
THE HOLY TRINITY PSALTER

**Inclusive language paraphrases of the Psalms
by Ian Sowton, Holy Trinity Community, 2005.**

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FOREWORD

This is not a new translation of the Psalms. It is a contemporary rendition, a paraphrase, which has two guiding purposes: to provide a text that is first, inclusive throughout and second, useful for both public congregational worship and also for private devotions.

The original impulse behind this enterprise was to provide an inclusive language text. The chief device I use to achieve this purpose is to employ a variety of names for God set in linguistic formulations that avoid the ubiquitous male pronouns, and so giving the effect, at least in English, of being gender-free. One of these names, El Shaddai, had some female connotations in the ancient Hebrew, and on two or three occasions I have linked it to feminine pronouns as a reminder that there have long since been feminine names for a deity thought of as including "female" characteristics. Another device serving the interests of inclusiveness is to switch from the third to the second person pronoun, thus moving from the impersonal, third person mode to the personal mode of direct address.

Since it definitely changes the rhetorical situation in the passage concerned, this device (which I first thought was original with me but very soon discovered was not) is used sparingly here, only as a last resort in the face of really extensive flights of incorrigibly male God-talk.

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The *Holy Trinity Psalter* follows *The Revised Common Lectionary*^{*}, which includes the complete list of lections for liturgical years A, B, and C, and was published by the Consultation on Common Texts (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992).

This means that it is not a complete psalter, since the *Revised Common Lectionary* (*RCL*) omits some psalms altogether and, in the case of many others, calls only for

part(s) of a given psalm to be used on a given Sunday. And some psalms, in whole or in part, are used several times over the course of the whole three-year liturgical cycle.

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On a dozen occasions the *RCL* calls for passages from other parts of Scripture to function as psalms. It lists most of these passages as alternatives to regular psalms. I have recast eight of these passages into the standard four-line format of this psalter. All twelve of them are collected toward the end of the psalter, on pp.163-175. That "standard four-line format" derives from a set of chants commonly used in our Church of the Holy Trinity, Toronto; but these psalm-texts can easily be pointed and sung, chanted, or spoken in various different ways.

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The *RCL* quite often, and necessarily, includes fairly detailed rubrics. It is well outside the scope of *The Holy Trinity Psalter* to reproduce all these rubrics, though there are occasional references to them in its concluding section, "Psalms Listed According to the Liturgical Year

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The editions of the Bible I have used as bases for this rendition of the Psalms are *The New Revised Standard Version*, *The New English Bible (with the Apocrypha)*, and the Standard Edition of *The Jerusalem Bible*. The commentaries I have consulted regularly and with great profit are Volumes 19 and 21 of *Word Biblical Commentary* (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1983) and Volume 20 (Dallas, Texas: Word Books, 1990). The tone of the original psalms ranged from solemnly cultic to urgently personal. I have

tried to convey this range of tone without becoming either too staid on the one hand, or too distractingly colloquial on the other.

'Metaphrase' as a verb means to 'put into other words'; as a noun it generally means 'a literal translation'. There is, however, an established literary convention in regard especially to renditions of the Psalms, that uses the noun 'metaphrase' to mean a poetic version that is neither a literal translation nor a really close paraphrase. One could say that metaphrases of the Psalms are a species of poetic paraphrase that tries both to remain scrupulously faithful to the movement of thought and imagery of its original, and also to result in a new, contemporary devotional poem. We owe by far the most celebrated example of metaphrases of the Psalms in English to the brother and sister team of Sir Philip Sidney and Mary Herbert, Countess of Pembroke, in the 1580-90's--an enterprise begun by Philip and finished by Mary, after his death, in poetry that is at least as good as his. Those 'Sidnein Psalms' were a remarkable flowering of Reformation piety and remain a monumental contribution to English devotional poetry. (I.S.)

PSALMS

PSALM 1

A Wisdom Psalm

¹ Blessed are those who refuse wicked advice,
who do not tread the sinners' road, or cosy up to scoffers,
² but take deep pleasure in the law of God,
meditating on it day and night.

³ They are like trees planted close to water;
they yield fruit in season, their leaves never wither.
They prosper in everything they do-- ⁴ not so the wicked,
who are like chaff whirled away by the wind.

⁵ Evil people shall not pass the scrutiny of judgment,
nor sinners find a place in the congregation of the just;
⁶ for God watches over the way of the righteous,
but the path of wrongdoers leads to a dead end.

PSALM 2

A Coronation Psalm

1 Why are the nations in such turmoil, hatching futile plots?
2 The kings of the earth are set in their opposition to God,
3 the rulers conspire together against God's anointed one:
"Let's break their fetters," they cry, "let's throw off their chains!"

4 At first God in heaven gives them a derisive laugh,
5 but before long will be angrily rebuking them,
terrifying them in a fury, while declaring:
6 "I, God, have set my chosen ruler on Zion, my holy hill."

7 I will repeat the decree of the Holy One, who said to me,
"You are my child, this day I have begotten you.
8 Ask, and I will give whole nations as your heritage,
the farthest reaches of the world as your possession.

9 You will break those restive vassals with a rod of iron,
and shatter them in pieces like some potter's vase."
10 So hear this word to the wise, all you kings,
and heed this warning, O rulers of the earth:

11 Serve God with reverence, make your trembling submissions,
12 lest the Most High, whose wrath can kindle quickly,
gets angry and you are struck dead in your tracks.
Blessed be all who take refuge in, not umbrage at, my God.

PSALM 4

A Lament

1 Answer me when I call, O God of my right!
In the past you have given me shelter
when I was beset by troubles and in distress.
So be gracious to me now, and hear my prayer.

2 How long, you people, are you going to shame my honour,
and fall for empty words, and root about for lies?

3 Know this: the faithful have been set apart as God's own,
and the Eternal listens to me when I call.

4 So when you are angry, do not make a sin of it;
ponder things as you rest in bed and keep your cool.

5 Offer the right sacrifices at the due times,
and pin your faith on the Holy One, God only wise.

6 Many people say, "Oh if only something good would happen!
Let the light of your face shine upon us, O God!"

7 You, though, have filled my heart with more gladness
than they get from all their bumper crops and wine aplenty.

8 I will take my rest with quiet mind and peaceful sleep,
for you, Shaddai, are the only one to lie me down in safety.

Note on the subtitle "Lament": Lament is a general term used by many biblical scholars for one of the largest categories of psalms, the other being Hymns--songs of praise and thanksgiving. Not many Laments fit their designation precisely or display all the features associated with the category. They cover a much wider range of "lamentable" emotions, stances, and moods than just grief and/or complaint; but they also and often rise to a renewal of vows, or affirmations (as above), or even notes of thanksgiving.

PSALM 5:1-8

A Lament

1 Listen to me O God! pay some attention to my sighs.
2 Note the sound of my distress, O my Creator God;
3 every morning, Holy One, my voice reaches up for you;
dawn finds me pleading my cause, keeping vigil.

4 You are not a God who finds evil entertaining;
wickedness can never cosy up to you.
5 No braggart will stand up and meet your gaze;
you have no use at all for evildoers.

6 You make short work of those who deal in lies;
you find cruelty and hypocrisy detestable.
7 But I will gain admittance to your sacred house,
thanks to your unfailing, abundant love.

I will bow in reverent awe toward your holy temple
as respite and protection from my enemies.
8 Lead me, Shaddai, in your righteousness,
O make your way plain and straight before me.

PSALM 8

A Hymn

1 O sovereign God, glorious above the heavens,
how majestically your name rings through the world!

2 You make the very sound of infants at the breast a defence
to outface your foes and silence vengeful enemies.

3 When I scan the heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon, the innumerable stars you forged,

4 what is the human race, that you should care a bean for it?
mortals, that you should spare them a second thought?

5 Yet you have positioned them as only slightly less than gods,
crowning them with glory and many honours.

6 You have set them over the rest of your creation
and placed, as it were, all things at their feet:

7 all sheep and oxen, the beasts, too, of plain and forest,

8 the air-riding birds and the water-sporting fishes –
whatever passes down along the ocean waterways –

9 O God, how majestically your name sounds through the world!

PSALM 9:9-20

A Lament

9 The Eternal is a fortified sanctuary for the oppressed,
a tower of strength when times are bad.

10 And those who know your name have faith in you,
for you, O God, do not abandon those who seek you.

11 Sing praises to the Holy One who inhabits Zion,
declare the deeds of the Eternal among the nations;
12 for Yahweh, rememberer and avenger of bloodshed,
does not forget the cry of the afflicted.

13 Be gracious, O God – see what I suffer from those who hate me;
you are the one who plucks me from death's door,
14 so that in your daughter Zion's gates I can tell all your praises,
and exult rejoicing in your powers of deliverance.

15 The nations have bogged down in a pit of their own making;
their feet have been snagged by their own hidden net.
16 God is clearly manifested in the passing of such a judgement,
whereby the wicked are hoist with their own petard.

17 Sinners shall go drifting off down to Sheol,
along with every people who forgets the Righteous One.
18 The needy shall not always be ignored,
nor the hope of the poor waste endlessly away.

19 Bestir yourself, O God! Do not let mere mortals prevail;

let the nations be brought to the bar before you.
20 Put the fear of God into them, O Lover of Justice;
let the nations know that they are all too human.

PSALM 13

A Lament

1 What's keeping you, O God? Have you forgotten me for good?

How long are you going to ignore me?

2 How long must I bear such pain in my soul
and struggle with the sorrow in my heart all day?

How long will my enemy win out over me?

3 Give me a considered answer, O my saviour!

Kindle my eyes with your living light,
or I will drift off into sleep, the sleep of death;

4 and my enemy will brag, "I have come off best",
my foes will enjoy seeing me so shaken.

5 But as I have trusted in your love, so I will rejoice in your
salvation.

6 I shall be making songs out of your bountiful dealings with me.

PSALM 14

A Lament

1 Fools say in their hearts, "There is no God."
They're corrupt, they act abominably; none does good.

2 The Holy One looks down from heaven on humanity
to see if anyone's wise enough to be seeking God.

3 They are all astray, each as perverse as the other;
no one – not a one of them – is doing good.

4 Doesn't any of you sinners know a thing? –
chewing up my people like bread? refusing to worship God?

5 Your day of terror will surely come,
for the Righteous One sides with the righteous.

6 You would like to unravel the hopes of the poor,
but remember, the Most High is their refuge.

7 Oh how I long for Israel's deliverance to come from Zion!
When Yahweh restores the fortunes of the faithful,
the line of Jacob, Leah, and Rachel will rejoice,
and oh how glad the whole family of Israel will be!

PSALM 15

A Wisdom Psalm

1 Who is worthy, O God, to stay in your tabernacle?

Who has any right to live on your holy hill?

2 Those who walk blamelessly – doing what is right
and speaking the truth from their very heart;

3 those who do not slander, who do not hurt their friends
or cultivate a grievance against their neighbours;

4 those who regard wickedness as despicable,
but honour everyone who reverences El Shaddai;

who stand by their oath even when it costs them;

5 who do not lend money out at interest

or take bribes aimed at harming the innocent:

all those who behave this way shall never be shaken.

PSALM 16

A Hymn

¹Protect me, Holy One, for I've taken refuge in you.
²"You are my God," I say, "I'm worthless apart from you."
³As for your saints throughout the land,
they are its true nobility and my greatest pleasure.

⁴Those who make the choice of any other god
are bringing no end of troubles on themselves;
I will not join in offering their libations of blood,
or so much as utter the name of any other god.

⁵El Shaddai is choice food and drink to me;
my entire destiny is in your hands.
⁶I have a goodly heritage and the design of my life
has unfolded for me along pleasant lines.

⁷I bless the great I AM who counsels me;
at night my inmost being also offers me instruction.
⁸Always I keep the Righteous One in mind;
since God is close to hand, I shall not be moved.

⁹And so my heart is merry, my soul rejoices,
my body, too, rests easy and unafraid.
¹⁰For you do not abandon me to Sheol,
or let your faithful follower gaze down into the Pit.

¹¹You open my eyes to the path of life.
In your presence there is fullness of joy,

and in your generous hand are pleasures,
pleasures of the kind that last forever.

PSALM 17: 1-9, 15

A Lament

1 Hear a just cause, O God! pay attention to my plea
and listen to my prayer, uttered by sincerest lips.

2 Let my vindication come direct from you;
let your gaze take due regard of what is right.

3 However you choose to test me and try my heart,
you will find no wickedness; my speech is free of sin.

4 Regardless of what others do, by virtue of your word
I have steered clear of the ways of violence.

5 I have stuck to your paths, my feet have not slipped.

6 I call on you, Yahweh, confident of an answer;
turn your ear my way, listen to what I have to say.

7 Show your steadfast love in wondrous fashion,

O saviour of those who seek refuge at your hand from foes.

8 Guard me as apple of your eye; shelter me hidden in your
wings

9 from the evildoers who are plundering me,
from my deadly enemies who have me surrounded....

15 As for me, in the justice of my plea
I shall be looking you frankly in the face;
and when I awake, I shall be completely satisfied –
gazing directly upon you as you really are.

PSALM 19

A Hymn

1 The heavens are sounding the glory of God;
the firmament proclaims its Maker's handiwork.

2 Each new day has its own eloquence,
and night to night is declaring knowledge.

3 Their soundless voice cannot be heard,
there is no speech, there is nothing spoken,
4 yet their voices go out through all the world,
their silent speaking words to the ends of the earth.

God has set a tent in heaven for the sun, 5 which strides
like a bridegroom from under his wedding canopy
to run its course with the joyful zest of an athlete.

6 Nothing in all the sky hidden from its heat

as it rises at one end of the heavens
and completes its circuit at the other.

7 The law of the Holy One is perfect, restoring the soul;
the testimony of I AM is sure, making simplicity wise;

8 the rightness of God's precepts rejoices the heart;
the divine commandment is clear, enlightening the eyes;
9 reverence for the Creator is pure and endures forever;
the Eternal's ordinances are true and altogether just.

10 They are more desirable than gold – even much fine gold –
sweeter, too, than honey and dripping honeycombs.

11 Moreover, they serve as warning to me your servant,
and the keeping of them brings great reward.

12 Cleanse me from all my hidden faults,
for who is able to detect their own unwitting errors?

13 Restrain your servant, too, from prideful thoughts;
do not let them gain the upper hand over me!

Then I shall be accounted blameless,
and innocent of any great transgression.

14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable to you, O God, my rock and my redeemer.

PSALM 20

A Royal Psalm

1 May El Shaddai answer you in the day of danger!
The name of Leah, Rachel, and Jacob's God protect you!
2 May the Holy One send help from the sanctuary
and give you support from out of Zion.

3 May God remember all your offerings,
and regard your burnt sacrifices with favour!
4 May the Eternal grant you your heart's desire,
bringing all your plans to their fulfilment!

5 May we shout for joy over your victory,
streaming out our banners in the name of God!
May the Righteous One grant all your petitions!
6 I know that the Most High will help the anointed one.

Holy heaven will answer the consecrated one
with famous victories from God's strong hand.
7 Some take pride in chariots and some in horses,
but our boast is in the name of God Most High.

8 They shall collapse and fall, we shall rise and stand.
9 Grant victory, O Yahweh; answer us when we call.

PSALM 22

A Lament

1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why is your aid so distant from my groaning words?

2 O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer me,
by night, too, but I find no healing rest.

3 Yet you are holy, enthroned on Israel's praises.
4 Our forebears believed you, and you delivered them.
5 They were rescued when they cried out to you;
they trusted you and did not suffer the shame of betrayal.

6 But me – I am a worm, not even human;
scorned and despised by all and sundry.
7 Everyone who sees me makes a mock of me,
they curl a sneering lip, they wag their heads:

8 "Commit your cause to God; let God play the deliverer
and rescue the one in whom heaven delights!"
9 But it was you, Shaddai, who eased me from the womb,
who kept me safe upon my mother's breast.

10 From the day of my birth I depended utterly on you,
you have been my God ever since my mother bore me.
11 O do not withdraw from me, do not distance yourself,
for trouble is closing in and there is none to help.

12 I'm hemmed in by a circle of dangerous bulls,

surrounded by strong bulls of Bashan;
13 they open their gaping mouths at me
like some hungry lion roaring on the prowl.

14 I am poured out like water, every bone is out of joint;
my heart is like wax melting in my chest;
15 my mouth is dry as a potsherd, my tongue sticks to my gums;
you, Most High, you are laying me in the dust of death.

16 The dogs have gathered, an evil gang surrounds me.
My hands, my feet are dry as claws, 17 I can count every bone.
They stand staring at me and gloating;
18 they divide up my clothes and throw dice for my garments.

19 But you, O God, do not stand there so aloof!
Quickly, O my help, come quickly to my aid!
20 Save my soul from the sword, from the power of the dog!
21 Deliver me from the jaws of the lion!

You have rescued me from the horns of wild oxen.
22 I will tell of your name to my brothers and sisters;
in the midst of the assembled congregation
I will be standing up to glorify you with praise.

23 Offer your praises, all you who revere the Holy One!
Glorify God, you offspring of Leah, Rachel, and Jacob;
stand in awe of the Eternal, all you children of Israel!
24 God did not shun me, but listened when I raised my cry.

El Shaddai did not scorn the suffering of the afflicted,
or shrink in loathing from their plight.
25 You inspire my praise in the great congregation, O God;
I will make good on my vows in front of the god-fearing folk.

26 The poor shall eat their fill and be satisfied;
true seekers of God will be offering up their praise –
may your hearts live and thrive forever!
27 All the ends of the earth will remember and return to God;

Psalm 22...

the whole family of nations shall worship before Yahweh,
28 who holds dominion and rules over every country.
29 Indeed, from high lifers to those dying down in dust –
all must bow to the One for whom I shall live my life.

30 Future generations will be told about El Shaddai;
posterity will serve God, proclaiming divine deliverance
to a people yet unborn, 31 and declaring
that Yahweh is the one who has brought it all about.

PSALM 23

A Hymn

¹ El Shaddai is my shepherd, I shall not be left in need;
² she settles me in pastures of lush green,
brings me beside still, ³ soul-restoring waters,
and leads me by paths of justice for her name's sake.

⁴ Even though I walk the valley of death's shadow,
I fear no evil, for you are close beside me;
your staff and shepherd's crook reassure me.
⁵ My enemies watch, impotent, as you set a table for me;

you anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows.
⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall attend me
all the days of my life, and I shall be living
in the house of my Good Shepherd forever.

PSALM 24

A Hymn

1 The earth in its plenitude belongs to God,
the world and every living thing upon it;
2 the Creator has sunk its foundation in the seas
and settled it firmly on the river courses.

3 Who shall ascend the hill of God and stand in that holy place?
4 Those who are clean of hand and pure of heart,
whose souls refuse to consider any deceitfulness,
those who do not go around making false promises.

5 They will receive the blessing of El Shaddai,
and vindication from the God of their salvation.

6 Such is the company of those who look for the Most High,
who seek the face of the God of Leah, Rachel, and Jacob.

7 Lift up your heads, O gates! be lifted up, O ancient doors!
so that the Splendour of Splendours may come in.

8 Who, pray tell, is this Splendour of Splendours?
God, strong and mighty, invincible in battle.

9 Lift up your heads, O gates! be lifted up, O ancient doors!
so that the Splendour of Splendours may come in.

10 And who might this Splendour of Splendours be?
The God of hosts, the One who reigns in glory.

PSALM 25:1-10

A Lament

¹ I lift my soul up to you, O God. ² I trust in you;
save me from shame; do not let my enemies crow over me.
³ Do not let those who wait for you be humiliated;
let the brazenly treacherous be the ones who are disgraced.

⁴ Tutor me in your ways, O Shaddai; teach me your paths.
⁵ Lead me into your truth and instruct me,
for you are the Holy One, God of my salvation,
and all day long I wait to feel your presence.

⁶ Keep in mind your mercy and steadfast love, O God,
as they have persisted down through time.
⁷ Forget the sins of my youth and my transgressions;
remember me lovingly, Yahweh, for your goodness' sake!

⁸ Good and upright as you are, you teach sinners your way.
⁹ You lead ordinary, unassuming folk in what is right.
¹⁰ For those who keep your covenant and decrees
all your paths are of enduring love and faithfulness.

PSALM 26

A Lament

1 Vindicate me, O God, for I have lived above reproach
and trusted in you without wavering.

2 Put me to the proof, Most High, and try me;
bring my heart and mind to the test.

3 For as I carry on in faithfulness to you,
your steadfast love is what I see before me.

4 I avoid liars, I do not hang around with hypocrites;

5 I detest duplicity and refuse the company of sinners.

6 Innocent, I wash my hands and process round your altar,

7 singing my thanks, testifying to your marvellous deeds.

