

Psalms

Book 1 (Psalms 1-41)

Psalm 1¹

1:1 How blessed² is the one³ who does not follow⁴ the advice⁵ of the wicked,⁶ or stand in the pathway⁷ with sinners, or sit in the assembly⁸ of scoffers!⁹

1:2 Instead¹⁰ he finds pleasure in obeying the LORD's commands;¹¹ he meditates on¹² his commands¹³ day and night.

1:3 He is like¹⁴ a tree planted by flowing streams;¹⁵ it¹⁶ yields¹⁷ its fruit at the proper time,¹⁸ and its leaves never fall off.¹⁹ He succeeds in everything he attempts.²⁰

1:4 Not so with the wicked!

¹ **sn** Psalm 1. In this wisdom psalm the author advises his audience to reject the lifestyle of the wicked and to be loyal to God. The psalmist contrasts the destiny of the wicked with that of the righteous, emphasizing that the wicked are eventually destroyed while the godly prosper under the Lord's protective care.

² **tn** The Hebrew noun is an abstract plural. The word often refers metonymically to the happiness that God-given security and prosperity produce (see v. 3; Pss 2:12; 34:9; 41:1; 65:4; 84:12; 89:15; 106:3; 112:1; 127:5; 128:1; 144:15).

³ **tn** *Heb* "[Oh] the happiness [of] the man." Hebrew wisdom literature often assumes and reflects the male-oriented perspective of ancient Israelite society. The principle of the psalm is certainly applicable to all people, regardless of their gender or age. To facilitate modern application, we translate the gender and age specific "man" with the more neutral "one." (Generic "he" is employed in vv. 2-3). Since the godly man described in the psalm is representative of followers of God (note the plural form צְדִיקִים [*tsadiqim*, "righteous, godly"] in vv. 5-6), one could translate the collective singular with the plural "those" both here and in vv. 2-3, where singular pronouns and verbal forms are utilized in the Hebrew text (cf. NRSV). However, here the singular form may emphasize that godly individuals are usually outnumbered by the wicked. Retaining the singular allows the translation to retain this emphasis.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "walk in." The three perfect verbal forms in v. 1 refer in this context to characteristic behavior. The sequence "walk-stand-sit" envisions a progression from relatively casual association with the wicked to complete identification with them.

⁵ **tn** The Hebrew noun translated "advice" most often refers to the "counsel" or "advice" one receives from others. To "walk in the advice of the wicked" means to allow their evil advice to impact and determine one's behavior.

⁶ **tn** In the psalms the Hebrew term רְשָׁעִים (*rasha'im*, "wicked") describes people who are proud, practical atheists (Ps 10:2, 4, 11) who hate God's commands, commit sinful deeds, speak lies and slander (Ps 50:16-20), and cheat others (Ps 37:21).

⁷ **tn** "Pathway" here refers to the lifestyle of sinners. To "stand in the pathway of/with sinners" means to closely associate with them in their sinful behavior.

⁸ **tn** Here the Hebrew term מוֹשָׁב (*moshav*), although often translated "seat" (cf. NEB, NIV), appears to refer to the whole assembly of evildoers. The word also carries the semantic nuance "assembly" in Ps 107:32, where it is in synonymous parallelism with קָהָל (*qahal*, "assembly").

⁹ **tn** The Hebrew word refers to arrogant individuals (Prov 21:24) who love conflict (Prov 22:10) and vociferously reject wisdom and correction (Prov 1:22; 9:7-8; 13:1; 15:12). To "sit in the assembly" of such people means to completely identify with them in their proud, sinful plans and behavior.

¹⁰ **tn** Here the Hebrew expression כִּי־יִמ (*ki'im*, "instead") introduces a contrast between the sinful behavior depicted in v. 1 and the godly lifestyle described in v. 2.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "his delight [is] in the law of the LORD." In light of the following line, which focuses on studying the Lord's law, one might translate, "he finds pleasure in studying the LORD's commands." However, even if one translates the line this way, it is important to recognize that mere study and intellectual awareness are not ultimately what bring divine favor. Study of the law is metonymic here for the correct attitudes and behavior that should result from an awareness of and commitment to God's moral will; thus "obeying" has been used in the translation rather than "studying."

¹² **tn** The Hebrew imperfect verbal form draws attention to the characteristic behavior described here and lends support to the hyperbolic adverbial phrase "day and night." The verb הָגָה (*hagag*) means "to recite quietly; to meditate" and refers metonymically to intense study and reflection.

¹³ **tn** Or "his law."

¹⁴ **tn** The Hebrew perfect verbal form with *vav* (ו) consecutive here carries the same characteristic force as the imperfect in the preceding verse. According to the psalmist, the one who studies and obeys God's commands typically prospers.

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "channels of water."

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "which."

¹⁷ **tn** The Hebrew imperfect verbal forms in v. 3 draw attention to the typical nature of the actions/states they describe.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "in its season."

¹⁹ **tn** Or "fade"; "wither."

sn The author compares the godly individual to a tree that has a rich water supply (planted by flowing streams), develops a strong root system, and is filled with leaves and fruit. The simile suggests that the godly have a continual source of life which in turn produces stability and uninterrupted prosperity.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "and all which he does prospers"; or "and all which he does he causes to prosper." (The simile of the tree does not extend to this line.) It is not certain if the Hiphil verbal form יָצְלַח (*yatsliakh*) is intransitive-exhibitive ("prosper") or causative ("causes to prosper") here. If the verb is intransitive, then כֹּל (*kol*, "all, everything") is the subject. If the verb is causative, then the godly individual or the Lord himself is the subject and לֹא is the object. The wording is reminiscent of Josh 1:8, where the Lord tells Joshua: "This law scroll must not leave your lips! You must memorize it day and night so you can carefully obey all that is written in it. Then you will prosper (literally, "cause your way to prosper") and be successful."

Instead¹ they are like wind-driven chaff.²
1:5 For this reason³ the wicked cannot
 withstand⁴ judgment,⁵
 nor can sinners join the assembly of the
 godly.⁶
1:6 Certainly⁷ the LORD guards the way of
 the godly,⁸
 but the way of the wicked ends in de-
 struction.⁹

*Psalm 2*¹⁰

2:1 Why¹¹ do the nations rebel?¹²
 Why¹³ are the countries¹⁴ devising¹⁵ plots
 that will fail?¹⁶
2:2 The kings of the earth¹⁷ form a united
 front;¹⁸
 the rulers collaborate¹⁹
 against the LORD and his anointed king.²⁰
2:3 They say,²¹ "Let's tear off the shackles
 they've put on us!"²²
 Let's free ourselves from²³ their ropes!"
2:4 The one enthroned²⁴ in heaven laughs
 in disgust;²⁵
 the Lord taunts²⁶ them.

¹ **tn** Here the Hebrew expression כִּי־יִמ (ki-'im, "instead," cf. v. 2) introduces a contrast between the prosperity of the godly depicted in v. 3 and the destiny of the wicked described in v. 4.

² **tn** *Heb* "[they are] like the chaff which [the] wind blows about." The Hebrew imperfect verbal form draws attention to the typical nature of the action described.

sn *Wind-driven chaff*. In contrast to the well-rooted and productive tree described in v. 3, the wicked are like a dried up plant that has no root system and is blown away by the wind. The simile describes the destiny of the wicked (see vv. 5-6).

³ **tn** Or "Therefore."

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "arise in," but the verb is used metonymically here in the sense of "stand"; "endure," as in 1 Sam 13:14 and Job 8:15. The negated Hebrew imperfect verbal form is here taken as indicating incapability or lack of potential, though one could understand the verb form as indicating what is typical ("do not withstand") or what will happen ("will not withstand").

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "the judgment." The article indicates a judgment that is definite in the mind of the speaker. In the immediate context this probably does not refer to the "final judgment" described in later biblical revelation, but to a temporal/historical judgment which the author anticipates. Periodically during the OT period, God would come in judgment, removing the wicked from the scene, while preserving a godly remnant (see Gen 6-9; Ps 37; Hab 3).

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "and sinners in the assembly (or "circle") of [the] godly." The negative particle and verb from the preceding line are assumed by ellipsis here ("will not arise/stand").

sn The assembly of the godly is insulated from divine judgment (Ps 37:12-17, 28-29).

⁷ **tn** The translation understands כִּי as asseverative. Another option is to translate "for," understanding v. 6 as a theological explanation for vv. 3-5, which contrasts the respective destinies of the godly and the wicked.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "the LORD knows the way of the righteous." To "know a way" means, in its most basic sense, "to recognize/acknowledge a pathway, route, or prescribed way of life" (see Josh 3:4; Job 21:14; Ps 67:2; Isa 42:16; Jer 5:4-5). Here it could refer to the Lord recognizing the behavior of the godly and, by metonymy, rewarding their godliness with security and prosperity (resulting in the translation, "the LORD rewards the behavior of the godly"). The present translation takes the verb in the sense of "mark out" (cf. Job 23:10), which metonymically could mean "watch over, protect, guard." In this case the "way of the godly" is not their behavior, but their course of life or destiny; a translation reflecting this would be "the LORD protects the lives of the godly" or "the LORD watches over the destiny of the godly" (cf. NEB, NIV, NRSV). The Hebrew active participle יָדָעָה (yodea', "knows") has here a characteristic durative force.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "but the way of the wicked perishes." The "way of the wicked" may refer to their course of life (Ps 146:9; Prov 4:19; Jer 12:1) or their sinful behavior (Prov 12:26; 15:9). The Hebrew imperfect verbal form probably describes here what typically happens, though one could take the form as indicating what will happen ("will perish").

¹⁰ **sn** *Psalm 2*. In this royal psalm the author asserts the special status of the divinely chosen Davidic king and warns the nations and their rulers to submit to the authority of God and his chosen vice-regent.

¹¹ **tn** The question is rhetorical. Rather than seeking information, the psalmist expresses his outrage that the nations would have the audacity to rebel against God and his chosen king.

¹² **tn** The Hebrew verb רָגַשׁ (ragash) occurs only here. In Dan 6:6, 11, 15 the Aramaic cognate verb describes several officials acting as a group. A Hebrew nominal derivative is used in Ps 55:14 of a crowd of people in the temple.

¹³ **tn** The interrogative לָמָּה (lamah, "why?") is understood by ellipsis in the second line.

¹⁴ **tn** Or "peoples" (so many English versions).

¹⁵ **tn** The Hebrew imperfect form describes the rebellion as underway. The verb הָגַה (hagah), which means "to recite quietly, meditate," here has the metonymic nuance "devise, plan, plot" (see Ps 38:12; Prov 24:2).

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "devising emptiness." The noun רִיק (riq, "emptiness") may characterize their behavior as "worthless, morally bankrupt" but more likely refers to the outcome of their plots (i.e., failure). As the rest of the psalm emphasizes, their rebellion will fail.

¹⁷ **sn** The expression *kings of the earth* refers somewhat hyperbolically to the kings who had been conquered by and were subject to the Davidic king.

¹⁸ **tn** Or "take their stand." The Hebrew imperfect verbal form describes their action as underway.

¹⁹ **tn** Or "conspire together." The verbal form is a Niphal from יָסַד (yasad), BDB 413-14 s.v. יָסַד; defines the verb as "establish, found," but HALOT 417 s.v. יָסַד proposes a homonym meaning "get together, conspire" (an alternate form of יָסַד, sud).

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "and against his anointed one." The Davidic king is the referent (see vv. 6-7).

²¹ **tn** The words "they say" are supplied in the translation for clarification. The quotation represents the words of the rebellious kings.

²² **tn** *Heb* "their (i.e., the LORD's and the king's) shackles." The kings compare the rule of the Lord and his vice-regent to being imprisoned.

²³ **tn** *Heb* "throw off from us."

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* "sitting." The Hebrew verb יָשַׁב (yashav) is here used metonymically of "sitting enthroned" (see Pss 9:7; 29:10; 55:19; 102:12; 123:1).

²⁵ **tn** As the next line indicates, this refers to derisive laughter. The Hebrew imperfect verbal forms in vv. 4-5 describe the action from the perspective of an eyewitness who is watching the divine response as it unfolds before his eyes.

²⁶ **tn** Or "scoffs at"; "derides"; "mocks."

2:5 Then he angrily speaks to them and terrifies them in his rage,¹ saying,²
 2:6 “I myself³ have installed⁴ my king on Zion, my holy hill.”
 2:7 The king says,⁵ “I will announce the LORD’s decree. He said to me:⁶ ‘You are my son!⁷ This very day I have become your father!’
 2:8 Ask me, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance,⁸ the ends of the earth as your personal property.
 2:9 You will break them⁹ with an iron scepter;¹⁰ you will smash them like a potter’s jar!”¹¹
 2:10 So now, you kings, do what is wise;¹² you rulers of the earth, submit to correction!¹³
 2:11 Serve¹⁴ the LORD in fear! Repent in terror!¹⁵

1 sn And terrifies them in his rage. This line focuses on the effect that God’s angry response (see previous line) has on the rebellious kings.

2 tn The word “saying” is supplied in the translation for clarification to indicate that the speaker is the Lord (cf. RSV, NIV).

3 tn The first person pronoun appears before the first person verbal form for emphasis, reflected in the translation by “myself.”

4 tn Or perhaps “consecrated.”

5 tn The words “the king says” are supplied in the translation for clarification. The speaker is the Lord’s chosen king.

6 tn Or “I will relate the decree. The LORD said to me” (in accordance with the Masoretic accentuation).

7 sn “You are my son!” The Davidic king was viewed as God’s “son” (see 2 Sam 7:14; Ps 89:26-27). The idiom reflects ancient Near Eastern adoption language associated with covenants of grant, by which a lord would reward a faithful subject by elevating him to special status, referred to as “sonship.” Like a son, the faithful subject received an “inheritance,” viewed as an unconditional, eternal gift. Such gifts usually took the form of land and/or an enduring dynasty. See M. Weinfeld, “The Covenant of Grant in the Old Testament and in the Ancient Near East,” *JAOS* 90 (1970): 184-203, for general discussion and some striking extra-biblical parallels.

8 sn I will give you the nations. The LORD promises the Davidic king universal dominion.

9 tc The LXX reads “you will shepherd them.” This reading, quoted in the Greek text of the NT in Rev 2:27; 12:5; 19:15, assumes a different vocalization of the consonantal Hebrew text and understands the verb as רָעָה (*ra’ah*, “to shepherd”) rather than רָעָה (*ra’ah*, “to break”). But the presence of נָפַץ (*nafats*, “to smash”) in the next line strongly favors the MT vocalization.

10 tn The Hebrew term שֵׁבֶט (*shevet*) can refer to a “staff” or “rod,” but here it probably refers to the Davidic king’s royal scepter, symbolizing his sovereignty.

11 sn Like a potter’s jar. Before the Davidic king’s awesome power, the rebellious nations are like fragile pottery.

12 sn The speaker here is either the psalmist or the Davidic king, who now addresses the rebellious kings.

13 tn The Niphal has here a tolerative nuance; the kings are urged to submit themselves to the advice being offered.

14 tn The Hebrew verb translated “serve” refers here to submitting to the Lord’s sovereignty as expressed through the rule of the Davidic king. Such “service” would involve maintaining allegiance to the Davidic king by paying tribute on a regular basis.

15 tn Traditionally, “rejoice with trembling” (KJV). The verb גִּיל (*gil*) normally means “rejoice,” but this meaning does not fit well here in conjunction with “in trembling.” Some try to understand “trembling” (and the parallel רָעָה, *ra’ah*, “fear”)

2:12 Give sincere homage!¹⁶ Otherwise he¹⁷ will be angry,¹⁸ and you will die because of your behavior,¹⁹ when his anger quickly ignites.²⁰ How blessed²¹ are all who take shelter in him!²²

in the sense of “reverential awe” and then take the verbs “serve” and “rejoice” in the sense of “worship” (cf. NASB). But רָעָה (*ra’ah*, “trembling”) and its related terms consistently refer to utter terror and fear (see Exod 15:15; Job 4:14; Pss 48:6; 55:5; 104:32; Isa 33:14; Dan 10:11) or at least great emotional distress (Ezra 10:9). It seems more likely here that גִּיל carries its polarized meaning “mourn, lament,” as in Hos 10:5. “Mourn, lament” would then be metonymic in this context for “repent” (referring to one’s rebellious ways). On the meaning of the verb in Hos 10:5, see F. I. Andersen and D. N. Freedman, *Hosea* (AB), 556-57.

16 tn Traditionally, “kiss the son” (KJV). But בָּר (*bar*) is the Aramaic word for “son,” not the Hebrew. For this reason many regard the reading as suspect. Some propose emendations of vv. 11b-12a. One of the more popular proposals is to read בִּירְעָה נָשָׂה לְרַגְלָיו (*bir’adah nashah l’raglayv*, “in trembling kiss his feet”). It makes better sense to understand בָּר (*bar*) as an adjective meaning “pure” (see Pss 24:4; 73:1 and BDB 141 s.v. בָּר 3) functioning here in an adverbial sense. If read this way, then the syntactical structure of exhortation (imperative followed by adverbial modifier) corresponds to the two preceding lines (see v. 11). The verb נָשָׂה (*nashaq*, “kiss”) refers metonymically to showing homage (see 1 Sam 10:1; Hos 13:2). The exhortation in v. 12a advocates a genuine expression of allegiance and warns against insincerity. When swearing allegiance, vassal kings would sometimes do so insincerely, with the intent of rebelling when the time was right. The so-called “Vassal Treaties of Esarhaddon” also warn against such an attitude. In this treaty the vassal is told: “If you, as you stand on the soil where this oath [is sworn], swear the oath with your words and lips [only], do not swear with your entire heart, do not transmit it to your sons who will live after this treaty, if you take this curse upon yourselves but do not plan to keep the treaty of Esarhaddon...may your sons and grandsons because of this fear in the future” (see J. B. Pritchard, ed., *The Ancient Near East*, 2:62).

17 tn Throughout the translation of this verse the third person masculine pronouns refer to the LORD (cf. v. 11).

18 tn The implied subject of the verb is the LORD, mentioned in v. 11. Elsewhere the subject of this verb is consistently the LORD, suggesting it may be a technical term for divine anger. Anger is here used metonymically for judgment, as the following statement makes clear. A Moabite cognate occurs in the Mesha inscription, where it is used of the Moabite god Chemosh’s anger at his people (see J. B. Pritchard, ed., *The Ancient Near East*, 1:209).

19 tn Heb “and you will perish [in the] way.” The Hebrew word דֶּרֶךְ (*derekh*, “way”) here refers to their rebellious behavior (not to a pathway, as often understood). It functions syntactically as an adverbial accusative in relation to the verb “perish.”

20 tn Or “burns.” The LORD’s anger is compared here to fire, the most destructive force known in ancient Israel.

21 tn The Hebrew noun is an abstract plural. The word often refers metonymically to the happiness that God-given security and prosperity produce (see Pss 1:1; 34:9; 41:1; 65:4; 84:12; 89:15; 106:3; 112:1; 127:5; 128:1; 144:15).

22 sn Who take shelter in him. “Taking shelter” in the LORD is an idiom for seeking his protection. Seeking his protection presupposes and even demonstrates the subject’s loyalty to the LORD. In the psalms those who “take shelter” in the LORD are contrasted with the wicked and equated with those who love, fear, and serve the LORD (Pss 5:11-12; 31:17-20; 34:21-22).

Psalms 3¹

A psalm of David, written when he fled from his son Absalom.²

3:1 LORD, how³ numerous are my enemies!

Many attack me.⁴

3:2 Many say about me,
“God will not deliver him.”⁵ (Selah)⁶

3:3 But you, LORD, are a shield that protects me;⁷

you are my glory⁸ and the one who restores me.⁹

3:4 To the LORD I cried out,¹⁰
and he answered me from his holy hill.¹¹
(Selah)

3:5 I rested and slept;
I awoke,¹² for the LORD protects¹³ me.

¹ **sn** Psalm 3. The psalmist acknowledges that he is confronted by many enemies (vv. 1-2). But, alluding to a divine oracle he has received (vv. 4-5), he affirms his confidence in God’s ability to protect him (vv. 3, 6) and requests that God make his promise a reality (vv. 7-8).

² **sn** According to Jewish tradition, David offered this prayer when he was forced to flee from Jerusalem during his son Absalom’s attempted coup (see 2 Sam 15:13-17).

³ **tn** The Hebrew term *mah*, “how”) is used here as an adverbial exclamation (see BDB 553 s.v.).

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “many rise up against me.”

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “there is no deliverance for him in God.”

⁶ **sn** The function of the Hebrew term *selah* (selah), transliterated here “Selah,” is uncertain. It may be a musical direction of some kind.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “a shield round about me.”

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “my glory,” or “my honor.” The psalmist affirms that the LORD is his source of honor, i.e., the one who gives him honor in the sight of others. According to BDB 459 s.v. *קָבוֹד* 7, the phrase refers to God as the one to whom the psalmist gives honor. But the immediate context focuses on what God does for the psalmist, not vice-versa.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “[the one who] lifts my head.” This phrase could be understood to refer to a general strengthening of the psalmist by God during difficult circumstances. However, if one takes the suggestion of the superscription that this is a Davidic psalm written during the revolt of Absalom, the phrase “lift the head” could refer to the psalmist’s desire for restoration to his former position (cf. Gen 40:13 where the same phrase is used). Like the Hebrew text, the present translation (“who restores me”) can be understood in either sense.

¹⁰ **tn** The prefixed verbal form could be an imperfect, yielding the translation “I cry out,” but the verb form in the next line (a *vav* [v] consecutive with the preterite) suggests this is a brief narrative of what has already happened. Consequently the verb form in v. 4a is better understood as a preterite, “I cried out.” (For another example of the preterite of this same verb form, see Ps 30:8.) Sometime after the crisis arose, the psalmist prayed to the LORD and received an assuring answer. Now he confidently awaits the fulfillment of the divine promise.

¹¹ **sn** *His holy hill*. That is, Zion (see Pss 2:6; 48:1-2). The psalmist recognizes that the LORD dwells in his sanctuary on Mount Zion.

¹² **tn** The three verbal forms that appear in succession here (perfect + *vav* [v] consecutive with preterite + perfect) are most naturally taken as narrational. When the psalmist received an assuring word from the LORD, he was able to sleep calmly. Because the LORD was protecting him, he awoke safely from his sleep.

¹³ **tn** Or “supports”; “sustains.” In this explanatory causal clause the imperfect verbal form probably has a habitual or present progressive nuance, for the psalmist is confident of God’s continual protection (see v. 3). Another option is to take the verb as a preterite, “for the LORD protected me.” In this

3:6 I am not afraid¹⁴ of the multitude of people¹⁵

who attack me from all directions.¹⁶

3:7 Rise up,¹⁷ LORD!

Deliver me, my God!

Yes,¹⁸ you will strike¹⁹ all my enemies on the jaw;

you will break the teeth²⁰ of the wicked.²¹

3:8 The LORD delivers,²²
you show favor to your people.²³ (Selah)

case, the psalmist focuses specifically on the protection God provided while he slept.

¹⁴ **tn** The imperfect verbal form here expresses the psalmist’s continuing attitude as he faces the crisis at hand.

¹⁵ **tn** Or perhaps “troops.” The Hebrew noun *am* (*am*) sometimes refers to a military contingent or army.

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “who all around take a stand against me.”

¹⁷ **tn** In v. 2 the psalmist describes his enemies as those who “confront” him (*qamim*), literally, “rise up against him”). Now, using the same verbal root (*qum*) he asks the LORD to rise up (*qumah*) in his defense.

¹⁸ **tn** Elsewhere in the psalms the particle *ki* (*ki*), when collocated with a perfect verbal form and subordinated to a preceding imperative directed to God, almost always has an explanatory or causal force (“for, because”) and introduces a motivating argument for why God should respond positively to the request (see Pss 5:10; 6:2; 12:1; 16:1; 41:4; 55:9; 56:1; 57:1; 60:2; 69:1; 74:20; 119:94; 123:3; 142:6; 143:8). (On three occasions the *ki* is recitative after a verb of perception [“see/know that,” see Pss 4:3; 25:19; 119:159]). If *ki* is taken as explanatory here, then the psalmist is arguing that God should deliver him now because that is what God characteristically does. However, such a motivating argument is not used in the passages cited above. The motivating argument usually focuses on the nature of the psalmist’s dilemma or the fact that he trusts in the LORD. For this reason it is unlikely that *ki* has its normal force here. Most scholars understand the particle *ki* as having an asseverative (emphasizing) function here (“indeed, yes”; NEB leaves the particle untranslated).

¹⁹ **tn** If the particle *ki* (*ki*) is taken as explanatory, then the perfect verbal forms in v. 7b would describe God’s characteristic behavior. However, as pointed out in the preceding note on the word “yes,” the particle probably has an asseverative force here. If so, the perfects may be taken as indicating rhetorically the psalmist’s certitude and confidence that God will intervene. The psalmist is so confident of God’s positive response to his prayer, he can describe God’s assault on his enemies as if it had already happened. Such confidence is consistent with the mood of the psalm, as expressed before (vv. 3-6) and after this (v. 8). Another option is to take the perfects as precatives, expressing a wish or request (“Strike all my enemies on the jaw, break the teeth of the wicked”). See *IBHS* 494-95 §30.5.4c, d. However, not all grammarians are convinced that the perfect is used as a precativ in biblical Hebrew.

²⁰ **sn** The expression *break the teeth* may envision violent hand-to-hand combat, though it is possible that the enemies are pictured here as a dangerous animal (see Job 29:17).

²¹ **tn** In the psalms the Hebrew term *rasha'im* (*rasha'im*, “wicked”) describes people who are proud, practical atheists (Ps 10:2, 4, 11) who hate God’s commands, commit sinful deeds, speak lies and slander (Ps 50:16-20), and cheat others (Ps 37:21). They oppose God and his people.

²² **tn** *Heb* “to the LORD [is] deliverance.”

²³ **tn** *Heb* “upon your people [is] your blessing.” In this context God’s “blessing” includes deliverance/protection, vindication, and sustained life (see Pss 21:3, 6; 24:5).

Psalm 4¹

For the music director, to be accompanied by stringed instruments; a psalm of David.

4:1 When I call out, answer me,
O God who vindicates me!²
Though I am hemmed in, you will lead
me into a wide, open place.³
Have mercy on me⁴ and respond to⁵ my
prayer!
4:2 You men,⁶ how long will you try to
turn my honor into shame?⁷
How long⁸ will you love what is worth-
less⁹
and search for what is deceptive?¹⁰
(Selah)
4:3 Realize that¹¹ the LORD shows the
godly special favor;¹²
the LORD responds¹³ when I cry out to him.
4:4 Tremble with fear and do not sin!¹⁴
Meditate as you lie in bed, and repent of
your ways!¹⁵ (Selah)

1 sn Psalm 4. The psalmist asks God to hear his prayer, expresses his confidence that the Lord will intervene, and urges his enemies to change their ways and place their trust in God. He concludes with another prayer for divine intervention and again affirms his absolute confidence in God's protection.

2 tn Heb "God of my righteousness."

3 tn Heb "in distress (or "a narrow place") you make (a place) large for me." The function of the Hebrew perfect verbal form here is uncertain. The translation above assumes that the psalmist is expressing his certitude and confidence that God will intervene. The psalmist is so confident of God's positive response to his prayer, he can describe God's deliverance as if it had already happened. Such confidence is consistent with the mood of the psalm (vv. 3, 8). Another option is to take the perfects as precative, expressing a wish or request ("lead me"). See *IBHS* 494-95 §30.5.4c, d. However, not all grammarians are convinced that the perfect is used as a precative in biblical Hebrew.

4 tn Or "show me favor."

5 tn Heb "hear."

6 tn Heb "sons of man."

7 tn Heb "how long my honor to shame?"

8 tn The interrogative construction עַד-מַה (*'ad-meh*, "how long?"), is understood by ellipsis in the second line.

9 tn Heb "emptiness."

10 tn Heb "a lie." Some see the metonymic language of v. 2b ("emptiness, lie") as referring to idols or false gods. However, there is no solid immediate contextual evidence for such an interpretation. It is more likely that the psalmist addresses those who threaten him (see v. 1) and refers in a general way to their sinful lifestyle. (See R. Mosis, *TDOT* 7:121.) The two terms allude to the fact that sinful behavior is ultimately fruitless and self-destructive.

11 tn Heb "and know that."

12 tn Heb "that the LORD sets apart a faithful one for himself." The psalmist states a general principle, though the singular form and the parallel line indicate he has himself in mind as the representative godly person. A רַחֲסִיד (khasid; here translated as "the godly") is one who does what is right in God's eyes and remains faithful to God (see Pss 12:1; 18:25; 31:23; 37:28; 86:2; 97:10).

13 tn Heb "hears."

14 sn The psalmist warns his enemies that they need to tremble with fear before God and repudiate their sinful ways.

15 tn Heb "say in your heart(s) on your bed(s) and wail/lament." The verb דָּוַּח (dommu) is understood as a form of דָּוַּח ("wail, lament") in sorrow and repentance. Another option is to take the verb from II דָּמַח (damam, "be quiet"); cf. NIV, NRSV "be silent."

4:5 Offer the prescribed sacrifices¹⁶
and trust in the LORD!¹⁷

4:6 Many say, "Who can show us any-
thing good?"

Smile upon us, LORD!¹⁸

4:7 You make me happier¹⁹
than those who have abundant grain and
wine.²⁰

4:8 I will lie down and sleep peacefully,²¹
for you, LORD, make me safe and secure.²²

Psalm 5²³

For the music director, to be accompanied by wind instruments;²⁴ a psalm of David.

5:1 Listen to what I say,²⁵ LORD!
Carefully consider my complaint!²⁶

5:2 Pay attention to my cry for help,
my king and my God,
for I am praying to you!

5:3 LORD, in the morning²⁷ you will hear²⁸
me;²⁹

16 tn Or "proper, right." The phrase also occurs in Deut 33:19 and Ps 51:19.

17 sn Trust in the LORD. The psalmist urges his enemies to make peace with God and become his followers.

18 tn Heb "lift up upon us the light of your face, LORD." The verb נִסָּח is apparently an alternate form of נִסָּח, "lift up." See GKC 217 §76.b. The idiom "light of your face" probably refers to a smile (see Eccl 8:1), which in turn suggests favor and blessing (see Num 6:25; Pss 31:16; 44:3; 67:1; 80:3, 7, 19; 89:15; Dan 9:17).

sn Smile upon us. Though many are discouraged, the psalmist asks the Lord to intervene and transform the situation.

19 tn Heb "you place joy in my heart." Another option is to understand the perfect verbal form as indicating certitude, "you will make me happier."

20 tn Heb "from (i.e., more than) the time (when) their grain and their wine are abundant."

21 tn Heb "in peace at the same time I will lie down and sleep."

22 tn Heb "for you, LORD, solitarily, securely make me dwell." The translation understands לְבַדְּךָ (*l'vadad*) as modifying the verb; the Lord keeps enemies away from the psalmist so that he is safe and secure. Another option is to take לְבַדְּךָ with what precedes and translate, "you alone, LORD, make me secure."

23 sn Psalm 5. Appealing to God's justice and commitment to the godly, the psalmist asks the Lord to intervene and deliver him from evildoers.

24 tn The meaning of the Hebrew word נְחִילוֹת (*n^hkhilot*), which occurs only here, is uncertain. Many relate the form to נְחִיל (khalil, "flute").

25 tn Heb "my words."

26 tn Or "sighing." The word occurs only here and in Ps 39:3.

27 sn In the morning is here viewed as the time of prayer (Pss 59:16; 88:13) and/or of deliverance (Ps 30:5).

28 tn The imperfect is here understood in a specific future sense; the psalmist is expressing his confidence that God will be willing to hear his request. Another option is to understand the imperfect as expressing the psalmist's wish or request. In this case one could translate, "LORD, in the morning hear me."

29 tn Heb "my voice."

in the morning I will present my case to you¹ and then wait expectantly for an answer.²
5:4 Certainly³ you are not a God who approves of evil;⁴
 evil people⁵ cannot dwell with you.⁶
5:5 Arrogant people cannot stand in your presence;⁷
 you hate⁸ all who behave wickedly.⁹
5:6 You destroy¹⁰ liars;¹¹
 the LORD despises¹² violent and deceitful people.¹³
5:7 But as for me,¹⁴ because of your great faithfulness I will enter your house;¹⁵
 I will bow down toward your holy temple as I worship you.¹⁶

5:8 LORD, lead me in your righteousness¹⁷ because of those who wait to ambush me,¹⁸ remove the obstacles in the way in which you are guiding me!¹⁹
5:9 For²⁰ they do not speak the truth;²¹ their stomachs are like the place of destruction,²² their throats like an open grave,²³ their tongues like a steep slope leading into it.²⁴
5:10 Condemn them,²⁵ O God! May their own schemes be their downfall!²⁶
 Drive them away²⁷ because of their many acts of insurrection,²⁸

¹ **tn** *Heb* "I will arrange for you." Some understand a sacrifice or offering as the implied object (cf. NEB "I set out my morning sacrifice"). The present translation assumes that the implied object is the psalmist's case/request. See Isa 44:7.

² **tn** *Heb* "and I will watch."

³ **tn** Or "for."

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "not a God [who] delights [in] wickedness [are] you."

⁵ **tn** The Hebrew text has simply the singular form רע, which may be taken as an abstract noun "evil" (the reference to "wickedness" in the preceding line favors this; cf. NEB, NASB, NRSV) or as a substantival adjective "evil one" (the references to evil people in the next two verses favor this; cf. NIV "with you the wicked cannot dwell").

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "cannot dwell as a resident foreigner [with] you." The negated imperfect verbal form here indicates incapability or lack of permission. These people are morally incapable of dwelling in God's presence and are not permitted to do so.

⁷ **sn** Only the godly are allowed to dwell with the Lord. *Evil people* are excluded. See Ps 15.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "before your eyes."

⁸ **sn** *You hate*. The לרוד "hates" the wicked in the sense that he despises their wicked character and deeds and actively opposes and judges them for their wickedness. See Ps 11:5.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "all the workers of wickedness."

¹⁰ **tn** The imperfect verbal form indicates God's typical response to such individuals. Another option is to translate the verb as future ("You will destroy"); the psalmist may be envisioning a time of judgment when God will remove the wicked from the scene.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "those who speak a lie." In the OT a "lie" does not refer in a general philosophical sense to any statement that fails to correspond to reality. Instead it refers more specifically to a slanderous and/or deceitful statement that promotes one's own selfish, sinful interests and/or exploits or harms those who are innocent. Note the emphasis on violence and deceit in the following line.

¹² **tn** The imperfect verbal form highlights the Lord's characteristic attitude toward such individuals.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "a man of bloodshed and deceit." The singular אִישׁ (*ish*, "man") is used here in a collective or representative sense; thus the translation "people" is appropriate here. Note the plural forms in vv. 5-6a.

¹⁴ **sn** *But as for me*. By placing the first person pronoun at the beginning of the verse, the psalmist highlights the contrast between the evildoers' actions and destiny, outlined in the preceding verses, with his own.

¹⁵ **sn** *I will enter your house*. The psalmist is confident that God will accept him into his presence, in contrast to the evildoers (see v. 5).

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "in fear [of] you." The Hebrew noun יָרֵא (*yir'ah*, "fear"), when used of fearing God, is sometimes used metonymically for what it ideally produces: "worship, reverence, piety."

¹⁷ **tn** God's providential leading is in view. His צְדָקָה (*ts'edaqah*, "righteousness") includes here the deliverance that originates in his righteousness; he protects and vindicates the one whose cause is just. For other examples of this use of the word, see BDB 842 s.v.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "because of those who watch me [with evil intent]." See also Pss 27:11; 56:2.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "make level before me your way." The imperative "make level" is Hiphil in the *Kethib* (consonantal text); Piel in the *Qere* (marginal reading). God's "way" is here the way in which he leads the psalmist provisionally (see the preceding line, where the psalmist asks the Lord to lead him).

²⁰ **tn** Or "certainly."

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "for there is not in his mouth truthfulness." The singular pronoun ("his") probably refers back to the "man of bloodshed and deceit" mentioned in v. 6. The singular is collective or representative, as the plural in the next line indicates, and so has been translated "they."

²² **tn** *Heb* "their inward part[s] [is] destruction." For a discussion of the extended metaphor in v. 9b, see the note on the word "it" at the end of the verse.

²³ **tn** *Heb* "their throat is an open grave." For a discussion of the extended metaphor in v. 9b, see the note on the word "it" at the end of the verse. The metaphor is suggested by the physical resemblance of the human throat to a deeply dug grave; both are dark chasms.

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* "they make smooth their tongue." Flattering, deceitful words are in view. See Ps 12:2. The psalmist's deceitful enemies are compared to the realm of death/Sheol in v. 9b. Sheol was envisioned as a dark region within the earth, the entrance to which was the grave with its steep slopes (cf. Ps 88:4-6). The enemies' victims are pictured here as slipping down a steep slope (the enemies' tongues) and falling into an open grave (their throat) that terminates in destruction in the inner recesses of Sheol (their stomach). The enemies' קִרְב ("inward part") refers here to their thoughts and motives, which are destructive in their intent. The throat is where these destructive thoughts are transformed into words, and their tongue is what they use to speak the deceitful words that lead their innocent victims to their demise.

²⁵ **sn** As the psalmist walks down the path in which God leads him, he asks the Lord to guide his steps and remove danger from the path (v. 8), because he knows his enemies have "dug a grave" for him and are ready to use their deceitful words to "swallow him up" like the realm of death (i.e., Sheol) and bring him to ruin.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "declare/regard them as guilty." Declaring the psalmist's adversaries guilty is here metonymic for judging them or paying them back for their wrongdoing.

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "may they fall from their plans." The prefixed verbal form is a jussive, expressing an imprecation. The psalmist calls judgment down on the evildoers. Their plans will be their downfall in that God will judge them for their evil schemes.

²⁷ **tn** Or "banish them."

²⁸ **tn** The Hebrew noun used here, פְּשָׁע (*pesha'*), refers to rebellious actions. The psalmist pictures his enemies as rebels against God (see the next line).

for they have rebelled against you.

5:11 But may all who take shelter¹ in you be happy!²

May they continually³ shout for joy!⁴

Shelter them⁵ so that those who are loyal to you⁶ may rejoice!⁷

5:12 Certainly⁸ you reward⁹ the godly,¹⁰ LORD.

Like a shield you protect¹¹ them¹² in your good favor.¹³

Psalms 6¹⁴

For the music director, to be accompanied by stringed instruments, according to the *sheminith* style;¹⁵ a psalm of David.

6:1 LORD, do not rebuke me in your anger! Do not discipline me in your raging fury!¹⁶

6:2 Have mercy on me,¹⁷ LORD, for I am frail!

Heal me, LORD, for my bones are shaking!¹⁸

¹ **sn** *Take shelter*. "Taking shelter" in the Lord is an idiom for seeking his protection. Seeking his protection presupposes and even demonstrates the subject's loyalty to the Lord. In the psalms those who "take shelter" in the Lord are contrasted with the wicked and equated with those who love, fear, and serve the Lord (Pss 5:11-12; 31:17-20; 34:21-22).

² **tn** The prefixed verbal form is a jussive of wish or prayer. The psalmist calls on God to reward his faithful followers.

³ **tn** Or perhaps more hyperbolically, "forever."

⁴ **tn** As in the preceding line, the prefixed verbal form is a jussive of wish or prayer.

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "put a cover over them." The verb form is a Hiphil imperfect from כָּכַח (*sakhakh*, "cover, shut off"). The imperfect expresses the psalmist's wish or request.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "the lovers of your name." The phrase refers to those who are loyal to the Lord. See Pss 69:36; 119:132; Isa 56:6.

⁷ **tn** The *vav* (ו) with prefixed verbal form following the volitional "shelter them" indicates purpose or result ("so that those...may rejoice").

⁸ **tn** Or "For."

⁹ **tn** Or "bless." The imperfect verbal forms here and in the next line highlight how God characteristically rewards and protects the godly.

¹⁰ **tn** Or "innocent." The singular form is used here in a collective or representative sense.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "surround." In 1 Sam 23:26 the verb describes how Saul and his men hemmed David in as they chased him.

¹² **tn** *Heb* "him." The singular form is used here in a collective or representative sense and is thus translated "them."

¹³ **tn** Or "with favor" (cf. NRSV). There is no preposition before the noun in the Hebrew text, nor is there a pronoun attached. "Favor" here stands by metonymy for God's defensive actions on behalf of the one whom he finds acceptable.

¹⁴ **sn** *Psalms 6*. The psalmist begs the Lord to withdraw his anger and spare his life. Having received a positive response to his prayer, the psalmist then confronts his enemies and describes how they retreat.

¹⁵ **tn** The meaning of the Hebrew term שְׁמִינִית (*sh^eminith*, "sheminith") is uncertain; perhaps it refers to a particular style of music. See 1 Chr 15:21.

¹⁶ **sn** The implication is that the psalmist has sinned, causing God to discipline him by bringing a life-threatening illness upon him (see vv. 2-7).

¹⁷ **tn** Or "show me favor."

¹⁸ **tn** Normally the verb בָּהַל (*bahal*) refers to an emotional response and means "tremble with fear, be terrified" (see vv. 3, 10). Perhaps here the "bones" are viewed as the seat of the psalmist's emotions. However, the verb may describe one of the effects of his physical ailment, perhaps a fever. In

6:3 I am absolutely terrified,¹⁹ and you, LORD – how long will this continue?²⁰

6:4 Relent, LORD, rescue me!²¹

Deliver me because of your faithfulness!²²

6:5 For no one remembers you in the realm of death,²³

In Sheol who gives you thanks?²⁴

6:6 I am exhausted as I groan; all night long I drench my bed in tears;²⁵ my tears saturate the cushion beneath me.²⁶

6:7 My eyes²⁷ grow dim²⁸ from suffering; they grow weak²⁹ because of all my enemies.³⁰

6:8 Turn back from me, all you who behave wickedly,³¹ for the LORD has heard the sound of my weeping!³²

6:9 The LORD has heard my appeal for mercy; the LORD has accepted³³ my prayer.

Ezek 7:27 the verb describes how the hands of the people will shake with fear when they experience the horrors of divine judgment.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "my being is very terrified." The suffixed form of נֶפֶשׁ (*nefesh*, "being") is often equivalent to a pronoun in poetic texts.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "and you, LORD, how long?" The suffering psalmist speaks in broken syntax. He addresses God, but then simply cries out with a brief, but poignant, question: How long will this (= his suffering) continue?

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "my being," or "my life." The suffixed form of נֶפֶשׁ (*nefesh*, "being") is often equivalent to a pronoun in poetic texts.

²² **sn** *Deliver me because of your faithfulness*. Though the psalmist is experiencing divine discipline, he realizes that God has made a commitment to him in the past, so he appeals to God's faithfulness in his request for help.

²³ **tn** *Heb* "for there is not in death your remembrance." The Hebrew noun זְכָר (*zekher*, "remembrance") here refers to the name of the Lord as invoked in liturgy and praise. Cf. Pss 30:4; 97:12. "Death" here refers to the realm of death where the dead reside. See the reference to Sheol in the next line.

²⁴ **tn** The rhetorical question anticipates the answer, "no one."

sn *In Sheol who gives you thanks?* According to the OT, those who descend into the realm of death/Sheol are cut off from God's mighty deeds and from the worshiping covenant community that experiences divine intervention (Pss 30:9; 88:10-12; Isa 38:18). In his effort to elicit a positive divine response, the psalmist reminds God that he will receive no praise or glory if he allows the psalmist to die. Dead men do not praise God!

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "I cause to swim through all the night my bed."

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "with my tears my bed I flood/melt."

²⁷ **tn** The Hebrew text has the singular "eye" here.

²⁸ **tn** Or perhaps, "are swollen."

²⁹ **tn** Or perhaps, "grow old."

³⁰ **sn** In his weakened condition the psalmist is vulnerable to the taunts and threats of his enemies.

³¹ **tn** *Heb* "all [you] workers of wickedness." See Ps 5:5.

³² **sn** *The LORD has heard*. The psalmist's mood abruptly changes because the LORD responded positively to the lament and petition of vv. 1-7 and promised him deliverance.

³³ **tn** The prefixed verbal form is probably a preterite here; it is parallel to a perfect and refers to the fact that the LORD has responded favorably to the psalmist's request.

6:10 May all my enemies be humiliated¹
and absolutely terrified!²
May they turn back and be suddenly hu-
miliated!

Psalms 7³

A musical composition⁴ by David, which he sang
to the LORD concerning⁵ a Benjaminite named
Cush.⁶

7:1 O LORD my God, in you I have taken
shelter.⁷

Deliver me from all who chase me! Res-
cue me!

7:2 Otherwise they will rip⁸ me⁹ to shreds
like a lion;

they will tear me to bits and no one will
be able to rescue me.¹⁰

7:3 O LORD my God, if I have done what
they say,¹¹

or am guilty of unjust actions,¹²

7:4 or have wronged my ally,¹³

or helped his lawless enemy,¹⁴

¹ **tn** The four prefixed verbal forms in this verse are understood as jussives. The psalmist concludes his prayer with an imprecation, calling judgment down on his enemies.

² **tn** *Heb* “and may they be very terrified.” The psalmist uses the same expression in v. 3 to describe the terror he was experiencing. Now he asks the LORD to turn the tables and cause his enemies to know what absolute terror feels like.

³ **sn** *Psalms 7*. The psalmist asks the Lord to intervene and deliver him from his enemies. He protests his innocence and declares his confidence in God’s justice.

⁴ **tn** The precise meaning of the Hebrew term שִׁירָיו (*shig-gayon*; translated here “musical composition”) is uncertain. Some derive the noun from the verbal root שָׁגַג (*shagah*, “swerve, reel”) and understand it as referring to a “wild, passionate song, with rapid changes of rhythm” (see BDB 993 s.v. שָׁגַג). But this proposal is purely speculative. The only other appearance of the noun is in Hab 3:1, where it occurs in the plural.

⁵ **tn** Or “on account of.”

⁶ **sn** Apparently this individual named *Cush* was one of David’s enemies.

⁷ **tn** The Hebrew perfect verbal form probably refers here to a completed action with continuing results.

⁸ **tn** The verb is singular in the Hebrew text, even though “all who chase me” in v. 1 refers to a whole group of enemies. The singular is also used in vv. 4-5, but the psalmist returns to the plural in v. 6. The singular is probably collective, emphasizing the united front that the psalmist’s enemies present. This same alternation between a collective singular and a plural referring to enemies appears in Pss 9:3, 6; 13:4; 31:4, 8; 41:6, 10-11; 42:9-10; 55:3; 64:1-2; 74:3-4; 89:22-23; 106:10-11; 143:3, 6, 9.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “my life.” The pronominal suffix attached to נָפְשִׁי (*nefesh*) is equivalent to a personal pronoun. See Ps 6:3.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “tearing and there is no one rescuing.” The verbal form translated “tearing” is a singular active participle.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “if I have done this.”

¹² **tn** *Heb* “if there is injustice in my hands.” The “hands” figuratively suggest deeds or actions.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “if I have repaid the one at peace with me evil.” The form שְׂוִיָּמִי (*sho^lmi*, “the one at peace with me”) probably refers to a close friend or ally, i.e., one with whom the psalmist has made a formal agreement. See BDB 1023 s.v. שְׂוִיָּמִי 4.a.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “or rescued my enemy in vain.” The preterite with *vav* (v) consecutive (the verb form is pseudo-cohortative; see *IBHS* 576-77 §34.5.3) carries on the hypothetical nuance of the perfect in the preceding line. Some regard the statement as a parenthetical assertion that the psalmist is kind to his enemies. Others define הִלַּחֵץ (*khalats*) as “despoil” (cf.

7:5 may an enemy relentlessly chase¹⁵ me¹⁶
and catch me,¹⁷

may he trample me to death¹⁸
and leave me lying dishonored in the
dust.¹⁹ (Selah)

7:6 Stand up angrily,²⁰ LORD!

Rise up with raging fury against my en-
emies!²¹

Wake up for my sake and execute the
judgment you have decreed for them!²²

NASB, NRSV “plundered”; NIV “robbed”), an otherwise unattested nuance for this verb. Still others emend the verb to לָחַץ (*lakhs*, “oppress”). Most construe the adverb רֵיקָם (*reqam*, “emptily, vainly”) with “my enemy,” i.e., the one who is my enemy in vain.” The present translation (1) assumes an emendation of יָנִי (*isor^rny*, “my enemy”) to יָנִי (*isor^rro*, “his [i.e., the psalmist’s ally’s] enemy”) following J. Tigay, “Psalm 7:5 and Ancient Near Eastern Treaties,” *JBL* 89 (1970): 178-86, (2) understands the final *mem* (ם) in רֵיקָם as enclitic, and (3) takes רֵיק (*riq*) as an adjective modifying “his enemy.” (For other examples of a suffixed noun followed by an attributive adjective without the article, see Pss 18:17 (“my strong enemy”), 99:3 (“your great and awesome name”) and 143:10 (“your good spirit”). The adjective רֵיק occurs with the sense “lawless” in Judg 9:4; 11:3; 2 Chr 13:7. In this case the psalmist affirms that he has not wronged his ally, nor has he given aid to his ally’s enemies. Ancient Near Eastern treaties typically included such clauses, with one or both parties agreeing not to lend aid to the treaty partner’s enemies.

¹⁵ **tn** The vocalization of the verb form seems to be a mixture of Qal and Piel (see GKC 168 §63.n). The translation assumes the Piel, which would emphasize the repetitive nature of the action. The translation assumes the prefixed verbal form is a jussive. The psalmist is so certain that he is innocent of the sins mentioned in vv. 3-4, he pronounces an imprecation on himself for rhetorical effect.

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “my life.” The pronominal suffix attached to נָפְשִׁי (*nefesh*) is equivalent to a personal pronoun. See Ps 6:3.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “and may he overtake.” The prefixed verbal form is distinctly jussive. The object “me,” though unexpressed, is understood from the preceding statement.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “and may he trample down to the earth my life.”

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “and my honor in the dust may he cause to dwell.” The prefixed verbal form is distinctly jussive. Some emend כְּבוֹדִי (*kh^vvodiy*, “my honor”) to כְּבוֹדִי (*kh^vvediy*, “my liver” as the seat of life), but the term כְּבוֹדִי (*kh^vvodiy*) is to be retained since it probably refers to the psalmist’s dignity or honor.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* “in your anger.”

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “Lift yourself up in the angry outbursts of my enemies.” Many understand the preposition prefixed to עֲבָרוֹת (*avrot*, “angry outbursts”) as adverbial, “against,” and the following genitive “enemies” as subjective. In this case one could translate, “rise up against my furious enemies” (cf. NIV, NRSV). The present translation, however, takes the preposition as indicating manner (cf. “in your anger” in the previous line) and understands the plural form of the noun as indicating an abstract quality (“fury”) or excessive degree (“raging fury”). Cf. Job 21:30.

²² **tc** *Heb* “Wake up to me [with the] judgment [which] you have commanded.” The LXX understands אֱלֹהֵי (*ely*, “my God”) instead of אֵלַי (*elay*, “to me”); the LXX reading is followed by NEB, NIV, NRSV. If the reading of the MT is retained, the preposition probably has the sense of “on account of, for the sake of.” The noun מִשְׁפָּט (*mishpat*, “judgment”) is probably an adverbial accusative, modifying the initial imperative, “wake up.” In this case *עִוֵּת* (*isvⁱta*, “[which] you have commanded”) is an asyndetic relative clause. Some take the perfect as precativ. In this case one could translate the final line, “Wake up for my sake! Decree judgment!” (cf. NIV). However, not all grammarians are convinced that the perfect is used as a precativ in biblical Hebrew.

7:7 The countries are assembled all around you,¹ take once more your rightful place over them!²
 7:8 The LORD judges the nations.³ Vindicate me, LORD, because I am innocent,⁴ because I am blameless,⁵ O Exalted One!⁶
 7:9 May the evil deeds of the wicked⁷ come to an end!⁸ But make the innocent⁹ secure,¹⁰ O righteous God, you who examine¹¹ inner thoughts and motives!¹²
 7:10 The Exalted God is my shield,¹³ the one who delivers the morally upright.¹⁴

7:11 God is a just judge; he is angry throughout the day.¹⁵
 7:12 If a person¹⁶ does not repent, God sharpens his sword¹⁷ and prepares to shoot his bow.¹⁸
 7:13 He prepares to use deadly weapons against him,¹⁹ he gets ready to shoot flaming arrows.²⁰
 7:14 See the one who is pregnant with wickedness, who conceives destructive plans, and gives birth to harmful lies – ²¹
 7:15 he digs a pit²² and then falls into the hole he has made.²³
 7:16 He becomes the victim of his own destructive plans²⁴ and the violence he intended for others falls on his own head.²⁵
 7:17 I will thank the LORD for²⁶ his justice; I will sing praises to the sovereign LORD!²⁷

¹ **tn** *Heb* “and the assembly of the peoples surrounds you.” Some understand the prefixed verbal form as a jussive, “may the assembly of the peoples surround you.”

² **tn** *Heb* “over it (the feminine suffix refers back to the feminine noun “assembly” in the preceding line) on high return.” Some emend שׁוּבָה (*shuvah*, “return”) to שֵׁבָה (*shevah*, “sit [in judgment]”) because they find the implication of “return” problematic. But the psalmist does not mean to imply that God has abandoned his royal throne and needs to regain it. Rather he simply urges God, as sovereign king of the world, to once more occupy his royal seat of judgment and execute judgment, as the OT pictures God doing periodically.

³ **sn** *The LORD judges the nations.* In hyperbolic fashion the psalmist pictures the nations assembled around the divine throne (v. 7a). He urges God to take his rightful place on the throne (v. 7b) and then pictures him making judicial decisions that vindicate the innocent (see vv. 8-16).

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “judge me, O LORD, according to my innocence.”

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “according to my blamelessness.” The imperative verb translated “vindicate” governs the second line as well.

⁶ **tn** The Hebrew form עָלִי (*‘alah*) has been traditionally understood as the preposition עַל (*‘al*, “over”) with a first person suffix. But this is syntactically awkward and meaningless. The form is probably a divine title derived from the verbal root עָלָה (*‘alah*, “ascend”). This relatively rare title appears elsewhere in the OT (see HALOT 824-25 s.v. עָלָה), though this text is not listed) and in Ugaritic as an epithet for Baal (see G. R. Driver, *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, 98). See M. Dahood, *Psalms* (AB), 1:44-45, and P. C. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50* (WBC), 98.

⁷ **tn** In the psalms the Hebrew term רִשְׁעִים (*‘rasha'im*, “wicked”) describes people who are proud, practical atheists (Ps 10:2, 4, 11) who hate God’s commands, commit sinful deeds, speak lies and slander (Ps 50:16-20), and cheat others (Ps 37:21). They oppose God and his people.

⁸ **tn** The prefixed verbal form is a jussive, expressing an implication here.

⁹ **tn** Or “the godly” (see Ps 5:12). The singular form is collective (see the plural “upright in heart” in v. 10), though it may reflect the personal focus of the psalmist in this context.

¹⁰ **tn** The prefixed verbal form expresses the psalmist’s prayer or wish.

¹¹ **tn** For other uses of the verb in this sense, see Job 7:18; Pss 11:4; 26:2; 139:23.

¹² **tn** *Heb* “and [the one who] tests hearts and kidneys, righteous God.” The translation inverts the word order to improve the English style. The heart and kidneys were viewed as the seat of one’s volition, conscience, and moral character.

¹³ **tn** Traditionally, “my shield is upon God” (cf. NASB). As in v. 8, עַל (*‘al*) should be understood as a divine title, here compounded with “God” (cf. NIV, “God Most High”). See M. Dahood, *Psalms* (AB), 1:45-46. The shield metaphor pictures God as a protector against deadly attacks.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “pure of heart.” The “heart” is here viewed as the seat of one’s moral character and motives. The “pure of

heart” are God’s faithful followers who trust in and love the Lord and, as a result, experience his deliverance (see Pss 11:2; 32:11; 36:10; 64:10; 94:15; 97:11).

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “God (the divine name יְהוָה [*‘el*] is used) is angry during all the day.” The verb זָעַם (*zo'em*) means “be indignant, be angry, curse.” Here God’s angry response to wrongdoing and injustice leads him to prepare to execute judgment as described in the following verses.

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “If he”; the referent (a person who is a sinner) has been specified in the translation for clarity. The subject of the first verb is understood as the sinner who fails to repent of his ways and becomes the target of God’s judgment (vv. 9, 14-16).

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “if he does not return, his sword he sharpens.” The referent (God) of the pronominal subject of the second verb (“sharpens”) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “his bow he treads and prepares it.” “Treading the bow” involved stepping on one end of it in order to string it and thus prepare it for battle.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “and for him he prepares the weapons of death.”

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* “his arrows into flaming [things] he makes.”

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “and he conceives harm and gives birth to a lie.”

sn *Pregnant with wickedness...gives birth to harmful lies.* The psalmist metaphorically pictures the typical sinner as a pregnant woman, who is ready to give birth to wicked, destructive schemes and actions.

²² **tn** *Heb* “a pit he digs and he excavates it.” Apparently the imagery of hunting is employed; the wicked sinner digs this pit to entrap and destroy his intended victim. The redundancy in the Hebrew text has been simplified in the translation.

²³ **tn** The verb forms in vv. 15-16 describe the typical behavior and destiny of those who attempt to destroy others. The image of the evildoer falling into the very trap he set for his intended victim emphasizes the appropriate nature of God’s judgment.

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* “his harm [i.e., the harm he conceived for others, see v. 14] returns on his head.”

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “and on his forehead his violence [i.e., the violence he intended to do to others] comes down.”

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* “according to.”

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* “[to] the name of the LORD Most High.” God’s “name” refers metonymically to his divine characteristics as suggested by his name, in this case the compound “LORD Most High.” The divine title “Most High” (עֶלְיוֹן, *‘elyon*) pictures God as the exalted ruler of the universe who vindicates the innocent and judges the wicked. See especially Ps 47:2.

Psalm 8¹

For the music director, according to the *gittith* style,² a psalm of David.

8:1 O LORD, our Lord,³ how magnificent⁴ is your reputation⁵ throughout the earth! You reveal your majesty in the heavens above!⁶

8:2 From the mouths of children and nursing babies you have ordained praise on account of your adversaries,⁷ so that you might put an end to the vindictive enemy.⁸

8:3 When I look up at the heavens, which your fingers made, and see the moon and the stars, which you set in place,⁹

8:4 Of what importance is the human race,¹⁰ that you should notice¹¹ them? Of what importance is mankind,¹² that you should pay attention to them,¹³

8:5 and make them a little less than the heavenly beings?¹⁴

¹ **sn** Psalm 8. In this hymn to the sovereign creator, the psalmist praises God's majesty and marvels that God has given mankind dominion over the created order.

² **tn** The precise meaning of the Hebrew term *gittith* is uncertain; it probably refers to a musical style or type of instrument.

³ **tn** The plural form of the title emphasizes the LORD's absolute sovereignty.

⁴ **tn** Or "awesome"; or "majestic."

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "name," which here stands metonymically for God's reputation.

⁶ **tc** *Heb* "which, give, your majesty on the heavens." The verb form *תִּהְיֶה* (*tihi*; an imperative?) is corrupt. The form should be emended to a second masculine singular perfect (*תִּתַּחַת*, *natatah*) or imperfect (*תִּתֵּן*, *titen*) form. The introductory *אֲשֶׁר* (*asher*, "which") can be taken as a relative pronoun ("you who") or as a causal conjunction ("because"). One may literally translate, "you who [or "because you"] place your majesty upon the heavens." For other uses of the phrase "place majesty upon" see Num 27:20 and 1 Chr 29:25.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "you establish strength because of your foes." The meaning of the statement is unclear. The present translation follows the reading of the LXX which has "praise" (*αἶνος*, *ainos*) in place of "strength" (*עֹז*, *oz*); cf. NIV, NCV, NLT.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "to cause to cease an enemy and an avenger." The singular forms are collective. The Hitpael participle of *נָקַם* (*naqam*) also occurs in Ps 44:16.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "when I see your heavens, the works of your fingers, the moon and stars which you established." The verb "[and] see" is understood by ellipsis in the second half of the verse.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "What is man[kind]?" The singular noun *אֲנוּשׁ* (*enosh*, "man") is used here in a collective sense and refers to the human race.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "remember him."

¹² **tn** *Heb* "and the son of man." The phrase "son of man" is used here in a collective sense and refers to human beings. For other uses of the phrase in a collective or representative manner, see Num 23:19; Ps 146:3; Isa 51:12.

¹³ **tn** The two imperfect verbal forms in v. 4 describe God's characteristic activity.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "and you make him lack a little from [the] gods [or "God"]." The Piel form of *קָחַר* (*khasar*, "to decrease, to be devoid") is used only here and in Eccl 4:8, where it means "to deprive, to cause to be lacking." The prefixed verbal form with *vav* (ו) consecutive either carries on the characteristic nuance

You grant mankind¹⁵ honor and majesty;¹⁶ **8:6** you appoint them to rule over your creation;¹⁷

you have placed¹⁸ everything under their authority,¹⁹

8:7 including all the sheep and cattle, as well as the wild animals,²⁰

8:8 the birds in the sky, the fish in the sea and everything that moves through the currents²¹ of the seas.

8:9 O LORD, our Lord,²² how magnificent²³ is your reputation²⁴ throughout the earth!²⁵

of the imperfect in v. 5b or indicates a consequence ("so that you make him...") of the preceding statement (see GK 328 §111.m). Some prefer to make this an independent clause and translate it as a new sentence, "You made him...." In this case the statement might refer specifically to the creation of the first human couple, Adam and Eve (cf. Gen 1:26-27). The psalmist does appear to allude to Gen 1:26-27, where mankind is created in the image of God and his angelic assembly (note "let us make man in our image" in Gen 1:26). However, the psalmist's statement need not be limited in its focus to that historical event, for all mankind shares the image imparted to the first human couple. Consequently the psalmist can speak in general terms of the exalted nature of mankind. The referent of *אֱלֹהִים* (*elohim*, "God" or "the heavenly beings") is unclear. Some understand this as a reference to God alone, but the allusion to Gen 1:26-27 suggests a broader referent, including God and the other heavenly beings (known in other texts as "angels"). The term *אֱלֹהִים* is also used in this way in Gen 3:5, where the serpent says to the woman, "you will be like the heavenly beings who know good and evil." (Note Gen 3:22, where God says, "the man has become like one of us.") Also *אֱלֹהִים* may refer to the members of the heavenly assembly in Ps 82:1, 6. The LXX (the ancient Greek translation of the OT) reads "angels" in Ps 8:5 (this is the source of the quotation of Ps 8:5 in Heb 2:7).

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "you crown him [with]." The imperfect verbal forms in this and the next line describe God's characteristic activity.

¹⁶ **sn** *Honor and majesty*. These terms allude to mankind's royal status as God's vice-regents (cf. v. 6 and Gen 1:26-30).

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "you cause [i.e., "permit, allow"] him to rule over the works of your hands."

¹⁸ **tn** The perfect verbal form probably has a present perfect nuance here. It refers to the continuing effects of God's original mandate (see Gen 1:26-30).

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "under his feet."

sn *Placed everything under their authority*. This verse affirms that mankind rules over God's creation as his vice-regent. See Gen 1:26-30.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "and also the beasts of the field."

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "paths."

²² **tn** The plural form of the title emphasizes the LORD's absolute sovereignty.

²³ **tn** Or "awesome, majestic."

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* "name," which here stands metonymically for God's reputation.

²⁵ **sn** Using the poetic device of inclusio, the psalmist ends the psalm the way he began it. The concluding refrain is identical to v. 1.

Psalm 9¹

For the music director; according to the *alumoth-labben* style;² a psalm of David.

9:1 I will thank the LORD with all my heart!
I will tell about all your amazing deeds!³
9:2 I will be happy and rejoice in you!
I will sing praises to you, O sovereign One!⁴
9:3 When my enemies turn back, they trip and are defeated⁵ before you.
9:4 For you defended my just cause;⁶ from your throne you pronounced a just decision.⁷
9:5 You terrified the nations with your battle cry;⁸ you destroyed the wicked;⁹ you permanently wiped out all memory of them.¹⁰

9:6 The enemy's cities have been reduced to permanent ruins;¹¹ you destroyed their cities;¹² all memory of the enemies has perished.¹³
9:7 But the LORD¹⁴ rules¹⁵ forever; he reigns in a just manner.¹⁶
9:8 He judges the world fairly; he makes just legal decisions for the nations.¹⁷
9:9 Consequently¹⁸ the LORD provides safety for the oppressed;¹⁹ he provides safety in times of trouble.²⁰
9:10 Your loyal followers trust in you,²¹ for you, LORD, do not abandon those who seek your help.²²
9:11 Sing praises to the LORD, who rules²³ in Zion!
Tell the nations what he has done!²⁴
9:12 For the one who takes revenge against murderers took notice of the oppressed;²⁵

1 sn Psalm 9. The psalmist, probably speaking on behalf of Israel or Judah, praises God for delivering him from hostile nations. He celebrates God's sovereignty and justice, and calls on others to join him in boasting of God's greatness. Many Hebrew mss and the ancient Greek version (LXX) combine Psalms 9 and 10 into a single psalm.

2 tc The meaning of the Hebrew term עֲלֻמוֹת (*'almot*) is uncertain. Some mss divide the form into עַל מוֹת (*'al mut*, "according to the death [of the son]"), while the LXX assumes a reading עַל עֲלֻמוֹת (*'al 'alumos*, "according to *alumos*"). The phrase probably refers to a particular tune or musical style.

3 tn The cohortative forms in vv. 1-2 express the psalmist's resolve to praise God publicly.

4 tn Heb "[to] your name, O Most High." God's "name" refers metonymically to his divine characteristics as suggested by his name, in this case "Most High." This divine title (עֲלִיּוֹן, *'elyon*) pictures God as the exalted ruler of the universe who vindicates the innocent and judges the wicked. See especially Ps 47:2.

5 tn Or "perish"; or "die." The imperfect verbal forms in this line either emphasize what typically happens or describe vividly the aftermath of a recent battle in which the LORD defeated the psalmist's enemies.

6 tn Heb "for you accomplished my justice and my legal claim."

7 tn Heb "you sat on a throne [as] one who judges [with] righteousness." The perfect verbal forms in v. 4 probably allude to a recent victory (see vv. 5-7). Another option is to understand the verbs as describing what is typical ("you defend...you sit on a throne").

8 tn The verb גָּעַר (*ga'ar*) is often understood to mean "rebuke" and in this context taken to refer to the LORD's "rebuke" of the nations. In some cases it is apparent that scolding or threatening is in view (see Gen 37:10; Ruth 2:16; Zech 3:2). However, in militaristic contexts this translation is inadequate, for the verb refers in this setting to the warrior's battle cry, which terrifies and paralyzes the enemy. See A. Caquot, *TDOT* 3:53, and note the use of the verb in Pss 68:30; 106:9; and Nah 1:4, as well as the related noun in Job 26:11; Pss 18:15; 76:6; 104:7; Isa 50:2; 51:20; 66:15.

9 tn The singular form is collective (note "nations" and "their name"). In the psalms the "wicked" (רָשָׁעִים, *rasha'im*) are typically proud, practical atheists (Ps 10:2, 4, 11) who hate God's commands, commit sinful deeds, speak lies and slander (Ps 50:16-20), and cheat others (Ps 37:21). In this context the hostile nations who threaten Israel/Judah are in view.

10 tn Heb "their name you wiped out forever and ever." The three perfect verbal forms in v. 5 probably refer to a recent victory (definite past or present perfect use), although they might express what is typical (characteristic use).

11 tn Heb "the enemy – they have come to an end [in] ruins permanently." The singular form אֹיֵב (*oyev*, "enemy") is collective. It is placed at the beginning of the verse to heighten the contrast with יְהוָה (*yehvah*, "the LORD") in v. 7.

12 tn Heb "you uprooted cities."

13 tn Heb "it has perished, their remembrance, they." The independent pronoun at the end of the line is in apposition to the preceding pronominal suffix and lends emphasis (see *IBHS* 299 §16.3.4). The referent of the masculine pronoun is the nations/enemies (cf. v. 5), not the cities (the Hebrew noun עָרִים [*arim*, "cities"] is grammatically feminine). This has been specified in the present translation for clarity; many modern translations retain the pronoun "them," resulting in ambiguity (cf. NRSV "their cities you have rooted out; the very memory of them has perished").

14 tn The construction vav (ו) + subject highlights the contrast between the exalted LORD and his defeated foes (see v. 6).

15 tn Heb "sits" (i.e., enthroned, see v. 4). The imperfect verbal form highlights the generalization.

16 tn Heb "he establishes for justice his throne."

17 tn Heb "the peoples." The imperfect verbal forms in v. 8 either describe God's typical, characteristic behavior, or anticipate a future judgment of worldwide proportions ("will judge...").

18 tn Following the imperfect in v. 9, the construction vav (ו) conjunctive + shortened form of the prefixed verb הָיָה (*hayah*) indicates a consequence or result of the preceding statement. The construction functions this same way in Pss 81:15 and 104:20.

19 tn Heb "and the LORD is an elevated place for the oppressed." The singular form דָּכָא (*dakh*, "oppressed") is collective here.

20 tn Heb "[he is] an elevated place for times in trouble." Here an "elevated place" refers to a stronghold, a defensible, secure position that represents a safe haven in times of unrest or distress (cf. NEB "tower of strength"; NIV, NRSV "stronghold").

21 tn Heb "and the ones who know your name trust in you." The construction vav (ו) conjunctive + imperfect at the beginning of the verse expresses another consequence of the statement made in v. 8. "To know" the LORD's "name" means to be his follower, recognizing his authority and maintaining loyalty to him. See Ps 91:14, where "knowing" the LORD's "name" is associated with loving him.

22 tn Heb "the ones who seek you."

23 tn Heb "sits" (i.e., enthroned, and therefore ruling – see v. 4). Another option is to translate as "lives" or "dwells."

24 tn Heb "declare among the nations his deeds."

25 tn Heb "for the one who seeks shed blood remembered them." The idiomatic expression "to seek shed blood" seems

he did not overlook¹ their cry for help²
9:13 when they prayed:³
 “Have mercy on me,⁴ LORD!
 See how I am oppressed by those who
 hate me,⁵
 O one who can snatch me away⁶ from the
 gates of death!
9:14 Then I will⁷ tell about all your praise-
 worthy acts,⁸
 in the gates of Daughter Zion⁹ I will re-
 joice because of your deliverance.”¹⁰
9:15 The nations fell¹¹ into the pit they
 had made;
 their feet were caught in the net they had
 hidden.¹²
9:16 The LORD revealed himself;
 he accomplished justice;
 the wicked were ensnared by their own
 actions.¹³ (Higgaion.¹⁴ Selah)
9:17 The wicked are turned back and sent
 to Sheol,¹⁵
 this is the destiny of¹⁶ all the nations that
 ignore¹⁷ God,

9:18 for the needy are not permanently
 ignored,¹⁸
 the hopes of the oppressed are not forever
 dashed.¹⁹
9:19 Rise up, LORD!²⁰
 Don't let men be defiant!²¹
 May the nations be judged in your pres-
 ence!
9:20 Terrify them, LORD!²²
 Let the nations know they are mere mor-
 tals!²³ (Selah)

Psalm 10²⁴

10:1 Why, LORD, do you stand far off?
 Why do you pay no attention during
 times of trouble?²⁵
10:2 The wicked arrogantly chase the op-
 pressed;²⁶
 the oppressed are trapped²⁷ by the
 schemes the wicked have dreamed up.²⁸

to carry the idea “to seek payment/restitution for one’s shed blood.” The plural form דָּמִים (*damim*, “shed blood”) occurs only here as the object of דָּרַשׁ (*darash*); the singular form דָּם (*dam*, “blood”) appears with the verb in Gen 9:5; 42:22; Ezek 33:6. “Them,” the pronominal object of the verb “remembered,” refers to the oppressed, mentioned specifically in the next line, so the referent has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹ **tn** Heb “did not forget.”

² **tn** Heb “the cry for help of the oppressed.” In this context the “oppressed” are the psalmist and those he represents, whom the hostile nations have threatened.

³ **tn** The words “when they prayed,” though not represented in the Hebrew text, are supplied in the translation for clarification. The petition in vv. 13-14 is best understood as the cry for help which the oppressed offered to God when the nations threatened. The LORD answered this request, prompting the present song of thanksgiving.

⁴ **tn** Or “show me favor.”

⁵ **tn** Heb “see my misery from the ones who hate me.”

⁶ **tn** Heb “one who lifts me up.”

⁷ **tn** Or “so that I might.”

⁸ **tn** Heb “all your praise.” “Praise” stands by metonymy for the mighty acts that prompt it.

⁹ **sn** *Daughter Zion* is an idiomatic title for Jerusalem. It appears frequently in the prophets, but only here in the psalms.

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “in your deliverance.”

¹¹ **tn** Heb “sank down.”

¹² **sn** The hostility of the nations against God’s people is their downfall, for it prompts God to intervene and destroy them. See also Ps 7:15-16.

¹³ **tn** Heb “by the work of his hands [the] wicked [one] was ensnared. The singular form רָשָׁא (*rasha*, “wicked”) is collective or representative here (see vv. 15, 17). The form נוֹקֵשׁ (*noqesh*) appears to be an otherwise unattested Qal form (active participle) from נָקַשׁ (*naqash*), but the form should be emended to נוֹקָשׁ (*noqash*), a Niphal perfect from נָקַשׁ (*yaqash*).

¹⁴ **tn** This is probably a technical musical term.

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “the wicked turn back to Sheol.” The imperfect verbal form either emphasizes what typically happens or describes vividly the aftermath of the LORD’s victory over the psalmist’s enemies. See v. 3.

¹⁶ **tn** The words “this is the destiny of” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons. The verb “are turned back” is understood by ellipsis (see the preceding line).

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “forget.” “Forgetting God” refers here to worshipping false gods and thereby refusing to recognize his sovereignty (see also Deut 8:19; Judg 3:7; 1 Sam 12:9; Isa 17:10;

Jer 3:21; Ps 44:20). The nations’ refusal to acknowledge God’s sovereignty accounts for their brazen attempt to attack and destroy his people.

¹⁸ **tn** Or “forgotten.”

¹⁹ **tn** Heb “the hope of the afflicted does [not] perish forever.” The negative particle is understood by ellipsis; note the preceding line. The imperfect verbal forms express what typically happens.

²⁰ **sn** *Rise up, LORD! ... May the nations be judged.* The psalm concludes with a petition that the Lord would continue to exercise his justice as he has done in the recent crisis.

²¹ **tn** Or “prevail.”

²² **tn** Heb “place, LORD, terror with regard to them.” The Hebrew term מוֹרָא (*morah*, “terror”) is an alternative form of מוֹרָא (*mora*); a reading that appears in some mss and finds support in several ancient textual witnesses).

²³ **tn** Heb “let the nations know they [are] man[kind]”; i.e., mere human beings (as opposed to God).

²⁴ **sn** *Psalm 10*. Many Hebrew mss and the ancient Greek version (LXX) combine Psalms 9 and 10 into a single psalm. Taken in isolation, Psalm 10 is a petition for help in which the psalmist urges the Lord to deliver him from his dangerous enemies, whom he describes in vivid and terrifying detail. The psalmist concludes with confidence; he is certain that God’s justice will prevail.

²⁵ **tn** Heb “you hide for times in trouble.” The interrogative “why” is understood by ellipsis; note the preceding line. The Hiphil verbal form “hide” has no expressed object. Some supply “your eyes” by ellipsis (see BDB 761 s.v. אֵינִי Hiph and HALOT 835 s.v. אֵינִי hif) or emend the form to a Niphal (“you hide yourself,” see BHS, note c; cf. NEB, NIV, NRSV).

²⁶ **tn** Heb “because of the pride of [the] wicked he burns [i.e. hotly pursues] [the] oppressed.” The singular forms רָשָׁא (*rasha*, “wicked”) and אָנִי (*aniy*, “oppressed”) are collective and representative, as indicated in the next line, which uses plural verb forms to describe the actions of both.

²⁷ **tn** The two imperfect verbal forms in v. 2 describe either what typically happens (from the psalmist’s perspective) or what the psalmist was experiencing at the time he offered this prayer.

²⁸ **tn** Heb “they are trapped in the schemes which they have thought up.” The referents of the two pronominal suffixes on the verbs have been specified in the translation for clarity. The referent of the first suffix (“they”) is taken as the oppressed, while the referent of the second (“they”) is taken to be the wicked (cf. NIV, which renders “wicked” in the previous line as a collective singular). Others take the referent of both occurrences of “they” in the line to be the wicked (cf. NRSV, “let them be caught in the schemes they have devised”).

10:3 Yes,¹ the wicked man² boasts because he gets what he wants;³ the one who robs others⁴ curses⁵ and⁶ rejects the LORD.⁷
 10:4 The wicked man is so arrogant he always thinks, "God won't hold me accountable; he doesn't care."⁸
 10:5 He is secure at all times.⁹ He has no regard for your commands;¹⁰

he disdains all his enemies.¹¹
 10:6 He says to himself,¹² "I will never¹³ be upended, because I experience no calamity."¹⁴
 10:7 His mouth is full of curses and deceptive, harmful words,¹⁵ his tongue injures and destroys.¹⁶
 10:8 He waits in ambush near the villages;¹⁷ in hidden places he kills the innocent. His eyes look for some unfortunate victim.¹⁸
 10:9 He lies in ambush in a hidden place, like a lion in a thicket;¹⁹ he lies in ambush, waiting to catch²⁰ the oppressed; he catches the oppressed²¹ by pulling in his net.²²
 10:10 His victims are crushed and beaten down; they are trapped in his sturdy nets.²³

¹ **tn** The translation assumes כִּי (*ki*) is asseverative: "indeed, certainly." Another option is to translate "for," understanding v. 3 as giving the reason why the wicked so arrogantly seek to destroy the helpless (so NASB, NRSV).

² **tn** The representative or typical evildoer is described in vv. 3-11, 13, 15. Since the singular form predominates in these verses, it has been retained in the translation.

³ **tn** *Heb* "the wicked [one] boasts on account of the desire of his appetite." The translation assumes that the preposition עַל (*al*) introduces the reason why the wicked boasts (cf. this use of עַל with הֵלֵל [*halal*] in Ps 119:164 and Ezra 3:11). In this case, the "desire of his appetite" refers by metonymy to the object desired and acquired.

⁴ **tn** The translation assumes the active participle is substantival, referring to the wicked man mentioned in the preceding line. The substantival participle is then understood as the subject of the following verbs. For other examples of the participle of בָּטַח (*batsar*) used of those who desire and/or acquire wealth through dishonest and/or violent means, see Prov 1:19; 15:27; Jer 6:13; 8:10; Hab 2:9.

⁵ **tn** The verb בָּרַךְ (*barakh*) normally means "to bless," but in a few cases it exhibits the polarized meaning "to curse" (1 Kgs 21:10, 13; Job 1:5-11; 2:5-9). (Some regard this use of בָּרַךְ as a mere euphemism.) The verb refers to the act of pronouncing or calling down a formal curse upon the object of one's anger.

⁶ **tn** The conjunction "and" is supplied in the translation; it does not appear in the Hebrew text.

⁷ **tn** Another option is to translate, "he blesses one who robs others, [but] he curses the LORD." In this case the subject of the verbs is "the wicked man" mentioned in the previous line, and "the one who robs others" is the object of the verb בָּרַךְ (*barakh*), which is understood in its usual sense of "bless."

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "the wicked [one], according to the height of his nose, he does not seek, there is no God, all his thoughts." The phrase "height of his nose" probably refers to an arrogant or snooty attitude; it likely pictures one with his nose turned upward toward the sky in pride. One could take the "wicked" as the subject of the negated verb "seek," in which case the point is that the wicked do not "seek" God. The translation assumes that this statement, along with "there is no God," is what the wicked man thinks to himself. In this case God is the subject of the verb "seek," and the point is that God will not hold the wicked man accountable for his actions. Verse 13 strongly favors this interpretation. The statement "there is no God" is not a philosophical assertion that God does not exist, but rather a confident affirmation that he is unconcerned about how men live morally and ethically (see v. 11).

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "they are firm, his ways, at every time." The verb הָיִל (*khayil*, "be firm, be strong") occurs only here and in Job 20:21, where it has the sense "endure."

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "[on a] height, your judgments from before him." If the MT is retained, then the idea may be that God's "judgments" are high above (i.e., not recognized) by the wicked man. However, the syntax is awkward. The translation assumes an emendation of מְרוֹם (*marom*, "height") to סָרוּ (*saru*, "[your judgments] are turned aside"), the final *mem* (ם) being dittographic (note the initial *mem* on the immediately following word מִשְׁפָּטֵיךָ [*mishpataykha*, "your judgments"]). "Judgments" probably refers here to God's laws or commands, rather than his judicial decisions or acts of judgment.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "all his enemies, he snorts against them." This may picture the wicked man defiantly challenging his enemies because he is confident of success. Another option is to take בָּיַח (*yafiah*) from the root יָבַח (*yafakh*, "to testify") and translate "he testifies against all his enemies," implying that he gets the upper hand over them in legal battles. The noun יָבִיחַ (*yafeah*, "witness") is attested in biblical Hebrew (see Prov 6:19; 12:17; 14:5, 25; 19:5, 9, and Hab 2:3). The verb, however, is not clearly attested.

¹² **tn** *Heb* "he says in his heart/mind."

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "for a generation and a generation." The traditional accentuation of the MT understands these words with the following line.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "who, not in calamity." If אָשֶׁר (*asher*) is taken as a relative pronoun here, then one could translate, "[I] who [am] not in calamity." Some emend אָשֶׁר to אֲשֶׁר (*asher*, "happiness"; see HALOT 99 s.v. אֲשֶׁר); one might then translate, "[I] live in] happiness, not in calamity." The present translation assumes that אָשֶׁר functions here as a causal conjunction, "because, for." For this use of אָשֶׁר, see BDB 83 s.v. אָשֶׁר 8.c (where the present text is not cited).

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "[with] a curse his mouth is full, and lies in injury."

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "under his tongue are destruction and wickedness." The words translated "destruction and wickedness" are also paired in Ps 90:10. They also appear in proximity in Pss 7:14 and 55:10.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "he sits in the ambush of the villages."

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "his eyes for an unfortunate person lie hidden." The language may picture a lion (see v. 9) peering out from its hiding place in anticipation that an unsuspecting victim will soon come strolling along.

¹⁹ **tn** Or "in its den."

²⁰ **tn** The verb, which also appears in the next line, occurs only here and in Judg 21:21.

²¹ **tn** The singular form is collective (see v. 10) or refers to the typical or representative oppressed individual.

²² **tn** Or "when he [i.e., the wicked man] pulls in his net."

²³ **tn** The background of the imagery is hunting, where the hunter uses a net to entrap an unsuspecting bird or wild animal.

²³ **tn** *Heb* "he crushes, he is bowed down, and he falls into his strong [ones], [the] unfortunate [ones]." This verse presents several lexical and syntactical difficulties. The first word יִדְּכֶה (*yidekeh*) is an otherwise unattested Qal form of the verb דָּכָה (*dakhah*, "crush"). The *Qere* [marginal] form is imperfect; the consonantal text [*Kethib*] has the perfect with a prefixed conjunction *vav* (וּ), If the wicked man's victim is the subject, which seems to be the case (note the two verbs which follow), then the form should be emended to a Niphal (יִדְּכֶה, *yiddakkeh*). The phrase בְּעִצְמוֹתָיו (*ba'atumayy*, "into his strong

10:11 He says to himself,¹
“God overlooks it;
he does not pay attention;
he never notices.”²

10:12 Rise up, LORD!³
O God, strike him down!⁴
Do not forget the oppressed!

10:13 Why does the wicked man reject
God?⁵

He says to himself,⁶ “You⁷ will not hold
me accountable.”⁸

10:14 You have taken notice,⁹
for¹⁰ you always see¹¹ one who inflicts
pain and suffering.¹²

The unfortunate victim entrusts his cause
to you;¹³

you deliver¹⁴ the fatherless.¹⁵

10:15 Break the arm¹⁶ of the wicked and
evil man!

Hold him accountable for his wicked
deeds,¹⁷

which he thought you would not dis-
cover.¹⁸

10:16 The LORD rules forever!¹⁹

The nations are driven out of his land.²⁰

10:17 LORD, you have heard²¹ the request²²
of the oppressed;

you make them feel secure because you
listen to their prayer.²³

10:18 You defend²⁴ the fatherless and
oppressed,²⁵

[ones]”), poses interpretive problems. The preposition בְּ (*bet*) follows the verb נָפַל (*nafal*, “fall”), so it may very well carry the nuance “into” here, with “his strong [ones]” then referring to something into which the oppressed individual falls. Since a net is mentioned in the preceding verse as the instrument used to entrap the victim, it is possible that “strong [ones]” here refers metonymically to the wicked man’s nets or traps. Ps 35:8 refers to a man falling into a net (רֶשֶׁת , *reshet*), as does Ps 141:10 (where the plural of מִכְחַמַּר [*mikhmar*, “net”] is used). A hunter’s net (רֶשֶׁת), is associated with snares (פָּרָה [*pakh*], מִקְשִׁים [*moq’shim*]) and ropes (חֲבָלִים , *khavalim*) in Ps 140:5. The final word in the verse (חֲלֵלְכָאִים [*khelka’im*, “unfortunate [ones]”) may be an alternate form of חֲלֵלְכַחַּח (*khelkhakh*, “unfortunate [one]”; see vv. 8, 14). The *Qere* (marginal reading) divides the form into two words, חֵלְ כָאִים (*khel ka’im*, “arm/host of disheartened [ones]”). The three verb forms in v. 10 are singular because the representative “oppressed” individual is the grammatical subject (see the singular אֵי [*any*] in v. 9).

¹ **tn** *Heb* “he says in his heart.” See v. 6.

² **tn** *Heb* “God forgets, he hides his face, he never sees.”

³ **sn** *Rise up, O LORD!* The psalmist’s mood changes from lament to petition and confidence.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “lift up your hand.” Usually the expression “lifting the hand” refers to praying (Pss 28:2; 134:2) or making an oath (Ps 106:26), but here it probably refers to “striking a blow” (see 2 Sam 18:28; 20:21). Note v. 15, where the psalmist asks the LORD to “break the arm of the wicked.” A less likely option is that the psalmist is requesting that the LORD declare by oath his intention to intervene.

⁵ **tn** The rhetorical question expresses the psalmist’s outrage that the wicked would have the audacity to disdain God.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “he says in his heart” (see vv. 6, 11). Another option is to understand an ellipsis of the interrogative particle here (cf. the preceding line), “Why does he say in his heart?”

⁷ **tn** Here the wicked man addresses God directly.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “you will not seek.” The verb דָּרַשׁ (*darash*, “seek”) is used here in the sense of “seek an accounting.” One could understand the imperfect as generalizing about what is typical and translate, “you do not hold [people] accountable.”

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “you see.” One could translate the perfect as generalizing, “you do take notice.”

¹⁰ **tn** If the preceding perfect is taken as generalizing, then one might understand כִּי (*ki*) as asseverative: “indeed, certainly.”

¹¹ **tn** Here the imperfect emphasizes God’s typical behavior.

¹² **tn** *Heb* “destruction and suffering,” which here refers metonymically to the wicked, who dish out pain and suffering to their victims.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “to give into your hand, upon you, he abandons, [the] unfortunate [one].” The syntax is awkward and the meaning unclear. It is uncertain who or what is being given into God’s hand. Elsewhere the idiom “give into the hand” means to deliver into one’s possession. If “to give” goes with what precedes (as the accentuation of the Hebrew text suggests), then this may refer to the wicked man being delivered

over to God for judgment. The present translation assumes that “to give” goes with what follows (cf. NEB, NIV, NRSV). The verb יָצַב (*ya’azov*) here has the nuance “entrust” (see Gen 39:6; Job 39:11); the direct object (“[his] cause”) is implied.

¹⁴ **tn** Or “help.”

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “[for] one who is fatherless, you are a deliverer.” The noun יָתוֹם (*yatom*) refers to one who has lost his father (not necessarily his mother, see Ps 109:9).

¹⁶ **sn** *The fatherless.* Because they were so vulnerable and were frequently exploited, fatherless children are often mentioned as epitomizing the oppressed (see Pss 68:5; 82:3; 94:6; 146:9; as well as Job 6:27; 22:9; 24:3, 9; 29:12; 31:17, 21).

¹⁷ **sn** The *arm* symbolizes the strength of the wicked, which they use to oppress and exploit the weak.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “you seek his wickedness.” As in v. 13, the verb דָּרַשׁ (*darash*, “seek”) is used here in the sense of “seek an accounting.” One could understand the imperfect as describing a fact, “you hold him accountable,” or as anticipating divine judgment, “you will hold him accountable.” However, since the verb is in apparent parallelism with the preceding imperative (“break”), it is better to understand the imperfect as expressing the psalmist’s desire or request.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “you will not find.” It is uncertain how this statement relates to what precedes. Some take בָּל (*bal*), which is used as a negative particle in vv. 4, 6, 11, 18, as asseverative here, “Indeed find (i.e., judge his wickedness).” The translation assumes that the final words are anasyndetic relative clause which refers back to what the wicked man boasted in God’s face (“you will not find [i.e., my wickedness]”). See v. 13.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* “the LORD is king forever and ever.”

²¹ **tn** Or “the nations perish from his land.” The perfect verb form may express what is typical or it may express rhetorically the psalmist’s certitude that God’s deliverance is “as good as done.”

²² **sn** *The nations* may be the underlying reality behind the psalmist’s references to the “wicked” in the earlier verses. This reference to the nations may have motivated the combining of Ps 10 with Ps 9 (see Ps 9:5, 15, 19).

²³ **sn** *You have heard.* The psalmist is confident that God has responded positively to his earlier petitions for divine intervention. The psalmist apparently prayed the words of vv. 16-18 after the reception of an oracle of deliverance (given in response to the confident petition of vv. 12-15) or after the LORD actually delivered him from his enemies.

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* “desire.”

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “you make firm their heart, you cause your ear to listen.”

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* “to judge (on behalf of),” or “by judging (on behalf of).”

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* “crushed.” See v. 10.

so that mere mortals may no longer terrorize them.¹

Psalms 11²

For the music director; by David.

11:1 In the LORD I have taken shelter.³

How can you say to me,⁴
“Flee to a mountain like a bird!⁵

11:2 For look, the wicked⁶ prepare⁷ their bows,⁸

they put their arrows on the strings,
to shoot in the darkness⁹ at the morally upright.¹⁰

11:3 When the foundations¹¹ are destroyed,
what can the godly¹² accomplish?”¹³

1 *tn* Heb “he will not add again [i.e., “he will no longer”] to terrify, man from the earth.” The Hebrew term עָנֹשׁ (*enosh*, “man”) refers here to the wicked nations (v. 16). By describing them as “from the earth,” the psalmist emphasizes their weakness before the sovereign, eternal king.

2 *sn* *Psalms 11*. The psalmist rejects the advice to flee from his dangerous enemies. Instead he affirms his confidence in God’s just character and calls down judgment on evildoers.

3 *tn* The Hebrew perfect verbal form probably refers here to a completed action with continuing results.

4 *tn* The pronominal suffix attached to נֶפֶשׁ (*nefesh*) is equivalent to a personal pronoun. See Ps 6:3.

5 *tc* The MT is corrupt here. The *Kethib* (consonantal text) reads: “flee [masculine plural!] to your [masculine plural!] mountain, bird.” The *Qere* (marginal reading) has “flee” in a feminine singular form, agreeing grammatically with the addressee, the feminine noun “bird.” Rather than being a second masculine plural pronominal suffix, the ending כֶּ- (*-khem*) attached to “mountain” is better interpreted as a second feminine singular pronominal suffix followed by an enclitic *mem* (ם). “Bird” may be taken as vocative (“O bird”) or as an adverbial accusative of manner (“like a bird”). Either way, the psalmist’s advisers compare him to a helpless bird whose only option in the face of danger is to fly away to an inaccessible place.

6 *tn* In the psalms the “wicked” (רָשָׁעִים, *rasha'im*) are typically proud, practical atheists (Ps 10:2, 4, 11) who hate God’s commands, commit sinful deeds, speak lies and slander (Ps 50:16-20), and cheat others (Ps 37:21). They oppose God and threaten his people (Ps 3:8).

7 *tn* The Hebrew imperfect verbal form depicts the enemies’ hostile action as underway.

8 *tn* Heb “a bow.”

9 *sn* *In the darkness*. The enemies’ attack, the precise form of which is not indicated, is compared here to a night ambush by archers; the psalmist is defenseless against this deadly attack.

10 *tn* Heb “pure of heart.” The “heart” is here viewed as the seat of one’s moral character and motives. The “pure of heart” are God’s faithful followers who trust in and love the Lord and, as a result, experience his deliverance (see Ps 7:10; 32:11; 36:10; 64:10; 94:15; 97:11).

11 *tn* The precise meaning of this rare word is uncertain. An Ugaritic cognate is used of the “bottom” or “base” of a cliff or mountain (see G. R. Driver, *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, 47, 159). The noun appears in postbiblical Hebrew with the meaning “foundation” (see Jastrow 1636 s.v. יָסַד).

12 *tn* The singular form is used here in a collective or representative sense. Note the plural form “pure [of heart]” in the previous verse.

13 *sn* The quotation of the advisers’ words (which begins in 11:1c) ends at this point. They advise the psalmist to flee because the enemy is poised to launch a deadly attack. In such a lawless and chaotic situation godly people like the psalmist can accomplish nothing, so they might as well retreat to a safe place.

11:4 The LORD is in his holy temple;¹⁴
the LORD’s throne is in heaven.¹⁵

His eyes¹⁶ watch;¹⁷
his eyes¹⁸ examine¹⁹ all people.²⁰

11:5 The LORD approves of²¹ the godly,²²
but he²³ hates²⁴ the wicked and those who
love to do violence.²⁵

11:6 May the LORD rain down²⁶ burning
coals²⁷ and brimstone²⁸ on the wicked!
A whirlwind is what they deserve!²⁹

14 *tn* Because of the royal imagery involved here, one could translate “lofty palace.” The Lord’s heavenly temple is in view here (see Mic 1:2-4).

15 *sn* *The Lord’s throne is in heaven*. The psalmist is confident that the Lord reigns as sovereign king, “keeps an eye on” all people, and responds in a just manner to the godly and wicked.

16 *sn* *His eyes*. The anthropomorphic language draws attention to God’s awareness of and interest in the situation on earth. Though the enemies are hidden by the darkness (v. 2), the Lord sees all.

17 *tn* The two Hebrew imperfect verbal forms in this verse describe the Lord’s characteristic activity.

18 *tn* Heb “eyelids.”

19 *tn* For other uses of the verb in this sense, see Job 7:18; Pss 7:9; 26:2; 139:23.

20 *tn* Heb “test the sons of men.”

21 *tn* Heb “examines,” the same verb used in v. 4b. But here it is used in a metonymic sense of “examine and approve” (see Jer 20:12).

22 *tn* The singular form is used here in a collective or representative sense. Note the plural form “pure (of heart)” in v. 2.

23 *tn* Heb “his [very] being.” A נֶפֶשׁ (*nefesh*, “being, soul”) is also attributed to the Lord in Isa 1:14, where a suffixed form of the noun appears as the subject of the verb “hate.” Both there and here the term is used of the seat of one’s emotions and passions.

24 *sn* *He hates the wicked*. The Lord “hates” the wicked in the sense that he despises their wicked character and deeds, and actively opposes and judges them for their wickedness. See Ps 5:5.

25 *tn* Heb “the wicked [one] and the lover of violence.” The singular form is used here in a collective or representative sense. Note the plural form רָשָׁעִים (*rasha'im*, “wicked [ones]”) in v. 2 and 6.

26 *tn* The verb form is a jussive, indicating that the statement is imprecatory (“May the Lord rain down”), not indicative (“The Lord rains down”; see also Job 20:23). The psalmist appeals to God to destroy the wicked, rather than simply stating his confidence that God will do so. In this way the psalmist seeks to activate divine judgment by appealing to God’s just character. For an example of the power of such a curse, see Judg 9:7-57.

27 *tc* The MT reads “traps, fire, and brimstone,” but the image of God raining traps, or snares, down from the sky is bizarre and does not fit the fire and storm imagery of this verse. The noun פָּחִים (*pakhim*, “traps, snares”) should be emended to פָּחָמַי (*pakhamey*, “coals of [fire]”). The rare noun פָּחָם (*pakhām*, “coal”) occurs in Prov 26:21 and Isa 44:12; 54:16.

28 *sn* The image of God “raining down” brimstone on the objects of his judgment also appears in Gen 19:24 and Ezek 38:22.

29 *tn* Heb “[may] a wind of rage [be] the portion of their cup.” The precise meaning of the rare noun זֵיל אֶפֶת (*zil’afot*) is uncertain. It may mean “raging heat” (BDB 273 s.v. זֵיל אֶפֶת) or simply “rage” (HALOT 272 s.v. זֵיל אֶפֶת). If one understands the former sense, then one might translate “hot wind” (cf. NEB, NRSV). The present translation assumes the latter nuance, “a wind of rage” (the genitive is attributive) referring to a “whirlwind” symbolic of destructive judgment. In this mixed metaphor, judgment is also compared to an allotted portion of a beverage poured into one’s drinking cup (see Hab 2:15-16).

11:7 Certainly¹ the LORD is just;²
he rewards godly deeds;³
the upright will experience his favor.⁴

Psalm 12⁵

For the music director; according to the *sheminit*
style;⁶ a psalm of David.

12:1 Deliver, LORD!
For the godly⁷ have disappeared;⁸
people of integrity⁹ have vanished.¹⁰
12:2 People lie to one another;¹¹
they flatter and deceive.¹²
12:3 May the LORD cut off¹³ all flattering lips,

¹ tn Or "for."

² tn Or "righteous."

³ tn Heb "he loves righteous deeds." The "righteous deeds" are probably those done by godly people (see v. 5). The Lord "loves" such deeds in the sense that he rewards them. Another option is to take צדקות (*ts'ddaqot*) as referring to God's acts of justice (see Ps 103:6). In this case one could translate, "he loves to do just deeds."

⁴ tn Heb "the upright will see his face." The singular subject ("upright") does not agree with the plural verb. However, collective singular nouns can be construed with a plural predicate (see GKC 462 §145.b). Another possibility is that the plural verb יִרְאוּ (*yekhezu*) is a corruption of an original singular form. To "see" God's "face" means to have access to his presence and to experience his favor (see Ps 17:15 and Job 33:26 [where יָרָא (*ra'ah*), not יָרָה (*khashah*), is used]). On the form פָּנָיו (*fanemo*, "his face") see GKC 300-301 §103.b, n. 3.

⁵ sn Psalm 12. The psalmist asks the Lord to intervene, for society is overrun by deceitful, arrogant oppressors and godly individuals are a dying breed. When the Lord announces his intention to defend the oppressed, the psalmist affirms his confidence in the divine promise.

⁶ tn The meaning of the Hebrew term שְׁמִינִית (*sh^eminit*) is uncertain; perhaps it refers to a particular style of music. See 1 Chr 15:21.

⁷ tn The singular form is collective or representative. Note the plural form "faithful [ones]" in the following line. A "godly [one]" (רַחֲמֵי, *khasid*) is one who does what is right in God's eyes and remains faithful to God (see Pss 4:3; 18:25; 31:23; 37:28; 86:2; 97:10).

⁸ tn Or "have come to an end."

⁹ tn Heb "the faithful [ones] from the sons of man."

¹⁰ tn The Hebrew verb פָּסַח (*pasas*) occurs only here. An Akkadian cognate means "efface, blot out."

¹¹ tn Heb "falsehood they speak, a man with his neighbor." The imperfect verb forms in v. 2 describe what is typical in the psalmist's experience.

¹² tn Heb "[with] a lip of smoothness, with a heart and a heart they speak." Speaking a "smooth" word refers to deceptive flattery (cf. Ps 5:9; 55:21; Prov 2:16; 5:3; 7:5, 21; 26:28; 28:23; Isa 30:10). "Heart" here refers to their mind, from which their motives and intentions originate. The repetition of the noun indicates diversity (see GKC 396 §123.f, *IBHS* 1.16 §7.2.3c, and Deut 25:13, where the phrase "weight and a weight" refers to two different measuring weights). These people have two different types of "hearts." Their flattering words seem to express kind motives and intentions, but this outward display does not really reflect their true motives. Their real "heart" is filled with evil thoughts and destructive intentions. The "heart" that is seemingly displayed through their words is far different from the real "heart" they keep disguised. (For the idea see Ps 28:3.) In 1 Chr 12:33 the phrase "without a heart and a heart" means "undivided loyalty."

¹³ tn The verb form is a jussive, indicating that the statement is imprecatory ("May the LORD cut off"), not indicative ("The LORD will cut off"; see also Ps 109:15 and Mal 2:12). The psalmist appeals to God to destroy the wicked, rather than simply stating his confidence that he will. In this way he seeks to activate divine judgment by appealing to God's just character. For an example of the power of such a curse, see Judg 9:7-57.

and the tongue that boasts!¹⁴
12:4 They say,¹⁵ "We speak persuasively;¹⁶
we know how to flatter and boast.¹⁷
Who is our master?"¹⁸

12:5 "Because of the violence done to the
oppressed,¹⁹
because of the painful cries²⁰ of the
needy,
I will spring into action,"²¹ says the LORD.
"I will provide the safety they so desper-
ately desire."²²

12:6 The LORD's words are absolutely reli-
able.²³

They are as untainted as silver purified in
a furnace on the ground,
where it is thoroughly refined.²⁴

12:7 You, LORD, will protect them;²⁵

¹⁴ tn Heb "a tongue speaking great [things]."

¹⁵ tn Heb "which say." The plural verb after the relative pronoun indicates a plural antecedent for the pronoun, probably "lips" in v. 3.

¹⁶ tn Heb "to our tongue we make strong." The Hiphil of גָּבַר (*gavar*) occurs only here and in Dan 9:27, where it refers to making strong, or confirming, a covenant. Here in Ps 12 the evildoers "make their tongue strong" in the sense that they use their tongue to produce flattering and arrogant words to accomplish their purposes. The preposition לְ (*l*) prefixed to "our tongue" may be dittographic.

¹⁷ tn Heb "our lips [are] with us." This odd expression probably means, "our lips are in our power," in the sense that they say what they want, whether it be flattery or boasting. For other cases where אִתּוֹ (*et*, "with") has the sense "in the power of," see Ps 38:10 and other texts listed by BDB 86 s.v. 3.a.

¹⁸ sn The rhetorical question expresses the arrogant attitude of these people. As far as they are concerned, they are answerable to no one for how they speak.

¹⁹ tn The term translated "oppressed" is an objective genitive; the oppressed are the recipients/victims of violence.

²⁰ tn Elsewhere in the psalms this noun is used of the painful groans of prisoners awaiting death (79:11; 102:20). The related verb is used of the painful groaning of those wounded in combat (Jer 51:52; Ezek 26:15) and of the mournful sighing of those in grief (Ezek 9:4; 24:17).

²¹ tn Heb "I will rise up."

²² tn Heb "I will place in deliverance, he pants for it." The final two words in Hebrew (יַפְיֹאֵךְ לוֹ, *yafiak lo*) comprise an asyndetic relative clause, "the one who pants for it." "The one who pants" is the object of the verb "place" and the antecedent of the pronominal suffix (in the phrase "for it") is "deliverance." Another option is to translate, "I will place in deliverance the witness for him," repositing יַפְיֹאֵךְ (a Hiphil imperfect form פָּיַח, *puakh*, "pant") as יַפְיֹאֵךְ (*yafeahk*), a noun meaning "witness." In this case the LORD would be promising protection to those who have the courage to support the oppressed in the court of law. However, the first part of the verse focuses on the oppressed, not their advocates.

²³ tn Heb "the words of the LORD are pure words," i.e., untainted by falsehood or deception (in contrast to the flattery of the evildoers, v. 2).

²⁴ tn Heb "[like] silver purified in a furnace of [i.e., "on"] the ground, refined seven times." The singular participle מְצֻקָּק (*m^ezuqqaq*, "refined") modifies "silver." The number seven is used rhetorically to express the thorough nature of the action. For other rhetorical/figurative uses of שִׁבְעֵתַיִם (*shiv'atayim*, "seven times"), see Gen 4:15, 24; Ps 79:12; Prov 6:31; Isa 30:26.

²⁵ tn The third person plural pronominal suffix on the verb is masculine, referring back to the "oppressed" and "needy" in v. 5 (both of those nouns are plural in form), suggesting that the verb means "protect" here. The suffix does not refer to אֲמָרוֹת (*amarot*, "words") in v. 6, because that term is feminine gender.

you will continually shelter each one
from these evil people,¹
12:8 for the wicked seem to be every-
where,²
when people promote evil.³

Psalm 13⁴

For the music director; a psalm of David.

13:1 How long, LORD, will you continue
to ignore me?⁵
How long will you pay no attention to
me?⁶
13:2 How long must I worry,⁷
and suffer in broad daylight?⁸
How long will my enemy gloat over me?⁹
13:3 Look at me!¹⁰ Answer me, O LORD
my God!
Revive me,¹¹ or else I will die!¹²
13:4 Then¹³ my enemy will say, "I have
defeated him!"

¹ **tn** *Heb* "you will protect him from this generation permanently." The third masculine singular suffix on the verb "protect" is probably used in a distributive sense, referring to each one within the group mentioned previously (the oppressed/ needy, referred to as "them" in the preceding line). On this grammatical point see GKC 396 §123.f (where the present text is not cited). (Some Hebrew mss and ancient textual witnesses read "us," both here and in the preceding line.) The noun דור (*dor*, "generation") refers here to the psalmist's contemporaries, who were characterized by deceit and arrogance (see vv. 1-2). See BDB 189-90 s.v. for other examples where "generation" refers to a class of people.

² **tn** *Heb* "the wicked walk all around." One could translate v. 8a as an independent clause, in which case it would be a concluding observation in proverbial style. The present translation assumes that v. 8a is a subordinate explanatory clause, or perhaps a subordinate temporal clause ("while the wicked walk all around"). The adverb כָּבִיב (*saviv*, "around"), in combination with the Hitpael form of the verb "walk" (which indicates repeated action), pictures the wicked as ubiquitous. They have seemingly overrun society.

³ **tn** *Heb* "when evil is lifted up by the sons of man." The abstract noun זָלוּת (*zulut*, "evil") occurs only here. On the basis of evidence from the cognate languages (see *HALOT* 272 s.v.), one might propose the meaning "base character," or "morally foolish behavior."

⁴ **sn** *Psalm 13*. The psalmist, who is close to death, desperately pleads for God's deliverance and affirms his trust in God's faithfulness.

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "will you forget me continually."

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "will you hide your face from me."

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "How long will I put counsel in my being?"

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "[with] grief in my heart by day."

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "be exalted over me." Perhaps one could translate, "How long will my enemy defeat me?"

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "see."

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "Give light [to] my eyes." The Hiphil of אָוֹר (*ur*), when used elsewhere with "eyes" as object, refers to the law of God giving moral enlightenment (Ps 19:8), to God the creator giving literal eyesight to all people (Prov 29:13), and to God giving encouragement to his people (Ezra 9:8). Here the psalmist pictures himself as being on the verge of death. His eyes are falling shut and, if God does not intervene soon, he will "fall asleep" for good.

¹² **tn** *Heb* "or else I will sleep [in?] the death." Perhaps the statement is elliptical, "I will sleep [the sleep] of death," or "I will sleep [with the sleepers in] death."

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "or else."

Then¹⁴ my foes will rejoice because I am
upended.
13:5 But I¹⁵ trust in your faithfulness.
May I rejoice because of your deliver-
ance!¹⁶
13:6 I will sing praises¹⁷ to the LORD
when he vindicates me.¹⁸

Psalm 14¹⁹

For the music director; by David.

14:1 Fools say to themselves,²⁰ "There is
no God."²¹
They sin and commit evil deeds;²²
none of them does what is right.²³
14:2 The LORD looks down from heaven²⁴
at the human race,²⁵
to see if there is anyone who is wise²⁶ and
seeks God.²⁷
14:3 Everyone rejects God;²⁸
they are all morally corrupt.²⁹
None of them does what is right,³⁰
not even one!

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "or else."

¹⁵ **tn** The grammatical construction used here (conjunction with independent pronoun) highlights the contrast between the psalmist's defeated condition envisioned in v. 4 and confident attitude he displays in v. 5.

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "may my heart rejoice in your deliverance." The verb form is jussive. Having expressed his trust in God's faithful character and promises, the psalmist prays that his confidence will prove to be well-placed. "Heart" is used here of the seat of the emotions.

¹⁷ **tn** The verb form is cohortative, indicating the psalmist's resolve (or vow) to praise the LORD when deliverance arrives.

¹⁸ **tn** Or "for he will have vindicated me." The verb form indicates a future perfect here. The idiom גָּמַל עָלַי (*gamal 'al*) means "to repay," here in a positive sense.

¹⁹ **sn** *Psalm 14*. The psalmist observes that the human race is morally corrupt. Evildoers oppress God's people, but the psalmist is confident of God's protection and anticipates a day when God will vindicate Israel.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "a fool says in his heart." The singular is used here in a collective or representative sense; the typical fool is envisioned.

²¹ **sn** "There is no God." The statement is probably not a philosophical assertion that God does not exist, but rather a confident affirmation that God is unconcerned about how men live morally and ethically (see Ps 10:4, 11).

²² **tn** *Heb* "they act corruptly, they make a deed evil." The verbs describe the typical behavior of the wicked. The subject of the plural verbs is "sons of man" (v. 2). The entire human race is characterized by sinful behavior. This practical atheism – living as if there is no God who will hold them accountable for their actions – makes them fools, for one of the earmarks of folly is to fail to anticipate the long range consequences of one's behavior.

²³ **tn** *Heb* "there is none that does good."

²⁴ **sn** The picture of the LORD looking down from heaven draws attention to his sovereignty over the world.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "upon the sons of man."

²⁶ **tn** Or "acts wisely." The Hiphil is exhibitiv.

²⁷ **sn** *Anyone who is wise and seeks God* refers to the person who seeks to have a relationship with God by obeying and worshiping him.

²⁸ **tn** *Heb* "everyone turns aside."

²⁹ **tn** *Heb* "together they are corrupt."

³⁰ **tn** *Heb* "there is none that does good."

14:4 All those who behave wickedly¹ do not understand – ²

those who devour my people as if they were eating bread, and do not call out to the LORD.

14:5 They are absolutely terrified,³ for God defends the godly.⁴

14:6 You want to humiliate the oppressed,⁵ even though⁶ the LORD is their⁷ shelter.

14:7 I wish the deliverance⁸ of Israel would come from Zion!

When the LORD restores the well-being of his people,⁹

may Jacob rejoice,¹⁰ may Israel be happy!¹¹

*Psalm 15*¹²

A psalm of David.

15:1 LORD, who may be a guest in your home?¹³

Who may live on your holy hill?¹⁴

15:2 Whoever lives a blameless life,¹⁵ does what is right, and speaks honestly.¹⁶

15:3 He¹⁷ does not slander,¹⁸

or do harm to others,¹⁹ or insult his neighbor.²⁰

15:4 He despises a reprobate,²¹ but honors the LORD's loyal followers.²²

He makes firm commitments and does not renege on his promise.²³

15:5 He does not charge interest when he lends his money.²⁴

He does not take bribes to testify against the innocent.²⁵

The one who lives like this²⁶ will never be upended.

¹ **tn** *Heb* "all the workers of wickedness." See Pss 5:5; 6:8.

² **tn** *Heb* "Do they not understand?" The rhetorical question (rendered in the translation as a positive affirmation) expresses the psalmist's amazement at their apparent lack of understanding. This may refer to their lack of moral understanding, but it more likely refers to their failure to anticipate God's defense of his people (see vv. 5-7).

³ **tn** *Heb* "there they are afraid [with] fear." The perfect verbal form is probably used in a rhetorical manner; the psalmist describes the future demise of the oppressors as if it were already occurring. The adverb שָׁמַיִם (*sham*, "there") is also used here for dramatic effect, as the psalmist envisions the wicked standing in fear at a spot that is this vivid in his imagination (BDB 1027 s.v.). The cognate accusative following the verb emphasizes the degree of their terror.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "for God is with a godly generation." The Hebrew noun דֹר (*dor*, "generation") refers here to the general class of people who are characterized by godliness. See BDB 190 s.v. for other examples where "generation" refers to a class of people.

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "the counsel of the oppressed you put to shame." Using a second person plural verb form, the psalmist addresses the wicked. Since the context indicates their attempt to harm the godly will be thwarted, the imperfect should be taken in a subjunctive (cf. NASB, NRSV) rather than an indicative manner (cf. NIV). Here it probably expresses their desire or intent ("want to humiliate").

⁶ **tn** It is unlikely that כִּי (*ki*) has a causal force here. The translation assumes a concessive force; another option is to understand an asseverative use ("certainly, indeed").

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "his." The antecedent of the singular pronoun is the singular form אָנִי ('*ani*, "oppressed") in the preceding line. The singular is collective or representative here (and thus translated as plural, "they").

⁸ **sn** *The deliverance of Israel.* This refers metonymically to God, the one who lives in Zion and provides deliverance for Israel.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "turns with a turning [toward] his people." The Hebrew term שׁוּבָת (*shuvut*) is apparently a cognate accusative of שׁוּב (*shuv*).

¹⁰ **tn** The verb form is jussive.

¹¹ **tn** Because the parallel verb is jussive, this verb, which is ambiguous in form, should be taken as a jussive as well.

¹² **sn** *Psalm 15.* This psalm describes the character qualities that one must possess to be allowed access to the divine presence.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "Who may live as a resident foreigner in your tent?"

¹⁴ **sn** In this context the Lord's *holy hill* probably refers to Zion/Jerusalem. See Isa 66:20; Joel 2:1; 3:17; Zech 8:3; Pss 2:6; 43:3; 48:1; 87:1; Dan 9:16.

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "one who walks blamelessly."

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "one who speaks truth in his heart"; or "one who speaks truth [that is] in his heart." This apparently refers to formulating a truthful statement in one's mind and then honestly revealing that statement in one's speech.

¹⁷ **sn** Hebrew literature often assumes and reflects the male-oriented perspective of ancient Israelite society. The principle of the psalm is certainly applicable to all people, regardless of their gender or age.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "he does not slander upon his tongue." For another example of רָגַל (*ragal*, "slander") see 2 Sam 19:28.

¹⁹ **tn** Or "his fellow."

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "and he does not lift up an insult against one who is near to him."

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "despised in his eyes [is] a rejected [one]." The Hebrew term נִמְאָס (*nim'as*, "rejected [one]") apparently refers here to one who has been rejected by God because of his godless behavior. It stands in contrast to "those who fear God" in the following line.

²² **tn** *Heb* "those who fear the LORD." The one who fears the LORD respects his sovereignty and obeys his commandments. See Ps 128:1; Prov 14:2.

²³ **tn** *Heb* "he takes an oath to do harm and does not change." The phrase "to do harm" cannot mean "do harm to others," for the preceding verse clearly characterizes this individual as one who does *not* harm others. In this context the phrase must refer to an oath to which a self-imprecation is attached. The godly individual takes his commitments to others so seriously he is willing to "swear to his own hurt." For an example of such an oath, see Ruth 1:16-17.

²⁴ **sn** *He does not charge interest.* Such an individual is truly generous, and not simply concerned with making a profit.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "a bribe against the innocent he does not take." For other texts condemning the practice of a judge or witness taking a bribe, see Exod 23:8; Deut 16:19; 27:25; 1 Sam 8:3; Ezek 22:12; Prov 17:23.

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "does these things."

Psalm 16¹

A prayer² of David.

16:1 Protect me, O God, for I have taken shelter in you.³

16:2 I say to the LORD, “You are the Lord, my only source of well-being.”⁴

16:3 As for God’s chosen people who are in the land, and the leading officials I admired so much⁵ –

16:4 their troubles multiply, they desire other gods.⁶

I will not pour out drink offerings of blood to their gods,⁷

nor will I make vows in the name of their gods.⁸

16:5 LORD, you give me stability and prosperity;⁹

you make my future secure.¹⁰

16:6 It is as if I have been given fertile fields

or received a beautiful tract of land.¹¹

16:7 I will praise¹² the LORD who¹³ guides¹⁴ me;

yes, during the night I reflect and learn.¹⁵

16:8 I constantly trust in the LORD;¹⁶

because he is at my right hand, I will not be upended.

16:9 So my heart rejoices

and I am happy;¹⁷

My life is safe.¹⁸

¹ **sn** Psalm 16. The psalmist seeks divine protection because he has remained loyal to God. He praises God for his rich blessings, and is confident God will vindicate him and deliver him from death.

² **tn** The precise meaning of the Hebrew term מִבְּתָחַם (*mikh-tam*) is uncertain. HALOT 582-83 s.v. defines it as “inscription.”

³ **tn** The Hebrew perfect verbal form probably refers here to a completed action with continuing results (see 7:1; 11:1).

sn Taken shelter. “Taking shelter” in the Lord is an idiom for seeking his protection. Seeking his protection presupposes and even demonstrates the subject’s loyalty to the Lord. In the psalms those who “take shelter” in the Lord are contrasted with the wicked and equated with those who love, fear and serve the Lord (Ps 5:11-12; 31:17-20; 34:21-22).

⁴ **tn** Heb “my good [is] not beyond you.” For the use of the preposition עַל (*al*) in the sense of “beyond,” see BDB 755 s.v. 2.

⁵ **tn** Heb “regarding the holy ones who [are] in the land, they; and the mighty [ones] in [whom is/was] all my desire.” The difficult syntax makes the meaning of the verse uncertain. The phrase “holy ones” sometimes refers to God’s angelic assembly (see Ps 89:5, 7), but the qualifying clause “who are in the land” suggests that here it refers to God’s people (Ps 34:9) or to their priestly leaders (2 Chr 35:3).

