

MYTHOGENIC PSALMS

Transflections

By

G. Charles Andersen

The psalms have been a powerful source of inspiration and consolation in the faith journey of untold millions of people for three millenia, or more. Because of the importance of this spiritually rich treasure house, there have been quite a number of beautiful and important translations that are faithful to the words and meaning of the original scriptures. In a very real sense, there is nothing I can suggest to improve those translations. However, as I have prayed the psalms personally and liturgically over many years, there are some recurring problems that have troubled me.

First of all, my faith tradition is Christian. As a Christian, I bring a certain amount of "baggage" with me when I experience the psalms, which were written long ago for a people with a very different orientation to life, God, and the world around them. Simply stated, I believe in Christ and the promise of the Kingdom. On the most basic level, much of the material in the psalms seems to be outside of that orientation.

Such problems do not appear to bother many others, or they simply find creative ways around such quagmires. For instance, in earlier monastic traditions, the psalms were considered a pre-figuration of Christ, so David and Jesus became synonymous. One of the difficulties of this approach comes in dealing with some of the more "polemical" psalms, which do not convey the gospel notion of forgiveness and compassion for one's enemies. Personally, the idea of the Prince of Peace invoking God's blessing to destroy the children of his enemies is simply beyond my power to rationalize. There are those who can do this, I'm not one of them. I do not have enough flexibility to do the mental gymnastics required in order to "authentically" pray the psalms in this manner.

Imposing meanings upon the psalms which are alien to the original structure and world view does not particularly appeal to me either. Another approach, popular with liturgists, is to simply edit out those verses which create problems. While being a neat solution to a messy problem, truncating the psalms can create sense of manipulating the Word of God.

If even a truncated psalm can be conceived as possibly consistent with the original, why not consider some other possible alternative approaches? That is why I created these "trans-flections" on the psalms. The idea is that these trans-flections are both reflections and translations of the psalms, according to certain principles I have developed.

Some time ago, I acquired a book regarding semantic domains in the Greek New Testament. The idea behind this work is to arrange words used in the New Testament according to a broad range of contextual meanings that similar words convey within the culture, much like a thesaurus. The whole idea is to assist translators by giving them a wider range of possibilities for translating words from the Greek into the living languages of the world today.

For translators, the problem of faithful rendering of the texts often goes far beyond the original meaning of particular words, and thus into the realm of semantic domains. Each language reflects the categorical structure of how a particular people and culture views the world around them. Even beyond the differences of poetic and literary devices used, there can be conceptual nuances that will seem alien when translated from one cultural or linguistic system to another.

For instance, in the line from Psalm 42, "My soul is like a deer (hind) that longs for living streams" is a straight forward translation of the words used in the original psalm. What the author is conveying in poetic imagery is clear on a literary level. While such a metaphor might be very powerful for herder/gatherer peoples living in close proximity to nature centuries before the time of Christ, it may mean virtually nothing to late twentieth century christians living in an urban technological environment. There are those in our society who may have never seen a deer, or may not have experienced one outside of a public zoo. Such people have no way of knowing how deer respond when they are thirsty, or when that thirst is satisfied. The question is not only one of translation, but of meaning. How do you transfer the power of that particular metaphor to the context of a culture like ours, that will convey similar emotional impact without trivializing or destroying the sense of the original?

That's why I became involved in this project. Rather than do a literal translation, or even a simple paraphrase of the original, my approach is to respect the categorical structures of twentieth century English speaking Americans, whose world view has been shaped by a very different language, life-style, literature and religious experience (not to mention the impact of science and other disciplines).

A "trans-flection" is a reflective translation/transcription of the original text. My purpose is to address some of the linguistic/semantic/theological/phenomenological problems of a christian praying the psalms, cognizant of the fact that by doing so, I create other problems. My hope is that there may be other people who share my feelings and experience, who will also benefit from this approach. I revere the inspired Word of God, and it is with humility and trepidation that I undertook this endeavor.

Speaking of problems, there are some additional things to note. Because of the criteria I'm using, I have not included every psalm in this collection. In fairness to the original, some psalms need to be left alone. Frequently, I have omitted references to enemies and judgmental descriptions such as the "wicked", "sinners", etc. Whenever possible, I've removed judgmentalism (which is a Christian prohibition) and translated enemies into terms of psycho-spiritual conflict rather than inter-personal conflict. This re-focusing is a value judgment that may water down the meaning for some. I've tried to deal as creatively as possible with the issues of: exclusive language, gender oriented references to God, cosmological anomaly, anthropic deity problems, and other traps.

The process I used is simply to translate using Hebrew, Greek, Latin sources, and various English translations to produce word images that seemed appropriate. Wherever possible, I let the original stand on its own. Because the poetic parallelisms of semitic languages become somewhat tedious in English, I frequently disregarded them in favor of other literary devices. After the translation process, I tried to employ literary devices that most people might recognize as somewhat poetic. For the most part, however, I did not try to force rhyme schemes or meter, unless they seemed to emerge naturally from the translation I had developed.

I hope these remarks are helpful. Other than this, I think these psalms will stand on their own merit. I sincerely hope you will find them prayerfully rewarding in your faith journey.

G. Charles Andersen

PSALM 1

Blessed are they
Who follow the path of the Lord,
Rather than their natural inclination
To seek an easier way.

For their delight
Shall be the Word
And the guiding hand of God,
Which they grasp gladly
Day and night.

Like trees by a river shall they be,
Bearing abundant fruit, year after year,
Without diminishing or failing,
And every day of their life
Flowers in God's prosperity.

Not so,
With those who spurn God, not so!
For they are like tumble-weeds
When the hot desert winds blow.

Across the gloom
Of trackless wastes they wander,
Far from the waters of life.
For the Lord's Way
Is the pathway of promise,
While others lead only to doom.

Psalm 2 (NKJV)

1 Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing?

2 The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying,

3 “Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us.”

4 He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision.

5 Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure:

6 “Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion.”

7 “I will declare the decree: The Lord has said to Me, ‘You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.

8 Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession.

9 You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter’s vessel.’ ”

10 Now therefore, be wise, O kings; Be instructed, you judges of the earth.

11 Serve the Lord with fear, And rejoice with trembling.

12 Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, And you perish in the way, When His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.

PSALM 3

O Lord, how heavy are my burdens,
How many problems must I endure?
There are those who mock my faith in you
And say, "God cannot help".

But you, O Lord, are my consolation,
As long as I live.
My Glorious One, you raise my spirits
When I am down,
And restore my courage.

I cry to you for help, O Lord
And from realms close by,
Or across the limitless span of creation
You come to comfort me.

I am no longer afraid to lie down and sleep,
For I know you will protect me
Through even the longest night.

When You are with me,
I have no dread of
The day that awaits the dawn.

