

## PSALM 25

## AN ALPHABETIC ACROSTIC

This is a prayer wherein the Psalmist prays, with wonderful fervency of heart, to be strengthened in the faith and in the love of the Word of God – even though he knew that on this account, he would have great and bitter enemies in the world. He besought the Lord that he would not be broken down in mind by afflictions, nor by the greatness and multiplicity of his own infirmities, when he saw how hypocrites despise true religion and the true Word with much confidence and secure presumption – as if these things were a disgrace for persons of “enlightened minds” and “good education” to be engaged in.

In the worship of God, we must lift up our souls to Him (verses 1-7). It is certain that none who wait on the Lord by a believing attendance, and who wait for Him by a believing hope, shall ever be ashamed of it. Even the most advanced believer needs and desires to be taught by God. If we sincerely long to know our duty, and resolve to do it, we may be sure that the Lord will direct us in it. But see how the Psalmist is earnest in his prayer for the pardon of his sins. When God pardons iniquities, He is said to remember it no more. It is His goodness, and not ours – His mercy, and not our merit – that must be our plea for the pardon of sin, and for all the strength that we need in order to go on in His ways. This plea we must rely upon – feeling our own unworthiness, and being satisfied

**Overview of the Psalm, adapted from Charles Spurgeon:**

David is pictured in this Psalm as in a faithful photograph. His holy trust, his many conflicts, his great transgressions, his bitter repentance, and his deep distresses are all here, so that we see the very heart of “the man after God’s own heart.” It is evidently a composition of David’s later years, for he mentions the sins of his youth; and from its painful references to the craft and cruelty of his many foes, it will not be too speculative to refer it to the period when Absalom was heading his great rebellion against him. This is the second of the seven Penitential Psalms. It is the mark of a true saint that his sorrows remind him of his sins, and that his sorrow for sin drives him to his God.

In the original language, the twenty-two verses of this Psalm begin with the letters of the Hebrew alphabet in their proper order. It is the first instance we have of an inspired acrostic, or alphabetical song. This method may have been adopted by the writer to assist the memory, and the Holy Spirit may have employed it to show us that the graces of style and the arts of poetry may lawfully be used in His service. Why should not all the wit and ingenuity of mankind be sanctified to the noblest purposes by being laid upon the altar of the Lord?

From the singularity of the structure of the Psalm, it is not easy to discover any particular sections; there are great changes of thought, but there is no variation of subject. The moods of the writer’s mind are twofold: prayer and meditation. And as these appear in turns, we shall thus divide the verses: prayer in verses 1-7, 11, and 16-22; and meditation in verses 8-10 and 12-15.

with the riches of the Redeemer's mercy and grace. How boundless is that mercy which covers forever the sins and follies of a youth spent without God and without hope! Blessed be the Lord, for the blood of the Sacrifice of the perfect Lamb of God can wash away every stain!

We are all sinners (verses 8-14); and Christ came into the world to save sinners, to teach sinners, and to call sinners to repentance. We value a promise by the character of the one who makes it; and therefore, we may most assuredly depend upon the promises of God. All the paths of the Lord – that is, all His promises and all His Providences – are mercy and truth. In all His dealings, His people may see His mercy displayed and His Word fulfilled, no matter what afflictions they may be exercised with. Those who are humble and distrust themselves, and who desire to be taught and to follow Divine guidance, will be guided by Him in judgment – that is, by the rule of the written Word – to find rest for their souls in the Savior. Even when the body is sick and in pain, the soul may be at ease in God.

The Psalmist concludes (verses 15-22) in the same manner in which he began – namely, by expressing his dependence upon the Lord and his desire toward Him. It is good to thus hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. David pleads his own integrity; for although he was naturally a sinner before God, yet in regard to his enemies, he had the testimony of a clear conscience that he had done them no wrong. And then he assures himself that God will, at length, give His people rest from all their enemies. In heaven, they will be perfectly redeemed from all troubles.

Blessed Savior, You have graciously taught us that without You, we can do nothing. Teach us how to pray, how to appear before You in the way which You shall choose, and how to lift up our whole hearts and desires after You – for You are “THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS!”

*Lord Jesus, we confess to You that our sins are indeed heavy, great, and grievous. We beseech You that for Your great name's sake, You would pardon them – notwithstanding their heavy nature, and the many provocations with which they have been marked. We also pray for grace so that instead of following our own devices and cutting out new paths of thought for ourselves, we may enquire for the good old ways of Your truth and apply for a scholarship in Your College of Grace! Amen.*