⁶ **tn** Heb “their troubles multiply, another, they pay a dowry.” The meaning of the text is unclear. The Hebrew term עֲצֻבוֹתָם (*ats^votam*, “troubles”) appears to be a plural form of עֲצֻבָה (*ats^vet*, “pain, wound”; see Job 9:28; Ps 147:3). Because idolatry appears to be in view (see v. 4b), some prefer to emend the noun to עֲצֻבִים (*ats^vim*, “idols”). “Troubles” may be a wordplay on “idols” or a later alteration designed to emphasize that idolatry leads to trouble. The singular form אֲחֵר (“another”) is syntactically problematic here. Perhaps the form should be emended to a plural אֲחֵרִים (*akherim*, “others”). (The final *mem* [מ] could have been lost by haplography; note the *mem* [מ] at the beginning of the next word.) In this case it might be taken as an abbreviated form of the well-attested phrase אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים (*elohim akherim*, “other gods”). (In Isa 42:8 the singular form אֲחֵר (*akher*, “another”) is used of another god.) The verb בָּחַר (*mahar*) appears in the Qal stem; the only other use of a Qal verbal form of a root בָּחַר is in Exod 22:15, where the denominative verb בָּחַר (*mahor*, “purchase [a wife]”) appears; cf. the related noun בִּתּוּחַ (*mohar*, “bride money, purchase price for a wife”). If that verb is understood here, then the idolaters are pictured as eager bridegrooms paying the price to acquire the object of their desire. Another option is to emend the verb to a Piel and translate, “hurry (after).”

⁷ **tn** Heb “I will not pour out their drink offerings of blood.” The third masculine plural suffix would appear to refer back to the people/leaders mentioned in v. 3. However, if we emend רֵחַ (*akher*, “another”) to the plural אֲחֵרִים (*akherim*, “other [gods]”) in v. 4, the suffix can be understood as referring to these gods – “the drink offerings [made to] them.” The next line favors this interpretation. Perhaps this refers to some type of pagan cultic ritual. Elsewhere wine is the prescribed content of drink offerings.

⁸ **tn** Heb “and I will not lift up their names upon my lips.” The expression “lift up the name” probably refers here to swearing an oath in the name of deity (see Exod 20:7; Deut 5:11). If so, the third masculine plural suffix on “names” likely refers to the pagan gods, not the people/leaders. See the preceding note.

⁹ **tn** Heb “O LORD, the portion of my possession and my cup”; or “the LORD [is] the portion of my possession and my cup.” The psalmist compares the LORD to landed property, which was foundational to economic stability in ancient Israel, and to a cup of wine, which may symbolize a reward (in Ps 11:6 it symbolizes the judgment one deserves) or divine blessing (see Ps 23:5). The metaphor highlights the fact that God is the psalmist’s source of security and prosperity.

¹⁰ **tc** Heb “you take hold of my lot.” The form תִּחַזְקֶנּוּ (*tomikh*) should be emended to a participle, תֹּחֶזֶק (*tomekh*). The psalmist pictures the LORD as casting his lot (a method used to allot landed property) for him, thus assuring that he will receive a fertile piece of land (see v. 6). As in the previous line, land represents security and economic stability, thus “you make my future secure.”

¹¹ **tn** Heb “measuring lines have fallen for me in pleasant [places]; yes, property [or “an inheritance”] is beautiful for me.” On the dative use of עָלַי, see BDB 758 s.v. II.8. Extending the metaphor used in v. 5, the psalmist compares the divine blessings he has received to a rich, beautiful tract of land that one might receive by allotment or inheritance.

¹² **tn** Heb “bless,” that is, “proclaim as worthy of praise.”

¹³ **tn** Or “because.”

¹⁴ **tn** Or “counsels, advises.”

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “yes, [during] nights my kidneys instruct [or “correct”] me.” The “kidneys” are viewed here as the seat of the psalmist’s moral character (see Ps 26:2). In the quiet darkness the LORD speaks to his inner being, as it were, and enables him to grow in moral understanding.

¹⁶ **tn** Heb “I set the LORD before me continually.” This may mean that the psalmist is aware of the LORD’s presence and sensitive to his moral guidance (see v. 7), or that he trusts in the LORD’s protection (see the following line).

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “my glory is happy.” Some view the Hebrew term כְּבוֹדִי (*k^evodiy*, “my glory”) as a metonymy for man’s inner being (see BDB 459 s.v. II בְּבוֹד 5), but it is preferable to emend the form to כֶּבֶדִי (*k^evediy*, “my liver”). Like the heart, the liver is viewed as the seat of one’s emotions. See also Pss 30:12; 57:9; 108:1, as well as H. W. Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament*, 64, and M. Dahood, *Psalms* (AB), 1:90. For an Ugaritic example of the heart/liver as the source of joy, see G. R. Driver, *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, 47-48: “her [Anat’s] liver swelled with laughter, her heart was filled with joy, the liver of Anat with triumph.”

¹⁸ **tn** Heb “yes, my flesh dwells securely.” The psalmist’s “flesh” stands by metonymy for his body and, by extension, his physical life.

16:10 You will not abandon me⁴ to Sheol;²
 you will not allow your faithful follower³
 to see⁴ the Pit.⁵
 16:11 You lead me in⁶ the path of life;⁷
 I experience absolute joy in your presence;⁸
 you always give me sheer delight.⁹

Psalms 17¹⁰

A prayer of David.

17:1 LORD, consider my just cause!¹¹
 Pay attention to my cry for help!
 Listen to the prayer
 I sincerely offer!¹²
 17:2 Make a just decision on my behalf!¹³
 Decide what is right!¹⁴

17:3 You have scrutinized my inner motives;¹⁵
 you have examined me during the night.¹⁶
 You have carefully evaluated me, but you
 find no sin.
 I am determined I will say nothing sinful.¹⁷
 17:4 As for the actions of people¹⁸ –
 just as you have commanded,
 I have not followed in the footsteps of
 violent men.¹⁹
 17:5 I carefully obey your commands;²⁰
 I do not deviate from them.²¹
 17:6 I call to you for you will answer me,
 O God.
 Listen to me!²²
 Hear what I say!²³
 17:7 Accomplish awesome, faithful
 deeds,²⁴
 you who powerfully deliver those who
 look to you for protection from their
 enemies.²⁵
 17:8 Protect me as you would protect the
 pupil of your eye!²⁶
 Hide me in the shadow of your wings!²⁷

¹ tn Or “my life.” The suffixed form of נֶפֶשׁ (*nefesh*, “being”) is often equivalent to a pronoun in poetic texts.

² sn In ancient Israelite cosmology *Sheol* is the realm of the dead, viewed as being under the earth’s surface. See L. I. J. Stadelmann, *The Hebrew Conception of the World*, 165-76.

³ tn A “faithful follower” (חֲסִיד [khasid], traditionally rendered “holy one”) is one who does what is right in God’s eyes and remains faithful to God (see Pss 4:3; 12:1; 18:25; 31:23; 37:28; 86:2; 97:10). The psalmist here refers to himself, as the parallel line (“You will not abandon me to Sheol”) indicates.

⁴ tn That is, “experience.” The psalmist is confident that the Lord will protect him in his present crisis (see v. 1) and prevent him from dying.

⁵ sn According to Peter, the words of Ps 16:8-11 are applicable to Jesus (Acts 2:25-29). Peter goes on to argue that David, being a prophet, foresaw future events and spoke of Jesus’ resurrection from the dead (Acts 2:30-33). Paul seems to concur with Peter in this understanding (see Acts 13:35-37). For a discussion of the NT application of these verses to Jesus’ resurrection, see R. B. Chisholm, Jr., “A Theology of the Psalms,” *A Biblical Theology of the Old Testament*, 292-95.

⁶ tn The Hebrew word שָׁחַת (*shakhat*, “pit”) is often used as a title for Sheol (see Pss 30:9; 49:9; 55:24 HT [55:23 ET]; 103:4). Note the parallelism with the previous line.

⁷ tn Heb “cause me to know”; or “cause me to experience.”

⁸ tn This is a metaphorical way of saying, “you preserve my life.” The phrase “path of life” stands in contrast to death/Sheol in Prov 2:18-19; 5:5-6; 15:24.

⁹ tn Heb “abundance of joy [is] with your face.” The plural form of the noun שִׂמְחָה (*simkhah*, “joy”) occurs only here and in Ps 45:15. It may emphasize the degree of joy experienced.

¹⁰ tn Heb “delight [is] in your right hand forever.” The plural form of the adjective נְיָיִם (*na'im*, “pleasant, delightful”) may here emphasize the degree of delight experienced (see Job 36:11).

¹¹ sn *Psalms 17*. The psalmist asks God to intervene on his behalf because his life is threatened by dangerous enemies. He appeals to divine justice, for he is certain of his own innocence. Because he is innocent, he expects to encounter God and receive an assuring word.

¹² tn Heb “hear, LORD, what is just.”

¹³ tn Heb “Listen to my prayer, [made] without lips of deceit.”

¹⁴ tn Heb “From before you may my justice come out.” The prefixed verbal form מֵצָא (*yatsa*) could be taken as an imperfect, but following the imperatives in v. 1, it is better understood as a jussive of prayer.

¹⁵ tn Heb “May your eyes look at what is right.” The prefixed verbal form is understood as jussive. (See also the preceding note on the word “behave.”)

¹⁵ tn Heb “you tested my heart.”

¹⁶ tn Heb “you visited [at] night.”

¹⁷ tc Heb “you tested me, you do not find, I plan, my mouth will not cross over.” The Hebrew verbal form זָמַתִּי (*zammotiy*) is a Qal perfect, first person singular from the root זָמַם (*zamam*, “plan, plan evil”). Some emend the form to a suffixed form of the noun, זָמַתִּי (*zimmatiy*, “my plan/evil plan”), and take it as the object of the preceding verb “find.” However, the suffix seems odd, since the psalmist is denying that he has any wrong thoughts. If one takes the form with what precedes, it might make better sense to read זָמַתִּי (*zimmot*, “evil plans”). However, this emendation leaves an unclear connection with the next line. The present translation maintains the verbal form found in the MT and understands it in a neutral sense, “I have decided” (see Jer 4:28). The words “my mouth will not cross over” (i.e., “transgress, sin”) can then be taken as a noun clause functioning as the object of the verb.

¹⁸ tn Heb “with regard to the deeds of man[kind].”

¹⁹ tn Heb “by the word of your lips, I, I have watched the paths of the violent” (i.e., “watched”) in the sense of “watched for the purpose of avoiding”).

²⁰ tn Heb “my steps stay firm in your tracks.” The infinitive absolute functions here as a finite verb (see GKC 347 §113. gg). God’s “tracks” are his commands, i.e., the moral pathways he has prescribed for the psalmist.

²¹ tn Heb “my footsteps do not stagger.”

²² tn Heb “Turn your ear toward me.”

²³ tn Heb “my word.”

²⁴ tn Heb “Set apart faithful acts.”

²⁵ tn Heb “[O] one who delivers those who seek shelter from the ones raising themselves up, by your right hand.” The Lord’s “right hand” here symbolizes his power to protect and deliver.

²⁶ sn *Those who look to you for protection from their enemies*. “Seeking shelter” in the Lord is an idiom for seeking his protection. Seeking his protection presupposes and even demonstrates the subject’s loyalty to the Lord. In the psalms those who “take shelter” in the Lord are contrasted with the wicked and equated with those who love, fear and serve the Lord (Pss 5:11-12; 31:17-20; 34:21-22).

²⁷ tc Heb “Protect me like the pupil, a daughter of an eye.” The noun בַּת (*bat*, “daughter”) should probably be emended to בָּבַת (*bavat*, “pupil”). See Zech 2:12 HT (2:8 ET) and HALOT 107 s.v. *בָּבַת.

²⁷ sn *Your wings*. The metaphor compares God to a protective mother bird.

17:9 Protect me from¹ the wicked men
who attack² me,
my enemies who crowd around me for
the kill.³

17:10 They are calloused,⁴
they speak arrogantly.⁵

17:11 They attack me, now they surround
me,⁶

they intend to throw me to the ground.⁷

17:12 He⁸ is like a lion⁹ that wants to tear
its prey to bits,¹⁰
like a young lion crouching¹¹ in hidden
places.

17:13 Rise up, LORD!

Confront him!¹² Knock him down!¹³

Use your sword to rescue me from the
wicked man!¹⁴

17:14 LORD, use your power to deliver me
from these murderers,¹⁵

from the murderers of this world!¹⁶

They enjoy prosperity;¹⁷

you overwhelm them with the riches they
desire.¹⁸

They have many children,
and leave their wealth to their offspring.¹⁹

17:15 As for me, because I am innocent I
will see your face,²⁰

when I awake you will reveal yourself to
me.²¹

¹ **tn** Heb “from before”; or “because.” In the Hebrew text v. 9 is subordinated to v. 8. The words “protect me” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

² **tn** Heb “destroy.” The psalmist uses the perfect verbal form to emphasize the degree of danger. He describes the wicked as being already in the process of destroying him.

³ **tn** Heb “my enemies, at the risk of life they surround me.” The Hebrew phrase בְּנִפְשׁוֹ (b^enefesh) sometimes has the nuance “at the risk of [one’s] life” (see 1 Kgs 2:23; Prov 7:23; Lam 5:9).

⁴ **tn** Heb “their fat they close.” The Hebrew term חֵלֶב (*khelev*, “fat”) appears to stand by metonymy for their calloused hearts. They attack the psalmist without feeling any pity or remorse. Some propose emending the text to לִבָּנוּ (*khelev libbano*, “fat of their heart[s]”; cf. Ps 119:70, “their heart is insensitive like fat”). This assumes haplography of the לב (*lamed-bet*) consonantal sequence.

⁵ **tn** Heb “[with] their mouth they speak with arrogance.”

⁶ **tc** Heb “our steps, now they surround me.” The *Kethib* (consonantal text) has “surround me,” while the *Qere* (marginal reading) has “surround us,” harmonizing the pronoun to the preceding “our steps.” The first person plural pronoun does not fit the context, where the psalmist speaks as an individual. In the preceding verses the psalmist uses a first person singular verbal or pronominal form twenty times. For this reason it is preferable to emend “our steps” to אֲשִׁירֵי (‘*ish^eruni*, “they attack me”) from the verbal root אָשַׁר (*ashur*, “march, stride, track”).

⁷ **tn** Heb “their eyes they set to bend down in the ground.”

⁸ **tn** Here the psalmist switches to the singular pronoun; he views his enemies collectively, or singles out a representative of the group, perhaps its leader.

⁹ **tn** Heb “his likeness [is] like a lion.”

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “[that] longs to tear.”

¹¹ **tn** Heb “sitting.”

¹² **tn** Heb “Be in front of his face.”

¹³ **tn** Or “bring him to his knees.”

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “rescue my life from the wicked [one] [by] your sword.”

¹⁵ **tc** Heb “from men [by] your hand, LORD.” The translation assumes an emendation (both here and in the following line) of מִמִּיתִים (*mimitim*, “from men”) to מִמִּימִיתִים (*minimtitim*, “from those who kill”). For other uses of the plural form of the Hiphil participle of מוּת (*mut*, “die”), see 2 Kgs 17:26 (used with lions as subject), Job 33:22 (apparently referring to the agents of death), and Jer 26:15 (used of those seeking Jeremiah’s life).

¹⁶ **tn** Heb “from men, from [the] world.” On the emendation of “men” to “murderers,” see the preceding note on the word “murderers.”

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “their portion, in life.”

¹⁸ **tn** Heb “and [with] your treasures you fill their belly.”

¹⁹ **sn** You overwhelm them with the riches they desire. The psalmist is not accusing God of being unjust; he is simply observing that the wicked often prosper and that God is the ultimate source of all blessings that human beings enjoy (see Matt 5:45). When the wicked are ungrateful for God’s blessings, they become even more culpable and deserving of judgment. So this description of the wicked actually supports the psalmist’s appeal for deliverance. God should rescue him because he is innocent (see vv. 3-5) and because the wicked, though blessed abundantly by God, still have the audacity to attack God’s people.

²⁰ **tn** Heb “they are satisfied [with] sons and leave their abundance to their children.”

²¹ **tn** Heb “I, in innocence, I will see your face.” To “see” God’s “face” means to have access to his presence and to experience his favor (see Ps 11:7; see also Job 33:26 [where רָאָה (*ra’ah*), not רָחַז (*khazah*), is used]). Here, however, the psalmist may be anticipating a mystical experience. See the following note on the word “me.”

²¹ **tn** Heb “I will be satisfied, when I awake, [with] your form.” The noun מְבוֹהָה (*m^ebovaha*) normally carries the nuance “likeness” or “form.” In Job 4:16 it refers to a ghostlike spiritual entity (see v. 15) that revealed itself to Eliphaz during the night. The psalmist may anticipate a mystical encounter with God in which he expects to see a manifestation of God’s presence (i.e., a theophany), perhaps in conjunction with an oracle of deliverance. During the quiet darkness of the night, God examines the psalmist’s inner motives and finds them to be pure (see v. 3). The psalmist is confident that when he awakens, perhaps sometime during the night or in the morning, he will be visited by God and assured of vindication.

²¹ **sn** When I awake you will reveal yourself to me. Some see in this verse an allusion to resurrection. According to this view, when the psalmist awakens from the sleep of death, he will see God. It is unlikely that the psalmist had such a highly developed personal eschatology. As noted above, it is more likely that he is anticipating a divine visitation and mystical encounter as a prelude to his deliverance from his enemies.

Psalm 18¹

For the music director; by the LORD's servant David, who sang² to the LORD the words of this song when³ the LORD rescued him from the power⁴ of all his enemies, including Saul.⁵

18:1 He said:⁶

"I love⁷ you, LORD, my source of strength!⁸

18:2 The LORD is my high ridge,⁹ my stronghold,¹⁰ my deliverer.

My God is my rocky summit where¹¹ I take shelter,¹²

my shield, the horn that saves me,¹³ and my refuge.¹⁴

18:3 I called¹⁵ to the LORD, who is worthy of praise,¹⁶

and I was delivered from my enemies.

18:4 The waves¹⁷ of death engulfed me,¹⁸ the currents¹⁸ of chaos¹⁹ overwhelmed me.²⁰

18:5 The ropes of Sheol tightened around me,²¹

the snares of death trapped me.²²

18:6 In my distress I called to the LORD;

I cried out to my God.²³

From his heavenly temple²⁴ he heard my voice;

he listened to my cry for help.²⁵

¹ **sn** Psalm 18. In this long song of thanks, the psalmist (a Davidic king, traditionally understood as David himself) affirms that God is his faithful protector. He recalls in highly poetic fashion how God intervened in awesome power and delivered him from death. The psalmist's experience demonstrates that God vindicates those who are blameless and remain loyal to him. True to his promises, God gives the king victory on the battlefield and enables him to subdue nations. A parallel version of the psalm appears in 2 Sam 22:1-51.

² **tn** Heb "spoke."

³ **tn** Heb "in the day," or "at the time."

⁴ **tn** Heb "hand."

⁵ **tn** Heb "and from the hand of Saul."

⁶ **tn** A number of translations (e.g., NASB, NIV, NRSV) assign the words "he said" to the superscription, in which case the entire psalm is in first person. Other translations (e.g., NAB) include the introductory "he said" at the beginning of v. 1.

⁷ **tn** The verb רָחַם (*rakhām*) elsewhere appears in the Piel (or Pual) verbal stem with the basic meaning, "have compassion." The verb occurs only here in the basic (Qal) stem. The basic stem of the verbal root also occurs in Aramaic with the meaning "love" (see DNWSI 2:1068-69; Jastrow 1467 s.v. רָחַם; G. Schmuttermayr, "rhm: eine lexikalische Studie," *Bib* 51 [1970]: 515-21). Since this introductory statement does not appear in the parallel version in 2 Sam 22:1-51, it is possible that it is a later addition to the psalm, made when the poem was revised for use in worship.

⁸ **tn** Heb "my strength." "Strength" is metonymic here, referring to the Lord as the one who bestows strength to the psalmist; thus the translation "my source of strength."

⁹ **sn** My high ridge. This metaphor pictures God as a rocky, relatively inaccessible summit, where one would be able to find protection from enemies. See 1 Sam 23:25, 28.

¹⁰ **sn** My stronghold. David often found safety in such strongholds. See 1 Sam 22:4-5; 24:22; 2 Sam 5:9, 17; 23:14.

¹¹ **tn** Or "in whom."

¹² **sn** Take shelter. "Taking shelter" in the Lord is an idiom for seeking his protection. Seeking his protection presupposes and even demonstrates the subject's loyalty to the Lord. In the psalms those who "take shelter" in the Lord are contrasted with the wicked and equated with those who love, fear and serve the Lord (Pss 5:11-12; 31:17-20; 34:21-22).

¹³ **tn** Heb "the horn of my salvation"; or "my saving horn."

^{sn} Though some see "horn" as referring to a horn-shaped peak of a hill, or to the "horns" of an altar where one could find refuge, it is more likely that the horn of an ox underlies the metaphor (cf. Deut 33:17; 1 Kgs 22:11; Ps 92:10). The horn of the wild ox is frequently a metaphor for military strength; the idiom "exalt the horn" signifies military victory (see 1 Sam 2:10; Pss 89:17, 24; 92:10; Lam 2:17). In the ancient Near East powerful warrior-kings would sometimes compare themselves to a goring bull that uses its horns to kill its enemies. For examples, see P. Miller, "El the Warrior," *HTR* 60 (1967): 422-25, and R. B. Chisholm, "An Exegetical and Theological Study of Psalm 18/2 Samuel 22" (Th.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1983), 135-36. Ps 18:2 uses the metaphor of the horn in a slightly different manner. Here the Lord himself is compared to a horn. He is to the psalmist what the horn is to the ox, a source of defense and victory.

¹⁴ **tn** Or "my elevated place." The parallel version of this

psalm in 2 Sam 22:3 adds at this point, "my refuge, my savior, [you who] save me from violence."

¹⁵ **tn** In this song of thanksgiving, where the psalmist recalls how the Lord delivered him, the prefixed verbal form is best understood as a preterite indicating past tense, not an imperfect.

¹⁶ **tn** Heb "worthy of praise, I cried out [to] the LORD." Some take מְהוֹלָל (*mehullal*, "worthy of praise") with what precedes and translate, "the praiseworthy one," or "praiseworthy." However, the various epithets in vv. 1-2 have the first person pronominal suffix, unlike מְהוֹלָל. If one follows the traditional verse division and takes מְהוֹלָל with what follows, it is best understood as substantival and as appositional to יְהוָה (*yehvah*): "[to the] praiseworthy one I cried out, [to the] LORD."

¹⁷ **tc** Ps 18:4 reads "ropes," while 2 Sam 22:5 reads "waves." The reading of the psalm has been influenced by the next verse (note "ropes of Sheol") and perhaps also by Ps 116:3 (where "ropes of death" appears, as here, with the verb אָפַף, *afaf*). However, the parallelism of v. 4 (note "currents" in the next line) favors the reading "waves." While the verb אָפַף is used with "ropes" as subject in Ps 116:3, it can also be used with engulfing "waters" as subject (see Jonah 2:5). Death is compared to surging waters in v. 4 and to a hunter in v. 5.

¹⁸ **tn** The Hebrew noun נַחַל (*nakhāl*) usually refers to a river or stream, but in this context the plural form likely refers to the currents of the sea (see vv. 15-16).

¹⁹ **tn** The noun בְּלִיעָה (*blī'ya'at*) is used here as an epithet for death. Elsewhere it is a common noun meaning "wickedness, uselessness." It is often associated with rebellion against authority and other crimes that result in societal disorder and anarchy. The phrase "man/son of wickedness" refers to one who opposes God and the order he has established. The term becomes an appropriate title for death, which, through human forces, launches an attack against God's chosen servant.

²⁰ **tn** In this poetic narrative context the prefixed verbal form is best understood as a preterite indicating past tense, not an imperfect. (Note the perfect verbal form in the parallel/preceding line.) The verb בָּעַת (*ba'at*) sometimes by metonymy carries the nuance "frighten," but the parallelism (see "engulfed") favors the meaning "overwhelm" here.

²¹ **tn** Heb "surrounded me."

²² **tn** Heb "confronted me."

²³ **tn** In this poetic narrative context the four prefixed verbal forms in v. 6 are best understood as preterites indicating past tense, not imperfections.

²⁴ **tn** Heb "from his temple." Verse 10, which pictures God descending from the sky, indicates that the heavenly temple is in view, not the earthly one.

²⁵ **tc** Heb "and my cry for help before him came into his ears." 2 Sam 22:7 has a shorter reading, "my cry for help, in his ears." It is likely that Ps 18:6 MT as it now stands represents a conflation of two readings: (1) "my cry for help came before him," (2) "my cry for help came into his ears." See F. M. Cross and D. N. Freedman, *Studies in Ancient Yahwistic Poetry* (SBLDS), 144, n. 13.

18:7 The earth heaved and shook;¹
 the roots of the mountains² trembled;³
 they heaved because he was angry.
 18:8 Smoke ascended from⁴ his nose;⁵
 fire devoured as it came from his mouth;⁶
 he hurled down fiery coals.⁷
 18:9 He made the sky sink⁸ as he de-
 scended;
 a thick cloud was under his feet.
 18:10 He mounted⁹ a winged angel¹⁰ and
 flew;

he glided¹¹ on the wings of the wind.¹²
 18:11 He shrouded himself in darkness,¹³
 in thick rain clouds.¹⁴
 18:12 From the brightness in front of him
 came
 hail and fiery coals.¹⁵
 18:13 The LORD thundered¹⁶ in¹⁷ the sky;

1 sn *The earth heaved and shook.* The imagery pictures an earthquake in which the earth's surface rises and falls. The earthquake motif is common in OT theophanies of God as warrior and in ancient Near Eastern literary descriptions of warring gods and kings. See R. B. Chisholm, "An Exegetical and Theological Study of Psalm 18/2 Samuel 22" (Th.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1983), 160-62.

2 tn 2 Sam 22:8 has "heavens" which forms a merism with "earth" in the preceding line. The "foundations of the heavens" would be the mountains. However, the reading "foundations of the mountains" has a parallel in Deut 32:22.

3 tn In this poetic narrative context the prefixed verbal form is best understood as a preterite indicating past tense, not an imperfect. Note the three prefixed verbal forms with *vav* (ו) consecutive in the verse.

4 tn *Heb* "within"; or "[from] within." For a discussion of the use of the preposition ב (b^t) here, see R. B. Chisholm, "An Exegetical and Theological Study of Psalm 18/2 Samuel 22" (Th.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1983), 163-64.

5 tn Or "in his anger." The noun אף (*af*) can carry the abstract meaning "anger," but the parallelism (note "from his mouth") suggests the more concrete meaning "nose" here. See also v. 15, "the powerful breath of your nose."

6 tn *Heb* "fire from his mouth devoured." In this poetic narrative context the prefixed verbal form is best understood as a preterite indicating past tense, not an imperfect. Note the two perfect verbal forms in the verse.

sn *Fire devoured as it came from his mouth.* For other examples of fire as a weapon in OT theophanies and ancient Near Eastern portrayals of warring gods and kings, see R. B. Chisholm, "An Exegetical and Theological Study of Psalm 18/2 Samuel 22" (Th.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1983), 165-67.

7 tn *Heb* "coals burned from him." Perhaps the psalmist pictures God's fiery breath igniting coals (cf. Job 41:21), which he then hurls as weapons (cf. Ps 120:4).

8 tn The Hebrew verb נָחַה (*natah*) can carry the sense "[cause to] bend, bow down." For example, Gen 49:15 pictures Issachar as a donkey that "bends" its shoulder or back under a burden. Here the LORD causes the sky, pictured as a dome or vault, to sink down as he descends in the storm.

9 tn Or "rode upon."

10 tn *Heb* "a cherub." Because of the typical associations of the word "cherub" in English with chubby winged babies, the term has been rendered "winged angel" in the translation.

sn *Winged angel* (*Heb* "cherub"). Cherubs, as depicted in the OT, possess both human and animal (lion, ox, and eagle) characteristics (see Ezek 1:10; 10:14, 21; 41:18). They are pictured as winged creatures (Exod 25:20; 37:9; 1 Kgs 6:24-27; Ezek 10:8, 19) and serve as the very throne of God when the ark of the covenant is in view (Pss 80:1; 99:1; see Num 7:89; 1 Sam 4:4; 2 Sam 6:2; 2 Kgs 19:15). The picture of the LORD seated on the cherubs suggests they might be used by him as a vehicle, a function they carry out in Ezek 1:22-28 (the "living creatures" mentioned here are identified as cherubs in Ezek 10:20). In Ps 18:10 the image of a cherub serves to personify the wind (see the next line of the psalm).

11 tc 2 Sam 22:11 reads "appeared" (from רָאָה, *ra'ah*); the relatively rare verb הָיָה (*da'ah*, "glide") is more difficult and probably the original reading here in Ps 18.

12 sn *The wings of the wind.* Verse 10 may depict (1) the LORD riding a cherub, which is in turn propelled by the wind current. Another option (2) is that two different vehicles (a cherub and the wind) are envisioned. Yet another option (3) is that the wind is personified as a cherub. For a discussion of ancient Near Eastern parallels to the imagery in v. 10, see M. Weinfeld, "Rider of the Clouds" and 'Gatherer of the Clouds,'" *JANESCU* 5 (1973): 422-24.

13 tc *Heb* "he made darkness his hiding place around him, his covering." 2 Sam 22:12 reads, "he made darkness around him coverings," omitting "his hiding place" and pluralizing "covering." Ps 18:11 may include a conflation of synonyms ("his hiding place" and "his covering") or 2 Sam 22:12 may be the result of haplography/homoioarcton. Note that three successive words in Ps 18:11 begin with the Hebrew letter *samek*: סִתְרוּ סְבִיבוֹתָיו סִכְרוּ (*sitro s^vivotayv sukkato*).

14 tc *Heb* "darkness of water, clouds of clouds." The noun "darkness" (הַשְׁכְּתָה, *kheshekhat*) is probably a corruption of an original reading הוֹשֶׁרֶת, a form that is preserved in 2 Sam 22:12. The latter is a construct form of הַשְׁרָה (*khashrah*, "sieve") which occurs only here in the OT. A cognate Ugaitic noun means "sieve," and a related verb הַשְׁרָה (*khashar*, "to sift") is attested in postbiblical Hebrew and Aramaic. The phrase הַשְׁרָה מַיִם (*khashrat mayim*) means literally "a sieve of water." It pictures the rain clouds as a sieve through which the rain falls to the ground (see F. M. Cross and D. N. Freedman, *Studies in Ancient Yahwistic Poetry* [SBLDS], 146, n. 33).

15 tc *Heb* "from the brightness in front of him his clouds came, hail and coals of fire." 2 Sam 22:13 reads, "from the brightness in front of him burned coals of fire." The Lucianic family of texts within the Greek tradition of 2 Sam 22:13 seems to assume the underlying Hebrew text: מִנְּהַר עָבְרוּ אֵשׁ בָּרָד וְנֹהֵלֵי אֵשׁ "from the brightness in front of him came hail and coals of fire" (the basis for the present translation). The textual situation is perplexing and the identity of the original text uncertain. The verbs עָבְרוּ (*avaru*; Ps 18:12) and נָבְרוּ (*ba'aru*; 2 Sam 22:13) appear to be variants involving a transposition of the first two letters. The noun עָבָיִם (*avayv*, "his clouds," Ps 18:12) may be virtually dittographic (note the following נָבְרוּ, *avaru*), or it could have accidentally dropped out from the text of 2 Sam 22:13 by virtual haplography (note the preceding נָבְרוּ, which might have originally read עָבְרוּ). The noun בָּרָד (*barad*, "hail," Ps 18:12) may be virtually dittographic (note the preceding עָבְרוּ), or it could have dropped out from 2 Sam 22:13 by virtual haplography (note the preceding נָבְרוּ, which might have originally read עָבְרוּ). For a fuller discussion of the text and its problems, see R. B. Chisholm, "An Exegetical and Theological Study of Psalm 18/2 Samuel 22" (Th.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1983), 74-76.

16 sn Thunder is a common motif in OT theophanies and in ancient Near Eastern portrayals of the storm god and warring kings. See R. B. Chisholm, "An Exegetical and Theological Study of Psalm 18/2 Samuel 22" (Th.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1983), 179-83.

17 tn 2 Sam 22:14 has "from."

the sovereign One¹ shouted.²
18:14 He shot his³ arrows and scattered
 them.⁴
 many lightning bolts⁵ and routed them.⁶
18:15 The depths⁷ of the sea⁸ were ex-
 posed;
 the inner regions⁹ of the world were un-
 covered
 by¹⁰ your battle cry,¹¹ LORD,
 by the powerful breath from your nose.¹²

¹ **tn** Heb “the Most High.” This divine title (עֲלִיּוֹן, *’elyon*) pictures God as the exalted ruler of the universe who vindicates the innocent and judges the wicked. See especially Ps 47:2.

² **tc** The text of Ps 18:13 adds at this point, “hail and coals of fire.” These words are probably accidentally added from v. 12b; they do not appear in 2 Sam 22:14.

tn Heb “offered his voice.” In this poetic narrative context the prefixed verbal form is best understood as a preterite indicating past tense, not an imperfect. Note the prefixed verbal form with *vav* (ה) consecutive in the preceding line.

³ **tn** 2 Sam 22:15 omits the pronominal suffix (“his”).

⁴ **tn** The pronominal suffixes on the verbs “scattered” and “routed” (see the next line) refer to the psalmist’s enemies. Some argue that the suffixes refer to the arrows, in which case one might translate “shot them far and wide” and “made them move noisily,” respectively. They argue that the enemies have not been mentioned since v. 4 and are not again mentioned until v. 17. However, usage of the verbs פָּרַץ (*puts*, “scatter”) and הָמַם (*hamam*, “rout”) elsewhere in Holy War accounts suggests the suffixes refer to enemies. Enemies are frequently pictured in such texts as scattered and/or routed (see Exod 14:24; 23:27; Num 10:35; Josh 10:10; Judg 4:15; 1 Sam 7:10; 11:11; Ps 68:1).

⁵ **sn** Lightning is a common motif in in OT theophanies and in ancient Near Eastern portrayals of the storm god and warring kings. See R. B. Chisholm, “An Exegetical and Theological Study of Psalm 18/2 Samuel 22” (Th.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1983), 190-92.

⁶ **tn** Heb “lightning bolts, many.” 2 Sam 22:15 has simply “lightning” (בָּרָק, *baraq*). The identity of the word רָב (rav) in Ps 18:14 is problematic. (1) It may be a form of a rare verb רָבַב (*ravav*, “to shoot”), perhaps attested in Gen 49:23 as well. In this case one might translate, “he shot lightning bolts and routed them.” Other options include (2) understanding רָב (*rav*) as an adverbial use of the adjective, “lightning bolts in abundance,” or (3) emending the form to רָבּוּ (*rabbu*), from רָבַב (*ravav*, “be many”) or to רָבוּ (*ravu*), from רָוַח (*ravah*, “be many”) – both a haplography of the *vav* (ו); note the initial *vav* on the immediately following form – and translating “lightning bolts were in abundance.”

⁷ **sn** Arrows and lightning bolts are associated in other texts (see Pss 77:17-18; 144:6; Zech 9:14), as well as in ancient Near Eastern art (see R. B. Chisholm, “An Exegetical and Theological Study of Psalm 18/2 Samuel 22” [Th.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1983], 187).

⁸ **tn** Or “channels.”

⁹ **tc** Ps 18:15 reads “water” (cf. Ps 42:1); “sea” is the reading of 2 Sam 22:16.

¹⁰ **tn** Or “foundations.”

¹¹ **tn** Heb “from.” The preposition has a causal sense here.

¹² **tn** The noun is derived from the verb גָּרַר (*ga’ar*), which is often understood to mean “rebuke.” In some cases it is apparent that scolding or threatening is in view (see Gen 37:10; Ruth 2:16; Zech 3:2). However, in militaristic contexts this translation is inadequate, for the verb refers in this setting to the warrior’s battle cry, which terrifies and paralyzes the enemy. See A. Caquot, *TDOT* 3:53, and note the use of the verb in Pss 68:30; 106:9; and Nah 1:4, as well as the related noun in Job 26:11; Pss 9:5; 76:6; 104:7; Isa 50:2; 51:20; 66:15.

¹³ **tn** 2 Sam 22:16 reads “by the battle cry of the LORD, by the blast of the breath of his nose.” The phrase “blast of the breath” (Heb “breath of breath”) employs an appositional genitive. Synonyms are joined in a construct relationship to emphasize the single idea. For a detailed discussion of the

18:16 He reached down¹³ from above and
 took hold of me;
 he pulled me from the surging water.¹⁴
18:17 He rescued me from my strong en-
 emy,¹⁵
 from those who hate me,
 for they were too strong for me.
18:18 They confronted¹⁶ me in my day of
 calamity,
 but the LORD helped me.¹⁷
18:19 He brought me out into a wide open
 place;
 he delivered me because he was pleased
 with me.¹⁸
18:20 The LORD repaid¹⁹ me for my godly
 deeds,²⁰
 he rewarded²¹ my blameless behavior.²²
18:21 For I have obeyed the LORD’s com-
 mands;²³

grammatical point with numerous examples, see Y. Avishur, “Pairs of Synonymous Words in the Construct State (and in Appositional Hendiadys) in Biblical Hebrew,” *Semitics* 2 (1971): 17-81.

¹³ **tn** Heb “stretched.” Perhaps “his hand” should be supplied by ellipsis (see Ps 144:7). In this poetic narrative context the three prefixed verbal forms in this verse are best understood as preterites indicating past tense, not imperfects.

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “mighty waters.” The waters of the sea symbolize the psalmist’s powerful enemies, as well as the realm of death they represent (see v. 4 and Ps 144:7).

¹⁵ **tn** The singular refers either to personified death or collectively to the psalmist’s enemies. The following line, which refers to “those [plural] who hate me,” favors the latter.

¹⁶ **tn** The same verb is translated “trapped” in v. 5. In this poetic narrative context the prefixed verbal form is best understood as a preterite indicating past tense, not imperfect.

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “became my support.”

¹⁸ **tn** Or “delighted in me.”

¹⁹ **tn** In this poetic narrative context the prefixed verbal form is best understood as a preterite indicating past tense, not imperfect.

²⁰ **tn** Heb “according to my righteousness.” As vv. 22-24 make clear, the psalmist refers here to his unwavering obedience to God’s commands. In these verses the psalmist explains that the LORD was pleased with him and willing to deliver him because he had been loyal to God and obedient to his commandments. Ancient Near Eastern literature contains numerous parallels. A superior (a god or king) would typically reward a subject (a king or the servant of a king, respectively) for loyalty and obedience. See R. B. Chisholm, “An Exegetical and Theological Study of Psalm 18/2 Samuel 22” (Th.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1983), 211-13.

²¹ **tn** The unreduced Hiphil prefixed verbal form appears to be an imperfect, in which case the psalmist would be generalizing. However, both the preceding and following contexts (see especially v. 24) suggest he is narrating his experience. Despite its unreduced form, the verb is better taken as a preterite. For other examples of unreduced Hiphil preterites, see Pss 55:14a; 68:9a, 10b; 80:8a; 89:43a; 107:38b; 116:6b.

²² **tn** Heb “according to the purity of my hands he repaid to me.” “Hands” suggest activity and behavior.

²³ **tn** Heb “for I have kept the ways of the LORD.” The phrase “ways of the LORD” refers here to the “conduct required” by the LORD. In Ps 25 the LORD’s “ways” are associated with his covenantal demands (see vv. 4, 9-10). See also Ps 119:3 (cf. vv. 1, 4), as well as Deut 8:6; 10:12; 11:22; 19:9; 26:17; 28:9; 30:16.

I have not rebelled against my God.¹

18:22 For I am aware of all his regulations,²

and I do not reject his rules.³

18:23 I was innocent before him, and kept myself from sinning.⁴

18:24 The LORD rewarded me for my godly deeds;⁵

he took notice of my blameless behavior.⁶

18:25 You prove to be loyal⁷ to one who is faithful,⁸

you prove to be trustworthy⁹ to one who is innocent.¹⁰

18:26 You prove to be reliable¹¹ to one who is blameless,

but you prove to be deceptive¹² to one who is perverse.¹³

¹ **tn** Heb “I have not acted wickedly from my God.” The statement is elliptical; the idea is, “I have not acted wickedly and, in so doing, departed from my God.”

² **tn** Heb “for all his regulations [are] before me.” The Hebrew term *מִשְׁפָּטִים* (*mishpatim*, “regulations”) refers to God’s covenantal requirements, especially those which the king is responsible to follow (cf. Deut 17:18-20). See also Pss 19:9 (cf. vv. 7-8); 89:30; 147:20 (cf. v. 19), as well as the numerous uses of the term in Ps 119.

³ **tn** Heb “and his rules I do not turn aside from me.” 2 Sam 22:23 reads, “and his rules, I do not turn aside from it.” The prefixed verbal form is probably an imperfect; the psalmist here generalizes about his loyalty to God’s commands. The Lord’s “rules” are the stipulations of the covenant which the king was responsible to obey (see Ps 89:31; cf. v. 30 and Deut 17:18-20).

⁴ **tn** Heb “from my sin,” that is, from making it my own in any way.

sn *Kept myself from sinning.* Leading a blameless life meant that the king would be loyal to God’s covenant, purge the government and society of evil and unjust officials, and reward loyalty to the Lord (see Ps 101).

⁵ **tn** Heb “according to my righteousness.”

⁶ **tn** Heb “according to the purity of my hands before his eyes.” 2 Sam 22:25 reads “according to my purity before his eyes.” The verbal repetition (compare vv. 20 and 24) sets off vv. 20-24 as a distinct sub-unit within the psalm.

⁷ **tn** The imperfect verbal forms in vv. 25-29 draw attention to God’s characteristic actions. Based on his experience, the psalmist generalizes about God’s just dealings with people (vv. 25-27) and about the way in which God typically empowers him on the battlefield (vv. 28-29). The Hitpael stem is used in vv. 26-27 in a reflexive resultative (or causative) sense. God makes himself loyal, etc. in the sense that he conducts or reveals himself as such. On this use of the Hitpael stem, see GKC 149-50 §54.e.

⁸ **tn** Or “to a faithful follower.” A “faithful follower” (*הַכִּיר*, *khasid*) is one who does what is right in God’s eyes and remains faithful to God (see Pss 4:3; 12:1; 16:10; 31:23; 37:28; 86:2; 97:10).

⁹ **tn** Or “innocent.”

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “a man of innocence.”

¹¹ **tn** Or “blameless.”

¹² **tn** The Hebrew verb *פָּתַל* (*patal*) is used in only three other texts. In Gen 30:8 it means literally “to wrestle,” or “to twist.” In Job 5:13 it refers to devious individuals, and in Prov 8:8 to deceptive words.

¹³ **tn** The adjective *עִקְשׁ* (*iqqesh*) has the basic nuance “twisted, crooked,” and by extension refers to someone or something that is morally perverse. It appears frequently in Proverbs, where it is used of evil people (22:5), speech (8:8; 19:1), thoughts (11:20; 17:20), and life styles (2:15; 28:6). A righteous king opposes such people (Ps 101:4).

sn Verses 25-26 affirm God’s justice. He responds to people in accordance with their moral character. His response mirrors their actions. The faithful and blameless find God to

18:27 For you deliver oppressed¹⁴ people, but you bring down those who have a proud look.¹⁵

18:28 Indeed,¹⁶ you are my lamp, LORD.¹⁷ My God¹⁸ illuminates the darkness around me.¹⁹

18:29 Indeed,²⁰ with your help²¹ I can charge against²² an army;²³ by my God’s power²⁴ I can jump over a wall.²⁵

18:30 The one true God acts in a faithful manner;²⁶

be loyal and reliable in his dealings with them. But deceivers discover he is able and willing to use deceit to destroy them. For a more extensive discussion of the theme of divine deception in the OT, see R. B. Chisholm, “Does God Deceive?” *BSac* 155 (1998): 11-28.

¹⁴ **tn** Or perhaps, “humble” (note the contrast with those who are proud).

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “but proud eyes you bring low.” 2 Sam 22:28 reads, “your eyes [are] upon the proud, [whom] you bring low.”

¹⁶ **tn** Or “for.” The translation assumes that *כִּי* (*ki*) is asseverative here.

¹⁷ **tn** Ps 18:28 reads literally, “you light my lamp, LORD.” 2 Sam 22:29 has, “you are my lamp, LORD.” The Ps 18 reading may preserve two variants, *נֵרִי* (*neriy*, “my lamp”) and *אוֹרִי* (*oriy*, “my light”), cf. Ps 27:1. The verb *תָּאִיר* (*ta’ir*, “you light”) in Ps 18:28 would, in this case, be a corruption of the latter. See F. M. Cross and D. N. Freedman, *Studies in Ancient Yahwistic Poetry* (SBLDS), 150, n. 64. The metaphor, which likens the LORD to a lamp or light, pictures him as the psalmist’s source of life. For other examples of “lamp” used in this way, see Job 18:6; 21:17; Prov 13:9; 20:20; 24:20. For other examples of “light” as a symbol for life, see Job 3:20; 33:30; Ps 56:13.

¹⁸ **tn** 2 Sam 22:29 repeats the name “LORD.”

¹⁹ **tn** Heb “my darkness.”

²⁰ **tn** Or “for.” The translation assumes that *כִּי* (*ki*) is asseverative here.

²¹ **tn** Heb “by you.”

²² **tn** Heb “I will run.” The imperfect verbal forms in v. 29 indicate the subject’s potential or capacity to perform an action. Though one might expect a preposition to follow the verb here, this need not be the case with the verb *רָוַס* (*ruvs*; see 1 Sam 17:22). Some emend the Qal to a Hiphil form of the verb and translate, “I put to flight [Heb “cause to run”] an army.”

²³ **tn** More specifically, the noun *גִּדּוּד* (*g’duud*) refers to a raiding party or to a contingent of troops.

sn *I can charge against an army.* The picture of a divinely empowered warrior charging against an army in almost superhuman fashion appears elsewhere in ancient Near Eastern literature. See R. B. Chisholm, “An Exegetical and Theological Study of Psalm 18/2 Samuel 22” (Th.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1983), 228.

²⁴ **tn** Heb “and by my God.”

²⁵ **sn** *I can jump over a wall.* The psalmist uses hyperbole to emphasize his God-given military superiority.

²⁶ **tn** Heb “[As for] the God, his way is blameless.” The term *הָאֵל* (*ha’el*, “the God”) stands as a nominative (or genitive) absolute in apposition to the resumptive pronominal suffix on “way.” The prefixed article emphasizes his distinctiveness as the one true God (cf. Deut 33:26). God’s “way” in this context refers to his protective and salvific acts in fulfillment of his promise (see also Deut 32:4; Pss 67:2; 77:13 [note vv. 11-12, 14]; 103:7; 138:5; 145:17).

the LORD's promise¹ is reliable;²
he is a shield to all who take shelter³ in
him.

18:31 Indeed,⁴ who is God besides the
LORD?

Who is a protector⁵ besides our God?⁶

18:32 The one true God⁷ gives⁸ me
strength,⁹

he removes¹⁰ the obstacles in my way.¹¹

18:33 He gives me the agility of a deer;¹²

he enables me to negotiate the rugged
terrain.¹³

18:34 He trains my hands for battle;¹⁴

my arms can bend even the strongest
bow.¹⁵

18:35 You give me your protective shield;¹⁶
your right hand supports me;¹⁷
your willingness to help¹⁸ enables me to
prevail.¹⁹

18:36 You widen my path,²⁰
my feet²¹ do not slip.

18:37 I chase my enemies and catch²²
them;

I do not turn back until I wipe them out.

18:38 I beat them²³ to death;²⁴
they fall at my feet.²⁵

¹ **sn** *The LORD's promise.* In the ancient Near East kings would typically seek and receive oracles from their god(s) prior to battle. For examples, see R. B. Chisholm, "An Exegetical and Theological Study of Psalm 18/2 Samuel 22" (Th.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1983), 241-42.

² **tn** *Heb* "the word of the LORD is purified." The LORD's "word" probably refers here to his oracle(s) of victory delivered to the psalmist before the battle(s) described in the following context. See also Pss 12:5-7 and 138:2-3. David frequently received such oracles before going into battle (see 1 Sam 23:2, 4-5, 10-12; 30:8; 2 Sam 5:19). The LORD's word of promise is absolutely reliable; it is compared to metal that has been refined in fire and cleansed of impurities. See Ps 12:6.

³ **sn** *Take shelter.* See the note on the word "shelter" in v. 2.

⁴ **tn** Or "for."

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "rocky cliff," which is a metaphor of divine protection. See v. 2, where the Hebrew term צוּר (*tsur*) is translated "rocky summit."

⁶ **tn** The rhetorical questions anticipate the answer, "No one." In this way the psalmist indicates that the LORD is the only true God and reliable source of protection. See also Deut 32:39, where the LORD affirms that he is the only true God. Note as well the emphasis on his role as protector (*Heb* "rocky cliff," צוּר, *tsur*) in Deut 32:4, 15, 17-18, 30.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "the God." The prefixed article emphasizes the LORD's distinctiveness as the one true God (cf. Deut 33:26). See v. 30.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "is the one who clothes." For similar language see 1 Sam 2:4; Pss 65:6; 93:1. The psalmist employs a generalizing hymnic style in vv. 32-34; he uses participles in vv. 32a, 33a, and 34a to describe what God characteristically does on his behalf.

⁹ **tn** 2 Sam 22:33 reads, "the God is my strong refuge."

¹⁰ **sn** *Gives me strength.* As the following context makes clear, this refers to physical and emotional strength for battle (see especially v. 39).

¹¹ **tn** The prefixed verbal form with vav (ו) consecutive here carries along the generalizing force of the preceding participle.

¹² **tn** *Heb* "he made my path smooth." The Hebrew term תָּמִים (*tamim*, "smooth") usually carries a moral or ethical connotation, "blameless, innocent." However, in Ps 18:33 it refers to a pathway free of obstacles. The reality underlying the metaphor is the psalmist's ability to charge into battle without tripping (see vv. 33, 36).

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "[the one who] makes my feet like [those of] a deer."

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "and on my high places he makes me walk." The imperfect verbal form emphasizes God's characteristic provision. The psalmist compares his agility in battle to the ability of a deer to negotiate rugged, high terrain without falling or being injured.

¹⁵ **sn** Habakkuk uses similar language to describe his faith during difficult times. See Hab 3:19.

¹⁶ **sn** *He trains my hands.* The psalmist attributes his skill with weapons to divine enablement. Egyptian reliefs picture gods teaching the king how to shoot a bow. See O. Keel, *The Symbolism of the Biblical World*, 265.

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "and a bow of bronze is bent by my arms"; or "my arms bend a bow of bronze." The verb נָחַת (*nakhat*) apparently means "pull back, bend" here (see HALOT 692 s.v. נָחַת). The third feminine singular verbal form appears to agree with the feminine singular noun קֶשֶׁת (*qeset*, "bow"). In this case the verb must be taken as Niphal (passive). However, it is possible that "my arms" is the subject of the verb and "bow" the object. In this case the verb is Piel (active). For other examples of a feminine singular verb being construed with a plural noun, see GKC 464 §145.k.

¹⁶ **sn** *The strongest bow* (*Heb* "bow of bronze") probably refers to a bow laminated with bronze strips, or to a purely ceremonial or decorative bow made entirely from bronze. In the latter case the language is hyperbolic, for such a weapon would not be functional in battle.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "and you give to me the shield of your deliverance."

¹⁸ **sn** *You give me your protective shield.* Ancient Near Eastern literature often refers to a god giving a king special weapons. See R. B. Chisholm, "An Exegetical and Theological Study of Psalm 18/2 Samuel 22" (Th.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1983), 260-61.

¹⁹ **tc** 2 Sam 22:36 omits this line, perhaps due to homoiocartan. A scribe's eye may have jumped from the vav (ו) prefixed to "your right hand" to the vav prefixed to the following "and your answer," causing the copyist to omit by accident the intervening words ("your right hand supports me and").

²⁰ **tn** The MT of Ps 18:35 appears to read, "your condescension," apparently referring to God's willingness to intervene (cf. NIV "you stoop down"). However, the noun אָנָוָה (*anavah*) elsewhere means "humility" and is used only here of God. The form אָנָוָה (*anvat/kha*) may be a fully written form of the suffixed infinitive construct of אָנָה (*anah*, "to answer"; a defectively written form of the infinitive appears in 2 Sam 22:36). In this case the psalmist refers to God's willingness to answer his prayer; one might translate, "your favorable response."

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "makes me great."

²² **tn** *Heb* "you make wide my step under me." "Step" probably refers metonymically to the path upon which the psalmist walks. Another option is to translate, "you widen my stride." This would suggest that God gives the psalmist the capacity to run quickly.

²³ **tn** *Heb* "lower legs." On the meaning of the Hebrew noun, which occurs only here, see H. R. Cohen, *Biblical Hapax Legomena* (SBLDS), 112. A cognate Akkadian noun means "lower leg."

²⁴ **tn** 2 Sam 22:38 reads "destroy."

²⁵ **tn** Or "smash them." 2 Sam 22:39 reads, "and I wiped them out and smashed them."

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "until they are unable to rise." 2 Sam 22:39 reads, "until they do not rise."

²⁷ **sn** *They fall at my feet.* For ancient Near Eastern parallels, see O. Keel, *The Symbolism of the Biblical World*, 294-97.

18:39 You give me strength¹ for battle;
you make my foes kneel before me.²
18:40 You make my enemies retreat,³
I destroy those who hate me.⁴
18:41 They cry out, but there is no one to
help them,⁵
they cry out to the LORD,⁶ but he does
not answer them.
18:42 I grind them as fine windblown
dust;⁷
I beat them underfoot⁸ like clay⁹ in the
streets.
18:43 You rescue me from a hostile army;¹⁰
you make me¹¹ a leader of nations;
people over whom I had no authority are
now my subjects.¹²
18:44 When they hear of my exploits, they
submit to me.¹³

¹ tn Heb "clothed me." See v. 32.

² tn Heb "you make those who rise against me kneel beneath me."

sn My foes kneel before me. For ancient Near Eastern parallels, see R. B. Chisholm, "An Exegetical and Theological Study of Psalm 18/2 Samuel 22" (Th.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1983), 268.

³ tn Heb "and [as for] my enemies, you give to me [the] back [or "neck"]." The idiom "give [the] back" means "to cause [one] to turn the back and run away." Cf. Exod 23:27.

⁴ sn Those who hate me. See v. 17, where it is the LORD who delivered the psalmist from those who hated him.

⁵ tn Heb "but there is no deliverer."

⁶ tn Heb "to the LORD." The words "they cry out" are supplied in the translation because they are understood by ellipsis (see the preceding line).

sn They cry out. This reference to the psalmist's enemies crying out for help to the LORD suggests that the psalmist refers here to enemies within the covenant community, rather than foreigners. However, the militaristic context suggests foreign enemies are in view. Ancient Near Eastern literature indicates that defeated enemies would sometimes cry out for mercy to the god(s) of their conqueror. See R. B. Chisholm, "An Exegetical and Theological Study of Psalm 18/2 Samuel 22" (Th.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1983), 271.

⁷ tn Heb "I pulverize them like dust upon the face of the wind." The phrase "upon the face of" here means "before." 2 Sam 22:43 reads, "like dust of the earth."

⁸ tc Ps 18:42 reads, "I empty them out" (Hiphil of ריק, "empty"), while 2 Sam 22:43 reads, "I crush them, I stomp on them" (juxtaposing the synonyms ריקק and ריקק). It is likely that the latter is a conflation of variants. One, but not both, of the verbs in 2 Sam 22:43 is probably original; "empty out" does not form as good a parallel with "grind, pulverize" in the parallel line.

⁹ tn Or "mud."

¹⁰ tn Heb "from the strivings of a people." In this context the Hebrew term ריב (riv, "striving") probably has a militaristic sense (as in Judg 12:2; Isa 41:11), and עם (am, "people") probably refers more specifically to an army (for other examples, see the verses listed in BDB 766 s.v. | עם, עם 2.d). Some understand the phrase as referring to attacks by the psalmist's own countrymen, the "nation" being Israel. However, foreign enemies appear to be in view; note the reference to "nations" in the following line.

¹¹ tn 2 Sam 22:44 reads, "you keep me."

¹² tn Heb "a people whom I did not know serve me." In this context "know" (ידע, yada) probably refers to formal recognition by treaty. People who were once not under the psalmist's authority now willingly submit to his rulership to avoid being conquered militarily (see vv. 44-45). The language may recall the events recorded in 2 Sam 8:9-10 and 10:19.

¹³ tn Heb "at a report of an ear they submit to me." The report of the psalmist's exploits is so impressive that those who hear it submit to his rulership without putting up a fight.

Foreigners are powerless¹⁴ before me;
18:45 foreigners lose their courage,¹⁵
they shake with fear¹⁶ as they leave¹⁷ their
strongholds.¹⁸
18:46 The LORD is alive!¹⁹
My protector²⁰ is praiseworthy!²¹
The God who delivers me²² is exalted as
king!²³
18:47 The one true God²⁴ completely vin-
dicates me;²⁵
he makes nations submit to me.²⁶
18:48 He delivers me²⁷ from my enemies;
you snatch me away²⁸ from those who

¹⁴ tn For the meaning "be weak, powerless" for קָהָה (kakhash), see Ps 109:24. The next line (see v. 45a), in which "foreigners" are also mentioned, favors this interpretation. Another option is to translate "cower in fear" (see Deut 33:29; Pss 66:3; 81:15; cf. NIV "cringe"; NRSV "came cringing").

¹⁵ tn Heb "wither, wear out."

¹⁶ tn The meaning of הָרַג (kharag, "shake") is established on the basis of cognates in Arabic and Aramaic. 2 Sam 22:46 reads הָרַג (kharag), which might mean here, "[they] come limping" (on the basis of a cognate in postbiblical Hebrew). The normal meaning for הָרַג ("gird") makes little sense here.

¹⁷ tn Heb "from."

¹⁸ tn Heb "their prisons." The besieged cities of the foreigners are compared to prisons.

¹⁹ tn Elsewhere the construction הָיָה יְהוָה (khai-yehvah) is used exclusively as an oath formula, "as surely as the LORD lives," but this is not the case here, for no oath follows. Here the statement is an affirmation of the LORD's active presence and intervention. In contrast to pagan deities, he demonstrates he is the living God by rescuing and empowering the psalmist.

²⁰ tn Heb "my rocky cliff," which is a metaphor for protection. See similar phrases in vv. 2, 31.

²¹ tn Or "blessed [i.e., praised] be."

²² tn Heb "the God of my deliverance." 2 Sam 22:48 reads, "the God of the rocky cliff of my deliverance."

²³ tn The words "as king" are supplied in the translation for clarification. Elsewhere in the psalms the verb רוּם (rum, "be exalted"), when used of God, refers to his exalted position as king (Pss 99:2; 113:4; 138:6) and/or his self-revelation as king through his mighty deeds of deliverance (Pss 21:13; 46:10; 57:5, 11).

²⁴ tn Heb "the God." See v. 32.

²⁵ tn Heb "is the one who grants vengeance to me." The plural form of the noun indicates degree here, suggesting complete vengeance or vindication.

sn Completely vindicates me. In the ancient Near East military victory was sometimes viewed as a sign that one's God had judged in favor of the victor, avenging and/or vindicating him. See, for example, Judg 11:27, 32-33, 36.

²⁶ tn Heb "he subdues nations beneath me." On the meaning of the verb דָּבַר (davar, "subdue," a homonym of דָּבַר, davar, "speak"), see HALOT 209-10 s.v. | דָּבַר. See also Ps 47:3 and 2 Chr 22:10. 2 Sam 22:48 reads "and [is the one who] brings down nations beneath me."

²⁷ tn Heb "[the one who] delivers me." 2 Sam 22:49 reads "and [the one who] brings me out."

²⁸ tn Heb "lifts me up." In light of the preceding and following references to deliverance, the verb רוּם probably here refers to being rescued from danger (see Ps 9:13). However, it could mean "exalt, elevate" here, indicating that the LORD has given the psalmist victory over his enemies and forced them to acknowledge the psalmist's superiority (cf. NIV, NRSV).

attack me;¹
 you rescue me from violent men.
18:49 So I will give you thanks before the
 nations;² O LORD!
 I will sing praises to you!³
18:50 He⁴ gives his chosen king magnifi-
 cent victories;⁵
 he is faithful⁶ to his chosen ruler,⁷
 to David and his descendants⁸ forever.⁹

*Psalms 19*¹⁰

For the music director; a psalm of David.

19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God;¹¹
 the sky displays his handiwork.¹²
19:2 Day after day it speaks out;¹³
 night after night it reveals his greatness.¹⁴
19:3 There is no actual speech or word,
 nor is its¹⁵ voice literally heard.
19:4 Yet its voice¹⁶ echoes¹⁷ throughout

the earth;
 its¹⁸ words carry¹⁹ to the distant horizon.²⁰
 In the sky²¹ he has pitched a tent for the
 sun.²²

19:5 Like a bridegroom it emerges²³ from
 its chamber;²⁴
 like a strong man it enjoys²⁵ running its
 course.²⁶

19:6 It emerges from the distant horizon,²⁷
 and goes from one end of the sky to the
 other;²⁸
 nothing can escape²⁹ its heat.

19:7 The law of the LORD is perfect
 and preserves one's life.³⁰

The rules set down by the LORD³¹ are reli-
 able³²

and impart wisdom to the inexperienced.³³
19:8 The LORD's precepts are fair³⁴
 and make one joyful.³⁵

¹ *tn* Heb "from those who rise against me."

² *sn* I will give you thanks before the nations. This probably alludes to the fact that the psalmist will praise the LORD in the presence of the defeated nations when they, as his subjects, bring their tribute payments. Ideally the Davidic king was to testify to the nations of God's greatness. See J. H. Eaton, *Kingship and the Psalms* (SBT), 182-85.

³ *tn* Heb "to your name." God's "name" refers metonymically to his divine characteristics as suggested by his name, in this case "LORD," the primary name of Israel's covenant God which suggests his active presence with his people (see Exod 3:12-15).

⁴ *tn* Or "the one who."

⁵ *tn* Heb "magnifies the victories of his king." "His king" refers to the psalmist, the Davidic king whom God has chosen to rule Israel.

⁶ *tn* Heb "[the one who] does loyalty."

⁷ *tn* Heb "his anointed [one]," i.e., the psalmist/Davidic king. See Ps 2:2.

⁸ *tn* Or "offspring"; Heb "seed."

⁹ *sn* If David is the author of the psalm (see the superscription), then he here anticipates that God will continue to demonstrate loyalty to his descendants who succeed him. If the author is a later Davidic king, then he views the divine favor he has experienced as the outworking of God's faithful promises to David his ancestor.

¹⁰ *sn* Psalm 19. The psalmist praises God for his self-revelation in the heavens and in the Mosaic law. The psalmist concludes with a prayer, asking the Lord to keep him from sinning and to approve of his thoughts and words.

¹¹ *sn* God's glory refers here to his royal majesty and power.

¹² *tn* Heb "and the work of his hands the sky declares." The participles emphasize the ongoing testimony of the heavens/sky.

¹³ *tn* Heb "it gushes forth a word." The "sky" (see v. 1b) is the subject of the verb. Though not literally speaking (see v. 3), it clearly reveals God's royal majesty. The sun's splendor and its movement across the sky is in view (see vv. 4-6).

¹⁴ *tn* Heb "it [i.e., the sky] declares knowledge," i.e., knowledge about God's royal majesty and power (see v. 1). This apparently refers to the splendor and movements of the stars. The imperfect verbal forms in v. 2, like the participles in the preceding verse, combine with the temporal phrases ("day after day" and "night after night") to emphasize the ongoing testimony of the sky.

¹⁵ *tn* Heb "their." The antecedent of the plural pronoun is "heavens" (v. 1).

¹⁶ *tc* The MT reads, "their measuring line" (קוּם, *qum*). The noun קָוָה (*qav*, "measuring line") makes no sense in this context. The reading קוֹלָם (*qolam*, "their voice") which is supported by the LXX, is preferable.

¹⁷ *tn* Heb "goes out," or "proceeds forth."

¹⁸ *tn* Heb "their" (see the note on the word "its" in v. 3).

¹⁹ *tn* The verb is supplied in the translation. The Hebrew text has no verb; יָצָא (*yatsa*, "goes out") is understood by ellipsis.

²⁰ *tn* Heb "to the end of the world."

²¹ *tn* Heb "in them" (i.e., the heavens).

²² *sn* He has pitched a tent for the sun. The personified sun emerges from this "tent" in order to make its daytime journey across the sky. So the "tent" must refer metaphorically to the place where the sun goes to rest during the night.

²³ *tn* The participle expresses the repeated or regular nature of the action.

²⁴ *tn* The Hebrew noun חֻפָּה (*khufah*, "chamber") occurs elsewhere only in Isa 4:5 and Joel 2:16 (where it refers to the bedroom of a bride and groom).

sn Like a bridegroom. The metaphor likens the sun to a bridegroom who rejoices on his wedding night.

²⁵ *tn* The imperfect verbal form draws attention to the regularity of the action.

²⁶ *tn* Heb "[on] a path."

sn Like a strong man. The metaphorical language reflects the brilliance of the sunrise, which attests to the sun's vigor.

²⁷ *tn* Heb "from the end of the heavens [is] its going forth."

²⁸ *tn* Heb "and its circuit [is] to their ends."

²⁹ *tn* Heb "is hidden from."

³⁰ *tn* Heb "[it] restores life." Elsewhere the Hiphil of שׁוּב (*shuv*, "return") when used with נֶפֶשׁ (*nefesh*, "life") as object, means to "rescue or preserve one's life" (Job 33:30; Ps 35:17) or to "revive one's strength" (emotionally or physically; cf. Ruth 4:15; Lam 1:11, 16, 19). Here the point seems to be that the law preserves the life of the one who studies it by making known God's will. Those who know God's will know how to please him and can avoid offending him. See v. 11a.

³¹ *tn* Traditionally, "the testimony of the LORD." The noun עֲדוּת (*edut*) refers here to the demands of God's covenant law.

³² *tn* God's covenant contains a clear, reliable witness to his moral character and demands.

³³ *tn* Or "the [morally] naive," that is, the one who is young and still in the process of learning right from wrong and distinguishing wisdom from folly.

³⁴ *tn* Or "just." Perhaps the idea is that they impart a knowledge of what is just and right.

³⁵ *tn* Heb "[they] make happy [the] heart." Perhaps the point is that they bring a sense of joyful satisfaction to the one who knows and keeps them, for those who obey God's law are richly rewarded. See v. 11b.

The LORD's commands¹ are pure² and give insight for life.³

19:9 The commands to fear the LORD are right⁴

and endure forever.⁵ The judgments given by the LORD are trustworthy and absolutely just.⁶

19:10 They are of greater value⁷ than gold, than even a great amount of pure gold; they bring greater delight⁸ than honey, than even the sweetest honey from a honeycomb.

19:11 Yes, your servant finds moral guidance there;⁹ those who obey them receive a rich reward.¹⁰

19:12 Who can know all his errors?¹¹ Please do not punish me for sins I am unaware of.¹²

19:13 Moreover, keep me from committing flagrant¹³ sins; do not allow such sins to control me.¹⁴ Then I will be blameless, and innocent of blatant¹⁵ rebellion.

19:14 May my words and my thoughts be acceptable in your sight,¹⁶ O LORD, my sheltering rock¹⁷ and my redeemer.¹⁸

Psalm 20¹⁹

For the music director; a psalm of David.

20:1 May the LORD answer²⁰ you²¹ when you are in trouble;²² may the God of Jacob²³ make you secure!

20:2 May he send you help from his temple;²⁴

from Zion may he give you support!

20:3 May he take notice²⁵ of your offerings; may he accept²⁶ your burnt sacrifice! (Selah)

20:4 May he grant your heart's desire;²⁷ may he bring all your plans to pass!²⁸

20:5 Then we will shout for joy over your²⁹ victory; we will rejoice³⁰ in the name of our God! May the LORD grant all your requests!

1 tn Heb "command." The singular here refers to the law as a whole.

2 tn Because they reflect God's character, his commands provide a code of moral and ethical purity.

3 tn Heb [they] enlighten [the] eyes.

4 tn Heb "the fear of the LORD is clean." The phrase "fear of the LORD" probably refers here to the law, which teaches one how to demonstrate proper reverence for the LORD. See Ps 111:10 for another possible use of the phrase in this sense.

5 tn Heb "[it] stands permanently."

6 sn *Trustworthy and absolutely just.* The Lord's commands accurately reflect God's moral will for his people and are an expression of his just character.

7 tn Heb "more desirable."

8 tn Heb "are sweeter." God's law is "sweet" in the sense that, when obeyed, it brings a great reward (see v. 11b).

9 tn Heb "moreover your servant is warned by them."

10 tn Heb "in the keeping of them [there is] a great reward."

11 tn Heb "Errors who can discern?" This rhetorical question makes the point that perfect moral discernment is impossible to achieve. Consequently it is inevitable that even those with good intentions will sin on occasion.

12 tn Heb "declare me innocent from hidden [things]," i.e., sins. In this context (see the preceding line) "hidden" sins are not sins committed in secret, but sins which are not recognized as such by the psalmist.

13 tn Or "presumptuous."

14 tn Heb "let them not rule over me."

15 tn Heb "great."

16 tn Heb "may the words of my mouth and the thought of my heart be acceptable before you." The prefixed verbal form at the beginning of the verse is understood as a jussive of prayer. Another option is to translate the form as an imperfect continuing the thought of v. 14b: "[Then] the words of my mouth and the thought of my heart will be acceptable before you."

17 tn Heb "my rocky cliff," which is a metaphor for protection; thus the translation "sheltering rock."

18 tn Heb "and the one who redeems me." The metaphor casts the Lord in the role of a leader who protects members

of his extended family in times of need and crisis.

19 sn *Psalm 20.* The people pray for the king's success in battle. When the king declares his assurance that the Lord will answer the people's prayer, they affirm their confidence in God's enablement.

20 tn The prefixed verbal forms here and in vv. 1b-5 are interpreted as jussives of prayer (cf. NEB, NIV, NRSV). Another option is to understand them as imperfections, "the LORD will answer," etc. In this case the people declare their confidence that the LORD will intervene on behalf of the king and extend to him his favor.

21 sn *May the LORD answer you.* The people address the king as they pray to the Lord.

22 tn Heb "in a day of trouble."

23 tn Heb "the name of the God of Jacob." God's "name" refers metonymically to his very person and to the divine characteristics suggested by his name, in this case "God of Jacob," which highlights his relationship to Israel.

24 tc Heb "from [the] temple." The third masculine singular pronominal suffix (י, *nun*) has probably been accidentally omitted by haplography. Note that the following word begins with a prefixed *vav* (ו). See P. C. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50* (WBC), 184.

25 tn Or "remember." For other examples of the verb זָכַר (*zakhar*) carrying the nuance "take notice of," see Pss 8:4 and 9:12.

26 tc Heb "consider as fat." The verbal form should probably be emended to יִדְּשֶׁנָּה (*dash^eneha*), the final *he* (ה) being understood as a third feminine singular pronominal suffix referring back to the feminine noun "burnt sacrifice."

27 tn Heb "may he give to you according to your heart." This probably refers to the king's prayer for protection and victory in battle. See vv. 5-6.

28 sn *May he bring all your plans to pass.* This probably refers to the king's strategy for battle.

29 sn *Your victory.* Here the king is addressed (see v. 1).

30 tc The Hebrew verb דָּגַל (*dagal*) occurs only here in the Qal. If accepted as original, it may carry the nuance "raise a banner," but it is preferable to emend the form to נִגִּיל ("we will rejoice") which provides better parallelism with "shout for joy" and fits well with the prepositional phrase "in the name of our God" (see Ps 89:16).

20:6 Now I am sure¹ that the LORD will deliver² his chosen king;³ he will intervene for him⁴ from his holy heavenly temple,⁵ and display his mighty ability to deliver.⁶
20:7 Some trust in chariots and others in horses,⁷ but we⁸ depend on⁹ the LORD our God.
20:8 They will fall down,¹⁰ but we¹¹ will stand firm.¹²
20:9 The LORD will deliver the king;¹³

¹ tn Or “know.”

^{sn} Now I am sure. The speaker is not identified. It is likely that the king, referring to himself in the third person (note “his chosen king”), responds to the people’s prayer. Perhaps his confidence is due to the reception of a divine oracle of salvation.

² tn The perfect verbal form is probably used rhetorically to state that the deliverance is as good as done. In this way the speaker emphasizes the certainty of the deliverance. Another option is to take the statement as generalizing; the psalmist affirms that the LORD typically delivers the king.

³ tn Heb “his anointed one.” This title refers to the Davidic king. See Pss 2:2 and 18:50.

⁴ tn Heb “he will answer him.”

⁵ tn Heb “from his holy heavens.”

⁶ tn Heb “with mighty acts of deliverance of his right hand.” The Lord’s “right hand” here symbolizes his power to protect and deliver (see Ps 17:7).

⁷ tn Heb “these in chariots and these in horses.” No verb appears; perhaps the verb “invoke” is to be supplied from the following line. In this case the idea would be that some “invoke” (i.e., trust in) their military might for victory (cf. NEB “boast”; NIV “trust”; NRSV “take pride”). Verse 8 suggests that the “some/others” mentioned here are the nation’s enemies.

⁸ tn The grammatical construction (conjunction + pronominal subject) highlights the contrast between God’s faithful people and the others mentioned in the previous line.

⁹ tn Heb “we invoke the name of.” The Hiphil of יָרָא (*zakhar*), when combined with the phrase “in the name,” means “to invoke” (see Josh 23:7; Isa 48:1; Amos 6:10). By invoking the Lord’s name in prayer, the people demonstrate their trust in him.

¹⁰ tn Or “stumble and fall down.”

¹¹ tn The grammatical construction (conjunction + pronominal subject) highlights the contrast between God’s victorious people and the defeated enemies mentioned in the previous line. The perfect verbal forms either generalize or, more likely, state rhetorically the people’s confidence as they face the approaching battle. They describe the demise of the enemy as being as good as done.

¹² tn Or “rise up and remain upright.” On the meaning of the Hitpolel of נָסַח (*ud*), see HALOT 795 s.v. נָסַח. The verbal forms (a perfect followed by a prefixed form with *vav* [ו] consecutive) either generalize or, more likely, state rhetorically the people’s confidence as they face the approaching battle.

¹³ tc This translation assumes an emendation of the verbal form הוֹשִׁיעָה (*hoshi’ah*). As it stands, the form is an imperative. In this case the people return to the petitionary mood with which the psalm begins (“O LORD, deliver”). But the immediate context is one of confidence (vv. 6-8), not petition (vv. 1-5). If one takes the final *he* on the verb “deliver” as dittographic (note the initial *he* (ה) on the following phrase, “the king”), one can reposit the verbal form as a perfect and understand it as expressing the people’s confidence, “the LORD will deliver the king” (see v. 6). The Hebrew scribal tradition takes “the king” with the following line, in which case it would be best interpreted as a divine title, “may the King answer us” or “the king will answer us” (see Pss 98:6; 145:1). However, the poetic parallelism is better balanced if “the king” is taken with the first line. In this case the referent is the Davidic king, who is earlier called the LORD’s “anointed one” (cf. note on “chosen king” in v. 6; see Pss 21:7; 45:5, 11; 63:11).

he will answer us¹⁴ when we call to him for help!¹⁵

Psalm 21¹⁶

For the music director; a psalm of David.

21:1 O LORD, the king rejoices in the strength you give;¹⁷ he takes great delight in the deliverance you provide.¹⁸

21:2 You grant¹⁹ him his heart’s desire; you do not refuse his request.²⁰ (Selah)

21:3 For you bring him²¹ rich²² blessings;²³ you place a golden crown on his head.

21:4 He asked you to sustain his life,²⁴ and you have granted him long life and an enduring dynasty.²⁵

21:5 Your deliverance brings him great honor;²⁶ you give him majestic splendor.²⁷

¹⁴ tn If the imperative is retained in the preceding line, then the prefixed verbal form is best taken as a jussive of prayer, “may he answer us.” However, if the imperative in the previous line is emended to a perfect, the prefixed form is best taken as imperfect, “he will answer us” (see the note on the word “king” at the end of the previous line).

¹⁵ tn Heb “in the day we call.”

¹⁶ sn Psalm 21. The psalmist praises the Lord for the way he protects and blesses the Davidic king.

¹⁷ tn Heb “in your strength.” The translation interprets the pronominal suffix as subjective, rather than merely descriptive (or attributive).

¹⁸ tn Heb “and in your deliverance, how greatly he rejoices.”

¹⁹ tn The translation assumes the perfect verbal forms in v. 2 are generalizing, stating factually what God typically does for the king. Another option is to take them as present perfects, “you have granted...you have not refused.” See v. 4, which mentions a specific request for a long reign.

²⁰ tn Heb “and the request of his lips you do not refuse.”

²¹ tn Or “meet him [with].”

²² tn Heb “good.”

²³ sn You bring him rich blessings. The following context indicates that God’s “blessings” include deliverance/protection, vindication, sustained life, and a long, stable reign (see also Pss 3:8; 24:5).

²⁴ tn Heb “life he asked from you.” Another option is to translate the perfect verbal forms in v. 4 with the present tense, “he asks...you grant.”

²⁵ tn Heb “you have granted him length of days forever and ever.” The phrase “length of days,” when used of human beings, usually refers to a lengthy period of time (such as one’s lifetime). See, for example, Deut 30:20; Job 12:12; Ps 91:16; Prov 3:2, 16; Lam 5:20. The additional phrase “forever and ever” is hyperbolic. While it seems to attribute eternal life to the king (see Pss 61:6-7; 72:5 as well), the underlying reality is the king’s enduring dynasty. He will live on, as it were, through his descendants, who will continue to rule over his kingdom long after he has passed off the scene.

²⁶ tn Or “great glory.”

²⁷ tn Heb “majesty and splendor you place upon him.” For other uses of the phrase הוֹד וְהָדָר (*hod v’hadar*, “majesty and splendor”) see 1 Chr 16:27; Job 40:10; Pss 96:6; 104:1; 111:3.

21:6 For you grant him lasting blessings; you give him great joy by allowing him into your presence.¹

21:7 For the king trusts² in the LORD, and because of the sovereign One's³ faithfulness he is not upended.⁴

21:8 You⁵ prevail over⁶ all your enemies; your power is too great for those who hate you.⁷

21:9 You burn them up like a fiery furnace⁸ when you appear;⁹ the LORD angrily devours them;¹⁰ the fire consumes them.

21:10 You destroy their offspring¹¹ from the earth, their descendants¹² from among the human race.¹³

21:11 Yes,¹⁴ they intend to do you harm,¹⁵ they dream up a scheme,¹⁶ but they do not succeed.¹⁷

21:12 For you make them retreat¹⁸

when you shoot your arrows at them.¹⁹

21:13 Rise up, O LORD, in strength!²⁰ We will sing and praise²¹ your power!

Psalm 22²²

For the music director; according to the tune "Morning Doe";²³ a psalm of David.

22:1 My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?²⁴

I groan in prayer, but help seems far away.²⁵

22:2 My God, I cry out during the day, but you do not answer, and during the night my prayers do not let up.²⁶

22:3 You are holy; you sit as king receiving the praises of Israel.²⁷

22:4 In you our ancestors²⁸ trusted; they trusted in you²⁹ and you rescued them.

22:5 To you they cried out, and they were saved;

in you they trusted and they were not disappointed.³⁰

¹ **tn** Heb "you make him happy with joy with [i.e., "close by" or "in"] your face." On the idiom "with your face" (i.e., "in your presence") see Ps 16:11 and BDB 816 s.v. פָּנָיו II.2.a.

² **tn** The active participle draws attention to the ongoing nature of the action.

³ **tn** Traditionally "the Most High's." The divine title "Most High" (יְהוָה, *elyon*) pictures God as the exalted ruler of the universe who vindicates the innocent and judges the wicked. Note the focus of vv. 8-12 and see Ps 47:2.

⁴ **tn** Another option is to translate the imperfect verbal form as future, "he will not be upended" (cf. NRSV "he shall not be moved"). Even if one chooses this option, the future tense must be understood in a generalizing sense.

⁵ **tn** The king is now addressed. One could argue that the LORD is still being addressed, but v. 9 militates against this proposal, for there the LORD is mentioned in the third person and appears to be distinct from the addressee (unless, of course, one takes "LORD" in v. 9 as vocative; see the note on "them" in v. 9b). Verse 7 begins this transition to a new addressee by referring to both the king and the LORD in the third person (in vv. 1-6 the LORD is addressed and only the king referred to in the third person).

⁶ **tn** Heb "your hand finds." The idiom pictures the king grabbing hold of his enemies and defeating them (see 1 Sam 23:17). The imperfect verbal forms in vv. 8-12 may be translated with the future tense, as long as the future is understood as generalizing.

⁷ **tn** Heb "your right hand finds those who hate you."

⁸ **tn** Heb "you make them like a furnace of fire." Although many modern translations retain the literal Hebrew, the statement is elliptical. The point is not that he makes them like a furnace, but like an object burned in a furnace (cf. NEB, "at your coming you shall plunge them into a fiery furnace").

⁹ **tn** Heb "at the time of your face." The "face" of the king here refers to his angry presence. See Lam 4:16.

¹⁰ **tn** Heb "the LORD, in his anger he swallows them, and fire devours them." Some take "the LORD" as a vocative, in which case he is addressed in vv. 8-9a. But this makes the use of the third person in v. 9b rather awkward, though the king could be the subject (see vv. 1-7).

¹¹ **tn** Heb "fruit." The next line makes it clear that offspring is in view.

¹² **tn** Heb "seed."

¹³ **tn** Heb "sons of man."

¹⁴ **tn** Or "for."

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "they extend against you harm." The perfect verbal forms in v. 11 are taken as generalizing, stating factually what the king's enemies typically do. Another option is to translate with the past tense ("they intended...planned").

¹⁶ **sn** See Ps 10:2.

¹⁷ **tn** Heb "they lack ability."

¹⁸ **tn** Heb "you make them a shoulder," i.e., "you make them

turn and run, showing the back of their neck and shoulders."

¹⁹ **tn** Heb "with your bowstrings you fix against their faces," i.e., "you fix your arrows on the bowstrings to shoot at them."

²⁰ **tn** Heb "in your strength," but English idiom does not require the pronoun.

²¹ **sn** The psalm concludes with a petition to the Lord, asking him to continue to intervene in strength for the king and nation.

²² **tn** Heb "sing praise."

²³ **sn** Psalm 22. The psalmist cries out to the Lord for deliverance from his dangerous enemies, who have surrounded him and threaten his life. Confident that the Lord will intervene, he then vows to thank the Lord publicly for his help and anticipates a time when all people will recognize the Lord's greatness and worship him.

²⁴ **tn** Heb "according to the doe of the dawn." Apparently this refers to a particular musical tune or style.

²⁵ **sn** From the psalmist's perspective it seems that God has abandoned him, for he fails to answer his cry for help (vv. 1b-2).

²⁶ **tn** Heb "far from my deliverance [are] the words of my groaning." The Hebrew noun שֹׁאֵגָה (*sh^eagah*) and its related verb שָׁאָג (*sha'ag*) are sometimes used of a lion's roar, but they can also describe human groaning (see Job 3:24 and Pss 32:3 and 38:8).

²⁷ **tn** Heb "there is no silence to me."

²⁸ **tn** Heb "[O] one who sits [on] the praises of Israel." The verb "receiving" is supplied in the translation for clarity. The metaphorical language pictures the LORD as sitting enthroned as king in his temple, receiving the praises that his people Israel offer up to him.

²⁹ **tn** Heb "fathers."

³⁰ **tn** The words "in you" are supplied in the translation. They are understood by ellipsis (see the preceding line).

³¹ **tn** Or "were not ashamed."

22:6 But I¹ am a worm,² not a man;³
 people insult me and despise me.⁴
 22:7 All who see me taunt⁵ me;
 they mock me⁶ and shake their heads.⁷
 22:8 They say,⁸
 “Commit yourself⁹ to the LORD!
 Let the LORD¹⁰ rescue him!
 Let the LORD¹¹ deliver him, for he de-
 lights in him.”¹²
 22:9 Yes, you are the one who brought me
 out¹³ from the womb
 and made me feel secure on my mother’s
 breasts.
 22:10 I have been dependent on you since
 birth;¹⁴
 from the time I came out of my mother’s
 womb you have been my God.¹⁵
 22:11 Do not remain far away from me,
 for trouble is near and I have no one to
 help me.¹⁶
 22:12 Many bulls¹⁷ surround me;

powerful bulls of Bashan¹⁸ hem me in.
 22:13 They¹⁹ open their mouths to devour
 me²⁰
 like a roaring lion that rips its prey.²¹
 22:14 My strength drains away like wa-
 ter,²²
 all my bones are dislocated;
 my heart²³ is like wax;
 it melts away inside me.
 22:15 The roof of my mouth²⁴ is as dry as a
 piece of pottery;
 my tongue sticks to my gums.²⁵
 You²⁶ set me in the dust of death.²⁷
 22:16 Yes,²⁸ wild dogs surround me –
 a gang of evil men crowd around me;
 like a lion they pin my hands and feet.²⁹
 22:17 I can count³⁰ all my bones;

¹ **tn** The grammatical construction (conjunction + pronoun) highlights the contrast between the psalmist’s experience and that of his ancestors. When he considers God’s past reliability, it only heightens his despair and confusion, for God’s present silence stands in stark contrast to his past saving acts.

² **tn** The metaphor expresses the psalmist’s self-perception, which is based on how others treat him (see the following line).

³ **tn** Or “not a human being.” The psalmist perceives himself as less than human.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “a reproach of man and despised by people.”

⁵ **tn** Or “scoff at, deride, mock.”

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “they separate with a lip.” Apparently this refers to their verbal taunting.

⁷ **tn** *Shake their heads*. Apparently this refers to a taunting gesture. See also Job 16:4; Ps 109:25; Lam 2:15.

⁸ **tn** The words “they say” are supplied in the translation for clarification and for stylistic reasons. The psalmist here quotes the sarcastic taunts of his enemies.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “roll [yourself].” The Hebrew verb גָּלַל here has the sense of “commit” (see Prov 16:3). The imperative form in the Hebrew text indicates the enemies here address the psalmist. Since they refer to him in the third person in the rest of the verse, some prefer to emend the verb to a perfect, “he commits himself to the LORD.”

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “Let him”; the referent (the LORD) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “Let him”; the referent (the LORD) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹² **tn** That is, “for he [the LORD] delights in him [the psalmist].” For other cases where the expression “delight in” refers to God’s delight in a person, see Num 14:8; 1 Kgs 10:9; Pss 18:19; 40:8.

sn This statement does not necessarily reflect the enemies’ actual belief, but it does reflect the psalmist’s confession. The psalmist’s enemies sarcastically appeal to God to help him, because he claims to be an object of divine favor. However, they probably doubted the reality of his claim.

¹³ **tn** Or “the one who pulled me.” The verb is derived from either גָּחַח (*gakhah*; see HALOT 187 s.v. גָּחַח) or גִּיַח (*giyah*; see BDB 161 s.v. גִּיַח) and seems to carry the nuance “burst forth” or “pull out.”

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “upon you I was cast from [the] womb.”

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “from the womb of my mother you [have been] my God.”

sn Despite the enemies’ taunts, the psalmist is certain of his relationship with God, which began from the time of his birth (*from the time I came out of my mother’s womb*).

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “and there is no helper.”

¹⁷ **sn** The psalmist figuratively compares his enemies to

dangerous bulls.

¹⁸ **sn** *Bashan*, located east of the Jordan River, was well-known for its cattle. See Ezek 39:18; Amos 4:1.

¹⁹ **tn** “They” refers to the psalmist’s enemies, who in the previous verse are described as “powerful bulls.”

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* “they open against me their mouth[s].” To “open the mouth against” is a Hebrew idiom associated with eating and swallowing (see Ezek 2:8; Lam 2:16).

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “a lion ripping and roaring.”

²² **tn** *Heb* “like water I am poured out.”

²³ **sn** The *heart* is viewed here as the seat of the psalmist’s strength and courage.

²⁴ **tc** *Heb* “my strength” (כֹּחִי, *kokhiy*), but many prefer to emend the text to חִיכִי (*khikiy*, “my palate”; cf. NEB, NRSV “my mouth”) assuming that an error of transposition has occurred in the traditional Hebrew text.

²⁵ **tn** Cf. NEB “my jaw”; NASB, NRSV “my jaws”; NIV “the roof of my mouth.”

²⁶ **sn** Here the psalmist addresses God and suggests that God is ultimately responsible for what is happening because of his failure to intervene (see vv. 1-2, 11).

²⁷ **sn** The imperfect verbal form draws attention to the progressive nature of the action. The psalmist is in the process of dying.

²⁸ **tn** Or “for.”

²⁹ **tn** *Heb* “like a lion, my hands and my feet.” This reading is often emended because it is grammatically awkward, but perhaps its awkwardness is by rhetorical design. Its broken syntax may be intended to convey the panic and terror felt by the psalmist. The psalmist may envision a lion pinning the hands and feet of its victim to the ground with its paws (a scene depicted in ancient Near Eastern art), or a lion biting the hands and feet. The line has been traditionally translated, “they pierce my hands and feet,” and then taken as foreshadowing the crucifixion of Christ. Though Jesus does appropriate the language of this psalm while on the cross (compare v. 1 with Matt 27:46 and Mark 15:34), the NT does not cite this verse in describing the death of Jesus. (It does refer to vv. 7-8 and 18, however. See Matt 27:35, 39, 43; Mark 15:24, 29; Luke 23:34; John 19:23-24.) If one were to insist on an emendation of כְּאֵרִי (*ka’ariy*, “like a lion”) to a verb, the most likely verbal root would be כָּרַח (*karah*, “dig”; see the LXX). In this context this verb could refer to the gnawing and tearing of wild dogs (cf. NCV, TEV, CEV). The ancient Greek version produced by Symmachus reads “bind” here, perhaps understanding a verbal root כָּרַח, which is attested in later Hebrew and Aramaic and means “to encircle, entwine, embrace” (see HALOT 497-98 s.v. כָּרַח and Jastrow 668 s.v. כָּרַח). Neither one of these proposed verbs can yield a meaning “bore, pierce.”

³⁰ **tn** The imperfect verbal forms in vv. 17-18 draw attention to the progressive nature of the action.

my enemies¹ are gloating over me in triumph.²

22:18 They are dividing up my clothes among themselves; they are rolling dice³ for my garments.

22:19 But you, O LORD, do not remain far away!

You are my source of strength!⁴ Hurry and help me!⁵

22:20 Deliver me⁶ from the sword! Save⁷ my life⁸ from the claws⁹ of the wild dogs!

22:21 Rescue me from the mouth of the lion,¹⁰

and from the horns of the wild oxen!¹¹ You have answered me!¹²

22:22 I will declare your name to my countrymen!¹³

In the middle of the assembly I will praise you!

22:23 You loyal followers of the LORD,¹⁴ praise him!

All you descendants of Jacob, honor him! All you descendants of Israel, stand in awe of him!¹⁵

22:24 For he did not despise or detest the suffering¹⁶ of the oppressed;¹⁷

he did not ignore him;¹⁸ when he cried out to him, he responded.¹⁹

22:25 You are the reason I offer praise²⁰ in the great assembly;

I will fulfill my promises before the LORD's loyal followers.²¹

22:26 Let the oppressed eat and be filled!²² Let those who seek his help praise the LORD!

May you²³ live forever!

22:27 Let all the people of the earth acknowledge the LORD and turn to him!²⁴

Let all the nations²⁵ worship you!²⁶

22:28 For the LORD is king²⁷ and rules over the nations.

22:29 All of the thriving people²⁸ of the earth will join the celebration and worship;²⁹

all those who are descending into the grave³⁰ will bow before him, including those who cannot preserve their lives.³¹

22:30 A whole generation³² will serve him;

1 tn Heb "they." The masculine form indicates the enemies are in view. The referent (the psalmist's enemies) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

2 tn Heb "they gaze, they look upon me."

3 tn Heb "casting lots." The precise way in which this would have been done is not certain.

4 tn Heb "O my strength."

5 tn Heb "hurry to my help."

6 tn Or "my life."

7 tn The verb "save" is supplied in the translation; it is understood by ellipsis (see "deliver" in the preceding line).

8 tn Heb "my only one." The psalmist may mean that his life is precious, or that he feels isolated and alone.

9 tn Heb "from the hand." Here "hand" is understood by metonymy as a reference to the "paw" and thus the "claws" of the wild dogs.

10 sn The psalmist again compares his enemies to vicious dogs and ferocious lions (see vv. 13, 16).

11 tn The Hebrew term רַמִּים (*remim*) appears to be an alternate spelling of רַעֲמִים (*ra'emim*, "wild oxen"; see BDB 910 s.v. רַעֲמִים).

12 tn Heb "and from the horns of the wild oxen you answer me." Most take the final verb with the preceding prepositional phrase. Some understand the verb form as a relatively rare precative perfect, expressing a wish or request (see *IBHS* 494-95 §30.5.4c, d). However, not all grammarians are convinced that the perfect is used as a precative in biblical Hebrew. (See the discussion at Ps 3:7.) Others prefer to take the perfect in its usual indicative sense. The psalmist, perhaps in response to an oracle of salvation, affirms confidently that God has answered him, assuring him that deliverance is on the way. The present translation takes the prepositional phrase as parallel to the preceding "from the mouth of the lion" and as collocated with the verb "rescue" at the beginning of the verse. "You have answered me" is understood as a triumphant shout which marks a sudden shift in tone and introduces the next major section of the psalm. By isolating the statement syntactically, the psalmist highlights the declaration.

13 tn Or "brothers," but here the term does not carry a literal familial sense. It refers to the psalmist's fellow members of the Israelite covenant community (see v. 23).

14 tn Heb "[you] fearers of the LORD." See Ps 15:4.

15 tn Heb "fear him."

16 tn Or "affliction"; or "need."

17 sn In this verse the psalmist refers to himself in the third

person and characterizes himself as oppressed.

18 tn Heb "he did not hide his face from him." For other uses of the idiom "hide the face" meaning "ignore," see Pss 10:11; 13:1; 51:9. Sometimes the idiom carries the stronger idea of "reject" (see Pss 27:9; 88:14).

19 tn Heb "heard."

20 tn Heb "from with you [is] my praise."

21 tn Heb "my vows I will fulfill before those who fear him." When asking the LORD for help, the psalmists would typically promise to praise the LORD publicly if he intervened and delivered them.

22 sn *Eat and be filled.* In addition to praising the LORD, the psalmist also offers a thank offering to the LORD and invites others to share in a communal meal.

23 tn Heb "may your heart[s]."

24 tn Heb "may all the ends of the earth remember and turn to the LORD." The prefixed verbal forms in v. 27 are understood as jussives (cf. NEB). Another option (cf. NIV, NRSV) is to take the forms as imperfects and translate, "all the people of the earth will acknowledge and turn...and worship." See vv. 29-32.

25 tn Heb "families of the nations."

26 tn Heb "before you."

27 tn Heb "for to the LORD [is] dominion."

28 tn Heb "fat [ones]." This apparently refers to those who are healthy and robust, i.e., thriving. In light of the parallelism, some prefer to emend the form to יְשֻׁנֵי (*sheny*, "those who sleep [in the earth]"; cf. NAB, NRSV), but רַעֲמִים (*dishney*, "fat [ones]") seems to form a merism with "all who descend into the grave" in the following line. The psalmist envisions all people, whether healthy or dying, joining in worship of the LORD.

29 tn Heb "eat and worship." The verb forms (a perfect followed by a prefixed form with *vav* [ו] consecutive) are normally used in narrative to relate completed actions. Here the psalmist uses the forms rhetorically as he envisions a time when the LORD will receive universal worship. The mood is one of wishful thinking and anticipation; this is not prophecy in the strict sense.

30 tn Heb "all of the ones going down [into] the dust." This group stands in contrast to those mentioned in the previous line. Together the two form a merism encompassing all human beings – the healthy, the dying, and everyone in between.

31 tn Heb "and his life he does not revive."

32 tn Heb "offspring."

they will tell the next generation about the sovereign Lord.¹

22:31 They will come and tell about his saving deeds;² they will tell a future generation what he has accomplished.³

Psalms 23⁴

A psalm of David.

23:1 The LORD is my shepherd,⁵ I lack nothing.⁶

23:2 He takes me to lush pastures,⁷ he leads me to refreshing water.⁸

23:3 He restores my strength.⁹

1 tn *Heb* "it will be told concerning the Lord to the generation." The Hebrew term translated "Lord" here is אֲדוֹנָי (*adonay*).

2 tn *Heb* "his righteousness." Here the noun צְדִיקָה (*tsidqah*) refers to the Lord's saving deeds whereby he vindicates the oppressed.

3 tn *Heb* "to a people [to be] born that he has acted." The words "they will tell" are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

4 sn *Psalms 23*. In vv. 1-4 the psalmist pictures the Lord as a shepherd who provides for his needs and protects him from danger. The psalmist declares, "The Lord is my shepherd," and then extends and develops that metaphor, speaking as if he were a sheep. In vv. 5-6 the metaphor changes as the psalmist depicts a great royal banquet hosted by the Lord. The psalmist is a guest of honor and recipient of divine favor, who enjoys unlimited access to the divine palace and the divine presence.

5 sn *The LORD is my shepherd*. The opening metaphor suggests the psalmist is assuming the role of a sheep. In vv. 1b-4 the psalmist extends the metaphor and explains exactly how the LORD is like a shepherd to him. At the surface level the language can be understood in terms of a shepherd's relationship to his sheep. The translation of vv. 1-4 reflects this level. But, of course, each statement also points to an underlying reality.

6 tn The imperfect verbal form is best understood as generalizing; the psalmist highlights his typical or ongoing experience as a result of having the LORD as his shepherd (habitual present use). The next verse explains more specifically what he means by this statement.

7 tn *Heb* "he makes me lie down in lush pastures." The Hiphil verb יָרִיבֵנִי (*yarbitseniy*) has a causative-modal nuance here (see *IBHS* 445-46 §27.5 on this use of the Hiphil), meaning "allows me to lie down" (see also *Jer* 33:12). The point is that the shepherd takes the sheep to lush pastures and lets them eat and rest there. Both imperfect verbal forms in v. 2 are generalizing and highlight the psalmist's typical experience.

8 tn Both genitives in v. 2 indicate an attribute of the noun they modify: רֵיחַ (deshe) characterizes the pastures as "lush" (i.e., rich with vegetation), while מְנוּחֹת (*m'nukhot*) probably characterizes the water as refreshing. In this case the plural indicates an abstract quality. Some take מְנוּחֹת in the sense of "still, calm" (i.e., as describing calm pools in contrast to dangerous torrents) but it is unlikely that such a pastoral scene is in view. Shepherds usually watered their sheep at wells (see *Gen* 29:2-3; *Exod* 2:16-19). Another option is to take מְנוּחֹת as "resting places" and to translate, "water of/at the resting places" (i.e., a genitive of location; see *IBHS* 147-48 §9.5.2e).

sn Within the framework of the metaphor, the psalmist/shepherd is declaring in v. 2 that his shepherd provides the essentials for physical life. At a deeper level the psalmist may be referring to more than just physical provision, though that would certainly be included.

9 tn The appearance of the Hebrew term נַפְשִׁי (*nafshi*), traditionally translated "my soul," might suggest a spiritualized interpretation for the first line of v. 3. However, at the surface

He leads me down¹⁰ the right paths¹¹ for the sake of his reputation.¹²

23:4 Even when I must walk through the darkest valley,¹³ I fear¹⁴ no danger,¹⁵

level of the shepherd/sheep metaphor, this is unlikely. When it occurs with a pronominal suffix נֶפֶשׁ (*nefesh*) is often equivalent to a pronoun, especially in poetry (see *BDB* 660 s.v. נֶפֶשׁ 4.a). In this context, where the statement most naturally refers to the physical provision just described, the form is best translated simply "me." The accompanying verb (a Polel form [factive use] of) שׁוּב (shuv), if referring to the physical provision just described, carries the nuance "refresh, restore strength."

10 tn The imperfect verbal forms in v. 3 יָשׁוּבָה [yashoveh] and יַחְנִינֵי [yakhneniy], like those in vv. 1-2, highlight what is typical of the shepherd/sheep relationship.

11 tn The attributive genitive צְדִיקָה (*tsedeq*) is traditionally translated "righteousness" here, as if designating a moral or ethical quality. But this seems unlikely, for it modifies מַגְלֵי (*mag'ley*, "paths"). Within the shepherd/sheep metaphor, the phrase likely refers to "right" or "correct" paths, i.e. ones that lead to pastures, wells, or the fold. While צְדִיקָה usually does carry a moral or ethical nuance, it can occasionally refer to less abstract things, such as weights and offerings. In this context, which emphasizes divine provision and protection, the underlying reality is probably God's providential guidance. The psalmist is confident that God takes him down paths that will ultimately lead to something beneficial, not destructive.

12 tn The Hebrew term שֵׁם (*shem*, "name") refers here to the shepherd's reputation. (The English term "name" is often used the same way.) The statement לְמַעַן שְׁמִי (*l'ma'an sh'mo*, "for the sake of his name") makes excellent sense within the framework of the shepherd/sheep metaphor. Shepherds, who sometimes hired out their services, were undoubtedly concerned about their vocational reputation. To maintain their reputation as competent shepherds, they had to know the "lay of the land" and make sure they led the sheep down the right paths to the proper destinations. The underlying reality is a profound theological truth: God must look out for the best interests of the one he has promised to protect, because if he fails to do so, his faithfulness could legitimately be called into question and his reputation damaged.

13 tn The Hebrew term צִלְמוֹת (*tsalmavet*) has traditionally been understood as a compound noun meaning "shadow of death" (צֶל [tsel] + מָוֶת [mavet]; see *BDB* 853 s.v. צִלְמוֹת). Other scholars prefer to vocalize the form צִלְמוֹת (*tsalmu*) and understand it as an abstract noun (from the root צָלַם, *tsalam*) meaning "darkness." An examination of the word's usage favors the latter derivation. It is frequently associated with darkness/night and contrasted with light/morning (see *Job* 3:5; 10:21-22; 12:22; 24:17; 28:3; 34:22; *Ps* 107:10, 14; *Isa* 9:1; *Jer* 13:16; *Amos* 5:8). In some cases the darkness described is associated with the realm of death (*Job* 10:21-22; 38:17), but this is a metaphorical application of the word and does not reflect its inherent meaning. If the word does indeed mean "darkness," it modifies גַּיָּא (*gay*, "valley, ravine") quite naturally. At the metaphorical level, v. 4 pictures the shepherd taking his sheep through a dark ravine where predators might lurk. The life-threatening situations faced by the psalmist are the underlying reality behind the imagery.

14 tn The imperfect verbal forms in v. 4, as in vv. 1-3, highlight what is typical in the psalmist's experience.

15 tn The Hebrew term רָע (*ra'*) is traditionally translated "evil" here, perhaps suggesting a moral or ethical nuance. But at the level of the metaphor, the word means "danger, injury, harm," as a sheep might experience from a predator. The life-threatening dangers faced by the psalmist, especially the enemies mentioned in v. 5, are the underlying reality.

for you are with me;
your rod and your staff reassure me.¹
23:5 You prepare a feast before me²
in plain sight of my enemies.
You refresh³ my head with oil;
my cup is completely full.⁴

23:6 Surely your goodness and faithful-
ness⁵ will pursue⁶ me all my days,⁷

and I will live in⁸ the LORD's house⁹ for
the rest of my life.¹⁰

Psalm 24¹¹

A psalm of David.

24:1 The LORD owns the earth and all it
contains,
the world and all who live in it.

24:2 For he set its foundation upon the seas,
and established¹² it upon the ocean cur-
rents.¹³

24:3 Who is allowed to ascend¹⁴ the moun-
tain of the LORD?¹⁵

Who may go up to his holy dwelling
place?

24:4 The one whose deeds are blameless
and whose motives are pure,¹⁶
who does not lie.¹⁷

¹ **tn** The Piel of נָחַם (*nakhām*), when used with a human object, means "comfort, console." But here, within the metaphorical framework, it refers to the way in which a shepherd uses his implements to assure the sheep of his presence and calm their nerves. The underlying reality is the emotional stability God provides the psalmist during life threatening situations.

² **sn** In v. 5 the metaphor switches. (It would be very odd for a sheep to have its head anointed and be served wine.) The background for the imagery is probably the royal banquet. Ancient Near Eastern texts describe such banquets in similar terms to those employed by the psalmist. (See M. L. Barre and J. S. Kselman, "New Exodus, Covenant, and Restoration in Psalm 23," *The Word of the Lord Shall Go Forth*, 97-127.) The reality behind the imagery is the Lord's favor. Through his blessings and protection he demonstrates to everyone, including dangerous enemies, that the psalmist has a special relationship with him.

³ **tn** The imperfect verbal form in v. 5a carries on the generalizing mood of vv. 1-4. However, in v. 5b the psalmist switches to a perfect (דִּשְׁנָה, *dishanta*), which may have a generalizing force as well. But then again the perfect is conspicuous here and may be present perfect in sense, indicating that the divine host typically pours oil on his head prior to seating him at the banquet table. The verb דָּשַׁן (*dashan*; the Piel is factitive) is often translated "anoint," but this is misleading, for it might suggest a symbolic act of initiation into royal status. One would expect the verb מָשַׁח (*mashan*) in this case; דִּשְׁנָה here describes an act of hospitality extended to guests and carries the nuance "refresh." In Prov 15:30 it stands parallel to "make happy" and refers to the effect that good news has on the inner being of its recipient.

⁴ **tn** The rare noun רוּיָה (*ruyah*) is derived from the well-attested verb רָוַה (*ra vah*, "be saturated, drink one's fill"). In this context, where it describes a cup, it must mean "filled up," but not necessarily to overflowing.

⁵ **tn** The noun חֶסֶד (*hesed*; v. 6) has been the subject of several monographs. G. R. Clark concludes that חֶסֶד "is not merely an attitude or an emotion; it is an emotion that leads to an activity beneficial to the recipient." He explains that an act of חֶסֶד is "a beneficent action performed, in the context of a deep and enduring commitment between two persons or parties, by one who is able to render assistance to the needy party who in the circumstances is unable to help him- or herself." (See G. R. Clark, *The Word Hesed in the Hebrew Bible* [JSOTSup], 267.) HALOT 336-37 s.v. defines the word as "loyalty," or "faithfulness." Other appropriate meanings might be "commitment" and "devotion."

⁶ **tn** The use of רָדַף (*radaf*, "pursue, chase") with נוֹב וְחֶסֶד (*tov vakhshed*, "goodness and faithfulness") as subject is ironic. This is the only place in the entire OT where either of these nouns appears as the subject of this verb (*radaf*, "pursue"). This verb is often used to describe the hostile actions of enemies. One might expect the psalmist's enemies (see v. 5) to chase him, but ironically God's "goodness and faithfulness" (which are personified and stand by metonymy for God himself) pursue him instead. The word "pursue" is used outside of its normal context in an ironic manner and creates a unique, but pleasant word picture of God's favor (or a kind God) "chasing down" the one whom he loves.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "all the days of my life."

⁸ **tn** The verb form יִשְׁבֵּתִי (*yeshvity*) is a Qal perfect (with *vav* [ן] consecutive), first common singular, from שָׁב (*shuv*, "return") and should be translated, "and I will return." But this makes no sense when construed with the following phrase, "in the house of the Lord." The term שָׁב (*shuv*) appears only here with the following phrase בְּבֵיתִי (*beyvet*). The form should be emended to יִשְׁבֵּתִי (*yeshvity*; an infinitive construct from יָשַׁב, *yashav*, "live") with pronominal suffix) or to יִשְׁבֵּתִי (*yeshvity*; a Qal perfect with *vav* [ן] consecutive, first common singular, from יָשַׁב [see BHS, note c]). In either case one could then translate, "and I will live [in the house of the Lord]." The phrase "in the house" frequently follows the verb יָשַׁב in the OT.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "the house of the Lord." The phrase may be purely metaphorical here, referring to the royal palace where the royal host of v. 5 holds his banquet and lives. If one takes the phrase more literally, it would refer to the earthly tabernacle (if one accepts Davidic authorship) or the later temple (see Judg 19:18; 1 Sam 1:7, 24; 2 Sam 12:20; 1 Kgs 7:12, 40, 45, 51).

¹⁰ **tn** The phrase יָמֵי חַיֵּי אֱדָרְךָ (*orekh yamim*, "length of days") is traditionally translated "forever." However, this phrase, when used elsewhere of people, usually refers to a lengthy period of time, such as one's lifetime, and does not mean "forever" in the sense of eternity. (Cf. Deut 30:20; Job 12:12; Ps 91:16; Prov 3:2, 16; Lam 5:20.) Furthermore, the parallel phrase "all the days of my life" suggests this more limited meaning. Psalm 21:4, where the phrase is followed by "forever and ever," may be an exception, though the juxtaposition of the phrases may be an example of intensification, where the second phrase goes beyond the limits of the first, rather than synonymy. Even if one takes both expressions as referring to eternal life, the language is part of the king's hyperbolic description of the Lord's blessings and should not be taken literally.

¹¹ **sn** *Psalm 24*. The psalmist affirms the universal kingship of the sovereign creator, reminds his people that only the morally pure are qualified to worship him, and celebrates his splendor as a mighty warrior king.

¹² **tn** The prefixed verbal form is understood as a preterite, referring to the creation of the world.

¹³ **sn** *He...established it upon the ocean currents*. The description reflects ancient Israelite prescientific cosmology, which is based on outward appearances. The language also suggests that God's creative work involved the subjugation of chaos, symbolized by the sea.

¹⁴ **tn** The imperatives in v. 3 are modal, expressing potential or permission.

¹⁵ **sn** In this context the Lord's *mountain* probably refers to Zion/Jerusalem (see Isa 2:2-3).

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "the innocent of hands and the pure of heart." The "hands" allude to one's actions, the "heart" to one's thought life and motives.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "who does not lift up for emptiness my life." The first person pronoun on נִפְשִׁי (*nafshy*, "my life") makes little sense here; many medieval Hebrew MSS support the ancient versions in reading a third person pronoun "his." The idiom

or make promises with no intention of keeping them.¹
24:5 Such godly people are rewarded by the LORD,² and vindicated by the God who delivers them.³
24:6 Such purity characterizes the people who seek his favor, Jacob's descendants, who pray to him.⁴ (Selah)
24:7 Look up,⁵ you gates! Rise up,⁶ you eternal doors! Then the majestic king⁷ will enter!⁸
24:8 Who is this majestic king?⁹ The LORD who is strong and mighty! The LORD who is mighty in battle!
24:9 Look up, you gates! Rise up, you eternal doors! Then the majestic king will enter!
24:10 Who is this majestic king? The LORD who commands armies!¹⁰ He is the majestic king! (Selah)

Psalms 25¹¹

By David.

25:1 O LORD, I come before you in prayer.¹²
25:2 My God, I trust in you. Please do not let me be humiliated;

"lift the life" here means to "long for" or "desire strongly." In this context (note the reference to an oath in the following line) "emptiness" probably refers to speech (see Ps 12:2).

¹ **tn** Heb "and does not swear an oath deceitfully."

² **tn** Heb "he (the righteous individual described in v. 4) lifts up a blessing from the LORD." The singular subject is representative here, as v. 6 makes clear. The referent (godly people like the individual in v. 4) has been specified in the translation for clarity. The imperfect verbal form is generalizing; such people are typically rewarded for their deeds.

³ **tn** "and vindication from the God of his deliverance."

⁴ **tn** Heb "this [is the] generation of the ones seeking him, the ones seeking your face, Jacob." To "seek the LORD's face" means to seek his favor through prayer (see 2 Sam 21:1; Pss 27:8; 105:4).

sn This verse presents a somewhat idealized view of Jacob's descendants as devoted worshippers of the Lord.

⁵ **tn** Heb "lift up your heads." The gates of the Lord's dwelling place are here personified. The idiom "lift up the head" often means "be confident, bold" (see Judg 8:28; Job 10:15; Ps 83:2; Zech 1:21).

⁶ **tn** Heb "lift yourselves up."

⁷ **tn** Or "king of glory."

⁸ **tn** Following the imperatives of the preceding lines, the prefixed verbal form with *vav* (ו) conjunctive indicates purpose or result.

⁹ **sn** *Who is this majestic king?* Perhaps the personified gates/doors ask this question, in response to the command given in v. 7.

¹⁰ **tn** Traditionally, "the LORD of hosts," a title which here pictures the Lord as a mighty warrior-king who leads armies into battle.

¹¹ **sn** *Psalms 25*. The psalmist asks for divine protection, guidance and forgiveness as he affirms his loyalty to and trust in the Lord. This psalm is an acrostic; every verse begins with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet, except for v. 18, which, like v. 19, begins with ר (*resh*) instead of the expected ק (*qof*). The final verse, which begins with פ (*pe*), stands outside the acrostic scheme.

¹² **tn** Heb "to you, O LORD, my life I lift up." To "lift up" one's "life" to the LORD means to express one's trust in him through prayer. See Pss 86:4; 143:8.

do not let my enemies triumphantly rejoice over me!

25:3 Certainly none who rely on you will be humiliated.

Those who deal in treachery will be thwarted¹³ and humiliated.

25:4 Make me understand your ways, O LORD!

Teach me your paths!¹⁴

25:5 Guide me into your truth¹⁵ and teach me.

For you are the God who delivers me; on you I rely all day long.

25:6 Remember¹⁶ your compassionate and faithful deeds, O LORD, for you have always acted in this manner.¹⁷

25:7 Do not hold against me¹⁸ the sins of my youth¹⁹ or my rebellious acts!

Because you are faithful to me, extend to me your favor, O LORD!²⁰

25:8 The LORD is both kind and fair;²¹ that is why he teaches sinners the right way to live.²²

25:9 May he show²³ the humble what is right!²⁴

May he teach²⁵ the humble his way!

25:10 The LORD always proves faithful and reliable²⁶

to those who follow the demands of his covenant.²⁷

¹³ **tn** Heb "those who deal in treachery in vain." The adverb רֵקָמָה (*reqam*, "in vain") probably refers to the failure (or futility) of their efforts. Another option is to understand it as meaning "without cause" (cf. NIV "without excuse"; NRSV "wantonly treacherous").

¹⁴ **sn** *Teach me your paths*. In this context the LORD's "ways" and "paths" refer to the moral principles which the LORD prescribes for his followers. See vv. 8-10.

¹⁵ **sn** The LORD's commandments are referred to as *truth* here because they are a trustworthy and accurate expression of the divine will.

¹⁶ **tn** That is, "remember" with the intention of repeating.

¹⁷ **tn** Heb "for from antiquity [are] they."

¹⁸ **tn** Heb "do not remember," with the intention of punishing.

¹⁹ **sn** That is, the *sins* characteristic of youths, who lack moral discretion and wisdom.

²⁰ **tn** Heb "according to your faithfulness, remember me, you, for the sake of your goodness, O LORD."

²¹ **tn** Heb "good and just."

²² **tn** Heb "teaches sinners in the way."

²³ **tn** The prefixed verbal form is jussive; the psalmist expresses his prayer.

²⁴ **tn** Heb "may he guide the humble into justice." The Hebrew term אָנָוִים (*anavim*, "humble") usually refers to the oppressed, but in this context, where the psalmist confesses his sin and asks for moral guidance, it apparently refers to sinners who humble themselves before God and seek deliverance from their sinful condition.

²⁵ **tn** The prefixed verbal form is interpreted as a jussive (it stands parallel to the jussive form, "may he guide").

²⁶ **tn** Heb "all the paths of the LORD are faithful and trustworthy." The LORD's "paths" refer here to his characteristic actions.

²⁷ **tn** Heb "to the ones who keep his covenant and his testimonies."

25:11 For the sake of your reputation,¹ O LORD,
 forgive my sin, because it is great.²
 25:12 The LORD shows his faithful followers
 the way they should live.³
 25:13 They experience his favor;⁴
 their descendants⁵ inherit the land.⁶
 25:14 The LORD's loyal followers receive
 his guidance,⁷
 and he reveals his covenantal demands to
 them.⁸
 25:15 I continually look to the LORD for
 help,⁹
 for he will free my feet from the enemy's
 net.¹⁰
 25:16 Turn toward me and have mercy on
 me,
 for I am alone¹¹ and oppressed!
 25:17 Deliver me from my distress;¹²
 rescue me from my suffering!¹³
 25:18 See my pain and suffering!
 Forgive all my sins!¹⁴
 25:19 Watch my enemies, for they out-
 number me;
 they hate me and want to harm me.¹⁵
 25:20 Protect me¹⁶ and deliver me!
 Please do not let me be humiliated,
 for I have taken shelter in you!
 25:21 May integrity and godliness protect
 me,
 for I rely on you!

25:22 O God, rescue¹⁷ Israel
 from all their distress!¹⁸

Psalm 26¹⁹

By David.

26:1 Vindicate me, O LORD,
 for I have integrity,²⁰
 and I trust in the LORD without wavering.
 26:2 Examine me, O LORD, and test me!
 Evaluate my inner thoughts and motives!²¹
 26:3 For I am ever aware of your faithful-
 ness,²²
 and your loyalty continually motivates
 me.²³
 26:4 I do not associate²⁴ with deceitful
 men,
 or consort²⁵ with those who are dishon-
 est.²⁶
 26:5 I hate the mob²⁷ of evil men,
 and do not associate²⁸ with the wicked.
 26:6 I maintain a pure lifestyle,²⁹
 so I can appear before your altar,³⁰ O
 LORD,
 26:7 to give you thanks,³¹
 and to tell about all your amazing deeds.³²
 26:8 O LORD, I love the temple where you
 live,³³

¹ **tn** Heb "name." By forgiving the sinful psalmist, the LORD's reputation as a merciful God will be enhanced.

² **sn** *Forgive my sin, because it is great.* The psalmist readily admits his desperate need for forgiveness.

³ **tn** Heb "Who is this man, the one who fears the LORD? He will instruct him in the way he should choose." The singular (note "man") is representative here (see v. 14, where the plural is used), and has thus been translated as a plural ("followers...they").

⁴ **tn** Heb "his life in goodness dwells." The singular is representative (see v. 14).

⁵ **tn** Or "offspring"; Heb "seed."

⁶ **tn** Or "earth."

⁷ **tn** Heb "the advice of the LORD belongs to those who fear him."

⁸ **tn** Heb "and his covenant, to make them know."

⁹ **tn** Heb "my eyes continually [are] toward the LORD."

¹⁰ **tn** Heb "for he will bring out from a net my feet." The hostility of the psalmist's enemies is probably in view (see v. 19).

¹¹ **tn** That is, helpless and vulnerable.

¹² **tc** Heb "the distresses of my heart, they make wide." The text makes little if any sense as it stands, unless this is an otherwise unattested intransitive use of the Hiphil of רָחַב (*rakhav*, "be wide"). It is preferable to emend the form רָחַבְיָבִי (*hirkhiv*; Hiphil perfect third plural "they make wide") to רָחַבְיָבִי (*harkhev*; Hiphil imperative masculine singular "make wide"). (The final *vav* [h] can be joined to the following word and taken as a conjunction.) In this case one can translate, "[in/from] the distresses of my heart, make wide [a place for me]," that is, "deliver me from the distress I am experiencing." For the expression "make wide [a place for me]," see Ps 4:1.

