
תהילים ✧ THE PSALMS

The Book of Psalms (or 'Psalter', from the Greek *ψαλτεριον*) is a collection of 151 poems, hymns, and songs (we here include Ps 151, present in the *Septuagint*, *Syriac Peshitta* and *Qumran MSS* but not in the *Masoretic Text* and most English translations). From Ps 10–148, the numbering of the *MT* (used here) is one figure ahead of the *LXX* and *Vulgate*, which merge 9/10 and 114/115 but divide both 116 & 147.

Many psalms have titles, or 'inscriptions', which often include musical directions, such as '*To the leader: with strings*' (Ps 4, 6, etc.); the meaning of some terms is uncertain; for example, *Shiggaion* (Ps 7), *Miktam* (Ps 16, 56–60), *Maskil* (Ps 42, 44, 52–55 *et cetera*), *Sheminith* (Ps 6, 12), *Gittith* (Ps 8, 81, 84), *Alamoth* (Ps 46) and *Mahalath* (Ps 53). References to the *sons of Korah* (Ps 42, 44–49, 84, etc.), *Jeduthun* (Ps 39, 62, 77), *Asaph* (Ps 50, 73–83), *Heman* (Ps 88) and *Ethan* (Ps 89) point to the work of professional musicians (1Ch 15,16–22, Ne 12:41–46). '*Song of Ascents*' (Ps 120–134) may mean 'pilgrim song', that is, of ascent to Jerusalem. For the significance of the frequently occurring word, '*Selah*' (סֶלָה), see #3:3.

AUTHORSHIP AND DATES

The titles attribute 73 psalms to David, 12 to Asaph, 11 to the Korahites and 1 each to Heman, Ethan (or Jeduthun), Moses and Solomon; the *LXX* inscriptions do not always match those of the *MT* and credit David with 82 Psalms. The purpose of these inscriptions may not have been to name the author but merely to establish a relationship between the psalm and the person named; those 'for/of the Korahites' were part of the repertoire of the family of cantors, just as the numerous psalms 'To the leader' (4, 5, 6, 8, etc.) were performed under his direction. But it was not long before these notices were taken to indicate authorship and, to the inscription 'of David' at the head of some Psalms, were added details of the circumstances in his life at the time these psalms were composed (3, 7, 18, 34, 51, 52, 54, etc.).

Due to what the historical books say of David's musical talent (1S 16:16–18, cf. Am 6:5), poetic gifts (2S 1:19–27, 3:33–34) and his love of the liturgy (2S 6:5, 15–16), it is inevitable that these qualities should be expressed in the Psalter; indeed, Ps 18 is a version of a poem attributed to David in 2S 22. Not all the psalms of the Davidic collection are by him, no doubt, but it may have a few as a core. The inscriptions are not decisive and, when the NT writers quote a psalm as being by David, they are following their contemporaries. Even so, the traditional connexion of David with the Psalms should not be wholly rejected, and David, who 'sang the songs of Israel' (2S 23:1), must be conceded an essential part in the formation of the religious poetry of Israel.

The Psalter covers several centuries of activity. After erroneous assessments, assigning a very late date to most psalms, less extreme views now prevail; apart from those composed by David, many date from the monarchical period but their content is too general for more than conjectural dating. The psalms of the Kingship of God, echoing parts of Isaiah, were written during the Exile, as were those such as 137, which speak of the destruction of Jerusalem; Ps 126 celebrates the return from Exile. The post-Exilic period was fertile in psalmody: the restored Temple saw a reawakening of public worship, the cantors were assimilated with the Levites, and Ben Sira used psalm form in his teaching. Arguments for psalms written after the Persian period, or even during Maccabean times (specifically, 44, 74, 79 & 83) are not convincing.

ספר ראשון

תהילים פרק א

א אֲשֶׁרִי הָאִישׁ
אֲשֶׁר | לֹא הִלֵּךְ בְּעֵצַת רְשָׁעִים
וּבְדֶרֶךְ חַטָּאִים לֹא עָמַד
וּבְמוֹשָׁב לְצִידִים לֹא יָשָׁב:
ב כִּי אִם בְּתוֹרַת יְהוָה חִפְצוֹ
וּבְתוֹרָתוֹ יִהְיֶה יוֹמָם וּלְיָלִיָּה:
ג וְהָיָה כְּעֵץ שָׁתוּל עַל-פְּלִיגֵי-מַיִם
אֲשֶׁר פִּרְיוֹ | יִתֵּן בְּעֵתוֹ וְעֵלְהוּ לֹא-יִבּוֹל
וְכָל אֲשֶׁר-יַעֲשֶׂה יִצְלִיחַ:
ד לֹא-כֵן הָרְשָׁעִים
כִּי אִם-כַּמֶּץ אֲשֶׁר-תִּדְפְּנוּ רוּחַ:

BOOK I

PSALM 1

- 1 Happy is anyone
who rejects the advice of the wicked
and does not take a stand in the path that sinners tread,
nor a seat in company with cynics,
- 2 but who delights in the Law of Yahweh
and meditates on his law by day and night.
- 3 Such a one is like a tree planted near streams;
it bears fruit in season and its leaves never wither,
and every project succeeds.
- 4 How different the wicked,
just like the chaff blown around by the wind.

PSALM 1

Psalms 1 and 2 serve as preface to the Psalter; they summarise its moral teaching and messianic ideas. Ps 1, contrasting the 'two ways', hymns the Law, the true way to happiness (see 19:7-14 & 119).

- 1 'Happy' (the NJB has 'how blessed') is the conventional translation of a Hebrew expression meaning 'the happiness of'. In the Psalms, the term רְשָׁעִים ('wicked') describes people who are proud, practical atheists (10:2, 4, 11) who hate God's commands, commit sinful deeds, speak lies and slander (50:16-20), and cheat others (37:21).
- 2 The verb הִגָּה ('meditates') actually means 'to recite quietly' (63:6, 77:12, 143:4) as opposed to the loud cry of the prayer under trial (3:4, 5:2); it refers metonymically to intense study and reflection.
- 3 The 2nd Maqaf in עַל-פְּלִיגֵי-מַיִם does not appear in either the Aleppo or Leningrad Codices but is included in the MAM text in grey (as here).
- 4 At the end of the 1st line the NJB, following the LXX (οὕχ οὕτως), adds a 2nd 'how different'; here, we follow the MT (for the 1st line, the NRSV has, "The wicked are not so"). In threshing, the crushed sheaves were tossed into the air, where the wind blew away the lighter chaff.

ה' עַל־בֶּן | לֹא־יִקְמוּ רָשָׁעִים בַּמִּשְׁפָּט
וְחַטָּאִים בַּעֲדַת צְדִיקִים:
ו' כִּי־יֹדֵעַ יְהוָה דֶּרֶךְ צְדִיקִים
וְדֶרֶךְ רָשָׁעִים תֵּאבֵד:

- ⁵ The wicked will not stand firm at the Judgement,
nor sinners in the gathering of the upright.
- ⁶ For, Yahweh watches over the path of the upright,
but the path of the wicked is doomed.

⁵ This verse speaks of the great Judgement to come (according to the *MT*), or any divine judgement in this life (according to the *LXX*); the 'gathering of the upright' is insulated from divine judgment (Ps 37:12-17, 28-29).

⁶ The literal translation of 'is doomed' is 'will perish'.

תהילים פרק ב

א לִמָּה רָגָשׁוּ גוֹיִם
וְלֹאֲמִים יִהְיוּ רִיק:
ב יִתְצַבּוּ מַלְכֵי-אֶרֶץ
וְרוֹזְנִים נֹסְדוּ-יַחַד
עַל-יְהוָה וְעַל-מָשִׁיחוֹ:
ג נִנְתָּקָה אֶת-מִוְסְרוֹתֵינוּ
וְנִשְׁלִיכָה מִמֶּנּוּ עֲבֹתֵינוּ:
ד יוֹשֵׁב בַּשָּׁמַיִם יִשְׁחַק
אֲדֹנָי יִלְעַג-לָמוֹ:
ה אֲזַיְדַּבֵּר אֱלִימוֹ בְּאָפוֹ
וּבִחְרוֹנוֹ יִבְהִלְמוֹ:
ו וְאֲנִי נִסְכַּחְתִּי מֶלֶכִּי
עַל-צִיּוֹן הַר-קֹדֶשׁ:

PSALM 2

- 1 Why do the nations conspire,
and the peoples plot in vain?
- 2 Kings of the earth take up position,
princes plot together
against Yahweh and his anointed:
- 3 "Now let us break their fetters!
Now let us throw off their bonds!"
- 4 He who is enthroned in the heavens laughs;
Yahweh makes a mockery of them.
- 5 Then, in his anger, he rebukes them;
in his rage, he strikes them with terror.
- 6 "I myself have anointed my king
on Zion my holy mountain."

PSALM 2

- 1 The Hebrew verb רָגָשׁוּ ('conspire') occurs only here; in Dn 6:6, 11, 15, the Aramaic cognate verb describes several officials acting as a group.
- 2 For the 2nd line, the NRSV has 'and the rulers take counsel together'. The word 'anointed' in Hebrew is, literally, 'Messiah', one of the titles of the Israelite king; after the extinction of the Hebrew monarchy, this became a name for the ideal king of a future, hoped-for restoration, and this Psalm has been interpreted accordingly (cf. Ac 4:25-29).
- 3 The kings compare the rule of Yahweh and his vice-regent to being imprisoned.
- 4 The literal translation of 'enthroned' (וְיֹשֵׁב) is 'sitting': the verb is used metonymically for 'sitting enthroned' (Ps 9:7, 29:10, 55:19, 102:12 & 123:1).
- 5 The 2nd line focuses on the effect that God's angry response (1st line) has on the rebellious kings.
- 6 The 'mountain of God' was initially Sinai (Ex 3:1, 18:5), where Moses encountered God and received the Law from him (Ex 24:12-18), Dt 33:2, see 1K 19:8). Once Solomon had built the Temple on the hill of Zion (2S 5:7-9), this hill became the unique mountain where God resided, to which his people 'went up' to listen to him and adore him (see #Dt 12:2) and it gave its name to the whole city of Jerusalem.

אֶסְפְּרָה אֶל־חֶק ז
 יְהוָה אָמַר אֵלַי בְּנִי אַתָּה
 אֲנִי הַיּוֹם יִלְדָּתִיךָ:
 שְׁאַל מִמֶּנִּי וְאֶתְּנָה גּוֹיִם נַחֲלָתְךָ ח
 וְאַחֲזָתְךָ אֶפְסֵי־אָרֶץ:
 תִּרְעַם בְּשִׁבְט בְּרֹזֶל ט
 כְּכֹלִי יוֹצֵר תִּנְפְּצֵם:
 וְעַתָּה מְלָכִים הַשְׁכִּילוּ י
 הוֹסְרוּ שִׁפְטֵי אָרֶץ:
 עֲבֹדוּ אֶת־יְהוָה בִּירְאָה יא
 וְגִילוּ בְרַעְדָּה:
 נִשְׁקוּ־בֶרֶךְ יב
 פֶּן־יֵאָגֵף | וְתֵאבְדוּ דְרֹךְ
 כִּי־יִבְעַר כָּמַעַט אֹפוֹ
 אֲשֶׁר־י כָּל־חוֹסֵי בוֹ:

- 7 I will tell of the decree:
Yahweh said to me, "You are my son,
today, I have fathered you.
- 8 Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage,
and the ends of the earth your possession.
- 9 With an iron sceptre you will break them,
shatter them like so many pots."
- 10 So now, you kings, come to your senses,
you earthly rulers, learn your lesson!
- 11 In fear, be submissive to Yahweh;
repent in terror!
- 12 Kiss his feet,
or he will be angry and you will perish in the way,
for his fury flares up in a moment.
How blessed are all who take refuge in him!

7 The *Maqaf* in אֶל־חֶק does not appear in either the Aleppo or Leningrad Codices but is included in the MAM text in grey (as here).

8 God promises the Davidic/Messianic King universal dominion.

9 For 'you will break them', the LXX reads 'you will shepherd them' (ποιμανεῖς αὐτοὺς); this reading, quoted in the NT (Rv 2:27, 12:5, 19:15), assumes a different vocalisation of the consonantal Hebrew text, but the presence of 'to shatter' in the next line strongly favours the MT vocalisation.

10 In vv. 10–12, rebellious rulers are warned to submit.

11 Traditionally, the 2nd line is translated, 'rejoice with trembling'; the verb גִּיל normally means 'rejoice' but this does not fit well here; some try to understand 'trembling' in the sense of 'reverential awe', but רַעְדָּה and its related terms consistently refer to utter terror and fear (see Ex 15:15, Job 4:14, Ps 48:6, 55:5, 104:32, Is 33:14, Dn 10:11) or at least great emotional distress (Ezr 10:9). It seems more likely here that גִּיל carries its polarised meaning 'mourn' or 'lament' (as in Ho 10:5) which would then be metonymic in for 'repent' (referring to one's rebellious ways).

12 'Kiss his feet' is conjectural (נִשְׁקוּ לְרַגְלָיו); the MT has 'kiss the son' (נִשְׁקוּ־בֶרֶךְ) as also the LXX and Tg (see 19:8).

תהילים פרק ג

א מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד
בְּבִרְחוֹ מִפְּנֵי אֲבִשָׁלוֹם בְּנוֹ:
ב יְהוָה מַה־רַּבּוֹ צָר
רַבִּים קָמִים עָלַי:
ג רַבִּים אֹמְרִים לְנַפְשִׁי
אֵין יִשׁוּעָתָה לֹא בֵאלֹהִים
סֵלָה:
ד וְאַתָּה יְהוָה מִגֵּן בְּעַד
כְּבוֹדִי וּמִרְיֵם רֹאשִׁי:
ה קוֹלִי אֶל־יְהוָה אֶקְרָא
וַיַּעֲנֵנִי מִהַר קֹדֶשׁ
סֵלָה:
ו אֲנִי שָׁכַבְתִּי וְאִישָׁנָה
הַקִּיצוֹתִי כִּי יְהוָה יִסְמְכֵנִי:

PSALM 3

- ¹ *A Psalm of David,
when he fled from his son Absalom.*
- ² Yahweh, how many are my enemies!
Many are rising up against me.
- ³ How countless those who say of me,
"No salvation for him from his God!"
Selah
- ⁴ But you, Yahweh, the shield at my side,
my glory, you hold my head high.
- ⁵ I cry out to Yahweh;
he answers from his holy mountain.
Selah
- ⁶ As for me, if I lie down and sleep,
I shall awake, for Yahweh sustains me.

PSALM 3

- ¹ The *NJB*, *NRSV* and most English translations do not number this title; here, following the *MT*, we include it as v. 1, and all other verse numbers are accordingly incremented.
- ² The term *מה* ('how') is used here as an adverbial exclamation.
- ³ The *NRSV*, following the *Peshitta*, has 'you' in place of 'him'. 'Selah' (סֵלָה), throughout the Psalter, the *NJB* uses the English word, 'pause') is a liturgical direction; it may indicate that there should be an instrumental interlude at this point in the singing of the Psalm.
- ⁴ Vv. 4–5 express trust, a regular element in those Psalms that are laments.
- ⁵ The psalmist recognises that God dwells in his sanctuary on Mount Zion.
- ⁶ It is perhaps after having spent the night in the Temple that the psalmist receives assurances that Yahweh's attitude is still favourable.

ז לֹא־אִירָא מֵרַבּוֹת עַם
 אֲשֶׁר סָבִיב שְׂתוּ עָלַי:
 ח קוּמָה יְהוָה | הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי אֱלֹהֵי
 כִּי־הִכִּיתָ אֶת־כָּל־אֹיְבֵי לִחֵי
 שְׁנֵי רָשָׁעִים שִׁבַּרְתָּ:
 ט לִיהוָה הִשְׁוּעָה
 עַל־עַמּוֹךְ בְּרִכְתְּךָ
 סְלָה:

- 7 I am not afraid of ten thousands of people,
 who range themselves against me wherever I turn.
- 8 Arise, Yahweh, rescue me, my God!
 You strike all my foes across the face;
 you break the teeth of the wicked.
- 9 In Yahweh is salvation,
 on your people, your blessing!

Selah

⁷ The imperfect verbal form in the 1st line expresses the psalmist's continuing attitude as he faces the crisis at hand.

⁸ Vv. 8–9 comprise a concluding prayer for the psalmist and the nation.

⁹ In this context, God's '*blessing*' includes deliverance/protection, vindication, and sustained life (see Ps 21:3–6, 24:5).

תהילים פרק ד

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ בְּנִינּוֹת מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד:
ב בִּקְרָאִי עֲנֵנִי אֱלֹהֵי צְדִיקִי
בַּצָּר הִרְחַבְתָּ לִּי
חֲנֻנִי וּשְׁמַע תְּפִלָּתִי:
ג בְּנֵי אִישׁ עַד־מָה כְּבוֹדִי לְכַלְמָה
תִּאְהַבּוּן רֵיק תִּבְקֹשׁוּ כֶזֶב
סֵלָה:
ד וַדַּעוּ כִּי־הִפְלָה יְהוָה חֶסֶד לּוֹ
יְהוָה יִשְׁמַע בִּקְרָאִי אֱלֹהֵי:
ה רָגְזוּ וְאֶל־תַּחֲטְאוּ
אִמְרוּ בְּלִבְבְּכֶם עַל־מִשְׁפַּבְּכֶם וְדַמּוּ
סֵלָה:
ו זְבַחוּ זִבְחֵי־צֶדֶק
וּבְטַחוּ אֶל־יְהוָה:

PSALM 4

- ¹ *To the leader: with strings. A Psalm of David.*
- ² When I call, answer me, God of my righteousness.
In my distress, you have set me at large;
take pity on me and hear my prayer!
- ³ Children of men, how long will you be heavy of heart,
why love what is vain and chase after illusions?
Selah
- ⁴ Realise that Yahweh performs wonders for his faithful,
Yahweh listens when I call to him.
- ⁵ When you are disturbed, do not sin,
speak in your hearts, and on your beds be still.
Selah
- ⁶ Loyal offer sacrifices,
and trust in Yahweh.

PSALM 4

- ¹ The *NJB*, *NRSV* and most English translations do not number this title; here, following the *MT*, we include it as v. 1, and all other verse numbers are incremented. This Psalm is a prayer of trust and thanks: God is the one source of happiness. Vv. 5 & 9 show that it is an evening prayer.
- ² The psalmist is so confident of God's positive response to his prayer, he can describe God's deliverance as if it had already happened.
- ³ 'Will you be heavy of heart' follows the *LXX* (*βαρυκάρδοι*); the *MT* (and the *NRSV*) has 'shall my honour suffer shame', with faulty division of words.
- ⁴ Vv. 3-5 rebuke those who falsely accuse the psalmist of wrongdoing. The charge is probably a formal accusation to which the accused replies by a public declaration of innocence (see 26:4-7).
- ⁵ Another reading of 'disturbed' is 'angry'. The text of this verse is obscure and no doubt corrupt; it has not been satisfactorily emended. The general sense is that we should shrink from offending God and pray to him in the calm silence of adoration.
- ⁶ The psalmist urges his enemies to make peace with God and become his followers.

ז רבים אמרים מִי־רָאָנוּ טוֹב
 נִסְה־עֲלֵינוּ אֹר פְּנֵיךָ יְהוָה:
 ח נִתְתָּה שִׂמְחָה בְּלִבִּי
 מֵעַתָּה דָגְגָם וְתִירוֹשָׁם רַבּוּ:
 ט בְּשָׁלוֹם יִחְדּוּ אֶשְׁכְּבָה וְאִישׁוֹ
 כִּי־אַתָּה יְהוָה
 לְבַדְּד לְבִטָּח תּוֹשִׁיבֵנִי:

- 7 Many keep saying, "O that we might see some good!"
 Let the light of your face shine on us.
- 8 Yahweh, you have put gladness in my heart,
 more than all their corn and new wine.
- 9 In peace, I lie down and at once fall asleep,
 for it is you, Yahweh,
 who makes me rest securely.

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- 7 The 2nd line is a Biblical phrase, common in the Psalter, for royal or divine favour. The 'face' is the visible aspect of something (104:30, Gn 2:6) or of a person, whose thoughts, and emotions it makes visible (Gn 4:5, 31:2). Hence, it can stand for the personality ('of my face' = 'my', 42:6,11, 43:5) and presence, especially in the case of human beings meeting God. As it is impossible for human beings to see God (see #Ex 33:20), God can 'let his face shine' on them (see Ps 31:16, 44:3, 80:3) only in a restricted sense. In the same way must passages be understood in which a human being seeks God (24:6, 27:8, Job 33:26, Am 5:4) or beholds him (Ps 11:7, 42:3).
- 8 Another option for the 1st line is to understand the perfect verbal form as indicating certitude: 'you will put gladness in my heart'.
- 9 The translation of the 2nd line understands לְבַדְּד as modifying the verb: God keeps enemies away from the psalmist so that he is safe and secure; another option is to take לְבַדְּד with what precedes and translate, 'you alone, Yahweh, make me secure'.

תהילים פרק ה

א לְמִנְצַח אֶל־הַנְּחִילוֹת
מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד:
ב אֲמַר־י הָאֲזִינָה | יְהוָה
בֵּינָה הִגִּינִי:
ג הַקְשִׁיבָה | לְקוֹל שׁוֹעֵי מַלְכִּי וְאֱלֹהֵי
כִּי־אֵלֶיךָ אֶתְפַּלֵּל:
ד יְהוָה בֹּקֶר תִּשְׁמַע קוֹלִי
בֹּקֶר אֶעֱרֹךְ־לְךָ וְאֶצְפָּה:
ה כִּי | לֹא אֶל־חֶפֶץ רָשָׁע | אֶתָּה
לֹא יִגְרֹךְ רָע:
ו לֹא־יִתְצַבּוּ הוֹלְלִים לִנְגַד עֵינֶיךָ
שִׁנְאָת כָּל־פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן:
ז תִּאבֹּד דְּבַר־י כָּזָב
אִישׁ־דְּמִים וּמְרֹמָה יִתְעַב | יְהוָה:

PSALM 5

- 1 To the leader: for the flutes.
A Psalm of David.
- 2 Give ear to my words, Yahweh,
spare a thought for my sighing.
- 3 Listen to my cry for help, my king and my God;
for, to you I pray!
- 4 Yahweh, in the morning, you hear my voice;
in the morning, I plead my case to you and watch.
- 5 You are not a God who takes pleasure in evil;
no sinner can be your guest.
- 6 Boasters cannot stand their ground under your gaze;
you hate all evildoers.
- 7 You destroy those who speak lies;
the violent and deceitful are abhorrent to Yahweh.

PSALM 5

- 1 Most English translations do not number this title; here, following the MT, we include it as v. 1, and all other verse numbers are accordingly incremented with respect to those in such publications.
- 2 The word translated 'sighing' occurs only here and in Ps 39:3. The *Paseq* in the 1st line is presented as grey text, as it appears in the MAM text.
- 3 The NJB includes the 2nd line in the same stanza as v. 4.
- 4 Dawn is the moment of divine favours (see #17:16).
- 5 The negated imperfect verbal form in the 2nd line indicates incapability or lack of permission: these people are morally incapable of dwelling in God's presence and are not permitted to do so.
- 6 The NJB includes the 2nd line in the same stanza as v. 7.
- 7 The *Paseq* in the 2nd line is presented as grey text, just as it appears in the MAM text.

ח ואֲנִי בְּרַב חֶסֶדְךָ אָבוֹא בֵּיתְךָ
אֶשְׁתַּחֲוֶה אֶל־הַיְכָל־קֹדֶשְׁךָ בִּירְאָתְךָ:
ט יְהוָה | נַחֲנִי בְצַדִּיקְתְּךָ
לְמַעַן שׁוּרְרִי
הוֹשֶׁר הַיָּשָׁר לִפְנֵי דְרָכְךָ:
י כִּי אֵין בְּפִיהוּ נִכּוֹנָה
קִרְבָּם הַנּוֹת
קִבְר־פֶּתַח גְּרָם
לְשׁוֹנָם יַחֲלִיקוֹן:
יא הַאֲשִׁימָם | אֱלֹהִים
יִפְלוּ מִמַּעַצְוֹתֶיהֶם
בְּרַב פְּשָׁעֵיהֶם הִדְיָחֻמוֹ
כִּי־מָרוּ בָּךְ:
יב וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ כָל־חֹסֵי בָּךְ
לְעוֹלָם יִרְנְנוּ

- 8 But I, through your faithful love, may enter your house,
and before your Holy Temple bow down in awe of you.
- 9 Yahweh, in your saving justice, lead me,
because of my enemies;
make your way plain before me.
- 10 There is no truth in their mouths,
their hearts are destruction,
their throats are open graves,
their tongues seductive.
- 11 Lay the guilt on them, God;
make their intrigues their own downfall.
For their countless offences, thrust them from you,
since they have rebelled against you.
- 12 But joy for all who take refuge in you,
endless songs of gladness!

- 8 By placing the 1P pronoun at the beginning of the verse, the psalmist highlights the contrast between the evildoers' actions and destiny, outlined in the preceding verses, with his own.
- 9 The *Qere* reading of הַיָּשָׁר (a Piel form) seems more suitable than the הוֹשֶׁר (a Hiphil) of the *Ketiv*.
- 10 As the psalmist walks down the path in which God leads him, he asks Yahweh to guide his steps and remove danger from the path (v. 8), because he knows his enemies have 'dug a grave' for him and are ready to use their deceitful words to 'swallow him up' like the realm of death (i.e., Sheol) and bring him to ruin.
- 11 Such appeals for vengeance on the enemies of God by the psalmist are very frequent in the Psalms (e.g. 10:15, 31:17, 54:5, 58:6ff, 59:11ff, 69:22-28, 79:12, 83:9-18, 104:35, 109:6-20, 125:5, 137:7-9, 139:19-22, 140:9-11. Under the old covenant, retribution in this life was still the rule, and against this background, these appeals simply betray a hunger for justice.
- 12 To 'take refuge' in Yahweh is an idiom for seeking his protection, which presupposes and even demonstrates the subject's loyalty to God.

וְתִסְדֹּךְ עֲלֵימוֹ
וַיַּעֲלֶצּוּ בְךָ אֲהַבֵּי שְׁמֶךָ:
כִּי־אַתָּה תְּבָרֵךְ צַדִּיק יג
יְהוָה כַּצִּנֹּה רָצוֹן תַּעֲטֹרֵנּוּ:

You shelter them, they rejoice in you,
those who love your name.

¹³ For you bless the upright,
Yahweh, you surround them with favour as with a shield.

¹³ The imperfect verbal forms in this verse highlight how God characteristically rewards and protects the godly.

תהילים פרק ו

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ בְּנִינּוֹת עַל־הַשְּׁמִינִית
מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד:
ב יְהוָה אֶל־בְּאַפְּךָ תוֹכִיחֵנִי
וְאֶל־בַּחֲמַתְךָ תִּסְרֶנִּי:
ג חֲנִנִי יְהוָה כִּי אֲמָלֵל־אֲנִי
רַפְּאֵנִי יְהוָה כִּי גִבְהָלוּ עַצְמִי:
ד וּנְפָשִׁי גִבְהָלָה מְאֹד
וְאֵת וְאֶתָּה יְהוָה עַד־מָתִי:
ה שׁוּבָה יְהוָה חֲלֹצָה נַפְשִׁי
הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי לְמַעַן חֶסֶדְךָ:

PSALM 6

- 1 *To the leader: for the strings and the Sheminith.
A Psalm of David:*
- 2 Yahweh, let your rebuke to me not be in anger,
your punishment not in the heat of wrath.
- 3 Have pity on me, Yahweh, for I am fading away.
Heal me, Yahweh, for my bones are shaking with terror.
- 4 My spirit is shaken to its very depths,
and you, Yahweh – how long?
- 5 Yahweh, relent and save my life;
rescue me for the sake of your faithful love.

PSALM 6

- 1 Most English translations do not number this title; here, following the *MT*, we include it as v. 1, and all other verse numbers are incremented; the meaning of the term שְׁמִינִית ('*Sheminith*') is uncertain; perhaps it refers to a particular style of music (see 1Ch 15:21). This is the first of the seven 'Penitential Psalms' (32, 38, 51, 102, 130 & 143). A sick person appeals to God: The psalmist begs Yahweh to withdraw his anger and spare his life; having received a positive response to his prayer, the psalmist then confronts his enemies and describes how they retreat.
- 2 The implication here is that the psalmist has sinned, causing God to discipline him by bringing a life-threatening illness upon him (vv. 2–7).
- 3 Normally the verb גִּבְהָלוּ ('*shaking*') refers to an emotional response and means 'tremble with fear' (vv. 3, 10); perhaps here the 'bones' are viewed as the seat of the psalmist's emotions. However, the verb may describe one of the effects of his physical ailment, perhaps a fever. In Ezk 7:27 the verb describes how the hands of the people will shake with fear when they experience the horrors of divine judgment.
- 4 The final ה in the *Qere* reading of וְאֶתָּה may have been dropped (by haplography) in the וְאֵת of the *Ketiv*.
- 5 The Hebrew word נֶפֶשׁ ('*nephesh*' – see Gn 2:7) means the life-giving breath (and by extension 'throat'), which is the source of life and which disappears at death. The word is often used to denote a person or animal as a living individual (Gn 12:1, 14:21, Ex 1:5, 12:4) or in the different aspects of bodily and affective life, always linked to one another (see #Gn 2:21). The expression '*my nephesh*' is often equivalent to the reflexive pronoun 'myself' (see 3:2, 44:25, 124:7, Gn 12:13, Ex 4:19, 1S 1:26, 18:1–3, as are also 'my life', 'my face' and 'my glory').

כִּי אֵין בַּמּוֹת זְכוֹרָךְ
 בִּשְׁאוֹל מִי יוֹדֶה-לָּךְ:
 יִגְעֵתִי | בְּאַנְחָתִי
 אֶשְׁחָה בְּכָל-לַיְלָה מִטָּתִי
 בְּדַמְעָתִי עֵרְשִׁי אֲמַסָּה:
 עֵשְׂשָׂה מִכְעַס עֵינַי
 עֲתָקָה בְּכָל-צוֹרָרַי:
 סוּרוּ מִמֶּנִּי כָל-פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן
 כִּי-שָׁמַע יְהוָה קוֹל בְּכִי:
 שָׁמַע יְהוָה תַּחֲנֻנָּתִי
 יְהוָה תִּפְלֹתִי יִקַּח:
 יִבְשׁוּ | וַיִּבְהֲלוּ מְאֹד כָּל-אֹיְבֵי
 יֵשְׁבוּ יִבְשׁוּ רִגְעַם:

- 6 For in death there is no remembrance of you;
 who could sing your praises in Sheol?
 7 I am weary with groaning,
 every night I drench my pillow
 and soak my bed with tears.
 8 My eyes waste away with vexation,
 they grow weak because of all my foes.
 9 Away from me, all evildoers,
 for Yahweh has heard the sound of my weeping.
 10 Yahweh has heard my pleading;
 Yahweh has accepted my prayer.
 11 Let all my enemies be humiliated, shaken to their depths,
 let them retreat in sudden confusion.

- 6 In Sheol (see #Nb 16:33), the dead are silent shadows of their former selves and can have no relationship with God (Ps 30:9, 88:5–6, 10–12, Is 38:18, Job 3:13–19 and see Gn 37:35). The noun זְכוֹרָךְ (*“remembrance”*) here refers to the name of Yahweh as invoked in liturgy and praise.
 7 The literal translation of the 2nd line is, *“I cause to swim through all the night my bed;”* and that of the 3rd is, *“with my tears my bed I flood/melt.”*
 8 For the 2nd line (here following the NRSV), the NJB has the conjectural, *“Arrogance from all my foes!”* The psalmist’s ‘foes’ regard the misfortune of the sick as a punishment for some hidden sin (cf. Job’s friends). The theme is elaborated elsewhere (31, 35, 38, 69).
 9 The psalmist puts the blame for illness on his enemies, believing they have uttered a curse (cf. 102:8). Jesus quotes the 1st line in Mt 7:23.
 10 The prefixed verbal form *‘has accepted’* is parallel to a perfect and indicates that Yahweh has responded favourably to the psalmist’s request.
 11 The 4 prefixed verbal forms in this verse are taken as jussives. The psalmist concludes his prayer by calling judgment down on his enemies.

תהילים פרק ז

א שִׁגְיוֹן לְדָוִד
אֲשֶׁר־שָׁר לַיהוָה
עַל־דְּבַר־כּוֹשׁ בֶּן־יְמִינִי:
ב יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי בְדָחַסִּיתִי
הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי מִכָּל־רֹדְפֵי וְהַצִּילֵנִי:
ג פֶּן־יִטְרֹף בְּאֲרִיֵּה נַפְשִׁי
פָּרַק וְאֵין מַצִּיל:
ד יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אִם־עָשִׂיתִי זֹאת
אִם־יִשְׁעוּל בְּכַפִּי:
ה אִם־גָּמַלְתִּי שׁוֹלְמֵי רֶעַ
וְאֶחְלָצָה צוֹרְרֵי רִיקָם:

PSALM 7

- 1 *A Shiggaion of David,
which he sang to Yahweh
about Cush the Benjaminite.*
- 2 *Yahweh my God, I take refuge in you,
save me from all my pursuers and rescue me,*
- 3 *or, like a lion, they will tear me apart;
they will carry me off with no one to rescue me.*
- 4 *Yahweh my God, if I have done this:
if injustice has stained my hands,*
- 5 *if I have repaid my ally with treachery
or spared one who attacked me unprovoked,*

PSALM 7

- 1 Most English translations do not number this title; here, following the MT, we include it as v. 1, and all other verse numbers are accordingly incremented. The meaning of the term, שִׁגְיוֹן ('Shiggaion'), is uncertain (the NJB uses 'lament'); some derive the noun from the verbal root שָׁגָה ('swerve' or 'reel') and understand it as referring to a wild, passionate song, with rapid changes of rhythm, but this line of reasoning is purely speculative. (The only other appearance of the noun is in Hab 3:1, where it occurs in the plural form.)
- 2 Two protestations of innocence have been combined in this Psalm: the 1st, vv. 1-5, 12-16, in the wisdom style, demands strict retaliation; the 2nd, vv. 6-11, modelled on Jeremiah, appeals for the intervention of God the Judge. V. 17 is a liturgical conclusion.
- 3 The literal translation of 'tear me apart' is 'tear my life apart': the pronominal suffix attached to נַפְשִׁי is equivalent to a personal pronoun.
- 4 'This' refers to the specified crime, of which the psalmist was accused.
- 5 The Lex Talionis (see #Ex 21:25) required that good be rendered for good, and evil for evil. The text should not be watered down as in the versions, 'if I requited with evil the man who wronged me', or (following the Tg) 'robbed my persecutor'; the morality of the Gospel is yet to come (Mt 5:38ff).

ו יִרְדְּף־אוֹיֵב | נַפְשִׁי וַיִּשָּׁג
וִירְמָס לָאָרֶץ חַיִּי
וּכְבוֹדִי | לְעָפָר יִשְׁכֵּן
סֵלָה:

ז קוּמָה יְהוָה | בְּאַפְךָ
הַנָּשָׂא בְּעִבְרוֹת צוֹרְרֵי
וְעוֹרָה אֵלַי מִשְׁפָּט צוּרֹת:
ח וְעַד־תָּסוּבֶבֶךְ
וְעָלֶיהָ לְמָרוֹם שׁוּבָה:
ט יְהוָה יִדֵּן עַמִּים
שְׁפִטֵּנִי יְהוָה
כְּצַדִּיקִי וּכְתִמִּי עָלַי:
י יִגְמַר־נָא רָע | רְשָׁעִים
וּתְכוֹנֵן צַדִּיק
וּבְחֵן לְבוֹת וּכְלִיֹּת
אֱלֹהִים צַדִּיק:

6 then let an enemy hunt me down and catch me,
may he trample my life into the ground
and crush my vital parts into the dust.

Selah

7 Arise, Yahweh in your anger,
rise up against the arrogance of my foes.
Awake, my God, you demand judgement.
8 Let the assembly of nations gather round you;
return above it on high!
9 Yahweh judges the nations;
judge me, Yahweh,
as my uprightness and integrity deserve.
10 Put an end to the malice of the wicked,
make the upright stand firm,
you who discern hearts and minds,
God the upright.

⁶ The phrase here translated as 'vital parts' literally means 'glory', but the word also means 'liver' (for the Semites, the seat of thought and emotion); 'glory' also means 'soul' (as in the NRSV). The 'dust' is that of the tomb.

⁷ 'My God' is conjectural (אֵלַי), following the LXX; the MT has 'towards me' or 'awake for me' (אֵלַי).

⁸ Some emend שׁוּבָה ('return') to שִׁבָּה ('sit [in judgment]', cf. NRSV) because they find the implication of 'return' problematic; but the psalmist does not mean to imply that God has abandoned his royal throne and needs to regain it: rather, he simply urges God, as sovereign king of the world, to once more occupy his royal seat of judgment and execute judgment, as the OT pictures God doing periodically.

⁹ The MT adds a word that means literally 'on me' and might be translated 'that is in me' (as in the NRSV).

¹⁰ In the Psalms, the term רְשָׁעִים ('the wicked') describes people who are proud, practical atheists (Ps 10), who hate God's commands, commit sinful deeds, speak lies and slander (Ps 50:17-21), and cheat others (Ps 37:22); they oppose God and his people.

יא מִגִּנֵּי עַל־אֱלֹהִים
 מוֹשִׁיעַ יִשְׂרָאֵל:
 יב אֱלֹהִים שׁוֹפֵט צַדִּיק
 וְאֵל זַעַם בְּכָל־יּוֹם:
 יג אִם־לֹא יִשׁוּב חֲרָבוֹ יִלְטֹשׁ
 קִשְׁתּוֹ דֶּרֶךְ וַיְכַנְנֶה:
 יד וְלוֹ הַכִּין כְּלִי־מָוֶת
 חֲצִיו לְדֹלְקִים יַפְעֹל:
 טו הִנֵּה יַחְבֵּל־אֹוֹן
 וְהָרָה עֵמָל וְיֵלֵד שָׂקָר:
 טז בּוֹר כְּרֶה וַיַּחְפְּרֶהוּ
 וַיִּפֹּל בַּשַּׁחַת יַפְעֹל:
 יז יִשׁוּב עֵמָלוֹ בְּרֹאשׁוֹ
 וְעַל קִדְקִדּוֹ חֲמָסוֹ יֵרֵד:
 יח אֹדָה יְהוָה בְּצִדְקוֹ
 וְאֶזְמְרָה שֵׁם־יְהוָה עֲלִיוֹן:

11 God is my shield,
 saving the pure of heart.
 12 God is righteous judge,
 and a God who has indignation every day.
 13 If he does not repent, he will whet his sword,
 draw his bow and make ready.
 14 He has prepared his deadly weapons
 and readied his flaming arrows.
 15 Look at him: pregnant with malice,
 conceiving spite, he gives birth to treachery.
 16 He digs a trap, scoops it out,
 but he falls into the snare he made himself.
 17 His mischief recoils on his own head,
 his brutality falls back on his own skull.
 18 I thank Yahweh for his saving justice.
 I sing to the name of Yahweh, the Most High.

-
- 11 The 'pure of heart' are God's faithful followers, who trust in and love him and thus experience his deliverance (11:2, 32:11, 36:10, 64:10 & 97:11).
 12 For this verse, here following the MT & NRSV, the NJB, with the LXX, has: "God is an upright judge, slow to anger, but a God at all times threatening."
 13 The subject of the 1st verb is the sinner who fails to repent of his ways and becomes the target of God's judgment (vv. 10, 15-17).
 14 The literal translation of the 2nd line is, "his arrows into flaming [things] he makes."
 15 The psalmist metaphorically pictures the typical sinner as a pregnant woman, ready to give birth to wicked, destructive schemes and actions.
 16 Apparently, the imagery of hunting is employed; the wicked sinner digs this pit to entrap and destroy his intended victim.
 17 The literal translation of the 2nd line is, "and on his forehead his violence comes down."
 18 The psalmist promises to give format thanks to God, probably by offering a thanksgiving sacrifice (compare 66:14-16). The word זָמַר (Greek *ψαλλῶ*), here translated as 'sing', strictly means to play on a stringed instrument, or to sing with musical accompaniment.

תהילים פרק ח

א לְמִנְצַח עַל־הַגִּתִּית
מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד:
ב יְהוָה אֱדַנִּינוּ
מִה־אֲדִיר שִׁמְךָ בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ
אֲשֶׁר תִּנָּה הוֹדְךָ עַל־הַשָּׁמַיִם:
ג מִפִּי עוֹלָלִים וּנְקִיִּם יִסְדֹּתָ עֹז
לְמַעַן צוֹרְרֶיךָ
לְהַשְׁבִּית אוֹיֵב וּמִתְנַקֵּם:
ד כִּי־אֲרָאָה שְׁמִיךָ מַעֲשֵׂה אֲצַבְעֶיךָ
יָרַח וְכוֹכָבִים אֲשֶׁר כּוֹנְנָתָה:
ה מִה־אֲנוּשׁ כִּי־תִזְכְּרֶנּוּ
וּבֶן־אָדָם כִּי תִפְקְדֶנּוּ:
ו וְתַחֲסֶרְהוּ מַעַט מֵאֱלֹהִים
וְכָבוֹד וְהָדָר תַּעֲטֶרְהוּ:

PSALM 8

- 1 *To the leader: according to the Gittith.
A Psalm of David:*
- 2 Yahweh our Lord,
how majestic is your name throughout the world!
You have set your glory above the heavens.
- 3 Even through the mouths of children, or of babes in arms,
because of your adversaries,
that you might silence the enemy and the avenger.
- 4 I look up at your heavens, shaped by your fingers,
the moon and the stars you set firm.
- 5 What are human beings that you spare a thought for them,
or the son of man that you care for him?
- 6 Yet you have made him a little lower than God,
you have crowned him with glory and beauty.

PSALM 8

- 1 Most English translations do not number the title; here, with the MT, we include it as v. 1, with other verse numbers suitably incremented. The precise meaning of the term הַגִּתִּית ('Gittith') is uncertain; it probably refers to a musical style or type of instrument.
- 2 As soon as he can pronounce it, the divine name enables the believer to share in the glory of Yahweh (see v. 6).
- 3 As in Pr 18:10, the divine name confounds all idolatry by revealing the one true God, Yahweh (see Ex 3:14). The LXX version of the 1st line is quoted by Jesus in Mt 21:16: "From out of (the) mouths of infants and one nursing, (you) make sure of praise."
- 4 Literally translated, this verse reads, "When I see your heavens, the works of your fingers, the moon and stars which you set firm."
- 5 The NRSV has 'mortals' in place of 'son of man' (בֶּן־אָדָם); here, it is not a Messianic title but a collective term for the human race.
- 6 The NJB has 'a god' in place of 'God' (the Hebrew word translated is אֱלֹהִים); the WEBBE, following the LXX, has 'the angels'. The terms 'glory' and 'beauty' allude to mankind's royal status as God's vice-regents (cf. v. 7 and Gn 1:26-30).

תַּמְשִׁילֶהוּ בַּמַּעֲשֵׂי יָדָיְךָ	ז	7	You made him lord of the works of your hands,
כָּל שֶׁתָּה תַּחַת־רַגְלָיו:			out all things under his feet,
צֹנֶה וְאַלְפִים כָּלֶם	ח	8	sheep and cattle, all of them,
וְגַם בַּהֲמוֹת שָׂדֵי:			and even the wild beasts,
צִפּוֹר שָׁמַיִם וְדָגֵי הַיָּם	ט	9	birds in the sky, fish in the sea,
עֹבֵר אֲרָחוֹת יָמִים:			when he makes his way across the ocean.
יְהוָה אֱדַנֵּנוּ	י	10	Yahweh, our Lord,
מִה־אֲדִיר שְׁמֶךָ בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ:			how majestic is your name throughout the world!

⁷ God has given human beings a share in his own dignity by conferring on them dominion over the rest of Creation (Gn 1:26).

⁸ The literal translation of 'wild beasts' is 'beasts of the field'.

⁹ The literal translation of 'across the ocean', here following the NJB, is 'through the paths of the seas'.

¹⁰ The opening verse is here repeated as a refrain.

תהילים פרק ט

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ עַל־מֹת לִבָּן
מִזְמֹר לְדָוִד:

ב אֹדָה יְהוָה בְּכָל־לִבִּי
אֲסַפְּרָה כָּל־נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ:
ג אֲשִׁמְחָה וְאֶעֱלֶזָּה בְּךָ
אֲזַמְרָה שִׁמְךָ עֲלִיוֹן:

ד בְּשׁוּב־אֹיְבֵי אַחֲזֹר
יִכָּשְׁלוּ וְיֵאבְדוּ מִפְּנֶיךָ:
ה כִּי־עָשִׂיתָ מִשְׁפָּטִי וְדִינִי
יִשְׁבֹּת לְכִסֵּא שׁוֹפֵט צֶדֶק:

PSALM 9

1 To the leader: according to Muth-Labben.
A Psalm of David.

ALEF

2 I thank you, Yahweh, with my whole heart;
I recount all your wonders.
3 I rejoice and delight in you,
I sing to your name, Most High.

BET

4 My enemies are in retreat;
they stumble and perish at your presence.
5 For you have given fair judgement in my favour,
you have sat on your throne giving righteous judgement.

PSALM 9

- ¹ Most English translations do not number the title; here, following the *MT*, we include it as v. 1, with all other verse numbers accordingly incremented. The Psalm is 'alphabetical' (see #Pr 31:10) but in the *MT*, which is in a poor state, several letters have no corresponding strophe. Many *Hebrew MSS* and the *LXX* combine Psalms 9 & 10. The meaning of עַל־מֹת is uncertain; some *MSS* do not divide the form (as here, 'according to the death [of the son]'), while the *LXX* assumes a reading עַל־מִלְּמוֹת (ἐπὲρ τῶν κρυφίων τοῦ υἱοῦ, 'for the private things of the son'); the phrase probably refers to a particular tune or musical style (the *NJB* translates as 'on the oboe and harp').
- ² The spokesman of the 'poor' (see #Zp 2:3) describes in a hymn and invokes in a prayer the execution of God's judgement on the wicked.
- ³ The cohortative forms in vv. 2-3 express the psalmist's resolve to praise God publicly.
- ⁴ An alternative reading for 'perish' is 'are defeated'; the imperfect verbal forms either emphasise what typically happens or describe vividly the aftermath of a recent battle in which God defeated the psalmist's enemies.
- ⁵ The divine judgement is regarded as already given; the 'Day of Yahweh' will reveal its content. This theme is common in the Psalms.

גִּעַרְתָּ גּוֹיִם אֲבֹדְתָּ רָשָׁע י
 שְׁמָם מִחַיִּית לְעוֹלָם וְעַד:
 הָאֵל הָאוֹיֵב | תָּמּוּ חֲרָבוֹת לִנְצַח ז
 וְעָרִים נִתְּשָׁת
 אֲבָד זִכְרָם הֵמָּה: אוֹיֵב | תָּמּוּ חֲרָבוֹת לִנְצַח
 וְעָרִים נִתְּשָׁת אֲבָד זִכְרָם הֵמָּה:
 וַיְהִי הָיָה לְעוֹלָם יֹשֵׁב ח
 כּוֹנֵן לְמִשְׁפַּט בְּסֹאֵו:
 וְהוּא יִשְׁפֹּט-תֵּבֵל בְּצֶדֶק ט
 יִדִּין לְאַמִּים בְּמִישְׁרִים:
 וַיְהִי יְהוָה מִשְׁגֹּב לְדָךְ י
 מִשְׁגֹּב לְעֵתוֹת בְּצָרָה:
 וַיִּבְטְחוּ בְךָ יוֹדְעֵי שְׁמֶךָ יא
 כִּי לֹא-עֲזַבְתָּ דְרָשֶׁיךָ יְהוָה:

GIMEL

- 6 You have terrified the nations, destroyed the wicked,
blotted out their name forever and ever.
- 7 The enemy has vanished,
endless ruin;
you have destroyed their cities,
their very memory has perished.

HE

- 8 See, Yahweh is enthroned forever,
keeping his throne firm for judgement.
- 9 He will himself judge the world in uprightness;
will give a true verdict on the nations.

VAV

- 10 So, Yahweh is a stronghold for the oppressed,
a stronghold in times of trouble!
- 11 Those who revere your name can rely on you;
you never desert those who seek you, Yahweh.

- 6 The verb גִּעַרְתָּ ('you have terrified') is often understood to mean 'rebuke' and in this context taken to refer to God's rebuke of the nations; in some cases, it is apparent that scolding or threatening is in view (see Gn 37:10, Rt 2:16, Zc 3:2). However, in militaristic contexts this translation is inadequate, for the verb refers in this setting to the warrior's battle cry, which terrifies and paralyses the enemy.
- 7 The independent pronoun at the end of the verse is in apposition to the preceding pronominal suffix and lends emphasis.
- 8 The opening construction, *vav* + subject, highlights the contrast between the exalted God and his defeated foes (see v. 7).
- 9 The imperfect verbal forms either describe God's typical, characteristic behaviour, or anticipate a future judgment of worldwide proportions.
- 10 The construction, *vav* + shortened prefixed verb הִיָּה indicates a consequence or result of the preceding statement.
- 11 The opening construction, *vav* + imperfect, expresses another consequence of the statement made in v. 9.

יב זָמְרוּ לַיהוָה יֹשֵׁב צִיּוֹן
הַגִּידוּ בְּעַמִּים עֲלִילוֹתָיו:
יג כִּי־דָרַשׁ דָּמִים אוֹתָם זָכַר
לֹא־שָׁכַח צַעֲקַת עֲנִיִּים עָנִיִּים:

יד חַנּוּנִי יְהוָה
רְאֵה עֲנִי מִשְׁנְאִי
מְרוֹמְמֵי מִשְׁעָרֵי מָוֶת:
טו לִמְעַן אֲסַפְּרָה כָּל־תְּהִלָּתֶיךָ
בְּשַׁעְרֵי בֵּת־צִיּוֹן
אֲגִילָה בִּישׁוּעָתֶךָ:

טז טָבְעוּ גוֹיִם בְּשַׁחַת עָשׂוּ
בְּרֶשֶׁת־זוֹ טָמְנוּ נִלְכְּדָה רַגְלָם:
יז נֹדַע | יְהוָה מִשְׁפָּט עָשָׂה
בַּפֶּעַל כִּפְּיוֹ נֹקֵשׁ רָשָׁע
הַגִּיּוֹן סֵלָה:

ZAYIN

- 12 Sing to Yahweh who dwells in Zion,
tell the nations his mighty deeds.
13 For the avenger of blood does not forget them,
he does not ignore the cry of the afflicted.

HET

- 14 Have pity of me, Yahweh,
see my affliction, because of those who hate me,
and pull me back from the gates of death,
15 that I may recount all your praises
at the gates of the Daughter of Zion
and rejoice in your salvation.

TET

- 16 The nations have fallen into the trap they made,
their feet caught in the snare they laid.
17 Yahweh has made himself known, given judgement;
he has ensnared the wicked in the work of their own hands.

Higgaion Selah

12 The literal translation of 'dwells' is 'sits'; another common reading is 'rules'.

13 The different reading of the *Qere* and *Ketiv* here likely reflects a scribe's misreading of a (possibly small or short) *vav* for a *yod*.

14 The *NJB* omits the end of the 2nd line.

15 'Daughter of Zion' is an idiomatic title for Jerusalem; it appears frequently in the prophets, but only here in the psalms.

16 The 'nations' here refers to the psalmist's enemies.

17 The meaning of הַגִּיּוֹן ('Higgaion', not present in the *NJB*) is unknown; it may be a technical musical term.

יח ישובו רשעים לשאולה
כל־גוים שכחי אלהים:

יט כי לא לנצח ישכח אביון
תקות עניים ענייִם תאבד לעד:

כ קומה יהוה אל־יעז אנוש
ישפטו גוים על־פניך:

כא שִׁיתָה יְהוָה מוֹרָה לָהֶם
ידעו גוים אנוש הֵמָּה
סֵלָה:

YOD

18 Let the wicked turn away to Sheol,
all the nations forgetful of God.

KAF

19 For the needy are not forgotten forever,
not forever does the hope of the poor come to nothing.

20 Arise, Yahweh; human strength shall not prevail.
The nations shall stand trial before you.

21 Strike them with terror, Yahweh;
the nations shall know that they are no more than human!

Selah

-
- 18 The imperfect verbal form of the 1st line either emphasises what typically happens or describes vividly the aftermath of God's victory over the psalmist's enemies. 'Sheol' is the place of the dead.
- 19 The different reading of the *Qere* and *Ketiv* here likely reflects a scribe's misreading of a (possibly small or short) *vav* for a *yod*.
- 20 The psalm concludes with a petition that God would continue to exercise his justice as he has done in the recent crisis.
- 21 The term מוֹרָה ('terror') is an alternative form of מוֹרָא (a reading that appears in some MSS and finds support in several ancient witnesses).

תהילים פרק י

א לִמָּה יְהוָה תַּעֲמֹד בְּרָחוֹק
תַּעֲלִים לַעֲתוֹת בַּצָּרָה:
ב בְּגֵאוֹת רָשָׁע יִדְלַק עֲנִי
יִתְפָּשׂוּ | בַּמִּזְמוֹת זֶה חֲשָׁבוּ:
ג כִּי־הֵלֵל רָשָׁע עַל־תַּאֲוֹת נַפְשׁוֹ
וּבִצָּעַ בְּרֹדֶךְ נֶאֱמָן | יְהוָה:
ד רָשָׁע כְּגִבָּה אָפוּ בַל־יִדְרֹשׁ
אֵין אֱלֹהִים כָּל־מִזְמוֹתָיו:
ה יִחִילוּ דְרָכָו | בְּכָל־עֵת
מְרוֹם מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ מִנִּגְדּוֹ
כָּל־צוֹרָרָיו יִפִּיחַ בָּהֶם:
ו אָמַר בְּלִבּוֹ בַל־אֲמוֹט
לְדֹר וָדֹר אֲשֶׁר לֹא־בָרַע:

PSALM 10

LAMED

- 1 Why, Yahweh, do you keep so distant,
stay hidden in times of trouble?
2 The wicked arrogantly hunts down the weak –
they are caught in the schemes they devised.

MEM

- 3 The wicked is proud of his inmost desires;
by his blasphemies, the grasping spurns Yahweh.

NUN

- 4 The wicked, in his arrogance, does not look very far;
"There is no God," is his only thought.
5 In all circumstances, his step prospers;
your judgements are above his head.
As for his rivals – he scoffs at them all.
6 He says in his heart, "I shall never be shaken,"
free of trouble himself, he wishes it on others.

PSALM 10

- 1 Psalms 9 and 10 were originally one poem (as they are in the LXX and Vg).
2 The singular רָשָׁע ('the wicked') and עֲנִי ('the weak') are collective and representative, as indicated in the 2nd line, which uses plural verb forms.
3 The text of vv. 3–4 is uncertain and probably altered for theological reasons (the literal Hebrew for 'blaspheming' is 'blessing', a euphemism, as in 1K 21:10,13 and Job 1:5,11, 2:5,9). There are variations in the versions.
4 This verse is not implying atheism; rather it speaks of the belief that God is not concerned with moral retribution (compare v. 11 and 94:7).
5 Some emend מְרוֹם ('height') to סָרוּ ('turned aside'), assuming the final mem to be dittographic.
6 The literal translation for 'never' is 'for a generation and a generation'.

<p>ז אֱלֹהִים פִּיהוּ מְלֵא וּמַרְמוֹת וְתֹדֶן תַּחַת לְשׁוֹנוֹ עֵמֶל וְאָוֶן: ח יֵשֵׁב בַּמַּאֲרָב חֲצֵרִים בַּמִּסְתָּרִים יִהְיֶה נֶקִי עֵינָיו לַחֲלָכָה יִצְפֹּנוּ:</p>	<p>(SAMEKH) PE 7 His speech is full of lies and browbeating, under his tongue lurk spite and wickedness. 8 In the settlements, he lies in ambush; in his hiding-place, he murders the innocent; his eyes are secretly set against the helpless.</p>
<p>ט יֹאֲרֵב בַּמִּסְתָּר פֶּאֶרְיָה בְּסֻכָּה יֹאֲרֵב לַחֲטוּף עֲנִי יִחַטֵּף עֲנִי בַּמִּשְׁכּוֹ בְּרִשְׁתּוֹ:</p>	<p>AYIN 9 He lurks unseen like a lion in his lair, lurking to pounce on the poor; he pounces on him and drags him off in his net.</p>
<p>י וּדְכָה יִדְכֶּה יֶשֶׁחַ וְנָפַל בְּעֵצוּמָיו חֲלָכָאִים [חַל כָּאִים]: יא אָמַר בְּלִבּוֹ שָׁכַח אֵל הַסִּתִּיר פָּנָיו בִּלְרָאָה לְנֹצַח:</p>	<p>TSADI 10 He keeps watch, crouching down low, the poor wretch falls into his clutches. 11 He says in his heart, “God forgets, he has turned away his face to avoid seeing the end.”</p>
<p>יב קוּמָה יְהוָה אֵל נִשָּׂא יָדָךְ אַל־תִּשְׁכַּח עֲנִיִּים עֲנֻיִם:</p>	<p>QOF 12 Rise up, Yahweh! God, raise your hand; do not forget the afflicted!</p>

-
- 7 The words translated ‘spite and wickedness’ are also paired in Ps 90:10; they also appear in proximity in Ps 7:14 & 55:10.
- 8 In place of ‘settlements’, the NJB has the conjectural ‘undergrowth’ (see Is 35:7).
- 9 The background of the imagery is hunting, where the hunter uses a net to entrap an unsuspecting bird or wild animal.
- 10 ‘He keeps watch’ is conjectural, to restore the letter *Tsadi*, and is not present in the MT. The *Qere* reading of יִדְכֶּה is an imperfect whereas the וּדְכָה of the *Ketiv* is an otherwise unattested Qal form).
- 11 An alternative translation for the last line is, “he does not pay attention; he never notices.”
- 12 The poet entreats God to raise his hand to save (138:7) and to strike (Is 11:15, Ezk 36:7, Mi 5:8). The different reading of the *Qere* and *Ketiv* here likely reflects a scribe’s misreading of a (possibly small or short) *vav* for a *yod*.

יג עֲלֵמָה | נֶאֱמַר רָשָׁע | אֱלֹהִים
 אָמַר בְּלִבּוֹ לֹא תִדְרֹשׁ:
 יד רָאֵתָה כִּי־אַתָּה | עֹמֵל וְכַעַס | תִּבְיֹט
 לַתֵּת בְּיָדְךָ
 עֲלֵיךְ יַעֲזֹב חִלְכָּהּ
 יָתוֹם אַתָּה | הִלִּיתָ עֹזָר:
 טו שִׁבַּר זְרוֹעַ רָשָׁע
 וְרַע תִּדְרוֹשׁ־רָשָׁעוֹ בְּלִתְמַצָּא:
 טז יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ עוֹלָם וָעֶד
 אֲבָדוּ גוֹיִם מֵאַרְצוֹ:
 יז תִּאֲזֹת עֲנָוִים שְׁמַעַתָּ יְהוָה
 תִּכְיֶין לִבָּם תִּקְשִׁיב אֲזִנְךָ:
 יח לִשְׁפֹט יָתוֹם וְדָךְ
 בְּלִי־זִסְיָ עוֹד לַעֲרֹץ אֲנֹשׁ מִן־הָאָרֶץ:

13 Why should the wicked spurn God,
 assuring himself you will never follow it up?

RESH

14 You have seen for yourself the trouble and vexation
 that you may take it in hand.
 The oppressed relies on you;
 you are the only recourse of the orphan.

SHIN

15 Break the arm of the wicked and evil;
 seek out wickedness there until you find none.
 16 Yahweh is king forever and ever;
 the nations shall perish from his land.

TAV

17 Yahweh, you listen to the laments of the poor,
 you give them courage, and you grant them a hearing,
 18 to give judgement for the orphaned and exploited,
 so that earthborn humans may strike terror no more.

13 The rhetorical question expresses the psalmist's outrage that the wicked would have the audacity to disdain God.

14 The text of the last line is uncertain: the noun יָתוֹם refers to one who has lost his father (not necessarily his mother, see Ps 109:9).

15 The 'arm' symbolises the strength of the wicked, which they use to oppress and exploit the weak.

16 'The nations' may be the underlying reality behind the psalmist's references to the 'wicked' in the earlier verses; this reference to the nations may have motivated the combining of Ps 10 with Ps 9 (see Ps 9:6, 16, 20–21).

17 The psalmist is confident that God has responded positively to his earlier petitions (he apparently prayed the words of vv. 16–18 after the reception of an oracle of deliverance, given in response to the petition of vv. 12–15, or after God actually delivered him from his enemies).

18 The meaning of the last line is uncertain: the term אֲנֹשׁ ('human[s]') most likely refers to the wicked nations (v. 16).

תהילים פרק יא

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ לְדָוִד
בִּיהוָה חֲסִיתִי
אֵיךְ תֹּאמְרוּ לַנֶּפֶשׁ
נֹדֹד נֹדֵי הַרְבֵּם צָפֹר:
ב כִּי הִנֵּה הַרְשָׁעִים יִדְרֹכֹן קֶשֶׁת
כּוֹנֵנֵי חָצֵם עַל־יָתֵר
לִירוֹת בְּמוֹ-אֶפֶל לְיִשְׂרָאֵל:
ג כִּי הַשְׁתּוֹת יִהְרָסוּן
צִדִּיק מִה־פֶּעַל:
ד יְהוָה בְּהִיבֵל קִדְשׁוֹ
יְהוָה בַּשָּׁמַיִם כָּסֵאוֹ
עֵינָיו יַחֲזוּ
עֹפְעִפּוֹ יִבְחֲנוּ בְּנֵי אָדָם:
ה יְהוָה צִדִּיק יִבְחֵן
וְרָשָׁע וְאֹהֵב חָמָס
שֹׂנְאָה נַפְשׁוֹ:

PSALM 11

- 1 *To the leader. Of David.*
In Yahweh, I have found refuge.
How can you say to me,
"Bird, flee to the mountain?"
- 2 "For look, the wicked are drawing their bows,
fitting their arrows to the string
to shoot honest men in the darkness,
- 3 If the foundations fall to ruin,
what can the upright do?"
- 4 Yahweh is in his holy Temple!
Yahweh's throne is in heaven;
his eyes behold,
his gaze scrutinises the children of Adam.
- 5 Yahweh examines the upright and the wicked,
he detests the wicked
and the lover of violence.

PSALM 11

- 1 The *Qere* reading of נֹדֵי is feminine singular, whereas the נֹדֹד of the *Ketiv* is masculine plural.
- 2 The enemies' attack is compared here to a night ambush by archers; the psalmist is defenceless against this deadly attack.
- 3 The precise meaning of the rare word here translated 'foundations' is uncertain; an Ugaritic cognate is used of the 'bottom' or 'base' of a cliff or mountain, and the noun appears in postbiblical Hebrew with the meaning 'foundation'.
- 4 At the end of the 3rd line, the *NJB*, following the *LXX* & *Tg*, adds 'the world'; here, we follow the *MT*.
- 5 God 'detests' the wicked in that he despises their wicked character and deeds and actively opposes and judges them for their wickedness.

יִמְטֵר עַל־רָשָׁעִים פָּחִים^ו
 אֵשׁ וּגְפָרִית וְרוּחַ זִלְעָפוֹת מִנֶּת כּוֹסִם:
 כִּי־צַדִּיק יִהְיֶה צְדָקוֹת אֱהָב^ז
 יֵשֶׁר יַחְזֹן פְּנֵימוֹ:

- ⁶ He will rain coals of fire and sulphur on the wicked,
a scorching wind will be their lot.
- ⁷ For Yahweh is upright and loves uprightness,
the honest will ever see his face.

⁶ 'Coals' follows *Symmachus*; the MT has 'snares'. Literally translated, 'lot' would be 'part of the cup'; this is a metaphor for destiny (the cup may have been used to contain lots), either happy (16:5, 23:5) or more frequently unhappy (75:8, Mt 20:22, Rv 14:10, 16:19). The cup of divine anger is one of the themes of the prophets (see #Is 51:17, Jr 25:15, Lm 4:21, Ezk 23:31ff, Hab 2:16).

⁷ The last line is a conjectural translation; the MT reading, "his face will look on the honest," is perhaps the result of a theological scruple, since human beings cannot see God (see #Ex 33:20). Nevertheless, the expression, 'to contemplate God's face' is common in the Psalms in the sense of standing in the presence of God like servants before a kindly master (15:1); see 16:11, 17:15, 24:6, footnote to 27:8, 105:4, Gn 33:10, Job 33:26, Is 38:11.

תהילים פרק יב

- א לַמְנַצֵּחַ עַל־הַשְּׁמִינִית
מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד:
- ב הוֹשִׁיעָה יְהוָה כִּי־גָמַר חֹסֵיד
כִּי־פָסוּ אֱמוּנִים מִבְּנֵי אָדָם:
- ג שׁוּא | יִדְבְּרוּ אִישׁ אֶת־רֵעֵהוּ
שֶׁפֶת חֲלָקוֹת
בֹּלֵב וּלֵב יִדְבְּרוּ:
- ד יִכְרֹת יְהוָה כָּל־שִׁפְתֵי חֲלָקוֹת
לִשׁוֹן מַדְבֵּרֶת גְּדִלוֹת:
- ה אֲשֶׁר אָמְרוּ | לְלִשְׁנֵנוּ נִגְבִּיר
שִׁפְתֵינוּ אֶתֵּנוּ מִי אֲדוֹן לָנוּ:
- ו מִשָּׁד עֲנִיִּים מֵאַנְקַת אֲבִיּוֹנִים
עֲתָה אֶקוֹם יֹאמַר יְהוָה

PSALM 12

- ¹ *To the leader: on the Sheminith.
A Psalm of David.*
- ² Help, Yahweh, for no one loyal is left;
the faithful have vanished from humankind.
- ³ Friend lies to friend,
and, smooth-tongued,
speaks from an insincere heart.
- ⁴ May Yahweh cut off every smooth lip,
every boastful tongue,
- ⁵ those who say, "In our tongue lies our strength,
our lips are our allies; who can master us?"
- ⁶ "For the poor who are plundered, the needy who groan,
now will I act," says Yahweh,

PSALM 12

- ¹ Most English translations do not number the title; here, following the *MT*, we include it as v. 1, with all other verse numbers accordingly incremented; the meaning of the term שְׁמִינִית is uncertain; perhaps it refers to a particular style of music (see 1Ch 15:21). This Psalm is a prayer in the manner of the Prophets. Human deceit is contrasted with God's reliability in word and promise.
- ² The verb פָּסוּ ('*vanished*') occurs only here; an Accadian cognate means 'efface' or 'blot out'.
- ³ Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "*falsehood they speak, a man with his neighbour.*"
- ⁴ The verb translated '*cut off*' is a jussive, indicating that the statement is imprecatory, not indicative (see Ps 109:15 & Mal 2:12). The psalmist appeals to God to destroy the wicked, rather than simply stating his confidence that he will; in this way, he seeks to activate divine judgment by appealing to God's just character. (For an example of the power of such a curse, see Jg 9:7-57.)
- ⁵ The rhetorical question expresses the arrogant attitude of these people; they consider themselves answerable to no one for how they speak.
- ⁶ The words of this verse were perhaps spoken by a priest or temple prophet as a formal act of assurance to the suppliant.

אֲשִׁית בְּיִשְׁעַי פִּיח־לוֹ:
 אֲמָרוֹת יְהוָה אֲמָרוֹת טְהוֹרוֹת ז
 כֶּסֶף צָרוּף בְּעֵלִיל לָאָרֶץ מְזַקֵּק שִׁבְעַתָּיִם:
 אֲתֵה־יְהוָה תִּשְׁמְרֵם ח
 תִּצְרְנֵנוּ מִן־הַדּוֹר זֶה לְעוֹלָם:
 סָבִיב רְשָׁעִים יִתְהַלְכוּ ט
 כָּרָם זָלוּת לִבְנֵי אָדָם:

"I will grant salvation to those who sigh for it."

- 7 Yahweh's promises are promises unalloyed,
 natural silver that comes from the earth seven times refined.
- 8 You, Yahweh, will watch over us,
 you will protect them from that brood forever.
- 9 The wicked will scatter in every direction,
 as vileness is exalted among the humankind.

7 God's word is pure of any deceit.

8 The choir (perhaps indicated by the use of 'us') commends reliance on the promise just made and prays that it may soon be carried out.

9 'As vileness is exalted' is an uncertain translation following the NRSV (the NJB has 'as the pinnacle of worthlessness'). The literal translation of the MT is 'like a mound of throwing away'; the Tg paraphrases, 'like vermin that suck the blood of men'.

תהילים פרק יג

א לִמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד:
ב עַד־אֵנָּה יְהוָה תִשְׁכַּחֲנִי נָצַח
עַד־אֵנָּה | תִסְתִיר אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי:
ג עַד־אֵנָּה אֲשִׁית עֲצוֹת בְּנַפְשִׁי
יָגוֹן בְּלִבִּי יוֹמָם
עַד־אֵנָּה | יָרוּם אִיבִי עָלַי:
ד הַבִּיטָה עֲנֵנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי
הָאֵירָה עֵינַי פֶּן־אִישָׁן הַמּוֹת:
ה פֶּן־יֹאמַר אִיבִי יִכְלֹתִי
צָרִי יִגִּילוּ כִּי אֶמוּט:
ו ואֲנִי | בַּחֲסֶדֶךָ בִּטַּחֲתִי
יִגַּל לִבִּי בִישׁוּעָתֶךָ
אֲשִׁירָה לַיהוָה
כִּי גָמַל עָלַי:

PSALM 13

- 1 *To the leader. A Psalm of David.*
- 2 How long, Yahweh, will you forget me – forever?
How long will you turn away your face from me?
- 3 How long must I nurse rebellion in my soul,
sorrow in my heart, day and night?
How long is the enemy to domineer over me?
- 4 Look down; answer me, Yahweh my God!
Give light to my eyes or I shall fall into the sleep of death.
- 5 And my foe will boast, “I have overpowered him,”
and my enemy have the joy of seeing me stumble.
- 6 As for me, I trust in your faithful love, Yahweh.
Let my heart delight in your saving help.
Let me sing to Yahweh for his generosity to me,
let me sing to the name of Yahweh the Most High.

PSALM 13

- 1 Most translations do not number the title; here, following the *MT*, we include it as v. 1, with all other verse numbers accordingly incremented.
- 2 The psalmist's complaint is given special emotional force by the fourfold 'how long'.
- 3 In place of 'nurse rebellion', the *NRSV*, following the *Peshitta*, has 'bear pain'; a footnote suggests 'hold counsels' as the translation of the *MT*.
- 4 The Hiphil of אִירָה, when used elsewhere with 'eyes' as object, refers to the law of God giving moral enlightenment (Ps 19:8), to God the creator giving literal eyesight to all people (Pr 29:13), and to God giving encouragement to his people (Ezr 9:8); here, the psalmist pictures himself as being on the verge of death: his eyes are falling shut and, if God does not intervene soon, he will 'fall asleep' for good.
- 5 More literally translated, the 2 lines of this verse open with 'else' rather than 'and'.
- 6 The majority of English translations split this verse, with the last 2 lines forming v. 7; here, we follow the *MT* & *LXX*.

תהילים פרק יד

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ לְדָוִד
אָמַר נָבֵל בְּלִבּוֹ אֵין אֱלֹהִים
הַשְׁחִיתוּ הַתְּעִיבוּ עָלֶיָּהּ
אֵין עֲשֵׂה-טוֹב:
ב יְהוָה מִשְׁמַיִם הַשְׁקִיף עַל-בְּנֵי-אָדָם
לִרְאוֹת הֲיֵשׁ מִשְׁכִּיל
דֹּרֵשׁ אֶת-אֱלֹהִים:
ג הַכֹּל סָר יַחְדָּו נִאֲלָחוּ
אֵין עֲשֵׂה-טוֹב אֵין גַּם-אֶחָד:
ד הֲלֹא יָדְעוּ כָל-פֹּעֲלֵי אֹן
אֲכָלִי עַמִּי אֲכָלוּ לֶחֶם
יְהוָה לֹא קָרָאוּ:

PSALM 14

- 1 *To the leader. Of David.*
The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God."
Their deeds are corrupt and vile,
not one of them does right.
- 2 Yahweh looks down from heaven on the sons of man,
to see if a single one is wise,
a single one seeks God.
- 3 All have turned away, all alike turned sour,
not one of them does right, not even one.
- 4 Are they not aware, all these evildoers?
They are devouring my people as they eat bread,
and they never call to Yahweh.

PSALM 14

- 1 This Psalm, which is almost identical to Ps 53, seems to be a variation on the typical lament.
- 2 The picture of the LORD looking down from heaven draws attention to his sovereignty over the world.
- 3 After this verse, some LXX MSS insert 3 verses, quoted in Rm 3:10–18; they are to be found in Ps 5:9, 140:3, 10:7, 36:2, Pr 1:16, Is 59:7–8:

τάφος ἀνεωγμένος ὁ λάρυγξ αὐτῶν,
ταῖς γλώσσαις αὐτῶν ἐδολιοῦσαν·
ἰὸς ἀσπίδων ὑπὸ τὰ χεῖλη αὐτῶν,
ὧν τὸ στόμα ἄρᾶς καὶ πικρίας γέμει·
ὄξεῖς οἱ πόδες αὐτῶν ἐκχέαι αἷμα·
σύντριμμα καὶ ταλαιπωρία ἐν ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτῶν,
καὶ ὁδὸν εἰρήνης οὐκ ἔγνωσαν·
οὐκ ἔστιν φόβος θεοῦ ἀπέναντι τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν αὐτῶν.

Their throats are open graves,
their tongues are seductive.
Snake's venom is under their lips;
their mouths are full of spite and wickedness.
For, their feet hasten to shed blood.
Destruction and desolation are in their ways;
they do not know the way of peace.
There is no fear of God before their eyes.

- 4 The figure of speech of the 2nd and 3rd lines is common in the Prophets.

ה שֶׁם | פָּחַדוּ פַּחַד
 כִּי־אֱלֹהִים בְּדֹר צַדִּיק:
 ו עֲצַת־עֲנִי תִבְיֹשׁ
 כִּי יִהְיֶה מַחְסֵהוּ:
 ז מִי יִתֵּן מִצִּיּוֹן יְשׁוּעַת יִשְׂרָאֵל
 בְּשׁוּב יִהְיֶה שְׁבוּת עַמּוֹ
 יִגַּל יַעֲקֹב יִשְׂמַח יִשְׂרָאֵל:

- 5 They shall be in great terror,
 for God takes the side of the upright.
 6 You may mock the plans of the poor,
 but Yahweh is their refuge.
 7 Who will bring from Zion salvation for Israel?
 When Yahweh restores the fortunes of his people,
 what joy for Jacob, what happiness for Israel!

5 After the 1st line, the *NJB*, following the *LXX* (οὐ οὐκ ἦν φόβος) & Ps 53, inserts 'where there is no need for fear' (i.e. Zion, v. 7, see also 48:2, 76:2, 87:5-7, Ezk 48:35): the phrase speaks of mysterious fear without apparent cause (see Lv 26:36, Dt 28:67, 1S 14:15, 2Ch 14:13, Job 3:25). There may be an allusion to the annihilation of the Assyrians in 701 BCE, suddenly struck down when they had no apparent reason to fear (see 2K 19:35, Is 37:36).

6 'You may mock' translates an imperfect form that can be taken in either a subjunctive (as *NRSV*) or indicative (as *NETB*) form; here, we follow the *NJB*.

7 The verb of the 3rd line (85:1, 126:1, Dt 30:3, Job 42:10, Jr 29:14, Ezk 16:53, Ho 6:11, Am 9:14) means primarily the return from the Exile, but frequently has the wider sense of re-establishing, restoring, making a change of fortune.

תהילים פרק טו

א מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד
יְהוָה מִיִּיגוֹר בְּאֵהֶלָךְ
מִי־יִשְׁכֵּן בְּהַר קֹדֶשְׁךָ:
ב הוֹלֵךְ תָּמִים וּפָעַל צֶדֶק
וְדִבֵּר אֱמֶת בִּלְבָבוֹ:
ג לֹא־רָגַל | עַל־לִשְׁנוֹ
לֹא־עָשָׂה לְרֵעֵהוּ רָעָה
וְחָרְפָה לֹא־נָשָׂא עַל־קִרְבּוֹ:
ד גְּבוּזָה | בְּעֵינָיו נִמְאָס
וְאֶת־יִרְאֵי יְהוָה יַכְבֵּד
נִשְׁבַּע לַהֲרַע וְלֹא יִמָּר:

PSALM 15

- ¹ *A Psalm of David.*
Yahweh, who can abide in your tent,
who can dwell on your holy mountain?
- ² Whoever lives blamelessly, who acts uprightly,
and speaks the truth from the heart.
- ³ He does not slander with his tongue,
does not wrong a comrade,
nor cast discredit on a neighbour.
- ⁴ He looks with scorn on the reprobate,
but honours those who fear Yahweh;
he stands by an oath at any cost.

PSALM 15

- ¹ This Psalm is a summary of moral conduct; compare with this the moral precepts of the Decalogue (see #Ex 20:1). The sanctuary at Jerusalem is sometimes called a '*tent*', retaining the imagery of the ancient sanctuary in the desert, commemorated each year by the Feast of Shelters (see #Ex 23:14). In this context, Yahweh's '*holy mountain*' probably refers to Zion/Jerusalem (see Is 66:20, Jl 2:1, 3:17, Zc 8:3 Ps 2:6, 43:3, 48:1, 87:1, Dn 9:16).
- ² The 2nd line apparently refers to formulating a truthful statement in one's mind and then honestly and openly revealing that statement in one's speech.
- ³ For another example of רָגַל ('*slander*') see 2S 19:28. Hebrew literature often assumes and reflects the male-oriented perspective of ancient Israelite society, but the principle of the psalm is certainly applicable to all people, regardless of their gender or age.
- ⁴ The term נִמְאָס ('*reprobate*' – literally, '*rejected [one]*') apparently refers here to one who has been rejected by God because of his godless behaviour; it stands in contrast to '*those who fear Yahweh*' in the following line, which speaks of God's loyal subjects. This latter expression, common in the Psalms, is synonymous with '*faithful*', '*pious*' or '*devout*'. Later, it is used for all in sympathy with Judaism (see #Ac 2:11, 10:2).

ה
בִּסְפוֹ | לֹא־נָתַן בְּנִשְׁךָ
וְשֹׁחַד עַל־נַפְקִי לֹא לָקַח
עֹשֶׂה־אֵלֶּה
לֹא יִמּוּט לְעוֹלָם:

⁵ He asks no interest on loans
and takes no bribe to harm the innocent.
Those who do these things
shall never be shaken.

⁵ The prohibition of interest (Ex 22:25, Lv 25:35–37) has reference to charitable loans made for the relief of distress rather than to the purely business type of loan that became common in a later commercial age.

תהילים פרק טז

א מִכְתָּם לְדָוִד
שִׁמְרֵנִי אֱל
כִּי־חֲסִיתִי בְךָ:
ב אִמְרַתְּ לַיהוָה אֲדֹנִי אַתָּה
טוֹבֹתִי בְלִעְלִיךָ:
ג לְקִדּוּשִׁים אֲשֶׁר־בָּאָרֶץ הַמָּה
וְאֲדִירִי כָל־חֲפְצֵי־בָם:
ד יִרְבוּ עֲצָבוֹתָם אַחֵר מֵהֵרָו
בְּל־אֶסִּיד נִסְכֵּיהֶם מִדָּם
וּבִל־אֶשָּׂא אֶת־שְׁמוֹתֶם עַל־שִׁפְתֵי:

PSALM 16

- ¹ *A Miktam of David.*
Protect me, O God,
in you is my refuge.
- ² To Yahweh I say, "You are my Lord,
my only source of well-being."
- ³ As for the holy ones, who are in the land,
and the leaders I admired so much:
- ⁴ People flock to their teeming idols.
Never shall I pour libations to them,
never take their names on my lips!

PSALM 16

- ¹ The meaning of 'Miktam' (מִכְתָּם) is uncertain (the NJB has 'in a quiet voice' and NETB has 'prayer'). This rubric occurs before Psalms whose public recitation could arouse the anger of the non-Jewish political masters of Jerusalem.
- ² The very obscure text of vv. 2-3 is translated here (loosely) following NETB; the NJB (adopting some conjectural vowel changes) and NRSV (following the Tg) have, respectively:

To Yahweh I say, "You are my Lord,
my happiness is in none
of the sacred spirits of the earth."
They only take advantage of all who love them.

I say to the Lord, "You are my Lord;
I have no good apart from you."
As for the holy ones in the land,
they are the noble, in whom is all my delight.

These verses could be addressed to those who claimed to combine the worship of God with that of local deities; this syncretism was Israel's great and persistent temptation (see Is 57:6, 65:5, 66:3ff).

- ³ The phrase 'holy ones' sometimes refers to God's angelic assembly (see Ps 89:5, 7), but the qualifying clause 'who are in the land' suggests that here it refers to God's people (Ps 34:9) or to their priestly leaders (2Ch 35:3).
- ⁴ The 1st line follows the LXX (ἐπληθύνθησαν αἱ ἀσθένειαι αὐτῶν) & Peshitta (the NRSV has, "Those who choose another God multiply their sorrows"); the MT is corrupt. The word here translated as 'idols' literally means 'weakness' – a euphemism.

ה	יְהוָה מִנֶּתְחֶלְקִי וְכוֹסִי אַתָּה תוֹמִיד גּוֹרְלִי:	5	Yahweh is my heritage and my cup; you, you alone, hold my lot secure.
ו	חֲבָלִים נִפְלוּלִי בִנְעָמִים אֶף־נִחַלֶּת שְׁפָרָה עָלַי:	6	The measuring-line marks out for me a delightful place, my heritage is indeed lovely.
ז	אֲבָרֶךְ אֶת־יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר יַעֲצֵנִי אֶף־לַיְלֹת יִסְרוּנִי כְּלִיזָתִי:	7	I bless Yahweh who is my counsellor, even at night, my heart instructs me.
ח	שׁוֹתִי יְהוָה לִנְגְדִי תָמִיד כִּי מִימִינִי בַּל־אֲמוּט:	8	I keep Yahweh before me always, for with him at my right hand, nothing can shake me.
ט	לִכְן שִׂמַּח לִבִּי וַיִּגַּל כְּבוֹדִי אֶף־בְּשָׂרִי יִשְׁכַּן לִבְטָח:	9	So, my heart rejoices, my soul delights, my body too will rest secure.
י	כִּי לֹא־תַעֲזֹב נַפְשִׁי לְשָׂאוֹל לֹא־תִתֵּן חֲסִידֶךָ לְרֹאוֹת שַׁחַת:	10	For you will not abandon me to Sheol, you cannot allow your faithful servant to see the abyss.
יא	תּוֹדִיעֵנִי אֶרֶח חַיִּים שִׁבַּע שְׂמֵחוֹת אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ נְעֻמוֹת בְּיָמֶיךָ נֶצַח:	11	You will teach me the path of life. In your presence, there is unbounded joy; at your right hand is delight forever.

⁵ The psalmist pictures God casting his lot for him, thus assuring that he will receive a fertile piece of land (see v. 6).

⁶ Vv. 5–6 allude to the Levitical state: their portion (the traditional ‘cup’, see #11:6, or ‘measuring-line’, see Mi 2:4–5) is Yahweh.

⁷ The literal translation for ‘heart’ is ‘loins’; like the heart, the seat of intimate thoughts and sentiment (see 7:9, Pr 23:16, Jr 12:2).

⁸ The literal translation of ‘heart’ is ‘kidneys’.

⁹ ‘Soul’ literally translates as ‘glory’ (see #7:5).

¹⁰ The psalmist has set his heart on Yahweh. His lively faith and total commitment to God call for a union that defies dissolution; hence, he must pray to escape death, which would break that union (6:5, see also #49:15). The hope, though vague as yet, is leading towards a belief in resurrection (see #2M 7:9, Dn 12:2). In ancient Israelite cosmology, ‘Sheol’ is the realm of the dead, viewed as being under the earth’s surface.

¹¹ The psalmist is confident he will survive the ordeal and, through God’s help, enjoy life’s pleasures again.

תהילים פרק יז

א תִּפְלֹה לַדָּוִד
שְׁמָעָה יְהוָה | צֶדֶק
הַקְשִׁיבָה רִנָּתִי הַאֲזִינָה תְּפִלָּתִי
בְּלֹא שֹׁפְתֵי מַרְמָה:
ב מִלִּפְנֵיךָ מִשְׁפָּטִי יֵצֵא
עֵינֶיךָ תַּחֲזִינָה מִיִּשְׁרָיִם:
ג בְּחִנֹּת לִבִּי | פָּקֶדֶת לַיְלָה
צִרְפָּתָנִי בַל־תִּמְצָא
זַמְתִּי בַל־יַעֲבֹר־פִּי:
ד לַפְעֻלֹת אָדָם בְּדִבֶּר שִׁפְתֶיךָ
אֲנִי שָׁמַרְתִּי אֲרוּחוֹת פְּרִיץ:
ה תִּמְךָ אֲשֶׁרִי בַמַּעְגְּלוֹתֶיךָ
בַל־נִמְוָטוּ פְעָמַי:
ו אֲנִי־קִרְאתֶיךָ כִּי־תַעֲנֵנִי אֵל
הִט־אָזְנְךָ לִי שְׁמַע אִמְרָתִי:

PSALM 17

- 1 *A Prayer of David.*
Listen, Yahweh, to an upright cause,
pay attention to my cry, lend an ear to my prayer,
from lips free of deceit.
- 2 From before you will my vindication come,
your eyes fixed on what is right.
- 3 You probe my heart, examine me at night,
you test me by fire and find that
my mouth does not transgress.
- 4 As for what most people do: by the word of your lips,
I have avoided the ways of the violent.
- 5 My steps never stray from the paths you lay down,
from your tracks, so my feet never stumble.
- 6 I call upon you, for you will answer me, God;
turn your ear to me, hear what I say.

PSALM 17

- 1 This is a cry for vindication against false accusers (compare vv. 9–12).
- 2 The prefixed verbal forms, here taken as imperfects (following the *NJB*), could also be read as jussives of prayer (as *NETB*).
- 3 The verbal form זַמְתִּי is a Qal perfect 1PS from a root meaning ‘plan’; some emend to a suffixed form of the noun, זִמְתִּי (‘my (evil) plan’) and take it as the object of the preceding verb, ‘find’. However, the suffix seems odd, since the psalmist is denying that he has any wrong thoughts. The last line (literally, ‘my mouth will not cross over’) can be taken as a noun clause functioning as the object of the verb.
- 4 The *NJB* reinterprets this verse, reading, “... as most people do. I have treasured the words from your lips.”
- 5 God’s ‘tracks’ are his commands, i.e., the moral pathways he has prescribed for the psalmist.
- 6 The literal translation of ‘what I say’ is ‘my word’.

ז	הַפִּלָּה חֲסִדֶּיךָ מוֹשִׁיעַ חוֹסִים מִמַּתְקוֹמָמִים בְּיָמֶיךָ:	7	Show evidence of your faithful love, saviour of those who hope in your strength against attack.
ח	שְׁמֶרְנִי כְּאִישׁוֹן בַּת־עֵין בְּצֵל כְּנָפֶיךָ תִּסְתִּירֵנִי:	8	Guard me as the apple of an eye; shelter me in the shadow of your wings,
ט	מִפְּנֵי רָשָׁעִים זֶה שְׂדוּנִי אִיבֵי בִנְפֹשׁ יִקִּיפוּ עָלַי:	9	from the wicked who would destroy me; deadly enemies are closing in on me.
י	חֲלָבָמוּ סָגְרוּ פִּימוֹ דִּבְרוּ בְּגָאוֹת:	10	They close their hearts to pity, mouthing arrogant words.
יא	אֲשֶׁרֵינוּ עָתָה סִבְבוּנִי סִבְבוּנוּ עֵינֵיהֶם יִשְׁתּוּ לְנִטּוֹת בְּאַרְץ:	11	They are advancing against me, now they surround me, watching for the chance to hurl me to the ground.
יב	דָּמִינוּ בְּאַרְיֵה יִכְסּוֹף לִטְרֹף וְכִכְפִּיר יֵשֵׁב בְּמִסְתָּרִים:	12	He is like a lion preparing to pounce, like a young lion crouching in ambush.
יג	קוּמָה יְהוָה קְדָמָה פָּנָיו הִכְרִיעָהוּ פִּלְטָה נַפְשִׁי מִרָשָׁע חֲרָבָךָ:	13	Arise, Yahweh, confront him and bring him down, with your sword save me from the wicked,

⁷ Literally translated, 'in your strength' is 'by your right hand'.

⁸ The 'apple' of the eye is the pupil, the most precious part (Zc 2:8).

⁹ For 'destroy', the psalmist uses a perfect verb to emphasise the degree of danger: the wicked are already in the process of destroying him.

¹⁰ The literal translation of the 1st line is "their fat they close;" the term חֲלָב ('fat') appears to stand by metonymy for their callous hearts: they attack the psalmist without feeling any pity or remorse. Some propose emending the text to חֲלָב לִבָּמוֹ ('fat of their heart(s)', cf. Ps 119:70, 'their heart is insensitive like fat'), and emendation assuming haplography of the לב sequence.

¹¹ In place of סִבְבוּנִי ('surround me'), here following the *Ketiv*, the *Qere* has סִבְבוּנוּ ('surround us'). 'They are advancing against me' follows the *Vg*; the *MT* has 'our steps'. The *NRSV*, following the *Peshitta*, has 'They track me down'.

¹² Note that, here, the psalmist switches to the singular pronoun for his adversary: he views his enemies collectively, or singles out a representative of the group, perhaps its leader.

¹³ The literal translation of 'confront him' is 'be in front of his face'.

מִמֶּתִים יָדְךָ | יְהוָה מִמֶּתִים מִחֶלֶד
 חֶלֶקם בְּחַיִּים
 וְצַפִּינְךָ וְצַפִּינְךָ תִּמְלֵא בְטֶגֶם
 יִשְׁבְּעוּ בָנִים וְהַנִּיחוּ יְתָרָם לְעוֹלָלֵיהֶם:
 אֲנִי בַצֶּדֶק אֶחֱזֶה פָנֶיךָ
 אֲשַׁבְּעָה בְּהַקִּיץ תִּמְוִנָתְךָ:

14 from men, by your hand, Yahweh, from men of the world.
 May you fill their bellies from your store,
 their children have all they desire,
 and leave their surplus to their children.
 15 As for me, in my uprightness I will see your face;
 when I awake, I shall be satisfied with the vision of you.

14 The literal translation of 'store' is 'that which you hide'; scarcely a question of punishment, here, as many think, but of passing pleasures to which the Psalmist prefers God's friendship. The different reading of the *Qere* and *Ketiv* here likely reflects a scribe's misreading of a (possibly small or short) *vav* for a *yod*.

15 The morning awakening is God's chosen hour for granting favours (5:3, 30:5, 46:5, 49:14, 57:8, 73:20, 90:14, 130:6, 143:8). It is also the time when justice is done (see #101:8). Dawn and light are symbols of deliverance (Is 8:20, 9:1, 33:2, 58:10, Lm 3:23, Zp 3:5, cf. #Jn 1:4-5, 8:12). Evening and darkness symbolise trial and sorrow (v. 3, 30:5, 59:6, 88:18, 107:10, Is 17:14, 50:10). The word 'awakening' has sometimes been taken as a subtle reference to the resurrection (see #16:10, 2K 4:31, Is 26:19, Dn 12:2).

תהילים פרק יח

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ | לְעֶבֶד יְהוָה לְדָוִד
אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר | לַיהוָה אֶת־דִּבְרֵי הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת
בְּיוֹם הַצִּיל־יְהוָה אוֹתוֹ מִכַּף כָּל־אֹיְבָיו
וּמִיַּד שָׂאוּל:
ב וַיֹּאמֶר
ג אֶרְחַמֶּךָ יְהוָה חֲזָקִי:
ד יְהוָה | סִלְעִי וּמְצוּדָתִי וּמִפְלֹטִי
אֵלֵי צוּרֵי אַחֲסֵה־בִּי
ה מִגְנִי וְקַרְן־יִשְׁעֵי מִשְׁגָּבִי:
ו מַהֲלָל אֶקְרָא יְהוָה
ז וּמִן־אֹיְבֵי אֹשָׁע:
ח אִפְפוּנֵי חֲבַל־מוֹת
ט וְנַחֲלֵי בַלְיַעַל יִבְעֲתוּנִי:

PSALM 18

- 1 To the leader. A Psalm of David, the servant of Yahweh, who addressed the words of this song to Yahweh when Yahweh had delivered him from all his enemies and from the clutches of Saul.
- 2 He said:
I love you, Yahweh, my strength.
- 3 Yahweh is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; my God, my rock, in him I take refuge; my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.
- 4 I call to Yahweh who is worthy of praise, and I am saved from my foes.
- 5 With Death's nets closing in on me, Belial's torrents ready to swallow me,

PSALM 18

- 1 Most translations do not number this header; here, following the MT, we include it as v. 1, with all other verse numbers incremented.
- 2 This psalm is a triumphal ode combining a thanksgiving prayer (vv. 4–27) with a royal victory song (vv. 31–50), ending on a Messianic note; a parallel version appears in 2S 22:1–51. The NJB, following 2S 22, adds a 3rd line, “my Saviour, you have saved me from violence.” A number of translations (e.g., NRSV, NJB, NASB & NIV) assign the words ‘he said’ to the header (v. 1 herein), in which case the entire psalm is in 1st person.
- 3 In the Psalms, God is often called the ‘Rock of Israel’, i.e. the bulwark of his people and especially of the Davidic dynasty; cf. Mt 16:18. ‘The horn of my salvation’ is symbol of power and vigour (75:5, 89:17, 92:10, cf. Dt 33:17, 1K 22:11, Zc 2:4), often with Messianic overtones (Ps 132:17, Ezk 29:11).
- 4 Some take מַהֲלָל (“worthy of praise”) with what precedes and translate, ‘the praiseworthy one’, or ‘praiseworthy’; however, the various epithets in vv. 2–3 have the 1st person pronominal suffix, unlike מַהֲלָל, which is best understood as appositional to יְהוָה.
- 5 In place of ‘nets’, the NJB, following 2S 22, has ‘breakers’.

חִבְלֵי שְׂאוֹל סִבְבוּנִי קִדְמוּנֵי מִוֶּקְשֵׁי מוֹת: בַּצֶּרֶל־לִי אֶקְרָא יְהוָה וְאֶל־אֱלֹהֵי אֲשׁוּעַ יִשְׁמַע מֵהִיכָלוֹ קוֹלִי וְשׁוֹעֲתִי לִפְנֵיו תָּבוֹא בְּאָזְנוֹ:	ו	6	Sheol's snares every side of me, Death's traps lying ahead of me, I called to Yahweh in my anguish, I cried for help to my God before his face; from his Temple, he heard my voice, and my cry came to his ears.
וּתְגַעַשׁ וּתְרַעַשׁ הָאָרֶץ וּמוֹסְדֵי הָרִים יִרְגָּזוּ וְיִתְגַּעְשׁוּ כִּי־חָרָה לוֹ: עָלָה עָשָׁן בְּאִפּוֹ וְאֶשׁ־מִפִּי תֹאכַל גְּחָלִים בִּעֲרוּ מִמֶּנּוּ: וַיֵּט שָׁמַיִם וַיִּרֹד וַעֲרַפֵּל תַּחַת רַגְלָיו:	ח	8	Then the earth quaked and rocked, the mountains' foundations shuddered, and quaked at his blazing anger. Smoke rose from his nose, from his mouth, devouring fire – glowing coals flamed forth at it.
	י	10	He bowed the heavens and came down, a storm cloud underneath his feet.

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- ⁶ Vv. 5–7 give a metaphorical description of the psalmist's difficulties; for the actual situation, see vv. 37–45. Narration of the troubles from which the worshipper has been saved is a regular feature of the thanksgiving psalms. 'Sheol' is the place of the dead.
- ⁷ The NJB and NRSV, following 2S, omit 'before his face', here following the MT.
- ⁸ Here begins a description of the triumphant intervention of God on behalf of the Psalmist, vv. 7–17 (see footnotes to Ex 13:22 & 19:16). The imagery of vv. 8–20 associates Yahweh's appearance with the phenomena of a thunderstorm (compare Jg 5:4–5, Ps 29:3–9). In place of 'mountains', 2S 22:8 has 'heavens', forming a merism with 'foundations' – the 'heavens' foundations' would be mountains.
- ⁹ The NJB parenthesises the 3rd line. The 'glowing coals' represent lightning. The noun translated 'nose' can also carry the abstract meaning 'anger' but the parallelism in the 2nd line ('from his mouth') suggests the more literal meaning here.
- ¹⁰ The verb וַיֵּט ('he bowed') has the sense '(cause to) bend/bow down'; for example, Gn 49:15 pictures Issachar as a donkey that bends its shoulder or back under a burden. Here, God causes the sky, pictured as a dome or vault, to sink down as he descends in the storm.

יִרְכָּב עַל־כְּרוּב וַיַּעֲף יא
 וַיָּדָא עַל־כַּנְפֵי־רוּחַ:
 יִשֶׁת חֹשֶׁךְ | סָתַר סְבִיבוֹתָיו סָפְתוֹ יב
 חֲשֹכֶת־מַיִם עָבִי שְׁחָקִים:
 מִנְּגֵה נֶגְדּוֹ יג
 עָבְיוּ עָבְרוּ בָרָד וּגְחֲלֵי־אֵשׁ:
 וַיִּרְעַם בַּשָּׁמַיִם | יְהוָה יד
 וַעֲלִיזוֹן יִתֵּן קֹלּוֹ בָרָד וּגְחֲלֵי־אֵשׁ:
 וַיִּשְׁלַח חֲצֵיו וַיִּפְּצֵם טו
 וַבִּרְקִים רַב וַיַּהַמֵּם:
 וַיִּרְאוּ | אֶפְיקֵי מַיִם טז
 וַיִּגְלוּ מוֹסְדוֹת תַּבֵּל

- 11 Riding one of the cherubim, he flew,
 soaring on the wings of the wind.
 12 He shrouded himself in darkness,
 made his pavilion dark waters and dense cloud.
 13 At the brightness before him,
 there broke through his clouds hail and blazing fire.
 14 Yahweh thundered from the heavens,
 the Most High made his voice heard.
 15 He shot his arrows and scattered them,
 he hurled his lightning and routed them.
 16 The very springs of the sea were exposed;
 the world's foundations were laid bare,

- 11 In place of 'cherubim' (here following the NRSV), the NJB has 'winged creatures': these are the figures above the Ark (see #Ex 25:18), inspiring Ezekiel's vision of the chariot of God (Ezk 1:5ff, Ps 68:33, 104:3 and #1:10); they form a throne for Yahweh (1S 4:4, 2S 6:2, 2K 19:15). From the destruction of the Temple onwards, they symbolise heavenly beings.
 12 Literally translated, the 1st line reads: "he made darkness his hiding place around him, his covering;" 2S 22:12 omits 'his hiding place' and pluralises 'covering'. The text here may include a conflation of synonyms ('his hiding place' and 'his covering') or 2S 22:12 may be the result of haplography/homoioarcton (note that 3 successive words begin with the letter Samekh).
 13 The MT for this verse is corrupt and the text here follows the NRSV. The Lucianic family of texts within the LXX tradition of 2S 22:13 seems to assume the underlying text: מִנְּגֵה נֶגְדּוֹ עָבְרוּ בָרָד וּגְחֲלֵי אֵשׁ ("from the brightness in front of him came hail and coals of fire"), the basis for the present translation.
 14 At the end of this verse, the MT repeats 'hail and blazing fire' (from v. 13). Here, the text follows the LXX and 2S 22:14 (as also do the NJB and NRSV).
 15 The pronominal suffixes on the verbs 'scattered' and 'routed' refer to the psalmist's enemies.
 16 In place of 'the sea' (here following the NRSV), the NJB has 'ocean' (following 2S); the MT has 'the waters'. The 'breath from your nostrils' is the storm wind.

מַגְעֲרַתְךָ יְהוָה
מִנְשַׁמַּת רוּחַ אַפְּךָ:
יִשְׁלַח מִמָּרוֹם יִקְחֵנִי יז
יִמְשְׁנֵנִי מִמַּיִם רַבִּים:
יִצִּילֵנִי מֵאִיבֵי עֹז יח
וּמִשְׂנְאֵי כִּי־אֲמָצוּ מִמֶּנִּי:
יִקְדְּמוּנִי בְיוֹם־אִי־דִי יט
וַיְהִי־יְהוָה לְמִשְׁעַן לִי:
וַיּוֹצִיאֵנִי לַמָּרְחָב כ
יַחֲלֹצֵנִי כִּי חָפֵץ בִּי:
יִגְמֹלֵנִי יְהוָה כְּצַדִּיקי כא
כִּבֵּר יָדַי יִשִּׁיב לִי:
כִּי־שָׁמַרְתִּי דְרָכֵי יְהוָה כב
וְלֹא־דָשַׁעְתִּי מֵאֱלֹהֵי:
כג כִּי כָל־מִשְׁפָּטָיו לִנְגִדִי

at your roaring, Yahweh,
at the blast of breath from your nostrils!
17 He reached down from on high, snatched me up,
and pulled me from the mighty waters.
18 He rescued me from my mighty foe,
from those who hated me, who were too strong for me.
19 They assailed me on my day of disaster
but Yahweh supported me.
20 He freed me, set me at large;
he rescued me because he delighted in me.
21 Yahweh rewards me for my uprightness,
as my hands are pure, so he repays me.
22 For I have kept the ways of Yahweh,
and not fallen away from my God.
23 His ordinances are all before me,

-
- 17 In this poetic narrative context, the 3 prefixed verbal forms in this verse are best understood as preterites indicating past tense, not imperfects. The waters of the sea symbolise the psalmist's powerful enemies, as well as the realm of death they represent (see v. 4 & 144:7).
18 The singular 'foe' of the 1st line refers either to personified death or collectively to the psalmist's enemies; the 2nd line, which refers to 'those who hated me', favours the latter.
19 The literal translation of 'supported me' is 'became my support'.
20 In place of 'delighted in me', here following the MT & NRSV, the NJB has 'loves me'.
21 In vv. 21-28, the king attributes Yahweh's favour toward him to his own previous loyalty to God and his keeping the commandments.
22 The 2nd line is elliptical; the idea is: "I have not acted wickedly and, in so doing, departed from my God."
23 The term מִשְׁפָּטָיו ('ordinances') refers to God's covenantal requirements, especially those which the king is responsible to follow (cf. Dt 17:18-20); see also Ps 19:9 (cf. vv. 8-9), 89:30, 147:20 (cf. v. 20), as well as the numerous uses of the term in Ps 119.

וְחֻקֹּתָיו לֹא־אֲסִיר מִנִּי:

בד ואֵהי תָּמִים עִמּוֹ

וְאֶשְׁתַּמֵּר מֵעוֹנִי:

כה וַיִּשְׁב־יְהוָה לִי כַצְדָּקִי

כבר יָדִי לִנְגֹד עֵינָיו:

כו עִם־חֲסִיד תִּתְחַסֵּד

עִם־גִּבֹּר תָּמִים תִּתָּמַם:

כז עִם־נָבֵר תִּתְבַּרֵּר

וְעִם־עֹקֵשׁ תִּתְפַּתֵּל:

כח כִּי־אַתָּה עִם־עֲנִי תוֹשִׁיעַ

וְעֵינָיִם רָמוֹת תִּשְׁפִּיל:

כט כִּי־אַתָּה תֹּאדִיר נֶרִי

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יְגִיָּה חֲשָׁכִי:

ל כִּי־בְךָ אֶרֶץ גְּדוּד

וּבְאֱלֹהֵי אֲדָלְג־שׁוּר:

his statutes I have not put away from me.

24 I am blameless before him;

I keep myself clear of evil.

25 Therefore, Yahweh repaid me for acting uprightly because he could see my hands were pure.

26 You are faithful to the faithful follower, blameless with the blameless.

27 With the pure, you show yourself pure, but with the devious, you show cunning.

28 You save a humble people and humiliate those with haughty looks.

29 It is you who light my lamp, Yahweh, my God, lights up my darkness.

30 With you, I storm the rampart; with my God, I can scale any wall.

24 Leading a blameless life meant that the king would be loyal to God's covenant, purge the government and society of evil and unjust officials, and reward loyalty to Yahweh (see Ps 101).

25 In place of 'my hands were pure' (here following the MT and NRSV), the NJB has 'I was pure' (following 2S 22).

26 A 'faithful follower' (חֲסִיד) is one who does what is right in God's eyes and remains faithful to God (see 4:3, 12:1, 16:10, 31:23, 37:28, 86:2 & 97:10).

27 The verb translated 'show cunning' is used in only 3 other texts: in Gn 30:8, it means literally 'to wrestle' or 'to twist'; in Job 5:13, it refers to devious individuals, and in Pr 8:8 to deceptive words.

28 The literal translation of the 2nd line is, "but haughty eyes you bring low."

29 In place of 'It is you who lights my lamp' (here following the MT), the MT, following 2S 22, has 'you yourself are my lamp'. The MT is a gloss, intended to soften the materialism of the image.

30 This is an exuberant outburst of confidence in what he can accomplish with God's help.

לא האֵלֹהִים דְּרָכּוֹ
 אֲמַרְתָּ־יְהוָה צְרוּפָה
 מִגֵּן הוּא לְכָל־הַחֹסִים בּוֹ׃
 לב כִּי מִי אֱלֹהִים מִבְּלַעַד־יְהוָה
 וּמִי צֹרֵר זֹלָתִי אֱלֹהֵינוּ׃
 לג האֵלֹהִים הַמְאַזְרֵנִי חֵיל
 וַיֵּתֶן תָּמִים דְּרָכָי׃
 לד מְשׁוּה רַגְלִי כַּאֲיִלוֹת
 וַעֲלֵב בְּמַתִּי יַעֲמִידֵנִי׃
 לה מְלַמֵּד יָדַי לַמִּלְחָמָה
 וְנִחַתָּה קֶשֶׁת־נְחוּשָׁה זְרוּעֹתַי׃
 לו וַתִּתֵּן־לִי מִגֵּן יְשׁוּעָה
 וַיְמִינֵךָ תְּסַעֲדֵנִי
 וַעֲנוּתֶךָ תִּרְבֵּנִי׃
 לו תִּרְחִיב צַעְדֵי תַחְתִּי

- 31 This God, his way is blameless;
 the word of Yahweh is refined in the furnace,
 for he alone is the shield of all who take refuge in him.
 32 For, who is God but Yahweh,
 who is a rock but our God?
 33 This God, who girds me with strength,
 who makes my way free from blame.
 34 He makes me swift as a deer
 and sets me firmly on the heights.
 35 He trains my hands for battle,
 my arms to bend a bow of bronze.
 36 You give me your shield of salvation;
 your right hand upholds me,
 your help has made me great.
 37 You give me the strides of a giant

- 31 The term **הָאֵלֹהִים** (*'this God'*) stands as a nominative (or genitive) absolute, in apposition to the pronominal suffix on *'way'*; the prefixed article emphasises his distinctiveness as the one true God (cf. Dt 33:26). God's *'way'*, in this context, refers to his protective and salvific acts in fulfilment of his promise (see also Dt 32:4, Ps 67:2, 77:13, 103:7, 138:5 & 145:17).
 32 The rhetorical questions expect the answer, "No one." The psalmist shows that Yahweh is the only true God and reliable source of protection.
 33 As the following context makes clear, *'strength'* refers to physical and emotional strength for battle (see especially v. 40).
 34 Habakkuk (Hab 3:19) uses similar language to describe his faith during difficult times.
 35 The 2nd line probably refers to a bow laminated with bronze strips, or to a purely ceremonial or decorative bow made entirely from bronze; in the latter case, the language is hyperbolic, for such a weapon would not be functional in battle.
 36 The NJB parenthesises the 2nd line and, for the 3rd line, reads *'and you never cease to listen to me'*; here, we follow the NRSV.
 37 The literal translation of *'ankles'* is *'lower legs'* (the NRSV has *'feet'*).

וְלֹא מַעְדּוֹ קָרַסְלִי:
 אֶרְדּוֹף אֹיְבֵי וְאֲשִׁיגֶם לַח
 וְלֹא-אָשׁוּב עַד-כְּלוֹתָם:
 אֶמְחָצֵם וְלֹא-יִכְלוּ קוֹם לט
 יִפְּלוּ תַּחַת רַגְלִי:
 וְתִאָּזְרֵנִי חֵיל לַמִּלְחָמָה מ
 תִּכְרִיעַ קַמִּי תַּחְתִּי:
 וְאֹיְבֵי נִתְּתָה לִי עֶרְף מֵא
 וּמִשְׁנָאִי אֶצְמִיתָם:
 יִשׁוּעוּ וְאִין-מוֹשִׁיעַ מֵב
 עַל-יְהוָה וְלֹא עֲנָם:
 וְאֶשְׁחָקֶם בְּעַפָּר עַל-פְּנֵי-רוּחַ מֵג
 בְּטִיט חוּצוֹת אֲרִיקָם:
 תִּפְּלֹטֵנִי מֵרִיבֵי עָם מֵד
 תִּשְׁמִינֵנִי לְרֹאשׁ גּוֹיִם

and ankles that never weaken.
 38 I pursue my enemies and overtake them,
 not turning back until they are annihilated.
 39 I strike them down and they cannot rise,
 they fall, they are under my feet.
 40 You have girded me with strength for the fight,
 made my foes kneel beneath me.
 41 You made my enemies retreat before me;
 and those who hate me I destroy.
 42 They cry out, there is no one to save;
 to Yahweh, but no answer comes.
 43 I crumble them like dust before the wind
 trample them like the mud of the streets.
 44 You free me from the quarrels of my people,
 you place me at the head of the nations;

38 In place of 'overtake', 2S 22:38 reads 'destroy'.

39 A more literal translation of 'I strike them down' is 'I smash them'.

40 For the 2nd line, the NJB reads, "bent down my assailants beneath me."

41 Cf. v. 18, where it is Yahweh who delivered the psalmist from those who hated him.

42 This reference to his enemies crying out for help to Yahweh suggests that the psalmist refers here to enemies within the covenant community, rather than foreigners; however, the militaristic context suggests foreign enemies are in view. Ancient Middle Eastern literature indicates that defeated enemies would sometimes cry out for mercy to the god(s) of their conqueror.

43 The literal translation of 'before' is 'upon the face of'.

44 'My people' follows 2S 22; the MT has 'a people' and the LXX has 'peoples' (both here and in 2S). The reading of 2S must be the original one; it was generalised afterwards because of the rest of the verse, and perhaps also to remove the criticism of Israel.

עַם לֹא־יָדַעְתִּי יַעֲבֹדוּנִי:
 לְשִׁמְעַע אֲזֵן יִשְׁמְעוּ לִי מֶה
 בְּנֵי־נֹכַח יִכְחָשׁוּ־לִי:
 בְּנֵי־נֹכַח יִבְלוּ מו
 וַיַּחְרְגוּ מִמִּסְגְּרוֹתֵיהֶם:
 חִי־יְהוָה וּבָרוּךְ צוּרִי מו
 וַיְרוֹם אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעִי:
 הָאֵל הַנּוֹתֵן נַקְמֹת לִי מו
 וַיְדַבֵּר עַמִּים תַּחְתָּי:
 מִפְּלִטִי מֵאֵיבֵי מו
 אַף מִן־קָמִי תִרְוַמְנִי
 מֵאִישׁ חָמָס תַּצִּילֵנִי:
 עַל־כֵּן | אֹדֶדְךָ בְּגוֹיִם | יְהוָה נ
 וּלְשִׁמְךָ אֲזַמְּרָה:

a people I did not know are now my servants.
 45 As soon as they heard of me, they obeyed me;
 foreigners came cringing to me.
 46 Foreigners grow faint of heart;
 they come trembling out of their strongholds.
 47 Yahweh lives! Blessed be my rock!
 Exalted be the God of my salvation,
 48 the God who gives me vengeance,
 and subjects whole peoples to me,
 49 who rescues me from my raging enemies.
 You lift me high above those who attack me;
 you deliver me from the man of violence.
 50 For this I will praise you, among the nations, Yahweh,
 and sing praise to your name.

-
- 45 The report of the psalmist's exploits is so impressive that those who hear it submit to his rule without putting up a fight.
 46 The meaning of וַיַּחְרְגוּ ('trembling') is established on the basis of cognates in Arabic and Aramaic; the normal meaning ('girding') makes little sense here.
 47 Elsewhere, the construction חִי־יְהוָה is used exclusively as an oath formula, 'as surely as Yahweh lives', but this is not the case here, for no oath follows. Here, the statement is an affirmation of Yahweh's active presence and intervention: in contrast to pagan deities, he demonstrates he is the living God by rescuing and empowering the psalmist.
 48 In the ancient Middle East, military victory was sometimes viewed as a sign that one's God had judged in favour of the victor, avenging and/or vindicating him (see, for example, Jg 11:27, 32–33, 36).
 49 In place of 'lift me high above', NETB has 'snatch me away from'.
 50 The 1st line probably alludes to the fact that the psalmist will praise God in the presence of the defeated nations when they, as his subjects, bring their tribute payments. Ideally, the Davidic king was to testify to the nations of God's greatness.

מִגְדֹּל יְשׁוּעוֹת מֶלֶךְ
וְעָשָׂה חֶסֶד לְמַשִּׁיחוֹ
לְדָוִד וּלְזַרְעוֹ עַד-עוֹלָם:

⁵¹ He saves his king time after time,
displays his faithful love for his anointed,
for David and his seed forever.

⁵¹ This verse is a liturgical conclusion recalling the promises of victory and salvation made to the Davidic dynasty (cf. 89:1ff, 28ff, 1S 2:10). It establishes the identity of the psalmist as a king of this dynasty; at least the nucleus of the Psalm may go back to David. In place of 'seed', the *NJB* has 'heirs' and the *WEBBE* has 'offspring'.

תהילים פרק יט

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד:
ב הַשָּׁמַיִם מְסַפְּרִים כְּבוֹד־אֱלֹהִים
ג וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו מְגִיד הַרְקִיעַ:
ד יוֹם לַיּוֹם יִבְיַע אָמֵר
ה וּלְלַיְלָה לְלַיְלָה יַחְוֶה־דַּעַת:
ו אֵין־אָמֵר וְאֵין דְּבָרִים
ז בְּלִי נִשְׁמָע קוֹלָם:
ח בְּכֹל־הָאָרֶץ יֵצֵא קוֹם
ט וּבִקְצֵה תֵּבֵל מְלִיָּהֶם
י לְשֹׁמֵשׁ שָׁם־אֹהֶל בָּהֶם:
יא וְהוּא כַּחֲתָן יֵצֵא מִחַפְּתוֹ

PSALM 19

- 1 *To the leader. A Psalm of David.*
- 2 The heavens declare the glory of God;
the vault of heaven proclaims his handiwork.
- 3 Day after day it pours forth speech;
and night after night it declares knowledge.
- 4 There is no speech, nor are there words;
their voice is not heard.
- 5 Yet through all the earth, their voice goes out,
this message reaches the whole world.
High above, he pitched a tent for the sun,
- 6 which comes forth from his pavilion like a bridegroom,

PSALM 19

The psalmist praises God for his self-revelation in the heavens and in the Mosaic Law.

- 1 Most English translations do not number this title, as does the *MT*; subsequent verse numbers will therein be accordingly decremented.
- 2 This hymn celebrates Yahweh as Creator of the heavens, and particularly of the sun (vv. 5–6) and the author of the Law; nature and Law both manifest the perfection of God. In the ancient East, the sun symbolised justice (see Ws 5:7, Ml 3:20); hence, the conjunction of the Psalm's two sections. V. 4 is applied to the apostles (see also Rm 10:18).
- 3 The subject of the verbs in this verse is the sky (the '*vault of heaven*' from v. 2).
- 4 The versions interpret the 2nd line, '*whose sound cannot be heard*'; but, in what follows, there is allusion to the Assyro-Babylonian idea that the stars are the silent '*writing of the heavens*'.
- 5 '*Their voice*' follows the *LXX* (φρόγγος αὐτῶν) and *NRSV*; the *MT* reads '*measuring line*' (קוֹם), which makes no sense here (the *NJB* has '*the design stands out*'); the *LXX* assumes the reading קוֹלָם.
- 6 The psalmist, speaking of the sun as a creature of God, uses expressions found also in Babylonian mythology: the skies provide a track along which the sun, like an athlete, runs its daily course.

יֵשִׁישׁ כְּגִבּוֹר לָרוֹץ אֶרֶח׃
 ז מִקְצֵה הַשָּׁמַיִם | מוֹצְאוֹ
 וְתִקּוּפָתוֹ עַל־קְצוֹתֵם
 וְאֵין נִסְתָּר מִחֲמָתוֹ׃
 ח תּוֹרַת יְהוָה תְּמִימָה מְשִׁיבַת נֶפֶשׁ
 עֲדוֹת יְהוָה נֶאֱמָנָה מַחְכִּימַת פֶּתִי׃
 ט פְּקוּדֵי יְהוָה יֹשְׁרִים מְשַׁמְחֵי־לֵב
 מִצְוֹת יְהוָה בְּרָה מְאִירַת עֵינַיִם׃
 י יִרְאַת יְהוָה | טְהוֹרָה עֹמֶדֶת לְעַד
 מִשְׁפָּטֵי־יְהוָה אֱמֶת צִדְקוֹ יַחֲדוֹ׃
 יא הִנֵּחַ־מִדִּים מְזֶהָב וּמִפָּז רָב
 וּמִתּוֹקִים מִדְּבַשׁ וְנֹפֶת צוּפִים׃
 יב גַּם־עַבְדְּךָ נִזְהָר בָּהֶם
 בְּשֹׁמְרָם עֶקֶב רָב׃
 יג שְׂגִיאוֹת מִי־יָבִין

- and like a champion runs its course with joy.
- 7 Rising on the one horizon,
he runs his circuit to the other,
and nothing can escape his heat.
- 8 The Law of Yahweh is perfect, refreshment to the soul.
The decree of Yahweh is sure, wisdom for the simple.
- 9 The precepts of Yahweh are honest, joy for the heart.
The commandment of Yahweh is pure, light for the eyes.
- 10 The fear of Yahweh is pure, lasting forever.
The judgements of Yahweh are true and altogether just.
- 11 More desirable than gold are they, even than fine gold,
sweeter than honey that drips plentifully from the comb.
- 12 Thus, your servant is warned by them;
observing them brings great reward.
- 13 But who can detect his own failings?

7 A more literal translation of 'can escape' would be 'is hidden from'.

8 Probably, a later writer added vv. 8-15, praising the revelation of God's will in the Mosaic Law, in order to counterbalance what seemed to him the almost pagan emphasis on the revelation of God in nature (vv. 1-6).

9 The point of the 1st line is that God's laws bring a sense of joyful satisfaction to the one who knows and keeps them, for those who obey them are richly rewarded.

10 The phrase, 'fear of Yahweh', probably refers here to the Law, which teaches one how to demonstrate proper reverence for God.

11 Observance of the Law is a joy, not a burden.

12 The NJB has 'formed' in place of 'warned', here following the MT & NRSV.

13 The literal translation of the 2nd line is, "Declare me innocent from hidden [things]." The poet asks to be delivered from either accidental or deliberate violations of the commandments.

מְנַסְתָּרוֹת נִקְנִי:
 ד' גַּם מִזִּדִּים | חֶשֶׁךְ עֲבֹדֶךָ
 אֶל־יִמְשְׁלוּ־בִי אֲזִי אֵיתָם
 וְנִקִּיתִי מִפֶּשַׁע רָב:
 טו יְהִי־לִרְצוֹן | אִמְרֵי־פִי
 וְהִגִּיוֹן לִבִּי לִפְנֶיךָ
 יְהִזֶּה צוּרִי וְגֹאֲלִי:

Wash away my hidden faults.

¹⁴ Also, from pride preserve your servant,
never let it be my master.

Then shall I be above reproach, free from grave sin.

¹⁵ Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart,
be acceptable in your sight,
Yahweh, my rock, my redeemer.

¹⁴ For 'pride' (literally, 'the proud'), the LXX has 'the aliens' (*ἀλλοτρίων*); Ps 119 persistently opposes pride to obedience to the Law.

¹⁵ 'Redeemer' translates צוּרִי, which denotes both the avenger of blood (Nb 35:19) and the redeemer (Lv 25:25, 47–49). It is applied by Job 19:25, Ps 19:14, 78:35, Jr 50:34 and Is 41:14, 43:14, 44:6, 24, 49:7, 59:20 to Yahweh as avenger, Saviour, and rescuer from death of his people and his servants.

תהילים פרק ב

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד:
ב יִעֲנֶה יְהוָה בְּיוֹם צָרָה
יִשְׁגָּבֶךָ שֵׁם | אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב:
ג יִשְׁלַח-עֲזָרָךְ מִקֹּדֶשׁ
וּמִצִּיּוֹן יִסְעֶדְךָ:
ד יִזְכֹּר כָּל-מִנְחֹתֶךָ
וְעוֹלֹתֶיךָ יִדְשָׁנָה
סֵלָה:
ה יִתֵּן-לְךָ כָּל-בִּבְיָךְ
וְכָל-עֲצָתְךָ יִמְלֹא:
ו נִרְנָנָה | בִּישׁוּעֹתֶיךָ
וּבְשֵׁם-אֱלֹהֵינוּ נִדְגָּל
יִמְלֹא יְהוָה כָּל-מִשְׁאָלוֹתֶיךָ:

PSALM 20

- 1 To the leader. A Psalm of David:
- 2 May Yahweh answer you in time of trouble,
May the name of the God of Jacob protect you!
- 3 May he send you help from his Sanctuary,
and give you support from Zion!
- 4 May he remember all your sacrifices
and delight in your burnt offerings!
- Selah*
- 5 May he grant you your heart's desire
and crown all your plans with success!
- 6 So that with joy we can hail your victory
and draw up our ranks in the name of our God.
May Yahweh grant all of your petitions!

