

PSALM 35 ¹
<A PLEA FOR HELP>
<A Psalm of David>

- 1 Contend, O Lord, with those who are my adversaries!
Fight against those who fight against me!
- 2 Seize the shield and armor ²
and come to my defense.
- 3 Brandish the spear and javelin (*or, pike, war ax*); ³
halt my pursuers!
- Say to my soul (*or, Assure me*)
"I am your deliverance."
- 4 Let those who seek to kill me
be put to shame and dishonor.
Let those who plot evil against me
be driven back and disgraced.
- 5 Let them be like chaff that is blown by the wind,
with the angel of the Lord pursuing them!
- 6 Let their paths be dark and slippery,
with an angel of the Lord pursuing them!
- 7 Unprovoked, they have hidden their net as a trap for me;
unprovoked they dug a pit to capture me.
- 8 Let unforeseen disaster come upon them!
Also, let the net they hid catch them;
may they fall into their pit, to their ruin! ⁴
- 9 Then my soul will rejoice because of the Lord,
exalting in his deliverance.
- 10 My entire being ⁵ will declare,
"O Lord, there is no one to compare with you
(*or, able to be compared with you*)!
You who are the rescuer ⁶ of the weak
from those who are too powerful for them,
the weak (*or, afflicted*) and needy from those who exploit them."
- 11 Hostile witnesses rise up; ⁷
they accuse me of things of which I know nothing.
- 12 They repay my good actions with evil!

1 Some scholars feel three different Psalms were fused into one in this Psalm. 1-10, 11-18, 19-28. There is no external evidence to substantiate the theory.

2 Literally: "body shield" or "buckler."

3 The Dead Sea Scrolls made it clear that the Hebrew word was used to describe a weapon. Previously attempts at emendation sought to clarify this verse.

4 MT Literally: "in ruin they fall into it."

5 Literally: "all my bones."

6 The Hebrew word has with it the idea of snatching away.

7 Literally: "witnesses of violence stand up."

to my great personal bereavement.
13 But as for me, when they were ill, ---
I wore sackcloth,
I humbled myself with fasting,
I prayed with my head bowed low.⁸
*(or, when my prayer was unanswered,
I walked with my head bowed.)*
14 I grieved as I would for my friend or my brother;
I went about as one who mourns his mother,
bowed down and in grief.

15 But when I stumbled they gathered in glee,
they gathered together against me;
ruffians⁹ who I did not know
mistreated me unceasingly.
16 They jeered me again and again,
gnashing their teeth.¹⁰

17 O Lord, how much longer will you just be observing?
Rescue me from their ravages *(or, onslaughts)*.
My precious life from the young lions.¹¹
18 Then I will thank you in the great congregation;
I will praise you amid the mighty throng .

19 Do not let those treacherous enemies gloat over me;
do not let those who hate me without cause smirk with delight!
20 For they do not speak of peace
but they devise deceitful plots against those who are peace loving;
they conceive of accusations.
21 They loudly shout against me;
they say, "Aha, aha!
Our eyes have seen it *(or, we caught you)!*"

22 You have witnessed this, O Lord! Do not be silent!
O Lord, do not be far from me!"
23 Awake and rouse yourself for my defense;
plead my cause, My God and my Lord.!
24 O Lord, my God, according to your righteousness
declare me innocent and do not let them gloat over me!

8 Hebrew uncertain. Literally: "and my prayer will keep returning to my bosom."

9 Hebrew uncertain. Hebrew vowel points provide several possibilities: "smitten, smiters, ruffians, limping men, those about to strike."

10 Hebrew uncertain. Literally: "like the most profane of mockers of deformity."

11 Hebrew uncertain in this verse. The word translated "precious" is "my darling" in Hebrew. With a slight emendation "ravages" can be "from them that roar." "Young lions" can readily be emended to "unbelievers."

25 Do not let them say to themselves,
"Aha, we have accomplished what we wanted!"
Let them not say, "We have ridden ourselves of him." ¹²

26 Let them all be disgraced and confused
who gloat about my calamity!
Let those who are proud and arrogant against me
be covered with shame and dishonor!