¹³ **tn** Heb "from my distresses lead me out."

¹⁴ **tn** Heb "lift up all my sins."

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "see my enemies for they are numerous, and [with] violent hatred they hate me."

¹⁶ **tn** Or "my life."

¹⁷ **tn** Or "redeem."

¹⁸ **tn** Heb "his distresses."

sn *O God, rescue Israel from all their distress.* It is possible that the psalmist speaks on behalf of the nation throughout this entire psalm. Another option is that v. 22 is a later addition to the psalm which applies an original individual lament to the covenant community. If so, it may reflect an exilic setting.

¹⁹ **sn** *Psalm 26.* The author invites the Lord to test his integrity, asserts his innocence and declares his loyalty to God.

²⁰ **tn** Heb "for I in my integrity walk."

²¹ **tn** Heb "evaluate my kidneys and my heart." The kidneys and heart were viewed as the seat of one's volition, conscience, and moral character.

²² **tn** Heb "for your faithfulness [is] before my eyes."

²³ **tn** Heb "and I walk about in your loyalty."

sn The psalmist's awareness of the LORD's *faithfulness and...loyalty* toward him *motivates* him to remain loyal to the LORD and to maintain his moral purity.

²⁴ **tn** Heb "sit."

²⁵ **tn** Heb "go." The psalmist uses the imperfect form of the verb to emphasize that he does not make a practice of associating with such people.

²⁶ **tn** Heb "[those who] conceal themselves."

²⁷ **tn** Heb "assembly, company."

²⁸ **tn** Heb "sit." The psalmist uses the imperfect form of the verb to emphasize that he does not make a practice of associating with such people.

²⁹ **tn** Heb "I wash my hands in innocence." The psalmist uses an image from cultic ritual to picture his moral lifestyle. The imperfect verbal emphasizes that this is his habit.

³⁰ **tn** Heb "so I can go around your altar" (probably in ritual procession). Following the imperfect of the preceding line, the cohortative with *vav* (ו) conjunctive indicates purpose or result.

³¹ **tn** Heb "to cause to be heard the sound of thanksgiving."

³² **tn** The two infinitival forms (both with prefixed preposition *ל*, *lamed*) give the purpose for his appearance at the altar.

³³ **tn** Heb "the dwelling of your house."

the place where your splendor is revealed.¹

26:9 Do not sweep me away² with sinners, or execute me along with violent people,³

26:10 who are always ready to do wrong⁴ or offer a bribe.⁵

26:11 But I have integrity!⁶

Rescue me⁷ and have mercy on me!

26:12 I am safe,⁸

and among the worshipers I will praise the LORD.

Psalm 27⁹

By David.

27:1 The LORD delivers and vindicates me!¹⁰

I fear no one!¹¹

The LORD protects my life!

I am afraid of no one!¹²

27:2 When evil men attack me¹³

to devour my flesh,¹⁴

when my adversaries and enemies attack me,¹⁵

they stumble and fall.¹⁶

27:3 Even when an army is deployed against me,

I do not fear.¹⁷

Even when war is imminent,¹⁸

I remain confident.¹⁹

27:4 I have asked the LORD for one thing – this is what I desire!

I want to live²⁰ in the LORD's house²¹ all the days of my life,

so I can gaze at the splendor²² of the LORD

and contemplate in his temple.

27:5 He will surely²³ give me shelter²⁴ in the day of danger;²⁵

he will hide me in his home;²⁶

he will place me²⁷ on an inaccessible rocky summit.²⁸

27:6 Now I will triumph

over my enemies who surround me!²⁹

I will offer sacrifices in his dwelling place and shout for joy!³⁰

I will sing praises to the LORD!

27:7 Hear me,³¹ O LORD, when I cry out!

Have mercy on me and answer me!

27:8 My heart tells me to pray to you,³²

and I do pray to you, O LORD.³³

27:9 Do not reject me!³⁴

Do not push your servant away in anger!

You are my deliverer!³⁵

Do not forsake or abandon me,

O God who vindicates me!

27:10 Even if my father and mother abandoned me,³⁶

the LORD would take me in.³⁷

¹ *tn Heb* "the place of the abode of your splendor."

² *tn Heb* "do not gather up my life with."

³ *tn Heb* "or with men of bloodshed my life." The verb is supplied; it is understood by ellipsis (see the preceding line).

⁴ *tn Heb* "who [have] in their hands evil."

⁵ *tn Heb* "and their right hand is full of a bribe."

⁶ *tn Heb* "and I in my integrity walk." The psalmist uses the imperfect verbal form to emphasize this is his practice. The construction at the beginning of the verse (conjunction + pronoun) highlights the contrast between the psalmist and the sinners mentioned in vv. 9-10.

⁷ *tn Or* "redeem me."

⁸ *tn Heb* "my foot stands in a level place."

⁹ *sn Psalm 27.* The author is confident of the Lord's protection and asks the Lord to vindicate him.

¹⁰ *tn Heb* "the LORD [is] my light and my deliverance." "Light" is often used as a metaphor for deliverance and the life/blessings it brings. See Pss 37:6; 97:11; 112:4; Isa 49:6; 51:4; Mic 7:8. Another option is that "light" refers here to divine guidance (see Ps 43:3).

¹¹ *tn Heb* "Whom shall I fear?" The rhetorical question anticipates the answer, "No one!"

¹² *tn Heb* "Of whom shall I be afraid?" The rhetorical question anticipates the answer, "No one!"

¹³ *tn Heb* "draw near to me."

¹⁴ *sn To devour my flesh.* The psalmist compares his enemies to dangerous, hungry predators (see 2 Kgs 9:36; Ezek 39:17).

¹⁵ *tn Heb* "my adversaries and my enemies against me." The verb "draw near" (that is, "attack") is understood by ellipsis; see the previous line.

¹⁶ *tn* The Hebrew verbal forms are perfects. The translation assumes the psalmist is generalizing here, but another option is to take this as a report of past experience, "when evil men attacked me...they stumbled and fell."

¹⁷ *tn Heb* "my heart does not fear."

¹⁸ *tn Heb* "if war rises up against me."

¹⁹ *tn Heb* "in this [i.e., "during this situation"] I am trusting."

²⁰ *tn Heb* "my living."

²¹ *sn The LORD's house.* This probably refers to the tabernacle (if one accepts Davidic authorship) or the temple (see Judg 19:18; 1 Sam 1:7, 24; 2 Sam 12:20; 1 Kgs 7:12, 40, 45, 51).

²² *tn Or* "beauty."

²³ *tn Or* "for he will." The translation assumes the כִּי (*ki*) is asseverative here, rather than causal.

²⁴ *tn Heb* "he will hide me in his hut."

²⁵ *tn Or* "trouble."

²⁶ *tn Heb* "tent."

²⁷ *tn* The three imperfect verb forms in v. 5 anticipate a positive response to the prayer offered in vv. 7-12.

²⁸ *tn Heb* "on a rocky summit he lifts me up." The LORD places the psalmist in an inaccessible place where his enemies cannot reach him. See Ps 18:2.

²⁹ *tn Heb* "and now my head will be lifted up over my enemies all around me."

sn In vv. 1-3 the psalmist generalizes, but here we discover that he is facing a crisis and is under attack from *enemies* (see vv. 11-12).

³⁰ *tn Heb* "I will sacrifice in his tent sacrifices of a shout for joy" (that is, "sacrifices accompanied by a joyful shout").

³¹ *tn Heb* "my voice."

³² *tc Heb* "concerning you my heart says, 'Seek my face.'" The verb form "seek" is plural, but this makes no sense here, for the psalmist is addressed. The verb should be emended to a singular form. The first person pronominal suffix on "face" also makes little sense, unless it is the voice of the LORD he hears. His "heart" is viewed as speaking, however, so it is better to emend the form to פָּנָיו (*panayv*, "his face").

³³ *tn Heb* "your face, O LORD, I seek." To "seek the LORD's face" means to seek his favor through prayer (see 2 Sam 21:1; Pss 24:6; 105:4).

³⁴ *tn Heb* "do not hide your face from me." The idiom "hide the face" can mean "ignore" (see Pss 10:11; 13:1; 51:9) or carry the stronger idea of "reject" (see Pss 30:7; 88:14).

³⁵ *tn Or* "[source of] help."

³⁶ *tn Or* "though my father and mother have abandoned me."

³⁷ *tn Heb* "gather me in"; or "receive me."

27:11 Teach me how you want me to live,¹
lead me along a level path² because of
those who wait to ambush me!³
27:12 Do not turn me over to my en-
emies,⁴
for false witnesses who want to destroy
me testify against me.⁵
27:13 Where would I be if I did not be-
lieve I would experience
the LORD's favor in the land of the liv-
ing?⁶
27:14 Rely⁷ on the LORD!
Be strong and confident!⁸
Rely on the LORD!

Psalms 28⁹

By David.

28:1 To you, O LORD, I cry out!
My protector,¹⁰ do not ignore me!¹¹
If you do not respond to me,¹²
I will join¹³ those who are descending
into the grave.¹⁴
28:2 Hear my plea for mercy when I cry
out to you for help,
when I lift my hands¹⁵ toward your holy
temple!¹⁶
28:3 Do not drag me away with evil men,
with those who behave wickedly,¹⁷
who talk so friendly to their neighbors,¹⁸

while they plan to harm them!¹⁹
28:4 Pay them back for their evil deeds!
Pay them back for what they do!
Punish them!²⁰
28:5 For they do not understand the
LORD's actions,
or the way he carries out justice.²¹
The LORD²² will permanently demolish
them.²³
28:6 The LORD deserves praise,²⁴
for he has heard my plea for mercy!²⁵
28:7 The LORD strengthens and protects
me;²⁶
I trust in him with all my heart.²⁷
I am rescued²⁸ and my heart is full of
joy.²⁹
I will sing to him in gratitude.³⁰
28:8 The LORD strengthens his people,³¹
he protects and delivers his chosen king.³²

¹ **tn** *Heb* "teach me your way." The LORD's "way" refers here to the moral principles which he expects the psalmist to follow. See Ps 25:4.

² **sn** The *level path* refers to God's moral principles (see the parallel line), which, if followed, will keep the psalmist blameless before his accusers (see v. 12).

³ **tn** *Heb* "because of those who watch me [with evil intent]." See also Pss 5:8; 54:5; 56:2.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "do not give me over to the desire of my enemies."

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "for they have risen up against me, lying witnesses and a testifier of violence." The form יָפֵאֵךְ (*yaf'ekh*) is traditionally understood as a verb meaning "snort, breathe out": "for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty" (KJV; cf. BDB 422 s.v.). A better option is to take the form as a noun meaning "a witness" (or "testifier"). See Prov 6:19; 12:17; 14:5, 25; 19:5, 9, and Hab 2:3.

⁶ **tn** In the Hebrew text the sentence is incomplete: "If I had not believed [I would] see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living." The words "Where would I be" are supplied in the translation to clarify the intent of the statement.

⁷ **tn** Or "wait."

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "be strong and let your heart be confident."

⁹ **sn** *Psalm 28*. The author looks to the Lord for vindication, asks that the wicked be repaid in full for their evil deeds, and affirms his confidence that the Lord will protect his own.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "my rocky summit." The Lord is compared to a rocky summit where one can find protection from enemies. See Ps 18:2.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "do not be deaf from me."

¹² **tn** *Heb* "lest [if] you are silent from me."

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "I will be equal with."

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "the pit." The noun בֹּרַי (*bor*, "pit, cistern") is sometimes used of the grave and/or the realm of the dead.

¹⁵ **sn** *I lift my hands*. Lifting one's hands toward God was a gesture of prayer.

¹⁶ **tn** The Hebrew term דְּבִיר (*d'vir*, "temple") actually refers to the most holy place within the sanctuary.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "workers of wickedness."

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "speakers of peace with their neighbors."

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "and evil [is] in their heart[s]."

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "Give to them according to their work, and according to the evil of their deeds. According to the work of their hands give to them. Return their due to them." The highly repetitive style reflects the psalmist's agitated emotional state and draws attention to his yearning for justice.

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "or the work of his hands." In this context "the LORD's actions" and "the work of his hands" probably refer to the way he carries out justice by vindicating the godly and punishing the wicked. (Note the final line of the verse, which refers to divine judgment. See also Ps 92:4-7.) Evil men do not "understand" God's just ways; they fail to realize he will protect the innocent. Consequently they seek to harm the godly, as if they believe they will never be held accountable for their actions.

²² **tn** *Heb* "he"; the referent (the LORD, who is referred to in the two immediately preceding lines) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²³ **tn** *Heb* "will tear them down and not rebuild them." The ungodly are compared to a structure that is permanently demolished.

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* "blessed [be] the LORD."

²⁵ **sn** *He has heard my plea for mercy*. The psalmist's mood abruptly changes at this point, because the Lord responded positively to his petition and assured him that he would deliver him.

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "The LORD [is] my strength and my shield."

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* "in him my heart trusts."

²⁸ **tn** Or "I am helped."

²⁹ **tn** *Heb* "and my heart exults."

³⁰ **tn** *Heb* "and from my song I will thank him." As pointed in the Hebrew text, מִשִּׁירִי (*mishiri*) appears to be "from my song," but the preposition "from" never occurs elsewhere with the verb "to thank" (Hiphil of יָדָה, *yadah*). Perhaps מִשִּׁירִי is a noun form meaning "song." If so, it can be taken as an adverbial accusative, "and [with] my song I will thank him." See P. C. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50* (WBC), 236.

³¹ **tn** *Heb* "the LORD [is] strength to them" (or perhaps, "to him"). The form לָמוֹ (*lamo*, "to them/him") is probably a corruption of an original לְנַפְשֵׁי לָמוֹ (*l'namo*, "to his people"; see P. C. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50* [WBC], 236), perhaps due to quiescence of the letter *ayin* (ע; see P. McCarter, *Textual Criticism* [GBS], 55). Note the reference to the LORD's "people" in the next verse.

³² **tn** *Heb* "he [is] a refuge of help for his anointed one." The noun מְשִׁיחַ (*mashiakh*, "anointed one") refers to the Davidic king, who perhaps speaks as representative of the nation in this psalm. See Pss 2:2; 18:50; 20:6; 84:9; 89:38, 51; 132:10, 17.

28:9 Deliver your people!
Empower⁴ the nation that belongs to
you!²
Care for them like a shepherd and carry
them in your arms³ at all times!⁴

*Psalms 29*⁵

A psalm of David.

29:1 Acknowledge the LORD, you heav-
enly beings,⁶
acknowledge the LORD's majesty and
power!⁷
29:2 Acknowledge the majesty of the
LORD's reputation!⁸
Worship the LORD in holy attire!⁹
29:3 The LORD's shout is heard over the
water;¹⁰
the majestic God thunders,¹¹
the LORD appears over the surging water.¹²

¹ tn Or "bless."

² tn Heb "your inheritance." The parallelism (note "your people") indicates that Israel is in view.

³ tn Heb "shepherd them and lift them up."

sn The shepherd metaphor is sometimes associated with royal responsibility. See 2 Sam 5:2; 7:7; Mic 5:2-4).

⁴ tn Or "forever."

⁵ sn Psalm 29. In this hymn of praise the psalmist calls upon the heavenly assembly to acknowledge the royal splendor of the Lord. He describes the Lord's devastating power as revealed in the thunderstorm and affirms that the Lord exerts this awesome might on behalf of his people. In its original context the psalm was a bold polemic against the Canaanite storm god Baal, for it affirms that the Lord is the real king who controls the elements of the storm, contrary to pagan belief. See R. B. Chisholm, Jr., "The Polemic against Baalism in Israel's Early History and Literature," *BSac* 150 (1994): 280-82.

⁶ tc Heb "sons of gods," or "sons of God." Though אֱלֹהִים (*'elim*) is vocalized as a plural form ("gods") in the MT, it is likely that the final *mem* is actually enclitic, rather than a plural marker. In this case one may read "God." Some, following a Qumran text and the LXX, also propose the phrase occurred in the original text of Deut 32:8.

tn The phrase אֱלֹהִים בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים (*b'ney 'elim*, "sons of gods" or "sons of God") occurs only here and in Ps 89:6 (89:7 HT). In Ps 89 the "sons of gods/God" are also called "the assembly of the holy ones" and "council of the holy ones." The heavenly assembly, comprised of so-called "angels" and other supernatural beings, appears to be in view. See Job 5:1; 15:15 and Zech 14:5, where these supernatural beings are referred to as "holy ones." In Canaanite mythological texts the divine council of the high god El is referred to as "the sons of El." The OT apparently borrows the Canaanite phrase and applies it to the supernatural beings that surround the heavenly throne.

⁷ tn Or "ascribe to the LORD glory and strength."

⁸ tn Heb "ascribe to the LORD the glory of his name." The Hebrew term שֵׁם (*shem*, "name") refers here to the LORD's reputation. (The English term "name" is often used the same way.)

⁹ tn That is, properly dressed for the occasion.

¹⁰ tn Heb "the voice of the LORD [is] over the water." As the next line makes clear, the "voice of the LORD" is here the thunder that accompanies a violent storm. The psalm depicts the LORD in the role of a warrior-king, so the thunder is his battle cry, as it were.

¹¹ tn The Hebrew perfect verbal form is probably descriptive. In dramatic fashion the psalmist portrays the LORD coming in the storm to do battle with his enemies and to vindicate his people.

¹² tn Traditionally "many waters." The geographical references in the psalm (Lebanon, Sirion, Kadesh) suggest this is a reference to the Mediterranean Sea (see Ezek 26:19; 27:26). The psalmist describes a powerful storm moving in from the sea and sweeping over the mountainous areas north of Is-

29:4 The LORD's shout is powerful,¹³
the LORD's shout is majestic.¹⁴

29:5 The LORD's shout breaks¹⁵ the cedars,
the LORD shatters¹⁶ the cedars of Leba-
non.¹⁷

29:6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf
and Sirion¹⁸ like a young ox.¹⁹

29:7 The LORD's shout strikes²⁰ with flam-
ing fire.²¹

29:8 The LORD's shout shakes²² the wil-
derness,
the LORD shakes the wilderness of
Kadesh.²³

rael. The "surging waters" may symbolize the hostile enemies of God who seek to destroy his people (see Pss 18:17; 32:6; 77:20; 93:4; 144:7; Isa 17:13; Jer 51:55; Ezek 26:19; Hab 3:15). In this case the LORD is depicted as elevated above and sovereign over the raging waters.

¹³ tn Heb "the voice of the LORD [is] accompanied by strength."

¹⁴ tn Heb "the voice of the LORD [is] accompanied by majesty."

¹⁵ tn The Hebrew participial form draws attention to the durative nature of the action being described.

¹⁶ tn The prefixed verbal forms with *vav* (ו) consecutive here and in v. 6a carry on the descriptive function of the preceding participle (see GKC 329 §111.1). The verb שָׁבַר (*shavar*) appears in the Qal in the first line of the verse, and in the Piel in the second line. The verb, which means "break" in the Qal, appears thirty-six times in the Piel, always with multiple objects (the object is either a collective singular or grammatically plural or dual form). The Piel may highlight the repetition of the pluralative action, or it may suggest an intensification of action, indicating repeated action comprising a whole, perhaps with the nuance "break again and again, break in pieces." Another option is to understand the form as resultative: "make broken" (see *IBHS* 404-7 §24.3).

¹⁷ tn The cedars of the Lebanon forest were well-known in ancient Israel for their immense size. Here they may symbolize the arrogant enemies of God (see Isa 2:12-13).

¹⁸ sn Sirion is another name for Mount Hermon (Deut 3:9).

¹⁹ sn Lebanon and Sirion are compared to frisky young animals (a calf...a young ox) who skip and jump. The thunderous shout of the LORD is so powerful, one can see the very mountains shake on the horizon.

²⁰ tn The verb normally means "to hew [stone or wood]," or "to hew out." In Hos 6:5 it seems to mean "cut in pieces," "knock down," or perhaps "hack" (see F. I. Andersen and D. N. Freedman, *Hosea* [AB], 428). The Ugaritic cognate can mean "assault." In v. 7 the verb seems to have a similar meaning, perhaps "attack, strike." The phrase "flames of fire" is an adverbial accusative; the LORD's shout is accompanied by "flames of fire," that is, lightning bolts.

²¹ sn The LORD's shout strikes with flaming fire. The short line has invited textual emendation, but its distinct, brief form may highlight the statement, which serves as the axis of a chiasmic structure encompassing vv. 5-9: (A) the LORD's shout destroys the forest (v. 5); (B) the LORD's shout shakes the terrain (v. 6); (C) the LORD's shout is accompanied by destructive lightning (v. 7); (B') the LORD's shout shakes the terrain (v. 8); (A') the LORD's shout destroys the forest (v. 9).

²² tn The Hebrew imperfect verbal forms are descriptive in function; the psalmist depicts the action as underway.

²³ sn Kadesh. The references to Lebanon and Sirion in v. 6 suggest this is a reference to the northern Kadesh, located north of Damascus, not the southern Kadesh mentioned so often in the OT. See M. Dahood, *Psalms* (AB), 1:178.

29:9 The LORD's shout bends⁴ the large trees² and strips³ the leaves from the forests.⁴ Everyone in his temple says, "Majestic!"⁵
 29:10 The LORD sits enthroned over the engulfing waters,⁶ the LORD sits enthroned⁷ as the eternal king.
 29:11 The LORD gives⁸ his people strength,⁹ the LORD grants his people security.¹⁰

Psalm 30¹¹

A psalm – a song used at the dedication of the temple;¹² by David.

¹ **tn** The Hebrew imperfect verbal form is descriptive in function; the psalmist depicts the action as underway.

² **tc** *Heb* "the deer." Preserving this reading, some translate the preceding verb, "causes [the deer] to give premature birth" (cf. NEB, NASB). But the Polel of הָיִל/חָיִל (*khul/khil*) means "give birth," not "cause to give birth," and the statement "the LORD's shout gives birth to deer" is absurd. In light of the parallelism (note "forests" in the next line) and v. 5, it is preferable to emend אֵילֹת (*ayyalot*, "deer") to אֵילֹת ('*elot*, "large trees") understanding the latter as an alternate form of the usual plural form אֵילִים (*ayyalim*).

³ **tn** The verb is used in Joel 1:7 of locusts stripping the leaves from a tree. The prefixed verbal form with *vav* (ו) consecutive here carries the descriptive function of the preceding imperfect. See GKC 329 §11.1.t.

⁴ **tn** The usual form of the plural of יָעַר (*ya'ar*, "forest") is יְעָרִים (*yeyarim*). For this reason some propose an emendation to יְעָרוֹת (*yeyarot*, "female mountain goats") which would fit nicely in the parallelism with "deer" (cf. NEB "brings kids early to birth"). In this case one would have to understand the verb יָעַר (*khassaf*) to mean "cause premature birth," an otherwise unattested homonym of the more common יָעַר ("strip bare").

⁵ **sn** The Lord's thunderous shout is accompanied by high winds which damage the trees of the forest.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "In his temple, all of it says, 'Glory.'"

⁷ **tn** The noun מַבּוּל (*mabbul*, "flood") appears only here and in Gen 6-11, where it refers to the Noahic flood. Some see a reference to that event here. The presence of the article (perhaps indicating uniqueness) and the switch to the perfect verbal form (which could be taken as describing a past situation) might support this. However, the immediate context indicates that the referent of מַבּוּל is the "surging waters" mentioned in v. 3. The article indicates waters that are definite in the mind of the speaker and the perfect is probably descriptive in function, like "thunders" in v. 3. However, even though the historical flood is not the primary referent here, there may be a literary allusion involved. The psalmist views the threatening chaotic sea as a contemporary manifestation of the destructive waters of old.

⁸ **tn** The prefixed verbal form with *vav* (ו) consecutive here carries the descriptive function of the preceding perfect.

⁹ **tn** The imperfect verbal forms in v. 11 are either descriptive or generalizing.

¹⁰ **sn** *Strength*. This probably refers to military power; see the use of the noun in 1 Sam 2:10 and Ps 86:16.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "blesses his people with peace." The Hebrew term שָׁלוֹם (*shalom*, "peace") probably refers here to the protection and prosperity experienced by God's people after the LORD intervenes in battle on their behalf.

¹² **sn** *Psalm 30*. The author thanks the Lord for delivering him from death and urges others to join him in praise. The psalmist experienced divine discipline for a brief time, but when he cried out for help the Lord intervened and restored his favor.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "a song of the dedication of the house." The referent of "house" is unclear. It is possible that David wrote this psalm for the dedication ceremony of Solomon's temple. An-

30:1 I will praise you, O LORD, for you lifted me up,¹³ and did not allow my enemies to gloat¹⁴ over me.

30:2 O LORD my God, I cried out to you and you healed me.¹⁵

30:3 O LORD, you pulled me¹⁶ up from Sheol;

you rescued me from among those descending into the grave.¹⁷

30:4 Sing to the LORD, you faithful followers¹⁸ of his;

give thanks to his holy name.¹⁹

30:5 For his anger lasts only a brief moment,

and his good favor restores one's life.²⁰ One may experience sorrow during the night,

but joy arrives in the morning.²¹

30:6 In my self-confidence I said, "I will never be upended."²²

30:7 O LORD, in your good favor you made me secure.²³

other possibility is that the psalm was used on the occasion of the dedication of the second temple following the return from exile, or on the occasion of the rededication of the temple in Maccabean times.

¹³ **tn** Elsewhere the verb הָלַח (*dalah*) is used of drawing water from a well (Exod 2:16, 19; Prov 20:5). The psalmist was trapped in the pit leading to Sheol (see v. 3), but the LORD hoisted him up. The Piel stem is used here, perhaps suggesting special exertion on the LORD's part.

¹⁴ **tn** Or "rejoice."

¹⁵ **sn** *You healed me*. Apparently the psalmist was plagued by a serious illness that threatened his life. See Ps 41.

¹⁶ **tn** Or "my life."

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "you kept me alive from those descending into the pit." The Hebrew noun בּוֹר (*bor*, "pit, cistern") is sometimes used of the grave and/or the realm of the dead. The translation follows the consonantal Hebrew text (*Kethib*); the marginal reading (*Qere*) has, "you kept me alive so that I did not go down into the pit."

¹⁸ **tn** A "faithful follower" (הַסֵּדִי) is one who does what is right in God's eyes and remains faithful to God (see Pss 4:3; 12:1; 16:10; 31:23; 37:28; 86:2; 97:10).

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "to his holy remembrance." The noun זִכָּר (*zekher*, "remembrance") here refers to the name of the LORD as invoked in liturgy and praise. Cf. Pss 6:5; 97:12. The LORD's "name" is "holy" in the sense that it is a reminder of his uniqueness and greatness.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "for [there is] a moment in his anger, [but] life in his favor." Because of the parallelism with "moment," some understand מוֹמֵנִים (*khayyim*) in a quantitative sense: "lifetime" (cf. NIV, NRSV). However, the immediate context, which emphasizes deliverance from death (see v. 3), suggests that מוֹמֵנִים has a qualitative sense: "physical life" or even "prosperous life" (cf. NEB "in his favour there is life").

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "in the evening weeping comes to lodge, but at morning a shout of joy." "Weeping" is personified here as a traveler who lodges with one temporarily.

²² **sn** *In my self-confidence I said...* Here the psalmist begins to fill in the background of the crisis referred to in the earlier verses. He had been arrogant and self-confident, so the Lord withdrew his protection and allowed trouble to invade his life (vv. 8-11).

²³ **tn** *Heb* "in your good favor you caused to stand for my mountain strength." Apparently this means "you established strength for my mountain" ("mountain" in this case representing his rule, which would be centered on Mt. Zion) or "you established strength as my mountain" ("mountain" in this case being a metaphor for security).

Then you rejected me¹ and I was terrified.
30:8 To you, O LORD, I cried out;
 I begged the Lord for mercy.²
30:9 “What³ profit is there in taking my
 life,⁴
 in my descending into the Pit?⁵
 Can the dust of the grave⁶ praise you?
 Can it declare your loyalty?⁷
30:10 Hear, O LORD, and have mercy on me!
 O LORD, deliver me!”⁸
30:11 Then you turned my lament into
 dancing;
 you removed my sackcloth and covered
 me with joy.⁹
30:12 So now¹⁰ my heart¹¹ will sing to you
 and not be silent;
 O LORD my God, I will always¹² give
 thanks to you.

*Psalms 31*¹³

For the music director; a psalm of David.

31:1 In you, O LORD, I have taken shelter!
 Never let me be humiliated!

¹ **tn** *Heb* “you hid your face.” The idiom “hide the face” can mean “ignore” (see Pss 10:11; 13:1; 51:9) or, as here, carry the stronger idea of “reject” (see Ps 88:14).

² **tn** The prefixed verbal forms in v. 8 are probably preterites; the psalmist recalls that he prayed in his time of crisis.

³ **sn** The following two verses (vv. 9-10) contain the prayer (or an excerpt of the prayer) that the psalmist offered to the Lord during his crisis.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “What profit [is there] in my blood?” “Blood” here represents his life.

⁵ **tn** The Hebrew term שְׁחַת (*shakhat*, “pit”) is often used as a title for Sheol (see Pss 16:10; 49:9; 55:24 HT [55:23 ET]; 103:4).

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “dust.” The words “of the grave” are supplied in the translation for clarification.

⁷ **tn** The rhetorical questions anticipate the answer, “Of course not!”

sn According to the OT, those who descend into the realm of death/Sheol are cut off from God’s mighty deeds and from the worshiping covenant community that experiences divine intervention (Pss 6:5; 88:10-12; Isa 38:18). In his effort to elicit a positive divine response, the psalmist reminds God that he will receive no praise or glory if he allows the psalmist to die. Dead men do not praise God!

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “be a helper to me.”

⁹ **sn** *Covered me with joy*. “Joy” probably stands metonymically for festive attire here.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “so that”; or “in order that.”

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “glory.” Some view כְּבוֹד (*khavod*, “glory”) here as a metonymy for man’s inner being (see BDB 459 s.v. II כְּבוֹד 5), but it is preferable to emend the form to כְּבֵדִי (*kēvediy*, “my liver”). Like the heart, the liver is viewed as the seat of one’s emotions. See also Pss 16:9; 57:9; 108:1, as well as H. W. Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament*, 64, and M. Dahood, *Psalms* (AB), 1:90. For an Ugaritic example of the heart/liver as the source of joy, see G. R. Driver, *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, 47-48: “her [Anat’s] liver swelled with laughter, her heart was filled with joy, the liver of Anat with triumph.” “Heart” is used in the translation above for the sake of English idiom; the expression “my liver sings” would seem odd indeed to the modern reader.

¹² **tn** Or “forever.”

¹³ **sn** *Psalms 31*. The psalmist confidently asks the Lord to protect him. Enemies threaten him and even his friends have abandoned him, but he looks to the Lord for vindication. In vv. 19-24, which were apparently written after the Lord answered the prayer of vv. 1-18, the psalmist thanks the Lord for delivering him.

Vindicate me by rescuing me!¹⁴

31:2 Listen to me!¹⁵

Quickly deliver me!

Be my protector and refuge,¹⁶

a stronghold where I can be safe!¹⁷

31:3 For you are my high ridge¹⁸ and my
 stronghold;

for the sake of your own reputation¹⁹ you
 lead me and guide me.²⁰

31:4 You will free me²¹ from the net they
 hid for me,

for you are my place of refuge.

31:5 Into your hand I entrust my life;²²
 you will rescue²³ me, O LORD, the faithful
 God.

31:6 I hate those who serve worthless
 idols,²⁴

but I trust in the LORD.

31:7 I will be happy and rejoice in your
 faithfulness,

because you notice my pain
 and you are aware of how distressed I
 am.²⁵

31:8 You do not deliver me over to the
 power of the enemy;

you enable me to stand²⁶ in a wide open
 place.

31:9 Have mercy on me, for I am in
 distress!

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “in your vindication rescue me.”

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “turn toward me your ear.”

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “become for me a rocky summit of refuge.”

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “a house of strongholds to deliver me.”

¹⁸ **sn** The metaphor of the *high ridge* pictures God as a rocky, relatively inaccessible summit, where one would be able to find protection from enemies. See 1 Sam 23:25, 28.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “name.” The Hebrew term שֵׁם (*shem*, “name”) refers here to the LORD’s reputation. (The English term “name” is often used the same way.)

²⁰ **tn** The present translation assumes that the imperfect verbal forms are generalizing, “you lead me and guide me.” Other options are to take them as an expression of confidence about the future, “you will lead me and guide me” (cf. NASB), or as expressing a prayer, “lead me and guide me” (cf. NEB, NIV, NRSV).

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “bring me out.” The translation assumes that the imperfect verbal form expresses the psalmist’s confidence about the future. Another option is to take the form as expressing a prayer, “free me.”

²² **tn** *Heb* “my spirit.” The noun רוּחַ (*ruakh*, “spirit”) here refers to the animating spirit that gives the psalmist life.

²³ **tn** Or “redeem.” The perfect verbal form is understood here as anticipatory, indicating rhetorically the psalmist’s certitude and confidence that God will intervene. The psalmist is so confident of God’s positive response to his prayer that he can describe his deliverance as if it had already happened. Another option is to take the perfect as precative, expressing a wish or request (“rescue me”; cf. NIV). See *IBHS* 494-95 §30.5.4c, d. However, not all grammarians are convinced that the perfect is used as a precative in biblical Hebrew.

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* “the ones who observe vain things of falsehood.” See Jonah 2:9.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “you know the distresses of my life.”

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* “you cause my feet to stand.”

My eyes grow dim¹ from suffering.²
 I have lost my strength.³
31:10 For my life nears its end in pain;
 my years draw to a close as I groan.⁴
 My strength fails me because of⁵ my sin,
 and my bones become brittle.⁶
31:11 Because of all my enemies, people
 disdain me;⁷
 my neighbors are appalled by my suffer-
 ing⁸ –
 those who know me are horrified by my
 condition;⁹
 those who see me in the street run away
 from me.
31:12 I am forgotten, like a dead man no
 one thinks about;¹⁰
 I am regarded as worthless, like a broken
 jar.¹¹
31:13 For I hear what so many are saying,¹²
 the terrifying news that comes from every
 direction.¹³
 When they plot together against me,
 they figure out how they can take my life.
31:14 But I trust in you, O LORD!
 I declare, “You are my God!”
31:15 You determine my destiny!¹⁴
 Rescue me from the power of my en-
 emies and those who chase me.
31:16 Smile¹⁵ on your servant!
 Deliver me because of your faithfulness!
31:17 O LORD, do not let me be humiliated,

for I call out to you!
 May evil men be humiliated!
 May they go wailing to the grave!¹⁶
31:18 May lying lips be silenced –
 lips¹⁷ that speak defiantly against the in-
 nocent¹⁸
 with arrogance and contempt!
31:19 How great is your favor,¹⁹
 which you store up for your loyal follow-
 ers!²⁰
 In plain sight of everyone you bestow it
 on those who take shelter²¹ in you.²²
31:20 You hide them with you, where they
 are safe from the attacks²³ of men,²⁴
 you conceal them in a shelter, where they
 are safe from slanderous attacks.²⁵
31:21 The LORD deserves praise²⁶
 for he demonstrated his amazing faith-
 fulness to me when I was besieged by
 enemies.²⁷
31:22 I jumped to conclusions and said,²⁸
 “I am cut off from your presence!”²⁹
 But you heard my plea for mercy when I
 cried out to you for help.
31:23 Love the LORD, all you faithful fol-
 lowers³⁰ of his!
 The LORD protects those who have integ-
 rity,
 but he pays back in full the one who acts
 arrogantly.³¹

¹ tn Or perhaps, “are swollen.”

² tn Cf. Ps 6:7, which has a similar line.

³ tn Heb “my breath and my stomach [grow weak].” Apparently the verb in the previous line (“grow dim, be weakened”) is to be understood here. The Hebrew term נפש can mean “life,” or, more specifically, “throat, breath.” The psalmist seems to be lamenting that his breathing is impaired because of the physical and emotional suffering he is forced to endure.

⁴ tn Heb “and my years in groaning.”

⁵ tn Heb “stumbles in.”

⁶ tn Heb “grow weak.”

⁷ tn Heb “because of all my enemies I am a reproach.”

⁸ tc Heb “and to my neighbors, exceedingly.” If the MT is retained, then these words probably go with what precedes. However the syntactical awkwardness of the text suggests it is textually corrupt. P. C. Craigie (*Psalms 1-50* [WBC], 258) suggests that the initial *mem* (ם) בְּאֵד (me’od, “exceedingly”) be understood as an enclitic *mem* (ם) which was originally suffixed to the preceding form and then later misinterpreted. The resulting form אֵד (ed) can then be taken as a defectively written form of אֵד (ed, “calamity”). If one follows this emendation, then the text reads literally, “and to my neighbors [I am one who experiences] calamity.” The noun פְּחַד (fakhad, “[object of] horror”) occurs in the next line; אֵד and פְּחַד appear in parallelism elsewhere (see Prov 1:26-27).

⁹ tn Heb “and [an object of] horror to those known by me.”

¹⁰ tn Heb “I am forgotten, like a dead man, from [the] heart.” The “heart” is here viewed as the center of one’s thoughts.

¹¹ tn Heb “I am like a broken jar.” One throws away a broken jar without a second thought because it is considered worthless and useless.

¹² tn Heb “the report of many.”

¹³ tn Heb “the terror from all around.”

¹⁴ tn Heb “in your hand [are] my times.”

¹⁵ tn Heb “cause your face to shine.”

¹⁶ tn The verb יָדַע (yidda’nu) is understood as a form of דָּמַם (damam, “wail, lament”). Another option is to take the verb from דָּמָה (“be quiet”; see BDB 198-99 s.v. דָּמָה), in which case one might translate, “May they lie silent in the grave.”

¹⁷ tn Heb “the [ones which].”

¹⁸ tn Or “godly.”

¹⁹ tn Or “How abundant are your blessings!”

²⁰ tn Heb “for those who fear you.”

²¹ tn “Taking shelter” in the LORD is an idiom for seeking his protection. Seeking his protection presupposes and even demonstrates the subject’s loyalty to the LORD. In the psalms those who “take shelter” in the LORD are contrasted with the wicked and equated with those who love, fear, and serve the LORD (Pss 2:12; 5:11-12; 34:21-22).

²² tn Heb “you work [your favor] for the ones seeking shelter in you before the sons of men.”

²³ tn The noun רֶמֶס (rokhes) occurs only here. Its meaning is debated; some suggest “snare,” while others propose “slander” or “conspiracy.”

²⁴ tn Heb “you hide them in the hiding place of your face from the attacks of man.” The imperfect verbal forms in this verse draw attention to God’s typical treatment of the faithful.

²⁵ tn Heb “you conceal them in a shelter from the strife of tongues.”

²⁶ tn Heb “blessed [be] the LORD.”

²⁷ tn Heb “for he caused his faithfulness to be amazing to me in a besieged city.” The psalmist probably speaks figuratively here. He compares his crisis to being trapped in a besieged city, but the LORD answered his prayer for help. Verses 19-24 were apparently written after the LORD answered the prayer of vv. 1-18.

²⁸ tn Heb “and I, I said in my haste.”

²⁹ tn Heb “from before your eyes.”

³⁰ tn A “faithful follower” (חַסִּיד, *khasid*) is one who does what is right in God’s eyes and remains faithful to God (see Pss 4:3; 12:1; 16:10; 31:23; 37:28; 86:2; 97:10).

³¹ tn The participial forms in the second and third lines characterize the Lord as one who typically protects the faithful and judges the proud.

31:24 Be strong and confident,¹
all you who wait on the LORD!

Psalms 32²

By David; a well-written song.³

32:1 How blessed⁴ is the one whose rebellious acts are forgiven,⁵
whose sin is pardoned!⁶

32:2 How blessed is the one⁷ whose wrongdoing the LORD does not punish,⁸
in whose spirit there is no deceit.⁹

32:3 When I refused to confess my sin,¹⁰
my whole body wasted away,¹¹
while I groaned in pain all day long.

32:4 For day and night you tormented me;¹²
you tried to destroy me¹³ in the intense heat¹⁴ of summer.¹⁵ (Selah)

¹ **tn** Heb “be strong and let your heart[s] be confident.”

² **sn** *Psalms 32*. The psalmist recalls the agony he experienced prior to confessing his sins and affirms that true happiness comes when one’s sins are forgiven. He then urges others not to be stubborn, but to turn to God while forgiveness is available, for God extends his mercy to the repentant, while the wicked experience nothing but sorrow.

³ **tn** The meaning of the Hebrew term מִשְׁכִּיל (*maskil*) is uncertain. The word is derived from a verb meaning “to be prudent; to be wise.” Various options are: “a contemplative song,” “a song imparting moral wisdom,” or “a skillful [i.e., well-written] song.” The term occurs in the superscriptions of Pss 32, 42, 44, 45, 52-55, 74, 78, 88, 89, and 142, as well as in Ps 47:7.

⁴ **tn** The Hebrew noun is an abstract plural. The word often refers metonymically to the happiness that God-given security and prosperity produce (see Pss 1:1, 3; 2:12; 34:9; 41:1; 65:4; 84:12; 89:15; 106:3; 112:1; 127:5; 128:1; 144:15). Here it refers to the relief that one experiences when one’s sins are forgiven.

⁵ **tn** Heb “lifted up.”

⁶ **tn** Heb “covered over.”

⁷ **tn** Heb “man.” The word choice reflects the perspective of the psalmist, who is male. The principle of the psalm is certainly applicable to all people, regardless of their gender or age. To facilitate modern application, the gender and age specific “man” has been translated with the more neutral “one.”

⁸ **tn** Heb “blessed [is] the man to whom the LORD does not impute wrongdoing.”

⁹ **sn** *In whose spirit there is no deceit*. The point is not that the individual is sinless and pure. In this context, which focuses on confession and forgiveness of sin, the psalmist refers to one who refuses to deny or hide his sin, but instead honestly confesses it to God.

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “when I was silent.”

¹¹ **tn** Heb “my bones became brittle.” The psalmist pictures himself as aging and growing physically weak. Trying to cover up his sin brought severe physical consequences.

¹² **tn** Heb “your hand was heavy upon me.”

¹³ **tc** Heb “my [?] was turned.” The meaning of the Hebrew term לִשְׁדָּה (*ʾeshad*) is uncertain. A noun לִשְׁדָּה (*lashad*, “cake”) is attested in Num 11:8, but it would make no sense to understand that word in this context. It is better to emend the form to לִשְׁדָּי (*ʾeshuddiy*, “to my destruction”) and understand “your hand” as the subject of the verb “was turned.” In this case the text reads, “[your hand] was turned to my destruction.” In Lam 3:3 the author laments that God’s “hand” was “turned” (הִפָּךְ, *hafakh*) against him in a hostile sense.

¹⁴ **sn** *You tried to destroy me*. The psalmist’s statement reflects his perspective. As far as he was concerned, it seemed as if the Lord was trying to kill him.

¹⁵ **tn** The translation assumes that the plural form indicates degree. If one understands the form as a true plural, then one might translate, “in the times of drought.”

¹⁶ **sn** *Summer*. Perhaps the psalmist suffered during the

32:5 Then I confessed my sin;
I no longer covered up my wrongdoing.
I said, “I will confess¹⁶ my rebellious acts
to the LORD.”

And then you forgave my sins.¹⁷ (Selah)

32:6 For this reason every one of your faithful followers¹⁸ should pray to you while there is a window of opportunity.¹⁹
Certainly²⁰ when the surging water²¹ rises, it will not reach them.²²

32:7 You are my hiding place;
you protect me from distress.

You surround me with shouts of joy from those celebrating deliverance.²³ (Selah)

32:8 I will instruct and teach you²⁴ about how you should live.²⁵

I will advise you as I look you in the eye.²⁶

32:9 Do not be²⁷ like an unintelligent horse or mule,²⁸
which will not obey you

hot season and perceived the very weather as being an instrument of divine judgment. Another option is that he compares his time of suffering to the uncomfortable and oppressive heat of summer.

¹⁶ **tn** The Hiphil of הִתְוַדַּת normally means “give thanks, praise,” but here, as in Prov 28:13, it means “confess.”

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “the wrongdoing of my sin.” By joining synonyms for “sin” in this way, the psalmist may be emphasizing the degree of his wrongdoing.

¹⁸ **tn** A “faithful follower” (חֲסִיד, *hasid*) is one who does what is right in God’s eyes and remains faithful to God (see Pss 4:3; 12:1; 18:25; 31:23; 37:28; 86:2; 97:10).

¹⁹ **tn** Heb “at a time of finding.” This may mean, “while there is time to ‘find’ [the Lord]” and seek his forgiveness (cf. NIV). Some emend the text by combining מִצְוָה (*m’atso*, “finding”) with the following term רָק (*raq*, “only, surely”) and read either מַצְוָהּ (*matsoq*, “distress”; see Ps 31:22) or מַצְוָהּ (*matsoq*, “hardship”; see Ps 119:143). In this case, one may translate “in a time of distress/hardship” (cf. NEB, NRSV).

²⁰ **tn** The Hebrew term רָק (*raq*) occasionally has an asseverative force.

²¹ **sn** *The surging water* is here a metaphor for trouble that endangers one’s life.

²² **tn** Heb “him.” The translation uses the plural “them” to agree with the plural “every one of your faithful followers” in the first line of v. 6.

²³ **tn** Heb “[with] shouts of joy of deliverance you surround me.”

²⁴ **tn** The second person pronominal forms in this verse are singular. The psalmist addresses each member of his audience individually (see also the note on the word “eye” in the next line). A less likely option (but one which is commonly understood) is that the LORD addresses the psalmist in vv. 8-9 (cf. NASB “I will instruct you and teach you...I will counsel you with My eye upon you”).

²⁵ **tn** Heb “I will instruct you and I will teach you in the way [in] which you should walk.”

²⁶ **tn** Heb “I will advise, upon you my eye,” that is, “I will offer advice [with] my eye upon you.” In 2 Chr 20:12 the statement “our eye is upon you” means that the speakers are looking to the LORD for intervention. Here the expression “my eye upon you” may simply mean that the psalmist will teach his pupils directly and personally.

²⁷ **tn** The verb form is plural (i.e., “do not all of you be”); the psalmist addresses the whole group.

²⁸ **tn** Heb “like a horse, like a mule without understanding.”

unless they are controlled by a bridle and bit.¹

32:10 An evil person suffers much pain,² but the LORD's faithfulness overwhelms the one who trusts in him.³

32:11 Rejoice in the LORD and be happy, you who are godly!
Shout for joy, all you who are morally upright!⁴

*Psalms 33*⁵

33:1 You godly ones, shout for joy because of the LORD!
It is appropriate for the morally upright to offer him praise.

33:2 Give thanks to the LORD with the harp!

Sing to him to the accompaniment of a ten-stringed instrument!

33:3 Sing to him a new song!⁶
Play skillfully as you shout out your praises to him!⁷

33:4 For⁸ the LORD's decrees⁹ are just,¹⁰ and everything he does is fair.¹¹

33:5 The LORD promotes¹² equity and justice;
the LORD's faithfulness extends throughout the earth.¹³

33:6 By the LORD's decree¹⁴ the heavens were made;

by a mere word from his mouth all the stars in the sky were created.¹⁵

33:7 He piles up the water of the sea;¹⁶ he puts the oceans¹⁷ in storehouses.

33:8 Let the whole earth fear¹⁸ the LORD!
Let all who live in the world stand in awe of him!

33:9 For he spoke, and it¹⁹ came into existence,

he issued the decree,²⁰ and it stood firm.
33:10 The LORD frustrates²¹ the decisions of the nations;

he nullifies the plans²² of the peoples.

33:11 The LORD's decisions stand forever; his plans abide throughout the ages.²³

33:12 How blessed²⁴ is the nation whose God is the LORD,
the people whom he has chosen to be his special possession.²⁵

¹ **tn** Heb "with a bridle and bit, its [?] to hold, not to come near to you." The meaning of the Hebrew noun גְּדִי (*'adyi*) is uncertain. Normally the word refers to "jewelry," so some suggest the meaning "trappings" here (cf. NASB). Some emend the form to לְתִיקָה (*l'khehem*, "their jawbones") but it is difficult to see how the present Hebrew text, even if corrupt, could have derived from this proposed original reading. P. C. Craigie (*Psalms 1-50* [WBC], 265) takes the form from an Arabic root and translates "whose gallop." Cf. also NRSV "whose temper must be curbed."

² **tn** Heb "many [are the] pains of evil [one]." The singular form is representative here; the typical evildoer, representative of the larger group of wicked people, is in view.

³ **tn** Heb "but the one who trusts in the LORD, faithfulness surrounds him."

⁴ **tn** Heb "all [you] pure of heart." The "heart" is here viewed as the seat of one's moral character and motives. The "pure of heart" are God's faithful followers who trust in and love the LORD and, as a result, experience his deliverance (see Pss 7:10; 11:2; 36:10; 64:10; 94:15; 97:11).

⁵ **sn** Psalm 33. In this hymn the psalmist praises the LORD as the sovereign creator and just ruler of the world who protects and vindicates those who fear him.

⁶ **sn** A new song is appropriate because the LORD is constantly intervening in the lives of his people in fresh and exciting ways.

⁷ **tn** Heb "play skillfully with a loud shout."

⁸ **sn** For the LORD's decrees are just... After the call to praise (vv. 1-3), the psalmist now gives a series of reasons why the LORD is worthy of praise.

⁹ **tn** Heb "word." In this context, which depicts the LORD as the sovereign creator and ruler of the world, the LORD's "word" refers to the decrees whereby he governs his dominion.

¹⁰ **tn** Or "upright."

¹¹ **tn** Heb "and all his work [is] in faithfulness."

¹² **tn** Heb "loves." The verb "loves" is here metonymic; the LORD's commitment to principles of equity and justice causes him to actively promote these principles as he governs the world.

¹³ **tn** Heb "fills the earth."

¹⁴ **tn** Heb "word."

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "and by the breath of his mouth all their host." The words "were created" are added in the translation for stylistic reasons; they are understood by ellipsis (note "were made" in the preceding line). The description is consistent with Gen 1:16, which indicates that God spoke the heavenly luminaries into existence.

¹⁶ **tn** Heb "[he] gathers like a pile the waters of the sea." Some prefer to emend גַּד (*ged*, "heap, pile"; cf. NASB) to נֹד (*nod*, "bottle"; cf. NRSV; NIV "into jars"), but "pile" is used elsewhere to describe water that the LORD confines to one place (Exod 15:8; Josh 3:13, 16; Ps 78:13). This verse appears to refer to Gen 1:9, where God decrees that the watery deep be gathered to one place so that dry land might appear. If so, the participles in this and the following line depict this action with special vividness, as if the reader were present on the occasion. Another option is that the participles picture the confinement of the sea to one place as an ongoing divine activity.

¹⁷ **tn** Or "watery depths." The form תְּהוֹמוֹת (*tehomot*, "watery depths") is the plural form of תְּהוֹם (*tehom*, "great deep"; see Gen 1:2).

¹⁸ **tn** In this context "fear" probably means "to demonstrate respect for the LORD's power and authority by worshiping him and obeying his commandments."

¹⁹ **tn** That is, "all the earth" in the first line of v. 8. The apparent antecedent of the masculine subject of the verbs in v. 9 (note note וְהָיָה [vayehiy] and וַיִּבְנוּ [vayya'amod]) is "earth" or "world," both of which are feminine nouns. However, כֹּל (*kol*, "all") may be the antecedent, or the apparent lack of agreement may be explained by the collective nature of the nouns involved here (see GKC 463 §145.e).

²⁰ **tn** Heb "he commanded."

²¹ **tn** Heb "breaks" or "destroys." The Hebrew perfect verbal forms here and in the next line generalize about the LORD's activity.

²² **tn** Heb "thoughts."

²³ **tn** Heb "the thoughts of his heart for generation to generation." The verb "abides" is supplied in the translation. The LORD's "decisions" and "plans" here refer to his decrees and purposes.

²⁴ **tn** The Hebrew noun is an abstract plural. The word often refers metonymically to the happiness that God-given security and prosperity produce (see Pss 1:1; 2:12; 34:9; 41:1; 65:4; 84:12; 89:15; 106:3; 112:1; 127:5; 128:1; 144:15).

²⁵ **tn** Heb "inheritance."

33:13 The LORD watches¹ from heaven; he sees all people.²

33:14 From the place where he lives he looks carefully at all the earth's inhabitants.

33:15 He is the one who forms every human heart,³ and takes note of all their actions.

33:16 No king is delivered by his vast army; a warrior is not saved by his great might.

33:17 A horse disappoints those who trust in it for victory;⁴ despite its great strength, it cannot deliver.

33:18 Look, the LORD takes notice of his loyal followers,⁵ those who wait for him to demonstrate his faithfulness⁶

33:19 by saving their lives from death⁷ and sustaining them during times of famine.⁸

33:20 We⁹ wait for the LORD; he is our deliverer¹⁰ and shield.¹¹

33:21 For our hearts rejoice in him, for we trust in his holy name.

33:22 May we experience your faithfulness, O LORD,¹² for¹³ we wait for you.

Psalm 34¹⁴

Written by David, when he pretended to be insane before Abimelech, causing the king to send him away.¹⁵

34:1 I will praise¹⁶ the LORD at all times; my mouth will continually praise him.¹⁷

34:2 I will boast¹⁸ in the LORD; let the oppressed hear and rejoice!¹⁹

34:3 Magnify the LORD with me! Let's praise²⁰ his name together!

34:4 I sought the LORD's help²¹ and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears.

34:5 Those who look to him for help are happy;

their faces are not ashamed.²²

34:6 This oppressed man cried out and the LORD heard; he saved him²³ from all his troubles.

¹⁴ **sn** *Psalm 34*. In this song of thanksgiving the psalmist praises God for delivering him from distress. He encourages others to be loyal to the Lord, tells them how to please God, and assures them that the Lord protects his servants. The psalm is an acrostic; vv. 1-21 begin with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet. (Verse 6 begins with the letter *he* (ה) and v. 7 with the letter *zayin* (ז). The letter *vav* (ו), which comes between ה and ז, seems to be omitted, although it does appear at the beginning of v. 6b. The final verse of the psalm, which begins with the letter *pe* (פ), is outside the acrostic scheme.)

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "By David, when he changed his sense before Abimelech and he drove him away and he went."

sn *Pretended to be insane*. The psalm heading appears to refer to the account in 1 Sam 21:10-15 which tells how David, fearful that King Achish of Gath might kill him, pretended to be insane in hopes that the king would simply send him away. The psalm heading names the king Abimelech, not Achish, suggesting that the tradition is confused on this point. However, perhaps "Abimelech" was a royal title, rather than a proper name. See P. C. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50* (WBC), 278.

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "bless."

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "continually [will] his praise [be] in my mouth."

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "my soul will boast"; or better, "let my soul boast." Following the cohortative form in v. 1, it is likely that the prefixed verbal form here is jussive.

¹⁹ **tn** The two prefixed verbal forms in this verse are best taken as jussives, for the psalmist is calling his audience to worship (see v. 3).

²⁰ **tn** Or "exalt."

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "I sought the LORD."

²² **tc** *Heb* "they look to him and are radiant and their faces are not ashamed." The third person plural subject ("they") is unidentified; there is no antecedent in the Hebrew text. For this reason some prefer to take the perfect verbal forms in the first line as imperatives, "look to him and be radiant" (cf. NEB, NRSV). Some medieval Hebrew mss and other ancient witnesses (Aquila, the Syriac, and Jerome) support an imperatival reading for the first verb. In the second line some (with support from the LXX and Syriac) change "their faces" to "your faces," which allows one to retain more easily the jussive force of the verb (suggested by the preceding לֹא ["*al*]): "do not let your faces be ashamed." It is probable that the verbal construction in the second line is rhetorical, expressing the conviction that the action in view cannot or should not happen. See GK 322 §109.e.

²³ **tn** The pronoun refers back to "this oppressed man," namely, the psalmist.

¹ **tn** The Hebrew perfect verbal forms in v. 13 state general facts.

² **tn** *Heb* "all the sons of men."

³ **tn** *Heb* "the one who forms together their heart[s]." "Heart" here refers to human nature, composed of intellect, emotions and will. The precise force of יחדו (*yakhad*, "together") is unclear here. The point seems to be that the LORD is the creator of every human being.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "a lie [is] the horse for victory."

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "look, the eye of the LORD [is] toward the ones who fear him." The expression "the eye...[is] toward" here indicates recognition and the bestowing of favor. See Ps 34:15. The one who fears the LORD respects his sovereignty and obeys his commandments. See Ps 128:1; Prov 14:2.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "for the ones who wait for his faithfulness."

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "to save from death their live[s]."

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "and to keep them alive in famine."

⁹ **tn** Or "our lives." The suffixed form of נפש (*nefesh*, "being, life") is often equivalent to a pronoun in poetic texts.

¹⁰ **tn** Or "[source of] help."

¹¹ **tn** Or "protector."

¹² **tn** *Heb* "let your faithfulness, O LORD, be on us."

¹³ **tn** Or "just as."

34:7 The LORD's angel camps around the LORD's¹ loyal followers² and delivers them.³

34:8 Taste⁴ and see that the LORD is good! How blessed⁵ is the one⁶ who takes shelter in him!⁷

34:9 Remain loyal to⁸ the LORD, you chosen people of his,⁹ for his loyal followers¹⁰ lack nothing!

34:10 Even young lions sometimes lack food and are hungry, but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.

34:11 Come children! Listen to me! I will teach you what it means to fear the LORD.¹¹

34:12 Do you want to really live?¹² Would you love to live a long, happy life?¹³

34:13 Then make sure you don't speak evil words¹⁴ or use deceptive speech!¹⁵

34:14 Turn away from evil and do what is right!¹⁶

Strive for peace and promote it!¹⁷

34:15 The LORD pays attention to the godly

and hears their cry for help.¹⁸

34:16 But the LORD opposes evildoers and wipes out all memory of them from the earth.¹⁹

34:17 The godly²⁰ cry out and the LORD hears;

he saves them from all their troubles.²¹

34:18 The LORD is near the brokenhearted; he delivers²² those who are discouraged.²³

34:19 The godly²⁴ face many dangers,²⁵ but the LORD saves²⁶ them²⁷ from each one of them.

34:20 He protects²⁸ all his bones;²⁹ not one of them is broken.³⁰

34:21 Evil people self-destruct;³¹ those who hate the godly are punished.³²

34:22 The LORD rescues his servants,³³ all who take shelter in him escape punishment.³⁴

¹ tn Heb "his"; the referent (the LORD) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

² tn Heb "those who fear him."

³ tn The prefixed verb with *vav* (ו) consecutive here carries the same generalizing force as the active participle in the first line. See GKC 329 §111.1.

⁴ tn This verb is normally used of tasting or savoring food. The metaphor here appears to compare the LORD to a tasty meal.

⁵ tn The Hebrew noun is an abstract plural. The word often refers metonymically to the happiness that God-given security and prosperity produce (see Pss 1:1, 3; 2:12; 41:1; 65:4; 84:12; 89:15; 106:3; 112:1; 127:5; 128:1; 144:15).

⁶ tn Heb "man." The principle of the psalm is certainly applicable to all people, regardless of their gender or age. To facilitate modern application, we translate the gender and age specific "man" with the more neutral "one."

⁷ tn "Taking shelter" in the LORD is an idiom for seeking his protection. Seeking his protection presupposes and even demonstrates the subject's loyalty to the LORD. In the psalms those who "take shelter" in the LORD are contrasted with the wicked and equated with those who love, fear, and serve the LORD (Pss 2:12; 5:11-12; 31:17-20; 34:21-22).

⁸ tn Heb "fear."

⁹ tn Heb "O holy ones of his."

¹⁰ tn Heb "those who fear him."

¹¹ tn Heb "the fear of the LORD I will teach you." In vv. 13-14 the psalmist explains to his audience what it means to "fear" the LORD.

¹² tn Heb "Who is the man who desires life?" The rhetorical question is used to grab the audience's attention. "Life" probably refers here to quality of life, not just physical existence or even duration of life. See the following line.

¹³ tn Heb "[Who] loves days to see good?"

¹⁴ tn Heb "guard your tongue from evil."

¹⁵ tn Heb "and your lips from speaking deception."

¹⁶ tn Or "do good."

¹⁷ tn Heb "seek peace and pursue it."

¹⁸ tn Heb "the eyes of the LORD [are] toward the godly, and his ears [are] toward their cry for help."

¹⁹ tn Heb "the face of the LORD [is] against the doers of evil

to cut off from the earth memory of them."

²⁰ tn Heb "they" (i.e., the godly mentioned in v. 15).

²¹ tn The three perfect verbal forms are taken in a generalizing sense in v. 17 and translated with the present tense (note the generalizing mood of vv. 18-22).

²² tn The Hebrew imperfect verbal form highlights the generalizing statement and draws attention to the fact that the LORD typically delivers the oppressed and needy.

²³ tn Heb "the crushed in spirit."

²⁴ tn The Hebrew text uses the singular form; the representative or typical godly person is envisioned.

²⁵ tn Or "trials."

²⁶ tn The Hebrew imperfect verbal form highlights the generalizing statement and draws attention to the fact that the LORD typically delivers the godly.

²⁷ tn Heb "him," agreeing with the singular form in the preceding line.

²⁸ tn The Hebrew participial form suggests such protection is characteristic.

²⁹ tn That is, he protects the godly from physical harm.

³⁰ sn *Not one of them is broken.* The author of the Gospel of John saw a fulfillment of these words in Jesus' experience on the cross (see John 19:31-37), for the Roman soldiers, when they saw that Jesus was already dead, did not break his legs as was customarily done to speed the death of crucified individuals. John's use of the psalm seems strange, for the statement in its original context suggests that the LORD protects the godly from physical harm. Jesus' legs may have remained unbroken, but he was brutally and unjustly executed by his enemies. John seems to give the statement a literal sense that is foreign to its original literary context by applying a promise of divine protection to a man who was seemingly not saved by God. However, John saw in this incident a foreshadowing of Jesus' ultimate deliverance and vindication. His unbroken bones were a reminder of God's commitment to the godly and a sign of things to come. Jesus' death on the cross was not the end of the story; God vindicated him, as John goes on to explain in the following context (John 19:38-20:18).

³¹ tn Heb "evil kills the wicked [one]." The singular form is representative; the typical evil person is envisioned. The Hebrew imperfect verbal form draws attention to the typical nature of the action.

³² tn Heb "are guilty," but the verb is sometimes used metonymically with the meaning "to suffer the consequences of guilt," the effect being substituted for the cause.

³³ tn Heb "redeems the life of his servants." The Hebrew participial form suggests such deliverance is characteristic.

³⁴ tn "Taking shelter" in the LORD is an idiom for seeking his protection. Seeking his protection presupposes and even demonstrates the subject's loyalty to the LORD. In the psalms those who "take shelter" in the LORD are contrasted with the wicked and equated with those who love, fear, and serve the LORD (Pss 2:12; 5:11-12; 31:19).

Psalms 35¹

By David.

35:1 O LORD, fight² those who fight with me!

Attack those who attack me!

35:2 Grab your small shield and large shield,³

and rise up to help me!

35:3 Use your spear and lance⁴ against⁵ those who chase me!

Assure me with these words:⁶ “I am your deliverer!”

35:4 May those who seek my life be embarrassed and humiliated!

May those who plan to harm me be turned back and ashamed!⁷

35:5 May they be⁸ like wind-driven chaff, as the LORD’s angel⁹ attacks them!¹⁰

35:6 May their path be¹¹ dark and slippery,

as the LORD’s angel chases them!

35:7 I did not harm them, but they hid a net to catch me

and dug a pit to trap me.¹²

35:8 Let destruction take them by surprise!¹³

Let the net they hid catch them!

Let them fall into destruction!¹⁴

35:9 Then I will rejoice in the LORD

and be happy because of his deliverance.¹⁵

35:10 With all my strength I will say,¹⁶

“O LORD, who can compare to you?”

You rescue¹⁷ the oppressed from those who try to overpower them;¹⁸

the oppressed and needy from those who try to rob them.”¹⁹

35:11 Violent men perjure themselves,²⁰ and falsely accuse me.²¹

35:12 They repay me evil for the good I have done,²²

I am overwhelmed with sorrow.²³

35:13 When they were sick, I wore sackcloth,²⁴

and refrained from eating food.²⁵

(If I am lying, may my prayers go unanswered!)²⁶

35:14 I mourned for them as I would for a friend or my brother.²⁷

I bowed down²⁸ in sorrow as if I were mourning for my mother.²⁹

35:15 But when I stumbled, they rejoiced and gathered together;

they gathered together to ambush me.³⁰

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “then my soul will rejoice in the LORD and be happy in his deliverance.”

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “all my bones will say.”

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “[the one who] rescues.” The substantival participle in the Hebrew text characterizes God as one who typically rescues the oppressed.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “from [the one who is] too strong for him.” The singular forms are used in a representative sense. The typical oppressed individual and typical oppressor are in view.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “the oppressed [one] and needy [one] from [the one who] robs him.” As in the previous line, the singular forms are used in a representative sense.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* “witnesses of violence rise up.”

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “[that] which I do not know they ask me.”

²² **tn** *Heb* “they repay me evil instead of good.”

²³ **tn** *Heb* “[there is] bereavement to my soul.”

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* “as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth.” Sackcloth was worn by mourners. When the psalmist’s enemies were sick, he was sorry for their misfortune and mourned for them.

²⁵ **sn** Fasting was also a practice of mourners. By refraining from normal activities, such as *eating food*, the mourner demonstrated the sincerity of his sorrow.

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* “and my prayer upon my chest will return.” One could translate, “but my prayer was returning upon my chest,” but the use of the imperfect verbal form sets this line apart from the preceding and following lines (vv. 13a, 14), which use the perfect to describe the psalmist’s past actions.

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* “like a friend, like a brother to me I walked about.”

²⁸ **sn** *I bowed down*. Bowing down was a posture for mourning. See Ps 38:6.

²⁹ **tn** *Heb* “like mourning for a mother [in] sorrow I bowed down.”

³⁰ **tn** *Heb* “they gathered together against me, stricken [ones], and I did not know.” The Hebrew form נִכְחִים (*nekhim*, “stricken ones”?) is problematic. Some suggest an emendation to נִכְחִים (כְּנִכְחִים) (*k’nokh^hrim*, “foreigners”) or “like foreigners,” which would fit with what follows, “[like] foreigners that I do not recognize.” Perhaps the form should be read as a Qal active participle, נִכְחִים (*nokhim*, “ones who strike”) from the verbal root נָכַח (*nakhah*, “to strike”). The Qal of this verb is unattested in biblical Hebrew, but the *peal* (basic) stem appears in Old Aramaic (J. Fitzmyer, *The Aramaic Inscriptions of Sefire* [BibOr], 114; *DNWSI* 1:730.) In this case one might translate, “attackers gathered together against me though I was not aware of it” (cf. NASB “smiters”; NEB, NRSV “ruffians”; NIV

¹ **sn** *Psalms* 35. The author, who faces ruthless enemies who seek his life for no reason, begs the Lord to fight his battles for him and to vindicate him by annihilating his adversaries.

² **tn** Or “contend.”

³ **tn** Two different types of shields are mentioned here. See also Ezek 38:4. Many modern translations render the first term (translated here “small shield”) as “buckler” (cf. NASB “buckler and shield”; the order is often reversed in the translation, apparently for stylistic reasons: cf. NEB, NIV, NRSV “shield and buckler”). The English term “buckler,” referring to a small round shield held on the arm to protect the upper body, is unfamiliar to many modern readers, so the term “small shield” was used in the present translation for clarity.

⁴ **tn** Or “javelin.” On the meaning of this word, which occurs only here in the Hebrew Bible, see M. Dahood, *Psalms* (AB), 1:210-11.

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “draw out spear and lance to meet.”

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “say to me,” or “say to my soul.”

⁷ **tn** The four prefixed verbal forms in this verse are understood as jussives. The psalmist is calling judgment down on his enemies. See also the distinct jussive form in v. 6.

⁸ **tn** The prefixed verbal form is taken as a jussive. See v. 4.

⁹ **sn** See the mention of the LORD’s angel in Ps 34:7.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “as the LORD’s angel pushes [them].”

¹¹ **tn** The prefixed verbal form is distinctly jussive, indicating this is a prayer.

¹² **tc** *Heb* “for without cause they hid for me a pit of their net, without cause they dug for my life.” It appears that the words “pit” and “net” have been transposed. “Net” goes with the verb “hid” in the first line (see v. 8, as well as Pss 9:15; 31:4), while “pit” goes with the verb “dug” in the second line (see Ps 7:15).

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “let destruction [which] he does not know come to him.” The singular is used of the enemy in v. 8, probably in a representative or collective sense. The psalmist has more than one enemy, as vv. 1-7 make clear.

¹⁴ **tn** The psalmist’s prayer for his enemies’ demise continues. See vv. 4-6.

They tore at me without stopping to rest.¹

35:16 When I tripped, they taunted me relentlessly,² and tried to bite me.³

35:17 O Lord, how long are you going to just stand there and watch this?⁴

Rescue⁵ me⁶ from their destructive attacks;

guard my life⁷ from the young lions!

35:18 Then I will give you thanks in the great assembly;⁸

I will praise you before a large crowd of people!⁹

35:19 Do not let those who are my enemies for no reason¹⁰ gloat¹¹ over me!

Do not let those who hate me without cause carry out their wicked schemes!¹²

35:20 For they do not try to make peace with others,¹³

but plan ways to deceive those who are unsuspecting.¹⁴

35:21 They are ready to devour me;¹⁵ they say, “Aha! Aha! We’ve got you!”¹⁶

35:22 But you take notice,¹⁷ LORD!

O Lord, do not remain far away from me!
35:23 Rouse yourself, wake up¹⁸ and vindicate me!¹⁹

My God and Lord, defend my just cause!²⁰

35:24 Vindicate me by your justice, O LORD my God!

Do not let them gloat²¹ over me!

35:25 Do not let them say to themselves,²² “Aha! We have what we wanted!”²³

Do not let them say, “We have devoured him!”

35:26 May those who want to harm me be totally embarrassed and ashamed!²⁴

May those who arrogantly taunt me be covered with shame and humiliation!²⁵

35:27 May those who desire my vindication shout for joy and rejoice!

May they continually say,²⁶ “May the LORD be praised,²⁷ for he wants his servant to be secure.”²⁸

35:28 Then I will tell others about your justice,²⁹

and praise you all day long.³⁰

“attackers”).

1 tn *Heb* “they tore and did not keep quiet.” By using the verb “tear,” the psalmist likens his enemies to a wild animal (see Hos 13:8). In v. 17 he compares them to hungry young lions.

2 tc The MT reads “as profane [ones] of mockers of food,” which is nonsensical. The present translation assumes (1) an emendation of בְּהִנְפִי (*b^hkhanfey*, “as profane men”) to בְּהִנְפִי (*bekhanfey*, “when I tripped”; preposition + Qal infinitive construct from הִנֵּף [“limp”] + first common singular pronominal suffix) and (2) an emendation of לִעֲנֵי כֶּסֶף (*la’agey ma’og*, “mockers of food”) to לִעֲנֵי אָזְנוֹ (*la’gam ‘agu*, “[with] taunting they taunted”; masculine plural noun with enclitic mem + Qal perfect third common plural from עָנָה [*la’ag*, “taunt”]).

3 tn *Heb* “gnashing at me with their teeth.” The infinitive absolute adds a complementary action – they gnashed with their teeth as they taunted.

4 tn *Heb* “O Lord, how long will you see?”

5 tn *Heb* “bring back, restore.”

6 tn Or “my life.”

7 tn *Heb* “my only one.” The psalmist may mean that his life is precious, or that he feels isolated and alone (see Ps 22:20). The verb “guard” is supplied in the translation, because the verb “rescue” is understood by ellipsis (see the previous line).

8 sn The *great assembly* is also mentioned in Ps 22:25.

9 tn *Heb* “among numerous people.”

10 tn *Heb* “[with] a lie.” The Hebrew noun שֶׁקֶר (*sheqer*, “lie”) is used here as an adverb, “falsely, wrongfully” (see Ps 38:19).

11 tn *Heb* “rejoice.”

12 tn *Heb* “[do not let] those who hate me without cause pinch [i.e., wink] an eye.” The negative particle is understood in the second line by ellipsis (see the preceding line). In the Book of Proverbs “winking an eye” is associated with deceit and trickery (see 6:13; 10:10; 16:30).

13 tn *Heb* “for they do not speak peace.”

14 tn *Heb* “but against the quiet ones of the land words of deceit they plan.” The imperfect verbal forms in v. 20 highlight their characteristic behavior.

15 tn *Heb* “and they cause their mouth to be wide against me.” The prefixed verbal form with *vav* (ו) consecutive here carries on the generalizing mood of the previous verse. For other examples of this use of the prefixed verbal form with *vav* consecutive, see GKC 329 §11.1.

16 tn *Heb* “our eye sees.” Apparently this is an idiom meaning to “look in triumph” or “gloat over” (see Ps 54:7).

17 tn *Heb* “you see, O Lord.” There is a deliberate play on words. In v. 21 the enemies say, “our eye sees,” but the psalmist is confident that the LORD “sees” as well, so he appeals to him for help (see also v. 17).

18 sn Though he is confident that the Lord is aware of his situation (see v. 22a), the psalmist compares the Lord’s inactivity to sleep and urges him to *wake up*.

19 tn *Heb* “for my justice.”

20 tn *Heb* “for my cause.”

21 tn *Heb* “rejoice.”

22 tn *Heb* “in their heart[s].”

23 tn *Heb* “Aha! Our desire!” The “desire” of the psalmist’s enemies is to triumph over him.

24 tn *Heb* “may they be embarrassed and ashamed together, the ones who rejoice over my harm.”

25 tn *Heb* “may they be clothed with shame and humiliation, the ones who magnify [themselves] against me.” The prefixed verbal forms in v. 26 are understood as jussives (see vv. 24b-25, where the negative particle אַל (*al*) appears before the prefixed verbal forms, indicating they are jussives). The psalmist is calling down judgment on his enemies.

26 tn The prefixed verbal forms in v. 27a are understood as jussives (see vv. 24b-26).

27 tn The prefixed verbal form is taken as a jussive, “may the LORD be magnified [in praise].” Another option is to take the verb as an imperfect, “the LORD is great.”

28 tn *Heb* “the one who desires the peace of his servant.”

29 tn *Heb* “and my tongue will proclaim your justice.”

30 tn *Heb* “all the day your praise.” The verb “proclaim” is understood by ellipsis in the second line (see the previous line).

Psalms 36¹

For the music director; written by the LORD's servant, David; an oracle.²

36:1 An evil man is rebellious to the core.³ He does not fear God,⁴

36:2 for he is too proud to recognize and give up his sin.⁵

36:3 The words he speaks are sinful and deceitful; he does not care about doing what is wise and right.⁶

36:4 He plans ways to sin while he lies in bed;

he is committed to a sinful lifestyle;⁷ he does not reject what is evil.⁸

36:5 O LORD, your loyal love reaches to the sky;⁹ your faithfulness to the clouds.¹⁰

36:6 Your justice is like the highest mountains,¹¹ your fairness like the deepest sea; you preserve¹² mankind and the animal kingdom.¹³

36:7 How precious¹⁴ is your loyal love, O God! The human race finds shelter under your wings.¹⁵

36:8 They are filled with food from your house, and you allow them to drink from the river of your delicacies.

36:9 For you are the one who gives and sustains life.¹⁶

36:10 Extend¹⁷ your loyal love to your faithful followers,¹⁸ and vindicate¹⁹ the morally upright!²⁰

36:11 Do not let arrogant men overtake me, or let evil men make me homeless!²¹

36:12 I can see the evildoers! They have fallen!²²

They have been knocked down and are unable to get up!²³

¹ **sn** Psalm 36. Though evil men plan to harm others, the psalmist is confident that the Lord is the just ruler of the earth who gives and sustains all life. He prays for divine blessing and protection and anticipates God's judgment of the wicked.

² **tn** In the Hebrew text the word אָרָא ("oracle") appears at the beginning of the next verse (v. 2 in the Hebrew text because the superscription is considered v. 1). The resulting reading, "an oracle of rebellion for the wicked [is] in the midst of my heart" (cf. NIV) apparently means that the psalm, which foresees the downfall of the wicked, is a prophetic oracle about the rebellion of the wicked which emerges from the soul of the psalmist. One could translate, "Here is a poem written as I reflected on the rebellious character of evil men." Another option, followed in the translation above, is to attach אָרָא (*n'um*, "oracle") with the superscription. For another example of a Davidic poem being labeled an "oracle," see 2 Sam 23:1.

³ **tn** Heb "[the] rebellion of an evil man [is] in the midst of my heart." The translation assumes a reading "in the midst of his heart" (i.e., "to the core") instead of "in the midst of my heart," a change which finds support in a few medieval Hebrew mss, the Hebrew text of Origen's Hexapla, and the Syriac.

⁴ **tn** Heb "there is no dread of God before his eyes." The phrase "dread of God" refers here to a healthy respect for God which recognizes that he will punish evil behavior.

⁵ **tn** Heb "for it causes to be smooth to him in his eyes to find his sin to hate." The meaning of the Hebrew text is unclear. Perhaps the point is this: His rebellious attitude makes him reject any notion that God will hold him accountable. His attitude also prevents him from recognizing and repudiating his sinful ways.

⁶ **tn** Heb "he ceases to exhibit wisdom to do good." The Hiphil forms are exhibitiv, indicating the outward expression of an inner attitude.

⁷ **tn** Heb "he takes a stand in a way [that is] not good." The word "way" here refers metaphorically to behavior or life style.

⁸ **tn** The three imperfect verbal forms in v. 4 highlight the characteristic behavior of the typical evildoer.

⁹ **tn** Heb "[is] in the heavens."

¹⁰ **sn** The Lord's loyal love/faithfulness is almost limitless. He is loyal and faithful to his creation and blesses mankind and the animal kingdom with physical life and sustenance (vv. 6-9).

¹¹ **tn** Heb "mountains of God." The divine name אֱלֹהִים ('el, "God") is here used in an idiomatic manner to indicate the superlative.

¹² **tn** Or "deliver."

¹³ **sn** God's justice/fairness is firm and reliable like the highest mountains and as abundant as the water in the deepest sea. The psalmist uses a legal metaphor to describe God's preservation of his creation. Like a just judge who vindicates the innocent, God protects his creation from destructive forces.

¹⁴ **tn** Or "valuable."

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "and the sons of man in the shadow of your wings find shelter." The preservation of physical life is in view, as the next verse makes clear.

¹⁶ **tn** Heb "for with you is the fountain of life, in your light we see light." Water (note "fountain") and light are here metaphors for life.

¹⁷ **tn** Heb "draw out to full length."

¹⁸ **tn** Heb "to those who know you." The Hebrew verb יָדָע (*yada*, "know") is used here of those who "know" the Lord in the sense that they recognize his royal authority and obey his will (see Jer 22:16).

¹⁹ **tn** Heb "and your justice to." The verb "extend" is understood by ellipsis in the second line (see the previous line).

²⁰ **tn** Heb "the pure of heart." The "heart" is here viewed as the seat of one's moral character and motives. The "pure of heart" are God's faithful followers who trust in and love the Lord and, as a result, experience his deliverance (see Pss 7:10; 11:2; 32:11; 64:10; 94:15; 97:11).

²¹ **tn** Heb "let not a foot of pride come to me, and let not the hand of the evil ones cause me to wander as a fugitive."

²² **tn** Heb "there the workers of wickedness have fallen." The adverb שָׁמָּה (*sham*, "there") is used here for dramatic effect, as the psalmist envisions the evildoers lying fallen at a spot that is vivid in his imagination (BDB 1027 s.v.).

²³ **tn** The psalmist uses perfect verbal forms in v. 12 to describe the demise of the wicked as if it has already taken place.

Psalm 37^A

By David.

37:1 Do not fret² when wicked men seem to succeed!³

Do not envy evildoers!

37:2 For they will quickly dry up like grass,
and wither away like plants.⁴

37:3 Trust in the LORD and do what is right!
Settle in the land and maintain your integrity!⁵

37:4 Then you will take delight in the LORD,⁶
and he will answer your prayers.⁷

37:5 Commit your future to the LORD!⁸
Trust in him, and he will act on your behalf.⁹

37:6 He will vindicate you in broad daylight,
and publicly defend your just cause.¹⁰

37:7 Wait patiently for the LORD!¹¹
Wait confidently¹² for him!

Do not fret over the apparent success of a sinner,¹³
a man who carries out wicked schemes!

37:8 Do not be angry and frustrated!¹⁴

Do not fret! That only leads to trouble!
37:9 Wicked men¹⁵ will be wiped out,¹⁶
but those who rely on the LORD are the ones who will possess the land.¹⁷

37:10 Evil men will soon disappear;¹⁸
you will stare at the spot where they once were, but they will be gone.¹⁹

37:11 But the oppressed will possess the land
and enjoy great prosperity.²⁰

37:12 Evil men plot against the godly²¹
and viciously attack them.²²

37:13 The Lord laughs in disgust²³ at them,
for he knows that their day is coming.²⁴

37:14 Evil men draw their swords
and prepare their bows,
to bring down²⁵ the oppressed and needy,
and to slaughter those who are godly.²⁶

37:15 Their swords will pierce²⁷ their own hearts,
and their bows will be broken.

37:16 The little bit that a godly man owns
is better than

the wealth of many evil men,²⁸

37:17 for evil men will lose their power,²⁹
but the LORD sustains³⁰ the godly.

¹ **sn** Psalm 37. The psalmist urges his audience not to envy the wicked, but to trust in and obey the Lord, for he will destroy sinners and preserve the godly. When the smoke of judgment clears, the wicked will be gone, but the godly will remain and inherit God's promised blessings. The psalm is an acrostic; every other verse begins with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

² **tn** The verb form is singular (see vv. 3-10 as well, where the second person verbs and pronouns are also singular). The psalmist's exhortation has a wisdom flavor to it; it is personalized for each member of his audience.

³ **tn** Heb "over sinners." The context indicates that the psalmist has in mind the apparent power and success of sinners. See v. 7b.

⁴ **tn** Heb "like green vegetation."

⁵ **tn** Heb "tend integrity." The verb רָחַץ (*ra'ah*, "tend, shepherd") is probably used here in the sense of "watch over, guard." The noun אֱמוּנָה (*'emunah*, "faithfulness, honesty, integrity") is understood as the direct object of the verb, though it could be taken as an adverbial accusative, "[feed] securely," if the audience is likened to a flock of sheep.

⁶ **tn** Following the imperatives of v. 3 the prefixed verbal forms with *vav* (ו) in v. 4 indicate result. Faith and obedience (v. 3) will bring divine blessing (v. 4).

⁷ **tn** Or "and he will give you what you desire most." Heb "and he will grant to you the requests of your heart."

⁸ **tn** Heb "roll your way upon the LORD." The noun "way" may refer here to one's activities or course of life.

⁹ **tn** Heb "he will act." Verse 6 explains what is meant; the LORD will vindicate those who trust in him.

¹⁰ **tn** Heb "and he will bring out like light your vindication, and your just cause like noonday."

¹¹ **tn** Heb "Be quiet before the LORD!"

¹² **tc** The Hebrew text has וְתַחַלּוּלָהּ (v^h*thikholel*, Hitpoel of חָלַל, *khil*, "writhe with fear, suffer") but this idea fits awkwardly here. The text should be changed to וְתַחַלּוּלָהּ (v^h*tokhel*; Hiphil of חָלַל, *yakhal*, "wait"). It appears that the Hebrew text is the product of dittography: (1) the initial הוּ (vav-he) is accidentally repeated from the preceding word (וְהוּהוּ, *y^hvhah*) and (2) the final *lamed* (ל) is accidentally repeated (note the preceding *lamed* and the initial *lamed* on the following form, לִי).

¹³ **tn** Heb "over one who causes his way to be successful."

¹⁴ **tn** Heb "Refrain from anger! Abandon rage!"

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "for evil men." The conjunction כִּי (*ki*, "for") relates to the exhortations in v. 8; there is no reason to be frustrated, for the evildoers will be punished in due time.

¹⁶ **tn** Or "cut off, removed."

¹⁷ **tn** Heb "and those who wait on the LORD, they will possess the land."

¹⁸ **tn** Heb "and yet, a little, there will be no wicked [one]."

¹⁹ **tn** Heb "and you will carefully look upon his place, but he will not be [there]." The singular is used here in a representative sense; the typical evildoer is in view.

²⁰ **tn** Heb "and they will take delight in (see v. 4) abundance of peace."

²¹ **tn** Or "innocent." The singular is used here in a representative sense; the typical evildoer and the typical godly individual are in view.

²² **tn** Heb "and gnashes at him with his teeth" (see Ps 35:16). The language may picture the evil men as wild animals. The active participles in v. 12 are used for purposes of dramatic description.

²³ **tn** Heb "laughs." As the next line indicates, this refers to derisive laughter (see 2:4). The Hebrew imperfect verbal form describes the action from the perspective of an eye-witness who is watching the divine response as it unfolds before his eyes.

²⁴ **tn** Heb "for he sees that his day is coming." As the following context makes clear (vv. 15, 17, 19-20), "his day" refers to the time when God will destroy evildoers.

²⁵ **tn** Heb "to cause to fall."

²⁶ **tn** Heb "the upright in way," i.e., those who lead godly lives.

²⁷ **tn** Heb "enter into."

²⁸ **tn** Heb "Better [is] a little to the godly one than the wealth of many evil ones." The following verses explain why this is true. Though a godly individual may seem to have only meager possessions, he always has what he needs and will eventually possess the land. The wicked may prosper for a brief time, but will eventually be destroyed by divine judgment and lose everything.

²⁹ **tn** Heb "for the arms of the evil ones will be broken."

³⁰ **tn** The active participle here indicates this is characteristically true.

37:18 The LORD watches over the innocent day by day¹ and they possess a permanent inheritance.²
 37:19 They will not be ashamed when hard times come,³ when famine comes they will have enough to eat.⁴
 37:20 But⁵ evil men will die; the LORD's enemies will be incinerated⁶ – they will go up in smoke.⁷
 37:21 Evil men borrow, but do not repay their debt, but the godly show compassion and are generous.⁸
 37:22 Surely⁹ those favored by the LORD¹⁰ will possess the land, but those rejected¹¹ by him will be wiped out.¹²
 37:23 The LORD grants success to the one whose behavior he finds commendable.¹³
 37:24 Even if¹⁴ he trips, he will not fall

headlong,¹⁵ for the LORD holds¹⁶ his hand.
 37:25 I was once young, now I am old. I have never seen a godly man abandoned, or his children¹⁷ forced to search for food.¹⁸
 37:26 All day long he shows compassion and lends to others,¹⁹ and his children²⁰ are blessed.
 37:27 Turn away from evil! Do what is right!²¹ Then you will enjoy lasting security.²²
 37:28 For the LORD promotes²³ justice, and never abandons²⁴ his faithful followers.
 They are permanently secure,²⁵ but the children²⁶ of evil men are wiped out.²⁷
 37:29 The godly will possess the land and will dwell in it permanently.
 37:30 The godly speak wise words and promote justice.²⁸
 37:31 The law of their God controls their thinking,²⁹ their³⁰ feet do not slip.
 37:32 Evil men set an ambush for the godly and try to kill them.³¹

¹ *tn* Heb “the LORD knows the days of the innocent ones.” He “knows” their days in the sense that he is intimately aware of and involved in their daily struggles. He meets their needs and sustains them.

² *tn* Heb “and their inheritance is forever.”

³ *tn* Heb “in a time of trouble.”

⁴ *tn* Heb “in days of famine they will be satisfied.”

⁵ *tn* Or “for,” but Hebrew בִּי in this case would have to extend all the way back to v. 17a. Another option is to understand the particle as asseverative, “surely” (see v. 22).

⁶ *tc* The meaning of the MT בִּיקָר בְּרִים [*kiqar karim*], “like what is precious among the pastures/rams”) is uncertain. One possibility is to take the noun בְּרִים as “pastures” and interpret “what is precious” as referring to flowers that blossom but then quickly disappear (see v. 2 and BDB 430 s.v. יָקָר 3). If בְּרִים is taken as “rams,” then “what is precious” might refer to the choicest portions of rams. The present translation follows a reading in the Dead Sea Scrolls (4QpPs37), בִּיקָר בּוֹרֵם (“like the burning of an oven”). The next line, which pictures the LORD’s enemies being consumed in smoke, supports this reading, which assumes confusion of the Hebrew letters *resh* (ר) and *dalet* (ד) at the end of the first word in the sequence.

⁷ *tn* Heb “they perish in smoke, they perish.” In addition to repeating the verb for emphasis, the psalmist uses the perfect form of the verb to picture the enemies’ demise as if it had already taken place. In this way he draws attention to the certitude of their judgment.

⁸ *tn* Heb “an evil [man] borrows and does not repay, but a godly [man] is gracious and gives.” The singular forms are used in a representative sense; the typical evildoer and godly individual are in view. The three active participles and one imperfect (“repay”) draw attention to the characteristic behavior of the two types.

⁹ *tn* The particle כִּי is best understood as asseverative or emphatic here.

¹⁰ *tn* Heb “those blessed by him.” The pronoun “him” must refer to the Lord (see vv. 20, 23), so the referent has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹¹ *tn* Heb “cursed.”

¹² *tn* Or “cut off”; or “removed” (see v. 9).

¹³ *tn* Heb “from the LORD the steps of a man are established, and in his way he delights.” The second line qualifies the first. The man whose behavior is commendable in God’s sight is the one whose ways are established by God. Another option is that the second line refers to the godly man delighting in God’s “way,” namely the lifestyle which he prescribes for men. In this case one might translate, “The LORD grants success to the one who desires to obey his commands.”

¹⁴ *tn* Other translation options for כִּי in this context are “when” (so NASB) or “though” (so NEB, NIV, NRSV).

¹⁵ *tn* Heb “be hurled down.”

¹⁶ *tn* The active participle indicates this is characteristically true. See v. 17.

¹⁷ *tn* Or “offspring”; Heb “seed.”

¹⁸ *tn* Heb “or his offspring searching for food.” The expression “search for food” also appears in Lam 1:11, where Jerusalem’s refugees are forced to search for food and to trade their valuable possessions for something to eat.

¹⁹ *tn* The active participles describe characteristic behavior.

²⁰ *tn* Or “offspring”; Heb “seed.”

²¹ *tn* Or “Do good!” The imperatives are singular (see v. 1).

²² *tn* Heb “and dwell permanently.” The imperative with *vav* (ו) is best taken here as a result clause after the preceding imperatives.

²³ *tn* Heb “loves.” The verb “loves” is here metonymic; the LORD’s commitment to principles of justice causes him to actively promote these principles as he governs the world. The active participle describes characteristic behavior.

²⁴ *tn* The imperfect verbal form draws attention to this generalizing statement.

²⁵ *tn* Or “protected forever.”

²⁶ *tn* Or “offspring”; Heb “seed.”

²⁷ *tn* Or “cut off”; or “removed.” The perfect verbal forms in v. 28b state general truths.

²⁸ *tn* Heb “The mouth of the godly [one] utters wisdom, and his tongue speaks justice.” The singular form is used in a representative sense; the typical godly individual is in view. The imperfect verbal forms draw attention to the characteristic behavior of the godly.

²⁹ *tn* Heb “the law of his God [is] in his heart.” The “heart” is here the seat of one’s thoughts and motives.

³⁰ *tn* Heb “his.” The pronoun has been translated as plural to agree with the representative or typical “godly” in v. 30.

³¹ *tn* Heb “an evil [one] watches the godly [one] and seeks to kill him.” The singular forms are used in a representative sense; the typical evildoer and godly individual are in view. The active participles describe characteristic behavior.

37:33 But the LORD does not surrender the godly,
or allow them to be condemned in a court
of law.¹

37:34 Rely² on the LORD! Obey his com-
mands!³

Then he will permit you⁴ to possess the
land;

you will see the demise of evil men.⁵

37:35 I have seen ruthless evil men⁶
growing in influence, like a green tree
grows in its native soil.⁷

37:36 But then one passes by, and sud-
denly they have disappeared!⁸

I looked for them, but they could not be
found.

37:37 Take note of the one who has integ-
rity! Observe the godly!⁹

For the one who promotes peace has a
future.¹⁰

37:38 Sinful rebels are totally destroyed;¹¹
evil men have no future.¹²

37:39 But the LORD delivers the godly;¹³
he protects them in times of trouble.¹⁴

37:40 The LORD helps them and rescues
them;

he rescues them from evil men and deliv-
ers them,¹⁵
for they seek his protection.

Psalm 38¹⁶

A psalm of David, written to get God's attention.¹⁷

38:1 O LORD, do not continue to rebuke
me in your anger!

Do not continue to punish me in your
raging fury!¹⁸

38:2 For your arrows pierce¹⁹ me,
and your hand presses me down.²⁰

38:3 My whole body is sick because of
your judgment;²¹

I am deprived of health because of my
sin.²²

38:4 For my sins overwhelm me;²³
like a heavy load, they are too much for
me to bear.

38:5 My wounds²⁴ are infected and start-
ing to smell,²⁵

because of my foolish sins.²⁶

38:6 I am dazed²⁷ and completely humili-
ated;²⁸
all day long I walk around mourning.

¹ **tn** *Heb* "the LORD does not abandon him into his hand or condemn him when he is judged." The imperfects draw attention to the LORD's characteristic behavior in this regard.

² **tn** Or "wait."

³ **tn** *Heb* "keep his way." The LORD's "way" refers here to the "conduct required" by the LORD. In Ps 25 the LORD's "ways" are associated with his covenantal demands (see vv. 4, 9-10). See also Ps 119:3 (cf. vv. 1, 4), as well as Deut 8:6; 10:12; 11:22; 19:9; 26:17; 28:9; 30:16.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "and he will lift you up." The prefixed verbal form with *vav* (ו) is best taken here as a result clause following the imperatives in the preceding lines.

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "when evil men are cut off you will see."

⁶ **tn** The Hebrew uses the representative singular again here.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "being exposed [?] like a native, luxuriant." The Hebrew form *תִּתְעַרֵּה* (*mit'areh*) appears to be a Hitpael participle from *עָרָה* (*'arah*, "be exposed"), but this makes no sense in this context. Perhaps the form is a dialectal variant of *תִּתְעַלֵּה* ("giving oneself an air of importance"; see Jer 51:3), from *עָלָה* (*'alah*, "go up"; see P. C. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50* [WBC], 296). The noun *אֲזָרָה* (*'ezrah*, "native, full citizen") refers elsewhere to people, but here, where it is collocated with "luxuriant, green," it probably refers to a tree growing in native soil.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "and he passes by and, look, he is not [there]." The subject of the verb "passes by" is probably indefinite, referring to any passerby. Some prefer to change the form to first person, "and I passed by" (cf. NEB; note the first person verbal forms in preceding verse and in the following line).

⁹ **tn** Or "upright."

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "for [there is] an end for a man of peace." Some interpret *אֲחָרַיִת* (*'akharit*, "end") as referring to offspring (see the next verse and Ps 109:13; cf. NEB, NRSV).

¹¹ **tn** Or "destroyed together." In this case the psalmist pictures judgment sweeping them away as a group.

¹² **tn** *Heb* "the end of evil men is cut off." As in v. 37, some interpret *אֲחָרַיִת* (*'akharit*, "end") as referring to offspring (see Ps 109:13). The perfect verbal forms in v. 38 probably express general truths. Another option is that they are used emphatically to state with certitude that the demise of the wicked is as good as done.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "and the deliverance of the godly [ones] [is] from the LORD."

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "[he is] their place of refuge in a time of trouble."

¹⁵ **tn** The prefixed verbal forms with *vav* (ו) consecutive carry on the generalizing tone of the preceding verse.

¹⁶ **sn** Psalm 38. The author asks the Lord to deliver him from his enemies. He confesses his sin and recognizes that the crisis he faces is the result of divine discipline. Yet he begs the Lord not to reject him.

¹⁷ **tn** The Hebrew text reads simply, "to cause to remember." The same form, the Hiphil infinitive of *זָכַר* (*zakhar*, "remember"), also appears in the heading of Ps 70. Some understand this in the sense of "for the memorial offering," but it may carry the idea of bringing one's plight to God's attention (see P. C. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50* [WBC], 303).

¹⁸ **tn** The words "continue to" are supplied in the translation of both lines. The following verses make it clear that the psalmist is already experiencing divine rebuke/punishment. He asks that it might cease.

sn Compare Ps 38:1 with Ps 6:1, which has similar wording.

¹⁹ **tn** The verb Hebrew *נָחַת* (*nakhath*) apparently here means "penetrate, pierce" (note the use of the Qal in Prov 17:10). The psalmist pictures the LORD as a warrior who shoots arrows at him (see Ps 7:12-13).

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "and your hand [?] upon me." The meaning of the verb *נָחַת* (*nakhath*) is unclear in this context. It is preferable to emend the form to *וַתְּנַחֵם* (*vattanakh*) from the verb *נָחַח* (*nuakh*, "rest"). In this case the text would read literally, "and your hand rests upon me" (see Isa 25:10, though the phrase is used in a positive sense there, unlike Ps 38:2).

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "there is no soundness in my flesh from before your anger." "Anger" here refers metonymically to divine judgment, which is the practical effect of God's anger at the psalmist's sin.

²² **tn** *Heb* "there is no health in my bones from before my sin."

²³ **tn** *Heb* "pass over my head."

²⁴ **sn** The reference to *wounds* may be an extension of the metaphorical language of v. 2. The psalmist pictures himself as one whose flesh is ripped and torn by arrows.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "my wounds stink, they are festering" (cf. NEB).

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "from before my foolishness."

²⁷ **tn** The verb's precise shade of meaning in this context is not entirely clear. The verb, which literally means "to bend," may refer to the psalmist's posture. In Isa 21:3 it seems to mean "be confused, dazed."

²⁸ **tn** *Heb* "I am bowed down to excess."

38:7 For I am overcome with shame¹
and my whole body is sick.²
38:8 I am numb with pain and severely
battered;³
I groan loudly because of the anxiety I
feel.⁴
38:9 O Lord, you understand my heart's
desire;⁵
my groaning is not hidden from you.
38:10 My heart beats quickly;
my strength leaves me;
I can hardly see.⁶
38:11 Because of my condition,⁷ even my
friends and acquaintances keep their
distance;⁸
my neighbors stand far away.⁹
38:12 Those who seek my life try to entrap
me;¹⁰
those who want to harm me speak de-
structive words;
all day long they say deceitful things.
38:13 But I am like a deaf man – I hear
nothing;
I am like a mute who cannot speak.¹¹
38:14 I am like a man who cannot hear
and is incapable of arguing his defense.¹²
38:15 Yet¹³ I wait for you, O LORD!
You will respond, O Lord, my God!
38:16 I have prayed for deliverance, be-
cause otherwise they will gloat over me;¹⁴
when my foot slips they will arrogantly
taunt me.¹⁵
38:17 For I am about to stumble,
and I am in constant pain.¹⁶
38:18 Yes,¹⁷ I confess my wrongdoing,
and I am concerned about my sins.

38:19 But those who are my enemies for
no reason are numerous;¹⁸
those who hate me without cause out-
number me.¹⁹
38:20 They repay me evil for the good I
have done;
though I have tried to do good to them,
they hurl accusations at me.²⁰
38:21 Do not abandon me, O LORD!
My God, do not remain far away from me!
38:22 Hurry and help me,²¹ O Lord, my
deliverer!

Psalms 39²²

For the music director, Jeduthun; a psalm of
David.

39:1 I decided,²³ "I will watch what I say
and make sure I do not sin with my
tongue."²⁴
I will put a muzzle over my mouth
while in the presence of an evil man.²⁵
39:2 I was stone silent.²⁶
I held back the urge to speak.²⁷
My frustration grew,²⁸
39:3 my anxiety intensified.²⁹
As I thought about it, I became impatient.³⁰
Finally I spoke these words:³¹
39:4 "O LORD, help me understand my
mortality

¹ *tn Heb* "for my loins are filled with shame." The "loins" are viewed here as the seat of the psalmist's emotions. The present translation assumes that *נִקְלָה* (*nīqlēh*) is derived from *קָלָה* (*qalah*, "be dishonored"). Some derive it instead from a homonymic root *קָלָה* (*qalah*), meaning "to roast." In this case one might translate "fever" (cf. NEB "my loins burn with fever").

² *tn Heb* "there is no soundness in my flesh" (see v. 3).

³ *tn Heb* "I am numb and crushed to excess."

⁴ *tn Heb* "I roar because of the moaning of my heart."

⁵ *tn Heb* "O Lord, before you [is] all my desire."

⁶ *tn Heb* "and the light of my eyes, even they, there is not with me." The "light of the eyes" may refer to physical energy (see 1 Sam 14:27, 29), life itself (Ps 13:3), or the ability to see (Prov 29:23).

⁷ *tn* Or "wound," or "illness."

⁸ *tn Heb* "stand [aloof]."

⁹ *tn Heb* "and the ones near me off at a distance stand."

¹⁰ *tn Heb* "lay snares."

¹¹ *sn* I am like a deaf man...like a mute. The psalmist is like a deaf mute; he is incapable of defending himself and is vulnerable to his enemies' deception (see v. 14).

¹² *tn Heb* "and there is not in his mouth arguments."

¹³ *tn* Or perhaps "surely."

¹⁴ *tn Heb* "For I said, 'Lest they rejoice over me.'" The psalmist recalls the motivating argument of his petition. He probably prefaced this statement with a prayer for deliverance (see Pss 7:1-2; 13:3-4; 28:1).

¹⁵ *tn Heb* "they will magnify against me." See Pss 35:26; 55:13.

¹⁶ *tn Heb* "and my pain [is] before me continually."

¹⁷ *tn* Or "for." The translation assumes that *כִּי* (*ki*) is asseverative here.

¹⁸ *tn Heb* "and my enemies, life, are many." The noun *חַיִּים* (*khayyim*, "life") fits very awkwardly here. The translation assumes an emendation to *חִנָּם* (*khinam*, "without reason"); note the parallelism with *שֶׁקֶר* [*sheqer*, "falsely"] and see Pss 35:19; 69:4; Lam 3:52). The verb *אִסַּם* (*atsam*) can sometimes mean "are strong," but here it probably focuses on numerical superiority (note the parallel verb *רָבַב*, *ravav*, "be many").

¹⁹ *tn Heb* "are many."

²⁰ *tn Heb* "the ones who repay evil instead of good accuse me, instead of my pursuing good."

²¹ *tn Heb* "hurry to my help." See Ps 22:19.

²² *sn Psalm 39*. The psalmist laments his frailty and mortality as he begs the Lord to take pity on him and remove his disciplinary hand.

²³ *tn Heb* "I said."

²⁴ *tn Heb* "I will watch my ways, from sinning with my tongue."

²⁵ *sn* The psalmist wanted to voice a lament to the LORD (see vv. 4-6), but he hesitated to do so in the presence of evil men, for such words might be sinful if they gave the wicked an occasion to insult God. See C. A. Briggs and E. G. Briggs, *Psalms* (ICC), 1:345.

²⁶ *tn Heb* "I was mute [with] silence."

²⁷ *tn Heb* "I was quiet from good." He kept quiet, resisting the urge to find emotional release and satisfaction by voicing his lament.

²⁸ *sn* I held back the urge to speak. For a helpful discussion of the relationship (and tension) between silence and complaint in ancient Israelite lamentation, see E. S. Gerstenberger, *Psalms, Part I* (FOTL), 166-67.

²⁹ *tn Heb* "and my pain was stirred up." Emotional pain is in view here.

³⁰ *tn Heb* "my heart was hot within me."

³¹ *tn Heb* "In my reflection fire burned." The prefixed verbal form is either a preterite (past tense) or an imperfect being used in a past progressive or customary sense ("fire was burning").

³² *tn Heb* "I spoke with my tongue." The phrase "these words" is supplied in the translation for clarification and for stylistic reasons.

and the brevity of life!¹
 Let me realize how quickly my life will pass!²
39:5 Look, you make my days short-lived,³ and my life span is nothing from your perspective.⁴
 Surely all people, even those who seem secure, are nothing but vapor.⁵
39:6 Surely people go through life as mere ghosts.⁶
 Surely they accumulate worthless wealth without knowing who will eventually haul it away.⁷
39:7 But now, O Lord, upon what am I relying?
 You are my only hope!⁸
39:8 Deliver me from all my sins of rebellion!
 Do not make me the object of fools' insults!
39:9 I am silent and cannot open my mouth because of what you have done.⁹
39:10 Please stop wounding me!¹⁰
 You have almost beaten me to death!¹¹
39:11 You severely discipline people for their sins;¹²
 like a moth you slowly devour their strength.¹³

1 tn *Heb* "Cause me to know, O Lord, my end; and the measure of my days, what it is!"

2 tn *Heb* "Let me know how transient I am!"

3 tn *Heb* "Look, handbreadths you make my days." The "handbreadth" (equivalent to the width of four fingers) was one of the smallest measures used by ancient Israelites. See P. C. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50* (WBC), 309.

4 tn *Heb* "is like nothing before you."

5 tn *Heb* "surely, all vapor [is] all mankind, standing firm." Another option is to translate, "Surely, all mankind, though seemingly secure, is nothing but a vapor."

6 tn *Heb* "surely, as an image man walks about." The preposition prefixed to "image" indicates identity here.

sn *People go through life* (*Heb* "man walks about"). "Walking" is here used as a metaphor for living. The point is that human beings are here today, gone tomorrow. They have no lasting substance and are comparable to mere images or ghosts.

7 tc *Heb* "Surely [in] vain they strive, he accumulates and does not know who gathers them." The MT as it stands is syntactically awkward. The verb forms switch from singular ("walks about") to plural ("they strive") and then back to singular ("accumulates and does not know"), even though the subject (generic "man") remains the same. Furthermore there is no object for the verb "accumulates" and no plural antecedent for the plural pronoun ("them") attached to "gatherers." These problems can be removed if one emends the text from הֶבֶל הַיְהוּמַן (hevel yehemaun, "[in] vain they strive") to הֶבֶל הַחֲמוֹן (hevel yehamon, "vain things of wealth"). This assumes a misdivision in the MT and a virtual dittography of vav (ו) between the *mem* and *nun* of הַחֲמוֹן. The present translation follows this emendation.

8 tn *Heb* "my hope, for you it [is]."

9 tn *Heb* "because you acted." The psalmist has in mind God's disciplinary measures (see vv. 10-13).

10 tn *Heb* "remove from upon me your wound."

11 tn *Heb* "from the hostility of your hand I have come to an end."

12 tn "with punishments on account of sin you discipline a man."

13 tc *Heb* "you cause to dissolve, like a moth, his desired

Surely all people are a mere vapor. (Selah)

39:12 Hear my prayer, O LORD!
 Listen to my cry for help!
 Do not ignore my sobbing!¹⁴
 For I am dependent on you, like one residing outside his native land;
 I am at your mercy, just as all my ancestors were.¹⁵
39:13 Turn your angry gaze away from me, so I can be happy before I pass away.¹⁶

Psalm 40¹⁷

For the music director; By David, a psalm.

40:1 I relied completely¹⁸ on the LORD, and he turned toward me and heard my cry for help.
40:2 He lifted me out of the watery pit,¹⁹ out of the slimy mud.²⁰
 He placed my feet on a rock and gave me secure footing.²¹
40:3 He gave me reason to sing a new song.²²

[thing]." The translation assumes an emendation of הַחֲמוֹדוֹ (*khamudo*, "his desirable [thing]") to הַחֲמוֹדוֹ (*khemdo*, "his loveliness" [or "beauty"]), a reading that is supported by a few medieval Hebrew mss.

14 tn *Heb* "do not be deaf to my tears."

15 tn *Heb* "For a resident foreigner [am] I with you, a sojourner like all my fathers."

sn resident foreigners were *dependent* on the *mercy* and goodwill of others. The Lord was concerned that resident foreigners be treated properly. See Deut 24:17-22, Ps 146:9.

16 tn *Heb* "Gaze away from me and I will smile before I go and am not." The precise identification of the initial verb form (הִשָּׁעַת, *hasha*) is uncertain. It could be from the root שָׁעַת (*sha'a*, "smear"), but "your eyes" would be the expected object in this case (see Isa 6:10). The verb may be an otherwise unattested Hiphil form of שָׁעַת (*sha'ah*, "to gaze") meaning "cause your gaze to be." Some prefer to emend the form to the Qal שָׁעַת (*sh'eh*, "gaze"; see Job 14:6). If one does read a form of the verb "to gaze," the angry divine "gaze" of discipline would seem to be in view (see vv. 10-11). For a similar expression of this sentiment see Job 10:20-21.

17 sn *Psalm 40*. The psalmist combines a song of thanksgiving for a recent act of divine deliverance (vv. 1-11) with a confident petition for renewed divine intervention (vv. 12-17).

18 tn *Heb* "relying, I relied." The infinitive absolute precedes the finite verbal form to emphasize the verbal idea. The emphasis is reflected in the translation through the adverb "completely." Another option is to translate, "I waited patiently" (cf. NASB, NIV, NRSV).

19 tn *Heb* "cistern of roaring." The Hebrew noun בּוֹר (*bor*, "cistern, pit") is used metaphorically here of Sheol, the place of death, which is sometimes depicted as a raging sea (see Ps 18:4, 15-16). The noun שָׁאוֹן (*sha'on*, "roaring") refers elsewhere to the crashing sound of the sea's waves (see Ps 65:7).

20 tn *Heb* "from the mud of mud." The Hebrew phrase translated "slimy mud" employs an appositional genitive. Two synonyms are joined in a construct relationship to emphasize the single idea. For a detailed discussion of the grammatical point with numerous examples, see Y. Avishur, "Pairs of Synonymous Words in the Construct State (and in Appositional Hendiadys) in Biblical Hebrew," *Semiotics 2* (1971): 17-81.

21 tn *Heb* "he established my footsteps."

22 sn A new song was appropriate because the Lord had intervened in the psalmist's experience in a fresh and exciting way.

praising our God.¹
 May many see what God has done,
 so that they might swear allegiance to
 him and trust in the LORD!²
40:4 How blessed³ is the one⁴ who trusts
 in the LORD⁵
 and does not seek help from⁶ the proud
 or from liars!⁷
40:5 O LORD, my God, you have accom-
 plished many things;
 you have done amazing things and car-
 ried out your purposes for us.⁸
 No one can thwart you!⁹
 I want to declare them and talk about
 them,
 but they are too numerous to recount!¹⁰
40:6 Receiving sacrifices and offerings are
 not your primary concern.¹¹
 You make that quite clear to me!¹²

¹ **tn** Heb “and he placed in my mouth a new song, praise to our God.”

² **tn** Heb “may many see and fear and trust in the LORD.” The translation assumes that the initial prefixed verbal form is a jussive (“may many see”), rather than an imperfect (“many will see”). The following prefixed verbal forms with *vav* (v) conjunctive are taken as indicating purpose or result (“so that they might swear allegiance...and trust”) after the introductory jussive.

³ **tn** The Hebrew noun is an abstract plural. The word often refers metonymically to the happiness that God-given security and prosperity produce (see Pss 1:1, 3; 2:12; 34:9; 41:1; 65:4; 84:12; 89:15; 106:3; 112:1; 127:5; 128:1; 144:15).

⁴ **tn** Heb “man.” See the note on the word “one” in Ps 1:1.

⁵ **tn** Heb “who has made the LORD his [object of] trust.”

⁶ **tn** Heb “and does not turn toward.”

⁷ **tn** Heb “those falling away toward a lie.”

⁸ **tn** Heb “many things you have done, you, O LORD my God, your amazing deeds and your thoughts toward us.” The precise meaning of the text is not clear, but the psalmist seems to be recalling the Lord’s miraculous deeds on Israel’s behalf (see Pss 9:1; 26:7), as well as his covenantal decrees and promises (see Ps 33:11).

⁹ **tn** Heb “there is none arrayed against you.” The precise meaning of the text is unclear, but the collocation *אֶל־יָבִי* (*‘arakh ‘el*, “array against”) is used elsewhere of military (Judg 20:30; 1 Chr 19:17) or verbal opposition (Job 32:14).

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “I will declare and I will speak, they are too numerous to recount.” The present translation assumes that the cohortatives are used in a hypothetical manner in a formally unmarked conditional sentence, “Should I try to declare [them] and speak [of them]...” (cf. NEB, NIV, NRSV). For other examples of cohortatives in the protasis (“if” clause) of a conditional sentence, see GKC 320 §108.e. (It should be noted, however, that GKC understands this particular verse in a different manner. See GKC 320 §108.f, where it is suggested that the cohortatives are part of an apodosis with the protasis being suppressed.) Another option is to take the cohortatives as a declaration of the psalmist’s resolve to announce the truth expressed in the next line. In this case one might translate: “I will declare and speak [the truth]: They are too numerous to recount.”

¹¹ **tn** Heb “sacrifice and offering you do not desire.” The statement is exaggerated for the sake of emphasis (see Ps 51:16 as well). God is pleased with sacrifices, but his first priority is obedience and loyalty (see 1 Sam 15:22). Sacrifices and offerings apart from genuine allegiance are meaningless (see Isa 1:11-20).

¹² **tn** Heb “ears you hollowed out for me.” The meaning of this odd expression is debated (this is the only collocation of “hollowed out” and “ears” in the OT). It may have been an idiomatic expression referring to making a point clear to a listener. The LXX has “but a body you have prepared for me,” a

You do not ask for burnt sacrifices and
 sin offerings.

40:7 Then I say,
 “Look! I come!

What is written in the scroll pertains to me.¹³

40:8 I want to do what pleases you,¹⁴ my
 God.

Your law dominates my thoughts.”¹⁵

40:9 I have told the great assembly¹⁶ about
 your justice.¹⁷

Look! I spare no words!¹⁸

O LORD, you know this is true.

40:10 I have not failed to tell about your
 justice;¹⁹

I spoke about your reliability and deliver-
 ance;

I have not neglected to tell the great as-
 sembly about your loyal love and faith-
 fulness.²⁰

40:11 O LORD, you do not withhold²¹ your
 compassion from me.

May your loyal love and faithfulness con-
 tinually protect me!²²

40:12 For innumerable dangers²³ surround
 me.

reading which is followed in Heb 10:5.

¹³ **tn** Heb “in the roll of the scroll it is written concerning me.” Apparently the psalmist refers to the law of God (see v. 8), which contains the commandments God desires him to obey. If this is a distinctly royal psalm, then the psalmist/king may be referring specifically to the regulations of kingship prescribed in Deut 17:14-20. See P. C. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50* (WBC), 315.

¹⁴ **tn** Or “your will.”

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “your law [is] in the midst of my inner parts.” The “inner parts” are viewed here as the seat of the psalmist’s thought life and moral decision making.

¹⁶ **sn** The great assembly is also mentioned in Pss 22:25 and 35:18.

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “I proclaim justice in the great assembly.” Though “justice” appears without a pronoun here, the LORD’s just acts are in view (see v. 10). His “justice” (*צֶדֶק*, *tsedeq*) is here the deliverance that originates in his justice; he protects and vindicates the one whose cause is just.

¹⁸ **tn** Heb “Look! My lips I do not restrain.”

¹⁹ **tn** Heb “your justice I have not hidden in the midst of my heart.”

²⁰ **tn** Heb “I have not hidden your loyal love and reliability.”

²¹ **tn** Some (cf. NIV, NRSV) translate the verb as a request (“do not withhold”), but elsewhere in the psalms the second masculine singular prefixed form, when addressed to God and preceded by *לֹא* (*lo’*), is always indicative in mood and never has the force of a prayer (see Pss 16:10; 22:2; 44:9; 51:16-17; 60:10; 108:11; cf. NEB, NASB).

²² **tn** In this line the psalmist makes the transition from confidence to petition (see v. 13). Since the prefixed verbal form in the preceding line is imperfect/indicative, one could take the verb in this line as imperfect as well and translate, “your loyal love and faithfulness continually protect me” (cf. NEB). However, the *כִּי* (*ki*) at the beginning of the next verse, if causal (“because”), is best understood as introducing a motivating argument in support of a petition. For this reason v. 11b is best taken as a prayer with the prefixed form being understood as jussive (cf. NIV, NRSV). For parallels to the proposed construction (jussive followed by *כִּי* + perfect introducing motivating argument), see Ps 25:21, as well as Pss 10:2-3; 22:8.

²³ **tn** Or “sinful deeds.” The Hebrew term used here can have a nonmoral nuance (“dangers”) or a moral one (“sinful deeds”) depending on the context. The next line (see “my sins”) seems to favor the moral sense, but the psalmist also speaks of enemies shortly after this (v. 14).

My sins overtake me
 so I am unable to see;
 they outnumber the hairs of my head
 so my strength fails me.¹
40:13 Please be willing, O LORD, to rescue
 me!
 O LORD, hurry and help me!²
40:14 May those who are trying to snatch
 away my life
 be totally embarrassed and ashamed!³
 May those who want to harm me
 be turned back and ashamed!⁴
40:15 May those who say to me, “Aha!
 Aha!”
 be humiliated⁵ and disgraced!⁶
40:16 May all those who seek you be
 happy and rejoice in you!
 May those who love to experience⁷ your
 deliverance say continually,⁸
 “May the LORD be praised!”⁹
40:17 I am oppressed and needy!¹⁰
 May the LORD pay attention to me!¹¹
 You are my helper and my deliverer!
 O my God, do not delay!

Psalm 41¹²

For the music director; a psalm of David.

41:1 How blessed¹³ is the one who treats
 the poor properly!¹⁴
 When trouble comes,¹⁵ the LORD delivers
 him.¹⁶
41:2 May the LORD protect him and save
 his life!¹⁷
 May he be blessed¹⁸ in the land!
 Do not turn him over¹⁹ to his enemies!²⁰

¹ **tn** *Heb* “and my heart abandons me.” The “heart” is here viewed as the seat of emotional strength and courage. For a similar idea see Ps 38:10.

² **tn** *Heb* “hurry to my help.” See Pss 22:19; 38:22.

³ **tn** *Heb* “may they be embarrassed and ashamed together, the ones seeking my life to snatch it away.”

⁴ **tn** The four prefixed verbal forms in this verse (“may those...be...embarrassed and ashamed...may those...be turned back and ashamed”) are understood as jussives. The psalmist is calling judgment down on his enemies.

⁵ **sn** See Ps 35:4 for a similar prayer.

