

**PSALMS**  
**BOOK TWO**  
*Psalms 42 - 72*

**PSALMS 42 - 43**<sup>1</sup>  
<LONGING FOR GOD>

<To the Choirmaster: A Maskil of the Korahites>

1 As the doe longs for cool flowing streams,  
so my entire being longs for you, O God.

2 My entire being thirsts for God,  
for the living God!

When will I come and behold<sup>2</sup> the presence of God  
(*or, appear before God*)?

3 My tears have been my food day and night,  
while people<sup>3</sup> continually taunt me, saying,  
"Where is your God?"

4 I remember these things as I pour out my soul in distress:  
how formerly I went with he multitude,  
and led them in procession to the house of God,<sup>4</sup>  
with festive shouts and songs of thanksgiving,  
a multitude keeping the festival.

5 O my soul, why are you downcast,  
and why are you disturbed within me?  
Have hope in God; for I will again praise him,  
my help and my God.<sup>5</sup>

6 My innermost being is downcast within me,  
therefore I think of you,  
from the land of Jordan and of Hermon, from Mount Mizar.<sup>6</sup>

7 Deep calls to deep at the roar of your cataracts;<sup>7</sup>  
all your breakers and your billows have swept over me.

8 By day the Lord commands (*or, entrusts to me*) his steadfast love;  
and at night his song is with me,

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1 Psalms 42 and 43 were, without a doubt, one Psalm and should be considered to be a single entity. They appear that way in a number of Hebrew manuscripts.

2 Hebrew: "I will see" or "I will appear."

3 Literally: "he says."

4 Hebrew uncertain.

5 So: Some Hebrew manuscripts. Other manuscripts "Praise Him, my help. My God, my soul..."

6 Hebrew uncertain. Mount Hermon is about 45 miles NE of the Lake of Galilee. Mount Mizar is unknown. The word "mizar" in Hebrew means "small," thus perhaps the foothills of Mount Hermon.

7 Hebrew uncertain.

a prayer to the God of my life. <sup>8</sup>  
<sup>9</sup> I say to God who is my rock (*or, my defender*),  
 "Why have you forgotten me"  
 Why must I go about mourning,  
 oppressed by the enemy?"  
<sup>10</sup> Like the thrust of a deadly wound in my body<sup>9</sup>  
 my adversaries revile me,  
 when they continually taunt me by jeering, <sup>10</sup>  
 "Where is your God?"  
<sup>11</sup> O my soul, why are you downcast,  
 and why are you disturbed within me?  
 Have hope in God: for I will again praise him,  
 my help and my God.

**43**<sup>11</sup> <sup>1</sup> Vindicate me <sup>12</sup> O God and defend my cause  
 against impious people.  
 Rescue me from persons who are deceitful and unjust.  
<sup>2</sup> For you are the God in whom I take refuge;  
 why have you rejected me?  
 Why must I go about mourning because of the oppression of my enemy?

<sup>3</sup> Oh, send out your light and your truth;  
 let them lead me,  
 let them bring me to your holy (*or, sacred*) hill  
 and to your dwelling.

<sup>4</sup> Then I will go to the altar of God, <sup>13</sup>  
 to God, my highest joy;  
 and I will praise you with the harp,  
 O God my God!

<sup>5</sup> O my soul, why are you downcast,  
 and why are you disturbed within me?  
 Have hope in God, for I will again praise him,  
 my help and my God.

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8 An emendation suggests: "Day and night my longing (i.e. my prayer) to the God of my life is 'May God give charge to his kindness.'"

9 Hebrew uncertain. Literally: "with a crushing (or death) of my bones."

10 Hebrew uncertain.

11 The continuation of Psalm 42.

12 The word used in Hebrew is a word that would be used in the language of a court proceeding.

13 So: MT. A few manuscripts say "your altar, O God."

**PSALM 44**

<THE PRAYER OF A DEFEATED NATION>

<To the Choirmaster: A Maskil of the Korahites>

- 1 O God, with our ears we have heard,  
our ancestors tell us,  
about the deeds you performed in their time,  
in the days of old:
- 2 how you, by your own power dispossessed the other nations,  
and you planted them;<sup>14</sup>  
you brought affliction to the other people,  
but you set your people free (*or, to prosper*),
- 3 for it was not by their own power that they conquered the land,  
nor did their own strength give them victory;  
but by your power and your strength,  
and the assurance of your presence;  
for you were pleased with them  
(*or, they were assured that you were with them*).
- 4 You are my king and my God,  
who decreed (*or, commanded*)<sup>15</sup> victories for Jacob.
- 5 Through you we overcame<sup>16</sup> our enemies;  
through your name we trampled upon our assailants.
- 6 For I do not trust in my bow,  
nor can my sword make me victorious.
- 7 But you have saved us from our enemies  
and have defeated those who hate us.
- 8 We have continually praised you, O God,  
and we will unceasingly give thanks to your name.  
Selah.
- 9 However, you have rejected and disgraced us,  
and have not accompanied our armies.
- 10 You have made us retreat from the enemy  
and our foes have plundered our possessions.
- 11 You have made us like sheep ready for slaughter,  
and have dispersed us among the nations.
- 12 You have sold your people for an insignificant amount (*or, a pittance*),  
not demanding a high price for them  
(*or, making no profit from the sale*).
- 13 You have made us the reproach of our neighbors,  
the derision and scorn of those around us.

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14 I. e. your people.

