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PSALMS

An Introduction

The name “Psalms” comes from the Greek word *psalmos* which means “song.” Sometimes the book is called the Psalter. It has been called the “Hebrew Prayer and Praise Book.” It was the first book in the third main division of the Old Testament which is called “the Writings” (see Luke 24:44).

The Book of Psalms may very well be the most beloved book of the Old Testament. It was the hymn book and the prayer book of Israel. Later, the early Christians also fell in love with this book. It has provided people with so much comfort in times of trouble, as well as its frequent use in public worship and private devotionals.

The Psalms were written by different authors over a long period of time. Of the 150 psalms, 73 psalms have been ascribed to David, 49 psalms are anonymous, 12 psalms were written by Asaph, 12 psalms by the sons of Korah, 2 psalms by Solomon, 1 psalm by Moses, and 1 psalm by Ethan.

The collection is arranged in five sections: Book I (Ps. 1–41); Book II (Ps. 42–72); Book III (Ps. 73–89); Book IV (Ps. 90–106); Book V (Ps. 107–150). There are sub-groups here and there within the Psalms: the psalms of Korah’s sons (Ps. 42–49; 84–85; 87–88); the *michtam* psalms (Ps. 56–60); the psalms of Asaph (Ps. 50, 73–83); and the songs of degrees (Ps. 120–134). There appears to be a set in Ps. 93–100. Ps. 113–118 are called the Hallel Psalms. Ps. 138–145 all have the name of David in their superscriptions. And Ps. 146–150 all begin and end with “Hallelu Yah.” The longest psalm is Ps. 119 with 176 verses. (It is also the longest chapter in the entire Bible.) In this particular psalm, each character of the Hebrew alphabet (from ‘aleph to tau) begins a verse in each section of eight verses (acrostic). The shortest psalm is Ps. 117 with only 2 verses.

There was a wide variety of purposes and occasions which prompted the writing of the various types of psalms. Some are national in scope, and some are intimately personal. Some are exultant, and some are forlorn. There is a tremendous range of human emotion expressed in the Book of Psalms (both collectively and individually). It’s no wonder that Psalms has been so popular throughout the ages. There is something there for everyone—temple hymns, royal psalms which anticipated Christ as the Messianic King, imprecatory wishes, aspirations, struggles, deep contrition, feelings of deliverance, outpourings of prayer to God, worship, confession, inner conflicts, pleas for help and protection, and songs of thanksgiving for God’s blessings.

In the New Testament, there are 283 quotations from the Old Testament; 116 of them are from the Book of Psalms alone. Jesus loved the Psalms. Even while dying on the cross, Jesus quoted from them (Matt. 27:46; Luke 23:46). Messianic predictions abound regarding his suffering, death, resurrection, and final victory in glory.

The Psalms are especially useful for all of us today (1 Cor. 10:11). The Book of Psalms emphasizes the following things: There is only one true God. And, He is ever-present, all-powerful, and infinitely wise. We must all recognize the universality of God’s love, His providence, and His goodness. He is sovereign and we must obey Him unflinchingly with reverence. Idols are empty, false, and abominable. Sin is horrible, and God hates it. He will execute judgment upon all sinners. But God is also merciful and forgiving if man is truly penitent and submissive. Great joy will result. Many psalms stress the beauty of God’s holiness and a deep personal relationship with God.

BOOK ONE (Psalms 1–41):

True Happiness

1¹Happy^a is the person who does not listen to the evil people.^b He does not go where sinners go.^c He does not do what bad people do.^d ²Instead, he loves the Always-Present One's^e

a 1:1 or, "Blessed" = A full life is rewarding. The term is used 33 times in the Old Testament; always of man, never of God.

b 1:1 literally, "who does not walk in the counsel of evil people." "Walk" is often used in Scripture to denote a way of life; that is, one's conduct.

c 1:1 literally, "nor does he stand in the way of sinners" = following their bad example. "Sinners" are those who violate known obligations.

d 1:1 literally, "nor does he sit in the seat of scoffers." "Scoffers" are those people who treat virtue and religion with contempt.

e 1:2 literally, "Yahweh's" (sometimes spelled "Jehovah," or the shortened form, "Yah" or "Jah.") This is the personal and covenant Name which God Himself chose to be known by. See Exo. 3:14-15; 6:3. The meaning is associated with the eternal existence of God. The Name seems to suggest the timelessness of God, the very Foundation of all existence. Perhaps there is a hint of this in Rev. 1:4, "... from the One who is, who was, and who will be ..." Jesus probably alluded to this in John 8:58, "Before Abraham was, I AM." Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Heb. 13:8). Since the original Hebrew text had only consonants, this sacred Name (called "the tetragrammaton," 4 letters) was YHWH. No one can be sure of the original pronunciation. Because ancient Jewish people thought that the Name of God was too holy to be uttered (Deut. 28:58), and because they were afraid of violating Exo. 20:7 and Lev. 24:16, they routinely substituted the Hebrew word for "Lord" (*Adonay*) for YHWH. That custom is still being practiced today. This is the reason for the traditional "LORD" (with small capital letters). This Name occurs more than 6,000 times in the Old Testament. See the full implications of the meaning of this divine Name in Exo. 33:18-20; 34:6-7; Num. 14:18; Neh. 9:17; Ps. 86:15; 103:8; 145:8; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2.

teachings.^f He thinks about God's teachings day and night.³ He is strong, like a tree planted beside a river. It produces fruit in its season. Its leaves don't die. Everything he does will be a success.

⁴But evil people are not like that. They are like useless chaff^g that the wind blows away.⁵ So, the evil people will not escape God's punishment. Sinners will not gather with righteous people.

⁶Why? Because Yahweh knows the way of righteous people. But the evil people will be destroyed.

The Chosen One

2¹Why are the nations so mad? Why are the ethnic groups making useless plans?² The kings of the earth prepare to fight. Their leaders come together against Yahweh^h and against His anointedⁱ king.^j

f 1:2 Hebrew: *torah*

g 1:4 or, "bits of straw"; that is, something worthless; the debris which is separated from the grain in winnowing

h 2:2 See Acts 4:25-26. Compare Matt. 27:1; Luke 23:1-25.

i 2:2 Officially rubbing the candidate with oil signified his separation to the Lord for a particular task as well as preparing that person with divine guidance. See 1 Sam. 2:10; 12:3; 24:6; 26:9,11,16; 2 Sam. 1:14,16; 19:21; 22:51; 23:1; Ps. 2:6; Zech. 4:14.

j 2:2 = His Messiah or Christ (John 1:41). The *Sohar* section of the Jewish Talmud interpreted this

³“Let us break their chains that hold us as prisoners! Let us throw off their ropes that tie us!” say the nations.

⁴But Yahweh, who sits in heaven, laughs.^a The Lord makes fun of them.

⁵Then He rebukes them angrily. He scares them with His fury.

⁶He says: “I have anointed My own king!^b He will rule in Jerusalem on My holy mountain.”^c

⁷Now I^d will tell you what Yahweh has declared:

He said to me: “You are My Son.”^e Today I have become

your Father.^f ⁸If you ask Me, then I will give the nations to you as your share. All the ends of the earth will belong to you.^g

⁹You will make them obey you by punishing them with an iron rod. You will shatter them like pottery.”

¹⁰Therefore, you kings, be smart! O rulers of the earth, learn this lesson!

¹¹Obey Yahweh with reverence. Be happy, but tremble.^h ¹²Show that you are loyal toⁱ His Son. Otherwise,

he will be angry and you will be destroyed. He can become angry quickly. But happy are all those who trust him for protection.

A Morning Prayer for Help

3¹A psalm^j of David when he fled from his son Absalom.^k

psalm as Messianic.

a 2:4 Compare Ps. 29:10; 37:13; 59:8; Prov. 1:26; Isa. 18:4; 40:22. God quietly goes ahead steadily to accomplish His purposes, despite man’s futile efforts to oppose Him (Acts 4:28).

b 2:6 Compare Matt. 28:18; 1 Cor. 15:24-28; Heb. 10:13.

c 2:6 Mount Zion was selected by King David to become the permanent home for God’s ark of the covenant (2 Sam. 5:5-9; 24:15-25; 1 Chr. 11:4-9). This was the site of Solomon’s temple in Jerusalem (1 Kings 8:1ff; 2 Chr. 33:15; Ps. 3:4; 15:1; 43:3; 99:9). Eventually, the name “Zion” was transferred to the entire city of Jerusalem. Isaiah prophesied that God’s Word would go forth from Jerusalem (Isa. 2:1-3); and it did so on the Pentecost following the resurrection of Christ (Acts 2:1-47).

d 2:7 Here the psalm switches to the other speaker, the Messiah himself.

e 2:7 See 2 Sam. 7:14. Therefore, Jesus Christ is “the Son of God” (Dan. 9:25; Matt. 1:1; 26:63-65; Heb. 1:2,5; Rom. 1:4; John 1:49; 5:18).

f 2:7 pointing to the day that Christ was resurrected, referring to the time that God’s decree was made, when the new covenant went into effect (Eph. 1:20-23). That was the day when Jesus of Nazareth was crowned as King of Kings. See Acts 13:32-33; Heb. 1:5; 5:5. Compare also Isa. 11:4; Ps. 110:6; Matt. 3:17; 17:5; 22:45; 25:1-46; Mark 1:11; 9:7; Acts 2:34; Rom. 1:4; Rev. 2:26-27; 12:5; 19:15.

g 2:8 See the Messianic tone of Zech. 9:9-10.

h 2:11 because of their awe of the Messiah

i 2:12 literally, “kiss” = a token act of submission to the Son’s Messianic authority (Gen. 41:40; 1 Sam. 10:1; 1 Kings 19:18; Hos. 13:2)

j 3:1 Hebrew: *mizmor*, which means “ode” or “song” (usually accompanied by a musical instrument). Sixty-five of the psalms are designated as *mizmor*.

k 3:1 See 2 Sam. 15:13–17:22. About half of the Book of Psalms is ascribed to David.

O Yahweh, I have many, many enemies! So many people have turned against me.^a ²Many people are talking about me. They say: “God will **not** rescue him!” (Selah)^b

³Nevertheless, O Yahweh, You are a shield around me. You are my wonderful God who gives me courage. ⁴I will pray out loud to Yahweh. And, He will answer me from His holy mountain. (Selah)

⁵I can lie down and go to sleep. And I will wake up again, because Yahweh protects me. ⁶Ten thousand enemies may surround me, but I’m not afraid.

⁷O Yahweh, rise up! My God, come save me! Hit all of my enemies on the jaw! Break the teeth of evil people! ⁸Yahweh can save His people. O God, bless Your people! (Selah)

a 3:1 See 2 Sam. 15:4-5.

b 3:2 This solemn word was a musical signal to singers. The Hebrew word comes from a root which means “to rest” or “to pause” (for dramatic effect, possibly during an instrumental interlude), though it may have called for a change in the tempo or the pitch.

An Evening Prayer for Help

4¹To the director of music.^c To be performed on the Neginoth.^d
A psalm of David.

Answer me when I pray to You, my God, who always does what is right. Lift the load that I carry. Be merciful to me and hear my prayer.

²O people,^e how long will you turn my honor into shame!? You people love what is false, and you look for new lies. (Selah) ³Be aware that Yahweh has chosen for Himself those who are loyal to Him. Yahweh listens when I pray to Him.

⁴You are allowed to become angry, but don’t sin. Think about these things quietly as you go to bed. (Selah)

⁵Offer the sacrifices of righteousness! And, trust in Yahweh!

⁶Many people ask: “Who will give us anything good!? O Yahweh, be kind to us!”^f

c 4:1 = the leader of the 288 Levitical choir members (1 Chr. 23:5,30; 25:1ff; Neh. 11:17). This title is found in 53 of the psalms, and it was attached to Habakkuk’s prayer (Hab. 3:1-19).

d 4:1 = a musical instrument

e 4:2 literally, “O sons of men,”

f 4:6 literally, “Lift up the light of Your face upon us!” = smiling (James Moffatt). See Num. 6:25-26.

⁷But You have made me very happy. I am happier than they are, even when they harvest the grain, and their wine abounds. ⁸I go to bed and sleep soundly.^a Why? Because, O Yahweh, **You** are the only One who can keep me safe.

A Prayer for Protection from an Enemy

S¹To the director of music. To be performed on the Nehiloth.^b
A psalm of David.

O Yahweh, listen to my words. Understand what I'm thinking. ²Listen to my cry for help. My King and my God, I pray to You. ³O Yahweh, You hear my voice every morning. Every morning, I ask You for what I need. And, I wait for Your answer.

⁴You are not a God who is pleased with wrongdoing. You won't dwell with evildoers. ⁵Mockers cannot stand in Your presence. You hate all wrongdoers. ⁶You destroy all liars. Yahweh despises those who murder^c and deceive others.

⁷Because of Your great love,^d I can come to Your House.^e Because I revere You, I can worship toward Your holy temple. ⁸O Yahweh, since I have so many enemies, show me the right thing to do. Show me clearly how You want me to live.

⁹With their mouths, my enemies do not tell the truth. In their hearts, they want to destroy people. Their throats are like an open grave. They use their tongues to tell lies. ¹⁰O God, declare them guilty! Let them fall into their own traps. Drive them away, because their sins are numerous. Why? Because they have turned against You.

¹¹On the other hand, let everyone who trusts You be happy. Let them sing joyful songs forever! You protect those who love You. They rejoice because of You. ¹²O Yahweh, You bless the one who does what is right. You surround him with protection like a soldier's shield.^f

a 4:8 Hebrew: *shalom* = with peace of mind; without anxiety

b 5:1 = a musical wind-instrument

c 5:6 literally, "the man of blood". The source of murder is always Satan, and he is a smooth-talking liar (John 8:44).

d 5:7 or, "Your mercy". The Hebrew word (*chesed*) here always implies the relationship of covenant to which both parties are loyally committed.

e 5:7 = near the Sanctuary of the tabernacle (1 Sam. 1:9; 3:3; 2 Sam. 22:7). Solomon's temple had not yet been built.

f 5:12 This psalm may have been written when King Saul tried to kill David (1 Sam. 18:10-13).

A Prayer to Yahweh for Mercy

6¹To the director of music.
To be performed on the
Neginoth according to the Sheminith.^a
A psalm of David.

O Yahweh, don't correct me
while You are angry. Don't
punish me when You are furious.

²O Yahweh, be kind to me,
because I am weak. Heal me,
O Yahweh, because my bones
ache. ³I am very upset. But, You,
O Yahweh, how long will it be
before I get help?

⁴O Yahweh, return and rescue
me. Save me because of Your
kindness. ⁵Dead people don't
remember You.^b Those in the
grave do not praise You.^c

⁶I am in pain; I'm tired. Every
night, my bed is wet with my
tears. I have soaked my pillow
from crying. ⁷My eyes are red
from so much grief. They have
become weak from weeping over
all my enemies.

⁸Get away from me, all you who
do evil! Yahweh has heard the

a 6:1 literally, "the 8th"; possibly denoting male voices who were an octave lower than female voices

b 6:5 literally, "For in death there is no remembrance of You." Compare Job 19:25ff; Dan. 12:2-3; Heb. 11:19.

c 6:5 literally, "Who can give You praise in Sheol?" Compare Ps. 16:9-11; 17:15; 49:14-15; 73:24.

sound of my crying. ⁹Yahweh
has heard my plea for help.
Yahweh **will** answer my prayer.
¹⁰All of my enemies will be
ashamed and greatly troubled.
They will suddenly turn and
leave in shame.

A Prayer for Justice

7¹A song^d of David, which he
sang to Yahweh concerning the
words of Cush, a Benjaminite.^e

O Yahweh my God, I trust in
You for protection. Save me and
rescue me from all those who
are chasing me. ²Otherwise,
they will tear me apart like
a lion, ripping me to pieces,
and no one else could save me.

³O Yahweh my God, what have
I done!? Have my hands done
something wrong!?! ⁴Have I done
wrong to my friend!? Have
I stolen from my enemy!?! ⁵If
I have done any of these things,
then let my enemy chase me and
capture me. Let him stomp me
to death. Let him bury me in the
dust. (Selah)

⁶O Yahweh, rise up when You
get angry. Stand up against

d 7:1 or, "happosody". Hebrew: *Shiggaion* = an elegy (compare Hab. 3:1).

e 7:1 David may have been falsely accused of plotting against King Saul.

the rage of my enemies. Get up for me; demand fairness! 7 Gather the assembly of the ethnic groups around You, and rule over them from above. 8 O Yahweh, judge the nations! O Yahweh, defend me! Prove that I am right!^a Show that I have done no wrong! 9 O God, You do what is right. You know our thoughts and feelings.^b Please stop those evil actions which are done by evil people. And, help those who do what is right.

10 God protects me like a shield. He saves those whose hearts are right. 11 God judges by what is right. And, God is always ready to punish the evil people. 12 If they do not change their lives, then God will sharpen His sword. He will string^c His bow and take aim.^d 13 Yes, God has prepared His deadly weapons. He has made ready His flaming arrows.^e

14 Look, there are people who conceive evil. They plan trouble

and tell lies. 15 They dig a big hole — hollowing it out — to trap other people.^f But, they will fall into the ditch that they themselves made! 16 They are the ones who will get into trouble. The violence that they cause will only hurt them!^g

17 I praise Yahweh because He does what is right. I sing praises to the Name of Yahweh, the Most High.^h

God's Majesty and Man's Honor

8ⁱ To the director of music. To be performed on the Gittith.ⁱ A psalm of David.

O Yahweh, our Lord, Your Name is the most wonderful Name in all the earth!

You have set Your glory above the heavens. 2 Children — even babies — sing praises to You,^j

f 7:15 This deep pit was deceptively covered with grass and brush, hoping that unsuspecting animals would come along and fall in to be captured or killed.

g 7:16 literally, "And his violence will descend upon the top of his own head." See Esth. 5-7.

h 7:17 Hebrew: *Yahweh 'Elyon* (compare the name of Melchizedek's God in Gen. 14:17-24). This psalm may have been written when David fled to Samuel at Ramah, with King Saul chasing David hard (1 Sam. 19:18-24).

i 8:1 probably a musical instrument (compare Ps. 81:1 and Ps. 84:1)

j 8:2 literally, "From the lips of toddlers and babies, You have built a stronghold". See Matt. 21:16, which quoted the Greek Septuagint (LXX), applying the passage to children who praised Jesus in the temple.

a 7:8 David believes staunchly in his own innocence.

b 7:9 literally, "You test our hearts and kidneys (= our secret feelings)."

c 7:12 literally, "make ready"

d 7:12 literally, "and bend (it)." This means that God was ready to execute His punishment upon evil people.

e 7:13 These "fiery shafts" might be referring to lightning (Ps. 18:14; Zech. 9:14).

PSALMS 8, 9

for the sake of Your enemies—
to silence Your foes and those
who try to get revenge.

³I think about Your heavens,
which You made with Your
fingers. I contemplate the
moon and the stars, which You
created. ⁴But why is mortal
man^a so important to You?
Why do You care about human
beings?^b ⁵You made him
a little lower than the angels.^c
And, You have crowned him
with glory and honor.

⁶You put him in charge of
everything You made.^d You put
all things under his control^e

Compare also Matt. 11:25.

a 8:4 Hebrew: *'enosh*; it means “sickly” (having the sense of “frail” or “puny”) Compare Gen. 4:26.

b 8:4 literally, “the son of mankind?” Compare Job 7:17-21; Ps. 144:3-4.

c 8:5 Hebrew: *'elohim*, which could mean “angels,” “divine beings,” “God,” or “gods”. The Greek Version (LXX), the Vulgate, the Aramaic Targum, the Syriac text, and the Arabic Version have “angels” here (compare Ps. 86:8; 95:3; 96:5; 132:6; 135:5). Translating the Hebrew word *'elohim* as “God” here would contradict the distance from God in the previous verses. Man is *not* slightly below deity; man’s exaltation is only in the area of sovereignty, which is similar to God’s absolute rule.

d 8:6 Compare Gen. 1:26,28; 9:2-3; Job 5:23; Ps. 104:20-24; Eccl. 7:29; Jer. 27:6; Acts 17:20,28,29; 1 Cor. 11:7; James 3:7.

e 8:6 literally, “underneath his feet”. Compare Ps. 47:3; 91:13; Lam. 3:34; Rom. 16:20. But see Heb. 2:6-9 and 1 Cor. 15:27, which applied Ps. 8:4-6 to the incarnation of Jesus Christ (the Second Adam) who conquered dreaded death (1 Cor. 15:26; Heb. 2:15; 1 Pet. 3:22) and now possesses all divine authority (Matt. 28:18).

⁷—all the sheep; the cattle; and
the wild animals; ⁸the birds in
the sky; the fish in the sea; and
whatever passes along the paths
of the sea.

⁹O Yahweh, our Lord, Your
Name is the most wonderful
Name in all the earth!

Thanksgiving for God’s Judgment

9¹To the director of music. To be
performed to Muth-Labben.^f
A psalm of David.^g

I will praise You, O Yahweh, with
all my heart. I will declare all
Your miracles.

²I will be glad and rejoice
because of You. O God Most
High, I will sing praises to Your
Name.

³My enemies turn back. They
are overwhelmed, and they die
in front of You. ⁴You supported
my just cause. You sat upon
Your throne and judged fairly.
⁵You spoke strongly against the
foreign nations. You destroyed

f 9:1 = “(The) Death of the Son,” possibly the name of a well-known melody.

g 9:1 The Greek Septuagint (LXX) and the Latin Vulgate combined Psalm 9 and Psalm 10 into one psalm. The Catholic Church follows that numbering, but Protestants have continued to number these psalms separately as is done in the Hebrew Bible.

the evil people. You wiped out their names forever and ever.

⁶The enemy has vanished forever. You uprooted their cities. No one even remembers them anymore.

⁷Nevertheless, Yahweh rules forever.^a He stays on His throne to judge. ⁸Yahweh will judge the world by what is right.^b He will decide what is fair for the ethnic groups. ⁹Yahweh defends those who suffer. He protects them in times of trouble. ¹⁰Those who know Yahweh^c trust in Him. O Yahweh, You have never abandoned anyone who continues to seek You.

¹¹Sing praises to Yahweh who dwells on Mount Zion.^d Tell the nations what He has done. ¹²He remembers who the murderers were.^e He will not forget the cries of those who suffer.

¹³O Yahweh, be kind to me. See how my enemies hurt me. Don't let me go through the gates of death.^f ¹⁴Then, at the gates of Jerusalem,^g I will declare all my praises about You. I will rejoice because You saved me. ¹⁵The foreign nations have fallen into the pit which they themselves dug. Their feet are caught in the nets they laid. ¹⁶Yahweh has made Himself known by His just decisions which He carried out. The evil people get trapped by what they themselves do. (Higgaion)^h (Selah)ⁱ ¹⁷Evil people will go to the grave;^j so will all the nations who forget God. ¹⁸Those who are in trouble will never be forgotten. The hopes of the poor won't die.

¹⁹O Yahweh, rise up and judge the nations in Your presence! Don't let mortal men think they are strong. ²⁰Put fear in them, O Yahweh! Let the nations

a 9:7 God is eternal; He is always the same (James 1:17). And, His eternal justice will always triumph in the end.

b 9:8 See Acts 17:30-31 concerning the final Judgment Day.

c 9:10 literally, "Your Name"

d 9:11 where God's tabernacle was placed. Originally, "Zion" was a Jebusite stronghold, which King David's men finally captured (2 Sam. 5:6-10). During Solomon's reign, "Zion" began to refer to the specific hill in Jerusalem on which the temple of God stood. God's true throne is in heaven (Ps. 11:4).

e 9:12 Compare Gen. 4:9; 9:2,5; Ezek. 33:6. Every crime will eventually be punished by God.

f 9:13 Compare Job 17:16; 38:17; Matt. 16:18.

g 9:14 literally, "at the gates of the daughter of Zion"; that is, the enclosure of the city; symbolically used in Heb. 12:22

h 9:16 This Hebrew word means "meditation", possibly accompanied by a deep, vibrating sound.

i 9:16 Since both musical directions are given *together*, this special vocal and/or instrumental interlude may have been one of unusual emphasis and solemnity.

j 9:17 Hebrew: *Sheol* = Hades in the New Testament (with Luke 16:23 denoting the location where evil people end up, a place of future punishment)

learn that they are only human.
(Selah)

A Prayer for Help for the Oppressed

10¹O Yahweh, why do
You stay so far away!?
Will You hide in troublesome
times!?^a

²The evil people arrogantly
pursue the poor people, who get
caught in the traps which the
bad people set. ³The evil people
brag about the things they want.
They bless the greedy people, but
they despise the Always-Present
One. ⁴The evil people have
a proud look. They do not look
for God. Every single one of their
schemes is futile. They think that
there is no God!^b ⁵They are
always twisted. They are far from
keeping Your laws. They make
fun of all their enemies. ⁶Each
one thinks in his mind: “Nothing
bad will ever happen to me! I will
never ever be ruined!” ⁷Their
mouths are full of curses, lies,
and threats. Under their tongues
are trouble and sin. ⁸They
stalk just outside the villages.
They secretly look for innocent

people to kill. They watch for the
helpless one. ⁹Secretly, they wait
like a lion—in hiding. They wait
to pounce upon poor people.
Hunters catch them, drawing
them into their clutches. ¹⁰The
poor folks succumb, and they
are crushed. The victims are
defeated by the strong ones.
¹¹The evil people think: “God
has forgotten about us. He does
not see what is happening!”

¹²O Yahweh God, rise up and
punish the evil people. Don’t
forget those who need help.
¹³Why do evil people despise
God!? They think to themselves:
“God will **not** punish us!” ¹⁴O
Yahweh, surely You see the cruel
and evil things!?

Look at them and do something!
People in trouble look to You
for help. You are the One who
helps the orphans.^c ¹⁵Break
the power of evil and bad men!
Punish them for the wrongs they
have done, until there is nothing
left to punish!

¹⁶Yahweh is the King forever
and ever. The pagans will be

a 10:1 God was not hiding; it only seemed that way.

b 10:4 Such a person has come to the false
conclusion that God doesn’t matter (compare Ps.
14:1). See John 3:19.

c 10:14 Compare Exo. 22:22; Deut. 10:18; Isa.
1:17; Ps. 68:5; 82:3; Jer. 49:11; Hos. 14:3; Mal. 3:5;
James 1:27.

eliminated from His land. ¹⁷O Yahweh, You have heard what the poor people want. Do whatever they are asking for. Listen to them! ¹⁸Protect the orphans and those who suffer. Then they will no longer be scared of evil people.

Trusting in God

11 ¹To the director of music.
A psalm of David.

I've trusted in Yahweh for protection. How dare you people say this to me:

"Escape like a bird to your mountain. ²Look, like hunters, the evil people string their bows! They placed their arrows on the bowstrings, using them to shoot from dark places^a at those who are honest. ³When all that is good falls apart,^b what can good people do?"

⁴Yahweh is in His holy temple.^c Yahweh sits on His throne in heaven. And, He sees what people do. He keeps His eye on

them.^d ⁵Yahweh tests those who do right. But He^e hates the evil people and those who love to hurt other people. ⁶He will send hot coals upon the evil people.^f Burning sulfur and a scorching whirlwind is what they will get.^g

⁷Yahweh does what is right, and He loves justice. So, honest people will gaze upon His face.

A Plea for Help

12 ¹To the director of music.
To be performed on the Sheminith. A psalm of David.

Save me, O Yahweh, because the holy people are all gone. No true believers are left on earth. ²Each one tells lies^h to his neighbor.ⁱ They say one thing and mean another.^j

d 11:4 literally, "His eyelids will examine (= penetrate; give close scrutiny to) the sons of men." God knows what everybody is doing morally.

e 11:5 literally, "His soul"

f 11:6 literally, "He will rain coals of fire upon the evil people." See God's judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 18:16-33; 19:1-29). See also Rev. 14:10; 20:10; 21:8.

g 11:6 literally, "(is) the share of their cup." "Cup" is a frequent metaphor for God's favor or wrath (Ps. 16:5; 23:5; 75:9; Isa. 51:17; Matt. 20:22-23).

h 12:2 literally, "emptiness"

i 12:2 or, "All of them lie to one another." Compare Eph. 4:15; Rev. 21:8.

j 12:2 literally, "They speak (with) flattering lip(s) with a heart and a heart." = a double heart. Compare Deut. 25:13, with two different sets of measuring weights. See James 1:7-8. Compare Prov. 4:23; Matt. 12:34; 15:18-19; Mark 7:6,19,21; Luke 6:45; 12:34; Acts 5:3-4; 8:21-22.

a 11:2 without the victims being aware of the archers' presence; it was a sneak attack.

b 11:3 literally, "When the foundations are destroyed". Here "foundations" means the fundamental principles of decency and order in society. Compare Ps. 82:5.

c 11:4 Compare Hab. 2:20, a trusting reference to God's heavenly temple.

PSALMS 12, 13, 14

³Yahweh will stop all those lying lips! He will chop off those bragging tongues! ⁴They say: “Our tongues will help us win! We can say whatever we wish! No one is our master!”^a

⁵But Yahweh says:

“I will now rise up because the poor people are suffering. Because of the moans of the helpless folks, I will give them the help they want. That is God’s passion.^b ⁶Yahweh’s words are pure words. They are like silver purified by fire, like silver refined seven times over.

⁷⁻⁸The evil people live all around us. Everyone loves what is wrong!^c O Yahweh, **You** will keep us safe! Always protect us from such people.

A Prayer to Yahweh for Help

13¹To the director of music. A psalm of David.

How much longer will You forget me, O Yahweh!? How much longer will You hide Your face from me? Forever!?! ²How long must I worry!?! Must I feel sorrow in my heart every day!?

a 12:4 literally, “Who is lord over us!?”

b 12:5 literally, “He pants for it.”

c 12:7-8 literally, “Evil is praised by the sons of men.”

How long will my enemy win over me!?

³O Yahweh, look at me! Answer me, my God! Restore my strength,^d or I will die!^e ⁴Otherwise, my enemy will say: “I have won!” My foes will rejoice that I have been defeated.

⁵But I trust in Your constant love.^f My heart is happy because You rescued me. ⁶I will sing to Yahweh, because He has taken care of me.^g

The Sinfulness of People

Psalms 53:1-6

14¹To the director of music. A psalm of David.

A fool^h thinks to himself: “There is no God!”ⁱ Fools are corrupt; they do terrible things. None of them does anything good.

²Yahweh looks down from

d 13:3 literally, “Enlighten my eyes,” = putting the sparkle back into David’s eyes

e 13:3 literally, “Otherwise, I will sleep the death.” In the Scriptures, death is often compared to sleep (Dan. 12:2; John 11:11,13; 1 Cor. 11:30; 1 Thes. 4:14).

f 13:5 or, “Your mercy.”

g 13:6 This psalm may have been written when David was hiding in the wilderness of Ziph (1 Sam. 23:14-15).

h 14:1 Hebrew: *nabal* (1 Sam. 25:25)

i 14:1 See Ps. 53:1. Compare 2 Cor. 4:4; Rom. 1:21-22. Fools ignore the existence of God in their so-called “moral” decisions. They don’t even bother to deny Him; they are their own gods.

heaven at all the people. He looks to see if anyone is wise, if anyone is looking to God for help. ³But all have turned away. ^a Together, everyone has become rotten. None of them does anything good—not even one person! ^b

⁴Won't wrongdoers ever learn!? They destroy my people as if they were eating bread. They do not ask Yahweh for help. ⁵But the evil people will be filled with terror, because God is with those who do what is right. ⁶The evil people upset the plans of the poor folks. But Yahweh will protect the poor people.

⁷Oh I pray that victory will come to Israel from Mount Zion! May Yahweh restore prosperity to His people. Then the people of Jacob will rejoice. And, the people of Israel will be glad. ^c

True Worshipers

15 ¹A psalm of David.
O Yahweh, who can stay
in Your Sanctuary? ^d Who is

a 14:3 or, "turned aside" = sinned; strayed off (God's moral path). See Rom. 3:23.

b 14:3 Compare Eccl. 7:20.

c 14:7 This psalm may have been written when the ark of the covenant was moved to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6:12-17; 15:29-30; 1 Chr. 15:25-29; 16:1; 2 Chr. 1:4).

d 15:1 literally, "Your (holy) tent?" See 2 Sam. 6:17. These are instructions to those who want access to God (compare Ps. 24:3-6; Isa. 33:14-16).

allowed to dwell on Your holy mountain?

²Only a person who is honest^e and who does what is right.^f He must speak the truth in his heart. ³He must not tell lies about others. He must do no wrong to his friends. He must not gossip against his neighbors. ⁴He must despise vile people, but he must honor those who revere Yahweh. He must keep his vows, no matter what the cost. (He does not switch it.)^g ⁵He must not charge interest on the money he lends to a poor Hebrew brother. And, he must not take a bribe to hurt innocent people.

Whoever does all these things will never be shaken.

A Prayer of Confidence

16 ¹A poem^h of David.
Protect me, O God,
because I trust in You.

²I say to Yahweh: "You are my Lord. Every good thing I have comes from You." ³There are holy people in the world. I take

e 15:2 literally, "the one who walks (= lives. Life is a journey.) uprightly" Compare Job 1:1; Isa. 33:15.

f 15:2 Compare Mic. 6:8; 1 John 3:6-10.

g 15:4 = His word is always good.

h 16:1 Hebrew: *miktam*

a very special delight in them.
 4But those who run after other gods will have much pain. I will not offer their sacrifices of blood. I won't even speak their names aloud. 5Yahweh is all I need; He takes care of me. 6My share in life has been wonderful. Yes, my portion has been beautiful.

7I praise Yahweh because He guides me. Even at night, I think about His instruction.^a
 8I always keep Yahweh before me.^b Because He is close by my side,^c I will not be hurt.

9So, I'm glad, and I rejoice.^d Even my body has hope.^e 10This is because You will not leave me in the grave.^f You will not allow Your Holy One^g to experience^h corruption.ⁱ 11You will show

me^j the pathway to life.^k
 Being with You will fill me with joy. At Your right hand,^l I will find pleasure forever.^m

The Prayer of an Honest Man

17¹A prayerⁿ of David.
 O Yahweh, hear me begging for fairness. Listen to my cry for help! Pay attention to my prayer! I speak the truth. 2You will decide that I am right.^o Your eyes can see what is true.

3You have examined my heart.^p You have inspected me during the night. You questioned me without finding anything wrong. I did not plan any evil, 4as others do. I have obeyed Your commands. I have not done what violent people do. 5I have done what You told me to do.^q
I have not failed.

a 16:7 literally, "my kidneys instruct me" = the conscience (Job 19:27; Jer. 11:20)
b 16:8 or, "I am always aware of Yahweh's presence." Compare John 12:27-28; Heb. 5:7-8.
c 16:8 literally, "at my right (hand)". Compare Ps. 73:23; 109:31; 110:5; 121:5.
d 16:9 or, "celebrate." David/Christ was optimistic about life after death.
e 16:9 literally, "will also rest in hope." = total security
f 16:10 Hebrew: to Sheol (compare Job 10:21-22). God protects us from the power of death (Matt. 16:18).
g 16:10 or, "Your Beloved One" = Jesus Christ (Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34; Acts 3:14); it *cannot* refer to David in any sense whatever!
h 16:10 literally, "to see"
i 16:10 or, "to rot" (= decay). See Acts 2:27,31; 13:35-37.

j 16:11 Jesus Christ (see Acts 2:28)
k 16:11 referring to the Messiah's post-resurrection state. Death no longer had dominion over Christ after he arose from the grave (Rom. 6:9).
l 16:11 Jesus Christ was exalted to this special place of honor (Ps. 110:1; Mark 16:19; Acts 2:33; 7:56; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3).
m 16:11 See Acts 2:25-28. This psalm may have been written when David prayed in 2 Sam. 7:18-29; 1 Chr. 17:16-27.
n 17:1 Hebrew: *tephilah*
o 17:2 literally, "Let the vindication decision about me go forth from Your presence." David was seeking a clear-cut acquittal. Compare Job 23:1-6.
p 17:3 Compare 1 Sam. 16:7; 1 Kings 8:39; Ps. 7:9; 44:21; Prov. 15:11; Jer. 11:20; 17:10; 20:12; John 2:24-25; Acts 1:24; 15:8; Heb. 4:13; Rev. 2:23.
q 17:5 literally, "My steps stayed in Your tracks."

⁶I call to You, O God, because You will answer me. Please listen to me now. Hear what I say. ⁷Your love is so wonderful! By Your power,^a You save those who trust You from their enemies. ⁸Guard me as You would protect Your own eye.^b Shelter me as a bird hides her young ones under her wings.^c ⁹Keep me from the evil people who would attack me. Protect me from my enemies who surround me.

¹⁰They are selfish.^d They brag. ¹¹They have chased me. Now they surround me. They plan to throw me down to the ground. ¹²They are like lions that are yearning to attack. Like young lions, they sit in hiding.

¹³O Yahweh, rise up and face the enemy. Throw them down! Save me from the evil people by Your sword. ¹⁴O Yahweh, rescue me from them by Your power. Their reward is in this life.

They have plenty of food.^e They have many sons. They leave lots of money to their small children. ¹⁵Because I have lived right, I will look upon Your face.^f When I wake up, I will be satisfied with seeing Your likeness.^g

A Song of Victory

2 Samuel 22:1-51

18¹To the director of music. A psalm of David, the servant of Yahweh. On the day when Yahweh delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul, David sang the words of this song to Yahweh. David said:^h

I love You, O Yahweh. You are my Strength.

²Yahweh is my Rock, my Place of Safety, and my Savior. My God is my Rock. I can run to Him for safety. He is my Shield and my Saving Strength,ⁱ Yahweh is my High Tower. ³I will call to Yahweh. I will be saved from

e 17:14 literally, "And You fill their belly (with) Your hidden things." This could mean that it is David's wish that they eventually receive retribution from God that is stored up for them.

f 17:15 See Gen. 32:30; Job 19:26-27; Matt. 5:8; 1 Cor. 13:12; Heb. 12:14; 1 John 3:2-3.

g 17:15 Compare Num. 12:8; 1 John 3:2. This psalm may have been written when David went to En-Gedi to flee from King Saul (1 Sam. 23:29).

h 18:1 See 2 Sam. 22:1-51 for the parallel chapter.

i 18:2 or, "and the horn of my salvation"; that is, referring to the horns of a bull, which was a very powerful animal

a 17:7 literally, "By Your right (hand),"

b 17:8 literally, "as the apple (= the pupil), the daughter of the eye." Compare Deut. 32:10.

c 17:8 literally, "Hide me in the shadow of Your wings." Compare Deut. 32:10-12; Ruth 2:12; Ps. 36:7; 57:1; 61:4; 63:7; 91:4; Matt. 23:37; Luke 13:24.

d 17:10 literally, "They have closed up their fat." = They are completely insensitive; pitiless.

my enemies. Yahweh be praised!

⁴The ropes of death bound me. The deadly rivers overwhelmed me. ⁵The ropes of death wrapped around me. The traps of death confronted me. ⁶In my desperation, I called to Yahweh. I cried out to my God. From His temple,^a He heard my voice. My call to Him for help reached His ears.

⁷The earth trembled and quaked. The foundations of the mountains began to shake and quiver. They shook because Yahweh was angry. ⁸Smoke came out of His nostrils. Consuming fire came out of His mouth. Burning coals blazed out of it. ⁹He tore open the sky and came down. Dark clouds were under His feet. ¹⁰He rode an angel-like being,^b and He flew. Yes, He soared on the wings of the wind. ¹¹He made darkness His covering. His shelter was around Him, surrounded by fog and thick clouds. ¹²Out of the brightness of His presence came

clouds. They passed through with hail and flashes of lightning. ¹³Yahweh thundered in heaven. God the Most High raised His voice. And, there was hail and flashes of lightning. ¹⁴He shot His arrows and scattered His enemies. The bolts of lightning which He sent forth confused them. ¹⁵O Yahweh, You rebuked Your enemies with the blast of the breath from Your nostrils. The valleys of the sea appeared.^c The foundations of the earth became exposed.

¹⁶Yahweh reached down from above and He took hold of me. He pulled me up from the deep waters. ¹⁷He saved me from my powerful enemies, from those who hated me. They were too strong for me. ¹⁸They attacked me at my time of trouble. But Yahweh protected me.

¹⁹He took me to a safe place. Because He delights in me, He rescued me.

²⁰Yahweh spared me because of the righteous way I've lived; I did what Yahweh said was right. He has rewarded me.^d ²¹For

a 18:6 = God's residence in heaven. Compare Ps. 11:4; 29:9.

b 18:10 or, "a cherub," a celestial representation of majesty. See Ps. 80:1; 99:1; Ezek. 1:1ff; 10:1ff. Cherubim (the plural form) were symbols of the presence of God (Gen. 3:24; Exo. 25:18).

c 18:15 Compare Exo. 15:1-12.

d 18:20 This is not a claim of sinlessness on the

I have guarded the ways of Yahweh, and, I have not betrayed my God.²² I have observed all of His laws, and, I have not turned away from His decrees.²³ I was blameless^a in His presence, and I kept myself from doing wrong.²⁴ Therefore, Yahweh has rewarded me according to my righteousness,^b according to my purity in His sight.^c

²⁵O Yahweh, You are loyal to those who are loyal. You are upright to those who have integrity.²⁶ You are pure to those who are pure. But You are hostile to those who are morally twisted.²⁷ You save those who are humble. But, You humble those who are proud.²⁸ O Yahweh, You give light^d to my lamp. My God brightens the darkness around me.²⁹ With Your help, I can attack an army! With God's

help, I can climb over a wall!

³⁰God's way is without fault. Yahweh's Word is pure.^e He is a Shield to all those who trust Him.³¹ Who is God? None but Yahweh!^f Who is the Rock? Only our God!³² The one true God is my Protection. He makes my way free from fault.³³ He causes me to be as sure-footed as a deer. He helps me to stand on my steep mountains.³⁴ He trains my hands for battle. Therefore, my arms can bend a bronze bow.³⁵ You provided to me Your saving shield. You support me with Your right hand. You have stooped down to raise me up.³⁶ You gave me a better way to live. So, I don't fall apart.

³⁷I chased my enemies and caught them. I did not quit until they were finished.³⁸ I crushed them, so that they didn't get up again. They fell beneath my feet.³⁹ You dressed me with strength for the battle. You put my foes under my feet.⁴⁰ You made my enemies turn back. I silenced those who hated me.⁴¹ They called for help, but

part of David but an affirmation of the basic purity of his deed (compare Ps. 24:4).

a 18:23 literally, "complete, innocent". Compare the word "upright" in Job 1:1.

b 18:24 that is, as if I were righteous. David *knew* that he did not deserve God's mercy, but God intervened on David's behalf because God regarded David as a good man.

c 18:24 literally, "according to the cleanness of my hands before His eyes."

d 18:28 "Light" can symbolize one's well-being (Job 22:28; 29:3; Ps. 97:11; Prov. 13:9; Lam. 3:2) or life and salvation (Ps. 18:28; Isa. 9:2; 49:6; 58:8; 59:9; Jer. 13:16; Amos 5:18-20). God is the Source of light (Isa. 10:17; 60:1,2,19,20; Mic. 7:8-9).

e 18:30 or, "refined" (as metal tested in the fire). In other words, God's Word has stood the test.

f 18:31 = only Yahweh (monotheism)

there was no one who came to save them. They cried out to Yahweh, but He did not answer them. ⁴²I beat my enemies into tiny pieces. They were like dust blowing in the wind. I emptied them out like mud in the streets.

⁴³You saved me when the people attacked me.^a You made me the leader of foreign nations. People whom I never knew served me.^b ⁴⁴As soon as they hear me, they “obey” me. Foreigners obey me. ⁴⁵They all become afraid. They come out of their strongholds, trembling.

⁴⁶“Yahweh lives! May my Rock be praised! Exalt the God who saves me! ⁴⁷The one true God gives me victory over my enemies. He causes people to be under my rule. ⁴⁸He delivers me from my enemies. Yes, You set me over those who hate me. You saved me from cruel men. ⁴⁹So, I will acknowledge You, O Yahweh, among the nations. I will sing praises to Your Name.^c

a 18:43 This might refer to the rebellion led by Absalom (2 Sam. 15:6-37; 16:1-23; 17:1-29; 18:1-33).

b 18:43 King David had subjugated several nations—the Philistines, the Moabites, the Syrians, and the Edomites. He put garrisons in their cities, and they made monetary payments to him (2 Sam. 8 and 2 Sam. 10).

c 18:49 This is a Messianic prophecy and it is parallel with Ps. 2:8. In Rom. 15:9, the Apostle Paul

⁵⁰Yahweh gives great victories to His king. He is loyal^d to the king whom He crowned—to David and his descendants forever.

God’s Creation

19¹To the director of music.
A psalm of David.

The heavens keep telling about the glory of God.^e And, the skies^f announce what His hands have made. ²They declare the story day after day. They display knowledge night after night. ³There is neither speech nor words. Their sound is not heard.^g ⁴Nevertheless, their message reaches the whole world.^h It goes everywhere on earth.

The sky is like a home for the sun. ⁵The sun comes out like a happy groom from his bedroom. It rejoices like an athlete eager

was quoting this passage to prove that the truths of religion were *not* to be confined to the Jews, but they were to be made known to other nations, too.

d 18:50 or, “shows constant love”

e 19:1 Compare Ps. 50:6; 89:5-8; 97:6; 148:3; Rom. 1:19-20. As a shepherd boy, young David had spent a lot of time pondering this thought.

f 19:1 Hebrew: *raqiya'*, which means “an expanse” = space. See Gen. 1:6-8, 14-15, 17, 20.

g 19:3 Regardless of what the language is, there are no human beings anywhere on earth who are beyond the reach of the starry heaven’s silent but glorious message about God’s majesty.

h 19:4 This divine, natural revelation can be understood in any language on earth. In fact, the world is without excuse, if it denies the existence of the one true God (Rom. 1:20-21).

to run a race. ⁶The sun rises from one end of the sky, and it follows its path to the other end. Nothing can hide from its heat. ^a

⁷Yahweh's teachings are perfect. ^b They restore the soul. ^c Yahweh's commands can be trusted. They make common ^d persons wise. ^e ⁸Yahweh's principles are right. They make people happy. Yahweh's commands are radiant. They light up the way. ⁹It is pure to revere Yahweh. That deep respect will last forever. Yahweh's judgments are true. They are completely right. ¹⁰They are worth more than gold, even lots of the purest gold. They are sweeter than honey, even the finest honey. ¹¹They also tell me what to do. Keeping them brings great reward. ¹²No one can see all of his own mistakes. ^f Forgive me when I sin without knowing it. ¹³Keep me from the deliberate sins that

I want to do. ^g Don't let them rule over me. ^h Then I can be flawless, and I will be innocent of open rebellion.