8 O Yahweh, I love the house in which you dwell,
that holy place where your Presence lives in glory.

9 Do not sweep me away with the sinners,

nor my life with that of those bloodsuckers

10 whose hands are quick with criminal moves,
whose fists are clutching bribes by the bushel.

11 But as for me, I walk in my integrity;

redeem me, treat me with compassion.

12 With my feet planted firm on level ground

I will bless you, Holy One, in the great congregation.

PSALM 27

A Hymn

1 I AM is my light, my salvation, my life's sanctuary,
so who can frighten me? Why should I live in fear?
2 When enemies – scoundrels all – gather to make a meal of me,
they're going to stumble and fall flat on their faces.

3 A whole besieging army shall not cow my spirit;
even if I'm caught in a war I will stay confident.
4 One thing I asked of God, something I really long for:
to live out my life in the house of the Most High,

to fix my contemplating gaze upon God's beauty,
to plumb my faith in the quiet of the temple.
5 When the day of trouble comes you will shelter me,
safely enfolded in the cover of your tent;

you are sure to set me in place on a high rock.
6 Now, head held high above surrounding enemies,
I will offer sacrifices in the sacred tent with shouts of joy;
I will sing and make melody to El Shaddai.

7 Hear, O God, when I call! answer in your graciousness!
8 "Come now," says my heart, "search out Yahweh's face!"
I truly do seek your face. 9 Do not hide it from me.
You who've been my help, do not turn from me in anger.

O my salvation, do not discard, do not forsake me!
10 Even if my own parents desert me, God will adopt me.
11 Instruct me in your way, O eternal Wisdom,
guide me on some level path leading past my foes.

12 Do not abandon me to the will of adversaries,
for perjurers, breathing malice, have appeared against me.
13 I believe that in my day I shall live to see God's goodness.
14 Wait for the Most High; be strong, take courage. Wait.

PSALM 29

A Hymn

1 Strength and glory, O you heavenly beings,
ascribe strength and glory to the Eternal.
2 Ascribe to God the glory of the sacred name,
and worship Elohim in holy splendour.
3 The Creator's voice sounds across the waters;
The glory of God thunders over mighty torrents.
4 The voice of the Holy One is full of power,
full of majesty, 5 enough to splinter cedars.

God snaps off the cedars of Lebanon,
6 making Lebanon skitter like a calf,
and Sirion like a young wild ox.
7 The voice of Yahweh flashes out tongues of fire.

8 That voice! - it shakes the wilderness;
it rocks the desert wastelands of Kadish.
9 It whirls the oaks, it strips the forests bare,
while everyone in the temple cries, "Glory be!"

10 Regal and secure above the flood,
God sits enthroned as Creator forever.
11 May El Shaddai give strength to her people!
May she bless every one of them with peace!

PSALM 30

A Thanksgiving

¹ I will extol you, Holy One, for you pulled me up
and did not let my enemies crow over me.

² O God, my God, I called on you for help,
and in answer you have healed me.

³ Elohim, you brought my soul back up from Sheol,
resurrected me from among those lost to the Pit.

⁴ Sing praises, O you faithful, thank the holy name of God,
⁵ whose anger is momentary, whose favour is lifelong.

Weeping may drag on through the night,
but joy comes with the morning.

⁶ As for me, when everything was going well,
"Nothing," I said, "will ever get me down."

⁷ Your favour, O God, had planted me mountain firm;
then you hid your face – and my world fell apart.

⁸ I cried out to you in desperate supplication:

⁹ "If I sink into the Pit, what good will my death serve?"

Will my dusty remains offer you thanksgivings?

Will they bear witness to your faithfulness?

¹⁰ Listen to me, Yahweh! be gracious to me!

Come on, O Most High, get me to my feet!"

¹¹ You have turned my mourning into dancing;

you have taken off my sackcloth to dress me in joy,
12 so my soul may break its silence in praise of you.
O Shaddai, for sure you have my thanks forever.

PSALM 31:1-5,9-16,19-24

A Lament

1 I look to you for refuge, O God, preserve me from disgrace
and, out of your sense of justice, deliver me.

2 Listen to me! come promptly to my rescue.
Be my rock of sanctuary and fortress of salvation.

3 You are indeed my rock and stronghold;
lead me, guide me for your own name's sake;
4 pluck me from the hidden net that's spread for me,
for it is in you that I find my safest refuge.

5 Into your hand I commit my spirit;
you have redeemed me, O Yahweh, faithful God....
9 Be gracious to me, Adonai, for I am in deep trouble;
my eyes, my body and soul, are wasted with grief.

10 My life is being eaten away with sorrow,
my years are consumed with sighing.
Strong as I am, I stumble under my misery,
blight racks every bone in my body.

11 My enemies hold me in amused contempt,
my neighbours regard me as a disaster;
I am a thing of dread to my acquaintances,
those who see me in the street flinch away.

12 I have sunk without trace, forgotten as the dead,

tossed aside like a bit of broken pottery.
13 I hear the whispers of many – terror all around! –
as they scheme together, plotting to do me in.

14 But I hang on to my trust in you, O Holy One,
and I affirm, "You are my God."
15 My fate and fortunes are in your hand;
keep me out of the hands of foes and persecutors.

16 Let the light of your smile shine on me, your servant,
in your unfailing love be my saviour still....
19 O what an abundance of your goodness
you have in store for god-fearing worshippers!

what goodness you have shown – for all to see –
on behalf of those who find their refuge in you!
20 Your sheltering presence hides them from mortal plots,
holds them safely sheltered from contentious tongues.

21 Blessed be God for the wondrous loving kindness
shown me when I was as beset as a city under siege.
22 In my panic I had said, "I am driven far from your sight."
But you heard my pleading when I called for help.

²³ So, all you saints of God, persist in loving God,
who looks after the faithful but pays back pride in full.
²⁴ Stay strong, take heart and keep your courage up,
all you who fix your hopes on the Righteous One.

PSALM 32

A Thanksgiving

1 Happy are those whose sins are mercifully set **aside**,
the ones whose transgression is **forgiven**;
2 those who have no iniquity reckoned **against them**,
and in whose spirit there lurks no **deceit**.

3 While I kept silence, my body wasted **away**
to the sound of my groaning all day **long**.
4 For your hand was heavy on me day and **night**;
my strength dried up as if by heat of **summer**.

5 Then finally I admitted my sin to **you**,
and stopped trying to conceal my **iniquity**;
I said, "I will confess my transgression to **God**,"
and you blotted out the guilt of my **sin**.

6 Then let all the faithful offer up their **prayers**,
so the floodwaters of distress will not **reach them**.
7 You are my hiding place, preserving me from **trouble**;
you surround me with glad shouts of **deliverance**.

8 I will teach you, instructing you in the right **way**;
I will guide you with my counselling **eye**.
9 Do not be clueless, like some horse or **mule**
that requires bit and bridle so as not to **stray**.

10 The wicked are subject to all sorts of **torment**,
but steadfast love encircles those who trust in **God**.
11 Rejoice in your Creator, O justice lovers, be **glad** –
sound out! enjoy your happiness, all you of upright **heart**.

PSALM 33

A Hymn

1 Rejoice in the Creator, all you good-hearted folk.
Praise from the upright has an appropriate ring to it.
2 Praise God on harps, make melody on ten-stringed lutes.
3 Compose new songs. Play virtuoso strings! Sound *fortissimo!*

4 The word of El Shaddai is truly trustworthy,
everything the Beloved does is in good faith.
5 The Holy One loves rectitude and justice.
Earth brims with its Maker's steadfast love.

6 Your word summoned the cosmos into being,
your living breath became the hosts of heaven.
7 You gathered up the sea like water in a goatskin,
settled the deeps in unfathomable storehouses.

8 Let everyone, worldwide, reverence you in awe.
9 What you spoke, happened; what you commanded, stood firm.
10 You frustrate the plans of entire peoples
and dismantle the counsels of the nations.

11 *Your* counsels, though, hold good for ever,
your own plans endure down through the generations.
12 Happy the nation that has Yahweh as its God,
and the people whom you've chosen as your heritage.

13 You look down from heaven and see all humankind.
14 From where you sit enthroned you watch

every last inhabitant of the wide world –
15 you who fashion every heart, observe every deed.

16 A ruler finds no safety in having a huge army;
a warrior finds no deliverance in great strength.

17 The war horse is a forlorn hope for victory,
and all its might is no guarantee of rescue.

18 Truly the Eternal's friendly eye is on the reverent,
on those who hope in El Shaddai's unfailing love
19 mercifully to deliver their souls from death,
and keep them alive in times of famine.

20 Our souls wait upon I AM, our help and shield.
21 Our hearts rejoice in God, trusting in the holy name.
22 May your loving kindness, Holy One, rest upon us,
even as we are resting all our hopes on you.

PSALM 34

A Thanksgiving

1 I will be always blessing my Creator,
whose praises shall be on my lips continually.

2 My soul makes large claims for God;
let humble-hearted folk hear and be glad.

3 O join with me to extol the Holy One,
let us exalt God's name together.

4 I sought help from the Most High, who answered me,
delivering me from all my anxieties.

5 Look to Elohim and shine with radiant joy;
enough of being shame faced and abashed.

6 This poor soul cried and was heard by God,
and delivered from all my troubles.

7 The angel of the Most High camps on guard
around the reverent and rescues them.

8 O taste and see that God is good;
happy are those who take refuge in their Maker.

9 You sanctified ones, stand in awe of El Shaddai,
for those who revere her lack for nothing.

10 Young lions might well suffer want and hunger,
but those who seek out God lack no good thing.

11 Come, children, listen to what I have to say;
I will instruct you in god fearing ways.
12 Which among you has a zest for life?
Who would like ample time to enjoy what's good? –

Psalm 34...

13 Keep your tongue from evil, your lips from lies.
14 Shun wickedness, seek peace and go for it.
15 The eyes of Elohim are on those who love justice,
the ears of the Holy One are open to their cries.
16 God's face is set against all evildoers,
to blot out all memory of them from the earth.
17 When the righteous call out for help, God hears
and rescues them from all their troubles.
18 El Shaddai is very close to the broken-hearted
and saves those whose spirit has been crushed.
19 The afflictions of good people may be many,
but Yahweh delivers them from every one;
20 God guards every bone in their bodies,
so not a single one gets broken.
21 Their own evil brings death upon the wicked,
and all who hate the righteous will be condemned to ruin.
22 The Just One ransoms the lives of faithful worshippers;
no one who takes refuge in God will suffer calamity.

PSALM 36: 5-11

A Wisdom Psalm

5 Your steadfast love, O God, reaches to the heavens
and your faithfulness extends up to the clouds.

6 Your justice rises lofty as great mountain ranges,
your judgments are profound as ocean canyons.

Yahweh, you save people and beasts alike.

7 How precious is your unfailing love, O Holy One!
Everyone may take shelter in the shadow of your wings.

8 They feast on the abundance of your house;

you give them drink from the river of your delights.

9 You are the fount of life; it is in your light that we see light.

10 O keep up your steadfast love to those who know you,
and your salvation to all honest-hearted folk!

11 Do not permit the arrogant of foot to tread me under,
or the wicked of hand to drive me into exile.

PSALM 37:1-11,39-40

A Wisdom Psalm

1 Do not fret over the wicked, or be envious of wrong-doers,
2 they will soon fade like grass, withering like once-green herbs.
3 Put your faith in God and get on with doing good,
so as to enjoy your country in the pleasures of security.

4 Delight in Yahweh, who will grant your heart's desire.
5 Commit your way to God, who will act upon your trust.
6 El Shaddai will give you a dazzling vindication
and make the justice of your cause plain as noontday.

7 Be still in the holy Presence; wait patiently for God;
do not get frazzled trying to outdo winners,
or vexed over people who pull off despicable schemes.
8 Wean yourself off rage, leave wrath behind.

Do not fret yourself – in can only lead to evil.
9 Anyone who's wicked shall be destroyed,
while those who hope in God shall possess the land.
10 Give it a little time, and the evildoers will be gone;

even if you should look hard at where they once were,
their places will be vacant, they will have vanished.

11 But it is the unassuming folk who'll inherit the earth
and enjoy themselves in abundant prosperity...

39 Salvation for the just comes from the Righteous One,
who is their sanctuary in times of trouble.

40 They find help and rescue from the wicked
because they go to the Holy One for refuge.

PSALM 40:1-11

A Thanksgiving

1 I waited patiently for the Eternal,
who leaned down to me and, hearing my cry,
2 plucked me from the noisome pit, out of the quagmire,
set my feet on rock, and secured my footing.

3 You have given me a new song to sing,
a canticle of praise to you, our El Shaddai.
There are many who will see all this and stand in awe,
and come to put their confidence in you.

4 And blessed are those who do make God their trust,
who do not join forces with the proud, or erring idolaters.
5 Many are your wondrous deeds and thoughts on our behalf,
O God my God; no one bears comparison with you.

Were I to tell of those deeds and proclaim them,
they would prove to be beyond all reckoning.
6 You opened my ear and I hear: sacrifices you do not want.
You have required neither burnt nor sin offerings.

7 Then I said, "Here I am; in the scroll of your book
I have been set down, O Righteous One, my God,
8 to delight in performing your divine will;
your law is inscribed within my heart."

9 I have told the glad news of deliverance in full assembly;
look, I have not been staying quiet – as you know, O God.

¹⁰ I have not kept your saving help a secret in my heart,
but made your faithfulness and salvation very public;

I have not concealed your steadfast love
or your faithfulness from the great congregation.

¹¹ O God, do not withhold your mercy from me;
may that love and faithfulness keep me safe forever.

PSALM 41

A Thanksgiving

1 Happy are those who are considerate of the poor;
El Shaddai delivers them when times are bad,
2 and watchfully protects them to keep them going;
they are known throughout the land as blessed.

3 You do not abandon them to the will of their enemies.
You grace their sickbeds, healing their infirmities.

4 As for me, I said, "O God, be merciful to me;
heal me, for I have sinned against you."

5 My foes wonder maliciously when I and my name will perish.
6 And when they visit, they utter hollow insincerities,
while secretly taking note of everything that's wrong
and, when they leave, broadcasting my misfortunes.

7 All who hate me whisper together about me,
maliciously imagining the worst.

8 They think that something deadly has me in its grip,
that I'll not be rising from what's become my deathbed.

9 Even my bosom friend whom I completely trusted,
who shared my bread, kicked me now that I'm down.

10 But you, O Most High, deal graciously with me –
make me well again, so I can make liars of the lot of them.

11 I take it as a sure sign of being in your favour
that my enemy has not got the better of me.

12 Rather, because of my integrity you've upheld me
and established my place in your presence forever.

13 Blessed be the Holy One, the God of Israel,
from everlasting to everlasting. Amen. Be it so!

PSALM 42 & 43

A Lament

¹ My soul longs for you, O Holy One,
like a deer longs for flowing streams.

² My soul thirsts for the living God.

When shall I come to look on the face of my Creator?

³ Day and night tears have been my only food,
while people keep on saying to me,
"Come on now, tell us – where is your God?"

⁴ As I pour out my soul, this is what I remember:

how I used to go up with the pilgrim throng,
leading the procession to the house of God
with joyous shouts and songs of thanksgiving –
that happy clamour of a crowd keeping festival.

⁵ Why are you feeling so down, O my soul?
what's causing you such deep-seated unease?
Hope in El Shaddai! for I shall live another day
to praise Elohim, my helper ⁶ and my God.

The soul within me is dispirited, so I recall you
and the times at Jordan, Hermon, and Mount Mizar.
⁷ Deep calls to deep in the thunder of your cataracts;
all your waves, all your breakers have rolled over me.

⁸ During the day the steadfast love of Yahweh

is directed in kindness onto me;
at night a hymn keeps running through my head,
a vespers prayer to the great I AM of my life.

⁹ I ask God, my rock, "Why have you forgotten me?
Why must I creep gloomily about, oppressed by foes?"
¹⁰ Their taunts are like a deadly thrust to the body
as they keep nagging, "So where is your God?"

¹¹ Why are you feeling so down, O my soul?
what's causing you such deep-seated unease?
Hope in El Shaddai! for I shall live another day
to praise Elohim, my helper and my God.

43. ¹ I am asking you to vindicate me, O God,
to take up my cause against an ungodly lot;
deliver me from justice-flouters and deceivers!
² You are the Most High in whom I take sanctuary;

so why have you been giving me the brush-off?
Why must I skulk mournfully about,
oppressed by those who have no use for me?
³ O send out your light and truth to lead me;

let them bring me to your sacred hill-top dwelling.
⁴ Then I will go up to the altar, to God my highest joy,

and harp your praises, O Eternal One, my God.
5 Why are you so down, my soul? why so uneasy?

Hope in El Shaddai! for I shall live another day
to praise Elohim, my helper and my God.

PSALM 45

A Royal Wedding Psalm

1 My heart overflows with a noble theme
as I address my verses to the king;
my tongue flows like the pen of an expert scribe:

2 You are the handsomest of men;

your lips have the very shape of grace,
sure sign that you are blessed by God forever.

3 With sword buckled to your thigh, O mighty one,
take up your stance of glorious majesty.

4 In that majesty ride victorious for truth and right;
let your strong hand teach you awesome deeds.

5 Your arrows bite sharp at the heart of enemies;
whole nations fall beneath your sway.

6 Your throne, like the throne of God, is everlasting.

Your royal sceptre is a staff of equity;

7 you love justice and hate wickedness,
so the Holy One your God has chosen you –

has anointed you with oil of joy above your fellows;

8 your robes are fragrant with myrrh, aloes, and cassia.

Music of strings composed for your delight
sounds from ivory-paneled palaces;

9 princesses are among your ladies of honour;

at your right hand stands the queen in gold of Ophir.

10 Listen, O daughter, consider what I have to say:
Forget your people and your parents' house;

11 and when the king desires you in your beauty
remember he is your lord and give due obeisance.

12 The people of Tyre will court your favour with rich gifts,
the richest of them, 13 with all kinds of wealth.

In her room the princess is decked in cloth-of-gold;
14 she is led to the king in her many-coloured robes;
with her virgin companions following on behind,
15 they are escorted with festive joy to the king's palace.

16 You shall beget sons, O king, in your ancestral home,
and raise them to be world famous princes.

17 I will make your name so celebrated down through time
that the nations will be praising you forever and ever.

PSALM 46

A Hymn

1 Yahweh is our refuge and our strength,
our ever-present, proven help in trouble.

2 So we will not fear though earth itself shifts,
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;

3 not even though its waters roar and seethe,
with great peaks quaking at the tumult.

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

5 God is in the midst of the city, it shall not be moved;
with the dawn of every morning El Shaddai will be its help.

6 Nations thrash about, empires totter; I AM speaks, earth melts.

7 The God of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge.

8 Come, look closely at the works of Elohim;
see what upheavals God can visit on the world:
9 stamping out wars to the earth's end and back,
breaking bows, shattering spears, burning shields.

10 "Be still and know that I am God!
I am high above the nations of the world,
I am exalted on earth." 11 The God of hosts is with us,
the God of Leah and Rachel is our refuge.

PSALM 47

An Enthronement Hymn

1 Clap your hands, all you peoples!
sing out to God with loud shouts of joy!

2 For the Eternal, Most High, is truly awesome,
presiding in majesty over all the world.

3 Elohim subdued whole peoples under us,
bringing entire nations beneath our feet;
4 and picked out our heritage for us,
the pride of the Holy One's beloved Jacob.

5 God has gone up with a shout to the sound of trumpets.
6 Sing! sing your praises to our regal Maker. Sing out!

7 The Righteous One governs the whole earth;
hymn El Shaddai's praises with special psalms.

8 The Creator rules the nations from a throne of holiness.
9 Notables from all the nations gather
as people of the God of Abraham and Sarah.
To God, high exalted, belong the great ones of the earth.

PSALM 48

A Hymn

1 Our great Maker is greatly to be praised
in the precincts of God's city. That holy mountain –
2 those beautiful heights, joy of all the earth –
Mount Zion in its northern fastness, city of the great king.

3 Within its citadels God has proved a sure defence.
4 When assembled kings came on together to attack,
5 the first sight of it dumbfounded them; they fled in panic,
6 seized with trembling and pain sharp as birth pangs;

7 it was like an east wind shattering the fleet of Tarshish.
8 Everything we heard tell of it, we now have seen
with our own eyes in the great city of our Sabaoth God,
that city which El Shaddai keeps firm in place forever.

