EDIFIED EDITION

Psalms

A modern rendering of the Holy Scriptures

150	2,461	Old	19
chapters	verses	Testament	book of 66

Contents

Psalm 1
Psalm 2
Psalm 3
Psalm 4
Psalm 5
Psalm 6
Psalm 7
Psalm 8
Psalm 9
Psalm 10
Psalm 11
Psalm 12
Psalm 13
Psalm 14
Psalm 15
Psalm 16
Psalm 17
Psalm 18
Psalm 19
Psalm 20
Psalm 21
Psalm 22
Psalm 23
Psalm 24
Psalm 25
Psalm 26
Psalm 27
Psalm 28
Psalm 29
Psalm 30
Psalm 31
Psalm 32
Psalm 33
Psalm 34
Psalm 35
Psalm 36
Psalm 37
Psalm 38
Psalm 39
Psalm 40
Psalm 41
Psalm 42
Psalm 43
Psalm 44
Psalm 45
Psalm 46
Psalm 47
Psalm 48
Psalm 49
Psalm 50
Psalm 51
Psalm 52
Psalm 53
Psalm 54
Psalm 55
Psalm 56

Psalm 57
Psalm 58
Psalm 59
Psalm 60
Psalm 61
Psalm 62
Psalm 63
Psalm 64
Psalm 65
Psalm 66
Psalm 67
Psalm 68
Psalm 69
Psalm 70
Psalm 71
Psalm 72
Psalm 73
Psalm 74
Psalm 75
Psalm 76
Psalm 77
Psalm 78
Psalm 79
Psalm 80
Psalm 81
Psalm 82
Psalm 83
Psalm 84
Psalm 85
Psalm 86
Psalm 87
Psalm 88
Psalm 89
Psalm 90
Psalm 91
Psalm 92
Psalm 93
Psalm 94
Psalm 95
Psalm 96
Psalm 97
Psalm 98
Psalm 99
Psalm 100
Psalm 101
Psalm 102
Psalm 103
Psalm 104
Psalm 105
Psalm 106
Psalm 107
Psalm 108
Psalm 109
Psalm 110
Psalm 111
Psalm 112
Psalm 113
Psalm 114
Psalm 115
Psalm 116
Psalm 117
Psalm 118
Psalm 119
Psalm 120
Psalm 121
Psalm 122
Psalm 123
Psalm 124
Psalm 125
Psalm 126
Psalm 127
Psalm 128
Psalm 129
Psalm 130
Psalm 131
Psalm 132
Psalm 133
Psalm 134
Psalm 135
Psalm 136
Psalm 137
Psalm 138
Psalm 139
Psalm 140
Psalm 141
Psalm 142

Psalm 143
Psalm 144
Psalm 145
Psalm 146
Psalm 147
Psalm 148
Psalm 149
Psalm 150

Edified Edition (EDE): a modern rendering of the Holy Scriptures from the original Hebrew and Greek, in everyday British English. www.edifiededition.com

Numbered notes follow each chapter.

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Psalm 1

Psalm 1 opens the whole book by setting two ways side by side. Blessed is the one who does not follow the wicked but delights in the law of the LORD, thinking on it day and night; he is like a tree beside streams of water, bearing fruit in its season. The wicked are like chaff blown away by the wind. They will not stand in the judgement, for the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked ends in ruin.

1 Blessed is the man[1] who does not walk in the advice of the wicked, or stand in the path of sinners, or sit in the company of mockers.

2 Instead, his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on His law he meditates day and night.

3 He will be like a tree planted beside channels of water, which gives its fruit in its season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does will prosper.

4 Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away.

5 So the wicked will not stand firm in the judgement, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

6 For the LORD watches over the path of the righteous, but the path of the wicked will perish.

1 The Psalms are gathered into five books, perhaps echoing the five books of Moses. Book One is Psalms 1–41.

Psalm 2

Psalm 2 is a royal psalm. The nations and their kings plot against the LORD and His Anointed, but He who sits in heaven laughs at them and declares that He has installed His King on Zion. The King tells of the LORD's decree: "You are My Son." The nations are His inheritance, and He will shatter them with an iron rod. So the rulers of the earth are warned to serve the LORD with fear and to kiss the Son, for all who take refuge in Him are blessed. The New Testament applies this psalm to Jesus.

1 Why do the nations rage, and the peoples plot in vain?[1]

2 The kings of the earth take their stand, and the rulers gather together, against the LORD and against His Anointed:

3 "Let us tear off their chains and throw off their ropes from us!"

4 He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord mocks them.

5 Then He speaks to them in His anger and terrifies them in His fury:

6 "I have installed My King on Zion, My holy hill."

7 I will tell of the decree of the LORD. He said to me, "You are My Son; today I have begotten You.[2]

8 Ask of Me, and I will make the nations Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth Your possession.

9 You will break them with a rod of iron; You will shatter them like a potter's jar."[3]

10 Now then, you kings, be wise; take warning, you judges of the earth.

11 Serve the LORD in fear, and rejoice, trembling.

12 Kiss the Son,[4] or He will be angry and you will perish on the way, for His anger can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in Him.

1 Verses 1–2 are quoted in Acts 4:25–26.

2 Quoted in Acts 13:33 and Hebrews 1:5; 5:5.

3 The Greek has ‘rule them’, as in Revelation 2:27; 12:5; 19:15.

4 The Hebrew here uses the Aramaic word for ‘son’. The meaning of the line is uncertain; the Greek has ‘accept correction’.

Psalm 3

Psalm 3 is David’s morning prayer when he fled from his son Absalom. Many enemies rise against him and say that God will not save him, but the LORD is his shield and his glory. He cries to the LORD and is answered from the holy hill. He lies down, sleeps and wakes, for the LORD sustains him, and he is not afraid of tens of thousands. He asks God to arise, for deliverance belongs to the LORD.

A psalm of David, when he fled from his son Absalom.

1 LORD, how many are my foes![1] How many rise up against me!

2 How many say of me, “There is no deliverance for him in God.” Selah.[2]

3 But You, LORD, are a shield all around me, You are my glory, and You lift up my head.

4 With my voice I cry to the LORD, and He answers me from His holy hill. Selah.

5 I lay down and slept; I woke, for the LORD sustains me.

6 I will not fear the tens of thousands drawn up against me on every side.

7 Rise up, LORD! Save me, my God! For You strike all my enemies on the jaw; You break the teeth of the wicked.

8 Deliverance belongs to the LORD. May Your blessing be on Your people. Selah.

1 In Hebrew the titles of the psalms are counted as verses, so the verse numbers there are often one or two higher. For the events see 2 Samuel 15–18.

2 A word of uncertain meaning, probably a direction to the musicians, such as a pause.

Psalm 4

Psalm 4 is an evening prayer of trust. David asks God, who has given him room in distress, to hear him. He challenges those who love what is empty and tells them that the LORD has set apart the faithful for Himself. Let them tremble and not sin, reflect in silence on their beds, offer right sacrifices and trust the LORD. Many long for good things, but the joy the LORD has put in his heart is greater than an abundant harvest, and he lies down and sleeps in peace.

For the director: with stringed instruments. A psalm of David.

1 Answer me when I call, God of my righteousness! You have given me room when I was in distress.[1] Be gracious to me and hear my prayer.

2 You people, how long will my honour be turned to shame? How long will you love what is empty and go after lies? Selah.

3 Know that the LORD has set apart the faithful for Himself; the LORD hears when I call to Him.

4 Be angry, but do not sin;[2] search your hearts on your beds, and be silent. Selah.

5 Offer right sacrifices, and trust in the LORD.

6 Many are saying, “Who will show us good?” Let the light of Your face shine on us, LORD.

7 You have put more joy in my heart than they have when their grain and new wine abound.

8 In peace I will lie down and sleep, for You alone, LORD, make me live in safety.

1 ‘For the director’ is probably the leader of the temple music; so in many titles.

2 As the Greek, quoted in Ephesians 4:26; or ‘Tremble, and do not sin’.

Psalm 5

Psalm 5 is a morning prayer. David lays his cause before the LORD, his King and his God, and waits expectantly. God takes no pleasure in wickedness; the boastful cannot stand before Him, and He destroys liars and the bloodthirsty. By His great loyal kindness David will enter His house and worship. He asks to be led in righteousness because of his enemies, whose throat is an open grave, and he prays that they will bear their guilt. All who take refuge in God will rejoice, for He surrounds the righteous with favour as with a shield.

For the director: for flutes. A psalm of David.

1 Give ear to my words, LORD; consider my sighing.[1]

2 Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God,
for it is to You that I pray.

3 LORD, in the morning You hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before You and wait expectantly.

4 For You are not a God who delights in wickedness; evil cannot be Your guest.

5 The boastful cannot stand in Your sight; You hate all who do wrong.

6 You destroy those who tell lies; the LORD abhors the bloodthirsty and the deceitful.

7 But I, by Your great loyal kindness, will enter Your house; in reverence I will bow down towards Your holy temple.

8 Lead me, LORD, in Your righteousness because of my enemies; make Your way straight before me.

9 For nothing they say can be trusted, and their inmost self is destruction. Their throat is a grave left open; with their tongues they deceive.[2]

10 Hold them guilty, God; let them fall by their own schemes. Drive them out for their many offences, for they have rebelled against You.

11 But let all who take refuge in You be glad; let them sing for joy for ever. Spread Your protection over them, so that those who love Your name may exult in You.

12 For You, LORD, bless the righteous; You surround them with favour as with a shield.

1 The title's word for 'flutes' is uncertain.

2 Quoted in Romans 3:13.

Psalm 6

Psalm 6 is a cry from deep distress, the first of the psalms of penitence. David asks the LORD not to rebuke him in anger, for he is faint and his bones are shaken. How long? He asks God to turn and save him because of His loyal kindness, for who praises Him in Sheol? He is worn out with groaning and his bed is soaked with tears. Then he turns on his enemies, for the LORD has heard his weeping and accepted his prayer.

For the director: with stringed instruments, on the eighth. A psalm of David.

1 LORD, do not rebuke me in Your anger, or discipline me in Your wrath.[1]

2 Be gracious to me, LORD, for I am faint; heal me, LORD, for my bones are shaking.

3 My soul is in deep anguish. But You, LORD, how long?

4 Turn, LORD, rescue my life; save me because of Your loyal kindness.

5 For in death no one remembers You. Who gives You thanks in Sheol?[2]

6 I am exhausted by my groaning. All night long I soak my bed; I drench my couch with tears.

7 My eye grows dim with grief; it weakens because of all my foes.

8 Away from me, you evildoers,[3] for the LORD has heard the sound of my weeping!

9 The LORD has heard my plea; the LORD accepts my prayer.

10 All my enemies will be put to shame and deeply dismayed; they will turn back in sudden shame.

1 'On the eighth' may mean an eight-stringed instrument or a musical setting.

2 The place of the dead.

3 Compare Matthew 7:23.

Psalm 7

Psalm 7 is David's appeal for justice when slandered by Cush the Benjaminite. He takes refuge in the LORD from a pursuer who would tear him like a lion. If he has done wrong, let the enemy overtake him. He calls on God to rise up and judge the peoples, for God tests hearts and minds and is a righteous judge. If the wicked man does not repent, God has His sword and bow ready; the one who digs a pit will fall into it. David will give thanks to the LORD for His righteousness.

A shiggaion of David, which he sang to the LORD concerning Cush, a Benjaminite.

1 LORD my God, in You I take refuge; save me from all my pursuers and rescue me,[1]

2 or they will tear me like a lion, ripping me apart with no one to rescue me.

3 LORD my God, if I have done this, if there is wrong on my hands,

4 if I have repaid my friend with evil, or plundered my enemy without cause,

5 then let the enemy pursue me and overtake me; let him trample my life to the ground and lay my honour in the dust. Selah.

6 Rise up, LORD, in Your anger; lift Yourself up against the fury of my foes. Awake for me; You have decreed justice.

7 Let the assembly of the peoples gather around You; take Your seat on high over them.

8 The LORD judges the peoples. Judge me, LORD, according to my righteousness and my integrity.

9 Let the evil of the wicked come to an end, but establish the righteous, You who test hearts and minds, O righteous God.

10 God is my shield; He saves those who are upright in heart.

11 God is a righteous judge, a God who shows His anger every day.

12 If someone does not repent, He sharpens His sword; He has bent and strung His bow.

13 He has prepared His deadly weapons and made His arrows into fiery shafts.

14 See, the wicked man conceives evil, is pregnant with trouble and gives birth to lies.

15 He digs a pit and hollows it out, and falls into the hole he has made.

16 His trouble comes back on his own head, and his violence falls on the crown of his head.

17 I will give thanks to the LORD for His righteousness, and I will sing praise to the name of the LORD Most High.

1 *Shiggaion* in the title is a term of uncertain meaning, perhaps a lament.

Psalm 8

Psalm 8 is a hymn to the Creator. The LORD's name is majestic in all the earth, and His glory is set above the heavens; even from the mouths of infants He has established strength. When the psalmist considers the heavens, the moon and the stars, he asks what man is, that God should care for him. Yet God has made him little less than heavenly beings and crowned him with glory, and has put all creatures under his feet. Hebrews 2 applies these words to Jesus.

For the director: on the gittith. A psalm of David.

1 LORD, our Lord, how majestic is Your name throughout the earth! You have set Your splendour above the heavens.[1]

2 From the lips of children and infants You have established strength[2] because of Your foes, to silence the enemy and the avenger.

3 When I look at Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars that You have set in place,

4 what is man, that You remember him, or the son of man, that You care for him?[3]

5 You have made him a little lower than God,[4] and You crowned him with glory and honour.

6 You made him ruler over the works of Your hands, putting everything under his feet:[5]

7 all sheep and cattle, and the wild animals too,

8 the birds of the air and the fish of the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas.

9 LORD, our Lord, how majestic is Your name
throughout the earth!

1 *Gittith* in the title is a term of uncertain meaning, perhaps a tune or an instrument from Gath.
2 The Greek has ‘prepared praise’, as quoted in Matthew 21:16.
3 Verses 4–6 are quoted in Hebrews 2:6–8. ‘Son of man’ here means a human being.
4 Or ‘than heavenly beings’; the Greek, followed in Hebrews 2:7, has ‘than the angels’.
5 Compare 1 Corinthians 15:27 and Ephesians 1:22.

Psalm 9

> *Psalm 9 gives thanks with a whole heart for the wonders of the LORD, the Most High. He has upheld David’s cause, rebuked the nations and blotted out their name. The LORD reigns for ever and judges the world in righteousness; He is a stronghold for the oppressed and does not forsake those who seek Him. The nations have fallen into the pit they dug, and the wicked return to Sheol, but the needy will not always be forgotten. David asks the LORD to rise up and to let the nations know that they are only mortal.*

For the director: to the tune of “The Death of the Son”. A psalm of David.

1 I will give thanks to the LORD with all my heart;[1]
I will tell of all Your wonders.

2 I will rejoice and exult in You; I will make music
to Your name, O Most High.

3 When my enemies turn back, they stumble and
perish before You.

4 For You have upheld my right and my cause; You
have sat on Your throne, judging rightly.

5 You have rebuked the nations and destroyed the
wicked; You have blotted out their name for ever
and ever.

6 The enemy has come to an end in everlasting
ruins; You have uprooted their cities, and the very
memory of them has perished.

7 But the LORD sits enthroned for ever; He has
established His throne for judgement.

8 He will judge the world in righteousness; He will
govern the peoples with fairness.

9 The LORD is a stronghold for the oppressed, a
stronghold in times of trouble.

10 Those who know Your name put their trust in
You, for You, LORD, do not abandon those who
seek You.

11 Sing praise to the LORD, who dwells in Zion;
proclaim His deeds among the peoples.

12 For the One who avenges blood remembers
them, and the cry of the afflicted does not slip His
mind.

13 Be gracious to me, LORD; see how my enemies
afflict me, You who lift me up from the gates of
death,

14 so that I may recount all Your praises in the
gates of Daughter Zion and rejoice in Your
salvation.

15 The nations have sunk into the pit they made;
their foot is caught in the net they hid.

16 The LORD has made Himself known; He has
carried out judgement. The wicked are snared by
the work of their own hands. Higgaion.[2] Selah.

17 The wicked will return to Sheol, all the nations
that forget God.

18 For the needy will not always be forgotten, nor
the hope of the afflicted perish for ever.

19 Rise up, LORD; do not let mortals prevail. Let
the nations be judged in Your presence.

20 Strike them with terror, LORD; let the nations
know that they are only mortal. Selah.

1 Psalms 9 and 10 together form a broken acrostic on the Hebrew alphabet, and the Greek treats them as one psalm. The tune name in the title is uncertain.
2 A musical term of uncertain meaning.

Psalm 10

Psalm 10 asks why the LORD stands far off in times of trouble. It describes the wicked man in his arrogance: he hunts down the poor, boasts of his desires, says in his heart that there is no God, and lies in wait like a lion, sure that God has forgotten. The psalmist calls on the LORD to rise up and break the arm of the wicked, for He sees trouble and is the helper of the orphan. The LORD is King for ever; He hears the desire of the humble and will defend the orphan and the oppressed.

1 LORD, why do You stay so far away? Why do You
hide Yourself in times of trouble?
2 In his arrogance the wicked man hunts down the
afflicted. Let them be caught in the schemes they
have devised.
3 For the wicked man boasts of the desires of his
heart; the greedy man curses and spurns the
LORD.
4 In his pride the wicked man does not seek Him;
all his thoughts are, 'There is no God.'
5 His ways always prosper. Your judgements are
far above him, out of his sight, and he sneers at all
his foes.
6 He says in his heart, 'I will not be shaken;
through all generations I will have no trouble.'
7 His mouth is full of curses, deceit and
oppression;[1] mischief and evil are under his
tongue.
8 He sits in ambush in the villages; in hidden
places he murders the innocent. His eyes watch in
secret for the helpless.
9 He lies in wait in his hiding place like a lion in its
lair; he lies in wait to seize the afflicted, and he
seizes them and drags them off in his net.
10 His victim is crushed and sinks down; the
helpless fall by his strength.
11 He says in his heart, 'God has forgotten; He has
hidden His face and will never see.'
12 Rise up, LORD! God, lift up Your hand. Do not
forget the afflicted.
13 Why does the wicked man spurn God? Why does
he say in his heart, 'You will not call me to
account'?
14 But You do see; You look on trouble and grief, to
take it into Your hands. The helpless commit
themselves to You; You have been the helper of
the orphan.
15 Break the arm of the wicked and evil man; call
his wickedness to account until You find no more.
16 The LORD is King for ever and ever; the nations
have perished from His land.
17 You have heard the desire of the humble, LORD;
You will strengthen their hearts and turn Your ear
to them,
18 to do justice for the orphan and the oppressed,
so that mortal man from the earth may terrify no
more.

1 Compare Romans 3:14.

Psalm 11

Psalm 11 is a song of trust. David has taken refuge in the LORD, so how can people tell him to flee like a bird to the mountains, because the wicked have bent their bows and the foundations are destroyed? The LORD is in His holy temple and on His throne in heaven, and His eyes examine all mankind. He tests the righteous, hates those who love violence, and rains fire and sulphur on the wicked. For the LORD is righteous and loves justice; the upright will see His face.

For the director. Of David.

1 In the LORD I have taken refuge. How can you
say to me, "Flee like a bird to your mountain![1]
2 For see, the wicked bend the bow; they fit their
arrow to the string, to shoot from the shadows at
the upright in heart.
3 When the foundations are being destroyed, what
can the righteous do?"
4 The LORD is in His holy temple; His throne is in
heaven. His eyes watch; His gaze tests all
mankind.
5 The LORD tests the righteous, but He hates the
wicked and the lover of violence.
6 He will rain burning coals and sulphur on the
wicked; a scorching wind will be their portion.

7 For the LORD is righteous and loves just deeds;
the upright will see His face.

1 So the spoken Hebrew; the written text has ‘Flee, you birds’. Where the quotation ends is uncertain.

Psalm 12

Psalm 12 cries to the LORD for help, for the faithful have vanished and everyone speaks lies with flattering lips. The psalmist prays that the LORD will cut off the boastful tongue that says, “Who is master over us?” Because the poor are plundered, the LORD says that He will now rise up and keep them safe. His words are pure, like silver refined seven times. He will guard His people from this generation, though the wicked strut about and vileness is prized.

For the director: on the eighth. A psalm of David.

1 Help, LORD, for the godly are no more; the faithful have vanished from among mankind.

2 Everyone speaks lies to his neighbour; they flatter with their lips, but with a double heart.

3 May the LORD cut off all flattering lips and the tongue that makes great boasts,

4 those who say, “With our tongue we will prevail; our lips are our own. Who is master over us?”

5 “Because the afflicted are plundered and the needy groan, I will now rise up,” says the LORD. “I will set them in the safety they long for.”

6 The words of the LORD are pure words, like silver refined in a furnace on the ground,[1] purified seven times.

7 You, LORD, will keep them; You will guard us from this generation for ever.

8 The wicked strut about on every side, when what is vile is exalted among mankind.

1 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain.

Psalm 13

Psalm 13 is a short lament that moves from anguish to trust. Four times David asks, “How long?” Will the LORD forget him for ever? How long must he bear sorrow and let his enemy triumph? He asks God to look on him and answer, or he will sleep in death and his enemy will rejoice. But he trusts in God’s loyal kindness and will sing to the LORD, who has been good to him.

For the director. A psalm of David.

1 How long, LORD? Will You forget me for ever? How long will You turn Your face away?

2 How long must I wrestle with my thoughts, and have sorrow in my heart all day? How long will my enemy be exalted over me?

3 Look on me and answer me, LORD my God. Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death,

4 and my enemy will say, “I have overcome him,” and my foes will rejoice when I am shaken.

5 But I rely on Your loyal kindness; my heart will rejoice in Your salvation.

6 I will sing to the LORD, for He has been good to me.[1]

1 In Hebrew verses 5 and 6 are one verse.

Psalm 14

Psalm 14 describes the folly of those who say in their hearts that there is no God. The LORD looks down from heaven to see if anyone understands, but all have turned away; no one does good. Evildoers devour God’s people, yet they are overwhelmed with dread, for God is with the righteous. David longs for salvation to come from Zion, when the LORD restores His people. Psalm 53 is nearly the same, and Paul draws on this psalm in Romans 3.

For the director. Of David.

1 The fool says in his heart, “There is no God.”
They are corrupt, and their deeds are vile; there is
no one who does what is good.[1]
2 The LORD looks down from heaven on mankind
to see if there is anyone who understands, anyone
who searches for God.
3 They have all turned away and together gone
bad; there is no one who does what is good, not so
much as one.
4 Will they never learn, all these evildoers, who eat
up My people as they eat bread, and do not call on
the LORD?
5 There they are, overwhelmed with dread, for God
is with the company of the righteous.
6 You would frustrate the plans of the poor, but the
LORD is their refuge.
7 Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of
Zion! When the LORD restores the fortunes of His
people, Jacob will rejoice and Israel will be glad.

1 Compare Psalm 53:1–6. Verses 1–3 are drawn on in Romans 3:10–12.

Psalm 15

Psalm 15 asks who may live on the LORD’s holy hill, and answers with a portrait of the upright: one who walks blamelessly, does what is right and speaks truth from the heart; who does not slander, harm a neighbour or despise those who fear the LORD; who keeps an oath even when it hurts, lends without interest and takes no bribe. Whoever does these things will never be shaken.

A psalm of David.

1 LORD, who may be a guest in Your tent? Who
may dwell on Your holy hill?[1]
2 The one whose walk is blameless, who does what
is right and speaks truth from his heart;
3 who does not slander with his tongue, does no
harm to his neighbour and casts no slur on his
friend;
4 who despises those who are rejected, but
honours those who fear the LORD; who keeps his
oath even when it hurts him, and does not change
it;
5 who lends his money without interest and takes
no bribe against the innocent. Whoever does these
things will never be shaken.

1 Compare Psalm 24:3–6 and Isaiah 33:14–16.

Psalm 16

Psalm 16 is a psalm of confidence. David takes refuge in God, his only good, and delights in the faithful, but will have no part in the worship of other gods. The LORD is his portion and his cup, and the boundary lines have fallen in pleasant places. Because the LORD is at his right hand, he will not be shaken; his heart is glad, and God will not abandon him to Sheol or let His Holy One see decay. Peter and Paul apply these words to the resurrection of Jesus.

A miktam of David.

1 Keep me safe, O God, for in You I take refuge.[1]
2 I said to the LORD, “You are my Lord; I have no
good apart from You.”
3 As for the holy ones in the land, they are the
noble ones, in whom is all my delight.
4 Those who run after another god will multiply
their sorrows. I will not pour out their drink
offerings of blood or take their names on my lips.
5 The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup; You
hold my lot secure.
6 The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant
places; indeed, I have a delightful inheritance.
7 I will bless the LORD who counsels me; even at
night my inmost being instructs me.
8 I keep the LORD always before me; because He
is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.[2]

9 Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure,

10 because You will not abandon my soul to Sheol, nor let Your Holy One see decay.

11 You make known to me the path of life. In Your presence there is fullness of joy, and at Your right hand are pleasures for ever.

1 *Miktam* in the title is a term of uncertain meaning.

2 Verses 8–11 are quoted, from the Greek, in Acts 2:25–28; verse 10 also in Acts 13:35.

Psalm 17

Psalm 17 is David's prayer for vindication. He asks the LORD to hear his just cause, for God has tested him and found no wrong, and his steps have held to God's paths. He asks God to show His wonderful loyal kindness, to keep him as the apple of the eye and hide him in the shadow of His wings from enemies who surround him like a lion. He asks the LORD to rise up and rescue him from those whose portion is in this life. As for him, he will see God's face in righteousness and be satisfied when he awakes.

A prayer of David.

1 Hear a just cause, LORD; listen to my cry. Give ear to my prayer, which comes from lips free of deceit.

2 Let my vindication come from Your presence; let Your eyes see what is right.

3 You have examined my heart and visited me by night; You have tested me and found nothing. I have resolved that my mouth will not sin.

4 As for what people do, by the word of Your lips I have stayed clear of the paths of the violent.

5 I have kept my steps to Your tracks; my feet have not stumbled.

6 I call on You, for You will answer me, O God. Turn Your ear to me and hear my words.

7 Show the wonders of Your loyal kindness, You who save by Your right hand those who take refuge from their foes.

8 Guard me as the apple of Your eye; shelter me in the shadow of Your wings

9 from the wicked who attack me, my mortal enemies who close in on me.

10 They have closed up their callous hearts; their mouths speak with arrogance.

11 They have tracked us down and now surround us; their eyes are set on throwing us to the ground.

12 He is like a lion eager to tear its prey, like a young lion crouching in cover.

13 Rise up, LORD, confront him and bring him down. Rescue my life from the wicked by Your sword,

14 from such men by Your hand, LORD, from men of this world, whose portion is in this life. You fill their bellies with what You have stored up; their sons have plenty, and they leave what remains to their children.[1]

15 As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; when I awake, I will be satisfied with seeing Your likeness.

1 The meaning of the Hebrew in this verse is uncertain.

Psalm 18

Psalm 18 is David's song of thanks on the day the LORD rescued him from all his enemies and from Saul, nearly the same as 2 Samuel 22. He loves the LORD, his rock, fortress and deliverer. When the cords of death surrounded him, he called out, and God came down in storm and fire and drew him out of mighty waters, because He delighted in him. The LORD has rewarded his righteousness; He lights his lamp, arms him with strength and trains his hands for battle, so that he crushes his enemies and is made head of the nations. So David will praise the LORD among the nations, for He shows loyal kindness to His anointed, to David and his offspring for ever.

For the director. Of David the servant of the LORD, who spoke to the LORD the words of this song on the day when the LORD rescued him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul. He said:

1 I love You, LORD, my strength.[1]

2 The LORD is my rock, my stronghold and my rescuer, my God, my rock where I shelter, my shield, the horn that saves me, my fortress on the height.

3 I call on the LORD, who is worthy of praise, and I am saved from my enemies.

4 The cords of death coiled about me; the torrents of destruction overwhelmed me with terror.

5 The cords of Sheol coiled about me; the snares of death lay in wait for me.

6 In my distress I called on the LORD; to my God I cried for help. From His temple He heard my voice; my cry for help reached His ears.

7 Then the earth heaved and quaked; the foundations of the mountains trembled and shook, because He was angry.

8 Smoke went up from His nostrils, and devouring fire from His mouth; glowing coals blazed out from Him.

9 He parted the heavens and came down, with thick darkness under His feet.

10 Riding a cherub He flew, and swooped on the wind's wings.

11 He made darkness His covering, a canopy around Him, dark waters, dense clouds of the sky.

12 Out of the brightness before Him His clouds passed by, with hail and coals of fire.

13 The LORD thundered from heaven; the Most High made His voice resound, with hail and coals of fire.

14 He shot His arrows and scattered them, great bolts of lightning, and threw them into confusion.

15 The beds of the sea came into view and the world's foundations were uncovered at Your rebuke, LORD, when the breath of Your nostrils blasted out.

16 He reached down from on high and took hold of me; He drew me out of mighty waters.

17 He rescued me from my powerful enemy, from those who hated me, for they were too strong for me.

18 They confronted me on the day of my disaster, but the LORD was my support.

19 He brought me out into an open place; He set me free because He delighted in me.

20 The LORD has dealt with me according to my righteousness; He has repaid me according to the cleanness of my hands.

21 I have walked in the LORD's paths and have not wickedly abandoned my God.

22 All His rules are before me, and I have not put His statutes away from me.

23 I have been blameless before Him and have kept myself from guilt.

24 So the LORD has repaid me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in His sight.

25 With the loyal You show Yourself loyal; with the blameless man You show Yourself blameless.

26 To the pure You show Your purity, but to the twisted You show Your cunning.

27 You save a humble people, but You bring low the haughty eyes.

28 You, LORD, light my lamp; the LORD my God lights up my darkness.

29 With You I can charge against a troop; with my God I can leap over a wall.

30 This God, His way is perfect; the word of the LORD has been tested in the fire. He is a shield to all who take refuge in Him.

31 Who but the LORD is God? Who but our God is a rock?

32 This God arms me with strength and has made my way blameless.

33 He makes my feet like the feet of a deer and sets me secure on the heights.

34 He trains my hands for battle, so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.

35 You have handed me Your shield of salvation, Your right hand holds me up, and Your help has raised me up.

36 You have widened the path beneath my steps, and my ankles have not given way.

37 I pursued my enemies and overtook them; I did not turn back until they were finished off.

38 I crushed them, so that they could not rise; they fell beneath my feet.

39 You armed me with strength for the battle; You made my attackers sink beneath me.

40 You made my enemies turn their backs to me, and those who hated me I destroyed.

41 They cried for help, but there was no one to save them; they cried to the LORD, but He did not answer them.

42 I beat them as fine as dust before the wind; I
emptied them out like mud in the streets.
43 You delivered me from the quarrels of the
people; You made me head of the nations. A
people I did not know serve me.
44 As soon as they hear of me, they obey me;
foreigners come cringing to me.
45 Foreigners lose heart, and come trembling out
of their strongholds.
46 The LORD is alive! Praise to my rock! Let the
God of my salvation be lifted high,
47 the God who gives me vengeance and brings
peoples down beneath me,
48 who brings me out from my enemies. You lift me
high above those who rise against me; You rescue
me from violent men.
49 Therefore I will praise You, LORD, among the
nations, and sing to Your name.[2]
50 He gives great victories to His king, and shows
loyal kindness to His anointed, to David and his
offspring for ever.

1 This verse is not in the parallel song. The rest of the psalm follows 2 Samuel 22:2–51, and the wording is kept close to our 2 Samuel, with the real differences kept.

2 Quoted in Romans 15:9.

Psalm 19

Psalm 19 praises God for His two great witnesses. The heavens declare His glory without words, and the sun runs its course like a bridegroom. The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; His commands are right and bright, more desirable than gold and sweeter than honey. By them His servant is warned. David asks to be cleansed from hidden faults and kept from wilful sins, and prays that his words and thoughts will be acceptable to the LORD, his rock and redeemer.

For the director. A psalm of David.

1 The heavens tell of the glory of God, and the sky
proclaims the work of His hands.
2 Day after day it pours out speech; night after
night it declares knowledge.
3 There is no speech, there are no words; their
voice is not heard.
4 Yet their voice has gone out into all the earth,
and their words to the ends of the world.[1] In the
heavens He has pitched a tent for the sun,
5 which comes out like a bridegroom from his
chamber, and runs its course with joy like a
champion.
6 It rises at one end of the heavens and circles
round to the other; nothing is hidden from its
heat.
7 The LORD's law is perfect, reviving the soul. The
LORD's testimony can be trusted, giving wisdom
to the simple.
8 The precepts of the LORD are right, bringing joy
to the heart. The commandment of the LORD is
clear, giving light to the eyes.
9 The fear of the LORD is clean, lasting for ever.
The LORD's rules are true; every one of them is
righteous.
10 They are more desirable than gold, than much
fine gold, and sweeter than honey straight from
the comb.
11 They warn Your servant, and there is great
reward in keeping them.
12 Who can discern his own errors? Clear me of my
hidden faults.
13 Keep Your servant also from wilful sins; do not
let them rule over me. Then I will be blameless,
innocent of great offence.
14 May the words of my mouth and the thoughts of
my heart be pleasing in Your sight, LORD, my rock
and my Redeemer.