¹⁴I hope my words and thoughts ⁱ please You, ^j O Yahweh, You who are my Rock, the One who redeems me.

A Prayer for Victory

20 ¹To the director of music. A psalm of David.

May Yahweh answer you in times of trouble. ^k May the Name of the God of Jacob protect you. ² May He send you help from His Sanctuary. ¹ May He support you from Mount Zion. ³ May He remember all of your offerings. May He accept all of your sacrifices. (Selah) ⁴ May He give you what you want. May all of your plans succeed. ⁵ We will shout for joy when you succeed.

g 19:13 or, "from presumptuous sins." See Num. 15:30; Heb. 10:26-31. The more that one drinks in God's teachings the easier it is to keep them.

h 19:13 Compare John 8:32,36; Rom. 6:12-14; Gal. 5:1.

i 19:14 = total vulnerability

j 19:14 literally, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in Your presence." Compare Exo. 28:38; Lev. 19:5; 22:20-21; Prov. 14:35; Isa. 56:7; 60:7; Jer. 6:20; Rom. 12:1-2.

k 20:1 literally, "on the day of distress." This psalm may have been a prayer that was offered before military conflict (compare 2 Chr. 20:1-30).

l 20:2 = the Most Holy Place inside God's temple, where He was supposed to reside (Exo. 28:43; 29:30; 35:19; 39:1). Since God was the true King (1 Sam. 8:4-9), it was His throne.

a 19:6 As Gen. 1 teaches, the sun is *not* to be worshiped. The one true God created the sun in order to provide light and heat for human use. All of the heat in or on earth has the sun as its source.

b 19:7 or, "complete" (Job 1:1). God's Law is fully described in Psalm 119.

c 19:7 It is not scientific truths which convert the hearts of men but truths revealed by Almighty God that truly change us.

d 19:7 literally, "simple" = ordinary (Prov. 1:4,22)

e 19:7 or, "extraordinary."

f 19:12 literally, "Who can discern (his) secret faults!?"

We will raise a flag in the Name of our God. May Yahweh give you all that you ask for.

⁶Now I know that Yahweh helps His anointed king. He answers him from His holy heaven. He saves him with His strong right hand. ⁷Some people trust in war-chariots; others rely on horses.^a But we will exult in the Name of Yahweh, our God! ⁸They are overwhelmed and defeated. But we march forward and win.

⁹O Yahweh, give victory to the king! Answer us when we call for help!^b

A Song of Praise for Victory

21¹To the director of music. A psalm of David. O Yahweh, the king^c rejoices because of Your strength. He is

a 20:7 Jewish kings were commanded by God *not* to multiply horses (Deut. 17:16). Compare Exo. 14:9,17,18,23,26,28; 15:1,19,21; Deut. 11:4; 20:1; Josh. 11:4,6,9; 24:6; 1 Sam. 13:5; 2 Sam. 8:4; 10:18; 15:1; 1 Kings 1:5; 4:26,28; 9:19,22; 10:25,26,28,29; 20:1,20,21,25; 22:4; 2 Kings 3:7; 5:9; 6:14,15,17; 7:6,7,10,13; 18:23,24; 23:11; 1 Chr. 18:4; 19:6; 2 Chr. 1:14,16,17; 8:6,9; 9:24,25,28; 12:3; 16:8; Ps. 33:17; 76:6; 147:10; Prov. 21:31; Isa. 2:7; 21:9; 30:16; 31:1,3; 36:8,9; 43:17; Jer. 4:13,29; 6:23; 8:16; 12:5; 46:4,9; 50:37,42; 51:21,27; Ezek. 17:15; 23:6,12,20,23; 26:7,10,11; 27:14; 38:4,15; 39:20; Dan. 11:40; Hos. 1:7; 14:3; Joel 2:4; Amos 2:15; 4:10; 6:12; Mic. 5:10; Nah. 3:2-3; Hab. 1:8; 3:8,15; Hag. 2:22; Zech. 9:10; 10:5; 12:4; 14:15,20.

b 20:9 This psalm may have been written when David was fighting Syrian forces (2 Sam. 10:15-19; 1 Chr. 19:16-19).

c 21:1 David

so happy when You save him! ²You gave the king whatever he wanted. You did not refuse what he asked for. (Selah) ³You put good things in front of him. You placed a fine, gold crown upon his head.^d ⁴He asked You for life, and You gave it to him. His years go on and on.^e ⁵He has great glory because You gave him victories. You gave him honor and majesty. ⁶You always gave him blessings. You made him glad with the joy of Your presence. ⁷The king trusts in Yahweh. Because the Most High God loves him, he will not be overwhelmed.

⁸Your hand is against all Your enemies. Those who hate You will feel Your power. ⁹When You appear, You will burn them up, like wood in a furnace.^f In Your anger, O Yahweh, You will swallow them. Your fire will devour them.^g ¹⁰You will destroy their families from the earth. Their children will not survive. ¹¹They make evil plans against You, but their traps will

d 21:3 Compare 2 Sam. 12:30; Rev. 14:14; 19:12.

e 21:4 literally, “—length of days forever and ever” = a long life. David lived to be about 70. Many scholars believe that this psalm is Messianic (2 Sam. 7:13,16).

f 21:9 Compare Matt. 13:41-42,50.

g 21:9 See Deut. 4:24; 32:22; Acts 17:30-31; 2 Thes. 1:7-10; Rev. 6:14-17.

not work. ¹²When You aim Your arrows at them, You will cause them to retreat.

¹³Be supreme, O Yahweh, in Your power. We sing and praise Your greatness!

Anguish and Praise

22¹To the director of music. To the tune of “The Deer of the Dawn.” A psalm of David.

My God, my God, why did you abandon me!?^a You are too far away to save me.^b You are too far away to hear my moans. ²O my God, I call to You during the day, but You don’t answer. And, I call at night; I’m not silent.

³Yet You sit as the Holy One. The praises of Israel are Your throne. ⁴Our ancestors trusted in You. They trusted You, and You saved them. ⁵They called to You for help, and they were rescued. They trusted in You, and they were not disappointed.

⁶But I am like a worm instead of a man.^c Men make fun of me. The people look down on me.

a 22:1 Hebrew: ‘Eli, ‘Eli, lamah ‘azabtani? See Isa. 53:6; Acts 2:30-31; Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34; John 17:24; Rom. 3:25; 1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 2:9.

b 22:1 David was feeling deserted, desperate, and discouraged.

c 22:6 Compare Job 25:6; Isa. 41:14. This was utter humiliation (Isa. 52:14; 53:3).

⁷Everyone who looks at me laughs. They stick out their tongues at me.^d They shake their heads.^e

⁸They say: “Let him turn to Yahweh for help! Let **Him** rescue him!^f If He likes you, maybe **He** will deliver you!”^g

⁹Yet You are the One who took me from the womb. You caused me to trust You while I was just a baby. ¹⁰I have leaned on You since the day I was born. You have been my God since my mother gave birth to me. ¹¹So, don’t be far away from me. Now, trouble is near, and there is no one to help.

¹²Many men have encircled me, like angry bulls. The strong bulls of Bashan are on every side. ¹³They open their jaws at me. Like hungry, roaring lions. ¹⁴My strength is all gone, like water poured out onto the ground. All of my bones are out of joint.^h My

d 22:7 literally, “They open the lip (at me).” = verbal abuse; shouting insults. Compare Job 16:4,10; Ps. 35:21; 64:8; 109:25; Lam. 2:15.

e 22:7 See Matt. 27:39; Mark 15:29.

f 22:8 See Matt. 27:42-43; Luke 23:35.

g 22:8 or, “Why doesn’t He help you!?” See Mark 15:30-32.

h 22:14 literally, “are spread apart.” Crucifixions were brutal. The Romans began by nailing the person to the cross on the ground; the victim was lying on his back. Then the soldiers lifted the cross

heart is like wax.^a It has melted inside me. ¹⁵My strength has dried up like a piece of broken pottery. My tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth.^b You laid me in the dust of death.^c ¹⁶A gang of wrongdoers has trapped me. Like a pack of dogs,^d they have surrounded me. They bit my arms and legs.^e ¹⁷I have been stripped.^f People look and stare at me. ¹⁸They divided my clothes among them,^g and they gambled for my clothing.^h

¹⁹Nevertheless, O Yahweh, don't stay away! You are my Strength; hurry to help me! ²⁰Save me from the sword. From these dogs, save the only life that I have. ²¹Rescue me from the lion's mouth. Deliver me from the horns of the wild bull.

perpendicular to the ground and dropped it into a hole. This caused both shoulders to become dislocated.

a 22:14 = heart failure. Compare John 19:30-47.

b 22:15 or, "clings to my jaws." Compare Job 29:10; John 19:28.

c 22:15 = ready to die. See Dan. 12:2-3.

d 22:16 Compare Philp. 3:2; Rev. 22:15.

e 22:16 literally, "pierced my hands and feet" = wounding. The Hebrew root here means "to dig", "to bore through", or "to pierce". See John 20:25. Compare Luke 24:39-40.

f 22:17 literally, "I can count all of my bones." Crucifixion extended the emaciated, human frame, throwing the bones of the thorax prominently forward.

g 22:18 See Luke 23:34.

h 22:18 See Mark 15:24; John 19:24.

²²Then I will announce Your Name to my brothers.ⁱ I will praise You in the middle of the congregation.^j ²³Praise Yahweh, all you who revere Him. All you descendants of Jacob, honor Him! Revere Him, all you descendants of Israel!^k ²⁴Yahweh does not ignore or look down on the one who is in trouble. God does not hide from him.^l He listens whenever the one in trouble calls out to Him. ²⁵O Yahweh, I praise You in the big meeting of Your people. These worshipers will see me do what I vowed. ²⁶Poor people will eat until they are satisfied. Those who look to Yahweh will praise Him. May your hearts live forever! ²⁷People everywhere will remember and will turn to Yahweh. All the families of the nations will worship Him. ²⁸This is because Yahweh is King. He rules over the foreign nations.^m

²⁹The powerful people of the earth will feast and worship. All those who go down to the dust will bow down before Him, as

i 22:22 = his fellow Israelites. See John 20:17; Rom. 8:29.

j 22:22 See Heb. 2:12.

k 22:23 Compare Gal. 6:16.

l 22:24 literally, "hide His face from him" = turning away. Compare Isa. 53:11-12; Heb. 5:7.

m 22:28 Compare Dan. 7:13,14,27; 1 Cor. 15:24-28.

well as those who cannot stay alive. ³⁰Posterity will serve Him. Future generations will always be told about the Lord. ³¹They will come and proclaim His righteousness. People who are not yet born will hear about what God has done.

The Lord Is My Shepherd

23 ¹A psalm^a of David. Yahweh is my Shepherd.^b I have everything I need. ²He gives me rest in green pastures.^c He leads me beside calm waters. ³He gives me new strength.^d For the sake of His Name, He guides me in paths that are right.^e ⁴Even if I walk through a very dark valley,^f I will not be afraid of anything bad, because **You** are with me.^g Your

a 23:1 Hebrew: *mizmor*

b 23:1 Compare Gen. 48:15; 49:24; Ps. 28:9; 79:13; 80:1; 95:7; 100:3; Isa. 40:11; Jer. 31:10; 50:19; Ezek. 34:11-16. Today, Jesus Christ is our Shepherd (John 10:11,14; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 2:25; 5:4; Rev. 7:17).

c 23:2 literally, "He causes me to lie down in green pastures." using the metaphor of tending sheep. After the sheep are completely satisfied with their grazing, they will lie down contentedly. Compare Isa. 14:30; 17:2; Jer. 33:12; Ezek. 34:14-15; Zeph. 2:7; 3:13.

d 23:3 literally, "He restores (= refreshes) my soul" (= my life) after exhaustion. Compare Ps. 19:7; Ruth 4:15; Prov. 25:13; Lam. 1:16.

e 23:3 or, "righteous ways", not in the direction of ruination. See Ps. 77:20; 78:72.

f 23:4 literally, "through the valley of the shadow of death," = the deepest darkness; severe crises

g 23:4 See 1 Sam. 17:34-36. You may *seem* to be alone, but God is with you; and, He will never abandon you.

rod^h and Your walking-stickⁱ comfort me.^j

⁵You prepare a banquet for me in front of my enemies. You pour oil on^k my head. You bless me abundantly. ⁶Surely Your goodness and love will be with me all of my life. And, I will dwell in the House of Yahweh forever!

The King of Glory

24 ¹A psalm of David. The world and everything in it belongs to Yahweh, as well as the earth and everyone who dwells in it. ²He built it on the oceans. He established it upon the rivers.

³Who may go up to the mountain of Yahweh? Who is allowed to stand in His holy temple? ⁴Only those with clean hands and pure hearts, one who has not worshiped idols. One must not have made vows by a false god. ⁵This is the one who will receive a blessing from

h 23:4 = a symbol of God's authority (Job 9:34; Exo. 21:20; 2 Sam. 7:14; Ps. 2:9; 45:6)

i 23:4 or, "staff" = a longer instrument for support and for guiding the sheep (Exo. 21:19; Judg. 6:21; 2 Kings 4:29; Zech. 8:4)

j 23:4 or, "reassure me." The rod and the walking-stick show that the Shepherd is always there for them.

k 23:5 or, "anoint" = symbolic of hospitality (Luke 7:46) and gladness

Yahweh. The God who saves such a person will declare him to be righteous. ⁶This person tries to follow God, looking to the God of Jacob for help. (Selah)

⁷O gates, open up all the way! Open wide, you ancient doors! Then the glorious King will come in. ⁸Who is this glorious King? Yahweh, strong and mighty! Yahweh, the powerful warrior! ⁹O gates, open up all the way! Open wide, you ancient doors! Then the glorious King will come in. ¹⁰Who is He, this glorious King? Yahweh of the armies of heaven—He is the glorious King.^a (Selah)

A Prayer for Guidance and Protection

25 ¹A psalm of David. O Yahweh, I give myself^b to You.^c ²My God, I trust in You. Do not let me be disgraced. Don't let my enemies laugh at me. ³No one who waits for You will be disgraced. But

a 24:10 This particular psalm may have been written when the ark (= chest) of the covenant was moved to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6:12-17; 15:29-30; 1 Chr. 15:25-29; 16:1; 2 Chr. 1:4). Christians have used this psalm to celebrate the ascension of Christ into the heavenly Jerusalem.

b 25:1 literally, "my soul"

c 25:1 This psalm is an acrostic psalm; that is, sections of the psalm begin with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

those who sin without excuse will be disgraced.

⁴O Yahweh, show me Your ways. Teach me how to live. ⁵Guide me in Your truth. Teach me, because You are the God of my salvation. I will wait for You all day long. ⁶O Yahweh, remember Your great mercy and Your love. These things have existed since eternity. ⁷Do not remember the sins that I did when I was young, or the other things that I've done wrong. But do remember to love me, because You are good, O Yahweh.

⁸Yahweh is good and honest. Therefore, He directs sinners to the right path. ⁹He shows those who are not proud how to do right. He teaches them His way. ¹⁰All of Yahweh's ways are loving and true for those who follow the commands of His covenant. ¹¹For the sake of Your Name, O Yahweh, forgive my many sins. ¹²Is there someone who reveres Yahweh? Yahweh will direct him to the best way. ¹³He will enjoy a good life. His children will inherit the land. ¹⁴Yahweh tells His secrets to those who revere Him. He reveals His covenant

to them. ¹⁵My eyes are always looking to Yahweh for help. He will keep me from any traps.

¹⁶Turn Your face to me and be kind to me. I am lonely and hurting. ¹⁷My troubles have grown larger. Set me free from my problems. ¹⁸Look at my suffering and my troubles. Take away all of my sins! ¹⁹Look at how many enemies I have! See how intensely they hate me! ²⁰Protect me and rescue me. I trust in You. Don't let me be disgraced. ²¹I am waiting for You. So, may my integrity and honesty preserve me. ²²O God, redeem Israel from all their troubles!

A Good Man's Prayer

26¹A psalm of David.
O Yahweh, defend me! I have lived an innocent life. I have trusted in Yahweh and never doubted. ²O Yahweh, cross-examine me and test me.^a Look closely into my heart and mind.^b ³I see Your love; it's right there in front of me. I live by Your truth. ⁴I do not spend time with liars.

a 26:2 as an assayer tests metals to determine their genuineness and their value

b 26:2 literally, "Purify my kidneys (= human emotions) and my heart." Compare Ps. 7:9.

I do not make friends with people who hide their sin. ⁵I hate the company of wrongdoers. I won't sit with the evil people. ⁶I wash my hands to show that I am innocent.^c I approach Your altar, O Yahweh. ⁷I raise my voice in praise. I tell about all of Your miracles. ⁸O Yahweh, I love the House where You dwell. It is where Your greatness is.

⁹Do not sweep me away with sinners. Don't take my life along with those murderers. ¹⁰A trick is in their hands. They do wrong for money. ¹¹But I have lived an innocent life. So, redeem me and be kind to me.

¹²I stand in a safe place. O Yahweh, I praise You in the big meeting.

A Prayer of Praise

27¹A psalm of David.
Yahweh is my Light and the One who saves me. I fear no one! Yahweh protects my life. I'm afraid of no one. ²Wrongdoers may try to destroy my body. My foes and my enemies may attack me. But they will be overwhelmed and be defeated. ³If an army surrounds me,

c 26:6 Compare Deut. 21:6-7; Matt. 27:24.

I won't be afraid. If war breaks out, I will trust in Yahweh.

⁴I ask for only one thing from Yahweh. This is what I want: Let me dwell in Yahweh's House all the days of my life. Just let me gaze upon Yahweh's beauty. Let me seek Him in His temple. ⁵During danger, He will keep me safe in His shelter. He will hide me within His holy tent. Or, He will protect me on a tall mountain. ⁶Then my head will be higher than my enemies around me. I will offer joyful sacrifices in His holy tent. I will sing and praise Yahweh.

⁷O Yahweh, hear me whenever I call. Be kind to me, and answer me. ⁸My heart said of You: "Go, worship Him." So, I come to worship You, O Yahweh. ⁹Do not turn away from me. Do not turn me away in anger. You have helped me. Do not push me away or leave me alone, O God of my salvation. ¹⁰If my father and mother abandoned me, then Yahweh would take me in. ¹¹O Yahweh, teach me Your ways. Guide me to do what is right, because I have enemies. ¹²Don't let my enemies defeat

me. They tell lies about me. They claim that they will hurt me.^a

¹³I still truly believe that I will live to see Yahweh's goodness. ¹⁴Wait for Yahweh's help. Be strong and be brave and wait for Yahweh's help.

A Prayer for Help

28¹A psalm of David.
O Yahweh, my Rock, I call out to You for help. Do **not** turn a deaf ear to me. If You are silent, then I would be like those who go down into the grave.^b ²Hear the sound of my prayer, when I cry out to You for help. I raise my hands toward Your Most Holy Place.^c

³Don't drag me away with the evil people, with those who do wrong. They say "Peace!"^d to their neighbors, but evil is in their hearts. ⁴Pay them back for what they have done. And, according to the evil of their practices, You should give to them according to the work of their hands. Pay them back with

a 27:12 literally, "and they breathe out (= threaten) violence." Compare the expression in Acts 9:1.

b 28:1 literally, "the Pit." = a metaphor for death

c 28:2 literally, "to the oracle of Your holiness." = the innermost Sanctuary of the tabernacle, where the ark of the covenant stood

d 28:3 Hebrew: *shalom* = cordiality

what they deserve. ⁵They don't understand what Yahweh has done or what He has made. So, He will knock them down and never lift them up.

⁶Praise Yahweh! He has heard my prayers for help. ⁷Yahweh is my Strength and my Shield. I trust in Him, and He helps me. I am very happy. And, I praise Him with my song.

⁸Yahweh is the Strength of His people. And, He is the secure Fortress for His anointed one.^a ⁹Save Your people and bless those who belong to You. Be their Shepherd^b and carry them forever.

The Voice of Yahweh

29¹A psalm of David. You angels,^c give praises to Yahweh; give glory and power to Yahweh! ²Give to Yahweh the glory owed to His Name. Worship Yahweh in holy array.

³Yahweh's voice is heard over the sea. The glorious God thunders. Yahweh echoes over the great ocean. ⁴Yahweh's voice is powerful. Yahweh's voice is majestic. ⁵Yahweh's voice breaks the cedar trees. Yahweh breaks even the cedars of Lebanon.^d ⁶He makes the mountains of Lebanon dance like a calf. He makes Mount Hermon^e jump like a baby bull. ⁷Yahweh's voice makes the lightning flash. ⁸Yahweh's voice shakes the desert. Yahweh shakes the Desert of Kadesh.^f ⁹Yahweh's voice twists the oaks. The leaves fall off the trees. And, in His temple, everyone says: "Glory to God!"

¹⁰Yahweh controls the flood. Yahweh rules as King forever! ¹¹Yahweh gives strength to His people. Yahweh blesses His people with peace.

a 28:8 King David was God's earthly regent over His people.

b 28:9 literally, "And take care of them". Compare Ps. 23:1; 80:1; Isa. 40:11; Jer. 31:10; Ezek. 34:1-31; Mic. 5:4. Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd (John 10:11,14).

c 29:1 literally, "You sons of strong ones" = heavenly beings. Compare Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; Ps. 82:6; 89:6; 103:20-21; 148:1-2.

d 29:5 The cedars of Lebanon are often referred to in the Bible as remarkable for their lofty size and impressive grandeur (1 Kings 4:33; 5:6; Ps. 92:12; Ezra 3:7).

e 29:6 literally, "Sirion", the proper name among the Sidonians (Deut. 3:9)

f 29:8 Kadesh was the southeastern border of the promised land (Num. 20:1). Twelve Jewish spies were sent from there (Num. 13:17,26; 14:40-45; 21:1-3; Deut. 1:41-46; Judg. 1:7). Kadesh was on the northern border of Edom.

A Prayer of Thanks

30¹A psalm of David. A song about the dedication of the House.

I will praise You, O Yahweh, because You rescued me. You did not let my enemies laugh at me. ²O Yahweh, my God, I prayed to You, and You healed me. ³O Yahweh, You lifted me out of the grave.^a You spared me from going down where the dead people are.^b

⁴Sing praises to Yahweh, you godly people. Give thanks to His holy Name. ⁵His anger lasts only for a moment, but His kindness lasts for a lifetime. Crying may last for a night, but joy will come in the morning.^c ⁶When I felt safe, I said: “I will never fail!” ⁷O Yahweh, by Your kindness, You made my strong mountain safe.^d But when You turned away, I was scared.

⁸I called to You, O Yahweh. I prayed to my Lord. ⁹I said:

a 30:3 Hebrew: Sheol. David was saved from the brink of death.

b 30:3 literally, “into the Pit.” = death

c 30:5 Compare Isa. 26:20; 54:7; 2 Cor. 4:17-18; 1 Pet. 1:7.

d 30:7 literally, “You made stand . . .” = to establish. “Mountain” is *not* denoting a literal mountain; it refers to a time when an overconfident David felt that he was completely secure.

“What good will it do if I die, or if I go down to the grave? Dust cannot praise You. It cannot speak about Your truth. ¹⁰O Yahweh, hear me and be merciful to me. O Yahweh, help me!”

¹¹You changed my sorrow into dancing. You took away my rough cloth,^e and clothed me with happiness. ¹²Therefore, I will sing to You, O Glorious One, and not be quiet! O Yahweh, my God, I will praise You forever!^f

Commitment to God

Psalms 71:1-3

31¹To the director of music. A psalm of David.

O Yahweh, I trust in You. Let me never be disgraced.^g Save me because You do what is right. ²Listen to me. Rescue me quickly. Be a solid Rock of Strength to me, a Strong Fortress to save me. ³You are my

e 30:11 or, “my sackcloth”; wearing this material showed that a person was very sad (Compare Gen. 37:34; Job 16:15; Ps. 35:13; Isa. 3:24; Matt. 11:21).

f 30:12 This psalm may have been written when David purchased the threshing-floor of Araunah (2 Sam. 24:18-25; 1 Chr. 21:18-30). David was preparing building materials for the temple (1 Chr. 21:1-22:6). Later, this psalm was a favorite of the exiles in Babylonia, who longed for a restoration of their temple in Palestine. Still later, Psalm 30 came to be chanted at the Feast of Hanukkah (John 10:22); it celebrated the rededication of the temple by Judas Maccabeus (165 B.C.).

g 31:1 Compare Rom. 1:16; 5:5; 2 Tim. 1:12.

Rock and my Fortress. For the sake of Your Name, lead me and guide me. ⁴Set me free from the trap that they set for me. You are my Protection. ⁵I put my spirit into Your hands.^a Redeem me, O Yahweh, God of truth.

⁶I hate those who worship false gods.^b I trust only in Yahweh! ⁷I will rejoice and be glad because of Your constant love. You saw my suffering. You knew about my troubles. ⁸You have not let my enemies capture me. You have set me in a safe place.

⁹O Yahweh, have pity on me; I am miserable. My eyes are weak from so much crying. My whole being^c is exhausted from grief. ¹⁰My life is ending in sadness. My years are spent in crying. My health is failing because of my misery. And, my bones are getting old. ¹¹Because of all my troubles, my enemies hate me. Even my neighbors look down on me. When my friends see me, they are afraid and they run away from me. ¹²I am like a piece of a broken pot. I am completely

forgotten, as if I were dead. ¹³I have heard many insults. Terror is all around me. All together, they make plans against me. They want to kill me.

¹⁴But, O Yahweh, I trust in You! I say: "You are my God!"

¹⁵My life is in Your hands. Rescue me from the grasp of my enemies. Save me from those who are chasing me. ¹⁶Show Your kindness to me, Your servant. Save me because of Your constant love. ¹⁷O Yahweh, I called to You. So, don't let me be disgraced. Let the evil people be the ones who are disgraced! Let them be silent in the grave. ¹⁸With pride and hatred they speak recklessly against a righteous person. So, shut their lying lips!

¹⁹How great is Your goodness! You have stored it up for those who revere You. You do good things for those who trust in You. You do this for all to see. ²⁰By Your presence, You protect them from whatever people try to plan against them. You keep them safe in Your shelter, away from evil words.

a 31:5 or, "I give You my life." See Luke 23:46. Compare Stephen's dying words in Acts 7:59.

b 31:6 literally, "those who keep worthless idols." Compare Jonah 2:8; 1 Cor. 8:4.

c 31:9 literally, "My soul and my belly"

²¹Praise Yahweh. His love to me was wonderful when my city was attacked. ²²In my distress, I thought: “God cannot see me!” But You **did** hear my prayer when I cried out to You for help!

²³Love Yahweh, all you godly people who belong to Him! Yahweh preserves those who truly believe. But He punishes the proud ones as much as they have sinned. ²⁴All you people who put your hope in Yahweh, be strong, and He will encourage you.^a

Confession and Forgiveness

32¹Apsalm of David. A lesson. ^bHappy is the person whose sins are forgiven, whose wrongs are pardoned. ²Happy is the person whom Yahweh does not consider to be guilty. In that person there is nothing false.^c

³When I kept things to myself, I felt weakness deep inside me. I moaned all day long. ⁴Day and night, You tested me.^d My

a **31:24** literally, “and He will strengthen your hearts.” This psalm may have been written when David was at Keilah in grave danger of being captured by King Saul and killed (1 Sam. 23:7-13).

b **32:1** Hebrew: *maskil* = a contemplation

c **32:2** literally, “and there is no deceit in his spirit.” Compare Nathaniel’s character in John 1:47.

d **32:4** literally, “Your hand was heavy upon me.” Compare Job 13:21; Ps. 39:10.

strength was gone,^e as in the summer heat. (Selah) ⁵Then I admitted my sins to You. I did not hide my guilt. I thought: “I will confess my wrongs to Yahweh!” And, You did forgive my sins. (Selah)

⁶For this reason, let each one who is godly pray to You while they still can. When troubles rise up like a flood of huge waters, they will not reach that person. ⁷You are my Hiding Place. You protect me from my troubles. You surround me with songs of victory. (Selah)

⁸Yahweh says: “I will instruct you. I will teach you which way to go. I will guide you and watch over you. ⁹So, don’t be like a horse or a donkey; they don’t understand.^f They must be led with bits, with bridles, and with reins, or they will not come near you.” ¹⁰Evil people have many troubles. But Yahweh’s constant love surrounds the person who trusts in Him.

¹¹O you good people, rejoice and be happy in Yahweh. All you whose hearts are right, sing!

e **32:4** or, “wilted”. Literally, “My juice was dried up,” = a draining experience.

f **32:9** or, “they are stupid.”

A Song of Praise

33¹Rejoice in Yahweh, you people who do what is right! Honest people should praise Him. ²Praise Yahweh with the harp. Make music for Him on the ten-stringed lyre. ³Sing a new song to Him, play well and joyfully.

⁴The Word of Yahweh is right. Everything He does is true. ⁵He loves what is fair and just. Yahweh's constant love^a fills the earth.

⁶The sky was made through Yahweh's command.^b By the breath^c of His mouth, He made the whole army of stars. ⁷He gathered the waters of the sea into a heap. He made the great ocean stay in its place. ⁸Let all the earth revere Yahweh. The whole world should be in awe of Him! ⁹He spoke, and it happened.^d He commanded, and it appeared. ¹⁰Yahweh upsets the plans of nations. He ruins the plots of the peoples. ¹¹But Yahweh's plans will stand

forever. The thoughts of His mind will last for all generations.

¹²Happy is the nation whose God is Yahweh. Happy are the people whom He chose to be His very own. ¹³Yahweh looks down from heaven. He sees every person.^e ¹⁴From His throne, He watches everyone who lives on earth. ¹⁵He shaped their hearts. He understands everything they do.

¹⁶No king is saved by his own large army. No warrior escapes by his own great strength.^f ¹⁷Horses cannot bring victory.^g They alone cannot save by their great strength. ¹⁸Listen, it is **Yahweh** who looks after those who revere Him. He is the One who watches over those who put their hope in His constant love. ¹⁹He rescues them from death. He spares their lives in times of hunger.

²⁰So, we will wait for Yahweh! He is our Help, our Shield to protect us. ²¹We rejoice in Him.

^e 33:13 literally, "all the sons of men."

^f 33:16 Compare Goliath, the giant (1 Sam. 17:4-51).

^g 33:17 literally, "The (war) horse (is) a vain hope for victory." See Isa. 31:1; Ezek. 17:15. Beginning with King Solomon, Israel began to acquire large numbers of horses for military dominance (1 Kings 4:26,28; 9:19,22; 10:26,29).

^a 33:5 or, "grace"

^b 33:6 or, "Word." Compare Gen. 1:3,6; Job 38:8-11; Ps. 104:7; 119:89; Heb. 11:3.

^c 33:6 Hebrew: *ruwach* = spirit (Gen. 1:2)

^d 33:9 See Gen. 1:3-10.

We trust in His holy Name.²² O Yahweh, let Your constant love be upon us, just as we put our hope in You!

Praising God for Deliverance

34¹A psalm of David. When he dramatically changed his behavior^a in front of Abimelech,^b and he drove David away, and David left.

I will praise Yahweh at all times.^c His praise is always on my lips. ²My whole being praises Yahweh. The poor people will hear and be glad. ³Let us praise His Name together! Tell of the greatness of Yahweh with me.

⁴I asked Yahweh for help, and He answered me. He rescued me from all my fears. ⁵Those who look to Him for help are happy. They are never disgraced. ⁶This poor man called out, and Yahweh heard him. Yahweh saved him from all his troubles. ⁷The angel of Yahweh camps around those who revere Him.^d He delivers them.

⁸Examine and see how good Yahweh is. Happy is the person who trusts in Yahweh. ⁹You people who belong to Yahweh, revere Him! Those who revere Him will have everything they need.^e ¹⁰Even young lions may become weak and hungry. But those people who go to Yahweh for help will **not** lack any good thing!

¹¹Children, come and listen to me. I will teach you to revere Yahweh. ¹²You must do these things to enjoy life, to live a long time, and to be happy. ¹³You must not say false things.^f You must not tell lies. ¹⁴Stop doing evil and do right. Look for peace and follow it.^g

¹⁵Yahweh is watching good people. He listens to their prayers. ¹⁶But Yahweh is against those who do wrong.^h He makes the world forget them.

¹⁷Yahweh hears good people when they cry out to Him. He rescues them from all their troubles. ¹⁸Yahweh is close to

a 34:1 or, "When he pretended to be crazy"

b 34:1 According 1 Sam. 21:10-15, it was Achish.

c 34:1 This psalm is an acrostic psalm; that is, sections of the psalm begin with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

d 34:7 Compare Gen. 32:1-2; 2 Kings 6:17; Ps. 91:11; Dan. 6:22; Heb. 1:14.

e 34:9 Compare 1 Tim. 4:8.

f 34:13 literally, "Keep your tongue from evil." Compare James 1:26; 3:2-10.

g 34:14 Compare Rom. 12:18.

h 34:16 See 1 Pet. 3:10-12.

people who are broken-hearted. He saves those whose spirits have been crushed.^a

¹⁹People who do what is right may have many problems, but Yahweh will solve them all. ²⁰He will protect their very bones; not one of them will be broken.^b

²¹Evil will kill the bad person. Those who hate a good person will be declared as guilty. ²²But Yahweh redeems the lives of His servants. No one who trusts in Him will be declared as guilty.

A Prayer for Help

35¹A psalm of David. O Yahweh, battle with those who battle with me. Fight against those who fight against me. ²Pick up the small shield and the large shield. Rise up and help me! ³Lift up Your spear and javelin against those who chase me. Say to me: “I will save you!”

⁴Make those who want to kill me be ashamed and disgraced. Cause those who plan to harm me to turn back and be confused. ⁵Make them like chaff blown by the wind. Let the angel of Yahweh

drive them away. ⁶Let their road be dark and slippery as the angel of Yahweh chases them. ⁷For no reason, they spread out their net to trap me. For no reason, they dug a pit for me. ⁸So, let ruin strike them suddenly. Let them be caught in their own nets. Let them fall into the pit and die! ⁹Then I will rejoice in Yahweh. I will be happy when He saves me. ¹⁰My whole being^c will say: “O Yahweh, who is like You? You rescue the weak ones from the strong ones. You save the weak people and the needy people from robbers.”

¹¹Ruthless men stand up to testify. They ask me about things I don't know. ¹²They repay me with evil for the good I have done. They make me very sad. ¹³Yet when they were sick, I put on rough cloth to show my sadness. I showed my sorrow by going without food. But my prayers were not answered. ¹⁴I behaved as though they were my friends or my brothers. I bowed in sadness as if I were crying for my mother. ¹⁵But when I was in trouble, they gathered around and laughed. Before I knew it, they gathered against me to

a 34:18 The people who have lost all hope. See Ps. 51:17.

b 34:20 See John 19:36. Compare Exo. 12:46.

c 35:10 literally, “All my bones” = with all my heart

attack. They insulted me; they kept talking on and on. ¹⁶With ungodly men, they made fun of me, and they were cruel to me. They ground their teeth at me^a in anger. ¹⁷O Lord, how long will You watch this sort of thing happen!?! Bring back my life from their attacks. Save me from these people who are like young lions. ¹⁸Then I will thank You in the big meeting.^b I will praise You among the huge crowds of people.

¹⁹Don't let my enemies laugh at me. They are treacherous. Don't let them make fun of me.^c They have no cause to hate me.^d ²⁰Their words are not friendly. They make up lies about peace-loving people. ²¹They speak against me. They say: "Aha! Aha! We saw what you did!"

²²O Yahweh, You have been watching. Do not keep quiet. O Lord, don't leave me alone. ²³Wake up! Come and defend

a 35:16 = glaring with hatred in their eyes. Compare Ps. 37:12; Lam. 2:16; Matt. 8:12; 13:42,50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Luke 13:28; Acts 7:54.

b 35:18 or, "in the large congregation." = public worship

c 35:19 literally, "and let not those (people) wink the eye" = smirking. Winking was a malicious collusion (Prov. 6:13; 10:10).

d 35:19 See John 15:25.

me! My God and my Lord, fight for my case! ²⁴O Yahweh, my God, vindicate me with Your justice! Don't let them laugh at me! ²⁵Don't let them think: "Aha! We've got what we wanted!" Don't let them say: "We have destroyed him!"

²⁶Let them be put to shame and embarrassed. They were happy when I was hurt. Cover them with shame and disgrace. They thought they were better than I was. ²⁷May my friends sing and shout for joy. May they always say: "Yahweh is great! He loves to see His servant do well." ²⁸I will proclaim Your goodness. I will praise You every day!

The Evil of Men

36¹To the director of music of the servant of Yahweh. A psalm of David.

Sin^e speaks to the evil man deep within his heart.^f He has no fear of God. ²He thinks too much of himself. He does not see his own sin—to hate it!^g ³The words from his mouth are evil and deceitful. He has stopped trying to be good or to be smart. ⁴At night, he makes evil plans. He sets himself

e 36:1 or, "Transgression" = rebellion

f 36:1 Compare Rom. 7:11,13.

g 36:2 Compare Rom. 7:15-21,23.

on a path that is not good. He does not reject things that are evil.

The Lovingkindness of God

⁵O Yahweh, Your constant love reaches up to the heavens. Your loyalty^a extends to the skies. ⁶Your righteousness is as high as the mountains. Your justice is like the deep ocean. O Yahweh, You protect both human beings and animals. ⁷O God, Your constant love is so precious! You protect all kinds of people as a bird protects her young under her wings. ⁸They eat the rich food in Your House. You let them drink from Your river of delights. ⁹You are the Giver of all life.^b Your light^c lets us enjoy life.

¹⁰Continue to love those who know You.^d And, keep on doing good to those who are good. ¹¹Don't let proud people trample me.^e Don't let the evil people force me away.

a 36:5 or, "faithfulness"

b 36:9 literally, "For (the) fountain (= source, Jer. 2:13; 17:13; John 4:10,14) of life (is) with You."

c 36:9 which is closely associated with life (Job 3:20; 33:30; Ps. 49:19; 56:13; Isa. 53:11; 1 Pet. 2:9; 1 John 1:5; Rev. 21:23; 22:5)

d 36:10 literally, "Draw out Your kindness to those who know You." The word "know" denotes true piety (John 17:3; Philp. 3:10; Eph. 3:19; 2 Tim. 1:12).

e 36:11 literally, "Don't let the foot of pride come against me." This may be a metaphor, referring to a military leader humiliating a defeated opponent by placing a foot on his throat.

¹²Look there! Those who do evil have been defeated. They are overwhelmed; they cannot do evil any longer.

Good and Evil

37¹A psalm of David. Don't be upset because of wrongdoers.^f Don't be jealous of those who behave perversely.^g ²Like the grass, they will soon dry up. Like green plants, they will soon die off.

³Trust in Yahweh and do good. Dwell in the land and enjoy its safety. ⁴Take delight in serving Yahweh, and He will give you whatever you want.

⁵Depend upon Yahweh. Trust in Him, and He will take care of you.^h ⁶Then your innocence will shine like the sun. Your vindication will shine like the noonday sun.

⁷Wait on Yahweh and be patient with Him. Don't be upset when others get rich or when someone's evil plans succeed. ⁸Don't get angry. Forsake fury.

f 37:1 This psalm is an acrostic psalm; that is, sections of the psalm begin with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

g 37:1 See Ps. 73:1-28; Prov. 23:17; 24:19.

h 37:5 literally, "and He will act." See Prov. 16:3; 1 Pet. 5:7.

Don't be upset; it only leads to trouble. ⁹Wrongdoers will be sent away. But people who wait on Yahweh are the ones who will possess the land.

¹⁰In a little while, there will be no more evil people. Though you may look for them, they will be gone! ¹¹Humble people will possess the land. They will enjoy complete peace.^a

¹²The evil people make evil plans against good people. They grind their teeth at them^b in anger. ¹³But the Lord laughs at such people. He sees that their day is coming.

¹⁴The evil people draw their swords, and, they bend their bows. They try to kill the poor and the helpless. They want to slaughter those who are honest. ¹⁵But their swords will stab their own hearts,^c and their bows will be broken.

¹⁶It is better to have little and be right than to have much and be wrong.^d ¹⁷The power of the

evil people will be broken, but Yahweh supports those who do right.

¹⁸Yahweh watches over the lives of the innocent. Their reward will last forever. ¹⁹When trouble comes, they will not be ashamed. They will be full in times of hunger.

²⁰But the evil people will die. Yahweh's enemies will be like the flowers of the fields. They will disappear like smoke.^e

²¹The bad person borrows, but he does not pay it back. But the good person gives freely to others. ²²Those people whom Yahweh blesses will possess the land. But those whom He condemns will be sent away.

²³When a man's steps come from Yahweh, they are prepared, and God takes delight in a person's path. ²⁴Though the man may stumble, he will **not** fall,^f because Yahweh is holding his hand.

²⁵I was young, and now

a 37:11 Hebrew: *shalom*. Compare Rom. 5:1.
b 37:12 = glaring with hatred in their eyes; fanatical rage. Compare Ps. 35:16; Lam. 2:16; Acts 7:54.
c 37:15 See Esth. 7:10.
d 37:16 Compare the rich man and Lazarus (Luke

16:19-31).
e 37:20 Compare Job 14:2; Ps. 1:4-5; Isa. 40:6-8; James 1:10-11.
f 37:24 Compare Prov. 24:16; 2 Cor. 4:9; 6:10.

I am old. But I have never seen Yahweh abandon a good person, or a good man's children begging for food. ²⁶Good people always lend freely to others. And their children are a blessing.

²⁷Stop doing evil and do good. Then you will live forever. ²⁸Yahweh loves justice. He will not abandon His holy ones.

He will always protect them. But the children of the evil people will die! ²⁹Good people will possess the land. They will dwell in it forever.

³⁰A good person speaks with wisdom. He says what is fair. ³¹The teachings of his God are in his heart. He does not fail to obey them.

³²The evil people spy on good people. They want to kill them. ³³Yahweh will not take away His protection. He will not judge good people to be guilty.

³⁴Wait on Yahweh and follow Him. He will honor you and give you the land. And, you will see the evil people destroyed.

³⁵I saw an evil, cruel man. He towered, like a healthy, native tree in good soil. ³⁶But he died and, behold, he was gone! I looked for him, but he couldn't be found anymore.

³⁷Take note of the innocent person. Watch the honest one. The man who has peace will have children to live after him. ³⁸But sinners will be destroyed together. In the end, the evil people will die.

³⁹Yahweh saves good people. He is their strong Fortress in times of trouble. ⁴⁰Yahweh helps them and delivers them. He delivers them from the evil people because they trust in Him for protection.

A Man in Pain Prays to God

38¹A psalm of David. To bring to remembrance.

O Yahweh, don't correct me when You are angry. Don't punish me when You are furious.

²Your arrows have wounded me. Your hand has come down on me. ³My body is sick from Your punishment. Even my bones are not healthy because of my sin.

⁴My guilt has overwhelmed me.

It is like a heavy load that is too heavy for me to carry.

⁵My sores stink^a and have become infected because I was foolish. ⁶I am bent over and bowed down. I am sad all day long. ⁷I am burning up with fever.^b My whole body is sore. ⁸I am weak and so faint. I moan from the great pain I feel.

⁹My Lord, You know everything I want. My cries are not hidden from You. ¹⁰My heart pounds, and my strength is gone. I am losing my eyesight.^c ¹¹Because of my wounds, my loved ones and neighbors leave me alone. My relatives stay far away. ¹²Some people set traps to kill me. Those who want to hurt me plan ruination. All day long, they utter lies.

¹³I am like a deaf man; I cannot hear. Like a mute person, I cannot speak. ¹⁴I am like a person who does not hear. I have no answer to give. ¹⁵My hope is in You, O Yahweh! **You** will answer,

a 38:5 or, "My wounds fester"

b 38:7 literally, "for my loins (= my back) are filled with burning." (= searing pain)

c 38:10 literally, "Even the light of my eyes is not with me." This could be a symptom that death was approaching.

O my Lord God! ¹⁶I prayed: "Don't let them laugh at me. Don't let them brag about me when I am defeated."^d

¹⁷"I am about to fall. I cannot forget my pain. ¹⁸I confess my guilt. I am troubled by my sin. ¹⁹My enemies are healthy and strong. Many people hate me for no reason. ²⁰They repay me with evil for the good I did. They oppose^e me because I try to do good.

²¹"O Yahweh, don't abandon me! My God, don't go away! ²²Come quickly to help me, O my Lord, my salvation!"^f

Hope in God

39¹To the director of music. To Jeduthun.^g A psalm of David.

I thought: "I will be careful how I act. I will not sin by what I say. I will be careful about what

d 38:16 literally, "when my foot slips." = falling into sin, even doing so inadvertently

e 38:20 Hebrew: *satan*

f 38:22 This psalm may have been written after David repented of his sin with Bathsheba (2 Sam. 12:1-15).

g 39:1 See Ps. 62:1 and Ps. 72:1. Jeduthun was one of David's three musical directors (1 Chr. 16:41-42; 25:1,6; 2 Chr. 5:12). The other two were Asaph and Heman. He was called the king's "seer" in 2 Chr. 35:15. Jeduthun was probably the same person as Ethan (1 Chr. 6:44; 15:19).

I say around evil people.”^a ²So I kept very quiet. I didn’t even say anything good. Nevertheless, I became even more upset. ³I became very angry inside. And the more I thought about it, the angrier I became. So I spoke:

⁴“O Yahweh, tell me when my end will come. How long will I live? Let me know how much longer I have to live. ⁵Behold, You have given me only a short time. And, my lifetime is like nothing in front of You. Everyone’s life is surely just a breath.”^b (Selah)

⁶A person is surely like a shadow moving around. All his busy work is certainly for nothing. He collects things, but he doesn’t know who will get them next.^c

⁷“So now, O Lord, what hope do I have? **You** are my hope! ⁸Rescue me from all of my sins. Don’t let fools make fun of me.

⁹I am quiet; I don’t open my mouth,^d because **You** are the One who has done this.^e ¹⁰Quit punishing me!^f Your beating is about to kill me. ¹¹You correct and punish people for their sins. Like a moth, You destroy what they love. Each person’s life is surely just a breath. (Selah)

¹²“O Yahweh, hear my prayer! Listen to my cry for help. Don’t ignore my tears.^g I am like a visitor with You. Like all my ancestors, I’m only here for a short time.^h ¹³Leave me alone, so that I can be happy.ⁱ I will leave soon and not be here anymore!”

