

PSALMS
BOOK THREE
Psalms 73 - 89

PSALM 73¹

<GOD IS BEYOND COMPARE>

<A Psalm of Asaph>²

1 God is indeed (*or, truly*) good to the upright;
to those who are pure in heart.

*(or: Truly God is good to Israel;
to those who are pure in heart).*³

2 But as for me, my feet had almost strayed,
my way of life was nearly off course.

3 For I was jealous of those who were proud
when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

4 For they are not in pain⁴
their bodies are strong⁵ and healthy.⁶

5 They do not suffer like others;
they are not afflicted like other people.

6 Therefore they wear their pride like a chain denoting honor
or like a garment of violence that covers them.

7 Their eyes are filled with malice;⁷
their hearts overflow with evil plotting.⁸

8 They are corrupt and plot evil.
From their lofty places they threaten oppression.

9 They constantly slander heaven
and their evil declarations spread over the earth.

10 Because of this their people (*i.e. followers*) turn and praise them;⁹
and find no fault in them.¹⁰

11 and as a result they say, "How does God know?
Is there knowledge in the Most High?"

1 A Wisdom Psalm. See Psalms 37 and 49 for similar Wisdom Psalms.

2 Asaph: I Chronicles 25:1 was the founder of one of the temple choirs.

3 Some scholars combine what others feel are two words. The result " 1 word "upright" 2 words "Israel." Since in the manuscripts there is no space between words this becomes a moot point.

4 The Hebrew word means "rope" and is often used, for travail pangs. Cf. Isaiah 58:6.

5 Literally "their bellies are fat."

6 If the Hebrew consonants are divided into two words it would mean: "no pain in them." Cf. comment in note 2.

7 So: LXX, Syriac & Vulgate. Literally: "their eyes swell out with fatness."

8 Hebrew uncertain. Literally: "they go beyond the imaginations of the heart."

9 Hebrew uncertain in verse 10. Literally: "his people return back here."

10 So with slight emendation. Literally MT: "abundant waters are drained by them."

- 12 Take note! This is what the wicked are like:
always carefree, they increase in wealth.
- 13 Is it for no purpose that I have kept myself pure (*or, my heart clean*)
and washed my hands in innocence?
- 14 For I have been stricken continually
and punished each morning.
- 15 If I had said, "I will speak as they do,"
I would have betrayed the family of God.¹¹
- 16 However, when I attempted to understand (*or, analyze*) this,
it seemed like a hopeless task to me ---
- 17 until I went to the sanctuary of God (*or, the temple*).
Then I understood their fate.
- 18 You certainly have set them on slippery ground.
You cause them to fall into ruin.
- 19 How suddenly they are destroyed;
completely swept away by a torrent of terror!
- 20 They are¹² like a dream when one awakes
and on awakening you despise those frightening dreams.¹³
- 22 I was stupid and ignorant;¹⁴
I was like a beast toward you.
- 23 Nevertheless I am continually with you;
you hold my right hand.
- 24 You lead (*or guide*) me with your counsel (*or, instruction*),
and ultimately you will receive me with honor.¹⁵
- 25 Who else have I in heaven?
Beyond you there is nothing upon earth that I might desire.
- 26 My body and my mind¹⁶ may fail,
but God is the strength¹⁷ of my heart;
and my portion forever.
- 27 Notice: those who are far (*or, withdrawn*) from you will surely perish:
you annihilate those who are false¹⁸ toward you;
- 28 but as for me, it is wonderful to be near God!
I have made the Lord God my refuge,

11 Literally: "been untrue to the circle of your children."

12 Hebrew MT: "the Lord."

13 Hebrew uncertain. Literally "images".

14 Literally "brutish." The Hebrew word for "beasts or cattle" is used.

15 Hebrew uncertain. Literally: "and lead me toward honor."

16 Literally: "flesh and heart."

17 Literally: "rock."

18 The Hebrew word used here is used for marital infidelity.

that I may proclaim all your work! ¹⁹

PSALM 74

<A LAMENT IN A TIME OF NATIONAL CALAMITY>

<A Maskil of Asaph>

- ¹ O God, why do you reject us forever?
(*or, O God, why do you reject us? Is it forever?*)
Why does your anger fume (*or, smolder*)
against the sheep of your pasture?
- ² Remember your congregation:
those you have acquired (*or chosen for yourself*) long ago;
the tribes of your heritage which you have redeemed;
Mount Zion where you have dwelt! ²⁰
- ³ Inspect these perpetual ruins (*or, long standing ruins*); ²¹
the enemy has utterly destroyed the sanctuary. ²²
- ⁴ Your enemies ²³ have cheered victoriously in the midst of the holy place;
They set up their own signs as tokens of victory.
- ⁵ Like workmen they hacked up the holy place
with their axes as if it were a clump of trees. ²⁴
- ⁶ They smashed all the carved paneling
with hatchets and hammers (*or, picks*).
- ⁷ They set the sanctuary on fire;
they vandalized the place where you are worshipped, razing it.
- ⁸ They said to themselves: "We will utterly crush them";
they burned ²⁵ all the places in the land where we met to worship you.
- ⁹ We do not see any omens;
no prophets remain;
and there is no one who knows how long
- ¹⁰ How long, O God, will your enemies mock you?
Will they insult you forever?
- ¹¹ Why do you hold back your hand,
why do you not take action against them? ²⁶
- ¹² Yet God, my king, is from the beginning

¹⁹ The New American Bible adds "in the gates of the daughter of Zion." I do not find this in Hebrew or in my copy of the Vulgate though the thought is one that would be compatible with the thinking of the Psalmists.

