

d Daleth

25 My soul clings to the dust (*or, I feel defeated*);
revive me according to your word!

26 When I confessed (*or, declared*) my ways (*or, behavior*), you answered
me;

teach me your statutes!

27 Help me understand the way of your precepts,
and I will meditate on your wondrous deeds (*or, teachings*).

28 My soul is overcome with grief;
strengthen (*or, sustain*) me according to your word!

29 Remove false ways (*or, delusions*) from me;
and graciously¹ teach me your law!

30 I have chosen the way of obedience (*or, faithfulness*),
I have set your ordinances² before me.

31 I cling to your testimonies, O Lord;
do not put me to shame!

32 I will eagerly peruse your commandments
for you increase my understanding.

h He

33 Teach me, O Lord, the significance of your statutes;
I will observe them to the end (*or, as a reward*).³

34 Help me to clearly understand how I may keep your law
and observe it wholeheartedly.

35 Guide me in the path of your commandments,
for I delight in it.

36 Cause my interests to be in your testimonies,
and not in unjust gain.

37 Avert my eyes from looking at what is worthless (*or, vile*)
and revive me by your ways.

38 Reassure your servant of your promises
which are for those who revere you.

39 Remove the disgrace which I dread;
for your ordinances are good.

40 See, I long for your precepts;
give me life through your righteousness!

W Waw

41 Let your constant love⁴ come to me, O Lord,
your salvation as you have promised.

42 Then I will have an answer for those⁵ who insult me,
for I have placed my trust in your word.

1 Literally: "and with respect to your law be gracious to me." A possible translation could be "and grace me with your law."

2 Hebrew uncertain. MT: "your ordinances I have set." Syriac, supports an emendation: ytywa "I desire."

3 Hebrew uncertain. A possible emendation is "as a reward."

4 So: LXX.

5 MT: singular. LXX: plural.

43 Do not remove the word of truth from me completely,⁶
 for my hope is in your ordinances.
 44 I will obey your law continually ---
 for ever and ever.
 45 I will walk where I desire, in freedom⁷
 for I have turned to your precepts.
 46 I will also speak of your testimonies before kings
 and I will not be ashamed.
 47 I, myself, take delight in your commandments,
 because I love them.
 48 I revere⁸ your commandments [*which I love*]⁹
 and I will meditate on (*or, study*) your statutes.

Z Zayin

49 Remember your¹⁰ word to your servant,
 through which you have given me hope.
 50 This is my consolation in my suffering,
 that your promise gives me life (*or, revives me*).
 51 Those who are arrogant¹¹ mock (*or sneer at*) me cruelly,
 but I do not swerve from your law.
 52 I remember your ancient ordinances;
 I find consolation in them, O Lord.
 53 Burning rage grips me because of the wicked ---
 those who forsake your law.
 54 Your statutes have been my theme song
 (*or, the source of strength to me*),
 all my life long (*or, wherever I dwell, in exile*).¹²
 55 I remember your name at night, O Lord,
 and keep your law.
 56 This has been my practice:¹³
 I have obeyed your precepts!

X Heth (*Cheth*)

57 The Lord is my portion;
 I promise (*or, resolve*) to keep your words.
 58 Wholeheartedly I implore your favor;¹⁴
 be gracious to me according to your promise.
 59 When I reflect on your ways,¹⁵

6 Literally: "utterly out of my mouth."

7 Literally: "in a broad space."

8 Literally: "my hands also will I lift up."

9 Possibly a gloss since it overloads the line.

10 A slight emendation but supported by early translations.

11 The Hebrew word is translated "haughty" in verse 21.

12 Literally: "in the house of my pilgrimage."

13 Hebrew uncertain. Literally: "this has been mine", or, "this is my lot."

14 The Hebrew word translated "favor" is "to put (someone) in a good mood, to conciliate."

15 So: emended, supported by LXX. MT: "my ways."

I turn to your testimonies;
60 I am prompt and do not delay¹⁶
to keep your commandments.
61 Even though the wicked ensnare me in an ever tightening noose,¹⁷
I do not forget your law.
62 I rise up at midnight and praise you,
because of your righteous ordinances.
63 I am a friend (*or, companion*) of all who revere you,
of those who keep your precepts.
64 Your constant love, O Lord, fills the earth;
teach me your statutes.

j Teth

65 You have treated your servant well,
in accordance with your word, O Lord.
66 Teach me good sense¹⁸ and knowledge,
for I have believed in your commandments.
67 Before I was afflicted¹⁹ I went astray;
but now I keep your word.
68 You are good and kind,
teach me your statutes.
69 The arrogant have smeared²⁰ me with lies,
but I keep your precepts with my entire being.
70 Their mind²¹ is gross, like fat,
but I delight in your love.
71 It is good for me that I was afflicted,²²
that I might learn your statutes.
72 The law you have declared (*or, revealed*) is better to me
than thousands of pieces of gold and silver.

y Yodh

73 Your hands created me and kept me safe,
give me understanding that I may learn your commandments.
74 Those who revere you will see me and rejoice,
because I have placed my hope in your word.
75 I know, O Lord, that your judgments are right,
and that you have humbled me because of your faithfulness
(*or, in good faith*).
76 May your constant love become my comfort,
according to your promise to your servant.