Arise, O Lord!
Deliver me, O my God.
Put my troubles to flight
And leave them powerless over me.

Victory comes from you, O Lord,
And blessings for your faithful ones.

PSALM 4

Answer me in my need-filled hour
O God, my strength,
My help,
My power.
The flood of life overwhelms me,
And my heart is filled with fear.
Be kind once more to me, O Lord,
Be merciful,
Be near!

"How long", says the Lord
"Will your proud heart insult me?"
"How long will you pursue what is worthless
and love what is false?"

"Have you forgotten
That I, the Lord
have created you
and know your needs before you call?"

Help me, O Lord, to abandon the battle within;
To know peace in my heart instead.
Help me experience the depth of your love
When I lie
In the silence of my bed.

Let me offer the sacrifice of surrender,
As I raise my songs,
And put my trust in you, O Lord,
Where my life has shown,
It truly belongs.

There are those who pray:
"Give us more blessings, O Lord.
Look upon us with greater kindness!"
But the grateful heart
Accumulates more than they
Will ever know,
With all their riches and power.

When I lie down, I sleep peacefully
The whole night through,
For you keep me perfectly safe, O Lord
As I sleep,
As I dream,
As I trust in you..

PSALM 5

Hear my words, O Lord,
Listen to my cry.
I offer my heart-felt prayer to you
And eagerly await your reply.

Because of your love
I have entered
The Temple of Truth
You revealed,
I open my heart before you,
From You, nothing is concealed.

Lord, my troubles confound me
As I struggle to follow your way,
Make my path ever clearer,
As I work to serve you each day.

False friends can rarely be trusted
In spite of the care they display,
Their words are smooth and seductive,
Behind smiles they deceive and betray.

O Lord, may their plots come to ruin,
May their hearts feel the fire of your gaze,
Whatever the fruit of their folly,
May they be shown the truth of your ways.

But we who find safety and comfort
Behind the strength of your shield,
Will sing songs of joy and of victory,
And our pleasure will not be concealed.

PSALM 6

Rebuke me not, O Lord
Nor be angry with me,
For my soul is deeply troubled.

Be gracious to me and have mercy,
For my exhaustion is overwhelming.

How much longer, O Lord,
Will you wait to save me?
Come now, for the sake of your love!

If the world of darkness consumes me,
How will I praise you there?

I am weary
And worn out from weeping,
My pillow is soaked with my tears.

My eyes are swollen with grief,
My heart is consumed with my woes.

Keep my troubles
From holding me captive,
O Lord, will you answer my prayer?

Drive away my confusion and shame
And rescue me from my defeat.

PSALM 7

O Lord, my God, my Refuge,
I seek the strength of your arm.
There are those who pursue me
And hate me,
Who seek to do me harm.

Like lions, they hunt to destroy me,
To catch me and tear me apart.
Save me, O Lord, my Refuge,
Keep me safe
Within the walls of your heart.

O Lord, if I have offended
Or caused grief to friend or foe,
I am ignorant of their case against me.
I search my mind and heart,
But my transgressions I do not know.

If their cause against me is just,
I have no cause to complain.
But, if their cause is just to destroy me,
Will you allow them
To cause me such pain?

For you are the Lord of all justice,
And justice is what they demand.
Rise up, O Lord, in your mercy,
And deliver me from their fury
By the strength of your hand.

You are the judge of all nations,
You judge our thoughts and desires.
You know that I am innocent.
Keep the wicked from winning,
As justice requires.

Bend your bow and be ready
If they listen not to your word,
For they engage in plots of evil;
Trouble and deception
Is the only law they've heard.

In the traps they set for others,
May they soon be caught,
And punished for the pain they've caused
By the violence their
Hands have wrought.

I thank you Lord for your justice,
I sing your praise, Most High.
You, O Lord,
Again have saved me.
You, O Lord,
Have heard my cry.

PSALM 8

O Lord, our God,
Your Glory is revealed
By all creation!
Your dominion extends even beyond the stars.

From the lips of children
Your truth is revealed,
Humbling the mighty
And confounding the pretensions of the proud.

When I look at your creation,
The moon, the stars
And all that you have ordained,
What am I in the vast mystery of the universe?

And yet, you regard me highly
And have crowned me
With glory and honor
That is only less than your own.

You have appointed me steward of your creation,
To care for all living things
In the sea, in the air
And on the land.

O Lord, our God,
Your glory is revealed
By all creation.

Psalm 9 (NKJV)

1 I will praise You, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will tell of all Your marvelous works.

2 I will be glad and rejoice in You; I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High.

3 When my enemies turn back, They shall fall and perish at Your presence.

4 For You have maintained my right and my cause; You sat on the throne judging in righteousness.

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

6 O enemy, destructions are finished forever! And you have destroyed cities; Even their memory has perished.

7 But the Lord shall endure forever; He has prepared His throne for judgment.

8 He shall judge the world in righteousness, And He shall administer judgment for the peoples in uprightness.

9 The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, A refuge in times of trouble.

10 And those who know Your name will put their trust in You; For You, Lord, have not forsaken those who seek You.

11 Sing praises to the Lord, who dwells in Zion! Declare His deeds among the people.

12 When He avenges blood, He remembers them; He does not forget the cry of the humble.

13 Have mercy on me, O Lord! Consider my trouble from those who hate me, You who lift me up from the gates of death,

14 That I may tell of all Your praise In the gates of the daughter of Zion. I will rejoice in Your salvation.

15 The nations have sunk down in the pit which they made; In the net which they hid, their own foot is caught.

16 The Lord is known by the judgment He executes; The wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Meditation.

17 The wicked shall be turned into hell, And all the nations that forget God.

18 For the needy shall not always be forgotten; The expectation of the poor shall not perish forever.

19 Arise, O Lord, Do not let man prevail; Let the nations be judged in Your sight.

20 Put them in fear, O Lord, That the nations may know themselves to be but men.

Psalm 10 (NKJV)

1 Why do You stand afar off, O Lord? Why do You hide in times of trouble?

2 The wicked in his pride persecutes the poor; Let them be caught in the plots which they have devised.

3 For the wicked boasts of his heart's desire; He blesses the greedy and renounces the Lord.

4 The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God; God is in none of his thoughts.

5 His ways are always prospering; Your judgments are far above, out of his sight; As for all his enemies, he sneers at them.

6 He has said in his heart, "I shall not be moved; I shall never be in adversity."

7 His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and oppression; Under his tongue is trouble and iniquity.

8 He sits in the lurking places of the villages; In the secret places he murders the innocent; His eyes are secretly fixed on the helpless.

9 He lies in wait secretly, as a lion in his den; He lies in wait to catch the poor; He catches the poor when he draws him into his net.