1 As the Greek, quoted in Romans 10:18; the Hebrew has 'their line'.

Psalm 20

Psalm 20 is a prayer for the king before battle. The people pray that the LORD will answer him in the day of trouble, send help from the sanctuary and grant all his requests. They will shout for joy at his victory. Now the psalmist knows that the LORD saves His anointed. Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but they trust in the name of the LORD their God. They close with a prayer that the LORD will save the king and answer them when they call.

For the director. A psalm of David.

1 May the LORD answer you when trouble comes;
may the name of Jacob's God keep you safe.
2 May He send you help from the sanctuary
and support you from Zion.
3 May He remember all your offerings
and accept your burnt sacrifices. Selah.
4 May He give you your heart's desire
and fulfil all your plans.
5 We will shout for joy at your victory
and raise our banners in the name of our God.
May the LORD grant all your requests.
6 Now I know that the LORD gives victory to His anointed;
from His holy heaven He will answer him
with the saving power of His right hand.
7 Some boast in chariots and some in horses,
but we boast in the name of the LORD our God.
8 They collapse and fall,
but we rise up and stand firm.
9 LORD, save the king! Answer us when we call.[1]

1 Or, following the Greek, 'LORD, save the king, and answer us when we call'; the Hebrew accents read 'LORD, save! May the King answer us when we call.'

Psalm 21

Psalm 21 gives thanks for the king's victory. He rejoices in the LORD's strength, for God has given him his heart's desire, set a crown of gold on his head and granted him length of days. His glory is great through God's salvation, and because he trusts in the LORD's loyal kindness, he will not be shaken. The king's hand will find out all his enemies, who will be consumed as in a blazing oven; their schemes will fail. The psalm ends with a call for the LORD to be exalted in His strength.

For the director. A psalm of David.

1 LORD, the king delights in Your strength; how he exults in Your salvation![1]
2 You have granted him what his heart desired,
and have not held back what his lips requested. Selah.
3 For You met him with rich blessings;
You set a crown of pure gold on his head.
4 He asked You for life, and You gave it to him,
length of days for ever and ever.
5 Through Your salvation his glory is great;
You lay splendour and majesty on him.
6 For You make him a blessing for ever;
You fill him with the joy of Your presence.
7 For the king trusts in the LORD,
and through the loyal kindness of the Most High he will not be shaken.
8 Your hand will reach all your enemies;
your right hand will seize those who hate you.
9 You will make them like a blazing oven when you appear.
The LORD will swallow them up in His anger,
and fire will consume them.
10 You will wipe their offspring from the earth,
their descendants from among mankind.
11 Though they plot evil against you
and devise schemes, they will not succeed.
12 For you will make them turn their backs
when you aim your bow at their faces.
13 Be exalted, LORD, in Your strength;
we will sing and praise Your might.

1 Psalms 20 and 21 are a pair: a prayer before battle and thanks after it.

Psalm 22

Psalm 22 is a cry of desolation that ends in praise, and the New Testament hears in it the suffering of Jesus. The psalmist asks why God has forsaken him, though Israel's fathers trusted Him and were rescued. He is a worm, mocked by all, surrounded by bulls and dogs; his strength is poured out, his hands and feet are attacked, and his clothes are shared out by lot. Then, rescued, he will proclaim God's name among his brothers, for God has not despised the afflicted. All the ends of the earth will turn to the LORD, and generations yet to come will tell of His righteousness.

For the director: to the tune of "The Doe of the Dawn". A psalm of David.

1 My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?[1]
Why so far from my rescue, so far from the words
of my groaning?

2 My God, I cry by day, but You do not answer, and
by night, but I find no rest.

3 Yet You are holy, enthroned on the praises of
Israel.

4 In You our fathers trusted; they trusted, and You
delivered them.

5 They cried to You and were rescued; in You they
trusted and were not put to shame.

6 But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by
mankind and despised by the people.

7 All who see me mock me; they curl their lips and
shake their heads:

8 "He trusted in the LORD; let the LORD deliver
him. Let Him rescue him, since He delights in
him."[2]

9 Yet You brought me out of the womb; You made
me trust at my mother's breast.

10 From birth I was cast on You; from my mother's
womb You have been my God.

11 Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and
there is no one to help.

12 Many bulls surround me; strong bulls of Bashan
encircle me.

13 They open their mouths wide against me, like a
ravening, roaring lion.

14 I am poured out like water, and my bones are all
pulled apart. My heart is like wax, melting inside
me.

15 My strength is dried up like a piece of broken
pottery, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my
mouth; You lay me in the dust of death.

16 For dogs surround me; a band of evildoers
encircles me. They have pierced my hands and my
feet.[3]

17 I can count all my bones; people stare and gloat
over me.

18 They divided my garments among them, and for
my clothing they cast lots.[4]

19 But You, LORD, do not be far off; You are my
strength, come quickly to help me.

20 Rescue me from the sword, my precious life
from the dog's power.

21 Rescue me from the lion's jaws; from the wild
oxen's horns You have answered me.

22 I will proclaim Your name to my brothers; in the
midst of the congregation I will sing Your praise.[5]

23 You who fear the LORD, praise Him! All Jacob's
descendants, honour Him! All Israel's
descendants, stand in awe of Him!

24 For He has not despised or scorned the suffering
of the afflicted; He has not hidden His face from
him, but has heard when he cried to Him.

25 You are the source of my praise in the great
assembly; I will keep my vows in front of those
who fear Him.

26 The afflicted will eat and be satisfied; those who
seek the LORD will praise Him. May your hearts
live for ever!

27 All the ends of the earth will remember and turn
to the LORD, and all the families of the nations
will bow down before You.

28 For kingship belongs to the LORD, and He rules
over the nations.

29 All the rich of the earth will eat and worship; all
who go down to the dust will kneel before Him,
those who cannot keep themselves alive.

30 Descendants will serve Him; the next generation
will be told about the Lord.

31 They will come and declare His righteousness to
a people yet unborn: He has done it!

1 Spoken by Jesus on the cross, Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34.
2 Compare Matthew 27:43.
3 So the Greek, Syriac and some Hebrew manuscripts; most Hebrew manuscripts have ‘like a lion, my hands and my feet’.
4 Quoted in John 19:24.
5 Quoted in Hebrews 2:12.

Psalm 23

Psalm 23 is David’s song of trust in the LORD, his shepherd. Because of Him he lacks nothing; he is led to green pastures and quiet waters, and his soul is restored. Even in the darkest valley he fears no harm, for the LORD is with him. Then the picture changes to a host, who lays a table for him in the sight of his enemies and fills his cup. Goodness and loyal kindness will follow him all his days, and he will live in the house of the LORD for ever.

A psalm of David.

1 The LORD is my shepherd; I lack nothing.[1]
2 He lets me rest in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters.
3 He restores my soul. He guides me along right paths for the sake of His name.
4 Even when I walk through the darkest valley,[2] I fear no harm, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff give me comfort.
5 You lay a table for me in the sight of my foes. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
6 Goodness and loyal kindness will surely pursue me every day of my life, and I will live in the house of the LORD for ever.[3]

1 Compare Ezekiel 34:11–16 and John 10:11–14.
2 Or ‘the valley of the shadow of death’.
3 Hebrew ‘for length of days’.

Psalm 24

Psalm 24 celebrates the LORD’s entry into His holy place. The earth and everything in it belong to Him, for He founded it on the seas. Who may go up to His holy hill? The one with clean hands and a pure heart, who receives blessing from the LORD. Then the ancient gates are told to lift up their heads so that the King of glory may come in. Who is He? The LORD, strong and mighty in battle, the LORD of Armies.

A psalm of David.

1 The earth is the LORD’s, and everything in it,[1] the world and all who live in it.
2 For He set its foundations on the seas and made it firm on the rivers.
3 Who may go up the hill of the LORD? Who may stand in His holy place?
4 The one who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not set his mind on what is false or sworn deceitfully.
5 He will receive blessing from the LORD and vindication from the God who saves him.
6 Such is the generation of those who seek Him, who seek Your face, God of Jacob.[2] Selah.
7 Lift up your heads, you gates! Be lifted up, you ancient doors, so that the King of glory may come in.
8 Who is this King of glory? The LORD, mighty in strength; the LORD, a warrior in battle.
9 Lift up your heads, you gates! Lift them up, you ancient doors, so that the King of glory may come in.
10 Who then is this King of glory? He is the LORD of Armies, the King of glory. Selah.

1 Quoted in 1 Corinthians 10:26.
2 So the Greek and Syriac; the Hebrew has ‘who seek Your face, Jacob’.

Psalm 25

Psalm 25 is an alphabetic prayer. David lifts up his soul to God and asks not to be put to shame. He asks the LORD to teach him His paths, to remember His mercy and loyal kindness, and not to remember the sins of his youth. The LORD is good and upright, and He guides the humble; His paths are loyal kindness and truth for those who keep His covenant. David asks for pardon, for his guilt is great, and for rescue from his distress and his enemies. He ends with a prayer that God will redeem Israel from all its troubles.

Of David.

1 To You, LORD, I lift up my soul.[1]

2 My God, in You I trust; do not let me be put to shame, or let my enemies triumph over me.

3 No one who waits for You will be put to shame; shame will come on those who are faithless without cause.

4 Show me Your ways, LORD; teach me Your paths.

5 Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are God my Saviour; all day long I wait for You.

6 Remember Your mercy, LORD, and Your loyal kindness, for they are from of old.

7 Do not remember the sins of my youth or my offences. Remember me according to Your loyal kindness, because of Your goodness, LORD.

8 Good and upright is the LORD; so He shows sinners the way.

9 He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them His way.

10 All the paths of the LORD are loyal kindness and faithfulness for those who keep His covenant and His testimonies.

11 For the sake of Your name, LORD, pardon my guilt, for it is great.

12 Who then is the man who fears the LORD? He will show him the way he should choose.

13 He will live in prosperity, and his descendants will inherit the land.

14 The friendship of the LORD is for those who fear Him, and He makes His covenant known to them.

15 My eyes are always on the LORD, for He will free my feet from the net.

16 Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted.

17 The troubles of my heart have grown; bring me out of my distress.

18 Look on my affliction and my trouble, and take away all my sins.

19 See how many are my enemies, and how violently they hate me.

20 Guard my life and rescue me; do not let me be put to shame, for I take refuge in You.

21 May integrity and uprightness protect me, for I wait for You.

22 Redeem Israel, O God, from all its troubles.

1 The verses of this psalm begin with the letters of the Hebrew alphabet in order, with small irregularities.

Psalm 26

Psalm 26 is David's plea for vindication. He has walked in integrity and trusted the LORD without wavering, and he invites God to test him. He has not sat with deceitful men or joined evildoers. He washes his hands in innocence and goes round the altar, telling of God's wonders, for he loves the house where God's glory lives. He asks not to be swept away with sinners, and he resolves to go on in integrity and to bless the LORD in the assemblies.

Of David.

1 Vindicate me, LORD, for I have walked in my integrity; I have trusted in the LORD without wavering.

2 Test me, LORD, and try me; examine my heart and my mind.

3 For Your loyal kindness is before my eyes, and I walk in Your truth.

4 I do not sit with deceitful men, or go about with hypocrites.

5 I hate the company of evildoers, and I will not sit among the wicked.

6 I wash my hands in innocence and go round Your altar, LORD,[1]
7 proclaiming thanks aloud and telling of all Your wonders.
8 LORD, I love the house where You live, the place where Your glory dwells.
9 Do not sweep me away with sinners, or my life with the bloodthirsty,
10 in whose hands are evil schemes, and whose right hands are full of bribes.
11 But I walk in my integrity; redeem me and be gracious to me.
12 My foot stands on level ground; in the assemblies I will bless the LORD.

1 Perhaps a ritual of declaring innocence; compare Deuteronomy 21:6–7 and Matthew 27:24.

Psalm 27

Psalm 27 is a song of confidence and longing. The LORD is David's light and salvation, so whom should he fear? Though an army besieges him, he will be confident. The one thing he asks is to live in the LORD's house, to gaze on His beauty, for there he will be hidden in the day of trouble. Then he prays urgently: the LORD must not hide His face or forsake him, though his father and mother forsake him. He asks to be taught God's way and rescued from false witnesses. He is sure he will see the goodness of the LORD, and he tells himself to wait for Him.

Of David.

1 The LORD is my light and my salvation; who is there to fear? The LORD is my life's stronghold; who is there to dread?
2 When evildoers close in on me to devour my flesh, my foes and my enemies, it is they who stumble and fall.
3 Though an army camps against me, my heart will not fear; though war breaks out against me, even then I will be confident.
4 One thing I have asked of the LORD, one thing I seek: to live in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the LORD and to enquire in His temple.
5 For He will hide me in His shelter on the day of trouble; He will conceal me under the cover of His tent and set me high on a rock.
6 Now my head will be lifted up above the enemies around me. I will offer sacrifices in His tent with shouts of joy; I will sing and make music to the LORD.
7 Hear my voice when I call, LORD; be gracious to me and answer me.
8 My heart has said of You, "Seek His face."[1] Your face, LORD, I will seek.
9 Do not hide Your face from me; do not turn Your servant away in anger. You have been my help. Do not cast me off or forsake me, God my Saviour.
10 Though my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will take me in.
11 Teach me Your way, LORD, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies.
12 Do not give me over to the will of my foes, for false witnesses have risen against me, breathing violence.
13 I am sure that I will see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.
14 Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage. Wait for the LORD.

1 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain; literally 'Seek My face'.

Psalm 28

Psalm 28 is a prayer for help that turns to thanks. David calls on the LORD, his rock, not to be silent, or he will be like those who go down to the pit. He asks not to be dragged away with the wicked, who speak peace but have evil in their hearts, and he asks God to repay them. Then he blesses the LORD, who has heard his plea and is his strength and shield. The LORD is the strength of His people and the refuge of His anointed. David prays that He will save His people and be their shepherd for ever.

Of David.

1 To You, LORD, I call; my rock, do not turn a deaf ear to me. If You stay silent, I will be like those who go down to the pit.

2 Hear the sound of my plea as I cry to You for help, as I lift up my hands towards Your inner sanctuary.[1]

3 Do not drag me away with the wicked, with those who do wrong, who speak peace to their neighbours but have evil in their hearts.

4 Repay them for what they have done, for their evil deeds. Repay them for the work of their hands; give them what they deserve.

5 Because they pay no attention to the deeds of the LORD and what His hands have done, He will tear them down and not rebuild them.

6 Blessed be the LORD, for He has heard the sound of my plea.

7 The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in Him, and I am helped. My heart leaps for joy, and with my song I will give Him thanks.

8 The LORD is the strength of His people, a saving refuge for His anointed.

9 Save Your people and bless Your inheritance; be their shepherd and carry them for ever.

1 The Most Holy Place of the temple.

Psalm 29

Psalm 29 calls the heavenly beings to give glory to the LORD and then describes His voice in a great storm. It thunders over the waters, breaks the cedars of Lebanon, makes the mountains skip, flashes with fire, shakes the wilderness and strips the forests, and in His temple all cry, "Glory!" The LORD sits enthroned as King for ever, and He gives strength and peace to His people.

A psalm of David.

1 Ascribe to the LORD, you heavenly beings,[1] ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

2 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due to His name; worship the LORD in the splendour of holiness.

3 The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the LORD over the mighty waters.

4 The LORD's voice is full of power; the LORD's voice is full of majesty.

5 The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars; the LORD shatters the cedars of Lebanon.

6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and Sirion[2] like a young wild ox.

7 The voice of the LORD strikes with flashes of fire.

8 The LORD's voice makes the wilderness writhe; He convulses the wilderness of Kadesh.

9 The voice of the LORD makes the deer give birth[3] and strips the forests bare, and in His temple all cry, "Glory!"

10 The LORD sat enthroned over the flood; the LORD sits enthroned as King for ever.

11 May the LORD give strength to His people; may the LORD bless His people with peace.

1 Hebrew 'sons of gods' or 'sons of the mighty'.

2 Mount Hermon; see Deuteronomy 3:9.

3 Or 'twists the oaks'.

Psalm 30

Psalm 30 is David's thanks for rescue from death. He praises the LORD, who lifted him up, healed him and brought him up from Sheol. God's anger lasts a moment, but His favour a lifetime; weeping may stay for the night, but joy comes in the morning. When David felt secure he thought that he would never be shaken, but when God hid His face he was dismayed. He pleaded with the LORD: what gain is there in his death? The LORD turned his mourning into dancing, so he will give thanks for ever.

A psalm. A song for the dedication of the house. Of David.

1 I will exalt You, LORD, for You have lifted me up
and have not let my enemies rejoice over me.[1]
2 LORD my God, I cried to You for help, and You
healed me.
3 LORD, You brought me up from Sheol; You kept
me alive from going down to the pit.
4 Sing to the LORD, you His faithful ones; give
thanks at the remembrance of His holiness.
5 For His anger lasts only a moment, but His
favour a lifetime. Weeping may lodge with us at
evening, but in the morning there are shouts of
joy.
6 When I was secure I said, “I will never be
shaken.”
7 LORD, by Your favour You had set me on a strong
mountain, but when You hid Your face, I was
dismayed.
8 To You, LORD, I called; to the Lord I pleaded for
mercy:
9 “What gain is there in my blood, if I go down to
the pit? Will the dust praise You? Will it declare
Your faithfulness?
10 Hear, LORD, and be gracious to me; LORD, be
my helper.”
11 You turned my mourning into dancing; You took
off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy,
12 so that my soul[2] may sing Your praise and not be
silent. LORD my God, I will give You thanks for
ever.

1 The ‘house’ of the title may be the temple or the king’s palace.
2 Hebrew ‘glory’.

Psalm 31

Psalm 31 moves between prayer and trust. David takes refuge in the LORD, his rock and fortress, and commits his spirit into His hand. He rejoices in God’s loyal kindness, for God has seen his affliction. Then he pleads again: he is wasting away with grief, scorned by his enemies and forgotten like the dead, and many plot against him. Yet his times are in God’s hand. He prays for God’s face to shine on him. He praises the abundant goodness God has stored up for those who fear Him, and he calls on all the faithful to love the LORD and take courage. Jesus spoke words of this psalm on the cross.

For the director. A psalm of David.

1 In You, LORD, I have taken refuge; let me never
be put to shame. Rescue me in Your
righteousness.
2 Turn Your ear to me; come quickly to save me. Be
my rock of refuge, a strong fortress to deliver me.
3 For You are my rock and my fortress; for the sake
of Your name lead me and guide me.
4 Free me from the net they have hidden for me,
for You are my refuge.
5 Into Your hand I entrust my spirit;[1] You have
redeemed me, LORD, faithful God.
6 I hate those who cling to worthless idols; as for
me, I trust in the LORD.
7 I will rejoice and be glad in Your loyal kindness,
for You have seen my affliction; You have known
the anguish of my soul.
8 You have not handed me over to the enemy, but
have set my feet in a broad place.
9 Be gracious to me, LORD, for I am in distress; my
eye is wasting away with grief, and my soul and
my body too.
10 My life is worn out with sorrow, and my years
with sighing. My strength fails because of my
guilt, and my bones waste away.
11 Because of all my foes I have become a
reproach, especially to my neighbours, and a
dread to my friends; those who see me in the
street run away from me.
12 I am forgotten, like someone dead and out of
mind; I have become like a broken jar.
13 For I hear the whispering of many, terror on
every side,[2] as they plot together against me and
scheme to take my life.
14 But I trust in You, LORD; I say, “You are my
God.”
15 My times are in Your hand; rescue me from my
enemies and from those who pursue me.
16 Let Your face shine on Your servant; save me in
Your loyal kindness.
17 LORD, do not let me be put to shame, for I have
called on You. Let the wicked be put to shame and
lie silent in Sheol.

18 Let lying lips be struck dumb, which speak with arrogance against the righteous, in pride and contempt.

19 How great is Your goodness, which You have stored up for those who fear You, and have shown to those who take refuge in You, in the sight of all people!

20 You hide them in the shelter of Your presence from human plots; You keep them safe in Your dwelling from accusing tongues.

21 Blessed be the LORD, for He has shown me the wonder of His loyal kindness in a city under siege.

22 In my alarm I said, “I am cut off from Your sight.” Yet You heard the sound of my plea when I cried to You for help.

23 Love the LORD, all you His faithful ones! The LORD preserves the loyal, but pays back the proud in full.

24 Be strong and take courage, all you who wait for the LORD.

1 Spoken by Jesus in Luke 23:46.
2 Compare Jeremiah 20:10.

Psalm 32

Psalm 32 celebrates the joy of being forgiven. Blessed is the one whose wrongdoing is forgiven and whose sin is covered. While David kept silent his bones wasted away under God’s heavy hand, but when he confessed his sin, God forgave him. So let the faithful pray while God may be found; He is their hiding place. God promises to instruct and guide. People should not be like a stubborn horse or mule. Many sorrows come to the wicked, but loyal kindness surrounds those who trust in the LORD, so let the righteous rejoice. Paul quotes this psalm in Romans 4.

Of David. A maskil.

1 Blessed is the one whose wrongs are forgiven, whose sins are covered over;[1]

2 blessed is the man whose sin the LORD will not hold against him, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

3 While I kept quiet, my bones wore away with my groaning all day long.

4 For day and night Your hand was heavy on me; my strength dried up as in the summer heat. Selah.

5 Then I acknowledged my sin to You and did not cover up my guilt. I said, “I will confess my offences to the LORD,” and You forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah.

6 So let everyone who is faithful pray to You while You may be found. Surely when the great waters rise, they will not reach him.

7 You are my hiding place; You protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah.

8 I will teach you and show you the way to go; I will give you counsel, with My eye on you.

9 Do not be like a horse or a mule, which have no understanding, but must be controlled by bit and bridle, or they will not come near you.

10 Many are the sorrows of the wicked, but loyal kindness surrounds the one who trusts in the LORD.

11 Rejoice in the LORD and be glad, you righteous; sing out, all you upright in heart.

1 Verses 1–2 are quoted in Romans 4:7–8. *Maskil* in the title is a term of uncertain meaning, perhaps a skilful or a teaching song.

Psalm 33

Psalm 33 calls the righteous to sing a new song to the LORD, whose word is right and whose loyal kindness fills the earth. By His word the heavens were made; He spoke and it came to be. He thwarts the plans of the nations, but His own plans stand for ever. Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD. From heaven He sees all mankind. Kings are not saved by armies, nor by horses, but the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him. The people wait for Him, and they ask that His loyal kindness will rest on them.

1 Sing for joy in the LORD, you righteous; praise is
fitting for the upright.
2 Give thanks to the LORD with the lyre; make
music to Him on the ten-stringed harp.
3 Sing to Him a new song; play skilfully, with
shouts of joy.
4 For the LORD's word is true, and everything He
does is faithful.
5 He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is
full of the loyal kindness of the LORD.
6 By the LORD's word the heavens were formed,
and all their host by the breath of His mouth.[1]
7 He piles up the waters of the sea; He stores the
deeps in His treasure houses.
8 Let the whole earth fear the LORD; let all who
live in the world revere Him.
9 For He spoke, and it came to be; He commanded,
and it stood firm.
10 The LORD frustrates the plans of the nations;
He thwarts the schemes of the peoples.
11 The plans of the LORD stand for ever, the
purposes of His heart through all generations.
12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD,
the people He has chosen as His inheritance.
13 From heaven the LORD looks down and sees all
mankind.
14 From His dwelling place He watches all who live
on the earth.
15 He forms the hearts of them all and understands
all that they do.
16 No king is saved by his great army; no warrior
escapes by his great strength.
17 A horse is a false hope for victory; for all its
great strength it cannot save.
18 See, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear
Him, on those who hope in His loyal kindness,
19 to rescue their souls from death and keep them
alive in famine.
20 We wait in hope for the LORD; He is our helper
and our shield.
21 In Him our hearts are glad, for we have trusted
in His holy name.
22 May Your loyal kindness rest on us, LORD, as we
put our hope in You.

1 Compare Genesis 1 and Hebrews 11:3.

Psalm 34

> *Psalm 34 is an alphabetic song of David, written after he escaped from Abimelech. He will bless the LORD at all times and calls others to join him, for the LORD answered him and freed him from all his fears. Those who look to Him are radiant. The angel of the LORD camps around those who fear Him; let them taste and see that the LORD is good. David teaches the fear of the LORD: keep the tongue from evil, turn from evil, do good, seek peace. The LORD hears the righteous, is near the broken-hearted, and guards all their bones. Peter quotes this psalm, and John recalls it at the cross.*

Of David, when he pretended to be insane before Abimelech, who drove him away, and he left.

1 I will bless the LORD at all times; His praise will
always be on my lips.[1]
2 My soul boasts in the LORD; let the humble hear
and be glad.
3 Glorify the LORD with me; let us exalt His name
together.
4 I looked for the LORD, and He answered me; He
freed me from everything I feared.
5 Those who look to Him are radiant; their faces
will never be ashamed.
6 This poor man called, and the LORD heard him
and saved him from all his troubles.
7 The angel of the LORD camps around those who
fear Him, and He rescues them.
8 Taste and see that the LORD is good;[2] blessed is
the one who shelters in Him.
9 Fear the LORD, you His holy ones, for those who
fear Him lack nothing.
10 Young lions may go hungry and suffer want, but
those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.
11 Come, my children, listen to me, and I will teach
you to fear the LORD.
12 Whoever wants to love life and see good days[3]
13 must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from
speaking deceit;
14 let him turn away from evil and do good; let him
seek peace and pursue it.

15 The LORD's eyes are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayer.

16 But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil, to wipe their memory from the earth.

17 The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears and delivers them from all their troubles.

18 The LORD is near the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

19 Many are the troubles of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him from them all.

20 He guards all his bones; not one of them will be broken.[4]

21 Evil will kill the wicked, and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.

22 The LORD redeems the life of His servants; no one who takes refuge in Him will be condemned.

1 The verses of this psalm begin with the letters of the Hebrew alphabet in order. For the title see 1 Samuel 21:10–15, where the king is Achish; Abimelech may be a royal title.

2 Compare 1 Peter 2:3.

3 Verses 12–16 are quoted in 1 Peter 3:10–12.

4 Compare John 19:36.

Psalm 35

> *Psalm 35 is David's appeal to the LORD to fight those who fight him. He asks God to take up shield and spear and to tell him, "I am your salvation," and that his enemies may be like chaff before the wind, driven by the angel of the LORD, and caught in their own net. He laments that malicious witnesses repay evil for good, though he mourned and fasted when they were ill. They gather in glee at his stumbling. He asks how long the Lord will look on, and he prays to be vindicated. Those who delight in his cause will say, "The LORD is great," and he will tell of God's righteousness all day long.*

Of David.

1 Oppose those who oppose me, LORD; fight those who fight me.

2 Take up shield and buckler and rise up to help me.

3 Draw the spear and the javelin to meet my pursuers. Say to my soul, "I am your salvation."

4 Let those who seek my life be put to shame and disgraced; let those who plan my harm turn back in confusion.

5 Let them be like chaff before the wind, with the angel of the LORD driving them on.

6 Let their way be dark and slippery, with the angel of the LORD pursuing them.

7 For without cause they hid their net for me; without cause they dug a pit for my life.

8 Let ruin come on him unawares; let the net he hid catch him, and let him fall into it, to his ruin.

9 Then my soul will rejoice in the LORD and exult in His salvation.

10 All my bones will say, "LORD, who is like You? You rescue the poor from those too strong for them, the poor and needy from those who rob them."

11 Malicious witnesses rise up; they question me about things I do not know.

12 They repay me evil for good, leaving my soul bereaved.

13 Yet when they were ill, I wore sackcloth and humbled myself with fasting. When my prayer came back to me unanswered,

14 I went about as if for my friend or my brother; I bowed down in grief, like one mourning his mother.

15 But when I stumbled, they gathered in glee; attackers gathered against me when I did not expect it. They tore at me without ceasing.

16 Like godless mockers at a feast,[1] they gnashed their teeth at me.

17 Lord, how long will You watch? Save me from their attacks, my precious life from the lions.

18 I will give You thanks in the great assembly; among a mighty throng I will praise You.

19 Do not let those who are my enemies without reason gloat over me, or those who hate me for no cause wink with their eyes.[2]

20 For they do not speak peace, but devise lying words against those who live quietly in the land.

21 They open their mouths wide against me and say, "Aha, aha! Our eyes have seen it!"

22 You have seen it, LORD; do not stay silent. Lord, do not be far from me.

23 Rouse Yourself and awake to my cause, my God and my Lord, to my defence.

24 Vindicate me, LORD my God, according to Your righteousness; do not let them gloat over me.

25 Do not let them say to themselves, “Aha, just what we wanted!” Do not let them say, “We have swallowed him up.”

26 Let all who rejoice at my trouble be put to shame and confusion; let those who exalt themselves over me be clothed in shame and disgrace.

27 Let those who delight in my vindication shout for joy and be glad, and let them always say, “The LORD is great, who delights in the well-being of His servant.”

28 Then my tongue will tell of Your righteousness and Your praise all day long.

1 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain.

2 Compare John 15:25; Psalm 69:4.

Psalm 36

Psalm 36 sets human wickedness beside God’s love. Sin speaks to the wicked deep in his heart; there is no fear of God before his eyes, and he flatters himself and plots evil on his bed. By contrast the LORD’s loyal kindness reaches to the heavens, His faithfulness to the skies, His righteousness is like the mighty mountains and His judgements like the great deep. People find refuge in the shadow of His wings and drink from His river of delights, for with Him is the fountain of life. David prays that God’s loyal kindness will continue, and he sees the evildoers fallen.

For the director. Of David the servant of the LORD.

1 Sin speaks to the wicked deep in his heart;[1] there is no fear of God before his eyes.

2 For he flatters himself so much that he cannot see his guilt and hate it.

3 The words of his mouth are wicked and deceitful; he has stopped acting wisely and doing good.

4 He plots wickedness on his bed; he sets himself on a path that is not good and does not reject evil.

5 Your loyal kindness, LORD, reaches to the heavens, Your faithfulness to the skies.

6 Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, Your judgements like the great deep. You preserve people and animals, LORD.

7 How precious is Your loyal kindness, O God! All people take refuge in the shadow of Your wings.

8 They feast on the abundance of Your house, and You give them drink from Your river of delights.

9 For the fountain of life is with You; by Your light we see light.

10 Keep showing Your loyal kindness to those who know You, and Your righteousness to those whose hearts are upright.

11 Do not let the foot of the proud come against me, or the hand of the wicked drive me away.

12 There the evildoers lie fallen, thrown down and unable to rise.

1 So some Hebrew manuscripts; most have ‘in my heart’. The rest of the verse is quoted in Romans 3:18.

Psalm 37

Psalm 37 is an alphabetic wisdom psalm. David tells his hearers not to fret over evildoers, who will soon wither like grass, but to trust in the LORD, delight in Him, commit their way to Him and wait patiently. The wicked will be cut off, but the humble will inherit the land. A little that the righteous have is better than the wealth of many wicked. The LORD upholds the righteous and does not forsake His faithful ones; David has never seen the righteous abandoned. The law of God is in their hearts. The wicked may flourish, but they pass away, and the LORD saves those who take refuge in Him.

Of David.

1 Do not fret because of evildoers, or be envious of those who do wrong,[1]

2 for they will soon wither like grass and fade like green plants.

3 Trust in the LORD and do good; live in the land and cultivate faithfulness.

4 Take delight in the LORD, and He will give you the desires of your heart.

5 Commit your way to the LORD; trust in Him, and He will act.

6 He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, and your justice like the noonday sun.

7 Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for Him. Do not fret over those who prosper in their way, over those who carry out wicked schemes.

8 Let go of anger and turn from wrath; do not fret, for it leads only to evil.

9 For evildoers will be cut off, but those who hope in the LORD will inherit the land.

10 Just a little longer, and the wicked will be no more; you will look for him in his place, and he will not be there.

11 But the humble will inherit the land[2] and delight in abundant peace.

12 The wicked plots against the righteous and gnashes his teeth at him,

13 but the Lord laughs at him, for He knows that his day is on its way.

14 The wicked draw the sword and bend the bow, to bring down the poor and needy and to slaughter those whose ways are upright.

15 Their sword will pierce their own heart, and their bows will be broken.

16 The little that the righteous man has is better than the wealth of many wicked.

17 For the wicked will have their arms broken, but the LORD holds up the righteous.

18 The LORD knows the days of the blameless, and their inheritance will last for ever.

19 They will not be put to shame in evil times, and in days of famine they will have plenty.

20 But the wicked will perish; the enemies of the LORD will be like the beauty of the meadows,[3] gone, vanished like smoke.

21 The wicked man borrows and does not repay, but the righteous man is generous and gives.

22 For those He blesses will inherit the land, but those He curses will be cut off.

23 The steps of a man are established by the LORD, when He delights in his way.

24 Though he stumbles, he will not fall headlong, for the LORD holds him by the hand.

25 I was young and now I am old, yet never have I seen the righteous abandoned, or his children begging for bread.

26 All day long he is generous and lends, and his children become a blessing.

27 Turn from evil and do good, and you will live in the land for ever.

28 For the LORD loves justice and will not forsake His faithful ones. They will be kept safe for ever, but the children of the wicked will be cut off.