9 In the midst of the temple we ponder your steadfast love.
10 As your name, so your praise, O God, reaches worldwide.
Your strong hand is charged with victory. 11 Let Zion be glad!
let the towns of Judah rejoice over your judgements.

12 Walk about Zion, go all around it, count its towers,
13 note its ramparts, inspect its citadels,
so you can tell the coming generation
14 that this is our eternal God, our guide forever and ever.

PSALM 49:1-12

A Wisdom Psalm

1 Hear this and listen to it, everybody, everywhere,
2 upper class and low, rich and poor together.
3 I have some words of wisdom to utter,
my heartfelt meditation will bring understanding.

4 There is a proverb I will be attentive to,
and solve its riddling moral to music of the harp:
5 Why should I fear bad times, beset by wicked bullies
6 who trust in wealth and brag about their great riches?

7 For indeed there is no adequate price for anyone's life,
there is no payment one can offer God for it.
8 Ransom from death is costly, forever insufficient
9 to purchase endless life and immunity from the grave.

10 We note that the wise die too, along with fools and dolts,
all of them relinquishing their wealth to others.
11 Graves are their homes forever, their permanent dwellings,
though they had named their estates as their own.

12 So mortals cannot rest secure in wealthy pomp;
they are just like any other animal that perishes.

PSALM 50:1-15,22-23

A Psalm of Prophetic Judgement

¹The Almighty, God Most High,
speaks out in summons to the whole earth
from the rising to the setting of the sun.
² God shines beaming out of Zion, perfect in beauty.

³ Our Creator approaches, and is not quiet about it –
heralded by hungry flames, wreathed in hurricane.
⁴ The Holy One calls heaven and earth as witnesses,
in order to arraign and judge the chosen people:

⁵ "Gather all my faithful ones about me,
those who covenanted with me by sacrifice!"
⁶ The heavens declare El Shaddai's justice,
it is the Righteous One's own self who sits as judge.

⁷ "Listen, O my people, and I will speak;
it is I AM your God who testifies against you, O Israel.
⁸ It is not so much that I find fault with your sacrifices –
those burnt offerings that are continually before me –

⁹ as that I do not need any bull from your barn-house,
or any of the he-goats from your folds.
¹⁰ Every wild creature of the forest is already mine,
so are the cattle on a thousand hills.

¹¹ I know every single mountain bird

and nothing moves in the fields that is not mine.
12 If I were hungry, it's not you I would be telling,
for the wide world and everything in it belong to me.

13 Do I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink goat's blood?
14 Offer thanksgiving as your sacrifice to God,
make good your vows. 15 When times are bad,
call on me; I will rescue you and you shall glorify me....

22 Mark this, then, you who go forgetting God,
or you will be destroyed and not a soul to save you.
23 Those who bring thanksgiving as their sacrifice,
they are the ones who really do me honour;

I will show forth the saving power of God
to everyone who keeps to this right way."

PSALM 51:1-17

A Lament

1 In your steadfast love and clemency, O God,
mercifully blot out my revolting acts.

2 Give me a thorough sluicing from my guilt
and cleanse me from my wickedness.

3 I know my iniquities only too well,
and my sin haunts me day in and day out.

4 I have sinned against you, and you only,
and committed what is evil in your eyes;

so you are justified in pronouncing sentence
and blameless when you pass your judgement.

5 Indeed, I was born the easy prey of guilt,
apt to sin from the moment my mother conceived me.

6 You desire sincerity right to the core of one's being,
so teach me wisdom deep in the secrecy of my heart.

7 Purge my guilt with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

8 Let me hear again the sounds of joy and gladness;
let the bones you crushed knit in a joyous dance.

9 Hide your face from my sins, expunge all my guilt.

10 Create in me a pure heart, O God, put a new, resolute spirit in me.

11 Do not throw me out of your presence,
do not deprive me of your holy spirit.

12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and foster a generous spirit within me.

13 Then I will instruct the wicked in your ways,
and sinners will find their way back to you.

14 Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, my saviour God,
and I will acclaim your justice at the top of my voice.

15 O Righteous One, just unlock my lips
and my mouth will show the world what it is to praise.

16 You take no particular delight in sacrifices;
if I brought a burnt offering, you would not be impressed.

17 My sacrifice, O Shaddai, is a wounded spirit;
a broken, contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

PSALM 52

A Prophetic Denunciation

1 Why are you boasting, you mover and shaker,
of the horrible mischief you've done to the godly?
You spend your days 2 hatching destructive plots.
You have a razor for a tongue, you maestro of treachery.

3 You prefer evil to goodness, lies to truthfulness.
4 You love words that chew people up, you fork-tongue.
5 But God is going to dismantle you for good,
to snap you up and drag you from your tent;

Yahweh will root you up from the land of the living.

6 Justice lovers will note all this in awe, then laugh,
7 "See, there's the one who had no use for God as refuge,
but trusted in riches, looking for security in tainted wealth."

8 But I flourish like a green olive in the house of God,
in whose faithful love I put my trust forever and ever.
9 I will give unceasing thanks for all that you have done.
Here, among the faithful, I will proclaim your good name.

PSALM 54

A Lament

1 Let your name be the saving of me, O God;
vindicate me according to your power.
2 Hear my prayer, Most High, listen to what I have to say.
3 For the insolent have risen in rebellion against me;

ruthless, godless men are out to murder me,
4 but Elohim is my sure help, the mainstay of my life,
5 who is going to repay my enemies for their evil.
In your faithfulness put an end to the lot of them.

6 I will be offering you a willing sacrifice;
I will give thanks, O Shaddai, to your name, for it is good.
7 You have rescued me from all kinds of trouble,
and I have looked in triumph on my enemies.

PSALM 62:5-12

A Wisdom Psalm

5 In quiet my soul waits for God alone, none other,
because the source of all my hope is God,
6 my one and only rock, my salvation,
my stronghold – I shall not be shaken.

7 My deliverance, my honour rest on Elohim,
my mighty rock where I find sanctuary.
8 O you people, always trust in the Holy One;
pour out your heart to El Shaddai, our refuge.

9 Ordinary folk are nothing but a puff of breath;
those with pretensions to rank are a delusion;
put them together on the scales and up they go –
both of them combined weigh no more than a sigh.

10 Do not put your trust in extortion,
do not rest any vain hopes on robbery;
should legitimate riches multiply themselves,
take care not to set your heart on them.

11 God has spoken once, twice have I heard it said:
that all power rests with the Most High,
12 that faithful love is of your essence, Yahweh,
and that you repay us as our deeds deserve.

PSALM 63:1-8

A Wisdom Psalm

¹ O Holy One, I affirm you as my God,
I search for you, my parched soul thirsts for you;
my yearning body faints for need of you,
as in a weary land, dried out and waterless.

² I have looked upon you in your sanctuary
with just such longing, gazing at your power and glory.
³ Since your steadfast love is better than life itself,
I will be setting about to sing your praises.

⁴ So I will bless you as long as I have breath;
with prayerful hands uplifted I will invoke your name.
^{5/6} As I lie abed during the watches of the night,
when my thoughts turn to you, I meditate on you;

O then my soul feasts richly, my joyful lips praise you;
⁷ for you have proved to be my helper,
and I sing joyous in the shadow of your wings.
⁸ My soul clings to you, and your strong hand supports me.

PSALM 65

A Thanksgiving Hymn

1 Praise is your due in Zion, O Holy One,
and vows that have been addressed to you
2 shall be made good, O answerer of prayer!
3 When sin overwhelms us, you pardon our iniquities.

4 Happy are those you choose and invite to live in your courts.
We shall be filled with the blessings of your holy temple-house.
5 You respond to us, O God of our salvation,
with awesome marvels of deliverance;

the whole world trusts hopefully in you,
right to the ends of the earth and uttermost seas.

6 It was your strength that set mountains firm in place;
you are girdled with creative power.

7 Roaring seas or turbulent nations, you calm them both.
8 Dwellers at world's far edges live in awe of your signs;
you make the gates of morning and dusk shout for joy.
9 How greatly your visits, your watering, enrich the land;

the river of God is brimming with water;
you have provided for earth to supply the folk with grain.

10 You water her furrows lavishly, levelling her ridges,
softening her with showers and blessing her growth.

11 You crown the year with your bounty;

the very ruts of your wagon wheels seep abundance.

12 Desert pastures well up, hills wrap themselves in glee;

13 the meadows dress themselves up in flocks,

and the valleys deck themselves out in grain,

calling and singing together in pure delight.

PSALM 66

A Thanksgiving Hymn

1 Make a joyful noise to I AM, you whole wide world;
2 sing God's splendid Name in glory-giving praise.
3 Tell Elohim, "How awesome your deeds are!
Your foes cringe in the face of your great power.

4 The whole earth waits upon you in worship,
sings your praises, sings psalms in praise of your name."
5 Come, see what the Most High has done
by way of awesome deeds among us mortals.

6 The Almighty turned sea into dry land;
our ancestors passed through the river on foot.
We rejoiced, there, 7 in the ruler of eternal might,
whose eyes keep watch on the nations –

so let would-be rebels keep their profile low.
8 Bless our God, all peoples everywhere,
let the sound of our Creator's praise be heard,
9 who has preserved our lives and our feet from stumbling.

10 Though it must be said, O God, that you have tested us:
you have proved us, refined us like they do with silver.
11 You have been know to land us in the net;
you have heaped burdens on our backs;

12 you let people gallop roughshod over our heads;
we had to make our way through fire and water –
even so, you have seen us through to a spacious liberty.
13 I will come into your house with burnt offerings;

I will fulfill all the vows 14 that I uttered,
the ones that passed my lips when times were bad.
15 I will make you burnt offerings of fatlings,
complete with the smoke of sacrificial rams;

I will make an offering of bulls and goats.
16 Come and listen, all you God-fearing folk,
and I will tell you what the Holy One has done for me.
17 I called on God in prayer, high praises on my tongue.

18 Had I been cherishing any secret sin,
the Holy One would not have listened to me.
19 But truly Yahweh has heard me out,
and really paid attention to my words of prayer.

20 Blessed be El Shaddai for not rejecting my devotions,
or bereaving me of her divinely steadfast love.

PSALM 67

A Hymn of Praise

1 May you be gracious to us, Shaddai, and bless us,
may your face shine smiling upon us,
2 so that your ways may be known world-wide,
your saving power among all nations.

3 Let the peoples, yes all of them, praise you, O God.
4 Let whole nations celebrate and sing for joy,
for you judge peoples with even-handed justice,
and take the nations on earth under your guidance.

5 Let the peoples, yes all of them, praise you, O God.
6 Earth has borne its fruits, our Creator God has blessed us.
7 O may your blessing continue to rest upon us;
let all the ends of the earth hold you in due reverence.

PSALM 68:1-10,32-35

A Hymn of Praise

1 Let God rise up and Yahweh's enemies be scattered;
let those who hate Elohim flee the holy presence.

2 Disperse them like so much wind-blown smoke;
let the wicked melt away before God like wax beside fire.

3 But let lovers of justice give full rein to happiness,
exulting, jubilant with joy in the presence of their Beloved.

4 Sing! sound out praises to the Eternal's name;
lift up a song to God the cloud-rider, exult before her.

5 Parent to orphans and defender of widows –
such is El Shaddai in her holy dwelling place.

6 God houses the lonely, frees prisoners into prosperity;
but rebels have to scratch a living from arid wastes.

7 Most High, when you led your people's exodus,
when you went marching out through the wilderness,

8 the earth quaked and skies gushed with rain
at the presence of I AM, God of Sinai, God of Israel.

9 You gave widespread, abundant showers
to restore your own land when it was languishing,

10 so that your family found it a habitable home
where in your goodness you provided for the needy....

32 You nations of the earth, sing praises to Shaddai,
to our Creator, 33 who rides the immemorial heavens;

listen! – thunder – tremendous voice of the Almighty.

34 All power be to God, whose majesty plays over Israel;

whose heavens are sign of such mighty creativity.

35 How awesome you are in your holy sanctuary,

you, the Holy One of Israel, empowering your people
and filling them with strength. Blessed be Yahweh!

PSALM 69:7-18

A Lament

7 It is for your sake, God, that I've borne reproach,
and been humiliated with such loss of face.

8 I have become a stranger to my own kinfolk,
an alien to my own mother's children.

9 Zeal for your house is what has been consuming me;
insults against you have fallen on me to bear.

10 When I made my soul weep with fasting,
all I got for doing that was put-downs.

11 When I dressed myself in sackcloth,
they made a byword of me, a butt of jokes.

12 I am gossip-fodder for those who sit at the town gate,
and the town drunks make up songs about me.

13 But as for me, I say my prayers to you, O God.

In the abundance of your loving kindness,
and in your good time, give me an answer.

With your trusty help 14 save me from sinking in the mire;

let me be rescued from foes, from the depths of their hatred.

15 Do not let the floodwaters sweep over me,
or the abyss swallow me, or the mouth of the Pit engulf me.

16 In your good loving kindness, answer me, O God;

in the fullness of your mercy, turn towards me.

17 Do not hide your face from me, your servant,
for I am in a bad way – be quick to answer me.

18 Come close, redeem me, for thanks to enemies I need ransoming.

PSALM 70

A Lament

1 May it please you to deliver me, O God.

O Righteous One, hurry to my assistance!

2 Shame and confusion on those who are out to get me.

Let those who want to hurt me be rebuffed and disgraced.

3 Let them back off for shame – them and their "Aha, Aha's!"

4 But happiness and joy in you to all who seek you.

Let everyone who loves your saving power

keep up the ceaseless refrain, "God is great!"

5 But I am poor and needy; hurry my way, O Shaddai!

You are my help, my saviour; this is no time to be delaying!

PSALM 71:1-14

A Lament

1 I take refuge in you, O God; let me never be shamed.

2 In your justice come to my rescue and save me;

listen to me and set about my deliverance!

3 Be the sheltering rock for me that I know you are;

be the stronghold for my safety that indeed you are.

4 Rescue me, O my God from the grasp of wicked hands,
from the clutches of unjust, ruthless people.

5 You, Yahweh, are my hope, my trust since I was young.

6 I have relied on you since the day I was born;
you were midwife to my mother at my birth.

Always you are my theme of praise, 7 my strong refuge,
though to many I've seemed like some mysterious portent.

8 When it comes to praising you I have a real mouthful!
I can descant on your glory all day long.

9 Do not abandon me when old age overtakes me,
do not forsake me when my strength is on the ebb.

10 For I am the topic of malicious talk among my enemies;
those who would like to see me dead confer together

11 saying, "Let's go! grab that godforsaken wretch
who hasn't a solitary soul to come to the rescue."

12 Stay close, O Holy One; O Shaddai, hurry to my help!

13 Let my slanderers be shrivelled up with shame;
let those who wish me harm be disgraced and scorned.
14 But I will always hope, praising you more and yet still more.

PSALM 72:1-7,10-14,18-19

A Royal Psalm

1 Endow the ruler with your sense of justice, O God,
and a ruler's heir with your righteousness.

2 May the ruler judge your people even-handedly,
and the poor among your folk with justice.

3 May the mountains and the foothills
yield a righteous prosperity for your people.

4 May the ruler uphold the cause of the nation's poor,
delivering the needy and crushing the oppressor.

5 May the ruler live as long as the sun endures,
and be as long-lived as the moon, age after age;
6 and be like rain falling on new mown grass,
like refreshing showers moistening the earth.

7 In the reigning judge's day may the virtues flourish
and peace prevail until our moon falls from the sky....

10 Let the kings of Tarshish and the isles send tribute,
the monarchs of Sheba and Seba bring their gifts.

11 Let all the kings pay their due homage;
let all nations render service to a ruler
12 who rescues the afflicted when they beg relief,
and delivers the poor and those without protectors.

13 A ruler who has pity on the weak and destitute,
who saves them from a pauper's death;

14 who redeems their lives from violence and exploitation,
and regards the blood of all of them as precious....

18 Blessed be El Shaddai, the God of Israel,
unique in the performance of marvellous deeds.

19 Blessed forever be the glorious name of Elohim;
may God's glory fill the whole world. Amen! Be it so!

PSALM 77:1-2,11-20

A Lament Concludes with a Hymn of Praise

1 I call out, I cry aloud to God, hoping to be heard.

2 In the day of my distress I go searching for Yahweh;
at night, my hand stretches tirelessly in supplication;
my soul refuses to be comforted....

11 I will recall the deeds of the Creator;
I will hark back to past wonders you performed.

12 I will meditate on your work in all its plenitude,
and ponder your tremendous acts.

13 Your way, O Elohim, is uniquely holy.
What god is remotely as great as our Holy One?

14 You are the God who works miracles;
you have displayed your power among the nations.

15 With your strong arm you redeemed your people,
the descendants of Jacob, Leah, Rachel, and Joseph.

16 When the waters saw you, O God, saw who you were,
they recoiled in terror; the very ocean shook to its depths.

17 The clouds sluiced down rain; the skies rumbled;
your arrows flashed here, there, everywhere.

18 Thunder was crashing in your whirlwind,
your lightning lit the world as earth rocked and shook.

19 Your right of way was sea, your path led through huge waves,

yet your footprints were not visible to anyone.

²⁰ You shepherded your people along like a flock
under the hand of Moses, Miriam, and Aaron.

PSALM 78:1-7,12-16,23-29,34-38

A Salvation History Psalm

1 O my people, listen to the lore I have to teach,
pay close attention the words I have to say.

2 I will narrate a parable for you,
and expound the hidden meaning of ancient sayings,

3 things that we all have heard about and known,
and that our ancestors have passed on to us.

4 We will not hide these things from their descendants;
we will tell the coming generation all about them:

the glorious deeds and the power of Yahweh,
and all the marvels that El Shaddai has performed.

5 The Most High established a decree in Jacob,
and laid down a law to be kept in Israel,

with orders to our forebears to teach it to their offspring,
6 so that the next generation--yet unborn--might know the law,
and in turn instruct *their* children in it, 7 putting their trust in I AM,
remembering the acts of God, and keeping the commandments....

12 Right under their ancestors' eyes God performed marvels
in the land of Egypt, in the countryside of Zoan Rameses.

13 Elohim parted the Red Sea, letting them pass through it,
and heaped waves on each other like banked up mounds.

14 All day you led them with a cloud, all night with a fiery light.

15 You split rocks open in the wilderness,
and gave them drinking water abundant as the sea.
16 You made streams gush from rock, water flow like rivers....

23 Then God gave orders to the skies above,
and opened up the doors of heaven,
24 raining manna down on them to eat,
and gifting them with the grain of heaven.

25 So with Shaddai sending them food aplenty,
mortals fed on the bread of angels.
26 Yahweh let loose an east wind in the heavens,
and by divine power drove the south wind along;

27 God showered game on them thick as dust,
flying birds like the sea-sand in their numbers,
28 and let them flutter down in their encampment,
all around the tents in which they sojourned.

29 So the people ate well till they were full,
for the Most High had given them what they craved....

34 When the divine wrath struck them down
they were quick enough, then, to seek out God;

they repented and looked earnestly to Elohim,
35 recalling that the Holy One was their rock,
that the Most High God was their redeemer.
36 But they flattered with lip-service, lied with fancy talk.

37 In their heart of hearts they were not being loyal;
they were not holding steadfast to your covenant.
38 Yet you, being compassionate, forgave their sin
and refrained from destroying them;

time and again you curbed your anger,
and did not stir up your wrath to the full.
39 You remembered that they were mere mortality,
a breath of wind that passes, never to return.

PSALM 79:1-9

A Lament

1 O God, foreign infidels have taken over your inheritance;
they have defiled your temple and laid waste Jerusalem.

2 They've left the corpses of your servants as carrion for crows,
the bodies of your true worshippers as food for wild beasts.

3 All around Jerusalem they spilled their blood like water,
leaving no one there even to give them decent burial.

4 We have become the taunt of our neighbours,
butts of mockery and cruel jokes of those around us.

5 How long, O God? Are you going to be angry forever?
Will your jealous wrath go on and on raging like a fire?

6 Pour out your anger on nations who don't acknowledge you,
and on those kingdoms which do not call upon your name;

7 it's they who've swallowed Jacob, trashed Rachel's home.

8 Do not hold the sins of our forebears against us;
let your timely compassion come swift to meet us,
for we have been brought low, so very low.

9 Help us, O God our saviour, for the honour of your name;
for the sake of that name rescue us, blot out our sins.

PSALM 80

A Lament

1 Listen, O Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead Joseph like a flock!
you who are enthroned upon the cherubim!
shine out 2 on Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh.