⁶ **tn** The prefixed verbal form is understood as a jussive in this imprecation.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “May they be humiliated according to their shame, those who say to me, ‘Aha! Aha!’”

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “those who love,” which stands metonymically for its cause, the experience of being delivered by the LORD.

⁹ **tn** The three prefixed verbal forms prior to the quotation are understood as jussives. The psalmist balances out his imprecation against his enemies with a prayer of blessing upon the godly.

¹⁰ **tn** The prefixed verbal form is taken as a jussive, “may the LORD be magnified [in praise].” Another option is to take the verb as an imperfect, “the LORD is great” (cf. NRSV). See Ps 35:27.

¹¹ **sn** See Pss 35:10; 37:14.

¹² **tn** The prefixed verbal form may be taken as a jussive of prayer (as in the present translation; cf. NIV) or as an imperfect, “The LORD will pay attention to me” (cf. NRSV). The parallel in Ps 70:5 has, “O God, hurry to me!” For this reason some prefer to emend *יַחַשְׁבֵּהוּ* (*yakhshav*, “may he pay attention”) to *יַחַשְׁבֵּהוּ* (*khushah*, “hurry!”). The syntax of the Hebrew text is awkward; elsewhere when the Qal of *יַחַשְׁבֵּהוּ* (*khashav*, “reckon; consider”) is collocated with the preposition *ל־* (*lamed*) and a pronominal suffix there is an accompanying direct object or additional prepositional phrase/adverbial accusative (see Gen 15:6; 2 Sam 19:19; Job 13:24; 19:11; 33:10; Pss 32:2; 41:7; Amos 6:5).

¹² **sn** *Psalm 41*. The psalmist is confident (vv. 11-12) that the LORD has heard his request to be healed (vv. 4-10), and he anticipates the joy he will experience when the LORD intervenes (vv. 1-3). One must assume that the psalmist is responding to a divine oracle of assurance (see P. C. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50* [WBC], 319-20). The final verse is a fitting conclusion to this psalm, but it is also serves as a fitting conclusion to the first “book” (or major editorial division) of the Psalter. Similar statements appear at or near the end of each of the second, third, and fourth “books” of the Psalter (see Pss 72:19, 89:52, and 106:48 respectively).

¹³ **tn** The Hebrew noun is an abstract plural. The word often refers metonymically to the happiness that God-given security and prosperity produce (see Pss 1:1, 3; 2:12; 34:9; 65:4; 84:12; 89:15; 106:3; 112:1; 127:5; 128:1; 144:15).

¹⁴ **sn** *One who treats the poor properly*. The psalmist is characterizing himself as such an individual and supplying a reason why God has responded favorably to his prayer. The LORD’s attitude toward the merciful neighbors their treatment of the poor.

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “in the day of trouble” (see Ps 27:5).

¹⁶ **tn** That is, the one who has been kind to the poor. The prefixed verbal form could be taken as jussive of prayer (“may the LORD deliver,” see v. 2), but the preceding parallel line is a declaration of fact, not a prayer per se. The imperfect can be taken here as future (“will deliver,” cf. NEB, NASB) or as generalizing (“delivers,” cf. NIV, NRSV). The parallel line, which has a generalizing tone, favors the latter. At the same time, though the psalmist uses a generalizing style here, he clearly has himself primarily in view.

¹⁷ **tn** The prefixed verbal forms are taken as jussives in the translation because the jussive is clearly used in the final line of the verse, suggesting that this is a prayer. The psalmist stops to pronounce a prayer of blessing on the godly individual envisioned in v. 1. Of course, he actually has himself primarily in view. He mixes confidence (vv. 1, 3) with petition (v. 2) because he stands in the interval between the word of assurance and the actual intervention by God.

¹⁸ **tc** The translation follows the consonantal Hebrew text (*Kethib*), which has a Pual (passive) prefixed form, regarded here as a jussive. The Pual of the verb *אַשַׁר* (*ashar*) also appears in Prov 3:18. The marginal reading (*Qere*) assumes a vav (h) consecutive and Pual perfect. Some, with the support of the LXX, change the verb to a Piel (active) form with an objective pronominal suffix, “and may he bless him,” or “and he will bless him” (cf. NIV).

¹⁹ **tn** The negative particle *לֹא* (*al*) before the prefixed verbal form indicates the verb is a jussive and the statement a prayer. Those who want to take v. 2 as a statement of confidence suggest emending the negative particle to *לֹא* (*lo*), which is used with the imperfect. See the earlier note on the verbal forms in line one of this verse. According to GKC 322 §109.e, this is a case where the jussive is used rhetorically to “express that something cannot or should not happen.” In this case one might translate, “you will not turn him over to his enemies,” and take the preceding verbal forms as indicative in mood.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* “do not give him over to the desire of his enemies” (see Ps 27:12).

41:3 The LORD supports¹ him on his sickbed; you completely heal him from his illness.²

41:4 As for me, I said:³

“O LORD, have mercy on me!

Heal me, for I have sinned against you!

41:5 My enemies ask this cruel question about me,⁴

“When will he finally die and be forgotten?”⁵

41:6 When someone comes to visit,⁶ he pretends to be friendly,⁷

he thinks of ways to defame me,⁸

and when he leaves he slanders me.⁹

41:7 All who hate me whisper insults about me to one another;¹⁰

they plan ways to harm me.

41:8 They say,¹¹

“An awful disease¹² overwhelms him,¹³ and now that he is bed-ridden he will never recover.”¹⁴

41:9 Even my close friend¹⁵ whom I trusted,

he who shared meals with me, has turned against me.¹⁶

41:10 As for you, O LORD, have mercy on me and raise me up,

so I can pay them back!”¹⁷

41:11 By this¹⁸ I know that you are

pleased with me, for my enemy does¹⁹ not triumph²⁰ over me.

41:12 As for me, you uphold²¹ me because of my integrity;²²

you allow²³ me permanent access to your presence.²⁴

41:13 The LORD God of Israel deserves praise²⁵

in the future and forevermore!²⁶

We agree! We agree!²⁷

Book 2 (Psalms 42-72)

*Psalm 42*²⁸

For the music director; a well-written song²⁹ by the Korahites.

42:1 As a deer³⁰ longs³¹ for streams of water, so I long³² for you, O God!

¹ **tn** The prefixed verbal form could be taken as jussive, continuing the prayer of v. 2, but the parallel line in v. 3b employs the perfect, suggesting that the psalmist is again speaking in the indicative mood (see v. 1b). The imperfect can be understood as future or as generalizing (see v. 1).

² **tn** *Heb* “all his bed you turn in his illness.” The perfect is used here in a generalizing sense (see v. 1) or in a rhetorical manner to emphasize that the healing is as good as done.

³ **sn** In vv. 4-10 the psalmist recites the prayer of petition and lament he offered to the Lord.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “my enemies speak evil concerning me.”

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “and his name perish.”

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “to see.”

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “he speaks deceitfully.”

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “his heart gathers sin to itself.”

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “he goes outside and speaks.”

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “together against me they whisper, all those who hate me.” The Hitpael of לָחַשׁ (*lakhash*) refers here to whispering to one another (see 2 Sam 12:19).

¹¹ **tn** The words “they say” are not in the Hebrew text, but are supplied in the translation to make it clear that v. 8 contains a quotation of what the psalmist’s enemies say about him (see v. 7a).

¹² **tn** *Heb* “thing of worthlessness.” In Ps 101:3 the phrase refers to evil deeds in general, but here it appears to refer more specifically to the illness that plagues the psalmist.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “is poured out on him.” The passive participle of יָצַק (*yatsaq*) is used.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “and he who lies down will not again arise.”

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “man of my peace.” The phrase here refers to one’s trusted friend (see Jer 38:22; Obad 7).

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “has made a heel great against me.” The precise meaning of this phrase, which appears only here, is uncertain. **sn** The language of this verse is applied to Judas Iscariot in John 13:18.

¹⁷ **tn** The cohortative with prefixed *vav* (ו) here indicates purpose or result (“Then I will repay them”) after the preceding imperatives.

¹⁸ **sn** *By this*. Having recalled his former lament and petition, the psalmist returns to the confident mood of vv. 1-3. The basis for his confidence may be a divine oracle of deliverance, assuring him that God would intervene and vindicate him. The demonstrative pronoun “this” may refer to such an

oracle, which is assumed here, though its contents are not included. See P. C. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50* (WBC), 319, 321.

¹⁹ **tn** Or “will.” One may translate the imperfect verbal form as descriptive (present, cf. NIV) or as anticipatory (future, cf. NEB).

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* “shout.”

²¹ **tn** Or “have upheld.” The perfect verbal form can be taken as generalizing/descriptive (present) or as a present perfect.

²² **sn** *Because of my integrity*. See Pss 7:8; 25:21; 26:1, 11.

²³ **tn** The prefixed verbal form with *vav* (ו) consecutive has the same aspectual function as the preceding perfect. It is either generalizing/descriptive (present) or has a present perfect nuance (“you have allowed”).

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* “and you cause me to stand before you permanently.”

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “[be] blessed.” See Pss 18:46; 28:6; 31:21.

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* “from everlasting to everlasting.” See 1 Chr 16:36; Neh 9:5; Pss 90:2; 106:48.

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* “surely and surely” אָמֵן וְאָמֵן [*amen v^o amen*], i.e., “amen and amen”. This is probably a congregational response to the immediately preceding statement about the propriety of praising God.

²⁸ **sn** *Psalm 42*. The psalmist recalls how he once worshiped in the Lord’s temple, but laments that he is now oppressed by enemies in a foreign land. Some medieval Hebrew MSS combine Psalms 42 and 43 into a single psalm.

²⁹ **tn** The meaning of the Hebrew term מַשְׁכִּיל [*maskil*] is uncertain. The word is derived from a verb meaning “to be prudent; to be wise.” Various options are: “a contemplative song,” “a song imparting moral wisdom,” or “a skillful [i.e., well-written] song.” The term occurs in the superscriptions of Pss 32, 42, 44, 45, 52-55, 74, 78, 88, 89, and 142, as well as in Ps 47:7.

³⁰ **tn** Since the accompanying verb is feminine in form, the noun אַיִל [*ayil*, “male deer”] should be emended to אַיִלָּה [*ayileh*, “female deer”]. Haplography of the letter *tav* has occurred; note that the following verb begins with *tav*.

³¹ **tn** Or “pants [with thirst].”

³² **tn** Or “my soul pants [with thirst].” The Hebrew term נֶפֶשׁ [*nefesh*] with a pronominal suffix is often equivalent to a pronoun, especially in poetry (see BDB 660 s.v. נֶפֶשׁ 4.a).

42:2 I thirst¹ for God,
for the living God.

I say,² “When will I be able to go and
appear in God’s presence?”³

42:3 I cannot eat, I weep day and night;⁴
all day long they say to me,⁵ “Where is
your God?”

42:4 I will remember and weep!⁶
For I was once walking along with the
great throng to the temple of God,
shouting and giving thanks along with
the crowd as we celebrated the holy
festival.⁷

42:5 Why are you depressed,⁸ O my
soul?⁹

Why are you upset?¹⁰
Wait for God!

For I will again give thanks
to my God for his saving intervention.¹¹

¹ **tn** Or “my soul thirsts.”

² **tn** The words “I say” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons and for clarification.

³ **tn** *Heb* “When will I go and appear [to] the face of God?” Some emend the Niphal verbal form אֶרְאֶה (*er’eh*, “I will appear”) to a Qal אֶרְאֶה (*er’eh*, “I will see”; see Gen 33:10), but the Niphal can be retained if one understands ellipsis of אֶת (*et*) before “face” (see Exod 34:24; Deut 31:11).

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “My tears have become my food day and night.”

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “when [they] say to me all the day.” The suffixed third masculine plural pronoun may have been accidentally omitted from the infinitive בְּאֲמֹר (*be’emor*, “when [they] say”). Note the term בְּאֲמֹרָם (*be’omram*, “when they say”) in v. 10.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “These things I will remember and I will pour out upon myself my soul.” “These things” are identified in the second half of the verse as those times when the psalmist worshiped in the Lord’s temple. The two cohortative forms indicate the psalmist’s resolve to remember and weep. The expression “pour out upon myself my soul” refers to mourning (see Job 30:16).

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “for I was passing by with the throng [?], I was walking with [?] them to the house of God; with a voice of a ringing shout and thanksgiving a multitude was observing a festival.” The Hebrew phrase בִּתְרוֹם בָּיָךְ (*bassakh’eddaddem*, “with the throng [?] I was walking with [?]”) is particularly problematic. The noun תְּרוֹם (*sakh*) occurs only here. If it corresponds to הַמִּזְרָן (*hamon*, “multitude”) then one can propose a meaning “throng.” The present translation assumes this reading (cf. NIV, NRSV). The form אֶדְדָּם (“I will walk with [?]”) is also very problematic. The form can be taken as a Hitpael from דָּדָה (*dadah*; this verb possibly appears in Isa 38:15), but the pronominal suffix is problematic. For this reason many emend the form to אֶדְדָּם (“nobles”) or אֶדְדָּם (“great,” with enclitic *mem* [ם]). The present translation understands the latter and takes the adjective “great” as modifying “throng.” If one emends תְּרוֹם (*sakh*, “throng [?]”) to סוֹךְ (*sokh*, “shelter”; see the *Qere* of Ps 27:5), then אֶדְדָּם (“*addir*”) could be taken as a divine epithet, “[in] the shelter of [the] majestic one,” a reading which may find support in the LXX and Syriac Peshitta.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “Why do you bow down?”

⁹ **sn** For poetic effect the psalmist addresses his *soul*, or inner self.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “and [why] are you in turmoil upon me?” The prefixed verbal form with *vav* (ו) consecutive here carries on the descriptive present nuance of the preceding imperfect. See GKC 329 §111.t.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “for again I will give him thanks, the saving acts of his face.” The verse division in the Hebrew text is incorrect. The phrase אֱלֹהַי (*elohay*, “my God”) at the beginning of v. 7 belongs with the end of v. 6 (see the corresponding refrains in 42:11 and 43:5, both of which end with “my God” after “saving acts of my face”). The Hebrew term פָּנָיו (*panayv*, “his face”) should

42:6 I am depressed,¹²

so I will pray to you while I am trapped
here in the region of the upper Jordan,¹³
from Hermon,¹⁴ from Mount Mizar.¹⁵

42:7 One deep stream calls out to another¹⁶
at the sound of your waterfalls,¹⁷
all your billows and waves overwhelm
me.¹⁸

42:8 By day the LORD decrees his loyal
love,¹⁹

and by night he gives me a song,²⁰
a prayer²¹ to the living God.

42:9 I will pray²² to God, my high ridge:²³
“Why do you ignore²⁴ me?”

Why must I walk around mourning²⁵
because my enemies oppress me?”

42:10 My enemies’ taunts cut into me to
the bone,²⁶

be emended to פָּנָיו (*p’neyv*, “face of”). The emended text reads, “[for] the saving acts of the face of my God,” that is, the saving acts associated with God’s presence/intervention.

¹² **tn** *Heb* “my God, upon me my soul bows down.” As noted earlier, “my God” belongs with the end of v. 6.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “therefore I will remember you from the land of Jordan.” “Remember” is here used metonymically for prayer (see vv. 8-9). As the next line indicates, the region of the upper Jordan, where the river originates, is in view.

¹⁴ **tc** *Heb* “Hermons.” The plural form of the name occurs only here in the OT. Some suggest the plural refers to multiple mountain peaks (cf. NASB) or simply retain the plural in the translation (cf. NEB), but the final *mem* (ם) is probably ditto-graphic (note that the next form in the text begins with the letter *mem*) or enclitic. At a later time it was misinterpreted as a plural marker and vocalized accordingly.

¹⁵ **tn** The Hebrew term מִצְרָר (*mits’ar*) is probably a proper name (“Mizar”), designating a particular mountain in the Hermon region. The name appears only here in the OT.

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “deep calls to deep.” The Hebrew noun תְּרוֹם (*t’hom*) often refers to the deep sea, but here, where it is associated with Hermon, it probably refers to mountain streams. The word can be used of streams and rivers (see Deut 8:7; Ezek 31:4).

¹⁷ **tn** The noun טִינּוֹר (*tsinnor*, “waterfall”) occurs only here and in 2 Sam 5:8, where it apparently refers to a water shaft. The psalmist alludes to the loud rushing sound of mountain streams and cascading waterfalls. Using the poetic device of personification, he imagines the streams calling out to each other as they hear the sound of the waterfalls.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “pass over me” (see Jonah 2:3). As he hears the sound of the rushing water, the psalmist imagines himself engulfed in the current. By implication he likens his emotional distress to such an experience.

¹⁹ **sn** The psalmist believes that the Lord has not abandoned him, but continues to extend *his loyal love*. To this point in the psalm, the author has used the name “God,” but now, as he mentions the divine characteristic of loyal love, he switches to the more personal divine name Yahweh (rendered in the translation as “the LORD”).

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* “his song [is] with me.”

²¹ **tc** A few medieval Hebrew MSS read תְּהִלָּה (*t’hillah*, “praise”) instead of תְּפִלָּה (*t’fillah*, “prayer”).

²² **tn** The cohortative form indicates the psalmist’s resolve.

²³ **tn** This metaphor pictures God as a rocky, relatively inaccessible summit, where one would be able to find protection from enemies. See 1 Sam 23:25, 28; Pss 18:2; 31:3.

²⁴ **tn** Or “forget.”

²⁵ **sn** Walk around mourning. See Ps 38:6 for a similar idea.

²⁶ **tc** *Heb* “with a shattering in my bones my enemies taunt me.” A few medieval Hebrew MSS and Symmachus’ Greek version read “like” instead of “with.”

as they say to me all day long, “Where is your God?”¹

42:11 Why are you depressed,² O my soul?³

Why are you upset?⁴

Wait for God!

For I will again give thanks

to my God for his saving intervention.⁵

Psalm 43⁶

43:1 Vindicate me, O God!

Fight for me⁷ against an ungodly nation!

Deliver me⁸ from deceitful and evil men!⁹

43:2 For you are the God who shelters me.¹⁰

Why do you reject me?¹¹

Why must I walk around¹² mourning¹³ because my enemies oppress me?

43:3 Reveal¹⁴ your light¹⁵ and your faithfulness!

They will lead me,¹⁶

they will escort¹⁷ me back to your holy hill,¹⁸

and to the place where you live.¹⁹

¹ **sn** “Where is your God?” The enemies ask this same question in v. 3.

² **tn** *Heb* “Why do you bow down?”

³ **sn** For poetic effect the psalmist addresses his *soul*, or inner self.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “and why are you in turmoil upon me?”

⁵ **tc** *Heb* “for again I will give him thanks, the saving acts of my face and my God.” The last line should be emended to read יִשְׁעוּת פְּנֵי אֱלֹהֵי (yish’*shu*’ot f’ney’*elohay*), “[for] the saving acts of the face of my God”), that is, the saving acts associated with God’s presence/intervention. This refrain is almost identical to the one in v. 5. See also Ps 43:5.

⁶ **sn** *Psalm 43*. Many medieval Hebrew mss combine Psalm 43 and Psalm 42 into one psalm. Psalm 43 is the only psalm in Book 2 of the Psalter (Psalms 42-72) that does not have a heading, suggesting that it was originally the third and concluding section of Psalm 42. Ps 43:5 is identical to the refrain in Ps 42:11 and almost identical to the refrain in Ps 42:5.

⁷ **tn** Or “argue my case.”

⁸ **tn** The imperfect here expresses a request or wish. Note the imperatives in the first half of the verse. See also v. 3.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “from the deceitful and evil man.” The Hebrew text uses the singular form “man” in a collective sense, as the reference to a “nation” in the parallel line indicates.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “God of my place of refuge,” that is, “God who is my place of refuge.” See Ps 31:4.

¹¹ **tn** The question is similar to that of Ps 42:9, but זָרַק (*zanakh*, “reject”) is a stronger verb than שָׁחַח (*shakhakh*, “forget”).

¹² **tn** The language is similar to that of Ps 42:9, but the Hitpael form of the verb הָלַךְ (*halakh*; as opposed to the Qal form in 42:9) expresses more forcefully the continuing nature of the psalmist’s distress.

¹³ **sn** *Walk around mourning*. See Ps 38:6 for a similar statement.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “send.”

¹⁵ **sn** God’s deliverance is compared here to a *light* which will lead the psalmist back home to the Lord’s temple. Divine deliverance will in turn demonstrate the Lord’s *faithfulness* to his people.

¹⁶ **tn** Or “may they lead me.” The prefixed verbal forms here and in the next line may be taken as jussives.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “bring.”

¹⁸ **sn** In this context the Lord’s *holy hill* is Zion/Jerusalem. See Isa 66:20; Joel 2:1; 3:17; Zech 8:3; Pss 2:6; 15:1; 48:1; 87:1; Dan 9:16.

¹⁹ **tn** Or “to your dwelling place[s].” The plural form of the

43:4 Then I will go²⁰ to the altar of God, to the God who gives me ecstatic joy,²¹ so that I express my thanks to you,²² O God, my God, with a harp.

43:5 Why are you depressed,²³ O my soul?²⁴

Why are you upset?²⁵

Wait for God!

For I will again give thanks

to my God for his saving intervention.²⁶

Psalm 44²⁷

For the music director; by the Korahites, a well-written song.²⁸

44:1 O God, we have clearly heard,²⁹ our ancestors³⁰ have told us what you did³¹ in their days, in ancient times.³²

noun may indicate degree or quality; this is the Lord’s special dwelling place (see Pss 46:4; 84:1; 132:5, 7).

²⁰ **tn** The cohortative expresses the psalmist’s resolve. Prefixed with the *vav* (ו) conjunctive it also expresses the result or outcome of the preceding verbs “lead” and “escort.”

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “to God, the joy of my happiness.” The phrase “joy of my happiness” employs an appositional genitive. Synonyms are joined in a construct relationship to emphasize the degree of the psalmist’s joy. For a detailed discussion of the grammatical point with numerous examples, see Y. Avishur, “Pairs of Synonymous Words in the Construct State (and in Appositional Hendiadys) in Biblical Hebrew,” *Semitics* 2 (1971): 17-81.

²² **tn** The cohortative with *vav* (ו) conjunctive probably indicates purpose (“so that”) or intention.

²³ **tn** *Heb* “Why do you bow down?”

²⁴ **sn** For poetic effect the psalmist addresses his *soul*, or inner self.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “and why are you in turmoil upon me?”

²⁶ **tc** *Heb* “for again I will give him thanks, the saving acts of my face and my God.” The last line should be emended to read יִשְׁעוּת פְּנֵי אֱלֹהֵי (yish’*shu*’ot f’ney’*elohay*), “[for] the saving acts of the face of my God,” that is, the saving acts associated with God’s presence/intervention. This refrain is identical to the one in Ps 42:11. See also 42:5, which differs only slightly.

²⁷ **sn** *Psalm 44*. The speakers in this psalm (the worshiping community within the nation Israel) were disappointed with God. The psalm begins on a positive note, praising God for leading Israel to past military victories. Verses 1-8 appear to be a song of confidence and petition which the people recited prior to battle. But suddenly the mood changes as the nation laments a recent defeat. The stark contrast between the present and the past only heightens the nation’s confusion. Israel trusted in God for victory, but the Lord rejected them and allowed them to be humiliated in battle. If Israel had been unfaithful to God, their defeat would make sense, but the nation was loyal to the Lord. Comparing the Lord to a careless shepherd, the nation urges God to wake up and to extend his compassion to his suffering people.

²⁸ **tn** The meaning of the Hebrew term מַשְׁכִּיל (*maskil*) is uncertain. See the note on the phrase “well-written song” in the superscription of Ps 42.

²⁹ **tn** *Heb* “with our ears we have heard.”

³⁰ **tn** *Heb* “fathers” (also in v. 2; the same Hebrew word may be translated either “fathers” or “ancestors” depending on the context).

³¹ **tn** *Heb* “the work you worked.”

³² **tn** *Heb* “in the days of old.” This refers specifically to the days of Joshua, during Israel’s conquest of the land, as vv. 2-3 indicate.

44:2 You, by your power,¹ defeated nations
and settled our fathers on their land;²
you crushed³ the people living there⁴
and enabled our ancestors to occupy it.⁵
44:3 For they did not conquer⁶ the land
by their swords,
and they did not prevail by their
strength,⁷
but rather by your power,⁸ strength⁹ and
good favor,¹⁰
for you were partial to¹¹ them.
44:4 You are my¹² king, O God!
Decree¹³ Jacob's¹⁴ deliverance!
44:5 By your power¹⁵ we will drive back¹⁶
our enemies;

¹ tn Heb “you, your hand.”

² tn Heb “dispossessed nations and planted them.” The third masculine plural pronoun “them” refers to the fathers (v. 1). See Ps 80:8, 15.

³ tn The verb form in the Hebrew text is a Hiphil preterite (without vav [ו] consecutive) from רָעַע (*ra'a*, “be evil; be bad”). If retained it apparently means, “you injured; harmed.” Some prefer to derive the verb from רָעַע (“break”; cf. NEB “breaking up the peoples”), in which case the form must be revocalized as Qal (since this verb is unattested in the Hiphil).

⁴ tn Or “peoples.”

⁵ tn Heb “and you sent them out.” The translation assumes that the third masculine plural pronoun “them” refers to the fathers (v. 1), as in the preceding parallel line. See Ps 80:11, where Israel, likened to a vine, “spreads out” its tendrils to the west and east. Another option is to take the “peoples” as the referent of the pronoun and translate, “and you sent them away,” though this does not provide as tight a parallel with the corresponding line.

⁶ tn Or “take possession of.”

⁷ tn Heb “and their arm did not save them.” The “arm” here symbolizes military strength.

⁸ tn Heb “your right hand.” The LORD’s “right hand” here symbolizes his power to protect and deliver (see Pss 17:7; 20:6; 21:8).

⁹ tn Heb “your arm.”

¹⁰ tn Heb “light of your face.” The idiom “light of your face” probably refers to a smile (see Eccl 8:1), which in turn suggests favor and blessing (see Num 6:25; Pss 4:6; 31:16; 67:1; 80:3, 7, 19; 89:15; Dan 9:17).

¹¹ tn Or “favorable toward.”

¹² sn The speaker changes here to an individual, perhaps the worship leader or the king. The oscillation between singular (vv. 4, 6) and plural (vv. 1-3, 5, 7-8) in vv. 1-8 may reflect an antiphonal ceremony.

¹³ tc The LXX assumes a participle here (מְצַוֶּה [m^ctsavveh], “the one who commands/decrees”) which would stand in apposition to “my God.” It is possible that the MT, which has the imperative (צַוֶּה, *tsavveh*) form, has suffered haplography of the letter mem (מ). Note that the preceding word אֱלֹהִים (*elohim*) ends in mem. Another option is that the MT is divided in the wrong place; perhaps one could move the final mem from אֱלֹהִים to the beginning of the next word and read אֱלֹהֵי בְצִוְךָ (*elohay m^ctsavveh*, “[You are my king,] my God, the one who decrees”).

tn Or “command.” This may be the Israelites’ petition prior to the battle. See the introductory note to the psalm.

¹⁴ tn That is, Israel. See Pss 14:7; 22:23.

¹⁵ tn Heb “by you.”

¹⁶ tn Heb “gore” (like an ox). If this portion of the psalm contains the song of confidence/petition the Israelites recited prior to battle, then the imperfections here and in the next line may express their expectation of victory. Another option is that the imperfections function in an emphatic generalizing manner. In this case one might translate, “you [always] drive back...you [always] trample down.”

sn The Hebrew verb translated “drive back” is literally “gore”; the imagery is that of a powerful wild ox that “gores” its enemies and tramples them underfoot.

by your strength¹⁷ we will trample down¹⁸
our foes!¹⁹

44:6 For I do not trust in my bow,
and I do not prevail by my sword.

44:7 For you deliver²⁰ us from our en-
emies;

you humiliate²¹ those who hate us.

44:8 In God I boast all day long,
and we will continually give thanks to
your name. (Selah)

44:9 But²² you rejected and embarrassed
us!

You did not go into battle with our
armies.²³

44:10 You made us retreat²⁴ from the en-
emy.

Those who hate us take whatever they
want from us.²⁵

44:11 You handed us²⁶ over like sheep to
be eaten;

you scattered us among the nations.

44:12 You sold²⁷ your people for a pit-
tance,²⁸

you did not ask a high price for them.²⁹

44:13 You made us³⁰ an object of disdain
to our neighbors;

those who live on our borders taunt and
insult us.³¹

44:14 You made us³² an object of ridicule³³
among the nations;

¹⁷ tn Heb “in your name.” The LORD’s “name” refers here to his revealed character or personal presence. Specifically in this context his ability to deliver, protect, and energize for battle is in view (see Ps 54:1).

¹⁸ sn The image of the powerful wild ox continues; see the note on the phrase “drive back” in the preceding line.

¹⁹ tn Heb “those who rise up [against] us.”

²⁰ tn Or “have delivered,” if past successes are in view. Another option is to take the perfect as rhetorical, emphasizing that victory is certain (note the use of the imperfect in vv. 5-6).

²¹ tn Or “have humiliated,” if past successes are in view. Another option is to take the perfect as rhetorical, emphasizing that victory is certain (note the use of the imperfect in vv. 5-6).

²² tn The particle אַף (*af*, “but”) is used here as a strong adversative contrasting the following statement with what precedes.

²³ tn Heb “you did not go out with our armies.” The prefixed verbal form is a preterite (without vav [ו] consecutive).

²⁴ tn Heb “you caused us to turn backward.”

²⁵ tn Heb “plunder for themselves.” The prepositional phrase לָבֵי (*lamo*, “for themselves”) here has the nuance “at their will” or “as they please” (see Ps 80:6).

²⁶ tn The prefixed verbal form is a preterite (without vav [ו] consecutive).

²⁷ tn The prefixed verbal form is a preterite (without vav [ו] consecutive).

²⁸ tn Heb “for what is not wealth.”

²⁹ tn Heb “you did not multiply their purchase prices.”

³⁰ tn The prefixed verbal form is a preterite (without vav [ו] consecutive).

³¹ tn Heb “an [object of] taunting and [of] mockery to those around us.”

³² tn The prefixed verbal form is a preterite (without vav [ו] consecutive).

³³ tn Heb “a proverb,” or “[the subject of] a mocking song.”

foreigners treat us with contempt.¹

44:15 All day long I feel humiliated²
and am overwhelmed with shame,³

44:16 before the vindictive enemy
who ridicules and insults me.⁴

44:17 All this has happened to us, even
though we have not rejected you⁵

or violated your covenant with us.⁶

44:18 We have not been unfaithful,⁷
nor have we disobeyed your commands.⁸

44:19 Yet you have battered us, leaving us
a heap of ruins overrun by wild dogs,⁹

you have covered us with darkness.¹⁰

44:20 If we had rejected our God,¹¹
and spread out our hands in prayer to another
god,¹²

44:21 would not God discover it,
for he knows¹³ one's thoughts?¹⁴

44:22 Yet because of you¹⁵ we are killed all
day long;
we are treated like¹⁶ sheep at the slaugh-
tering block.¹⁷

44:23 Rouse yourself! Why do you sleep,
O Lord?

Wake up!¹⁸ Do not reject us forever!

44:24 Why do you look the other way,¹⁹
and ignore²⁰ the way we are oppressed and
mistreated?²¹

44:25 For we lie in the dirt,
with our bellies pressed to the ground.²²

44:26 Rise up and help us!
Rescue us²³ because of your loyal love!

*Psalm 45*²⁴

For the music director; according to the tune of
"Lilies,"²⁵ by the Korahites, a well-written
poem,²⁶ a love song.

45:1 My heart is stirred by a beautiful
song.²⁷

I say, "I have composed this special song²⁸
for the king;

¹ **tn** *Heb* "a shaking of the head among the peoples." Shaking the head was a derisive gesture (see Jer 18:16; Lam 2:15).

² **tn** *Heb* "all the day my humiliation [is] in front of me."

³ **tn** *Heb* "and the shame of my face covers me."

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "from the voice of one who ridicules and insults, from the face of an enemy and an avenger." See Ps 8:2.

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "we have not forgotten you." To "forget" God refers here to worshiping false gods and thereby refusing to recognize his sovereignty (see v. 20, as well as Deut 8:19; Judg 3:7; 1 Sam 12:9; Isa 17:10; Jer 3:21; Ps 9:17). Thus the translation "we have not rejected you" has been used.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "and we did not deal falsely with your covenant."

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "our heart did not turn backward." Cf. Ps 78:57.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "and our steps did [not] turn aside from your path." The negative particle is understood by ellipsis (see the preceding line). God's "path" refers to his commands, i.e., the moral pathway he has prescribed for the psalmist. See Pss 17:5; 25:4.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "yet you have battered us in a place of jackals."

¹⁰ **tn** The Hebrew term צְלִמּוֹת (*tsalmavet*) has traditionally been understood as a compound noun meaning "shadow of death" (צֶלַם מוֹת [mavet + tsel]; see BDB 853 s.v. צְלִמּוֹת; cf. NASB). Other scholars prefer to vocalize the form צְלִמּוֹת (*tsalmut*) and understand it as an abstract noun (from the root צִלַּם meaning "darkness" (cf. NIV, NRSV). An examination of the word's usage favors the latter derivation. It is frequently associated with darkness/night and contrasted with light/morning (see Job 3:5; 10:21-22; 12:22; 24:17; 28:3; 34:22; Ps 107:10, 14; Isa 9:1; Jer 13:16; Amos 5:8). In some cases the darkness described is associated with the realm of death (Job 10:21-22; 38:17), but this is a metaphorical application of the word and does not reflect its inherent meaning. In Ps 44:19 darkness symbolizes defeat and humiliation.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "if we had forgotten the name of our God." To "forget the name" here refers to rejecting the LORD's authority (see Jer 23:27) and abandoning him as an object of prayer and worship (see the next line).

¹² **tn** *Heb* "and spread out your hands to another god." Spreading out the hands was a prayer gesture (see Exod 9:29, 33; 1 Kgs 8:22, 38; 2 Chr 6:12-13, 29; Ezra 9:15; Job 11:13; Isa 1:15). In its most fundamental sense אַחֵר ("another; foreign; strange") refers to something that is outside one's circle, often making association with it inappropriate. A "strange" god is an alien deity, an "outside god" (see L. A. Snijders, *TDOT* 4:54-55).

¹³ **tn** The active participle describes what is characteristically true.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "would not God search out this, for he knows the hidden things of [the] heart?" The expression "search out" is used metonymically here, referring to discovery, the intended effect of a search. The "heart" (i.e., mind) is here viewed as the seat of one's thoughts. The rhetorical question expects the answer, "Of course he would!" The point seems to be this:

There is no way the Israelites who are the speakers in the psalm would reject God and turn to another god, for the omniscient God would easily discover such a sin.

¹⁵ **tn** The statement "because of you" (1) may simply indicate that God is the cause of the Israelites' defeat (see vv. 9-14, where the nation's situation is attributed directly to God's activity, and cf. NEB, NRSV), or (2) it may suggest they suffer because of their allegiance to God (see Ps 69:7 and Jer 15:15). In this case one should translate, "for your sake" (cf. NASB, NIV). The citation of this verse in Rom 8:36 follows the LXX (Ps 43:23 LXX), where the Greek term ἕνεκεν (*heneken*; LXX ἕνεκα) may likewise mean "because of" or "for the sake of" (BDAG 334 s.v. ἕνεκα 1).

¹⁶ **tn** Or "regarded as."

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "like sheep of slaughtering," that is, sheep destined for slaughter.

¹⁸ **sn** *Wake up!* See Ps 35:23.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "Why do you hide your face?" The idiom "hide the face" can mean "ignore" (see Pss 10:11; 13:1; 51:9) or carry the stronger idea of "reject" (see Pss 30:7; 88:14).

²⁰ **tn** Or "forget."

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "our oppression and our affliction."

²² **tn** *Heb* "for our being/life sinks down to the dirt, our belly clings to the earth." The suffixed form of נֶפֶשׁ (*nefesh*, "being, life") is often equivalent to a pronoun in poetic texts.

²³ **tn** Or "redeem us." See Pss 25:22; 26:11; 69:18; 119:134.

²⁴ **sn** *Psalm 45*. This is a romantic poem celebrating the Davidic king's marriage to a lovely princess. The psalmist praises the king for his military prowess and commitment to justice, urges the bride to be loyal to the king, and anticipates that the marriage will be blessed with royal offspring.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "according to lilies." "Lilies" may be a tune title or musical style, suggestive of romantic love. The imagery of a "lily" appears frequently in the Song of Solomon in a variety of contexts (see 2:1-2, 16; 4:5; 5:13; 6:2-3; 7:2).

²⁶ **tn** The meaning of the Hebrew term מַשְׂכִּיל (*maskil*) is uncertain. See the note on the phrase "well-written song" in the superscription of Ps 42.

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* "[with] a good word." The "good word" probably refers here to the song that follows.

²⁸ **tn** *Heb* "my works [are] for a king." The plural "works" may here indicate degree, referring to the special musical composition that follows.

my tongue is as skilled as the stylus of an experienced scribe.¹¹

45:2 You are the most handsome of all men!²

You speak in an impressive and fitting manner!³

For this reason⁴ God grants you continual blessings.⁵

45:3 Strap your sword to your thigh, O warrior!⁶

Appear in your majestic splendor!⁷

45:4 Appear in your majesty and be victorious!⁸

Ride forth for the sake of what is right,⁹ on behalf of justice!¹⁰

Then your right hand will accomplish mighty acts!¹¹

45:5 Your arrows are sharp and penetrate the hearts of the king's enemies.

Nations fall at your feet.¹²

45:6 Your throne,¹³ O God, is permanent.¹⁴ The scepter¹⁵ of your kingdom is a scepter of justice.

45:7 You love¹⁶ justice and hate evil.¹⁷ For this reason God, your God¹⁸ has anointed you¹⁹

with the oil of joy,²⁰ elevating you above your companions.²¹

45:8 All your garments are perfumed with²² myrrh, aloes, and cassia.

¹ **tn** *Heb* "my tongue [is] a stylus of a skillful scribe." Words flow from the psalmist's tongue just as they do from a scribe's stylus.

² **tn** *Heb* "you are handsome from the sons of man." The preposition "from" is used in a comparative ("more than") sense. The peculiar verb form *יְפִיפִיתָ* (*yafyafita*) is probably the result of dittography of *yod-pe* (יפ) and should be emended to *יפִיתָ* (*yafita*). See GKC 152 §55.e.

³ **tn** *Heb* "favor is poured out on your lips." "Lips" probably stands by metonymy for the king's speech. Some interpret the Hebrew term *קֶהֶן* (*khen*) as referring here to "gracious (i.e., kind and polite) speech", but the word probably refers more generally to "attractive" speech that is impressively articulated and fitting for the occasion. For other instances of the term being used of speech, see Prov 22:11 and Eccl 10:12.

⁴ **tn** Or "this demonstrates." The construction *עַל־כֵּן* (*al-ken*, "therefore") usually indicates what logically follows from a preceding statement. However, here it may infer the cause from the effect, indicating the underlying basis or reason for what precedes (see BDB 487 s.v. *כֵּן* 3.f; C. A. Briggs and E. G. Briggs, *Psalms* [ICC], 1:386).

⁵ **tn** Or "blesses you forever." Here "bless" means to "endue with the power and skill to rule effectively," as the following verses indicate.

⁶ **tn** Or "mighty one."

⁷ **tn** The Hebrew text has simply, "your majesty and your splendor," which probably refers to the king's majestic splendor when he appears in full royal battle regalia.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "and your majesty, be successful." The syntax is awkward. The phrase "and your majesty" at the beginning of the verse may be accidentally repeated (dittography); it appears at the end of v. 3.

⁹ **tn** Or "for the sake of truth."

¹⁰ **tc** The precise meaning of the MT is uncertain. The form *אָנָּוָה* (*anvah*) occurs only here. One could emend the text to *אָנָּוָה וְצֶדֶק* (*anavah v'sedeq*, "[for the sake of truth], humility, and justice"). In this case "humility" would perhaps allude to the king's responsibility to "serve" his people by promoting justice (cf. NIV "in behalf of truth, humility and righteousness"). The present translation assumes an emendation to *וַיָּנִן* (*ya'an*, "because; on account of") which would form a suitable parallel to *עַל־דְּבַר* (*al-d'var*, "because; for the sake of") in the preceding line.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "and your right hand will teach you mighty acts"; or "and may your right hand teach you mighty acts." After the imperatives in the first half of the verse, the prefixed verbal form with *vav* (ו) conjunctive likely indicates purpose ("so that your right hand might teach you mighty acts") or result (see the present translation). The "right hand" here symbolizes the king's military strength. His right hand will "teach" him mighty acts by performing them and thereby causing him to experience their magnificence.

¹² **tn** *Heb* "your arrows are sharp - peoples beneath you fall - in the heart of the enemies of the king." The choppy style reflects the poet's excitement.

¹³ **sn** The king's *throne* here symbolizes his rule.

¹⁴ **tn** Or "forever and ever."

¹⁵ **sn** O God. The king is clearly the addressee here, as in vv. 2-5 and 7-9. Rather than taking the statement at face value, many prefer to emend the text because the concept of deifying the earthly king is foreign to ancient Israelite thinking (cf. NEB "your throne is like God's throne, eternal"). However, it is preferable to retain the text and take this statement as another instance of the royal hyperbole that permeates the royal psalms. Because the Davidic king is God's vice-regent on earth, the psalmist addresses him as if he were God incarnate. God energizes the king for battle and accomplishes justice through him. A similar use of hyperbole appears in Isa 9:6, where the ideal Davidic king of the eschaton is given the title "Mighty God" (see the note on this phrase there). Ancient Near Eastern art and literature picture gods training kings for battle, bestowing special weapons, and intervening in battle. According to Egyptian propaganda, the Hittites described Ramesses II as follows: "No man is he who is among us, it is Seth great-of-strength, Baal in person; Not deeds of man are these his doings, They are of one who is unique" (see Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 2:67). Ps 45:6 and Isa 9:6 probably envision a similar kind of response when friends and foes alike look at the Davidic king in full battle regalia. When the king's enemies oppose him on the battlefield, they are, as it were, fighting against God himself.

¹⁵ **sn** The king's *scepter* symbolizes his royal authority.

¹⁶ **sn** To *love justice* means to actively promote it.

¹⁷ **sn** To *hate evil* means to actively oppose it.

¹⁸ **tn** For other examples of the repetition of Elohim, "God," see Pss 43:4; 48:8, 14; 50:7; 51:14; 67:7. Because the name Yahweh ("LORD") is relatively rare in Pss 42-83, where the name Elohim ("God") predominates, this compounding of Elohim may be an alternative form of the compound name "the LORD my/your/our God."

¹⁹ **sn** *Anointed you*. When read in the light of the preceding context, the anointing is most naturally taken as referring to the king's coronation. However, the following context (vv. 8-9) focuses on the wedding ceremony, so some prefer to see this anointing as part of the king's preparations for the wedding celebration. Perhaps the reference to his anointing at his coronation facilitates the transition to the description of the wedding, for the king was also anointed on this occasion.

²⁰ **sn** The phrase *oil of joy* alludes to the fact that the coronation of the king, which was ritually accomplished by anointing his head with olive oil, was a time of great celebration and renewed hope. (If one understands the anointing in conjunction with the wedding ceremony, the "joy" would be that associated with the marriage.) The phrase "oil of joy" also appears in Isa 61:3, where mourners are granted "oil of joy" in conjunction with their deliverance from oppression.

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "from your companions." The "companions" are most naturally understood as others in the royal family or, more generally, as the king's countrymen.

²² **sn** Verses 6-7 are quoted in Heb 1:8-9, where they are applied to Jesus.

²² **tn** The words "perfumed with" are supplied in the translation for clarification.

From the luxurious palaces¹ comes the music of stringed instruments that makes you happy.²

45:9 Princesses³ are among your honored guests,⁴ your bride⁵ stands at your right hand, wearing jewelry made with gold from Ophir.⁶

45:10 Listen, O princess!⁷ Observe and pay attention!⁸ Forget your homeland⁹ and your family!¹⁰

45:11 Then¹¹ the king will be attracted by¹² your beauty. After all, he is your master! Submit¹³ to him!¹⁴

45:12 Rich people from Tyre¹⁵ will seek your favor by bringing a gift.¹⁶

45:13 The princess¹⁷ looks absolutely magnificent,¹⁸ decked out in pearls and clothed in a brocade trimmed with gold.¹⁹

45:14 In embroidered robes she is escorted to the king. Her attendants, the maidens of honor who follow her, are led before you.²⁰

45:15 They are bubbling with joy as they walk in procession and enter the royal palace.²¹

45:16 Your²² sons will carry²³ on the dynasty of your ancestors,²⁴ you will make them princes throughout the land.

45:17 I will proclaim your greatness through the coming years,²⁵ then the nations will praise you²⁶ forever.

¹ **tn** *Heb* “the palaces of ivory.” The phrase “palaces of ivory” refers to palaces that had ivory panels and furniture decorated with ivory inlays. Such decoration with ivory was characteristic of a high level of luxury. See 1 Kgs 22:39 and Amos 3:15.

² **tn** *Heb* “from the palaces of ivory stringed instrument[s] make you happy.”

³ **tn** *Heb* “daughters of kings.”

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “valuable ones.” The form is feminine plural.

⁵ **tn** This rare Hebrew noun apparently refers to the king’s bride, who will soon be queen (see Neh 2:6). The Aramaic cognate is used of royal wives in Dan 5:2-3, 23.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “a consort stands at your right hand, gold of Ophir.”

sn *Gold from Ophir* is also mentioned in Isa 13:12 and Job 28:16. The precise location of Ophir is uncertain; Arabia, India, East Africa, and South Africa have all been suggested as options.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “daughter.” The Hebrew noun בַּת (“daughter”) can sometimes refer to a young woman in a general sense (see H. Haag, *TDOT* 2:334).

⁸ **tn** *Listen, O princess.* The poet now addresses the bride.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “see and turn your ear.” The verb רָאָה (*ra’ah*, “see”) is used here of mental observation.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “your people.” This reference to the “people” of the princess suggests she was a foreigner. Perhaps the marriage was arranged as part of a political alliance between Israel (or Judah) and a neighboring state. The translation “your homeland” reflects such a situation.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “and the house of your father.”

¹² **tn** After the preceding imperatives, the jussive verbal form with *vav* (ו) conjunctive is best understood as introducing a purpose (“so that the king might desire your beauty”) or result clause (see the present translation and cf. also NASB). The point seems to be this: The bride might tend to be homesick, which in turn might cause her to mourn and diminish her attractiveness. She needs to overcome this temptation to unhappiness and enter into the marriage with joy. Then the king will be drawn to her natural beauty.

¹³ **tn** Or “desire.”

¹⁴ **tn** Or “bow down.”

¹⁵ **sn** *Submit to him.* The poet here makes the point that the young bride is obligated to bring pleasure to her new husband. Though a foreign concept to modern western culture, this was accepted as the cultural norm in the psalmist’s day.

¹⁶ **map** For location see Map1-A2; Map2-G2; Map4-A1; JP3-F3; JP4-F3.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “and a daughter of Tyre with a gift, your face they will appease, the rich of people.” The phrase “daughter of Tyre” occurs only here in the OT. It could be understood as addressed to the bride, indicating she was a Phoenician (cf. NEB). However, often in the OT the word “daughter,” when collocated with the name of a city or country, is used to personify the referent (see, for example, “Daughter Zion” in Ps 9:14,

and “Daughter Babylon” in Ps 137:8). If that is the case here, then “Daughter Tyre” identifies the city-state of Tyre as the place from which the rich people come (cf. NRSV). The idiom “appease the face” refers to seeking one’s favor (see Exod 32:11; 1 Sam 13:12; 1 Kgs 13:6; 2 Kgs 13:4; 2 Chr 33:12; Job 11:19; Ps 119:58; Prov 19:6; Jer 26:19; Dan 9:13; Zech 7:2; 8:21-22; Mal 1:9).

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “[the] daughter of a king.”

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “[is] completely glorious.”

²⁰ **tc** *Heb* “within, from settings of gold, her clothing.” The Hebrew term פְּנִימָה (*p̄nimah*, “within”), if retained, would go with the preceding line and perhaps refer to the bride being “within” the palace or her bridal chamber (cf. NIV, NRSV). Since the next two lines refer to her attire (see also v. 9b), it is preferable to emend the form to פְּנִינִיהָ (“her pearls”) or to פְּנִינִים (“pearls”). The *mem* (מ) prefixed to “settings” is probably dittographic.

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “virgins after her, her companions, are led to you.” Some emend לָךְ (*lakh*, “to you”) to לָהּ (*lah*, “to her,” i.e., the princess), because the princess is now being spoken of in the third person (vv. 13-14a), rather than being addressed directly (as in vv. 10-12). However, the ambiguous suffixed form לָךְ need not be taken as second feminine singular. The suffix can be understood as a pausal second masculine singular form, addressed to the king. The translation assumes this to be the case; note that the king is addressed once more in vv. 16-17, where the second person pronouns are masculine.

²² **tn** *Heb* “they are led with joy and happiness, they enter the house of the king.”

²³ **tn** The pronoun is second masculine singular, indicating the king is being addressed from this point to the end of the psalm.

²⁴ **tn** The prefixed verbal form could be taken as jussive and the statement interpreted as a prayer, “May your sons carry on the dynasty of your ancestors!” The next line could then be taken as a relative clause, “[your sons] whom you will make princes throughout the land.”

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “in place of your fathers will be your sons.”

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* “I will cause your name to be remembered in every generation and generation.” The cohortative verbal form expresses the poet’s resolve. The king’s “name” stands here for his reputation and character, which the poet praised in vv. 2-7.

²⁶ **sn** *The nations will praise you.* As God’s vice-regent on earth, the king is deserving of such honor and praise.

Psalm 46¹

For the music director; by the Korahites; according to the *alamoth* style;² a song.

46:1 God is our strong refuge;³ he is truly our helper in times of trouble.⁴

46:2 For this reason we do not fear⁵ when the earth shakes,⁶ and the mountains tumble into the depths of the sea,⁷

46:3 when its waves⁸ crash⁹ and foam, and the mountains shake¹⁰ before the surging sea.¹¹ (Shelah)

46:4 The river's channels bring joy to the city of God,¹²

¹ **sn** Psalm 46. In this so-called "Song Of Zion" God's people confidently affirm that they are secure because the great warrior-king dwells within Jerusalem and protects it from the nations that cause such chaos in the earth. A refrain (vv. 7, 11) concludes the song's two major sections.

² **sn** The meaning of the Hebrew term *עֲלֻמוֹת* (*alamoth*, which means "young women") is uncertain; perhaps it refers to a particular style of music. Cf. 1 Chr 15:20.

³ **tn** *Heb* "our refuge and strength," which is probably a hendiadys meaning "our strong refuge" (see Ps 71:7). Another option is to translate, "our refuge and source of strength."

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "a helper in times of trouble he is found [to be] greatly." The perfect verbal form has a generalizing function here. The adverb *בְּגָדוֹ* (*m'ed*, "greatly") has an emphasizing function.

⁵ **tn** The imperfect is taken in a generalizing sense (cf. NEB) because the situation described in vv. 2-3 is understood as symbolizing typical world conditions. In this case the imperfect draws attention to the typical nature of the response. The covenant community characteristically responds with confidence, not fear. Another option is to take the situation described as purely hypothetical. In this case one might translate, "We will not fear, even though the earth should shake" (cf. NIV, NRSV).

⁶ **tn** The Hiphil infinitival form is normally taken to mean "when [the earth] is altered," being derived from *נִיר* (*mur*, "to change"). In this case the Hiphil would be intransitive, as in Ps 15:4. HALOT 560 s.v. *נִיר* emends the form to a Niphal and derives it from a homonymic root *נִיר* attested in Arabic with the meaning "shake."

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "heart of the seas." The plural may be used for emphasis, pointing to the deepest sea. Note that the next verse uses a singular pronoun ("its waters," "its swelling") in referring back to the plural noun.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "its waters."

⁹ **tn** Or "roar."

¹⁰ **tn** The three imperfect verbal forms in v. 3 draw attention to the characteristic nature of the activity described.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "at its swelling." The Hebrew word often means "pride." If the sea is symbolic of hostile nations, then this may be a case of double entendre. The surging, swelling sea symbolizes the proud, hostile nations. On the surface the psalmist appears to be depicting a major natural catastrophe, perhaps a tidal wave. If so, then the situation would be hypothetical. However, the repetition of the verbs *הָמָה* (*hamah*, "crash; roar," v. 3) and *נִיר* (*mot*, "shake," v. 2) in v. 6, where nations/kingdoms "roar" and "shake," suggests that the language of vv. 2-3 is symbolic and depicts the upheaval that characterizes relationships between the nations of the earth. As some nations (symbolized by the surging, chaotic waters) show hostility, others (symbolized by the mountains) come crashing down to destruction. The surging waters are symbolic of chaotic forces in other poetic texts (see, for example, Isa 17:12; Jer 51:42) and mountains can symbolize strong kingdoms (see, for example, Jer 51:25).

¹² **tn** *Heb* "A river, its channels cause the city of God to be glad."

sn The city of God is Jerusalem (see Pss 48:1-2; 87:2-3).

the special, holy dwelling place of¹³ the sovereign One.¹⁴

46:5 God lives within it,¹⁵ it cannot be moved.¹⁶

God rescues it¹⁷ at the break of dawn.¹⁸

46:6 Nations are in uproar, kingdoms are overthrown.¹⁹

The river's "channels" are probably *irrigation ditches* vital to growing crops. Some relate the imagery to the "waters of Shiloah" (see Isa 8:6), which flowed from the Gihon spring to the pool of Siloam. In Isa 8:6-8 these waters are contrasted with the flood waters symbolizing Assyria. Even if this is the reality behind the imagery, the picture of a river flowing through Jerusalem is idealized and exaggerated. The river and irrigation ditches symbolize the peace and prosperity that the Lord provides for Jerusalem, in contrast to the havoc produced by the turbulent waters (symbolic of the nations) outside the city. Some see here an adaptation of Canaanite (or, more specifically, Jebusite) mythical traditions of rivers/springs flowing from the high god El's dwelling place. The Songs of Zion do utilize such imagery at times (see Ps 48:2). The image of a river flowing through Zion may have inspired prophetic visions of an eschatological river flowing from the temple (see Ezek 47:1-12; Joel 3:18).

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "the holy [place] of the dwelling places of." The adjective "holy" is used here in a substantival manner and placed in construct with the following noun (see GKC 428 §132.c). Origen's transliterated text assumes the reading *קֹדֶשׁ* (*qodesh*, "holiness; holy place"), while the LXX assumes a Piel verbal form *קִדְּשׁ* (*qidesh*, "makes holy") and takes the following form as "his dwelling place." The plural form *מִקְדָּשֵׁי* (*mishk'ney*, "dwelling places of") is probably a plural of degree, emphasizing the special character of this dwelling place. See GKC 397 §124.b. The form stands as an appositional genitive in relation to the preceding construct noun.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "Most High." This divine title (*עֲלִיּוֹן*, *'elyon*) pictures God as the exalted ruler of the universe who vindicates the innocent and judges the wicked. See especially Pss 7:17; 9:2; 18:13; 21:7; 47:2.

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "God [is] within her." The feminine singular pronoun refers to the city mentioned in v. 4.

¹⁶ **tn** Another option is to translate the imperfect verbal form as future, "it will not be upended." Even if one chooses this option, the future tense must be understood in a generalizing sense. The verb *נִיר* (*mot*), translated "upended" here, is used in v. 2 of the mountains "tumbling" into the seas and in v. 6 of nations being "upended." By way of contrast, Jerusalem, God's dwelling place, is secure and immune from such turmoil and destruction.

¹⁷ **tn** Or "helps her." The imperfect draws attention to the generalizing character of the statement.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "at the turning of morning." (For other uses of the expression see Exod 14:27 and Judg 19:26).

sn *At the break of dawn.* The "morning" is viewed metaphorically as a time of deliverance and vindication after the dark "night" of trouble (see Ps 30:5; Isa 17:14). There may be an allusion here to Exod 14:27 (where the Lord destroyed the Egyptians at the "break of dawn") or, more likely, to the miraculous deliverance of Jerusalem from the Assyrian siege, when the people discovered the dead bodies of the Assyrian army in the morning (Isa 37:36).

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "nations roar, kingdoms shake." The Hebrew verb *הָמָה* (*hamah*, "roar, be in uproar") is used in v. 3 of the waves crashing, while the verb *נִיר* (*mot*, "overthrown") is used in v. 2 of mountains tumbling into the sea (see also v. 5, where the psalm affirms that Jerusalem "cannot be moved"). The repetition of the verbs suggests that the language of vv. 2-3 is symbolic and depicts the upheaval that characterizes relationships between the nations of the earth. As some nations (symbolized by the surging, chaotic waters) show hostility, others (symbolized by the mountains) come crashing down to destruction. The surging waters are symbolic of chaotic forces in other poetic texts (see, for example, Isa 17:12; Jer 51:42) and mountains can symbolize strong kingdoms (see, for example, Jer 51:25).

God¹ gives a shout,² the earth dissolves.³

46:7 The LORD who commands armies is on our side!⁴

The God of Jacob⁵ is our protector!⁶
(Selah)

46:8 Come! Witness the exploits⁷ of the LORD,
who brings devastation to the earth!⁸

46:9 He brings an end to wars throughout the earth;⁹

he shatters¹⁰ the bow and breaks¹¹ the spear;

he burns¹² the shields with fire.¹³

46:10 He says,¹⁴ “Stop your striving and recognize¹⁵ that I am God!

¹ **tn** *Heb* “He.” God is the obvious referent here (see v. 5), and has been specified in the translation for clarity.

² **tn** *Heb* “offers his voice.” In theophanic texts the phrase refers to God’s thunderous shout which functions as a battle cry (see Pss 18:13; 68:33).

³ **tn** Or “melts.” See Amos 9:5. The image depicts the nation’s helplessness before Jerusalem’s defender, who annihilates their armies (see vv. 8-9). The imperfect verbal form emphasizes the characteristic nature of the action described.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “the LORD of hosts is with us.” The title “LORD of hosts” here pictures the LORD as a mighty warrior-king who leads armies into battle (see Ps 24:10). The military imagery is further developed in vv. 8-9.

⁵ **tn** That is, Israel, or Judah (see Ps 20:1).

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “our elevated place” (see Pss 9:9; 18:2).

⁷ **sn** In this context the Lord’s exploits are military in nature (see vv. 8b-9).

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “who sets desolations in the earth” (see Isa 13:9). The active participle describes God’s characteristic activity as a warrior.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “[the] one who causes wars to cease unto the end of the earth.” The participle continues the description begun in v. 8b and indicates that this is the LORD’s characteristic activity. Ironically, he brings peace to the earth by devastating the warlike, hostile nations (vv. 8, 9b).

¹⁰ **tn** The verb *שָׁבַר* (*shavar*, “break”) appears in the Piel here (see Ps 29:5). In the OT it occurs thirty-six times in the Piel, always with multiple objects (the object is either a collective singular or grammatically plural or dual form). The Piel may highlight the repetition of the pluralitive action, or it may suggest an intensification of action, indicating repeated action comprising a whole, perhaps with the nuance “break again and again, break in pieces.” Another option is to understand the form as resultative: “make broken” (see *IBHS* 404-7 §24.3). The imperfect verbal form carries on and emphasizes the generalizing nature of the description.

¹¹ **tn** The perfect verbal form with *vav* (ו) consecutive carries along the generalizing emphasis of the preceding imperfect.

¹² **tn** The imperfect verbal form carries on and emphasizes the generalizing nature of the description.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “wagons he burns with fire.” Some read “chariots” here (cf. NASB), but the Hebrew word refers to wagons or carts, not chariots, elsewhere in the OT. In this context, where military weapons are mentioned, it is better to revocalize the form as *אֲגִילֹת* (*agilot*, “round shields”), a word which occurs only here in the OT, but is attested in later Hebrew and Aramaic.

¹⁴ **tn** The words “he says” are supplied in the translation for clarification.

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “do nothing/be quiet (see 1 Sam 15:16) and know.” This statement may be addressed to the hostile nations, indicating they should cease their efforts to destroy God’s people, or to Judah, indicating they should rest secure in God’s protection. Since the psalm is an expression of Judah’s trust and confidence, it is more likely that the words are directed to the nations, who are actively promoting chaos and are in need of a rebuke.

I will be exalted¹⁶ over¹⁷ the nations! I will be exalted over¹⁸ the earth!”

46:11 The LORD who commands armies is on our side!¹⁹

The God of Jacob²⁰ is our protector!²¹
(Selah)

Psalm 47²²

For the music director; by the Korahites; a psalm.

47:1 All you nations, clap your hands! Shout out to God in celebration!²³

47:2 For the sovereign LORD²⁴ is awe-inspiring,²⁵

he is the great king who rules the whole earth!²⁶

47:3 He subdued nations beneath us²⁷ and countries²⁸ under our feet.

47:4 He picked out for us a special land²⁹ to be a source of pride for³⁰ Jacob,³¹ whom he loves.³² (Selah)

¹⁶ **tn** Elsewhere in the psalms the verb *רום* (*rum*, “be exalted”) when used of God, refers to his exalted position as king (Pss 18:46; 99:2; 113:4; 138:6) and/or his self-revelation as king through his mighty deeds of deliverance (Pss 21:13; 57:5; 11).

¹⁷ **tn** Or “among.”

¹⁸ **tn** Or “in.”

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “the LORD of hosts is with us.” The title “LORD of hosts” here pictures the Lord as a mighty warrior-king who leads armies into battle (see Ps 24:10). The military imagery is further developed in vv. 8-9.

²⁰ **tn** That is, Israel, or Judah (see Ps 20:1).

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “our elevated place” (see Pss 9:9; 18:2).

²² **sn** *Psalm 47*. In this hymn the covenant community praises the Lord as the exalted king of the earth who has given them victory over the nations and a land in which to live.

²³ **tn** *Heb* “Shout to God with [the] sound of a ringing cry!”

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* “the LORD Most High.” The divine title “Most High” (*עֵלְיוֹן*, *‘elyon*) pictures the Lord as the exalted ruler of the universe who vindicates the innocent and judges the wicked.

²⁵ **tn** Or “awesome.” The Niphal participle *נִרְאָה* (*nora*), when used of God in the psalms, focuses on the effect that his royal splendor and powerful deeds have on those witnessing his acts (Pss 66:3; 5; 68:35; 76:7; 12; 89:7; 96:4; 99:3; 111:9). Here it refers to his capacity to fill his defeated foes with terror and his people with fearful respect.

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* “a great king over all the earth.”

²⁷ **tn** On the meaning of the verb *דָּבַר* (*davar*, “subdue”), a homonym of *דָּבַר* (“speak”), see *HALOT* 209-10 s.v. דָּבַר. See also Ps 18:47 and 2 Chr 22:10. The preterite form of the verb suggests this is an historical reference and the next verse, which mentions the gift of the land, indicates that the conquest under Joshua is in view.

²⁸ **tn** Or “peoples” (see Pss 2:1; 7:7; 9:8; 44:2).

²⁹ **tn** *Heb* “he chose for us our inheritance.” The prefixed verbal form is understood as a preterite (see “subdued” in v. 3).

³⁰ **tn** *Heb* “the pride of.” The phrase is appositional to “our inheritance,” indicating that the land is here described as a source of pride to God’s people.

³¹ **tn** That is, Israel.

³² **sn** *Jacob whom he loves*. The Lord’s covenantal devotion to his people is in view.

47:5 God has ascended his throne¹ amid
loud shouts;²
the LORD has ascended his throne amid
the blaring of ram's horns.³
47:6 Sing to God! Sing!
Sing to our king! Sing!
47:7 For God is king of the whole earth!
Sing a well-written song!⁴
47:8 God reigns⁵ over the nations!
God sits on his holy throne!
47:9 The nobles of the nations assemble,
along with the people of the God of Abra-
ham,⁶
for God has authority over the rulers⁷ of
the earth.
He is highly exalted!⁸

Psalms 48⁹

A song, a psalm by the Korahites.

48:1 The LORD is great and certainly wor-
thy of praise
in the city of our God,¹⁰ his holy hill.
48:2 It is lofty and pleasing to look at,¹¹
a source of joy to the whole earth.¹²
Mount Zion resembles the peaks of Za-
phon,¹³
it is the city of the great king.
48:3 God is in its fortresses;
he reveals himself as its defender.¹⁴
48:4 For¹⁵ look, the kings assemble;¹⁶
they advance together.
48:5 As soon as they see,¹⁷ they are
shocked,¹⁸
they are terrified, they quickly retreat.¹⁹

¹ **sn** *God ascended his throne.* In the context of vv. 3-4, which refer to the conquest of the land under Joshua, v. 5 is best understood as referring to an historical event. When the Lord conquered the land and placed his people in it, he assumed a position of kingship, as predicted by Moses (see Exod 15:17-18, as well as Ps 114:1-2). That event is here described metaphorically in terms of a typical coronation ceremony for an earthly king (see 2 Sam 15:10; 2 Kgs 9:13). Verses 1-2, 8-9 focus on God's continuing kingship, which extends over all nations.

² **tn** *Heb* "God ascended amid a shout." The words "his throne" are supplied in the translation for clarification. The LORD's coronation as king is described here (see v. 8). Here the perfect probably has a present perfect function, indicating a completed action with continuing effects.

³ **tn** *Heb* "the LORD amid the sound of the ram horn." The verb "ascended" is understood by ellipsis; see the preceding line.

⁴ **tn** The meaning of the Hebrew term מַשְׂכִּיל (maskil) is uncertain. The word is derived from a verb meaning "to be prudent; to be wise." Various options are: "a contemplative song," "a song imparting moral wisdom," or "a skillful [i.e., well-written] song." The term also occurs in the superscriptions of Pss 32, 42, 44, 45, 52-55, 74, 78, 88, 89, and 142. Here, in a context of celebration, the meaning "skillful, well-written" would fit particularly well.

⁵ **tn** When a new king was enthroned, his followers would acclaim him king using this enthronement formula (Qal perfect מָלַךְ malakh, "to reign," followed by the name of the king). See 2 Sam 15:10; 1 Kgs 1:11, 13, 18; 2 Kgs 9:13, as well as Isa 52:7. In this context the perfect verbal form is generalizing, but the declaration logically follows the historical reference in v. 5 to the LORD's having ascended his throne.

⁶ **tc** The words "along with" do not appear in the MT. However, the LXX has "with," suggesting that the original text may have read עִם (im 'am, "along with the people"). In this case the MT is haplographic (the consonantal sequence ayin-mem [נַם] being written once instead of twice). Another option is that the LXX is simply and correctly interpreting "people" as an adverbial accusative and supplying the appropriate preposition.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "for to God [belong] the shields of the earth." Perhaps the rulers are called "shields" because they are responsible for protecting their people. See Ps 84:9, where the Davidic king is called "our shield," and perhaps also Hos 4:18.

⁸ **tn** The verb קָלָה (alah, "ascend") appears once more (see v. 5), though now in the Niphal stem.

⁹ **sn** *Psalms 48.* This so-called "Song of Zion" celebrates the greatness and glory of the Lord's dwelling place, Jerusalem. His presence in the city elevates it above all others and assures its security.

¹⁰ **sn** *The city of our God* is Jerusalem, which is also referred to here as "his holy hill," that is, Zion (see v. 2, as well as Isa 66:20; Joel 2:1; 3:17; Zech 8:3; Pss 2:6; 15:1; 43:3; 87:1; Dan 9:16).

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "beautiful of height." The Hebrew term נוף (nof, "height") is a genitive of specification after the qualitative noun "beautiful." The idea seems to be that Mount Zion, because of its lofty appearance, is pleasing to the sight.

¹² **sn** *A source of joy to the whole earth.* The language is hyperbolic. Zion, as the dwelling place of the universal king, is pictured as the world's capital. The prophets anticipated this idealized picture becoming a reality in the eschaton (see Isa 2:1-4).

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "Mount Zion, the peaks of Zaphon." Like all the preceding phrases in v. 2, both phrases are appositional to "city of our God, his holy hill" in v. 1, suggesting an identification in the poet's mind between Mount Zion and Zaphon. "Zaphon" usually refers to the "north" in a general sense (see Pss 89:12; 107:3), but here, where it is collocated with "peaks," it refers specifically to Mount Zaphon, located in the vicinity of ancient Ugarit and viewed as the mountain where the gods assembled (see Isa 14:13). By alluding to West Semitic mythology in this way, the psalm affirms that Mount Zion is the real divine mountain, for it is here that the Lord God of Israel lives and rules over the nations. See P. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50* (WBC), 353, and T. N. D. Mettinger, *In Search of God*, 103.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "he is known for an elevated place."

¹⁵ **tn** The logical connection between vv. 3-4 seems to be this: God is the protector of Zion and reveals himself as the city's defender – this is necessary because hostile armies threaten the city.

¹⁶ **tn** The perfect verbal forms in vv. 4-6 are understood as descriptive. In dramatic style (note הִנֵּה, hinneh, "look") the psalm describes an enemy attack against the city as if it were occurring at this very moment. Another option is to take the perfects as narrational ("the kings assembled, they advanced"), referring to a particular historical event, such as Sennacherib's siege of the city in 701 B.C. (cf. NIV, NRSV). Even if one translates the verses in a dramatic-descriptive manner (as the present translation does), the LORD's victory over the Assyrians was probably what served as the inspiration of the description (see v. 8).

¹⁷ **tn** The object of "see" is omitted, but v. 3b suggests that the LORD's self-revelation as the city's defender is what they see.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "they look, so they are shocked." Here כֵּן (ken, "so") has the force of "in the same measure."

¹⁹ **tn** The translation attempts to reflect the staccato style of the Hebrew text, where the main clauses of vv. 4-6 are simply juxtaposed without connectives.

48:6 Look at them shake uncontrollably,¹
like a woman writhing in childbirth.²

48:7 With an east wind
you shatter³ the large ships.⁴

48:8 We heard about God's mighty deeds,
now we have seen them,⁵
in the city of the LORD, the invincible
Warrior,⁶

in the city of our God.
God makes it permanently secure.⁷
(Selah)

48:9 We reflect on your loyal love, O God,
within your temple.

48:10 The praise you receive as far away
as the ends of the earth
is worthy of your reputation, O God.⁸
You execute justice!⁹

48:11 Mount Zion rejoices;
the towns¹⁰ of Judah are happy,¹¹
because of your acts of judgment.¹²

48:12 Walk around¹³ Zion! Encircle it!

¹ *tn* Heb "trembling seizes them there." The adverb שָׁם (*sham*, "there") is used here, as often in poetic texts, to point "to a spot in which a scene is localized vividly in the imagination" (BDB 1027 s.v.).

² *tn* Heb "[with] writhing like one giving birth."

³ *sn* The language of vv. 5-6 is reminiscent of Exod 15:15.

⁴ *tn* The switch to the imperfect, as well as the introduction of the ship metaphor, perhaps signals a change to a generalizing tone; the LORD typically shatters these large ships, symbolic of the human strength of hostile armies (see the following note on "large ships"). The verb שָׁבַר (*shavar*, "break") appears in the Piel here (see Pss 29:5; 46:9). In the OT it occurs thirty-six times in the Piel, always with multiple objects (the object is either a collective singular or grammatically plural or dual form). The Piel may highlight the repetition of the pluralative action, or it may suggest an intensification of action, indicating repeated action comprising a whole, perhaps with the nuance "break again and again, break in pieces." Another option is to understand the again as resultative: "make broken" (see *IBHS* 404-7 §24.3).

⁵ *tn* Heb "the ships of Tarshish." This probably refers to large ships either made in or capable of traveling to and from the distant western port of Tarshish. These ships, which were the best of their class, here symbolize the mere human strength of hostile armies, which are incapable of withstanding the LORD's divine power (see Isa 2:16).

⁶ *tn* Heb "As we have heard, so we have seen." The community had heard about God's mighty deeds in the nation's history. Having personally witnessed his saving power with their own eyes, they could now affirm that the tradition was not exaggerated or inaccurate.

⁷ *tn* Heb "the LORD of hosts." The title "LORD of hosts" here pictures the LORD as a mighty warrior-king who leads armies into battle (see Pss 24:10; 46:7, 11).

⁸ *tn* Or "God makes it secure forever." The imperfect highlights the characteristic nature of the generalizing statement.

⁹ *tn* Heb "like your name, O God, so [is] your praise to the ends of the earth." Here "name" refers to God's reputation and revealed character.

¹⁰ *tn* Heb "your right hand is full of justice." The "right hand" suggests activity and power.

¹¹ *tn* Heb "daughters." The reference is to the cities of Judah surrounding Zion (see Pss 97:8 and H. Haag, *TDOT* 2:336).

¹² *tn* The prefixed verbal forms are understood as generalizing imperfects. (For other examples of an imperfect followed by causal לְעֵינֵינוּ [*l'ma'an*], see Pss 23:3; Isa 49:7; 55:5.) Another option is to interpret the forms as jussives, "Let Mount Zion rejoice! Let the towns of Judah be happy!" (cf. NASB, NRSV; note the imperatives in vv. 12-13.)

¹³ *sn* These acts of judgment are described in vv. 4-7.

¹⁴ *tn* The verb forms in vv. 12-13 are plural; the entire Juda-

Count its towers!

48:13 Consider its defenses!¹⁴
Walk through¹⁵ its fortresses,
so you can tell the next generation about
it!¹⁶

48:14 For God, our God, is our defender
forever!¹⁷
He guides¹⁸ us!¹⁹

Psalm 49²⁰

For the music director, a psalm by the Korahites.

49:1 Listen to this, all you nations!
Pay attention, all you inhabitants of the
world!²¹

49:2 Pay attention, all you people,²²
both rich and poor!

49:3 I will declare a wise saying;²³

hite community is addressed.

¹⁴ *tn* Heb "set your heart to its rampart."

¹⁵ *tn* The precise meaning of the Hebrew word translated "walk through," which occurs only here in the OT, is uncertain. Cf. NEB "pass...in review"; NIV "view."

¹⁶ *sn* The city's towers, defenses, and fortresses are outward reminders and tangible symbols of the divine protection the city enjoys.

¹⁷ *tn* Heb "for this is God, our God, forever and ever." "This" might be paraphrased, "this protector described and praised in the preceding verses."

¹⁸ *tn* The imperfect highlights the characteristic nature of the generalizing statement.

¹⁹ *tn* In the Hebrew text the psalm ends with the words עַל־מוֹת (*al-mut*, "upon [unto?] dying"), which make little, if any, sense. M. Dahood (*Psalms* [AB], 1:293) proposes an otherwise unattested plural form עֲלָמוֹת (*alamot*; from עוֹלָם, "eternity"). This would provide a nice parallel to עוֹלָם וָעֶד (*alam va'ed*, "forever") in the preceding line, but elsewhere the plural of עוֹלָם appears as עֲלָמִים (*alamim*). It is preferable to understand the phrase as a musical direction of some sort (see *al-mut* in the superscription of Ps 9) or to emend the text to עַל־עֲלָמוֹת (*al-alamot*, "according to the *alamoth* style"; see the heading of Ps 46). In either case it should be understood as belonging with the superscription of the following psalm.

²⁰ *sn* Psalm 49. In this so-called wisdom psalm (see v. 3) the psalmist states that he will not fear the rich enemies who threaten him, for despite their wealth, they are mere men who will die like everyone else. The psalmist is confident the Lord will vindicate the godly and protect them from the attacks of their oppressors.

²¹ *tn* The rare noun הָאֵרֶץ (*kheled*, "world") occurs in Ps 17:14 and perhaps also in Isa 38:11 (see the note on "world" there).

²² *tn* Heb "even the sons of mankind, even the sons of man." Because of the parallel line, where "rich and poor" are mentioned, some treat these expressions as polar opposites, with בני אָדָם (*b'ney adam*) referring to the lower classes and בני אֵיִשׁ (*b'ney ish*) to higher classes (cf. NIV, NRSV). But usage does not support such a view. The rare phrase בני אֵיִשׁ ("sons of man") appears to refer to human beings in general in its other uses (see Pss 4:2; 62:9; Lam 3:33). It is better to understand "even the sons of mankind" and "even the sons of man" as synonymous expressions (cf. NEB "all mankind, every living man"). The repetition emphasizes the need for all people to pay attention, for the psalmist's message is relevant to everyone.

²³ *tn* Heb "my mouth will speak wisdom." According to BDB 315 s.v. חֲכֹמָה the plural חֲכֹמֹת (*khokhot*, "wisdom") indicates degree or emphasis here.

I will share my profound thoughts.⁴

49:4 I will learn a song that imparts wisdom;

I will then sing my insightful song to the accompaniment of a harp.²

49:5 Why should I be afraid in times of trouble,³

when the sinful deeds of deceptive men threaten to overwhelm me?⁴

49:6 They trust⁵ in their wealth and boast⁶ in their great riches.

49:7 Certainly a man cannot rescue his brother;⁷

he cannot pay God an adequate ransom price⁸

49:8 (the ransom price for a human life⁹ is too high,

and people go to their final destiny),¹⁰

49:9 so that he might continue to live¹¹ forever

and not experience death.¹²

49:10 Surely¹³ one sees¹⁴ that even wise people die;¹⁵

fools and spiritually insensitive people all pass away¹⁶

and leave their wealth to others.¹⁷

¹ **tn** *Heb* “and the meditation of my heart [i.e., mind] is understanding.” The Hebrew term הָגוּת (*hagut*, “meditation”), derived from הָגָה (*hagah*, “to recite quietly; to meditate”), here refers to thoughts that are verbalized (see the preceding line). The plural form הַבְּינוֹת (*havynot*, “understanding”) indicates degree or emphasis (see GKC 397-98 §124.e).

² **tn** *Heb* “I will turn my ear to a wise saying, I will open [i.e., “reveal; explain”] my insightful saying with a harp.” In the first line the psalmist speaks as a pupil who learns a song of wisdom from a sage. This suggests that the resulting insightful song derives from another source, perhaps God himself. Elsewhere the Hebrew word pair מָשַׁל/חִידָה (*mashal/khidah*) refers to a taunt song (Hab 2:6), a parable (Ezek 17:2), lessons from history (Ps 78:2), and proverbial sayings (Prov 1:6). Here it appears to refer to the insightful song that follows, which reflects on the mortality of humankind and the ultimate inability of riches to prevent the inevitable – death. Another option is that the word pair refers more specifically to the closely related proverbial sayings of vv. 12, 20 (note the use of the verb מָשַׁל, *mashal*, “to be like” in both verses). In this case the psalmist first hears the sayings and then explains (*Heb* “opens”) their significance (see vv. 5-11, 13-19).

³ **tn** *Heb* “days of trouble.” The phrase also occurs in Ps 94:13. The question is rhetorical; there is no reason to be afraid when the rich oppressors threaten the weak (see v. 17). The following verses explain why this is so.

⁴ **tc** The MT has, “the iniquity of my heels surrounds me.” The clause is best understood as temporal and as elaborating on the preceding phrase “times of trouble.” If the MT is retained, the genitive “of my heels” would probably indicate location (“the iniquity at my heels”); the sinful actions of the rich threaten to overtake the psalmist, as it were. It is better, however, to emend עֲקֵבַי (*‘aqivay*, “my heels”) to either (1) עֲקֵבַי (*‘aqubay*, “my deceitful ones,” i.e., “those who deceive me” [from the adjective עֲקֹב (*‘aqov*), “deceitful,” see Jer 17:9]) or (2) עֲקֵבַי (*‘oqivay*, “those who deceive me” [a suffixed active participle from עֲקַב, *‘aqav*, “betray, deceive”]). Origen’s translation of the Hebrew text favors the first of these options. Either of the emendations provides a much smoother transition to v. 6, because “those who trust in their wealth” would then be appositional to “those who deceive me.”

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “the ones who trust.” The substantival participle stands in apposition to “those who deceive me” (v. 5).

⁶ **tn** The imperfect verbal form emphasizes their characteristic behavior.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “a brother, he surely does not ransom, a man.” The sequence אֶחָאֵשׁ...אִישׁ (*akh...ish*, “a brother...a man”) is problematic, for the usual combination is אִישׁ...אֶחָאֵשׁ (“a brother...a man”) or אִישׁ...אִישׁ (“a man...a man”). When אִישׁ and אֶחָאֵשׁ are combined, the usual order is אִישׁ...אֶחָאֵשׁ (“a man...a brother”), with “brother” having a third masculine singular suffix, “his brother.” This suggests that “brother” is the object of the verb and “man” the subject. (1) Perhaps the altered word order and absence of the suffix can be explained by the text’s poetic character, for ellipsis is a feature of Hebrew poetic style. (2) Another option, supported by a few medieval Hebrew mss, is to emend “brother” to the similar sounding אָךְ (*akh*, “surely; but”) which occurs in v. 15 before the verb פָּדָה (*padah*, “ransom”). If this reading is accepted the Qal imperfect form: פָּדֵדֵה (*yifddeh*, “he can [not] ransom”) would need to be emended to a Niphal (passive) form, יִפְדֵּה (*yifadeh*, “he can[not] be ran-

somed”) unless one understands the subject of the Qal verb to be indefinite (“one cannot redeem a man”). (A Niphal imperfect can be collocated with a Qal infinitive absolute. See GKC 344-45 §113.w.) No matter how one decides the textual issues, the imperfect in this case is modal, indicating potential, and the infinitive absolute emphasizes the statement.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “he cannot pay to God his ransom price.” Num 35:31 may supply the legal background for the metaphorical language used here. The psalmist pictures God as having a claim on the soul of the individual. When God comes to claim the life that ultimately belongs to him, he demands a ransom price that is beyond the capability of anyone to pay. The psalmist’s point is that God has ultimate authority over life and death; all the money in the world cannot buy anyone a single day of life beyond what God has decreed.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “their life.” Some emend the text to “his life,” understanding the antecedent of the pronoun as “brother” in v. 7. However, the man and brother of v. 7 are representative of the human race in general, perhaps explaining why a plural pronoun appears in v. 8. Of course, the plural pronoun could refer back to “the rich” mentioned in v. 6. Another option (the one assumed in the translation) is that the suffixed *mem* is enclitic. In this case the “ransom price for human life” is referred to an abstract, general way.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “and one ceases forever.” The translation assumes an indefinite subject which in turn is representative of the entire human race (“one,” that refers to human beings without exception). The verb כָּדַל (*khadal*, “cease”) is understood in the sense of “come to an end; fail” (i.e., die). Another option is to translate, “and one ceases/refrains forever.” In this case the idea is that the living, convinced of the reality of human mortality, give up all hope of “buying off” God and refrain from trying to do so.

¹¹ **tn** The jussive verbal form with *vav* (ו) conjunctive is taken as indicating purpose/result in relation to the statement made in v. 8. (On this use of the jussive after an imperfect, see GKC 322 §109.f.) In this case v. 8 is understood as a parathetical comment.

¹² **tn** *Heb* “see the Pit.” The Hebrew term שִׁחַת (*shakhat*, “pit”) is often used as a title for Sheol (see Pss 16:10; 30:9; 55:24 HT [55:23 ET]; 103:4).

¹³ **tn** The particle כִּי (*ki*) is understood here as asseverative (emphatic).

¹⁴ **tn** The subject of the verb is probably the typical “man” mentioned in v. 7. The imperfect can be taken here as generalizing or as indicating potential (“surely he/one can see”).

¹⁵ **tn** The imperfect verbal forms here and in the next line draw attention to what is characteristically true. The *vav* (ו) consecutive with perfect in the third line carries the same force.

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “together a fool and a brutish [man] perish.” The adjective בֹּרֵךְ (*ba’ar*, “brutish”) refers to spiritual insensitivity, not mere lack of intelligence or reasoning ability (see Pss 73:22; 92:6; Prov 12:1; 30:2, as well as the use of the related verb in Ps 94:8).

¹⁷ **sn** Death shows no respect for anyone. No matter how wise or foolish an individual happens to be, all pass away.

49:11 Their grave becomes their permanent residence,
 their eternal dwelling place.¹
 They name their lands after themselves,²
 49:12 but, despite their wealth, people do
 not last,³
 they are like animals⁴ that perish.⁵
 49:13 This is the destiny of fools,⁶
 and of those who approve of their
 philosophy.⁷ (Selah)

49:14 They will travel to Sheol like sheep,⁸
 with death as their shepherd.⁹
 The godly will rule¹⁰ over them when the
 day of vindication dawns;¹¹
 Sheol will consume their bodies and
 they will no longer live in impressive
 houses.¹²
 49:15 But¹³ God will rescue¹⁴ my life¹⁵ from
 the power¹⁶ of Sheol;
 certainly¹⁷ he will pull me to safety.¹⁸

¹ **tc** *Heb* “their inward part [is] their houses [are] permanent, their dwelling places for a generation and a generation.” If one follows the MT, then קָרֵב (*qerev*, “inward part”) must refer to the seat of these people’s thoughts (for other examples of this use of the term, see BDB 899 s.v., though BDB prefers an emendation in this passage). In this case all three lines of v. 11 expose these people’s arrogant assumption that they will last forever, which then stands in sharp contrast to reality as summarized in v. 12. In this case one might translate the first two lines, “they think that their houses are permanent and that their dwelling places will last forever” (cf. NASB). Following the lead of several ancient versions, the present translation assumes an emendation of קָרֵבָם (*qirbam*, “their inward part”) to קְבָרֵים (*qvarim*, “graves”). This assumes that the letters *bet* (ב) and *resh* (ר) were accidentally transposed in the MT. In this case the first two lines support the point made in v. 10, while the third line of v. 11 stands in contrast to v. 12. The phrase עוֹלָם בֵּית *olam*, “permanent house”) is used of a tomb in Eccl 12:5 (as well as in Phoenician tomb inscriptions, see DNWSI 1:160 for a list of texts) and מִשְׁכָּן (*mishkan*, “dwelling place”) refers to a tomb in Isa 22:16. Cf. NEB, NIV, NRSV.

² **sn** Naming their lands after themselves is a claim of possession.

³ **tc** *Heb* “but mankind in honor does not remain.” The construction *vav* (ו) + noun at the beginning of the verse can be taken as contrastive in relation to what precedes. The Hebrew term עָרָה (*qar*, “honor”) probably refers here to the wealth mentioned in the preceding context. The imperfect verbal form draws attention to what is characteristically true. Some scholars emend לָמַד (*yalin*, “remains”) to יָבִין (*yavin*, “understands”) but this is an unnecessary accommodation to the wording of v. 20.

⁴ **tn** Or “cattle.”

⁵ **tc** The verb is derived from דָּמָה (*damah*, “cease; destroy”; BDB 198 s.v.). Another option is to derive the verb from דָּבָה (“be silent”; see HALOT 225 s.v. II דָּבָה, which sees two homonymic roots דָּבָה, “be silent,” דָּבָה, “destroy”) rather than a single root) and translate, “they are like dumb beasts.” This makes particularly good sense in v. 20, where the preceding line focuses on mankind’s lack of understanding.

⁶ **tc** *Heb* “this [is] their way, [there is] folly [belonging] to them.” The Hebrew term translated “this” could refer (1) back to the preceding verse[s] or (2) ahead to the subsequent statements. The translation assumes the latter, since v. 12 appears to be a refrain that concludes the psalm’s first major section and marks a structural boundary. (A similar refrain [see v. 20] concludes the second half of the psalm.) The noun דֶּרֶךְ (*derekh*, “way”) often refers to one’s lifestyle, but, if it relates to what follows, then here it likely refers metonymically to one’s destiny (the natural outcome of one’s lifestyle [cf. NEB, NIV, NRSV “fate”]). (See the discussion in K. Koch, *TDOT* 3:285.) If one prefers the more common nuance (“lifestyle”), then the term would look back to the self-confident attitude described in the earlier verses.

⁷ **tc** *Heb* “and after them, in their mouth they take delight.” The meaning of the MT is not entirely clear. “After them” is understood here as substantial, “those who come after them” or “those who follow them.” “Their mouth” is taken as a metonymy for the arrogant attitude verbalized by the rich. In the expression “take delight in,” the preposition ב (*bet*) introduces the object/cause of one’s delight (see Pss 147:10; 149:4). So the idea here is that those who come after/follow the rich find the philosophy of life they verbalize and promote to be attractive and desirable.

⁸ **tc** *Heb* “like sheep to Sheol they are appointed.” The verb form שָׁחוּ (*shahu*) is apparently derived from שָׁחַת (*shatat*), which appears to be a variant of the more common שָׁחַת (*shiyat*, “to place; to set”; BDB 1060 s.v. שָׁחַת and GKC 183 §67.ee). Some scholars emend the text to שָׁחוּ (*shakhu*; from the verbal root שָׁחַח [*shukh*, “sink down”]) and read “they descend.” The present translation assumes an emendation to שָׁחַת (*shat*; from the verbal root שָׁחַח [*shut*, “go; wander”]), “they travel, wander.” (The letter *tet* [ט] and *tav* [ת] sound similar; a scribe transcribing from dictation could easily confuse them.) The perfect verbal form is used in a rhetorical manner to speak of their destiny as if it were already realized (the so-called perfect of certitude or prophetic perfect).

⁹ **tc** *Heb* “death will shepherd them,” that is, death itself (personified here as a shepherd) will lead them like a flock of helpless, unsuspecting sheep to Sheol, the underworld, the land of the dead.

¹⁰ **tn** The prefixed verbal form with *vav* (ו) consecutive carries the same force as the perfect verbal form in v. 14a. The psalmist speaks of this coming event as if it were already accomplished.

¹¹ **tc** *Heb* “will rule over them in the morning.” “Morning” here is a metaphor for a time of deliverance and vindication after the dark “night” of trouble (see Pss 30:5; 46:5; 59:16; 90:14; 143:8; Isa 17:14). In this context the psalmist confidently anticipates a day of vindication when the LORD will deliver the oppressed from the rich (see v. 15) and send the oppressors to Sheol.

¹² **tc** *Heb* “their form [will become an object] for the consuming of Sheol, from a lofty residence, to him.” The meaning of this syntactically difficult text is uncertain. The translation assumes that צוֹר (*sur*, “form”; this is the *Qere* [marginal] reading; the *Kethib* has צִירֵים [*tsiram*, “their image”]) refers to their physical form or bodies. “Sheol” is taken as the subject of “consume” (on the implied “become” before the infinitive “to consume” see GKC 349 §114.k). The preposition מִן (*min*) prefixed to “lofty residence” is understood as privative, “away from; so as not.” The preposition ל (*lamed*) is possessive, while the third person pronominal suffix is understood as a representative singular.

¹³ **tn** Or “certainly.”

¹⁴ **tn** Or “redeem.”

¹⁵ **tn** Or “me.” The Hebrew term נַפְשׁ (*nefesh*) with a pronominal suffix is often equivalent to a pronoun, especially in poetry (see BDB 660 s.v. נַפְשׁ 4.a).

¹⁶ **tc** *Heb* “hand.”

¹⁷ **tn** Or “for.”

¹⁸ **tc** *Heb* “he will take me.” To improve the poetic balance of the verse, some move the words “from the power of Sheol” to the following line. The verse would then read: “But God will rescue my life; / from the power of Sheol he will certainly deliver me” (cf. NEB).

sn According to some, the psalmist here anticipates the resurrection (or at least an afterlife in God’s presence). But it is more likely that the psalmist here expresses his hope that God will rescue him from premature death at the hands of the rich oppressors denounced in the psalm. The psalmist is well aware that all (the wise and foolish) die (see vv. 7-12), but he is confident God will lead him safely through the present “times of trouble” (v. 5) and sweep the wicked away to their final destiny. The theme is a common one in the so-called wisdom psalms (see Pss 1, 34, 37, 112). For a fuller discussion of the psalmists’ view of the afterlife, see R. B. Chisholm, Jr., “A Theology of the Psalms,” *A Biblical Theology of the Old Testament*, 284-88.

(Selah)

- 49:16** Do not be afraid when a man becomes rich¹ and his wealth multiplies!²
49:17 For he will take nothing with him when he dies; his wealth will not follow him down into the grave.³
49:18 He pronounces this blessing on himself while he is alive: “May men praise you, for you have done well!”
49:19 But he will join his ancestors;⁴ they will never again see the light of day.⁵
49:20 Wealthy people do not understand;⁶ they are like animals⁷ that perish.⁸

Psalms 50⁹

A psalm by Asaph.

50:1 El, God, the LORD¹⁰ speaks,

¹ **sn** When a man becomes rich. Why would people fear such a development? The acquisition of wealth makes individuals powerful and enables them to oppress others (see vv. 5-6).

² **tn** Heb “when the glory of his house grows great.”

³ **tn** Heb “his glory will not go down after him.”

⁴ **tn** Verses 18-19a are one long sentence in the Hebrew text, which reads: “Though he blesses his soul in his life, [saying], ‘And let them praise you, for you do well for yourself,’ it [that is, his soul] will go to the generation of his fathers.” This has been divided into two sentences in the translation for clarity, in keeping with the tendency of contemporary English to use shorter sentences.

⁵ **tn** Heb “light.” The words “of day” are supplied in the translation for clarification.

⁶ **tn** Heb “mankind in honor does not understand.” The Hebrew term קָרָה (*qar*, “honor”) probably refers here to the wealth mentioned in the preceding context. The imperfect verbal form draws attention to what is characteristically true. Some emend יָבִין (*yavin*, “understands”) to יָבִין (*yavin*, “remains”), but this is an unnecessary accommodation to the wording of v. 12.

⁷ **tn** Or “cattle.”

⁸ **tn** The Hebrew verb is derived from דָּמָה (*damah*, “cease, destroy”; BDB 198 s.v.). Another option is to derive the verb from דָּמָה (*damah*, “be silent”; see HALOT 225 s.v. II דָּמָה, which sees two homonymic roots [I דָּמָה, “be silent,” and II דָּמָה, “destroy”] rather than a single root) and translate, “they are like dumb beasts.” This makes particularly good sense here, where the preceding line focuses on mankind’s lack of understanding.

⁹ **sn** Psalm 50. This psalm takes the form of a covenant lawsuit in which the Lord comes to confront his people in a formal manner (as in Isa 1:2-20). The Lord emphasizes that he places priority on obedience and genuine worship, not empty ritual.

¹⁰ **sn** Israel’s God is here identified with three names: El (אֵל [*el*], or “God”), Elohim (אֱלֹהִים [*elohim*], or “God”), and Yahweh (יְהוָה [*yhwh*] or “the LORD”). There is an obvious allusion here to Josh 22:22, the only other passage where these three names appear in succession. In that passage the Reubenites, Gadites, and half-tribe of Manasseh declare, “El, God, the LORD! El, God, the LORD! He knows the truth! Israel must also know! If we have rebelled or disobeyed the LORD, don’t spare us today!” In that context the other tribes had accused the trans-Jordanian tribes of breaking God’s covenant by worshiping idols. The trans-Jordanian tribes appealed to “El, God, the LORD” as their witness that they were innocent of the charges brought against them. Ironically here in Ps 50 “El, God, the LORD” accuses his sinful covenant people of violating the covenant and warns that he will not spare them if they

and summons the earth to come from the east and west.¹¹

50:2 From Zion, the most beautiful of all places,¹²

God comes in splendor.¹³

50:3 Our God approaches and is not silent,¹⁴

consuming fire goes ahead of him and all around him a storm rages.¹⁵

50:4 He summons the heavens above, as well as the earth, so that he might

judge his people.¹⁶

50:5 He says:¹⁷

“Assemble my covenant people before me,¹⁸

those who ratified a covenant with me by sacrifice!”¹⁹

50:6 The heavens declare his fairness,²⁰ for God is judge.²¹ (Selah)

50:7 He says:²²

“Listen my people! I am speaking!

Listen Israel! I am accusing you!²³

I am God, your God!

50:8 I am not condemning²⁴ you because of your sacrifices,

persist in their rebellion.

¹¹ **tn** Heb “and calls [the] earth from the sunrise to its going.”

¹² **tn** Heb “the perfection of beauty.”

¹³ **tn** Or “shines forth.”

¹⁴ **sn** Comes in splendor. The psalmist may allude ironically to Deut 33:2, where God “shines forth” from Sinai and comes to superintend Moses’ blessing of the tribes.

¹⁵ **tn** According to GKC 3:22 §109.e, the jussive (note the negative particle אַל, *al*) is used rhetorically here “to express the conviction that something cannot or should not happen.”

¹⁶ **tn** Heb “fire before him devours, and around him it is very stormy.”

¹⁷ **tn** Or perhaps “to testify against his people.”

¹⁸ **sn** The personified heavens and earth (see v. 1 as well) are summoned to God’s courtroom as witnesses against God’s covenant people (see Isa 1:2). Long before this Moses warned the people that the heavens and earth would be watching their actions (see Deut 4:26; 30:19; 31:28; 32:1).

¹⁹ **tn** The words “he says” are supplied in the translation for clarification. God’s summons to the defendant follows.

²⁰ **tn** Or “Gather to me my covenant people.” The Hebrew term חָסִיד (*khasid*, “covenant people”) elsewhere in the psalms is used in a positive sense of God’s loyal followers (see the note at Ps 4:3); but here, as the following line makes clear, the term has a neutral sense and simply refers to those who have outwardly sworn allegiance to God, not necessarily to those whose loyalty is genuine.

²¹ **tn** Heb “the cutters of my covenant according to sacrifice.” A sacrifice accompanied the covenant-making ceremony and formally ratified the agreement (see Exod 24:3-8).

²² **tn** Or “justice.”

²³ **tn** Or “for God, he is about to judge.” The participle may be taken as substantival (as in the translation above) or as a predicate (indicating imminent future action in this context).

²⁴ **tn** The words “he says” are supplied in the translation for clarification. God’s charges against his people follow.

²⁵ **tn** Heb “Israel, and I will testify against you.” The imperative “listen” is understood in the second line by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

²⁶ **tn** Or “rebuking.”

or because of your burnt sacrifices that you continually offer me.¹

50:9 I do not need to take² a bull from your household or goats from your sheepfolds.

50:10 For every wild animal in the forest belongs to me, as well as the cattle that graze on a thousand hills.³

50:11 I keep track of⁴ every bird in the hills, and the insects⁵ of the field are mine.

50:12 Even if I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world and all it contains belong to me.

50:13 Do I eat the flesh of bulls? Do I drink the blood of goats?⁶

50:14 Present to God a thank-offering! Repay your vows to the sovereign One!⁷

50:15 Pray to me when you are in trouble!⁸ I will deliver you, and you will honor me!⁹

50:16 God says this to the evildoer:¹⁰ “How can you declare my commands, and talk about my covenant?¹¹

50:17 For you hate instruction and reject my words.¹²

50:18 When you see a thief, you join him;¹³ you associate with men who are unfaithful to their wives.¹⁴

50:19 You do damage with words,¹⁵ and use your tongue to deceive.¹⁶

50:20 You plot against your brother;¹⁷ you slander your own brother.¹⁸

50:21 When you did these things, I was silent,¹⁹

so you thought I was exactly like you.²⁰ But now I will condemn²¹ you and state my case against you!²²

50:22 Carefully consider this, you who reject God!²³

Otherwise I will rip you to shreds²⁴ and no one will be able to rescue you.

50:23 Whoever presents a thank-offering honors me.²⁵

To whoever obeys my commands, I will reveal my power to deliver.²⁶

¹ **tn** *Heb* “and your burnt sacrifices before me continually.”

² **tn** Or “I will not take.”

³ **tn** *Heb* “[the] animals on a thousand hills.” The words “that graze” are supplied in the translation for clarification. The term *בהמות* (*b³hemot*, “animal”) refers here to cattle (see Ps 104:14).

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “I know.”

⁵ **tn** The precise referent of the Hebrew word, which occurs only here and in Ps 80:13, is uncertain. Aramaic, Arabic and Akkadian cognates refer to insects, such as locusts or crickets.

⁶ **tn** The rhetorical questions assume an emphatic negative response, “Of course not!”

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “Most High.” This divine title (*עֲלִיּוֹן*, *’elyon*) pictures God as the exalted ruler of the universe who vindicates the innocent and judges the wicked. See especially Pss 7:17; 9:2; 18:13; 21:7; 47:2.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “call [to] me in a day of trouble.”

⁹ **sn** In vv. 7-15 the Lord makes it clear that he was not rebuking Israel because they had failed to offer sacrifices (v. 8a). On the contrary, they had been faithful in doing so (v. 8b). However, their understanding of the essence of their relationship with God was confused. Apparently they believed that he needed/desired such sacrifices and that offering them would ensure their prosperity. But the Lord owns all the animals of the world and did not need Israel’s meager sacrifices (vv. 9-13). Other aspects of the relationship were more important to the Lord. He desired Israel to be thankful for his blessings (v. 14a), to demonstrate gratitude for his intervention by repaying the vows they made to him (v. 14b), and to acknowledge their absolute dependence on him (v. 15a). Rather than viewing their sacrifices as somehow essential to God’s well-being, they needed to understand their dependence on him.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “evil [one].” The singular adjective is used here in a representative sense; it refers to those within the larger covenant community who have blatantly violated the Lord’s commandments. In the psalms the “wicked” (*רָשָׁעִים*, *’rasha’im*) are typically proud, practical atheists (Ps 10:2, 4, 11) who hate God’s commands, commit sinful deeds, speak lies and slander, and cheat others (Ps 37:21).

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “What to you to declare my commands and lift up my covenant upon your mouth?” The rhetorical question expresses sarcastic amazement. The Lord is shocked that such evildoers would give lip-service to his covenantal demands, for their lifestyle is completely opposed to his standards (see vv. 18-20).

¹² **tn** *Heb* “and throw my words behind you.”

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “you run with him.”

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “and with adulterers [is] your portion.”

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “your mouth you send with evil.”

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “and your tongue binds together [i.e., “frames”] deceit.”

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “you sit, against your brother you speak.” To “sit” and “speak” against someone implies plotting against that person (see Ps 119:23).

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “against the son of your mother you give a fault.”

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “these things you did and I was silent.” Some interpret the second clause (“and I was silent”) as a rhetorical question expecting a negative answer, “[When you do these things], should I keep silent?” (cf. NEB). See GKC 335 §112.cc.

sn The Lord was *silent* in the sense that he delayed punishment. Of course, God’s patience toward sinners eventually runs out. The divine “silence” is only temporary (see v. 3, where the psalmist, having described God’s arrival, observes that “he is not silent”).

²⁰ **tn** The Hebrew infinitive construct (*הַיְיֹתָ*, *heyot*) appears to function like the infinitive absolute here, adding emphasis to the following finite verbal form (*אָהַרְתָּ*, *’ahyeh*). See GKC 339-40 §113.a. Some prefer to emend *הַיְיֹתָ* (*heyot*) to the infinitive absolute form *הָיָה* (*hayo*).

²¹ **tn** Or “rebuke” (see v. 8).

²² **tn** *Heb* “and I will set in order [my case against you] to your eyes.” The cohortative form expresses the Lord’s resolve to accuse and judge the wicked.

²³ **tn** *Heb* “[you who] forget God.” “Forgetting God” here means forgetting about his commandments and not respecting his moral authority.

²⁴ **sn** Elsewhere in the psalms this verb is used (within a metaphorical framework) of a lion tearing its prey (see Pss 7:2; 17:12; 22:13).

²⁵ **sn** The reference to a *thank-offering* recalls the earlier statement made in v. 14. Gratitude characterizes genuine worship.

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* “and [to one who] sets a way I will show the deliverance of God.” Elsewhere the phrase “set a way” simply means “to travel” (see Gen 30:36; cf. NRSV). The present translation assumes an emendation of *יָשַׁם* (*’sam derekh*) to *יִשְׁמַר* (*’shomer derekh*), “and [the one who] keeps my ways” [i.e., commands, see Pss 18:21; 37:34]. Another option is to read *יִשְׁמַר דַּרְכּוֹ* (*’shomer darko*, “and [the one who] guards his way,” i.e., “the one who is careful to follow a godly lifestyle”; see Ps 39:1).

Psalm 51¹

For the music director; a psalm of David, written when Nathan the prophet confronted him after David's affair with Bathsheba.²

51:1 Have mercy on me, O God, because of³ your loyal love!

Because of⁴ your great compassion, wipe away my rebellious acts!⁵

51:2 Wash away my wrongdoing!⁶
Cleave me of my sin!⁷

51:3 For I am aware of⁸ my rebellious acts;

I am forever conscious of my sin.⁹

51:4 Against you – you above all¹⁰ – I have sinned;

I have done what is evil in your sight.

¹ **sn** Psalm 51. The psalmist confesses his sinfulness to God and begs for forgiveness and a transformation of his inner character. According to the psalm superscription, David offered this prayer when Nathan confronted him with his sin following the king's affair with Bathsheba (see 2 Sam 11-12). However, the final two verses of the psalm hardly fit this situation, for they assume the walls of Jerusalem have been destroyed and that the sacrificial system has been temporarily suspended. These verses are probably an addition to the psalm made during the period of exile following the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. The exiles could relate to David's experience, for they, like him, and had been forced to confront their sin. They appropriated David's ancient prayer and applied it to their own circumstances.

² **tn** Heb "a psalm by David, when Nathan the prophet came to him when he had gone to Bathsheba."

³ **tn** Or "according to."

⁴ **tn** Or "according to."

⁵ **tn** Traditionally "blot out my transgressions." Because of the reference to washing and cleansing in the following verse, it is likely that the psalmist is comparing forgiveness to wiping an object clean (note the use of the verb *מָחָה* (*makhah*) in the sense of "wipe clean; dry" in 2 Kgs 21:13; Prov 30:20; Isa 25:8). Another option is that the psalmist is comparing forgiveness to erasing or blotting out names from a register (see Exod 32:32-33). In this case one might translate, "erase all record of my rebellious acts."

⁶ **tn** Heb "Thoroughly wash me from my wrongdoing."

⁷ **sn** In vv. 1b-2 the psalmist uses three different words to emphasize the multifaceted character and degree of his sin. Whatever one wants to call it ("rebellious acts," "wrongdoing," "sin"), he has done it and stands morally polluted in God's sight. The same three words appear in Exod 34:7, which emphasizes that God is willing to forgive sin in all of its many dimensions. In v. 2 the psalmist compares forgiveness and restoration to physical cleansing. Perhaps he likens spiritual cleansing to the purification rites of priestly law.

⁸ **tn** Heb "know."

⁹ **tn** Heb "and my sin [is] in front of me continually."

¹⁰ **tn** Heb "only you," as if the psalmist had sinned exclusively against God and no other. Since the Hebrew verb *חָטָא* (*hata'*, "to sin") is used elsewhere of sinful acts against people (see BDB 306 s.v. 2.a) and David (the presumed author) certainly sinned when he murdered Uriah (2 Sam 12:9), it is likely that the psalmist is overstating the case to suggest that the attack on Uriah was ultimately an attack on God himself. To clarify the point of the hyperbole, the translation uses "above all," rather than the potentially confusing "only."

So¹¹ you are just when you confront me;¹²
you are right when you condemn me.¹³

51:5 Look, I was guilty of sin from birth,
a sinner the moment my mother conceived me.¹⁴

51:6 Look,¹⁵ you desire¹⁶ integrity in the inner man;¹⁷

you want me to possess wisdom.¹⁸

51:7 Sprinkle me¹⁹ with water²⁰ and I will be pure;²¹

wash me²² and I will be whiter than snow.²³

51:8 Grant me the ultimate joy of being forgiven!²⁴

¹¹ **tn** The Hebrew term *לְמַעַן* (*l'ma'an*) normally indicates purpose ("in order that"), but here it introduces a logical consequence of the preceding statement. (Taking the clause as indicating purpose here would yield a theologically preposterous idea – the psalmist purposely sinned so that God's justice might be vindicated!) For other examples of *לְמַעַן* indicating result, see 2 Kgs 22:17; Jer 27:15; Amos 2:7, as well as IBHS 638-40 §38.3.

¹² **tn** Heb "when you speak." In this context the psalmist refers to God's word of condemnation against his sin delivered through Nathan (cf. 2 Sam 12:7-12).

¹³ **tn** Heb "when you judge."

¹⁴ **tn** Heb "Look, in wrongdoing I was brought forth, and in sin my mother conceived me." The prefixed verbal form in the second line is probably a preterite (without *vav* [v] consecutive), stating a simple historical fact. The psalmist is not suggesting that he was conceived through an inappropriate sexual relationship (although the verse has sometimes been understood to mean that, or even that *all* sexual relationships are sinful). The psalmist's point is that he has been a sinner from the very moment his personal existence began. By going back beyond the time of birth to the moment of conception, the psalmist makes his point more emphatically in the second line than in the first.

¹⁵ **sn** The juxtaposition of two occurrences of "look" in vv. 5-6 draws attention to the sharp contrast between the sinful reality of the psalmist's condition and the lofty ideal God has for him.

¹⁶ **tn** The perfect is used in a generalizing sense here.

¹⁷ **tn** Heb "in the covered [places]," i.e., in the inner man.

¹⁸ **tn** Heb "in the secret [place] wisdom you cause me to know." The Hiphil verbal form is causative, while the imperfect is used in a modal sense to indicate God's desire (note the parallel verb "desire").

¹⁹ **sn** *You want me to possess wisdom.* Here "wisdom" does not mean "intelligence" or "learning," but refers to moral insight and skill.

²⁰ **tn** The imperfect verbal form is used here to express the psalmist's wish or request.

²¹ **tn** Heb "cleanse me with hyssop." "Hyssop" was a small plant (see 1 Kgs 4:33) used to apply water (or blood) in purification rites (see Exod 12:22; Lev 14:4-6, 49-52; Num 19:6-18). The psalmist uses the language and imagery of such rites to describe spiritual cleansing through forgiveness.

²² **tn** After the preceding imperfect, the imperfect with *vav* (v) conjunctive indicates result.

²³ **tn** The imperfect verbal form is used here to express the psalmist's wish or request.

²⁴ **sn** *I will be whiter than snow.* Whiteness here symbolizes the moral purity resulting from forgiveness (see Isa 1:18).

²⁵ **tn** Heb "cause me to hear happiness and joy." The language is metonymic: the effect of forgiveness (joy) has been substituted for its cause. The psalmist probably alludes here to an assuring word from God announcing that his sins are forgiven (a so-called oracle of forgiveness). The imperfect verbal form is used here to express the psalmist's wish or request. The synonyms "happiness" and "joy" are joined together as a hendiadys to emphasize the degree of joy he anticipates.

May the bones¹ you crushed rejoice!²
51:9 Hide your face³ from my sins!
 Wipe away⁴ all my guilt!
51:10 Create for me a pure heart, O God!⁵
 Renew a resolute spirit within me!⁶
51:11 Do not reject me!⁷
 Do not take your Holy Spirit⁸ away from
 me!⁹
51:12 Let me again experience the joy of
 your deliverance!
 Sustain me by giving me the desire to
 obey!¹⁰
51:13 Then I will teach¹¹ rebels your merciful
 ways,¹²
 and sinners will turn¹³ to you.
51:14 Rescue me from the guilt of murder,¹⁴ O God, the God who delivers me!

Then my tongue will shout for joy because of your deliverance.¹⁵
51:15 O Lord, give me the words!¹⁶
 Then my mouth will praise you.¹⁷
51:16 Certainly¹⁸ you do not want a sacrifice, or else I would offer it,¹⁹
 you do not desire a burnt sacrifice.²⁰
51:17 The sacrifices God desires are a
 humble spirit²¹ –
 O God, a humble and repentant heart²²
 you will not reject.²³
51:18 Because you favor Zion, do what is
 good for her!²⁴
 Fortify²⁵ the walls of Jerusalem!²⁶
51:19 Then you will accept²⁷ the proper
 sacrifices, burnt sacrifices and whole
 offerings;
 then bulls will be sacrificed²⁸ on your
 altar.²⁹

¹ **sn** *May the bones you crushed rejoice.* The psalmist compares his sinful condition to that of a person who has been physically battered and crushed. Within this metaphorical framework, his “bones” are the seat of his emotional strength.

² **tn** In this context of petitionary prayer, the prefixed verbal form is understood as a jussive, expressing the psalmist’s wish or request.

³ **sn** In this context *Hide your face from my sins* means “Do not hold me accountable for my sins.”

⁴ **tn** See the note on the similar expression “wipe away my rebellious acts” in v. 1.

⁵ **sn** The *heart* is viewed here as the seat of the psalmist’s motives and moral character.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “and a reliable spirit renew in my inner being.”

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “do not cast me away from before you.”

⁸ **sn** *Your holy Spirit.* The personal Spirit of God is mentioned frequently in the OT, but only here and in Isa 63:10-11 is he called “your/his holy Spirit.”

⁹ **sn** *Do not take...away.* The psalmist expresses his fear that, due to his sin, God will take away the Holy Spirit from him. NT believers enjoy the permanent gift of the Holy Spirit and need not make such a request nor fear such a consequence. However, in the OT God’s Spirit empowered certain individuals for special tasks and only temporarily resided in them. For example, when God rejected Saul as king and chose David to replace him, the divine Spirit left Saul and came upon David (1 Sam 16:13-14).

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “and [with] a willing spirit sustain me.” The psalmist asks that God make him the kind of person who willingly obeys the divine commandments. The imperfect verbal form is used here to express the psalmist’s wish or request.

¹¹ **tn** The cohortative expresses the psalmist’s resolve. This may be a vow or promise. If forgiven, the psalmist will “repay” the Lord by declaring God’s mercy and motivating other sinners to repent.

¹² **tn** *Heb* “your ways.” The word “merciful” is added for clarification. God’s “ways” are sometimes his commands, but in this context, where the teaching of God’s ways motivates repentance (see the next line), it is more likely that God’s merciful and compassionate way of dealing with sinners is in view. Thanksgiving songs praising God for his deliverance typically focus on these divine attributes (see Pss 34, 41, 116, 138).

¹³ **tn** Or “return,” i.e., in repentance.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “from bloodshed.” “Bloodshed” here stands by metonymy for the guilt which it produces.

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “my tongue will shout for joy your deliverance.” Another option is to take the prefixed verbal form as a jussive, “may my tongue shout for joy.” However, the pattern in vv. 12-15 appears to be prayer/request (see vv. 12, 14a, 15a) followed by promise/vow (see vv. 13, 14b, 15b).

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “open my lips.” The imperfect verbal form is used here to express the psalmist’s wish or request.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “and my mouth will declare your praise.”

¹⁸ **tn** Or “For.” The translation assumes the particle is asseverative (i.e., emphasizing: “certainly”). (Some translations that consider the particle asseverative leave it untranslated.) If taken as causal or explanatory (“for”, cf. NRSV), the verse would explain why the psalmist is pleading for forgiveness, rather than merely offering a sacrifice.

¹⁹ **tn** The translation assumes that the cohortative is used in a hypothetical manner in a formally unmarked conditional sentence, “You do not want a sacrifice, should I offer [it]” (cf. NEB). For other examples of cohortatives in the protasis (“if” clause) of a conditional sentence, see GKC 320 §108.e. (It should be noted, however, that GKC understands this particular verse in a different manner. See GKC 320 §108.f, where it is suggested that the cohortative is part of an apodosis with the protasis being suppressed.)

²⁰ **sn** *You do not desire a burnt sacrifice.* The terminology used in v. 16 does not refer to expiatory sacrifices, but to dedication and communion offerings. This is not a categorical denial of the sacrificial system in general or of the importance of such offerings. The psalmist is talking about his specific situation. Dedication and communion offerings have their proper place in worship (see v. 19), but God requires something more fundamental, a repentant and humble attitude (see v. 17), before these offerings can have real meaning.

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “a broken spirit.”

²² **tn** *Heb* “a broken and crushed heart.”

²³ **tn** Or “despise.”

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* “do what is good for Zion in your favor.”

²⁵ **tn** Or “Build.” The imperfect verbal form is used here to express the psalmist’s wish or request.

²⁶ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

²⁷ **tn** Or “desire, take delight in.”

²⁸ **tn** *Heb* “then they will offer up bulls.” The third plural subject is indefinite.

²⁹ **sn** Verses 18-19 appear to reflect the exilic period, when the city’s walls lay in ruins and the sacrificial system had been disrupted.

Psalm 52¹

For the music director; a well-written song² by David. It was written when Doeg the Edomite went and informed Saul: “David has arrived at the home of Ahimelech.”³

52:1 Why do you boast about your evil plans,⁴ O powerful man?

God’s loyal love protects me all day long!⁵

52:2 Your tongue carries out your destructive plans,⁶ it is as effective as a sharp razor, O deceiver.⁷

52:3 You love evil more than good, lies more than speaking the truth.⁸ (Selah)

52:4 You love to use all the words that destroy,⁹ and the tongue that deceives.

52:5 Yet¹⁰ God will make you a permanent heap of ruins.¹¹

He will scoop you up¹² and remove you from your home,¹³

he will uproot you from the land of the living. (Selah)

52:6 When the godly see this, they will be filled with awe, and will mock the evildoer, saying:¹⁴

52:7 “Look, here is the man who would not make¹⁵ God his protector! He trusted in his great wealth and was confident about his plans to destroy others.”¹⁶

52:8 But I¹⁷ am like a flourishing¹⁸ olive tree in the house of God;

I continually¹⁹ trust in God’s loyal love.

52:9 I will continually²⁰ thank you when²¹ you execute judgment;²²

I will rely²³ on you,²⁴ for your loyal followers know you are good.²⁵

¹ **sn** Psalm 52. The psalmist confidently confronts his enemy and affirms that God will destroy evildoers and vindicate the godly.

² **tn** The meaning of the Hebrew term מַשְׁכִּיל (*maskil*) is uncertain. The word is derived from a verb meaning “to be prudent; to be wise.” Various options are: “a contemplative song,” “a song imparting moral wisdom,” or “a skillful [i.e., well-written] song.” The term occurs in the superscriptions of Pss 32, 42, 44, 45, 52-55, 74, 78, 88, 89, and 142, as well as in Ps 47:7.

³ **tn** *Heb* “when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul and said to him, ‘David has come to the house of Ahimelech.’”

sn According to the superscription, David wrote this psalm during the period when Saul was seeking his life. On one occasion Doeg the Edomite, Saul’s head shepherd (1 Sam 21:7), informed Saul of David’s whereabouts (see 1 Sam 21-22).

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “Why do you boast in evil?”

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “the loyal love of God [is] all the day.” In this context, where the psalmist is threatened by his enemy, the point seems to be that the psalmist is protected by God’s loyal love at all times.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “destruction your tongue devises.”

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “like a sharpened razor, doer of deceit.” The masculine participle עָשָׂה (*asah*) is understood as a substantival vocative, addressed to the powerful man.

⁸ **tn** Or “deceit more than speaking what is right.”