10 So he crouches, he lies low, That the helpless may fall by his strength.

11 He has said in his heart, "God has forgotten; He hides His face; He will never see."

12 Arise, O Lord! O God, lift up Your hand! Do not forget the humble.

13 Why do the wicked renounce God? He has said in his heart, "You will not require an account."

14 But You have seen, for You observe trouble and grief, To repay it by Your hand. The helpless commits himself to You; You are the helper of the fatherless.

15 Break the arm of the wicked and the evil man; Seek out his wickedness until You find none.

16 The Lord is King forever and ever; The nations have perished out of His land.

17 Lord, You have heard the desire of the humble; You will prepare their heart; You will cause Your ear to hear,

18 To do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed, That the man of the earth may oppress no more.

PSALM 11

Only in the Lord, do I find my refuge:

Who are these experts who say,
"Run!"
"Hide!"
"Fly like a bird to the mountains,
And seek shelter there."

Though the world around us
May be falling apart,
And fear alone may be ruling our heart,
Should we listen to fools,
Who offer certainty and consistency?

For these are treacherous hunters,
Who lurk and wait
In the shadows and shade,
Ready to pounce on the unwary and afraid
Who heed their call to security.

Only in the Lord, do I find my refuge:

The Lord is ever watchful,
Aware of deeds, great and small,
Discerning the motives of all,
The peaceful and the vengeful.

Those who react with violence,
For even the cause of justice,
Will face
The raging furnace
Of the hot wrath of God.

Yet those with a tranquil heart
Amid the storms and chaos of life
Are pleasing to the Lord,
Who invites them, as their reward,
To live in unending peace.

PSALM 12

Be our help, O Lord,
 Who else can we trust?
Those who are honest
 Are treated like dust
 And swept away by the corrupt.

The deceitful are everywhere,
 All we can find
Are those who use lies
 To flatter and blind
 Their neighbors, their victims, their friends.

Silence, O Lord, those treacherous tongues,
 Those boastful mouths who say,
"With our power, we get what we want,
 We always get our way,
 And no one can stop us."

"Alas", I cry out to the Lord,
 "They've gone too far,
Oppressing the needy
 And your beloved, who are
 Close to your heart."

The Lord will provide
 The safety we seek,
From the prowling marauders
 Who prey on the weak,
 The righteous, the beloved of God.

The Lord will protect us
 From that plundering crowd,
With a powerful hand
 Will humble those deceitful and proud,
 And preserve us from their intentions.

PSALM 13

How long, O Lord, will you forget me?
Will you hide from me for ever?
How long must I endure
This suffering in my soul?
Will only sorrow fill my heart
Night and day?
Why does my life seem so out of control?

Look into my heart, O God
And answer me!
Will you restore my strength
Before my downfall is completed?
Will you allow the faithless to gloat
Over my collapse, and say,
"God's Beloved, we have defeated"?

I rely on your steadfast love,
And my heart will rejoice
When you rescue me.
I will sing to you, O Lord,
Because of your goodness and mercy!

PSALM 14

Fools say in their heart,
"There is no God."
They have been corrupted by their might,
Doing terrible deeds
Without discerning what is right.

The Lord looks within their hearts
To see,
If any are wise enough
To seek holiness.

But they have gone astray
And have all become lost.
None of them have learned God's way,
Not a single one.

How can they be so ignorant
Of the Lord?
"Don't they know that
God's people are the ones they devour?
They will learn who God is,
They will come to know God's power!

When the truth of God
Becomes known to them
They will be terrified,
For when the righteous are revealed
Where will fools be able to hide?

The poor and humble
Will frustrate the plans of the proud,
For the Lord will be their protection.

How happy are God's chosen ones
When the Lord reveals
Their resurrection.

PSALM 15

O Lord, who may enter your temple?
Who may worship
On your Holy Hill?

Those who obey you in everything,
Who act justly,
And whose words are true.

Those who slander no one,
Who do not take advantage of friends,
Nor spread rumors about their neighbors.

The one who embraces those in need
And honors those who know God's way.
They, whose promises are kept
Without keeping score.

Those who give without expecting profit,
Whose integrity is not for sale.

Whoever lives this way,
Will ever be secure.

PSALM 16

Keep me safe, O God,
I trust in your protection.
I say to the Lord,
"You alone do I worship,
For all that I am,
All that I have,
Is your gift to me.

I am grateful to be among those
You have chosen.
Others, who pay homage
To power,
To wealth,
To fame,
As if they were Gods,
Bring only trouble on themselves.

I will not pray to the God's they have made,
I will not pay tribute
To their idols.

For you Lord,
Are all that I desire.
You provide for all my needs,
And secure my future.
How wonderful are the blessings
You have bestowed on me.

I bless the Lord who gives me counsel,
Who inspires my heart
With wisdom.
I am always in the Lord's presence
And nothing can separate us.

My heart is glad
And my soul rejoices,
Secure in the guiding hands of God.

For God shields me
From the power of darkness
And empowers me
To walk in the light.
The presence of God fills me,
And brings me pleasure, forever.

PSALM 17

Hear O Lord, the sound of my cry,
Give heed to my innermost prayer.
Because you know what is right,
I am confident of your justice.

You know my heart
And all my ways,
For you have looked deep within me.

You have seen my struggles,
And know
That I have tried to follow your call.

Reveal your wonderful love
And save me once more.

Keep me as the apple of your eye.
Hide me in the shelter of your wings.
Keep me safe from the pitiless and proud.

Save me from
Those around me,
Just waiting to bring me down.

Come Lord!
Save me from those lurking lions
Who wait in ambush.

May their bellies be filled
With the meat of remorse
As they feast on
What they truly deserve.

But, I will be safe
With you, O Lord,
For you count me among your treasures.

My heart is alive with your presence,
And my soul is filled with joy.

Psalm 18 (NKJV)

1 I will love You, O Lord, my strength.

2 The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

3 I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised; So shall I be saved from my enemies.

4 The pangs of death surrounded me, And the floods of ungodliness made me afraid.

5 The sorrows of Sheol surrounded me; The snares of death confronted me.

6 In my distress I called upon the Lord, And cried out to my God; He heard my voice from His temple, And my cry came before Him, even to His ears.

7 Then the earth shook and trembled; The foundations of the hills also quaked and were shaken, Because He was angry.

8 Smoke went up from His nostrils, And devouring fire from His mouth; Coals were kindled by it.

9 He bowed the heavens also, and came down With darkness under His feet.

10 And He rode upon a cherub, and flew; He flew upon the wings of the wind.

11 He made darkness His secret place; His canopy around Him was dark waters And thick clouds of the skies.

12 From the brightness before Him, His thick clouds passed with hailstones and coals of fire.

13 The Lord thundered from heaven, And the Most High uttered His voice, Hailstones and coals of fire.

14 He sent out His arrows and scattered the foe, Lightnings in abundance, and He vanquished them.

15 Then the channels of the sea were seen, The foundations of the world were uncovered At Your rebuke, O Lord, At the blast of the breath of Your nostrils.