27 Let those who desire my vindication
shout for joy and be glad
and say again and again,
"The Lord who desires the well-being
of his servant is great!"

28 Then I will proclaim your righteousness
and your praise continually (*or, all the day long*).

PSALM 36 ¹³

<*HUMAN WICKEDNESS AND GOD'S GOODNESS.*>

<To the Choirmaster. Of David, the servant of the Lord>

1 Deep in their hearts sin speaks to the wicked;
they have no recognition of awe for God.

2 For they flatter themselves into thinking
their evil can not be discovered and condemned
(*or, they do not mend their ways* ¹⁴).

3 The words of their mouths are mischief and lies;
they no longer do what is wise and good.

4 They plot evil deeds while lying in bed;
their way of life is not good.
They never reject evil.

5 O Lord, your inexhaustible love extends to the heavens,
your faithfulness extends to the clouds.

6 Your righteousness is like the highest mountains. ¹⁵
Your judgments are like the great depths of the ocean.
You care about humans and animals, O Lord!

7 How precious is your inexhaustible love, O God. ¹⁶

12 Literally: "swallowed him up" This is one word in Hebrew that implies "smacking of the lips."

13 Because of contrasts in the Psalm some scholars have felt that two Psalms, originally independent, were combined into one composition.

14 So: NEB.

15 Literally: "the mountains of God."

16 The MT can also be understood as "gods and men find protection."

All of humanity finds protection in the shadow of your wings.

- 8 They feast in the abundance¹⁷ of your house,
and you give them drink from the river of your delights.
9 For with you is the source of life,
because of your light, we see light.
- 10 O continue to bestow your inexhaustible love to those who know you
and your salvation to the righteous!
11 Do not let the feet of the arrogant trample me,
nor the hand of the wicked expel me.
12 There the evildoers lie prostrate,
they are overthrown and unable to rise.

PSALM 37
<GOD'S CARE OF THE FAITHFUL>
<Of David>

- a** 1 Do not become worried¹⁸ because of the wicked,
do not be incensed by wrongdoers!
2 For they will soon wither like grass,
and wilt like the green herbs.
- b** 3 Trust in the Lord and do good;
so you will inherit the land and enjoy security.¹⁹
4 Take delight in the Lord,
and he will grant the requests of your heart.
- g** 5 Commit your way to the Lord;
Trust in him, and he will take action.
6 He will vindicate your cause
and justice for you will be as bright as the noonday sun.
- d** 7 Be quiet²⁰ in the Lord's presence and wait patiently for him.
Do not become worried about those who prosper,
or over those who carry out evil schemes.
- h** 8 Refrain from anger and abandon wrath!
Do not become worried about yourself,
it only leads to harm.

17 Literally: "fatness."

18 Literally: "do not become heated."

19 Literally: "and pasture on faithfulness."

20 Heb. "be silent."

9 For the evil doer will be cut off;
but those who trust in the Lord will inherit the land.

W 10 Soon the wicked will completely disappear
though you look carefully for them, they will be gone.
11 But the lowly (*or, meek*) will inherit the land,
and delight themselves in abundant prosperity.

Z 12 The wicked plots against the righteous
and gnash their teeth at him;
13 but the Lord laughs at the wicked,
for he knows that his day is coming.

X 14 The wicked draws their swords and bend their knees
to slay the lowly (*or, poor*) and the needy;
to destroy those who do what is right.²¹
15 They will be killed by their own swords
and their bows will be broken.

j 16 Better the little that the righteous have
than the abundance of many who are wicked.
17 For the power of the wicked will be broken
but the Lord will protect the righteous.

y 18 The Lord cares for the blameless
and their heritage will be theirs forever;
19 they will not suffer humiliation in times of distress;
in times of famine they will have in abundance.

k 20 But the wicked will perish;
the enemies of the Lord will vanish like wild flowers in a drought.²²
They disappear like smoke.

l 21 The wicked borrow and do not repay.
The righteous are generous and continue giving;
22 For those blessed by the Lord will inherit the land,
but those who are cursed by him will be cut off.

m 21 The Lord guides our steps
and protects those who please him.
22 Should they fall they will not fall headlong,

21 Literally: "whose way is upright."

22 The Hebrew in this verse is uncertain.

for the Lord supports them in his hand.