Rouse up your might and come to save us!
3 Restore us, O God, shine your saving smile upon us.
4 How long, O Yahweh, most high God of hosts,
are you going to take offence at your people's prayers?

5 You have fed them with the bread of sorrow,
and given them triple measure of tears to drink.
6 You are letting our neighbours bicker over us;
our enemies share a good laugh among themselves.

7 The time has come to restore us, O God of hosts;
shine the saving light of your smile upon us.
8 You brought a vine all the way from Egypt;
to plant it, you dispossessed whole nations.

9 You cleared the ground for it to grow in;
it took deep root and covered the whole land.
10 The mountains were covered with its shade,
the mighty cedars with its branches;

11 its boughs stretched right up to the Sea,

and its shoots as far as the great River.

12 Why, then, have you broken down its walls,
so any passer-by can make free with its fruit?

13 Boars from the forest are ravaging it,
and every passing creature of the wild feeds on it.

14 Do an about face, O God of hosts,
look down again from heaven and take in the sight;

have a care, have some regard for this vine,
15 the stock planted by your own strong hand.
16 People have burned it, they have hacked it down –
may they perish under the rebuke of your frown!

17 But let your hand rest on the one at your side,
the child of Adam you've strengthened for your service.

18 Then we will never go back on you again;
rekindle life in us and we will call upon your name.

19 Restore us, O most high God of hosts;
shine the saving light of your smile upon us.

PSALM 81

A Festival Psalm

1 Sing out to the Righteous One, our strength;
shout for joy to the God of Jacob, Leah, and Rachel!

2 Raise a joyous song, shake the tambourine,
sound the sweet lyre to accompany the harp.

3 Blow the ritual horn for the new moon,
for the new moon on our festal day.

4 For this is a statute to be observed by Israel,
an ordinance set down by the God of Jacob;

5 it was laid on Joseph as a solemn obligation,
when Yahweh took the field against the land of Egypt.
I hear a voice I had not heard before:

6 "I am the one who lifted the burden off your shoulder;
your hands were freed to set the slave pack down.

7 In your distress you called, and I rescued you;
unseen in my storm cloud, I answered you in thunder;
at the waters of Meribah I put you to the test.

8 Hear me, O my people, while I admonish you;
O Israel, if you would only listen to me!
9 You shall harbour no strange god among you;
you shall not worship any foreign deity.

10 I am Yahweh your God who brought you out of Egypt.
Open your mouth wide and I will fill it.

11 But my people did not listen to my voice,
the children of Israel would have none of me.

12 So I abandoned them to their own stubborn hearts,
leaving them to fend for themselves.

13 If my people would only listen to me!
if Israel would only walk in my ways!

14 Then in no time at all I would subdue their enemies,
and give the back of my hand to their foes.

15 Those who hate the Holy One would cringe before me,
and their doom would be forever sealed.

16 But you I would feed with the finest wheat,
and fill you to contentment with sweet honey from the rock."

PSALM 82

A Wisdom Psalm

1 God takes the floor in the divine council
and among the assembled gods, delivers judgement:

2 "How long are you going to judge unjustly,
and rule in favour of the wicked?"

3 Deal justly with the weak and orphaned;
see to the rights of the downtrodden and destitute.

4 Rescue those who are helpless, those in need;
free them from the clutches of the wicked."

5 They know nothing, these godling judges,
they really do not have a clue;
they stumble about in the dark
while the whole world order is being shaken.

6 "You may be gods," I say, "all children of the Most High,
7 but mortal-like, you shall perish, O princes, to a man."

8 Ascend the bench, O God, and judge the earth,
for all the nations belong to you!

PSALM 84

A Hymn

1 How lovely is your dwelling place, Yahweh Sabaoth!

2 My soul is pining, indeed it feels faint
with longing for the courts of Shaddai;
heart and body, I sing for joy to the living God.

3 At your altars, O Yahweh Sabaoth, my sovereign God,
even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest
where she may bring up her family –

4 lucky members of your household! praising you continually!

5 Blessed are those who find their strength in you,
whose hearts know the pilgrim ways to Zion.

6 They pass through Baca valley, leaving it a place of springs,
and the early rain, too, covers it with pools.

7 They press on from height to height,
certain that the God of gods is to be seen in Zion.

8 Most High God of hosts, hear my prayer! listen, God of Jacob:
9 have regard to our shield, look on the face of your anointed.

10 A single day spent in your courts is better
than any thousand days elsewhere.

I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God
than live well in the tents of wickedness.

11 The Eternal is both light of sun and shield of defence,
granting favour and bestowing honour,
withholding no good thing to those who lead a blameless life.
12 O Yahweh Sabaoth, happy is anyone who trusts in you!

PSALM 85

A Lament

1 Once, Adonai, you were well disposed toward your land;
you revived the fortunes of Jacob;

2 you forgave the iniquity of your people
and extended pardon for all their sin.

3 You let all your wrath against them subside,
and thought better of your blazing anger.

4 Restore us again, O God of our salvation;
relinquish your indignation toward us.

5 Are you going to be angry with us forever?
Will generation after generation feel your prolonged anger?

6 Revive us again – please? – so your folk can rejoice in you.

7 Show us your steadfast love, grant us your salvation.

8 I am listening for what God Most High has to say,
for El Shaddai *will* extend the olive branch to her people,
offering words of peace to those who keep the faith,
provided that they turn their back on folly.

9 For those who reverence God salvation surely is at hand,
close enough for divine glory to suffuse our land.

10 Steadfast love and loyalty are going to meet;
justice and peace will greet each other with a kiss.

11 Faithfulness will spring exuberant from the ground

while righteousness smiles down from heaven.

¹² The Creator will give good things, our land, rich yields,

¹³ as justice, the harbinger, clears a path for the tread of God.

PSALM 86

A Lament

¹ Listen to me, O Yahweh, and answer me,
I am downtrodden and in bad need of help.
² Preserve my life, for I am your loyal devotee;
rescue me, the servant who trusts entirely in you.

You are my God, ³ show me some mercy, Adonai,
since it's to you I raise my cry the livelong day.
⁴ Gladden the spirit of your servant,
for it's to you, Shaddai, that I lift up my soul.

⁵ Hope of the Just, you are kind and forgiving,
lavish in steadfast love for all who worship you.
⁶ Listen, Elohim, to my prayer; hear my pleading cry.
⁷ In my day of distress I call on you, for you will answer me.

⁸ None of the gods can hold a candle to you, O God,
nor are there any works that rival yours.
⁹ All the nations you have brought into being
shall come and bow down before you, Most High;

they shall glorify your name, ¹⁰ for in your greatness,
in your marvellous deeds, you alone are God.
¹¹ Teach me your path, Yahweh, so I may walk true to you;
give me a single-hearted reverence for your name.

12 I give you wholehearted thanks, O Adonai my God,
and I undertake to glorify your name for ever.
13 For your unswerving love for me is no small thing –
even plucking my soul from the depths of Sheol.

14 O God, insolent men take up arms against me;
a mob of thugs who set no store by you is out to get me.
15 But you, O Shaddai, are a merciful and gracious God,
forbearing and rich in faithful loving kindness.

16 Turn my way and be gracious to me;
impart some of your strength to me, your slave;
rescue this child of your slave-girl.

17 Give me some decisive sign of your favour;

then those who hate me will see to their shame
how much, Yahweh, you have helped and cherished me.

PSALM 89: 1- 4,15-37

A Visionary Hymn of Praise

1 I will be forever singing of God's steadfast love;

I will proclaim your constancy to all generations.

2 I affirm that your loving kindness endures forever;

your faithfulness is as unshakeable as the heavens.

3 You declared, "I have covenanted with my chosen one,

I have sworn an oath to my servant David:

4 'I will establish your posterity for ever,

and build you a throne to last from age to age.' " ...

15 Happy are the people who know how to acclaim you,
who walk, O Elohim, in the light of your presence!

16 In your name they exult the whole day long,
in your righteousness they find themselves exalted.

17 You are the strength in which they glory;

we hold our heads high by your grace and favour.

18 Our shield and protector belongs to God Most High,
our king to none other than the Holy One of Israel.

19 Then you spoke to your loyal follower in a vision:

"I have advanced someone who is a great warrior,

I have elevated someone chosen from my people.

20 I have found and settled on my servant David;

I have anointed him with my holy oil;
21 my hand shall always be there for him,
so, too, will my arm to keep him strong.
22 No enemy shall outwit him, no malefactor bring him low.

23 I will crush all opponents arrayed against him
and overcome all those who hate him.
24 My loyalty and unfailing love shall attend him;
he shall hold his head high in the power of my name.

25 I will put command of the sea into David's hand,
and give his strong hand firm hold on the rivers.
26 His cry to me shall be: 'Abba! my God, my saving Rock!'
27 I will nominate him my first-born, highest of earth's rulers.

28 I will cherish him in steadfast love forever,
and my covenant with him shall hold firm.
29 I will establish David's line in perpetuity,
and his throne for as long as heaven endures.

30 If his offspring abandon my law and flout my decrees,
31 violating my statutes and ignoring my commandments,
32 then I will punish their disobedience with the rod
and their sinfulness with scourges;

³³ but I will not deprive him of my loving kindness,
or play false with my faithfulness.

³⁴ I will not forswear my oath of covenant,
or alter one jot, one tittle of my given word.

³⁵ I have sworn by my own holiness once and for all;
I will not lie to David — ³⁶ his line shall last for ever,
with his throne enduring before me like the sun,
³⁷ like the moon, set as perpetual witness in the skies."

PSALM 90

A Lament

1 Yahweh, you have been our true home through the ages.

2 From everlasting to everlasting, you are I AM,
infinitely prior to the birthing of the mountains,
or your formation of the earth and cosmos.

3 You turn humankind back into dust,
saying, "Return, children of Adam, to your origins."

4 In your sight a thousand years are nothing –
a yesterday just passed, a mere night-watch.

5 You brush them away; they are like a dream,
like grass that revives in dews of dawn:

6 during the morning it flourishes, renewed,
by evening it has dried out and withered.

7 In just such fashion your anger makes an end of us;
we are overwhelmed by the onset of your wrath.

8 You have laid our misdeeds bare before you,
turned the full light of your face on our secret sins.

9 Our lives go by under the shadow of your wrath;
our years peter out to their end like a sigh.

10 Seventy years make up our lifespan,
or eighty, perhaps, if we are strong;

even then, their entire passage is toilsome and anxious;
in no time they are vanished, and we are flown.

11 Who can size up the power of your anger?

Your wrath is as great as the reverence which is your due.

12 Teach us, then, to account carefully for each day,
so we might come through to where the heart is wise.

13 About face, O God! How long before you relent?

Have some compassion on your followers!

14 In a glad daybreak, satisfy our hunger for your love,
so we can be glad, rejoicing all our lifelong days.

15 Grant us a happy day for every day you have afflicted us,
and a good year for every evil one we have endured.

16 Let your activity be made plain to your servants,
and the splendour of your power to their children.

17 Let the favour of the Holy One our God rest upon us,
and prosper, O prosper all our undertakings!

PSALM 91:1-6,9-16

A Wisdom Psalm

¹You who live in the shelter of the Most High,
who lodge in El Shaddai's protective shade,
² will be saying to Yahweh, "My sanctuary, my fortress,
my Almighty One in whom I put my trust!" –

³ for God will disentangle you from the fowler's snare,
and deliver you from the deadly fevers;
⁴ will cover you with pinions, great wings of refuge,
constant and reliable as shield and buckler.

⁵ You will not fear the terror of the night,
or the arrow's deadly flight by day,
⁶ or the pestilence that stalks in darkness,
or the wasting plague that rages at broad noon....

⁹ Because you have made the Holy One your refuge,
and God the one with whom you are most at home,
¹⁰ nothing evil shall ever happen to you,
no stealthy plague come lurking near your tent.

¹¹ Yahweh has instructed the angels about you,
to watch over you as you come and go.
¹² They will bear you up on their strong hands,
lest you dash your foot against a stone.

¹³ You will tread safely on adders and past lions;
you will trample snakes and young lions underfoot.

14 I undertake, God says, to rescue those who love me;
I will protect everyone who knows me by my name.

15 When they call to me, I will respond;
in trouble I will be there to save them and do them proud.
16 I will satisfy them with a good long life,
and make my salvation plain for them to see.

PSALM 92:1-4,12-15

A Thanksgiving Psalm

1 It is a good and proper thing to give thanks to God,
to sing praises to your name, O Most High;

2 to be declaring your faithful love at dawn of day,
and telling of your constancy at fall of night;

3 all this to the music of harp and ten-stringed lute,
to the melodious strumming of the lyre.

4 For your deeds, Shaddai, have filled me with exultation;
I am singing for joy over the works of your hands....

12 Those who love justice flourish like the palm tree,
they grow tall as a cedar in Lebanon.

13 They are planted in the green of God's own house,
they do well in the courts of our Holy One.

14 In old age they are still producing fruit;
they are always green and full of sap –

15 good evidence of the justice of Elohim,
my rock, in whom there is no trace of unrighteousness.

PSALM 93

An Enthronement Hymn

¹ Yahweh is sovereign, robed in majestic panoply;
in full robes, and girded with a belt of power.
You set the world firm in place, unshakeable forever,
² a throne for you, established from time immemorial;

you are I AM from everlasting to everlasting.

³ O God Most High, the ocean lifts its swells,
let the waters of the ocean raise their voice;
so let them lift their voice to a thunderous roar –

⁴ more majestic than the thunder of huge seas,
than ocean breakers, is the high majesty of the Creator!
⁵ Your decrees stand firm in place, unshakeable;
and holiness, O God, forever marks your house's beauty.

PSALM 95

An Enthronement Hymn

1 Come! Let us raise a song to the Most High;
let us joyously acclaim the Rock of our salvation!

2 Let us parade into God's presence with thanksgiving,
and shake the rafters with psalms of praise to Yahweh!

3 For I AM is the greatest, High King above all gods.

4 Deepest cave or mountain height, God holds both in hand.

5 The sea belongs to Elohim, who made it;
the dry land, too, shaped by the Creator's hands.

6 Come! let us worship and bow low in reverent homage,
let us fall on our knees before El Shaddai, our Maker!

7 For we are the people of God's pasture,
of this our God, who tends us like a flock.

8 If you would only listen to that Shepherd's voice today!
Do not harden your hearts like your forebears did at Meribah,
or at Massah in the wilderness, 9 when they confronted me –
put me to the test, even though they had seen me in action.

10 Forty years of that crowd was enough to make me say,
'They are a fickle-hearted lot who disregard my ways.'

11 So in my anger I swore this oath:
'They shall not enter into my rest.'

PSALM 96

An Enthronement Hymn

1 O sing a new song for the Holy One;
let the whole world sing songs for Yahweh.
2 Sing for Adonai and bless the holy name;
tell out the Beloved's saving grace from day to day.

3 Proclaim El Shaddai's glory among the nations,
declare her marvellous deeds to every people.
4 God is great, and due the very highest praise,
far worthier of our reverence than any godling.

5 The various gods which nations worship are all idols,
but the one who made the universe is God Most High,
6 whose presence is attended by majesty and splendour,
whose sanctuary is charged with power and beauty.

7 Give, you families of nations, out with it,
give Yahweh's renown and might the full credit owing.
8 Ascribe to the Creator the glory due the holy name;
bring an offering and come, enter the courts of Elohim.

9 Worship the Holy One in the splendour of that holiness;
all the world, stand before the Presence in trembling awe.
10 Spread this word among the nations: "God reigns!
The earth is firmly fixed, never to be moved.

The Righteous One will judge all peoples justly."

11 So let the heavens be glad, let the earth rejoice;
let the sea, full of all its creatures, join in with a roar;
12 let the countryside and everything in it exult.

Then whole forests shall chorus joyfully 13 before their Maker,
who is drawing close, coming to judge the earth.
God will pass judgment on the world with justice,
on the nations with neither fear nor favour.

PSALM 97

An Enthronement Hymn

- 1 Yahweh reigns! Let the earth be glad
and its myriad coastlands all rejoice!
- 2 Cloud and thick mist enfold the Holy One,
whose throne is founded on righteousness and justice.
- 3 God's advance guard, fire, burns up enemies left and right.
4 The Almighty's lightning bolts light up the world;
earth sees all this and falls to trembling.
- 5 Mountains melt like wax before the universal Sovereign.
- 6 The heavens proclaim the righteousness of God,
whose glory is plain to the sight of every nation.
- 7 Shame on image-worshippers, vaunting their pathetic idols;
all you petty gods, come and bow the knee to Adonai.
- 8 Zion is gladdened to hear your judgments, O Wisdom,
and the towns – daughters of Judah – are delighted.
- 9 For you, Yahweh, are supreme over all the earth;
you are exalted way above all so-called gods.
- 10 You who love God Most High, persist in loathing evil.
Elohim guards the lives of loyal followers,
saving them from the clutches of the wicked.
- 11 A harvest-home of light and joy dawns for just and upright folk.
- 12 Rejoice in El Shaddai, O you lovers of what is right,

and give thankful praise to the holy name!

PSALM 98

An Enthronement Hymn

- 1 Sing a new song to God, doer of marvellous deeds,
whose strong hand and holy arm have won victory.
- 2 Yahweh has made the extent of this triumph very clear,
revealing before the nations' eyes a vindication of divinity.
- 3 Elohim, you have kept in mind your steadfast love,
your unwavering loyalty to the house of Israel.
All the farthest reaches of the world
have witnessed the victory of our Holy One.
- 4 All together now – world wide! – joyous acclaim for Adonai!
belt out glad paeans and glorias *fortissimo!*
- 5 Chant your psalms of praise to the harp,
to the lyre and other strains of melody!
- 6 Acclaim the presence of the sovereign, God Most High,
with trumpets and the blare of horns!
- 7 Let the sea, full of all its creatures, join in with a roar;
the whole world, too, and all who live in it.
- 8 Let rivers clap their hands, hills make joyous harmony
9 in the presence of God, who comes to judge the earth;
who will pass judgment on the world with justice,
on the nations of the earth with equity.

PSALM 99

An Enthronement Hymn

1 Yahweh reigns – whole peoples shake in their boots!
sits enthroned upon the cherubim – earth quakes!
2 Tremendous in Zion, God towers above all nations.
3 Let them praise your great, awe-inspiring name.

Holy is Elohim! 4 In regal might, Lover of Justice,
you have firmly established the laws of equity;
you have seen to justice and honesty in Jacob.
5 Extol El Shaddai our God, worship at her footstool.

Holy is Elohim! 6 Miriam and Moses and Aaron,
they were among your devotees; Hannah and Samuel,
they were among those who called upon your name.
They prayed to you their Holy One, and you answered them.

7 You spoke to them from within a pillar of cloud;
they followed your precepts and kept the Law you gave.
8 You, Yahweh our God, responded as a forgiving deity,
though you did not let them get away with doing wrong.

9 Extol El Shaddai our God, worship at her sacred hilltop;
for holy indeed is Elohim our Creator God.

PSALM 100

An Enthronement Hymn

- 1 Everyone one earth, joyfully acclaim the Holy One.
- 2 Enjoy your worship, be glad of Elohim,
and enter the presence of Yahweh on notes of song.
- 3 Savour your knowledge that El Shaddai is God.

It is the Most High who made us and not we ourselves;
we are God's people, the sheep of God's pasture.

- 4 Enter our Beloved's gates with thanksgiving,
and the sacred courts with praise upon praise.

Give thanks to our Maker and bless the Holy Name.

- 5 For the fount of goodness is God Most High,
whose unswerving love endures for ever,
whose constancy holds firm from age to age.

PSALM 103:1-13,22

A Thanksgiving Hymn

1 Bless God, O my soul! my whole being, bless the holy name.

2 Bless, O my soul – remember all the benefits of Yahweh,
3 forgiver of your trespasses, healer of your infirmities,
4 who redeems your life from the deathly Pit;

who encircles you with steadfast love and mercy,
5 and so contents you, lifelong, with good things
that your youth, eagle-like, is constantly renewed.
6 God acts to vindicate the downtrodden and do them justice.

7 Moses was instructed in the ways of the Holy One,
whose deeds unfurled before the eyes of all Israel.
8 El Shaddai is tender hearted and gracious,
slow to anger, quick in abundant loving kindness.

9 The Righteous One will not always play the accuser,
nor go on nursing resentful anger for all time.
10 Elohim does not treat us as our sins deserve,
nor repay us in due proportion to our offences.

11 Your faithful love for those who reverence you
is as great as heaven is high above the earth;
12 you separate us from our transgressions
as far as the east is from the west.