16 He sent from above, He took me; He drew me out of many waters.

17 He delivered me from my strong enemy, From those who hated me, For they were too strong for me.

18 They confronted me in the day of my calamity, But the Lord was my support.

19 He also brought me out into a broad place; He delivered me because He delighted in me.

20 The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness; According to the cleanness of my hands He has recompensed me.

21 For I have kept the ways of the Lord, And have not wickedly departed from my God.

22 For all His judgments were before me, And I did not put away His statutes from me.

23 I was also blameless before Him, And I kept myself from my iniquity.

24 Therefore the Lord has recompensed me according to my righteousness, According to the cleanness of my hands in His sight.

25 With the merciful You will show Yourself merciful; With a blameless man You will show Yourself blameless;

26 With the pure You will show Yourself pure; And with the devious You will show Yourself shrewd.

27 For You will save the humble people, But will bring down haughty looks.

28 For You will light my lamp; The Lord my God will enlighten my darkness.

29 For by You I can run against a troop, By my God I can leap over a wall.

30 As for God, His way is perfect; The word of the Lord is proven; He is a shield to all who trust in Him.

31 For who is God, except the Lord? And who is a rock, except our God?
32 It is God who arms me with strength, And makes my way perfect.
33 He makes my feet like the feet of deer, And sets me on my high places.
34 He teaches my hands to make war, So that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.
35 You have also given me the shield of Your salvation; Your right hand has held me up, Your gentleness has made me great.
36 You enlarged my path under me, So my feet did not slip.
37 I have pursued my enemies and overtaken them; Neither did I turn back again till they were destroyed.
38 I have wounded them, So that they could not rise; They have fallen under my feet.
39 For You have armed me with strength for the battle; You have subdued under me those who rose up against me.
40 You have also given me the necks of my enemies, So that I destroyed those who hated me.
41 They cried out, but there was none to save; Even to the Lord, but He did not answer them.
42 Then I beat them as fine as the dust before the wind; I cast them out like dirt in the streets.
43 You have delivered me from the strivings of the people; You have made me the head of the nations; A people I have not known shall serve me.
44 As soon as they hear of me they obey me; The foreigners submit to me.
45 The foreigners fade away, And come frightened from their hideouts.
46 The Lord lives! Blessed be my Rock! Let the God of my salvation be exalted.
47 It is God who avenges me, And subdues the peoples under me;
48 He delivers me from my enemies. You also lift me up above those who rise against me; You have delivered me from the violent man.
49 Therefore I will give thanks to You, O Lord, among the Gentiles, And sing praises to Your name.
50 Great deliverance He gives to His king, And shows mercy to His anointed, To David and his descendants forevermore.

PSALM 19

The universe proclaims
 The Glory of God!
Eternity echoes
 An infinite song of wonder.

Age after endless age,
 New voices emerge
 To join the Chorus of Creation.

The ceaseless cycle of change
 Brings forth:
 New Hope,
 New Life,
 New Mystery.

The Laws of Nature are perfect,
 and their discovery reveals
 The hand of our Creator.

As each day unfolds,
 We explore new horizons
 And are rewarded with
Wisdom and reverence for the Lord.

Creator God,
 Deliver us from our ignorance
 And strengthen us in holiness.

May our thoughts and words
 Be a worthy sacrifice to you, O Lord,
 Our Refuge and Redeemer.

PSALM 20

The Lord will answer
When trouble is near,
The name of God will protect you!

From the Kingdom of Light
God's help will come
To guard and defend you!

May all your offerings be accepted,
May all your plans succeed.
May all your desires be granted,
May God provide all you need.

Some trust in the power of their weapons,
And others in the strength of their walls.
But we trust in the power of God,
To sustain us
Through all of life's pitfalls.

Give victory to your anointed, O Lord,
Answer when we call.

PSALM 21

I am grateful, O Lord,
 Because you give me strength.
I rejoice,
 Because you give me victory.
You have granted my heart's desire,
 And have answered my plea.

You shower me with blessings,
 And set a crown upon my head.
Rather than mere survival,
 You give me eternal life, instead.

My success is because of your blessings,
 My rewards because of your aid.
I trust in you Lord, completely,
 In whom my foundation is laid.

I know you will use me
 For whatever cause is just.
I praise you Lord,
 For in your steadfast love, I trust.

PSALM 22

My God, my God,
Why have you forsaken me?
To you I cry, desperately,
Yet help does not come!

Day and night I call to you, My God.
I get no answer,
I get no rest.

You are the Holy One,
The God of All!
Our ancestors put their trust in you,
And they were not disappointed.

They called on you
To deliver them,
And you saved them from danger.

And now, Here I am,
Alone,
A fool,
Despised and scorned
By everyone.

All who see me
Mock and taunt me,
"You relied on the Lord,
Where is your Savior?"

"If you are so special,
Why doesn't God save you?"

What can I say, O Lord?
You brought me safely into this world,
And when I was growing up
You were always with me.
I have relied on you
As long as I can remember,
And you have always taken
care of me.

Do not abandon me when I need you most!
Everywhere I turn
I am confronted with ruin and darkness.
My strength evaporates like
water,
I can barely move,
And my heart is like melted
wax.

My throat is as dry as the desert,
My tongue sticks
To the roof of my mouth.

You have left me for dead
In this dung-heap of disaster,
Surrounded by hungry wolves,
Closing in,
To rip and shred
The flesh from my bones.

They profit from my misfortune
By dividing everything,
Even my clothes,
Among themselves.

O Lord, be close to me
In my hour of need!
Come quickly to my rescue!
Save me, before it's too late!

I will tell everyone
Of the wonderful things
You have done.

I will sing your praise
In the gathering of the assembly.
"You servants of the Lord,
Give praise!
Give honor!
Give glory!
God does not neglect the poor
Or ignore their suffering,
But answers when they call."

In the presence of those
Who worship you,
I will offer the sacrifices I
promised.

Because of your love,
The poor will eat
As much as they want,
And all who come to you
Will feast for ever.

All the ends of the earth
Shall proclaim:
"Turn to the Lord."

All nations shall belong
To your eternal Kingdom.

The proud will bend in homage,
And all will raise
Their hearts in worship.

Future generations will know,
"THE LORD IS THE SALVATION OF ALL!"

PSALM 23

ANTIPHON:

**The Lord is my Shepherd,
Ever at my side.
Through all my trials
God will be my Guide.**

In pastures of green
God gives me repose,
In the sunlight of love
Where peaceful water flows.
What more can I want?