- n** 25 I have been young and now am old;
yet I have never seen the righteous abandoned
nor their children begging for bread.
26 They always give liberally and lend to others
and their children become a blessing.
- s** 27 Turn away from evil and do good;
so that you will abide forever!
28 For the Lord loves justice!
He will not abandon his faithful ones.
- [** He will keep the righteous safe,
but the children of the wicked will be destroyed.
29 The righteous will inherit the land,
and dwell there forever.
- p** 30 The mouths of the righteous utter wisdom,
and their tongue says what is right.
31 The law of their God is in their hearts;
their steps do not slip.
- c** 32 The wicked spit on the righteous
and seek to kill them.
33 The Lord will not abandon them to their enemies power;
nor let them be condemned when they are on trial.
- q** 34 Place your trust in the Lord and obey his will;
and he will raise you up so that you will inherit the land;
you will witness the destruction of the wicked!
- r** 35 I have seen wicked men triumphant,
and well rooted like a cedar of Lebanon.²³
36 Later on I²⁴ passed by and they were no more;
though I sought them, they could not be found.
- X** 37 Watch the blameless and not the upright,
for there is prosperity for the peaceful.
38 But: transgressors will be completely destroyed;
the posterity of the wicked will be wiped out!

23 Hebrew uncertain.

24 So: Syriac, Jerome. Hebrew: "he."

t 39 The deliverance of the righteous comes from the Lord;
he is their refuge in times of trouble
40 The Lord helps them and rescues them:
he delivers them from the wicked and saves them,
because they take refuge (*or, trust*) in him.

PSALM 38

<A PRAYER IN TIMES OF SUFFERING>

<A Psalm of David for the memorial ²⁵ offering.>

1 O Lord, do not reprimand me in your wrath,
nor punish me in your fury!

2 For your arrows have sunk into me,
and your blows have knocked me down.

3 There is no health in my flesh
because of your indignation;
there is no health in my bones
because of my sin.

4 For my iniquities have overwhelmed me.
they weigh me down like a burden that is too heavy.

5 My wounds are fetid and fester.
Because of my foolishness

6 I am utterly stooped over and prostrate.
All day I go about mourning (*or, in gloom*).

7 For my sinews (*or, loins*) are filled with burning fever
and I am seriously ill.

8 I am utterly numbed and crushed;
I groan loudly ²⁶ because of the anguish of my heart (*or mind*).

9 Lord, you are aware of all my desires;
my sighing is not hidden from you.

10 My mind reels,²⁷ my strength fails me;
and my eyes are also failing.

11 My friends and companions avoid me
because of my affliction ²⁸

25 The Hebrew word means "to remember" with the thought of bringing an offering to God's remembrance. Two kinds of memorial offerings were made: 1. burning incense with a cereal offering that was mixed with oil. 2. burning incense on the Sabbath day with the showbread.

26 Heb. "roar."

27 Literally: "my heart palpitates." The Revised Psalter translates: "my heart is bewitched." It is understood that in the Psalmist's day the heart was often thought of as the seat of emotions, hence the translation "my mind reels."

28 Literally: "plague" which is used for leprosy 4 times in the Hebrew Scriptures.

and my neighbors²⁹ have deserted me.

12 Those who are intent on killing me lay their snares (*or, traps*).
Those who seek to harm me speak of ruin
and talk about treachery all day long.

13 But: I am like a deaf man, I do not hear,
like one who is mute, who cannot speak.

14 Yes, I am like a man who does not hear
and in whose mouth there is no response.

15 But: I wait for you, O Lord!
It is you, O Lord, my God, who will answer!
16 For I pray, "Only do not let them go over me,
those who boast of their enmity when my foot slips."