29 The righteous will inherit the land and live in it for ever.

30 The mouth of the righteous man speaks wisdom, and his tongue speaks what is just.

31 The law of his God is in his heart; his steps do not slip.

32 The wicked man spies on the righteous, looking for a way to kill him,

33 but the LORD will not leave him in his power, or let him be condemned when he is brought to trial.

34 Wait for the LORD and keep to His way, and He will exalt you to inherit the land; you will see the wicked cut off.

35 I have seen a wicked and ruthless man, flourishing like a green tree in its native soil.

36 But he passed away, and he was gone; though I looked for him, he could not be found.

37 Watch the blameless, take note of the upright, for the man of peace has a future.

38 But sinners will all be destroyed; the future of the wicked will be cut off.

39 The salvation of the righteous comes from the LORD; He is their stronghold in time of trouble.

40 The LORD helps them and sets them free; He sets them free from the wicked and saves them, for they take refuge in Him.

1 Every second verse or so of this psalm begins with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

2 Compare Matthew 5:5. The Hebrew word means both ‘land’ and ‘earth’.

3 Or ‘like the fat of lambs’.

Psalm 38

Psalm 38 is a psalm of penitence and pain. David asks the LORD not to rebuke him in wrath, for God's arrows have pierced him. There is no health in his body because of his sin, his guilt has gone over his head, and his wounds fester. His friends stand aloof, and his enemies lay snares, but he is like a deaf man who does not hear. He waits for the LORD and confesses his sin, and he ends by asking God not to forsake him but to come quickly to help him.

A psalm of David, for remembrance.

1 LORD, do not rebuke me in Your anger, or discipline me in Your wrath.[1]

2 For Your arrows have sunk into me, and Your hand has pressed down on me.

3 There is no health in my body because of Your anger; there is no soundness in my bones because of my sin.

4 For my guilt has gone over my head; it is like a burden too heavy for me.

5 My wounds stink and fester because of my foolishness.

6 I am bent double and bowed down; all day long I go about mourning.

7 For my loins burn with fever, and there is no soundness in my body.

8 I am numb and utterly crushed; I groan in the anguish of my heart.

9 Lord, You know all that I long for; my groaning is not hidden from You.

10 My heart pounds, my strength fails me, and the light of my eyes has gone from me.

11 My friends and companions stay away from my affliction, and my relatives stand far off.

12 Those who seek my life lay their snares; those who wish me harm speak of ruin and plot deceit all day long.

13 But I am like a deaf man who does not hear, like a mute who does not open his mouth.

14 I have become like a man who hears nothing, in whose mouth there is no reply.

15 For I put my hope in You, LORD; You will answer, Lord my God.

16 For I said, "Do not let them gloat at my expense, or lord it over me when my foot slips."

17 For I am ready to fall, and my pain is always with me.

18 I confess my guilt; I am troubled by my sin.

19 My enemies are lively and strong; those who hate me without reason are many.

20 Those who repay evil for good oppose me because I pursue what is good.

21 Do not forsake me, LORD; my God, do not be far from me.

22 Come quickly to help me, Lord my salvation.

1 'For remembrance' in the title may refer to the memorial offering.

Psalm 39

Psalm 39 is a meditation on the brevity of life. David resolves to keep silent before the wicked, but his anguish burns within him, and he asks the LORD to show him his end and how fleeting he is. His days are a few handbreadths; everyone is but a breath, going about like a shadow and heaping up wealth for others. His hope is in the Lord. He asks to be delivered from his sins and to have God's hand removed. He prays that God will hear his tears, for he is a guest, a passing stranger, and he asks for a moment's relief before he is gone.

For the director: for Jeduthun. A psalm of David.

1 I said, "I will watch my ways and keep my tongue from sin; I will put a muzzle on my mouth while the wicked are in my presence."[1]

2 I was mute and silent; I held my peace to no good, and my anguish grew worse.

3 My heart grew hot within me; as I mused, the fire burned. Then I spoke with my tongue:

4 "LORD, show me my end and the measure of my days; let me know how fleeting I am.

5 See, You have made my days a few handbreadths, and my lifetime is as nothing before You. Surely

everyone, however firm he stands, is only a breath. Selah.

6 Surely a man goes about like a shadow. Surely he bustles about for nothing; he heaps up wealth without knowing who will gather it.

7 So now, Lord, what am I waiting for? My hope rests in You.

8 Rescue me from all my offences; do not make me the scorn of fools.

9 I was silent; I would not open my mouth, for it is You who have done this.

10 Take Your blow away from me; I am worn out by the attack of Your hand.

11 When You rebuke someone for his sin, You consume what he treasures like a moth. Surely everyone is only a breath. Selah.

12 Hear my prayer, LORD; listen to my cry; do not be deaf to my tears. For I am a guest with You, a foreigner, like all my fathers.

13 Look away from me, so that I may smile again before I go and am no more."

1 Jeduthun was one of David's chief musicians; see 1 Chronicles 16:41.

Psalm 40

> *Psalm 40 begins with thanks and ends with a plea. David waited patiently for the LORD, who drew him out of the pit and put a new song in his mouth. Blessed is the one who trusts the LORD, whose wonders are too many to tell. God did not desire sacrifice, but an obedient servant: "Here I am, I have come." He has proclaimed God's righteousness in the great assembly. Then, surrounded by troubles and his sins, he cries for rescue, and for shame on those who seek his life. Hebrews 10 applies verses 6–8 to Christ. Verses 13–17 reappear as Psalm 70.*

For the director. Of David. A psalm.

1 I waited and waited for the LORD; He bent down to me and heard my cry.

2 He drew me up out of the pit of destruction, out of the miry clay, and set my feet on a rock, making my steps secure.

3 He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many will see and fear, and will trust in the LORD.

4 Blessed is the man who has made the LORD his trust, who does not turn to the proud or to those who go after lies.

5 Many, LORD my God, are the wonders You have done, and Your plans for us; none can compare with You. If I were to tell of them and speak of them, they would be too many to count.

6 Sacrifice and offering You did not desire; You have dug out my ears.[1] Burnt offering and sin offering You did not require.

7 Then I said, "Here I am, I have come; it is written of me in the scroll of the book.

8 It is my delight to do Your will, my God; Your law is deep within me."

9 I have told the good news of righteousness in the great assembly; see, I do not seal my lips, as You know, LORD.

10 I have not kept Your righteousness hidden in my heart; I have spoken of Your faithfulness and salvation. I have not concealed Your loyal kindness and truth from the great assembly.

11 As for You, LORD, do not withhold Your mercy from me; may Your loyal kindness and Your truth always protect me.

12 For troubles beyond number have surrounded me; my sins have overtaken me, and I cannot see. They are more than the hairs of my head, and my heart fails me.

13 Be pleased, LORD, to rescue me; LORD, come quickly to help me.

14 Let all who seek to take my life be put to shame and confusion; let those who wish me harm be turned back and disgraced.

15 Let those who say to me, "Aha, aha!" be appalled at their shame.

16 But let all who seek You rejoice and be glad in You; let those who love Your salvation always say, "The LORD is great!"

17 As for me, I am poor and needy; may the Lord think of me. You are my help and my rescuer; my God, do not delay.

1 That is, You have opened my ears to hear. The Greek, quoted in Hebrews 10:5–7, has ‘but a body You prepared for Me’.

Psalm 41

Psalm 41 closes Book One. Blessed is the one who considers the poor; the LORD will deliver him in the day of trouble and sustain him on his sickbed. David asks for healing, for he has sinned. His enemies wish him dead, and even his close friend, who ate his bread, has lifted his heel against him. He asks the LORD to raise him up, and he is sure of God’s pleasure because his enemy does not triumph. The psalm ends with a blessing that closes the first book of the Psalms. Jesus applies verse 9 to Judas.

For the director. A psalm of David.

1 Blessed is the one who considers the poor; the LORD will deliver him in the day of trouble.

2 The LORD will protect him and keep him alive; he will be called blessed in the land. You will not give him up to the will of his enemies.

3 The LORD will sustain him on his sickbed; You will restore him to health from his illness.

4 I said, “LORD, be gracious to me; heal me, for I have sinned against You.”

5 My enemies wish me ill: “When will he die and his name be forgotten?”

6 When one of them comes to see me, he speaks empty words, while his heart gathers slander; then he goes out and spreads it abroad.

7 All who hate me whisper about me together; they expect the worst for me:

8 “A deadly thing has been poured out on him; he will not get up from where he lies.”

9 Even my close friend, whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me.[1]

10 But You, LORD, be gracious to me and raise me up, so that I may repay them.

11 This is how I know You are pleased with me: my enemy has no victory over me.

12 You hold me up in my integrity, and You keep me in Your presence for ever.

13 Blessed be the LORD, Israel’s God, for ever and ever. Amen and Amen.[2]

1 Quoted in John 13:18.

2 This blessing closes Book One of the Psalms; compare 72:18–19; 89:52; 106:48; and the whole of Psalm 150.

Psalm 42

Psalm 42 opens Book Two, and with Psalm 43 forms one song, with a shared refrain. As a deer longs for flowing streams, the psalmist’s soul thirsts for the living God, while people taunt him, “Where is your God?” He remembers leading the festal crowd to God’s house. Though far away near Hermon, and overwhelmed as by deep waters, he speaks to his own soul: why is it downcast? He will hope in God and praise Him again.

For the director. A maskil of the sons of Korah.

1 As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for You, O God.[1]

2 My soul is thirsty for God, the living God. When may I come and appear before Him?

3 My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me all day long, “Where is your God?”

4 These things I remember as I pour out my soul: how I used to go with the crowd, leading them in procession to the house of God, with shouts of joy and thanksgiving among the festive throng.

5 Why are you downcast, my soul? Why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God, for I will yet praise Him, my Saviour and my God.[2]

6 My soul is downcast within me; so I remember You from the land of the Jordan and the peaks of Hermon, from Mount Mizar.

7 Deep calls to deep at the thunder of Your cataracts; all Your breakers and waves have rolled over me.

8 By day the LORD commands His loyal kindness, and at night His song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life.

9 I say to God my rock, “Why have You forgotten me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?”

10 As if crushing my bones, my foes taunt me,
saying to me all day long, “Where is your God?”

11 Why are you downcast, my soul? Why are you in
turmoil within me? Hope in God, for I will yet
praise Him, my Saviour and my God.

1 Book Two of the Psalms is Psalms 42–72. The sons of Korah were Levite temple singers; see 1 Chronicles 6:31–37. Psalms 42 and 43 were probably one psalm, for they share a refrain.
2 So the Greek and Syriac, as in verse 11; the Hebrew has ‘the salvation of His face’.

Psalm 43

Psalm 43 continues Psalm 42. The psalmist asks God to vindicate him against an ungodly nation and a deceitful man. Why has God rejected him? He asks God to send out His light and truth to lead him to the holy hill, so that he may go to the altar of God, his joy and delight, and praise Him with the lyre. The chapter ends with the refrain: why are you downcast, my soul? Hope in God.

1 Vindicate me, O God, and plead my cause against
an unfaithful nation; rescue me from deceitful and
unjust men.[1]

2 For You are the God of my refuge. Why have You
rejected me? Why must I go about mourning,
oppressed by the enemy?

3 Send out Your light and truth to lead me; let
them bring me to Your holy hill and the place
where You live.

4 Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my
great joy, and I will praise You with the lyre, O
God, my God.

5 Why are you downcast, my soul? Why are you in
turmoil within me? Hope in God, for I will yet
praise Him, my Saviour and my God.

1 This psalm has no title and continues Psalm 42.

Psalm 44

Psalm 44 is a national lament. The people recall how God drove out the nations and planted their ancestors in the land, not by their sword but by His right hand. In Him they boasted. Yet now He has rejected them, sold them for nothing and made them a byword, though they have not forgotten Him or been false to His covenant. For His sake they face death all day long. They cry to the Lord to awake, not to hide His face, and to redeem them because of His loyal kindness. Paul quotes verse 22 in Romans 8.

For the director. Of the sons of Korah. A maskil.

1 O God, we have heard with our ears, our fathers
have told us, what You did in their days, in days
long ago.

2 By Your hand You drove out nations and planted
our fathers; You crushed peoples and made our
fathers flourish.

3 For it was not by their sword that they took the
land, and their own arm did not save them; it was
Your right hand and Your arm, and the light of
Your face, for You delighted in them.

4 You are my King, O God; command victories for
Jacob.

5 Through You we push back our foes; through
Your name we trample those who rise against us.

6 For I do not trust in my bow, and my sword will
not save me.

7 It is You who have saved us from our foes and put
to shame those who hate us.

8 In God we have boasted all day long, and we will
give thanks to Your name for ever. Selah.

9 Yet You have rejected and humbled us; You no
longer go out with our armies.

10 You have made us retreat before the foe, and
those who hate us have plundered us.

11 You have given us up like sheep to be eaten and
scattered us among the nations.

12 You have sold Your people for a trifle and made
no profit from their sale.

13 You have made us a reproach to our neighbours,
a scorn and a mockery to those around us.

14 You have made us a byword among the nations;
the peoples shake their heads at us.

15 My disgrace is before me all day long, and my face is covered with shame,

16 at the taunts of those who insult and revile me, at the sight of the enemy and the avenger.

17 All this has come on us, though we have not forgotten You or been false to Your covenant.

18 Our hearts have not turned back, nor have our steps left Your path.

19 Yet You have crushed us in a place of jackals and covered us with deep darkness.

20 If we had forgotten our God's name, or stretched out our hands to a foreign god,

21 would God not have found it out? For He knows the secrets of the heart.

22 Yet for Your sake we are put to death all day long; we are counted as sheep for slaughtering.[1]

23 Wake up, Lord! Why are You sleeping? Rouse Yourself! Do not reject us for ever.

24 Why do You turn Your face away, forgetting our affliction and oppression?

25 For our soul is sunk down to the dust; our bodies cling to the ground.

26 Rise up and help us; redeem us because of Your loyal kindness.

1 Quoted in Romans 8:36.

Psalm 45

Psalm 45 is a royal wedding song. The poet's heart overflows as he addresses the king, the fairest of men, whose lips are full of grace. He calls on him to ride out in majesty for truth and justice. God's throne lasts for ever, and God has anointed him with the oil of gladness. The bride, a princess in gold, is told to forget her people and honour the king; she is led to him in splendour, with her companions. His sons will be princes in all the earth, and his name will be remembered in every generation. Hebrews 1 applies verses 6–7 to the Son.

For the director: to the tune of "Lilies". Of the sons of Korah. A maskil. A love song.

1 My heart is stirred by a noble theme as I recite my verses for the king. My tongue is a skilled writer's pen.

2 You are the most handsome of men; grace is poured on Your lips, for God has blessed You for ever.

3 Strap Your sword on Your thigh, mighty warrior, in Your splendour and majesty.

4 In Your majesty ride out victoriously for the sake of truth, humility and justice; let Your right hand teach You awesome deeds.

5 Your sharp arrows pierce the hearts of the king's enemies; the peoples fall beneath You.

6 Your throne, O God, is for ever and ever, and the sceptre of uprightness is the sceptre of Your kingdom.[1]

7 You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; so God, Your God, has anointed You with gladness as with oil, beyond Your companions.

8 All Your robes are fragrant with myrrh, aloes and cassia; from ivory palaces stringed instruments make You glad.

9 Daughters of kings are among Your honoured women; at Your right hand stands the queen in gold of Ophir.

10 Listen, daughter, consider and give ear: forget your people and your father's house.

11 The king will long for your beauty; bow to him, for he is your lord.

12 The daughter of Tyre will come with a gift; the rich among the people will seek your favour.

13 All glorious is the princess within; her gown is interwoven with gold.

14 In embroidered robes she is led to the king; her virgin companions follow her and are brought to You.

15 They are led in with joy and gladness; they enter the king's palace.

16 Your sons will succeed Your fathers; You will make them princes throughout the earth.

17 I will make Your name remembered through all generations; so the peoples will praise You for ever and ever.

1 Verses 6–7 are quoted in Hebrews 1:8–9.

Psalm 46

Psalm 46 is a song of confidence in God's presence. God is a refuge and strength, so His people will not fear, though the earth shakes and the mountains fall into the sea. A river gladdens the city of God, and God is in her; the nations rage, but He speaks and the earth melts. The refrain says that the LORD of Armies is with us. Let all come and see His works: He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth. "Stop, and know that I am God."

For the director. Of the sons of Korah. On alamoth. A song.

1 God is our refuge and strength, a help always ready in times of trouble.[1]

2 So we will not fear, though the earth gives way and the mountains topple into the heart of the sea,

3 though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake at its surging. Selah.

4 There is a river whose streams gladden the city of God, the holy dwelling of the Most High.

5 God is in the midst of her; she will not be shaken. God will help her at the break of dawn.

6 Nations rage, kingdoms totter; He raises His voice, and the earth melts.

7 The LORD of Armies stands with us; our stronghold is the God of Jacob. Selah.

8 Come and see the works of the LORD, the devastation He has brought on the earth.

9 He puts an end to wars across the earth; He snaps the bow and shatters the spear; He burns the chariots.

10 "Stop, and know that I am God. I will be lifted high among the nations; I will be lifted high on the earth."

11 The LORD of Armies stands with us; our stronghold is the God of Jacob. Selah.

1 *Alamoth* in the title is a term of uncertain meaning, perhaps 'for women's voices'.

Psalm 47

Psalm 47 calls all peoples to clap their hands and shout to God, for the LORD Most High is awesome, the great King over all the earth. He subdued nations under His people and chose their inheritance. God has gone up with shouts of joy and the sound of the ram's horn. Sing praises, for God is King of all the earth; He sits on His holy throne, and the nobles of the peoples gather as the people of the God of Abraham.

For the director. Of the sons of Korah. A psalm.

1 Clap your hands, all you peoples; shout to God with cries of joy.

2 For the LORD Most High is to be feared, the great King of all the earth.

3 He subdued peoples under us and nations under our feet.

4 He chose our heritage for us, the pride of Jacob, whom He loves. Selah.

5 God has gone up with shouts of joy, the LORD with the sound of the ram's horn.[1]

6 Sing to God, sing! Sing to our King, sing!

7 For God is King of all the earth; sing praises with a maskil.

8 God is King over the nations; God is seated on His holy throne.

9 The peoples' nobles assemble with the people of Abraham's God, for the shields of the earth are God's; He is lifted high.

1 Perhaps the ark going up to the temple; compare Psalm 24:7–10.

Psalm 48

Psalm 48 praises the greatness of the LORD in Zion, His holy hill, beautiful in elevation and the joy of all the earth. God has shown Himself to be its stronghold: kings gathered against it, saw it, and fled in terror. What the people have heard, they have now seen in the city of the LORD of Armies, and they reflect on His loyal kindness in the temple. Let Zion rejoice. Walk around her, count her towers and tell the next generation that this God is our God for ever and ever; He will guide us.

A song. A psalm of the sons of Korah.

1 Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised, in the city of our God, His holy hill.

2 Beautiful in its height, the joy of all the earth, is Mount Zion, in the far north,[1] the city of the great King.

3 Within her citadels God has shown Himself to be a stronghold.

4 For see, the kings assembled and advanced together.

5 They saw it and were astounded; they were terrified and fled in alarm.

6 Trembling seized them there, pain like that of a woman in labour.

7 With the east wind You shattered the ships of Tarshish.

8 What we have heard we have now seen, in the city of the LORD of Armies, the city of our God: God will make her secure for ever. Selah.

9 O God, in Your temple we meditate on Your loyal kindness.

10 Your praise, O God, like Your name, reaches the ends of the earth. Your right hand is full of justice.

11 Let Mount Zion be glad; let Judah's towns rejoice because of Your judgements.

12 Walk around Zion, go all the way round her; count her towers,

13 consider her ramparts, go through her citadels, so that you may tell the next generation

14 that this is God, our God for ever and ever; He will guide us to the end.[2]

1 Hebrew *Zaphon*, also the name of the mountain of the gods in Canaanite myth; Zion, not Zaphon, is the true mountain of God.

2 So the Greek; the Hebrew reads 'over death'.

Psalm 49

Psalm 49 is a wisdom poem for all people, rich and poor. Why should the psalmist fear those who trust in their wealth? No one can ransom another or pay God the price of a life; wise and foolish alike die and leave their wealth to others. People with riches are like the animals that perish; death will be their shepherd in Sheol. But God will ransom the psalmist from the power of Sheol and take him. So do not be afraid when someone grows rich, for he will carry nothing away when he dies.

For the director. Of the sons of Korah. A psalm.

1 Hear this, all you peoples; listen, all who live in this world,

2 people of low and high estate, the rich and the poor alike.

3 My mouth will speak wisdom, and the meditation of my heart will give understanding.

4 I will turn my ear to a proverb; I will explain my riddle on the lyre.

5 Why should I fear in evil days, when the iniquity of my deceivers surrounds me,

6 those who trust in their wealth and boast of their great riches?

7 Surely no one can redeem another or give God a ransom for him,

8 for the ransom for a life is costly, and no payment is ever enough,

9 that he should live on for ever and never see the pit.

10 For he sees wise men die, and the fool and the brute alike go to ruin and leave their wealth to others.

11 Their graves are their homes for ever,[1] their dwellings for all generations, though they named lands after themselves.

12 But man, for all his honour, does not last; he is
like the animals that perish.

13 This is the fate of those who trust in themselves,
and of their followers who approve what they say.
Selah.

14 Like sheep they are destined for Sheol; death
will be their shepherd. The upright will rule over
them in the morning, and their form will waste
away in Sheol, far from their mansions.

15 But God will redeem my life from the power of
Sheol, for He will take me to Himself. Selah.

16 Do not be afraid when someone grows rich,
when the splendour of his house increases.

17 For when he dies he will take nothing with him;
his splendour will not go down after him.

18 Though he counted himself happy while he lived,
and people praise you when you do well,

19 he will join the generation of his fathers, who
will never see the light.

20 A man with riches but without understanding is
no better than the beasts that perish.

1 So the Greek and Syriac; the Hebrew has ‘their inward thought’.

Psalm 50

Psalm 50 is a great courtroom scene. God the LORD summons the earth and shines out of Zion, coming with fire to judge His people. He does not rebuke them for their sacrifices, for every animal is His; if He were hungry, He would not tell them. He wants thanksgiving, vows kept, and calling on Him in the day of trouble. To the wicked He says: how can they recite His statutes when they hate discipline, join thieves and slander their brothers? They must consider this. Whoever offers thanksgiving honours God, and God will show him His salvation.

A psalm of Asaph.

1 The Mighty One, God, the LORD, has spoken; He
summons the earth from the rising of the sun to
its setting.[1]

2 Out of Zion, perfect in beauty, God shines forth.

3 Our God comes and will not keep silent; a
consuming fire goes before Him, and around Him
a great storm rages.

4 He summons the heavens above and the earth, to
judge His people:

5 “Gather to Me My faithful ones, who made a
covenant with Me by sacrifice.”

6 The heavens proclaim His righteousness, for God
Himself is judge. Selah.

7 “Hear, My people; I am speaking. Israel, I testify
against you: I am God, your God.

8 I do not rebuke you for your sacrifices; your
burnt offerings are always before Me.

9 I will not take a bull from your house or goats
from your pens,

10 for all the forest animals are Mine, and the
cattle on a thousand hills.

11 I know every bird in the mountains, and all that
moves in the fields is Mine.

12 If I were hungry I would not tell you, for the
world and all that fills it are Mine.

13 Do I feed on the flesh of bulls? Do I drink goats’
blood?

14 Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and
fulfil your vows to the Most High.

15 Call to Me when trouble comes; I will rescue
you, and you will honour Me.”

16 But to the wicked God says: “What right have
you to recite My statutes or take My covenant on
your lips?

17 For you hate discipline and cast My words
behind you.

18 When you see a thief, you join him, and you
throw in your lot with adulterers.

19 You give your mouth free rein for evil, and you
harness your tongue to deceit.

20 You sit speaking against your brother, and you
slander your own mother’s son.

21 You have done these things, and I kept silent;
you thought I was just like you. But I will rebuke
you and lay the case before your eyes.

22 Consider this, you who forget God, or I will tear
you to pieces, with no one to rescue you.

23 Whoever offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving
honours Me, and to the one who orders his way
rightly I will show the salvation of God.”

1 Asaph was a chief musician of David; see 1 Chronicles 16:4–5. Psalms 73–83 also bear his name.

Psalm 51

Psalm 51 is David's great prayer of repentance after the prophet Nathan came to him over Bathsheba. He asks God, in His loyal kindness and great mercy, to blot out his offences and wash him clean, for he has sinned against God alone. God wants truth in the inner being. He asks to be cleansed with hyssop and washed whiter than snow, for a pure heart and a steadfast spirit, and not to have God's Holy Spirit taken from him. Then he will teach sinners God's ways. The sacrifice God wants is a broken spirit and a contrite heart. He ends with a prayer for Zion.

For the director. A psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came to him after he had gone in to Bathsheba.

1 Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your loyal kindness; according to Your great mercy, blot out my offences.[1]

2 Wash away all my guilt, and make me clean from my sin.

3 For I know my offences, and my sin is always before me.

4 Against You, You alone, I have sinned and done what is evil in Your sight, so that You are proved right when You speak, and blameless when You judge.[2]

5 See, I was guilty when I was born, and sinful when my mother conceived me.

6 See, You delight in truth in the inner being; You teach me wisdom in the secret heart.

7 Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be pure; wash me until I am whiter than snow.

8 Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones You have crushed rejoice.

9 Turn Your face from my sins and wipe out all my guilt.

10 Create a pure heart in me, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

11 Do not cast me out of Your presence, or take Your Holy Spirit from me.

12 Give me back the joy of Your salvation, and sustain me with a willing spirit.

13 Then I will teach offenders Your ways, and sinners will return to You.

14 Rescue me from bloodguilt, O God, the God who saves me, and my tongue will sing of Your righteousness.

15 Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare Your praise.

16 For You take no delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; You are not pleased with burnt offerings.

17 The sacrifice God wants is a broken spirit; a broken and crushed heart, O God, You will not reject.

18 In Your favour do good to Zion; build up the walls of Jerusalem.

19 Then You will delight in right sacrifices, in burnt offerings and whole offerings; then bulls will be offered on Your altar.

1 For the title see 2 Samuel 11–12.

2 Compare Romans 3:4, which follows the Greek.

Psalm 52

Psalm 52 was written when Doeg the Edomite told Saul that David had gone to the house of Ahimelech. David challenges the boastful man, whose tongue plots destruction like a sharp razor and who loves evil more than good. God will tear him down and uproot him from the land of the living. The righteous will see it and laugh at the man who trusted in his wealth. But David is like a green olive tree in the house of God, trusting in His loyal kindness for ever and giving thanks.

For the director. A maskil of David, when Doeg the Edomite went and told Saul, "David has gone to the house of Ahimelech."

[1]Why do you boast of evil, you mighty man? The loyal kindness of God endures all day long.[1]

[2]Your tongue plots destruction; it is like a sharp razor, you worker of deceit.

[3]You love evil above good, and lies above speaking the truth. Selah.

[4]You love every destructive word, you deceitful tongue.

[5]So God will bring you down for ever; He will snatch you up and tear you from your tent, and uproot you from the land of the living. Selah.

[6]The righteous will see and fear, and they will laugh at him:

[7]"See the man who would not make God his stronghold, but trusted in his great wealth and grew strong by destroying others."

[8]But I am like a flourishing olive tree in God's house; I trust in God's loyal kindness for ever and ever.

[9]I will thank You for ever for what You have done; I will hope in Your good name in the presence of Your faithful ones.

1 For the title see 1 Samuel 21:7; 22:9–10.

Psalm 53

Psalm 53 is nearly the same as Psalm 14, using the name God in place of the LORD. The fool says in his heart that there is no God. God looks down from heaven and sees that all have turned away, and that no one does good. Evildoers devour His people, but they are overwhelmed with dread, for God scatters the bones of those who attack them. The psalm ends by longing for salvation to come from Zion.

For the director: on mahalath. A maskil of David.

[1]The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, and their ways are vile; there is no one who does what is good.[1]

[2]God looks down from heaven on mankind to see if there is anyone who understands, anyone who searches for God.

[3]They have all turned back and together gone bad; there is no one who does what is good, not so much as one.

[4]Will they never learn, these evildoers, who eat up My people as they eat bread, and do not call on God?

[5]There they are, overwhelmed with dread, where there was nothing to dread, for God has scattered the bones of those who attacked you. You put them to shame, for God has rejected them.

[6]Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion! When God restores the fortunes of His people, Jacob will rejoice and Israel will be glad.

1 Compare Psalm 14. *Mahalath* in the title is a term of uncertain meaning.

Psalm 54

Psalm 54 is David's prayer when the Ziphites betrayed him to Saul. He asks God to save him by His name and vindicate him by His might, for ruthless men who do not regard God seek his life. God is his helper and the Lord upholds him; He will repay his enemies. David will offer a freewill sacrifice and praise the LORD's name, for He has rescued him from all his troubles.

For the director: with stringed instruments. A maskil of David, when the Ziphites came and said to Saul, "Is David not hiding among us?"

[1]Save me, O God, by Your name, and vindicate me by Your might.[1]

[2]Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to what I say.

[3]For strangers have risen against me, and ruthless men seek my life; they do not set God before them. Selah.

[4]See, God helps me; the Lord sustains my life.

[5]He will repay my enemies for their evil; in Your faithfulness destroy them.

[6]I will sacrifice a freewill offering to You; I will praise Your name, LORD, for it is good.

7 For He has rescued me from every trouble, and
my eye has looked in triumph on my enemies.

1 For the title see 1 Samuel 23:19; 26:1.

Psalm 55

Psalm 55 is a lament over betrayal. David's heart is in anguish and the terrors of death have fallen on him, and he wishes he had the wings of a dove to fly away and be at rest. Violence and strife fill the city. The worst of it is that the one who has turned on him is no enemy but his close friend, with whom he walked to the house of God. He calls on God evening, morning and noon, and God hears him. His friend's words are smoother than butter but his heart is war. David tells others to cast their burden on the LORD, who will sustain them, and he himself will trust in God.

For the director: with stringed instruments. A maskil of David.

1 Listen to my prayer, O God; do not hide Yourself
from my plea.

2 Pay attention to me and answer me; I am restless
in my complaint and distraught

3 at the voice of the enemy and the pressure of the
wicked, for they bring down trouble on me and
hate me in their anger.

4 My heart writhes within me; the terrors of death
have come down on me.

5 Fear and trembling grip me, and horror covers
me.

6 I said, "If only I had wings like a dove! I would fly
off and find rest.

7 See, I would wander far away and lodge in the
wilderness. Selah.

8 I would hurry to my place of shelter, far from the
raging wind and storm."

9 Confuse them, Lord, and confound their speech,
for I see violence and strife in the city.

10 Day and night they prowl around it on its walls,
and wickedness and trouble are within it.

11 Destruction is at work inside it; oppression and
deceit never leave its square.

12 If it were an enemy insulting me, I could bear it;
if it were a foe exalting himself over me, I could
hide from him.

13 But it is you, a man like myself, my companion,
my close friend,

14 with whom I enjoyed sweet fellowship as we
walked with the throng to the house of God.

15 Let death take them by surprise; let them go
down to Sheol alive, for evil is in their homes and
in their hearts.

16 As for me, I call to God, and the LORD saves me.

17 Evening, morning and noon I complain and
groan, and He hears my voice.

18 He redeems my soul in safety from the battle
against me, though many oppose me.

19 God, who is enthroned from of old, will hear and
humble them, Selah, because they do not change
and do not fear God.

20 My friend has laid hands on those at peace with
him; he has broken his covenant.

21 His speech is smoother than butter, but war is in
his heart; his words are softer than oil, yet they
are drawn swords.

22 Cast your burden on the LORD, and He will
sustain you;[1] He will never let the righteous be
shaken.

23 But You, O God, will bring them down to the pit
of destruction; the bloodthirsty and deceitful will
not live out half their days. As for me, I trust in
You.

1 Compare 1 Peter 5:7.

Psalm 56

Psalm 56 was written when the Philistines seized David in Gath. Enemies trample on him all day long, but when he is afraid he puts his trust in God, and he asks what mere flesh can do to him. His enemies twist his words and watch his steps. He asks God to bring them down, to count his wanderings and put his tears in His bottle. He knows that God is for him, and he repeats his refrain of trust. He will fulfil his vows, for God has rescued him from death so that he may walk before God in the light of life.

For the director: to the tune of "The Silent Dove in Distant Places". Of David. A miktam, when the Philistines seized him in Gath.

1 Be gracious to me, O God, for people trample on me; all day long attackers oppress me.[1]

2 My enemies trample on me all day long, for many fight against me, O Most High.

3 When I am afraid, I put my trust in You.

4 In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I will not be afraid. What can mere flesh do to me?

5 All day long they distort my words; all they think of is how to harm me.

6 They stir up strife and lurk; they watch my steps, hoping to take my life.

7 Do not let them escape because of their wickedness; in Your anger bring down the peoples, O God.

8 You have counted my wanderings; put my tears in Your bottle. Are they not in Your book?

9 Then my enemies will turn back on the day I call. This I know: God is for me.

10 In God, whose word I praise, in the LORD, whose word I praise,

11 in God I trust; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?