ANTIPHON:

**The Lord is my Shepherd,
Ever at my side.
Through all my trials
God will be my Guide.**

Though darkness and evil
Are ever so near,
The Lord is my Shepherd,
I will have no fear!
For my Light is sure
And my Path secure.
What more can I want?

ANTIPHON:

**The Lord is my Shepherd,
Ever at my side.
Through all my trials
God will be my Guide.**

At the banquet of life,
My cup overflows.
For the hand of God anoints me,
And dispels all my woes.
Only goodness and mercy
Shall follow me
All the days of my life.
And I shall dwell
In the grace of God
Forever and ever.
What more can I want?

ANTIPHON:

**The Lord is my Shepherd,
Ever at my side.
Through all my trials
God will be my Guide.**

PSALM 24

The earth is the Lord's
And everything in it.
On foundations of mystery
Was everything laid.

Who can expect
To stand before the Lord,
To dwell in the Holy Presence?

Those who are pure in heart,
Upright in thought and deed,
Who do not worship false gods
Or make empty promises.

The Lord will bless them
And save them
Because they seek the Kingdom.
Such people will come into the presence of God.

Fling open
The gates of your heart,
Though closed from long ago,
So the King of Glory may enter.

Who is the King of Glory?
The Lord's anointed,
Powerful and mighty,
Victorious and strong.
The Holy Son of God!

PSALM 25

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul,
In you I place my trust.
Save me from shameful defeat,
From the ridicule of others.

Shame does not descend on those
Who trust in you, O Lord,
But only on those
Who wrap themselves in their pride.

Make your ways known to me,
Teach me your path.
Help me walk by your Light,
For you are the God
Who saves me.
I place all my trust in you.

Remember, O Lord,
The kindness and love
You have shown
Throughout my life.
Forgive my sins, old and new,
And keep me on the right road.
Grant me prosperity,
And a close relationship with you.

Because I am broken and weak,
I turn to you, O Lord.
Be merciful to me,
Help me, and keep me from harm.

Relieve me from my anxieties
And save me from my troubles.
Be mindful of my suffering and distress,
And forgive all my sins.

You know from where my troubles come,
And those who shall oppose me.
I turn to you for strength.
Protect and save me from
Treachery and defeat.

Because I place my trust in you,
Please be near.
Nurture goodness and honesty within my heart.
From all trouble, save me, O God,
Save your people O Lord.

Psalm 26 (NKJV)

1 Vindicate me, O Lord, For I have walked in my integrity. I have also trusted in the Lord; I shall not slip.

2 Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; Try my mind and my heart.

3 For Your lovingkindness is before my eyes, And I have walked in Your truth.

4 I have not sat with idolatrous mortals, Nor will I go in with hypocrites.

5 I have hated the assembly of evildoers, And will not sit with the wicked.

6 I will wash my hands in innocence; So I will go about Your altar, O Lord,

7 That I may proclaim with the voice of thanksgiving, And tell of all Your wondrous works.

8 Lord, I have loved the habitation of Your house, And the place where Your glory dwells.

9 Do not gather my soul with sinners, Nor my life with bloodthirsty men,

10 In whose hands is a sinister scheme, And whose right hand is full of bribes.

11 But as for me, I will walk in my integrity; Redeem me and be merciful to me.

12 My foot stands in an even place; In the congregations I will bless the Lord.

PSALM 27

The Lord is my light and my salvation,
Whom should I fear?
The Lord is the strength within me,
Of what should I be afraid?

Whatever ambush awaits me,
I shall not be overwhelmed.
Even if surrounded,
I will not be afraid.
For what adversary can vanquish me
When God comes to my aid?

There is only one thing I ask of the Lord:
To dwell forever
In the light and peace
Of the Kingdom.

The Lord will shelter me
From all the storms of life,
And raise me above the flood.

With shouts of joy I will raise my prayers
And sing of the Rock
Of my salvation.

Hear me Lord, when I call upon you.
Be merciful and answer my plea.
When you called me to serve you,
I answered,
Please don't hide yourself from me.

If I have offended you,
Forgive me, for my failings.
Please don't cast me from your care.
Though my father and mother may disown me,
I trust that you are always there.

Teach me the way of truth,
Show me how to live.
Lead me through the trials of life
And teach me how to forgive.

Trust in the Lord,
Who calls you to eternal life.
Have faith, do not despair.
Trust in the Lord.

PSALM 28

Do not turn your back on Me
O Lord, my defender.
Listen to my cry.

Like so many,
I'm slipping into the abyss.
Hear my prayer,
And hold my outstretched hand.

Am I being punished also
For the mis-deeds of others,
Whose failures I do not know?

If you must teach them,
Must I also be included in their lesson?
Am I not innocent of their guiles?

Blessed be the Lord
Who has heard my cry for help!
The Lord gives me strength
And makes me glad.
In my shield I trust.

Save your people, Lord,
And bless those who are yours.
Be our shepherd,
And carry us home.

PSALM 29

Praise the Lord, all powers and beings,
Give glory and praise forever.
Humble yourself before the Holy One,
In homage to the Lord.

I hear the mighty voice of God:
In the roaring storm and waves.
In the thunder,
As the lightning cracks
On the rocks and in the trees.

When the trembling earth
Shakes the foundations of the mountain,
Or when, like the hot breath of God,
The volcano erupts.

I know the voice of the Lord,
In all its might and majesty.

The Lord rules over all these powers,
And more,
As King, forever.

May the Lord give strength
To all who walk in justice,
And bless them with peace!

PSALM 30

I praise you Lord,
For you have withheld victory
From my foes.

O Lord, My God, I cried for help
And you filled me with strength.
I was about to sink beneath the wave,
But you restored my life.

Sing praise to the Lord
All you faithful people,
Remember the deeds of the Holy One,
And give thanks.

The chastisement of God lasts but a moment,
The blessings last for ever.
Tears may flow at night,
But joy comes in the morning.

I felt so sure of myself
When you were with me.
But when you hid yourself,
I stood alone and afraid.

I called to you, Lord,
And begged for help.
"I can serve you better in life,"
I said,
"Than if I was counted among the dead."

Hear me Lord, and be merciful!
Help me, Lord.

You have turned my tears of sorrow
Into tears of joy.
My soul dances with gladness!
I will not be silent,
I must sing your praise.

Lord, you are my God!
I will give you thanks for ever.

PSALM 31

I turn to you Lord, for protection,
Deliver me, I pray.
Because you care for me
I trust you will save me soon!
Keep me safe from those snares and pitfalls
Designed to entrap me.
Shelter me from danger
And keep evil away.

You have given me freedom,
But where else can I go?
I place my trust in you
Rather than worship others.
You see the challenges before me,
And all my suffering you know.