17 For I am on the verge of collapse
and my pain is constant.

18 I confess my iniquity.
I am grieved because of my sin.

19 Those who, for no reason, are my foes are powerful
and many hate me without cause.

20 Those who repay me evil for good
are my adversaries because I follow after good.

21 O Lord, do not abandon me!
O my God, do not be far from me!

22 Hasten to help me,
O Lord of my salvation!

PSALM 39

<A PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS>

<To the Choirmaster: To Jeduthun. A Psalm of David>

1 I said, "I will closely watch over my ways,³⁰
that I may not speak in a sinful manner!
I will bridle³¹ my mouth
as long as the wicked are in my presence."³²
2 When I kept in quiet silence

29 Literally: "kinsmen."

30 MT. ykrd "words" Emended: yrbg "way."

31 Heb. "muzzle" "I will keep my muzzle." LXX "I will set my mouth". This Hebrew word used nowhere else in the Old Testament.

32 So: Heb. LXX "while the wicked remain before me."

I held my peace but to no avail;³³
my distress became more intense.
3 My mind³⁴ became enraged within me.
While I mused, the fire burned, (*or, the fire increased*).
Then I spoke out!

4 "Lord, inform me of my life's end,
and what is the length of my days!
Inform me concerning the fleeting extend of my life!
5 Behold, you have made my days to be merely a few handbreadths,
and my life span is as nothing before you.
Surely everyone's life continues no longer than an empty breath!"
Selah.

6 Surely everyone goes about as a shadow!³⁵
Surely all persons are in turmoil which is futile.
People amass wealth but do not know who will benefit.
7 "And now, Lord, on what can I rely?
My hope is in you!
8 Deliver me from all my transgressions!
Do not make me endure the taunts of fools!
9 I am silent, I do not speak
because it is the result of your action.
10 Remove your plague (*or, scourge*) from me;
I am overcome by the blows of your hand!³⁶
11 When you chasten humanity with punishment for sin,
it is consuming! Like a moth destroying what is valuable.
Surely everyone is only an empty breath (*or, a puff of wind*).
Selah.

12 "Hear my prayer, O Lord, and listen to my cry for help!
Do not ignore my tears!
For I am a waif (*or, stranger*),
a sojourner like all my ancestors.
13 Look away from me (*or, Spare me*),³⁷ that I may know gladness,
(*or, Do not scowl at me, that I might again smile*)
before I pass away and am no more!

33 Heb: "not from good" i.e. "without success."

34 Literally: "heart" cf. Footnote 27 on pg. 48.

35 Hebrew uncertain in verse 6.

36 Heb. "hostility" LXX: "by the might."

37 Hebrew uncertain in verse 13.

PSALM 40 ³⁸

<GOOD NEWS OF DELIVERANCE>

<To the Choirmaster: A Psalm of David>

- 1 When I waited patiently for the Lord;
 he listened to me and heard my plea.
- 2 He lifted me up from a desolate pit,³⁹
 out of a marshy slough,
and set my feet upon a rock,
 making my steps firm and steady.
- 3 He put a new song in my mouth,
 a hymn of praise to our God.
Many will see and be in awe⁴⁰
 and place their trust in the Lord.
- 4 Happy is the person who
 places trust in the Lord,
who does not follow the proud (*or idols*)⁴¹
 to those who go astray after false gods (*or, falsehood*)!
- 5 You have done numerous things on my behalf, O Lord, my God.⁴²
 Your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us;
 there is no one who compares with you!
Were I to proclaim and tell of your deeds,
 they would be more than can be recounted!
- 6 You do not desire sacrifice and offering,⁴³
 but you have been attentive to me.⁴⁴
You have not required burnt offering and sin offerings.⁴⁵
- 7 Then I said, "Here I am;
 in the scroll of the book it is written of me."⁴⁶
- 8 I desire to do your will, O my God;
 Your law is within my heart."
- 9 I have proclaimed the good news of deliverance
 in the great congregation.
See, I have not withheld speaking
 as you well know, O Lord.