A Song of Deliverance

40¹To the director of music.
A psalm of David.

I waited patiently for Yahweh. He turned to me and heard my cry. ²He lifted me out of the pit of destruction, out of the sticky mud. He stood me on a rock. He made my feet steady. ³He

a **39:1** literally, “I will guard my mouth with a muzzle (compare Deut. 25:4), while the evil (person) is in front of me.” Charles Spurgeon once said, “Silence in the presence of the ungodly is especially wise, because bad men are sure to misuse even our holiest speech. And, it is worse to cast our pearls before such swine.” (*Treasury of David* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), p. 187).

b **39:5** See Gen. 4:2,8; Job 14:2; Ps. 144:4; Eccl. 6:12; James 4:14.

c **39:6** Compare Job 27:16-19; Eccl. 2:18,21; 5:13-14; Luke 12:20.

d **39:9** Compare Isa. 53:7.

e **39:9** David was hesitant to speak because he did not want to blame God.

f **39:10** literally, “Remove Your stroke from me.” Compare Luke 22:42.

g **39:12** literally, “Don’t be silent about my tears.” Compare Job 16:20; Luke 7:13; 23:28; John 11:33,35; 20:11-17; Rom. 8:26; Rev. 21:4.

h **39:12** or, “(I am) a pilgrim.” Compare 1 Chr. 29:15; Heb. 11:13-15; 1 Pet. 2:11.

i **39:13** literally, “brighten up.” David’s faith in God was stronger than his deep depression.

put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many people will see this and revere Him. Then they will trust in Yahweh.

⁴Happy is the person who puts his trust in Yahweh. God does not turn to those who are proud, to those who worship false gods. ⁵O Yahweh, my God, You have done so many miracles.^a Your plans for us are numerous. No one can compare with You. If I proclaimed everything and told about it, then there would be too many things to count.

⁶You do not want sacrifices and offerings.^b Neither do You ask for whole burnt-offerings or sin-offerings.^c But You have accepted my offer of service for a lifetime.^d ⁷Since this is the case,

a 40:5 or, “proofs.” = things which are clearly beyond what human beings can accomplish; things so complex that they cannot even be classified or fully comprehended

b 40:6 Compare 1 Sam. 15:22; Ps. 50:8-14; 51:16-17; Isa. 1:11; Hos. 6:6; Amos 5:21-24; Mic. 6:6-8; Matt. 9:13; 12:7.

c 40:6 Compare Heb. 10:1-14. Christ abolished the offerings of the Old Law in order to establish the offering of Christ’s body. After the Messiah came, animal sacrifices would *not* characterize true worship to God (John 4:19-24). The sin-offering of Jesus is the way that the sins of the whole world are taken away (1 John 2:1-2).

d 40:6 literally, “But You have pierced my ear.” According to Exo. 21:6 and Deut. 15:17, this voluntary act of piercing the ear was the sign of a life-

I said: “Look, I^e have come.^f It is prescribed to me in the scroll of the book.^g ⁸My God, I delight in doing what You want.^h Your teachings are in my heart.”

⁹I will announce Your goodnessⁱ in the big meeting of Your people.^j O Yahweh, look, You know^k that my lips are not silent. ¹⁰I cannot conceal Your goodness in my heart. I speak openly about Your faithfulness and Your salvation. I don’t hide Your constant love and Your

long pledge of service by a servant to his master. An alternative interpretation of “You have opened my ears” is: David (the type of Christ) was ready to listen to God and obey Him. In other words, his ears were “unstopped” (Ps. 58:4-5; Prov. 21:13; Zech. 7:11).
e 40:7 Here King David is the type of the Messiah, and Jesus Christ is the corresponding antitype.

f 40:7 These inspired words assumed the pre-existence of Christ.

g 40:7 = the king’s personal copy of the Torah (Deut. 17:18-20; 2 Kings 11:12). Compare these prophecies about the Messiah in the Pentateuch: Gen. 3:15; 49:10; Deut. 18:15-19.

h 40:8 See Heb. 10:5-7, which applies David’s words to the Messiah. The Lamb of God (John 1:29) was completely submissive to God’s will (Matt. 26:39; Luke 22:42; John 4:34; Philp. 2:8).

i 40:9 or, “righteousness.” See Ps. 68:11; 96:2. See John 17:26; Rom. 1:16-17.

j 40:9 Throughout his ministry, note the mighty throngs which followed Jesus of Nazareth in Matt. 4:25; 5:1; 7:28; 8:1,18; 9:8,33,36; 11:17; 13:2,34,36; 14:13,15,19,22,23; 15:30,32,33,35,36,39; 17:14; 19:2; 20:29,31; 21:8,9,11,26,46; 22:33; 23:1; Mark 3:7-9,20; 3:32; 4:1,36; 5:21,24,27,30,31; 6:45; 7:33; 8:1,2,6,34; 9:14,15,17,25; 10:1,46; 11:18; 12:12; Luke 5:15,19; 6:17,19; 7:9,11,12,24; 8:4,19,40,45; 9:11,12,16,37,38; 11:27,29; 12:1,13,54; 14:25; 18:36; 19:3,37,39; 22:6; 23:27,48; John 5:13; 6:2,5; 7:32,49; 12:9,12,17,18,29,34.

k 40:9 Compare John 17:4,6,8,14,26.

truth from the people in the great gathering.

¹¹O Yahweh, don't hold back Your tender mercies from me. Let Your constant love and Your truth always protect me. ¹²Troubles have surrounded me.^a There are too many to count. My afflictions have caught me.^b I cannot see a way to escape.^c I have more problems than the hairs on my head. And, my heart fails me.^d

Psalms 70 1-5

¹³Please, O Yahweh, rescue me! Hurry, O Yahweh, to help me. ¹⁴People are trying to kill me. Shame them and disgrace them! People want to hurt me. Let them be driven away in disgrace! ¹⁵People are making fun of me. Let them be appalled at their own shame. ¹⁶But let all those who follow You be happy and be glad in You. They love You for saving them.^e May they always say: "Praise Yahweh!"

a 40:12 Compare Matt. 26:36-46.

b 40:12 See Isa. 53:6-7; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13. Jesus Christ vicariously took our sins (= punishment) upon himself.

c 40:12 or, "I cannot see my way clear." Compare 1 Cor. 10:13.

d 40:12 Compare John 19:34. Jesus sank under the tremendous weight of his suffering; his heart could simply not go on.

e 40:16 Compare 1 Cor. 12:12-13; Gal. 3:16.

¹⁷O Lord, I am poor and helpless.^f But please don't forget me. You are my Help and my Deliverer. O my God, come quickly.^g

A Sick Man's Prayer

41¹To the director of music. A psalm of David.

Happy is the person who builds up the poor people. When trouble comes, Yahweh will deliver him. ²Yahweh will protect him and spare his life. God will bless him in the land. God will not let his enemies take him. ³Yahweh will give him strength when he is sick. God will make him well again.

⁴I prayed: "O Yahweh, be kind to me. Heal me because I have sinned against You." ⁵My enemies are saying cruel things about me. They say: "When will he die and be forgotten!?" ⁶Whenever somebody comes to see me, he utters empty words. He comes only to obtain bad news. Then he goes out to gossip.

⁷Together all my enemies

f 40:17 or, "needy." Compare 2 Cor. 8:9.

g 40:17 literally, "Don't delay." Jesus Christ died on the cross in about 6 hours. This was surprisingly swift, so much so that Pilate wanted to verify the death of Jesus before releasing his corpse (Mark 15:42-45).

whisper things about me. They think the worst about me.⁸ They say: “He has a terrible disease. He will never get out of bed again!”⁹ My most-trusted, best friend ate at my table. Now even he has turned against me.¹⁰ But **You**, O Yahweh, have mercy on me. Give me strength, and I will pay them back!¹¹ My enemies do not defeat me. That is how I know that You take delight in me.¹² Because I am innocent, You support me. You will let me be with You forever.

¹³ Praise Yahweh, the God of Israel! He has always been, and He will always be. Amen and amen.

BOOK TWO (Psalms 42–72):

The Prayer of a Troubled Man

42¹ To the director of music. A lesson for the sons of Korah.^a

A deer thirsts for a stream of water. In the same way, I thirst for You, O God.^b ² I thirst for God, for the living God. When can I go to meet with Him?^c

a 42:1 Compare 1 Chr. 9:19. Eleven psalms are ascribed to Korah's family. Psalm 42 and Psalm 43 may well have been one psalm originally.

b 42:1 Compare Matt. 5:6; Luke 1:53; 6:21; John 6:27.

c 42:2 literally, “When will I come and appear in

³ Day and night, my tears have been my food.^d People are always saying to me: “Where is your God?”^e ⁴ When I remember these things,^f I speak with a broken heart. I used to walk with the crowd.^g I was the one who led the procession of the festive throng to the temple of God with sounds of joy and thanksgiving.

⁵ Why am I so sad!? Why am I so upset!? I should put my hope in God. I should keep on praising Him, my Savior. ⁶ O my God, I am very sad. So, I remember You while I am in the land where the Jordan River begins. I will remember You while I am near the Hermon Mountains^h and on the mountain of Mizar.ⁱ ⁷ Deep calls to deep; they sound loud like waterfalls. Your waves and Your rough waters are crashing all around me.

the presence of God?” Compare Gen. 32:30; Job 19:26-27; Matt. 5:8; 1 Cor. 13:12; Heb. 12:14; 1 John 3:2-3.

d 42:3 Grief had taken away the author's appetite.

e 42:3 Compare 2 Sam. 16:7; Ps. 3:2; 22:8.

f 42:4 The author was far removed from the House of God, the place of public worship.

g 42:4 The author sweetened his mental anguish by reminiscing about “the good old days” in Jerusalem.

h 42:6 This 9,200-foot mountain was at the northern border of David's kingdom.

i 42:6 This was probably a small peak in the same mountain range as Mount Hermon, somewhere near the headwaters of the Jordan River. It may have been visible from Jerusalem on certain days.

⁸Yahweh shows His constant love during the day. And, at night, His song is with me. My life is a prayer to God.

⁹I will say to God, my Rock: “Why have You forgotten me!? Why am I so sad when troubled by my enemies?” ¹⁰The insults of my enemies make me feel as if my bones were broken. They are always taunting: “Where is your God?”

¹¹Why am I so sad!? Why am I so upset!? I should put my hope in God. I should keep on praising Him, my Savior and my God.

Far from Home

43 ¹O God, defend me! Argue my case against those who do not follow You. Deliver me from liars and those who do evil.^a ²O God, You are my Strength. Why have You rejected me!? Why am I so sad when troubled by my enemies!? ³Send me Your light and Your truth. Let them guide me. Let them lead me to Your holy mountain,^b to where You dwell.

a 43:1 It is possible that this refers to Ahithophel who betrayed King David (2 Sam. 15:31; 16:23; 17:14,23).

b 43:3 Mount Zion was selected by King David to

⁴Then I will go to the altar of God, to God who is the reason for my joy. I will praise You with a harp, O God, my God.

⁵Why am I so sad!? Why am I so upset!? I should put my hope in God. I should keep on praising Him, my Savior and my God.

A Prayer to God for Protection

44 ¹To the director of music. For the sons of Korah. A Lesson.

O God, we have heard about You with our own ears. Our ancestors^c have told us what You did in their time, in days long ago. ²By Your power, You forced the pagan people out of the land.^d You placed our ancestors here. You punished those ethnic groups and expelled them. ³But it was not **their** swords that took the land. It wasn't **their** power^e that gave them victory. No, it was **Your** great power and strength. You were with them, because You loved them.^f

become the permanent home for God's ark of the covenant (2 Sam. 5:5-9; 24:15-25; 1 Chr. 11:4-9). This was the site of Solomon's temple in Jerusalem (1 Kings 8:1ff; 2 Chr. 33:15; Ps. 3:4; 15:1; 43:3; 99:9).

c 44:1 or, “forefathers”

d 44:2 Compare Exo. 23:23,29; Num. 33:52-53; Deut. 7:22-23; 20:16-17.

e 44:3 literally, “arm”

f 44:3 Compare Exo. 13:14-16; Deut. 6:20-25; 8:10-18; 9:3-6; Josh. 14:6-14; 24:12; Ps. 78:3-4.

⁴You are the One, my King. O God, Your commands led Jacob's people to victory. ⁵With Your help, we push back our enemies. In Your Name, we walk on those who rise up against us. ⁶I won't trust my own bow to rescue me. My sword cannot bring victory to me. ⁷No, **You** saved us from our foes. You disgraced our enemies. ⁸We will celebrate God all day long. We will praise Your Name forever! (Selah)

⁹But now, You have rejected us and shamed us. You do not march out with our armies anymore. ¹⁰You have allowed our foes to push us back. Our enemies have taken our wealth.^a ¹¹You gave us away like sheep to be eaten. You scattered us among the foreign nations.^b ¹²You sold Your own people for nothing. You made no profit from the sale. ¹³You have made us a taunt to our neighbors. The surrounding community laughs and makes fun of us. ¹⁴You made us a joke among the foreign nations. People shake their heads. ¹⁵I am always in disgrace. I am covered

up with shame. ¹⁶My enemy wants to get revenge by using insults and curses.

¹⁷All these things have happened to us, but we have **not** forgotten You. We have kept our covenant with You. ¹⁸Our hearts have not turned away from You. We have not stopped following You. ¹⁹But You crushed us in this place where wild dogs live.^c You covered us with deep darkness.

²⁰We did not forget the Name of our God. We did not lift our hands^d in prayer to foreign gods. ²¹God would have known it if we had. He knows what is in our hearts.^e ²²Yet, for Your sake, we are in constant danger of death! People think we are worth no more than sheep that will soon be slaughtered.^f ²³Wake up, O Lord! Why are You sleeping?^g

a 44:10 or, "plundered (us) for themselves" = pillaging. Compare 2 Kings 23:33; 24:13-16; 25:13-17; 2 Chr. 36:7.

b 44:11 The Greek term for this is *Diaspora* = the Dispersion (Neh. 1:9; John 7:35; James 1:1; 1 Pet. 1:1).

c 44:19 in a desolate place. See Jer. 9:11. The jackals lived among the old ruins of depopulated towns. The Israelites had been defeated and their towns had been reduced to rubble.

d 44:20 Compare Exo. 9:29; 1 Kings 8:22; 2 Chr. 6:12-13; Ps. 88:9.

e 44:21 literally, "the secrets of the heart." Compare 1 Chr. 28:9; Acts 1:24; 15:8; Rom. 8:27; Rev. 2:23.

f 44:22 or, "we are regarded as sheep (scheduled) for slaughter." See Rom. 8:36 where Paul quotes this verse to describe Christian steadfastness during persecution. They were martyrs for God. These godly people did not deserve to suffer like that, but it was the will of God (Acts 5:41; 14:22; Rom. 8:17; 2 Cor. 4:8-10).

g 44:23 Compare Ps. 121:4. God was *not* asleep;

Get up! Don't reject us forever!
 24 Why are You hidden from us?^a Why have You forgotten our pain and distress?

25 We have been pushed down into the dirt! We are flat on the ground.^b 26 Get up! Help us! Because of Your constant love, redeem us!^c

A Royal Wedding Song

45¹To the director of music. To be performed on Shoshannim.^d For the sons of Korah. A lesson.

A love song.^e

Beautiful thoughts fill my mind. I am speaking of royal things. My tongue is like the pen of a skilled writer.

2 You^f are more handsome than anyone. You are a very good

it only seemed that way because He did not act immediately.

a 44:24 literally, "Why do You hide Your face?" = as if God were indifferent (compare Ps. 3:7; 9:19; 13:1), but God is appealed to on the basis of His honor.

b 44:25 literally, "Our bellies stick to the earth." = defeat

c 44:26 Compare Ps. 25:22; 31:5; Isa. 1:27; 52:3. This psalm may have been written about the time that King Hezekiah was consulting the prophet Isaiah (2 Kings 19:2-7; Isa. 37:2-7).

d 45:1 meaning, "According to the Lilies." See the titles of Psalm 60, Psalm 69, and Psalm 80. This may have been a well-known melody. Some scholars think it was a spring festival tune.

e 45:1 There is a long-standing Jewish and Christian tradition that Psalm 45 is referring to the marriage of the Messiah and His people.

f 45:2 the king

speaker.^g Therefore, God has blessed you forever.³ Put on your sword, O powerful warrior!^h Show your glory and majesty.ⁱ 4 In your majesty, win the victory. Defend what is true, humble, and right! Your power will do amazing things. 5 Your sharp arrows will enter into the hearts of the king's enemies. Nations will be defeated before you. 6 O God, Your throne will last forever and ever.^j You rule your kingdom fairly.

7 You have loved what is right and hated what is wrong. This is why God, your God, has made you king^k over your friends with the oil of gladness.^l

8 All your clothes are myrrh,^m

g 45:2 literally, "Grace has poured into your lips." See Matt. 7:29; 13:54; Luke 2:47; 4:22.

h 45:3 Compare Isa. 49:2; Matt. 10:34; John 18:37; 1 Cor. 15:25,28; 2 Thes. 1:8; Heb. 4:12; Rev. 1:16; 2:12,16; 19:15,21.

i 45:3 Compare Isa. 9:6.

j 45:6 See Isa. 9:7; Ps. 110:1-7. The King in this psalm is Christ, and He has every right to be called "God".

k 45:7 literally, "anointed you". The anointing of Jesus took place when he was immersed in the Jordan River; the Spirit of God came down upon him in a dove-like form and remained there (Matt. 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-23; John 1:29-34).
l 45:7 See Heb. 1:8-9. "The oil of gladness" could be referring to the Messiah's coronation, but it could also be referring to the anointing for the wedding (Isa. 61:3), paralleling Ps. 45:8.

m 45:8 an aromatic resin. It exudes from a tree found in Arabia or Abyssinia (Gen. 43:11; Esth. 2:12; Song of Songs 4:6; 5:5). Myrrh was sometimes used as a pain-killer (Mark 15:23) and

aloes,^a and cassia.^b From palaces of ivory^c music comes to make you happy.⁹ The daughters of kings are among your honored women. Your bride stands at your right side,^d wearing gold from Ophir.^e

¹⁰ Listen to me, O daughter. Look and pay attention. Forget your people and your father's family.¹¹ The king desires your beauty.^f Because he is your master, you should bow down to him.^g ¹² People from the city of Tyre^h have brought

also used by the Jews to prepare corpses for burial (John 19:38-40).

a 45:8 a sweet-smelling substance that comes from India

b 45:8 a spice made from the bark of a tree. It closely resembles cinnamon. It was used as incense (Exo. 30:24; Ezek. 27:19). The body of Jesus Christ was wrapped in bandages that were so impregnated with perfumes that they seemed to constitute his clothes.

c 45:8 Compare 1 Kings 22:39. The palaces were *not* constructed with ivory, but inlaid with ivory. Biblical archeologists have discovered such artifacts in Central Palestine.

d 45:9 the place of honor (1 Kings 2:19; Mark 4:62; 16:19; Acts 7:55; Heb. 1:3)

e 45:9 Ophir was a distant country to which the ships of King Solomon traveled. Much fine gold was found there (1 Kings 9:26; 10:22; 22:48). It was famous for the purity of its gold even in the time of Job (Job 28:16).

f 45:11 When the bride of Christ is pure, she is beautiful (Rev. 19:7-8) or "glorious" (Eph. 5:27).

g 45:11 = voluntary submission (Gen. 3:16; 1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:22,24; 1 Pet. 3:5-6). This was worship (Matt. 2:11; 8:2; 14:33; 15:25; 18:26; 28:9; Heb. 1:6; Rev. 19:10; 22:9).

h 45:12 representing the richest non-Jewish nations. This was symbolic of all those who adhere to Christ.

a gift.ⁱ Rich people will want to meet you.

¹³ The princess is very beautiful. Her gown is woven with gold thread. ¹⁴ In her embroidered clothes, she is brought to the king. Her bridesmaids follow behind her. Her friends are brought to him. ¹⁵ They come with happiness and joy. They enter the king's palace.^j

¹⁶ You will have sons to take the place of your ancestors. You will make them rulers throughout all the land. ¹⁷ I will make Your Name famous from now on. Therefore, people will praise You forever and ever.^k

God Is Our Refuge and Strength

46¹ To the director of music. Of the sons of Korah. According to "The Virgins."¹ A song. God is our Protection^m and Strength. He always helps us in times of trouble. ² So, we will not be afraid, even if the earth

i 45:12 Compare Matt. 2:9-11; Rev. 21:24. The wealth of the world would be laid at his feet and at his disposal (Isa. 60:5-7,9,11,13).

j 45:15 This is the wedding processional of all the saints of God into the eternal home of the soul. See Isa. 35:10. Compare 1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6.

k 45:17 See Rev. 4:10; 5:9-13; 19:9; 21:9.

l 46:1 Hebrew: *'Alomot*. It probably denotes the treble clef, that is the musical range (parts) sung by female voices. Compare Ps. 68:25.

m 46:1 or, "Refuge"

quakes, or if the mountains fall into the deep ocean.³ We will not fear, even if its waters roar and foam, or if the mountains shake at the raging sea. (Selah)

⁴There is a river^a which channels joy to the city of God.^b This is the Sanctuary where the Most High God resides.⁵ God is in that city; and it will **not** be shaken. God will help her as dawn approaches.⁶ Nations tremble, and kingdoms are shaken. God's voice speaks; the earth crumbles.

⁷Yahweh of the armies of heaven is with us. The God of Jacob is our Fortress. (Selah)

⁸Come, see what Yahweh has done!^c He does spectacular things in the earth.⁹ He stops wars far, far away.^d He breaks

all bows and shatters all spears,^e and He burns up the chariots in the fire.^f ¹⁰God says: "Be quiet and know^g that I am God!^h I will be supreme among the nations. I will be supreme throughout the earth."

¹¹Yahweh of the armies of heaven is with us. The God of Jacob is our Fortress.ⁱ (Selah)^j

God Is Awesome

47¹To the director of music. For the sons of Korah. A psalm.^k

Clap your hands, all you nations! Shout to God with joy! ²Why? Because Yahweh, the Most High, is wonderful! He is the great King over all the earth! ³He defeated nations for us, and put the ethnic groups under our control. ⁴He chose for us the

e 46:9 Once a bow or a spear is broken it is of no military value.

f 46:9 These were used as fuel to burn up the bodies of the dead soldiers.

g 46:10 or, "acknowledge"

h 46:10 Compare Exo. 14:13-14.

i 46:11 or, "High Tower" = the ultimate defense, an inaccessible high place

j 46:11 This particular psalm was probably written when God totally delivered Jerusalem from Sennacherib's army in 701 B.C. (described in 2 Kings 19:35; Isa. 29-31; Isa. 33; Isa. 37). But some scholars think the psalm was written when Yahweh gave His answer to King Jehoshaphat through the prophet Jahaziel (2 Chr. 20:14-19).

k 47:1 Hebrew: *mizmor*. Today Jewish synagogues use this psalm during Rosh Hashanah, the first of the high holy days.

a 46:4 Compare Ps. 36:8. "River" is a metaphor for the perennial, continual blessings of God (compare Isa. 8:6-8; Rev. 22:1-2).

b 46:4 "The spring of Gihon, whose waters Hezekiah brought into Jerusalem by a tunnel (2 Chr. 32:30) are here used as a symbol of God's refreshing presence." (*The New Layman's Bible Commentary*, p. 631).

c 46:8 literally, "look at the astonishing deeds of Yahweh!" For a long time, the citizens of Jerusalem could see the smoke rising from the continual fires which consumed the dead bodies of Sennacherib's army.

d 46:9 literally, "to the end of the earth". God can terminate wars anytime He wishes and anywhere He wishes. Prof. Tony Ash said, "Men fight to impose their will, but God imposes His will to end fighting." (*The Living Word Commentary*)

land which we would inherit.^a
We are the descendants of Jacob,
whom He loved. (Selah)

⁵God has gone up to His throne.
There is shouting of joy. The
Always-Present One goes up
with trumpets blaring.^b ⁶Sing
praises to God. Sing praises!
Sing praises to our King. Sing
praises!

⁷Why? Because God is the King
over the whole world. So, sing an
uplifting song to Him! ⁸God is
the King over the foreign nations.
God sits upon His holy throne.^c
⁹The nobles of the nations
gather together as the people
of the God of Abraham. Why?
Because the leaders of the earth
belong to God. He is supreme!

The City of God—Zion

48¹A song. A psalm for the
sons of Korah.
The Always-Present One is
great; He should be greatly
praised in the city of our God, on
His holy mountain.^d ²It is high

a 47:4 = the promised land (Gen. 12:7; 17:8; Exo. 3:8; Deut. 1:8; Jer. 3:18)

b 47:5 literally, “with the sound of a ram’s horn” (Exo. 19:16,19; Josh. 6:4). Hebrew: *shofar*.

c 47:8 Compare Jer. 17:12; Rev. 4:9-10; 5:1,7,13; 6:16; 7:10,15; 19:4.

d 48:1 literally, “the mountain of His holiness”. God’s Sanctuary was erected on top of Mount Zion (Moriah). See Isa. 2:2-3; 25:6,7,10. Compare Gal.

and beautiful. It brings joy to the
whole world. Mount Zion^e is
like the high mountains of the
north. It is the city of the Great
King.³ God is within Jerusalem’s
citadels. He is known as her
Fortress.

⁴Look, kings have joined to-
gether and assembled to attack
the city.^f ⁵But when they saw
her, they were amazed. They
ran away in a panic. ⁶Sheer
fear took hold of them there.
They hurt, like a woman having
a baby. ⁷Using the east wind,
You destroyed the large trading
ships.

⁸First we heard about it, and now
we have seen it. God will always
keep His city safe. It is the city of
Yahweh of the armies of heaven,
the city of our God. (Selah)
⁹O God, we come into Your

4:26. Though God’s presence was once confined to the temple in ancient Jerusalem, He now dwells in the heart of every true Christian (Rom. 8:9,11; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:22; 3:17; Col. 3:16; 2 Tim. 1:14).

e 48:2 Its elevation is approximately 2,500 feet high. Originally, “Zion” was a Jebusite stronghold, which King David’s men finally captured (2 Sam. 5:6-10). During Solomon’s reign, “Zion” began to refer to the specific hill in Jerusalem on which the temple of God stood.

f 48:4 The writer may have been referring to the hostile kings who opposed Jehoshaphat (2 Chr. 20:1-30). Or, the psalmist may have been thinking of the devastation of the Assyrian army when Hezekiah was king (2 Kings 19:35-36).

temple courtyard. There we ponder Your constant love. ¹⁰O God, just as Your Name is known all over the world, people everywhere on earth praise You. Your right hand is full of goodness. ¹¹Mount Zion is happy. All the towns of Judah rejoice, because Your decisions are fair.

¹²Walk around Jerusalem. Go all around her and count her towers.^a ¹³Notice how strong they are. Investigate her citadels. Then you will be able to tell your children all about them. ¹⁴Why? Because this God is our God forever and ever. He will guide us from now on.

Man will Die

49 ¹To the director of music. For the sons of Korah. A psalm.

Hear this, all you nations. Listen, all you who live on earth.

²Heed, both important and unimportant, rich people and poor people together. ³What I say is wise. My heart speaks with understanding. ⁴I will pay attention to a wise saying. I will explain my riddle on the harp.

⁵Why should I be afraid of bad

a 48:12 Jerusalem was impregnable, secure from every angle.

days? Why should I fear when the sin of my persecutors surrounds me? ⁶They trust in their money. They brag about how rich they are. ⁷No one can buy back the life of another person. No one can pay a ransom for his own life^b to God. ⁸The price of a human life is high. No payment is ever enough. ⁹Do people live forever? No. Don't they all face death? Yes.^c

¹⁰Look, even wise men die. Fools and people without any sense also die. And, they leave their riches behind to others.^d

¹¹Their graves will always be their homes.^e They will live there from now on, even though they named landmarks after themselves. ¹²Even highly-esteemed people won't live forever. Like animals, they die. ¹³This is what will happen to

b 49:7 The wealthy man—no matter how rich he is—cannot buy his own way out of the grave or anybody else's. He cannot make his current possessions permanent within his family. He cannot take his money with him beyond death. He cannot purchase eternal life. He cannot continue to oppress the poor people. Riches and power are only temporary. All must be left behind!

c 49:9 or, "He will experience corruption, won't he?" Only God has the power to redeem a soul from death (Ps. 49:15).

d 49:10 Compare Job 30:23; Eccl. 2:14-18,21; 7:2; 9:5; Ps. 37:1-40; 39:6; 73:18-20; 89:48; 92:6-7; Luke 12:20-21.

e 49:11 See Eccl. 12:5.

people who trust in themselves. And, this will happen to their followers who believe them. (Selah)

¹⁴Like sheep and goats, they must die. Death will be their shepherd. Honest people will prevail over them in the morning. And, their bodies will rot in a grave—far from their mansions. ¹⁵But God will surely redeem my life. He will take me from the grave.^a (Selah)

¹⁶Don't be upset when somebody becomes rich,^b because his house is more beautiful than yours. ¹⁷He won't take anything to the grave. His money won't be buried with him. ¹⁸He was praised when he was alive. (And people may praise you when you succeed.) ¹⁹But, he will go to where his ancestors are. He will never see light again.

²⁰Rich people who have no understanding are just like animals that die!

a 49:15 literally, "from the hand (= control) of Sheol." Compare Gen. 5:24; Job 19:25-27; Ps. 16:10; 73:24; Isa. 26:19; Dan. 12:2-3; Heb. 11:35.
b 49:16 Compare Job 27:16-19; 1 Tim. 6:6-10.

God Is the Judge

50¹A psalm of Asaph.^c The Mighty One, God,^d Yahweh, speaks. He summons the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.^e ²God shines from Jerusalem, the beauty of which is perfect. ³Our God comes, but He will **not** be silent. A fire burns in front of Him,^f and a raging storm surrounds Him.^g ⁴He summons the earth and the sky above, so that He may judge His people. ⁵He says: "You who are faithful to Me, gather around."^h You have made a covenant with Me, using a sacrifice." ⁶God Himself is the Judge. Even the skies declare that He is right. (Selah)

⁷God says: "My people, listen to Me.ⁱ O Israel, I will testify against you. I am God, Your God. ⁸I do not reprimand you

c 50:1 See 1 Chr. 6:39-44; 15:16-19; 16:4,5,7, 37,41,42; 25:1ff; 2 Chr. 20:14; 29:13,30-31; Ezra 2:41; 3:10; Neh. 7:44; 11:22; 12:46. Twelve psalms are ascribed to Asaph. This is the first one; the others are found in Ps. 73-83.

d 50:1 or, "The God of gods"; Hebrew: 'El 'Elohim. This is the one true God, the Supreme Ruler of the universe.

e 50:1 The Judge of all the earth (Gen. 18:25) is calling the whole human race together for final judgment (Matt. 25:31-46; John 5:22,28-30; Acts 10:42; 17:30-31; Rev. 20:11-15).

f 50:3 Compare 2 Thes. 1:8; Heb. 10:27.

g 50:3 Compare Exo. 19:16,18; 20:18.

h 50:5 Compare Matt. 24:31.

i 50:7 See Deut. 6:4-5.

because of your sacrifices.^a You always bring Me your whole burnt-offerings.^b ⁹But I do **not** need the bulls from your stalls or the male goats from your pens. ¹⁰Why? Because every creature of the forest is already Mine! The cattle on a thousand hills belong to Me. ¹¹I know every bird in the mountains. Every moving thing in the fields is Mine. ¹²If I were hungry, I would not tell **you**. The earth is Mine, and every single thing on it. ¹³I don't eat the meat of bulls or drink the blood of male goats. ¹⁴Give an offering to show thanks to God. Give God, the Most High, what you have vowed. ¹⁵Call to Me in times of trouble. I will save you, and you will honor Me."

¹⁶But God says to the evil people:

"Why do you talk about My laws!? Why do you even mention My covenant!? ¹⁷You hate My discipline. You turn your back on what I say. ¹⁸When you see a thief, you want to join him. You take part in adultery. ¹⁹You do not stop your mouth from speaking evil. Your tongue makes up lies. ²⁰You sit there

speaking against your brother. You slander your mother's son. ²¹I have kept quiet while you did these things.^c You thought I was just like you. But I will reprimand you. I will accuse you to your face!

²²"Now think about this, you people who forget God. Otherwise, I will tear you apart, and no one will save you. ²³The person who honors Me is the one who gives Me offerings to show thanks. And I, God, will save one who does that!"

A Prayer for Cleansing

51¹To the director of music. A psalm of David. It was written when the prophet Nathan came to David after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba. O God, be merciful to me, because You are a loving God. Because You are always ready to be merciful, wipe out all of my rebellions.^d ²Wash me thoroughly of my guilt, and cleanse me from my sin. ³I admit^e my rebellions; my sin is continually right there in front

c 50:21 Compare Eccl. 8:11; Isa. 18:4; 42:14; 57:11; Acts 17:30.

d 51:1 literally, "transgressions." Compare Ps. 19:13; 32:1. See Col. 2:14.

e 51:3 or, "I acknowledge" = David's conscience

a 50:8 These Jews were not neglecting their rituals, but their worship did not spring from the heart.

b 50:8 Compare Isa. 1:11-12; Mic. 6:6-8; Hos. 6:6.

of me.^a ⁴I have sinned^b against You, and You alone.^c I have done wrong in Your sight. So, You are proved right when You sentence me. You are fair when You judge me. ⁵Listen, I was brought forth into a world of wrongdoing.^d In the surroundings of sin did my mother conceive me. ⁶Listen, You want me to be completely honest. So, teach me true wisdom.

⁷Purge me with hyssop,^e and I will be pure. Wash me; then I will be whiter than snow.^f ⁸Let me hear sounds of joy and gladness. Let the bones^g that You crushed be happy again.^h ⁹Turn Your

face away from my sins. Wipe out all of my guilt!

¹⁰Create a pure heart for me, O God. Please renew a solid spirit within me.ⁱ ¹¹Do not send me away from Your presence! Don't take Your holy spirit away from me. ¹²Give me back the joy of Your salvation. Grant me a volunteering attitude to keep me going.

¹³Then I will teach Your ways to those who rebel. And, sinners will turn back to You. ¹⁴O God, deliver me from the guilt of murder!^j O God, You are the One who saves me. I^k will sing loudly about Your righteousness. ¹⁵O Lord, let me speak, so that I may praise You. ¹⁶You take no delight in sacrifices.^l If You did, then I would offer them.^m You do not savor a whole burnt-offering. ¹⁷No, the sacrifice that God wants is a brokenⁿ spirit. O God,

a 51:3 The prophet Nathan effectively confronted David with the enormity of David's guilt. After that, David could not rest because he was so aware of what he had done.

b 51:4 See Exo. 20:13-14,17.

c 51:4 Compare Gen. 39:9; Luke 15:18. God is the ultimate Standard (Rom. 3:4). Prof. Ash said it well: "Sin is sin because God is God, and all wrongdoing is most importantly against Him." David was not denying that others were hurt by his sinful deeds.

d 51:5 David had the propensity to sin. Compare Gen. 8:21; Isa. 6:5.

e 51:7 Part of a hyssop bush was used in ritual cleansings (Exo. 12:22; Num. 19:6,18; Lev. 14:1-7; Heb. 9:19). = Take away my sin!

f 51:7 The color of white is a symbol of purity in the Scriptures (Isa. 1:18; Dan. 7:9; Rev. 7:14; 19:14).

g 51:8 = the entire person (Ps. 6:2; 35:10)

h 51:8 To the core, David's sickness was a spiritual illness. The only hope that a sinner has when crushed with the consciousness of his own sin is the mercy of God. Compare 1 Tim. 1:16.

i 51:10 Compare Jer. 32:39; Ezek. 36:26; John 3:1-8; 2 Cor. 5:17.

j 51:14 or, "blood-guiltiness!" Compare Gen. 9:5-6. David had personally ordered the death of Uriah (2 Sam. 11:14-17).

k 51:14 literally, "My tongue"

l 51:16 See Heb. 9:9-14. Compare Amos 5:21-24; Mic. 6:6-8. A true change of heart *must* take place first.

m 51:16 The law of Moses provided no sacrifice for deliberate sins. David had to seek restoration with God before he could offer sincere sacrifices.

n 51:17 = yielding

You will not reject a heart that is broken and sorry for its sin.

¹⁸Do for Zion whatever good You please, O God! Build up the walls of Jerusalem. ¹⁹Then You will take delight in the proper sacrifices and whole burnt-offerings.^a And, bulls will be offered on Your altar.

God's Judgment and Mercy

52¹To the director of music. A lesson of David. It was written when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul that David went to the household of Ahimelech.^b

O mighty warrior,^c why do you brag about such evil!? God's constant love will continue forever. ²You plot destruction. Your tongue is like a sharp razor, inventing deadly lies. ³Doeg, you love wrong more than right, and you love telling lies more than telling the truth. (Selah)

⁴You love all the words that bite, O deceitful tongue!

⁵But God will ruin you forever.

He will grab you and throw you out of your tent. He will tear you away from the land of the living. (Selah)

⁶Those who do right will see this and fear God. They will laugh at you and say:

⁷"Look what happened to the man who did **not** depend on God! Instead, he depended upon his money. He had become strong by destroying other people."

⁸But I am like a green olive tree, growing in the holy tent of God. I trust in God's constant love forever and ever. ⁹O God, I will thank You forever for what You have done. And, I will hope in Your Name (because it is good). I will worship You publicly among Your godly people.

People Are Evil

Psalms 14:1-7

53¹To the director of music. To be performed on Mahalath.^d A lesson of David.

A fool thinks to himself: "There is no God!" Atheists are corrupt. They do disgusting things. Not one of them does anything good.

a 51:19 A sacrifice that is offered with the right spirit will be considered by God as right (John 4:23-24).

b 52:1 at Keilah. See 1 Sam. 21:1; 22:9-23; 23:1-6.

c 52:1 Doeg was an important deputy of King Saul. Doeg was a self-serving informer who wanted to ingratiate himself to Saul who was already paranoid. Compare Isa. 22:17.

d 53:1 = a musical instrument or possibly the name of a well-known melody

²God looked down from heaven at all the people. He looked to see if there was anyone who was wise, if anyone was looking to God for help. ³But everyone had turned away. Together, everybody had become filthy. None of them were doing anything good—not a single person!^a

⁴Don't the wrongdoers understand! No. They destroy My people as if they were eating bread. They have not asked God for help.^b ⁵They are filled with terror, when there is no hint of terror. God will scatter the bones of your enemies. You will defeat them because God has rejected them.

⁶I pray that victory will come to Israel from Mount Zion! May God give back the prosperity of His people! Then the people of Jacob will rejoice. And the people of Israel will be glad.

A Prayer for Relief

54¹To the director of music. To be performed on the Neginoth. A lesson of David, when the Ziphites went and told Saul:

“David is in hiding among us!”^c

O God, save me by Your Name! Vindicate me by Your strength. ²Hear my prayer, O God. Listen to what I say.

³Strangers^d turn against me. Cruel men^e want to kill me. They do not care about God. (Selah)

⁴Look, God will help me. The Lord will spare my life.

⁵Let my enemies be punished with their own evil. Cut them off by Your faithfulness.

⁶I will offer You a special, voluntary sacrifice.^f I will praise Your Name, O Yahweh, because it is good. ⁷You have delivered me from all my troubles. I have seen my enemies defeated.^g

The Prayer of a Man Betrayed by a Friend

55¹To the director of music. To be performed on the Neginoth. A lesson of David.

O God, listen to my prayer. Don't

a 53:3 See Eccl. 7:20; Rom. 3:10-12.

b 53:4 They will not pray to God, because they don't believe that God exists.

c 54:1 literally, “Isn't David hiding himself among us?” (Yes). See 1 Sam. 23:19; 26:1.

d 54:3 the pagan Ziphites

e 54:3 King Saul's soldiers

f 54:6 Compare Exo. 35:29; 36:3; Lev. 7:16; Num. 15:3.

g 54:7 This psalm may have been written when David escaped to the Wilderness of Maon (1 Sam. 23:24-28).

ignore my prayer. ²Pay attention to me; answer me. I'm worried, and I'm upset ³over what the enemy says and how the evil people stare at me. They bring down troubles on me. They hate me; they are angry.^a

⁴I have great anxiety. The terrors of death have attacked me. ⁵I'm scared; I'm shaking. I am overwhelmed with horror. ⁶I thought: "I wish I had wings like a dove. Then I would fly away and rest. ⁷Listen, I would wander far away. I would stay in the desert. (Selah)

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

⁹O Lord, destroy their plots and confuse their words! I see violence and fighting in the city. ¹⁰Day and night, they go all around on its walls. Malice and crime are everywhere inside the city.^b ¹¹Destructive forces are going on in the heart of the city. Intimidation and fraud are always present in its streets.

¹²If it were an enemy who was insulting me, then I could endure that. If it were a foe who was opposing me, then I could hide from him. ¹³But it is **you**, a person like myself! You were my companion and my close friend.^c ¹⁴We used to have a good friendship. We walked together with the crowd to the holy tent of God.

¹⁵Let death take away my enemies. Let them be buried alive, because evil dwells among them. ¹⁶But I will call to God for help. And, Yahweh will save me. ¹⁷I will complain and moan—morning, noon, and night. But He will listen to me. ¹⁸Many people are against me.^d But He keeps me safe during the battle which is being waged against me. ¹⁹God, who rules forever, **will** hear me and punish them. (Selah)

But they will not change their hearts. They do not fear God.

²⁰The one who used to be my friend now attacks his friends. He has double-crossed them. ²¹His

a 55:3 See 2 Sam. 15–17.

b 55:10 Chaos abounded in Jerusalem when Absalom's men took over.

c 55:13 probably referring to Ahithophel, David's trusted adviser (2 Sam. 15:31)

d 55:18 probably referring to the attempted coup of Absalom (2 Sam. 15:12; 17:11; 18:7)

words were more slippery than butter, but war was in his heart. His words were more soothing than olive oil, yet they are ready to cut like swords.

²²Give your worries to Yahweh;^a He will take care of you.^b He will never let good people down.^c

²³But You, O God, will bring down the evil people to the grave.^d Murderers and liars will die young.^e But I will trust in You.

A Prayer of Trust

56¹To the director of music. According to the melody of: “A Dove on an Oak Tree Far Away.” A poem of David written when the Philistines were about to capture him at Gath.^f

O God, be merciful to me, because some men are chasing me. The battle is pressing me hard all day long.²My enemies are pursuing me all day long. They are arrogant, and there are

a 55:22 Compare Matt. 6:11,25-34; Philp. 4:6-7.

b 55:22 See 1 Pet. 5:7.

c 55:22 Compare Ps. 37:23-24.

d 55:23 literally, “the pit of destruction.”

e 55:23 literally, “will not live out half of their days.”

f 56:1 This psalm was probably written about the time when David fled to Achish, the king of Gath, the first time (1 Sam. 21:10-15). David wrote Psalm 34 after he got away from the Philistines, but Psalm 56 was written *while* he was among the Philistines, within the control of King Achish. Perhaps David saw himself as the innocent dove and the menacing Philistines corresponded with the remote forest.

many who are battling against me.

³Today I’m afraid, but I will trust in You. ⁴I trust in God! I will praise His Word.⁸ I trust in God; I will **not** be afraid! What can human beings do to me!;^h

⁵All day long, they twist my words. They are always planning to hurt me. ⁶They conspire; they are hiding. They watch my steps. They hope to kill me.

⁷O God, don’t let them get away with it! In Your anger, bring down those foreigners! ⁸You have kept track of all my problems.ⁱ Keep a record of my tears.^j They are in Your book, right? Yes.

⁹On the very day I call for help, that’s the time when my enemies will retreat. This is the one thing I know: God is **for** me! ¹⁰In God, whose Word I praise; in Yahweh, whose Word I praise;

g 56:4 Compare Matt. 10:28; Heb. 13:6.

h 56:4 or, “No one can harm me!” Compare Rom. 8:31.

i 56:8 literally, “my wandering.” (Compare 1 Sam. 21:10 (to Gath); 1 Sam. 22:1 (to the cave of Adullam); 1 Sam. 22:3 (to Mizpeh in Moab); 1 Sam. 22:5 (to the forest of Hareth); 1 Sam. 23:5 (to Keilah); 1 Sam. 23:14 (to the wilderness of Ziph); 1 Sam. 23:25 (to the rock in the wilderness of Maon); 1 Sam. 24:1-2 (to the wilderness of En-Gedi).

j 56:8 literally, “Put my tears in a bottle.” (= a lachrymatory; a small flask made of leather)

¹¹It is in God that I put my trust. I will **not** be afraid. What can man do to me!?

¹²O God, I must keep my vows to You. I will present my offerings to thank You.^a ¹³You have delivered me from death. You wouldn't allow me to be defeated.^b So, I will walk with God, in light, among the living people.^c

Pleading for God's Help

57¹To the director of music. To be performed to the melody of: "Don't Destroy."^d A poem of David written when he ran away from Saul. David was hiding in the cave.

Be merciful to me, O God. Be merciful to me, because I come to You for protection. I come to You for protection, just as a little bird gets under its mother's wings until the danger has passed.

²I cry out to God, the Most High, to the God who works out His purpose for me. ³He sends

a 56:12 Here David's faith speaks of his deliverance as if it had already happened.

b 56:13 literally, "(You kept) my feet from falling" (= slipping)

c 56:13 Compare Job 33:30. The grave is usually pictured as a place of darkness (Job 10:21-22) and gloom (Ps. 6:5; 30:9; Isa. 38:11,18,19).

d 57:1 Compare Moses' prayer in Deut. 9:26. See the titles of Psalm 58, Psalm 59; and Psalm 75 for different sets of emergencies.

help from heaven and saves me. He punishes those who take advantage of me. (Selah)

God sends His constant love and His truth.

⁴Like lions, my enemies are all around me. I am lying down calmly there among the flames of the sons of men. Their teeth are like spears and arrows. Their tongues are like sharp swords.

⁵O God, You are supreme over the skies. Your splendor covers the whole earth! ⁶They set a trap for me. I was worried. They dug a pit for my path, but they themselves fell into it! (Selah)

Psalms 108:1-5

⁷My heart is determined,^e O God. My heart is determined. I will sing and make a melody to You. ⁸Wake up, my soul! Wake up, O harp and lyre! I will wake up the dawn.