12 I am bound by vows to You, O God; I will present thank offerings to You.

13 For You have rescued my soul from death, and my feet from stumbling, so that I may walk before God in the light of life.

1 For the title see 1 Samuel 21:10–15.

Psalm 57

Psalm 57 is David's prayer in the cave when he fled from Saul. He takes refuge in the shadow of God's wings until the storm of destruction passes, and he cries to God Most High, who will send His loyal kindness and truth. He lies among lions whose teeth are spears. The refrain asks God to be exalted above the heavens. His enemies have fallen into their own pit. His heart is steadfast; he will awake the dawn with song and praise God among the nations, for His loyal kindness reaches to the heavens.

For the director: "Do Not Destroy". Of David. A miktam, when he fled from Saul in the cave.

1 Be gracious to me, O God, be gracious to me, for in You my soul takes refuge; in the shadow of Your wings I will take refuge until the storms of destruction pass by.[1]

2 I cry to God Most High, to God who fulfils His purpose for me.

3 He will send from heaven and save me, shaming those who trample on me. Selah. God will send out His loyal kindness and His truth.

4 My soul is among lions; I lie down among those who breathe fire, people whose teeth are spears and arrows, whose tongues are sharp swords.

5 Rise high above the heavens, O God; let Your glory fill all the earth.

6 They set a net for my steps; my soul was bowed down. They dug a pit in my path, but they have fallen into it themselves. Selah.

7 My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast; I will sing and make music.

8 Awake, my soul! Awake, harp and lyre! I will awaken the dawn.

9 I will give You thanks, Lord, among the peoples; I will sing Your praise among the nations.

10 For Your loyal kindness is high as the heavens, and Your truth as the skies.

11 Rise high above the heavens, O God; let Your glory fill all the earth.

1 For the title see 1 Samuel 22:1; 24:3. ‘Do Not Destroy’ is probably a tune name. Verses 7–11 reappear in Psalm 108:1–5.

Psalm 58

Psalm 58 challenges unjust rulers. Do they really speak justly? In their hearts they devise wrongs and deal out violence. The wicked go astray from birth and are like a deaf snake that will not listen to the charmer. The psalmist prays in fierce images that God will break their teeth and make them vanish like water, like a slug melting away or a stillborn child. The righteous will rejoice, and people will say that there is indeed a reward for the righteous and a God who judges on earth.

For the director: “Do Not Destroy”. Of David. A miktam.

1 Do you rulers[1] really speak justly? Do you judge mankind with fairness?

2 No, in your hearts you devise injustice; your hands deal out violence on the earth.

3 The wicked go astray from the womb; from birth they wander, speaking lies.

4 Their venom is like the venom of a snake, like that of a deaf cobra that stops its ears,

5 which will not hear the voice of the charmers, however skilful the enchanter.

6 Break the teeth in their mouths, O God; tear out the fangs of the young lions, LORD.

7 Let them vanish like water that runs away; when they aim their arrows, let them fall short.

8 Let them be like a slug that melts as it moves, like a stillborn child that never sees the sun.

9 Before your pots can feel the heat of the thorns, whether green or burning, He will sweep them away.[2]

10 The righteous will rejoice when they see vengeance; they will wash their feet in the blood of the wicked.

11 Then people will say, “Surely there is a reward for the righteous; surely there is a God who judges on earth.”

1 Or ‘you gods’; the meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain.

2 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain.

Psalm 59

Psalm 59 is David’s cry when Saul sent men to watch his house and kill him. He asks God to rescue him from bloodthirsty men who lie in wait though he has done no wrong. They come back each evening, snarling like dogs and prowling round the city, but the LORD laughs at them. God is his fortress. He asks God to bring them down so that His people will not forget, and to consume them in wrath so that all may know that God rules in Jacob. As for David, he will sing of God’s strength and loyal kindness in the morning.

For the director: “Do Not Destroy”. Of David. A miktam, when Saul sent men to watch his house in order to kill him.

1 Rescue me from my enemies, my God; protect me from those who rise against me.[1]

2 Rescue me from those who do wrong, and save me from bloodthirsty men.

3 See how they lie in wait for my life! Fierce men gather against me, not for any offence or sin of mine, LORD.

4 For no fault of mine they run and get ready. Rouse Yourself to meet me, and see!

5 You, LORD God of Armies, the God of Israel, awake to punish all the nations; show no mercy to wicked traitors. Selah.

6 They come back in the evening, snarling like dogs and prowling round the city.

7 See what pours from their mouths: swords are on their lips, for they say, “Who will hear?”

8 But You, LORD, laugh at them; You mock all the nations.

9 My Strength, I watch for You,[2] for God is my fortress.

10 My God in His loyal kindness will come to meet me; God will let me look in triumph on my foes.

11 Do not kill them, or my people will forget; send them reeling by Your power and bring them low,

Lord our shield.

12 Every word on their lips is sin; let them be trapped in their pride, for the curses and lies they speak.

13 Consume them in wrath, consume them until they are no more, so that people may know to the ends of the earth that God rules in Jacob. Selah.

14 They come back in the evening, snarling like dogs and prowling round the city.

15 They wander about for food and growl if they are not satisfied.

16 But I will sing of Your strength; in the morning I will sing for joy of Your loyal kindness. For You have been my fortress, a refuge in the day of my distress.

17 My Strength, I will sing praise to You, for God is my fortress, my God of loyal kindness.

1 For the title see 1 Samuel 19:11.

2 So some Hebrew manuscripts, as in verse 17; most have ‘His strength’.

Psalm 60

Psalm 60 is a national lament after a defeat, though the title recalls victories over Aram and Edom. God has rejected His people and shaken the land, making them drink the wine of staggering. The people ask to be saved so that His beloved ones may be delivered. God has spoken from His sanctuary: Shechem, Gilead, Ephraim and Judah are His, and Moab, Edom and Philistia are subject to Him. Who will lead the king to Edom? Human help is worthless, but with God they will do valiantly. Verses 5–12 reappear in Psalm 108.

For the director: to the tune of “The Lily of the Testimony”. A miktam of David, for teaching, when he fought Aram-naharaim and Aram-zobah, and Joab returned and struck down twelve thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt.

1 O God, You have rejected us and broken through our defences; You have been angry. Now restore us![1]

2 You have made the land quake and torn it open; heal its breaches, for it is tottering.

3 You have made Your people see hard things; You have given us wine that makes us stagger.

4 You have raised a banner for those who fear You, to rally them from the bow. Selah.

5 So that those You love may be rescued, save us by Your right hand and answer us.

6 God has spoken from His holy place: “I will triumph; I will parcel out Shechem and measure off the Valley of Succoth.

7 Gilead is Mine, and Manasseh is Mine; Ephraim is My helmet, Judah is My sceptre.

8 Moab is My washbasin; on Edom I throw My sandal; over Philistia I shout in triumph.”

9 Who will bring me to the fortified city? Who will lead me to Edom?

10 Have You not rejected us, O God? You no longer go out, O God, with our armies.

11 Give us help against the foe, for human help is worthless.

12 With God we will do valiantly; it is He who will tread down our foes.

1 For the title see 2 Samuel 8:3–14 and 1 Chronicles 18:3–13, where the number differs.

Psalm 61

Psalm 61 is a prayer from the ends of the earth. David’s heart is faint, and he asks to be led to the rock that is higher than he, for God has been his refuge and strong tower. He longs to live in God’s tent for ever and to shelter under His wings. God has heard his vows. He prays that the king’s life will be prolonged and that loyal kindness and truth will guard him, and he promises to sing praise and fulfil his vows day by day.

For the director: with stringed instruments. Of David.

1 Hear my cry, O God; listen to my prayer.

2 From the far ends of the earth I call to You when my heart grows faint. Lead me to the rock that towers above me.

3 For You have been my refuge, a strong tower against the enemy.

4 Let me live in Your tent for ever and take refuge under the shelter of Your wings. Selah.

5 For You, O God, have listened to my vows; You have given me what belongs to those who revere Your name.

6 Add days to the days of the king; may his years span many generations.[1]

7 May he be enthroned before God for ever; appoint loyal kindness and truth to guard him.

8 Then I will sing praise to Your name for ever, fulfilling my vows day after day.

1 Jewish and Christian readers alike have heard in this more than an earthly king.

Psalm 62

Psalm 62 is a song of quiet trust. David's soul rests in God alone, his rock and salvation. How long will his enemies assault him, like a leaning wall, blessing with their mouths and cursing in their hearts? He urges his own soul and the people to trust God at all times and pour out their hearts to Him. Mortals are only a breath, and riches are not to be relied on. God has spoken more than once: power belongs to God, and so does loyal kindness, and He repays everyone according to what he has done.

For the director: for Jeduthun. A psalm of David.

1 My soul finds rest in God alone; my salvation comes from Him.

2 He alone is my rock and my salvation, my high fortress; I will not be greatly moved.

3 How long will you all attack a man, to batter him down like a leaning wall or a tottering fence?

4 They plan only to bring him down from his high position; they delight in lies. They bless with their mouths, but curse in their hearts. Selah.

5 Find rest in God alone, my soul; my hope comes from Him.

6 He alone is my rock, my salvation and my high fortress; I will not be moved.

7 My salvation and my honour depend on God; He is my strong rock and my refuge.

8 Rely on Him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts to Him. God is our shelter. Selah.

9 People of low degree are only a breath, and people of rank are a lie. Put on the scales, they go up; together they weigh less than a breath.

10 Do not trust in extortion or set vain hopes on robbery; if riches increase, do not set your heart on them.

11 God has spoken once; twice have I heard it: power is God's,

12 and that loyal kindness belongs to You, Lord; for You repay each person according to his deeds.[1]

1 Compare Romans 2:6 and Revelation 22:12.

Psalm 63

Psalm 63 comes from David's time in the wilderness of Judah. In a dry and weary land his soul thirsts for God. He has seen God's power and glory in the sanctuary, and God's loyal kindness is better than life, so he will bless Him as long as he lives. On his bed he remembers God through the night and sings in the shadow of His wings. His enemies will fall by the sword, but the king will rejoice in God.

A psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.

1 O God, You are my God; I seek You earnestly. My soul thirsts for You, my body longs for You, in a dry and weary land without water.[1]

2 So I have gazed on You in the sanctuary, to see Your power and Your glory.

3 Because Your loyal kindness is better than life, my lips will praise You.

4 So I will bless You as long as I live; in Your name I will lift up my hands.

5 My soul will be satisfied as with rich food, and my mouth will praise You with joyful lips.

6 When I remember You on my bed, I think of You through the watches of the night.

7 For You have been my help, and in the shadow of Your wings I sing for joy.

8 My soul clings to You; Your right hand holds me up.

9 But those who seek to destroy my life will go down to the depths of the earth.

10 They will be given over to the sword and become food for jackals.

11 But the king will rejoice in God; all who swear by Him will exult, for the mouths of liars will be stopped.

1 For the title see 1 Samuel 23:14 or 2 Samuel 15:23.

Psalm 64

Psalm 64 asks God to protect David from the secret plots of evildoers, who sharpen their tongues like swords and shoot bitter words like arrows from ambush. They hold to evil plans and ask who will see them. But God will shoot His arrow at them, and they will suddenly be struck down, brought to ruin by their own tongues. All people will fear and tell what God has done, and the righteous will rejoice in the LORD.

For the director. A psalm of David.

1 Hear my voice, O God, in my complaint; protect my life from the dread of the enemy.

2 Hide me from the secret plots of the wicked, from the throng of evildoers,

3 who sharpen their tongues like swords and aim bitter words like arrows,

4 shooting from ambush at the blameless, suddenly and without fear.

5 They encourage one another in evil plans; they talk of hiding their snares, and they say, “Who will see them?”

6 They devise injustice and say, “We have perfected a clever plan.” The human mind and heart are deep.[1]

7 But God will shoot His arrow at them; suddenly they will be struck down.

8 Their own tongues will bring them to ruin, and all who see them will shake their heads.

9 Then all people will fear; they will proclaim God’s work and consider what He has done.

10 The righteous will rejoice in the LORD and take refuge in Him, and all the upright in heart will exult.

1 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain.

Psalm 65

Psalm 65 is a song of thanks for the harvest. Praise awaits God in Zion, and all people come to Him who hears prayer and forgives sins. Blessed are those He brings near to live in His courts. By awesome deeds He answers them, the hope of the ends of the earth, who set the mountains in place and stilled the seas and the nations. He visits the land and waters it, crowns the year with His goodness, and the pastures and valleys shout for joy.

For the director. A psalm of David. A song.

1 Praise awaits You, O God, in Zion,[1] and to You vows will be fulfilled.

2 You who hear prayer, to You all people will come.

3 When our sins overwhelmed me, You atoned for our offences.

4 Blessed is the one You choose and bring close to live in Your courts. We will be satisfied with the good things of Your house, of Your holy temple.

5 You answer us with awesome deeds of righteousness, God our Saviour, the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas.

6 By Your strength You established the mountains, being girded with might.

7 You calm the raging of the seas, the crashing of their waves and the uproar of the peoples.

8 Those who live at the ends of the earth are afraid of Your signs; You make the places of morning and evening shout for joy.

9 You visit the earth and water it; You enrich it greatly. The stream of God is full of water; You provide grain for people, for so You have prepared the land.

10 You drench its furrows and level its ridges; You soften it with showers and bless its growth.

11 You crown the year with Your goodness, and Your paths drip with abundance.

12 The pastures of the wilderness overflow, and the hills are clothed with joy.

13 The meadows are dressed with flocks and the valleys covered with grain; they shout for joy and sing.

1 The Hebrew is uncertain; or ‘Silence is praise to You’.

Psalm 66

Psalm 66 calls the whole earth to shout to God and sing of His glory. Come and see what He has done: He turned the sea into dry land and rules for ever. Let the peoples bless Him, for He kept us alive; He tested us like silver, took us through fire and water, and brought us to a place of abundance. Then the psalmist speaks for himself: he will fulfil his vows with burnt offerings. He invites all who fear God to hear what He has done for him, for he cried out and God listened, and did not turn away his prayer or His loyal kindness.

For the director. A song. A psalm.

1 Shout for joy to God, all the earth!

2 Sing the glory of His name; make His praise glorious.

3 Say to God, “How awesome are Your deeds! So great is Your power that Your enemies cringe before You.

4 All the earth bows down to You; they sing praise to You; they sing praise to Your name.” Selah.

5 Come and see what God has done, His awesome deeds for mankind.

6 He made the sea dry land; they crossed the river on foot. There we were glad in Him.[1]

7 He rules by His might for ever; His eyes watch the nations. Let the rebellious not exalt themselves. Selah.

8 Bless our God, you peoples; let the sound of His praise be heard.

9 He has kept us among the living and has not let our feet slip.

10 For You have put us to the test, O God; You have refined us like silver.

11 You brought us into the net and laid a burden on our backs.

12 You let men ride over us; we passed through fire and water, but You led us out into abundance.

13 I will come to Your house with burnt offerings; I will fulfil my vows to You,

14 the vows my lips promised and my mouth spoke when I was in trouble.

15 I will offer You fat animals as burnt offerings, with the smoke of rams; I will sacrifice bulls and goats. Selah.

16 Come and hear, all you who fear God, and I will tell what He has done for me.

17 I cried to Him with my mouth, and His praise was on my tongue.

18 If I had cherished wrongdoing in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.

19 But truly God has listened; He has heard the sound of my prayer.

20 Blessed be God, who has not rejected my prayer or withdrawn His loyal kindness from me.

1 See Exodus 14 and Joshua 3.

Psalm 67

Psalm 67 prays that God will be gracious and bless His people, echoing the priestly blessing, so that His way may be known on earth and His salvation among all nations. The refrain calls all peoples to praise Him, and the nations to be glad, for He judges with fairness and guides them. The earth has given its harvest, and God will bless His people, so that all the ends of the earth will fear Him.

For the director: with stringed instruments. A psalm. A song.

1 May God be gracious to us and bless us; may He
make His face shine on us,[1] Selah.
2 so that Your way may be known across the earth,
and Your salvation among every nation.
3 May the peoples give You thanks, O God; may all
the peoples give You thanks.
4 May the nations rejoice and sing for joy, for You
judge the peoples fairly and lead the nations of the
earth. Selah.
5 May the peoples give You thanks, O God; may all
the peoples give You thanks.
6 The earth has yielded its harvest; God, our God,
blesses us.
7 God blesses us, and all the ends of the earth will
fear Him.

1 Compare the blessing in Numbers 6:24–26.

Psalm 68

Psalm 68 is a triumphant procession of God from Sinai to Zion. God rises and His enemies scatter. He is the father of the fatherless and the defender of widows. He marched through the wilderness, the earth shook, and He gave rain to His weary people. Kings fled, and He chose Zion as His mountain over the peaks of Bashan. He ascended on high, leading captives and receiving gifts. He bears His people's burdens daily and delivers from death. The procession of singers and musicians enters the sanctuary, with the tribes taking part. Kings will bring Him gifts, and all the kingdoms of the earth are called to sing to God, who gives strength to His people.

For the director. Of David. A psalm. A song.

1 God rises up; His enemies are scattered, and
those who hate Him flee before Him.[1]
2 As smoke is blown away, so You blow them away;
as wax melts before the fire, so the wicked perish
before God.
3 But the righteous are glad; they rejoice before
God and are overjoyed.
4 Sing to God, sing praise to His name; lift up a
song to Him who rides on the clouds.[2] His name is
the LORD;[3] rejoice before Him.
5 God in His holy dwelling is a father to the
fatherless and a defender of widows.
6 God gives the lonely a home; He leads prisoners
out into prosperity, but the rebellious live in a
parched land.
7 O God, when You went out at the head of Your
people, when You marched across the wasteland,
Selah,
8 the earth shook and the heavens poured down
rain before God, the One of Sinai, before God, the
God of Israel.
9 You sent abundant rain, O God; You restored Your
inheritance when it was weary.
10 Your flock settled in it; in Your goodness, O God,
You provided for the poor.
11 The Lord gives the word, and a great host of
women proclaims it:
12 "Kings and their armies flee, they flee!" The
women at home divide the plunder.
13 Though you lie among the sheepfolds, there are
wings of a dove covered with silver, its feathers
with shimmering gold.
14 When the Almighty scattered kings there, it
snowed on Zalmon.
15 O mountain of God, mountain of Bashan, O
many-peaked mountain, mountain of Bashan,
16 why do you look with envy, you many-peaked
mountains, at the mountain God has desired for
His dwelling, where the LORD will live for ever?
17 The chariots of God are tens of thousands,
thousands upon thousands; the Lord has come
from Sinai into His sanctuary.
18 You went up on high; You led captives in Your
train; You received gifts among people,[4] even from
the rebellious, so that the LORD God might live
there.
19 Blessed be the Lord, who carries our burdens
day after day, the God who saves us. Selah.
20 Our God is a God who saves; to the LORD, the
Lord, belong escapes from death.

21 Surely God will crush the heads of His enemies,
the hairy crown of those who go on in their guilty ways.
22 The Lord said, “I will fetch them back from Bashan;
I will fetch them back from the depths of the sea,
23 so that your foot may wade in blood,
and the tongues of your dogs have their share of your enemies.”
24 Your procession has been seen, O God,
the procession of my God, my King, into the sanctuary.
25 The singers go in front, the musicians last,
with young women playing tambourines between them.
26 Bless God in the great congregation;
bless the LORD, you who are from Israel’s fountain.
27 There is little Benjamin leading them,
the princes of Judah in their throng,
the princes of Zebulun and the princes of Naphtali.
28 Summon Your power,[5] O God;
show Your strength, O God, as You have done for us.
29 Because of Your temple at Jerusalem,
kings will bring gifts to You.
30 Rebuke the beast among the reeds,
the herd of bulls with the calves of the peoples.
Trample those who lust for silver;
scatter the peoples who delight in war.
31 Envoys will come from Egypt;
Cush will hurry to stretch out her hands to God.
32 Kingdoms of the earth, sing to God;
sing praise to the Lord, Selah,
33 to Him who rides through the ancient highest heavens;
see, He utters His voice, His mighty voice.
34 Ascribe strength to God,
whose majesty is over Israel
and whose strength is in the skies.
35 You are awesome, O God, in Your sanctuaries;
Israel’s God gives strength and power to His people.
Blessed be God!

1 Compare Numbers 10:35. Much of the Hebrew of this psalm is difficult.
2 Or ‘through the deserts’.
3 Hebrew *Yah*.
4 Ephesians 4:8 has ‘He gave gifts to people’, as in the Aramaic and Syriac.
5 So the Greek and Syriac; the Hebrew has ‘Your God has commanded your strength’.

Psalm 69

Psalm 69 is a cry from deep distress, often quoted in the New Testament. The waters have come up to David’s neck, and those who hate him without cause outnumber the hairs of his head. He has borne reproach for God’s sake, for zeal for God’s house has consumed him, and the insults aimed at God have fallen on him. He begs God to answer him in His loyal kindness and draw him out of the mire. He found no comforters, and they gave him vinegar for his thirst. He calls for judgement on his persecutors, then turns to praise, for the LORD hears the needy and will save Zion.

For the director: to the tune of “Lilies”. Of David.

1 Save me, O God, for the water is up to my neck.
2 I am sinking in deep mud, with no foothold;
I have come into deep waters, and the flood sweeps over me.
3 I am worn out with crying; my throat is parched.
My eyes fail as I wait for my God.
4 Those who hate me for no cause[1] are more than the hairs of my head;
many are those who would destroy me, my enemies without reason.
Must I now give back what I did not steal?
5 O God, You know my folly; my guilt is not hidden from You.
6 Let those who wait for You not be put to shame because of me, Lord GOD of Armies;
let those who seek You not be disgraced because of me, God of Israel.
7 For it is for Your sake that I have borne reproach,
and shame has covered my face.
8 I have become a stranger to my brothers,
a foreigner to my mother’s sons.
9 For zeal for Your house has consumed me,
and the insults of those who insulted You have fallen on me.[2]
10 When I wept and humbled my soul with fasting,
it brought me reproach.

11 When I put on sackcloth for my clothing, they made a byword of me.

12 The people at the gate gossip about me, and the drunkards make up songs about me.

13 But as for me, my prayer is to You, LORD, at a time of Your favour. In Your great loyal kindness, O God, answer me with Your faithful salvation.

14 Rescue me from the mire, and do not let me sink; let me be rescued from those who hate me and from the deep waters.

15 Do not let the flood sweep over me, or the deep swallow me, or the pit close its mouth over me.

16 Answer me, LORD, for Your loyal kindness is good; in Your great mercy turn to me.

17 Do not hide Your face from Your servant; I am in distress, so answer me quickly.

18 Draw near to me and redeem me; set me free because of my enemies.

19 You know my reproach, my shame and my disgrace; all my foes are before You.

20 Reproach has broken my heart, and I am in despair. I looked for sympathy, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none.

21 They gave me poison for food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.[3]

22 Let their table become a snare and a trap for them, and a retribution for their allies.[4]

23 Let their eyes grow dark so that they cannot see, and make their backs tremble for ever.

24 Pour out Your wrath on them; let Your burning anger overtake them.

25 Let their dwelling become desolate, and let there be no one to live in their tents.[5]

26 For they persecute the one You have struck, and they talk of the pain of those You have wounded.

27 Add guilt to their guilt; let them have no share in Your righteousness.

28 Let their names be wiped from the book of life, and not be written among the righteous.

29 But I am afflicted and in pain; let Your salvation, O God, set me on high.

30 I will praise God's name in song and glorify Him with thanks.

31 This will please the LORD more than an ox, or a bull with its horns and hooves.

32 The humble will see it and be glad; you who seek God, let your hearts revive.

33 For the LORD hears the needy and does not despise His own who are prisoners.

34 Let heaven and earth praise Him, the seas and all that moves in them.

35 For God will save Zion and rebuild the towns of Judah; people will live there and possess it.

36 The children of His servants will inherit it, and those who love His name will live in it.

1 Quoted in John 15:25.
2 Quoted in John 2:17 and Romans 15:3.
3 Compare Matthew 27:34, 48; John 19:28–30.
4 Verses 22–23 are quoted, from the Greek, in Romans 11:9–10.
5 Quoted of Judas in Acts 1:20.

Psalm 70

> *Psalm 70 is a short, urgent cry for help, nearly the same as Psalm 40:13–17. David asks God to hurry to rescue him. He prays that those who seek his life will be shamed and turned back, and that all who seek God will rejoice and say at all times, "God is great!" He is poor and needy, so he asks God to come quickly and not to delay.*

For the director. Of David, for remembrance.

1 Be pleased, O God, to rescue me; LORD, come quickly to help me.[1]

2 Let those who seek my life be put to shame and confusion; let those who wish me harm be turned back and disgraced.

3 Let those who say, "Aha, aha!" turn back because of their shame.

4 But let all who seek You be glad and rejoice in You; let those who love Your salvation say at all times, "God is great!"

5 As for me, I am poor and needy; come quickly to me, O God. You are my help and my rescuer; LORD, do not delay.

1 Compare Psalm 40:13–17.

Psalm 71

Psalm 71 is the prayer of an old man. He has taken refuge in the LORD, his rock and fortress, who has been his hope since his youth, indeed since birth. He asks not to be cast off in old age when his strength fails, though his enemies say that God has forsaken him. He will hope continually and tell of God's righteousness all day long. He asks God not to forsake him until he has declared His power to the next generation. Though God has shown him many troubles, He will revive him again, and he will praise the Holy One of Israel with harp and lyre.

1 In You, LORD, I have taken refuge; let me never be put to shame.[1]

2 In Your righteousness rescue me and set me free; turn Your ear to me and save me.

3 Be my rock of refuge, where I can always go; You have commanded that I be saved, for You are my rock and my fortress.

4 Rescue me, my God, from the hand of the wicked, from the grip of the unjust and the cruel.

5 For You are my hope, Lord GOD, my trust since my youth.

6 I have leaned on You since birth; You brought me out of my mother's womb. My praise is always of You.

7 I have been a wonder to many, but You are my strong refuge.

8 My mouth is filled with Your praise, with Your splendour all day long.

9 Do not cast me off in my old age; do not forsake me when my strength fails.

10 For my enemies speak about me, and those who watch for my life plot together.

11 They say, "God has forsaken him. Pursue him and seize him, for no one will rescue him."

12 O God, do not be far from me; my God, come quickly to help me.

13 Let my accusers be put to shame and consumed; let those who seek my harm be covered with reproach and disgrace.

14 But I will always hope, and I will praise You more and more.

15 My mouth will tell of Your righteousness, of Your salvation all day long, though I cannot know their measure.

16 I will come with the mighty deeds of the Lord GOD; I will proclaim Your righteousness, Yours alone.

17 O God, You have taught me from my youth, and to this day I declare Your wonders.

18 Even when I am old and grey, O God, do not forsake me, until I declare Your strength to the next generation, Your might to all who are to come.

19 Your righteousness, O God, reaches the heights. You have done mighty things; O God, who can compare with You?

20 You have shown me many troubles and evils, but You will revive me again; from the depths of the earth You will bring me up again.

21 You will increase my honour and comfort me once more.

22 I too will thank You with the harp for Your faithfulness, my God; I will make music for You on the lyre, Holy One of Israel.

23 My lips will shout for joy when I sing to You, and so will my soul, which You have redeemed.

24 My tongue too will tell of Your righteousness all day long, for those who sought my harm have been put to shame and disgrace.

1 Verses 1–3 are close to Psalm 31:1–3.

Psalm 72

Psalm 72 is a prayer for the king, closing Book Two. The psalmist asks God to give the king His justice, so that he will judge the poor rightly, defend the needy and crush the oppressor. May he endure as long as the sun and be like rain on mown grass. May he rule from sea to sea, and may kings bring him gifts and all nations serve him, for he rescues the needy, and their blood is precious to him. May his name endure for ever and all nations be blessed in him. The psalm ends with a blessing on the God of Israel, whose glory fills the earth, and the note that the prayers of David are ended.

Of Solomon.

1 Give the king Your justice, O God, and the king's
son Your righteousness.
2 May he judge Your people with righteousness,
and Your afflicted with justice.
3 Let the mountains yield peace for the people, and
the hills yield righteousness.
4 May he defend the afflicted among the people,
save the children of the needy and crush the
oppressor.
5 May they fear You[1] as long as the sun and moon
endure, through all generations.
6 May he be like rain falling on mown grass, like
showers watering the earth.
7 In his days may the righteous flourish, and peace
abound until the moon is no more.
8 May he rule from sea to sea, and from the River
to the ends of the earth.
9 May the desert tribes bow before him, and his
enemies lick the dust.
10 May the kings of Tarshish and of the coasts pay
tribute; may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring
their gifts.
11 May all kings bow down to him and all nations
serve him.
12 For he rescues the needy who cry out, the
afflicted who have no helper.
13 He has pity on the poor and needy and saves the
lives of the needy.
14 He redeems them from oppression and violence,
for their blood is precious in his sight.
15 Long may he live! May gold from Sheba be given
to him; may people pray for him continually and
bless him all day long.
16 May there be abundant grain in the land, waving
on the tops of the hills. May its fruit flourish like
Lebanon, and may the people of the cities thrive
like the grass of the field.
17 May his name endure for ever; may his name
increase as long as the sun. May all nations be
blessed in him and call him blessed.[2]
18 Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel,
who alone does wonders.
19 Blessed be His glorious name for ever; may His
glory fill all the earth. Amen and Amen.
20 The prayers of David son of Jesse are ended.[3]

1 The Greek has 'May he endure'.

2 Compare Genesis 12:3.

3 This closes Book Two. Some later psalms also bear David's name.

Psalm 73

Psalm 73 opens Book Three with Asaph's honest struggle. God is good to the pure in heart, but Asaph nearly slipped when he envied the prosperity of the wicked, who are healthy, proud, violent and scornful, and ask how God can know. Had he kept his heart clean for nothing? It troubled him until he entered God's sanctuary and saw their end: they stand on slippery ground and are swept away. He had been senseless as a beast, yet God holds his right hand and guides him. Whom has he in heaven but God? His flesh and heart may fail, but God is his portion for ever, and it is good for him to be near God.

A psalm of Asaph.

1 God is indeed good to Israel, to all whose hearts
are pure.[1]
2 As for me, my feet nearly gave way; my steps all
but slid from under me.

3 For I was jealous of the arrogant when I watched
the wicked prosper.
4 They have no pangs in their death; their bodies
are sleek and strong.
5 They are free from the burdens others bear; they
are not struck down as others are.
6 So pride is their necklace, and violence covers
them like a garment.
7 Their eyes bulge from fatness; the imaginations
of their hearts run wild.
8 They sneer and speak with spite; from on high
they threaten to oppress.
9 They set their mouths against the heavens, and
their tongues strut through the earth.
10 So the people turn to them and drink in all they
say.[2]
11 They say, “How can God know? Does the Most
High have any knowledge?”
12 See, these are the wicked, always at ease as
they grow in wealth.
13 Surely in vain have I kept my heart pure and
washed my hands in innocence.
14 For all day long I have been struck down, and
rebuked every morning.
15 Had I said, “I will talk like that,” I would have
been false to Your children.
16 Yet when I tried to make sense of this, it wearied
me,
17 until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I
saw what their end would be.
18 Surely You set them on slippery ground; You
cast them down to ruin.
19 How suddenly they are destroyed, swept away
by terrors!
20 Like a dream when one wakes, Lord, so when
You rouse Yourself You despise their image.
21 When my heart was embittered and I was
pierced within,
22 I was stupid and knew nothing; I was a brute
beast before You.
23 Yet I am always with You; You hold me by my
right hand.
24 You guide me with Your counsel, and afterwards
You will take me into glory.
25 Whom have I in heaven but You? And there is
nothing on earth I desire besides You.
26 My flesh and heart may waste away, but God is
my heart’s rock and my portion for ever.
27 See, those who are far from You will perish; You
destroy all who are unfaithful to You.
28 But as for me, it is good to be near God. I have
made the Lord GOD my refuge, so that I may tell
of all Your works.

1 Book Three of the Psalms is Psalms 73–89.
2 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain.

Psalm 74

> *Psalm 74 laments the destruction of the sanctuary. Why has God rejected His flock for ever? The psalmist asks Him to remember the people He redeemed and Mount Zion. Enemies have roared in the meeting place, smashed its carved work with axes and burned the sanctuary, and there are no more prophets. How long will the enemy mock? Yet God is King from of old: He divided the sea, crushed Leviathan, split open springs and set the bounds of the earth. The psalmist pleads with God to remember His covenant, not to forget His afflicted people, and to rise up and plead His own cause.*

A maskil of Asaph.

1 Why, O God, have You rejected us for ever? Why
does Your anger smoke against the sheep of Your
pasture?[1]
2 Remember Your congregation, which You
acquired long ago, the tribe of Your inheritance,
which You redeemed, Mount Zion, where You have
dwelt.
3 Turn Your steps to these everlasting ruins, to all
the damage the enemy has done in the sanctuary.
4 Your foes have roared in the place where You met
with us; they have set up their own banners as
signs.
5 They behaved like men swinging axes in a thicket
of trees.