Be merciful to me, O Lord,
And dry all my tears.
Though I am worn out, I cannot sleep,
For the pressure gives me no rest.
Let me find comfort in you,
Embrace me and calm all my fears.

My neighbors treat me with contempt,
Or avoid me on the street.
They act as if I'm not there,
As though I was among the dead.
I hear them whispering when I approach,
I'm afraid they're celebrating my defeat.

No matter what they say or do, O Lord,
I am always in your care.
Though they speak with arrogance
Behind my back,
When I confront them,
They scatter everywhere.

The Lord will silence those liars
And cast them into the night,
To devour each other
With their insolence and conceit.
Yet the Lord exalts me,
And leads me gently to the light.

How wonderful are the gifts of God!
How secure the shelter!
How abundant the feast!
How many the rewards!

Praise the Lord!
How steadfast the love I was shown,
When my fear and doubt
Overcame me.

The Lord heard my cry for help
And drove all my anxieties out,
So that faith could reclaim me.

The Lord protects the faithful.
Be strong!
Be Courageous!
Hope in the Lord!

PSALM 32

Happy are they whose sins are forgiven.
Blessed are they who are free from deceit.

Though I withheld the secrets of my heart,
You knew what was hidden there.
I thought that I could bury my sin in silence,
Beyond your scrutiny.

My energy and strength
Were completely drained
As I strained
To maintain my composure.

Day and night my heart was burdened.
No rest, no respite
Could I find
In that desert of darkness I had created.

I finally revealed my heart to you,
I trusted you with my shame--and confessed my guilt.
You embraced me and forgave all my sins.
O what love!
You dried all my tears.

You are my hiding place, O Lord.
You will save me from
Trial and woe.
I sing of you, my salvation.
You protect and guide me,
Wherever I go.

The Lord said to me:

"Though I will ride you like a horse,
Yet gently will I teach you,
Without bit or bridle.

I will lead you my beloved,
And you may sometimes suffer
Because you are strong and proud.

Because you obey me,
You will have cause for rejoicing.
For the wind will sing in your ears,
And your heart will soar,
As the road flies
Beneath your feet.

Be still and know,
That I am God."

Psalm 33 (NKJV)

- 1 Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! For praise from the upright is beautiful.
- 2 Praise the Lord with the harp; Make melody to Him with an instrument of ten strings.
- 3 Sing to Him a new song; Play skillfully with a shout of joy.
- 4 For the word of the Lord is right, And all His work is done in truth.
- 5 He loves righteousness and justice; The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.
- 6 By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.
- 7 He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; He lays up the deep in storehouses.
- 8 Let all the earth fear the Lord; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.
- 9 For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.
- 10 The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; He makes the plans of the peoples of no effect.
- 11 The counsel of the Lord stands forever, The plans of His heart to all generations.
- 12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, The people He has chosen as His own inheritance.
- 13 The Lord looks from heaven; He sees all the sons of men.
- 14 From the place of His dwelling He looks On all the inhabitants of the earth;
- 15 He fashions their hearts individually; He considers all their works.
- 16 No king is saved by the multitude of an army; A mighty man is not delivered by great strength.
- 17 A horse is a vain hope for safety; Neither shall it deliver any by its great strength.
- 18 Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear Him, On those who hope in His mercy,
- 19 To deliver their soul from death, And to keep them alive in famine.
- 20 Our soul waits for the Lord; He is our help and our shield.
- 21 For our heart shall rejoice in Him, Because we have trusted in His holy name.
- 22 Let Your mercy, O Lord, be upon us, Just as we hope in You.

Psalm 34 (NKJV)

1 I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.
2 My soul shall make its boast in the Lord; The humble shall hear of it and be glad.
3 Oh, magnify the Lord with me, And let us exalt His name together.
4 I sought the Lord, and He heard me, And delivered me from all my fears.
5 They looked to Him and were radiant, And their faces were not ashamed.
6 This poor man cried out, and the Lord heard him, And saved him out of all his troubles.
7 The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him, And delivers them.
8 Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!
9 Oh, fear the Lord, you His saints! There is no want to those who fear Him.
10 The young lions lack and suffer hunger; But those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing.
11 Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord.
12 Who is the man who desires life, And loves many days, that he may see good?
13 Keep your tongue from evil, And your lips from speaking deceit.
14 Depart from evil and do good; Seek peace and pursue it.
15 The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their cry.
16 The face of the Lord is against those who do evil, To cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.
17 The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears, And delivers them out of all their troubles.
18 The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit.
19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous, But the Lord delivers him out of them all.
20 He guards all his bones; Not one of them is broken.
21 Evil shall slay the wicked, And those who hate the righteous shall be condemned.
22 The Lord redeems the soul of His servants, And none of those who trust in Him shall be condemned.

Psalm 35 (NKJV)

1 Plead my cause, O Lord, with those who strive with me; Fight against those who fight against me.

2 Take hold of shield and buckler, And stand up for my help.

3 Also draw out the spear, And stop those who pursue me. Say to my soul, "I am your salvation."

4 Let those be put to shame and brought to dishonor Who seek after my life; Let those be turned back and brought to confusion Who plot my hurt.

5 Let them be like chaff before the wind, And let the angel of the Lord chase them.

6 Let their way be dark and slippery, And let the angel of the Lord pursue them.

7 For without cause they have hidden their net for me in a pit, Which they have dug without cause for my life.

8 Let destruction come upon him unexpectedly, And let his net that he has hidden catch himself; Into that very destruction let him fall.

9 And my soul shall be joyful in the Lord; It shall rejoice in His salvation.

10 All my bones shall say, "Lord, who is like You, Delivering the poor from him who is too strong for him, Yes, the poor and the needy from him who plunders him?"

11 Fierce witnesses rise up; They ask me things that I do not know.

12 They reward me evil for good, To the sorrow of my soul.

13 But as for me, when they were sick, My clothing was sackcloth; I humbled myself with fasting; And my prayer would return to my own heart.

14 I paced about as though he were my friend or brother; I bowed down heavily, as one who mourns for his mother.

15 But in my adversity they rejoiced And gathered together; Attackers gathered against me, And I did not know it; They tore at me and did not cease;

16 With ungodly mockers at feasts They gnashed at me with their teeth.

17 Lord, how long will You look on? Rescue me from their destructions, My precious life from the lions.

18 I will give You thanks in the great assembly; I will praise You among many people.

19 Let them not rejoice over me who are wrongfully my enemies; Nor let them wink with the eye who hate me without a cause.