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “you love all the words of swallowing.” Traditionally בָּלַע (*balā*) has been taken to mean “swallowing” in the sense of “devouring” or “destructive” (see BDB 118 s.v. בָּלַע). HALOT 135 s.v. III בָּלַע proposes a homonym here, meaning “confusion.” This would fit the immediate context nicely and provide a close parallel to the following line, which refers to deceptive words.

¹⁰ **tn** The adverb עַד (*gam*, “also; even”) is translated here in an adversative sense (“yet”). It highlights the contrastive correspondence between the evildoer’s behavior and God’s response.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “will tear you down forever.”

¹² **tn** This rare verb הִחָתֵךְ (*khatah*) occurs only here and in Prov 6:27; 25:22; Isa 30:14.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “from [your] tent.”

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “and the godly will see and will fear and at him will laugh.”

¹⁵ **tn** The imperfect verbal form here draws attention to the ongoing nature of the action. The evildoer customarily rejected God and trusted in his own abilities. Another option is to take the imperfect as generalizing, “[here is the man who] does not make.”

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “he was strong in his destruction.” “Destruction” must refer back to the destructive plans mentioned in v. 2. The verb (derived from the root עָזַז, ‘*azaz*, “be strong”) as it stands is either an imperfect (if so, probably used in a customary sense) or a preterite (without vav [ו] consecutive). However the form should probably be emended to וַיַּעַז (vayyā‘az), a Qal preterite (with vav [ו] consecutive) from עָזַז. Note the preterite form without vav (ו) consecutive in the preceding line (וַיִּבְטַח, vayyivtakh, “and he trusted”). The prefixed vav (ו) was likely omitted by haplography (note the suffixed vav [ו] on the preceding וַיִּשְׁרוּ, ‘*oshero*, “his wealth”).

¹⁷ **tn** The disjunctive construction (vav [ו] + subject) highlights the contrast between the evildoer’s destiny (vv. 5-7) and that of the godly psalmist’s security.

¹⁸ **tn** Or “luxuriant, green, leafy.”

¹⁹ **tn** Or, hyperbolically, “forever and ever.”

²⁰ **tn** Or, hyperbolically, “forever.”

²¹ **tn** Or “for.”

²² **tn** *Heb* “you have acted.” The perfect verbal form (1) probably indicates a future perfect here. The psalmist promises to give thanks when the expected vindication has been accomplished. Other options include (2) a generalizing (“for you act”) or (3) rhetorical (“for you will act”) use.

²³ **tn** Or “wait.”

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* “your name.” God’s “name” refers here to his reputation and revealed character.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “for it is good in front of your loyal followers.”

Psalms 53¹

For the music director; according to the *machalath* style;² a well-written song³ by David.

53:1 Fools say to themselves,⁴ “There is no God.”⁵

They sin and commit evil deeds;⁶ none of them does what is right.⁷

53:2 God looks down from heaven⁸ at the human race,⁹ to see if there is anyone who is wise¹⁰ and seeks God.¹¹

53:3 Everyone rejects God;¹² they are all morally corrupt.¹³

None of them does what is right,¹⁴ not even one!

¹ **sn** Psalm 53. This psalm is very similar to Ps 14. The major difference comes in v. 5, which corresponds to, but differs quite a bit from, Ps 14:5-6, and in the use of the divine name. Ps 14 uses “the LORD” (יהוה, *YHWH*, “Yahweh”) in vv. 2a, 4, 6, and 7, while Ps 53 employs “God” (אלהים, *’elohim*) throughout, as one might expect in Pss 42-83, where the name “Yahweh” is relatively infrequent. The psalmist observes that the human race is morally corrupt. Evil-doers oppress God’s people, but the psalmist is confident of God’s protection and anticipates a day when God will vindicate Israel.

² **tn** The meaning of the Hebrew term מַחְלָלֶת (*makhlat*, “machalath”) is uncertain; perhaps it refers to a particular style of music, a tune title, or a musical instrument. The term also appears in the heading of Ps 52.

³ **tn** The meaning of the Hebrew term מַשְׁכִּיל (*maskil*) is uncertain. See the note on the phrase “well-written song” in the superscription of Ps 52.

⁴ **tn** Heb “a fool says in his heart.” The singular is used here in a collective or representative sense; the typical fool is envisioned.

⁵ **sn** *There is no God.* This statement is probably not a philosophical assertion that God does not exist, but rather a confident affirmation that he is unconcerned about how men live morally and ethically (see Ps 10:4, 11).

⁶ **tn** Heb “they act corruptly, they do evil [with] injustice.” Ps 14:1 יַעֲלֶה לָהּ (*’alilah*, “a deed”) instead of אָוֵל (*’aval*, “injustice”). The verbs describe the typical behavior of the wicked. The subject of the plural verbs is “sons of man” (v. 2). The entire human race is characterized by sinful behavior. This practical atheism – living as if there is no God who will hold them accountable for their actions – makes them fools, for one of the earmarks of folly is to fail to anticipate the long range consequences of one’s behavior.

⁷ **tn** Heb “there is none that does good.”

⁸ **sn** The picture of the LORD looking down from heaven draws attention to his sovereignty over the world.

⁹ **tn** Heb “upon the sons of man.”

¹⁰ **tn** Or “acts wisely.” The Hiphil is exhibitive.

¹¹ **tn** That is, who seeks to have a relationship with God by obeying and worshipping him.

¹² **tn** Heb “all of it turns away.” Ps 14:1 has הִבֵּל (*hakkol*) instead of בָּלוּי, and קָר (*sar*, “turn aside”) instead of סָג (*sag*, “turn away”).

¹³ **tn** Heb “together they are corrupt.”

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “there is none that does good.”

53:4 All those who behave wickedly¹⁵ do not understand¹⁶ –

those who devour my people as if they were eating bread, and do not call out to God.

53:5 They are absolutely terrified,¹⁷ even by things that do not normally cause fear.¹⁸

For God annihilates¹⁹ those who attack you.²⁰

You are able to humiliate them because God has rejected them.²¹

53:6 I wish the deliverance²² of Israel would come from Zion!

When God restores the well-being of his people,²³

may Jacob rejoice,²⁴ may Israel be happy!²⁵

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “the workers of wickedness.” See Pss 5:5; 6:8. Ps 14:4 adds כֹּל (*kol*, “all of”) before “workers of wickedness.”

¹⁶ **tn** Heb “Do they not understand?” The rhetorical question expresses the psalmist’s amazement at their apparent lack of understanding. This may refer to their lack of moral understanding, but it more likely refers to their failure to anticipate God’s defense of his people (see vv. 5-6).

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “there they are afraid [with] fear.” The perfect verbal form is probably used in a rhetorical manner; the psalmist describes the future demise of the oppressors as if it were already occurring. The adverb שָׁם (*sham*, “there”) is also used here for dramatic effect, as the psalmist envisions the wicked standing in fear at a spot that is this vivid in his imagination (BDB 1027 s.v.). The cognate accusative following the verb emphasizes the degree of their terror (“absolutely”).

¹⁸ **tn** Heb “there is no fear.” Apparently this means the evil-doers are so traumatized with panic (see v. 5b) that they now jump with fear at everything, even those things that would not normally cause fear. Ps 14:5 omits this line.

¹⁹ **tn** Heb “scatters the bones.” The perfect is used in a rhetorical manner, describing this future judgment as if it were already accomplished. Scattering the bones alludes to the aftermath of a battle. God annihilates his enemies, leaving their carcasses spread all over the battlefield. As the bodies are devoured by wild animals and decay, the bones of God’s dead enemies are exposed. See Ps 141:7.

²⁰ **tn** Heb “[those who] encamp [against] you.” The second person masculine singular pronominal suffix probably refers to God’s people viewed as a collective whole. Instead of “for God scatters the bones of those who encamp against you,” Ps 14:5 reads, “for God is with a godly generation.”

²¹ **tn** Once again the perfect is used in a rhetorical manner, describing this future judgment as if it were already accomplished. As in the previous line, God’s people are probably addressed. The second person singular verb form is apparently collective, suggesting that the people are viewed here as a unified whole. Ps 14:6 reads here “the counsel of the oppressed you put to shame, even though God is his shelter,” the words being addressed to the wicked.

²² **tn** This refers metonymically to God, the one who lives in Zion and provides deliverance for Israel.

²³ **tn** Heb “turns with a turning [toward] his people.” The Hebrew term יָשׁוּבָה (*shuvut*) is apparently a cognate accusative of שׁוּב (*shuv*).

²⁴ **tn** The verb form is jussive.

²⁵ **tn** Because the parallel verb is jussive, this verb, which is ambiguous in form, should be taken as a jussive as well.

Psalm 54^A

For the music director, to be accompanied by stringed instruments; a well-written song² by David. It was written when the Ziphites came and informed Saul: "David is hiding with us."³

54:1 O God, deliver me by your name!⁴
Vindicate me⁵ by your power!

54:2 O God, listen to my prayer!

Pay attention to what I say!⁶

54:3 For foreigners⁷ attack me;⁸
ruthless men, who do not respect God,
seek my life.⁹ (Selah)

54:4 Look, God is my deliverer!¹⁰
The Lord is among those who support
me.¹¹

54:5 May those who wait to ambush me¹²
be repaid for their evil!¹³
As a demonstration of your faithfulness,¹⁴
destroy them!

54:6 With a freewill offering I will sacrifice¹⁵ to you!

I will give thanks to your name, O LORD,
for it is good!

54:7 Surely¹⁶ he rescues me from all
trouble.¹⁷

1 sn Psalm 54. The psalmist asks God for protection against his enemies, confidently affirms that God will vindicate him, and promises to give thanks to God for his saving intervention.

2 tn The meaning of the Hebrew term מַשְׁכִּיל (maskil) is uncertain. See the note on the phrase "well-written song" in the superscription of Ps 52.

3 tn Heb "Is not David hiding with us?"

sn According to the superscription, David wrote this psalm during the period when Saul was seeking his life. On one occasion the Ziphites informed Saul that David was hiding in their territory (see 1 Sam 23:19-20).

4 tn God's "name" refers here to his reputation and revealed character, which would instill fear in the psalmist's enemies (see C. A. Briggs and E. G. Briggs, *Psalms* [ICC], 2:17).

5 tn The imperfect verbal form is used here to express the psalmist's wish or request.

6 tn Heb "to the words of my mouth."

7 tc Many medieval Hebrew mss read זְדִים (zedim, "proud ones") rather than זָרִים (zarim, "foreigners"). (No matter which reading one chooses as original, dalet-resh confusion accounts for the existence of the variant.) The term זְדִים ("proud ones") occurs in parallelism with עֲרִיסִים (aritsim, "violent ones") in Ps 86:14 and Isa 13:11. However, זָרִים (zarim, "foreigners") is parallel to עֲרִיסִים (aritsim, "violent ones") in Isa 25:5; 29:5; Ezek 28:7; 31:12.

8 tn Heb "rise against me."

9 tn Heb "and ruthless ones seek my life, they do not set God in front of them."

10 tn Or "my helper."

11 tn Or "sustain my life."

12 tn Heb "to those who watch me [with evil intent]." See also Pss 5:8; 27:11; 56:2.

13 tn The *Kethib* (consonantal text) reads a Qal imperfect, "the evil will return," while the *Qere* (marginal reading) has a Hiphil imperfect, "he will repay." The parallel line has an imperative (indicating a prayer/request), so it is best to read a jussive form (yashov, "let it [the evil] return") here.

14 tn Heb "in [or "by"] your faithfulness."

15 tn The cohortative verbal form expresses the psalmist's resolve/vow to praise.

16 tn Or "for," indicating a more specific reason why he will praise the Lord's name (cf. v. 6).

17 tn The perfects in v. 7 are probably rhetorical, indicating the psalmist's certitude and confidence that God will inter-

and I triumph over my enemies.¹⁸

Psalm 55¹⁹

For the music director, to be accompanied by stringed instruments; a well-written song²⁰ by David.

55:1 Listen, O God, to my prayer!
Do not ignore²¹ my appeal for mercy!

55:2 Pay attention to me and answer me!
I am so upset²² and distressed,²³ I am beside myself,²⁴

55:3 because of what the enemy says,²⁵
and because of how the wicked²⁶ pressure
me,²⁷

for they hurl trouble²⁸ down upon me²⁹
and angrily attack me.

55:4 My heart beats violently³⁰ within me;
the horrors of death overcome me.³¹

55:5 Fear and panic overpower me,³²

vene. The psalmist is so confident of God's positive response to his prayer, he can describe God's deliverance and his own vindication as if they were occurring or had already occurred.

18 tn Heb "and on my enemies my eyes look."

19 sn Psalm 55. The suffering and oppressed author laments that one of his friends has betrayed him, but he is confident that God will vindicate him by punishing his deceitful enemies.

20 tn The meaning of the Hebrew term מַשְׁכִּיל (maskil) is uncertain. See the note on the phrase "well-written song" in the superscription of Ps 52.

21 tn Heb "hide yourself from."

22 tn Or "restless" (see Gen 27:40). The Hiphil is intransitive-exhibitive, indicating the outward display of an inner attitude.

23 tn Heb "in my complaint."

24 tn The verb is a Hiphil cohortative from הוּם (hum), which means "to confuse someone" in the Qal and "to go wild" in the Niphal. An Arabic cognate means "to be out of one's senses, to wander about." With the *vav* (ו) conjunctive prefixed to it, the cohortative probably indicates the result or effect of the preceding main verb. Some prefer to emend the form to הוּמָהּ (hūmah), a Niphal of הוּם (hum), or to הוּמָהּ (hūmah), a Qal imperfect from הוּמָהּ (hamah, "to moan"). Many also prefer to take this verb with what follows (see v. 3).

25 tn Heb "because of [the] voice of [the] enemy."

26 tn The singular forms "enemy" and "wicked" are collective or representative, as the plural verb forms in the second half of the verse indicate.

27 tn Heb "from before the pressure of the wicked." Some suggest the meaning "screech" (note the parallel "voice"; cf. NEB "shrill clamour"; NRSV "clamor") for the rare noun עָקָה (aqah, "pressure").

28 tn Heb "wickedness," but here the term refers to the destructive effects of their wicked acts.

29 tc The verb form in the MT appears to be a Hiphil imperfect from the root מוּט (mut, "to sway"), but the Hiphil occurs only here and in the *Kethib* (consonantal text) of Ps 140:10, where the form יַמְטֵר (yamter, "let him rain down") should probably be read. Here in Ps 55:3 it is preferable to read יַמְטֵר (yamtiru, "they rain down"). It is odd for "rain down" to be used with an abstract object like "wickedness," but in Job 20:23 God "rains down" anger (unless one emends the text there; see BHS).

30 tn Heb "shakes, trembles."

31 tn Heb "the terrors of death have fallen on me."

32 tn Heb "fear and trembling enter into me."

terror overwhelms¹ me.

55:6 I say,² “I wish I had wings like a dove!

I would fly away and settle in a safe place!

55:7 Look, I will escape to a distant place; I will stay in the wilderness. (Selah)

55:8 I will hurry off to a place that is safe from the strong wind³ and the gale.”

55:9 Confuse them,⁴ O Lord!

Frustrate their plans!⁵

For I see violence and conflict in the city.

55:10 Day and night they walk around on its walls,⁶

while wickedness and destruction⁷ are within it.

55:11 Disaster is within it; violence⁸ and deceit do not depart from its public square.

55:12 Indeed,⁹ it is not an enemy who insults me,

or else I could bear it;

it is not one who hates me who arrogantly taunts me,¹⁰

or else I could hide from him.

55:13 But it is you,¹¹ a man like me,¹² my close friend in whom I confided.¹³

55:14 We would share personal thoughts with each other;¹⁴

in God’s temple we would walk together among the crowd.

55:15 May death destroy them!¹⁵

May they go down alive into Sheol!¹⁶

For evil is in their dwelling place and in their midst.

55:16 As for me, I will call out to God, and the LORD will deliver me.

55:17 During the evening, morning, and noontime

I will lament and moan,¹⁷

and he will hear¹⁸ me.¹⁹

55:18 He will rescue²⁰ me and protect me from those who attack me,²¹

even though²² they greatly outnumber me.²³

55:19 God, the one who has reigned as king from long ago,

will hear and humiliate them.²⁴ (Selah)

¹ **tn** *Heb* “covers.” The prefixed verbal form with *vav* (ו) consecutive carries on the descriptive (present progressive) force of the preceding imperfect.

² **tn** The prefixed verbal form with *vav* (ו) consecutive carries on the descriptive (present progressive) force of the verbs in v. 5.

³ **tn** *Heb* “[the] wind [that] sweeps away.” The verb *קָנָה* (*sa’ah*, “sweep away”) occurs only here in the OT (see H. R. Cohen, *Biblical Hapax Legomena* [SBLDS], 120).

⁴ **tn** Traditionally *בָּלַע* (*bala’*) has been taken to mean “swallow” in the sense of “devour” or “destroy” (cf. KJV), but this may be a homonym meaning “confuse” (see BDB 118 s.v. *בָּלַע*; HALOT 135 s.v. III **בָּלַע*). “Their tongue” is the understood object of the verb (see the next line).

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “split their tongue,” which apparently means “confuse their speech,” or, more paraphrastically, “frustrate the plans they devise with their tongues.”

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “day and night they surround it, upon its walls.” Personified “violence and conflict” are the likely subjects. They are compared to watchmen on the city’s walls.

⁷ **sn** *Wickedness and destruction*. These terms are also closely associated in Ps 7:14.

⁸ **tn** Or “injury, harm.”

⁹ **tn** Or “for.”

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “[who] magnifies against me.” See Pss 35:26; 38:16.

¹¹ **sn** *It is you*. The psalmist addresses the apparent ring-leader of the opposition, an individual who was once his friend.

¹² **tn** *Heb* “a man according to my value,” i.e., “a person such as I.”

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “my close friend, one known by me.”

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “who together we would make counsel sweet.” The imperfect verbal forms here and in the next line draw attention to the ongoing nature of the actions (the so-called customary use of the imperfect). Their relationship was characterized by such intimacy and friendship. See *IBHS* 502-3 §31.2b.

¹⁵ **tc** The meaning of the MT is unclear. The *Kethib* (consonantal text) reads *יִשְׁחַמְוֵת עֲלֵינוּ* (*yashimavet ’alemo*, “May devastation [be] upon them!”). The proposed noun *יִשְׁחַמְוֵת* occurs only here and perhaps in the place name Beth-Jeshimoth in Num 33:49. The *Qere* (marginal text) has *יָשִׁי בְּוֶת עֲלֵינוּ* (*yashi mavet ’alemo*). The verbal form *יָשִׁי* is apparently an alternate form of *נָשָׂא* (*yashi’*), a Hiphil imperfect from *נָשָׂא* (*nasha’*, “deceive”). In this case one might read “death will come deceptively upon them.” This reading has the advantage of reading *בְּוֶת* (*mavet*, “death”) which forms a natural parallel with “Sheol” in the next line. The present translation is based on the following reconstruction of the text: *יִשְׁחַמְוֵת בְּוֶת* (*yeshimmem mavet*). The verb assumed in the reconstruction is a Hiphil jussive third masculine singular from *שָׁמַם* (*shamam*, “be desolate”) with a third masculine plural pronominal suffix attached. This reconstruction assumes that (1) haplography has occurred in the traditional text (the original sequence of three *mems* [מ] was lost with only one *mem* remaining), resulting in the fusion of originally distinct forms in the *Kethib*, and (2) that *עֲלֵינוּ* (*’alemo*, “upon them”) is a later scribal addition attempting to make sense of a garbled and corrupt text. The preposition *עַל* (*’al*) does occur with the verb *שָׁמַם* (*shamam*), but in such cases the expression means “be appalled at/because of” (see Jer 49:20; 50:45). If one were to retain the prepositional phrase here, one would have to read the text as follows: *יִשְׁחַמְוֵת בְּוֶת עֲלֵינוּ* (*yashim mavet ’alemo*, “Death will be appalled at them”). The idea seems odd, to say the least. Death is not collocated with this verb elsewhere.

¹⁶ **sn** *Go down alive*. This curse imagines a swift and sudden death for the psalmist’s enemies.

¹⁷ **tn** The first verb is clearly a cohortative form, expressing the psalmist’s resolve. The second verb, while formally ambiguous, should also be understood as cohortative here.

¹⁸ **tn** The prefixed verb with *vav* (ו) consecutive normally appears in narrative contexts to indicate past action, but here it continues the anticipatory (future) perspective of the preceding line. In Ps 77:6 one finds the same sequence of cohortative + prefixed verbal form with *vav* (ו) consecutive. In this case as well, both forms refer to future actions.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “my voice.”

²⁰ **tn** The perfect verbal form is here used rhetorically to indicate that the action is certain to take place (the so-called perfect of certitude).

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “he will redeem in peace my life from [those who] draw near to me.”

²² **tn** Or “for.”

²³ **tn** *Heb* “among many they are against me.” For other examples of the preposition *עִמָּד* (*immad*) used in the sense of “at, against,” see HALOT 842 s.v.; BDB 767 s.v.; *IBHS* 219 §11.2.14b.

²⁴ **tc** *Heb* “God will hear and answer them, even [the] one who sits [from] ancient times.” The prefixed verbal form with *vav* (ו) consecutive carries on the anticipatory force of the preceding imperfect. The verb appears to be a Qal form from *אָנַח* (*anah*, “to answer”). If this reading is retained, the point would be that God “answered” them in judgment. The trans-

They refuse to change,
and do not fear God.⁴

55:20 He² attacks³ his friends;⁴
he breaks his solemn promises to them.⁵

55:21 His words are as smooth as butter,⁶
but he harbors animosity in his heart.⁷

His words seem softer than oil,
but they are really like sharp swords.⁸

55:22 Throw your burden⁹ upon the LORD,
and he will sustain you.¹⁰

He will never allow the godly to be up-
ended.¹¹

55:23 But you, O God, will bring them¹²
down to the deep Pit.¹³

Violent and deceitful people¹⁴ will not
live even half a normal lifespan.¹⁵

But as for me, I trust in you.

Psalms 56¹⁶

For the music director; according to the *yonath-
elem-rechovim* style;¹⁷ a prayer.¹⁸ of

lation assumes an emendation to the Piel וַיַּעֲבֹד (*vay'annem*;
see 2 Kgs 17:20) and understands the root as אָנַח ('*annah*,' "to
afflict"; see also 1 Kgs 8:35).

1 tn Heb "[the ones] for whom there are no changes, and they do not fear God."

2 sn He. This must refer to the psalmist's former friend, who was addressed previously in vv. 12-14.

3 tn Heb "stretches out his hand against."

4 tc The form should probably be emended to an active participle הַשְׁלָמָה (*sholmayv*) from the verbal root שָׁלַם (*shalam*, "be in a covenant of peace with"). Perhaps the translation "his friends" suggests too intimate a relationship. Another option is to translate, "he attacks those who made agreements with him."

5 tn Heb "he violates his covenant."

6 tn Heb "the butter-like [words] of his mouth are smooth." The noun מַחְמָה (*makhma'ot*, "butter-like [words]") occurs only here. Many prefer to emend the form to מַחְמָה (*mekhem'ah*, from [i.e., "than"] butter"), cf. NEB, NRSV "smoother than butter." However, in this case "his mouth" does not agree in number with the plural verb הִלְכִי (*kholqu*, "they are smooth"). Therefore some further propose an emendation of פִּי (*piv*, "his mouth") to פָּנָיו (*panayv*, "his face"). In any case, the point seems to be that the psalmist's former friend spoke kindly to him and gave the outward indications of friendship.

7 tn Heb "and war [is in] his heart."

8 tn Heb "his words are softer than oil, but they are drawn swords."

9 tn The Hebrew noun occurs only here.

10 tn The pronoun is singular; the psalmist addresses each member of his audience individually.

11 tn Heb "he will never allow swaying for the righteous."

12 tn The pronominal suffix refers to the psalmist's enemies (see v. 19).

13 tn Heb "well of the pit." The Hebrew term שְׁחַת (*shakhat*, "pit") is often used as a title for Sheol (see Pss 16:10; 30:9; 49:9; 103:4).

14 tn Heb "men of bloodshed and deceit."

15 tn Heb "will not divide in half their days."

16 sn Psalm 56. Despite the threats of his enemies, the psalmist is confident the Lord will keep his promise to protect and deliver him.

17 tn The literal meaning of this phrase is "silent dove, distant ones." Perhaps it refers to a particular style of music, a tune title, or a type of musical instrument.

18 tn The precise meaning of the Hebrew word מִכְתָּם (*miktam*), which also appears in the heading to Pss 16 and 57-60 is uncertain. HALOT 582-83 s.v. defines it as "inscription."

David, written when the Philistines captured him in Gath.¹⁹

56:1 Have mercy on me, O God, for men
are attacking me!²⁰

All day long hostile enemies²¹ are tor-
menting me.²²

56:2 Those who anticipate my defeat²³ at-
tack me all day long.

Indeed,²⁴ many are fighting against me, O
Exalted One.²⁵

56:3 When²⁶ I am afraid,
I trust in you.

56:4 In God – I boast in his promise²⁷ –
in God I trust, I am not afraid.

What can mere men²⁸ do to me?²⁹

56:5 All day long they cause me trouble;³⁰
they make a habit of plotting my demise.³¹

19 sn According to the superscription, David wrote this psalm when the Philistines seized him and took him to King Achish of Gath (see 1 Sam 21:11-15).

20 tn According to BDB 983 s.v. שָׁאַף, the verb is derived from שָׁאַף (*sha'af*, "to trample, crush") rather than the homonymic verb "pant after."

21 tn Heb "a fighter." The singular is collective for his enemies (see vv. 5-6). The Qal of לָחַם (*lakham*, "fight") also occurs in Ps 35:1.

22 tn The imperfect verbal form draws attention to the continuing nature of the enemies' attacks.

23 tn Heb "to those who watch me [with evil intent]." See also Pss 5:8; 27:11; 54:5; 59:10.

24 tn Or "for."

25 tn Some take the Hebrew term מָרוֹם (*marom*, "on high; above") as an adverb modifying the preceding participle and translate, "proudly" (cf. NASB; NIV "in their pride"). The present translation assumes the term is a divine title here. The Lord is pictured as enthroned "on high" in Ps 92:8. (Note the substantial use of the term in Isa 24:4 and see C. A. Briggs and E. G. Briggs (*Psalms* [ICC], 2:34), who prefer to place the term at the beginning of the next verse.)

26 tn Heb "[in] a day."

27 tn Heb "in God I boast, his word." The syntax in the Hebrew text is difficult. (1) The line could be translated, "in God I boast, [in] his word." Such a translation assumes that the prepositional phrase "in God" goes with the following verb "I boast" (see Ps 44:8) and that "his word" is appositional to "in God" and more specifically identifies the basis for the psalmist's confidence. God's "word" is here understood as an assuring promise of protection. Another option (2) is to translate, "in God I will boast [with] a word." In this case, the "word" is a song of praise. (In this view the pronominal suffix "his" must be omitted as in v. 10.) The present translation reflects yet another option (3): In this case "I praise his word" is a parenthetical statement, with "his word" being the object of the verb. The sentence begun with the prepositional phrase "in God" is then completed in the next line, with the prepositional phrase being repeated after the parenthesis.

28 tn Heb "flesh," which refers by metonymy to human beings (see v. 11, where "man" is used in this same question), envisioned here as mortal and powerless before God.

29 tn The rhetorical question assumes the answer, "Nothing!" The imperfect is used in a modal sense here, indicating capability or potential.

30 tn Heb "my affairs they disturb." For other instances of דָּבַר (*davar*) meaning "affairs, business," see BDB 183 s.v. The Piel of עָנַב (*atsav*, "to hurt") occurs only here and in Isa 63:10, where it is used of "grieving" (or "offending") the Lord's holy Spirit. Here in Ps 56:5, the verb seems to carry the nuance "disturb, upset," in the sense of "cause trouble."

31 tn Heb "against me [are] all their thoughts for harm."

56:6 They stalk¹ and lurk,²
 they watch my every step,³
 as⁴ they prepare to take my life.⁵
 56:7 Because they are bent on violence,
 do not let them escape!⁶
 In your anger⁷ bring down the nations,⁸
 O God!
 56:8 You keep track of my misery.⁹
 Put my tears in your leather container!¹⁰
 Are they not recorded in your scroll?¹¹
 56:9 My enemies will turn back when I
 cry out to you for help,¹²
 I know that God is on my side.¹³
 56:10 In God – I boast in his promise¹⁴ –

in the LORD – I boast in his promise¹⁵ –
 56:11 in God I trust, I am not afraid.
 What can mere men¹⁶ do to me?¹⁷
 56:12 I am obligated to fulfill the vows I
 made to you, O God;¹⁸
 I will give you the thank-offerings you
 deserve,¹⁹
 56:13 when you deliver²⁰ my life from
 death.
 You keep my feet from stumbling,²¹
 so that I might serve²² God as I enjoy
 life.²³

Psalms 57²⁴

For the music director; according to the *al-tashcheth* style;²⁵ a prayer²⁶ of David, written when he fled from Saul into the cave.²⁷

57:1 Have mercy on me, O God! Have
 mercy on me!
 For in you I have taken shelter.²⁸
 In the shadow of your wings²⁹ I take
 shelter
 until trouble passes.

¹ tn The verb is from the root גור (*gur*), which means “to challenge, attack” in Isa 54:15 and “to stalk” (with hostile intent) in Ps 59:3.

² tn Or “hide.”

³ tn Heb “my heels.”

⁴ tn Heb “according to,” in the sense of “inasmuch as; since,” or “when; while.”

⁵ tn Heb “they wait [for] my life.”

⁶ tc Heb “because of wickedness, deliverance to them.” As it stands, the MT makes no sense. The negative particle אֵין (*ayin*, “there is not,” which is due to dittography of the immediately preceding אֵין, “wickedness”), should probably be added before “deliverance” (see BHS, note a). The presence of an imperative in the next line (note “bring down”) suggests that this line should be translated as a prayer as well, “may there not be deliverance to them.”

⁷ tn Heb “in anger.” The pronoun “you” is supplied in the translation for clarification.

⁸ tn Or perhaps “people” in a general sense.

⁹ tn Heb “my wandering you count, you.” The Hebrew term נוד (*nod*, “wandering”) derived from the verbal root נוד, *nod*, “to wander”; cf. NABSB here refers to the psalmist’s “changeable circumstances of life” and may be translated “misery.” The verb סָפַר (*safar*, “count”) probably carries the nuance “assess” here. Cf. NIV “my lament”; NRSV “my tossings.”

¹⁰ tn Traditionally “your bottle.” Elsewhere the Hebrew word נֹדָה (*no’d*, “leather container”) refers to a container made from animal skin which is used to hold wine or milk (see Josh 9:4, 13; Judg 4:19; 1 Sam 16:20). If such a container is metaphorically in view here, then the psalmist seems to be asking God to store up his tears as a reminder of his suffering.

¹¹ tn The word “recorded” is supplied in the translation for clarification. The rhetorical question assumes a positive response (see the first line of the verse).

¹² tn Heb “then my enemies will turn back in the day I cry out.” The Hebrew particle אַז (*az*, “then”) is probably used here to draw attention to the following statement.

¹³ tn Heb “this I know, that God is for me.”

¹⁴ tn Heb “in God I praise a word.” The syntax of the Hebrew text is difficult. The statement is similar to that of v. 4, except that the third person pronominal suffix is omitted here, where the text has simply “a word” instead of “his word.” (1) One could translate, “in God I will boast [with] a word.” In this case, the “word” refers to a song of praise. (2) If one assumes that God’s word is in view, as in v. 4, then one option is to translate, “in God I boast, [in] his word.” In this case the prepositional phrase “in God” goes with the following verb “I boast” (see Ps 44:8) and “[his] word” is appositional to “in God” and more specifically identifies the basis for the psalmist’s confidence. God’s “word” is here understood as an assuring promise of protection. (3) The present translation reflects another option: In this case “I praise [his] word” is a parenthetical statement, with “[his] word” being the object of the verb. The sentence begun with the prepositional phrase “in God” is then completed in v. 11, with the prepositional phrase being repeated after the parenthesis.

¹⁵ tn The phrase “in the LORD” parallels “in God” in the first line. Once again the psalmist parenthetically remarks “I boast in [his] word” before completing the sentence in v. 11.

¹⁶ tn The statement is similar to that of v. 4, except “flesh” is used there instead of “man.”

¹⁷ tn The rhetorical question assumes the answer, “Nothing!” The imperfect is used in a modal sense here, indicating capability or potential.

¹⁸ tn Heb “upon me, O God, [are] your vows.”

¹⁹ tn Heb “I will repay thank-offerings to you.”

²⁰ tn The perfect verbal form is probably future perfect; the psalmist promises to make good on his vows once God has delivered him (see Pss 13:5; 52:9). (2) Another option is to understand the final two verses as being added later, after the LORD intervened on the psalmist’s behalf. In this case one may translate, “for you have delivered.” Other options include taking the perfect as (3) generalizing (“for you deliver”) or (4) rhetorical (“for you will”).

²¹ tn Heb “are not my feet [kept] from stumbling?” The rhetorical question expects the answer, “Of course they are!” The question has been translated as an affirmation for the sake of clarification of meaning.

²² tn Heb “walk before.” For a helpful discussion of the background and meaning of this Hebrew idiom, see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 254; cf. the same idiom in 2 Kgs 20:3; Isa 38:3.

²³ tn Heb “in the light of life.” The phrase is used here and in Job 33:30.

²⁴ sn *Psalms 57*. The psalmist asks for God’s protection and expresses his confidence that his ferocious enemies will be destroyed by their own schemes.

²⁵ tn Heb “do not destroy.” Perhaps this refers to a particular style of music, a tune title, or a musical instrument. These words also appear in the heading to Pss 58-59, 75.

²⁶ tn The precise meaning of the Hebrew word מִכְתָּם (*mik-tam*), which also appears in the heading to Pss 16, 56, 58-60 is uncertain. HALOT 582-83 s.v. defines it as “inscription.”

²⁷ sn According to the superscription, David wrote this psalm on the occasion when he fled from Saul and hid in “the cave.” This probably refers to either the incident recorded in 1 Sam 22:1 or to the one recorded in 1 Sam 24:3.

²⁸ tn Heb “my life has taken shelter.” The Hebrew perfect verbal form probably refers here to a completed action with continuing results.

²⁹ sn *In the shadow of your wings*. The metaphor likens God to a protective mother bird (see also Pss 17:8; 36:7).

57:2 I cry out for help to the sovereign God,¹
to the God who vindicates² me.
57:3 May he send help from heaven and deliver me³
from my enemies who hurl insults!⁴
(Selah)
May God send his loyal love and faithfulness!
57:4 I am surrounded by lions;
I lie down⁵ among those who want to devour me;⁶
men whose teeth are spears and arrows,
whose tongues are a sharp sword.⁷
57:5 Rise up⁸ above the sky, O God!
May your splendor cover the whole earth!⁹
57:6 They have prepared a net to trap me;¹⁰
I am discouraged.¹¹
They have dug a pit for me.¹²
They will fall¹³ into it! (Selah)

1 tn Heb “to God Most High.” The divine title “Most High” (עֲלִיּוֹן, *‘elyon*) pictures God as the exalted ruler of the universe who vindicates the innocent and judges the wicked. See especially Ps 47:2.

2 tn Or “avenges in favor of.”

3 tn Heb “may he send from heaven and deliver me.” The prefixed verbal forms are understood as jussives expressing the psalmist’s prayer. The second verb, which has a *vav* (ו) conjunctive prefixed to it, probably indicates purpose. Another option is to take the forms as imperatives expressing confidence, “he will send from heaven and deliver me” (cf. NRSV).

4 tn Heb “he hurls insults, one who crushes me.” The translation assumes that this line identifies those from whom the psalmist seeks deliverance. (The singular is representative; the psalmist is surrounded by enemies, see v. 4.) Another option is to understand God as the subject of the verb הָרַף (*kharaf*), which could then be taken as a homonym of the more common root הָרַף (“insult”) meaning “confuse.” In this case “one who crushes me” is the object of the verb. One might translate, “he [God] confuses my enemies.”

5 tn The cohortative form אֶשְׁכַּבְּהָ (*eshkabbah*, “I lie down”) is problematic, for it does not seem to carry one of the normal functions of the cohortative (resolve or request). One possibility is that the form here is a “pseudo-cohortative” used here in a gnomic sense (IBHS 576-77 §34.5.3b).

6 tn The Hebrew verb לָהַט (*lahat*) is here understood as a *hapax legomenon* meaning “devour” (see HALOT 521 s.v. II לָהַט), a homonym of the more common verb meaning “to burn.” A more traditional interpretation takes the verb from this latter root and translates, “those who are aflame” (see BDB 529 s.v.; cf. NASB “those who breathe forth fire”).

7 tn Heb “my life, in the midst of lions, I lie down, devouring ones, sons of mankind, their teeth a spear and arrows and their tongue a sharp sword.” The syntax of the verse is difficult. Another option is to take “my life” with the preceding verse. For this to make sense, one must add a verb, perhaps “and may he deliver” (cf. the LXX), before the phrase. One might then translate, “May God send his loyal love and faithfulness and deliver my life.” If one does take “my life” with v. 4, then the parallelism of v. 5 is altered and one might translate: “in the midst of lions I lie down, [among] men who want to devour me, whose teeth...”

8 tn Or “be exalted.”

9 tn Heb “over all the earth [be] your splendor.” Though no verb appears, the tone of the statement is a prayer or wish. (Note the imperative form in the preceding line.)

10 tn Heb “for my feet.”

11 tn Heb “my life bends low.” The Hebrew term נָפַשׁ (*nefesh*) with a pronominal suffix is often equivalent to a pronoun, especially in poetry (see BDB 660 s.v. נָפַשׁ 4.a).

12 tn Heb “before me.”

13 tn The perfect form is used rhetorically here to express

57:7 I am determined,¹⁴ O God! I am determined!
I will sing and praise you!
57:8 Awake, my soul!¹⁵
Awake, O stringed instrument and harp!
I will wake up at dawn!¹⁶
57:9 I will give you thanks before the nations, O Master!
I will sing praises to you before foreigners!¹⁷
57:10 For your loyal love extends beyond the sky,¹⁸
and your faithfulness reaches the clouds.
57:11 Rise up¹⁹ above the sky, O God!
May your splendor cover the whole earth!²⁰

Psalm 58²¹

For the music director; according to the *al-tashcheth* style;²² a prayer²³ of David.

58:1 Do you rulers really pronounce just decisions?²⁴

the psalmist’s certitude. The demise of the enemies is so certain that he can speak of it as already accomplished.

14 tn Or perhaps “confident”; Heb “my heart is steadfast.” The “heart” is viewed here as the seat of the psalmist’s volition and/or emotions.

15 tn Heb “glory,” but that makes little sense in the context. Some view כְּבוֹד (*kavod*, “glory”) here as a metonymy for man’s inner being (see BDB 459 s.v. כְּבוֹד 5), but it is preferable to emend the form to כְּבִיד (*k^lvediy*, “my liver”). Like the heart, the liver is viewed as the seat of one’s emotions. See also Pss 16:9; 30:12; 108:1, as well as H. W. Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament*, 64, and M. Dahood, *Psalms* (AB), 1:90. For an Ugaritic example of the heart/liver as the source of joy, see G. R. Driver, *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, 47-48: “her [Anat’s] liver swelled with laughter, her heart was filled with joy, the liver of Anat with triumph.”

16 tn BDB 1007 s.v. שָׁרַח takes “dawn” as an adverbial accusative, though others understand it as a personified direct object. “Dawn” is used metaphorically for the time of deliverance and vindication the psalmist anticipates. When salvation “dawns,” the psalmist will “wake up” in praise.

17 tn Or “the peoples.”

18 tn Heb “for great upon the sky [or “heavens”] [is] your loyal love.”

19 tn Or “be exalted.”

20 tn Heb “over all the earth [be] your splendor.” Though no verb appears, the tone of the statement is a prayer or wish. (Note the imperative form in the preceding line.)

21 sn Psalm 58. The psalmist calls on God to punish corrupt judges because a vivid display of divine judgment will convince observers that God is the just judge of the world who vindicates the godly.

22 tn Heb “do not destroy.” Perhaps this refers to a particular style of music, a tune title, or a musical instrument. These words also appear in the heading to Pss 57, 59, and 75.

23 tn The precise meaning of the Hebrew word מִקְטָמִּים (*miktamim*) which also appears in the heading to Pss 16 and 56-57, 59-60 is uncertain. HALOT 582-83 s.v. defines it as “inscription.”

24 tn Heb “Really [in] silence, what is right do you speak?” The Hebrew noun אֵילִם (*elem*, “silence”) makes little, if any, sense in this context. Some feel that this is an indictment of the addressees’ failure to promote justice; they are silent when they should make just decisions. The present translation assumes an emendation to אֵלִים (*elim*), which in turn is understood as a defectively written form of אֵלִיִּים (*elim*, “rulers,” a metaphorical use of אָיִל, “ram”; see Exod 15:15; Ezek 17:13). The rhetorical question is sarcastic, challenging their claim to be just. Elsewhere the collocation of דָּבַר (*davar*,

Do you judge people⁴ fairly?
58:2 No!² You plan how to do what is
 unjust;³
 you deal out violence in the earth.⁴
58:3 The wicked turn aside from birth;⁵
 liars go astray as soon as they are born.⁶
58:4 Their venom is like that of a snake,⁷
 like a deaf serpent⁸ that does not hear,⁹
58:5 that does not respond to¹⁰ the magi-
 cians,
 or to a skilled snake-charmer.
58:6 O God, break the teeth in their
 mouths!
 Smash the jawbones of the lions, O LORD!
58:7 Let them disappear¹¹ like water that
 flows away!¹²
 Let them wither like grass!¹³

“speak”) with צִדֵּק (*tsedeq*, “what is right”) as object means “to speak the truth” (see Ps 52:3; Isa 45:19). Here it refers specifically to declaring what is right in a legal setting, as the next line indicates.

¹ **tn** *Heb* “the sons of mankind.” The translation assumes the phrase is the object of the verb “to judge.” Some take it as a vocative, “Do you judge fairly, O sons of mankind?” (Cf. NASB; see Ezek 20:4; 22:2; 23:36.)

² **tn** The particle אַף (*af*, “no”) is used here as a strong adversative emphasizing the following statement, which contrasts reality with the rulers’ claim alluded to in the rhetorical questions (see Ps 44:9).

³ **tn** *Heb* “in the heart unjust deeds you do.” The phrase “in the heart” (i.e., “mind”) seems to refer to their plans and motives. The Hebrew noun עֵינֶה (*avlah*, “injustice”) is collocated with פָּעַל (*pa’al*, “do”) here and in Job 36:23 and Ps 119:3. Some emend the plural form עֵוֹת (*’olot*, “unjust deeds”; see Ps 64:6) to the singular עֵוָה (*avel*, “injustice”; see Job 34:32), taking the final tav (ת) as dittographic (note that the following verbal form begins with tav). Some then understand עֵוָה (*avel*, “injustice”) as a genitive modifying “heart” and translate, “with a heart of injustice you act.”

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “in the earth the violence of your hands you weigh out.” The imagery is from the economic realm. The addressees measure out violence, rather than justice, and distribute it like a commodity. This may be ironic, since justice was sometimes viewed as a measuring scale (see Job 31:6).

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “from the womb.”

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “speakers of a lie go astray from the womb.”

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “[there is] venom to them according to the likeness of venom of a snake.”

⁸ **tn** Or perhaps “cobra” (cf. NASB, NIV). Other suggested species of snakes are “asp” (NEB) and “adder” (NRSV).

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “[that] stops up its ear.” The apparent Hiphil jussive verbal form should be understood as a Qal imperfect with “i” theme vowel (see GKC 168 §63.n).

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “does not listen to the voice of.”

¹¹ **tn** Following the imperatival forms in v. 6, the prefixed verbal form is understood as a jussive expressing the psalmist’s wish. Another option is to take the form as an imperfect (indicative) and translate, “they will scatter” (see v. 9). The verb מָאַס (*ma’as*; which is a homonym of the more common מָאַס, “to refuse, reject”) appears only here and in Job 7:5, where it is used of a festering wound from which fluid runs or flows.

¹² **tn** *Heb* “like water, they go about for themselves.” The translation assumes that the phrase “they go about for themselves” is an implied relative clause modifying “water.” Another option is to take the clause as independent and parallel to what precedes. In this case the enemies would be the subject and the verb could be taken as jussive, “let them wander about.”

¹³ **tc** The syntax of the Hebrew text is difficult and the meaning uncertain. The text reads literally, “he treads his arrows (following the *Qere*; *Kethib* has “his arrow”), like they are cut off/dry up.” It is not clear if the verbal root is מָלַל (*malal*, “circumcise”; BDB 576 s.v. IV מָלַל) or the homonymic מָלַל

58:8 Let them be¹⁴ like a snail that melts away as it moves along!¹⁵

Let them be like¹⁶ stillborn babies¹⁷ that never see the sun!

58:9 Before the kindling is even placed under your pots,¹⁸

he¹⁹ will sweep it away along with both the raw and cooked meat.²⁰

58:10 The godly²¹ will rejoice when they see vengeance carried out; they will bathe their feet in the blood of the wicked.

58:11 Then²² observers²³ will say,

“Yes indeed, the godly are rewarded!²⁴

Yes indeed, there is a God who judges²⁵ in the earth!”

(“wither”; HALOT 593-94 s.v. מָלַל). Since the verb מָלַל (“to wither”) is used of vegetation, it is possible that the noun הַצִּיר (*khatsir*, “grass,” which is visually similar to הַצִּיר, *khitsayv*, “his arrows”) originally appeared in the text. The translation above assumes that the text originally was מָלַל הַצִּיר הַצִּיר (*kemo khatsir yimolalu*, “like grass let them wither”). If original, it could have been accidentally corrupted to הַצִּיר כְּמֵי הַצִּיר (“his arrow(s) like they dry up”) with דָּרַךְ (*darakh*, “to tread”) being added later in an effort to make sense of “his arrow(s).”

¹⁴ **tn** There is no “to be” verb in the Hebrew text at this point, but a jussive tone can be assumed based on vv. 6-7.

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “like a melting snail [that] moves along.” A. Cohen (*Psalms* [SoBB], 184) explains that the text here alludes “to the popular belief that the slimy trail which the snail leaves in its track is the dissolution of its substance.”

¹⁶ **tn** The words “let them be like” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons. The jussive mood is implied from the preceding context, and “like” is understood by ellipsis (see the previous line).

¹⁷ **tn** This rare word also appears in Job 3:16 and Eccles 6:3.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “before your pots perceive thorns.”

¹⁹ **tn** Apparently God (v. 6) is the subject of the verb here.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* “like living, like burning anger he will sweep it away.” The meaning of the text is unclear. The translation assumes that within the cooking metaphor (see the previous line) הַי (*khay*, “living”) refers here to raw meat (as in 1 Sam 2:15, where it modifies בָּשָׂר, *basar*, “flesh”) and הַחַר (kharun; which always refers to God’s “burning anger” elsewhere) here refers to food that is cooked. The pronominal suffix on the verb “sweep away” apparently refers back to the “thorns” of the preceding line. The image depicts swift and sudden judgment. Before the fire has been adequately kindled and all the meat cooked, the winds of judgment will sweep away everything in their path.

²¹ **tn** The singular is representative here, as is the singular from “wicked” in the next line.

²² **tn** Following the imperfects of v. 10, the prefixed verbal form with vav (ו) conjunctive probably indicates a result or consequence of what precedes.

²³ **tn** *Heb* “man.” The singular is representative here.

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* “surely [there] is fruit for the godly.”

²⁵ **tn** The plural participle is unusual here if the preceding אֱלֹהִים (*’elohim*) is here a plural of majesty, referring to the one true God. Occasionally the plural of majesty does take a plural attributive (see GKC 428-29 §132.h). It is possible that the final mem (ם) on the participle is enclitic, and that it was later misunderstood as a plural ending. Another option is to translate, “Yes indeed, there are gods who judge in the earth.” In this case, the statement reflects the polytheistic mindset of pagan observers who, despite their theological ignorance, nevertheless recognize divine retribution when they see it.

Psalm 59^A

For the music director; according to the *al-tashcheth* style;² a prayer³ of David, written when Saul sent men to surround his house and murder him.⁴

59:1 Deliver me from my enemies, my God!

Protect me⁵ from those who attack me!⁶

59:2 Deliver me from evildoers!⁷
Rescue me from violent men!⁸

59:3 For look, they wait to ambush me;⁹
powerful men stalk¹⁰ me,
but not because I have rebelled or sinned,
O LORD.¹¹

59:4 Though I have done nothing wrong,¹²
they are anxious to attack.¹³

Spring into action and help me! Take notice of me!¹⁴

59:5 You, O LORD God, the invincible warrior,¹⁵ the God of Israel,
rouse yourself and punish¹⁶ all the nations!

Have no mercy on any treacherous evildoers! (Selah)

59:6 They return in the evening;
they growl¹⁷ like a dog

and prowl around outside¹⁸ the city.

59:7 Look, they hurl insults at me
and openly threaten to kill me,¹⁹
for they say,²⁰
“Who hears?”

59:8 But you, O LORD, laugh in disgust at them,²¹

you taunt²² all the nations.

59:9 You are my source of strength! I will wait for you!²³

For God is my refuge.²⁴

59:10 The God who loves me will help me;²⁵

God will enable me to triumph over²⁶ my enemies.²⁷

59:11 Do not strike them dead suddenly,
because then my people might forget the lesson.²⁸

Use your power to make them homeless
vagabonds and then bring them down,
O Lord who shields us!²⁹

59:12 They speak sinful words.³⁰
So let them be trapped by their own pride
and by the curses and lies they speak!

59:13 Angrily wipe them out! Wipe them out so they vanish!

Let them know that God rules
in Jacob and to the ends of the earth!

(Selah)

59:14 They return in the evening;
they growl³¹ like a dog

and prowl around outside³² the city.

59:15 They wander around looking for something to eat;

they refuse to sleep until they are full.³³

59:16 As for me, I will sing about your strength;

¹ sn Psalm 59. The psalmist calls down judgment on his foreign enemies, whom he compares to ravenous wild dogs.

² tn Heb “do not destroy.” Perhaps this refers to a particular style of music, a tune title, or a musical instrument. These words also appear in the superscription to Pss 57-58, 75.

³ tn The precise meaning of the Hebrew word מִקְטָם (*mik-tam*), which also appears in the heading to Pss 16, 56-58, 60 is uncertain. HALOT 582-83 s.v. defines it as “inscription.”

⁴ tn Heb “when Saul sent and they watched his house in order to kill him.”

sn According to the superscription, David wrote this psalm on the occasion when Saul sent assassins to surround David’s house and kill him in the morning (see 1 Sam 19:11). However, the psalm itself mentions foreign enemies (vv. 5, 8). Perhaps these references reflect a later adaptation of an original Davidic psalm.

⁵ tn Or “make me secure”; Heb “set me on high.”

⁶ tn Heb “from those who raise themselves up [against] me.”

⁷ tn Heb “from the workers of wickedness.”

⁸ tn Heb “from men of bloodshed.”

⁹ tn Heb “my life.”

¹⁰ tn The Hebrew verb is from the root גָּרַר (*gur*), which means “to challenge, attack” in Isa 54:15 and “to stalk” (with hostile intent) in Ps 56:8.

¹¹ sn The point is that the psalmist’s enemies have no justifiable reason for attacking him. He has neither rebelled or sinned against the LORD.

¹² tn Heb “without sin.”

¹³ tn Heb “they run and they are determined.”

¹⁴ tn Heb “arise to meet me and see.” The Hebrew verb קָרָא (*qara*), “to meet; to encounter” here carries the nuance of “to help.”

¹⁵ tn Heb “LORD, God, Hosts.” One expects the construct form אֱלֹהֵי (*elohey*) before זְבָאוֹת (*tsv’va’ot*, “hosts”). See Ps 89:9, but יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ (יהוה אלהינו) precedes זְבָאוֹת (*tsv’va’ot*) in Pss 80:4, 19; 84:8 as well.

¹⁶ tn Heb “wake up to punish” (see Pss 35:23; 44:23).

¹⁷ tn Or “howl”; or “bark.”

¹⁸ tn Heb “go around.”

¹⁹ tn Heb “look, they gush forth with their mouth, swords [are] in their lips.”

²⁰ tn The words “for they say” are supplied in the translation for clarification. The following question (“Who hears?”) is spoken by the psalmist’s enemies, who are confident that no one else can hear their threats against the psalmist. They are aggressive because they feel the psalmist is vulnerable and has no one to help him.

²¹ sn Laugh in disgust. See Pss 2:4; 37:13.

²² tn Or “scoff at”; or “deride”; or “mock” (see Ps 2:4).

²³ tc Heb “his strength, for you I will watch.” “His strength” should be emended to “my strength” (see v. 17). Some also emend אֶשְׁמְרָה (*eshmorah*, “I will watch”) to אֶזְמְרָה (*ezam-merah*, “I will sing praises [to you]”) See v. 17.

²⁴ tn Or “my elevated place” (see Ps 18:2).

²⁵ tn Heb “the God of my [Qere (marginal reading); the Kethib (consonantal text) has “his”] loyal love will meet me.”

²⁶ tn Heb “will cause me to look upon.”

²⁷ tn Heb “those who watch me [with evil intent].” See also Pss 5:8; 27:11; 54:5; 56:2.

²⁸ tn Heb “do not kill them, lest my people forget.”

sn My people might forget the lesson. Swift, sudden destruction might be quickly forgotten. The psalmist wants God’s judgment to be prolonged so that it might be a continual reminder of divine justice.

²⁹ tn Heb “make them roam around by your strength and bring them down, O our shield, the Lord.”

³⁰ tn Heb “the sin of their mouth [is] the word of their lips.”

³¹ tn Or “howl”; or “bark.”

³² tn Heb “go around.”

³³ tn Heb “if they are not full, they stay through the night.”

I will praise your loyal love in the morning.
 For you are my refuge¹
 and my place of shelter when I face
 trouble.²
59:17 You are my source of strength! I
 will sing praises to you!³
 For God is my refuge,⁴ the God who
 loves me.⁵

Psalms 60⁶

For the music director; according to the *shushan-eduth* style;⁷ a prayer⁸ of David written to instruct others.⁹ It was written when he fought against Aram Naharaim and Aram-Zobah. That was when Joab turned back and struck down¹⁰ 12,000 Edomites¹¹ in the Valley of Salt.¹²

60:1 O God, you have rejected us.¹³
 You suddenly turned on us in your anger.¹⁴
 Please restore us!¹⁵
60:2 You made the earth quake; you split
 it open.¹⁶
 Repair its breaches, for it is ready to fall.¹⁷
60:3 You have made your people experi-
 ence hard times;¹⁸
 you have made us drink intoxicating
 wine.¹⁹

60:4 You have given your loyal followers²⁰
 a rallying flag,
 so that they might seek safety from the
 bow.²¹ (Selah)
60:5 Deliver by your power²² and answer
 me,²³
 so that the ones you love may be safe.²⁴
60:6 God has spoken in his sanctuary:²⁵
 "I will triumph! I will parcel out
 Shechem;
 the Valley of Succoth I will measure off.²⁶
60:7 Gilead belongs to me,
 as does Manasseh!²⁷
 Ephraim is my helmet,²⁸
 Judah my royal scepter.²⁹
60:8 Moab is my washbasin.³⁰
 I will make Edom serve me.³¹
 I will shout in triumph over Philistia."³²
60:9 Who will lead me into the fortified city?
 Who will bring me to Edom?³³

¹ **tn** Or "my elevated place" (see Ps 18:2).

² **tn** *Heb* "and my shelter in the day of my distress."

³ **tn** *Heb* "my strength, to you I will sing praises."

⁴ **tn** Or "my elevated place" (see Ps 18:2).

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "the God of my loyal love."

⁶ **sn** *Psalms 60*. The psalmist grieves over Israel's humiliation, but in response to God's assuring word, he asks for divine help in battle and expresses his confidence in victory.

⁷ **tn** The Hebrew expression means "lily of the testimony." It may refer to a particular music style or to a tune title.

⁸ **tn** The precise meaning of the Hebrew word מִכְתָּם (*mik-tam*), which also appears in the heading to Pss 16, 56-59, is uncertain. *HALOT* 582-83 s.v. defines it as "inscription."

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "to teach."

¹⁰ **tn** In Josh 8:21 and Judg 20:48 the two verbs "turn back" and "strike down" are also juxtaposed. There they refer to a military counter-attack.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "12,000 of Edom." Perhaps one should read אֲרָם (*aram*, "Aram") here rather than אֲדוֹם (*edom*, "Edom").

¹² **sn** The heading apparently refers to the military campaign recorded in 2 Sam 10 and 1 Chr 19.

¹³ **sn** *You have rejected us*. See Pss 43:2; 44:9, 23.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "you broke out upon us, you were angry."

¹⁵ **tn** The imperfect verbal form here expresses the psalmist's wish or prayer.

¹⁶ **tn** The verb פָּצַע (*patsam*, "split open") occurs only here in the OT. An Arabic cognate means "crack," and an Aramaic cognate is used in *Tg. Jer* 22:14 with the meaning "break open, frame." See BDB 822 s.v. and Jastrow 1205 s.v. פָּצַע.

sn *You made the earth quake; you split it open*. The psalmist uses the imagery of an earthquake to describe the nation's defeat.

¹⁷ **sn** *It is ready to fall*. The earth is compared to a wall that has been broken by the force of the earthquake (note the preceding line) and is ready to collapse.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "you have caused your people to see [what is] hard."

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "wine of staggering," that is, intoxicating wine that makes one stagger in drunkenness. Intoxicating wine is here an image of divine judgment that makes its victims stagger like drunkards. See Isa 51:17-23.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "those who fear you."

²¹ **tn** There is a ray of hope in that God has allowed his loyal followers to rally under a battle flag. The translation assumes the verb is from the root נָס (*nus*, "flee") used here in the Hit-polel in the sense of "find safety for oneself" (*HALOT* 681 s.v. נָס) or "take flight for oneself" (BDB 630-31 s.v. נָס). Another option is to take the verb as a denominative from נָס (*nes*, "flag") and translate "that it may be displayed" (BDB 651 s.v. נָס) or "that they may assemble under the banner" (*HALOT* 704 s.v. נָס). Here קִשֶׁת (*qoshet*) is taken as an Aramaized form of קֶשֶׁת (*qeshet*, "bow"; BDB 905-6 s.v. קֶשֶׁת), though some understand the homonymic קִשֶׁת (*qosht*, "truth") here (see Prov 22:21; cf. NASB). If one follows the latter interpretation, the line may be translated, "so that they might assemble under the banner for the sake of truth."

²² **tn** *Heb* "right hand."

²³ **tn** The *Qere* (marginal reading) has "me," while the *Ket-hib* (consonantal text) has "us."

²⁴ **tn** Or "may be rescued." The lines are actually reversed in the Hebrew text, "So that the ones you love may be rescued, deliver by your power and answer me."

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "in his holy place."

²⁶ **sn** *Shechem* stands for the territory west of the Jordan, the *Valley of Succoth* for the region east of the Jordan.

²⁷ **sn** *Gilead* was located east of the Jordan. Half of the tribe of *Manasseh* lived east of the Jordan in the region of Bashan.

²⁸ **tn** *Heb* "the protection of my head."

sn *Ephraim*, named after one of Joseph's sons, was one of two major tribes located west of the Jordan. By comparing Ephraim to a helmet, the Lord suggests that the Ephraimites played a primary role in the defense of his land.

²⁹ **sn** *Judah*, like Ephraim, was the other major tribe west of the Jordan. The Davidic king, symbolized here by the royal scepter, came from this tribe.

³⁰ **sn** The metaphor of the *washbasin*, used to rinse one's hands and feet, suggests that *Moab*, in contrast to Israel's elevated position (vv. 6-7), would be reduced to the status of a servant.

³¹ **tn** *Heb* "over Edom I will throw my sandal." The point of the metaphor is not entirely clear. Some interpret this as idiomatic for "taking possession of," i.e., "I will take possession of Edom." Others translate עָלַי (*al*) as "to" and understand this as referring to a master throwing his dirty sandal to a servant so that the latter might dust it off.

³² **tc** *Heb* "over me, O Philistia, shout in triumph." The translation follows the text of Ps 108:9. When the initial עָלַי (*aleyo*, "over") was misread as עָלַי (*alay*, "over me"), the first person verb form was probably altered to an imperative to provide better sense to the line.

³³ **sn** In v. 9 the psalmist speaks again and acknowledges his need for help in battle. He hopes God will volunteer, based on the affirmation of sovereignty over Edom in v. 8, but he is

60:10 Have you not rejected us, O God? O God, you do not go into battle with our armies.

60:11 Give us help against the enemy, for any help men might offer is futile.¹

60:12 By God's power we will conquer;² he will trample down³ our enemies.

Psalm 61⁴

For the music director; to be played on a stringed instrument; written by David.

61:1 O God, hear my cry for help! Pay attention to my prayer!

61:2 From the most remote place on earth⁵ I call out to you in my despair.⁶

Lead me⁷ up to an inaccessible rocky summit!⁸

61:3 Indeed,⁹ you are¹⁰ my shelter, a strong tower that protects me from the enemy.¹¹

61:4 I will be a permanent guest in your home;¹²

I will find shelter in the protection of your wings.¹³ (Selah)

61:5 For you, O God, hear my vows; you grant me the reward that belongs to your loyal followers.¹⁴

61:6 Give the king long life! Make his lifetime span several generations!¹⁵

61:7 May he reign¹⁶ forever before God!

also aware that God has seemingly rejected the nation (v. 10, see also v. 1).

¹ **tn** Heb "and futile [is] the deliverance of man."

² **tn** Heb "in God we will accomplish strength." The statement refers here to military success (see Num 24:18; 1 Sam 14:48; Pss 108:13; 118:15-16).

³ **sn** *Trample down*. On this expression see Ps 44:5.

⁴ **sn** *Psalm 61*. The psalmist cries out for help and expresses his confidence that God will protect him.

⁵ **tn** Heb "from the end of the earth." This may indicate (1) the psalmist is exiled in a distant land, or (2) it may be hyperbolic (the psalmist feels alienated from God's presence, as if he were in a distant land).

⁶ **tn** Heb "while my heart faints."

⁷ **tn** The imperfect verbal form here expresses the psalmist's wish or prayer.

⁸ **tn** Heb "on to a rocky summit [that] is higher than I."

⁹ **tn** Or "for."

¹⁰ **tn** Or "have been."

¹¹ **tn** Heb "a strong tower from the face of an enemy."

¹² **tn** Heb "I will live as a resident foreigner in your tent permanently." The cohortative is understood here as indicating resolve. Another option is to take it as expressing a request, "please let me live" (cf. NASB, NRSV).

¹³ **sn** *I will find shelter in the protection of your wings*. The metaphor compares God to a protective mother bird.

¹⁴ **tn** Heb "you grant the inheritance of those who fear your name." "Inheritance" is normally used of land which is granted as an inheritance; here it refers metaphorically to the blessings granted God's loyal followers. To "fear" God's name means to have a healthy respect for his revealed reputation which in turn motivates one to obey God's commands (see Ps 86:11).

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "days upon days of the king add, his years like generation and generation."

sn It is not certain if the (royal) psalmist is referring to himself in the third person in this verse, or if an exile is praying on behalf of the king.

¹⁶ **tn** Heb "sit [enthroned]." The prefixed verbal form is un-

Decree that your loyal love and faithfulness should protect him.¹⁷

61:8 Then I will sing praises to your name continually,¹⁸ as I fulfill¹⁹ my vows day after day.

Psalm 62²⁰

For the music director, Jeduthun; a psalm of David.

62:1 For God alone I patiently wait;²¹ he is the one who delivers me.²²

62:2 He alone is my protector²³ and deliverer.

He is my refuge;²⁴ I will not be upended.²⁵

62:3 How long will you threaten²⁶ a man? All of you are murderers,²⁷

as dangerous as a leaning wall or an unstable fence.²⁸

62:4 They²⁹ spend all their time planning how to bring him³⁰ down.³¹

They love to use deceit;³² they pronounce blessings with their mouths,

but inwardly they utter curses.³³ (Selah)

derstood as a jussive here, expressing the psalmist's prayer.

¹⁷ **tn** Heb "loyal love and faithfulness appoint, let them protect him."

¹⁸ **tn** Or "forever."

¹⁹ **tn** Or perhaps, "and thereby fulfill." The preposition with the infinitive construct here indicates an accompanying circumstance.

²⁰ **sn** *Psalm 62*. The psalmist expresses his unwavering confidence in God's justice and in his ability to protect his people.

²¹ **tn** Heb "only for God [is] there silence [to] my soul."

²² **tn** Heb "from him [is] my deliverance."

²³ **tn** Heb "my high rocky summit."

²⁴ **tn** Or "my elevated place" (see Ps 18:2).

²⁵ **tn** The Hebrew text adds רַבָּה (*rabbah*, "greatly") at the end of the line. It is unusual for this adverb to follow a negated verb. Some see this as qualifying the assertion to some degree, but this would water down the affirmation too much (see v. 6b, where the adverb is omitted). If the adverb has a qualifying function, it would suggest that the psalmist might be upended, though not severely. This is inconsistent with the confident mood of the psalm. The adverb probably has an emphatic force here, "I will not be greatly upended" meaning "I will not be annihilated."

²⁶ **tn** The verb form is plural; the psalmist addresses his enemies. The verb יָרָה occurs only here in the OT. An Arabic cognate means "shout at."

²⁷ **tn** The Hebrew text has a Pual (passive) form, but the verb form should be vocalized as a Piel (active) form. See BDB 953-54 s.v. יָרָה.

²⁸ **tn** Heb "like a bent wall and a broken fence." The point of the comparison is not entirely clear. Perhaps the enemies are depicted as dangerous, like a leaning wall or broken fence that is in danger of falling on someone (see C. A. Briggs and E. G. Briggs, *Psalms* [ICC], 2:69).

²⁹ **tn** That is, the psalmist's enemies addressed in the previous verse.

³⁰ **tn** That is, the generic "man" referred to in the previous verse.

³¹ **tn** Heb "only from his lofty place [or perhaps, "dignity"] they plan to drive [him] away."

³² **tn** Heb "they delight [in] a lie."

³³ **sn** The enemies use deceit to bring down their victim. They make him think they are his friends by pronouncing blessings upon him, but inwardly they desire his demise.

62:5 Patiently wait for God alone, my soul!¹

For he is the one who gives me confidence.²

62:6 He alone is my protector³ and deliverer.

He is my refuge;⁴ I will not be upended.⁵

62:7 God delivers me and exalts me; God is my strong protector and my shelter.⁶

62:8 Trust in him at all times, you people! Pour out your hearts before him!⁷

God is our shelter! (Selah)

62:9 Men are nothing but a mere breath; human beings are unreliable.⁸

When they are weighed in the scales, all of them together are lighter than air.⁹

62:10 Do not trust in what you can gain by oppression!¹⁰

Do not put false confidence in what you can gain by robbery!¹¹

If wealth increases, do not become attached to it!¹²

62:11 God has declared one principle; two principles I have heard:¹³

God is strong,¹⁴

62:12 and you, O Lord, demonstrate loyal love.¹⁵

For you repay men for what they do.¹⁶

Psalm 63¹⁷

A psalm of David, written when he was in the Judean wilderness.¹⁸

63:1 O God, you are my God! I long for you!¹⁹

My soul thirsts²⁰ for you, my flesh yearns for you, in a dry and parched²¹ land where there is no water.

63:2 Yes,²² in the sanctuary I have seen you,²³

and witnessed²⁴ your power and splendor.

63:3 Because²⁵ experiencing²⁶ your loyal love is better than life itself, my lips will praise you.

63:4 For this reason²⁷ I will praise you while I live;

¹ **tn** *Heb* "only for God be silent, my soul." The wording is similar to that of v. 1a. Here an imperatival form, דומי (dommy, "be silent"), appears instead of the noun דומייה (dumiyah, "silence"). The psalmist is encouraging himself to maintain his trust in God.

² **tn** *Heb* "for from him [is] my hope."

³ **tn** *Heb* "my high rocky summit."

⁴ **tn** Or "my elevated place" (see Ps 18:2).

⁵ **sn** The wording is identical to that of v. 2, except that דומייה (rabbah, "greatly") does not appear in v. 6.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "upon God [is] my deliverance and my glory, the high rocky summit of my strength, my shelter [is] in God."

⁷ **tn** To "pour out one's heart" means to offer up to God intense, emotional lamentation and petitionary prayers (see Lam 2:19).

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "only a breath [are] the sons of mankind, a lie [are] the sons of man." The phrases "sons of mankind" and "sons of man" also appear together in Ps 49:2. Because of the parallel line there, where "rich and poor" are mentioned, a number of interpreters and translators treat these expressions as polar opposites, בְּנֵי אָדָם (b'ney 'adam) referring to the lower classes and בְּנֵי אִישׁ (b'ney 'ish) to higher classes. But usage does not support such a view. The rare phrase בְּנֵי אִישׁ ("sons of man") appears to refer to human beings in general in its other uses (see Pss 4:2; Lam 3:33). It is better to understand the phrases as synonymous expressions.

⁹ **tn** The noun הֶבֶל (hevel), translated "a breath" earlier in the verse, appears again here.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "do not trust in oppression." Here "oppression" stands by metonymy for the riches that can be gained by oppressive measures, as the final line of the verse indicates.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "and in robbery do not place vain hope." Here "robbery" stands by metonymy for the riches that can be gained by theft, as the next line of the verse indicates.

¹² **tn** *Heb* "[as for] wealth, when it bears fruit, do not set [your] heart [on it]."

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "one God spoke, two which I heard." This is a numerical saying utilizing the "x" followed by "x + 1" pattern to facilitate poetic parallelism. (See W. M. W. Roth, *Numerical Sayings in the Old Testament* [VTSup], 55-56.) As is typical in such sayings, a list corresponding to the second number (in this case "two") follows. Another option is to translate, "God has spoken once, twice [he has spoken] that which I have heard." The terms אַחַת ('akhat, "one; once") and שְׁתַּיִם (sh'tayim, "two; twice") are also juxtaposed in 2 Kgs 6:10 (where they refer to an action that was done more than "once

or twice") and in Job 33:14 (where they refer to God speaking "one way" and then in "another manner").

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "that strength [belongs] to God."

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "and to you, O Master, [is] loyal love."

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "for you pay back to a man according to his deed." Another option is to understand vv. 11b and 12a as the first principle and v. 12b as the second. In this case one might translate, "God has declared one principle, two principles I have heard, namely, that God is strong, and you, O Lord, demonstrate loyal love, and that you repay men for what they do."

¹⁷ **sn** *You repay men for what they do.* The psalmist views God's justice as a demonstration of both his power (see v. 11c) and his loyal love (see v. 12a). When God judges evildoers, he demonstrates loyal love to his people.

¹⁸ **sn** *Psalm 63.* The psalmist expresses his intense desire to be in God's presence and confidently affirms that God will judge his enemies.

¹⁹ **sn** According to the psalm superscription David wrote the psalm while in the "wilderness of Judah." Perhaps this refers to the period described in 1 Sam 23-24 or to the incident mentioned in 2 Sam 15:23.

²⁰ **tn** Or "I will seek you."

²¹ **tn** Or "I thirst."

²² **tn** *Heb* "faint" or "weary." This may picture the land as "faint" or "weary," or it may allude to the effect this dry desert has on those who are forced to live in it.

²³ **tn** The Hebrew particle כֵּן (ken) is used here to stress the following affirmation (see Josh 2:4).

²⁴ **tn** The perfect verbal form is understood here as referring to a past experience which the psalmist desires to be repeated. Another option is to take the perfect as indicating the psalmist's certitude that he will again stand in God's presence in the sanctuary. In this case one can translate, "I will see you."

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "seeing." The preposition with the infinitive construct here indicates an accompanying circumstance.

²⁶ **tn** This line is understood as giving the basis for the praise promised in the following line. Another option is to take the Hebrew particle כִּי (ki) as asseverative/emphasizing, "Indeed, your loyal love is better" (cf. NEB, which leaves the particle untranslated).

²⁷ **tn** The word "experiencing" is supplied in the translation for clarification. The psalmist does not speak here of divine loyal love in some abstract sense, but of loyal love revealed and experienced.

²⁸ **tn** Or perhaps "then."

in your name I will lift up my hands.¹
63:5 As if with choice meat² you satisfy
 my soul.³
 My mouth joyfully praises you,⁴
63:6 whenever⁵ I remember you on my bed,
 and think about you during the nighttime
 hours.
63:7 For you are my deliverer,⁶
 under your wings⁷ I rejoice.
63:8 My soul⁸ pursues you,⁹
 your right hand upholds me.
63:9 Enemies seek to destroy my life,¹⁰
 but they will descend into the depths of
 the earth.¹¹
63:10 Each one will be handed over to the
 sword;¹²
 their corpses will be eaten by jackals.¹³
63:11 But the king¹⁴ will rejoice in God;
 everyone who takes oaths in his name¹⁵
 will boast,
 for the mouths of those who speak lies
 will be shut up.¹⁶

Psalms 64¹⁷

For the music director; a psalm of David.

64:1 Listen to me,¹⁸ O God, as I offer my
 lament!

¹ **sn** *I will lift up my hands.* Lifting up one's hands toward God was a gesture of prayer (see Ps 28:2; Lam 2:19) or respect (Ps 119:48).

² **tn** *Heb* "like fat and fatness."

³ **tn** Or "me."

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "and [with] lips of joy my mouth praises."

⁵ **tn** The Hebrew term *im* (יִמ) is used here in the sense of "when;" as in Ps 78:34.

⁶ **tn** Or "[source of] help."

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "in the shadow of your wings."

⁸ **tn** Or "I." The Hebrew term *nefesh* (נֶפֶשׁ) with a pronominal suffix is often equivalent to a pronoun, especially in poetry (see BDB 660 s.v. נֶפֶשׁ 4.a).

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "clings after." The expression means "to pursue with determination" (see Judg 20:45; 1 Sam 14:22; 1 Chr 10:2; Jer 42:16).

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "but they for destruction seek my life." The pronoun "they" must refer here to the psalmist's enemies, referred to at this point for the first time in the psalm.

¹¹ **sn** *The depths of the earth* refers here to the underworld dwelling place of the dead (see Ezek 26:20; 31:14, 16, 18; 32:18, 24). See L. I. J. Stadelmann, *The Hebrew Conception of the World*, 167.

¹² **tn** *Heb* "they will deliver him over to the sword." The third masculine plural subject must be indefinite (see GKC 460 §144.f) and the singular pronominal suffix either representative or distributive (emphasizing that each one will be so treated). Active verbs with indefinite subjects may be translated as passives with the object (in the Hebrew text) as subject (in the translation).

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "they will be [the] portion of jackals"; traditionally, "of foxes."

¹⁴ **sn** The psalmist probably refers to himself in the third person here.

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "who swears [an oath] by him."

¹⁶ **tn** The Niphal of this verb occurs only here and in Gen 8:2, where it is used of God "stopping" or "damming up" the great deep as he brought the flood to an end.

¹⁷ **sn** *Psalms 64.* The psalmist asks God to protect him from his dangerous enemies and then confidently affirms that God will destroy his enemies and demonstrate his justice in the sight of all observers.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "my voice."

Protect¹⁹ my life from the enemy's terrifying attacks.²⁰

64:2 Hide me from the plots of evil men, from the crowd of evildoers.²¹

64:3 They²² sharpen their tongues like a sword; they aim their arrow, a slanderous charge,²³

64:4 in order to shoot down the innocent²⁴ in secluded places.

They shoot at him suddenly and are unafraid of retaliation.²⁵

64:5 They encourage one another to carry out their evil deed.²⁶

They plan how to hide²⁷ snares, and boast,²⁸ "Who will see them?"²⁹

64:6 They devise³⁰ unjust schemes; they disguise³¹ a well-conceived plot.³² Man's inner thoughts cannot be discovered.³³

64:7 But God will shoot³⁴ at them;

¹⁹ **tn** The imperfect verbal form is used here to express the psalmist's request.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "from the terror of [the] enemy." "Terror" is used here metonymically for the enemy's attacks that produce fear because they threaten the psalmist's life.

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "workers of wickedness."

²² **tn** *Heb* "who." A new sentence was started here in the translation for stylistic reasons.

²³ **tn** *Heb* "a bitter word."

²⁴ **tn** The psalmist uses the singular because he is referring to himself here as representative of a larger group.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "and are unafraid." The words "of retaliation" are supplied in the translation for clarification.

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "they give strength to themselves, an evil matter [or "word"]."

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* "they report about hiding."

²⁸ **tn** *Heb* "they say."

²⁹ **tn** If this is a direct quotation (cf. NASB, NIV), the pronoun "them" refers to the snares mentioned in the previous line. If it is an indirect quotation, then the pronoun may refer to the enemies themselves (cf. NEB, which is ambiguous). Some translations retain the direct quotation but alter the pronoun to "us," referring clearly to the enemies (cf. NRSV).

³⁰ **tn** *Heb* "search out, examine," which here means (by metonymy) "devise."

³¹ **tc** The MT has תַּמְנוּ (*tammu*, "we are finished"), a Qal perfect first common plural form from the verbal root תָּמַם (*tamam*). Some understand this as the beginning of a quotation of the enemies' words and translate, "we have completed," but the Hiphil would seem to be required in this case. The present translation follows many medieval Hebrew MSS in reading תִּמְנֵנוּ (*tomnu*, "they hide"), a Qal perfect third common plural form from the verbal root תָּמַם (*taman*).

³² **tn** *Heb* "a searched-out search," which is understood as referring here to a thoroughly planned plot to destroy the psalmist.

³³ **tn** *Heb* "and the inner part of man, and a heart [is] deep." The point seems to be that a man's inner thoughts are incapable of being discovered. No one is a mind reader! Consequently the psalmist is vulnerable to his enemies' well-disguised plots.

³⁴ **tn** The prefixed verb with *vav* (ו) consecutive is normally used in narrative contexts to describe completed past actions. It is possible that the conclusion to the psalm (vv. 7-10) was added to the lament after God's judgment of the wicked in response to the psalmist's lament (vv. 1-6). The translation assumes that these verses are anticipatory and express the psalmist's confidence that God would eventually judge the wicked. The psalmist uses a narrative style as a rhetorical device to emphasize his certitude. See GKC 329-30 §111.w.

suddenly they will be¹ wounded by an arrow.²

64:8 Their slander will bring about their demise.³

All who see them will shudder,⁴

64:9 and all people will fear.⁵

They will proclaim⁶ what God has done, and reflect on his deeds.

64:10 The godly will rejoice in the LORD and take shelter in him.

All the morally upright⁷ will boast.⁸

Psalm 65⁹

For the music director; a psalm of David, a song.

65:1 Praise awaits you,¹⁰ O God, in Zion. Vows made to you are fulfilled.

65:2 You hear prayers,¹¹

all people approach you.¹²

65:3 Our record of sins overwhelms me,¹³ but you forgive¹⁴ our acts of rebellion.

65:4 How blessed¹⁵ is the one whom you choose, and allow to live in your palace courts.¹⁶

¹ **tn** The perfect verbal form here expresses the psalmist's certitude about the coming demise of the wicked.

² **tn** The translation follows the traditional accentuation of the MT. Another option is to translate, "But God will shoot them down with an arrow, suddenly they will be wounded" (cf. NIV, NRSV).

³ **tc** The MT reads literally, "and they caused him to stumble, upon them, their tongue." Perhaps the third plural subject of the verb is indefinite with the third singular pronominal suffix on the verb being distributive (see Ps 63:10). In this case one may translate, "each one will be made to stumble." The preposition לְ (al) might then be taken as adversative, "against them [is] their tongue." Many prefer to emend the text to וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ (yayyakhshilemu) "they bowed down," and he caused them to stumble over their tongue." However, if this reading is original, it is difficult to see how the present reading of the MT arose. Furthermore, the preposition is not collocated with the verb כָּשַׁל (kashal) elsewhere. It is likely that the MT is corrupt, but a satisfying emendation has not yet been proposed.

⁴ **tn** The Hitpolel verbal form is probably from the root נוד (nud; see HALOT 678 s.v. נוד), which is attested elsewhere in the Hitpolel stem, not the root נוד (nadad, as proposed by BDB 622 s.v. | נוד), which does not occur elsewhere in this stem.

⁵ **tc** Many medieval Hebrew MSS read וַיִּרְאוּ (vayyir'u, "and they will see") instead of וַיִּירְאוּ (vayyir'u, "and they will proclaim").

⁶ **tn** Heb "the work of God," referring to the judgment described in v. 7.

⁷ **tn** Heb "upright in heart."

⁸ **tn** That is, about the LORD's accomplishments on their behalf.

⁹ **sn** Psalm 65. The psalmist praises God because he forgives sin and blesses his people with an abundant harvest.

¹⁰ **tn** Heb "for you, silence, praise." Many prefer to emend the noun דְּמִיָּה (dumiyah, "silence") to a participle דְּמִיָּה (domiyah), from the root דָּמָה (damah, "be silent"), understood here in the sense of "wait."

¹¹ **tn** Heb "O one who hears prayer."

¹² **tn** Heb "to you all flesh comes."

¹³ **tn** Heb "the records of sins are too strong for me."

¹⁴ **tn** Or "make atonement for."

¹⁵ **tn** The Hebrew noun is an abstract plural. The word often refers metonymically to the happiness that God-given security and prosperity produce (see Pss 1:1; 2:12; 34:9; 41:1; 84:12; 89:15; 106:3; 112:1; 127:5; 128:1; 144:15).

¹⁶ **tn** Heb "[whom] you bring near [so that] he might live [in] your courts."

May we be satisfied with the good things of your house – your holy palace.¹⁷

65:5 You answer our prayers by performing awesome acts of deliverance, O God, our savior.¹⁸

All the ends of the earth trust in you,¹⁹ as well as those living across the wide seas.²⁰

65:6 You created the mountains by your power,²¹

and demonstrated your strength.²²

65:7 You calm the raging seas²³ and their roaring waves, as well as the commotion made by the nations.²⁴

65:8 Even those living in the most remote areas are awestruck by your acts,²⁵ you cause those living in the east and west to praise you.²⁶

65:9 You visit the earth and give it rain;²⁷ you make it rich and fertile²⁸

with overflowing streams full of water.²⁹ You provide grain for them,³⁰

for you prepare the earth to yield its crops.³¹

¹⁷ **tn** Or "temple."

¹⁸ **tn** Heb "[with] awesome acts in deliverance you answer us, O God of our salvation."

¹⁹ **tn** Heb "a source of confidence [for] all the ends of the earth."

²⁰ **sn** All the ends of the earth trust in you. This idealistic portrayal of universal worship is typical hymnic hyperbole, though it does anticipate eschatological reality.

²¹ **tc** Heb "and [the] distant sea." The plural adjective is problematic after the singular form "sea." One could emend יָם (yam, "sea") to יָמִים (yamim, "seas"), or emend the plural form רַקְחִים (rakhoqim, "far") to the singular rakhoq. In this case the final mem (ם) could be treated as dittographic; note the mem on the beginning of the first word in v. 6.

²² **tn** Heb "[the] one who establishes [the] mountains by his power."

²³ **tn** Heb "one [who] is girded with strength"; or "one [who] girds himself with strength."

²⁴ **tn** Heb "the roar of the seas."

²⁵ **sn** The raging seas...the commotion made by the nations. The raging seas symbolize the turbulent nations of the earth (see Ps 46:2-3, 6; Isa 17:12).

²⁶ **tn** Heb "and the inhabitants of the ends fear because of your signs." God's "signs" are the "awesome acts" (see v. 5) he performs in the earth.

²⁷ **tn** Heb "the goings out of the morning and the evening you cause to shout for joy." The phrase "goings out of the morning and evening" refers to the sunrise and sunset, that is, the east and the west.

²⁸ **tn** The verb form is a Polel from שִׁק (shuq, "be abundant"), a verb which appears only here and in Joel 2:24 and 3:13, where it is used in the Hiphil stem and means "overflow."

²⁹ **tn** Heb "you greatly enrich it."

³⁰ **tn** Heb "[with] a channel of God full of water." The divine name is probably used here in a superlative sense to depict a very deep stream ("a stream fit for God," as it were).

³¹ **tn** The pronoun apparently refers to the people of the earth, mentioned in v. 8.

³² **tn** Heb "for thus [referring to the provision of rain described in the first half of the verse] you prepare it." The third feminine singular pronominal suffix attached to the verb "prepare" refers back to the "earth," which is a feminine noun with regard to grammatical form.

65:10 You saturate¹ its furrows,
and soak² its plowed ground.³
With rain showers you soften its soil,⁴
and make its crops grow.⁵
65:11 You crown the year with your good
blessings,⁶
and you leave abundance in your wake.⁷
65:12 The pastures in the wilderness glisten
with moisture,⁸
and the hills are clothed with joy.⁹
65:13 The meadows are clothed with
sheep,
and the valleys are covered with grain.
They shout joyfully, yes, they sing.

Psalms 66¹⁰

For the music director; a song, a psalm.

66:1 Shout out praise to God, all the earth!
66:2 Sing praises about the majesty of his
reputation!¹¹
Give him the honor he deserves!¹²
66:3 Say to God:
“How awesome are your deeds!
Because of your great power your en-
emies cower in fear¹³ before you.
66:4 All the earth worships¹⁴ you
and sings praises to you!
They sing praises to your name!” (Selah)
66:5 Come and witness¹⁵ God’s exploits!¹⁶
His acts on behalf of people are awesome!¹⁷
66:6 He turned the sea into dry land,¹⁸

they passed through the river on foot.¹⁹
Let us rejoice in him there!²⁰
66:7 He rules²¹ by his power forever;
he watches²² the nations.
Stubborn rebels should not exalt²³ them-
selves. (Selah)
66:8 Praise²⁴ our God, you nations!
Loudly proclaim his praise!²⁵
66:9 He preserves our lives²⁶
and does not allow our feet to slip.
66:10 For²⁷ you, O God, tested us;
you purified us like refined silver.
66:11 You led us into a trap;²⁸
you caused us to suffer.²⁹
66:12 You allowed men to ride over our
heads;
we passed through fire and water,
but you brought us out into a wide open
place.³⁰
66:13 I will enter³¹ your temple with burnt
sacrifices;
I will fulfill the vows I made to you,
66:14 which my lips uttered
and my mouth spoke when I was in
trouble.
66:15 I will offer up to you fattened ani-
mals as burnt sacrifices,
along with the smell of sacrificial rams.
I will offer cattle and goats. (Selah)
66:16 Come! Listen, all you who are loyal
to God!³²

¹ **tn** Heb “saturating” [the form is an infinitive absolute].

² **tn** Heb “flatten, cause to sink.”

³ **tn** Heb “trenches,” or “furrows.”

⁴ **tn** Heb “soften it,” that is, the earth.

⁵ **tn** Heb “its vegetation you bless.” Divine “blessing” often involves endowing an object with special power or capacity.

⁶ **tn** Heb “your good,” which refers here to agricultural blessings.

⁷ **tn** Heb “and your paths drip with abundance.”

⁸ **tn** Heb “drip.”

⁹ **tn** That is, with rich vegetation that brings joy to those who see it.

¹⁰ **sn** *Psalms 66*. The psalmist praises God because he has delivered his people from a crisis.

¹¹ **tn** Heb “his name,” which here stands metonymically for God’s reputation.

¹² **tn** Heb “make honorable his praise.”

¹³ **tn** See Deut 33:29; Ps 81:15 for other uses of the verb כָּהַשׁ (*kakhash*) in the sense “cower in fear.” In Ps 18:44 the verb seems to carry the nuance “be weak, powerless” (see also Ps 109:24).

¹⁴ **tn** Or “bows down to.” The prefixed verbal forms in v. 4 are taken (1) as imperfects expressing what is typical. Another option (2) is to interpret them as anticipatory (“all the earth will worship you”) or (3) take them as jussives, expressing a prayer or wish (“may all the earth worship you”).

¹⁵ **tn** Or “see.”

¹⁶ **tn** Or “acts” (see Ps 46:8).

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “awesome [is] an act toward the sons of man.” It is unclear how the prepositional phrase relates to what precedes. If collocated with “act,” it may mean “on behalf of” or “toward.” If taken with “awesome” (see 1 Chr 16:25; Pss 89:7; 96:4; Zeph 2:11), one might translate “his awesome acts are beyond human comprehension” or “his awesome acts are superior to anything men can do.”

¹⁸ **sn** He turned the sea into dry land. The psalmist alludes to Israel’s crossing the Red Sea (Exod 14:21).

¹⁹ **tn** Because of the reference to “the river,” some understand this as an allusion to Israel’s crossing the Jordan River. However, the Hebrew term נָהָר (*nahad*) does not always refer to a “river” in the technical sense; it can be used of sea currents (see Jonah 2:4). So this line may also refer to the Red Sea crossing (cf. NEB).

²⁰ **tn** The adverb שָׁמָּה (*sham*, “there”) is used here, as often in poetic texts, to point “to a spot in which a scene is localized vividly in the imagination” (BDB 1027 s.v.).

²¹ **tn** Heb “[the] one who rules.”

²² **tn** Heb “his eyes watch.” “Eyes” are an anthropomorphism, attributed to God here to emphasize his awareness of all that happens on earth.

²³ **tn** The verb form is jussive (note the negative particle אַל, ‘al). The *Kethib* (consonantal text) has a Hiphil form of the verb, apparently to be understood in an exhibitive sense (“demonstrate stubborn rebellion”; see BDB 927 s.v. רָוַם Hiph), while the *Qere* (marginal reading) has a Qal form, to be understood in an intransitive sense. The preposition לָ (lamed) with pronominal suffix should be understood in a reflexive sense (“for themselves”) and indicates that the action is performed with the interest of the subject in mind.

²⁴ **tn** Heb “bless,” in the sense of declaring “God to be the source of...special power” (see HALOT 160 s.v. וָקוּ בִּירָךְ).

²⁵ **tn** Heb “cause the voice of his praise to be heard.”

²⁶ **tn** Heb “the one who places our soul in life.”

²⁷ **tn** Or “indeed.”

²⁸ **tn** Heb “you brought us into a net.” This rare word for “net” also occurs in Ezek 12:13; 13:21; 17:20.

²⁹ **tn** Heb “you placed suffering on our hips.” The noun מִיָּוֶזֶה (*mi’aqah*, “suffering”) occurs only here in the OT.

³⁰ **tc** The MT reads רוּחָה (“saturation”) but this should be emended to רוּחָה (*vakhah*, “wide open place”; i.e., “relief”), a reading supported by several ancient versions (LXX, Syriac, Jerome, Targum).

³¹ **sn** Here the psalmist switches to the singular; he speaks as the representative of the nation.

³² **tn** Heb “all of the fearers of God.”

I will declare what he has done for me.

66:17 I cried out to him for help¹
and praised him with my tongue.²

66:18 If I had harbored sin in my heart,³
the Lord would not have listened.

66:19 However, God heard;
he listened to my prayer.

66:20 God deserves praise,⁴
for⁵ he did not reject my prayer
or abandon his love for me!⁶

Psalm 67

For the music director; to be accompanied by
stringed instruments; a psalm, a song.

67:1 May God show us his favor⁸ and
bless us!⁹

May he smile on us!¹⁰ (Selah)

67:2 Then those living on earth will know
what you are like;

all nations will know how you deliver
your people.¹¹

67:3 Let the nations thank you, O God!
Let all the nations thank you!¹²

67:4 Let foreigners¹³ rejoice and celebrate!
For you execute justice among the nations,
and govern the people living on earth.¹⁴

(Selah)

67:5 Let the nations thank you, O God!
Let all the nations thank you!¹⁵

67:6 The earth yields its crops.

May God, our God, bless us!

67:7 May God bless us!¹⁶

Then all the ends of the earth will give
him the honor he deserves.¹⁷

*Psalm 68*¹⁸

For the music director; by David, a psalm, a song.

68:1 God springs into action!¹⁹

His enemies scatter;
his adversaries²⁰ run from him.²¹

68:2 As smoke is driven away by the
wind, so you drive them away.²²

As wax melts before fire,
so the wicked are destroyed before God.

68:3 But the godly²³ are happy;
they rejoice before God

and are overcome with joy.²⁴

68:4 Sing to God! Sing praises to his
name!

Exalt the one who rides on the clouds!²⁵
For the LORD is his name!²⁶

fixed verbal forms in v. 5 are understood as jussives in this call to praise.

¹⁶ **tn** The prefixed verb forms in vv. 6b-7a are understood as jussives.

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “will fear him.” After the jussive of the preceding line, the prefixed verbal form with prefixed *vav* (ו) conjunctive is understood as indicating purpose/result. (Note how v. 3 anticipates the universal impact of God showing his people blessing.) Another option is to take the verb as a jussive and translate, “Let all the ends of the earth fear him.”

¹⁸ **sn** *Psalm 68*. The psalmist depicts God as a mighty warrior and celebrates the fact that God exerts his power on behalf of his people.

¹⁹ **tn** Or “rises up.” The verb form is an imperfect, not a jussive. The psalmist is describing God’s appearance in battle in a dramatic fashion.

²⁰ **tn** Heb “those who hate him.”

²¹ **sn** The wording of v. 1 echoes the prayer in Num 10:35: “Spring into action, LORD! Then your enemies will be scattered and your adversaries will run from you.”

²² **tn** Heb “as smoke is scattered, you scatter [them].”

²³ **tn** By placing the subject first the psalmist highlights the contrast between God’s ecstatic people and his defeated enemies (vv. 1-2).

²⁴ **tn** Heb “and they are happy with joy” (cf. NEB). Some translate the prefixed verbal forms of v. 3 as jussives, “Let the godly be happy, let them rejoice before God, and let them be happy with joy!” (Cf. NASB, NIV, NRSV; note the call to praise in v. 4.)

²⁵ **tn** Traditionally the Hebrew term עֲרַבּוֹת (*aravot*) is taken as “steppe-lands” (often rendered “deserts”), but here the form is probably a homonym meaning “clouds.” Verse 33, which depicts God as the one who “rides on the sky” strongly favors this (see as well Deut 33:26), as does the reference in v. 9 to God as the source of rain. The term עֲרַבּוֹת (*aravah*, “cloud”) is cognate with Akkadian *urpatu/erpetu* and with Ugaritic *rpt*. The phrase *rkb r’pt* (“one who rides on the clouds”) appears in Ugaritic mythological texts as an epithet of the storm god Baal. The nonphonemic interchange of the bilabial consonants *b* and *p* is attested elsewhere in roots common to Hebrew and Ugaritic, though the phenomenon is relatively rare.

²⁶ **tc** Heb “in the LORD his name.” If the MT is retained, the preposition בְּ (*bet*) is introducing the predicate (the so-called *bet* of identity), “the LORD is his name.” However, some prefer to emend the text to בְּיָהוָה שְׁמוֹ (*ki yah shemo*, “for Yah is his name”). This emendation, reflected in the present translation, assumes a confusion of *bet* (ב) and *kaf* (כ) and haplography of *yod* (י).

¹ **tn** Heb “to him [with] my mouth I called.”

² **tn** Heb “and he was extolled under my tongue.” The form רומַם (*romam*) appears to be a *polal* (passive) participle from רומ (rum, “be exalted”), but many prefer to read רומֵם, “high praise [was under my tongue]” (cf. NEB). See BDB 928 s.v. רומֵם.

³ **tn** Heb “sin if I had seen in my heart.”

⁴ **tn** Heb “blessed [be] God.”

⁵ **tn** Or “who.” In a blessing formula after בָּרוּךְ (*barukh*, “blessed be”) the form אֲשֶׁר (*asher*), whether taken as a relative pronoun or causal particle, introduces the basis for the blessing/praise.

⁶ **tn** Heb “did not turn aside my prayer and his loyal love with me.”

⁷ **sn** *Psalm 67*. The psalmist prays for God’s blessing upon his people and urges the nations to praise him for he is the just ruler of the world.

⁸ **tn** Or “have mercy on us.”

⁹ **tn** The prefixed verbal forms are understood as jussives expressing the psalmist’s prayer. Note the jussive form יֵאָר (yā’er) in the next line.

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “may he cause his face to shine with us.”

¹¹ **tn** Heb “to know in the earth your way, among all nations your deliverance.” The infinitive with לֹ (lamed) expresses purpose/result. When God demonstrates his favor to his people, all nations will recognize his character as a God who delivers. The Hebrew term דֶּרֶךְ (*derekh*, “way”) refers here to God’s characteristic behavior, more specifically, to the way he typically saves his people.

¹² **tn** Heb “let the nations, all of them, thank you.” The prefixed verbal forms in vv. 3-4a are understood as jussives in this call to praise.

¹³ **tn** Or “peoples.”

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “for you judge nations fairly, and [as for the] peoples in the earth, you lead them.” The imperfects are translated with the present tense because the statement is understood as a generalization about God’s providential control of the world. Another option is to understand the statement as anticipating God’s future rule (“for you will rule...and govern”).

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “let the nations, all of them, thank you.” The pre-

Rejoice before him!

68:5 He is a father to the fatherless
and an advocate for widows.¹

God rules from his holy palace.²

68:6 God settles those who have been de-
serted in their own homes;³
he frees prisoners and grants them pros-
perity.⁴

But sinful rebels live in the desert.⁵

68:7 O God, when you lead your people
into battle,⁶

when you march through the desert,⁷
(Selah)

68:8 the earth shakes,
yes, the heavens pour down rain

before God, the God of Sinai,⁸
before God, the God of Israel.⁹

68:9 O God, you cause abundant showers
to fall¹⁰ on your chosen people.¹¹

When they¹² are tired, you sustain them,¹³
68:10 for you live among them.¹⁴

¹ **sn** God is depicted here as a just ruler. In the ancient Near Eastern world a king was responsible for promoting justice, including caring for the weak and vulnerable, epitomized by the *fatherless* and *widows*.

² **tn** *Heb* “God [is] in his holy dwelling place.” He occupies his throne and carries out his royal responsibilities.

³ **tn** *Heb* “God causes the solitary ones to dwell in a house.” The participle suggests this is what God typically does.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “he brings out prisoners into prosperity.” Another option is to translate, “he brings out prisoners with singing” (cf. NIV). The participle suggests this is what God typically does.

⁵ **tn** Or “in a parched [land].”

sn God delivers the downtrodden and oppressed, but *sinful rebels* who oppose his reign are treated appropriately.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “when you go out before your people.” The Hebrew idiom “go out before” is used here in a militaristic sense of leading troops into battle (see Judg 4:14; 9:39; 2 Sam 5:24).

⁷ **sn** *When you march through the desert*. Some interpreters think that v. 7 alludes to Israel’s exodus from Egypt and its subsequent travels in the desert. Another option is that v. 7, like v. 8, echoes Judg 5:4, which describes how the God of Sinai marched across the desert regions to do battle with Sisera and his Canaanite army.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “this one of Sinai.” The phrase is a divine title, perhaps indicating that the LORD rules from Sinai.

⁹ **sn** The language of vv. 7-8 is reminiscent of Judg 5:4-5, which tells how the God of Sinai came in the storm and annihilated the Canaanite forces led by Sisera. The presence of allusion does not mean, however, that this is a purely historical reference. The psalmist is describing God’s typical appearance as a warrior in terms of his prior self-revelation as ancient events are reactualized in the psalmist’s experience. (For a similar literary technique, see Hab 3.)

¹⁰ **tn** The verb נָחַל (*nah*, “cause rain to fall”) is a homonym of the more common נָחַל (“brandish”).

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “[on] your inheritance.” This refers to Israel as God’s specially chosen people (see Pss 28:9; 33:12; 74:2; 78:62, 71; 79:1; 94:5, 14; 106:40). Some take “your inheritance” with what follows, but the *vav* (ו) prefixed to the following word (note נַחֲלָהּ, *v. nahlah*) makes this syntactically unlikely.

¹² **tn** *Heb* “it [is],” referring to God’s “inheritance.”

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “it,” referring to God’s “inheritance.”

¹⁴ **tn** The meaning of the Hebrew text is unclear; it appears to read, “your animals, they live in it,” but this makes little, if any, sense in this context. Some suggest that כְּהַיָּהּ (*khayah*) is a rare homonym here, meaning “community” (BDB 312 s.v.) or “dwelling place” (HALOT 310 s.v. III כְּהַיָּהּ). In this case one may take “your community/dwelling place” as appositional to

You sustain the oppressed with your good
blessings, O God.

68:11 The Lord speaks;¹⁵

many, many women spread the good
news.¹⁶

68:12 Kings leading armies run away

– they run away!¹⁷

The lovely lady¹⁸ of the house divides up
the loot.

68:13 When¹⁹ you lie down among the
sheepfolds,²⁰

the wings of the dove are covered with
silver

and with glittering gold.²¹

68:14 When the sovereign Judge²² scatters
kings,²³

let it snow²⁴ on Zalmon!

the third feminine singular pronominal suffix at the end of v. 9, the antecedent of which is “your inheritance.” The phrase יָשִׁיבוּ־בָהּ (*yashivu-vah*, “they live in it”) may then be understood as an *asyndetic* relative clause modifying “your community/dwelling place.” A literal translation of vv. 9b-10a would be, “when it [your inheritance] is tired, you sustain it, your community/dwelling place in [which] they live.”

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “gives a word.” Perhaps this refers to a divine royal decree or battle cry.

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “the ones spreading the good news [are] a large army.” The participle translated “the ones spreading the good news” is a feminine plural form. Apparently the good news here is the announcement that enemy kings have been defeated (see v. 12).

¹⁷ **tn** The verbal repetition draws attention to the statement.

¹⁸ **tn** The Hebrew form appears to be the construct of נִוּה (*nuh*, “pasture”) but the phrase “pasture of the house” makes no sense here. The translation assumes that the form is an alternative or corruption of נִוּיָה (“beautiful woman”). A reference to a woman would be appropriate in light of v. 11b.

¹⁹ **tn** Or “if.”

²⁰ **tn** The meaning of the Hebrew word translated “sheepfolds” is uncertain. There may be an echo of Judg 5:16 here.

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “and her pinions with the yellow of gold.”

sn The point of the imagery of v. 13 is not certain, though the reference to *silver* and *gold* appears to be positive. Both would be part of the loot carried away from battle (see v. 12b).

²² **tn** The divine name used here is שַׁדַּדַּי (“Shaddai”). Shaddai/El Shaddai is the sovereign king/judge of the world who grants life, blesses and kills, and judges. In Genesis he blesses the patriarchs with fertility and promises numerous descendants. Outside Genesis he both blesses (protects) and takes away life and/or happiness.

²³ **tn** The Hebrew text adds “in it.” The third feminine singular pronominal suffix may refer back to God’s community/dwelling place (v. 10).

²⁴ **tn** The verb form appears to be a Hiphil jussive from שָׁלַג (*shalag*), which is usually understood as a denominative verb from שָׁלַג (*sheleg*, “snow”) with an indefinite subject. The form could be taken as a preterite, in which case one might translate, “when the sovereign judge scattered kings, it snowed on Zalmon” (cf. NIV, NRSV). The point of the image is unclear. Perhaps “snow” suggests fertility and blessing (see v. 9 and Isa 55:10), or the image of a snow-capped mountain suggests grandeur.

sn *Zalmon* was apparently a mountain in the region, perhaps the one mentioned in Judg 9:46 as being in the vicinity of Shechem.

68:15 The mountain of Bashan¹ is a towering mountain;²

the mountain of Bashan is a mountain with many peaks.³

68:16 Why do you look with envy,⁴ O mountains⁵ with many peaks, at the mountain where God has decided to live?⁶

Indeed⁷ the LORD will live there⁸ permanently!

68:17 God has countless chariots; they number in the thousands.⁹ The Lord comes from Sinai in holy splendor.¹⁰

68:18 You ascend on high,¹¹ you have taken many captives.¹² You receive tribute¹³ from¹⁴ men, including even sinful rebels.

Indeed the LORD God lives there!¹⁵

68:19 The Lord deserves praise!¹⁶ Day after day¹⁷ he carries our burden, the God who delivers us. (Selah)

¹ **sn** The *mountain of Bashan* probably refers to Mount Hermon.

² **tn** *Heb* “a mountain of God.” The divine name is probably used here in a superlative sense to depict a very high mountain (“a mountain fit for God,” as it were). Cf. NIV “are majestic mountains”; NRSV “O mighty mountain.”

³ **tn** The meaning of the Hebrew term, which appears only here in the OT, is uncertain. *HALOT* 174 s.v. מְבִינִים suggests “many-peaked,” while BDB 148 s.v. מְבִינִים suggests “rounded summit.”

⁴ **tn** The meaning of the Hebrew verb רָצַד (*ratsad*), translated here “look with envy,” is uncertain; it occurs only here in the OT. See BDB 952-53. A cognate verb occurs in later Aramaic with the meaning “to lie in wait; to watch” (*Jastrow* 1492 s.v. רָצַד).

⁵ **tn** Perhaps the apparent plural form should be read as a singular with enclitic *mem* (ם); later misinterpreted as a plural ending). The preceding verse has the singular form.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “[at] the mountain God desires for his dwelling place.” The reference is to Mount Zion/Jerusalem.

⁷ **tn** The Hebrew particle אַף (*af*) has an emphasizing function here.

⁸ **tn** The word “there” is supplied in the translation for clarification.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “thousands of [?].” The meaning of the word שְׁנָאֵן (*shin’an*), which occurs only here in the OT, is uncertain. Perhaps the form should be emended to שְׁאָנָן (*sha’anan*, “at ease”) and be translated here “held in reserve.”

¹⁰ **tc** The MT reads, “the Lord [is] among them, Sinai, in holiness,” which is syntactically difficult. The present translation assumes an emendation to אֲדֹנָי בְּאֵת מִסִּינַי (*adonay ba’ missinay*; see BHS note b-b and Deut 33:2).

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “to the elevated place;” or “on high.” This probably refers to the Lord’s throne on Mount Zion.

¹² **tn** *Heb* “you have taken captives captive.”

¹³ **tn** Or “gifts.”

¹⁴ **tn** Or “among.”

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “so that the LORD God might live [there].” Many take the infinitive construct with לֵּךְ (*lamed*) as indicating purpose here, but it is unclear how the offering of tribute enables the Lord to live in Zion. This may be an occurrence of the relatively rare emphatic *lamed* (see *HALOT* 510-11 s.v. לֵּךְ, though this text is not listed as an example there). If so, the statement corresponds nicely to the final line of v. 16, which also affirms emphatically that the Lord lives in Zion.

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “blessed [be] the Lord.”

¹⁷ **tn** It is possible to take this phrase with what precedes (“The Lord deserves praise day after day”) rather than with what follows.

68:20 Our God is a God who delivers; the LORD, the sovereign Lord, can rescue from death.¹⁸

68:21 Indeed God strikes the heads of his enemies,

the hairy foreheads of those who persist in rebellion.¹⁹

68:22 The Lord says, “I will retrieve them²⁰ from Bashan, I will bring them back from the depths of the sea,

68:23 so that your feet may stomp²¹ in their blood,

and your dogs may eat their portion of the enemies’ corpses.”²²

68:24 They²³ see your processions, O God—the processions of my God, my king, who marches along in holy splendor.²⁴

68:25 Singers walk in front; musicians follow playing their stringed instruments,²⁵

in the midst of young women playing tambourines.²⁶

68:26 In your large assemblies praise God, the LORD, in the assemblies of Israel!²⁷

68:27 There is little Benjamin, their ruler,²⁸ and the princes of Judah in their robes,²⁹ along with the princes of Zebulun and the princes of Naphtali.

68:28 God has decreed that you will be powerful.³⁰

O God, you who have acted on our behalf, demonstrate your power,

68:29 as you come out of your temple in Jerusalem!³¹

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “and to the LORD, the Lord, to death, goes out.”

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “the hairy forehead of the one who walks about in his guilt.” The singular is representative.

²⁰ **tn** That is, the enemies mentioned in v. 21. Even if they retreat to distant regions, God will retrieve them and make them taste his judgment.

²¹ **tc** Some (e.g. NRSV) prefer to emend מַכְחֹטִים (*makhchats*, “smash; stomp”; see v. 21) to רַחֲחִים (*rakhchats*, “bathe”; see Ps 58:10).

²² **tn** *Heb* “[and] the tongue of your dogs from [the] enemies [may eat] its portion.”

²³ **tn** The subject is probably indefinite, referring to bystanders in general who witness the procession.

²⁴ **tn** The Hebrew text has simply “in holiness.” The words “who marches along” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “after [are] the stringed instrument players.”

²⁶ **sn** To celebrate a military victory, women would play *tambourines* (see Exod 15:20; Judg 11:34; 1 Sam 18:6).

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* “from the fountain of Israel,” which makes little, if any, sense here. The translation assumes an emendation to בְּתַקְוֵי אֱסָרָה (*b^emiqra’ey*, “in the assemblies of [Israel]”).

²⁸ **sn** *Little Benjamin, their ruler*. This may allude to the fact that Israel’s first king, Saul, was from the tribe of Benjamin.

²⁹ **tc** The MT reads רִגְמָתָם (*rigmatam*), which many derive from רָגַם (*ragam*, “to kill by stoning”) and translates, “[in] their heaps,” that is, in large numbers.

³⁰ **tn** *Heb* “God has commanded your strength.” The statement is apparently addressed to Israel (see v. 26).

³¹ **tn** *Heb* “Be strong, O God, [you] who have acted for us, from your temple in Jerusalem.”

map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

Kings bring tribute to you.

68:30 Sound your battle cry⁴ against the wild beast of the reeds,² and the nations that assemble like a herd of calves led by bulls!³ They humble themselves⁴ and offer gold and silver as tribute.⁵ God⁶ scatters⁷ the nations that like to do battle.

68:31 They come with red cloth⁸ from Egypt, Ethiopia⁹ voluntarily offers tribute¹⁰ to God.

68:32 O kingdoms of the earth, sing to God!

Sing praises to the Lord. (Selah)

68:33 to the one who rides through the sky from ancient times!¹¹

Look! He thunders loudly.¹²

68:34 Acknowledge God's power,¹³ his sovereignty over Israel,

and the power he reveals in the skies!¹⁴

68:35 You are awe-inspiring, O God, as you emerge from your holy temple!¹⁵ It is the God of Israel¹⁶ who gives the people power and strength. God deserves praise!¹⁷

*Psalm 69*¹⁸

For the music director; according to the tune of "Lilies";¹⁹ by David.

69:1 Deliver me, O God, for the water has reached my neck.²⁰

69:2 I sink into the deep mire where there is no solid ground;²¹

I am in²² deep water, and the current overpowers me.

69:3 I am exhausted from shouting for help; my throat is sore;²³

my eyes grow tired of looking for my God.²⁴

69:4 Those who hate me without cause are more numerous than the hairs of my head.

Those who want to destroy me, my enemies for no reason,²⁵ outnumber me.²⁶

They make me repay what I did not steal!²⁷

69:5 O God, you are aware of my foolish sins;²⁸

my guilt is not hidden from you.²⁹

69:6 Let none who rely on you be disgraced because of me,

¹ **tn** The Hebrew verb גָּרַר (*ga'ar*) is often understood to mean "rebuke." In some cases it is apparent that scolding or threatening is in view (see Gen 37:10; Ruth 2:16; Zech 3:2). However, in militaristic contexts such as Ps 68 this translation is inadequate, for the verb refers in this setting to the warrior's battle cry, which terrifies and paralyzes the enemy. See A. Caquot, *TDOT* 3:53, and note the use of the verb in Ps 106:9 and Nah 1:4, as well as the related noun in Job 26:11; Pss 18:15; 76:6; 104:7; Isa 50:2; 51:20; 66:15.

² **sn** *The wild beast of the reeds* probably refers to a hippopotamus, which in turn symbolizes the nation of Egypt.

³ **tn** *Heb* "an assembly of bulls, with calves of the nations."

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "humbling himself." The verb form is a Hitpael participle from the root רָפַס (*rafas*, "to trample"). The Hitpael of this verb appears only here and in Prov 6:3, where it seems to mean, "humble oneself," a nuance that fits nicely in this context. The apparent subject is "wild beast" or "assembly," though both of these nouns are grammatically feminine, while the participle is a masculine form. Perhaps one should emend the participial form to a masculine plural (מִתְרַפְּסִים, *mitrapim*) and understand "bulls" or "calves" as the subject.

⁵ **tc** *Heb* "with pieces [?] of silver." The meaning of the Hebrew term רָצִי (*ratsay*) is unclear. It is probably best to emend the text to בִּצְרֵר וְכֶסֶף (*bets'er v'khasef*, "[with] gold and silver").

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "he"; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁷ **tn** The verb בָּזַר (*bazar*) is an alternative form of פָּזַר (*pazar*, "scatter").

⁸ **tn** This noun, which occurs only here in the OT, apparently means "red cloth" or "bronze articles" (see *HALOT* 362 s.v. רְחִיטָיִן; cf. NEB "tribute"). Traditionally the word has been taken to refer to "nobles" (see BDB 365 s.v. רְחִיטָיִן; cf. NIV "envoys"). Another option would be to emend the text to הַרְשִׁימָיִם (*hashmannim*, "the robust ones," i.e., leaders).

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "Cush."

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "causes its hands to run," which must mean "quickly stretches out its hands" (to present tribute).

¹¹ **tc** *Heb* "to the one who rides through the skies of skies of ancient times." If the MT is retained, one might translate, "to the one who rides through the ancient skies." (שָׁמַיִם [*sh'mey*, "skies of"] may be accidentally repeated.) The present translation assumes an emendation to בָּשָׂמַיִם מִקְדָּם (*bashamayim miqqedem*, "[to the one who rides] through the sky from ancient times"), that is, God has been revealing his power through the storm since ancient times.

¹² **tn** *Heb* "he gives his voice a strong voice." In this context God's "voice" is the thunder that accompanies the rain (see vv. 8-9, as well as Deut 33:26).

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "give strength to God."

¹⁴ **sn** The language of v. 34 echoes that of Deut 33:26.

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "awesome [is] God from his holy places." The plural of מִקְדָּשִׁים (*miqdash*, "holy places") perhaps refers to the temple precincts (see Ps 73:17; Jer 51:51).

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "the God of Israel, he."

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "blessed [be] God."

¹⁸ **sn** *Psalm 69*. The psalmist laments his oppressed condition and asks the Lord to deliver him by severely judging his enemies.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "according to lilies." See the superscription to Ps 45.

²⁰ **tn** The Hebrew term נֶפֶשׁ (*nefesh*) here refers to the psalmist's throat or neck. The psalmist compares himself to a helpless, drowning man.

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "and there is no place to stand."

²² **tn** *Heb* "have entered."

²³ **tn** Or perhaps "raw"; *Heb* "burned; inflamed."

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* "my eyes fail from waiting for my God." The psalmist has intently kept his eyes open, looking for God to intervene, but now his eyes are watery and bloodshot, impairing his vision.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "[with] a lie." The Hebrew noun שֶׁקֶר (*sheqer*, "lie") is used here as an adverb, "falsely, wrongfully" (see Pss 35:19; 38:19).

²⁶ **tn** The Hebrew verb עָצַם (*'atsam*) can sometimes mean "are strong," but here it probably focuses on numerical superiority; note the parallel verb רָבַב (*ravav*, "be many").

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* "that which I did not steal, then I restore." Apparently לֹא ('az, "then") is used here to emphasize the verb that follows.

sn *They make me repay what I did not steal*. The psalmist's enemies falsely accuse him and hold him accountable for alleged crimes he did not even commit.

²⁸ **tn** *Heb* "you know my foolishness."

²⁹ **sn** The psalmist is the first to admit that he is not perfect. But even so, he is innocent of the allegations which his enemies bring against him (v. 5b). God, who is aware of his foolish sins and guilt, can testify to the truth of his claim.

O sovereign LORD and king!¹
 Let none who seek you be ashamed be-
 cause of me,
 O God of Israel!

69:7 For I suffer² humiliation for your
 sake³

and am thoroughly disgraced.⁴

69:8 My own brothers treat me like a
 stranger;

they act as if I were a foreigner.⁵

69:9 Certainly⁶ zeal for⁷ your house⁸ con-
 sumes me;

I endure the insults of those who insult
 you.⁹

69:10 I weep and refrain from eating
 food,¹⁰

which causes others to insult me.¹¹

69:11 I wear sackcloth
 and they ridicule me.¹²

69:12 Those who sit at the city gate gossip
 about me;

drunkards mock me in their songs.¹³

69:13 O LORD, may you hear my prayer
 and be favorably disposed to me!¹⁴

O God, because of your great loyal love,
 answer me with your faithful deliver-
 ance!¹⁵

69:14 Rescue me from the mud! Don't let
 me sink!

Deliver me¹⁶ from those who hate me,
 from the deep water!

69:15 Don't let the current overpower me!
 Don't let the deep swallow me up!

Don't let the Pit¹⁷ devour me!¹⁸

69:16 Answer me, O LORD, for your loyal
 love is good!¹⁹

Because of your great compassion, turn
 toward me!

69:17 Do not ignore²⁰ your servant,
 for I am in trouble! Answer me right
 away!²¹

69:18 Come near me and redeem me!²²

Because of my enemies, rescue me!

69:19 You know how I am insulted, hu-
 miliated and disgraced;

you can see all my enemies.²³

69:20 Their insults are painful²⁴ and make
 me lose heart,²⁵

I look²⁶ for sympathy, but receive none,²⁷
 for comforters, but find none.

69:21 They put bitter poison²⁸ into my
 food,

and to quench my thirst they give me vin-
 egar to drink.²⁹

69:22 May their dining table become a
 trap before them!

May it be a snare for that group of
 friends!³⁰

69:23 May their eyes be blinded!³¹
 Make them shake violently!³²

¹ *tn Heb* "O Master, LORD of hosts." Both titles draw attention to God's sovereign position.

² *tn Heb* "carry, bear."

³ *tn Heb* "on account of you."

⁴ *tn Heb* "and shame covers my face."

⁵ *tn Heb* "and I am estranged to my brothers, and a foreigner to the sons of my mother."

⁶ *tn* Or "for." This verse explains that the psalmist's suffering is due to his allegiance to God.

⁷ *tn* Or "devotion to."

⁸ *sn* God's house, the temple, here represents by metonymy God himself.

⁹ *tn Heb* "the insults of those who insult you fall upon me."

sn Jn 2:17 applies the first half of this verse to Jesus' ministry in the context of John's account of Jesus cleansing the temple.

¹⁰ *sn* Fasting was a practice of mourners. By refraining from normal activities such as eating food, the mourner demonstrated the sincerity of his sorrow.

¹¹ *tn Heb* "and it becomes insults to me."

¹² *tn Heb* "and I am an object of ridicule to them."

¹³ *tn Heb* "the mocking songs of the drinkers of beer."