²⁰ Many scholars begin this line with "remember" which is not in the Hebrew text.

²¹ Hebrew uncertain. Literally "walk upon your steps" or "direct your steps."

²² Literally: "the holy place."

²³ The word *r[wm]* is singular in some Hebrew manuscripts but the plural form has better manuscript support .

²⁴ The Hebrew is obscure. Many emendations are suggested by scholars.

²⁵ So: LXX and Syriac.

²⁶ Hebrew unclear. MT "consume your right hand from." Several emendations are suggested by scholars.

and works salvation (*or, deliverance*)²⁷ throughout the earth.

13 By your might you divided the sea;
you smashed the heads of sea monsters!

14 You crushed the heads of Leviathan
giving him as food²⁸ for the creatures of the desert (*or, the jackals*).

15 You released the springs and torrents;
You dried streams that had never failed.

16 You are ruler over the day and the night;
you have established the moon and stars²⁹ and the sun.

17 You established all the boundaries of the earth;
you have created the seasons.³⁰

18 Be aware, O Lord, how the enemy blasphemes,
and reprobates³¹ who revile your name.

19 Do not abandon those who praise you;³²
do not forget your afflicted ones forever!

20 Have regard for your³³ covenant;
for the dark places (*or, hiding places, caves*) of the land are filled
with the haunts of those who are violent.

21 Do not let the downtrodden be put to shame;
let the oppressed and needy praise your name!

22 Rise, O God! Champion your cause!
Remember how the impious mock you all day long!

23 Do not ignore the angry clamor of your enemies,
the endless uproar of your adversaries!

PSALM 75

<*THANKSGIVING FOR GOD'S WONDROUS DEEDS*>

<*To the Choirmaster: According to Do Not Destroy
(al-tash-hith). A Psalm of Asaph. A Song.*>

1 We give thanks to you, O God, we give thanks;
we invoke your presence³⁴
and declare (*or, recount*) your wondrous deeds.

27 In Hebrew this is a plural word.

28 Hebrew uncertain. MT: "food for the people." A number of emendations are suggested. Among these: food for sharks, dolphins, etc.

29 The Hebrew word *rwam* means "luminaries" usually thought of as the moon and the stars.

30 Literally "summer and winter."

31 Literally "fools."

32 Hebrew unclear in this verse. So: LXX and Syriac and one Hebrew manuscript. Several emendations are suggested by scholars.

33 So: LXX and Syriac. Hebrew: "the."

34 MT literally: "and near is your name. They recount."

2 "At a time which I determine
I will judge fairly.
3 When the earth totters ³⁵ along with its inhabitants,
it is I who keep it's pillars (*or, foundation*) steady.
Selah.

4 "I say to the boastful, 'Stop boasting!'
and to the wicked, 'Stop being proud!' ³⁶
5 Do not display pride
or speak with arrogance."³⁷

6 For being lifted up does not come from the east or from the west,
nor from the southern desert or from the northern mountains;³⁸
7 but it is God who executes judgment,
condemning one and acquitting another.
8 For there is a cup in the hand of the Lord,
filled with foaming wine, thoroughly mixed;³⁹
and he will pour a draught from it,
and all the wicked of the earth
will drink it to the last dregs.

9 But I will rejoice ⁴⁰ forever,
I will sing praise to the God of Jacob.

10 "I ⁴¹ will cut off all the pride of the wicked
but the power of the righteous will be exalted (*or, increased*)!"

PSALM 76

<GOD IS THE VICTOR>

<To the Choirmaster: With stringed instruments (negoth).

A Psalm of Asaph. A song. ⁴² >

1 God is renowned in Judah,
his name is honored in Israel.
2 Salem ⁴³ has become his home

35 The Hebrew word can mean "totter" or "melt."

36 Literally: "do not lift up your horn." The horn becomes a symbol of strength, as in the instance of a stag proudly making his display of his prowess during the mating season.

37 Literally: "with a stretched out neck." Again a reference to the stag proudly displaying his prowess.

38 Hebrew uncertain. Numerous emendations are suggested by scholars. MT: syrt emended to symmw.

39 Generally scholars assume the wine was, in this instance, mixed with spices, like mulled wine. A few scholars feel the mixing is with water.