PSALM 20

- 1 Most English translations do not number this header; here, we follow the *MT* and other verse numbers herein are accordingly incremented.
- 2 The prefixed verbal forms in vv. 2–6 are interpreted as jussives of prayer (cf. *NJB*, *NRSV*, *NEB*, *NIV*); another option is to understand them as imperfects, ‘Yahweh will answer...’, in which case the people declare their confidence that God will intervene on behalf of the king.
- 3 The literal translation of ‘his Sanctuary’ is ‘the Sanctuary’; the 3MS pronominal suffix (י) has probably been accidentally omitted by haplography (note that the following word begins with a prefixed *vav*).
- 4 The literal translation of ‘delight in’ (יִדְשָׁנָה) is ‘considered as fat’ (emendation of vowels), with the final ה being understood as a 3FS pronominal suffix referring back to the feminine noun ‘sacrifice’.
- 5 The 1st line probably refers to the king’s prayer for protection and victory in battle, and the 2nd to the king’s strategy for battle.
- 6 Between vv. 6 and 7, some liturgical action evidently occurred, probably the proclamation of an oracle of victory by a priest or temple prophet (see #12:5 and compare 21:8–12), which then inspired the expression of confidence in vv. 7–9.

עֲתָה יִדְעֹתִי ז
 כִּי הוֹשִׁיעַ | יְהוָה מִשִּׁיחוֹ
 יַעֲנֶהוּ מִשָּׁמַי קִדְשׁוֹ
 בְּגִבּוֹרֹת יֵשַׁע יְמִינוֹ:
 אֱלֹה בָרַכְבּ וְאֱלֹה בְּסוּסִים ח
 וְאַנְחֵנוּ | בְּשֵׁם־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ נִזְכִּיר:
 הֵמָּה כָּרְעוּ וְנִפְּלוּ ט
 וְאַנְחֵנוּ קָמְנוּ וְנִתְּעוֹדָד:
 יְהוָה הוֹשִׁיעָה י'
 הַמֶּלֶךְ יַעֲנֵנוּ בְּיוֹם־קִרְאָנוּ:

- 7 Now I know that Yahweh
gives victory to his Anointed.
He will respond from his holy heavens
with great deeds of victory from his right hand.
- 8 Some call on chariots, some on horses,
but we invoke the name of Yahweh our God.
- 9 They will crumple and fall,
while we stand upright and firm.
- 10 Give victory, Yahweh;
let the King answer us when we call.

⁷ An alternative translation for 'Anointed' is 'Christ' or 'Messiah' (see #Ex 30:22 & #1S 9:26), the king of Israel.

⁸ The Hiphil of זָכַר, when combined with the phrase 'in the name', means 'to invoke' (see Jos 23:7, Is 48:1, Am 6:10); by invoking God's name in prayer, the people demonstrate their trust in him.

⁹ In the 2nd line, the grammatical construction (conjunction + pronominal subject) highlights the contrast between God's victorious people and the defeated enemies mentioned in the 1st line.

¹⁰ For this verse, the LXX reads, "Yahweh, save the king; answer us when we call."

תהילים פרק כא

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד:
ב יְהוָה בִּעְזָתְךָ יִשְׂמַח-מֶלֶךְ
וּבִישׁוּעַתְךָ מֶה-יִגַּל יִגִּל מְאֹד:
ג תֵּאוֹת לָבוּ נָתַתָּה לוֹ
וְאַרְשֶׁת שְׁפָתָיו בַּל-מִנְעַת
סֵלָה:
ד כִּי-תִקְדָּמֶנּוּ בִּרְכוֹת טוֹב
תַּשִּׁית לְרֹאשׁוֹ עֲטֹרַת פָּז:
ה חַיִּים | שָׁאֵל מִמֶּךָ נָתַתָּה לוֹ
אַרְךָ יָמִים עוֹלָם וָעֶד:
ו גְּדוֹל כְּבוֹדוֹ בִּישׁוּעַתְךָ
הוֹד וְהָדָר תִּשׁוּבָה עָלָיו:
ז כִּי-תִשְׁיֹתָהּ בִּרְכוֹת לְעֵד
תַּחֲדָהּ בְּשִׂמְחָה אֶת-פָּנֶיךָ:

PSALM 21

- 1 To the leader. A Psalm of David.
- 2 Yahweh, the king rejoices in your power;
how your saving help fills him with joy!
- 3 You have granted him his heart's desire
and not withheld the prayer of his lips.
Selah
- 4 For you meet him with blessings of prosperity
and put a crown of pure gold on his head.
- 5 He has asked for life, you have given it him,
length of days forever and ever.
- 6 Great is his glory through your saving help;
you invest him with majesty and splendour.
- 7 You confer on him everlasting blessings;
you gladden him with the joy of your presence.

PSALM 21

- 1 Most English translations do not number this header; here, we follow the *MT* and, herein, the verse numbers are accordingly incremented.
- 2 The *Qere* has יִגַּל in place of יִגִּל, here following the *Kethib*.
- 3 The *NJB* has 'denied him' in place of 'withheld', here following the *NRSV*.
- 4 The following context shows that God's 'blessings' include deliverance, vindication, sustained life, and a long, stable reign (cf. Ps 3:8 & 24:5).
- 5 The phrase, 'length of days', when used of human beings, usually refers to a lengthy period of time (such as one's lifetime); see, for example, Dt 30:20, Job 12:12, Ps 91:16, Pr 3:2, 16, Lm 5:20. The additional phrase, 'forever and ever', is hyperbolic: while it seems to attribute eternal life to the king (Cf. Ps 61:6-7, 72:5), the underlying reality is the king's enduring dynasty.
- 6 For other uses of the phrase הוֹד וְהָדָר ('majesty and splendour'), see 1Ch 16:27, Job 40:10, Ps 96:6, 104:1, 111:3.
- 7 On the idiom 'with your face' (i.e. 'in your presence'), see 16:11.

ח כִּי־הַמֶּלֶךְ בִּטַּח בַּיהוָה
 וּבְחֶסֶד עֲלִיּוֹן בִּלְיָמוּט:
 ט תִּמְצֵא יָדְךָ לְכָל־אִיבִיךָ
 י יְמִינְךָ תִּמְצֵא שֹׂנְאֶיךָ:
 תְּשִׁיתָמוּ |
 כְּתִנּוֹר אֵשׁ לַעַת פִּנִּיךָ
 יְהוָה בָּאֵפוֹ יִבְלַעֵם
 וְתֹאכְלֵם אֵשׁ:
 יא פְּרִימוֹ מֵאֶרֶץ תֵּאֲבֹד
 וְזֶרְעוֹ מִבְּנֵי אָדָם:
 יב כִּי־נָטוּ עֲלֶיךָ רָעָה
 חֲשָׁבוּ מְזֻמָּה בִלְיֹכְלוּ:
 יג כִּי תִשְׁתַּמּוּ שָׂכָם
 בְּמִיתָרֶיךָ תִּכּוֹנֵן עַל־פְּנֵיהֶם:
 יד רוּמָה יְהוָה בְּעֹזְךָ
 נִשְׁיֶרָה וְנִזְמָרָה גְבוּרָתְךָ:

- 8 For the king puts his trust in Yahweh,
the mercy of the Most High will keep him from falling.
- 9 Your hand will reach all your enemies,
your right hand will find out all who hate you.
- 10 You will make them
as a fiery furnace on the day of your anger;
Yahweh will engulf them in his anger,
and fire will devour them.
- 11 You will purge the earth of their offspring,
the human race of their descendants.
- 12 They have devised evil against you
but plot as they may, they will not succeed.
- 13 For you will put them to flight,
by shooting your arrows in their faces.
- 14 Rise up, Yahweh, in your power!
We will sing and make music in honour of your strength.

- 8 The divine title 'Most High' (עֲלִיּוֹן) pictures God as the exalted ruler of the universe who vindicates the innocent and judges the wicked.
- 9 The king is now addressed. One *could* argue that God is still being addressed, but v. 10 militates against this proposal, for there God is mentioned in the 3rd person and appears to be distinct from the king.
- 10 'On the day of your anger' means 'the day when you come to judge'. Vv. 9–13 are addressed to the king, but several expressions therein suggest an eschatological perspective; it is possible that in the original text (see LXX), this passage was addressed to Yahweh.
- 11 The literal translations of 'offspring' and 'descendants' are, respectively, 'fruit' and 'seed'.
- 12 On the phrase, 'plot as they may', cf. 10:2.
- 13 The literal translation of 'put them to flight' is 'make them a shoulder': i.e., making them turn to run, showing the back of their necks and shoulders.
- 14 The psalm concludes with a petition to God, asking him to continue to intervene in strength for the king and nation.

תהילים פרק כב

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ עַל־אֵילַת הַשָּׁחַר
מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד:
ב אֱלֹהִי אֱלֹהֵי לִמָּה עֲזַבְתָּנִי
רָחוֹק מִשְׁוֹעָתִי דְּבַרִּי שְׁאֵגְתִּי:
ג אֱלֹהִי אֶקְרָא יוֹמָם וְלֹא תִעֲנֶנּוּ
וְלַיְלָה וְלֹא־דַמְיָה לִי:
ד וְאַתָּה קָדוֹשׁ
יֹשֵׁב תְּהִלּוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל:
ה בָּךְ בִּטְחוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
בִּטְחוּ וְתִפְלָטְמוּ:
ו אֵלֶיךָ זָעְקוּ וְנִמְלָטוּ
בָּךְ בִּטְחוּ וְלֹא־בוֹשׁוּ:
ז וְאַנְכִי תוֹלַעַת וְלֹא־אִישׁ
חֲרַפְתָּ אָדָם וּבְזוֹי עָם:

PSALM 22

- 1 *To the leader: to 'the Doe of the Dawn'.
A Psalm of David.*
- 2 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
I groan in prayer but help seems far away.
- 3 My God, I call by day but you do not answer,
at night, but I find no respite.
- 4 Yet you, the Holy One,
make your home in the praises of Israel.
- 5 In you, our ancestors trusted;
they trusted in you and you set them free.
- 6 To you they called for help and were delivered;
in you, they trusted and were not put to shame.
- 7 But I am a worm, not a man,
scorn of mankind, contempt of the people.

PSALM 22

- 1 The 'Doe of the Dawn' is possibly the title of a familiar song; some translations have 'for morning solace'. Most English translations do not number this header as a verse; here, we follow the MT and, herein, the verse numbers are accordingly incremented.
- 2 The 1st line was quoted by Jesus on the cross (Mk 15:34).
- 3 The literal translation of 'I find no respite' is 'there is no silence to me'.
- 4 An alternative reading of the 2nd line, following the LXX, is, "you who dwell in the sanctuary, the praise of Israel."
- 5 The words 'in you' in the 2nd line are supplied in the translation; they are understood by ellipsis (see the 1st line).
- 6 In place of 'put to shame', NETB has 'disappointed'.
- 7 Vv. 7-9 express the aggravation of psalmist's misery by the mockery of those who regard illness as proof of God's displeasure.

ח כל־רֹאִי יִלְעָגוּ לִי
 יפְטִירוּ בְשֹׁפָה יִנְעוּ רֹאשׁ:
 ט גַּל אֶל־יְהוָה יִפְלֹטֶהוּ
 יִצִּילֵהוּ כִּי חָפֵץ בּוֹ:
 י כִּי־אַתָּה גָּחִי מִבֶּטֶן
 מִבְּטִיחִי עַל־שְׁדֵי אִמִּי:
 יא עַל־יָדְךָ הִשְׁלַכְתִּי מִרְחֹם
 מִבֶּטֶן אִמִּי אֵלַי אָתָּה:
 יב אֶל־תִּרְחַק מִמֶּנִּי כִּי־צָרָה קְרוּבָה
 כִּי־אֵין עֹזֶר:
 יג סִבְבוּנִי פָרִים רַבִּים
 אֲבִירֵי בָשָׁן כְּתֻרוּנִי:
 יד פָּצוּ עָלַי פִּיהֶם
 אֲרִיֵּה טָרֵף וְשֹׁאֵג:
 טו כַּמִּים נִשְׁפַּכְתִּי
 וְהִתְפָּרְדּוּ כָּל־עַצְמוֹתַי

8 All who see me jeer at me,
 they sneer and shake their heads,
 9 “Commit yourself to Yahweh, let him deliver!
 Let him deliver him, as he took such delight in him.”
 10 It was you who drew me from the womb
 and soothed me on my mother’s breast.
 11 On you I was cast from my birth,
 from the womb, I have belonged to you.
 12 Do not hold aloof, for trouble is upon me,
 and there is no one to help!
 13 Many bulls are encircling me,
 wild bulls of Bashan closing in on me.
 14 Lions ravening and roaring
 open their mouths against me.
 15 My strength is trickling away,
 my bones are all disjointed,

8 Apparently, ‘shake their heads’ refers to a taunting gesture; see also Job 16:4, Ps 109:25, Lm 2:15.

9 The NJB, following the LXX, has ‘he trusted himself’ in place of ‘commit yourself’, here following the NRSV & MT.

10 God’s help in former times inspires the psalmist (vv. 9–11) to pray that it may continue in the present.

11 Despite the enemies’ taunts, the psalmist is certain of his relationship with God, which began from the time of his birth.

12 The verb ‘there is’ is not present in the MT but is implied.

13 The detractors behave like savage animals (see also vv. 16, 20–21). On the ‘bulls of Bashan’, see Am 4:1.

14 To ‘open the mouth against’ is a Hebrew idiom associated with eating and swallowing (see Ezk 2:8, Lm 2:16).

15 The ‘heart’ is viewed here as the seat of the psalmist’s strength and courage.

הִיָּה לִבִּי כְדוֹנָג
 נִמַּס בְּתוֹךְ מֵעִי:
 טז יָבֵשׁ כַּחֲרֹשׁ | כָּחִי
 וְלִשׁוֹנִי מִדְּבַק מִלְּקוֹחִי
 וְלִעֲפָר־מֹת תִּשְׁפָּתֵנִי:
 זי כִּי סָבְבוּנִי כְּלָבִים
 עֹדֶת מֵרָעִים הִקִּיפוּנִי
 כְּאִרֵּי יָדַי וְרַגְלֵי:
 יח אֲסַפֵּר כָּל־עֲצָמוֹתַי
 הֵמָּה יִבִּיטוּ יִרְאוּ־בִי:
 ט יַחְלִקוּ בְּגָדֵי לֵהֶם
 וְעַל־לְבוּשֵׁי יִפִּילוּ גֹזְרֵל:
 כ וְאַתָּה יְהוָה אֶל־תִּרְחַק
 אֵילוֹתַי לְעִזְרָתִי חֹשֶׁה:
 כא הַצִּילָה מִחֶרֶב נַפְשִׁי
 מִיַּד־פֶּלֶב יַחֲדָתִי:

and my heart has turned to wax,
melting inside me.

- 16 My mouth is dry as earthenware;
my tongue sticks to my jaw.
You lay me down in the dust of death.
- 17 A pack of dogs surrounds me,
a gang of villains closing in on me
as if to hack off my hands and my feet.
- 18 I can count every one of my bones,
while they look on and gloat.
- 19 They divide my garments among them
and cast lots for my clothing.
- 20 Yahweh, do not hold aloof!
O my strength, hurry to my help!
- 21 Rescue my soul from the sword,
my life from the grasp of the dog!

16 'Mouth' is a conjectural translation (כָּחִי – literally, 'palate'); the MT has 'strength' (כֹּחִי).

17 'As if to hack off' is conjectural (with the NJB); the MT has 'like a lion' (the LXX has 'they have dug into', the Peshitta has 'they have wounded' and the NRSV has 'My hands and feet have shrivelled'); the WEBBE, following the Qumran MSS, has 'They have pierced my hands and feet'. The passage recalls Is 53:5 but the evangelists did not make use of it in the Passion narratives.

18 The imperfect verbal forms in vv. 18-19 draw attention to the progressive nature of the action.

19 The sick one is so nearly dead that neighbours and relatives have already begun to divide the property.

20 For the 2nd line, here following the MT & NJB, the NRSV reads, "O my help, come quickly to my aid!"

21 The literal translation of 'my life' is 'my only one'; the psalmist may mean that his life is precious, or that he feels isolated and alone.

כב	הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי מִפִּי אַרְיָה וּמִקֶּרְנֵי רִמִּים עֲנִיתָנִי: אֲסַפְּרָה שְׁמֶךָ לְאַחֵי בְּתוֹךְ קָהָל אֱהַלְלֶךָ: כד יֵרָאִי יְהוָה הַלְלוּהוּ כג כָּל־זֶרַע יַעֲקֹב בְּבִדּוּהוּ וְגִוְרוֹ מִמֶּנּוּ כָל־זֶרַע יִשְׂרָאֵל: כה כִּי לֹא־בָזָה וְלֹא שָׁקַץ עֲנֹת עֲנִי וְלֹא־הִסְתִּיר פָּנָיו מִמֶּנּוּ וּבִשְׁוֹעוֹ אֱלֹהֵי שָׁמַע: כו מֵאֲתָךְ תִּהְלָלְתִּי בְּקָהָל רַב נִדְרֵי אֲשֻׁלֵּם נִגְדֵי יֵרָאִיו: כז יֹאכְלוּ עֲנֻוִּים וַיִּשְׂבְּעוּ יִהְלְלוּ יְהוָה דְּרָשָׁיו יְחִי לְבַבְכֶּם לְעַד: כח יִזְכְּרוּ וַיֵּשְׁבוּ אֶל־יְהוָה כג כָּל־אֲפִסֵּי־אֶרֶץ	22 Save me from the lion's mouth. You have rescued me from the wild bulls' horns. 23 I shall proclaim your name to my brothers, praise you in full assembly: 24 "You who fear Yahweh, praise him! All the race of Jacob, honour him! And stand in awe of him, all the race of Israel!" 25 For he did not despise nor abhor the poverty of the poor, has not turned his face from him, but, when he cried for help, he heard. 26 Of you is my praise in the thronged assembly; I will perform my vows before all who fear him. 27 The poor will eat and be satisfied; those who seek Yahweh will praise him: "May your heart live forever." 28 All the ends of the earth shall remember Yahweh and return to him,
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22 The literal translation of 'rescued' is 'answered'.

23 Here, the term 'brothers' does not carry a literal sense but refers to the psalmist's fellow members of the covenant community (see v. 24).

24 Another reading for 'stand in awe of him' is 'fear him'.

25 In this verse, the psalmist refers to himself in the 3rd person and characterises himself as oppressed.

26 When asking God for help, the psalmists would typically promise to praise him publicly if he intervened and delivered them.

27 This verse is an allusion to the Messianic banquet (Is 55:1ff) rather than to the ritual meal following the communion sacrifice (see #Lv 3:1).

28 'Him' in the 4th line follows the LXX & Peshitta; the MT has 'you', as also in the first line of v. 30.

וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לְפָנָיו
 כָּל־מְשַׁפְּחוֹת גּוֹיִם:
 כֵּי לִיהוָה הַמְּלוּכָה כט
 וּמֹשֶׁל בַּגּוֹיִם:
 ל אָכְלוּ וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ | כָּל־דְּשֵׁנֵי־אֶרֶץ
 לִפְנָיו יִכְרְעוּ כָל־יּוֹרְדֵי עֶפֶר
 וְנִפְשׁוּ לֹא חַיָּה:
 לא זֶרַע יַעֲבֹדֵנּוּ
 יִסְפֹּר לְאֲדָנָיו לְדוֹר:
 לב יִבְאוּ וַיְגִידוּ צְדָקָתוֹ
 לְעַם נֹלָד כִּי עָשָׂה:

all the families of nations
 bow down before him.

29 For dominion belongs to Yahweh,
 ruler of the nations!

30 All who prosper on earth will bow before him,
 all who go down to the dust will do reverence before him,
 and those who are dead.

31 Their descendants will serve him;
 will proclaim his name to generations

32 still to come; and these will tell of his saving justice
 to a people yet unborn: he has fulfilled it.

29 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "For to Yahweh dominion."

30 The literal translation of 'all who prosper' is 'all the fat ones'.

31 This is a difficult verse; it can also be interpreted, "He (the wicked) will not live, but generations will serve him." Some MSS and the LXX have, "my soul shall live for him," an adjustment relating to belief in the resurrection.

32 'Still to come' follows the LXX; the MT has 'they will come'.

תהילים פרק כג

א מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד
יְהוָה רֹעִי לֹא אֲחַסֵּר:
ב בְּנֵאֲוֹת דֶּשָׁא יִרְבִּיצֵנִי
עַל־מֵי מִנְחֹת יִנְהַלֵּנִי:
ג נַפְשִׁי יִשׁוּבֵב
יִנְחֵנִי בַּמַּעְגָּלִי-צֶדֶק לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ:
ד גַּם כִּי־אֵלֶךְ בְּגִיאַת צַלְמוֹת
לֹא־אִירָא רָע כִּי־אַתָּה עִמָּדִי
ה שְׁבִטָּךְ וּמִשְׁעֲנֹתֶךָ הֵמָּה יִנְחֲמֵנִי:
תַּעֲרֹךְ לִפְנֵי שַׁלְחַן נֹגֵד צָרָרִי
דִּשְׁנֵת בְּשֶׁמֶן רֹאשִׁי
כּוֹסִי רוּיָה:

PSALM 23

- ¹ *A Psalm of David.*
Yahweh is my shepherd; I lack nothing.
- ² He lets me lie in lush meadows.
He leads me beside refreshing streams,
³ to restore my spirit.
He guides me in paths of righteousness as befits his name.
- ⁴ Even were I to walk in the darkest valley
I should fear no evil, for you are at my side.
Your staff and your crook are there to soothe me.
- ⁵ You prepare a table for me under the eyes of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup brims over.

PSALM 23

- ¹ The imperfect verbal form in 'I lack nothing' is best understood as generalising; the psalmist highlights his typical or ongoing experience as a result of having Yahweh as his shepherd (habitual present use). V. 2 explains more specifically what he means by this statement.
- ² Both genitives in this verse indicate an attribute of the noun they modify: דֶּשָׁא characterises the pastures as 'lush', while מִנְחֹת probably characterises the streams as refreshing. In this case, the plural indicates an abstract quality. Some take מִנְחֹת in the sense of 'still', 'calm' or 'tranquil' (NJB) – describing calm pools in contrast to dangerous torrents, but it is unlikely that such a pastoral scene is in view.
- ³ Alternative translations for 'spirit' (נַפְשִׁי) are 'soul' or 'life' – the individualised principal of life.
- ⁴ 'For you are' is a later addition to the text, probably to harmonise with 1S 22:23, and to stress the allusion to David. The original text was probably, "at my side are your crook and your staff." 'Darkest valley' follows the NRSV; the more traditional 'valley of the shadow of death' is an ancient, but probable fanciful rendering; compare 44:19, 107:10, Job 3:5, Is 9:2, et cetera, where the same expression (צַלְמוֹת) occurs.
- ⁵ The rare noun רוּיָה is derived from the well-attested verb רוּה ('be saturated', 'drink one's fill'); in this context, where it describes a cup, it must mean 'filled up'.

אֶדָּ | טוֹב וְחֶסֶד יִרְדְּפוּנִי
כָּל־יְמֵי חַיִּי
וְשִׁבְתִּי בְּבֵית יְהוָה לְאָרְךָ יָמִים:

6 Surely kindness and faithful love pursue me
every day of my life.
I make my home in the House of Yahweh forever.

⁶ An alternative reading for 'kindness and faithful love' (following the NRSV) is 'goodness and mercy'; the noun חֶסֶד has been the subject of several monographs: some conclude that it is not merely an attitude or an emotion, but an emotion that leads to an activity beneficial to the recipient. Other appropriate meanings might be 'commitment' and 'devotion'. The use of יִרְדְּפוּנִי ('pursue') with טוֹב וְחֶסֶד ('kindness and faithful love') as subject is ironic; this is the only place in the entire OT where either of these nouns appears as the subject of this verb, which is often used to describe the hostile actions of enemies. One might expect the psalmist's enemies (see v. 5) to chase him, but ironically God's 'kindness and faithful love' (which are personified and stand by metonymy for God himself) pursue him instead. The word 'pursue' is used outside of its normal context in an ironic manner and creates a unique, but pleasant word picture of God's favour (or a kind God) 'chasing down' the one whom he loves.

תהילים פרק כד

א לְדָוִד מְזִמּוֹר
לַיהוָה הָאָרֶץ וּמְלוֹאָהָ
תִּבְלֵ וְיֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ:
ב כִּי־הוּא עַל־יָמִים יִסְדָּהָ
וְעַל־נְהֻרֹת יִכּוֹנְנָהּ:
ג מִי־עֲלָה בְהַר־יְהוָה
וּמִי־יָקֹום בְּמִקְוֹם קֹדֶשׁוֹ:
ד נָקִי כַפַּיִם וּבֶרֶךְ לֵבָב
אֲשֶׁר | לֹא־נִשְׁאַ לְשׁוֹא נַפְשִׁי
וְלֹא נִשְׁבַּע לְמַרְמָה:
ה יֵשׂא בִּרְכָה מֵאֵת יְהוָה
וְצִדְקָה מֵאֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעוֹ:
ו זֶה דֹּר דָּרָשׁוֹ
מִבְּקֵשֵׁי פָנֶיךָ יַעֲקֹב
סֵלָה:

PSALM 24

- 1 *Of David. A Psalm.*
To Yahweh belong the earth and all it contains,
the world and all who live there.
- 2 It is he who laid its foundations on the seas,
on the flowing waters fixed it firm.
- 3 Who shall go up to the mountain of Yahweh?
Who shall take a stand in his holy place?
- 4 The clean of hands and pure of heart,
whose heart is not set on vanities,
who does not swear an oath in order to deceive.
- 5 Such a one will receive blessing from Yahweh,
saving justice from the God of his salvation.
- 6 Such is the company of those who seek him,
who seek your presence, God of Jacob.

Selah

PSALM 24

- 1 Most English translations (cf. *NJB* & *NRSV*) do not include the title as part of this verse; here, we follow the *MT*.
- 2 The earth is represented as resting on the waters of the nether ocean, see Ex 20:4
- 3 The question posed is, "Who shall be admitted to the Temple?" The answer (vv. 4-6): "Only those who have the requisite moral qualities." The 'mountain of Yahweh' probably here refers to Zion (see Is 2:2-3).
- 4 In some *Hebrew MSS*, the *vav* in לְשׁוֹא is presented as a small letter.
- 5 The imperfect verbal form is generalizing: such people are typically rewarded for their deeds.
- 6 The 2nd line follows the *Peshitta* and 2 *Hebrew MSS*; the *MT* ends with, "your presence, Jacob," and the *LXX* with, "the presence of the God of Jacob."

זָּ שִׂאוּ שְׁעָרִים | רִאשֵׁיכֶם
 וְהִנֵּשׂאוּ פִתְחֵי עוֹלָם
 וַיָּבֹא מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד:
 ח מִי זֶה מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד
 יֵהוָה עֲזוֹז וְגִבּוֹר
 יֵהוָה גִּבּוֹר מִלְחָמָה:
 ט שִׂאוּ שְׁעָרִים | רִאשֵׁיכֶם
 וְשִׂאוּ פִתְחֵי עוֹלָם
 וַיָּבֹא מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד:
 י מִי הוּא זֶה מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד
 יֵהוָה צְבָאוֹת
 הוּא מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד
 סֵלָה:

- 7 Lift high your heads, O gates!
 Raise high the ancient gateways,
 and the King of Glory shall enter!
- 8 Who is he, this King of Glory?
 It is Yahweh, strong and valiant,
 Yahweh, valiant in battle.
- 9 Lift high your heads, O gates!
 Raise high the ancient gateways,
 and the King of Glory shall enter!
- 10 Who is he, this King of Glory?
 Yahweh Sabaoth,
 he is the King of Glory.

Selah

-
- 7 In vv. 7–10, the choir outside the gates, presumably accompanied by the Ark, now requests to be admitted. The ‘*King of Glory*’ means the God of Israel, whose presence was associated with the Ark.
- 8 Perhaps the personified gates/doors ask this question, in response to the command given in v. 7.
- 9 In place of ‘*King of Glory*’, here following the NJB & NRSV, NETB has ‘*the majestic king*’.
- 10 The title, ‘*Yahweh Sabaoth*’ (יֵהוָה צְבָאוֹת), pictures God as a mighty warrior-king who leads armies into battle.

תהילים פרק כה

א לְדָוִד

אֵלֶיךָ יְהוָה נַפְשִׁי אֶשָּׂא:

ב אֱלֹהִי בְךָ בִטְחֹתִי אֶל־אֲבוֹשָׁה
אֶל־יַעֲלֹצוּ אוֹיְבֵי לִי:

ג גַּם כָּל־קוֹיֵךְ לֹא יִבְשׁוּ
יִבְשׁוּ הַבּוֹגְדִים רִיקָם:

ד דְּרָכֶיךָ יְהוָה הוֹדִיעֵנִי
אֲרַחֲוֶיךָ לִמְדֵנִי:

ה הַדְרִיכֵנִי בְאֱמֻנָתְךָ וְלִמְדֵנִי
כִּי־אַתָּה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל

PSALM 25

¹ *Of David.*

ALEF

ADORATION I offer, Yahweh, to you, my God.

BET

² BUT in my trust in you do not put me to shame,
let not my enemies gloat over me.

GIMEL

³ CALLING to you, none shall ever be put to shame,
but shame is theirs who groundlessly break faith.

DALET

⁴ DIRECT me in your ways, Yahweh,
and teach me your paths.

HE

⁵ ENCOURAGE me to walk in your truth and teach me
since you are the God who saves me.

PSALM 25

This Psalm is acrostic (cf. Ps 9–10): each successive verse begins with another letter of the Hebrew alphabet, except v. 18, which, like v. 19, begins with ר instead of the expected ק (cf. #5). The last verse, beginning with פ, stands outside the acrostic scheme. The text presented here is (exactly) that of the NJB, which is an especially nice translation because of the fact that the first letter of each verse in the translation is the corresponding letter of the English alphabet.

¹ The literal translation of ‘Adoration I offer’ is ‘I lift up my life’.

² In place of ‘gloat’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘exult’ and NETB has ‘triumphantly rejoice’.

³ The adverb רִיקָם (‘groundlessly’) could also apply to the futility of their efforts.

⁴ In this context, God’s ‘ways’ and ‘paths’ refer to the moral principles which he prescribes for his followers (see vv. 8–10).

⁵ Following the NJB, we here split the verse to fill in the missing 1 stanza.

אוֹתָךְ קוֹיִתִּי כָּל־הַיּוֹם:
לְמַעַן טוֹבֶכָה יְהוָה:

זְכַר־רַחֲמֶיךָ יְהוָה וְחַסְדֶּיךָ י
כִּי מַעֲזֹלִים הֵמָּה:

חַטָּאוֹת נְעוּרַי וּפְשָׁעַי אֶל־תִּזְכֹּר ז
בְּחַסְדֶּךָ זְכַר־לִי אֶתָּה

טוֹב־וַיֵּשֶׁר יְהוָה ח
עַל־כֵּן יוֹרָה חַטָּאִים בְּדַרְךְ:

יְדַרְךְ עֲנָוִים בְּמִשְׁפָּט ט
וַיְלַמֵּד עֲנָוִים דְּרֵכּוֹ:

י כָּל־אַרְחֻת
יְהוָה חֶסֶד וְאַמֶּת
לְנֹצְרֵי בְרִיתוֹ וְעֹדְתָיו:

VAV

FOR my hope is in you all day long –

^{7c} such is your generosity, Yahweh.

ZAYIN

⁶ GOODNESS and faithful love have been yours forever,
Yahweh, do not forget them.

HET

⁷ HOLD not my youthful sins against me,
but remember me as your faithful love dictates.

TET

⁸ INTEGRITY and generosity are marks of Yahweh
for he brings sinners back to the path.

YOD

⁹ JUDICIOUSLY, he guides the humble,
instructing the poor in his way.

KAF

¹⁰ KINDNESS unfailing and constancy
mark all Yahweh's paths,
for those who keep his covenant and his decrees.

^{7c} This line has been transposed from the end of v. 7 (following the NJB).

⁶ The 1st and 2nd lines of the translation are here transposed to reflect the acrostic sequence in English.

⁷ After 'sins', the MT adds the doublet, 'and my faults'; here, we use the text of the NJB, which itself follows the Peshitta.

⁸ An alternative (and more literal) translation of the 2nd line is, "therefore he teaches sinners in the way."

⁹ In place of 'poor', the MT & NRSV repeat 'humble'; here, we follow the NJB & Peshitta.

¹⁰ Yahweh's 'paths' refer here to his characteristic actions.

יא לִמְעַן־שִׁמְךָ יְהוָה
וְסִלַּחַת לַעֲוֹנֵי כִי רַב־הוּא:

יב מִי־זֶה הָאִישׁ יֵרָא יְהוָה
יִוָּלְנוּ בְּדַרְךְ יִבְחָר:

יג נִפְשׁוּ בְטוֹב תֵּלִין
וְזִרְעוּ יִירֶשׁ אֶרֶץ:

יד סֹד יְהוָה לִירְאָיו
וּבְרִיתוֹ לַהֲדִיעֵם:

טו עֵינַי תָּמִיד אֶל־יְהוָה
כִּי הוּא־יֹצִיא מִרְשֶׁת רַגְלִי:

טז פָּנָה־אֵלַי וְחַנּוּנִי
כִּי־יָחִיד וְעָנִי אֲנִי:

LAMED

11 LET my sin, great though it is, be forgiven,
Yahweh, for the sake of your name.

MEM

12 MEN who respect Yahweh, what of them?
He teaches them the way they must choose.

NUN

13 NEIGHBOURS to happiness will they live,
and their children inherit the land.

SAMEKH

14 ONLY those who fear Yahweh
have his secret and his covenant, for their understanding.

AYIN

15 PERMANENTLY my eyes are on Yahweh,
for he will free my feet from the snare.

PE

16 QUICK, turn to me, pity me,
alone and wretched as I am!

11 By forgiving the sinful psalmist, the Yahweh's reputation as a merciful God will be enhanced.

12 The word translated 'men' is actually singular, but it is representative.

13 The sages of Israel had taught that the upright would receive a reward on earth; to this is now added the hope, nursed by those back from exile, of the unconditional enjoyment of the land of their ancestors.

14 'Secret' refers not so much to the mystery of God himself, Ws 2:22, as an intimacy with God, Ps 73:28, Ex 33:20, Job 29:5, Pr 3:32, together with an understanding of the ways of God, Jr 16:21, 31:34, Ho 6:6.

15 The hostility of the psalmist's enemies is probably in view in the 2nd line (see v. 19).

16 'Alone' here implies that the psalmist is helpless and vulnerable.

יז צָרוֹת לִבִּי הִרְחִיבוּ
מִמְצוּקוֹתַי הוֹצִיאוּנִי:

יח רֵאֵה עֲנִי וְעַמְלִי
וְשָׂא לְכָל־חַטָּאוֹתַי:

יט רֵאֵה־אֵיבֵי כִי־רַבּוּ
וְשִׁנְאַת חֲמַס שְׂנֵאוֹנִי:

כ שְׁמֶרָה נַפְשִׁי וְהַצִּילֵנִי
אַל־אֲבוֹשׁ כִּי־חֲסִיתִי בְּךָ:

כא תִּסְוֶיֶשֶׁר יִצְרוֹנִי
כִּי קוִיתִידָּ:

כב פְּדֵה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל
מִכָּל צָרוֹתָיו:

TSADI

17 RELIEVE the distress of my heart,
bring me out of my constraint.

QOF

18 SPARE a glance for my misery and pain,
take all my sins away.

RESH

19 TAKE note how countless are my enemies,
how violent their hatred for me.

SHIN

20 UNLESS you guard me and rescue me
I shall be put to shame, for you are my refuge.

TAV

21 VIRTUE and integrity be my protection,
for my hope, Yahweh, is in you.

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

17 'Relieve' is a conjectural translation; the MT has 'they have relieved'; an alternative translation for the 1st line is, "The troubles of my heart are enlarged." Literally translated ("the distresses of my heart, they make wide"), the 1st line makes little sense, unless this is an otherwise unattested intransitive use of the Hiphil of רָחַב ('be wide').

18 The literal translation of the 2nd line is 'lift up all my sins'.

19 Literally translated, this verse reads, "See my enemies for they are numerous, and (with) violent hatred they hate me."

20 The NRSV has 'my life' in place of the 1st instance of 'me', here following the NJB.

21 'Yahweh' follows the LXX (and NJB); the MT omits the Name.

22 This verse, which is outside the alphabetic series, could be a post-Exilic liturgical antiphon, (compare 34:22), adapting an individual prayer to congregational use.

תהילים פרק כו

א לְדָוִד |
שִׁפְטֵנִי יְהוָה
כִּי־אֲנִי בְּתִמִּי הִלַּכְתִּי
וּבִיהוָה בְּטַחַתִּי לֹא אֲמַעַד:
ב בַּחֲנִנִי יְהוָה וְנִסְגִּי
צְרוּפָה צָרְפָה כְּלִי־וֹתִי וְלִבִּי:
ג כִּי־חֲסִדְךָ לִנְגִד עֵינִי
וְהִתְהַלַּכְתִּי בְּאֱמֶתְךָ:
ד לֹא־יִשְׁבַּתִּי עִם־מְתֵי־שׁוֹא
וְעַם־נְעֻלְמִים לֹא אֲבוֹא:
ה שִׁנְאַתִּי קֹהֶל מְרָעִים
וְעַם־רָשָׁעִים לֹא אֲשֵׁב:
ו אֶרְחֹץ בְּנִקְיוֹן כַּפִּי
וְאֶסְבֹּבָה אֶת־מִזְבִּיחְךָ יְהוָה:

PSALM 26

- 1 *Of David.*
Be my judge, Yahweh!
I go on my way in integrity;
my trust in Yahweh never wavers.
- 2 Probe me, Yahweh, examine me;
test my heart and my mind in the fire.
- 3 For your faithful love is before my eyes
and I live my life by your truth.
- 4 I do not sit with wastrels,
nor do I associate with hypocrites.
- 5 I hate the company of sinners;
I refuse to sit down with the wicked.
- 6 I will wash my hands in innocence
and join the procession round your altar, Yahweh,

PSALM 26

- 1 The literal translation of the 3rd line is, "for I in my integrity walk."
- 2 Literally translated, the 2nd line read, "evaluate my kidneys and my heart." The kidneys and heart were viewed as the seat of one's volition, conscience, and moral character. The *Qere* has צָרְפָה in place of צְרוּפָה, here following the *Kethib*.
- 3 For the 2nd line, the *NRSV* has, "and I walk in faithfulness to you." The psalmist's awareness of Yahweh's faithfulness loyalty toward him motivates him to remain loyal and to maintain his moral purity.
- 4 The literal translation of 'associate' is 'go'; the psalmist uses the imperfect form of the verb to emphasise that he does not make a practice of associating with such people.
- 5 The psalmist uses the imperfect form of the verb 'to sit' to emphasise that he does not make a practice of associating with such people.
- 6 The psalmist uses an image from cultic ritual to picture his moral lifestyle. Compare Dt 21:6-8 and Ps 51:7.

ז לְשִׁמַּע בְּקוֹל תּוֹדָה
 וּלְסַפֵּר כָּל־נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ:
 ח יְהוָה אֲהַבְתִּי מְעוֹן בֵּיתְךָ
 וּמְקוֹם מִשְׁכַּן כְּבוֹדְךָ:
 ט אַל־תֹּאסֹף עִם־חַטָּאִים נַפְשִׁי
 וְעִם־אֲנָשֵׁי דָמִים חַיִּי:
 י אֲשֶׁר־בִּידֵיהֶם זִמָּה
 וַיִּמְנֹס מִלֶּאֱהָ שָׁחַד:
 יא וְאֲנִי בְתָמִי אֵלֶיךָ
 פִּדְנִי וְחַנּוּנִי:
 יב רַגְלִי עָמְדָה בְּמִשְׁוֹר
 בְּמִקְהָלִים אֲבָרְךָ יְהוָה:

- 7 to make heard the sound of thanksgiving,
to proclaim all your wonders.
- 8 Yahweh, I love the beauty of your house
and the place where your glory dwells.
- 9 Do not sweep me away with sinners,
nor my life with men of violence,
whose hands are stained with guilt,
their right hands heavy with bribes.
- 11 In innocence, I will go on my way;
ransom me, take pity on me.
- 12 I take my stand on the right path;
I will bless you, Yahweh, in the assemblies.

7 The 2 infinitive forms (both with prefixed preposition ל) give the purpose for his appearance at the altar.

8 'Beauty' follows the LXX; the MT has 'dwelling' (a mere change of vowels).

9 In place of 'sweep me away', here following the NRSV & NETB, the NJB has 'couple me'; the literal translation of the MT is 'gather up my life'.

10 A more literal translation of the 1st line is, "who have evil in their hands."

11 The construction at the beginning of the verse (conjunction + pronoun) highlights the contrast between the psalmist and the sinners mentioned in vv. 9-10.

12 The MT omits 'you', here following the LXX.

תהילים פרק כז

א לְדָוִד |
יְהוָה | אֹרִי וַיִּשְׁעֵי מִמִּי אִירָא
יְהוָה מְעוֹז־חַיִּי מִמִּי אֶפְחָד:
ב בִּקְרָב עָלַי | מְרַעִים
לֹאֲכַל אֶת־בְּשָׁרִי
צָרִי וְאֹיְבֵי לִי
הֵמָּה כָּשְׁלוּ וַנִּפְּלוּ:
ג אֶסְתַּחֲנֶה עָלַי | מַחְנֶה
לֹא־יִירָא לִבִּי
אֶסְתַּקּוּם עָלַי מִלְחָמָה
בְּזֹאת אֲנִי בֹטָח:
ד אַחַת | שְׁאֵלָתִי מֵאֵת־יְהוָה
אוֹתָהּ אֲבַקֵּשׁ
שְׁבִתִּי בְּבֵית־יְהוָה כָּל־יְמֵי חַיִּי
לַחֲזוֹת בְּנֹעַם־יְהוָה וּלְבַקֵּר בְּהִיכָלוֹ:

PSALM 27

- 1 *Of David.*
Yahweh is my light and my salvation, whom should I fear?
Yahweh is the fortress of my life, whom should I dread?
- 2 When the wicked advance against me
to eat me up;
they, my opponents, my enemies,
are the ones who stumble and fall.
- 3 Though an army pitch camp against me,
my heart will not fear.
Though war break out against me,
my trust will never be shaken.
- 4 One thing I ask of Yahweh,
one thing I seek:
To dwell in Yahweh's house all the days of my life;
To enjoy the sweetness of Yahweh, to seek out his Temple.

PSALM 27

- 1 An alternative translation for 'fortress' is 'refuge'. 'Light' is often used as a metaphor for deliverance and the life/blessings it brings (see 37:6, 97:11, 112:4, Is 49:6, 51:4, Mi 7:8); another option is that 'light' refers here to divine guidance (see 43:3).
- 2 The psalmist compares his enemies to dangerous, hungry predators (see 2K 9:36, Ezk 39:17).
- 3 The last line, literally translated, reads, "in this, I am trusting" (referring to the situation that the psalmist finds himself in).
- 4 'Yahweh's house' probably refers to the Tabernacle (if one accepts Davidic authorship) or the Temple (if the author was a temple functionary); see Jg 19:18, 1S 1:7, 24, 2S 12:20, 1K 7:12, 40, 45, 51.

ה כִּי יִצְפֶּנִּי | בְּסִכּוֹ בַּיּוֹם רָעָה
 יִסְתֶּרֶנִּי בְּסִתְרֵי אֹהֶלֹו
 בְּצוּר יִרְוֹמֵמֶנִי:
 ו עַתָּה יָרוֹם רֹאשִׁי עַל אֵיבֵי סְבִיבוֹתַי
 וְאֶזְבַּחַהּ בְּאֹהֶלֹו זִבְחֵי תְרוּעָה
 אֲשִׁירָה וְאֶזְמָרָה לַיהוָה:
 ז שְׁמַע־יְהוָה קוֹלִי אֶקְרָא
 וְחַנּוּנִי וְעֲנֵנִי:
 ח לֵךְ | אִמֹר לְבִי בִקְשׁוּ פָנַי
 אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֲבַקֵּשׁ:
 ט אַל־תִּסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ | מִמֶּנִּי
 אַל תִּטְּבֵאֵךְ עַבְדְּךָ
 עֲזַרְתִּי הִייתִי
 אַל־תִּטְּשֵׁנִי וְאַל־תִּעֲזֹבֵנִי אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:
 י כִּי־אָבִי וְאִמִּי עֲזָבוּנִי
 וַיְהִי וְאֶסְפְּנִי:

- 5 For he hides me away under his roof on the day of evil.
 He folds me in the recesses of his tent,
 sets me high on a rock.
 6 Now I will triumph over the enemies who surround me.
 In his tent, I will offer sacrifices of acclaim.
 I will sing; I will make music for Yahweh.
 7 Yahweh, hear my voice as I cry,
 be gracious to me and answer me!
 8 Of you, my heart has said, "Seek his face!"
 Your face, Yahweh, I seek; do not turn away from me.
 9 Do not hide your face from me.
 Do not turn your servant away in anger;
 without you, I am helpless.
 Never leave me; never forsake me, God, my Saviour.
 10 Though my father and mother forsake me,
 Yahweh will gather me up.

5 'His roof' and 'his tent' (v. 6) denote the sanctuary in Jerusalem: God places the psalmist out of reach of his enemies (cf. 18:2).

6 In vv. 1–3, the psalmist generalises, but here we discover that he is facing a crisis and is under attack from enemies (see vv. 11–12).

7 The NRSV & NETB omit 'voice', here following the MT & NJB.

8 'Seek his face' is conjectural (as the NJB); the MT has 'seek (plural) my face'; the expression (#Am 5:4), originally signifying 'to consult Yahweh' (2S 21:1), took on a wider sense: to seek to know God, to live in his presence. To 'seek God', 40:16, 69:6, 105:3, Dt 4:29, is to serve him faithfully.

9 The idiom 'hide your face' can mean 'ignore' (see 10:11, 13:1, 51:9) or carry the stronger idea of 'reject' (see 30:7, 88:14).

10 In place of the opening 'though' (here following the NJB), the NRSV and NETB have '(even) if'.

א הִוֵּרְנִי יְהוָה דְּרָכֶךָ
 וּנְחֲנִי בְּאֶרֶחַ מִישׁוֹר לְמַעַן שׁוֹרְרֵי:
 ב אֶל־תִּתְּנֵנִי בְּנֶפֶשׁ צָרִי
 ג כִּי קִמּוּבִי עַד־שֶׁקֶר וַיִּפַּח חֲמָם:
 לֹא־אֶהְיֶה לְרֹאשׁוֹת בְּטוֹב־יְהוָה
 ד בְּאֶרֶץ חַיִּים:
 קוֹה אֶל־יְהוָה
 חֲזַק וַיֵּאמֶץ לִבֶּךָ
 וְקוֹה אֶל־יְהוָה:

- 11 Yahweh, teach me your way,
 lead me on the level path because of my enemies.
 12 Do not abandon me to the will of my foes –
 for, liars have risen against me, who breath out violence.
 13 This I believe: I shall see the goodness of Yahweh,
 in the land of the living.
 14 Rely on Yahweh,
 be strong, let your heart be bold;
 rely on Yahweh.

-
- 11 The 'level path' refers to God's moral principles (see the 1st line), which, if followed, will keep the psalmist blameless before his accusers (v. 12).
 12 The form יִפַּח is traditionally understood as a verb meaning 'snort' or 'breathe out' (as NJB & NRSV) but another option is to take the form as a noun meaning 'witness' (or 'testifier'), following NETB: "for false witnesses who want to destroy me testify against me." (See Pr 6:19, 12:17, 14:5, 25, 19:5, 9 & Hab 2:3.)
 13 Another reading of 'I shall see' is, "If only I were sure of seeing!" In Maccabaeen times, this passage was understood with a future life in view. The *puncta extrodinaria* (*nequdot*) above and below the first word of this verse were probably added (before the times of the Masoretes) to indicate uncertain letters, which may even need to be removed.
 14 An alternate reading for 'rely on' (as NETB and NJB) is 'wait for' (as NRSV).

תהילים פרק כח

א לְדָוִד אֵלֶיךָ יְהוָה | אֶקְרָא
צוּרִי אֶל־תַּחֲרֹשׁ מִמְּנִי
פֶּן־תַּחֲשֶׁה מִמְּנִי
וְנִמְשַׁלְתִּי עִם־יֹרְדֵי בֹר:
ב שְׁמַע קוֹל תַּחֲנוּנִי בְּשׁוֹעֵי אֵלֶיךָ
בְּנִשְׁאֵי יָדַי אֶל־דְּבִיר קִדְשֶׁךָ:
ג אֶל־תִּמְשַׁכְּנִי עִם־רָשָׁעִים
וְעִם־פְּעֵלֵי אָוֶן
דְּבַרִּי שְׁלוֹם עִם־רַעֲיָהֶם
וְרַעָה בְּלִבָּבָם:
ד תֵּן־לָהֶם כַּפְעָלָם
וּכְרַע מִעַלְלֵיהֶם
כְּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיהֶם תֵּן לָהֶם
הַשֵּׁב גְּמוּלָם לָהֶם:
ה כִּי לֹא יִבְיִנוּ אֶל־פַּעֲלֹת יְהוָה
וְאֶל־מַעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו
יִהְרָסוּ וְלֹא יִבְנֻם:

PSALM 28

- ¹ *Of David.*
To you, Yahweh, I cry: my rock, do not be deaf to me!
If you stay silent,
I shall be like those who sink into oblivion.
- ² Hear the sound of my prayer when I call upon you,
when I raise my hands, towards your Holy of Holies.
- ³ Do not drag me away with the wicked,
with those who behave wickedly,
who talk to their partners of peace
with treachery in their hearts.
- ⁴ Repay them according to their deeds,
as befits their treacherous actions.
As befits their handiwork, repay them;
let their deserts fall back on themselves.
- ⁵ They do not comprehend the deeds of Yahweh,
the work of his hands.
May he pull them down and not rebuild them.

PSALM 28

- ¹ God is compared to a rocky summit where one can find protection from enemies. See Ps 18:2.
- ² The NJB adds 'Yahweh' to the end of the 3rd line; here, we follow the MT.
- ³ The literal translation of 2nd line is, "with the workers of wickedness," and that for the 3rd line is, "speakers of peace with their neighbours."
- ⁴ The highly repetitive style of this verse reflects the psalmist's agitated emotional state and draws attention to his yearning for justice.
- ⁵ Here, 'deeds of Yahweh' and 'work of his hands' likely refer to the way he carries out justice by vindicating the godly and punishing the wicked.

ו	בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה כִּי־שָׁמַע קוֹל תַּחֲנוּנֵי: יְהוָה עֲזִי וּמִגְנִי בּוֹ בָטַח לִבִּי וְנִעְזַרְתִּי וַיַּעֲלֵז לִבִּי וּמִשִּׁירֵי אֲהוֹדֶנּוּ: יְהוָה עֲזֹלְמוֹ וּמַעֲזוֹ יִשׁוּעוֹת מְשִׁיחוֹ הוּא: הוֹשִׁיעָה אֶת־עַמֶּךָ וּבִרְךָ אֶת־נַחֲלֶתְךָ וְרַעַם וְנִשְׂאֵם עַד־הָעוֹלָם:	6	Blessed be Yahweh for he hears the sound of my prayer.
ז		7	Yahweh is my strength and my shield; in him, my heart trusts. I have been helped; my body has recovered its vigour, with all my heart, I thank him.
ח		8	Yahweh is the strength of his people, a safe refuge for his anointed.
ט		9	Save your people, bless your heritage, shepherd them and carry them forever!

-
- ⁶ The psalmist's mood abruptly changes at this point, because the LORD responded positively to his petition and assured him that he would deliver him.
- ⁷ In place of 'my body has recovered its vigour, with all my heart', following the LXX (καὶ ἀνέθαλεν ἡ σάραξ μου· καὶ ἐκ θελήματός μου); the MT has, 'my heart rejoices; with my song'.
- ⁸ The parallelism suggests that the 'anointed' is here the people of God consecrated to his service, see 105:15, #Ex 19:3 and Hab 3:13, and not the king, Ps 20:6, or the high priest, Ps 84:9.
- ⁹ The shepherd metaphor is sometimes associated with royal responsibility (see 2S 5:2, 7:7, Mic 5:2–4).

תהילים פרק כט

א מִזְמוֹר לַדָּוִד
הָבוּ לַיהוָה בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים
הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז:
ב הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ
הִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לַיהוָה בְּהַדְרַת־קֹדֶשׁ:
ג קוֹל יְהוָה עַל־הַמָּיִם
אֱלֹהֵי־כְבוֹד הָרָעִים
יְהוָה עַל־מַיִם רַבִּים:
ד קוֹל־יְהוָה בַּפֶּחַח
קוֹל יְהוָה בְּהַדָּר:
ה קוֹל יְהוָה שֹׁבֵר אֲרָזִים
וַיִּשְׁבֶּר יְהוָה אֶת־אֲרָזֵי הַלְבָנוֹן:

PSALM 29

- 1 *A Psalm of David.*
Give Yahweh his due, sons of God;
give Yahweh his due of glory and strength.
- 2 Give Yahweh the glory due to his name;
adore Yahweh in the splendour of holiness.
- 3 Yahweh's voice is over the waters,
the God of glory thunders,
Yahweh, over countless waters.
- 4 Yahweh's voice is power;
Yahweh's voice is full of majesty.
- 5 Yahweh's voice shatters cedars;
Yahweh shatters cedars of Lebanon.

PSALM 29

This 'Hymn to the Lord of the Storm' evokes the power and glory of God (see #Ex 13:22 & 19:16), subduing the enemies of Israel and assuring peace to the chosen people.

- 1 The 'Sons of God' (literally, 'sons of the gods', cf. 82:1, 89:6, Job 1:6ff) are the angels who constitute the heavenly court. The verse is sometimes applied to Israel, the 'son of God' (Ex 4:22, Dt 14:1, Ho 11:1). The LXX adds 'bring sons of rams to the LORD' (ἐνέγκαστε τῷ κυρίῳ υἱοὺς κριῶν).
- 2 In place of 'splendour', the LXX (αὐλῆ) and Peshitta have 'courtyard', denoting heaven, the invisible counterpart of the Temple (11:4, 78:69).
- 3 'The waters' here refers to the Mediterranean, but with mythological overtones.
- 4 Literally translated, this verse reads, "the voice of Yahweh (is) accompanied by strength; the voice of Yahweh (is) accompanied by majesty."
- 5 The prefixed verbal forms with *vav* (ו) consecutive continue the descriptive function of the preceding participle. The verb שָׁבַר appears in the Qal in the 1st line and in the Piel in the 2nd line: in the Qal, it means 'break'; in the Piel, always with multiple objects it may highlight the repetition of the plural action, or suggest an intensification of action; another option is to understand the form as resultative: 'make broken'.

וִירְקִידִם כְּמו־עֵגֶל	ו	6	He makes Lebanon skip like a calf,
לִבְנוֹן וְשִׁרְיֹן כְּמוֹ בֶן־רֶאֱמִים:			Sirion like a young wild ox.
קוֹל־יְהוָה חָצַב לַהֲבוֹת אֵשׁ:	ז	7	Yahweh's voice carves out lightning-shafts.
קוֹל יְהוָה יִחִיל מִדְּבַר	ח	8	Yahweh's voice convulses the desert;
יִחִיל יְהוָה מִדְּבַר קִדְשׁ:			Yahweh convulses the desert of Kadesh.
קוֹל יְהוָה יְחַלֵּל אֵילוֹת	ט	9	Yahweh's voice convulses terebinths,
וַיַּחֲשֹׁף יַעֲרֹת			strips forests bare.
וּבְהִיכָלוֹ כָּלֹּא אָמַר כְּבוֹד:			In his palace, all cry "Glory!"
יְהוָה לַמַּבּוּל יֵשֵׁב	י	10	Yahweh was enthroned for the Flood;
וַיֵּשֶׁב יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ לְעוֹלָם:			Yahweh is enthroned as King forever.
יְהוָה עֹז לְעַמּוֹ יִתֵּן	יא	11	Yahweh will give strength to his people;
יְהוָה יְבָרֵךְ אֶת־עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם:			Yahweh blesses his people with peace.

⁶ 'Sirion' (שִׁרְיֹן) is the Sidonian name for Lebanon, Dt 3:9; it could also refer to Mount Hermon.

⁷ God hews out arrows to transfix his enemies, cf. 18:14, Dt 32:23,42, Hab 3:11, Zc 9:14.

⁸ 'Kadesh' (קִדְשׁ) is almost certainly that of the post-Exodus wanderings (Nb 20:1).

⁹ 'The terebinths' is conjectural (אֵילוֹת); the MT has 'the hinds' (אֵילֹת). The great trees, here and in v. 5, perhaps symbolise the proud enemies of God and of his people, cf. Is 2:13, 10:18,33, 32:19, Jr 21:14, 46:23, Ezk 21:2, Zc 11:2. 'Palace' refers either to heaven (v. 2) or to the Temple, where the liturgy echoes the praise of the heavenly court, or possibly the Holy Land, consecrated to Yahweh (114:2) and his dwelling-place (Jr 12:7, Zc 9:8).

¹⁰ The 'Flood' (מַבּוּל) – a word that appears only here and in Gn 6–11) was the first manifestation of divine justice.

¹¹ Above the tumult of the storm, Yahweh reigns in majestic peace.

תהילים פרק ל

א מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר־חֲנֻכַּת הַבַּיִת לְדָוִד:
ב אֲרֻמְמֶךָ יְהוָה כִּי דָלִיתָנִי
וְלֹא־שִׂמְחַת אִיבֵי לִי:
ג יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי
שׁוֹנְעֵתִי אֱלִיף וַתִּרְפָּאֵנִי:
ד יְהוָה הֶעֱלִית מִן־שְׁאוֹל נַפְשִׁי
חֵייתָנִי מִיֹּרְדֵי־בֹר:
ה זָמְרוּ לַיהוָה חֲסִידָיו
וְהוֹדוּ לִזְכֹּר קִדְשׁוֹ:
ו כִּי רָגַע | בְּאַפּוֹ
חַיִּים בְּרָצוֹנוֹ
בַּעֲרֵב יְלִין בְּכִי
וּלְבָקֵר רִנָּה:
ז וְאֲנִי אִמַּרְתִּי בְשָׁלוֹ
בְּלֹא־אִמּוֹט לְעוֹלָם:

PSALM 30

- ¹ *A Psalm. A Song for the Dedication of the Temple. Of David.*
- ² I praise you Yahweh, for you have raised me up,
you have not let my foes make merry over me.
- ³ Yahweh, my God,
I cried to you for help and you healed me.
- ⁴ Yahweh, you have lifted me out of Sheol,
restored me to life from those gone down to the Pit.
- ⁵ Make music for Yahweh, all you faithful ones,
praise his unforgettable holiness.
- ⁶ His anger lasts but a moment,
his favour through life;
in the evening come tears,
but with dawn cries of joy.
- ⁷ Carefree, I used to think,
“Nothing can ever shake me!”

PSALM 30

- ¹ Most English translations do not include a verse number for this title; here, we follow the MT, and other verse numbers herein are incremented.
- ² Elsewhere, the verb דָּלָה is used of drawing water from a well (Ex 2:16, 19, Pr 20:5).
- ³ Apparently, the psalmist was plagued by a serious illness that threatened his life (see Ps 41).
- ⁴ The Qere reading, מִיֹּרְדֵי, would give, “you kept me alive so that I did not go down into the Pit;” here, we follow the Ketiv (מִיֹּרְדֵי).
- ⁵ The congregation is invited to join in giving thanks.
- ⁶ Translated literally, the 3rd line opens, “in the evening, tears pass the night.”
- ⁷ Before becoming ill, the psalmist felt secure but, when illness came, prayed to God (vv. 9–11) and God had restored his health (vv. 12–13).

ח יהוה ברצונך
 העמדתה להררי-עז
 הסתרת פניך
 הייתי נבהל:
 ט אליך יהוה אקרא
 ואל-אדני אתחנן:
 י מה-בצע בדמי
 ברדתי אל-שחת
 היודך עפר
 היגיד אמתך:
 יא שמע-יהוה וחנוני
 יהוה היה-עזר לי:
 יב הפכת מספדי למחול לי
 פתחת שקי
 ותאזרני שמחה:

8 Yahweh, by your favour,
 you made my mountain stand strong,
 but you turned away your face
 and I was terrified.
 9 To you, Yahweh, I will call,
 to my God I cry for mercy.
 10 What point is there in my death,
 my going down to the abyss?
 Can the dust praise you
 or proclaim your faithfulness?
 11 Listen, Yahweh, take pity on me,
 Yahweh, be my help!
 12 You have turned my mourning into dancing;
 you have stripped off my sackcloth
 and clothed me with joy.

8 The text of the 1st 2 lines is conjectural; the MT reads, "By your favour you have set up a force on my mountain."

9 'My God' follows the LXX; the MT has 'Lord' (not the Divine Name).

10 The literal translation of 'death' is 'blood', for blood contains life, 62:14, 116:15, see #Gn 9:6 and #Lv 1:5. According to the OT, those who descend into the realm of death (Sheol) are cut off from God's mighty deeds and from the worshiping covenant community that experiences divine intervention (Ps 6:5, 88:10–12, Is 38:18); in his effort to elicit a positive divine response, the psalmist reminds God that he will receive no praise or glory if he allows the psalmist to die: dead men do not praise God!

11 Literally translated, the 2nd line ends, "be a helper to me."

12 'Joy' probably stands metonymically for festive attire here.

יג
לְמַעַן יִזְמְרֶךָ כְּבוֹד וְלֹא יִדָּם
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי לְעוֹלָם אֲוֶדְךָ:

¹³ So, my heart will sing to you unceasingly,
Yahweh, my God, I shall praise you forever.

¹³ 'Heart' (literally, 'liver') follows the LXX (see 7:5); the MT has 'glory' and the NRSV has 'soul'.

תהילים פרק לא

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד:
ב בְּךָ־יְהוָה חֲסִיתִי
אֶל־אֲבוֹשָׁה לְעוֹלָם
בְּצִדְקַתְךָ פָּלַטְנִי:
ג הִטָּה אֵלַי אָזְנוֹךָ מִהֲרָה הֲצִילְנִי
הִיָּה לִי לְצוּר־מַעֲזוֹ לְבֵית מְצוּדוֹת
לְהוֹשִׁיעֵנִי:
ד כִּי־סִלַּעַי וּמְצוּדוֹתַי אַתָּה
וּלְמַעַן שְׁמֹךָ תִּנְחַנֵּנִי וּתְנַהֲלֵנִי:
ה תוֹצִיאֵנִי מִרֶשֶׁת זוֹ טָמְנוּ לִי
כִּי־אַתָּה מַעֲוִי:
ו בִידְךָ אֶפְקִיד רוּחִי
פָּדִית אוֹתִי יְהוָה אֵל אֱמֶת:

PSALM 31

- 1 *To the leader. A Psalm of David.*
- 2 In you, Yahweh, I have taken refuge;
let me never be shamed.
In your vindication, rescue me.
- 3 Incline your ear to me; rescue me speedily.
Be a rock of refuge for me,
a strong fortress to save me.
- 4 You are my high ridge, my rampart;
true to your name, lead me and guide me!
- 5 Draw me out of the net they have spread for me,
for you are my refuge.
- 6 Into your hands, I commit my spirit;
you will rescue me, Yahweh, faithful God.

PSALM 31

- 1 Most English translations do not include a verse number for this title; here, we follow the *MT*, and all subsequent verse numbers are accordingly incremented. This Psalm is a prayer inspired by the Confessions of Jeremiah; Jon 2 is also quite close.
- 2 'Rescue' (here following the *LXX*) comes after 'speedily' (v. 3) in the *MT*. Vv. 2-9 and 10-25 are parallel in form, both containing the principal elements of a lament.
- 3 This verse is seemingly omitted by the *NJB*.
- 4 The metaphor of the 'high ridge' pictures God as a rocky, relatively inaccessible summit, where one would be able to find protection from enemies (see 1S 23:25, 28).
- 5 We assume here that the imperfect verbal form ('draw me out') expresses a prayer.
- 6 The perfect verbal form in the 2nd line is anticipatory, indicating the psalmist's certainty that God will intervene; confident of God's positive response to his prayer, he describes his rescue as if it had already happened. The *NJB* has 'faithful god' ('God of truth') at the beginning of v. 7.

ז	שָׂנְאֵתִי הַשְׁמָרִים הַבְּלִי־שׁוֹא וְאֲנִי אֶל־יְהוָה בִּטְחֹתִי: אֲגִילָּה וְאֶשְׂמְחָה בַּחֲסִדְךָ אֲשֶׁר רָאִיתָ אֶת־עֲנִי יָדַעְתָּ בְּצָרוֹת נַפְשִׁי: וְלֹא הִסְגַּרְתָּנִי בְּיַד־אֹיֵב הָעַמְדָּת בַּמֶּרְחֹב רַגְלִי: חַנּוּנִי יְהוָה כִּי צָר־לִי עָשְׂשָׂה בְּכַעַס עֵינָי נַפְשִׁי וּבִטְנִי: כִּי כָלוּ בִּיגּוֹן חַיִּי וּשְׁנוֹתַי בְּאַנְחָה כָּשָׁל בַּעֲוֹנֵי כַחִּי וְעֲצָמֵי עָשָׂשׁוּ: יב מְכַל־צָרָרִי הָיִיתִי חֲרָפָה וְלִשְׂכֹנָיִי מֵאֵד וּפָחַד לַמִּיֶּדְעִי רָאִי בַחוּץ נִדְדוּ מִמֶּנִּי:	7 You hate worshippers of ineffectual idols; but my trust is in Yahweh: 8 I will delight and rejoice in your faithful love! You, who have seen my misery and witnessed the miseries of my soul. 9 You have not handed me over to the enemy; you have given me freedom to roam at large. 10 Take pity on me Yahweh, for I am in trouble. Vexation is gnawing away my eyes, my soul deep within me. 11 For my life is spent with sorrow and my years with sighs. My strength gives way under my misery, and my bones waste away. 12 I am the scorn of all my adversaries, a calamity to my neighbours, an object of horror to my friends; Those who see me in the street flee.
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⁷ 'You hate' follows the LXX and Peshitta; the MT has 'I hate'.

⁸ A more literal translation for 'miseries of my soul' is 'distresses of my life'.

⁹ The NJB includes the 1st line in v. 8.

¹⁰ The psalmist seems to be lamenting that his breathing is impaired because of the physical and emotional suffering he is forced to endure.

¹¹ 'Misery' follows the LXX and Peshitta; the MT has 'iniquity'.

¹² 'A calamity' is conjectural (אֵד); the MT has 'exceedingly' (מֵאֵד). The initial מ may be understood as enclitic, which was originally suffixed to the preceding form and then later misinterpreted; the resulting form can then be taken as a defectively written form of אֵיד.

יג נִשְׁכַּחְתִּי כִּמְת מֶלֶב
 הֵיְתִי כְּכֵלִי אֶבֶד:
 יד כִּי שָׁמַעְתִּי דְּבַת רַבִּים
 מִגֹּזֵר מִסָּבִיב
 בְּהוֹסְדָם יַחַד עָלַי
 לִקְחַת נַפְשִׁי זִמְמוּ:
 טו וְאַנִּי עָלֶיךָ בִּטְחֹתִי יְהוָה
 אֲמַרְתִּי אֱלֹהֵי אֶתָּה:
 טז בִּידֶךָ עֲתַתִּי
 הַצִּילֵנִי מִיַּד־אֹיְבָי וּמִרְדָּפִי:
 זז הָאִירָה פָּנֶיךָ עַל־עַבְדְּךָ
 הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי בַּחֲסֶדְךָ:
 יח יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי־אֲבוֹשָׁה כִּי קִרְאתֶיךָ
 יִבְשׁוּ רַגְעִים יָדָמוּ לְשֹׁאֵל:
 טט תִּאֲלַמְנָה שִׁפְתֵי־שָׁקֶר
 הַדְּבָרוֹת עַל־צִדִּיק עֲתָק
 בְּגָאוֹה וּבְזוּז:

- 13 I have passed out of mind like one who is dead;
 I have become like a broken vessel.
 14 All I hear is slander,
 terror wherever I turn,
 as they plot together against me,
 scheming to take my life.
 15 But my trust is in you, Yahweh;
 I say, "You are my God."
 16 My life is in your hands; rescue me
 from the hands of my enemies and persecutors.
 17 Let your face shine on your servant,
 save me in your faithful love.
 18 Yahweh, let disgrace fall not on me; for, I call on you;
 but let the wicked be shamed; let them go silently to Sheol.
 19 Let the lying lips be stilled,
 which speak against the upright
 in pride and contempt.

13 This verse follows the NRSV; the NJB has, "I have no more place in their hearts than a corpse, or something lost."

14 The literal translation of the 2nd line is, "the terror from all around."

15 The psalmist here asserts his faith in God.

16 The literal translation of 'life' is 'times'.

17 For 'let your face shine', here following the MT, NJB & NRSV, NETB has 'smile'.

18 The NJB includes the last line as part of v. 19. 'Sheol' is the place of the dead.

19 Another option for 'upright' is 'innocent'.

כ מה רב־טוֹבָךְ אֲשֶׁר־צָפַנְתָּ לִירְאֶיךָ
 פִּעֲלֹת לַחֲסִים בְּךָ
 נִגְד בְּנֵי אָדָם:
 כא תַּסְתִּירֵם | בְּסֶתֶר פָּנֶיךָ מִרְכְּסֵי־אִישׁ
 תַּצְפֶּנֶם בְּסֻכָּה
 מִרִיב לְשׁוֹנוֹת:
 כב בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה
 כִּי הִפְלִיא חֶסֶדּוֹ לִי
 בְּעִיר מָצוֹר:
 כג וְאֲנִי | אֲמַרְתִּי בַחֲפֹזִי
 נִגְרַזְתִּי מִנֶּגֶד עֵינֶיךָ
 אֲכֹן שָׁמַעְתָּ קוֹל תַּחֲנוּנִי
 בְּשׁוֹעֵי אֱלֹהִים:
 כד אֶהְיוּ אֶת־יְהוָה כָּל־חֲסִידָיו
 אֱמוּנִים נֹצֵר יְהוָה
 וּמִשְׁלֵם עַל־יָתֵר עֲשֵׂה גְאוּה:

- 20 What good things you have in store for those who fear you,
 and bestow on those who make you their refuge,
 for all humanity to see.
 21 In your presence you hide them, far from human plotting,
 shielding them in your tent,
 far from contentious tongues.
 22 Blessed be Yahweh,
 for he has wondrously shown his steadfast love to me
 when I was beset as a city under siege.
 23 In a state of terror I cried,
 "I have been cut off from your sight!"
 Yet, you heard my plea for help
 when I cried out to you.
 24 Love Yahweh, all his faithful:
 Yahweh protects his loyal servants,
 but he repays the arrogant with interest.

20 Three Hebrew MSS (and other versions) add the Divine Name at the beginning of this verse.

21 'Contentious tongues' refers to scorn, slander, and perjury (cf. 55:9, 109:3, 120:2ff, 1K 21:10,13, Job 5:21, Is 54:17, J2 18:18).

22 The 3rd line here follows the NRSV (the NJB parentheses it). The psalmist probably speaks figuratively here; he compares his crisis to being trapped in a besieged city, but God answered his prayer for help. Vv. 20–25 were apparently written after the prayer of vv. 2–19 was answered.

23 'Cut off' conjecturally restores the original text; in the MT, two letters have been changed over to soften the unduly pessimistic expression, giving 'driven far', as in the NRSV.

24 The 'faithful' (חֲסִיד) is one who does what is right in God's eyes and remains faithful to God (see 4:3, 12:1, 16:10, 37:28, 86:2, 97:10).

כֹּה חֲזִקוּ וַיֵּאֲמֵן לְבַבְכֶּם
כָּל־הַמֵּיחָלִים לַיהוָה:

²⁵ Be brave; take heart,
all who put your hope in Yahweh.

²⁵ The literal translation of ‘*take heart*’ is ‘*let your hearts be confident*’.

תהילים פרק לב

א לְדוֹד מְשָׁכִיל
אֲשֶׁרִי נְשׁוּי־פָשַׁע
כְּסוּי חַטָּאָה:
ב אֲשֶׁרִי אָדָם
לֹא יַחֲשֹׁב יְהוָה לוֹ עוֹן
וְאֵין בְּרוּחוֹ רְמִיָּה:
ג כִּי־הִחַרְשָׁתִי בְּלוּ עַצְמִי
בְּשִׂאֲנָתִי כָּל־הַיּוֹם:
ד כִּי יוֹמָם וּלְיָלָה תִּכְבֵּד עָלַי יָדְךָ
נִהְפָּךְ לְשֹׁדִי
בְּחֶרְבְּנִי קִיץ
סֵלָה:
ה חַטָּאתִי אֹדִיעֶךָ וְעוֹנִי לֹא־כִסִּיתִי
אֶמְרָתִי אֹדֶה עָלַי פֶּשַׁעִי לִיהוָה
וְאַתָּה נָשָׂאתָ עוֹן חַטָּאתִי
סֵלָה:

PSALM 32

- ¹ *Of David. A Maskil.*
Happy are those whose offence is forgiven,
whose sin is blotted out.
- ² Happy are those
to whom Yahweh imputes no guilt,
whose spirit harbours no deceit.
- ³ I said not a word, but my bones wasted away
from groaning all day long.
- ⁴ Day and night, your hand lay heavy upon me;
my heart grew parched as stubble
in summer drought.
- Selah*
- ⁵ I made my sin known to you, did not conceal my guilt.
I said, "I shall confess my offence to Yahweh."
And you took away the guilt of my sin.
- Selah.*

PSALM 32

- ¹ This Psalm is a didactic poem; its two parts, vv. 1–7 and 8–11, balance each other, but the rhythm is different. It is one of the penitential psalms. The literal translation of 'whose sin is blotted out' is 'his sin is covered', #63:3, #85:2, Job 31:33.
- ² Here and in v. 1, the NJB has 'how blessed' in place of 'happy', here following the NRSV (see #1:1).
- ³ The psalmist pictures himself as aging and growing physically weak: trying to cover up his sin brought severe physical consequences.
- ⁴ For the 3rd line, the NRSV has 'my strength was dried up'; the MT lacks 'my heart'. 'Stubble' (literally 'a field') is conjectural; the MT has 'my sap'.
- ⁵ The Hiphil of יָדָה normally means 'give thanks' or 'praise' but here, as in Pr 28:13, it means 'confess'.

וְעַל־זֹאת יִתְפַּלֵּל כָּל־חֹסֵיד | אֱלֹהֶיךָ
 לַעֲת מַצָּא
 רַק לְשֹׁטֵף מַיִם רַבִּים
 אֱלֹהֵיךָ לֹא יַגִּיעוּ:
 אַתָּה | סֶתֶר לִי מִצָּר תִּצְרְנִי
 רַנִּי פֶלֶט
 תְּסוּבֶּבְנִי
 סֵלָה:
 ח אֲשַׁכִּילְךָ | וְאֹרֶךְ בְּדַרְךְ־זֶה תִּלְךָ
 אֵינֶעָצָה עָלֶיךָ עֵינַי:
 ט אֲלִי־תִהְיוּ | כְּסוֹס כְּפֶרֶד׃ אֵין הָבִין
 בְּמִתְגַּוְרֶסֶן עֲדִיו לְבָלוֹם
 בֹּל קָרֵב אֵלֶיךָ:
 י רַבִּים מְכַאֲזִים לָרָשָׁע
 וְהַבּוֹטָח בַּיהוָה
 יִחְסֵד יְסוּבֶּבְנוּ:
 יא שִׂמְחוּ בַיהוָה וְגִילוּ צְדִיקִים
 וְהִרְנִינוּ כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל:

- 6 That is why each of your faithful ones prays to you
in time of distress.
Even if great floods overflow,
they will never reach your faithful.
- 7 You are a refuge for me,
you guard me in trouble;
with songs of deliverance you surround me.
Selah.
- 8 I shall instruct and teach you the way to go;
I shall not take my eyes off you.
- 9 Do not be like horse or mule; they have no understanding
his advance is controlled by bridle or bit;
or they will not come near.
- 10 Countless troubles are in store for the wicked;
but, for those who trust in Yahweh,
steadfast love surrounds them.
- 11 Rejoice in Yahweh, exult all you upright,
shout for joy, you pure of heart.

6 'Distress' is conjectural (מִצָּר); the MT has 'to find only' (רַק מַצָּא), which could come from misreading the final consonants of the two forms.

7 The literal translation of the last line is, "(with) shouts of joy of deliverance you surround me."

8 The 2P pronouns in this verse are singular: the psalmist addresses each member of his audience individually.

9 For the 2nd line, the NJB reads, "if you advance to master them."

10 The singular form of 'the wicked' is representative here; the typical evildoer, representative of the larger group of wicked people, is in view.

11 The 'heart' is here viewed as the seat of one's moral character and motives.

תהילים פרק לג

א רִנְנוּ צְדִיקִים בַּיהוָה
לִישָׁרִים נֶאֱוָה תִּהְיֶה:
ב הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה בְּכִנּוֹר
בְּנֶגֶב עֲשׂוֹר זִמְרוּלוֹ:
ג שִׁירוּלוֹ שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ
הֵיטִיבוּ נֶגֶן בְּתִרְעָה:
ד כִּי־יֵשֶׁר דְּבַר־יְהוָה
וְכָל־מַעֲשָׂהוּ בֶאֱמוּנָה:
ה אֱהָב צְדָקָה וּמִשְׁפָּט
חֶסֶד יְהוָה מְלֵאָה הָאָרֶץ:
ו בְּדִבַּר יְהוָה שָׁמַיִם נִעֲשׂוּ
וּבְרוּחַ פִּיו כָּל־צְבָאָם:

PSALM 33

- 1 Shout for joy, you upright;
praise comes well from the honest.
- 2 Give thanks to Yahweh on the lyre,
play for him on the ten-stringed lyre.
- 3 Sing to him a new song;
make sweet music for your cry of victory.
- 4 The word of Yahweh is straightforward;
all he does springs from his constancy.
- 5 He loves uprightness and justice;
the faithful love of Yahweh fills the earth.
- 6 By the word of Yahweh the heavens were made,
by the breath of his mouth their entire array.

PSALM 33

- 1 In this hymn, the psalmist praises God as the sovereign creator and just ruler of the world who protects and vindicates those who fear him.
- 2 Lyres were made with various numbers of strings.
- 3 'Cry of victory' originally indicated the war cry that preceded attack, Ex 32:17, Jos 6:5, Jg 7:20–21, 1S 17:20,52, Jr 4:19,49:2, Ho 5:8, Am 1:14; it hailed Yahweh as king and leader, Nb 23:21, Zp 1:14; cf. 1L 10:24, and his palladium, the Ark, 1S 4:5, 2S 6:15. After the Exile, this ritual war cry assumes a ceremonial and liturgical character; it acclaims Yahweh as king of Israel and of the nations, 47:1,5, 89:15, 95:1, 98:4,6, Saviour, Is 44:23, and judge, Jl 2:1; it hails his Messiah also, Zc 9:9. It is shouted on feast days, Ezr 3:11, cf. Job 38:7, at thanksgiving sacrifices, Ps 27:6, 65:13, 100:1, Job 33:26, and in religious processions, Ps 95:1–2, 100:1ff; see #Nb 10:5.
- 4 After the call to praise (vv. 1–3), the psalmist now gives a series of reasons why God is worthy of praise.
- 5 The verb 'loves' is here metonymic; God's commitment to principles of equity and justice causes him to actively promote these principles as he governs the world.
- 6 The emphasis on the divine word, here and in v. 9, reflects Gn 1:3–31.

ז	כָּנָס כַּנֹּד מִי הַיָּם נָתַן בְּאוֹצְרוֹת תְּהוֹמוֹת:	7	He collects the waters of the sea like a dam; he stores away the abyss in his treasure house.
ח	יִירָאוּ מִיְהוָה כָּל־הָאָרֶץ מִמֶּנּוּ יִגְדְּרוּ כָל־יֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֶל:	8	Let the whole earth fear Yahweh, let all who dwell in the world revere him.
ט	כִּי הוּא אָמַר וַיְהִי הוּא־צִוָּה וַיַּעֲמֹד:	9	For, the moment he spoke, it was so, no sooner had he commanded, than there it stood!
י	יְהוָה הַפִּיר עֲצַת־גּוֹיִם הִנִּיא מַחֲשָׁבוֹת עַמִּים:	10	Yahweh thwarts the plans of nations, frustrates the counsels of peoples.
יא	עֲצַת יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם תַּעֲמֹד מַחֲשָׁבוֹת לְבֹ לְדָר וָדָר:	11	Yahweh's own plan stands firm forever, his heart's counsel from age to age.
יב	אֲשֶׁר־יִגְדֹּי אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיו הָעָם בָּחַר לְנַחֲלָה לּוֹ:	12	How blessed the nation whose God is Yahweh, the people he has chosen as his heritage.
יג	מִשְׁמַיִם הִבִּיט יְהוָה רָאָה אֶת־כָּל־בְּנֵי הָאָדָם:	13	From heaven Yahweh looks down, he sees all the children of Adam.

-
- 7 Some versions correct the vowels in 'treasure house' to 'wineskin' but there is an allusion to the miracle of the Sea in Ex 15:8; see also Ps 18:13.
- 8 In this context, 'fear' probably means respect for God's power and authority by worshiping him and obeying his commandments.
- 9 The pronoun 'it' (both instances) refers to 'the whole earth' in the 1st line of v. 8. The apparent antecedent of the masculine subject of the verbs in this verse (וַיְהִי and וַיַּעֲמֹד) is 'earth' or 'world', both of which are feminine nouns; however, כָּל ('whole') may be the antecedent, or the apparent lack of agreement may be explained by the collective nature of the nouns involved here.
- 10 The literal translation of 'thwarts' is 'breaks' or 'destroys'.
- 11 Yahweh's 'plan' and 'counsel' here refer to his decrees and purposes.
- 12 The noun translated 'blessed' is an abstract plural; the word often refers metonymically to the happiness that God-given security and prosperity produce (see 1:1, 2:12, 34:9, 41:1, 65:4, 84:12, 89:15, 106:3, 112:1, 127:5, 128:1 & 144:15).
- 13 The perfect verbal forms here state general facts.

יד מִמְּכוֹן־שִׁבְתּוֹ הַשָּׁמַיִם
 אֵל כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ:
 טו הַיֹּצֵר יַחַד לִבָּם
 הַמְּבִין אֶל־כָּל־מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם:
 טז אִין־הַמֶּלֶךְ נוֹשָׁע בְּרַב־חַיִּל
 גִּבּוֹר לֹא־יִנָּצֵל בְּרַב־כֹּחַ:
 יז שֶׁקֶר הַסּוֹס לְתִשׁוּעָה
 וּבְרַב חַיִּלּוֹ לֹא יִמָּלֵט:
 יח הִנֵּה עֵין יְהוָה אֶל־יִרְאָיו
 לְמִיַּחֲלִים לְחַסְדּוֹ:
 יט לְהַצִּיל מִמּוֹת נַפְשָׁם
 וּלְחַיּוֹתָם בְּרָעֵב:
 כ נַפְשֵׁנוּ חֲבַתָּה לַיהוָה
 עֲזָרְנוּ וּמִגְגֻנּוּ הוּא:

14 From the place where he sits, he watches
 all who dwell on the earth.
 15 He alone moulds their hearts;
 he understands all they do.
 16 A large army will not keep a king safe;
 a warrior's strength will not save his life.
 17 It is illusion to rely on a horse for safety;
 for all its power, it cannot save.
 18 Truly, Yahweh watches over those who fear him,
 those who rely on his faithful love,
 19 to rescue them from death
 and keep them alive in famine.
 20 We are waiting for Yahweh;
 he is our help and our shield.

14 For this verse, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "From where he sits enthroned, he watches all the inhabitants of the earth."

15 'Heart' here refers to human nature, composed of intellect, emotions and will. The precise force of יַחַד (literally, 'together') is unclear here, but the point seems to be that God is the creator of every human being.

16 This verse here follows the NJB; the NRSV & NETB read, more literally, "A king is not saved by his great army; a warrior is not delivered by his great strength;" however, here, the referent of the pronouns 'his' is ambiguous.

17 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "a lie (is) the horse for victory."

18 The literal translation of the 1st line is, "Look, the eye of Yahweh (is) toward the ones who fear him;" the expression, 'the eye ... (is) toward' here indicates recognition and the bestowing of favour (see 34:15). The one who fears Yahweh respects his sovereignty and obeys his commandments (see 128:1, Pr 14:2).

19 The literal translation of the 1st line is, "To save from death their lives."

20 The opening pronoun ('we') translates נַפְשֵׁנוּ ('our lives'); the suffixed form of נַפְשִׁי is often equivalent to a pronoun in poetic texts.

כא כִּי־בּוֹ יִשְׂמַח לִבֵּנוּ
כִּי בְּשֵׁם קֹדֶשׁוֹ בִּטְחָנוּ:
כב יְהִי־חֶסֶדְךָ יְהוָה עָלֵינוּ
כַּאֲשֶׁר יִחְלֹנוּ לָךְ:

- ²¹ For in him our heart rejoices,
in his holy name we trust.
²² Yahweh, let your faithful love rest on us,
as our hope has rested in you.

²¹ The 'name' of God was considered equivalent to God himself.

²² For the 2nd line, here following the NJB, the NRSV has "even as we hope in you," and NETB has "for we wait for you."

תהילים פרק לד

א לְדָוִד
בְּשׁוֹנוֹתָו אֶת־טַעְמוֹ לִפְנֵי אֲבִימֶלֶךְ
וַיִּגְרָשֵׁהוּ וַיֵּלֶךְ׃

ב אֲבָרְכָה אֶת־יְהוָה בְּכָל־עֵת
תָּמִיד תִּהְלֶתוּ בִּפִּי׃

ג בִּיהוָה תִּתְהַלֵּל נַפְשִׁי
יִשְׁמְעוּ עֲנֻנִים וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ׃

ד גִּדְּלוּ לַיהוָה אֹתִי
וְנִרְוַמָּה שְׁמוֹ יַחְדָּו׃

ה דִּרְשָׁתִי אֶת־יְהוָה וְעֲנֵנִי
וּמִכָּל־מְגֻרֹתַי הַצִּילֵנִי׃

PSALM 34

¹ *Of David,*
when he feigned madness before Abimelech,
and he drove him away and he went.

ALEF

² I will bless Yahweh at all times,
his praise continually on my lips.

BET

³ I will praise Yahweh from my heart;
let the humble hear and rejoice.

GIMEL

⁴ Proclaim with me the greatness of Yahweh;
let us acclaim his name together.

DALET

⁵ I seek Yahweh and he answers me,
frees me from all my fears.

PSALM 34

- ¹ This is an acrostic Wisdom Psalm, cf. Pr 31:10 (though the sequence of strophes is upset): a thanksgiving (1–10) and an instruction in the style of Proverbs on the fates of the upright and the wicked (11–22). Most English translations do not include the title as a separate verse (here following the MT); thus, verse numbers therein are accordingly decremented.
- ² The literal translation of ‘on my lips’ is ‘in my mouth’.
- ³ The 2 prefixed verbal forms in this verse are best taken as jussives, for the psalmist is calling his audience to worship (see v. 4).
- ⁴ Alternative readings for ‘acclaim’ (here following the NJB) are ‘praise’ (NETB) and ‘exalt’ (NRSV).
- ⁵ NETB has ‘the Lord’s help’ in place of ‘Yahweh’, here following the MT.

הִבִּיטוּ אֵלָיו וְנִהְרֹוּ
 וּפְנֵיהֶם אֲלֵי־חִפְרוּ:
 זֶה עָנִי קָרָא וַיְהִי הָשָׁמַע
 וּמִכָּל־צָרוֹתָיו הוֹשִׁיעֹו:
 חָנָה מִלֹּאֲדֵי־יְהוָה סָבִיב לִירְאָיו
 וַיַּחֲלֹצֵם:
 טַעֲמֻ וּרְאוּ כִי־טוֹב יְהוָה
 אֲשֶׁר־יִחְסֶה־בּוֹ:
 יִרְאוּ אֶת־יְהוָה קְדָשָׁיו
 כִּי־אֵין מַחְסוֹר לִירְאָיו:
 יֹא כַּפִּירִים רָשׁוּ וְרָעִבוּ
 וְדֹרְשֵׁי יְהוָה לֹא־יִחְסְרוּ כָל־טוֹב:

HE

6 Fix your gaze on Yahweh and your face will grow bright,
you will never hang your head in shame.

ZAYIN

7 This poor soul calls out and Yahweh hears,
saves him from all his troubles.

HET

8 The angel of Yahweh camps round those who fear him,
and rescues them.

TET

9 Taste and see that Yahweh is good.
How blessed are those who take shelter in him.

YOD

10 Fear Yahweh, you his holy ones:
those who fear him lack for nothing.

KAF

11 Young lions may go needy and hungry,
but those who seek Yahweh lack nothing good.

-
- 6 'Your head' follows the LXX and Peshitta; the MT has 'their faces' (it is possible that the verbal construction in the 2nd line is rhetorical, expressing the conviction that the action in view cannot or should not happen).
- 7 In place of 'this poor soul', here following the NRSV & MT, the NJB has 'a pauper'.
- 8 The prefixed verb with *vav* (ו) consecutive in the 2nd line carries the same generalizing force as the active participle in the 1st line.
- 9 'Taking shelter' in God is an idiom for seeking his protection, which presupposes and even demonstrates the subject's loyalty.
- 10 Another possible reading for 'his holy ones' is 'his chosen people' (as NETB).
- 11 Wild animals often denote the wicked, 3:7, 22:21, Job 4:9-10, Ezk 38:13, Zc 11:3. The LXX interprets by translating 'young lions' as 'the rich'.

יב לְכוּ־בָנִים שְׁמְעוּ־לִי
יִרְאֵת יְהוָה אֶל־מִדְּכֶם:

יג מִי־הָאִישׁ הַחֲפֹץ חַיִּים
אֲהַב יָמִים לְרִאזוֹת טוֹב:

יד נֹצֵר לְשׁוֹנֶךָ מֵרַע
וְשֹׁפֵתֶיךָ מִדְּבַר מְרִמָּה:

טו סוּר מֵרַע וַעֲשֵׂה־טוֹב
בִּקֵּשׁ שָׁלוֹם וְרִדְפֵהוּ:

טז עֵינֵי יְהוָה אֶל־צַדִּיקִים
וְאָזְנוֹ אֶל־שׁוֹעֲתָם:

יז פְּנֵי יְהוָה בַּעֲשֵׂי רַע
לְהַכְרִית מֵאֶרֶץ זָכָרָם:

LAMED

12 Come, my children, listen to me,
I will teach you the fear of Yahweh.

MEM

13 Who among you delights in life,
longs for time to enjoy prosperity?

NUN

14 Guard your tongue from evil,
your lips from speaking deception.

SAMEKH

15 Depart from evil and do what is right;
seek peace and pursue it.

AYIN

16 The eyes of Yahweh are on the upright,
his ear turned to their cry.

PE

17 Yahweh's face is set against those who do evil,
to cut off the memory of them from the earth.

12 In vv. 14–15, the psalmist explains to his audience what it means to ‘fear’ Yahweh.

13 The rhetorical questions are used to grab the audience’s attention; ‘life’ probably refers here to quality of life, not just physical existence or even duration of life.

14 The NJB ends this verse with, “from any breath of deceit.”

15 The literal translation of ‘what is right’ is ‘good’. In place of ‘depart from’, here following the NRSV, both the NJB and NETB have ‘turn away from’.

16 Literally translated, this verse reads, “the eyes of Yahweh (are) toward the godly, and his ears (are) toward their cry for help.”

17 The NRSV has ‘remembrance’ in place of ‘memory’, here following the NJB.

יח צַעֲקוּ וַיְהוֹה שָׁמַע
וּמִכָּל-צָרוֹתֵם הִצִּילָם:

יט קָרוֹב יְהוֹה לְנֹשֶׁבְרֵי-לֵב
וְאֶת-דֹּכְאֵי-רוּחַ יוֹשִׁיעַ:

כ רַבּוֹת רָעוֹת צַדִּיק
וּמִכָּלם יִצְלָנוּ יְהוֹה:

כא שָׁמַר כָּל-עַצְמוֹתָיו
אֶחָת מֵהֵנָּה לֹא נִשְׁבְּרָה:

כב תָּמוּת רָשָׁע רָעָה
וְשֹׂנְאֵי צַדִּיק יִאָּשְׁמוּ:

כג פֹּדֶה יְהוֹה נַפְשׁ עֲבָדָיו
וְלֹא יִאָּשְׁמוּ כָל-הַחֹסִים בּוֹ:

TSADI

18 They cry in anguish and Yahweh hears,
and rescues them from all their troubles.

QOF

19 Yahweh is near to the broken-hearted;
he saves the crushed in spirit.

RESH

20 Many are the afflictions of the righteous,
but Yahweh rescues them from them all.

SHIN

21 Yahweh takes care of all their bones,
not one of them will be broken.

TAV

22 Evil brings death to the wicked;
those who hate the upright will pay the penalty.

23 Yahweh ransoms the lives of those who serve him,
and none who take shelter in him are condemned.

18 The 3 perfect verbal forms in this verse are taken in a generalising sense and translated with the present tense.

19 The imperfect verbal form of 'saves' highlights the generalising statement and draws attention to the fact that Yahweh typically delivers the oppressed and needy.

20 Other readings for 'afflictions' (as NRSV) are 'trials' and 'dangers'.

21 The Gospel of John sees a fulfilment of these words in Jesus' experience on the cross (Jn 19:31-37); the Roman soldiers, when they saw that Jesus was already dead, did not break his legs as was often done to hasten death.

22 The singular term, 'wicked', is representative of all wicked people.

23 Those who 'take shelter' in God are contrasted with the wicked and equated with those who love, fear, and serve him (2:12, 5:11-12, 31:19).

תהילים פרק לה

א לְדָוִד |
רִיבָה יְהוָה אֶת־יָרִיבִי
לָחֶם אֶת־לַחֲמִי:
ב הַחֶזֶק מִגֶּן וְצַנָּה
וְקוֹמָה בְּעֶזְרָתִי:
ג וְהִרְק חֲנִית וְסֶגֶר לִקְרֹאת רִדְפִי
אֲמַר לִנְפְשִׁי יִשְׁעֲתָךְ אֲנִי:
ד יִבְשׁוּ וַיִּכְלְמוּ מִבְּקֶשִׁי נַפְשִׁי
יִסְגּוּ אַחֲזֹר וַיִּחְפְּרוּ
חֲשָׁבִי רַעְתִּי:
ה יִהְיוּ כַּמָּץ לִפְנֵי־רוּחַ
וּמִלֵּאךְ יְהוָה דּוֹחָה:
ו יִהְיֶה־דֶרֶךְם חֹשֶׁךְ וַחֲלָקֻלָּקֶת
וּמִלֵּאךְ יְהוָה רִדְפָם:
ז כִּי־חֲנָם טִמְנוּ־לִי שַׁחַת רְשָׁתָם
חֲנָם חָפְרוּ לִנְפְשִׁי:

PSALM 35

- ¹ *Of David.*
Contend, Yahweh, with those who contend with me;
fight against those who fight against me!
- ² Grasp your buckler and shield,
up, and help me.
- ³ Brandish spear and pike to confront my pursuers,
give me the assurance, "I am your Saviour."
- ⁴ Let shame and dishonour come to those who seek my life!
Defeat and repulse in dismay
to those who plot my downfall.
- ⁵ Let them be like chaff before the wind,
with the angel of Yahweh to chase them.
- ⁶ Let their way be dark and slippery,
with the angel of Yahweh to hound them.
- ⁷ For, unprovoked, they laid their snare for me;
without cause, they dug a trap to kill me.

PSALM 35

- ¹ For this verse, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "Accuse my accusers, Yahweh; attack my attackers."
- ² For this verse, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "Take hold of shield and buckler, and rise up to help me!"
- ³ 'Pike' is conjectural (the NRSV has 'javelin'), following 11QPs^a; the MT has 'halt' (וְסֶגֶר), a word found only here).
- ⁴ The 4 prefixed verbal forms in this verse are understood as jussives: the psalmist is calling judgment down on his enemies.
- ⁵ The prefixed verbal form in the 1st line is taken as jussive (as also in v. 6).
- ⁶ The jussive verbs in vv. 4–6 indicate that this is a prayer.
- ⁷ This verse has been corrected following the *Peshitta*; the MT is corrupt.

ח תְּבוֹאָהּ שׁוֹאָה לֹא־יָדַע
וְרִשְׁתּוּ אֲשֶׁר־טָמַן תִּלְכְּדוּ
בְּשׁוֹאָה יִפֹּל־בָּהּ:
ט וְנִפְשִׁי תִגִּיל בִּיהוָה
תִּשְׂיֵשׁ בִּישׁוּעָתוֹ:
י כָּל־עַצְמוֹתַי | תֹּאמַרְנָה
יְהוָה מִי כָמוֹךָ
מִצִּיל עָנִי מִחֶזֶק מִמָּנֹו
וְעָנִי וְאַבְיוֹן מִגְזָלוֹ:
יא יְקוֹמוּן עַדִי חֲמָס
אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָדַעְתִּי יִשְׁאַלוּנִי:
יב יִשְׁלֹמוּנִי רָעָה תַּחַת טוֹבָה
שָׂכּוּל לְנַפְשִׁי:
יג וְאַנִּי | בַּחֲלוּתָם לְבוּשִׁי שָׂק
עָנִיתִי בַצּוֹם נַפְשִׁי
וְתִפְלַתִּי עַל־חִיקִי תָשׁוּב:

- 8 Ruin comes upon them unawares;
the snare they have laid will catch them,
and into their own trap, they will fall.
- 9 Then I shall delight in Yahweh,
rejoice that he has saved me.
- 10 My very bones will all exclaim,
Yahweh, who can compare with you
in rescuing the poor from the oppressor,
the poor and needy from the exploiter?
- 11 False witnesses come forward against me
asking me questions I cannot answer.
- 12 They repay me evil for good;
my soul is forlorn.
- 13 But I, when they were ill, had worn sackcloth,
and mortified myself with fasting,
praying ever anew in my heart.

8 'Into their own trap' follows the Peshitta; the MT has 'in the ruin' (dittography from the preceding lines).

9 Literally translated, this verse reads, "Then my soul will rejoice in Yahweh and be happy in his deliverance."

10 The NJB omits the 2nd instance of 'the poor and'; the NRSV has 'weak' instead of 'poor' (twice).

11 The literal translation of the 1st line is, "Witnesses of violence rise up." The Maqaf in כָּל־עַצְמוֹתַי does not appear in either the Aleppo or Leningrad Codices but is included in the MAM text in grey (as here).

12 Literally translated, this verse (here following the NRSV) reads, "They repay me evil instead of good; (there is) bereavement to my soul." The NJB reads, "They cross-examine me, repay my kindness with cruelty, and make my life barren."

13 For the 3rd line, the NRSV has, "I prayed with head bowed down on my bosom." The literal translation is "and my prayer upon my chest will return."

יד כָּרַע-כָּאֵחַ לִי הִתְהַלַּכְתִּי
 כַּאֲבִל-אִם קָדַר שְׁחוֹתִי:
 טו וּבְצִלְעֵי שְׂמֹחוּ וְנֹאסְפוּ
 נֹאסְפוּ עָלַי גִּבִּים וְלֹא יָדַעְתִּי
 קָרְעוּ וְלֹא-דָמוּ:
 טז בַּחֲנָפִי לַעֲגִי מַעֲוֹג חָרָק עָלַי שְׂנִימוּ:
 ז אֲדַנִּי כַּמָּה תִּרְאֶה
 הַשִּׁיבָה נַפְשִׁי מִשְׂאִיהֶם
 מִכַּפְּיָרִים יְחִידָתִי:
 יח אֲוֹדֶה בְּקֹהֶל רַב
 בְּעַם עֲצוֹם אֶהְלֹךְ:
 ט אֶל-יִשְׁמַחוּ-לִי אִיבֵי שֶׁקֶר
 שְׂנְאֵי חֲנָם יִקְרְצוּ-עֵינִי:
 כ כִּי לֹא שְׁלוֹם יִדְבְּרוּ
 וְעַל רִגְעֵי-אָרֶץ
 דְּבָרֵי מְרֻמוֹת יַחֲשִׁבוּן:

14 As if for a friend or brother, I wandered restless;
 as if mourning a mother, so bowed had I been in sorrow.
 15 When I stumble, I gather in glee, gather around me;
 strangers I never even knew
 tear me apart incessantly.
 16 If I fall, they surround me, grinding their teeth at me.
 17 How much longer, Lord, will you look on?
 Rescue me from their onslaughts,
 my life from the young lions.
 18 I will give you thanks in the great assembly;
 praise you where the people gather.
 19 Let not my lying enemies gloat over me,
 those who hate me without cause look askance at me.
 20 They have no greeting of peace
 to the peace-loving people of the land;
 they think up deceptive speeches.

14 Bowing down was a posture for mourning (see 38:6).

15 'Strangers' is conjectural (נִכְרִים); the MT has 'smitten ones' (גִּבִּים); the NRSV has 'ruffians'. As in some other laments, it is not clear whether the psalmist's principal trouble arises from enemies or from a sickness of which they take advantage.

16 The 1st line assumes correction of the arrangement of vowels and division of words (the NRSV has, "They impiously mocked more and more."); the LXX has, "Riddling me with jibe after jibe." The uncorrected MT would translate, "Like the most profane of mockers of a cake."

17 The literal translation of 'my life' is 'my only one'; the psalmist may mean that his life is precious, or that he feels isolated and alone (see 22:20).

18 The meaning of the 2nd line is unclear (the NRSV has 'ravages' in place of 'onslaughts').

19 NETB translates 'lying' (שֶׁקֶר) as an adverb, reading, 'those who are my enemies for no reason'.

20 The imperfect verbal forms highlight the characteristic behaviour of the psalmist's enemies.

כֹּא וִירְחִיבוּ עָלַי פִּיהֶם
 אָמְרוּ הָאֵח | הָאֵח רֹאֲתָה עֵינֵינוּ:
 כֵּב רֹאֲיָתָה יְהוָה אֶל־תִּתְחַרֵּשׁ
 אֲדֹנָי אֶל־תִּרְחַק מִמֶּנִּי:
 כֶּג הִעִירָה וְהִקִּיצָה לְמִשְׁפָּטִי
 אֱלֹהֵי וְאֲדֹנָי לְרִיבִי:
 כֹּד שְׁפֹטֵנִי בְצֶדֶקְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי
 וְאֶל־יִשְׁמְחוּ־לִי:
 כֶּה אֶל־יֹאמְרוּ בִלְבָבָם הָאֵח נִפְשָׁנוּ
 אֶל־יֹאמְרוּ בִלְעֲנוּהוּ:
 כֹּו יִבְשׁוּ וַיִּחְפְּרוּ | יִחְדּוּ שְׂמִחִי רָעָתִי
 יִלְבָּשׁוּ־בִשְׁת וּכְלָמָה
 הַמְּגִדִּילִים עָלַי:
 כֹּו יִרְנוּ וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ חֲפָצֵי צֶדֶקִי
 וַיֹּאמְרוּ תָמִיד יִגְדֵּל יְהוָה
 הַחֲפֹץ שְׁלוֹם עַבְדּוֹ:

- 21 Their mouths wide open to accuse me,
 they say, "Come on now, our eyes see."
 22 You see it, Yahweh, do not stay silent;
 Lord, do not stand aloof from me.
 23 Up, awake, to my defence,
 my God and my Lord, to my cause.
 24 Vindicate me by your justice, Yahweh my God,
 and do not let them gloat over me.
 25 Do not let them think, "We have our heart's desire,"
 nor, "Now we have swallowed him up."
 26 Shame and dismay on all who gloat over my misfortunes.
 Let all who profit at my expense
 be covered with shame and disgrace.
 27 Let all who favour my uprightness shout in joy and be glad;
 let them constantly say, "Great is Yahweh,
 who delights to see his servant in peace."

21 They falsely accuse the psalmist of some crime.

22 Note the play on words: in v. 21, the enemies say 'our eyes see' but the psalmist, knowing that God sees as well, appeals to him (cf. v. 17).

23 Though he is confident that God is aware of his situation (v. 22), the psalmist compares God's inactivity to sleep and urges him to wake up.

24 A more literal translation of 'gloat' is 'rejoice'.

25 The 'desire' of the psalmist's enemy is to triumph over him.

26 The prefixed verbal forms in this verse are understood as jussives (see vv. 24^b–25, where the negative particle **אַל** appears before the prefixed verbal forms, indicating they are jussives): the psalmist is calling down judgment on his enemies.

27 Literally translated, the last line reads, "the one who desires the peace of his servant."

כח וְלִשׁוֹנִי תְהַגֵּה צִדִּיק
כָּל-הַיּוֹם תְּהַלֵּלָךְ:

²⁸ Then my tongue shall recount your saving justice,
all day long (sing) your praises.

²⁸ The verb 'sing' is understood by ellipsis in the 2nd line (see the 1st line).

תהילים פרק לו

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ | לְעַבְד־יְהוָה לְדָוִד:
ב נֶאֱסַפְשַׁע לְרָשָׁע בְּקֶרֶב לִבִּי
ג אֵין־פֶּחַד אֱלֹהִים לִנְגִד עֵינָיו:
ד כִּי־הִחְלִיק אֱלֹוֹ בְּעֵינָיו
ה לְמַצָּא עֲוֹנוֹ לְשֹׂנְאֵ:
ו דְּבַר־יִפְיוֹ אֶזֶן וּמִרְמָה
ז חָדַל לְהַשְׁכִּיל לְהִיטִיב:
ח אֶזֶן | יַחֲשֹׁב עַל־מִשְׁכָּבוֹ
ט יִתְיַצֵּב עַל־דֶּרֶךְ לֹא־טוֹב רָע לֹא יִמָּאָס:
י יְהוָה בִּהְשָׁמִים חֲסִדֶּךָ
יא אֲמוֹנָתְךָ עַד־שְׁחָקִים:
יב צְדָקָתְךָ | כְּהַרְרֵי־אֵל
יג מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ תְּהוֹם רַבָּה

PSALM 36

- ¹ *To the leader. Of David, the servant of Yahweh.*
- ² Sin is the oracle of the wicked in the depths of his heart.
There is no fear of God before his eyes.
- ³ He sees himself with too flattering an eye
to detect and detest his guilt.
- ⁴ All he says is malicious and deceitful;
he has turned his back on wisdom.
- ⁵ To get his way, he hatches malicious plots even in his bed;
once set on a wicked course, no evil is too much for him.
- ⁶ Yahweh, your faithful love is in the heavens,
your constancy reaches to the clouds.
- ⁷ Your saving justice is like towering mountains,
your judgement like the great deep.

PSALM 36

- ¹ Most English translations do not include a verse number for this title; here, we follow the *MT*, and subsequent verse numbers are incremented. The *Paseq* is presented as grey text, just as it appears in the *MAM* text.
- ² The 3 parts of this Psalm, vv. 2-5 (in the type of a wisdom psalm), 6-10 (a hymn) and 11-13 (a prayer in the style of a lament), may have existed separately. The voice of sin, here personified, takes the place of the word of God.
- ³ The text of the 2nd line is uncertain (literally translated, the verse reads, "For it causes to be smooth to him in his eyes to find his sin to hate."); the *NRSV* has, "that their iniquity cannot be found out and hated."
- ⁴ The *Hiphil* forms are exhibitivite, indicating the outward expression of an inner attitude.
- ⁵ The 3 imperfect verbal forms in this verse highlight the characteristic behaviour of the typical evildoer.
- ⁶ God's 'faithful love' is almost limitless: loyal and faithful to his creation, he blesses mankind and the animal kingdom with life and sustenance.
- ⁷ The literal translation for 'towering mountains' is 'mountains of God'.

אָדָם וּבְהֵמָה תוֹשִׁיעַ יְהוָה:
ח מִה־יִּקָּר חֶסֶדְךָ אֱלֹהִים
וּבְנֵי אָדָם
בְּצֵל כְּנָפֶיךָ יַחְסִיוֹן:
ט יְרוּיֹן מִדְּשֵׁן בֵּיתְךָ
וְנָחַל עֲדֻנֶּיךָ תִּשְׁקֶם:
י כִּי־עֲמָךְ מְקוֹר חַיִּים
בְּאוֹרְךָ נִרְאָה־אוֹר:
יא מִשְׁךָ חֶסֶדְךָ לִידְעֶיךָ
וְצִדְקַתְךָ לְיִשְׁרֵי־לֵב:
יב אֲל־תִּבּוֹאֲנִי רֶגֶל גִּאֲוָה
וְיִדְרֹשׁ עֲלַי אֲל־תִּנְדָּנִי:
יג שֵׁם נָפְלוּ פְעֻלֵי אֹן
דָּחוּ וְלֹא־יָכְלוּ קוּם:

You support both man and beast, Yahweh.
8 How precious is your faithful love, O God.
All people take refuge
in the shadow of your wings.
9 They feast on the bounty of your house,
and you let them drink from you delicious streams.
10 In you is the source of life;
by your light, we see the light.
11 Maintain your faithful love to those who acknowledge you,
and your saving justice to the pure of heart.
12 Do not let the foot of the arrogant overtake me
or wicked hands drive me away.
13 There they have fallen, the evildoers,
flung down, never to rise again.

8 The literal translation of 'all people' is 'sons of Adam'.

9 This verse makes it clear that the preservation of physical life is in view in the 2nd line of v. 8.

10 'Life' means prosperity, peace and happiness, cf. 133:3; the 'fountain of life' in Proverbs is wisdom, Pr 13:14, 16:22, 18:4, and the fear of God, 14:27. This passage is applied to Christ, the light and life of all the people.

11 The verb translated 'acknowledge' (יָדַע, literally, 'know') is used here of those who know Yahweh in the sense that they recognise his royal authority and obey his will (see Jr 22:16). The 'heart' is here viewed as the seat of one's moral character and motives; the 'pure of heart' are God's faithful followers who trust in him and love him and, as a result, experience his deliverance (see 7:10, 11:2, 32:11, 64:10, 94:15, 97:11).

12 Literally translated, this verse reads, "Let not a foot of pride come to me and let not the hand of the evil ones cause me to wander as a fugitive."

13 The psalmist uses perfect verbal forms in this verse to describe the demise of the wicked as if it has already taken place.

תהילים פרק לז

א לְדָוִד |

אֶל־תִּתְחַר בַּמֶּרְעִים
אֶל־תִּקְנָא בְעֲשֵׂי עוֹלָה:
כּ כִּי בַחֲצִיר מְהֵרָה יִמְלֹ
וּבִירָק דָּשָׁא יִבּוֹלֹן:

ג בִּטַּח בִּיהוָה וַעֲשֵׂה־טוֹב
שְׁכֹן־אַרֶץ וְרַעַה אֲמוֹנָה:
ד וְהִתְעַנֵּג עַל־יְהוָה
וַיִּתֵּן־לָךְ מִשְׁאֵלֶת לִבְךָ:

ה גּוֹל עַל־יְהוָה דְּרָכְךָ
וּבִטַּח עָלָיו וְהוּא יַעֲשֶׂה:

PSALM 37

¹ *Of David:*

ALEF

Do not get heated about the wicked
or envy those who do wrong.

² Quick as the grass they wither,
fading like the plants of the fields.

BET

³ Put your trust in Yahweh and do right,
make your home in the land and maintain security.

⁴ Make Yahweh your joy
and he will give you your heart's desires.

GIMEL

⁵ Commit your destiny to Yahweh,
be confident in him, and he will act.

PSALM 37

- ¹ The verb form of 'get heated' is singular (see vv. 3-10 as well, where the second person verbs and pronouns are also singular). The psalmist's exhortation has a wisdom flavour to it; it is personalised for each member of his audience.
- ² The literal translation of 'plants' is 'green vegetation'.
- ³ The 'land' is the Holy Land (see 25:13, Dt 16:20). The literal translation of 'live secure' is 'feed securely' (the NRSV has 'enjoy security'), see Is 14:30. The verb רַעַה ('maintain') is probably used here in the sense of 'watch over', or 'guard'; the noun אֲמוֹנָה ('security') is understood as the direct object of the verb, though it could be taken as an adverbial accusative, '(live) securely' (as NJB), if the audience is likened to a flock of sheep.
- ⁴ Following the imperatives of v. 3 the prefixed verbal forms with *vav* here indicate result: faith and obedience will bring divine blessing.
- ⁵ The literal translation of the 1st line is "roll your way upon Yahweh." V. 6 explains the 2nd line: Yahweh will vindicate those who trust in him.

וְהוֹצִיא כְּאוֹר צְדָקָה
וּמִשְׁפָּט כְּצַהֲרִים:

דָּוָם | לִיהוָה וְהִתְחוֹלֵל לוֹ
אֶל־תִּתְּחַר בְּמַצְלִיחַ דְּרָכּוֹ
בְּאִישׁ עֹשֶׂה מְזֻמוֹת:

הֲרַף מֵאַף וּעֲזֹב חֲמָה
אֶל־תִּתְּחַר אֶדְ-לִהֲרֶע:
כִּי־מִרְעִים יִפְרֹתוֹן
וְקוֹנֵי יְהוָה הֵמָּה יִירְשׁוּ־אֶרֶץ:

וְעוֹד מְעַט וְאֵין רָשָׁע
וְהִתְבּוֹנֵנָת עַל־מְקוֹמוֹ וְאֵינְנוּ:
וְעֲנֻיִם יִירְשׁוּ־אֶרֶץ
וְהִתְעַנְּגוּ עַל־רֵב שְׁלוֹם:

6 He will make your uprightness clear as daylight,
and the justice of your cause as the noon.

DALET

7 Stay quiet before Yahweh, wait longingly for him;
do not fret over those who prosper,
succeeding by devious means.

HE

8 Refrain from anger, leave rage aside,
do not get heated – it leads only to evil.
9 For evildoers will be cut off,
but those who hope in Yahweh shall inherit the land.

VAV

10 A little while and the wicked will be no more;
though you seek well in his place, he is not there.
11 But the poor will have the land for their own,
to enjoy untroubled peace.

6 The literal translation of this verse is, “And he will bring out like light your vindication, and your just cause like noonday.”

7 ‘Wait longingly’ is a conjectural translation (וְתוֹחֵל); the MT has וְהִתְחוֹלֵל (Hitpael of תִּיל – ‘writhe’, ‘suffer’) but this idea fits awkwardly here; it appears that it is the product of dittography: 1 the initial וּ is accidentally repeated from the preceding word and 2 the final ל is accidentally repeated (and note the initial ל on the following word).

8 In place of ‘it leads only to evil’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘it can do no good’.

9 The conjunction כִּי (‘for’) relates to the exhortations of v. 8; there is no reason to be frustrated, for evildoers will be punished in due course.

10 Here is the heart of the argument: Be patient! Retribution will come soon, even though it is not evident now (compare vv. 35–36).

11 Compare the 1st line with the words of Jesus in Mt 5:5.

יב זִמְם רָשָׁע לְצַדִּיק
וַחֲרָק עָלָיו שִׁנָּיו:
יג אֲדַנִּי יִשְׁחַק-לוֹ
כִּי-רָאָה כִּי-יָבֵא יוֹמוֹ:

יד חָרַב | פָּתַח חֶרֶב רָשָׁעִים וְדָרְכוֹ קָשָׁתָם
לְהַפִּיל עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן
לְטַבּוֹחַ יִשְׂרָאֵל:
טו חָרַבָם תִּבּוֹא בְלִבָּם
וְקִשְׁתוֹתָם תִּשְׁבַּרְנָה:

טז טוֹב-מֶעַט לְצַדִּיק
מִהֶמּוֹן רָשָׁעִים רַבִּים:
יז כִּי זְרוּעוֹת רָשָׁעִים תִּשְׁבַּרְנָה
וְסוּמָךְ צַדִּיקִים יִהְיֶה:

ZAYIN

- 12 The wicked plots against the upright
and gnashes his teeth at him.
13 But Yahweh only laughs at his efforts,
knowing that his end is in sight.

HET

- 14 The wicked draws his sword and bends his bow
to bring down the needy
and slaughter the honest.
15 But his sword will enter his own heart
and his bow will be shattered.

TET

- 16 What little the upright possesses
outweighs the wealth of the many wicked.
17 For the weapons of the wicked shall be shattered,
while Yahweh supports the upright.

- 12 The singular ‘upright’ is used here in a representative sense: the typical evildoer and the typical godly individual are in view.
13 The laughter is derisive (see 2:4); the imperfect verbal form describes the action from the perspective of an eyewitness who is watching the divine response as it unfolds before his eyes.
14 The literal translation of “bring down” is “cause to fall”. The NJB inverts the order of the 3rd and 4th lines; here, we follow the MT (and NRSV).
15 In place of ‘enter’ (following the MT & NRSV), the NJB has ‘pierce’.
16 The 2nd line follows the NRSV (and MT); the NJB has ‘outweighs all the wealth of the wicked’.
17 The active participle form (‘supports’) here indicates something that is actively true.

יח יֹדַע יְהוָה יָמֵי תַּמִּימָם
וְנַחֲלָתָם לְעוֹלָם תִּהְיֶה:
יט לֹא יִבְשׁוּ בְּעַת רָעָה
וּבְיָמֵי רָעָבֹן יִשְׁבְּעוּ:

כ כִּי רָשָׁעִים יֵאָבְדוּ
וְאֵיבֵי יְהוָה כִּי־קָר כָּרִים
כָּלוּ בְּעֶשֶׁן כָּלוּ:

כא לֹוֶה רָשָׁע וְלֹא יִשְׁלַם
וְצַדִּיק חֹנֵן וְנוֹתֵן:
כב כִּי מְבָרְכֵוּ יִרְשׁוּ אֶרֶץ
וּמְקַלְלֵיו יִכָּרְתוּ:

YOD

- 18 Yahweh knows the lives of the just;
their birth-right will endure forever.
19 They will not be put to shame when bad times come;
in time of famine, they will have plenty.

KAF

- 20 The wicked, enemies of Yahweh, will be die,
they will vanish like the burning of an oven,
they will vanish in smoke.

LAMED

- 21 The wicked borrows and will not repay,
but the upright is generous in giving.
22 Those he blesses will have the land for their own,
and those he curses be annihilated.

18 Yahweh 'knows' them in that he is intimately aware of and involved in their daily struggles; he meets their needs and sustains them.

19 The NRSV has 'abundance' in place of 'plenty'.

20 'Like the burning of an oven' follows 4Q^p (כִּי־קָר כֹּרִים); the meaning of the MT (כִּי־קָר כָּרִים) – 'like what is precious among the pastures/rams'. If we read 'pastures', then 'what is precious' refers to flowers that blossom but quickly disappear (v. 2); or, if we read 'rams', then 'what is precious' might refer to the choicest portions. The next line, which pictures Yahweh's enemies being consumed in smoke, supports this reading, which assumes confusion of the letters ר (Resh) and ד (Dalet) at the end of the first word in the sequence.

21 The singular forms are used in a representative sense; the typical evildoer and godly individual are in view. The three active participles and one imperfect ('repay') draw attention to the characteristic behaviour of the two types.

22 The LXX has, "For those who bless him ..." (ὅτι οἱ εὐλογοῦντες αὐτὸν ...) and "but those who curse him ..." (οἱ δὲ καταρώμενοι αὐτὸν ...).

כג מִיְהוָה מַצְעֲדֵי־גִבּוֹר כּוֹנְנֻ
וְדַרְכּוֹ יִחַפֵּץ:
כד כִּי־יִפֹּל לֹא־יֹטֵל
כִּי־יִהְיֶה סוּמָךְ יָדוֹ:

כה גֵּר | הָיִיתִי גַם־זָקֵנָתִי
וְלֹא־רָאִיתִי צַדִּיק נֶעְזֵב
וְזָרְעוֹ מִבֶּקֶשׁ־לֶחֶם:
כו כָּל־הַיּוֹם חוֹנֵן וּמְלוֹה
וְזָרְעוֹ לִבְרָכָה:

כז סוּר מִרָע וַעֲשֵׂה־טוֹב
וּשְׁכֵן לְעוֹלָם:
כח כִּי יִהְיֶה | אֱהָב מִשְׁפָּט
וְלֹא־יַעֲזֹב אֶת־חֲסִידָיו

MEM

23 A man's steps are made firm by Yahweh;
and takes pleasure in him.

24 When he trips, he does not fall headlong,
since Yahweh supports him by the hand.

NUN

25 Now I am old, but ever since my youth,
I never saw an upright person abandoned,
or the children of the upright forced to search for bread.

26 The upright is always compassionate, always lending,
so his descendants reap a blessing.

SAMEKH

27 Turn your back on evil and do what is right;
you will have a home forever.

28 For, Yahweh loves justice,
and will not forsake his faithful.

23 The second line qualifies the first: the man whose behaviour is commendable in God's sight is the one whose ways are established by God. Alternatively, the second line could refer to the man delighting in God's 'way', namely the lifestyle which he prescribes for men, when one might read, "Yahweh grants success to the one who desires to obey his commands."

24 Other translation options for כִּי ('when', following the NJB & NASB) in the first line are 'though' (NRSV, NEB, NIV) and 'even if' (NETB).

25 The expression 'search for bread' also appears in Lm 1:11, where Jerusalem's refugees are forced to search for food and to trade their valuable possessions for something to eat.

26 The active participles here describe characteristic behaviour.

27 The literal translation of 'what is right' is 'good'; the imperatives are singular (see #1).

28 The LXX (and NJB) includes the last two lines in v. 29.

לְעוֹלָם נִשְׁמְרוּ
וְזֶרַע רָשָׁעִים נִכְרֶת:

כט צְדִיקִים יִירְשׁוּ־אֶרֶץ
וַיִּשְׁכְּנוּ לָעֶד עֲלֶיהָ:

ל פִּי־צְדִיק יִהְיֶה חֲכָמָה
וְלִשׁוֹנוֹ תִּדְבֵּר מִשְׁפָּט:
לא תוֹרַת אֱלֹהֵיו בִּלְבוֹ
לֹא תִמְעַד אֲשָׁרָיו:

לב צוּפֵה רָשָׁע לְצְדִיק
וּמִבֶּקֶשׁ לְהַמִּיתוֹ:
לג יְהוָה לֹא־יַעֲזֹבֵנוּ בְּיָדוֹ
וְלֹא יִרְשִׁיעֵנוּ בַּהֲשָׁפְטוֹ:

לד קִנּוּה אֶל־יְהוָה | וְשָׁמַר דְּרָכּוֹ
וַיְרוֹמֶמֶד לְרֵשֶׁת אֶרֶץ
בְּהִכְרַת רָשָׁעִים תִּרְאֶה:

Evildoers will perish eternally;
the descendants of the wicked will be annihilated.