15 So: LXX. Hebrew: "you are my king, O God, decree (or command)" with the sense of 'please do it'.

16 Literally: "push down."

14 You have caused us to be ridiculed<sup>17</sup> among the nations,  
 a laughingstock<sup>18</sup> among the nations,<sup>19</sup>  
 15 My disgrace is constantly on my mind  
 and I am covered with shame,  
 16 because of the words of the taunters and revilers,  
 and the sight of the enemy and the avenger.

17 All this has happened to us,  
 even though we have not forgotten you,  
 nor have we broken your covenant.  
 18 We have not become disloyal to you<sup>20</sup>  
 nor have our feet strayed from your path,  
 19 yet you have crushed us, making us a haunt for jackals,<sup>21</sup>  
 and covered us with deep darkness (*or, the darkness of death*).

20 If we had forgotten the name of our God,  
 or prayed to strange gods,<sup>22</sup>  
 21 would not God surely have discovered this?  
 For God knows the secrets of our hearts!  
 22 No, it is for your sake that we are slain all the day long,  
 and treated as sheep to be slaughtered.

23 O Lord, rouse yourself! Why do you sleep?  
 Awake! Do not reject us forever!  
 24 Why are you hiding your face?  
 Why do you ignore our misery and oppression?  
 25 For our soul is sunk down in the dust,  
 our bodies lie prostrate on the ground.  
 26 Rise up! Come to our aid!  
 Deliver us for the sake of your constant love!

**PSALM 45**

*<AN ODE FOR A ROYAL WEDDING>*

*<To the Choirmaster: Set to Shoshannim (or, According to Lilies.)*

*A Maskil of the Korahites>*

1 My heart is stirred up<sup>23</sup> by beautiful words;  
 I recite my verses<sup>24</sup> to the king;

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17 Hebrew: "a proverb" or "a saying."

18 Hebrew: "shaking of the head."

19 Literally: "people."

20 Literally: "our hearts have not turned back (or flinched)."

21 A possible Hebrew reading is: "sea monster" So: NEB.

22 Literally: "spread out our hands to a strange god" that being the position in which prayers were made.

23 Literally: "boils, seethes."

24 Literally: "my work" or "my works."

- my tongue is as nimble as the pen of an expert scribe.
- 2 You are the most handsome of all men;  
your speech is endowed with grace (*or, grace is poured upon your lips*);  
therefore God has blessed you eternally.
- 3 Gird your sword on your thigh, O mighty one,  
you are glorious and majestic!
- 4 In your majesty ride forth victoriously,  
for the cause of truth and defend <sup>25</sup> the right;  
let your power bring about awesome deeds!
- 5 May your arrows strike sharply,  
piercing the heart of the king's enemies!  
May the people fall under your power!
- 6 Your kingdom is eternal (*or, your throne is the throne of God;*  
*or, your throne O God;*  
*Emended: Your throne will stand forever.*)  
Your royal scepter provides rule with justice.
- 7 You love righteousness and hate wickedness;  
therefore God, your God, has anointed you  
with the oil of gladness,  
choosing you over all your peers.
- 8 Your robes are all fragrant with myrrh, aloes [and cassia].<sup>26</sup>  
From ivory palaces musicians <sup>27</sup> entertain you;
- 9 royal princesses are among your favorites (*or, ladies of honor*).  
The queen stands at your right hand adorned in the finest gold.<sup>28</sup>
- 10 Be attentive, O daughter, consider and listen to me  
(*or, incline your ear to me*);  
for get your people and your father's house;
- 11 for the king will be aroused by your beauty.  
Since he is your lord, bow to him (*or, be obedient to him*).
- 12 The daughter (*or, city*) of Tyre will court your favor with gifts;  
the richest of the people <sup>13</sup> with all kinds of treasures.

The royal princess is in her chamber, decoratively clad  
in gold-embroidered robes  
(*or, Tyre will court your favor with gifts*  
*from the riches of people.*  
*All glorious is the princess within,*

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25 Hebrew: "and the meekness of." Hebrew uncertain in verse 4.

26 No doubt a later Aramaic gloss, since it changes the meter of the strophe.

27 Literally: "stringed instruments."

28 Literally: "in gold of Ophir." Ophir is perhaps a region in southern Arabia, East Africa or more recent thought, in India. It apparently was considered to be the finest gold that was available.

- gold-embroidered is her clothing).*
- 14 in colorful robes she is led to the king,  
with her virgin companions following her as escorts.<sup>29</sup>
- 15 With joy and gladness they are led in  
as they enter the palace of the king.
- 16 To succeed your ancestors, [O King]<sup>30</sup> there will be many sons;  
you will make them princes in (*or, over*) all the earth.
- 17 I will cause your name to be celebrated in all generations;  
therefore the people will praise you  
forever and ever.<sup>31</sup>

**PSALM 46**<sup>32</sup>

<A MIGHTY FORTRESS.>

<To the Choirmaster: A Psalm of the Korahites  
According to Alamo<sup>33</sup>. A Song.>

- 1 God is our refuge and strength,  
constantly ready to help (*or, well proven*) in time of trouble.
- 2 Therefore we will not be afraid even though the earth reels;<sup>34</sup>  
even though the mountains topple into the depths of the sea;
- 3 even though its waters rage and foam;  
even though the mountains quake  
with their surging violence<sup>35</sup> (*or, tumult*);<sup>36</sup>
- Selah.
- 4 There is a river whose streams  
gladden the city of God.  
the holy habitation of the most high<sup>37</sup>  
(*wondrous city is a possible translation.*)
- 5 God is in it's midst, it will not be moved;  
God will help it when morning dawns.
- 6 The nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms topple;  
He speaks and the earth dissolves (*or, disintegrates*).
- 7 The Lord of hosts is with us;

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29 Hebrew: MT "those brought by her."

