this is the weeping David during his nights, who says:

**“Weeping may endure for a night...” (Psalm 30:5)**

It is a calm period that he spends with himself, far from being busy with work and commitments... he prays and contemplates... he remembers his sins and weeps.

When you remember the weeping of David, ask yourself: Do I weep over my sins, like he wept?!

† † †

Afterwards, he also says:

**“My eye wastes away because of grief; it grows old because of all my enemies.”**

In other translations “...because of the sadness...” And the meaning is the same: whether it is sadness over his state, or anger against himself, or the anger of God, because of all this his eye wastes.

It is because of the grief and crying and the anger inside him at what he did of sins that his eye wastes and has become old before its time...

**Tears**

**Many are the stories about tears in the lives of saints.**

Saint Arsanious the Great lost his eye lashes from excessive crying. This great Saint used to soak the psalms with his tears. He used to place a towel upon his knees as he did his work to catch the tears. Saint Arsanious was a man of prayer, spending the whole night in prayer. He stood to pray when the sun was setting, and continued to pray till it appears before him again. Despite this, he used to weep...

† † †

And we sin numerous sins that cannot be counted, without weeping.

**I am afraid that we have lost weeping over our sins, because we are busy with the sins of others and not our sins.**

**Or we have lost weeping for our sins because we are occupied with committing other sins.**

Weeping is a big topic that I cannot possibly try to cover here...

† † †

The important thing is that I want to tell you a fact which is

**David Wept Greatly**

**David was a person who wept a lot.**

**He says “For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping.” (Psalm 102:9)**

That is, when he holds a glass to drink, his tears fall into the glass as he drinks, so his drink is mingled with tears...

How great is his sensitivity!! And we drink sin like water and forget.

David, because of his great tears, says to the Lord “Put my tears into Your bottle.” (Psalm 56:8) And he also says:

**“My tears have been my food day and night.” (Psalm 42:3)**

In his fasting also, he wept and said “When I wept and chastened my soul with fasting...” (Psalm 69:10) He weeps before God and says to Him “...give ear to my cry; do not be silent at my tears; for I am a stranger with You.” (Psalm 39:12) ...David wept because he said “Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy.” (Psalm 126:5)

† † †

David continued to weep over his sin all his life and never ceased from weeping...

**Do you know when he stopped weeping? This happened when he stood on the edge of eternity, on the edge of death.**

It was then that he said “Return to your rest, O my soul, for the Lord has dealt bountifully with You. For You have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.” (Psalm 116:7-8)

Return, O my soul to your rest after you have toiled in groaning and suffered from tears, and your eyes have grown old from grief and sorrow.

† † †

Saint Arsanious also used to weep till death... In the hour of his death, he was shaken. His disciples said to him: Even you, our father, are afraid?!

He said to them: The awesomeness of this hour has accompanied me since I entered monasticism...

And one of the saints said: I fear three matters: From the hour of death when my soul departs from my body... From the hour of standing before the throne of the Just Judge... And from the hour of my judgment...

† † †

**Tears are a must, for they purify the soul and wash it from sin.**

Look at what David, the great prophet says: My eyes are weary from weeping, that is, they are exhausted...

And the Lord, in the Book of Joel the prophet, says “Turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.” (Joel 2:12)

Have we wept for our weaknesses and falls? And we pray in the Midnight Prayer and each of us says “Give me, Lord, fountains of many tears as You did in the past to the sinful woman...” (Luke 7:38)

† † †

I do not want to lengthen the contemplation in the matter of tears, for I have published a book for you about tears which you can refer to...

### **The Answer**

Let us return to the Psalm of David (Psalm 6), and say that when he arrived to tears, the Lord lifted away the grief from him. The end of the Psalm is completely different to its beginning. Having felt the answer, he says:

**“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.”**

† † †

Maybe those workers of iniquity are those who gloated at him in his fall, having seen some of the punishment of God to him, and thought he is rejected by Him!! Or maybe what is meant by workers of iniquity are the thoughts that bring grief or helplessness.

With regards to us, when we say this in our prayers, by the workers of iniquity, we mean all thoughts of sin that fight us.

Depart from me, for the answer is the Lord has heard my supplication, when I said to Him “But You, O Lord, how long? Return, O Lord, deliver me!”