⁹O Lord, I will praise You among the nations.^f I will sing songs of praise about You among the ethnic groups. ¹⁰Your constant love is so great that

e 57:7 or, "resolved" = single-minded

f 57:9 = the non-Jews. See Rom. 15:9-10.

it reaches up to the skies. Your truth extends up to the clouds.
¹O God, You are supreme over the skies. Your splendor covers the whole earth!

Punish the Wicked!

58¹To the director of music. To be performed to the melody of: "Don't Destroy." A poem of David.

Do you rulers^a really say what is right? Do you, O sons of men, judge people fairly?^b ²No! In your hearts, you plan evil. You dole out violent crimes^c in the land. ³From birth, evil people start doing bad things.^d They tell lies and do wrong just as soon as they are born. ⁴Their poison is like the poison of a snake, like a deaf cobra^e that stops up its ears.^f ⁵The deaf cobra cannot

a 58:1 probably referring to the last vestiges of King Saul's corrupt government

b 58:1 Compare Amos 5:7,10-13; Mic. 3:1-3,9-11; 7:2; Isa. 1:23; 5:23; 10:1-2; Ezek. 22:6,12.

c 58:2 gross miscarriages of justice because of bribes to corrupt judges

d 58:3 literally, "From the womb . . . are estranged." Poetically speaking, from the very beginning, they have the inclination to sin against God (compare Gen. 8:21; Isa. 6:5.) because they are being heavily influenced early on by their parents and by their young friends (1 Kings 21:25; 2 Kings 8:16-18; 1 Sam. 2:12-17,22-25,31-34; 4:11,17,18; 1 Cor. 15:33.). They are incorrigible, hardened by sin.

e 58:4 or, "adder"; "asp"

f 58:4 Compare Acts 7:57. These particular vipers will bite their victims no matter what. This special type of person was malevolent, and there was no possibility of restraining them from doing evil. They cannot be tamed.

hear the music of the snake charmer, no matter how well he plays a flute for them.

⁶O God, break the teeth in their mouths! Tear out the fangs of those young lions, O Yahweh!
⁷Let them disappear like water that drains away. Whenever they draw back the bow, may their arrows be blunted. ⁸Let them be like snails that melt away as they move along. Like a baby born dead, may they never see the sun!

⁹God's fierce anger will sweep them all away. It will happen faster than burning thorns can heat a pot. ¹⁰Good people will be glad when they see God punish them. The good people will wash their feet in the blood of the evil people. ¹¹Then someone will say: "Indeed, there are rewards for those who do what is right!"^g There really is a God who judges the world!"

A Prayer for Protection

59¹To the director of music. To be performed to the melody of: "Don't Destroy." A poem of David when Saul had sent some

g 58:11 literally, "Surely fruit (is) for the righteous one!" Compare Matt. 5:12; 10:41-42; 1 Tim. 4:8; Heb. 10:35; 11:6; 2 John 1:8; Rev. 22:12.

men to watch David's house in order to kill him.^a

O my God, deliver me from my enemies. Protect me from those who rise up against me.² Deliver me from those who do evil. Save me from murderers.

³Look, they are waiting to take my life! Cruel men have banded themselves together to oppose me. But I didn't do anything wrong to them or cross them, O Yahweh. ⁴I'm innocent, yet they are ready to attack me. Wake up to help me and see what's happening! ⁵You are Yahweh, the God of the armies of heaven, the God of Israel. Get up and punish all those foreigners!^b Don't show those traitors any mercy. (Selah)

⁶They come back at night. Like dogs, they snarl and prowl around the city. ⁷Look at what pours out of their mouths. Insults spew from their lips.^c They say: "Who is listening!?" ⁸Nevertheless, O Yahweh, You laugh at them. You scoff at all those foreigners.

⁹O my Strength, I wait for You, because You, O God, are my Fortress.

¹⁰God loves me, and He will be with me. God will help me defeat my enemies. ¹¹O Lord, our Shield, don't kill them. If You do, my people will forget. Scatter them by Your power, and bring them down. ¹²They sin by what they say. They sin with their words. They curse and they tell lies. So, let their own pride trap them. ¹³Destroy them by Your anger. Destroy them totally! Then everyone will **know** that God rules over Israel,^d even to the ends of the earth. (Selah)

¹⁴Yes, they come back at night. Like dogs, they snarl and prowl around the city. ¹⁵They roam around looking for food. And they growl, if they don't find enough food. ¹⁶Nevertheless, I will sing about Your strength. Yes, in the morning, I will sing of Your constant love.^e You are my Fortress, my Refuge in times of trouble.

¹⁷O my Strength, I will sing

a 59:1 See 1 Sam. 19:9-17.

b 59:5 King Saul had hired many foreign, mercenary soldiers.

c 59:7 literally, "Swords (are) in their lips." Compare Ps. 57:4.

d 59:13 literally, "Jacob,"

e 59:16 David was accustomed to having his early morning devotionals.

praises to You. You, O God, are my Fortress. You, O God, love me.

A Prayer for Help

60¹To the director of music. "On the Lily of Testimony."^a A poem of David for teaching. It was written when David fought Aram-Naharaim and Aram-Zobah, and when Joab returned and struck down 12,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt.^b

O God, You have rejected us and scattered us.^c You have been angry; turn back to us.² You caused the earth to quake;^d You tore it open. Heal its wounds, because it is trembling.³ You have caused Your people to suffer hardship. You made us unable to walk straight, like people drunk with wine.

⁴You have raised a banner^e to gather those who revere You. Now they can escape the enemy's arrows.^f (Selah)

a 60:1 This may have been a well-known melody. Some scholars think that it was a spring festival tune.

b 60:1 See 2 Sam. 8:3-14; 1 Kings 11:15-16; 1 Chr. 18:9-13.

c 60:1 This prayer was a cry to God to reverse a recent, national defeat.

d 60:2 a metaphor showing a sense of panic among the Jewish people

e 60:4 as a military signal for rallying troops

f 60:4 literally, "from the bow." We are following the more convincing Greek, Syriac, and Latin manuscripts instead of the traditional Masoretic Text which has: "because of the truth."

Psalms 108:6-13

⁵Answer us and save us by Your power. Then the people whom You love will be rescued.⁶ God has said in His Sanctuary: "When I win, I will divide Shechem^g and cut up the Valley of Succoth.^h ⁷Both Gilead and Manasseⁱ belong to Me. Ephraim^j is like My helmet.^k Judah^l holds my royal scepter.^m ⁸Moabⁿ is like my wash-bowl.^o I throw out my sandals^p on top of Edom. I shout in triumph over Philistia."

⁹Who will bring me to the strong, walled city?^q Who will lead me to Edom? ¹⁰O God, surely You have rejected us. You

g 60:6 the principal city west of the Jordan River (1 Kings 12:25)

h 60:6 a prominent sector of Canaan east of the Jordan River (Gen. 33:17-18)

i 60:7 Gilead was the old name of the large territory east of the Jordan River (Gen. 37:25). The half-tribe of Manasseh was located on both sides of the Jordan River. So, this expression represented the whole land of Israel (Gen. 13:14-15).

j 60:7 Being one of the largest tribes, it was situated in the very center of the country.

k 60:7 literally, "the strength of My head." = strong, military protection

l 60:7 located in southern Palestine

m 60:7 See Gen. 49:8-12.

n 60:8 a region to the east of the Dead Sea

o 60:8 a contemptuous, subservient role (Num. 24:17)

p 60:8 transferring a possession. Compare Ruth 3:4; 4:7-9. David was claiming this territory, according to God's promise.

q 60:9 probably referring to Petra, which was the capital of Edom (Obad. 1:3-4). David is asking his military leaders to rise up and conquer it.

do not go out with our armies anymore. ¹¹Help us fight the enemy. The help of humans is useless. ¹²Nevertheless, with God's help, we **can** win! **He** will defeat our enemies!

God Is My Refuge

61 ¹To the director of music. To be performed on the Neginath.^a A psalm of David.

O God, hear my cry. Listen to my prayer.

²I call to You from the ends of the earth.^b I am afraid! Take me away to a rock that is high above me.^c ³You are my Shelter, like a strong fortress against my enemies.

⁴Let me live in Your Meeting Tent forever. Protect me as a bird protects its young ones under its wings. (Selah)

⁵O God, You have heard my vows. You have given me the things that belong to those who revere You. ⁶Give the king^d a long life.^e Let him live for

a 61:1 = a stringed, musical instrument

b 61:2 in relationship to God's Sanctuary (Deut. 28:64)

c 61:2 David was seeking an inaccessible place of security, beyond his reach. David knew he needed divine help.

d 6:6 David

e 61:6 literally, "Add days to the days of the king."

many years. ⁷Let him rule in the presence of God forever.^f Ordain him with Your constant love and faithfulness. They will protect him.

⁸Then I will praise Your Name forever, keeping my vows every day.

Depending on God

62 ¹To the director of music. To Jeduthun. A psalm of David.

I wait patiently for God. Only **He** can save me! ²He alone is my Rock, who saves me. He is my Fortress. I will **never** be defeated!

³How long will you people attack me? Must all of you throw me down? I am like a wall that is leaning, like a fence that is about to fall. ⁴You are surely planning my downfall from my place of honor. You enjoy telling lies about me. With your mouth you bless me, but, in your hearts, you curse me! (Selah)

⁵I wait patiently for God. He alone is my hope. ⁶He alone is

Jewish interpreters in later times believed that these verses referred to the Messiah, the future son of David.

f 61:7 Compare Luke 1:32.

my Rock, who saves me. He is my Fortress. I will **not** be defeated!
 7 My honor and salvation come from God. He is my mighty Rock and my Protection. 8 You people, trust God at all times! Tell Him all your problems. God is a refuge for us. (Selah)

9 Human beings are surely only a breath.^a People are a lie. They weigh nothing on the scales. Together they are only a puff of air. 10 Don't trust in using force. Don't trust in robbery. Even if you gain more riches, don't put your trust in them.

11 "Power belongs to God!" God said this once, and I have heard it over and over. 12 O Lord, constant love belongs to You, too. You reward a person for whatever he does.^b

Yearning for God

63¹ A psalm of David when he was in the Desert of Judah.^c
 O God, You are my God. I want to follow You. My soul thirsts for You. My body yearns for You, in

a dry, empty land where there is no water.^d 2 So I have beheld You in the Sanctuary.^e I have seen Your strength and Your glory. 3 Your constant love is better than life. I will praise You loudly. 4 So I will praise You as long as I live. I will lift up my hands in prayer to Your Name. 5 I will be content as if I had eaten the best foods. With lips full of joy, my mouth will praise You.

6 While I am lying on my bed, I remember You. I think about You throughout the night. 7 Because You are my Help, I will gladly sing of Your protection. 8 I stay close to You. You support me with Your right hand.

9 Some people are trying to kill me. But **they** are the ones who will go down to the grave. 10 They will be killed with swords. They will be eaten by wild dogs.

11 Nevertheless, the king will rejoice in God. All who make promises in His Name will praise Him. But

a 62:9 or, "a puff of air." Compare James 4:14.

b 62:12 Compare 2 Cor. 5:10; Gal. 6:7-8; Rev. 22:12.

c 63:1 See 2 Sam. 15:23-28; 16:2,14; 17:16,29. This psalm may have been written when King David was forced to flee Jerusalem because of the insurrection of his son, Absalom (2 Sam. 15:13-16).

d 63:1 David was located in an arid strip of desert that was just west of the Dead Sea.

e 63:2 David was temporarily being denied access to worship near God's tabernacle. Here David may have been recalling a vision of God (a theophany) which he previously experienced. Compare Ps. 27:4; 48:8-9.

the mouths of liars will be shut!^a

A Prayer for Protection

64¹To the director of music.
A psalm of David.

O God, please listen as I voice my complaint. Guard my life against the threats of my enemies.²Hide me from those evil people who are conspiring, from that mob of wrongdoers.³They sharpen their tongues like swords. They aim cruel words like arrows.⁴They hide and shoot at innocent people. They shoot at them suddenly, and they are not afraid.^b

⁵They encourage each other to do wrong. They talk about setting clever traps. They think that no one will see them.⁶They plot injustice and say: “We have made a perfect plan!” The heart and the mind of a man are shrewd.

⁷But God will shoot **them** with arrows! They will be struck down suddenly.⁸Their own words will be used against them. All who see them will avoid them.⁹Then everyone will fear. They

will proclaim what God has done. Yes, they will learn from what He has done.¹⁰Good people will be happy in Yahweh. They will find protection in Him. Let everyone who is honest praise God!^c

Praising God from Nature

65¹To the director of music.
A psalm of David. A song.
Praise is waiting for You, O God, in Jerusalem. We will keep our promises to You.²You hear prayers! All people will come to You.^d³Our guilt overwhelms us. Nevertheless, You forgive our sins.⁴Happy are the people whom You choose. You bring them to stay in Your courtyards. We are filled with the good things of Your House, Your holy temple.

⁵You answer us in amazing, righteous ways, O God of our salvation. People everywhere on the earth and beyond the sea trust You.⁶By Your strength You made the mountains. You possess great power.⁷You calm the roaring seas,^e the roaring

a 63:11 See Rom. 3:19. Compare Rev. 21:8,27.

b 64:4 They are unafraid of being detected. They keep no law of man, and they do not fear Almighty God (Isa. 55:19).

c 64:10 This psalm may have been written when David fled to Moab to avoid capture by King Saul (1 Sam. 22:3-5).

d 65:2 The one true God is a universal God.

e 65:7 See Mark 4:39.

waves and the uproar of the ethnic groups. ⁸Even those people who live far, far away stand in awe of Your miracles. You are praised from where the sun rises to where it sets.

⁹You take care of the land and You water it. You cause it to be very fertile. The river of God is full of water. Grain grows because You cause it to grow. ¹⁰You supply water to the plowed fields. You soak them with water. You soften the ground with rain. And then You bless its growth. ¹¹You top off the year with a good harvest. You load the wagons with many crops. ¹²The desert is covered with grass. The hills are covered with happiness. ¹³The meadows are full of sheep and goats. The wide valleys are covered with grain. Everything sings and shouts for joy!

Praise and Thanksgiving

66¹To the director of music. A song. A psalm. All people on the earth, shout with joy to God! ²Sing about the glory of His Name! Offer Him glorious praise! ³Say to God: “Your works are amazing! Your power is so great that Your enemies fall down in front of

You. ⁴The whole world worships You. They sing praises to You. They sing praises to Your Name.” (Selah)

⁵Come and see what God has done. ^a See what awesome things He has done for mankind. ⁶He turned the sea into dry land. ^b The people crossed the river on foot. ^c So, let us rejoice because of what He did there. ⁷He rules forever by His might. He keeps His eye on the nations. Rebels should not exalt themselves. (Selah)

⁸Praise our God, you peoples! Sing His praise loudly! ⁹He protects our lives, and He does not allow us to be defeated. ¹⁰You, O God, have tested us. You have purified us as one who purifies silver. ^d ¹¹You permitted us to be trapped. You put a heavy load upon us. ¹²You allowed our enemies to ride roughshod over our heads. ^e We went through fire and flood, but You brought

a 66:5 or, “the works of God.” Is it possible that the psalmist was inviting them to view the corpses of Sennacherib’s army which were still lying there?

b 66:6 Compare Exo. 14:21.

c 66:6 See Josh. 3:14-17.

d 66:10 Sometimes God allows us to go through some hard times in order to purge us of sinful impurities.

e 66:12 = total domination. Compare Ezek. 36:12.

us to a place with lots of good things.

¹³I will come to Your House with whole burnt-offerings. I will give You what I promised, ¹⁴whatever my lips uttered and my mouth spoke when I was in trouble. ¹⁵I will offer You whole burnt-offerings of fat animals, along with the smoke of male sheep. And, I will sacrifice bulls and male goats. (Selah)

¹⁶All of you who revere God, come and listen. I will tell you what He has done for me. ¹⁷I cried out loud to Him with my mouth. I glorified Him with my tongue. ¹⁸If I had cherished any sin in my heart, then the Lord would not have listened to me. ¹⁹But God **has** truly listened. He **has** paid attention to the sound of my prayer. ²⁰Praise God! He did **not** ignore my prayer. He did not hold back His constant love from me.

Praise to God

67¹To the director of music. For the Neginoth. A psalm. A song.

May God have mercy on us and bless us, showing His kindness to us. (Selah)

²Then the world will know Your ways. All nations will learn that You **can** save.

³O God, the peoples should praise You. All the peoples should praise You. ⁴O let all the ethnic groups be glad and sing for joy, because You will judge the peoples fairly. You guide all the ethnic groups on earth. (Selah)

⁵O God, the peoples should praise You. All the peoples should praise You. ⁶The land has produced its crops. God, our God, has blessed us. ⁷God has blessed us; let all people everywhere revere Him!

The True God

68¹To the director of music. A psalm of David. A song.^a Let God rise up and scatter His enemies. Let those who hate Him run away from Him. ²Drive them away, just as smoke is driven away by the wind. As wax melts in front of a fire, let the evil people be destroyed before God. ³But those who do right should be glad. They should

a 68:1 This psalm was probably a processional service (compare 2 Sam. 6:12) that celebrated God's glorious reign. According to Eph. 4:8-13, the early Christians viewed this ancient psalm as a foreshadowing of Christ's resurrection, ascension, and reign over a hostile world.

rejoice before God. They should be happy and glad.

⁴Sing to God. Sing praises to His Name. “Prepare the way for Him who rides through the deserts.” His Name is Yah.^a Rejoice before Him. ⁵God is in His sacred Home. He is the Father to orphans. He protects the widows. ⁶God provides a home for the lonely people to live in. With joy, He releases the prisoners. But those who rebel against God live in a scorched land.

⁷O God, You led Your people out. You marched through the desert. (Selah)

⁸The earth shook. Yes, the sky poured down rain in the presence of God. This happened at Mount Sinai, in the presence of God, the God of Israel. ⁹O God, You sent much rain.^b You restored Your tired land. ¹⁰Your people settled there. O God, in Your goodness, You took care of the poor people.

¹¹The Lord gave the command.^c

a 68:4 the short form of Yahweh (Exo. 15:2; Isa. 12:2; 26:4)

b 68:9 And God sent down abundant manna (Exo. 16:1-36; Num. 11:1-9; Deut. 8:3,16; Josh. 5:12; Neh. 9:20; Ps. 78:24) and even quail.

c 68:11 or, “announced the Word” by means of the ark of the covenant

And, a great army proclaimed the news: ¹²“Kings of the armies are running away!^d They are running away! The women at home are dividing the plunder ¹³—the wings of a dove figurine covered with silver, its feathers with shining gold—why did some of you stay behind, among the pens for the sheep?” ¹⁴Almighty God spread out the kings there on the battlefield,^e like snow falling on Mount Zalmon.

¹⁵The mountain^f of Bashan^g is a great mountain. Mount Bashan has many peaks. ¹⁶Why do you mountains with many peaks look down on Mount Zion, which God chose for His Home? Yahweh will dwell there forever. ¹⁷God comes with millions^h of His chariots.ⁱ The Lord comes from Mount Sinai into His Sanctuary.^j ¹⁸He went

d 68:12 Compare Josh. 1:2-6.

e 68:14 See Josh. 2:8-11; 5:1; 6:16. Compare 2 Kings 7:15.

f 68:15 Mountains were often symbols of foreign nations (Ps. 46:2; 65:6).

g 68:15 Poetically speaking, the mountains of Bashan (particularly snow-covered Mount Hermon, which was over 9,200 feet high) were jealous of Mount Zion in Jerusalem because God had chosen Mount Zion to be His “highest” mountain instead of them.

h 68:17 literally, “twenty thousand thousands” = myriads and myriads

i 68:17 Compare 2 Kings 6:17; Hab. 3:8,15.

j 68:17 The author is celebrating the triumphal entry of God’s ascent to Mount Zion.

up high; He captured everything. He gave gifts to human beings,^a even the rebellious ones. And, Yah God will dwell there.

¹⁹Praise the Lord day by day. The God of our salvation helps us. (Selah)

²⁰To us, the one true God is the God of salvation. The Lord Yahweh owns the escape route from death.

²¹God will surely crush the heads of His enemies, the hairy skulls of those who continue to sin. ²²The Lord said: "I will bring the enemy back from Bashan.^b I will bring them back from the depths of the sea.^c ²³Then you can bathe your feet in their blood. And, your dogs can lick their share of the blood of your enemies."

²⁴O God, people have seen Your victory marches. My God, my King, marched into the

Sanctuary. ²⁵The singers are in front, and the musicians are behind. In the middle are the girls with the tambourines. ²⁶Praise God in the big meeting. Praise Yahweh, all you who are descendants of Jacob. ²⁷There is the smallest tribe, Benjamin, leading them. And there are the leaders of Judah with their group. There also are the leaders of Zebulun and the leaders of Naphtali.^d

²⁸O God, order up Your strength. Show the mighty power that You have used on our behalf before. ²⁹Kings will bring their riches to You as a present, because Your temple^e is over Jerusalem.^f ³⁰Punish Egypt, that beast among the tall grass along the river.^g Punish the herd of bulls^h among the calves of the nations. Then they will humbly bring their silver bars to You.ⁱ Scatter those nations that love

d 68:27 Benjamin and Judah were from the south, while Zebulun and Naphtali were from the north. Therefore, these four tribes may be representative of the whole nation.

e 68:29 The tabernacle was sometimes called "the temple" prior to the existence of Solomon's temple.

f 68:29 The presence of God resided in Jerusalem (Ps. 5:7).

g 68:30 This is a reference to Pharaoh (Ezek. 29:3), as if he were a crocodile or a lion lurking among the reeds.

h 68:30 Pharaoh's princes or the heads of allied kingdoms

i 68:30 = bowing down and offering tribute

a 68:18 literally, "You have received gifts among men." See Eph. 4:8; Col. 2:15. The metaphor is that of a victorious king after a great battle; he has much plunder to share.

b 68:22 = captured, enemy soldiers who had temporarily escaped to the east. Perhaps an allusion to Num. 21:33-35.

c 68:22 those captured, enemy soldiers who had fled westward to the Mediterranean coastline

to make war. ³¹Messengers will come from Egypt with forced payments. ^aThe people of Cush ^bwill pray to God.

³²O kingdoms of the earth, sing to God. Sing praises to the Lord. (Selah)

³³Sing to the One who rides through the sky, the ancient skies. Listen, He speaks with a thundering voice. ³⁴Announce that God is powerful. He rules over Israel. His strength is in the skies. ³⁵God is awesome as He comes from His Sanctuary! The God of Israel gives strength and power to His people.

Praise ^cGod! ^d

A Cry for Help

69 ¹To the director of music. According to "The Lilies." ^eA psalm of David.
O God, save me, because the

a 68:31 literally, "with bronze." Compare Isa. 19:1-25; 43:3; 45:14.

b 68:31 Ethiopia

c 68:35 literally, "Blessed (be)"

d 68:35 This psalm was probably composed when the ark of the covenant was brought up from the household of Obed-Edom by David (2 Sam. 6:12; 1 Chr. 15:1-29). However, this psalm could possibly have been written when Uzzah was killed by touching the ark of the covenant (2 Sam. 6:6-11; 1 Chr. 13:9-14).

e 69:1 This may have been a well-known melody. Some scholars think it was a spring festival tune.

water has risen ³up to my neck. ²I am sinking deep into the mud, ^fand there is nothing to stand on. I am in deep water, and the waves are about to drown me. ³I'm tired of calling out for help. My throat is sore. My eyes are strained from looking for my God. ⁴The people who hate me for no reason ^goutnumber the hairs on my head. Those who desire to destroy me are powerful. My enemies are liars. They make me pay back what I did not steal.

⁵O God, You know what I have done wrong. My guilt is not hidden from You. ^h

⁶O Lord, Yahweh of the armies of heaven, don't let those who hope in You be disgraced because of me. ⁱO God of Israel,

f 69:2 using the metaphor of a man who is trying to ford a fast-flowing river and is about to be swept away

g 69:4 Concerning Christ (the antitype), see John 15:25 and compare Zech. 11:1-8. Concerning David (the type), King Saul hated young David; that was enough of a reason for many of Saul's followers to hate David, too.

h 69:5 Compare Heb. 4:13. This part of the psalm *cannot* apply to the Messiah, the sinless Savior.

i 69:6 This refers to the true Israelites who were faithful to God, as distinguished from the great majority of the Jewish people. David knew that if Saul's men could destroy him, then they would not hesitate to wipe out the faithful ones in the kingdom as well. David prayed here that this would not happen.

don't let those who seek You be ashamed because of me. ⁷For Your sake, I carry this blame. My face is covered with shame. ⁸I am like a stranger to my brothers.^a I am like a foreigner to the sons of my mother.^b ⁹The fire^c which I feel for Your House burns within me!^d The insults of the people who were insulting You fell on me.^e ¹⁰When I weep and go without food, people insult me. ¹¹When I wear rough cloth to show my sadness, they make jokes about me. ¹²They make fun of me publicly. Even the drunkards make up songs about me.

¹³But as for me, my prayer is to You, O Yahweh. At a time that You choose, O God, because of Your abundant, constant love, please answer me with Your sure salvation! ¹⁴Pull me out of the mud. Don't let me sink! Deliver me from those who hate me and from the deep waters. ¹⁵Don't let the floodwaters drown me. Don't let the deep swallow me. Don't let the grave

close its mouth over me. ¹⁶O Yahweh, answer me because Your constant love is so good. In Your great compassion, turn to me. ¹⁷Don't hide Your face from me, Your servant. I'm in trouble. Please answer me quickly. ¹⁸Come near me. Redeem me. Because of my enemies, ransom me.

¹⁹You know how I am insulted, shamed, and disgraced; all of my enemies are before You. ²⁰Insults have broken my heart; I am sick. I looked for sympathy, but there was none. I looked for comforters, but I found no one. ²¹They put poison in my food. And, when I was thirsty, they gave me vinegar to drink.^f

²²Let their own table which is set before them become a trap. Let their banquets ensnare them and pay them back. ²³Let their eyes become dark, so that they cannot see. Let their backs always be weak. ²⁴Pour out Your punishment upon them. And, let Your burning anger overtake them. ²⁵May their palaces be

a 69:8 Compare Mark 3:21; John 7:5.

b 69:8 David's brothers were afraid of King Saul's order to find their outlawed brother and kill him.

c 69:9 literally, "zeal"; "ardor" = the strong desire for real, religious reform

d 69:9 See John 2:17.

e 69:9 See Rom. 15:3.

f 69:21 Compare Matt. 27:34,48-50; Mark 15:23,36; Luke 23:36; John 19:29-30. The Romans sometimes gave their victims *posca* (= sour wine) mixed with myrrh to deaden their pain.

empty. Let there be no one to live in their tents.

²⁶They persecute those whom You have wounded. They gossip about the pain of those whom You have hurt. ²⁷Charge them with crime after crime. Don't acquit them! ²⁸Wipe their names out of the Book of Life.^a Don't list them with those who do what is right.

²⁹I am sad and in pain. Let Your salvation, O God, protect me.

³⁰I will praise God's Name in a song. I will honor Him by giving thanks. ³¹That will please Yahweh more than offering an ox to Him,^b or sacrificing a bull with horns and hoofs.^c ³²Humble people will see this and be glad. O be encouraged, you people who seek God. ³³Yahweh listens to those in need. He does not look down on His prisoners.

³⁴Heaven and earth should praise Him. The oceans and everything that moves in them

should praise Him, too. ³⁵God will save Jerusalem. He will rebuild the towns of Judah. Then people will live there and own the land. ³⁶The descendants of God's servants will inherit that land. Those who love His Name^d will dwell there.

A Prayer for Deliverance

Psalms 40:13-17

70¹To the director of music. A psalm of David. To bring to remembrance.

Please, O God, rescue me! Hurry, O Yahweh, to help me. ²People are trying to kill me. Let them be put to shame and confused! People want to hurt me. Let them be driven away in disgrace! ³People are making fun of me. Let them be appalled at their own shame. ⁴But let all those who follow You be happy and be glad in You. They love You for saving them. May they always say: "Praise God!" ⁵O God, I am poor and helpless. But please hurry to me. You are my Help and my Deliverer. O Yahweh, come quickly!

a 69:28 Compare Exo. 32:32; Ps. 69:28; 139:16; Isa. 4:3; Dan. 10:21; 12:1; Mal. 3:16; Luke 10:20; Philp. 4:3; Rev. 3:5; 5:1; 13:8; 17:8; 20:11-15; 21:27.

b 69:31 Compare Heb. 9:23; 10:1-4.

c 69:31 Compare Heb. 13:15.

d 69:36 God's true followers

The Prayer of an Old Man

Psalms 31:1-4

71¹O Yahweh, I take refuge in You.^a Don't let me ever be put to shame! ²Because You do what is right, deliver me and rescue me. Listen to me and save me. ³Be like a rock of refuge for me, where I can always go. Give the command to save me. You are my Rock and my Fortress. ⁴O my God, rescue me from the power of evil people, from the control of unjust, cruel people.

⁵O Lord Yahweh, You are my hope. I have trusted You since I was young. ⁶I have depended on You since I was born. You are the One who took me from my mother's belly. I will always praise You. ⁷I am a wonder to many people. You are my strong Refuge. ⁸I am always praising You. All day long, I honor You.

⁹Don't throw me away when I get old. Do not abandon me when my strength is gone. ¹⁰My enemies speak against me. They are watching. Together they plot to kill me. ¹¹They say: "God has abandoned him! Let's go after

him and take him! No one will deliver him!" ¹²O God, don't be far off from me! O my God, please hurry to help me! ¹³Let them be ashamed. Let those who accuse^b me be destroyed. They are trying to hurt me. Cover them up with shame and disgrace.

¹⁴But I will always have hope. And, I will praise You even more. ¹⁵I will tell about Your righteousness all day long, especially about Your salvation, even though it is more than I can tell. ¹⁶I will go on proclaiming Your powerful deeds, O Lord Yahweh. I will mention Your righteousness, Yours alone. ¹⁷O God, You have taught me since I was young. But, even today, I declare the miracles that You do. ¹⁸Even though I am old and gray, don't abandon me, O God, until I can declare Your power to the children. I will tell all those who are coming up about Your might.

¹⁹O God, Your justice reaches up to the skies. You have done such great things. O God, there is no one like You! ²⁰You have given me many troubles and bad

^a 71:1 Compare Paul's final words in 2 Tim. 1:12; 4:6-8.

^b 71:13 Hebrew: *satan* (a verb)

times. Nevertheless, You will give me new life. When I was almost dead, You kept me alive. ²¹You make me more important than ever. You surround and comfort me.

²²Using a harp, I will also praise You for Your faithfulness, O my God. I will sing praises to You with the lyre, O Holy One of Israel. ²³I will shout for joy when I sing praises to You. You have redeemed me. ²⁴I will recall Your justice all day long. Why? Because those who want to hurt me will be ashamed and disgraced.

A Prayer for the King

72 ¹A psalm of Solomon. ^a O God, give Your justice to the king, and endow the king's son with Your fairness. ²Let him judge Your people fairly, deciding what is right for the poor people. ³The mountains will bring prosperity ^b to the people, and the hills will experience righteousness. ⁴Let the king be fair to the poor people. May he

save the needy people and crush those who oppress them.

⁵May he live as long as the sun. Help him rule as long as the moon, throughout all generations! ^c ⁶Let him be like the gentle rain which falls on the grass that is mowed, like showers that water the earth. ⁷Let good people flourish while the king rules. Let peace abound as long as there is a moon.

⁸And, may he rule from sea to sea, and from the Euphrates River to the ends of the earth. ⁹Let the people of the desert bow down to him. And, make his enemies lick the dust. ^d ¹⁰Let the kings of Tarshish ^e and the faraway lands ^f bring him gifts. Let the kings of Sheba ^g and Seba ^h offer their presents to him. ¹¹Let all kings fall down in front of him. Let all the nations serve him.

¹²He will deliver the poor

a 72:1 Psalm 127 is also ascribed to King Solomon. See 1 Kings 3:9,11-12. The Targum, the prevailing view of the ancient Jews, and the early Christians applied this psalm to the coming Messiah.

b 72:3 Hebrew: *shalom*

c 72:5 = immortality

d 72:9 = the most thorough submission and abject humiliation as they prostrate themselves on the ground

e 72:10 perhaps in the southwestern part of Spain — the opposite direction of Nineveh. Compare Jonah 1:3.

f 72:10 literally, "of the islands" = distant shores

g 72:10 probably Southwestern Arabia

h 72:10 This may have been the Sudan or Ethiopia.

people when they cry out for help. He will assist the needy people when no one else will help them. ¹³The king will be kind to the weak and poor people. He will save needy souls. ¹⁴He will redeem them from cruel people who would hurt them. Their blood is so precious to him.

¹⁵Long live the king! May he receive gold from Sheba. May people always pray for him. May God's blessings be upon him all day long. ¹⁶Let there be an abundance of grain in the land, waving even on the tops of the mountains.^a Let the land be as fertile as Lebanon.^b Let the cities grow like the grass of the earth. ¹⁷Let the king be famous forever. Let him be remembered as long as the sun shines.

Let the nations be blessed through him.^c And, may they all call him "happy."

¹⁸Praise Yahweh God, the God of Israel. Only **He** does such

a 72:16 This is poetic language for overflowing crops.

b 72:16 referring to the tall and stately cedar trees of Lebanon

c 72:17 literally, "And all nations will bless themselves in him." See Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18; Matt. 21:9; 23:39; Luke 19:38; Eph. 1:3.

miracles. ¹⁹Praise His glorious Name forever! Let His splendor fill the whole world. Amen and amen!

²⁰(This ends the prayers of David, the son of Jesse.)^d

BOOK THREE (Psalms 73–89):

The Fate of Evil People

73¹A psalm of Asaph. God is truly good to Israel, to those who have pure hearts. ²But, as for me, my feet had almost stumbled.^e I had almost lost my foothold. ³Why? Because I was envious of proud people.^f I observed that evil people were prospering.^g

⁴They are not suffering. They are strong and healthy. ⁵They don't have troubles like most people. They don't have the problems that others have. ⁶So, they wear pride as a necklace.^h They put on violence as their clothing. ⁷Their eyes bulge out from fatness.

d 72:20 This means that Book II (Ps. 42–72) of the Book of Psalms is concluded.

e 73:2 = skepticism; that is having serious doubts about his absolute confidence in the one true God.
f 73:3 See Psalm 37 and Psalm 49. Compare Ps. 5:5.

g 73:3 Hebrew: *shalom*. Compare Job 21:1–34; Jer. 12:1–4.

h 73:6 They wanted to flaunt it arrogantly as a status symbol. Compare Isa. 3:16. Contrast Prov. 1:9; 3:3,22.

Their minds are always planning to do more evil.⁸ They make fun of others and speak with malice. They speak proudly of hurting others.⁹ They brag to the sky, and their mouths gossip on the earth.¹⁰ So, their people turn to them and give them whatever they want.^a ¹¹They say: “How can God know!?”^b What does the Most High God know!?”

¹²Listen, these people are evil. They are always carefree. And, they are getting richer and richer.¹³ So, have I kept my heart pure for nothing!?”^c Why have I kept my hands from doing wrong?¹⁴ O God, all day long I have suffered. I have been disciplined every morning.^d

¹⁵If I had decided to talk this way,^e then, listen, I would have

a 73:10 literally, “and the waters of a full (cup) is drained by them” = drinking the very last drop in the cup. Compare Isa. 51:17.

b 73:11 or, “God will not know.” They think that God will *not* intervene.

c 73:13 literally, “in vain” = What good did it do me!? What is the advantage of living a life of holiness? See Heb. 11:6. The author craved a meaningful purpose for his life. Things temporarily seemed to be upside-down in his mind.

d 73:14 literally, “And my chastening (was) at the mornings.” His life had been one of sacrifice, not material prosperity.

e 73:15 or, “If I had said: ‘I will speak thus and so.’” = to say such things; that is, academically, about wrongdoers prospering. But he had kept his doubts to himself.

let Your people down.¹⁶ I tried to understand all of this, but it was too much for me to comprehend,¹⁷ **until** I went to the Sanctuary of God!^f Then I understood what will happen to them.^g

¹⁸You have truly put them in danger. You cause them to be destroyed.¹⁹ They are destroyed in an instant. They are utterly swept away by terrors.²⁰ It will be like waking up from dreaming a dream. O Lord, You will dismiss their fantasies.^h ²¹When my heart was sour and I was bitter,ⁱ ²²I was stupid and ignorant. I was acting like an animal toward You.

²³Nevertheless, You are continually with me. You have held me by my right hand.²⁴ You guide me with Your advice. And, later, You will receive me into glory.²⁵ I have no one in heaven but You. And, besides You, I desire nothing on earth.²⁶ My

f 73:17 Compare Exo. 25:22; Ps. 5:7; 27:4. True spiritual enlightenment came to the tempted heart within the House of God.

g 73:17 Compare Ps. 37:37-38; Prov. 1:27; 29:1.

h 73:20 What the evil people thought was real will turn out to have been only a fantasy. Compare Ps. 39:6; Isa. 29:7.

i 73:21 literally, “and I was pierced (in) my kidneys.” = my deepest feelings

mind and my body may become weak, but **God** is my strength. He is mine forever!

²⁷Listen, those who are far from You, O God, will perish! You will destroy all those who are unfaithful to You.^a ²⁸But, as for me, how wonderful it is that I am close to God!^b I have made the Lord Yahweh my refuge. I will tell everybody all about everything You have done!^c

An Appeal to God

74¹A lesson of Asaph.
O God, why have You rejected us for so long!^d Will Your anger continue to smolder against us, the sheep of Your pasture! ²Remember Your congregation^e whom You acquired a long time ago. You redeemed us;^f we are Your very own.^g Remember Mount Zion, where You once resided. ³Pick Your

way through these everlasting ruins.^h The enemy wrecked everything in the Sanctuary.ⁱ

⁴The foe has shouted in triumph^j in Your holy meeting place. They raised their banners there as symbols of victory. ⁵They acted like woodsmen using their axes to cut down a bunch of small trees. ⁶They smashed her carved, wood panels^k with their hatchets and sledgehammers. ⁷They burned Your Sanctuary to the ground.^l They have defiled^m the holy place where Your Name once resided. ⁸They thought: “We will completely crush them!” They burned all the holy meeting places in the land. ⁹We do not see our sacred symbols. There are no prophets anymore.ⁿ And, no one knows how long this will last.^o

h 74:3 After 586 B.C. Solomon’s temple lay in ruins for what seemed like an eternity.

i 74:3 Perhaps this was an eye-witness account written by a Levite.

j 74:4 a war-cry

k 74:6 See 1 Kings 6:15,21,22,29.

l 74:7 by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 24:1-20; 25:9; 2 Chr. 36:19) in 586 B.C.

m 74:7 or, “polluted”; “contaminated” = desecration

n 74:9 that is, in Jerusalem or Judea. The prophet Jeremiah had been kidnapped and taken off to Egypt (Jer. 43:6-7). Compare also Lamentation 2:8-9. And, Ezekiel was already in Babylon. Later, God renewed His communication with His people through His post-exilic prophets—through Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

o 74:9 Perhaps Jeremiah’s prophecy (Jer. 25:11) was not yet generally known.

a 73:27 literally, “all those who were behaving like an adulteress against You” = promiscuity. Compare Jer. 3:1,3,8,9; 5:7; Ezek. 23:35,37; Matt. 12:39; 16:4; Rev. 2:22.

b 73:28 Compare James 4:8.

c 73:28 The author had moved full circle in this psalm—from skepticism to evangelism.

d 74:1 or, “pushed (us) aside forever!” This psalm was written when the Israelites were in exile from their homeland.

e 74:2 the Jewish nation. Compare Exo. 12:3; 16:1,2,9; Lev. 4:15; Num. 27:17.

f 74:2 from Egyptian bondage

g 74:2 literally, “to be the tribe (or, “the staff” = all Israel) of Your heritage” (Deut. 9:29).

10 O God, how much longer will the enemy make fun of You!? Will the foe insult Your Name forever!? 11 Why do You hold back Your power!? Bring Your full power out in the open.^a Strike^b them!

12 O God, You have been our King for a long, long time. You have saved this country. 13 You once split open the Red Sea by Your strength.^c On the waters, You broke the heads of the sea-monsters. 14 You smashed the heads of the monster, Leviathan.^d You gave his carcass to the desert creatures as food. 15 You opened up the springs and the streams.^e And, You made the powerful rivers run dry.^f 16 The day belongs to You; and, the night is Yours, too. You made the moon^g

and the sun.^h 17 You fixed all the boundaries on the earth.ⁱ You made summer and winter.^j

18 O Yahweh, remember how the enemy blasphemed You. Remember how those foolish people turned away from You. 19 Do not feed us, Your doves, to those wild animals. Never forget Your poor people! 20 Remember the covenant, because violence fills every nook and cranny^k of this land. 21 Don't let Your people who are beaten down be disgraced! The poor and needy people praise Your Name! 22 O God, get up and make Your own case! Remember the blasphemy that comes from those foolish people all day long. 23 Don't forget the sound of Your enemies! Don't forget that the noise of Your foes is always rising!

a 74:11 literally, "even Your right (hand), from the midst of Your bosom." = God's right hand appeared to be out of sight.

b 74:11 or, "consume"

c 74:13 See Exo. 14:10-31.

d 74:14 a legendary, many-headed monster which was a symbol of the forces of evil and chaos. The psalmist did *not* believe in this myth, but he knew that many people had heard of Leviathan. The vivid imagery continues with Rahab, which is Egypt (Job 9:13; 26:12-13; 41:1-34; Ps. 89:10; Isa. 51:9; Ezek. 29:3-5; 32:2-6). Here it refers to Pharaoh and his Egyptian army.

e 74:15 See Exo. 17:6; Num. 20:8.

f 74:15 referring to the divine stoppage of the Jordan River in Josh. 3:14-17

g 74:16 literally, "the light"

God will Judge Fairly

75¹ To the director of music. To be performed to the melody of: "Don't Destroy."¹ A psalm of Asaph. A song.^m

h 74:16 See Gen. 1:14-19.

i 74:17 Compare Acts 17:26.

j 74:17 Compare Gen. 1:14.

k 74:20 literally, "full of the dark places" = havens of paganism

l 75:1 Compare Moses' prayer in Deut. 9:26. See the titles of Psalm 57, Psalm 58; and Psalm 59 for different sets of emergencies.

m 75:1 Several scholars believe that it was

O God, we give thanks to You. We give thanks because You are^a near. People tell all about the wonderful things that You do.

²You say: “I set the time for trial.^b I will judge fairly.^c ³The earth with all its people may shake,^d but I am the One who holds its pillars steady. (Selah)

⁴I say to those who are proud: ‘Don’t brag!’ I say to the evil people, ‘Don’t show your power.^e ⁵Don’t try to use your power against Heaven or be stubborn!’^f

⁶No one from the east or the west or the desert can exalt you.^g

⁷No, **God** is the Judge; He judges one person as guilty, and judges

another person as innocent.^h The Always-Present One is holding a cup of anger in His hand.^h It is full of foamingⁱ wine, mixed with spices.^j He pours it out—even to the last drop. And, all the evil people of the earth must drink the very last of it.^k

⁹As for me, I will proclaim this forever. I will sing praises to the God of Jacob. ¹⁰He will take all the power away from the evil people. But the power of the good people will increase.

God Is the Winner

76¹To the director of music. With stringed instruments. A psalm of Asaph. A song.¹

The people in Judah know God. The people in Israel know that He is great.² He lives in Jerusalem.^m

composed about the time when the Assyrians threatened Jerusalem during Hezekiah’s reign (2 Kings 19:1-37; Isa. 37:1-38).

a 75:1 literally, “Your Name is”

b 75:2 Compare Acts 17:31.

c 75:2 in His own good time. God knows the best time to intervene.

d 75:3 or, “may come apart”. Literally, “is dissolving”. When it seems that the whole moral order of this world is about to collapse, God is still on His throne.

e 75:4 literally, “Don’t lift up (your) horn!” = boasting. This metaphor is taken from that of a bull threatening to charge. Horns symbolized strength and pride (Ps. 18:2; 89:17; 92:10; 112:9; 132:17; 148:14).

f 75:5 literally, “(or) speak with a stiff neck” = defiant insolence

g 75:6 literally, “Exaltations (are) not from the east, from the west, or from the desert.” = Human alliances cannot decide your fate; success is determined by God’s favor.

h 75:8 Compare Rev. 14:10; 18:6.

i 75:8 or, “fermented”

j 75:8 Certain spice-drugs increased the level of intoxication or potency.

k 75:8 literally, “must drain (= wring out) its dregs.” Wine was kept in wineskins. So, the wineskins would sometimes be squeezed to get every last bit of wine from them. The dregs are “the lees” or “the settlings” at the bottom of the cask, after the wine is completely drained off (Isa. 25:6). This constitutes the strongest part of the alcoholic mixture. The meaning is: The punishment which God had reserved for evil people would be totally exhausted.

l 76:1 This psalm was probably written to commemorate their dramatic deliverance from the Assyrians (701 B.C.) during the reign of King Hezekiah (2 Kings 19:1-37; Isa. 37:1-38). The Greek Septuagint (LXX) stated this in the title.

m 76:2 literally, “His tent is in Salem.” Compare Gen. 14:18; Heb. 7:1-2 for this ancient name of

His Home is on Mount Zion.
³There God broke the flaming arrows, the shields, the swords, and the weapons. (Selah)

⁴O God, how glorious You are! You are more majestic than the hills rich with wild game. ⁵The brave soldiers were stripped of everything they had, as they lay asleep in death. Not a single warrior could lift a finger to stop it. ⁶O God of Jacob, when You rebuked them, the horses and the drivers fell down dead. ⁷You should be feared! Who can stand in front of You when You are angry!? No one!^a ⁸You pronounced the judgment from heaven. And the earth was afraid and kept silent, ⁹when God stood up to make the decision to save all the afflicted people of the earth. (Selah)

¹⁰People will praise You for Your punishment of evil. Like an ornament, You wear the survivors of Your anger.

¹¹Keep your vows^b to Yahweh, your God. From all around

Jerusalem. The ark of the covenant was moved to Jerusalem by King David in 2 Sam. 6:17.

a 76:7 Compare Rev. 6:12-17.

b 76:11 or, “promises” (Deut 23:21-23) = acknowledging the sovereignty of God by offering tribute

Him, let them bring gifts to the God whom we worship. ¹²God defeats rebellious princes. The kings on earth fear Him.

God Is My Comfort

77¹To the director of music. According to Jeduthun.^c
 A psalm of Asaph.