13 Just as parents feel compassion for their children,
so you, too, feel compassion for those who revere you....
22 Let all creation throughout the divine dominion
be blessing its Creator. Yes, bless God, O my soul!

PSALM 104:1-9,24-34,35bc

A Creation Hymn

1 Bless creating Wisdom, O my soul!
O Yahweh my God, you are the greatest.
You are clothed with honour and majesty,
2 wrapped in a mantle of pure light.

You stretch out the heavens like a tent,
3 settling the beams of your mansion on their waters;
you use the clouds for your chariot,
riding on the wings of the wind;

4 you assign the winds to be your messengers,
fire and flame to be your ministers.
5 You set Gaia so firm on her foundations
that she shall never be jarred loose.

6 You spread the deep over her like a cloak,
with the waters standing higher than the mountains.
7 Then at your stern order the waters retreat pell-mell,
at the sound of your thunder they take to their heels.

8 They flowed over mountains, poured into valleys,
finding the place that you allotted to them.
9 You fixed a boundary which they may not pass,
so they might not overspread the earth again....

24 O God, how many and various are all your works!
Earth teems with your creatures, creations of your Sophia.
25 Yonder the vast expanse of sea is brimming
with countless moving forms of life, small and large.

26 There go the ships, there goes Leviathan, your plaything.
27 All these look to you for provision as they need it;
28 when you give them food, they gather it up;
when you open your hand, they eat their fill of good things.

29 When you hide your face they are panic-stricken;
when you call in their breath, they die and revert to dust.
30 When you breathe out your spirit, they come to life;
and so it is that you keep renewing the face of the earth.

31 May your glory, Elohim, endure for ever!
may you go on rejoicing in your creations, O God! –
32 you whose look can set the world a-tremble,
whose touch can leave the mountains smoking.

33 As long as I live I will be singing for El Shaddai;
all my life I will chant psalms of praise to the Holy One.
34 May my meditation please I AM, in whom I so rejoice.
35b Bless God the Creator, O my soul! c Hallelujah!

PSALM 105:1-11,16-26,37-45

A Hymn

1 O give thanks to Yahweh and proclaim the Holy Name,
declare the acts of Elohim throughout all nations.

2 Sing hymns of praise, make music for the Most High,
with all the Creator's marvellous deeds as your theme.

3 Glory in the hallowed name of El Shaddai;
joy to the heart of everyone who's looking for Adonai!
4 Come, turn to the Righteous One, your strength;
be on the lookout for God's presence continually.

5 Never forget the marvellous works of Wisdom,
the miracles performed, the judgements given,
6 you offspring of Abraham and Sarah, God's servants,
you children of Leah, Jacob, and Rachel, God's chosen.

7 I AM is the Holy One our God,
whose judgements are in effect throughout the world;
8 who remembers the covenant forever,
the law down through a thousand generations;

9 that covenant which was made with Abraham and Sarah,
and the oath sworn to Isaac and Rebecca,
10 which Yahweh confirmed to Jacob by way of statute,
to Israel as an everlasting covenant,

11 saying, "I am going to give into your possession

the land of Canaan, as an inheritance."...

16 When the Most High called up famine to beset the land,
to break in and make off with every stick of bread,

v.17 God had already sent someone on **ahead**—
Joseph, who had been sold off as a **slave**.

v.18 His feet were badly chafed by **fetters**,
an iron collar was locked around his **neck**;

v.19 the word of God kept putting Joseph to the **test**
until what he had said would happen came **true**.

v.20 The king, ruler of nations, sent and set Joseph **free**.

v.21 Pharaoh made him master of the royal treasure and
household,

v.22 to train the court officials at the king's **pleasure**,
and to teach the Egyptian elders wisdom...**Hallelujah!**

25 Egyptian hearts then changed to hating Israel,
and double-crossing Yahweh's followers.

26 El Shaddai sent Moses her servant,
with Aaron and Miriam whom she had chosen....

37 Then God led Israel out with all its silver and gold,
and not a one among their tribes so much as stumbled.

38 Egypt was only too glad to see the last of them,
for a deep dread of Israel had settled over it.

39 The Eternal spread a cloud as covering,
and a fire to light their way by night.

40 They asked and the Most High brought quails,
sending them their fill of food from heaven.

41 God opened up the rock, and water gushed out,

making its way like a river across arid ground.

42 For Yahweh remembered the sacred word
spoken with Abraham and Sarah, servants of God.

43 So the people were led out amid rejoicing,
the chosen folk to the sound of singing.

44 Elohim gave them the lands of the nations,
and they took possession of other peoples' wealth,

45 the better to keep the divine statutes
and observe the laws of the Holy One. Hallelujah!

PSALM 106:1-6,19-23

A Hymn

¹ Praise God! Give thanks for the goodness of Yahweh,
whose unshakeably loyal love holds good for ever.

² Who can frame in words the mighty acts of Elohim,
or hope to declare the whole praiseworthiness of God?

³ Happy are those who act justly and always do right.

⁴ Include me, Shaddai, when you show favour to your people;
help me, as well, when you set about delivering them,

⁵ so I may see for myself the prosperity of your chosen ones;

so I, too, may rejoice over your nation's happiness,
exultantly praising along with your own people.

⁶ We have sinned, though, and committed wrongs;
we have incurred a verdict of guilty, we and our forebears....

¹⁹ At Horeb they constructed a calf,
they bowed in worship to an image cast of metal.

²⁰ They exchanged *you*, their Glory,
for the representation of a grass-eating ox!

²¹ They forgot all about the Holy One, their Saviour,
who had performed great deeds in Egypt,

²² marvellous works in the country of Ham,
awesome exploits by the Sea of Reeds.

23 So Yahweh was of a mind to do away with them –
had not Moses, the specially chosen one,
stepped into the breach and stood up to God
so as to deflect the divine wrath from destroying them.

PSALM 107:1-9; 17-37, 43

A Thanksgiving

¹ O give thanks for the goodness of El Shaddai,
whose steadfast love is ever lasting.

² Let those redeemed by Elohim say as much,
those who've been redeemed from the power of enemies;

³ those gathered back in from other lands,
from east, west, north, and over the sea.

⁴ Some went astray in wild desert wastes,
unable to find their way to any inhabited town;

⁵ short on rations, in dire thirst, their spirits sank within them.

⁶ In their distress they cried out to the Holy One,
who saved them from their plight, ⁷ leading them
by a direct way until they came to an inhabited town.

⁸ Let them thank Yahweh for such loyal love,
for the wonders worked on behalf of humankind!

⁹ For the Creator satisfies those in the pangs of thirst
and fills the starving with good things....

¹⁷ Some played the fool, what with their rebellious ways,
and had to endure affliction thanks to their sins;

¹⁸ they loathed even the thought of any kind of food,
and so came close to the very gates of death.

¹⁹ Then in their distress they cried out to the Holy One,
who rescued them from their plight,

20 uttering the divine word of healing
that delivered them from the pit of dissolution.

21 Let them thank Yahweh for such loyal love,
for the wonders worked on behalf of humankind!

22 And let them offer sacrifices of thanksgiving
and recount the acts of God with joyous song.

23 Then there were those who took to sea in ships,
plying their trade on the great ocean;
24 they saw the works of I AM, the deep sea marvels.
25 God's word raised a windstorm, whipping up huge waves.

26 Up to the sky they went, down to the depths;
their courage melted in the face of such calamity;
27 they reeled and staggered like drunkards,
their seamanship at its wits' end, foundering.

28 Then in their distress they cried out to the Holy One,
who saved them from their plight, 29 stilled the storm
and hushed the waves. 30 They were glad then for the calm,
as God brought them to the harbour they were making for.

31 Let them thank Yahweh for such loyal love,
for the wonders worked on behalf of humankind!

32 Let them extol God in the congregation of the people,
and praise El Shaddai in the assembly of elders.

33 The Creator can and does turn rivers into desert,
springs of fresh water into dustbowls,
34 fertile countryside into briny marsh,
because of the wickedness of those who live there.

35 But the Most High can turn desert into water pools,
parched land into fresh water springs,
36 letting the hungry have a place to live,
where they build a town in which to thrive.

37 There they sow fields, they plant vineyards,
and there they gather in the harvest bounty....

43 Let everyone who's wise take these things to heart,
and ponder Yahweh's unshakeably loyal love.

PSALM 111

A Hymn

- 1 Hallelujah! In company with the upright
I will offer heartfelt thanks to God amid the congregation.
- 2 The acts of the Holy One are very great,
well worth the study of all who take pleasure in them.
- 3 Full of splendour and majesty is the activity of I AM,
whose unchanging righteousness goes on for ever.
- 4 You are renowned, Shaddai, for your marvellous deeds;
you are graciousness itself and full of mercy.
- 5 You provide food for those who reverence you,
mindful, always, of your covenant with them.
- 6 You have shown your people the power of your action
in granting them the heritage of other nations.
- 7 Your handiwork is marked by fidelity and justice,
every one of your precepts by trustworthiness.
- 8 They are so established as to last forever and ever,
to be carried out in good faith and uprightly.
- 9 You sent and redeemed your people,
and have ordered the keeping of your covenant for ever.
Holy is your name, and awesomely revered.
- 10 Reverence for you is the beginning of wisdom;

all who practice it are showing that they know a thing or two.
Your praise is going to go on and on forever.

PSALM 112

A Wisdom Psalm

¹ Alleluia! Blessed are those who revere the Holy One,
who take profound delight in God's commandments.

² Their descendants will be powers in the land,
an upright class that will receive sure blessing.

³ Their homes are places of wealth and riches,
and their righteousness holds firm for ever.

⁴ In the darkness light rises shining for the upright;
they are generous, compassionate, and just.

⁵ It is well for those who lend graciously,
who conduct their affairs with justice.

⁶ The righteous will not be shaken, not ever,
and they will be remembered for ever.

⁷ They are not scared when the news is bad,
for their hearts are steady, secure in Elohim.

⁸ Until they finally look in triumph on their foes,
they remain firm-minded, they will not panic.

⁹ They have given open-handedly to the poor,
and their righteousness holds firm for ever;
they carry their heads high in honour.

¹⁰ Evil people see all this in mounting anger:

in a gnashing of teeth they waste away,
for the desire of the wicked comes to nothing.

PSALM 113

A Hymn

1 Alleluia! sound your praises, O servants of God;
praise to the holy name of the Most High!

2 Blessed be God's name, henceforth and evermore.

3 Sunrise to sunset, let Elohim's name be praised.

4 The exalted Holy One is far above all nations,
in glory over and above the heavens.

5 Who is like Yahweh our God, enthroned on the heights,

6 looking so far down on the heavens and our earth?

7 God raises the poor and needy from dust and dunghill,
8 to sit them down with princes and nobles of the country.

9 El Shaddai gives the childless woman a home,
making her a joyful mother of children. Alleluia!

PSALM 114

A Hymn

1 When Israel broke away from Egypt,
the house of Jacob from a people of outlandish speech,
2 Judah became God's temple and Israel God's domain.
3 The sea took one look and fled; Jordan back-pedalled.

4 The mountains skipped like rams, the hills like lambs.
5 What is it, O sea, that makes you take to your heels?
What's with you, Jordan, to be recoiling upon yourself?
6 Mountains, why skip like rams? hills, why frisk like lambs?

7 Tremble, O Holy Land, at the approach of Yahweh,
at the presence of the God of Leah, Rachel, and Jacob,
8 who turns the rock into a pool of water,
and stony flint into a welling spring.

PSALM 116:1-9,12-19

A Thanksgiving

¹ Love fills me, Yahweh, because you have heard
the note of supplication in my voice.

² Since you have listened attentively to me,
as long as I live I will be proclaiming this:

³ "The snares of death had me entangled,
the pangs of Sheol already had me in their grip;
in my distress and torment, ⁴ I invoked the sacred name:
'O God Most High, I beg of you, preserve my life!'

⁵ Yahweh is scrupulous and just, our compassionate God
⁶ who looks after the interests of ordinary folk –
rescuing the likes of me when I was down."

⁷ So rest easy again, my soul, for God's been very good to you.

⁸ Yes indeed, you have delivered my soul from death,
my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling.

⁹ And here I am, walking in El Shaddai's presence,
savouring my place in the land of the living....

¹² What shall I give in return for all God's gifts to me?

¹³ I will lift the cup of salvation, invoking Yahweh's name.

¹⁴ I will fulfill my vows to the Holy One
in front of the assembled Israelites.

15 The death of the faithful departed
is very costly in the sight of Elohim.
16 I am your servant, the child of your slave-girl,
but you have undone my fetters.

17 I will be offering you a thanksgiving sacrifice
and proclaiming the name of God Most High.

18 I will fulfill my vows to the Holy One
in front of the assembled Israelites –

19 right in the courts of Yahweh's temple,
in the very midst of you, O Jerusalem. Hallelujah!

PSALM 118:1-2,14-29

A Thanksgiving

1 O give thanks to El Shaddai, our highest good,
whose steadfast, saving love endures for ever!

2 Let Israel take up the refrain and declare,
"God's steadfast, saving love endures for ever."...

14 Yahweh is my strength and my defence,
and Elohim has become my deliverer.

15 Listen! there are glad victory songs
sounding in the tents of the righteous:

"The strong hand of the Most High does valiantly,

16 that hand exalts, that hand does so valiantly!"

17 I shall not die, but survive to recount Yahweh's deeds.

18 God did chastise me sorely, yes, but not to death.

19 Open up the gates of righteousness to me
so I can come through and give my thanks to Adonai.

20 This is the gateway of the Holy One of Israel;
it is for the righteous to enter through it.

21 I give you thanks for having answered me,
for having become my salvation.

22 The stone which the builders rejected
has become the very cornerstone itself.

23 The Righteous One has brought all this about;

for us, it's something marvellous to behold.
24 It's some day! – this day that God has made!
so let's whoop it up, make something special of it.

25 Please save us, O God! Prosper us, we beg you!
26 Blessed is the one who comes in Yahweh's name.
We bless you from the house of the Holy One.
27 I AM, who has given us light, is God indeed.

Weave the festive procession with its branches
all the way, right up to the horns of the altar!
28 You are my Creator, I will return thanks to you;
you are my God, I will pull out all stops in praise of you.

29 O give thanks to El Shaddai, our highest good,
whose steadfast, saving love endures for ever!

PSALM 119:1-8

A Wisdom Psalm (Verse 1 ALEPH)

1 How blessed are those who lead a blameless life,
who conduct their lives according to God's law!

2 Happy are those who abide by its stipulations,
and put their whole heart into seeking Elohim;

3 and who live, moreover, conforming to God's will!

4 You have required diligent adherence to your rules.

5 How I wish that I may be set on a steady course
for living in observance of your covenant conditions!

6 Then, with a firm eye on all your statutes,
I shall not be open to suffering humiliation.

7 As I go on learning your just judgements,
I will praise you with heartfelt sincerity.

8 I intend to comply with your commandments;
O do not ever leave me completely in the lurch.

PSALM 119:9-16

A Wisdom Psalm (Verse 2 BET)

9 How can young people walk unsullied on their way?

By holding to it watchfully according to your word.

10 I am putting my whole heart into seeking you;

do not let me stray from your commandments.

11 I treasure the word of your promise in my heart,

so as to keep me from sinning against you.

12 Blessed are you, Yahweh! teach me your statutes.

13 I go over all your judgments, reciting what you've uttered.

14 I take as much joy in the way blazed by your decrees

as in the sum total of all worldly wealth.

15 I want to ponder your precepts, eyes fixed on your paths.

16 I delight in your laws; I am not about to forget your word.

PSALM 119:33-40

A Wisdom Psalm (Verse 5 HE)

33 Teach me, O God, the way set out in your statutes,
and I will keep it scrupulously to the end.

34 Enlighten me, so I can comply with your law
and stick to its terms wholeheartedly.

35 Lead me in the path of your commands, for it delights me.

36 Turn my heart toward your decrees, away from selfish gain.

37 Avert my eyes from vanities, let me find life within your ways.

38 Confirm to your servant the promise holding for all god-fearers.

39 Since your ordinances are for the good,
deflect away from me the shaming I so dread.

40 See, I have yearned for your precepts;
give me life, in keeping with your just loyalty to the covenant.

PSALM 119:97-104

A Wisdom Psalm (Verse 13 MEM)

97 Oh, how I love your law!

I meditate on it all day long.

98 Forever mine and always with me,

your commandment makes me wiser than my foes.

99 I have a deeper insight than all my teachers,
because I studiously ponder your instructions.

100 I am wiser than folk ripe in years,

because I keep strictly to your ordinances.

101 In order to remain obedient to your word
I keep my feet off every path of evil.

102 Since you yourself have been my teacher,

I do not shy away from your judgements.

103 How sweet your words are on my tongue –
sweeter in my mouth than honey!

104 I gain understanding through your precepts;

and that is why I so hate all false paths.

PSALM 119:105-112

A Wisdom Psalm (Verse 14 NUN)

105 Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.

106 I've sworn a confirmed oath to abide by your just rulings.

107 I am in a very bad way indeed;

grant me life, O God, as promised in your word.

108 Accept my offerings of praise, O Shaddai,
and school me in your judgements.

109 Time and again I take my life in my hands,
but I do not ever forget your law.

110 Wicked scoundrels have laid out a snare for me,
but I take care not to stray from your precepts.

111 Your decrees are my eternal heritage, my heart's joy.

112 I am deeply resolved to keep your laws always, to the end.

PSALM 119:129-136

A Wisdom Psalm (verse 17 PE)

129 The terms of your instruction are wonderful;
that is why I keep them in my very soul;

130 To unfold your words is to shed much light,
yes, and bring understanding to the untutored.

131 I pant open-mouthed with longing for your commandments.

132 Turn your gracious attention toward me,
as you are wont to with those who love your name.

133 Steady me, as you promised, and don't let evil master me.

134 Save me from the ways people oppress each other,
so I may observe your precepts all the better.

135 Regard your servant favourably; teach me your statutes.

136 My eyes stream tears over the way your law is flouted.

PSALM 119:137-144

A Wisdom Psalm (verse 18 ZADE)

137 You are just, O God, and your judgements are fair.

138 You have fixed your decrees justly, and in all good faith.

139 My oppressors are so forgetful of your words
that I find myself overwhelmed by zealous outrage.

140 Your word of promise is well and truly tested,
and I, your servant, am lovingly devoted to it.

141 I may be inconsequential and despised,
but I am not about to forget your precepts.

142 Your righteousness is for always, your law is truth.

143 I'm in trouble and distress, but your decrees delight me still.

144 The terms of your instructions remain forever just;
grant me that discernment which makes for life.

PSALM 121

Hymn: A Song of Ascents

1 I will raise my eyes to search the hills –
from where is my help going to come?

2 My help comes from God Most High,
the Creator who made both heaven and earth.

3 Yahweh will not let your foot stumble;
the one who watches over you will not slumber.

4 No, the guardian of Israel never dozes off or sleeps.

5 El Shaddai keeps you, protective shade right at hand.

6 Sun shall not strike you by day, nor moon by night.

7 God will guard you from all harm and preserve your life.

8 Elohim will keep watch over you, going out and coming in,
from this moment on and for evermore.

PSALM 122

Hymn: A Song of Ascents

1 I was so glad when they said to me,

"Let us go to the house of Yahweh!"

2 Here we are, standing inside your gates, Jerusalem.

3 Jerusalem – properly built, compact and close knit;

4 a city where the tribes of Israel, God's own tribes,

go up, as stipulated, to thank the holy name of Yahweh.

5 The seats of justice were established there,

the tribunals of the house of David.

6 Pray for the shalom of Jerusalem:

"May all who love you prosper in safety.

7 May peace preside within your walls

and secure prosperity within your ramparts!"

8 For the sake of my relatives and neighbours

I will say, "Shalom be within you."

9 For the sake of the house of Elohim our God

I will pray for your well-being.

PSALM 123

Lament: A Song of Ascents

1 I raise my eyes to you, enthroned in heaven.
2 Just as slaves eye the hand of their master,
or a slave girl's eyes follow the hand of her mistress,
so our eyes look to Yahweh our God for liege lord's grace.

3 Mercy, O God! grant us your seigneurial aid and favour,
for we have endured more than our fill of scorn.
4 We've had more than enough of jeers from the well off,
and the open contempt of the arrogant.

PSALM 124

Thanksgiving: A Song of Ascents

1 But for God being on our side – say it again, Israel –
2 but for God being on our side when our enemies attacked,
3 they would have swallowed us up alive,
after working themselves into a rage against us;

4 the flash flood would have swept us away,
5 the torrent, the raging waters would have drowned us.
6 Blessed be El Shaddai, who had not given us over
as prey for them to sink their teeth into!