30 So: LXX.

31 So: LXX.

32 This Psalm prompted Martin Luther to write the hymn "A Mighty Fortress is Our God."

33 Alamo<sup>33</sup> means "your woman" i.e. singing in a high pitch or for female voices.

34 ρψμη = "reel" or "change". Some scholars emend the text to read νωμη "dissolve."

35 Hebrew: includes the concept of God's majesty.

36 Some translators insert verse 7 here and repeat it as verse 7. No Hebrew, LXX or Latin manuscripts seem to support this variant translation though with the verse as a kind of refrain in verse 7 and again at the end of the Psalm it's inclusion, based on the nature of Hebrew poetry would not be unusual.

37 LXX "the most high has made holy his dwelling place."

the God of Jacob is our refuge (*or, fortress*).  
Selah.

8 Come, see the works of the Lord,  
how he has brought about desolation in the earth.  
9 He stops wars throughout the earth.  
he breaks the bow and snaps the spear,  
he burns the chariots (*or, shields*)<sup>38</sup> with fire!  
10 "Be still"<sup>39</sup> (*or, calm down*) and know that I am God.  
I am exalted (*or, I will dominate*) the nations,  
I am exalted (*or, I will dominate*) the earth!"  
11 The Lord of hosts is with us;  
the God of Jacob is our refuge (*or, fortress*).  
Selah..

#### **PSALM 47**

*<GOD, THE SOVEREIGN OF THE EARTH>*

*<To the Choirmaster. A Psalm of the Korahites>*

1 Clap your hands, all people!  
Acclaim God with loud songs of joy!  
2 For the Lord, most high, is awesome (*or, to be revered*);  
the great sovereign over the entire earth.  
3 He enabled us to rule over people,  
and brought about the defeat of nations.  
4 He chose our inheritance (*or, our country*),  
the pride of Jacob whom he loved.  
Selah.

5 God has ascended (*to his throne*) with great acclamation,  
and is accompanied by the fanfare of trumpets.  
6 Sing praises to God, sing praises!  
Sing praises to our king, sing praises!  
7 For God is the ruler over the entire earth;  
sing praises with a psalm!<sup>40</sup>  
8 God rules over the nations,  
God is seated on his holy throne.  
9 The rulers with the people<sup>41</sup> assemble,

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38 The Hebrew word can be translated "chariots" meaning transport, not war, chariots. War chariots are not referred to in the Old Testament. It can also be used as the word "shield" meaning a round shield.

39 The Heb. word has the concept of "reverence" not just "silence."

40 Hebrew: "maskil."

41 Hebrew: "of the people."

joining with<sup>42</sup> the people of the God of Abraham;  
For the guardianship of the earth belongs to God!  
He is highly exalted!

**PSALM 48**

<THE FAITHFUL GOD>

<A Song. A Psalm of the Korahites.<sup>43</sup>>

1 The Lord is great and should be greatly acclaimed  
in the city of our God!  
2 His holy mountain is high and beautiful.  
It is the joy of all the earth;  
Mount Zion,<sup>44</sup> in the far north,  
the city of the great king.  
3 God has shown that for her fortified places (*fortresses, citadels*)  
he, himself, is the sure defense  
(*or, has shown that in God's presence there is safety*).  
  
4 For behold, the (*armies of*) the kings of the earth joined forces  
as they advanced (*or attacked*) unitedly.  
5 But: at the sight of it (*Zion or the city*) they were astounded,  
they panicked and fled;  
6 trembling seized them  
and they experienced pain like that of a woman in labor;  
7 like God's causing the ships of Tarshish<sup>45</sup> to be battered by the east wind.<sup>46</sup>  
8 We have heard and also witnessed  
in the city of the Lord of hosts,  
in the city of our God,  
that God establishes the city for ever.  
Selah.

9 In the midst of your temple, we have pondered (*or, meditated*)  
on your constant love, O God,  
10 for just as your name, O God reaches to the ends of the earth,  
so also does your praise!  
Your right hand is filled with victory!  
11 Let Mount Zion rejoice!  
Let the towns<sup>47</sup> of Judah exalt

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42 So: LXX, Syriac. MT and Hebrew O. T. Text Project: "as the people" Some scholars translate, with NEB "with the families of Abraham's line."

43 LXX adds: "To be used on the second day of the week (the second Sabbath)."

44 Scholars feel the reference is to Mount Zaphon in Syria since Mount Zion (Jerusalem) is in the south.

45 Ships of Tarshish, (Spain) would be considered huge sea going vessels, much larger than the small ships that stayed near the coast of the eastern Mediterranean Sea.

46 Some Hebrew MSS have ξωρκ "like the wind" or "as the east wind shatters ships."

47 Literally: "daughters."



because of your judgments!

- 12 Walk about Zion, go encircle her,  
count her towers,  
13 take note of her ramparts,  
go through her fortified places (*or, fortresses*);<sup>48</sup>  
that you may recount this to the next generations  
14 that this is God,  
our God for ever and ever!  
He will be our guide forever!<sup>49</sup>

### **PSALM 49**

#### **<THE FOLLY OF RICHES>**

*<To the Choirmaster: A Psalm of the Korahites>*

- 1 Hear this, all people!  
Listen, all inhabitants of the world,  
2 lowly and mighty,  
rich and poor alike!  
3 My mouth<sup>50</sup> will speak wisdom:  
the thoughts of my heart will be insightful!  
4 I will be attentive to a proverb;<sup>51</sup>  
I will expound my perplexing problem to the music of the harp (*or, lyre*).
- 5 Why should I be fearful in times of trouble,  
when I am surrounded by wicked persecutors;  
6 or those who trust in their own wealth,  
and boast of the abundance of their great riches?  
7 Truly, no one can ransom himself,<sup>52</sup>  
or pay the price for himself to God,  
8 for the ransom of his<sup>53</sup> life is too costly,<sup>54</sup>  
and can never be sufficient;  
9 so that it would be possible for someone to continue to live forever  
and never die.
- 10 Yes, when we look at the wise we discover that even they die,  
the foolish and the ignorant alike must perish  
and leave their fortunes to others.