I cry out loud to God for help. I call out loud to God, so that He may hear me. ²I look for the Lord on the day of my trouble. All night long, I reach out my hands without fatigue. I will not be comforted.

³Whenever I remember God, I become upset. When I meditate, I become discouraged. (Selah)

⁴O God, You keep my eyes from closing.^d I am too upset to say anything. ⁵I keep thinking about the old days, the years of long ago.^e ⁶At night, I remember my music. With my own heart, I meditate, asking myself:

⁷“Will the Lord reject us

c 77:1 See Ps. 39:1 and Ps. 62:1.

d 77:4 literally, “You seize the watches of my eyes.” = God kept the psalmist awake all night because of prayer vigils.

e 77:5 The psalmist was trying to bolster his faith and to calm his spirit by reflecting upon God’s timely help in the past.

forever!?! Won't He ever be kind to us again!?! ⁸Is His constant love gone forever!?! Has His promise failed for all time!?! ⁹Has God forgotten to be merciful!?! Or, is He too angry to show pity to us!?!” (Selah)

¹⁰Then I think: “This is what makes me very sad: For years, the power of God, the Most High, was with us.” ¹¹I remember the deeds of Yah. I certainly remember the miracles that You performed long ago. ¹²I think deeply about all the things You did. I meditate on what You have done.

¹³O God, Your ways are holy. No god is as great as our God! ¹⁴You are the one true God who performed miracles. You showed Your strength among the nations.

¹⁵By Your power, You have redeemed Your people, the descendants of Jacob and Joseph. (Selah)

¹⁶O God, the waters^a saw You. They saw You and became very afraid. Yes, the deep waters trembled with fear. ¹⁷The clouds

poured out their rain. The sky thundered. Yes, Your lightning-bolts flashed everywhere.^b ¹⁸The crash of Your thunder was in the storm. Lightning lit up the world. The earth trembled and shook. ¹⁹Your way went in the sea^c and Your path was in the deep waters, but Your footprints were not seen.

²⁰You led Your people like a flock of sheep. You used Moses and Aaron to lead them.

God and His People

78^d A lesson. By Asaph.^d
O my people, listen to my law. Listen to what I say. ²I will speak using comparisons. I will explain things that have been secret since long ago. ³We have heard them, and we know them. Our ancestors told them to us.^e ⁴We will not keep them from our children. To those who come later^f we will declare the praises of Yahweh. We will

b 77:17 See Exo. 19:16.

c 77:19 See Exo. 14:10-31.

d 78:1 See 1 Chr. 15:16-19; 15:4,5,7,37,41,42; 25:1ff. This psalm may have been written just prior to the split which occurred between Israel (ten tribes) and Judah (two tribes).

e 78:3 Compare Deut. 6:19-25; Josh. 4:6-7.

f 78:4 “to the following generation.” They were charged with faithfully handing down these historical truths to future generations. Each generation has this sacred duty. We are always just one generation away from apostasy.

a 77:16 the Red Sea and the Jordan River

tell about His power and His miracles that He has done. ⁵He gave laws for the people of Jacob. He set up the teachings in Israel. And, He commanded our ancestors to teach them to their children.^a ⁶Then their children would learn them, even their children who were not yet born. And, they will grow up and tell their children. ⁷So, they would all trust God. They would not forget the deeds that God had done. Instead, they would obey His commands. ⁸They would not be like their ancestors,^b who were stubborn and disobedient.^c Their hearts were not loyal. They were not true to God.

⁹The men of Ephraim^d had bows for weapons, but they ran away on the day of battle.^e ¹⁰They did not keep God's covenant. They refused to live by His teachings. ¹¹They forgot the deeds that He had done and

the miracles that He had shown them.^f ¹²He did miracles while their ancestors watched, in the region of Zoan,^g in the land of Egypt. ¹³He divided the Red Sea^h and led them through. He made the waters stand up like a wall. ¹⁴He led them with a cloud by day. And, He led them all night by the light of a fire.ⁱ ¹⁵He split open the rocks in the desert. And, He gave them much water, as though it were from the deep ocean. ¹⁶He brought streams out of rock. And, He caused water to flow down like rivers.^j

¹⁷Nevertheless, the people continued to sin against Him.^k In the desert, they turned against God, the Most High.^l ¹⁸They decided to test God^m by demanding the food that they craved. ¹⁹Then they spoke against God. They said: "Can God prepare food in the

a 78:5 See Exo. 10:2; 12:26-27; 13:8,14; Deut. 4:9; 6:6-9,20-21.

b 78:8 Compare Exo. 32:7-9; 33:3; 34:9; Acts 7:51-53.

c 78:8 literally, "a stubborn and rebellious generation" = ungovernable. Compare Deut. 32:5,20.

d 78:9 literally, "The sons of Ephraim". The most powerful of the ten tribes that broke away to form a separate nation called "Israel". "Ephraim" may be symbolic for *all* the northern tribes.

e 78:9 This might be referring to Judg. 12:1-6 or 1 Sam. 31:1-13.

f 78:11 See Exo. 7-17.

g 78:12 Zoan, also known as Tanis, was the capital of Egypt in Moses' day. It was located in the northeastern region of the Nile delta, near Goshen.

h 78:13 or, "the End Sea". See Exo. 14:1-15:21.

i 78:14 See Exo. 13:21; 14:24.

j 78:16 See Exo. 17:6; Num. 20:8,10,11. Compare 1 Cor. 10:4.

k 78:17 Compare Exo. 15:24; Deut. 9:22.

l 78:17 Hebrew: 'Elyon. See Gen. 14:18-20.

m 78:18 literally, "They tested God in their heart." See Exo. 16:2; 17:1-2.

wilderness!?” No.”²⁰ Suddenly, when He hit the rock, water poured out. Streams overflowed. They said, “But can He also give us bread!?”^a Will He provide His people with meat!?”^b ²¹ So, when Yahweh heard them, He was very angry.^c His fire broke out against the people of Jacob. His anger rose up against Israel. ²² Why? Because they had no faith in God. They did not trust Him to save them. ²³ Nevertheless, He gave a command to the clouds above. He opened the doors of heaven. ²⁴ He rained manna^d down upon them so that they could eat. He gave them the grain^e from heaven.^f ²⁵ So, man ate the bread of angels.^g He sent them all the food that they could eat. ²⁶ He sent the east wind in the skies. He led out the south wind by His power. ²⁷ He rained meat^h upon them like dust. The flying birds were as numerous as

the sands of the seas.²⁸ He made the birds fall inside their camp, all around their tents. ²⁹ So, the people ate and became very full. God had given them what they craved for. ³⁰ Before they had satisfied their cravingⁱ—while their food was still in their mouths—³¹ God became very angry with them. He killed some of the most vigorous of them. He struck down the best young men of Israel.

³² However, the people kept on sinning even more. Despite His miracles, they did **not** believe.^j ³³ So, He ended their days with meaninglessness,^k and their years in sudden terror. ³⁴ Whenever He killed some of them, the others would look to Him for help. They would come back to God and sincerely follow Him. ³⁵ They would remember that God was their Rock, that God, the Most High, was their

a 78:20 Hebrew: *lechem* = food

b 78:20 Compare Exo. 16:2-3; Num. 11:4.

c 78:21 See Num. 11:1,10.

d 78:24 God's gift of special food for the Israelites long journey through the desert. See Exo. 16:4,5,14ff; Num. 11:7-8.

e 78:24 Compare Exo. 16:31.

f 78:24 See John 6:31.

g 78:25 literally, “the strong ones” = nobles or princes. The Greek Septuagint (LXX) and the Latin Vulgate have “angels” (Ps. 103:20). Compare Ps. 105:40.

h 78:27 = the flesh of quails

i 78:30 literally, “They were not strangers to their desires.” = They were not separated from their unwarranted wishes. The Israelites did not restrain their intense lust for food beyond the manna which should have fully satisfied them. Instead, they indulged themselves to excess.

j 78:32 See Num. 14:11. Compare Mark 6:5-6; John 12:37.

k 78:33 literally, “So He consumed their days in emptiness.” This refers to their fruitless wanderings in the wilderness, which lasted for 38 years until the last of the old generation perished.

Redeemer. ³⁶But their words were false;^a their tongues lied to Him. ³⁷Their hearts were not really loyal to God. They did not keep His covenant. ³⁸Still, God was merciful. He did forgive their sins. He did **not** destroy them.^b He held back His anger many times. He did not stir up all His fury.^c ³⁹He remembered that they were only human.^d They were like a wind that blows by and does not come back.

⁴⁰They turned against God so often in the wilderness! They made Him very sad in the desert. ⁴¹Again and again, they tested God.^e They brought pain to^f the Holy One of Israel.^g ⁴²They did not remember His great power,^h or the time when He redeemed them from the enemy. ⁴³They forgot the signs

which He did in Egypt and His miracles in the region of Zoan. ⁴⁴He changed their rivers to blood.ⁱ So, no one could drink the water. ⁴⁵He sent swarms of biting flies against the Egyptian people.^j He also sent frogs that ruined them.^k ⁴⁶He gave their crops over to the grasshoppers,^l and what they worked for to locusts. ⁴⁷He killed their grapevines with hail,^m and their sycamore trees with sleet. ⁴⁸He surrendered their cattle to hail,ⁿ and their livestock to lightning-bolts. ⁴⁹He showed them His hot anger. He sent His fierce anger, indignation, and hostility against them. And, He sent a group of His destroying angels.^o ⁵⁰He found a way to show His anger. He did not prevent them from dying. He let them die by a terrible disease. ⁵¹He killed all the firstborn sons in Egypt,^p the oldest son of each family of

a 78:36 literally, "But they flattered Him with their mouth." = Their professions of true faith were false and hollow.

b 78:38 God spared them in spite of their repeated acts of rebellion.

c 78:38 See Exo. 32:14; Num. 14:20.

d 78:39 literally, "flesh" = prone to err; often liable to fall into temptation. Compare Ps. 103:14-16; Matt. 26:41.

e 78:41 See Num. 14:22.

f 78:41 literally, "provoked" = pushed the limits of God to see just how much they could get away with

g 78:41 Compare Deut. 1:19-23. The expression, "the Holy One of Israel" is very common in the Book of Isaiah.

h 78:42 literally, "His hand" = divine intervention. Generally, the Israelites did not realize that God was omnipotent.

i 78:44 See Exo. 7:20. There were other rivers and canals in Egypt besides the Nile.

j 78:45 See Exo. 8:24.

k 78:45 See Exo. 8:6.

l 78:46 or, "to the caterpillars". The Hebrew word means "devourer" (Joel 1:4; 2:25). See Exo. 10:12-14.

m 78:47 See Exo. 9:23.

n 78:48 See Exo. 9:25.

o 78:49 or, "messengers." See Exo. 11:4-5; 12:23,29,30; Heb. 11:28.

p 78:51 See Exo. 11:4-5; 12:29-30. The 3rd, 5th, 6th, and 9th plagues were not mentioned in this psalm.

Ham.^a ⁵²Then, like sheep, God led out His own people.^b Like a flock, He guided them through the wilderness. ⁵³He led them to safety; they had nothing to fear. However, their enemies drowned in the sea.^c ⁵⁴So, God brought them to His holy boundary. He brought them to the mountain country which He took by His own power. ⁵⁵He forced out the foreign nations ahead of them. And, He had His people inherit the land.^d He let the tribes of Israel settle there in tents.^e

⁵⁶But they tested God,^f and they turned against God, the Most High. They did **not** keep His rules. ⁵⁷They turned away and sinned just like their ancestors did. They were like a crooked bow that does not shoot straight.^g ⁵⁸They made God angry by

building high places to worship false gods.^h They made Him jealous with their idols. ⁵⁹When God heard them, He became very angry. And, He rejected the people of Israel completely. ⁶⁰He abandoned His dwelling place at Shiloh,ⁱ the tent where He lived among men.^j ⁶¹He allowed His Holy Chest^k to be captured.^l He permitted the Holy Chest, which was His glory,^m to be taken by enemies. ⁶²He allowed His people to be killed. He was very angry with His children. ⁶³The young men died by fire.ⁿ The virgins had no one to marry. ⁶⁴Their priests fell

h 78:58 These were the old pagan shrines to Baal worship which featured prostitutes as the main attraction. Instead of destroying these ancient sites, as God commanded, the Israelites patronized them. Compare Lev. 26:30; 1 Kings 3:2; 12:31-32; 2 Kings 17:32; 2 Chr. 33:17.

i 78:60 See the whole account in 1 Sam. 4:1-22. Shiloh had been a beacon for God's Word for about 400 years. It was in the territory of Ephraim, between Bethel and Shechem (Judg. 21:19), where the ark of the covenant had once been housed for centuries (see Judg. 18:31; 1 Sam. 1:3,24; 2:14; 3:21; 4:3,12; 14:3; 1 Kings 2:27).

j 78:60 Compare John 1:14.

k 78:61 literally, "His power". The ark of the covenant was the centerpiece of the Jewish worship of the true God. It contained the most sacred of items from the tabernacle. See Exo. 25:10-22.

l 78:61 See 1 Sam. 4:3-11.

m 78:61 "Glory" was the exact term that the wife of Phinehas used as she lay dying (1 Sam. 4:19-22). The ark of the covenant was the sign of the kingship of Israel's God and the focal point for the display of His power and His glory.

n 78:63 literally, "Fire devoured His young men." = They were victims of war. Compare Num. 21:28.

a 78:51 literally, "the first-fruits of the strength in the tents of Ham." One of Ham's sons was Mizraim (Gen. 10:6), the Hebrew name for "Egypt." The Hamitic people settled in Egypt (Ps. 105:23,27; 106:21-22).

b 78:52 God is the true Shepherd (Ps. 23:1-2).

c 78:53 literally, "But the sea covered their enemies." See Exo. 14:27-28; 15:10.

d 78:55 literally, "And He caused them to fall in the line of inheritance." Compare Josh. 13:7; 18:1ff; 19:1ff.

e 78:55 They ceased to be nomadic.

f 78:56 Compare Judg. 2:10-13.

g 78:57 literally, "They twisted like a deceitful bow." = They relapsed. This "bow" was defective; it was unreliable. Such a bow would cause an arrow to veer off target, making it worthless.

by the sword. But their widows were not permitted to cry.

⁶⁵Then the Lord got up as if He had been asleep. He woke up like a warrior who was drunk with wine. ⁶⁶He struck down His enemies.^a He disgraced them forever. ⁶⁷But God rejected the family of Joseph. He did not choose the tribe of Ephraim.^b ⁶⁸Instead, He chose the tribe of Judah,^c Mount Zion, which He dearly loves. ⁶⁹And, He built His Sanctuary high like the mountains. Like the earth, He built it to last forever.^d ⁷⁰He also chose David to be His servant.^e God took him from the sheep pens.^f ⁷¹He brought him from tending the female sheep

a 78:66 Compare 1 Sam. 5-6.

b 78:67 Joshua came from the tribe of Ephraim, but the matters got worse and worse until the time of Eli. The lack of spiritual leadership on the part of the Ephraimites, in whose territory the tabernacle at Shiloh lay, was undermining the entire nation of Israel. However, under David's leadership, the ark of the covenant was moved to Jerusalem.

c 78:68 Compare Gen. 49:8-10. God selected David as the new king and Jerusalem as His capital. See Ps. 132:1-18.

d 78:69 See Luke 1:30-33. Often in Scripture, the term "forever" merely means "a very long time". Even the earth is not eternal (Ps. 102:25-27; Heb. 1:10-12; 3:3-4; 2 Pet. 3:10-11).

e 78:70 See 1 Sam. 15:1-30. Like Moses, David was one of God's greatest servants because David completed the conquest of the Promised Land.

f 78:70 or, "folds of sheep." God transformed David from being a shepherd of Jesse's flock to being the shepherd of God's flock. See 1 Sam. 16:11; 2 Sam. 7:8.

and their young lambs, so that David could lead the flock, the people of Jacob. They are God's own people, Israel, His heritage. ⁷²And, David led them with a devoted heart. He guided them with skillful hands.

A Prayer for the Nation's Deliverance

79¹A psalm of Asaph.^g
O God, the foreign nations have invaded Your land.^h They have defiled Your holy temple.ⁱ They have turned Jerusalem into ruins. ²They have given the corpses of Your servants as food to the wild birds. They have given the bodies of Your loyal ones^j to the wild animals of the earth. ³They have poured out the people's blood like water, all around Jerusalem.^k No one remained to bury the dead people.^l ⁴We are a laughing-stock to the other

g 79:1 See 1 Chr. 15:16-19; 15:4,5,7,37,41,42; 25:1ff. This psalm was written when the Israelites were in exile from their homeland. The Jews recite this psalm on the 9th day of the Jewish month of Ab to commemorate the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians.

h 79:1 literally, "Your heritage" = the nation of Israel (Lev. 25:23)

i 79:1 Solomon's temple was completely destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. See 2 Kings 25:8-12; 2 Chr. 36:17-21; Jer. 52:12-24.

j 79:2 = God's pious ones (the Chasidim)

k 79:3 See 2 Kings 21:16.

l 79:3 Compare Jer. 15:3; 16:4.

nations.^a They sneer and make fun of us.^b

⁵O Yahweh, how much longer will this last!? Will You be angry forever!? Will Your jealousy continue to burn like a fire!?

⁶Pour out Your anger against the foreign nations that do not acknowledge You. Be angry with the kingdoms who do not honor You. ⁷Why? Because they have destroyed the people of Jacob. Those nations have devastated Israel's homeland. ⁸Don't punish us for the sins^c of our ancestors. Show Your mercy to us soon. We are helpless!

⁹O God of our salvation, help us, for the glory of Your Name. Deliver us and forgive our sins, for the sake of Your own honor.^d

¹⁰Why should the foreign nations ask: "Where is their God!?" Tell the other nations, in our presence, that You will punish those who murder Your servants. ¹¹Listen to the

moans of the prisoners. Use Your great power to preserve those who are sentenced to die.^e

¹²O Lord, pay back those around us seven times over for the insults that they have hurled at You.

¹³We are Your people, the sheep of Your pasture. We will always thank You. We will praise You forever and ever.

A Prayer for the Nation's Restoration

80¹To the director of music. According to "The Lilies of the Covenant."^f A psalm of Asaph.

O Shepherd of Israel, listen to us! You lead the people of Joseph like a flock. You sit on Your throne between the angel-cherubs.^g Show Your greatness ²to the tribes of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh.^h Use Your strength! Come to save us!

a 79:4 literally, "to our (foreign) neighbors." Because they regarded the fall of Jerusalem as certain proof that the God of the Jews was powerless to stop it.

b 79:4 Compare Ps. 44:13; Jer. 42:18; Lam. 2:15.

c 79:8 that is, the cumulative sins (2 Kings 17:7-23; 23:26-27; 24:3-4; Jer. 7:21-26; 32:17-18; Lam. 5:7; Dan. 9:4-16)

d 79:9 literally, "for Your Name's sake." Compare Matt. 6:9; John 12:28.

e 79:11 literally, "the sons of death." This refers to the Jews who would most probably die during the death march to Babylonian captivity.

f 80:1 literally, "Shoshannim-Eduth." This may have been a well-known melody. Some scholars think it was a spring festival tune.

g 80:1 See Exo. 25:18-22; 37:7; Heb. 9:5.

h 80:2 probably representing the northern part of the Jewish kingdom; all were offspring from Rachel. These were the tribes which marched next to the ark of the covenant (Num. 2:18-24; 10:21-24).

³O God, restore us. Show us Your kindness, so that we can be saved.

⁴O Yahweh, God of the armies of heaven, how long will You smolder at the prayers of Your people? ⁵You have fed Your people tears. You have caused them to drink many tears. ⁶You allow our neighboring countries to bicker over our land. Our enemies make fun of us.

⁷O God of the armies of heaven, restore us! Show us Your kindness, so that we can be saved.

⁸You brought us out of Egypt as though we were a grapevine.^a You forced out other ethnic groups and planted us in the land. ⁹You cleared the land for us! Like a vine, we took root and filled the land. ¹⁰We covered the mountains with our shade. We had limbs like mighty cedar trees. ¹¹Our branches reached the Mediterranean Sea. And, our shoots extended to the Euphrates River.^b

a 80:8 Compare Hos. 10:1; 14:1; Mic. 7:1; Isa. 3:14; 5:1-7; 27:2; Jer. 2:21; 12:10; Ezek. 15:6; 17:6-8.

b 80:11 During King Solomon's reign, the borders of his kingdom extended from the sea all the way to the Euphrates River (1 Kings 4:21,24).

¹²So, why did You pull down our walls? Now everyone who passes by steals grapes from us. ¹³Like a wild pig out of the forest, they trample us. Like wild animals, they feed on us. ¹⁴O God of the armies of heaven, please come back! Look down from heaven and see! Take care of us, Your vine. ¹⁵You planted this shoot with Your very own hands. You raised up this child for Yourself.

¹⁶Now it is cut down and burned with fire. You destroyed them by Your angry looks. ¹⁷Help the man whom You have chosen, this human being whom You have raised up for Yourself. ¹⁸Then we will not turn away from You. Give us life once again, and we will call to You for help. ¹⁹O Yahweh, God of the armies of heaven, restore us! Show us Your kindness, so that we can be saved.

A Song for a Feast

81¹To the director of music. To be performed on the Gittith.^c

A psalm of Asaph.

Sing out loud to God, our Strength. Shout for joy to the God of Jacob. ²Start the music.

c 81:1 is a musical instrument

Use the tambourine. Play pleasant music on the harp with the lyre.

³Blow the ram's horn at the time of the New Moon. Blow it when the moon is full, on the day of our festival.^a ⁴This is a law for Israel.^b It is God's command to the people of Jacob. ⁵He made it a decree among the people of Joseph when He went out against the land of Egypt. I heard a Voice that I did not recognize. It said:

⁶"I took the load off your shoulders.^c I allowed you to put down your baskets of bricks. ⁷When you were in trouble, you called out, and I rescued you.^d I answered you in a thundercloud.^e I tested you at the waters of Meribah.^f (Selah)

⁸My people, listen! I am warning

you! O Israel, please listen to me!^g ⁹You must **not** have any unauthorized gods among you! You must **never** worship any foreign god. ¹⁰I am Yahweh, your God, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.^h Open your mouth, and I will feed you.ⁱ

¹¹"But My people would not listen to Me. Israel did not want Me. ¹²So, I let them go on their stubborn way.^j They followed their own advice.^k ¹³How I wish My own people would listen to Me! If only Israel would live by My ways! ¹⁴Then I would quickly defeat their enemies. I would turn My hand against their foes. ¹⁵Those who hate Me^l would cringe in My presence. Their punishment would continue forever. ¹⁶But I would feed you with the best wheat. I would satisfy you with honey from the rocks."^m

a 81:3 This might be referring to the Feast of Tabernacles (or, the Festival of Huts), in the 7th Jewish month, when the moon would be full (Lev. 23:33-36).

b 81:4 Every 7th year, at the Feast of Tabernacles, the covenant law was supposed to be read to all the people (Deut. 31:9-13; Neh. 8:2,15).

c 81:6 This was referring to the forced labor of the Israelites in Egypt (Exo. 1:11-14).

d 81:7 See Exo. 3:7-10.

e 81:7 literally, "in the secret place of thunder." Compare Exo. 14:21,24; 15:6,10; 19:16-18; 20:18-20; Ps. 106:9.

f 81:7 See Exo. 17:1-7.

g 81:8 Compare Matt. 23:37-39.

h 81:10 See Exo. 19:4-5; 20:2-4; Deut. 4:15-20.

i 81:10 literally, "and I will fill it." This imagery is that of a nest of tiny birds opening their mouths to be fed by one of their parents. Compare Deut. 11:13-15; 28:1-4.

j 81:12 literally, "I gave him up to the hardness (= obstinacy) of their heart." Compare Rom. 1:24,26,28.

k 81:12 Compare Deut. 29:18; Prov. 1:30; Acts 7:42; Rom. 11:25.

l 81:15 literally, "Yahweh"

m 81:16 = wild honey. Compare Deut. 32:13-14. This a poetic exaggeration to show great abundance.

God Is in Control

82¹A psalm of Asaph.
 God is in charge of the great gathering of His people.^a He judges the judges.^b

²He says: “How much longer will you continue to pronounce unjust decisions in favor of evil people!?”^c How much longer will you go on showing partiality to the evil people!?”^d (Selah)

³“Defend the orphans and the weak individuals. Defend the rights of the poor and suffering people.”⁴Rescue the poor and needy people.^e Deliver them from the power of the evil people.

⁵“You^f don’t know anything. You don’t understand. You walk

a 82:1 Compare Exo. 12:3,6,19,47; 16:1; Lev. 4:13; Num. 16:9; 27:17; 31:16; 32:4; Deut. 1:17; Josh. 22:16-18,20; 2 Chr. 19:6-7.

b 82:1 Hebrew: *’elohim*. See Exo. 21:6; 22:7-9,28. Compare 1 Sam. 8:3; Mic. 3:1-3; 7:3; Amos 2:6; 8:6; Isa. 1:16-17; 3:13-15; Jer. 21:12; 22:3; Ezek. 34:4,21; Zeph. 3:3. God holds the human judges responsible to Himself. The one true God is the ultimate Authority. Compare Rom. 13:1,2,9.

c 82:2 Compare Isa. 1:23; 3:13-15; Jer. 22:1-5,13-17; Amos 5:10-13,24; 6:12; Mic. 2:1-11; 3:1-4,9-12.

d 82:2 literally, “to lift up the faces of the evil people”. God shows no favoritism (Acts 10:34; Rom. 2:11; 1 Pet. 1:17).

e 82:4 Compare Deut. 14:28-29; 16:11,12,14; 24:19-22; 26:12-15; 27:19; Isa. 1:16-17; Jer. 7:5-7; Ezek. 22:9; Zech. 7:8-14.

f 82:5 or, “They”, referring to the corrupt Jewish judges

in the dark,^g while the world is falling apart.

⁶I said that you are gods.^h You are all sons of the Most High God. ⁷But you people will die like any other person. You will expire like any of the leaders.”

⁸O God, please get up and judge the world! Why? Because all the nations belong to You.

Defeat Them, O God!

83¹A song. A psalm of Asaph.ⁱ
 O God, do not keep quiet. O God, do not be silent or be still.²Why? Because, look, Your enemies are becoming active. Those who hate You are getting ready to attack. ³They are making crafty plans against Your people.^j They conspire to harm those whom You protect. ⁴They claim: “Come on, let’s

g 82:5 = moral corruption. See John 1:5; 3:19-21; 8:12; 12:35,46; 1 John 1:5-6; 2:8,9,11.

h 82:6 Hebrew: *’elohim* = judges. This means that God had conferred upon these men a title which showed their nearness to Almighty God. Therefore, their legal decisions should reflect that great honor which was bestowed upon them. See John 10:34-35. These were *human* judges sitting in God’s place, as His representatives on earth, exercising judgment (Exo. 21:6; 22:7-9).

i 83:1 See 1 Chr. 15:16-19; 15:4,5,7,37,41,42; 25:1ff. Many scholars believe that this psalm was written about the time of 2 Chr. 20, when the Moabites, the Ammonites, the Edomites, and their allies were overrunning the kingdom of Judah.

j 83:3 Compare Balaam in Num. 24-26; 31:16.

wipe them out as a nation! Then no one will remember the name 'Israel' anymore!"

⁵These enemies are united in their plot. These people have made a pact against You: ⁶the families of Edom; and the Ishmaelites; Moab and the Hagrites;^a ⁷the people of Gebal;^b Ammon; Amalek; Philistia; and the inhabitants of Tyre.^c ⁸Even Assyria has joined them to help the Ammonites and the Moabites, the descendants of Lot.^d (Selah)

⁹O God, do to those people what You did to Midian.^e Do what You did to Sisera and to Jabin at the Kishon River. ¹⁰They died at Endor.^f Their corpses rotted on the ground. ¹¹Do to their important leaders what You did to Oreb and Zeeb.^g Do to all their princes what You did to Zebah and Zalmunna.^h ¹²They said: "Let us take for ourselves the pasture-lands that belong to God!"

a 83:6 = Arabs, descendants of Hagar (Gen. 16:1; 25:12)

b 83:7 = Byblos, an important Phoenician city? (1 Kings 5:18; Ezek. 27:9)

c 83:7 This was the capital city of Phoenicia.

d 83:8 See Gen. 19:36-38.

e 83:9 See Judg. 7:1ff.

f 83:10 See Josh. 17:11; 1 Sam. 28:7.

g 83:11 See Judg. 7:23-25; 8:3.

h 83:11 See Judg. 8:4-21.

¹³My God, make them like the tumbleweed, like chaff blown away by the wind. ¹⁴Be like a fire that burns a forest or like flames that blaze through the hills. ¹⁵So, chase them with Your storm. Scare them with Your tornado. ¹⁶Cover them with shame. Then people will look for You, O Yahweh.

¹⁷Make them afraid and ashamed forever. Disgrace them. Destroy them. ¹⁸Then they will **know** that You are Yahweh.ⁱ They will **know** that You alone are God, the Most High, over all the earth!

Yearning for God's House

84¹To the director of music. To be performed on the Gittith.^j For the sons of Korah. A psalm.^k

O Yahweh of the armies of heaven, how lovely is Your dwelling-place!^l ²I really want to be there in the courtyards of

i 83:18 or, "that Your Name (is) Yahweh"; the Ever-Existent One, the only One to whom the Name could belong (Exo. 6:3).

j 84:1 = a musical instrument

k 84:1 Hebrew: *mizmor*. Compare the close similarity of this psalm to Psalm 42.

l 84:1 Hebrew: *mishkan*. This was originally the sacred tent of God, the tabernacle. This movable tent-temple was constructed for holy service to God, according to the "pattern" which God Himself showed to Moses on Mount Sinai (Exo. 25:9; Heb. 8:5).

Yahweh. My whole being shouts for joy to the living God!

³Even the sparrow has found himself a home.^a And, the swallow has a nest for herself, where she may raise her young ones near Your altars, O Yahweh of the armies of heaven, my King and my God. ⁴Happy are those who dwell in Your House.^b They are always praising You. (Selah)

⁵Happy is the person whose strength is in You. Such an individual truly wants to go on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. ⁶As they pass through the Valley of Baca,^c they make it like a spring. The autumn rains fill it with pools of water. ⁷These people get stronger as they go onward.^d Finally, all of them appear in

a 84:3 Small birds had found a way to build their nests in the crevices and small niches in the temple area. They had managed to find a place of peace and security for themselves. The psalmist craved the same thing. Compare Luke 9:58.

b 84:4 that is, the priests and Levites who lived in the vicinity of the temple area.

c 84:6 literally, “the Valley of Weeping,” = a period of sorrow. It could possibly be referring to balsam trees which were prevalent in the dry regions. These trees seemed to distill “tears”.

d 84:7 literally, “They go from strength to strength.” It was similar to the feelings that the expectant forefathers felt when they too endured hardship during their wanderings in the desert before entering into the Promised Land. Later, the returning Jewish exiles felt a sense of exhilaration as they approached Jerusalem after many years.

God’s presence in Jerusalem.

⁸O Yahweh, God of the armies of heaven, hear my prayer! O God of Jacob, listen to me! (Selah)

⁹O God, behold our shield! Look upon Your anointed king.

¹⁰One day in the courtyards of Your dwelling-place is better than one thousand days anywhere else! I would rather be a door-keeper in my God’s House than to dwell in the homes of sin. ¹¹Why? Because Yahweh God is like our Sun and Shield. Yahweh gives us favor and glory. He does not hold back anything good from those whose lives are righteous.

¹²O Yahweh of the armies of heaven, happy is the person who trusts in You!

A Prayer for Mercy

85¹To the director of music. For the sons of Korah. A psalm.^e

O Yahweh, You have been kind to Your land. You have restored the prosperity of the people of Jacob. ²You forgave the guilt of

e 85:1 Hebrew: *mizmor*. This psalm was written soon after the return of the Jews from Babylonian captivity.

Your people. You pardoned all their sins. (Selah)

³You set aside all Your anger. You turned away from Your fury. ⁴O God of our salvation, bring us back again. Please stop being angry with us! ⁵Will You be angry with us forever!? Will You prolong Your anger for all generations? ⁶Won't You revive us again!? If so, Your people would rejoice in You. ⁷O Yahweh, show us Your constant love. And, grant Your salvation to us.

⁸I will listen to what the one true God, Yahweh, says. He has promised peace to His people and to those who are loyal to Him. But let them not go back to foolishness! ⁹Surely God will soon save those who revere Him. And, His splendor will dwell in our land. ¹⁰Constant love and truth will meet together. Righteousness and peace will kiss. ¹¹Truth will spring up from the ground. And, righteousness will look down from the sky. ¹²Yes, Yahweh will give His goodness. And, our land will produce its crops. ¹³Righteousness will go ahead

of God and will prepare the way for Him.

A Prayer for Help

86¹A prayer^a of David.
O Yahweh, listen to me and please answer me! I am poor and in need. ²Protect me, because I am loyal to You. My God, save me, Your servant. I trust in You. ³O Lord, be merciful to me. Why? Because I have called out to You all day. ⁴Bring joy to me, Your servant. O Lord, I give my life to You.

⁵You are forgiving and good, O Lord. You have great love for all those who pray to You. ⁶O Yahweh, hear my prayer! Please listen when I ask for mercy! ⁷I call to You in times of trouble, because You **will** answer me.

⁸O Lord, there is no god like You. There are no deeds like Yours. ⁹O Lord, all the nations which You have made will come and worship in Your presence. They will honor You. ¹⁰You are great, and You do miracles. You are the only God!

¹¹O Yahweh, teach me what You want me to do. And, I will live by

^a 86:1 Hebrew: *tepilah*

Your truth. Unite my heart to revere Your Name. ¹²O Lord, my God, I will thank You with all my heart. I will honor Your Name forever. ¹³You have great love for me. You have delivered me from the depths of death.

¹⁴O God, arrogant men have risen up against me. A gang of cruel men are trying to kill me. They do **not** revere You.

¹⁵But You, O Lord, are a God who shows mercy and who is kind. You don't become angry quickly. You have great love and faithfulness. ¹⁶Please turn to me and be merciful. Give me, Your servant, strength. Save me, the son of Your female servant.^a

¹⁷Show me a sign of Your goodness. When my enemies see it, they will be ashamed. Why? Because You, O Yahweh, have helped me and comforted me.

Zion

87¹For the sons of Korah. A psalm. A song.

Yahweh built Jerusalem upon the holy mountains.^b ²Yahweh

a 86:16 David's mother

b 87:1 literally, "His foundation (is) on the holy mountains." Jerusalem itself is surrounded by hills, and within the city there were four hills—Zion, Moriah, Acra, and Bezethah. See Ps. 78:69; Isa. 14:32.

loves the gates of Zion more than any other place in Israel. ³O city of the one true God, wonderful things are being said about You. (Selah)

⁴God says: "I will include Egypt and Babylonia^c on the list of nations that acknowledge Me.^d Look, people from Philistia, Tyre, and Ethiopia will say: 'This one was born in Jerusalem!'"

⁵They will say about Jerusalem: "This one and that one were born there. God, the Most High, will strengthen her." ⁶Yahweh will write in the register of the nations: "This person was born there." (Selah)

⁷Singers and musicians will say: "All good things come from Jerusalem."

A Prayer for Deliverance from Death

88¹A song. A psalm for the sons of Korah. To the director of music. On Mahalath-Leannoth.^e A lesson of Heman the Ezrahite.^f

c 87:4 The fact that Assyria is not mentioned here might mean that the psalm was written after 612 B.C., when the city of Nineveh fell to the Babylonians.

d 87:4 These were probably non-Jewish converts (= proselytes) to monotheism. Compare Eph. 2:19.

e 88:1 It might mean: "something to be said concerning sickness."

f 88:1 Compare 1 Chr. 6:33-38.

O Yahweh, You are the God of my salvation. I cry out to You day and night. ²Please accept my prayer. Listen to my cry for help.

³My life is full of troubles. I'm almost dead.^a ⁴Some people think that I've already got one foot in the grave.^b I am like a man who has no strength. ⁵I've been left for dead, like a victim lying in a grave. You don't think about dead people anymore. They are cut off from Your care.

⁶You have brought me close to death in the deep, dark places. ⁷You have been very angry with me. And, You have overwhelmed me with all Your waves. (Selah)

⁸You have taken my friends away from me. You have caused them to avoid me. I am trapped, and I can't escape. ⁹My eyes are weak from crying.

O Yahweh, I have prayed to You every day. I have lifted up my hands in prayer to You. ¹⁰Do You show Your miracles to dead people!?

No. Do their departed spirits rise up and thank You!? No. (Selah)

¹¹Will Your constant love be proclaimed in the grave!? No. Will Your loyalty be told within the place of death?^c No. ¹²Will Your miracles be known in the darkness!? No. Will Your righteousness be known in the land where dead people are forgotten!? No.

¹³But, O Yahweh, I have cried out to You for help. I pray to You in the morning. ¹⁴O Yahweh, why do You reject me? Why do You hide Your face from me?

¹⁵Ever since I was young, I have often been weak and close to death. I have suffered from Your terrors. I am in despair. ¹⁶Your rage has swept over me. I am shattered by your dreaded attacks. ¹⁷All day long, they engulf me like a flood. They completely surround me. ¹⁸You have taken my loved ones and friends away from me. You have banished my acquaintances into darkness.

a 88:3 literally, "And, my life is close to Sheol" (= Hades).

b 88:4 literally, "I am classed among those who go down to the pit" (= death).

c 88:11 Hebrew: 'Abaddon, which means "in ruins"; it is a Hebrew synonym for She'ol. Compare Job 26:6; Prov. 15:11; 27:20; Rev. 9:11.

God's Covenant with David

89¹A lesson of Ethan the Ezrahite.^a

I will always sing about Yahweh's constant love. I will tell of His loyalty from now on. ²I will declare: "Your constant love stands firm forever. Your loyalty continues like the sky."

³You said: "I made a covenant with the man of My choice. I made a promise to My servant David. ⁴I once told him this: 'I will cause your family to continue forever.'^b Your kingdom will last from now on.'" (Selah)

⁵O Yahweh, the heavens praise You for Your miracles and for Your loyalty in the assembly of Your holy ones. ⁶Who in heaven is equal to Yahweh!? No one. None of the angels is like Yahweh. ⁷When the holy ones meet, it is **God** whom they greatly fear. God is more awesome than all those who surround Him. ⁸O Yahweh, God of the armies of

heaven, who is strong like You!? No one. O Yah, Your loyalty is all around You.

⁹You rule over the raging sea. You calm the stormy waves. ¹⁰You crushed Rahab^c like a carcass. By Your power, You scattered Your enemies.^d ¹¹The skies and the earth belong to You. You made the world and everything in it.^e ¹²You created the north and the south. Mount Tabor and Mount Hermon^f sing for joy at the very mention of Your Name. ¹³Your arm possesses great power. Your hand is strong. Your right hand is lifted up.

¹⁴Your kingdom is built on what is right and fair. Constant love and truth accompany all You do. ¹⁵Happy are the people who know how to praise You. O Yahweh, let them live in the light of Your presence. ¹⁶They rejoice in Your Name all the time. They extol Your righteousness. ¹⁷Why? Because You are the

a 89:1 Compare 1 Chr. 15:19.

b 89:4 2 Sam. 7:1-17 stated that a descendant of David would always be king. It was conditional (1 Kings 2:4). Jesus Christ is the perfect fulfillment of that prophecy (Luke 1:30-33). God has indeed raised up David's "kingdom," but it is spiritual in nature, not political (Amos 9:11-12; Acts 15:16-17). All nations are being blessed by the Branch of David (= the Messiah). See Isa. 11:1-3,10; Acts 13:23; Rom. 15:12.

c 89:10 = Egypt; that is, at the exodus of God's people. Rahab was probably another name for "Leviathan" (Ps. 74:14; 104:26). Tiamat (=Rahab) was the name of a mythical, chaotic, Babylonian sea-monster. See Job 9:13; 26:12.

d 89:10 Compare Deut. 5:15; 7:8,19.

e 89:11 See Ps. 24:1-2.

f 89:12 These were prominent mountains in Palestine. Mount Tabor is about 1,900 feet high, and Mount Hermon is more than 9,000 feet high.

Glory of their strength. In Your kindness, You honor our king. ¹⁸Our shield^a belongs to Yahweh. Our king belongs to the Holy One of Israel.

God's Promise to King David

¹⁹Once in a vision, You spoke to Your holy ones. You said: "I have given strength to a warrior. I have selected a young man from among My people."^b ²⁰I have found My servant, David. I anointed^c him by pouring my holy oil on him.^d ²¹I will steady him with My hand. I will also strengthen him with My arm. ²²No enemy will make him give forced payments. Evil people^e will not defeat him. ²³I will crush his enemies ahead of him. I will strike down those who hate him. ²⁴My loyalty and My constant love will be with him. Through Me, he will be strong. ²⁵I will give him power over the sea and control over the rivers. ²⁶He will call out to Me: "You are my heavenly Father, my God and the Rock of my salvation."

a 89:18 the current Jewish king

b 89:19 See 1 Sam. 16:1-6.

c 89:20 Officially rubbing David with oil signified God's selection of him to be king, as well as preparing David with divine guidance. See 1 Sam. 2:10; 12:3; 24:6; 26:9,11,16; 2 Sam. 1:14,16; 19:21; 22:51; 23:1; Ps. 2:6; Zech. 4:14.

d 89:20 See 1 Sam. 16:13; Acts 13:22.

e 89:22 literally, "The son of sin"

²⁷I will appoint him my firstborn son. He will be the greatest king on earth.^f ²⁸My constant love will watch over him forever. My covenant with him will never end.^g ²⁹I will cause his family to continue. His kingdom will last as long as the skies.

³⁰"But his descendants might reject My teachings and not follow My rules. ³¹They might break My laws and disobey My commands. ³²Then I will punish their rebellion with a rod, and their wrongs with a whip. ³³But I will not hold back My constant love from David. I will not stop being loyal to him. ³⁴I will not break My covenant. I will not change what I have said. ³⁵By My holiness, I have sworn once for all—I will never lie to David. ³⁶His family will continue forever. And, his kingdom will endure before Me like the sun. ³⁷It will last forever, like the moon—that faithful witness in the sky." (Selah)

³⁸But now, You have rejected

f 89:27 literally, "the highest of the kings of the earth." Jesus, the Son of David (Matt. 1:1), is the King of kings and Lord of lords (1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 1:5; 17:14; 19:16).

g 89:28 literally, "will stand firm for him." See 2 Sam. 7:13-16; 23:5.

and spurned Your king. You have been angry with Your anointed one. ³⁹You have broken the covenant with Your servant. You threw his crown to the ground. ⁴⁰You have torn down all his city walls. You have turned his strong, walled cities into ruins. ⁴¹Everyone who passes by steals from him. His neighbors insult him. ⁴²You have given victory to his enemies. You have made all of his enemies happy. ⁴³You have made his sword useless. You did not help him stand in battle. ⁴⁴You have put an end to his splendor. You hurled his throne to the ground. ⁴⁵You have cut his life short.^a You have covered him with shame. (Selah)

⁴⁶O Yahweh, how long will this go on!?^b Will You ignore us forever!? How long will Your anger burn like a fire!? ⁴⁷Remember how short my life is! Why did You create all of us for emptiness!?^c ⁴⁸What man who is alive will not die!? No one. Can he escape the grave!? No. (Selah)

a 89:45 literally, “You have shortened the days of his youth.” This might be referring to King Jehoiachin who was only 18 years old when he was carried away to Babylon captive. Ten years later, Judah ceased to exist as a kingdom altogether.

b 89:46 The psalmist is pleading for the restoration of a Davidic king.

⁴⁹O Lord, where is Your constant love from times past? You promised it to David with loyalty. ⁵⁰O Lord, don’t forget how they insulted Your servant. Remember how I have suffered the insults of the nations. ⁵¹O Yahweh, remember how Your enemies insulted Your king! Remember how they insulted Your anointed one wherever he went.

⁵²Praise Yahweh forever! Amen and amen!

BOOK FOUR (Psalms 90–106):

The Psalm of Moses

90¹A prayer of Moses,^c the man of the one true God.^d
O Lord, You have been our Home since the beginning.²You were already God^e—before the mountains were born and before You gave birth to the earth and the universe! You have always been, and You will always be.^f

c 90:1 Compare Exo. 15; Deut. 32.

d 90:1 Compare Deut. 33:1; Josh. 14:6; Ezra 3:2.

e 90:2 The universe is not without a Sovereign Being. It is not the product of chance. It is not merely subject to blind laws of physics. It is not under the control of evil. Anarchy cannot prevail. No, the entire universe is under the government of God who is a wise, holy, intelligent, just, benevolent Supreme Being. And, He rules it well; He is presiding over His eternal plan.

f 90:2 literally, “even from everlasting to everlasting”; that is, stretching backward in time

³You turn people back into dust.^a You say: “Go back, O human beings!”⁴To You, 1,000 years is like the passing of a day. It passes like one hour in the night.⁵You take our lives; they are just like a dream. We are merely like the grass that sprouts up in the morning.⁶Though it may sprout and flourish in the morning, it will dry up and die by nightfall!

⁷We are destroyed by Your anger.^b We are terrified by Your hot anger.⁸You have put the evil that we have done in front of You. You clearly see our secret sins.⁹All of our days pine away while You are angry. Our years end with a moan.^c¹⁰Our lifetime is 70 years. If we are strong, then we might live to be 80 years old. But those years are full of hard work and pain. They pass quickly, and then we are gone.

¹¹Who knows the full power of Your anger!? No one. Your fury is as great as the respect that You

without limit to duration and stretching forward in time without limit to duration; from eternal ages to eternal ages. See Exo. 3:14; 6:3; Job 11:7; Isa. 44:6,8; 46:9; John 8:58; Rev. 1:4,8,17; 4:8.

a 90:3 = death. See Gen. 2:7; 3:19; Eccl. 12:7.

b 90:7 The events reflected in Ps. 90:7-12 may have occurred in the latter months of the wanderings of the Israelites in the desert (Num. 21:14-23).

c 90:9 literally, “We finish our years like a sigh.” = There’s no permanency.

deserve.¹²Teach us how short our lives really are,^d so that we may be wise.

¹³O Yahweh, how long will it be before You return and show kindness to Your servants?¹⁴Fill us with Your constant love in the morning. Then we will rejoice and be glad all of our lives.¹⁵We have seen years of trouble. Now give us joy, just as You gave us sorrow.¹⁶Show us, Your servants, the wonderful things that You do. Show Your greatness to their children.