6 And now they have smashed all its carved work
with hatchets and hammers.
7 They have set fire to Your sanctuary; they have
defiled the dwelling place of Your name, bringing
it to the ground.
8 They said in their hearts, “We will crush them
completely.” They have burned every meeting
place of God in the land.
9 We see no signs for us; there is no prophet any
more, and none of us knows how long this will
last.
10 How long, O God, will the foe mock? Will the
enemy revile Your name for ever?
11 Why do You hold back Your hand, Your right
hand? Take it from Your bosom and destroy them!
12 Yet God is my King from of old, bringing
salvation on the earth.
13 By Your strength You split the sea; You smashed
the heads of the monsters on the waters.
14 You crushed the heads of Leviathan[2] and gave
him as food to the creatures of the desert.
15 You split open springs and streams; You dried up
ever-flowing rivers.
16 Yours is the day, and Yours also the night; You
established the moon and the sun.
17 You set all the borders of the earth; You shaped
summer and winter.
18 Remember this: the enemy has mocked You,
LORD, and a foolish people has reviled Your name.
19 Do not hand over the soul of Your dove to the
wild animals; do not forget the life of Your
afflicted people for ever.
20 Look to Your covenant, for the dark places of the
land are full of the haunts of violence.
21 Do not let the oppressed turn back in shame; let
the poor and needy praise Your name.
22 Rise up, O God, and plead Your cause;
remember how fools mock You all day long.
23 Do not forget the clamour of Your foes, the
uproar of those who rise against You, which goes
up continually.

1 Probably written after the Babylonians destroyed the temple in 586 BC.
2 A sea monster, symbol of chaos; here perhaps Egypt at the Red Sea.

Psalm 75

Psalm 75 gives thanks that God’s name is near. God speaks: at the time He chooses He will judge with fairness, for He holds the pillars of the earth steady. The boastful are warned not to lift up their horns, for exaltation does not come from east or west; God is the judge, who brings one down and lifts up another. In the LORD’s hand is a cup of foaming wine, and all the wicked must drink it to the dregs. The psalmist will sing praise for ever, for the horns of the wicked will be cut off.

For the director: “Do Not Destroy”. A psalm of Asaph. A song.

1 We give thanks to You, O God, we give thanks, for
Your name is near; people tell of Your wonders.
2 “At the time I appoint I will judge with fairness.
3 When the earth and all who live on it totter, it is I
who hold its pillars firm. Selah.
4 I say to the boastful, ‘Do not boast,’ and to the
wicked, ‘Do not lift up your horn.[1]
5 Do not lift up your horn against heaven, or speak
with a stiff neck.’”
6 For exaltation does not come from the east or the
west, nor from the wilderness.
7 It is God who judges: He brings one down and
lifts up another.
8 For in the LORD’s hand is a cup of foaming wine,
well mixed; He pours it out, and all the wicked of
the earth must drain it to the dregs.
9 But I will proclaim it for ever; I will sing praise to
the God of Jacob.
10 All the horns of the wicked I will cut off, but the
horns of the righteous will be lifted up.

1 The horn is a sign of strength and pride.

Psalm 76

Psalm 76 celebrates God's victory from Zion. God is known in Judah, and His dwelling is in Salem. There He broke the weapons of war. He is more majestic than the mountains; the warriors sleep their last sleep and the horse and chariot lie still at His rebuke. Who can stand before Him when He is angry? He rises to judge and to save the humble of the earth, and even human wrath brings Him praise. Let all make vows to the LORD and bring gifts to the One who is to be feared.

For the director: with stringed instruments. A psalm of Asaph. A song.

1 God is known in Judah; His name is great in Israel.

2 His tent is in Salem,[1] His dwelling place in Zion.

3 There He broke the flashing arrows, the shield, the sword and the weapons of war. Selah.

4 You are radiant, more majestic than the mountains of prey.

5 The brave were plundered and sank into their last sleep; none of the warriors could lift a hand.

6 At Your rebuke, God of Jacob, both horse and chariot lay stunned.

7 You alone are to be feared! Who can stand before You when You are angry?

8 From heaven You pronounced judgement; the earth feared and was still,

9 when God rose up to judge, to save all the humble of the earth. Selah.

10 Even human wrath brings You praise; You restrain the remnant of wrath.

11 Make vows to the LORD your God and fulfil them; let all around Him bring gifts to the One who is to be feared.

12 He cuts down the spirit of rulers; He is feared by the kings of the earth.

1 Jerusalem; compare Genesis 14:18.

Psalm 77

Psalm 77 moves from sleepless distress to remembering God's great acts. Asaph cries to God and will not be comforted. He remembers former days and asks whether the Lord has rejected him for ever, whether His loyal kindness has ceased. Then he turns to remember the deeds of the LORD, His wonders of old. God's way is holy; He redeemed His people, and the waters saw Him and trembled. His path was through the sea, though His footprints were not seen, and He led His people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

For the director: for Jeduthun. Of Asaph. A psalm.

1 I cry aloud to God, aloud to God, and He will hear me.

2 In the day of my trouble I seek the Lord; at night my hand is stretched out without tiring, and my soul refuses to be comforted.

3 I remember God, and I moan; I meditate, and my spirit grows faint. Selah.

4 You keep my eyelids from closing; I am so troubled that I cannot speak.

5 I think of the former days, the years long past.

6 I remember my song in the night; I meditate in my heart, and my spirit searches:

7 "Will the Lord reject for ever? Will He never show favour again?

8 Has His loyal kindness ceased for ever? Has His promise failed for all time?

9 Has God forgotten His grace? Has His anger shut off His compassion?" Selah.

10 Then I said, "This is my grief, that the right hand of the Most High has changed."[1]

11 I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember Your wonders of old.

12 I will meditate on all Your work and consider Your mighty acts.

13 Your way, O God, is holy. What god is as great as our God?

14 You are the God who works wonders; You have shown Your strength among the peoples.

15 With Your arm You redeemed Your people, the descendants of Jacob and Joseph. Selah.

16 The waters saw You, O God; the waters saw You and writhed; even the deeps trembled.

17 The clouds poured down water; the skies sent out thunder, and Your arrows flashed back and forth.

18 Your thunder rolled in the whirlwind; lightning lit up the world; the earth quaked and shook.

19 Your way was through the sea, Your path through the mighty waters, though Your footprints were not seen.

20 You led Your people like sheep, through the hands of Moses and Aaron.

1 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain.

Psalm 78

Psalm 78 is a long teaching psalm from Asaph, retelling Israel's history as a warning. What the fathers have told must be passed on, so that the children will trust God and not be like a stubborn generation. God divided the sea, led them, split rocks and rained down manna and quail, yet they kept sinning and testing Him, and though He struck them, He was compassionate and forgave. They forgot the plagues in Egypt and the rescue from it. In the land they provoked Him with high places, so He abandoned Shiloh and gave His people to the sword. Then the Lord woke as from sleep, chose Judah and Mount Zion, and chose David, who shepherded them with integrity.

A maskil of Asaph.

1 Listen, my people, to my teaching; turn your ears to the words of my mouth.

2 I will open my mouth in parables;[1] I will utter hidden things from of old,

3 things we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us.

4 We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praises of the LORD, His might and the wonders He has done.

5 He established a testimony in Jacob and set up a law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers to teach their children,

6 so that the next generation might know them, the children yet to be born, and they in turn might tell their children.

7 Then they would put their confidence in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments.

8 They would not be like their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation whose heart was not steadfast, whose spirit was not faithful to God.

9 The men of Ephraim, armed with bows, turned back on the day of battle.

10 They did not keep God's covenant, and they refused to walk in His law.

11 They forgot what He had done, the wonders He had shown them.

12 He worked wonders in the sight of their fathers in the land of Egypt, in the region of Zoan.

13 He split the sea and led them through; He made the waters stand up like a wall.

14 By day He led them with a cloud, and all night long with a light of fire.

15 He split rocks in the wilderness and gave them drink as abundant as the deeps.

16 He brought streams out of the rock and made water flow down like rivers.

17 But they went on sinning against Him, rebelling in the desert against the Most High.

18 They tested God in their hearts by demanding the food they craved.

19 They spoke against God and said, "Can God lay a table in the wilderness?

20 He struck the rock, and water gushed out and streams overflowed. But can He give bread as well? Can He provide meat for His people?"

21 When the LORD heard, He was furious; fire broke out against Jacob, and anger rose against Israel,

22 because they did not believe in God or trust in His salvation.

23 Yet He gave orders to the skies above and threw open heaven's doors.

24 He rained down manna for them to eat and gave them the grain of heaven.[2]

25 Mortals ate the bread of angels; He sent them food in abundance.

26 He let loose the east wind in the heavens and drove the south wind by His power.

27 He rained meat on them like dust, winged birds like the sand of the seas.

28 He made them fall inside their camp, all around their tents.

29 So they ate and were well filled, for He gave them what they craved.

30 But before they had turned from their craving, while the food was still in their mouths,

31 the anger of God rose against them; He killed the strongest of them and struck down the young men of Israel.

32 In spite of all this they went on sinning; they did not believe in His wonders.

33 So He ended their days in futility and their years in terror.

34 When He killed them, they sought Him; they turned back and looked eagerly for God.

35 They recalled that God was their rock, and God Most High their redeemer.

36 But their mouths flattered Him, and their tongues lied to Him.

37 Their heart was not steadfast towards Him; they were not faithful to His covenant.

38 Yet He, being compassionate, atoned for their guilt and did not destroy them. Many times He held back His anger and did not rouse all His wrath.

39 He remembered that they were only flesh, a passing wind that does not return.

40 How many times they defied Him in the wilderness and grieved Him in the desert!

41 Again and again they tested God and provoked the Holy One of Israel.

42 They did not remember His power, the day He redeemed them from the foe,

43 when He performed His signs in Egypt and His wonders in the region of Zoan.

44 He turned their rivers to blood, so that they could not drink from their streams.

45 He sent swarms of flies that devoured them, and frogs that devastated them.

46 He gave their crops to the caterpillar, and their harvest to the locust.

47 He destroyed their vines with hail and their sycamore-figs with frost.

48 He gave over their cattle to the hail, and their flocks to bolts of lightning.

49 He sent on them His burning anger, fury, indignation and distress, a band of destroying angels.

50 He made a path for His anger; He did not spare their souls from death, but gave their lives over to the plague.

51 He struck down every firstborn in Egypt, the first fruits of their strength in the tents of Ham.

52 Then He led out His people like sheep and guided them like a flock in the wilderness.

53 He led them in safety, and they were not afraid, but the sea engulfed their enemies.

54 He brought them to His holy territory, to the mountain His right hand had acquired.

55 He drove out nations before them, allotted them their inheritance by measure, and settled the tribes of Israel in their tents.

56 But they tested and rebelled against God Most High and did not keep His testimonies.

57 They turned back and were faithless like their fathers, as unreliable as a faulty bow.

58 They angered Him with their high places and stirred His jealousy with their idols.

59 When God heard, He was furious and utterly rejected Israel.

60 He abandoned the dwelling at Shiloh, the tent where He had lived among mankind.

61 He gave His strength into captivity, His glory into the hand of the foe.

62 He handed His people over to the sword; He was furious with His own inheritance.

63 Fire consumed their young men, and their young women had no wedding songs.

64 Their priests were cut down by the sword, and their widows could shed no tears.

65 Then the Lord awoke as from sleep, like a warrior shouting from wine.

66 He drove back His foes and put them to lasting shame.

67 He turned away from Joseph’s tent and passed over the tribe of Ephraim,

68 but He picked the tribe of Judah, and Mount Zion, whom He loved.

69 He built His sanctuary like the heights, like the earth He founded for ever.

70 He chose David His servant and took him from the sheepfolds;

71 from following the nursing ewes He brought him to shepherd Jacob His people, Israel His inheritance.

72 He shepherded them with integrity of heart and guided them with skilful hands.

1 Quoted in Matthew 13:35.
2 Compare John 6:31.

Psalm 79

Psalm 79 is a lament over the fall of Jerusalem. Nations have invaded God's inheritance, defiled His temple and left Jerusalem in ruins, with the bodies of His servants unburied. How long will the LORD be angry? The psalmist asks Him to pour out His wrath on the nations that do not know Him, not to hold past sins against His people, and to help them for the glory of His name. Why should the nations ask, "Where is their God?" He asks that the groans of the prisoners will reach God, and he promises that His people will thank Him for ever.

A psalm of Asaph.

1 O God, the nations have invaded Your inheritance; they have defiled Your holy temple and reduced Jerusalem to rubble.[1]

2 They have given the bodies of Your servants to the birds of the air as food, the flesh of Your faithful ones to the wild animals.

3 They have poured out their blood like water all around Jerusalem, and there is no one to bury them.

4 We have become a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and a mockery to those around us.

5 How long, LORD? Will You be angry for ever? Will Your jealousy burn like fire?

6 Pour out Your fury on the nations that do not know You, on the kingdoms that do not call on Your name.

7 For they have devoured Jacob and laid waste his home.

8 Do not hold against us the sins of past generations; let Your mercy come quickly to meet us, for we are brought very low.

9 Help us, God our Saviour, for the glory of Your name; rescue us and atone for our sins for the sake of Your name.

10 Why should the nations say, "Where is their God?" Before our eyes, let the nations know that You avenge the spilled blood of Your servants.

11 Let the groans of the prisoners come before You; by Your great arm preserve those condemned to die.

12 Pay back sevenfold into the laps of our neighbours the insults they have hurled at You, Lord.

13 Then we Your people, the sheep of Your pasture, will thank You for ever; from generation to generation we will tell of Your praise.

1 Compare 2 Kings 25 and Jeremiah 52. Verses 6–7 are close to Jeremiah 10:25.

Psalm 80

Psalm 80 is a plea for restoration, with the refrain, "Restore us, O God; let Your face shine, that we may be saved." The Shepherd of Israel, enthroned on the cherubim, is asked to stir up His might. He has fed His people with tears and made them a scorn. Israel is pictured as a vine He brought out of Egypt and planted, which filled the land; but now its walls are broken, and it is ravaged and burned. The psalmist asks God to look down, to watch over this vine, and to let His hand rest on the man at His right hand, and the people will not turn away again.

For the director: to the tune of "Lilies of the Testimony". Of Asaph. A psalm.

1 Listen, Shepherd of Israel, You who lead Joseph like a flock. You who are enthroned on the cherubim, shine out

2 before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh. Rouse Your strength and come to our rescue.

3 Restore us, O God; let Your face shine, that we may be saved.

4 LORD God of Armies, how long will You smoke
with anger against the prayers of Your people?
5 You have fed them with the bread of tears and
made them drink tears by the bowlful.
6 You have made us a cause of strife to our
neighbours, and our enemies mock us.
7 Restore us, God of Armies; let Your face shine,
that we may be saved.
8 You uprooted a vine from Egypt; You cleared out
the nations and planted it.[1]
9 You prepared the ground for it; it put down its
roots and spread through the land.
10 The mountains were covered with its shade, and
the mighty cedars with its branches.
11 It stretched its branches to the Sea and its
shoots to the River.
12 Why have You broken down its walls, so that all
who pass by pluck its fruit?
13 Boars from the forest ravage it, and creatures of
the field feed on it.
14 Return, God of Armies! Look down from heaven
and see; take care of this vine,
15 the stock Your right hand has planted, the son
You raised up for Yourself.
16 It has been burned with fire and cut down; at
Your rebuke they perish.
17 Let Your hand rest on the man at Your right
hand, the son of man You raised up for Yourself.
18 Then we will never turn from You; revive us, and
we will call on Your name.
19 Restore us, LORD God of Armies; let Your face
shine, that we may be saved.

1 Compare Isaiah 5:1–7 and John 15:1.

Psalm 81

> *Psalm 81 begins as a call to a festival, with singing, tambourine and ram's horn at the new moon, as God decreed for Israel. Then God speaks: He relieved them of their burden in Egypt and answered them from the thundercloud. He pleads with His people to listen and have no foreign god, for He is the LORD who brought them out of Egypt; if they open their mouths, He will fill them. But they would not listen, so He gave them over to their stubborn hearts. If only they would walk in His ways, He would subdue their enemies and feed them with the finest wheat and honey from the rock.*

For the director: on the gittith. Of Asaph.

1 Sing for joy to God our strength; shout to the God
of Jacob!
2 Raise a song and strike the tambourine, the
sweet lyre with the harp.
3 Sound the ram's horn at the new moon, and at
the full moon, for our feast day.[1]
4 For this is a statute for Israel, a rule of the God of
Jacob.
5 He established it as a testimony in Joseph when
He went out against the land of Egypt. I hear a
voice I did not know:
6 "I removed the burden from his shoulder; his
hands were freed from the basket.
7 In your distress you called, and I rescued you; I
answered you from the hiding place of the
thunder; I tested you at the waters of Meribah.
Selah.
8 Hear, My people, while I warn you. Israel, if only
you would listen!
9 There must be no foreign god among you; you
must not bow down to an alien god.
10 I am the LORD your God, who brought you up
from Egypt. Open your mouth wide, and I will fill
it.
11 But My people did not listen to My voice; Israel
would have none of Me.
12 So I gave them over to their stubborn hearts, to
walk in their own counsels.
13 If only My people would listen to Me, if Israel
would walk in My ways,
14 I would quickly bring their enemies low and turn
My hand on their foes.
15 Those who hate the LORD would cringe before
Him, and their doom would last for ever.
16 But I would feed you with the finest wheat, and
satisfy you with honey from the rock."

1 Perhaps the Feast of Booths; see Leviticus 23:24, 34.

Psalm 82

Psalm 82 pictures God taking His stand in the divine assembly and judging the "gods". How long will they judge unjustly and show favour to the wicked? They must defend the poor and the fatherless and rescue the needy. But they know nothing and walk in darkness, and the foundations of the earth are shaken. God says that, though they are called gods and sons of the Most High, they will die like mortals. The psalmist asks God to rise and judge the earth, for all the nations are His. Jesus quotes verse 6 in John 10.

A psalm of Asaph.

1 God takes His stand in the divine assembly; He gives judgement among the gods.[1]

2 "How long will you give unjust rulings and favour the wicked? Selah.

3 Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the rights of the afflicted and the destitute.

4 Save the weak and needy; free them from the grip of the wicked."

5 They do not know or understand; they walk about in darkness, and all the foundations of the earth are shaken.

6 I said, "You are gods; every one of you is a son of the Most High.

7 But you will die like mortals and fall like any other ruler."

8 Rise up, O God, judge the earth, for all the nations are Your inheritance.

1 Perhaps heavenly powers, or human rulers acting as gods; compare John 10:34–36.

Psalm 83

Psalm 83 asks God not to stay silent, for His enemies have conspired against His people, saying that they will wipe out the name of Israel. A league of nations, Edom, Moab, Ammon, Philistia, Tyre and Assyria, has formed against Him. The psalmist asks God to deal with them as He dealt with Midian, Sisera and Jabin, and to drive them away like whirling dust and pursue them with His storm. May they be put to shame, so that they will seek His name and know that the LORD alone is the Most High over all the earth.

A song. A psalm of Asaph.

1 O God, do not keep silent; do not hold Your peace or be still, O God.

2 For see, Your enemies are in uproar, and those who hate You have raised their heads.

3 They lay crafty plans against Your people and plot against those You treasure.

4 "Come," they say, "let us wipe them out as a nation, so that the name of Israel is remembered no more."

5 For they have plotted together with one mind; they have made a covenant against You:

6 the clans of Edom and Ishmael, of Moab and the Hagrites,

7 Gebal, Ammon and Amalek, Philistia with the people of Tyre.

8 Even Assyria has joined them to lend strength to the descendants of Lot. Selah.

9 Do to them as You did to Midian, as You did to Sisera and Jabin at the Kishon brook,[1]

10 who were destroyed at En-dor and became dung on the ground.

11 Treat their nobles like Oreb and Zeeb, and all their rulers like Zebah and Zalmunna,

12 who said, "Let us take possession of the pastures of God."

13 My God, make them like tumbleweed, like straw before the wind.

14 As fire burns a forest, as flame sets the mountains ablaze,

15 so chase them with Your tempest and terrify them with Your hurricane.

16 Fill their faces with shame, so that they may seek Your name, LORD.

17 Let them be put to shame and terrified for ever; let them perish in disgrace.

18 Let them know that You alone, whose name is the LORD, are the Most High over all the earth.

1 See Judges 4–8.

Psalm 84

Psalm 84 is a pilgrim's love song to the house of God. How lovely is the LORD's dwelling! The psalmist's soul longs for His courts, and even the sparrow has found a home near His altars. Blessed are those who live in His house, and blessed are those whose hearts are set on the pilgrim roads, who pass through the Valley of Baca and make it a place of springs, and go from strength to strength. One day in God's courts is better than a thousand elsewhere; it is better to stand at the threshold of His house than to live in the tents of the wicked. The LORD is a sun and shield, and He withholds no good thing from those who walk uprightly.

For the director: on the gittith. Of the sons of Korah. A psalm.

1 How lovely is Your dwelling place, LORD of Armies!

2 My soul longs, it faints for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh cry out for joy to the living God.

3 Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest where she can raise her young, close by Your altars, LORD of Armies, my King and my God.

4 Blessed are those who live in Your house; they praise You continually. Selah.

5 Blessed are those whose strength is in You, whose hearts are set on the pilgrim roads.

6 As they pass through the Valley of Baca,[1] they make it a place of springs, and the autumn rain covers it with pools.

7 They go from strength to strength, until each appears before God in Zion.

8 LORD God of Armies, listen to my prayer; hear me, God of Jacob. Selah.

9 Look on our shield, O God; look with favour on the face of Your anointed.

10 For one day in Your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God than live in the tents of the wicked.

11 For the LORD God is a sun and a shield; the LORD gives grace and glory. He withholds no good thing from those whose walk is blameless.

12 LORD of Armies, blessed is the one who trusts in You.

1 Perhaps 'the Valley of Weeping', or of balsam trees.

Psalm 85

Psalm 85 looks back on God's past favour and asks for it again. The LORD restored Jacob, forgave His people's guilt and turned from His anger. Now the people ask Him to restore them once more and revive them, so that they may rejoice. The psalmist will listen to what God says, for He speaks peace to His people, and His salvation is near to those who fear Him. Loyal kindness and truth meet, righteousness and peace kiss; truth springs from the earth and righteousness looks down from heaven, the land yields its harvest, and righteousness goes before Him.

For the director. Of the sons of Korah. A psalm.

1 LORD, You showed favour to Your land; You restored the fortunes of Jacob.[1]

2 You forgave the guilt of Your people and covered all their sins. Selah.

3 You withdrew all Your fury and turned from Your burning anger.

4 Restore us again, God our Saviour, and put away Your displeasure towards us.

5 Will You be angry with us for ever? Will You prolong Your anger through all generations?

6 Will You not revive us again, so that Your people may rejoice in You?

7 Show us Your loyal kindness, LORD, and grant us Your salvation.

8 I will listen to what God the LORD will say, for He speaks peace to His people, His faithful ones; but let them not turn back to folly.

9 Surely He is ready to save those who fear Him, so that His glory may dwell in our land.

10 Loyal kindness and truth have met; righteousness and peace have kissed.

11 Truth springs up from the earth, and righteousness looks down from heaven.

12 The LORD will indeed give what is good, and our land will yield its harvest.

13 Righteousness goes before Him and makes a path for His steps.

1 Perhaps written after the return from exile.

Psalm 86

Psalm 86 is David's prayer in distress, woven from phrases of other psalms. He is poor and needy, God's devoted servant, and he asks the Lord to bring him joy, for He is good and forgiving, rich in loyal kindness to all who call on Him. There is no god like the Lord, and all nations will come and worship Him. David asks to be taught God's way, with an undivided heart. Arrogant men seek his life, but the Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger. He asks for a sign of God's goodness, so that those who hate him will be put to shame.

A prayer of David.

1 Turn Your ear, LORD, and answer me, for I am poor and needy.

2 Guard my life, for I am devoted to You. You are my God; save Your servant who trusts in You.

3 Show me Your grace, Lord, for all day long I call to You.

4 Gladden the soul of Your servant, for I lift up my soul to You, Lord.

5 For You, Lord, are good and forgiving, rich in loyal kindness to all who call on You.

6 Give ear, LORD, to my prayer; listen to my plea for mercy.

7 When trouble comes I call to You, for You will answer me.

8 There is none like You among the gods, Lord, and no deeds like Yours.

9 All the nations You have made will come and bow before You, Lord, and give glory to Your name.[1]

10 For You are great and do wonders; You alone are God.

11 Teach me Your way, LORD, so that I may walk in Your truth; give me an undivided heart to fear Your name.

12 I will thank You, Lord my God, with all my heart, and I will glorify Your name for ever.

13 For great is Your loyal kindness towards me; You have rescued my soul from the depths of Sheol.

14 O God, arrogant men have risen against me; a band of ruthless men seeks my life, and they have no regard for You.

15 But You, Lord, are a God compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and rich in loyal kindness and faithfulness.

16 Turn to me and be gracious to me; give Your strength to Your servant, and save the son of Your maidservant.

17 Show me a sign of Your goodness, so that those who hate me may see and be put to shame, for You, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

1 Compare Revelation 15:4.

Psalm 87

Psalm 87 is a short song of Zion, the city God founded on His holy mountain and loves more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are said of her. God will record Egypt, Babylon, Philistia, Tyre and Cush among those who know Him, and of each it will be said that they were born in Zion. The Most High Himself will establish her. As the LORD registers the peoples, He will note that this one was born there, and singers and dancers will say that all their springs are in Zion.

Of the sons of Korah. A psalm. A song.

1 He has founded His city on the holy mountains.

2 The LORD prefers the gates of Zion to all the dwellings of Jacob.

3 Glorious things are said of you, city of God. Selah.

4 "I will mention Rahab[1] and Babylon among those who know Me. See, Philistia, Tyre and Cush: 'This

one was born there.’”

5 And of Zion it will be said, “Everyone was born in her,” and the Most High Himself will make her firm.

6 The LORD will note as He registers the peoples, “This one was born there.” Selah.

7 Singers and dancers alike will say, “All my springs are in you.”

1 Here a poetic name for Egypt; compare Isaiah 30:7.

Psalm 88

Psalm 88 is the darkest of the psalms. Heman cries day and night to the LORD, the God who saves him, for his soul is full of troubles and his life draws near to Sheol. He is counted among the dead, forgotten and cut off, and God’s wrath lies heavy on him. God has taken his friends from him. He asks whether the dead will praise God, or God’s loyal kindness be told in the grave. He has been afflicted from his youth, and God’s terrors have overwhelmed him. Unlike almost every other psalm, it ends without relief: darkness is his closest friend.

A song. A psalm of the sons of Korah. For the director: on mahalath leannoth. A maskil of Heman the Ezrahite.

1 LORD, the God who saves me, day and night I cry out before You.[1]

2 Let my prayer come before You; turn Your ear to my cry.

3 For my soul has had its fill of troubles, and my life is on the edge of Sheol.

4 I am counted among those who go down to the pit; I am like a man without strength,

5 cast off among the dead, like the slain lying in their graves, whom You no longer remember, cut off from Your care.

6 You have put me in the lowest pit, in dark places, in the depths.

7 Your wrath lies heavy on me, and You have overwhelmed me with all Your waves. Selah.

8 You have taken my friends far from me and made me repulsive to them. I am shut in and cannot escape.

9 My eyes grow dim with grief. I call to You, LORD, every day; I spread out my hands to You.

10 Do You work wonders for the dead? Do the departed rise up and praise You? Selah.

11 Is Your loyal kindness told in the grave, or Your faithfulness in Abaddon?

12 Are Your wonders known in the darkness, or Your righteousness in the land of forgetting?

13 But I cry to You for help, LORD; in the morning my prayer comes to meet You.

14 LORD, why do You turn my soul away? Why do You keep Your face hidden from me?

15 I have been afflicted and close to death from my youth; I have borne Your terrors and am in despair.

16 Your fury has swept over me; Your terrors have destroyed me.

17 They surround me like water all day long; they close in on me together.

18 You have taken my loved ones and friends from me; darkness is my closest friend.

1 The words in the title are of uncertain meaning. On Heman compare 1 Kings 4:31.

Psalm 89

Psalm 89 closes Book Three by holding God’s promise to David against the disaster of the present. Ethan sings of the LORD’s loyal kindness and faithfulness and recalls the covenant with David. No one in heaven is like the LORD, who rules the raging sea and crushed Rahab; righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne. God spoke in a vision: He anointed David, and his line will last for ever, as the sun and moon. If his sons sin, they will be punished, but God will not break His covenant. Yet now God has rejected His anointed, renounced the covenant and cast his crown in the dust. How long, LORD? Where is Your former loyal kindness? The psalm ends with the blessing that closes the third book.

A maskil of Ethan the Ezrahite.

1 I will sing of the LORD’s loyal kindness for ever;
with my mouth I will make known Your
faithfulness to all generations.[1]
2 For I said, “Your loyal kindness is built up for
ever; You have established Your faithfulness in the
heavens.”
3 You said, “I have made a covenant with the one I
chose; I have sworn an oath to David My servant:
4 ‘I will establish your offspring for ever and build
up your throne through all generations.’” Selah.
5 The heavens praise Your wonders, LORD, Your
faithfulness too in the assembly of the holy ones.
6 For who in the skies can compare with the
LORD? Who among the heavenly beings is like the
LORD,
7 a God greatly feared in the council of the holy
ones, more awesome than all who surround Him?
8 LORD God of Armies, who is mighty as You are,
LORD, with Your faithfulness all around You?
9 You rule the raging of the sea; when its waves
rise, You still them.
10 You crushed Rahab like one who is slain; with
Your strong arm You scattered Your enemies.
11 The heavens are Yours, the earth also is Yours;
You founded the world and all that is in it.
12 You created the north and the south; Tabor and
Hermon sing for joy at Your name.
13 Your arm is mighty; Your hand is strong, Your
right hand lifted high.
14 Righteousness and justice are the foundation of
Your throne; loyal kindness and truth go before
You.
15 Blessed are the people who know the joyful
shout, who walk, LORD, in the light of Your face.
16 They rejoice in Your name all day long, and they
are exalted in Your righteousness.
17 For You are the glory of their strength, and by
Your favour You lift up our horn.
18 For our shield is the LORD’s, and our king is the
Holy One of Israel’s.
19 Once You spoke in a vision to Your faithful ones
and said, “I have given help to a warrior; I have
exalted one chosen from the people.
20 I have found My servant David and anointed him
with My holy oil.[2]
21 My hand will sustain him; My arm will
strengthen him.
22 No enemy will outwit him; no wicked man will
oppress him.
23 I will crush his foes before him and strike down
those who hate him.
24 My faithfulness and My loyal kindness will be
with him, and through My name his horn will be
lifted high.
25 I will set his hand over the sea, his right hand
over the rivers.
26 He will cry to Me, ‘You are my Father, my God,
the rock who saves me.’
27 And I will appoint him My firstborn, highest
among the earth’s kings.
28 I will keep My loyal kindness for him for ever,
and My covenant with him will stand firm.
29 I will establish his offspring for ever and his
throne as long as the heavens last.
30 If his sons forsake My law and do not walk in My
rules,
31 if they violate My statutes and do not keep My
commandments,
32 then I will punish their offence with the rod and
their guilt with blows.
33 But I will not withdraw My loyal kindness from
him or be false to My faithfulness.
34 I will not violate My covenant or alter what My
lips have uttered.
35 I have sworn by My holiness, once and for ever;
to David I will not lie.
36 His offspring will endure for ever, and his throne
like the sun before Me.
37 Like the moon it will be established for ever, a
faithful witness in the skies.” Selah.
38 But You have spurned and rejected him; You are
furious with Your anointed.
39 You have disowned the covenant with Your
servant and thrown his crown in the dust.
40 You have broken down all his walls and reduced
his strongholds to ruins.
41 All who pass by plunder him; he has become the
scorn of his neighbours.
42 You have exalted the right hand of his foes and
made all his enemies rejoice.
43 You have turned back the edge of his sword and
have not supported him in battle.
44 You have put an end to his splendour and hurled
his throne down.

45 You have cut short the days of his youth and
covered him with shame. Selah.
46 How long, LORD? Will You hide Yourself for
ever? How long will Your wrath burn like fire?
47 Remember how short my time is! For what
emptiness You have created all mankind!
48 Who can live and never see death? Who can
rescue his soul from the power of Sheol? Selah.
49 Lord, where is Your former loyal kindness, which
You swore to David in Your faithfulness?
50 Remember, Lord, how Your servants are
mocked; I bear in my heart the taunts of all the
peoples,
51 with which Your enemies mock, LORD, with
which they mock the footsteps of Your anointed.
52 Blessed be the LORD for ever. Amen and Amen.[3]

1 On Ethan compare 1 Kings 4:31. Verses 3–4 and 19–37 draw on God's promise in 2 Samuel 7:8–16.
2 Compare Acts 13:22.
3 This blessing closes Book Three.