40 So: LXX. MT "declare." The difference is one letter to emend the text to be like the LXX.

41 So: MT & LXX. Syriac "he."

42 LXX adds: "with reference to the Assyrians."

43 Salem is a pre-Israelite name. It is also an abbreviation for Jerusalem.

his habitation ⁴⁴ is in Zion.
3 There he shattered the flaming (*or, flashing*) ⁴⁵ arrows of the enemy,
their shields, swords and weapons of war. ⁴⁶
Selah.

4 You are resplendent, O God, more glorious
than the everlasting mountains. ⁴⁷
5 The valiant warriors were stripped of their possessions;
they have sunk into the stupor of death.
None of the veteran warriors
were able to lift a hand (*or, all the warriors were useless*). ⁴⁸
6 At your rebuke, O God of Jacob
both riders ⁴⁹ (*or, chariots*) and horses lie still (*or, are dead*).

7 But you! You are awesome!
Who can stand before you
when your intense fury has been aroused?
8 From the heavens you pronounced sentence;
the earth feared and was silent
9 when God rose to execute judgment;
to save all the oppressed (*or, afflicted*) of the world.
Selah.

10 Human wrath serves only to praise you.
Those who survive the wars will keep your festival. ⁵⁰
11 Make your vows to the Lord, your God, and fulfill them!
Let all bring tribute ⁵¹ to him who is so awesome; ⁵²
12 who checks (*or, breaks*) the pride of the rulers
and inspires awe in the kings of the earth.

PSALM 77

<A CRY FOR HELP>

<To the Choirmaster: To Jeduthun.

A Psalm of Asaph.>

1 I call upon (*or, shout to*) God,

44 The Hebrew word usually designates a "lair" or "den" for animals, hence "a comfortable haven" or "habitation."

45 Literally: "the flames of the bow" or "thunderbolt." Depending on interpretation either "flaming" or "flashing" could be used with suitable attestation from the Hebrew usage of the word.

46 Literally: "the battle."

47 Hebrew unclear. Literally: "mountains of prey." prey - @rj. everlasting d[. LXX uses "everlasting."

48 Literally: "did not find their hands."

49 The Hebrew word *bka* usually means "chariot" but occasionally means "rider."

50 The Hebrew in this verse is unclear. Numerous emendations have been suggested. Literally: "for the wrath of man must be turned to your praise. Those who survive this you bind to yourself."

51 Hebrew uncertain.

52 In Hebrew this line is one Hebrew word.

I call upon (*or, shout to*) God that he might be attentive to me.
2 In times of distress I seek the Lord;
My hand⁵³ is stretched out without becoming weary;⁵⁴
My mind⁵⁵ is not (*or, refuses to be*) consoled.
3 I remember God and sigh;
I ponder (*or, complain*) and my spirit faints.
Selah.

4 You keep my eyelids⁵⁶ from closing;
(*or, You hold my eyelids open: You keep me awake*)
I am upset that I cannot sleep.
5 I dwell on the days of old,
I recall the years that are long past.
6 At night I commune⁵⁷ with my heart
meditating and searching my spirit⁵⁸
(*or, I ponder as my spirit searches*).
7 "Will the Lord always reject us
and never again be gracious toward us?
8 Has his steadfast love utterly disappeared?
Will his promises be unfulfilled forever?
9 Has God forgotten to be merciful?
Has he in anger discontinued his compassion?
Selah.

10 Therefore I say, "It is my fault⁵⁹
that the right hand of the Most High has changed."⁶⁰
11 I will recall⁶¹ the wonderful works of the Lord;
yes, I will remember your past wonders!
12 I will think about (*or, meditate upon*) all your acts,
and ponder about your mighty deeds.
13 O God, your way is holy.
What sort of deity is as great as our⁶² God?
14 You are the God who performs miracles.
You have displayed your might among the nations.
15 With your own power you redeemed your people,

53 Hebrew uncertain. The Hebrew word in the MT, *ry* means "sore" which is used by the KJV.

54 Hands were stretched out in prayer.

55 Literally: "soul."

56 Literally: "the guards of my eyes."

57 Hebrew: "make music." Emended to *tygt* with LXX and Syriac.

58 So: LXX and Jerome. Hebrew has "my spirit searches."

59 Hebrew unclear. Many emendations have been suggested including: grief, infirmity, entreaty, plea, years, renewal, recital.

60 The Hebrew word translated *changed* *twgX* in the past was thought to mean "years." This has been cleared up in relatively recent years.

61 With the thought of a public recounting of the deeds of the Lord.

62 So: LXX and Syriac. Omitted by MT.

the descendants of Jacob and Joseph.
Selah.

- 16 When the waters saw you, O God,
when the waters saw you, they were afraid,
yes, even the depths were convulsed.
- 17 The clouds poured down rain;
the skies thundered;⁶³
your bolts of lightning⁶⁴ flashed all around.
- 18 The crash of your thunder was in the whirlwind.⁶⁵
Your lighting illuminated the world;
the earth trembled and shook.
- 19 Your way was through the sea,
your paths through the mighty waters;
though your foot prints (*or, tracks*) were unseen.⁶⁶
- 20 You led your people like a flock,
under the leadership of Moses and Aaron.