¹⁷O Lord our God, be pleased with us. Give us success in whatever we do. Yes, give us success in everything!

In God’s Care

91¹Those who go to the Most High for safety will be protected by God Almighty.²I will say to Yahweh: “You are my Place of Safety and my Fortress. You are my God, and I trust in You!”

³God will save you from hidden traps and from deadly diseases.

⁴He will protect you as a bird spreads its wings over its young

d 90:12 literally, “Teach (us) to number our days,”

ones. His truth will be like a shield or a city wall. ⁵You will not fear any terrorist attack at night, or an enemy's arrow that is shot during the day. ⁶You will not be afraid of diseases that come in the dark, or a sickness that strikes at noon. ⁷At your side, 1,000 people may die, or even 10,000 right beside you, but **you** will not be hurt! ⁸You will only watch what happens. You will see the evil people punished.

⁹The Always-Present One is your Protection. You have made God, the Most High, your Home. ¹⁰Nothing bad will happen to you. No disaster will come near your home. ¹¹God will command His angels to take care of you. They will watch over you wherever you go. ¹²Their hands will catch you, so that you will not hit your foot against a rock.^a ¹³You will walk on lions and cobras. You will step on fierce lions and poisonous snakes.^b ¹⁴The Always-Present One says: "If someone loves me, then I will rescue him. I will protect those who acknowledge Me. ¹⁵They will call out to Me, and I will

answer them. I will be with them in times of trouble. I will deliver them and honor them. ¹⁶I will reward them with a long, full life. They will see how I can save."

God's Goodness

92¹A psalm. A song. For the sabbath day.

It is good to give thanks to Yahweh, and to sing praises to Your Name, O Most High God. ²It is good to proclaim Your constant love each morning and Your loyalty every night. ³It is good to praise You with the ten-stringed lyre^c and by the melody of the harp.

⁴O Yahweh, You have made me happy by what You have done. I will sing for joy about what Your hands have accomplished. ⁵O Yahweh, You have accomplished such great things! Your thoughts are so deep! ⁶Stupid people^d do not know these things. Fools don't understand this. ⁷Evil people spring up like the grass. All the wrongdoers seem to flourish. But they will be forever doomed.

a 91:12 See Matt. 4:6; Luke 4:10-11.

b 91:13 without any harm coming to you. Compare Mark 16:18; Acts 28:3-6.

c 92:3 a common, stringed instrument

d 92:6 literally, "A man without sense"

⁸Nevertheless, **You**, O Yahweh, will be honored forever.

⁹Why? Because, look, O Yahweh, Your enemies — look, Your enemies will surely perish. All who do evil will be scattered. ¹⁰But You have made me as strong as a wild ox. You have poured fine oils upon me. ¹¹When I looked, I saw the downfall of my enemies. I heard the cries of those who are trying to do me harm.

¹²Nevertheless, righteous people will flourish like palm trees. They will grow tall like the cedar trees of Lebanon. ¹³They will become like trees planted near the House of Yahweh. They will flourish in the courtyards of our God. ¹⁴When these trees become old, they will still be producing fruit. They will be healthy^a and fresh ¹⁵to show that Yahweh is morally good. He is my Rock,^b and there is no wrong in Him.

God's Majesty

93¹Yahweh is King! He is clothed with majesty. The Always-Present One is clothed. He dresses Himself with

strength. Yes, the world is firmly established; it cannot be moved. ²O God, Your kingdom was set up long ago. You have always existed from all eternity.

³O Yahweh, the seas rise up.^c The seas raise their voice. The seas lift up their roaring waves. ⁴The sound of the water is loud. The ocean waves are powerful. But Yahweh above is much greater.

⁵O Yahweh, Your laws are very solid. Your House will be holy forever!

God Is the Judge of Everyone

94¹O Yahweh, You God of vengeance, You God of vengeance,^d get revenge! ²Rise up, O Judge of the earth.^e Give back to the proud ones what they deserve to receive.^f ³How much longer will the evil people be happy!?! How much longer, O Yahweh!?

⁴They pour out, they utter arrogant words. They brag, all those evildoers. ⁵O Yahweh,

c 93:3 This might be referring to world powers (Isa. 8:5-8). It could also be a figure for distress (Ps. 38:4; 46:1-3; 66:12; 69:1-2,13-15; 79:3; 88:17).

d 94:1 Compare Rom. 12:19.

e 94:2 See Gen. 18:25.

f 94:2 See Deut. 32:35.

a 92:14 literally, "fat" = full of sap

b 92:15 = Protector

they crush Your people. They cause those who belong to You to suffer. ⁶They kill widows and foreigners. They murder orphans. ⁷Yet they say: “Yah does **not** see us. The God of Jacob doesn’t even notice.”

⁸You foolish ones among the people, pay attention! You fools, when will you understand!?

⁹Can’t the One who created ears hear!? Yes, of course. Or, can’t the One who formed eyes see!? Yes. ¹⁰Won’t the One who corrects nations punish people!? Yes. Doesn’t God, the Teacher of all men, know everything!? Yes. ¹¹The Always-Present One knows what people think. He knows how worthless their thoughts are.^a

¹²O Yah, those whom You correct are happy.^b O God, You teach them Your teachings.

¹³You give them rest from times of trouble, until a grave is dug for the evil people. ¹⁴Yahweh won’t forsake His people.^c He will never abandon those who belong to Him. ¹⁵Judgments will be fair again. And, all those

who are honest will follow justice.

¹⁶Who will rise up on my behalf to fight against the evil people? Who will stand with me against those who do wrong?

¹⁷If Yahweh had not helped me, then my life would have been over. ¹⁸I thought: “I am about to fall!” But, O Yahweh, Your constant love supported me. ¹⁹I was very worried within, but You comforted me, making me happy.

²⁰You have nothing to do with crooked judges. They use the law to cause suffering. ²¹They join forces against the lives of those who do right. They sentence innocent people to death. ²²But, like a fortress, Yahweh protects me. My God is the Rock of my Refuge. ²³God will pay them back for their sins. He will destroy them in their evil. Yahweh, our God, will destroy them!

Praise and Worship

95¹Come on, let’s sing for joy to Yahweh! Let us shout praises to the Rock^d who saves us. ²Let us come into His

a 94:11 See 1 Cor. 3:20.

b 94:12 or, “blessed.” Compare Heb. 12:5-11.

c 94:14 Compare 1 Sam. 12:22; Rom. 11:1-2.

d 95:1 God

presence with thanksgiving. Let us sing praise-songs to Him.

³The Always-Present One is the greatest God, the great King above all the so-called gods.^a

⁴The deepest places on earth are under His control. And, the highest mountains belong to Him. ⁵The sea is His; He made it. And, His hands formed the dry land.

⁶Come, let us bow down and worship Him. Let us kneel in the presence of the Always-Present One; He made us. ⁷Why? Because He is our God! And, we are the people of His pasture, and the flock of sheep that He tends.

Today, listen to what He says:^b
⁸“Don’t let your hearts become stubborn, as your ancestors did at Meribah,^c as you did on that day at Massah^d in the desert. ⁹Your ancestors tested Me there.^e They put Me to the test, even though

they had witnessed what I did.^f
¹⁰I was disgusted^g with those people for 40 years.^h I thought: ‘Their hearts always wander away. They have no regard for My ways!’ ¹¹I was angry. So, I vowed: “They will **never** enter My land of rest!”ⁱ

God Is the True King

1 Chronicles 16:23-33

96¹Sing a new song to Yahweh. Sing to Yahweh, all the earth. ²Sing to Yahweh. Praise His Name. Every day tell the good news that He saves us. ³Tell the nations about His glory. Proclaim His miracles among all peoples.

⁴Why? Because Yahweh is great; He should be highly praised. He should be revered more than all the so-called gods.^j ⁵All the gods of the ethnic groups are only idols.^k But Yahweh created the skies.^l ⁶Glory and majesty are in His presence. Power and

a **95:3** The pagan world of that time had many different gods over every aspect of their culture. They amounted to nothing (Jer. 5:7; 10:10-15; 1 Cor. 8:4.) However, the one true God of Israel is universal.

b **95:7** See Heb. 3:7-9.

c **95:8** *Meribah* means “quarreling”. See Exo. 17:7; Num. 20:13; Deut. 33:8; Ps. 78:18,41; Heb. 3:15; 4:7.

d **95:8** *Massah* means “testing”.

e **95:9** See Heb. 3:9.

f **95:9** See Exo. 16:1-36; Num. 14:11.

g **95:10** or, “nauseated”. Compare Rev. 3:16.

h **95:10** See Num. 14:34; 32:13.

i **95:11** Compare Exo. 33:14; Num. 14:30; Deut. 12:10; 25:19; Josh. 1:13,15; Heb. 3:9-11; 4:3,5.

j **96:4** These were local, man-made, imaginary gods. They were worthless (Isa. 40:19ff; 41:21-24; 44:12ff). The one true God created all things; He is the only God.

k **96:5** See 1 Cor. 8:4.

l **96:5** See Ps. 19:1.

beauty are in His Sanctuary.

⁷Assign to Yahweh, all you clans of various ethnic groups. Assign to Yahweh glory and power. ⁸Assign to Yahweh the glory owed to His Name. Bring an offering and come into His courtyards.^a ⁹Worship Yahweh with the beauty of holiness. The whole earth should tremble in His presence.

¹⁰Tell the nations: “Yahweh is King!” Yes, the world is firmly established; it will not be moved. He will judge the ethnic groups fairly. ¹¹Let the skies be glad, and let the earth rejoice. Let the sea and everything in it roar. ¹²Let the fields and everything in them show their joy. Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy.^b ¹³They will all celebrate in the presence of the Always-Present One, because He is coming.^c He is coming to judge the earth.^d He will judge the people of the world with

fairness,^e and the ethnic groups with His truth.

God Is the Supreme Ruler

97¹Yahweh is King! Let the earth rejoice. Far-away lands should be glad.

²Clouds and thick darkness surround Him.^f His kingdom is built on what is right and fair. ³A fire goes ahead of Him^g and burns up His enemies all around.^h ⁴His lightning flashes in the sky. When the people see it, they tremble.ⁱ ⁵The mountains melt like wax in the presence of the Always-Present One, in front of the Lord of all the earth.^j ⁶The skies proclaim His righteousness. And, all the peoples see His splendor.

⁷All those who worship idols should be ashamed.^k They brag about their false gods. All the judges should bow down to Yahweh!

a 96:8 Compare Rom. 12:1; Heb. 13:15; 1 Pet. 2:5.

b 96:12 Even inanimate nature seems to praise God. It has been affected by the sins of mankind (Gen. 3:17-19). Compare Rom. 8:14-22.

c 96:13 The one true God created the universe. It is under the control of His supreme intellect; it is governed by the same laws. Whatever affects one part of the universe affects all of it.

d 96:13 Compare Ps. 72:2-4; Isa. 11:2-5.

e 96:13 or, “justice”. See John 12:48; Acts 17:30-31.

f 97:2 See Exo. 26:33; 2 Chr. 3:14. Compare Exo. 19:16-19; Ps. 104:3; Dan. 7:13; Matt. 24:30; Rev. 1:7. God is awesome.

g 97:3 Compare Amos 1:1-2:5; 4:11; 7:4; Joel 1:19-20; 2:3; Obad. 1:18; Nah. 1:6; Zeph. 3:8; Isa. 30:27; 66:15-16; Jer. 5:14; 23:29; Ezek. 21:32.

h 97:3 Compare Ps. 18:13; 50:3; 2 Pet. 3:7.

i 97:4 Compare Rev. 6:14ff.

j 97:5 Compare 2 Pet. 3:10.

k 97:7 What they trusted in turned out to be emptiness (Job 6:20; Ps. 22:5; 25:2).

⁸When Jerusalem hears this, she is glad. The towns of Judah rejoice. They are happy because of Your judgments, O Yahweh. ⁹You are Yahweh, the Most High, over all the earth. You are supreme over all so-called gods.

¹⁰People who love Yahweh should hate evil.^a The Always-Present One watches over the lives of those who follow Him. He delivers them from the power of the evil people. ¹¹Light shines upon those who do right.^b Joy belongs to those who are honest. ¹²Rejoice in Yahweh, you people who do right. Give thanks to His holy Name!

God Is the Judge of the World

98¹A psalm. Sing a new song to Yahweh, because He has done wonderful things. By His right hand and holy arm,^c He has won the victory. ²Yahweh has announced His power to save. He has shown His justice to the foreign nations.^d ³He has

a 97:10 Compare Isa. 1:16-20; Prov. 8:13; Rom. 12:9.

b 97:11 literally, "Light is sown for the righteous one." The seeds of light (= truth) will eventually germinate in the hearts of righteous people (Luke 8:8,11,15; James 3:18).

c 98:1 that is, vindicating His righteous cause

d 98:2 Hebrew: *goyim*. Compare Isa. 41-42;

remembered His constant love and His loyalty to the people of Israel. All the ends of the earth have seen God's power to save.

⁴Shout with joy to Yahweh, all the earth. Burst into happy songs. Sing praises. ⁵Sing praises to Yahweh with harps, with harps and the sound of singing. ⁶Blow the trumpets^e and the ram's horns.^f Shout for joy in the presence of the Always-Present One, the King. ⁷Let the sea and everything in it roar. Let the earth and everyone on it sing. ⁸Let the rivers clap their hands. Let the mountains sing together for joy. ⁹Let them celebrate in the presence of the Always-Present One, because He is coming to judge the earth.^g He will judge the world with justice. He will judge the ethnic groups with fairness.^h

God Is Faithful

99¹Yahweh is King! Let the ethnic groups shake with fear.ⁱ He sits between the

44:24-45:7.

e 98:6 referring to the long, silver, straight trumpets, like the ones mentioned in Num. 10:2,8-10; 31:6

f 98:6 Hebrew: *shofar*

g 98:9 Compare 1 Cor. 15:20-28; 2 Thes. 1:9; 2 Pet. 3:10-13; Rev. 20:11-15; 21:1-4.

h 98:9 See Acts 17:30-31.

i 99:1 Compare Rev. 6:16.

angel-like figures.^a Let the earth quake.^b ²Yahweh in Jerusalem is great. He is supreme over all the ethnic groups. ³Let them give thanks to Your Name! Your Name is great, awesome, and holy.^c ⁴The King^d is powerful; He loves justice.^e O Yahweh, **You** have established fairness. You have done what is good and right among the people of Jacob. ⁵Exalt Yahweh, our God! Worship at His footstool.^f He is holy. ⁶Moses and Aaron were among His priests.^g And, Samuel was among His worshipers. They called out to Yahweh,^h and He answered them. ⁷He spoke to them in the pillar of cloud.ⁱ

a 99:1 or, “cherubim” or “cherubs”. Compare Gen. 3:24; Exo. 25:10-22; 37:1-9; 1 Sam. 4:4; 2 Sam. 22:11; Ps. 18:10; 80:1; Ezek. 1:1ff; 10:1ff; Rev. 4:1ff.

b 99:1 See Hab. 3:6,10; Heb. 12:26-27.

c 99:3 See Isa. 6:3; Rev. 4:8.

d 99:4 Almighty God

e 99:4 Though God is absolutely supreme, He does not rule as a despot; His strength is tempered with divine justice.

f 99:5 = the temple. Compare Solomon’s throne and footstool (2 Chr. 9:17-19). Similarly, God sits on His heavenly throne, and His earthly throne is His footstool (Isa. 66:1; Matt. 5:34-35). Sometimes “footstool” was applied to the ark of the covenant (1 Chr. 28:2), the temple (Ps. 132:7), or Zion (Lam. 2:1).

g 99:6 Hebrew: *kohen*. Here the term is being used in its broadest sense, namely, as a representative intermediary who intercedes between God and man.

h 99:6 Compare Exo. 17:11; 32:11-13,31-32; Num. 14:13-19; 21:7; 1 Sam. 7:5,8-9; 12:19-23.

i 99:7 = the Shechinah, which was the visible symbol of God’s presence. See Exo. 19:9,16; 24:15,16,18; 33:9-10; 34:5; 40:34-38; Num. 12:5-

They obeyed the rules and laws that He gave them.

⁸O Yahweh, our God, You did answer them. You showed them that You are a forgiving God. But You punished them for their wrongs.^j ⁹Exalt Yahweh, our God! Worship Him at His holy mountain! Why? Because Yahweh, our God, is holy!

A Song of Praise

100¹A psalm of thanksgiving.

Shout for joy to Yahweh, all the earth! ²Serve Yahweh with gladness. Come into His presence with singing. ³Know this: Yahweh, **He** is God! He made us, and we belong to Him. We are His people, the flock of His pasture.

⁴Come into His temple with songs of thanksgiving. Enter His courtyards with songs of praise. Thank Him, and praise His Name. ⁵Yahweh is good. His constant love lasts forever. His loyalty continues from now on.

6; 1 Sam. 3:3; 12:23.

j 99:8 Compare Exo. 32:10,34; 34:6-7. And, each individual is held responsible for his own sins (Ezek. 18:1-4,20).

David's Promise

101¹A psalm of David.
I will sing of constant love and fairness.^a O Yahweh, I will sing praises to You.²I will be careful to live an upright^b life.^c When will You come to me?

I will live an innocent life^d within my household.³I will not look at anything evil.

I hate those who turn against You. They will not be found near me.⁴Let those who want to do wrong stay away from me. I will have nothing to do with evil!

⁵If anyone secretly says things against his neighbor, then I will stop him. I will not tolerate those who are arrogant and who look down on others.^e

⁶I will look favorably upon trustworthy people, so that I can dwell with them. Only those

who live with integrity^f will be my servants.

⁷No one who is dishonest will live in my palace. Those who tell lies will not be permitted to stay in my presence.⁸Every morning^g I will oppose all the evil people in the land. I will rid Yahweh's city of all those who do wrong.

The Prayer of a Suffering Man

102¹A prayer of the afflicted, when he is faint and pours out his complaint in the presence of the Always-Present One.^h

O Yahweh, please listen to my prayer. Let my cry for help come to You.²Don't hide Your face from me in my time of trouble. Please pay attention to me! When I cry out for help, answer me quickly!

³My life is passing away like smoke. My bones burn up like a furnace.⁴My heart is like grass that has been cut and dried. I forget to eat.⁵Because of my

a 101:1 or, "justice."

b 101:2 or, "morally complete"

c 101:2 literally, "way."

d 101:2 literally, "I will walk with integrity of heart"; that is, by honest principles

e 101:5 literally, "the high of eyes and the proud of heart." Compare Prov. 6:18ff; 21:4.

f 101:6 literally, "One who walks in the way that is blameless" = those who are completely honest. Compare Job 1:1.

g 101:8 Some kings used to hear court cases in the morning.

h 102:1 Most scholars believe that this psalm was written when the Israelites were in exile in Babylonia.

grief, my skin hangs on my bones. ⁶I am like a desert owl.^a I am like an owl living among the ruins.^b

⁷I lie awake. I am like a lonely bird sitting on the roof.^c ⁸My enemies insult me all day long. Those who make fun of me use my name as a curse word. ⁹I eat ashes as my food.^d My tears fall into my drinks. ¹⁰Because of Your anger and indignation, You have picked me up and thrown me away.^e ¹¹My days are like long shadows. I am like grass that has dried up. ¹²Nevertheless, O Yahweh, You rule forever! Your fame continues from now on. ¹³You will come and take pity on Jerusalem. The set time has now come to be kind to her.^f ¹⁴Your servants dearly love

her stones.^g They are very sad about her dust. ¹⁵The foreign nations will revere the Name of Yahweh.^h All the kings on earth will honor Him. ¹⁶Yahweh will rebuildⁱ Jerusalem. He will appear in His glory.^j ¹⁷He will answer the prayers of the needy people. He will not reject their prayers.

¹⁸Write these things down for the future. Then people who are not yet born will praise Yah. ¹⁹Yahweh looked down from His Sanctuary above. From heaven, He looked closely at the earth. ²⁰He heard the moans of the prisoners. And, He freed those who were sentenced to die. ²¹The Name of Yahweh will be proclaimed in Zion. And, His praise will be heard in Jerusalem. ²²People will gather together. Kingdoms will serve the Always-Present One.

²³God has weakened me in my prime. He has cut short my life. ²⁴So I thought: "My God, don't take me in the middle of my life!"

a 102:6 or, "a vulture of the wilderness." Some think that it was the somber pelican which haunted desolate, marshy places. This was especially true around Lake Huleh in Northern Galilee.

b 102:6 Owls were often associated with abandoned ruins (Isa. 34:11,15; Jer. 50:39; Zeph. 2:14).

c 102:7 perhaps a plaintive bird that had lost its mate, like a stork

d 102:9 = being fed a steady diet of humiliation

e 102:10 referring to the deportation and the exile of the Jews

f 102:13 This was the time appointed by God for judgment and deliverance (Exo. 9:5; 2 Sam. 24:15; Ps. 75:2; Dan. 11:27,35). Perhaps the 70 years of Jeremiah's prophecy was coming to a close (Jer. 25:11-12; Dan. 9:1-2).

g 102:14 Note how many Jews pray devotedly in Jerusalem at the Wailing Wall today. At that time, Jerusalem was lying in demolished ruins.

h 102:15 referring to the Messianic era

i 102:16 See Acts 15:16.

j 102:16 See Rev. 21.

Your years go on and on. ²⁵In the beginning, You created the earth. And, Your hands made the skies. ²⁶They will perish, but You will remain. They will all wear out like clothes. And, like clothes, You will change them. And they will be discarded. ²⁷But You never change. And, Your years have no end. ²⁸Your children will continue. And, their children will be established in Your presence.

God's Love

103 ¹A psalm of David. ^a
O my soul, ^b praise Yahweh! All my inner being, praise His holy Name! ²O my soul, praise Yahweh. Don't forget all of His kindnesses. ³He forgives all of my sins. ^c He

a 103:1 This psalm may have been written after David repented of his sin with Bathsheba (2 Sam. 12:1-15).

b 103:1 the Hebraic way of addressing oneself

c 103:3 Compare Acts 2:21,38,39; Rev. 22:17. Could people receive God's forgiveness in Old Testament days? Yes! David *knew* that he was forgiven (2 Sam. 12:13; Ps. 32:1-5; Rom. 4:6-8). Abraham and Lazarus were in a state of blessedness (Luke 16:19-25). Of course, animal sacrifices could not take away sin (Heb. 10:1-4). Pious souls living in Old Testament times knew that fact (1 Sam. 15:22-23; Ps. 40:6-8; 50:12-15,23; 51:16-17; 69:30-31;). Only the blood of the Lamb of God could truly cover sins (John 1:29; 1 Cor. 5:7). His blood cleansed those who lived under the old covenant, if they were obedient and penitent, just as his blood continually cleanses faithful Christians in the Christian age (Heb. 9:15-18; 1 John 1:7). God passed over all those sins which had been committed prior to the death of the Messiah (Rom.

heals all of my diseases. ⁴He redeems my life from the grave. He crowns me with constant love and mercy. ⁵He satisfies my desires with good things. He makes me feel young again, like the eagle. ^d

⁶Yahweh does what is right and fair for all who are oppressed by others.

⁷He showed His ways to Moses and His miracles to the people of Israel. ⁸Yahweh shows mercy, and He is kind. He does not become angry quickly, and He has great, constant love. ⁹He will not always reprimand us. He will not be angry forever. ^e ¹⁰He has not punished us as our sins deserved to be punished. He has not repaid us for the evil that we have done. ¹¹As high as the sky is above the earth, so great is His constant love for those who revere Him. ¹²He has taken our sins away from us, as far as the east is from the west. ¹³Yahweh has mercy upon those who revere Him, as a father has mercy on his children. ¹⁴He knows how we

^{3:25}) until the Sin-bearer (Jesus Christ) could become the *effective* remedy for sin (Gal. 3:13).

d 103:5 Eagles never seem to get tired. Compare Isa. 40:31.

e 103:9 God does not hold grudges.

were made. He remembers that we are dust.^a ¹⁵Human life^b is like grass.^c Man grows like a flower in the field. ¹⁶After the wind blows it, the flower is gone. There is no sign of where it once was. ¹⁷But Yahweh's constant love for those who revere Him continues forever and ever. And, His fairness continues to their grandchildren ¹⁸and to those who keep His covenant and who remember to obey His commands.

¹⁹Yahweh has set His throne in heaven. And His kingdom rules over everything.^d

²⁰You who are His angels, praise Yahweh! You are the mighty warriors who do what He says. Listen to what He says. ²¹O all His armies,^e praise Yahweh. You who do whatever He wants are His servants. ²²Everything Yahweh has made should praise Him in all the places that He rules.

O my soul, praise Yahweh!

a 103:14 See Gen. 2:7; 3:19.

b 103:15 or, "Mortal man"

c 103:15 Compare Ps. 90:5-6; Isa. 40:6-8; 1 Pet. 1:24.

d 103:19 Compare Dan. 4:25.

e 103:21 This probably refers to the celestial bodies (Deut. 4:19; Ps. 96:11-13; 148:1-6).

God Is the Creator

104 ¹O my soul, praise Yahweh!

O Yahweh, my God, You are very great. You are clothed with splendor and majesty. ²You wear light like a robe.^f You stretch out the skies like a tent.^g ³You build Your own room above the clouds. You make the clouds Your chariot. You ride on the wings of the wind. ⁴You make the winds Your messengers. Flames of fire are Your servants.^h

⁵You set the earth on its foundations,ⁱ so that it can never be moved. ⁶You covered the earth with the deep oceans as if it were a garment.^j The waters stood above the mountains.^k ⁷But, at Your rebuke, the water fled. When You gave Your orders like thunder, it hurried away. ⁸The mountains rose. The valleys sank. They went to the places You appointed for them. ⁹You set boundaries for the seas that they cannot cross.^l The

f 104:2 See Gen. 1:3; John 1:1-9; 1 Tim. 6:16; James 1:17; 1 John 1:5.

g 104:2 See Gen. 1:6; Isa. 40:12,22.

h 104:4 See Heb. 1:7. Angels are subordinate beings, but Christ is superior to them.

i 104:5 Compare Job 26:7; 38:4.

j 104:6 Compare Gen. 1:2; Job 38:9.

k 104:6 Compare Gen. 1:9; 7:19-20; 2 Pet. 3:5-6.

l 104:9 Compare Job 26:10; 38:8-11; Prov. 8:27-

water will never cover the earth again.^a

¹⁰You cause springs to pour into the ravines. They flow between the mountains. ¹¹They give water to all the wild animals. The wild donkeys come there to drink. ¹²Wild birds make nests beside the water. They sing among the tree branches. ¹³From above, You give water to the mountains. The earth is full of the things You made. ¹⁴You cause the grass to grow for cattle, and vegetables for man's use. You bring forth abundant food from the earth. ¹⁵You give us wine that makes the hearts of man happy.^b And, You give us olive oil that makes our faces shine. You give us bread that gives us strength. ¹⁶Yahweh's trees receive plenty of water. They are the cedar trees of Lebanon, which He planted. ¹⁷The little birds make their nests there. The home of the stork is in the fir trees. ¹⁸The high mountains

belong to the wild goats. The rocks are hiding places for the rock-badgers.^c

¹⁹You made the moon to mark the seasons. And, the sun always knows when to set.^d ²⁰You make it dark, and it becomes night. Then all the wild creatures creep around. ²¹The young lions are roaring for their prey. They look to God for food. ²²When the sun rises, they leave. They go back to their dens to lie down.^e ²³Then people go to work. And, they labor until evening.

²⁴O Yahweh, You have made many things. With Your wisdom, You made them all. The earth is full of Your possessions.^f ²⁵Look at the sea, so big and wide! Its teeming creatures, large and small, cannot be counted.^g ²⁶Ships travel over the ocean. And then there is the sea-monster, Leviathan, which

29; Isa. 54:9; Jer. 5:22.

a 104:9 See Gen. 1:2; 9:11,15.

b 104:15 Wine was an acceptable drink to be used in moderation at mealtime (Eccl. 10:19; John 2:1-11). It could also be used for medicinal purposes (Prov. 31:6-7; Luke 10:34; 1 Tim. 5:23). However, the excessive use of wine and other strong alcoholic drinks has always been condemned in the Bible (Prov. 20:1; 23:29-35; 1 Cor. 6:9-11).

c 104:18 or, "marmots." Some scholars think that they were hyraxes.

d 104:19 See Gen. 1:14-19.

e 104:22 Unlike human beings, lions are mostly nocturnal, searching for their prey at night. Then the lions retire to their dens during the daytime.

f 104:24 See Gen. 1:2-23. There are millions of species of living creatures; some of them are microscopic. All of them belong to God; He created them. Somehow God keeps track of every single one of them (Matt. 10:29; Luke 12:6)!

g 104:25 See Gen. 1:21-22.

You formed to play there.^a

²⁷All these things depend on You to give them their food at the right time. ²⁸When You give it to them, they gather it up. When You open Your hand, they are filled with good food. ²⁹When You turn away from them, they become scared. When You take away their breath, they die and return into dust. ³⁰When You breathe on them, they are created. You make the land new again.

³¹May the glory of Yahweh last forever. May Yahweh enjoy what He has made.^b ³²He merely looks at the earth, and it shakes. He touches the mountains, and they smoke.^c

³³I will sing to Yahweh all of my life. I will sing praises to my God while I exist. ³⁴May my thoughts please Him. I am so happy in Yahweh. ³⁵Let sinners be destroyed from the earth! Don't let the evil people live anymore! O my soul, praise Yahweh! Praise Yah!^d

a 104:26 See Gen. 1:21.

b 104:31 See Gen. 1:31.

c 104:32 perhaps referring to volcanoes, but especially note Exo. 19:18.

d 104:35 Hebrew: *Hallelu Yah*. This is the first time

God Takes Care of His People

1 Chronicles 16:8-22

105 ¹O give thanks to Yahweh and pray to Him. Announce His deeds among the nations. ²Sing to Him. Sing praises to Him. Tell about all the wonderful things that He has done. ³Glory in His Holy Name. Let those who seek for Yahweh be happy. ⁴Seek Yahweh and His strength. Always seek His presence.

⁵Remember the wonderful things that He has done. Remember His miracles and His decisions. ⁶O offspring of His servant Abraham, you are the descendants of Jacob, His chosen ones. ⁷He is Yahweh, our God. His laws are in the whole world.

⁸He is always mindful of His covenant, of the Word that He commanded for 1,000 generations, ⁹the covenant which He made with Abraham,^e His oath to Isaac,^f ¹⁰which He confirmed to Jacob as a law,^g to the people of Israel

that this expression appears in the Book of Psalms.

e 105:9 See Gen. 12:1-3; 17:2-14; 22:15-18; Heb. 6:13-20.

f 105:9 See Gen. 26:2-5.

g 105:10 or, "a decree," = a fixed policy

as a permanent covenant.^a

¹¹Yahweh said: "I will give you the land of Canaan.^b The promised land will belong to you."

¹²God's people were few in number then. They were foreigners in the land. ¹³They wandered from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another people.^c

¹⁴But God did not let anyone oppress them. He warned kings not to harm them. ¹⁵He said: "Don't hurt My chosen people. Don't harm My prophets."^d

¹⁶God ordered a time of hunger in the land.^e And, He destroyed all the food. ¹⁷Then He sent a man ahead of them. It was Joseph, who was sold as a slave.^f

¹⁸They put painful chains around his feet and an iron collar around his neck.^g ¹⁹Then the time came to pass which Joseph had foretold.^h Yahweh's

words proved that Joseph was correct.ⁱ ²⁰The king of Egypt sent for Joseph and released him.^j The ruler of the Egyptian people set him free. ²¹The king made Joseph the master of the king's household.^k Joseph was in charge of all the king's possessions.^l ²²Joseph could order the princes as he wished. He taught his elders to be wise.

²³Then his father Israel^m came to Egypt.ⁿ Jacob lived as a foreigner in the land of Egypt.^o

²⁴God made His people grow in vast numbers. He made them stronger than their enemies.^p

²⁵And, He caused the Egyptians to hate His people.^q They made plans against His servants.

²⁶Then God sent His servant Moses, as well as Aaron, whom He had chosen. ²⁷They performed many signs among the Egyptians. They worked miracles in the land of Ham.

²⁸God sent darkness and made the land dark.^r And, did Aaron

the land dark.^r And, did Aaron

a 105:10 See Gen. 28:10-15; 32:28; Gal. 3:29.

b 105:11 See Gen. 13:14-15.

c 105:13 namely, going to Egypt, to Gerar, to Mahanaim, to Shechem, to Bethel, to Ephrah, and back to Egypt again

d 105:15 God had spoken directly to these patriarchs. Compare Gen. 20:7; 41:38.

e 105:16 See Gen. 12:10; 41:54.

f 105:17 See Gen. 37:23-28,36; 39:1.

g 105:18 literally, "his soul." This was *not* mentioned in the account in Gen. 37.

h 105:19 or, "predicted". See Gen. 37:5-11.

i 105:19 See Gen. 42:6,9; 43:26,28; 44:14; 50:18.

j 105:20 See Gen. 41:1-14.

k 105:21 See Gen. 45:8-9.

l 105:21 See Gen. 41:37-45.

m 105:23 Jacob

n 105:23 See Gen. 46:6-7.

o 105:23 literally, "in the land of Ham."

p 105:24 See Exo. 1:7,9.

q 105:25 Compare Exo. 1:10; 4:21; 7:3.

r 105:28 Compare Exo. 10:21-23; Jer. 13:16.

and Moses rebel against what God said? No! ²⁹God changed the water of the Egyptians into blood and killed their fish.^a ³⁰Then their country was filled with frogs. The frogs were even found in the bedrooms of their rulers.^b ³¹Yahweh spoke, and swarms of flies came.^c And, gnats were everywhere in the country.^d ³²He made hail fall like rain.^e And, lightning flashed throughout their land. ³³He struck down their grapevines and their fig trees. He shattered the trees in their country. ³⁴He spoke, and the grasshoppers came. The young locusts were too many to count.^f ³⁵They ate all the plants in their land. They ate what the earth produced. ³⁶God also killed all the firstborn sons in their land,^g the oldest son of each family.

³⁷Then He brought His people out, and they carried silver and gold with them.^h Not one of His people faltered. ³⁸The Egyptians were glad when they

left, because the Egyptians were terrified of them.ⁱ ³⁹The Always-Present One covered them with a cloud in the daytime, and lit up the night with fire.^j ⁴⁰When they demanded, He brought them quail.^k He filled them with bread from heaven.^l ⁴¹God split the rock, and water gushed out.^m It flowed like a river through the desert.

⁴²God remembered His holy promise given to His servant Abraham.ⁿ ⁴³So, God brought His people out with joy, His chosen ones with singing.^o ⁴⁴He gave them the lands of foreign nations. They took possession of what other people had worked for.^p ⁴⁵This was so that they would follow His orders and obey His teachings.

Praise Yah!

a 105:29 See Exo. 7:20.

b 105:30 See Exo. 8:6.

c 105:31 See Exo. 8:24.

d 105:31 See Exo. 8:17.

e 105:32 See Exo. 9:22.

f 105:34 See Exo. 10:13.

g 105:36 See Exo. 12:29.

h 105:37 See Gen. 15:14; Exo. 12:35.

i 105:38 See Exo. 12:33; Deut. 11:25.

j 105:39 See Exo. 13:21-22; 14:19-20; 16:10; 24:16; 34:5; 40:34-35,38; Num. 10:34; 11:25; 12:5; 16:42; Deut. 31:15.

k 105:40 See Exo. 16:1-13.

l 105:40 that is, "manna." See Exo. 16:14-36.

m 105:41 See Exo. 17:1-7; 1 Cor. 10:1-4.

n 105:42 See Gen. 18:19; Exo. 2:24.

o 105:43 or, "shouts of joy." See Exo. 15:1-21.

p 105:44 Compare Deut. 6:10-12; Josh. 13:7ff; 21:43-45; 24:13.

Israel Rebelled Again and Again

1 Chronicles 16:34-36

106¹Praise Yah!
Give thanks to Yahweh, because He is good. His constant love continues forever.^a
²No one can tell all the mighty deeds that Yahweh has done.^b No one can completely describe all of the praises that He deserves.
³Happy are those people who are fair, who do what is right at all times.^c ⁴O Yahweh, when You are kind to Your people, remember me. When You save them, help me.^d ⁵Let me see the good things that You do for Your chosen people. Let me be happy, along with Your happy nation. Let me join Your own people in praising You.

⁶We have sinned, just as our ancestors did.^c We have done wrong; we've done evil.^d ⁷Our ancestors in Egypt did not learn from Your miracles. They forgot all about Your many kindnesses. So, they turned against You at the sea, the Red Sea.^d ⁸But God saved them for His own Name's

a 106:1 See 1 Chr. 16:34-36,41; 2 Chr. 5:13.

b 106:2 Compare Job 11:7-9; Ps. 92:5; Isa. 40:12-17; Rom. 11:33-36.

c 106:6 Compare Lev. 26:40; 1 Kings 8:47; Ezra 9:6-7; Neh. 1:6-7; 9:16-18,26; Dan. 9:5-8.

d 106:7 or, "the End Sea." See Exo. 14:10-12.

sake, to show His great power.^e

⁹He commanded the Red Sea, and it dried up.^f He led them through the deep sea as if it were a desert.^g ¹⁰So, God saved them from those who hated them. He redeemed them from their enemies.^g ¹¹And, the water covered their adversaries.^h Not one of them survived!ⁱ ¹²Then the people believed what God said.ⁱ They sang praises to Him.^j

¹³But they quickly forgot what He had done.^k They did not wait for His advice.^l ¹⁴Their desire for food in the wilderness was too strong.^l And, they tested God in the desert.^m ¹⁵So, He gave them what they wanted.ⁿ But, He also sent a terrible disease among them.^o

¹⁶The people in the camp became jealous of Moses, and

e 106:8 Compare Exo. 7:5; 9:16; 14:4,18; 15:11-16; Rom. 9:17.

f 106:9 See Exo. 14:21-22.

g 106:10 Compare Exo. 6:6-7; 14:30; 15:16.

h 106:11 See Exo. 14:27-30; 15:5,10.

i 106:12 See Exo. 14:31.

j 106:12 See Exo. 15:1-18.

k 106:13 Compare Exo. 15:24; 16:3; 32:8; Num. 11:4.

l 106:14 literally, "They craved a craving in the wilderness." They wanted better food than what God faithfully supplied to them (manna). See Num. 11:5.

m 106:14 See Ps. 78:18.

n 106:15 See Num. 11:31-32.

o 106:15 literally, "sent leanness into their soul." See Num. 11:20,33.

jealous of Aaron, the holy priest of the Always-Present One.^a
 17 Then the ground opened up and swallowed Dathan.^b
 It closed over Abiram's group.
 18 Then a fire burned among their followers. Flames burned up the evil people.

19 The people made a golden calf at Mount Sinai.^c They worshiped a metal statue.^d
 20 They exchanged^e their glorious God for a statue of a bull,^f which eats grass!¹ 21 They forgot God, their Savior, the One who had done such great things in Egypt.² 22 God did miracles in the land of Egypt.^g He did amazing things at the Red Sea.^h 23 So, God said that He would destroy them.ⁱ But Moses, His chosen one,^j stood before Him in the gap.^k He stopped God's anger from destroying them.^l

24 Then they refused to go into

the beautiful land of Canaan.^m
 They did **not** believe what God promised.²⁵ They grumbled in their tents,ⁿ and they did not obey the Always-Present One.²⁶ So, He swore an oath to them^o that they would die in the wilderness.^p 27 He said that their children would be dispersed among foreign nations and that He would scatter them among other countries.^q

28 They attached themselves to the worship of Baal^r at Peor.^s They ate meat that had been sacrificed to lifeless statues.^t
 29 They made God angry by what they did. Therefore, many people became sick with a terrible disease.^u 30 But Phinehas^v took strong action, and the

a 106:16 See Num. 16:1-3; Jude 1:11.

b 106:17 See Num. 16:31-33.

c 106:19 literally, "(Mount) Horeb." See Exo. 32:4,5,24; Deut. 9:8-16.

d 106:19 Compare Exo. 20:4-5.

e 106:20 See Rom. 1:23.

f 106:20 or, "ox" = Apis, a god of the Egyptians

g 106:22 literally, "in the land of Ham." See Exo. 7-12.

h 106:22 See Exo. 14:24,27-30.

i 106:23 See Deut. 9:13-14.

j 106:23 See Exo. 3:10; 4:1-17.

k 106:23 See Exo. 32:11-14,30-34; Deut. 9:13-14,25.

l 106:23 See Exo. 32:32.

m 106:24 See Num. 13:27-33; 14:3,28.

n 106:25 See Num. 14:1-4,27; Deut. 1:27.

o 106:26 literally, "He raised His hand against them" = taking a vow (Exo. 6:8; Deut. 32:40)

p 106:26 See Num. 14:27,29,30,32,37.

q 106:27 See Lev. 26:33; Deut. 4:25-27; 28:32,64.

r 106:28 a false, male Canaanite god. The worshipers believed that some sort of mystical union existed between themselves and Baal, a fertility god. They thought that having sacrificial feasts in honor of Baal and conducting sexual orgies would induce Baal to fertilize their crops.

s 106:28 See Num. 25:2,3,5. Peor was the name of a mountain in Moab.

t 106:28 instead of worshiping the one true God who created all life. He is "the living God" (Jer. 10:3-10). Compare 1 Cor. 12:2.

u 106:29 or, "a plague." See Num. 25:4-8. About 24,000 people died.

v 106:30 the grandson of Aaron. See Num. 25:7-8.

epidemic stopped.^a ³¹God will remember that what Phinehas did was right.^b And, God will remember this from now on.

³²The people also made God angry at the waters of Meribah.^c Even Moses got in trouble because of them.^d ³³The people provoked his spirit.^e So, Moses spoke rashly.^f

³⁴The people did not destroy the ethnic groups,^g as Yahweh had commanded them to do.^h ³⁵Instead, they mixed withⁱ the ethnic groups.^j And, they learned their customs.^k ³⁶They worshiped the idols of other nations.^l And, they were trapped

by them.³⁷ Yes, they even killed their own sons and daughters^m for the demons.ⁿ ³⁸They poured out innocent blood—the blood of their sons and their daughters, whom they had sacrificed to the idols of Canaan. So, the land was made unholy by their blood.^o ³⁹The people became unclean by their sinful deeds. They were unfaithful to God^p in what they did.

⁴⁰So, Yahweh became very angry with His people. He was disgusted with His own children. ⁴¹He allowed other nations to defeat them. He permitted their enemies to rule over them.^q ⁴²Their enemies were cruel to them.^r Their enemies kept them under their power. ⁴³God delivered His people many

a 106:30 See Num. 25:1-14.

b 106:31 God credited his zeal to his righteousness. See Gen. 15:6; Ps. 32:1-2; Rom. 4:1-8. God approved of his actions and rewarded him and his descendants with a perpetual priesthood (Num. 25:13; 1 Chr. 6:4).

c 106:32 See Exo. 17:1-7; Num. 20:1-13,24; 27:14; Deut. 32:51; 33:8.

d 106:32 See Num. 20:10-12. Moses' sin was in speaking to the rock as if the power to bring forth water belonged to him, not God.

e 106:33 even though Moses was normally a very meek man (Num. 12:3)

f 106:33 = without stopping to think seriously first

g 106:34 See Judg. 1:21,27,29,30,31,33,35.

h 106:34 See Num. 33:52; Deut. 7:5,16.

i 106:35 = intermarrying

j 106:35 Compare 1 Cor. 15:33. If there was contact, then contamination would result (Judg. 2:2,11-13,19; 3:5-7; 6:25; 10:6).

k 106:35 or, "habits." Compare Rom. 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 6:14-17.

l 106:36 false gods such as Baal, Ashtoreth,

Chemosh, Molech, Remphan, etc.

m 106:37 See Lev. 18:21; Deut. 18:10; 2 Kings 3:27; 16:1-3; Isa. 57:5; Jer. 7:31; 19:1-9; Ezek. 16:20; 20:31; 23:37.

n 106:37 literally, "the destroyers" = the false Canaanite gods. Compare Deut. 32:15-18; 1 Cor. 10:20-21.

o 106:38 Compare Deut. 35:33; 2 Kings 24:4; Isa. 59:7; Jer. 7:6; 22:3,17.

p 106:39 literally, "they prostituted themselves" (compare Hos. 2:2-5; 4:14; Ezek. 23:2-21)

q 106:41 Compare Judg. 3:8,10,12,14,31; 4:2-3; 6:1; 10:7-18; 13:1; 1 Chr. 5:25-26; 2 Chr. 12:2-5; 36:13-17.

r 106:42 See 1 Sam. 9:16; 13:19-20.

times,^a but, on purpose,^b they continued to turn against Him. So, they became even more evil.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, God saw their misery;^c He heard their cry for help.^d ⁴⁵And, He remembered His covenant with them. He acted as though His mind had been changed, because of His great, constant love.^e ⁴⁶He caused them to be pitied by all those who held them captive.^f

⁴⁷O Yahweh, our God, save us! Bring us back from the foreign nations. Then we will give thanks to You. Then we will gladly praise You.⁴⁸ Praise Yahweh, the God of Israel, forever and ever. And let all the people say: “Amen!”

Praise Yah!

BOOK FIVE (Psalms 107–150):

God Delivers His People

107¹O give thanks to Yahweh, because

a 106:43 See Judg. 3:9,15-29,31; 4:4-24; 7:19-25; 11:12-33; 15:8-20; 2 Sam. 5:22-25.

b 106:43 = deliberately

c 106:44 or, “distress.” See 2 Kings 17:13; 2 Chr. 36:15.

d 106:44 See Exo. 2:23; 3:7,9; Judg. 3:9,15; 4:3; 6:6; 10:10; 1 Sam. 12:10-11; 1 Chr. 5:20; 2 Chr. 12:7; 14:11-12; 20:4-24; 32:20-21; 33:11-13.

e 106:45 Compare Exo. 32:14; 2 Sam. 24:16; 1 Chr. 21:15; Jer. 26:19; Rom. 5:20-21.

f 106:46 See 2 Kings 25:27-30; Dan. 1:3-5,9,19; 2:49; 3:30; 6:28; Ezra 1:4-6; Neh. 1:11; 2:1-8.