38 Possibly two Psalms were combined: Verses 1-11: thanksgiving. Verses 13 - 17: an appeal lamenting the need for deliverance from enemies. Verse 12 serves as a transitional verse. Other scholars feel two thoughts are intricately intertwined in the formation of this Psalm.

39 Heb. "pit of tumult". Emended: "pit of ruin" or "pit of Sheol."

40 In Hebrew there is a form of alliteration in the words for "see" and "awe."

41 LXX: "vain things."

42 So: MT One Hebrew MSS and Syriac say "our God."

43 cbz animal sacrifice. hcnm meal or cereal offering.

44 Hebrew uncertain. Literally: "ears you have dug for me."

45 gamc An expiatory offering to cancel sin.

46 Hebrew uncertain.

10 I have not hidden your saving help within my heart,
I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation;
I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness
from the great congregation.

11 Do not withhold your mercy
from me, O Lord!
May your steadfast love and your faithfulness
continually preserve me!

12 Evils have surrounded me
in great numbers;
my iniquities have caught up with me,
till I cannot discern my way.⁴⁷
They are more than the hairs of my head;
I have lost my confidence.⁴⁸

13 Be pleased, O Lord, to save me!
O Lord, hasten to help me!
14 Let them be completely frustrated and confounded
who seek to snatch away my life.
Let them be turned back and brought to disgrace (*or, misfortune*)
who desire to harm me.
15 Let them feel embarrassed and ashamed
because they are the ones
who say to me, "Aha, Aha!"

16 But may all who seek you
rejoice and be glad in you:
may those who love your salvation
continually say, "Great is the Lord!"
17 As for me, I am poor and needy,
may the Lord think about deliverance for me.
You are my help and my rescuer (*or, deliverer*);
do not delay, O my God!

PSALM 41

<A PRAYER IN TIME OF ILLNESS>

<To the Choirmaster: A Psalm of David>

1 Happy is he who is thoughtfully concerned
about the poor (*or, weak, helpless*)!
The Lord will deliver (*or, save*) him in the day of trouble;

47 Literally: "I cannot see."

48 Literally: "my heart fails me" with the thought that I am at my wits end.

2 the Lord protects him and preserves his life:
 he is blessed (*or, happy*) in the land:
 you do not give him up⁴⁹ to the rage of his enemies.
 3 The Lord sustains him in his illness;
 in his illness you heal him of all his illness.⁵⁰

4 As for me, I said to the Lord, "O Lord, be gracious to
 (*or, have mercy on*) me;
 heal me, for I have sinned against you!"
 5 My foes declare with hatred:
 "When will he die, and his name forgotten (*or, his line die out*)?"
 6 If someone comes to see me, he speaks insincerely⁵¹
 but during that time his mind⁵² plots mischief
 and when he goes out he speaks to others, openly.
 7 All my enemies whisper to each other about me;
 they make evil plans to harm me.⁵³
 8 They say, "A fatal illness has befallen him;
 he will not recover, but will die (*or, he will not rise again from his bed*)"
 9 Even my closest and trusted friend,
 who ate of my bread, has rejected me (*or turned against me*).⁵⁴
 10 But you, O Lord, have mercy on me
 and restore my health, that I may repay them!

11 I will know that you are pleased with me,
 when my enemy does not triumph over me.
 12 But you have sustained me because of my integrity
 and keep me in your presence forever.

13 Praised be the Lord, the God of Israel⁵⁵
 from everlasting to everlasting!
 Amen and Amen!

<END OF BOOK ONE OF THE PSALMS>

49 So Heb. LXX "sickness."

50 Hebrew uncertain. Literally: "you change all his bed."

51 Literally: "his heart utters emptiness."

52 Literally: "heart."

53 Literally: "they devise the worst for me."

54 Hebrew uncertain. Literally: "has lifted his heel against me."

55 This editorial doxology is not a part of Psalm 41 but is similar to doxologies at the close of the other books of Psalms.
 Amen and Amen was no doubt added for liturgical reasons.