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48 Hebrew uncertain.

49 Hebrew uncertain. MT "be our guide unto death" Revocalized it becomes "ever more" or "forever". NIV translates "even to the end."

50 Literally: "the utterance of my heart."

51 The Hebrew word can also mean "parable, poem, prophetic saying, oracle, wise saying or instruction."

52 Emendations: "no man can ransom his brother" or "no ransom can ever be sufficient for one's life."

53 Hebrew: "their."

54 Hebrew uncertain in verses 8 & 9.

- 11 Their tombs<sup>55</sup> are their eternal homes,  
 their dwelling places for all generations,  
 though they once were wealthy and famous on earth  
 (*or had many earthly possessions*).
- 12 Honor and possessions do not provide long life,  
 for these also will perish, even as do the animals.
- 13 Death is the fate of those who have self assurance,<sup>56</sup>  
 and the end of those<sup>57</sup> who are pleased with their lot (*in life*).  
 Selah.
- 14 Like sheep they are headed for Sheol;<sup>58</sup>  
 death will be their shepherd.  
 They descend<sup>59</sup> directly to the grave,  
 and their bodies will soon decay;  
 Sheol will be their home.<sup>60</sup>
- 15 But: God will ransom my soul from the clutches of Sheol,<sup>61</sup>  
 for he will receive me.  
 Selah.
- 16 Do not be envious<sup>62</sup> when someone becomes rich,  
 when the glory (*or, wealth*) of his house increases,  
 17 for when he dies he is unable to take it with him;  
 his glory (*or, wealth*) will not follow him,  
 18 though while he lives he counts himself to be happy,  
 and though a man gets praise because he prospers,<sup>63</sup>  
 19 he will join the generations of his ancestors  
 who will never again see the light of day.
- 20 A person's importance does not prevent death  
 for he will perish, even as do the animals.

**PSALM 50**

<GOD ADDRESSES THE PEOPLE>

<A Psalm of Asaph>

- 1 The Mighty One, God, the Lord,  
 speaks and summons the earth

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55 Hebrew: "inward thought". By omitting one consonant the Hebrew word becomes "tomb" which better suits the sentence.

56 Hebrew unclear.

57 Hebrew unclear. Lit. "after them."

58 Hebrew thought describes Sheol as "the abode of the dead."

59 Hebrew: "the upright will have dominion over them in the morning."

60 Hebrew uncertain.

61 Literally: "from the hand of Sheol."

62 MT: "afraid" with other vowel points: "envious" or "in great awe."

63 Hebrew uncertain.

from the rising of the sun to it's setting  
(*or, from east to west; from everywhere in the world*).

2 From Zion, the perfection of beauty,  
God shines forth!

3 Our God comes, he does not fail to act (*or, will not keep silence*).

A devouring fire is before him,  
and around<sup>64</sup> him is a raging storm.

4 He summons the heavens above  
and the earth to<sup>65</sup> judge his people:

5 "Gather my faithful ones<sup>66</sup> in my presence:  
those who by sacrifices have made a covenant with me."

6 The heavens proclaim his righteousness,  
for God himself is the judge!

Selah.

7 "Be attentive, O my people, and I will speak,  
O Israel, I will testify against you.  
I am God, your God!

8 Though I do not censure you because of your sacrifices,  
or for your burnt offerings which are continually before me;<sup>67</sup>

9 I will accept no<sup>68</sup> young bullocks from your stalls,  
nor young rams from your pens;

10 for every wild creature in the forest is mine,  
as are the cattle on a thousand hills

(*or, the thousands of cattle on the hills*).<sup>69</sup>

11 I know every bird in the air<sup>70</sup>  
and everything that is alive in the fields is mine.

12 If I were hungry, I would not tell you:  
for the world and all that is in it is mine.

13 Do I eat the flesh of bulls  
or drink the blood of goats?

14 Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving  
(*or, a thank-offering; make thanksgiving your sacrifice to God*);  
fulfill your vows to the most high:

15 call upon me in times of trouble:  
I will rescue you and you will glorify (*or, honor*) me."

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64 With the idea of raging closely around him.

65 Literally: "that he might."

66 Literally: "his godly servants."

67 Verse 8 could be in question form.

68 With the idea of not needing.

69 Hebrew uncertain.

70 LXX and Syriac "mountains."

- 16 But God<sup>71</sup> says: "What right do you have to recite my laws,  
or to speak about my covenant?"
- 17 Since you hate discipline (*or, instruction*)  
and you ignore<sup>72</sup> my words.
- 18 When you see a thief, you become friends with him;  
and you unite yourselves (*or, make common cause*) with adulterers.
- 19 You freely speak what is evil (*or, you are forever speaking evil*)  
and your tongue is uttering deceit (*or, inventing lies*).
- 20 You sit and malign your brother;<sup>73</sup>  
you slander<sup>74</sup> your own mother's son (*or, your own relatives*).
- 21 These things you have done and I have been silent:<sup>75</sup>  
You thought I was<sup>76</sup> like you, yourself,  
but now I censure you, and lay the charge before you!
- 22 You who forget God: remember this;  
lest I tear you apart and there is no one to save you!
- 23 Whoever brings thanksgiving as his sacrifice honors me:  
whoever improves<sup>77</sup> his way of life  
I will show the salvation of God!"<sup>78</sup>