He is good.^g His constant love continues forever.^h ²The people whom Yahweh has redeemed should say so. They are the ones whom He has redeemed from the control of the enemy. ³He has gathered them from other lands,¹ from east and west, from north and south.^j

⁴They had wandered in the desert lands. They found no city in which to dwell. ⁵They were hungry and thirsty. They were discouraged. ⁶In their misery, they cried out to Yahweh. And, He delivered them from their troubles. ⁷He led them on a straight road, to a city where they could dwell. ⁸Let them give thanks to Yahweh for His constant love, and for the wonders that He does for people. ⁹He satisfies the thirsty ones. He fills up the hungry people with good things.^k ¹⁰Some people sat in gloom and deep darkness. They were prisoners suffering in iron chains.^l ¹¹They had turned

g 107:1 This psalm may have been written when the work of laying the foundation of the second temple began (Ezra 3:8-13).

h 107:1 See 1 Chr. 16:34.

i 107:3 See Isa. 45:5-7.

j 107:3 literally, “and from the sea.” = the Red Sea (Ps. 114:3), which connected to the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean

k 107:9 Compare Matt. 5:6.

l 107:10 This section refers to the Jewish exiles

against the words of God.^a They had refused the advice of God, the Most High. ¹²So, He broke their pride by hard work. They stumbled, but there was no one to help them.^b ¹³In their misery, they cried out to Yahweh.^c And, He saved them from their troubles. ¹⁴He brought them out of their gloom and deep darkness. He broke apart their chains.

¹⁵Let them give thanks to Yahweh for His constant love, and for the wonders that He does for people. ¹⁶He demolishes bronze gates.^d And, He cuts iron bars in two.^e ¹⁷Some people who revolted against God became fools. They suffered for the evil they did. ¹⁸They refused to eat anything. So, they almost died. ¹⁹In their misery, they cried out to Yahweh. And, He saved them from their troubles. ²⁰God sent forth His Word and healed them. So, they were delivered from all their pitfalls.

²¹Let them give thanks to Yahweh for His constant love and for the wonders that He does for people. ²²Let them offer sacrifices of thanksgiving. With singing, they should announce what God has done.

²³Others have gone out to sea in ships.^f They earned their living on the great oceans. ²⁴They have seen what Yahweh could do, the wonders that He does in deep waters. ²⁵He spoke, and a storm came up. It blew up high waves of the sea. ²⁶The ships were tossed as high as the sky and fell low in the waves. The storm was so bad that the men lost their courage. ²⁷They were wobbly,^g and they staggered like men who were drunk. They didn't know what to do.^h ²⁸In their misery, they cried out to Yahweh. And, He brought them out of their troubles. ²⁹He made the storm be still.ⁱ He calmed the waves of the sea. ³⁰The sailors were glad that it was quiet. And, God guided them to

(2 Kings 17:4; 23:31-33; 24:10-12; 25:7).

a 107:11 See Dan. 9:5-8; Zech. 1:4.

b 107:12 For 70 years (Jer. 25:11-12; 29:10; Dan. 9:2), God allowed them to suffer the severe consequences of their pagan ways.

c 107:13 See Dan. 9:3-27.

d 107:16 There were 100 bronze doors in the city of Babylon.

e 107:16 Compare Isa. 45:2.

f 107:23 This is probably a metaphor likening the nation of Israel to a ship that was nearly lost at sea.

g 107:27 perhaps from sea-sickness

h 107:27 literally, "And all their wisdom (= skill) was swallowed up." All their knowledge of seamanship was useless.

i 107:29 literally, "He settled the storm to a whisper." Compare Matt. 8:23-27.

the port they desired.^a ³¹Let them give thanks to Yahweh for His constant love, and for the wonders that He does for people. ³²Let them exalt His greatness in the gathering of the people. They should praise Him in the meeting of the elders.

³³He changed rivers into a desert, and springs of water into dry ground. ³⁴He made fertile soil salty,^b because the people there did evil. ³⁵He changed the desert into pools of water, and dry ground into springs of water. ³⁶He had the hungry people settle there. They built a city in which to dwell. ³⁷They sowed seeds in the fields and planted vineyards. And, they received a good harvest. ³⁸And God blessed them, and they increased greatly in number.^c Their cattle did not decrease.

³⁹Because of oppression, troubles, and sadness, their families became smaller and weaker. ⁴⁰God showed that He was displeased with their princes. He

made them wander in a pathless desert.^d ⁴¹But He lifted up the poor people out of their suffering. And, He caused their families to grow like flocks of sheep. ⁴²People with integrity see this, and they are happy. But the evil people say nothing.

⁴³Whoever is wise will pay attention to these things. He will discern the constant love of Yahweh.

A Cry for Help

Psalms 57:7-11

108¹A song. A psalm of David.

O God, my heart is right. I will sing. Yes, I will sing songs of praise with all my soul. ²Wake up, O harp and lyre! I will wake up the dawn. ³O Yahweh, I will give thanks to You among the ethnic groups. I will sing songs of praise about You among the nations. ⁴Your constant love is so great that it is higher than the skies. Your truth reaches even to the clouds. ⁵O God, You are supreme over the skies. Let Your glory be over all the earth.

Psalms 60:5-12

⁶Rescue the people whom You

a 107:30 = the haven of Jerusalem

b 107:34 like the soil near the Dead Sea (Gen. 13:10-12); nothing grows there. Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:24-29) were overthrown nearby.

c 107:38 Compare Gen. 13:16; 22:17; 26:4; 32:12.

d 107:40 = the Babylonian exile

love; save us by Your power. Please answer me! ⁷God has spoken from His Sanctuary: “In triumph I will divide up Shechem^a and measure off the Valley of Succoth.^b ⁸Gilead is Mine; Manasseh is Mine.^c Ephraim is like My helmet. Judah holds My royal scepter. ⁹Moab is like My wash-bowl. I toss My sandals at Edom. I shout in triumph over Philistia.”

¹⁰Who will bring me to the strong, walled city? Who will lead me to Edom? ¹¹O God, surely You have rejected us! O God, You do not go out with our armies anymore. ¹²Help us fight the enemy. Human help is useless. ¹³But we can win with God’s help. He will defeat our foes.^d

A Prayer for Punishment

109¹To the director of music. A psalm of David. O God, I praise You. Please do not be silent!^e ²⁻³Evil people and liars have spoken against me. They have told hateful lies about me. They have surrounded me. They attack me for no reason.^f ⁴They accused me, even though I loved them. Nevertheless, I continue to pray. ⁵I was good to them, but now they repay me with evil! I loved them, but they hate me!

⁶Appoint an evil man to oppose him. Let the accuser^g accuse him.^h ⁷When he is judged, let him be found guilty. Let even his prayer show that he is guilty. ⁸Let his life be cut short. And, let another man replace him as leader.ⁱ ⁹Let his children

a 108:7 Shechem was an important, centrally-located city in the history of Israel (Josh. 8:30-35; 20:7; 21:21; 24:1-33). It was high among the hills of Ephraim.

b 108:7 a prominent sector of Canaan east of the Jordan River (Gen. 33:17-18)

c 108:8 Gilead was the old name of the large territory east of the Jordan River (Gen. 37:25). The half-tribe of Manasseh was located on both sides of the Jordan River. So, this expression represented the whole land of Israel (Gen. 13:14-15).

d 108:13 See the parallel passage in Ps. 57:7-11 and the doublet in Ps. 60:5-12. This psalm may have been written when David finally got control over the country of Edom.

e 109:1 The meaning is: “O God, don’t let these terrible wrongs go unpunished!” (compare Ps. 50:3,21).

f 109:2-3 or, “without cause.” See John 15:25.

g 109:6 = the prosecutor (Hebrew: *satan*)

h 109:6 literally, “stand at his right (hand)” = bring him to trial. Compare Zech. 3:1-2. Here David wants them to have a taste of their own medicine; namely, that a real adversary with a malignant heart would make use of his trusted position to advance his own agenda. Compare Luke 18:1-8; Acts 23:3; 2 Thes. 1:1-10; 2:8-12; 2 Tim. 4:14; Rev. 6:9-11.

i 109:8 literally, “May another take his oversight (= his charge)” = Letting a worthy person take over his position of leadership. This verse was quoted in Acts 1:20 in connection with Judas Iscariot. Judas’ betrayal of Jesus was similar to that of those who

become orphans. And, let his wife become a widow. ¹⁰May his children wander around as beggars. Let them be forced out of the ruins where they live. ¹¹Let the people he owes money to take everything he owns. Let strangers steal everything he has worked for. ¹²Let no one show mercy to him. Let no one show pity to his orphaned children. ¹³Let all of his descendants die. Let him be forgotten by people who live after him. ¹⁴Let Yahweh remember how evil his ancestors were. Don't let the sins of his mother ever be wiped out. ¹⁵Let Yahweh always recall their sins. Then He will make people completely forget about them.

¹⁶They did not remember to be kind. They persecuted the poor and needy people, and they hounded the broken-hearted people to death.

¹⁷They loved to put curses on others. So, let those same curses fall on them! They did not want to bless other people. So, don't let good things happen to them. ¹⁸They cursed others as often as they wore clothes.

Cursing others penetrated their bodies and their whole lives, like drinking water or like using olive oil. ¹⁹Therefore, let their curses cover **them** like clothes. Let those curses wrap around **them** like a belt which they wear. ²⁰May Yahweh do these things to those who accuse me, to those who speak evil against my life!

²¹But You, O Lord Yahweh, treat me well for the sake of Your Name. Because Your constant love is so good, deliver me. ²²I am poor and helpless. And, I am very sad. ²³I'm dying, like an evening shadow. I am shaken off like a locust. ²⁴My knees are weak from hunger. I have become thin. ²⁵My enemies insult me. They look at me and shake their heads.

²⁶O Yahweh, my God, please help me! Save me, because You are so loving! ²⁷Then they will **know** that You have saved me. They will **know** that it was by Your power, O Yahweh. ²⁸They may curse me, but **You** must bless me. They may attack me, but **they** are the ones who will be disgraced! Then I, Your servant, will be glad. ²⁹Let those who

had betrayed David when David was the most vulnerable.

accuse me be totally ashamed. Let them be covered up with shame — like a big coat.

³⁰I will publicly thank Yahweh. I will praise Him among many people. ³¹God does defend helpless people. He saved them from those who were condemning them to death.^a

The Chosen King of Yahweh

110¹A psalm of David.^b This is a statement of Yahweh to my Lord:^c “Sit at My right side^d until I put your enemies under your control.”^e

²Yahweh will make you King in Jerusalem over all nations.^f

a 109:31 This psalm may have been written when David was betrayed in the town of Keilah (1 Sam. 22:20-23; 23:1-6).

b 110:1 This psalm may have been written when David prayed in 2 Sam. 7:18-29; 1 Chr. 17:16-27.

c 110:1 Hebrew: *Adonay* = the Messiah. This shows that this individual is superior in rank to King David (Matt. 22:42-43; Rom. 1:3-4).

d 110:1 literally, “at My right (hand)” = the place of honor (1 Kings 2:19; Ps. 45:9; Mark 16:19; Acts 7:55-56; Eph. 1:20). This was quoted in Matt. 22:43-45; 26:64; Mark 12:36-37; 14:62; Luke 20:42-44; 22:69; Acts 2:34-36; Heb. 1:13.

e 110:1 literally, “until I make your enemies your footstool” = humbling them underneath his feet. Compare Josh. 10:24; Judg. 1:7; 2 Chr. 9:18; 1 Kings 5:3; 1 Cor. 15:25; Eph. 1:20-22; Philp. 2:9-11; Heb. 10:12-13. See Matt. 28:18; 1 Cor. 15:24-28.

f 110:2 literally, “Yahweh sends forth from Zion the rod of your strength” (= the Messiah’s mighty scepter). This means that God would extend Christ’s powerful kingdom. Compare 2 Sam. 5:7,9. For “rod” see Isa. 9:4; 10:15; Jer. 48:12; it is God’s truth (Isa. 2:3; 11:4).

And, you will rule over your enemies.^g ³Your people will join you on the day when you come to power.^h You have been dressed in holiness from birth. You have the freshness of a child. ⁴Yahweh has made a promise,ⁱ and He will **not** change His mind. He said: “You are a priest forever, a priest after the category of Melchizedek.”^j

⁵The Lord is at your right hand to help you. When God becomes angry, He will crush kings.^k ⁶He will judge those nations, filling them with corpses.^l He will crush leaders over the entire world.^m ⁷On the way, the Kingⁿ will drink from the brook. Then he will be strengthened after the battle.

Praising God

111¹Praise Yah!
I will thank Yahweh

g 110:2 See Ps. 2:7-12; Rev. 17:14.

h 110:3 literally, “Your people (are) free-will gifts on the day of your strength” = Your people will offer themselves freely on the day that you lead your army (victoriously). Compare Rom. 12:1; 2 Cor. 8:5; Philp. 2:17. See 1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:5.

i 110:4 or, “has taken a solemn oath”. See Heb. 6:16-18; 7:20-22.

j 110:4 The future Messiah would be king *and* priest in one person (Zech. 6:13; Heb. 5:1-14; 7:1-28).

k 110:5 See Ps. 2:2,10.

l 110:6 or, “piling up the dead ones.” Compare Rev. 19:17-18.

m 110:6 See Ps. 2:9; Rev. 19:11-21.

n 110:7 = the Messiah

with all my heart^a in the council of the upright ones and of the assembly. ²Yahweh does great things. All those who delight in Him should ponder them. ³What He does is glorious and splendid. His righteousness continues forever. ⁴His wonders are unforgettable. Yahweh is kind and merciful. ⁵He provides food to those who revere Him.^b He remembers His covenant forever. ⁶He has shown His power to His people when He gave them the lands of foreign nations.^c ⁷Everything He does is true and fair. All His precepts can be trusted. ⁸They will continue forever. They were made true and right. ⁹He sets His people free. He made His covenant everlasting. His Name is holy and awesome.

¹⁰The beginning of wisdom is reverence for Yahweh.^d All those who put it into practice have a good understanding. The praise of Him will go on forever!

a 111:1 This psalm is an acrostic psalm; that is, sections of the psalm begin with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

b 111:5 Compare Ps. 78:11-31; 105:8-9,16-24,40-41; 106:13-15; Matt. 6:11.

c 111:6 Compare Deut. 6:10-15; 9:4-12.

d 111:10 See Prov. 1:7; 9:10; 15:33.

A Good Person Is Happy

112¹Praise Yah!
Happy is the person who reveres Yahweh.^e He loves to do what the Always-Present One commands.

²His descendants will be powerful in the land.^f The children of honest people will be blessed. ³His house will be full of wealth and riches. His goodness will continue forever. ⁴A light shines in the darkness for honest people, for those who are good, kind, and merciful. ⁵It is good to be kind and generous. Whoever is fair in his business dealings ⁶will never be defeated. A good man will be remembered from now on. ⁷He won't be afraid of bad news. He is safe, because he trusts in Yahweh. ⁸That person is confident. He will not be afraid. In triumph, he will look upon his enemies. ⁹He gives freely to the poor people. His righteousness lasts forever.^g He will be given great honor.^h

¹⁰The evil people will see this and become angry. They will

e 112:1 This psalm is an acrostic psalm.

f 112:2 Compare Gen. 12:1-3; 15:1-6.

g 112:9 quoted in 2 Cor. 9:9.

h 112:9 literally, "His horn is exalted with honor."

grind their teeth^a in anger and then disappear. The wishes of the evil people will come to nothing.

God Raises up Humble People

113¹Praise Yah!^b
Praise Him, you servants of Yahweh. Praise the Name of Yahweh. ²Yahweh's Name should be praised now and forever. ³Yahweh's Name should be praised from where the sun rises to where it sets.

⁴Yahweh is supreme over all the nations. His glory reaches up to the skies. ⁵No one is like Yahweh, our God. He rules from heaven. ⁶He bends down to look at the skies and the earth. ⁷The Always-Present One lifts the poor people from the dirt.^c He takes the helpless folks from the ashes ⁸to cause them to sit among princes, among the

princes of His people. ⁹He gives children to the woman who is not able to have children.^d He makes her a happy mother of several children.

Praise Yah!

A Song about the Exodus

114¹The Israelites went out of Egypt. The people of Jacob left that foreign country. ²Then Judah became God's Sanctuary.^e Israel became the land that He ruled.

³The Red Sea looked and ran away.^f The Jordan River turned back.^g ⁴The mountains danced like rams^h and the hills jumped like little lambs. ⁵O sea, why did you run away? O Jordan, why did you turn back? ⁶O mountains, why did you dance like rams? O hills, why did you jump around like little lambs?

⁷O earth, shake with fear in the

a 112:10 Gritting the teeth together was a sign of great anger, disappointment, or pain. See also Job 16:9; Ps. 35:16; 37:12; Matt. 8:12; 13:42,50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Mark 9:18; Luke 13:28; Acts 7:54.

b 113:1 Hebrew: *Hallelu Yah*. Yah is the short form of Yahweh (Exo. 15:2; Isa. 12:2; 26:4). In Judaism, Ps. 113–118 are known as the Egyptian Hallel psalms. Ps. 113–114 are sung before the Passover meal, and Ps. 115–118 are sung after the meal (*seder*). See Matt. 26:30. These psalms are also sung during the Festival of Pentecost, the Festival of Tabernacles, the New Moon Festival, and the Festival of Dedication (*Hanukkah*).

c 113:7 Compare Luke 1:52.

d 113:9 = sterility; barrenness, which was considered to be a disgrace in Near Eastern culture (Gen. 30:1-3; Luke 1:7,36,25,57,58). Compare Gen. 21:7 (Sarah); 1 Sam. 1:1–2:8,21 (Hannah). Rebekah (Gen. 25:20), Rachel (Gen. 29:31), Manoah's wife (Judg. 13:2), the Shunammite woman (2 Kings 4:14), and Elizabeth (Luke 1:7) were all once barren.

e 114:2 Judah was the leading tribe; the Messiah would come from this tribe (Gen. 49:8-12).

f 114:3 See Exo. 14:21.

g 114:3 See Josh. 3:14-17.

h 114:4 See Exo. 19:16-19.

presence of the Lord. Tremble in the presence of the God of Jacob. ⁸He turned a rock into a pool of water.^a He changed a hard rock into a spring of water.^b

The One True God

115¹It does not belong to us, O Yahweh. Not to us. The praise belongs to **You**, because of Your constant love and loyalty!

²Why do the nations ask:^c “Where, pray tell, is their God?”
³Our God is in heaven. He does whatever He wants.

Psalms 135:15-20

⁴Their idols are made of silver and gold.^d They are made by human hands. ⁵The idols have mouths, but they cannot speak. They have eyes, but they cannot see. ⁶They have ears, but they cannot hear. They have noses, but they cannot smell. ⁷They have hands, but they cannot feel. They have feet, but they cannot walk. And, no sounds

come from their throats. ⁸All the people who make idols and trust in them are just like them.^e

⁹O family of Israel, trust in Yahweh! He is your Helper and your Shield.^f ¹⁰O household of Aaron, trust in Yahweh! He is your Helper and your Shield. ¹¹You people who revere Yahweh should trust in Yahweh. He is your Helper and your Shield.

¹²Yahweh has been mindful of us. He will bless us. He will bless the household of Israel. He will bless the household of Aaron. ¹³He will bless those who revere Him, from the smallest ones to the greatest ones.

¹⁴May Yahweh give you many children. And, may He give them children also. ¹⁵May Yahweh bless you people. He made heaven and earth.

¹⁶Heaven — heaven belongs to Yahweh, but He turned the earth over to human beings.

¹⁷It is not the dead people^g who

a 114:8 See Exo. 17:6.

b 114:8 See Num. 20:11.

c 115:2 Prof. Alexander makes a strong case that the time when this psalm was written took place following the return from Babylonian exile but before the actual building of the second temple.

d 115:4 Compare Isa. 41:14-29; 44:9-20; 45:14-17; Jer. 10:1-18; Hab. 2:18-19.

e 115:8 Men become like the object of their adoration. Compare Matt. 6:21.

f 115:9 = protection. Compare Gen. 15:1; Deut. 33:29; Prov. 30:5.

g 115:17 Compare Matt. 8:22; Luke 9:60; 1 Tim. 5:6.

praise Yah. Those in the grave are silent.^a ¹⁸But we are the ones who praise Yah, now and forever.

Praise Yah!

Saved from Death

116¹I love Yahweh because He listens to my prayers for help. ²He paid attention to me. So, I will call to Him for help as long as I live.

³The ropes of death bound me.^b The fear of death took hold of me. I was troubled and sad. ⁴Then I called upon the Name of Yahweh.^c I said: “Please, O Yahweh, rescue me!” ⁵Yahweh is kind and does what is right. Our God is merciful. ⁶Yahweh watches over the simple-minded. When I was helpless, He saved me.

⁷I thought to myself: “Relax, because Yahweh takes good care of you.”

⁸O One Who Is Always Present, You have rescued me from death. You have stopped my eyes from crying. You have kept me from being defeated. ⁹Therefore, I will live with Yahweh, in the land of the living. ¹⁰I believed, so I spoke:^d “I am completely ruined!”^e ¹¹In my distress I thought: “All people are liars!”

¹²What can I give back to Yahweh for all the good things that He has given to me?^f ¹³I will give Him a drink-offering for saving me.^g And, I will pray to Yahweh. ¹⁴In front of all His people, I will certainly give Yahweh what I promised.^h

¹⁵The death of one who is faithful to Him is precious to Yahweh. ¹⁶O Yahweh, I pray that I am Your servant. I am Your servant and the son of Your female servant. You have freed me from my chains. ¹⁷I will

a 115:17 literally, “nor does anyone who goes down (into) silence.” The Jews of the Old Testament did believe in the after-life (Ps. 16:9-11; 17:15; 49:15; 73:23,34; Isa. 26:19). In the New Testament, in light of God’s perfect revelation in the Messiah, Christians praise God and His Son throughout eternity (Rev. 4:5; 7:9-17; 11:17-18; 21:1-4; 22:1-5).

b 116:3 Compare Ps. 18:4. This was a life-threatening illness.

c 116:4 There is an ancient Hebrew tradition which ascribes Psalm 116 to King Hezekiah who almost died. See Isa. 37-38.

d 116:10 quoted in 2 Cor. 4:13. Faith carries with it the duty to speak the absolute truth.

e 116:10 Even while the affliction continued, the author felt confident that relief would come from God. Any feelings of disillusionment gave way to true faith.

f 116:12 Compare 1 Cor. 4:7.

g 116:13 literally, “the cup of salvation.” The drink-offering was a part of the thank-offering (Num. 15:3-5).

h 116:14 literally, “I will surely pay my vows to Yahweh.” Religious vows *must* be kept (Deut. 23:21-23; Eccl. 5:1-6).

give an offering of thanksgiving to You. And, I will worship Yahweh. ¹⁸In front of all His people, I will give Yahweh what I promised. ¹⁹I will do this in the temple courtyards of Yahweh in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.

Praise Yah!

Sing Praises to Yahweh

117¹All you foreign nations, praise Yahweh! All you ethnic groups, esteem Him!^a ²Yahweh loves us very much. His truth is everlasting.

Praise Yah!

Thanksgiving

118¹O you people, thank Yahweh, because He is good. His constant love continues forever.^b

²Please let the people of Israel say: “His constant love continues forever.” ³Please let

the household^c of Aaron say: “His constant love continues forever.” ⁴Please let those who revere Yahweh say: “His constant love continues forever.”

⁵I was in trouble, so I called out to Yah.^d Yah answered me and set me free. ⁶I will not be afraid, because Yahweh is with me. People^e cannot do anything to me.^f ⁷Yahweh is with me to help me. And as for me, I will see my enemies defeated.

⁸It is better to take refuge in Yahweh than to trust human beings. ⁹It is better to take refuge in Yahweh than to trust in princes.

¹⁰All the nations^g surrounded me. But I defeated them soundly in the Name of Yahweh. ¹¹They surrounded me on every side. But, in the Name of Yahweh I defeated them soundly. ¹²They surrounded me like a swarm of bees. But they died as quickly as thorns burn. In the Name of Yahweh, I defeated them soundly.

a 117:1 See Paul’s quotation in Rom. 15:11. It was predicting that God’s grace would prevail in the whole world. Long before the coming of Christ, this shortest of the psalms celebrated the invitation of all non-Jews to worship the one true God. He is the God of all people (Matt. 8:11; 12:21; 28:19; Acts 13:46; 18:6; 21:21; 22:21; 26:20,23; Rom. 3:29; 9:24,30; 11:11; 15:9-11,16,18; Gal. 2:2; Eph. 2:11-18; 3:1-9.

b 118:1 See 1 Chr. 16:34.

c 118:3 or, “the family” = the Jewish priesthood

d 118:5 = the short form of Yahweh, the personal name of God (Exo. 15:2; Isa. 12:2; 26:4)

e 118:6 Hebrew: *’adam* = human beings

f 118:6 or, “What can man do to me!?” This is quoted in Heb. 13:6.

g 118:10 Hebrew: *goyim* = non-Jews

13 They chased me until I was almost defeated, but Yahweh helped me. 14 Yah gives me strength and causes me to sing. He has saved me.

15 Shouts of joy and victory come from the tents of those who do right: “Yahweh has done powerful things! 16 The power of Yahweh has won the victory. The Always-Present One has done powerful things!”

17 I will not die but live. And, I will announce what Yah has done. 18 Yah has taught me a difficult lesson. But He did not let me die.

19 Open the temple gates for me, so that I may come in through them and thank Yah. 20 This is Yahweh’s gate. Only those who are righteous may enter through it. 21 O One Who Is Always Present, I thank You for answering me. You have saved me.

22 The Stone that the builders did not want^a became the

a 118:22 Because they thought it was worthless, they rejected it. Just as David was rejected but became the next king anyway, so Christ would become the head of God’s kingdom on earth despite all the attempts of the Jewish leaders to prevent it.

Cornerstone.^b 23 The Always-Present One did this, and it is a wonderful thing for us to see.^c 24 This is the day that Yahweh has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

25 Please, O Yahweh, save us now!^d Please, O Yahweh, give us success now. 26 Blessed is the One who comes in the Name of Yahweh.^e We bless all of you from the temple of Yahweh. 27 Yahweh is God!^f And, He has given us light.^g Join in the festival with branches in your hands. Come to the corners^h of the altar.

28 You are my God, and I will thank You. My God, I will exalt You. 29 O you people, thank Yahweh, because

That “Stone” was Jesus the Messiah (Isa. 28:16).

b 118:22 This verse is quoted in Matt. 21:42; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17; Acts 4:11; and 1 Pet. 2:7. See also Eph. 2:20-22; 1 Cor. 3:11; Col. 1:15-20. Compare Isa. 19:13 where the same Hebrew word (*pinah*) is used as a metaphor for a leader.

c 118:23 literally, “in your eyes.” This verse was quoted in Matt. 21:42 and Mark 12:10-11.

d 118:25 Hebrew: *hoshiy’ah na’* = Hosanna! This was a prayer (Ps. 20:9).

e 118:26 This was a priestly benediction pronounced upon those who entered the temple courtyards to worship

f 118:27 = He is the one true God.

g 118:27 or, “He shines on us.” = God’s benevolence. Compare Num. 6:25. Here “light” means deliverance (compare Ps. 43:3).

h 118:27 literally, “the horns” = projections (Exo. 27:2; 30:2; 37:25; 1 Kings 2:28)

He is good. His constant love continues forever.

The Law of Yahweh:

'ALEPH (א, א)

119¹Happy^a are the people who live pure lives. They follow Yahweh's teachings. ²Happy are the people who keep His rules. They ask Him for help with their whole heart. ³They don't do what is wrong. They follow His ways. ⁴O God, You commanded that Your orders must be fully obeyed. ⁵I wish I were more consistent about obeying Your decrees. ⁶Then I would not be ashamed when I think about all Your commands. ⁷When I learned that Your decisions are fair, I thanked You with an honest heart. ⁸I will obey Your decrees. Don't ever abandon me!^b

BETH (ב, ב)

⁹How can a young man live a

a 119:1 or, "Blessed". The Hebrew word is *'ashrey*.

b 119:8 This psalm is an acrostic psalm; that is, sections of the psalm begin with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet. In this case, every 8 verses begins with a different Hebrew letter. In other words, there are 22 sections of 8 verses each. The first letter in each verse of the first section is the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The first letter in each verse of the second section is the second letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and so forth.

pure life? He can do it by obeying Your Word. ¹⁰With all my heart, I have searched for You! Don't let me stray from Your commands. ¹¹I have taken Your words to heart, so that I would not sin against You. ¹²O Yahweh, You should be praised! Teach me Your decrees. ¹³My lips will declare all the decisions that You have spoken. ¹⁴I rejoice in living by Your rules, just as people enjoy great riches. ¹⁵I ponder Your orders, and I study Your ways. ¹⁶I take delight in obeying Your decrees. I will not forget Your Word.

GIMEL (ג, ג)

¹⁷Be good to me, Your servant, so that I may live. Then I will obey Your Word. ¹⁸Open my eyes to see the wonderful things coming from Your teachings.^c ¹⁹I am a pilgrim^d on earth. Don't hide Your commands from me. ²⁰I long to study Your decisions all the time. ²¹You reprimand arrogant people. Those who ignore Your commands are cursed. ²²Don't let me be insulted and hated, because I keep Your rules. ²³Even though

c 119:18 literally, "the law"; the Hebrew word is *torah*.

d 119:19 or, "a stranger" = a temporary resident. Compare Heb. 11:13.

princes may officially speak against me, I, Your servant, will meditate upon Your decrees. ²⁴Your rules give me pleasure. They give me good advice.

DALETH (ד, 7)

²⁵I am about to die. According to Your Word, give me life. ²⁶I told You about my life, and You answered me. Teach me Your decrees. ²⁷Help me to understand the meaning of Your orders. Then I will meditate on Your wonders. ²⁸I am tired and sad. Make me strong by Your Word. ²⁹Don't let me be dishonest. Be kind to me through Your teachings. ³⁰I have chosen the path of truth. I have focused upon Your decisions. ³¹I hold onto Your rules. O Yahweh, don't let me be disgraced! ³²I will eagerly obey Your commands, because You have made me happy.

HE (ה, 7)

³³O Yahweh, teach me to follow Your decrees. Then I will keep them until the end. ³⁴Help me understand, so that I can keep Your teachings. I will obey them with all my heart. ³⁵Help me live by^a Your commands,

because that makes me happy. ³⁶Help me want to obey Your rules instead of desiring tainted money.^b ³⁷Keep me from looking at worthless things. Let me live by Your Word. ³⁸Keep Your promise to me, Your servant. I revere You. ³⁹Take away the disgrace that I fear. Your decisions are good. ⁴⁰Listen, I yearn to follow Your orders! Give me life because of Your righteousness.

WAW (ו, 7)

⁴¹O Yahweh, show me Your constant love. Save me by Your Word. ⁴²Then I will have an answer for the people who insult me. I trust whatever You say.^c ⁴³Don't ever prevent me from speaking Your truth. I depend upon the fairness of Your decisions. ⁴⁴I will always obey Your teachings — forever and ever. ⁴⁵And, I will live in freedom, because I seek Your orders. ⁴⁶I will discuss Your rules next to kings. And, I will not be ashamed.^d ⁴⁷I enjoy obeying Your commands; I love them! ⁴⁸I praise Your

b 119:36 Some people want to get rich more than they want to follow God's will. See 1 Tim. 6:10 and Col. 3:5.

c 119:42 literally, "I trust in Your Word."

d 119:46 Compare Matt. 10:18-20; Acts 4:19; 5:29; 26:2.

a 119:35 literally, "walk in the path of"

commands, which I love. And, I meditate upon Your decrees.

ZAYIN (ז, ז)

⁴⁹Remember Your promise to me, Your servant. It gives me hope. ⁵⁰It comforted me even when I was suffering. Your Word gives me life.^a ⁵¹Arrogant people make fun of me all the time. Nevertheless, I will not turn aside from Your teachings. ⁵²O Yahweh, I remember Your decisions from long ago. I receive comfort from them. ⁵³I become furious with evil people. They have abandoned Your teachings. ⁵⁴I sing about Your decrees wherever I stay. ⁵⁵O Yahweh, I reflect upon You at night. I will obey Your teachings. ⁵⁶This is what I will do: I will follow Your orders.

CHETH (ח, ח)

⁵⁷O Yahweh, You are my choice. I promise to obey Your words. ⁵⁸I am praying to You with all my heart. Be kind to me, as You have promised. ⁵⁹I thought about my life, and I decided to obey Your rules.^b ⁶⁰I will hurry and not wait to obey Your commands.

⁶¹Even if evil people tie me up with ropes, I will not forget Your teachings. ⁶²I get up in the middle of the night to thank You,^c because Your decisions are right. ⁶³I am a friend to anyone who reveres You, to those who follow Your orders. ⁶⁴O Yahweh, Your constant love fills the earth. Teach me Your decrees.

TETH (ט, ט)

⁶⁵You have done good things for me, Your servant, as You have promised, O Yahweh. ⁶⁶Teach me knowledge and good judgment, because I trust Your commands. ⁶⁷Before I received discipline, I used to do wrong. But now I obey Your Word. ⁶⁸You are good, and You do what is good. Teach me Your decrees. ⁶⁹Arrogant people have made up lies about me. But I will follow Your orders with all my heart. ⁷⁰Those people have no feelings, but I love Your teachings. ⁷¹It was good for me to receive discipline, so that I would learn Your decrees. ⁷²Your teachings are worth more to me than thousands of pieces of gold and silver.^d

a 119:50 Compare 1 Cor. 4:15; Heb. 4:12; James 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23.

b 119:59 literally, "and I turned my feet toward Your testimonies." Compare Luke 15:17-18.

c 119:62 Compare Ps. 63:6; Acts 16:25.

d 119:72 This is an idiom which means: "more than all the money in the world".

YODH (y, ך)

⁷³Your hands made me, and You sustain me. Give me understanding, so that I can learn Your commands. ⁷⁴Those who revere You will be glad when they see me, because I put my hope in Your Word. ⁷⁵O Yahweh, I know that Your decisions are fair. And, it was right for You to punish me. ⁷⁶Please comfort me with Your constant love, as You promised me, Your servant. ⁷⁷Have mercy on me, so that I may live. I love Your teachings. ⁷⁸Bring disgrace upon arrogant people, because they told lies about me. As for me, I will meditate upon Your orders. ⁷⁹Let those who revere You come back to me. They know Your rules. ⁸⁰May I obey Your decrees perfectly. Then I will never be ashamed.

KAPH (k, ך)

⁸¹I am worn out from waiting for You to save me. But I put my trust in Your Word. ⁸²My eyes are tired from looking for Your promise. I think: "When will You comfort me!?" ⁸³Even though I am like a leather wine-bag^a shriveled up in smoke, I do not forget Your decrees. ⁸⁴How long must I wait!? When will You execute

judgment upon those who are hurting me!? ⁸⁵Arrogant people have dug pits to trap me. They won't have anything to do with Your teachings. ⁸⁶All of Your commands can be trusted. Liars are hurting me. Help me! ⁸⁷They have almost put me in the grave. Nevertheless, I have not abandoned Your orders. ⁸⁸Through Your constant love, give me life, so that I can obey Your rules.

LAMED (l, ך)

⁸⁹O Yahweh, Your Word is everlasting. It continues forever in heaven. ⁹⁰Your loyalty will go on from now on. You made the earth, and it still stands. ⁹¹Everything endures until this day, because of Your laws. All things serve You. ⁹²If I had not loved Your teachings, then I would have died in my misery. ⁹³I will never forget Your orders, because, through them, You have given me life. ⁹⁴I belong to You. Save me! I have been seeking Your orders. ⁹⁵Evil people are waiting to destroy me. But I will think about Your rules. ⁹⁶Every perfect thing that I see has its limits, but Your commands have no limits!

MEM (m, ך)

⁹⁷O how I love Your teachings!

^a 119:83 This was an old container.

I meditate upon them all day long. ⁹⁸Your commands make me wiser than my enemies. Your commands are mine forever! ⁹⁹I have greater insight than all my teachers, because I meditate upon Your rules. ¹⁰⁰I have more understanding than old men, because I follow Your orders. ¹⁰¹I have avoided every evil path, so that I could obey Your Word. ¹⁰²I haven't turned away from Your decisions, because You Yourself taught me. ¹⁰³Your promises are so sweet to me. They are like honey to my mouth. ¹⁰⁴Your orders give me understanding. Therefore, I hate every false way.

NUN (נ, נ)

¹⁰⁵Your Word is like a lamp for my feet, and a light for my path.^a ¹⁰⁶I will do whatever I have vowed, obeying Your fair decisions. ¹⁰⁷I have suffered a lot. O Yahweh, give me life by Your Word. ¹⁰⁸O Yahweh, please accept my spontaneous praise. And teach me Your decisions. ¹⁰⁹My life is in constant danger, but I haven't forgotten Your teachings. ¹¹⁰Evil people have set a trap

for me, but I haven't strayed from Your orders. ¹¹¹I will follow Your rules forever. They make me happy. ¹¹²I will always try to do whatever You decree—until the end!

SAMECH (ס, ס)

¹¹³I hate double-minded people,^b but I love Your teachings. ¹¹⁴You are my Refuge and my Shield. I trust Your Word. ¹¹⁵Get away from me, you people who do wrong! I want to keep the commands of my God! ¹¹⁶Sustain me as You've promised, so that I may live. Don't let my hopes be crushed. ¹¹⁷Hold me up, and I'll be safe. I will always respect Your decrees. ¹¹⁸You reject everyone who strays from Your decrees. Their lies mislead them. ¹¹⁹Like trash, You discard all the evil people of the world. That is why I love Your rules. ¹²⁰I shiver in fear of You. I am in awe of Your decisions.

'AYIN (ע, ע)

¹²¹I have done what is just and fair. Don't leave me to the mercy of my oppressors. ¹²²Please guarantee a blessing for me, Your servant! Don't let arrogant

^a 119:105 or, "my way." Compare 2 Pet. 1:19; Rev. 22:4.

^b 119:113 See James 1:8.

people oppress me. ¹²³My eyes are tired from watching for Your saving help and the fulfillment of Your righteous promise. ¹²⁴Show Your constant love to me, Your servant. And teach me Your decrees. ¹²⁵I am Your servant. Give me insight, so that I can understand Your rules. ¹²⁶O Yahweh, it is time to act! People have violated Your teachings. ¹²⁷But I love Your commands more than I desire gold, even the purest gold. ¹²⁸And, I completely respect all of Your orders. I hate every false way!

PE (p, פ)

¹²⁹Your rules are wonderful. That is why I abide by them. ¹³⁰Explaining Your words enlightens,^a instructing the simple-minded ones.^b ¹³¹I yearn for Your commands. I open my mouth and breathe hard.^c ¹³²Look at me and have mercy on me, as You always do to those who love You.^d ¹³³Guide my steps in Your Word. Don't let any sin control me. ¹³⁴Redeem me from man's oppression. Then

a 119:130 Compare Luke 24:27,31; Acts 17:3; Eph. 1:18.

b 119:130 Compare Ps. 19:7.

c 119:131 like a traveler in the hot desert panting (= craving) for a cool breeze (Ps. 63:1; 84:2).

d 119:132 literally, "Your Name."

I will obey Your orders. ¹³⁵Show Your kindness to me, Your servant. Teach me Your decrees. ¹³⁶Plenty of tears flow from my eyes, because people won't obey Your teachings.

TSADHE (ts, צ)

¹³⁷O Yahweh, You are righteous. And, Your decisions are fair. ¹³⁸The rules that You commanded are righteous and completely trustworthy. ¹³⁹I am so upset; I'm worn out! Why? Because my enemies have ignored Your words. ¹⁴⁰Your Word is so pure. I love it. ¹⁴¹I am unimportant and despised, but I have not forgotten Your orders. ¹⁴²Your justice is always just. And, Your teachings are true. ¹⁴³I have had troubles and misery. But I take delight in Your commands. ¹⁴⁴Your rules are always right. Help me to understand them, so that I may live.

QOPH (q, ק)

¹⁴⁵O Yahweh, I call out to You with all my heart. Answer me and I will keep Your decrees. ¹⁴⁶I call out to You: "Save me!" I will obey Your rules. ¹⁴⁷I get up very early in the morning and cry out for help. I trust in

Your Word. ¹⁴⁸I stay awake all night, so that I can meditate upon Your Word. ¹⁴⁹Through Your constant love, listen to me. O Yahweh, preserve my life by Your judgment. ¹⁵⁰Lawless attackers are getting closer to me. But they live far from Your teachings. ¹⁵¹But, O Yahweh, You are close by. And, all Your commands are true. ¹⁵²Long ago, I learned from Your rules that You made them to last forever.

RESH (ר, 7)

¹⁵³Look upon my suffering and deliver me, because I have not forgotten Your teachings. ¹⁵⁴Argue my case and redeem me. Preserve my life by Your Word. ¹⁵⁵Salvation is far from evil people, because they don't seek out Your decrees. ¹⁵⁶O Yahweh, You are very kind. Preserve my life by Your decisions. ¹⁵⁷My persecutors and my foes are numerous. Nevertheless, I have not turned away from Your rules. ¹⁵⁸I see those traitors, and I am disgusted with them, because they won't obey Your Word. ¹⁵⁹Look how I love Your orders, O Yahweh! Through Your constant love, preserve my life. ¹⁶⁰The sum of

Your Word is truth.^a And, each of Your decisions is always fair!

SIN (ס, שׁ) / SHIN (שׁ, שׁ)

¹⁶¹Leaders attack me for no reason. Nevertheless, I revere Your Word. ¹⁶²I am as happy over Your Word as one who discovers a great treasure. ¹⁶³I hate and despise lying, but I love Your teachings. ¹⁶⁴I praise You seven times each day for Your fair decisions. ¹⁶⁵Those who love Your teachings will find true peace. There is no stumbling block for them.^b ¹⁶⁶I am waiting for You to save me, O Yahweh. I will obey Your commands. ¹⁶⁷I obey Your rules. I love them very much. ¹⁶⁸I obey Your orders and rules. You see everything I do.^c

TAU (ט, 7)

¹⁶⁹O Yahweh, may my cry for help come before You. Give me insight through Your Word. ¹⁷⁰May my plea come before You. Deliver me as You promised. ¹⁷¹Let me speak praise to You, because You have taught me

a 119:160 The whole body of God's revelation is truth—from the first words of Genesis to the last words of Revelation.

b 119:165 = an obstacle. Compare Lev. 19:14; Ezek. 7:19; 14:3; 44:12; Rom. 14:13; 1 Cor. 8:9; Rev. 2:14.

c 119:168 literally, "for all my ways are in front of You." Compare Prov. 5:21; Heb. 4:13.

Your decrees. ¹⁷²May my tongue sing about Your Word, because all of Your commands are fair. ¹⁷³Always be ready to help me, because I have chosen to follow Your orders. ¹⁷⁴O Yahweh, I yearn for You to save me. I take delight in Your teachings. ¹⁷⁵Let me live, so that I may praise You. Your decisions will help me. ¹⁷⁶I have gone astray^a like a lost sheep.^b Look for me, Your servant, because I have not forgotten Your commands.

A Cry for Help

120¹A song of ascents.^c When I was in trouble, I called out to Yahweh. And He answered me. ²O Yahweh, deliver me from liars, from deceivers.

³O you deceiver, what will God do to you? How will He punish you? ⁴He will do so with the sharp arrows of a warrior, and with the burning coals of broomwood.^d

a 119:176 or, “wandered away”. Compare Isa. 53:6; Matt. 10:6; 15:24; 18:12; Luke 15:4,6; 1 Pet. 2:25.

b 119:176 Compare Luke 19:10.

c 120:1 This psalm was written for the pilgrims who *went up* to Jerusalem for the three great annual festivals (Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles).

d 120:4 The broom tree has a low combustion point; it blazes up immediately with intense heat.

⁵How terrible it is to live in the land of Meshech.^e I have to dwell among the people of Kedar.^f ⁶I have dwelled too long with people who hate peace. ⁷I want peace, but when I talk for peace, they want war.

Help Comes from Yahweh

121¹A song of ascents. I look up to the hills,^g but from where will my help come? ²My help comes from Yahweh! He is the Maker of heaven and earth. ³He will not let you be defeated. He who guards you never sleeps. ⁴Listen, He who guards Israel never sleeps or rests.

⁵Yahweh is your Guardian. The Always-Present One protects you as the shade protects you from the sun. ⁶The sun cannot hurt you during the day. And, the moon cannot harm you at night.^h

e 120:5 referring to a people in the extreme northern part of Mesopotamia.

f 120:5 Kedar was a son of Ishmael (Gen. 25:13). An Arabian tribe descended from Kedar (Isa. 42:11; 60:7; Jer. 49:28). Dwelling among slanderers was like living among savages.

g 121:1 or, “mountains” = a reference to Jerusalem; that is, praying in the direction of the temple (1 Kings 8:31-53).

h 121:6 Many people believed that lunacy (insanity) was caused by continued exposure to the moon (Latin: *luna*). Compare the Greek word for epilepsy found in Matt. 4:24; 17:15; Mark 9:17;

⁷Yahweh will guard you from all dangers. He will guard your life.
⁸The Always-Present One will guard you as you come and go, from now on and forever.

Jerusalem

122¹A song of ascents.
 A psalm of David.

I was glad when they said to me: “Let us go to the House of Yahweh.”²We are standing inside your gates, O Jerusalem.

³Jerusalem is built like a city that is tightly joined together.^a

⁴The people from the tribes go up there.^b The tribes belong to Yah.^c They come to give thanks to the Name of Yahweh, as the law requires of Israel.⁵There stand the thrones for judgment, the thrones of the dynasty of David.

⁶Pray for Jerusalem’s peace:^d
 “May those who love you

prosper.”^e ⁷May there be peace within your walls and prosperity within your strong towers.”⁸For the sake of my relatives and friends, I repeat: “May there be peace in you!”⁹For the sake of the House of Yahweh, our God, I wish only what is best for you, O Jerusalem!

A Prayer for Mercy

123¹A song of ascents.
 O One Who Is Always

Present, I look up to You, You who dwell in heaven.²Listen, male slaves depend upon their masters. And, a female servant depends on her mistress. In the same way, we depend upon Yahweh, our God, until He shows us mercy.

³Have mercy on us, O Yahweh! Have mercy on us, because we have endured so much contempt.^f ⁴We have suffered so many insults from lazy people, and much contempt from proud people.

God Protects His People

124¹A song of ascents.
 A psalm of David.