16 The same Hebrew word is used of Lot who was reluctant to leave Sodom in Genesis 19:16.

17 Literally: "they surround me with cords"... "they entwine me."

18 Literally: "taste" in the sense of spiritual discernment.

19 The Hebrew word can mean "to be humbled" though more often "afflicted" would be the desired translation.

20 The Hebrew word could be used to smear plaster.

21 Literally: "heart."

22 Cf. footnote 19 above.

77 Have mercy on me, that I might live;
for your law is my delight.
78 Let the arrogant be dismayed,
because they have oppressed me unjustly.
As for me, I will meditate on your precepts.
79 Let those who revere you turn to me,
that they may know (*or, and those that have known*)²³ your testimonies.
80 May my heart be blameless according to your statutes,
that I may not be ashamed.

K Koph

81 I am worn out as I await your salvation;
I place my trust in your word.
82 I have waited in vain²⁴ for your promise.
I ask, "When will you comfort me?"
83 I have become like a wineskin in the smoke,²⁵
yet I have not neglected your statutes.
84 How long must your servant wait?²⁶
until you judge those who persecute me?
85 Those who are arrogant have made life difficult²⁷ for me;
they also flout your law.
86 All your commandments are enduring;
they persecute me using false charges. Help me!
87 They have almost wiped me off the earth (*or, succeeded in killing me*);
but I have not abandoned your precepts.
88 Grant me life²⁸ in your constant love,
that I may obey your testimonies!

L Lamed

89 The Lord²⁹ exists for ever!
Your word is firmly fixed (*or, planted*) in the heavens.
90 Your faithfulness³⁰ endures to all generations;
you have established the earth and it endures.
91 Your appointment endures to this day;
for every thing is in your service.
92 Had your law not been my source of joy,
I would have perished in my afflictions.
93 I will never forget your precepts;
you have given me life because of them.

23 An example of "qere and kethiv". Cf. Psalm 8:5, footnote 52, page 8.

24 Literally: "my eyes fail."

25 i.e. aged and of no great value.

26 Literally: "How many are the days of your servant."

27 Literally: "dug pitfalls."

28 MT: "to live."

29 Possibly: "O Lord" or "Our Lord."

30 Some emend the text to read "your word" since the criteria of the Psalm are not met as the verse stand. i.e. God's law, precepts, ordinances, etc. are not mentioned. Cf. Footnote 111 pg. 162.

94 I am yours, save me;
for I have sought your precepts.
95 The wicked plot³¹ to destroy me;
but I meditate on (*or, ponder*) your testimonies.
96 I have seen that everything has its limit,
but your commandment is perfect (*or, limitless*).³²

m Mem

97 Oh, how I love your law!
It is my meditation (*or, I study it*) all day long.
98 Your commandment³³ makes me wiser than my enemies,
for it is always with me.
99 I have gained more understanding than all the teachers,
for your precepts are my meditation.
100 I understand more than the aged³⁴
for I keep your precepts.
101 I have avoided every evil way,
in order to be obedient to your word.
102 I do not depart from your ordinances,
for you, yourself, have instructed me.
103 How sweet are your words³⁵ to my taste,
sweeter than honey to my mouth.
104 I get understanding through your precepts,
therefore I hate every false way.

n Nun

105 Your word is a guiding lamp for my feet³⁶
and a light for my path.
106 I have made a solemn promise and have resolved,
to obey your righteous ordinances.
107 I am severely afflicted;
sustain my life, O Lord, according to your word!
108 Accept my offerings of praise,³⁷
and teach me your ordinances.
109 I continually risk my life
(*or, my life is always in danger,*
I am always ready to risk my life),³⁸
but I do not forget your law.
110 The wicked have set a snare for me,
but I do not veer from your precepts.