AYIN

29 The upright shall have the land for their own;
there they shall live forever.

PE

30 Wisdom comes from the lips of the upright,
and his tongue speaks what is right.

31 The law of his God is in his heart,
his foot will never slip.

TSADI

32 The wicked keeps a close eye on the upright,
looking out for a chance to kill him.

33 Yahweh will never abandon him to his clutches,
nor let him be condemned if he is tried.

QOF

34 Put your hope in Yahweh, keep to his path,
he will raise you up to make the land your own;
you will look on while the wicked are annihilated.

29 Although the poetic structure is broken by this short verse, the acrostic format is preserved with the opening ע (Ain).

30 The singular is used here representatively: the typical godly man. The imperfect verbs highlight the characteristic behaviour of the godly.

31 The 'heart' is here the seat of one's thoughts and motives.

32 The singular forms are representative of the typical evildoer and godly individual. The active participles describe characteristic behaviour.

33 The pronoun 'him' refers to the 'upright' and 'his' to the 'wicked' of v. 32.

34 Patient waiting for Yahweh to act is the proper attitude, not querulous anxiety (compare v. 9, 38:15, 62:1,5, 130:5, Is 40:31).

לֵה רָאִיתִי רָשָׁע עָרִיץ
 וּמִתְעַרָּה כְּאַזְרַח רַעְנָן:
 לוּ וַיַּעֲבֹר וְהָיָה אֵינֶנּוּ
 וְאֶבְקֶשְׁהוּ וְלֹא נִמְצָא:
 לוּ שְׁמַרְתָּם וּרְאֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל
 כִּי־אַחֲרִית לְאִישׁ שָׁלוֹם:
 לוּ וּפְשָׁעִים נִשְׁמְדוּ יַחְדָּו
 אַחֲרִית רָשָׁעִים נִכְרְתָה:
 לט וַתִּשְׁוַעַת צְדִיקִים מִיְהוָה
 מְעוֹזָם בְּעֵת צָרָה:
 מ וַיַּעֲזֹרֵם יְהוָה וַיִּפְּלֹטֵם
 יִפְּלֹטֵם מִרְשָׁעִים וְיִוְשִׁיעֵם
 כִּי־חָסוּ בּוֹ:

RESH

- 35 I have seen the wicked exultant
and towering like a cedar of Lebanon.
36 When next I passed, he was gone,
I searched for him and he was nowhere to be found.

SHIN

- 37 Observe the innocent and consider the honest,
for the man of peace will not lack a future.
38 But the wicked will all be destroyed together,
and their future annihilated.

TAV

- 39 The upright have Yahweh for their Saviour,
their refuge in times of trouble.
40 Yahweh helps them and rescues them,
he will rescue them from the wicked,
and save them because they take refuge in him.

35 The 2nd line follows the LXX (καὶ ἐπαιρούμενον ὡς τὰς κέδρους τοῦ Λιβάνου); the MT is uncertain ('and being exposed like a native, luxuriant').

36 'I passed' follows the LXX (παρῆλθον) and Peshitta; the MT has 'he passed'.

37 Some interpret אַחֲרִית ('future' or 'end') as referring to offspring (NJB, NRSV, and see the next verse & 109:13); here, we follow the NETB.

38 Here, the psalmist pictures judgment sweeping the wicked away as a group. See #37 on the word 'future'.

39 For the first line, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "The salvation of the righteous is from the LORD."

40 The prefixed verbal forms with *vav* consecutive continue the generalising tone of the preceding verse.

תהילים פרק לח

א מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד לְהִזְכִּיר:
ב יְהוָה אֶל־בְּקַצְפֶּךָ תוֹכִיחֵנִי
וּבְחִמָּתְךָ תִּסְרֹנֵנִי:
ג כִּי־חֲצִיךָ נִחְתּוּ בִּי
וּתְנַחַת עָלַי יָדְךָ:
ד אִין־מָתָם בְּבִשְׂרֵי מִפְּנֵי זַעֲמֶךָ
אִין־שְׁלוֹם בְּעַצְמֵי מִפְּנֵי חַטָּאתִי:
ה כִּי עֲוֹנֹתַי עָבְרוּ רֹאשִׁי
כְּמִשָּׂא כְבֵד יִכְבְּדוּ מִמֶּנִּי:
ו הִבֵּאִישׁוּ נִמְקוּ חִבּוּרֹתַי
מִפְּנֵי אִוְלָתִי:
ז נַעֲוִיתִי שַׁחְתִּי עַד־מָאֵד
כָּל־הַיּוֹם קָדַר הִלַכְתִּי:

PSALM 38

- 1 *A Psalm of David, to cause to remember.*
- 2 Yahweh, do not correct me in anger,
do not discipline me in wrath.
- 3 For your arrows have pierced deep into me,
your hand has pressed down upon me.
- 4 Your indignation has left no part of me unscathed,
my sin has left no health in my bones.
- 5 My sins stand higher than my head;
they weigh on me as an unbearable weight.
- 6 I have stinking, festering wounds,
thanks to my folly.
- 7 I am twisted and bent double;
I spend my days in gloom.

PSALM 38

- 1 Most English translations do not include a verse number for this title; here, we follow the *MT*, and other verse numbers are incremented.
- 2 This Penitential Psalm is the complaint of a devout person who is sick and assumed to be sinful, see vv. 3–4, 5b, and 18. Some verses are reminiscent of Job and the poem of the suffering servant, Is 53.
- 3 ‘*Pressed down*’ follows the *Peshitta* and *Tg*; the *MT* has ‘*fallen*’.
- 4 The psalmist acknowledges that the disease must be a deserved punishment for having committed some sin, perhaps unwittingly (cf. v. 18).
- 5 The psalmist is overwhelmed by the weight of his sins.
- 6 The reference to ‘*wounds*’ may be an extension of the metaphorical language of v. 3: the psalmist pictures himself as one whose flesh is ripped and torn by arrows.
- 7 The precise meaning of the verb translated ‘*twisted*’ in this context is not entirely clear; the verb, which literally means ‘*to bend*’, may refer to the psalmist’s posture but, in Is 21:3 it seems to mean ‘*confused*’ or ‘*dazed*’.

ח	כִּי־כִסְלִי מִלֹּאֵן נִקְלָה וְאֵין מָתֶם בְּבִשְׂרִי:	8	My loins burn with fever, no part of me is unscathed.
ט	נִפְּוִגְוֹתַי וְנִדְבַּכְתִּי עַד־מָאֵד שְׁאֲגֹתַי מִנֶּהֱמַת לִבִּי:	9	Numbed and utterly crushed I groan in distress of heart.
י	אֲדַנִּי נִגְדָּךְ כָּל־תַּאֲוֹתַי וְאִנְחָתִי מִמֶּךָ לֹא־נִסְתָּרָה:	10	Lord, you know all my longing; my sighing is not hidden from you.
יא	לִבִּי סָחָרָחַר עֲזָבָנִי כְחִי וְאוֹר־עֵינַי גָּם־הֵם אֵין אִתִּי:	11	My heart is throbbing, my strength has failed, and the light of my eyes has gone from me.
יב	אֲהַבִּי וְרַעִי מִנִּגַּד נִגְעֵי יַעֲמָדוּ וְקִרְוֹבֵי מִרְחָק עֲמָדוּ:	12	Friends and companions shun my disease, even the dearest of them keep their distance.
יג	וַיִּנְקְשׁוּ מִבִּקְשֵׁי נַפְשִׁי וְדֹרְשֵׁי רַעְתִּי דִּבְרוּ הָוֹת וּמְרֻמוֹת כָּל־הַיּוֹם יִהְיוּ:	13	Those with designs on my life lay snares; those who wish me ill speak of violence and hatch treachery all day long.
יד	וְאֲנִי בַּחֲרֹשׁ לֹא אֶשְׁמַע וּכְאֵלֶם לֹא יִפְתַּח־פִּי:	14	But I hear nothing, as though I were deaf, as though dumb, saying not a word.

⁸ The 'loins' are viewed here as the seat of the psalmist's emotions. The present translation assumes that נִקְלָה is derived from קָלָה ('to roast'), whereas NETB derives it from קָלָה ('be dishonoured') and reads, "I am overcome with shame."

⁹ More literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "I roar because of the moaning of my heart."

¹⁰ The 1st line, literally translated, reads, "Lord, before you (is) all my desire."

¹¹ The 'light of my eyes' may refer to physical energy (see 1S 14:27, 29), life itself (Ps 13:3) or the ability to see (Pr 29:23).

¹² Former friends avoid the writer as one forsaken by God.

¹³ Enemies are circulating lies about the psalmist (compare vv. 19–20).

¹⁴ The psalmist is like a deaf mute; he is incapable of defending himself and is vulnerable to his enemies' deception (see v. 15).

טו	וְאֵהִי כְּאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר לֹא־שָׁמַע וְאֵין בְּפִיו תּוֹכַחֹת:	15	I am like the one who, hearing nothing, has no retort to make.
טז	כִּי־לַךְ יְהוָה הוֹחֲלֹתִי אֶתָּה תַעֲנֶה אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהִי:	16	For in you, Yahweh, I put my hope, you, Lord my God, will give answer.
יז	כִּי־אָמַרְתִּי פֶן־יִשְׁמַחוּ־לִי בְּמוֹט רַגְלִי עָלַי הִגְדִּילוּ:	17	I said, "Never let them gloat over me, do not let them take advantage of me if my foot slips."
יח	כִּי־אֲנִי לִצְלַע נָכוֹן וּמִכְאוֹבִי נִגְדִּי תָמִיד:	18	There is no escape from me from falling, no relief from my misery.
יט	כִּי־עוֹנִי אֶגִּיד אֲדַאֵג מִחַטָּאתִי:	19	Yes, I make no secret of my guilt, I am anxious at the thought of my sin.
כ	וְאִיבֵי חַיִּים עֲצָמוּ וְרַבּוֹ שֹׁנְאֵי שָׂקָר:	20	Those who oppose me without cause are mighty, and many are those who hate me unprovoked.
כא	וּמִשְׁלָמִי רָעָה תַּחַת טוֹבָה יִשְׁטַנּוּנִי תַּחַת רְדוּפֵי רִדְפֵי־טוֹב:	21	Those who repay me evil for good, slander me for trying to do them good.

15 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "and there is not in his mouth arguments."

16 For the opening preposition ('for'), here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'but' and NETB has 'yet'.

17 The psalmist recalls the motivating argument of his petition; he probably prefaced this statement with a prayer for deliverance (see 7:1–2, 13:3–4, 28:1).

18 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "and my pain (is) before me continually."

19 The translation assumes that the opening כִּי is assertive here.

20 'Without cause' follows 11QPs^a; the MT has 'living foes'.

21 Some LXX MSS and versions add, "They have rejected me, the loved one, like a hideous corpse," (cf. Is 14:19), an allusion to the crucified Christ; the Coptic version, still more explicitly, has, "They have nailed my flesh." The significance of the dropped *vav* from רְדוּפֵי (as *Kethib*) in the רִדְפֵי of the *Qere* is not clear.

כב אֶל־תֵּעֲזֹבֵנִי יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵי אֶל־תִּרְחַק מִמֶּנִּי:
כג חוֹשָׁה לַעֲזָרְתִּי
אֲדֹנָי תִּשׁוּעָתִי:

²² Yahweh, do not desert me,
my God, do not be far from me.

²³ Come quickly to my help,
Lord, my Saviour!

²² In place of '*be far*', here following the NRSV, the NJB has '*stand aloof*'.

²³ Compare 22:19.

תהילים פרק לט

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ לִידִיתוֹן לִידוֹתוֹן
מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד:

ב אֶמְרָתִי
אֲשֶׁמְרָה דְרָכַי מִחֲטֹאֵא בְלִשׁוֹנִי
אֲשֶׁמְרָה לִפִּי מִחֶסֶם
בְּעַד רָשָׁע לִנְגִדִי:

ג נֶאֱלַמְתִּי דוֹמִיָּה הַחֲשִׁיתִי מְטוֹב
וּכְאַבִּי נַעֲכָר:

ד חֶסֶל־לִבִּי בְקִרְבִּי
בְּהִגִּי תִבְעַר־אֵשׁ
דִּבְרָתִי בְלִשׁוֹנִי:

ה הוֹדִיעֵנִי יְהוָה | קֵצִי
וּמִדַּת יָמַי מִה־הִיא
אֲדַעֲהָ מִה־חֲדָל אָנִי:

PSALM 39

1 To the leader: to Jeduthun.
A Psalm of David.

2 I said,
"I will guard my ways so that I do not sin by my tongue.
I will keep a muzzle on my mouth
as long as any sinner is near."

3 I stayed dumb, silent, speechless, to no avail;
my distress grew worse.

4 My heart became hot within me,
but at the thought of this it flared up
and the words came bursting out:

5 "Let me know, Yahweh, my fate,
how much longer I have to live.
Show me just how frail I am.

PSALM 39

- 1 Most English translations do not include a verse number for this title; here, we follow the *MT*, and subsequent verse numbers are incremented. The different reading of the *Qere* and *Ketiv* here likely reflects a scribe's misreading of a (possibly small or short) *vav* for a *yod*.
- 2 Cf. Ps 88. The psalmist expresses his dismay at the prosperity of the godless and the shortness of life, vv. 1-6; he commends himself to God and begs for his favour.
- 3 For the 2nd line, the *NJB* has the conjectural, "but the sinner's prosperity redoubled my torment;" here, we follow the *NRSV*.
- 4 The literal translation of the 1st line is, "In my reflection fire burned;" the prefixed verbal form is either a preterite (past tense) or an imperfect being used in a past progressive or customary sense ('fire was burning').
- 5 Literally translated, the 1st 2 lines read, "Cause me to know, Yahweh, my end; and the measure of my days, what it is!"

וְהִנֵּה טַפְחוֹת | נָתַתָּה יְמֵי
וְחִלְדִּי כְּאֵין נִגְדָּךְ
אֵךְ כֹּל־הֶבֶל כֹּל־אָדָם נֹצֵב
סֵלָה:

אֵךְ־בְּצֵלֶם | יִתְהַלֵּךְ־אִישׁ
אֵךְ־הֶבֶל יִהְיֶה
יִצְבֹּר וְלֹא־יֵדַע מִי־אֶסְפֶּם:
וְעַתָּה מִה־קִּוִּיתִי אֲדֹנָי
תִּוְחַלְתִּי לָךְ הִיא:
מִכָּל־פֶּשַׁעַי הַצִּילֵנִי
חֲרַפְתָּ נֹבֵל אֶל־תְּשִׁימֵנִי:
נֹאֲלַמְתִּי לֹא אֶפְתַּח־פִּי
כִּי אַתָּה עָשִׂיתָ:
הִסַּר מֵעָלַי נִגְעָךְ
מִתַּגֵּרַת יָדְךָ אֲנִי כִלִּיתִי:

6 “You have made my days a few handbreadths;
the length of my life is as nothing to you.
Surely everyone stands as a mere breath.

Selah

7 “Every human being that walks is only a shadow;
surely for nothing they are in turmoil –
no knowing who will profit from it.”
8 So now, Lord, for what am I to hope?
My hope is in you.
9 Save me from all my sins,
do not make me the scorn of the fool.
10 I keep silence; I speak no more,
since you yourself have been at work.
11 Take your scourge away from me;
I am worn out by the blows you deal me.

6 The ‘handbreadth’ was a measure of about 7½ cm (4 fingers); compare Ezk 40:5, 43:13.

7 The 2nd line follows the NRSV; the NJB has the conjectural, “a mere puff of wind is the wealth stored away.” ‘Walking’ is here a metaphor for living; the point is that human beings are here today, gone tomorrow; they have no lasting substance and are comparable to mere images or ‘shadows’.

8 The literal translation of the 2nd line is, “my hope, for you it (is).”

9 In place of ‘scorn of the fool’, here following the NRSV, then NJB has ‘butt of fools’ and NETB has ‘object of fools’ insults’.

10 The psalmist has in mind God’s disciplinary measures (see vv. 11–14).

11 In place of ‘blows’, the MT has ‘hostility’.

יב בְּתוֹכָחֹת עַל־עוֹן יִסְרֹת אִישׁ
וּתְמָס כְּעֵשׂ חֲמוּדוֹ
אֶדְ הָבֵל כָּל־אָדָם
סֵלָה:

יג שְׁמָעָה תְּפִלָּתִי | יְהוָה וְשׁוּעָתִי | הֶאֱזִינָה
אֶל־דַּמְעָתִי אֶל־תַּחֲרֹשׁ
כִּי גֵר אֲנִי עִמָּךְ
תּוֹשֵׁב כְּכָל־אֲבוֹתַי:
יד הֲשַׁע מִמֶּנִּי וְאֲבִלִּיגָה
בְּטָרִם אֵלֶיךָ וְאִינֶנִּי:

12 You correct human beings by punishing sin,
like a moth you eat away all their desires –
a human being is a mere puff of wind.

Selah

13 Yahweh, hear my prayer, listen to my cry for help,
do not remain deaf to my weeping.
For I am a stranger in your house,
a nomad, like all my ancestors.

14 Turn away your gaze that I may breathe freely
before I depart and am no more!

¹² NETB, along with some other Mediaeval MSS, reads חֲמוּדוֹ ('loveliness') for חֲמוּדוֹ ('desires').

¹³ The psalmist knows that, in any case, life will be short, but hopes for at least one more respite, brief though it may be.

¹⁴ The precise identification of the initial verb form (הֲשַׁע) is uncertain. It could be from the root שָׁעַ ('smear') but 'your eyes' would be the expected object in this case (see Is 6:10), or it may be an otherwise unattested Hiphil form of שָׁעַ ('to gaze') meaning "cause your gaze to be."

תהילים פרק מ

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ לְדָוִד מִזְמוֹר:
ב קוֹה קוֹיְתִי יְהוָה
וַיֵּט אֵלַי וַיִּשְׁמַע שׁוֹעַתִּי:
ג וַיַּעֲלֵנִי מִבּוֹר שְׁאוֹן מִטֵּיט הַיִּוֹן
וַיִּקֶּם עַל-סֹלֶעַ רַגְלִי
כּוֹנֵן אֲשֶׁרִי:
ד וַיִּתֵּן בְּפִי שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ תְּהִלָּה לֵאלֹהֵינוּ
יֵרָאוּ רַבִּים וַיִּירָאוּ
וַיִּבְטְחוּ בִיהוָה:
ה אֲשֶׁרִי הִגְבֵּר אֲשֶׁר-שָׁם יְהוָה מִבְּטָחוֹ
וְלֹא-פָנָה אֶל-רֹהָבִים וְשָׁטִי כֶזֶב:
ו רַבּוֹת עֲשִׂיתָ | אַתָּה | יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי
נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ וּמַחְשַׁבְתֶּיךָ אֵלֵינוּ
אֵין | עֲרֹךְ אֵלֶיךָ אֲגִידָה וְאֲדַבְּרָה
עֲצָמוֹ מִסֶּפֶר:

PSALM 40

- ¹ *To the leader. A Psalm of David.*
- ² I waited, I waited for Yahweh,
and then he stooped to me and heard my cry for help.
- ³ He pulled me up from the seething chasm,
from the mud of the mire. He set my feet on rock,
and made my footsteps firm.
- ⁴ He put a new song in my mouth, praise of our God.
Many will be awestruck at the sight,
and will put their trust in Yahweh.
- ⁵ How blessed is he who puts his trust in Yahweh,
who does not respect rebels or to those who turn to lies.
- ⁶ How much you have done, Yahweh, my God –
your wonders, your plans for us –you have no equal.
I will proclaim and speak of them;
they are beyond number.

PSALM 40

- ¹ Most English translations do not include a verse number for this title; here, we follow the MT, and subsequent verse numbers are incremented.
- ² The hymn of thanksgiving, vv. 1-11, is followed by a cry of distress, vv. 13-17, identical with Ps 70.
- ³ In place of 'seething chasm', the NRSV has 'desolate pit'; the MT has 'pit of tumult'.
- ⁴ A 'new song' was appropriate because God had intervened in the psalmist's experience in a fresh and exciting way.
- ⁵ The noun translated 'blessed' is an abstract plural.
- ⁶ The precise meaning of the 1st 2 lines is not clear but the psalmist seems to be recalling God's miraculous deeds on Israel's behalf (see 9:1, 26:7), as well as his covenantal decrees and promises (see 33:11).

זִבַּח וּמִנְחָה | לֹא־חִפְצָּתָּ
אֲזִנִּים כְּרִית לִי
עוֹלָה וְחַטָּאָה לֹא שְׁאַלְתָּ:
אֲזִי אָמַרְתִּי הִנֵּה־בֹאֲתִי
בְּמַגֵּל־תִּסְפֹּר כְּתוּב עָלַי:
לַעֲשׂוֹת־רְצוֹנְךָ אֱלֹהֵי חִפְצָּתִי
וְתוֹרַתְךָ בְּתוֹךְ מִעֵי:
בְּשִׁרְתִּי צֶדֶק | בְּקֹהֶל רֹב
הִנֵּה שִׁפְתֵי לֹא אֶכְלָא
יְהוֹה אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ:
צִדְקַתְךָ לֹא־כִסִּיתִי | בְּתוֹךְ לִבִּי
אֲמוֹנַתְךָ וְתִשׁוּעַתְךָ אָמַרְתִּי
לֹא־כִחַדְתִּי חֶסֶדְךָ וְאֱמַתְךָ
לְקֹהֶל רֹב:

- 7 You wanted no sacrifice or cereal offering,
but you gave me an open ear.
Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required.
- 8 Then I said, “here I am, I am coming.”
In the scroll of the book it is written of me:
- 9 My delight is to do your will;
Your Law, my God, is deep in my heart.
- 10 I proclaimed your saving justice in the great assembly.
See, I will not hold my tongue,
Yahweh, as you well know.
- 11 I have not hidden your justice in my heart;
I have declared your faithfulness and your salvation.
I have not concealed your mercy and truth
from the great assembly.

7 The literal translation of ‘open’ is ‘dug out’. God sees to it that his servant knows his will, cf. Is 50:5. An LXX variant, ‘you have fashioned a body for me’ was applied to Christ, Heb. 10:5ff.

8 The meaning of the 2nd line is uncertain.

9 Obedience is better than sacrifice, 1S 15:22. The prophets often put Israel on their guard against practices that involved no interior commitment (Am 5:12, Gn 8:21) or against a presumptuous confidence in the presence of God in his Temple (see Jr 7:3–4). In post-Exilic Judaism, whatever the continued importance of the Temple as a sign of salvation (Zc 1:16), interior cult becomes more and more important and the dispositions of the heart, prayer, obedience and love, themselves take on the value of cult, Ps 50, 51:17, 69:30–31, 141:2, Pr 21:3; see also Tb 4:11, Si 34:18–35:10. This prepares for the survival of Judaism after the destruction of the Temple, and continues in the NT (Rm 1:9 & 12:1).

10 The ‘great assembly’ is also mentioned in 22:25 and 35:18.

11 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, “Your justice I have not locked in the midst of my heart.”

יב אֶתֶּהּ יְהוָה לֹא־תִכְלֹא רַחֲמֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי
 חֲסִדְךָ וְאַמְתָּךְ תִּמְיֹד יִצְרוּנִי:
 יג כִּי אֶפְפוּ־עָלַי רָעוֹת עַד־אֵין מִסְפָּר
 הַשִּׁיגוּנִי עֲוֹנָתִי וְלֹא־יִכְלָתִי לִרְאוֹת
 עֲצָמוֹ מִשְׁעָרוֹת רֹאשִׁי
 וְלִבִּי עֲזָבָנִי:
 יד רָצָה יְהוָה לְהַצִּילָנִי
 יְהוָה לְעֶזְרָתִי חֹשֶׁה:
 טו יִבְשׁוּ וַיַּחֲפְרוּ יַחַד
 מִבְּקָשִׁי נַפְשִׁי לִסְפּוֹתָהּ
 יִסְגּוּ אַחֲזֹר וַיִּכְלְמוּ
 חֲפָצַי רַעְתִּי:
 טז יִשְׁמוּ עַל־עֵקֶב בִּשְׁתָּם
 הַאֲמָרִים לִי הֵאָח | הֵאָח:
 ז' יִשְׁיִשׁוּ וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ | בָּךְ כָּל־מְבַקְשֶׁיךָ
 יֹאמְרוּ תִמְיֹד יִגְדַּל יְהוָה
 אֱהִי תִשׁוּעָתְךָ:

12 Do not withhold, Yahweh, your tenderness from me;
 let your faithful and steadfast love guard me forever.
 13 For troubles surround me, until they are beyond number;
 my sins have overtaken me; I cannot see my way.
 They outnumber the hairs of my head
 and my heart fails me.
 14 Be pleased, Yahweh, to rescue me,
 Yahweh, come quickly and help me!
 15 Shame and dismay to all
 who seek to take my life.
 Back with them, let them be humiliated
 who delight in my misfortunes.
 16 Let them be aghast with shame,
 those who say to me, "Aha, aha!"
 17 But joy and happiness in you to all who seek you!
 Let them ceaselessly cry, "Great is Yahweh"
 who love your saving power.

12 The NJB & NETB translate the phrase 'do not withhold' as a statement ('you do not withhold').

13 The term translated 'troubles' can have the normal nuance of 'dangers' or a moral one of 'sins'.

14 Literally translated, the verse end, "hurry to my help."

15 The 4 prefixed verbal forms in this verse are understood as jussives: the psalmist is calling judgment down on his enemies.

16 More literally translated, this verse reads, "May they be humiliated according to their shame, those who say to me, 'Aha! Aha!'"

17 The psalmist balances out his imprecation against his enemies with a prayer of blessing upon the godly.

יח ואֲנִי | עָנִי וְאַבְיוֹן אֲדֹנִי יִחְשָׁב־לִי
עֲזַרְתִּי וּמַפְלִטִי אַתָּה
אֱלֹהֵי אֶל־תְּאַחֵר:

¹⁸ Poor and needy as I am, the Lord has me in mind.
You, my helper, my Saviour,
my God, do not delay.

¹⁸ On the 1st line, see 35:10 & 37:14.

תהילים פרק מא

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד:
ב אֲשֶׁרִי מְשָׁכִיל אֶל־דָּל
ג בְּיוֹם רָעָה יִמְלֹטֵהוּ יְהוָה:
ד יְהוָה | יִשְׁמְרֵהוּ וַיַּחֲיֵהוּ יֵאָשֶׁר וְאֲשֶׁר בָּאָרֶץ
ה וְאֶל־תִּתְּנֵהוּ בְּנַפְשׁ אִיְּבָיו:
ו יְהוָה יִסְעֲדֵנּוּ עַל־עֵרֶשׁ דָּוִי
ז כָּל־מְשַׁכְּבוֹ הִפְכֵת בַּחֲלִיו:
ח אֲנִי־אֶמְרָתִי יְהוָה חֲנֻנִי
ט רִפְאָה נַפְשִׁי כִּי־חָטָאתִי לָךְ:
י אֹיְבֵי יֹאמְרוּ רַע לִי
יא מָתִי יָמוּת וְאֶבֶד שְׁמוֹ:
יב וְאֶסְבֵּא לְרֵאוֹת | שׁוֹא יִדְבֹר
יג לְבֹי יִקְבְּצֵ־אוֹן לוֹ
יד יֵצֵא לַחוּץ יִדְבֹר:

PSALM 41

- 1 *To the leader. A Psalm of David.*
- 2 Blessed is anyone who cares for the poor and the weak;
in time of trouble, Yahweh rescues him.
- 3 Yahweh protects him, gives him life and happiness on earth.
Do not abandon him to his enemies' pleasure!
- 4 Yahweh sustains him on his bed of sickness;
you transform altogether the bed where he lies sick.
- 5 For my part I said, "Yahweh, take pity on me!
Cure me, for I have sinned against you."
- 6 My enemies wonder in malice,
"When will he die and his name disappear?"
- 7 When people come to see me, their talk is hollow,
while their hearts gather mischief;
when they get out, they spread the news.

PSALM 41

- 1 Most English translations do not include a verse number for this title; here, we follow the *MT*, and subsequent verse numbers are incremented.
- 2 'Poor and' follows the *LXX* (*πτωχὸν καὶ*) and *Tg*; it is lacking in the *MT*. The phrase, 'and the weak' is lacking in the *NRSV*, in which a footnote offers 'weak' as an alternative to 'poor'.
- 3 The *Ketiv* has **יֵאָשֶׁר** (a prefixed Pual passive form), in place of the **וְאֵשֶׁר** (Pual perfect with *vav* consecutive) of the *Qere*.
- 4 The meaning of the 2nd line is uncertain; the *NRSV* has, "in their illness, you heal all their infirmities."
- 5 In vv. 5–11, the psalmist recites the prayer of petition and lament he offered to the Lord.
- 6 For the 1st line, here following the *NRSV*, the *NJB* reads, "My enemies speak to me only of disaster."
- 7 For the 2nd line, here following the *NRSV*, the *NJB* has 'with spite in their hearts' (which it also transposes to the end of the verse).

ח יֶחֶד עָלַי יִתְלַחֲשׁוּ כָּל־שֹׁנְאֵי
עָלַי | יִחְשְׁבוּ רָעָה לִּי:
ט דִּבֶּר־בִּלְיַעַל יִצּוֹק בּוֹ
וְאֲשֶׁר שָׁכַב לֹא־יוֹסִיף לָקוּם:
י גַּם־אִישׁ שְׁלוֹמִי | אֲשֶׁר־בִּטַּחְתִּי בּוֹ
אֹכֵל לַחֲמִי הִגְדִּיל עָלַי עֶקֶב:
יא וְאַתָּה יְהוָה חַנּוּנִי וְהַקִּימֵנִי
וְאַשְׁלֶמָה לָהֶם:
יב בָּזֹאת יֵדַעְתִּי כִּי־חִפְצָתָ בִּי
כִּי לֹא־יִרְעֶה אִיבִי עָלַי:
יג וְאֲנִי בַתְּמִי תִמְכַּת בִּי
וְתַצִּיבֵנִי לִפְנֵיךָ לְעוֹלָם:
יד בָּרוּךְ יְהוָה | אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
מִהָעוֹלָם וְעַד הָעוֹלָם
אָמֵן | וְאָמֵן:

8 All who hate me whisper together about me
and reckon I deserve the misery I suffer.
9 “A fatal sickness has a grip on him;
now that he is down, he will never get up again.”
10 Even my trusted friend on whom I relied,
who shared my table, lifts his heel against me.
11 But you, Yahweh, take pity on me!
Raise me up that I may repay them.
12 This will convince me that you delight in me,
if my enemy no longer exults over me.
13 Then you will keep me unscathed,
and set me in your presence forever.
14 Blessed be Yahweh, the God of Israel,
from eternity to eternity.
Amen and Amen.

⁸ Sickness is regarded as a punishment for sin, see Job, Ps 38:3, 107:17.

⁹ The literal translation for ‘a fatal sickness’ is ‘a thing of Belial’ (see #Dt 13:14).

¹⁰ The ‘trusted friend’ has sometimes been identified with Ahithopel, David’s counsellor, 2S 15:12, 17:23, and cf. 2S 12:19.

¹¹ The cohortative with prefixed ַי in the 2nd line indicates purpose or result (‘I may repay them’) after the preceding imperatives.

¹² Having recalled his former lament and petition, the psalmist returns to the confident mood of vv. 2–4. The basis for his confidence may be a divine oracle of deliverance, assuring him that God would intervene and vindicate him.

¹³ In the 2nd line, the prefixed verbal form with ַי consecutive (‘set me’) has the same aspectual function as the preceding perfect: it is either generalising/descriptive (present) or has a present perfect nuance (‘you have set’).

¹⁴ This doxology (not truly part of the Psalm) closes the first book of the Psalter, cf. 72:18–20, 89:52, 106:48.

ספר שני

תהילים פרק מב

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִשְׁכִּיל לְבִנֵי־קָרַח:
ב כָּאֵיל תַּעֲרֹג עַל־אֲפִיקֵי־מַיִם
ג בֶּן נַפְשִׁי תַעֲרֹג אֵלַיָּךְ אֱלֹהִים:
ד צִמְאָה נַפְשִׁי | לֵאלֹהִים לֵאלֹהֵי חַי
ה מִתִּי אֲבֹא וְאֶרְאֶה פָנַי אֱלֹהִים:
ו הִיתָה־לִּי דִמְעָתִי לֶחֶם יוֹמָם וּלְיֵלָה
ז בְּאֵמַר אֵלַי כָּל־הַיּוֹם אֵיךְ אֱלֹהֶיךָ:
ח אֵלֶּה אֲזַכָּרָה | וְאֶשְׁפָּכָה עָלַי | נַפְשִׁי
ט כִּי אֶעֱבֹר | בְּסֶף אֲדִידִים עַד־בֵּית אֱלֹהִים
י בְּקוֹל־רִנָּה וְתוֹדָה הֶמְזֶן חֲוָגָה:
יא מִה־תִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה־חַי | נַפְשִׁי וְתִהְיֶה עָלַי
יב הִזְחֲלִי לֵאלֹהִים כִּי־עוֹד אוֹדְנִי

BOOK II

PSALM 42

- 1 *To the leader. A Maskil of the Korahites.*
- 2 As a deer yearns for running streams,
so I yearn for you, my God.
- 3 I thirst for God, the living God;
when shall I go to see the face of God?
- 4 I have no food but tears day and night,
as all day long I am taunted, "Where is your God?"
- 5 This I remember as I pour out my heart,
how I used to pass under the roof of the Most High,
among cries of joy and praise, the sound of the feast.
- 6 Why be so downcast, why all these sighs?
Hope in God, for I will praise him still,

PSALM 42

- 1 Most English translations do not include a verse number for this title; here, we follow the *MT*, and subsequent verse numbers are incremented.
- 2 Psalms 42 & 43 are a single lyric consisting of three stanzas with a refrain (42:5, 11, 43:5). The author, who lived in the north of Palestine near Mt Hermon and the sources of the Jordan (42:6–7), has been prevented by illness (42:10) from making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem (42:4, 43:3–4).
- 3 The 2nd line here follows the *LXX* and *Peshitta*; the *MT* has 'when shall I appear before'. The phraseology here means to visit the Sanctuary of the Temple in Jerusalem (see #27:8 and Dt 31:11); the Hebrew comes from a scribe shocked by the immediacy of the phrase (see # Ex 33:20).
- 4 People regard the sickness as evidence that God has forsaken the sufferer (compare 22:6–8).
- 5 'Most High' (literally, 'admirable' with a plural of majesty) follows the *LXX* and *Peshitta*; the *MT* is uncertain (the *NRSV* has 'throng'). The 'roof' (literally 'hut') is the Temple where God resides, and which every pious Israelite visited each year (Ex 23:14–17).
- 6 'Saviour' (literally 'saviour of my face') follows the *LXX* and *Peshitta*; cf. v. 11, where the *MT* has 'his face'.

יְשׁוּעוֹת פָּנָיו: ^ז אֱלֹהֵי
 עָלִי נִפְשִׁי תִשְׁתַּחֲחַח
 עַל־כֵּן אֶזְכְּרֶךָ מֵאֶרֶץ יַרְדֵּן
 וְחֶרְמוֹנִים מִהָר מִצְעָר:
 ח תְּהוֹם־אֶל־תְּהוֹם קוֹרֵא לְקוֹל צְנוּרֶיךָ
 כָּל־מִשְׁבָּרֶיךָ וְגַלֶּיךָ עָלַי עֲבְרוּ:
 ט יוֹמָם | יֵצֵא יְהוָה | חֶסְדּוֹ
 וּבַלַּיְלָה שִׁירָה עִמִּי
 תְּפִלָּה לְאֵל חַיִּי:
 י אוֹמְרָה | לְאֵל סִלְעִי לְמָה שָׁכַחְתָּנִי
 לְמָה־קָּדַר אֱלֹהֶיךָ
 בְּלַחֲץ אוֹיֵב:
 יא בְּרֹצַח | בַּעֲצְמוֹתַי חֲרָפוֹנִי צוֹרְרִי
 בְּאִמְרָם אֵלַי כָּל־הַיּוֹם
 אֵיךְ אֱלֹהֶיךָ:

my Saviour, ⁷ my God.

When I am downcast, I think of you:

from the land of Jordan and Hermon,

I think of you, from the humble mountain.

⁸ Deep is calling to deep by the roar of your cataracts;
all your waves and breakers have rolled over me.

⁹ In the daytime Yahweh sends his faithful love,
and even at night his song is with me,
a prayer to my living God.

¹⁰ I shall say to God, my rock, "Why have you forgotten me?
Why must I go around in mourning,
harassed by the enemy?"

¹¹ With death in my bones, my enemies taunt me,
all day long they ask me,
"Where is your God?"

⁷ The 'humble mountain' (or 'hill of Mizar') alludes to Zaorah, not far from the sources of the Jordan, which could be a stage on the route of the Exile.

⁸ The noun תְּהוֹם often refers to the deep sea but, here, where it is associated with Hermon, it probably refers to mountain streams; the word can be used of streams and rivers (see t 8:7, Ezk 31:4).

⁹ The psalmist believes that God has not abandoned him but continues to extend 'his faithful love'; to this point in the psalm, the author has used the word 'God' but now, as he mentions the divine characteristic of love, he switches to the more personal divine name, יְהוָה.

¹⁰ This metaphor pictures God as a rocky, relatively inaccessible summit, where one would be able to find protection from enemies (cf. 1S 23:25–28, Ps 18:2, 31:3).

¹¹ A few medieval Hebrew MSS and Symmachus read 'like' instead of 'with'.

יב מִה־תִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה | נַפְשִׁי
וּמִה־תִּהְיֶה עָלַי
הוֹחִלִי לֵאלֹהִים כִּי־עוֹד אֶדְבֹּר
יְשׁוּעַת פָּנֶי וְאֱלֹהֵי:

¹² Why be so downcast, O my soul,
why all these sighs?
Hope in God, for I will praise him still,
my Saviour, my God.

¹² For poetic effect, the psalmist addresses his 'soul', or inner self.

תהילים פרק מג

א שִׁפְטֵנִי אֱלֹהִים | וְרִיבָה רִיבִי
מִגְזֵי לֹא־חֶסֶד
מֵאִישׁ מִרְמָה וְעוֹלָה תִּפְלֹטֵנִי:
ב כִּי־אַתָּה | אֱלֹהֵי מַעֲוִי
לָמָּה זָנַחְתָּנִי
לָמָּה־קָדַר אֶתְהַלֵּךְ בִּלְחָץ אוֹיֵב:
ג שְׁלַח־אוֹרְךָ וְאַמְתָּךְ הִמָּה יִנְחֹנֵנִי
יְבִיאוּנִי אֶל־הַר־קֹדֶשְׁךָ וְאֶל־מִשְׁכְּנוֹתֶיךָ:
ד וְאַבֹּאֶה | אֶל־מִזְבֵּחַ אֱלֹהִים
אֶל־אֵל־שִׂמְחַת גִּילִי
וְאוֹדֶךָ בְּכִנּוֹר אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵי:
ה מִה־תִּשְׁתַּחֲוִי | נַפְשִׁי
וּמִה־תִּהְיֶה עָלַי

PSALM 43

- 1 Judge me, God, defend my cause
against a people who have no faithful love;
from those who are treacherous and unjust, deliver me.
- 2 For you are the God of my strength;
why abandon me?
Why do I go mourning, harassed by the enemy?
- 3 Send out your light and your truth; let them guide me,
to lead me to your holy mountain to your dwelling-place.
- 4 Then I shall go to the altar of God,
to the God of my joy.
I will rejoice and praise you on the harp, O God, my God.
- 5 Why be so downcast, O my soul,
why all these sighs?

PSALM 43

Many medieval *Hebrew MSS* combine Psalms 42 & 43; Ps 43 is the only psalm in Book 2 of the Psalter (Ps 42–72) that does not have a heading, suggesting that it was originally the 3rd and final section of Ps 42; v. 5 is identical to the refrain in 42:12 and almost identical to that in 42:6.

- 1 In vv. 1–4, the psalmist prays that, by healing the disease, he may be vindicated as a righteous person and enabled to go to Jerusalem.
- 2 The question of the 2nd line is similar to that of Ps 42:9, but זָנַח ('abandon') is a stronger verb than שָׁכַח ('forget').
- 3 God's deliverance is compared here to a 'light', which will lead the psalmist back home to God's Temple; divine deliverance will in turn demonstrate God's 'truth' to his people. In this context, God's 'holy mountain' is Zion/Jerusalem (see Is 66:20, Jl 2:1, 3:17, Zc 8:3, Ps 2:6, 15:1, 48:1, 87:1, Dn 9:16). In place of 'dwelling-place', here following *JPS*, *WEB* has 'tents'.
- 4 'My joy' follows one *Hebrew MS* (the *NRSV* has 'to God my exceeding joy'); the *MT* has 'the joy of my delight' and the *LXX* interprets, 'God who makes joyful my youth'.
- 5 This verse repeats the refrain of the previous Psalm (see 42:6, 42:12).

הִוָּחִילִי לֵאלֹהִים כִּי־עוֹד אֶוֹדְנוּ
יְשׁוּעַת פָּנַי וְאֱלֹהֵי:

Hope in God, for I will praise him still,
my Saviour, my God.

תהילים פרק מד

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ | לְבִנְי־קָרַח מִשְׁכִּיל:
ב אֱלֹהִים | בְּאַזְנוֹנוֹ שָׁמַעְנוּ
אֲבוֹתֵינוּ סִפְרוּ־לָנוּ
פָּעַל פְּעֻלָּתְ בִּימֵיהֶם בִּימֵי קֹדֶם:
ג אַתָּה | יָדָךְ גּוֹיִם הוֹרַשְׁתָּ וַתַּטְעֵם
תָּרַע לְאֻמִּים וַתְּשַׁלַּח־ם:
ד כִּי לֹא בַחֲרָבָם יִרְשׁוּ אֶרֶץ
וְזִרְעָם לֹא־הוֹשִׁיעָה לָמוֹ
כִּי־יְמִינְךָ וְזִרְעֶךָ וְאוֹר פָּנֶיךָ
כִּי רָצִיתָם:
ה אַתָּה־הוּא מֶלֶכִּי אֱלֹהִים
צִוָּה יְשׁוּעוֹת יַעֲקֹב:
ו בָּךְ צָרֵינוּ נִגְגָה
בְּשִׁמְךָ נִבּוֹס קִמִּינוּ:

PSALM 44

- 1 *To the leader. A Maskil of the Korahites.*
- 2 God, we have heard for ourselves,
our ancestors have told us,
of the deeds you did in their days, in the days of old:
- 3 With your hand, you drove out nations and planted them,
you afflicted the peoples, but them you set free.
- 4 For not by their own sword did they win the land,
nor did their own arms give them victory,
but your hand and your arm, and the light of your face,
for you loved them.
- 5 You are my king, my God,
who decreed Jacob's victories.
- 6 Through you, we drove back our opponents,
in your name we trampled down our assailants.

PSALM 44

- 1 Most English translations do not include a verse number for this title; here, we follow the MT, and subsequent verse numbers are incremented. The *Paseq* is presented as grey text, just as it appears in the MAM text.
- 2 The last line refers specifically to the days of Joshua, during Israel's conquest of the land, as vv. 3-4 indicate.
- 3 The word 'them' in the 1st line refers to the 'ancestors' of v. 2.
- 4 The idiom, 'light of your face', refers to a smile (Qo 8:1) suggesting favour and blessing (Nb 6:25, Ps 4:6, 31:16, 67:1, 80:3, 7, 19, 89:15, Dn 9:17).
- 5 'Who decreed' follows the LXX (ἐντελλόμενος, reading מְצִוָּה) and Peshitta; the MT has 'decree' (צִוָּה).
- 6 The verb translated 'drove back' is literally 'gored': the imagery is that of a powerful wild ox that gores its enemies and tramples them underfoot.

ז כִּי לֹא בִקְשָׁתִי אֲבֹטַח
 וְחֶרְבִּי לֹא תוֹשִׁיעֵנִי:
 ח כִּי הוֹשַׁעְתָּנוּ מִצָּרֵינוּ
 וּמִשְׁנֵאֵינוּ הַבִּישׁוֹת:
 ט בָּאֱלֹהִים הִלְלָנוּ כָּל־הַיּוֹם
 וְשִׁמְךָ לְעוֹלָם נִזְדָּה
 סֵלָה:
 י אַף־זָנַחְתָּ וּתְכַלִּימָנוּ
 וְלֹא־תֵצֵא בְּצַבָּאוֹתֵינוּ:
 יא תְּשִׁיבֵנוּ אַחֲזֹר מִנִּי־צָר
 וּמִשְׁנֵאֵינוּ שָׁסוּ לָמוֹ:
 יב תִּתֵּנּוּ כְּצֹאן מֵאֵכֶל
 וּבְגוֹזִים זָרִיתָנוּ:
 יג תִּמְכֹּר־עַמְּךָ בְּלֹא־הוֹן
 וְלֹא־רִבִּית בְּמַחֲרִיהֶם:
 יד תְּשִׁימָנוּ חֶרְפָּה לְשֹׂכְנֵינוּ
 לְעֵג וּקְלָס לְסַבִּיבוֹתֵינוּ:

- 7 For my trust was not in my bow;
nor did my sword save me.
- 8 You have saved us from our opponents,
and have put to shame those who hate us.
- 9 Our boast was always of God,
we praised your name without ceasing.
- Selah*
- 10 Yet now you have abandoned and humiliated us,
you no longer take the field with our armies.
- 11 You leave us to fall back before the enemy;
those who hate us plunder us at their will.
- 12 You hand us over like sheep for slaughter;
you scatter us among the nations.
- 13 You sell your people for a pittance
and make no profit on the sale.
- 14 You make us the butt of our neighbours,
the mockery and scorn of those around us.

7 The psalmist here freely admits that, without God, he is powerless.

8 In place of 'have saved' and 'have put', NETB reads 'save' and 'put', taking the perfects a rhetorical (emphasising that victory is certain).

9 Note that the call for a pause (סֵלָה) is part of v. 9.

10 The particle אַף ('yet') is used here as a strong adversative contrasting the following statement with what precedes.

11 The prepositional phrase לָמוֹ (literally, 'for themselves') here has the nuance 'at their will' or 'as they please'.

12 The 2nd line seems appropriate only to the post-Exilic period, a circumstance that helps to date the poem.

13 The literal translation of 'a pittance' is 'what is not wealth'.

14 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "an (object of) taunting and (of) mockery to those around us."

טו	תְּשִׁימֵנוּ מִשָּׁל בְּגוֹיִם מִנּוֹד-רָאשׁ בְּלֹאמִים:	15	You make us a by-word among nations; other people shake their heads over us.
טז	כָּל-הַיּוֹם כָּלִמְתִּי נִגְדִי וּבִשֵּׁת פָּנַי כִּסְתָּנִי:	16	All day long, I brood on my disgrace, the shame written clear on my face,
יז	מִקּוֹל מַחֲרָף וּמִגִּדְף מִפְּנֵי אוֹיֵב וּמִתִּנְקָם:	17	from the sound of insult and abuse, from the sight of hatred and vengefulness.
יח	כָּל-זֹאת בָּאתָנוּ וְלֹא שָׁכַחְנוּךָ וְלֹא-שָׁקַרְנוּ בְּבְרִיתְךָ:	18	All this has befallen us though we had not forgotten you, or been disloyal to your covenant.
יט	לֹא-נָסוּג אַחֲזֹר לִבֵּנוּ וְתַט אֲשַׁרֵּינוּ מִנֵּי אֲרֻחֶךָ:	19	Our heart has never turned away; our feet have never strayed from your path.
כ	כִּי דָבִיתָנוּ בַּמָּקוֹם תַּנִּים וְתִכָּס עָלֵינוּ בַּצִּלְמוֹת:	20	Yet, you have crushed us in the place where jackals live, and thrown over us a shadow dark as death.
כא	אִם-שָׁכַחְנוּ שֵׁם אֱלֹהֵינוּ וּנִפְרָשׁ כַּפֵּינוּ לְאֵל זָר:	21	Had we forgotten the name of our God and stretched out our hands to a foreign god,
כב	הֲלֹא אֱלֹהִים יַחְקֹר-זֹאת כִּי-הוּא יֹדֵעַ תַּעֲלָמוֹת לֵב:	22	would not God have found this out, for he knows the secrets of the heart?

15 For the 2nd line, the NRSV has 'a laughing stock among the people'. Shaking the head was a derisive gesture (see Jr 18:16, Lm 2:15).

16 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "and the shame of my face covers me."

17 A more literal translation of this verse is, "from the voice of one who ridicules and insults, from the face of an enemy and an avenger."

18 Vv. 18–23 may be later additions to adapt the Psalm to the persecutions of the Maccabaeae period (2nd Century BCE).

19 God's 'path' refers to his commands, i.e., the moral pathway he has prescribed for Israel.

20 The 'place where jackals live' is either the devastated country (Is 34:13, Jr 9:10) or the desert, a refuge for persecuted Jews (1M 2:29, 9:33).

21 With 'outstretched hands' is the attitude of prayer, cf. 28:2, 141:2, Is 1:15.

22 The rhetorical question expects the answer, "Of course he would!" The point seems to be this: there is no way the Israelites, who are the speakers in the psalm, would reject God and turn to another god, for the omniscient God would easily discover such a sin.

כג כִּי־עֲלִיף הִרְגָנוּ כָּל־הַיּוֹם
 נֶחֱשְׁבָנוּ כְּצֹאן טְבָחָה:
 כד עֹרָה | לָמָּה תִישָׁן | אֲדֹנָי
 הִקִּיצָה אֶל־תִּזְנוּחַ לְנֶצַח:
 כה לָמָּה־פָנִיךָ תַסְתִּיר
 תִּשְ�כַּח עֲנִינוֹ וּלְחַצָנוּ:
 כו כִּי שָׁחָה לְעֹפָר נַפְשֵׁנוּ
 דָּבָקָה לָאָרֶץ בְּטִנָּנוּ:
 כז קוּמָה עֲזֹרְתָהּ לָנוּ
 וּפְדֹנוּ לְמַעַן חַסְדֶּךָ:

- 23 For your sake, we are being massacred all day long,
 treated as sheep for the slaughter.
 24 Wake, Lord! Why are you asleep?
 Awake! Do not abandon us for good.
 25 Why do you hide your face,
 forgetting that we are poor and harassed?
 26 For we sink down to the dust
 and our bodies cling to the ground.
 27 Arise! Come to our help!
 Ransom us, as your faithful love demands.

23 This verse is probably an allusion to the persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes.

24 Though he is confident that God is aware of his situation, the psalmist compares God's inactivity to sleep and urges him to wake up. The word, 'Lord', translates אֲדֹנָי ('Adonai').

25 The idiom, 'hide your face', can mean 'ignore' or carry the stronger idea of 'reject'.

26 The suffixed form of נַפֶּשׁ ('life') is often equivalent to a pronoun in poetic texts.

27 In place of 'ransom', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'redeem' and NETB has 'rescue'.

תהילים פרק מה

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ עַל־שֹׁשְׁנִים
לְבַנֵּי־קָרַח מְשָׁפִיל שִׁיר יְדִידָת:
ב רָחַשׁ לִבִּי | דָּבַר טוֹב
אָמַר אֲנִי מַעֲשֵׂי לַמֶּלֶךְ
לְשׁוֹנִי עֵט | סוֹפֵר מִהִיר:
ג יַפְיִפִּית מְבִנֵּי אָדָם
הוֹצֵק חֵן בְּשִׁפְתוֹתָיךְ
עַל־כֵּן בִּרְכָךְ אֱלֹהִים לְעוֹלָם:
ד חֲגֹר־חֲרָבְךָ עַל־יְרֵךְ גִּבּוֹר
הוֹדֵךְ וְהִדְרֵךְ:
ה וְהִדְרֵךְ | צֵלַח רֶכֶב עַל־דְּבַר־אַמֶּת וְעֲנָה־צֶדֶק
וְתוֹרֵךְ נֹרְאוֹת יְמִינֶךָ:

PSALM 45

- ¹ *To the leader: to the tune "Lilies". A Maskil.
Of the Korahites. A love song.*
- ² My heart overflows with a noble theme;
I address my poem to the king,
my tongue the pen of an expert scribe.
- ³ Of all men, you are the most handsome;
favour is poured out on your lips,
for God has blessed you forever.
- ⁴ Warrior, strap your sword at your side;
advance in your majesty and splendour.
- ⁵ Ride on in the cause of truth, gentleness, and uprightness.
Let your right hand teach you dread deeds.

PSALM 45

- ¹ Most English translations do not include a verse number for the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and subsequent verse numbers are accordingly incremented. The mention of the tune, "*Lilies*," must be a Maccabaeal alteration linking up with Sg. The original reference lying behind the title can be traced from the Greek, "*Those who alter the Charter (= the Law)*," see headings to Ps 60, 69 & 80 – an allusion to apostate Jews.
- ² According to some scholars, this Psalm may be a secular song to celebrate the marriage of an Israelite king, Solomon, Jeroboam II, or Ahab (whose bride was a Tyrian princess, 1K 16:31). However, Jewish and Christian traditions understand it as celebrating the marriage of the messianic King with Israel, see Sg 3:11, Is 62:5, Ezk 16:8–13. The poet addresses first the messianic King, vv. 2–9, crediting him with the attributes of Yahweh (145:4–7, 12–13) and of Emmanuel (Is 9:5–6), then the queen, vv. 10–16.
- ³ '*Lips*' probably stands by metonymy for the king's speech. Some interpret the term לִפְיֶךָ as referring here to 'gracious (i.e., kind and polite) speech' but the word probably refers more generally to 'attractive' speech that is impressively articulated and fitting for the occasion.
- ⁴ For the 2nd line, the *MT* has simply, "*your majesty and your splendour*," referring to the king's splendour when he appears in royal battle regalia.
- ⁵ For the last line (here following the *NRSV*), the *NJB* has the conjectural, "*Stretch the bowstring tight, lending terror to your right hand.*"

חֲצִיף שְׁנוֹנִים ^ו
 עַמִּים תַּחֲתֶיךָ יִפְּלוּ בְּלֵב אוֹיְבֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ:
 כִּסְאֶךָ אֱלֹהִים עוֹלָם וָעֶד ^ז
 שֶׁבֶט מִיֶּשֶׁר שֶׁבֶט מַלְכוּתֶךָ:
 אֶהְבֶּת צֶדֶק וְתִשְׁנֹא רָשָׁע ^ח
 עַל־כֵּן מִשְׁחָךְ
 אֱלֹהִים אֵלֶיךָ שֶׁמֶן שְׂשׂוֹן מִחֲבֶרֶךְ:
 מְרוֹאֵהֶלֶת קִצְיוֹת כָּל־בְּגְדֶיךָ ^ט
 מִן־הַיִּכְלִי שֶׁן מִנִּי שְׂמִיחָה:
 בָּנוֹת מַלְכִּים בִּיקְרוּתֶיךָ ^י
 נִצְבָּה שֶׁגֶל לִימִינֶךָ בְּכֶתֶם אוֹפִיר:
 שְׁמַעֲיֵבֶת וְרָאִי וְהִטִּי אָזְנְךָ ^{יא}
 וְשַׁכְחִי עַמִּי וּבֵית אָבִיךָ:

6 Your arrows are sharp,
 in the heart of the king's enemy; nations fall under you.
 7 Your throne is from God, forever and ever,
 the sceptre of your kingship a sceptre of justice.
 8 You love righteousness and hate wickedness.
 This is why, God, your God, has anointed you
 with oil of gladness, as none of your rivals.
 9 Your robes are all fragrant with myrrh, aloes, and cassia.
 From palaces of ivory, harps bring you joy.
 10 In your retinue are daughters of kings,
 the consort at your right hand in gold of Ophir.
 11 Listen, my daughter, attend to my words and hear;
 forget your own nation and your ancestral home.

⁶ The choppy style reflects the poet's excitement.

⁷ The LXX translates the opening as, 'Your throne, God', seeing in the word *Elohim* a vocative addressing the king; in fact, this title is applied to the Messiah (Is 9:5), the leaders and to judges (Ps 82:6, Ex 22:6), to Moses (Ex 4:16, 7:1) and to the House of David (Zc 12:8).

⁸ To 'love righteousness' means to actively promote it; to 'hate wickedness' means to actively oppose it.

⁹ 'Fragrant with' and 'cassia' are from the NRSV; they are lacking in the NJB. The phrase, 'palaces of ivory' (1K 22:39, Am 3:15) shows that the bridegroom was an Israelite king.

¹⁰ The 1st line refers to the non-Jewish nations, converted to the true God (Sg 1:3, 6:8, Is 60:3ff, 61:5) and following Israel into his service, vv. 15–16. The rare noun translated 'consort' apparently refers to the king's bride, who will soon be queen (see Ne 2:6); the Aramaic cognate is used of royal wives in Dn 5:2–3, 23.

¹¹ Like the ancestral figure, Abraham, Israel must sever all links with the surrounding non-Jewish world and will receive 'sons' in return for the 'fathers' thus left.

יב וַיִּתְּאוּ הַמֶּלֶךְ יָפִיךְ
 כִּי־הוּא אֲדֹנֶיךָ וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִי־לּוֹ:
 יג וּבֵת־צָרַר
 יד בַּמִּנְחָה פָנֶיךָ יַחֲלוּ עֲשִׂירֵי עָם:
 כֹּל־כְּבוֹדָהּ בֵּת־מֶלֶךְ פָּנִימָה
 מִמְּשַׁבְּצוֹת זָהָב לְבוּשָׁה:
 טו לְרִקְמוֹת תּוֹבֵל לְמֶלֶךְ
 טז בְּתוֹלוֹת אַחֲרֶיהָ רְעוּתֶיהָ מוֹבְאוֹת לָךְ:
 תּוֹבֵלָנָה בְּשִׂמְחָת וְגִיל
 ז תְּבֹאִינָהּ בְּהִיכַל מֶלֶךְ:
 זח תַּחַת אֲבֹתֶיךָ יִהְיוּ בָנֶיךָ
 תִּשְׁתַּמּוּ לְשָׂרִים בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ:
 יח אֶזְכִּירָה שְׁמֶךָ בְּכָל־דָּר וָדָר
 עַל־כֵּן עַמִּים יְהוֹדוּךָ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד:

- 12 Then the king will fall in love with your beauty;
he is your lord, bow down before him.
- 13 The daughter of Tyre
will court your favour with gifts, the richest of people.
- 14 The princess looks magnificent,
decked in pearls and gold-woven robes.
- 15 In embroidered robes, she is led to the king;
behind her, the virgins, her companions, follow.
- 16 With joy and gladness, they are led along,
as they enter the palace of the king.
- 17 Instead of your ancestors, you will have sons;
you will make them rulers over the whole world.
- 18 I will make your name celebrated in all generations,
so nations will sing your praise forever and ever.

- 12 After the preceding imperatives, the jussive verbal form with *vav* (ו) conjunctive is best understood as introducing a purpose or result clause. The point seems to be this: the bride might tend to be homesick, which in turn might cause her to mourn and diminish her attractiveness. She needs to overcome this temptation to unhappiness and enter into the marriage with joy. Then the king will be drawn to her natural beauty.
- 13 NETB has 'Rich people from Tyre' in place of 'the daughter of Tyre'.
- 14 This is the homage of the non-Jewish peoples, promised for the messianic times.
- 15 The literal translation of the MT has 'the king's daughter inside' before 'in embroidered robes'.
- 16 Literally translated, this verse reads, "They are led with joy and happiness, they enter the house of the king."
- 17 The NRSV, following the LXX, inserts 'O king' before 'will have sons'. The poet promises the king (the pronouns are masculine) successful progeny and literary immortality.
- 18 As God's vice-regent on earth, the king is deserving of such honour and praise.

תהילים פרק מו

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ לְבְנֵי־קֹרַח עַל־עֲלֻמוֹת שִׁיר:
ב אֱלֹהִים לָנוּ מַחֲסֵה וְעֹז
עֲזָרָה בַּצָּרוֹת נִמְצָא מֵאֲד:
ג עַל־כֵּן לֹא־נִירָא בְּהִמִּיר אֲרֶץ
וּבְמוֹט הָרִים בְּלֵב יָמִים:
ד יִהְיוּ יַחֲמְרוּ מִימֵי
יִרְעֲשׂוּ הָרִים בְּגֵאוֹתָו
סְלָה:
ה נָהָר פִּלְגָיו יִשְׁמְחוּ עִיר־אֱלֹהִים
קֹדֶשׁ מִשְׁכְּנֵי עֲלִיוֹן:
ו אֱלֹהִים בְּקִרְבָּה בַּל־תִּמּוֹט
יִעֲזֶרֶה אֱלֹהִים לִפְנוֹת בֹּקֶר:

PSALM 46

- 1 *To the leader. A Song of the Korahites. For the oboe.*
 - 2 God is both refuge and strength for us,
a well-proved help in trouble.
 - 3 Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth shakes,
though mountains tumble into the depths of the sea.
 - 4 Though its waters roar and seethe,
and the mountains totter as it heaves.
- Selah*
- 5 There is a river whose streams bring joy to God's city;
it sanctifies the dwelling of the Most High.
 - 6 God is in the midst of the city, it cannot fall;
at break of day, God comes to its rescue.

PSALM 46

- 1 Most English translations do not include a verse number for the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and subsequent verse numbers are accordingly incremented. This Psalm is a Canticle of Zion. God's presence in the Temple safeguards the Holy City, while symbolic waters purify it and fertilise it, making it a second Eden. In the title, the *WEBBE* uses the Hebrew name, 'Alamoth' in place of 'oboe'.
- 2 In place of 'well-proved', here following the *NJB*, the *NRSV* has 'very present'. This verse inspired Luther's hymn, "A Mighty Fortress."
- 3 The Hiphil infinitive translated 'shakes' is usually taken to mean 'when (the earth) is altered', deriving from מוֹר ('to change'); in this case, it would be intransitive, as in 15:4. Here, we emend the form to a Niphal from a homonymic root מוֹר, attested in Arabic with the meaning 'shake'.
- 4 The images are of a return to chaos. The earth rests on the waters of the nether ocean, 24:2, supported by pillars, see 75:3, 104:5, Job 9:6, Pr 8:27. These columns totter and the waters are released and dash against the mountains. After this verse, the *NJB* inserts the refrain of vv. 8 & 12 as v. 3^a, though this is not present in any ancient *MSS*.
- 5 The 'streams' are irrigation ditches; some relate the imagery to the 'waters of Shiloah' (Is 8:6), flowing from the Gihon to the pool of Siloam.
- 6 The *NJB* lacks 'the midst of', here following the *NRSV*.

ז המו גוֹיִם מִטּוֹ מַמְלָכוֹת
 נָתַן בְּקוֹלוֹ תִּמּוֹג אֶרֶץ:
 ח יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת עִמָּנוּ
 מִשְׁגֹּב־לָנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב
 סֵלָה:

ט לְכוּ־חֲזוּ מַפְעָלוֹת יְהוָה
 אֲשֶׁר־שָׁם שָׁמֹת בָּאֶרֶץ:
 י מִשְׁבִּית מַלְחָמוֹת עַד־קֶצֶה הָאָרֶץ
 קָשֶׁת יִשְׁבֵּר וְקֶצֶץ חֲנִית
 עֲגָלוֹת יִשְׂרָף בָּאֵשׁ:
 יא הִרְפוּ וְדַעוּ כִּי־אֲנֹכִי אֱלֹהִים
 אֲרוֹם בְּגוֹלִים אֲרוֹם בָּאֶרֶץ:
 יב יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת עִמָּנוּ
 מִשְׁגֹּב־לָנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב
 סֵלָה:

7 Nations are in uproar; kingdoms are tumbling,
 when he raises his voice the earth crumbles away.

8 Yahweh Sabaoth is with us,
 our citadel, the God of Jacob.

Selah

9 Come, consider the works of Yahweh,
 the astounding deeds he has done on the earth.

10 He puts an end to wars over the whole wide world,
 he breaks the bow, he snaps the spear,
 and shields he burns in the fire.

11 “Be still and acknowledge that I am God,
 supreme over nations, supreme over the world.”

12 Yahweh Sabaoth is with us,
 our citadel, the God of Jacob.

Selah

7 In texts describing theophanies, God’s ‘voice’ refers to the thunderous shout which functions as a battle cry (see Ps 18:13, 68:33).

8 The title ‘Yahweh Sabaoth’ pictures God as a mighty warrior-king leading armies into battle (Ps 24:10); the imagery is developed in vv. 9–10.

9 In this context, God’s ‘works’ are military in nature (see vv. 9^b–10).

10 In place of ‘shields’ (as NJB, NRSV & NETB), the MT has ‘wagons’ (עֲגָלוֹת); some read ‘chariots’ (e.g. NASB) but the Hebrew word refers to wagons or carts, not chariots, elsewhere in the OT. In this context, where military weapons are mentioned, it is better to re-vocalise the form as עֲגָלוֹת (‘round shields’), a word which occurs only here in the OT, but is attested in later Hebrew and Aramaic.

11 This verse may be addressed to the hostile nations, indicating they should cease their efforts to destroy God’s people, or to Judah, indicating they should rest secure in God’s protection. Since the psalm is an expression of Judah’s confidence, the former is more likely.

12 In place of ‘citadel’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘refuge’ and NETB has ‘protector’ (as also in v. 8).

תהילים פרק מז

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ | לְבִנְיָקֶרַח מִזְמוֹר:
ב כָּל־הָעַמִּים תִּקְעוּ־כַף
הָרִיעוּ לֵאלֹהִים בְּקוֹל רִנָּה:
ג כִּי־יְהוָה עֲלִיּוֹן נוֹרָא
מֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל עַל־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ:
ד יְדַבֵּר עַמִּים תַּחְתֵּינוּ
וְלְאֻמִּים תַּחַת רַגְלֵינוּ:
ה יִבְחַר־לָנוּ אֶת־נַחֲלָתָנוּ
אֶת־גְּאוֹן יַעֲקֹב אֲשֶׁר־אָהֵב
סֵלָה:
ו עֲלֶה אֱלֹהִים בְּתִרְעוּעָה
יְהוָה בְּקוֹל שׁוֹפָר:

PSALM 47

- 1 To the leader. A Psalm of the Korahites.
 - 2 Clap your hands, all peoples;
acclaim God with shouts of joy.
 - 3 For Yahweh, the Most High, is glorious,
the great king over all the earth.
 - 4 He brings peoples under our yoke
and nations under our feet.
 - 5 He chooses for us our heritage,
the pride of Jacob whom he loves.
- Selah*
- 6 God goes up to shouts of acclaim,
Yahweh to a fanfare on the ram's horn.

PSALM 47

- 1 This eschatological hymn is the first of the "Psalms of Kingship" (see Ps 93 ff.); it elaborates the acclamation, "Yahweh is King!" The king of Israel goes up to the Temple in triumphal procession to the sound of ritual acclamation (see #33:3). His empire extends to all nations who will one day join the chosen people. Most English translations do not include a verse number for the title; here, we follow the MT, and subsequent verse numbers are accordingly incremented. The *Paseq* is presented as grey text, just as it appears in the MAM text.
- 2 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "Shout to God with (the) sound of a ringing cry!"
- 3 The divine title 'Most High' (עֲלִיּוֹן) pictures God as the exalted ruler of the universe who vindicates the innocent and judges the wicked.
- 4 An alternative reading for 'nations' is 'peoples'.
- 5 The *Maqaf* in אֶת־גְּאוֹן does not appear in either the Aleppo or Leningrad Codices but is included in the MAM text in grey (as here).
- 6 Vv. 6-10 were most likely composed to accompany a ceremony connected with the Ark, which dramatized Yahweh's kingship (cf. 24:7-10 & 68:17-18).

זִמְרוּ אֱלֹהִים זִמְרוּ ז
 זִמְרוּ לְמֶלֶכְנוּ זִמְרוּ: ח
 כִּי מֶלֶךְ כָּל־הָאָרֶץ אֱלֹהִים
 זִמְרוּ מִשְׁכִּיל: ט
 מֶלֶךְ אֱלֹהִים עַל־גּוֹיִם
 אֱלֹהִים יֹשֵׁב | עַל־כִּסֵּא קֹדֶשׁ: י
 נְדִיבֵי עַמִּים | נֶאֱסָפוּ
 עִם אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹרָהֶם
 כִּי לְאֱלֹהִים מִגְנֵי־אָרֶץ
 מֵאֵד נִעְלָה:

- 7 Sing praises to God, sing praises;
sing praises to our King, sing praises.
- 8 For, God is the king of all the earth;
sing praises with a psalm!
- 9 God reigns over the nations,
seated on his holy throne.
- 10 The leaders of the nations rally
to the people of the God of Abraham.
The shields of the earth belong to God,
who is exalted on high.

7 For this verse, here following the MT, NRSV & NETB, the NJB (following the LXX) reads:

ψάλατε τῷ Θεῷ ἡμῶν, ψάλατε, *Let the music sound for our God, let it sound,*
 ψάλατε τῷ βασιλεῖ ἡμῶν, ψάλατε, *let the music sound for our king, let it sound.*

8 For the 2nd line, here following the MT & NRSV, the NJB, following the LXX (ψάλατε συνετῶς) has, “learn the music; let it sound for God!”

9 When a new king was enthroned, his followers would acclaim him king using this enthronement formula (Qal perfect 3MS מֶלֶךְ – ‘to reign’, followed by the name of the king): see 2S 15:10, 1K 1:11–18, 2K 9:13, as well as Is 52:7. In this context, the perfect verbal form is generalising, but the declaration logically follows the historical reference in v. 5 to God having ascended his throne.

10 The covenant with Abraham is extended to the whole human race. The ‘shields’ are the kings, defenders of their peoples.

תהילים פרק מח

א שִׁיר מִזְמֹר לְבְנֵי־קָרַח:
ב גָּדוֹל יְהוָה וּמִהַלֵּל מְאֹד
ג בְּעִיר אֱלֹהֵינוּ הֶרֶקֶדְשׁוֹ:
יִפָּה נוֹף מְשׁוֹשׁ כָּל־הָאָרֶץ
הֶרֶצִּיּוֹן יִרְכָּתִי צָפוֹן
ד קְרִית מֶלֶךְ רַב:
אֱלֹהִים בְּאַרְמְנוֹתֶיהָ
ה נֹדַע לְמִשְׁגָּב:
כִּי־הִנֵּה הַמְּלָכִים נֹעְדוּ
עָבְרוּ יַחְדָּו:
ו הֵמָּה רָאוּ כֵן תִּמְהוּ
נִבְהְלוּ נַחֲפָזוּ:

PSALM 48

- 1 *A Song. A Psalm of the Korahites.*
- 2 Great is Yahweh and most worthy of praise
in the city of our God. His holy hill,
3 towering in beauty, is the joy of the whole world.
Mount Zion in the heart of the north,
the settlement of the Great King.
- 4 God himself among its palaces
has proved himself its bulwark.
- 5 For look, the kings assemble;
together they advanced.
- 6 When they looked, they were shocked,
they panicked, they fled.

PSALM 48

- 1 This is a hymn exalting Mount Zion, the nucleus of ancient Jerusalem, site of the royal palace and the Temple (see #2S 5:9). It may contain an allusion (vv. 4 and 15) to the defeat of the Syro-Ephraimite alliance against Ahaz in 735 BCE and the hasty retreat of Sennacherib in 701 BCE. Most English translations do not include a verse number for the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and subsequent verse numbers are incremented.
- 2 The 'city of our God' is Jerusalem, which is also referred to here as 'his holy hill', that is, Zion (see v. 3 and Is 66:20, Jl 2:1, 3:17, Zc 8:3, Dn 9:16).
- 3 In Canaanite poetry, 'the mountain of the north' is the home of the gods (called 'Zaphon' in the Ras Shamra tablets); the psalmist adopts the expression, applying it to Mount Zion. The *NRSV* has 'in the far north' in place of 'in the heart of the north'.
- 4 Literally translated, the 2nd line read, "he is known for an elevated place."
- 5 The logical connection between verses 4 and 5 seems to be this: God is the protector of Zion and reveals himself as the city's defender – this is necessary because hostile armies threaten the city.
- 6 The translation attempts to reflect the staccato style of the Hebrew text, where the main clauses of vv. 5–7 are juxtaposed without connectives.

ז רַעֲדָה אֶחֱזַתָם שָׁם
 חֵיל כִּיּוֹלָדָה:
 ח בְּרוּחַ קָדִים
 תִּשְׁבֵּר אֲנִיּוֹת תַּרְשִׁישׁ:
 ט כָּאֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְנוּ | בֵּן רֹאִינוּ
 בְּעִיר־יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת בְּעִיר אֱלֹהֵינוּ
 אֱלֹהִים יְכוֹנֶנָּה עַד־עוֹלָם
 סֵלָה:
 י דְּמִינוּ אֱלֹהִים חֶסֶדָּךְ
 בְּקֶרֶב הַיְכָלְךָ:
 יא כְּשִׁמְךָ אֱלֹהִים
 בֵּן תִּהְלֶתְךָ עַל־קְצוֹי־אָרֶץ
 צֶדֶק מְלֵאָה יְמִינְךָ:
 יב יִשְׂמַח | הַר־צִיּוֹן
 תִּגְלֶנָּה בָנוֹת יְהוּדָה
 לְמַעַן מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ:
 יג סִבּוּ צִיּוֹן וְהַקִּיפוּהָ
 סַפְּרוּ מִגְדָּלֶיהָ:

- 7 Trembling seized them there,
pains like a woman in labour,
- 8 As when the east wind
shatters the ships of Tarshish.
- 9 What we had heard we saw for ourselves
in the city of our God, in the city of Yahweh Sabaoth,
which God has established forever.
- Selah*
- 10 We reflect on your faithful love, God,
in your Temple!
- 11 Both your name and your praise, God,
reach to the ends of the earth.
Your right hand is full of justice.
- 12 Mount Zion rejoices,
the daughters of Judah delight
because of your judgements.
- 13 Go round Zion, walk right through her,
count her bastions.

7 The adverb שָׁם ('there') is used here, as often in poetic texts, to point 'to a spot in which a scene is localised vividly in the imagination'.

8 The verse refers to sea-going ships capable of reaching Tarshish but see #Is 23:1.

9 Both the *NJB* & *NRSV* omit the word '*Selah*' (סֵלָה), here following the *MT*.

10 In place of 'faithful', here following the *NJB*, the *NRSV* has 'steadfast' and *NETB* has 'loyal'.

11 Here, God's 'name' refers to his reputation and revealed character.

12 The 'daughters of Judah' refers to the towns neighbouring Mount Zion (the *NRSV* has 'towns' in place of 'daughters').

13 The verb forms in vv. 13–14 are plural: the entire Judahite community is addressed.

יד שִׁיתוּ לְבַבְכֶּם | לַחִילָהּ
 פִּסְגּוֹ אֲרָמֹנֹתֶיהָ
 לְמַעַן תִּסְפְּרוּ לְדוֹר אַחֲרָיוֹן:
 טו כִּי זֶה | אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵינוּ עוֹלָם וָעֶד
 הוּא יִנְהַגֵּנוּ עַל־מֹת:

14 Admire her walls;
 examine her palaces,
 to tell future generations that such is God.
 15 Our God is forever and ever;
 he is our guide!

¹⁴ The translation of the 1st line is uncertain; the *NRSV* opens with ‘consider its ramparts’.

¹⁵ At the end of this verse, the *MT* adds ‘to death’ (עַל־מֹת), a corrupt rubric belonging to the following Psalm.

תהילים פרק מט

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ | לְבְנֵי־קָרַח מִזְמוֹר:
ב שְׁמַעוּ־זֹאת כָּל־הָעַמִּים
ג הָאֲזִינוּ כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי הָאֲדָמָה
ד גַּם־בְּנֵי אָדָם גַּם־בְּנֵי־אִישׁ
ה יַחַד עָשִׂיר וְאֶבְיוֹן:
ו פִּי יִדְבֹר חֲכָמוֹת
ז וְהִגֹּת לִבִּי תְבוּנוֹת:
ח אֶטָּה לְמִשְׁלַל אֲזִנִּי
ט אֶפְתָּח בְּכֹנֹר חִידָתִי:
י לָמָּה אֵירָא בְיָמַי רָע
יא עֹן עֲקָבִי יִסּוּבֵנִי:

PSALM 49

- ¹ To the leader. A Psalm of the Korahites.
- ² Hear this, all nations;
listen, all who dwell on earth:
- ³ All mankind, every living person,
rich and poor alike!
- ⁴ My lips have wisdom to utter,
my heart good sense to whisper.
- ⁵ I listen carefully to a proverb;
I set my riddle to the music of the harp.
- ⁶ Why should I be afraid in times of trouble,
when the iniquity of my persecutors surrounds me?

PSALM 49

- ¹ Most English translations do not include a verse number for the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and subsequent verse numbers are accordingly incremented. The *Paseq* is presented as grey text, just as it appears in the *MAM* text.
- ² The rare noun חֲלָד ('earth') occurs in Ps 17:14 and perhaps also in Is 38:11.
- ³ Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "Even the sons of mankind, even the sons of man." Because of the 2nd line, where 'rich and poor' are mentioned, some treat these expressions as polar opposites, with בְּנֵי אָדָם referring to the lower classes and בְּנֵי־אִישׁ to higher classes (cf. *NJB*: 'people high and low'). But usage does not support such a view. The rare phrase בְּנֵי־אִישׁ (literally, 'sons of man') appears to refer to human beings in general in its other uses (see Ps 4:2, 62:9, Lm 3:33); thus, it is better to understand 'even the sons of mankind' and 'even the sons of man' as synonymous expressions. The repetition emphasises the need for all people to pay attention, for the psalmist's message is relevant to everyone.
- ⁴ The term תְּבוּנוֹת ('meditations') here refers to thoughts that are verbalized (see the 1st line).
- ⁵ In the 1st line, the psalmist speaks as a pupil who learns a song of wisdom from a sage; this suggests that the resulting insightful song derives from another source, perhaps God himself.
- ⁶ The 2nd line follows the *NRSV*; the *NJB* has the conjectural, "Malice dogs me and hems me in."

ז	הַבֹּטְחִים עַל־חֵילָם וּבְרַב עֲשָׂרָם יִתְהַלְלוּ:	7	They trust in their wealth, and boast of the profusion of their riches.
ח	אֶחָד לֹא־פֹדֶה יִפְדֶּה אִישׁ לֹא־יִתֵּן לְאֱלֹהִים כֶּפֶר׃	8	Truly, no one can ever redeem a brother, or pay his own ransom to God.
ט	וַיִּקֶּר פְּדִיּוֹן נַפְשָׁם וַחֲדָל לְעוֹלָם:	9	The price of life is too high; it can never be
י	וַיַּחֲיֶעֱוֹד לְנֶצַח לֹא יֵרָאֶה הַשְׁחָת׃	10	that he will live on forever and avoid the sight of the abyss.
יא	כִּי יֵרָאֶה חֲכָמִים יָמוּתוּ יַחַד בְּסִיל וּבַעַר יֵאָבְדוּ וְעִזְבוּ לְאַחֲרֵים חֵילָם:	11	Surely, he will see the wise will also die, no less than the fool and the brute, and leave their wealth behind for others.
יב	קִרְבָּם בְּתִימוֹ לְעוֹלָם מִשְׁכַּנָּתָם לְדוֹר וָדָר קִרְאוּ בְשִׁמוֹתָם עָלֵי אֲדָמוֹת׃	12	Forever no home but their tombs, their dwelling-place age after age, though they gave their name to whole territories.
יג	וְאָדָם בִּיקָר בְּלִילִין נִמְשַׁל כַּבְּהֵמוֹת נִדְמוֹ׃	13	In prosperity, people lose their good sense; they become no better than dumb animals.

7 The imperfect verbal form of the 2nd line emphasises their characteristic behaviour.

8 Another reading for the 1st line is, "No one can ransom a brother."

9 Some emend the text to 'his life', understanding the antecedent of the pronoun as 'brother' in v. 8.

10 In place of 'abyss', the NRSV has 'grave'; the literal translation is 'pit', meaning Sheol.

11 The particle כִּי is understood here as emphatic.

12 'Tombs' follows the LXX (τάφοι) and Peshitta; the MT has 'inside (thought)'.

13 The translation of the 1st line is uncertain; the NRSV has, "Mortals cannot abide in their pomp," as also in v. 20.

יִד זֶה דְרָכָם בָּסֵל לָמוֹ
וְאַחֲרֵיהֶם | בְּפִיָּהֶם יִרְצוּ

סֵלָה:

טו כְּצֹאֵן | לְשֹׂאֹל שְׁתּוֹ מוֹת יִרְעֵם
וְיִרְדּוּ בָם יִשְׁרִים | לַבֹּקֶר
וְצִירָם וְצוֹרָם לְבִלּוֹת שֹׂאֹל
מִזֶּבֶל לוֹ:

טז אֱ-לֹהִים יִפְדֶּה נַפְשִׁי מִיַּד-שֹׂאֹל
כִּי יִקְחֵנִי

סֵלָה:

יז אַל-תִּירָא כִּי-יַעֲשֶׂר אִישׁ
כִּי-יִרְבֶּה כְּבוֹד בֵּיתוֹ:

יח כִּי לֹא בַּמוֹתוֹ יִקַּח הַכֹּל
לֹא-יִרְדַּ אַחֲרָיו כְּבוֹדוֹ:

יט כִּי-נִפְשׁוּ בַחַיּוֹ יִבְרָךְ
וְיִזְדָּךְ כִּי-תִיטִיב לָךְ:

14 So, they go on in their self-assurance,
right up to the end, they are content with their lot.

Selah

15 They go to Sheol like sheep,
with death as their shepherd;
the honest will rule them in the morning.
Sheol will consume them.

16 But God will ransom my soul from the clutches of Sheol,
and will receive me.

Selah

17 Do not be afraid when someone gets rich,
and lives in ever-greater splendour.

18 When he dies, he will take nothing with him,
his wealth will not go down with him.

19 Though he pampered himself while he lived,
and people praise you for looking after yourself,

14 The translation of this verse is uncertain; the NRSV has, "Such is the fate of the foolhardy, the end of those who are pleased with their lot."

15 'Morning is the time for eschatological judgement and the triumph of the upright, see #17:15. The different reading of the *Qere* and *Ketiv* here possibly reflects a scribe's misreading of a (possibly small or short) *vav* for a *yod*.

16 The Psalmist trusts God to keep him beyond the reach of Sheol. It cannot be asserted that here he glimpses the possibility of being 'taken up' to heaven like Enoch and Elijah (see #16:10 & #73:24); but he does think that the ultimate fate of the upright must differ from that of the godless.

17 Why would people fear such a development? The acquisition of wealth makes people powerful and enables them to oppress others (vv. 6-7).

18 By contrast, God will glorify the upright, 73:24, 91:15.

19 Verses 19-20 form one long sentence in the *MT*.

כ תָּבוֹא עַד־דֹּר אֲבוֹתָיו
עַד־נֶצַח לֹא יֵרְאוּ־אֹר:
כא אָדָם בִּיקָר וְלֹא יִבִּין
נִמְשָׁל בְּבֵה־מֹות נִדְמוּ:

²⁰ he will go to join the ranks of his ancestors,
who will never again see the light.

²¹ In prosperity, people lose their good sense;
they are like animals that perish.

²⁰ 'He' is a conjectural translation (the NRSV has '*they*'); the MT has '*you*'.

²¹ Another reading for '*animals*' is '*cattle*'.

תהילים פרק נ

א מִזְמוֹר לְאַסָּף
אֵל אֱלֹהִים יְהוָה דִּבֶּר וַיִּקְרָא אֶרֶץ
מִמִּזְרַח־שֶׁמֶשׁ עַד־מְבֹאוֹ:
ב מִצִּיּוֹן מְכַלֵּל־יָפִי
אֱלֹהִים הוֹפִיעַ:
ג יבֹא אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֵל־יִחְרֹשׁ
אֶשׁ־לִפְנָיו תֹּאכַל וְסִבִּיבָיו נִשְׁעָרָה מֵאֵד:
ד יִקְרָא אֶל־הַשָּׁמַיִם מֵעַל
וְאֶל־הָאָרֶץ לִדִּין עַמּוֹ:
ה אֶסְפוּ־לִי חֲסִידַי
כָּרְתִי בְרִיתִי עֲלִי־זָבַח:
ו וַיִּגִּדּוּ שָׁמַיִם צִדְקוֹ
כִּי־אֱלֹהִים | שֹׁפֵט הוּא
סֵלָה:

PSALM 50

- 1 *A Psalm of Asaph.*
The God of gods, Yahweh, is speaking;
from east to west, he summons the earth.
- 2 From Zion, perfection of beauty,
he shines forth.
- 3 Our God is coming and will not keep silent,
devouring fire ahead of him, raging tempest around him.
- 4 He summons the heavens from on high,
and the earth to judge his people.
- 5 "Gather to me my faithful,
who sealed my covenant sacrifice."
- 6 The heavens proclaim his saving justice,
"God himself is judge."

Selah

PSALM 50

- 1 The literal translation of 'from east to west' is 'from the sunrise to its going'.
- 2 The psalmist may allude ironically to Dt 33:2, where God 'shines forth' from Sinai and comes to superintend Moses' blessing of the tribes.
- 3 The jussive in the 1st line (note the negative particle **וְאֵל**) is used rhetorically to express the conviction that something cannot or should not happen. (Compare Ps 18:8, Ha 3:4.)
- 4 The personified heavens and earth (see v. 1 as well) are summoned to God's courtroom as witnesses against God's covenant people (see Is 1:2). Long before this, Moses warned the people that the heavens and earth would be watching their actions (see Dt 4:26, 30:19, 31:28, 32:1).
- 5 The term **חֲסִידַי** ('*my faithful*') is used elsewhere in the psalms in a positive sense of God's loyal followers but here, as the 2nd line makes clear, the term has a neutral sense and simply refers to those who have sworn allegiance to God, not necessarily to those whose loyalty is genuine.
- 6 The 2nd line may also be read, "for God, he is about to judge." The participle may be taken as substantive (as in the translation) or as a predicate.

ז	שְׁמַעָה עַמִּי וְאִדְבַּרְהָ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶעֱיֵדָה בָּךְ אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֶיךָ אָנֹכִי:	7	"Listen, my people, I am speaking, Israel, I am giving evidence against you, I, go, your God.
ח	לֹא עַל־זִבְחֶיךָ אוֹכִיחֶךָ וְעוֹלָתֶיךָ לִנְגֹדִי תָמִיד:	8	Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you, those burnt offerings constantly before me.
ט	לֹא־אֶקַּח מִבֵּיתְךָ פֶּרֶךְ מִמֶּכְלָאֲתֶיךָ עֲתוּדִים:	9	I will not take any bull from your homes, or a single goat from your folds.
י	כִּי־לִי כָל־חַיַּת־הָאָרֶץ בְּהֵמוֹת בְּהַרְרֵי־אֶלְפֵי:	10	For all forest creatures are mine already, the animals on the mountains in their thousands.
יא	יָדַעְתִּי כָל־עוֹף הָרִים וְזִיז שְׂדֵי עַמָּדִי:	11	I know every bird in the air; whatever moves in the fields is mine.
יב	אִם־אֶרְעֵב לֹא־אֶמַּר לָךְ כִּי־לִי תֵבֵל וּמְלָאָה:	12	If I were hungry, I should not tell you, since the world and all it holds is mine.
יג	הָאוֹכֵל בֶּשָׂר אֲבִירִים וְדָם עֲתוּדִים אֶשְׁתֶּה:	13	Am I to eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats?
יד	זָבַח לֵאלֹהִים תּוֹדָה וְשָׁלֵם לְעֹלִיזֹן נִדְרֶיךָ:	14	Let thanksgiving be your sacrifice to God; fulfil the vows you make to the Most High.

7 God does not want their sacrifices, which they have brought in abundance (vv. 8–13) but rather thanksgiving and prayer (vv. 14–15).

8 An alternative to 'rebuke' (here following the NRSV) is 'condemn' (as NETB).

9 The NJB & NRSV have 'accept' in place of 'take', here following NETB.

10 The term בְּהֵמוֹת ('animals') refers here to cattle (see Ps 104:14).

11 'Air' follows the LXX, Tg and Peshitta; the MT has 'mountains'.

12 God does not need sacrifices for sustenance (see v. 13 & #15).

13 The rhetorical questions assume an emphatic negative response, "Of course not!"

14 For the 1st line, the NRSV reads, "Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving."

טו וְקִרְאַנִי בְיוֹם צָרָה
 אֲחַלְצֶךָ וְתִכְבְּדֵנִי:
 טז וְלִרְשָׁעִים אָמַר אֱלֹהִים
 מַה־לָּךְ לִסְפֹּר חֻקֵּי
 וְתַשָּׂא בְרִיתִי עַל־פִּידֶךָ:
 ז' וְאַתָּה שָׁנֵאתָ מוֹסֵר
 וְתִשְׁלַח דְּבָרֶיךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ:
 יח אִם־רָאִיתָ גִּנְבַּת וְתִרְצֵן עִמּוֹ
 וְעַם מְנַאֲפִים חִלַּקְךָ:
 יט פִּידְךָ שִׁלַּחַת בִּרְעָה
 וְלִשְׁוֹנֶה תִּצְמִיד מְרֻמָּה:
 כ תָּשֵׁב בְּאַחִיֶּךָ תִּדְבֹּר
 בֶּבֶן־אִמְךָ תִּתְּנֶנּוּ דָּפִי:
 כא אֱלֹהִים עָשִׂיתָ וְהִחַרְשְׁתָּ
 דְּמִית הָיִיתָ־אֱהִיָּה כִּמּוֹךָ

- 15 Then, if you call me in time of trouble
I will rescue you and you will honour me.”
- 16 But to the wicked God says:
“What right have you to recite my statutes,
to take my covenant on your lips?
- 17 For you detest my teaching
and thrust my words behind you.
- 18 “You make friends with a thief as soon as you see one,
you feel at home with adulterers.
- 19 Your conversation is devoted to evil,
and your tongue to inventing lies.
- 20 “You sit and speak against your own brother,
you malign you own mother’s son.
- 21 You do this: am I to say nothing?
Do you think that I am really like you?

- 15 In vv. 7–15, God makes it clear that he was not rebuking Israel because they had failed to offer sacrifices (v. 8) but their understanding of the essence of their relationship with God was confused: they believed that he *needed* such sacrifices.
- 16 So far, God has addressed all Israel indiscriminately; the 1st line could have been added to exclude the upright from what follows: toleration of evil (v. 18) and indulgence in slander (vv. 19–20).
- 17 The 2nd line means that they reject God’s instruction.
- 18 The literal translation of the 2nd line is, “*and with adulterers (is) your portion.*”
- 19 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, “*Your mouth you send with evil.*”
- 20 To ‘sit and speak against’ someone implies plotting against that person (see Ps 119:23).
- 21 God was silent in the sense that he delayed punishment. Of course, God’s patience toward sinners eventually runs out: the divine ‘silence’ is only temporary (see v. 3, where the psalmist, having described God’s arrival, observes that he ‘*will not keep silent*’).

אֹכִיחֶךָ וְאֶעֱרָכָה לְעֵינֶיךָ:
 כב בִּינוּנָא זֹאת שְׁכַחִי אֱלֹהֶ
 פֶּן־אֶטְרֹף וְאִין מַצִּיל:
 כג זִבַּח תֹּזֶה יִכְבְּדֵנִי
 וְשֵׁם דְּרָךְ אֶרְאֶנּוּ בִישַׁע אֱלֹהִים:

I charge you, indict you to your face.

- ²² “Think it out, you who forget God,
 or I will tear you apart without hope of a rescuer.
²³ Honour to me is a sacrifice of thanksgiving;
 to the upright, I will show God’s salvation.”

²² Elsewhere in the psalms this verb translated ‘tear you apart’ is used of a lion tearing its prey (see Ps 7:2, 17:12, 22:13).

²³ ‘The upright’, literally, ‘the who keeps my ways’ (וְשֹׁמֵר דְּרָכַי) is conjectural; the MT has ‘he has placed his way’ (וְשֵׁם דְּרָךְ).

תהילים פרק נא

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד:
ב בָּבוֹא־אֵלָיו נָתַן הַנָּבִיא
כא כְּאֲשֶׁר־בָּא אֶל־בֵּת־שֶׁבַע:
ג חַנּוּנִי אֱלֹהִים כְּחַסְדֶּךָ
ד כְּרַב רַחֲמֶיךָ מִחַה פֶשְׁעִי:
ה הרבה הרב כִּבְסֵנִי מֵעוֹנִי
וּמַחְטָאתִי טַהֲרֵנִי:
ז כִּי־פֶשְׁעִי אֲנִי אָדַע
ח וַחֲטָאתִי נִגְדִי תָמִיד:
ט לֹךְ לְבַדְּךָ חֲטָאתִי
י וְהָרַע בְּעֵינֶיךָ עָשִׂיתִי
לְמַעַן תִּצְדַּק בְּדִבְרֶךָ
יא תִּזְכֶּה בְּשִׁפְטֶךָ:

PSALM 51

- ¹ *To the leader. A Psalm of David.*
- ² *When the prophet Nathan came to him after he had gone to Bathsheba.*
- ³ Have mercy on me, O God, in your faithful love; in your great tenderness, wipe away my offences.
- ⁴ Wash me thoroughly from my guilt; purify me from my sin.
- ⁵ For I am well aware of my offences and my sin is constantly in mind.
- ⁶ Against you, you alone, I have sinned, I have done what you see to be wrong, that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgement.

PSALM 51

- ¹ This is a Penitential Psalm (see #6:1), with close affinity with prophetic literature, especially Isaiah and Ezekiel. Although v. 10 makes it clear that the psalmist's problem is one of illness, the main emphasis is on restoration to moral, rather than merely physical, health.
- ² Most English translations do not include verse numbers for the titles; here, we follow the *MT*, and verse numbers are increased by 2.
- ³ Because of the reference to washing and cleansing in the following verse, it is likely that the psalmist is comparing forgiveness to wiping an object clean (note the use of the verb מָחָה in the sense of 'wipe clean' in 2Kg 21:13, Pr 30:20, Is 25:8); another option is that the psalmist is comparing forgiveness to erasing or blotting out names from a register (cf. Ex 32:32–33).
- ⁴ It is unclear what the significance of the different reading of the *Kethib* (הַרְבֵּה) and *Qere* (הָרַב) is here.
- ⁵ The literal translation of the 2nd line is, "and my sin (is) in front of me continually."
- ⁶ God is wholly pure and upright and by pardoning demonstrates his power over evil and his victory over sin.

ז הַזְכֵּרֵנִי חַטְּאוֹתַי
 וּבְחַטָּא יַחַמְתֵּנִי אֱמִי:
 ח הַזְכֵּרֵנִי חֶפְצֶת בִּטְחוֹת
 וּבְסֵתֶם חֲכָמָה תּוֹדִיעֵנִי:
 ט תְּחַטְּאֵנִי בַּאֲזוֹב וְאַטְהַר
 תְּכַבְּסֵנִי וּמַשְׁלֵג אֶלְבִּין:
 י תִּשְׁמִיעֵנִי שִׁשׁוֹן וְשִׂמְחָה
 תִּגְלֶנָּה עֲצָמוֹת דָּבִית:
 יא הַסְתֵּר פְּנֶיךָ מִחַטְּאֵי
 וְכִלְעוֹנֹתַי מִחָה:
 יב לֵב טָהוֹר בְּרֹא-לִי אֱלֹהִים
 וְרוּחַ נָכוֹן חֲדָשׁ בְּקִרְבִּי:

7 Remember, I was born guilty,
 a sinner from the moment of conception.
 8 You delight in sincerity of heart,
 and, in secret, you teach me wisdom.
 9 Purify me with hyssop until I am clean;
 wash me until I am whiter than snow.
 10 Let me hear the sound of joy and gladness,
 and the bones you have crushed will dance.
 11 Hide your face from my sins,
 and wipe away all my guilt.
 12 God, create in me a clean heart,
 renew within me a resolute spirit.

-
- 7 Human beings are born in a state of impurity (see #Job 14:4 and Pr 20:9), which is an implicit recognition of their tendency to evil (Gn 8:21). This basic impurity is here pleaded as a mitigating circumstance, cf. 1K 8:46, which God should take into account.
 8 The vocabulary of this verse (*'of heart'* – literally *'that which is covered'*, *'secret'* – *'that which is closed'*) should be compared with 7:9, 16:7, and 33:15. God penetrates human nature and can transform it. A symbolic sense may also be discerned if the verse is connected with Ezk 13:10ff, on the lying prophets who 'plaster over' cracked walls instead of rebuilding them (see also Lv 14:43 on infection of walls). Here, on the contrary, even what is hidden and plastered over will be purified and renewed by divine wisdom.
 9 *'Hyssop'* is a plant used for sprinkling in purifications (Lv 14:4, Nb 19:18); here, the sense is more likely metaphorical.
 10 The psalmist compares his sinful condition to that of a person who has been physically battered and crushed; within this metaphorical framework, his *'bones'* are the seat of his emotional strength.
 11 In this context, *"Hide your face from my sins"* means: Do not hold me accountable for my sins.
 12 In place of *'resolute'*, the NRSV uses *'right'*. The verb here translated as *'create'* always has God as its subject; it designates the act by which he brings something new and wonderful into being (Gn 1:1, Ex 34:10, Is 48:7, 65:17, Jr 31:21–22). The justification of the sinner is the most wonderful of all the works of God, and is analogous to the act of creation, see Ezk 36:25ff and Jr 31:33, 32:39–40.

אֶל־תִּשְׁלִיכֵנִי מִלִּפְנֵיךָ יג
 וְרוּחַ קֹדֶשְׁךָ אַל־תִּקַּח מִמֶּנִּי:
 הַשִּׁיבָה לִי שִׂשׁוֹן יִשְׁעֶךָ יד
 וְרוּחַ נְדִיבָה תִּסְמְכֵנִי:
 אֲלַמְּדָה פִּשְׁעִים דְּרָכֶיךָ טו
 וְחַטָּאִים אֵלֶיךָ יָשׁוּבוּ:
 הַצִּילֵנִי מִדָּמִים | אֱלֹהִים טז
 אֱלֹהֵי תְּשׁוּעָתִי
 תִּרְנֹן לְשׁוֹנֵי צְדָקָתְךָ:
 אֲדַנִּי שִׁפְתֵי תִפְתָּח יז
 וּפִי יַגִּיד תְּהִלָּתְךָ:
 כִּי | לֹא־תַחֲפֹץ זֶבַח וְאַתָּנָה יח
 עֹלָה לֹא תִרְצָה:

- 13 Do not thrust me away from your presence;
do not take away from me your Holy Spirit.
- 14 Give me back the joy of your salvation;
sustain in me a generous spirit.
- 15 I will teach the wicked your paths,
and sinners will return to you.
- 16 Deliver me from bloodshed, God,
God of my salvation,
and my tongue will acclaim your saving justice.
- 17 Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will speak out your praise.
- 18 Sacrifice gives you no pleasure,
burnt offering you do not desire.

13 Here, the 'Holy Spirit' is considered as the principle (a human quality but given by God) of moral and religious activity, whether of the individual, 143:10, Ws 1:5, 9:17, or of the nation as a whole, Ne 9:20, Is 63:11, Hg 2:5.

14 The NRSV uses 'willing' in place of 'generous' (which a footnote therein suggests as an alternative).

15 The cohortative translated 'I will teach' expresses the psalmist's resolve; this may be a vow or promise: if forgiven, the psalmist will 'repay' God by declaring his mercy and motivating other sinners to repent.

16 The prophet Ezekiel (see Ezk 7:23, 9:9, 22:2, 24:6) calls Jerusalem 'city of blood'. This has sometimes been considered an allusion to the murder of Uriah by David (2S 12:9). It has also been understood as the expression of the sudden death of the wicked, traditionally the punishment for sin.

17 The imperfect verbal form is used in the 1st line to express the psalmist's wish or request.

18 The terminology used here does not refer to expiatory sacrifices, but to dedication and communion offerings: this is not a categorical denial of the sacrificial system in general or of the importance of such offerings. The psalmist is talking about his specific situation. Dedication and communion offerings have their proper place in worship (see v. 19), but God requires something more fundamental, a repentant and humble attitude (see v. 19), before these offerings can have real meaning.

יט זִבְחֵי אֱלֹהִים רוּחַ נִשְׁבָּרָה
 לִב־נִשְׁבָּר וְנִדְבָה
 כ הִיטִיבָה בְּרָצוֹנְךָ אֶת־צִיּוֹן
 תִּבְנֶה חוֹמוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם:
 כא אֲזִ תַחֲפֹץ זִבְחֵי־צֶדֶק
 עֹלָה וְכֹלִיל
 אֲזִ יַעֲלוּ עַל־מִזְבִּיחֶךָ פָּרִים:

19 Sacrifice to God is a broken spirit,
 a broken, contrite heart you never scorn.
 20 In your graciousness, do good to Zion;
 rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.
 21 Then you will delight in upright sacrifices,
 burnt offerings and whole oblations,
 and young bulls will be offered on your altar.

¹⁹ An alternative opening is, “*My sacrifice to God.*”

²⁰ After the return from Exile, the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem was eagerly looked forward to as a sign of divine forgiveness, Is 60–62, Jr 30:15–18, Ezk 36:33.

²¹ The 2nd line is a liturgical annotation, inserted later. In the restored Jerusalem, sacrifice will recover its value because it will be offered with devotion (literally, ‘upright sacrifice’).

תהילים פרק נב

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִשְׁכִּיל לְדָוִד:
ב בָּבוֹא | דּוֹעַג הָאֲדָמִי וַיַּגֵּד לְשָׂאוּל וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ
בָּא דָּוִד אֶל-בֵּית אַחִימֶלֶךְ:
ג מִהִתְתַּהַלֵּל בִּרְעָה הַגִּבּוֹר
חֶסֶד אֵל כָּל-הַיּוֹם:
ד הַזֹּאת תַּחֲשֹׁב לְשׁוֹנֶךָ
כְּתַעַר מִלֹּטֶשׁ עֲשֵׂה רַמְיָה:
ה אֲהַבֵּת רָע מְטוֹב
שֶׁקֶר | מִדְּבַר צֶדֶק
סֵלָה:
ו אֲהַבֵּת כָּל-דְּבַר-יִבְלֵעַ
לְשׁוֹן מִרְמָה:

PSALM 52

- 1 *To the leader. A Maskil of David.*
- 2 *When Doeg the Edomite went and warned Saul,
"David has gone to Abimelech's house."*
- 3 *Why take pride in evil, O powerful one?
God's loyal love protects me all day long.*
- 4 *Your tongue devises destruction;
sharp as a razor, doer of deceit.*
- 5 *You prefer evil to good,
lying to uprightness.*
Selah
- 6 *You revel in destructive talk,
treacherous tongue!*

PSALM 52

- 1 The psalmist confidently confronts his enemy and affirms that God will destroy evildoers and vindicate the godly. Most English translations do not assign verse numbers to the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and subsequent verse numbers are accordingly increased by 2.
- 2 According to the title, David wrote this psalm during the period when Saul was seeking his life; on one occasion, 'Doeg the Edomite', Saul's head shepherd (1S 21:7), informed Saul of David's whereabouts (see 1S 21-22).
- 3 The translation here follows the *MT* (and *NETB*); the *NJB*, following the *LXX*, reads, "Why take pride in being wicked, you champion in villainy? All day long ..."
- 4 The masculine participle עֲשֵׂה is understood as a substantive vocative, addressed to the powerful man.
- 5 A more literal translation of the 2nd line is, "deceit more than speaking what is right." Note the unusual/unexpected dagesh on the resh in רָע.
- 6 Traditionally בִּלְעַ (literally, 'swallowing') has been interpreted in the sense of 'devouring'; this would fit the immediate context nicely and provide a close parallel to the following line, which refers to deceptive words.

ז גַּם־אֵל יִתְצַדֵּךְ לְנֶצַח
 יַחַתְדֶּךָ וַיִּסְחַדֶּךָ מֵאֹהֶל
 וּשְׂרָשְׁדֶּךָ מֵאֶרֶץ חַיִּים
 סֵלָה:

ח וַיֵּרְאוּ צַדִּיקִים וַיִּירְאוּ
 וְעָלְיוּ יִשְׁחַקּוּ:
 ט הִנֵּה הַגִּבּוֹר לֹא יֵשִׁים אֱלֹהִים מְעֻזָּו
 וַיִּבְטַח בְּרֹב עֲשָׂרוֹ
 י' וַאֲנִי כְזֹית רַעֲנָן בְּבֵית אֱלֹהִים
 בָּטַחְתִּי בַחֲסֵד־אֱלֹהִים עוֹלָם וָעֶד:
 יא אוֹדֶדְךָ לְעוֹלָם כִּי עָשִׂיתָ
 וְאֶקְוֶה שְׁמֶךָ כִּי־טוֹב
 נִגִּיד חֲסִידֶיךָ:

7 That is why God will crush you forever,
 snatch you and tear you from your tent,
 and uproot you from the land of the living.

Selah

8 The upright will be awestruck as they see it,
 they will mock him:
 9 “See, the one who would not take refuge in God,
 but relied on his own great wealth,
 and made himself strong by crime.”
 10 But I am like a flourishing olive tree in the house of God.
 I put my trust in God’s faithful love, forever and ever.
 11 I shall praise you forever for what you have done,
 and in the presence of your faithful shall trust in your name,
 so full of goodness.

7 The rare verb (יַחַתְדֶּךָ, ‘snatch’) occurs only here and in Pr 6:27, 25:22 & Is 30:14.

8 The NRSV has ‘the evildoer’ in place of ‘him’. Literally translated, this verse reads, “and the godly will see and will fear and at him will laugh.”

9 For the last line, the NRSV, following the Tg and Peshitta, has, “and sought refuge in wealth.”

10 The psalmist is confident of deliverance.

11 The NRSV has the conjectural ‘proclaim’ in place of ‘trust in’.

תהילים פרק נג

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ עַל־מַחֲלַת מִשְׁכִּיל לְדָוִד:
ב אָמַר נָבִל בְּלִבּוֹ אֵין אֱלֹהִים
הַשְׁחִיתוּ וְהִתְעִיבוּ עוֹל
אֵין עֲשֵׂה־טוֹב:
ג אֱלֹהִים מִשְׁמַיִם הַשְׁקִיף עַל־בְּנֵי־אָדָם
לִרְאוֹת הֵיחַשׁ מִשְׁכִּיל
דֶּרֶשׁ אֶת־אֱלֹהִים:
ד כָּלֹּץ סָג יַחְדָּו נִאֲלָחוּ
אֵין עֲשֵׂה־טוֹב
אֵין גַּם־אֶחָד:
ה הֲלֹא יָדְעוּ פְעָלֵי אֹן
אֲכָלִי עַמִּי אֲכָלוּ לֶחֶם
אֱלֹהִים לֹא קָרְאוּ:

PSALM 53

- 1 *To the leader. In sickness. A Maskil of David.*
- 2 The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God!"
They are corrupt, vile, and unjust,
not one of them does right.
- 3 God looks down from heaven at the children of Adam,
to see if a single one is wise,
a single one seeks God.
- 4 They have all proved faithless;
they are all alike, perverse.
Not one of them does right, no, not even one.
- 5 Are they not aware, these evildoers?
They are devouring my people, as they eat bread,
and they never call upon God.

PSALM 53

- ¹ Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and subsequent verse numbers are accordingly incremented. The meaning of the term translated '*in sickness*' (עַל־מַחֲלַת, here following the *NJB*) is uncertain. This is an 'Elohistic' edition of Ps 14 (of which see the footnotes).
- ² The statement, "*There is no God*," is probably not a philosophical assertion that God does not exist, but rather a confident affirmation that he is unconcerned about how men live morally and ethically (see Ps 10:4, 11).
- ³ The image of God looking down from heaven draws attention to his sovereignty over the world.
- ⁴ The literal translation of the 2nd line is, "*together they are corrupt*."
- ⁵ The rhetorical question of the 1st line expresses the psalmist's amazement at their apparent lack of understanding; this may refer to their lack of moral understanding, but it more likely refers to their failure to anticipate God's defence of his people (see vv. 6–7).

שֵׁם | פָּחַדוּ פָּחַד לֹא־הָיָה פָּחַד
 כִּי־אֱלֹהִים פִּזֵּר עַצְמוֹת חֲנָדָה
 הִבְשִׁתָּה כִּי־אֱלֹהִים מְאַסֶּם:
 מִי יִתֵּן מִצִּיּוֹן יִשְׁעוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל
 בְּשׁוּב אֱלֹהִים שְׁבוֹת עַמּוֹ
 יִגַּל יַעֲקֹב יִשְׂמַח יִשְׂרָאֵל:

- 6 They shall be in great fear, where there was no fear;
 for, God scatters the bones of him who besieges you;
 they are mocked because God rejects them.
- 7 Who will bring from Zion salvation for Israel?
 When God brings his people home,
 Jacob will rejoice; Israel will be glad!

6 The 2nd line is an allusion to Sennacherib (the NRSV has '*the ungodly*' in place of '*him who besieges you*') and, through him, to all the enemies of Jerusalem. The text of this verse seems less corrupt than in Ps 14.

7 The 1st line refers metonymically to God, the one who lives in Zion and provides deliverance for Israel.

תהילים פרק נד

א לִמְנַצֵּחַ בְּנִינֹת מִשְׁכֵּיל לְדָוִד:
ב בָּבֹא הַזִּיפִים וַיֹּאמְרוּ לְשֹׁאֵל
הֲלֹא דָוִד מְסֻתָּר עִמָּנוּ:
ג אֱלֹהִים בְּשִׁמְךָ הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי
וּבְגִבּוֹרֶתְךָ תְּדִינֵנִי:
ד אֱלֹהִים שְׁמַע תְּפִלָּתִי
הָאֲזִינָה לְאִמְרֵי־פִי:
ה כִּי זָרִים קָמוּ עָלַי
וְעֲרִיצִים בִּקְשׁוּ נַפְשִׁי
לֹא שָׁמוּ אֱלֹהִים לְנַגְדָם
סֵלָה:
ו הִנֵּה אֱלֹהִים עֹזֵר לִי
אֲדַנִּי בְּסִמְכֵי נַפְשִׁי:

PSALM 54

- ¹ To the leader: on stringed instruments. A Maskil of David.
² When the Ziphites went to Saul and said,
"Is not David hiding with us?"
³ God, save me by your name,
in your power, vindicate me.
⁴ God, hear my prayer,
listen to the words I speak.
⁵ Arrogant men are attacking me,
bullies hounding me to death,
no room in their thoughts for God.
Selah
⁶ But now God is coming to my help,
the Lord, among those who sustain me.

PSALM 54

- ¹ Most English translations do not assign verse numbers to the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and subsequent verse numbers are accordingly increased by 2.
² Some English translations (e.g. *NETB*) translate the rhetorical question as a statement: "*David is hiding with us.*"
³ Here, the 'name' is used as a substitute for the person, see #Ex 3:13.
⁴ Literally translated, the 2nd line ends, "... words of my mouth."
⁵ 'Arrogant' follows one *Hebrew MS* (זָרִים) and the *Tg* (the *NRSV* uses 'insolent'); the *MT* has 'strangers' (זָרִים), which could be a xenophobic alteration from the Maccabaeian era, or a result of ד to ר confusion.
⁶ An alternative reading for the 1st line is, "Look: God is my helper!"

ז יִשׁוּב יִשְׁיב הָרַע לְשׁוֹרְרֵי
 בְּאַמְתָּךְ הַצְמִיתֵם:
 ח בְּנִדְבָה אֶזְבַּחַה לָּךְ
 אֹדָה שְׁמֶךָ יְהוָה כִּי־טוֹב:
 ט כִּי מִכָּל־צָרָה הִצִּילָנִי
 וּבְאֵיבִי רָאִתָּה עֵינַי:

- 7 Let their wickedness recoil on those who lie in wait for me.
 Yahweh, in your constancy, destroy them.
- 8 With a freewill offering I will sacrifice to you
 and praise your name, for it is good.
- 9 For it has rescued me from all my troubles,
 and my eye has feasted on my enemies.

⁷ The **ישוב** of the *Ketiv* reads 'will return' in place of the **יִשְׁיב** ('let ... recoil') of the *Qere*.

⁸ For the 1st line, here following the *NRSV* & *NETB*, the *NJB* reads, "I will gladly offer you sacrifice." (See Nb 15:3.)

⁹ The perfects in this verse are probably rhetorical, indicating the psalmist's certitude and confidence that God will intervene: the psalmist is so confident of God's positive response to his prayer, he can describe God's deliverance and his own vindication as if they were occurring or had already occurred.

תהילים פרק נה

א לִמְנַצֵּחַ בְּנִגִּיֹת מִשְׁכִּיל לְדָוִד:
ב הֶאֱזִינָה אֱלֹהִים תְּפִלָּתִי
וְאַל־תִּתְּעַלֵּם מִתַּחֲנָנִי:
ג הַקְשִׁיבָה לִי וְעֲנֵנִי
אֲרִיד בְּשִׁיחִי וְאֶהְיָמָה:
ד מִקּוֹל אוֹיֵב מִפְּנֵי עֶקֶת רָשָׁע
כִּי־יִמְיֹטוּ עָלַי אֹן וּבֹאֲף יִשְׁטָמוּנִי:
ה לְבִי יִחִיל בְּקִרְבִּי
וְאִימֹת מָוֶת נָפְלוּ עָלַי:
ו יִרְאָה וְרֵעַד יִבֹּא בִּי
וְתִכְסֹּנִי פִלָּצוֹת:
ז וְאֶמַּר מִי־יִתֵּן־לִי אֵבֶר כַּיֹּנָה
אֲעֹפָה וְאֶשְׁכְּנָה:

PSALM 55

- ¹ *To the leader: with stringed instruments. A Maskil of David.*
- ² God, hear my prayer,
do not hide away from my plea.
- ³ Give me a hearing, answer me,
I am restless in my troubles.
- ⁴ I shudder at the enemy's shouts, at the outcry of the wicked;
they hurl trouble down upon me and angrily attack me.
- ⁵ My heart writhes within me,
the terrors of death come upon me.
- ⁶ Fear and trembling overwhelm me,
and shuddering grips me.
- ⁷ And I say, "I wish I had wings like a dove,
to fly away and find rest?"

PSALM 55

- ¹ Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and subsequent verse numbers are accordingly incremented. This Psalm is an individual lamentation inspired by Jeremiah (cf. Jr 4:19, 9:1ff, 18:19, 23:9); the Hebrew text is in a poor condition.
- ² Another reading for 'hide away from' (following *NETB*) is 'ignore'.
- ³ For the 2nd line, here following *NETB*, the *NJB* reads, "my troubles give me no peace."
- ⁴ 'Outcry' is conjectural (עֶקֶת); the *MT* (עֶקֶת) is unintelligible (the *NRSV* has 'noise').
- ⁵ An alternative reading for 'writhes' is 'trembles'.
- ⁶ The verbal form with the prefixed *vav* (וְאֶשְׁכְּנָה, 'grips') carries on the descriptive (present progressive) force of the preceding imperfect.
- ⁷ The form with the prefixed *vav* (וְאֶמַּר, 'And I say') carries on the descriptive force of the verbs in v. 6.

ח הֵנָּה אֶרְחִיק נָדָד
אֵלַיִן בַּמִּדְבָּר
סֵלָה:

ט אֲחִישָׁה מִפִּלֹּט לִי
מִרוּחַ סֶעָה מִסָּעֵר:

י בִּלְעַ אֲדָנִי פִלַּג לְשׁוֹנָם
כִּי־רָאִיתִי חֲמָס וְרִיב בְּעִיר:
יא יוֹמָם וּלְיָלָה יִסּוּבְּבָהּ עַל־חוֹמֹתֶיהָ
וְאוֹן וְעַמָּל בַּקִּרְבָּה:
יב הַנּוֹת בַּקִּרְבָּה
וְלֹא־יִמִּישׁ מִרְחֻבָּהּ תָּדָךְ וּמִרְמָה:
יג כִּי לֹא־אוֹיֵב יַחְרִפְנִי וְאִשָּׂא
לֹא־מִשְׁנְאִי עָלַי הַגִּדִּיל
וְאֶסְתֵּר מִמֶּנּוּ:
יד וְאַתָּה אֲנֹשׁ כְּעֶרְכִּי
אֱלוֹפִי וּמִידְעִי:

8 How far would I escape,
and make a nest in the desert!
Selah

9 I would hurry of to a place that is safe
from the wind that sweeps away,
10 the destructive gale, Lord, from the flood of their tongues.
For I see violence and strife in the city.
11 Day and night, they make their rounds along its walls,
inside live malice and mischief.
12 Inside lives destruction,
injury and treachery never absent from its central square.
13 It is not an enemy who insults me – I could bear that –
if an opponent pitted himself against me,
I could turn away from him.
14 But you, a person of my own rank,
a comrade and dear friend,

8 For the 1st line, here following the NJB, NETB reads, “Look, I will escape to a distant place.”

9 The verb סֶעָה (*sweeps away*) occurs only here in the OT.

10 Text corrected: ‘destructive’ (בלַע) is conjectural; the MT has ‘is destructive’ (בִּלְעַ); ‘the flood of’ follows the Peshitta; the MT has ‘divisive’.

11 Personified ‘violence and strife’ are the likely subjects of the 1st line: they are compared to watchmen on the city’s walls.

12 Alternative readings for ‘injury’ are ‘violence’ (NETB) and ‘tyranny’ (NJB).

13 The text here follows the NRSV (and MT); the NJB, following the LXX, opens with, “Were it an enemy...”

14 The psalmist addresses the apparent ringleader of the opposition, an individual who was once his friend.

טו אֲשֶׁר יַחֲדוּ נִמְתִּיק סוֹד
בְּבֵית אֱלֹהִים נִהְלָךְ בְּרָגֶשׁ:
טז יְשִׁימוֹת [יְשִׁי מוֹת] עָלֵימוּ יִרְדּוּ שְׁאוֹל חַיִּים
כִּי־רַעוֹת בְּמִגּוֹרָם בְּקִרְבָּם:
יז אֲנִי אֶל־אֱלֹהִים אֶקְרָא
וַיִּהְיֶה יוֹשִׁיעֵנִי:
יח עֶרֶב וּבֹקֶר וְצַהֲרַיִם אֲשִׁיחָה וְאֶהְמָה
וַיִּשְׁמַע קוֹלִי:
יט פָּדָה בְּשָׁלוֹם גַּפְשִׁי מִקְּרֹב־לִי
כִּי־בְרַבִּים הֵיוּ עֲמָדִי:
כ יִשְׁמַע | אֱלֹ | וַיַּעֲנֵם וַיֵּשֶׁב קֹדֶם
סְלֵה
כא אֲשֶׁר אֵין חֲלִיפּוֹת לָמוֹ
וְלֹא יִרְאוּ אֱלֹהִים:
כא שְׁלַח יָדָיו בְּשִׁלְמוֹ
חֲלַל בְּרִיתוֹ:

15 with whom I shared intimate friendship
in the House of God.
16 May death destroy them, may they go down alive to Sheol,
since evil shares their home with them.
17 For my part, I appeal to God,
and Yahweh saves me.
18 Evening, morning, noon,
I complain and groan.
19 He hears my cry; he ransoms me and gives me peace
from the feud against me, for they are numerous.
20 God, who is enthroned of old, will hear and humble them.
Selah
No change of heart for them,
for they do not fear God.
21 They attack those at peace with them,
going back on their oaths.

-
- 15 The imperfect verbal forms in this verse draw attention to the ongoing nature of the actions (the so-called customary use of the imperfect): their relationship was characterised by such intimacy and friendship.
- 16 In place of 'may death destroy', here following the *Qere* (יְשִׁי מוֹת), the *Ketiv* has 'may devastation be upon' (יְשִׁימוֹת).
- 17 Note that the psalmist only uses the Divine Name in the 2nd line.
- 18 'Evening, morning and noon' are the hours of prayer (Dn 6:11).
- 19 The NJB has the conjectural 'taking me to law' in place of 'numerous', here following the MT.
- 20 The prefixed verbal from with *vav* consecutive carries on the anticipatory force of the preceding imperfect.
- 21 At the end of the verse, the NRSV adds 'with me'.

כב חֲלָקוֹ | מִחֲמַאת פִּי וְקָרֵב לִבּוֹ
 רָפוּ דְבָרָיו מִשֶּׁמֶן
 וְהֵמָּה פִּתְחוֹת:
 כג הַשֵּׁלֶךְ עַל־יְהוָה | יִהְיֶה וְהוּא יִכְלֹכֶלְךָ
 לֹא־יִתֵּן לְעוֹלָם מוֹט
 לַצַּדִּיק:
 כד וְאַתָּה אֱלֹהִים | תּוֹרֵדֵם | לְבֶאֱר שַׁחַת
 אֲנָשֵׁי דָמִים וּמְרֻמָּה לֹא־יִחַצּוּ יְמֵיהֶם
 וְאֲנִי אֶבְטַח־בְּךָ:

- 22 His mouth is smoother than butter but war is in his heart;
 his words more soothing than oil,
 yet sharpened like a sword.
- 23 Unload your burden onto Yahweh and he will sustain you;
 never will he allow the upright
 to stumble.
- 24 You, God, will thrust them down to the abyss of destruction,
 violent and deceptive, before half their days are spent.
 For my part, I put my trust in you.

22 The noun מִחֲמַאת ('butter-like') occurs only here.

23 This verse may be understood as the ironical remarks of the false friend (v. 21), or as self-encouragement uttered by the sufferer. The word for 'burden' occurs only here, and it is translated following the context and the versions; and alternative could be 'what he has given you'.