20 For they do not speak peace, But they devise deceitful matters Against the quiet ones in the land.

21 They also opened their mouth wide against me, And said, "Aha, aha! Our eyes have seen it."

22 This You have seen, O Lord; Do not keep silence. O Lord, do not be far from me.

23 Stir up Yourself, and awake to my vindication, To my cause, my God and my Lord.

24 Vindicate me, O Lord my God, according to Your righteousness; And let them not rejoice over me.

25 Let them not say in their hearts, "Ah, so we would have it!" Let them not say, "We have swallowed him up."

26 Let them be ashamed and brought to mutual confusion Who rejoice at my hurt; Let them be clothed with shame and dishonor Who exalt themselves against me.

27 Let them shout for joy and be glad, Who favor my righteous cause; And let them say continually, "Let the Lord be magnified, Who has pleasure in the prosperity of His servant."

28 And my tongue shall speak of Your righteousness And of Your praise all the day long.

Psalm 36 (NKJV)

1 An oracle within my heart concerning the transgression of the wicked: There is no fear of God before his eyes.

2 For he flatters himself in his own eyes, When he finds out his iniquity and when he hates.

3 The words of his mouth are wickedness and deceit; He has ceased to be wise and to do good.

4 He devises wickedness on his bed; He sets himself in a way that is not good; He does not abhor evil.

5 Your mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; Your faithfulness reaches to the clouds.

6 Your righteousness is like the great mountains; Your judgments are a great deep; O Lord, You preserve man and beast.

7 How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Your wings.

8 They are abundantly satisfied with the fullness of Your house, And You give them drink from the river of Your pleasures.

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

10 Oh, continue Your lovingkindness to those who know You, And Your righteousness to the upright in heart.

11 Let not the foot of pride come against me, And let not the hand of the wicked drive me away.

12 There the workers of iniquity have fallen; They have been cast down and are not able to rise.

Psalm 37 (NKJV)

1 Do not fret because of evildoers, Nor be envious of the workers of iniquity.
2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, And wither as the green herb.
3 Trust in the Lord, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.
4 Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.
5 Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass.
6 He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, And your justice as the noonday.
7 Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.
8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; Do not fret—it only causes harm.
9 For evildoers shall be cut off; But those who wait on the Lord, They shall inherit the earth.
10 For yet a little while and the wicked shall be no more; Indeed, you will look carefully for his place, But it shall be no more.
11 But the meek shall inherit the earth, And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.
12 The wicked plots against the just, And gnashes at him with his teeth.
13 The Lord laughs at him, For He sees that his day is coming.
14 The wicked have drawn the sword And have bent their bow, To cast down the poor and needy, To slay those who are of upright conduct.
15 Their sword shall enter their own heart, And their bows shall be broken.
16 A little that a righteous man has Is better than the riches of many wicked.
17 For the arms of the wicked shall be broken, But the Lord upholds the righteous.
18 The Lord knows the days of the upright, And their inheritance shall be forever.
19 They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, And in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.
20 But the wicked shall perish; And the enemies of the Lord, Like the splendor of the meadows, shall vanish. Into smoke they shall vanish away.
21 The wicked borrows and does not repay, But the righteous shows mercy and gives.
22 For those blessed by Him shall inherit the earth, But those cursed by Him shall be cut off.
23 The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, And He delights in his way.
24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; For the Lord upholds him with His hand.
25 I have been young, and now am old; Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, Nor his descendants begging bread.
26 He is ever merciful, and lends; And his descendants are blessed.
27 Depart from evil, and do good; And dwell forevermore.
28 For the Lord loves justice, And does not forsake His saints; They are preserved forever, But the descendants of the wicked shall be cut off.
29 The righteous shall inherit the land, And dwell in it forever.
30 The mouth of the righteous speaks wisdom, And his tongue talks of justice.
31 The law of his God is in his heart; None of his steps shall slide.
32 The wicked watches the righteous, And seeks to slay him.
33 The Lord will not leave him in his hand, Nor condemn him when he is judged.
34 Wait on the Lord, And keep His way, And He shall exalt you to inherit the land; When the wicked are cut off, you shall see it.
35 I have seen the wicked in great power, And spreading himself like a native green tree.
36 Yet he passed away, and behold, he was no more; Indeed I sought him, but he could not be found.
37 Mark the blameless man, and observe the upright; For the future of that man is peace.
38 But the transgressors shall be destroyed together; The future of the wicked shall be cut off.

39 But the salvation of the righteous is from the Lord; He is their strength in the time of trouble.
40 And the Lord shall help them and deliver them; He shall deliver them from the wicked, And save them, Because they trust in Him.

Psalm 38 (NKJV)

1 O Lord, do not rebuke me in Your wrath, Nor chasten me in Your hot displeasure!
2 For Your arrows pierce me deeply, And Your hand presses me down.
3 There is no soundness in my flesh Because of Your anger, Nor any health in my bones
Because of my sin.
4 For my iniquities have gone over my head; Like a heavy burden they are too heavy for me.
5 My wounds are foul and festering Because of my foolishness.
6 I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long.
7 For my loins are full of inflammation, And there is no soundness in my flesh.
8 I am feeble and severely broken; I groan because of the turmoil of my heart.
9 Lord, all my desire is before You; And my sighing is not hidden from You.
10 My heart pants, my strength fails me; As for the light of my eyes, it also has gone from me.
11 My loved ones and my friends stand aloof from my plague, And my relatives stand afar off.
12 Those also who seek my life lay snares for me; Those who seek my hurt speak of
destruction, And plan deception all the day long.
13 But I, like a deaf man, do not hear; And I am like a mute who does not open his mouth.
14 Thus I am like a man who does not hear, And in whose mouth is no response.
15 For in You, O Lord, I hope; You will hear, O Lord my God.
16 For I said, "Hear me, lest they rejoice over me, Lest, when my foot slips, they exalt
themselves against me."
17 For I am ready to fall, And my sorrow is continually before me.
18 For I will declare my iniquity; I will be in anguish over my sin.
19 But my enemies are vigorous, and they are strong; And those who hate me wrongfully have
multiplied.
20 Those also who render evil for good, They are my adversaries, because I follow what is
good.
21 Do not forsake me, O Lord; O my God, be not far from me!
22 Make haste to help me, O Lord, my salvation!

Psalm 39 (NKJV)

1 I said, "I will guard my ways, Lest I sin with my tongue; I will restrain my mouth with a muzzle, While the wicked are before me."
2 I was mute with silence, I held my peace even from good; And my sorrow was stirred up.
3 My heart was hot within me; While I was musing, the fire burned. Then I spoke with my tongue:
4 "Lord, make me to know my end, And what is the measure of my days, That I may know how frail I am.
5 Indeed, You have made my days as handbreadths, And my age is as nothing before You; Certainly every man at his best state is but vapor.
6 Surely every man walks about like a shadow; Surely they busy themselves in vain; He heaps up riches, And does not know who will gather them.
7 "And now, Lord, what do I wait for? My hope is in You.
8 Deliver me from all my transgressions; Do not make me the reproach of the foolish.
9 I was mute, I did not open my mouth, Because it was You who did it.
10 Remove Your plague from me; I am consumed by the blow of Your hand.
11 When with rebukes You correct man for iniquity, You make his beauty melt away like a moth; Surely every man is vapor.
12 "Hear my prayer, O Lord, And give ear to my cry; Do not be silent at my tears; For I am a stranger with You, A sojourner, as all my fathers were.
13 Remove Your gaze from me, that I may regain strength, Before I go away and am no more."