31 Literally: "lie in wait."

32 Literally: "exceedingly broad."

33 This word could also be a plural in the Hebrew text.

34 Literally: "the elders."

35 A slight emendation is made that is supported by several Hebrew manuscripts, LXX and Syriac. MT: "your word."

36 So: LXX & Syriac. MT: "my foot."

37 Literally: "the freewill offerings of my mouth." This could conceivably imply a grateful sacrifice.

38 Literally: "my soul is continually in my hand."

111 Your decrees are my eternal heritage;
they are my heart's delight.

112 I am determined to perform your statutes
forever -- to the end (*or, a reward forever*).³⁹

S Samekh, (*Samech*)

113 I hate those who are double minded,⁴⁰
but I love your law.

114 You are my safe refuge and my protector;
I hope in your word.

115 Stay away from me, you evildoers,
that I might be obedient to the commandments of my God.

116 Support me according to your promise, that I may live,
do not thwart my expectation (*or, disappoint me*) in my hope!

117 Sustain me that I may be safe;
and I will continually have regard for⁴¹ your statutes.

118 You despise (*or, reject*) all who stray from your statutes;
for they are false and deceitful.

119 You treat⁴² the wicked of the earth as refuse (*or, scum*);
therefore I love your decrees.

120 My flesh shudders with dread because of you
and I am in awe of your judgments.

[Ain (*Ayin*)

121 I have done what is just and right;
do not abandon me to my oppressors.

122 Guarantee safety (*or, well-being*) for your servant;
do not let the godless (*or, arrogant*) oppress me
(*or, accuse me falsely*).⁴³

123 My eyes are strained watching for your salvation,
and the fulfillment of your righteous promise.

124 Deal with your servants as befits your constant love,
and teach me your statutes.

125 I am your servant; grant me discernment,
that I might understand your decrees.

126 O Lord, it is time for you to act;
for your law has been disobeyed.

127 I truly⁴⁴ love your commandments

39 Hebrew uncertain. The thought seems to be "until I die."

40 *syp[s]* is a difficult Hebrew word which could mean vain thoughts, those who are not completely loyal, dissemblers or waverers. Moffatt translates "the men who are half and half."

41 Some scholars emend so as to translate "find my delight in."

42 An emendation *tbXx* supported by some ancient versions. MT: "you put away." A few Hebrew manuscripts and translations say: "As far as you are concerned all evil people are refuse."

43 This verse, like verse 90, does not seem to meet the criteria laid down by the Psalmist that God's word, law, precepts, etc. be mentioned in each verse.

44 So: emended, reading *lkla* "truly". MT: *lkla* "therefore."

more than gold, even the finest gold. ⁴⁵
128 I am careful to I direct my steps by your precepts, ⁴⁶
I hate every deceptive way!

ρ Pe

129 Your testimonies are wonderful;
Therefore I observe them.
130 The opening ⁴⁷ of your word gives light; ⁴⁸
it grants understanding to the simple (*or, open hearted*).
131 I pant with open mouth,
longing for your commandments.
132 Turn to me and be gracious to me,
as is your custom toward those who love your name.
133 Establish my steps firmly in accordance with your promise
and let no iniquity dominate me.
134 Redeem me from human oppression,
that I may keep your precepts.
135 Show favoritism toward your servant
and teach me your statutes.
136 My eyes shed streams of tears,
because people do not keep your law.

Ϙ Sadhe (*Tsadhe*)

137 You are righteous, O Lord,
and your judgments are just (*or, upright*), ⁴⁹
138 You have given your righteous decrees
in complete faithfulness.
139 My zeal ⁵⁰ wears me out
because my enemies neglect your word.
140 Your promises are tested through and through
and your servant loves them.
141 I am insignificant and despised,
yet I do not neglect your precepts.
142 Your righteousness, O God, is eternal,
and your law is the truth.
143 Trouble and distress have come upon me,
but your commandments are my joy.
144 Your righteous decrees are eternal;
grant me understanding that I might live!

ϙ Qoph (*Koph*)

145 I cry wholeheartedly to you, answer me, O Lord!

45 This line is based on emended text which some Hebrew manuscripts support.

46 So: LXX & Jerome. Hebrew uncertain.

47 This Hebrew word is not found elsewhere.

48 The Hebrew text of verses 129 & 130a is uncertain.

49 The MT has a plural word.

50 Is the zeal for God's Law or is it zeal because of anger against the enemies?

I will obey your statutes.
 146 I cry to you: "Save me,
 that I might keep your testimonies."
 147 I rise⁵¹ before dawn and cry for help:
 "I hope in your words."⁵²
 148 I am awake before each night watch,
 that I might meditate on your promises.
 149 O Lord, because of your constant love, hear my voice!
 In your justice preserve my life.
 150 Those who persecute me⁵³ with evil purpose are not far away;
 they do not keep⁵⁴ your law.
 151 You, however, are near, O Lord,
 and all your commandments are permanent.
 152 I learned long ago of your testimonies;
 that you have established them to stand forever.