24 The pronominal suffix in the 1st line refers to the psalmist's enemies (see v. 20).

תהילים פרק נו

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ | עַל־יוֹנֵת אֱלֹם רַחֲקִים
לְדוֹד מִכְתָּם בְּאַחַז אוֹתוֹ פְּלִשְׁתִּים בָּגַת:

ב חֲנֹנִי אֱלֹהִים כִּי־שָׂאֲפָנִי אֲנוּשׁ
כָּל־הַיּוֹם לֶחֶם יִלְחָצֵנִי:

ג שָׂאֲפוּ שׁוֹרְרֵי כָל־הַיּוֹם
כִּי־רַבִּים לִחְמִים לִי מְרוֹם:

ד יוֹם אִירָא

אֲנִי אֵלֶיךָ אֶבְטָח:

ה בָּאֱלֹהִים אֶהְלֵל דְּבָרוֹ

בָּאֱלֹהִים בִּטְחֹתִי לֹא אִירָא

מִה־יַּעֲשֶׂה בִּשְׂרָ לִי:

ו כָּל־הַיּוֹם דְּבָרִי יַעֲצֹבוּ

עָלַי כָּל־מַחֲשַׁבְתָּם לְרָע:

PSALM 56

¹ To the leader, according to, "The Dove on Far-off Terebinths."
A Miktam of David, when the Philistines seized him in Gath.

² Take pity on me, God, as they harry me,
all day long, enemies torment me.

³ Those who harry me lie in wait for me all day;
countless are those who attack me from the heights.

⁴ When I am afraid,
I put my trust in you.

⁵ In God, whose word I praise,
in God I put my trust and have no fear,
what can mortal man do to me?

⁶ All day long, they carp at my words,
their only thought is to harm me.

PSALM 56

¹ Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and subsequent verse numbers are accordingly incremented. For the "Dove of the Far-off Terebinths," (following the *NRSV*), the *NJB* has, "Oppression of distant princes" (the word 'oppression' is the same in Hebrew as 'dove').

² The literal translation of 'enemies' is 'a fighter': the singular is collective (cf. vv. 6-7).

³ On the heights around Jerusalem, see 2K 19:22. There must be an allusion to the siege of 701 BCE, as in Ps 76 (see also vv. 11-12), with which there are close connexions. However, the phrase can also be understood, 'with haughtiness'.

⁴ The literal translation of 'when' is '(in) a day'.

⁵ Here, as in v. 10, the 'word' of God is his promise on which his servant relies, see 106:12, 119:42,65, 130:5.

⁶ Literally translated, the 2nd line read, "against me (are) all their thoughts for harm."

ז יגורו | יצפּונוּ הָמָּה עֲקֵבֵי יִשְׁמְרוּ
 כְּאִשֶּׁר קִוּוּ נַפְשִׁי:
 ח עַל-אֲוֹן פִּלְט־לָמוּ
 בְּאַף עַמִּים | הוֹרֵד אֱלֹהִים:
 ט נְדִי סִפְרָתָהּ אֶתָּה
 שִׁימָה דְּמָעָתִי בְּנֹאדָךְ
 הֲלֹא בְּסִפְרָתְךָ:
 י אֲזִי יָשׁוּבוּ אוֹיְבֵי אַחֲוֵר בְּיוֹם אֶקְרָא
 זֶה-יִדְעָתִי כִּי-אֱלֹהִים לִי:
 יא בָּאֱלֹהִים אֶהְלֵל דְּבַר
 בִּיהוָה אֶהְלֵל דְּבַר:
 יב בָּאֱלֹהִים בִּטְחָתִי לֹא אִירָא
 מִה-יַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם לִי:
 יג עָלִי אֱלֹהִים נִדְרֶיךָ
 אֲשַׁלֵּם תּוֹדַת לֹךְ:

7 They gather together, lie in wait and spy on my movements,
 as though determined to take my life.
 8 Because of this crime, reject them;
 in your anger, God, strike down the nations.
 9 You yourself have kept count of my sorrows;
 collect my tears in your wineskin.
 Is it not in your record?
 10 Then my enemies will turn back on the day when I call.
 This I know, because God is on my side.
 11 In God, whose word I praise,
 in Yahweh, whose word I praise,
 12 in God I put my trust and have no fear;
 what can mortal man do to me?
 13 I must perform the vows I have made, God;
 I will pay you for the debt of thanks.

-
- 7 'Gather together' follows the Tg, the MT has 'attack'; the NRSV has 'stir up strife'. The different reading of the Qere and Ketiv here may reflect a scribe's misreading of a (possibly small or short) *vav* for a *yod*.
 8 For the 1st line, the NRSV has, "So, repay them for their crime." 'The nations' is a metaphor for the psalmist's enemies.
 9 There is perhaps an allusion here to the tears of Hezekiah, 2K 20:5, Is 38:3-5. Each tear of the just will have its eschatological compensation, Is 25:8, cf. Rv 7:17. The NJB omits the 3rd line, dismissing it as a gloss (cf. 139:16, Job 19:23, MI 3:16).
 10 The Hebrew particle אֲזִי ('then') is probably used here to draw attention to the following statement.
 11 The phrase 'in Yahweh' parallels 'in God' in the 1st line. Once again, the psalmist parenthetically remarks "whose word I praise" before completing the sentence in v. 12.
 12 The 2nd line is similar to that of v. 4, except 'flesh' is used there instead of 'man'.
 13 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "Upon me, O God, (are) your vows."

יֵד כִּי הִצַּלְתָּ נַפְשִׁי מִמָּוֶת
הֵלֵא רַגְלִי מִדָּחִי
לְהִתְהַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהִים
בְּאוֹר הַחַיִּים:

¹⁴ For you have saved my soul from death,
and my feet from falling and my eyes from tears,
to walk in the presence of God,
in the light of the living.

¹⁴ The *NJB* omits the 2nd line; the first phrase follows the *NRSV*; ‘and my eyes from tears’ follows the *LXX*, being borrowed from 116:8 and suggested by v. 8.

תהילים פרק נז

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ אֶל־תִּשְׁחַת לְדָוִד מִכָּתָם

בְּבִרְחוֹ מִפְּנֵי־שָׁאוֹל בַּמְעָרָה:

ב חֲנֲנִי אֱלֹהִים | חֲנֲנִי

כִּי בְךָ חֲסִיָּה נַפְשִׁי

וּבִצֵּל־כַּנְפֶיךָ אֲחֹסָה

עַד יַעֲבֹר הַזֹּזֹת:

ג אֶקְרָא לֵאלֹהִים עֲלִיּוֹן

לֵאלֹל גִּמַּר עָלַי:

ד יִשְׁלַח מִשְׁמַיִם | וַיִּזְשִׁיעֵנִי

חֲרָף שָׂאֲפִי

סֵלָה

יִשְׁלַח אֱלֹהִים חֶסֶדּוֹ וְאַמְתּוֹ:

ה נַפְשִׁי | בְּתוֹךְ לִבָּאֵם אֲשֶׁכְּבָה לְהָטִים

בְּנֵי־אָדָם שְׁנֵיהֶם חֲנִית וְחֶצִים

וּלְשׁוֹנָם חֶרֶב חֲדָה:

PSALM 57

1 To the leader, to the tune, "Do not destroy." A Miktam of David, when he escaped from Saul in the cave.

2 Take pity on me, God, take pity on me,
for in you I take refuge,
in the shadow of your wings I take refuge,
until the destruction is past.

3 I call to God the Most High,
to God who has done everything for me.

4 He will send from heaven and save me
from enemies who hurl insults.

Selah

God will send his faithful love and his constancy.

5 I lie among by lions that greedily devour human prey;
their teeth are spears and arrows,
their tongue a sharp sword.

PSALM 57

- 1 Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the MT, and subsequent verse numbers are incremented.
- 2 The metaphor of the 3rd line likens God to a protective mother bird (see also Ps 17:8, 36:7).
- 3 The divine title 'Most High' (עֲלִיּוֹן) pictures God as the exalted ruler of the universe who vindicates the innocent and judges the wicked.
- 4 The translation assumes that the 2nd line identifies those from whom the psalmist seeks deliverance. (The singular is representative; the psalmist is surrounded by enemies, see v. 5.) Another option is to understand God as the subject of the verb חֲרָף, which could then be taken as a homonym of the more common root חָרַף ('insult') meaning 'confuse'. In this case one might translate, "he (God) confuses my enemies."
- 5 'Greedily devour' is a conjectural translation; the MT has 'are aflame for'.

וְרוֹמָה עַל־הַשָּׁמַיִם אֱלֹהִים י
 עַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדָךְ:
 רָשַׁת | הִכִּינוּ לַפְעָמִי כַּפִּי נַפְשִׁי ז
 כָּרוּ לִפְנֵי שִׂיחָה
 נָפְלוּ בַתּוֹכָהּ
 סֵלָה:
 נִכְזֹן לִבִּי אֱלֹהִים נִכְזֹן לִבִּי ח
 אֲשִׁירָה וְאֶזְמְרָה:
 עֹרָה כְּבוֹדִי עֹרָה הַנֶּבֶל וְכִנּוֹר ט
 אֶעֱיֶרָה שָׁחַר:
 אֹדֶךָ בְּעַמִּים | אֲדֹנִי י
 אֶזְמַרְךָ בַּלְּאֻמִּים:
 כִּי־גָדַל עַד־שָׁמַיִם חֶסֶדְךָ יא
 וְעַד־שָׁחֲקִים אֲמַתְךָ:
 וְרוֹמָה עַל־שָׁמַיִם אֱלֹהִים יב
 עַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדָךְ:

- 6 Be exalted above the heavens, God,
your glory over all the earth!
- 7 They laid a snare in my path; I am bowed with care;
they dug a pit ahead of me,
but fell in it themselves.

Selah

- 8 My heart is steadfast, God, my heart is steadfast.
I will sing and make music for you.
- 9 Awake, my glory, awake, lyre and harp,
that I may awake the dawn.
- 10 I will praise you among the peoples, Lord;
I will make music for you among nations.
- 11 For you faithful love towers to heaven,
your constancy to the clouds.
- 12 Be exalted above the heavens, God,
your glory over all the earth!

-
- 6 The psalmist wants God to manifest his sovereignty by rescuing the oppressed and destroying the godless. This verse is a refrain (cf. v. 12).
- 7 The literal translation of 'I am bowed' is 'my soul is bowed'; the term נַפֶּשׁ + pronominal suffix is equivalent to a pronoun, especially in poetry.
- 8 The heart is viewed here as the seat of the psalmist's volition and/or emotions.
- 9 The 'Dawn' is personified, as in Job 3:9, 38:12, 41:10. Dawn is the hour of rescue (see #17:15).
- 10 The term here translated 'Lord' (אֲדֹנִי) is used in place of the Divine Name when reading aloud.
- 11 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "For great upon the sky (is) your loyal love."
- 12 Though no verb appears in the 2nd line, the tone of the statement is a prayer or wish (note the imperative form in the 1st line).

תהילים פרק נח

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ אֶל־תִּשְׁחַת לְדָוִד מִכָּתָם:
ב הָאֱמֹנִים אֲלֵם צֶדֶק תְּדַבְּרוּן
ג מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל תִּשְׁפֹּטוּ בְּנֵי אָדָם:
ד אֶף־בְּלִבָּי עֹלֹת תִּפְעֲלוּן
ה בְּאָרֶץ חֲמָס יָדֵיכֶם תִּפְלִסוּן:
ו זְרוּ רָשָׁעִים מֵרַחֵם
ז תַּעֲזוּ מִבֶּטֶן דְּבָרֵי כָזָב:
ח חֲמַת־לֵמוֹ כְּדַמּוֹת חֲמַת־נָחַשׁ
ט כְּמו־פֶתֶן חָרַשׁ יֶאֱטֵם אָזְנוֹ:
י אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִשְׁמַע לְקוֹל מְלַחֲשִׁים
יא חֹבֵר חֲבָרִים מִחֻכָּם:
יב אֱלֹהִים הֲרַס־שִׁנֵּימוּ בְּפִימוֹ
יג מִלִּתְעוֹת כְּפִירִים נִתָּן | יְהוָה:

PSALM 58

- 1 *To the leader, to the tune, "Do not destroy." A Miktam of David.*
- 2 Mighty lords as you are, do you truly give upright verdicts?
Do you judge fairly the children of Adam?
- 3 No! You devise injustice in your hearts,
and with your hands, you administer tyranny on the earth.
- 4 Since the womb, the wicked have gone astray;
liars on the wrong path since their birth.
- 5 They are poisonous as any snake,
deaf as a viper that blocks its ears,
- 6 so as not to hear the music of the magician,
however skilful his spells.
- 7 God, break the teeth in their mouths,
snap off the fangs of these young lions, Yahweh.

PSALM 58

- 1 Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the MT, and other verse numbers are incremented.
- 2 'Mighty lords' follows a footnote in the NRSV (the NJB has 'divine'); the MT has 'in silence' (אֲלֵם), which can be conjecturally translated as 'gods' (אֱלֹהִים). The expression here embraces judges and rulers, see 45:6,7, 82, Ex 21:6, 22:7, Dt 19:17, 2S 14:17.
- 3 The particle אֶף ('No!') is used here as a strong adversative, emphasizing the following statement, which contrasts reality with the rulers' claim alluded to in the rhetorical questions (see Ps 44:9).
- 4 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "speakers of a lie go astray from the womb."
- 5 Other suggested species of snake are 'cobra' (NETB, NIV) and 'asp' (NEB).
- 6 The literal translation of 'hear the music' is 'listen to the voice'.
- 7 In place of 'snap the fangs', NETB has 'smash the jawbones'.

ח יִמָּאֲסוּ כְּמוֹ-מַיִם יִתְהַלְכוּ-לִמּוֹ
 יִדְרֹךְ חֲצֹו כְּמוֹ יִתְמַלְלוּ:
 ט כְּמוֹ שֶׁבִּלּוֹל תִּמָּס יִהְיֶה
 נֶפֶל אִשָּׁת בַּל־חַזּוֹ שֶׁמֶשׁ:
 י בִּטְרָם | יִבִּינוּ סִירְתְּכֶם אֶטֶד
 כְּמוֹ-חֵי כְּמוֹ-חֲרוֹן יִשְׁעֵרְנוּ:
 יא יִשְׁמַח צַדִּיק בִּי־חֲזֵה נָקָם
 פְּעַמָּיו יִרְחֹץ בַּדָּם הַרְשָׁע:
 יב וַיֹּאמֶר אָדָם אֶדְ-פָּרִי לַצַּדִּיק
 אֶדְ יֵשׁ-אֱלֹהִים שֹׁפְטִים בָּאָרֶץ:

- 8 Let them drain away like water running to waste;
let them wither like trampled grass.
- 9 Let them be like the slug that melts as it moves,
or a stillborn child that never sees the sun.
- 10 Before they sprout thorns like the bramble,
green or burnt up, let retribution whirl them away.
- 11 The godly will rejoice to see vengeance done,
and he will bathe his feet in the blood of the wicked.
- 12 “So,” people will say, “the upright does have a reward;
there is a God to dispense justice on earth.”

8 ‘Like trampled grass’ is conjectural (reading חֲצִיר for חֲצֹו); the MT has ‘tramples his arrows’.

9 The text here alludes to the popular belief that the slimy trail which the snail leaves in its track was the dissolution of its substance.

10 ‘Before they sprout thorns’ is a correction following the Symmachus and Jerome; the MT has ‘Sooner than your pots feel the heat of the thorn’ (as also does the NRSV).

11 The rare word translated ‘godly’ also appears in Job 3:16 and Qo 6:3.

12 The plural participle is unusual in the 2nd line if the preceding אֱלֹהִים is here a plural of majesty, referring to the one true God. Occasionally, this plural of majesty does take a plural attributive but it is also possible that the final *mem* (ם) on the participle is enclitic, and that it was later misunderstood as a plural ending.

תהילים פרק נט

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ אֶל־תִּשְׁחַח לְדוֹד מִכְתָּם
בְּשִׁלַּח שָׁאוּל
וַיִּשְׁמְרוּ אֶת־הַבַּיִת לְהַמִּיתוֹ:
ב הַצִּילֵנִי מֵאִיְבֵי | אֱלֹהֵי
מִמַּתְקוֹמִמִי תִשְׁוֹבֵנִי:
ג הַצִּילֵנִי מִפְּעֵלֵי אֹן
וּמֵאֲנָשֵׁי דָמִים הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי:
ד כִּי הִנֵּה אֲרֹבּוּ לְנַפְשִׁי
יִגְוְרוּ עָלַי עֲזִים
ה לֹא־פָשַׁעְתִּי וְלֹא־חָטָאתִי יְהוָה:
ו בְּלִי־עוֹן יִרְצוֹן וּבִכְוֹנָנוּ
עוֹרָה לְקִרְאָתִי וּרְאָה:
ז וְאַתָּה יְהוָה־אֱלֹהִים | צְבָאוֹת אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
הַקִּיצָה לְפָקֵד כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם
אֶל־תַּחֲנוּן כָּל־בֹּגְדֵי אֹן
סֵלָה:

PSALM 59

- ¹ *To the leader: to the tune, "Do Not Destroy."
A Miktam of David.
When Saul sent men to watch David's house to have him killed.*
- ² Rescue me from my enemies, my God,
be my stronghold from my assailants.
- ³ Rescue me from evildoers,
from men of violence, save me.
- ⁴ Look at them lurking to ambush me,
violent men are attacking me,
but not because I have rebelled or sinned, Yahweh.
- ⁵ For no guilt, they come running to take up position.
Wake up, help me and keep watch!
- ⁶ Yahweh, God of Sabaoth, God of Israel,
rise up to punish the nations,
show no mercy to all these malicious traitors.
- Selah*

PSALM 59

- ¹ Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and subsequent verse numbers are incremented.
- ² This Psalm, with its mixture of praise and imprecation, has two refrains: vv. 6 and 14:9 & 17.
- ³ The literal translation of 'violence' is 'bloodshed'.
- ⁴ The point is that the psalmist's enemies have no justifiable reason for attacking him. He has neither 'rebelled' nor 'sinned' against God.
- ⁵ The verb קָרָא ('to meet') here carries the nuance of 'to help'.
- ⁶ The 2nd line is of eschatological style, cf. Is 26:21.

ז	יָשׁוּבוּ לָעֶרֶב יֵהֱמוּ כָּפָלָב וַיִּסּוּבּוּ עִיר:	7	Back they come at nightfall, snarling like curs, prowling through the town.
ח	הִנֵּה יִבְיַעֲזוּ בִּפְיָהֶם חֲרָבוֹת בְּשִׁפְתוֹתֵיהֶם כִּי־מִי שָׁמָע:	8	Look how they rant in speech with swords on their lips, "Who is there to hear us?"
ט	וְאַתָּה יְהוָה תִּשְׁחַק־לָמוֹ תִּלְעַג לְכָל־גּוֹיִם:	9	For your part, Yahweh, you laugh at them, you make mockery of all nations.
י	עִזּוֹ אֵלֶיךָ אֲשַׁמְרָה כִּי־אֱלֹהִים מְשֹׁגְבִי:	10	My strength, I keep my eyes fixed on you. For my stronghold is God.
יא	אֱלֹהֵי חֲסִדוֹ חֲסִדֵי יִקְדָּמֶנִי אֱלֹהִים יִרְאֵנִי בְּשִׁרְרִי:	11	The God who loves me faithfully is coming to meet me; my God will let me look in triumph on my enemies.
יב	אַל־תִּהְרַגְם פֶּן־יִשְׁכַּחוּ עַמִּי הַנִּיעַמּוֹ בַּחִילָךְ וְהוֹרִידֵמוֹ מִגִּגְנוֹ אֲדָנִי:	12	Do not annihilate them, or my people may forget; shake them in your power, bring them low, Lord, our shield.
יג	חַטָּאת־פִּימוֹ דְּבַר־שִׁפְתֵימוֹ וַיִּלְכְּדוּ בְּגִאוֹנָם וַיִּמְאֲלָה וּמִכַּחַשׁ יִסְפְּרוּ:	13	Sin is in their mouths, sin on their lips, so let them be trapped in their pride for the curses and lies that they utter.

7 The image of this refrain suggests (see vv. 15–16) the packs of stray dogs found in the villages of the east.

8 The NRSV has ‘sharp words’ in place of ‘swords’. The 2nd line is a form of blasphemy, cf. 10:4, 14:1, 64:5, 94:7.

9 Other options for ‘make mockery of’ are ‘taunt’ and ‘scoff at’.

10 The MT has ‘his strength’ in place of ‘my strength’.

11 ‘Who loves me’ (literally, ‘of my love’) follows the LXX & Peshitta; the MT has ‘his love’. The Qere/Kethib difference may be vav/yod confusion.

12 Like Cain, Gn 4:14–15, non-Jewish nations must survive to witness the divine justice.

13 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, “The sin of their mouth (is) the word of their lips.”

יד כִּלֵּה בַחֲמָה פִּלֵּה וְאַיֵּנָמוּ
 וַיִּדְעוּ כִּי־אֱלֹהִים מֶשֶׁל בֵּיעָקֵב
 לְאַפְסֵי הָאָרֶץ
 סֵלָה:
 טו וַיָּשְׁבוּ לָעֶרֶב יֵהֱמוּ כָּפָלָב
 וַיִּסּוּבּוּ עִיר:
 טז הִמָּה יְנוּעוֹן יִנְיָעוֹן לֶאֱכֹל
 אִם־לֹא יִשְׁבְּעוּ וַיִּלְיָנוּ:
 ז' וְאֲנִי אֲשִׁיר עֲזָךְ
 וְאַרְנֶן לִבְקָר חֶסֶדְךָ
 כִּי־הָיִיתָ מְשֻׁגָּב לִי
 וּמְנוּס בְּיוֹם צָר־לִי:
 יח עֲזִי אֵלֶיךָ אֲזַמְּרָה
 כִּי־אֱלֹהִים מְשֻׁגָּבִי אֱלֹהֵי חֶסְדִּי:

14 Destroy them in wrath, destroy them so they are no more,
 and let it be known that God is master
 in Jacob and to the ends of the earth.

Selah

15 Back they come at nightfall, snarling like curs,
 prowling around the town.
 16 They scavenge for something to eat,
 growling unless they have their fill.
 17 Therefore, I will sing of your strength,
 in the morning acclaim, your faithful love;
 you have been a fortress for me,
 a refuge when I was in trouble.
 18 My strength, I will make music for you,
 for my stronghold is God, the God who loves me faithfully.

14 Here, the name 'Jacob' represents the nation of Israel.

15 In place of 'around', which could mean 'outside', the NJB has 'through'.

16 'Growling' follows the LXX and Peshitta; the MT has 'spending the night'. The Qere/Kethib difference may be a case of *vav/yod* confusion.

17 A more literal translation for 'refuge' is 'elevated place'.

18 The last antiphon seems incomplete, cf. v. 10.

תהילים פרק ס

- א לַמְנַצֵּחַ עַל־שׁוֹשַׁן עֲדוּת
מִכְתָּם לְדָוִד לְלִמּוּד:
ב בְּהַצֹּתוֹ | אֶת־אַרְם נְהָרַיִם
וְאֶת־אַרְם צוֹבָה
וַיָּשָׁב יוֹאָב וַיַּךְ אֶת־אֲדֹמִים בְּגִיא־מֶלֶח
שָׁנִים עֶשְׂרֵי אֶלֶף:
ג אֱלֹהִים זָנַחְתָּנוּ פָּרַצְתָּנוּ
אֲנַפְתָּ תִּשׁוּבָב לָנוּ:
ד הִרְעַשְׁתָּה אֶרֶץ פָּצַמְתָּהּ
רָפָה שְׁבֵרִיָּה כִי־מָטָה:
ה הִרְאִיתָ עַמְּךָ קֶשֶׁה
הִשְׁקִיתָנוּ יַיִן תִּרְעָלָה:

PSALM 60

- 1 To the leader: to the tune, "The decree is a lily."
A Miktam of David.
2 To be learnt, when he was at war with
Aram-Naharaim and Aram-Zobah,
and Joab marched back to destroy twelve thousand Edomites
in the Valley of Salt.
3 God, you have rejected us, broken us,
you were angry, come back to us!
4 You made the earth tremble, split it open;
now mend the rifts, it is tottering still.
5 You have forced your people to drink a bitter draught,
forced us to drink intoxicating wine.

PSALM 60

- 1 Most English translations do not assign verse numbers to the titles; here, we follow the *MT*, and subsequent verse numbers are accordingly increased by 2.
2 The heading apparently refers to the military campaign recorded in 2S 10 and 1Ch 19, implying the same historical situation as 44 and 80; v. 9 introduces a prophecy of hope, repeated in 108:7–14, foretelling the restoration of an enlarged and unified kingdom, as in the early days of the monarchy, with control over Edom, Ephraim, and Gilead (see Is 11:13–14, Ob).
3 The imperfect verbal form at the end of the 2nd line expresses the psalmist's wish or prayer.
4 The verb פָּצַם ('split open') occurs only here in the OT; an Arabic cognate means 'crack' and an Aramaic cognate is used in *Tg. Jer* 22:14, with the meaning 'break open' or 'frame'.
5 'Intoxicating wine' is here an image of divine judgment that makes its victims stagger like drunkards (see Is 51:17–23).

1 נִתְּתָה לִירְאִיָּךְ גַּם לְהִתְנוּסָס
 מִפְּנֵי קֶשֶׁט
 סֵלָה:
 2 לִמְעַן יִחַלְצוּן יְדִידֶיךָ
 הוֹשִׁיעָה יְמִינְךָ וְעֲנֵנוּ וְעֲנֵנִי:
 ח אֱלֹהִים | דְּבַר בְּקִדְשׁוֹ אֶעֱלֶזָה
 אֲחַלֶּקֶה שֶׁכֶם וְעַמֶּק סִכּוֹת אֲמַדֵּד:
 ט לִי גִלְעָד | וְלִי מְנַשֶּׁה
 וְאַפְרַיִם מַעֲזוֹ רֹאשִׁי
 יְהוּדָה מַחְקֶקִי:
 י מוֹאָב | סִיר רַחְצִי עַל־אֲדוֹם אֲשַׁלֶּיךָ נֶעְלִי
 עָלַי פִּלֶּשֶׁת הַתְּרוּעָעִי:
 יא מִי יְבַלְנִי עִיר מְצוֹר
 מִי נַחֲנִי עַד־אֲדוֹם:

- 6 You gave a signal to those who fear you
to let them escape out of bowshot.
Selah
- 7 To rescue those you love,
save with your right hand and answer me.
- 8 God has spoken from his sanctuary, in triumph:
"I will divide up Shechem and share the valley of Succoth.
- 9 "Mine is Gilead, mine Manasseh,
Ephraim the helmet on my head,
Judah my commander's baton.
- 10 "Moab is my washbasin; on Edom I plant my sandal.
over me, Philistia, shout "Victory"!"
- 11 Who will lead me against the fortified city?
Who will guide me into Edom?

-
- 6 The banner, or rallying signal, is a common feature (Ex 17:15, Is 5:26, 11:10, 49:22, 62:10, Sg 2:4); here, however, it is the signal for retreat, see v. 10. 'Out of bowshot' follows the LXX and Peshitta; the MT has 'because of the truth'.
- 7 The translation here follows the *Qere* (וְעֲנֵנִי – 'answer me'); the *Ketiv* has וְעֲנֵנוּ ('answer us').
- 8 An alternative translation for 'from his sanctuary' is 'by his holiness'. The 2nd line begins an anti-Samaritan rally, cf. Ne 3:33ff. The mention together of Shechem and Succoth, see Gn 33:17–18, is no doubt an allusion to the conquest of the Promised Land, recalled with regret but also with hope.
- 9 The places mentioned are either Hebrew territories (vv. 8–9) or parts of the one-time Hebrew empire under the United Monarchy (v. 10). The God of Israel lays claim to them all.
- 10 To 'plant the sandal' is an ancient custom, Dt 25:9, Rt 4:7; it signifies appropriation. The 2nd line is ironical, softened in Ps 108:9: "Over Philistia I cry victory."
- 11 The 'fortified city' perhaps refers to Sela, Edom's capital.

ב' הלא־אתה אֱלֹהִים זִנְחָתָנוּ
 וְלֹא־תֵצֵא אֱלֹהִים בְּעֲבֹאוֹתֵינוּ:
 ג' הִבֵּה־לָנוּ עֲזֶרֶת מִצָּר
 וְשׂוֹא תִשׁוּעַת אָדָם:
 ד' בָּאֱלֹהִים נַעֲשֶׂה־חֵיל
 וְהוּא יְבוֹס צָרֵינוּ:

- 12 Have you not rejected us, God?
 You no longer march, O God, with our armies.
 13 Bring us help in our time of crisis;
 any human help is worthless.
 14 With God we shall do deeds of valour,
 he will trample down our enemies.

12 An expression of the Psalmist's nostalgia, who, in a country divided and plundered by its neighbours, thinks back to the golden age of holy war, the conquest and the Davidic kingdom.

13 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "*and futile (is) the deliverance of man.*"

14 The phrase '*deeds of valour*' refers to military success (see Nb 24:18, 1S 14:48).

תהילים פרק סא

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ | עַל־נְגִינֹת לְדָוִד:

ב שְׁמַעַה אֱלֹהִים רִנָּתִי

הַקְשִׁיבָה תְּפִלָּתִי:

ג מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ | אֵלֶיךָ אֶקְרָא

בְּעֵטֶף לִבִּי

בְּצוּר־יְרוֹם מִמְּנֵי תִנְחַנֵּי:

ד כִּי־הֵייתָ מְחֹסֶה לִּי

מִגִּדְל־עֹז מִפְּנֵי אוֹיֵב:

ה אֲגֹרָה בְּאֹהֶלְךָ עוֹלָמִים

אֲחֹסֶה בְּסֶתֶר כְּנָפֶיךָ

סֵלָה:

ו כִּי־אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים שָׁמַעַתָּ לְנַדְרֵי

נַתַּת יְרֵשֶׁת יִרְאֵי שִׁמְךָ:

PSALM 61

1 To the leader: for strings. Of David.

2 Hear my cry, O God;
listen to my prayer.

3 From the end of the earth, I call to you
with fainting heart.
Lead me to the high rock that stands far out of my reach.

4 For you are my refuge,
a strong tower against the enemy.

5 Let me stay in your tent forever,
taking refuge in the shelter of your wings.

Selah

6 For you, God, accept my vows,
you grant me the heritage of those who fear your name.

PSALM 61

- 1 Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and subsequent verse numbers are accordingly incremented. This Psalm is the lament of a Levite in exile from Mount Zion, vv. 2–6, followed by a prayer for the king, vv. 7–8.
- 2 The psalmist cries out for help and expresses his confidence that God will protect him.
- 3 The phrase, ‘from the end of the earth’ seems to show that the psalmist did not live in Palestine. The 3rd line refers to the Rock of the Temple for which the Psalmist longs. This Psalm could date from the first deportation (598 BCE), cf. 2K 24:14ff, when the Temple had not yet been destroyed.
- 4 The literal translation of ‘against’ is ‘from the face of’.
- 5 The metaphor of the 2nd line compares God to a protective mother bird.
- 6 ‘Heritage’ is normally used of land, but here it refers metaphorically to the blessings granted God’s loyal followers. To ‘fear’ God’s name means to have a healthy respect for his revealed reputation which in turn motivates one to obey God’s commands (see Ps 86:11).

ז יָמִים עַל־יָמֵי־מֶלֶךְ תּוֹסִיף
 ח שְׁנוֹתָיו כְּמוֹ־דֶר וְדֶר:
 ט יֵשֶׁב עוֹלָם לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהִים
 חֶסֶד וְאַמֶּת מִן יִנְצְרֶהוּ:
 כֵּן אֶזְמְרָה שִׁמְךָ לְעַד
 לְשִׁלְמִי נִדְרֵי יוֹם | יוֹם:

- 7 Let the king live on and on,
 let his years continue age after age.
 8 May his throne be always in God's presence;
 your faithful love and constancy watch over him.
 9 Then I shall always sing to your name,
 as I fulfil my vows day after day.

7 It is not certain if the (royal) psalmist is referring to himself in the third person in this verse, or if an exile is praying on behalf of the king.
 8 These personified divine attributes will accompany the messianic king, 85:10ff, 89:14,24, as they protect the king, Pr 20:28, or the faithful Levite, Ps 40:11. Vv. 6–7 may be an ancient prayer for the king, but their emphasis on a reign indefinitely prolonged recalls the prophecy of Nathan, 2S 7:16, 1Ch 17:14, and their close resemblance to the messianic passages of Ps 72 and 80 makes them applicable to the royal Messiah.
 9 The preposition with the infinitive construct in the 2nd line indicates an accompanying circumstance.

תהילים פרק סב

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ עַל־יְדוּתוֹן
מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד:
ב אֵךְ אֱלֹהִים דּוֹמִיָּה נַפְשִׁי
מִמָּוֶן יִשׁוּעָתִי:
ג אֵךְ־הוּא צוּרִי וִישׁוּעָתִי
מִשְׁגָּבִי לֹא־אֲמוּט רַבָּה:
ד עַד־אֲנִה | תְּהוֹתֶתְנוּ עַל־אִישׁ
תִּרְצָחוּ כָלֶכֶם
כְּקִיר נָטוּי
גֹּדֶר הַדְּחוּיָה:
ה אֵךְ מִשְׁאֵתוֹ יַעֲצוּ לְהַדִּיחַ יֶרֶצוּ כָזָב
בְּפִיו יְבָרְכוּ
וּבִקְרָבָם יִקְלְלוּ־סֵלָה:

PSALM 62

- ¹ *To the leader: according to Jeduthun.
A Psalm of David.*
- ² In God alone there is rest for my soul,
from him comes my safety.
- ³ He alone is my rock, my safety,
my refuge, so that I stand unwavering.
- ⁴ How much longer will you threaten a man,
all together, intent on murder,
like a rampart already leaning over,
a wall already damaged?
- ⁵ They only plan to bring down a person of prominence;
delighting in lies,
they bless with their lips but curse in their hearts – *Selah*

PSALM 62

- ¹ Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and subsequent verse numbers are accordingly incremented. A didactic Psalm: human malice, hollowness of thing created, vanity of riches, impartiality of the divine judge. The theme of the refrain, vv. 2-3, 6-7, is that of the following Psalm.
- ² Literally translated, the 1st line reads, “*only for God (is) there silence (to) my soul.*”
- ³ The *MT* adds ‘greatly’ (רַבָּה) at the end of the 2nd line, but it is unusual for this adverb to follow a negated verb. Some see this as qualifying the assertion to some degree, but this would water down the affirmation too much (see v. 7^b, where the adverb is omitted). If the adverb has a qualifying function, it would suggest that the psalmist might waver, though not severely.
- ⁴ The point of the comparison in the 3rd line is not entirely clear: perhaps the enemies are depicted as dangerous, like a leaning wall or broken fence that is in danger of falling on someone.
- ⁵ The 1st line here (loosely) follows the *NRSV*; the *NJB* has the conjectural, “*Trickery is their only plan.*”

אֶדְ לֵאלֹהִים דּוֹמִי נַפְשִׁי ו
 כִּי־מִמֶּנּוּ תִקְוָתִי:
 אֶדְ־הוּא צוּרִי וַיְשׁוּעָתִי
 מִשָּׁגְבִי לֹא אֲמוּט:
 עַל־אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁעִי וְכְבוֹדִי ח
 צוּר־עֵזִי מַחְסִי בֵּאלֹהִים:
 בְּטַחּוֹ בּוֹ בְּכָל־עֵת | עֹם ט
 שִׁפְכוּ־לִפְנָיו לִבְבְּכֶם
 אֱלֹהִים מַחְסֵה־לָנוּ
 סֵלָה:
 אֶדְ | הֵבֶל בְּנֵי־אָדָם י
 כְּזָב בְּנֵי־אִישׁ
 בְּמֵאזְנִים לַעֲלֹת
 הֵמָּה מֵהֵבֶל יָחַד:
 אֶל־תִּבְטְחוּ בְּעֶשֶׂק וּבְגִזָּל אֶל־תִּהְבְּלוּ יא
 חֵיל | כִּי־יִנּוֹב
 אֶל־תִּשִּׁיתוּ לֵב:

- 6 Rest in God alone, my soul!
He is the source of my hope.
- 7 He alone is my rock, my safety,
my stronghold, so that I stand unwavering.
- 8 In God is my safety and my glory,
the rock of my strength. In God is my refuge.
- 9 Trust in him, you people, at all times.
Pour out your hearts to him;
God is a refuge for us.
- Selah*
- 10 Ordinary people are a mere puff of wind;
important people are a delusion.
Set both on the scales together,
and they are lighter than a puff of wind.
- 11 Put no trust in extortion, no empty hopes in robbery;
however much wealth may multiply,
do not set your heart on it.

6 The wording is similar to that of v. 2: the psalmist is encouraging himself to maintain his trust in God.

7 This verse is identical to v. 3, except for the lack of a terminal adverb (see #3).

8 Literally translated, this verse reads, "Upon God (is) my deliverance and my glory, the high rocky summit of my strength, my shelter (is) in God."

9 To 'pour out your hearts' means to offer up to God intense, emotional lamentation and petitionary prayers (see Lm 2:19).

10 'Ordinary people' and 'important people' translate literally as 'sons of men' and 'people of value' respectively, as in 49:2.

11 Here 'extortion' and 'robbery' stand by metonymy for the riches that can be gained by oppressive measures and theft, as the latter part of the verse indicates.

יב אַחַת | דְּבַר אֱלֹהִים
 שְׁתֵּים-עוֹן שָׁמַעְתִּי
 כִּי עֹז לֵאלֹהִים:
 יג וּלְדֹאֲדָנִי חֶסֶד
 כִּי-אַתָּה תְּשַׁלֵּם לְאִישׁ כְּמַעֲשָׁהוּ:

12 Once God has spoken,
 twice I have heard this:
 Strength belongs to God.
 13 To you, Lord, faithful love;
 and you repay all according to their work.

¹² This literary device of numerical proverbs is found in Job 40:5, Pr 6:16, 30:15, Am 1:3ff.

¹³ The doctrine of individual retribution is taught by the prophets (see especially #Ezk 14:12), the wisdom writers, the psalmists (see #37:1) and by the New Testament, Mt 16:27, Rv 2:23.

תהילים פרק סג

א מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד
בְּהִיּוֹתוֹ בַּמִּדְבָּר יְהוּדָה:
ב אֱלֹהִים | אֵלֵי אֶתָּה אֲשַׁחֲרֶךָ
צִמְאָה לָךְ | נַפְשִׁי כָמָה לָךְ בְּשָׂרִי
בְּאַרְצ־צִיָּה וְעֵינִי בְלִי־מַיִם:
ג כֵּן בִּקְדֹשׁ חֲזִיתֶךָ
לְרֹאוֹת עֲזֶךָ וּכְבוֹדֶךָ:
ד כִּי־טוֹב חֶסֶדֶךָ מֵחַיִּים
שִׁפְתֵי יִשְׁבְּחוּנֶךָ:
ה כֵּן אֲבָרְכֶךָ בְּחַיִּי
בְּשִׁמְךָ אֲשֶׁא כָפִי:
ו כָמוֹ חֵלֶב וּדְשֵׁן תִּשְׂבַּע נַפְשִׁי
וּשְׁפָתִי רִנָּנוֹת יְהוָה־פִי:
ז אֶס־זַכְּרֶתִיךָ עַל־יְצוּעֵי
בְּאֲשֶׁמְרוֹת אֶהְגֶּה־בָךְ:

PSALM 63

- ¹ *A Psalm of David,
when he was in the desert of Judah.*
- ² God, you are my God, I pine for you;
my heart thirsts for you, my body longs for you,
as a land parched, dreary, waterless.
- ³ Thus, I have gazed on you in the Sanctuary,
seeing your power and your glory.
- ⁴ Because your faithful love is better than life itself,
my lips will praise you.
- ⁵ Thus, I will bless you all my life,
in your name lift up my hands.
- ⁶ All my longings fulfilled as with fat and rich foods,
a song of joy on my lips and praise in my mouth.
- ⁷ On my bed when I think of you,
I muse on you in the watches of the night.

PSALM 63

- ¹ Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the MT, and other verse numbers are incremented.
- ² The 1st line follows the LXX and Peshitta; the MT has, "from early morning I am with you."
- ³ The perfect verbal form, 'I have gazed', is here taken to refer to a past experience that the psalmist wants repeated. An alternative is to take the perfect as indicating the author's certainty that he will again stand in God's presence in the sanctuary, where one could read, 'I will see you'.
- ⁴ The psalmist does not speak here of divine loyal love in some abstract sense, but of loyal love revealed and experienced.
- ⁵ Lifting up one's hands toward God was a gesture of prayer (see Ps 28:2, Lm 2:19) or respect (Ps 119:48).
- ⁶ In place of 'fat and rich foods', the NRSV has 'a rich feast'.
- ⁷ In ancient Israel, the night was divided into three watches.

ח כִּי־הֵיִיתָ עֲזָרְתָהּ לִי
 וּבִצֵּל כְּנָפֶיךָ אֲרַנֶּן:
 ט דְּבַקָּה נַפְשִׁי אַחֲרֶיךָ
 בִּי תִמְכָּה יְמִינֶךָ:
 י וְהָמָּה לִשְׂוֹאָה יִבְקְשׁוּ נַפְשִׁי
 יֵבְאוּ בְּתַחְתִּיּוֹת הָאָרֶץ:
 יא יִגִּירָהּ עַל־יְדֵי־חֶרֶב
 מִנֶּת שְׁעָלִים יִהְיוּ:
 יב וְהַמֶּלֶךְ יִשְׂמַח בְּאֱלֹהִים
 יִתְהַלֵּל כָּל־הַנִּשְׁבָּע בּוֹ
 כִּי יִסְכַּר פִּי דוֹבְרֵי־שָׁקֶר:

- 8 For you are my source of help;
in the shadow of your wings, I rejoice.
- 9 My heart clings to you,
your right hand supports me.
- 10 Let those who are hounding me to death
go down to the depths of the earth.
- 11 Let them be given over to the blade of the sword,
and left as food for jackals.
- 12 Then the king shall rejoice in God,
all who swear by him shall gain recognition,
for the mouths of liars shall be silenced.

⁸ In place of 'you are', here following NETB, then NJB has 'you have been'.

⁹ The expression translated 'clings to' means 'to pursue with determination' (see Jg 20:45, 1S 14:22, 1Ch 10:2, Jr 42:16).

¹⁰ The 'depths of the earth' refers here to the underworld dwelling place of the dead (see Ezk 26:20, 31:14, 16, 18; 32:18, 24).

¹¹ 'Jackals' has traditionally been translated as 'foxes'.

¹² 'By him' could mean by Yahweh (cf. Dt 6:13, Jr 12:16) or by the king; the text is ambiguous.

תהילים פרק סד

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד:
ב שְׁמַע־אֱלֹהִים קוֹלִי בְשִׁיחִי
ג מִפֶּחַד אֹיֵב תִּצְרֵךְ חַיִּי:
ד תִּסְתִּירֵנִי מִסּוֹד מְרֻעִים
ה מִרְגָּשָׁת פְּעָלֵי אֱוֹן:
ו אֲשֶׁר שָׁנְנוּ כַחֲרֵב לְשׁוֹנָם
ז דִּרְכוֹ חָצֵם דְּבַר מָר:
ח לִירֵאת בְּמִסְתָּרִים תָּם
ט פֶּתְאִם יִרְהוּ וְלֹא יִירָאוּ:
י יַחְזִקוּ־לָמוֹ | דְּבַר רָע
יא יִסְפְּרוּ לְטִמּוֹן מִזְכָּרֵי
יב אָמְרוּ מִי יִרְאֶה־לָמוֹ:
יג יַחְפְּשׁוּ עוֹלֹת
יד תִּמְנוּ חֶפֶשׁ מִחֶפֶשׁ
טו וְקָרַב אִישׁ וְלֵב עֵמֶק:

PSALM 64

- 1 *To the leader. A Psalm of David.*
- 2 Listen, God, to my voice as I plead,
protect my life from the terror of the enemy.
- 3 Hide me from the league of the wicked,
from the gang of evildoers.
- 4 They sharpen their tongues like a sword;
aim their arrows of poisonous abuse.
- 5 They shoot at the innocent from cover,
shoot suddenly, with nothing to fear.
- 6 They support each other in their evil designs;
they discuss how to lay their snares, saying,
"Who can see us?"
- 7 "Who can penetrate our secrets?"
He will do that who penetrates human nature to its depths,
the depths of the heart.

PSALM 64

- 1 Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and other verse numbers are incremented.
- 2 'Terror' is used here metonymically for the enemy's attacks that produce fear because they threaten the psalmist's life.
- 3 The literal translation for 'evildoers' is 'workers of wickedness'.
- 4 By the Law of Retaliation, the arrow of God (v. 8) avenges the arrow of the wicked word.
- 5 The psalmist uses the singular form of 'innocent' because he is referring to himself here as representative of a larger group.
- 6 'Us' (cf. *NJB* & *NRSV*) follows the *Peshitta*; the *MT* text has 'them' (cf. *NETB*).
- 7 The text of the 3rd line has been corrected by changing two consonants and re-dividing the words; the *MT* is corrupt, literally reading, "They reason out (contrive) wicked deeds; we are ready, a plot they hatch; and the depths."

ח וַיִּרְם אֱלֹהִים חֶץ פִּתְאוֹם
 הָיוּ מִכּוֹתָם:
 ט וַיִּכְשִׁילוּהוּ עֲלִימוֹ לְשׁוֹנָם
 י תִּנְדְּדוּ כָּל־רֹאֵה בָם:
 י וַיִּירָאוּ כָּל־אָדָם
 וַיִּגִּידוּ פֶּעַל אֱלֹהִים
 וַמַּעֲשָׂהוּ הִשְׁכִּילוּ:
 יא יִשְׁמַח צַדִּיק בַּיהוָה וְחָסָה בּוֹ
 וַיִּתְהַלָּל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל־בּוֹ:

- 8 God will shoot them with his arrow;
sudden will be their wounds.
- 9 He brings them down because of their tongue,
and all who seek them shake their heads.
- 10 Everyone will be awestruck,
proclaim what God has done
and reflect on his deeds.
- 11 The upright will rejoice in Yahweh,
will take refuge in him, and all the honest will praise him.

-
- 8 The prefixed verb ('will shoot') with *vav* consecutive is normally used in narrative contexts to describe completed past actions. It is possible that the conclusion to the psalm (vv. 8-11) was added to the lament after God's judgment of the wicked in response to the psalmist's lament (vv. 2-7). The translation (following *NETB*) assumes that these verses are anticipatory and express the psalmist's confidence that God would eventually judge the wicked. The psalmist uses a narrative style as a rhetorical device to emphasize his certitude.
- 9 The 1st line is conjectural; the MT has, "He makes him stumble against them (is their tongue)."
- 10 Many medieval *Hebrew MSS* read 'see' instead 'proclaim'.
- 11 The literal translation of 'honest' is 'upright in heart'.

תהילים פרק סה

א לִמְנַצַּח מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד שִׁיר:
ב לֵךְ דְּמִיָּה תְהִלָּה אֱלֹהִים בְּצִיּוֹן
וְלֵךְ יִשְׁלֹם־נֶדֶר:
ג שְׁמַע תְּפִלָּה
עֲדִיף כָּל־בָּשָׂר יִבְאוּ:
ד דְּבַר־י עֲוֹנֹת גָּבְרוּ מִנִּי
פְּשָׁעֵינוּ אַתָּה תִכַּפֶּרם:
ה אֲשֶׁר־י תִבְחַר וְתִקְרַב יִשְׁכֹּן חֲצִירֶיךָ
נִשְׂבַּעַה בְּטוֹב בֵּיתְךָ
קֹדֶשׁ הֵיכָלְךָ:
ו נִזְרָאוֹת | בְּצֶדֶק תַּעֲנֵנוּ
אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעֵנוּ
מִבְּטָח כָּל־קְצוֹי־אֶרֶץ וַיִּם רַחֲקִים:

PSALM 65

- 1 *To the leader. A Psalm of David. A song.*
- 2 Praise awaits you, God, in Zion.
Vows to you shall be fulfilled,
3 for you answer prayer.
All humanity must come to you
4 with its sinful deeds.
Our faults overwhelm us but you blot them out.
5 Happy is he you choose and invite to dwell in your courts.
We shall be satisfied with the good things of your house,
of your holy temple.
6 You respond to us with the marvels of your saving justice,
God our Saviour, hope of the whole wide world,
even the distant islands.

PSALM 65

- 1 Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and subsequent verse numbers are accordingly incremented. After a good year with plentiful rain, the people thank the Creator: the first part, vv. 2–9, with its worldwide outlook, is reminiscent of Isaiah; the second, vv. 10–14, with a change of rhythm in v. 11, is an enthusiastic description of spring in Judah.
- 2 The literal translation of ‘praise awaits you’ is ‘for you, silence, praise’; some amend the noun ‘silence’ to a participle, taken here to mean ‘wait’.
- 3 The word ‘humanity’ (here following the *NJB*) literally means ‘flesh’.
- 4 ‘Blot out’ (literally, ‘cover the sin’) is an expression in the Priestly vocabulary for divine pardon, granted especially on the Day of Atonement (see #Lv 1:4, 16:1 and #Ps 78:38, 79:9).
- 5 The noun translated ‘happy’ is an abstract plural; the word often refers to the happiness that God-given security and prosperity produce.
- 6 ‘Islands’ follows the *Tg*; the *MT* has ‘seas’ (as does the *NRSV*), perhaps an anti-universalist alteration, since the ‘islands’ represent non-Jewish nations.

ז מִכִּין הָרִים בְּכֹחוֹ
 נֶאֱזָר בְּגִבּוֹרָה:
 ח מְשַׁבֵּיחַ | שְׁאוֹן יָמִים שְׁאוֹן גְּלִיָּהֶם
 וְהַמּוֹן לְאֲמִים:
 ט וַיִּירָאוּ | יֹשְׁבֵי קְצוֹת מְאוֹת־תֵּיךְ
 מוֹצְאֵי בֹקֶר וְעֶרֶב תִּרְנִין:
 י פָקַדְתָּ הָאָרֶץ וַתִּשְׁקָקָה רַבַּת תַּעֲשֹׁרָנָה
 פָּלַג אֱלֹהִים מְלֵא מֵיִם
 תִּכְּיוֹן דָּגָנָם כִּי־כֵן תְּכִינָה:
 יא תִּלְמִיָּה רוּחַ נַחַת גְּדוּדָה
 בְּרִבִּיבִים תִּמְגַּגֵּנָה צְמַחָה תִּבְרָךְ:
 יב עֲטַרְתָּ שְׁנַת טוֹבֶתֶךָ
 וּמַעֲגָלֶיךָ יִרְעֲפוּן דָּשֵׁן:
 יג יִרְעֲפוּ נְאוֹת מִדְּבָר
 וְגִיל גְּבֻעוֹת תַּחֲגֹרְנָה:

- 7 By your strength, you hold the mountains steady,
being clothed in power.
- 8 You calm the raging of the seas, the raging of their waves,
And the tumult of the nations.
- 9 Your miracles bring shouts of joy
to the gateways of morning and evening.
- 10 You visit the earth, water it, and fill it with riches;
the river of God brims over with water,
you provide the grain.
- 11 You water its furrows abundantly, level its ridges,
soften it with showers and bless it shoots.
- 12 You crown the year with your generosity,
richness seeps from your tracks.
- 13 The pastures of the desert grow moist;
the hillsides wrap themselves in joy.

7 'Your' follows the LXX; the MT has 'his'.

8 The raging seas symbolize the turbulent nations of the earth (see Ps 46:2-3, 6, Is 17:12).

9 The 'gateways', through which the sun was thought to pass each day, represent the most distant countries.

10 The poet is thinking about the storehouses above the vault of the sky where the waters are kept, 104:3, Gn 1:7, 7:11, Job 38:25, rather than the symbolic river of Zion, Ps 46:4.

11 Divine 'blessing' often involves an object with special power or capacity.

12 The chariot of God, 68:4, 17, Is 66:15, traverses the earth dispersing fertility.

13 The hills are wrapped with rich vegetation that brings joy to those who see it.

יֵד
לְבָשׁוּ כְרִים | הַצֹּאֵן
וְעַמֻּקִּים יַעֲטֹפוּ-בָר
יִתְרוּעְעוּ אֶף-יִשְׁרָו:

¹⁴ The meadows clothe themselves with flocks,
the valleys clothed with grain;
they shout and sing for joy.

¹⁴ The *NJB* has '*wheat*' in place of '*grain*', here following the *NRSV* & *NETB*.

תהילים פרק סו

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ שִׁיר מִזְמוֹר
הָרִיעוּ לֵאלֹהִים כָּל־הָאָרֶץ:
ב זָמְרוּ כְבוֹד־שְׁמוֹ
שִׁימוּ כְבוֹד תְּהִלָּתוֹ:
ג אִמְרוּ לֵאלֹהִים מִה־נֹּרָא מַעֲשָׂיו
בָּרַב עֲזָרָה יִכַּחֲשׂוּ לָךְ אִיבִיךָ:
ד כָּל־הָאָרֶץ | יִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לָךְ וְיִזְמְרוּ־לָךְ
יִזְמְרוּ שְׁמֶךָ
סֵלָה:
ה לְכוּ וּרְאוּ מַפְעָלוֹת אֱלֹהִים
נֹרָא עֲלִילָה עַל־בְּנֵי אָדָם:
ו הַפֶּדְ יָם | לִיבֶשֶׁה
בְּנֶהֱר יַעֲבְרוּ בְּרִגְלָם
שֵׁם נִשְׁמַח־בּוֹ:

PSALM 66

- 1 To the leader. A Song. A Psalm.
Make a joyful noise to God, all the earth.
- 2 Sing psalms to the glory of his name;
glorify him with your praises.
- 3 Say to God, "How awesome you are!
Because of your power, your enemies cringe before you.
- 4 "All the earth will worship you and will sing praises to you,
sing praises to your name."
- Selah*
- 5 Come and see the marvels of God:
he is awesome in his deeds for the children of Adam.
- 6 He changed the sea into dry land;
they crossed the river on foot.
So let us rejoice in him,

PSALM 66

- 1 This liturgical thanksgiving, the leader of which speaks from v. 13 onwards, recalls in style and worldwide outlook the 2nd half of Isaiah.
- 2 God's 'name' here stands metonymically for his reputation.
- 3 In Ps 18:44, the verb לָךְ ('cringe') seems to carry the nuance 'be weak' or 'be powerless' (cf. Ps 81:15, 109:24 Dt 33:29).
- 4 The NJB has 'psalms' in place of 'praises' (twice in this verse); here, we follow the NRSV.
- 5 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "awesome (is) an act toward the sons of man." It is unclear how the prepositional phrase relates to what precedes: if collocated with 'act', it may mean 'on behalf of' or 'toward'; if taken with 'awesome' (see 1Ch 16:25, Ps 89:7, 96:4, Zp 2:11), one might translate, "his awesome acts are beyond human comprehension" or, "his awesome acts are superior to anything men can do."
- 6 The crossing of the Sea of Reeds (Ex 14-15) and of the Jordan (Jos 3), two great events of Israel's history, are also paired in 74:13-15 & 114.

ז מִשֵּׁל בְּגִבּוֹרָתוֹ | עוֹלָם
 עֵינָיו בְּגוֹיִם תִּצְפִּינָה
 הַסּוֹדָרִים | אֶל־יְרוּמוֹ יְרִימוֹ לְמוֹ
 סֵלָה:

ח בָּרְכוּ עַמִּים | אֱלֹהֵינוּ
 וְהַשְׁמִיעוּ קוֹל תְּהִלָּתוֹ:
 ט הַשֵּׁם נִפְשָׁנוּ בַּחַיִּים
 וְלֹא־נָתַן לַמּוֹט רִגְלָנוּ:
 י כִּי־בַחֲנִתָּנוּ אֱלֹהִים
 צִרְפָּתָנוּ כְּצֶרֶף־כֶּסֶף:
 יא הִבֵּאתָנוּ בַּמְצוּדָה
 שָׂמַת מוֹעֵקָה בְּמַתְּנֵינוּ:
 יב הִרְכַּבְתָּ אָנוּשׁ לְרֹאשֵׁנוּ
 בָּאֲנוּ־בָאֵשׁ וּבַמַּיִם
 וְתוֹצִיאָנוּ לְרוּיָה:
 יג אָבוֹא בֵּיתְךָ בְּעוֹלוֹת
 אֲשַׁלֵּם לָךְ נִדְרֵי:

7 who rules forever by his power;
 his eyes keep watch on the nations:
 let the rebellious not exalt themselves.

Selah

8 Nations, bless our God,
 let the sound of his praise be heard.
 9 He brings us to life
 and keeps our feet from stumbling.
 10 For you, God, have put us to the test,
 refined us like silver.
 11 You let us fall into the net;
 you put a heavy burden on our backs.
 12 You let men ride over our heads;
 we went through fire and water,
 but you led us out to breathe again.
 13 I bring burnt offerings to your house;
 I fulfil to you my vows,

7 The verb 'exalt' is a jussive; the *Ketiv* has יְרִימוֹ (Hiphil, exhibitiv), whereas the *Qere* has יְרוּמוֹ (Qal, intransitive).

8 A more literal translation of 'let' would be "cause ... to."

9 The 1st line is the origin of the name, "Resurrection Psalm," given by some *LXX MSS*. The Easter liturgy uses this verse.

10 One could also open this verse with 'Indeed' in place of 'For'.

11 The word מוֹעֵקָה ('burden') occurs only here in the OT.

12 'Breathe again' follows the *LXX*, *Peshitta* & *Tg*; the *MT* has 'saturation' (the *NRSV* has a conjectural 'spacious place').

13 Here, the psalmist switches to the singular; he speaks as the representative of the nation.

יְד אֲשֶׁר־פָּצוּ שְׁפָתַי
וְדִבַּרְתִּי בִצְרֹלִי:
טו עֲלֹת מִיָּחִים אֲעֹלֶה־לָּךְ
עִם־קֹטֶרֶת אֵילִים
אֲעֹשֶׂה בְקָר עִם־עֲתוּדִים
סֵלָה:

טז לְכוּ־שִׁמְעוּ וְאַסְפְּרָה כָּל־יִרְאֵי אֱלֹהִים
אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לְנַפְשִׁי:
יז אֵלִיו פִּי־קָרָאתִי
וְרוֹמֶם תַּחַת לְשׁוֹנִי:
יח אֲנִי אִם־רָאִיתִי בְלִבִּי
לֹא יִשְׁמַע | אֲדָנִי:
יט אֲבֵן שָׁמַע אֱלֹהִים
הִקְשִׁיב בְּקוֹל תַּפְלָתִי:
כ בְּרוּךְ אֱלֹהִים
אֲשֶׁר לֹא־הִסִּיר תַּפְלָתִי וְחִסְדּוֹ מֵאֵתִי:

14 the vows that rose to my lips,
which I pronounced when I was in trouble.
15 I will offer you rich burnt offerings,
with the smoke of burning rams.
I will sacrifice to you bullocks and goats.
Selah
16 Come and listen, all you who fear God,
while I tell you what he has done for me.
17 To him I cried aloud,
high praise was on my tongue.
18 Had I been aware of guilt in my heart,
the Lord would not have listened.
19 But truly, God did listen,
attentive to the sound of my prayer.
20 Blessed be God
who did not reject my prayer or abandon his love for me.

14 In place of 'rose to my lips', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'my lips uttered'.
15 The NRSV has 'burnt offerings of fatlings' in place of 'rich burnt offerings', here following the NJB.
16 A more literal translation of 'you who fear God' is 'fearers of God'.
17 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "To him (with) my mouth I called."
18 In place of 'Lord', here following the NJB & NRSV, NETB has 'sovereign Master'.
19 The NRSV has 'has listened' in place of 'did listen', here following the NJB.
20 In a blessing formula after בְּרוּךְ, the form אֲשֶׁר introduces the basis for the blessing/praise.

תהילים פרק סז

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ בְּנִגִּינַת מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר:
ב אֱלֹהִים יַחֲנֵנוּ וַיְבָרְכֵנוּ
יֵאָר פָּנָיו אֶתָּנוּ סֵלָה:
ג לְדַעַת בָּאָרֶץ דְּרָכָךָ
בְּכָל־גּוֹיִם יִשׁוּעָתְךָ:
ד יוֹדוּךָ עַמִּים | אֱלֹהִים
יוֹדוּךָ עַמִּים כָּלָם:
ה יִשְׂמְחוּ וַיִּרְנְנוּ לְאַמִּים
כִּי־תִשְׁפֹּט עַמִּים מִיֶּשֶׁר
וּלְאַמִּים | בָּאָרֶץ תִּנָּחֵם
סֵלָה:
ו יוֹדוּךָ עַמִּים | אֱלֹהִים
יוֹדוּךָ עַמִּים כָּלָם:
ז אֶרֶץ נָתַנָּה יְבוּלָהּ
יְבָרְכֵנוּ אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵינוּ:

PSALM 67

- 1 *To the leader. A Song. A Psalm.*
 - 2 May God show his kindness and bless us,
and make his face shine on us.
 - 3 Then the earth will acknowledge your ways
and all nations your power to save.
 - 4 Let the nations praise you, God,
let all the nations praise you.
 - 5 Let the nations rejoice and sing for joy,
you judge the peoples with fairness,
you guide the nations on earth.
- Selah*
- 6 Let the nations praise you, God,
let all the nations praise you.
 - 7 The earth has yielded its produce;
God, our God has blessed us.

PSALM 67

- 1 Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and other verse numbers are incremented.
- 2 This Psalm was probably recited at the harvest festival, see #Ex 23:14.
- 3 When God demonstrates his favour to his people, all nations will recognise his character as a God who delivers.
- 4 This refrain is in the spirit of the second part of Isaiah.
- 5 The *NJB*, following *Codex Sinaiticus*, adds 'you judge the world with justice' as a 2nd line.
- 6 The prefixed verbal forms in this verse are understood as jussives in this call to praise.
- 7 For the 2nd line, here following the *NJB* & *NRSV*, *NETB* has, "May God, our God, bless us."

יְבָרְכֵנוּ אֱלֹהִים ח
וַיִּירָאוּ אוֹתוֹ כָּל-אַפְסֵי-אָרֶץ:

⁸ May God continue to bless us;
let all the ends of the earth revere him.

⁸ For the 2nd line, *NETB* reads, “*Then all the ends of the earth will give him the honour he deserves.*” Here, we follow the *NJB* & *NRSV*.

תהילים פרק סח

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ לְדָוִד מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר:
ב יָקוּם אֱלֹהִים יִפּוּצוּ אוֹיְבָיו
וַיִּנּוּסוּ מִשְׁנֵאוֹ מִפְּנֵיו:
ג כִּהְגִּדֹף עָשָׂן תִּגְדֹּף
כִּהֵמָס דֹּג מִפְּנֵי־אֵשׁ
יֵאבְדוּ רָשָׁעִים מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים:
ד וְצַדִּיקִים יִשְׂמְחוּ יַעֲלִצוּ לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהִים
וַיִּשְׂשֻׁוּ בְשִׂמְחָה:
ה שִׁירוּ | לְאֱלֹהִים זִמְרוּ שְׁמוֹ
סָלוּ לְרֹכֵב בְּעֲרֵבוֹת
בֵּיה שְׁמוֹ וַעֲלֹזוּ לִפְנֵיו:
ו אֲבִי יְתוֹמִים וְדִין אֲלֻמֹּת
אֱלֹהִים בְּמַעוֹן קִדְּשׁוּ:

PSALM 68

- 1 *To the leader. A Psalm of David. A Song.*
- 2 Let God arise, let his enemies scatter;
let his opponents flee before him.
- 3 You disperse them like smoke:
as wax melts in the presence of a fire,
so the wicked melt at the presence of God.
- 4 Let the upright rejoice in the presence of God,
delighted and crying out for joy.
- 5 Sing to God, play music to his name,
build a road for the Rider of the Clouds,
his name is Yah; dance before him.
- 6 Father of orphans, defender of widows,
such is God in his holy dwelling.

PSALM 68

- 1 Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and subsequent verse numbers are incremented.
- 2 Between Prelude (vv. 2-7) and Conclusion (vv. 33-36) are six groups of two strophes, the strophes being paired off on the basis of subject matter. A copyist's error has upset the order of strophes 6 and 7. This is the most difficult of the Psalms to interpret, and there is no general agreement as to its meaning as a whole or in many of its details; some scholars regard it as merely a collection of unrelated fragments.
- 3 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "as smoke is scattered, you scatter [them]."
- 4 By placing the subject first, the psalmist highlights the contrast between God's ecstatic people and his defeated enemies (vv. 2-3).
- 5 In place of 'his name is' (here following the *MT* and *NRSV*), the *NJB* has the conjectural 'rejoice in'. An alternative reading of the 2nd line is, "lift up a song for him who rides through the desert."
- 6 God is depicted here as a just ruler: In the ancient Middle East, a king was responsible for promoting justice, including caring for the weak and vulnerable, epitomised by the 'orphans' and 'widows'.

ז אֱלֹהִים | מוֹשִׁיב יְחִידִים | בֵּיתָה
 מוֹצִיא אֲסִירִים בְּבוֹשֶׁרוֹת
 אֶךְ סוֹרְרִים שְׂכָנוּ צַחִיחָה:
 ח אֱלֹהִים בַּצֵּאתְךָ לִפְנֵי עַמְּךָ
 בַּצֵּעֲדֶךָ בִּישִׁמוֹן
 סֵלָה:

ט אֶרֶץ רָעָשָׁה | אֶף־שָׁמַיִם נָטְפוּ
 מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים זֶה סִינִי
 מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:
 י גֶּשֶׁם נִדְבוֹת תִּנְיַף אֱלֹהִים
 נִחַלְתָּךְ וְנִלְאָה אֶתָּה כּוֹנֵנֶתָה:
 יא חֵיתְךָ יִשְׁבוּ־בָהּ
 תִּכֵּן בְּטוֹבְתְךָ לַעֲנִי אֱלֹהִים:
 יב אֲדַנִּי יִתֵּן־אֹמֶר
 הַמְּבֹשְׁרוֹת צָבָא רַב:

- 7 God gives the lonely a home to live in
 and leads prisoners out into prosperity,
 but rebels must live in the bare wastelands.
- 8 God, when you set out at the head of your people,
 when you strode over the desert,
Selah
- 9 The earth rocked, the heavens pelted down rain
 at the presence of God, the God of Sinai,
 at the presence of God, the God of Israel.
- 10 God, you rained down a shower of blessings,
 when you heritage was weary, you gave it strength.
- 11 Your family found a home, which you,
 in your generosity, provided for the humble.
- 12 The Lord gave a command,
 the good news of a countless army.

-
- 7 God delivers the downtrodden and oppressed, but 'rebels' who oppose his reign are treated appropriately.
- 8 Some think this verse alludes to Israel's exodus from Egypt and its subsequent travels in the desert; another option is that, like v. 9, it echoes Jg 5:4, which describes how the God of Sinai marched across the desert regions to do battle with Sisera and his Canaanite army.
- 9 The NJB omits 'the God of Sinai'. This strophe shows God taking the field, his departure from Egypt in the Cloud, Ex 13:21, Nb 14:14, and the theophany at Sinai, see #Ex 19:16.
- 10 This and the following verse refer to the miracles of the Exodus: the manna, the quails, and the entry into the Promised Land.
- 11 The meaning of the 1st line is unclear; it appears to read, "your animals, they live in it," but this makes little, if any, sense in this context.
- 12 Vv. 12 & 13 talk of the victories of the conquest. The 'fair one' possibly means Jael (Jg 5:24) or perhaps the wives of the conquerors; see Jg 5:30, 11:34, 1S 18:6.

יג	מַלְכֵי צְבָאוֹת יִדְדוֹן יִדְדוֹן וְנוֹת-בֵּית תַּחֲלֵק שָׁלָל: אִם-תִּשְׁכְּבוּן בֵּין שִׁפְתַּיִם כַּנְפֵי יוֹנָה נִחְפָּה בַּכֶּסֶף וְאַבְרוֹתֶיהָ בִּירְקָרֶק חֲרוֹץ: בִּפְרֹשׁ שְׂדֵי מַלְכִים בָּהּ תִּשְׁלַג בְּצִלְמוֹן:	13	The chieftains of the army are in flight, in flight, and the fair lady at home is sharing out the spoils.
יד	הַר-אֱלֹהִים הַר-בָּשָׁן הַר גִּבְנָנִים הַר-בָּשָׁן: לָמָּה תִּרְצְדוֹן הָרִים גִּבְנָנִים הָהָר חָמַד אֱלֹהִים לְשִׁבְתּוֹ אֶף-יִהְיֶה יֹשֶׁבֶן לְנֶצַח: רֶכֶב אֱלֹהִים רַבְתִּים אֶלְפֵי שְׁנָאן אֲדָנִי בָם סִינִי בַקֶּדֶשׁ:	14	While you are at ease in the sheepfolds, the wings of the Dove are being covered with silver, and her feathers with green gold.
טו		15	When Shaddai scatters the chieftains, through her it snows on the Dark Mountain.
טז		16	A mountain of God, the mountain of Bashan! A haughty mountain, the mountain of Bashan!
יז		17	Why look with envy, haughty mountains, of the mountain God has chosen for his dwelling? There, God will dwell forever.
יח		18	The chariots of God are thousand upon thousand; God has come up from Sinai to the Sanctuary.

¹³ The phrase, 'fair lady' is a conjectural translation – the MT appears to read 'pasture', which makes little or no sense in this context.

¹⁴ The 'Dove' is the symbol of Israel, see 74:19, Ho 7:11, decking itself out with the finery won in battle, see Jos 22:8, Jg 8:24ff.

¹⁵ The 'Dark Mountain' is probably a wooded hill near Shechem, Jg 9:48–49. Abimelech sowed salt (white as snow, see Si 43:18–19) on the ruins of this town, Jg 9:45. The passage is highly obscure, but one imagines the poet, imitating Jg 5, questioning the isolationist clans who were not present at the battle, and vaunting to them the precious booty that the women of Israel are sharing out, and which shines on their brown skin like the plumage of a dove.

¹⁶ 'Bashan' was a region east of the Sea of Galilee.

¹⁷ The meaning of the verb translated here as 'look with envy' (תִּרְצְדוֹן) is uncertain; it occurs only here in the OT.

¹⁸ The 'chariots' are not those of Solomon (1K 10:26) but the heavenly chariots seen by Elijah (2K 6:17, cf. 2K 7:6, Is 66:15). What follows refers to the victories of the monarchical period. At the time of the Second Temple, the text of the second line was altered by changing the division of the words; literally, it translates, "The Lord is in them, Sinai is in the Sanctuary." Sinai is thus identified with Zion, from where the Law issues (Is

ט עֲלִיתָ לַמְּרוֹם | שְׁבִיתָ שְׁבִי
לִקְחַת מִתְּנוּת בְּאָדָם
וְאִף סוֹרְרִים לְשֹׁכֵן | יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים:

כ בְּרוּךְ אֲדֹנָי יוֹם | יוֹם
יַעֲמֹס־לָנוּ הָאֵל יִשׁוּעָתָנוּ
סֵלָה:

כא הָאֵל | לָנוּ אֵל לְמוֹשָׁעוֹת
וְלִיְהוָה אֲדֹנָי לַמָּוֶת תִּצָּאוֹת:
כב אֲדֹ-אֱלֹהִים יִמְחֹץ רֹאשׁ אֹיְבָיו
קִדְקֹד שֶׁעַר מִתְּהַלֵּךְ בְּאַשְׁמִיו:

כג אָמַר אֲדֹנָי מִבֶּשֶׁן אָשִׁיב
אָשִׁיב מִמַּצְלוֹת יָם:

כד לְמַעַן | תִּמְחֹץ רִגְלֶךָ בְּדָם
לְשׁוֹן כָּל־בֵּיךְ מֵאֹיְבִים מִנֶּהוּ:

19 You have climbed the heights, taken captives;
you have taken men as tribute, even rebels
that Yah God might have a dwelling place.

20 Blessed be the Lord, day after day,
he carries us along, God our Saviour.

Selah

21 Our God is a God who saves;
from Lord Yahweh comes escape from death.

22 But God smashes the head of his enemies,
the longhaired forehead of the prowling criminal.

23 The Lord has said, "I will bring them back from Bashan,
I will bring them back from the depths of the sea,

24 so that you may bathe your feet in blood,
and your dogs' tongues feast on your enemies."

2:3). This is the first sign of an adaptation of this Psalm in function of the liturgical feast of Pentecost, which commemorated the gift of the Law on Sinai.

19 The 'heights' refers to Zion. The word יְהוָה ('Yah') is a poetic, abbreviated version of the Tetragrammaton.

20 The phrase, 'day after day', could equally well apply to what follows it as to what precedes it.

21 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "and to the LORD, the sovereign Master, to death, goings out."

22 In place of 'forehead', here following NETB, the NJB has 'skull' and the NRSV has 'crown'.

23 Even if they retreat to distant regions, God will retrieve them and make them taste his judgment.

24 This verse alludes to the deaths of Ahab (1K 21:19, 22:38), of Jehoram (2K 9:24) and of Jezebel (2K 9:36). 'Bathe' follows the LXX, Tg and Peshitta; the MT has 'shatter'.

כה ראו הליכותיך אלהים
 הליכות אלי מלכי בקדש:
 כו קדמו שרים אחר נגנים
 בתוך עלמות תופפות:
 כז במקלות ברכו אלהים
 אדני ממקור ישראל:
 כח שם בנימן | צעיר רדם
 שרי יהודה רגמתם
 שרי זבולן שרי נפתלי:
 כט צוה אלהיך עזך
 עוזה אלהים זו פעלת לנו:
 ל מהיכלך על־ירושלם
 לך יובילו מלכים שי:
 לא גער חית קנה עדת אבירים | בעגלי עמים
 מתרפס ברצי־כסף

- 25 Your processions, God, are for all to see,
 the processions of my God, of my king, to the Sanctuary.
 26 Singers ahead, musicians behind,
 in the middle come girls, playing tambourines.
 27 In Choirs, they bless God,
 Yahweh, since the foundation of Israel.
 28 Benjamin was there, the youngest in front,
 the princes of Judah in bright coloured robes,
 the princes of Zebulun, and the princes of Naphtali.
 29 Take command, my God, as befits your power,
 the power, God, which you have wielded for us.
 30 Because of your Temple high above Jerusalem,
 kings will come to you bearing tribute.
 31 Rebuke the Beast of the Reeds, the herd of bulls,
 that people of calves, who bow down with ingots of silver.

25 An alternative reading for 'are for all to see' is 'have been seen'.

26 To celebrate a military victory, women would play tambourines (see Ex 15:20, Jg 11:34, 1S 18:6).

27 This verse is a liturgical antiphon.

28 Vv. 25–28 evoke the Pasch of Hezekiah (2Ch 30), in which the tribes of the North took part. The reason for the mention of just these four tribes, the first two from the south, the other two from Galilee, is uncertain. Benjamin was the tribe of Saul, Judah that of David.

29 The 1st line has been corrected, following the LXX and Peshitta; the MT has, "Your God has commanded your strength." The text and rhythm of the two following strophes are rather uncertain.

30 NETB associates the 1st line with the previous verse, "... as you come out of your Temple in Jerusalem."

31 'People of calves' is an insulting allusion to Egypt, its chieftains, and people. It must be at the time of the great Jewish deportation to Egypt in the reign of Ptolemy Soter, circa 320 BCE.

בְּזֶרַע עַמִּים קִרְבוֹת יִחַפְּצוּ:
לִב יֵאָתִיו חֲשִׁמָּנִים מִנִּי מִצְרַיִם
כּוֹשׁ תִּרְיֵץ יָדָיו לֵאלֹהִים:
לֵג מִמְּלָכוֹת הָאָרֶץ שִׁירוּ לֵאלֹהִים
זִמְרוּ אֲדֹנָי
סֵלָה:
לֵד לִרְכֹּב בְּשָׁמַי שְׁמִי־קֹדֶם
הֵן יִתֵּן בְּקוֹלוֹ קוֹל עֹז:
לֵה תִּגְוַע עֹז לֵאלֹהִים
עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל גִּאֲוָתוֹ
וְעֹזוֹ בַּשְּׁחָקִים:
לוֹ נֹרָא אֱלֹהִים מִמִּקְדָּשֶׁיךָ
אֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל
הוּא נֹתֵן עֹז וְתַעֲצֻמוֹת לָעָם
בְּרוּךְ אֱלֹהִים:

Scatter the people who delight in war.

- 32 From Egypt, nobles will come;
Ethiopia will stretch out its hands to God.
33 Kingdoms of the earth sing to God,
sing praises to the Lord.

Selah

- 34 O Rider of the Heavens, the primeval heavens,
there he speaks, with a voice of power!
35 Acknowledge the power of God,
whose majesty is over Israel,
whose power is in the clouds.
36 Awesome is God in his sanctuary.
He, the God of Israel,
gives strength and power to his people.
Blessed be God.

32 'Ethiopia' translates the Hebrew 'Cush'; an alternative is 'Nubia'.

33 In place of 'Lord', NETB has 'sovereign Master'.

34 In this context, God's 'voice' is the thunder that accompanies the rain (see vv. 9-10, as well as Dt 33:26).

35 The language of this verse echoes that of Dt 33:26.

36 'In his sanctuary' follows the LXX; the MT has 'from your sanctuary'.

תהילים פרק סט

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ | עַל־שׁוֹשַׁנִּים לְדָוִד:

ב הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי אֱלֹהִים

כִּי בָאוּ מַיִם עַד־נַפְשִׁי:

ג טָבַעְתִּי | בֵּין מַצּוֹלָה וְאֵין מַעֲמָד

בָּאתִי בַּמַּעַמְקֵי־מַיִם

וְשָׁבַלְת שֹׁטְפָתִנִּי:

ד יִגְעַתִּי בְקֶרְאִי נָחַר גְּרוֹנִי

כָּלוּ עֵינַי מִיַּחַל לְאֱלֹהֵי:

ה רַבּוֹ | מַשְׁעָרוֹת

רֹאשִׁי שֹׂנְאֵי חֵנָם

עֲצָמוּ מִצְמִיתִי אִיבֵי שָׁקֶר

אֲשֶׁר לֹא־גִזְלָתִי אֲז אֲשִׁיב:

ו אֱלֹהִים אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ לְאוֹלָתִי

וְאֲשִׁמוֹתַי מִמֶּךָ לֹא־נִכְחָדוּ:

PSALM 69

1 To the leader: to the tune, "Lilies." Of David.

2 Save me, God, for the waters
have come up to my neck.

3 I sinking in deep mire and there is no firm ground.
I have stepped into deep water
and the waves are washing over me.

4 I am exhausted with calling out, my throat is hoarse,
and my eyes grow dim with searching for my God.

5 More than the hairs of my head
are those who hate me without reason;
they who would get rid of me are many, my evil enemies.
Must I give back what I have never stolen?

6 God, you know how foolish I am;
my offences are not hidden from you.

PSALM 69

- 1 Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and subsequent verse numbers are incremented.
- 2 This Messianic Psalm is composed of two laments of differing rhythms, each containing a lamentation followed by a prayer. The first (2-7 & 14-16) elaborates the themes of the nether waters (see #18:4) and enemies (Ps 35 etc). The second (8-13 and 17ff) is a cry of distress of one who suffers for his zeal (see Ps 22, Is 53:10, Jr 15:15). The Psalm ends as a hymn of national application, vv. 33ff (cf. 22:27ff and 102:13ff).
- 3 The language of vv. 2-4 is metaphorical.
- 4 In placed of 'hoarse', here following the *NJB*, the *NRSV* has 'parched'; the literal translation is 'burned'.
- 5 The *NJB* parenthesises the last line.
- 6 The psalmist is the first to admit that he is not perfect; but even so, he is innocent of the allegations which his enemies bring against him.

<p>ז אל־יִבְשׁוּ בִי קוֹיֶךָ אֲדָנִי יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אל־יִפְלֹמוּ בִי מִבִּקְשֶׁיךָ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:</p>	<p>7 Those who hope in you must not be made fools of, Lord Yahweh Sabaoth, because of me! Those who seek you must not be disgraced, God if Israel, because of me!</p>
<p>ח כִּי־עָלִיךָ נִשְׂאתִי חֲרָפָה כְּסֻתָּה כְּלָמָה פָּנִי:</p>	<p>8 It is for you I bear insults; that shame has covered my face.</p>
<p>ט מוֹזֵר הָיִיתִי לְאָחִי וְנֹכְרִי לִבְנֵי אִמִּי:</p>	<p>9 I have become a stranger to my brothers, alienated from my own mother's sons.</p>
<p>י כִּי־קִנְאַת בֵּיתְךָ אֲכַלְתָּנִי וְחֲרָפוֹת חוֹרְפֶיךָ נָפְלוּ עָלַי:</p>	<p>10 For I am eaten up with zeal for you house, and insults directed against you fall on me.</p>
<p>יא וּאֲבָכָה בַּצּוֹם נַפְשִׁי וְתִהְיֶה לְחֲרָפוֹתַי לִי:</p>	<p>11 I mortify myself with fasting and find myself insulted for it.</p>
<p>יב וְאַתָּנָה לְבוּשֵׁי שָׂק וְאַהִי לָהֶם לְמַשָּׁל:</p>	<p>12 I dress myself in sackcloth and become their laughing-stock.</p>
<p>יג יִשְׁיָחוּ בִי יֹשְׁבֵי שַׁעַר וְנִגְיְנוֹת שׁוֹתֵי שֵׁכָר:</p>	<p>13 I am the gossip of people sitting at the gate, and the theme of drunkards' songs.</p>

7 The use of three 'titles' here draws attention to God's sovereign position.

8 For the last line, NETB reads, "and I am thoroughly disgraced."

9 Literally translated, this verse reads, "And I am estranged to my brothers and a foreigner to the sons of my mother."

10 The psalmist may have been, like Haggai and Zechariah, a zealot for the rebuilding of the Temple after the Exile (compare this verse with vv. 36–37; see also Ezr 4:1–5, 23–24, 5:2–3). This verse is quoted in Jn 2:17.

11 'Mortify myself' follows the LXX and Peshitta; the MT has 'weep'.

12 Another reading for 'laughing-stock' is 'object of ridicule'.

13 A more literal translation of 'drunkards' is 'drinkers of beer'.

יד ואֲנִי תַפְלִיתִי־לָךְ | יְהוָה עַת רְצוֹן
 אֱלֹהִים בְּרַב־חַסְדֶּךָ
 עֲנֵנִי בְאַמַּת יִשְׁעֶךָ:
 טו הַצִּילֵנִי מִטֵּיט וְאֶל־אֶטְבֶּעָה
 אֲנַצֵּלָה מִשְׁנָאִי
 וּמִמַּעַמְקֵי מַיִם:
 טז אֶל־תִּשְׁטַפְּנִי | שְׂבַלַת מַיִם
 וְאֶל־תִּבְלַעֵנִי מִצּוֹלָה
 וְאֶל־תִּאֲטַר־עָלַי בְּאֵר פִּיהָ:
 יז עֲנֵנִי יְהוָה כִּי־טוֹב חַסְדֶּךָ
 כְּרַב רַחֲמֶיךָ פָּנָה אֵלַי:
 יח וְאֶל־תִּסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ מֵעַבְדֶּךָ
 כִּי־צָר־לִי מְהֵרָה עֲנֵנִי:
 יט קִרְבָּה אֶל־נַפְשִׁי גְּאֹלָה
 לְמַעַן אֵיבֵי פִדְנִי:
 כ אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ חֲרַפְתִּי וּבִשְׁתִּי וּכְלִמְתִּי
 נִגְדָדְךָ כָּל־צוֹרָרִי:

- 14 Thus, I pray to you, Yahweh, at the time of your favour.
In your faithful love, answer me,
in the constancy of your saving power.
- 15 Rescue me from the mire before I sink;
so shall I be saved from those who hate me,
from the deep waters.
- 16 Let not the flood wash over me,
or the deep swallow me,
or the pit close its mouth on me.
- 17 Answer me, Yahweh, for your steadfast love is good;
in your tenderness, turn towards me.
- 18 Do not hide your face from your servant;
be quick to answer me, for I am in trouble.
- 19 Come to my side, redeem me,
ransom me because of my enemies.
- 20 You know well the insults, the shame and disgrace I endure.
Every one of my oppressors is known to you.

14 More literally translated, the 2nd half reads, "O God, in the abundance of your loyal love, answer me in the faithfulness of your deliverance."

15 NETB translates the passive verb in the 2nd line in the active voice – 'deliver me'.

16 The 'pit' here symbolizes the place of the dead (see Ps 55:23).

17 The NJB ends the 1st line (here following the NRSV) with 'your faithful love is generous'.

18 The idiom, 'hide your face' means to ignore.

19 The verb, 'redeem', casts the God in the role of a leader who protects members of his extended family in times of need and crisis.

20 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "Before you are all my enemies."

כא חרפה | שברה לבי ואנושה
 ואקוה לגוד ואין
 ולמנחמים ולא מצאתי:
 כב ויתנו בברותי ראש
 ולצמאי ישקוני חמץ:
 כג יהי־שלחנם לפניהם לפח
 ולשלומים למוקש:
 כד תחשכנה עיניהם מראות
 ומתניהם תמיד המעד:
 כה שפד־עליהם זעמך
 וחרון אפך ישיגם:
 כו תהי־טירתם נשמה
 באהליהם אליהי ישוב:
 כז כי־אתה אשר־הכית רדפו
 וא־ל־מכאוב חלליך יספרו:

- 21 Insult has broken my heart past cure.
 I hoped for sympathy, but in vain,
 for consolers – but I found none.
- 22 To eat, they give me poison,
 to drink, vinegar when I was thirsty.
- 23 Let their own table prove a trap for them,
 a snare for their allies.
- 24 May their eyes grow so dim that they cannot see,
 may their hips shake continually.
- 25 Vent your fury on them;
 let your burning anger overtake them.
- 26 Reduce their encampment to ruin,
 and leave their tents untenanted.
- 27 For they hound one you had already stricken
 and they redouble the pain of one you had wounded.

21 The 1st line is a conjectural translation (similar to that of the *NRSV*); the order of lines and words in vv. 20–21 has been upset, but no reconstruction is satisfactory.

22 This verse is quoted in all four Gospels (Mt 27:34, Mk 15:36, Lk 23:36, Jn 19:29).

23 For the 2nd line, here following the *NRSV*, the *NJB* reads, ‘and their abundance a snare’.

24 The *NJB* translates the 2nd line rather differently: “all their muscles lose their strength.”

25 ‘Fury’ here refers metonymically to divine judgment, which is the practical effect of God’s anger.

26 This verse is quoted in Ac 1:20.

27 ‘Redoubling’ follows the *LXX* & *Peshitta*; the *MT* has ‘recounting’. In this verse, the object is in the plural, an adaptation to the national liturgy.

כח תִּנְהַעֲוֹן עַל־עוֹנֵם
 וְאַל־יָבֹאוּ בְּצַדִּיקְתָּ:
 כט יִמְחוּ מִסֵּפֶר חַיִּים
 וְעַם צְדִיקִים אַל־יִכְתְּבוּ:
 ל וְאֲנִי עֲנִי וְכוֹאֵב
 יִשׁוּעַתָּךְ אֱלֹהִים תִּשְׁגְּבֵנִי:
 לא אֶהְלֵל שֵׁם־אֱלֹהִים בְּשִׁיר
 וְאֶגְדִּלְנוּ בְּתוֹדָה:
 לב וְתִיטֵב לַיהוָה מְשׁוֹר פֶּרֶךְ
 מִקֶּרֶן מַפְרִים:
 לג רְאוּ עֲנוּיִם יִשְׁמְחוּ
 דֶּרֶשׁי אֱלֹהִים וַיְחִי לְבַבְכֶּם:
 לד כִּי־שָׁמַע אֶל־אֲבִיוֹנִים יְהוָה
 וְאֶת־אֲסִירָיו לֹא בִזָּה:

28 Charge them with crime after crime;
 exclude them from your saving justice.
 29 Erase them from the book of the living,
 do not enrol them among the upright.
 30 For myself, wounded wretch that I am,
 by your saving power raise me up!
 31 I will praise God's name in song,
 I will extol him by thanksgiving.
 32 This will please Yahweh more than an ox,
 than a bullock horned and hoofed.
 33 Let the humble see it and are glad.
 Let you courage revive, you who seek God.
 34 For God listens to the poor,
 he has never scorned his captive people.

28 A more literal reading of the 2nd line is, "let them not come into your vindication."

29 The phrase 'the book of the living' (literally, 'scroll of life') occurs only here in the OT. It pictures a scroll or census list containing the names of the citizens of a community. When an individual dies, that person's name is wiped out of the list; so, this curse is a very vivid way of asking that the enemies die.

30 A priest or temple prophet may have delivered an oracle of assurance between this and the following verses.

31 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "I will magnify him with thanks."

32 Heartfelt gratitude is more pleasing to God than any formal, material sacrifice.

33 'You who seek God' refers to those who seek to have a relationship with God by obeying and worshiping him (see 53:2).

34 The psalmist here compares the objects of divine discipline (see v. 27) to prisoners.

לה יה־לְלוּהוּ שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ
 יַמִּים וְכָל־רֹמֵשׁ בָּם:
 לוּ כִּי אֱלֹהִים | יוֹשִׁיעַ צִיּוֹן
 וַיְבַנֶּה עָרֵי יְהוּדָה
 וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שָׁם וַיִּרְשׁוּהָ:
 לוּ וְזָרַע עֲבָדָיו יִנְחֻלֶּהָ
 וְאַהֲבֵי שְׁמוֹ יִשְׁכְּנוּ־בָהּ:

- 35 Let heaven and earth praise him,
 the seas and all that swims in them!
 36 For God will save Zion,
 and rebuild the cities of Judah.
 Then his people will live there on their own land.
 37 The descendants of his servants will inherit it,
 and those who love his name will dwell there.

35 The *NJB* moves the verb, 'praise' to the end of the verse; here, we follow the *MT*, *NRSV* & *NETB*.

36 If vv. 36–37 are not a later addition, they show the Psalm to be post-Exilic.

37 The earlier lament reflects an individual's situation, while vv. 36–37 seem to reflect a communal application of it.

תהילים פרק ע

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ לְדָוִד לְהַזְכִּיר:
ב אֱלֹהִים לְהַצִּילָנִי
יְהוָה לְעֲזָרְתִּי חוֹשֶׁה:
ג יִבְשׁוּ וַיַּחֲפְרוּ מִבִּקְשֵׁי נַפְשִׁי
יִסְגּוּ אַחֲזָר וַיִּכְלָמוּ
חִפְצֵי רַעְתִּי:
ד יֵשׁוּבוּ עַל־עֵקֶב בִּשְׁתָּם
הָאֹמְרִים הֵאָחָז | הָאָחָז:
ו יֵשִׁישׁוּ וַיִּשְׁמְחוּ | בָּךְ כָּל־מְבַקְשֶׁיךָ
וַיֹּאמְרוּ תָמִיד יִגְדֵּל אֱלֹהִים
אֱהָבֵי יִשׁוּעָתְךָ:
ז וְאַנִּי | עָנִי וְאַבְיוֹן אֱלֹהִים חוֹשֶׁה־לִּי
עֲזָרִי וּמַפְלִטִי אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי־תַאֲחָר:

PSALM 70

- 1 *To the leader. Of David, for the memorial offering.*
- 2 Be pleased, God, to rescue me,
Yahweh, come quickly and help me!
- 3 Shame and dismay to those who seek my life!
Back with them! Let them be humiliated
who delight in my misfortunes.
- 4 Let them shrink away covered with shame,
those who say, "Aha, aha!"
- 5 Let all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you.
Let them ceaselessly cry, "God is great,"
who love your saving power.
- 6 Poor and needy as I am, God, come quickly to me!
Yahweh, my helper, my Saviour, do not delay!

PSALM 70

- 1 Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the MT, and verse numbers are accordingly incremented.
- 2 This Psalm is a doublet of 40:13–17. The psalmist asks for God's help and for divine retribution against his enemies.
- 3 The four prefixed verbal forms in this verse are understood as jussives: The psalmist is calling judgment down on his enemies.
- 4 Ps 40:15 has the verb 'be aghast with shame' instead of 'shrink away' and adds 'to me' after 'say'.
- 5 The three prefixed verbal forms prior to the quotation are understood as jussives: The psalmist balances out his imprecation against his enemies with a prayer of blessing on the godly.
- 6 Ps 40:18 has 'my God' instead of the Divine Name.

תהילים פרק עא

א בָּךְ־יְהוָה חֲסִיתִי
אֶל־אֲבוֹשָׁה לְעוֹלָם:
ב בְּצִדְקַתְךָ תַּצִּילֵנִי וּתְפַלֵּטֵנִי
הִטָּה־אֵלַי אָזְנוֹךָ וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנִי:
ג הִיָּה לִי לְצֹר מְעוֹן לְבוֹא
תָמִיד צְוִיתָ לְהוֹשִׁיעֵנִי
כִּי־סִלַּעַי וּמְצוּדַתִּי אַתָּה:
ד אֱלֹהֵי פִלְטָנִי מִיַּד רָשָׁע
מִכַּף מַעְוָל וְחוֹמֶק:
ה כִּי־אַתָּה תִּקּוֹתִי
אֲדַנִּי יְהוָה מִבֶּטְחִי מִנְּעוּרַי:
ו עֲלִידָךְ | נִסְמַכְתִּי מִבֶּטֶן
מִמַּעַי אִמִּי אַתָּה גֹזֵז
בָּךְ תִּהְלֶתִי תָמִיד:

PSALM 71

- 1 In you, Yahweh, I take refuge;
I shall never be put to shame.
- 2 In your saving justice rescue me, deliver me;
listen to me and save me.
- 3 Be a sheltering rock for me, always accessible.
You have determined to save me,
for you are my rock, my fortress.
- 4 My God, rescue me from the grasp of the wicked,
from the grasp of the rogue and the ruthless.
- 5 For you are my hope, Lord,
my trust, Yahweh, since my youth.
- 6 On you I have relied since my birth,
since my mother's womb you have been my portion,
the constant theme of my praise.

PSALM 71

- 1 The psalmist prays for divine intervention and expresses his confidence that God will protect and vindicate him. The first three verses are very similar to 31:1-3a.
- 2 Ps 31:1 omits 'and save me'.
- 3 The 2nd line here follows the LXX (and cf. 31:2); the MT has 'to enter continually, you commanded to deliver me'.
- 4 The literal translation of 'grasp' (here following the NRSV) is 'hand'.
- 5 In place of 'my youth', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'boyhood'.
- 6 The meaning of the 2nd line is uncertain; some MSS have 'strength' in place of 'portion' and the NRSV has, for the line, "it was you who took me from my mother's womb."

כְּמוֹפֶת הַיָּתִי לְרַבִּים וְאַתָּה מַחֲסִי־עוֹ:	ז	7	Many were bewildered at me, but you are my sure refuge.
יִמְלֵא פִי תְהִלָּתְךָ כָּל־הַיּוֹם תִּפְאָרֶתְךָ:	ח	8	My mouth is full of your praises, filled with your splendour all day long.
אַל־תִּשְׁלִיכֵנִי לַעֲת זָקְנָה בְּכָלוֹת כָּחִי אַל־תַּעֲזֹבֵנִי:	ט	9	Do not reject me in my old age, nor desert me when my strength is failing.
כִּי־אֹמְרוּ אוֹיְבֵי לִי וְשֹׁמְרֵי נַפְשִׁי נוֹעֲצוּ יַחְדָּו:	י	10	For my enemies are discussing me, those with designs on my life are plotting together.
לֵאמֹר אֱלֹהִים עֲזָבוּ רָדְפוּ וְתַפְשׁוּהוּ כִּי־אֵין מַצִּיל:	יא	11	Saying, "Hound him down, for God has deserted him! Seize him, there is no one to rescue him."
אֱלֹהִים אַל־תִּרְחַק מִמֶּנִּי אֱלֹהֵי לְעֶזְרָתִי חִשָּׁה חוֹשָׁה:	יב	12	God, do not stand aloof, my God, come quickly to help me.
יִבְשׁוּ יָכְלוּ שֹׁטְנֵי נַפְשִׁי יַעֲטוּ חֲרָפָה וּכְלָמָה מִבְקָשֵׁי רָעָתִי:	יג	13	Shame and ruin on those who slander me; may those who seek my harm be covered with scorn and disgrace.

-
- ⁷ The bewilderment was because of his sufferings: they were surprised to see a good man suffer (cf. Job).
⁸ Literally translated, this verse reads, "My mouth is filled [with] your praise, all the day [with] your splendour."
⁹ There are violent enemies (vv. 10–11) and age is a disadvantage (compare v. 18).
¹⁰ A more literal translation for the 2nd line (here following the NJB) is, "those who watch for my life consult together."
¹¹ The NJB omits the opening, 'saying' and the NRSV has 'they say'.
¹² The difference between the *Ketiv* and *Qere* readings here is possibly due to a scribal in reading a (possibly small or short) *vav* as a *yod*.
¹³ The NJB has 'insult and infamy' in place of 'scorn and disgrace', here following the NRSV.

יד ואני תמיד איחל
 והוספתי על-כל-תהלתך:
 טו פי | יספר צדקתך
 כל-היום תשועתך
 כי לא ידעתי ספרות:
 טז אבוא בגברות אדני יהוה
 אזכיר צדקתך לבדך:
 זי אלהים למדתני מנעורי
 ועד-הנה אגיד נפלאותיך:
 יח וגם עד-זקנתי ושיבה
 אלהים אל-תעזבני
 עד-אגיד זרועך לדור
 לכל-יבוא גבורתך:
 יט וצדקתך אלהים עד-מרום
 אשר-עשית גדלות
 אלהים מי כמוך:

14 As for me, my hope will never fade;
 I will praise you yet more and more.
 15 My lips shall proclaim your saving justice,
 your saving power all day long,
 though their number is past my knowledge.
 16 I will come in the power of Yahweh
 to tell of your justice, yours alone.
 17 God, you have taught me from boyhood,
 and I am still proclaiming your marvels.
 18 Now that I am old and grey-haired,
 God, do not desert me,
 until I have proclaimed your strength
 to generations still to come, your power.
 19 Your power and your righteousness, O God,
 reach to the skies above.
 God, who is like you?

14 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, “and I will add to all your praise.”

15 The NJB omits the last line (here following the NSRV), dismissing it as the gloss of a scribe puzzled by the following word.

16 The meaning of the 1st line is uncertain (literally, “I shall come in the powers of the Lord Yahweh”). Possibly, the first letter should be changed to read, “I shall proclaim the powerful deeds of Yahweh.”

17 A more literal translation for the 2nd line is, “and until now I proclaim ...”

18 This passage could be applied to Israel, whose ‘youth’ and ‘old age’ were often referred to by the prophets. ‘Your strength’ translates literally as ‘your arm’, a figure of speech found in the prophets (Is 51:9, 53:1) referring to the miracles of the Exodus.

19 Similar statements are made in 36:5 & 57:10.

כ אֲשֶׁר הִרְאִיתָנִי צָרוֹת רַבּוֹת וְרָעוֹת
 תָּשׁוּב תַּחֲיֵנוּ תַּחֲיֵנִי
 וּמִתְהַמּוֹת הָאָרֶץ תָּשׁוּב תַּעֲלֵנִי:
 כא תִּרְבֵּן גְּדַלְתִּי
 וְתַסֵּב תִּנְחַמְנִי:
 כב גַּם־אֲנִי אֹדֹךָ בְּכָל־נֶבֶל
 אֲמַתֶּךָ אֱלֹהֵי
 אֲזַמְרָה לָךְ בְּכָנּוֹר
 קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל:
 כג תִּרְנְנָה שִׁפְתֵּי כִי אֲזַמְרָה־לָּךְ
 וְנַפְשִׁי אֲשֶׁר פָּדִיתָ:
 כד גַּם־לְשׁוֹנִי כָּל־הַיּוֹם תִּהְיֶה צְדָקָתְךָ
 כִּי־בָשׁוּ כִי־חָפְרוּ מִבְּקָשִׁי רָעָתִי:

- 20 You have shown me much misery and hardship,
 but you will give me life again.
 You will raise me up again from the depths of the earth.
 21 You will increase my honour,
 and comfort me once again.
 22 For my part, I will thank you on the lyre
 for your constancy, my God.
 I will play the harp in your honour,
 O Holy One of Israel.
 23 My lips sing for joy as I play to you;
 my soul also, which you have rescued.
 24 All day long, my tongue muses on your saving justice.
 Scorn and disgrace on those who seek my harm!

20 The differences between the *Kethib* and *Qere* readings here both appear to be due to *vav/yod* confusion.

21 For this verse, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "You will prolong my old age, and comfort me again."

22 The basic sense of the word 'holy' is 'set apart from that which is commonplace'; God's holiness is first and foremost his transcendent sovereignty as the ruler of the world: he is 'set apart' from the world over which he rules. At the same time, his holiness encompasses his moral authority, which derives from his royal position. As king, he has the right to dictate to his subjects how they are to live; indeed, his very own character sets the standard for proper behaviour.

23 The NJB omits the 2nd line, here following the NRSV.

24 This verse repeats the refrain of v. 13.

תהילים פרק עב

א לְשִׁלְמָה |
אֱלֹהִים מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ לְמֶלֶךְ תֵּן
וְצִדְקָתְךָ לְבֶן-מַלְכְּךָ:
ב יָדִין עַמֶּךָ בְּצֶדֶק
וְעֲנִיֶיךָ בְּמִשְׁפָּט:
ג יִשְׂאוּ הָרִים שָׁלוֹם לָעָם
וְגִבְעוֹת בְּצִדְקָה:
ד יִשְׁפֹט | עֲנִי-יָעָם
יֹושֵׁעַ לִבְנֵי אֲבִיוֹן וַיְדַכֵּא עוֹשֵׁק:
ה יִירָאוּךָ עַם-שָׁמַיִם
וּלְפָנֶיךָ יִרְחַ דֹּר דֹּרִים:
ו יֵרֵד כְּמָטָר עַל-גֶּזֶז
כְּרִבִּיבִים זֶרְזִיף אֶרֶץ:

PSALM 72

- 1 *Of Solomon.*
God, endow the king with your own fair judgement,
the son of the king with your own saving justice.
- 2 May he rule your people with justice,
and your oppressed with fair judgement.
- 3 Mountains and hills
bring peace to the people, in justice!
- 4 He will judge the poor of the people,
he will save the sons of the poor and crush their oppressors.
- 5 In the sight of the sun and the moon,
he will endure, age after age.
- 6 He will come down like rain on mown grass,
like showers moistening the land.

PSALM 72

- 1 This Psalm, dedicated to Solomon, whose wealth, glory, and reign it celebrates (1K 3:9,12,28, 4:20, 10:1-29, 1Ch 22:9), evokes the image of the future ideal king. Jewish and Christian traditions see it as a portrait of the messianic King foretold by Is 9:5, 11:1-5 and Zc 9:9ff.
- 2 These people are called God's 'oppressed' because he is their defender (see 9:12, 18, 10:12, 12:5).
- 3 The personified mountains and hills represent messengers sweeping over the land announcing the king's just decrees and policies (see Is 52:7).
- 4 The prefixed verbal form translated as 'he will save' appears to be an imperfect, not a jussive.
- 5 'He will endure' follows the LXX; the MT has 'they will fear you'. Vv. 5-6 suggest the supernatural aura that surrounded the person of the king in the thought of the ancient Middle East (even in Israel he could be called 'God's son' – see 2:2 – and possibly even 'God' – see 45:6). The health, fertility and success of the nation were bound up inextricably in those of its monarch.
- 6 A possible alternative translation for 'mown grass' is 'fleece' (see Jg 6:37ff).

ז יִפְרַח־בִּימֵי צֶדֶק
 וְרֹב שְׁלוֹם עַד־בְּלִי יָרַח:
 ח וַיֵּרֶד מִיָּם עַד־יָם
 וּמִנְהַר עַד־אֶפְסַי־אַרְצָה:
 ט לִפְנֵי יִכְרַעוּ צִיִּים
 וְאֹיְבָיו עָפָר יִלְחֲכוּ:
 י מְלָכֵי תַרְשִׁישׁ וְאִיִּים
 מִנְחָה יִשְׁיִבוּ
 מְלָכֵי שֶׁבָא וְסָבָא
 אֲשֶׁכֶר יִקְרִיבוּ:
 יא וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ־לּוֹ כָּל־מְלָכִים
 כָּל־גּוֹיִם יַעֲבֹדוּהוּ:
 יב כִּי־יִצִּיל אֲבִיּוֹן מִשּׁוֹעַ
 וְעָנִי וְאִין־עֹזֶר לּוֹ:
 יג יַחֵס עַל־דָּל וְאֲבִיּוֹן
 וְנַפְשׁוֹת אֲבִיּוֹנִים יוֹשִׁיעַ:

- 7 In his days, the upright shall flourish,
 and peace in plenty until the moon is no more.
 8 His empire shall stretch from sea to sea,
 from the River to the limits of the earth.
 9 The Beast will cower before him;
 his enemies will lick the dust.
 10 The kings of Tarshish and the islands
 will pay him tribute.
 The kings of Sheba and Saba
 will offer gifts.
 11 All kings will do him homage;
 all nations become his servants.
 12 For he rescues anyone needy who calls to him,
 and the poor who has no one to help.
 13 He has pity on the weak and the needy,
 and saves the needy from death.

7 The NJB has 'uprightness' in place of 'the upright' – a messianic adaptation, cf. Jr 23:5, Zc 9:9. The messianic age will last until the end of time.
 8 This verse outlines the boundaries of the ideal Israel (see #Jg 20:1). The 'River' is the Euphrates (1K 4:21).
 9 The word 'beast', used of animals or demons in the desert (Is 13:21, 34:14, Jr 50:39, Ezk 34:28) here refers to subjugated heathen states, cf. Is 27:1, Dn 7:3, Rv 13:1. The NRSV has 'his foes' and a footnote therein translates the Hebrew as 'those who live in the desert'.
 10 'Tarshish' was in the western Mediterranean, possibly in Spain. 'Sheba' and 'Saba' were in southern Arabia.
 11 For this verse, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "May all kings fall down before him, all nations give him service."
 12 Although 'the poor' (and the following verb) is here singular, it is representative of many.
 13 The prefixed verb form of the 1st line is best understood as a defectively written imperfect (see Dt 7:16).

יד	מִתּוֹדַי וּמִחַמְסִי יִגְאֹל נַפְשָׁם וַיִּקֶּר דָּמָם בְּעֵינָיו:	14	From oppression and violence, he redeems their lives, their blood is precious in his sight.
טו	וַיְחִי וַיִּתֵּן לֹא מִזֶּהָב שְׁבָא וַיִּתְפַּלֵּל בְּעֵדוֹ תָּמִיד כָּל־הַיּוֹם יִבְרַכְנָהוּ:	15	Long may he live; may the gold of Sheba be given him! Prayer will be offered for him constantly, and blessings invoked on him all day.
טז	יְהִי פֶסֶת־בָּרֶ בְּאַרְץ בְּרֹאשׁ הָהָרִים יִרְעַשׁ כָּל־בִּנְנוֹן פְּרִי וַיִּצְיָצוּ מֵעִיר כְּעֶשֶׂב הָאָרֶץ: יְהִי שְׁמוֹ לְעוֹלָם לְפָנֵי־שֶׁמֶשׁ יִנֵּן יָנוֹן שְׁמוֹ וַיִּתְבָּרְכוּ בּוֹ כָּל־גּוֹיִם יִאֲשְׁרוּהוּ:	16	Abundance of grain shall be throughout the land. Its fruit sways like Lebanon. Let it flourish, thriving like the grass of the field.
יז	יְהִי שְׁמוֹ לְעוֹלָם לְפָנֵי־שֶׁמֶשׁ יִנֵּן יָנוֹן שְׁמוֹ וַיִּתְבָּרְכוּ בּוֹ כָּל־גּוֹיִם יִאֲשְׁרוּהוּ:	17	May his name be blessed forever and multiply in the sight of the sun. In him shall be blessed every race in the world, and all nations call him blessed.
יח	בָּרוּךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עֹשֶׂה נִפְלְאוֹת לְבַדּוֹ: וּבָרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹדוֹ לְעוֹלָם וַיִּמְלֵא כְבוֹדוֹ אֶת־כָּל הָאָרֶץ	18	Blessed be Yahweh, the God of Israel, who alone works wonders.
יט	וּבָרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹדוֹ לְעוֹלָם וַיִּמְלֵא כְבוֹדוֹ אֶת־כָּל הָאָרֶץ	19	Blessed forever his glorious name; may the whole world be filled with his glory!

14 The verb, 'he redeems', casts God in the role of a leader who protects members of his extended family in times of need and crisis.

15 The NJB parenthesises the first line. The remainder of the verse is obscure; the subject of the verb is not explicit. Israel is praying for the success of the Messiah's saving mission, but it could also be understood, "He (the Messiah) will pray for him (the poor man) and will bless him."

16 English versions differ greatly for this verse; here, we follow WEBBE.

17 The first 'blessed' and 'every race in the world' follow the LXX and are lacking in the MT. The NJB (and NRSV), following the versions, has 'endure' in place of 'multiply', here following the MT. The Ketiv / Qere difference here is like due to misreading a (possibly small/short) vav as a yod.

18 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "one who does wonders by himself."

19 The last line is probably a congregational response of agreement to the immediately preceding statement about the propriety of praising God.

אָמֵן | וְאָמֵן:
כַּ כָּלֹו תַפִּלוֹת דָּוִד בֶּן־יֵשׁׁי:

Amen! Amen!

²⁰ The prayers of David, son of Jesse, are ended.

²⁰ This colophon and preceding doxology (18–19) close the second book of the Psalter and are not part of the actual Psalm.

ספר שלישי

תהילים פרק עג

א מִזְמוֹר לְאַסָּף
אֵד טוֹב לְיִשְׂרָאֵל אֱלֹהִים
לְבָרִי לִבָּב:
ב וְאֲנִי כִמְעַט נָטוּי נָטִיו רַגְלִי
כְּאִין שָׁכַח שִׁפְכוֹ אֲשֶׁרִי:
ג כִּי־קִנְאָתִי בַהוֹלְלִים
שָׁלוֹם רְשָׁעִים אֶרְאֶה:
ד כִּי אֵין חֲרָצָבוֹת לְמוֹתָם
וּבְרִיא אוֹלָם:
ה בְּעֵמֶל אִנוּשׁ אֵינָמוּ
וְעַם־אָדָם לֹא יִנָּגְעוּ:
ו לִכֵּן עֲנֻקְתָּמוּ גְאוּהָ
יַעֲטֹף־שִׁית חֲמַס לָמוֹ:

BOOK III

PSALM 73

- ¹ *A Psalm of Asaph.*
Indeed God is good to Israel, to those who are pure of heart.
- ² My feet were on the point of stumbling,
a little more and I had slipped.
- ³ For I was envious of the arrogant,
I saw the prosperity of the wicked.
- ⁴ For they have no pain,
their bodies are sound and sleek.
- ⁵ Exempt from the cares that are the human lot,
they are not plagues like other people.
- ⁶ Therefore, pride is a necklace to them,
violence the garment they wear.

PSALM 73

- ¹ The poet-sage is troubled by the prosperity of the godless and sufferings of the upright, cf. Job 21:1ff, Qo 7:15, Jr 12:1, Ml 3:15, but goes on to contrast the passing pleasures of the sinner with the enduring peace of God's friendship. In place of 'Israel', the NRSV has 'the upright'.
- ² The psalmist had nearly lost faith. The *Kethib*/*Qere* differences here lack any obvious explanation.
- ³ A more literal translation for 'prosperity' is 'peace'.
- ⁴ Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "their bellies are strong and fat."
- ⁵ For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "they have no part in Adam's afflictions."
- ⁶ The metaphor suggests that their arrogance is something the wicked 'wear' proudly; it draws attention to them, just like a necklace.

יֵצֵא מִחֶלֶב עֵינָמוּ ז
 עֲבְרוּ מִשְׁכִּיּוֹת לִבָּב:
 יִמְקֹוּ וַיִּדְבְּרוּ בְרַע עֶשֶׂק ח
 מִמָּרוֹם יִדְבְּרוּ:
 שִׁתּוּ בַשָּׁמַיִם פִּיהֶם ט
 וְלִשְׁוֹנָם תִּהְלֹךְ בָּאָרֶץ:
 לִכְנָן יֵשִׁיב יָשׁוּב עִמּוֹ הַלֵּם י
 וּמִי מֵלֵא יִמְצֹו לָמוֹ:
 וְאָמְרוּ אֵיכָה יֵדְע־אֵל יא
 וַיֵּשׁ דַּעַה בְּעֶלְיוֹן:
 הִנֵּה־אֵלֶּה רָשָׁעִים יב
 וְשִׁלּוֹי עוֹלָם הַשְׁגוֹחִיל:
 אֶדְרִיק זָכִיתִי לִבִּי ג
 וְאַרְחֹץ בְּנִקְיוֹן כַּפִּי:
 וְאֵהִי נִגּוּעַ כָּל־הַיּוֹם יד

7 From their fat oozes out malice,
 their hearts drip with cunning.
 8 They scoff and speak with malice;
 loftily, they advocate force.
 9 Their mouth claims heaven for themselves
 and their tongue is never still on earth.
 10 That is why my people turn to them,
 and enjoy the waters of plenty.
 11 And they say, "How can God know?
 What knowledge can the Most High have?"
 12 That is what the wicked are like,
 piling up wealth without any worries.
 13 Was it useless, then, to have kept my own heart clean,
 to have washed my hands in innocence?
 14 For I was under a hail of blows all day long,

-
- 7 The 1st line is a conjectural translation, following the *NJB*; the *NRSV*, following the *MT*, has, "*Their eyes swell out with fatness.*"
 8 For the 1st line, the *NJB* reads, "*Cynically they advocate evil.*" The verb translated '*they scoff*' (יִמְקֹוּ) occurs only here in the OT.
 9 The meaning of the text is uncertain. Perhaps the idea is that they lay claim to heaven (i.e., speak as if they were ruling in heaven) and move through the earth declaring their superiority and exerting their influence.
 10 This verse follows the *LXX* and *Peshitta*; the *MT* is corrupt, literally, "*That is why his people come back this side, the waters of plenty are empty.*" For the 2nd line, the *NRSV* has, "*and find no fault in them.*" The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here appears to be caused by *vav*/*yod* confusion.
 11 Their indifference to morality was grounded in a sceptical attitude toward God.
 12 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "*the ones who are always at ease increase wealth.*"
 13 If wickedness is not punished, why be good?
 14 Efforts to be righteous brought only suffering.

וְתוֹכַחְתִּי לַבִּקְרִים:
טו אִם-אֶמְרָתִי אֶסְפֶּרָה כִּמּוֹ
הִנֵּה דֹר בְּנֵיךָ בִּגְדִתִּי:
טז וְאַחֲשָׁבָה לִדְעַת זֹאת
עֲמַל הִיא הוּא בְּעֵינַי:
יז עַד-אֲבֹא אֶל-מִקְדָּשֵׁי-אֵל
אֲבִינָה לְאַחֲרִיתָם:
יח אֵךְ בַּחֲלָקוֹת תִּשִׁית לָמוֹ
הַפִּלְתָּם לְמִשְׁוֹאוֹת:
יט אֵיךְ הָיוּ לִשְׂמָה כְּרָגַע
סָפוּ תָמוּ מִן-בִּלְהוֹת:
כ כַּחֲלוֹם מִהִקִּיץ אֲדֹנָי
בְּעֵרָן צֶלֶם תִּבְזֶה:
כא כִּי יִתְחַמֵּץ לִבִּי
וְכִלְיוֹתַי אֲשָׁתוֹנָן:

and punished every morning.
15 Had I said, "I shall talk like them,"
I should have betrayed your children's race.
16 So, I set myself to understand this:
how difficult I found it!
17 Until I went into the sanctuaries of the gods
and understood what was destined to become of them.
18 Truly you set them in slippery places;
you make them fall to ruin.
19 How sudden is their hideous destruction!
They are swept away, annihilated by terror!
20 Like a dream upon waking, Lord,
when you awake, you dismiss their image.
21 My heart grew embittered,
my affections dried up.

15 This is what the psalmist was tempted to say, but he had refrained from doing so because of the effect it might have on others (39:1).

16 Private cogitation brought no answer to the problem; it was only on going into the Temple to seek God's help (vv. 17-28) that a satisfactory answer came. The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here appears to be the result of correcting a scribe's misreading of a (small) *vav* as a *yod*.

17 The 'sanctuaries' are those of the non-Jewish gods, support of the impious and responsible for evil in the world (Ps 82). It has been understood also of the Temple (Jr 51:51) or of divine mysteries (Ps 119:130, Ws 2:22) but the context suggests rather the ruin of non-Jewish sanctuaries.

18 For this verse, the *NJB* reads, "You place them on a slippery slope and drive them down into chaos." Here, we follow the *NRSV*.

19 For the 2nd line, *NETB* reads, "Terrifying judgements make their demise complete."

20 On God's 'awakening', see 35:23, 44:23, 59:5, 78:65, Is 51:9. On the 'image', see 49:14, 90:5, Job 20:8, Is 29:7-8. 'Lord' translates אֲדֹנָי ('*Adonai*').

21 The imperfect verb forms here indicate continuing conditions in a past time frame.

וְאֲנִי־בֶעֱר וְלֹא אֲדַע בְּהֵמוֹת הָיִיתִי עֹמֵד:	כב	22	I was stupid and uncomprehending, a clumsy animal in your presence.
וְאֲנִי תָמִיד עֹמֵד אֶחֱזַת בְּיַד־יְמִינִי:	כג	23	Even so, I stayed in your presence; you grasped me by the right hand.
בְּעֲצַתְךָ תִּנְחֵנִי וְאַחֲר כְּבוֹד תִּקְחֵנִי:	כד	24	You will guide me with advice and will draw me in the wake of your glory.
מִי־לִי בַשָּׁמַיִם וְעִמָּךְ לֹא־חֲפָצָתִי בָאָרֶץ:	כה	25	Who else is there for me in heaven? And, with you, I lack nothing on earth.
כֹּלָה שְׁאֵרִי וּלְבָבִי צוּר־לִבִּי וְחֶלְקִי אֱלֹהִים לְעוֹלָם:	כו	26	My heart and my flesh are pining away: rock of my heart, my portion, God forever!
כִּי־הִנֵּה רָחֲקִידָּ יֵאָבְדוּ הַצִּמְתָּה כָּל־זוֹנֶה מִמֶּךָ:	כז	27	Truly, those who abandon you will perish; you destroy those who adulterously desert you.
וְאֲנִי קִרְבַּת אֱלֹהִים לִי־טוֹב שִׁתִּי בְּאֲדָנִי יְהוָה מַחְסִי לְסַפֵּר כָּל־מַלְאכֹתֶיךָ:	כח	28	However, my happiness is to be near God. I have made the Lord Yahweh my refuge, to tell of all your works.

22 'Clumsy animal' translates literally as 'Behemoth', crassness personified (Job 40:15ff).

23 The writer now realised that the righteous has something that the wicked could never enjoy – a sense of the nearness of God (cf. Ps 63 & 27:4).

24 'Glory' (the NRSV has 'honour') here seems to be the divine attribute personified, recalling the Cloud of Exodus. Some versions translate 'with glory', giving the word its usual sense when used of human beings; this interpretation suggests that God preserves the just from an early and shameful death and will vindicate them, even though the upright dies while the wicked survive. Moreover, as in 16:9ff, the psalmist yearns for unbreakable union with God: this is a milestone on the road to explicit belief in resurrection and eternal life (see footnote to 16:10).

25 The psalmist uses a merism (heaven/earth) to emphasize that God is the sole object of his desire and worship in the entire universe.

26 The NRSV has 'strength' in place of 'rock'.

27 In prophetic literature, the phrase 'to adulterously desert' means infidelity to God (see #Ho 1:2).

28 The NJB adds an extra line, following the LXX: "at the gates of the daughter of Zion."

תהילים פרק עד

א מִשְׁכֵּל לְאַסָּף
לִמָּה אֱלֹהִים זָנַחְתָּ לְנֹצַח
יַעֲשֵׂן אֶפְדָּךְ בְּצֹאן מִרְעִיתֶךָ:
ב זָכַר עֲדָתְךָ לְקִנְיַת קֹדֶם
גֵּאֻלַּת שִׁבְט נַחֲלֶתְךָ
הַר־צִיּוֹן זֶה שְׁכֻנַּת בּוֹ:
ג הָרִימָה פַעֲמִידָה לְמִשְׁאֹת נֹצַח
כָּל־הָרַע אוֹיֵב בִּקְדָּשׁ:
ד שִׁאֲגוּ צִרְיֶיךָ בִּקְרֹב מוֹעֲדֶךָ
שִׁמוּ אוֹתָתָם אֹתוֹת:
ה יוֹדַע כְּמִבִּיא לְמַעַלָּה
בְּסֶבֶךְ־עֵץ קִרְדָּמוֹת:
ו וַעַת וַעֲתָה פְתוּחִיהָ יַחַד
בְּכִשְׁלִי וְכִלְפֹּת יִהְלָמוּ:

PSALM 74

- 1 *A Maskil of Asaph.*
God, why have you finally rejected us,
your anger blazing against the flock you used to pasture?
- 2 Remember the people you took to yourself long ago,
your own tribe, which you redeemed,
and this Mount Zion where you came to live.
- 3 Come up to these endless ruins!
The enemy has sacked everything in the Sanctuary.
- 4 Your foes made uproar in the place of assemblies;
they fixed their emblems over the entrance, emblems
- 5 never known before.
Their axes deep in the wood,
hacking at the panels,
- 6 they battered them down with axe and pick.

PSALM 74

- 1 According to the Tg, the madman (v. 22) is Antiochus Epiphanes, the 'mad king' who burned the Temple gates (1M 4:38, 2M 1:8) and profaned the Sanctuary (1M 1:21ff, 39, 2M 6:5). But the Psalm can also apply to the sack of the Temple by the army of Nebuchadnezzar (2K 25:9, Is 64:10), from which epoch the voice of prophecy ceased (v. 9, see Ps 77:8, Lm 2:9, Ezk 7:26 and 1M 4:46, 9:27, 14:41).
- 2 The literal translation of 'people' is 'assembly'.
- 3 Literally translated, the verses open, "Lift up your steps to ..."
- 4 'Over the entrance' (literally, 'as at the entrance, on high') follows the LXX and Peshitta; the MT has 'as one who grants entry' and the NRSV has 'at the upper entrance'.
- 5 'Never known before' follows the LXX; the MT has 'he is known' (probably a gloss of v. 4b); the NRSV omits this line.
- 6 'Hacking at the panels' follows the LXX; the MT has 'and now its carvings'. The Qere here probably corrects a letter dropped from the Kethib.