7 We have escaped like a bird from the fowler's snare;
the trap is broken and we have got away scot-free.
8 Our help is to be found in the name of Yahweh,
the Creator who made both heaven and earth.

PSALM 125

Lament: A Song of Ascents

1 Those who trust in God are like Mount Zion,
unshakeable and everlasting.

2 As the mountains encircle Jerusalem,
so you encircle your people now and always.

3 The sceptre of wickedness surely shall not come to rest
over the land allotted to the righteous,
lest those living in right relation with the covenant
should turn their hands to doing wrong.

4 Do good, O Shaddai, to those who are good,
and to those whose hearts are upright.

5 But those who turn aside into their own crooked ways
Yahweh will bundle off with sinners. Peace to Israel!

PSALM 126

Lament: A Song of Ascents

1 When God restored the fortunes of Zion
we felt for all the world like dreamers –
2 full throated laughter in our mouths,
joyous shouting on our tongues.

Then word went out among the nations:
"Yahweh has done great things on their behalf."
3 Great things for us indeed! how we rejoiced!
4 Replenish our fortunes, O God, like Negeb wadis.

5 Those who sow in tears reap with cries of joy.
6 With bag of seed in hand to sow, one may set out in tears,
but, bringing in the harvest sheaves,
one returns home shouting happily.

PSALM 127

Wisdom Psalm: A Song of Ascents

1 If the Everlasting does not build the house,
the builders will have worked at it in vain.

2 If the Everlasting does not guard the city,
the sentry will have stood on watch in vain.

3 Long hours and the bread of anxious toil are futile –
it's heaven that confers carefree sleep on those God loves.

4 Children are indeed a heritage from El Shaddai,
sons and daughters, a reward from the Creator.

Sons of one's youth are like arrows in a warrior's hand.

5 Happy is anyone who has a quiver full of them.

Such people shall not suffer any humiliation
when they confront their adversaries at the gate.**

**In ancient Israel courts were convened in open forum just inside the city gates; so the phrase "at the gate", or "in the gate", usually means "in court". And the larger one's family – in ancient Israel, the more sons, specifically, one had – the greater one's prestige and influence in the courts.

PSALM 128

Wisdom Psalm: A Song of Ascents

1 Blessed is everyone who reveres the Holy One,
who pilgrims on according to the will of God.

2 You shall certainly eat the fruit of your own labours;
you shall be happy and it shall go well with you.

3 Your spouse will be like a thriving vine inside your house,
your children like olive shoots around your table.

4 Such, note, is the blessing that awaits god fearing folk.

5 May El Shaddai bless you from out of Zion;

may you see Jerusalem prospering all your life,

6 and live to see your children's children! Peace to Israel!

PSALM 130

Lament: A Song of Ascents

1 Out of the depths, O Yahweh, I call to you.

2 Hear me, God! Listen carefully to my imploring voice!

3 O Holy One, were you to keep tally of our iniquities,
who, Most High, could stand up to such scrutiny?

4 But in you is forgiveness, which is why you are revered.

5 Longingly I wait on Elohim, hoping in the word of promise;

6 I yearn for God more intently than sentries wait for dawn,
more fervently than any watchmen look for morning.

7 O Israel, keep your hopes settled on El Shaddai,
in whom is to be found unfailing, loyal love
and abundant powers of redemption.

8 She it is who will free Israel from all its sins.

PSALM 131

A Song of Ascents

1 Yahweh, my heart is not swollen with pride,
nor am I one for giving haughty looks;

I do not busy myself with important matters
that are too big, too mysteriously difficult for me.

² Rather, I have calmed and quieted my soul.

My soul is like a weaned child with its mother,
like some little child I am carrying with me.

³ Let your hope be in God, O Israel, now and always.

PSALM 132

Royal Psalm: A Song of Ascents

1 O God, please remember in David's favour
all the hardships he endured, remember
2 how he swore a solemn oath to Elohim,
vowing to the Mighty One of Jacob:

3 "I will not enter my tent house, or climb into my bed,
4 I'll not let sleep close my eyes, or slumber drop my eyelids,
5 until I have found a place for Yahweh,
a fit tabernacle for the Mighty One of Jacob."

6 Look, we heard talk of it in Ephrathah,
we came across it in the countryside of Jaar.
7 Let us make our way to Yahweh's dwelling;
let us fall in worship at God's footstool.

8 Rise up, Holy One, and go to your resting-place,
you together with your ark of power.
9 Let your priests be robed in righteousness,
and let your loyal worshippers shout for joy.

10 For the sake of your servant David
do not repudiate your anointed king.
11 Adonai swore to David a sure oath
from which there will be no turning back:

"I will set one of your own progeny upon your throne.
12 And if your descendents keep my covenant
and the stipulations in which I shall instruct them,
their offspring, too, shall occupy your throne for ever."

13 For God has chosen Zion as the most desirable seat:
14 "This is my resting-place in perpetuity;
I will be in residence here, for that is my desire.
15 I will bless her with abundant produce, fill her poor with food.

16 I will clothe her priests with salvation,
and her faithful servants will shout for joy.
17 There I will renew the power and success of David's line;
there I have trimmed and lit a lamp for my anointed king.

18 I will clothe his enemies with disgrace,
but on his head will rest his gleaming crown."

PSALM 133

Wisdom Psalm: A Song of Ascents

1 How very good and pleasant it is for kindred to stay together!

2 It is like the fragrant oil on one's head,
running down over the beard, over Aaron's beard,
trickling down over the collar of his robes.

3 It is like the dew of Hermon falling on the heights of Zion:
there where God has ordained the blessing of life for evermore.

PSALM 136

An Antiphonal Hymn

1 O give thanks to the Eternal, who is so good,
who loves with loyal, everlasting love.

2 O give thanks to the God of gods,
whose steadfast love endures for ever.

3 O give thanks to the Ruler of all rulers,
whose faithful loving kindness lasts for ever,
4 who alone performs great wonders
out of a loyal, everlasting love;

5 who by Sophia-Wisdom made the heavens
in steadfast love that endures for ever;

6 who spread the earth out upon the waters
in faithful loving kindness that lasts for ever;

7 who brought the great lights into being,
with a Creator's loyal, everlasting love;

8 the sun to preside as ruler over day,
for Elohim's steadfast love endures for ever;

9 the moon and stars to rule the night,
for God's faithful loving kindness lasts for ever....

23 When we were down, Yahweh kept us in mind,
remembered us in loyal, everlasting love.

24 and rescued us from all our enemies,

for El Shaddai's steadfast love endures for ever.

²⁵ God provides all creatures with their food,
in faithful loving kindness that lasts for ever.

²⁶ Give thanks, then, to the God of heaven
for such love, such a loyal, everlasting love.

PSALM 137:1-8[9]

A Lament

1 There by the waterways of Babylon —
there we sat down and wept
whenever we remembered Zion.

2 There on the poplar-willows we hung our lyres.

3 For there our captors asked us for songs,
our tormentors called for merriment, saying,
"Sing us one of the songs of Zion!"

4 But how could we sing God's song in a foreign land?

5 If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my good hand wither!

6 Let my tongue be gummed to the roof of my mouth
if I do not hold you fast in memory,
if I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy.

7 Remember to hold it against the Edomites
how, O God, on Jerusalem's day of doom,
they said, "Tear it down! Tear it down!
Right down to its laid bare foundations!"

8 O Lady Babylon, you destroyer! Blessings on whoever
shall pay you back for what you've done to us!

PSALM 138

A Thanksgiving

¹ O Yahweh, I give you thanks with all my heart;
I celebrate you in song before the gods;
² I prostrate myself toward your holy temple,
thanking your name for your loyal love and constancy,

for you have exalted your holy name,
you have raised your word of promise above all else.

³ The very day I called, you answered me,
you restored my pride, putting some heart in me.

⁴ Let every ruler in the world be praising you, Elohim,
upon hearing the promises your lips let fall.

⁵ Let them be singing of El Shaddai's ways,
for great is the glory of the Almighty.

⁶ Although on high, the Holy One looks to the lowly,
but turns only a distant gaze upon the haughty.

⁷ Though I have to walk a troubled path,
you keep me from the fury of my enemies;

you show your power, your strong hand delivers me.

⁸ God will fulfill the purpose divinely ordained for me;
Righteous One, your steadfast love endures forever.

Do not abandon the work of your hands unfinished.

PSALM 139:1-18,23-24

A Lament

1 Yahweh, you examine me searchingly and know me.

2 You know when I sit down and when I get up;
from a long way off you are aware of my thoughts.

3 You trace my path, on the move or resting;

you are familiar with every detail of my behaviour.

4 A word need not even have reached my tongue
before you, O Elohim, know exactly what it is.

5 You enclose me, behind, before, and your hand stretches
over me.

6 Such wonderful knowledge is well beyond me,
so high that there's no way I can attain it.

7 Where could I go if I wanted to avoid your spirit?
Or where could I flee to escape your presence?

8 If I make my way up to heaven, you are there;
if I lay out my bed-roll in Sheol, there you are.

9 Were I to take the wings of dawn herself
and settle at the farthest reaches of the sea,

10 even there, your hand would guide me,
and your strong hand would hold me safe.

11 Or if I were to say, "Surely the dark shall cover me,
and the daylight around me turn into night,"

12 even darkness is not dark to you, for whom
night is bright as day, darkness and light the same.
13 Indeed, it was you who created my insides,
you knit me together in my mother's womb.

14 I praise you, for I find you marvellously awesome.
I know very well how wonderful your creations are.
15 When I was being put together in secret,
intricately woven deep down in the earth,

the structure of my frame was no mystery to you.
16 Your eyes could see my substance yet unformed.
All the days coming to me were recorded in your book
when not a one of them as yet existed.

17 How weighty are your thoughts to me, O God!
How vast is the sum total of them!
18 I try to reckon them – they outnumber the sands;
I come to the end, only to find you endless still....

23 Examine me, Holy One, and plumb my heart;
test me, and come to know my misgivings.
24 See if there is anything hurtful about my conduct,
and guide me in your everlasting way.

PSALM 143:1-11[12]

A Lament

1 God, hear my prayer; in your self-consistent justice
listen to my pleas, and in your righteousness answer me.

2 Do not bring your servant to the bar of judgement,
since before you not a soul can count as righteous.

3 The enemy has chased me, grinding my life into the dirt,
forcing me to crouch in the dark like those long dead.

4 So now my spirits are failing within me,
and in my heart of hearts I'm in a daze of shock.

5 I recall old times, I think about all your deeds;
I meditate on the works of your creating hands.

6 I lift up my outstretched hands to you,
with a soul as thirsty for you as dried out ground.

7 Be quick about answering, Yahweh, for my spirit fails.
Do not turn away, or I'll be like those going down into the Pit.

8 Let morning bring news of your steadfast love,
because it is in you that I put my trust.

Let me know the road I should be taking,
for you are the focus of my heart's desire.

9 Save me, Shaddai, from my adversaries,
since it's to you that I have run for refuge.

10 Teach me to do your will, for you are my God.
Let your good spirit bring me onto an even path.
11 For your name's sake, Holy One, grant me life.
In your characteristic justice, bring me out of trouble....

PSALM 145

A Hymn

1 I will extol you, my sovereign God,
and bless your name for ever and ever.

2 I will bless you daily, and praise your name forever.

3 I AM is great, unfathomably great, utterly praiseworthy.

4 Each generation shall laud your deeds to the next,
and shall proclaim your mighty acts.

5 I will ponder your marvellous works
and the glorious splendour of your majesty.

6 The power of your awesome deeds shall be proclaimed,
with me adding to the declarations of your greatness.

7 They shall celebrate the fame of your lavish goodness,
and sing full voiced of the righteousness so typical of you.

8 Yahweh honours commitments and shows mercy,
is slow to anger and overflowing with loving kindness.

9 The Righteous One is generous to everyone,
with a tenderness embracing all creation.

10 Let all your handiwork be giving you thanks, O God,
and all your loyal worshippers be blessing you.

11 Let them be speaking of the glory of your reign,
and let them be telling of your power;

12 making known to all humankind your mighty acts,
and the glorious majesty of your reign.

13 Your reign is one that lasts throughout the ages,
your dominion endures down through the generations.

14 Faithful to every promise, upright in every deed,
God steadies the stumbling and raises the bowed down.

15 The eyes of all your creatures look hopefully to you,
and you give them their food in due season.

16 You satisfy, open-handed, the wants of every living thing.

17 Elohim is just in all conduct, lovingly faithful in every act.

18 El Shaddai is near to all who invoke her,
close to everyone who calls on her sincerely.

19 Yahweh fulfills the desire of all god fearing folk,
hears, too, their cries for help and rescues them.

20 You watch over everyone who loves you,
but are going to make short work of all the wicked.

21 I will speak out in praise of the Eternal One,
and all life will bless the holy name for ever and ever.

PSALM 146

A Hymn

1 Hallelujah! Praise be to God!

Praise God Most High, I tell myself.

2 I will praise El Shaddai my whole life long.

I will make music to my God as long as I live.

3 Do not repose your confidence in rulers,
in children of Adam, who have no power to save.

4 Their breath fails them, they return to the earth;
that very day sees the collapse of all their projects.

5 Happy are those whose helper is the God of Jacob,
who set their hope on Elohim as their God,

6 the one who made heaven and earth,
the sea, and everything that's to be found in them;

this is the one who keeps faith for ever;

7 who sees justice done for the oppressed.

I AM feeds the hungry and sets prisoners free.

8 I AM opens blind eyes and straightens bent backs;

the Righteous One loves those who are just.

9 The Holy One takes care of strangers;

comes to the relief of the orphaned and widowed,

but skews the way of the wicked ruinously off-course.

10 Yahweh – your God, O Zion – will reign forever,
down through all generations. Hallelujah!

PSALM 147

A Hymn

1 Praise God! How good it is to sing psalms to our God,
so gracious, such a fitting subject for a song of praise.

2 Yahweh rebuilds Jerusalem, gathers up Israel's outcasts;
3 heals the broken-hearted and bandages their wounds.

4 Our Creator decides the number of the stars,
and gives every single one of them its own name.

5 Our Holy One is great, with power in abundance,
with a wisdom well beyond all reckoning.

6 Elohim lifts up the oppressed and floors the wicked.

7 Grateful songs for Yahweh! lyre music for our God! –

8 the one who covers the heavens with clouds,
prepares rain for the earth, grows grass on the hills.

9 El Shaddai provides their food to the animals,
and to the young ravens when they call.

10 God takes no great delight in a horse's strength,
or any special pleasure in an athlete's sturdy legs;

11 God takes pleasure, rather, in god fearing folk,
in those who pin their hopes on the Eternal's loyal love.**

12 Praise Yahweh, O Jerusalem! Zion, praise your God!

13 who braces your gate-bars and blesses your children within.

14 God it is who grants prosperity inside your borders
and fills you with the finest grade of wheat;
15 who sends commands to earth – swift runs that word! –
who lets fall snow like wool, strews frost around like ashes.

17 Yahweh throws down hail like outsized breadcrumbs –
who can stand up to such cold? –
18 then sends out the word that thaws them,
making the winds blow and the melt waters run.

19 In declaring the word to Jacob, Leah, and Rachel,
the divine statutes and ordinances to Israel,
20 the Holy One has not dealt thus with any other nation;
they have no inkling of those rulings. Hallelujah!

**In the Septuagint and the Vulgate, verses 1-11 and 12-20 are regarded as two separate psalms.

PSALM 148

A Hymn

1 Praise God! Praise from the heavens! in the heights!
2 Praise Yahweh, all you angels, all you hosts!
3 Sun and moon, praise God, and all you blazing stars!
4 Heaven of heavens, waters above the heavens, praise!

5 Let them praise the name of their Creator,
who spoke the command that brought them into being;
6 who set them on their courses forever and ever,
establishing a law that cannot pass away.

7 Praise God – from earth to sea - monsters and all depths;
8 fire and hail, snow and frosty mist,
boisterous wind carrying out God's command!
9 Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!

10 Wild and all domestic animals, creepers and winged birds!
11 Monarchs of the earth and all nations,
rulers and all judges throughout the world!
12 Young men and women, too, old and young alike!

13 Let them praise God's name, for its unique supremacy;
the majesty of Yahweh extends over earth and heaven.
14 Shaddai has raised the sign of power over her people,
enhancing the renown of all her loyal worshippers –

of all those who go to make up Israel,

the people close to the Holy One. Hallelujah!

PSALM 149:1-6a [6b-9a] 9b

A Hymn

1 Hallelujah! Sing a new song for Yahweh,
praise from the assembled beneficiaries of God's loyal love.

2 Let Israel take joyous pleasure in its Maker;
let the children of Zion exult in their king.

3 Let them dance a liturgy of praise to the holy name,
celebrating I AM with melody of tambourine and lyre.

4 For El Shaddai takes a lot of pleasure in her people
and crowns her ordinary folk with victory.

5 Let those who keep the faith exult in triumph,
chorusing for joy upon their festive couches.

6 Let them sing full-throated in high praise of Elohim....

9b This brings honour on all God's faithful ones. Hallelujah!

PSALM 150

A Hymn

1 Hallelujah! Praise God in the sanctuary;
praise Yahweh in the fortress-vault of heaven;
2 praise for the Creator's mighty works,
high praise to accord with God's surpassing greatness!

3 Praise Elohim with a blare of horns,
with lute and harp, 4 with tambourine and dance;
5 praise God with clanging cymbals – loud clashing cymbals!
6 Let everything that draws breath praise I AM! Hallelujah!

WISDOM OF SOLOMON 10:15-21

It was Wisdom who freed a godly people, a blameless race,
from a nation of oppressors who enslaved them.

She entered the soul of a servant of Yahweh,
who stood up to dread kings with signs and wonders.

She rewarded god fearing folk for all their labours,
leading them along by a marvellous way;
she became their shelter by day, their bright star by night.
Wisdom brought them safe through the Sea of Reeds;

she guided them through its deep waters,
but swallowed up their enemies in its waves,
then spat them back up from the depths of the abyss.
And so it was that the godly plundered the ungodly.

The righteous sang hymns to your holy name, Shaddai,
and with one voice praised your protecting hand,
for Wisdom taught the dumb to speak,
and made the tongues of infants eloquent.

ISAIAH 12

1 On the great day of God Most High you will say:
I will give thankful praise to you, O Shaddai,
for though you had reason to be angry with me,
you put aside your anger and comforted me.

2 Surely God is my saviour; I will be trusting, unafraid,
for Yahweh is my strength and sure defence,
and has undertaken to be my deliverer.

3 With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

4 And on that day you will say: Give thanks to I AM,
invoke the holy name; publish to all the world around
the acts of God; proclaim the supremacy of that name.

5 Sing psalms to the One who has done so superbly well.

Let all this be made known everywhere on earth!

6 Shout aloud, you citizenry of royal Zion,
sing out for joy, because the Holy One of Israel
is present in divine majesty among you.

LUKE 1:47-55 (1)

Magnificat

My soul is praising Yahweh to the skies
and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour.

How she rejoices in God her Saviour!

who has done me, a lowly servant girl, great honour.

Surely, from now on, all generations will call me blessed.

Yes, surely they will call her blessed!

For El Shaddai has done great things for me

and I hold the name of Elohim as holy.

Holiest in the heights, that glorious name!

God's grace rests in mercy on the reverent from age to age.

The arm of God Almighty has put forth its strength

scattering the proud in the imagination of their hearts!

Yahweh has toppled the powers-that-be and lifted the oppressed,

filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich off empty.

The poor eat well while the affluent discover hunger!

In remembrance of founding mercies

the Holy One has come to the rescue of servant Israel,

honouring the promise made to our ancestors,

to Sarah, Abraham, and their progeny for ever.

Mercy on all children of the promise!

SONG OF SOLOMON 2:8-13

Listen! That is my darling's voice!
My beloved comes, bounding over mountains,
leaping along the row of hills
like a gazelle, or some young wild goat.

Look! My lover's standing there behind our wall,
gazing in at the window through the lattice.
That dear voice sounds and says to me:
"Up, my loveliest darling, and come away.

For winter is now past, the rains are over and gone;
the flowers have started to appear;
the season for singing has arrived,
the voice of the turtle-dove is sounding everywhere.

Green figs will be ripening on the fig trees;
the vines are covered with their blossoms,
wafting the fragrances of spring.
So up, my dearest beauty, and let's be away."