### **PSALM 51**

<THE PRAYER OF A PENITENT>

<To the Choirmaster: A Psalm of David

when Nathan the prophet came to him,

after he had an adulterous relationship with Bathsheba.><sup>79</sup>

- 1 Be merciful toward me, O God,  
as befits your loving faithfulness.  
In keeping with your abundant compassion,  
remove the record of my transgressions.
- 2 Wash me thoroughly of my iniquities,  
and purify<sup>80</sup> me of my sin!
- 3 For I am aware of my transgressions  
and I am always conscious of my sin.
- 4 I have sinned against you, you alone,

71 This word is a possible gloss since it does not fit the meter of the line.

72 Literally "throw my words behind you."

73 MT. βΦτ "sit" Emended: τΦβ "shame" ∴ "You speak shameful things against your brother."

74 Hebrew = "blemish" or "fault". Used only here in the Old Testament.

75 This line could be a question: "Should I keep silence?"

76 Literally I AM.

77 Hebrew: "Him who puts away."

78 Hebrew uncertain.

79 Cf. II Samuel 12.

80 The Hebrew word is used in smelting metals to remove dross.

and done evil in your sight.  
 Therefore you are justified in the sentence you give  
 and blameless in your judgment.

5 I surely was born with iniquity<sup>81</sup>  
 and in sin my mother conceived me<sup>82</sup>  
*(or, a sinner when my mother conceived me).*

6 You, obviously, desire truth in the inward being;<sup>83</sup>  
 Therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart<sup>84</sup>  
*(or, about the secret things).*

7 Purify<sup>85</sup> me with hyssop<sup>86</sup> *(or, marjoram)*, and I will be clean  
*(or, until I become clean).*  
 Wash me, that I will become whiter than snow.

8 Let me hear<sup>87</sup> joy and gladness;  
 let the bones which you have crushed rejoice.

9 Hide your face from my sins,  
 and wipe away all my iniquities.

10 Create a pure heart in me, O God,  
 and put a new and unvacillatingly loyal spirit within me.

11 Do not banish me from your presence,  
 and do not deprive me of your holy Spirit.

12 Restore the joy of your salvation to me,  
 and sustain a willing spirit in me  
*(or, make me willing to serve you).*

13 Then I will teach transgressors of your nature,  
 so that sinners might return to you.

14 Spare me from blood guiltiness<sup>88</sup>  
*(or, death, bloodshed or the crime of murder).*  
 O God of my salvation,  
 I will sing aloud of your deliverance.

15 Open my lips *(or, grant me permission to speak)*, O Lord,  
 and my mouth will proclaim your praise!

16 You do not take pleasure in sacrifices;  
 You would not be pleased if I were to give burnt offerings.

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81 i.e. with the idea of proneness to commit evil.

82 The Hebrew does not suggest disgrace of his mother but the thought of the Psalmist humbling himself.

83 Hebrew uncertain.

84 Hebrew uncertain.

85 Lit. "un-sin."

86 Cf. Exodus 12:22; Leviticus 14:1-7; Numbers 19:1-6, 16-19.

87 Syriac "Fill me."

88 Hebrew uncertain. Possibly "silence." The thought is either the Psalmist being put to death or the Psalmist as the perpetrator of murder. Either would be grievous.

17 The sacrifice acceptable to God <sup>89</sup> (*or, My sacrifice to God*)  
is a broken spirit;  
a crushed and a contrite heart, O God,  
you will not despise.

18 Do good to Zion, in your good will; <sup>90</sup>  
rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

19 Then you will delight in sacrifice that is properly offered;  
Burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings;  
then bulls will be offered on your altar.

### **PSALM 52**

#### **<GOD IS IN CONTROL>**

*<To the Choirmaster: A Maskil of David  
when Doeg, the Edomite, came and told Saul,  
"David has come to the house of Ahimelech.>* <sup>91</sup>

1 Why do you boast, O mighty <sup>92</sup> one?

Since the constant love of God is without limit. <sup>93</sup>

2 All day long you are plotting destruction.

Your tongue is like a sharp razor,  
for you are deceitful.

3 You love evil more than good,  
and falsehood rather than the truth.

Selah.

4 O deceitful tongue,

you love words that are destructive.

5 Therefore God will destroy (*or, demolish*) you forever:

God will seize you and drag you from your tent;  
and will cause your life to end!

Selah.

6 The righteous will see this and be awestruck.

They will laugh at you, saying,

7 "See the man <sup>94</sup> who would not take refuge in God, <sup>95</sup>

but trusted in his great wealth  
and sought refuge in a destructive life

(*or, was self-satisfied with his destructive life*)".

---

89 MT "God's sacrifices are a broken spirit" with the idea that this is the desire of God.

90 Verses 18 - 19 are thought to be a later addition, possibly after the destruction of Jerusalem by Babylon.

91 Cf. I Samuel 22:6-23. These superscriptions were added later. The reference to "the house of God" is a reminder of this. The "house of God" had not been built at the time of I Samuel 22.

92 The Hebrew word used here would be used for famous soldiers, rich persons, tyrants and even gangsters.

93 MT is unclear.

94 The Hebrew word has a derisive sense to it, reflecting the Hebrew of verse 1.

95 Literally: "make God his stronghold."

8 But I am like a green olive tree  
growing in God's house  
(*or, for I am in God's house.*)  
I trust in the unfailing love of God  
for ever and ever.  
9 I will always gratefully praise you  
because of what you have done!  
In the presence of the godly  
I will proclaim<sup>96</sup> that your name is good.

