

Church Abandoned?

June 4, 2016

As day by day the chaos increases in almost everything and everybody around us, and inside the Church it seems as though everybody is against everybody, it is certainly reassuring to find that the Psalmist of maybe 3,000 years ago cried out to God to come to the aid of his people, in similar distress from his enemies. Then as now they rose up in their pride against him, their pride “ascends continually,” they have done their best to wreck his Temple and his religion, and he has allowed them much success. Here is Psalm 73 (74), with minimal notes of explanation in italics:—

A. How can God be allowing the triumph of His enemies against His own Church? [1] O God, why hast Thou cast us off unto the end: why is Thy wrath enkindled against the sheep of Thy pasture? [2] Remember Thy congregation (*Catholic Church*), which Thou hast possessed from the beginning. The sceptre of Thy inheritance which Thou hast redeemed: Mount Sion (*Catholic Church*) in which Thou hast dwelt. [3] Lift up Thy hands against their (*God's enemies*) pride unto the end; see what things the enemy hath done wickedly in the sanctuary. [4] And they that hate Thee have made their boasts, in the midst of Thy solemnity. They have set up their ensigns for signs, [5] and they knew not (*the holiness of God*) both in the going out and on the highest top (*Temple gates and summit*). As with axes in a wood of trees, [6] they have cut down at once the gates thereof, with axe and hatchet (*Vatican II*) they have brought it down. [7] They have set fire to Thy sanctuary: they have defiled the dwelling place of Thy name (*Catholic Church*) on the earth. [8] They said in their heart, the whole kindred of them together: Let us abolish all the festival days of God (*Catholic liturgy*) from the land. [9] Our signs we have not seen, there is now no prophet: and He will know us no more (*God has given up. We are on our own.*) [10] How long, O God,

shall the enemy reproach: is the adversary to provoke thy name for ever? [11] Why dost thou turn away Thy hand: and Thy right hand out of the midst of thy bosom for ever?

B. But God is the Master of salvation, of history and of all Nature. [12] But God is our king before ages: he hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth. [13] Thou by Thy strength didst make the sea (*Red Sea crossing*) firm: Thou didst crush the heads of the dragons (*Egyptians*) in the waters. [14] Thou hast broken the heads of the dragon (*Egyptian king*): thou hast given him to be meat for the people of the Ethiopians. [15] Thou hast broken up the fountains and the torrents: Thou hast dried up the Ethan (*running strongly, e.g. Jos. III*) rivers. [16] Thine is the day, and Thine is the night: Thou hast made the morning light and the sun. [17] Thou hast made all the borders of the earth: the summer and the spring were formed by Thee.

C. O God, forget not your own humble people, and crush your proud enemies. [18] Remember this, the enemy hath reproached the Lord: and a foolish people hath provoked Thy name. [19] Deliver not up to beasts the souls that confess to Thee: and forget not to the end the souls of Thy poor. [20] Have regard to Thy covenant (*New Testament*): for they that are the obscure of the earth have been filled with dwellings of iniquity. [21] Let not the humble be turned away with confusion: the poor and needy shall praise Thy name. [22] Arise, O God, judge thy own cause: remember Thy reproaches with which the foolish man hath reproached Thee all the day. [23] Forget not the voices of Thy enemies: the pride of them that hate Thee ascendeth continually.

Kyrie eleison.