ז שלחו באש מקדשך
 לארץ חללו משכן־שִׁמְךָ:
 ח אמרו בלבם נינם יחד
 שרפו כל־מוֹעֲדֵי־אֵל בארץ:
 ט אות־תֵּינוּ לֹא רֹאִינוּ
 אֵין־עוֹד נְבִיא וְלֹא־אֲתָנוּ יָדַע עַד־מָה:
 י עַד־מָתִי אֱלֹהִים יַחַרְף צַר
 ינֹאֵץ אוֹיֵב שְׁמֶךָ לְנֶצַח:
 יא לְמָה תִּשְׁיֵב יָדְךָ וּיְמִינְךָ
 מִקֶּרֶב חֹקֶךָ חִיקְךָ כָּלָה:
 יב וְאֱלֹהִים מֶלֶכִּי מִקֶּדֶם
 פָּעַל יְשׁוּעוֹת בִּקְרֵב הָאָרֶץ:
 יג אַתָּה פּוֹרֶרֶת בְּעֹזְךָ יָם
 שִׁבְרָתָ רָאשֵׁי תַנִּינִים עַל־הַמַּיִם:

7 They set fire to your sanctuary,
 profanely demolishing the dwelling-place of your name.
 8 They said to themselves, “Let us crush them at one stroke!”
 They burned down every sacred shrine in the land.
 9 We see no signs, no prophet any more,
 and none of us knows how long it will last.
 10 How much longer, God, will the enemy blaspheme?
 Is the enemy to insult your name forever?
 11 Why hold back your hand,
 keep your right hand hidden in the folds of your robe?
 12 Yet, God, my king is, from the first,
 the author of saving acts throughout the earth.
 13 By your power, you split the sea in two,
 and smashed the head of the monster on the waters.

7 Another reading for ‘demolishing’ is ‘razing (to the ground)’.

8 ‘Let us crush them’ follows the Peshitta; the MT has ‘their offspring’ (נִינָם).

9 Jeremiah had spoken of 70 years of exile (Jr 25:11, 29:10), a figure symbolising long duration.

10 The NRSV has ‘revile’ in place of ‘insult’, here following the NJB.

11 ‘Keep ... hidden’ (the NRSV has ‘keep ... in your bosom’) is a conjectural translation; the MT has ‘destroy’. The *Kethib/Qere* difference here is likely a correction of *vav/yod* confusion.

12 The psalmist speaks as Israel’s representative here.

13 The MT has the plural form, ‘monsters’ (cf. NRSV ‘dragons’), but it is likely that an original enclitic *mem* has been misunderstood as a plural ending. The imagery of the mythological sea monster is utilized here.

אֶתְּהָ רָצַצְתָּ רֹאשֵׁי לְוִיָּתָן	יד	14	You crushed Leviathan's heads,
תַּתַּנְּנוּ מֵאֵכָל לָעַם לְצִיִּים:			gave him as food to the wild animals.
אֶתְּהָ בִקְעַת מַעִין וּנְחַל	טו	15	You released the springs and brooks,
אֶתְּהָ הַחַיִּת נִהְרֹת אֵיתָן:			and turned primordial rivers into dry land.
לְךָ יוֹם אֶף-לְךָ לַיְלָה	טז	16	Yours is the day and yours the night,
אֶתְּהָ הַכִּינֹת מְאֹר וְשֶׁמֶשׁ:			you caused sun and light to exist.
אֶתְּהָ הָעֲבַת כָּל-גְּבוּלוֹת אֶרֶץ	יז	17	You fixed all the boundaries of the earth;
קִיץ וְחֹרֶף אֶתְּהָ יִצְרָתָם:			you created summer and winter.
זְכֹר-זֹאת אוֹיֵב חֲרָף יְהוָה	יח	18	Remember the enemy's blasphemy, Yahweh;
וְעַם נָבָל נֶאֱצָו שְׁמֶךָ:			a foolish people insults your name.
אַל-תִּתֵּן לַחַיִּת גִּפְשׁ תּוֹרֶךְ	יט	19	Do not surrender your turtledove to the beast;
חַיִּת עֲנִיָּיִךְ אַל-תִּשְׁכַּח לְנֶצַח:			do not forget forever the life of your oppressed people.
הִבֵּט לְבַרִּית	כ	20	Look to the Covenant,
כִּי מָלְאוּ מַחֲשָׁפֵי-אֶרֶץ נְאוֹת חֲמָס:			for all the dark places of the land are full, haunts of violence.

-
- ¹⁴ Vv. 13–15 allude to the miracles of the Exodus (Ex 14:30, 17:1–7, Nb 20:2–13), to the defeat of the Egyptians (Ezk 29:3, 32:4) and to the crossing of the Jordan (Jos 3), as manifestations of the power of the Creator. This recapitulation of divine favours in the past (vv. 12–17) preludes the closing entreaty (vv. 18–23).
- ¹⁵ Perhaps this verse alludes to the way in which God provided water for the Israelites as they travelled in the desert following the Exodus.
- ¹⁶ The NRSV has 'luminaries' in place of 'light', and a footnote suggests 'moon' as an alternative.
- ¹⁷ The word, 'boundaries' would appear to refer to geographical boundaries, such as mountains, rivers, and seacoasts; however, since the day-night cycle has just been mentioned (v. 16) and the next line speaks of the seasons, it is possible that it here refers to the divisions of the seasons.
- ¹⁸ The NJB moves the Divine Name to near the beginning of the verse.
- ¹⁹ Hosea compared Israel to a dove (Ho 7:11, 11:11; cf. Sg 5:2); in place of 'turtledove' the LXX and Peshitta have 'the soul that gave you thanks'.
- ²⁰ The NRSV, following the LXX and Peshitta, has 'your Covenant'; here, we follow the MT and NJB.

כא אֶל־יֵשֶׁבֶדֶךָ נִכְלָם
 עֲנִי וְאַבְיוֹן יִהְלְלוּ שְׁמֶךָ:
 כב קוּמָה אֱלֹהִים רִיבָה רִיבֶךָ
 זָכֹר חֲרַפְתְּךָ מִנִּי־נָבָל כָּל־הַיּוֹם:
 כג אֶל־תִּשְׁכַּח קוֹל צִרְיֶיךָ
 שִׁאוֹן קָמֶיךָ עַל־הַ תָּמִיד:

- ²¹ Do not let the downtrodden retreat in confusion;
 give the poor and needy cause to praise your name.
- ²² Arise, God, champion your own cause;
 remember how fools blaspheme you all day long!
- ²³ Do not forget the shouting of your enemies,
 the ever-mounting uproar of your adversaries.

²¹ The 2nd line is metonymic. The point is this: May the oppressed be delivered from their enemies! Then they will have ample reason to praise God's name.

²² Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "remember your reproach from a fool all the day."

²³ Another reading for 'forget' is 'disregard'.

תהילים פרק עה

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ אֶל־תִּשְׁחַח

מִזְמוֹר לְאַסָּף שִׁיר:

ב הוֹדִינוּ לָךְ | אֱלֹהִים

הוֹדִינוּ וְקָרֹב שְׁמֶךָ

סִפְּרוּ נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ:

ג כִּי אַקַּח מוֹעֵד

אֲנִי מִיִּשְׁרָיִם אֲשַׁפֵּט:

ד נִמְגִּים אֶרֶץ וְכָל־יֹשְׁבֶיהָ

אֲנֹכִי תִכְנֶנֶתִּי עֲמוּדֶיךָ

סֵלָה:

ה אִמְרָתִי לַהֲלָלִים אֶל־תִּהְיוּ

וְלִרְשָׁעִים אֶל־תִּתְּרוּ קִרְיָן:

ו אֶל־תִּתְּרוּ לַמָּרוֹם קִרְיָנְכֶם

תִּדְבְּרוּ בְּצוֹאֵר עֵתֶכֶּךָ:

PSALM 75

1 For the leader: to the tune, "Do Not Destroy."

A Psalm of Asaph. A Song.

2 We give thanks to you, God;
we give thanks to you, for your name is near;
men tell of your wonders.

3 "At the appointed time
I myself shall dispense justice.

4 The earth quakes and all its inhabitants;
it is I who hold its pillars firm."

Selah

5 "I said to the boastful, 'Do not boast!'
To the wicked, 'Do not flaunt your strength!'

6 Do not flaunt your strength so proudly,
do not talk with that arrogant stance.'"

PSALM 75

1 Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the MT, and verse numbers are accordingly incremented.

2 An antiphon (v. 2) introduces a divine pronouncement addressed to the wicked, and foretelling judgement on them (vv. 3–6). Vv. 7–9 describe the universal judgement at which the Psalmist rejoices (vv. 10–11).

The 2nd line here follows the LXX and Peshitta; the MT and NRSV have, "we give thanks, your name is near."

3 God typically executes fair judgment as he governs the world.

4 The 2nd line should be understood in a generalizing sense: God typically prevents the world from being overrun by chaos.

5 The literal translation of 'strength' is 'horn'.

6 The image behind the language of vv. 5–6 is that of a powerful wild ox that confidently raises its head before its enemies.

כִּי לֹא מִמּוֹצֵא וּמִמַּעַרְב	ז	7	No longer from east to west,
וְלֹא מִמִּדְבַּר הָרִים:			no longer in the mountainous desert,
כִּי־אֱלֹהִים שֹׁפֵט	ח	8	is God judging the uprightness,
זֶה יְשַׁפִּיל זֶה יָרִים:			bringing some down, raising others.
כִּי כֹס בְּיַד־יְהוָה	ט	9	Yahweh is holding a cup
וַיִּזֶן חֲמֵר מֵלֵא מִסֵּךְ			filled with a heady blend of wine;
וַיִּגְרַם מִזֶּה אֶדְ-שִׁמְרִיהָ יִמְצוּ יִשְׁתּוּ			he will pour it, they will drink it to the dregs,
כָּל רָשָׁעֵי־אָרֶץ:			all the wicked on earth will drink it.
וְאֲנִי אֶגִּיד לְעֹלָם	י	10	But I shall speak out forever;
אֶזְמְרָה לֵאלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב:			I shall make music for the God of Jacob.
וְכָל־קִרְנֵי רָשָׁעִים אֲגַדֵּעַ	יא	11	I shall break down all the strength of the wicked,
תְּרוֹמַמְנָה קִרְנוֹת צַדִּיק:			and the strength of the upright will rise high.

⁷ Literally translated, this verse reads, “For not from the east or from the west, and not from the desert of the mountains.” If one follows this reading, the sentence is elliptical: one must supply ‘does help come’, or some comparable phrase.

⁸ The imperfects here emphasise the generalizing nature of the statement.

⁹ The psalmist pictures God as forcing the wicked to gulp down an intoxicating drink that will leave them stunned and vulnerable. Divine judgment is also depicted this way in Ps 60:3, Is 51:17-23 & Hab 2:16.

¹⁰ The NRSV, following the LXX, has ‘rejoice’ in place of ‘speak out’.

¹¹ The literal translation of ‘strength’ (twice in this verse) is ‘horns’ – the imagery of the wild ox is used again (cf. #6).

תהילים פרק עו

א לִמְנִצַּח בְּנִגִּיֶּנֶת מִזְמֹר לְאַסָּף שִׁיר:
ב נִודַע בִּיהוּדָה אֱלֹהִים
ג בִּישְׂרָאֵל גְּדוֹל שְׁמוֹ:
ד וַיְהִי בְשָׁלֹם סוּכּוֹ
וּמְעוֹנָתוֹ בְּצִיּוֹן:
ה שְׁמָה שֶׁבַר רִשְׁפֵי־קֶשֶׁת
מִגֶּן וַחֲרֵב וּמִלְחָמָה
ו סֵלָה:
ז נֶאֱזָר אֶתָּה אֲדִיר
מִהַרְרֵי־טָרֶף:
ח אֶשְׁתּוֹלְלוּ אֲבִירֵי לֵב נִמּוּ שְׁנָתָם
וְלֹא־מִצְאוּ כָל־אֲנָשֵׁי־חֵיל יָדֵיהֶם:
ט מִגַּעַרְתָּ אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב
נִרְדָּם וְרֶכֶב וְסוּסִים:

PSALM 76

- ¹ *To the leader: for strings. A Psalm of Asaph. A Song.*
- ² God is acknowledged in Judah;
his name is great in Israel.
- ³ His tent is pitched in Salem;
his dwelling is in Zion.
- ⁴ There he has broken the lightning-flashes of the bow,
shield and sword and weapons of war.
Selah
- ⁵ Radiant you are, and renowned
for the mountains of booty.
- ⁶ Plundered heroes are now sleeping their last sleep;
the warriors' arms have failed them.
- ⁷ At your battle cry, God of Jacob,
chariot and horse stand stunned.

PSALM 76

- ¹ Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and verse numbers are accordingly incremented.
- ² The *LXX* includes “Concerning the Assyrian” in the title.
- ³ ‘Salem’ is the abridged name of Jerusalem (see Gn 14:18, Jdt 4:4), the ‘City of Peace’.
- ⁴ This verse may allude to the miraculous defeat of the Assyrians in 701 BCE (see Is 36–37).
- ⁵ The *NRSV*, following the *LXX*, omits ‘of booty’.
- ⁶ The term ‘sleep’ here refers to death.
- ⁷ The noun translated ‘battle cry’ (following *NETB*) is derived from the Hebrew verb often understood to mean ‘rebuke’.

ח אֶתְּהָ | נֹרָא אֶתְּהָ
 וּמִי־יַעֲמֹד לְפָנֶיךָ
 מֵאֵז אַפְּךָ:
 ט מִשְׁמַיִם הַשְׁמַעַת דִּין
 אֶרֶץ יִרְאָה וְשָׁקֵטָה:
 י בְּקוֹם־לְמַשְׁפָּט אֱלֹהִים
 לְהוֹשִׁיעַ כָּל־עַנְוֵי־אֶרֶץ
 סֵלָה:

יא כִּי־חֶמֶת אָדָם תּוֹדֶךָ
 שְׂאֵרִית חֶמֶת תַּחֲגֹר:
 יב נִדְּרוּ וְשָׁלְמוּ לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם
 כָּל־סִבִּיבָיו יִבִּילוּ שֵׁי לַמֹּרָא:
 יג יִבְצֹר רוּחַ נְגִידִים
 נֹרָא לְמַלְכֵי־אֶרֶץ:

8 But you, indeed, are awesome.

Who can stand before you
 when once your anger is roused?

9 From heaven your verdicts thunder;
 the earth is silent with dread

10 when God rises up to give judgement,
 to save all the humble of the earth.

Selah

11 Human anger serves only to praise you,
 the survivors of your anger will huddle round you.

12 Make and fulfil your vows to Yahweh your God,
 let all who surround him bring tribute to the awesome one.

13 He cuts short the breath of princes,
 strikes terror in earthly kings.

8 For this verse, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, “You, you alone, strike terror! Who can hold his ground in your presence when your anger strikes?”

9 ‘The earth’ stands here by metonymy for its inhabitants.

10 The NJB has ‘takes his stand’ in place of ‘rises up’, here following (loosely) the NRSV.

11 The literal translation of ‘will huddle round you’ is ‘you will gird them on’, an image taken from Jeremiah (cf. Ps 109:19) symbolising close union. The divine anger seems to be personified here (cf. 58:9), whereas impotent human anger only witnesses to the power and justice of God.

12 The phrase, ‘all who surround him’, may refer to the surrounding nations but, in 89:7, the phrase refers to God’s heavenly assembly.

13 The term יִבְצֹר (‘he cuts short’) is a hapax legomenon.

תהילים פרק עז

א לִמְנַצֵּחַ עַל־יְדוּתוֹן יִדִּיתוֹן לְאַסָּף מִזְמוֹר:
ב קוֹלִי אֶל־אֱלֹהִים וְאַצְעֻקָה
קוֹלִי אֶל־אֱלֹהִים וְהֶאֱזִין אֵלַי:
ג בְּיוֹם צָרָתִי אֲדַנִּי דָרָשְׁתִּי
יָדִי לִלְלָה נִגְרָה וְלֹא תָפּוּג
מֵאֲנָה הִנָּחַם נַפְשִׁי:
ד אֲזַכְּרָה אֱלֹהִים וְאֶהְמִיָּה
אֲשִׁיחָה | וְתַתְּעוּטָף רוּחִי
סֵלָה:
ה אֲחֻזָּת שִׁמְרוֹת עֵינַי
נִפְעַמְתִּי וְלֹא אֲדַבֵּר:
ו חֲשַׁבְתִּי יָמִים מִקֵּדָם
שָׁנוֹת עוֹלָמִים:

PSALM 77

- ¹ *To the leader: according to Jeduthun. A Psalm of Asaph.*
- ² I will cry to God in distress,
I will cry to God and he will hear me.
- ³ In the day of my distress I sought the Lord,
all night I tirelessly stretched out my hands,
my heart refused to be consoled.
- ⁴ I sigh as I think of God;
my spirit faints away as I ponder on him.
- Selah*
- ⁵ You kept my eyelids open;
I was too distraught to speak.
- ⁶ I thought of former times,
about years long past.

PSALM 77

- ¹ Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and verse numbers are accordingly incremented. The *Kethib/Qere* difference here is likely due to misreading a (possibly small/short) *vav* as a *yod*.
- ² The perfect forms with *vav* consecutives are best taken as future here (although some translations render this as a past tense; cf. *NEB*, *NIV*). The psalmist expresses his confidence that God will respond to his prayer; this mood of confidence seems premature (see vv. 4–5), but v. 2 probably reflects the psalmist's attitude at the end of the prayer (see vv. 14–21). Having opened with an affirmation of confidence, he then retraces how he gained confidence during his trial (see vv. 3–13).
- ³ Here, the psalmist refers back to the very recent past, when he began to pray for divine help.
- ⁴ The first three verbs are cohortatives, the last a perfect with *vav* consecutive.
- ⁵ The literal translation of 'eyelids' is 'guards of the eyes'.
- ⁶ 'I ponder' follows the *LXX* and *Peshitta*; the *MT* has 'I remember my music'. The division of vv. 6–7 follows the *LXX*.

אֶזְכְּרָה נִגִּינָתִי בַּלַּיְלָה עַם-לִבִּי אֲשִׁיחָה וַיַּחֲפֹשׂ רוּחִי:	ז	7	I recalled, through the night I ponder in my heart, as I reflect, my spirit asked this question:
הֲלִעֲלָמִים יִזְנַח אֲדַנִּי וְלֹא-יִסְיף לְרָצוֹת עוֹד:	ח	8	Is the Lord's rejection final? Will he never show favour again?
הֲאִפֹּס לִנְצַח חֲסִדּוֹ גָּמַר אֲמַר לְדָר וּדָר:	ט	9	Has his faithful love gone forever? Is his promise at an end for all time?
הֲשָׁכַח חֲנוּת אֵל אֶסְקֶפֶץ בְּאַף רַחֲמָיו סֵלָה:	י	10	Does God forget to show mercy? In anger, does he shut off his compassion?
וְאָמַר חֲלוּתִי הִיא שָׁנוֹת יָמִין עֲלִיוֹן:	יא	11	And I said, "This is what wounds me, the right hand of the Most High has lost its strength."
אֶזְכֹּר מַעֲלִי־יָהּ כִּי-אֶזְכְּרָה מִקֶּדֶם פְּלֹאֲךָ:	יב	12	Remembering Yahweh's great deeds, remembering your wonders in the past,
וְהִגִּיתִי בְּכָל-פִּעֲלֶךָ וּבַעֲלִילוֹתֶיךָ אֲשִׁיחָה:	יג	13	I will reflect on all that you did, I will ponder all your great deeds.
אֱלֹהִים בְּקֹדֶשׁ דְּרָבָךָ	יד	14	God, your ways are holy!

⁷ In place of 'I recalled', the NRSV, following the LXX and Peshitta, has 'I commune'; the MT has 'my music'. For the last line, the NRSV, following the Peshitta & Vg, has 'I meditate and search my spirit'.

⁸ In a few Hebrew MSS, the initial ה of this verse is presented as an enlarged letter.

⁹ The literal translation of 'promise' is 'word'.

¹⁰ The NJB has 'tenderness' in place of 'compassion', here following the NRSV.

¹¹ The divine title, 'Most High', pictures God as the exalted ruler of the universe who vindicates the innocent and judges the wicked.

¹² 'Remembering' follows the LXX and Peshitta; the MT has 'I will make known'. The Kethib/Qere difference may be due to vav/yod confusion.

¹³ The perfect forms with vav consecutives are best taken as future here.

¹⁴ In vv. 14–21, the psalmist reflects on God's work in Israel's past; he has reached the place where he could confidently ask for God's help (v. 2).

מִי־אֵל גָּדוֹל כְּאֱלֹהִים:
 אַתָּה הָאֵל עֹשֶׂה פֶלֶא טו
 הוֹדַעְתָּ בְּעַמִּים עֲזָדָ:
 גָּאֵלְתָּ בְּזִרְוֹעַ עַמְּךָ טז
 בְּנִי־יַעֲקֹב וְיוֹסֵף סֵלָה:
 רָאֹהָ מַיִם | אֱלֹהִים יז
 רָאֹהָ מַיִם יַחֲלִילוּ
 אֶף יִרְגְּזוּ תְהוֹמוֹת:
 זָרְמוּ מַיִם | עֲבוֹת קוֹל נִתְּנוּ שְׁחָקִים יח
 אֶף־חֲצָצִיף יִתְהַלְכוּ:
 קוֹל רַעְמָךְ | בַּגִּלְגָּל ט
 הָאִירוּ בְּרָקִים תִּבְל
 רָגְזָה וּתְרַעַשׂ הָאָרֶץ:
 בָּיִם דֶּרֶךְךָ וּשְׁבִילֶךָ בְּמַיִם רַבִּים כ
 וְעִקְבוֹתֶיךָ לֹא נִדְּעוּ:
 נַחֲיִיתָ כְּצֹאֵן עֶמֶד כא
 בְּיַד־מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן:

What god is as great as our God?
 15 You are the God who does marvellous deeds;
 you have displayed your power among the peoples.
 16 With your own arm, you redeemed your people,
 the children of Jacob and Joseph.
 17 When the waters saw you, God,
 when the waters saw you, they writhed in anguish,
 the very depths shook with fear.
 18 The clouds pelted down water,
 the sky thundered, your arrows shot back and forth.
 19 The crash of your thunder was in the whirlwind;
 your lightning-bolts lit up the world,
 and the earth shuddered and shook.
 20 You walked over the sea, over the countless waters,
 and none could trace your footsteps.
 21 You guided your people like a flock
 by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

15 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, “brought nations to acknowledge your power.”

16 An alternative reading for ‘redeemed’ is ‘delivered’.

17 Vv. 17–21 are a fragment of an ancient hymn praising God for his work in Creation (vv. 17–20) and in the history of Israel (v. 21).

18 The miracle of the Sea of Reeds is presented in a cosmic perspective (see #Job 7:12). This verse evokes the theophany of Sinai.

19 The prefixed verbal form translated as ‘shook’ may be taken as a preterite or as an imperfect with past progressive force.

20 It is not obvious what the root cause of the *Kethib*/*Qere* difference is here.

21 NETB adds ‘of sheep’ after ‘flock’, though this is not in the MT.

תהילים פרק עח

א מִשְׁכִּיל לְאַסָּף
הֶאֱזִינָה עַמִּי תוֹרָתִי
הִטּוּ אָזְנוֹכֶם לְאִמְרֵי־פִי:
ב אֶפְתָּחָה בְּמִשְׁלַל פִּי
אֲבִיעָה חִידוֹת מִנִּי־קֹדֶם:
ג אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְנוּ וַנִּדְעֶם
וְאֲבוֹתֵינוּ סִפְרוּ־לָנוּ:
ד לֹא נִכְחֹד | מִבְּנֵיהֶם
לְדוֹר אַחֲרוֹן
מִסִּפְרֵים תְּהִלּוֹת יְהוָה
וְעֲזֹזוֹ וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה:
ה וַיִּקֶּם עֲדוֹת | בִּיעָקֹב
וַתּוֹרָה שֵׁם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל

PSALM 78

- 1 *A Maskil of Asaph.*
Listen, my people, to my teaching,
pay attention to what I say.
- 2 I will speak to you in parables;
unfold the mysteries of the past.
- 3 What we have heard and known,
what our ancestors have told us,
- 4 we shall not conceal from their descendants,
but will tell to a generation still to come:
the praises of Yahweh, his power,
and the wonderful deeds he has done.
- 5 He instituted a decree in Jacob,
he established a law in Israel;

PSALM 78

This Psalm is a didactic meditation, in the manner of Deuteronomy, on the history of Israel, the sins of the nation and their punishment. It stresses the responsibility of Ephraim, the ancestor of the Samaritans, the choice of Judah and the call of David. The author rehearses Israel's history; he praises God for his power, goodness, and patience, but also reminds his audience that sin angers God and prompts his judgment.

- 1 The meaning of the term 'Maskil' (מִשְׁכִּיל) is uncertain.
- 2 'Parables' (following the NRSV – the NJB has 'poetry') is a translation of 'Mashal' (מִשְׁלַל) – a rhythmical maxim expressed in poetic parallelism. This verse is quoted by Jesus in Mt 13:35.
- 3 The literal translation of 'ancestors' is 'fathers'.
- 4 The pronominal suffix ('their') of the first line refers back to the 'ancestors' of v. 3.
- 5 עֲדוֹת ('decree') refers to God's command that elders teach their children about his mighty deeds in Israel's history (Ex 10:2, Dt 4:9, 6:20–25).

אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֶת־אֲבוֹתֵינוּ		he commanded our ancestors
לְהוֹדִיעֵם לְבָנֵיהֶם:		to hand it down to their descendants,
לְמַעַן יֵדְעוּ דּוֹר	ו	6 that a generation still to come might know it,
אֲחֵרוֹן בָּנִים יוֹלְדוּ		children yet to be born.
יִקְמוּ וְיִסְפְּרוּ לְבָנֵיהֶם:		They should be sure to tell their own children,
וְיִשִּׁימוּ בִּאלֹהִים כָּסֶלֶם	ז	7 and should put their trust in God,
וְלֹא יִשְׁכַּחוּ מַעֲלָלֵי־אֱלֹהִים		never forgetting God's great deeds,
וּמִצְוֹתָיו יִנְצְרוּ:		always keeping his commands.
וְלֹא יִהְיוּ כְּאֲבוֹתָם	ח	8 That they should not be like their ancestors,
דּוֹר סוֹרֵר וּמָרָה		a stubborn and rebellious generation,
דּוֹר לֹא־הֶכִּין לִבּוֹ		a generation whose heart was not steadfast,
וְלֹא־נֶאֱמְנָה אֶת־אֱלֹהִים רוּחוֹ:		their spirit fickle towards God.
בְּנֵי־אֶפְרַיִם נוֹשְׁקֵי רֹמֵי־קֶשֶׁת	ט	9 The archer sons of Ephraim
הִפְכוּ בַּיּוֹם קָרֵב:		turned back when the time came for fighting.
לֹא שָׁמְרוּ בְרִית אֱלֹהִים	י	10 They failed to keep God's Covenant;
וּבִתְוֹרָתוֹ מֵאֲנוּ לִלְכֹּת:		they refused to follow his Law.

6 Literally translated, the 3rd line reads, "They will arise and will tell to their sons."

7 An alternative reading for 'keeping' is 'obeying'.

8 The expression 'to have a steadfast heart' means 'to be committed' (see 1S 7:3). The phrase 'turned back' could refer to the northern tribes' failure to conquer completely their allotted territory (see Jg 1), or it could refer to the typical consequence (military defeat) of their sin (see vv. 10–11).

9 The psalmist blames the sins of the nation on Ephraim, thus anticipating the future history of the Northern Kingdom (or possibly alluding to the Samaritan schism, see Zc 11:14); see also v. 67. The NRSV rephrases the 1st line thus, "The Ephraimites, armed with the bow."

10 The literal translation of 'follow' (as NJB) is 'obey'; the NRSV has 'walk according to'.

יא וַיִּשְׁכַּחַו עֲלֵילוֹתָיו
 וַנִּפְלְאוּתָיו אֲשֶׁר הָרָאם:
 יב נֶגַד אֲבוֹתָם עָשָׂה פֶּלֶא
 בָּאָרֶץ מִצְרַיִם שְׂדֵה-צֹעַן:
 יג בִּקְעַיִם וַיַּעֲבִירֵם
 וַיַּצֵּב-מַיִם כְּמוֹ-גֵד:
 יד וַיִּנְחָם בְּעַנְנֵי יוֹמָם
 וְכָל-לַיְלָה בְּאֹר אֵשׁ:
 טו יִבְקַע צֻרִים בַּמִּדְבָּר
 וַיִּשְׁק כְּתֹהֲמוֹת רַבָּה:
 טז וַיּוֹצֵא נוֹזְלִים מִסֶּלַע
 וַיּוֹרֵד כְּנִהְרוֹת מַיִם:
 יז וַיֹּסִיפוּ עוֹד לַחֲטֹא-לוֹ
 לַמְּרוֹת עֲלִיּוֹן בְּצִיָּה:

- 11 They had forgotten his great deeds,
 the marvels he had shown them.
 12 He did marvels in the sight of their ancestors
 in Egypt, in the Plains of Tanis.
 13 He split the sea and brought them through,
 and made the waters stand up like a heap.
 14 He led them with a cloud by day,
 and all the night with the light of a fire.
 15 He split rocks in the desert,
 let them drink as though from the limitless depths.
 16 He brought forth streams from a rock,
 made waters flow down like rivers.
 17 Yet, they sinned against him more than ever,
 rebelling against the Most High in barren country.

11 Vv. 12–31 recount the miracles of the Exodus.

12 The NJB, following the LXX (*Táδεως*), has ‘Tanis’ in place of ‘Zoan’, here following the MT (צֹעַן) & NRSV; Zoan was located in the Egyptian delta, where the enslaved Israelites lived (see Nb 13:22, Is 19:11, 13; 30:4, Ezk 30:14).

13 The NJB has ‘dam’ in place of ‘heap’, here following the MT & NRSV.

14 For the 2nd line, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, “and all night long with a fiery light.”

15 The literal translation of the 2nd line is “and caused them to drink, like the depths, abundantly.”

16 The NJB has ‘in torrents’ in place of ‘like rivers’, here following the NRSV.

17 In place of ‘rebelling against’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘defying’.

יח וַיִּנְסוּ-אֶל בִּלְבָבָם
 לִשְׁאֹל-אֶכֶל לִנְפֹשָׁם:
 יט וַיְדַבְּרוּ בֵּאלֹהִים
 אָמְרוּ הֲיֻכַּל אֵל לַעֲרֹךְ שֻׁלְחָן בַּמִּדְבָּר:
 כ הֲנָּה הַכָּה-צֹרֵר | וַיִּזְנוּבוּ מִיָּם
 וַנַּחֲלִים יִשְׁטָפוּ
 הֲגַם-לֶחֶם יֻכַּל תֵּת
 אִם-יָכִין שְׂאֵר לְעַמּוֹ:
 כא לִכְן | שָׁמַע יְהוָה וַיִּתְּעַבֵּר
 וַאֲשׁ נִשְׁקָה בִיעָקֵב
 וַגַּם-אַף עָלָה בִּישְׂרָאֵל:
 כב כִּי לֹא הֶאֱמִינוּ בֵּאלֹהִים
 וְלֹא בָטְחוּ בִישׁוּעָתוֹ:
 כג וַיִּצֹ שְׁחָקִים מִמֶּעַל
 וַדְּלִתִּי שָׁמַיִם פֶּתַח:

- 18 They deliberately challenged God
by demanding food to their hearts' content.
- 19 They insulted God by saying,
"Can God make a banquet in the desert?"
- 20 True, when he struck the rock,
waters gushed out and flowed in torrents;
but what of bread? Can he give that;
can he provide meat for his people?
- 21 Therefore, when he heard them, Yahweh vented his anger,
fire blazed against Jacob
his anger mounted against Israel,
because they had no faith in God,
no trust in his power to save.
- 23 Even so, he gave orders to the skies above;
he opened the sluice gates of heaven.

18 The literal translation of the 1st line is, "and they tested God in their heart;" the heart is viewed here as the centre of their volition.

19 The literal translation of 'make a banquet' is 'make a table (for food)'.

20 The opening word ('true', here following the NJB – NETB has 'yes') translates literally as 'look'.

21 The NJB lacks 'therefore', here following the NRSV.

22 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "they did not trust his deliverance."

23 For this verse, here following the NJB, NETB reads, "He gave a command to the clouds above, and opened the doors in the sky."

כד וַיִּמְטֹר עֲלֵיהֶם מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם לֶאֱכֹל
 וַיִּדְגֵּן שָׁמַיִם נָתַן לָמוֹ:
 כה לֶחֶם אַבִּירִים אָכַל אִישׁ
 צִדָּה שָׁלַח לָהֶם לְשֹׁבַע:
 כו יָסַע קָדִים בַּשָּׁמַיִם
 וַיִּנְהַג בְּעֹזוֹ תִּימָן:
 כז וַיִּמְטֹר עֲלֵיהֶם כַּעֲפֹר שָׁאֵר
 וּכְחוֹל יָמִים עוֹף כָּנָף:
 כח וַיִּפֹּל בִּקְרֵב מַחֲנֵהוּ
 סָבִיב לְמִשְׁכְּנֵתוֹ:
 כט וַיֹּאכְלוּ וַיִּשְׂבְּעוּ מְאֹד
 וְתַאֲוָתָם יָבֹא לָהֶם:
 ל לֹא־זָרוּ מִתַּאֲוָתָם
 עוֹד אֲכָלָם בִּפְיָהֶם:

24 He rained down manna to feed them;
 he gave them the wheat of heaven.
 25 Mere mortals ate the bread of the Mighty;
 he sent them as much food as they could want.
 26 He roused an east wind in the heavens,
 dispatched a south wind by his strength.
 27 He rained down meat on them like dust,
 and birds thick as sand on the seashore.
 28 He let them fall within their camp,
 all around their dwelling-place.
 29 They ate as much food as they wanted,
 he satisfied all their cravings.
 30 But their cravings were still upon them,
 the food was still in their mouths,

24 'Manna' was apparently shaped like a seed (Ex 16:31), perhaps explaining why it is here compared to wheat. This verse is quoted in Jn 6:31.

25 The 'Mighty' are the angels (cf. Ps 103:20), as the LXX in fact translates (*ἀγγέλων*), as does the NRSV.

26 For this verse, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "He caused the east wind to blow in the heavens, and by his power he led out the south wind."

27 The literal translation of the 2nd line is, "and like the sand of the seas winged birds."

28 The NJB has 'his' in place of 'their' in the 2nd line; here, we follow the NRSV & NETB.

29 Alternative translations for the 1st line (here following the NJB) are, "And they ate and were well filled" (NRSV) and, "They ate until they were stuffed" (NETB).

30 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "They were not separated from their desire."

לא ואף אֱלֹהִים | עָלָה בָּהֶם
וַיַּהַרְג בְּמַשְׁמָנֵיהֶם
וּבַחֹרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַכְרִיעַ:

לב בְּכָל־זֹאת חָטְאוּ־עוֹד
וְלֹא־הֶאֱמִינוּ בְּנִפְלְאוֹתָיו:
לג וַיִּכַּל־בַּהֶבֶל יְמֵיהֶם
וּשְׁנוֹתָם בַּבֶּהֱלָה:

לד אִם־הִרְגָם וּדְרָשׁוּהוּ
וְשָׁבוּ וְשַׁחֲרוּ־אֵל:
לה וַיִּזְכְּרוּ כִּי־אֱלֹהִים צוּרָם
וְאֵל עֲלִיּוֹן גָּאֻלָּם:

לו וַיִּפְתּוּהוּ בִּפְיָהֶם
וּבִלְשׁוֹנָם יִכְזְבוּ־לּוֹ:
לז וּלְבָם לֹא־נִכּוֹן עִמּוֹ
וְלֹא נֶאֱמְנוּ בַּבְּרִיתוֹ:

31 when the wrath of God attacked them,
slaughtering their strongest men,
laying low the flower of Israel.

32 Despite all this, they went on sinning;
they put no faith in his marvels.

33 He made their days vanish in mist,
their years in sudden ruin.

34 Whenever he slaughtered them, they began to seek him;
they turned back and looked eagerly for God.

35 They recalled that God was their rock,
God the Most High, their redeemer.

36 They tried to hoodwink him with their mouths,
their tongues were deceitful towards him.

37 Their hearts were not loyal to him;
they were not faithful to his Covenant.

31 For the 3rd line, here following the NJB & NRSV (and a fairly literal translation of the MT), NETB reads, "he brought the young men of Israel to their knees."

32 Vv. 32–39 present a general review of the inconstancy of Israel and the patience of God.

33 The literal translation of this verse, here following the NJB, is, "and he ended in vanity their days, and their years in terror."

34 The NJB, following the Peshitta, has 'him' in place of 'God'.

35 A more literal translation of 'their rock' is 'my high rocky summit'.

36 For the 2nd line, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "they lied to him with their tongues."

37 A more literal translation of 'loyal to' (as NJB) is 'steadfast toward' (as NRSV; see #8).

לח | וְהוּא רַחוּם |
 יִכַּפֵּר עוֹן וְלֹא־יִשְׁחִית
 וְהִרְבֵּה לְהַשִּׁיב אָפּוֹ
 וְלֹא־יַעִיר כָּל־חַמְתּוֹ:
 לט ויִזְכֹּר כִּי־בֶשֶׁר הֵמָּה
 רוּחַ הַזֹּלֶזֶל וְלֹא יָשׁוּב:
 מ כַּמָּה יִמְרוּהוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר
 יַעֲצִיבוּהוּ בִישִׁימוֹן:
 מא ויָשׁוּבוּ וַיִּנְסוּ אֶל
 וְקִדּוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל הֵתוּן:
 מב לֹא־זָכְרוּ אֶת־יָדוֹ
 יוֹם אֲשֶׁר־פָּדַם מִנִּי־צָר:
 מג אֲשֶׁר־שָׂם בַּמִּצְרַיִם אֹתוֹתָיו
 וּמוֹפְתָיו בְּשֵׂדֵה־צֹעַן:

- 38 Yet, in his compassion, he forgave their guilt
instead of killing them,
repeatedly repressing his anger
instead of rousing his full wrath.
- 39 He remembered they were creatures of flesh,
a breath of wind that passes, never to return.
- 40 How often they defied him in the desert!
How often they grieved him in the wastelands!
- 41 Repeatedly they challenged God,
provoking the Holy One of Israel.
- 42 Not remembering his hand,
or the day when he redeemed them from the foe,
- 43 he who did his signs in Egypt,
his miracles in the Plains of Zoan,

38 This verse steps back briefly from the narrative summary of Israel's history and lays the theological basis for v. 39, which focuses on God's mercy toward sinful Israel.

39 The prefixed verbal form with *vav* consecutive (וַיִּזְכֹּר – 'he remembered') signals a return to the narrative.

40 Alternative readings for 'grieved him' (as NJB & NRSV) are 'insulted him' (NETB) and 'caused him pain'.

41 The basic sense of the word 'holy' is 'set apart from that which is commonplace', 'special', or 'unique'; God's holiness is first and foremost his transcendent sovereignty as the ruler of the world: he is 'set apart' from the world over which he rules. At the same time, his holiness encompasses his moral authority, which derives from his royal position: as king, he has the right to dictate to his subjects how they are to live; indeed, his very own character sets the standard for proper behaviour.

42 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "the time when he saved them from the oppressor."

43 The 'plagues' of Egypt are summarised in vv. 43–51. The NJB, following the LXX, has 'Tanis' (Τάνεως) in place of 'Zoan' (see #12).

וַיַּהֲפֹךְ לָדָם יְאֲרֵיהֶם מִד
 וַנְּזִלֵּיהֶם בַּל־יִשְׁתּוּן:
 יִשְׁלַח בָּהֶם עֲרָב וַיֹּאכְלֵם מה
 וַצִּפְרָדֵּעַ וַתִּשְׁחִיתֵם:
 וַיִּתֵּן לַחֲסִיל יְבוּלָם מו
 וַיִּגְעַם לָאֲרֶבָּה:
 יִהְרֹג בַּבֶּרֶד גִּפְנֵם מז
 וַשְּׁקִמּוּתָם בַּחֲנָמַל:
 וַיִּסְגֵּר לַבֶּרֶד בְּעִירָם מח
 וַמְקַנִּיָּהֶם לְרִשְׁפִּים:
 יִשְׁלַח־בָּם חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ מט
 עֲבָרָה וְזַעַם וְצָרָה
 מְשַׁלַּחַת מַלְאֲכֵי רָעִים:
 יַפְלֹס נְתִיב לְאַפּוֹ נ
 לֹא־חֲשָׁד מִמּוֹת נַפְשָׁם
 וַחֲיִיתָם לְדַבַּר הַסִּגִּיר:

44 turning their rivers to blood,
 so that they could not drink of their streams.
 45 He sent swarms of flies to eat them up,
 and frogs to devastate them.
 46 He gave their crops to the caterpillar,
 the fruit of their hard work to the locust.
 47 He killed their vines with hail,
 and their sycamore trees with frost.
 48 He delivered up their cattle to hail,
 and their flocks to thunderbolts.
 49 He loosed against them his raging anger,
 fury, rage, and destruction,
 a detachment of destroying angels.
 50 He gave free course to his anger.
 He did not exempt their own selves from death,
 delivering up their lives to the plague.

44 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, “their streams so that they had nothing to drink.”

45 The NJB has ‘horseflies’ in place of ‘swarms of flies’, here following the NRSV.

46 NETB has ‘grasshopper’ in place of ‘caterpillar’, here following the NJB & NRSV.

47 In place of ‘frost’ (as NJB & NRSV), NETB has ‘driving rain’.

48 The literal translation of ‘thunderbolts’ is ‘flames’, referring to the lightning strikes that accompanied the storm.

49 The literal translation of ‘raging anger’ is ‘rage of his anger’; the synonyms are joined in a construct relationship to emphasise the single idea.

50 There were no obstacles to impede the progress of God’s fury; it moved swiftly and destructively.

וַיִּךְ כָּל־בְּכוֹר בְּמִצְרַיִם רֹאשֵׁית אוֹנִים בְּאֹהֶל־חָם:	נא	51	He struck all the first-born in Egypt, the flower of the youth in the tents of Ham.
וַיֹּסֶעַ כְּצֹאן עֲמֹ וַיְנַהֲגֵם כְּעֹדֶר בַּמִּדְבָּר:	נב	52	He brought out his people like sheep, guiding them like a flock in the desert.
וַיְנַחֲם לַבֶּטֶח וְלֹא פָחַדוּ וְאֶת־אוֹיְבֵיהֶם כָּסָה הַיָּם:	נג	53	He led them in safety, so that they were not afraid; while the sea engulfed their enemies.
וַיְבִיאֵם אֶל־גְּבוּל קְדִשׁוֹ הַר־צֹה קָנְתָה יְמִינוֹ:	נד	54	He brought them to his holy land, the hill-country won by his right hand.
וַיִּגְרֹשׁ מִפְּנֵיהֶם גּוֹיִם וַיִּפְּלֵם בְּחֶבֶל נֶחֱלָה וַיִּשְׁכֵּן בְּאֹהֲלֵיהֶם שְׁבֹטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:	נה	55	He dispossessed nations before them, measured out a heritage for each of them, and settled the tribes of Israel in their tents.
וַיִּנָּסוּ וַיִּמְרוּ אֶת־אֱלֹהִים עֲלִיוֹן וַעֲדוֹתָיו לֹא שָׁמְרוּ:	נו	56	Yet still, they challenged the Most High and defied him, refusing to keep his decrees.
וַיִּסְגּוּ וַיִּבְגְּדוּ כְּאֲבוֹתָם נִהְפְּכוּ כְּקֶשֶׁת רָמִיָּה:	נז	57	As perverse and treacherous as their ancestors, they gave way like a faulty bow.

51 'Ham' (חָם) is a poetic synonym for Egypt (Gn 10:6).

52 Vv. 52–55 recount the Exodus from Egypt and the invasion of Canaan.

53 For the 1st line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "He led them safe and unafraid," and NETB has "He led them safely along."

54 The literal translation of 'hill-country' (as NJB) is 'mountain' (as NRSV); the whole land of Canaan seems to be referred to here.

55 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "he caused to fall (to) them with a measuring line an inheritance."

56 Vv. 56–64 recount the sins of Israel in the time of Samuel and Saul.

57 The literal translation of 'gave way' (here following the NJB) is 'turned back'.

נח וַיִּכְעִסוּהוּ בַּבְּמוֹתָם
 וַבִּפְסִילֵיהֶם יִקְנִיאוּהוּ:
 נט שָׁמַע אֱלֹהִים וַיִּתְּעַבֵּר
 וַיִּמָּאֵס מְאֹד בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל:
 ס וַיֹּטֶשׂ מִשְׁכַּן שְׁלֹו
 אֹהֶל שֹׁכֵן בָּאָדָם:
 סא וַיִּתֵּן לַשְּׁבִי עֲזֹו
 וַתִּפְאֲרֵתוּ בִיד־צָר:
 סב וַיִּסְגֹּר לַחֲרֹב עַמּוֹ
 וַבִּנְחֻלָּתוֹ הִתְעַבֵּר:
 סג בַּחֲוָרָיו אָכַלָּה-אֵשׁ
 וּבַתּוֹלְתָיו לֹא הוֹלִלוּ:
 סד כָּהֲנָיו בַּחֲרֹב נָפְלוּ
 וְאַלְמֹנֹתָיו לֹא תִבְכִּינָה:

58 For they provoked him with their high places,
 rousing his jealousy with their idols.
 59 God listened and vented his wrath;
 he totally rejected Israel.
 60 He forsook his dwelling in Shiloh,
 the tent where he used to dwell on the earth.
 61 He abandoned his power to captivity,
 his splendour to the enemy's clutches.
 62 He gave up his people to the sword;
 he vented his wrath on his own heritage.
 63 Fire devoured their young men;
 their young girls had no wedding-song.
 64 Their priests fell by the sword
 and their widows sang no dirge.

58 For 'high places' (a traditional translation following the NJB & NRSV), NETB has 'pagan shrines'.

59 In place of 'vented his wrath', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'he was full of wrath' and NETB has 'was angry'.

60 The destruction of the temple at Shiloh is mentioned elsewhere only in Jr 7:12-14 and 26:6; the period was that of the events related in 1S 4:1-7:2. Vv. 60-61 refer to the Philistines' capture of the ark in the days of Eli (1S 4:1-11).

61 'His splendour' refers to the Ark of the Covenant, 132:8, 2Ch 6:41.

62 The NRSV lacks the word 'own', here following the NJB.

63 Here and in v. 64, the suffixed pronoun translated as 'their' is a collective singular.

64 Because of the invading army and the ensuing panic, the priests' widows had no time to carry out the normal mourning rites.

סה וַיִּקָּץ כַּיְשׁוֹן | אֲדֹנִי
 כְּגִבּוֹר מִתְרוֹנֵן מִיָּין:
 סו וַיִּדְּצֵרְיוּ אַחֲזֹר
 חֲרַפַּת עוֹלָם נָתַן לָמוֹ:
 סז וַיִּמָּאֵס בְּאַהֲלֵי יוֹסֵף
 וַבְּשֵׁבֶט אֶפְרַיִם לֹא בָחַר:
 סח וַיִּבְחַר אֶת־שֵׁבֶט יְהוּדָה
 אֶת־הָרֶ צִיּוֹן אֲשֶׁר אָהֵב:
 סט וַיִּבֶן כְּמוֹ־רָמִים מִקְדָּשׁוֹ
 כְּאַרְץ יִסְדָּה לְעוֹלָם:
 ע וַיִּבְחַר בְּדָוִד עַבְדּוֹ
 וַיִּקְחֵהוּ מִמִּכְלַאת צֹאן:
 עא מֵאַחֲרֵ עֲלוֹת הַבָּיֹא
 לְרֻעוֹת בֵּיעֶקֶב עֲמוֹ
 וּבְיִשְׂרָאֵל נַחֲלָתוֹ:

65 The Lord arose as though he had been asleep,
 like a strong man fighting-mad with wine.
 66 He struck his enemies on the rump,
 and put them to everlasting shame.
 67 Rejecting the tents of Joseph,
 passing over the tribe of Ephraim,
 68 he chose the tribe of Judah,
 Mount Zion, which he loves.
 69 He built his sanctuary like high hills;
 like the earth, set its form forever.
 70 He chose David, his servant,
 took him from the sheepfold.
 71 He took him from tending ewes
 to be the shepherd of his servant Jacob,
 and Israel his heritage.

-
- 65 The verb *מִתְרוֹנֵן* ('fighting-mad') occurs only here in the OT; the phrase '*fighting-mad with wine*' could picture a drunken warrior controlled by his emotions and passions (as in the present translation), or it could refer to a warrior who awakes from a drunken stupor.
 66 This verse is a reference to the haemorrhoids inflicted on the Philistines when they had detained the Ark.
 67 Vv. 67–72 recount the rejection of Ephraim, the choice of Zion, dwelling-place of Yahweh and model of the heavenly sanctuary, and the call of David, Yahweh's anointed, shepherd of his people and type of the awaited Messiah.
 68 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "*his well-loved mountain of Zion*."
 69 '*High hills*' is conjectural; the MT has '*high (beings)*'; the NRSV has '*the high heavens*'.
 70 Before '*his servant*', the NJB adds '*to be*'.
 71 In place of '*to be the shepherd of*', here following the NRSV, the NJB has '*to pasture*'.

עב וִירָעַם כֶּתֶם לִבָּו
וּבְתִבּוּנוֹת כִּפִּיּוֹ יִנְחֵם:

⁷² He pastured them with unblemished heart;
with a sensitive hand, he led them.

⁷² The NRSV has 'skilful' in place of 'sensitive', here following the NJB.

תהילים פרק עט

א מִזְמוֹר לְאַסָּף
אֱלֹהִים בָּאוּ גוֹלִים | בְּנַחֲלָתְךָ
טָמְאוּ אֶת־הֵיכַל קֹדֶשְׁךָ
שָׁמוּ אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם לְעֵיִם:
ב נָתְנוּ אֶת־נַבְלַת עַבְדֶּיךָ
מֵאֵכָל לְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם
בָּשָׂר חֲסִידֶיךָ לְחִית־אָרֶץ:
ג שָׁפְכוּ דָמָם | בְּמִים
סָבִיבוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם
וְאֵין קוֹבֵר:
ד הֵינּוּ חֲרָפָה לְשֹׁכְנֵינוּ
לְעַג וְקֶלֶס לְסָבִיבוֹתֵינוּ:
ה עַד־מָה יִהְיֶה תֹאנֶנְךָ לְנֶצַח
תִּבְעַר בְּמוֹ־אֵשׁ קִנְאָתְךָ:

PSALM 79

- 1 *A Psalm of Asaph.*
God, the pagans have invaded your heritage,
they have defiled your Holy Temple,
and they have laid Jerusalem in ruins.
- 2 They have left the corpses of your servants
as food for the birds of the air,
the bodies of your faithful for the wild beasts.
- 3 Around Jerusalem,
they have shed blood like water,
leaving no one to bury them.
- 4 We are the scorn of our neighbours,
mocked and derided by those around us.
- 5 How long will you be angry, Yahweh? Forever?
Will your jealous wrath go on burning like fire?

PSALM 79

- 1 This Psalm could apply to the capture of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 587 BCE, or to the ravaging of the city by Israel's neighbours, Edom, Moab *et cetera*, cf. 2K 24:2.
- 2 NETB omits 'as food', here following the NJB & NRSV.
- 3 Literally translated, this verse reads, "They have poured out their blood like water, all around Jerusalem, and there is no one burying."
- 4 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "the butt and laughing-stock of those around us."
- 5 The NJB has 'jealousy' in place of 'jealous wrath', here following the NRSV.

ו	שִׁפְךָ חֲמַתְךָ אֱלֹהֵי-הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יִדְעוּךָ וְעַל מַמְלָכוֹת אֲשֶׁר בְּשִׁמְךָ לֹא קָרְאוּ: כִּי אָכַל אֶת-יַעֲקֹב וְאֶת-נְוֹהוּ הַשָּׁמוֹ:	6	Pour out your anger on the nations who do not acknowledge you, and on the kingdoms that do not call on your name.
ז	אֶל-תִּזְכֹּר-לָנוּ עֲוֹנוֹת רִאשֹׁנִים מִהֵר יִקְדָּמוּנוּ רַחֲמֶיךָ כִּי דָלוּנוּ מְאֹד: עֲזָרְנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעֵנוּ עַל-דְּבַר כְּבוֹד-שִׁמְךָ וְהַצִּילֵנוּ וְכַפֵּר עַל-חַטֹּאתֵינוּ לְמַעַן שִׁמְךָ:	7	For they have devoured Jacob and devastated his home.
ח	לָמָּה יֹאמְרוּ הַגּוֹיִם אֵיזָה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם יִוָּדַע בַּגִּיִּים בַּגּוֹיִם לְעֵינֵינוּ נִקְמַת דָּם-עֶבְדֶּיךָ הַשָּׁפוּךְ:	8	Do not count against us the sins of former generations; in your tenderness, come quickly to meet us, for we are utterly weakened.
ט		9	Help us, God our Saviour, for the glory of your name; wipe away our sins, rescue us for the sake of your name.
י		10	Why should the nations ask, “Where is their God?” Let us see the nations suffer vengeance for shedding your servants’ blood.

⁶ The people of these kingdoms pray to other gods, not the LORD, because they do not recognise his authority over them.

⁷ For the 2nd line, the NRSV reads, “and laid waste his habitation.” Here, we follow the NJB.

⁸ Some understand ‘former’ as an attributive adjective modifying ‘sins’; the present translation (following the NJB, NRSV & NETB) assumes that it here refers to those who lived formerly, that is, the people’s ancestors (see Lm 5:7). The word is used in this way in Lv 26:45, Dt 19:14 and Qo 1:11.

⁹ The NJB, following the LXX, adds the Divine Name at the beginning of the 3rd line. Here, we follow the MT & NRSV.

¹⁰ God is the ‘avenger of blood’ for Israel, see #Nb 35:19. The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here appears to be related to *vav*/*yod* confusion.

יא תבוא לפניך אַנְקַת אֶסִיר
 כְּגִדְל זְרוּעֶךָ
 הוֹתֵר בְּנֵי תְמוּתָהּ:
 יב וְהֵשֶׁב לְשִׁכְנֵינוּ שִׁבְעָתִים אֶל־חִיקָם
 חֲרָפָתָם אֲשֶׁר חֲרָפוּךָ אֲדֹנָי:
 יג וְאֶנְחֵנוּ עִמָּךְ | וְצֹאן מִרְעִיתֶךָ
 נֹודָה לְךָ לְעוֹלָם
 לְדוֹר וָדוֹר נִסְפָּר תְּהִלָּתֶךָ:

- 11 May the groans of the captive reach you;
 by your great strength
 save those doomed to die!
 12 Repay our neighbours sevenfold
 for the insults they have levelled at you, Lord.
 13 And we, your people, the flock that you pasture,
 will thank you forever,
 will recite your praises from age to age.

¹¹ In place of 'doomed to die', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'who are condemned to death'.

¹² The number seven is used rhetorically to express the thorough nature of the action; see also, Gn 4:15, 24, Ps 12:6, Pr 6:31 & Is 30:26.

¹³ An alternative (more literal) translation for 'forever' is 'continually'.

תהילים פרק פ

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ אֶל־שֹׁשְׁנִים
עֲדוֹת לְאַסָּף מִזְמוֹר:
ב רָעָה יִשְׂרָאֵל | הָאֲזִינָה
נִהְגַּ כְּצֹאן יוֹסֵף
יָשֵׁב הַכְּרוּבִים הוֹפִיעָה:
ג לִפְנֵי אֶפְרַיִם | וּבְנֵימָן וּמְנַשֶּׁה
עוֹרָרָה אֶת־גְּבוּרָתָךְ
וּלְכֵה לִישַׁעֲתָה לָנוּ:
ד אֱלֹהִים הֲשִׁיבֵנוּ
וְהָאֵר פָּנֶיךָ וְנוֹשָׁעָה:
ה יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת
עַד־מָתִי עֲשֵׂנָה בַתְּפִלַּת עַמֶּךָ:
ו הָאֲכַלְתָּם לֶחֶם דַּמְעָה
וְתִשְׁקְמוּ בַדַּמְעוֹת שְׁלִישׁ:

PSALM 80

- ¹ *To the leader: tune, "The decrees are lilies."
A Psalm of Asaph.*
- ² Shepherd of Israel, listen,
you who lead Joseph like a flock,
enthroned on the winged creatures, shine forth
- ³ over Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh;
rouse your valour
and come to our help.
- ⁴ God, bring us back.
Let your face shine on us and we shall be safe.
- ⁵ Yahweh, God Sabaoth, how long
will you flare up at your people's prayer?
- ⁶ You have made tears their food,
threefold tears their drink.

PSALM 80

- ¹ Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and verse numbers are accordingly incremented.
- ² This Psalm could apply equally well either to northern Israel (vv. 2–3) laid waste by the Assyrians (mentioned in the title in the *LXX*), see Jr 31:15ff, or to Judah after the sack of Jerusalem in 587 BCE (see Jr 12:7–13). The psalmist looks forward to the reuniting of the kingdom (see Is 49:5, Ezk 37:16, Zc 9:13, 10:6) within its ideal frontiers (v. 12, see #Jg 20:1).
- ³ 'Ephraim' and 'Manasseh', sons of Joseph, with whom Benjamin is sometimes reckoned, are the two principal tribes of the north.
- ⁴ This verse is a refrain (see vv. 8 & 20).
- ⁵ The psalmist expects persistent prayer to pacify God.
- ⁶ The term שְׁלִישׁ ('threefold', literally, 'third part of [a measure]') occurs only here and in Is 40:12.

ז	תְּשִׂימֵנוּ מִדּוֹן לְשִׁכְנֵינוּ וְאֵיבֵינוּ יִלְעָגוּ-לָמוּ:	7	You let our neighbours quarrel over us; our enemies mock us.
ח	אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת הַשִּׁיבֵנוּ וְהָאֵר פָּנֶיךָ וְנוֹשְׁעָה:	8	God Sabaoth, bring us back. Let your face shine on us and we shall be safe.
ט	גִּפֶּן מִמִּצְרַיִם תִּסְיַע תִּגְרֹשׁ גּוֹיִם וְתַטְעָה:	9	You brought a vine out of Egypt, to plant it you drove out nations.
י	פָּנִיתָ לַפָּנִיָּה וְתִשְׂרַשׁ שְׂרָשֶׁיהָ וְתִמְלֵא-אֶרֶץ:	10	You cleared a space for it; it took root and filled the land.
יא	כֶּסֶה הָרִים צֶלֶהָ וְעִנְפֶיהָ אֲרוֹזֵי-אֵל:	11	The mountains were covered with its shade, and the cedars of God with its branches.
יב	תִּשְׁלַח קִצְיָהּ עֲדָיִם וְאֶל-נָהָר יוֹנְקוֹתֶיהָ:	12	Its boughs stretched as far as the sea, its shoots as far as the river.
יג	לָמָּה פָּרַצְתָּ גְדְרֶיהָ וְאֶרְוָהּ כָּל-עֹבְרֵי דָרֶךְ:	13	Why have you broken down its walls? Every passer-by plucks its grapes.
יד	יִכְרַסְמֶנָּה חֲזִיר מִיעָר וְזִיז שָׂדֵי יִרְעֶנָּה:	14	Boars from the forest tear at it, insects feed on it.

7 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "You have made us an object of contention to our neighbours."

8 Note the small differences between this verse and vv. 4/20.

9 The 'vine' is an allegory frequent in the prophets; see #Is 5:1.

10 The NJB has 'whole country' in place of 'land', here following the NRSV & NETB.

11 An alternative reading of the 2nd line is, "the branches were cedars of God," i.e. the highest cedars, cf. Ps 36:3, 68:15.

12 The 'River' mentioned here is the Euphrates (1K 4:21).

13 The protective 'walls' of the metaphorical vineyard are in view here (see Is 5:5).

14 Note that the ע in מִיעָר is raised ('suspended'), just as it appears in almost all *Hebrew MSS*; this is the middle letter of the Book of Psalms.

טו אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת שׁוּב־נָא
 הִבֵּט מִשָּׁמַיִם וּרְאֵה
 וּפְקֹד גִּפְּנֵי זֹאת:
 טז וּכְנֹה אֲשֶׁר־נָטַעַה יְמִינְךָ
 וְעַל־בֶּן אֲמָצְתָה לְךָ:
 יז שִׂרְפָה בָאֵשׁ כְּסוּחָה
 מִגְעֶרֶת פָּנֶיךָ יֵאָבְדוּ:
 יח תְּהִי־יָדְךָ עַל־אִישׁ יְמִינְךָ
 עַל־בֶּן־אָדָם אֲמָצְתָ לְךָ:
 טט וְלֹא־נָסוּג מִמֶּךָ
 תַּחֲיִינוּ וּבִשְׁמֶךָ נִקְרָא:
 כ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת הֲשִׁיבֵנו
 הָאֵר פָּנֶיךָ וְנוֹשְׁעָה:

- 15 Come back God Sabaoth, we pray,
look down from heaven and see;
visit this vine.
- 16 Protect what your own hand has planted,
and the son you authorised.
- 17 They have thrown it on the fire like dung;
the frown of your rebuke will destroy them.
- 18 Let your hand protect those at your side,
the child of Adam you have strengthened for yourself!
- 19 Never again will we turn away from you,
give us life and we will call upon your name.
- 20 Yahweh Sabaoth, bring us back.
Let your face shine on us and we shall be safe.

15 The term אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת ('God Sabaoth' or 'God of Hosts') is translated by NETB as 'God, invincible warrior'.

16 The NRSV and NJB omit the 2nd line, here following the MT. The כ in וּכְנֹה is presented as an enlarged letter, as it appears in most Hebrew MSS.

17 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "because of the rebuke of your face they perish."

18 The 2nd line is probably an allusion to Zerubbabel (Ezr 3:2, Hg 1:1) rather than to Benjamin ('son of the right hand') – cf. 'Amaziah', ('Yahweh is trusty'), cf. 2Ch 25:5, or Israel (cf. Ex 4:22).

19 For the 2nd line (here following the NJB/NRSV), NETB reads, "Revive us and we will pray to you."

20 The NJB opens with 'God' in place of the Divine Name, here following the MT.

תהילים פרק פא

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ | עַל־הַגִּתִּית לְאַסָּף:
ב הֲרִנְנוּ לֵאלֹהִים עֲזֹנָנוּ
הָרִיעוּ לֵאלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב:
ג שְׂאוּ־זִמְרָה וְתִנּוּ־תָף
כְּנֹר נָעִים עֶסֶן־נָבֶל:
ד תִּקְעוּ בַחֹדֶשׁ שׁוֹפָר
בַּפֶּסַח לְיוֹם חַגֵּנוּ:
ה כִּי חָק לְיִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא
מִשְׁפָּט לֵאלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב:
ו עֲדוֹת | בִּיהוֹסֵף שְׁמוֹ
בַּצֵּאתוֹ עַל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
שָׁפַת לֹא־יָדַעְתִּי אֲשַׁמֶּע:
ז הִסִּירוֹתִי מִסָּבֶל שְׂכָמוֹ
כַּפָּיו מִדָּוִד תַּעֲבִרְנָה:

PSALM 81

- ¹ *To the leader: according to "The Gittith." Of Asaph.*
- ² Sing for joy to God our strength,
shout in triumph to the God of Jacob.
- ³ Raise up a song, beat the tambourine,
play the melodious harp and the lyre.
- ⁴ Blow the trumpet for the new month,
for the full moon, for the feast day!
- ⁵ For Israel has this statute,
an ordinance of the God of Jacob.
- ⁶ A decree he imposed on Joseph,
when he went to war against Egypt.
I heard a voice unknown to me:
- ⁷ I freed his shoulder from the burden,
his hands were able to lay aside the labourer's basket.

PSALM 81

- ¹ Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the MT, and verse numbers are accordingly incremented.
- ² The prelude (2–6) introduces a divine prophecy, cf. Ps 50, 95, in the style of Deuteronomy. The Feast of Shelters (see #Ex 23:14) commemorated the period in the desert and the Law given at Sinai. It was the greatest feast of the year.
- ³ The NJB opens with, 'Strike up the music'.
- ⁴ The first day of the lunar month was a feast day, 2K 4:23, Is 1:13, Ho 2:13, Am 8:5. The 1st day of the 7th month was long reckoned as the 1st day of the New Year, Lv 23:24, Nb 29:1; at the full moon next following, the Feast of Shelters was celebrated, Lv 23:34, Nb 29:12.
- ⁵ The NJB has 'a decision' in place of 'an ordinance', here following the NRSV.
- ⁶ The first person ('I heard') represents the assembly of Israel, who must listen to God (see vv. 8, 11, 13). The NRSV has 'over' in place of 'against'.
- ⁷ This verse alludes to the forced labour imposed on Israel in Egypt. The NRSV has 'your' in place of 'his' (here following the MT).

ח בַּצָּרָה קָרָאתָ וְאַחֲלָצְדָּ
אֶעֱנֶךָ בְּסִתְרֵי רַעַם
אֶבְחַנְךָ עַל־מֵי מְרִיבָה
סֵלָה:

ט שִׁמַּע עַמִּי וְאֶעֱיֶדֶה בְּךָ
יִשְׂרָאֵל אִם־תִּשְׁמַע־לִי:
י לֹא־יִהְיֶה בְּךָ אֱלֹה זָר
וְלֹא תִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לְאֵל נָכַר:
יא אֲנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
הַמֵּעִלְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
הַרְחַב־פִּיךָ וְאִמְלֵאֲהוּ:
יב וְלֹא־שִׁמַּע עַמִּי לְקוֹלִי
וְיִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא־אָבָה לִי:
יג וְאֲשַׁלְּחֵהוּ בְּשִׁרְיוֹתָם לְבָם
יֵלְכוּ בְּמוֹעֲצוֹתֵיהֶם:
יד לוֹ עַמִּי שִׁמַּע לִי
יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּדַרְכֵי יְהִלְכוּ:

8 You cried out in your distress, so I rescued you.
Hidden in the storm, I answered you,
I tested you at the waters of Meribah.
Selah

9 Listen, my people, while I give you warning;
Israel, if only you would listen to me!
10 You shall have no strange gods,
shall worship no alien god.
11 I, Yahweh, am your God,
who brought you here from Egypt;
open your mouth wide and I will fill it.
12 My people would not listen to me,
Israel would not submit to me.
13 Therefore, I left them to their stubborn selves,
to follow their own devices.
14 If only my people would listen to me,
if only Israel would walk in my ways.

8 The 2nd line refers to the theophany at Sinai.

9 Vv. 9–11 appear to recall what God commanded the generation of Israelites that experience the events described in v. 8.

10 The imperfect verbal forms in this verse have a modal function, expressing what is obligatory.

11 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, “you have only to open your mouth for me to fill it.”

12 The NJB has ‘have none of me’ in place of ‘submit to me’, here following the NRSV & MT (אָבָה לִי).

13 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, “And I sent him away in the stubbornness of their heart.”

14 The Hebrew particle לוֹ (‘if only’) introduces a purely hypothetical or contrary to fact condition (see 2S 18:12).

טו כַּמַּעַט אוֹיְבֵיהֶם אֶכְנִיעַ
וְעַל צָרֵיהֶם אֲשִׁיב יָדִי:
טז מְשֻׁנְאֵי יְהוָה יִכְחָשׁוּ-לּוֹ
וְיִהְיֶה עֵתָם לְעוֹלָם:
יז וַיֹּאכִלֵהוּ מִחֶלֶב חֹטֵה
וּמִצֹּר דָּבַשׁ אֲשַׁבֵּיעַד:

- 15 At one stroke, I would subdue their enemies;
turn my hand against their opponents.
- 16 Those who hate Yahweh would woo his favour,
though their time was sealed forever.
- 17 While I would feed him on pure wheat,
would give you your fill of honey from the rock.

¹⁵ NETB translates the phrase, 'turn my hand against' idiomatically, as 'attack'.

¹⁶ The Hebrew term translated 'their time' must refer here to the time of the demise and humiliation of those who hate God.

¹⁷ 'I would feed him' (the NRSV has 'I would feed you') is conjectural (compare 2nd line); the MT has 'he would feed him'.

תהילים פרק פב

א מִזְמוֹר לְאַסָּף
אֱלֹהִים נֹצֵב בְּעֵדֶת־אֱל
בְּקֶרֶב אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁפֹּט:
ב עַד־מָתִי תִשְׁפֹּטוּ־עוֹל
וּפְנֵי רָשָׁעִים תִּשְׁאוּ־סֵלָה:
ג שְׁפֹטוּ־דָל וְיִתּוֹם
עָנִי וְרֹשׁ הַצְּדִיקוֹ:
ד פִּלְטוּ־דָל וְאַבְיוֹן
מִיַּד רָשָׁעִים הַצִּילוּ:
ה לֹא יִדְעוּ | וְלֹא יִבִּינוּ
בְּחֹשֶׁכָּה יִתְהַלְכוּ
יִמּוּטוּ כָל־מוֹסְדֵי אָרֶץ:
ו אֲנִי־אֶמְרָתִי אֱלֹהִים אַתֶּם
וּבְנֵי עֲלִיוֹן כְּלַכְּם:

PSALM 82

- 1 A Psalm of Asaph.
God takes his stand in the divine assembly;
surrounded by the gods, he gives judgement.
- 2 How much longer will you give unjust judgements
and uphold the prestige of the wicked? *Selah*
- 3 Give justice to the weak and the fatherless;
be fair to the wretched and the destitute.
- 4 Rescue the weak and the needy,
save them from the clutches of the wicked.
- 5 Ignorant and uncomprehending,
they wander in darkness,
while the foundations of the world are tottering.
- 6 I had thought, "Are you gods,
are all of you sons of the Most High?"

PSALM 82

- 1 This Psalm is a warning to wicked rulers and judges in an eschatological setting (vv. 1, 5, 8). The first verse makes use of a conception, common to the ancient Middle East, that the world is ruled by a council of gods (89:5-7); the poet, presumably a priest or temple prophet, sees, in a vision, the God of Israel standing up in the midst of the council and pronouncing judgement upon all the other members.
- 2 This indictment is frequent in the prophets: Is 1:17ff, Jr 5:28, 21:12, 22:3, Ezk 22:27,29, Mi 3:1-11, Zc 7:9-10, see Job 29:12, Pr 18:5, 24:11-12.
- 3 Because they were so vulnerable and were frequently exploited, fatherless children are often mentioned as epitomizing the oppressed.
- 4 The literal translation of 'clutches' (here following the NJB) is 'hand' (as NRSV).
- 5 Having addressed the defendants, God now speaks to those who are observing the trial, referring to the gods in the third person.
- 6 The rulers and judges are reckoned with the 'sons of the Most High', the members of the heavenly court (cf. Job 1:6). Jn 10:34 quotes this verse.

ז
אִכֵּן כְּאָדָם תָּמוּתוֹן
וּכְאַחַד הַשָּׂרִים תִּפְּלוּ:
ח
קוּמָה אֱלֹהִים שִׁפְטָה הָאָרֶץ
כִּי־אַתָּה תִּנְחַל בְּכָל־הַגּוֹיִם:

⁷ No, you will die as human beings do,
as one man, princes, you will fall.

⁸ Arise, God, judge the world,
for all nations belong to you.

⁷ For the 2nd line, the NRSV reads, “*and fall like any prince.*”

⁸ This verse is a prayer that the poet’s vision may be realised.

תהילים פרק פג

א שִׁיר מִזְמוֹר לְאַסָּף:
ב אֱלֹהִים אַל־דַּמִּי־לָךְ
אֶל־תַּחֲרֹשׁ וְאַל־תִּשְׁקֹט אֵל:
ג כִּי־הִנֵּה אֹיְבֶיךָ יִהְיֶינָה
וּמִשְׁנֵאֵיךָ נִשְׂאוּ רָאשׁ:
ד עַל־עַמֶּךָ יַעֲרִימוּ סֹד
וְיִתְעַצּוּ עַל־צְפוּנֶיךָ:
ה אָמְרוּ לָכֵן וְנַכְחִידֵם מִגּוֹי
וְלֹא־יִזְכָּר שֵׁם־יִשְׂרָאֵל עוֹד:
ו כִּי נִוְעָצוּ לֵב יַחַד
עָלֶיךָ בְּרִית יִכָּתֹוּ:
ז אֱהִי אֲדוֹם וְיִשְׁמְעֵאלִים
מוֹאָב וְהַגְרִיטִים:
ח גְּבַל וְעַמּוֹן וְעַמְלֵק

PSALM 83

- 1 A Song. A Psalm of Asaph.
- 2 God, do not remain silent,
do not stay quiet or unmoved, God!
- 3 See how your enemies are in uproar,
how those who hate you have raised their heads.
- 4 They are laying plans against your people,
conspiring against those you cherish.
- 5 They say, "Come, let us annihilate them as a nation,
the name of Israel shall be remembered no more!"
- 6 They conspire with a single mind;
they conclude an alliance against you,
- 7 the tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites,
Moab and the Hagrites,
- 8 Gebal, Ammon, Amalek,

PSALM 83

- 1 Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and verse numbers are accordingly incremented.
- 2 This Psalm enumerates ten traditional enemies of Israel whose hostility was maintained to a late date, see 2Ch 20:1ff, Ne 2:19, 1M 5:3ff.
- 3 *NETB* translates 'have raised their heads' idiomatically, as 'are hostile'.
- 4 The passive participle of the verb 'to hide' is used here in the sense of 'cherished' or 'treasured'.
- 5 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "We will cause them to disappear from [being] a nation."
- 6 'A single mind' is a conjectural translation (literally, 'one heart'); the *MT* has 'united'.
- 7 The 'Hagrites' (sons of Hagar) were nomads of Transjordan.
- 8 Here, 'Gebal' refers to Gabalene, a district of Idumaea north of Petra, and not to Byblos as in Ezk 27:9.

פִּלִּשְׁתִּים עַם־יִשְׁבֵּי צוּר:
 ט גַּם־אַשּׁוּר נִלְוָה עִמָּם
 הָיוּ זְרוּעַ לְבְנֵי־לוֹט סֵלָה:
 י עֲשֵׂה־לָהֶם כַּמִּדְיָן
 כְּסִיסְרָא כִּיבִין בְּנַחַל קִישׁוֹן:
 יא נִשְׁמְדוּ בְּעֵין־דָּאָר
 הָיוּ דָמֵן לְאֲדָמָה:
 יב שִׁיתְמוּ נְדִיבֵימוֹ כְּעָרֵב וְכִזְאָב
 וְכִזְבָּח וְכִצְלָמֹנֶעַ כָּל־נְסִיקֵימוֹ:
 יג אֲשֶׁר אָמְרוּ נִירְשָׁה לָנוּ
 אֵת נְאוֹת אֱלֹהִים:
 יד אֱלֹהֵי שִׁיתְמוּ כַּגִּלְגָּל
 כָּקֶשׁ לְפָנֵי־רוּחַ:
 טו כָּאֵשׁ תִּבְעַר־יַעַר
 וְכִלְהָבָה תִּלְהֹט הָרִים:
 טז כִּפֶּן תִּרְדָּפֵם בְּסַעֲרָךְ

Philistia and the Tyrians.

- 9 Even Assyria has joined them
to reinforce the children of Lot.
- 10 Treat them like Midian and Sisera,
like Jabin at the River Kishon.
- 11 Wiped out at En-Dor,
they served to manure the ground.
- 12 Treat their leaders like Oreb and Zeeb,
all their commanders like Zebah and Zalmunna.
- 13 Who said, "Let us take for ourselves
God's settlements."
- 14 My God, treat them like thistledown,
like chaff at the mercy of the wind.
- 15 As fire devours a forest,
as a flame sets mountains ablaze,
- 16 so drive them away with your tempest,

9 'Assyria' could mean either Seleucid Syria (cf. Jdt 16:3) or the Asshurite tribe (Gn 25:3, 2S 2:9, cf. #Nb 24:22). The 'children of Lot' are the Moabites and Ammonites (Gn 19:36–38, Dt 2:9).

10 Gideon's victory of 'Midian' is recorded in Jg 6–8, the defeat of 'Sisera' and 'Jabin' by Deborah and Barak in Jg 4–5.

11 'En-Dor' is not mentioned in the accounts of Gideon's or Barak's victories, but both battles took place in the general vicinity of the town.

12 On 'Oreb' and 'Zeeb', see Jg 7:25; on 'Zebah' and 'Zalmunna', see Jg 8:21.

13 The translation assumes that 'Zebah and Zalmunna' (v. 12) are the antecedents of the relative pronoun, 'who said'.

14 In place of 'thistledown', the NRSV has 'whirling dust' and a footnote suggests 'tumbleweed' as an alternative.

15 The imagery of fire and flames suggests unrelenting, destructive judgment.

16 The two imperfect verbal forms in this verse express the psalmist's wish or prayer.

וּבְסוּפְתָךְ תִּבְהַלֵּם:
 מִלֵּא פָנֵיהֶם קִלּוֹן יז
 וַיִּבְקְשׁוּ שְׁמֶךָ יְהוָה:
 יִבְשׁוּ וַיִּבְהֻלוּ עַד־עַד יח
 וַיַּחֲפְרוּ וַיֹּאבְדוּ:
 וַיֵּדְעוּ כִּי־אַתָּה שְׁמֶךָ יְהוָה לְבַדְּךָ יט
 עֲלִיּוֹן עַל־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ:

by your whirlwind fill them with terror.

17 Shame written all over their faces,
let them seek your name, Yahweh!

18 May dishonour and terror be theirs forever,
death also and destruction.

19 Let them know that you alone bear the name of Yahweh,
Most High over all the earth.

17 The phrase, 'your name', here can mean God's person.

18 The expression עַד־עַד ('forever') may be used hyperbolically here, for the psalmist asks that the experience of judgment might lead the nations to recognise (v. 19) and even to seek (v. 17) God.

19 NETB uses the title, 'Sovereign King' in place of the more traditional 'Most High'.

תהילים פרק פד

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ עַל־הַגִּתִּית
לְבַנֵּי־קֶרַח מִזְמוֹר:
ב מֵה־יָדִידוֹת מְשֻׁכְּנוֹתֶיךָ
יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת:
ג נִכְסְפָה וְגַם־כָּלְתָּהּ | נַפְשִׁי לַחֲצֹרוֹת יְהוָה
לִבִּי וּבִשְׁרִי
יִרְנְנוּ אֵל אֱלֹהֵי:
ד גַּם־צִפּוֹר מֵצֵאָה בַּיֵּת וּדְרוֹר | קָן לָהּ
אֲשֶׁר־שָׂתָה אֶפְרָחֶיהָ
אֶת־מִזְבְּחוֹתֶיךָ יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת
מֶלֶכִּי וָאֱלֹהֵי:
ה אֲשֶׁר־יֹשְׁבֵי בֵיתְךָ
עוֹד יִהְלְלוּךָ
סֵלָה:
ו אֲשֶׁר־אָדָם עוֹזֵלֹ בְּךָ
מִסְלֹת בְּלִבָּבָם:

PSALM 84

- 1 *To the leader: according to "The Gittith."
Of the Korahites. A Psalm.*
- 2 How lovely are your dwelling-places
Yahweh Sabaoth.
- 3 My whole being yearns and pines for Yahweh's courts.
My heart and my body
cry out for joy to the living God.
- 4 Even the sparrow has found a home,
the swallow a nest to place its young;
your altars, Yahweh Sabaoth,
my King and my God.
- 5 How happy are those who live in your house;
they shall praise you continually.
Selah
- 6 Blessed are those who find their strength in you,
whose hearts are set on pilgrimage.

PSALM 84

- 1 Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and verse numbers are accordingly incremented.
- 2 A song praising God as host in his Temple, dispensing happiness and forgiveness to pilgrims (6–8) and to all who serve in his house (5–11).
- 3 The literal translation of 'whole being' is 'flesh'.
- 4 Note that the ק in קָן is presented as an enlarged letter, as it appears in almost all *Hebrew MSS*.
- 5 The noun translated 'happy' is an abstract plural; the word often refers to the happiness that God-given security and prosperity produce.
- 6 'Pilgrimage' translates literally from 'ascents' (*LXX*) or 'pathways' (*MT*); the *NRSV* appends 'to Zion'.

עֲבְרִי בְּעֵמֶק הַבָּכָא מֵעֵין יִשְׁתִּיחוּ
 גַם־בְּרָכּוֹת יַעֲטֶה מִזֶּרֶחַ:
 יֵלְכוּ מִחִיל אֶל־חִיל
 יֵרָאֶה אֱלֹהִים בְּצִיּוֹן:
 יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת שְׁמָעָה תִּפְלְתִי
 הֶאֱזִינָה אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב סֵלָה:
 מִגִּנְנוּ רָאָה אֱלֹהִים
 וְהִבֵּט פָּנָי מִשִּׁיחָד:
 כִּי טוֹב־יוֹם בַּחֲצִידֶךָ מֵאֶלֶף
 בַּחֲרָתִי הַסְתּוֹפֵף בְּבֵית אֱלֹהֵי
 מִדּוֹר בְּאֶהֱלֵי־רָשָׁע:
 כִּי שֶׁמֶשׁ וּמִגֶּן יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים
 חֵן וְכְבוֹד יִתֵּן יְהוָה
 לֹא יִמְנַע־טוֹב לַהֲלֻכִים בְּתָמִים:

- 7 Passing through the Valley of Balsam, they make a spring.
 Yes, the autumn rain covers it with blessings.
 8 They go from height to height,
 the God of gods will be seen in Zion.
 9 Yahweh, God Sabaoth, hear my prayer,
 listen, God of Jacob.
 10 God, our shield, look,
 and see the face of your anointed.
 11 Better one day in your courts than a thousand I chose,
 to stand on the threshold of God's house
 than to live in the tents of the wicked.
 12 For Yahweh God is a sun and shield,
 he gives grace and glory;
 He refuses nothing good to those whose walk blamelessly.

- 7 Several MSS (and the LXX and Peshitta) have 'Tears' in place of 'Balsam' (the words are identical when spoken); the NRSV has the name 'Baca' (see Jg 2:5). The Balsam (or the 'weeping tree') must here be the 'nettle tree' (see 2S 5:23–24). The text of the last line is uncertain (the NRSV has, "and the early rain also covers it with pools"). The LXX has, "the lawgiver will bestow blessings," a possible correction being, "the leader will call out the blessings." Here, we follow the MT.
 8 The NRSV has 'strength to strength' in place of 'height to height'; the Tg has 'from battlement to battlement'.
 9 One expects the construct form אֱלֹהִים before צְבָאוֹת but אֱלֹהִים יְהוָה precedes צְבָאוֹת in Ps 59:5 & 80:4,19 as well.
 10 Here, the 'anointed' (Messiah) is probably the high priest, chief authority in the post-Exilic community.
 11 In NJB has the conjectural, 'at my own devices' (literally 'at my liberty') in place of 'I chose', here following the MT.
 12 The NJB has 'rampart' in place of 'sun', here following the MT & NRSV; The epithet, 'sun', though rarely used of Israel's God in the OT, was a well-attested royal title in the ancient Middle East.

יג יהוה צבאות
אשרי אדם בטח בך:

¹³ Yahweh Sabaoth,
blessed is he who trusts in you.

¹³ The individual referred to here is representative of all followers of God.

תהילים פרק פה

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ | לְבְנֵי־קָרַח מִזְמוֹר:
ב רָצִיתָ יְהוָה אֶרֶץ
ג נְשֹׂאתָ עוֹן עַמֶּךָ
ד אֶסְפֶּתָ כָּל־עֲבֹרֹתֶךָ
ה שׁוּבֵנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעֵנוּ
ו הַפֵּר כַּעֲסֶךָ עִמָּנוּ:
ז הַלְעוֹלָם תִּאֲנֶף־בָּנוּ
ח תִּמְשֹׁךְ אַפֶּךָ לְדֹר וָדֹר:
ט הֲלֹא־אַתָּה תָּשׁוּב תַּחֲיֵנוּ
י וְעַמֶּךָ יִשְׂמְחוּ־בְךָ:
יא הֲרֹאֵנוּ יְהוָה חֲסִדֶּךָ

PSALM 85

- 1 *To the leader. Of the Korahites. A Psalm.*
- 2 Yahweh, you are gracious to your land,
you bring back the captives of Jacob.
- 3 You forgave the guilt of your people;
you pardoned all their sin.
- 4 You retract all your anger;
you turned from your raging anger.
- 5 Bring us back, God our Saviour;
appease your indignation at us!
- 6 Will you be angry with us forever?
Will you prolong your anger to all generations?
- 7 Will you not revive us once more,
for your people to rejoice in you?
- 8 Show us, Yahweh, your faithful love;

PSALM 85

- 1 Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the MT, and verse numbers are accordingly incremented.
- 2 The difference between the *Kethib* & *Qere* readings here is likely due to a scribe misreading a (possibly large/long) *yod* as a *vav*.
- 3 The literal translation of 'forgave' (here following the NRSV) is 'lifted up'; the NJB has 'take away'.
- 4 The phrase, 'raging anger' (literally, 'rage of your anger') employs an appositional genitive: synonyms are joined in a construct relationship to emphasise the single idea.
- 5 The literal translation of 'appease' is 'break'; some emend this to 'turn aside'.
- 6 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "Will you prolong your anger age after age?"
- 7 The NJB has 'give us life again' in place of 'revive us once more', here following the NRSV.
- 8 The NJB does not translate the Divine Name in this verse.

וְיִשְׁעֶךָ תִּתֶּן-לָנוּ:
 ט אֲשַׁמְעָה מִה־יְדִבֵּר הָאֵל | יְהוָה
 כִּי | יְדִבֵּר שָׁלוֹם
 אֶל-עַמּוֹ וְאֶל-חֲסִידָיו
 וְאֶל-יֹשְׁבֵי לְבָסֶלָה:
 י אַךְ קָרוֹב לִירְאָיו יִשְׁעוֹ
 לְשֹׁכֵן כְּבוֹד בְּאַרְצֵנוּ:
 יא חֶסֶד-וְאֵמֶת נִפְגְּשׁוּ
 צְדָק וְשָׁלוֹם נִשְׁקוּ:
 יב אֵמֶת מֵאֶרֶץ תִּצְמַח
 וְצְדָק מִשָּׁמַיִם נִשְׁקֶף:
 יג גַּם-יְהוָה יִתֵּן הַטּוֹב
 וְאַרְצֵנוּ תִתֵּן יְבוּלָה:
 יד צְדָק לִפְנֵי יְהוָה
 וַיִּשֶׂם לְדֶרֶךְ פְּעָמָיו:

grant us your saving help.

- 9 I am listening. What is God's message?
 Yahweh's message is peace
 for his people, for his faithful,
 if only they renounce their folly.
- 10 His saving help is near for those who fear him;
 his glory will dwell in our land.
- 11 Faithful Love and Loyalty will meet,
 Saving Justice and Peace embrace.
- 12 Loyalty will spring up from the earth,
 and Justice will lean down from heaven.
- 13 Yahweh will himself bestow prosperity,
 and our soil will yield its harvest.
- 14 Justice will walk before him,
 treading out a path.

9 For the last line, the NRSV has, "to those who turn to him in their hearts."

10 The glory of Yahweh (see #Ex 24:16), which had deserted the Temple and the holy city, is to return to the restored Temple (Ezk 43:2, Hg 2:9).

11 'Faithful Love', 'Loyalty', 'Saving Justice' and 'Peace' are the personified attributes of God; these will inaugurate the kingdom of God on earth and in human hearts.

12 The psalmist already sees undeniable signs of God's faithfulness and expects deliverance to arrive soon.

13 Both 'bestow' and 'yield' translate the same Hebrew verb (תָּן); the repetition emphasises that agricultural prosperity is the direct result of divine blessing.

14 God's saving justice blazes the trail; it is the condition of peace and happiness.

תהילים פרק פו

א תַּפְלֵה לְדָוִד
הִטְהִי־הוֹה אֶזְנֶךָ עֲנֵנִי
כִּי־עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן אֲנִי:
ב שְׁמֶרָה נַפְשִׁי בִּי־חֶסֶד אֲנִי
הוֹשַׁע עַבְדְּךָ אֶתָּה אֱלֹהֵי
הַבּוֹטָח אֱלֹהֶיךָ:
ג חַנּוּנִי אֲדֹנִי
כִּי אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶקְרָא כָּל־הַיּוֹם:
ד שִׂמַּח נַפְשׁ עַבְדְּךָ
כִּי אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲדֹנִי נַפְשִׁי אֶשְׂא:
ה כִּי־אַתָּה אֲדֹנִי טוֹב וְסֹלֶחַ
וְרַב־חֶסֶד לְכָל־קֹרְאֶיךָ:
ו הַאֲזִינָה יְהוֹה תִּפְלְתִּי
וְהַקְשִׁיבָה בְּקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנוֹתַי:

PSALM 86

- ¹ *A Prayer of David.*
Listen to me, Yahweh, answer me,
for I am poor and needy.
- ² Guard my life, for I am faithful,
save your servant who relies on you.
You are my God;
- ³ take pity on me, Lord,
for to you I cry all day long.
- ⁴ Fill your servant's heart with joy, Lord,
for to you I raise up my soul.
- ⁵ For you, Lord, are kind and forgiving,
rich in faithful love for all who call upon you.
- ⁶ Give ear, Yahweh, to my prayer;
listen to my cry of supplication.

PSALM 86

This Psalm is a Hellenistic composition without much literary unity, reflecting the state of mind of pious Jews, precursors of the Hasidaeans at the time of the Maccabees.

- ¹ Another possible reading for 'poor' is 'oppressed'.
- ² The NJB has simply 'me' in place of 'my life', here following the MT & NRSV.
- ³ Another reading for 'take pity on me' is 'show me favour'.
- ⁴ The words 'heart' and 'soul' in Hebrew are interchangeable; the NRSV has 'soul' in both lines here, and the NJB has 'heart' twice.
- ⁵ The NJB lacks the opening 'for', here following the NRSV.
- ⁶ For this verse, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "Yahweh, hear my prayer, listen to the sound of my pleading."

ז בְּיוֹם צָרָתִי אֶקְרָאךָ
 כִּי תַעֲנֵנִי:
 ח אֵין־כַּמּוֹךְ בָּאֱלֹהִים | אֲדֹנִי
 וְאֵין כַּמַּעֲשִׂיךְ:
 ט כָּל־גּוֹיִם | אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ יְבוֹאוּ | וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ
 לְפָנֶיךָ אֲדֹנִי וַיִּכְבְּדוּ לְשִׁמְךָ:
 י כִּי־גָדוֹל אַתָּה וַעֲשֵׂה נִפְלְאוֹת
 אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים לְבַדְּךָ:
 יא הוֹרְנִי יְהוָה | דְּרָכֶךָ
 אֶהְלֶכְךָ בְּאַמְתָּךְ
 יב יַחַד לִבְבִּי לִירְאָה שְׁמֶךָ:
 אֲוֹדְךָ | אֲדֹנִי אֱלֹהֵי בְּכָל־לִבִּי
 וְאֶכְבֹּדָה שְׁמֶךָ לְעוֹלָם:
 ג כִּי־חֲסָדֶךָ גָּדוֹל עָלַי
 וְהִצַּלְתָּ נַפְשִׁי מִשְׁאוֹל תַּחְתִּיהָ:

7 In my day of distress, I call upon you,
 because you answer me.
 8 Among the gods, there is none to compare with you,
 no great deeds to compare with yours.
 9 All nations you have made will come and adore you, Lord,
 and give glory to your name.
 10 For you are great and do marvellous deeds,
 you alone are God.
 11 Teach me, Yahweh, your ways,
 that I may not stray from your loyalty;
 let my heart's one aim be to fear your name.
 12 I thank you with all my heart, Lord my God,
 I will glorify your name forever.
 13 For your faithful love for me is so great
 that you have rescued me from the depths of Sheol.

7 The NJB adds 'Lord' at the end of this verse.

8 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads simple, "and there are none like your acts."

9 The NJB omits 'you have made', suggesting the words are misplaced from the preceding verse.

10 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "you, God, and none other."

11 God's 'ways' refer here to the moral principles he expects the psalmist to follow.

12 An alternative (more literal) translation for 'forever' is 'continually'.

13 'Sheol' (שאול) is the abode of the dead; the psalmist is sure God will not allow the present situation to end in death.

יד אֱלֹהִים | זֹדִים קְמוּ-עָלַי
 וְעַדַּת עָרִיצִים בִּקְשׁוּ נַפְשִׁי
 וְלֹא שְׁמוּךְ לִנְגֹדִם:
 טו וְאַתָּה אֲדֹנִי אֱלֹהִים רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן
 אַרְךְ אֲפִים וְרַב־חֶסֶד וְאֵמֶת:
 טז פְּנֵה אֵלַי וְחַנְּנֵנִי
 תְּנֵה-עֶזְךָ לְעַבְדְּךָ
 וְהוֹשִׁיעָה לְבִן-אֲמָתְךָ:
 יז עֲשֵׂה-עִמִּי אוֹת לְטוֹבָה
 וִירְאוּ שָׁנְאֵי וִיבָשׁוּ
 כִּי-אַתָּה יְהוָה עֲזָרְתָּנִי וְנִחַמְתָּנִי:

- 14 Arrogant men, God, are rising up against me,
a gang of ruffians is after my life;
in their scheme of things you have no place.
- 15 But you, Lord, are a God of tenderness and mercy,
slow to anger, rich in faithful love and loyalty.
- 16 Turn to me and pity me;
give to your servant your strength,
to the child of your serving-girl your saving help.
- 17 Give me a sign of your kindness,
so that my enemies will see to their shame
that you, Yahweh, help and console me.

14 In place of 'a gang of ruffians', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'a brutal gang'.

15 The psalmist's confession of faith in this verse echoes Ex 34:6.

16 'The child of your serving-girl' is synonymous with 'your servant'.

17 The NJB includes the 2nd & 3rd lines as a separate verse (v. 18); here, we follow the MT & NRSV.

תהילים פרק פז

א לְבִנְיָקֶרַח מִזְמֹר שִׁיר
יְסֻדָּתוֹ בְּהַרְרֵי־קֹדֶשׁ:
ב אֱהָב יְהוָה שַׁעְרֵי צִיּוֹן
מִכָּל מִשְׁכָּנֹת יַעֲקֹב:
ג נִכְבְּדוֹת מִדְּבַר בָּךְ
עִיר הָאֱלֹהִים סֵלָה:
ד אֲזַכִּיר | רָהַב וּבָבֶל לִידְעִי
הִנֵּה פִלֶּשֶׁת וְצָר עַם־כּוּשׁ
זֶה יִלְד־שָׁם:
ה וְלִצִּיּוֹן | יֹאמַר אִישׁ וְאִישׁ יִלְד־בָּהּ
וְהוּא יְכוֹנְנָה עַל־יוֹן:
ו יְהוָה יִסְפֹּר בִּכְתוּב עַמִּים
זֶה יִלְד־שָׁם
סֵלָה:

PSALM 87

- ¹ *Of the Korahites. A Psalm. A Song.*
With its foundations on the holy mountains,
- ² Yahweh loves his city; he prefers the gates of Zion
to any dwelling-place in Jacob.
- ³ Glorious things are spoken of you,
city of God.
- ⁴ "I number Rahab and Babylon among those who know me;
look at Tyre, Philistia, Ethiopia,
so and so was born there."
- ⁵ But of Zion it shall be said, "Everyone was born there,"
her guarantee is the Most High.
- ⁶ Yahweh in his register of peoples
will note against each, "Born there."

Selah

PSALM 87

- ¹ This Psalm draws on Isaiah and Zechariah. Isaiah had already spoken of Zion as mother, fruitful spouse of Yahweh and, as such, a foreshadowing of the Church.
- ² Another reading for 'dwelling-places in Jacob' is 'dwellings of Jacob'.
- ³ This verse provided the theme for Augustine's "City of God" and was the inspiration of a popular hymn.
- ⁴ An alternative translation for 'Ethiopia' is 'Nubia' (the MT has 'Cush'). 'Rahab' (רָהַב) is a reference to Egypt.
- ⁵ The non-Jews, wherever born, are adopted by Zion, which becomes their true country.
- ⁶ The 'register of peoples' is a reference to the roll of citizenship (Is 4:3, Ezk 13:9) not to the apocalyptic Book of Dooms, Ps 69:28. The non-Jews are listed as citizens of Zion.

וְשָׂרִים בְּחַלְלִים ז
כָּל־מַעֲיָנִי בָּךְ:

⁷ Princes, no less than native-born,
all make their home in you.

⁷ 'Princes' follows the *LXX* and *Peshitta*; the *MT* has 'singers' (confusion of two almost identical letters). God writes down foreign princes as children of Zion. For this verse, the *NRSV* reads: *Singers and dancers alike say, "All my springs are in you."* The verse seems to be only a fragment.

תהילים פרק פח

א שִׁיר מִזְמוֹר לְבְנֵי־קָרַח
לְמִנְצָח עַל־מַחֲלַת לְעֲנֹת
מִשְׁכִּיל לְהִימָן הָאֶזְרָחִי:
ב יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יְשׁוּעָתִי
יוֹסֶזַעַקְתִּי בַלַּיְלָה נִגְדָּדָה:
ג תְּבוֹא לִפְנֵיךָ תַּפְלָתִי
הִטָּה אֲזִנֶּךָ לִרְנָתִי:
ד כִּי־שִׁבְעָה בְרָעוֹת נַפְשִׁי
וְחַיִּי לְשֹׁאֵל הִגִּיעוּ:
ה נַחֲשִׁבְתִּי עִם־יֹרְדֵי בֹר
הָיִיתִי כְגֹבֵר אֵין־אֵיל:
ו בַּמָּתִים חָפְשִׁי
כְּמוֹ חֲלָלִים | שְׁכַבְתִּי קֶבֶר
אֲשֶׁר לֹא זְכַרְתָּם עוֹד
וְהִמָּה מִיַּדְךָ נִגְזְרוּ:

PSALM 88

- 1 *A Song. A Psalm of the Korahites.
To the choirmaster: according to Mahalath Leannoth.
A Maskil of Heman the Ezrahite.*
- 2 Yahweh, God of my salvation,
when I cry out to you in the night,
- 3 let my prayer reach your presence;
hear my cry for help.
- 4 For my soul is full of troubles,
my life is on the brink of Sheol.
- 5 Already numbered among those who sink into oblivion,
I am like those who have no help,
- 6 left alone among the dead,
like the slaughtered lying in the grave,
like those whom you remember no more,
cut off as they are from your protection.

PSALM 88

- 1 Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the MT, and verse numbers are accordingly incremented.
- 2 Compare this anguished prayer with the complaints of Job.
- 3 The prefixed verbal form in the 1st line is understood as a jussive, indicating the psalmist's desire or prayer.
- 4 NETB has 'my life' in place of 'my soul', here following the NJB & NRSV. 'Sheol' is the abode of the dead.
- 5 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "I am as one bereft of strength."
- 6 The LXX has 'freed' in place of 'alone' (the NRSV has 'forsaken'); in the tomb, the servant is free of his master (cf. Job 3:19). It is the same with the poor in distress: there is no more link with God.

ז שִׁתְּנִי בְּבוֹר תַּחְתִּיּוֹת
בְּמַחְשָׁפִים בְּמַצְלוֹת:
ח עָלִי סִמְכָה חֲמַתְךָ
וְכָל־מְשַׁבְּרֶיךָ עֲנִית
סֵלָה:

ט הִרְחַקְתָּ מִיָּדַי מִמֶּנִּי
שִׁתְּנִי תוֹעֵבוֹת לָמוֹ
כָּלֹא וְלֹא אֶצֵּא:
י עֵינַי דָּאֲבָה מִנִּי־עֲנִי
קִרְאתֶיךָ יְהוָה בְּכָל־יוֹם
שִׁטַּחְתִּי אֵלֶיךָ כַּפִּי:
יא הַלְמַתִּים תַּעֲשֶׂה־פֶלֶא
אִם־רָפְאִים יִקְוֹמוּ | יוֹדוּךָ
סֵלָה:

יב הִי־סֹפֵר בִּקְבֹּר חֲסִידְךָ
אֲמוֹנֶתְךָ בְּאֲבִדּוֹן:

7 You have plunged me to the bottom of the grave,
in the darkness, in the depths.

8 Your wrath lies heavy on me,
and you overwhelm me with all your waves.

Selah

9 You have deprived me of my friends,
made me repulsive to them;
I am imprisoned, with no escape.

10 My eyes grow dim with suffering.
I call to you, Yahweh, all day;
I spread out my hands to you.

11 Do you work wonders for the dead?
Can shadows rise up to praise you?

Selah

12 Do they speak in the grave of your faithful love,
of your constancy in Abaddon?

7 The literal translation of 'grave' is 'pit' (or 'cistern').

8 Another reading for the 1st line is, "Your anger bears down on me."

9 The NJB lacks the opening, 'I am', of the 3rd line, here following the NRSV.

10 Spreading out the hands toward God was a prayer gesture (see Ex 9:29, 33, 1K 8:22, 38, 2C 6:12-13, 29, Ezr 9:15, Job 11:13, Is 1:15).

11 'Shadows' translates רָפְאִים – a term used for those who occupy the land of the dead.

12 The NJB has 'place of perdition' in place of 'Abaddon'; here, we follow the MT (and NRSV).

יג הַיּוֹדֵעַ בַּחֹשֶׁךְ פְּלֹאֵךְ
 וְצִדְקָתְךָ בָּאָרֶץ נִשְׁיָה:
 יד וְאֲנִי אֵלֶיךָ יְהוָה שׁוֹעֵתִי
 וּבִבְקָר תַּפְלִתִּי תִקְדָּמְךָ:
 טו לָמָּה יְהוָה תִּזְנַח נַפְשִׁי
 תִּסְתִּיר פָּנֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי:
 טז עָנִי אֲנִי וְגֹועַ מִנֶּעַר
 נִשְׁאַתִּי אִמֶּיךָ אֶפְוֵנָה:
 יז עָלַי עָבְרוּ חֲרוֹנֶיךָ
 בְּעוֹתֶיךָ צָמְתוּתָנִי:
 יח סִבּוּנִי כַּמִּים כָּל־הַיּוֹם
 הַקִּיפוּ עָלַי יַחַד:
 יט הִרְחַקְתָּ מִמֶּנִּי אֶהָב וָרֵעַ
 מִיַּדְעֵי מַחֲשָׁךְ:

13 Are your wonders known in the darkness,
 your saving justice in the land of oblivion?
 14 But, for my part, I cry to you, Yahweh,
 every morning my prayer comes before you.
 15 Why, Yahweh, do you rebuff me,
 turn your face away from me?
 16 Wretched and close to death since childhood,
 I have borne your terrors – I am finished!
 17 Your anger has overwhelmed me;
 your terrors have annihilated me.
 18 They flood around me all day long;
 from all sides, they close in on me.
 19 You have deprived me of friends and companions,
 and all that I know is the dark.

13 The rhetorical questions in vv. 11–13 expect the answer, “Of course not!”

14 NETB has ‘confronts you’ in place of ‘comes before you’, here following the NJB & NRSV.

15 A more literal translation of ‘turn your face away’ is ‘hide your face’.

16 ‘I am finished’ is a conjectural translation (אֶפְוֵנָה); the MT (אֶפְוֵנָה) is unintelligible. The NRSV has ‘desperate’ in place of ‘finished’.

17 ‘Have annihilated me’ is a conjectural translation (צָמְתוּתָנִי); the MT (צָמְתוּתָנִי) is unintelligible. The NRSV has ‘your dread assaults destroy me’.
 Corrections were probably made to this verse in order to soften a text shocking by its pessimism.

18 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, “close in on me all at once.”

19 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, “those known by me, darkness.”

תהילים פרק פט

א מִשְׁפִּיל לְאִיתָן הָאֶזְרָחִי:
ב חֶסְדֵי יְהוָה עוֹלָם אֲשִׁירָה
לְדֹר וָדֹר | אֹדִיעַ אֱמוּנָתְךָ בְּפִי:
ג כִּי־אֲמַרְתִּי עוֹלָם חֶסֶד יִבְנֶה
שָׁמַיִם | תִּכַּן אֱמוּנָתְךָ בָּהֶם:
ד כִּרְתִּי בְרִית לְבַחֲרִי
נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לְדָוִד עַבְדִּי:
ה עַד־עוֹלָם אֶכִּין זִרְעֶךָ
וּבְנֵי־יָדְךָ לְדֹר־וָדֹר כְּסֹאֲךָ
סֵלָה:
ו וַיֹּדְדוּ שָׁמַיִם פְּלֹאֲךָ יְהוָה
אֶף־אֱמוּנָתְךָ בְּקֹהֶל קְדָשִׁים:
ז כִּי מִי בִשְׁחָק יַעֲרֹךְ לַיהוָה
יְדָמָה לַיהוָה בְּבָנָי אֱלֹהִים:

PSALM 89

- ¹ *A Maskil of Ethan the Ezrahite.*
 - ² I shall sing the faithful love of Yahweh forever;
from age to age, my lips shall declare your constancy.
 - ³ For you have said: love is built to last forever,
you have fixed your constancy form in the heavens.
 - ⁴ I have made a covenant with my Chosen One,
sworn an oath to my servant David:
 - ⁵ I will make your dynasty firm forever,
build your throne stable age after age.
- Selah*
- ⁶ The heavens praise your wonders, Yahweh,
your constancy in the gathering of your faithful.
 - ⁷ Who in the skies can compare with Yahweh?
Who among the sons of God can rival him?

PSALM 89

- ¹ Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and verse numbers are accordingly incremented.
- ² The prelude (vv. 2–3) followed by the rehearsal of the Davidic Covenant (vv. 4–5) and a hymn to the Creator (vv. 6–19) introduces a messianic oracle (vv. 20–38) and, in contrast, an account of the humiliations of the nation (vv. 39–46), concluded by a prayer (vv. 47–52). The pairing of ‘love’ with ‘faithfulness’ is a central theme of this Psalm.
- ³ ‘You have said’ follows the *LXX*; the *MT* has ‘I have said’.
- ⁴ At the opening of this verse, *NETB* adds, ‘The LORD said’.
- ⁵ The *NJB* uses the past tense of the verbs in this verse; here, we follow the *NRSV* & *NETB*.
- ⁶ As the following context makes clear, the ‘heavens’ here stand by metonymy for the angelic beings that surround God’s heavenly throne.
- ⁷ For ‘sons of God’, *NETB* reads, ‘supernatural beings’ (see #8).

ח אל נִעְרָץ בְּסוּד־קִדְשִׁים רַבָּה
וְנוֹרָא עַל־כָּל־סְבִיבָיו:
ט יְהוָה | אֱלֹהֵי צְבָאוֹת
מִי־כִמּוֹךְ חֲסִין | יְה
וְאַמוֹנַתְךָ סְבִיבוֹתֶיךָ:
י אֶתְּהָ מוֹשֵׁל בְּגָאוֹת הַיָּם
בְּשׂוֹא גָלוּ אֶתְּהָ תִשְׁבַּחֵם:
יא אֶתְּהָ דִכָּאתָ כַּחֲלָל רַהַב
בְּזָרוּעַ עֲזָךְ פָּזַרְתָּ אוֹיְבֶיךָ:
יב לָךְ שָׁמַיִם אֶף־לָךְ אֶרֶץ
תֵּבֵל וּמְלָאָה אֶתְּהָ יְסֻדֵּתָם:
יג צִפּוֹן וַיְמִין אֶתְּהָ בְּרָאתָם
תְּבוֹר וְחֶרְמוֹן בְּשִׁמְךָ יִרְנְנוּ:
יד לָךְ זְרוּעַ עַם־גְּבוּרָה
תַּעֲזֹ יָדְךָ תִּרְוֹם יְמִינְךָ:

- 8 God is awesome in the assembly of holy ones,
great and dreaded among all who surround him.
- 9 Yahweh, God Sabaoth,
who is like you, mighty Yah?
Your constancy is all round you!
- 10 You control the majesty of the sea;
when its waves ride high, you calm them.
- 11 You split Rahab in two like a corpse,
scattered your enemies with your mighty arm.
- 12 Yours are the heavens and yours the earth,
the world and all it holds, you founded them.
- 13 You created the north and the south;
Tabor and Hermon hail your name with joy.
- 14 Yours is a strong arm,
mighty your hand, your right hand raised high.

- 8 The 'holy ones' are the angels, as also are the 'sons of God' in v. 6. 'Great' follows the LXX; the MT joins 'great' with 'assembly'.
- 9 The title, 'God Sabaoth', pictures God as enthroned in the midst of the angelic hosts of heaven. At the end of the 1st line, the NJB has the full Divine Name and most English versions also use 'The LORD' here, yet the MT uses only the first two letters, so we have here read שְׁבִטֵי־יָהּ as 'the tribes of Yah' (cf. # 122:4).
- 10 In place of 'majesty of the sea', the NJB reads, 'pride of the ocean' and the NRSV has 'raging of the sea'.
- 11 'Rahab' is a mythical monster personifying the watery chaos, see #Job 7:12; it also sometimes means Egypt (Ps 87:4).
- 12 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "the world and its fullness, you established them."
- 13 'North' and 'south' translate 'Zaphon' (צִפּוֹן) and 'Yamin' (יְמִין). 'Tabor' is a mountain in the north of Palestine.; 'Hermon' is the highest mountain of Syria.
- 14 The God's 'arm', 'hand', and 'right hand' all symbolise his activities, especially his exploits in war.

טו צֶדֶק וּמִשְׁפָּט מְכוֹן כְּסֵאֶךָ
 חֶסֶד וְאַמֶּת יִקְדְּמוּ פָנֶיךָ:
 טז אֲשֶׁר־יֵהֱמוּ יְדַעֵי תְרוּעָה
 יְהוָה בְּאוֹר־פָּנֶיךָ יִהְיוּ:
 יז בְּשִׁמְךָ יִגִּילוּ כָּל־הַיּוֹם
 וּבְצִדְקָתְךָ יְרוֹמוּ:
 יח כִּי־תִפְאֶרֶת עֲזָמוּ אַתָּה
 וּבְרָצוֹנְךָ תִּרְוֶה תְרוֹם קִרְנֵינוּ:
 יט כִּי לַיהוָה מִגִּנָּנוּ
 וְלִקְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל מִלְּכָנוּ:
 כ אַזְ דִּבַּרְתָּ בְּחֹזֶן לַחֲסִידֶיךָ
 וְתֹאמַר שׁוֹיֵתִי עֶזֶר עַל־גִּבּוֹר
 הַרִימוֹתַי בְּחֹר מַעַם:
 כא מִצָּאתִי דָוִד עַבְדִּי
 בְּשֶׁמֶן קֹדֶשׁ מִשְׁחָתִיו:

- 15 Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne,
faithful love and constancy march before you.
- 16 How blessed the nation that learns to acclaim you!
They will live, Yahweh, in the light of your presence.
- 17 In your name, they rejoice all day long,
and extol your righteousness.
- 18 You are the flower of their strength;
by your favour, our strength is triumphant.
- 19 For to you Yahweh belongs our shield,
to the Holy One of Israel our king.
- 20 Once you spoke in a vision, to your faithful and said,
I have given strength to a warrior,
I have raised up a man chosen from my people.
- 21 I have found David my servant,
and anointed him with my holy oil.

15 In place of 'righteousness and justice', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'Saving justice and Fair Judgement'.

16 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "Happy are the people who know the shout."

17 The 2nd line follows the NRSV; the NJB has, "by your saving justice they are raised up."

18 The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here appears to be a simple case of *vav*/*yod* confusion.

19 The phrase, 'our shield', refers metaphorically to the Davidic king, who, as God's vice-regent, was the human protector of the people.

20 'Your faithful' here refers to Samuel and Nathan (though the NRSV has 'faithful one' and a study note claims this to be David or Nathan). 'Strength' is a conjectural translation (the NRSV has 'crown'); the MT has 'help'.

21 After 'anointed him', NETB adds 'as king' for clarity.

כב אֲשֶׁר יְדִי תִכּוֹן עִמּוֹ
אֶף־זְרוּעֵי תִאֲמָצְנוּ:
כג לֹא־יִשְׂיֵא אוֹיֵב בּוֹ
וּבֶן־עוֹלָה לֹא יַעֲנֶנּוּ:
כד וּכְתוּתִי מִפְּנֵי צָרָיו
וּמִשְׁנֵאָיו אֶגְוֶף:
כה וְאִמּוֹנָתִי וְחֶסֶדִי עִמּוֹ
וּבִשְׁמִי תִרְוֹם קִרְנוֹ:
כו וְשִׁמְתִּי בַיָּם יָדוֹ
וּבִנְהַרֹת יַמִּינוֹ:
כז הוּא יִקְרָאנִי אָבִי אַתָּה
אֱלֹהֵי וְצוֹר יִשׁוּעָתִי:
כח אֶף־אֲנִי בְכוֹר אֶתְגַּהֵר
עָלְיוֹן לְמַלְכֵי־אֶרֶץ:

22 My hand will always be with him,
my arm will make him strong.
23 No enemy will be able to outwit him,
no wicked man overcome him.
24 I shall crush his enemies before him,
strike down those who hate him.
25 My constancy and faithful love will be with him;
in my name his strength will be triumphant.
26 I shall establish his power over the sea,
his dominion over the rivers.
27 He will cry to me, "You are my father,
my God, the rock of my salvation!"
28 I will make him my first-born,
the highest of earthly kings.

22 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "With whom my hand will be firm."

23 A more literal translation of 'outwit' would possibly be 'exact tribute' (as NETB)

24 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "strike his opponents dead."

25 The NRSV ends (more literally) with, "his horn will be exalted."

26 Some identify 'the sea' as the Mediterranean and 'the rivers' as the Euphrates and its tributaries; however, it is more likely that they are symbols for hostile powers that oppose God and the king (see v. 10, as well as Ps 93:3-4).

27 The Davidic king was viewed as God's 'son' (see 2S 7:14, Ps 2:7). The idiom reflects ancient Near Eastern adoption language associated with covenants of grant, by which a lord would reward a faithful subject by elevating him to special status, referred to as 'sonship'. Like a son, the faithful subject received an inheritance, viewed as an unconditional, eternal gift.

28 The firstborn son typically had special status and received special privileges.

כט לְעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁמֶר לּוֹ חֶסֶדִי
 וּבְרִיתִי נֶאֱמָנָה לוֹ:
 ל וְשִׁמְתִּי לְעַד זֶרְעוֹ
 וְכִסְאוֹ כִּימֵי שָׁמַיִם:
 לא אִם־יַעֲזֹבוּ בָנָיו תּוֹרָתִי
 וּבִמְשַׁפְּטֵי לֹא יֵלְכוּ:
 לב אִם־חִקְתִּי יַחֲלֹלוּ
 וּמִצְוֹתִי לֹא יִשְׁמְרוּ:
 לג וּפְקַדְתִּי בַשֶּׁבֶט פֶּשַׁעַם
 וּבִנְגִנָּעִים עֲוֹנָם:
 לד וְחֶסֶדִי לֹא־אֶפִּיר מֵעַמּוֹ
 וְלֹא־אֶשְׁקֹר בְּאֱמוּנָתִי:
 לה לֹא־אֲחַלֵּל בְּרִיתִי
 וּמוֹצֵא שִׁפְתֵּי לֹא אֲשַׁנֶּה:
 לו אַחַת נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי בְּקִדְשִׁי
 אִם־לִדְּוֹד אֶכְזֹב:

29 I shall maintain my faithful love for him always,
 my covenant with him will stay firm.
 30 I have established his dynasty forever,
 his throne to be as lasting as the heavens.
 31 Should his descendants forsake my law,
 and do not walk according to my ordinances,
 32 should they violate my statutes,
 and not observe my commandments,
 33 then I shall punish their offences with the rod,
 their guilt with the whip,
 34 but I shall never withdraw from him my faithful love;
 I shall not belie my constancy.
 35 I shall not violate my covenant,
 I shall not withdraw the word once spoken.
 36 I have sworn by my holiness, once and for all,
 never will I lie to David.

29 Literally translated, this verse reads, “forever I will keep for him my loyal love and will make my covenant secure for him.” In place of אֲשֶׁמֶר, here following the *Kethib*, the *Qere* has אֶשְׁמֶר.

30 A more literal translation of ‘dynasty’ is ‘offspring’.

31 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV (and MT), the NJB reads, “and not keep to my rulings.”

32 Another reading for ‘violate’ is ‘desecrate’.

33 Despite the harsh image of beating with a ‘rod’, the language reflects a father-son relationship (see v. 31, 2S 7:14).

34 ‘Withdraw’ follows the *Peshitta*; the MT has ‘break’ (the NRSV has ‘remove’).

35 Another reading for ‘violate’ is ‘desecrate’.

36 In place of ‘lie to David’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘break faith with David’.

לז זרעו לעולם יהיה
 וכסאו כשמש נגדי:
 לח כִּירַח יִפּוֹן עוֹלָם
 ועד בִּשְׁחַק נֶאֱמָן
 סלה:

לט ואתה זנחת ותמאס
 התעפרת עם־משיחך:
 מ נארתה ברית עבדך
 חללת לארץ נזרו:
 מא פרצת כל־גדרתיו
 שמת מבצרי מחתה:
 מב שסוהו כל־עברי דרך
 היה חרפה לשכניו:
 מג הרימות ימין צריו
 השמחת כל־אויביו:

37 His dynasty shall continue forever,
 his throne shall endure like the sun before me.

38 It shall be established forever like the moon,
 a faithful witness in the skies.

Selah

39 Yet you yourself – you have spurned and rejected
 and have vented your wrath on your anointed.

40 You have repudiated the Covenant with your servant,
 dishonoured his crown in the dust.

41 You have pierced all his defences,
 and laid his strongholds in ruins.

42 Everyone passing by plunders him;
 he has become the scorn of his neighbours.

43 You have raised high the right hand of his opponents;
 have made all his enemies happy.

37 The NJB lacks 'shall endure' in the 2nd line, here following the NRSV.

38 Scholars have offered a variety of opinions as to the identity of the 'witness' referred to here, none of which is very convincing.

39 The term 'anointed' here refers to the whole Davidic dynasty.

40 The Hebrew word translated 'repudiated' occurs only here and in Lm 2:7.

41 The king here represents the land and cities over which he rules.

42 The NJB has 'butt' in place of 'scorn', here following the NRSV.

43 The idiom, 'raised high the right hand' refers to victorious military deeds (see #14).

מִד אֶף־תָּשִׁיב צוּר חֶרְבּוֹ
 וְלֹא הִקִּימְתּוֹ בַּמִּלְחָמָה:
 מֵה הַשְׁבֵּת מִטְהַרֹּו
 וְכִסְאוֹ לָאָרֶץ מִגִּרְתָּהּ:
 מו הַקְצַרְתָּ יָמַי עָלֹמָיו
 הִעֲטִיתָ עָלָיו בּוֹשָׁה
 סֵלָה:

מו עַד־מָה יִהְיֶה תִסְתָּר לְנֶצַח
 תִּבְעַר כְּמוֹ־אֵשׁ חֲמָתְךָ:
 מֵח זְכַר־אֲנִי מֵה־חֵלֶד
 עַל־מָה־שָׂוִא בְרָאתָ כָּל־בְּנֵי־אָדָם:
 מֵט מִי גִבֹּר יִחִיָּה וְלֹא יִרְאֶה־מוֹת
 יִמְלֹט נַפְשׁוֹ מִיֶּד־שְׂאוֹל
 סֵלָה:

ג אֵיךְ | חֲסִדֶיךָ הָרַשְׁנִים | אֲדֹנִי
 נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לְדָוִד בְּאַמּוֹנָתְךָ:

- 44 You have turned back the edge of his sword,
 and failed to support him in battle.
 45 You have stripped him of his splendid sceptre,
 and toppled his throne to the ground.
 46 You have cut short the days of his youth,
 enveloped him in shame.

Selah

- 47 How long, Yahweh, will you remain hidden? Forever?
 Is your anger to go on smouldering like a fire?
 48 Remember me; how long have I left?
 For what pointless end did you create all mortals?
 49 Who can live and never see death?
 Who can save himself from the clutches of Sheol?

Selah

- 50 Lord, where is your steadfast love of old?
 You made an oath to David by your constancy.

- 44 The perfect verbal form predominates in vv. 39–46; the use of the imperfect ('turned back') here may be for rhetorical effect. The psalmist briefly lapses into dramatic mode, describing the king's military defeat as if it were happening before his very eyes.
 45 'Splendid sceptre' is conjectural (מִטְהַרֹּו); the MT has 'lustre' (מִטְהָדוֹ).
 46 For the 1st line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "You have aged him before his time."
 47 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "How long, O LORD, will hide yourself forever?"
 48 The meaning of the Hebrew text of the 1st line is uncertain.
 49 The rhetorical questions anticipate the answer, "No one!"
 50 Many mediaeval Hebrew MSS read the Divine Name (יְהוָה) here in place of 'Lord'.

זָכֹר אֲדֹנָי חֲרַפַּת עַבְדֶּיךָ נא
 שָׂאתִי בְחִיקֵי כָל־רַבִּים עַמִּים:
 אֲשֶׁר חָרְפוּ אוֹיְבֶיךָ | יְהוָה נב
 אֲשֶׁר חָרְפוּ עֲקֵבוֹת מְשִׁיחֶךָ:
 בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם נג
 אָמֵן | וְאָמֵן:

51 Do not forget, O Lord, the insults to your servant;
 I take to heart the taunts of the nations,
 52 which your enemies have levelled, Yahweh,
 have levelled at the footsteps of your anointed!
 53 Blessed be Yahweh forever,
 Amen, Amen.

51 The NJB lacks 'O Lord' (and cf. #50).

52 Literally translated, this verse reads, "[By] which your enemies, O LORD, taunt, [by] which they taunt [at] the heels of your anointed one."