What if Yahweh had not been on

Luke 9:39. But this could be referring to the cold nights which follow the intense heat of the day in Oriental countries.

a 122:3 pointing to a time *before* the Babylonian exile. Fortified, compact Jerusalem was situated on four hills that were almost impregnable topographically.

b 122:4 = making their annual pilgrimages (Exo. 23:17)

c 122:4 = the short form of Yahweh, the personal name of God (Exo. 15:2; Isa. 12:2; 26:4)

d 122:6 Hebrew: *shalom Yerushalaim*. Compare Jesus’ word-play in Luke 19:42.

e 122:6 Hebrew: *yishlayuw*

f 123:3 or, “scorn.” Compare the local Samaritans mentioned in Neh. 1:3; 2:19; 4:1-4.

our side!?! (Let Israel repeat this.)
²What if Yahweh had not been on our side, when men attacked us!?!³When they were furious at us, they would have swallowed us alive!⁴Then such waters would have drowned us. The stream would have overwhelmed us.⁵Then the raging waters would have overwhelmed us.⁶Praise Yahweh! He did not let them chew us up.⁷Like a bird, we have escaped from the hunter's trap. The trap has been broken, and we have escaped.⁸Our help comes from Yahweh,^a the One who made heaven and earth!

God Takes Care of His People

125¹A song of ascents. Those who trust Yahweh are like Mount Zion. It sits unmoved forever!^b²The mountains surround Jerusalem, and, Yahweh surrounds His

people—both now and forever!

³The evil people must not rule over the domain of those who do right. Otherwise, the people who do right would be tempted to do wrong.

⁴O Yahweh, be good to those who are good, to those whose hearts are honest.⁵But, O Yahweh, banish those who do evil,^c those who turn to dishonest ways.

Let there be peace upon Israel.^d

Thanksgiving for Restoration

126¹A song of ascents. When Yahweh gave prosperity back to Jerusalem, it seemed as if we were dreaming.^e²Then we were filled with laughter, and we sang happy songs. Then the foreign nations said: "Yahweh has done great

a 124:8 literally, "Our help (is) in the Name of Yahweh". Compare Ps. 121:2. The idea of God's eternity has a distinct connotation associated with the proper name of "Yahweh," which comes from the Hebrew verb *hayah* (= to be, to become). The RSV's marginal note of Exo. 3:14 is "I will be what I will be." So, the eternal, unchangeable nature of God is associated with the Name "Yahweh" (Isa. 40:28-31; 41:4; 43:10-11; 44:6-8).

b 125:1 In comparison with the very low depression of the Dead Sea (1,292 feet below sea level), which was nearby, Jerusalem's elevation (around 2,500 feet above sea level) was dramatically high.

c 125:5 = renegade hypocrites (Isa. 1:21-31; Jer. 5:1-6; 6:13-15; Hos. 4:4-10; Ps. 72:1-4; 78:67-72; 101:1-8). Leniency toward law-breakers leads to the complete breakdown of morality in society.

d 125:5 that is, upon the real Israel (John 14:27; 16:33; Gal. 6:16). This psalm was probably composed after the Babylonian exile, during the troublesome times of Ezra and Nehemiah (Neh. 6:12-13).

e 126:1 It hardly seemed possible that Cyrus (the Medo-Persian king) would be actually financing their return to their homeland and encouraging them in every way possible. It seemed too good to be true!

things with them!”^a ³Yahweh has done great things with us. We are glad.

⁴Yahweh gave us back our prosperity,^b as the streams bring back life in the Negev.^c ⁵Those who cry as they plant crops will sing joyfully at harvest-time. ⁶Those who go forth weeping^d as they carry out the bag of seeds to plant will return with songs of joy,^e carrying their bundles of grain.

True Security

127¹ A song of ascents. A psalm by Solomon.^f If Yahweh does **not** build the house, then the builders are wasting their time on it! If Yahweh does **not** guard the city, then it is pointless for the guards to stay awake.^g ²God gives sleep to those whom He loves.^h So,

a 126:2 See Ezra 1:1-4.

b 126:4 Compare Mal. 3:8-10.

c 126:4 = the desert to the south of Judea, toward the Sinai Peninsula. During the dry season, all of the desert streams (wadis) dry up completely.

d 126:6 Compare Ezra 4:11-24; Matt. 5:4.

e 126:6 Compare Ezra 6:16,22.

f 127:1 Psalm 72 is also ascribed to King Solomon.

g 127:1 literally, “the watchman stays awake in vain.” Without God’s blessing, no amount of diligent concern can save a city. The safety of the citizens depends entirely upon God.

h 127:2 Nathan the prophet gave the name of Jedidiah (“Yah’s beloved one”) to Solomon (2 Sam. 12:25). Also, God imparted great wisdom to Solomon during a dream that he had at Gibeon (1 Kings 3:5ff).

it’s useless for you people to get up early in the morning and stay up late at night,ⁱ working hard for a living. ³Look, children are a gift from Yahweh.^j Babies are a reward. ⁴Sons who are born to a young man are like arrows in the hand of a warrior. ⁵Happy is the man who has his bag full of arrows. These men will not be defeated when they fight their enemies in court.^k

Revere Yahweh!

128¹ A song of ascents. Happy are all those who revere Yahweh and obey Him. ²You will enjoy what you are working for.^l You will be happy, and it will go well with you. ³Your wife will give you many children, like a vine that produces a lot of fruit, flourishing right next to your home. Your children will bring many blessings to you, like olive branches that produce many olives in your yard. ⁴Listen, that is how the man who

i 127:2 = burning the candle at both ends without the blessing of God (Prov. 10:22)

j 127:3 Compare Gen. 29:31-35; 30:1-6,17-23; 1 Sam. 1:5-6,11,19-20.

k 127:5 literally, “at the gate,” which was the place for all public business (Job 5:4; Deut. 17:5; 21:19; 22:15,24; 25:7; Ruth 4:1; Isa. 29:21; Amos 5:12; Ps. 69:12)

l 128:2 literally, “You will surely eat (the fruit of) the labor of your hands.” Compare Eccl. 2:24-26; 2 Thes. 3:10.

respects Yahweh will be blessed.

⁵May Yahweh bless you from Mount Zion. May you enjoy the good things of Jerusalem all the days of your life. ⁶May you live to see your grandchildren.

Let there be peace upon Israel!

A Prayer against the Enemies of Israel

129¹A song of ascents. Since I^a was young, they have treated me badly many times. (Let Israel repeat this.) ²Since I was young, they have treated me badly many times. But they have **never** defeated me!^b ³Like farmers plowing, they plowed over my back, making long furrows. ⁴But Yahweh does what is right. He has set me free from those evil people.^c

⁵Let all those who hate Jerusalem^d be turned back in shame.

a 129:1 = the nation of Israel

b 129:2 Compare 2 Cor. 3:8-9.

c 129:4 literally, "He has cut the ropes of the evil people in two." = cessation of bondage. This metaphor of "ropes" may refer to the plow being tied to the necks of the oxen by a harness (Job 39:10; Hos. 11:1-4). By God's grace, the people of Israel had survived for centuries in the midst of a very unfriendly world.

d 129:5 literally, "Zion". It was the Holy City of God (Ps. 48:1), where God dwelt (Ps. 68:16), the mother-city of the world (Psalm 87), a type of the

⁶Let them be like the grass on the roof-top.^e It dries up before it has grown out much. ⁷There is not enough of it to fill a reaper's hand or to make it into a bundle to fill his arms. ⁸Let not those who pass by them say: "May Yahweh bless you! We bless you in the Name of Yahweh!"

Put Your Hope in Yahweh

130¹A song of ascents. O Yahweh, I am in big trouble! So, I call out to You for help. ²O Lord, please hear my voice. Listen to my prayer for help.

³O Lord, if You, O Yah, kept a record of all sins, then no one would be left! ⁴But You do forgive us. Therefore, You will be revered.

⁵I wait eagerly for Yahweh to help me. And, I trust in His Word! ⁶My soul waits for the Lord to help me more than night watchmen wait for the dawn.

new Jerusalem (Rev. 21:1-8).

e 129:6 In the Mid-East, a thin, insulating, layer of earth was put upon the flat roofs of their houses. Whenever rain showers came, grass would spring up quickly there. But, because the soil was so shallow, the hot sun would soon wither the grass. Nothing of value would ever be produced by this superficial grass.

⁷O people of Israel, put your hope in Yahweh because He is loving, and He is fully able to redeem. ⁸He will redeem Israel from all their sins!

Child-like Trust

131¹A song of ascents.
A psalm of David.

O Yahweh, my heart is not proud. I don't look down on others. I don't concern myself with great affairs. Neither do I worry about things which are too wonderful for me to understand. ²Instead, I am calm, and I am quiet. I am like a toddler with its mother. I'm at peace, like a little baby.

³O people of Israel, put your hope in Yahweh—from now on and forever.

God's Temple

132¹A song of ascents.
O Yahweh, remember David and everything that he suffered.^a

²David made a vow to Yahweh. He made a promise to the Mighty God of Jacob. ³He said: "I will not go home to my house,

^a **132:1** or, "endured." = hardships (compare 1 Sam. 22-31; 2 Sam. 6:1-11; 2 Sam. 8; 2 Sam. 13-19; 1 Kings 1; 1 Kings 5:3; 1 Chr. 22:8). David was deceased, but the memory of him was still strong.

nor will I lie down on my bed, ⁴nor will I close my eyes, nor will I allow myself to sleep ⁵until I provide a permanent place for Yahweh, a dwelling-place for the Mighty God of Jacob."

⁶Listen, in Bethlehem,^b we heard about the Holy Chest.^c We found it in the fields of Jaar:^d ⁷"Let us go to His dwelling-place. Let's worship at His footstool."^e

2 Chronicles 6:41-42

⁸"Rise up, O Yahweh, and come to Your resting-place, You and the Holy Chest, the symbol of Your strength. ⁹May Your priests do what is right. May those who follow You sing for joy."

¹⁰For the sake of Your servant David, do not reject Your anointed^f king.

^b **132:6** literally, "Ephrathah", its ancient name (Gen. 35:16-19; 48:7; Ruth 4:11; Mic. 5:2)

^c **132:6** This was the centerpiece of the Jewish worship of the true God. It contained the most sacred of items from the tabernacle. See Exo. 25:10-22. Ps. 132:8 is the only place the ark of the covenant is mentioned in the Book of Psalms.

^d **132:6** = Kiriath-Jearim, also called Baalah, a city of Judah (Josh. 15:60) where the ark of the covenant rested for 20 years (1 Sam. 7:1ff). See 1 Chr. 13:5-6.

^e **132:7** = God's throne

^f **132:10** Officially rubbing the candidate with oil signified his separation to the Lord for a particular task as well as preparing that person with divine guidance. See 1 Sam. 2:10; 12:3; 24:6; 26:9,11,16; 2 Sam. 1:12-16; 19:21; 22:51; 23:1; Ps. 2:6; Zech. 4:14; Acts 2:30.

¹¹Yahweh made a promise to David which Yahweh would certainly not take back.^a He vowed: “After you, I will cause one of your descendants^b to rule as king. ¹²But, your sons must obey My covenant and the rules that I teach them.^c Then their sons after them will rule on your throne forever.”^d

¹³Yahweh has chosen Jerusalem. He wants it for His home. ¹⁴He says: “This is my resting-place forever. Here is where I want to stay. ¹⁵I will bless her with plenty of nourishment. I will satisfy her poor people with food. ¹⁶I will let her priests receive deliverance. And, those of her who follow God will truly sing for joy!

¹⁷“There I will make a king come from the family of David.^e For My anointed one, I will

provide a descendant.^f ¹⁸I will cover his enemies with shame, but the crown on his head will shine.”

Brotherhood

133¹A song of ascents.
A psalm of David.^g

Look how good and pleasant it is when brothers^h dwell together in such unity!ⁱ ²Harmony is like having the special anointing mixture of olive oil poured on the priest's head,^j running down on his beard. It ran down Aaron's beard onto the collar of his robes.^k ³Harmony is as refreshing as the dew of Mount Hermon^l that falls on the hills

f 132:17 literally, “I will prepare a lamp for My anointed one.” = perpetuation of David's dynasty in Jesus Christ (Ps. 110:1-4). The metaphor of the lamp was a figure of prosperity (Ps. 18:10,28; 89:17) and guidance (Ps. 119:105).

g 133:1 Although Davidic authorship is missing in the Aramaic Targum and in some manuscripts of the Greek Septuagint (LXX), this psalm was attributed to David in the Psalms Scroll of Qumran (Cave No. 11) next to the Dead Sea.

h 133:1 = Jewish brothers on their way to worship together in Jerusalem

i 133:1 See where Jesus prayed for our unity in John 17:20-23. Compare Matt. 23:8.

j 133:2 See Exo. 29:7; 30:22,25,30; Lev. 21:10.

k 133:2 See Lev. 8. Because Aaron, the high priest, wore the chest-plate (ephod) containing all the names of the twelve tribes, any anointing oil that was poured upon his head ran down over all the tribes of Israel. This act symbolically emphasized their oneness and unity, according to Dr. Rawlinson.

l 133:3 This prominent 9,200-foot mountain is about 100 miles north of Jerusalem. The cool breezes originating from Mount Hermon produce a heavy dew in Jerusalem (about 2,500' in elevation).

a 132:11 Compare Heb. 6:13-20.

b 132:11 eventually referring to the Messiah. See Heb. 1:5.

c 132:12 The physical descendants of King David were bound by a condition—faithfulness to God's covenant. This promise to David was terminated at the time of Jehoniah because of a long succession of evil ways in David's dynasty (Jer. 22:30).

d 132:12 = spiritually speaking, David's royal lineage would continue indefinitely through Jesus Christ (Luke 1:31-33). Jesus, the son of David, was completely obedient to God (Heb. 5:8-9; Rev. 3:21).

e 132:17 literally, “I will cause the horn of David to sprout.” = enlarging his power

of Jerusalem. There Yahweh pronounces His blessing—life forevermore!

Those who Serve at Night

134¹A song of ascents.^a Listen! Praise Yahweh, all you servants of Yahweh, who minister in the temple of Yahweh at night.² Raise your hands in the Sanctuary, and praise Yahweh.³ May Yahweh bless you^b from Mount Zion. He made heaven and earth!

A Song of Praise

135¹Praise Yah! Praise the Name of Yahweh.^c Praise Him, O you servants of Yahweh,² who minister in the temple of Yahweh and in the courtyards of the temple of our God.

³Praise Yah, because Yahweh is good. Sing praises to His Name because it is pleasant.⁴ Yah has chosen the people of Jacob for Himself. He has chosen the

people of Israel for His very own.

⁵I know that Yahweh is great. Our Lord is greater than all the gods.^d ⁶Yahweh does whatever He wishes, in heaven or on earth, in the seas or in all the deep oceans.^e ⁷He brings the storm clouds from the ends of the earth. He sends the lightning with the rain.^f He brings out the wind from His storehouses.^g

⁸He destroyed the firstborn males in Egypt, both human and animal.^h ⁹He sent forth many signs and miracles among you, O Egypt! He did amazing things to Pharaoh and to all his servants.ⁱ ¹⁰He defeated great nations and killed powerful kings: ¹¹Sihon, the king of the Amorites;^j Og, the king of Bashan;^k and all the other kings of Canaan. ¹²Then God gave their land as a gift,

a 134:1 This psalm was written for the pilgrims who went up to Jerusalem for the three great annual festivals (Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles). Psalm 134 is the fitting conclusion of the group of song-poems known as “the Psalms of Ascents” (Ps. 120–134).

b 134:3 See Num. 6:24–26.

c 135:1 Psalm 135 and Psalm 136 are known as “The Great Hallel (Praise)”. They were probably post-exilic in origin.

d 135:5 See Exo. 18:11. Compare 1 Cor. 8:4–6. Some scholars think that the Hebrew word *elohim* here refers to earthly rulers as in Psalm 82.

e 135:6 Unlike the local gods, Yahweh who is the one true God was and is in control over all of nature. He created it. Ancient pagans were mystified by the weather. So, they attributed these phenomena to gods which they invented.

f 135:7 Compare Job 28:26.

g 135:7 See Job 38:22; Jer. 10:13.

h 135:8 See Exo. 11:5; 12:29.

i 135:9 Compare Ps. 105:27–36.

j 135:11 See Num. 21:21–30; Deut. 2:24–37.

k 135:11 See Num. 21:33–35; Deut. 3:1–14.

a gift to His own people, the Israelites.^a

¹³O Yahweh, Your Name is everlasting. O Yahweh, You will be remembered from now on.
¹⁴You defend Your people. You have compassion upon Your servants.

Psalms 115:4-11

¹⁵The idols of foreign nations are made of silver and gold. They are only made by human hands.
¹⁶They may have mouths, but they cannot speak. They have eyes, but they cannot see.
¹⁷They may have ears, but they cannot hear. Yes, they have no breath in their mouths.
¹⁸The people who make idols and trust them are all just like idols.^b
¹⁹O household of Israel, praise Yahweh! O household of Aaron, praise Yahweh!
²⁰O household of Levi, praise Yahweh! You people who revere Yahweh should praise Him!
²¹You people who live in Jerusalem, praise Yah on Mount Zion!

Praise Yah!

a 135:12 literally, "Israel." See Ps. 136:19-22.

b 135:18 Compare Isa. 1:31. See Ps. 115:4-8.

A Hymn of Praise and Thanksgiving

136¹O give thanks to Yahweh, because He is good. His constant love continues forever.^c
²O give thanks to the God of gods. His constant love continues forever.
³O give thanks to the Lord of lords.^d His constant love continues forever.
⁴Only He can do great miracles. His constant love continues forever.
⁵Using His skill, He made the skies. His constant love continues forever.
⁶He spread out the earth over the seas. His constant love continues forever.
⁷He made the great lights.^e His constant love continues forever.
⁸He made the sun to govern the day.^f His constant love continues forever.
⁹He made the moon and the stars to govern the night.^g His constant love continues forever.
¹⁰He killed the firstborn ones of the Egyptians.^h His constant love continues forever.
¹¹He

c 136:1 See 1 Chr. 16:34. This is the only psalm which has this line repeated in *every* verse as a liturgical refrain.

d 136:3 = rulership over all human authority. See 1 Tim. 6:14-16; Rev. 17:14; 19:16.

e 136:7 = the sun, the moon, and the stars; see Gen. 1:14.

f 136:8 See Gen. 1:16.

g 136:9 See Gen. 1:16.

h 136:10 literally, "He struck down Egypt in their firstborn ones." See Exo. 12:29; Ps. 78:51; 135:8.

brought the people of Israel out of Egypt.^a His constant love continues forever. ¹²He did it with His great power and strength.^b His constant love continues forever. ¹³He parted the waters of the Red Sea. His constant love continues forever. ¹⁴He brought the Israelites through the middle of it.^c His constant love continues forever. ¹⁵But He drowned the Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea.^d His constant love continues forever. ¹⁶God led His people through the desert. His constant love continues forever. ¹⁷He defeated great kings. His constant love continues forever. ¹⁸He killed powerful kings. His constant love continues forever: ¹⁹Sihon, the king of the Amorites. His constant love continues forever. ²⁰And Og, the king of Bashan.^e His constant love continues forever. ²¹He gave Sihon and

Og's land away as a gift. His constant love continues forever. ²²It was a gift to His servants, the Israelites. His constant love continues forever. ²³He is the One who didn't forget about us when we were in deep trouble. His constant love continues forever. ²⁴He freed us from our enemies.^f His constant love continues forever. ²⁵He gives food to every living creature.^g His constant love continues forever. ²⁶O give thanks to the God of heaven. His constant love continues forever.

The Mourning of the Prisoners in Babylon

137¹By the rivers of Babylon,^h weⁱ sat down and wept^j when we remembered Jerusalem. ²We hung up our harps on the branches of the poplar^k trees nearby. ³Those who had captured us asked us for song lyrics there. Our enemies demanded happy songs.

a 136:11 literally, "out from among them." See Exo. 12:51; Ps. 105:43.

b 136:12 literally, "with a strong hand and an outstretched arm." Compare the same expression in Exo. 3:20; 6:1,6; 13:9; Deut. 4:34; 5:15; 7:19; 26:8; Jer. 32:21; Ps. 44:3.

c 136:14 See Exo. 14:21-22,29; Ps. 78:13.

d 136:15 See Exo. 14:27.

e 136:20 the whole tableland which is east of the Jordan River (Gen. 37:25; Josh. 22:9; 2 Sam. 2:9). Along with the term "Gilead," "Bashan" refers to the land east of the Jordan, as distinguished from the plateau of Moab (Deut. 3:10; Josh. 13:11; 2 Kings 10:33).

f 136:24 = the Babylonian captors (Psalm 137)

g 136:25 literally, "to all flesh." Compare Ps. 104:27-28; 115:16.

h 137:1 Here the name "Babylon" is used for the entire country. These canals (Jer. 51:13) would be tributaries of the Euphrates River or the Tigris River.

i 137:1 Jewish slaves

j 137:1 This psalm was probably written while the Israelites were in exile in Babylonia or shortly afterward.

k 137:2 or, "willow"

They said: “Sing us a song about Zion!”

⁴But we cannot sing songs of Yahweh in a foreign land!^a

⁵O Jerusalem, if I forget you, let my right hand lose its skill.

⁶Let my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth,^b if I don’t remember you. Let these things happen, if I do not think of Jerusalem as my greatest joy.

⁷O Yahweh, hold it against the Edomites^c—what they did^d on the day when Jerusalem fell.^e They yelled: “Tear the city down! Tear it down to its foundations!”

⁸O people of Babylon, you are

doomed!^f The people who pay you back will rejoice over you.^g They will punish you for what you did to us.⁹ They will be only too happy to grab your little babies and throw^h them against the rocks!ⁱ

A Song of Praise to God

138¹A psalm of David. O One Who Is Always Present, I will thank You with all my heart. I will sing praises to You in front of the so-called gods.² I will worship, facing Your holy temple.^j And, I will thank You for Your constant love and loyalty. You have made Your Name and Your Word greater than anything.³ On the day when I called out to You, You answered me. You made me strong and brave.

⁴O Yahweh, may all the kings of the earth thank You. Why? Because they will hear the words which You speak.⁵ They will

a 137:4 Compare Prov. 25:20. Lands outside of Palestine were “unclean” for an Israelite (Hos. 9:3; Ezek. 4:13).

b 137:6=beingunabletospeak.CompareEzek.3:26.

c 137:7 literally, “the sons of Edom.” The Edomites were descendants of Esau (Gen. 25:30), the older, twin brother of Jacob. Earlier, some other descendants of Esau, the Amalekites were the first enemies to oppose the descendants of Jacob on their way out of Egypt (Exo. 17:8). The Edomites refused to permit the Israelites to pass through their land (Num. 20:17-20). The treacherous Doeg was an Edomite (1 Sam. 21-22). The family of Herod the Great was the last of the Edomites (see Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 14.1.3). He tried to snuff out the Christ child’s life (Matt. 2:16). So, what started as a quarrel between brothers developed into what amounted to a family feud between nations (Amos 1:11-12; Isa. 34; 63:1-4; Jer. 49:7-22; Ezek. 25:8,12-14; 35:1ff).

d 137:7 Compare Obad. 1:11-13; Lam. 4:21-22.

e 137:7 The city of Jerusalem was captured by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. after a very long siege.

f 137:8 Compare Isa. 13:14,19-22; 21:1-10; 47:1ff; Jer. 50-51; Hab. 2:4-20.

g 137:8 King Cyrus conquered the Babylonians. Compare divine retribution in Exo. 21:23-24; Lev. 24:19-20; Deut. 19:21.

h 137:9 or, “dash” = smashing

i 137:9 Compare 2 Kings 8:12; 15:16; Nah. 3:10; Hos. 10:14; 13:16; Amos 1:13; Luke 19:44.

j 138:2 This refers to the tabernacle (2 Sam. 6:17). Several other psalms ascribed to David use the word “temple” (Ps. 5:7; 11:4; 18:6; 27:4 and the title of Psalm 30).

sing about what the Always-Present One has done, because His glory is great.

⁶Although Yahweh is supreme, He still takes care of those who are humble.^a But He knows to stay away from those who are proud. ⁷O Yahweh, even when I am in the middle of trouble, You keep me alive. When my enemies are angry, You reach down and save me by Your power. ⁸O Yahweh, You complete everything for me. O Yahweh, Your constant love continues forever. You made me; don't abandon me!^b

God Knows Everything

139¹To the director of music. A psalm of David.

O Yahweh, You have examined me. You know everything there is about me. ²You know when I sit down and when I get up. From a distance, You understand my thoughts. ³You know where I go and where I lie down. You are familiar with all of my ways. ⁴O Yahweh, even before I say a word, behold, You already

know what I'm going to say. ⁵You surround me—in front and in back. You have put Your hand upon me. ⁶Such knowledge is too wonderful for me. It's more than I can understand.

⁷Where could I go to get away from Your Spirit!?! Nowhere. Where could I run from Your presence!?! Nowhere. ⁸If I were to go up to the skies, You are there. If I were to lie down where the dead are, behold, You are there. ⁹If I were to get up at dawn, or dwell in the remotest part of the sea, ¹⁰even there Your hand would guide me. You would hold me tight with Your right hand.

¹¹If I were to think: "The darkness will surely hide me. The light around me will turn into night." ¹²Even the darkness would not be dark to You. The night would be as light as the day. To You, darkness and light are the same.

¹³You made all my intricate parts.^c You formed me in my mother's womb. ¹⁴I thank You because of the amazing, unique

^a 138:6 or, "lowly." Compare James 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5.

^b 138:8 literally, "Do not abandon the works of Your hands." This psalm may have been written about the time of King David's death (1 Kings 2:10; 1 Chr. 29:28-30).

^c 139:13 literally, "For You have possessed my kidneys"

way You made me. What You have done is wonderful! I know this very well. ¹⁵You observed my frame being formed as I took shape in my mother's body. When I was put together there, ¹⁶You saw my unformed body^a as it was being formed. All the days planned for me were written in Your Book,^b before I was even one day old.

¹⁷O God, Your thoughts are precious to me. How vast is the totality of them! ¹⁸If I could count them, Your thoughts would exceed the number of all the grains of sand.^c When I wake up, I am still with You.

¹⁹O God, I wish You would kill the evil people! Get away from me, you murderers! ²⁰These men blaspheme You. Your enemies abuse Your Name. ²¹O Yahweh, I hate those who hate You. I detest those who rise up against You.^d ²²I feel only hatred for them. They have become my enemies, too.

²³O God, examine me and know my heart. Test me and know my anxious feelings. ²⁴See if there is any bad trait in me. Lead me in the everlasting way.

A Prayer for Protection

140¹To the director of music. A psalm of David.^e

O Yahweh, rescue me from an evil person! Protect me from a cruel man.^f ²He makes up evil plans in his heart. He is always starting fights. ³These men make their tongue as sharp as a snake's tongue. Like dangerous snakes, poison is under their lips.^g (Selah)

⁴O Yahweh, guard me from the power of evil people. Protect me from a cruel man who plans to trip my feet. ⁵Arrogant men have hidden a trap for me. They have spread out the cords of their net. They have set traps beside the road for me. (Selah)

⁶I said to Yahweh: "You are my God!" O Yahweh, listen to my prayer for help. ⁷O Lord Yahweh, the Strength of my salvation, You

a 139:16 literally, "Your eyes saw my embryo." = Before David was even born, God took note of his fetus.

b 139:16 Compare Exo. 32:32-33; Ps. 56:8; 69:28; Mal. 3:16; Philp. 4:3; Rev. 3:5; 21:27.

c 139:18 Compare Job 5:8-9; 26:14; 37:5; Ps. 40:5; Rom. 11:33-36.

d 139:21 Compare Mark 3:5 where Jesus was grieved because of the hardness of their hearts.

e 140:1 This psalm may have been written when David was in the town of Keilah (1 Sam. 22:20-23; 23:1-6).

f 140:1 literally, "a man of violence." Hebrew: *chamas*
g 140:3 This line is quoted in Rom. 3:13.

protect me in battle. ⁸O Yahweh, do not give the evil man what he wants. Don't allow his plan to succeed, or else he will become proud. (Selah)

⁹Let the heads of those who are surrounding me be covered with the trouble that their talk has caused. ¹⁰Let burning coals fall on them. Throw them into the fire, or into muddy pits from which they cannot escape. ¹¹Don't let liars become entrenched in the land. May disaster quickly hunt down violent men.

¹²I know Yahweh will defend the cause of needy people. In court, He will get justice for the poor. ¹³Righteous people will certainly thank You. Honest people will live in Your presence.

A Prayer for Preservation from Evil

141 ¹A psalm of David.
O Yahweh, I call out to You. Come quickly to me! Listen when I call to You for help. ²Let my prayer be like incense^a placed in front of You.

Let my praise^b be like the evening sacrifice.^c

³O Yahweh, help me control my tongue. Help me be careful about what I say. ⁴Don't let me turn aside to anything that is evil, or to join others in doing wrong. Don't let me participate with those people who are practicing sin. ⁵If a righteous man were to punish me, that would be a kind thing. If he were to correct me, that would be like having olive oil put on my head. I shouldn't refuse it.

But I pray against those who do evil. ⁶When their leaders are thrown down from the cliffs, then the people will know that I have spoken the truth. ⁷They will say: "Just as the ground is plowed and broken up, so our bones have been scattered near the grave."

⁸O Lord Yahweh, I look to You for help. I take refuge in You. Don't risk my life! ⁹Protect me from the traps that they set for me, and from the snares of wrongdoers. ¹⁰Let those evil people fall into their own nets

^a 141:2 Incense was a powder that smelled nice when it was burned. It was a symbol of prayer to God (Rev. 5:8; 8:3-4).

^b 141:2 literally, "the lifting up of my palms"

^c 141:2 Hebrew: *minchah*

together. But let **me** pass by safely!

A Prayer for Help

142¹ A lesson of David, a prayer when he was in the cave.^a

I cry out loud to Yahweh. I pray to Yahweh for mercy.² I pour out my problems to Him. I tell Him my troubles.

³Whenever I am afraid,^b You know the way out. In the path where I walk, my enemies have hidden a trap for me. ⁴Look around me^c and watch. No one is concerned about me. I have no place of safety. No one cares whether I live or die.

⁵O Yahweh, I cry out to You for help. I say: “**You** are my Refuge. You are all I want in this life.”^d

⁶Listen to my cry, because I am helpless. Deliver me from those

who are chasing me.^e They are stronger than I am.^f ⁷Free me from my prison.^g Then I will give thanks to Your Name.

Then the righteous people will surround me, because You have been so good to me.

Listen to My Prayer!

143¹ A psalm of David. O Yahweh, hear my prayer!

Listen to my cry for mercy! Come help me, because You are loyal and righteous.^h

²Don’t put me, Your servant, on trial,ⁱ because no one alive is innocent in Your presence.^j

³My enemies are chasing me. They have crushed me to the ground. They have made me live in darkness like those who died

a 142:1 either the cave of Adullam (1 Sam. 22:1-2) or at En-Gedi (1 Sam. 24:3)

b 142:3 literally, “When my spirit faints inside me,” = ready to give up. Sometimes David was at his wit’s end; he felt overwhelmed by certain situations. Compare Rom. 8:26-27.

c 142:4 literally, “Look to the right”; that is, the rightful place of the protector (Ps. 16:8; 109:31; 110:5). That is where the defense attorney was supposed to be. However, no one was there to defend David.

d 142:5 literally, “(You are) my portion in the land of the living.” This was the opposite of Sheol. David did not put his hopes in human hands, but only in God’s hands.

e 142:6 King Saul and his followers

f 142:6 David had only 400 men to defend him against the thousands of King Saul’s soldiers.

g 142:7 = the cave of Ps. 142:1. David’s movements were severely restricted.

h 143:1 or, “fair.” Perhaps David is thinking back to the prophet Nathan’s words in 2 Sam. 7.

i 143:2 David was not pleading to God on the grounds of justice (compare Job 4:17; 9:2; 15:14; 25:4). Though God would certainly be just, David was fully aware that he was a sinner. David did not attempt to appeal to God on the merits of his own righteousness. David was seeking the mercy of Yahweh (Ps. 32:1-2,5; 51:1-2; 103:3,11-13; 130:3-4). Our hope is in the mercy of God, not in the justice of God.

j 143:2 See Job 14:3; 1 Kings 8:46; Isa. 53:6; 64:6; Eccl. 7:20; Rom. 3:19,20,23; Gal. 3:22; James 3:2; 1 John 1:8-10.

long ago. ⁴So, I am afraid. My courage is gone.^a

⁵I remember what happened long ago. I ponder everything You have done. I think about all that You have made. ⁶I lift my hands to You in prayer. As a dry land needs rain, I am thirsty for You. (Selah)

⁷O Yahweh, please answer me quickly. I am getting weak. Don't turn away from me, or I will be like those who are dead. ⁸Tell me in the morning about Your constant love. I trust in You. Show me the way that I should go, because my prayers go up to You. ⁹O Yahweh, deliver me from my enemies. As long as I am near You, I'm covered. ¹⁰Teach me to do what You want, because You are my God. Your Spirit is good. Lead me on level ground. ¹¹O Yahweh, for Your Name's sake, preserve my life! In Your righteousness, bring me out of trouble. ¹²In Your constant love, defeat my enemies. Destroy all those who oppose me, because I am Your servant.

a 143:4 literally, "My heart within me is stunned." = a mental paralysis. David was in a state of despair; he could not look anywhere for human help.

David Thanks God

144 ¹A psalm of David.^b
Praise Yahweh, my Rock! He trains my hands for war. He trains my fingers for battle.^c ²He gives me constant love and, like a fortress, protects me. He is my Stronghold and the One who rescues me. He is my Shield, and I take refuge in Him. He subjugates my people to me.^d

³O Yahweh, why is man^e so important to You? Why do You even think about a human being?^f ⁴A man is like a breath.^g His life is like a passing shadow.

⁵O Yahweh, open up the sky and come down. Touch the mountains, so that they will smoke. ⁶Send the lightning and scatter my enemies. Shoot forth Your arrows and confuse them. ⁷Reach down from above. Pull me out of this sea of enemies. Rescue me from these

b 144:1 Compare Psalm 18.

c 144:1 David was very skillful in placing an arrow on the string of a bow, pulling the string back, and hitting his target with the arrow.

d 144:2 This psalm was probably written by David after the rebellion led by Absalom.

e 144:3 Hebrew: 'adam = the human race

f 144:3 literally, "the son of a weakling (= a mortal), that You esteem him?"

g 144:4 Compare Ps. 39:5-6; 62:9; 102:3.

foreigners. ⁸They are liars. They are deceitful.^a

⁹O God, I will sing a new song to You. I will make music to You on the ten-stringed lyre. ¹⁰You are the One who gives victory to kings. You are the One who rescues His servant David from the cruel sword.

¹¹Rescue me and deliver me from the control of these foreigners. They are liars; they are deceitful.

¹²May our sons in their youth grow like strong trees. Permit our daughters to be like the decorated, sculptured columns of a palace. ¹³Let our barns be filled with crops of all kinds. Let our flocks have thousands of sheep and goats, myriads of animals in our fields. ¹⁴May our oxen be strong. May no one break in. Let there be no war. Let there be no screams in our streets.

¹⁵Happy are such a people who are like this. Happy are the people whose God is Yahweh!

a **144:8** literally, "And their right (hand) is a right (hand) of lies." = swearing an oath (Exo. 6:8; Deut. 32:40; Ps. 106:26) to tell the truth but lying instead

David Praises God

145¹A song of praise by David.^b

I will exalt You, O my God, the King.^c I will bless Your Name forever and ever. ²I will bless You every day. Yes, I will praise Your Name forever and ever. ³Yahweh is great. He is worthy of our praise. No one can fully understand how great He is.^d ⁴Each generation will extol what You have done. They will retell Your mighty deeds. ⁵They will proclaim the glorious splendor of Your majesty. And, I will think about Your wonders. ⁶They will tell of the awesome things that You do. And, I will declare how great You are. ⁷They will celebrate the fame of Your great goodness. They will sing about Your fairness.

⁸Yahweh is kind, and He shows mercy. He does not easily become angry.^e Instead, He is full of constant love.^f ⁹Yahweh is good to everyone. And, He is

b **145:1** Hebrew: *tehilah* = a celebration of God

c **145:1** This psalm is an acrostic psalm; that is, sections of the psalm begin with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

d **145:3** literally, "And of His greatness there is no searching." = His greatness is unsearchable. Compare Job 5:9; 9:10; 11:7-8; Ps. 40:5; 116:12; 147:5; Rom. 11:33-36.

e **145:8** literally, "slow to anger." Compare Ps. 103:8.

f **145:8** See Exo. 34:6.

merciful to everything He has made.^a ¹⁰O Yahweh, everything You have made will thank You.^b Those who follow You will bless You. ¹¹They will tell about the glory of Your kingdom. And, they will speak of Your power, ¹²so that all men may come to realize Your power. And, they will know the glorious majesty of Your kingdom. ¹³Your kingdom will continue forever. And, You will rule throughout all generations.

Yahweh will keep all of His promises. He takes care of everything He has made by His constant love.^c ¹⁴Yahweh helps those who have been defeated. He takes care of those who are in trouble. ¹⁵In hope, all eyes look to You for food. And, You give it to them at the proper time. ¹⁶You open Your hand, and You satisfy the appetite of all living things.

a 145:9 literally, “And His mercies (are) over all His works.” = showering compassion upon God’s entire creation (Ps. 100:5; 104:27-28; 136:25)

b 145:10 Compare Ps. 19:1.

c 145:13 Most Hebrew manuscripts of the Masoretic Text do *not* have the last two lines of this verse. One Hebrew manuscript and the Hebrew manuscripts which the translators of the Greek Septuagint followed *do* have these last two lines, as do some texts of the Dead Sea scrolls (11QPsa) and the Syriac text.

¹⁷Everything that Yahweh does is right. With His constant love, He takes care of all He has made.^d

¹⁸Yahweh is near everyone who calls out to Him, to all who truly call upon Him. ¹⁹He gives those who revere Him what they desire. He listens to their cries for help, and He saves them. ²⁰Yahweh protects everyone who loves Him.^e But He will destroy all evil people.^f

²¹I will praise Yahweh. Let everyone^g bless His holy Name forever and ever!

God Saves Us

146¹Praise Yah!^h
O my soul, praise Yahweh! ²I will praise Yahweh while I’m alive. I will sing praises to my God while I exist.

³Don’t put your trust in princes or in any other human being.ⁱ
None of them can save you.^j

d 145:17 Compare Matt. 10:29.

e 145:20 Compare Ps. 31:20,23; 97:10.

f 145:20 Compare Matt. 25:46.

g 145:21 literally, “all flesh” = all rational beings (Ps. 145:10)

h 146:1 Hebrew: *Hallelu Yah*. Yah is the short form of Yahweh (Exo. 15:2; Isa. 12:2; 26:4). Each of the last 5 psalms of the Book of Psalms begins and ends with the expression “Hallelujah”. That is why they are called “The Hallelujah Psalms”.

i 146:3 literally, “in a son of man” = a mere mortal = human limitation. Compare Ps. 8:3-8.

j 146:3 literally, “in whom there is no deliverance”.

⁴When they die, they are buried.^a On that day, all of their plans perish.^b

⁵Happy is the one who gets help from the God of Jacob. His hope is in Yahweh, his God.

⁶He made heaven and earth, the sea and everything in it. He remains loyal forever. ⁷He does what is fair for those who have been wronged. He gives food to the hungry people. Yahweh sets the prisoners free.^c ⁸Yahweh gives sight to the blind people.^d

Yahweh lifts up people who are in trouble. Yahweh loves those who do right. ⁹Yahweh protects the foreigners.^e He helps the widows and the orphans. But He frustrates the plans of the evil people.

¹⁰May Yahweh rule forever. O Jerusalem, He is your God forever and ever.

Ultimately, man cannot save himself, and man cannot save others.

a 146:4 literally, "he returns to the ground." See Gen. 3:19; Ps. 90:3; Eccl. 12:7. No matter how exalted someone is on earth, he is mortal.

b 146:4 Compare Luke 12:19-20.

c 146:7 that is, innocent persons who were wrongfully imprisoned (Gen. 41:14; Ps. 105:16-22; Acts 5:17-20; 16:25-34)

d 146:8 Compare Isa. 6:10-12; 32:1-3; 35:5-7; 42:16,18-25; Ps. 119:18; John 9:1-7,39-41.

e 146:9 the aliens who lived in the Jewish community. Compare Exo. 12:49; 22:21; 23:9; Lev. 19:33; Deut. 1:16; 10:18-19; Isa. 56:3,6.

Praise Yah!

Praising Almighty God

147¹Praise Yah!
It is good to sing praises to our God. How pleasant it is to praise Him. How fitting!

²Yahweh rebuilds Jerusalem.^f He brings back the scattered Israelites who were taken captive. ³He heals the broken-hearted people.^g And, He bandages their wounds.^h

⁴He counts the stars.ⁱ And, He names each one of them. ⁵Our Lord is great and very powerful. There is no limit to what He knows.^j ⁶The Always-Present One helps the humble people. But He hurls the evil people to the ground.

⁷Sing songs of thanksgiving to Yahweh. Sing praises to our God with a harp. ⁸He fills the sky with clouds. He sends rain

f 147:2 Compare Neh. 2:17-20; 4:1-23; 6:16; 12:27.

g 147:3 = dejected persons. Compare Isa. 61:1; Luke 4:18.

h 147:3 Metaphorically, it is referring to sin-sick people (compare Isa. 1:5-6; Jer. 30:12-13,30; Hos. 5:13-14; Mic. 1:9).

i 147:4 Compare Gen. 15:5. God knows the exact number of stars there are because He created each of them.

j 147:5 Compare Job 28:12-28; Isa. 40:26-29.

to the earth. He makes the grass grow on the hills. ⁹He gives food to the animals and to the young ravens that call out.

¹⁰He does not relish in the strength of a horse,^a nor does He take delight in the power of a man.^b ¹¹Yahweh takes delight in those who revere Him, with those who trust His constant love.

¹²O Jerusalem, glorify Yahweh! O Zion, praise your God! ¹³He strengthens the bars of your city gates.^c He blesses the people^d inside the city.^e ¹⁴He brings peace to your country.^f He fills you with the finest wheat.

¹⁵He gives a command to the earth. And, His Word runs swiftly.^g ¹⁶He spreads the snow like white wool.^h And, He

a 147:10 = cavalry. Compare Job 39:19-25.

b 147:10 = foot-soldiers, the infantry

c 147:13 The weakest point in the defenses of an ancient city was at the gates. So, heavy bars of metal-reinforced wood were locked into metal brackets embedded within the masonry of the walls to prevent a forced entry. And, it took several men to close the gates each night.

d 147:13 literally, "your children"

e 147:13 literally, "within you." = the precincts of Jerusalem

f 147:14 literally, "to your border." Pagan locals like Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem would no longer trouble the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

g 147:15 = Whatever God says happens quickly.

h 147:16 Compare Job 37:6.

scatters the frost like ashes. ¹⁷He hurls down hail like pebbles. No one can stand the freezing cold that He sends. ¹⁸Then He sends out His Word, and it melts.ⁱ He causes the breeze to blow and the waters to flow.

¹⁹He declares His words to Jacob. He gave His laws and decrees to Israel. ²⁰He has not done this for any foreign nation. And, they don't know His laws.

Praise Yah!

Praise Yahweh!

148 ¹Praise Yah!
 Praise Yahweh from the heavens. Praise Him in the heights. ²Praise Him, all His angels. Praise Him, all His armies of heaven. ³Praise Him, O sun and moon. Praise Him, all you shining stars. ⁴Praise Him, you highest heavens and you vapors above the sky. ⁵Let them all praise the Name of Yahweh! Why? Because He gave the command, and they were created. ⁶He set them in place forever and ever. He made a law,^j and that law cannot be broken.

i 147:18 or, "it thaws." Compare Job 37:10-12.

j 148:6 = all God's laws of physics, the invariable laws of nature. Examples of this are: the law of gravity, the principles of inertia, the law of thermodynamics, etc.

⁷Praise the Always-Present One from the earth. Praise Him, O you huge sea creatures^a and all the oceans. ⁸Praise Him, O lightning and hail, snow and clouds, and stormy winds that obey Him. ⁹Praise Him, O mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedar trees. ¹⁰Praise Him, you wild animals and all livestock, you crawling things^b and birds. ¹¹Praise Him, you kings of the earth and all ethnic groups, you princes and all leaders of the earth. ¹²Praise Him, you young men and virgin girls, you old people, along with the young people.

¹³Let them all praise the Name of Yahweh! Why? Because only His Name is to be exalted.^c His glory is above the earth and the sky.^d ¹⁴He gives His people power. He should be praised by all those who follow Him, by the Israelites, the people who are close to His heart.

Praise Yah!

A Song of Praise

149¹Praise Yah!
Sing a new song to Yahweh. Sing His praise in the assembly of those who follow Him.^e

²Let the Israelites be happy because of God, their Maker. Let the people of Jerusalem^f rejoice because of their King.^g ³Let them praise His Name with dancing. Let them sing praises to Him with tambourines and harps. ⁴Why? Because Yahweh takes delight in His people. He crowns the humble people with victory. ⁵Let those who follow Him rejoice in His glory. Let them sing for joy, even in bed! ⁶Let the praise of God be in their mouths, with their two-edged swords in their hands. ⁷They will inflict God's vengeance upon the nations. They will punish the ethnic groups. ⁸They will put those kings in chains and the important leaders in iron bands. ⁹They will carry out the sentence that God has written. God is to be honored by all who follow Him.

Praise Yah!

a 148:7 Compare Gen. 1:21; Ps. 104:26.

b 148:10 The Hebrew word (*remes*) includes all rodents, reptiles, crabs, insects, worms, etc.

c 148:13 Compare Ps. 8:1.

d 148:13 Only the Creator is to be worshiped, not His creation.

e 149:1 = the Chasidim, the pious ones (Ps. 16:3)

f 149:2 literally, "the sons of Zion"

g 149:2 Yahweh

Praise God!

150¹Praise Yah!
Praise God in His
Sanctuary.^a Praise His strength
in space.^b ²Praise Him for His
mighty deeds. Praise Him for
His excellent greatness. ³Praise
Him with trumpet blasts. Praise
Him with harps and lyres.

a 150:1 that is, the one located in heaven where
God dwells (Ps. 2:4; 11:4; 14:2; 20:6; 33:13; 80:14
85:11; 102:19; 103:19; 115:3; 123:1).

b 150:1 = the mighty heavens above (Gen. 1:6)

⁴Praise Him with tambourines
and dancing. Praise Him with
stringed instruments and flutes.
⁵Praise Him with loud cymbals.
Praise Him with crashing
cymbals.

⁶Let everything that breathes
praise Yah!

Praise Yah!