Psalm 90

> *Psalm 90 opens Book Four with the only psalm credited to Moses. The Lord has been His people's home in all generations, God from everlasting to everlasting. Mortals return to dust; a thousand years are like yesterday to Him, and human life is like grass, seventy or eighty years of toil, swiftly gone under His anger. So Moses asks God to teach us to number our days, to have compassion, to satisfy us with His loyal kindness in the morning, and to establish the work of our hands.*

A prayer of Moses the man of God.

1 Lord, You have been our home through all
generations.[1]
2 Before the mountains were born, or You brought
forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to
everlasting You are God.
3 You turn mortals back to dust and say, "Return,
you children of man."
4 In Your sight a thousand years are no more than
yesterday once it has gone, or a watch of the
night.[2]
5 You sweep people away in the sleep of death;
they are like grass that springs up in the morning.
6 In the morning it flourishes and grows, but by
evening it fades and withers.
7 For we are consumed by Your anger and terrified
by Your wrath.
8 You have placed our wrongdoing in front of You,
our hidden sins in the light of Your face.
9 For all our days pass away under Your fury; we
finish our years like a sigh.
10 The length of our life is seventy years, or eighty
if we are strong, yet their best is only trouble and
sorrow. They soon pass, and we fly away.
11 Who knows the power of Your anger? Your wrath
is as great as the fear due to You.
12 Teach us, then, to count our days rightly, so that
our hearts may grow wise.
13 Return, LORD! How long? Have pity on Your
servants.
14 Satisfy us in the morning with Your loyal
kindness, so that we may sing for joy and be glad
all our days.
15 Give us joy to match the days You have humbled
us, the years in which we have known hardship.
16 Let Your deeds be shown to Your servants, and
Your splendour to their children.
17 May the kindness of the Lord our God be upon
us. Make the work of our hands endure for us;
make the work of our hands endure.

1 Book Four of the Psalms is Psalms 90–106.
2 Compare 2 Peter 3:8.

Psalm 91

Psalm 91 is a song of security for those who live in the shelter of the Most High. The LORD is their refuge and fortress, who will rescue them from the snare and the plague and cover them with His wings. They need not fear the terror of night or the arrow by day; thousands may fall, but harm will not come near. He commands His angels to guard them. God Himself then speaks: because they love Him, He will rescue, protect and honour them, and show them His salvation. The devil quotes verses 11–12 in tempting Jesus.

1 Whoever lives in the shelter of the Most High will
rest in the shadow of the Almighty.
2 I say to the LORD, “My refuge and my fortress,
my God, in whom I trust.”
3 For He will rescue you from the fowler’s snare
and from the deadly plague.
4 He will cover you with His feathers, and under
His wings you will find refuge; His truth is a shield
and a wall.
5 You will not fear the terror of the night, or the
arrow that flies by day,
6 or the plague that stalks in the darkness, or the
destruction that lays waste at noon.
7 Though a thousand fall beside you and ten
thousand at your right hand, it will not touch you.
8 Your own eyes will simply look on and watch the
wicked repaid.
9 Because you have made the LORD your refuge,
and the Most High your home,
10 no harm will come to you, and no disaster will
come near your tent.
11 For He will command His angels concerning
you, to guard you in all your ways.[1]
12 They will lift you up in their hands, so that you
will not strike your foot against a stone.
13 You will walk over the lion and the cobra; you
will crush the young lion and the serpent
underfoot.
14 “Because he holds fast to Me in love, I will
rescue him; I will protect him, for he knows My
name.
15 When he calls to Me, I will answer; in his trouble
I will be at his side; I will deliver him and bring
him honour.
16 With long life I will satisfy him and show him My
salvation.”

1 Verses 11–12 are quoted in Matthew 4:6 and Luke 4:10–11.

Psalm 92

Psalm 92 is a song for the Sabbath. It is good to give thanks to the LORD and to proclaim His loyal kindness in the morning and His faithfulness at night, with lute and harp. His works make the psalmist glad, and His thoughts are deep. The senseless do not understand that the wicked flourish like grass only to be destroyed for ever, but the LORD is exalted for ever. He has raised the psalmist’s strength. The righteous will flourish like a palm tree and grow like a cedar; planted in the LORD’s house, they bear fruit in old age and declare that the LORD is upright.

A psalm. A song for the Sabbath day.

1 It is good to give thanks to the LORD and to sing
praise to Your name, O Most High,
2 to proclaim Your loyal kindness in the morning
and Your faithfulness at night,
3 to the music of the ten-stringed lute and the
harp, to the melody of the lyre.
4 For You, LORD, have made me glad by Your
deeds; I sing for joy at the works of Your hands.
5 How great are Your works, LORD! How very deep
are Your thoughts!
6 The senseless man does not know, and the fool
does not understand,
7 that though the wicked spring up like grass and
all evildoers flourish, they will be destroyed for
ever.
8 But You, LORD, are exalted for ever.
9 For see, Your enemies, LORD, see, Your enemies
will perish; all evildoers will be scattered.
10 But You have raised my horn like that of a wild
ox; You have poured fresh oil on me.[1]

11 My eyes have looked in triumph on my enemies;
my ears have heard the downfall of the evildoers
who rise against me.

12 The righteous will flourish like a palm tree and
grow like a cedar of Lebanon.

13 Planted in the house of the LORD, they will
flourish in the courts of our God.

14 They will still bear fruit in old age; they will stay
fresh and green,

15 declaring that the LORD is just; He is my rock,
and in Him no wrong is found.

1 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain.

Psalm 93

Psalm 93 proclaims that the LORD is King, robed in majesty and armed with strength. The world stands firm, and His throne was established long ago. The floods have lifted up their voice, but mightier than the breakers of the sea is the LORD on high. His decrees are firmly established, and holiness adorns His house for ever.

1 The LORD is King! He is robed in majesty; the
LORD is robed, armed with strength. The world is
firmly established; it cannot be shaken.[1]

2 Your throne was established long ago; You are
from everlasting.

3 The floods have risen, LORD, the floods have
raised their roar; the floods raise their crashing
waves.

4 Mightier than the thunder of the great waters,
mightier than the breakers of the sea, is the LORD
on high.

5 Your decrees are very sure; holiness adorns Your
house, LORD, for evermore.

1 Psalms 93 and 95–99 celebrate the LORD as King.

Psalm 94

Psalm 94 calls on the God of vengeance to shine out. How long will the wicked exult, crushing His people and killing the widow and the orphan, saying that the LORD does not see? Fools should think again: does He who made the ear not hear? The LORD knows that human thoughts are futile. Blessed is the one He disciplines, for He will not abandon His people. Who will stand up for the psalmist? If the LORD had not helped him, he would have gone to the land of silence. When his foot slipped, God's loyal kindness held him up, and His comfort brings him joy. The LORD is his fortress and will destroy the wicked.

1 LORD, God of vengeance, God of vengeance,
shine out!

2 Rise up, Judge of the earth; repay the proud as
they deserve.

3 How long will the wicked, LORD, how long will
the wicked exult?

4 They pour out arrogant words; all evildoers
boast.

5 They crush Your people, LORD, and afflict Your
inheritance.

6 The widow and the foreigner they put to death,
and the fatherless they murder.

7 They say, "The LORD does not see; the God of
Jacob pays no attention."

8 Pay attention, you most senseless of the people!
Fools, when will you gain insight?

9 Does He who planted the ear not hear? Does He
who formed the eye not see?

10 Does He who disciplines the nations not punish,
He who teaches mankind knowledge?

11 The LORD knows the reasonings of man, that
they are futile.[1]

12 Blessed is the man You discipline, LORD, whom
You teach from Your law,

13 to give him relief from days of trouble, until a pit
is dug for the wicked.

14 For the LORD will not forsake His people; He
will not abandon His inheritance.

15 For justice will again be righteous, and all the
upright in heart will follow it.

16 Who will stand up for me against the wicked?
Who will take my side against those who do evil?

17 If the LORD had not been my help, my soul
would soon have lived in the land of silence.
18 When I said, “My foot is slipping,” Your loyal
kindness, LORD, kept me from falling.
19 When anxious thoughts multiplied within me,
Your comforts delighted my soul.
20 Can a corrupt throne be Your ally, one that
frames injustice by law?
21 They band together against the righteous and
condemn the innocent to death.
22 But the LORD has been my fortress, and my God
the rock where I take refuge.
23 He will bring their wickedness back on them
and destroy them for their evil; the LORD our God
will destroy them.

1 Quoted in 1 Corinthians 3:20, which has ‘of the wise’.

Psalm 95

Psalm 95 calls the people to sing for joy to the LORD, the great King above all gods, who holds the depths of the earth and made the sea and the dry land. They are to bow down before their Maker, for they are the flock in His care. Then comes a warning: today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as your fathers did in the wilderness, who put Him to the test. For forty years He was angry with that generation, and swore that they would not enter His rest. Hebrews 3–4 applies this warning to believers.

1 Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us
shout to the rock of our salvation.
2 Let us come before Him with thanksgiving and
shout to Him with songs of praise.
3 For the LORD is a great God, the great King who
is over all gods.
4 In His hand are the depths of the earth, and the
mountain peaks are His.
5 The sea belongs to Him, for He made it, and the
dry land was shaped by His hands.
6 Come, let us bow down in worship; let us kneel
before the LORD our Maker.
7 For He is our God, and we are the people of His
pasture, the flock under His care. Today, if you
hear His voice,[1]
8 “Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on
the day of testing in the wilderness,[2]
9 where your fathers put Me to the test and tried
Me, though they had seen My works.
10 For forty years I was angry with that generation,
and said, ‘They always go astray in their heart;
they have not known My ways.’
11 As I swore in My wrath, ‘They shall not enter My
rest.’”

1 Verses 7–11 are quoted in Hebrews 3:7–11; see also Hebrews 4:3, 7.
2 Hebrew ‘as at Meribah, as on the day of Massah’; these names mean ‘quarrelling’ and ‘testing’. See Exodus 17:7.

Psalm 96

Psalm 96 calls all the earth to sing a new song to the LORD and to tell the nations of His glory. He is to be feared above all gods, for the gods of the nations are mere idols, while the LORD made the heavens. The families of the peoples are to ascribe glory to Him and bring an offering into His courts. Heaven, earth, sea, fields and forest are to rejoice, for He is coming to judge the earth with righteousness. Most of this psalm appears also in 1 Chronicles 16.

1 Sing a new song to the LORD; sing to the LORD,
all the earth.[1]
2 Sing to the LORD; bless His name; proclaim His
salvation day after day.
3 Declare His glory among the nations, His
wonders among all peoples.
4 For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise;
He is to be feared above all gods.
5 The gods of the nations are all mere idols, but it
was the LORD who made the heavens.
6 Splendour and majesty are before Him; strength
and glory fill His sanctuary.
7 Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples,
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.
8 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due to His name;
bring an offering as you enter His courts.

9 Worship the LORD in the splendour of holiness.
Tremble before Him, all the earth.
10 Say among the nations, “The LORD is King!”
The world is firmly established; it cannot be
moved. He will judge the peoples with fairness.
11 Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad;
let the sea roar, and everything in it.
12 Let the fields exult, and all that is in them. Then
all the forest trees will shout for joy
13 in the LORD’s presence, for He is coming, He is
coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world
with righteousness, and the peoples in His
faithfulness.

1 This psalm is found, with small differences, in 1 Chronicles 16:23–33.

Psalm 97

Psalm 97 declares that the LORD is King, and calls the earth and the many islands to rejoice. Cloud and darkness surround Him, fire goes before Him, His lightning lights up the world, and the mountains melt like wax. The heavens proclaim His righteousness. Those who serve idols are put to shame, and all gods bow to Him, while Zion is glad at His judgements. Those who love the LORD are told to hate evil, for He guards His faithful ones. Light is sown for the righteous, and they are called to rejoice in Him.

1 The LORD is King! Let the earth rejoice; let the
many islands be glad.
2 Cloud and thick darkness surround Him;
righteousness and justice are the foundation of
His throne.
3 Fire advances in front of Him and consumes His
foes all around.
4 His lightning flashes light up the world; the earth
looks on and shakes.
5 The mountains melt like wax before the LORD,
before the Lord of all the earth.
6 The heavens proclaim His righteousness, and all
the peoples see His glory.
7 All who serve carved images are put to shame,
those who boast in worthless idols; worship Him,
all you gods![1]
8 Zion hears and is glad, and the daughters of
Judah rejoice because of Your judgements, LORD.
9 For You, LORD, are the Most High, above the
whole earth; You are raised high over all gods.
10 You who love the LORD, hate evil! He guards the
lives of His faithful ones and rescues them from
the hand of the wicked.
11 Light is scattered like seed for the righteous,
and gladness for those whose hearts are true.
12 Rejoice in the LORD, you righteous, and give
thanks to His holy name.

1 The Greek has ‘all His angels’; compare Hebrews 1:6.

Psalm 98

Psalm 98 calls for a new song, for the LORD has done wonders and won the victory. He has shown His salvation to the nations and remembered His loyal kindness to Israel, and all the ends of the earth have seen it. All the earth is to shout for joy with lyre, trumpets and ram’s horn before the King. The sea, the rivers and the mountains join in, for He is coming to judge the world with righteousness.

A psalm.

1 Sing a new song to the LORD, for He has done
wonders; His right hand and His holy arm have
won Him victory.[1]
2 The LORD has made His salvation known; He has
revealed His righteousness in the sight of the
nations.
3 He has kept in mind His loyal kindness and
faithfulness towards the house of Israel; the whole
world, to its furthest bounds, has seen our God’s
salvation.
4 Shout to the LORD, all the earth; burst into joyful
song and sing praises.
5 Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre, with the
lyre and the sound of song.
6 With trumpets and the sound of the ram’s horn,
shout before the King, the LORD.

7 Let the sea roar, and everything in it, the world and those who live in it.

8 Let the rivers clap their hands; let the mountains join in singing for joy

9 before the LORD, for He comes as judge of the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with fairness.

1 The opening and close of this psalm echo Psalm 96.

Psalm 99

Psalm 99 proclaims that the LORD is King, enthroned above the cherubim and great in Zion, so that the peoples tremble. Three times it declares that He is holy. The mighty King loves justice and has done what is right in Jacob. Moses, Aaron and Samuel called on Him and He answered them, speaking from the pillar of cloud. He forgave them, yet punished their misdeeds, so the people are called to exalt Him and worship at His holy mountain.

1 The LORD is King; let the peoples tremble! He sits enthroned above the cherubim; let the earth quake.

2 The LORD is great in Zion; He is exalted over all the peoples.

3 Let them give thanks to Your name, great and awesome. He is holy!

4 The King is mighty and loves justice.[1] You have established fairness; You have done justice and righteousness in Jacob.

5 Lift high the LORD our God; bow down at His footstool. He is holy!

6 Moses and Aaron were among His priests, and Samuel among those who called on His name; they called to the LORD, and He answered them.

7 From the pillar of cloud He spoke to them; they obeyed His testimonies and the decree He gave them.

8 LORD our God, You answered them; You were a forgiving God to them, yet You punished their misdeeds.

9 Lift high the LORD our God and bow down at His holy mountain, for the LORD our God is holy.

1 The Hebrew of this line is difficult.

Psalm 100

Psalm 100 calls all the earth to shout to the LORD and to serve Him with gladness. He is God, who made us, and we are His people, the sheep of His pasture. So we are to enter His gates with thanksgiving, for He is good, and His loyal kindness and faithfulness last through all generations.

A psalm for giving thanks.

1 Shout to the LORD, all the earth.

2 Serve the LORD with gladness; come before Him with joyful song.

3 Know that the LORD is God. He made us, and we are His;[1] we are His people, the sheep of His pasture.

4 Come through His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise; thank Him and bless His name.

5 For the LORD is good; His loyal kindness endures for ever, and His faithfulness through all generations.

1 So the spoken Hebrew; the written text has ‘and not we ourselves’.

Psalm 101

Psalm 101 is a king's vow. David will sing of loyal kindness and justice and will walk with integrity in his own house. He will set nothing worthless before his eyes and will have nothing to do with evil. He will silence the slanderer and will not tolerate the proud. The faithful of the land will live with him and serve him, but no deceiver will stay in his house, and morning by morning he will rid the LORD's city of evildoers.

A psalm of David.

1 I will sing of loyal kindness and justice; to You,
LORD, I will sing praise.

2 I will give careful attention to the blameless way.
When will You come to me? I will walk with
integrity of heart within my house.

3 I will set no worthless thing before my eyes. I
hate the work of those who turn aside; it will not
cling to me.

4 A twisted heart will keep away from me; I will
have no part in evil.

5 Whoever slanders his neighbour in secret, I will
silence; the one with haughty eyes and a proud
heart I will not tolerate.

6 My eyes will be on the faithful of the land, that
they may live with me; the one who walks in the
blameless way will serve me.

7 No one who practises deceit will live in my
house; no one who tells lies will stand before my
eyes.

8 Morning by morning I will silence all the wicked
of the land, to cut off all evildoers from the city of
the LORD.[1]

1 The king gave judgement in the morning; compare 2 Samuel 15:2; Jeremiah 21:12.

Psalm 102

Psalm 102 is the prayer of a sufferer who pours out his complaint. His days vanish like smoke, his heart withers like grass, he cannot eat, and he is like a lonely bird on a roof, taunted by enemies under God's wrath. But the LORD is enthroned for ever and will have compassion on Zion. The nations will fear His name when He rebuilds her, and a people yet to be created will praise Him for hearing the groans of the prisoners. The psalmist pleads not to be taken in the middle of his days. Heaven and earth will wear out like a garment, but God remains the same. Hebrews 1:10–12 applies these words to the Son.

A prayer of one afflicted, when he is faint and pours out his complaint before the LORD.

1 LORD, hear my prayer; let my cry for help come
to You.

2 Do not turn Your face away from me when I am in
distress. Bend Your ear to me; when I call, be
quick to answer.

3 For my days vanish like smoke, and my bones
burn like a furnace.

4 My heart is struck down and withered like grass,
for I forget to eat my food.

5 Because of my loud groaning my bones cling to
my skin.

6 I am like a desert owl, like a little owl among the
ruins.

7 I lie awake; I am like a lonely bird on a roof.

8 All day long my enemies taunt me; those who
mock me use my name as a curse.

9 For I eat ashes as my food and mix my drink with
tears,

10 because of Your fury and Your wrath, for You
have lifted me up and thrown me aside.

11 My days are like a lengthening shadow, and I
wither like grass.

12 But You, LORD, sit enthroned for ever; Your
renown lasts through all generations.

13 You will rise and have compassion on Zion, for it
is time to show her favour; the appointed time has
come.

14 For Your servants delight in her stones and pity
her dust.

15 The nations will fear the name of the LORD, and
all the kings of the earth Your glory.

16 For the LORD will rebuild Zion and appear in
His glory.

17 He will turn to the prayer of the destitute and
will not despise their plea.
18 Let this be written for a future generation, that
a people yet to be created may praise the LORD.
19 For the LORD looked down from His holy height;
from heaven He gazed at the earth,
20 to hear the groans of the prisoners and to free
those condemned to die,
21 so that the name of the LORD may be declared
in Zion and His praise in Jerusalem,
22 when peoples and kingdoms gather together to
serve the LORD.
23 He has broken my strength on the way; He has
cut short my days.[1]
24 I said, "My God, do not take me away in the
middle of my days. Your years go on through all
generations."
25 You laid the foundation of the earth in the
beginning, and the heavens are the work of Your
hands.[2]
26 They will perish, but You remain; they will all
wear out like a garment. Like a cloak You will
change them, and they will be changed.
27 But You are the same, and Your years will never
end.
28 The children of Your servants will live secure,
and their descendants will be established before
You.

1 So the spoken Hebrew; the written text has 'His strength'.
2 Verses 25–27 are quoted in Hebrews 1:10–12.

Psalm 103

Psalm 103 is David's call to his own soul to bless the LORD and not forget His benefits: He forgives, heals, redeems and satisfies. He gives justice to the oppressed and made His ways known to Moses. He is compassionate and gracious and does not repay us as our sins deserve; His loyal kindness is as high as the heavens, and He removes our offences as far as the east is from the west. Like a father He remembers that we are dust. Our days are like grass, but His loyal kindness is everlasting. His throne is in heaven, and angels, armies and all His works are called to bless Him.

Of David.

1 Bless the LORD, my soul; let my whole being
bless His holy name.
2 Bless the LORD, my soul, and do not forget any of
His benefits.
3 He forgives all your sins and heals all your
diseases.
4 He redeems your life from the pit and crowns you
with loyal kindness and compassion.
5 He satisfies you with good things, so that your
youth is renewed like the eagle's.[1]
6 The LORD does what is right and gives justice to
all the oppressed.
7 He showed Moses His ways and the people of
Israel His deeds.
8 The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow
to anger and abounding in loyal kindness.
9 He will not always accuse, nor will He keep His
anger for ever.
10 He has not dealt with us as our sins deserve, or
repaid us according to our wrongdoing.
11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is His loyal kindness towards those who
fear Him.
12 As far as the east lies from the west, that is how
far He has taken our offences from us.
13 As a father is tender to his children, so the
LORD is tender to those who fear Him.
14 For He knows what we are made of; He keeps in
mind that we are dust.
15 As for man, his days are like grass; he flowers
like a flower of the field.
16 The wind blows over it and it is no more, and its
place does not know it again.
17 But the loyal kindness of the LORD is from
everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him,
and His righteousness to their children's children,
18 to those who keep His covenant and remember
to carry out His precepts.
19 The LORD has established His throne in heaven,
and His kingdom rules over all.

20 Bless the LORD, you His angels, mighty ones who do His word, obeying the voice of His word.

21 Bless the LORD, all His armies, His ministers who do His will.

22 Bless the LORD, all His creation, in every place where He rules. Bless the LORD, my soul.

1 The Hebrew for ‘you’ here is uncertain.

Psalm 104

Psalm 104 blesses the LORD as Creator. Robed in light, He stretched out the heavens and set the earth on its foundations, and at His rebuke the waters fled to the place He appointed. He sends springs for the beasts and birds, grass for cattle, and food, wine and oil for people. He made the moon and sun, night for the lions and day for human work. His works are many, all made in wisdom, and the sea teems with life. All creatures look to Him: when He hides His face they die, and when He sends His Spirit they are created. The psalmist will sing to the LORD as long as he lives.

1 Bless the LORD, my soul. LORD my God, You are very great, clothed in splendour and majesty.

2 He wraps Himself in light as in a robe; He stretches out the heavens like a tent curtain.

3 He lays the beams of His upper rooms on the waters; He takes the clouds for His chariot and travels on the wings of the wind.

4 He makes His angels winds, and His ministers a flame of fire.[1]

5 He set the earth on its foundations, so that it can never be moved.

6 You clothed it with the deep as with a robe; the waters stood higher than the mountains.

7 At Your rebuke they took flight; at Your voice of thunder they hurried away.

8 The mountains rose and the valleys sank, to the place You appointed for them.

9 You set a boundary they may not cross, so that they will never again cover the earth.

10 He sends springs into the valleys; they flow between the mountains.

11 They give drink to all the beasts of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst.

12 The birds of the sky nest beside them and sing among the branches.

13 From His upper rooms He waters the mountains; the earth is filled with the fruit of Your work.

14 He makes grass grow for the cattle, and plants for people to cultivate, bringing food from the earth:

15 wine that gladdens human hearts, oil that makes faces shine, and bread that sustains human hearts.

16 The trees of the LORD drink their fill, the cedars of Lebanon that He planted.

17 There the birds build their nests; the stork makes its home in the cypresses.

18 The high mountains belong to the wild goats; the rock badgers shelter among the crags.

19 He made the moon to mark the seasons; the sun knows when to set.

20 You bring darkness and it becomes night, when all the beasts of the forest prowl.

21 The young lions roar after prey and look to God for their food.

22 When the sun rises they withdraw and lie down in their dens.

23 People go out to their work and to their labour until evening.

24 How many are Your works, LORD! You made them all in wisdom; the earth is full of Your creatures.

25 There is the sea, great and wide, teeming with countless creatures, living things both small and large.

26 There the ships go to and fro, and Leviathan, which You formed to play in it.

27 All of them look to You to give them their food at the proper time.

28 You give it to them and they gather it up; You open Your hand and they are filled with good things.

29 When You hide Your face they are terrified; when You take their breath they die and go back to their dust.

30 When You send Your Spirit they are created, and You make the face of the ground new.

31 May the glory of the LORD last for ever; may the LORD rejoice in His works.

32 At His glance the earth trembles; at His touch the mountains smoke.

33 As long as I live I will sing to the LORD; while I have breath I will sing praise to my God.

34 May my meditation please Him; I will rejoice in the LORD.

35 May sinners vanish from the earth, and may the wicked be no more. Bless the LORD, my soul. Hallelujah!

1 Quoted in Hebrews 1:7. The Hebrew can also mean 'He makes the winds His messengers, and flames of fire His servants'.

Psalm 105

Psalm 105 calls Israel to give thanks and remember what the LORD has done. He remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and protected them when they were few. He sent Joseph ahead into Egypt as a slave, then raised him to rule. Israel grew strong there, and He sent Moses and Aaron with signs: darkness, blood, frogs, flies, hail, locusts and the death of the firstborn. He brought His people out with silver and gold, led them by cloud and fire, and fed them, because He remembered His holy promise. He gave them the land so that they might keep His laws. Verses 1–15 appear also in 1 Chronicles 16.

1 Give thanks to the LORD; call on His name; make His deeds known among the peoples.[1]

2 Sing to Him, make music to Him; tell of all His wonderful works.

3 Glory in His holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice.

4 Look to the LORD and His strength; seek His face always.

5 Remember the wonders He has done, His marvels and the judgements He pronounced,

6 O descendants of His servant Abraham, O sons of Jacob, His chosen ones!

7 He is the LORD our God; His rulings reach through all the earth.

8 He remembers His covenant for ever, the word He commanded for a thousand generations,

9 the covenant He made with Abraham, His sworn promise to Isaac.

10 He confirmed it to Jacob as a statute, to Israel as an everlasting covenant,

11 saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan as the share you will inherit."

12 When they were few in number, few indeed, and strangers in it,

13 they roamed from one nation to another, from kingdom to kingdom.

14 He let no one oppress them; for their sake He rebuked kings:

15 "Do not touch My anointed ones; do My prophets no harm."

16 He called down famine on the land and broke every staff of bread.

17 He sent a man ahead of them, Joseph, sold as a slave.

18 They hurt his feet with shackles; his neck was put in iron,

19 until what he foretold came to pass, and the word of the LORD proved him true.

20 The king sent and released him; the ruler of peoples set him free.

21 He made him master of his household and ruler of all his possessions,

22 to bind his princes as he pleased and to make his elders wise.

23 Then Israel came to Egypt; Jacob lived as a foreigner in the land of Ham.

24 The LORD made His people very fruitful, and made them stronger than their foes.

25 He changed their hearts so that they hated His people and dealt cunningly with His servants.

26 He sent His servant Moses, and Aaron, His chosen one.

27 They carried out His signs among them, and wonders throughout the land of Ham.

28 He sent darkness and made the land dark, and they did not rebel against His words.[2]

29 He changed their waters to blood and caused their fish to die.

30 Frogs overran their land, reaching even their kings' chambers.

31 He spoke, and swarms of flies came, and gnats throughout their territory.

32 He turned their rain to hail, with lightning flashing through their land.

33 He struck down their vines and fig trees and splintered the trees throughout their land.

34 He spoke, and locusts came, young locusts without number.

35 They ate every green thing in their land and devoured the fruit of their soil.

36 Then He struck down all the firstborn in their land, the firstfruits of all their manhood.

37 He brought Israel out with silver and gold, and among His tribes no one stumbled.

38 Egypt was glad when they left, for dread of Israel had fallen on them.

39 He spread a cloud as a covering and a fire to give light at night.

40 They asked, and He brought quail, and He satisfied them with bread from heaven.

41 He opened the rock and water gushed out; it ran like a river through the dry land.

42 For He remembered His holy promise to Abraham His servant.

43 He brought His people out with rejoicing, His chosen ones with shouts of joy.

44 He gave them the lands of the nations, and they took possession of what others had toiled for,

45 so that they might keep His statutes and obey His laws. Hallelujah!

1 Verses 1–15 are found, with small differences, in 1 Chronicles 16:8–22.

2 ‘They’ is probably Moses and Aaron. The Greek and Syriac omit ‘not’, making it the Egyptians.

Psalm 106

> *Psalm 106, which closes Book Four, confesses Israel’s sins beside God’s kindness. The people rebelled at the Red Sea, yet He saved them. They forgot His works and craved food in the wilderness; they envied Moses and Aaron; they made a calf at Horeb, and only Moses stood in the breach. They despised the land, joined themselves to Baal of Peor, angered God at Meribah, mixed with the nations and sacrificed their children to idols. So He handed them over to their enemies, yet when He heard their cry He remembered His covenant. The psalm ends by asking to be gathered from the nations, and with the blessing that closes Book Four.*

1 Hallelujah! Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; His loyal kindness endures for ever.

2 Who can tell the mighty deeds of the LORD or declare all His praise?

3 Blessed are those who act justly, who always do what is right.

4 Remember me, LORD, when You show favour to Your people; come to me with Your salvation,

5 that I may see the prosperity of Your chosen ones, share the joy of Your nation, and glory with Your inheritance.

6 We have sinned like our ancestors; we have done wrong and acted wickedly.

7 When our fathers were in Egypt, they did not understand Your wonders; they did not remember Your abundant loyal kindness, but rebelled by the sea, at the Red Sea.

8 Yet He saved them for the sake of His name, to make His mighty power known.

9 He rebuked the Red Sea and it turned dry; He took them through the deep as if through a desert.

10 He saved them from the power of their foe and redeemed them from the enemy’s grasp.

11 The waters covered their adversaries; not one of them was left.

12 Then they believed His words and sang His praise.

13 But they soon forgot His works and did not wait for His counsel.

14 In the wilderness they gave way to craving, and in the desert they put God to the test.

15 So He gave them what they asked for, but sent a wasting disease among them.

16 In the camp they grew jealous of Moses and of Aaron, the LORD’s holy one.

17 The ground opened and swallowed Dathan and closed over the company of Abiram.

18 Fire blazed among their company; flames burned up the wicked.

19 They made a calf at Horeb and worshipped a cast image.

20 They exchanged their Glory for the image of an ox that eats grass.[1]

21 They forgot God their Saviour, the doer of great things in Egypt,

22 wonders in the land of Ham and awesome deeds by the Red Sea.

23 So He said He would destroy them, had not Moses His chosen one stood in the breach before Him to turn His wrath from destroying them.

24 They despised the pleasant land and did not believe His promise.

25 They grumbled in their tents and did not listen to the voice of the LORD.

26 So He swore to them with uplifted hand that He would make them fall in the wilderness,

27 make their descendants fall among the nations, and scatter them across the lands.

28 They joined themselves to Baal of Peor and ate sacrifices offered to the dead.

29 They provoked Him with their deeds, and a plague broke out among them.

30 Then Phinehas stood up and intervened, and the plague was stopped.

31 This was credited to him as righteousness, through all generations for ever.

32 They angered Him at the waters of Meribah, and it went badly with Moses because of them,

33 for they rebelled against His Spirit, and Moses spoke rashly with his lips.

34 They did not destroy the peoples, as the LORD had commanded them,

35 but mixed with the nations and learned their ways.

36 They served their idols, and these became their snare.

37 They sacrificed their sons and their daughters to demons.

38 They shed the blood of the innocent, their own sons and daughters, sacrificed to Canaan's idols, and the land was defiled by bloodshed.