WISDOM OF SOLOMON 6:17-20

[Hear then, you rulers, and take this to heart]

The true beginning of understanding is the desire to learn,
and a concern for learning means being in love with Wisdom;

loving her means keeping her laws; to keep her laws is a
guarantee of immortality, and immortality brings one closer
to God.

Thus it is that the desire of Wisdom leads to the condition
and stature of true kingliness

EXODUS 15:1b-11, 20-21

"I will sing to Yahweh, who has triumphed gloriously – throwing horse and rider into the sea. The Holy One is my strength and song, and has become my salvation; this is my God, whom I will praise, my family's God, whom I will exalt. Adonai is a warrior whose name is 'Most High'.

God threw the Pharaoh's chariots and infantry into the sea; the pick of Egypt's officers were drowned in the Red Sea. The onrushing waters covered them; they sank like stones into the depths. Your great hand, Elohim, glorious in power – that great hand, O Elohim, shattered the enemy. In the greatness of your majesty you overthrew your adversaries, you unleashed your fury, which consumed them like so much stubble. At the blast of your nostrils the waters recoiled, the floods backed up, the deeps congealed in the heart of the sea.

The enemy said, 'I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the plunder; my desire will have its fill of them. I will unsheathe my sword, my hand will destroy them. You blew your wind, the sea swamped them; they sank like lead in the huge seas. Who is like you, O Adonai, among the gods? Who can match you, majestic in your holiness, awesome in your splendour, performing wonders?..."

Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took her tambourine in hand, and all the women went along with her, dancing with their tambourines. And Miriam sang to them: "Sing to God

Most High who has triumphed gloriously, throwing horse and rider into the seas."

LUKE 1:47-55 (2)

Magnificat

That vision – did it stir my joy, or fear?
"Be calm," I tell my soul, be still, don't run.
Affirm God's greatness, vast and yet right here;
be grateful for the honour you've been done."

With wary thanks I praise the Holy Name;
my spirit celebrates my saviour God.
The future's sure to bring me blessed fame,
but mercy on the path now to be trod!

And there *is* mercy for true worshippers
in every generation, though God's arm
quickly turns braggarts into whimperers,
and has proud fancies scattering in alarm.

Most High, you bring down rulers from their thrones,
and raise up humble ordinary folk;
the hungry eat stew rich with marrow bones,
while socialites are sent to dine on smoke.

Mindful of previous mercies, you bring aid
to succour Israel in her distress,
according to your ancient promise made
to Sarah and her children numberless.

Music: (e.g.) Edward John Hopkins, 1818-1901: Ellers 10 10 10 10]

WISDOM OF SOLOMON 7:26-8:1

Wisdom is the brightness that flows from eternal light, the perfect mirror of God's active power and the very image of divine goodness. Though one and singular, she can do everything; unchanging herself, she keeps renewing all things; age after age she enters into holy souls, making them God's friends and prophets, for nothing is acceptable to God but those who make their home with Wisdom. She is more radiant than the sun, she outshines every constellation. In comparison to the light of day, she is adjudged superior; for day gives way to night, but against Wisdom no evil can prevail. She spans the world in power from end to end, and orders everything in beneficence.

1 SAMUEL 2:1-10

Hannah's Song

1 "My heart is exulting in El Shaddai,
in whom I can now hold my head up high.
I can speak of my detractors with derision,
as I savour my triumph to the full.

2 There is no Holy One like God – none to rival you;
there is no Rock comparable to our Elohim.
3 So stop your proud talk and flow of arrogant words,
for, as God, Yahweh knows and weighs all deeds.

4 The bows of strong warriors are broken,
while those who falter put on new strength.
5 Fat cats have to get jobs if they want to eat,
but the hungry gain weight off the fat of the land.

The barren woman has given birth to seven,
while the mother of lots of children has been left forlorn.
6 Adonai kills and Adonai brings to life,
sends people down to Sheol, raises people up from Sheol.

7 Yahweh brings about both poverty and wealth,
brings people low, exalts people high;
8 lifts the poor and needy out of dust and dunghill
to sit with princes and inherit seats of honour.

The pillars of the earth belong to the Creator,

who has erected the whole world upon them.

9 God will stand guard over the footsteps of the faithful,
but the wicked shall be cut off to sink into the dark;

it is not just by sheer strength that one prevails.

10 Adonai! – whose adversaries shall be shattered
when the High God thunders in the heavens.

The writ of the Just One will run to the ends of the earth;

the Holy One will strengthen the chosen ruler,
and raise high the head of the anointed one.

LUKE 1:68-79

Song of Zechariah

Blessed be the sovereign Holy One of Israel,
who has looked on us with favour and redeemed us,
who has raised up a mighty saviour for us
from the family of Yahweh's servant David:

as was spoken long since through the prophets –
that we should be saved from all our enemies
and from the hands of all who hate us.

So God has shown the mercy promised to our forebears;

and has kept in mind the sacred covenant,
that oath sworn to our ancestor Abraham,
that we, safely rescued from all our enemies,
might fearlessly do God holy and just service all our lives.

And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest,
since you will be a harbinger preparing the ways of God,
bringing knowledge of salvation to all people
by virtue of having their sins forgiven.

Thanks to the tender mercy of our God
the dayspring from on high will dawn upon us,
to shine on those crouching in the dark of death's shadow,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

LUKE 1:47-55 (3)

Magnificat

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of our God!
Unnumbered blessings, give my spirit voice;
tender to me the promissory word;
in God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Name!
Make known those mighty deeds God's arm has done,
those mercies sure, from age to age the same,
the holy name – Yahweh the Righteous One.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of God's might!
Powers and dominions lay their glories by;
proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,
the hungry fed, the humble lifted high.

Tell out, my soul, how God is merciful,
so firm in oath that Israel's help is sure;
God has honoured our forebears' trust in full,
their and their children's hope shall rest secure.

[This version, with modifications to vv.1-3 and new v.4 by Ian Sowton, Advent 1997, is in the Anglican Church of Canada's Book of Alternative Services as "Canticle 18b", copyright 1965, Hope Publishing Company]

LAMENTATIONS 3:19-26

The thought of my affliction is wormwood,
the idea of my homelessness is gall!
My soul cannot stop thinking about it,
and lies buffeted and cowed within me.

But I call this to mind and it gives me hope:
the steadfast love of God never falters;
the mercies of Yahweh are new every morning,
they never run dry – how great is your loyalty!

"Elohim, you are my destiny," says my inmost being,
and so I will continue to pin my hopes on you."
You are good to those who wait for you,
to the soul that sincerely tries to find you.

It is good that one should wait in tranquillity
for the coming of the Holy One's salvation.

METAPHRASES OF THE PSALMS

METAPHRASE PSALM 1

Music *Give to the Wind your Fears* 6 6 8 6 6

Blessed are those who shun
all wicked, mean advice,
who have not down sin's path begun,
nor sat with those who scoff,
nor sat with those who scoff.

God's law is their delight;
by day they learn it well,
they meditate on it by night,
to prosper in their soul,
to prosper in their soul.

They are like trees grown tall
beside translucent brooks;
their fruit delights the harvest hall,
they keep their leafy green,
they keep their leafy green.

The lawless, whirled afar
like chaff by gusting winds;
they cannot pass the judgement bar,
nor share in sacred rites,
nor share in sacred rites.

Perish all wicked ways!

and blessings on the just,
who live in heaven's friendly gaze,
the apple of God's eye,
the apple of God's eye.

METAPHRASE: PSALM 4

Music att. Robert Lowry 1826-99 alt. *How Can I Keep from Singing* 8 7 8 7
with refrain

O God of all that's right in me, now hear my call and answer;
many's the tight spot I've been in and you provided shelter.
So do me grace and note my plea: it's my good name they're after—
those lords of the mendacious spin and their vain empty laughter.

How long, you lot, will you shame me? It's time you knew this clearly:
god-fearing folk are set apart, kept as God's own, most dearly.
As such a one I bend my knee, petitioning sincerely
for God to soothe my libelled heart, though you hurt me severely.

Leave off your anger, keep your cool—the sin of wrath is killing.
Lie down, be still, and ponder there, and keep your bile from spilling.
Make sacrifice by proper rule, due times and rites fulfilling;
then put your trust in heaven's care for calm of mind, God willing.

"If only some great good would come!" I hear the people praying.
They seem to miss God's wonted smile, but I've a gift outweighing

their joy at any harvest home: deep gladness, undecaying.
I lie down, God, and sleep the while, secure in you past saying.

METAPHRASE: PSALM 8

Music: 17c. Dutch Hymn, altd. Geoffrey Shaw *Oxford Book of Carols* 1928

God, your creation's glory, your magnificence,
sound a majestic chord of praise around the world;
but even out of infantile mouths you've founded a defence,
to teach a lesson to your foes, disarming enmity,
so they can learn true praise, their sneering lips uncurled.

When I imagine all your cosmic plenitude:
bright worlds you daily stitch into your quilt of sky,
the quark's elusive pirouetting, the moon's beatitude—
why should we mortals have a place among your thoughts at all?
what matter to you if our race should live or die?

Yet you have raised us almost to angelic ranks,
crowned us as knowing selves and sceptred us with speech,
formed us to be a privileged choir that sings its conscious thanks.
In this small province of her realm we're Nature's thinking part:
we learn and plan, invent, explore with reason's reach.

For creatures owing fealty to great Gaia's rights
we all too often are polluting, upstart pests.
From depths of fished-out, choking up seas, to woods, to air-thin
heights,
our siblings in this space-ark earth all go in fear of us:
to praise you well we must love them as fellow guests.

METAPHRASE: PSALM 15

Music Swedish folk tune 7 6 7 6D

Who has the right to linger
in God's own hallowed place?

Can anyone be worthy
of Zion's hilltop grace?

Those who right the justice scales,
who pilgrim without blame,
speaking true—with tongue and heart
whose meaning is the same;

those who will not wound their friends,
nor slit a good name's throat;
those who despise all evil
and keep no grudge afloat;
lovers of God they honour;
they keep their costly word,
but turn no tainted dollar:
such stand strong, undeterred.

METAPHRASE: PSALM 16 (Version I)

Melody *Antiphoner*, Paris, 1681 *O Quanta Qualia* 10 10 10 10 variable with 11

Some—such as you there—like hedging your bet
with 'Mighty Ones' and suchlike foreign gods.
Hear what I say, though you'd rather forget:
Yahweh's for real, they're just stone, wood, and clods.

You are my God, be my truest protection;
apart from you I'm a nonentity.
Chasing those idols is courting rejection—
they'll get no names, no libations from me.

You, Elohim, are my choice food and wine.
You hold my fate: beginning, end, throughout;
I am a map which, line by pleasant line,
lovingly your grace and mercy mark out.

Blest be Shaddai for her friendly guidance,
for my heart whispering its lore from dream-deeps.
Mindful of God, I am firm and in balance,
hard to unsettle and prone to sound sleeps.

My body's easy, my soul's joy intense,
for you will spare me the sight of hell gaping.
Insight you give me, and bliss in your presence,
and from your hand pleasures endlessly springing.

Note: In biblical scholarship how to translate verses 2 and 3 of this psalm is a matter of a good deal of conjecture. In these two versions of Psalm 16 I have followed a rendition (not accepted by the *New Revised Standard Version*, for example) that envisages a difference of opinion between the psalmist, faithful to Yahweh alone, and a syncretist who calls on other gods as well as Yahweh.

METAPHRASE: PSALM 16 (Version II)

Music: Melody, Robert Williams 1781?-1821, harm. John Roberts 1822-1877

Llanfair 76 76 76 76 [as in 77 77 with Alleluias]

You, O Yahweh, are my God,
be my refuge always.

Not for me two loyalties,
having my faith both ways—
naming Mammon ‘Mighty One’,
praising you as ‘Master’.

To go courting other gods
just invites disaster.

So, no calling on their names,
and no blood-libation.

I am nothing without you,
I am your creation;
line by pleasant boundary line,
you have shaped the places
of my goodly heritage—
hallowed times, rich graces.

I bless God my counsellor,
close to whom I’m keeping;
my unconscious counsels too,
in its nightly briefing.

Merry at the side of God,
soul can breathe securely;
body, too, can feel at ease,
moving free and surely.

You will not abandon me,
you are kind, forgiving;
you spare me the sight of hell,
alleluia!

In your hand that points the path
to a life worth living,
there are pleasures evermore,
alleluia!

METAPHRASE: PSALM 19

Music: *Lansdowne* 9 9 9 9 John L Bell 1989

The skies are a text of glory,
starry script of God's creative Word,
proclaiming an unfinished story—
what we see so far is mere foreword.

Each bright day is voluble with praise,
while successive nights new knowledge teach;
they've no voice, yet what their silence says
sounds out through creation's farthest reach.

From his sky-rigged tent steps maestro sun,
like bridegroom from wedding canopy,
like an athlete fresh and primed to run
his course in good spirits, joyously.

Strong from far east to far west he goes,
everyone is subject to his heat.
So with Yahweh's law: none may propose
exemption—its writ runs wide, complete.

That law is perfect: pure and upright,
making wisdom of simplicities,
life-giving, suffusing eyes with light,
fostering the glad heart's gaieties.

Reverence for you shines clear for ever.
Your precepts are justice's true home,
better than all gold put together,
than honey, than golden honeycomb.

Keeping them keeps me from sin's assaults;
they can warn me—but how hard to see
one's own flaws! Save me from hidden faults!
Let no proud thoughts get a grip on me.

Then I can stand wholesome, innocent,
free of serious misbehaviour.
May my words, my thoughts, leave you content
O Elohim my rock, my saviour.

METAPHRASE: PSALM 23

Music Johannes Brahms 1833-1897, *Lullaby* 67 67D

El Shaddai shepherds me,
fears of want soon relieving;
leads me through meadowed pass
by a still lake's placid bowl.
Settling me in new grass,
she replenishes my soul,
brings me where I can take
the right paths for her name's sake.

Even though I should walk
valley'd in death's dark shadow,
sickly fears will relent
in your pastor's crook of arm.
My old foes, impotent,
cannot do me real harm,
watching you pour my wine
as you set me down to dine.

Precious oil on my head
consecrates me as your own,
while my cup, pledging you,
brims and overflows with joy.
Goodness, yes, mercy too,
that mischance will not alloy,
surely shall wait on me
in your house perpetually.

METAPHRASE: PSALM 30

Music *Resignation* CMD (86 86 86 86) Melody *The Southern Harmony*,
New Haven, 1835

I will extol you, God Most High,
now and in times to come,
for when I called on you for aid
you healed and raised me strong—
frustrating all my eager foes
who had queued up to gloat.
You plucked my soul away from hell
and saved me from the Pit.

So all you faithful raise a cry
of praise with lyre and drum,
the wrath of God is quickly stayed,
the favour lingers long.
Night may drag on in tearful woes,
dawn sounds a happy note.
Trust me, I know this very well,
my own case confirms it.

I'd seen my fortunes multiply,
my pride grew venturesome;
but I was utterly dismayed
when my health went all wrong.
I cried in my despairing throes,
"Grant me some antidote!
My dusty bones will only smell,

they won't praise you one whit."

METAPHRASE: PSALM 30

Music Resignation CMD (86 86 86 86) *Melody The Southern Harmony,*
New Haven, 1835

You stooped to mend and purify
the wreck I had become;
you stripped my sackcloth, grimed and frayed,
soothed groans into a song.
My mourning goes in dancing clothes,
I praise you in full throat.
My soul breaks silence now to swell
your praises due and fit.

METAPHRASE: PSALM 33:1-12

Music *Yorkshire* 10 10 10 10 10 10 John Wainwright 1723-1768

Rejoice in Yahweh all good hearted folk,
praise from the just is most appropriate;
so praise with melodies on ten-string harps,
let lyrics with good tunes proliferate,
and let there be impromptu singing groups,
inventive dance steps and loud joyous whoops.

El Shaddai's every act is in good faith,
all her commandments are trustworthy ones.
Gaia brims full with her creator's love.
God spoke the universe, breathed brilliant suns;
God bottled as it were the vintage seas,
stored oceans deep in unplumbed galleries.

Let the whole world hold you in reverence,
let all its tenants worship in due awe;
no sooner had you said than it was done,
your orders still hold firm in natural law.
Great nations' plans you easily frustrate,
you nullify or skew counsels of state.

Your counsels, though, endure eternally,
your thoughts span generations, age to age.
Blest are the folk gifted with you for God,
who make up your own chosen heritage.
Therefore rejoice, all you of upright soul!

Praise from the righteous is a fitting role.

METAPHRASES: PSALM 33:13-22

Music: *Forest Green*

CMD English Trad.

harmonised Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

Yahweh's mere glance takes in the world
and all humanity —
whom God has fashioned with such skill—
notes our activity.

Great armies do not guarantee
rulers' security;
no warrior's strength really bestows
safety from life's low blows.

No power of horse is failure proof,
vain hope of safety there.
Truly the eye of Elohim
lingers in friendly care
on those who trust in God to save
their souls from a foul grave,
to spare some of their harvest yields
should famine stalk their fields.

How eagerly our tip-toe souls
await you, Adonai;
you are our one sure hope, the shield
on whom we most rely.
Our trusting joy of heart acclaim
the holiest of names.
May your kind love shine day by day

to warm our hope we pray.

METAPHRASE: PSALM 42

Music *Argentina* 11 11 11 11 with refrain

In her thirst for God my soul knows all too well
how a winded deer longs for a cooling brook;
my whole being yearns to see God's living face,
for so long my only food has been my tears.

Ruffians, they keep taunting me:
"Just where is your God these days?"
Bear up, my uneasy soul!
What's with all this doom and gloom?

Casting back, my soul recalls high festival—
how I led glad pilgrims to the hill that took
us all singing up to Yahweh's sacred space;
how I miss those happy shouts, those God-blessed years!
Bear up! my discouraged soul,
what's with all this doom and gloom?
Trusting, walking hopefully,
I'll live to praise God again.

When I'm struggling hard against a dismal spell
I relive the past, I take a backward look
at Mount Hermon, Jordan river, scenes of grace;
yet your breakers swamp me, roll me in my fears.
Daily, your unfailing love
spreads forth, answering to your care;
nightly, it's my evensong,
prayer to my life's only God.

I confront my God, my rock and citadel:
“Why do you forget me, blank me from your look?
Why must I skulk mournfully about the place
just because my foes harass me with their jeers?”
Scoundrels, they keep needling me
with bone-separating skill:
“Speak up, we’re agog to hear
just where is your God these days?”

Bear up, my uneasy soul!
What’s with all this doom and gloom?
Trusting, walking hopefully,
I’ll live to praise God again.

METAPHRASE: PSALM 46 [Version 1]

Music John Hughes 1873-1932 *Cwm Rhondda* 87 87 87 with repeat

Since God is our strength and shelter
timely help in time of need,
we shall not be disconcerted
though earth heaves and rocks stampede,
though the oceans seethe and roar
we stand safe on God's firm shore.

Sure there is a wondrous city
gladdened by unfailing streams;
in its midst God lights a dwelling
with love's undiminished beams.
That great city's not for capture,
each dawn sees her still secure.

Kingdoms totter, nations stumble;
at God's thunder cliffs lose hold.
Yahweh Sabaoth is with us,
Jacob's God is our stronghold.
Look at Yahweh's sharp unsettling
of all warlike posturing:

God makes junk of warriors' weapons,
peace takes root where she has trod.
'I am high above all nations,
so be still, know I am God.'
Yahweh Sabaoth is with us,

Rachel's God is our stronghold.

METAPHRASE: PSALM 46 [Version 2]

Music: *Quelle Est Cette Odeur* French Traditional 98 98 98

God is our proven strength and refuge,
assisting frailties, salving pains.
We will not fear trouble's appearance:
not roaring ocean, wild and huge,
not quakes that reshape heaving mountains,
not sea-volcano's boiling vents.

There is a river whose clear waters
purl through your city's gladdened streets;
you are her holiness, her glory,
each dawn she safely wakes and stirs.
One act of God whole empires unseats,
one word concludes their history.

Look at what desolations Yahweh
visits on earth's war-mongering:
bow strings are cut, harness all blood-soaked,
shields scorched and spearheads hacked away.
See how those who for blood were hungering
are food for monsters they invoked.

“I am exalted in the nations,
be still and know that I am God.
I reign in life, death, fire and deluge;
high kings owe me rich oblations.”
This God led Rachel where she trod,
this God of hosts is our refuge.

METAPHRASE: PSALM 49

Melody *Nederlandtsch Gedenckclank* 1626. Arr. Ed. Kresmer 1838-1914,
Kresmer 12 11 12 11

Hear this, everyone: I've wise words to say.
I will take a proverb seriously,
tune my riddle to the harp like any bard.