PSALM 78

<GOD'S GOODNESS DESPITE ISRAEL'S INGRATITUDE>

<A Maskil of Asaph.>

- 1 O my people, be attentive to my teaching;
listen to my message.
- 2 I will speak using a wise saying;
I will expound upon the sayings of the past;
- 3 things we have heard and known,
that our ancestors have told us.
- 4 We will not withhold these things from their children,
telling the coming generations
of the glorious deeds⁶⁷ of the Lord, his might,
and the wondrous he has done.
- 5 He established a decree in Jacob,
and instituted a law in Israel,
which he ordered our ancestors
to teach to their children;
- 6 so that the next generation might learn them,
-- the children yet unborn --

63 The Hebrew word means "voice."

64 Literally: "arrows."

65 The Hebrew word means "wheel." Thus the TEV translates "the crash of your thunder rolled out." In this usage "whirlwind" seems to fit well.

66 Literally: "are not known."

67 Literally: "praise" or "praiseworthy deeds."

and rise and tell them to their children.
7 Through this they should place their confidence (*or, reliance*) in God,
and not forget the works of God,
but always observe his commandments,
8 that they should not be like their ancestors,
an obstinate and defiant generation,
whose spirit did not remain faithful to God.

9 The Ephramites ⁶⁸ armed with bows and arrows ⁶⁹
retreated on the day of battle.
10 They did not keep God's covenant,
but refused to obey his law.
11 They forgot what he had done
and the miracles that he had performed.
12 With ancestors watching he performed miracles
in the land of Egypt, in the region of Zoan.⁷⁰
13 He made a path through the sea
and let them pass through to the other side
and made the waters stand up like a heap (*or, wall*).
14 He led them with a cloud by day
and all night long with a fiery light.
15 He split rocks in the desert
and gave them abundant water from the depths.
16 He caused streams to come out of the rock
and made the waters flow in torrents.⁷¹
17 Yet they continued sinning against him even more;
defying the Most High in the desert.
18 They deliberately put God to the test
by demanding the food they craved.
19 They blasphemed against God, saying:
"Can God supply food in the desert?"
20 Granted, he struck the rock and water gushed out
with overflowing streams,
but can he also give bread,
or supply meat for his people?"
21 Therefore, when the Lord heard them,
he was filled with rage (*or, enraged*);
and fire blazed against Jacob,
his wrath mounted against Israel;
22 because they did not have faith in God

68 This reference would be to the northern tribes of which Ephraim was one. Some scholars consider the word a gloss since no hint of the cowardice mentioned in the Psalm has ever been recorded.

69 Hebrew: "armed with shooting."

70 A city in the region of the North East delta of the Nile. Possibly modern San al Hagar.

71 Literally: "like rivers."

and did not trust his power to save them.
 23 But he commanded the skies above
 and opened heaven's doors ⁷²
 24 and he rained down manna ⁷³ upon them
 and gave them heavenly grain for food.
 25 They ate of the bread of the angels; ⁷⁴
 for God provided them with food in abundance.
 26 He also caused the east wind to blow in the heavens
 and with his might he stirred the south wind;
 27 he sent down ⁷⁵ flesh upon them in great quantities;
 birds as abundant as the sand of the sea!
 28 He let them fall inside the camp
 all around their tents;
 29 and the people ate and were satisfied,
 for God gave them what they had craved.
 30 But even before they had satisfied their craving,
 while food was still in their mouths,
 31 the anger of God flared up against them,
 and he killed the strongest men of Israel,
 along with the youth of Israel.

 32 In spite of all this the people kept on sinning,
 despite Gods wonders they did not believe,
 33 so God snuffed out their lives
 and their existence ended with sudden disaster.
 34 When God struck them, those who remained turned to him;
 repenting and seeking God earnestly.
 35 They remembered that God was their rock ⁷⁶ (*or, redeemer*),
 the Most High God was their redeemer.
 36 But their words were deceitful;
 they were spoken insincerely.
 37 They were not loyal toward him;
 and were not faithful to his covenant.
 38 Yet he, being compassionate,
 forgive their iniquity
 and did not destroy them (*or, but never lost his temper*):
 He often restrained (*or, repressed*) his anger
 and did not give vent to his fury.
 39 He remembered that they were only human
 a fleeting breeze that passes and never returns.