¹⁴ *tn Heb* "as for me, [may] my prayer be to you, O LORD, [in] a time of favor."

¹⁵ *tn Heb* "O God, in the abundance of your loyal love, answer me in the faithfulness of your deliverance."

¹⁶ *tn Heb* "let me be delivered."

¹⁷ *tn Heb* "well," which here symbolizes the place of the dead (cf. Ps 55:23).

¹⁸ *tn Heb* "do not let the well close its mouth upon me."

¹⁹ *tn* Or "pleasant"; or "desirable."

²⁰ *tn Heb* "do not hide your face from." The Hebrew idiom "hide the face" can (1) mean "ignore" (see Pss 10:11; 13:1; 51:9) or (2) carry the stronger idea of "reject" (see Pss 30:7; 88:14).

²¹ *tn* Or "quickly."

²² *tn Heb* "come near my life and redeem it." The verb "redeem" casts the LORD in the role of a leader who protects members of his extended family in times of need and crisis (see Ps 19:14).

²³ *tn Heb* "before you [are] all my enemies."

²⁴ *tn Heb* "break my heart." The "heart" is viewed here as the origin of the psalmist's emotions.

²⁵ *tn* The verb form appears to be a Qal preterite from an otherwise unattested root ניש (*nush*), which some consider an alternate form of נשׁ (*'anash*, "be weak; be sick"; see BDB 60 s.v. נשׁ). Perhaps the form should be emended to a Niphal, נשׁה (*va'e'onshah*, "and I am sick"). The Niphal of נשׁ occurs in 2 Sam 12:15, where it is used to describe David's sick child.

²⁶ *tn Heb* "wait."

²⁷ *tn Heb* "and I wait for sympathy, but there is none." The form נד (*nud*) is an infinitive functioning as a verbal noun; "sympathizing." Some suggest emending the form to a participle נד (*nad*, "one who shows sympathy"). The verb נד (*nud*) also has the nuance "show sympathy" in Job 2:11; 42:11 and Isa 51:19.

²⁸ *tn* According to BDB 912 s.v. נשׁ the term can mean "a bitter and poisonous plant."

²⁹ *sn* John 19:28-30 appears to understand Jesus' experience on the cross as a fulfillment of this passage (or Ps 22:15). See the study note on the word "thirsty" in John 19:28.

³⁰ *tc Heb* "and to the friends for a snare." The plural of שלום (*shalom*, "peace") is used in Ps 55:20 of one's "friends." If the reading of the MT is retained here, the term depicts the psalmist's enemies as a close-knit group of friends who are bound together by their hatred for the psalmist. Some prefer to revocalize the text as וְלִשְׁלֻמִים (*ul'shillumim*, "and for retribution"). In this case the noun stands parallel to פּוּקֵה (*pakh*, "trap") and מוֹקֵשׁ (*moqesh*, "snare"), and one might translate, "may their dining table become a trap before them, [a means of] retribution and a snare" (cf. NIV).

³¹ *tn Heb* "may their eyes be darkened from seeing."

³² *tn Heb* "make their hips shake continually."

69:24 Pour out your judgment¹ on them!
 May your raging anger² overtake them!
 69:25 May their camp become desolate,
 their tents uninhabited!³
 69:26 For they harass⁴ the one whom you
 discipline,⁵
 they spread the news about the suffering
 of those whom you punish.⁶
 69:27 Hold them accountable for all their
 sins!⁷
 Do not vindicate them!⁸
 69:28 May their names be deleted from
 the scroll of the living!⁹
 Do not let their names be listed with the
 godly!¹⁰
 69:29 I am oppressed and suffering!
 O God, deliver and protect me!¹¹
 69:30 I will sing praises to God's name!¹²
 I will magnify him as I give him thanks!¹³
 69:31 That will please the LORD more than
 an ox or a bull
 with horns and hooves.
 69:32 The oppressed look on – let them
 rejoice!
 You who seek God,¹⁴ may you be

encouraged!¹⁵
 69:33 For the LORD listens to the needy;
 he does not despise his captive people.¹⁶
 69:34 Let the heavens and the earth praise
 him,
 along with the seas and everything that
 swims in them!
 69:35 For God will deliver Zion
 and rebuild the cities of Judah,
 and his people¹⁷ will again live in them
 and possess Zion.¹⁸
 69:36 The descendants of his servants will
 inherit it,
 and those who are loyal to him¹⁹ will live
 in it.²⁰

*Psalms 70*²¹

For the music director; by David; written to get
 God's attention.²²

70:1 O God, please be willing to rescue
 me!²³
 O LORD, hurry and help me!²⁴
 70:2 May those who are trying to take my
 life
 be embarrassed and ashamed!²⁵
 May those who want to harm me
 be turned back and ashamed!²⁶
 70:3 May those who say, "Aha! Aha!"
 be driven back²⁷ and disgraced!²⁸

¹ tn Heb "anger." "Anger" here refers metonymically to divine judgment, which is the practical effect of God's anger.

² tn Heb "the rage of your anger." The phrase "rage of your anger" employs an appositional genitive. Synonyms are joined in a construct relationship to emphasize the single idea. For a detailed discussion of the grammatical point with numerous examples, see Y. Avishur, "Pairs of Synonymous Words in the Construct State (and in Appositional Hendiadys) in Biblical Hebrew," *Semiotics 2* (1971), 17-81.

³ tn Heb "in their tents may there not be one who dwells."

sn In Acts 1:20 Peter applies the language of this verse to Judas' experience. By changing the pronouns from plural to singular, he is able to apply the ancient curse, pronounced against the psalmist's enemies, to Judas in particular.

⁴ tn Or "persecute"; Heb "chase."

⁵ tn Heb "for you, the one whom you strike, they chase."

⁶ tn Heb "they announce the pain of your wounded ones" (i.e., "the ones whom you wounded," as the parallel line makes clear).

sn The psalmist is innocent of the false charges made by his enemies (v. 4), but he is also aware of his sinfulness (v. 5) and admits that he experiences divine discipline (v. 26) despite his devotion to God (v. 9). Here he laments that his enemies take advantage of such divine discipline by harassing and slandering him. They "kick him while he's down," as the expression goes.

⁷ tn Heb "place sin upon their sin."

⁸ tn Heb "let them not come into your vindication."

⁹ tn Heb "let them be wiped out of the scroll of the living."

sn The phrase *the scroll of the living* occurs only here in the OT. It pictures a scroll or census list containing the names of the citizens of a community. When an individual died, that person's name was removed from the list. So this curse is a very vivid way of asking that the enemies die.

¹⁰ tn Heb "and with the godly let them not be written."

sn *Do not let their names be listed with the godly.* This curse pictures a scroll in which God records the names of his loyal followers. The psalmist makes the point that his enemies have no right to be included in this list of the godly.

¹¹ tn Heb "your deliverance, O God, may it protect me."

¹² tn Heb "I will praise the name of God with a song."

¹³ tn Heb "I will magnify him with thanks."

¹⁴ sn *You who seek God* refers to those who seek to have a relationship with God by obeying and worshiping him (see Ps 53:2).

¹⁵ tn Heb "may your heart[s] live." See Ps 22:26.

¹⁶ tn Heb "his prisoners he does not despise."

¹⁷ tn Heb "they"; the referent (God's people) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁸ tn Heb "it." The third feminine singular pronominal suffix probably refers to "Zion" (see Pss 48:12; 102:14); thus the referent has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁹ tn Heb "the lovers of his name." The phrase refers to those who are loyal to God (cf. v. 35). See Pss 5:11; 119:132; Isa 56:6.

²⁰ sn Verses 35-36 appear to be an addition to the psalm from the time of the exile. The earlier lament reflects an individual's situation, while these verses seem to reflect a communal application of it.

²¹ sn *Psalms 70.* This psalm is almost identical to Ps 40:13-17. The psalmist asks for God's help and for divine retribution against his enemies.

²² tn Heb "to cause to remember." The same form, a Hiphil infinitive of זָכַר (*zakhar*, "remember"), also appears in the superscription of Ps 38. Some understand this in the sense of "for the memorial offering," but it may carry the idea of bringing one's plight to God's attention (see P. C. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50* [WBC], 303).

²³ tn Heb "O God, to rescue me." A main verb is obviously missing. The verb רָצַח (*ratsah*, "be willing") should be supplied (see Ps 40:13). Ps 40:13 uses the divine name "LORD" rather than "God."

²⁴ tn Heb "hurry to my help." See Pss 22:19; 38:22.

²⁵ tn Heb "may they be embarrassed and ashamed, the ones seeking my life." Ps 40:14 has "together" after "ashamed," and "to snatch it away" after "my life."

²⁶ tn The four prefixed verbal forms in this verse are understood as jussives. The psalmist is calling judgment down on his enemies.

sn See Ps 35:4 for a similar prayer.

²⁷ tn Heb The prefixed verbal form is understood as a jussive in this imprecation.

²⁸ tn Heb "May they be turned back according to their shame, those who say, 'Aha! Aha!'" Ps 40:15 has the verb "humiliated" instead of "turned back" and adds "to me" after "say."

70:4 May all those who seek you be happy
and rejoice in you!
May those who love to experience¹ your
deliverance say continually,²
“May God³ be praised!”⁴
70:5 I am oppressed and needy!⁵
O God, hurry to me!⁶
You are my helper and my deliverer!
O LORD,⁷ do not delay!

*Psalms 71*⁸

71:1 In you, O LORD, I have taken shelter!
Never let me be humiliated!
71:2 Vindicate me by rescuing me!⁹
Listen to me!¹⁰ Deliver me!¹¹
71:3 Be my protector and refuge,¹²
a stronghold where I can be safe!¹³
For you are my high ridge¹⁴ and my
stronghold.
71:4 My God, rescue me from the power¹⁵
of the wicked,
from the hand of the cruel oppressor!
71:5 For you give me confidence,¹⁶ O
Lord;
O LORD, I have trusted in you since I was
young.¹⁷
71:6 I have leaned on you since birth;¹⁸
you pulled me¹⁹ from my mother’s womb.

¹ **tn** *Heb* “those who love,” which stands metonymically for its cause, the experience of being delivered by God.

² **tn** The three prefixed verbal forms prior to the quotation are understood as jussives. The psalmist balances out his imprecation against his enemies with a prayer of blessing on the godly.

³ **tn** Ps 40:16 uses the divine name “LORD” here instead of “God.”

⁴ **tn** The prefixed verbal form is taken as a jussive, “may the LORD be magnified [in praise].” Another option is to take the verb as an imperfect, “the LORD is great.” See Ps 35:27.

⁵ **sn** See Pss 35:10; 37:14.

⁶ **tn** Ps 40:17 has “may the Lord pay attention to me.”

⁷ **tn** Ps 40:17 has “my God” instead of “LORD.”

⁸ **sn** *Psalms 71*. The psalmist prays for divine intervention and expresses his confidence that God will protect and vindicate him. The first three verses are very similar to Ps 31:1-3a.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “in your vindication rescue me and deliver me.” Ps 31:1 omits “and deliver me.”

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “turn toward me your ear.”

¹¹ **tn** Ps 31:2 adds “quickly” before “deliver.”

¹² **tc** *Heb* “become for me a rocky summit of a dwelling place.” The Hebrew term *מִקְוֵה* (*ma’oq*, “dwelling place”) should probably be emended to *מִקְוֵה* (*ma’oz*, “refuge”); see Ps 31:2).

¹³ **tc** *Heb* “to enter continually, you commanded to deliver me.” The Hebrew phrase *לְבֹא לְיָמֵי צִוִּית* (*lavo’ tamid tsiivita*, “to enter continually, you commanded”) should be emended to *לְבֵית מְצֻדוֹת* (*l’bet m’tsudot*, “a house of strongholds”; see Ps 31:2).

¹⁴ **sn** *You are my high ridge*. This metaphor pictures God as a rocky, relatively inaccessible summit, where one would be able to find protection from enemies. See 1 Sam 23:25, 28.

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “hand.”

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “for you [are] my hope.”

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “O LORD, my source of confidence from my youth.”

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “from the womb.”

¹⁹ **tc** The form in the MT is derived from *גָּזַח* (*gazah*, “to cut off”), perhaps picturing God as the one who severed the psalmist’s umbilical cord. Many interpreters and translators prefer to emend the text to *גָּזַח* (*gokhzy*), from *גֹּחַ* (*gukh*) or *גִּיחַ*, (*gikh*, “pull out”; see Ps 22:9; cf. the present translation) or to *עֲזִיז* (*uzzy*, “my strength”; cf. NEB “my protector since I left my

I praise you continually.²⁰

71:7 Many are appalled when they see
me,²¹

but you are my secure shelter.

71:8 I praise you constantly
and speak of your splendor all day long.²²

71:9 Do not reject me in my old age!²³
When my strength fails, do not abandon
me!

71:10 For my enemies talk about me;
those waiting for a chance to kill me plot
my demise.²⁴

71:11 They say,²⁵ “God has abandoned
him.

Run and seize him, for there is no one
who will rescue him!”

71:12 O God, do not remain far away from
me!

My God, hurry and help me!²⁶

71:13 May my accusers be humiliated and
defeated!

May those who want to harm me²⁷ be cov-
ered with scorn and disgrace!

71:14 As for me, I will wait continually,
and will continue to praise you.²⁸

71:15 I will tell about your justice,
and all day long proclaim your salvation,²⁹
though I cannot fathom its full extent.³⁰

71:16 I will come and tell about³¹ the
mighty acts of the sovereign LORD.

I will proclaim your justice – yours alone.

71:17 O God, you have taught me since I
was young,
and I am still declaring³² your amazing
deeds.

71:18 Even when I am old and gray,³³

O God, do not abandon me,
until I tell the next generation about your
strength,
and those coming after me about your
power.³⁴

mother’s womb”).

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* “in you [is] my praise continually.”

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “like a sign [i.e., portent or bad omen] I am to many.”

²² **tn** *Heb* “my mouth is filled [with] your praise, all the day [with] your splendor.”

²³ **tn** *Heb* “do not cast me away at the time of old age.”

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* “those who watch for my life consult together.”

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “saying.”

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* “hurry to my help.”

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* “those who seek my harm.”

²⁸ **tn** *Heb* “and I add to all your praise.”

²⁹ **tn** *Heb* “my mouth declares your vindication, all the day your deliverance.”

³⁰ **tn** *Heb* “though I do not know [the] numbers,” that is, the tally of God’s just and saving acts. HALOT 768 s.v. *קְפִירָה* understands the plural noun to mean “the art of writing.”

³¹ **tn** *Heb* “I will come with.”

³² **tn** *Heb* “and until now I am declaring.”

³³ **tn** *Heb* “and even unto old age and gray hair.”

³⁴ **tn** *Heb* “until I declare your arm to a generation, to everyone who comes your power.” God’s “arm” here is an anthropomorphism that symbolizes his great strength.

71:19 Your justice, O God, extends to the
skies above;¹
you have done great things.²
O God, who can compare to you?³
71:20 Though you have allowed me to
experience much trouble and distress,⁴
revive me once again!⁵
Bring me up once again⁶ from the depths
of the earth!
71:21 Raise me to a position of great honor!⁷
Turn and comfort me!⁸
71:22 I will express my thanks to you with
a stringed instrument,
praising⁹ your faithfulness, O my God!
I will sing praises to you accompanied by
a harp,
O Holy One of Israel!¹⁰
71:23 My lips will shout for joy! Yes,¹¹ I
will sing your praises!
I will praise you when you rescue me!¹²

¹ **tn** *Heb* “your justice, O God, [is] unto the height.” The Hebrew term *קָרוֹם* (*marom*, “height”) is here a title for the sky/heavens.

sn *Extends to the skies above.* Similar statements are made in Pss 36:5 and 57:10.

² **tn** *Heb* “you who have done great things.”

³ **tn** Or “Who is like you?”

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “you who have caused me to see many harmful distresses.”

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “you return, you give me life.” The Hebrew term *שׁוּב* (*shuv*, “return”) is used here in an adverbial sense, indicating repetition of the action described by the following verb. The imperfects are understood here as expressing the psalmist’s prayer or wish. (Note the use of a distinctly jussive form at the beginning of v. 21.) Another option is to understand this as a statement of confidence, “you will revive me once again” (cf. NIV, NRSV).

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “you return, you bring me up.” The Hebrew term *שׁוּב* (*shuv*, “return”) is used here in an adverbial sense, indicating repetition of the action described by the following verb. The imperfects are understood here as expressing the psalmist’s prayer or wish. (Note the use of a distinctly jussive form at the beginning of v. 21.) Another option is to understand this as a statement of confidence, “you will bring me up once again” (cf. NIV, NRSV).

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “increase my greatness.” The prefixed verbal form is distinctly jussive, indicating this is a prayer or wish. The psalmist’s request for “greatness” (or “honor”) is not a boastful, self-serving prayer for prominence, but, rather, a request that God would vindicate by elevating him over those who are trying to humiliate him.

⁸ **tn** The imperfects are understood here as expressing the psalmist’s prayer or wish. (Note the use of a distinctly jussive form at the beginning of v. 21.)

⁹ **tn** The word “praising” is supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

¹⁰ **sn** The basic sense of the word “holy” is “set apart from that which is commonplace, special, unique.” The LORD’s holiness is first and foremost his transcendent sovereignty as the ruler of the world. He is “set apart” from the world over which he rules. At the same time his holiness encompasses his moral authority, which derives from his royal position. As king he has the right to dictate to his subjects how they are to live; indeed his very own character sets the standard for proper behavior.

¹¹ **tn** Or “when.” The translation assumes that *כִּי* (*ki*) has an emphasizing (asseverative) function here.

¹² **tn** *Heb* “and my life [or “soul”] which you will have redeemed.” The perfect verbal form functions here as a future perfect. The psalmist anticipates praising God, for God will have rescued him by that time.

71:24 All day long my tongue will also tell
about your justice,
for those who want to harm me¹³ will be
embarrassed and ashamed.¹⁴

*Psalm 72*¹⁵

For¹⁶ Solomon.

72:1 O God, grant the king the ability to
make just decisions!¹⁷
Grant the king’s son¹⁸ the ability to make
fair decisions!¹⁹
72:2 Then he will judge²⁰ your people
fairly,
and your oppressed ones²¹ equitably.
72:3 The mountains will bring news of
peace to the people,
and the hills will announce justice.²²
72:4 He will defend²³ the oppressed
among the people;
he will deliver²⁴ the children²⁵ of the poor
and crush the oppressor.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “those who seek my harm.”

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “will have become embarrassed and ashamed.” The perfect verbal forms function here as future perfects, indicating future actions which will precede chronologically the action expressed by the main verb in the preceding line.

¹⁵ **sn** *Psalm 72.* This royal psalm contains a prayer for the Davidic king (note the imperatival form in v. 1 and the jussive forms in vv. 16-17). It is not entirely clear if vv. 2-15 express a prayer or anticipate a future reign. The translation assumes a blend of petition and vision: (I) opening prayer (v. 1), followed by anticipated results if prayer is answered (vv. 2-7); (II) prayer (v. 8), followed by anticipated results if prayer is answered (vv. 9-14); (III) closing prayer (vv. 15-17). Whether a prayer, vision, or combination of the two, the psalm depicts the king’s universal rule of peace and prosperity. As such it is indirectly messianic, for the ideal it expresses will only be fully realized during the Messiah’s earthly reign. Verses 18-19 are a conclusion for Book 2 of the Psalter (Pss 42-72; cf. Ps 41:13, which contains a similar conclusion for Book 1), while v. 20 appears to be a remnant of an earlier collection of psalms or an earlier edition of the Psalter.

¹⁶ **tn** The preposition could be understood as indicating authorship (“Of Solomon”), but since the psalm is a prayer for a king, it may be that the superscription reflects a tradition that understood this as a prayer for Solomon.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “O God, your judgments to [the] king give.”

¹⁸ **sn** *Grant the king...Grant the king’s son.* It is not entirely clear whether v. 1 envisions one individual or two. The phrase “the king’s son” in the second line may simply refer to “the king” of the first line, drawing attention to the fact that he has inherited his dynastic rule. Another option is that v. 1 envisions a co-regency between father and son (a common phenomenon in ancient Israel) or simply expresses a hope for a dynasty that champions justice.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “and your justice to [the] son of [the] king.”

²⁰ **tn** The prefixed verbal form appears to be an imperfect, not a jussive.

²¹ **sn** These people are called God’s *oppressed ones* because he is their defender (see Pss 9:12, 18; 10:12; 12:5).

²² **tn** *Heb* “[the] mountains will bear peace to the people, and [the] hills with justice.” The personified mountains and hills probably represent messengers who will sweep over the land announcing the king’s just decrees and policies. See Isa 52:7 and C. A. Briggs and E. G. Briggs, *Psalms* (ICC), 2:133.

²³ **tn** *Heb* “judge [for].”

²⁴ **tn** The prefixed verbal form appears to be an imperfect, not a jussive.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “sons.”

72:5 People will fear¹ you² as long as the sun and moon remain in the sky, for generation after generation.³
 72:6 He⁴ will descend like rain on the mown grass,⁵ like showers that drench⁶ the earth.⁷
 72:7 During his days the godly will flourish,⁸ peace will prevail as long as the moon remains in the sky.⁹
 72:8 May he rule¹⁰ from sea to sea,¹¹ and from the Euphrates River¹² to the ends of the earth!
 72:9 Before him the coastlands¹³ will bow down, and his enemies will lick the dust.¹⁴
 72:10 The kings of Tarshish¹⁵ and the coastlands will offer gifts; the kings of Sheba¹⁶ and Seba¹⁷ will bring tribute.
 72:11 All kings will bow down to him; all nations will serve him.
 72:12 For he will rescue the needy¹⁸ when they cry out for help, and the oppressed¹⁹ who have no de-

¹ **tn** In this context “fear” probably means “to demonstrate respect for the LORD’s power and authority by worshiping him and obeying his commandments.” See Ps 33:8. Some interpreters, with the support of the LXX, prefer to read יִתְרַחֵם (y^{tr} a’arikh, “and he [the king in this case] will prolong [days]”), that is, “will live a long time” (cf. NIV, NRSV).

² **tn** God is the addressee (see vv. 1-2).

³ **tn** *Heb* “with [the] sun, and before [the] moon [for] a generation, generations.” The rare expression דֹּר דֹּרִים (*dor dorim*, “generation, generations”) occurs only here, in Ps 102:24, and in Isa 51:8.

⁴ **tn** That is, the king (see vv. 2, 4).

⁵ **tn** The rare term *zġ* refers to a sheep’s fleece in Deut 18:4 and Job 31:20, but to “mown” grass or crops here and in Amos 7:1.

⁶ **tc** The form in the Hebrew text appears to be an otherwise unattested noun. Many prefer to emend the form to a verb from the root זָרַף (*zaraf*). *BHS* in textual note b on this verse suggests a Hiphil imperfect, third masculine plural יִזְרִיפוּ (*yazrifu*), while HALOT 283 s.v. *זָרַף prefers a Pilpel perfect, third masculine plural יִזְרִפוּ (*zirzefu*). The translation assumes the latter.

⁷ **tn** The imagery of this verse compares the blessings produced by the king’s reign to fructifying rains that cause the crops to grow.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “sprout up,” like crops. This verse continues the metaphor of rain utilized in v. 6.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “and [there will be an] abundance of peace until there is no more moon.”

¹⁰ **tn** The prefixed verbal form is a (shortened) jussive form, indicating this is a prayer of blessing.

¹¹ **sn** *From sea to sea*. This may mean from the Mediterranean Sea in the west to the Dead Sea in the east. See Amos 8:12. The language of this and the following line also appears in Zech 9:10.

¹² **tn** *Heb* “the river,” a reference to the Euphrates.

¹³ **tn** Or “islands.” The term here refers metonymically to those people who dwell in these regions.

¹⁴ **sn** As they bow down before him, it will appear that his enemies are licking the dust.

¹⁵ **sn** *Tarshish* was a distant western port, the precise location of which is uncertain.

¹⁶ **sn** *Sheba* was located in Arabia.

¹⁷ **sn** *Seba* was located in Africa.

¹⁸ **tn** The singular is representative. The typical needy individual here represents the entire group.

¹⁹ **tn** The singular is representative. The typical oppressed

fender.

72:13 He will take pity²⁰ on the poor and needy;

the lives of the needy he will save.

72:14 From harm and violence he will defend them;²¹

he will value their lives.²²

72:15 May he live!²³ May they offer him gold from Sheba!²⁴

May they continually pray for him!

May they pronounce blessings on him all day long!²⁵

72:16 May there be²⁶ an abundance²⁷ of grain in the earth;

on the tops²⁸ of the mountains may it²⁹ sway!³⁰

individual here represents the entire group.

²⁰ **tn** The prefixed verb form is best understood as a defective written imperfect (see Deut 7:16).

²¹ **tn** Or “redeem their lives.” The verb “redeem” casts the LORD in the role of a leader who protects members of his extended family in times of need and crisis (see Pss 19:14; 69:18).

²² **tn** *Heb* “their blood will be precious in his eyes.”

²³ **tn** The prefixed verbal form is jussive, not imperfect. Because the form has the prefixed *vav* (ו), some subordinate it to what precedes as a purpose/result clause. In this case the representative poor individual might be the subject of this and the following verb, “so that he may live and give to him gold of Sheba.” But the idea of the poor offering gold is incongruous. It is better to take the jussive as a prayer with the king as subject of the verb. (Perhaps the initial *vav* is dittographic; note the *vav* at the end of the last form in v. 14.) The statement is probably an abbreviated version of the formula יְיָ הַמֶּלֶךְ חַיִּים (y^{ky} *hammelekh*, “may the king live”; see 1 Sam 10:24; 2 Sam 16:16; 1 Kgs 1:25, 34, 39; 2 Kgs 11:12).

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* “and he will give to him some gold of Sheba.” The prefixed verbal form is understood as a jussive with a grammatically indefinite subject (“and may one give”). Of course, the king’s subjects, mentioned in the preceding context, are the tribute bearers in view here.

²⁵ **tn** As in the preceding line, the prefixed verbal forms are understood as jussives with a grammatically indefinite subject (“and may one pray...and may one bless”). Of course, the king’s subjects, mentioned in the preceding context, are in view here.

²⁶ **tn** The prefixed verbal form is jussive, not imperfect. The translation assumes the subject is impersonal (rather than the king).

²⁷ **tn** The Hebrew noun פָּסַח (*pissah*; which appears here in the construct form) occurs only here in the OT. Perhaps the noun is related to the verbal root פָּשַׁח (*pasah*, “to spread,” see BDB 832 s.v.); the root appears as פָּסַח [*pasah*] in post-biblical Hebrew, which is used in postbiblical Hebrew of the rising sun’s rays spreading over the horizon and a tree’s branches spreading out (see Jastrow 1194 s.v. פָּסַח, פָּסַח, פָּסַח). In Ps 72:16 a “spreading of grain” would refer to grain fields extending out over the land. C. A. Briggs and E. G. Briggs (*Psalms* [ICC], 2:139) emend the form to פָּסַח (*s^ffiakh*, “second growth”).

²⁸ **tn** *Heb* “top” (singular).

²⁹ **tn** That is, the grain.

³⁰ **tn** According to the traditional accentuation of the MT, this verb belongs with what follows. See the translator’s note at the end of the verse for a discussion of the poetic parallelism and interpretation of the verse.

May its⁴ fruit trees² flourish³ like the forests of Lebanon!⁴

May its crops⁵ be as abundant⁶ as the grass of the earth!⁷

72:17 May his fame endure!⁸

May his dynasty last as long as the sun remains in the sky!⁹

May they use his name when they formulate their blessings!¹⁰

1 tn The antecedent of the third masculine singular pronominal suffix is unclear. It is unlikely that the antecedent is אֶרֶץ (*'eret*, "earth") because this noun is normally grammatically feminine. Perhaps רֹאשׁ (ro'sh, "top [of the mountains]") is the antecedent. Another option is to understand the pronoun as referring to the king, who would then be viewed as an instrument of divine agricultural blessing (see v. 6).

2 tn Heb "fruit."

3 tc According to the traditional accentuation of the MT, this verb belongs with what follows. See the note on the word "earth" at the end of the verse for a discussion of the poetic parallelism and interpretation of the verse. The present translation takes it with the preceding words, "like Lebanon its fruit" and emends the verb form from יַצִּיטוּ (yatsitsu; Qal imperfect third masculine plural with prefixed vav, [ו]) to יַצִּיטֵי (yatsits; Qal imperfect third masculine singular). The initial vav is eliminated as dittographic (note the vav on the ending of the preceding form בְּרֵייו, *piyvo*, "its/his fruit") and the vav at the end of the form is placed on the following emended form (see the note on the word "crops"), yielding וַיַּצִּיטוּ (*va'amir*, "and [its] crops").

4 tn Heb "like Lebanon."

5 tc The MT has "from the city." The translation assumes an emendation to עֲמִיר (*'amir*, "crops").

6 tn The translation assumes that the verb יַצִּיטוּ ("flourish") goes with the preceding line. The words "be as abundant" are supplied in the translation for clarification.

7 tc The traditional accentuation and vocalization of the MT differ from the text assumed by the present translation. The MT reads as follows: "May there be an abundance of grain in the earth, / and on the tops of the mountains! / May its [or 'his?'] fruit [trees?] rustle like [the trees of] Lebanon! / May they flourish from the city, like the grass of the earth!" If one follows the MT, then it would appear that the "fruit" of the third line is a metaphorical reference to the king's people, who flow out from the cities to populate the land (see line 4). Elsewhere in the OT people are sometimes compared to grass that sprouts up from the land (see v. 7, as well as Isa 27:6; Pss 92:7; 103:15). The translation understands a different poetic structural arrangement and, assuming the emendations mentioned in earlier notes, interprets each line of the verse to be a prayer for agricultural abundance.

8 tn Heb "may his name [be] permanent." The prefixed verbal form is jussive, not imperfect.

9 tn Heb "before the sun may his name increase." The *Kethib* (consonantal text) assumes יַיִן (*yayin*; a Hiphil of the verbal root יָיַן, *nin*) or יַיִן (yayen; a Piel form), while the *Qere* (marginal reading) assumes יַיִן (*yayin*; a Niphal form). The verb יַיִן occurs only here, though a derived noun, meaning "offspring," appears elsewhere (see Isa 14:22). The verb appears to mean "propagate, increase" (BDB 630 s.v. יָיַן) or "produce shoots, get descendants" (HALOT 696 s.v. יָיַן). In this context this appears to be a prayer for a lasting dynasty that will keep the king's name and memory alive.

10 tn Heb "may they bless one another by him," that is, use the king's name in their blessing formulae because he is a prime example of one blessed by God (for examples of such blessing formulae, see Gen 48:20 and Ruth 4:11). There is some debate on whether the Hitpael form of בָּרַךְ (*barakh*, "bless") is reflexive-reciprocal (as assumed in the present translation) or passive. The Hitpael of בָּרַךְ occurs in five other passages, including the hotly debated Gen 22:18 and 26:4. In these two texts one could understand the verb form as passive and translate, "all the nations of the earth will be blessed through your offspring," or one could take the Hitpael as re-

flexive or reciprocal and translate, "all the nations of the earth will pronounce blessings [i.e., on themselves or one another] by your offspring." In the first instance Abraham's (or Isaac's) offspring are viewed as a channel of divine blessing. In the second instance they are viewed as a prime example of blessing that will appear as part of the nations' blessing formulae, but not necessarily as a channel of blessing to the nations. In Deut 29:18 one reads: "When one hears the words of this covenant [or "oath"] and invokes a blessing on himself (Hitpael of בָּרַךְ) in his heart, saying: 'I will have peace, even though I walk with a rebellious heart.'" In this case the Hitpael is clearly reflexive, as the phrases "in his heart" and "I will have peace" indicate. The Hitpael of בָּרַךְ appears twice in Isaiah 65:16: "The one who invokes a blessing on himself (see Deut 9:18) in the land will invoke that blessing by the God of truth; and the one who makes an oath in the land will make that oath by the God of truth." A passive nuance does not fit here. The parallel line, which mentions making an oath, suggests that the Hitpael of בָּרַךְ refers here to invoking a blessing. Both pronouncements of blessing and oaths will appeal to God as the one who rewards and judges, respectively. Jer 4:2 states: "If you swear, 'As surely as the LORD lives,' with truth, integrity, and honesty, then the nations will pronounce blessings by him and boast in him." A passive nuance might work ("the nations will be blessed"), but the context refers to verbal pronouncements (swearing an oath, boasting), suggesting that the Hitpael of בָּרַךְ refers here to invoking a blessing. The logic of the verse seems to be as follows: If Israel conducts its affairs with integrity, the nation will be favored by the Lord, which will in turn attract the surrounding nations to Israel's God. To summarize, while the evidence might leave the door open for a passive interpretation, there is no clear cut passive use. Usage favors a reflexive or reciprocal understanding of the Hitpael of בָּרַךְ. In Ps 72:17 the Hitpael of בָּרַךְ is followed by the prepositional phrase בִּי (*vo*, "by him"). The verb could theoretically be taken as passive, "may all the nations be blessed through him" (cf. NIV, NRSV), because the preceding context describes the positive effects of this king's rule on the inhabitants of the earth. But the parallel line, which employs the Piel of אָשַׁר (*'ashar*) in a factitive/declarative sense, "regard as happy, fortunate," suggests a reflexive or reciprocal nuance for the Hitpael of בָּרַךְ here. If the nations regard the ideal king as a prime example of one who is fortunate or blessed, it is understandable that they would use his name in their pronouncements of blessing.

11 tn Heb "all the nations, may they regard him as happy." The Piel is used here in a delocutive sense ("regard as").

12 tn Heb "[be] blessed." See Pss 18:46; 28:6; 31:21; 41:13.

13 tn Heb "[the] one who does amazing things by himself."

14 tn Heb "[be] blessed."

15 tn Or "glory."

16 tn Heb "surely and surely" (אָמֵן וְאָמֵן [*amen v'amen*], i.e., "Amen and amen"). This is probably a congregational response of agreement to the immediately preceding statement about the propriety of praising God.

17 tn Heb "the prayers of David, son of Jesse, are concluded." As noted earlier, v. 20 appears to be a remnant of an earlier collection of psalms or an earlier edition of the Psalter. In the present arrangement of the Book of Psalms, not all psalms prior to this are attributed to David (see Pss 1-2, 10, 33, 42-50, 66-67, 71-72) and several psalms attributed

Book 3
(Psalms 73-89)

Psalms 73¹

A psalm by Asaph.

73:1 Certainly God is good to Israel,²
and to those whose motives are pure!³

73:2 But as for me, my feet almost
slipped;
my feet almost slid out from under me.⁴

73:3 For I envied those who are proud,
as I observed⁵ the prosperity⁶ of the
wicked.

73:4 For they suffer no pain;⁷
their bodies⁸ are strong and well-fed.⁹

73:5 They are immune to the trouble com-
mon to men;

they do not suffer as other men do.¹⁰

73:6 Arrogance is their necklace,¹¹

to David appear after this (see Pss 86, 101, 103, 108-110, 122, 124, 131, 138-145).

1 sn Psalm 73. In this wisdom psalm the psalmist offers a personal testimony of his struggle with the age-old problem of the prosperity of the wicked. As he observed evil men prosper, he wondered if a godly lifestyle really pays off. In the midst of his discouragement, he reflected upon spiritual truths and realities. He was reminded that the prosperity of the wicked is only temporary. God will eventually vindicate his people.

2 tn Since the psalm appears to focus on an individual's concerns, not the situation of Israel, this introduction may be a later addition designed to apply the psalm's message to the entire community. To provide a better parallel with the next line, some emend the Hebrew phrase לַיִשְׂרָאֵל אֱלֹהִים (*l'Yisra'el 'elohim*, "to Israel, God") to אֱלֹהִים [אוֹר] לַיִשְׂרָאֵל (*elohim [or 'el] l'Yyashar*, "God [is good] to the upright one").

3 tn Heb "to the pure of heart."

4 tn The Hebrew verb normally means "to pour out," but here it must have the nuance "to slide."

sn My feet almost slid out from under me. The language is metaphorical. As the following context makes clear, the psalmist almost "slipped" in a spiritual sense. As he began to question God's justice, the psalmist came close to abandoning his faith.

5 tn The imperfect verbal form here depicts the action as continuing in a past time frame.

6 tn Heb "peace" (שָׁלוֹם, *shalom*).

7 tn In Isa 58:6, the only other occurrence of this word in the OT, the term refers to "bonds" or "ropes." In Ps 73:4 it is used metaphorically of pain and suffering that restricts one's enjoyment of life.

8 tn Or "bellies."

9 tc Or "fat." The MT of v. 4 reads as follows: "for there are no pains at their death, and fat [is] their body." Since a reference to the death of the wicked seems incongruous in the immediate context (note v. 5) and premature in the argument of the psalm (see vv. 18-20, 27), some prefer to emend the text by redividing it. The term לְמוֹתָם (*l'motam*, "at their death") is changed to לְמוֹתָם לָמוֹתָם (*lamo tam*, "[there are no pains] to them, strong [and fat are their bodies]"). The term תָּם (*tam*, "complete; sound") is used of physical beauty in Song 5:2; 6:9. This emendation is the basis for the present translation. However, in defense of the MT (the traditional Hebrew text), one may point to an Aramaic inscription from Nerab which views a painful death as a curse and a nonpainful death in one's old age as a sign of divine favor. See ANET 661.

10 tn Heb "in the trouble of man they are not, and with mankind they are not afflicted."

11 sn Arrogance is their necklace. The metaphor suggests that their arrogance is something the wicked "wear" proudly. It draws attention to them, just as a beautiful necklace does to its owner.

and violence their clothing.¹²

73:7 Their prosperity causes them to do
wrong;¹³

their thoughts are sinful.¹⁴

73:8 They mock¹⁵ and say evil things;¹⁶
they proudly threaten violence.¹⁷

73:9 They speak as if they rule in heaven,
and lay claim to the earth.¹⁸

73:10 Therefore they have more than
enough food to eat,
and even suck up the water of the sea.¹⁹

12 tn Heb "a garment of violence covers them." The metaphor suggests that violence is habitual for the wicked. They "wear" it like clothing; when one looks at them, violence is what one sees.

13 tc The MT reads "it goes out from fatness their eye," which might be paraphrased, "their eye protrudes [or "bulges"] because of fatness." This in turn might refer to their greed; their eyes "bug out" when they see rich food or produce (the noun חֵלֶב [*khelev*, "fatness"] sometimes refers to such food or produce). However, when used with the verb יָצָא (*yatsa*, "go out") the preposition מִן ("from") more naturally indicates source. For this reason it is preferable to emend עֵינָם ("enemo, "their eye") to עֲוֹנָם (*avonamo*, "their sin") and read, "and their sin proceeds forth from fatness," that is, their prosperity gives rise to their sinful attitudes. If one follows this textual reading, another interpretive option is to take חֵלֶב ("fatness") in the sense of "unreceptive, insensitive" (see its use in Ps 17:10). In this case, the sin of the wicked proceeds forth from their spiritual insensitivity.

14 tn Heb "the thoughts of [their] heart [i.e., mind] cross over" (i.e., violate God's moral boundary, see Ps 17:3).

15 tn The verb מוֹק (*muq*, "mock") occurs only here in the OT.

16 tn Heb "and speak with evil."

17 tn Heb "oppression from an elevated place they speak." The traditional accentuation of the MT places "oppression" with the preceding line. In this case, one might translate, "they mock and speak with evil [of] oppression, from an elevated place [i.e., "proudly"] they speak." By placing "oppression" with what follows, one achieves better poetic balance in the parallelism.

18 tn Heb "they set in heaven their mouth, and their tongue walks through the earth." The meaning of the text is uncertain. Perhaps the idea is that they lay claim to heaven (i.e., speak as if they were ruling in heaven) and move through the earth declaring their superiority and exerting their influence. Some take the preposition בְּ- (*bet*) the first line as adversative and translate, "they set their mouth against heaven," that is, they defy God.

19 tc Heb "therefore his people return [so Qere (marginal reading); *Kethib* (consonantal text) has "he brings back"] to here, and waters of abundance are sucked up by them." The traditional Hebrew text (MT) defies explanation. The present translation reflects M. Dahood's proposed emendations (*Psalms* [AB], 2:190) and reads the Hebrew text as follows: לָמָּו יִשְׁבְּעוּם לֶחֶם וַיִּצְוּ יָמֵצוּ לָמָּו ("therefore they are filled with food, and waters of abundance they suck up for themselves"). The reading יִשְׁבְּעוּם לֶחֶם (*yisv'um lekhem*, "they are filled with food") assumes (1) an emendation of יָשִׁיב עִמּוֹ (*yashy'um*, "he will bring back his people") to יִשְׁבְּעוּם (*yisv'um*, "they will be filled"; a Qal imperfect third masculine plural form from שָׁבַע [*sava*] with enclitic *mem* [ם]), and (2) an emendation of הָלַם (*halom*, "to here") to לָהֵם ("food"). The expression "be filled/fill with food" appears elsewhere at least ten times (see Ps 132:15, for example). In the second line the Niphal form יִמְצִי (*yimmatsu*, derived from מָצָה [*matsah*, "drain"] is emended to a Qal form יָמֵצוּ (*yamotsu*), derived from מָצָה [*matsah*, "to suck"). In Isa 66:11 the verbs שָׁבַע (*sava*); proposed in Ps 73:10a) and יִמְצִי (proposed in Ps 73:10b) are parallel. The point of the emended text is this: Because they are seemingly sovereign (v. 9), they become greedy and grab up everything they need and more.

73:11 They say, “How does God know what we do?”

Is the sovereign One aware of what goes on?”¹

73:12 Take a good look! This is what the wicked are like,²

those who always have it so easy and get richer and richer.³

73:13 I concluded,⁴ “Surely in vain I have kept my motives⁵ pure and maintained a pure lifestyle.⁶

73:14 I suffer all day long, and am punished every morning.”

73:15 If I had publicized these thoughts,⁷ I would have betrayed your loyal followers.⁸

73:16 When I tried to make sense of this, it was troubling to me.⁹

73:17 Then I entered the precincts of God’s temple,¹⁰ and understood the destiny of the wicked.¹¹

73:18 Surely¹² you put them in slippery places; you bring them down¹³ to ruin.

73:19 How desolate they become in a mere moment!

Terrifying judgments make their demise complete!¹⁴

73:20 They are like a dream after one wakes up.¹⁵

O Lord, when you awake¹⁶ you will despise them.¹⁷

73:21 Yes,¹⁸ my spirit was bitter,¹⁹ and my insides felt sharp pain.²⁰

73:22 I was ignorant²¹ and lacked insight;²² I was as senseless as an animal before you.²³

73:23 But I am continually with you; you hold my right hand.

73:24 You guide²⁴ me by your wise advice, and then you will lead me to a position of honor.²⁵

73:25 Whom do I have in heaven but you? I desire no one but you on earth.²⁶

73:26 My flesh and my heart may grow weak²⁷

but God always²⁸ protects my heart and gives me stability.²⁹

¹ **tn** *Heb* “How does God know? Is there knowledge with the Most High?” They appear to be practical atheists, who acknowledge God’s existence and sovereignty in theory, but deny his involvement in the world (see Pss 10:4, 11; 14:1).

² **tn** *Heb* “Look, these [are] the wicked.”

³ **tn** *Heb* “the ones who are always at ease [who] increase wealth.”

⁴ **tn** The words “I concluded” are supplied in the translation. It is apparent that vv. 13-14 reflect the psalmist’s thoughts at an earlier time (see vv. 2-3), prior to the spiritual awakening he describes in vv. 17-28.

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “heart,” viewed here as the seat of one’s thoughts and motives.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “and washed my hands in innocence.” The psalmist uses an image from cultic ritual to picture his moral lifestyle. The reference to “hands” suggests actions.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “If I had said, ‘I will speak out like this.’”

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “look, the generation of your sons I would have betrayed.” The phrase “generation of your [i.e., God’s] sons” occurs only here in the OT. Some equate the phrase with “generation of the godly” (Ps 14:5), “generation of the ones seeking him” (Ps 24:6), and “generation of the upright” (Ps 112:2). In Deut 14:1 the Israelites are referred to as God’s “sons.” Perhaps the psalmist refers here to those who are “Israelites” in the true sense because of their loyalty to God (note the juxtaposition of “Israel” with “the pure in heart” in v. 1).

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “and [when] I pondered to understand this, troubling it [was] in my eyes.”

¹⁰ **tn** The plural of the term *miqdash* (מִקְדָּשׁ) probably refers to the temple precincts (see Ps 68:35; Jer 51:51).

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “I discerned their end.” At the temple the psalmist perhaps received an oracle of deliverance announcing his vindication and the demise of the wicked (see Ps 12) or heard songs of confidence (for example, Ps 11), wisdom psalms (for example, Pss 1, 37), and hymns (for example, Ps 112) that describe the eventual downfall of the proud and wealthy.

¹² **tn** The use of the Hebrew term אַךְ (“surely”) here literally counteracts its use in v. 13. The repetition draws attention to the contrast between the two statements, the first of which expresses the psalmist’s earlier despair and the second his newly discovered confidence.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “cause them to fall.”

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “they come to an end, they are finished, from terrors.”

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “like a dream from awakening.” They lack any real substance; their prosperity will last for only a brief time.

¹⁶ **sn** *When you awake.* The psalmist compares God’s inactivity to sleep and the time of God’s judgment to his awakening from sleep.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “you will despise their form.” The Hebrew term צֵלֶם (*tselem*, “form; image”) also suggests their short-lived nature. Rather than having real substance, they are like the mere images that populate one’s dreams. Note the similar use of the term in Ps 39:6.

¹⁸ **tn** Or perhaps “when.”

¹⁹ **tn** The imperfect verbal form here describes a continuing attitude in a past time frame.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* “and [in] my kidneys I was pierced.” The imperfect verbal form here describes a continuing condition in a past time frame.

²¹ **tn** Or “brutish, stupid.”

²² **tn** *Heb* “and I was not knowing.”

²³ **tn** *Heb* “an animal I was with you.”

²⁴ **tn** The imperfect verbal form here suggests this is the psalmist’s ongoing experience.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “and afterward [to] glory you will take me.” Some interpreters view this as the psalmist’s confidence in an afterlife in God’s presence and understand כָּבוֹד (*cavod*) as a metonymic reference to God’s presence in heaven. But this seems unlikely in the present context. The psalmist anticipates a time of vindication, when the wicked are destroyed and he is honored by God for his godly life style. The verb לָקַח (*laqakh*, “take”) here carries the nuance “lead, guide, conduct,” as in Num 23:14, 27-28; Josh 24:3 and Prov 24:11.

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* “Who [is there] for me in heaven? And besides you I do not desire [anyone] in the earth.” The psalmist uses a merism (heaven/earth) to emphasize that God is the sole object of his desire and worship in the entire universe.

²⁷ **tn** The Hebrew verb בָּיָה (*khalah*, “to fail; to grow weak”) does not refer here to physical death per se, but to the physical weakness that sometimes precedes death (see Job 33:21; Pss 71:9; 143:7; Prov 5:11).

²⁸ **tn** Or “forever.”

²⁹ **tn** *Heb* “is the rocky summit of my heart and my portion.” The psalmist compares the LORD to a rocky summit where one could go for protection and to landed property, which was foundational to economic stability in ancient Israel.

73:27 Yes,¹ look! Those far from you² die; you destroy everyone who is unfaithful to you.³

73:28 But as for me, God's presence is all I need.⁴

I have made the sovereign LORD my shelter, as⁵ I declare all the things you have done.

Psalm 74⁶

A well-written song⁷ by Asaph.

74:1 Why, O God, have you permanently rejected us?⁸

Why does your anger burn⁹ against the sheep of your pasture?

74:2 Remember your times¹⁰ whom you acquired in ancient times, whom you rescued¹¹ so they could be your very own nation,¹²

as well as Mount Zion, where you dwell!

74:3 Hurry and look¹³ at the permanent ruins, and all the damage the enemy has done to the temple!¹⁴

74:4 Your enemies roar¹⁵ in the middle of your sanctuary,¹⁶

they set up their battle flags.¹⁷

74:5 They invade like lumberjacks swinging their axes in a thick forest.¹⁸

74:6 And now¹⁹ they are tearing down²⁰ all its engravings²¹

with axes²² and crowbars.²³

74:7 They set your sanctuary on fire; they desecrate your dwelling place by knocking it to the ground.²⁴

74:8 They say to themselves,²⁵ "We will oppress all of them."²⁶

They burn down all the places where people worship God in the land.²⁷

74:9 We do not see any signs of God's presence,²⁸

there are no longer any prophets²⁹ and we have no one to tell us how long this will last.³⁰

74:10 How long, O God, will the adversary hurl insults?

Will the enemy blaspheme your name forever?

74:11 Why do you remain inactive? Intervene and destroy him!³¹

¹ **tn** Or "for."

² **sn** The following line defines the phrase *far from you* in a spiritual sense. Those "far" from God are those who are unfaithful and disloyal to him.

³ **tn** *Heb* "everyone who commits adultery from you."

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "but as for me, the nearness of God for me [is] good."

⁵ **tn** The infinitive construct with לְ (le) is understood here as indicating an attendant circumstance. Another option is to take it as indicating purpose ("so that I might declare") or result ("with the result that I declare").

⁶ **sn** *Psalm 74*. The psalmist, who has just experienced the devastation of the Babylonian invasion of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., asks God to consider Israel's sufferings and intervene on behalf of his people. He describes the ruined temple, recalls God's mighty deeds in the past, begs for mercy, and calls for judgment upon God's enemies.

⁷ **tn** The meaning of the Hebrew term מִשְׁכִּיל (*maskil*) is uncertain. The word is derived from a verb meaning "to be prudent; to be wise." Various options are: "a contemplative song," "a song imparting moral wisdom," or "a skillful [i.e., well-written] song." The term occurs in the superscriptions of Pss 32, 42, 44, 45, 52-55, 74, 78, 88, 89, and 142, as well as in Ps 47:7.

⁸ **sn** The psalmist does not really believe God has permanently rejected his people or he would not pray as he does in this psalm. But this initial question reflects his emotional response to what he sees and is overstated for the sake of emphasis. The severity of divine judgment gives the appearance that God has permanently abandoned his people.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "smoke." The picture is that of a fire that continues to smolder.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "your assembly," which pictures God's people as an assembled community.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "redeemed." The verb "redeem" casts God in the role of a leader who protects members of his extended family in times of need and crisis (see Ps 19:14).

¹² **tn** *Heb* "the tribe of your inheritance" (see Jer 10:16; 51:19).

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "lift up your steps to," which may mean "run, hurry."

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "everything [the] enemy has damaged in the holy place."

¹⁵ **tn** This verb is often used of a lion's roar, so the psalmist may be comparing the enemy to a raging, devouring lion.

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "your meeting place."

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "they set up their banners [as] banners." The Hebrew noun אֹיֹת (*ot*, "sign") here refers to the enemy army's battle flags and banners (see Num 2:12).

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "it is known like one bringing upwards, in a thicket of wood, axes." The Babylonian invaders destroyed the woodwork in the temple.

¹⁹ **tn** This is the reading of the Qere (marginal reading). The *Kethib* (consonantal text) has "and a time."

²⁰ **tn** The imperfect verbal form vividly describes the act as underway.

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "its engravings together."

²² **tn** This Hebrew noun occurs only here in the OT (see H. R. Cohen, *Biblical Hapax Legomena* [SBLDS], 49-50).

²³ **tn** This Hebrew noun occurs only here in the OT. An Akkadian cognate refers to a "pickaxe" (cf. NEB "hatchet and pick"; NIV "axes and hatchets"; NRSV "hatchets and hammers").

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* "to the ground they desecrate the dwelling place of your name."

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "in their heart."

²⁶ **tc** *Heb* "[?] altogether." The Hebrew form נִינָם (*ninam*) is problematic. It could be understood as the noun נֵינָן (*nin*, "offspring") but the statement "their offspring altogether" would make no sense here. C. A. Briggs and E. G. Briggs (*Psalms* [ICC], 2:159) emends יָיָד (*yakhad*, "altogether") to יָיָדוּ (*yakhid*, "alone") and translate "let their offspring be solitary" (i.e., exiled). Another option is to understand the form as a Qal imperfect first common plural from יָנָה (*yanah*, "to oppress") with a third masculine plural pronominal suffix, "we will oppress them." However, this verb, when used in the finite form, always appears in the Hiphil. Therefore, it is preferable to emend the form to the Hiphil נֹנֵם (*nomem*, "we will oppress them").

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* "they burn down all the meeting places of God in the land."

²⁸ **tn** *Heb* "our signs we do not see." Because of the reference to a prophet in the next line, it is likely that the "signs" in view here include the evidence of God's presence as typically revealed through the prophets. These could include miraculous acts performed by the prophets (see, for example, Isa 38:7-8) or object lessons which they acted out (see, for example, Isa 20:3).

²⁹ **tn** *Heb* "there is not still a prophet."

³⁰ **tn** *Heb* "and [there is] not with us one who knows how long."

³¹ **tn** *Heb* "Why do you draw back your hand, even your right hand? From the midst of your chest, destroy!" The psalmist pictures God as having placed his right hand (symbolic of ac-

74:12 But God has been my⁴ king from ancient times, performing acts of deliverance on the earth.²

74:13 You destroyed³ the sea by your strength; you shattered the heads of the sea monster⁴ in the water.

74:14 You crushed the heads of Leviathan;⁵ you fed⁶ him to the people who live along the coast.⁷

74:15 You broke open the spring and the stream,⁸

tivity and strength) inside his robe against his chest. He prays that God would pull his hand out from under his robe and use it to destroy the enemy.

¹ **tn** The psalmist speaks as Israel's representative here.

² **tn** *Heb* "in the midst of the earth."

³ **tn** The derivation and meaning of the Polel verb form פָּרַת (*porata*) are uncertain. The form may be related to an Akkadian cognate meaning "break, shatter," though the biblical Hebrew cognate of this verb always appears in the Hiphil or Hophal stem. BDB 830 s.v. II פָּרַר suggests a homonym here, meaning "to split; to divide." A Hitpoel form of a root פָּרַר (*parar*) appears in Isa 24:19 with the meaning "to shake violently."

⁴ **tn** The Hebrew text has the plural form, "sea monsters" (cf. NRSV "dragons"), but it is likely that an original enclitic *mem* has been misunderstood as a plural ending. The imagery of the mythological sea monster is utilized here. See the note on "Leviathan" in v. 14.

⁵ **sn** You crushed the heads of Leviathan. The imagery of vv. 13-14 originates in West Semitic mythology. The description of Leviathan should be compared with the following excerpts from Ugaritic mythological texts: (1) "Was not the dragon [Ugaritic *tnn*, cognate with Hebrew תַּנִּין (*tanin*), translated "sea monster" in v. 13] vanquished and captured? I did destroy the wriggling [Ugaritic *qltn*, cognate to Hebrew עֲקָלְתוֹן (*aqallaton*), translated "squirming" in Isa 27:1] serpent, [and] made an end of the wriggling serpent, the tyrant with seven heads" (note the use of the plural "heads" here and in v. 13). (See CTA 3.iii.38-39 in G. R. Driver, *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, 50.) (2) "For all that you smote Leviathan the slippery [Ugaritic *brh*, cognate to Hebrew בְּרִיחַ (*bariakh*), translated "fast moving" in Isa 27:1] serpent, [and] made an end of the wriggling serpent, the tyrant with seven heads" (See CTA 5.1.1-3 in G. R. Driver, *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, 68.) In the myths Leviathan is a sea creature that symbolizes the destructive water of the sea and, in turn, the forces of chaos that threaten the established order. In the OT, the battle with the sea motif is applied to Yahweh's victories over the forces of chaos at creation and in history (see Pss 74:13-14; 77:16-20; 89:9-10; Isa 51:9-10). Yahweh's subjugation of the waters of chaos is related to his kingship (see Pss 29:3, 10; 93:3-4). Isa 27:1 applies imagery from Canaanite mythology to Yahweh's eschatological victory over his enemies. Apocalyptic literature employs the imagery as well. The beasts of Dan 7 emerge from the sea, while Rev 13 speaks of a seven-headed beast coming from the sea. Here in Ps 74:13-14 the primary referent is unclear. The psalmist may be describing God's creation of the world (note vv. 16-17 and see Ps 89:9-12), when he brought order out of a watery mass, or the exodus (see Isa 51:9-10), when he created Israel by destroying the Egyptians in the waters of the sea.

⁶ **tn** The prefixed verbal form is understood as a preterite in this narrative context.

⁷ **sn** You fed him to the people. This pictures the fragments of Leviathan's dead corpse washing up on shore and being devoured by those who find them. If the exodus is in view, then it may allude to the bodies of the dead Egyptians which washed up on the shore of the Red Sea (see Exod 14:30).

⁸ **tn** You broke open the spring and the stream. Perhaps this alludes to the way in which God provided water for the Israelites as they traveled in the wilderness following the exo-

you dried up perpetually flowing rivers.⁹

74:16 You established the cycle of day and night:¹⁰

you put the moon¹¹ and sun in place.¹²

74:17 You set up all the boundaries¹³ of the earth;

you created the cycle of summer and winter.¹⁴

74:18 Remember how¹⁵ the enemy hurls insults, O LORD,¹⁶

and how a foolish nation blasphemes your name!

74:19 Do not hand the life of your dove¹⁷ over to a wild animal!

Do not continue to disregard¹⁸ the lives of your oppressed people!

74:20 Remember your covenant promises,¹⁹

for the dark regions of the earth are full of places where violence rules.²⁰

74:21 Do not let the afflicted be turned back in shame!

Let the oppressed and poor praise your name!²¹

74:22 Rise up, O God! Defend your honor!²²

du (see Ps 78:15-16, 20; 105:41).

⁹ **sn** Perpetually flowing rivers are rivers that contain water year round, unlike the seasonal streams that flow only during the rainy season. Perhaps the psalmist here alludes to the drying up of the Jordan River when the Israelites entered the land of Canaan under Joshua (see Josh 3-4).

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "To you [is] day, also to you [is] night."

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "[the] light." Following the reference to "day and night" and in combination with "sun," it is likely that the Hebrew term מְאֹר (*ma'or*, "light") refers here to the moon.

¹² **tn** *Heb* "you established [the] light and [the] sun."

¹³ **tn** This would appear to refer to geographical boundaries, such as mountains, rivers, and seacoasts. However, since the day-night cycle has just been mentioned (v. 16) and the next line speaks of the seasons, it is possible that "boundaries" here refers to the divisions of the seasons. See C. A. Briggs and E. G. Briggs, *Psalms* (ICC), 2:156.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "summer and winter, you, you formed them."

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "remember this."

¹⁶ **tn** Or "[how] the enemy insults the LORD."

¹⁷ **sn** Your dove. The psalmist compares weak and vulnerable Israel to a helpless dove.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "do not forget forever."

¹⁹ **tc** *Heb* "look at the covenant." The LXX reads "your covenant," which seems to assume a second person pronominal suffix. The suffix may have been accidentally omitted by haplography. Note that the following word (כַּף) begins with *kaf* (כ).

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "for the dark places of the earth are full of dwelling places of violence." The "dark regions" are probably the lands where the people have been exiled (see C. A. Briggs and E. G. Briggs, *Psalms* [ICC], 2:157). In some contexts "dark regions" refers to Sheol (Ps 88:6) or to hiding places likened to Sheol (Ps 143:3; Lam 3:6).

²¹ **sn** Let the oppressed and poor praise your name! The statement is metonymic. The point is this: May the oppressed be delivered from their enemies! Then they will have ample reason to praise God's name.

²² **tn** Or "defend your cause."

Remember how fools insult you all day long!¹

74:23 Do not disregard² what your enemies say,³ or the unceasing shouts of those who defy you.⁴

Psalms 75

For the music director; according to the *al-tashcheth* style;⁶ a psalm of Asaph; a song.

75:1 We give thanks to you, O God! We give thanks!

You reveal your presence;⁷ people tell about your amazing deeds.

75:2 God says,⁸ “At the appointed times,⁹

I judge¹⁰ fairly.

75:3 When the earth and all its inhabitants dissolve in fear,¹¹

I make its pillars secure.”¹² (Selah)

75:4¹³ I say to the proud, “Do not be proud,”

and to the wicked, “Do not be so confident of victory!”¹⁴

75:5 Do not be so certain you have won!¹⁵

¹ **tn** Heb “remember your reproach from a fool all the day.”

² **tn** Or “forget.”

³ **tn** Heb “the voice of your enemies.”

⁴ **tn** Heb “the roar of those who rise up against you, which ascends continually.”

⁵ **sn** *Psalms 75*. The psalmist celebrates God’s just rule, which guarantees that the godly will be vindicated and the wicked destroyed.

⁶ **tn** Heb “do not destroy.” Perhaps this refers to a particular style of music, a tune title, or a musical instrument. These words also appear in the superscription to Pss 57-59.

⁷ **tn** Heb “and near [is] your name.”

⁸ **tn** The words “God says” are not in the Hebrew text, but are supplied in the translation to clarify that God speaks in vv. 2-3.

⁹ **tn** Heb “when I take an appointed time.”

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “I, [in] fairness, I judge.” The statement is understood in a generalizing sense; God typically executes fair judgment as he governs the world. One could take this as referring to an anticipated (future) judgment, “I will judge.”

¹¹ **tn** Heb “melt.”

¹² **tn** The statement is understood in a generalizing sense; God typically prevents the world from being overrun by chaos. One could take this as referring to an anticipated event, “I will make its pillars secure.”

¹³ **tn** The identity of the speaker in vv. 4-6 is unclear. The present translation assumes that the psalmist, who also speaks in vv. 7-9 (where God/the LORD is spoken of in the third person) here addresses the proud and warns them of God’s judgment. The presence of כִּי (*ki*, “for”) at the beginning of both vv. 6-7 seems to indicate that vv. 4-9 are a unit. However, there is no formal indication of a new speaker in v. 4 (or in v. 10, where God appears to speak). Another option is to see God speaking in vv. 2-6 and v. 10 and to take only vv. 7-9 as the words of the psalmist. In this case one must interpret כִּי at the beginning of v. 7 in an asseverative or emphatic sense (“surely; indeed”).

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “do not lift up a horn.” The horn of an ox underlies the metaphor (see Deut 33:17; 1 Kgs 22:11; Ps 92:10). The horn of the wild ox is frequently a metaphor for military strength; the idiom “exalt/lift up the horn” signifies military victory (see 1 Sam 2:10; Pss 89:17, 24; 92:10; Lam 2:17). Here the idiom seems to refer to an arrogant attitude that assumes victory has been achieved.

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “do not lift up on high your horn.”

Do not speak with your head held so high!¹⁶

75:6 For victory does not come from the east or west, or from the wilderness.¹⁷

75:7 For God is the judge!¹⁸

He brings one down and exalts another.¹⁹

75:8 For the LORD holds in his hand a cup full

of foaming wine mixed with spices,²⁰ and pours it out.²¹

Surely all the wicked of the earth will slurp it up and drink it to its very last drop.”²²

75:9 As for me, I will continually tell what you have done;²³

I will sing praises to the God of Jacob!

75:10 God says,²⁴

“I will bring down all the power of the wicked;

the godly will be victorious.”²⁵

Psalms 76

For the music director; to be accompanied by stringed instruments; a psalm of Asaph, a song.

76:1 God has revealed himself in Judah;²⁷ in Israel his reputation²⁸ is great.

¹⁶ **tn** Heb “[do not] speak with unrestrained neck.” The negative particle is understood in this line by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

sn The image behind the language of vv. 4-5 is that of a powerful wild ox that confidently raises its head before its enemies.

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “for not from the east or from the west, and not from the wilderness of the mountains.” If one follows this reading the sentence is elliptical. One must supply “does help come,” or some comparable statement. However, it is possible to take הָרִים (*harim*) as a Hiphil infinitive from רוּם (*rum*), the same verb used in vv. 4-5 of “lifting up” a horn. In this case one may translate the form as “victory.” In this case the point is that victory does not come from alliances with other nations.

¹⁸ **tn** Or “judges.”

¹⁹ **tn** The imperfects here emphasize the generalizing nature of the statement.

²⁰ **tn** Heb “for a cup [is] in the hand of the LORD, and wine foams, it is full of a spiced drink.” The noun בִּסְסֶךְ (*mesekeh*) refers to a “mixture” of wine and spices.

²¹ **tn** Heb “and he pours out from this.”

²² **tn** Heb “surely its dregs they slurp up and drink, all the wicked of the earth.”

sn The psalmist pictures God as forcing the wicked to gulp down an intoxicating drink that will leave them stunned and vulnerable. Divine judgment is also depicted this way in Ps 60:3; Isa 51:17-23; and Hab 2:16.

²³ **tn** Heb “I will declare forever.” The object needs to be supplied; God’s just judgment is in view.

²⁴ **tn** The words “God says” are not in the Hebrew text. They are supplied in the translation to clarify that God speaks in v. 10.

²⁵ **tn** Heb “and all the horns of the wicked I will cut off, the horns of the godly will be lifted up.” The imagery of the wild ox’s horn is once more utilized (see vv. 4-5).

²⁶ **sn** *Psalms 76*. The psalmist depicts God as a mighty warrior who destroys Israel’s enemies.

²⁷ **tn** Or “God is known in Judah.”

²⁸ **tn** Heb “name,” which here stands metonymically for God’s reputation.

76:2 He lives in Salem;¹
he dwells in Zion.²

76:3 There he shattered the arrows,³
the shield, the sword, and the rest of the
weapons of war.⁴ (Selah)

76:4 You shine brightly and reveal your
majesty,
as you descend from the hills where you
killed your prey.⁵

76:5 The bravehearted⁶ were plundered;⁷
they “fell asleep.”⁸

All the warriors were helpless.⁹

76:6 At the sound of your battle cry,¹⁰ O
God of Jacob,
both rider¹¹ and horse “fell asleep.”¹²

76:7 You are awesome! Yes, you!
Who can withstand your intense anger?¹³

76:8 From heaven you announced what
their punishment would be.¹⁴

The earth¹⁵ was afraid and silent

76:9 when God arose to execute judgment,
and to deliver all the oppressed of the
earth. (Selah)

76:10 Certainly¹⁶ your angry judgment
upon men will bring you praise;¹⁷
you reveal your anger in full measure.¹⁸

76:11 Make vows to the LORD your God
and repay them!

Let all those who surround him¹⁹ bring
tribute to the awesome one!

76:12 He humbles princes;²⁰
the kings of the earth regard him as awe-
some.²¹

Psalm 77²²

For the music director, Jeduthun; a psalm of
Asaph.

77:1 I will cry out to God²³ and call for
help!

I will cry out to God and he will pay at-
tention²⁴ to me.

77:2 In my time of trouble I sought²⁵ the
Lord.

I kept my hand raised in prayer through-
out the night.²⁶

I²⁷ refused to be comforted.

¹ **sn** Salem is a shorter name for Jerusalem (see Gen 14:18).

² **tn** Heb “and his place of refuge is in Salem, and his lair in Zion.” God may be likened here to a lion (see v. 4).

³ **tn** Heb “flames of the bow,” i.e., arrows.

⁴ **tn** Heb “shield and sword and battle.” “Battle” probably here stands by metonymy for the weapons of war in general.

sn This verse may allude to the miraculous defeat of the Assyrians in 701 B.C. (see Isa 36-37).

⁵ **tn** Heb “radiant [are] you, majestic from the hills of prey.” God is depicted as a victorious king and as a lion that has killed its victims.

⁶ **tn** Heb “strong of heart.” In Isa 46:12, the only other text where this phrase appears, it refers to those who are stubborn, but here it seems to describe brave warriors (see the next line).

⁷ **tn** The verb is a rare Aramaized form of the Hitpolel (see GKC 149 §54.a, n. 2); the root is שָׁלַל (*shalal*, “to plunder”).

⁸ **tn** Heb “they slept [in] their sleep.” “Sleep” here refers to the “sleep” of death. A number of modern translations take the phrase to refer to something less than death, however: NASB “cast into a deep sleep”; NEB “fall senseless”; NIV “lie still”; NRSV “lay stunned.”

⁹ **tn** Heb “and all the men of strength did not find their hands.”

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “from your shout.” The noun is derived from the Hebrew verb גָּאַר (*ga’ar*), which is often understood to mean “rebuke.” In some cases it is apparent that scolding or threatening is in view (see Gen 37:10; Ruth 2:16; Zech 3:2). However, in militaristic contexts this translation is inadequate, for the verb refers in this setting to the warrior’s battle cry, which terrifies and paralyzes the enemy. See A. Caquot, *TDOT* 3:53, and note the use of the verb in Pss 68:30; 106:9; Nah 1:4, as well as the related noun in Job 26:11; Pss 9:5; 18:15; 104:7; Isa 50:2; 51:20; 66:15.

¹¹ **tn** Or “chariot,” but even so the term is metonymic for the charioteer.

¹² **tn** Heb “he fell asleep, and [the] chariot and [the] horse.” Once again (see v. 5) “sleep” refers here to the “sleep” of death.

¹³ **tc** Heb “and who can stand before you from the time of your anger?” The Hebrew expression מַעֲזָא (*me’az*, “from the time of”) is better emended to מַעֲזָא (*me’oz*, “from [i.e., “because of]” the strength of your anger”; see Ps 90:11).

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “a [legal] decision,” or “sentence.”

¹⁵ **tn** “The earth” stands here by metonymy for its inhabitants.

¹⁶ **tn** Or “for.”

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “the anger of men will praise you.” This could mean that men’s anger (subjective genitive), when punished by God, will bring him praise, but this interpretation does not harmonize well with the next line. The translation assumes that God’s anger is in view here (see v. 7) and that “men” is an objective genitive. God’s angry judgment against men brings him praise because it reveals his power and majesty (see vv. 1-4).

¹⁸ **tn** Heb “the rest of anger you put on.” The meaning of the statement is not entirely clear. Perhaps the idea is that God, as he prepares for battle, girds himself with every last ounce of his anger, as if it were a weapon.

¹⁹ **tn** The phrase “all those who surround him” may refer to the surrounding nations (v. 12 may favor this), but in Ps 89:7 the phrase refers to God’s heavenly assembly.

²⁰ **tn** Heb “he reduces the spirit of princes.” According to HALOT 148 s.v. II בָּצַר, the Hebrew verb בָּצַר (*batsar*) is here a hapax *legomenon* meaning “reduce, humble.” The statement is generalizing, with the imperfect tense highlighting God’s typical behavior.

²¹ **tn** Heb “[he is] awesome to the kings of the earth.”

²² **sn** Psalm 77. The psalmist recalls how he suffered through a time of doubt, but tells how he found encouragement and hope as he recalled the way in which God delivered Israel at the Red Sea.

²³ **tn** Heb “my voice to God.” The Hebrew verb גָּאַר (*gara*, “to call out; to cry out”) should probably be understood by ellipsis (see Ps 3:4) both here and in the following (parallel) line.

²⁴ **tn** The perfect with *vav* (ו) consecutive is best taken as future here (although some translations render this as a past tense; cf. NEB, NIV). The psalmist expresses his confidence that God will respond to his prayer. This mood of confidence seems premature (see vv. 3-4), but v. 1 probably reflects the psalmist’s attitude at the end of the prayer (see vv. 13-20). Having opened with an affirmation of confidence, he then retraces how he gained confidence during his trial (see vv. 2-12).

²⁵ **tn** Here the psalmist refers back to the very recent past, when he began to pray for divine help.

²⁶ **tn** Heb “my hand [at] night was extended and was not growing numb.” The verb נָגַר (*nagar*), which can mean “flow” in certain contexts, here has the nuance “be extended.” The imperfect form (נֹגֵר, *nafig*, “to be numb”) is used here to describe continuous action in the past.

²⁷ **tn** Or “my soul.” The Hebrew term נַפְשִׁי (*nefeshi*) with a pronominal suffix is often equivalent to a pronoun, especially in poetry (see BDB 660 s.v. נָפַשׁ 4.a).

77:3 I said, "I will remember God while I groan;
I will think about him while my strength leaves me."¹ (Selah)
77:4 You held my eyelids open;²
I was troubled and could not speak.³
77:5 I thought about the days of old, about ancient times.⁴
77:6 I said, "During the night I will remember the song I once sang;
I will think very carefully."
I tried to make sense of what was happening.⁵
77:7 I asked,⁶ "Will the Lord reject me forever?
Will he never again show me his favor?
77:8 Has his loyal love disappeared forever?
Has his promise⁷ failed forever?
77:9 Has God forgotten to be merciful?
Has his anger stifled his compassion?"
77:10 Then I said, "I am sickened by the thought
that the sovereign One⁸ might become inactive."⁹

¹ **tn** *Heb* "I will remember God and I will groan, I will reflect and my spirit will grow faint." The first three verbs are cohortatives, the last a perfect with *vav* (ו) consecutive. The psalmist's statement in v. 4 could be understood as concurrent with v. 1, or, more likely, as a quotation of what he had said earlier as he prayed to God (see v. 2). The words "I said" are supplied in the translation at the beginning of the verse to reflect this interpretation (see v. 10).

² **tn** *Heb* "you held fast the guards of my eyes." The "guards of the eyes" apparently refers to his eyelids. The psalmist seems to be saying that God would not bring him relief, which would have allowed him to shut his eyes and get some sleep (see v. 2).

³ **tn** The imperfect is used in the second clause to emphasize that this was an ongoing condition in the past.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "the years of antiquity."

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "I will remember my song in the night, with my heart I will reflect. And my spirit searched." As in v. 4, the words of v. 6a are understood as what the psalmist said earlier. Consequently the words "I said" are supplied in the translation for clarification (see v. 10). The prefixed verbal form with *vav* (ו) consecutive at the beginning of the final line is taken as sequential to the perfect "I thought" in v. 6.

⁶ **tn** As in vv. 4 and 6a, the words of vv. 7-9 are understood as a quotation of what the psalmist said earlier. Therefore the words "I asked" are supplied in the translation for clarification.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "word," which may refer here to God's word of promise (note the reference to "loyal love" in the preceding line).

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "Most High." This divine title (עֲלִיּוֹן, *'elyon*) pictures God as the exalted ruler of the universe who vindicates the innocent and judges the wicked. See especially Pss 7:17; 9:2; 18:13; 21:7; 47:2.

⁹ **tc** *Heb* "And I said, 'This is my wounding, the changing of the right hand of the Most High.'" The form הַיְדוּתִי (*khalloitiy*) appears to be a Qal infinitive construct (with a first person singular pronominal suffix) from the verbal root הָלַל (*khalal*, "to pierce; to wound"). The present translation assumes an emendation to הַיְדוּתִי (*khaloti*), a Qal infinitive construct (with a first person singular pronominal suffix) from the verbal root הָלַל (*khalal*, "be sick, weak"). The form שָׁנֹת (*sh'not*) is understood as a Qal infinitive construct from שָׁנָה (*shanah*, "to change") rather than a plural noun form, "years" (see v. 5). "Right hand" here symbolizes by metonymy God's power and activity. The psalmist observes that his real problem is theological in nature. His experience suggests that the sovereign Lord has abandoned him and become inactive. However, this

77:11 I will remember the works of the LORD.
Yes, I will remember the amazing things you did long ago!¹⁰
77:12 I will think about all you have done; I will reflect upon your deeds!¹¹
77:13¹² O God, your deeds are extraordinary!¹²
What god can compare to our great God?¹³
77:14 You are the God who does amazing things;
you have revealed your strength among the nations.
77:15 You delivered¹⁴ your people by your strength¹⁵ –
the children of Jacob and Joseph. (Selah)
77:16 The waters¹⁶ saw you, O God, the waters saw you and trembled.¹⁷
Yes, the depths of the sea¹⁸ shook with fear.¹⁹
77:17 The clouds poured down rain;²⁰ the skies thundered.²¹
Yes, your arrows²² flashed about.
77:18 Your thunderous voice was heard in the wind;
the lightning bolts lit up the world;
the earth trembled and shook.²³

goes against the grain of his most cherished beliefs.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "yes, I will remember from old your wonders."

sn The psalmist refuses to allow skepticism to win out. God has revealed himself to his people in tangible, incontrovertible ways in the past and the psalmist vows to *remember* the historical record as a source of hope for the future.

¹¹ **sn** Verses 13-20 are the content of the psalmist's reflection (see vv. 11-12). As he thought about God's work in Israel's past, he reached the place where he could confidently cry out for God's help (see v. 1).

¹² **tn** *Heb* "O God, in holiness [is] your way." God's "way" here refers to his actions. "Holiness" is used here in the sense of "set apart, unique," rather than in a moral/ethical sense. As the next line and the next verse emphasize, God's deeds are incomparable and set him apart as the one true God.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "Who [is] a great god like God?" The rhetorical question assumes the answer, "No one!"

¹⁴ **tn** Or "redeemed."

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "with [your] arm."

¹⁶ **tn** The waters of the Red Sea are here personified; they are portrayed as seeing God and fearing him.

¹⁷ **tn** The prefixed verbal form may be taken as a preterite or as an imperfect with past progressive force.

¹⁸ **tn** The words "of the sea" are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

¹⁹ **tn** The prefixed verbal form may be taken as a preterite or as an imperfect with past progressive force.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "water."

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "a sound the clouds gave."

²² **tn** The lightning accompanying the storm is portrayed as the LORD's "arrows" (see v. 18).

²³ **tn** The prefixed verbal form may be taken as a preterite or as an imperfect with past progressive force.

sn Verses 16-18 depict the LORD coming in the storm to battle his enemies and subdue the sea. There is no record of such a storm in the historical account of the Red Sea crossing. The language the psalmist uses here is stereotypical and originates in Canaanite myth, where the storm god Baal subdues the sea in his quest for kingship. The psalmist has employed the stereotypical imagery to portray the exodus vividly and at the same time affirm that it is not Baal who subdues the sea, but Yahweh.

77:19 You walked through the sea,¹
 you passed through the surging waters,²
 but left no footprints.³
 77:20 You led your people like a flock of
 sheep,
 by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

Psalms 78⁴

A well-written song⁵ by Asaph.

78:1 Pay attention, my people, to my instruction!
 Listen to the words I speak!⁶
 78:2 I will sing a song that imparts wisdom;
 I will make insightful observations about the past.⁷
 78:3 What we have heard and learned⁸ –
 that which our ancestors⁹ have told us –
 78:4 we will not hide from their¹⁰ descendants.
 We will tell the next generation
 about the LORD's praiseworthy acts,¹¹
 about his strength and the amazing things
 he has done.
 78:5 He established a rule¹² in Jacob;
 he set up a law in Israel.
 He commanded our ancestors
 to make his deeds known to their descendants,¹³
 78:6 so that the next generation, children
 yet to be born,
 might know about them.

They will grow up and tell their descendants about them.¹⁴
 78:7 Then they will place their confidence in God.
 They will not forget the works of God,
 and they will obey¹⁵ his commands.
 78:8 Then they will not be like their ancestors,
 who were a stubborn and rebellious generation,
 a generation that was not committed
 and faithful to God.¹⁶
 78:9 The Ephraimites¹⁷ were armed with bows,¹⁸
 but they retreated in the day of battle.¹⁹
 78:10 They did not keep their covenant with God,²⁰
 and they refused to obey²¹ his law.
 78:11 They forgot what he had done,²²
 the amazing things he had shown them.
 78:12 He did amazing things in the sight
 of their ancestors,
 in the land of Egypt, in the region of
 Zoan.²³
 78:13 He divided the sea and led them
 across it;
 he made the water stand in a heap.
 78:14 He led them with a cloud by day,
 and with the light of a fire all night long.
 78:15 He broke open rocks in the wilderness,
 and gave them enough water to fill the
 depths of the sea.²⁴
 78:16 He caused streams to flow from the
 rock,
 and made the water flow like rivers.

¹ *tn* *Heb* "in the sea [was] your way."

² *tn* *Heb* "and your paths [were] in the mighty waters."

³ *tn* *Heb* "and your footprints were not known."

⁴ *sn* *Psalms 78*. The author of this lengthy didactic psalm rehearses Israel's history. He praises God for his power, goodness and patience, but also reminds his audience that sin angers God and prompts his judgment. In the conclusion to the psalm the author elevates Jerusalem as God's chosen city and David as his chosen king.

⁵ *tn* The meaning of the Hebrew term מַשְׁכִּיל (*maskil*) is uncertain. See the note on the phrase "well-written song" in the superscription of Ps 74.

⁶ *tn* *Heb* "Turn your ear to the words of my mouth."

⁷ *tn* *Heb* "I will open with a wise saying my mouth, I will utter insightful sayings from long ago." Elsewhere the Hebrew word pair מַשְׁכִּיל + מִשְׁלָה (*maskil + mishlah*) refers to a taunt song (Hab 2:6), a parable (Ezek 17:2), proverbial sayings (Prov 1:6), and an insightful song that reflects on the mortality of humankind and the ultimate inability of riches to prevent death (Ps 49:4).

⁸ *tn* Or "known."

⁹ *tn* *Heb* "fathers" (also in vv. 5, 8, 12, 57).

¹⁰ *tn* The pronominal suffix refers back to the "fathers" ("our ancestors," v. 3).

¹¹ *tn* *Heb* "to a following generation telling the praises of the LORD." "Praises" stand by metonymy for the mighty acts that prompt worship. Cf. Ps 9:14.

¹² *tn* The Hebrew noun עֲדוּת (*'edut*) refers here to God's command that the older generation teach their children about God's mighty deeds in the nation's history (see Exod 10:2; Deut 4:9; 6:20-25).

¹³ *tn* *Heb* "which he commanded our fathers to make them known to their sons." The plural suffix "them" probably refers back to the LORD's mighty deeds (see vv. 3-4).

¹⁴ *tn* *Heb* "in order that they might know, a following generation, sons [who] will be born, they will arise and will tell to their sons."

¹⁵ *tn* *Heb* "keep."

¹⁶ *tn* *Heb* "a generation that did not make firm its heart and whose spirit was not faithful with God." The expression "make firm the heart" means "to be committed, devoted" (see 1 Sam 7:3).

¹⁷ *tn* *Heb* "the sons of Ephraim." Ephraim probably stands here by synecdoche (part for whole) for the northern kingdom of Israel.

¹⁸ *tn* *Heb* "ones armed, shooters of bow." It is possible that the term נוֹשְׂאֵי יָדַי (*nosh'ey yaday*, "ones armed [with]") is an interpretive gloss for the rare רוֹמֵי (*romey*, "shooters of"; on the latter see BDB 941 s.v. רָמָה). The phrase נוֹשְׂאֵי יָדַי (*nosh'ey yaday qeshet*, "ones armed with a bow") appears in 1 Chr 12:2; 2 Chr 17:17.

¹⁹ *sn* They retreated. This could refer to the northern tribes' failure to conquer completely their allotted territory (see Judg 1), or it could refer generally to the typical consequence (military defeat) of their sin (see vv. 10-11).

²⁰ *tn* *Heb* "the covenant of God."

²¹ *tn* *Heb* "walk in."

²² *tn* *Heb* "his deeds."

²³ *sn* The region of Zoan was located in the Egyptian delta, where the enslaved Israelites lived (see Num 13:22; Isa 19:11, 13; 30:4; Ezek 30:14).

²⁴ *tn* *Heb* "and caused them to drink, like the depths, abundantly."

78:17 Yet they continued to sin against him,
and rebelled against the sovereign One¹
in the desert.

78:18 They willfully challenged God²
by asking for food to satisfy their ap-
petite.

78:19 They insulted God, saying,³
“Is God really able to give us food⁴ in
the wilderness?”

78:20 Yes,⁵ he struck a rock and water
flowed out,
streams gushed forth.

But can he also give us food?
Will he provide meat for his people?”

78:21 When⁶ the LORD heard this, he was
furious.

A fire broke out against Jacob,
and his anger flared up⁷ against Israel,
78:22 because they did not have faith in
God,
and did not trust his ability to deliver
them.⁸

78:23 He gave a command to the clouds
above,
and opened the doors in the sky.

78:24 He rained down manna for them to
eat;

he gave them the grain of heaven.⁹

78:25 Man ate the food of the mighty ones.¹⁰
He sent them more than enough to eat.¹¹

78:26 He brought the east wind through
the sky,
and by his strength led forth the south
wind.

78:27 He rained down meat on them like
dust,
birds as numerous as the sand on the sea-
shores.¹²

78:28 He caused them to fall right in the
middle of their camp,
all around their homes.

78:29 They ate until they were stuffed,¹³
he gave them what they desired.

78:30 They were not yet filled up,¹⁴
their food was still in their mouths,

78:31 when the anger of God flared up
against them.

He killed some of the strongest of them;
he brought the young men of Israel to
their knees.

78:32 Despite all this, they continued to
sin,
and did not trust him to do amazing things.¹⁵

78:33 So he caused them to die unsatis-
fied¹⁶

and filled with terror.¹⁷

78:34 When he struck them down,¹⁸ they
sought his favor;¹⁹

they turned back and longed for God.

78:35 They remembered that God was
their protector,²⁰
and that the sovereign God was their de-
liverer.²¹

78:36 But they deceived him with their
words,²²
and lied to him.²³

78:37 They were not really committed to
him,²⁴

and they were unfaithful to his covenant.

78:38 Yet he is compassionate.

He forgives sin and does not destroy.

He often holds back his anger,
and does not stir up his fury.²⁵

78:39 He remembered²⁶ that they were
made of flesh,

and were like a wind that blows past and
does not return.²⁷

78:40 How often they rebelled against him
in the wilderness,
and insulted him²⁸ in the desert!

78:41 They again challenged God,²⁹
and offended³⁰ the Holy One of Israel.³¹

¹⁵ *tn* Heb “and did not believe in his amazing deeds.”

¹⁶ *tn* Heb “and he ended in vanity their days.”

¹⁷ *tn* Heb “and their years in terror.”

¹⁸ *tn* Or “killed them,” that is, killed large numbers of them.

¹⁹ *tn* Heb “they sought him.”

²⁰ *tn* Heb “my high rocky summit.”

²¹ *tn* Heb “and [that] God Most High [was] their redeemer.”

²² *tn* Heb “with their mouth.”

²³ *tn* Heb “and with their tongue they lied to him.”

²⁴ *tn* Heb “and their heart was not firm with him.”

²⁵ *tn* One could translate v. 38 in the past tense (“he was compassionate...forgave sin and did not destroy...held back his anger, and did not stir up his fury”), but the imperfect verbal forms are probably best understood as generalizing. Verse 38 steps back briefly from the narrational summary of Israel's history and lays the theological basis for v. 39, which focuses on God's mercy toward sinful Israel.

²⁶ *tn* The prefixed verbal form with *vav* (ו) consecutive sig-
nals a return to the narrative.

²⁷ *tn* Heb “and he remembered that they [were] flesh, a
wind [that] goes and does not return.”

²⁸ *tn* Or “caused him pain.”

²⁹ *tn* Heb “and they returned and tested God.” The Hebrew
verb שׁוּב (*shuv*, “to return”) is used here in an adverbial sense
to indicate that an earlier action was repeated.

³⁰ *tn* Or “wounded, hurt.” The verb occurs only here in the
OT.

³¹ *sn* The basic sense of the word “holy” is “set apart from
that which is commonplace, special, unique.” The Lord's ho-
liness is first and foremost his transcendent sovereignty as
the ruler of the world. He is “set apart” from the world over
which he rules. At the same time his holiness encompasses
his moral authority, which derives from his royal position. As
king he has the right to dictate to his subjects how they are to

¹ *tn* Heb “rebell[ing] [against] the Most High.”

² *tn* Heb “and they tested God in their heart.” The “heart”
is viewed here as the center of their volition.

³ *tn* Heb “they spoke against God, they said.”

⁴ *tn* Heb “to arrange a table [for food].”

⁵ *tn* Heb “look.”

⁶ *tn* Heb “therefore.”

⁷ *tn* Heb “and also anger went up.”

⁸ *tn* Heb “and they did not trust his deliverance.”

⁹ *sn* Manna was apparently shaped like a seed (Exod
16:31), perhaps explaining why it is here compared to grain.

¹⁰ *sn* Because of the reference to “heaven” in the preced-
ing verse, it is likely that *mighty ones* refers here to the angels
of heaven. The LXX translates “angels” here, as do a number
of modern translations (NEB, NIV, NRSV).

¹¹ *tn* Heb “provision he sent to them to satisfaction.”

¹² *tn* Heb “and like the sand of the seas winged birds.”

¹³ *tn* Heb “and they ate and were very satisfied.”

¹⁴ *tn* Heb “they were not separated from their desire.”

78:42 They did not remember what he had done,¹
 how he delivered them from the enemy,²
 78:43 when he performed his awesome
 deeds³ in Egypt,
 and his acts of judgment⁴ in the region of
 Zoan.
 78:44 He turned their rivers into blood,
 and they could not drink from their
 streams.
 78:45 He sent swarms of biting insects
 against them,⁵
 as well as frogs that overran their land.⁶
 78:46 He gave their crops to the grasshop-
 per,
 the fruit of their labor to the locust.⁷
 78:47 He destroyed their vines with hail,
 and their sycamore-fig trees with driving
 rain.
 78:48 He rained hail down on their cattle,⁷
 and hurled lightning bolts down on their
 livestock.⁸
 78:49 His raging anger lashed out against
 them,⁹
 He sent fury, rage, and trouble
 as messengers who bring disaster.¹⁰
 78:50 He sent his anger in full force,¹¹
 he did not spare them from death;
 he handed their lives over to destruction.¹²
 78:51 He struck down all the firstborn in
 Egypt,
 the firstfruits of their reproductive power¹³
 in the tents of Ham.

78:52 Yet he brought out his people like
 sheep;
 he led them through the wilderness like
 a flock.
 78:53 He guided them safely along,
 while the sea covered their enemies.
 78:54 He brought them to the border of his
 holy land,
 to this mountainous land¹⁴ which his right
 hand¹⁵ acquired.
 78:55 He drove the nations out from be-
 fore them;
 he assigned them their tribal allotments¹⁶
 and allowed the tribes of Israel to settle
 down.¹⁷
 78:56 Yet they challenged and defied¹⁸ the
 sovereign God,¹⁹
 and did not obey²⁰ his commands.²¹
 78:57 They were unfaithful²² and acted as
 treacherously as²³ their ancestors;
 they were as unreliable as a malfunction-
 ing bow.²⁴
 78:58 They made him angry with their
 pagan shrines,²⁵
 and made him jealous with their idols.
 78:59 God heard and was angry;
 he completely rejected Israel.
 78:60 He abandoned²⁶ the sanctuary at
 Shiloh,
 the tent where he lived among men.
 78:61 He allowed the symbol of his strong
 presence to be captured;²⁷
 he gave the symbol of his splendor²⁸ into
 the hand of the enemy.²⁹
 78:62 He delivered his people over to the
 sword,
 and was angry with his chosen nation.³⁰

live; indeed his very own character sets the standard for proper behavior. This expression is a common title for the LORD in the book of Isaiah.

¹ *tn* Heb "his hand," symbolizing his saving activity and strength, as the next line makes clear.

² *tn* Heb "[the] day [in] which he ransomed them from [the] enemy."

³ *tn* Or "signs" (see Ps 65:8).

⁴ *tn* Or "portents, omens" (see Ps 71:7). The Egyptian plagues are referred to here (see vv. 44-51).

⁵ *tn* Heb "and he sent an insect swarm against them and it devoured them."

⁶ *tn* Heb "and a swarm of frogs and it destroyed them."

⁷ *tn* Heb "and he turned over to the hail their cattle."

⁸ *tn* Heb "and their livestock to the flames." "Flames" here refer to the lightning bolts that accompanied the storm.

⁹ *tn* Heb "he sent against them the rage of his anger." The phrase "rage of his anger" employs an appositional genitive. Synonyms are joined in a construct relationship to emphasize the single idea. For a detailed discussion of the grammatical point with numerous examples, see Y. Avishur, "Pairs of Synonymous Words in the Construct State (and in Appositional Hendiadys) in Biblical Hebrew," *Semiotics* 2 (1971): 17-81.

¹⁰ *tn* Heb "fury and indignation and trouble, a sending of messengers of disaster."

¹¹ *tn* Heb "he leveled a path for his anger." There were no obstacles to impede its progress; it moved swiftly and destructively.

¹² *tn* Or perhaps "[the] plague."

¹³ *tn* Heb "the beginning of strength." If retained, the plural form *onim* ("onim, "strength") probably indicates degree ("great strength"), but many ancient witnesses read "their strength," which presupposes an emendation to *onam* (singular form of the noun with third masculine plural pronominal suffix).

¹⁴ *tn* Heb "this mountain." The whole land of Canaan seems to be referred to here. In Exod 15:17 the promised land is called the "mountain of your [i.e., God's] inheritance."

¹⁵ *tn* The "right hand" here symbolizes God's military strength (see v. 55).

¹⁶ *tn* Heb "he caused to fall [to] them with a measuring line an inheritance."

¹⁷ *tn* Heb "and caused the tribes of Israel to settle down in their tents."

¹⁸ *tn* Or "tested and rebelled against."

¹⁹ *tn* Heb "God, the Most High."

²⁰ *tn* Or "keep."

²¹ *tn* Heb "his testimonies" (see Ps 25:10).

²² *tn* Heb "they turned back."

²³ *tn* Or "acted treacherously like."

²⁴ *tn* Heb "they turned aside like a deceitful bow."

²⁵ *tn* Traditionally, "high places."

²⁶ *tn* Or "rejected."

²⁷ *tn* Heb "and he gave to captivity his strength." The expression "his strength" refers metonymically to the ark of the covenant, which was housed in the tabernacle at Shiloh.

²⁸ *tn* Heb "and his splendor into the hand of an enemy." The expression "his splendor" also refers metonymically to the ark of the covenant.

²⁹ *sn* Verses 60-61 refer to the Philistines' capture of the ark in the days of Eli (1 Sam 4:1-11).

³⁰ *tn* Heb "his inheritance."

78:63 Fire consumed their¹ young men,
and their² virgins remained unmarried.³
78:64 Their⁴ priests fell by the sword,
but their⁵ widows did not weep.⁶
78:65 But then the Lord awoke from his
sleep,⁷
he was like a warrior in a drunken rage.⁸
78:66 He drove his enemies back;
he made them a permanent target for
insults.⁹
78:67 He rejected the tent of Joseph;
he did not choose the tribe of Ephraim.
78:68 He chose the tribe of Judah,
and Mount Zion, which he loves.
78:69 He made his sanctuary as enduring
as the heavens above,¹⁰
as secure as the earth, which he estab-
lished permanently.¹¹
78:70 He chose David, his servant,
and took him from the sheepfolds.
78:71 He took him away from following
the mother sheep,¹²
and made him the shepherd of Jacob, his
people,
and of Israel, his chosen nation.¹³
78:72 David¹⁴ cared for them with pure
motives;¹⁵
he led them with skill.¹⁶

¹ **tn** Heb "his." The singular pronominal suffix is collective, referring back to God's "people" (v. 62).

² **tn** Heb "his." The singular pronominal suffix is collective, referring back to God's "people" (v. 62).

³ **tn** Heb "were not praised," that is, in wedding songs. The young men died in masses, leaving no husbands for the young women.

⁴ **tn** Heb "his." The singular pronominal suffix is collective, referring back to God's "people" (v. 62).

⁵ **tn** Heb "his." The singular pronominal suffix is collective, referring back to God's "people" (v. 62).

⁶ **sn** Because of the invading army and the ensuing panic, the priests' widows had no time to carry out the normal mourning rites.

⁷ **tn** Heb "and the master awoke like one sleeping." The Lord's apparent inactivity during the time of judgment is compared to sleep.

⁸ **tn** Heb "like a warrior overcome with wine." The Hebrew verb רָן (*ran*, "overcome") occurs only here in the OT. The phrase "overcome with wine" could picture a drunken warrior controlled by his emotions and passions (as in the present translation), or it could refer to a warrior who awakes from a drunken stupor.

⁹ **tn** Heb "a permanent reproach he made them."

¹⁰ **tc** Heb "and he built like the exalting [ones] his sanctuary." The phrase כְּבִימֹרָמִים (*k'emo-ramim*, "like the exalting [ones]") is a poetic form of the comparative preposition followed by a participial form of the verb רָם (*rum*, "be exalted"). The text should be emended to כְּבִימְרֹמִים (*kimromim*, "like the [heavenly] heights"). See Ps 148:1, where "heights" refers to the heavens above.

¹¹ **tn** Heb "like the earth, [which] he established permanently." The feminine singular suffix on the Hebrew verb יָסַד (*yasad*, "to establish") refers to the grammatically feminine noun "earth."

¹² **tn** Heb "from after the ewes he brought him."

¹³ **tn** Heb "to shepherd Jacob, his people, and Israel, his inheritance."

¹⁴ **tn** Heb "He"; the referent (David, God's chosen king, mentioned in v. 70) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "and he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart."

¹⁶ **tn** Heb "and with the understanding of his hands he led

Psalm 79²⁷

A psalm of Asaph.

79:1 O God, foreigners¹⁸ have invaded
your chosen land;¹⁹
they have polluted your holy temple
and turned Jerusalem²⁰ into a heap of
ruins.
79:2 They have given the corpses of your
servants
to the birds of the sky;²¹
the flesh of your loyal followers
to the beasts of the earth.
79:3 They have made their blood flow like
water
all around Jerusalem, and there is no one
to bury them.²²
79:4 We have become an object of disdain
to our neighbors;
those who live on our borders taunt and
insult us.²³
79:5 How long will this go on, O LORD?²⁴
Will you stay angry forever?
How long will your rage²⁵ burn like fire?
79:6 Pour out your anger on the nations
that do not acknowledge you.²⁶
on the kingdoms that do not pray to you!²⁷
79:7 For they have devoured Jacob
and destroyed his home.
79:8 Do not hold us accountable for the
sins of earlier generations!²⁸
Quickly send your compassion our way,²⁹
for we are in serious trouble!³⁰

them."

¹⁷ **sn** Psalm 79. The author laments how the invading nations have destroyed the temple and city of Jerusalem. He asks God to forgive his people and to pour out his vengeance on those who have mistreated them.

¹⁸ **tn** Or "nations."

¹⁹ **tn** Heb "have come into your inheritance."

²⁰ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

²¹ **tn** Heb "[as] food for the birds of the sky."

²² **tn** Heb "they have poured out their blood like water, all around Jerusalem, and there is no one burying."

²³ **tn** Heb "an [object of] taunting and [of] mockery to those around us." See Ps 44:13.

²⁴ **tn** Heb "How long, O Lord?"

²⁵ **tn** Or "jealous anger."

²⁶ **tn** Heb "which do not know you." Here the Hebrew term "know" means "acknowledge the authority of."

²⁷ **sn** The kingdoms that do not pray to you. The people of these kingdoms pray to other gods, not the Lord, because they do not recognize his authority over them.

²⁸ **tn** Heb "do not remember against us sins, former." Some understand "former" as an attributive adjective modifying sins, "former [i.e., chronologically prior] sins" (see BDB 911 s.v. רִאשֹׁנִים). The present translation assumes that רִאשֹׁנִים ("former") here refers to those who lived formerly, that is, the people's ancestors (see Lam 5:7). The word is used in this way in Lev 26:45; Deut 19:14 and Eccl 1:11.

²⁹ **tn** Heb "may your compassion quickly confront us." The prefixed verbal form is understood as a jussive, indicating a tone of prayer.

³⁰ **tn** Heb "for we are very low."

79:9 Help us, O God, our deliverer!
For the sake of your glorious reputation,¹
rescue us!
Forgive our sins for the sake of your
reputation!²
79:10 Why should the nations say, “Where
is their God?”
Before our very eyes may the shed blood
of your servants
be avenged among the nations!³
79:11 Listen to the painful cries of the
prisoners!⁴
Use your great strength to set free those
condemned to die!⁵
79:12 Pay back our neighbors in full!⁶
May they be insulted the same way they
insulted you, O Lord!⁷
79:13 Then we, your people, the sheep of
your pasture,
will continually thank you.⁸
We will tell coming generations of your
praiseworthy acts.⁹

Psalms 80⁴⁰

For the music director; according to the *shushan-eduth* style;¹¹ a psalm of Asaph.

80:1 O shepherd of Israel, pay attention,
you who lead Joseph like a flock of sheep!
You who sit enthroned above the
winged angels,¹² reveal your

splendor!¹³
80:2 In the sight of Ephraim, Benjamin,
and Manasseh reveal¹⁴ your power!
Come and deliver us!¹⁵
80:3 O God, restore us!
Smile on us!¹⁶ Then we will be delivered!¹⁷
80:4 O LORD God, invincible warrior!¹⁸
How long will you remain angry at your
people while they pray to you?¹⁹
80:5 You have given them tears as food,²⁰
you have made them drink tears by the
measure.²¹
80:6 You have made our neighbors dislike
us,²²
and our enemies insult us.
80:7 O God, invincible warrior,²³ restore us!
Smile on us!²⁴ Then we will be delivered!²⁵
80:8 You uprooted a vine²⁶ from Egypt;
you drove out nations and transplanted it.
80:9 You cleared the ground for it;²⁷

¹ *tn Heb* “the glory of your name.” Here and in the following line “name” stands metonymically for God’s reputation.

² *tn Heb* “your name.”

³ *tn Heb* “may it be known among the nations, to our eyes, the vengeance of the shed blood of your servants.”

⁴ *tn Heb* “may the painful cry of the prisoner come before you.”

⁵ *tn Heb* “according to the greatness of your arm leave the sons of death.” God’s “arm” here symbolizes his strength to deliver. The verbal form *hater* (*hater*) is a Hiphil imperative from *atar* (*yatar*, “to remain; to be left over”). Here it must mean “to leave over; to preserve.” However, it is preferable to emend the form to *hater* (*hater*), a Hiphil imperative from *atar* (“be free”). The Hiphil form is used in Ps 105:20 of Pharaoh freeing Joseph from prison. The phrase “sons of death” (see also Ps 102:21) is idiomatic for those condemned to die.

⁶ *tn Heb* “Return to our neighbors sevenfold into their lap.” The number seven is used rhetorically to express the thorough nature of the action. For other rhetorical/figurative uses of the Hebrew phrase *shiv’atayim* (“seven times”) see Gen 4:15, 24; Ps 12:6; Prov 6:31; Isa 30:26.

⁷ *tn Heb* “their reproach with which they reproached you, O Lord.”

⁸ *tn Or* (hyperbolically) “will thank you forever.”

⁹ *tn Heb* “to a generation and a generation we will report your praise.” Here “praise” stands by metonymy for the mighty acts that prompt worship. Cf. Ps 9:14.

¹⁰ *sn Psalms 80.* The psalmist laments Israel’s demise and asks the Lord to show favor toward his people, as he did in earlier times.

¹¹ *tn Heb* The Hebrew expression *shushan-eduth* means “lily of the testimony.” It may refer to a particular music style or to a tune title. See the superscription to Ps 60.

¹² *sn Winged angels (Heb “cherubs”).* Cherubs, as depicted in the OT, possess both human and animal (lion, ox, and eagle) characteristics (see Ezek 1:10; 10:14, 21; 41:18). They are pictured as winged creatures (Exod 25:20; 37:9; 1 Kgs 6:24-27; Ezek 10:8, 19) and serve as the very throne of God when the ark of the covenant is in view (Ps 99:1; see Num

7:89; 1 Sam 4:4; 2 Sam 6:2; 2 Kgs 19:15). The picture of the Lord seated on the cherubs suggests they might be used by him as a vehicle, a function they carry out in Ezek 1:22-28 (the “living creatures” mentioned here are identified as cherubs in Ezek 10:20). In Ps 18:10 the image of a cherub serves to personify the wind.

¹³ *tn Heb* “shine forth.”

¹⁴ *sn Reveal your splendor.* The psalmist may allude to Deut 33:2, where God “shines forth” from Sinai and comes to superintend Moses’ blessing of the tribes.

¹⁵ *tn Heb* “stir up”; “arouse.”

¹⁶ *tn Heb* “come for our deliverance.”

¹⁷ *tn Heb* The idiom “cause your face to shine” probably refers to a smile (see Eccl 8:1), which in turn suggests favor and blessing (see Num 6:25; Ps 4:6; 31:16; 44:3; 67:1; 89:15; Dan 9:17).

¹⁸ *tn Heb* “cause your face to shine in order that we may be delivered.” After the imperative, the cohortative with prefixed *vav* (ו) indicates purpose/result.

¹⁹ *tn Heb* “LORD, God, hosts.” One expects the construct form *אלהי* (*elohey*) before *צבאות* (*tsava’ot*; “hosts”; see Ps 89:9), but *אלהים* (*yehvah ’elohim*) precedes *צבאות* (*tsava’ot*) in Ps 59:5 and 84:8 as well. In this context the term “hosts” (meaning “armies”) has been rendered “invincible warrior.”

²⁰ *tn Heb* “How long will you remain angry during the prayer of your people.” Some take the preposition *ב* (*bet*) in an adversative sense here (“at/against the prayer of your people”), but the temporal sense is preferable. The psalmist expects persistent prayer to pacify God.

²¹ *tn Heb* “you have fed them the food of tears.”

²² *tn Heb* “[by] the third part [of a measure].” The Hebrew term *שליש* (*shalish*, “third part [of a measure]”) occurs only here and in Isa 40:12.

²³ *tn Heb* “you have made us an object of contention to our neighbors.”

²⁴ *tn Heb* “O God, hosts.” One expects the construct form *אלהי* before *צבאות* (*tsava’ot*, “hosts”; see Ps 89:9), but *אלהים* (*yehvah ’elohim*) precedes *צבאות* (*tsava’ot*) in Ps 59:5 and 84:8 as well. See also v. 4 for a similar construction.

²⁵ *tn Heb* The idiom “cause your face to shine” probably refers to a smile (see Eccl 8:1), which in turn suggests favor and blessing (see Num 6:25; Ps 4:6; 31:16; 44:3; 67:1; 89:15; Dan 9:17).

²⁶ *tn Heb* “cause your face to shine in order that we may be delivered.” After the imperative, the cohortative with prefixed *vav* (ו) indicates purpose/result.

²⁷ *sn The vine* is here a metaphor for Israel (see Ezek 17:6-10; Hos 10:1).

²⁸ *tn Heb* “you cleared away before it.”

it took root,¹

and filled the land.

80:10 The mountains were covered by its shadow,

the highest cedars² by its branches.

80:11 Its branches reached the Mediterranean Sea,³

and its shoots the Euphrates River.⁴

80:12 Why did you break down its walls,⁵ so that all who pass by pluck its fruit?⁶

80:13 The wild boars of the forest ruin it;⁷ the insects⁸ of the field feed on it.

80:14 O God, invincible warrior,⁹ come back!

Look down from heaven and take notice!

Take care of this vine,

80:15 the root¹⁰ your right hand planted, the shoot you made to grow!¹¹

80:16 It is burned¹² and cut down.

They die because you are displeased with them.¹³

80:17 May you give support to the one you have chosen,¹⁴

to the one whom you raised up for yourself!¹⁵

80:18 Then we will not turn away from you.

Revive us and we will pray to you!¹⁶

80:19 O LORD God, invincible warrior,¹⁷ restore us!

Smile on us!¹⁸ Then we will be delivered!¹⁹

Psalm 81²⁰

For the music director; according to the *gittith* style,²¹ by Asaph.

81:1 Shout for joy to God, our source of strength!

Shout out to the God of Jacob!

81:2 Sing²² a song and play the tambourine,

the pleasant sounding harp, and the ten-stringed instrument!

81:3 Sound the ram's horn on the day of the new moon,²³

and on the day of the full moon when our festival begins.²⁴

81:4 For observing the festival is a requirement for Israel,²⁵

it is an ordinance given by the God of Jacob.

81:5 He decreed it as a regulation in Joseph, when he attacked the land of Egypt.²⁶

¹ **tn** Heb "and it took root [with] its roots."

² **tn** Heb "cedars of God." The divine name אֱלֹהִים ('al, "God") is here used in an idiomatic manner to indicate the superlative.

³ **tn** Heb "to [the] sea." The "sea" refers here to the Mediterranean Sea.

⁴ **tn** Heb "to [the] river." The "river" is the Euphrates River in Mesopotamia. Israel expanded both to the west and to the east.

⁵ **sn** The protective walls of the metaphorical vineyard are in view here (see Isa 5:5).

⁶ **tn** Heb "pluck it."

⁷ **tn** The Hebrew verb בָּרַסַם (*kirsem*, "to eat away; to ruin") occurs only here in the OT.

⁸ **tn** The precise referent of the Hebrew word translated "insects," which occurs only here and in Ps 50:11, is uncertain. Aramaic, Arabic, and Akkadian cognates refer to insects, such as locusts or crickets.

⁹ **tn** Heb "O God, hosts." One expects the construct form אֱלֹהֵי before צְבָאוֹת (*ts'va'ot*, "hosts"; see Ps 89:9), but יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים (*Yehvah 'elohim*) precedes צְבָאוֹת (*ts'va'ot*) in Pss 59:5 and 84:8 as well. See also vv. 4, 7 for a similar construction.

¹⁰ **tn** The Hebrew noun occurs only here in the OT. HALOT 483 s.v. יָלַח emends the form לְכָנָה (*kannah*, "its shoot").

¹¹ **tn** Heb "and upon a son you strengthened for yourself." In this context, where the extended metaphor of the vine dominates, בֶּן (*ben*, "son") probably refers to the shoots that grow from the vine. Cf. Gen 49:22.

¹² **tn** Heb "burned with fire."

¹³ **tn** Heb "because of the rebuke of your face they perish."

¹⁴ **tn** Heb "may your hand be upon the man of your right hand." The referent of the otherwise unattested phrase "man of your right hand," is unclear. It may refer to the nation collectively as a man. (See the note on the word "yourself" in v. 17b.)

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "upon the son of man you strengthened for yourself." In its only other use in the Book of Psalms, the phrase "son of man" refers to the human race in general (see Ps 8:4). Here the phrase may refer to the nation collectively as a man. Note the use of the statement "you strengthened for yourself" both here and in v. 15, where the "son" (i.e., the branch of the vine) refers to Israel.

¹⁶ **tn** Heb "and in your name we will call."

¹⁷ **tn** Heb "O LORD, God, hosts." One expects the construct form אֱלֹהֵי before צְבָאוֹת (*ts'va'ot*, "hosts"; see Ps 89:9), but יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים (*Yehvah 'elohim*) precedes צְבָאוֹת (*ts'va'ot*) in Pss 59:5 and 84:8 as well. See also vv. 4, 7, 14 for a similar construction.

¹⁸ **tn** The idiom "cause your face to shine" probably refers to a smile (see Eccl 8:1), which in turn suggests favor and blessing (see Num 6:25; Pss 4:6; 31:16; 44:3; 67:1; 89:15; Dan 9:17).

¹⁹ **tn** Heb "cause your face to shine in order that we may be delivered." After the imperative, the cohortative with prefixed *vav* (ה) indicates purpose/result.

²⁰ **sn** *Psalm 81*. The psalmist calls God's people to assemble for a festival and then proclaims God's message to them. The divine speech (vv. 6-16) recalls how God delivered the people from Egypt, reminds Israel of their rebellious past, expresses God's desire for his people to obey him, and promises divine protection in exchange for obedience.

²¹ **tn** The precise meaning of the Hebrew term הַגִּיטִית (*haggittit*) is uncertain; it probably refers to a musical style or instrument. See the superscription to Ps 8.

²² **tn** Heb "lift up."

²³ **tn** Heb "at the new moon."

sn *New moon* festivals were a monthly ritual in Israel (see R. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 469-70). In this context the New Moon festival of the seventh month, when the Feast of Tabernacles was celebrated (note the reference to a "festival" in the next line), may be in view.

²⁴ **tn** Heb "at the full moon on the day of our festival." The Hebrew word כֶּסֶף (*keseh*) is an alternate spelling of כֶּסֶף (*kese'*, "full moon").

sn The *festival* in view is probably the Feast of Tabernacles (Booths), which began on the fifteenth day of the seventh month when the moon was full. See Lev 23:34; Num 29:12.

²⁵ **tn** Heb "because a statute for Israel [is] it."

²⁶ **tn** Heb "in his going out against the land of Egypt." This apparently refers to the general time period of Israel's exodus from Egypt. The LXX reads, "from Egypt," in which case "Joseph" (see the preceding line) would be the subject of the verb, "when he [Joseph = Israel] left Egypt."

I heard a voice I did not recognize.¹
81:6 It said:² “I removed the burden from his shoulder; his hands were released from holding the basket.”³
81:7 In your distress you called out and I rescued you.
 I answered you from a dark thunder-cloud.⁴
 I tested you at the waters of Meribah.⁵ (Selah)
81:8 I said,⁶ ‘Listen, my people! I will warn⁷ you!
 O Israel, if only you would obey me!⁸
81:9 There must be⁹ no other¹⁰ god among you.
 You must not worship a foreign god.
81:10 I am the LORD, your God, the one who brought you out of the land of Egypt.
 Open your mouth wide and I will fill it!⁹
81:11 But my people did not obey me;¹¹ Israel did not submit to me.¹²
81:12 I gave them over to their stubborn desires;¹³
 they did what seemed right to them.¹⁴
81:13 If only my people would obey me!¹⁵

¹ **tn** Heb “a lip I did not know, I heard.” Here the term “lip” probably stands for speech or a voice. Apparently the psalmist speaks here and refers to God’s voice, whose speech is recorded in the following verses.

² **tn** The words “It said” are not included in the Hebrew text. They are supplied in the translation for clarification.

³ **sn** *I removed the burden*. The Lord speaks metaphorically of how he delivered his people from Egyptian bondage. The reference to a basket/burden probably alludes to the hard labor of the Israelites in Egypt, where they had to carry loads of bricks (see Exod 1:14).

⁴ **tn** Heb “I answered you in the hidden place of thunder.” This may allude to God’s self-revelation at Mount Sinai, where he appeared in a dark cloud accompanied by thunder (see Exod 19:16).

⁵ **sn** The name *Meribah* means “strife.” Two separate but similar incidents at the place called Meribah are recorded in the Pentateuch (Exod 17:1-7; Num 20:1-13). In both cases the Israelites complained about lack of water and the Lord miraculously provided for them.

⁶ **tn** The words “I said” are supplied in the translation for clarification. Verses 8-10 appear to recall what the Lord commanded the generation of Israelites that experienced the events described in v. 7. Note the statement in v. 11, “my people did not listen to me.”

⁷ **tn** Or perhaps “command.”

⁸ **tn** The Hebrew particle **אם** (“if”) and following prefixed verbal form here express a wish (GKC 321 §109.b). Note that the apodosis (the “then” clause of the conditional sentence) is suppressed.

⁹ **tn** The imperfect verbal forms in v. 9 have a modal function, expressing what is obligatory.

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “different”; “illicit.”

¹¹ **tn** Heb “did not listen to my voice.”

¹² **tn** The Hebrew expression **אָוָה לִי** (*avah liy*) means “submit to me” (see Deut 13:8).

¹³ **tn** Heb “and I sent him away in the stubbornness of their heart.”

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “they walked in their counsel.” The prefixed verbal form is either preterite (“walked”) or a customary imperfect (“were walking”).

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “if only my people were listening to me.” The Hebrew particle **אם** (“if not”) introduces a purely hypothetical or contrary to fact condition (see 2 Sam 18:12).

If only Israel would keep my commands!¹⁶
81:14 Then I would quickly subdue their enemies, and attack¹⁷ their adversaries.”
81:15 (May those who hate the LORD¹⁸ cower in fear¹⁹ before him!
 May they be permanently humiliated!)²⁰
81:16 “I would feed Israel the best wheat,²¹ and would satisfy your appetite²² with honey from the rocky cliffs.”²³

Psalm 82²⁴

A psalm of Asaph.

82:1 God stands in²⁵ the assembly of El,²⁶

¹⁶ **tn** Heb “[and if only] Israel would walk in my ways.”

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “turn my hand against.” The idiom “turn the hand against” has the nuance of “strike with the hand, attack” (see Isa 1:25; Ezek 38:12; Amos 1:8; Zech 13:7).

¹⁸ **tn** “Those who hate the LORD” are also mentioned in 2 Chr 19:2 and Ps 139:21.

¹⁹ **tn** See Deut 33:29; Ps 66:3 for other uses of the verb **קָהַשׁ** (*kakhash*) in the sense “cower in fear.” In Ps 18:44 the verb seems to carry the nuance “to be weak; to be powerless” (see also Ps 109:24). The prefixed verbal form is taken as a jussive, parallel to the jussive form in the next line.

²⁰ **tc** Heb “and may their time be forever.” The Hebrew term **עֵתָם** (*ittam*, “their time”) must refer here to the “time” of the demise and humiliation of those who hate the LORD. Some propose an emendation to **בְּעֵתָם** (*ba’ataram*) or **בְּעֵתָם** (*bi’uam*; “their terror”; i.e., “may their terror last forever”), but the omission of **bet** (**ב**) in the present Hebrew text is difficult to explain, making the proposed emendation unlikely.

tn The verb form at the beginning of the line is jussive, indicating that this is a prayer. The translation assumes that v. 15 is a parenthetical “curse” offered by the psalmist. Having heard the reference to Israel’s enemies (v. 14), the psalmist inserts this prayer, reminding the Lord that they are God’s enemies as well.

²¹ **tn** Heb “and he fed him from the best of the wheat.” The Hebrew text has a third person form of the preterite with a **vav** (**ו**) consecutive attached. However, it is preferable, in light of the use of the first person in v. 14 and in the next line, to emend the verb to a first person form and understand the **vav** as conjunctive, continuing the apodosis of the conditional sentence of vv. 13-14. The third masculine singular pronominal suffix refers to Israel, as in v. 6.

²² **sn** *I would feed*. After the parenthetical “curse” in v. 15, the Lord’s speech continues here.

²³ **tn** Heb “you.” The second person singular pronominal suffix refers to Israel, as in vv. 7-10.

²⁴ **sn** The language in this verse, particularly the references to *wheat* and *honey*, is reminiscent of Deut 32:13-14.

²⁵ **sn** *Psalm 82*. The psalmist pictures God standing in the “assembly of El” where he accuses the “gods” of failing to promote justice on earth. God pronounces sentence upon them, announcing that they will die like men. Having witnessed the scene, the psalmist then asks God to establish his just rule over the earth.

²⁶ **tn** Or “presides over.”