39 They defiled themselves by what they did and were unfaithful in their deeds.

40 So the LORD's anger burned against His people, and He loathed His inheritance.

41 He handed them over to the nations, and those who hated them ruled over them.

42 Their enemies oppressed them and brought them under their power.

43 Many times He rescued them, but they rebelled in their schemes and sank down in their guilt.

44 Yet He saw their distress when He heard their cry.

45 For their sake He remembered His covenant and relented in His great loyal kindness.

46 He caused all who held them captive to pity them.

47 Save us, LORD our God, and gather us from the nations, so that we may give thanks to Your holy name and glory in Your praise.[2]

48 Blessed be the LORD, Israel's God, from everlasting to everlasting. Let every one of the people answer, "Amen!" Hallelujah![3]

1 Compare Romans 1:23.

2 Verses 47–48 are found also in 1 Chronicles 16:35–36.

3 This blessing closes Book Four of the Psalms.

Psalm 107

> *Psalm 107 opens Book Five by calling the redeemed to give thanks, for the LORD has gathered them from every land. Four pictures follow: those lost in the wilderness, prisoners in darkness, fools brought near to death by their sins, and sailors in a storm. Each group cries to the LORD in their trouble, He rescues them, and they are called to thank Him for His loyal kindness. He turns rivers into desert and desert into pools, settles the hungry, and lifts up the needy. The wise will consider the loyal kindness of the LORD.*

1 Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; His loyal kindness endures for ever.[1]

2 Let those the LORD has redeemed say so, those He redeemed from the hand of the enemy

3 and gathered from the lands, from east and west, from north and south.[2]

4 Some wandered in the wilderness, in desert wastes, and found no way to a city to live in.

5 Hungry and thirsty, their lives ebbed away.

6 Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and
He rescued them from their distress.
7 He led them by a straight path to a city where
they could live.
8 Let them thank the LORD for His loyal kindness
and for His wonders to the children of man.
9 For He satisfies the thirsty soul and fills the
hungry soul with good things.
10 Some sat in darkness and deep gloom, prisoners
in misery and iron chains,
11 because they had rebelled against God's words
and spurned the counsel of the Most High.
12 He humbled their hearts with hard labour; they
stumbled, and no one helped them.
13 Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
and He saved them from their distress.
14 He brought them out of darkness and deep
gloom and broke their chains apart.
15 Let them thank the LORD for His loyal kindness
and for His wonders to the children of man.
16 For He shatters gates of bronze and cuts
through bars of iron.
17 Some were fools in their rebellious ways and
suffered for their sins.
18 They loathed all food and drew near the gates of
death.
19 Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
and He saved them from their distress.
20 He sent His word and healed them; He rescued
them from the grave.
21 Let them thank the LORD for His loyal kindness
and for His wonders to the children of man.
22 Let them offer sacrifices of thanksgiving and tell
of His works with songs of joy.
23 Some went down to the sea in ships, doing
business on the great waters.
24 They saw the works of the LORD, His wonders in
the deep.
25 He spoke and raised a stormy wind that lifted up
the waves.
26 They rose to the sky and plunged to the depths;
their courage melted in their peril.
27 They reeled and staggered like drunkards, and
all their skill was gone.
28 Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
and He brought them out of their distress.
29 He stilled the storm to a whisper, and the waves
grew silent.
30 They were glad when it grew calm, and He
guided them to the harbour they longed for.
31 Let them thank the LORD for His loyal kindness
and for His wonders to the children of man.
32 Let them lift Him high in the people's assembly
and praise Him where the elders sit.
33 He turns rivers into desert, springs of water into
thirsty ground,
34 fruitful land into a salt waste, because of the
wickedness of those who live there.
35 He turns the desert into pools of water and
parched land into springs.
36 There He settles the hungry, and they found a
city to live in.
37 They sow fields and plant vineyards and gather
a fruitful harvest.
38 He blesses them and they multiply greatly, and
He does not let their cattle decrease.
39 When they are diminished and brought low by
oppression, disaster and sorrow,
40 He pours contempt on nobles and makes them
wander in a trackless waste.
41 But He lifts the needy out of misery and makes
their families like flocks.
42 The upright see it and are glad, and all
wickedness shuts its mouth.
43 Whoever is wise, let him pay attention to these
things and consider the loyal kindness of the
LORD.

1 Book Five of the Psalms is Psalms 107–150.
2 Hebrew 'and from the sea'.

Psalm 108

Psalm 108 joins the close of Psalm 57 to the close of Psalm 60. David's heart is steadfast, and he will give thanks among the nations, for God's loyal kindness is high above the heavens. He asks God to save by His right hand, and recalls God's promise from His holy place to claim the land and subdue Moab, Edom and Philistia. Human help is worthless, but with God they will do valiantly.

A song. A psalm of David.

1 My heart is steadfast, O God; I will sing and
make music with all my being.[1]
2 Awake, harp and lyre! I will awaken the dawn.
3 I will give You thanks, LORD, among the peoples;
I will sing Your praise among the nations.
4 For Your loyal kindness is high above the
heavens, and Your truth reaches the skies.
5 Rise high above the heavens, O God; let Your
glory fill all the earth.
6 So that those You love may be rescued, save us
by Your right hand and answer us.
7 God has spoken from His holy place: "I will
triumph; I will parcel out Shechem and measure
off the Valley of Succoth.
8 Gilead is Mine, Manasseh too; Ephraim is My
helmet, Judah is My sceptre.
9 Moab is My washbasin; on Edom I throw My
sandal; over Philistia I shout in triumph."
10 Who will bring me to the fortified city? Who will
lead me to Edom?
11 Have You not rejected us, O God? You no longer
go out, O God, with our armies.
12 Give us help against the foe, for human help is
worthless.
13 With God we will do valiantly; it is He who will
tread down our foes.

1 Verses 1–5 are found also in 57:7–11, and verses 6–13 in 60:5–12. Hebrew 'with my glory'.

Psalm 109

Psalm 109 is David's cry against those who repay his love with accusation. He asks that an accuser stand against his enemy, that the man's days be few and another take his office, that his family be ruined and his name blotted out, for he hounded the needy and loved to curse. David then turns to the Lord GOD: he is poor and needy, fading like a shadow and gaunt from fasting, and he asks to be saved in God's loyal kindness. They may curse, but God will bless, for He stands at the right hand of the needy. Peter applies verse 8 to Judas in Acts 1:20.

For the director. A psalm of David.

1 God of my praise, do not remain silent.
2 For wicked and deceitful mouths have opened
against me; they speak against me with lying
tongues.
3 They surround me with words of hatred and
attack me without cause.
4 In return for my love they accuse me, but I give
myself to prayer.
5 They repay me evil for good and hatred for my
love.
6 Appoint a wicked man against him; let an accuser
stand at his right hand.[1]
7 When he is tried, let him be found guilty, and let
his prayer count as sin.
8 May his days be few; let another take his office.[2]
9 May his children be fatherless and his wife a
widow.
10 May his children wander and beg, seeking food
far from their ruined homes.
11 May a creditor seize all he has, and strangers
plunder what he worked for.
12 May no one extend loyal kindness to him or pity
his fatherless children.
13 May his posterity be cut off, their name blotted
out in the next generation.
14 May the guilt of his fathers be remembered
before the LORD, and his mother's sin not be
blotted out.
15 May they be always before the LORD, and may
He cut off their memory from the earth.

16 For he never thought of showing loyal kindness,
but hounded the poor, the needy and the
brokenhearted to death.
17 He loved to curse; let it come on him. He took
no pleasure in blessing; let it be far from him.
18 He put on cursing like a garment; let it seep into
his body like water and into his bones like oil.
19 May it be like a robe wrapped round him, like a
belt he wears always.
20 May this be the LORD's reward to my accusers,
to those who speak evil against me.
21 But You, Lord GOD, deal with me for the sake of
Your name; because Your loyal kindness is good,
rescue me.
22 For I am poor and in need, and my heart is
pierced within me.
23 I fade like a lengthening shadow; I am shaken
off like a locust.
24 My knees give way from fasting; my body is thin
and gaunt.
25 I have become an object of scorn to them; when
they see me, they shake their heads.
26 Help me, LORD my God; save me in Your loyal
kindness.
27 Let them know that this is Your hand, that You,
LORD, have done it.
28 They may curse, but You will bless; when they
rise up they will be put to shame, but Your servant
will rejoice.
29 May my accusers be clothed with disgrace and
wrapped in their shame as in a cloak.
30 With my mouth I will give great thanks to the
LORD; I will praise Him in the great throng.
31 For He stands at the right hand of the needy, to
save him from those who condemn him.

1 The speaker of verses 6–19 may be David, or David may be quoting his enemies' curses on him (compare verse 20).
2 Quoted in Acts 1:20.

Psalm 110

Psalm 110 is the psalm the New Testament quotes most often. The LORD says to David's Lord, "Sit at My right hand" until His enemies are subdued. From Zion He will rule, and His people will offer themselves freely on the day of battle. The LORD has sworn that He is a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek. The Lord at His right hand will shatter kings and judge the nations. Jesus uses verse 1 to ask how the Messiah can be David's son, and Hebrews builds on verse 4.

A psalm of David.

1 The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand
until I put Your enemies under Your feet."[1]
2 The LORD will stretch out Your mighty sceptre
from Zion; rule in the midst of Your enemies.
3 Your people will offer themselves freely on the
day of Your battle. In holy splendour, from the
womb of the dawn, the dew of Your youth is
Yours.[2]
4 The LORD has sworn and will not change His
mind: "You are a priest for ever, after the order of
Melchizedek."[3]
5 The Lord is at Your right hand; He will shatter
kings on the day of His anger.
6 He will judge the nations, filling them with
corpses; He will shatter leaders across the wide
earth.
7 He will drink from the brook by the way, and so
He will lift up His head.

1 Hebrew 'make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet'. Quoted in Matthew 22:44; Mark 12:36; Luke 20:42–43; Acts 2:34–35; Hebrews 1:13.
2 The meaning of the Hebrew in this verse is uncertain.
3 Quoted in Hebrews 5:6; 7:17, 21. See Genesis 14:18.

Psalm 111

Psalm 111 is an alphabetic hymn of thanks. The works of the LORD are great and His righteousness stands for ever. He is gracious and compassionate, feeds those who fear Him, remembers His covenant, and gave His people the inheritance of the nations. His precepts are trustworthy, He sent redemption to His people, and His name is holy. Wisdom begins with the fear of the LORD.

1 Hallelujah! I will give thanks to the LORD with all
my heart, in the company of the upright and in the
assembly.[1]
2 Great are the works of the LORD, studied by all
who delight in them.
3 His deeds are splendid and majestic, and His
righteousness stands for ever.
4 He has caused His wonders to be remembered;
the LORD is gracious and compassionate.
5 He gives food to those who fear Him; He
remembers His covenant for ever.
6 He has shown His people how mighty His works
are, giving them the nations' inheritance.
7 All that His hands do is true and just; His
precepts are all trustworthy.
8 They stand firm for ever and ever, made in truth
and uprightness.
9 He sent redemption to His people; He has
commanded His covenant for ever. Holy and
awesome is His name.
10 Wisdom begins with the fear of the LORD; all
who live by it have good insight. His praise stands
for ever.

1 Psalms 111 and 112 are acrostics: after the opening 'Hallelujah', each line begins with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

Psalm 112

Psalm 112, also alphabetic, is the companion of Psalm 111: what is said there of the LORD is said here of the one who fears Him. He is blessed, delights in God's commandments, and his descendants are blessed. Light rises for him in the darkness. He is generous and just, and will never be shaken; he does not fear bad news, for his heart trusts in the LORD. He gives to the poor, and his righteousness endures. The wicked see it and grind their teeth, but their desire will perish.

1 Hallelujah! Blessed is the man who fears the
LORD, who delights greatly in His
commandments.
2 His offspring will be powerful in the land; the
upright of each generation will be blessed.
3 His house holds wealth and riches, and his
righteousness stands for ever.
4 Light rises in the darkness for the upright; he is
gracious, compassionate and righteous.
5 It goes well with the man who is generous and
lends, who conducts his affairs with justice.
6 He will never be shaken; the righteous will be
remembered for ever.
7 He does not fear bad news; his heart is steadfast,
trusting in the LORD.
8 His heart is steady and he will not fear, until he
looks in triumph on his foes.
9 He has scattered abroad, he has given to the
poor; his righteousness endures for ever. His horn
will be lifted high in honour.[1]
10 The wicked man sees it and is angry; he grinds
his teeth and melts away. The desire of the wicked
will perish.

1 Quoted in 2 Corinthians 9:9.

Psalm 113

Psalm 113 opens the Hallel, the songs sung at Passover. The LORD's servants are called to praise His name from sunrise to sunset. He is high above all nations, yet He stoops to look on heaven and earth. He raises the poor from the dust, seats them with princes, and gives the childless woman a home as a happy mother.

1 Hallelujah! Give praise, you servants of the
LORD; praise the LORD's name.[1]
2 May the name of the LORD be blessed, now and
for evermore.
3 From the rising of the sun to its setting, the name
of the LORD is to be praised.
4 The LORD is exalted over all nations; His glory is
higher than the heavens.
5 Who is like the LORD our God, who sits
enthroned on high,
6 who stoops down to look on the heavens and the
earth?
7 He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the
needy from the ash heap,
8 to seat them with princes, with the princes of His
people.
9 He settles the childless woman in her home as a
happy mother of children. Hallelujah!

1 Psalms 113–118 are known as the Hallel, sung at the great festivals and at Passover; compare Matthew 26:30.

Psalm 114

Psalm 114 sings of the exodus. When Israel came out of Egypt, Judah became God's sanctuary. The sea fled, the Jordan turned back, and the mountains skipped like rams. The psalmist asks them why, and answers by calling the earth to tremble before the God of Jacob, who turned rock into a pool of water.

1 When Israel left Egypt, when Jacob's house left a
people of foreign speech,
2 Judah became His holy place, and Israel the
realm He ruled.
3 The sea looked and fled; the Jordan turned back.[1]
4 The mountains skipped like rams, the hills like
lambs.
5 Why was it, sea, that you fled? Why, Jordan, did
you turn back?
6 Why, mountains, did you skip like rams, and you
hills, like lambs?
7 Tremble, earth, before the Lord, before the God
of Jacob,
8 who turned the rock into a pool and the hard flint
into springs of water.

1 See Exodus 14:21; Joshua 3:16.

Psalm 115

Psalm 115 gives glory to the LORD's name, not to His people. The nations ask where their God is, but He is in heaven and does as He pleases, while their idols are silver and gold, with mouths that cannot speak. Those who make them will become like them. Israel, the house of Aaron and all who fear the LORD are called to trust in Him, and He will bless them, small and great. The dead do not praise Him, but we will bless Him for evermore.

1 Not to us, LORD, not to us, but to Your name give
glory, for the sake of Your loyal kindness and Your
truth.
2 Why should the nations say, "Where is their
God?"
3 Our God is in heaven; He does whatever He
pleases.
4 Their idols are silver and gold, made by human
hands.[1]
5 They have mouths but cannot speak, eyes but
cannot see.
6 They have ears but cannot hear, noses but cannot
smell.

7 They have hands but cannot feel, feet but cannot walk; no sound comes from their throats.

8 Those who make them will become like them, and so will all who trust in them.

9 Israel, put your trust in the LORD; He is their helper and their shield.

10 House of Aaron, put your trust in the LORD; He is their helper and their shield.

11 You who fear the LORD, put your trust in Him; He is their helper and their shield.

12 The LORD has kept us in mind and will bless us; He will bless Israel's house; He will bless Aaron's house.

13 He will bless those who fear the LORD, the small and the great alike.

14 May the LORD give you increase, you and your children.

15 May you be blessed by the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.

16 The heavens belong to the LORD, but He has given the earth to the children of man.

17 It is not the dead who praise the LORD, nor any who go down into silence.

18 But we will bless the LORD, now and for evermore. Hallelujah!

1 Verses 4–8 are close to 135:15–18.

Psalm 116

Psalm 116 is a song of thanks from one saved from death. The psalmist loves the LORD, who heard his plea when the cords of death entangled him. The LORD is gracious and protects the simple, so his soul can return to its rest. He will walk before the LORD in the land of the living. He asks what he can give back, and answers that he will lift up the cup of salvation and pay his vows in the presence of all God's people, in the courts of the LORD's house.

1 I love the LORD, for He hears my voice and my pleas.

2 Because He has bent His ear to me, I will call to Him all my days.

3 The cords of death entangled me, and the anguish of Sheol came upon me; I found distress and sorrow.

4 Then I called on the name of the LORD: "Please, LORD, save my life!"

5 The LORD is gracious and righteous; our God is compassionate.

6 The LORD protects the simple; when I was brought low, He saved me.

7 Return to your rest, my soul, for the LORD has been good to you.

8 For You have saved me from death, kept my eyes from tears, and kept my feet from falling.

9 I will walk in the LORD's presence in the land of the living.

10 I believed, and so I spoke, "I am greatly afflicted."[1]

11 In my alarm I said, "All people are liars."

12 What can I give back to the LORD for all His goodness to me?

13 I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD.

14 I will fulfil my vows to the LORD before all His people.

15 The death of His faithful ones is costly in the LORD's sight.

16 LORD, truly I am Your servant; I am Your servant, born of Your maidservant. You have loosed my bonds.

17 I will offer You a sacrifice of thanksgiving and call on the name of the LORD.

18 I will fulfil my vows to the LORD before all His people,

19 in the courts of the house of the LORD, in your midst, Jerusalem. Hallelujah!

1 Quoted in 2 Corinthians 4:13.

Psalm 117

Psalm 117, the shortest psalm, calls all nations to praise the LORD, for His loyal kindness towards His people is great and His truth endures for ever. Paul quotes it to show that the Gentiles were always meant to praise God.

1 Praise the LORD, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples extol Him.[1]

2 For His loyal kindness towards us is great, and the truth of the LORD endures for ever. Hallelujah!

1 Quoted in Romans 15:11.

Psalm 118

Psalm 118 closes the Hallel with thanks for victory. Israel, the priests and all who fear the LORD are called to say that His loyal kindness endures for ever. The speaker called in distress and the LORD answered; it is better to take refuge in Him than to trust in princes. The nations surrounded him, but in the LORD's name he cut them down. He will not die but live. He enters the gates of righteousness, and the stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. The crowds greet Jesus with verses 25–26, and He applies verses 22–23 to Himself.

1 Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; His loyal kindness endures for ever.

2 Let Israel say, "His loyal kindness endures for ever."

3 Let the house of Aaron say, "His loyal kindness endures for ever."

4 Let those who fear the LORD say, "His loyal kindness endures for ever."

5 In my distress I called to the LORD; the LORD answered me and set me in a broad place.

6 The LORD is with me; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?[1]

7 The LORD is with me as my helper; I will look in triumph on those who hate me.

8 It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in man.

9 It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes.

10 All the nations surrounded me; in the name of the LORD I cut them down.

11 They surrounded me on every side; in the name of the LORD I cut them down.

12 They swarmed around me like bees but were put out like a fire of thorns; in the name of the LORD I cut them down.

13 I was pushed hard and nearly fell, but the LORD helped me.

14 The LORD is my strength and my song; He has become my salvation.[2]

15 Shouts of joy and victory ring out in the tents of the righteous: "The right hand of the LORD does mighty things!

16 The right hand of the LORD is lifted high; the right hand of the LORD does mighty things!"

17 I will not die but live, and tell of the works of the LORD.

18 The LORD has disciplined me severely, but He has not given me over to death.

19 Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will enter them and give thanks to the LORD.

20 This is the gate of the LORD; the righteous will enter through it.

21 I give You thanks, for You answered me and have become my salvation.

22 The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone;[3]

23 this was the LORD's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.

24 The LORD has made this day; let us be glad and rejoice in it.

25 Please, LORD, save us! Please, LORD, grant us success![4]

26 Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD! We bless you from the house of the LORD.

27 The LORD is God, and He has shone on us. Tie the festival offering with cords to the horns of the altar.

28 You are my God, and I will thank You; You are my God, and I will lift You high.

29 Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; His loyal kindness endures for ever.

1 Quoted in Hebrews 13:6, from the Greek.

2 The words of Exodus 15:2.

3 Verses 22–23 are quoted in Matthew 21:42; Mark 12:10–11; Luke 20:17; compare Acts 4:11; 1 Peter 2:7.

4 ‘Save us’ is the Hebrew from which ‘Hosanna’ comes; compare Matthew 21:9.

Psalm 119

Psalm 119, the longest psalm, is an alphabetic meditation on God’s word, in twenty-two stanzas of eight lines. Those who walk in the law of the LORD are blessed. The psalmist stores God’s word in his heart, delights in it more than riches, and asks to be taught. He is afflicted, mocked by the arrogant and persecuted without cause, yet he does not forget God’s law, which gives him life. God’s word stands firm in heaven; it is a lamp for his feet, sweeter than honey and better than gold. He ends by confessing that he has strayed like a lost sheep, and asks God to seek him.

א Aleph

1 Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the LORD.[1]

2 Blessed are those who keep His testimonies and seek Him with all their heart.

3 They do no wrong; they walk in His ways.

4 You have laid down Your precepts, to be kept with care.

5 Oh that my ways were steady in keeping Your statutes!

6 Then I will not be put to shame when I look at all Your commandments.

7 I will thank You with an upright heart as I learn Your righteous rulings.

8 I will keep Your statutes; do not utterly abandon me.

ב Beth

9 How can a young man keep his path pure? By guarding it according to Your word.

10 I have sought You with all my heart; do not let me stray from Your commandments.

11 I have stored Your word in my heart, so that I may not sin against You.

12 Blessed are You, LORD; teach me Your statutes.

13 With my lips I recount all the rulings of Your mouth.

14 The way of Your testimonies brings me more joy than all wealth.

15 I will meditate on Your precepts and fix my eyes on Your paths.

16 Your statutes are my delight; Your word I will not forget.

ג Gimel

17 Be good to Your servant, so that I may live and keep Your word.

18 Open my eyes, so that I may see wonders from Your law.

19 I am a foreigner on the earth; do not hide Your commandments from me.

20 My soul is crushed with longing for Your rulings at all times.

21 You rebuke the arrogant, the cursed, who stray from Your commandments.

22 Take scorn and contempt away from me, for I have kept Your testimonies.

23 Though princes sit and speak against me, Your servant meditates on Your statutes.

24 Your testimonies are my delight; they are my counsellors.

ד Daleth

25 My soul clings to the dust; give me life according to Your word.

26 I told You of my ways, and You answered me; teach me Your statutes.

27 Make me understand the way of Your precepts, and I will meditate on Your wonders.

28 My soul melts with sorrow; strengthen me according to Your word.

29 Keep me from the way of falsehood, and graciously give me Your law.

30 I have taken the way of faithfulness as mine; I keep Your rulings in view.

31 I hold fast to Your testimonies, LORD; do not let me be put to shame.

32 I run in the way of Your commandments, for You enlarge my heart.

ה He

33 Teach me, LORD, the way of Your statutes, and I will keep it to the end.

34 Give me understanding, and I will keep Your law and obey it with all my heart.

35 Guide me in the path of Your commandments, for I delight in it.

36 Turn my heart to Your testimonies, and not to selfish gain.

37 Turn my eyes away from worthless things; give me life in Your ways.

38 Fulfil for Your servant Your promise, which is for those who fear You.

39 Take away the disgrace I dread, for Your rulings are good.

40 See how I long for Your precepts; give me life in Your righteousness.

ו Waw

41 May Your loyal kindness come to me, LORD, Your salvation according to Your promise.

42 Then I will have an answer for the one who taunts me, for I trust in Your word.

43 Do not take the word of truth wholly from my mouth, for I hope in Your rulings.

44 I will keep Your law continually, for ever and ever.

45 I will walk in freedom, for I have sought Your precepts.

46 Before kings I will speak of Your testimonies, with no shame.

47 I delight in Your commandments, which I love.

48 I lift up my hands to Your commandments, which I love, and I meditate on Your statutes.

ז Zayin

49 Remember Your word to Your servant, on which You have made me hope.

50 This is my comfort in my affliction, that Your promise gives me life.

51 The arrogant mock me without mercy, but I do not turn from Your law.

52 I remember Your rulings of old, LORD, and I take comfort in them.

53 Burning anger seizes me because of the wicked who forsake Your law.

54 Your statutes have become my songs wherever I stay as a foreigner.

55 At night I remember Your name, LORD, and I keep Your law.

56 This has been my lot, for I have kept Your precepts.

ח Heth

57 The LORD is my portion; I have promised to keep Your words.

58 I have sought Your favour with all my heart; be gracious to me according to Your promise.

59 I have considered my ways and turned my feet to Your testimonies.

60 I hurry and do not delay to keep Your commandments.

61 Though the cords of the wicked bind me, I do not forget Your law.

62 At midnight I rise to thank You for Your righteous rulings.

63 I am a companion of all who fear You, of those who keep Your precepts.

64 The earth is full of Your loyal kindness, LORD; teach me Your statutes.

ט Teth

65 You have dealt well with Your servant, LORD, according to Your word.

66 Teach me good judgement and knowledge, for I trust in Your commandments.

67 I used to wander before I suffered, but now I obey Your word.

68 You are good, and You do good; teach me Your statutes.

69 The arrogant smear me with lies, but I keep Your precepts with all my heart.

70 Their hearts are thick like fat, but I delight in Your law.

71 It was good for me to be afflicted, so that I might learn Your statutes.

72 The law You have spoken means more to me than a fortune in gold and silver.

י Yodh

73 Your hands formed me and set me in place; help me understand, so that I may learn Your commandments.

74 When those who fear You see me they will be glad, for I have put my hope in Your word.

75 I know, LORD, that Your rulings are righteous,
and that in faithfulness You have afflicted me.
76 May Your loyal kindness comfort me, according
to Your promise to Your servant.
77 Let Your compassion reach me, so that I may
live; Your law is what I delight in.
78 Let the arrogant be put to shame, for they
wrong me with lies; but I will meditate on Your
precepts.
79 Let those who fear You turn to me, those who
know Your testimonies.
80 May my heart be blameless in Your statutes, so
that I may not be put to shame.

כ Kaph

81 My soul wears itself out for Your salvation; in
Your word I place my hope.
82 My eyes grow tired watching for Your promise,
and I ask, “When will You comfort me?”
83 Though I am like a wineskin in the smoke, I do
not forget Your statutes.[2]
84 How many days must Your servant wait? When
will You bring judgement on my persecutors?
85 The arrogant dig pits for me, in defiance of Your
law.
86 All Your commandments are trustworthy; they
persecute me with lies; help me!
87 They almost wiped me from the earth, but I have
not forsaken Your precepts.
88 In Your loyal kindness give me life, and I will
keep the testimony of Your mouth.

ל Lamedh

89 Your word, LORD, stands firm in heaven for
ever.
90 Your faithfulness lasts through all generations;
You established the earth, and it stands.
91 They stand today according to Your rulings, for
all things are Your servants.
92 Had Your law not been my delight, my affliction
would have destroyed me.
93 I will never forget Your precepts, for by them
You have given me life.
94 I belong to You; save me, for I have pursued
Your precepts.
95 The wicked lie in wait to destroy me, but I
consider Your testimonies.
96 I have seen a limit to all perfection, but Your
commandment has no bounds.

מ Mem

97 Oh, how I love Your law! I ponder it all day long.
98 Your commandments give me more wisdom than
my enemies, for they are mine for ever.
99 I see further than all who teach me, for I ponder
Your testimonies.
100 I understand more than the elders, for I keep
Your precepts.
101 I have held back my feet from every evil path,
so that I may keep Your word.
102 I have not turned from Your rulings, for You
Yourself have taught me.
103 How pleasant Your words taste to me, better
than honey in my mouth!
104 From Your precepts I gain understanding; that
is why I hate every false path.

נ Nun

105 Your word is a lamp that guides my feet, a light
shining on my road.
106 I have sworn an oath and confirmed it, to keep
Your righteous rulings.
107 I am deeply afflicted; LORD, give me life
according to Your word.
108 Accept, LORD, the freewill offerings of my
mouth, and teach me Your rulings.
109 My life is always in my hand, but I do not forget
Your law.
110 The wicked have set a trap for me, but I have
not strayed from Your precepts.
111 Your testimonies are my inheritance for ever,
for they are the joy of my heart.
112 I have set my heart on doing Your statutes for
ever, to the end.

ס Samekh

113 I hate those who are double-minded, but I love
Your law.
114 You are my shelter and my shield; in Your word
I place my hope.
115 Leave me, you evildoers, so that I may obey the
commandments of my God.
116 Sustain me according to Your promise, and I
will live; do not let my hope be put to shame.
117 Uphold me, and I will be safe, and I will always
have regard for Your statutes.
118 You reject all who wander from Your statutes,
for their lies come to nothing.

119 You discard all the wicked of the earth like dross; that is why I love Your testimonies.

120 My flesh trembles in fear of You, and I stand in awe of Your rulings.

ע Ayin

121 I have done what is just and right; do not leave me to my oppressors.

122 Guarantee Your servant's good; do not let the arrogant oppress me.

123 My eyes fail from watching for Your salvation and for Your righteous promise.

124 Treat Your servant as Your loyal kindness directs, and teach me Your statutes.

125 I am Your servant; help me understand, so that I may grasp Your testimonies.

126 It is time for the LORD to act, for they have broken Your law.

127 That is why I love Your commandments more than gold, more than pure gold.

128 That is why I count all Your precepts right, and I hate every false path.

פ Pe

129 Your testimonies are wonderful; that is why my soul keeps them.

130 When Your words are opened they give light, bringing understanding to the simple.

131 I open my mouth and pant, for I long for Your commandments.

132 Turn to me and be gracious to me, as is Your way with those who love Your name.

133 Steady my steps by Your promise, and let no wrong rule over me.

134 Redeem me from human oppression, so that I may keep Your precepts.

135 Let the light of Your face fall on Your servant, and teach me Your statutes.

136 Streams of tears flow from my eyes, because people do not keep Your law.

צ Tsadhe

137 You are righteous, LORD, and Your rulings are right.

138 You have commanded Your testimonies in righteousness and great faithfulness.

139 My zeal consumes me, for my enemies forget Your words.

140 Your promise is well tested, and Your servant loves it.

141 I am small and despised, yet I do not forget Your precepts.

142 Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your law is truth.

143 Trouble and distress have found me, but Your commandments are my delight.

144 Your testimonies are right for ever; help me understand, so that I may live.

ק Qoph

145 I call with all my heart; answer me, LORD; I will keep Your statutes.

146 I call to You; save me, and I will keep Your testimonies.

147 Before the dawn I am up crying for help; I have put my hope in Your word.

148 My eyes are awake before the night watches, to meditate on Your promise.

149 Hear my voice in Your loyal kindness; LORD, give me life according to Your rulings.

150 Those who pursue evil draw near; they are far from Your law.

151 You are near, LORD, and all Your commandments are truth.

152 Long ago I learned from Your testimonies that You founded them for ever.

ר Resh

153 Look on my affliction and rescue me, for I do not forget Your law.

154 Take up my case and redeem me; give me life as You promised.

155 Salvation lies far from the wicked, because they do not seek out Your statutes.

156 Your compassion is great, LORD; give me life according to Your rulings.

157 My persecutors and enemies are many, but I have not turned from Your testimonies.

158 I look at the treacherous with disgust, for they do not keep Your word.

159 See how I love Your precepts; LORD, give me life according to Your loyal kindness.

160 The sum of Your word is truth, and all Your righteous rulings last for ever.

ש Shin

161 Princes persecute me without cause, but my heart stands in awe of Your word.

162 I rejoice over Your promise like one who finds great plunder.

163 I hate and detest falsehood, but I love Your law.

164 Seven times a day I praise You for Your righteous rulings.

165 Those who love Your law have great peace, and nothing makes them stumble.

166 I hope for Your salvation, LORD, and I do Your commandments.

167 My soul keeps Your testimonies, and I love them greatly.

168 I obey Your precepts and Your testimonies, for You see all my ways.

ת Taw

169 Let my cry come near to You, LORD; give me understanding according to Your word.

170 Let my plea come before You; rescue me according to Your promise.

171 My lips will pour out praise, for You teach me Your statutes.

172 My tongue will sing of Your promise, for all Your commandments are right.

173 May Your hand be ready to help me, for I have made Your precepts my choice.

174 I long for Your salvation, LORD, and Your law is my delight.

175 Let my soul live and praise You, and let Your rulings help me.

176 I have wandered like a lost sheep; come looking for Your servant, for I have not forgotten Your commandments.

1 This psalm is an acrostic of twenty-two stanzas, one for each letter of the Hebrew alphabet; all eight lines of a stanza begin with that letter, which heads the stanza. Nearly every verse names God's word by one of eight terms: law, testimonies, precepts, statutes, commandments, rulings, word and promise.

2 That is, dried out and shrivelled.

Psalm 120

Psalm 120 opens the songs of ascents. The psalmist called to the LORD in distress and asks to be rescued from lying lips. A deceitful tongue will meet a warrior's arrows and burning coals. He has lived too long as a foreigner among those who hate peace; he is for peace, but they are for war.

A song of ascents.

1 In my distress I called to the LORD, and He answered me.[1]

2 LORD, rescue me from lying lips and from a deceitful tongue.

3 What will He give you, and what more will He do to you, you deceitful tongue?

4 A warrior's sharp arrows, with burning coals of the broom tree.

5 Woe is me, for I live as a foreigner in Meshech; I dwell among the tents of Kedar!

6 Too long I have lived among those who hate peace.

7 I want peace, but as soon as I speak, they want war.

1 Psalms 120–134 are each headed 'a song of ascents', probably because pilgrims sang them on the way up to Jerusalem.

Psalm 121

Psalm 121 asks where help comes from, and answers that it comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth. He who guards Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps. He is the shade at your right hand, and He will guard your life, your going out and your coming in, for evermore.

A song of ascents.

1 I look up to the mountains. From where will my help come?

2 My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.

3 He will not let your foot slip; He who guards you will not slumber.

4 See, He who guards Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps.

5 The LORD is your guardian; the LORD is your shade at your right hand.

6 By day the sun will not strike you, nor by night the moon.[1]

7 The LORD will guard you from all harm; He will guard your life.

8 The LORD will guard your going out and your coming in, now and for evermore.

1 The ancient world feared harm from the moon as well as from the sun.

Psalm 122

Psalm 122 is a pilgrim's joy at reaching Jerusalem. He was glad when they said, "We are going to the house of the LORD!" The tribes go up there to give thanks, and there stand the thrones of the house of David. He calls for prayer for Jerusalem's peace, and for the sake of his brothers and of the LORD's house he will seek her good.

A song of ascents. Of David.