53 This doxology (not part of the Psalm) ends the third book of the Psalter.

ספר רביעי

BOOK IV

תהילים פרק צ

PSALM 90

א תִּפְלֶה לְמֹשֶׁה אִישׁ־הָאֱלֹהִים
אֲדֹנֵי מַעֲוֹן אַתָּה הָיִיתָ לָנוּ
בְּדֹר וּדֹר:
ב בְּטֶרֶם | הָרִים יֵלְדוּ
וְתַחֲוֹלֵל אֶרֶץ וְתַבֵּל
וּמַעֲוֹלָם עַד־עוֹלָם אַתָּה אֵל:
ג תֵּשֶׁב אָנוּשׁ עַד־דָּכָא
וְתֹאמַר שׁוּבוּ בְנֵי־אָדָם:
ד כִּי אֵלֶיךָ שָׁנִים בְּעֵינֶיךָ
כְּיוֹם אֶתְמוֹל כִּי יַעֲבֹר
וְאִשְׁמוּרָה בַּלַּיְלָה:
ה זֶרְמָתָם שָׁנָה יֵהְיוּ
בַּבֹּקֶר כַּחֲצִיר יִחְלֹף:

1 *A Prayer of Moses, the Man of God.*
Lord, you have been our refuge
from age to age.
2 Before the mountains were born,
before the earth and the world came to birth,
from eternity to eternity, you are God.
3 You bring human beings to the dust,
by saying, "Return, children of Adam."
4 A thousand years are to you
like a yesterday that has passed,
like a watch of the night.
5 You end their lives and they fall asleep;
in the morning, they will be like growing grass:

PSALM 90

- 1 'Refuge' follows the LXX; the MT has 'dwelling-place' (as does the NRSV).
- 2 The Polel verb form in the 2nd line pictures God giving birth to the world; the LXX and some other ancient MSS assume a Polal (passive) verb form here, in which case the earth becomes the subject of the verb and the verb is understood as third feminine singular rather than second masculine singular.
- 3 The NRSV has 'us' in place of 'human beings', here following the MT.
- 4 The ancient Israelites divided the night into distinct periods, or 'watches'.
- 5 For the 1st line, here following NETB, the NJB reads, "You flood them with sleep." The verb זֶרְמָתָם has traditionally been taken to mean 'flood' (note the Polel form of a root in 77:17, where the verb is used of the clouds pouring down rain); however, the verb form here is Qal, not Polel,

ו	בִּבְקָר יִצִּיץ וְחָלָף לְעֶרֶב יִמּוּלֵל וַיִּבֶשׁ:	6	In the morning it is blossoming and growing, by evening it withers and dries up.
ז	כִּי־כָלִינוּ בְּאַפְּךָ וּבַחֲמַתְךָ נִבְהַלְנוּ:	7	For we have been destroyed by your wrath, dismayed by your anger.
ח	שֶׁת עֲוֹנֹתֵינוּ לִנְגִידְךָ עַל־מִנּוּ לְמַאֲזֹר פָּנֶיךָ:	8	You have taken note of our guilty deeds, our secrets in the full light of your presence.
ט	כִּי כָל־יְמֵינוּ פָּנוּ בְּעִבְרַתְךָ כָּלִינוּ שְׁנֵינוּ כְּמוֹ־הֶגֶה:	9	All our days pass under your wrath, our lives are over like a sigh.
י	יְמֵי־שְׁנוֹתֵינוּ בֵּהֶם שְׁבַע־שָׁנָה וְאַם בְּגִבּוֹרֹת שְׁמוֹנִים שָׁנָה וְרַהֲבָם עֵמֶל וְאֹן כִּי־גַז חַיִּשׁ וְנִעְפָּה:	10	The span of our life is seventy years – eighty for those who are strong – but their whole extent is anxiety and trouble, they are over in a moment and we are gone.
יא	מִי־יֹדַע עֹז אַפְּךָ וְכִי־רֹאֵתְךָ עִבְרַתְךָ:	11	Who feels the power of your anger, or who that fears you, your wrath?
יב	לְמִנּוֹת יְמֵינוּ כִּן הַיּוֹדַע	12	Teach us to count the days that are ours,

and is better understood as a homonym meaning ‘to make an end [of life]’. The term שָׁנָה (‘sleep’) can be taken as an adverbial accusative; it is a euphemism here for death (see Ps 76:5–6).

6 The Polel form of the verb translated ‘withers’ (יִמּוּלֵל) occurs only here; perhaps the form should be emended to a Qal, which necessitates eliminating the final lamed as dittographic (see Ps 37:2).

7 Another reading for ‘destroyed’ is ‘consumed’.

8 The Qere opens with שְׁתָּה in place of שֶׁת, here following the Kethib.

9 The Peshitta paraphrases ‘like a sigh’ as ‘like a spider’, which is added by the LXX.

10 ‘Whole extent’ (the NRSV repeats ‘span’) is conjectural, following the LXX and Peshitta; the MT has ‘pride’.

11 The precise meaning of the 2nd line (here following the NJB) is unclear; the NRSV reads, “Your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you.”

12 Awareness of human weakness leads to wisdom, which is fear of God (see #Pr 1:7).

וְנָבֹא לִבֵּב חִכְמָה:
ג שׁוּבָה יְהוָה עַד־מָתִי
וְהִנָּחֵם עַל־עַבְדֶּיךָ:
יד שְׁבַעֲנוּ בִּבְקָר חֶסֶדְךָ
וְנִרְנְנָה וְנִשְׂמְחָה בְּכָל־יְמֵינוּ:
טו שְׂמֵחֵנוּ כִּימוֹת עֲנִיתֵנוּ
שָׁנוֹת רָאִינוּ רָעָה:
טז יִרְאֶה אֶל־עַבְדֶּיךָ פֶּעֶלְךָ
וְהִדְרֶךָ עַל־בְּנֵיהֶם:
יז וִיְהִי | נָעַם אֲדֹנֵי אֱלֹהֵינוּ עָלֵינוּ
וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵינוּ כּוֹנֵנָה עָלֵינוּ
וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵינוּ כּוֹנֵנָהוּ:

and we shall come back to the heart of wisdom.
13 Come back, Yahweh! How long must we wait?
Take pity on your servants.
14 Each morning, fill us with your faithful love,
we shall sing and be happy all our days.
15 Let our joy be as long as the time you afflicted us,
the years when we experienced disaster.
16 Show your servants the deeds you do,
let the children enjoy your splendour!
17 Let the favour of the Lord our God be upon us,
and prosper for us the work of our hands.
O prosper the work of our hands!

¹³ In vv. 14–17, the meditation and prayer, concerned initially with the fate of the individual, are extended to the whole of Israel.

¹⁴ ‘Morning’ is used metaphorically for a time of renewed joy after affliction (see 30:5, 46:5, 49:14, 59:16, 143:8).

¹⁵ The literal translation of ‘experienced’ is ‘have seen’.

¹⁶ In this context (note v. 17), the verb form **יִרְאֶה** is best understood as an un-shortened jussive (see Gn 1:9, Is 47:3).

¹⁷ The NJB omits ‘our God’ and the entire 3rd line, here following the NRSV.

תהילים פרק צא

א יֵשֶׁב בְּסֵתֶר עֲלִיֹן
בְּצֵל שְׁדַי יִתְלוֹנֵן:
ב אֲמַר לַיהוָה מַחְסִי וּמְצוּדָתִי
אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹתַי:
ג כִּי הוּא יִצִּילֵךְ מִפֶּחַ יָקוֹשׁ
מִדְּבַר הָמוֹת:
ד בְּאַבְרָתּוֹ יִסְדֵּךְ לֵךְ
וְתַחַת־כַּנְפָּיו תִּחְסֶה
צָנָה וְסַחֲרָה אֲמַתּוֹ:
ה לֹא־תִירָא מִפֶּחַד לַיְלָה
מִחֵץ יַעֲוִף יוֹמָם:
ו מִדְּבַר בָּאֶפֶל יִהְיֶךְ
מִקֵּטֶב יִשׁוּד צְהָרִים:

PSALM 91

- 1 You who live in the secret place of Elyon,
spend your nights in the shelter of Shaddai,
- 2 saying to Yahweh, "My refuge and my fortress,
my God in whom I trust."
- 3 He rescues you from the snare
of the fowler and the plague of destruction.
- 4 He covers you with his pinions;
you find shelter under his wings.
His constancy is shield and protection.
- 5 You need not fear the terrors of night,
the arrow that flies in the daytime,
- 6 the plague that stalks in the darkness,
the scourge that wreaks havoc at high noon.

PSALM 91

This Psalm (Ps 90 in the LXX) elaborates the traditional teaching of the Sages (see Job 5:19ff) on God's protection of the upright person. The concluding divine utterance, vv. 14–16, assumes that the upright will be tested, but that God will deliver them.

- 1 There are four divine names in this one strophe (vv. 1–2): עֲלִיֹן ('Elyon' – 'the Most High'), שְׁדַי ('Shaddai' – see #Gn 17:1; here translated 'the God of Heaven', τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου, by the LXX, elsewhere as 'the Almighty'), יהוה ('Yahweh' – see #Ex 3:13) and אֱלֹהִים ('Elohim' – 'God').
- 2 In place of 'fortress', here following the NJB & NRSV, NETB has 'stronghold'.
- 3 The NJB has 'set on' in place of 'and the plague of'.
- 4 In place of 'pinions', the MT has the singular, but the plural should be read; the final י of the suffix, which indicates the plural, has dropped off by haplography (note the י at the beginning of the next word).
- 5 The 1st line probably alludes to a sneak attack by enemies in the darkness of night (see Sg 3:8).
- 6 Some versions translate the last line as, "from the noonday devil."

ז	יִפֹּל מִצִּדְּךָ אֶלֶף וּרְבֵבָה מִיְמִינֶךָ אֵלֶיךָ לֹא יָגֵשׁ:	7	Though a thousand fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, it will not come near you.
ח	רַק בְּעֵינֶיךָ תִּבְטֹחַ וְשַׁלַּמְתָּ רָשָׁעִים תִּרְאֶה:	8	You have only to keep your eyes open to see the punishment of the wicked,
ט	כִּי־אַתָּה יְהוָה מַחֲסִי עֲלִיוֹן שְׁמַתָּ מְעוֹנֶךָ:	9	because you have made Yahweh your refuge, and Elyon your fortress.
י	לֹא־תֹאנֶנָּה אֵלֶיךָ רָעָה וְנֹגַע לֹא־יִקְרַב בְּאַהֲלֶיךָ:	10	No disaster can overtake you, no plague come near your tent.
יא	כִּי מִלְּאֲכָיו יִצְוֶה־לָּךְ לְשֹׁמְרֶיךָ בְּכָל־דְּרָכֶיךָ:	11	He has given his angels orders about you to guard you wherever you go.
יב	עַל־כַּפְּפִים יִשְׂאוּנֶךָ פֶּן־תִּגָּף בְּאַבֶּן רַגְלֶךָ:	12	They will carry you in their arms in case you trip over a stone.
יג	עַל־שַׁחַל וּפֶתֶן תִּדְרֹךְ תִּרְמָס כִּפִּיר וְתַנִּין:	13	You will walk upon wild beast and adder; you will trample young lions and snakes.

- 7 For the last line, here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'you yourself will remain unscathed'; apparently, the deadly disease mentioned in v. 6^b is the understood subject here.
- 8 An alternative reading for 'punishment' is 'retribution'.
- 9 The 1st line is conjectural (following the NRSV); the MT has, "because you, Yahweh, are my refuge, you have made." 'Fortress' follows the LXX (καταφυγή); the MT has 'dwelling-place'.
- 10 The word נֹגַע ('plague', following the NJB; the NRSV has 'scourge') can also mean 'wound', 'condition' or 'illness'.
- 11 Vv. 11-12 are quoted in Mt 4:6 and Lk 4:10-11.
- 12 The literal translation of the second line is "so your foot will not strike a stone."
- 13 The translation of 'wild beast' is uncertain; the LXX has 'asp' (ἄσπιδα) and the NRSV 'lion'. Alternative readings for 'adder' (here following the NJB & NRSV) are 'cobra' (following the LXX – βασιλίσκον) and 'snake'.

כִּי בִי חֲשַׁק וְאֶפְלֹטָהוּ יד
 אֲשַׁגְּבֶהוּ כִּי־יֵדַע שְׁמִי טו
 יִקְרָאֵנִי וְאֶעֱנֶהוּ טו
 עֲמוֹ-אֲנֹכִי בְצָרָה
 אֲחַלְצֶהוּ וְאֶכְבֹּדֶהוּ טו
 אֶרְדּוּ יָמִים אֲשֶׁבִיעֵהוּ טו
 וְאֶרְאֶהוּ בִישׁוּעָתִי

- 14 "Since he clings to me, I rescue him,
I raise him high, since he acknowledges my name.
- 15 He calls to me and I answer him;
in distress, I am at his side,
I rescue him and bring him honour.
- 16 I shall satisfy him with long life,
and grant him to see my salvation."

14 Vv. 14–16 are Yahweh's oracle of assurance. For the 2nd line, here following the NJB, the NRSV has, "I will protect those who know my name."

15 For this verse, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads: "When they call to me, I will answer them; I will be with them in trouble, I will rescue them and honour them."

16 The literal translation of 'long life' is 'length of days'.

תהילים פרק צב

א מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר לַיּוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת:

ב טוֹב לְהַדּוֹת לַיהוָה

וּלְזַמֵּר לְשִׁמְךָ עֲלִיּוֹן:

ג לְהַגִּיד בַּבֶּקֶר חֶסֶדְךָ

וְאַמּוֹנֶתְךָ בַּלַּיְלוֹת:

ד עַל־עֲשׂוֹר וְעַל־נָבֶל

עַל־הַגִּיזָן בְּכִנּוֹר:

ה כִּי שִׂמְחַתְנִי יְהוָה בִּפְעֻלָּךְ

בְּמַעֲשֵׂי יְדֶיךָ אֲרַגֵּן:

ו מִה־גָּדְלוֹ מַעֲשֵׂיךָ יְהוָה

מֵאֵד עֲמָקוֹ מְחֻשְׁבְּתֶיךָ:

ז אִישׁ־בָּעַר לֹא יֵדַע

וְכֹסִיל לֹא־יָבִין אֶת־זֹאת:

PSALM 92

1 *A Psalm. A Song for the Sabbath Day.*

2 It is good to give thanks to Yahweh,
to make music for your name, Most High,

3 to proclaim your faithful love at daybreak,
and your constancy all through the night,

4 on the lyre, the ten-stringed lyre,
to the murmur of the harp.

5 You have brought me joy, Yahweh, by your deeds,
at the work of your hands I cry out,

6 "How great are your works, Yahweh,
immensely deep your thoughts!"

7 The dullard cannot realise this;
the stupid does not grasp it.

PSALM 92

This Psalm is a didactic hymn that develops the traditional doctrine of the sages: happiness of the just and ruin of the impious (see Ps 37, 49).

1 Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and verse numbers are accordingly incremented.

2 *NETB* generally uses the title, 'O Sovereign One' in place of 'Most High', which is more traditional.

3 Compare the morning and evening sacrifices (Ex 29:38–42).

4 The *NRSV* uses 'lute' in place of 'ten-stringed lyre', here following the *NJB*.

5 The occasion (described more explicitly in vv. 10–11) is a desire to give thanks for an answer to the psalmist's prayer for help.

6 God's 'thoughts' refer here to his moral design of the world, as outlined in vv. 7–16.

7 'Dullard' follows the *NRSV*; *NETB* uses 'spiritually insensitive', translating the term, בָּעַר.

ח בִּפְרֹחַ רָשָׁעִים | כְּמוֹ-עֵשֶׂב
 וַיִּצְיָצוּ כָּל-פֹּעֲלֵי אֹן
 לְהַשְׁמָדָם עַד-עֶד:
 ט וְאַתָּה מָרוֹם לְעַלְמֵי יְהוָה:
 י כִּי הִנֵּה אִי־בִידָהּ יְהוָה
 כִּי-הִנֵּה אִי־בִידָהּ יֵאָבֵדוּ
 יִתְפָּרְדּוּ כָּל-פֹּעֲלֵי אֹן:
 יא וְתָרַם כְּרָאִים קִרְנִי
 בִּלְתִּי בְשֶׁמֶן רַעֲנָן:
 יב וַתִּבֶּט עֵינִי בְשׁוּרֵי
 בַּקָּמִים עָלַי מִרְעִים תִּשְׁמַעְנָה אֲזִנִּי:
 יג צִדִּיק כְּתֹמֶר יִפְרֹחַ
 כְּאֶרֶז בַּלְבָּנוֹן יִשְׁגֶּה:
 יד נִשְׁתַּלֵּם בְּבֵית יְהוָה
 בַּחֲצֹרֹת אֱלֹהֵינוּ יִפְרִיחוּ:

- 8 The wicked may sprout like weeds,
 and every evildoer flourish,
 but only to be eternally destroyed.
 9 But you reign on high forever, Yahweh.
 10 Look at your enemies, Yahweh,
 look how your enemies perish.
 how all evildoers are scattered!
 11 You give me the strength of the wild ox;
 you anoint me with fresh oil.
 12 I caught sight of the ambush against me,
 overheard the plans of the wicked.
 13 The godly will flourish like the palm tree,
 will grow like a cedar of Lebanon.
 14 Planted in the house of Yahweh,
 they will flourish in the courts of our God.

8 God allows the wicked to prosper temporarily so that he might reveal his justice; when the wicked are destroyed, God demonstrates that wickedness does not pay off.

9 A more literal translation of 'reign on high' is 'are elevated'.

10 The NJB omits the 1st line, considering it a doublet of the 2nd; here, we follow the MT, NRSV & NETB.

11 'You anoint' follows the Peshitta and Tg; the MT has 'I anoint'.

12 'The ambush against me' (בְּשׁוּרֵי) follows the versions; the MT (בְּשׁוּרֵי) is faulty and has been glossed 'my adversaries' or 'the downfall of my enemies'.

13 The singular, 'godly', is here used in representative sense.

14 Compare 52:8.

טו עוֹד יִנּוּבֹן בְּשִׁיבָה
 דְּשָׁנִים וְרַעֲנָנִים יִהְיוּ:
 טז לְהַגִּיד בִּי־יֵשֶׁר יְהוָה
 צוּרִי וְלֹא־עוֹלָתָה עֲלָתָה בּוֹ:

¹⁵ In old age, they will still bear fruit;
 will remain fresh and green,
¹⁶ to proclaim Yahweh's integrity:
 my rock, in whom no fault can be found.

¹⁵ A more literal translation of the 2nd line is, "they are juicy and fresh."

¹⁶ The *Kethib/Qere* difference here appears to involve the restoration of a dropped letter.

תהילים פרק צג

א יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ גָּאוֹת לְבָשׁ
לְבָשׁ יְהוָה עֹז הַתְּאֵזָר
אֶף־תִּכּוֹן תִּבְלַל בַּל־תִּמּוֹט:
ב נִכּוֹן כִּסְאֶךָ מֵאֶז
מֵעוֹלָם אַתָּה:
ג נִשְׂאוּ נְהָרוֹת | יְהוָה
נִשְׂאוּ נְהָרוֹת קוֹלָם
יִשְׂאוּ נְהָרוֹת דִּכְיָם:
ד מְקַלּוֹת | מִיַּם רַבִּים
אֲדִירִים מִשְׁבְּרֵי־יָם
אֲדִיר בַּמָּרוֹם יְהוָה:
ה עֲדִיתִךְ | נֶאֱמְנוּ מְאֹד
לְבֵיתֶךָ נֶאֱוָה־קֹדֶשׁ
יְהוָה לְאֶרֶץ יָמִים:

PSALM 93

- 1 Yahweh is king, robed in majesty,
robed is Yahweh and girded with power;
the world is indeed set firm, it can never be shaken;
- 2 Your throne is set firm from of old,
from all eternity, you exist.
- 3 The rivers lift up, Yahweh,
the rivers lift up their voices,
the rivers lift up their thunder.
- 4 Greater than the voice of many waters,
more majestic than the breakers of the sea,
Yahweh is majestic in the heights.
- 5 Your decrees stand firm, unshakable;
holiness is the beauty of your House,
Yahweh, for all time to come.

PSALM 93

This Psalm celebrates the sovereignty of God, displayed by the laws he imposes on the physical world, and the Law that he gives. According to the title in the LXX and *Talmud*, it was recited on the 'eve of the Sabbath, when the earth was inhabited' (cf. Gn 1:24–31).

- 1 Strength is compared here to a belt that one wears for support; God's power undergirds his rule.
- 2 The heavens are the palace of God, 8:2; the waters, vv. 3–4, probably represent powers hostile to God and his people.
- 3 In place of 'rivers', here following the NJB (and MT), the NRSV has 'floods' and NETB has 'waves'.
- 4 The 2nd line is a conjectural translation; the MT has, "majestic are the waves of the sea."
- 5 The 'decrees' are the revealed Law, as immutable as the physical universe, and the basis of God's absolute sovereignty over Israel. The 'House' is the Temple, consecrated forever (1K 8:13, 9:3), and consecrating all who approach the Holy God there (Ex 19:6, Lv 10:3, 19:2, Ezk 42:14).

תהילים פרק צד

א אֱלֹהֵי נִקְמוֹת יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵי נִקְמוֹת הוֹפִיעַ:
ב הַנָּשׂא שֹׁפֵט הָאָרֶץ
הַשֹּׁב גָּמוּל עַל־גָּאִים:
ג עַד־מָתִי רָשָׁעִים | יְהוָה
עַד־מָתִי רָשָׁעִים יַעֲלִזוּ:
ד יִבְעִעוּ יִדְבְּרוּ עֵתֶק
יִתְאַמְרוּ כָּל־פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן:
ה עֲמָךְ יְהוָה יִדְכָּאוּ
וְנַחֲלֶתְךָ יַעֲנוּ:
ו אֶלְמָנָה וְגֵר יִהְרָגוּ
וְיִתּוּמִים יִרְצָחוּ:
ז וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא יִרְאֶה־יְיָ
וְלֹא־יִבִּין אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב:

PSALM 94

- 1 God of vengeance, Yahweh,
God of vengeance, shine forth!
- 2 Arise, judge of the world:
give back to the proud what they deserve!
- 3 How long are the wicked, Yahweh,
how long shall the wicked exult?
- 4 They pour out their arrogant words;
all the evildoers boast.
- 5 They crush your people, Yahweh;
they oppress your heritage.
- 6 They murder the widow and the stranger;
bring the fatherless to a violent death.
- 7 They say, "Yah is not looking,
the God of Jacob takes no notice."

PSALM 94

- 1 In place of 'shine forth', here following the NJB & NRSV, NETB has 'show your splendour'.
- 2 For the 2nd line, here following the NJB/NRSV, NETB has, "pay back the proud."
- 3 The NJB has 'triumph' in place of 'exult', here following the NRSV.
- 4 The Hitpa'el of אָמַר ('boast') occurs only here (and perhaps in Is 61:6).
- 5 God's 'heritage', here, is the Nation of Israel.
- 6 The NJB & NRSV have 'orphan' in place of 'fatherless' (here following NETB): the Hebrew noun refers to one who has lost his father (not necessarily his mother, see Ps 109:9).
- 7 The literal translation of 'takes no notice' is 'does not understand'.

ח	בִּינוּ בְּעָרִים בַּעַם וְכִסְלִים מִתִּי תִשְׁכִּילוּ:	8	Take notice, you coarsest of people! Fools, when will you learn some sense?
ט	הֲנֹטַע אֶזֶן הֲלֹא יִשְׁמַע אִם־יֵצֵר עֵין הֲלֹא יִבִּיט:	9	He who implanted the ear, does he not hear? He who fashioned the eye, does he not see?
י	הֲיֹסֵר גּוֹיִם הֲלֹא יוֹכִיחַ הַמֵּלֶמֶד אָדָם דַּעַת:	10	Shall he who instructs nations not punish? the teacher of all people,
יא	יֵהוּהָ יָדַע מַחְשְׁבוֹת אָדָם כִּי־הֵמָּה הַבָּל:	11	Yahweh knows human plans and how they are but an empty breath.
יב	אֲשֶׁר־יִהְיֶה הַגִּבּוֹר אֲשֶׁר־תִּסְרְנוּ יְהוָה וּמִתּוֹרַתְךָ תִּלְמַדְנוּ:	12	How blessed are those you instruct, Yah, whom you teach by means of your Law,
יג	לִהְשָׁקִיט לוֹ מִיָּמֵי רַע עַד יִכְרֶה לְרָשָׁע שַׁחַת:	13	to give them respite in evil times, until a pit is dug for the wicked.
יד	כִּי לֹא־יִטֹּשׁ יְהוָה עַמּוֹ וְנִחַלְתּוֹ לֹא יַעֲזֹב:	14	Yahweh will not abandon his people; he will not desert his heritage.
טו	כִּי־עַד־צֶדֶק יָשׁוּב מִשְׁפָּט וְאַחֲרָיו כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל:	15	For judgement will again become saving justice, and in its wake all upright hearts will follow.

⁸ Alternative readings for 'coarsest' (as NJB) are 'dullest' (NRSV) and 'most brutish' (footnote to NETB).

⁹ A wonderfully poetic verse, reminding the reader of the Creator's omnipotence.

¹⁰ For this verse, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "He who disciplines the nations, he who teaches knowledge to humankind, does he not chastise?"

¹¹ The NJB transposes the Divine Name into the 2nd line of v. 10; here, we follow the MT.

¹² This verse refers to the broadest sense of revelation and moral teaching.

¹³ For the 2nd line, here following the MT, NJB & NRSV, NETB reads, "until the wicked are destroyed."

¹⁴ God's 'heritage', here, is the Nation of Israel.

¹⁵ The 'upright hearts' are God's faithful followers who trust in and love him and, as a result, experience his deliverance.

טז מי־יקום לי עִם־מַרְעִים
 מי־יִתְּצֵב לי עִם־פְּעָלֵי אָוֶן:
 יז לוֹלִי יִהְיֶה עֲזָרְתָּהּ לִי
 כְּמַעֲטָה שְׁכֵנָה דּוֹמָה נַפְשִׁי:
 יח אִם־אֶמְרָתִי מָטָה רַגְלִי
 חֲסִדְךָ יִהְיֶה יִסְעָדָנִי:
 יט בְּרַב שְׂרָעָפִי בְּקִרְבִּי
 תִּנְחֹמֶיךָ יִשְׁעִשְׂעוּ נַפְשִׁי:
 כ הִיחַבְּרָךְ כֶּסֶף הַגּוֹת
 יֵצֵר עֲמַל עַל־יְחָק:
 כא יִגֹּדּוּ עַל־נַפְשׁ צַדִּיק
 וְדָם נָקִי יִרְשִׁיעוּ:
 כב וַיְהִי יִהְיֶה לִי לְמִשְׁגָּב
 וְאֱלֹהֵי לְצֹר מַחֲסִי:

- 16 Who rises up on my side against the wicked?
 Who stands firm on my side against all evildoers?
- 17 If Yahweh did not come to my help,
 I should soon find myself dwelling in the land of silence.
- 18 I need only say, "My foot is slipping,"
 for your faithful love, Yahweh, to support me.
- 19 However great the anxiety of my heart,
 your consolations soothe me.
- 20 Are you partner to a destructive court,
 which gives disorder the status of law?
- 21 They make an attack on the life of the upright,
 and condemn innocent blood.
- 22 No! Yahweh is a stronghold to me,
 my God is my rock of refuge.

16 The questions anticipate the answer, "No one except God" (see v. 17).

17 The 'land of silence' refers to Sheol (NETB has 'silence of death').

18 In place of 'my foot is slipping', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'I am slipping'.

19 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "your comforts cause my soul to delight."

20 The psalmist's enemies were persons in high official positions in the state.

21 Other readings for 'upright' (as NJB) are 'righteous' (NRSV) and 'blameless' (NETB).

22 The prefixed verbal form with *vav* consecutive in the 1st line is used in a rhetorical sense, describing an anticipated development as if it were already reality.

כג ויִשָּׁב עֲלֵיהֶם | אֶת-אֲוֹנָם
וּבִרְעָתָם יִצְמִיתֵם
יִצְמִיתֵם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ:

²³ He turns back their guilt on themselves,
annihilates them for their wickedness,
he annihilates them, Yahweh our God.

²³ One could also read 'in' instead of 'for'.

תהילים פרק צה

א לְכוּ נִרְנֵנָה לַיהוָה
נְרִיעָה לְצוּר יִשְׁעֵנוּ:
ב נִקְדָּמָה פָּנָיו בַּתּוֹדָה
בְּזִמְרוֹת נְרִיעֵ לּוֹ:
ג כִּי אֵל גָּדוֹל יְהוָה
וּמֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל עַל־כָּל־אֱלֹהִים:
ד אֲשֶׁר בְּיָדוֹ מַחְקְרֵי־אָרֶץ
וְתוֹעֲפֹת הָרִים לּוֹ:
ה אֲשֶׁר־לּוֹ הַיָּם וְהוּא עָשָׂהוּ
וַיַּבֶּשֶׁת יַדָּיו יָצְרוּ:
ו בָּאוּ נִשְׁתַּחֲוּהוּ וְנִכְרַעַה
נִבְרַכָּה לִפְנֵי־יְהוָה עֲשֵׂנוּ:

PSALM 95

- 1 Come, let us sing to Yahweh;
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.
- 2 Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;
let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise.
- 3 For Yahweh is a great God,
a king greater than all the gods.
- 4 In his hand are the depths of the earth;
the peaks of the mountains are his.
- 5 The sea belongs to him, for he made it,
and the dry land, which his hands have formed.
- 6 Come, let us bow low and do reverence;
kneel before Yahweh who made us!

PSALM 95

This Psalm is a processional hymn, perhaps recited at the Feast of Shelters (cf. Dt 31:11).

- 1 The 'rock' (here and in v. 8) is an allusion to the rock that yielded water in the desert (Ex 17:1 ff) or to the rock on which the Temple was built (2S 24:18).
- 2 The literal translation of 'come into his presence' is 'meet his face'.
- 3 The literal translation of 'greater than' is 'above'.
- 4 The phrase, 'in his hand' means in his sphere of authority.
- 5 In place of 'which his hands have formed', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'moulded by his hands'.
- 6 The literal translation of 'do reverence' is 'kneel down' (cf. the 2nd line).

ז כִּי הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ
 וְאִנְחֵנוּ עִם מְרֻעֵיתוֹ וְצֹאן יָדוֹ
 הַיּוֹם אִם־בִּקְלוֹ תִשְׁמָעוּ:
 ח אַל־תִּקְשׁוּ לִבְבְּכֶם כַּמְרִיבָה
 כְּיוֹם מַסָּה בַּמִּדְבָּר:
 ט אֲשֶׁר נִסּוּנִי אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם
 בַּחֲנוּנִי גַם־רָאוּ פַעֲלִי:
 י אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה אֶקוּט בְּדוֹר
 וְאָמַר עִם תַּעֲי לִבָּב הֵם
 וְהֵם לֹא־יָדְעוּ דְרָכַי:
 יא אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי בְּאִפִּי
 אִם־יָבֹאוּ אֶל־מְנוּחָתִי:

- 7 For he is our God,
 and we are the people of his pasture, the flock of his hand.
 If only you would listen to him today!
 8 Do not harden your hearts as at Meribah,
 as at the time of Massah in the desert,
 9 when your ancestors tested me,
 put me to the test, and saw what I could do!
 10 For forty years, that generation sickened me,
 and I said, "Always fickle hearts;
 they cannot grasp my ways."
 11 Then, in my anger, I swore
 they would never enter my place of rest.

7 Vv. 7b–11 are quoted in Heb 3:7–11. The declaration that worship without obedience is displeasing to God is a cardinal principal of Old Testament religion (Ps 15, 24:3–6, 40:6)

8 'Meribah' means 'dispute' and 'Massah' means 'temptation' (Ex 17:1–7, Nb 20:1–13; compare Ps 106:32–33).

9 The NJB has 'challenged' in place of 'tested', here following the MT & NSRV.

10 'That generation' follows the LXX and Peshitta; the MT has 'a generation'. 'Always' (עַד) follows the LXX (and NJB); the MT (and NRSV) has 'A people of' (עַם); the LXX has preserved the original readings, corrected in the Hebrew to soften the accusations against the Israel of the Exodus, an era that later traditions transformed into a golden age.

11 The last line refers to the Promised Land, and the Temple where God dwells.

תהילים פרק צו

א שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ
שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה כָּל־הָאָרֶץ:
ב שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה בָּרְכוּ שְׁמוֹ
בִּשְׁרוּ מִיּוֹם־לִיּוֹם יְשׁוּעָתוֹ:
ג סִפְרוּ בַּגּוֹיִם כְּבוֹדוֹ
בְּכָל־הָעַמִּים נִפְלְאוֹתָיו:
ד כִּי גָדוֹל יְהוָה וּמְהֵלֵל מְאֹד
נֹרָא הוּא עַל־כָּל־אֱלֹהִים:
ה כִּי כָל־אֱלֹהֵי הָעַמִּים אֱלִילִים
וְיְהוָה שָׁמַיִם עָשָׂה:
ו הוֹדִיָּה דָר לִפְנֵי
עֹז וְתַפְאֶרֶת בְּמִקְדָּשׁוֹ:
ז הָבוּ לַיהוָה מִשְׁפָּחוֹת עַמִּים
הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז:

PSALM 96

- 1 Sing a new song to Yahweh!
Sing to Yahweh, all the earth!
- 2 Sing to Yahweh; bless his name!
Proclaim his salvation day after day.
- 3 Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvels to every people!
- 4 Great is Yahweh, worthy of all praise,
more awesome than any of the gods.
- 5 All the gods of the nations are idols!
It was Yahweh who made the heavens.
- 6 In his presence are splendour and majesty,
in his sanctuary power and beauty.
- 7 Give to Yahweh, families of nations,
give to Yahweh glory and power.

PSALM 96

- 1 A 'new song' is appropriate because God is constantly intervening in the world as its just king.
- 2 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "announce from day to day his deliverance."
- 3 NETB repeats 'declare' (actually, 'tell') at the beginning of the 2nd line; here, we follow the MT, NJB & NRSV.
- 4 A possible alternative reading for the 2nd line is, "and feared by all other gods." (See 89:7.)
- 5 In place of 'idols', the LXX has 'the demons'. This theme appears frequently in the second part of Isaiah (40:18 ff), cf. 1Co 8:4.
- 6 Ther NRSV has 'honour' in place of 'splendour', here following the NJB & NETB.
- 7 The poet adapts 29:1-2 and stresses the Universalist aspect, cf. 47:9, 14:17.

ח הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ
 שְׂאוּ-מִנְחָה וּבֹאוּ לַחֲצֹרוֹתָיו:
 ט הִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לַיהוָה בְּהַדְרַת-קֹדֶשׁ
 חִילוּ מִפְּנֵי כָל-הָאָרֶץ:
 י אָמְרוּ בְּגוֹיִם | יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ
 אֶף-תִּכּוֹן תִּבֵּל בַּל-תִּמּוֹט
 יִדִּין עַמִּים בְּמִשְׁרִים:
 יא יִשְׂמְחוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְתִגַּל הָאָרֶץ
 יִרְעַם הַיָּם וּמִלְאוּ:
 יב יִעֲלֹז שָׂדֵי וְכָל-אֲשֶׁר-בּוֹ
 אֲז יִרְנְנוּ כָל-עֵצֵי-יַעַר:
 יג לִפְנֵי יְהוָה | כִּי בָא
 כִּי בָא לְשֹׁפֵט הָאָרֶץ
 יִשְׁפֹּט-תִּבֵּל בְּצֶדֶק
 וְעַמִּים בְּאַמּוֹנָתוֹ:

- 8 Give to Yahweh the glory due to his name!
Bring an offering and enter his courts.
- 9 Adore Yahweh in the splendour of his holiness;
tremble before him, all the earth.
- 10 Say among the nations, "Yahweh is king."
The world is set firm, it cannot be moved.
He will judge the nations with justice.
- 11 Let the sky rejoice and earth be glad!
Let the sea thunder, and all it holds!
- 12 Let the field exult, and all that is in it,
and all the trees of the forest cry out for joy,
- 13 at Yahweh's approach, for he is coming,
coming to judge the earth;
he judges the world with saving justice,
all the nations with constancy.

8 Ther NRSV lacks 'to' before 'his name', here following the NJB; the literal translation is 'glory of his name'.

9 For the 1st line, the NRSV has, "Worship Yahweh in holy splendour," interpreting this as a reference to ceremonial garments.

10 The NRSV has 'shall never' in place of 'cannot', here following the NJB & NETB.

11 In place of 'sky', the NJB has 'heavens' (the same Hebrew word can mean either).

12 The NJB has 'countryside' in place of 'field', here following the NRSV.

13 The verbal forms in v. 13 probably describe God's typical, characteristic behaviour, though they may depict in dramatic fashion the outworking of divine judgment or anticipate a future judgment of worldwide proportions, in which case they could be translated 'will judge the world'.

תהילים פרק צז

א יהוה מלך תגל הארץ
ישמחו איים רבים:
ב ענן וערפל סביבו
צדק ומשפט מכון כסאו:
ג אש לפניו תלך
ותלהט סביב צריו:
ד האירו ברקיו תבל
ראתה ותחל הארץ:
ה הרים כדונג נמסו מלפני יהוה
מלפני אדון כל הארץ:
ו הגידו השמים צדקו
וראו כל העמים כבודו:
ז יבשו כל עבדי פסל
המתהללים באילים
השתחוו לו כל אלהים:

PSALM 97

- 1 Yahweh is king! Let earth rejoice,
the many isles be glad!
- 2 Cloud, black cloud, engulfs him,
saving justice and judgement the foundations of his throne.
- 3 Fire goes before him,
sets ablaze his enemies on every side.
- 4 His lightning lights up the world;
the earth sees it and quakes.
- 5 The mountains melt like wax before Yahweh,
before the Lord of all the earth.
- 6 The heavens proclaim his saving justice;
all nations see his glory.
- 7 Shame on all who serve images,
who pride themselves on their idols;
bow down to him, all you gods!

PSALM 97

- 1 The NRSV has 'coastlands' in place of 'isles'.
- 2 God's 'throne' symbolises his kingship.
- 3 The NJB has the more literal 'all around' in place of 'on every side', here following the NRSV.
- 4 The NJB has 'lightning flashes' in place of 'lightning'; the MT has a plural form but this does not readily translate into modern English.
- 5 The NJB omits 'before Yahweh'.
- 6 The NRSV has 'righteousness' in place of 'saving justice', here following the NJB.
- 7 Idolaters will realise their folly (96:5). The LXX ends with 'angels' in place of 'gods'.

ח שְׁמֵעָה וְתִשְׁמַח | צִיּוֹן
וְתִגְלֶנָּה בָּנוֹת יְהוּדָה
לְמַעַן מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ יְהוָה:
ט כִּי־אַתָּה יְהוָה
עֲלִיוֹן עַל־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ
מֵאֲדָנָעֲלִית עַל־כָּל־אֱלֹהִים:
י אֱהִי יְהוָה שֹׂנְאֵי־רָע
שׁוֹמֵר נַפְשׁוֹת חֲסִידָיו
מִיַּד רָשָׁעִים יַצִּילֵם:
יא אֹר זָרַע לַצַּדִּיק
וְלִישְׂרֵי־לֵב שִׂמְחָה:
יב שִׂמְחוּ צַדִּיקִים בַּיהוָה
וְהוֹדוּ לִזְכָּר קִדְשׁוֹ:

- 8 Zion hears and is glad,
the daughters of Judah exult,
because of your judgements, Yahweh.
- 9 For you are Yahweh,
Most High over all the earth,
far transcending all gods.
- 10 Yahweh loves those who hate evil,
he keeps safe his faithful,
rescues them from the clutches of the wicked.
- 11 Light dawns for the upright,
and joy for honest hearts.
- 12 Rejoice in Yahweh, you who are upright,
praise his holy name.

⁸ The 'daughters' are the other towns of Judah.

⁹ NETB uses the title 'sovereign king' in place of the more traditional 'Most High'.

¹⁰ The literal translation of 1st line is, "You who love Yahweh hate evil." The *Maqaf* in שֹׂנְאֵי־רָע does not appear in either the Aleppo or Leningrad Codices but is included in the MAM text in grey (as here).

¹¹ 'Dawns' follows the LXX, Peshitta and Vg; the MT has 'is sown'.

¹² The noun זָכָר here refers to the name of God as invoked in liturgy and praise.

תהילים פרק צח

א מִזְמוֹר

שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה | שִׁיר חֹדֶשׁ
כִּי־נִפְלְאוֹת עָשָׂה
הוֹשִׁיעָה־לּוֹ יְמִינוֹ וּזְרוֹעַ קִדְשׁוֹ:
ב הוֹדִיעַ יְהוָה יְשׁוּעָתוֹ
לְעֵינֵי הַגּוֹיִם גְּלָה צְדָקָתוֹ:
ג זָכַר חֶסֶדּוֹ | וְאַמּוֹנָתוֹ לְבֵית יִשְׂרָאֵל
רָאוּ כָל־אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ
אֵת יְשׁוּעַת אֱלֹהֵינוּ:
ד הֲרִיעוּ לַיהוָה כָּל־הָאָרֶץ
פְּצְחוּ וְרִנְנוּ וְזָמְרוּ:
ה זָמְרוּ לַיהוָה בְּכִנּוֹר
בְּכִנּוֹר וְקוֹל זְמֶרָה:
ו בַּחֲצָצְרוֹת וְקוֹל שׁוֹפָר
הֲרִיעוּ לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ יְהוָה:

PSALM 98

- 1 *A Psalm.*
Sing a new song to Yahweh,
for he has performed wonders;
his saving power is in his right hand and his holy arm.
- 2 Yahweh has made known his deliverance,
revealed his saving justice for the nations to see.
- 3 He remembers mercy and faithfulness to the House of Israel.
All the ends of the earth have seen
the saving power of our God.
- 4 Acclaim Yahweh, all the earth,
burst into shouts of joy and sing praises!
- 5 Play to Yahweh on the harp,
on the harp, to the sound of instruments.
- 6 To the sound of trumpet and horn,
acclaim the presence of the King.

PSALM 98

- 1 The psalmist summons the whole earth to praise God because he reveals his justice and delivers Israel.
- 2 The NRSV has 'victory' in place of 'deliverance', here following NETB, and the NJB has 'saving power'.
- 3 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "he remembers his loyal love and his faithfulness."
- 4 The NJB omits 'and sing praises'.
- 5 The NJB omits 'on the harp' at the beginning of the 2nd line, considering it a dittography; here, we follow the MT (בְּכִנּוֹר) & NRSV.
- 6 These fanfares, reserved in Israel for the accession of a new king (2S 15:10, 1K 1:34) accompany the enthronement of Yahweh (Ps 47:5), for whom they had rung out on Sinai (Ex 19:16).

ז יִרְעַם הַיָּם וּמִלֵּאֵי
 תִּבֹּל וְיֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ:
 ח נְהַרֹּת יִמְחַאוּ-כַּף
 יֶחֶד הַרִים יִרְנְנוּ:
 ט לִפְנֵי יְהוָה כִּי בָא לְשֹׁפֵט הָאָרֶץ
 יִשְׁפֹּט-תֵּבֶל בְּצֶדֶק
 וְעַמִּים בְּמִישָׁרִים:

- 7 Let the sea roar, and all that it holds,
the world and all who live in it.
- 8 Let the rivers clap their hands,
and the mountains shout for joy together,
9 at Yahweh's approach; for, he comes to judge the earth;
he judges the world with saving justice
and the nations with fairness.

⁷ The NJB has 'thunder' in place of 'roar', here following the NRSV.

⁸ The NRSV has 'floods' in place of 'rivers', here following the NJB & NETB.

⁹ The verbal forms in v. 9 probably describe God's typical, characteristic behaviour.

תהילים פרק צט

א יהוה מלך יִרְגָזוּ עַמִּים
יֵשֵׁב כְּרוּבִים תִּנּוּט הָאָרֶץ:
ב יהוה בְּצִיּוֹן גָּדוֹל
וְרֵם הוּא עַל-כָּל-הָעַמִּים:
ג יוֹדוּ שִׁמְךָ גָּדוֹל וְנוֹרָא
קָדוֹשׁ הוּא:
ד וְעַז מֶלֶךְ מְשַׁפֵּט אֲהָב
אֶתָּה כּוֹנֵנֵת מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל
מְשַׁפֵּט וְצִדְקָה בִּיעֲקֹב | אֶתָּה עֹשִׂיתָ:
ה רוֹמְמוֹ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לַהֲדָם רַגְלָיו
קָדוֹשׁ הוּא:
ו מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן | בְּכֹהֲנָיו
וְשִׁמְוֵאל בְּקִרְאֵי שְׁמוֹ
קִרְאִים אֶל-יְהוָה וְהוּא יַעֲנֵם:

PSALM 99

- 1 Yahweh is king; let the peoples tremble!
He is enthroned on the cherubim; let the earth shiver!
- 2 Yahweh is great in Zion;
he is supreme over all nations.
- 3 Let them praise your great and awesome name;
holy is he!
- 4 You are a mighty king who loves justice;
you established honesty, justice, and uprightness;
in Jacob, it is you who are active.
- 5 Exalt Yahweh our God;
bow down at his footstool;
holy is he!
- 6 Moses and Aaron are among his priests, Samuel also,
calling on his name;
they called on Yahweh and he answered them.

PSALM 99

The two parts of this eschatological hymn, vv. 1–4 and 6–8 (ending with a refrain, vv. 5 and 9), celebrate the holiness of the King of Israel.

- 1 The NJB has 'winged creatures' in place of 'cherubim', here following the NRSV & MT (כְּרוּבִים).
- 2 In place of 'great', here following the NJB & NRSV, NETB has 'elevated'.
- 3 'Holy is he' is the refrain (see vv. 5 & 9).
- 4 'Mighty' is a conjectural translation; the MT has 'the might' (different vocalisations of וְעַז).
- 5 In place of 'bow down' (following the NJB), the NRSV & NETB have 'worship'.
- 6 These three were the great intercessors, cf. 106:23, Nb 17:11–13 and see #Ex 32:11.

ז בַּעֲמֹד עַנַּן יִדְבֵּר אֵלֵיהֶם
 שָׁמְרוּ עֲדָתוֹ וְחֻק נִתֵּן-לָמוֹ:
 ח יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ אַתָּה עֲנִיתָם
 אֵל נָשָׂא הַיִּיתָ לָהֶם
 וְנָקָם עַל-עֲלִילוֹתָם:
 ט רוֹמְמוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
 וְהִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְהַר קֹדֶשׁוֹ
 כִּי-קָדוֹשׁ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ:

- 7 He spoke with them in the pillar of cloud;
they obeyed his decrees, the Law he gave them.
- 8 Yahweh our God, you answered them,
you were a God of forgiveness to them,
but punished them for their sins.
- 9 Exalt Yahweh our God,
bow down at his holy mountain;
for, holy is Yahweh our God!

⁷ The NJB has 'fire' in place of 'cloud', here following the NRSV & NETB.

⁸ Some translations alter the vowels of the last line to read, 'forgiving them their sins', but Moses and Aaron were punished by being excluded from the Promised Land (see Nb 27:14, Dt 3:26).

⁹ The NJB lacks the opening 'for' of the 3rd line, here following the MT and NRSV.

תהילים פרק ק

א מִזְמוֹר לַתּוֹדָה
הֲרִיעוּ לַיהוָה כָּל־הָאָרֶץ:
ב עֲבֹדוּ אֶת־יְהוָה בְּשִׂמְחָה
בָּאוּ לִפְנֵי בְרִנָּה:
ג דַּעוּ כִּי־יְהוָה הוּא אֱלֹהִים
הוּא־עָשָׂנוּ וְלֹא וְלֹא אֲנַחְנוּ
עָמֹ וְצֹאן מִרְעִיתוֹ:
ד בָּאוּ שְׁעָרָיו בַּתּוֹדָה
חֲצִרְתָּיו בַּתְּהִלָּה
הוֹדוּ־לוֹ בִּרְכּוֹ שָׁמָּה:
ה כִּי־טוֹב יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ
וְעַד־דָּר וָדָר אֱמוּנָתוֹ:

PSALM 100

- 1 *A Psalm of thanksgiving.*
Acclaim Yahweh, all the earth.
- 2 Serve Yahweh with gladness,
some into his presence with songs of joy!
- 3 Be sure that Yahweh is God:
he made us; we belong to him,
his people and the flock of his sheepfold.
- 4 Enter his gates giving thanks
and his courts with praise;
give thanks to him and bless his name!
- 5 For Yahweh is good, his faithful love is everlasting,
his constancy from age to age.

PSALM 100

- 1 This hymn of praise provides a doxology to the series of Psalms of the kingship of Yahweh (from Ps 93). It was perhaps recited on entering the sanctuary to offer communion sacrifices (see Lv 7:11–12).
- 2 The NRSV has 'worship' in place of 'serve', here following the NJB.
- 3 Another reading for the 2nd line is, "it is he that made us and not we ourselves." The Kethib/Qere difference here defies any obvious explanation.
- 4 The NJB has 'singing praise' in place of 'with praise', here following the NRSV.
- 5 This verse is an ancient refrain (Jr 33:11), often repeated in the Psalms as an antiphon or prelude, and quoted in 2Ch 5:13, 7:3,20,21; Ezr 3:11, and 1M 4:24 (cf. Mi 7:20).

תהילים פרק קא

א לְדוֹד מְזִמּוֹר
חֶסֶד-וּמִשְׁפָּט אֲשִׁירָה
לְךָ יְהוָה אֶזְמְרָה:
ב אֲשַׁכִּילָהּ בְּדֶרֶךְ תָּמִים
מִתִּי תָבוֹא אֵלַי
אֶתְהַלֵּךְ בְּתֵם-לִבִּי בִקְרֵב בֵּיתִי:
ג לֹא-אֲשִׁית לִנְגִיד עֵינַי דְּבַר-בְּלִיעַל
עֲשֵׂה-סִסְטִים שִׁנְאַתִּי
לֹא יִדְבַק בִּי:
ד לִבִּי עָקֹשׁ יִסּוֹר מִמֶּנִּי
רָע לֹא אֲדַע:
ה מְלוֹשְׁנִי מְלִשְׁנִי בִסְתֵר רָעָהוּ
אוֹתוֹ אֶצְמִית
גְּבוּהַ-עֵינַיִם וְרָחֵב לֵבָב
אֹתוֹ לֹא אוֹכֵל:

PSALM 101

- 1 *A Psalm of David.*
I will sing of loyalty and justice;
to you, Yahweh, I will make music.
- 2 I will go forward in the path of the blameless;
when will you come to hear me?
I will live in purity of heart, in my house.
- 3 I will not set before my eyes anything sordid.
I hate those who act crookedly;
this has no attraction for me.
- 4 Let the perverse of heart keep away from me;
the wicked I disregard.
- 5 One who secretly slanders a comrade,
I reduce to silence;
haughty looks, proud heart,
these I cannot tolerate.

PSALM 101

- 1 In place of 'loyalty and justice', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'faithful love and judgement'.
- 2 The question is possibly an allusion to the expected coming of the Messiah, 'he who comes' (Mt 11:3, Jn 4:25).
- 3 The literal translation of 'anything sordid' is 'matters of Belial', i.e. idolatrous practices.
- 4 The adjective עָקֹשׁ ('perverse') has the basic nuance 'twisted' or 'crooked' and, by extension, refers to someone or something that is morally perverse (see Ps 18:26).
- 5 The removal of the *vav* in the *Qere* (מְלִשְׁנִי) from the *Kethib* version (מְלוֹשְׁנִי) is not trivial to explain.

יֵינִי בְּנֹאֲמֵי־אֶרֶץ לְשֹׁבֵת עֲמָדִי ^ו
 הֵלֶךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ תָּמִים
 הוּא יִשְׁרָתֵנִי:
 לֹא־יֵשֵׁב בְּקֶרֶב בֵּיתִי עֹשֶׂה רָמִיָּה ^ז
 דֹּבֵר שִׁקְרִים
 לֹא־יִכּוֹן לִנְגַד עֵינָי:
 לְבָקָרִים אֲצַמִּית כָּל־רְשָׁעֵי־אֶרֶץ ^ח
 לְהַכְרִית מֵעִיר־יְהוָה כָּל־פְּעֻלֵי אָוֶן:

- ⁶ I look to the faithful of the land to be my companions;
 only he who walks in the path of the blameless
 shall be my servant.
⁷ Anyone who practices deceit will not dwell in my house;
 no liar will stand his ground
 where I can see him.
⁸ Each morning, I reduce to silence all the wicked in the land,
 banishing from the city of Yahweh all evildoers.

⁶ For the 1st line, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "I will look with favour on the faithful in the land."

⁷ For the 2nd line, here following the NJB, the NRSV has, "in my presence."

⁸ Morning is the hour of divine favours (see #17:15), as also of human and divine justice (46:6, 73:14, 2S 15:2, Job 7:18, Is 33:2, Jr 21:12, Zp 3:5).

תהילים פרק קב

א תַּפְּלָה לְעֹנִי כִי־יַעֲטֹף
וּלְפָנַי יְהוָה יִשְׁפֹּךְ שִׁיחוֹ:
ב יְהוָה שְׁמָעָה תַּפְּלָתִי
וְשׁוֹעַתִּי אֱלֹהִים תְּבוֹא:
ג אֶל־תִּסָּתֵר פָּנֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי
בַּיּוֹם צָר־לִי
הִטָּה־אֵלַי אָזְנְךָ
בַּיּוֹם אֶקְרָא מִהֵרָ עֲנֵנִי:
ד כִּי־כָלוּ בַעֲשׂוֹן יָמַי
וְעֲצָמוֹתַי כַּמּוֹקֵד נִחְרוּ:
ה הוֹפָה־כְּעֵשֶׂב וַיִּבֶשׁ לִבִּי
כִּי־שָׁכַחְתִּי מֵאֲכֹל לֶחֶמִי:

PSALM 102

- ¹ *A prayer of someone afflicted,
who in misfortune pours out sorrows before Yahweh.*
- ² *Yahweh, hear my prayer;
let my cry for help reach you.*
- ³ *Do not turn away your face from me
in the day of my distress;
bend down and listen to me,
when I call, be quick to answer me!*
- ⁴ *For my days are vanishing like smoke,
my bones burning like a furnace.*
- ⁵ *My heart is withering like grass struck by blight;
I forget to eat my meals.*

PSALM 102

This Psalm of repentance combines two poems of differing rhythm: a personal complaint, vv. 2–12 and 24–28 (cf. Ps 69), and a prayer for the restoring of Zion, vv. 13–23 (perhaps quoted from a familiar song of Zion, anticipating the future glory of Jerusalem) and 29.

- ¹ Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the MT, and verse numbers are accordingly incremented.
- ² The NRSV has ‘come to you’ in place of ‘reach you’, here following the NJB.
- ³ For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘when I am in trouble’.
- ⁴ The noun מוקד (‘furnace’, following the NRSV – the NJB has ‘oven’ and NETB has ‘fireplace’) occurs only here, in Is 33:14 (where it refers to the fire itself), and perhaps in Lv 6:2.
- ⁵ During his time of mourning, the psalmist refrained from eating; in the following verse, he describes metaphorically the physical effects of fasting.

מְקוֹל אֲנַחְתִּי	ו	6	From the effort of voicing my groans,
דְּבָקָה עֲצָמִי לְבָשָׁרִי:			my bones stick out through my skin.
דְּמִיתִי לְקֹאֵת מִדְּבַר	ז	7	I am like a desert owl in the wastes,
הָיִיתִי כְּכֹס חֲרֻבוֹת:			a screech owl among ruins.
שִׁקְדָּתִי וְאֵהִיָּה	ח	8	I keep vigil and moan
כְּצִפּוֹר בּוֹדֵד עַל-גָּג:			like a lone bird on a roof.
כָּל-הַיּוֹם חֲרָפוּנִי אוֹיְבֵי	ט	9	All day long, my enemies taunt me;
מְהוֹלְלֵי בִּי נִשְׁבְּעוּ:			those who once praised me now use me as a curse.
כִּי-אֶפֶר כְּלֶחֶם אֲכַלְתִּי	י	10	Ashes are the food that I eat;
וְשִׁקּוּי בִּבְכִי מִסִּכְתִּי:			I mingle tears with my drink,
מִפְּנֵי-זַעַמְךָ וְקִצְפְּךָ	יא	11	because of your fury and anger,
כִּי נִשְׂאָתָנִי וְתִשְׁלִיכֵנִי:			since you have raised me up only to cast me away.
יָמֵי כָצֵל נִטוּי	יב	12	My days are like an evening shadow;
וְאֲנִי כְּעֵשֶׂב אֵיבֶשׁ:			I am withering up like grass.

-
- ⁶ The preposition at the beginning of the verse is causal; the phrase, 'voicing my groans', is metonymic for the anxiety that causes the groaning. The point seems to be this: Anxiety (which causes the psalmist to groan) keeps him from eating (v. 5); this physical deprivation in turn makes him emaciated – he is turned to 'skin and bones', so to speak.
- ⁷ The terms קֹאֵת ('desert owl') and כֹּס ('screech owl') both refer to some kind of bird, though it is uncertain what the exact species may be.
- ⁸ The 1st line is a conjectural translation (the NRSV has simply 'I lie awake'); the MT is uncertain (literally 'I keep vigil, I am').
- ⁹ 'Giving me as an example of the fate they want for their enemies', cf. Jr 29:22. 'Those who used to hate me' follows the LXX and Peshitta; the MT has 'those who are angry with me' (different arrangement of vowels); the NRSV has 'those who deride me'.
- ¹⁰ Mourners would sometimes put ashes on their head or roll in ashes as a sign of mourning (see 2S 13:19, Job 2:8, Is 58:5).
- ¹¹ The NRSV has 'indignation' in place of 'fury', here following the NJB.
- ¹² The literal translation of 'evening shadow' (following the NRSV) is 'extending shadow' – one cast by the setting sun that will soon be embraced by complete darkness.

יג וְאַתָּה יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם תִּשָּׁב
 וְזָכְרְךָ לְדֹר וָדֹר:
 יד אַתָּה תִּקּוּם תִּרְחֹם צִיּוֹן
 כִּי־עַתָּה לַחֲנֻנָּה כִּי־בָא מוֹעֵד:
 טו כִּי־רָצוּ עֲבָדֶיךָ אֶת־אֲבֹנֶיהָ
 וְאֶת־עֲפָרָהּ יַחֲנֹנוּ:
 טז וַיִּירָאוּ גוֹיִם אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה
 וְכָל־מַלְכֵי הָאָרֶץ אֶת־כְּבוֹדְךָ:
 יז כִּי־בִנְהָ יְהוָה צִיּוֹן
 נִרְאָה בְּכְבוֹדוֹ:
 יח פָּנָה אֶל־תְּפִלַּת הָעֲרֵר
 וְלֹא־בָזָה אֶת־תְּפִלָּתָם:
 יט תִּכְתֹּב זֹאת לְדֹר אַחֲרוֹן
 וְעַם נִבְרָא יְהַלְלֶיהָ:
 כ כִּי־יִשְׁקֹף מִמְרוֹם קֹדֶשׁוֹ
 יְהוָה מִשָּׁמַיִם | אֶל־אָרֶץ הַבֵּיט:

- 13 But you, Yahweh, are enthroned forever;
 each generation in turn remembers you.
 14 Rise up, take pity on Zion:
 for it is time to favour her, the appointed time has come.
 15 For your servants love her very stones,
 and have compassion on her dust.
 16 Then will the nations fear the name of Yahweh,
 and all the kings of the earth your glory.
 17 When Yahweh builds Zion anew,
 he will appear in his glory.
 18 He will turn to hear the prayer of the destitute,
 and will not treat their prayer with scorn.
 19 This shall be put on record for a future generation,
 and a people yet to be born shall praise Yah:
 20 Yahweh will look down from the heights of his sanctuary,
 look down from heaven to earth,

13 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "and your remembrance [is] for a generation and a generation."

14 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "the time has come to have mercy on her; the moment has come."

15 The Poel of the 2nd line occurs only here and in Pr 14:21, where it refers to having compassion on the poor.

16 To 'fear' God's name means to have a healthy respect for his revealed reputation, which in turn motivates one to obey God's commands (see 86:11).

17 For the 1st line, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "For the LORD will build up Zion."

18 The Hebrew adjective עֲרֵר ('destitute') occurs only here in the OT.

19 The opening pronoun, 'this', refers to the anticipated divine intervention on behalf of Zion.

20 The perfect verbal forms in this verse function as *future* perfects, indicating actions that will precede the developments described in v. 19.

כא לִשְׁמַע אֲנָקַת אֲסִיר
 לִפְתּוֹחַ בְּנֵי תְּמוּתָהּ:
 כב לְסַפֵּר בְּצִיּוֹן שֵׁם יְהוָה
 וְתִהְיֶה לְבִירוּשָׁלַם:
 כג בְּהִקְבֹּץ עַמִּים יַחַד
 וּמַמְלָכוֹת לַעֲבֹד אֶת־יְהוָה:
 כד עֲנֵה בְּדֶרֶךְ כְּחוֹ כְּחִי
 קֹצֵר יָמַי:
 כה אֹמֵר אֵלַי אֶל־תֵּעָלֵנִי בְּחֹצֵי יָמַי
 בְּדוֹר דּוֹרִים שְׁנוֹתֶיךָ:
 כו לִפְנֵים הָאָרֶץ יִסְדָּתָהּ
 וּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֶיךָ שָׁמַיִם:
 כז הֵמָּה | יֵאָבְדוּ וְאַתָּה תִּעֲמָד
 וְכֹלם כְּבָגֵד יִבְלוּ
 כח כָּל־בוֹשׁ תַּחֲלִיפֵם וְיִחַלְפוּ:
 וְאַתָּה־הוּא

21 to listen to the sighing of the captive,
 and set free those condemned to death,
 22 to proclaim the name of Yahweh in Zion,
 his praise in Jerusalem.
 23 Nations will gather together,
 and kingdoms to worship Yahweh.
 24 In my journeying, my strength has failed on the way;
 let me know the short time I have left.
 25 Do not take me away in the middle of my life,
 for your years run on from age to age.
 26 Long ago, you laid earth's foundations;
 the heavens are the work of your hands.
 27 They pass away but you endure;
 they all wear out like a garment,
 like outworn clothes you change them.
 28 But you never alter,

21 The literal translation of 'those condemned to death' is 'the sons of death'.

22 NETB opens the 2nd line with, "and praise him."

23 An alternative reading for 'worship' is 'serve'.

24 'Has failed' is conjectural; the MT has 'he has made to fail'. The translation of the 2nd line follows the LXX and Peshitta; the MT has, "He has shortened my days. I say: my God" (incorrect vowel arrangement). The Kethib/Qere difference here seems to be a case of *vav*/*yod* confusion.

25 The literal translation of 'middle of my life' is 'middle of my days'; the NJB has 'before half my days are done'.

26 Vv. 25–27 are quoted in Heb 1:10–12.

27 The NJB has 'remain' in place of 'endure', here following the NRSV.

28 The literal translation of 'you never alter' (the NRSV has 'you are the same') is 'you are he', compare Is 43:10,13,25.

וְשָׁנוֹתֶיךָ לֹא יִתְּמוּ:
בְּנֵי־עַבְדֶּיךָ יִשְׁכְּנוּ כט
וְזֶרְעָם לִפְנֶיךָ יִכּוֹן:

and your years never end.

²⁹ The children of those who serve you will dwell secure,
and their descendants live on in your presence.

²⁹ Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, “*and their seed before you will be established.*”

תהילים פרק קג

א לְדָוִד |
בָּרַכִּי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה
וְכָל־קִרְבִּי אֶת־שֵׁם קִדְשׁוֹ:
ב בָּרַכִּי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה
וְאַל־תִּשְׁכַּחִי כָל־גְּמוּלוֹ:
ג הִסְלַח לְכָל־עֲוֹנוֹכִי
הֲרַפָּא לְכָל־תַּחֲלוּאֵיכִי:
ד הַגְּזַל מִשַּׁחַת חַיִּיכִי
הַמַּעֲטֹרֵכִי חֶסֶד וִרְחָמִים:
ה הַמְשִׁבִּיעַ בְּטוֹב עֲדִידָךְ
תַּתְּחַדֵּשׁ כַּנְּשֹׂר נְעוּרֵיכִי:
ו עֲשֵׂה צְדָקוֹת יְהוָה
וּמִשְׁפָּטִים לְכָל־עֲשׂוּקִים:

PSALM 103

- ¹ *Of David.*
Bless Yahweh, my soul,
all that is within me, his holy name.
- ² Bless Yahweh, my soul;
never forget all his benefits.
- ³ He forgives all your offences,
cures all your diseases.
- ⁴ He redeems your life from the Pit,
crowns you with faithful love and tenderness.
- ⁵ He contents you with good things all your life,
renews your youth like an eagle's.
- ⁶ Yahweh acts with uprightness,
with justice to all who are oppressed.

PSALM 103

This Psalm might be classified as a hymn, but vv. 1–5 suggest that the words, though general, are intended to express the emotion of a particular individual on a specific occasion.

- ¹ In place of 'all that is within me', here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, 'from the depths of my being'.
- ² The NJB has 'acts of kindness' in place of 'benefits', here following the NRSV; the noun is also used in 2Ch 32:25.
- ³ The relatively rare noun translated 'diseases' refers to deadly diseases (see Dt 29:22, Jr 14:18, 16:4, 2Ch 21:19).
- ⁴ The word translated 'Pit' (following the NRSV – the NJB has 'abyss') is often used as a title for Sheol.
- ⁵ 'Your life' is a conjectural translation; the MT has 'your coiffure'. The vigour of the eagle was proverbial (Is 40:31).
- ⁶ Literally translated, this verse reads, "the LORD does fairness, and [acts of] justice for all the oppressed."

ז	יֹדִיעַ דְּרָכָיו לְמֹשֶׁה לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל־לִוְתָיו:	7	He revealed to Moses his ways, his great deeds to the children of Israel.
ח	רַחֻם וְחַנּוּן יְהוָה אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם וְרַב־חֶסֶד:	8	Yahweh is tenderness and pity, slow to anger and rich in faithful love.
ט	לֹא־לִנְצַח יִרֵב וְלֹא לְעוֹלָם יִטּוֹר:	9	He will not always accuse, nor will he keep his anger forever.
י	לֹא בַחֲטֵאֵינוּ עֲשֵׂה לָנוּ וְלֹא כְעֹנֹתֵינוּ גַּמַּל עָלֵינוּ:	10	He does not treat us as our sins deserve, nor repay us as befits our offences.
יא	כִּי כְגֹבַה שָׁמַיִם עַל־הָאָרֶץ גָּבַר חֶסְדּוֹ עַל־יִרְאָיו:	11	As the height of heaven above earth, so strong is his faithful love for those who fear him.
יב	כְּרָחֵק מִזֶּרֶחַ מִמַּעַרְב הִרְחִיק מִמֶּנּוּ אֶת־פְּשָׁעֵינוּ:	12	As the distance of east from west, so far from us he puts our faults.
יג	כְּרַחֵם אָב עַל־בָּנָיִם רַחֵם יְהוָה עַל־יִרְאָיו:	13	As a father has compassion for his children, so Yahweh has compassion for those who fear him.
יד	כִּי־הוּא יָדַע יִצְרָנוּ	14	He knows of what we are made;

⁷ God's 'ways' in this context are his protective and salvific acts in fulfilment of his promise.

⁸ These are the attributes of Yahweh revealed to Moses (see #Ex 34:6), which the whole Psalm develops, putting the accent on tenderness and pity (see vv. 17–18 and Ex 20:6), thus preparing for 1 Jn 4:8.

⁹ For this verse, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "His indignation does not last forever, nor will his resentment remain for all time."

¹⁰ The NRSV has 'iniquities' in place of 'offences', here following the NJB.

¹¹ In place of 'faithful love', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'steadfast love'.

¹² The literal translation of 'east' and 'west' are, respectively, 'sunrise' and 'sunset'.

¹³ In place of 'those who fear him', NETB has 'his faithful followers' (as also in v. 11).

¹⁴ An alternative reading for 'dust' (as NJB & NRSV) is 'clay' (as NETB).

זָכוֹר כִּי־עֹפָר אֲנַחְנוּ׃
טו אָנוּשׁ כַּחֲצִיר יָמָיו
כָּצִיץ הַשָּׂדֶה בֶּן יָצִיץ׃
טז כִּי רוּחַ עֲבָרָה־בּוֹ וְאֵינָנוּ
וְלֹא־יִכָּרְנוּ עוֹד מְקוֹמוֹ׃
יז וַחֲסֵד יְהוָה׃ מֵעוֹלָם וְעַד־עוֹלָם
עַל־יִרְאָיו
יח וְצִדְקָתוֹ לְבָנֵי בָנִים׃
לְשֹׁמְרֵי בְרִיתוֹ
וּלְזִכְרֵי פְקֻדָּיו לַעֲשׂוֹתָם׃
יט יְהוָה בַּשָּׁמַיִם הֵכִין בִּסְאוֹ
וּמַלְכוּתוֹ בְּכָל מְשָׁלָה׃
כ בָּרְכוּ יְהוָה מְלֹאכָיו
גִּבּוֹרֵי כַח עֹשֵׂי דְבָרוֹ
לִשְׁמֹעַ בְּקוֹל דְּבָרוֹ׃
כא בָּרְכוּ יְהוָה כָּל־עֲבָאֵיו

he remembers that we are dust.

- 15 As for a mortal – his days are like grass;
he blooms like the wild flowers.
- 16 As soon as the wind blows, he is gone,
never to be seen there again.
- 17 But Yahweh's faithful love for those who fear him
is from eternity and forever;
and his saving justice to their children's children.
- 18 As long as they keep his covenant,
and carefully obey his precepts.
- 19 Yahweh has fixed his throne in heaven
and his kingdom rules over all.
- 20 Bless Yahweh, all his angels,
mighty warriors who fulfil his commands,
attentive to the sound of his words.
- 21 Bless Yahweh, all his armies,

15 The noun אָנוּשׁ ('mortal') is used here generically of human beings.

16 NETB adds 'hot' before 'wind', though it is uncertain why this should be included.

17 Literally translated, the last line reads, "and his righteousness to sons of sons."

18 The literal translation of the 2nd line is, "to those who remember his precepts to do them."

19 The NJB has 'sovereign power' in place of 'kingdom', here following the NRSV.

20 Literally translated, this verse reads, "Praise the LORD [you] mighty ones of strength, doers of his word, by listening to the voice of his word."

21 A more literal translation of 'armies' is 'hosts'.

מְשַׁרְתָּיו עֲשֵׂי רְצוֹנוֹ:
בִּרְכוּ יְהוָה | כָּל־מַעֲשָׂיו כב
בְּכָל־מְקוֹמוֹת מְשֻׁלָּתוֹ
בִּרְכִי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה:

servants who fulfil his wishes.

²² Bless Yahweh, all his works,
in every place where he rules.
Bless Yahweh, my soul.

²² For the 2nd line, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, “in all places of his dominion.”

תהילים פרק קד

א בִּרְכֵי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי גְדֹלַת מְאֹד
הוֹד וְהָדָר לְבָשָׁת׃
ב עֲטֵה־אֹזֶר בַּשְּׁלֹמָה
נֹטֶה שָׁמַיִם כַּיָּרֵיעָה׃
ג הַמִּקְרָה בַּמַּיִם עֲלִיּוֹתָיו
הַשָּׁם־עֲבִים רִכּוּבוֹ
הַמְהַלֵּךְ עַל־כַּנְפֵי־רוּחַ׃
ד עֲשֵׂה מְלָאכָיו רוּחוֹת
מְשַׁרְתָּיו אֵשׁ לֵהֹט׃
ה יִסַּד־אָרֶץ עַל־מְכוּנֶיהָ
בַּל־תִּמּוֹט עוֹלָם וָעֶד׃
ו תִּהְיוּ כַּלְבוּשׁ כִּסֵּיתוֹ
עַל־הָרִים יַעֲמְדוּ מַיִם׃

PSALM 104

- 1 Bless Yahweh, my soul,
Yahweh, my God, how great you are!
Clothed in majesty and splendour,
- 2 wrapped in light as with a garment!
You stretch out the heavens like a tent,
- 3 Build your palace on the waters above,
making the clouds your chariot,
gliding on the wings of the wind,
- 4 appointing the winds your messengers,
flames of fire your servant.
- 5 You fixed the earth on its foundations,
so that it shall never be shaken.
- 6 You covered it with the deep like a garment,
the waters overtopping the mountains.

PSALM 104

This Psalm follows the sequence of the creation narrative in Gn 1. The psalmist praises God as the ruler of the world who sustains all life.

- 1 The 1st line was probably added in imitation of the preceding Psalm (cf. v. 35).
- 2 For the 1st line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "*wearing the light as a robe.*"
- 3 In vv. 3–4, the MT has '*his*' in place of all occurrences of '*your*'.
- 4 This verse is quoted in Heb 1:7. Another reading for '*messengers*' is '*angels*'.
- 5 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "*forever and ever it shall not be shaken.*"
- 6 The reading here, following the NJB/NRSV, '*You covered it*' is problematic because of the masculine suffix, if the feminine, '*earth*' is the antecedent; NETB prefers to read, '*the watery deep covered it*'.

ז	מִן־גְּעֻרְתְּךָ יִנוּסוּן מִן־קוֹל רַעֲמֶךָ יִחַפְּזוּן:	7	At your reproof the waters fled, at the voice of your, thunder, they sped away.
ח	יָעֻלוּ הָרִים יִרְדּוּ בְּקַעֲוֹת אֶל־מְקוֹם זֶה יִסְדַּתְּ לָהֶם:	8	They flowed over mountains, down valleys, to the place you had fixed for them.
ט	גְּבוּל־שְׂמֶמֶת בַּל־יַעֲבְרוּן בַּל־יָשׁוּבוּן לַכֶּסֶּוֹת הָאָרֶץ:	9	You made a boundary they were not to cross; they were not to return and cover the earth.
י	הִמְשַׁלַּח מַעֲיָנִים בְּנַחְלִים בֵּין הָרִים יִהְלִכּוּן:	10	In the valleys, you opened up springs, running down between the mountains,
יא	יִשְׁקוּ כָּל־חִיתוֹ שָׂדֵי יִשְׁבְּרוּ פְּרָאִים צִמָּאִם:	11	supplying water for all the wild animals; the wild asses quench their thirst.
יב	עֲלֵיהֶם עוֹף־הַשָּׁמַיִם יִשְׁכּוּן מִבֵּין עֵפָאִים יִתְנוּ־קוֹל:	12	On their banks, the birds of the air make their nests, they sing among the leaves.
יג	מִשְׁקָה הָרִים מֵעֲלִיּוֹתָיו מִפְּרִי מַעֲשֶׂיךָ תִּשְׂבַּע הָאָרֶץ:	13	From your high halls, you water the mountains, satisfying the earth with the fruit of your works.
יד	מִצְמִיחַ חֲצִיר לַבְּהֵמָה וְעֹשֵׁב לַעֲבֹדֶת הָאָדָם	14	For cattle, you make the grass grow, and for people, the plants they need

7 The NRSV has 'they' in place of 'the waters', here following the NJB.

8 Vv. 7-8 poetically depict Gn 1:9-10.

9 The NJB has 'limit' in place of 'boundary', here following the NRSV & NETB.

10 The NJB has 'ravines' in place of 'valleys', here following the NRSV.

11 The literal translation of 'wild animals' is 'animals in the field'.

12 In place of 'on their banks', the NRSV has 'by the streams'; the MT has 'by them'.

13 NETB takes the 'fruit' in the 2nd line more literally, reading, "the earth is full of the fruit you cause to grow."

14 The literal translation of "make the grass grow" is "cause the grass to sprout up."

לְהוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן־הָאָרֶץ:
 וַיִּין | יִשְׂמַח לִב־אָנוּשׁ טו
 לְהַצְהִיל פָּנִים מִשָּׁמֶן
 וְלֶחֶם לִב־אָנוּשׁ יִסְעֵד:
 יִשְׁבְּעוּ עֲצֵי יְהוָה טז
 אֲרָזֵי לְבָנוֹן אֲשֶׁר נָטַע:
 אֲשֶׁר־שָׁם צִפְרִים יִקְנְנוּ יז
 חֲסִידָה בְרוּשִׁים בֵּיתָה:
 הָרִים הַגְּבוּהִים לַיַּעֲלִים יח
 סִלְעִים מַחֲסֶה לְשֹׁפְנִים:
 עָשָׂה יָרַח לְמוֹעֲדִים יט
 שֶׁמֶשׁ יָדַע מְבוֹאוֹ:
 תִּשְׁתַּחֲשֹׁךְ וַיְהִי לַיְלָה כ
 בּוֹ־תִרְמַשׁ כָּל־חִית־יַעַר:
 הַכְּפִירִים שֹׁאֲגִים לַטֶּרֶף כא
 וּלְבַקֵּשׁ מֵאֵל אֲכָלִם:
 תִּזְרַח הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ יֵאֱסָפוֹן כב

to bring forth food from the earth,
 15 and wine to cheer people's hearts,
 oil to make their faces shine,
 food to make them sturdy of heart.
 16 The trees of Yahweh drink their fill,
 the cedars of Lebanon, which he sowed.
 17 There, the birds build their nests;
 on the highest branches, the stork makes its home.
 18 For the wild goats, there are the mountains;
 in the crags, the coneys find refuge.
 19 He made the moon to mark the seasons;
 the sun knows when to set.
 20 You bring on darkness, and night falls,
 when all the forest beasts roam around.
 21 Young lions roar for their prey,
 asking God for their food.
 22 The sun rises, and away they steal,

15 The Hebrew verb translated 'shine' occurs only here in the OT.

16 The 'cedars of Lebanon' are considered special because of their great size and grandeur.

17 'On the highest branches' follows the LXX; the MT has 'in the juniper trees'.

18 'Coneys' here refers to little mammals like marmots, living in groups.

19 This verse celebrates God's careful demarcation of the limits of months and days.

20 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "You make darkness so that it might be night."

21 The lions' roaring is viewed as a request for food from God.

22 The NJB has 'lairs' in place of 'dens', here following the NRSV & NETB.

וְאֶל־מְעוֹנֹתָם יִרְבְּצוּן:		back to their dens to lie down.
כג יֵצֵא אָדָם לַפֵּעֵלָו	כג	23 Man goes out to work,
וְלַעֲבֹדְתּוֹ עַד־עֶרֶב:		to labour until the evening falls.
כד מִה־רַבּוֹ מַעֲשֵׂיךָ יְהוָה	כד	24 How countless are your works, Yahweh,
כָּל־שֵׂם בַּחֲכָמָה עָשִׂיתָ		all of them made so wisely!
מִלֵּאָה הָאָרֶץ קִנְיָיִךְ:		The earth is full of your creatures.
כה זֶה הַיָּם גָּדוֹל וְרַחֵב יָדַיִם	כה	25 Then there is the sea, with its vast expanses
שִׁם־רַמֶּשׁ וְאֵין מִסְפָּר		teeming with countless creatures,
חַיּוֹת קְטָנוֹת עִם־גְּדִלּוֹת:		creatures both great and small.
כו שֵׁם אֲנִיּוֹת יִהְלָכוּן	כו	26 There ships pass back and forth,
לְוִיתָן זֶה־יִצְרַתָּ לְשַׁחֲקֵבּוֹ:		and Leviathan whom you made to sport with.
כז כָּל־שֵׂם אֵלֶיךָ יִשְׁבְּרוּן	כז	27 These all look to you
לִתֶּת אֹכֶלָם בְּעֵתוֹ:		to give them their food in due season.
כח תִּתֵּן לָהֶם יִלְקָטוּן	כח	28 You provide the food they gather;
תִּפְתַּח יָדְךָ יִשְׂבְּעוּן טוֹב:		your open hand gives them their fill.
כט תִּסְתִּיר פָּנֶיךָ יִבְהִלּוּן	כט	29 Turn away you face and they are dismayed;
תִּסָּף רוּחָם יִגָּעוּן		take back their breath and they die

23 Literally translated, this verse reads, “Man goes out to his work, and to his labour until evening.”

24 In this case the LORD’s ‘works’ are the creatures he has made, as the preceding and following contexts make clear.

25 The literal translation of the 1st line is, “This is the sea, great and broad of hands.”

26 The monster, ‘Leviathan’ (see 74:12) has become, for this author, merely a harmless, sportive creature of God.

27 For this verse, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, “They all depend on you, to feed them when they need it.”

28 The literal translation of ‘gives them their fill’ is ‘they are satisfied [with] good’.

29 The NJB has ‘they panic’ in place of ‘they are dismayed’, here following the NRSV.

וְאֶל־עֲפָרָם יִשׁוּבוּן:
 ל תִּשְׁלַח רוּחְךָ יִבְרָאוֹן
 וְתַחֲדַשׁ פְּנֵי אֲדָמָה:
 לֵא יְהִי כְבוֹד יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם
 יִשְׂמַח יְהוָה בְּמַעֲשָׂיו:
 לֵב הַמִּבֵּיט לָאָרֶץ וְתִרְעַד
 לֵג יִגַּע בַּהֲרִים וַיַּעֲשֶׁנוּ:
 לֵד אֶשִׁירָה לַיהוָה בַּחַיִּי
 לֵה אֲזַמְרָה לֵאלֹהֵי בְעוֹדִי:
 יַעֲרֹב עָלָיו שִׁיחִי
 אֲנֹכִי אֶשְׂמַח בַּיהוָה:
 יִתְּמוּ חַטָּאִים | מִן־הָאָרֶץ
 וְרָשָׁעִים | עוֹד אֵינָם
 בָּרַכִּי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה
 הַלְּלוּ־יָהּ:

and revert to dust.

- 30 Send out your breath and life begins;
you renew the face of the earth.
- 31 May the glory of Yahweh endure forever!
May Yahweh find joy in his works!
- 32 At his glance, the earth trembles;
at his touch, the mountains pour forth smoke.
- 33 I shall sing to Yahweh all my life,
make music for my God as long as I live.
- 34 May my musing be pleasing to him,
for Yahweh gives me joy.
- 35 May sinners vanish from the earth,
and the wicked exist no more!
Bless Yahweh, my soul.
Hallelujah!

30 The NRSV has 'spirit' in place of 'breath'; the spirit of God is the source of all being and life.

31 In this case, God's 'works' are the creatures he has made (cf. #24).

32 The NRSV lacks 'pour forth', here following the NJB.

33 The literal translation for 'as long as I live' is 'in my duration'.

34 The psalmist's thoughts ('musing') are expressed in his songs of praise.

35 The NJB, following the LXX, places 'Hallelujah' at the beginning of Ps 105, to which it properly belongs.

תהילים פרק קה

א הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה קְרָאוּ בְשֵׁמוֹ
הוֹדִיעוּ בְּעַמִּים עֲלִילוֹתָיו:
ב שִׁירוּ-לוֹ זִמְרוּ-לוֹ
שִׁיחוּ בְּכָל-נִפְלְאוֹתָיו:
ג הִתְהַלְלוּ בְּשֵׁם קֹדֶשׁוֹ
יִשְׂמַח לֵב מִבְּקֵשֵׁי יְהוָה:
ד דְּרֹשׁוּ יְהוָה וְעִזּוֹ
בִּקְשׁוּ פָנָיו תָּמִיד:
ה זָכְרוּ נִפְלְאוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר-עָשָׂה
מִפְתִּיו וּמִשְׁפָּטֵי-פִיו:
ו זֶרַע אַבְרָהָם עֲבָדוֹ
בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב בְּחִירָיו:
ז הוּא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
בְּכָל-הָאָרֶץ מִשְׁפָּטָיו:

PSALM 105

- 1 Give thanks to Yahweh, call on his name,
and proclaim his deeds among the peoples.
- 2 Sing to him, make music for him,
and recount all his wonders!
- 3 Glory in his holy name,
let the hearts that seek Yahweh rejoice!
- 4 Seek Yahweh and his strength;
seek his presence continually!
- 5 Remember the marvels that he has done,
his wonders, the judgements he has spoken.
- 6 Stock of Abraham, his servant,
children of Jacob, whom he chose!
- 7 He is Yahweh our God;
his judgements touch the whole world.

PSALM 105

This Psalm recalls the story of the Patriarchs (8–15), the story of Joseph (16–23), the mission of Moses (24–27), the plagues of Egypt (28–36), the Exodus and journey through the desert (37–43), and finally, the entry into Canaan, the land promised to Abraham (44–45).

- 1 The NJB has 'to the people' in place of 'among the peoples', here following the NRSV.
- 2 The NRSV has 'wonderful works' in place of 'wonders', here following the NJB.
- 3 For the 1st line, here following the NJB & NRSV, NETB has, "Boast about his holy name."
- 4 The NJB has 'tirelessly' in place of 'continually', here following the NRSV & NETB.
- 5 The literal translation of 'he has spoken' is 'of his mouth'.
- 6 Some MSS have 'Israel' in place of 'Abraham', which also appears in the parallel version of this psalm in 1Ch 16:13.
- 7 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "in all the earth are his judgements."

ח זָכַר לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתוֹ
 דָּבַר צִוָּה לְאַלְף דּוֹר:
 ט אֲשֶׁר בָּרַת אֶת־אַבְרָהָם
 וּשְׁבוּעָתוֹ לְיִשְׁחָק:
 י וַיַּעֲמִידָהּ לְיַעֲקֹב לְחֹק
 לְיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרִית עוֹלָם:
 יא לֵאמֹר לְךָ אֶתֵּן אֶת־אֶרֶץ־כְּנָעַן
 חֵבֶל נַחֲלָתְכֶם:
 יב בְּהִיוֹתָם מִתֵּי מִסְפָּר
 כְּמַעֲט וְגָרִים בָּהּ:
 יג וַיִּתְּהֻלְכוּ מִגּוֹי אֶל־גּוֹי
 מִמַּמְלָכָה אֶל־עַם אֲחֵר:
 יד לֹא־הָנִיחַ אָדָם לַעֲשֹׂקָם
 וַיִּזְכֹּחַ עֲלֵיהֶם מַלְכִּים:
 טו אֶל־תִּגְעוּ בַּמְּשִׁיחִי
 וְלִנְבִיאִי אֶל־תִּרְעוּ:

8 He remembers his covenant forever,
 the promise he laid down for a thousand generations,
 9 the covenant that he made with Abraham,
 his sworn promise to Isaac.
 10 He established it as a statute for Jacob,
 an everlasting covenant with Israel,
 11 saying, "To you, I give the land of Canaan,
 your allotted heritage."
 12 When they were insignificant in numbers,
 a handful of strangers in the land,
 13 wandering from country to country,
 from one kingdom and nation to another,
 14 he allowed no one to oppress them;
 for their sake, he rebuked kings,
 15 "Do not touch my anointed ones,
 to my prophets you may do no harm."

8 The text refers here to God's unconditional covenantal promise to Abraham and the patriarchs, as vv. 10–12 make clear.

9 For this verse, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "which he concluded with Abraham, the oath he swore to Isaac."

10 Another reading for 'everlasting' is 'eternal'.

11 The NJB moves 'Canaan' to the beginning of the 2nd line; here, we follow the NRSV & MT.

12 For this verse, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "When they were few in number, of little account, and strangers in it."

13 The literal translation of the 2nd line is, "and from a kingdom to another nation."

14 On the 'rebuked kings', see Gn 12:17, 20:3.

15 Israel is a kingdom of priests, Ex 19:6, Is 61:6, see also Ps 28:8, Hab 3:13. Only here are the most ancient ancestors of Israel given the title 'anointed ones', presumably because they are called 'prophets' (compare Gn 20:7, 1K 19:16).

טז וַיִּקְרָא רָעַב עַל־הָאָרֶץ
 כֹּל־מִטֶּה־לֶּחֶם שֹׁבֵר:
 יז שָׁלַח לִפְנֵיהֶם אִישׁ
 לְעֶבֶד נַמְכָּר יוֹסֵף:
 יח עָנוּ בַּכָּבֵל רַגְלָיו רַגְלָיו
 בַּרְזֶל בָּאָה נִפְשׁוֹ:
 יט עַד־עֵת בֹּא־דִבְרוּ
 אִמְרַת יְהוָה צִרְפָּתָהּ:
 כ שָׁלַח מֶלֶךְ וַיִּתִּירָהּ
 מִשָּׁל עַמִּים וַיַּפְתָּחָהּ:
 כא שָׂמוּ אֲדוֹן לְבֵיתוֹ
 וּמִשָּׁל בְּכָל־קְנִיָּנוֹ:
 כב לְאַסֹּר שָׂרָיו בְּנִפְשׁוֹ
 וּזְקֵנָיו יַחְכֵּם:
 כג וַיָּבֹא יִשְׂרָאֵל מִצְרַיִם
 וַיַּעֲקֹב גָּר בְּאֶרֶץ־חָם:

16 He called down famine on the land;
 he took away their food supply.
 17 He sent a man ahead of them,
 sold as a slave – Joseph.
 18 They bruised his feet with shackles,
 his neck was put in irons.
 19 In due time, his prophecy was fulfilled,
 the word of Yahweh proved him true.
 20 The king sent orders to release him;
 the ruler of nations set him free.
 21 He put him in charge of his house,
 the ruler of all he possessed,
 22 to instruct his princes as he saw fit,
 to teach his counsellors wisdom.
 23 Then Israel migrated to Egypt,
 Jacob lived as an alien in the country of Ham.

16 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, “every staff of food he broke.” The author refers to the famine that occurred in Joseph’s time (Gn 41:53–57).

17 For the 2nd line, WEBBE has, “Joseph was sold for a slave.”

18 The dropped *yod* in the *Qere* reading (רַגְלָיו) of רַגְלָיו (as *Kethib*) is not trivial to explain.

19 This verse refers to Joseph’s prediction of the famine in response to Pharaoh’s dream; Joseph emphasised to Pharaoh that the interpretation of the dream came from God (see Gn 41:16, 25, 28, 32, 39).

20 The ‘king’ here refers to Pharaoh.

21 The NJB has ‘household’ in place of ‘house’, here following the NRSV.

22 ‘Instruct’ follows the LXX and *Peshitta*; the MT has ‘bind’.

23 In place of ‘lived as an alien’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘settled’.

כד וַיַּכֶּר אֶת־עַמּוֹ מֵאֲדָ
 וַיַּעֲצֵמָהוּ מִצָּרָיו:
 כה הִפְךָ לִבָּם לְשׂנְאָ עַמּוֹ
 לְהִתְנַכֵּל בַּעֲבָדָיו:
 כו שִׁלַּח מֹשֶׁה עֲבָדָו
 אֶהֱרֹן אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר־בּוֹ:
 כז שְׁמוֹנֵבַם דְּבָרֵי אֱתוֹתָיו
 וּמִפְתִּים בָּאָרֶץ חָם:
 כח שִׁלַּח חֹשֶׁךְ וַיַּחֲשֹׁךְ
 וְלֹא־מָרוּ אֶת־דְּבָרָו דְּבָרָיו:
 כט הִפְךָ אֶת־מִימֵיהֶם לָדָם
 וַיָּמָת אֶת־דָּגָתָם:
 ל שָׂרָץ אֶרֶצָם צִפְרָדַּיִם
 בְּחֻדְרֵי מַלְכֵיהֶם:
 לא אָמַר וַיָּבֹא עֹרֵב
 כָּנָיִם בְּכָל־גְּבוּלָם:

24 He made his people increase in numbers;
 he gave them more strength than their enemies,
 25 whose heart he turned to hate his own people,
 to double-cross his servants.
 26 He sent his servant Moses,
 and Aaron, whom he had chosen.
 27 They worked there the wonders he commanded,
 marvels in the country of Ham.
 28 Darkness he sent, and darkness fell,
 but that nation defied his orders.
 29 He turned their waters into blood,
 and killed all the fish in them.
 30 Their country swarmed with frogs,
 even in the chambers of the king.
 31 At his word came flies,
 and mosquitoes throughout the country.

24 The pronouns in the 2nd line are actually singular in Hebrew but refer to the nation and its people.

25 The Hitpael form לְהִתְנַכֵּל ('to double-cross') occurs only here and in Gn 37:18, where it is used of Joseph's brothers plotting against him.

26 The NJB has 'the man of his choice' in place of 'whom he had chosen', here following the NRSV.

27 'Ham' is a poetic reference to Egypt.

28 'Defied' follows the LXX and Peshitta (the NRSV has 'rebelled against'); the MT has 'did not defy'. By reading שְׁמוֹנֵב instead of מָרוּ, it is possible to translate 'disregarded'. The dropped *yod* in the Qere 'correction' of the Kethib is not trivial to explain.

29 The NJB has 'rivers' in place of 'waters', here following the NRSV & NETB.

30 In place of 'chambers of the king', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'royal apartments'.

31 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "He spoke and flies came."

לב נתן גְּשֶׁמִיָּהֶם בָּרָד
 אֵשׁ לַהֲבוֹת בְּאַרְצָם:
 לג וַיִּדְּ גִפְנִים וְתֵאֲנֹתָם
 וַיִּשְׁבֹּר עֵץ גְּבוּלָם:
 לד אָמַר וַיָּבֹא אֲרֵבָה
 וַיֵּלֶק וְאִין מִסְפָּר:
 לה וַיֹּאכַל כָּל-עֵשֶׂב בְּאַרְצָם
 וַיֹּאכַל פְּרִי אֲדָמָתָם:
 לו וַיִּדְּ כָל-בְּכוֹר בְּאַרְצָם
 רֵאשִׁית לְכָל-אוֹנָם:
 לו וַיּוֹצִיָאֵם בְּכֶסֶף וְזָהָב
 וְאִין בְּשִׁבְטֵי כוֹשֵׁל:
 לח שִׂמַּח מִצְרַיִם בְּעָאֲתָם
 כִּי-נָפַל פַּחַדָּם עֲלֵיהֶם:
 לט פָּרַשׁ עָנָן לְמִסְדָּךְ
 וְאֵשׁ לְהָאִיר לַיְלָה:

- 32 He gave them hail as their rain,
flames of fire in their land.
- 33 He blasted their vines and their fig trees,
and shattered the trees of the country.
- 34 At his word came locusts,
grasshoppers beyond all counting.
- 35 They devoured every green thing in the land,
devoured all the produce of the soil.
- 36 He struck all the firstborn in their land,
the flower of all their manhood.
- 37 He led Israel out with silver and gold;
in their tribes, there was none who stumbled.
- 38 Egypt was glad at their leaving,
for terror of Israel had seized them.
- 39 He spread out a cloud as a covering,
and fire to light up the night.

32 The NRSV has 'lightning' in place of 'flames of fire', here following the NJB.

33 The NJB, translating literally, has singular nouns in the 1st line.

34 Here, 'grasshoppers' follows NETB; the NJB has 'hoppers' and the NRSV has 'young locusts'.

35 A more literal translation of 'produce of the soil' is 'fruit of the ground'.

36 Vv. 28–36 recall the plagues in a different order than that presented in Exodus.

37 The MT has 'them' in place of 'Israel'.

38 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "for fear of them had fallen upon them."

39 Another reading for 'covering' (here following the NRSV) is 'curtain'.

מ שֶׁאֵל וַיֵּבֵא שְׁלֹו
 וְלֶחֶם שָׁמַיִם יִשְׂבִּיעֵם:
 מא פֶּתַח צֹר וַיִּזְוּבוּ מֵיִם
 הֵלְכוּ בַּצִּיּוֹת נָהָר:
 מב כִּי־זָכַר אֶת־דְּבַר קִדְשׁוֹ
 אֶת־אַבְרָהָם עֶבְדּוֹ:
 מג וַיּוֹצֵא עִמּוֹ בְּשִׂשׂוֹן
 בָּרָנָה אֶת־בְּחִירָיו:
 מד וַיִּתֵּן לָהֶם אֲרָצוֹת גּוֹיִם
 וַעֲמַל לְאֻמִּים יִירָשׁוּ:
 מה בַּעֲבוּר יִשְׁמְרוּ חֻקָּיו
 וְתוֹרָתוֹ יִנָּצְרוּ
 הַלְלוּ־יָהּ:

- 40 They asked and he brought them quails,
 food from heaven to their hearts' content.
 41 He opened a rock; the waters gushed out,
 and flowed through the desert as a river.
 42 For he was faithful to his sacred promise,
 given to his servant Abraham,
 43 he led out his people with rejoicing,
 his chosen ones with shouts of joy.
 44 He gave them the territories of nations;
 they reaped the fruit of other people's labours,
 45 on condition that they kept his statutes,
 and remained obedient to his laws.

Hallelujah!

40 'They asked' follows the LXX and Peshitta; the MT has 'he asked'.

41 In place of 'through the desert', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'in the dry ground'.

42 The literal translation of 'sacred promise' is 'holy word'.

43 Literally translated, this verse reads, "And he led his people out with joy, with a ringing cry, his chosen ones."

44 A more literal translation of the 2nd line is, "and the work of peoples they possessed."

45 The NJB, following the LXX, omits 'Hallelujah' (possibly considering it a dittography of the beginning of the next psalm).

תהילים פרק קו

א הללו־יהוה
הודו ליהוה כִּי־טוֹב
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדּוֹ:
ב מִי יִמְלֹל גְּבוּרֹת יְהוָה
יִשְׁמִיעַ כָּל־תְּהִלָּתוֹ:
ג אֲשֶׁר־י שִׁמְרֵי מִשְׁפָּט
עֹשֶׂה צְדָקָה בְּכָל־עֵת:
ד זְכַרְנִי יְהוָה בְּרָצוֹן עִמָּךְ
פִּקְדָנִי בִישׁוּעָתְךָ:
ה לְרֵאוֹת | בְּטוֹבַת בְּחִירֶיךָ
לְשִׂמְחָה בְּשִׂמְחַת גּוֹיֶךָ
לְהִתְהַלֵּל עִם־נַחֲלֶתְךָ:
ו חֲטָאנוּ עִם־אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
הָעֲוִינוּ הִרְשָׁעֵנוּ:
ז אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם | לֹא־הִשְׁכִּילוּ נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ

PSALM 106

- 1 Hallelujah!
Give thanks to Yahweh, for he is good,
his faithful love is everlasting!
- 2 Who can recount all Yahweh's triumphs;
who can fully voice his praise?
- 3 Happy are those who observe justice,
whose conduct is always upright!
- 4 Remember me, Yahweh, in your love for your people;
come near to me with your saving power.
- 5 Let me share in the happiness of your chosen ones,
let me share the joy of your people,
the pride of your heritage.
- 6 Like our ancestors, we have sinned;
we have acted wickedly, guiltily.
- 7 Our fathers in Egypt did not understand your wonders.

PSALM 106

- 1 Literally translated, the last line reads, "For forever is his loyal love."
- 2 The literal translation of the 2nd line is, "[or] cause to be heard all his praise?"
- 3 The NJB has 'keep to what is just' in place of 'observe justice', here following the NRSV.
- 4 The NJB includes the last line as part of the following verse; here, we follow the NRSV.
- 5 The psalmist prays for a share in Israel's blessings when God restores prosperity to it (compare v. 47).
- 6 Here, the psalmist outlines his main theme: whatever God has done, Israel has always acted unfaithfully (vv. 7, 13-14, 19, 21, 24-25, 28-29, 32, 34-39, 43); nevertheless, he has constantly forgiven its disobedience and shown mercy (vv. 8, 15, 23, 30, 44-46).
- 7 'Most High' is a conjectural translation (עֲלִיּוֹן); the MT has 'at the sea' (עַל־יָם) (compare 78:17,56).

לֹא זָכְרוּ אֶת־רַב חֲסָדֶיךָ
 וַיִּמְרוּ עַל־יָם בַּיִם־סוּף:
 וַיֹּשִׁיעֵם לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ ח
 לְהוֹדִיעַ אֶת־גְּבוּרָתוֹ:
 וַיִּגְעַר בַּיִם־סוּף וַיַּחַרֵּב ט
 וַיּוֹלִיכֵם בְּתַהֲמוֹת כַּמֶּדְבָּר:
 וַיֹּשִׁיעֵם מִיַּד שׂוֹנְאִי י
 וַיִּגְאֹלֵם מִיַּד אוֹיְבֵי:
 וַיִּכְסּוּ־מַיִם צָרִיָּהֶם יא
 אֶחָד מֵהֶם לֹא נֹתַר:
 וַיֹּאמִינוּ בְּדִבְרָיו יב
 וַיִּשְׁירוּ תְהִלָּתוֹ:
 מִהֲרוּ שָׁכְחוּ מַעֲשָׂיו יג
 לֹא־חָכוּ לַעֲצָתוֹ:
 וַיִּתְּאוּ תַּאֲוָה בַּמֶּדְבָּר יד
 וַיִּנְסוּ־אֶל בִּישִׁימוֹן:

They did not bear in mind your countless acts of love;
at the Sea of Reeds, they defied the Most High.

- 8 Yet, for the sake of his name, he saved them,
to make known his mighty power.
- 9 At his rebuke, the Sea of Reeds dried up;
he led them through the deep as though it were a desert.
- 10 So, he saved them from their opponents clutches,
rescued them from the clutches of their enemies.
- 11 The waters enveloped their enemies,
not one of whom remained.
- 12 Then they believed what he had said,
and sang his praise.
- 13 But they soon forgot his achievements;
they did not even wait for his counsel.
- 14 They had a wanton craving in the desert;
in the solitary wastes, they challenged God.

8 God's 'name' stands here, metonymically, for his reputation.

9 The NJB has 'let them pass' in place of 'led them', here following the NRSV.

10 The literal translation of 'clutches' (twice in this verse) is 'hand'.

11 Another possible reading for 'remained' is 'survived'.

12 The NJB has 'praises' in place of 'praise', here following the NRSV.

13 In place of 'counsel', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'plans'.

14 This 'wanton craving' is described in Nb 11:4-35.

טו וַיִּתֵּן לָהֶם שְׁאֵלָתָם
 וַיִּשְׁלַח רָזוֹן בְּנִפְשָׁם:
 טז וַיִּקְנְאוּ לְמֹשֶׁה בַּמַּחֲנֶה
 לְאַהֲרֹן קֹדֶשׁ יְהוָה:
 יז תִּפְתַּח-אֲרֶץ וַתִּבְלַע דָּתָן
 וַתִּכַּס עַל-עֵדֻת אֲבִירָם:
 יח וַתִּבְעַר-אֵשׁ בְּעֵדָתָם
 לְהַבִּיהָ תִּלְהֹט רְשָׁעִים:
 יט יַעֲשׂוּ-עֵגֹל בַּחֲרֵב
 וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ לַמַּסְכָּה:
 כ וַיִּמְירוּ אֶת-כְּבוֹדָם
 בַּתְּבִנִית שׁוֹר אֹכֵל עֵשָׂב:
 כא נִשְׁכְּחוּ אֵל מוֹשִׁיעֵם
 עֲשֵׂה גְדֻלּוֹת בְּמִצְרַיִם:
 כב נִפְלְאוֹת בְּאֶרֶץ חָם

15 He gave them all they asked for,
 but struck them with a deep wasting sickness.
 16 In the camp they grew jealous of Moses,
 and of Aaron, Yahweh's holy one.
 17 The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan,
 closed in on Abiram's faction.
 18 Fire flamed out against their faction;
 the flame burned up the wicked.
 19 At Horeb, they made a calf,
 bowed low before cast metal.
 20 They exchanged their glory
 for the image of a grass-eating bull.
 21 They forgot the God who had saved them,
 who had done great deeds in Egypt,
 22 such wonders in the land of Ham,

15 'Wasting sickness' here translates a word of uncertain meaning; the LXX has 'a glut' (cf. Nb 11:33-34).

16 Vv. 16-18 describe the events of Nb 16:1-40.

17 Another (more literal) reading for 'faction' is 'assembly'.

18 The NJB has 'renegades' in place of 'wicked', here following the NRSV.

19 For the 2nd line, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "and worshipped a cast image."

20 The original reading must have been 'his glory' (i.e. God's, as in the NRSV), but the text was changed to eliminate an expression that seemed disrespectful or nearly blasphemous.

21 For the 1st line, the NRSV reads, "They forgot God, their Saviour."

22 A mor 'traditional' translation for 'Sea of Reeds' is 'Red Sea' but it is unlikely that what is known by that name today is in view.

נִרְאֹת עַל־יַם־סוּף:
 כג וַיֹּאמֶר לַהֲשֹׁמֵדִם
 לוֹלִי מֹשֶׁה בַּחֲיִרוֹ
 עָמַד בַּפֶּרֶץ לִפְנֵי
 לַהֲשִׁיב חֲמָתוֹ מִהַשְׁחִית:
 כד וַיִּמְאָסוּ בָאָרֶץ חֲמֵדָה
 לֹא־הֶאֱמִינוּ לְדְבָרוֹ:
 כה וַיִּרְגְּנוּ בְּאֹהֲלֵיהֶם
 לֹא שָׁמְעוּ בְּקוֹל יְהוָה:
 כו וַיִּשָּׂא יָדוֹ לָהֶם
 לְהַפִּיל אוֹתָם בַּמִּדְבָּר:
 כז וּלְהַפִּיל זֶרַעַם בְּגוֹיִם
 וּלְזַרְוֹתָם בָּאֲרָצוֹת:
 כח וַיַּצְמִדוּ לְבַעַל פְּעוֹר
 וַיֹּאכְלוּ זִבְחֵי מֵתִים:
 כט וַיִּכְעִסוּ בְּמַעַלְלֵיהֶם

such awesome deeds at the Sea of Reeds.

- 23 He thought of putting an end to them,
 had not Moses, his chosen one,
 taken a stand in the breach and confronted him,
 to turn his anger away from destroying them.
- 24 They despised the land of delight;
 they put no trust in his promise.
- 25 They stayed in their tents and grumbled;
 they would not listen to Yahweh's voice.
- 26 Therefore, he lifted his hand against them,
 to strike them down in the desert,
 to strike down their descendants among the nations,
 to scatter them all over the world.
- 28 They committed themselves to serve Baal-Peor,
 and ate sacrifices made to lifeless gods.
- 29 They so provoked him by their actions

23 Vv. 19–23 describe the events of Ex 32:1–35.

24 For the 1st line, the NJB reads, “They counted a desirable land for nothing.” Here, we (loosely) follow the NRSV.

25 On the 1st line, cf. Dt 1:27.

26 The idiom, ‘*lifted his hand*’, here refers to swearing an oath: one would sometimes solemnly lift one’s hand when making such a vow (see Ezk 20:5–6, 15).

27 The NRSV, following the *Peshitta*, has ‘*disperse*’ in place of ‘*strike down*’, here following the MT & NJB.

28 ‘*Baal-Peor*’ was a local manifestation of the Canaanite deity Baal, located at Peor.

29 The pronominal suffix on ‘*provoked*’ is omitted here but does appear in a few medieval Hebrew MSS.

וּתְפָרֵץ־בָּם מַגֵּפָה:
ל ויעֲמֹד פִּינְחָס וַיִּפְלֹל
וַתֵּעָצֵר הַמַּגֵּפָה:
לא וַתַּחֲשֹׁב לוֹ לְצַדִּיקָה
לְדָר וְדָר עַד־עוֹלָם:
לב וַיִּקְצִיפוּ עַל־מִי מְרִיבָה
וַיִּרַע לְמֹשֶׁה בַּעֲבוּרָם:
לג כִּי־הִמְרוּ אֶת־רוּחוֹ
וַיִּבְטֹא בִשְׁפָתָיו:
לד לֹא־הִשְׁמִידוּ אֶת־הָעַמִּים
לֵאמֹר יְהוָה לָהֶם:
לה וַיִּתְעַרְבוּ בַּגּוֹיִם
וַיִּלְמְדוּ מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם:
לו וַיַּעֲבֹדוּ אֶת־עֲצֻבֵיהֶם
וַיִּהְיוּ לָהֶם לְמוֹקֵשׁ:
לז וַיִּזְבְּחוּ אֶת־בְּנֵיהֶם וְאֶת־בָּנוֹתֵיהֶם

that a plague broke out among them.

- 30 Then up stood Phinehas to intervene,
and the plague was checked.
- 31 For this he is the example of uprightness,
from generation to generation forever.
- 32 At the waters of Meribah, they so angered him
that Moses suffered on their account.
- 33 For they had embittered his spirit,
and he spoke without due thought.
- 34 They did not destroy the nations,
as Yahweh had told them to do,
35 but intermarried with them,
and adopted their ways.
- 36 They worshipped those nations' false gods,
until they found themselves entrapped.
- 37 They sacrificed their own sons and their daughters

30 The intervention of Phinehas is recounted in Nb 25:7–8.

31 In place of 'generation to generation', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'age to age'.

32 The NJB has the Divine Name in place of 'him' at the end of the 1st line.

33 'Embittered' is a conjectural translation; the MT has 'defied' (change of vowels).

34 The 'nations' were those of Canaan.

35 The literal translation of 'ways' is 'deeds'.

36 On their entrapment, see Ex 23:33 & Jg 2:3.

37 The term לְשִׂדִּים ('to demons') occurs only here and in Dt 32:17. Some type of lesser deity is probably in view.

לַשְׂדִּים:
 לַח וַיִּשְׁפְּכוּ דָם נָקִי
 דַּם-בְּנֵיהֶם וּבָנוֹתֵיהֶם
 אֲשֶׁר זָבְחוּ לְעֻצְבֵי כְנָעַן
 וַתַּחֲנֹף הָאָרֶץ בַּדָּמִים:
 לט וַיִּטְמְאוּ בַּמַּעֲשִׂיהֶם
 אִיזֹנוּ בַּמַּעֲלָלִים:
 מ וַיַּחֲרֹאף יְהוָה בְּעַמּוֹ
 וַיִּתְּעַב אֶת-נַחֲלָתוֹ:
 מא וַיִּתֵּן בְּיַד-גּוֹיִם
 וַיִּמְשְׁלוּ בָהֶם שְׂנְאֵיהֶם:
 מב וַיִּלְחָצוּם אוֹיְבֵיהֶם
 וַיִּכְנְעוּ תַּחַת יָדָם:
 מג פְּעָמִים רַבּוֹת יִצִּילֻם
 וְהֵמָּה יִמְרוּ בַּעֲצָתָם
 וַיִּמָּכּוּ בְּעוֹנָם:
 מד וַיֵּרָא בָצָר לָהֶם

to demons.

- 38 Innocent blood they shed,
the blood of their sons and daughters;
offering them to the idols of Canaan,
they polluted the country with blood.
- 39 They defiled themselves with such actions;
their behaviour was that of a harlot.
- 40 Yahweh's anger blazed out at his people
and he abhorred his heritage.
- 41 He handed them over to the nations,
and their opponents became their masters.
- 42 Their enemies oppressed them,
crushing them under their rule.
- 43 Many times, he rescued them,
but they still defied him deliberately,
and sank ever deeper in their guilt.
- 44 Even so, he took pity on their distress,

38 Nb 35:33–34 explains that bloodshed defiles a land.

39 Adultery (73:27) and prostitution denote, in the prophets, unfaithfulness to God and idolatry (see #Ho 1:2).

40 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "his own heritage filled him with disgust."

41 Literally translated, the verse opens, "He gave them into the hand of the nations."

42 The literal translation of 'rule' is 'hand'.

43 The verb מָכָה ('to sink') occurs only here in the Qal.

44 For this verse, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "Nevertheless he regarded their distress when he heard their cry."

בְּשָׁמְעוֹ אֶת־רִנָּתָם:
מֵה וַיִּזְכֹּר לָהֶם בְּרִיתוֹ
וַיִּנָּחֵם כְּרַב חֲסָדוֹ:
מו וַיִּתֵּן אוֹתָם לְרַחֲמִים
לִפְנֵי כָל־שׁוֹבֵיהֶם:
מו הוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ יְיָ הֵזֶה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
וְקַבְּצֵנוּ מִן־הַגּוֹיִם
לְהַדוֹת לְשֵׁם קְדוֹשְׁךָ
לְהַשְׁתַּבַּח בְּתִהְלֶתְךָ:
מח בָּרוּךְ יְיָ הֵזֶה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
מִן־הָעוֹלָם וְעַד הָעוֹלָם
וְאָמַר כָּל־הָעַם אָמֵן
הַלְלוּ־יָהּ:

as soon as he heard them cry out.

⁴⁵ Bearing his covenant with them in mind,
he relented in his boundless and faithful love.

⁴⁶ He ensured that they received compassion,
in their treatment by all their captors.

⁴⁷ Save us, Yahweh our God,
gather us from among the nations
that we may give thanks to your holy name,
and may glory in praising you.

⁴⁸ Blessed be Yahweh, the God of Israel,
from all eternity and forever!
Let all the people say, "Amen."

Hallelujah!

⁴⁵ The *NJB* capitalises 'covenant'; here, we follow the *NRSV*.

⁴⁶ Another reading for 'captors' is 'conquerors'.

⁴⁷ This verse is a prayer that Israel may be delivered from its present distress. The 2nd line suggests that the Psalm, in its present form at least, dates from after the Babylonian Exile.

⁴⁸ This doxology marks the end of the fourth book of the Psalter and is followed by a liturgical rubric. The *NJB*, following the *LXX*, places 'Hallelujah' at the beginning of Ps 107, where it more logically belongs.

ספר חמישי

BOOK V

תהילים פרק קז

PSALM 107

א הָדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי־טוֹב
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדּוֹ:
ב יֹאמְרוּ גְאוּלֵּי יְהוָה
אֲשֶׁר גָּאֵלָם מִיַּד־צָר:
ג וּמֵאַרְצוֹת קִבְּצָם
מִמִּזְרַח וּמִמְעַרְב מִצָּפוֹן וּמִיָּם:
ד תִּעֲנוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר בִּישִׁימוֹן דֶּרֶךְ
עִיר מוֹשָׁב לֹא מָצְאוּ:
ה רָעֵבִים גַּם־צִמְאִים
נַפְשָׁם בָּהֶם תִּתְּעָטֵף:
ו וַיִּצְעֲקוּ אֶל־יְהוָה בְּצָר לָהֶם
מִמִּצּוֹקוֹתֵיהֶם יֻצִּילֵם:

- 1 Give thanks to Yahweh for he is good,
his faithful love lasts forever.
- 2 Let them say whom Yahweh redeemed,
whom he redeemed from the power of their enemies,
- 3 bringing them back from foreign lands,
from east and west, north and south.
- 4 They were wandering in the desert, in the wastelands,
could find no way to an inhabited city.
- 5 They were hungry and thirsty;
their soul fainted within them.
- 6 They cried out to Yahweh in their distress,
he rescued them from their trouble.

PSALM 107

This Psalm is a hymn of thanksgiving, inspired by the second part of Isaiah, for the mercies of Providence: the Exodus (vv. 4–9), the return from Exile (vv. 10–16), the help given to those who suffer (vv. 17–22), and to those on the high seas (vv. 23–32). The epilogue (vv. 33–43) elaborates the wisdom theme of the reversal of situations. There is a two-part refrain: vv. 6 and 8, 13 and 15, 19 and 21, 28 and 31.

- 1 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, “for forever is his faithful love.”
- 2 The literal translation of ‘power’ is ‘hand’.
- 3 ‘South’ is a conjectural translation; the MT has ‘sea’. This prelude calls on the returned exiles to praise God.
- 4 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV & NJB, the NETB reads, “found no city in which to live.”
- 5 The NJB reads, for the 2nd line, “their life was ebbing away;” here, we follow the NRSV.
- 6 The NRSV swaps the terms ‘distress’ and ‘trouble’, here following the NJB.

וַיִּדְרִיכֵם בְּדֶרֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל ז
לָלֶכֶת אֶל־עִיר מוֹשָׁב:
יִדְּוּ לַיהוָה חֲסִדּוֹ ח
וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו לִבְנֵי אָדָם:
כִּי־הִשְׂבִּיעַ נֶפֶשׁ שָׁקָה ט
וְנֶפֶשׁ רָעָבָה מִלֶּאֱטוֹב:
יֹשְׁבֵי חֹשֶׁךְ וְצִלְמוֹת י
אֲסִירֵי עֲנִי וּבְרִזָּל:
כִּי־הִמְרוּ אִמְרֵי־אֵל א
וַעֲצַת עֲלִיוֹן נֶאֱצוּ:
וַיִּכְנַע בְּעַמְלָל לֵבָם יב
כָּשְׁלוּ וְאֵין עֹזָר:
וַיִּזְעֻקוּ אֶל־יְהוָה בְּצָר לָהֶם יג
מִמַּצְקוֹתֵיהֶם יוֹשִׁיעֵם:
וַיֹּצִיאֵם מִחֹשֶׁךְ וְצִלְמוֹת יד
וּמוֹסְרוֹתֵיהֶם יִנְתַּק:

- 7 He set them on the road,
straight to an inhabited city.
- 8 Let them thank Yahweh for his faithful love,
for his wonders for the sons of Adam!
- 9 He has satisfied those who thirst
and filled the starving with good things.
- 10 Sojourners in gloom and shadow dark as death,
fettered in misery and chains,
- 11 for defying the orders of Yahweh,
for scorning the plan of the Most High.
- 12 He subdued their spirit by hard labour;
if they fell, there was no one to help.
- 13 They cried out to Yahweh in their distress,
he rescued them from their trouble.
- 14 He brought them out from gloom and shadow dark as death
and shattered their chains.

7 The 'inhabited city' is probably a reference to Canaan. The Exodus and the installation in the Promised Land had already (in Is 40ff) served as prototype of the return from Exile.

8 The phrase, 'sons of Adam' can equally well be read, 'sons of man'.

9 The literal translation of 'those who thirst' is 'those with longing throat'.

10 The phrase, 'shadow dark as death', has traditionally been translated as 'shadow of death'; another possible rendition is 'deep darkness'.

11 Literally translated, 'orders' is simply 'words'.

12 For 'hard labour', here following the NJB & NRSV, NETB has 'suffering'.

13 This verse repeats v. 6.

14 See #10 on the phrase, 'shadow dark as death'.

טו יִדְּוּ לַיהוָה חֲסִדּוֹ
 וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו לִבְנֵי אָדָם:
 טז כִּי־שָׁבַר דְּלָתוֹת נְחֹשֶׁת
 וּבְרִיחֵי בְרֹזֶל גָּדַע:
 ז' אֲוִלִּים מִדֶּרֶךְ פִּשְׁעָם
 וּמַעֲוֹנֹתֵיהֶם יִתְּעֻנוּ:
 יח כָּל־אֲכָל תִּתְּעַב נַפְשָׁם
 וַיִּגְיעוּ עַד־שַׁעְרֵי מוֹת:
 יט וַיִּזְעֻקוּ אֶל־יְהוָה בַּצָּר לָהֶם
 מִמַּצָּקוֹתֵיהֶם יוֹשִׁיעֵם:
 כ יִשְׁלַח דְּבָרוֹ וַיִּרְפָּאֵם
 וַיִּמְלֹט מִשְׁחִיתוֹתָם:
 כא יִדְּוּ לַיהוָה חֲסִדּוֹ
 וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו לִבְנֵי אָדָם:
 כב וַיִּזְבְּחוּ זִבְחֵי תוֹדָה
 וַיְסַפְּרוּ מַעֲשָׂיו בְּרִנָּה:

15 Let them thank Yahweh for his faithful love,
 for his wonders for the children of Adam!
 16 He broke open gates of bronze
 and smashed iron bars.
 17 Fools for their rebellious ways,
 wretched because of their sins,
 18 finding all food repugnant,
 brought close to the gates of death.
 19 They cried out to Yahweh in their distress;
 he rescued them from their trouble.
 20 He sent them out his word and cured them,
 and rescued their life from the abyss.
 21 Let them thank Yahweh for his faithful love,
 for his wonders for the children of Adam!
 22 Let them offer thanksgiving sacrifices,
 and recount with shouts of joy what he has done!

15 This verse repeats v. 8.

16 The language of this verse recalls Is 45:2.

17 For the 1st line, the NRSV has the conjectural translation, "Some were sick through their rebellious ways."

18 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "All food their appetite loathed."

19 This verse repeats vv. 6 & 13.

20 'Their life from the abyss' is a conjectural translation; the MT has 'from their abysses'.

21 This verse repeats vv. 8 & 15.

22 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "and let them proclaim his works with a ringing cry."

כג	ז יֹרְדֵי הַיָּם בַּאֲנִיֹּת עָשִׂי מְלָאכָה בַּמַּיִם רַבִּים:	23	Voyagers on the sea in ships, plying their trade on the great ocean,
כד	ז הִמָּה רָאוּ מַעֲשֵׂי יְהוָה וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו בְּמַצּוֹלָה:	24	have seen the works of Yahweh, his wonders in the deep.
כה	ז וַיֹּאמֶר וַיַּעֲמֵד רוּחַ סְעָרָה וַתִּרְוּמֻם גְּלִיו:	25	By his word, he raised a stormy wind, lashing up towering waves.
כו	ז יַעֲלוּ שָׁמַיִם יִרְדּוּ תְהוֹמוֹת נַפְשָׁם בָּרָעָה תִתְמוּגַג:	26	Up to the sky then down to the depths! Their courage melted away in their calamity.
כז	ז יִחוּגּוּ וַיִּנּוּעוּ כַּשְׂכּוֹר וְכָל־חֲכֻמָּתָם תִּתְבַּלֵּעַ:	27	They staggered and reeled like drunkards, and were at their wits' end.
כח	ז וַיַּצְעֲקוּ אֶל־יְהוָה בְּצָר לָהֶם וּמִמַּצּוֹקֵיהֶם יוֹצִיאֵם:	28	They cried out to Yahweh in their distress, he rescued them from their trouble.
כט	ז יָקַם סְעָרָה לְדַמְמָה וַיַּחֲשׂוּ גְלִיהֶם:	29	He reduced the storm to a calm, and their waves were hushed.
ל	ז וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ כִּי־יִשְׁתַּקּוּ וַיִּנָּחֵם אֶל־מְחוּז חֲפָצָם:	30	Then he brought them, overjoyed at the stillness, to their desired haven.

- 23 The ל characters ('inverted nun' or *nun hafucha*) at the beginning of vv. 23–28 (as also in v. 40) are marks indicating that a scribe thought the passage is misplaced and should be elsewhere. Here, they follow the placing of the *Aleppo Codex*; the *Leningrad Codex*, has them on vv. 21–26.
- 24 The NRSV has 'wondrous works' in place of 'wonders', here following the NJB.
- 25 The NJB has 'storm-wind' in place of 'stormy wind', here following the NRSV.
- 26 In place of 'courage', here following the NJB & NRSV, NETB has 'strength'.
- 27 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "and all their skill went under."
- 28 This verse repeats vv. 6, 13 & 19.
- 29 The antecedent of the 3MP pronominal suffix ('their waves') is not readily apparent, unless it refers back to 'waters' in v. 23.
- 30 The Hebrew noun translated 'haven' occurs only here in the OT.