²⁶ **tn** The phrase **עֲבַד אֵל** (*adat ’el*, “assembly of El”) appears only here in the OT. (1) Some understand “El” to refer to God himself. In this case he is pictured presiding over his own heavenly assembly. (2) Others take **אֵל** as a superlative here (“God stands in the great assembly”), as in Pss 36:6 and 80:10. (3) The present translation assumes this is a reference to the Canaanite high god El, who presided over the Canaanite divine assembly. (See Isa 14:13, where El’s assembly is called “the stars of El.”) In the Ugaritic myths the phrase *dt ’ilm* refers to the “assembly of the gods,” who congregate in King Kirtu’s house, where Baal asks El to bless Kirtu’s house (see G. R. Driver, *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, 91). If the Canaanite divine assembly is referred to here in Ps 82:1, then the psalm must be understood as a bold polemic against

in the midst of the gods⁴ he renders judgment.²

82:2 He says,³ “How long will you make unjust legal decisions and show favoritism to the wicked?”⁴ (Selah)

82:3 Defend the cause of the poor and the fatherless!⁵

Vindicate the oppressed and suffering!

82:4 Rescue the poor and needy! Deliver them from the power⁶ of the wicked!

82:5 They⁷ neither know nor understand. They stumble⁸ around in the dark, while all the foundations of the earth crumble.⁹

82:6 I thought,¹⁰ “You are gods; all of you are sons of the Most High.”¹¹

82:7 Yet you will die like mortals;¹² you will fall like all the other rulers.”¹³

Canaanite religion. Israel's God invades El's assembly, denounces its gods as failing to uphold justice, and announces their coming demise. For an interpretation of the psalm along these lines, see W. VanGemeren, “Psalms,” *EBC* 5:533-36.

² **sn** The present translation assumes that the Hebrew term אֱלֹהִים (*elohim*, “gods”) here refers to the pagan gods who supposedly comprise El's assembly according to Canaanite religion. Those who reject the polemical view of the psalm prefer to see the referent as human judges or rulers (אֲדָוָה sometimes refers to officials appointed by God, see Exod 21:6; 22:8-9; Ps 45:6) or as angelic beings (אֲמָרִים sometimes refers to angelic beings, see Gen 3:5; Ps 8:5).

³ **sn** The picture of God rendering judgment among the gods clearly depicts his sovereign authority as universal king (see v. 8, where the psalmist boldly affirms this truth).

⁴ **tn** The words “he says” are supplied in the translation to indicate that the following speech is God's judicial decision (see v. 1).

⁴ **tn** Heb “and the face of the wicked lift up.”

⁵ **tn** The Hebrew noun יָתוּם (*yatom*) refers to one who has lost his father (not necessarily his mother, see Ps 109:9). Because they were so vulnerable and were frequently exploited, fatherless children are often mentioned as epitomizing the oppressed (see Pss 10:14; 68:5; 94:6; 146:9; as well as Job 6:27; 22:9; 24:3; 9; 29:12; 31:17, 21).

⁶ **tn** Heb “hand.”

⁷ **sn** Having addressed the defendants, God now speaks to those who are observing the trial, referring to the gods in the third person.

⁸ **tn** Heb “walk.” The Hitpaal stem indicates iterative action, picturing these ignorant “judges” as stumbling around in the darkness.

⁹ **sn** These gods, though responsible for justice, neglect their duty. Their self-imposed ignorance (which the psalmist compares to stumbling around in the dark) results in widespread injustice, which threatens the social order of the world (the meaning of the phrase *all the foundations of the earth crumble*).

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “said.”

¹¹ **sn** Normally in the OT the title *Most High* belongs to the God of Israel, but in this context, where the mythological overtones are so strong, it probably refers to the Canaanite high god El (see v. 1, as well as Isa 14:13).

¹² **tn** Heb “men.” The point in the context is mortality, however, not maleness.

¹³ **sn** *You will die like mortals*. For the concept of a god losing immortality and dying, see Isa 14:12-15, which alludes to a pagan myth in which the petty god “Shining One, son of the Dawn,” is hurled into Sheol for his hubris.

¹³ **tn** Heb “like one of the rulers.” The comparison does not necessarily imply that they are not rulers. The expression “like one of” can sometimes mean “as one of” (Gen 49:16; Obad

82:8 Rise up, O God, and execute judgment on the earth!

For you own¹⁴ all the nations.

Psalm 83¹⁵

A song, a psalm of Asaph.

83:1 O God, do not be silent! Do not ignore us!¹⁶ Do not be inactive, O God!

83:2 For look, your enemies are making a commotion; those who hate you are hostile.¹⁷

83:3 They carefully plot¹⁸ against your people, and make plans to harm¹⁹ the ones you cherish.²⁰

83:4 They say, “Come on, let's annihilate them so they are no longer a nation!²¹ Then the name of Israel will be remembered no more.”

83:5 Yes,²² they devise a unified strategy;²³ they form an alliance²⁴ against you.

83:6 It includes²⁵ the tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites, Moab and the Hagrites,²⁶

83:7 Gebal,²⁷ Ammon, and Amalek, Philistia and the inhabitants of Tyre.²⁸

83:8 Even Assyria has allied with them, lending its strength to the descendants of Lot.²⁹ (Selah)

83:9 Do to them as you did to Midian³⁰ –

11) or “as any other of” (Judg 16:7, 11).

¹⁴ **tn** The translation assumes that the Qal of נָחַל (*nakhhal*) here means “to own; to possess,” and that the imperfect emphasizes a general truth. Another option is to translate the verb as future, “for you will take possession of all the nations” (cf. NIV “all the nations are your inheritance”).

¹⁵ **sn** Psalm 83. The psalmist asks God to deliver Israel from the attacks of foreign nations. Recalling how God defeated Israel's enemies in the days of Deborah and Gideon, he prays that the hostile nations would be humiliated.

¹⁶ **tn** Heb “do not be deaf.”

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “lift up [their] head[s].” The phrase “lift up [the] head” here means “to threaten; to be hostile,” as in Judg 8:28.

¹⁸ **tn** Heb “they make crafty a plot.”

¹⁹ **tn** Heb “and consult together against.”

²⁰ **tn** The passive participle of the Hebrew verb יָסַף (*tsafan*, “to hide”) is used here in the sense of “treasured; cherished.”

²¹ **tn** Heb “we will cause them to disappear from [being] a nation.”

²² **tn** Or “for.”

²³ **tn** Heb “they consult [with] a heart together.”

²⁴ **tn** Heb “cut a covenant.”

²⁵ **tn** The words “it includes” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

²⁶ **sn** The *Hagrites* are also mentioned in 1 Chr 5:10, 19-20.

²⁷ **sn** Some identify *Gebal* with the Phoenician coastal city of Byblos (see Ezek 27:9, where the name is spelled differently), though others locate this site south of the Dead Sea (see BDB 148 s.v. גִּבְלִי; HALOT 174 s.v. גִּבְלִי).

²⁸ **map** For location see Map1-A2; Map2-G2; Map4-A1; JP3-F3; JP4-F3.

²⁹ **tn** Heb “they are an arm for the sons of Lot.” The “arm” is here a symbol of military might.

³⁰ **tn** The *descendants of Lot* were the Moabites and Ammonites.

³⁰ **tn** Heb “do to them like Midian.”

as you did to Sisera and Jabin at the Kishon River!⁴

83:10 They were destroyed at Endor;² their corpses were like manure³ on the ground.

83:11 Make their nobles like Oreb and Zeeb,⁴ and all their rulers like Zebah and Zalmunna,⁵

83:12 who said,⁶ “Let’s take over⁷ the pastures of God!”

83:13 O my God, make them like dead thistles,⁸ like dead weeds blown away by⁹ the wind!

83:14 Like the fire that burns down the forest, or the flames that consume the mountainsides,¹⁰

83:15 chase them with your gale winds, and terrify¹¹ them with your windstorm.

83:16 Cover¹² their faces with shame, so they might seek¹³ you,¹⁴ O LORD.

83:17 May they be humiliated and continually terrified!¹⁵

May they die in shame!¹⁶

83:18 Then they will know¹⁷ that you alone are the LORD,¹⁸ the sovereign king¹⁹ over all the earth.

Psalm 84²⁰

For the music director; according to the *gittith* style,²¹ written by the Korahites, a psalm.

84:1 How lovely is the place where you live,²²

O LORD who rules over all!²³

84:2 I desperately want to be²⁴

in the courts of the LORD’s temple.²⁵

My heart and my entire being²⁶ shout for joy to the living God.

84:3 Even the birds find a home there, and the swallow²⁷ builds a nest, where she can protect her young²⁸ near your altars, O LORD who rules over all, my king and my God.

¹ **sn** The psalmist alludes here to Gideon’s victory over the Midianites (see Judg 7-8) and to Barak’s victory over Jabin’s army, which was led by his general Sisera (Judg 4-5).

² **sn** Endor is not mentioned in the accounts of Gideon’s or Barak’s victories, but both battles took place in the general vicinity of the town. (See Y. Aharoni and M. Avi-Yonah, *The Macmillan Bible Atlas*, 46, 54.) Because Sisera and Jabin are mentioned in v. 9b, many understand them to be the subject of the verbs in v. 10, though they relate v. 10 to Gideon’s victory, which is referred to in v. 9a, 11. (See, for example, Y. Aharoni, *The Land of the Bible*, 263.)

³ **tn** Heb “they were manure.” In addition to this passage, corpses are compared to manure in 2 Kgs 9:37; Jer 8:2; 9:21; 16:4; 25:33.

⁴ **sn** Oreb and Zeeb were the generals of the Midianite army that was defeated by Gideon. The Ephraimites captured and executed both of them and sent their heads to Gideon (Judg 7:24-25).

⁵ **sn** Zebah and Zalmunna were the Midianite kings. Gideon captured them and executed them (Judg 8:1-21).

⁶ **tn** The translation assumes that “Zebah and Zalmunna” are the antecedents of the relative pronoun (“who [said]”). Another option is to take “their nobles...all their rulers” as the antecedent and to translate, “those who say.”

⁷ **tn** Heb “let’s take possession for ourselves.”

⁸ **tn** Or “tumbleweed.” The Hebrew noun גַּלְגַּל (*galgal*) refers to a “wheel” or, metaphorically, to a whirling wind (see Ps 77:18). If taken in the latter sense here, one could understand the term as a metonymical reference to dust blown by a whirlwind (cf. NRSV “like whirling dust”). However, HALOT 190 s.v. גַּלְגַּל understands the noun as a homonym referring to a “dead thistle” here and in Isa 17:13. The parallel line, which refers to קֶשֶׁת (*qash*, “chaff”), favors this interpretation.

⁹ **tn** Heb “before.”

¹⁰ **sn** The imagery of fire and flames suggests unrelenting, destructive judgment.

¹¹ **tn** The two imperfect verbal forms in v. 15 express the psalmist’s wish or prayer.

¹² **tn** Heb “fill.”

¹³ **tn** After the preceding imperative, the prefixed verbal form with prefixed *vav* (ו) indicates purpose or result (“then they will seek”).

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “your name,” which stands here for God’s person.

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “and may they be terrified to perpetuity.” The Hebrew expression אָדָּמָה אָדָּמָה (*adey-ad*, “to perpetuity”) can mean

“forevermore” (see Pss 92:7; 132:12, 14), but here it may be used hyperbolically, for the psalmist asks that the experience of judgment might lead the nations to recognize (v. 18) and even to seek (v. 16) God.

¹⁶ **tn** Heb “may they be ashamed and perish.” The four prefixed verbal forms in this verse are understood as jussives. The psalmist concludes his prayer with an imprecation, calling severe judgment down on his enemies. The strong language of the imprecation seems to run contrary to the positive outcome of divine judgment envisioned in v. 16b. Perhaps the language of v. 17 is overstated for effect. Another option is that v. 16b expresses an ideal, while the strong imprecation of vv. 17-18 anticipates reality. It would be nice if the defeated nations actually pursued a relationship with God, but if judgment does not bring them to that point, the psalmist asks that they be annihilated so that they might at least be forced to acknowledge God’s power.

¹⁷ **tn** After the preceding jussives (v. 17), the prefixed verbal form with prefixed *vav* (ו) indicates purpose (“so that they may know”) or result.

¹⁸ **tn** Heb “that you, your name [is] the LORD, you alone.”

¹⁹ **tn** Traditionally “the Most High.”

²⁰ **sn** Psalm 84. The psalmist expresses his desire to be in God’s presence in the Jerusalem temple, for the Lord is the protector of his people.

²¹ **tn** The precise meaning of the Hebrew term חַגְגִּית (*haggitit*) is uncertain; it probably refers to a musical style or instrument.

²² **tn** Or “your dwelling place[s].” The plural form of the noun may indicate degree or quality; this is the LORD’s special dwelling place (see Pss 43:3; 46:4; 132:5, 7).

²³ **tn** Traditionally, “LORD of hosts.” The title draws attention to God’s sovereign position (see Ps 69:6).

²⁴ **tn** Heb “my soul longs, it even pines for.”

²⁵ **tn** Heb “the courts of the LORD” (see Ps 65:4).

²⁶ **tn** Heb “my flesh,” which stands for his whole person and being.

²⁷ **tn** The word translated “swallow” occurs only here and in Prov 26:2.

²⁸ **tn** Heb “even a bird finds a home, and a swallow a nest for herself, [in] which she places her young.”

sn The psalmist here romanticizes the temple as a place of refuge and safety. As he thinks of the birds nesting near its roof, he envisions them finding protection in God’s presence.

84:4 How blessed⁴ are those who live in your temple and praise you continually! (Selah)

84:5 How blessed are those who² find their strength in you, and long to travel the roads that lead to your temple!³

84:6 As they pass through the Baca Valley,⁴

he provides a spring for them.⁵ The rain⁶ even covers it with pools of water.⁷

84:7 They are sustained as they travel along,⁸

each one appears⁹ before God in Zion.

84:8 O LORD, sovereign God,¹⁰

hear my prayer!

Listen, O God of Jacob! (Selah)

84:9 O God, take notice of our shield!¹¹ Show concern for your chosen king!¹²

84:10 Certainly¹³ spending just one day in your temple courts is better than spending a thousand elsewhere.¹⁴ I would rather stand at the entrance¹⁵ to the temple of my God than live¹⁶ in the tents of the wicked.

84:11 For the LORD God is our sovereign protector.¹⁷

The LORD bestows favor¹⁸ and honor; he withholds no good thing from those who have integrity.¹⁹

84:12 O LORD who rules over all,²⁰ how blessed are those who trust in you!²¹

Psalm 85²²

For the music director; written by the Korahites, a psalm.

85:1 O LORD, you showed favor to your land; you restored the well-being of Jacob.²³

¹ **tn** The Hebrew noun is an abstract plural. The word often refers metonymically to the happiness that God-given security and prosperity produce (see v. 12 and Pss 1:1; 2:12; 34:9; 41:1; 65:4; 89:15; 106:3; 112:1; 127:5; 128:1; 144:15).

² **tn** *Heb* “[Oh] the happiness [of] the man.” Hebrew literature often assumes and reflects the male-oriented perspective of ancient Israelite society. The principle stated here was certainly applicable to all people, regardless of their gender or age. To facilitate modern application, we translate the gender and age specific “man” with the plural “those.” The individual referred to in v. 5a is representative of followers of God, as the use of plural forms in vv. 5b-7 indicates.

³ **tn** *Heb* “roads [are] in their heart[s].” The roads are here those that lead to Zion (see v. 7).

⁴ **tn** The translation assumes that the Hebrew phrase עֵינַק הַבְּכָא (*emeq habbakhā*) is the name of an otherwise unknown arid valley through which pilgrims to Jerusalem passed. The term בְּכָא (*bakha*) may be the name of a particular type of plant or shrub that grew in this valley. O. Borowski (*Agriculture in Iron Age Israel*, 130) suggests it is the black mulberry. Some take the phrase as purely metaphorical and relate עֵינַק to the root כָּבַח (*bakhah*, “to weep”). In this case one might translate, “the valley of weeping” or “the valley of affliction.”

⁵ **tc** The MT reads “a spring they make it,” but this makes little sense. Many medieval Hebrew MSS, as well as the LXX, understand God to be the subject and the valley to be the object, “he [God] makes it [the valley] [into] a spring.”

⁶ **tn** This rare word may refer to the early (or autumn) rains (see Joel 2:23).

⁷ **tc** The MT reads בְּרִיחֹת (*b^rrahhot*, “blessings”) but the preceding reference to a “spring” favors an emendation to בְּרִיחֹת (*b^rrahhot*, “pools”).

sn Pools of water. Because water is so necessary for life, it makes an apt symbol for divine favor and blessing. As the pilgrims traveled to Jerusalem, God provided for their physical needs and gave them a token of his favor and of the blessings awaiting them at the temple.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “they go from strength to strength.” The phrase “from strength to strength” occurs only here in the OT. With a verb of motion, the expression “from [common noun] to [same common noun]” normally suggests movement from one point to another or through successive points (see Num 36:7; 1 Chr 16:20; 17:5; Ps 105:13; Jer 25:32). Ps 84:7 may be emphasizing that the pilgrims move successively from one “place of strength” to another as they travel toward Jerusalem. All along the way they find adequate provisions and renewed energy for the trip.

⁹ **tn** The psalmist returns to the singular (see v. 5a), which he uses in either a representative or distributive (“each one”) sense.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “LORD, God, hosts.” One expects the construct form אֱלֹהֵי before צְבָאוֹת (*ts^vavot*, “hosts”; see Ps 89:9) but אֱלֹהֵי צְבָאוֹת (*yehvah^v ‘elohim*) precedes צְבָאוֹת in Pss 59:5 and 80:4, 19 as well.

¹¹ **tn** The phrase “our shield” refers metaphorically to the Davidic king, who, as God’s vice-regent, was the human protector of the people. Note the parallelism with “your anointed one” here and with “our king” in Ps 89:18.

¹² **tn** *Heb* “look [on] the face of your anointed one.” The Hebrew phrase מַשִּׁיחֶךָ (*m^sshikhekha*, “your anointed one”) refers here to the Davidic king (see Pss 2:2; 18:50; 20:6; 28:8; 89:38, 51; 132:10, 17).

¹³ **tn** Or “for.”

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “better is a day in your courts than a thousand [spent elsewhere].”

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “I choose being at the entrance of the house of my God over living in the tents of the wicked.” The verb סָפַף (*safaf*) appears only here in the OT; it is derived from the noun סָף (*saf*, “threshold”). Traditionally some have interpreted this as a reference to being a doorkeeper at the temple, though some understand it to mean “lie as a beggar at the entrance to the temple” (see HALOT 765 s.v. סָפַף).

¹⁶ **tn** The verb יָדַד (*dur*, “to live”) occurs only here in the OT.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “[is] a sun and a shield.” The epithet “sun,” though rarely used of Israel’s God in the OT, was a well-attested royal title in the ancient Near East. For several examples from Ugaritic texts, the Amarna letters, and Assyrian royal inscriptions, see R. B. Chisholm, “An Exegetical and Theological Study of Psalm 18/2 Samuel 22” (Th.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1983), 131, n. 2.

¹⁸ **tn** Or “grace.”

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “he does not withhold good to those walking in integrity.”

²⁰ **tn** Traditionally “LORD of hosts.”

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “[Oh] the happiness [of] the man [who] trusts in you.” Hebrew literature often assumes and reflects the male-oriented perspective of ancient Israelite society. The principle stated here is certainly applicable to all people, regardless of their gender or age. To facilitate modern application, we translate the gender and age specific “man” with the plural “those.” The individual referred to here is representative of all followers of God, as the use of the plural form in v. 12b indicates.

²² **sn** Psalm 85. God’s people recall how he forgave their sins in the past, pray that he might now restore them to his favor, and anticipate renewed blessings.

²³ **tn** *Heb* “you turned with a turning [toward] Jacob.” The Hebrew term שָׁבַת (*sh^vvut*) is apparently a cognate accusative of שָׁב (*shuv*). See Pss 14:7; 53:6.

85:2 You pardoned¹ the wrongdoing of your people;
you forgave² all their sin. (Selah)
85:3 You withdrew all your fury;
you turned back from your raging anger.³
85:4 Restore us, O God our deliverer!
Do not be displeased with us!⁴
85:5 Will you stay mad at us forever?
Will you remain angry throughout future generations?⁵
85:6 Will you not revive us once more?
Then your people will rejoice in you!
85:7 O LORD, show us your loyal love!
Bestow on us your deliverance!
85:8 I will listen to what God the LORD says.⁶
For he will make⁷ peace with his people,
his faithful followers.⁸
Yet they must not⁹ return to their foolish ways.
85:9 Certainly his loyal followers will soon experience his deliverance;¹⁰
then his splendor will again appear in our land.¹¹
85:10 Loyal love and faithfulness meet;¹²
deliverance and peace greet each other with a kiss.¹³
85:11 Faithfulness grows from the ground,
and deliverance looks down from the sky.¹⁴

¹ tn Heb "lifted up."

² tn Heb "covered over."

³ tn Heb "the rage of your anger." The phrase "rage of your anger" employs an appositional genitive. Synonyms are joined in a construct relationship to emphasize the single idea. For a detailed discussion of the grammatical point with numerous examples, see Y. Avishur, "Pairs of Synonymous Words in the Construct State (and in Appositional Hendiads) in Biblical Hebrew," *Semitics* 2 (1971): 17-81. See Pss 69:24; 78:49.

⁴ tn Heb "break your displeasure with us." Some prefer to emend חָפַר (*hafer*, "break") to חָסַר (*haser*, "turn aside").

⁵ tn Heb "Will your anger stretch to a generation and a generation?"

⁶ sn I will listen. Having asked for the Lord's favor, the psalmist (who here represents the nation) anticipates a divine word of assurance.

⁷ tn Heb "speak." The idiom "speak peace" refers to establishing or maintaining peaceful relations with someone (see Gen 37:4; Zech 9:10; cf. Ps 122:8).

⁸ tn Heb "to his people and to his faithful followers." The translation assumes that "his people" and "his faithful followers" are viewed as identical here.

⁹ tn Or "yet let them not." After the negative particle אַל (*al*), the prefixed verbal form is jussive, indicating the speaker's desire or wish.

¹⁰ tn Heb "certainly his deliverance [is] near to those who fear him."

¹¹ tn Heb "to dwell, glory, in our land." "Glory" is the subject of the infinitive. The infinitive with לֵךְ (*le*), "to dwell," probably indicates result here ("then"). When God delivers his people and renews his relationship with them, he will once more reveal his royal splendor in the land.

¹² tn Heb The psalmist probably uses the perfect verbal forms in v. 10 in a dramatic or rhetorical manner, describing what he anticipates as if it were already occurring or had already occurred.

¹³ sn Deliverance and peace greet each other with a kiss. The psalmist personifies these abstract qualities to emphasize that God's loyal love and faithfulness will yield deliverance and peace for his people.

¹⁴ sn The psalmist already sees undeniable signs of God's

85:12 Yes, the LORD will bestow his good blessings,¹⁵
and our land will yield¹⁶ its crops.
85:13 Deliverance goes¹⁷ before him,
and prepares¹⁸ a pathway for him.¹⁹

Psalm 86²⁰

A prayer of David.

86:1 Listen²¹ O LORD! Answer me!
For I am oppressed and needy.
86:2 Protect me,²² for I am loyal!
O my God, deliver your servant, who trusts in you!
86:3 Have mercy on me,²³ O Lord,
for I cry out to you all day long!
86:4 Make your servant²⁴ glad,
for to you, O Lord, I pray!²⁵
86:5 Certainly²⁶ O Lord, you are kind²⁷
and forgiving,
and show great faithfulness to all who cry out to you.
86:6 O LORD, hear my prayer!
Pay attention to my plea for mercy!
86:7 In my time of trouble I cry out to you,
for you will answer me.
86:8 None can compare to you among the gods, O Lord!
Your exploits are incomparable!²⁸
86:9 All the nations, whom you created,
will come and worship you,²⁹ O Lord.
They will honor your name.
86:10 For you are great and do amazing things.
You alone are God.
86:11 O LORD, teach me how you want me to live!³⁰
Then I will obey your commands.³¹

faithfulness and expects deliverance to arrive soon.

¹⁵ tn Heb "what is good."

¹⁶ tn Both "bestow" and "yield" translate the same Hebrew verb (נָתַן, *natan*). The repetition of the word emphasizes that agricultural prosperity is the direct result of divine blessing.

¹⁷ tn Or "will go."

¹⁸ tn Or "will prepare."

¹⁹ tn Heb "and it prepares for a way his footsteps." Some suggest emending יַשֵּׁם (y^sasem, "and prepares") to יְשַׁלֵּם (y^sshalom, "and peace") since "deliverance" and "peace" are closely related earlier in v. 13. This could be translated, "and peace [goes ahead, making] a pathway for his footsteps" (cf. NEB).

²⁰ sn Psalm 86. The psalmist appeals to God's mercy as he asks for deliverance from his enemies.

²¹ tn Heb "turn your ear."

²² tn Heb "my life."

²³ tn Or "show me favor."

²⁴ tn Heb "the soul of your servant."

²⁵ tn Heb "I lift up my soul."

²⁶ tn Or "for."

²⁷ tn Heb "good."

²⁸ tn Heb "and there are none like your acts."

²⁹ tn Or "bow down before you."

³⁰ tn Heb "teach me your way." The Lord's "way" refers here to the moral principles he expects the psalmist to follow. See Pss 25:4; 27:11.

³¹ tn Heb "I will walk in your truth." The Lord's commandments are referred to as "truth" here because they are a trustworthy and accurate expression of the divine will. See Ps 25:5.

Make me wholeheartedly committed to you!¹

86:12 O Lord, my God, I will give you thanks with my whole heart!

I will honor your name continually!²

86:13 For you will extend your great loyal love to me,³ and will deliver my life⁴ from the depths of Sheol.⁵

86:14 O God, arrogant men attack me,⁶ a gang⁷ of ruthless men, who do not respect you, seek my life.⁸

86:15 But you, O Lord, are a compassionate and merciful God.

You are patient⁹ and demonstrate great loyal love and faithfulness.¹⁰

86:16 Turn toward me and have mercy on me!

Give your servant your strength!

Deliver your slave!¹¹

86:17 Show me evidence of your favor!¹²

Then those who hate me will see it and be ashamed,¹³

for you, O LORD, will help me and comfort me.¹⁴

Psalm 87¹⁵

Written by the Korahites; a psalm, a song.

87:1 The LORD's city is in the holy hills.¹⁶

87:2 The LORD loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwelling places of Jacob.

87:3 People say wonderful things about you,¹⁷

O city of God. (Selah)

87:4 I mention Rahab¹⁸ and Babylon to my followers.¹⁹

Here are²⁰ Philistia and Tyre,²¹ along with Ethiopia.²²

It is said of them, "This one was born there."²³

87:5 But it is said of Zion's residents,²⁴ "Each one of these²⁵ was born in her, and the sovereign One²⁶ makes her secure."²⁷

¹ **tn** Heb "Bind my heart to the fearing of your name." The verb translated "bind" occurs only here in the Piel stem. It appears twice in the Qal, meaning "be joined" in both cases (Gen 49:6; Isa 14:20). To "fear" God's name means to have a healthy respect for him which in turn motivates one to obey his commands (see Pss 61:5; 102:15).

² **tn** Or "forever."

³ **tn** Heb "for your loyal love [is] great over me."

⁴ **tn** Or "for he will have delivered my life." The verb form indicates a future perfect here.

⁵ **tn** Or "lower Sheol."

⁶ **tn** Heb "rise up against me."

⁷ **tn** Or "assembly."

⁸ **tn** Heb "seek my life and do not set you before them." See Ps 54:3.

⁹ **tn** Heb "slow to anger."

¹⁰ **tn** Heb "and great of loyal love and faithfulness."

sn The psalmist's confession of faith in this verse echoes Exod 34:6.

¹¹ **tn** Heb "the son of your female servant." The phrase "son of a female servant" (see also Ps 116:16) is used of a son born to a secondary wife or concubine (Exod 23:12). In some cases the child's father is the master of the house (see Gen 21:10, 13; Judg 9:18). The use of the expression here certainly does not imply that the LORD has such a secondary wife or concubine! It is used metaphorically and idiomatically to emphasize the psalmist's humility before the LORD and his status as the LORD's servant.

¹² **tn** Heb "Work with me a sign for good." The expression "work a sign" also occurs in Judg 6:17.

¹³ **tn** After the imperative in the preceding line ("work"), the prefixed verb forms with prefixed *vav* (ו) conjunctive indicate purpose or result.

¹⁴ **tn** Heb The perfect verbal forms are understood here as dramatic/rhetorical, expressing the psalmist's certitude that such a sign from the LORD will be followed by his intervention. Another option is to understand the forms as future perfects ("for you, O LORD, will have helped me and comforted me").

¹⁵ **sn** *Psalm 87*. The psalmist celebrates the Lord's presence in Zion and the special status of its citizens.

¹⁶ **tn** Heb "his foundation [is] in the hills of holiness." The expression "his foundation" refers here by metonymy to the LORD's dwelling place in Zion. The "hills" are the ones surrounding Zion (see Pss 125:2; 133:3).

¹⁷ **tn** Heb "glorious things are spoken about you." The translation assumes this is a general reference to compliments paid to Zion by those who live within her walls and by those who live in the surrounding areas and lands. Another option is that this refers to a prophetic oracle about the city's glorious future. In this case one could translate, "wonderful things are announced concerning you."

¹⁸ **sn** "Rahab," which means "proud one," is used here as a title for Egypt (see Isa 30:7).

¹⁹ **tn** Heb "to those who know me" (see Ps 36:10). Apparently the LORD speaks here. The verbal construction (the Hiphil of זָכַר, *zakhar*, "remember" followed by the preposition לְ [le] with a substantive) is rare, but the prepositional phrase is best understood as indicating the recipient of the announcement (see Jer 4:16). Some take the preposition in the sense of "among" and translate, "among those who know me" (cf. NEB, NIV, NRSV). In this case these foreigners are viewed as the LORD's people and the psalm is interpreted as anticipating a time when all nations will worship the LORD (see Ps 86:9) and be considered citizens of Zion.

²⁰ **tn** Heb "Look."

²¹ **map** For location see Map1-A2; Map2-G2; Map4-A1; JP3-F3; JP4-F3.

²² **tn** Heb "Cush."

²³ **tn** Heb "and this one was born there." The words "It is said of them" are not in the Hebrew text, but are supplied for clarification and stylistic purposes (see v. 5). Those advocating the universalistic interpretation understand "there" as referring to Zion, but it seems more likely that the adverb refers to the nations just mentioned. The foreigners are identified by their native lands.

²⁴ **tn** Heb "and of Zion it is said." Another option is to translate, "and to Zion it is said." In collocation with the Niphal of אָמַר (*amar*), the preposition לָמַד (לְ-) can introduce the recipient of the statement (see Josh 2:2; Jer 4:11; Hos 1:10; Zeph 3:16), carry the nuance "concerning, of" (see Num 23:23), or mean "be named" (see Isa 4:3; 62:4).

²⁵ **tn** Heb "a man and a man." The idiom also appears in Esth 1:8. The translation assumes that the phrase refers to each of Zion's residents, in contrast to the foreigners mentioned in v. 4. Those advocating the universalistic interpretation understand this as a reference to each of the nations, including those mentioned in v. 4.

²⁶ **tn** Traditionally "Most High."

²⁷ **tn** Heb "and he makes her secure, the Most High."

87:6 The LORD writes in the census book of the nations,¹
 “This one was born there.”² (Selah)
 87:7 As for the singers, as well as the pipers – all of them sing within your walls.³

Psalm 88⁴

A song, a psalm written by the Korahites; for the music director; according to the *machalath-leannoth* style;⁵ a well-written song⁶ by Heman the Ezrachte.

88:1 O LORD God who delivers me!⁷

By day I cry out
 and at night I pray before you.⁸

88:2 Listen to my prayer!⁹
 Pay attention¹⁰ to my cry for help!

88:3 For my life¹¹ is filled with troubles
 and I am ready to enter Sheol.¹²

88:4 They treat me like¹³ those who descend into the grave.¹⁴
 I am like a helpless man,¹⁵

88:5 adrift¹⁶ among the dead,
 like corpses lying in the grave,
 whom you remember no more,
 and who are cut off from your power.¹⁷

88:6 You place me in the lowest regions of the Pit,¹⁸
 in the dark places, in the watery depths.

88:7 Your anger bears down on me,
 and you overwhelm me with all your waves. (Selah)

88:8 You cause those who know me to keep their distance;
 you make me an appalling sight to them.
 I am trapped and cannot get free.¹⁹

88:9 My eyes grow weak because of oppression.
 I call out to you, O LORD, all day long;
 I spread out my hands in prayer to you.²⁰

88:10 Do you accomplish amazing things for the dead?

Do the departed spirits²¹ rise up and give you thanks? (Selah)

88:11 Is your loyal love proclaimed in the grave,
 or your faithfulness in the place of the dead?²²

88:12 Are your amazing deeds experienced²³ in the dark region,²⁴
 or your deliverance in the land of oblivion?²⁵

88:13 As for me, I cry out to you, O LORD;
 in the morning my prayer confronts you.

88:14 O LORD, why do you reject me,
 and pay no attention to me?²⁶

88:15 I am oppressed and have been on the verge of death since my youth.²⁷
 I have been subjected to your horrors and am numb with pain.²⁸

¹ **tn** Heb “the LORD records in the writing of the nations.”

² **tn** As noted in v. 4, the translation assumes a contrast between “there” (the various foreign lands) and “in her” (Zion). In contrast to foreigners, the citizens of Zion have special status because of their birthplace (v. 5). In this case vv. 4 and 6 form a structural frame around v. 5.

³ **tc** Heb “and singers, like pipers, all my springs [are] in you.” The participial form הוללים (*kol^llim*) appears to be from a denominative verb meaning “play the pipe,” though some derive the form from הול (*khul*, “dance”). In this case the duplicated *lamed* (ל) requires an emendation to הוללים (*m^lkol^llim*, “a Polel form). The words are addressed to Zion. As it stands, the Hebrew text makes little, if any, sense. “Springs” are often taken here as a symbol of divine blessing and life”), but this reading does not relate to the preceding line in any apparent way. The present translation assumes an emendation to הוללים מעיני (*kol-ma^lyanay*, “all my springs”) to בְּכֵם נָגַי (*kullam^l anu*, “all of them sing,” with the form נָגַי being derived from נָגַה, *anah*, “sing”).

⁴ **sn** Psalm 88. The psalmist cries out in pain to the Lord, begging him for relief from his intense and constant suffering. The psalmist regards God as the ultimate cause of his distress, but nevertheless clings to God in hope.

⁵ **tn** The Hebrew phrase מַחְלַת לְאֲנוֹת (*makhlat l^l annot*) may mean “illness to afflict.” Perhaps it refers to a particular style of music, a tune title, or a musical instrument. The term מַחְלַת also appears in the superscription of Ps 53.

⁶ **tn** The meaning of the Hebrew term מַסְכִּיל (*maskil*) is uncertain. The word is derived from a verb meaning “to be prudent; to be wise.” Various options are: “a contemplative song,” “a song imparting moral wisdom,” or “a skillful [i.e., well-written] song.” The term occurs in the superscriptions of Pss 32, 42, 44, 45, 52-55, 74, 78, 88, 89, and 142, as well as in Ps 47:7.

⁷ **tn** Heb “O LORD God of my deliverance.” In light of the content of the psalm, this reference to God as the one who delivers seems overly positive. For this reason some emend the text to אֱלֹהֵי שִׁוְעָתִי (*alohay shivva^ltiy*, “[O LORD] my God, I cry out”). See v. 13.

⁸ **tn** Heb “[by] day I cry out, in the night before you.”

⁹ **tn** Heb “may my prayer come before you.” The prefixed verbal form is understood as a jussive, indicating the psalmist’s desire or prayer.

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “turn your ear.”

¹¹ **tn** Or “my soul.”

¹² **tn** Heb “and my life approaches Sheol.”

¹³ **tn** Heb “I am considered with.”

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “the pit.” The noun בּוֹר (*bor*, “pit,” “cistern”) is sometimes used of the grave and/or the realm of the dead.

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “I am like a man [for whom] there is no help.”

¹⁶ **tn** Heb “set free.”

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “from your hand.”

¹⁸ **tn** The noun בּוֹר (*bor*, “pit,” “cistern”) is sometimes used of the grave and/or the realm of the dead. See v. 4.

¹⁹ **tn** Heb “[I am] confined and I cannot go out.”

²⁰ **tn** Heb “I spread out my hands to you.” Spreading out the hands toward God was a prayer gesture (see Exod 9:29, 33; 1 Kgs 8:22, 38; 2 Chr 6:12-13, 29; Ezra 9:15; Job 11:13; Isa 1:15). The words “in prayer” have been supplied in the translation to clarify this.

²¹ **tn** Heb “Rephaim,” a term that refers to those who occupy the land of the dead (see Isa 14:9; 26:14, 19).

²² **tn** Heb “in Abaddon,” a name for Sheol. The noun is derived from a verbal root meaning “to perish,” “to die.”

²³ **tn** Heb “known.”

²⁴ **tn** Heb “darkness,” here a title for Sheol.

²⁵ **tn** Heb “forgetfulness.” The noun, which occurs only here in the OT, is derived from a verbal root meaning “to forget.”

sn The rhetorical questions in vv. 10-12 expect the answer, “Of course not!”

²⁶ **tn** Heb “[why] do you hide your face from me?”

²⁷ **tn** Heb “and am dying from youth.”

²⁸ **tn** Heb “I carry your horrors [?].” The meaning of the Hebrew form אֲפֻנָה (*afunah*), which occurs only here in the OT, is unclear. It may be an adverb meaning “very much” (BDB 67 s.v.), though some prefer to emend the text to אֲפֻגָה (*afugah*, “I am numb”) from the verb פָּגַת (*pag*; see Pss 38:8; 77:2).

88:16 Your anger overwhelms me;¹
your terrors destroy me.
88:17 They surround me like water all day
long;
they join forces and encircle me.²
88:18 You cause my friends and neighbors
to keep their distance;³
those who know me leave me alone in the
darkness.⁴

Psalms 89⁵

A well-written song⁶ by Ethan the Ezrachite.

89:1 I will sing continually⁷ about the
LORD's faithful deeds;
to future generations I will proclaim your
faithfulness.⁸
89:2 For I say, "Loyal love is permanently
established;⁹
in the skies you set up your faithfulness."¹⁰
89:3 The LORD said,¹¹
"I have made a covenant with my chosen
one;
I have made a promise on oath to David,
my servant:
89:4 'I will give you an eternal dynasty¹²
and establish your throne throughout future
generations.'¹³ (Selah)
89:5 O LORD, the heavens¹⁴ praise your
amazing deeds,
as well as your faithfulness in the angelic
assembly.¹⁵

89:6 For who in the skies can compare to
the LORD?
Who is like the LORD among the heavenly
beings,¹⁶
89:7 a God who is honored¹⁷ in the great
angelic assembly,¹⁸
and more awesome than¹⁹ all who sur-
round him?
89:8 O LORD, sovereign God!²⁰
Who is strong like you, O LORD?
Your faithfulness surrounds you.
89:9 You rule over the proud sea.²¹
When its waves surge,²² you calm them.
89:10 You crushed the Proud One²³ and
killed it;²⁴
with your strong arm you scattered your
enemies.
89:11 The heavens belong to you, as does
the earth.
You made the world and all it contains.²⁵
89:12 You created the north and the south.
Tabor and Hermon²⁶ rejoice in your
name.
89:13 Your arm is powerful,

¹ tn Heb "passes over me."

² tn Heb "they encircle me together."

³ tn Heb "you cause to be far from me friend and neighbor."

⁴ tn Heb "those known by me, darkness."

⁵ sn Psalm 89. The psalmist praises God as the sovereign creator of the world. He recalls God's covenant with David, but then laments that the promises of the covenant remain unrealized. The covenant promised the Davidic king military victories, but the king has now been subjected to humiliating defeat.

⁶ tn The meaning of the Hebrew term מִשְׁכִּיל (maskil) is uncertain. See the note on the phrase "well-written song" in the superscription of Ps 88.

⁷ tn Or "forever."

⁸ tn Heb "to a generation and a generation I will make known your faithfulness with my mouth."

⁹ tn Heb "built."

¹⁰ sn You set up your faithfulness. This may allude to the Lord's heavenly throne, which symbolizes his just rule and from which the Lord decrees his unconditional promises (see vv. 8, 14).

¹¹ tn The words "the LORD said" are supplied in the translation for clarification. It is clear that the words of vv. 3-4 are spoken by the LORD, in contrast to vv. 1-2, which are spoken by the psalmist.

¹² tn Heb "forever I will establish your offspring."

¹³ tn Heb "and I will build to a generation and a generation your throne."

¹⁴ tn As the following context makes clear, the personified "heavens" here stand by metonymy for the angelic beings that surround God's heavenly throne.

¹⁵ tn Heb "in the assembly of the holy ones." The phrase "holy ones" sometimes refers to God's people (Ps 34:9) or to their priestly leaders (2 Chr 35:3), but here it refers to God's heavenly assembly and the angels that surround his throne (see vv. 6-7).

¹⁶ tn Heb "sons of gods"; or "sons of God." Though אֱלִים ('elim) is vocalized as a plural form ("gods") in the Hebrew text, it is likely that the final mem (ם) is actually enclitic rather than a plural marker. In this case one may read "God." Some, following a Qumran text and the LXX, also propose the phrase occurred in the original text of Deut 32:8. The phrase בְּנֵי אֱלִים (v'ney'elim, "sons of gods" or "sons of God") occurs only here and in Ps 29:1. Since the "sons of gods/God" are here associated with "the assembly of the holy ones" and "council of the holy ones," the heavenly assembly (comprised of so-called "angels" and other supernatural beings) appears to be in view. See Job 5:1; 15:15 and Zech 14:5, where these supernatural beings are referred to as "holy ones." In Canaanite mythological texts the divine council of the high god El is called "the sons of El." The OT apparently uses the Canaanite phrase, applying it to the supernatural beings that surround the LORD's heavenly throne.

¹⁷ tn Heb "feared."

¹⁸ tn Heb "in the great assembly of the holy ones."

¹⁹ tn Or perhaps "feared by."

²⁰ tn Traditionally "God of hosts." The title here pictures the LORD as enthroned in the midst of the angelic hosts of heaven.

²¹ tn Heb "the majesty of the sea."

²² tn Heb "rise up."

²³ tn Heb "Rahab." The name "Rahab" means "proud one." Since it is sometimes used of Egypt (see Ps 87:4; Isa 30:7), the passage may allude to the exodus. However, the name is also used of the sea (or the mythological sea creature) which symbolizes the disruptive forces of the world that seek to replace order with chaos (see Job 9:13; 26:12). Isa 51:9 appears to combine the mythological and historical referents. The association of Rahab with the sea in Ps 89 (see v. 9) suggests that the name carries symbolic force in this context. In this case the passage may allude to creation (see vv. 11-12), when God overcame the great deep and brought order out of chaos.

²⁴ tn Heb "like one fatally wounded."

²⁵ tn Heb "the world and its fullness, you established them."

²⁶ sn Tabor and Hermon were two of the most prominent mountains in Palestine.

your hand strong,
 your right hand¹ victorious.²
89:14 Equity and justice are the founda-
 tion of your throne.³
 Loyal love and faithfulness characterize
 your rule.⁴
89:15 How blessed are the people who
 worship you!⁵
 O LORD, they experience your favor.⁶
89:16 They rejoice in your name all day
 long,
 and are vindicated⁷ by your justice.
89:17 For you give them splendor and
 strength.⁸
 By your favor we are victorious.⁹
89:18 For our shield¹⁰ belongs to the
 LORD,
 our king to the Holy One of Israel.¹¹
89:19 Then you¹² spoke through a vision
 to your faithful followers¹³ and said:
 "I have energized a warrior,¹⁴
 I have raised up a young man¹⁵ from the
 people.
89:20 I have discovered David, my servant.
 With my holy oil I have anointed him as

king.¹⁶
89:21 My hand will support him,¹⁷
 and my arm will strengthen him.
89:22 No enemy will be able to exact trib-
 ute¹⁸ from him;¹⁹
 a violent oppressor will not be able to
 humiliate him.²⁰
89:23 I will crush his enemies before him;
 I will strike down those who hate him.
89:24 He will experience my faithfulness
 and loyal love,²¹
 and by my name he will win victories.²²
89:25 I will place his hand over the sea,
 his right hand over the rivers.²³
89:26 He will call out to me,
 "You are my father,²⁴ my God, and the
 protector who delivers me."²⁵
89:27 I will appoint him to be my firstborn
 son,²⁶
 the most exalted of the earth's kings.
89:28 I will always extend my loyal love
 to him,
 and my covenant with him is secure.²⁷

¹ **sn** The Lord's *arm, hand,* and *right hand* all symbolize his activities, especially his exploits in war.

² **tn** *Heb* "is lifted up." The idiom "the right hand is lifted up" refers to victorious military deeds (see Pss 89:42; 118:16).

³ **sn** The Lord's *throne* symbolizes his kingship.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "are in front of your face." The idiom can mean "confront" (Ps 17:13) or "meet, enter the presence of" (Ps 95:2).

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "who know the shout." "Shout" here refers to the shouts of the Lord's worshipers (see Pss 27:6; 33:3; 47:5).

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "in the light of your face they walk." The idiom "light of your face" probably refers to a smile (see Eccl 8:1), which in turn suggests favor and blessing (see Num 6:25; Pss 4:6; 31:16; 44:3; 67:1; 80:3, 7, 19; Dan 9:17).

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "are lifted up."

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "for the splendor of their strength [is] you."

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "you lift up our horn," or if one follows the marginal reading (*Qere*), "our horn is lifted up." The horn of an ox underlies the metaphor (see Deut 33:17; 1 Kgs 22:11; Ps 92:10). The horn of the wild ox is frequently a metaphor for military strength; the idiom "exalt/lift up the horn" signifies military victory (see 1 Sam 2:10; Pss 75:10; 89:24; 92:10; Lam 2:17).

¹⁰ **tn** The phrase "our shield" refers metaphorically to the Davidic king, who, as God's vice-regent, was the human protector of the people. Note the parallelism with "our king" here and with "your anointed one" in Ps 84:9.

¹¹ **sn** The basic sense of the word "holy" is "set apart from that which is commonplace, special, unique." The Lord's holiness is first and foremost his transcendent sovereignty as the ruler of the world. He is "set apart" from the world over which he rules. At the same time his holiness encompasses his moral authority, which derives from his royal position. As king he has the right to dictate to his subjects how they are to live; indeed his very own character sets the standard for proper behavior. This expression is a common title for the Lord in the book of Isaiah.

¹² **tn** The pronoun "you" refers to the Lord, who is addressed here. The quotation that follows further develops the announcement of vv. 3-4.

¹³ **tn** Many medieval mss read the singular here, "your faithful follower." In this case the statement refers directly to Nathan's oracle to David (see 2 Sam 7:17).

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "I have placed help upon a warrior."

¹⁵ **tn** Or perhaps "a chosen one."

¹⁶ **tn** The words "as king" are supplied in the translation for clarification, indicating that a royal anointing is in view.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "with whom my hand will be firm."

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "an enemy will not exact tribute." The imperfect is understood in a modal sense, indicating capability or potential.

¹⁹ **tn** The translation understands the Hiphil of נָשָׂא (*nasha'*) in the sense of "act as a creditor." This may allude to the practice of a conqueror forcing his subjects to pay tribute in exchange for "protection." Another option is to take the verb from a homonymic verbal root meaning "to deceive," "to trick." Still another option is to emend the form to נָשָׂא (*visa'*), a Qal imperfect from נָשָׂא (*na'as*, "rise up") and to translate "an enemy will not rise up against him" (see M. Dahood, *Psalms* [AB], 2:317).

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "and a son of violence will not oppress him." The imperfect is understood in a modal sense, indicating capability or potential. The reference to a "son of violence" echoes the language of God's promise to David in 2 Sam 7:10 (see also 1 Chr 17:9).

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "and my faithfulness and my loyal love [will be] with him."

²² **tn** *Heb* "and by my name his horn will be lifted up." The horn of an ox underlies the metaphor (see Deut 33:17; 1 Kgs 22:11; Ps 92:10). The horn of the wild ox is frequently a metaphor for military strength; the idiom "exalt/lift up the horn" signifies military victory (see 1 Sam 2:10; Pss 75:10; 92:10; Lam 2:17).

²³ **tn** Some identify "the sea" as the Mediterranean and "the rivers" as the Euphrates and its tributaries. However, it is more likely that "the sea" and "the rivers" are symbols for hostile powers that oppose God and the king (see v. 9, as well as Ps 93:3-4).

²⁴ **sn** *You are my father.* The Davidic king was viewed as God's "son" (see 2 Sam 7:14; Ps 2:7). The idiom reflects ancient Near Eastern adoption language associated with covenants of grant, by which a lord would reward a faithful subject by elevating him to special status, referred to as "sonship." Like a son, the faithful subject received an "inheritance," viewed as an unconditional, eternal gift. Such gifts usually took the form of land and/or an enduring dynasty. See M. Weinfeld, "The Covenant of Grant in the Old Testament and in the Ancient Near East," *JAOS* 90 (1970): 184-203, for general discussion and some striking extra-biblical parallels.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "the rocky summit of my deliverance."

²⁶ **sn** The *firstborn son* typically had special status and received special privileges.

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* "forever I will keep for him my loyal love and will make my covenant secure for him."

89:29 I will give him an eternal dynasty,¹
and make his throne as enduring as the
skies above.²
89:30 If his sons reject my law
and disobey my regulations,
89:31 if they break³ my rules
and do not keep my commandments,
89:32 I will punish their rebellion by beat-
ing them with a club,⁴
their sin by inflicting them with bruises.⁵
89:33 But I will not remove⁶ my loyal love
from him,
nor be unfaithful to my promise.⁷
89:34 I will not break⁸ my covenant
or go back on what I promised.⁹
89:35 Once and for all I have vowed by
my own holiness,
I will never deceive¹⁰ David.
89:36 His dynasty will last forever.¹¹
His throne will endure before me, like the
sun,¹²
89:37 it will remain stable, like the moon,¹³
his throne will endure like the skies.¹⁴
(Selah)
89:38 But you have spurned¹⁵ and rejected
him;

you are angry with your chosen king.¹⁶
89:39 You have repudiated¹⁷ your cov-
enant with your servant;¹⁸
you have thrown his crown to the
ground.¹⁹
89:40 You have broken down all his²⁰
walls;
you have made his strongholds a heap of
ruins.
89:41 All who pass by²¹ have robbed him;
he has become an object of disdain to his
neighbors.
89:42 You have allowed his adversaries to
be victorious,²²
and all his enemies to rejoice.
89:43 You turn back²³ his sword from the
adversary,²⁴
and have not sustained him in battle.²⁵
89:44 You have brought to an end his
splendor,²⁶
and have knocked²⁷ his throne to the
ground.
89:45 You have cut short his youth,²⁸
and have covered him with shame. (Se-
lah)
89:46 How long, O LORD, will this last?

¹ tn Heb "and I will set in place forever his offspring."

² tn Heb "and his throne like the days of the heavens."

³ tn Or "desecrate."

⁴ tn Heb "I will punish with a club their rebellion."

sn Despite the harsh image of beating...with a club, the language reflects a father-son relationship (see v. 30; 2 Sam 7:14). According to Proverbs, a שֶׁבֶט (*shevet*, "club") was sometimes utilized to administer corporal punishment to rebellious children (see Prov 13:24; 22:15; 23:13-14; 29:15).

⁵ tn Heb "with blows their sin."

⁶ tn Heb "break"; "make ineffectual." Some prefer to emend אָפַר ('*afir*,' the Hiphil of פָּרַר, *parar*, "to break") to אָסַר (*asir*; the Hiphil of סָר, *sur*, "to turn aside"), a verb that appears in 2 Sam 7:15.

⁷ tn Heb "and I will not deal falsely with my faithfulness."

⁸ tn Or "desecrate."

⁹ tn Heb "and what proceeds out of my lips I will not alter."

¹⁰ tn Or "lie to."

¹¹ tn Heb "his offspring forever will be."

¹² tn Heb "and his throne like the sun before me."

¹³ tn Heb "like the moon it will be established forever."

¹⁴ tn Heb "and a witness in the sky, secure." Scholars have offered a variety of opinions as to the identity of the "witness" referred to here, none of which is very convincing. It is preferable to join יָגֵד (ygd) עֹלָם ('*olam*,' "eternity") in the preceding line and translate the commonly attested phrase עֹלָם יָגֵד ("forever"). In this case one may translate the second line, "[it] will be secure like the skies." Another option (the one reflected in the present translation) is to take עַד as a rare noun meaning "throne" or "dais." This noun is attested in Ugaritic; see, for example, CTA 16 vi 22-23, where *ksi* (= כִּסֵּה, *kisseh*, "throne") and *d* (= עַד, "dais") appear as synonyms in the poetic parallelism (see G. R. Driver, *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, 91). Emending בַּשְּׁהַק (*bashakhaq*, "in the heavens") to בַּשְּׁחַק (*kashakhaq*, "like the heavens") - *bet/kaf* (ב/כ) confusion is widely attested - one can then read "[his] throne like the heavens [is] firm/stable." Verse 29 refers to the enduring nature of the heavens, while Job 37:18 speaks of God spreading out the heavens (שְׁחַקִּים, *sh'khaqim*) and compares their strength to a bronze mirror. Ps 89:29 uses the term שָׁמַיִם (*shamayim*, "skies") which frequently appears in parallelism to שְׁהַקִּים.

¹⁵ tn The Hebrew construction (conjunction + pronoun, followed by the verb) draws attention to the contrast between what follows and what precedes.

¹⁶ tn Heb "your anointed one." The Hebrew phrase מְשִׁיחֶךָ (*m'shikhecha*, "your anointed one") refers here to the Davidic king (see Pss 2:2; 18:50; 20:6; 28:8; 84:9; 132:10, 17).

¹⁷ tn The Hebrew verb appears only here and in Lam 2:7.

¹⁸ tn Heb "the covenant of your servant."

¹⁹ tn Heb "you dishonor [or "desecrate"] on the ground his crown."

²⁰ tn The king here represents the land and cities over which he rules.

²¹ tn Heb "all the passersby on the road."

²² tn Heb "you have lifted up the right hand of his adversaries." The idiom "the right hand is lifted up" refers to victorious military deeds (see Pss 89:13; 118:16).

²³ tn The perfect verbal form predominates in vv. 38-45. The use of the imperfect in this one instance may be for rhetorical effect. The psalmist briefly lapses into dramatic mode, describing the king's military defeat as if it were happening before his very eyes.

²⁴ tc Heb "you turn back, rocky summit, his sword." The Hebrew term צֹר (*tsur*, "rocky summit") makes no sense here, unless it is a divine title understood as vocative, "you turn back, O Rocky Summit, his sword." Some emend the form to צַר (*tsor*, "flint") on the basis of Josh 5:2, which uses the phrase הַרְבֹּת צָרִים (*kharvot tsurim*, "flint knives"). The noun צַר (*tsor*, "flint") can then be taken as "flint-like edge," indicating the sharpness of the sword. Others emend the form to אָחֹר (*akhor*, "backward") or to מִצָּר (*mitsar*, "from the adversary"). The present translation reflects the latter, assuming an original reading הִשִּׁיב מִצָּר הַרְבֹּת (*tashiv mitsar kharbo*), which was corrupted to הִשִּׁיב צֹר הַרְבֹּת (*tashiv tsar kharbo*) by virtual haplography (confusion of *bet/mem* is well-attested) with צַר (*tsar*, "adversary") then being misinterpreted as צֹר in the later tradition.

²⁵ tn Heb "and you have not caused him to stand in the battle."

²⁶ tc The Hebrew text appears to read, "you have brought to an end from his splendor," but the form מִתְהַרֵּו (*mit'haro*) should be slightly emended (the *daghesh* should be removed from the *tet* [ת]) and read simply "his splendor" (the initial *mem* [מ] is not the preposition, but a nominal prefix).

²⁷ tn The Hebrew verb מָגַר (*magar*) occurs only here and perhaps in Ezek 21:17.

²⁸ tn Heb "the days of his youth" (see as well Job 33:25).

Will you remain hidden forever?¹
Will your anger continue to burn like
fire?

89:47 Take note of my brief lifespan!²
Why do you make all people so mortal?³

89:48 No man can live on without experi-
encing death,
or deliver his life from the power of
Sheol.⁴ (Selah)

89:49 Where are your earlier faithful
deeds,⁵ O Lord,⁶
the ones performed in accordance with
your reliable oath to David?⁷

89:50 Take note, O Lord,⁸ of the way your
servants are taunted,⁹
and of how I must bear so many insults
from people!¹⁰

89:51 Your enemies, O LORD, hurl insults;
they insult your chosen king as they dog
his footsteps.¹¹

89:52¹² The LORD deserves praise¹³ forev-
ermore!
We agree! We agree!¹⁴

Book 4
(Psalms 90-106)

*Psalm 90*¹⁵

A prayer of Moses, the man of God.

90:1 O Lord, you have been our protector¹⁶
through all generations!

90:2 Even before the mountains came into
existence,¹⁷

or you brought the world into being,¹⁸
you were the eternal God.¹⁹

90:3 You make mankind return²⁰ to the
dust,²¹

and say, "Return, O people!"

90:4 Yes,²² in your eyes a thousand years
are like yesterday that quickly passes,
or like one of the divisions of the night-
time.²³

90:5 You bring their lives to an end and
they "fall asleep."²⁴

¹ **tn** Heb "How long, O LORD, will hide yourself forever?"

² **tn** Heb "remember me, what is [my] lifespan." The Hebrew term *kheled* (כְּהֵלֶד) is also used of one's lifespan in Ps 39:5. Because the Hebrew text is so awkward here, some prefer to emend it to read *meḥ khadel* (מֵחַ כְּהֵלֶד אָנִי), "[remember] how transient [that is, "short-lived"] I am"; see Ps 39:4).

³ **tn** Heb "For what emptiness do you create all the sons of mankind?" In this context the term *shavah* (שָׁוָה) refers to mankind's mortal nature and the brevity of life (see vv. 45, 48).

⁴ **tn** Heb "Who [is] the man [who] can live and not see death, [who] can deliver his life from the hand of Sheol?" The rhetorical question anticipates the answer, "No one!"

⁵ **sn** The Lord's faithful deeds are also mentioned in Pss 17:7 and 25:6.

⁶ **tc** Many medieval Hebrew MSS read here *yehvah* (יְהוָה, "the LORD").

⁷ **tn** Heb "[which] you swore on oath to David by your faithfulness."

⁸ **tc** Many medieval Hebrew MSS read here *yehvah* (יְהוָה, "the LORD").

⁹ **tn** Heb "remember, O Lord, the taunt against your servants." Many medieval Hebrew MSS read the singular here, "your servant" (that is, the psalmist).

¹⁰ **tn** Heb "my lifting up in my arms [or "against my chest"] all of the many, peoples." The term *rabbim* (רַבִּים, "many") makes no apparent sense here. For this reason some emend the text to *rivy* (רִיבֵי, "attacks by"), a defectively written plural construct form of *riv* (רִיב, "dispute; quarrel").

¹¹ **tn** Heb "[by] which your enemies, O LORD, taunt, [by] which they taunt [at] the heels of your anointed one."

¹² **sn** The final verse of Ps 89, v. 52, is a conclusion to this third "book" (or major editorial division) of the Psalter. Similar statements appear at or near the end of each of the first, second and fourth "books" of the Psalter (see Pss 41:13; 72:18-19; 106:48, respectively).

¹³ **tn** Heb "[be] blessed." See Pss 18:46; 28:6; 31:21.

¹⁴ **tn** Heb "surely and surely" (אַמֵּן וְאַמֵּן [*amen v'amen*]), i.e., "Amen and amen"). This is probably a congregational response to the immediately preceding statement about the propriety of praising God; thus it has been translated "We agree! We agree!"

¹⁵ **sn** Psalm 90. In this communal lament the worship leader affirms that the eternal God and creator of the world has always been Israel's protector. But God also causes men, who are as transient as grass, to die, and in his fierce anger he decimates his covenant community, whose brief lives are filled with suffering and end in weakness. The community asks for wisdom, the restoration of God's favor, a fresh revelation of his power, and his blessing upon their labors.

¹⁶ **tn** Or "place of safety." See Ps 71:3.

¹⁷ **tn** Heb "were born."

¹⁸ **tn** Heb "and you gave birth to the earth and world." The Polel verbal form in the Hebrew text pictures God giving birth to the world. The LXX and some other ancient textual witnesses assume a *polal* (passive) verbal form here. In this case the earth becomes the subject of the verb and the verb is understood as third feminine singular rather than second masculine singular.

¹⁹ **tn** Heb "and from everlasting to everlasting you [are] God." Instead of אֵל (*el*, "God") the LXX reads אֵל (*al*, "not") and joins the negative particle to the following verb, making the verb *tashav* (תָּשָׁב) a jussive. In this case v. 3a reads as a prayer, "do not turn man back to a low place." However, taking *tashav* as a jussive is problematic in light of the following following wayyiqtol form וְתָמַר (vato'mer, "and you said/say").

²⁰ **tn** In this context the shortened prefix form does not function as a preterite, but indicates what is typical of the world.

²¹ **tn** The Hebrew term *daka* (דָּכָא) carries the basic sense of "crushed." Elsewhere it refers to those who are "crushed" in spirit or contrite of heart (see Ps 34:18; Isa 57:15). If one understands this nuance here, then v. 3 is observing that God leads mankind to repentance (the term *shuv*, שׁוּב, "return," which appears twice in this verse, is sometimes used of repentance.) However, the following context laments mankind's mortality and the brevity of life, so it is doubtful if v. 3 should be understood so positively. It is more likely that *daka* here refers to "crushed matter," that is, the dust that fills the grave (see HALOT 221 s.v. דָּכָא; BDB 194 s.v. דָּכָא). In this case one may hear an echo of Gen 3:19.

²² **tn** Or "for."

²³ **sn** The divisions of the nighttime. The ancient Israelites divided the night into distinct periods, or "watches."

²⁴ **tn** Heb "you bring them to an end [with] sleep." The Hebrew verb *zaram* (זָרַם) has traditionally been taken to mean "flood" or "overwhelm" (note the Polel form of a root זָרַם in Ps 77:17, where the verb is used of the clouds pouring down rain). However, the verb form here is Qal, not Polel, and is better understood as a homonym meaning "to make an end [of life]." The term *shenah* (שָׁנָה, "sleep") can be taken as an adverbial accusative; it is a euphemism here for death (see Ps 76:5-6).

In the morning they are like the grass that sprouts up;

90:6 in the morning it glistens¹ and sprouts up;

at evening time it withers² and dries up.

90:7 Yes,³ we are consumed by your anger; we are terrified by your wrath.

90:8 You are aware of our sins;⁴ you even know about our hidden sins.⁵

90:9 Yes,⁶ throughout all our days we experience your raging fury,⁷ the years of our lives pass quickly, like a sigh.⁸

90:10 The days of our lives add up to seventy years,⁹

or eighty, if one is especially strong.¹⁰ But even one's best years are marred by trouble and oppression.¹¹

Yes,¹² they pass quickly¹³ and we fly away.¹⁴

90:11 Who can really fathom the intensity of your anger?¹⁵

Your raging fury causes people to fear you.¹⁶

90:12 So teach us to consider our mortality,¹⁷ so that we might live wisely.¹⁸

90:13 Turn back toward us, O LORD! How long must this suffering last?¹⁹ Have pity on your servants!²⁰

90:14 Satisfy us in the morning²¹ with your loyal love!

Then we will shout for joy and be happy²² all our days!

90:15 Make us happy in proportion to the days you have afflicted us, in proportion to the years we have experienced²³ trouble!

90:16 May your servants see your work!²⁴ May their sons see your majesty!²⁵

90:17 May our sovereign God extend his favor to us!²⁶

Make our endeavors successful! Yes, make them successful!²⁷

*Psalms 91*²⁸

91:1 As for you, the one who lives²⁹ in the shelter of the sovereign One,³⁰

¹ **tn** Or "flourishes." The verb is used of a crown shining in Ps 132:18. Perhaps here in Ps 90:6 it refers to the glistening of the grass in the morning dew.

² **tn** The Polel form of this verb occurs only here. Perhaps the form should be emended to a Qal (which necessitates eliminating the final *lamed* [ל] as dittographic). See Ps 37:2.

³ **tn** Or "for."

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "you set our sins in front of you."

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "what we have hidden to the light of your face." God's face is compared to a light or lamp that exposes the darkness around it.

⁶ **tn** Or "for."

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "all our days pass by in your anger."

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "we finish our years like a sigh." In Ezek 2:10 the word *hegeh* (הֶגֶה) elsewhere refers to a grumbling or moaning sound. Here a brief sigh or moan is probably in view. If so, the simile pictures one's lifetime as transient. Another option is that the simile alludes to the weakness that characteristically overtakes a person at the end of one's lifetime. In this case the phrase could be translated, "we end our lives with a painful moan."

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "the days of our years, in them [are] seventy years."

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "or if [there is] strength, eighty years."

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "and their pride [is] destruction and wickedness." The Hebrew noun *rohav* (רוּחַב) occurs only here. BDB 923 s.v. assigns the meaning "pride," deriving the noun from the verbal root רָחַב ("to act stormily [boisterously, arrogantly]"). Here the "pride" of one's days (see v. 9) probably refers to one's most productive years in the prime of life. The words translated "destruction and wickedness" are also paired in Ps 10:7. They also appear in proximity in Pss 7:14 and 55:10. The oppressive and abusive actions of evil men are probably in view (see Job 4:8; 5:6; 15:35; Isa 10:1; 59:4).

¹² **tn** or "for."

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "it passes quickly." The subject of the verb is probably "their pride" (see the preceding line). The verb *guz* (גָּזַח) means "to pass" here; it occurs only here and in Num 11:31.

¹⁴ **sn** *We fly away.* The psalmist compares life to a bird that quickly flies off (see Job 20:8).

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "Who knows the strength of your anger?"

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "and like your fear [is] your raging fury." Perhaps one should emend וְכִי־אֶתְיִירְךָ (ukhyir'otekh, "and like your fear") to יִירְךָ (yir'otkh, "your fear"), understanding a virtual dittography (אֶתְךָ וְיִירְךָ אֶתְךָ, 'apekha ukhyir'otekh) to have occurred. In this case the psalmist asserts "your fear [is] your raging fury,"

that is, your raging fury is what causes others to fear you. The suffix on "fear" is understood as objective.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "to number our days," that is, to be aware of how few they really are.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "and we will bring a heart of wisdom." After the imperative of the preceding line, the prefixed verbal form with the conjunction indicates purpose/result. The Hebrew term "heart" here refers to the center of one's thoughts, volition, and moral character.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "Return, O LORD! How long?"

²⁰ **tn** Elsewhere the Niphal of נָחַם (nakham) + the preposition אֵל ('al) + a personal object has the nuance "be comforted concerning [the personal object's death]" (see 2 Sam 13:39; Jer 31:15). However, here the context seems to demand "feel sorrow for," "have pity on." In Deut 32:36 and Ps 135:14, where "servants" is also the object of the preposition, this idea is expressed with the Hitpael form of the verb.

²¹ **sn** *Morning* is used metaphorically for a time of renewed joy after affliction (see Pss 30:5; 46:5; 49:14; 59:16; 143:8).

²² **tn** After the imperative (see the preceding line) the cohortatives with the prefixed conjunction indicate purpose/result.

²³ **tn** *Heb* "have seen."

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* "may your work be revealed to your servants." In this context (note v. 17) the verb form יִרְאָה (yera'eh) is best understood as an unshortened jussive (see Gen 1:9; Isa 47:3).

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "and your majesty to their sons." The verb "be revealed" is understood by ellipsis in the second line.

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "and may the delight of the Master, our God, be on us." The Hebrew term נִיחַ (no'am, "delight") is used in Ps 27:4 of the LORD's "beauty," but here it seems to refer to his favor (see BDB 653 s.v.) or kindness (HALOT 706 s.v.).

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* "and the work of our hands establish over us, and the work of our hands, establish it."

²⁸ **sn** *Psalms 91.* In this psalm an individual (perhaps a priest) addresses one who has sought shelter in the Lord and assures him that God will protect him from danger (vv. 1-13). In vv. 14-16 God himself promises to keep his loyal follower safe.

²⁹ **tn** *Heb* "[O] one who lives."

³⁰ **tn** Traditionally "the Most High."

and resides in the protective shadow¹ of the mighty king² –

91:2 I say this about the LORD, my shelter and my stronghold, my God in whom I trust –

91:3 he will certainly rescue you from the snare of the hunter³ and from the destructive plague.

91:4 He will shelter you⁴ with his wings;⁵ you will find safety under his wings. His faithfulness is like a shield or a protective wall.⁶

91:5 You need not fear the terrors of the night,⁷

the arrow that flies by day,

91:6 the plague that comes in the darkness, or the disease that comes at noon.⁸

91:7 Though a thousand may fall beside you,

and a multitude on your right side, it⁹ will not reach you.

91:8 Certainly you will see it with your very own eyes –

you will see the wicked paid back.¹⁰

91:9 For you have taken refuge in the LORD,

my shelter, the sovereign One.¹¹

91:10 No harm will overtake¹² you; no illness¹³ will come near your home.¹⁴

91:11 For he will order his angels¹⁵ to protect you in all you do.¹⁶

¹ sn The Lord is compared here to a bird who protects its young under the shadow of its wings (see v. 4).

² sn The divine name used here is “Shaddai” (שַׁדַּי, *shaddai*; see also Ps 68:14). Shaddai (or El Shaddai) is the mighty king (sovereign judge) of the world who grants life/blesses and kills/judges. In Genesis he blesses the patriarchs with fertility and promises numerous descendants. Outside Genesis he both blesses/protects and takes away life/happiness.

³ tn The word refers specifically to a fowler (or hunter of birds).

⁴ tn Heb “put a cover over you” (see Ps 5:11).

⁵ tc The Hebrew text has the singular, but the plural should be read. The final *yod* (י) of the suffix, which indicates the plural, has dropped off by haplography (note the *yod* [י] at the beginning of the next word).

⁶ tn Traditionally the Hebrew term סוֹכְרֵהָ (sokherah), which occurs only here in the OT, has been understood to refer to a buckler or small shield (see BDB 695 s.v.). But HALOT 750 s.v., on the basis of evidence from the cognate languages, proposes the meaning “wall.”

⁷ tn This probably alludes to a sneak attack by enemies in the darkness of night (see Song 3:8).

⁸ sn As in Deut 32:23-24, vv. 5-6 closely associate military attack and deadly disease. Perhaps the latter alludes to one of the effects of siege warfare on the population of an entrapped city, which was especially vulnerable to the outbreak of epidemics.

⁹ tn Apparently the deadly disease mentioned in v. 6b is the understood subject here.

¹⁰ tn Heb “retribution on the wicked.”

¹¹ tn Heb “for you, the LORD, my shelter, the Most High, you have made your dwelling place.”

¹² tn Or “confront.”

¹³ tn For this sense of the Hebrew term נִגַּע see Ps 38:11.

¹⁴ tn Heb “your tent.”

¹⁵ tn Heb “for his angels he will command concerning you.”

¹⁶ tn Heb “in all your ways.”

91:12 They will lift you up in their hands, so you will not slip and fall on a stone.¹⁷

91:13 You will subdue¹⁸ a lion and a snake;¹⁹

you will trample underfoot a young lion and a serpent.

91:14 The LORD says,²⁰

“Because he is devoted to me, I will deliver him;

I will protect him²¹ because he is loyal to me.²²

91:15 When he calls out to me, I will answer him.

I will be with him when he is in trouble; I will rescue him and bring him honor.

91:16 I will satisfy him with long life,²³ and will let him see my salvation.

Psalm 92²⁴

A psalm; a song for the Sabbath day.

92:1 It is fitting²⁵ to thank the LORD, and to sing praises to your name, O sovereign One!²⁶

92:2 It is fitting²⁷ to proclaim your loyal love in the morning,

and your faithfulness during the night,

92:3 to the accompaniment of a ten-stringed instrument and a lyre,

to the accompaniment of the meditative tone of the harp.

92:4 For you, O LORD, have made me happy by your work.

I will sing for joy because of what you have done.²⁸

92:5 How great are your works, O LORD! Your plans are very intricate!²⁹

92:6 The spiritually insensitive do not recognize this;

the fool does not understand this.³⁰

¹⁷ tn Heb “so your foot will not strike a stone.”

¹⁸ tn Heb “walk upon.”

¹⁹ tn Or perhaps “cobra” (see Ps 58:4).

²⁰ tn The words “the LORD says” are supplied in the translation to clarify that the words which follow are the LORD’s oracle of assurance.

²¹ tn Or “make him secure” (Heb “set him on high”).

²² tn Heb “because he knows my name” (see Ps 9:10).

²³ tn Heb “length of days.”

²⁴ sn Psalm 92. The psalmist praises God because he defeats the wicked and vindicates his loyal followers.

²⁵ tn Or “good.”

²⁶ tn Traditionally “O Most High.”

²⁷ tn The words “it is fitting” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons. Verses 1-3 are actually one long sentence in the Hebrew text, but this has been divided up into two shorter sentences in the translation in keeping with contemporary English style.

²⁸ tn Heb “the works of your hands.”

²⁹ tn Heb “very deep [are] your thoughts.” God’s “thoughts” refer here to his moral design of the world, as outlined in vv. 6-15.

³⁰ tn Heb “the brutish man does not know, and the fool does not understand this.” The adjective בְּעִיר (*ba’ar*, “brutish”) refers to spiritual insensitivity, not mere lack of intelligence or reasoning ability (see Pss 49:10; 73:22; Prov 12:1; 30:2, as well as the use of the related verb in Ps 94:8).

92:7 When the wicked sprout up like grass,
and all the evildoers glisten,¹

it is so that they may be annihilated.²

92:8 But you, O LORD, reign³ forever!

92:9 Indeed,⁴ look at your enemies, O
LORD!

Indeed,⁵ look at how your enemies perish!
All the evildoers are scattered!

92:10 You exalt my horn like that of a
wild ox.⁶

I am covered⁷ with fresh oil.

92:11 I gloat in triumph over those who
tried to ambush me.⁸

I hear the defeated cries of the evil foes
who attacked me.⁹

92:12 The godly¹⁰ grow like a palm tree;
they grow high like a cedar in Lebanon.¹¹

92:13 Planted in the LORD's house,
they grow in the courts of our God.

92:14 They bear fruit even when they are
old;

they are filled with vitality and have
many leaves.¹²

92:15 So they proclaim that the LORD, my
protector,
is just and never unfair.¹³

*Psalm 93*¹⁴

93:1 The LORD reigns!

He is robed in majesty,

the LORD is robed,

he wears strength around his waist.¹⁵

Indeed, the world is established, it cannot
be moved.

93:2 Your throne has been secure from
ancient times;

you have always been king.¹⁶

93:3 The waves¹⁷ roar, O LORD,
the waves roar,
the waves roar and crash.¹⁸

93:4 Above the sound of the surging wa-
ter,¹⁹

and the mighty waves of the sea,
the LORD sits enthroned in majesty.²⁰

93:5 The rules you set down²¹ are com-
pletely reliable.²²

Holiness²³ aptly adorns your house, O
LORD, forever.²⁴

*Psalm 94*²⁵

94:1 O LORD, the God who avenges!
O God who avenges, reveal your splen-
dor!²⁶

94:2 Rise up, O judge of the earth!
Pay back the proud!

94:3 O LORD, how long will the wicked,
how long will the wicked celebrate?²⁷

94:4 They spew out threats²⁸ and speak
defiantly;

all the evildoers boast.²⁹

94:5 O LORD, they crush your people;
they oppress the nation that belongs to
you.³⁰

94:6 They kill the widow and the one re-
siding outside his native land,
and they murder the fatherless.³¹

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "from antiquity [are] you." As the context suggests, this refers specifically to God's royal position, not his personal existence.

¹⁷ **tn** The Hebrew noun translated "waves" often refers to rivers or streams, but here it appears to refer to the surging waves of the sea (see v. 4, Ps 24:2).

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "the waves lift up, O LORD, the waves lift up their voice, the waves lift up their crashing."

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "mighty waters."

sn The *surging waters* here symbolize the hostile enemies of God who seek to destroy the order he has established in the world (see Pss 18:17; 29:3; 32:6; 77:20; 144:7; Isa 17:13; Jer 51:55; Ezek 26:19; Hab 3:15). But the Lord is depicted as elevated above and sovereign over these raging waters.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "mighty on high [is] the LORD."

²¹ **tn** Traditionally "your testimonies." The Hebrew noun עֲדוּת (*edut*) refers here to the demands of God's covenant law. See Ps 19:7.

²² **sn** *The rules you set down*. God's covenant contains a clear, reliable witness to his moral character and demands.

²³ **sn** *Holiness* refers here to God's royal transcendence (see vv. 1-4), as well as his moral authority and perfection (see v. 5a).

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* "for your house holiness is fitting, O LORD, for length of days."

²⁵ **sn** *Psalm 94*. The psalmist asks God to judge the wicked and affirms his confidence in God's justice.

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "shine forth" (see Pss 50:2; 80:1).

²⁷ **tn** Or "exult."

²⁸ **tn** *Heb* "they gush forth [words]."

²⁹ **tn** The Hitpa'el of אָמַר (*amar*) occurs only here (and perhaps in Isa 61:6).

³⁰ **tn** Or "your inheritance."

³¹ **tn** The Hebrew noun יָתוּם (*yatom*) refers to one who has lost his father (not necessarily his mother, see Ps 109:9). Because they were so vulnerable and were frequently exploited, fatherless children are often mentioned as epitomizing the oppressed (see Pss 10:14; 68:5; 82:3; 146:9; as well as Job

¹ **tn** Or "flourish."

² **tn** *Heb* "in order that they might be destroyed permanently."

sn God allows the wicked to prosper temporarily so that he might reveal his justice. When the wicked are *annihilated*, God demonstrates that wickedness does not pay off.

³ **tn** *Heb* "[are elevated] on high."

⁴ **tn** Or "for."

⁵ **tn** Or "for."

⁶ **sn** The *horn of the wild ox* is frequently a metaphor for military strength; the idiom "to exalt/lift up the horn" signifies military victory (see 1 Sam 2:10; Pss 75:10; 89:24; Lam 2:17).

⁷ **tn** The Hebrew verb בָּלַל (*balal*) usually has the nuance "to mix." Here it seems to mean "to smear" or "to anoint." Some emend the form to בָּלִיטִי (*ballotaniy*); a second person form of the verb with a first person suffix) and read, "you anoint me."

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "my eye gazes upon those who watch me [with evil intent]." See also Pss 5:8; 27:11; 56:2. The form שׂוֹרֵי (*shuray*) should be emended to שׂוֹרְרֵי (*shor'ray*).

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "those who rise up against me, evil [foes], my ears hear."

¹⁰ **tn** The singular is used in a representative sense, with the typical godly person being in view.

¹¹ **sn** The cedars of the Lebanon forest were well-known in ancient Israel for their immense size.

¹² **tn** *Heb* "they are juicy and fresh."

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "so that [they] proclaim that upright [is] the LORD, my rocky summit, and there is no injustice in him."

¹⁴ **sn** *Psalm 93*. The psalmist affirms that the LORD is the king of the universe who preserves order and suppresses the destructive forces in the world.

¹⁵ **sn** *Strength* is compared here to a belt that one wears for support. The Lord's power undergirds his rule.

94:7 Then they say, “The LORD does not see this; the God of Jacob does not take notice of it.”¹
 94:8 Take notice of this,² you ignorant people!³
 You fools, when will you ever understand?
 94:9 Does the one who makes the human ear not hear?
 Does the one who forms the human eye not see?⁴
 94:10 Does the one who disciplines the nations not punish?
 He is the one who imparts knowledge to human beings!
 94:11 The LORD knows that peoples’ thoughts are morally bankrupt.⁵
 94:12 How blessed is the one⁶ whom you instruct, O LORD,
 the one whom you teach from your law,
 94:13 in order to protect him from times of trouble,⁷
 until the wicked are destroyed.⁸
 94:14 Certainly⁹ the LORD does not forsake his people;
 he does not abandon the nation that belongs to him.¹⁰
 94:15 For justice will prevail,¹¹
 and all the morally upright¹² will be vindicated.¹³
 94:16 Who will rise up to defend me¹⁴
 against the wicked?
 Who will stand up for me against the evildoers?¹⁵
 94:17 If the LORD had not helped me,

I would have laid down in the silence of death.¹⁶
 94:18 If I say, “My foot is slipping,” your loyal love, O LORD, supports me.
 94:19 When worries threaten to overwhelm me,¹⁷
 your soothing touch makes me happy.¹⁸
 94:20 Cruel rulers¹⁹ are not your allies, those who make oppressive laws.²⁰
 94:21 They conspire against²¹ the blameless,²²
 and condemn to death the innocent.²³
 94:22 But the LORD will protect me,²⁴
 and my God will shelter me.²⁵
 94:23 He will pay them back for their sin.²⁶
 He will destroy them because of²⁷ their evil;
 the LORD our God will destroy them.

*Psalm 95*²⁸

95:1 Come! Let’s sing for joy to the LORD!
 Let’s shout out praises to our protector who delivers us!²⁹
 95:2 Let’s enter his presence³⁰ with thanksgiving!
 Let’s shout out to him in celebration!³¹
 95:3 For the LORD is a great God,
 a great king who is superior to³² all gods.
 95:4 The depths of the earth are in his hand,³³
 and the mountain peaks belong to him.

6:27; 22:9; 24:3, 9; 29:12; 31:17, 21).

¹ tn Heb “does not understand.”

² tn Heb “understand.” The verb used in v. 7 is repeated here for rhetorical effect. The people referred to here claim God is ignorant of their actions, but the psalmist corrects their faulty viewpoint.

³ tn Heb “[you] brutish among the people.”

⁴ tn Heb “The one who plants an ear, does he not hear? The one who forms an eye, does he not see?”

⁵ tn Heb “the LORD knows the thoughts of man, that they are emptiness.” The psalmist thinks specifically of the “thoughts” expressed in v. 7.

⁶ tn Heb “[Oh] the happiness [of] the man.” Hebrew wisdom literature often assumes and reflects the male-oriented perspective of ancient Israelite society. The principle of the psalm is certainly applicable to all people, regardless of their gender or age. To facilitate modern application, we translate the gender and age specific “man” with the more neutral “one.” The generic masculine pronoun is used in v. 2.

⁷ tn Heb “to give him rest from the days of trouble.”

⁸ tn Heb “until a pit is dug for the wicked.”

⁹ tn Or “for.”

¹⁰ tn Or “his inheritance.”

¹¹ tn Heb “for judgment will return to justice.”

¹² tn Heb “all the pure of heart.” The “heart” is here viewed as the seat of one’s moral character and motives. The “pure of heart” are God’s faithful followers who trust in and love the LORD and, as a result, experience his deliverance (see Pss 7:10; 11:2; 32:11; 36:10; 64:10; 97:11).

¹³ tn Heb “and after it [are] the pure of heart.”

¹⁴ tn Heb “for me.”

¹⁵ sn Who will stand up for me...? The questions anticipate the answer, “No one except God” (see v. 17).

¹⁶ tn Heb “If the LORD [were] not my help, quickly my life would have lain down in silence.” The psalmist, perhaps speaking as the nation’s representative, recalls God’s past intervention. For other examples of conditional sentences with the term לֹא־יָלֵךְ (*luley*, “if not”) in the protasis and a perfect verbal form in the apodosis, see Pss 119:92 and 124:2-5.

¹⁷ tn Heb “when my worries are many within me.”

¹⁸ tn Heb “your comforts cause my soul to delight.”

¹⁹ tn Heb “a throne of destruction.” “Throne” stands here by metonymy for rulers who occupy thrones.

²⁰ tn Heb “Is a throne of destruction united to you, one that forms trouble upon a statute?” The rhetorical question anticipates the answer, “Of course not!” The translation, while not preserving the interrogative form of the statement, reflects its rhetorical force.

²¹ tn Or “attack.”

²² tn Heb “the life of the blameless.”

²³ tn Heb “and the blood of the innocent they declare guilty.”

²⁴ tn Heb “and the LORD has become my elevated place.” The prefixed verbal form with *vav* (ו) consecutive is used in a rhetorical sense, describing an anticipated development as if it were already reality.

²⁵ tn Heb “and my God [has become] a rocky summit of my safety.”

²⁶ tn The prefixed verbal form with *vav* (ו) consecutive is used in a rhetorical sense, describing an anticipated development as if it were already reality.

²⁷ tn Or “in.”

²⁸ sn Psalm 95. The psalmist summons Israel to praise God as the creator of the world and the nation’s protector, but he also reminds the people not to rebel against God.

²⁹ tn Heb “to the rocky summit of our deliverance.”

³⁰ tn Heb “meet his face.”

³¹ tn Heb “with songs of joy.”

³² tn Heb “above.”

³³ tn The phrase “in his hand” means within the sphere of his authority.

95:5 The sea is his, for he made it.
His hands formed the dry land.
95:6 Come! Let's bow down and worship!¹
Let's kneel before the LORD, our Creator!
95:7 For he is our God;
we are the people of his pasture,
the sheep he owns.²
Today, if only you would obey him!³
95:8 He says,⁴ "Do not be stubborn like
they were at Meribah,⁵
like they were that day at Massah⁶ in the
wilderness,⁷
95:9 where your ancestors challenged my
authority,⁸
and tried my patience, even though they
had seen my work.
95:10 For forty years I was continually
disgusted⁹ with that generation,
and I said, "These people desire to go
astray;¹⁰
they do not obey my commands."¹¹
95:11 So I made a vow in my anger,
"They will never enter into the resting
place I had set aside for them."¹²

*Psalm 96*¹³

96:1 Sing to the LORD a new song!¹⁴
Sing to the LORD, all the earth!
96:2 Sing to the LORD! Praise his name!
Announce every day how he delivers!¹⁵

¹ tn Heb "kneel down."

² tn Heb "of his hand."

³ tn Heb "if only you would listen to his voice." The Hebrew particle **אם** ("if") and following prefixed verbal form here express a wish (cf. Ps 81:8). Note that the apodosis (the "then" clause of the conditional sentence) is suppressed.

⁴ tn The words "he says" are supplied in the translation to clarify that the following words are spoken by the Lord (see vv. 9-11).

⁵ sn The name *Meribah* means "strife." Two separate but similar incidents at Meribah are recorded in the Pentateuch (Exod 17:1-7; Num 20:1-13, see also Pss 81:7; 106:32). In both cases the Israelites complained about lack of water and the Lord miraculously provided for them.

⁶ sn The name *Massah* means "testing." This was another name (along with Meribah) given to the place where Israel complained following the Red Sea Crossing (see Exod 17:1-7, as well as Deut 6:16; 9:22; 33:8).

⁷ tn Heb "do not harden your heart[s] as [at] Meribah, as [in] the day of Massah in the wilderness."

⁸ tn Heb "where your fathers tested me."

⁹ tn The prefixed verbal form is either a preterite or an imperfect. If the latter, it emphasizes the ongoing nature of the condition in the past. The translation reflects this interpretation of the verbal form.

¹⁰ tn Heb "a people, wanderers of heart [are] they."

¹¹ tn Heb "and they do not know my ways." In this context the Lord's "ways" are his commands, viewed as a pathway from which his people, likened to wayward sheep (see v. 7), wander.

¹² tn Heb "my resting place." The promised land of Canaan is here viewed metaphorically as a place of rest for God's people, who are compared to sheep (see v. 7).

¹³ sn *Psalm 96*. The psalmist summons everyone to praise the Lord, the sovereign creator of the world who preserves and promotes justice in the earth.

¹⁴ sn A new song is appropriate because the Lord is constantly intervening in the world as its just king. See also Pss 33:3; 40:3; 98:1.

¹⁵ tn Heb "announce from day to day his deliverance."

96:3 Tell the nations about his splendor!
Tell¹⁶ all the nations about his amazing
deeds!
96:4 For the LORD is great and certainly
worthy of praise;
he is more awesome than all gods.¹⁷
96:5 For all the gods of the nations are
worthless,¹⁸
but the LORD made the sky.
96:6 Majestic splendor emanates from
him;¹⁹
his sanctuary is firmly established and
beautiful.²⁰
96:7 Ascribe to the LORD, O families of
the nations,
ascribe to the LORD splendor and strength!
96:8 Ascribe to the LORD the splendor he
deserves!²¹
Bring an offering and enter his courts!
96:9 Worship the LORD in holy attire!²²
Tremble before him, all the earth!
96:10 Say among the nations, "The LORD
reigns!
The world is established, it cannot be
moved.
He judges the nations fairly."²³
96:11 Let the sky rejoice, and the earth be
happy!
Let the sea and everything in it shout!
96:12 Let the fields and everything in
them celebrate!
Then let the trees of the forest shout with
joy
96:13 before the LORD, for he comes!
For he comes to judge the earth!
He judges the world fairly,²³
and the nations in accordance with his
justice.²⁴

*Psalm 97*²⁵

97:1 The LORD reigns!
Let the earth be happy!
Let the many coastlands rejoice!
97:2 Dark clouds surround him;
equity and justice are the foundation of
his throne.²⁶

¹⁶ tn The verb "tell" is understood by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

¹⁷ tn Or perhaps "and feared by all gods." See Ps 89:7.

¹⁸ tn The Hebrew term **אֱלִילִים** (*'elilim*, "worthless") sounds like **אֱלֹהִים** (*'elohim*, "gods"). The sound play draws attention to the statement.

¹⁹ tn Heb "majesty and splendor [are] before him."

²⁰ tn Heb "strength and beauty [are] in his sanctuary."

²¹ tn Heb "the splendor of [i.e., "due"] his name."

²² tn Or "in holy splendor."

²³ tn The verbal forms in v. 13 probably describe God's typical, characteristic behavior, though they may depict in dramatic fashion the outworking of divine judgment or anticipate a future judgment of worldwide proportions, in which case they could be translated "will judge the world."

²⁴ tn Heb "and the nations with his integrity."

²⁵ sn *Psalm 97*. The psalmist depicts the Lord as the sovereign, just king of the world who comes in power to vindicate his people.

²⁶ sn The Lord's *throne* symbolizes his kingship.

97:3 Fire goes before him;
on every side¹ it burns up his enemies.
97:4 His lightning bolts light up the
world;
the earth sees and trembles.
97:5 The mountains melt like wax before
the LORD,
before the Lord of the whole earth.
97:6 The sky declares his justice,
and all the nations see his splendor.
97:7 All who worship idols are ashamed,
those who boast about worthless idols.
All the gods bow down before him.²
97:8 Zion hears and rejoices,
the towns³ of Judah are happy,
because of your judgments, O LORD.
97:9 For you, O LORD, are the sovereign
king⁴ over the whole earth;
you are elevated high above all gods.
97:10 You who love the LORD, hate evil!
He protects⁵ the lives of his faithful fol-
lowers;
he delivers them from the power⁶ of the
wicked.
97:11 The godly bask in the light;
the morally upright experience joy.⁷
97:12 You godly ones, rejoice in the LORD!
Give thanks to his holy name.⁸

Psalm 98⁹

A psalm.

98:1 Sing to the LORD a new song,¹⁰
for he performs¹¹ amazing deeds!

¹ tn Heb "all around."

² tn The translation assumes that the prefixed verbal form in the first line is an imperfect ("are ashamed") and that the ambiguous form in the third line is a perfect ("bow down") because the psalmist appears to be describing the effect of the LORD's mighty theophany on those who witness it (see vv. 5, 8). Another option is to take the prefixed form in the first line as a jussive ("let all who worship idols be ashamed") and the ambiguous form in the third line as an imperative ("All you gods, bow down before him!"); cf. NIV.

³ tn Heb "daughters." The term "daughters" refers to the cities of Judah surrounding Zion (see Ps 48:11 and H. Haag, *TDOT* 2:336).

⁴ tn Traditionally "Most High."

⁵ tn The participle may be verbal, though it might also be understood as substantival and appositional to "the LORD." In this case one could translate, "Hate evil, you who love the LORD, the one who protects the lives...and delivers them."

⁶ tn Heb "hand."

⁷ tn Heb "Light is planted for the godly, and for the upright of heart joy." The translation assumes an emendation of זָרַע (*zara*, "planted") to זָרָה (*zara*, "shines") which collocates more naturally with "light." "Light" here symbolizes the joy (note the following line) that accompanies deliverance and the outpouring of divine favor.

⁸ tn Heb "to his holy remembrance." The Hebrew noun זָכָר (*zakhar*, "remembrance") here refers to the name of the LORD as invoked in liturgy and praise. Cf. Pss 6:5; 30:4. The LORD's "name" is "holy" in the sense that it is a reminder of his uniqueness and greatness.

⁹ sn *Psalm 98*. The psalmist summons the whole earth to praise God because he reveals his justice and delivers Israel.

¹⁰ sn A new song is appropriate because the Lord is constantly intervening in the world as its just king. See Ps 96:1.

¹¹ tn The perfect verbal forms in vv. 1-3 are understood here as describing characteristic divine activities. Another option is

His right hand and his mighty arm
accomplish deliverance.¹²
98:2 The LORD demonstrates his power to
deliver;¹³
in the sight of the nations he reveals his
justice.
98:3 He remains loyal and faithful to the
family of Israel.¹⁴
All the ends of the earth see our God deli-
ver us.¹⁵
98:4 Shout out praises to the LORD, all the
earth!
Break out in a joyful shout and sing!
98:5 Sing to the LORD accompanied by a
harp,
accompanied by a harp and the sound of
music!
98:6 With trumpets and the blaring of the
ram's horn,
shout out praises before the king, the
LORD!
98:7 Let the sea and everything in it shout,
along with the world and those who live
in it!
98:8 Let the rivers clap their hands!
Let the mountains sing in unison
98:9 before the LORD!
For he comes to judge the earth!
He judges the world fairly,¹⁶
and the nations in a just manner.

Psalm 99¹⁷

99:1 The LORD reigns!
The nations tremble.¹⁸
He sits enthroned above the winged
angels;¹⁹

to translate them as present perfects, "has performed...has accomplished deliverance, etc." referring to completed actions that have continuing results.

¹² tn Heb "his right hand delivers for him and his holy arm." The right hand and arm symbolize his power as a warrior-king (see Isa 52:10). His arm is "holy" in the sense that it is in a category of its own; God's power is incomparable.

¹³ tn Heb "makes known his deliverance."

¹⁴ tn Heb "he remembers his loyal love and his faithfulness to the house of Israel."

¹⁵ tn Heb "the deliverance of our God," with "God" being a subjective genitive (= God delivers).

¹⁶ tn The verbal forms in v. 9 probably describe God's typical, characteristic behavior, though they may depict in dramatic fashion the outworking of divine judgment or anticipate a future judgment of worldwide proportions ("will judge...").

¹⁷ sn *Psalm 99*. The psalmist celebrates the Lord's just rule and recalls how he revealed himself to Israel's leaders.

¹⁸ tn The prefixed verbal forms in v. 1 are understood here as indicating the nations' characteristic response to the reality of the LORD's kingship. Another option is to take them as jussives: "let the nations tremble...let the earth shake!"

¹⁹ sn *Winged angels* (Heb "cherubs"). Cherubs, as depicted in the OT, possess both human and animal (lion, ox, and eagle) characteristics (see Ezek 1:10; 10:14, 21; 41:18). They are pictured as winged creatures (Exod 25:20; 37:9; 1 Kgs 6:24-27; Ezek 10:8, 19) and serve as the very throne of God when the ark of the covenant is in view (Ps 99:1; see Num 7:89; 1 Sam 4:4; 2 Sam 6:2; 2 Kgs 19:15). The picture of the Lord seated on the cherubs suggests they might be used by him as a vehicle, a function they carry out in Ezek 1:22-28 (the "living creatures" mentioned here are identified as cherubs in Ezek 10:20). In Ps 18:10 the image of a cherub serves

the earth shakes.¹

99:2 The LORD is elevated² in Zion;
he is exalted over all the nations.

99:3 Let them praise your great and awesome name!

He³ is holy!

99:4 The king is strong;
he loves justice.⁴

You ensure that legal decisions will be made fairly,⁵

you promote justice and equity in Jacob.

99:5 Praise⁶ the LORD our God!
Worship⁷ before his footstool!

He is holy!

99:6 Moses and Aaron were among his priests;

Samuel was one of those who prayed to him.⁸

They⁹ prayed to the LORD and he answered them.

99:7 He spoke to them from a pillar of cloud;¹⁰

they obeyed his regulations and the ordinance he gave them.

99:8 O LORD our God, you answered them.

They found you to be a forgiving God, but also one who punished their sinful deeds.¹¹

99:9 Praise¹² the LORD our God!

Worship on his holy hill,
for the LORD our God is holy!

Psalm 100¹³

A thanksgiving psalm.

100:1 Shout out praises to the LORD, all the earth!

100:2 Worship¹⁴ the LORD with joy!
Enter his presence with joyful singing!

100:3 Acknowledge that the LORD is God!
He made us and we belong to him;¹⁵

we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

100:4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
and his courts with praise!

Give him thanks!

Praise his name!

100:5 For the LORD is good.

His loyal love endures,¹⁶
and he is faithful through all generations.¹⁷

Psalm 101¹⁸

A psalm of David.

101:1 I will sing about loyalty and justice!
To you, O LORD, I will sing praises!

101:2 I will walk in¹⁹ the way of integrity.
When will you come to me?

I will conduct my business with integrity
in the midst of my palace.²⁰

101:3 I will not even consider doing what is dishonest.²¹

I hate doing evil;²²

I will have no part of it.²³

101:4 I will have nothing to do with a
perverse person;²⁴

to personify the wind.

¹ **tn** The Hebrew verb נט (nut) occurs only here in the OT, but the meaning can be determined on the basis of the parallelism with רגז (ragaz, "tremble") and evidence from the cognate languages (see H. R. Cohen, *Biblical Hapax Legomena* [SBLDS], 121).

² **tn** Heb "great."

³ **tn** The pronoun refers to the LORD himself (see vv. 5, 9).

⁴ **tn** Heb "and strength, a king, justice he loves." The syntax of the Hebrew text is difficult here. The translation assumes that two affirmations are made about the king, the LORD (see v. 1, and Ps 98:6). The noun עז ('oz, "strength") should probably be revocalized as the adjective אץ ('az, "strong").

⁵ **tn** Heb "you establish fairness."

⁶ **tn** Or "exalt."

⁷ **tn** Or "bow down."

⁸ **tn** Heb "among those who called on his name."

⁹ **tn** Heb "those who." The participle is in apposition to the phrase "those who called on his name" in the preceding line.

¹⁰ **sn** A pillar of cloud. The psalmist refers to the reality described in Exod 33:9-10; Num 12:5; and Deut 31:15.

¹¹ **tn** Heb "a God of lifting up [i.e., forgiveness] you were to them, and an avenger concerning their deeds." The present translation reflects the traditional interpretation, which understands the last line as qualifying the preceding one. God forgave Moses and Aaron, but he also disciplined them when they sinned (cf. NIV, NRSV). Another option is to take "their deeds" as referring to harmful deeds directed against Moses and Aaron. In this case the verse may be translated, "and one who avenged attacks against them." Still another option is to emend the participial form נָקַם (noqem, "an avenger") to נָקַח (noqam), a rare Qal participial form of נָקַח (naqah, "purify") with a suffixed pronoun. In this case one could translate, "and one who purified them from their [sinful] deeds" (cf. NEB "and held them innocent").

¹² **tn** Or "exalt."

¹³ **sn** Psalm 100. The psalmist celebrates the fact that Israel has a special relationship to God and summons worshipers to praise the Lord for his faithfulness.

¹⁴ **tn** Or "serve."

¹⁵ **tn** The present translation (like most modern translations) follows the Qere (marginal reading), which reads literally, "and to him [are] we." The Kethib (consonantal text) has "and not we." The suffixed preposition לו ("to him") was confused aurally with the negative particle לו because the two sound identical.

¹⁶ **tn** Or "is forever."

¹⁷ **tn** Heb "and to a generation and a generation [is] his faithfulness."

¹⁸ **sn** Psalm 101. The psalmist, who appears to be a king, promises to promote justice in his land and vows to rid his royal court of evildoers.

¹⁹ **tn** Heb "take notice of."

²⁰ **tn** Heb "I will walk about in the integrity of my heart in the midst of my house."

²¹ **tn** Heb "I will not set before my eyes a thing of worthlessness."

²² **tn** Heb "the doing of swerving [deeds] I hate." The Hebrew term סְתִים (setim) is probably an alternate spelling of שְׂתִים (setim), which appears in many medieval Hebrew mss. The form appears to be derived from a verbal root שָׁט (sut, "to fall away; to swerve"; see Ps 40:4).

²³ **tn** Heb "it [i.e., the doing of evil deeds] does not cling to me."

²⁴ **tn** Heb "a perverse heart will turn aside from me." The adjective עִקְשׁ (iqqesh) has the basic nuance "twisted; crooked" and by extension refers to someone or something that is morally perverse (see Ps 18:26). It appears frequently in the Book of Proverbs, where it is used of evil people (22:5), speech (8:8; 19:1), thoughts (11:20; 17:20), and life styles (2:15; 28:6).

I will not permit¹ evil.

101:5 I will destroy anyone who slanders his neighbor in secret.

I will not tolerate anyone who has a haughty demeanor and an arrogant attitude.²

101:6 I will favor the honest people of the land,³

and allow them to live with me.⁴

Those who walk in the way of integrity will attend me.⁵

101:7 Deceitful people will not live in my palace.⁶

Liars will not be welcome in my presence.⁷

101:8 Each morning I will destroy all the wicked people in the land, and remove all evildoers from the city of the LORD.

Psalms 102⁸

The prayer of an oppressed man, as he grows faint and pours out his lament before the LORD.

102:1 O LORD, hear my prayer!
Pay attention to my cry for help!⁹

102:2 Do not ignore me in my time of trouble!¹⁰

Listen to me!¹¹

When I call out to you, quickly answer me!

102:3 For my days go up in smoke,¹² and my bones are charred like a fire-place.¹³

102:4 My heart is parched¹⁴ and withered like grass, for I am unable¹⁵ to eat food.¹⁶

¹ **tn** Heb "know." The king will not willingly allow perverse individuals to remain in his royal court.

² **tn** Heb "[one who has] pride of eyes and wideness [i.e., arrogance] of heart, him I will not endure."

³ **tn** Heb "my eyes [are] on the faithful of the land."

⁴ **tn** The Hebrew text simply reads, "in order to live with me."

⁵ **tn** Heb "one who walks in the way of integrity, he will minister to me."

⁶ **tn** Heb "he will not live in the midst of my house, one who does deceit."

⁷ **tn** Heb "one who speaks lies will not be established before my eyes."

⁸ **sn** *Psalms 102*. The psalmist laments his oppressed state, but longs for a day when the Lord will restore Jerusalem and vindicate his suffering people.

⁹ **tn** Heb "and may my cry for help come to you."

¹⁰ **tn** Heb "do not hide your face from me in the day of my trouble." The idiom "to hide the face" can mean "to ignore" (see Pss 10:11; 13:1; 51:9) or carry the stronger idea of "to reject" (see Pss 29:7; 30:7; 88:14).

¹¹ **tn** Heb "turn toward me your ear."

¹² **tn** Heb "for my days come to an end in smoke."

¹³ **tn** The Hebrew noun *mo-qed* (*mo-qed*, "fireplace") occurs only here, in Isa 33:14 (where it refers to the fire itself), and perhaps in Lev 6:2.

¹⁴ **tn** Heb "struck, attacked."

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "I forget."

¹⁶ **sn** *I am unable to eat food*. During his time of mourning, the psalmist refrained from eating. In the following verse he describes metaphorically the physical effects of fasting.

102:5 Because of the anxiety that makes me groan,
my bones protrude from my skin.¹⁷

102:6 I am like an owl¹⁸ in the wilderness;
I am like a screech owl¹⁹ among the ruins.²⁰

102:7 I stay awake;²¹

I am like a solitary bird on a roof.

102:8 All day long my enemies taunt me;
those who mock me use my name in their curses.²²

102:9 For I eat ashes as if they were bread,²³

and mix my drink with my tears,²⁴

102:10 because of your anger and raging fury.

Indeed,²⁵ you pick me up and throw me away.

102:11 My days are coming to an end,²⁶
and I am withered like grass.

102:12 But you, O LORD, rule forever,²⁷
and your reputation endures.²⁸

102:13 You will rise up and have compassion on Zion.²⁹

For it is time to have mercy on her,
for the appointed time has come.

¹⁷ **tn** Heb "from the sound of my groaning my bone[s] stick to my flesh." The preposition at the beginning of the verse is causal; the phrase "sound of my groaning" is metonymic for the anxiety that causes the groaning. The point seems to be this: Anxiety (which causes the psalmist to groan) keeps him from eating (v. 4). This physical deprivation in turn makes him emaciated – he is turned to "skin and bones," so to speak.

¹⁸ **tn** The Hebrew term *q'at* (*qa'at*) refers to some type of bird (see Lev 11:18; Deut 14:17) that was typically found near ruins (see Zeph 2:14). Modern translations have frequently rendered this as some type of owl (NIV, REB "desert owl"; NRSV "owl").

¹⁹ **tn** The Hebrew term *khos* (*khos*) refers to a bird (see Lev 11:17; Deut 14:16), probably a type of owl (cf. NIV, REB "owl"; NRSV "little owl").

²⁰ **sn** By comparing himself to a screech owl among the ruins, the psalmist may be highlighting his loneliness (see v. 7), though he may also be comparing his cries for help to the owl's screech.

²¹ **tn** This probably refers to the psalmist's inability to sleep. Another option is to translate, "I keep watch," in which case it might refer to watching for a response from the LORD (see vv. 1-2).

²² **tn** Heb "by me they swear." When the psalmist's enemies call judgment down on others, they hold the psalmist up as a prime example of what they desire their enemies to become.

²³ **sn** Mourners would sometimes put ashes on their head or roll in ashes as a sign of mourning (see 2 Sam 13:19; Job 2:8; Isa 58:5).

²⁴ **tn** Heb "weeping."

²⁵ **tn** Or "for."

²⁶ **tn** Heb "my days [are] like an extended [or "lengthening"] shadow," that is, like a late afternoon shadow made by the descending sun that will soon be swallowed up by complete darkness.

²⁷ **tn** Heb "sit" (i.e., sit enthroned, see Ps 9:7). The imperfect verbal form highlights the generalization.

²⁸ **tn** Heb "and your remembrance [is] for a generation and a generation."

²⁹ **tn** The imperfect verbal forms are understood as expressing the psalmist's confidence in God's intervention. Another option is to take them as expressing the psalmist's request or wish, "You, rise up and have compassion!"

102:14 Indeed,¹ your servants take delight
in her stones,
and feel compassion for² the dust of her
ruins.³
102:15 The nations will respect the reputa-
tion of the LORD,⁴
and all the kings of the earth will respect⁵
his splendor,
102:16 when the LORD rebuilds Zion,
and reveals his splendor,
102:17 when he responds to the prayer of
the destitute,⁶
and does not reject⁷ their request.⁸
102:18 The account of his intervention⁹
will be recorded for future generations;
people yet to be born will praise the LORD.
102:19 For he will look down from his
sanctuary above;¹⁰
from heaven the LORD will look toward
earth,¹¹
102:20 in order to hear the painful cries of
the prisoners,
and to set free those condemned to die,¹²
102:21 so they may proclaim the name of
the LORD in Zion,
and praise him¹³ in Jerusalem,¹⁴
102:22 when the nations gather together,
and the kingdoms pay tribute to the
LORD.¹⁵
102:23 He has taken away my strength in
the middle of life;¹⁶
he has cut short my days.
102:24 I say, “O my God, please do not
take me away in the middle of my life!¹⁷

You endure through all generations.¹⁸
102:25 In earlier times you established the
earth;
the skies are your handiwork.
102:26 They will perish,
but you will endure.¹⁹
They will wear out like a garment;
like clothes you will remove them and
they will disappear.²⁰
102:27 But you remain,²¹
your years do not come to an end.
102:28 The children of your servants will
settle down here,
and their descendants²² will live securely
in your presence.”²³

*Psalm 103*²⁴

By David.

103:1 Praise the LORD, O my soul!
With all that is within me, praise²⁵ his
holy name!
103:2 Praise the LORD, O my soul!
Do not forget all his kind deeds!²⁶
103:3 He is the one who forgives all your
sins,
who heals all your diseases,²⁷
103:4 who delivers²⁸ your life from the
Pit,²⁹
who crowns you with his loyal love and
compassion,
103:5 who satisfies your life with good
things,³⁰
so your youth is renewed like an eagle's.³¹
103:6 The LORD does what is fair,

¹ tn Or “for.”

² tn The Poel of הָנַן (*khanan*) occurs only here and in Prov 14:21, where it refers to having compassion on the poor.

³ tn Heb “her dust,” probably referring to the dust of the city's rubble.

⁴ tn Heb “will fear the name of the LORD.” To “fear” God's name means to have a healthy respect for his revealed reputation which in turn motivates one to obey God's commands (see Ps 86:11).

⁵ tn The verb “will fear” is understood by ellipsis in the second line (see the preceding line).

⁶ tn The Hebrew adjective עֲרֵירָא (*‘arar*, “destitute”) occurs only here in the OT. It is derived from the verbal root עָרַר (“to strip oneself”).

⁷ tn Heb “despise.”

⁸ tn The perfect verbal forms in vv. 16-17 are functioning as future perfects, indicating future actions that will precede the future developments described in v. 15.

⁹ tn The Hebrew text has simply “this,” referring to the anticipated divine intervention on behalf of Zion (vv. 13, 16-17). The referent has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁰ tn Heb “from the height of his sanctuary.”

¹¹ tn The perfect verbal forms in v. 19 are functioning as future perfects, indicating future actions that will precede the future developments described in v. 18.

¹² tn Heb “the sons of death.” The phrase “sons of death” (see also Ps 79:11) is idiomatic for those condemned to die.

¹³ tn Heb “his praise.”

¹⁴ map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

¹⁵ tn “and the kingdoms to serve the LORD.”

¹⁶ tn Heb “he has afflicted my strength in the way.” The term “way” refers here to the course of the psalmist's life, which appears to be ending prematurely (vv. 23b-24).

¹⁷ tn Heb “do not lift me up in the middle of my days.”

¹⁸ tn Heb “in a generation of generations [are] your years.”

¹⁹ tn Heb “stand.”

²⁰ tn The Hebrew verb הָלַף (*khalaf*) occurs twice in this line, once in the Hiphil (“you will remove them”) and once in the Qal (“they will disappear”). The repetition draws attention to the statement.

²¹ tn Heb “you [are] he,” or “you [are] the one.” The statement may echo the LORD's affirmation “I am he” in Isa 41:4; 43:10, 13; 46:10; 48:12. In each of these passages the affirmation emphasizes the fact that the LORD transcends time limitations, the very point being made in Ps 102:27.

²² tn Or “offspring”; Heb “seed.”

²³ tn Heb “before you will be established.”

²⁴ sn *Psalm 103*. The psalmist praises God for his mercy and willingness to forgive his people.

²⁵ tn The verb “praise” is understood by ellipsis in the second line (see the preceding line).

²⁶ tn Or “his benefits” (see 2 Chr 32:25, where the noun is also used of kind deeds performed by the LORD).

²⁷ tn This relatively rare noun refers to deadly diseases (see Deut 29:22; Jer 14:18; 16:4; 2 Chr 21:19).

²⁸ tn Or “redeems.”

²⁹ tn The Hebrew term שִׁחַת (*shakhat*, “pit”) is often used as a title for Sheol (see Pss 16:10; 30:9; 49:9; 55:24 HT [55:23 ET]).

³⁰ tc Heb “who satisfies with the good of your ornaments.” The text as it stands makes little, if any, sense. The translation assumes an emendation of עֲדֵיךָ (*‘edekh*, “your ornaments”) to עֲדֵכִי (*‘odekhiy*, “your duration; your continuance”), that is, “your life” (see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* [WBC], 18).

³¹ sn The expression *your youth is renewed like an eagle's* may allude to the phenomenon of molting, whereby the eagle grows new feathers.

and executes justice for all the oppressed.¹

103:7 The LORD revealed his faithful acts² to Moses, his deeds to the Israelites.

103:8 The LORD is compassionate and merciful; he is patient³ and demonstrates great loyal love.⁴

103:9 He does not always accuse, and does not stay angry.⁵

103:10 He does not deal with us as our sins deserve;⁶ he does not repay us as our misdeeds deserve.⁷

103:11 For as the skies are high above the earth, so his loyal love towers⁸ over his faithful followers.⁹

103:12 As far as the eastern horizon¹⁰ is from the west,¹¹ so he removes the guilt of our rebellious actions¹² from us.

103:13 As a father has compassion on his children,¹³ so the LORD has compassion on his faithful followers.¹⁴

103:14 For he knows what we are made of;¹⁵ he realizes¹⁶ we are made of clay.¹⁷

103:15 A person's life is like grass.¹⁸ Like a flower in the field it flourishes,

103:16 but when the hot wind¹⁹ blows by, it disappears, and one can no longer even spot the place where it once grew.

103:17 But the LORD continually shows loyal love to his faithful followers,²⁰ and is faithful to their descendants,²¹

103:18 to those who keep his covenant, who are careful to obey his commands.²²

103:19 The LORD has established his throne in heaven; his kingdom extends over everything.²³

103:20 Praise the LORD, you angels of his, you powerful warriors who carry out his decrees

and obey his orders!²⁴

103:21 Praise the LORD, all you warriors of his,²⁵ you servants of his who carry out his desires!²⁶

103:22 Praise the LORD, all that he has made,²⁷ in all the regions²⁸ of his kingdom! Praise the LORD, O my soul!

*Psalm 104*²⁹

104:1 Praise the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, you are magnificent.³⁰ You are robed in splendor and majesty.

104:2 He covers himself with light as if it were a garment. He stretches out the skies like a tent curtain,

104:3 and lays the beams of the upper rooms of his palace on the rain clouds.³¹

He makes the clouds his chariot, and travels along on the wings of the wind.³²

104:4 He makes the winds his messengers, and the flaming fire his attendant.³³

¹ **tn** Heb "the LORD does fairness, and [acts of] justice for all the oppressed."

² **tn** Heb "made known his ways." God's "ways" in this context are his protective and salvific acts in fulfillment of his promise (see also Deut 32:4; Pss 18:30; 67:2; 77:13 [note vv. 11-12, 14]; 138:5; 145:17).

³ **tn** Heb "slow to anger" (see Ps 86:15).

⁴ **tn** Heb "and great of loyal love" (see Ps 86:15).

⁵ **tn** The Hebrew verb נָטַר (*natar*) is usually taken to mean "to keep; to guard," with "anger" being understood by ellipsis. The idiom "to guard anger" is then understood to mean "to remain angry" (see Lev 19:18; Jer 3:5, 12; Nah 1:2). However, it is possible that this is a homonymic root meaning "to be angry" (see HALOT 695 s.v. נָטַר).

⁶ **tn** Heb "not according to our sins does he do to us."

⁷ **tn** Heb "and not according to our misdeeds does he repay us."

⁸ **tn** For this sense of the verb נָבַר (*gavar*), see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 17, 19.

⁹ **tn** Heb "those who fear him."

¹⁰ **tn** Heb "sunrise."

¹¹ **tn** Or "sunset."

¹² **tn** The Hebrew term פְּשָׁע (*pesh'a*, "rebellious act") is here used metonymically for the guilt such actions produce.

¹³ **tn** Or "sons," but the Hebrew term sometimes refers to children in general.

¹⁴ **tn** Heb "those who fear him."

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "our form."

¹⁶ **tn** Heb "remembers."

¹⁷ **tn** Heb "we [are] clay."

¹⁸ **tn** Heb "[as for] mankind, like grass [are] his days." The Hebrew noun אֲנוּשׁ (*enosh*) is used here generically of human beings. What is said is true of all mankind.

¹⁹ **tn** Heb "[the] wind." The word "hot" is supplied in the translation for clarification.

²⁰ **tn** Heb "but the loyal love of the LORD [is] from everlasting to everlasting over those who fear him."

²¹ **tn** Heb "and his righteousness to sons of sons."

²² **tn** Heb "to those who remember his precepts to do them."

²³ **tn** Heb "his kingdom rules over all."

²⁴ **tn** Heb "[you] mighty ones of strength, doers of his word, by listening to the voice of his word."

²⁵ **tn** Heb "all his hosts."

²⁶ **tn** Heb "his attendants, doers of his desire."

²⁷ **tn** Heb "all his works," which includes mankind.

²⁸ **tn** Heb "places."

²⁹ **sn** *Psalm 104*. The psalmist praises God as the ruler of the world who sustains all life.

³⁰ **tn** Heb "very great."

³¹ **tn** Heb "one who lays the beams on water [in] his upper rooms." The "water" mentioned here corresponds to the "waters above" mentioned in Gen 1:7. For a discussion of the picture envisioned by the psalmist, see L. I. J. Stadelmann, *The Hebrew Conception of the World*, 44-45.

³² **sn** Verse 3 may depict the Lord riding a cherub, which is in turn propelled by the wind current. Another option is that the wind is personified as a cherub. See Ps 18:10 and the discussion of ancient Near Eastern parallels to the imagery in M. Weinfeld, "Rider of the Clouds" and "Gatherer of the Clouds," *JANESCU* 5 (1973): 422-24.

³³ **tc** Heb "and his attendants a flaming fire." The lack of agreement between the singular "fire" and plural "attendants" has prompted various emendations. Some read "fire and flame." The present translation assumes an emendation to "his attendant" (י in the Hebrew text being virtually ditto-graphic).

³⁴ **sn** In Ugaitic mythology Yam's messengers appear as *flaming fire* before the assembly of the gods. See G. R. Driver, *Ca-*

104:5 He established the earth on its foundations;
it will never be upended.
104:6 The watery deep covered it¹ like a garment;
the waters reached² above the mountains.³
104:7 Your shout made the waters retreat;
at the sound of your thunderous voice
they hurried off –
104:8 as the mountains rose up,
and the valleys went down –
to the place you appointed for them.⁴
104:9 You set up a boundary for them that
they could not cross,
so that they would not cover the earth
again.⁵
104:10 He turns springs into streams;⁶
they flow between the mountains.
104:11 They provide water for all the animals
in the field;
the wild donkeys quench their thirst.
104:12 The birds of the sky live beside
them;
they chirp among the bushes.⁷
104:13 He waters the mountains from the
upper rooms of his palace;⁸
the earth is full of the fruit you cause to
grow.⁹
104:14 He provides grass¹⁰ for the cattle,
and crops for people to cultivate,¹¹
so they can produce food from the
ground,¹²
104:15 as well as wine that makes people
feel so good,¹³
and so they can have oil to make their
faces shine,¹⁴

as well as food that sustains people's
lives.¹⁵

104:16 The trees of the LORD¹⁶ receive all
the rain they need,¹⁷
the cedars of Lebanon which he planted,
104:17 where the birds make nests,
near the evergreens in which the herons
live.¹⁸

104:18 The wild goats live in the high
mountains,¹⁹
the rock badgers find safety in the cliffs.