1 How glad I was when they said to me, "We are going to the house of the LORD!"

2 Now our feet stand inside your gates, Jerusalem.

3 Jerusalem, built as a city that is closely joined together,

4 where the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, as was decreed for Israel, to give thanks to the name of the LORD.

5 For there the thrones of judgement stand, the thrones of the house of David.

6 Pray for Jerusalem's peace: "May those who love you prosper.[1]

7 May there be peace within your walls and security within your palaces."

8 For the sake of my brothers and friends I will say, "Peace be within you."

9 Because of the house of the LORD our God I will work for your good.

1 In Hebrew 'peace' and 'prosper' echo the sound of the name Jerusalem.

Psalm 123

Psalm 123 lifts the eyes to the LORD enthroned in heaven. As servants watch their master's hand, so the people look to Him until He shows favour. They ask for mercy, for they have had more than enough of the contempt of the proud.

A song of ascents.

1 To You I lift my eyes, You who sit enthroned in heaven.

2 As the eyes of servants look to their master's hand, as the eyes of a maid look to her mistress's hand, so our eyes look to the LORD our God until He shows us favour.

3 Have mercy on us, LORD, have mercy on us, for we have had more than enough of contempt.[1]

4 Our souls have had more than enough of the scorn of the comfortable and the contempt of the proud.

1 'Have mercy' is the same Hebrew word as 'shows favour' in verse 2.

Psalm 124

Psalm 124 is Israel's thanks for escape. If the LORD had not been on their side, their enemies would have swallowed them alive and the waters would have swept them away. They have escaped like a bird from the snare, and their help is in the name of the LORD.

A song of ascents. Of David.

1 If the LORD had not been on our side, let Israel say,
2 if the LORD had not been on our side when people rose up against us,
3 then they would have swallowed us alive when their anger blazed against us.
4 Then the waters would have swept us away; the torrent would have passed over us.[1]
5 Then the raging waters would have passed over us.
6 Blessed be the LORD, who did not hand us over to their teeth like prey.
7 We have escaped like a bird from the fowlers' snare; the snare is broken, and we have escaped.
8 Our help is in the name of the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.

1 Hebrew 'over our soul'; so also in verse 5.

Psalm 125

Psalm 125 says that those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken. As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD surrounds His people. The wicked will not rule the land of the righteous. The psalm asks the LORD to do good to the upright, and ends with a wish for peace on Israel.

A song of ascents.

1 Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but stands for ever.
2 As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD surrounds His people, now and for evermore.
3 The sceptre of the wicked will not rest on the land allotted to the righteous, so that the righteous may not turn their hands to evil.
4 Do good, LORD, to those who are good, to those who are upright in heart.
5 But those who turn aside to crooked ways the LORD will lead away with the evildoers. Peace be on Israel.[1]

1 Compare 128:6; Galatians 6:16.

Psalm 126

Psalm 126 remembers the joy when the LORD restored Zion, like a dream, with mouths full of laughter, so that even the nations spoke of it. It asks Him to restore the people again, like streams in the Negev. Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy.

A song of ascents.

1 When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.[1]
2 Then our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. Then it was said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."
3 Great things indeed the LORD has done for us, and we are glad.
4 Restore our fortunes, LORD, like streams in the Negev.[2]
5 Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy.
6 Whoever goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will come back with songs of joy, carrying his sheaves.

1 Or 'brought back the captives of Zion'.
2 The dry stream beds of the south fill suddenly after rain.

Psalm 127

Psalm 127 teaches that all labour is empty unless the LORD builds the house and guards the city, for He gives sleep to those He loves. Children are a heritage from Him, like arrows in a warrior's hand, and the man with a full quiver is blessed.

A song of ascents. Of Solomon.

1 Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders
labour in vain. Unless the LORD guards the city,
the guard keeps watch in vain.
2 In vain you rise early and stay up late, eating the
bread of hard toil, for He gives sleep to those He
loves.[1]
3 Children are a heritage from the LORD; the fruit
of the womb is a reward.
4 Like arrows in a warrior's hand are the sons of
one's youth.
5 Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them;
they will not be put to shame when they speak
with their enemies at the gate.

1 Or 'for He provides for those He loves while they sleep'.

Psalm 128

Psalm 128 declares that everyone who fears the LORD is blessed. They will eat the fruit of their labour, with a wife like a fruitful vine and children like olive shoots around the table. The psalm asks the LORD to bless them from Zion, so that they may see Jerusalem prosper and see their children's children.

A song of ascents.

1 Blessed is each one who fears the LORD and
walks in His ways.
2 You will eat the fruit of your labour; you will be
blessed, and it will go well with you.[1]
3 Your wife will be like a fruitful vine inside your
house, your children like olive shoots around your
table.
4 See, this is how the man who fears the LORD will
be blessed.
5 May the LORD bless you from Zion; may you see
the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your
life.
6 May you see your children's children. Peace be
on Israel.

1 Hebrew 'the labour of your hands'.

Psalm 129

Psalm 129 is Israel's testimony that, though attacked from its youth, it has not been overcome. Ploughmen have ploughed on its back, but the righteous LORD has cut the cords of the wicked. It asks that all who hate Zion may be like grass on the roof, which withers before anyone can harvest it or bless the reapers.

A song of ascents.

1 "Often they have attacked me from my youth," let
Israel say,
2 "often they have attacked me from my youth, yet
they have not overcome me.
3 Ploughmen have ploughed on my back and made
their furrows long."
4 The LORD is righteous; He has severed the cords
of the wicked.
5 May all who hate Zion be put to shame and
turned back.
6 May they be like grass on the roof, which withers
before it can grow,[1]
7 which does not fill the reaper's hand or the
binder's arms,
8 so that those who pass by do not say, "The
blessing of the LORD be on you; we bless you in
the name of the LORD."

1 Grass could sprout on flat earthen roofs but had no depth of soil.

Psalm 130

Psalm 130 cries to the LORD out of the depths. If He kept a record of sins, no one could stand, but with Him there is forgiveness. The psalmist waits for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning, and calls Israel to hope in Him, for He will redeem them from all their sins.

A song of ascents.

1 Out of the depths I call to You, LORD.

2 Lord, hear my voice; let Your ears be attentive to my plea for mercy.

3 LORD, if You kept count of sins, then, Lord, who could stand?

4 But with You there is forgiveness, so that You may be feared.

5 I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and I put my hope in His word.

6 My soul longs for the Lord more than watchmen long for dawn, more than watchmen long for dawn.

7 Israel, put your hope in the LORD, for with the LORD there is loyal kindness, and with Him is abundant redemption.

8 It is He who will redeem Israel from all their sins.[1]

1 Compare Matthew 1:21.

Psalm 131

Psalm 131 is David's quiet confession that his heart is not proud and that he does not reach for things too great for him. He has calmed his soul like a weaned child with its mother, and he calls Israel to hope in the LORD.

A song of ascents. Of David.

1 LORD, my heart is not proud, and my eyes are not haughty. I do not concern myself with great matters, or things too wonderful for me.

2 Rather, I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother; my soul within me is like a weaned child.[1]

3 Israel, put your hope in the LORD, now and for evermore.

1 A weaned child rests with its mother without fretting for the breast.

Psalm 132

Psalm 132 recalls David's vow not to rest until he found a dwelling for the LORD, and the bringing of the ark to Zion. It asks God to come to His resting place and, for David's sake, not to turn away His anointed. The LORD swore to set David's descendants on his throne, and He has chosen Zion as His home for ever. There He will bless her provisions, clothe her priests with salvation, and make a horn grow for David.

A song of ascents.

1 Remember, LORD, in David's favour all the hardships he endured,

2 how he swore to the LORD and made a vow to the Mighty One of Jacob:

3 "I will not enter my house or get into my bed,

4 my eyes will have no sleep and my eyelids no rest,

5 until I have found a place for the LORD, a home for the Mighty One of Jacob."

6 We heard of it at Ephrathah; we came upon it in the fields of Jaar.[1]

7 “Let us go to His dwelling; let us worship at His footstool.”

8 Arise, LORD, and come to Your resting place, You and the ark of Your might.[2]

9 May Your priests be clothed with righteousness, and may Your faithful ones sing for joy.

10 For the sake of David Your servant, do not turn away the face of Your anointed one.

11 The LORD swore to David a sure oath that He will not take back: “One of your own descendants I will set on your throne.[3]

12 If your sons keep My covenant and the testimonies I teach them, their sons also will sit on your throne for ever.”

13 For the LORD has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His dwelling:

14 “This will be My resting place for ever; I will live here, for this is what I desired.

15 I will bless her food supply richly; her poor I will fill with bread.

16 I will clothe her priests with salvation, and her faithful ones will sing aloud for joy.

17 There I will make a horn grow for David; I have prepared a lamp for My anointed one.

18 I will clothe his enemies with shame, but on him his crown will shine.”

1 That is, the ark, which stayed at Kiriath-jearim; see 1 Samuel 7:1–2; 2 Samuel 6.

2 Verses 8–10 are close to 2 Chronicles 6:41–42.

3 Compare Acts 2:30.

Psalm 133

> *Psalm 133 sings of how good it is when brothers live together in unity. It is like the anointing oil running down Aaron’s beard, and like the dew of Hermon falling on Zion, where the LORD has commanded the blessing of life for evermore.*

A song of ascents. Of David.

1 How good it is, how pleasant, when brothers live together as one!

2 It is like precious oil on the head, running down on the beard, the beard of Aaron, running down on the collar of his robes.[1]

3 It is like the dew of Hermon falling on the mountains of Zion. For there the LORD has commanded the blessing, life for evermore.

1 See Exodus 30:25, 30.

Psalm 134

> *Psalm 134 closes the songs of ascents. The LORD’s servants who stand in His house by night are called to bless Him, and they in turn are blessed from Zion by the Maker of heaven and earth.*

A song of ascents.

1 Come, bless the LORD, all you servants of the LORD, who stand by night in the house of the LORD.[1]

2 Raise your hands towards the sanctuary and bless the LORD.

3 May the LORD bless you from Zion, He who made heaven and earth.

1 The last of the songs of ascents; the priests and Levites kept watch in the temple at night.

Psalm 135

Psalm 135 calls the LORD's servants to praise Him, for He has chosen Israel and is greater than all gods. He does whatever He pleases in heaven and on earth. He struck down the firstborn of Egypt, defeated Sihon and Og, and gave their land to His people. His name endures for ever, while the idols of the nations are silver and gold, and those who trust in them will become like them. The houses of Israel, Aaron and Levi are called to bless the LORD.

1 Hallelujah! Give praise to the LORD's name;
praise Him, you servants of the LORD,
2 you who serve in the LORD's house,
in the courts of our God's house.
3 Hallelujah, for the LORD is good;
sing to His name, for that is a delight.
4 For the LORD has chosen Jacob for Himself,
Israel as His treasured possession.
5 I know that the LORD is great;
our Lord is greater than all gods.
6 The LORD does whatever He pleases,
in heaven and on earth,
in the seas and all the depths.
7 He makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth;
He makes lightning for the rain
and brings the wind out of His storehouses.
8 He struck down the firstborn of Egypt,
both people and animals.
9 He sent signs and wonders into your midst, Egypt,
against Pharaoh and all his servants.
10 He struck down many nations
and killed mighty kings,
11 Sihon the Amorite king,
Og the king of Bashan,
and every kingdom in Canaan,
12 and He gave their land as an inheritance,
an inheritance to His people Israel.
13 LORD, Your name endures for ever;
LORD, Your renown lasts through all generations.
14 For the LORD will vindicate His people
and have compassion on His servants.[1]
15 The idols of the nations are silver and gold,
made by human hands.
16 They have mouths but cannot speak,
eyes but cannot see.
17 They have ears but cannot hear,
and there is no breath in their mouths.
18 Those who make them will become like them,
and so will all who trust in them.
19 House of Israel, bless the LORD;
house of Aaron, bless the LORD;
20 house of Levi, bless the LORD;
you who fear the LORD, bless the LORD.
21 Blessed be the LORD from Zion,
He who lives in Jerusalem. Hallelujah!

1 The words of Deuteronomy 32:36.

Psalm 136

Psalm 136 is a litany of thanks, with one refrain after every line: His loyal kindness endures for ever. It gives thanks to the God of gods for making the heavens, the earth and the lights of day and night, for bringing Israel out of Egypt and through the Red Sea, for leading them through the wilderness, for defeating Sihon and Og and giving their land to Israel, and for remembering His people and feeding every creature.

1 Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good;
His loyal kindness endures for ever.[1]
2 Give thanks to the God of gods;
His loyal kindness endures for ever.
3 Give thanks to the Lord of lords;
His loyal kindness endures for ever.
4 to Him who alone does great wonders;
His loyal kindness endures for ever.
5 who by understanding made the heavens;
His loyal kindness endures for ever.
6 who spread out the earth on the waters;
His loyal kindness endures for ever.
7 who made the great lights;
His loyal kindness endures for ever.
8 the sun to rule by day;
His loyal kindness endures for ever.
9 the moon and stars to rule by night;
His loyal kindness endures for ever.
10 who struck down the Egyptians' firstborn;
His loyal kindness endures for ever.

11 and brought Israel out from among them; His loyal kindness endures for ever.

12 with a strong hand and an outstretched arm; His loyal kindness endures for ever.

13 who divided the Red Sea in two; His loyal kindness endures for ever.

14 and led Israel through the middle of it; His loyal kindness endures for ever.

15 but swept Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea; His loyal kindness endures for ever.

16 who led His people through the wilderness; His loyal kindness endures for ever.

17 who struck down great kings; His loyal kindness endures for ever.

18 and killed mighty kings; His loyal kindness endures for ever.

19 Sihon king of the Amorites; His loyal kindness endures for ever.

20 and Og king of Bashan; His loyal kindness endures for ever.

21 and gave their land as an inheritance; His loyal kindness endures for ever.

22 an inheritance to Israel His servant; His loyal kindness endures for ever.

23 who remembered us in our low estate; His loyal kindness endures for ever.

24 and rescued us from our foes; His loyal kindness endures for ever.

25 who gives food to every creature; His loyal kindness endures for ever.

26 Give thanks to the God of heaven; His loyal kindness endures for ever.

1 The people probably sang the refrain in reply; compare 2 Chronicles 7:3.

Psalm 137

> *Psalm 137 is a song of the exiles. By the rivers of Babylon they wept when they remembered Zion and hung up their lyres, for their captors demanded songs of Zion. How can they sing the LORD's song in a foreign land? The psalmist swears never to forget Jerusalem. He asks the LORD to remember what Edom did on the day the city fell, and ends with a terrible cry for justice against Babylon.*

1 By Babylon's rivers we sat and wept at the memory of Zion.

2 There on the poplars we hung our lyres,

3 for there our captors asked us for songs, and our tormentors demanded joy: "Sing us one of the songs of Zion!"

4 How can we sing the LORD's song in a foreign land?

5 If I forget you, Jerusalem, may my right hand lose its skill.

6 May my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth if I do not remember you, if I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy.

7 Remember, LORD, against the Edomites the day Jerusalem fell, how they said, "Strip her, strip her to her foundations!"[1]

8 Daughter of Babylon, doomed to destruction, blessed is the one who repays you for what you have done to us.

9 Blessed is the one who seizes your infants and dashes them against the rock.[2]

1 Compare Obadiah 10–14.

2 A cry for God's justice from those who had seen this done in Jerusalem; compare Isaiah 13:16; Lamentations 2:20.

Psalm 138

> *Psalm 138 gives thanks with a whole heart for God's loyal kindness and truth. On the day David called, God answered and made him bold. All the kings of the earth will thank the LORD. Though He is high, He looks on the lowly. In the midst of trouble God preserves David's life, and He will complete His purpose for him.*

Of David.

1 I give You thanks with all my heart; before the gods I sing Your praise.[1]

2 I bow down towards Your holy temple and give thanks to Your name for Your loyal kindness and

Your truth, for You have made Your word greater than all Your renown.

3 On the day I called, You answered me; You made me bold with strength in my soul.

4 All the kings of the earth will thank You, LORD, when they have heard the words of Your mouth.

5 They will sing of the LORD's ways, for the LORD's glory is great.

6 Though the LORD is high, He looks on the lowly, but the proud He knows from afar.

7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, You preserve my life; You stretch out Your hand against the anger of my enemies, and Your right hand saves me.

8 The LORD will complete His purpose for me. Your loyal kindness, LORD, endures for ever; do not abandon the work of Your hands.

1 Perhaps the gods of the nations, or earthly rulers.

Psalm 139

> *Psalm 139 marvels that the LORD knows David completely: his sitting and rising, his thoughts, and every word before he speaks it. There is nowhere to flee from God's Spirit, in heaven, in Sheol, across the sea or in the dark. God formed him in his mother's womb and wrote all his days in His book, and His thoughts are too many to count. David hates those who hate God, and he ends by asking God to search his heart and lead him in the everlasting way.*

For the director. Of David. A psalm.

1 LORD, You have searched me and You know me.

2 You know when I sit and when I rise; You discern my thoughts from far away.

3 You measure my going out and my lying down; You are familiar with all my ways.

4 Before a word is on my tongue, LORD, You know it completely.

5 You close me in from behind and in front, and You rest Your hand on me.

6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too high for me to reach.

7 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Where can I flee from Your presence?

8 If I climb up to heaven, You are there; if I lie down in Sheol, You are there too.

9 If I take the wings of the dawn and settle at the far side of the sea,

10 even there Your hand would guide me; Your right hand would keep hold of me.

11 If I say, "Surely the darkness will cover me, and the light around me become night,"

12 even the darkness is not dark to You; the night shines like the day, for darkness is as light to You.

13 For it was You who made my inmost parts, weaving me together in my mother's womb.

14 I give You thanks, for I was made in an awesome and wonderful way. Your works are wonderful; my soul knows that very well.

15 My frame was in full view to You when I was being made in secret, embroidered in the depths of the earth.

16 Your eyes saw my unformed body; in Your book all my days were written, the days fashioned for me when as yet there was none of them.

17 How precious are Your thoughts to me, O God! How vast is the sum of them!

18 If I counted them, they would outnumber the grains of sand; when I awake, I am still with You.

19 If only You would slay the wicked, O God! Away from me, you men of blood!

20 They speak of You with evil intent; Your enemies take Your name in vain.[1]

21 Do I not hate those who hate You, LORD? Do I not loathe those who rise against You?

22 I hate them with complete hatred; I count them my enemies.

23 Search me, God, and learn what is in my heart; test me and learn my anxious thoughts.

24 See if there is any way of pain in me, and guide me on the everlasting road.

1 The meaning of the Hebrew here is uncertain.

Psalm 140

Psalm 140 asks to be rescued from violent men who plot evil, whose tongues are like a serpent's and who have hidden traps along David's road. He says to the LORD, "You are my God," and asks that the schemes of the wicked may fail and that their own harm may cover them. He knows that the LORD gives justice to the needy, and that the upright will live in His presence.

For the director. A psalm of David.

1 Rescue me, LORD, from evil people; protect me from violent men,

2 who plot evil in their hearts and stir up wars all day long.

3 They sharpen their tongues like a serpent's; viper's poison lies behind their lips. Selah.[1]

4 Keep me, LORD, from the hands of the wicked; protect me from violent men who plan to trip my feet.

5 The proud have hidden a trap for me; they have spread cords as a net along the road and set snares for me. Selah.

6 I say to the LORD, "You are my God." Hear, LORD, my plea for mercy.

7 Lord GOD, my strong Saviour, You shield my head on the day of battle.

8 Do not grant the desires of the wicked, LORD; do not let their schemes succeed, or they will exalt themselves. Selah.

9 As for the heads of those who surround me, may the harm their lips have spoken cover them.

10 May burning coals fall on them; may they be thrown into the fire, into pits from which they cannot rise.

11 May the slanderer not be established in the land; may disaster hunt down the violent man without pause.

12 I know that the LORD upholds the cause of the afflicted and gives justice to the needy.

13 Surely the righteous will praise Your name; the upright will live in Your presence.

1 Quoted in Romans 3:13.

Psalm 141

Psalm 141 asks the LORD to come quickly and to receive David's prayer as incense. He asks for a guard over his mouth and a heart that does not turn to evil. A righteous man's rebuke would be oil for his head. His eyes are on the Lord GOD, and he asks to be kept from the traps of the wicked, who will fall into their own nets.

A psalm of David.

1 LORD, I call to You; come to me quickly; hear my voice when I call to You.

2 May my prayer be set before You as incense, my uplifted hands as the evening offering.

3 Set a guard, LORD, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips.

4 Do not let my heart turn to any evil thing, to act wickedly with men who do wrong; let me not eat their delicacies.

5 Let a righteous man strike me in loyal kindness; let him correct me; it is oil for my head, and my head will not refuse it. Yet my prayer is still against their evil deeds.[1]

6 When their rulers are thrown down the side of a cliff, they will hear that my words were pleasant.

7 As when someone ploughs and splits the ground, so our bones lie strewn at the mouth of Sheol.

8 But my eyes are on You, Lord GOD; in You I take refuge; do not leave me defenceless.

9 Keep me from the trap they have laid for me, from the snares of evildoers.

10 Let the wicked be caught in their own nets, all of them, while I go safely on.

1 The meaning of the Hebrew of verses 5–7 is uncertain.

Psalm 142

Psalm 142 is David's prayer from the cave. He cries aloud to the LORD and pours out his trouble. His spirit is faint, traps are hidden on his path, and no one cares for him. The LORD is his refuge and his portion in the land of the living. He asks to be brought out of prison, so that the righteous may gather round him.

A maskil of David, when he was in the cave. A prayer.

1 I cry aloud to the LORD; I plead aloud with the LORD for mercy.[1]

2 I pour out my troubled thoughts to Him; I lay my distress before Him.

3 When my spirit grows faint, You know my path. On the way I walk they have hidden a trap for me.

4 Look to my right and see: no one takes notice of me. There is no refuge for me; no one cares for my soul.

5 I cry to You, LORD; I say, "You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living."

6 Listen to my cry, for I am brought very low. Rescue me from my pursuers, for they are too strong for me.

7 Bring me out of prison, so that I may give thanks to Your name. The righteous will gather round me because You have dealt well with me.

1 Compare 1 Samuel 22:1; 24:3.

Psalm 143

Psalm 143 pleads with the LORD not to bring His servant into judgement, for no one living is righteous before Him. The enemy has crushed David, and his spirit fails. He remembers the days of old and stretches out his hands, thirsting like parched land. He asks to hear of God's loyal kindness in the morning, to be taught God's will, and to be led on level ground, for he is God's servant.

A psalm of David.

1 LORD, hear my prayer; listen to my plea for mercy; in Your faithfulness and righteousness answer me.

2 Do not bring Your servant into judgement, for no one living is righteous before You.[1]

3 For the enemy has pursued me and crushed my life to the ground; he has made me sit in darkness like those long dead.

4 So my spirit grows faint within me; my heart is dismayed within me.

5 I remember the days of old; I meditate on all You have done; I ponder the work of Your hands.

6 I reach out my hands to You; my soul is like dry ground, thirsting for You. Selah.

7 Answer me quickly, LORD; my spirit fails. Do not hide Your face from me, or I will be like those who go down to the pit.

8 Let me hear of Your loyal kindness in the morning, for I trust in You. Show me the way I should go, for to You I lift up my soul.

9 Rescue me from my enemies, LORD; I take shelter in You.

10 Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God. May Your good Spirit lead me on level ground.

11 For the sake of Your name, LORD, preserve my life; in Your righteousness bring my soul out of trouble.

12 In Your loyal kindness silence my enemies, and destroy all who oppress my soul, for I am Your servant.

1 Compare Romans 3:20; Galatians 2:16.

Psalm 144

Psalm 144 blesses the LORD, David's rock, who trains his hands for war. Man is like a breath, yet God takes notice of him. David asks God to part the heavens, come down and rescue him from foreigners who speak lies, and he promises a new song to the One who gives victory to kings. He prays that sons and daughters may flourish, that barns and flocks may be full, and that the streets may be at peace. Blessed are the people whose God is the LORD.

Of David.

1 Blessed be the LORD, my rock, who trains my hands for war and my fingers for battle.

2 He is my loyal love and my fortress, my stronghold and my deliverer, my shield, in whom I take refuge, who subdues peoples under me.[1]

3 LORD, what is man that You take notice of him, the son of man that You think of him?[2]

4 Man is like a breath; his days are like a passing shadow.

5 Bend Your heavens, LORD, and descend; touch the mountains so that they smoke.

6 Flash out lightning and scatter them; shoot Your arrows and rout them.

7 Reach down Your hand from on high; set me free and rescue me from the mighty waters, from the hand of foreigners,

8 whose mouths speak lies and whose right hands are false.

9 I will sing a new song to You, O God; on a ten-stringed lute I will make music to You,

10 to Him who gives victory to kings, who sets His servant David free from the deadly sword.

11 Set me free and rescue me from the hand of foreigners, whose mouths speak lies and whose right hands are false.

12 May our sons in their youth be like well-nurtured plants, and our daughters like corner pillars carved for a palace.

13 May our barns be full, supplying every kind of produce; may our sheep increase by thousands, by tens of thousands in our fields.

14 May our cattle be heavy with young, with no breach in the walls, no going into exile, and no cry of distress in our streets.

15 Blessed are the people for whom this is so; blessed are the people whose God is the LORD.

1 So some Hebrew manuscripts and the Syriac and Aramaic; most Hebrew manuscripts have 'my people'.
2 Compare 8:4.

Psalm 145

Psalm 145 is an alphabetic song of praise. David will bless God's name every day, for His greatness is beyond searching out. One generation will tell the next of His mighty deeds. The LORD is gracious and compassionate, good to all, and His kingdom is everlasting. He upholds the falling, feeds every living thing, and is near to all who call on Him in truth. All flesh is called to bless His holy name for ever.

A song of praise. Of David.

1 I will exalt You, my God the King; I will bless Your name for ever and ever.[1]

2 Every day I will bless You and praise Your name for ever and ever.

3 Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; His greatness is beyond searching out.

4 One generation will commend Your works to the next and tell of Your mighty deeds.

5 I will meditate on the glorious splendour of Your majesty and on Your wonderful works.

6 They will speak of the power of Your awesome deeds, and I will declare Your greatness.

7 They will pour out the memory of Your abundant goodness and sing joyfully of Your righteousness.

8 The LORD is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and great in loyal kindness.

9 The LORD is good to all, and His compassion is over all He has made.

10 All Your works will give You thanks, LORD, and Your faithful ones will bless You.

11 They will speak of the glory of Your kingdom and
tell of Your might,
12 to make known to the children of man His
mighty deeds and the glorious splendour of His
kingdom.
13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and
Your dominion lasts through all generations.[2]
14 The LORD upholds all who are falling and raises
up all who are bowed down.
15 The eyes of all look to You, and You give them
their food at the proper time.
16 You open Your hand and give every living thing
all it desires.
17 The LORD is just in every way He acts, and
faithful in everything He does.
18 The LORD is close to all who call to Him, to all
who call to Him in truth.
19 He fulfils the desire of those who fear Him; He
hears their cry and saves them.
20 The LORD guards all who love Him, but all the
wicked He will destroy.
21 My mouth will declare the LORD's praise; let
every creature bless His holy name for ever and
ever.

1 An acrostic: each verse begins with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet. See the note at verse 13.
2 The Hebrew has no line here for the letter nun. One Hebrew manuscript, a Dead Sea Scroll, the Greek and the Syriac add 'The LORD is faithful in all His words and gracious in all His deeds'.

Psalm 146

Psalm 146 begins the closing songs of praise. The psalmist will praise the LORD as long as he lives. Princes cannot save, for their plans perish with them, but blessed is the one whose hope is in the God of Jacob, the Maker of heaven and earth. He gives justice to the oppressed, food to the hungry and sight to the blind, watches over foreigners, orphans and widows, and will reign for ever.

1 Hallelujah! Praise the LORD, my soul.[1]
2 I will praise the LORD as long as I live; I will sing
to my God while I have breath.
3 Do not trust in princes, in mortals who cannot
save.
4 When their breath leaves them, they return to
the ground; on that very day their plans perish.
5 Blessed is the one whose help is the God of
Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God,
6 who made heaven, earth and sea, and everything
in them, who stays faithful for ever,
7 who gives justice to the oppressed and food to
the hungry. The LORD sets prisoners free;
8 the LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD
lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD
loves the righteous.
9 The LORD watches over foreigners and upholds
the orphan and the widow, but He thwarts the way
of the wicked.
10 The LORD will reign for ever, your God, Zion,
through all generations. Hallelujah!

1 Psalms 146–150 each open and close with 'Hallelujah'.

Psalm 147

Psalm 147 praises the LORD who rebuilds Jerusalem, gathers Israel's outcasts and heals the brokenhearted. He names the stars, lifts up the humble, sends rain and feeds the animals. He delights not in the strength of horses but in those who hope in His loyal kindness. Jerusalem is called to praise Him for peace and plenty. His word sends snow and hail and melts them, and He has given His statutes to Israel as to no other nation.

1 Hallelujah! How good it is to sing praise to our
God, how pleasant and fitting to praise Him.
2 The LORD builds up Jerusalem and gathers the
outcasts of Israel.[1]
3 He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their
wounds.
4 He determines the number of the stars and calls
each of them by name.

5 Great is our Lord and mighty in power; His understanding has no limit.

6 The LORD lifts up the humble but throws the wicked to the ground.

7 Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving; make music to our God on the lyre.

8 He covers the sky with clouds, prepares rain for the earth, and makes grass grow on the hills.

9 He gives the animals their food, and the young ravens when they call.

10 He takes no delight in the strength of the horse or pleasure in a warrior's legs.

11 The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him, those who hope in His loyal kindness.

12 Praise the LORD, Jerusalem; praise your God, Zion.

13 For He has made the bars of your gates strong and blessed your people within you.

14 He grants peace within your borders and satisfies you with the finest wheat.

15 He sends His command to the earth; His word runs swiftly.

16 He spreads snow like wool and scatters frost like ashes.

17 He throws down His hail in crumbs; who can stand up to His cold?

18 He speaks His word and they melt; He sends His wind, and the waters run.

19 He declares His word to Jacob, His statutes and rulings to Israel.

20 He has not done this for any other nation; they do not know His rulings. Hallelujah!

1 Compare Isaiah 56:8.

Psalm 148

> *Psalm 148 calls all creation to praise the LORD. From the heavens, the angels, sun, moon and stars are to praise Him, for He commanded and they were created. From the earth, the sea creatures, weather, mountains, trees, animals, kings, young and old are to praise His name, for it alone is exalted. He has raised up a horn for His people, who are close to Him.*

1 Hallelujah! Give the LORD praise from the heavens; praise Him on the heights.

2 Praise Him, all His angels; praise Him, all His armies.

3 Praise Him, sun and moon; praise Him, every star that shines.

4 Praise Him, highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens.[1]

5 Let these praise the LORD's name, for at His command they came to be.

6 He set them in place for ever and ever; He gave a decree that will not pass away.

7 Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea creatures and all the depths,

8 fire and hail, snow and mist, stormy wind that does His bidding,

9 mountains and every hill, fruit trees and every cedar,

10 wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds,

11 earth's kings and all peoples, princes and all earth's rulers,

12 young men and young women, old men and children.

13 Let these praise the LORD's name, for His name alone is high; His splendour rises over earth and heaven.

14 He has raised up a horn for His people, praise for all His faithful ones, the people of Israel, who are close to Him. Hallelujah!

1 Compare Genesis 1:7.

Psalm 149

Psalm 149 calls the faithful to sing a new song. Israel is to rejoice in its Maker with dancing, tambourine and lyre, for the LORD takes pleasure in His people and crowns the humble with salvation. With God's praises in their mouths and a sword in their hands, they will carry out the judgement written against the nations.

1 Hallelujah! Sing to the LORD a new song, His praise in the assembly of His faithful ones.

2 Let Israel rejoice in their Maker; let the children of Zion be glad in their King.

3 Let them praise His name with dancing and make music to Him with tambourine and lyre.

4 For the LORD delights in His people; He adorns the humble with salvation.

5 Let the faithful rejoice in this honour; let them shout for joy on their beds.

6 May God's high praises be on their lips and a two-edged sword in their hands,

7 to carry out vengeance on the nations and punishment on the peoples,

8 to put their kings in chains and their nobles in iron fetters,

9 to carry out on them the judgement written. This is the honour of all His faithful ones. Hallelujah![1]

1 Perhaps the judgement written in Deuteronomy 32:41–43.

Psalm 150

Psalm 150 closes the Book of Psalms. God is to be praised in His sanctuary and in His mighty heavens, for His mighty deeds and His greatness, with ram's horn, harp, lyre, tambourine, dancing, strings, pipe and cymbals. Everything that has breath is called to praise the LORD.

1 Hallelujah! Praise God in His sanctuary; praise Him in His mighty heavens.

2 Praise Him for His mighty deeds; praise Him for His surpassing greatness.

3 Praise Him with the sound of the ram's horn; praise Him with harp and lyre.

4 Praise Him with tambourine and dancing; praise Him with strings and pipe.

5 Praise Him with clashing cymbals; praise Him with resounding cymbals.

6 Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Hallelujah![1]

1 This psalm closes Book Five and the whole Book of Psalms.