ר Resh

153 See my affliction and rescue me,
 for I have not neglected your law.
 154 Defend my cause and redeem me;
 give me life in accordance with your promise!
 155 The wicked will not obtain salvation,
 for they do not turn to your statutes.
 156 O Lord, your mercy (*or, compassion*) is great;
 give me life according to your justice.⁵⁵
 157 My persecutors and my adversaries are many,
 but I have not forsaken your decrees.
 158 I have beheld the faithless with disgust
 (*or, have contended with the faithless*);
 because they do not keep your commandments.⁵⁶
 159 Remember how I love your precepts!
 Preserve my life according to your constant love.
 160 The essence⁵⁷ of your word is truth;
 and everyone of your righteous ordinances⁵⁸ is eternal.

X Schin

161 Princes have persecuted me unjustly,
 but my heart reverences your words.⁵⁹
 162 I rejoice in your word

51 Emended: ytmq "rise". MT: ytmdq "come to meet" or "anticipated."

52 Using a variant found in some Hebrew manuscripts.

53 A minor emendation supported by some Hebrew manuscripts, LXX and Jerome.

54 Literally: "they are not far from."

55 Some Hebrew manuscripts & LXX use a plural word while the MT uses a singular word.

56 LXX favors a plural word. MT "your word."

57 Literally: "head."

58 A plural word is supported by some Hebrew manuscripts, LXX and Syriac. MT: singular.

59 Textual evidence is divided. Some Hebrew manuscripts have a plural word, but the MT uses a singular: "word."

like one who finds a rich treasure.
 163 I hate and abhor falsehood,
 but I love your law.
 164 I praise you frequently⁶⁰
 for your righteous ordinances.
 165 Those who love you have perfect security (*or, perfect peace*);
 for there is nothing that can cause them to fall.⁶¹
 166 I hope for your salvation, O Lord,
 and I observe your commandments.
 167 I obey your decrees;
 I love them exceedingly!
 168 I obey your precepts and decrees,
 for all my ways are known to you.
 † Taw (*Tau*)
 169 Let my cry⁶² reach you, O Lord,
 grant me understanding according to your word!
 170 Let my supplication come before you;
 save me according to your word.
 171 My lips will pour out praise
 because you teach me your statutes.
 172 With my voice I will sing of your word,
 for all your commandments are just.
 173 Be ready to lend a hand to help me,
 for I have chosen to obey your precepts.
 174 I have longed for your salvation, O Lord,
 and delight in your law.
 175 Grant me a long life so that I may praise you,
 and may your ordinances help me.
 176 I have strayed like a lost (*or, perishing*) sheep;
 Please look after your servant,
 because I have not forgotten (*or, neglected*) your commandments.

PSALM 120

<LIVING AMONG ENEMIES OF PEACE>

<A Pilgrimage Song.>⁶³

1 In my distress I cry to the Lord,
 that he may answer me!⁶⁴
 2 "Deliver me, O Lord,

60 Literally: "seven times a day." It is possible that this was intended to be literally interpreted. Seven times was more than was traditionally required.

61 Literally: "they have no stumbling block (or, be an occasion for stumbling)."

62 The Hebrew word describes a mournful cry of supplication.

63 This is one of a collection of 15 Psalms which no doubt were used by pilgrims who came to Jerusalem to attend the great feasts. The title is uncertain in Hebrew. "A Song of Ascents" has been a basic translation because of the LXX $\alpha\nu\alpha\beta\alpha\sigma\epsilon\omega$. Other possible translations include: "A Song of Worship," "A Song of Ascents" or "A Pilgrim's Song."

64 "that he may answer me" is based on a repointing of $y\eta n n y w$

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- 65 Literally: "from lying lips, from a deceitful tongue". With the repetition of "a deceitful tongue" in verse 3 some scholars feel one of these is a scribal repetition and not originally in the Psalm. Which is the scribal repetition is not agreed upon.
- 66 Literally: "what will he give you and what will he add to you, you deceitful tongue?"
- 67 These would not be the arrows of hunters but those specifically used for war.
- 68 Retama roetam -- a thorny bush that, when burned, produces a hot fire which lasts a long time.
- 69 Some scholars emend אֲחִי to be Massa, a region not clearly identified. Meshech was a nation in Asia Minor.
- 70 A region in the Syrian desert south of Damascus. The two regions are quite distant from each other.