† † †

**“Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity,” means two things.**

Firstly, that since God has heard my prayer; He has cast them away from me.

Secondly, it means the refusal of the praying person of these thoughts that bring iniquity, which fight him and make his soul greatly troubled.

David, while praying, felt the work of God for his sake...

**He felt that God heard his prayer and answered him, while he was still praying...**

The light of hope entered his heart, so the cloud of grief dissipated, and the workers of iniquity no longer had power in fighting him. Instead, he gained an authority by which he can cast them away from himself, and say to them: Depart from me... not by my own strength, but through God who has heard the voice of my supplication and accepted my prayer. This is to Whom I say:

Arise O Lord God and let Your enemies be dispersed, and let all those who despise Your Holy name flee before Your face.

His repentance was not only made complete by weeping, but also by being away from the workers of iniquity and casting them away. Through repentance and God’s acceptance of his prayer, he regained his inner peace.

† † †

**He says: For the Lord has heard the voice of my weeping.**

His tears have a voice. Thus he says in another place “Attend (listen) to my tears.” ...Truly, tears speak a language far superior than any words, which is more effective and convincing.

“The Lord will receive my prayer.” This prayer entered into God’s heart, and He accepted it. David believed that it has been accepted- he felt this.

**So his tears changed to joy, and his contrition to rejoicing.**

He fought with God, and took from Him what he wanted...

In the beginning of the Psalm, he was saying "O Lord, do not rebuke me in Your anger, nor chasten me in Your hot displeasure." At the end of the Psalm, he says "The Lord has heard my supplication; the Lord will receive my prayer." ...Here is the comfort and rest.

### **Let all my Enemies be Ashamed**

We see him concluding his Psalm with these expressions:

**"Let all my enemies be ashamed and greatly troubled; let them turn back and be ashamed suddenly. Alleluia."**

Whether they are internal or external enemies, You have shamed them. His acceptance of my prayer and His answering of my supplications... all this is evidence of His acceptance and pleasure of David. Therefore, let them be ashamed and turned back.

Maybe also this carries the answer to a prayer which he said in another Psalm:

**"Show me a sign for good, that those who hate me may see it and be ashamed." (Psalm 68:17)**

And in his Psalm 6, he does not mean by shame his adversaries only, but he says all my enemies. For he said in another Psalm "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) ...All those who gloat and are malignant, let them be ashamed... very quickly, and let them be turned back and greatly troubled...

### **As for me, I will rejoice in the Lord...**

In the Lord who has shown me a sign for good.

In the Lord who has heard the voice of my weeping and received my prayer.

Blessed are you David for this joy and happiness. Truly, it is as you have said:

**"The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tents of the righteous..." (Psalm 118:15)**

### **Alleluia**

David concludes his Psalm with the word "Alleluia."

It is an expression meaning happiness in the Lord or rejoicing in the Lord.

Many of the Psalms of David are concluded with this. Even the well known Psalm of repentance, Psalm 50, is also concluded with the expression "Alleluia." It is amazing that the Psalm "do not rebuke me", the Psalm in which he drenches his couch with his

tears, is also concluded with the expression “Alleluia.” It is the same with Psalm 3 “how they have increased who trouble me,” and Psalm 13 “How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever?” ...All the Psalms of the Morning Prayer...

**Truly, David starts his prayer with grief, and then concludes it with happiness and rejoicing.**

It is like what the Bible says, “The end of a thing is better than its beginning.” (Ecclesiastes 7:8)... For in the beginning, we present our problems to God. And the end carries the solution of God to these problems...

Thus David started while troubled saying “My soul also is greatly troubled...” and ends with happiness and rejoicing ...It is a lesson for us all.

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In this Book

**In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, One God, Amen,**

This book is a part of the contemplations in the Psalms, some of which we have published.

It is a Psalm from the Psalms of the Morning Prayer. It is also a prayer in the Prayer of the Veil and in the First service of the Midnight Prayer.

It is one of the most important Psalms of repentance.

It is a type in which there is a mixture of tears and repentance with Divine comfort, and feeling the answer. Therefore it finishes with happiness and rejoicing.

It is a Psalm that we with everyone can learn and pray with it.  
Till we meet in another book of contemplations in some of the Psalms of the Morning  
Prayer.

Pope Shenouda III