72 This is the only time when "heaven's doors" is used. On other occasions it is the "windows of heaven."

73 When the Hebrew people questioned what they discovered they said "what is this" becoming the name, "manna."

74 So: LXX. Hebrew: "bread of the mighty ones."

75 Literally: rained down."

76 So: MT.

40 How often they rebelled against him in the desert
 and grieved him in the wilderness!
 41 They put him to the test again and again
 and provoked (*or, vexed*) the Holy One of Israel.
 42 They were oblivious of his great power
 or of the day when he redeemed them from their enemies.
 43 When he performed his signs in Egypt,
 and his miracles in the region of Zoan,
 44 he turned their rivers into blood,
 so that the water was not drinkable.
 45 He sent swarms of flies among them
 which caused them great suffering
 and frogs which ruined them.
 46 He gave their crops to the grasshoppers ⁷⁷;
 and their harvest (*or, the fruit of their labors*) to the locusts.
 47 He destroyed their vines with hail ⁷⁸
 and their fig trees ⁷⁹ with frost ⁸⁰ (*or, sleet*).
 48 He killed their cattle with hail
 and their flocks with lightning. ⁸¹
 49 He inflicted his fierce anger on them:
 wrath, indignation and distress,
 which came as would a company of destroying angels.
 50 He freely poured out ⁸² his anger;
 he did not spare their lives
 but caused them to die because of the plague.
 51 He killed all the firstborn in Egypt;
 the firstborn males in the dwellings of Ham. ⁸³
 52 Then he led his people out as would a shepherd
 and guided them in the desert like a flock.
 53 He led them safely and they were not afraid;
 but the sea engulfed their enemies.
 54 He brought them to his holy land, ⁸⁴
 to the mountains he, himself, had conquered.
 55 He drove out the previous inhabitants;
 he divided up the land as a possession,
 settling the tribes of Israel in their dwellings.

 56 Yet they challenged and rebelled against Almighty God,

77 Other possible translations for "grasshoppers" might be "grubs" or "caterpillars."

78 Some scholars interpret this as "a deluge of rain."

79 Hebrew uncertain. Literally: "sycamore." These trees are able to produce a low quality fig like fruit. cf. Amos 7:14.

80 The word is only used here in the Hebrew Scriptures.

81 Literally "flames." With different vowel points the word could be "plague." Two Hebrew manuscripts say "pestilence."

82 Literally: "made a path."

83 Ham, a son of Noah, was regarded as the ancestor of the Egyptians.

84 LXX: "hill."

and disregarded his commandments.
 57 They were rebellious and faithless as their ancestors had been;
 they were as twisted as a defective bow;
 58 for they provoked him to anger with their pagan shrines.⁸⁵
 they made him furious with their idols.
 59 When God heard, he was enraged
 and rejected Israel completely.
 60 He abandoned his dwelling in Shiloh,⁸⁶
 the residence where he dwelt among mortals;
 61 and allowed his power to go into captivity,
 his glory (*or, splendor*) in the hand of the foe.⁸⁷
 62 He allowed his people to be killed by their enemies
 and he was irate toward his people.
 63 War⁸⁸ destroyed their young men
 and the young women had no one to marry.⁸⁹
 64 Their priests died violently
 and their widows did not weep.

 65 Then the Lord was like a sleeper who awakens;
 like a warrior shouting⁹⁰ because of wine.
 66 He routed his enemies;⁹¹
 putting them into everlasting disgrace.
 67 He rejected the descendants of Joseph;
 he did not select the tribe of Ephraim;
 68 but he chose the tribe of Judah
 Mount Zion, which he loved.
 69 He built his sanctuary like the high heavens,⁹²
 like the earth which he has established forever.
 70 He chose David, his servant,
 and took him from the sheepfold;
 71 he brought him from tending the nursing ewes,
 to be the shepherd of his people, Jacob,
 of Israel, his inheritance.
 72 With blameless heart he tended them
 and guided them with skillful hands.

85 Literally: "high places."

86 About 25 miles north of Jerusalem, the central place of worship prior to David.

87 i. e. the ark of the covenant or the covenant box. cf. I Samuel 4:1-22.

88 Literally: "fire."

89 Literally: "no marriage song."

90 Literally: "overcome:." NJB: "like a strong man waking from a stupor."

91 Literally: "smote his adversaries backward."

92 Literally: "like the heights."

PSALM 79

<A PRAYER FOR MERCY FOR JERUSALEM>

<A Psalm of Asaph.>

- 1 O God, foreign enemies⁹³ have invaded your domain;
they have desecrated your holy temple;
Jerusalem has been reduced to rubble.
- 2 They have made corpses of your servants
as carrion for the birds of prey.
The bodies of your faithful ones⁹⁴ for wild animals of the earth.
- 3 The blood of your faithful ones has been shed like water
all around Jerusalem, with no one to bury them.⁹⁵
- 4 We have become the object of reproach to the surrounding nations;
scorned and derided by those around us.⁹⁶
- 5 How long, O Lord? Will you be angry forever?
Will your indignation continue smoldering?
- 6 Pour out your fury on the nations that do not worship you;
and on the kingdoms that do not invoke your name!
- 7 For they have devoured (*or, gobbled up*) Jacob (*or, your people Israel*)
and destroyed his habitation.
- 8 Do not accuse us of the iniquities (*or, crimes*) of our ancestors;
(*or, Do not hold our former iniquities against us*)
let your compassion come to us quickly, for we are very depressed.⁹⁷
- 9 Help us, O God of our salvation, for the honor of your name;
save us, and forgive our sins for the glory (*or, honor*) of your name!
- 10 Do not let the nations say,
"Where is your God?"
Let the nations become aware (*or, realize*)
that the deaths of your servants will be avenged in our presence!⁹⁸
- 11 Listen to the groans of the prisoners;
and according to your great power free those condemned to die!⁹⁹
- 12 Repay our neighbors sevenfold
for the abuse (*or, disgrace*) with which they have taunted you, O Lord!
- 13 Then we, your people, the flock of your pasture,
will thank you forever; and declare your praise through all generations!