**PSALM 53**

*<THE FATE OF THE UNGODLY>*

*<To the Choirmaster: According to Mahalath.  
A Maskil of David>*<sup>97</sup>

1 The fools say in their hearts,  
"There is no God."<sup>98</sup>  
They are corrupt, doing loathsome things;  
there is not one who does good!  
2 God looks down from heaven upon humanity,<sup>99</sup>  
to discern if there are any who are wise;  
who are mindful of God.  
3 Everyone has fallen (*or, turned*) away (*or, lapsed*);  
together they have all become depraved:  
there is no one who does good,  
no, not even one!  
4 Don't the evil doers understand anything?  
They are the ones who devour (*or, exploit*) my people,  
just as if they were eating bread,  
and do not call upon God.<sup>100</sup>  
5 But: they will be terrified;  
panic, greater than anyone has ever experienced,  
terror such as has never been.<sup>101</sup>  
God will scatter the bones of the ungodly;<sup>102</sup>  
they will be put to shame<sup>103</sup> because God  
has rejected them.

---

96 Hebrew: "wait for."

97 This is a variant form of Psalm 14, no doubt from an independent Psalm collection.

98 TAN: "God does not care."

99 Literally: "sons of men."

100 So: LXX which is more readily understood though the Hebrew text sustains the meter of the other portions of the Psalm.

101 Hebrew uncertain.

102 So: LXX. Hebrew "him who encamps against you (or, your besiegers)."

103 So: LXX. Hebrew "you will be put to shame."

6 O that deliverance for Israel would come from Zion!  
when God restores the fortunes of his people,  
Jacob will rejoice and Israel will be glad!

### **PSALM 54**

*<A PRAYER FOR PROTECTION>*

*<To the Choirmaster: with stringed instruments.*

*A Maskil of David, when the Ziphites<sup>104</sup>  
went to tell Saul, "David is hiding among us."><sup>105</sup>*

1 O God, save me by your name,  
and vindicate<sup>106</sup> me by your might.  
2 O God, hear my prayer,  
be attentive to the words I speak;  
3 for arrogant<sup>107</sup> persons have risen against me;  
those who seek my life cause terror.  
They are not concerned about God.

Selah.

4 Surely God is my helper!  
The Lord is the one who sustains<sup>108</sup> my life.  
5 May he repay the evil of my enemies!<sup>109</sup>  
You will destroy them because of your faithfulness!  
6 I will sacrifice to you with a liberal offering.  
I will give thanks to your name, O Lord, for it is good.  
7 You have saved me from my enemies  
and my eyes have looked in triumph upon my enemies.

### **PSALM 55**

*<A LAMENT ABOUT BETRAYAL>*

*<To the Choirmaster: With stringed instruments.*

*A Maskil of David>*

1 O God, be attentive to my prayer,  
and do not ignore my entreaty!  
2 Listen to me and answer!  
I am distraught<sup>110</sup> with trouble!

---

104 Ziph was a town in the hill country south east of Hebron in Judea.

105 Cf. I Samuel 23:19.

106 The Hebrew word might be translated 'render the justice due' with the expectation of a favorable verdict.

107 LXX & MT based on a different choice of vowel points change the word to "strangers."

108 So: LXX, Syriac & Jerome. MT: "of" or "with those who uphold."

109 The Hebrew word includes the idea of watching or spying.

110 Hebrew uncertain. The verb is used only in Genesis 27:40 where it means "to break loose". LXX "grieved" Jerome: "humiliated" Possible emendation: "I am restless."





Let them go in terror to their graves! <sup>119</sup>  
 16 But, as for me, I will call upon God;  
 and the Lord will save me.  
 17 Evening and morning and at noon,  
 I complain and moan  
 and he hears my voice.  
 18 He will safely redeem my soul (*i.e. unharmed*),  
 from the battle that I wage <sup>120</sup>  
 for many are arrayed <sup>121</sup> against me.  
 19 God will attentively listen to me and humble them,  
 he who has ruled from eternity;  
 because they keep no law (*or, do not change*) <sup>122</sup>  
 and do not have a sense of awe of God.  
 Selah.

20 <sup>123</sup> My former companion stretched his hand against  
 (*or, has attacked*) his friends.  
 He broke his agreement (*or, has gone back on his word*).  
 21 His words were smoother than butter (*or, deceitful*),  
 yet war (*or, hatred*) was in his heart;  
 his words were more soothing than oil,  
 yet they were like drawn swords.  
 22 Give your troubles (*or, what he has given you*)  
 to the Lord,  
 for he will sustain (*or, defend*) you!  
 He will never permit  
 the righteous to be defeated.  
 23 But you, O God, will bring them down  
 into the deepest pit;  
 murderers and treacherous persons:  
 they will not live out half their days!

However: for my part, I will trust in you!

---

119 MT "evils are their habitation in their midst".

120 Hebrew uncertain. Possible emdation: "from them that are near to me."

121 Hebrew implies: arrayed like archers.

122 Hebrew uncertain. Koehler and Baumgartner: "no respect for mature obligations".

123 Some scholars feel that verses 12-14 and 20-21 are a fragment inserted from another lament.

## PSALM 56

### <TRUST GOD FOR PROTECTION>

<To the Choirmaster: according to "The Dove on Far-off Terebinths" (jonth - elem - rechokim).<sup>124</sup>

A Miktam of David when the Philistines seized him in Gath..<sup>125</sup>

1 Be merciful to me, O God, for people persecute<sup>126</sup> me;  
My adversaries pursue me all day long;

2 my enemies always slander me,  
for many eagerly fight against me.