לא יִזְדוּ לַיהוָה חֲסִדּוֹ
 וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו לְבְנֵי אָדָם:
 לב וִירוֹמְמוּהוּ בְּקֶה־לָעַם
 וּבְמוֹשָׁב זִקְנִים יִהְלֹוהוּ:
 לג יֵשׁם נְהָרוֹת לְמַדְבָּר
 וּמִצְאֵי מַיִם לְצִמְאֹן:
 לד אֶרֶץ פְּרִי לַמִּלְחָה
 מִרְעַת יוֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ:
 לה יֵשׁם מְדָבָר לְאַגְס־מַיִם
 וְאֶרֶץ צִיָּה לְמִצְאֵי מַיִם:
 לו וַיּוֹשֶׁב שָׁם רַעֲבִים
 וַיְכַוְּנוּ עִיר מוֹשָׁב:
 לו וַיִּזְרְעוּ שְׂדוֹת וַיִּטְעוּ כִּרְמִים
 וַיַּעֲשׂוּ פְּרִי תְבוּאָה:
 לח וַיְבָרְכֵם וַיִּרְבּוּ מֵאֲדָ
 וּבְהֶמְתָּם לֹא יִמְעִיט:

- 31 Let them thank Yahweh for his faithful love,
 for his wonders for the children of Adam!
 32 Let them extol him in the assembly of the people,
 and praise him in the council of elders.
 33 He has turned rivers into desert,
 bubbling springs into arid ground,
 34 fertile country into a salty waste,
 because the people living there were evil.
 35 He has turned desert into stretches of water,
 arid ground into bubbling springs.
 36 He has given the hungry a home,
 where they have built themselves a city;
 37 they sow seeds, plant vines,
 and reap a harvest of their produce.
 38 He blesses them and their numbers increase;
 he keeps their cattle at full strength.

31 This verse repeats vv. 8, 15 & 21.

32 The literal translation of 'council' is 'seat'.

33 Vv. 33–43 form part of a hymn praising God for his bounty; it was probably not originally composed to go with the preceding verses but nevertheless provides a suitable unison conclusion for the thanksgiving liturgy.

34 The NJB has 'salt-flats' in place of 'a salty waste', here following the NRSV.

35 In this verse, God is seen as doing the opposite actions of those described in v. 33.

36 For this verse, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "And there he lets the hungry live, and they establish a town to live in."

37 At the beginning of this verse, the NJB adds 'there' (also starting a new sentence) but this is not present in the MT.

38 'Blesses' here means 'make fertile'; see Gn 1:28, where 'he blessed them' directly precedes the command 'be fruitful and populate the earth'.

לט וַיִּמְעָטוּ וַיִּשָּׁחוּ
 מַעְצָר רָעָה וַיִּגְזֹן:
 מ ז שִׁפְךָ בּוֹז עַל־נְדִיבִים
 וַיִּתְּעַם בְּתֵהוּ לֹא־דֶרֶךְ:
 מא וַיִּשְׁגֹּב אֲבִיוֹן מֵעֹנִי
 וַיַּשֵּׁם פֶּצֶאן מִשְׁפָּחוֹת:
 מב יֵרָאוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ
 וְכָל־עוֹלָה קִפְצָה פִּיהָ:
 מג מִי־חָכֶם וַיִּשְׁמַר־אֱלֹה
 וַיִּתְּבוֹנְנוּ חֲסִדֵי יְהוָה:

- 39 Their numbers had fallen; they had grown weak,
 under pressure of disaster and hardship.
 40 He covered princes in contempt,
 left them to wander in trackless wastes.
 41 But the needy he raises from their misery,
 makes their families as numerous as sheep.
 42 At the sight, the honest rejoice
 and the wicked have nothing to say.
 43 Who is wise? Let him take this to heart,
 and come to understand Yahweh's faithful love

39 The opening pronoun here refers to the 'enemies' rather than those blessed in the preceding verses.

40 See #23 on the initial ז character in the Hebrew text.

41 The NRSV has 'distress' in place of 'misery', here following the NJB.

42 For this verse, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "The upright see it and are glad; and all wickedness stops its mouth."

43 For the 1st line, the NRSV reads, "Let those who are wise give heed to these things."

תהילים פרק קח

א שִׁיר מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד:
ב נָכוֹן לִבִּי אֱלֹהִים
אֲשִׁירָה וְאֶזְמְרָה אֶף-כְּבוֹדִי:
ג עֹרָה הַנִּבֵּל וְכֹנֹר
אֶעֱרִיחַ שָׁחַר:
ד אֹדֶךָ בַּעַמִּים | יְהוָה
וְאֶזְמְרֶךָ בְּלֵאמִים:
ה כִּי-גָדוֹל מֵעַל-שָׁמַיִם חֶסֶדְךָ
וְעַד-שְׁחָקִים אֲמַתְךָ:
ו רֹמָה עַל-שָׁמַיִם אֱלֹהִים
וְעַל כָּל-הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדְךָ:
ז לִמְעַן יַחַלְצוּן יְדִידֶיךָ
הוֹשִׁיעָה יְמִינְךָ וְעֲנֵנִי:
ח אֱלֹהִים | דְּבַר בְּקִדְשׁוֹ אֶעֱלֶזָה
אֶחְלָקָה שְׂכָם

PSALM 108

- ¹ *A Song. A Psalm of David.*
- ² My heart is ready, God, my heart is ready;
I will sing and make music; come, my glory.
- ³ Awake, Lyre and harp,
I will awake the Dawn!
- ⁴ I will praise you among the peoples, Yahweh;
I will play to you among the nations.
- ⁵ For your faithful love towers above the heavens
and your constancy to the clouds.
- ⁶ Be exalted above the heavens, God,
and let your glory be over the whole earth!
- ⁷ To rescue those you love,
save with your right hand and answer us.
- ⁸ God has spoken from his sanctuary,
"In triumph I will divide up Shechem,

PSALM 108

- ¹ Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and verse numbers are accordingly incremented.
- ² The *NJB*, following the *MT*, omits the second 'my heart is ready', here following the *LXX*, *Peshitta* and some other Hebrew *MSS* (and *NRSV*).
- ³ 'Dawn' is used metaphorically for the time of deliverance and the author anticipates; when salvation dawns, he will wake up in praise.
- ⁴ Another reading for 'nations' is 'peoples'. The *Paseq* in the 1st line is presented as grey text, just as it appears in the *MAM* text.
- ⁵ Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "For great upon the heavens [is] your faithful love."
- ⁶ Though no verb appears in the 2nd line, the tone of the statement is a prayer or wish.
- ⁷ The *NRSV* & *NETB* reverse the two lines of this verse; here, we follow the *MT* & *NJB*.
- ⁸ An alternative reading for 'in his sanctuary' is 'by his holiness'.

וְעַמֶּק סְכוֹת אֶמְדָּד:
 לִי גִלְעָד | לִי מְנַשֶּׁה ט
 וְאֶפְרַיִם מַעֲזוֹ רֹאשִׁי
 יְהוּדָה מַחְקֵקִי:
 מוֹאָב | סִיר רְחֹצִי י
 עַל־אֲדוֹם אֲשַׁלֵּיךְ נַעֲלִי
 עַל־פְּלִשְׁתִּי אֶתְרוּעֶע:
 מִי יְבַלְנִי עִיר מְבָצָר יא
 מִי נַחֲנִי עַד־אֲדוֹם:
 הֲלֹא־אֱלֹהִים זָנַחְתָּנוּ יב
 וְלֹא־תֵצֵא אֱלֹהִים בְּצַבָּאוֹתֵינוּ:
 הִבֵּה־לָנוּ עֲזֶרֶת מִצָּר יג
 וְשׂוֹא תִשׁוּעַת אָדָם:
 בְּאֱלֹהִים נַעֲשֶׂה־חֵיל יד
 וְהוּא יְבוֹס צָרֵינוּ:

and share out the Valley of Succoth.

- 9 Mine is Gilead, mine Manasseh,
 Ephraim the helmet on my head,
 Judah my commander's baton.
- 10 Moab a bowl for me to wash in,
 on Edom I plant my sandal,
 over Philistia I cry victory."
- 11 Who will lead me against a fortified city?
 Who will guide me into Edom?
- 12 Have you not rejected us, O God?
 God, you no longer march with our armies.
- 13 Bring us help in our time of crisis;
 any human assistance is worthless.
- 14 With God, we shall do deeds of valour;
 he will trample down our enemies.

9 Gilead was located east of the Jordan River; half of the tribe of Manasseh lived east of the Jordan in the region of Bashan.

10 The metaphor of the wash basin, used to rinse one's hands and feet, suggests that Moab would be reduced to the status of a servant.

11 The psalmist speaks again and admits his need for help in battle; he hopes God will volunteer, based on the assertion of power over Edom.

12 The psalmist is aware that God has seemingly rejected the nation of Israel.

13 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "and futile [is] the deliverance of man."

14 The statements here refer to military success (see Nb 24:18, 1S 14:48, Ps 60:12, 118:16).

תהילים פרק קט

א לִמְנַצֵּחַ לְדוֹד מִזְמוֹר
אֱלֹהֵי תְהִלָּתִי אֶל־תַּחֲרֹשׁ:
ב כִּי פִי רָשָׁע וּפִי־מִרְמָה עָלַי פָּתַחוּ
דְּבָרוֹ אֶתִּי לְשׁוֹן שָׁקֶר:
ג וּדְבָרֵי שִׁנְאָה סָבְבוּנִי
וַיִּלְחַמוּנִי חֲנָם:
ד תַּחַת־אֲהַבְתִּי יִשְׁטָנוּנִי
וְאֲנִי תִפְלָה:
ה וַיִּשְׁימוּ עָלַי רָעָה תַּחַת טוֹבָה
וְשִׁנְאָה תַּחַת אֲהַבְתִּי:
ו הִפְקֵד עָלָיו רָשָׁע
וְשֹׁטֵן יַעֲמֵד עַל־יְמִינוֹ:
ז בִּהְשָׁפְטוֹ יֵצֵא רָשָׁע
וְתִפְלָתוֹ תִּהְיֶה לַחֲטָאָה:

PSALM 109

- 1 *To the leader. Of David. A Psalm.*
God whom I praise do not ignore me!
- 2 For, wicked and deceitful mouths are opened against me,
speaking against me with lying tongues.
- 3 They surround me with words of hate,
though I give no cause for hostility.
- 4 In return for my friendship, they denounce me,
and all I can do is pray!
- 5 They repay my kindness with evil,
and friendship with hatred.
- 6 Set up a wicked man against him
as accuser to stand on his right.
- 7 At his trial he will be found guilty,
even his prayer construed as a crime!

PSALM 109

- 1 In place of 'do not ignore me', here following NETB, the NJB & NRSV have 'do not be silent'; the literal translation of the MT is 'do not be deaf'.
- 2 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "false accusations are cast in my teeth."
- 3 For the 1st line, here following the NRSV (except for 'surround' in place of 'beset'), the NJB reads, "Words of hate fly all around me."
- 4 The literal translation of the 2nd line is 'and I a prayer'; the NRSV has 'even while I make prayer for them'.
- 5 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "And they set upon me evil in place of good."
- 6 The literal translation of the 2nd line would be, "Let the Accuser stand at his right hand." The Accuser (Hebrew Satan) was a name later given to the devil (see #Job 1:6). He, like the advocate (v. 31), stands on the right of the accused (Job 30:12, Zc 3:1).
- 7 The prefixed verbal form translated 'will be found' (following NETB) could be taken as a jussive (as NJB - 'may he be found') but the use of the imperfect form in the following line suggests that this verse anticipates the outcome of the accusation envisioned in v. 6.

ח יהיו־ימיו מַעֲטִים
 פִּקְדָּתוֹ יִקַּח אַחֵר:
 ט יהיו־בָּנָיו יְתוּמִים
 וְאִשְׁתּוֹ אִלְמָנָה:
 י וְנוֹעַ יָנוּעוּ בָנָיו וְשָׂאֲלוּ
 וְדָרְשׁוּ מִחֲרֻבוֹתֵיהֶם:
 יא יִנְקֹשׁ גֹּזֵשׁ לְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ
 וַיִּבְזּוּ זָרִים יִגְיעוּ:
 יב אֲל־יִהְיֶה־לּוֹ מִשָּׁךְ חֶסֶד
 וְאֲל־יִהְיֶה חֲזוֹן לִיתוּמָיו:
 יג יִהְיֶה־אַחֲרֵיתוֹ לְהַכְרִית
 בְּדוֹר אַחֵר יִמַּח שְׁמֹם:
 יד יִזְכֹּר | עוֹן אֲבֹתָיו אֲל־יִהְיֶה
 וְחַטָּאת אִמּוֹ אֲל־תִּמָּח:
 טו יִהְיוּ נִגְד־יְהוָה תָּמִיד
 וַיִּכְרַת מֵאֶרֶץ זָכָרָם:

- 8 May his life be cut short,
someone else take over his office.
- 9 May his children be orphaned
and his wife be widowed.
- 10 Let his children wander perpetually,
beggars driven from the ruins of their house.
- 11 Let a creditor seize all his goods
and strangers make off with the fruits of his toil.
- 12 May there be none left faithful enough to show him love,
no one to take pity on his orphans.
- 13 Let the line of his descendants be cut off,
his name wiped out in one generation.
- 14 May Yahweh never forget the crimes of his ancestors,
and his mother's sins not be wiped out.
- 15 Let Yahweh keep these constantly in mind,
to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

8 The prefixed verbal forms in vv. 8–20 (except those with *vav* consecutive) are taken as jussives of prayer.

9 A more literal translation of the 1st line is, “May his sons be fatherless.”

10 ‘Driven from’ here follows the LXX (reading יִגְרְשׁוּ); the MT reads ‘seeking’ (וְדָרְשׁוּ).

11 In place of ‘the fruits of his toil’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘his earnings’.

12 The 2nd line may refer to being generous (see 37:21).

13 In place of ‘in one generation’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘in the second generation’.

14 According to ancient Israelite theology and its doctrine of corporate solidarity and responsibility, children could be and often were punished for the sins of their parents.

15 The plural pronominal suffix on ‘remembrance of them’ probably refers back to the children mentioned in v. 13.

טז יֵעַן אֲשֶׁר | לֹא זָכַר עֲשׂוֹת חֶסֶד
 וַיִּרְדֹּף אִישׁ-עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן
 וַנִּכְאֶה לִּבָּב לְמוֹתָת:
 יז וַיֵּאָהֵב קָלֶלָה וַתְּבוֹאֶהוּ
 וְלֹא-חֶפֶץ בְּבִרְכָּה וַתִּרְחַק מִמֶּנּוּ:
 יח וַיִּלְבֹּשׁ קָלֶלָה כְּמָדוּ
 וַתֵּבֵא כִמִּים בְּקֶרְבּוֹ
 וְכֶשֶׁמֶן בַּעֲצְמוֹתָיו:
 יט תְּהִי-לּוֹ כְּבִגְד יַעֲטָה
 וְלִמְזַח תִּמְיֵד יַחְגֹּרָה:
 כ זֹאת פַּעֲלַת שְׂטָנִי מֵאֵת יְהוָה
 וְהַדְּבָרִים רָעַע עַל-נַפְשִׁי:
 כא וְאַתָּה | יְיָהוָה אֱדֹנָי
 עֲשֵׂה-אַתִּי לְמַעַן שְׁמֶךָ
 כב כִּי-טוֹב חֶסֶדְךָ הַצִּילָנִי:
 כב כִּי-עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן אֲנִכִּי

- 16 He had no thought of being loyal,
 but hounded the poor and the needy
 and the broken-hearted to their death.
 17 He had a taste for cursing; let it recoil on him!
 No taste for blessing; let it never come his way!
 18 Cursing has been the uniform he wore;
 let it soak into him like water,
 like oil right into his bones.
 19 Let it be as a robe that envelops him completely,
 a belt that he wears every day.
 20 Let this be the salary Yahweh pays
 those who speak evil against my life.
 21 But you, Yahweh my Lord,
 act on my behalf for your name's sake;
 because your faithful love is good, deliver me.
 22 Poor and needy as I am,

16 Literally translated, the last line reads, "and one timid of heart to put [him] to death."

17 Cursing and blessing are here personified.

18 The 2nd line is probably an allusion to the old ritual of 'the water of bitterness', described in Nb 5:11-31.

19 The noun מִזְח ('belt') occurs only here in the OT.

20 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "the accusers who blacken my name."

21 For this verse, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "Yahweh, treat them as your name demands; as your faithful love is generous, deliver me."

22 The 2nd line here follows NETB: the verb, חָלַל, appears to be a Qal form from the root חָלַל, meaning 'pierced' or 'wounded' (cf. NRSV, 'and my heart is pierced within me'; however, the Qal of this root is otherwise unattested. The translation assumes an emendation to יַחֲיִל, a Qal imperfect

וְלִבִּי חָלַל בְּקִרְבִּי: כְּצֵל-כְּנוֹטוֹתָיו נִהְלַכְתִּי נִנְעַרְתִּי כָּאֲרֵבָה: בְּרַכִּי כְּשֶׁלוֹ מִצֹּם וּבְשָׁרִי כַחַשׁ מִשֶּׁמֶן: וְאֲנִי הָיִיתִי חֲרֻפָּה לָהֶם יִרְאוּנִי יְנִיעוֹן רֹאשָׁם: עֲזֹרְנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי כַחֲסִדְּךָ: וַיֵּדְעוּ כִּי־יָדְךָ זֹאת אַתָּה יְהוָה עֲשִׂיתָה: יִקְלְלוּ־הֵמָּה וְאַתָּה תִּבְרָךְ קִמּוּ וַיִּבְשׁוּ וְעִבְדְּךָ יִשְׂמַח: יִלְבְּשׁוּ שׁוֹטְנֵי כְלָמָה וַיַּעֲטוּ כַמְעִיל בְּשָׂתָם:	כג	my heart beats violently within me. 23 I am passing away like an evening shadow; they have shaken me off like a locust. 24 My knees are weak from lack of food; my body lean for lack of fat. 25 I have become the object of their taunts; they shake their heads at the sight of me. 26 Help me, Yahweh my God, save me, as your faithful love demands. 27 Then they will know that yours is the saving hand, that this, Yahweh, is your word. 28 Let them curse, provided that you bless; let them be put to shame; may your servant be glad! 29 Let my accusers be clothed in disgrace, enveloped in a cloak of shame.
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from חוֹל, or to חָלַל, a Polal perfect from חוֹל.

23 The psalmist compares himself to a shadow made by the descending sun that will soon be swallowed up by complete darkness (cf. 102:11).

24 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, “and my flesh is lean away from fatness.”

25 The NJB has ‘butt’ in place of ‘object’.

26 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, “deliver me according to your faithfulness.”

27 In place of ‘then they will know’ (here following NETB), the NJB opens with ‘let them know’: after the preceding imperative, the prefixed verbal form with *vav* conjunctive indicates purpose or result.

28 The phrase, ‘let them be put to shame’ follows the LXX (& NRSV); the MT reads, ‘they have risen up and have been put to shame’.

29 The prefixed verbal forms in this verse are here translated as jussives (following the NJB).

לְאֹדָה יְהוָה מְאֹד בְּפִי
 וּבִתְהוֹדָת רַבִּים אֶהְלֵלֵנוּ:
 לֹא כִי־יַעֲמֵד לִימִין אֲבִיוֹן
 לְהוֹשִׁיעַ מִשְׁפָּטֵי נַפְשׁוֹ:

- 30 With generous thanks to Yahweh on my lips,
 I shall praise him before all the people.
 31 For he stands at the side of the poor,
 to save him from those who would put him to death.

30 For the 1st line, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "With my mouth I will give great thanks to the LORD."

31 The NJB has 'their lives' in place of 'him', here following the MT.

תהילים פרק קי

א לְדָוִד מִזְמוֹר

נָאֻם יְהוָה | לְאֹדְנִי שֵׁב לְיְמִינִי
עַד־אֲשִׁית אֲבִיךָ הַדָּם לְרִגְלֶיךָ:

ב מִטֶּה־עֶזְךָ יִשְׁלַח יְהוָה מִצִּיּוֹן
רֹדֶה בְּקֶרֶב אֲבִיךָ:

ג עַמְּךָ נִדְבַת בְּיוֹם חֵילֶךָ
בַּהֲדַר־קֹדֶשׁ מִרְחֹם מִשְׁחָר
לְךָ טַל יִלְדֹתֶיךָ:

ד נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה | וְלֹא יִנָּחֵם
אֶת־הַכֹּהֵן לְעֹלָם
עַל־דְּבָרֹתַי מִלְּפִי־צֶדֶק:

PSALM 110

¹ *Of David. A Psalm.*

Yahweh declared to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand,
until I make your enemies your footstool."

² Yahweh will stretch out the sceptre of your power;
from Zion, you will rule your foes all around you.

³ Your people offer themselves willingly
in the day of your power, in holy array.
Out of the womb of the dawn, to the dew of your youth.

⁴ Yahweh has sworn an oath he will never retract;
you are a priest forever
of the order of Melchizedek.

PSALM 110

- ¹ Yahweh's invitation to the Davidic king to 'sit' at his 'right hand' reflects the king's position as the Lord's vice-regent. Compare this verse with Jos 10:24 and Dn 7:14.
- ² Since Yahweh is mentioned in the 3rd person (note the use of the 1st person in v. 1), it is likely that these are the psalmist's words to the king, not a continuation of the oracle *per se*.
- ³ This verse (loosely) follows the WEB; the MT reads: "Your people is generosity on the day of your strength, in sacred splendours, from the womb of the dawn (meaning uncertain), to you the dew of your youth." (In place of 'sacred splendours', 83 MSS and Symmachus have 'on the holy mountain'.) The NJB more closely follows the LXX (μετὰ σοῦ ἡ ἀρχὴ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ τῆς δυνάμεώς σου ἐν ταῖς λαμπρότησιν τῶν ἁγίων· ἐκ γαστροῦ πρὸ ἐωσφόρου ἐξῆγεν ἡ σέ.): "Royal dignity has been yours since the day of your birth, sacred honour from the womb, from the dawn of your youth." In any case, the meaning of the second part can no longer be recovered with certainty.
- ⁴ An alternative reading for the 2nd line is, "you are a priest forever, a rightful king by my edict." Like all early Israelite kings, the new king will have the privileges of a priest (compare 2S 8:18, 1K 3:4). In this respect, he will be like Melchizedek, the ancient Canaanite priest-king of Jerusalem (Gn 14:18).

אֲדֹנִי עַל־יְמִינֶךָ ה
 מַחֵץ בְּיוֹם־אַפּוֹ מְלָכִים: ו
 יִדִּין בְּגוֹיִם מִלֵּא גְוִיּוֹת ז
 מַחֵץ רֹאשׁ עַל־אֶרֶץ רַבָּה: ז
 מִנְחַל בְּדֶרֶךְ יִשְׁתֶּה
 עַל־כֵּן יָרִים רֹאשׁ:

- 5 At your right hand, Lord,
he shatters kings when his anger breaks out.
- 6 He judges nations, heaping up corpses;
he breaks heads over the whole wide world.
- 7 He drinks from a stream as he goes,
and therefore he holds his head high.

⁵ As pointed in the *Qere*, אֲדֹנִי ('Lord') here refers to God, and many Mediaeval *Hebrew MSS* have the Tetragrammaton ('Yahweh').

⁶ The imperfect verbal forms in vv. 6–7 are understood here as descriptive-dramatic or as generalising, though they could be taken as future.

⁷ The Messiah drinks of the torrent of ordeal (see #18:4, 32:6, 66:12), or of the torrent of divine favours (36:8, 46:4). Or possibly, he is compared to the warrior pursuing his enemies, pausing only a moment to quench his thirst (Jg 7:5, 15:18, 1S 30:9).

תהילים פרק קיא

א הללו־יָהּ
אֹדָה יְהוָה בְּכָל־לֵב
בִּסּוֹד יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעֵדָה:
ב גדלים מעשי יהוה
דְּרוּשִׁים לְכָל־חַפְצֵיהֶם:
ג הוד־וְהָדָר פָּעִלּוּ
וְצִדְקָתוֹ עֹמֶדֶת לְעַד:
ד זָכַר עֲשֵׂה לְנַפְלְאוֹתָיו
חֲנוּן וְרַחֻם יְהוָה:
ה טָרַף נָתַן לִירָאָיו
יִזְכֹּר לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתוֹ:
ו כָּח מַעֲשָׂיו הִגִּיד לְעַמּוֹ
לְתַת לָהֶם נַחֲלַת גּוֹיִם:
ז מַעֲשֵׂי יָדָיו אֱמֶת וּמִשְׁפָּט
נֶאֱמָנִים כָּל־פְּקוּדָיו:

PSALM 111

- 1 Hallelujah!
I give thanks to Yahweh with all my heart,
in the meeting-place of honest people, in the assembly.
- 2 Great are the deeds of Yahweh,
pondered by all who delight in them.
- 3 Full of splendour and majesty is his work,
his saving justice stand firm forever.
- 4 He gives us a memorial of his great deeds;
Yahweh is mercy and tenderness.
- 5 He gives food to those who fear him;
he keeps his Covenant ever in mind.
- 6 His works show his people his power
in giving them the heritage of the nations.
- 7 The works of his hand are fidelity and justice;
all his precepts are trustworthy.

PSALM 111

- 1 This psalm is acrostic – each of the 22 lines (after the initial ‘Hallelujah’) begins with the corresponding letter of the Hebrew alphabet.
- 2 In place of ‘pondered’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘studied’ and NETB has ‘eagerly awaited’.
- 3 For other uses of the phrase הוד־וְהָדָר (‘splendour and majesty’) see 1Ch 16:27, Job 40:10, Ps 21:5, 96:6, 104:1.
- 4 The ‘memorial’ is the institution of the yearly feasts (see #Ex 23:14).
- 5 The 1st line is an allusion to the miracles of manna and quails (see #Ex 16:1).
- 6 Literally translated, this verse reads, “the strength of his deeds he proclaimed to his people, to give to them an inheritance of nations.”
- 7 In place of ‘trustworthy’, NETB has ‘reliable’ – the meaning is ‘fair and for man’s good’.

ח סְמוּכִים לְעַד לְעוֹלָם
 ט עֲשׂוּיִם בְּאֵמֶת וְיֶשֶׁר:
 פְּדוּת | שֶׁלַח לְעַמּוֹ
 צוּה-לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתוֹ
 קָדוֹשׁ וְנוֹרָא שְׁמוֹ:
 י רֹאשִׁית חֲכָמָה | יִרְאַת יְהוָה
 שְׁכָל טוֹב לְכָל-עֹשִׂיהֶם
 תְּהִלָּתוֹ עֲמִדָת לְעַד:

- 8 They are established forever and ever,
accomplished in fidelity and honesty.
- 9 Redemption he sends to his people,
his covenant he imposes forever;
holy and awesome is his name.
- 10 The root of wisdom is fear of Yahweh;
those who practice them are wise.
His praise will continue forever.

⁸ The passive participle translated 'accomplished' probably has the force of a gerund.

⁹ The NJB has 'deliverance' in place of 'redemption', here following the NRSV & NETB.

¹⁰ The 3MP pronominal suffix ('them') must refer back to the 'precepts' mentioned in v. 7; the NJB & NRSV have a singular pronoun, assuming the referent is the 'wisdom' of the preceding line.

תהילים פרק קיב

א הללו־יָהּ
אֲשֶׁר־אִישׁ יֵרָא אֶת־יְהוָה
בְּמִצְוֹתָיו חֲפֵץ מְאֹד:
ב גִּבּוֹר בָּאָרֶץ יִהְיֶה זִרְעוֹ
דּוֹר יִשְׂרָאֵל יְבָרֵךְ:
ג הוֹדוּעֶשֶׂר בְּבֵיתוֹ
וְצִדְקָתוֹ עֹמֶדֶת לְעַד:
ד זֶרַח בַּחֲשֵׁךְ אֹזֶר לַיִּשְׂרָאֵל
חֲנוּן וְרַחוּם וְצַדִּיק:
ה טוֹב־אִישׁ חוֹנֵן וּמִלּוּה
יְכַלְכֵּל דְּבָרָיו בְּמִשְׁפָּט:
ו כִּי־לְעוֹלָם לֹא־יִמוּט
לְזָכָר עוֹלָם יִהְיֶה צַדִּיק:
ז מִשְׁמוּעָה רָעָה לֹא יִירָא
נִכּוֹן לִבּוֹ בִּטְחַ בַּיהוָה:

PSALM 112

- 1 Hallelujah!
How blessed is anyone who fears Yahweh,
who delights in his commandments!
- 2 His descendants shall be powerful on earth;
the generation of the honest shall receive blessings:
- 3 Riches and wealth for his family;
his uprightness stands firm forever.
- 4 For the honest, he shines as a lamp in the dark,
generous, tender hearted and upright.
- 5 All goes well for one who lends generously,
who conducts his affairs with justice.
- 6 For all time to come he will not stumble;
for all time to come the upright will be remembered.
- 7 Bad news holds no fears for him;
firm is his heart, trusting in Yahweh.

PSALM 112

- 1 The *Maqaf* in הללו־יָהּ does not appear in either the Aleppo or Leningrad Codices but is included in the MAM text in grey (as here). This psalm is acrostic – each of the 22 lines (after the initial ‘Hallelujah’) begins with the corresponding letter of the Hebrew alphabet.
- 2 The term דּוֹר (‘generation’) could be taken as parallel to ‘descendants’ and translated ‘posterity’ but it more likely refers to the godly as a class.
- 3 The word ‘uprightness’ (the NRSV has ‘righteousness’) indicates both the virtue and the happiness that rewards it.
- 4 The literal translation of ‘upright’ is ‘he rises’. Others read, “For the honest in darkness a light arises; the upright is kind and compassionate.”
- 5 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, “who is honest in all his dealing.”
- 6 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, “for an eternal memorial a just [one] will be.”
- 7 The ‘heart’ is here viewed as the seat of the volition and emotions.

ח סִמוּךְ לִבּוֹ לֹא יִירָא
 עַד אֲשֶׁר־יִרְאֶה בְּצָרָיו:
 ט פֶּזֶר | נָתַן לְאֲבִיּוֹנִים
 צְדָקָתוֹ עֹמֶדֶת לְעַד
 קִרְנוֹ תָרוּם בְּכָבוֹד:
 י רָשָׁע יִרְאֶה | וְכָעַס
 שְׁנָיו יִחַרֵּק וְנָמַס
 תַּאֲוֹת רָשָׁעִים תֵּאֲבֹד:

- 8 His heart held steady, he has no fears;
in the end, he will look in triumph on his foes.
- 9 To the needy he gives without stint,
his uprightness stands firm forever;
his reputation is founded on strength.
- 10 The wicked are vexed at the sight;
they grind their teeth and waste away.
The desires of the wicked will be frustrated.

⁸ For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, “until he can gloat over his enemies.”

⁹ For the last line, the NRSV has, “their horn is exalted in honour;” a footnote to the NJB suggests as an alternative, “to his glory his strength increases.” This verse is quoted in part in 2Co 9:9.

¹⁰ The noun translated ‘the wicked’ is singular but the representative wicked individual is in view as typifying a group.

תהילים פרק קיג

א הללו־יְהוָה |
הללו עבְדֵי יְהוָה
הללו אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה:
ב יהי שֵׁם יְהוָה מְבֹרָךְ
מֵעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם:
ג מִמֶּזְרַח־שֶׁמֶשׁ עַד־מְבֹאֵז
מְהֵלֵל שֵׁם יְהוָה:
ד רָם עַל־כָּל־גּוֹיִם | יְהוָה
עַל הַשָּׁמַיִם כְּבוֹדוֹ:
ה מִי כִיהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
הַמַּגְבִּיחַ לִשְׁבֹּת:
ו הַמְשַׁפִּיל לִרְאוֹת
בַּשָּׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ:
ז מְקִימֵי מַעַפְרֵי דָל
מַאֲשֵׁפֶת יָרִים אֲבִיּוֹן:

PSALM 113

- 1 Hallelujah!
Praise, O servants of Yahweh;
praise the name of Yahweh.
- 2 Blessed be the name of Yahweh,
henceforth and forever.
- 3 From the rising of the sun to its setting,
praised be the name of Yahweh!
- 4 Supreme over all nations is Yahweh,
supreme over the heavens his glory.
- 5 Who is like Yahweh our God?
His throne is set on high,
- 6 but he stoops to look down
on heaven and earth.
- 7 He raises the poor from the dust;
he lifts the needy from the dunghill,

PSALM 113

- 1 The *Maqaf* in הללו־יְהוָה does not appear in either the Aleppo or Leningrad Codices but is included in the MAM text in grey (as here).
- 2 Vv. 2-4 form the choral response to the opening summons (v. 1).
- 3 For the 1st line, here following the NJB & NRSV, NETB reads, "From east to west." The extent is not temporal but spatial: from the *place* where the sun rises to where it sets.
- 4 A more literal translation of the 2nd line is, "above the sky is his glory."
- 5 A more literal translation of the 2nd line is, "the one who makes high to sit."
- 6 A more literal translation of the 1st line is, "the one who makes low to see."
- 7 The language of this verse is almost identical to that of 1S 2:8.

ח לְהוֹשִׁיבֵי עַם־נְדִיבִים
 עַם נְדִיבֵי עַמּוֹ:
 ט מוֹשִׁיבֵי עֶקֶרֶת הַבַּיִת
 אִם־הַבָּנִים שְׂמֵחָה
 הַלְלוּ־יָהּ:

⁸ to make them sit with princes,
 with the princes of his people.
⁹ He lets the barren woman be seated at home,
 the happy mother of sons.
 Hallelujah!

⁸ For the 1st line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, “to give them a place among princes.”

⁹ This verse refers to women like Sarah (Gn 16:1, 17:15–21, 18:9–15, 21:1–7) and Anne (1S 1–2). The stress is on the honour done to her, for a woman normally remained standing to serve. The NJB includes the last line as part of Ps 114; here, we follow the MT & NRSV.

תהילים פרק קיד

א בַּצֵּאת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם
בֵּית יַעֲקֹב מֵעַם לֵעָז:
ב הִיְתָה יְהוּדָה לְקֹדֶשׁוֹ
יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמְּשֻׁלּוֹתָיו:
ג הַיָּם רָאָה וַיָּנֹס
הַיַּרְדֵּן יָסָב לְאַחֲזֹר:
ד הַהָרִים רָקְדּוּ כְּאַיִלִים
גִּבְעוֹת כְּבִנְיָצָאן:
ה מַה־לָּךְ הַיָּם כִּי תִנּוֹס
הַיַּרְדֵּן תִּסָּב לְאַחֲזֹר:
ו הַהָרִים תִּרְקְדּוּ כְּאַיִלִים
גִּבְעוֹת כְּבִנְיָצָאן:
ז מִלִּפְנֵי אֲדוֹן חוֹלֵי אֶרֶץ
מִלִּפְנֵי אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב:

PSALM 114

- 1 When Israel came out of Egypt,
the House of Jacob from a people of foreign speech,
- 2 Judah became his sanctuary,
and Israel his domain.
- 3 The sea fled at the sight,
the Jordan turned back.
- 4 The mountains skipped like rams,
the hills like sheep.
- 5 Sea, what makes you flee?
Jordan, why turn back?
- 6 Why skip like rams, you mountains?
Why like sheep, you hills?
- 7 Tremble, earth, at the presence of the Lord,
at the presence of the God of Jacob,

PSALM 114

This hymn, which the *LXX* and *Peshitta* unite with Ps 115, pairs the crossing of the Sea of Reeds and the crossing of the Jordan (Ex 14 & Jos 3).

- 1 The verb לֵעָז ('to speak a foreign language') occurs only here in the OT.
- 2 The *NRSV* has 'God's sanctuary' in place of 'his sanctuary', here following the *MT* (and *NJB*).
- 3 The psalmist recalls the crossing of the Sea of Reeds (Ex 14:21).
- 4 This verse may recall the theophany at Sinai, when the mountain shook before God's presence (Ex 19:18).
- 5 For this verse, here following the *NJB*, the *NRSV* reads, "Why is it, O sea, that you flee? O Jordan, that you turn back?"
- 6 For this verse, here following the *NJB*, the *NRSV* reads, "O mountains, that you skip like rams? O hills, like lambs?"
- 7 The *NJB* has 'coming' in place of 'presence' (twice in this verse), here following the *NRSV*.

ח הַהִפְכִּי הַצֹּר אֲגַם־מַיִם
חֲלָמִישׁ לְמַעַיְנו־מַיִם:

⁸ who turns rock into pool,
flint into fountain.

⁸ In this verse, the psalmist recalls the event(s) recorded in Ex 17:6 and/or Nb 20:11 (see also Dt 8:15 and Ps 78:15–16, 20).

תהילים פרק קטו

א לֹא לָנוּ יְהוָה לֹא-לָנוּ
כִּי-לְשִׁמְךָ תֵּן כְּבוֹד
עַל-חֶסֶדְךָ עַל-אַמְתְּךָ:
ב לָמָּה יֹאמְרוּ הַגּוֹיִם
אֵי-הָנָא אֱלֹהֵיהֶם:
ג וְאֱלֹהֵינוּ בַּשָּׁמַיִם
ד כָּל אֲשֶׁר-חָפֵץ עָשָׂה:
ה עֲצִבֵיהֶם כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב
וּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵי אָדָם:
ז פֶּה-לָהֶם וְלֹא יִדְבְּרוּ
עֵינֵיהֶם לָהֶם וְלֹא יֵרְאוּ:
ח אֲזָנֵיהֶם לָהֶם וְלֹא יִשְׁמְעוּ

PSALM 115

- 1 Not to us, Yahweh, not to us,
but to your name give the glory,
for your faithful love and your constancy!
- 2 Why should the nations ask,
“Where is their God?”
- 3 Our God is in heaven;
he does whatever he pleases.
- 4 They have idols of silver and gold,
made by human hands.
- 5 These have mouths but say nothing,
have eyes but see nothing.
- 6 They have ears but hear nothing,

PSALM 115

This Psalm is an exhortation to confidence by commemorating the power of Yahweh and the impotence of idols: once returned from Exile, the people have no right to lose heart. It was, perhaps, sung as follows: A choir ascribes glory to God alone (1-2); a soloist proclaims that God is omnipotent and that idols have no life at all (3-8); the choir therefore asks Israel to trust in Yahweh (9-11); the congregation confidently responds (12-13). A priest then pronounces a blessing (14-15) and the Psalm ends with a concluding hymn of praise (16-18).

- 1 The psalmist asks God to demonstrate his loyal love and faithfulness, not simply so Israel may benefit, but primarily so that God will receive honour among the nations, who will recognise, contrary to their present view (see v. 2), that Israel's God is committed to his people.
- 2 The psalmist here 'mocks' pagan cultures for having gods that they can see.
- 3 The NJB has 'creates' in place of 'does', here following the NRSV & NETB.
- 4 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "the work of the hands of man."
- 5 Vv. 5-7 mock the impotence of man-made idols.
- 6 In place of 'hear nothing' and 'smell nothing', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'do not hear' and 'do not smell'.

אָף לֵהֶם וְלֹא יִרְיָחוּן:		have noses but smell nothing.
יְדֵיהֶם וְלֹא יִמְשֹׁן	ז	7 They have hands but cannot feel,
רַגְלֵיהֶם וְלֹא יִהְלֹכוּ		have feet but cannot walk;
לֹא יִהְיוּ בְּגִרוֹנָם:		no sound comes from their throats.
כְּמוֹהֶם יִהְיוּ עֹשִׂיהֶם	ח	8 Their makers will end up like them,
כָּל אֲשֶׁר־בִּטַּח בָּהֶם:		everyone who relies on them.
יִשְׂרָאֵל בִּטַּח בַּיהוָה	ט	9 House of Israel, rely on Yahweh;
עֲזָרָם וּמִגְנָם הוּא:		he is their help and their shield.
בֵּית אַהֲרֹן בִּטַּחוּ בַּיהוָה	י	10 House of Aaron, rely on Yahweh;
עֲזָרָם וּמִגְנָם הוּא:		he is their help and their shield.
יִרְאִי יִהְיֶה בִּטַּחוּ בַּיהוָה	יא	11 You who fear Yahweh, rely on Yahweh;
עֲזָרָם וּמִגְנָם הוּא:		he is their help and their shield.
יְהוָה זָכְרֵנוּ יְבָרֵךְ	יב	12 Yahweh will keep us in mind, he will bless,
יְבָרֵךְ אֶת־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל		he will bless the House of Israel;
יְבָרֵךְ אֶת־בֵּית אַהֲרֹן:		he will bless the House of Aaron.
יְבָרֵךְ יִרְאֵי יִהְיֶה	יג	13 He will bless those who fear Yahweh,

-
- 7 V. 5a refers to speaking but the last line, here, refers to inarticulate sounds made in the throat.
- 8 Because the idols are lifeless, they cannot help their worshipers in times of crisis; consequently, the worshipers end up as dead as the gods in which they trust.
- 9 For the 2nd line, here following the MT, NJB & NRSV, NETB reads, “*He is their deliverer and protector.*”
- 10 See #9 – the same applies here.
- 11 The three groups of vv. 9–11 (and v. 12) appear again in 118:2–4; those ‘*who fear Yahweh*’ are the proselytes (see #15:4).
- 12 Another option is to translate the prefixed form of the verb ‘bless’ in vv. 12–13 as a jussive, ‘*may he bless*’ (see v. 14).
- 13 For the 2nd line, NETB reads, “*both the old and the young,*” assuming that the adjectives refer to age.

הַקְטַנִּים עִם־הַגְּדֹלִים:
יִסַּף יְהוָה עֲלֵיכֶם יד
עֲלֵיכֶם וְעַל־בְּנֵיכֶם:
בְּרוּכִים אַתֶּם לַיהוָה טו
עֹשֶׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ:
הַשָּׁמַיִם שָׁמַיִם לַיהוָה טז
וְהָאָרֶץ נָתַן לִבְנֵי־אָדָם:
לֹא הַמֵּתִים יְהַלְלוּ־יָהּ ז
וְלֹא כָל־יֹרְדֵי דוֹמָה:
וְאֲנַחְנוּ נִבְרַךְ יָהּ יח
מֵעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם
הַלְלוּ־יָהּ:

small and great alike.

- 14 May Yahweh add to your numbers,
yours and your children's too!
- 15 May you be blessed by Yahweh,
who made heaven and earth.
- 16 Heaven belongs to Yahweh,
but earth he has given to the sons of Adam.
- 17 The dead cannot praise Yah,
those who sink into silence.
- 18 But we, the living, shall bless Yah,
henceforth and forever.

Hallelujah!

14 The prefixed verbal form here is jussive, indicating that this is a prayer.

15 See #14 – the same applied here.

16 Another reading for 'the sons of Adam' is 'the sons of man' (or 'mankind').

17 In early Israel, it was believed that the dead in Sheol ('silence') were separated from God (88:5–6).

18 'The living' follows the LXX; it is lacking in the MT (and NRSV). The NJB, following the LXX, places 'Hallelujah' at the beginning of Ps 116; here, we follow the MT (and NRSV).

תהילים פרק קטז

א אֶהְבֶּתִי כִּי־שָׁמַעַ | יְהוָה
אֶת־קוֹלִי תַחֲנוּנִי:
ב כִּי־הִטָּה אָזְנוֹ לִי
וּבִימִי אֶקְרָא:
ג אֶפְפוּנִי | חֲבִל־מָוֶת
וּמַצְרֵי שְׁאוֹל מִצְאוּנִי
צָרָה וִיגוֹן אִמְצָא:
ד וּבְשֵׁם־יְהוָה אֶקְרָא
אֲנִה יְהוָה מִלֹּטָה נַפְשִׁי:
ה חֲנוּן יְהוָה וְצַדִּיק
וְאֱלֹהֵינוּ מְרַחֵם:
ו שֹׁמֵר פֶּתָאִים יְהוָה
דָּלַתִּי וְלִי יְהוֹשִׁיעַ:
ז שׁוּבִי נַפְשִׁי לְמִנוּחַיִכִּי
כִּי־יְהוָה גָּמַל עָלַיִכִּי:

PSALM 116

- 1 I love Yahweh
because he listens to the sound of my prayer.
- 2 Because he bends down to hear me
on the day I call.
- 3 The bonds of death were all round me;
the pangs of Sheol held me fast;
distress and anguish held me in their grip.
- 4 Then I called on the name of Yahweh:
"Deliver me, Yahweh, I beg you."
- 5 Yahweh is merciful and upright;
our God is merciful.
- 6 Yahweh looks after the simple,
when I was brought low, he gave me strength.
- 7 My heart, be at peace once again,
for Yahweh has treated you generously.

PSALM 116

- 1 Literally translated, this verse reads, "I love because Yahweh heard my voice, my pleas." It is possible that the Divine Name originally appeared directly after 'I love' and was later accidentally misplaced.
- 2 The NJB has 'as' in place of 'on the day' (here following the Peshitta); the MT has 'in my days'.
- 3 'Pangs' follows the NRSV; the MT has 'sorrow' and adds 'I find' at the end of the verse. 'Sheol' is the abode of the dead.
- 4 For the 2nd line, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "O LORD, I pray, save my life!"
- 5 The NJB has 'tenderness' in place of 'merciful', here following the NRSV.
- 6 The word 'simple' here refers to the morally naïve – that is, one who is still young and learning right from wrong.
- 7 The Hebrew idiom translated 'treated you generously' means literally 'to repay', here in a positive sense.

ח כִּי חֲלַצְתָּ נַפְשִׁי מִמָּוֶת
 אֶת־עֵינַי מִן־דְּמָעָה
 אֶת־רַגְלִי מִדָּחִי:
 ט אֶתְהַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה
 בָּאֲרָצוֹת הַחַיִּים:
 י הָאֲמַנְתִּי כִּי אֲדַבֵּר
 אֲנִי עֲנִיתִי מְאֹד:
 יא אֲנִי אִמַּרְתִּי בַחֲפוּזִי
 כֹּל־הָאָדָם כֹּזֵב:
 יב מִה־אֲשִׁיב לַיהוָה
 כֹּל־תְּגֻמּוֹלוֹהִי עָלַי:
 יג כּוֹס־יִשׁוּעוֹת אֲשָׂא
 וּבִשְׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא:
 יד נִדְרֵי לַיהוָה אֲשַׁלֵּם
 נִגְדָה־נָּא לְכָל־עַמּוֹ:
 טו יִקָּר בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה
 הַמּוֹתָה לַחֲסִידָיו:

- 8 He has rescued me from death,
my eyes from tears,
and my feet from stumbling.
- 9 I shall pass my life in the presence of Yahweh,
in the land of the living.
- 10 My trust does not fail even when I say,
“I am completely wretched.”
- 11 In my terror I said,
“Everyone is a liar.”
- 12 What return can I make to Yahweh
for his generosity to me?
- 13 I shall take up the cup of salvation
and call on the name of Yahweh.
- 14 I shall fulfil my vows to Yahweh,
witnessed by all his people.
- 15 Costly in Yahweh’s sight
is the death of his faithful.

8 ‘He has rescued’ follows the LXX and Peshitta; the MT and NRSV have ‘You have rescued’; the phrase, ‘me from death’ is probably a later addition.

9 The word translated ‘land’ is actually a plural but the modern English idiom uses the singular form.

10 This verse is 115:1 in the LXX and Vg texts (see #114:1 and #10:1).

11 For the 2nd verse, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, “No human being can be relied on.”

12 The NRSV has ‘bounty’ in place of ‘generosity’, here following the NJB.

13 This verse alludes to the thanksgiving ritual preserved in Jewish and Christian liturgy (see 1Co 10:16).

14 The NRSV has ‘pay’ in place of ‘fulfil’, here following the NJB.

15 The LXX and Peshitta interpret this verse according to the dogma of the resurrection: “The death of the faithful is precious in Yahweh’s view.”

טז אֲנִי יְהוָה כִּי־אֲנִי עֲבָדְךָ
אֲנִי־עַבְדְּךָ בֶן־אֲמָתְךָ
פָּתַחְתָּ לְמוֹסְרִי:
יז לֹךְ־אֲזַבַּח זֶבַח תּוֹדָה
וּבִשְׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא:
יח נִדְרֵי לַיהוָה אֲשַׁלֵּם
נִגְדָה־נָּא לְכָל־עַמּוֹ:
יט בַּחֲצֹרוֹת | בֵּית יְהוָה
בְּתוֹכִי יְרוּשָׁלַם
הַלְלוּ־יָהּ:

- 16 I beg you Yahweh, I am your servant,
I am your servant, the son of your serving girl;
you have undone my fetters.
- 17 I shall offer you a sacrifice of thanksgiving
and call on the name of Yahweh.
- 18 I shall fulfil my vows to Yahweh,
witnessed by all his people,
- 19 in the courts of the house of Yahweh,
in your very heart, Jerusalem.
- Hallelujah!

16 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "I am your servant and my mother was your servant."

17 For the 1st line, here following the NJB & NRSV, NETB has the rather clumsy, "I will present a thank offering to you."

18 The NRSV has 'pay' in place of 'fulfil', here following the NJB. This verse is identical to v. 14.

19 The NJB places 'Hallelujah' at the beginning of Ps 117; here, we follow the MT (and NRSV).

תהילים פרק קיז

א הללו את־יהוה כל־גוים
שִׁבְּחוּהוּ כל־הָאֲמִים:
ב כִּי גָבַר עָלֵינוּ חֶסֶדוֹ
וְאִמַּת־יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם
הללו־יהוה:

PSALM 117

- ¹ Praise Yahweh, all nations;
extol him, all people.
- ² For his faithful love is strong
and his constancy never-ending.

Hallelujah!

PSALM 117

¹ This entire Psalm is a doxology.

² The *NJB* places 'Hallelujah' at the beginning of Ps 118; here, we follow the *MT* (and *NRSV*).

תהילים פרק קיח

א הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי־טוֹב
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדּוֹ:
ב יֹאמְרוּ־נָא יִשְׂרָאֵל
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדּוֹ:
ג יֹאמְרוּ־נָא בֵּית־אַהֲרֹן
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדּוֹ:
ד יֹאמְרוּ־נָא יְרֵאֵי יְהוָה
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדּוֹ:
ה מִן־הַמֶּצַר קִרְאתִי יְהוָה
עֲנֵנִי בַמֶּרְחֵב יְהוָה:
ו יְהוָה לִי לֹא אִירָא
מִה־יַּעֲשֶׂה לִּי אָדָם:
ז יְהוָה לִי בַעֲזָרִי

PSALM 118

- 1 Give thanks to Yahweh for he is good,
for his faithful love endures forever.
- 2 Let Israel say,
"His faithful love endures forever."
- 3 Let the House of Aaron say,
"His faithful love endures forever."
- 4 Let those who fear Yahweh say,
"His faithful love endures forever."
- 5 In my distress I called to Yah;
Yah heard me and brought me relief.
- 6 With Yahweh on my side, I fear nothing;
what can human beings do to me?
- 7 With Yahweh on my side as my help,

PSALM 118

This Psalm ends the 'Egyptian Hallel' (see #113:1). An invitatory (vv. 1–4) precedes the hymn of thanksgiving put into the mouth of the personified community and is followed by a number of responses (vv. 19ff, 25ff) chanted by various groups as the procession entered the Temple. The Psalm may have been used for the feast described in Ne 8:13–18 (see Ezr 3:4, 3:11, Zc 14:16 and #Ex 23:14).

- 1 Before the beginning of this verse, the *NJB*, following the *LXX*, inserts 'Hallelujah' (*Ἀλληλουϊα*); here, we follow the *MT* (& *NRSV*).
- 2 In place of 'Israel', here following the *MT* (יִשְׂרָאֵל) & *NRSV*, the *NJB*, following the *LXX* (οἶκος Ἰσραηλ) has 'the House of Israel'.
- 3 *NETB* has 'family' in place of 'House', here following the *NJB* & *NRSV* (the latter of which does not capitalise the word).
- 4 In place of 'those who fear Yahweh', here following the *MT* & *NJB*, *NETB* has 'the followers of the LORD'.
- 5 The noun מֶצַר ('distress') occurs only here and in Lm 1:3 (in Ps 116:3, it should probably be amended to מִצָּרִי – 'snares of').
- 6 This verse is quoted in Heb 13:6.
- 7 The literal translation of 'as my help' is 'among my helpers'.

וְאֲנִי אֶרְאֶה בְּשָׁנָאִי:
 ח טוֹב לְחַסּוֹת בַּיהוָה
 מִבֶּטֶחַ בְּאָדָם:
 ט טוֹב לְחַסּוֹת בַּיהוָה
 מִבֶּטֶחַ בְּנָדִיבִים:
 י כָּל־גּוֹיִם סָבְבוּנִי
 יא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי אֲמַלֵּם:
 סָבְבוּנִי גַם־סָבְבוּנִי
 יב בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי אֲמַלֵּם:
 סָבְבוּנִי כְּדַבּוּרִים
 דַּעֲכוּ כָאֵשׁ קוֹצִים
 יג בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי אֲמַלֵּם:
 דָּחָה דָּחִיתָנִי לְנָפֹל
 וַיְהִי עֲזָרָנִי:

I gloat over my enemies.

8 It is better to take refuge in Yahweh
 than to rely on human beings.

9 It is better to rely on Yahweh
 than to rely on princes.

10 Nations were swarming around me,
 in the name of Yahweh I cut them down.

11 They swarmed around me, pressing upon me,
 in the name of Yahweh I cut them down.

12 They swarmed around me like bees;
 they flared up like a brushwood fire,
 in the name of Yahweh I cut them down.

13 I was pushed hard, to make me fall,
 but Yahweh came to my help.

⁸ Taking refuge in Yahweh is an idiom for seeking his protection, which presupposes and even demonstrates the subject's loyalty. In the Psalms, those who 'take refuge' in Yahweh are contrasted with the wicked and equated with those who love, fear, and serve him (Ps 5:11–12, 31:17–20, 34:21–22).

⁹ In place of 'to rely on', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'put confidence in'.

¹⁰ Some translate 'cut them down' (here and in vv. 11 & 12) as 'I cause them to be circumcised' (the NRSV has 'I cut them off'); John Hyrcanus forced circumcision on Idumaeans and Greeks. While it is difficult to be sure whether the language of vv. 10–14 is literal or figurative, it is tenable that the speaker is a king who has come to the Temple to offer thanks for a victory.

¹¹ For the 1st line, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "They surrounded me, surrounded me on every side."

¹² 'They flared up' follows the LXX (ἐξέλαύθησαν), NJB & NRSV; the MT has 'they were extinguished'; the LXX reading supposes the emendation of בערו to דעכו. The point is that the hostility of the nations is short-lived, like a fire that quickly devours brushwood and then burns out.

¹³ 'I was pushed hard' follows the LXX (ὠσθραίσ – literally, 'being thrust through') and Peshitta; the MT has 'you pushed me hard'.

יד עֲזִי וְזִמְרַת יְהוָה
 וַיְהִי־לִי לִישׁוּעָה:
 טו קוֹל רִנָּה וִישׁוּעָה בְּאֶהְלֵי צְדִיקִים
 יִמִּין יְהוָה עָשָׂה חֵיל:
 טז יִמִּין יְהוָה רוֹמְמָה
 יִמִּין יְהוָה עָשָׂה חֵיל:
 יז לֹא־אֲמוֹת כִּי־אֲחִיה
 וְאֶסְפָּר מַעֲשֵׂי יְהוָה:
 יח יִסֹּר יִסְרֹנִי יְהוָה
 וְלִמּוֹת לֹא נִתְּנִי:
 ט פֶּתַח־חַיִּי שַׁעַר־צֶדֶק
 אֲבֹא־בָם אֲוֹדָה יְהוָה:
 כ זֶה־הַשַּׁעַר לַיהוָה
 צְדִיקִים יָבֹאוּ בּוֹ:
 כא אֲוֹדֶה כִּי עֲנִיתָנִי
 וְתַהֲיִי־לִי לִישׁוּעָה:

- 14 Yah is my strength and my song;
he has been my Saviour.
- 15 Shouts of joy and salvation, in the tents of the upright:
Yahweh's right hand does valiantly!
- 16 Yahweh's right hand is victorious;
Yahweh's right hand does valiantly!
- 17 I shall not die; I shall live
to recount the deeds of Yah.
- 18 Though Yah severely punished me,
he has not abandoned me to death.
- 19 Open for me the gates of saving justice,
I shall go in and thank Yah.
- 20 This is the gate of Yahweh;
the righteous shall enter through it.
- 21 I thank you for answering me,
and making yourself my Saviour.

14 In place of 'song', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'might' and NETB has 'protection'; the latter translations are based on the idea that the noun זִמְרָה ('song') is here a homonym.

15 The NRSV has 'glad songs of victory' in place of 'shouts of joy and salvation', here following the NJB.

16 In place of 'does valiantly', here following the MT & NRSV, the NJB has 'is triumphant' (as also in v. 15).

17 Before 'deeds', the NJB adds 'great'; here, we follow the MT & NRSV.

18 The infinitive absolute here translated as 'severely' emphasises the following verbal idea.

19 The 'gates of saving justice' are the gates to Yahweh's temple are referred to here, as v. 20 makes clear.

20 In place of 'righteous', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'upright'.

21 The NJB has 'hearing' in place of 'answering', here following the NRSV & NETB.

כב אֶבֶן מֵאֲסוּ הַבּוֹנִים
 הִיְתָה לְרֹאשׁ פִּנָּה:
 כג מֵאֵת יְהוָה הִיְתָה זֹאת
 הִיא נִפְלְאָת בְּעֵינֵינוּ:
 כד זֶה־הַיּוֹם עָשָׂה יְהוָה
 נִגִּילָה וְנִשְׂמַחָה בּוֹ:
 כה אֲנֵנוּ יְהוָה הוֹשִׁיעָה נָא
 אֲנֵנוּ יְהוָה הַצְלִיחָה נָא:
 כו בְּרוּךְ הַבָּא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה
 בִּרְכֹנֹכֶם מִבֵּית יְהוָה:
 כז אֱלֹהִים יְהוָה וַיֵּאָר לָנוּ
 אֶסְרוּ־חַג בַּעֲבָתִים
 עַד־קַרְנוֹת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ:

22 The stone that the builders rejected
 has become the cornerstone.
 23 This is Yahweh's doing
 and we marvel at it.
 24 This is the day that Yahweh has made,
 a day for us to rejoice and be glad.
 25 We beg you, Yahweh, save us;
 we beg you, Yahweh, give us the victory!
 26 Blessed is he who comes in the name of Yahweh!
 We bless you from the house of Yahweh.
 27 Yahweh is God; he gives us light.
 Link your processions, branches in hand,
 up to the horns of the altar.

22 Vv. 22–23 are quoted frequently in the NT (e.g. Mt 21:42, Ac 4:11, 1P 2:7). The literal translation of ‘cornerstone’ is ‘head of the corner’.

23 The Temple is rebuilt (cf. Hg 1:9, Zc 1:16). The ‘keystone’ (or ‘crowning stone’, cf. Jr 51:26), which may become a ‘stone of stumbling’, is a messianic theme (Is 8:14, 28:16, Zc 3:9, 4:7).

24 Though sometimes applied in a general way, the ‘day’ in this context refers to the day of deliverance, which the psalmist and people celebrate.

25 ‘Save us’ in Hebrew is הוֹשִׁיעָה (*Hosanna*); this and the following verse are alluded to in Mt 21:9 and parallel passages.

26 The 1st line alludes to the ritual cry, ‘Hosanna’ (‘Grant Salvation’), to which the priests answer with a blessing. The NJB reads, “Blessed in the name of Yahweh is he who is coming;” here, we follow the NRSV.

27 The literal translation of the last two lines is, “Inaugurate the ceremony with branches up to the horns of the altar,” referring to the ritual of a branch of myrtle or palm waved as the procession circled the altar.

כח אֵלֶי אֲתָהּ וְאֹדֶךָ
 אֱלֹהֵי אֲרוֹמְמֶךָ:
 כט הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי־טוֹב
 כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדּוֹ:

²⁸ You are my God, and I will give thanks to you;
 you are my God, I will extol you.

²⁹ Give thanks to Yahweh for he is good,
 for his faithful love endures forever.

²⁸ For this verse, here following the MT & NRSV, the NJB follows the LXX:

Θεός μου εἶ σύ, καὶ ἐξομολογήσομαί σοι. Θεός μου εἶ σύ, καὶ ὑψώσω σε· ἐξομολογήσομαί σοι, ὅτι ἐπήκουσάς μου καὶ ἐγένου μοι εἰς σωτηρίαν. ("You are my God, I thank you, all praise to you, my God. I thank you for hearing me, and making yourself my Saviour.")

²⁹ Alternative readings for 'endures forever' (following the NJB & NRSV) are 'endures' (as NETB) and 'is forever'.

תהילים פרק קיט

א אֲשֶׁרִי תַמִּימֵי־דֶרֶךְ
הֵהָלָכִים בְּתוֹרַת יְהוָה:
ב אֲשֶׁרִי נִצְרִי עֲדֹתָיו
בְּכָל־לֵב יִדְרְשׁוּהוּ:
ג אִף לֹא־פָעַלְוּ עוֹלָה
בְּדַרְכָּיו הֵלְכוּ:
ד אֶתָּה צִוִּיתָה פְקֻדֶיךָ
לְשֹׁמֵר מְאֹד:
ה אֲחֲלִי יִכְנֹו דַרְכִּי
לְשֹׁמֵר חֻקֶּיךָ:
ו אֲזִ לֹא־אֲבוֹשׁ
בְּהִבִּטִּי אֶל־כָּל־מִצְוֹתֶיךָ:

PSALM 119

ALEF

- 1 How blessed are those whose way is blameless,
who walk in the Law of Yahweh!
- 2 Blessed are those who observe his decrees,
who seek him with all their hearts,
- 3 and, doing no evil,
who walk in his ways.
- 4 You lay down your precepts
to be carefully kept.
- 5 O, that my ways be steady
in doing your will.
- 6 Then I shall not be shamed,
if my gaze is fixed on your commandments.

PSALM 119

- 1 This is an 'alphabetical' (acrostic) Psalm. The eight verses of each strophe begin with one of the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet and each verse (excepting only v. 122) contains one of the terms for the Law: decree, precept, statute, commandment, promise, word, judgement, or way. The word 'Law' and its synonyms are here to be understood in the widest sense of revealed teaching, as handed on by the prophets.
- 2 In place of 'decrees' (here following the NRSV), the NJB has 'instructions' and NETB has 'rules'.
- 3 For 'walk in his ways', here following the MT, NJB & NRSV, NETB has 'follow in his footsteps'.
- 4 Literally translated, this verse reads, "You, you commanded your precepts, to keep, very much."
- 5 A more literal translation of the 1st line is, "If only my ways were established."
- 6 Another reading for 'if' is 'when'.

אֹדֶךָ בְּיָשָׁר לִבִּי	ז	7	I thank you with a sincere heart
בְּלִמְדֵי מִשְׁפָּטִי צְדָקָה:			for teaching me your upright judgements.
אֶת־חֻקֶּיךָ אֲשָׁמֵר	ח	8	I shall do your will;
אֶל־תַּעֲזֹבֵנִי עַד־מָאֵד:			do not ever abandon me wholly.
BET			
בַּמָּה יִזְכֶּה־נָּעַר אֶת־אַרְחוֹ	ט	9	How can a young man keep his way spotless?
לְשֹׁמֵר כְּדִבְרְךָ:			By guarding it according to your word.
בְּכָל־לִבִּי דָרַשְׁתִּיךָ	י	10	With all my heart I seek you,
אֶל־תִּשְׁגֵּנִי מִמִּצְוֹתֶיךָ:			do not let me stray from your commandments.
בְּלִבִּי צִפְנֹתִי אִמְרֹתֶיךָ	יא	11	In my heart, I treasure your word,
לִמְעַן לֹא אַחֲטָא־לָךְ:			to avoid sinning against you.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה	יב	12	Blessed are you, Yahweh;
לְמַדְנִי חֻקֶּיךָ:			teach me your will.
בְּשִׁפְתֵי סִפְרֹתִי	יג	13	With my lips, I have repeated
כָּל מִשְׁפָּטֵי־פִיךָ:			all the judgements you have given.

7 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, “I will give you thanks with an upright heart.”

8 A literal translation of the 2nd line is, “do not abandon me to excess.” For other uses of the phrase עַד־מָאֵד (*‘to excess’*), see Ps 38:7–9.

9 Hebrew wisdom literature often assumes and reflects the male-oriented perspective of ancient Israelite society, but the principle of the psalm is certainly applicable to all people, regardless of their gender or age.

10 NETB has ‘commands’ in place of ‘commandments’, here following the NJB & NRSV (as also in v. 9).

11 Many medieval Hebrew MSS, as well as the LXX (λόγους σου), read ‘your words’ in place of ‘your word’.

12 In place of ‘blessed are you’, NETB has ‘you deserve praise’.

13 The literal translation of ‘you have given’ is ‘of your mouth’.

י	בְּדֶרֶךְ עֲדוֹתֶיךָ שְׂשׂוֹתִי כַּעַל כָּל־הוֹן: בִּפְקוּדֶיךָ אֲשִׁיחָה וְאִבִּיטָה אֲרַחֲתֶיךָ: בַּחֲקֶתֶיךָ אֲשַׁתְּעֶשׂע לֹא אֲשַׁכַּח דְּבָרֶךָ:	14	In the way of your instructions lies my joy, a joy beyond all wealth.
טו		15	I will ponder your precepts and fix my gaze on your paths.
טז		16	I find my delight in your will; I do not forget your words.
GIMEL			
יז	גָּמַל עַל־עֲבֹדֶךָ אֲחִיָּה וְאֲשַׁמְרָה דְּבָרֶךָ: גַּל־עֵינַי וְאִבִּיטָה נִפְלְאוֹת מִתּוֹרָתֶךָ: גֵּר אֲנִי בָאָרֶץ אֶל־תַּסְתֵּר מִמֶּנִּי מִצְוֹתֶיךָ: גָּרְסָה נַפְשִׁי לְתַאֲבָה אֶל־מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ בְּכָל־עֵת:	17	Be generous to your servant and I shall live, and shall keep your words.
יח		18	Open my eyes and I shall fix my gaze on the wonders of your Law.
יט		19	Wayfarer though I am on the earth, do not hide your commandments from me.
כ		20	My heart is pining away with longing at all times for your judgements.

14 The phrase 'all wealth' refers to all kinds of riches (see Pr 1:13, 6:31, 24:4, Ezk 27:12, 18).

15 The cohortative verbal forms in this verse express the psalmist's resolve.

16 The imperfects in this verse emphasise the attitude the psalmist maintains toward God's Law.

17 'Life' in this Psalm is to be understood in its fullest sense: happiness, security, liberation; a theme recurrent in Ezk 3:21, 18:33; but see Dt 4:1 and Ps 133:3 *et cetera*.

18 The verb form גַּל ('open' – literally, 'uncover') is an apocopate Piel imperative from גָּלָה.

19 Travellers were especially vulnerable and in need of help to understand the customs of the land to avoid getting into trouble.

20 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "My soul languishes for longing for."

גַּעַרְתָּ זֹדִים אַרְוֵרִים הַשְׁגִּים מִמִּצְוֹתֶיךָ: גַּל מֵעַלִי חֲרָפָה וּבֹז כִּי עֹדֶתֶיךָ נִצַּרְתִּי: גַּם יֹשְׁבוֹ שָׂרִים בִּי נִדְּבְרוּ עֲבַדְךָ יֵשִׁיחַ בַּחֲקִיךָ: גַּם־עֹדֶתֶיךָ שְׁעִשְׁתִּי אֲנִשִּׁי עֲצָתִי:	כא	21	You have rebuked the arrogant, the accursed, who stray from your commandments.
	כב	22	Set me free from taunts and contempt since I observe your instructions.
	כג	23	Though princes sit plotting against me, your servant keeps pondering your will.
	כד	24	Your instructions are my delight, your wishes my counsellors.
			DALET
דָּבַקָה לָעֹפָר נַפְשִׁי חֲיִנִי בְּדַבְרֶךָ: דְּרָכֵי סִפְרֹתִי וְתַעֲנֵנִי לְמַדְנִי חֻקֶּיךָ: דֶּרֶךְ־פְּקוּדֶיךָ הִבִּינֵנִי וְאֲשִׁיחָה בְּנִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ:	כה	25	I collapse in the dirt; true to your word, revive me.
	כו	26	I tell you my ways and you answer me; teach me your wishes.
	כז	27	Show me the way of your precepts that I may reflect on your wonders.

21 The 'arrogant' are the greatest of God's enemies, vv. 51, 69, 78, 85, 122; 19:13, 86:14, Is 13:11, Mt 3:19.

22 The literal translation of 'set me free from' is 'roll away from upon me'.

23 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "Though rulers sit, about me they talk together."

24 'Your wishes' follows the LXX (δικαιώματά σου) and NJB; the phrase is lacking in the MT (and NRSV).

25 The literal translation of the 1st line is, "My soul clings to the dirt;" the term נֶפֶשׁ ('soul') with a pronominal suffix is often equivalent to a pronoun, especially in poetry.

26 Literally translated, the verse opens, "My ways I proclaimed."

27 'Wonders' here refers to the teachings of the Law (see v. 18).

כח	דִּלְפָּה נִפְשִׁי מִתּוּגָה קִיְמֵנִי כְּדִבְרְךָ:	28	I am melting away for grief; true to your word, raise me up.
כט	דֶּרֶךְ־שֶׁקֶר הֶסֶר מִמֶּנִּי וְתוֹרַתְךָ חֲנּוּנִי:	29	Keep me far from the way of deceit; grant me the grace of your Law.
ל	דֶּרֶךְ־אֱמוּנָה בַּחֲרָתִי מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ שׁוֹיֵתִי:	30	I have chosen the way of constancy; I am committed to your judgements.
לא	דְּבַקְתִּי בְּעִדּוֹתֶיךָ יְהוָה אֵל־תִּבְשִׁינִי:	31	I cling to your instructions, Yahweh, do not disappoint me.
לב	דֶּרֶךְ־מִצְוֹתֶיךָ אֲרוּץ כִּי תִרְחִיב לִבִּי:	32	I run the way of your commandments, for you have given me freedom of heart.
לג	הוֹרֵנִי יְהוָה דֶּרֶךְ חֻקֶּיךָ וְאַצְרְנָה עֵקֶב:	He	33 Teach me, Yahweh, the way of your will, and I will observe it.
לד	הִבִּינִי וְאַצְרָה תוֹרַתְךָ וְאַשְׁמְרָנָה בְּכָל־לֵב:	34	Give me understanding and I will observe your Law, and keep it wholeheartedly.

28 Many medieval Hebrew MSS read the plural 'your words' in the 2nd line.

29 The 'way of deceit' refers to a lifestyle characterised by deceit and disloyalty to God; it stands in contrast to the 'way of constancy' in v. 30.

30 The verb שׁוֹיֵתִי (in the Piel stem) means 'to be accounted suitable', which in turn would mean by metonymy 'to be committed to'.

31 The NRSV has 'decrees' in place of 'instructions', here following the NJB.

32 The literal translation of the 2nd line is, "you have made wide my heart." The 'heart' is viewed here as the seat of the psalmist's volition and understanding; God gives the psalmist the desire and moral understanding that are foundational to the willing obedience depicted metaphorically in the preceding line. In Is 60:5, the expression 'your heart will be wide' means 'your heart will swell with pride' but, here, the nuance appears to be different.

33 Faithfulness to the commandments is the joy and immediate reward of the upright.

34 This verse expounds a wish often repeated in the Psalm and reiterated by the sages.

הַדְרִיכֵנִי בְּנִתִּיב מִצְוֹתֶיךָ	לֵה	35	Guide me in the way of your commandments,
כִּי־בֹ חֲפִצָּתִי:			for my delight is there.
הִטְלֵבִי אֶל־עֲדוּתֶיךָ	לֹ	36	Bend my heart to your instructions,
וְאַל אֶל־בָּצַע:			not to selfish gain.
הַעֲבֵר עֵינַי מִרְאוֹת שׁוֹא	לֹ	37	Avert my eyes from pointless images;
בְּדַרְכֶּךָ חַיִּי:			in your ways, give me life.
הַקֵּם לְעִבְדְּךָ אִמְרָתְךָ	לֵח	38	Keep your promise to your servant,
אֲשֶׁר לִירְאָתְךָ:			which is for those who fear you.
הַעֲבֵר חֲרָפְתִּי אֲשֶׁר יִגְרָתִּי	לֹט	39	Turn away the taunts that I dread,
כִּי מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ טוֹבִים:			for your judgements are generous.
הִנֵּה תַאֲבָתִי לִפְקֻדֶיךָ	מ	40	See how I yearn for your precepts;
בְּצִדְקָתְךָ חַיִּי:			in your righteousness give me life.
			VAV
וַיֵּבֹאֵנִי חֶסֶדְךָ יְהוָה	מֵא	41	Let you faithful love come to me, Yahweh,
תְּשׁוּעָתְךָ כְּאִמְרָתְךָ:			your salvation according to your promise.

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- 35 In place of 'guide me' (here following the NJB & NETB), the NRSV has 'lead me'; the literal translation is 'make me walk'.
- 36 The NRSV has 'decrees' in place of 'instructions' (as NJB), and NETB has 'rules'.
- 37 The NJB, following the Tg, has 'by your word' in place of 'in your ways', here following the MT (& NRSV).
- 38 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "so that all may hold you in awe." The literal translation is 'which is for your fear' but the LXX reads 'so as to fear you' (εἰς τὸν φόβον σου), which may be where the discrepancy arises.
- 39 Alternative translations for 'taunts' (following the NJB) are 'disgrace' (following the NRSV) and 'reproach' (following a footnote in NETB, which has 'insults' for its main text).
- 40 The NRSV translates the verb in the 1st line in the past tense ('see how I have longed for your precepts'). For 'righteousness' (here following the NRSV), the NJB has 'saving justice' and NETB has 'deliverance'.
- 41 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "true to your promise, save me!"

וְאֶעֱנֶה חֲרָפִי דָּבָר כִּי־בִטָּחָתִי בְּדִבְרֶךָ: וְאֶל־תִּצַּל מִפִּי דְּבַר־אֱמֶת עַד־מָאֵד כִּי לְמִשְׁפָּטֶךָ יִחְלָתִי: וְאֲשִׁמְרָה תּוֹרָתְךָ תָּמִיד לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד: וְאֶתְהַלֵּכָה בְּרַחֲבָהּ כִּי פִקְדֶיךָ דִּרְשָׁתִּי: וְאֶדְבָּרָה בְּעִדְתֶּיךָ נֶגֶד מְלָכִים וְלֹא אֲבוֹשׁ: וְאֲשַׁתְּעֹשֶׂע בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר אֶהְבֵּתִי: וְאֲשָׂא־כַפִּי אֶל־מִצְוֹתֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר אֶהְבֵּתִי וְאֲשִׁיחָה בְּחֻקֶּיךָ:	מב מג מד מה מו מז מח	42 Then I shall have an answer to the taunts against me, since I rely on your word. 43 Do not completely deprive me of that faithful word, since my hope lies in your judgements. 44 Then I shall keep your Law without fail forever and ever. 45 I shall live in all freedom because I have sought your precepts. 46 I shall speak of your instructions before kings and will not be shamed. 47 I shall find delight in your commandments; I love them dearly. 48 I shall lift my hands to your commandments that I love, and I shall ponder your judgements.
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- 42 The prefixed verbal form with *vav* conjunctive in the 1st line indicates purpose/result after the jussive (v. 41).
- 43 The psalmist wants to be able to give a reliable testimony about God's loyal love (vv. 41–42) but, if God does not intervene, the psalmist will be deprived of doing so, for the evidence of such love (i.e., deliverance) will be lacking.
- 44 The cohortative verbal form with *vav* conjunctive in the 1st line indicates purpose/result after the negated jussive (v. 43).
- 45 The faithful wish both to understand the Law and to make it a rule of life.
- 46 The series of 4 cohortatives with prefixed ו in vv. 46–48 list consequences of the anticipated positive divine response to the request of v. 43.
- 47 For the 2nd line, here following the *NJB*, the *NRSV* has, "because I love them."
- 48 Lifting the hands is often associated with prayer (Ps 28:2, 63:4, Lm 2:19): **1** Because praying to God's law borders on the extreme, some prefer to emend the text to 'I lift up my hands to you', eliminating 'your commandments that I love' as dittographic (in this view these words were accidentally repeated from the previous verse); **2** However, it is possible that the psalmist closely associates the law with God himself because

ZAYIN

מט זְכַרְדָּבֶר לְעַבְדְּךָ
 עַל אֲשֶׁר יַחֲלֵתֶנִּי:
 נ זאת נַחֲמָתִי בְּעַנִּי
 כִּי אִמְרָתְךָ חֵיתֵנִי:
 נא זֵדִים הִלְצֵנִי עַד־מָאֵד
 מִתּוֹרָתְךָ לֹא נָטִיתִי:
 נב זְכַרְתִּי מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ מֵעוֹלָם | יְהוָה
 וְאֶתְנַחֵם:
 נג זִלְעָפָה אֲחֻזָּתִי מִרָשָׁעִים
 עֲזָבִי תוֹרָתְךָ:
 נד זְמֵרוֹת הַיּוֹלֵי חֻקֶּיךָ
 בְּבֵית מְגוּרֵי:

49 Remember your word to your servant
 on which I have built my hope.
 50 It is my comfort in distress,
 for your promise gives me life.
 51 Endlessly the arrogant have jeered at me,
 but I have not swerved from your Law.
 52 I have kept your age-old judgements in mind,
 Yahweh, and I am comforted.
 53 Hot indignation seizes me because of the wicked,
 who abandon your Law.
 54 Your judgements are my song
 wherever I make my home.

he views the law as the expression of the divine will; 3 Another option is that ‘*I shall lift up my hands*’ does not refer to prayer here, but to the psalmist’s desire to receive and appropriate the law; 4 Still others understand this to be an action praising God’s commands.

49 The NJB opens with ‘*keep in mind your promise*’ in place of ‘*remember your word*’, here following the NRSV & NETB.

50 The hope generated by the promise brings comfort because (note ‘*for*’ at the beginning of the 2nd line) the promise revives the psalmist’s spirits. Another option is to take כִּי at the beginning of the 2nd line in the sense of ‘*that*’ (as NJB & NRSV).

51 For the 1st line, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, “*The arrogant utterly deride me.*”

52 The prepositional phrase translated ‘*age-old*’ apparently modifies ‘*your judgements*’, alluding to the fact that God revealed them to Israel in the distant past. Another option is to understand the prepositional phrase as modifying the verb, in which case one might translate, ‘*I have long remembered your judgements*’.

53 For the 1st line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, “*Fury grips me when I see the wicked.*”

54 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, “*where I live in exile.*” The literal translation is, “*in the house of my dwelling place;*” some take the noun מְגוּר in the sense of ‘*temporary abode*’ and see this as a reference to the psalmist’s status as a resident alien (v. 19), but the noun can refer to a dwelling place in general (55:15).

זָכַרְתִּי בַלַּיְלָה שְׁמֶךָ יְהוָה וְאֶשְׁמְרָה תּוֹרָתְךָ: זֹאת הִיְתָה-לִּי כִּי פָקֵדֶיךָ נִצַּרְתִּי:	נָה	55	All night, Yahweh, I hold your name in mind; and I will keep your Law.
	נֹו	56	This has been my practice, for I observe your precepts.
			HET
חֶלְקִי יְהוָה אִמְרָתִי לְשֹׁמֵר דְּבָרֶיךָ: חָלִיתִי פָנֶיךָ בְּכָל-לֵב חֲנֹנִי בְּאִמְרָתְךָ: חֲשַׁבְתִּי דַרְכִּי וְאָשִׁיבָה רַגְלִי אֶל-עֲדֹתֶיךָ: חֲשַׁתִּי וְלֹא הִתְמַהֲמַהְתִּי לְשֹׁמֵר מִצְוֹתֶיךָ: חֲבַלֵּי רָשָׁעִים עֹדְנִי תּוֹרָתְךָ לֹא שָׁכַחְתִּי:	נֹו	57	Yahweh is my portion; I promise to keep your words.
	נָה	58	Wholeheartedly I entreat your favour; true to your promise, take pity on me!
	נֹט	59	I have reflected on my ways, and I turn my steps to your instructions.
	ס	60	I hurry and do not delay to keep your commandments.
	סָא	61	Though caught in the snares of the wicked, I do not forget your Law.

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- 55 The cohortative verbal form in the 2nd line expresses the psalmist's resolve to obey the Law.
- 56 The demonstrative 'this' either 1 refers back to the practices mentioned in vv. 54–55, or 2 looks forward to the statement in the 2nd line, in which case כִּי ('for') should be translated 'that'.
- 57 The psalmist compares God to landed property, which was foundational to economic stability in ancient Israel (see Ps 16:5).
- 58 The literal translation of 'I entreat your favour' is 'I appease your face', and the literal translation of 'true to your promise' is 'according to your word'.
- 59 The literal translation of 'steps' is 'feet'.
- 60 This verse, here following the NJB & NRSV, is a fairly literal translation; NETB reads, "I keep your commandments eagerly and without delay."
- 61 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "The cords of the wicked surround me."

חֲצוֹת־לַיְלָה אֶקוֹם לְהוֹדוֹת לָךְ סב
עַל מִשְׁפָּטֶי צְדָקָה:
חֵבֶר אֲנִי לְכָל־אֲשֶׁר יִרְאוּךָ סג
וּלְשִׁמְרֵי פְקוּדֶיךָ:
חֶסֶדְךָ יְהוָה מְלֵאָה הָאָרֶץ סד
חֻקֶּיךָ לִמְדָנִי:

טוֹב עָשִׂיתָ עִם־עַבְדְּךָ סה
יְהוָה כְּדַבְּרְךָ:
טוֹב טַעַם וְדַעַת לִמְדָנִי סו
כִּי בַמִּצְוֹתֶיךָ הֵאֲמַנְתִּי:
טָרַם אֶעֱנֶה אֲנִי שׁוֹג סז
וְעַתָּה אִמְרַתְךָ שְׁמַרְתִּי:
טוֹב־אֵתָהּ וּמַטִּיב סח
לִמְדָנִי חֻקֶּיךָ:

62 At midnight, I rise to praise you
for your upright judgements.
63 I am a friend to all who fear you
and keep your precepts.
64 Your faithful love, Yahweh, fills the earth;
teach me your judgements.

TET

65 You have dealt well with your servant,
Yahweh, true to your promise.
66 Teach me judgement and knowledge,
for I rely on your commandments.
67 Before I was punished, I used to go astray,
but now I keep to your promise.
68 You are good and do good;
teach me your statutes.

62 The psalmist uses an imperfect verbal form in the 1st line to emphasise that this is his continuing practice.

63 In place of 'all who fear you' (following the MT & NJB/NRSV), NETB has 'your loyal followers'.

64 The NJB rearranges the verse, placing the divine name at the beginning of the 2nd line.

65 In place of 'have dealt well with', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'have been generous to' and NETB has 'are good to'; the literal translation is 'you do good to'.

66 The literal translation of 'judgement' is 'goodness of taste' ('taste' here refers to moral and ethical discernment).

67 In place of 'punished' (NJB), the NRSV has 'humbled' and NETB has 'afflicted'.

68 For the 1st line, here following the MT, NRSV and NETB, the NJB reads, "You are generous and act generously." The NJB has 'will' in place of 'statutes'.

טפלו עלי שקר זדים אני בכל-לב אצר פקודיך: טפש כחלב לבם אני תורתך שעשעתי: טוב-לי כי-עניתי למען אלמד חקיך: טוב-לי תורת-פיך מאלפי זהב וכסף:	סט ע עא עב	69 The arrogant blacken me with lies though I wholeheartedly observe your precepts. 70 Their hearts are gross like rich fat, but my delight is in your Law. 71 It was good for me that I was humbled, the better to learn your judgements. 72 The Law you have uttered is more precious to me than all the wealth in the world.
ידיך עשונני ויכוננני הבינני ואלמדה מצותיך: יראיך יראוני וישמחו כי לדברך יחלתי: ידעתי יהוה כי-צדק משפטיך ואמונה עניתני:	עג עד עה	YOD 73 Your hands have made me and established me; give me understanding, to learn your commandments. 74 Those who fear you rejoice at the sight of me, since I put my hope in your word. 75 I know, Yahweh, that your judgements are upright; and, in punishing me, you show your constancy.

69 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, “The arrogant smear over me a lie.”

70 The literal translation of the 1st line is, “Their heart is insensitive like fat.”

71 In place of ‘was humbled’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘had to suffer’.

72 A literal translation of this verse (here following the NJB) would be, “Better to me (is) the law of your mouth than thousands of gold and silver.”

73 The 2 verbs, ‘made’ and ‘established’, also appear together in Dt 32:6, where God, compared to a father, is said to have ‘made and established’ Israel.

74 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, “Those who fear you will see me and rejoice.”

75 In this context (note the 2nd line) the term משפטיך, which so often refers to the regulations of God’s Law elsewhere in this psalm, may refer instead to his decisions or disciplinary judgment.

יְהִי־נָא חֶסֶדְךָ לְנַחֲמָנִי כְּאִמְרַתְךָ לְעַבְדְּךָ:	עו	76	Your faithful love must be my consolation, as you have promised your servant.
יְבֹאוּנִי רַחֲמֶיךָ וְאַחִיָּה בִּי־תוֹרַתְךָ שְׁעֲשָׂעִי:	עז	77	Treat me with tenderness and I shall live, for your Law is my delight.
יִבְשׁוּ זָדִים כִּי־שָׁקַר עֲוֹתוֹנִי אֲנִי אֲשִׁיחַ בְּפִקּוּדֶיךָ:	עח	78	Let the arrogant be shamed, who tell lies about me, while I ponder your precepts.
יָשׁוּבוּ לִי יְרֵאִיךָ וַיִּדְעוּ וַיִּדְעֵי עֲדָתְךָ:	עט	79	Let those who fear you rally to me, those who understand your instructions.
יְהִי־לִבִּי תָמִים בַּחֲקֶיךָ לִמְעַן לֹא אֶבּוֹשׁ:	פ	80	My heart shall be faultless towards your will; then I shall not be ashamed.
KAF			
כָּל־תָּה לַתְּשׁוּעָתְךָ נַפְשִׁי לְדַבְּרֶךָ יַחֲלֹתִי:	פא	81	My soul languishes for your salvation, for your word is my hope.
כָּלוּ עֵינַי לְאִמְרַתְךָ לֵאמֹר מָתִי תִנַּחֲמָנִי:	פב	82	My eyes, too, are worn out waiting for your promise, when will you have pity on me?

76 The literal translation of the 2nd line is, “according to your word to your servant.”

77 The literal translation of ‘treat me with tenderness’ (here following the NJB) is ‘let your compassion come to me’.

78 A more literal translation of ‘who tell lies about me’ is ‘for (with) falsehood they have denied me justice’.

79 The Kethib/Qere difference here seems to be a simple case of yod/vav confusion.

80 The literal translation of the 1st line is, “May my heart be complete in your statutes.”

81 For the 1st line, the NJB has, “I shall wear myself out for your salvation.”

82 After ‘promise’, the MT adds ‘saying’ (dittography of previous word).

כִּי־הֵיִיתִי כְּנֹאֵד בְּקִיטֹור חֲקִידָה לֹא שִׁכַּחְתִּי:	פג	83	For I am like a smoked wineskin; but I do not forget your will.
כַּמָּה יָמִים עֲבֹדָה מִתִּי תַעֲשֶׂה בְרֹדְפֵי מִשְׁפָּט:	פד	84	How long must your servant endure? When will you bring my persecutors to judgement?
כְּרוּלֵי זָדִים שִׁיחֹות אֲשֶׁר לֹא כְתוּרְתָהּ:	פה	85	The arrogant have dug pitfalls for me; they flout your Law.
כָּל־מִצְוֹתֶיךָ אֱמוּנָה שֶׁקֶר רִדְפוּנִי עֲזָרְנִי:	פו	86	All your commandments show constancy. Help me when they pursue me dishonestly.
כַּמַּעַט כְּלוּנִי בָאָרֶץ וְאֲנִי לֹא־עֲזַבְתִּי פְקֻדֶיךָ:	פז	87	They have almost annihilated me on earth, but I have not deserted your precepts.
כַּחֲסִדְךָ חֲיֵנִי וְאֲשַׁמְרָה עֲדוֹת פִּיךָ:	פח	88	True to your faithful love, give me life, and I shall keep the instructions you have laid down.
		LAMED	
לְעוֹלָם יְהוָה דְּבָרְךָ נִצָּב בַּשָּׁמַיִם:	פט	89	Forever, Yahweh, your word is planted firm in heaven.

83 The word נֹאֵד ('wineskin') refers to a container made from animal skin which is used to hold wine or milk (see Jos 9:4, 13, Jg 4:19, 1S 16:20).

84 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "How long are the days of your servant?"

85 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "in defiance of your Law;" the literal translation is "which (is) not according to your Law."

86 God's commands are a *reliable* guide to right and wrong. By keeping them, the psalmist is doing what is right, yet he is still persecuted.

87 In place of 'annihilated me' (here following the NJB), the NRSV has 'made an end of me' and NETB has 'destroyed me'.

88 The cohortative verbal form with *vav* conjunctive in the 2nd line indicates purpose/result after the preceding imperative.

89 The translation assumes that 'your word' refers here to the body of divine instructions contained in the Law (note the frequent references to the Law in vv. 92-96, and see vv. 9, 16-17, 57, 101, 105, 130, 139 & 160-61. The reference in v. 86 to God's Law being 'reliable' favours this interpretation. Another option is that 'your word' refers to God's assuring word of promise, mentioned in vv. 25, 28, 42, 65, 74, 81, 107, 114, 147 & 169; in this case, one might translate, "Yahweh, your promise is reliable, it stands firm in heaven."

לְדֹר וָדֹר אֱמוּנָתְךָ	צ	90	Your faithfulness endures to all generations;
כּוֹנֵנֶת אֶרֶץ וְתַעֲמֹד:			you established the earth and it stands firm.
לְמִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ עֲמָדוֹ הַיּוֹם	צא	91	Through your judgements, all stands firm to this day,
כִּי הַכֹּל עַבְדֶּיךָ:			for all creation is your servant.
לִוְלֵי תוֹרָתְךָ שָׁעָשִׂי	צב	92	Had your Law not been my delight,
אֲזִי אֲבִדְתִּי בְּעָנִי:			I would have perished in my misery.
לְעוֹלָם לֹא־אֲשַׁכַּח פְּקוּדֶיךָ	צג	93	I shall never forget your precepts,
כִּי בָם חִיֵּיתָנִי:			for by them you have given me life.
לִךְ־אֲנִי הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי	צד	94	I am yours, save me,
כִּי פְקוּדֶיךָ דִּרְשָׁתִּי:			for I seek your precepts.
לִי קוֹו רְשָׁעִים לֹא־בִדְנִי	צה	95	The wicked lie in wait to kill me,
עֵדֹתֶיךָ אֶתְבּוֹנֵן:			but all my thought is of your instructions.
לְכָל־תְּכֵלֶה רֵאִיתִי קֵץ	צו	96	I have seen that all perfection is finite,
רַחֲבָה מִצֻּתְךָ מְאֹד:			but your commandment has no limit.

90 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, “To a generation and a generation (is) your faithfulness.”

91 For this verse, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, “By your appointment they stand today, for all things are your servants;” and NETB has, “Today they stand firm by your decrees, for all things are your servants.”

92 Other readings for ‘misery’ (NJB/NRSV) are ‘suffering’ and ‘sorrow’ (NETB).

93 NETB has ‘revived me’ in place of ‘given me life’, here following the NJB & NRSV.

94 In place of ‘save me’ (following the NJB & NRSV), NETB has ‘deliver me’.

95 For the 1st line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, “The wicked may hope to destroy me.”

96 God’s Law is beyond full comprehension, which is why the psalmist continually studies it (vv. 95, 97).

<p>מֵה־אֲהַבְתִּי תוֹרָתְךָ כָּל־הַיּוֹם הִיא שִׁיחִתִּי:</p>	צז		<p>MEM</p> <p>97 How I love your Law! I meditate on it all day long.</p>
<p>מֵאִיבִי תַּחֲכַמְנִי מִצְוֹתֶיךָ כִּי לְעוֹלָם הִיא־לִי:</p>	צח		<p>98 Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies for it is mine forever.</p>
<p>מִכָּל־מְלַמְדֵי הַשְּׂכָלָתִי כִּי עֲדוּתֶיךָ שִׁיחָה לִּי:</p>	צט		<p>99 I am wiser than all my teachers because your decrees are my meditation.</p>
<p>מִזְקָנִים אֶתְבּוֹנֵן כִּי פְקוּדֶיךָ נִצְרָתִי:</p>	ק		<p>100 I understanding more than the aged because I keep your precepts.</p>
<p>מִכָּל־אַרְחַ רַע כָּלֹאתִי רַגְלִי לִמְעַן אֲשַׁמֵּר דְּבָרְךָ:</p>	קא		<p>101 I restrain my foot from evil paths to keep your word.</p>
<p>מִמִּשְׁפָּטֶיךָ לֹא־סָרָתִי כִּי־אַתָּה הוֹרַתָּנִי:</p>	קב		<p>102 I do not turn aside from your judgements, for you have taught me.</p>
<p>מֵה־נִּמְלְצוּ לַחֲכִי אִמְרָתְךָ מִדְּבַשׁ לִפִּי:</p>	קג		<p>103 How pleasant your promise is to my palate, sweeter than honey in my mouth.</p>

⁹⁷ In place of ‘meditate’, here following the NRSV & NETB, the NJB has ‘ponder’.

⁹⁸ The plural form in the 1st line needs to be re-vocalised as a singular (‘commandment’) in order to agree with the preceding singular verb and the singular pronoun in the 2nd line.

⁹⁹ For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB has, “because I ponder your instructions.”

¹⁰⁰ The NJB has ‘have more understanding’ in place of ‘understand more’, here following the NRSV.

¹⁰¹ In place of ‘word’, here following the MT, many medieval Hebrew MSS read the plural.

¹⁰² For the 2nd line, the NJB reads, “because you yourself have instructed me;” here, we follow the NRSV.

¹⁰³ Literally translated, this verse reads, “How smooth they are to my palate, your word, more than honey to my mouth.” A few medieval Hebrew MSS and some other ancient witnesses, read the plural ‘your words’, which can be understood as the subject of the plural verb ‘they are smooth’.

מִפְּקוּדֵיךָ אֶתְבוֹנֵן עַל־כֵּן שִׁנְאַתִּי כָּל־אֶרֶח שֶׁקֶר:	קד	104 From your precepts, I learn wisdom, so I hate all deceptive ways.
נֵר־לְרַגְלִי דְבָרְךָ וְאוֹר לְנִתְיַבְתִּי:	קה	NUN 105 Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.
נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי וְאֶקְיָמָה לְשֹׁמֵר מִשְׁפָּטֶי צְדָקָךָ:	קו	106 I have sworn – and shall maintain it – to keep your upright judgements.
נִעֲנִיתִי עַד־מָאֹד יְהוָה חֲיֵנִי כְדִבְרְךָ:	קז	107 I am utterly wretched, Yahweh; true to your promise, give me life.
נִדְּבֹת פִּי רָצָה־נָא יְהוָה וּמִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ לְמַדְנִי:	קח	108 Accept, Yahweh, the tribute from my mouth, and teach me your judgements.
נַפְשִׁי בְכַפִּי תָמִיד וְתוֹרָתְךָ לֹא שָׁכַחְתִּי:	קט	109 My life is in your hands perpetually; I do not forget your Law.
נִתְּנוּ רָשָׁעִים פֶּח לִי וּמִפְּקוּדֵיךָ לֹא תַעֲיִתִי:	קי	110 The wicked have laid a snare for me, but I do not stray from your precepts.
נִחַלְתִּי עֲדוּתֶיךָ לְעוֹלָם כִּי־שִׂשׂוֹן לִבִּי הֵמָּה:	קיא	111 Your instructions are my eternal heritage, for they are the joy of my heart.

104 The literal translation of ‘all deceptive ways’ is ‘every false path’.

105 In place of ‘word’, here following the MT, many medieval Hebrew MSS read the plural.

106 For this verse, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, “I have sworn an oath and confirmed it, to observe your righteous ordinances.”

107 The literal translation of ‘true to your promise’ is ‘according to your word’.

108 In place of ‘the tribute from my mouth’, here following the MT & NJB, the NRSV (and NETB) has ‘my offerings of praise’.

109 The 1st line means, “I am prepared to sacrifice my life at any moment.”

110 The NJB has ‘have not strayed’ in place of ‘do not stray’, here following the NRSV.

111 The MT has no verb in the 2nd line but it is implied.

נָטִיתִי לִבִּי לַעֲשׂוֹת חֻקֶּיךָ
לְעוֹלָם עֲקֹב:

קיב

112 I devote myself to obeying your statutes;
their recompense is eternal.

SAMEKH

סַעֲפִים שִׁנְאַתִּי
וְתוֹרַתְךָ אֶהְבֵּתִי:

קיג

113 I hate a divided heart;
I love your Law.

סִתְּרִי וּמִגְנִי אֶתְּךָ
לְדַבְּרֶךָ יִחְלָתִי:

קיד

114 You are my refuge and my shield;
I hope in your word.

סוֹרוּ-מִמֶּנִּי מְרַעִים
וְאַצְרֶה מִצְוֹת אֱלֹהִי:

קטו

115 Leave me alone, you wicked,
I shall observe the commandments of my God.

סִמְכֵנִי כְּאִמְרַתְךָ וְאַחִיָּה
וְאַל-תִּבְשִׁינִי מִשְׁבָּרִי:

קטז

116 True to your word, support me and I shall live;
do not disappoint me of my hope.

סַעֲדֵנִי וְאַוְשַׁעַה
וְאַשַׁעַה בְּחֻקֶּיךָ תִּמִּיד:

קז

117 Uphold me and I shall be safe,
my gaze fixed on your will.

סָלִית כָּל-שׁוֹגִים מִחֻקֶּיךָ
כִּי-שָׁקֵר תִּרְמִיתָם:

קיח

118 You shake off all who stray from your will;
deceit fills their horizon.

112 Literally translated, this verse opens, “I turn my heart to do ...”

113 For ‘a divided heart’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘the double-minded’; the Hebrew word occurs only here and appears to be derived from a verbal root, attested in Arabic, meaning ‘to split’.

114 The NJB adds ‘put my’ before ‘hope’; here, we follow the NRSV.

115 The psalmist has already declared that he observes God’s commands despite persecution, so here the idea must be: “So that I might observe the commands of my God unhindered by threats.”

116 The literal translation of the 2nd line is, “Do not make me ashamed of my hope.” After the verb בּוֹשׁ (“to be ashamed”), the preposition מִן (“from”) often introduces the reason for shame.

117 The 2 cohortatives with *vav* conjunctive indicate purpose/result after the imperative at the beginning of the verse.

118 The verb סָלִית (“to disdain”) occurs only here and in Lm 1:15; cognate usage in Aramaic & Accadian suggests a nuance of ‘to shake off’.

סְגִים הַשֶּׁבֶת כָּל־רְשָׁעֵי־אֶרֶץ	קיט	119	In your sight all the wicked of earth are like rust,
לִכֵּן אֶהְבֵּתִי עֲדָתֶיךָ:			so I love your instructions.
סָמַר מִפֶּחַדְךָ בְּשָׂרִי	קב	120	My whole body trembles before you,
וּמִמִּשְׁפָּטֶיךָ יִרְאֵתִי:			your judgements fill me with fear.
		AYIN	
עָשִׂיתִי מִשְׁפָּט וְצֶדֶק	קבא	121	I have done what is just and right;
בְּלִית־נִיחָנִי לַעֲשֹׂקִי:			do not hand me over to my oppressors.
עָרַב עֲבָדְךָ לְטוֹב	קבב	122	Guarantee the well-being of your servant,
אֶל־יַעֲשֹׁקֵנִי זָדִים:			do not let the proud oppress me.
עֵינַי כָּלוּ לִישׁוּעָתְךָ	קבג	123	My eyes are languishing for your salvation
וּלְאַמְרַת צֶדֶקְךָ:			and for the saving justice you have promised.
עֲשֵׂה עִם־עֲבָדְךָ כְּחַסְדְּךָ	קבד	124	Show your faithful love to your servant,
וְחַקֶּיךָ לִמְדָנִי:			and teach me your judgements.
עֲבָדְךָ־אֲנִי הַבִּינֵנִי	קבה	125	Your servant am I; give me understanding
וְאֵדְעָה עֲדָתֶיךָ:			and I shall know your instructions.
עַתָּה לַעֲשׂוֹת לַיהוָה	קבו	126	It is time to take action, Yahweh;
הִפְרוּ תוֹרָתְךָ:			your Law is being broken.

119 'In your sight' follows Aquila and Symmachus; the MT has 'you stop'.

120 The verb סָמַר ('trembles') occurs only here and in Job 4:15.

121 For the 1st line, here following the NRSV, the NJB is rather more verbose: "All my conduct has been just and upright."

122 Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "Be surety for your servant for good."

123 The psalmist has intently kept his eyes open, looking for God to intervene, but now his eyes are watery and bloodshot, impairing his vision.

124 The literal translation of the 1st line is: "Do with your servant according to your faithful love."

125 The cohortative verbal form in the 2nd line with *vav* conjunctive indicates purpose/result after the preceding imperative.

126 NETB translates the passive form of the 2nd line as active: "they break your Law."

עַל־כֵּן אֶהְבֵּתִי מִצְוֹתֶיךָ מִזָּהָב וּמִפָּז:	קכז	127	Thus, I love your commandments more than gold, purest gold.
עַל־כֵּן כָּל־פְּקוּדֵי כָל יִשְׂרָאֵל כָּל־אַרְח שֶׁקֶר שָׁנְאֵתִי:	קכח	128	So, I rule my life by your precepts, I hate all deceptive paths.
פְּלֹאוֹת עֲדוּתֶיךָ עַל־כֵּן נִצְרָתָם נַפְשִׁי:	קכט	129	Wonderful are your instructions, so I observe them.
פֶּתַח דְּבָרֶיךָ יֹאִיר מִבֵּין פְּתִיִּים:	קל	130	As your word unfolds it gives light, and even the simple understand.
פִּי־פִּעֲרָתִי וְאֲשָׁאֶפֶה כִּי לְמִצְוֹתֶיךָ יֹאבֵּתִי:	קלא	131	I open wide my mouth, because I long for your commandments.
פְּנֵה־אֵלַי וְחַנּוּנִי כְּמִשְׁפָּט לְאַהֲבֵי שִׁמְךָ:	קלב	132	Turn to me, pity me; those who love your name deserve it.
פַּעֲמֵי הַכֵּן בְּאַמְרֹתֶיךָ וְאַל־תִּשְׁלַט־בִּי כָל־אֹוֹן:	קלג	133	Keep my steps firm in your word; that no evil may triumph over me.

127 Because the judgment the psalmist fears (see vv. 119–120) is imminent, he remains loyal to God's Law.

128 The 1st line follows the LXX (διὰ τοῦτο πρὸς πάσας τὰς ἐντολάς σου κατωρθούμην) and Vg; the meaning of the MT is uncertain.

129 In place of 'instructions', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'decrees' and NETB has 'rules'.

130 'The simple' here refers to the morally naïve: those who are young and still in the process of learning right from wrong and distinguishing wisdom from folly (see 19:7, 116:6).

131 The verb translated 'long' occurs only here in the OT.

132 Those who love of God's 'name' are his loyal followers (see 5:11, 69:36, Is 56:6).

133 God's 'word' refers here to his Law (see v. 11).

פִּדְנִי מֵעֶשֶׂק אָדָם וְאֲשִׁמְרָה פְּקוּדֶיךָ: פָּנֶיךָ הָאֵר בְּעַבְדְּךָ וְלִמְדֵנִי אֶת־חֻקֶּיךָ: פְּלִג־מַיִם יִרְדּוּ עֵינַי עַל לֹא־שִׁמְרוֹ תוֹרָתְךָ:	קלד קלה קלו	134 Rescue me from human oppression, that I may observe your precepts. 135 Let your face shine on your servant, teach me your will. 136 My eyes stream with tears because your Law is disregarded.
צִדִּיק אַתָּה יְהוָה וְיֹשֶׁר מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ: צוֹיֵת צֶדֶק עֲדָתְךָ וְאַמּוֹנָה מְאֹד: צַמְתַּתֵּנִי קִנְאָתִי כִּי־שָׁכַחוּ דְּבָרֶיךָ צָרִי: צְרוּפָה אִמְרָתְךָ מְאֹד וְעַבְדְּךָ אֶהְיֶה:	קלו קלח קלט קמ	TSADI 137 You are upright, Yahweh, and your judgements are fair. 138 You have appointed your decrees in righteousness and in all faithfulness. 139 My zeal is burning me up because my oppressors forget your word. 140 Your promise is well tested; your servant holds it dear.

¹³⁴ The cohortative verbal form in the 2nd line, with *vav* conjunctive, indicates purpose/result after the preceding imperative.

¹³⁵ In place of 'let your face shine', here following the MT, NJB & NRSV, NETB has simply, 'smile'.

¹³⁶ Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "(With) flowing streams my eyes go down."

¹³⁷ The NJB has 'honest' in place of 'fair', and the NRSV has 'right'; here, we follow NETB.

¹³⁸ For this verse, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "You impose uprightness as a witness to yourself; it is constancy itself" and NETB has, "The rules you impose are just, and absolutely reliable."

¹³⁹ In place of 'my zeal', the LXX reads, 'your zeal' or 'zeal for your house' (cf. 69:9).

¹⁴⁰ For the 1st line, here following the NJB (& NRSV), NETB reads, "Your word is absolutely pure."

צָעִיר אָנֹכִי וְנִבְזָה פְּקֻדֶּיךָ לֹא שָׁכַחְתִּי: צִדְקָתְךָ צֶדֶק לְעוֹלָם וְתוֹרַתְךָ אֱמֶת: צָר־וּמְצוֹק מִצָּאוֹנִי מִצְוֹתֶיךָ שֶׁעָשִׂיתִי: צֶדֶק עֲדוּתֶיךָ לְעוֹלָם הִבִּינִי וְאַחִיָּה:	קמא	141	Puny and despised as I am, I do not forget your precepts.
	קמב	142	Your saving justice is forever just, and your Law is trustworthy.
	קמג	143	Though anguish and distress grip me, your commandments are my delight.
	קמד	144	Your instructions are upright forever; give me understanding and I shall live.
		QOF	
קִרְאתִי בְּכָל־לֵב עֲנֵנִי יְהוָה חֲקִיךָ אֲצַרֶּה: קִרְאתֶיךָ הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי וְאַשְׁמְרֶה עֲדָתֶיךָ: קִדְמָתִי בְּנֹשֶׁף וְאַשׁוּעָה לְדַבְרֶיךָ לְדַבְרֶיךָ יַחֲלֹתִי: קִדְמוֹ עֵינֵי אֲשֶׁמְרוֹת לְשִׁיחַ בְּאַמְרֹתֶיךָ:	קמה	145	I call with all my heart; answer me, Yahweh, and I will observe your judgements.
	קמו	146	I call to you; save me, and I will keep your instructions.
	קמז	147	I am awake before dawn to cry for help, I put my hope in your word.
	קמח	148	My eyes anticipate each watch of the night, to meditate on your word.

¹⁴¹ In place of 'puny', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'small' and NETB has 'insignificant'.

¹⁴² The literal translation of the 1st line is, "Your justice (is) justice forever."

¹⁴³ A more literal translation of 'grip' (here following the NJB) is 'find'.

¹⁴⁴ The cohortative verbal form with *vav* conjunctive indicates purpose/result after the preceding imperative.

¹⁴⁵ NETB places 'answer ... judgements' in direct quotes; here, we follow the NJB & NRSV.

¹⁴⁶ NETB places 'save ... commandments' in direct quotes; here, we follow the NJB & NRSV.

¹⁴⁷ The extra letter (*yod*) in the Kethib reading, compared to the Qere, cannot be trivially explained.

¹⁴⁸ The NJB & NRSV have 'are awake before' in place of 'anticipate', here (loosely) following NETB.

קולי שמעה כחסדך קמט
 יהוה כמשפטך חייני:
 קרבו רדפי זמה קנ
 מתורתך רחקו:
 קרוב אתה יהוה קנא
 וכל מצותיך אמת:
 קדם ידעתי מעדתיך קנב
 כי לעולם יסדתם:
 ראה עניי וחלצני קנג
 כי תורתך לא שכחתי:
 ריבה ריבי וגאלני קנד
 לא מרתך חייני:
 רחוק מרשעים ישועה קנה
 כי חקיך לא דרשו:

149 In your faithful love, listen to my voice;
 Yahweh, let your judgements give me life.
 150 My pursuers are coming closer to their wicked designs,
 and further from your Law.
 151 You are close to me, Yahweh,
 and all your commandments are true.
 152 Long have I known that your rules
 were laid down to last forever.
 RESH
 153 Look at my suffering and rescue me,
 for I do not forget your Law.
 154 Plead my cause and redeem me;
 as you promised, give me life.
 155 Salvation is far from the wicked,
 for they do not seek your statutes.

149 The NJB transposes the divine name to the 1st line; here, we follow the MT & NRSV.

150 'My pursuers' (NJB) or 'those who pursue me' (NRSV) follows the LXX (οἱ καταδιώκοντές με) & Peshitta; the MT has 'those who pursue (wickedness)'.

151 The exact transition for 'true' is 'truth'.

152 The translation (following the NJB) assumes that the preposition prefixed to 'your rules' introduces the object of the verb, as in 1S 23:23; another option (cf. NRSV, NIV) is that the preposition indicates source, in which case one might translate, "Long ago I learned from your decrees that you have established them forever."

153 In place of 'suffering', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'misery' and NETB has 'pain'.

154 The verb 'redeem' casts God in the role of a leader, who protects members of his extended family in times of need and crisis (see also Ps 19:14).

155 The NJB has 'will' in place of 'statutes', here following the MT & NRSV.

רַחֲמֵיךָ רַבִּים יְהוָה כַּמִּשְׁפָּטֶיךָ חֲיִנִּי:	קנו	156	Your kindnesses to me are countless, Yahweh; give me life, according to your justice.
רַבִּים רֹדְפֵי וְצָרִי מֵעֲדוּתֶיךָ לֹא נִטִּיתִי:	קנו	157	My enemies and oppressors are countless, yet I do not turn aside from your instructions.
רָאִיתִי בְּגָדִים וְאַתְקוּטָה אֲשֶׁר אִמְרָתְךָ לֹא שָׁמְרוּ:	קנח	158	The sight of these renegades appals me; they do not observe your command.
רָאָה כִּי־פָקוּדֶיךָ אֶהְבֵּתִי יְהוָה בַּחֲסֶדְךָ חֲיִנִּי:	קנט	159	See how I love your precepts; give me life, true to your faithful love.
רֹאשׁ־דְּבָרְךָ אֱמֶת וְלִעוֹלָם כָּל־מִשְׁפָּט צֶדֶקְךָ:	קס	160	Faithfulness is the essence of your word, your upright judgements hold good forever.
SHIN			
שָׂרִים רֹדְפוּנִי חֲנָם וּמְדַבְרֶיךָ וּמְדַבְרֶיךָ פָּחַד לִבִּי:	קסא	161	Though princes hound me unprovoked, what fills me with awe is your word.
שֵׁשׁ אֲנֹכִי עַל־אִמְרָתְךָ כְּמוֹצֵא שָׁלָל רַב:	קסב	162	I rejoice in your promise like one who finds great plunder.

¹⁵⁶ The NJB reverses the order of phrases in the 2nd line.

¹⁵⁷ Literally translated, the 1st line reads, “Many (are) those who chase me and my enemies.”

¹⁵⁸ The literal translation of ‘command’ is ‘word’.

¹⁵⁹ In place of ‘faithful love’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘steadfast love’ and NETB has ‘loyal love’.

¹⁶⁰ Literally translated, the 1st line reads, “The head of your word is truth;” the term ‘head’ is used here of the ‘sum total’ of God’s instructions.

¹⁶¹ The extra letter (*yod*) in the *Kethib* reading, compared to the *Qere*, cannot be trivially explained. The psalmist’s healthy ‘fear’ of the consequences of violating God’s instructions motivates him to obey them (see v. 120).

¹⁶² The NJB has ‘a vast treasure’ in place of ‘great plunder’, here following the NRSV; the image is that of a victorious warrior who finds a large amount of plunder on the field of battle (see Jg 5:30).

שָׂקֵר שִׁנְאַתִּי וְאַתְעֲבָה תּוֹרַתְךָ אֶהְבֵּתִי:	קסג	163	I hate and detest falsehood, my love is for your Law.
שִׁבְעַת בְּיוֹם הַלֵּלְתִּיךָ עַל מִשְׁפָּטֶי צְדָקָה:	קסד	164	Seven times a day I praise you for your upright judgements.
שָׁלוֹם רַב לְאַהֲבֵי תּוֹרַתְךָ וְאִין־לָמוֹ מִכְשׁוֹל:	קסה	165	Great peace have those who love your Law; no stumbling blocks for them!
שֹׁבֵרְתִי לִישׁוּעַתְךָ יְהוָה וּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ עֲשִׂיתִי:	קסו	166	I am waiting for your salvation, Yahweh; I fulfil your commandments.
שִׁמְרָה נִפְשִׁי עֲדָתֶיךָ וְאַהֲבָם מְאֹד:	קסז	167	I observe your instructions; I love them dearly.
שִׁמְרָתִי פְקוּדֶיךָ וְעֲדָתֶיךָ כִּי כָל־דְּרָכַי נִגְדָּה:	קסח	168	I observe your precepts, your judgements, for all my ways are before you.
תִּקְרַב רִנָּתִי לִפְנֵיךָ יְהוָה כְּדַבְּרֶךָ הִבִּינֵנִי:	קסט	TAV 169	May my cry approach your presence, Yahweh; by your word give me understanding.

¹⁶³ For this verse, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, “I hate and abhor falsehood, but I love your law” and NETB has, “I hate and despise deceit; I love your law.”

¹⁶⁴ The number ‘seven’ is use rhetorically to suggest thoroughness.

¹⁶⁵ Literally translated, this verse reads, “Great peace (is) to the lovers of your law and there is no stumbling to them.”

¹⁶⁶ The literal translation of ‘fulfil’ (following the NJB & NRSV) is simply ‘do’.

¹⁶⁷ For this verse, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, “My soul keeps your decrees; I love them exceedingly.”

¹⁶⁸ For the 2nd line (here a quite literal translation, following the NJB & NRSV), NETB has, “for you are aware of everything I do.”

¹⁶⁹ In the 1st line, the psalmist is asking God to hear his cry for help.

תָּבוֹא תַּחֲנֹנִי לְפָנֶיךָ כְּאִמְרַתְךָ הִצִּילָנִי:	קע	170	May my prayer come into your presence; rescue me as you have promised.
תִּבְעֶנָה שְׁפָתַי תְּהַלֵּה כִּי תִלְמַדְנִי חֻקֶּיךָ:	קעא	171	May my lips proclaim your praise, for you teach me your statutes.
תֵּעַן לְשׁוֹנִי אִמְרַתְךָ כִּי כָל־מִצְוֹתֶיךָ צֶדֶק:	קעב	172	May my tongue recite your promise, for all your commandments are upright.
תְּהִי־יָדְךָ לְעֻזְרִנִּי כִּי פָקוּדֶיךָ בַּחֲרָתִי:	קעג	173	May your hand be there to help me, since I have chosen your precepts.
תֵּאָבֱתִי לִישׁוּעָתְךָ יְהוָה וְתוֹרַתְךָ שְׂעִשְׂעִי:	קעד	174	I long for your salvation, Yahweh, and your Law is my delight.
תַּחֲיֵי־נַפְשִׁי וְתִהְלֹלְךָ וּמִשְׁפָּטְךָ יִעֲזָרֵנִי:	קעה	175	May I live only to praise you, may your judgements be my help.
תֵּלֵעִיתִי כִּשֶׁה אֶבֶד בִּקְשׁ עֲבָדְךָ כִּי מִצְוֹתֶיךָ לֹא שָׁכַחְתִּי:	קעו	176	I wander like a lost sheep; come and look for your servant, for I have not forgotten your commandments.

¹⁷⁰ Literally translated, the 2nd line ends, “according to your speech.”

¹⁷¹ The NJB has ‘will’ in place of ‘statutes’, here following the NRSV & NETB.

¹⁷² The literal translation of ‘promise’ is ‘word’.

¹⁷³ Before ‘your precepts’, NETB adds the words ‘to obey’ (for clarity).

¹⁷⁴ The NJB omits the opening ‘and’ in the 2nd line; here, we follow the NRSV.

¹⁷⁵ God’s regulations will ‘help’ the psalmist by giving him moral and ethical guidance.

¹⁷⁶ It is possible that the point of the ‘lost sheep’ metaphor is vulnerability: The psalmist, who is threatened by his enemies, feels as vulnerable as a straying, lost sheep. This would not suggest, however, that he has wandered from God’s path (see the 2nd half of the verse and v. 110).

תהילים פרק קב

א שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת
אֶל־יְהוָה בַּצָּרָתָהּ לִי
קָרָאתִי וַיַּעֲנֵנִי:
ב יְהוָה הַצִּילָה נַפְשִׁי מִשְׁפַּת־שָׁקֶר
מִלְשׁוֹן רָמִיָּה:
ג מִה־יִּתֵּן לִי וּמִה־יִּסְיֹף לִי
לִשׁוֹן רָמִיָּה:
ד חֲצֵי גִבּוֹר שְׁנוּנִים
עִם גַּחְלֵי רִתְמִים:
ה אוֹיֵה־לִי כִי־גִרְתִּי מִשָּׁךְ
שָׁכַנְתִּי עִם־אֱהֲלֵי קֶדָר:
ו רַבַּת שְׁכֵנֵה־לָּהּ נַפְשִׁי
עִם שׂוֹנְאֵי שָׁלוֹם:

PSALM 120

1 *A Song of Ascents.*
To Yahweh when I am in trouble
I call and he answers me.
2 Save me, Yahweh, from lying lips
and a treacherous tongue!
3 What will he repay you, what more,
treacherous tongue?
4 War-arrows made sharp
with glowing coals of the broom tree.
5 How wretched I am, living in Meshech,
dwelling in the tents of Kedar!
6 Too long have I lived
among those who hate peace.

PSALM 120

- ¹ The 'Songs of Ascents' (Ps 120–134) were probably sung by pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem (see #84:6, Is 30:29). With the exception of Ps 132, their verses are 'elegiac' (unequal lines: 3 + 2 accents) and the 'step' device is often used (a verse takes up a word or expression from its predecessor, see 120:2–3, 5, 6 and 7).
- ² The literal translations of 'lying lips' and 'treacherous tongue' are, respectively, 'lip of falsehood' and 'tongue of deception'.
- ³ This question and the similar exclamation 'may he bring unnameable ills on you and worse ills too' was a customary form of imprecation; see #Rt 1:17, 1S 3:17, 14:44, 20:13, 25:22.
- ⁴ The 'broom tree' produces a particularly hot, long-burning fire.
- ⁵ 'Meshech' was the country of a Caucasian people (Gn 10:2, Ex 27:13), where Gog is later to be king (Ezk 38:2). The Arabs of 'Kedar' lived in the Syrian Desert. The psalmist makes these place-names synonymous with 'barbarian'.
- ⁶ The phrase, 'those who hate' translates a singular participle form, which is likely representative of a more general set of people.

אֲנִי־שָׁלוֹם וְכִי אֶדְבֵּר
הֵמָּה לַמִּלְחָמָה:

ז

⁷ I am for peace; but when I speak,
they are for war!

⁷ For this verse, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, “*When I speak of peace, they are all for war!*”

תהילים פרק קכא

א שִׁיר לַמַּעֲלוֹת
אֲשָׂא עֵינִי אֶל־הַהָרִים
מֵאֵין יָבֵא עֲזָרִי:
ב עֲזָרִי מֵעַם יְהוָה
עָשָׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ:
ג אֲלִי־יִתֵּן לִמּוֹט רַגְלִי
אֲלִי־נֹוֹם שֹׁמְרִי:
ד הִנֵּה לֹא־יָנוּם וְלֹא יִישָׁן
שׁוֹמֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל:
ה יְהוָה שֹׁמְרִי
יְהוָה צִלְּךָ עַל־יַד יְמִינִי:
ו יוֹזֵם הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לֹא־יִכָּבֵד
וַיֵּרַח בַּלַּיְלָה:

PSALM 121

1 *A Song of Ascents.*
I lift up my eyes to the hills;
where is my help to come from?
2 My help comes from Yahweh
who made heaven and earth.
3 May he save your foot from stumbling;
may he, your guardian, not fall asleep!
4 He who keeps Israel
neither slumbers nor sleeps.
5 Yahweh is your guardian,
Yahweh is you shade, at your right hand.
6 By day, the sun will not strike you,
nor the moon by night.

PSALM 121

- 1 This Psalm is equally appropriate for pilgrims on the hard road to Jerusalem, and for those on their pilgrimage to the heavenly Jerusalem. The 'hills' may refer to the high places where the Baals and local fertility gods were worshipped (2K 23:5).
- 2 Possibly 'my' should be emended to 'your' (compare v. 3).
- 3 For this verse, here following the NJB, the NRSV interprets the jussives as rhetorical and translates, 'he will allow' and 'he will not slumber'.
- 4 The NJB swaps (mostly) the two lines of this verse, reading, "You see – he neither sleeps nor slumbers, the guardian of Israel." Here, we follow the NRSV.
- 5 The NJB includes 'is your shade' as part of the 1st line; here, we follow the MT.
- 6 One hardly thinks of the moon's rays as being physically harmful, like those of the sun. The reference to the moon may simply lend poetic balance to the verse, but it is likely that the verse reflects an ancient, primitive belief that the moon could have an adverse effect on the mind. Another possibility is that the sun and moon stand, by metonymy, for harmful forces characteristic of the day and night, respectively.