93 Literally: "nations". "heathen" uses the same Hebrew word, hence: "foreign enemies."

94 The Hebrew word *dysx* translated "saints" basically means "showing loyalty." It is also translated as "godly loyal", "faithful" as well, depending on the usage in the sentence.

95 This verse is quoted in I Maccabees 7:17.

96 Literally: "a scorn and derision to those round about us."

97 Literally: "brought very low."

98 Literally: "while we look on."

99 Literally: "the children of death."

PSALM 80

<A PRAYER FOR RESTORATION>

<To the Choirmaster: According to Lilies (shoshannim - eduth).

A Testimony of Asaph. A Psalm.>

- 1 Be attentive, O Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead Joseph like a flock!
Appear, you who are enthroned upon the cherubim
(or, upon the ark of the covenant),
2 before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh!
Reveal your might and come to save us.
(or, Stir up your might from slumber and save us.)
- 3 Restore us, O God,
grant your favor that we might be saved!
- 4 O Lord, God of Hosts,
how long will your anger¹⁰⁰ smolder while your people pray?
5 You have fed them sorrow as their daily bread,
and made them drink an ample amount¹⁰¹ of tears.
6 You make us the scorn¹⁰² of our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh among¹⁰³ themselves.
- 7 Restore us, O God of Hosts;
grant your favor, that we may be saved!
- 8 You brought (or, transplanted) a vine from Egypt,
you drove out the other nations and planted it.
9 You cleared a place for it to grow
and its roots went deep and it spread over the land.
10 It covered the mountains with its shade,
and its branches extended beyond the mighty cedars.¹⁰⁴
11 Its branches reached to the sea
and its shoots (or, tendrils) extended as far as the river.¹⁰⁵
- 12 Why did you breach its walls (or, break down its fences),
so that everyone who passes by could steal its fruit?
13 The wild boar¹⁰⁶ ravages it (by eating or trampling),
and all creatures of the field feed on it.

100 The Hebrew word gives the thought of smoke from a smoldering fire. Perhaps the thought of "fume" with anger.

101 A probable reading of an uncommon word XylX meaning one third of a measure which would be a sizable amount.

102 So if emended to dwnm So also: Syriac. The MT uses "strife" or "contention."

103 So: MT. LXX, Syriac & 2 Hebrew manuscripts say "laugh at us."

104 Literally: "cedars of God." Some scholars translate, "and its branches were like the mighty cedars."

105 The reference is to the Euphrates. It was thought the appropriate territory was from the Mediterranean Sea to the Euphrates river.

106 Literally: "the boar from the forest." This is the only reference to wild boar in the Old Testament.

14 O God of Hosts, turn again!
 Look down from heaven and see;
 have regard for this vine,
 15 the stock which was planted by your hand,¹⁰⁷
 16 May those who have set it on fire, who have cut it down,¹⁰⁸
 perish as you frown at them in anger.
 17 Grant your protection upon your chosen ones,¹⁰⁹
 the ones¹¹⁰ whom you have taken as your own.¹¹¹
 18 Then we will not¹¹² turn back from you!
 Preserve our lives and we will invoke your name!

19 Restore us, O Lord, God of Hosts!
 Grant your favor that we may be saved!

PSALM 81

<GOD IS OUR STRENGTH>

<To the Choirmaster: According to the Gittith.

A Psalm of Asaph.>

1 Sing joyously to God, our strength (*or, our defender*),
 shout for joy to the God of Jacob!
 2 Sing to the music¹¹³ of the timbrel (*or, tambourine*),
 the melodious lyre and the harp.
 3 Blow the trumpet¹¹⁴ at the new moon,
 at the full moon, on our festival¹¹⁵ day.
 4 For it is a decree in Israel,
 an ordinance to the God of Jacob.
 5 He imposed a decree upon Jacob,¹¹⁶
 when he attacked¹¹⁷ the land of Egypt.

I heard an unfamiliar voice, saying:
 6 "I relieved your shoulder of the burden;
 your¹¹⁸ hands were freed from the basket."¹¹⁹

107 MT: "planted and upon whom the son whom you have reared for yourself." At this point some manuscripts insert verse 17b as a refrain.