Psalm 40 (NKJV)

1 I waited patiently for the Lord; And He inclined to me, And heard my cry.

2 He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, Out of the miry clay, And set my feet upon a rock, And established my steps.

3 He has put a new song in my mouth— Praise to our God; Many will see it and fear, And will trust in the Lord.

4 Blessed is that man who makes the Lord his trust, And does not respect the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.

5 Many, O Lord my God, are Your wonderful works Which You have done; And Your thoughts toward us Cannot be recounted to You in order; If I would declare and speak of them, They are more than can be numbered.

6 Sacrifice and offering You did not desire; My ears You have opened. Burnt offering and sin offering You did not require.

7 Then I said, “Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me.

8 I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart.”

9 I have proclaimed the good news of righteousness In the great assembly; Indeed, I do not restrain my lips, O Lord, You Yourself know.

10 I have not hidden Your righteousness within my heart; I have declared Your faithfulness and Your salvation; I have not concealed Your lovingkindness and Your truth From the great assembly.

11 Do not withhold Your tender mercies from me, O Lord; Let Your lovingkindness and Your truth continually preserve me.

12 For innumerable evils have surrounded me; My iniquities have overtaken me, so that I am not able to look up; They are more than the hairs of my head; Therefore my heart fails me.

13 Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me; O Lord, make haste to help me!

14 Let them be ashamed and brought to mutual confusion Who seek to destroy my life; Let them be driven backward and brought to dishonor Who wish me evil.

15 Let them be confounded because of their shame, Who say to me, “Aha, aha!”

16 Let all those who seek You rejoice and be glad in You; Let such as love Your salvation say continually, “The Lord be magnified!”

17 But I am poor and needy; Yet the Lord thinks upon me. You are my help and my deliverer; Do not delay, O my God.

Psalm 41 (NKJV)

- 1 Blessed is he who considers the poor; The Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.
- 2 The Lord will preserve him and keep him alive, And he will be blessed on the earth; You will not deliver him to the will of his enemies.
- 3 The Lord will strengthen him on his bed of illness; You will sustain him on his sickbed.
- 4 I said, "Lord, be merciful to me; Heal my soul, for I have sinned against You."
- 5 My enemies speak evil of me: "When will he die, and his name perish?"
- 6 And if he comes to see me, he speaks lies; His heart gathers iniquity to itself; When he goes out, he tells it.
- 7 All who hate me whisper together against me; Against me they devise my hurt.
- 8 "An evil disease," they say, "clings to him. And now that he lies down, he will rise up no more."
- 9 Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me.
- 10 But You, O Lord, be merciful to me, and raise me up, That I may repay them.
- 11 By this I know that You are well pleased with me, Because my enemy does not triumph over me.
- 12 As for me, You uphold me in my integrity, And set me before Your face forever.
- 13 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel From everlasting to everlasting! Amen and Amen.

PSALM 42

As parched lips

In the hot desert sun
Long for the taste of cool water,
So my soul longs for you, O my God!

I thirst for you, O Water of Life!

When can I immerse myself again
In the refreshing coolness
Of your streams?

Day and Night I cry,

And my tears are all that sustain me.
Constantly my tormentor gloats,
"Where is your God?"

My heart nearly breaks

When I think of days gone by.
Unfettered then,
I raised my heart to you, O Lord,
Singing and giving thanks.
There, in the midst of your joyful assembly,
I was the herald of your praise.

Why now, am I so sad, so consumed with grief?

I must renew my hope in God,
And once again lift my heart
In praise of my Savior.

Here in this exile of mine,

My heart turns to God,
Who has sent torrents of sorrow to crush me.
I feel overwhelmed and powerless, like being caught
In the thundering waterfalls of the river,
As it drops from mighty mountains.

May your love sustain me, O God,

Especially during the trials of the day,
So that in the evening
I may have at least a prayer left
To offer you,
O Lord of my life.

I say to God, the source of my strength,

Why have you forgotten Me?
How long must I endure
This hardship and suffering?
I am endlessly assailed by the taunt,
"Where is your God?"

Even so, why am I sad, so consumed with grief?

I must renew my hope in God,
And once again lift my heart
In praise of my Savior.

PSALM 95

Come, let us sing to the Lord
And shout with joy
To the one who saves us!

Let us come with grateful hearts
And sing songs
Of praise and thanksgiving.

For the Lord is a mighty God,
Who rules over all
The forces and powers.

God rules over all the earth,
From the deepest depths
To the highest heights.
From the recesses of my heart
To the furthest reaches of creation.

Come, let us give thanks and worship
Raising our hearts
Before the Lord, our maker.

For we are a grateful people,
The sheep of the flock,
Chosen to be God's own.

If today, you hear God's voice,
Harden not your hearts.
Be not like your ancestors
As they were in the desert.

There, they put God to the test
To see if they were beloved,
Though they had seen
Many works and wonders.

For forty years God sustained
That generation
With wandering hearts.

But they would not be led by God
Through the desert.
They followed instead their own path,
So they entered not
The land of promise,
Where they would have found rest.

Psalm 103 (NKJV)

1 Bless the Lord, O my soul; And all that is within me, bless His holy name!
2 Bless the Lord, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits:
3 Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases,
4 Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies,
5 Who satisfies your mouth with good things, So that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.
6 The Lord executes righteousness And justice for all who are oppressed.
7 He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the children of Israel.
8 The Lord is merciful and gracious, Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy.
9 He will not always strive with us, Nor will He keep His anger forever.
10 He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor punished us according to our iniquities.
11 For as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him;
12 As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.
13 As a father pities his children, So the Lord pities those who fear Him.
14 For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.
15 As for man, his days are like grass; As a flower of the field, so he flourishes.
16 For the wind passes over it, and it is gone, And its place remembers it no more.
17 But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting On those who fear Him, And His righteousness to children's children,
18 To such as keep His covenant, And to those who remember His commandments to do them.
19 The Lord has established His throne in heaven, And His kingdom rules over all.
20 Bless the Lord, you His angels, Who excel in strength, who do His word, Heeding the voice of His word.
21 Bless the Lord, all you His hosts, You ministers of His, who do His pleasure.
22 Bless the Lord, all His works, In all places of His dominion. Bless the Lord, O my soul!