3 Almighty God,<sup>127</sup> even when I am afraid,  
I place my trust in you!

4 I trust in God, whose word I praise,  
with God I am without fear.  
What can mere mortals do to me?<sup>128</sup>

5 All day long they lurk, seeking to injure my cause;<sup>129</sup>  
all their thoughts plot evil against me.

6 They conspire, they lurk,  
they stalk me,  
hoping that I die.

7 Therefore, repay<sup>130</sup> them for their crimes;  
defeat those people in your wrath, O God!<sup>131</sup>

8 You have kept track of my lament,  
and recorded it in your book.  
You have kept a record of my tears.<sup>132</sup>

9 In the day when I call to you  
my enemies will be repulsed.  
I know this because God is on my side:

10 God, whose word I praise --<sup>133</sup>  
the Lord whose word I praise.

11 I trust in God and I am without fear.  
What can mere mortals do to me?

---

124 Probably a melody.

125 One of the 5 Philistine towns.

126 Literally: "trample upon".

127 So: MT. Numerous emendations are suggested by scholars. NEB translates: "appear on high".

128 Some scholars feel this verse was a marginal gloss that found its way into the body of the Psalm.

129 Hebrew uncertain.

130 MT: "deliver or rescue."

131 A few scholars feel verses 10-11 are a refrain, thus appropriately inserted here as well as in the traditional location.

132 Literally: "my tears in a (or, your) bottle." The Hebrew word is for a large (wine) skin bottle, not a small "tear bottle" as is found by archaeologists. However, we know virtually nothing about the Hebrew people and "tear bottles".

133 Hebrew uncertain. Some scholars emend with words: "with God's help I praised his promise" or "with God, I will bring my cause to success."

12 O God, I must fulfill my vows to you!  
I will give you thank-offerings;  
13 For you have saved my soul from death  
and my feet from stumbling,  
that I might walk before God  
in the light of life!

**PSALM 57**

<PRAYER AND TRUST IN TIMES OF DANGER>  
<To the Choirmaster: According to Do Not Destroy  
(*al-tash-hith*).<sup>134</sup> A Miktam of David, when he fled  
from Saul, in a cave.>

1 Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me,  
for my refuge is in you!  
I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings  
until the stormy calamities have passed!  
2 I call to God, Most High,  
to God who fulfills his purpose in me  
(*or, who is my benefactor; supplies my need*).<sup>135</sup>  
3 He will reach down from heaven and save me,  
he will bring shame on those who eagerly pursue me.<sup>136</sup>  
Selah.

God will send forth his constant love and faithfulness!

4 I lie down among enemies who are like lions,  
greedily devouring<sup>137</sup> human prey.  
Their teeth are like spears and arrows,  
their tongues are like sharp swords!

5 Be exalted, O God above the heavens!  
Let your glory be over all the earth!

6 My enemies have prepared a net to ensnare me;  
my soul was bowed down (*or, I am stooped because of distress*).  
These enemies dug a pitfall for me along my path,  
but they have fallen into it themselves.  
Selah.

7 My heart is firm, O God, my heart is firm!  
I will sing and give praise!

---

134 Possibly a melody. A few scholars feel this is a note that the manuscript be kept, like "save" on the black board at school.

135 LXX: "the God who does good to me."

136 Literally: "trample me." Emended it could read, "he will save me from the power of those who trample me."

137 Hebrew: "who are aflame."

8 Awake, O my soul! <sup>138</sup>  
 Awake, O harp and lyre!  
 I will awaken the dawn!  
 9 I will praise you, O Lord, among all people!  
 I will sing praises to you among the nations;  
 10 For your constant love is as high as the heavens;  
 your faithfulness extends to the clouds.

11 Be exalted, O God, above the heavens!  
 Let your glory be over all the earth!

**PSALM 58**

<A PRAYER WHEN EVERYTHING GOES WRONG>

<To the Choirmaster: According to Do Not Destroy  
 (al - tash - hith) <sup>139</sup> A Miktam of David.> <sup>140</sup>

1 Do you really give just decrees, you gods? <sup>141</sup>  
 Do you judge the people impartially?  
 2 Never! In your thoughts <sup>142</sup> you willingly devise wickedness;  
 your hands commit (or, mete out) violence  
 (or, lawlessness, tyranny) on earth. <sup>143</sup>

3 From birth the wicked <sup>144</sup> (or, defiant) become perverse.  
 They err from birth, speaking lies.  
 4 They are filled with venom like that of a serpent.  
 They stop their ears like the deaf adder (or, cobra),  
 5 which does not hear the tune of the snake charmer  
 or the skillful enchanters spells.

6 O God, shatter their teeth in their mouths:  
 tear out the fangs of the young lions, O Lord!  
 7 May they disappear like water that drains away;  
 may they be crushed like grass. <sup>145</sup>  
 8 May they be like the slug <sup>146</sup> that dissolves into slime;  
 like the stillbirth that never sees light.

---

138 Hebrew: Literally: "my glory."

139 Cf. Footnote 134 on the previous page: (Psalm Title).

140 Unlike other Psalms of Lament the Psalmist has no personal complaint.

141 Hebrew uncertain. Because the Hebrew people did not recognize other gods some scholars want to use the word 'congregation' instead of "god". Other suggestions are: "mighty lords," "chief men" etc. This seems to be a highly unlikely solution.

142 Literally, "hearts."

143 It is generally assumed that the speaker in verses 1 & 2 is the Psalmist. However some feel it is God addressing some heavenly council.

144 i.e. those guilty of disloyalty to God or estrangement from justice.