108 Hebrew: "it is cut down."

109 Literally: "those at your right hand."

110 Literally: "a son of mankind" i.e. a human being.

111 Literally: "made strong for yourself."

112 Several versions translate "never." This is not implied in Hebrew.

113 Some scholars translate: "Take the pipe and the timbrel."

114 The Hebrew word *rpwX* is transliterated *shofar*, a rams horn.

115 This Hebrew word *gx* "festival" could signify any of the three annual festivals: Passover, Weeks or Tabernacles.

116 The Hebrew word: Jacob is spelled differently here, and only here. A few scholars feel this signifies the Northern Kingdom though there is no precedence for it.

117 Literally: "in his going out upon (or, over)."

118 In both instances of the word "your" in this verse the MT has "his."

119 Surely a reference to the container used to carry bricks in Egypt.

- 7 You called in distress and I rescued you,
I answered you in the secret places of thunder.¹²⁰
I tested you at the waters of Meribah.¹²¹
Selah.
- 8 Be attentive, O my people, and I will admonish you!
O Israel, if you would just listen to me!
- 9 Do not tolerate any strange god.
Do not worship any alien god.
- 10 I am the Lord your God,
who led you out from the land of Egypt.
Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.¹²²
- 11 "But my people refused to listen to me;
Israel would not be obedient to me.
- 12 So I permitted them to go their stubborn way;¹²³
to follow their own devices (*or, to do as they pleased*).
- 13 O if only my people would listen to me;
that Israel would follow my way!
- 14 Then I would quickly defeat their enemies
and conquer (*or, turn my hand against*) their foes.
- 15 Those who hate the Lord will cower (*or, cringe*) before him,
and their fate would be sealed eternally.
- 16 I would feed you¹²⁴ with the finest bread,
and satisfy you with honey from the rock."¹²⁵

PSALM 82

<GOD THE SUPREME RULER>

<A Psalm of Asaph.>

- 1 God presides over the divine assembly;
in the midst of the 'gods' he pronounces judgment:
- 2 "How long will you¹²⁶ judge perversely,
and show favor toward the wicked?
Selah.
- 3 Provide justice to the weak and orphans;
maintain fairness for the afflicted and destitute.
- 4 Rescue the wretched and the needy;
free them from the clutches of the wicked."

120 Hebrew uncertain.

121 Cf. Exodus 17:1-7; Numbers 20:2-13.

122 Some scholars feel this line belongs at the end of verse 7.

123 Literally: "stubborn hearts."

124 MT: "him."

125 A few scholars would transpose this verse to the end of verse seven.

126 In Hebrew this is a plural word.

5 They have neither the knowledge nor the understanding
that they are walking about in darkness
(*or, their actions are corrupt*).
All the foundations of the earth totter
(*or, they violate every moral principle*).

6 I say, "You are 'gods',
children of the Most High, all of you;
7 nevertheless you will die like mortals,
dying like any other ruler (*or, dying like one man, O rulers.*)

8 Arise, O God, provide justice for the earth
for all the nations are our possessions." ¹²⁷

PSALM 83

<O GOD, PURSUE OUR ENEMIES>

<A Song. A Psalm of Asaph.>

1 O God, do not remain silent;
do not be a mute observer!
2 Look! Your enemies are enraged;
those who hate you are rebelling. ¹²⁸
3 They plot craftily against your people;
they conspire together against your cherished ones.
4 They say, "Come, let us wipe their nation;
let us erase the memory of their name!"
5 Unanimously they conspire against you;
they establish an alliance ----
6 The inhabitants ¹²⁹ of Edom and the Ishmaelites;
Moab and the Hagrites,
7 Gebal, Ammon, Amalek,
Philistia along with the inhabitants of Tyre;
8 and now Assyria ¹³⁰ also has joined them.
They are the strong allies of the descendants of Lot.
Selah.

9 Deal with them as you did with the Midianites;
as with Sisera and Jabin at the river Kishon
10 who perished at Endor; ¹³¹

127 A possible emendation for the word 'possession' is 'to sift' as in the NEB "thou doest pass all nations through thy sieve."
Some scholars feel this verse is a liturgical conclusion to the Psalm so that it might be sung.

128 Literally: "raised their heads" as a sign of their rebellion.

129 Literally: "tents."

130 Possible reading: "Asshur."

131 So: Hebrew. In Judges 7:1 it is called En - Harod.

who became fertilizer ¹³² for the land.
 11 Deal with their leaders just as you did with Oreb and Zeeb
 and with all their rulers like Zebah and Zalmunna.
 12 These all had said, "Let us take the land of Israel ¹³³
 as our own possession."

 13 O my God, make them be like dust devils;
 like chaff blown away by the wind;
 14 like fire consumes the forest;
 like the flame that sets the mountains ablaze.
 15 Drive them away with your tempest,
 and terrify them with your tornado!
 16 Cover ¹³⁴ their faces with shame,
 causing them to seek your name, O Lord!
 17 Let them be frustrated and dismayed forever;
 let them die in disgrace.
 18 Let them know that you alone,
 whose name is the Lord,
 are the sovereign over all the earth! ¹³⁵

PSALM 84

<LONGING FOR THE HOUSE OF THE LORD>

<To the Choirmaster: according to the Gittith.