יְהוָה יִשְׁמְרֶךָ מִכָּל־רָע ז
 יִשְׁמֹר אֶת־נַפְשְׁךָ:
 יְהוָה יִשְׁמַרְצֶאֱתָךְ וּבֹאֲךָ ח
 מִעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם:

- 7 Yahweh guards you from all harm;
he guards your life.
- 8 Yahweh guards your comings and goings,
henceforth and forever.

⁷ The *NJB* repeats the Divine Name at the beginning of the 2nd line; here, we follow the *MT* & *NRSV*.

⁸ The *NRSV* translates ‘*your comings and goings*’ more literally, as ‘*your going out and your coming in*’.

תהילים פרק קכב

א שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְדָוִד
שִׂמְחָתִי בְּאִמְרִים לִי
בֵּית יְהוָה גִּלְדִּי:
ב עֲמֻדֹת הַיּוֹ רִגְלֵינוּ
בְּשַׁעְרֵיךָ יְרוּשָׁלַם:
ג יְרוּשָׁלַם הַבְּנוּיָה
כְּעִיר שֶׁחִבְרָה־לָּהּ יַחְדָּו:
ד שְׁשֵׁם עָלוּ שְׁבֻטִים שְׁבֻט־יִיָּה
עֲדוֹת לְיִשְׂרָאֵל
לְהַדוֹת לִשְׁם יְהוָה:
ה כִּי שָׁמָּה יֵשְׁבוּ כִסְאוֹת לְמִשְׁפָּט
כְּסֻאוֹת לְבֵית דָּוִד:
ו שְׂאֲלוּ שְׁלוֹם יְרוּשָׁלַם

PSALM 122

1 *A Song of Ascents. Of David.*
I rejoiced that they said to me,
“Let us go to the house of Yahweh.”
2 At last, our feet are standing
at your gates, Jerusalem!
3 Jerusalem, built as a city
that is bound firmly together.
4 There, the tribes go up,
the tribes of Yah, a sign for Israel
to give thanks to the name of Yahweh.
5 For there are set the thrones of judgement,
the thrones of the house of David.
6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem,

PSALM 122

- 1 The pilgrims halt at the gates and salute the holy city with *shalom* ('Peace'), alluding to the popular etymology of 'Jerusalem' ('City of Peace', see 76:1). This 'peace' plays a prominent part in the messianic hope (see the #Is 11:6 and #Ho 2:20).
- 2 Affection for holy Zion (see #2S 5:9) is a characteristic of Jewish piety (see Ps 48, 84, 87, 133, 137).
- 3 Jerusalem solidly restored (see Ne 2:17ff) is a symbol of the unity of the chosen people (the LXX and Peshitta have, for the 2nd line, 'that is one in fellowship').
- 4 The NJB has the *full* Divine Name in the 2nd line and most English translation also use 'The LORD' here, yet the MT uses only the first two letters, so we have here translated שְׁבֻט־יִיָּה as 'the tribes of Yah'. However, some suggest that the *dagesh* (or 'doubling-dot') in the *he* (ה) indicates that this is a 'recognised' abbreviation for the Divine Name.
- 5 Literally translated, this verse reads, "Indeed, there they sit [on] thrones for judgment, [on] thrones to the house of David."
- 6 A more literal translation of 'pray' is 'ask'.

יְשׁוּלוּ אֲהַבִּיךָ:			prosperity for those who love you!
יְהִי־שְׁלוֹם בְּחִילְךָ	ז	7	Peace be within your walls,
שְׁלוֹהַּ בְּאַרְמְנוֹתֶיךָ:			prosperity in your palaces!
לְמַעַן אַחֵי וְרַעֵי	ח	8	For love of my brothers and my friends
אֲדַבֶּר־נָא שְׁלוֹם בְּךָ:			I will say, "Peace be within you!"
לְמַעַן בֵּית־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ	ט	9	For love of the house of Yahweh our God,
אֲבַקֶּשׁה טוֹב לָךְ:			I will pray for your good.

⁷ Another reading for 'prosperity' is 'security' (as also in v. 6).

⁸ In place of 'Peace be within you', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'Peace upon you'.

⁹ The psalmist will seek Jerusalem's 'good' through prayer.

תהילים פרק קכג

א שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת
אֶלֶיךָ נִשְׁאַתִּי אֶת־עֵינִי
הַיֹּשֵׁבִי בַשָּׁמַיִם:
ב הִנֵּה כְעֵינֵי עֲבָדִים אֶל־יָד אֲדֹנֵיהֶם
כְּעֵינֵי שִׁפְחָה אֶל־יָד גְּבִרָתָהּ
כֵּן עֵינֵינוּ אֶל־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
עַד שִׁיחַנֵּנוּ:
ג חַנּוּנוּ יְהוָה חַנּוּנוּ
כִּי־רַב שִׁבְעָנוּ בּוֹז:
ד רַבַּת שִׁבְעָה־לָּהּ נַפְשֵׁנוּ
הַלֵּעַג הַשְּׂאֲנָנִים
הַבּוֹז לַגֵּאוֹנוֹת [לַגֵּאֵי יוֹנִים]:

PSALM 123

- 1 *A Song of Ascents.*
I lift up my eyes to you
who are enthroned in heaven.
- 2 Just as the eyes of servants are on the masters' hand,
or the eyes of a servant-girl on the hand of their mistress,
so our eyes look to Yahweh our God,
for him to take pity on us.
- 3 Have pity on us, Yahweh, have pity,
for we have had our full share of scorn.
- 4 Our soul has had more than its share
of jeers from the complacent,
of the scorn of the proud.

PSALM 123

- 1 This Psalm was probably composed shortly after the return from Exile or in the time of Nehemiah.
- 2 Servants look to their master for food, shelter, and other basic needs.
- 3 The speakers here may represent Israel, or some oppressed class or sect within it.
- 4 The last line (parenthesised in the *NJB*) is an addition from the Maccabaeen period, possibly under the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes. The text is obscure: the *Qere* (יוֹנִים לַגֵּאֵי) has 'scorn is for the proud Greeks'; but, in the *Ketiv* (לַגֵּאוֹנוֹת) and the *LXX*, the word for 'Greeks' has been attached to the preceding word (giving a possible form of 'proud') in order to camouflage the xenophobic allusion.

תהילים פרק קכד

א שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְדָוִד
לֹאִי יְהוָה שְׁהִיָּה לָנוּ
יֹאמַר־נָא יִשְׂרָאֵל:
ב לֹאִי יְהוָה שְׁהִיָּה לָנוּ
בְּקוֹם עָלֵינוּ אָדָם:
ג אֲזִי חַיִּים בִּלְעוֹנוּ
בַּחֲרוֹת אַפִּם בָּנוּ:
ד אֲזִי הַמַּיִם שִׁטְפוּנוּ
נַחֲלָה עֲבַר עַל־נַפְשֵׁנוּ:
ה אֲזִי עֲבַר עַל־נַפְשֵׁנוּ
הַמַּיִם הַיִּזְדוֹנִים:
ו בָּרוּךְ יְהוָה
שֶׁלֹא נִתְּנָנוּ טֶרֶף לְשֹׁנֵיהֶם:
ז נִפְשָׁנוּ כְּצִפּוֹר נִמְלָטָה מִפֶּה יוֹקְשִׁים

PSALM 124

- 1 *A Song of Ascents. Of David.*
If Yahweh had not been on our side
– let Israel repeat it –
- 2 if Yahweh had not been on our side
when people attacked us,
- 3 they would have swallowed us alive
when their anger was kindled against us.
- 4 Then the water would have washed us away,
a torrent would have gone over us;
- 5 then over us would have gone
the raging waters.
- 6 Blessed be Yahweh,
for not letting us fall a prey to their teeth!
- 7 We escaped like a bird from the fowlers' net.

PSALM 124

- 1 This is a Psalm of thanksgiving for dangers overcome, described in conventional metaphors. The congregation is invited to repeat the first phrase as an antiphon.
- 2 The literal translation of 'attacked' is 'rose up against'.
- 3 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV & NETV, the NJB reads, "in the heat of their anger."
- 4 The literal translation of 'us' is 'our being'; the term נִפְשׁ with a pronominal suffix is often equivalent a pronoun, especially in poetry.
- 5 For this verse, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "Running right over us then were turbulent waters."
- 6 Literally translated, the 2nd line opens, "the one who did not let."
- 7 The literal translation for 'we escaped' is 'our lives escaped'; NETB reads 'we escaped with our lives'.

הַפֶּחַ נִשְׁבַּר
וְאִנְחֵנוּ נִמְלָטָנוּ:
עֲזָרָנוּ בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה
עֹשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ:

ח

The net was broken
and we escaped.

⁸ Our help is the name of Yahweh,
the creator of heaven and earth.

⁸ A more literal translation of 'creator' is 'maker'.

תהילים פרק קכה

א שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת
הַבְּטָחִים בַּיהוָה
בְּהִרְצִיּוֹן לֹא יִמוּט לְעוֹלָם יֵשֵׁב:
ב יְרוּשָׁלַם הָרִים סְבִיב לָהּ
וַיהוָה סְבִיב לְעַמּוֹ
מֵעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם:
ג כִּי לֹא יָנוּחַ שִׁבְט הָרָשָׁע
עַל־גֹּרֶל הַצַּדִּיקִים לְמַעַן
לֹא־יִשְׁלַחוּ הַצַּדִּיקִים בְּעוֹלָתָהּ יְדֵיהֶם:
ד הִיטִיבָה יְהוָה לְטוֹבִים
וְלִישָׁרִים בְּלִבּוֹתָם:
ה וְהַמָּטִים עֲקֹלְקוֹתָם
יֹלִיכֶם יְהוָה אֶת־פְּעָלֵי הָאָוֶן
שָׁלוֹם עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל:

PSALM 125

- 1 *A Song of Ascents.*
Whoever trusts in Yahweh is like Mount Zion:
unshakeable, it stands forever.
- 2 Jerusalem! The mountains encircle her:
so Yahweh encircles his people,
henceforth and forever.
- 3 The sceptre of wickedness will not come to rest
over the heritage of the upright;
so that the upright might not set their hands to evil.
- 4 Do good, Yahweh, to those who are good,
to the sincere at heart.
- 5 But the crooked, the twisted, turn them away,
Yahweh, with evildoers.
Peace be upon Israel!

PSALM 125

- 1 This Psalm is a prayer for deliverance from national enemies.
- 2 For this verse, here following the *NJB* and the (arrangement of the) *MT*, the *NRSV* reads, "As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD surrounds his people, from this time on and forevermore."
- 3 The 'sceptre' symbolises royal authority; when collocated with 'wickedness', the phrase refers to an oppressive foreign conqueror.
- 4 The literal translation of 'sincere at heart' (following the *NJB*) is 'pure of heart'; the *NRSV* has 'upright in their hearts'.
- 5 The last line is understood as a prayer (cf. Ps 122:8).

תהילים פרק קכו

א שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלֹת
בָּשׁוּב יְהוָה אֶת־שִׁיבַת צִיּוֹן
הָיִינוּ כְּחִלְמִים:
ב אֲזַימָלֵא שְׁחֹק פִּינוֹ
וּלְשׁוֹנֵנוּ רִנָּה
אֲזַיֹּאמְרוּ בְּגוֹיִם
הַגִּדִּיל יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת עִם־אֱלֹהִים:
ג הַגִּדִּיל יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת עִמָּנוּ
הָיִינוּ שְׂמִיחִים:
ד שׁוּבָה יְהוָה אֶת־שְׁבִיתָנוּ שְׁבוֹתָנוּ
כַּאֲפִיקִים בְּנֶגֶב:
ה הַזְרְעִים בְּדַמְעָה
בְּרִנָּה יִקְצְרוּ:

PSALM 126

- 1 *A Song of Ascents.*
When Yahweh brought back Zion's captives,
we lived in a dream.
- 2 Then our mouths filled with laughter,
and our lips with song.
Then the nations kept saying, "What great deeds
Yahweh has done for them!"
- 3 Yes, Yahweh did great deeds for us,
and we rejoiced.
- 4 Bring back, Yahweh, our people from captivity
like torrents in the Negeb!
- 5 Those who sow in tears
sing as they reap.

PSALM 126

- 1 For the exiles, faced with the difficulties of reconstruction (see Ne 5), the return from Babylon portends the coming of the messianic age.
- 2 Literally translated, the first two lines read, "Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with a shout."
- 3 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, then NJB reads, "and we were overjoyed."
- 4 The rivers of the Negeb (the arid region to the south of Palestine), nearly always dry (see Job 6:15), fill swiftly in winter and make the soil fruitful. The *Kethib/Qere* difference here appears to be simple *yod/vav* confusion.
- 5 Perhaps the people were experiencing a literal drought, the effects of which cause them to lament their plight as they plant their seed in hopes that the rain would come. However, most take the language as metaphorical: like a farmer sowing his seed, the covenant community was enduring hardship as they waited for a new outpouring of divine blessing. Yet they are confident that a time of restoration will come and relieve their anxiety, just as the harvest brings relief and joy to the farmer.

הָלוֹךְ יֵלֵךְ | וּבָכָה נִשָּׂא מִשְׁדֵּי־הָזֶרַע
בֹּא־יָבֹא בִרְנָה
נִשָּׂא אֶלְמָתִיו:

6 He went off, went of weeping, carrying the seed.
He comes back, comes back singing,
bringing in his sheaves.

⁶ The noun translated as 'sheaves' (אֶלְמָה) occurs only here and in Gn 37:7 in the OT.

תהילים פרק קכז

א שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְשִׁלְמֹה
אִם־יְהוָה | לֹא־יִבְנֶה בַּיִת
שׁוּא עֲמָלוֹ בּוֹנֵיו בּוֹ
אִם־יְהוָה לֹא־יִשְׁמַר־עִיר
שׁוּא | שָׁקֵד שׁוֹמֵר:
ב שׁוּא לָכֶם מִשְׁכְּבֵימִי קוֹם
מֵאַחֲרֵי־שֵׁבֶת
אֲכָלִי לֶחֶם הָעֲצָבִים
כֵּן יִתֵּן לִידִידוֹ שְׁנָא:
ג הִנֵּה נַחֲלַת יְהוָה בָּנִים
שָׁכָר פְּרִי הַבֶּטֶן:
ד כַּחֲצִים בַּיַּד־גִּבּוֹר
כֵּן בְּנֵי הַנְּעוּרִים:

PSALM 127

- 1 *A Song of Ascents. Of Solomon.*
If Yahweh does not build a house
in vain do its builders toil.
If Yahweh does not guard a city
in vain does its guard keep watch.
- 2 In vain, you get up earlier,
and put off going to bed,
sweating to make a living,
since he provides for his beloved as they sleep.
- 3 Sons are a birthright from Yahweh;
children are a reward from him.
- 4 Like arrows in a warrior's hand
are the sons you father when young.

PSALM 127

- 1 Without God, human toil is useless; daily bread and children are gifts from God.
- 2 The literal translation of the last line is 'he gives to his loved ones in sleep' or 'he gives sleep'; the LXX has 'while he gives sleep to those he loves'. The Hebrew title of the Psalm identifies the 'beloved' with Solomon (cf. 2S 12:25) and possibly the 'sleep' with Solomon's dream at Gibeon (1K 3:5).
- 3 Some prefer to translate 'sons' with the gender neutral 'children', but 'sons' are plainly in view here, as the following verses make clear. Daughters are certainly wonderful additions to a family but, in ancient Israelite culture, sons were the 'arrows' that gave a man security in his old age, for they could defend the family interests at the city gate, where the legal and economic issues of the community were settled.
- 4 'Arrows' are used in combat to defend oneself against enemies; 'sons' are viewed here as providing social security and protection (v. 5).

ה
אֲשֶׁר־הִגֵּבֶר
אֲשֶׁר מָלֵא אֶת־אֲשָׁפְתּוֹ מֵהֶם
לֹא־יִבְשׁוּ
כִּי־יִדְבְּרוּ אֶת־אֹיְבָיִם בַּשַּׁעַר:

5 How blessed is the man
who has filled his quiver with them;
he shall not be put to shame
in dispute with his enemies at the city gate.

⁵ The literal translation of the last line is '*when he speaks with his enemies in the gate*', i.e. the gate of the city, where business is transacted.

תהילים פרק קכח

א שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת
אֲשֶׁר־יִירָא יְהוָה
הַהֹלֵךְ בְּדַרְכָּיו:
ב יָגִיעַ בַּפִּי כִּי תֹאכַל
אֲשֶׁר־יֵד וְטוֹב לָךְ:
ג אֲשֶׁתְּךָ כַּגֶּפֶן פְּרִיָּה בִּירְכֹתַי בֵּיתְךָ
בְּנֶיךָ כַּשְׁתְּלֵי זֵיתִים
סָבִיב לְשִׁלְחָנְךָ:
ד הִנֵּה כִּי־כֹן יְבָרֶךְ גֹּבֵר
יִרָא יְהוָה:
ה יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה מִצִּיּוֹן
וְרָאָה בְּטוֹב יְרוּשָׁלַם כָּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ:
ו וְרָאָה־בָּנִים לְבָנֶיךָ
שָׁלוֹם עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל:

PSALM 128

- 1 A Song of Ascents.
Happy are all who fear Yahweh,
who walk in his ways.
- 2 Your own labours will yield you a living,
happy and prosperous will you be.
- 3 Your wife is a fruitful vine in the inner parts of your house.
Your children are round your table
like shoots of an olive tree.
- 4 Such are the blessings that fall
on the man who fears Yahweh.
- 5 May Yahweh bless you from Zion!
May you see Jerusalem prosper all the days of your life.
- 6 May you live to see your children's children!
Peace be upon Israel!

PSALM 128

- 1 The Psalm celebrates the domestic happiness granted by God to the upright, in accordance with the teaching of the sages on earthly retribution.
- 2 The psalmist addressees the representative God-fearing man, as indicated by the references to 'your wife' (v. 3) and 'the man' (v. 4), as well as the 2MS pronominal and verbal forms in vv. 2-6.
- 3 The metaphor of the 'fruitful vine' pictures the wife as fertile; she will give her husband numerous children (see the 3rd line).
- 4 For the 2nd line, here following the MT, the NRSV reads, "on those who fear Yahweh."
- 5 The prefixed verbal forms of this verse understood as a jussive of prayer: having described the blessings that typically come to the godly, the psalmist concludes by praying that this ideal may become reality for the representative godly man being addressed.
- 6 On the last line, cf. 122:8 & 125:5.

תהילים פרק קכט

א שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת
רַבַּת צָרְרוּנִי מִנְעוּרִי
יֹאמְרֹנָא יִשְׂרָאֵל:
ב רַבַּת צָרְרוּנִי מִנְעוּרִי
גַם לֹא־יִכְלוּ לִי:
ג עַל־גְּבִי חָרְשׁוּ חֲרָשִׁים
הָאֲרִיכוּ לַמַּעֲנוֹת לְמַעֲנִיתָם:
ד יְהוֹה צַדִּיק
קָצַץ עֲבוֹת רָשָׁעִים:
ה יִבְשׁוּ וַיִּסָּגּוּ אַחֲזָר
כָּל שֹׁנְאֵי צִיּוֹן:
ו יִהְיוּ כַחֲצִיר גִּגּוֹת
שֶׁקֶדְמָת שֶׁלֶף יִבֹּשׁ:
ז שְׁלֹא מִלֵּא כַפּוֹ קוֹצֵר
וַחֲצֹנּוֹ מַעֲמֵר:

PSALM 129

- 1 *A Song of Ascents.*
Often as men have attacked me since I was young
– let Israel repeat it –
- 2 often as men have attacked me since I was young,
they have never overcome me.
- 3 On my back ploughmen have set to work,
making long furrows.
- 4 Yahweh the upright
has shattered the yoke of the wicked.
- 5 Let all who hate Zion
be shamed and turned back.
- 6 Let them be like the grass on a roof,
dried up before it is cut,
- 7 never to fill the reaper's arm
nor the binder's lap.

PSALM 129

- 1 Vv. 1–2 refer to the early days of Israel's history, the years in Egypt and the entry into Canaan.
- 2 The NRSV has 'from my youth' in place of 'since I was young', here following the NJB (as also in v. 1).
- 3 The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here appears to be a simple case of *vav*/*yod* confusion.
- 4 The NJB includes 'has shattered' as part of the 1st line; here, we follow the MT.
- 5 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV/NETB, the NJB reads, "be thrown back in confusion."
- 6 The translation of the 2nd line is uncertain: the word translated 'before' occurs nowhere else; it has been proposed to correct, following the Tg, the *Peshitta* and Is 37:27 (1QIs^a), to 'which the east wind scorches'.
- 7 The 'binder' was one who bundled the collected sheaves and tied them up.

וְלֹא אָמְרוּ | הָעֹבְרִים
בְּרַכַּת־יְהוָה אֲלֵיכֶם
בִּירְכָנוּ אֶתְכֶם בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה:

ח

- ⁸ And the passer-by will not say,
“The blessing of Yahweh be upon you!”
“We bless you in the name of Yahweh.”

⁸ In the 1st line, the perfect verbal form is used for rhetorical effect; it describes an anticipated development as if it were already reality.

תהילים פרק קל

א שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת
מִמַּעַמְקִים קָרָאתִיךָ יְהוָה:
ב אֲדֹנָי שְׁמָעָה בְּקוֹלִי
תְּהִינָה אָזְנוֹךָ קְשׁוּבוֹת
לְקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנָי:
ג אִם־עֲוֹנוֹת תִּשְׁמְרֶינָה
אֲדֹנָי מִי יַעֲמֵד:
ד כִּי־עֲמַךְ הַסְּלִיחָה
לְמַעַן תִּירָא:
ה קוֹיֹתִי יְהוָה קוֹתָה נַפְשִׁי
וְלִדְבָרוֹ הוֹחֵלְתִּי:
ו נַפְשִׁי לֹאֲדֹנִי
מִשְׁמָרִים לְבָקֶר שְׁמָרִים לְבָקֶר:
ז יִחַל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־יְהוָה
כִּי־עַם־יְהוָה הַחֲסֵד

PSALM 130

1 *A Song of Ascents.*
From the depths I call to you, Yahweh:
2 Lord, hear my cry.
Listen attentively
to the sound of my pleading!
3 If you, Yah, kept a record of our sins,
Lord, who could stand their ground?
4 But with you is forgiveness,
that you may be revered.
5 I wait for Yahweh, my soul waits,
and in his word I hope.
6 My soul waits for Lord
like watchmen for daybreak, like watchmen for daybreak.
7 Let Israel hope in Yahweh.
For with Yahweh is faithful love,

PSALM 130

- 1 This is a 'Penitential Psalm' (see #6:1), but still more a Psalm of hope.
- 2 The literal translation of 'sound' is 'voice'.
- 3 The psalmist here refers to standing before God' judgement seat. The NJB omits 'Yah' in the 1st line.
- 4 The LXX translates the 2nd line, 'because of your Law', a legalist adaptation.
- 5 For this verse, here following the NRSV & MT, the NJB, following the LXX, reads, "I rely, my whole being relies, Yahweh, on your promise."
- 6 The repetition in the 2nd line is possibly a corruption in the MT, but the LXX also includes it.
- 7 The NJB suggests that the MT for vv. 5-7a is corrupt and follows the LXX.

וְהִרְבֵּה עִמּוֹ פְדוּת:
וְהוּא יַפְדֶּה אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל
מִכָּל עֲוֹנָתָיו:

ח

with him generous ransom.

⁸ He will redeem Israel
from all its sins.

⁸ The noun עֲוֹן (*'sins'*) can refer to sin, the guilt sin produces, or the consequences of sin; only here is the noun collocated with the verb פָּדָה (*'redeem'*).

תהילים פרק קלא

א שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְדָוִד
יְהוָה | לֹא-גָבַהּ לִבִּי
וְלֹא-רָמּוּ עֵינַי
וְלֹא-הִלַּכְתִּי | בְּגִדְלוֹת וּבִנְפִלְאוֹת מִמֶּנִּי:
ב אִם-לֹא שְׁוִיתִי | וְדוֹמַמְתִּי נַפְשִׁי
כְּגִמְלָה עַלִּי אִמּוֹ
כְּגִמְלָה עַלִּי נַפְשִׁי:
ג יִחַל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל-יְהוָה
מִעַתָּה וְעַד-עוֹלָם:

PSALM 131

- 1 *A Song of Ascents.*
Yahweh, my heart is not haughty,
I do not set my sights too high.
I take no part in affairs to great or wondrous for me.
- 2 No, I hold myself in quiet and silence,
like a little child in its mother's arms,
like a little child, so I keep myself.
- 3 Let Israel hope in Yahweh
henceforth and forever.

PSALM 131

- 1 The soul at peace abandons itself to God, laying aside anxiety and ambition. The same childlike trust is demanded (v. 3) of the people of God (see Is 30:15).
- 2 The literal translation for 'little child' is 'weaned one'.
- 3 For this verse, here following the NJB, the NRSV & NETB read "O Israel, hope in the LORD, from this time on and forevermore."

תהילים פרק קלב

א שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת
זְכוֹר־יְהוָה לְדָוִד
אֵת כָּל־עֲנֹתָיו:
ב אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לַיהוָה
נֶדֶר לְאַבְרָם יַעֲקֹב:
ג אִם־אָבָא בְּאֵהָל בֵּיתִי
אִם־אֶעֱלֶה עַל־עֶרְשׁ יְצוּעִי:
ד אִם־אֶתֵּן שְׁנַת לְעֵינִי
לְעַפְעָפִי תִנּוּמָה:
ה עַד־אֲמַצָּא מְקוֹם לַיהוָה
מִשְׁכָּנֹת לְאַבְרָם יַעֲקֹב:
ו הִנֵּה־שָׁמַעְנוּהָ בְּאֶפְרַתָּה
מִצְאֹנָה בְּשִׂדֵי־יַעַר:

PSALM 132

- 1 *A Song of Ascents.*
Yahweh, remember David
and the hardships he endured,
2 the oath he swore to Yahweh,
his vow to the Mighty One of Jacob:
3 "I will not enter my house
nor get into my bed.
4 I will not give sleep to my eyes
or slumber to my eyelids,
5 until I have found a dwelling place for Yahweh,
a dwelling for the Mighty One of Jacob!"
6 Listen, we heard of it in Ephrathah,
we found it at Forest-Fields.

PSALM 132

- 1 This is a Messianic Psalm (see especially vv. 17–18). The divine promises (see #2S 7:1) here take on the form of the divine answer to an oath pronounced by David. A processional hymn (vv. 6ff) recalls the finding and translation of the Ark (1S 6:13ff, 2S6).
- 2 In place of 'Mighty One', here following the NJB & NRSV, NETB has 'powerful ruler'.
- 3 For this verse, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "I will not enter tent or house, will not climb into bed."
- 4 For this verse, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "I will not allow myself to sleep, not even to close my eyes."
- 5 The plural form of the noun translated 'dwelling place' may indicate degree or quality; David envisions a special dwelling place (43:3, 46:4, 84:1).
- 6 The pronoun, 'it', refers to the Ark. 'Forest-Fields' (the NRSV uses 'fields of Jaar') is a place-name akin to Kiriath-Jearim ('town of the woodlands'), which, like Bethlehem, was in the district of Ephrathah and where the Ark had been kept from Samuel's time until David became king in Jerusalem (1S 7:1–2, 2Ch 1:4). Vv. 6–10 evidently accompanied a dramatic ceremony that re-enacted the discovery of the Ark by David and the procession by which he brought it to the Sanctuary (2S 6:2–15).

נְבוֹאָה לְמִשְׁכְּנוֹתָיו	ז	7	Let us go into his dwelling-place,
נִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לְהֵדֶם רַגְלָיו:			and worship at his footstool.
קוּמָה יְהוָה לְמִנוּחֶיךָ	ח	8	Go up, Yahweh, to your resting-place,
אַתָּה וְאַרְוֹן עִזֶּךָ:			you and the Ark of your strength.
כַּהֲנִיךָ יִלְבְּשׁוּ־צֶדֶק	ט	9	Your priests are robed in saving justice,
וְחַסִּידֶיךָ יִרְנְנוּ:			your faithful are shouting for joy.
בְּעִבּוֹר דָּוִד עַבְדְּךָ	י	10	For the sake of your servant David,
אַל־תִּשָּׁב פְּנֵי מְשִׁיחֶךָ:			do not reject your anointed.
נִשְׁבַּע־יְהוָה לְדָוִד אֱמֶת	יא	11	Yahweh has sworn to David,
לֹא־יִשׁוּב מִמֶּנָּה			and will always remain true to his word:
מִפְּרֵי בִטְנֶךָ			"I promise that I will set
אֲשִׁית לְכִסֵּא־לְךָ:			a son of yours upon your throne.
אֶם־יִשְׁמְרוּ בְנֶיךָ בְּרִיתִי	יב	12	If your sons observe my covenant
וְעִדְתִּי זֹו אֶלְמָדָם			and the instructions I teach them,
גַּם־בְּנֵיהֶם עַד־עֶד			their sons too forevermore
יֵשְׁבוּ לְכִסֵּא־לְךָ:			will occupy your throne."

⁷ The pronoun, 'his', refers to God.

⁸ In place of 'go up', here following the *NJB*, the *NRSV* has 'rise up ... and go'.

⁹ The *NRSV* & *NETB* interpret the verbs in this verse as jussives; here, we follow the *NJB*.

¹⁰ The last line refers to the anointed of Yahweh, the descendant of David awaited by Israel; he will share power with the priests (Ps 110:3, Zc 4:14, 6:13).

¹¹ The literal translation for 'son of your' is 'fruit of your body'.

¹² In place of 'teach', here following *NETB*, the *NJB* has 'have taught' and the *NRSV* has 'will teach'.

כִּי־בָחַר יְהוָה בְּצִיּוֹן
 אֹהֶה לְמוֹשָׁב לּוֹ:
 זֹאת־מְנוּחָתִי עַד־יָעֵד
 פֹּה־אֶשֶׁב כִּי אֹתִיהָ:
 צִידָה בָרֶךְ אֲבָרֶךְ
 אֲבִיוֹנִיהָ אֲשַׁבֵּיעַ לֶחֶם:
 וְכֹהֲנֶיהָ אֲלַבִּישׁ יֵשַׁע
 וְחַסִּידֶיהָ רִנָּן יִרְנְנוּ:
 שֵׁם אֲצַמִּיחַ קֶרֶן לְדָוִד
 עֲרֹכְתִי נֹר לְמִשְׁחִי:
 אוֹיְבָיו אֲלַבִּישׁ בֹּשֶׁת
 וְעָלָיו יִצִּיץ נֹזֶר:

יג

יד

טו

טז

יז

יח

- 13 For Yahweh has chosen Zion,
he has desired it as a dwelling-place.
- 14 "Here shall I rest for evermore,
here shall I reside as I have wished.
- 15 I shall generously bless her produce,
give her needy their fill of food.
- 16 I shall clothe her priests with salvation,
and her faithful will sing aloud for joy.
- 17 There shall I raise up a line of descendants for David,
light a lamp for my anointed.
- 18 I shall clothe his enemies with shame,
while his own crown shall flourish."

13 In place of 'dwelling-place', the NJB has 'home' and the NRSV has 'habitation'.

14 The NJB has 'make my home' in place of 'reside', here following the NRSV.

15 In the 1st line, the infinitive absolute is used for emphasis.

16 Another reading for 'salvation' is 'deliverance'.

17 The literal translation of the 1st line is, 'There I shall make a horn grow for David' (see #18:2). Regarding the 'lamp', compare 1K 11:36, 15:4, 2K 8:19, and 2Ch 21:7. On the extinguished lamp, see Job 18:5, Jr 25:10. The Messiah will be the light of the nations, Is 42:6, 49:6, Lk 2:32.

18 The 1st line is an idiom for humiliation.

תהילים פרק קלג

א שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְדָוִד
הֵנָּה מֵה־טוֹב וּמֵה־נָּעִים
שִׁבְתָּ אַחִים גַּם־יַחַד:
ב כֶּשֶׁמֶן הַטּוֹב | עַל־הָרֹאשׁ
יָרֵד עַל־הַזָּקֵן וְקוֹאֲהָרָן
שִׁירֵד עַל־פִּי מְדוֹתָיו:
ג כֶּטֶל־חֶרְמוֹן שִׁירֵד עַל־הַרְרֵי צִיּוֹן
כִּי שָׁם | צוּהָ יְהוָה אֶת־הַבְּרָכָה
חַיִּים עַד־הָעוֹלָם:

PSALM 133

- 1 *A Song of Ascents.*
How good, how delightful it is
to live as brothers all together!
- 2 It is like the fine oil on the head,
running down the beard, Aaron's beard,
onto the collar of his robes.
- 3 It is like the dew of Hermon falling on the heights of Zion;
for there, Yahweh bestows his blessing,
everlasting life.

PSALM 133

- 1 This Psalm celebrates the brotherly relationships binding priests and Levites in the Temple and holy city. An alternative translation of 'live' is 'sit down', perhaps for a communion meal to end the pilgrimage of the Feast of Shelters.
- 2 The 'Aaron's beard' is a conjectural translation; the MT has 'the beard that goes down'.
- 3 'Hermon' is the chief mountain of Syria.

תהילים פרק קלד

א שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלֹת
הִנֵּה | בָּרְכוּ אֶת־יְהוָה
כָּל־עַבְדֵי יְהוָה
הָעֹמְדִים בְּבֵית־יְהוָה בַּלַּיְלוֹת:
ב שְׂאוּ־יְדֵיכֶם קֹדֶשׁ
וּבָרְכוּ אֶת־יְהוָה:
ג יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה מִצִּיּוֹן
עֲשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ:

PSALM 134

- 1 *A Song of Ascents.*
Come, bless Yahweh,
all you who serve Yahweh,
serving in the house of Yahweh during the night.
- 2 Lift your hands towards the sanctuary
and bless Yahweh.
- 3 May Yahweh bless you from Zion,
he who made heaven and earth!

PSALM 134

- 1 This is a call to prayer, or liturgical dialogue between pilgrims and Temple ministers, perhaps used at a nocturnal ceremony inaugurating the Feast of Shelters (see #Ex 23:14). Between the 4th & 5th lines, the *NJB*, following the *LXX*, inserts, '*in the courts of the house of our God*'; here, we follow the *MT* & *NRSV*.
- 2 The *NRSV* has '*holy place*' in place of '*sanctuary*'.
- 3 With this liturgical blessing (cf. Nb 6:23ff), the series of 'Songs of Ascents' comes to an end (see #Ps 120:1).

תהילים פרק קלה

א הַלְלוּ־יָהּ |
הַלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה
הַלְלוּ עַבְדֵי יְהוָה:
ב שְׁעִמְדִים בְּבֵית יְהוָה
בְּחִצְרוֹת בֵּית אֱלֹהֵינוּ:
ג הַלְלוּ־יָהּ כִּי־טוֹב יְהוָה
זָמְרוּ לְשִׁמּוֹ כִּי נָעִים:
ד כִּי־יַעֲקֹב בָּחַר לוֹ יֵה
יִשְׂרָאֵל לְסִגְלָתוֹ:
ה כִּי אֲנִי יָדַעְתִּי כִּי־גָדוֹל יְהוָה
וְאֲדַנִּינוּ מִכָּל־אֱלֹהִים:
ו כָּל אֲשֶׁר־חָפֵץ יְהוָה עָשָׂה
בַּשָּׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ
בַּיַּמִּים וּכְל־תְּהוֹמוֹת:
ז מַעֲלָה נִשְׁאִים מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ

PSALM 135

1 Hallelujah!
Praise the name of Yahweh,
you servants of Yahweh, praise him,
2 you who stand in the house of Yahweh,
in the courts of the house of our God.
3 Hallelujah! For, Yahweh is good,
make music for his name – it brings joy.
4 For, Yah has chosen Jacob for himself,
Israel as his own possession.
5 For I know that Yahweh is great,
our Lord is above all gods.
6 Yahweh does whatever he pleases
in heaven, on earth,
in the waters and all the depths.
7 He summons up clouds from the borders of earth,

PSALM 135

- ¹ The *Maqaf* in הַלְלוּ־יָהּ does not appear in either the Aleppo or Leningrad Codices but is included in the MAM text in grey (as here).
- ² The NJB has 'serving' in place of 'you who stand', here following the NRSV.
- ³ In place of 'it brings joy', here following the NJB, the NRSV reads 'for he is gracious'.
- ⁴ The language here echoes Ex 19:5, Dt 7:6, 14:2, 26:18; see also Mt 3:17.
- ⁵ NETB has 'sovereign master' in place of 'Lord', here following the NJB & NRSV.
- ⁶ NETB omits the Divine Name, here, reading 'He does whatever he pleases'.
- ⁷ For the 1st line, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "He it is who makes the clouds rise at the end of the earth."

בְּרָקִים לְמֶטֶר עֲשֵׂה			sends rain with lightning flashes,
מוֹצֵא-רוּחַ מְאוֹצְרוֹתָיו:			and brings the wind out of his storehouse.
שֶׁהָכָה בְּכוֹרֵי מִצְרַיִם	ח	8	He struck the first-born in Egypt,
מֵאָדָם עַד-בְּהֵמָה:			man and beast alike.
שְׁלַח אוֹתוֹת וּמִפְתִּים בְּתוֹכְכִי מִצְרַיִם	ט	9	He sent signs and wonders into your midst, O Egypt,
בַּפְּרֹעָה וּבְכָל-עַבְדָּיו:			against Pharaoh and all his officials.
שֶׁהָכָה גּוֹיִם רַבִּים	י	10	He struck down many nations,
וְהָרַג מְלָכִים עֲצוּמִים:			he slaughtered mighty kings –
לְסִיחֹון מֶלֶךְ הָאֲמֹרִי וְלַעֲוֹג מֶלֶךְ הַבָּשָׁן	יא	11	Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og king of Bashan,
וְלָכָל מַמְלָכוֹת כְּנָעַן:			and all the kingdoms of Canaan.
וְנָתַן אֶרֶץ נַחֲלָה	יב	12	He gave their land as a heritage,
נַחֲלָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל עַמּוֹ:			a heritage to his people Israel.
יְהוָה שְׁמֹךְ לְעוֹלָם	יג	13	Yahweh, your name endures forever,
יְהוָה זְכָרְךָ לְדֹרֹת:			Yahweh, your memory is fresh from age to age.
כִּי-יִדֵּין יְהוָה עַמּוֹ	יד	14	For Yahweh vindicates his people,
וְעַל-עַבְדָּיו יִתְנַחֵם:			feels compassion for his servants.

8 The NRSV opens with, “He it was who struck down ...” Here, we follow the NJB.

9 The NJB ends the 1st line with, “into the heart of Egypt.” Here, we follow the NRSV.

10 NETB has ‘defeated’ in place of ‘struck down’, here following the NJB & NRSV.

11 On ‘Sihon’ and ‘Og’, see Nb 21:21–35.

12 The NJB has ‘birthright’ in place of ‘heritage’ (twice in this verse), here following the NRSV.

13 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, “O LORD, your remembrance [is] for a generation and a generation.”

14 The imperfect verbal forms in this verse draw attention to God’s characteristic actions.

טו עֲצָבֵי הַגּוֹיִם כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב
 מַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵי אָדָם:
 טז פֶּה־לָּהֶם וְלֹא יִדְבְּרוּ
 עֵינַיִם לָהֶם וְלֹא יֵרְאוּ:
 זי אָזְנִים לָהֶם וְלֹא יִאֲזִינוּ
 אֶף אִין־יִשְׁרוּחַ בְּפִיהֶם:
 יח כְּמוֹתֵם יִהְיוּ עֹשֵׂיהֶם
 כָּל אֲשֶׁר־בִּטָּח בָּהֶם:
 יט בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בָּרְכוּ אֶת־יְהוָה
 בֵּית אַהֲרֹן בָּרְכוּ אֶת־יְהוָה:
 כ בֵּית הַלְוִי בָרְכוּ אֶת־יְהוָה
 יֵרָאִי יְהוָה בָּרְכוּ אֶת־יְהוָה:
 כא בָּרוּךְ יְהוָה | מִצִּיּוֹן
 שֹׁכֵן יְרוּשָׁלַם
 הַלְלוּ־יָהּ:

15 The idols of the nations are silver and gold,
 made by human hands.
 16 These have mouths but say nothing,
 have eyes but see nothing.
 17 They have ears but hear nothing,
 and they have no breath in their mouths.
 18 Their makers will end up like them,
 everyone who relies on them.
 19 House of Israel, bless Yahweh;
 House of Aaron, bless Yahweh.
 20 House of Levi, bless Yahweh,
 you who fear Yahweh, bless Yahweh.
 21 Blessed be Yahweh from Zion,
 he who dwells in Jerusalem!
 Hallelujah!

15 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, “the works of the hands of man.”

16 Vv. 15–18 essentially recite 115:4–8.

17 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, “indeed, there is not breath in their mouth.”

18 Because the idols are lifeless, they cannot help their worshipers in times of crisis; consequently, the worshipers end up as dead as the gods in which they trust.

19 NETB has ‘family’ in place of ‘house’ (here and in v. 20); here, we follow the MT, NJB & NRSV.

20 In place of ‘you who fear Yahweh’, NETB has ‘followers of the LORD’.

21 This verse is a liturgical antiphon to conclude the hymn. The NJB, following the LXX, includes ‘Hallelujah’ in Ps 136; here, we follow the MT (and NRSV).

תהילים פרק קלו

א הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי־טוֹב
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדּוֹ:
ב הוֹדוּ לֵאלֹהֵי הָאֱלֹהִים
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדּוֹ:
ג הוֹדוּ לַאֲדֹנֵי הָאֲדָנִים
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדּוֹ:
ד לַעֲשֵׂה נִפְלְאוֹת גְּדֹלוֹת לְבָדּוֹ
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדּוֹ:
ה לַעֲשֵׂה הַשָּׁמַיִם בְּתַבּוּנָה
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדּוֹ:
ו לְרַקַּע הָאָרֶץ עַל־הַמַּיִם
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדּוֹ:
ז לַעֲשֵׂה אוֹרִים גְּדֹלִים
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדּוֹ:

PSALM 136

1 Give thanks to Yahweh for he is good,
for his faithful love endures forever.
2 Give thanks to the God of gods,
for his faithful love endures forever.
3 Give thanks to the Lord of lords,
for his faithful love endures forever.
4 He alone works great wonders
for his faithful love endures forever.
5 In wisdom, he makes the heavens,
for his faithful love endures forever.
6 He set the earth firm of the waters,
for his faithful love endures forever.
7 He made the great lights,
for his faithful love endures forever.

PSALM 136

- ¹ This Psalm, a litany (cf. Dn 3:52-90) is called by the Jews 'the Great Hallel'; at the Passover meal, it was recited after the 'Lesser (Egyptian) Hallel' (Ps 113-118). The 2nd line in each verse is a congregational response.
- ² The title, 'God of gods' translates האלהים אלהי.
- ³ The title, 'Lord of lords' translates האדנים אדני.
- ⁴ The NJB omits 'great', which it considers redundant.
- ⁵ For the 1st line, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "who by understanding made the heavens."
- ⁶ For the 1st line, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "who spread out the earth on the waters."
- ⁷ The 'great lights' are the sun (v. 8) and the moon (v. 9).

ח	אֶת־הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לְמַמְשֶׁלֶת בַּיּוֹם כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדּוֹ:	8	The sun to rule the day, for his faithful love endures forever.
ט	אֶת־הַיָּרֵחַ וְכּוֹכָבִים לְמַמְשֶׁלֶת בַּלַּיְלָה כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדּוֹ:	9	Moon and stars to rule the night, for his faithful love endures forever.
י	לְמַכָּה מִצְרַיִם בְּבִכּוֹרֵיהֶם כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדּוֹ:	10	He struck down the first-born of Egypt, for his faithful love endures forever.
יא	וַיּוֹצֵא יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵתוֹכָם כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדּוֹ:	11	He brought Israel out from among them, for his faithful love endures forever.
יב	בְּיָד חֲזָקָה וּבְזְרוּעַ נְטוּיָה כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדּוֹ:	12	With a strong hand and outstretched arm, for his faithful love endures forever.
יג	לְגַזֵּר יַם־סוּף לְגִזְרִים כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדּוֹ:	13	He split the Sea of Reeds in two, for his faithful love endures forever.
יד	וַהֲעֵבִיר יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּתוֹכוֹ כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדּוֹ:	14	Let Israel pass through the middle, for his faithful love endures forever.
טו	וַנִּגְעַר פַּרְעֹה וְחִילוֹ בַּיַּם־סוּף כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדּוֹ:	15	And drowned Pharaoh and his army in the Sea of Reeds, for his faithful love endures forever.

⁸ In place of 'rule the day', here following the NJB, NETB has 'rule by day'.

⁹ In place of 'rule the night', here following the NJB, NETB has 'rule by night'.

¹⁰ At the opening of this verse (and many others), NETB inserts 'to the one who...'.
¹¹ In place of 'brought', here following the NJB & NRSV, NETB has 'led'.

¹² The NJB has 'mighty' in place of 'a strong', here following the NRSV.

¹³ 'Sea of Reeds' is a more accurate translation of the expression יַם־סוּף, traditionally translates as 'Red Sea'.

¹⁴ For the 1st line, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "and made Israel pass through the midst of it."

¹⁵ The NJB omits 'in the Sea of Reeds' (בַּיַּם־סוּף), which it considers a doublet drawn from v. 13.

לְמוֹלִיד עַמּוֹ בַּמִּדְבָּר כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדוֹ:	טז	16	He led his people through the desert, for his faithful love endures forever.
לְמַכּוֹת מְלָכִים גְּדֹלִים כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדוֹ:	יז	17	He struck down mighty kings, for his faithful love endures forever.
וַיַּהַרֵּג מְלָכִים אֲדִירִים כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדוֹ:	יח	18	And slaughtered famous kings, for his faithful love endures forever.
לְסִיחּוֹן מֶלֶךְ הָאֲמֹרִי כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדוֹ:	יט	19	Sihon king of the Amorites, for his faithful love endures forever.
וּלְעוֹג מֶלֶךְ הַבָּשָׁן כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדוֹ:	כ	20	And Og king of Bashan, for his faithful love endures forever.
וַנֶּתַן אֶרֶץ לְנַחֲלָה כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדוֹ:	כא	21	He gave their land as a heritage, for his faithful love endures forever.
נַחֲלָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל עֲבָדוֹ כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדוֹ:	כב	22	A heritage to his servant Israel, for his faithful love endures forever.
שֶׁבַשְׁפָּלָנוּ זָכַר לָנוּ כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדוֹ:	כג	23	He kept us in mind when we were humbled, for his faithful love endures forever.

¹⁶ In place of 'desert' here following the NJB, the NRSV & NETB have the more traditional 'wilderness'.

¹⁷ The NRSV opens with 'Who struck down ...'; here, we follow the NJB.

¹⁸ In place of 'famous', here following the NJB & NRSV, NETB has 'powerful'.

¹⁹ On 'Sihon', see Nb 21:21–35.

²⁰ On 'Og', see Nb 21:21–35.

²¹ The NJB has 'birthright' in place of 'heritage', here following the NRSV.

²² The NJB has 'birthright' in place of 'heritage', here following the NRSV.

²³ Literally translated, the 1st line reads, "who, in our low condition, remembered us."

וַיִּפְּרֹקֵנוּ מִצָּרֵינוּ
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדּוֹ:
נָתַן לֶחֶם לְכָל-בָּשָׂר
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדּוֹ:
הוֹדוּ לֵאלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדּוֹ:

כד

כה

כו

- 24 And rescued us from our enemies,
for his faithful love endures forever.
- 25 He provides food for all living creatures,
for his faithful love endures forever.
- 26 Give thanks to the God of Heaven,
for his faithful love endures forever.

²⁴ In place of 'rescued', here following the NJB & NRSV, NETB has 'snatched us away'.

²⁵ The literal translation of 'living creatures' is 'flesh'.

²⁶ The title, 'God of Heaven' translates הַשָּׁמַיִם אֱלֹהִים.

תהילים פרק קלז

א על נהרות | בבל
שם ישבנו גם-בכינו
בזכרנו את-ציון:
ב על-ערבים בתוכה
תלינו כנרותינו:
ג כי שם שאלונו שובינו דברי-שיר
ותוללנו שמחה
שירו לנו משיר ציון:
ד איך נשיר את-שיר-יהוה
על אדמת נכר:
ה אם-אשכחך ירושלם
תשכח ימיני:
ו תדבק-לשוני | לחכי
אם-לא אזכרכי

PSALM 137

1 By the rivers of Babylon,
there we sat down and wept
when we remembered Zion.
2 On the poplars, there
we had hung up our harps.
3 For there, our gaolers had asked us to sing them a song,
our captors to make merry,
"Sing us one of the songs of Zion."
4 How could we sing Yahweh's song
in a foreign land?
5 If I forget you, Jerusalem,
let my right hand wither!
6 Let my tongue remain stuck to my palate
if I do not keep you in mind,

PSALM 137

- 1 The 'rivers of Babylon' were streams or canals of the Tigris and Euphrates.
2 In place of 'poplars' (here following the NJB & NETB), the NRSV has 'willows'.
3 'Captors' follows the Tg; the MT is unintelligible (the NRSV has 'tormentors').
4 An alternative reading of 'Yahweh's song' is 'a song to Yahweh'.
5 'Wither' is a conjectural translation (תכש - from an otherwise unattested root meaning 'to be crippled'); the MT (which seems to have wanted to soften the curse) has 'forget' (תשכח).
6 Literally translated, the last 2 lines read, "if I do not lift up Jerusalem over the top of my joy."

אִם־לֹא אֶעֱלֶה אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם		if I do not count Jerusalem
עַל־רֹאשׁ שְׂמִיחָתִי:		the greatest of my joys.
זָכֹר יְהוָה לְבָנֵי אֱדוֹם	ז	7 Remember, Yahweh, to the Edomites' cost,
אֶת־יּוֹם יְרוּשָׁלַם		the day of Jerusalem,
הָאֹמְרִים עֲרוּ עָרוּ		how they said, "Down with it!
עַד הַיָּסוֹד בָּהּ:		Raze it to the ground!"
בֵּת־בָּבֶל הַשְׂדוּדָה	ח	8 Daughter of Babel, doomed to destruction,
אֲשֶׁר־יִשְׁלַם־לָךְ		a blessing on anyone
אֶת־אֲמוֹלֶךְ שְׂגִמְלָתָ לָנוּ:		who treats you as you treated us.
אֲשֶׁר־יִשְׁיָאֵחַז וְנִפֵּץ אֶת־עַלְלֶיךָ	ט	9 A blessing on anyone who seizes your babies
אֶל־הַסֶּלַע:		and shatters them against a rock!

-
- ⁷ The 'day of Jerusalem' was the 9th day of the 4th month (June-July, 587 BCE), when the Chaldeans breached the walls of Jerusalem (Jr 39:2, 52:7), or else the 10th day of the 5th month, when the Temple was burnt down (Jr 52:13, cf. Zc 7:5, 8:19). The Edomites (Nb 20:20–23) then joined forces with the besieging army; a number of prophetic pronouncements invoke the vengeance of Yahweh on them (Is 34:5ff, Jr 49:17, Jl 4:19, MI 1:3ff).
- ⁸ The psalmist dramatically anticipates Babylon's demise.
- ⁹ For other references to the wholesale slaughter of babies in the context of ancient Middle-Eastern warfare, see: 2K 8:12, Is 13:16, Ho 13:16 & Na 3:10.

תהילים פרק קלח

א לְדָוִד |
אֹדֶךָ בְּכָל-לִבִּי
נֶגְדַת אֱלֹהִים אֲזַמְרֶךָ:
ב אֲשַׁתְּחִוֶה אֶל-הֵיכַל קִדְשֶׁךָ
וְאֹדֶה אֶת-שִׁמְךָ עַל-חֶסֶדְךָ וְעַל-אַמְתֶּךָ
כִּי-הִגְדַּלְתָּ עַל-כָּל-שִׁמְךָ אִמְרָתְךָ:
ג בְּיוֹם קִרְאתִי וְתַעֲנֵנִי
תְּרַהֲבֵנִי בְנִפְשִׁי עֹז:
ד יוֹדֶךָ יְהוָה כָּל-מַלְכֵי-אָרֶץ
כִּי שָׁמְעוּ אִמְרֵי-פִיךָ:
ה וַיִּשִּׁירוּ בְּדַרְכֵי יְהוָה
כִּי-גָדוֹל כְּבוֹד יְהוָה:
ו כִּי-רַם יְהוָה וְשָׁפַל יֵרָאֶה
וְגִבָּה מִמָּרְחָק יִידַע:

PSALM 138

- 1 *Of David.*
I thank you with all my heart.
In the presence of angels, I sing to you.
- 2 I bow down before your holy Temple.
I praise your name for your faithful love and constancy;
your promises surpass even your fame.
- 3 You heard me on the day when I called,
and you gave new strength to my heart.
- 4 May all the kings of earth praise you, Yahweh,
when they hear the promises you make.
- 5 May they sing of Yahweh's ways,
"Great is the glory of Yahweh!"
- 6 Sublime as he is, Yahweh looks on the humble,
the proud he picks out from afar.

PSALM 138

- 1 The NJB, following the LXX, inserts the following as a 3rd line: "for you have listened to the cry I uttered." Here, we follow the MT & NRSV. 'Angels' follows the LXX; some versions (including the NRSV) have 'gods' instead.
- 2 The last line is conjectural; the MT has 'you have made your promise great above all your name' (meaning uncertain).
- 3 'Gave new strength to' follows the Peshitta; the MT has 'troubled the strength of'.
- 4 The prefixed verbal forms here and in v. 5 are understood as jussives (following NETB), for the psalmist appears to be calling upon the kings to praise God; another option is to take them as imperfects and translate, 'the kings of the earth shall praise ... and shall sing' (as NRSV), in which case the psalmist anticipates a universal response to his thanksgiving song.
- 5 For the 2nd line, NETB reads, "for the LORD's splendour is magnificent."
- 6 The NRSV has 'high' and 'lowly' in place of 'sublime' and 'humble', here following the NJB.

אִם־אֵלֶיךָ בִּקְרֹב צָרָה תִּחְיֶנִּי ז
 עַל אֵף אֹיְבֵי תִשְׁלַח יָדְךָ
 וְתוֹשִׁיעֵנִי יְמִינְךָ:
 יְהוָה יֹאמֶר בְּעַדִּי ח
 יְהוָה חֲסִדְךָ לְעוֹלָם
 מַעֲשֵׂי יְדִיךָ אֶל־תִּרְףּ:

- 7 Though I live surrounded by trouble
 you give me life – to my enemies' fury!
 You stretch out your right hand and save me,
- 8 Yahweh will do all things for me.
 Yahweh, your faithful love endures forever,
 do not abandon what you have made.

⁷ Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, “against the anger of my enemies you extend your hand.”

⁸ The *NJB* transposes the 1st line into part of the preceding verse.

תהילים פרק קלט

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ לְדָוִד מִזְמוֹר
יְהוָה חִקְרָתִנִי וַתַּדַּע:
ב אֶתָּה יַדַּעְתָּ שְׁבִתִּי וְקוּמִי
בִּנְתָּה לִרְעִי מֵרְחוֹק:
ג אֶרְחִי וְרַבְעִי זֵרִית
וְכָל־דַּרְכֵי הַסִּכְנֶתָה:
ד כִּי אֵין מִלָּה בְלִשׁוֹנִי
הֵן יְהוָה יַדַּעְתָּ כֻּלָּה:
ה אַחֲזֹר וְקִדַּם צִרְתָּנִי
וַתִּשֶׁת עָלַי כַּפְּכָה:
ו פִּלְאִיָּה פִּלְיָאָה דַּעַת מִמֶּנִּי
נִשְׁגָּבָה לֹא־אוּכַל לָהּ:
ז אָנָּה אֵלֶיךָ מְרוֹחֶךָ
וְאָנָּה מִפְּנֵיךָ אֲבָרַח:

PSALM 139

1 To the leader. A Psalm of David.
Yahweh, you examine me and know me,
2 You know when I sit, when I rise,
you understand my thoughts from afar.
3 You watch when I walk or lie down,
and you know every detail of my conduct.
4 Even before a word is on my tongue,
you, Yahweh, know all about it.
5 You fence me in, behind and in front,
you have laid your hand upon me.
6 Such amazing knowledge is beyond me,
a height to which I cannot attain.
7 Where shall I go to escape your spirit?
Where shall I flee from your presence?

PSALM 139

- 1 Compare this meditation on God's omniscience with the reflections of Job on the awesome fear of human beings under the eye of God (Job 7:17-20).
- 2 The NRSV has 'discern' in place of 'understand', here following the NJB.
- 3 The literal translation of 'watch' is 'measure'.
- 4 Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "look, O LORD, you know all of it."
- 5 NETB has 'squeeze' in place of 'fence', here following the NJB (the NRSV has 'hem').
- 6 The transposition of the *alef* and *yod* between the *Kethib* and *Qere* readings would benefit from an explanation that cannot (yet) be given.
- 7 God's 'spirit' may refer here to either (1) his presence (note the parallel term in the 2nd line), or (2) his personal Spirit (see 51:10).

ח	אִם־אֶסַּק שָׁמַיִם שָׁם אַתָּה וְאַצִּיעָה שְׂאוֹל הַגֵּד:	8	If I scale the heavens, you are there, if I lie flat in Sheol, there you are.
ט	אֲשָׂא כַנְפֵי־שַׁחַר אֲשַׁכְנָה בְּאַחֲרִית יָם:	9	If I speed away on the wings of the dawn, if I dwell beyond the ocean,
י	גַּם־שָׁם יְדֶךָ תִּנְחֲנִי וְתִאָּחֲזֵנִי יְמִינֶךָ:	10	even there, your hand will be guiding me, your right hand holding me fast.
יא	וְאָמַר אֶדְחֹשֶׁךְ יְשׁוּפֹנִי וְלִילָה אֹר בְּעֵדְנִי:	11	I will say, "Let the darkness cover me, and the night wrap itself around me."
יב	גַּם־חֹשֶׁךְ לֹא־יִחְשֶׁךְ מִמֶּךָ וְלִילָה כִּיּוֹם יֵאִיר כְּחֹשֶׁיכָה כְּאוֹרָה:	12	Even darkness to you is not dark, and night is as clear as the day, for darkness is as light to you.
יג	כִּי־אַתָּה קִנִּיתָ כְּלִי תִּסְכְּנִי בִּבְטֶן אִמִּי:	13	You created my inmost self, knit me together in my mother's womb.
יד	אוֹדֶךָ עַל כִּי נִרְאֹת נִפְלִיתִי נִפְלְאִים מַעֲשֶׂיךָ וְנִפְשִׁי יָדַעַת מְאֹד:	14	For so many marvels, I thank you; a wonder am I, and all your works are wonders.

⁸ It is a new thought that God is in Sheol (the abode of the dead) as well as in heaven (see #115:17).

⁹ This personification of the 'dawn' may find its roots in mythological traditions about the god Shachar, whose birth is described in an Ugaritic myth and who is mentioned in Is 14:12 as the father of Helel.

¹⁰ The NJB translates the imperfects in this verse as simple future tense verbs.

¹¹ 'Wrap itself around me' follows 11QPs^a (אֹר); the MT has 'be a light for' (אֹר).

¹² The NJB omits the last line, which it dismisses as an Aramaic gloss.

¹³ The literal translation of 'inmost self' is 'kidneys', which were sometimes considered the seat of one's emotions and moral character.

¹⁴ For this verse, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well."

לֹא־נִכְחַד עֲצָמִי מִמֶּךָ אֲשֶׁר־עָשִׂיתִי בִּסְתֵּר רָקַמְתִּי בְּתַחְתִּיּוֹת אָרֶץ:	טו	15	You knew me through and through, when I was being formed in secret, textured in the depths of the earth.
גְּלִמִּי רָאוּ עֵינֶיךָ וְעַל־סִפְרְךָ כָּל־יָמַי יִכָּתְבוּ יָמִים יֵצְרוּ וְלֹא יֶלֶד אֶחָד בָּהֶם:	טז	16	Your eyes could see my embryo. In your book, all my days were inscribed; every one that was fixed is there.
וְלִי מִה־יִּקְרֹוּ רַעֲיָךְ אֵל מִה עֲצָמוֹ רָאִשֵׁיהֶם:	יז	17	How hard for me to grasp your thoughts, how vast is the sum of them!
אֶסְפָּרָם מִחוּל יִרְבּוֹן הִקִּיצְתִּי וְעוֹדִי עִמָּךְ:	יח	18	If I count them, they are more than the grains of sand; if I come to an end, I am still with you.
אִם־תִּקְטֹל אֱלֹהִים רָשָׁע וְאֲנָשֵׁי דָמִים סוּרוּ מִנִּי:	יט	19	If only, God, you would kill the wicked! Men of violence, keep away from me –
אֲשֶׁר יִמְרוּדוּ לְמִזְמָה נִשּׂוֹא לַשּׂוֹא עֲרִיד:	כ	20	those who speak blasphemously about you, and take no account of your thoughts.

15 'You knew me' is conjectural; the MT has 'knowing'.

16 'Is there' follows some MSS; the MT has 'is not there', a difficult text. The Psalmist is meditating on the divine omniscience; God knows a person's destiny even before he is born (22:10, 71:16), while for that person the mystery is impenetrable. The exact nature of the *alef/yod* difference between the *Kethib* and the *Qere* is not entirely clear.

17 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "how many, God, there are."

18 'If I come to an end' (הִקִּיצְתִּי) follows three MSS; the MT has 'I wake up' (הִקִּיצְתִּי).

19 The particle אם ('if') and following prefixed verbal form here express a wish.

20 'Your thoughts' is conjectural (see vv. 2 & 17); the MT has 'your cities'; the whole of this verse is uncertain. For the 2nd line, the NRSV reads, "and lift themselves up against you for evil."

הִלּוֹא־מִשְׁנֹאִיךָ יְהוָה | אֲשֶׁנָּא
וּבִתְקוּמָמֶיךָ אֶתְקוּטָט:
תְּכַלִּית שְׁנֵאָה שְׁנֵאָתִים
לְאוֹיְבִים הָיוּ לִי:
חֲקֹרְנִי אֵל וְדַע לִבִּי
בְּחַנְנִי וְדַע שְׂרַעְפִּי:
וְרֹאֵה אֶם־דֶּרֶךְ־עֶצֶב בִּי
וְנַחֲנִי בְּדֶרֶךְ עוֹלָם:

כא

כב

כג

כד

- 21 Yahweh, do I not hate those who hate you,
and loathe those who defy you?
- 22 My hate for them has no limits;
I regard them as my own enemies.
- 23 God, examine me and know my heart,
test me and know my concerns.
- 24 Make sure that I am not on my way to ruin,
and guide me on the road of eternity.

²¹ The psalmist, a religious leader, does not hesitate to identify personal enemies as God's enemies also.

²² The form וּבִתְקוּמָמֶיךָ should be emended to וּבִמְתְּקוּמָמֶיךָ, a Hitpolel participle (the prefixed מ of the participle is accidentally omitted in the MT, though a few medieval Hebrew MSS have it).

²³ The noun שְׂרַעְפִּי ('concerns') is used of 'worries' in 94:19.

²⁴ An alternative translation for 'road of eternity' is 'ancient way'.

תהילים פרק קמ

א לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד:
ב חֲלַצְנִי יְיָ הוֹה מֵאֲדָם רָע
ג מֵאִישׁ חֲמָסִים תִּנְצָרְנִי:
ד אֲשֶׁר חֲשָׁבוּ רָעוֹת בְּלִב
ה כָּל־יָוִם יִגְוְרוּ מִלְחָמוֹת:
ו שֹׁנְנוּ לְשׁוֹנִם כְּמוֹ־נָחַשׁ
ז חֲמַת עֶכְשׂוֹב תַּחַת שִׁפְתֵימוֹ

סְלָה:

ח שְׁמֶרְנִי יְיָ הוֹה | מִיַּד רָשָׁע
ט מֵאִישׁ חֲמָסִים תִּנְצָרְנִי
י אֲשֶׁר חֲשָׁבוּ לְדַחֹת פְּעָמִי:
יא טִמְנוּ־גָאִים | פֶּח לִי
יב וַחֲבָלִים פָּרְשׁוּ רֶשֶׁת לִיד־מַעְגָּל
יג מִקְשִׁים שָׂתוּ־לִי

סְלָה:

PSALM 140

1 *To the leader. A Psalm of David.*

2 Rescue me, Yahweh, from evil men;
protect me from violent men,

3 whose heart is bent on malice,
who stir up wars continually.

4 Their tongues are as barbed as a serpent's;
viper's venom is under their lips.

Selah

5 Keep me, Yahweh, from the clutches of the wicked;
protect me from violent men
who are bent on making me stumble.

6 The arrogant have hidden a pitfall and noose
laying out snares where I walk
to trap me as I pass.

Selah

PSALM 140

- ¹ Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and subsequent verse numbers are accordingly incremented.
- ² For 'evil men', the Hebrew uses a singular noun in a representative or collective sense (note the plural verbs in v. 3).
- ³ For 'stir up war', the translation assumes a re-vocalisation of the Qal imperfect, יִגְוְרוּ, to יִגְרוּ, a Piel imperfect from גָּרָה.
- ⁴ The mention of 'their tongues' and 'their lips' probably implies that they have pronounced a curse against the psalmist (compare Ps 58 and 109).
- ⁵ The literal translation of 'making me stumble' is 'push down my steps'.
- ⁶ The ordering of lines within this verse follows the *NRSV*; the *NJB* transposes the first two lines.

אִמַּרְתִּי לַיהוָה אֱלֹהִי אַתָּה ז
 הֶאֱזִינָה יְהוָה קוֹל תַּחֲנוּנִי:
 יְהוָה אֲדֹנָי עֹז יְשׁוּעָתִי ח
 סָכַתָּה לְרֹאשִׁי בַיּוֹם נֶשֶׁק:
 אַל־תִּתֵּן יְהוָה מֵאוֹי רָשָׁע ט
 זִמְמוֹ אַל־תִּפֹּק יְרוֹמוֹ
 סֵלָה:
 רֹאשׁ מִסִּבִּי י
 עֲמַל שְׂפָתֵימוֹ יִכְסּוּמוֹ וַיִּכְסִּימוּ:
 יִמִּיטוּ יִמּוּטוֹ עָלֵיהֶם גִּחְלִים יא
 בָּאֵשׁ יִפְלֹם בְּמַהֲמֹרֹת בַּל־יִקְוֹמוּ:
 אִישׁ לְשׁוֹן בַּל־יִכּוֹן בְּאַרְץ יב
 אִישׁ־חֲמַס רַע יִצּוֹדְנוּ לַמִּדְחָפֶת:
 יָדַעַת יָדַעְתִּי כִּי־יַעֲשֶׂה יְהוָה דִּין עָנִי יג
 מִשֹּׁפֵט אֲבִינִים:

7 I said to Yahweh, "You are my God."
 Listen, Yahweh, to the sound of my prayer.
 8 Yahweh my Lord, my saving strength,
 you shield my head when battle comes.
 9 Yahweh, do not grant the wicked their wishes,
 do not let their plots succeed.
Selah
 10 Do not let my attackers prevail,
 but let them be overwhelmed by their own malice.
 11 May red-hot embers rain down on them,
 may they be flung into the mire no more to rise!
 12 Let the slanderer find no rest anywhere;
 let evil hunt down violent men implacably.
 13 I know that Yahweh will give judgement for the wretched,
 justice for the needy.

7 For the 2nd line, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "give ear, O LORD, to the voice of my supplications."

8 A more literal translation of 'my saving strength' is 'the strength of my deliverance'.

9 The MT adds 'they are exalted' to the end of the 2nd line; the translation understands this final verb as being an unmarked temporal clause.

10 Vv. 9–10 follow the LXX; the MT is very uncertain. The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here appears to be simple *yod/vav* confusion.

11 'Rain down' is conjectural (יִמְטִירוּ); the LXX, *Peshitta* and MT have 'be shaken' (יִמּוּטוּ). 'Red-hot' follows the LXX; the MT has 'in the fire'. The *Kethib*/*Qere* difference here appears to be a case of a scribe misreading a (possibly small/short) *vav* as a *yod*.

12 The literal translation for 'slanderer' is 'man of tongue'.

13 The significance of the added *yod* in the *Qere*, compared to the *Kethib*, is not completely clear.

אֲדָ צְדִיקִים יוֹדוּ לְשִׁמְךָ
יֵשְׁבוּ יֹשְׁרִים אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ:

י

¹⁴ Surely, the upright shall praise your name,
the honest dwell in your presence.

¹⁴ The *NJB* lacks the opening '*surely*', here following the *NRSV*.

תהילים פרק קמא

א מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד
יְהוָה קְרָאתִיךָ חוֹשֶׁה לִּי
הַאֲזִינָה קוֹלִי בְקִרְאִי־לָךְ:
ב תִּכּוֹן תַּפְלְתִּי קִטְרַת לִפְנֶיךָ
מִשְׁאֵת כַּפֵּי מִנְחַת־עֶרֶב:
ג שִׁיתָה יְהוָה שְׂמֶרֶה לִּפִּי
נִצְרָה עַל־דֶּל שְׁפָתַי:
ד אֶל־תִּטֹּל־לִבִּי לְדָבָר | רָע
לְהִתְעוֹלֵל עַל־לוֹת | בְּרָשָׁע
אֶת־אִישִׁים פְּעֻל־אָוֶן
וּבִלְ־אֱלֹהִים בְּמִנְעֵמִיהֶם:
ה יְהַלְמֵנִי צְדִיק | חֶסֶד וְיִכִּיחֵנִי
שֶׁמֶן רֹאשׁ אֶל־יְנִי רֹאשִׁי
כִּי־עוֹד וְתַפְלְתִּי בְרָעוֹתֵיהֶם:

PSALM 141

- 1 *A Psalm of David.*
Yahweh, I am calling, hurry to me;
listen to my voice when I call you.
- 2 May my prayer be like incense in your presence,
my uplifted hands like the evening sacrifice.
- 3 Yahweh, mount a guard over my mouth,
a guard at the door of my lips.
- 4 Do not turn my heart to any evil,
to busy myself with wicked deeds
in company with those who work iniquity;
do not let me eat of their delicacies.
- 5 May the upright correct me with a friend's rebuke;
but the wicked shall never anoint my head with oil,
for that would make me party to their crimes.

PSALM 141

- 1 In place of 'listen', here following the NJB, the NRSV has 'give ear'.
- 2 The 'evening sacrifice' was a prescribed daily offering; Jewish piety thus associates prayer with sacrifice (see 51:56, cf. Rv 5:8, 8:4).
- 3 The psalmist asks God to protect him from speaking inappropriately or sinfully.
- 4 For this verse, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "Check any impulse to speak evil, to share the foul deeds of evildoers. I shall not sample their delights!"
- 5 'The wicked' follows the LXX and Peshitta; the MT has 'excellent' (רֹאשׁ). 'That would make me party' follows 11QPs^a (הַפְלָתִי); the MT has 'my prayer' (תַּפְלָתִי). The text is very obscure; it seems that the Psalmist fears the advances of the wicked, which could seduce him.

וְשִׁמְטוּ בְיַד־סֵלַע שְׁפִטֵּיהֶם
 וְשִׁמְעוּ אֲמָרֵי כִי נִעְמּוּ:
 כִּמּוֹ פֶלֶחַ וּבִקְעָה בָאָרֶץ
 נִפְזְרוּ עַצְמֵינוּ לְפִי שְׁאוֹל:
 כִּי אֵלֶיךָ יְהוָה אֲדֹנָי עֵינַי
 בָּכָה חֲסִיתִי אֶל־תֵּעַר נַפְשִׁי:
 שְׁמֹרְנִי מִיַּד פֶּחַ יִקְשׁוּ לִי
 וּמִקְשׁוֹת פְּעֻלֵי אָוֶן:
 יִפְּלוּ בְּמִכְמָרֵי רְשָׁעִים
 יַחַד אֲנֹכִי עַד־אֶעְבֹּר:

6 They are delivered into the power of the rock, their judge,
 those who took pleasure in hearing me say,
 7 “Like a shattered millstone on the ground,
 our bones are scattered at the mouth of Sheol.”
 8 To you, Yahweh, I turn my eyes;
 in you I take refuge, do not leave me unprotected.
 9 Save me from the traps that they have laid for me,
 and from the snares of evildoers.
 10 Let the wicked fall each into his own net,
 while I pass on my way.

⁶ Yahweh is the ‘Rock of Israel’ (18:2, 19:14, 42:9); ‘their judge’ is in the plural in the MT – the plural of majesty, as in 58:11.

⁷ ‘A shattered millstone’ follows the LXX and Peshitta; the MT has ‘shattering and splitting’. ‘Sheol’ is the abode of the dead.

⁸ The NRSV has ‘defenceless’ in place of ‘unprotected’, here following the NJB.

⁹ The NJB lacks ‘and from’ in the 2nd line, here following the NRSV.

¹⁰ For the 2nd line, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, “while I alone escape.”

תהילים פרק קמב

א מִשְׁכִּיל לְדָוִד
בְּהִיּוֹתוֹ בַּמְעָרָה תְּפִלָּה:
ב קוֹלִי אֶל־יְהוָה אֶזְעַק
קוֹלִי אֶל־יְהוָה אֶתְחַנֵּן:
ג אֶשְׁפֹּךְ לִפְנֵי שִׁיחִי
צָרָתִי לִפְנֵי אֶגִּיד:
ד בְּהִתְעַטֵּף עָלַי רוּחִי
וְאַתָּה יְדַעַת נִתִּיבָתִי
בְּאַרְחֻזֹּי אֶהֱלֹךְ
ט מָנוּ פֶּחַ לִי:
ה הִבֵּיט יְמִין וְרָאָה וְאִין־לִי מְכִיר
אֶבֶד מָנוֹס מִמֶּנִּי
אִין דּוֹרֵשׁ לְנַפְשִׁי:
ו זַעֲקָתִי אֶלֶיךָ יְהוָה

PSALM 142

- 1 *A Maskil of David.*
When he was in the Cave. A Prayer.
- 2 To Yahweh I cry out with my plea.
To Yahweh I cry out with entreaty.
- 3 I pour out my worry in his presence,
in his presence I unfold my troubles.
- 4 However faint my spirit,
you are watching over my path.
On the road I have to travel
they have hidden a trap for me.
- 5 Look on my right and see: there is no one who knows me.
No refuge remains to me,
no one cares whether I live or die.
- 6 I cry out to you, Yahweh,

PSALM 142

- ¹ Most English translations do not assign a verse number to the title; here, we follow the *MT*, and subsequent verse numbers are accordingly incremented. According to the superscription, David wrote this psalm while 'in the cave'; this probably refers to either the incident recorded in 1S 22:1 or to the one recorded in 1S 24:3.
- ² This Psalm has been applied to Christ in his sufferings.
- ³ Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "my trouble before him I declare."
- ⁴ For the 2nd line, here following the *NJB*, the *NRSV* reads, "you know my way."
- ⁵ The right hand is where a defender stands (see 109:31, Is 63:12).
- ⁶ See 27:13, 52:5; cf. 16:5, 46:1, and 91:2. The psalmist compares the LORD to landed property, which was foundational to economic stability in ancient Israel.

אֶמְרָתִי אַתָּה מַחְסִי
חֵלְקִי בָאָרֶץ הַחַיִּים:
הַקְשִׁיבָה | אֱלֹהֵי כִי־דִלּוֹתַי מְאֹד
הַצִּילֵנִי מִרְדְּפֵי
כִּי אֲמָצוּ מִמֶּנִּי:
הוֹצִיאָה מִמִּסְגָּר | נַפְשִׁי לְהוֹדוֹת אֶת־שִׁמְךָ
בִּי יִכְתְּרוּ צַדִּיקִים
כִּי תִגְמַל עָלַי:

ז

ח

I affirm, "You are my refuge,
my share in the land of the living!"

7 Listen to my calling, for I am miserably weak.

Rescue me from my persecutors,
for they are too strong for me.

8 Lead me out of prison that I may praise your name.

The righteous will gather round me,
because of your generosity to me.

⁷ The literal translation of 'miserably weak' is 'very low'.

⁸ The LXX and Peshitta have 'hope' in place of 'gather round me'. All God's friends form one body; they join in the thanksgiving for the faithful saved by God (see 64:10, 107:42).

תהילים פרק קמג

א מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד
יְהוָה | שְׁמַע תְּפִלָּתִי
הֶאֱזִינָה אֶל־תַּחֲנוּנִי
בְּאֲמַנְתָּךְ עֲנֵנִי בְּצִדְקַתְךָ:
ב וְאַל־תָּבוֹא בַּמִּשְׁפָּט אֶת־עַבְדְּךָ
כִּי לֹא־יִצְדַּק לִפְנֶיךָ כָּל־חַי:
ג כִּי רָדַף אוֹיֵב | נַפְשִׁי
דָּכָא לָאָרֶץ חִיתִּי
הוֹשַׁבְנִי בַּמַּחֲשָׁבִים כְּמֵתִי עוֹלָם:
ד וְתַתְּעוּטָף עָלַי רוּחִי
ה בְּתוֹכִי יִשְׁתּוּמֵם לִבִּי:
ו זָכַרְתִּי יָמִים | מִקֶּדֶם
ז הִגִּיתִי בְּכָל־פִּעְלֶךָ
ח בַּמַּעֲשֵׂה יְדֶיךָ אֲשׁוּחָח:
ט פִּרְשֵׁתִי יְדֵי אֱלֹהֶיךָ

PSALM 143

- 1 *A Psalm of David.*
Yahweh, hear my prayer,
listen to my pleading in your constancy,
answer me in your saving justice.
- 2 Do not put your servant on trial,
for no one is guiltless at your tribunal.
- 3 An enemy is in deadly pursuit,
crushing me into the ground,
forcing me to live in darkness, like those long dead.
- 4 My spirit is faint,
and within me, my heart is numb with fear.
- 5 I recall the days of old,
reflecting on all your deeds,
I ponder the works of your hands.
- 6 I stretch out my hands to you,

PSALM 143

- 1 The NJB, following the LXX, adds the following to the end of the title: "*when his son was pursuing him*" (ὅτε αὐτὸν ὁ υἱὸς καταδιώκει); here, we follow the MT & NRSV.
- 2 Cf. 51:5, 130:3. Paul uses this passage somewhat freely (Rm 3:20, Ga 2:16).
- 3 'Darkness' here refers to Sheol, which the psalmist views as a dark place located deep in the ground (see Ps 88:6).
- 4 The literal translation of 'numb with fear' (following the NJB) is 'shocked'.
- 5 The literal translation of 'days of old' is 'days from before'.
- 6 For the 2nd line, NETB, assuming an emendation of the כ prefix to ב, reads, "*my soul thirsts for you in a parched land.*"

נַפְשִׁי | בְּאַרְצְ-עֵיפָה לָךְ

סֵלָה:

ז מֶהֱרַעַנְנִי | יְהוָה כָּלֶתָה רוּחִי
אֶל־תִּסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי
וְנִמְשַׁלְתִּי עַם־יִרְדֵּי בֹר:
ח הַשְׁמִיעֵנִי בִבְקֶר | חֲסִדְךָ כִּי־בָךְ בָּטַחְתִּי
הוֹדִיעֵנִי דֶרֶךְ־זוֹ אֵלֶיךָ
כִּי־אֵלֶיךָ נִשְׁאַתִּי נַפְשִׁי:
ט הַצִּילֵנִי מֵאִיְבֵי | יְהוָה
אֵלֶיךָ כִּסְתִּי:
י לַמִּדְנִי | לַעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹנְךָ כִּי־אַתָּה אֱלֹהֵי
רוּחְךָ טוֹבָה
יֵא תִנְחֵנִי בְּאַרֶץ מִישׁוֹר:
יֵא לְמַעַן־שִׁמְךָ יְהוָה תִּחְיֶנִּי
יב בְּצַדִּיקְתְּךָ | תוֹצִיא מִצָּרָה נַפְשִׁי:
וּבְחֲסִדְךָ תִּצְמִית אִיְבֵי
וְהִאֲבִדְתָּ כָל־צָרָי נַפְשִׁי
כִּי אֲנִי עֲבָדְךָ:

my heart like a land thirsty for you.

Selah

- 7 Answer me quickly, Yahweh, my spirit is worn out;
do not turn away your face from me,
or I shall be like those who sink into the Pit.
- 8 Let dawn bring news of your faithful love,
for I place my trust in you;
show me the road I must travel for you to relieve my heart.
- 9 Rescue me from my enemies, Yahweh,
since in you I find protection.
- 10 Teach me to do your will, for you are my God.
May your generous spirit lead me
on a level path.
- 11 Yahweh, for the sake of your name;
in your righteousness bring me out of trouble.
- 12 In your faithful love, destroy my enemies;
annihilate all those who oppress me,
for I am your servant.

7 The noun בֹּר ('the Pit') is sometimes used of the grave and/or the realm of the dead.

8 The morning is sometimes viewed as the time of divine intervention (see 30:5, 59:16, 90:14).

9 'I find protection' follows the Vg; the MT has 'I am protected' and the LXX has 'I have fled'.

10 A 'level path' (where one can walk free of obstacles) here symbolizes divine blessing and protection.

11 For the 2nd line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "in your saving justice, give me life; rescue me from distress."

12 The imperfect verbal forms in vv. 11-12a are understood as expressing the psalmist's desire.

תהילים פרק קמד

א לְדָוִד |
בָּרוּךְ יְהוָה | צוּרִי
הַמֵּלֶמֶד יָדַי לַקְרָב
אֲצַבְעוֹתַי לַמִּלְחָמָה:
ב חֲסִדִי וּמִצּוֹדֹתַי מִשְׁגָּבִי וּמִפְּלִטִי-לִי
מִגְנִי וּבֹרַחַסִּיתִי
הַרוֹדֵד עָמִי תַחְתִּי:
ג יְהוָה מִה־אָדָם וּתְדַעְהוּ
בֶן-אָנוּשׁ וְתַחֲשַׁבְהוּ:
ד אָדָם לַהֲבֵל דָּמָה
יָמָיו כַּצֵּל עוֹבֵר:
ה יְהוָה הִט־שָׁמַיִךְ וְתֵרֵד
גַּע בַּהָרִים וַיַּעֲשֵׁנוּ:
ו בְּרוֹק בָּרַק וְתַפִּיצֵם

PSALM 144

- 1 *Of David.*
Blessed be Yahweh, my rock,
who trains my hands for war
and my fingers for battle,
2 my faithful love, my bastion, my citadel, my Saviour;
I shelter behind him, my shield;
he makes the peoples submit to me.
3 Yahweh, what are human beings for you to notice,
or sons of Adam for you to think of them?
4 Human life is a mere puff of wind,
days as a fleeting shadow.
5 Yahweh, bow your heavens and come down,
touch the mountains, make them smoke.
6 Make the lightning flash and scatter them;

PSALM 144

- 1 The first part of the Psalm (vv. 1–11), a summary of liturgical prayer for the king, is inspired by Ps 18 and others. The second part (vv. 12–15) is original and described the prosperity of the messianic age.
2 In place of 'faithful love', the NRSV, following 18:2 and 2S 22:2, has 'rock'. 'The people' follows the Peshitta; the LXX and MT have 'my people'; the correction is intended to allude to David.
3 The singular noun, אָנוּשׁ, is used here in a representative sense for mankind.
4 A 'fleeting shadow' is perhaps one cast in the evening, soon to be swallowed up by complete darkness.
5 The NJB has 'part the heavens' in place of 'bow your heavens', here following the NRSV.
6 For the 1st line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "Scatter them with continuous lightning-flashes."

שֶׁלַח חֲצִיף וְתַהַמָּם:			rout them with a volley of your arrows.
שֶׁלַח יָדְךָ מִמָּרוֹם	ז	7	Stretch down your hand from above;
פָּצְנִי וְהַצִּילֵנִי מִמַּיִם רַבִּים			save me and rescue me from deep waters,
מִיַּד בְּנֵי נָכָר:			from the clutches of foreigners,
אֲשֶׁר פִּיהֶם דְּבַר־שׁוֹא	ח	8	whose every word is worthless,
וְיָמִינָם יָמִין שֶׁקֶר:			whose right hand is raised in perjury.
אֱלֹהִים שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ אֲשִׁירָה לָּךְ	ט	9	God, I sing to you a new song,
בְּנֶבֶל עֲשׂוֹר אֲזַמְּרָה־לָּךְ:			I play to you on the ten-stringed lyre,
הַנּוֹתֵן תְּשׁוּעָה לַמְּלָכִים	י	10	for you give kings victory and rescue your servant David.
הַפּוֹצֵה אֶת־דָּוִד עַבְדּוֹ מִחֶרֶב רָעָה:			From the sword of evil
פָּצְנִי וְהַצִּילֵנִי מִיַּד בְּנֵי־נָכָר	יא	11	save me, rescue me from the clutches of foreigners
אֲשֶׁר פִּיהֶם דְּבַר־שׁוֹא			whose every word is worthless,
וְיָמִינָם יָמִין שֶׁקֶר:			whose right hand testifies to falsehood.
אֲשֶׁר בְּנֵינוּ פְּנִטְעִים	יב	12	May our sons be like plants
מִגְדָּלִים בְּנְעוּרֵיהֶם			growing tall from their earliest days,
בְּנוֹתֵינוּ כְּזוּלֹת			our daughters like pillars
מִחֻטְבוֹת תְּבִנִית הֵיכָל:			carved fit for a palace.

7 The NRSV has 'hand of aliens' in place of 'clutches of foreigners', here following the NJB.

8 Literally translated, this verse reads, "who [with] their mouth speak falsehood, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood."

9 The NRSV has 'harp' in place of 'lyre', here following the NJB.

10 'David my servant' has become a messianic title (Jr 33:21, Ezk 34:23–24, 37:24).

11 The NRSV includes the last line of v. 10 in this verse; here, we follow the MT & NJB.

12 'Pillars' translates a rare word suggesting caryatids.

מְזֻנֵּנוּ מִלֵּאִים מְפִיקִים מִזֶּן אֶל־זֶן
 צֹאנֵנוּ מֵאֲלִפּוֹת מְרִבּוֹת
 בְּחוֹצוֹתֵינוּ:
 אֲלוֹפֵינוּ מְסֻבָּלִים
 אֵין־פֶּרֶץ וְאֵין יוֹצֵאת
 וְאֵין צוֹחָה בְּרַחֲבֵינוּ:
 אֲשֶׁר־הָעָם שָׂכְכָה לּוֹ
 אֲשֶׁר־הָעָם שִׁיחָה אֱלֹהָיו:

יג

יד

טו

13 May our barns be full, filled with all kinds of provision,
the sheep in our pastures be numbered in thousands
and tens of thousands.

14 And may our cattle be well fed,
free of raids and pillage,
free of outcry in our streets.

15 How blessed the nation of whom this is true,
blessed the nation whose God is Yahweh!

¹³ The Hebrew noun translated 'barns' occurs only here.

¹⁴ For the 2nd line, the NRSV reads, "May there be no breach in the walls, no exile."

¹⁵ Another reading for 'nation' is 'people'.

תהילים פרק קמה

א תהלה לדוד

אֲרוֹמְמֶךָ אֱלֹהֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ
וְאֶבְרַכְּךָ שְׁמֶךָ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד:

ב בְּכָל־יוֹם אֶבְרַכְּךָ
וְאֶהְלֵלְךָ שְׁמֶךָ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד:

ג גָּדוֹל יְהוָה וּמֵהַלָּל מְאֹד
וְלִגְדֻלָּתוֹ אֵין חֶקֶר:

ד דֹּר לְדֹר יִשְׁבַּח מַעֲשֶׂיךָ
וְגִבּוֹרֹתֶיךָ יִגִּידוּ:

ה הַדָּר כְּבוֹד הוֹדֶךָ
וְדַבְרֵי נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ אֲשִׁיחָה:

PSALM 145

Hymn of Praise. Of David.

ALEF

1 I shall praise you to the heights, God my King,
I shall bless your name forever and ever.

BET

2 Day after day, I shall bless you;
I shall praise your name forever and ever.

GIMEL

3 Great is Yahweh, and worthy of all praise,
his greatness beyond all reckoning.

DALET

4 Each age will praise your deeds to the next,
proclaiming your mighty works.

HE

5 Your renown is the splendour of your glory;
I will ponder the story of your wonders.

PSALM 145

¹ This acrostic Psalm borrows elements from several others.

² A more literal translation of 'forever and ever' (here following the NJB & NRSV) is 'continually'.

³ Literally translated, the 2nd line reads, "and concerning his greatness there is no searching."

⁴ The prefixed verbal forms in this verse are understood as imperfects, indicating how the psalmist expects his audience to respond to his praise.

⁵ Literally translated, this verse reads, "The splendour of the glory of your majesty and the matters of your amazing deeds I will ponder."

וַעֲזֹז נִזְרָאֲתִיךָ יֹאמְרוּ
וּגְדֹלוֹתֶיךָ וּגְדֻלַּתְךָ אֲסַפְּרָנָה:

זָכַר רַב־טוֹבָךָ יִבְעִי
וְצִדְקַתְךָ יִרְנְנוּ:

חֲנוּן וְרַחוּם יְהוָה
אֶרֶךְ אַפִּים וּגְדֹל־חֶסֶד:

טוֹב־יְהוָה לְכָל
וְרַחֲמָיו עַל־כָּל־מַעֲשָׂיו:

יִודוּךָ יְהוָה כָּל־מַעֲשֶׂיךָ
וְחֲסִידֶיךָ יְבָרְכֻכָּה:

כָּבוֹד מַלְכוּתְךָ יֹאמְרוּ
וּגְבוּרַתְךָ יִדְבְּרוּ:

VAV

6 They will speak of your awesome power,
and I shall recount your greatness.

ZAYIN

7 They will bring out the memory of your great generosity,
and joyfully acclaim your saving justice.

HET

8 Yahweh is tenderness and pity,
slow to anger, full of faithful love.

TET

9 Yahweh is generous to all;
his compassion embraces all his creatures.

YOD

10 All your creatures shall thank you, Yahweh,
and your faithful shall bless you.

KAF

11 They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom
and tell of your might,

⁶ The significance of the *Kethib*/ *Qere* difference here warrants full explanation.

⁷ The prefixed verbal forms in this verse are understood as imperfects, indicating how the psalmist expects his audience to respond to his praise.

⁸ In place of 'slow to anger', here following the MT, NJB & NRSV, NETB has 'patient'.

⁹ The NJB has 'tenderness' in place of 'compassion', here following the NRSV.

¹⁰ The NRSV has 'works' in place of 'creatures', here following the NJB.

¹¹ In place of 'kingdom', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'kingship'.

<p>יב להודיע לבני האדם גבורתיו וכבוד הדר מלכותו:</p>		<p>LAMED 12 making known your mighty deeds to the sons of Adam, the glory and majesty of your kingship.</p>
<p>יג מלכותך מלכות כל-עלמים וממשלתך בכל-דור ודור:</p>		<p>MEM 13 Your kingdom is a kingdom forever; your reign lasts from age to age.</p>
<p>נאמן אלוהים בדרכיו וחסיד בכול מעשיו</p>		<p>(NUN) God is trustworthy in all his words, and upright in all his deeds.</p>
<p>יד סומך יהוה לכל-הנפלים וזוקף לכל-הכפופים:</p>		<p>SAMEKH 14 Yahweh supports all who stumble, lifts up those who are bowed down.</p>
<p>טו עיני-כל אליך ישברו ואתה נותן-להם את-אכלם בעתו:</p>		<p>AYIN 15 All look to you in hope and you feed them with the food in due season.</p>
<p>טז פותח את-ידך ומשביע לכל-חי רצון:</p>		<p>PE 16 And, with generous hand, and fill every living thing with the food they desire.</p>

¹² The two occurrences of the pronoun 'your' follow the LXX and Peshitta; the MT has 'his' in both cases.

¹³ The *nun* verse is omitted by the MT but is preserved in the LXX and Peshitta, as in 11QPs^a (the Hebrew text presented here). The translation here follows the NJB, with the exception that we have changed the Divine Name for the word 'God' (translating אלוהים). The WEBBE includes the 2 lines, noting that some MSS omit them.

¹⁴ Another possible reading for 'bowed down' is 'discouraged'.

¹⁵ In place of 'in due season', here following the NRSV, NETB has 'on a regular basis'.

¹⁶ For the 2nd line, here following NETB, the NJB reads, "you satisfy the desires of every living creature."

<p>צִדִּיק יְהוָה בְּכָל־דַּרְכָּיו וְחַסִּיד בְּכָל־מַעֲשָׁיו:</p>	יז	<p>TSADI 17 Yahweh is just in all that he does, and is loving in all his deeds.</p>
<p>קָרוֹב יְהוָה לְכָל־קֹרְאֵיו לְכָל־אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָאֵהוּ בֶאֱמֶת:</p>	יח	<p>QOF 18 He is close to all who call upon him, all who call on him in truth.</p>
<p>רְצוֹן־יִרְאָיו יַעֲשֶׂה וְאֶת־שׁוֹעֲתָם יִשְׁמַע וְיוֹשִׁיעֵם:</p>	יט	<p>RESH 19 He fulfils the desires of all who fear him; he also hears their cry and saves them.</p>
<p>שׁוֹמֵר יְהוָה אֶת־כָּל־אֲהָבָיו וְאֵת כָּל־הָרָשָׁעִים יַשְׁמִיד:</p>	כ	<p>SHIN 20 Yahweh guards all who love him, but all the wicked he destroys.</p>
<p>תְּהַלֵּת יְהוָה יִדְבֹּר־פִּי וַיְבָרֵךְ כָּל־בָּשָׂר שֵׁם קִדְשׁוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:</p>	כא	<p>TAV 21 My mouth shall always praise Yahweh; let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.</p>

¹⁷ For this verse, the NJB reads, “Upright in all that he does, Yahweh acts only in faithful love.” Here, we (loosely) follow NETB, which more closely matches the MT.

¹⁸ In place of ‘in truth’, here following the MT & NRSV, the NJB has ‘from the heart’.

¹⁹ The NJB lacks ‘also’ in the 2nd line, here following the NRSV.

²⁰ In place of ‘he destroys’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘he will destroy’.

²¹ The NJB has ‘every creature’ in place of ‘all flesh’, here following the MT & NRSV.

תהילים פרק קמו

א הללו־יָהּ
הלֵלִי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה:
ב אֶהְלֹלָה יְהוָה בְּחַיִּי
אֲזַמְרָה לֵאלֹהֵי בְעוֹדִי:
ג אֶל־תִּבְטְחוּ בַנְּדִיבִים
בְּבֶן־אָדָם | שֹׁאִין לוֹ תְּשׁוּעָה:
ד תֵּצֵא רוּחוֹ יֵשֶׁב לְאֲדָמָתוֹ
בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא אֲבָדוֹ עֲשֵׂתִנְתּוֹ:
ה אֲשֶׁרִי שָׁאֵל יַעֲקֹב בְּעֶזְרוֹ
שִׁבְרוֹ עַל־יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיו:
ו עָשָׂה | שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ
אֶת־הַיָּם וְאֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־בָּם
הַשֹּׁמֵר אֱמֶת לְעוֹלָם:
ז עָשָׂה מִשְׁפָּט | לַעֲשׂוֹקִים
נָתַן לֶחֶם לְרַעֲבִים

PSALM 146

1 Hallelujah!
Praise Yahweh, my soul!
2 I will praise Yahweh all my life;
I will make music to my God as long as I live.
3 Do not put your trust in princes,
in any son of Adam, who has no power to save.
4 When his spirit goes forth, he returns to the earth,
on that very day all his plans come to nothing.
5 How blessed is he who has the God of Jacob to help him;
his hope is in Yahweh his God,
6 who made heaven and earth,
the sea and all that is in them.
He keeps faith forever,
7 gives justice to the oppressed,
gives food to the hungry;

PSALM 146

- ¹ This is the first Psalm of a third Hallel, Ps 146–150, recited by Jews in the morning; cf. 113–118 and 136.
² The NRSV transposes the phrases, ‘all my life’ and ‘as long as I live’, here following the NJB.
³ The phrase, ‘son of Adam’, refers to all humans.
⁴ Literally translated, this verse reads, “His spirit goes out, it returns to his ground; in that day his plans die.”
⁵ The title, ‘God of Jacob’ translates יַעֲקֹב אֵל.
⁶ Note that the pronoun, ‘them’ in the 2nd line refers to ‘heaven’, ‘earth’ and ‘the sea’.
⁷ Other reading for ‘gives justice’ (as NJB) are ‘executes justice’ (as NRSV) and ‘vindicates’ (NETB).

יְהוָה מַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים:
 יְהוָה | פָּקַח עֵינִים ח
 יְהוָה זָקַף כַּפּוּפִים
 יְהוָה אֱהָב צַדִּיקִים:
 יְהוָה | שָׁמַר אֶת־גֵּרִים ט
 יְתוֹם וְאַלְמָנָה יַעֲזֹדֵד
 וְדַרְדָּר רָשָׁעִים יַעֲנֹת:
 יְמֹלֵךְ יְהוָה | לְעוֹלָם י
 אֱלֹהֵיךָ צִיּוֹן לְדָר וּדָר
 הַלְלוּ־יָהּ:

Yahweh sets prisoners free.

- 8 Yahweh gives sight to the blind,
 Yahweh lifts up those who are bowed down;
 Yahweh loves the upright.
- 9 Yahweh protects the stranger;
 he sustains the orphan and the widow
 but he frustrates the wicked.
- 10 Yahweh will reign forever,
 your God, Zion, from age to age.

Hallelujah!

⁸ The *NJB* places the 3rd line of this verse after the 2nd line of v. 9, labelling it as 8c.

⁹ The *NJB* labels the 3rd line of this verse as 9c (see #8).

¹⁰ The *NJB*, following the *LXX*, places 'Hallelujah' at the beginning of 147:1.

תהילים פרק קמז

א הַלְלוּ־יָהּ
כִּי־טוֹב זִמְרָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
כִּי־נָעִים נְאוֹה תְהִלָּה:
ב בּוֹנֵה יְרוּשָׁלַם יְהוָה
גִּדְּחֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יִכְנָס:
ג הֹרֵפָא לְשִׁבּוּרֵי לֵב
וּמַחְבֵּשׁ לְעַצְבוֹתָם:
ד מוֹנֵה מִסְפֵּר לְכּוֹכְבִּים
לְכֹלֶם שְׁמוֹת יִקְרָא:
ה גָּדוֹל אֲדוֹנֵינוּ וְרַב־כֹּחַ
לְתַבּוּנָתוֹ אֵין מִסְפָּר:
ו מַעֲוֹדֵד עֲנֻיִם יְהוָה
מַשְׁפִּיל רָשָׁעִים עַד־אָרֶץ:

PSALM 147

- 1 Hallelujah!
How good it is to sing praises to our God;
for he is gracious, and a song of praise is fitting.
- 2 Yahweh builds up Jerusalem;
he gathers the outcasts of Israel,
3 healing the broken-hearted
and binding up their wounds.
- 4 He counts out the number of the stars,
and gives each one of them a name.
- 5 Our Lord is great, all-powerful;
his wisdom beyond all telling.
- 6 Yahweh sustains the poor;
he casts the wicked to the ground.

PSALM 147

- 1 Though divided into two (after v. 11) in several versions, including the Vg, this Psalm forms one poem. The poet celebrates God as the liberator of Israel, the creator, and friend of the lowly. The text here follows the MT & NRSV; the NJB, following the LXX, reads, "Praise Yahweh – it is good to sing psalms to our God – how pleasant to praise him."
- 2 For this verse, here following (mostly) the NRSV, the NJB reads, "Yahweh, Builder of Jerusalem! He gathers together the exiles of Israel."
- 3 The NRSV translates the imperfect verbs in this verse as simple present tense; here, we follow the NJB.
- 4 For this verse, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "He determines the number of the stars; he gives to all of them their names."
- 5 In place of 'Lord', here following the NJB & NRSV, NETB reads 'sovereign Master'.
- 6 In place of 'he casts', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'and humbles'.

ז עֲנוּ לַיהוָה בַּתּוֹדָה
 זַמְרוּ לֵאלֹהֵינוּ בְּכִנּוֹר:
 ח הַמִּכֶּסֶה שָׁמַיִם | בְּעָבִים
 הַמְכִּין לָאָרֶץ מָטָר
 הַמַּצְמִיחַ הָרִים חֲצִיר:
 ט נוֹתֵן לַבְּהֵמָה לַחֲמָה
 לַבִּנְי עֹרֵב אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָאוּ:
 י לֹא בַגְבוּרַת הַסּוּס יִחְפֹּץ
 לֹא־בִשְׁוֹקֵי הָאִישׁ יִרְצֶה:
 יא רוּצֶה יְהוָה אֶת־יִרְאָיו
 אֶת־הַמִּיַּחֲלִים לְחַסְדּוֹ:
 יב שִׁבְּחִי יְרוּשָׁלַם אֶת־יְהוָה
 הַלְלִי אֱלֹהֶיךָ צִיּוֹן:
 יג כִּי־חֹזֶק בְּרִיחֶיךָ שְׁעָרֶיךָ
 בִּרְךָ בְּנֶיךָ בְּקִרְבֶּךָ:
 יד הַשֵּׁם־גְּבוּלְךָ שְׁלוֹם

7 Sing to Yahweh in thanksgiving;
 play the harp for our God.
 8 He veils the sky with clouds,
 and provides the earth with rain,
 makes grass grow on the hills.
 9 He gives fodder to cattle
 and to young ravens when they cry.
 10 He takes no delight in the power of horses,
 no pleasure in the speed of a runner.
 11 Yahweh takes pleasure in those who fear him,
 in those who hope in his faithful love.
 12 Praise Yahweh, Jerusalem,
 Zion, praise your God.
 13 For he gives strength to the bars of your gates,
 he blesses your children within you.
 14 He maintains the peace of your frontiers,

7 The NRSV has 'lyre' in place of 'harp', here following the NJB & NETB.

8 At the end of this verse, the NJB, following the LXX, adds, "and plants for people to use."

9 In place of 'cry', NETB uses 'chirp'.

10 The 2nd line follows the NRSV; the NJB has 'human sturdiness' in place of 'the speed of a runner'.

11 The NJB omits the Divine Name here, using the pronoun 'his' in its place.

12 The Fathers of the Church apply the second part of this Psalm to the New Jerusalem, militant or triumphant.

13 The literal translation of 'children' is 'sons' but it is clear that children of either gender are in mind, here.

14 Another reading for 'peace of your frontiers' is 'prosperity within your borders'.

חֶלֶב חֲטִיִּים יִשְׁבִּיעַדֶּךָ:
הַשִּׁלַּח אִמְרָתוֹ אֶרֶץ טו
עַד־מְהֵרָה יִרוּץ דְּבָרֹךְ:
הַנָּתַן שֶׁלֶג כַּצֹּמֶר טז
כַּפֹּזַר כַּאֲפֹר יַפְזֹר:
מִשְׁלֵיךְ קִרְחוֹ כִּפְתִּים יז
לִפְנֵי קִרְתּוֹ מִי יַעֲמֹד:
יִשְׁלַח דְּבָרֹךְ וַיִּמְסֹם יח
יֵשֶׁב רוּחוֹ יִזְלוּ־מַיִם:
מִגִּיד דְּבָרֹךְ לִיעֲקֹב יט
חֲקָיו וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו לְיִשְׂרָאֵל:
לֹא עָשָׂה כֵּן לְכָל־גּוֹי כ
וּמִשְׁפָּטִים בְּלִידְעוֹם
הַלְלוּ־יָהּ:

gives you your fill of finest wheat.

15 He sends his word to the earth,
his command runs quickly.

16 He spreads the snow like wool,
strews hoarfrost like ashes.

17 He sends hailstones like breadcrumbs,
and who can withstand that cold?

18 When he sends his word, it melts them;
when he makes his wind blow, the waters are unstopped.

19 He reveals his word to Jacob,
his statutes and judgements to Israel.

20 For no other nation has he done this,
no other has known his judgements.

Hallelujah!

15 The word of God is here represented as a messenger, almost as a person (cf. 107:20, Is 55:11 and #Jn 1:14). The term אֶרֶץ ('earth') is an adverbial accusative; one must supply a preposition before it in the English translation.

16 The NJB has 'flax' in place of 'wool', here following the NRSV & NETB.

17 In place of 'hailstones', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'ice crystals'; the literal translation is 'his ice'.

18 The NJB has 'thaws' in place of 'melts', here following the NRSV & NETB.

19 The name, 'Jacob', here represents the tribes that are his descendants.

20 The NJB, following the LXX, omits 'Hallelujah'; here, we follow the MT & NRSV.

תהילים פרק קמח

א הללו־יְהוָה |
הללו את־יְהוָה מן־הַשָּׁמַיִם
הללוהוּ בַּמְרוֹמִים:
ב הללוהוּ כָּל־מַלְאָכָיו
הללוהוּ כָּל־עֲבָאָו:
ג הללוהוּ שֶׁמֶשׁ וְיָרֵחַ
הללוהוּ כָּל־כּוֹכָבֵי אֹרֶךְ:
ד הללוהוּ שְׁמֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם
וְהַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר | מֵעַל הַשָּׁמַיִם:
ה הללו את־שֵׁם יְהוָה
כִּי הוּא צִוָּה וַיִּבְרָאוּ:
ו וַיַּעֲמִידֵם לְעַד לְעוֹלָם
חֲקִנְתָּן וְלֹא יַעֲבֹר:
ז הללו את־יְהוָה מִן־הָאָרֶץ

PSALM 148

- 1 Hallelujah!
Praise Yahweh from the heavens;
praise him in the heights.
- 2 Praise him, all his angels;
praise him, all his host!
- 3 Praise him, sun and moon;
praise him, all shining stars.
- 4 Praise him, highest heaven;
praise him, waters above the heavens.
- 5 Let them praise the name of Yahweh
at whose command they were made.
- 6 He established them forever and ever
by an unchanging decree.
- 7 Praise Yahweh from the earth,

PSALM 148

- 1 Heaven, earth, and all creation are here called together to hymn Yahweh, restorer of the chosen people. Jews recite this Psalm each morning.
- 2 Another reading for 'angels' is 'heavenly messengers'.
- 3 The literal translation of 'shining stars' is 'stars of light'.
- 4 The 'waters' here refers to those mentioned in Gn 1:7.
- 5 At the end of the 1st line, the LXX inserts the first part of 33:9.
- 6 For the 2nd line, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed."
- 7 It is not entirely clear what is meant by 'all the depths'.

תַּנִּינִים וְכָל־תְּהוֹמוֹת:			sea-monsters and all the depths,
אֵשׁ וּבָרָד שֶׁלֵּג וְקִיטּוֹר	ח	8	fire and hail, snow and clouds,
רוּחַ סַעֲרָה עֹשֶׂה דְבָרוֹ:			storm-winds that obey his word.
הַהָרִים וְכָל־גְּבֻעוֹת	ט	9	Mountains and every hill,
עֵץ פֶּרִי וְכָל־אֲרָזִים:			fruit trees and every cedar!
הַחַיָּה וְכָל־בְּהֵמָה	י	10	Wild animals and all cattle,
רֶמֶשׂ וְצִפּוֹר כָּנָף:			reptiles and winged birds!
מַלְכֵי־אָרֶץ וְכָל־לְאֻמִּים	יא	11	Kings of the earth and all nations,
שָׂרִים וְכָל־שֹׁפְטֵי אֶרֶץ:			princes and all judges on earth!
בָּחוּרִים וְגַם־בְּתוּלוֹת	יב	12	Young men and young women,
זָקֵנִים עִם־נְעָרִים:			old people and children together!
יְהַלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה	יג	13	Let them praise the name of Yahweh;
כִּי־נִשְׁגָּב שְׁמוֹ לְבָדּוֹ			for his name alone is exalted,
הוֹדוּ עַל־אֶרֶץ וְשָׁמַיִם:			his splendour transcends earth and heaven.
וַיָּרִם קַרְנוֹ לְעַמּוֹ תְּהִלָּה לְכָל־חַסִּידָיו	יד	14	He raised the horn of his people, the praise of all his saints,

⁸ In place of 'clouds', here following *NETB*, the *NJB* has 'mist' and the *NRSV* has 'frost'; in 119:83, the noun refers to smoke but here, where the elements of nature are addressed, it is likely that clouds (which resemble smoke) are in view.

⁹ The *NJB* has 'orchard' in place of 'fruit trees', here following the *NRSV* & *NETB*.

¹⁰ The term here translated 'reptiles' (following the *NJB* – the *NRSV* has 'creeping things') may also refer to insects.

¹¹ In place of 'judges', here following the *NJB*, the *NRSV* has 'rulers'.

¹² The *NJB* has 'girls' in place of 'young women', here following the *NRSV*.

¹³ In place of 'exalted', here following the *NRSV* & *NETB*, the *NJB* has 'sublime'.

¹⁴ This is only one of two cases (with 103:7) where the Psalms use the expression 'children of Israel', which becomes very frequent after the Exile, in the deuterocanonical and Priestly writings. The *NJB*, following the *LXX*, omits 'Hallelujah'.

לְבָנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עִם קָרְבּוֹ
הַלְלוּ־יָהּ:

the children of Israel, the people close to him.
Hallelujah!

תהילים פרק קמט

א הַלְלוּ־יָהּ
שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה שִׁיר חֹדֶשׁ
תְּהַלְתּוּ בְּקֹהֶל חֲסִידִים:
ב יִשְׂמַח יִשְׂרָאֵל בַּעֲשׂוֹ
בְּנֵי־צִיּוֹן יִגִּילוּ בְּמַלְכָּם:
ג יִהְלְלוּ שְׁמוֹ בַּמַּחֲוֹל
בְּתֹף וּבְנֹזֵר יִזְמְרוּ־לוֹ:
ד כִּי־רוּצֵה יְהוָה בַּעֲמּוֹ
יַפְאֵר עֲנֻיִם בִּישׁוּעָה:
ה יִעֲלֻזוּ חֲסִידִים בְּכָבוֹד
יִרְנְנוּ עַל־מִשְׁכְּבוֹתָם:
ו רֹמְמוֹת אֵל בְּגִרוֹנָם
וְחֶרֶב פִּיפִיּוֹת בִּידָם:

PSALM 149

1 Hallelujah!
Sing a new song to Yahweh;
his praise in the assembly of the faithful!
2 Israel shall rejoice in its Maker,
the children of Zion delight in their king.
3 They shall dance in praise of his name,
play to him on tambourines and harp!
4 For Yahweh loves his people;
he will crown the humble with salvation.
5 The faithful exult in glory,
shout for joy as they worship him.
6 Let the high praises of God be in their throats,
a two-edged sword in their hands,

PSALM 149

- 1 This national hymn of the Hellenistic period (compare 1M 4:24 and 2M 15:25–27) looks to the eschatological future (see Is 61:2ff) and makes Israel the instrument of divine justice (see Zc 9:13–16).
- 2 The LORD is the ‘king’ here, as the parallelism in the previous line (*‘its Maker’*) indicates.
- 3 The NRSV has ‘lyre’ in place of ‘harp’, here following the NJB & NETB.
- 4 Literally translated, the 2nd line, here following the NJB, reads, “*he honours the oppressed [with] deliverance.*”
- 5 The literal translation of ‘*as they worship him*’ is ‘*on their couches*’ (as in the NRSV), i.e. from the place where they lie prostrate in worship (cf. 95:6, Jdt 6:18); or it may mean praise that does not cease, even at night (cf. 4:4, 63:6, Ho 7:14).
- 6 It is not clear what the significance of a ‘*two-edged sword*’ is here, though God’s word is described as such in Rv 19:15.

לַעֲשׂוֹת נִקְמָה בַּגּוֹיִם ז
 תּוֹכַחֲוֹת בַּלְּאֻמִּים:
 לְאַסֹּר מַלְכֵיהֶם בְּזָקִים ח
 וְנִכְבְּדֵיהֶם בְּכַבְלֵי בְרִזָּל:
 לַעֲשׂוֹת בָּהֶם | מִשְׁפָּט כְּתוּב ט
 הַדֵּר הוּא לְכָל־חֲסִידָיו
 הַלְלוּ־יָהּ:

7 to wreak vengeance on the nations,
 punishment on the peoples.
 8 to load their kings with chains
 and their nobles with iron shackles,
 9 to execute on them the judgement passed –
 to the honour of all his faithful.
 Hallelujah!

⁷ The literal translation of 'wreak' is 'do'.

⁸ In place of 'shackles', here following *NETB*, the *NJB* has 'fetters' and the *NRSV* has 'chains'.

⁹ This verse is an allusion to the declarations against the nations in the prophetic books. The *NJB*, following the *LXX*, omits 'Hallelujah'.

תהילים פרק קנ

א הַלְלוּ־יָהּ |
הַלְלוּ־אֱלֹהִים בְּקֹדֶשׁ
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּרָקִיעַ עֲזֹז:
ב הַלְלוּהוּ בְּגִבּוֹרָתוֹ
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּרַב גְּדֻלּוֹ:
ג הַלְלוּהוּ בְּתִקְעַ שׁוֹפָר
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּנֶבֶל וְכִנּוֹר:
ד הַלְלוּהוּ בְּתִף וּמַחֲוֹל
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּמִנִּים וְעִגְבָּ:
ה הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצְלֵי־שֹׁמֵעַ
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצְלֵי תְרוּעָה:
ו כָּל הַנְּשָׁמָה תִּהְלֵל יָהּ
הַלְלוּ־יָהּ:

PSALM 150

1 Hallelujah!
Praise God in his holy place;
praise him in the heavenly vault of his power.
2 Praise him for his mighty deeds;
praise him for his surpassing greatness.
3 Praise him with fanfare of trumpet;
praise him with harp and lyre.
4 Praise him with tambourines and dancing;
praise him with strings and pipes.
5 Praise him with the clamour of cymbals;
praise him with triumphant cymbals.
6 Let everything that breathes praise Yah.
Hallelujah!

PSALM 150

This Psalm is a more elaborate doxology than those concluding the first four books of the Psalter (41:13, 72:18–20, 89:51, 106:48); this one invites every musical instrument and every living being to praise Yahweh.

- ¹ In place of 'the heavenly vault of his power', the NRSV has 'his mighty firmament'.
- ² The NJB has 'all his greatness' in place of 'his surpassing greatness', here following the NRSV & NEITB.
- ³ The NRSV has 'lute and harp' in place of 'harp and lyre', here following the NJB.
- ⁴ In place of 'strings and pipes', here following the NJB (the NRSV has 'strings and pipe'), NETB has 'stringed instruments and the flute'.
- ⁵ The literal translation of 'triumphant cymbals' is 'cymbals of acclamation' (cf. 33:3, Nb 10:5).
- ⁶ Note the abbreviated form of the Divine Name (יָהּ) in the 1st line, in keeping with its use in the common phrase of the 2nd line.

ADDENDUM

Ψαλμός 151

- ¹ Οὗτος ὁ ψαλμός ἰδιόγραφος εἰς Δαυιδ
καὶ ἔξωθεν τοῦ ἀριθμοῦ·
ὅτε ἐμονομάχησεν τῷ Γολιαθ.
Μικρὸς ἤμην ἐν τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς μου καὶ νεώτερος ἐν
τῷ οἴκῳ τοῦ πατρός μου·
ἐποίμαινον τὰ πρόβατα τοῦ πατρός μου.
- ² αἱ χεῖρές μου ἐποίησαν ὄργανον,
οἱ δάκτυλοί μου ἤρμωσαν ψαλτήριον.
- ³ καὶ τίς ἀναγγελεῖ τῷ κυρίῳ μου;
αὐτὸς κύριος, αὐτὸς εἰσακούει.
- ⁴ αὐτὸς ἐξαπέστειλεν τὸν ἄγγελον αὐτοῦ
καὶ ἤρέν με ἐκ τῶν προβάτων τοῦ πατρός μου
καὶ ἔχρισέν με ἐν τῷ ἐλαίῳ τῆς χρίσεως αὐτοῦ.
- ⁵ οἱ ἀδελφοί μου καλοὶ καὶ μεγάλοι,
καὶ οὐκ εὐδόκησεν ἐν αὐτοῖς κύριος.

PSALM 151

- ¹ *This Psalm is ascribed to David
as his own composition (though it is outside the number),
after he had fought in single combat with Goliath.*
I was small among my brothers,
and the youngest in my father's house;
I tended my father's sheep.
- ² My hands made a harp;
my fingers fashioned a lyre.
- ³ And who will tell my Lord?
The Lord himself; it is he who hears.
- ⁴ It was he who sent his messenger
and took me from my father's sheep,
and anointed me with his anointing oil.
- ⁵ My brothers were handsome and tall,
but the Lord was not pleased with them.

PSALM 151

The Greek text here presented is that of the 'traditional' LXX version of Psalm 151 and the English text is from the NRSV. For the version from the Qumran Scrolls, see the following section ("Psalm 151A").

- ¹ After 'outside the number', some MSS add 'of the one hundred and fifty [psalms]'.
² Note that the Qumran text of this verse is considerably longer.
³ At the end of this verse, some MSS add 'everything', others add 'me' and others read 'who will hear me'.
⁴ An alternative reading for 'messenger' is 'angel'.
⁵ Note that the Qumran text of this verse is considerably longer.

⁶ ἐξῆλθον εἰς συνάντησιν τῷ ἀλλοφύλῳ,
καὶ ἐπικατηράσατό με ἐν τοῖς εἰδώλοις αὐτοῦ.
⁷ ἐγὼ δὲ σπασάμενος τὴν παρ'
αὐτοῦ μάχαιραν
ἀπεκεφάλισα αὐτὸν καὶ ἤρα ὄνειδος ἐξ υἱῶν Ἰσραηλ.

⁶ I went out to meet the Philistine,
and he cursed me by his idols.
⁷ But I drew his own sword;
I beheaded him,
and took away disgrace from the people of Israel.

⁶ An alternative reading for 'Philistine' is 'foreigner'.

⁷ This verse is not present in the *Qumran* text of Ps 151 but something similar appears as part of a subsequent, poorly-preserved psalm.

תהילים פרק קנא

הָלְלוּ יְהוָה לְדָוִד בֶּן־יִשָּׁי:

א קָטָן הָיִיתִי מֵאֶחָי

וְצָעִיר מִבְּנֵי אָמִי:

וַיִּשְׁמַנֵּי רוּעָה לְצֹאֲנִי

וּמוֹשֵׁל בְּגִדְיוֹתָיו:

ב יָדִי עָשׂוּ עֹגֶב

וְאֶצְבָּעוֹתַי כְּנֹר

וְאֶשְׁיֵמָה לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד:

אֲמַרְתִּי אֲנִי בְּנִפְשִׁי

ג הַהָרִים לֹא־עִידוּ־לּוֹ

וְהַגְּבָעוֹת לֹא־יְגִדוּ עָלָיו:

הָעֵצִים אֶת־דִּבְרֹוֹ

וְהַצֹּאֵן אֶת־מַעֲשָׂיו:

PSALM 151A

A Hallelujah of David the Son of Jesse.

- 1 Smaller was I than my brothers
and the youngest of the sons of my father.
Yet, he made me shepherd of his flock
and ruler over his kids.
- 2 My hands have made an instrument
and my fingers a lyre;
and so have I rendered glory to the Lord,
thought I, within my soul.
- 3 The mountains do not witness to him,
nor do the hills proclaim.
The trees have cherished my words
and the flock my works.

PSALM 151A

Psalm 151 did not appear in any Hebrew manuscript until the discovery, in 1956, of a Psalter manuscript among the Dead Sea Scrolls, from *Qumran Cave XI*, designated 11QPs^a. The English text here presented (following the *Oxford NRSV*) is a translation of this manuscript made by J.A. Sanders, the original editor of the scroll; the Hebrew text is taken from the [Open Siddur Project](#), wherein damaged content has been restored using text from *Peshitta* and *MT*-style vocalization and cantillation has been added.

- ¹ The word 'kids' here refers to young goats.
- ² Note that the *LXX* has 'harp' in place of 'instrument'.
- ³ The *LXX* lacks this verse.

כִּי מִי יִגִּיד וּמִי יִדְבֹּר
 וּמִי יִסְפֹּר אֶת־מַעֲשָׂיו:
 אֲדוֹן הַכֹּל רָאָה
 אֱלֹהֵ הַכֹּל הוּא שָׁמַע וְהוּא הֶאֱזִין:
 שָׁלַח גִּבְיָאוֹ לְמַשְׁחָנִי
 אֶת־שְׁמוּאֵל לְגַדְלָנִי:
 יֵצְאוּ אֲחֵי לִקְרֹאתוֹ
 יְפִי־הַתֹּזֶר וַיְפִי הַמְּרֹאֶה:
 הַגִּבְהִים | בְּקוֹמָתָם הַיָּפִים בְּשַׁעְרָם
 לֹא־בָחָרוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים בָּם:
 וַיִּשְׁלַח וַיִּקַּחנִי מֵאַחֶר
 הַצֹּאן וַיִּמְשַׁחנִי
 בְּשֶׁמֶן הַקֹּדֶשׁ: וַיְשִׁימָנִי
 נָגִיד לְעַמּוֹ וְמוֹשֵׁל בְּבָנֵי בְרִיתוֹ:

ד

4 For who can proclaim and who can bespeak
 and who can recount the deeds of the Lord?
 Everything God has seen,
 everything he has heard and he has heeded.

ה

5 He sent his prophet to anoint me,
 Samuel to make me great.
 My brothers went out to meet him,
 handsome of figure and appearance.

ו

6 Though they were tall of stature
 and handsome by their hair, the Lord God chose them not.

ז

7 He sent and took me from behind the flock
 and anointed me with holy oil;
 and he made me leader of his people
 and ruler over the people of his Covenant.

⁴ This verse deviates significantly from the *LXX* version.

⁵ The *LXX* has only the first line of this verse, followed by the first line of v. 7.

⁶ The *LXX* lacks the first part of the 2nd line, which partly repeats the last line of the preceding verse.

⁷ In the line following the *Qumran* text of this Psalm, another Psalm (with its heading) begins, of which only two poorly preserved lines remain. Apparently, they celebrate David's victory over Goliath. The *LXX* seems to have merged this 'extra' Psalm with a condensed version of 151.