145 Hebrew unclear. MT: "when he takes aim, let his arrows be as if blunted."

146 A Hebrew word used only here. Some feel it means "bees wax." others "worm." TANAKA: "Before the thorns grow into a bramble, may he whirl them away, alive in fury."

9 Before they are aware, let them be rooted out  
and like a buckthorn (*or, bramble; weed*) may they be swept away.

10 The righteous will rejoice when they see revenge;  
they will wash their feet in the blood of the wicked.

11 People will say:  
"Surely there is a reward for the righteous!  
There certainly is a God who judges the earth!"

### **PSALM 59**

<A PRAYER FOR PROTECTION FROM ENEMIES>

<To the Choirmaster: According to Do Not Destroy  
(*al - tash - hith*). A Miktam of David when  
Saul sent men to watch David's house  
in order to slay him.>

1 O My God, rescue me from my enemies!  
Protect me from those who rise up to assail me!  
2 Save me from the evildoers  
and defend me from those who are bloodthirsty.

3 For, behold, they are lurking to ambush me;  
fierce <sup>147</sup> persons plot against me,  
though not because of any transgression or sin of mine, O Lord,  
4 nor any fault of mine, yet they rush  
to prepare themselves to attack (*or, arm themselves*).

Rouse yourself, come to my assistance and see!  
5 You, O Lord, God of hosts, are the God of Israel.  
Rise up to punish all these nations:  
show no mercy toward those who plot evil as traitors.  
Selah.

6 Each evening they return,  
snarling like dogs,  
and prowling about the city.  
7 There they spew <sup>148</sup> destructive talk from their mouths  
and snarling, with their lips,  
for they say, "Who will hear us?"

8 But you laugh at them, O Lord,  
you hold all these nations in derision.  
9 I will sing praises to you who are my strength; <sup>149</sup>

---

147 The Hebrew word has the additional concept of 'strength'.

148 The Hebrew word is "bubble, burst out" This implies blasphemy.

149 Hebrew uncertain. MT and Syriac: "your strength" and "to you I will watch" or "I will watch for you."

for you, O God, are my fortress.  
 10 My God will come to my aid in his steadfast love!  
 My God will let me look in triumph on my enemies!  
 11 Do not kill them, or my people might forget;<sup>150</sup>  
 by your power make them wanderers (*or, shake them*)  
 and humiliate<sup>151</sup> them, O Lord, my shield (*or, sovereign*)!  
 12 Because of the sinfulness of their mouths, the words of their lips,  
 let them be trapped by their arrogance.  
 For the cursing and lies they utter,  
 13 destroy them in your wrath,  
 totally destroy them!  
 Then everyone will know -- to the ends of the earth --  
 that God rules over Jacob.<sup>152</sup>

Selah.

14 They come back each evening,  
 growling like dogs  
 and prowling about the city.  
 15 They roam about for food,  
 and whine if they do not get their fill.<sup>153</sup>  
 16 I, however, will sing of your might:  
 in the morning I will extol your constant love;  
 for you have been a fortress for me,  
 and a refuge in the day of my distress!

17 I will sing praise to you who are my strength;  
 for you, O God, are my fortress,  
 the God who shows me steadfast love.

### **PSALM 60**

<A NATIONAL PRAYER FOR DELIVERANCE>  
 <To the Choirmaster: According to Shoshan Eduth.<sup>154</sup>  
 A Miktam of David; for instruction.  
 When he strove with Aram - nahariam and with  
 Aram - zobah and when Joab, on his return  
 killed twelve thousand of Edom in the Valley of Salt.>

1 O God, you have spurned us and broken our defenses;  
 you have been angry! Now restore us!  
 (*or, You have been angry with us and turned your back on us.*)  
 2 You have made the land tremble, you have split it open;

---

150 Permitting the enemies to live becomes an object lesson.

151 Literally: "to bring low."

152 The Psalmist apparently feels that enemy nations have united against his nation.

153 MT: "they spend the night complaining."

154 See Introduction.

- mend its fractures, for it is tottering  
*(or, heal its wounds because it is giving way).*
- 3 You have made your people suffer hardships;  
 you have given us intoxicating wine that made us stagger.<sup>155</sup>
- 4 You have hoisted a banner *(or, warning)*  
 for those who fear *(or, reverence)* you;  
 to rally to it beyond the bow<sup>156</sup> shot *(or, in safety).*  
 Selah.
- 5 In order that your loved ones might be rescued --  
 give victory with your right hand and respond to our plea!
- 6<sup>157</sup> God has promised in his sanctuary *(or, in his holiness):*  
 "With exultation I will divide up Shechem  
 and distribute the Valley of Succoth.
- 7 Gilead is mine; Manasseh is mine;  
 Ephraim is my helmet *(or, chief stronghold);*  
 Judah is my scepter;
- 8 Moab is my wash-basin.  
 Upon Edom I hurl my shoe;<sup>158</sup>  
 I shout in triumph over Philistia."<sup>159</sup>
- 9 Who will bring me to the fortified city?  
 Who will lead me to Edom?
- 10 Have you really rejected us, O God?  
 O God, you have not been accompanying our armies.
- 11 O grant us aid against the enemy;  
 for human help is worthless!
- 12 With God on our side we will triumph;  
 it is he who will defeat our enemies.

---

155 TAN: "You have sated your people with a bitter draught."

156 So: LXX, Syriac, Jerome. Hebrew: truth. The Hebrew Text is uncertain. A probable emendation is: "Give to them that reverence you a place of refuge to flee from the bow."

157 Verses 6 - 12 appear also in Psalm 108.

158 As a symbol of possession.

159 Hebrew uncertain.