Why should I be afraid when times are hard,
when I'm beset by boastful bullies
who trust in how wealthy they are becoming?

Yes, life is priced beyond all ransoming,
far beyond all bargaining with God,
yet its preciousness cannot outbid the grave.

Everyone must perish—sage, fool, or knave.
Some acquire rich named estates, they too
have to move to chilly suburbs of the dead;

others enjoy their goods and coin instead.
Pomp is unstable, good sense can fail;
as with all animals, human lives must fade.

As for those who trust they have it made,
thinking, “God will save me from the Pit”,
they are so much grass for death to crop and chew—

they are already in Sheol's purview.
Stay cool: even billionaires are broke
on that trip to join their forebears in the dark.

They had their turn, took their bows, made their mark.
Pomp is unstable, good sense can fail;
as with all animals, human lives must fade.

METAPHRASE: PSALM 57

Music *Blaenwern* 87 87D

Mercy on me God, be gracious,
my soul nestles like a chick
in the shadow of your pinions
for these latest storms to pass.
I will call on She who perfects
all her purposes for me.

*Be exalted higher than heaven!
Shine your glory across the earth!*

Loyally, in loving kindness
God will send me help from heaven,
saving me and covering with shame
those who want me underfoot—
it's like lying down with lions,
man eating and razor-toothed.
Sensing that my soul was downcast,
they set nets, dug traps for me.

But they've fallen down their own pits
and I'm back to my old self:
steadfast now, and full of music,
I awake the dawn with songs.
All the world shall hear my praises
of your love and faithfulness.
*Be exalted higher than heaven!
Shine your glory across the earth!*

METAPHRASE: PSALM 65 [first setting]

Melody *Nederlandtsch Gedenckclank* 1626. Arr. Ed. Kresmer 1838-1914,
Kresmer 12 11 12 11

O answerer of prayer, the praises of Zion,
the vows to be made good, are all your just due.
All people, all over, must answer the summons
to make as they may an accounting to you.

But when we are drowning in sinful behaviour
you, prone to forgiveness, grant pardon anew.
How blest are those chosen to serve in your temple;
with its wholesome goodness we rest well content.

O hope of the cosmos, how awesome your actions
of saving response when we turn and repent.
With love's surging power you stacked up the mountains;
you calm fractious nations, make typhoons relent.

Far nomads are awed by the signs of your presence
way out at earth's edges, but still eloquent.
For you the rose gateways of morning and evening
sing out daily office in joyous refrain.

You bless our dear Gaia with fertile, rich moisture;
God's river of nurture runs brimming again:
your blessing of growth comes as green-softened ridges,
as corn you prepare in the moist furrowed plain,

as tracks of full wagons, hills sporting their gladness,
shy wilderness pastures spilled over with rain.
Fields, meadows shout praising your year-crowning bounty,
dressed up in their best flocks and decked out in grain.

METAPHRASE: PSALM 65 [second setting]

Music *The Ash Grove* 12 11 12 11D Traditional Welsh melody

O answerer of prayer, the praises of Zion,
the vows to be made good, are all your just due.
All people, all over, must answer the summons
to make as they may an accounting to you.
But when we are drowning in sinful behaviour
you, prone to forgiveness, grant pardon anew.
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You bless our dear Gaia with fertile, rich moisture;
God's river of nurture is brimming again.
Your blessing of growth comes as green-softened ridges,
as corn you prepare in the moist furrowed plain,
as tracks of full wagons, hills sporting their gladness,
shy wilderness pastures spilled over with rain.
Fields, meadows shout praising your year-crowning bounty,
dressed up their best flocks and decked out in grain.

METAPHRASE: PSALM 98

Music William Moore 1825, *Holy Manna* 87 87 87

Come, let's sing a brand new anthem
praising Yahweh's marvellous deeds;
all those triumphs—who can count them?—
glories the whole world concedes.
Holy is the arm that shields us,
strong the hand that tends our needs.
God's true love is Israel's diadem,
gleaming in its faithfulness.

Let our joy be loud, exuberant—
come on, earth, break out in praise!
Here are harps, with bells as descant,
there are horns of mellow phrase;
trumpeters hold *sostenuto*
til their eyes pop all a-glaze.
Joyful noise! we're all exultant,
listen to our homage grow!

Lakes are clapping to the psalmody
of hills yodelling on their shore.
Ocean, join this diverse hymnody,
clear your throat and give a roar.
Now the Righteous One's among you;
quiet! hush this glad uproar,
so the world hears God's best melody:
equity and justice true.

METAPHRASE: PSALM 114

When Israel broke free from Egypt's iron embrace,
when Rachel escaped from a foreign, harsh-tongued land,
then Judah was picked as God's sanctuary place,

and Israel as Yaweh's elect seigneurial space.

The sea turned tail; Jordan backed up, came to a stand,
when Israel broke free from Egypt's iron embrace.

Mountains skipped like rams, hills, like lambs in frisky chase.
So, sea, why retreat? why this firm new width of strand
when Judah was picked as God's sanctuary place?

And Jordan, why reverse your usual seaward race?
What's up, you peaks? jumping like rams—whole chasms spanned—
when Israel broke free from Egypt's iron embrace.

You lambkin hills, why skitter round at such a pace?
Tremble, land of promise, Yahweh is close at hand,
for Judah was picked as God's sanctuary place.

Earth, shiver in hopeful awe—God comes on apace,
who turned rock into water gushing over sand,
when Israel broke free from Egypt's iron embrace
and Judah was picked as God's sanctuary place.

METAPHRASE: PSALM 121

Melody C.H.Purdy 1799-1885, *Sandon* 10 4 10 4 10 10

My anxious look moves up the hillsides while
I try to cope;

from where shall I get any help, I ask,
in doubtful hope.

The help I need comes generous from God's hand,
which fashioned earth and stars countless as sand.

Your foot shall not be moved, nor ankle turned,
in God's safe keep.

God your protector has no slumbering times,
no need of sleep.

Israel's keeper will not ever doze,
God's wakeful, loving eye will never close.

You are in God's own keeping, nothing less:
walk unafraid.

As close to you as your own hand is set
a covering shade;
no stroke of sun shall ever parch your brain,
the rise of moon will shed no lunar bane.

The guardian of your life is God, who knows
what can befall;
though evils crowd around, you will be brought
safe through them all.

Coming and going through life's busy door,

you will be cherished now and evermore.

METAPHRASE: PSALM 143

Music Joseph Parry 1841-1903, *Aberystwyth* 77 77D

Large in justice as you are, listen, God, I beg of you:
Do not bring me to the bar of your fair but searching view.
Who'd dare plead a righteous case in a court where you preside?
More than most in that just place I would need your plenary grace.

When I'm ground into the dirt, crouching like a ghost in shade,
with my spirits faint, inert—shaken to the core, afraid:
at such moments I recall earlier times, then my thoughts slide
to your works—I bless them all as they shine, fly, swim, or crawl.

Dry-souled in this desert spell, I reach up my suppliant hands.
Do not hide from me! all hell gapes in these scorched shifting sands.
Answer soon! My spirit quails, I need dawn-news. Be my guide
up to where kind love prevails, where my trust in you avails.

O Shaddai, you are my hill of safe refuge from all foes.
As my God, teach me your will; frankly to my gaze disclose
something of the path I'll share with your Spirit close beside.
For your name's sake, take just care of the life your mercies spare.

METAPHRASE: PSALM 147:1-11,20c

Music *Lledrod (Llangollen)* irregular; with this text repeat last musical phrase

Hallelujah! how good to raise
our song to God, fit theme for praise.
You build up Zion, bring Israel's outcasts in,
heal breaking hearts, salve deepest woe.

Yes, hallelujah! Be it so!

You count the stars, give each her name;
strong beyond strength, wise past all fame,
you lift the fallen, knocking the callous down.
Sound the thanksgiving high and low!

Yes, hallelujah! Be it so!

You tuck up heaven in clouds of rain
to make earth green her hills again;
you give each animal its food, you listen for
the squawk of every baby crow.

Yes, hallelujah! Be it so!

You take no special great delight
in athletes' skill or horses' might;
god-fearing reverence, hope in your loyal love—
those are the things you cherish so.

Yes, hallelujah! Be it so!

METAPHRASE: PSALM 147:12-20

Music *Lledrod (Llangollen)* irregular; with this text repeat last musical phrase

Glory to God, Jerusalem!
Your homages—come, offer them.
God bars your gates with iron, then stays to bless
your children as they safely play.

Praise be! Sound great Amen today!

Within your borders shalom reigns;
you dine on bread from choicest grains.
Swift runs the word of God's command to bring
the woolly snow or frost ash-grey.

Praise be! Sound great Amen today!

Who wants cold ears and tingling thumbs
when hailstones scatter down like crumbs?
What warm relief when God speaks southerly
and ice as water melts away.

Praise be! Sound great Amen today!

Rachel and all of Israel hears
what's reached no other nation's ears:
the word of God as law and covenant
for them to lovingly obey.

Praise be! Sound great Amen today!

PSALMS LISTED ACCORDING TO THE LITURGICAL YEAR

SEASON OF ADVENT

YEAR A (1) 122 (2) 72:1-7,18-19 (3) 146:5-10 (4) 80:1-7,17-19
or *Luke* 1:47-55

YEAR B (1) 80:1-7,17-19 (2) 85:1-2,8-13 (3) 126 or (4) *Luke* 1:47-55 or
Luke 1:47-55 89:1-4,19-26

YEAR C (1) 25:1-10 (2) *Luke* 1:68-79 (3) *Isaiah* 12:2-6 (4) *Luke* 1:47-55
or 80:1-7

SEASON OF CHRISTMAS

YEAR A B C Christmas Eve/Day: Proper I 96
Proper II 97
Proper III 98

YEAR A B C First Sunday after Christmas Day: 148

YEAR A B C January 1: Holy Name of Jesus 8

YEAR A B C January 1: when observed as New Year's Day 8

YEAR A B C Second Sunday after Christmas Day: 147:12-20 or
Wisdom of Solomon 10:15-21

SEASON OF EPIPHANY

YEAR A B C Epiphany of our Saviour: 72:1-7, 10-14

YEAR A B C Baptism of Jesus (1st Sunday after the Epiphany): 29

YEAR A (2) 40:1-11 (3) 27:1,4-9 (4) 15 (5) 112:1-9{10}
(6) 119:1-8 (7) 119:33-40 (8) 131 (9) 31:1-5,19-24

Last Sunday after the Epiphany (Transfiguration): 2 or 99

YEAR B (2) 139:1-6,13-18 (3) 62:5-12 (4) 111 (5) 147:1-11,20c
(6) 30 (7) 41 (8) 103:1-13,22 (9) 81:1-10

Last Sunday after the Epiphany (Transfiguration): 50:1-6

YEAR C (2) 36:5-10 (3) 19 (4) 71:1-6 (5) 138 (6) 1
(7) 37:1-11,39-40 (8) 92:1-4,12-15 (9) 96:1-9

Last Sunday after the Epiphany (Transfiguration): 99

Note: For the 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th Sundays after the Epiphany, see detailed rubric in the *Revised Common Lectionary*

SEASON OF LENT

YEAR A B C Ash Wednesday: 51:1-17

YEAR A Lent (1) 32 (2) 121 (3) 95 (4) 23 (5) 130

YEAR B Lent (1) 25:1-10 (2) 22:23-31 (3) 19 (4) 107:1-3,17-22
(5) 51:1-12 or 119:9-16

YEAR C Lent (1) 91:1-2,9-16 (2) 27 (3) 63:1-8 (4) 32 (5) 126

YEAR A B C Lent (6) Passion or Palm Sunday: Liturgy of Palms 118:
1-2,19-29; Liturgy of Passion 31:9-16 (See
detailed rubric in *Revised Common Lectionary*)

YEAR A B C Holy Week: Monday 36:5-11; Tuesday 71:1-14;
Wednesday 70; Maundy Thursday 116:1-2,12-19;
Good Friday 22; Holy Saturday (other than the
Easter Vigil) 31:1-4,15-16

SEASON OF EASTER

- YEAR A B C Easter Vigil: 136:1-9,23-26...46...16...*Exodus* 15:1b-13, 17-18...19...42 & 43...143...98 (See detailed rubric in *RCL*). Between Epistle and Gospel: 114
- YEAR A B C Easter Day: 118:1-2,14-24
- YEAR A B C Easter Evening (when main eucharistic Easter service must be late in the day; not intended for Vespers): 114
- YEAR A Easter (2) 16 (3) 116:1-4,12-19 (4) 23 (5) 31:1-5,15-16 (6) 66:8-20. Ascension Day (may also be used for 7th Sunday of Easter): 47 or 93 (7) 68:1-10,32-35
- YEAR B Easter (2) 133 (3) 4 (4) 23 (5) 22:25-31 (6) 98. Ascension Day (may also be used for 7th Sunday of Easter): 47 or 93 (7) 1
- YEAR C Easter (2) 118:14-29 or 150 (3) 30 (4) 23 (5) 148 (6) 67. Ascension Day (may also be used for 7th Sunday of Easter): 47 or 93 (7) 97

DAY OF PENTECOST..SEASON AFTER PENTECOST (ORDINARY TIME)

YEAR A B C Day of Pentecost: 104:24-34,35b

----- YEAR A - ORDINARY TIME-----

Trinity Sunday (First Sunday after Pentecost): 8

May 29 to June 4 incl. (if after Trinity Sunday) [i] 46; [ii] 31:1-5,19-24

June 5 to 11 incl. (if after Trinity Sunday) [i] 33:1-12; [ii] 50:7-15

June 12 to 18 incl. (if after Trinity Sunday) [i] 116:1-2,12-19; [ii] 100

June 19 to 25 incl. (if after Trinity Sunday) [i] 86:1-10,16-17;

[ii] 69:7-10 {11-15} 16-18

June 26 to July 2 incl. [i] 13; [ii] 89:1-4,15-18

July 3 to 9 incl. [i] 45:10-17; [ii] 145:8-14

July 10 to 16 incl. [1] 119:105-112; [ii] 65:{1-8} 9-13

July 17 to 23 incl. [i] 139:1-12,23-24; [ii] 86:11-17

July 24 to 30 incl. [i] 105:1-11,45b; [ii] 119:129-136

July 31 to August 6 incl. [i] 17:1-7,15; [ii] 145:8-9,14-21

August 7 to 13 incl. [i] 105:1-6,16-22,45b; [ii] 85:8-13

August 14 to 20 incl. [i] 133; [ii] 67

August 21 to 27 incl. [i] 124; [ii] 138

August 28 to September 3 incl. [i] 105:1-6,23-26,45c; [ii] 26:1-8

September 4 to 10 incl. [i] 149; [ii] 119:33-40

September 11 to 17 incl. [i] 114; [ii] 103:{1-7},8-13

September 18 to 24 incl. [i] 105:1-6,37-45; [ii] 145:1-8

September 25 to October 1 incl. [i] 78:1-4, 12-16; [ii] 25:1-9

October 2 to 8 incl. [i] 19; [ii] 23

October 9 to 15 incl. [i] 106:1-6,19-23; [ii] 23

October 16 to 22 incl. [i] 99; [ii] 96:1-9,{10-13}

October 23 to 29 incl. [i] 90:1-6,13-17; [ii] 1

October 30 to November 5 incl. [i] 107:1-7,33-37; [ii] 43

November 6 to 12 incl. [i] 78:1-7; [ii] *Wisdom of Solomon* 6:17-20

or 70

November 13 to 19 incl. [i] 123; [ii] 90:1-8, {9-11}, 12

Reign of Christ: November 20 to 26 incl. [i] 100; [ii] 95:1-7a

All Saints November 1 or 1st Sunday in November: 34:1-10,22

Thanksgiving Day 2nd Monday in October: 65

----- YEAR B - ORDINARY TIME-----

Trinity Sunday (First Sunday after Pentecost): 29

May 29 to June 4 incl. (if after Trinity Sunday) [i] 139:1-6,13-18

[ii] 81:1-10

June 5 to 11 incl. (if after Trinity Sunday) [i] 138; [ii] 130

June 12 to 18 incl. (if after Trinity Sunday) [i] 20; [ii] 92:1-4,12-15

June 19 to 25 incl. (if after Trinity Sunday) [i] 9:9-20 or 133

[ii] 107:1-3,23-32

June 26 to July 2 incl. [i] 130; [ii] 30

July 3 to 9 incl. [i] 48; [ii] 123

July 10 to 16 incl. [i] 24; [ii] 85:8-13

July 17 to 23 incl. [i] 89:20-37; [ii] 23

July 24 to 30 incl. [i] 14; [ii] 145:10-18

July 31 to August 6 incl. [i] 51:1-12; [ii] 78:23-29

August 7 to 13 incl. [i] 130; [ii] 34:1-8

August 14 to 20 incl. [i] 111; [ii] 34:9-14

August 21 to 27 incl. [i] 84; [ii] 34:15-22

August 28 to September 3 incl. [i] 45:1-2,6-9; [ii] 15

September 4 to 10 incl. [i] 125; [ii] 146

September 11 to 17 incl. [i] 19 or *Wisdom of Solomon* 7:26-8:1

[ii] 116:1-9

September 18 to 24 incl. [i] 1; [ii] 54

September 25 to October 1 incl. [i] 124; [ii] 19:7-14
October 2 to 8 incl. [i] 26; [ii] 8
October 9 to 15 incl. [i] 22:1-15; [ii] 90:12-17
October 16 to 22 incl. [i] 104:1-9,24,35c; [ii] 91:9-16
October 23 to 29 incl. [i] 34:1-8{19-22}; [ii] 126
October 30 to November 5 incl. [i] 146; [ii] 119:1-8
November 6 to 12 incl. [1] 127; [ii] 146
November 13 to 19 incl. [i] 1 *Samuel* 2:1-10; [ii] 16
Reign of Christ: November 20 to 26 incl. [i] 132:1-12 {13-18}
[ii] 93
All Saints November 1 or 1st Sunday in November: 24
Thanksgiving Day Second Monday in October: 126

----- YEAR C - ORDINARY TIME -----

Trinity Sunday (1st Sunday after Pentecost): 8
May 29 to June 4 incl. (if after Trinity Sunday) [i] 96; [ii] 96:1-9
June 5 to June 11 incl. (if after Trinity Sunday) [i] 146; [ii] 30
June 12 to 18 incl. (if after Trinity Sunday) [i] 5:1-8; [ii] 32
June 19 to 25 incl.(if after Trinity Sunday) [i] 42 & 43; [ii] 22:19-28
June 26 to July 2 incl. [ii] 77:1-2,11-20; [ii] 16
July 3 to 9 incl. [i] 30; [ii] 66:1-9
July 10 to 16 incl. [i] 82; [ii] 25:1-10
July 17 to 23 incl. [i] 52; [ii] 15

July 24 to 30 incl. [i] 85; [ii] 138
July 31 to August 6 incl. [i] 107:1-9,43; [ii] 49:1-12
August 7 to 13 incl. [i] 50:1-8,22-23; [ii] 33:12-22
August 14 to 20 incl. [i] 80:1-2,8-19; [ii] 82
August 21 to 27 incl. [i] 71:1-6; [ii] 103:1-8
August 28 to September 3 incl. [i] 81:1,10-16; [ii] 112
September 4 to 10 incl. [i] 139:1-6,13-18; [ii] 1
September 11 to 17 incl. [i] 14; [ii] 51:1-10
September 18 to 24 incl. [i] 79:1-9; [ii] 113
September 25 to October 1 incl. [i] 91:1-6,14-16; [ii] 146
October 2 to 8 incl. [i] *Lamentations* 3:19-26 or 137; [ii] 37:1-9
October 9 to 15 incl. [i] 66:1-12; [ii] 111
October 16 to 22 incl. [i] 119:97-104; [ii] 121
October 23 to 29 incl. [i] 65; [ii] 84:1-7
October 30 to November 5 incl. [i] 119:137-144; [ii] 32:1-7
November 6 to 12 incl. [i] 145:1-5,17-21 or 98; [ii] 17:1-9
November 13 to 19 incl. [i] *Isaiah* 12; [ii] 98
Reign of Christ: November 20 to 26 incl. [i] *Luke* 1:68-79; [ii] 46
All Saints November 1 or 1st Sunday in November: 149
Thanksgiving Day 2nd Monday in October: 100

----- YEAR A B C - SPECIAL DAYS -----

Presentation of Jesus February 2: 84 or 24:7-10
The Annunciation March 25: 45 or 40:5-10
Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth May 31: 113
Holy Cross September 14: 98:1-5 or 78:1-2,34-38