A Psalm of the Korahites.>

1 How beloved is your dwelling place, ¹³⁶
 O Lord of Hosts!
 2 My soul longs, it yearns
 for the courts of the Lord;
 my entire being sings for joy
 to the living God!

 3 Even the sparrow finds a home
 and the swallow a nest for herself,
 where she may have her young
 near your altars, O Lord of Hosts,
 my king and my God.
 4 Happy are those who live in your house,
 always singing your praise!

Selah.

132 Literally: "dung."

133 Literally: "the pastures of Israel." It is possible that the reference is not to the entire land of Israel but only the most verdant pastures.

134 Hebrew uncertain.

135 This concludes the Psalms of Asaph: Psalms 50; 73 - 83.

136 MT: a plural word, "dwelling places."

5 Happy are those ¹³⁷ whose strength comes from you,
 who desire to make a pilgrimage to Zion. ¹³⁸

6 As they pass through the valley of Baca ¹³⁹
 they make it a place of springs;
 the winter rain also covers it with blessings. ¹⁴⁰

7 They go up from strength to strength
 (*or, they become stronger*); ¹⁴¹
 the presence of the God of gods will be felt in Zion!

8 O Lord, God of Hosts, hear my prayer;
 Be attentive, O God of Jacob.

Selah.

9 O God, our protector, behold ---
 look upon the face of your anointed (*or, your chosen ones*)!

10 For a single day in your courts is better
 than a thousand elsewhere. ¹⁴²

I would prefer to stand guard ¹⁴³ at the threshold of the house of my God
 than dwell in the tents of the wicked. ¹⁴⁴

11 For the Lord God is a sun and shield, ¹⁴⁵
 he confers favor and honor.
 The Lord does not withhold his bounty
 from those who do what is right.

12 O Lord of Hosts,
 happy are those who trust in you!

137 MT sda literally "men" - a plural form.

138 Literally: in whose heart are the highways." The Hebrew word for highway is "to go up" It is often translated "Ascents" as in the title to Psalms 120 - 134. The thought of a pilgrimage is prevalent in this use of the Hebrew word. The word "Zion" is only found in the LXX and Syriac but can appear in Hebrew with a slight emendation.

139 The Hebrew word transliterated as Baca means "balsam trees." A variant says "weeping." In relatively recent years some scholars have designated a location as being Baca. In more recent years this has been denied by most scholars. The exact site is unknown. An emendation reads "dark valley." The Hebrew text in this verse is uncertain.

140 MT: "blessings" With other vowel points emendation is "pools."

141 NEB: "they pass on from outer wall to inner."

142 The word "elsewhere" is not found in the Hebrew text but is deemed to be appropriate to the context.

143 The sons of Korah according to I Chronicles 9:19; 26:1 were the ones who were designated to be gatekeepers in the Temple.

144 A few scholars emend the word to read "wealthy" rather than "wicked."

145 Are these symbols for guidance and protection?

PSALM 85

<A PRAYER FOR PEACE>

<To the Choirmaster: Of the Korahites.

A Psalm>

- 1 Lord, you blessed your own land;
you allowed Jacob to prosper again.
- 2 You forgave the sins of your people;
you pardoned all their sin.
- Selah.
- 3 You retracted all your wrath;
and turned from your furious anger.¹⁴⁶
- 4 Restore¹⁴⁷ us again, O God, our savior
and revoke¹⁴⁸ your displeasure toward us!
- 5 Will you be angry with us forever?
Will your wrath continue against the coming generations?
- 6 Won't you restore new life in us again,
so that your people may rejoice in you (*or, praise you*)?
- 7 O Lord, manifest your constant love to us
and grant us your salvation!
- 8 Permit me to be attentive to what God the Lord will proclaim,
for he will promise peace to his people,
to his faithful ones, to those who truly turn in faith to him¹⁴⁹
- 9 Surely his salvation is very near to those who reverence him
(*or, Surely his saving presence is very near
to those who believe in him*)
so that glory may remain in our land.
- 10 Constant love and faithfulness will meet;
righteousness and peace will embrace.
- 11 Loyalty will sprout from the earth,
and righteousness will look down from heaven.
- 12 The Lord certainly will provide of his bounty
and our land will yield abundant harvests.
- 13 Righteousness will go before him,
and peace will walk in his footsteps.¹⁵⁰

146 Verses 1 -3 could be translated in the past, perfect or past perfect (pluperfect) tenses without violating Hebrew grammar.

147 The Hebrew word has two possible interpretations: "Turn us to God" or "Turn back to us, O God."

148 MT: "to break, invalidate". LXX: "get rid of."

149 Hebrew uncertain. Hebrew: "but let them not turn back in folly" or emended "...turn back in confidence".. LXX "in their hearts."

150 Hebrew unclear. The line, is, as emended.