104:19 He made the moon to mark the
months,²⁰
and the sun sets according to a regular
schedule.²¹

104:20 You make it dark and night comes,²²
during which all the beasts of the forest
prowl around.

104:21 The lions roar for prey,
seeking their food from God.²³

104:22 When the sun rises, they withdraw
and sleep²⁴ in their dens.

104:23 Men then go out to do their work,
and labor away until evening.²⁵

104:24 How many living things you have
made, O LORD!²⁶

You have exhibited great skill in making
all of them;²⁷

the earth is full of the living things you
have made.

104:25 Over here is the deep, wide sea,²⁸
which teems with innumerable swimming
creatures,²⁹
living things both small and large.

naanite Myths and Legends, 42.

¹ **tc** *Heb* "you covered it." The masculine suffix is problematic if the grammatically feminine noun "earth" is the antecedent. For this reason some emend the form to a feminine verb with feminine suffix, כִּסְתָהּ (*kisattah*, "[the watery deep] covered it [i.e., the earth]"), a reading assumed by the present translation.

² **tn** *Heb* "stood."

³ **sn** Verse 6 refers to the condition described in Gen 1:2 (note the use of the Hebrew term תְּרוֹם [*l'hom*, "watery deep"] in both texts).

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "from your shout they fled, from the sound of your thunder they hurried off."

sn Verses 7-8 poetically depict Gen 1:9-10.

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "a boundary you set up, they will not cross, they will not return to cover the earth."

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "[the] one who sends springs into streams." Another option is to translate, "he sends streams [i.e., streams that originate from springs] into the valleys" (cf. NIV).

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "among the thick foliage they give a sound."

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "from his upper rooms."

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "from the fruit of your works the earth is full." The translation assumes that "fruit" is literal here. If "fruit" is understood more abstractly as "product; result," then one could translate, "the earth flourishes as a result of your deeds" (cf. NIV, NRSV, REB).

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "causes the grass to sprout up."

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "for the service of man" (see Gen 2:5).

¹² **tn** *Heb* "to cause food to come out from the earth."

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "and wine [that] makes the heart of man happy."

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "to make [the] face shine from oil." The Hebrew verb שָׁהַד (*isahal*, "to shine") occurs only here in the OT. It appears to be an alternate form of שָׁהַד (*isahar*), a derivative from

שָׁהַד (*isaharim*, "noon").

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "and food [that] sustains the heart of man."

¹⁶ **sn** The trees of the LORD are the cedars of Lebanon (see the next line), which are viewed as special because of their great size and grandeur. The Lebanon forest was viewed elsewhere in the OT as the "garden of God" (see Ezek 31:8).

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "are satisfied," which means here that they receive abundant rain (see v. 13).

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "[the] heron [in the] evergreens [is] its home."

¹⁹ **sn** The cedars and evergreens of the Lebanon forest are frequently associated (see, for example, 2 Chr 2:8; Isa 14:8; 37:24; Ezek 31:8).

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "the high mountains [are] for the goats."

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "he made [the] moon for appointed times." The phrase "appointed times" probably refers to the months of the Hebrew lunar calendar.

²² **tn** *Heb* more metaphorically, "knows its setting."

²³ **tn** *Heb* "you make darkness, so that it might be night."

²⁴ **sn** The lions' roaring is viewed as a request for food from God.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "lie down."

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "man goes out to his work, and to his labor until evening."

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* "How many [are] your works, O LORD." In this case the LORD's "works" are the creatures he has made, as the preceding and following contexts make clear.

²⁸ **tn** *Heb* "all of them with wisdom you have made."

²⁹ **tn** *Heb* "this [is] the sea, great and broad of hands [i.e., "sides" or "shores"]."

³⁰ **tn** *Heb* "where [there are] swimming things, and without number."

104:26 The ships travel there,
and over here swims the whale¹ you
made to play in it.
104:27 All of your creatures² wait for you
to provide them with food on a regular
basis.³
104:28 You give food to them and they
receive it;
you open your hand and they are filled
with food.⁴
104:29 When you ignore them, they panic.⁵
When you take away their life's breath,
they die
and return to dust.
104:30 When you send your life-giving
breath, they are created,
and you replenish the surface of the
ground.
104:31 May the splendor of the LORD en-
dure!⁶
May the LORD find pleasure in the living
things he has made!⁷
104:32 He looks down on the earth and it
shakes;
he touches the mountains and they start
to smolder.
104:33 I will sing to the LORD as long as
I live;
I will sing praise to my God as long as I
exist!⁸
104:34 May my thoughts⁹ be pleasing to
him!
I will rejoice in the LORD.
104:35 May sinners disappear¹⁰ from the
earth,
and the wicked vanish!
Praise the LORD, O my soul!
Praise the LORD!

*Psalm 105*¹¹

105:1 Give thanks to the LORD!
Call on his name!
Make known his accomplishments
among the nations!
105:2 Sing to him!

Make music to him!
Tell about all his miraculous deeds!
105:3 Boast about his holy name!
Let the hearts of those who seek the LORD
rejoice!
105:4 Seek the LORD and the strength he
gives!
Seek his presence continually!
105:5 Recall the miraculous deeds he per-
formed,
his mighty acts and the judgments he
decreed,¹²
105:6 O children¹³ of Abraham,¹⁴ God's¹⁵
servant,
you descendants¹⁶ of Jacob, God's¹⁷ chosen
ones!
105:7 He is the LORD our God;
he carries out judgment throughout the
earth.¹⁸
105:8 He always remembers his covenant-
al decree,
the promise he made¹⁹ to a thousand gen-
erations –
105:9 the promise²⁰ he made to Abraham,
the promise he made by oath to Isaac!
105:10 He gave it to Jacob as a decree,
to Israel as a lasting promise,²¹
105:11 saying, "To you I will give the land
of Canaan
as the portion of your inheritance."
105:12 When they were few in number,
just a very few, and resident foreigners
within it,
105:13 they wandered from nation to na-
tion,
and from one kingdom to another.²²
105:14 He let no one oppress them;
he disciplined kings for their sake,
105:15 saying,²³ "Don't touch my chosen²⁴
ones!
Don't harm my prophets!"
105:16 He called down a famine upon the
earth;
he cut off all the food supply.²⁵

¹ *tn* Heb "[and] this Leviathan, [which] you formed to play in it." Elsewhere Leviathan is a multiheaded sea monster that symbolizes forces hostile to God (see Ps 74:14; Isa 27:1), but here it appears to be an actual marine creature created by God, probably some type of whale.

² *tn* Heb "All of them." The pronoun "them" refers not just to the sea creatures mentioned in vv. 25-26, but to all living things (see v. 24). This has been specified in the translation as "all of your creatures" for clarity.

³ *tn* Heb "to give their food in its time."

⁴ *tn* Heb "they are satisfied [with] good."

⁵ *tn* Heb "you hide your face, they are terrified."

⁶ *tn* Heb "be forever."

⁷ *tn* Or "rejoice in his works."

⁸ *tn* Heb "in my duration."

⁹ *tn* That is, the psalmist's thoughts as expressed in his songs of praise.

¹⁰ *tn* Or "be destroyed."

¹¹ *sn* *Psalm 105*. The psalmist summons Israel to praise God because he delivered his people from Egypt in fulfillment of his covenantal promises to Abraham. A parallel version of vv. 1-15 appears in 1 Chr 16:8-22.

¹² *tn* Heb "and the judgments of his mouth."

¹³ *tn* Or "offspring"; Heb "seed."

¹⁴ *tc* Some mss have "Israel," which appears in the parallel version of this psalm in 1 Chr 16:13.

¹⁵ *tn* Heb "his"; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁶ *tn* Heb "sons."

¹⁷ *tn* Heb "his"; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁸ *tn* Heb "in all the earth [are] his judgments."

¹⁹ *tn* Heb "[the] word he commanded." The text refers here to God's unconditional covenantal promise to Abraham and the patriarchs, as vv. 10-12 make clear.

²⁰ *tn* Heb "which."

²¹ *tn* Or "eternal covenant."

²² *tn* Heb "and from a kingdom to another nation."

²³ *tn* The word "saying" is supplied in the translation for clarification and for stylistic reasons.

²⁴ *tn* Heb "anointed."

²⁵ *tn* Heb "and every staff of food he broke." The psalmist refers to the famine that occurred in Joseph's time (see v. 17 and Gen 41:53-57).

105:17 He sent a man ahead of them¹ – Joseph was sold as a servant.

105:18 The shackles hurt his feet;² his neck was placed in an iron collar,³

105:19 until the time when his prediction⁴ came true.

The LORD's word⁵ proved him right.⁶

105:20 The king authorized his release;⁷ the ruler of nations set him free.

105:21 He put him in charge of his palace,⁸ and made him manager of all his property,

105:22 giving him authority to imprison his officials⁹

and to teach his advisers.¹⁰

105:23 Israel moved to¹¹ Egypt; Jacob lived for a time¹² in the land of Ham.

105:24 The LORD¹³ made his people very fruitful,

and made them¹⁴ more numerous than their¹⁵ enemies.

105:25 He caused them¹⁶ to hate his people, and to mistreat¹⁷ his servants.

105:26 He sent his servant Moses, and Aaron, whom he had chosen.

105:27 They executed his miraculous signs among them,¹⁸

and his amazing deeds in the land of Ham.

105:28 He made it dark;¹⁹ they did not disobey his orders.²⁰

105:29 He turned their water into blood, and killed their fish.

105:30 Their land was overrun by frogs, which even got into the rooms of their kings.

105:31 He ordered flies to come;²¹ gnats invaded their whole territory.

105:32 He sent hail along with the rain;²² there was lightning in their land.²³

105:33 He destroyed their vines and fig trees, and broke the trees throughout their territory.

105:34 He ordered locusts to come,²⁴ innumerable grasshoppers.

105:35 They ate all the vegetation in their land,

and devoured the crops of their fields.²⁵

105:36 He struck down all the firstborn in their land,

the firstfruits of their reproductive power.²⁶

105:37 He brought his people²⁷ out enriched²⁸ with silver and gold; none of his tribes stumbled.

105:38 Egypt was happy when they left, for they were afraid of them.²⁹

105:39 He spread out a cloud for a cover,³⁰ and provided a fire to light up the night.

105:40 They asked for food,³¹ and he sent quails;

he satisfied them with food from the sky.³²

105:41 He opened up a rock and water flowed out;

a river ran through dry regions.

105:42 Yes,³³ he remembered the sacred promise³⁴

he made to Abraham his servant.

105:43 When he led his people out, they rejoiced;

his chosen ones shouted with joy.³⁵

105:44 He handed the territory of nations over to them,

¹ tn After the reference to the famine in v. 16, v. 17 flashes back to events that preceded the famine (see Gen 37).

² tn Heb "they afflicted his feet with shackles."

³ tn Heb "his neck came [into] iron." The Hebrew term שַׁבְּחָה (*nefesh*) with the suffix could mean simply "he" or "his life." But the nuance "neck" makes good sense here (note the reference to his "feet" in the preceding line). See L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 38.

⁴ tn Heb "word," probably referring to Joseph's prediction about the fate of Pharaoh's cupbearer and baker (see Gen 41:9-14).

⁵ tn This line may refer to Joseph's prediction of the famine in response to Pharaoh's dream. Joseph emphasized to Pharaoh that the interpretation of the dream came from God (see Gen 41:16, 25, 28, 32, 39).

⁶ tn Heb "refined him."

⁷ tn Heb "[the] king sent and set him free."

⁸ tn Heb "he made him master of his house."

⁹ tn Heb "to bind his officials by his will."

¹⁰ tn Heb "and his elders he taught wisdom."

¹¹ tn Heb "entered."

¹² tn Heb "lived as a resident foreigner."

¹³ tn Heb "and he"; the referent (the LORD) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁴ tn Heb "him," referring to "his people."

¹⁵ tn Heb "his," referring to "his people."

¹⁶ tn Heb "their heart."

¹⁷ tn Or "to deal deceptively." The Hitpa'el of נָכַח (*nakhal*) occurs only here and in Gen 37:18, where it is used of Joseph's brothers "plotting" to kill him.

¹⁸ tn Apparently the pronoun refers to "his servants" (i.e., the Israelites, see v. 25).

¹⁹ tn Heb "he sent darkness and made it dark."

²⁰ tn Heb "he made it dark." The psalmist begins with the ninth plague (see Exod 10:21-29).

²¹ tn Heb "they did not rebel against his words." Apparently this refers to Moses and Aaron, who obediently carried out God's orders.

²¹ tn Heb "he spoke and flies came."

²² tn Heb "he gave their rains hail."

²³ tn Heb "fire of flames [was] in their land."

²⁴ tn Heb "he spoke and locusts came."

²⁵ tn Heb "the fruit of their ground."

²⁶ tn Heb "the beginning of all their strength," that is, reproductive power (see Ps 78:51).

sn Verses 28-36 recall the plagues in a different order than the one presented in Exodus: v. 28 (plague 9), v. 29 (plague 1), v. 30 (plague 2), v. 31a (plague 4), v. 31b (plague 3), vv. 32-33 (plague 7), vv. 34-35 (plague 8), v. 36 (plague 10). No reference is made in Ps 105 to plagues 5 and 6.

²⁷ tn Heb "them"; the referent (the LORD's people) has been supplied in the translation for clarity.

²⁸ tn The word "enriched" is supplied in the translation for clarification and for stylistic reasons.

²⁹ tn Heb "for fear of them had fallen upon them."

³⁰ tn Or "curtain."

³¹ tn Heb "he [i.e., his people] asked." The singular form should probably be emended to a plural שָׁאֲלוּ (*sha'alu*, "they asked"), the vav (ו) having fallen off by haplography (note the vav at the beginning of the following form).

³² tn Or "bread of heaven." The reference is to manna (see Exod 16:4, 13-15).

³³ tn Or "for."

³⁴ tn Heb "his holy word."

³⁵ tn Heb "and he led his people out with joy, with a ringing cry, his chosen ones."

and they took possession of what other peoples had produced,¹
105:45 so that they might keep his commands and obey² his laws.
 Praise the LORD!

*Psalm 106*³

106:1 Praise the LORD!
 Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, and his loyal love endures!⁴
106:2 Who can adequately recount the LORD's mighty acts, or relate all his praiseworthy deeds?⁵
106:3 How blessed are those who promote justice, and do what is right all the time!
106:4 Remember me, O LORD, when you show favor to your people!
 Pay attention to me, when you deliver,
106:5 so I may see the prosperity⁶ of your chosen ones, rejoice along with your nation,⁷ and boast along with the people who belong to you.⁸
106:6 We have sinned like⁹ our ancestors;¹⁰ we have done wrong, we have done evil.
106:7 Our ancestors in Egypt failed to appreciate your miraculous deeds, they failed to remember your many acts of loyal love, and they rebelled at the sea, by the Red Sea.¹¹
106:8 Yet he delivered them for the sake of his reputation,¹² that he might reveal his power.
106:9 He shouted at¹³ the Red Sea and it dried up; he led them through the deep water as if it were a desert.
106:10 He delivered them from the power¹⁴ of the one who hated them, and rescued¹⁵ them from the power¹⁶ of the enemy.

106:11 The water covered their enemies; not even one of them survived.¹⁷
106:12 They believed his promises,¹⁸ they sang praises to him.
106:13 They quickly forgot what he had done;¹⁹ they did not wait for his instructions.²⁰
106:14 In the wilderness they had an insatiable craving²¹ for meat,²² they challenged God²³ in the desert.
106:15 He granted their request, then struck them with a disease.²⁴
106:16 In the camp they resented²⁵ Moses, and Aaron, the LORD's holy priest.²⁶
106:17 The earth opened up and swallowed Dathan; it engulfed²⁷ the group led by Abiram.²⁸
106:18 Fire burned their group; the flames scorched the wicked.²⁹
106:19 They made an image of a calf at Horeb, and worshiped a metal idol.
106:20 They traded their majestic God³⁰ for the image of an ox that eats grass.
106:21 They rejected³¹ the God who delivered them, the one who performed great deeds in Egypt,
106:22 amazing feats in the land of Ham, mighty³² acts by the Red Sea.
106:23 He threatened³³ to destroy them, but³⁴ Moses, his chosen one, interceded with him³⁵ and turned back his destructive anger.³⁶
106:24 They rejected the fruitful land;³⁷ they did not believe his promise.³⁸

¹ **tn** Heb "and the [product of the] work of peoples they possessed."

² **tn** Heb "guard."

³ **sn** *Psalm 106*. The psalmist recalls Israel's long history of rebellion against God, despite his mighty saving deeds on their behalf.

⁴ **tn** Heb "for forever [is] his loyal love."

⁵ **tn** Heb "[or] cause to be heard all his praise."

⁶ **tn** Heb "good."

⁷ **tn** Heb "in order that [I may] rejoice with the rejoicing of your nation."

⁸ **tn** Heb "with your inheritance."

⁹ **tn** Heb "with."

¹⁰ **tn** Heb "fathers" (also in v. 7).

¹¹ **tn** Heb "Reed Sea" (also in vv. 9, 22). "Reed Sea" (or "Sea of Reeds") is a more accurate rendering of the Hebrew expression יַם סוּף (*yam suf*), traditionally translated "Red Sea." See the note on the term "Red Sea" in Exod 13:18.

¹² **sn** *They rebelled*. The psalmist recalls the people's complaint recorded in Exod 14:12.

¹³ **tn** Heb "his name," which here stands metonymically for God's reputation.

¹⁴ **tn** Or "rebuked."

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "hand."

¹⁶ **tn** Or "redeemed."

¹⁷ **tn** Heb "hand."

¹⁷ **tn** Heb "remained."

¹⁸ **tn** Heb "his words."

¹⁹ **tn** Heb "his works."

²⁰ **tn** Heb "his counsel."

²¹ **sn** *They had an insatiable craving*. This is described in Num 11:4-35.

²² **tn** Heb "they craved [with] a craving."

²³ **tn** Heb "they tested God."

²⁴ **tn** Heb "and he sent leanness into their being."

²⁵ **sn** *Disease*. See Num 11:33-34, where this plague is described.

²⁶ **tn** Or "envied."

²⁷ **tn** Heb "the holy one of the LORD."

²⁸ **tn** Or "covered."

²⁹ **tn** Or "the assembly of Abiram."

³⁰ **sn** Verses 16-18 describe the events of Num 16:1-40.

³¹ **tn** Heb "their glory." According to an ancient Hebrew scribal tradition, the text originally read "his glory" or "my glory." In Jer 2:11 the LORD states that his people (Israel) exchanged "their glory" (a reference to the LORD) for worthless idols.

³² **tn** Heb "forgot."

³³ **tn** Or "awe-inspiring."

³⁴ **tn** Heb "and he said."

³⁵ **tn** Heb "if not," that is, "[and would have] if [Moses] had not."

³⁶ **tn** Heb "stood in the gap before him."

³⁷ **tn** Heb "to turn back his anger from destroying."

³⁸ **sn** Verses 19-23 describe the events of Exod 32:1-35.

³⁹ **tn** Heb "a land of delight" (see also Jer 3:19; Zech 7:14).

⁴⁰ **tn** Heb "his word."

106:25 They grumbled in their tents;¹ they did not obey² the LORD.

106:26 So he made a solemn vow³ that he would make them die⁴ in the desert,

106:27 make their descendants⁵ die⁶ among the nations, and scatter them among foreign lands.⁷

106:28 They worshiped⁸ Baal of Peor, and ate sacrifices offered to the dead.⁹

106:29 They made the LORD angry¹⁰ by their actions, and a plague broke out among them.

106:30 Phinehas took a stand and intervened,¹¹

and the plague subsided.

106:31 This brought him a reward, an eternal gift.¹²

106:32 They made him angry by the waters of Meribah,

and Moses suffered¹³ because of them,

106:33 for they aroused¹⁴ his temper,¹⁵ and he spoke rashly.¹⁶

106:34 They did not destroy the nations,¹⁷ as the LORD had commanded them to do.

106:35 They mixed in with the nations and learned their ways.¹⁸

106:36 They worshiped¹⁹ their idols, which became a snare to them.²⁰

106:37 They sacrificed their sons and daughters to demons.²¹

106:38 They shed innocent blood – the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan.

The land was polluted by bloodshed.²²

106:39 They were defiled by their deeds, and unfaithful in their actions.²³

106:40 So the LORD was angry with his people²⁴

and despised the people who belong to him.²⁵

106:41 He handed them over to²⁶ the nations, and those who hated them ruled over them.

106:42 Their enemies oppressed them; they were subject to their authority.²⁷

106:43 Many times he delivered²⁸ them, but they had a rebellious attitude,²⁹ and degraded themselves³⁰ by their sin.

106:44 Yet he took notice of their distress, when he heard their cry for help.

106:45 He remembered his covenant with them, and relented³¹ because of his great loyal love.

106:46 He caused all their conquerors³² to have pity on them.

106:47 Deliver us, O LORD, our God! Gather us from among the nations!

Then we will give thanks³³ to your holy name,

¹ sn They grumbled in their tents. See Deut 1:27.

² tn Heb “did not listen to the voice of.”

³ tn Heb “and he lifted his hand to [or “concerning”] them.” The idiom “to lift a hand” here refers to swearing an oath. One would sometimes solemnly lift one’s hand when making such a vow (see Ezek 20:5-6, 15).

⁴ tn Heb “to cause them to fall.”

⁵ tn Or “offspring”; Heb “seed.”

⁶ tn Heb “and to cause their offspring to fall.” Some emend the verb to “scatter” to form tighter parallelism with the following line (cf. NRSV “disperse”).

⁷ tn Heb “among the lands.” The word “foreign” is supplied in the translation for clarification.

⁸ tn Heb “joined themselves to.”

sn They worshiped Baal of Peor. See Num 25:3, 5. Baal of Peor was a local manifestation of the Canaanite deity Baal located at Peor.

⁹ tn Here “the dead” may refer to deceased ancestors (see Deut 26:14). Another option is to understand the term as a derogatory reference to the various deities which the Israelites worshiped at Peor along with Baal (see Num 25:2 and L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* [WBC], 49).

¹⁰ tn Heb “They made angry [him].” The pronominal suffix is omitted here, but does appear in a few medieval Hebrew mss. Perhaps it was accidentally left off, an original וַיַּעֲרֹץ (vayyakh’isuhu) being misread as וַיַּעֲרֹץ (vayyakh’isu). In the translation the referent of the pronominal suffix (the LORD) has been specified for clarity to avoid confusion with Baal of Peor (mentioned in the previous verse).

¹¹ sn The intervention of Phinehas is recounted in Num 25:7-8.

¹² tn Heb “and it was reckoned to him for righteousness, to a generation and a generation forever.” The verb הִשָּׁב (khashav, “to reckon”) is collocated with עֲדָקָה (tsedaqah, “righteousness”) only in Ps 106:31 and Gen 15:6, where God rewards Abram’s faith with a land grant.

sn Brought him a reward. See Num 25:12-13.

¹³ tn Heb “there was harm to Moses.”

¹⁴ tn The Hebrew text vocalizes the form as הִמְרוּ (himru), a Hiphil from מָרָה (marah, “to behave rebelliously”), but the verb fits better with the object (“his spirit”) if it is revocalized as הִמְרוּ (hemeru), a Hiphil from מָרַר (marar, “to be bitter”). The Israelites “embittered” Moses’ “spirit” in the sense that they aroused his temper with their complaints.

¹⁵ tn Heb “his spirit.”

¹⁶ tn The Hebrew text adds “with his lips,” but this has not been included in the translation for stylistic reasons.

sn Verses 32-33 allude to the events of Num 20:1-13.

¹⁷ tn That is, the nations of Canaan.

¹⁸ tn Heb “their deeds.”

¹⁹ tn Or “served.”

²⁰ sn Became a snare. See Exod 23:33; Judg 2:3.

²¹ tn The Hebrew term שְׂדֵיִם (shedim, “demons”) occurs only here and in Deut 32:17. Some type of lesser deity is probably in view.

²² sn Num 35:33-34 explains that bloodshed defiles a land.

²³ tn Heb “and they committed adultery in their actions.” This means that they were unfaithful to the LORD (see Ps 73:27).

²⁴ tn Heb “the anger of the LORD burned against his people.”

²⁵ tn Heb “his inheritance.”

²⁶ tn Heb “gave them into the hand of.”

²⁷ tn Heb “they were subdued under their hand.”

²⁸ tn The prefixed verbal form is either preterite or imperfect, in which case it is customary, describing repeated action in past time (“he would deliver”).

²⁹ tn Heb “but they rebelled in their counsel.” The prefixed verbal form is either preterite or imperfect, in which case it is customary, describing repeated action in past time (“they would have a rebellious attitude”).

³⁰ tn Heb “they sank down.” The Hebrew verb מָכַח (makhakh, “to lower; to sink”) occurs only here in the Qal.

³¹ tn The Niphil of נָחַם (nakhham) refers here to the God relenting from a punishment already underway.

³² tn Or “captors.”

³³ tn Heb “to give thanks.” The infinitive construct indicates result after the imperative.

and boast about your praiseworthy deeds.¹

106:48 The LORD God of Israel deserves praise,² in the future and forevermore.³ Let all the people say, "We agree!⁴ Praise the LORD!"⁵

Book 5 (Psalms 107-150)

Psalm 107⁶

107:1 Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, and his loyal love endures!⁷
107:2 Let those delivered by the LORD speak out,⁸ those whom he delivered⁹ from the power¹⁰ of the enemy,
107:3 and gathered from foreign lands,¹¹ from east and west, from north and south.
107:4 They wandered through the wilderness on a desert road;
 they found no city in which to live.
107:5 They were hungry and thirsty; they fainted from exhaustion.¹²
107:6 They cried out to the LORD in their distress;
 he delivered them from their troubles.
107:7 He led them on a level road,¹³ that they might find a city in which to live.
107:8 Let them give thanks to the LORD for his loyal love,
 and for the amazing things he has done for people!¹⁴
107:9 For he has satisfied those who thirst,¹⁵ and those who hunger he has filled with food.¹⁶

107:10 They sat in utter darkness,¹⁷ bound in painful iron chains,¹⁸
107:11 because they had rebelled against God's commands,¹⁹ and rejected the instructions of the sovereign king.²⁰
107:12 So he used suffering to humble them,²¹ they stumbled and no one helped them up.
107:13 They cried out to the LORD in their distress;
 he delivered them from their troubles.
107:14 He brought them out of the utter darkness,²² and tore off their shackles.
107:15 Let them give thanks to the LORD for his loyal love,
 and for the amazing things he has done for people!²³
107:16 For he shattered the bronze gates, and hacked through the iron bars.²⁴
107:17 They acted like fools in their rebellious ways,²⁵ and suffered because of their sins.
107:18 They lost their appetite for all food,²⁶ and they drew near the gates of death.
107:19 They cried out to the LORD in their distress;
 he delivered them from their troubles.
107:20 He sent them an assuring word²⁷ and healed them;

¹ **tn** *Heb* "to boast in your praise."

² **tn** *Heb* "[be] blessed." See Pss 18:46; 28:6; 31:21.

³ **tn** *Heb* "from everlasting to everlasting."

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "surely" (אָמֵן, 'amen), traditionally transliterated "amen."

⁵ **sn** The final verse (v. 48) is a conclusion to this fourth "book" (or major editorial division) of the Psalter. Similar statements appear at or near the end of each of the first, second and third "books" of the Psalter (see Pss 41:13; 72:18-19; 89:52, respectively).

⁶ **sn** *Psalm 107*. The psalmist praises God for his kindness to his exiled people.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "for forever [is] his loyal love."

⁸ **tn** Or "let the redeemed of the LORD say [so]."

⁹ **tn** Or "redeemed."

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "hand."

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "from lands." The word "foreign" is supplied in the translation for clarification.

¹² **tn** *Heb* "and their soul in them fainted."

¹³ **sn** *A level road*. See Jer 31:9.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "and [for] his amazing deeds for the sons of man."

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "[the] longing throat." The noun נֶפֶשׁ (*nefesh*), which frequently refers to one's very being or soul, here probably refers to one's parched "throat" (note the parallelism with נֶפֶשׁ רָעָבָה, *nefesh r'evah*, "hungry throat").

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "and [the] hungry throat he has filled [with] good."

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "those who sat in darkness and deep darkness." Synonyms are joined here to emphasize the degree of "darkness" experienced by the exiles. The Hebrew term צְלִמּוֹת (*tsalmavet*, "deep darkness") has traditionally been understood as a compound noun, meaning "shadow of death" (צֶלַת + מָוֶת [*tsel + mavet*]; see BDB 853 s.v. צְלִמּוֹת; cf. NASB). Other authorities prefer to vocalize the form צְלִמּוֹת (*tsalmut*) and understand it as an abstract noun (from the root צָלַם) meaning "darkness." An examination of the word's usage favors the latter derivation. It is frequently associated with darkness/night and contrasted with light/morning (see Job 3:5; 10:21-22; 12:22; 24:17; 28:3; 34:22; Ps 107:10, 14; Isa 9:1; Jer 13:16; Amos 5:8). In some cases the darkness described is associated with the realm of death (Job 10:21-22; 38:17), but this is a metaphorical application of the word and does not reflect its inherent meaning. In Ps 107:10 the word refers metonymically to a dungeon, which in turn metaphorically depicts the place of Israel's exile (see vv. 2-3).

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "those bound in suffering and iron." "Suffering and iron" is a hendiadys (like English "good and angry"), where both words contribute to one idea. In this case the first word characterizes the second; the iron (chains) contribute to the prisoners' pain and suffering.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "the words of God."

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "the counsel of the Most High."

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "and he subdued with suffering their heart."

²² **tn** *Heb* "darkness and deep darkness." See the note on the word "darkness" in v. 10.

²³ **tn** *Heb* "and [for] his amazing deeds for the sons of man." See v. 8.

²⁴ **sn** The language of v. 16 recalls Isa 45:2.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "fools [they were] because of the way of their rebellion."

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "all food their appetite loathed."

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* "he sent his word." This probably refers to an oracle of assurance which announced his intention to intervene (see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* [WBC], 59).

he rescued them from the pits where they were trapped.¹

107:21 Let them give thanks to the LORD for his loyal love, and for the amazing things he has done for people!²

107:22 Let them present thank offerings, and loudly proclaim what he has done!³

107:23⁴ Some traveled on⁵ the sea in ships, and carried cargo over the vast waters.⁶

107:24 They witnessed the acts of the LORD, his amazing feats on the deep water.

107:25 He gave the order for a wind-storm,⁷ and it stirred up the waves of the sea.⁸

107:26 They⁹ reached up to the sky, then dropped into the depths. The sailors' strength¹⁰ left them¹¹ because the danger was so great.¹²

107:27 They swayed¹³ and staggered like a drunk, and all their skill proved ineffective.¹⁴

107:28 They cried out to the LORD in their distress;

he delivered them from their troubles.

107:29 He calmed the storm,¹⁵ and the waves¹⁶ grew silent.

107:30 The sailors¹⁷ rejoiced because the waves¹⁸ grew quiet, and he led them to the harbor¹⁹ they desired.

107:31 Let them give thanks to the LORD for his loyal love, and for the amazing things he has done for people!²⁰

107:32 Let them exalt him in the assembly of the people!

Let them praise him in the place where the leaders preside!²¹

107:33 He turned²² streams into a desert, springs of water into arid land,

107:34 and a fruitful land into a barren place,²³ because of the sin of its inhabitants.

107:35 As for his people,²⁴ he turned²⁵ a desert into a pool of water, and a dry land into springs of water.

107:36 He allowed the hungry to settle there, and they established a city in which to live.

107:37 They cultivated²⁶ fields, and planted vineyards, which yielded a harvest of fruit.²⁷

107:38 He blessed²⁸ them so that they became very numerous.

He would not allow their cattle to decrease in number.²⁹

¹ **tn** *Heb* "he rescued from their traps." The Hebrew word שֶׁחִית (*shekhit*, "trap") occurs only here and in Lam 4:20, where it refers to a trap or pit in which one is captured. Because of the rarity of the term and the absence of an object with the verb "rescued," some prefer to emend the text of Ps 107:20, reading מִשְׁחַת הַחַיִּים (*mishkhat khayyatam*, "[he rescued] their lives from the pit"). Note also NIV "from the grave," which interprets the "pit" as Sheol or the grave.

² **tn** *Heb* "and [for] his amazing deeds for the sons of man." See v. 8.

³ **tn** *Heb* "and let them proclaim his works with a ringing cry."

⁴ **sn** Verses 23-30, which depict the Lord rescuing sailors from a storm at sea, do not seem to describe the exiles' situation, unless the word picture is metaphorical. Perhaps the psalmist here broadens his scope and offers an example of God's kindness to the needy beyond the covenant community.

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "those going down [into]."

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "doers of work on the mighty waters."

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "he spoke and caused to stand a stormy wind."

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "and it stirred up its [i.e., the sea's, see v. 23] waves."

⁹ **tn** That is, the waves (see v. 25).

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "their being"; traditionally "their soul" (referring to that of the sailors). This is sometimes translated "courage" (cf. NIV, NRSV).

¹¹ **tn** Or "melted."

¹² **tn** *Heb* "from danger."

¹³ **tn** Only here does the Hebrew verb כָּנַח (*khagag*; normally meaning "to celebrate") carry the nuance "to sway."

¹⁴ **tn** The Hitpael of בָּלַע (*vala'*) occurs only here in the OT. Traditionally the form is derived from the verbal root בָּלַע ("to swallow"), but HALOT 135 s.v. בָּלַע understands a homonym here with the meaning "to be confused."

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "he raised [the] storm to calm."

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "their waves." The antecedent of the third masculine plural pronominal suffix is not readily apparent, unless it refers back to "waters" in v. 23.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "they"; the referent (the sailors) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "they"; the referent (the waves) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁹ **tn** The Hebrew noun occurs only here in the OT.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "and [for] his amazing deeds for the sons of man." See v. 8.

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "in the seat of the elders."

²² **tn** The verbal form appears to be a preterite, which is most naturally taken as narrational. (The use of prefixed forms with *vav* [י] consecutive in vv. 36-37 favor this.) The psalmist may return to the theme of God's intervention for the exiles (see vv. 4-22, especially vv. 4-9). However, many regard vv. 33-41 as a hymnic description which generalizes about God's activities among men. In this case it would be preferable to use the English present tense throughout (cf. NEB, NRSV).

²³ **tn** *Heb* "a salty land."

²⁴ **tn** The words "As for his people" are not included in the Hebrew text, but have been supplied in the translation for the sake of clarity. The psalmist contrasts God's judgment on his enemies with his blessing of his people. See the note on the word "enemies" in v. 39 for further discussion.

²⁵ **tn** The verbal form appears to be a preterite, which is most naturally taken as narrational. See the note on the word "turned" in v. 33.

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "sowed seed in."

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* "fruit [as] produce."

²⁸ **tn** "Bless" here carries the nuance "endue with sexual potency, make fertile." See Gen 1:28, where the statement "he blessed them" directly precedes the command "be fruitful and populate the earth" (see also 1:22). The verb "bless" carries this same nuance in Gen 17:16 (where God's blessing of Sarai imparts to her the capacity to bear a child); 48:16 (where God's blessing of Joseph's sons is closely associated with their having numerous descendants); and Deut 7:13 (where God's blessing is associated with fertility in general, including numerous descendants). See also Gen 49:25 (where Jacob uses the noun derivative in referring to "blessings of the breast and womb," an obvious reference to fertility) and Gen 27:27 (where the verb is used of a field to which God has given the capacity to produce vegetation).

²⁹ **tn** The verbal form in this line appears to be an imperfect, which may be taken as customary (drawing attention to typi-

107:39 As for their enemies,¹ they decreased in number and were beaten down,
 because of painful distress² and suffering.
107:40 He would pour³ contempt upon princes,
 and he made them wander in a wasteland with no road.
107:41 Yet he protected⁴ the needy from oppression,
 and cared for his families like a flock of sheep.
107:42 When the godly see this, they rejoice,
 and every sinner⁵ shuts his mouth.
107:43 Whoever is wise, let him take note of these things!
 Let them consider the LORD's acts of loyal love!

Psalms 108⁶

A song, a psalm of David.

108:1 I am determined,⁷ O God!
 I will sing and praise you with my whole heart.⁸

108:2 Awake, O stringed instrument and harp!
 I will wake up at dawn!⁹
108:3 I will give you thanks before the nations, O LORD!
 I will sing praises to you before foreigners!¹⁰
108:4 For your loyal love extends beyond the sky,¹¹
 and your faithfulness reaches the clouds.
108:5 Rise up¹² above the sky, O God!
 May your splendor cover the whole earth!¹³
108:6 Deliver by your power¹⁴ and answer me,
 so that the ones you love may be safe.¹⁵
108:7 God has spoken in his sanctuary:¹⁶
 "I will triumph! I will parcel out Shechem,
 the Valley of Succoth I will measure off."¹⁷
108:8 Gilead belongs to me,
 as does Manasseh!¹⁸
 Ephraim is my helmet,¹⁹
 Judah my royal scepter.²⁰
108:9 Moab is my washbasin.²¹
 I will make Edom serve me.²²
 I will shout in triumph over Philistia."

cal action in a past time frame) or as generalizing (in which case one should use the English present tense, understanding a move from narrative to present reality).

¹ **tn** The words "As for their enemies" are not included in the Hebrew text, but have been supplied in the translation for the sake of clarity. Without such clarification, one might think that v. 39 refers to those just mentioned in v. 38 as objects of divine blessing, which would contradict the point just emphasized by the psalmist. The structure of vv. 33-42 is paneled (A-B-A-B). In vv. 33-34 the psalmist describes God's judgment upon his enemies (perhaps those who had enslaved his people). In vv. 35-38 he contrasts this judgment with the divine blessing poured out on God's people. (See the note on the word "people" in v. 35.) In vv. 39-40 he contrasts this blessing with the judgment experienced by enemies, before returning in vv. 41-42 to the blessing experienced by God's people.

² **tn** *Heb* "from the oppression of calamity."

³ **tn** The active participle is understood as past durative here, drawing attention to typical action in a past time frame. However, it could be taken as generalizing (in which case one should translate using the English present tense), in which case the psalmist moves from narrative to present reality. Perhaps the participial form appears because the statement is lifted from Job 12:21.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "set on high."

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "all evil," which stands metonymically for those who do evil.

⁶ **sn** *Psalms 108*. With some minor variations, this psalm is a composite of Ps 57:7-11 (see vv. 1-5) and Ps 60:5-12 (see vv. 6-13).

⁷ **tn** Or perhaps "confident"; *Heb* "my heart is steadfast." The "heart" is viewed here as the seat of the psalmist's volition and/or emotions.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "also my glory," but this makes little sense in the context. Some view the term כְּבוֹד ("glory") here as a metonymy for man's inner being (see BDB 459 s.v. II כְּבוֹד 5), but it is preferable to emend the form to קִבְדִּי (*kēvodiy*, "my liver"). Like the heart, the liver is viewed as the seat of one's emotions. See also Pss 16:9; 30:12; 57:9; as well as H. W. Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament*, 64, and M. Dahood, *Psalms* (AB), 3:93. For an Ugaritic example of the heart/liver as the source of joy, see G. R. Driver, *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, 47-48: "her [Anat's] liver swelled with laughter, her heart was filled with joy, the liver of Anat with triumph."

⁹ **tn** BDB 1007 s.v. שָׁחַר takes "dawn" as an adverbial accusative, though others understand it as a personified direct object. "Dawn" is used metaphorically for the time of deliverance and vindication the psalmist anticipates. When salvation "dawns," the psalmist will "wake up" in praise.

¹⁰ **tn** Or "the peoples."

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "for great upon the sky [or "heavens"] [is] your loyal love."

¹² **tn** Or "be exalted."

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "over all the earth [be] your splendor." Though no verb appears, the tone of the statement is a prayer or wish. (Note the imperative form in the preceding line.)

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "right hand."

¹⁵ **tn** Or "may be rescued." The lines are actually reversed in the Hebrew text: "So that the ones you love may be rescued, deliver by your power and answer me."

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "in his holy place."

¹⁷ **sn** *Shechem* stands for the territory west of the Jordan River; the *Valley of Succoth* represents the region east of the Jordan.

¹⁸ **tn** *Gilead* was located east of the Jordan River. Half of the tribe of *Manasseh* lived east of the Jordan in the region of Bashan.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "the protection of my head."

sn *Ephraim*, one of Joseph's sons, was one of two major tribes located west of the Jordan River. By comparing Ephraim to a helmet, the Lord suggests that the Ephraimites played a primary role in the defense of his land.

²⁰ **sn** *Judah*, like Ephraim, was the other major tribe west of the Jordan River. The Davidic king, symbolized here by the *royal scepter*, came from this tribe.

²¹ **sn** The metaphor of the *washbasin*, used to rinse one's hands and feet, suggests that *Moab*, in contrast to Israel's elevated position (vv. 7-8), would be reduced to the status of a servant.

²² **tn** *Heb* "over Edom I will throw my sandal." The point of the metaphor is not entirely clear. Some interpret this as idiomatic for "taking possession of." Others translate גַּל ('*al*) as "to" and understand this as referring to a master throwing his dirty sandal to a servant so that the latter might dust it off.

108:10 Who will lead me into the fortified city?

Who will bring me to Edom?¹

108:11 Have you not rejected us, O God? O God, you do not go into battle with our armies.

108:12 Give us help against the enemy, for any help men might offer is futile.²

108:13 By God's power we will conquer;³ he will trample down⁴ our enemies.

*Psalms 109*⁵

For the music director, a psalm of David.

109:1 O God whom I praise, do not ignore me!⁶

109:2 For they say cruel and deceptive things to me; they lie to me.⁷

109:3 They surround me and say hateful things;⁸ they attack me for no reason.

109:4 They repay my love with accusations,⁹ but I continue to pray.¹⁰

109:5 They repay me evil for good,¹¹ and hate for love.

109:6¹² Appoint an evil man to testify

against him!¹³

May an accuser stand¹⁴ at his right side!

109:7 When he is judged, he will be found¹⁵ guilty!¹⁶

Then his prayer will be regarded as sinful.

109:8 May his days be few!¹⁷

May another take his job!¹⁸

109:9 May his children¹⁹ be fatherless, and his wife a widow!

109:10 May his children²⁰ roam around begging,

asking for handouts as they leave their ruined home!²¹

109:11 May the creditor seize²² all he owns!

May strangers loot his property!²³

109:12 May no one show him kindness!²⁴

May no one have compassion²⁵ on his fatherless children!

109:13 May his descendants²⁶ be cut off!²⁷

May the memory of them be wiped out by the time the next generation arrives!²⁸

109:14 May his ancestors'²⁹ sins be remembered by the LORD!

May his mother's sin not be forgotten!³⁰

¹ sn The psalmist speaks again and acknowledges his need for help in battle. He hopes God will volunteer, based on the affirmation of sovereignty over Edom in v. 9, but he is also aware that God has seemingly rejected the nation of Israel (v. 11).

² tn Heb "and futile [is] the deliverance of man."

³ tn Heb "in God we will accomplish strength." The statement refers here to military success (see Num 24:18; 1 Sam 14:48; Pss 60:12; 118:16-16).

⁴ sn On the expression *trample down our enemies* see Ps 44:5.

⁵ sn *Psalms 109*. Appealing to God's justice, the psalmist asks God to vindicate him and to bring severe judgment down upon his enemies.

⁶ tn Heb "do not be deaf."

⁷ tn Heb "for a mouth of evil and a mouth of deceit against me they open, they speak with me [with] a tongue of falsehood."

⁸ tn Heb "and [with] words of hatred they surround me."

⁹ tn Heb "in place of my love they oppose me."

¹⁰ tn Heb "and I, prayer."

¹¹ tn Heb "and they set upon me evil in place of good."

¹² sn In vv. 6-19 the psalmist calls on God to judge his enemies severely. Some attribute this curse-list to the psalmist's enemies rather than the psalmist. In this case one should paraphrase v. 6: "They say about me, 'Appoint an evil man, etc.'" Those supporting this line of interpretation point out that vv. 2-5 and 20 refer to the enemies' attack on the psalmist being a verbal one. Furthermore in vv. 1-5, 20 the psalmist speaks of his enemies in the plural, while vv. 6-19 refer to an individual. This use of the singular in vv. 6-19 could be readily explained if this is the psalmist's enemies' curse on him. However, it is much more natural to understand vv. 6-19 as the psalmist's prayer against his enemies. There is no introductory quotation formula in v. 6 to indicate that the psalmist is quoting anyone, and the statement "may the LORD repay my accusers in this way" in v. 20 most naturally appears to be a fitting conclusion to the prayer in vv. 6-19. But what about the use of the singular in vv. 6-19? Often in the psalms the psalmist will describe his enemies as a group, but then speak of them as an individual as well, as if viewing his adversaries collectively as one powerful foe. See, for example, Ps 7, where the psalmist uses both the plural (vv. 1, 6) and the singular (vv. 2, 4-5) in referring to enemies. Perhaps by using the

singular in such cases, the psalmist wants to single out each enemy for individual attention, or perhaps he has one especially hostile enemy in mind who epitomizes the opposition of the whole group. This may well be the case in Ps 109. Perhaps we should understand the singular throughout vv. 6-19 in the sense of "each and every one." For a lengthy and well-reasoned defense of the opposite view – that vv. 6-19 are a quotation of what the enemies said about the psalmist – see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 72-73.

¹³ tn Heb "appoint against him an evil [man]."

¹⁴ tn The prefixed verbal form is taken as a jussive here (note the imperative in the preceding line).

¹⁵ tn The prefixed verbal form could be taken as a jussive, but the use of the imperfect form in the following line suggests that v. 7 anticipates the outcome of the accusation envisioned in v. 6.

¹⁶ tn Heb "he will go out [as] a criminal" (that is, guilty).

¹⁷ tn The prefixed verbal forms (except those with *vav* [ו] consecutive) in vv. 8-20 are taken as jussives of prayer. Note the distinct jussive forms used in vv. 12-13, 15, 19.

¹⁸ tn The Hebrew noun פְּקִידָה (*pe'quddah*) can mean "charge" or "office," though BDB 824 s.v. suggests that here it refers to his possessions.

¹⁹ tn Or "sons."

²⁰ tn Or "sons."

²¹ tn Heb "and roaming, may his children roam and beg, and seek from their ruins." Some, following the LXX, emend the term יִרְשׁוּ (*doreshu*, "and seek") to יִגְרְשׁוּ (*goreshu*; a Pual jussive, "may they be driven away" [see Job 30:5; cf. NIV, NRSV]), but יִרְשׁוּ (*darash*) nicely parallels שִׁיחֵי (*shi'ehu*, "and beg") in the preceding line.

²² tn Heb "lay snares for" (see Ps 38:12).

²³ tn Heb "the product of his labor."

²⁴ tn Heb "may there not be for him one who extends loyal love."

²⁵ tn Perhaps this refers to being generous (see Ps 37:21).

²⁶ tn Or "offspring."

²⁷ sn On the expression *cut off* see Ps 37:28.

²⁸ tn Heb "in another generation may their name be wiped out."

²⁹ tn Or "fathers' sins."

³⁰ tn Heb "not be wiped out."

sn According to ancient Israelite theology and its doctrine of corporate solidarity and responsibility, children could be and often were punished for the sins of their parents. For a discus-

109:15 May the LORD be constantly aware of them,¹ and cut off the memory of his children² from the earth!
109:16 For he never bothered to show kindness;³ he harassed the oppressed and needy, and killed the disheartened.⁴
109:17 He loved to curse⁵ others, so those curses have come upon him.⁶ He had no desire to bless anyone, so he has experienced no blessings.⁷
109:18 He made cursing a way of life,⁸ so curses poured into his stomach like water and seeped into his bones like oil.⁹
109:19 May a curse attach itself to him, like a garment one puts on,¹⁰ or a belt¹¹ one wears continually!
109:20 May the LORD repay my accusers in this way,¹² those who say evil things about¹³ me!¹⁴

sion of this issue see J. Kaminsky, *Corporate Responsibility in the Hebrew Bible* (JSOTSUP). (Kaminsky, however, does not deal with Ps 109.)

¹ **tn** *Heb* “may they [that is, the sins mentioned in v. 14] be before the LORD continually.”

² **tn** *Heb* “their memory.” The plural pronominal suffix probably refers back to the children mentioned in v. 13, and for clarity this has been specified in the translation.

³ **tn** *Heb* “he did not remember to do loyal love.”

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “and he chased an oppressed and needy man, and one timid of heart to put [him] to death.”

⁵ **sn** A curse in OT times consists of a formal appeal to God to bring judgment down upon another. Curses were sometimes justified (such as the one spoken by the psalmist here in vv. 6-19), but when they were not, the one pronouncing the curse was in danger of bringing the anticipated judgment down upon himself.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “and he loved a curse and it came [upon] him.” A reference to the evil man experiencing a curse seems premature here, for the psalmist is asking God to bring judgment on his enemies. For this reason some (cf. NIV, NRSV) prefer to reposit the vav (ו) on “it came” as conjunctive and translate the verb as a jussive of prayer (“may it come upon him!”). The prefixed form with vav consecutive in the next line is emended in the same way and translated, “may it be far from him.” However, the psalmist may be indicating that the evil man’s lifestyle has already begun to yield its destructive fruit.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “and he did not delight in a blessing and it is far from him.”

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “he put on a curse as [if it were] his garment.”

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “and it came like water into his inner being, and like oil into his bones.” This may refer to this individual’s appetite for cursing. For him cursing was as refreshing as drinking water or massaging oneself with oil. Another option is that the destructive effects of a curse are in view. In this case a destructive curse invades his very being, like water or oil. Some who interpret the verse this way prefer to reposit the vav (ו) on “it came” to a conjunctive vav and interpret the prefixed verb as a jussive, “may it come!”

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “may it be for him like a garment one puts on.”

¹¹ **tn** The Hebrew noun *mezakh*, “belt; waistband”) occurs only here in the OT. The form apparently occurs in Isa 23:10 as well, but an emendation is necessary there.

¹² **tn** *Heb* “[may] this [be] the repayment to my accusers from the LORD.”

¹³ **tn** Or “against.”

¹⁴ **tn** The Hebrew term *nefesh*, “being; soul”) with a pronominal suffix is often equivalent to a pronoun, especially in poetry (see BDB 660 s.v. *נֶפֶשׁ* 4.a).

109:21 O sovereign LORD, intervene on my behalf for the sake of your reputation!¹⁵ Because your loyal love is good, deliver me!
109:22 For I am oppressed and needy, and my heart beats violently within me.¹⁶
109:23 I am fading away like a shadow at the end of the day;¹⁷ I am shaken off like a locust.
109:24 I am so starved my knees shake;¹⁸ I have turned into skin and bones.¹⁹
109:25 I am disdained by them.²⁰ When they see me, they shake their heads.²¹
109:26 Help me, O LORD my God! Because you are faithful to me, deliver me!²²
109:27 Then they will realize²³ this is your work,²⁴ and that you, LORD, have accomplished it.
109:28 They curse, but you will bless.²⁵ When they attack, they will be humiliated,²⁶ but your servant will rejoice.
109:29 My accusers will be covered²⁷ with shame, and draped in humiliation as if it were a robe.
109:30 I will thank the LORD profusely,²⁸

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “but you, LORD, Master, do with me for the sake of your name.” Here “name” stands metonymically for God’s reputation.

¹⁶ **tc** The verb in the Hebrew text (הָלַל, *khala*) appears to be a Qal form from the root הָלַל meaning “pierced; wounded.” However, the Qal of this root is otherwise unattested. The translation assumes an emendation to הָיִיל (*yakhiil*), a Qal imperfect from הָיִל (*khul*, “tremble”) or to הָלַל (*khola*), a *polal* perfect from הָלַל (*khul*). See Ps 55:4, which reads לִבִּי יְהִיֵּל בְּקִרְבִּי בִּי (*libbi yakhiil b’eqirbbiy*, “my heart trembles [i.e., “beats violently”] within me”).

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “like a shadow when it is extended I go.” He is like a late afternoon shadow made by the descending sun that will soon be swallowed up by complete darkness. See Ps 102:11.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “my knees stagger from fasting.”

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “and my flesh is lean away from fatness [i.e., “lean so as not to be fat].”

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* “as for me, I am a reproach to them.”

²¹ **sn** *They shake their heads.* Apparently shaking the head was a taunting gesture. See also Job 16:4; Ps 22:7; Lam 2:15.

²² **tn** *Heb* “deliver me according to your faithfulness.”

²³ **tn** After the preceding imperative, the prefixed verbal form with vav (ו) conjunctive indicates purpose or result.

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* “that your hand [is] this.”

²⁵ **tn** Another option is to translate the imperfect as a prayer/request (“may you bless”).

²⁶ **tn** The verbal sequence is perfect + prefixed form with vav (ו) consecutive. Since the psalmist seems to be anticipating the demise of his enemies, he may be using these forms rhetorically to describe the enemies’ defeat as if it were already accomplished. Some emend the text to קָמוּ יְבוֹשִׁי (*qamu yevoshu*, “may those who attack me be humiliated”). See L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 75.

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* “clothed.” Another option is to translate the prefixed verbal forms in this line and the next as jussives (“may my accusers be covered with shame”).

²⁸ **tn** *Heb* “I will thank the LORD very much with my mouth.”

in the middle of a crowd⁴ I will praise him,
109:31 because he stands at the right hand
of the needy,
to deliver him from those who threaten²
his life.

Psalms 110³

A psalm of David.

110:1 Here is the LORD's proclamation⁴ to
my lord:⁵

"Sit down at my right hand⁶ until I make
your enemies your footstool!"⁷

110:2 The LORD⁸ extends⁹ your domin-
ion¹⁰ from Zion.

Rule in the midst of your enemies!

110:3 Your people willingly follow you¹¹
when you go into battle.¹²

On the holy hills¹³ at sunrise¹⁴ the dew of

your youth¹⁵ belongs to you.¹⁶

110:4 The LORD makes this promise on
oath¹⁷ and will not revoke it.¹⁸

"You are an eternal priest¹⁹ after the pat-
tern of²⁰ Melchizedek."²¹

110:5 O sovereign LORD,²² at your right
hand

he strikes down²³ kings in the day he un-
leashes his anger.²⁴

¹ **tn** Heb "many."

² **tn** Heb "judge."

³ **sn** *Psalms 110*. In this royal psalm the psalmist announces God's oracle to the Davidic king. The first part of the oracle appears in v. 1, the second in v. 4. In vv. 2-3 the psalmist addresses the king, while in vv. 5-7 he appears to address God.

⁴ **tn** The word נִצְחָה (*nīṣṭum*) is used frequently in the OT of a formal divine announcement through a prophet.

⁵ **sn** *My lord*. In the psalm's original context the speaker is an unidentified prophetic voice in the royal court. In the course of time the psalm is applied to each successive king in the dynasty and ultimately to the ideal Davidic king. NT references to the psalm understand David to be speaking about his "lord," the Messiah. (See Matt 22:43-45; Mark 12:36-37; Luke 20:42-44; Acts 2:34-35).

⁶ **tn** To sit at the "right hand" of the king was an honor (see 1 Kgs 2:19). In Ugaritic myth (CTA 4 v. 108-10) the artisan god Kothar-and Khasis is described as sitting at the right hand of the storm god Baal. See G. R. Driver, *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, 61-62.

⁷ **sn** The Lord's invitation to the Davidic king to sit down at his right hand reflects the king's position as the Lord's vice-regent.

⁸ **tn** When the Lord made his covenant with David, he promised to subdue the king's enemies (see 2 Sam 7:9-11; Ps 89:22-23).

⁹ **tn** Since the Lord is mentioned in the third person (note the use of the first person in v. 1), it is likely that these are the psalmist's words to the king, not a continuation of the oracle per se.

¹⁰ **tn** The prefixed verbal form is understood here as descriptive-dramatic or as generalizing, though it could be taken as future.

¹¹ **tn** Heb "your strong scepter," symbolic of the king's royal authority and dominion.

¹² **tn** Heb "your people, free will offerings." Perhaps the people, in their willingness to volunteer, are compared metaphorically to freewill offerings. Following the LXX, some revocalize the text and read "with you is nobility."

¹³ **tn** Heb "in the day of your power."

¹⁴ **tc** Heb "in splendor of holiness." The plural construct form הַדְרֵי (*hadrey*, from הָדַר, *hadar*, "splendor") occurs only here; it may indicate degree or perhaps refer by metonymy to garments (see Pss 29:2 and 96:9, where the phrase הַדְרֵי קִדְשׁ [*hadrat qodesh*] refers to "holy attire"). If one retains the reading of the MT, this phrase should probably be taken with the preceding line. However, because of the subsequent references to "dawn" and to "dew," it is better to emend the text to הַרְרֵי קִדְשׁ [*harrey qodesh*, "mountains of holiness"], a reading found in many medieval Hebrew MSS and in some other ancient witnesses (see Joel 2:2; Ps 133:3, as well as L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* [WBC], 80). The "mountains of holiness" are probably the hills surrounding Zion (see Ps 87:1; 125:2; 133:3).

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "from the womb of dawn." The Hebrew noun

רֶחֶם (*rekhem*, "womb") is probably used here metonymically for "birth." The form מִשְׁחָר (*mishkhar*) occurs only here and should be emended to שָׁחַר (*shakhar*, "dawn") with the *mem* (ב) being understood as dittographic (note the final *mem* [ב] on the preceding word). The phrase "womb [i.e., "birth"] of dawn" refers to sunrise.

¹⁶ **sn** The point of the metaphor is not entirely clear. The dew may symbolize the king's youthful vitality or, more likely (note the parallelism), may refer to his army of strong, youthful warriors.

¹⁷ **tn** Heb "to you [is]."

¹⁸ **tn** Or "swears, vows."

¹⁹ **tn** Or "will not change his mind." The negated Niphal imperfect of נָחַם (*nakhham*) is a way of marking an announcement as an irrevocable decree. See 1 Sam 15:29; Ezek 24:14, as well as R. B. Chisholm, "Does God 'Change His Mind?'" *BSac* 152 (1995): 387-99.

²⁰ **sn** *You are an eternal priest*. The Davidic king exercised a non-Levitical priestly role. The king superintended Judah's cultic ritual, had authority over the Levites, and sometimes led in formal worship. David himself instructed the Levites to bring the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem (1 Chr 15:11-15), joined the procession, offered sacrifices, wore a priestly ephod, and blessed the people (2 Sam 6:12-19). At the dedication of the temple Solomon led the ceremony, offering sacrifices and praying on behalf of the people (1 Kgs 8).

²¹ **tn** The phrase עֲלֵי־דָבָרִיתִי (*al-divraty*) is a variant of עֲלֵי־דָבָרִיתִי (*al-divrar*; the final *qof* [ן] being an archaic genitival ending), which in turn is a variant of עַל־דָּבָר (*al davar*). Both phrases can mean "concerning" or "because of," but neither of these nuances fits the use of עֲלֵי־דָבָרִיתִי in Ps 110:4. Here the phrase probably carries the sense "according to the manner of." See L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 81.

²² **tn** The Davidic king's priestly role is analogous to that of Melchizedek, who was both "king of Salem" (i.e., Jerusalem) and a "priest of God Most High" in the time of Abraham (Gen 14:18-20). Like Melchizedek, the Davidic king was a royal priest, distinct from the Aaronic line (see Heb 7). The analogy focuses on the king's priestly role; the language need not imply that Melchizedek himself was "an eternal priest."

²³ **tn** As pointed in the Hebrew text, this title refers to God (many medieval Hebrew MSS read יְהוָה, *Yehveh*, "LORD" here). The present translation assumes that the psalmist here addresses the LORD as he celebrates what the king is able to accomplish while positioned at God's "right hand." According to this view the king is the subject of the third person verb forms in vv. 5b-7. (2) Another option is to understand the king as the addressee (as in vv. 2-3). In this case "the LORD" is the subject of the third person verbs throughout vv. 5-7 and is depicted as a warrior in a very anthropomorphic manner. In this case the LORD is pictured as being at the psalmist's right hand (just the opposite of v. 1). See Pss 16:8; 121:5. (3) A third option is to revocalize אֲדֹנָי (*adonay*, "LORD") as אֲדֹנָי, "my lord"; see v. 1). In this case one may translate, "My lord, at his [God's] right hand, strikes down." In this case the king is the subject of the third person verbs in vv. 5b-7.

²⁴ **tn** The perfect verbal forms in vv. 5-6 are understood here as descriptive-dramatic or as generalizing. Another option is to take them as rhetorical. In this case the psalmist describes anticipated events as if they had already taken place.

²⁵ **tn** Heb "in the day of his anger."

110:6 He executes judgment¹ against² the nations;
he fills the valleys with corpses;³
he shatters their heads over the vast
battlefield.⁴

110:7 From the stream along the road he
drinks;
then he lifts up his head.⁵

*Psalm 111*⁶

111:1 Praise the LORD!
I will give thanks to the LORD with my
whole heart,
in the assembly of the godly and the con-
gregation.

111:2 The LORD's deeds are great,
eagerly awaited⁷ by all who desire them.

111:3 His work is majestic and glorious,⁸
and his faithfulness endures⁹ forever.

111:4 He does¹⁰ amazing things that will
be remembered;¹¹

the LORD is merciful and compassionate.

111:5 He gives¹² food to his faithful fol-
lowers;¹³

he always remembers his covenant.¹⁴

111:6 He announced that he would do
mighty deeds for his people,
giving them a land that belonged to other
nations.¹⁵

¹ **tn** The imperfect verbal forms in vv. 6-7 are understood here as descriptive-dramatic or as generalizing, though they could be taken as future.

² **tn** Or "among."

³ **tn** *Heb* "he fills [with] corpses," but one expects a double accusative here. The translation assumes an emendation to מָלֵא בְּגוֹיֹת נַפְשֵׁי (for a similar construction see Ezek 32:5). In the former case גוֹיֹת (*ge'ayot*) has accidentally dropped from the text due to homoioteleuton; in the latter case it has dropped out due to homoiocaton.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "he strikes [the verb is מַכָּהִים (*nakhats*), translated "strikes down" in v. 5] head[s] over a great land." The Hebrew term רַבָּה (*rabbah*, "great") is here used of distance or spatial measurement (see 1 Sam 26:13).

⁵ **tn** Here the expression "lifts up the head" refers to the renewed physical strength and emotional vigor (see Ps 3:3) provided by the refreshing water. For another example of a victorious warrior being energized by water in the aftermath of battle, see Judg 15:18-19 (see also 1 Sam 30:11-12, where the setting is different, however).

⁶ **sn** *Psalm 111*. The psalmist praises God for his marvelous deeds, especially the way in which he provides for and delivers his people. The psalm is an acrostic. After the introductory call to praise, every poetic line (twenty-two in all) begins with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "sought out."

⁸ **tn** For other uses of the Hebrew phrase הֹדוּ וְהִרְרֵהוּ (*hoday'hadar*, "majesty and splendor") see 1 Chr 16:27; Job 40:10; Pss 21:5; 96:6; 104:1.

⁹ **tn** Or "stands."

¹⁰ **tn** Or "did," if this refers primarily to the events of the exodus and conquest period (see vv. 6, 9).

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "a memorial he had made for his amazing deeds."

¹² **tn** Or "gave," if the events of the exodus and conquest period (see v. 6, 9) are primarily in view.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "those who fear him."

¹⁴ **tn** Or "he remembers his covenant forever" (see Ps 105:8).

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "the strength of his deeds he proclaimed to his people, to give to them an inheritance of nations."

111:7 His acts are characterized by¹⁶ faith-
fulness and justice;
all his precepts are reliable.¹⁷

111:8 They are forever firm,
and should be faithfully and properly car-
ried out.¹⁸

111:9 He delivered his people;¹⁹
he ordained that his covenant be observed
forever.²⁰

His name is holy and awesome.

111:10 To obey the LORD is the fundamen-
tal principle for wise living,²¹
all who carry out his precepts acquire
good moral insight.²²

He will receive praise forever.²³

*Psalm 112*²⁴

112:1 Praise the LORD!
How blessed is the one²⁵ who obeys²⁶ the
LORD,
who takes great delight in keeping his
commands.²⁷

112:2 His descendants²⁸ will be powerful
on the earth;
the godly²⁹ will be blessed.

112:3 His house contains wealth and
riches;
his integrity endures.³⁰

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "the deeds of his hands [are]."

¹⁷ **tn** That is, fair and for man's good.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "done in faithfulness and uprightness." The passive participle probably has the force of a gerund. See L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 89.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "redemption he sent for his people."

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "he commanded forever his covenant."

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "the beginning of wisdom [is] the fear of the LORD."

²² **tn** *Heb* "good sense [is] to all who do them." The third masculine plural pronominal suffix must refer back to the "precepts" mentioned in v. 7. In the translation the referent has been specified for clarity. The phrase שֵׁבֶל טוֹב (*shekhel tov*) also occurs in Prov 3:4; 13:15 and 2 Chr 30:22.

²³ **tn** *Heb* "his praise stands forever."

²⁴ **sn** *Psalm 112*. This wisdom psalm lists some of the benefits of living a godly life. The psalm is an acrostic. After the introductory call to praise, every poetic line (twenty-two in all) begins with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "[Oh] the happiness [of] the man." Hebrew wisdom literature often assumes and reflects the male-oriented perspective of ancient Israelite society. The individual is representative of a larger group, called the "godly" in vv. 3-4. The principle of the psalm is certainly applicable to all people, regardless of their gender. To facilitate modern application, we translate the gender specific "man" with the more neutral "one." The generic masculine pronoun is used in the following verses.

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "fears."

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* "in his commands he delights very much." The words "in keeping" are supplied in the translation for clarification. Taking delight in the law is metonymic here for obeying God's moral will. See Pss 1:2.

²⁸ **tn** Or "offspring"; *Heb* "seed."

²⁹ **tn** *Heb* "His seed will be mighty on the earth, the generation of the godly." The Hebrew term דּוֹר (*dor*, "generation") could be taken as parallel to "offspring" and translated "posterity," but the singular more likely refers to the godly as a class. See BDB 189-90 s.v. for other examples where "generation" refers to a class of people.

³⁰ **tn** *Heb* "stands forever."

112:4 In the darkness a light⁴ shines for the godly,
for each one who is merciful, compassionate, and just.²
112:5 It goes well for the one³ who generously lends money,
and conducts his business honestly.⁴
112:6 For he will never be upended; others will always remember one who is just.⁵
112:7 He does not fear bad news. He⁶ is confident; he trusts⁷ in the LORD.
112:8 His resolve⁸ is firm; he will not succumb to fear
before he looks in triumph on his enemies.
112:9 He generously gives⁹ to the needy; his integrity endures.¹⁰
He will be vindicated and honored.¹¹
112:10 When the wicked¹² see this, they will worry;
they will grind their teeth in frustration¹³ and melt away;
the desire of the wicked will perish.¹⁴

*Psalm 113*¹⁵

113:1 Praise the LORD!
Praise, you servants of the LORD,
praise the name of the LORD!

¹ **tn** In this context “light” symbolizes divine blessing in its various forms (see v. 2), including material prosperity and stability.

² **tn** *Heb* “merciful and compassionate and just.” The Hebrew text has three singular adjectives, which are probably substantival and in apposition to the “godly” (which is plural, however). By switching to the singular, the psalmist focuses on each individual member of the group known as the “godly.” Note how vv. 5-9, like vv. 1-2a, use the singular to describe the representative godly individual who typifies the whole group.

³ **tn** *Heb* “man.”

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “he sustains his matters with justice.”

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “for an eternal memorial a just [one] will be.”

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “his heart,” viewed here as the seat of the volition and emotions (see Ps 108:1).

⁷ **tn** The passive participle בָּטְחָהּ [בְּטִיחָהּ] (*batuakh* [*batuakh*]) expresses a state that results from the subject’s action. See Isa 26:3.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “his heart,” viewed here as the seat of the volition.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “he scatters, he gives.”

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “stands forever.”

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “his horn will be lifted up in honor.” The horn of an ox underlies the metaphor (see Deut 33:17; 1 Kgs 22:11; Ps 92:10). The horn of the wild ox is frequently a metaphor for military strength; the idiom “exalt/lift up the horn” signifies military victory (see 1 Sam 2:10; Pss 89:17, 24; 92:10; Lam 2:17).

¹² **tn** The Hebrew text uses the singular; the representative wicked individual is in view as typifying the group (note the use of the plural form in v. 10).

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “his teeth he will gnash.” In Pss 35:16 and 37:12 this action is associated with a vicious attack.

¹⁴ **tn** This could mean that the desires of the wicked will go unfulfilled. Another possibility is that “desire” refers by metonymy to the object desired and acquired. In this case the point is that the wicked will lose what they desired so badly and acquired by evil means (see Ps 10:3).

¹⁵ **sn** *Psalm 113*. The psalmist praises God as the sovereign king of the world who reaches down to help the needy.

113:2 May the LORD’s name be praised now and forevermore!

113:3 From east to west¹⁶

the LORD’s name is deserving of praise.

113:4 The LORD is exalted over all the nations;

his splendor reaches beyond the sky.¹⁷

113:5 Who can compare to the LORD our God,

who sits on a high throne?¹⁸

113:6 He bends down to look¹⁹

at the sky and the earth.

113:7 He raises the poor from the dirt, and lifts up the needy from the garbage pile,²⁰

113:8 that he might seat him with princes, with the princes of his people.

113:9 He makes the barren woman of the family²¹

a happy mother of children.²²

Praise the LORD!

*Psalm 114*²³

114:1 When Israel left Egypt,
when the family of Jacob left a foreign nation behind,²⁴

114:2 Judah became his sanctuary,
Israel his kingdom.

114:3 The sea looked and fled;²⁵

the Jordan River²⁶ turned back.²⁷

114:4 The mountains skipped like rams,
the hills like lambs.²⁸

114:5 Why do you flee, O sea?

Why do you turn back, O Jordan River?

114:6 Why do you skip like rams, O mountains,

like lambs, O hills?

114:7 Tremble, O earth, before the Lord –
before the God of Jacob,

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “from the rising of the sun to its setting.” The extent is not temporal (“from sunrise to sunset”) but spatial (“from the place where the sun rises [the east] to the place where it sets [the west].”) In the phenomenological language of OT cosmology, the sun was described as rising in the east and setting in the west.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “above the sky [is] his splendor.”

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “the one who makes high to sit.”

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “the one who makes low to see.”

²⁰ **sn** The language of v. 7 is almost identical to that of 1 Sam 2:8.

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “of the house.”

²² **tn** *Heb* “sons.”

²³ **sn** *Psalm 114*. The psalmist recalls the events of the exodus and conquest and celebrates God’s kingship over his covenant people.

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* “the house of Jacob from a nation speaking a foreign language.” The Hebrew verb יָדַעַ [la’at, “to speak a foreign language”) occurs only here in the OT.

²⁵ **sn** The psalmist recalls the crossing of the Red Sea (Exod 14:21).

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* “the Jordan” (also in v. 5). The word “River” is not in the Hebrew text, but has been supplied in the translation for clarity.

²⁷ **sn** The psalmist recalls the crossing of the Jordan River (Josh 3:13, 16).

²⁸ **sn** *The mountains skipped like rams, the hills like lambs*. This may recall the theophany at Sinai when the mountain shook before God’s presence (Exod 19:18).

114:8 who turned a rock into a pool of water,
a hard rock into springs of water!⁴

Psalm 115²

115:1 Not to us, O LORD, not to us!
But to your name bring honor,³
for the sake of your loyal love and faithfulness.⁴

115:2 Why should the nations say,
“Where is their God?”

115:3 Our God is in heaven!

He does whatever he pleases!⁵

115:4 Their⁶ idols are made of silver and gold –

they are man-made.⁷

115:5 They have mouths, but cannot speak,

eyes, but cannot see,

115:6 ears, but cannot hear,

noses, but cannot smell,

115:7 hands, but cannot touch,

feet, but cannot walk.

They cannot even clear their throats.⁸

115:8 Those who make them will end up⁹
like them,

as will everyone who trusts in them.

115:9 O Israel, trust in the LORD!

He is their deliverer¹⁰ and protector.¹¹

115:10 O family¹² of Aaron, trust in the LORD!

He is their deliverer¹³ and protector.¹⁴

115:11 You loyal followers of the LORD,¹⁵
trust in the LORD!

He is their deliverer¹⁶ and protector.¹⁷

¹ **sn** In v. 8 the psalmist recalls the event(s) recorded in Exod 17:6 and/or Num 20:11 (see also Deut 8:15 and Ps 78:15-16, 20).

² **sn** *Psalm 115*. The psalmist affirms that Israel's God is superior to pagan idols and urges Israel to place their confidence in him.

³ **tn** Or “give glory.”

⁴ **sn** The psalmist asks the LORD to demonstrate his *loyal love and faithfulness*, not simply so Israel may benefit, but primarily so that the LORD will receive honor among the nations, who will recognize, contrary to their present view (see v. 2), that Israel's God is committed to his people.

⁵ **sn** *He does whatever he pleases*. Such sovereignty is characteristic of kings (see Eccl 8:3).

⁶ **tn** The referent of the pronominal suffix is “the nations” (v. 2).

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “the work of the hands of man.”

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “they cannot mutter in their throats.” Verse 5a refers to speaking, v. 7c to inarticulate sounds made in the throat (see M. Dahood, *Psalms* [AB], 3:140-41).

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “will be.” Another option is to take the prefixed verbal form as a prayer, “may those who make them end up like them.”

sn Because the idols are lifeless, they cannot help their worshipers in times of crisis. Consequently the worshipers *end up* as dead as the gods in which they trust.

¹⁰ **tn** Or “[source of] help.”

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “and their shield.”

¹² **tn** *Heb* “house.”

¹³ **tn** Or “[source of] help.”

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “and their shield.”

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “[you] fearers of the LORD.” See Ps 15:4.

¹⁶ **tn** Or “[source of] help.”

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “and their shield.”

115:12 The LORD takes notice of us,¹⁸ he will bless¹⁹ –

he will bless the family²⁰ of Israel,
he will bless the family of Aaron.

115:13 He will bless his loyal followers,²¹
both young and old.²²

115:14 May he increase your numbers,
yours and your children's!²³

115:15 May you be blessed by the LORD,
the Creator²⁴ of heaven and earth!

115:16 The heavens belong to the LORD,²⁵
but the earth he has given to mankind.²⁶

115:17 The dead do not praise the LORD,
nor do any of those who descend into the
silence of death.²⁷

115:18 But we will praise the LORD
now and forevermore.

Praise the LORD!

Psalm 116²⁸

116:1 I love the LORD

because he heard my plea for mercy,²⁹

116:2 and listened to me.³⁰

As long as I live, I will call to him when
I need help.³¹

116:3 The ropes of death tightened around
me,³²

the snares³³ of Sheol confronted me.

¹⁸ **tn** Or “remembers us.”

¹⁹ **tn** Another option is to translate the prefixed form of the verb “bless” in vv. 12-13 as a jussive, “may he bless” (see v. 14).

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* “house.”

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “the fearers of the LORD.”

²² **tn** *Heb* “the small along with the great.” The translation assumes that “small” and “great” here refer to age (see 2 Chr 15:13). Another option is to translate “both the insignificant and the prominent” (see Job 3:19; cf. NEB “high and low alike”).

²³ **tn** *Heb* “may he add to you, to you and your sons.” The prefixed verbal form is jussive, indicating this is a prayer.

²⁴ **tn** Or “maker.”

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “the heavens [are] heavens to the LORD.”

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* “to the sons of man.”

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* “silence,” a metonymy here for death (see Ps 94:17).

²⁸ **sn** *Psalm 116*. The psalmist thanks the Lord for delivering him from a life threatening crisis and promises to tell the entire covenant community what God has done for him.

²⁹ **tn** *Heb* “I love because the LORD heard my voice, my pleas.” It is possible that “the LORD” originally appeared directly after “I love” and was later accidentally misplaced. The translation assumes the prefixed verbal form is a preterite. The psalmist recalls that God heard his cry for help (note the perfect in v. 2a and the narrative in vv. 3-4).

³⁰ **tn** *Heb* “because he turned his ear to me.”

³¹ **tn** *Heb* “and in my days I will cry out.”

³² **tn** *Heb* “surrounded me.”

³³ **tn** The Hebrew noun בְּצָר (‘‘straits; distress’’) occurs only here, Ps 118:5 and Lam 1:3. If retained, it refers to Sheol as a place where one is confined or severely restricted (cf. BDB 865 s.v. בְּצָר, ‘‘the straits of Sheol’’; NIV ‘‘the anguish of the grave’’; NRSV ‘‘the pangs of Sheol’’). However, HALOT 624 s.v. בְּצָר suggests an emendation to מִצְדָּי (‘‘m^{ts}adey, ‘‘snares of’’), a rare noun attested in Job 19:6 and Eccl 7:26. This proposal, which is reflected in the translation, produces better parallelism with ‘‘ropes’’ in the preceding line.

I was confronted¹ with trouble and sorrow.

116:4 I called on the name of the LORD,
“Please LORD, rescue my life!”

116:5 The LORD is merciful and fair;
our God is compassionate.

116:6 The LORD protects² the untrained;³
I was in serious trouble⁴ and he delivered
me.

116:7 Rest once more, my soul,⁵
for the LORD has vindicated you.⁶

116:8 Yes,⁷ LORD,⁸ you rescued my life
from death,
and kept my feet from stumbling.

116:9 I will serve⁹ the LORD
in the land¹⁰ of the living.

116:10 I had faith when I said,
“I am severely oppressed.”

116:11 I rashly declared,¹¹
“All men are liars.”

116:12 How can I repay the LORD
for all his acts of kindness to me?

116:13 I will celebrate my deliverance,¹²
and call on the name of the LORD.

116:14 I will fulfill my vows to the LORD
before all his people.

116:15 The LORD values
the lives of his faithful followers.¹³

116:16 Yes, LORD! I am indeed your servant;
I am your lowest slave.¹⁴
You saved me from death.¹⁵

¹ **tn** The translation assumes the prefixed verbal form is a preterite. The psalmist recalls the crisis from which the Lord delivered him.

² **tn** *Heb* “guards.” The active participle indicates this is a characteristic of the LORD.

³ **tn** Or “the [morally] naive,” that is, the one who is young and still in the process of learning right from wrong and distinguishing wisdom from folly. See Ps 19:7.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “I was low.”

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “return, my soul, to your place of rest.”

⁶ **tn** The Hebrew idiom *נָצַל עַל (gamal ‘al)* means “to repay,” here in a positive sense (cf. Ps 13:5).

⁷ **tn** Or “for.”

⁸ **tn** “LORD” is supplied here in the translation for clarification.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “walk before” (see Ps 56:13). On the meaning of the Hebrew idiom, see the notes at 2 Kgs 20:3/Isa 38:3.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “lands, regions.”

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “I said in my haste.”

¹² **tn** *Heb* “a cup of deliverance I will lift up.” Perhaps this alludes to a drink offering the psalmist will present as he thanks the LORD for his deliverance. See v. 17.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “precious in the eyes of the LORD [is] the death of his godly ones.” The point is not that God delights in or finds satisfaction in the death of his followers! The psalmist, who has been delivered from death, affirms that the life-threatening experiences of God’s followers get God’s attention, just as a precious or rare object would attract someone’s eye. See Ps 72:14 for a similar expression of this belief.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “I am your servant, the son of your female servant.” The phrase “son of a female servant” (see also Ps 86:16) is used of a son born to a secondary wife or concubine (Exod 23:12). In some cases the child’s father is the master of the house (see Gen 21:10, 13; Judg 9:18). The use of the expression here certainly does not imply that the LORD has such a secondary wife or concubine! It is used metaphorically and idiomatically to emphasize the psalmist’s humility before the LORD and his status as the LORD’s servant.

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “you have loosed my bonds.” In this context the imagery refers to deliverance from death (see v. 3).

116:17 I will present a thank offering to
you,

and call on the name of the LORD.

116:18 I will fulfill my vows to the LORD
before all his people,

116:19 in the courts of the LORD’s temple,
in your midst, O Jerusalem.
Praise the LORD!

*Psalm 117*¹⁶

117:1 Praise the LORD, all you nations!

Applaud him, all you foreigners!¹⁷

117:2 For his loyal love towers¹⁸ over us,
and the LORD’s faithfulness endures.

Praise the LORD!

*Psalm 118*¹⁹

118:1 Give thanks to the LORD, for he is
good
and his loyal love endures!²⁰

118:2 Let Israel say,

“Yes, his loyal love endures!”

118:3 Let the family²¹ of Aaron say,

“Yes, his loyal love endures!”

118:4 Let the loyal followers of the LORD²²
say,

“Yes, his loyal love endures!”

118:5 In my distress²³ I cried out to the
LORD.

The LORD answered me and put me in a
wide open place.²⁴

118:6 The LORD is on my side,²⁵ I am not
afraid!

What can people do to me?²⁶

118:7 The LORD is on my side²⁷ as my
helper.²⁸

I look in triumph on those who hate me.

118:8 It is better to take shelter²⁹ in the
LORD

¹⁶ **sn** *Psalm 117*. The psalmist tells the nations to praise the Lord for his loyal love and faithfulness.

¹⁷ **tn** Or “peoples” (see Ps 108:3).

¹⁸ **tn** For this sense of the Hebrew verb *גָּבַר (gavar)*, see Ps 103:11 and L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150 (WBC)*, 17, 19.

¹⁹ **sn** *Psalm 118*. The psalmist thanks God for his deliverance and urges others to join him in praise.

²⁰ **tn** Or “is forever.”

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “house.”

²² **tn** *Heb* “fearers of the LORD.” See Ps 15:4.

²³ **tn** *Heb* “from the distress.” The noun *מַצָּר (metsar)*, “straits; distress”) occurs only here and in Lam 1:3. In Ps 116:3 *מַצָּר* should probably be emended to *מַצָּדֵי (metsadey)*, “snares of”).

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* “the LORD answered me in a wide open place.”

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “for me.”

²⁶ **tn** The rhetorical question assumes the answer, “Nothing!” The imperfect is used in a modal sense here, indicating capability or potential. See Ps 56:11.

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* “for me.”

²⁸ **tn** *Heb* “among my helpers.” The preposition may indicate identity here, while the plural may be one of majesty or respect.

²⁹ **tn** “Taking shelter” in the LORD is an idiom for seeking his protection. Seeking his protection presupposes and even demonstrates the subject’s loyalty to the LORD. In the psalms those who “take shelter” in the LORD are contrasted with the wicked and equated with those who love, fear, and serve the LORD (Pss 5:11-12; 31:17-20; 34:21-22).

than to trust in people.

118:9 It is better to take shelter in the LORD than to trust in princes.

118:10 All the nations surrounded me.¹ Indeed, in the name of the LORD² I pushed them away.³

118:11 They surrounded me, yes, they surrounded me. Indeed, in the name of the LORD I pushed them away.

118:12 They surrounded me like bees. But they disappeared as quickly⁴ as a fire among thorns.⁵

Indeed, in the name of the LORD I pushed them away.

118:13 “You aggressively attacked me⁶ and tried to knock me down,⁷ but the LORD helped me.

118:14 The LORD gives me strength and protects me;⁸ he has become my deliverer.”⁹

118:15 They celebrate deliverance in the tents of the godly.¹⁰

The LORD’s right hand conquers.¹¹

118:16 the LORD’s right hand gives victory,¹² the LORD’s right hand conquers.

¹ **sn** The reference to an attack by the nations suggests the psalmist may have been a military leader.

² **tn** In this context the phrase “in the name of the LORD” means “by the LORD’s power.”

³ **tn** Traditionally the verb has been derived from כּוּל (mul, “to circumcise”) and translated “[I] cut [them] off” (see BDB 557-58 s.v. כּוּל). However, it is likely that this is a homonym meaning “to fend off” (see HALOT 556 s.v. כּוּל) or “to push away.” In this context, where the psalmist is reporting his past experience, the prefixed verbal form is best understood as a preterite. The phrase also occurs in vv. 11, 12.

⁴ **tn** Heb “were extinguished.”

⁵ **tn** The point seems to be that the hostility of the nations (v. 10) is short-lived, like a fire that quickly devours thorns and then burns out. Some, attempting to create a better parallel with the preceding line, emend כּוּל (do’akhu, “they were extinguished”) to כּוּר (ba’anu, “they burned”). In this case the statement emphasizes their hostility.

⁶ **tn** Heb “pushing, you pushed me.” The infinitive absolute emphasizes the following verbal idea. The psalmist appears to address the nations as if they were an individual enemy. Some find this problematic and emend the verb form (which is a Qal perfect second masculine singular with a first person singular suffix) to כּוּר (nidkheti), a Niphal perfect first common singular, “I was pushed.”

⁷ **tn** Heb “to fall,” i.e., “that [I] might fall.”

⁸ **tn** Heb “my strength and protection [is] the LORD.” The Hebrew term זִמְרָה (zimrat) is traditionally understood as meaning “song” (“my strength and song [is] the LORD”) in which case one might translate, “for the LORD gives me strength and joy” (i.e., a reason to sing). However, many recent commentators have argued that the noun זִמְרָה is here a homonym, meaning “protection” or “strength.” See HALOT 274 s.v.; cf. NEB “The LORD is my refuge and defence”; NRSV “my strength and my might.”

⁹ **tn** Or “salvation.”

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “the sound of a ringing shout and deliverance [is] in the tents of the godly.”

¹¹ **tn** Heb “does valiantly.” The statement refers here to military success (see Num 24:18; 1 Sam 14:48; Pss 60:12; 108:13).

¹² **tn** Heb “exalts.”

118:17 I will not die, but live, and I will proclaim what the LORD has done.¹³

118:18 The LORD severely¹⁴ punished me, but he did not hand me over to death.

118:19 Open for me the gates of the just king’s temple!¹⁵ I will enter through them and give thanks to the LORD.

118:20 This is the LORD’s gate – the godly enter through it.

118:21 I will give you thanks, for you answered me, and have become my deliverer.

118:22 The stone which the builders discarded¹⁶ has become the cornerstone.¹⁷

118:23 This is the LORD’s work. We consider it amazing!¹⁸

118:24 This is the day the LORD has brought about.¹⁹

We will be happy and rejoice in it.

118:25 Please LORD, deliver!

Please LORD, grant us success!²⁰

118:26 May the one who comes in the name of the LORD²¹ be blessed!

We will pronounce blessings on you²² in the LORD’s temple.²³

¹³ **tn** Heb “the works of the LORD.”

¹⁴ **tn** The infinitive absolute emphasizes the following verbal idea.

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “the gates of justice.” The gates of the LORD’s temple are referred to here, as v. 20 makes clear. They are called “gates of justice” because they are the entrance to the just king’s palace. This has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁶ **tn** Or “rejected.”

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “the head of the corner.”

sn The metaphor of the stone...the builders discarded describes the way in which God’s deliverance reversed the psalmist’s circumstances. When he was in distress, he was like a stone which was discarded by builders as useless, but now that he has been vindicated by God, all can see that he is of special importance to God, like the cornerstone of the building.

¹⁸ **tn** Heb “it is amazing in our eyes.” The use of the plural pronoun here and in vv. 24-27 suggests that the psalmist may be speaking for the entire nation. However, it is more likely that vv. 22-27 are the people’s response to the psalmist’s thanksgiving song (see especially v. 26). They rejoice with him because his deliverance on the battlefield (see vv. 10-12) had national repercussions.

¹⁹ **tn** Heb “this is the day the LORD has made.” Though sometimes applied in a general way, this statement in its context refers to the day of deliverance which the psalmist and people celebrate.

²⁰ **sn** A petition for deliverance and success seems odd in a psalm thanking God for deliverance, but it is not unique (see Ps 9:19-20). The people ask God to continue to intervene for them as he has for the psalmist.

²¹ **sn** The people refer here to the psalmist, who enters the LORD’s temple to thank him publicly (see vv. 19-21), as the one who comes in the name of the LORD.

²² **tn** The pronominal suffix is second masculine plural, but the final mem (ם) is probably dittographic (note the mem [ם] at the beginning of the following form) or enclitic, in which case the suffix may be taken as second masculine singular, referring to the psalmist.

²³ **tn** Heb “from the house of the LORD.”

118:27 The LORD is God and he has delivered us.¹
 Tie the offering² with ropes
 to the horns of the altar!³
 118:28 You are my⁴ God and I will give
 you thanks!
 You are my God and I will praise you!
 118:29 Give thanks to the LORD, for he is
 good
 and his loyal love endures!⁵

*Psalms 119*⁶

⸀ (*Alef*)

119:1 How blessed are those whose ac-
 tions are blameless,⁷
 who obey⁸ the law of the LORD.
 119:2 How blessed are those who observe
 his rules,
 and seek him with all their heart,
 119:3 who, moreover, do no wrong,
 but follow in his footsteps.⁹
 119:4 You demand that your precepts
 be carefully kept.¹⁰
 119:5 If only I were predisposed¹¹

to keep your statutes!
 119:6 Then I would not be ashamed,
 if¹² I were focused on¹³ all your com-
 mands.
 119:7 I will give you sincere thanks,¹⁴
 when I learn your just regulations.
 119:8 I will keep your statutes.
 Do not completely abandon me!¹⁵
 ⸁ (*Bet*)
 119:9 How can a young person¹⁶ maintain
 a pure life?¹⁷
 By guarding it according to your instruc-
 tions!¹⁸
 119:10 With all my heart I seek you.
 Do not allow me to stray from your com-
 mands!
 119:11 In my heart I store up¹⁹ your words,²⁰
 so I might not sin against you.
 119:12 You deserve praise,²¹ O LORD!
 Teach me your statutes!
 119:13 With my lips I proclaim
 all the regulations you have revealed.²²
 119:14 I rejoice in the lifestyle prescribed
 by your rules²³
 as if²⁴ they were riches of all kinds.²⁵
 119:15 I will meditate on²⁶ your precepts
 and focus²⁷ on your behavior.²⁸
 119:16 I find delight²⁹ in your statutes;
 I do not forget your instructions.³⁰

¹ **tn** Heb “and he has given us light.” This may be an elliptical expression, with “his face” being implied as the object (see Num 6:25; Pss 31:16; 67:1; 80:3, 7, 19). In this case, “his face has given us light” = “he has smiled on us,” or “he has shown us his favor.” Another option (the one reflected in the translation) is that “light” here symbolizes divine blessing in the form of deliverance. “Light” is often used as a metaphor for deliverance and the life/blessings it brings. See Pss 37:6; 97:11; 112:4; Isa 49:6; 51:4; Mic 7:8. Some prefer to reposit the form לְיָמֵינוּ (l^oy^o’er; vav [l] conjunctive + jussive) and translate the statement as a prayer, “may he give us light.”

² **tn** The Hebrew noun כֹּהֵן (*khaq*) normally means “festival,” but here it apparently refers metonymically to an offering made at the festival. BDB 291 s.v. כֹּהֵן 2 interprets the word in this way here, citing as comparable the use of later Hebrew כֹּהֵן, which can refer to both a festival and a festival offering (see Jastrow 424 s.v. כֹּהֵן).

³ **tn** The second half of v. 27 has been translated and interpreted in a variety of ways. For a survey of major views, see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 122.

⁴ **sn** You are my God. The psalmist speaks again (see v. 21), responding to the words of the worshipers (v. 22-27).

⁵ **tn** Or “is forever.”

⁶ **sn** *Psalms 119*. The psalmist celebrates God’s law and the guidance it provides his people. He expresses his desire to know God’s law thoroughly so that he might experience the blessings that come to those who obey it. This lengthy psalm exhibits an elaborate acrostic pattern. The psalm is divided into twenty-two sections (corresponding to the letters of the Hebrew alphabet), each of which is comprised of eight verses. Each of the verses in the first section (vv. 1-8) begins with the letter *alef* (א), the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet. This pattern continues throughout the psalm as each new section highlights a successive letter of the alphabet. Each verse in section two (vv. 9-16) begins with the second letter of the alphabet, each verse in section three (vv. 17-24) with the third letter, etc. This rigid pattern creates a sense of order and completeness and may have facilitated memorization.

⁷ **tn** Heb “[Oh] the happiness of those who are blameless of way.”

⁸ **tn** Heb “walk in.”

⁹ **tn** Heb “walk in his ways.”

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “you, you commanded your precepts, to keep, very much.”

¹¹ **tn** Heb “if only my ways were established.”

¹² **tn** Or “when.”

¹³ **tn** Heb “I gaze at.”

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “I will give you thanks with an upright heart.”

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “do not abandon me to excess.” For other uses of the phrase עַד מְאֹד (*ad m^ood*, “to excess”), see Ps 38:6, 8.

¹⁶ **tn** Heb “young man.” Hebrew wisdom literature often assumes and reflects the male-oriented perspective of ancient Israelite society. The principle of the psalm is certainly applicable to all people, regardless of their gender or age. To facilitate modern application, the gender specific “young man” has been translated with the more neutral “young person.”

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “purify his path.”

¹⁸ **tn** Heb “by keeping according to your word.” Many medieval Hebrew mss as well as the LXX read the plural, “your words.”

¹⁹ **tn** Or “hide.”

²⁰ **tn** Heb “your word.” Some medieval Hebrew mss as well as the LXX read the plural, “your words.”

²¹ **tn** Heb “[are] blessed.”

²² **tn** Heb “of your mouth.”

²³ **tn** Heb “in the way of your rules.”

²⁴ **tn** Heb “as upon,” meaning “as if” (see 2 Chr 32:19).

²⁵ **tn** Heb “all wealth.” The phrase refers to all kinds of wealth and riches. See Prov 1:13; 6:31; 24:4; Ezek 27:12, 18.

²⁶ **tn** The cohortative verbal forms in this verse express the psalmist’s resolve.

²⁷ **tn** Heb “gaze [at].”

²⁸ **tn** Heb “ways” (referring figuratively to God’s behavior here).

²⁹ **tn** The imperfects in this verse emphasize the attitude the psalmist maintains toward God’s law. Another option is to translate with the future tense, “I will find delight...I will not forget.”

³⁰ **tn** Heb “your word.” Many medieval Hebrew mss as well as the LXX read the plural here.

ג (Gimel)

119:17 Be kind to your servant!
Then I will live¹ and keep² your instructions.³
119:18 Open⁴ my eyes so I can truly see⁵
the marvelous things in your law!
119:19 I am like a foreigner in this land.⁶
Do not hide your commands from me!
119:20 I desperately long to know⁷
your regulations at all times.
119:21 You reprimand arrogant people.
Those who stray from your commands
are doomed.⁸
119:22 Spare me⁹ shame and humiliation,
for I observe your rules.
119:23 Though rulers plot and slander me,¹⁰
your servant meditates on your statutes.
119:24 Yes, I find delight in your rules;
they give me guidance.¹¹

ד (Dalet)

119:25 I collapse in the dirt.¹²
Revive me with your word!¹³
119:26 I told you about my ways¹⁴ and you
answered me.
Teach me your statutes!
119:27 Help me to understand what your
precepts mean!¹⁵

Then I can meditate¹⁶ on your marvelous
teachings.¹⁷
119:28 I collapse¹⁸ from grief.
Sustain me by your word!¹⁹
119:29 Remove me from the path of de-
ceit!²⁰
Graciously give me²¹ your law!
119:30 I choose the path of faithfulness;
I am committed to²² your regulations.
119:31 I hold fast²³ to your rules.
O LORD, do not let me be ashamed!
119:32 I run along the path of your com-
mands,
for you enable me to do so.²⁴

ה (He)

119:33 Teach me, O LORD, the lifestyle
prescribed by your statutes,²⁵
so that I might observe it continually.²⁶
119:34 Give me understanding so that I
might observe your law,
and keep it with all my heart.²⁷

¹ **tn** The prefixed verbal form is probably a cohortative indicating purpose/result after the preceding imperative.

² **tn** The cohortative with *vav* (ו) conjunctive indicates purpose/result after the imperative that begins the verse.

³ **tn** *Heb* “your word.” Many medieval Hebrew mss as well as several ancient versions read the plural here.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “uncover.” The verb form גָּלַגְ (gal) is an apocopated Piel imperative from גָּלַגְ (galah, see GKC 214 §75.c).

⁵ **tn** The cohortative with *vav* (ו) conjunctive indicates purpose/result after the preceding imperative.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “I am a resident foreigner in the land.” Resident foreigners were especially vulnerable and in need of help. They needed to know the social and legal customs of the land to avoid getting into trouble. The translation (note the addition of “like”) assumes the psalmist is speaking metaphorically, not literally.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “my soul languishes for longing for.”

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “accursed.” The traditional punctuation of the Hebrew text takes “accursed” with the previous line (“arrogant, accursed ones”), but it is preferable to take it with the second line as the predicate of the statement.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “roll away from upon me.” Some derive the imperative form גָּלַגְ (gal) from גָּלַגְ (galah, “uncover,” as in v. 18), but here the form is from גָּלַגְ (galal, “roll”); see Josh 5:9, where חֶרְפָּה [kherpah, “shame; reproach”] also appears as object of the verb). Some, following the lead of a Dead Sea scroll (11QP^s), emend the form to גָּלַגְ (gol).

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “though rulers sit, about me they talk together.” (For another example of the Niphal of דָּבַר (davar) used with a suffixed form of the preposition ב, see Ezek 33:30.)

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “men of my counsel.” That is, God’s rules are like advisers to the psalmist, for they teach him how to live in a godly manner that refutes the accusations of his enemies.

¹² **tn** *Heb* “my soul clings to the dirt.” The Hebrew term נֶפֶשׁ (nefesh, “being; soul”) with a pronominal suffix is often equivalent to a pronoun, especially in poetry (see BDB 660 s.v. נֶפֶשׁ 4.a).

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “according to your word.” Many medieval Hebrew mss read the plural “your words.”

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “my ways I proclaimed.”

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “the way of your precepts make me understand.”

¹⁶ **tn** The cohortative with *vav* (ו) conjunctive indicates purpose/result after the preceding imperative.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “your amazing things,” which refers here to the teachings of the law (see v. 18).

¹⁸ **tn** Some translate “my soul weeps,” taking the verb דָּלַף (dalaf) from a root meaning “to drip; to drop” (BDB 196 s.v. דָּלַף). On the basis of cognate evidence from Arabic and Akkadian, HALOT 223 s.v. דָּלַף proposes a homonymic root here, meaning “be sleepless.” Following L. C. Allen (*Psalms 101-150* [WBC], 127, 135) the translation assumes that the verb is cognate with Ugaritic *dlp*, “to collapse; to crumple” in CTA 2 iv. 17, 26. See G. R. Driver, *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, 44, 144.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “according to your word.” Many medieval Hebrew mss read the plural “your words.”

²⁰ **tn** The “path of deceit” refers to a lifestyle characterized by deceit and disloyalty to God. It stands in contrast to the “way of faithfulness” in v. 30.

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “be gracious to me.” The verb is used metonymically here for “graciously giving” the law. (See Gen 33:5, where Jacob uses this verb in describing how God had graciously given him children.)

²² **tn** BDB 1000-1001 s.v. הִתְחַבֵּר derives the verb from the first homonym listed, meaning “to agree with; to be like; to resemble.” It here means (in the Piel stem) “to be accounted suitable,” which in turn would mean by metonymy “to accept; to be committed to.” Some prefer to derive the verb from a homonym meaning “to place; to set,” but in this case an elliptical prepositional phrase must be understood, “I place your regulations [before me]” (see Ps 16:8).

²³ **tn** Or “cling to.”

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* “for you make wide my heart.” The “heart” is viewed here as the seat of the psalmist’s volition and understanding. The LORD gives the psalmist the desire and moral understanding that are foundational to the willing obedience depicted metaphorically in the preceding line. In Isa 60:5 the expression “your heart will be wide” means “your heart will swell with pride,” but here the nuance appears to be different.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “the way of your statutes.”

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* “and I will keep it to the end.” The prefixed verbal form with *vav* (ו) conjunctive indicates purpose/result after the preceding imperative. The Hebrew term עָקַב (‘eqev) is understood to mean “end” here. Another option is to take עָקַב (‘eqev) as meaning “reward” here (see Ps 19:11) and to translate, “so that I might observe it and be rewarded.”

²⁷ **tn** The two prefixed verbal forms with *vav* (ו) conjunctive indicate purpose/result after the introductory imperative.

119:35 Guide me¹ in the path of your commands,
for I delight to walk in it.²
119:36 Give me a desire for your rules,³
rather than for wealth gained unjustly.⁴
119:37 Turn my eyes away from what is worthless!⁵
Revive me with your word!⁶
119:38 Confirm to your servant your promise,⁷
which you made to the one who honors you.⁸
119:39 Take away the insults that I dread!⁹
Indeed,¹⁰ your regulations are good.
119:40 Look, I long for your precepts.
Revive me with your deliverance!¹¹

י (Vav)

119:41 May I experience your loyal love,¹²
O LORD,
and your deliverance,¹³ as you promised.¹⁴
119:42 Then I will have a reply for the one
who insults me,¹⁵
for I trust in your word.
119:43 Do not completely deprive me of a
truthful testimony,¹⁶
for I await your justice.
119:44 Then I will keep¹⁷ your law continually
now and for all time.¹⁸
119:45 I will be secure,¹⁹
for I seek your precepts.
119:46 I will speak²⁰ about your regula-

tions before kings
and not be ashamed.
119:47 I will find delight in your com-
mands,
which I love.
119:48 I will lift my hands to²¹ your com-
mands,
which I love,
and I will meditate on your statutes.

י (Zayin)

119:49 Remember your word to your ser-
vant,
for you have given me hope.
119:50 This²² is what comforts me in my
trouble,
for your promise revives me.²³
119:51 Arrogant people do nothing but
scoff at me.²⁴
Yet I do not turn aside from your law.
119:52 I remember your ancient regula-
tions,²⁵
O LORD, and console myself.²⁶
119:53 Rage takes hold of me because of
the wicked,
those who reject your law.
119:54 Your statutes have been my songs²⁷
in the house where I live.²⁸

¹ tn Or "make me walk."

² tn Heb "for in it I delight."

³ tn Heb "turn my heart to your rules."

⁴ tn Heb "and not unjust gain."

⁵ tn Heb "Make my eyes pass by from looking at what is worthless."

⁶ tn Heb "by your word."

⁷ tn Heb "word."

⁸ tn Heb "which [is] for your fear," that is, the promise made to those who exhibit fear of God.

⁹ tn Heb "my reproach that I fear."

¹⁰ tn Or "for."

¹¹ tn Or "righteousness."

¹² tn Heb "and may your loyal love come to me."

¹³ tn Or "salvation" (so many English versions).

¹⁴ tn Heb "according to your word."

¹⁵ tn Heb "and I will answer [the] one who insults me a word." The prefixed verbal form with vav (v) conjunctive indicates purpose/result after the jussive (see v. 41).

¹⁶ tn Heb "do not snatch from my mouth a word of truth to excess." The psalmist wants to be able to give a reliable testimony about the LORD's loyal love (vv. 41-42), but if God does not intervene, the psalmist will be deprived of doing so, for the evidence of such love (i.e., deliverance) will be lacking.

¹⁷ tn The cohortative verbal form with vav (v) conjunctive indicates purpose/result after the negated jussive (see v. 43).

¹⁸ tn Or "forever and ever."

¹⁹ tn Heb "and I will walk about in a wide place." The cohortative with prefixed vav (v) conjunctive gives a further consequence of the anticipated positive divine response (see vv. 43-44). Another option is to take the cohortative as expressing the psalmist's request. In this case one could translate, "and please give me security."

²⁰ tn The series of four cohortatives with prefixed vav (v) conjunctive in vv. 46-48 list further consequences of the anticipated positive divine response to the request made in v. 43.

²¹ tn Lifting the hands is often associated with prayer (Pss 28:2; 63:4; Lam 2:19). (1) Because praying to God's law borders on the extreme, some prefer to emend the text to "I lift up my hands to you," eliminating "your commands, which I love" as dittographic. In this view these words were accidentally repeated from the previous verse. (2) However, it is possible that the psalmist closely associates the law with God himself because he views the law as the expression of the divine will. (3) Another option is that "lifting the hands" does not refer to prayer here, but to the psalmist's desire to receive and appropriate the law. (4) Still others understand this to be an action praising God's commands (so NCV; cf. TEV, CEV, NLT).

²² tn The demonstrative "this" refers back to the hope just mentioned or forward to the statement in the second line concerning the promise's power to revive. See the note on the word "me" at the end of the verse for further discussion.

²³ tn The hope generated by the promise (see v. 49b) brings comfort because (note "for" at the beginning of the line) the promise revives the psalmist's spirits. Another option is to take כי (ki) at the beginning of the second line in the sense of "that," in which case "this" refers to the promise's power to revive.

²⁴ tn Heb "scoff at me to excess."

²⁵ tn Heb "I remember your regulations from of old." The prepositional phrase "from of old" apparently modifies "your regulations," alluding to the fact that God revealed them to Israel in the distant past. Another option is to understand the prepositional phrase as modifying the verb, in which case one might translate, "I have long remembered your regulations."

²⁶ tn Or "find comfort."

²⁷ tn Heb "songs were your statutes to me."

²⁸ tn Heb "in the house of my dwelling place." Some take the Hebrew noun מגור (magor) in the sense of "temporary abode," and see this as a reference to the psalmist's status as a resident foreigner (see v. 19). But the noun can refer to a dwelling place in general (see Ps 55:15).

119:55 I remember your name during the night, O LORD,
and I will keep¹ your law.
119:56 This² has been my practice,
for I observe your precepts.

𐤀 (*Khet*)

119:57 The LORD is my source of security.³
I have determined⁴ to follow your instructions.⁵
119:58 I seek your favor⁶ with all my heart.
Have mercy on me as you promised!⁷
119:59 I consider my actions⁸
and follow⁹ your rules.
119:60 I keep your commands
eagerly and without delay.¹⁰
119:61 The ropes of the wicked tighten
around¹¹ me,
but I do not forget your law.
119:62 In the middle of the night I arise¹²
to thank you
for your just regulations.
119:63 I am a friend to all your loyal fol-
lowers,¹³
and to those who keep your precepts.
119:64 O LORD, your loyal love fills the
earth.
Teach me your statutes!

𐤃 (*Tet*)

119:65 You are good¹⁴ to your servant,
O LORD, just as you promised.¹⁵
119:66 Teach me proper discernment¹⁶ and
understanding!
For I consider your commands to be reli-
able.¹⁷
119:67 Before I was afflicted I used to
stray off,¹⁸
but now I keep your instructions.¹⁹
119:68 You are good and you do good.

¹ tn The cohortative verbal form expresses the psalmist's resolve to obey the law.

² tn Heb "this has been to me." The demonstrative "this" (1) refers back to the practices mentioned in vv. 54-55, or (2) looks forward to the statement in the second line, in which case the 𐤀 (*ki*) at the beginning of the second line should be translated "that."

³ tn Heb "my portion [is] the LORD." The psalmist compares the LORD to landed property, which was foundational to economic stability in ancient Israel (see Ps 16:5).

⁴ tn Heb "I said."

⁵ tn Heb "to keep your words" (see v. 9).

⁶ tn Heb "I appease your face."

⁷ tn Heb "according to your word."

⁸ tn Heb "my ways."

⁹ tn Heb "and I turn my feet toward."

¹⁰ tn Heb "I hurry and I do not delay to keep your commands."

¹¹ tn Heb "surround."

¹² tn The psalmist uses an imperfect verbal form to emphasize that this is his continuing practice.

¹³ tn Heb "to all who fear you."

¹⁴ tn Heb "do good."

¹⁵ tn Heb "according to your word."

¹⁶ tn Heb "goodness of taste." Here "taste" refers to moral and ethical discernment.

¹⁷ tn Heb "for I believe in your commands."

¹⁸ tn Heb "before I suffered, I was straying off."

¹⁹ tn Heb "your word."

Teach me your statutes!

119:69 Arrogant people smear my reputa-
tion with lies,²⁰
but I observe your precepts with all my
heart.

119:70 Their hearts are calloused,²¹
but I find delight in your law.

119:71 It was good for me to suffer,
so that I might learn your statutes.

119:72 The law you have revealed is more
important to me
than thousands of pieces of gold and
silver.²²

׃ (*Yod*)

119:73 Your hands made me and formed
me.²³

Give me understanding so that I might
learn²⁴ your commands.

119:74 Your loyal followers will be glad
when they see me.²⁵

for I find hope in your word.

119:75 I know, LORD, that your regula-
tions²⁶ are just.

You disciplined me because of your faith-
ful devotion to me.²⁷

119:76 May your loyal love console me,
as you promised your servant.²⁸

119:77 May I experience your compas-
sion,²⁹ so I might live!

For I find delight in your law.

119:78 May the arrogant be humiliated, for
they have slandered me!³⁰

But I meditate on your precepts.

119:79 May your loyal followers³¹ turn to
me,

those who know your rules.

119:80 May I be fully committed to your
statutes,³²

so that I might not be ashamed.

𐤂 (*Kaf*)

119:81 I desperately long for³³ your deliv-
erance.

I find hope in your word.

²⁰ tn Heb "smear over me a lie."

²¹ tn Heb "their heart is insensitive like fat."

²² tn Heb "better to me [is] the law of your mouth than thou-
sands of gold and silver."

²³ tn Heb "made me and established me." The two verbs
also appear together in Deut 32:6, where God, compared to a
father, is said to have "made and established" Israel.

²⁴ tn The cohortative verbal form with vav (ו) conjunctive indi-
cates purpose/result after the preceding imperative.

²⁵ tn Heb "those who fear you will see me and rejoice."

²⁶ tn In this context (note the second line) the Hebrew term
מִשְׁפָּטִים (*mishpatim*), which so often refers to the regulations
of God's law elsewhere in this psalm, may refer instead to his
decisions or disciplinary judgment.

²⁷ tn Heb "and [in] faithfulness you afflicted me."

²⁸ tn Heb "according to your word to your servant."

²⁹ tn Heb "and may your compassion come to me."

³⁰ tn Heb "for [with] falsehood they have denied me jus-
tice."

³¹ tn Heb "those who fear you."

³² tn Heb "may my heart be complete in your statutes."

³³ tn Heb "my soul pines for." See Ps 84:2.

119:82 My eyes grow tired as I wait for your promise to be fulfilled.¹

I say,² “When will you comfort me?”

119:83 For³ I am like a wineskin⁴ dried up in smoke.⁵

I do not forget your statutes.

119:84 How long must your servant endure this?⁶

When will you judge those who pursue me?

119:85 The arrogant dig pits to trap me,⁷ which violates your law.⁸

119:86 All your commands are reliable. I am pursued without reason.⁹ Help me!

119:87 They have almost destroyed me here on the earth,

but I do not reject your precepts.

119:88 Revive me with¹⁰ your loyal love, that I might keep¹¹ the rules you have revealed.¹²

לָ (Lamed)

119:89 O LORD, your instructions endure; they stand secure in heaven.¹³

119:90 You demonstrate your faithfulness to all generations.¹⁴

You established the earth and it stood firm.

119:91 Today they stand firm by your decrees,

for all things are your servants.

119:92 If I had not found encouragement in your law,¹⁵

I would have died in my sorrow.¹⁶

¹ **tn** Heb “my eyes fail for your word.” The psalmist has intently kept his eyes open, looking for God to intervene, but now his eyes are watery and bloodshot, impairing his vision. See Ps 69:3.

² **tn** Heb “saying.”

³ **tn** Or “even though.”

⁴ **tn** The Hebrew word נֶזֶק (*no'q*, “leather container”) refers to a container made from animal skin which is used to hold wine or milk (see Josh 9:4, 13; Judg 4:19; 1 Sam 16:20).

⁵ **tn** Heb “in the smoke.”

⁶ **tn** Heb “How long are the days of your servant?”

⁷ **tn** Heb “for me.”

⁸ **tn** Heb “which [is] not according to your law.”

⁹ **sn** God’s commands are a *reliable* guide to right and wrong. By keeping them the psalmist is doing what is right, yet he is still persecuted.

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “according to.”

¹¹ **tn** The cohortative verbal form with *vav* (ו) conjunctive indicates purpose/result after the preceding imperative.

¹² **tn** Heb “of your mouth.”

¹³ **tn** Heb “Forever, O LORD, your word stands firm in heaven,” or “Forever, O LORD, [is] your word; it stands firm in heaven.” The translation assumes that “your word” refers here to the body of divine instructions contained in the law (note the frequent references to the law in vv. 92-96). See vv. 9, 16-17, 57, 101, 105, 130, 139 and 160-61. The reference in v. 86 to God’s law being faithful favors this interpretation. Another option is that “your word” refers to God’s assuring word of promise, mentioned in vv. 25, 28, 42, 65, 74, 81, 107, 114, 147 and 169. In this case one might translate, “O LORD, your promise is reliable, it stands firm in heaven.”

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “to a generation and a generation [is] your faithfulness.”

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “if your law had not been my delight.”

¹⁶ **tn** Or “my suffering.”

119:93 I will never forget your precepts, for by them you have revived me.

119:94 I belong to you. Deliver me!

For I seek your precepts.

119:95 The wicked prepare to kill me,¹⁷ yet I concentrate on your rules.

119:96 I realize that everything has its limits,

but your commands are beyond full comprehension.¹⁸

מֶ (Mem)

119:97 O how I love your law!

All day long I meditate on it.

119:98 Your commandments¹⁹ make me wiser than my enemies,

for I am always aware of them.

119:99 I have more insight than all my teachers,

for I meditate on your rules.

119:100 I am more discerning than those older than I,

for I observe your precepts.

119:101 I stay away²⁰ from the evil path, so that I might keep your instructions.²¹

119:102 I do not turn aside from your regulations,

for you teach me.

119:103 Your words are sweeter in my mouth than honey!²²

119:104 Your precepts give me discernment.

Therefore I hate all deceitful actions.²³

נֹ (Nun)

119:105 Your word²⁴ is a lamp to walk by, and a light to illumine my path.²⁵

119:106 I have vowed and solemnly sworn to keep your just regulations.

119:107 I am suffering terribly.

O LORD, revive me with your word!²⁶

119:108 O LORD, please accept the freewill offerings of my praise!²⁷

Teach me your regulations!

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “the wicked wait for me to kill me.”

¹⁸ **tn** Heb “to every perfection I have seen an end, your command is very wide.” God’s law is beyond full comprehension, which is why the psalmist continually studies it (vv. 95, 97).

¹⁹ **tn** The plural form needs to be revocalized as a singular in order to agree with the preceding singular verb and the singular pronoun in the next line. The LORD’s “command” refers here to the law (see Ps 19:8).

²⁰ **tn** Heb “I hold back my feet.”

²¹ **tn** Heb “your word.” Many medieval Hebrew mss read the plural.

²² **tn** Heb “How smooth they are to my palate, your word, more than honey to my mouth.” A few medieval Hebrew mss, as well as several other ancient witnesses, read the plural “your words,” which can then be understood as the subject of the plural verb “they are so smooth.”

²³ **tn** Heb “every false path.”

²⁴ **tn** Many medieval Hebrew mss read the plural (“words”).

²⁵ **tn** Heb “[is] a lamp for my foot and a light for my path.”

²⁶ **tn** Heb “according to your word.”

²⁷ **tn** Heb “of my mouth.”

119:109 My life is in continual danger,¹ but I do not forget your law.

119:110 The wicked lay a trap for me, but I do not wander from your precepts.

119:111 I claim your rules as my permanent possession, for they give me joy.²

119:112 I am determined to obey³ your statutes at all times, to the very end.

◊ (*Samek*)

119:113 I hate people with divided loyalties,⁴ but I love your law.

119:114 You are my hiding place and my shield.

I find hope in your word.

119:115 Turn away from me, you evil men, so that I can observe⁵ the commands of my God.⁶

119:116 Sustain me as you promised,⁷ so that I will live.⁸

Do not disappoint me!⁹

119:117 Support me, so that I will be delivered.

Then I will focus¹⁰ on your statutes continually.

119:118 You despise¹¹ all who stray from your statutes, for they are deceptive and unreliable.¹²

119:119 You remove all the wicked of the earth like slag.¹³

Therefore I love your rules.¹⁴

119:120 My body¹⁵ trembles¹⁶ because I fear you,¹⁷ I am afraid of your judgments.

י (Ayin)

119:121 I do what is fair and right.¹⁸

Do not abandon me to my oppressors!

119:122 Guarantee the welfare of your servant!¹⁹

Do not let the arrogant oppress me!

119:123 My eyes grow tired as I wait for your deliverance,²⁰

for your reliable promise to be fulfilled.²¹

119:124 Show your servant your loyal love!²²

Teach me your statutes!

119:125 I am your servant. Give me insight,

so that I can understand²³ your rules.

119:126 It is time for the LORD to act – they break your law!

119:127 For this reason²⁴ I love your commands

more than gold, even purest gold.

119:128 For this reason I carefully follow all your precepts.²⁵

I hate all deceitful actions.²⁶

פ (Pe)

119:129 Your rules are marvelous.

Therefore I observe them.

119:130 Your instructions are a doorway through which light shines.²⁷

They give²⁸ insight to the untrained.²⁹

¹ tn Heb "my life [is] in my hands continually."

² tn Heb "for the joy of my heart [are] they."

³ tn Heb "I turn my heart to do."

⁴ tn Heb "divided ones." The word occurs only here; it appears to be derived from a verbal root, attested in Arabic, meaning "to split" (see HALOT 762 s.v. *סָפַק). Since the psalmist is emphasizing his unwavering allegiance to God and his law, the term probably refers to those who lack such loyalty. The translation is similar to that suggested by L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 131.

⁵ tn The cohortative verbal form with vav (ו) conjunctive indicates purpose/result after the preceding imperative.

⁶ tn The psalmist has already declared that he observes God's commands despite persecution, so here the idea must be "so that I might observe the commands of my God *unhindered by threats*."

⁷ tn Heb "according to your word."

⁸ tn The prefixed verbal form with vav (ו) conjunctive indicates purpose/result after the preceding imperative.

⁹ tn Heb "do not make me ashamed of my hope." After the Hebrew verb בֹּשֵׁת (*bosh*, "to be ashamed") the preposition מִן (*min*, "from") often introduces the reason for shame.

¹⁰ tn Or "and that I might focus." The two cohortatives with vav (ו) conjunctive indicate purpose/result after the imperative at the beginning of the verse.

¹¹ tn The Hebrew verb סָלַח (*salah*, "to disdain") occurs only here and in Lam 1:15. Cognate usage in Aramaic and Akkadian, as well as Lam 1:15, suggest it may have a concrete nuance of "to throw away."

¹² tn Heb "for their deceit [is] falsehood."

¹³ sn Traditionally "dross" (so KJV, ASV, NIV). The metaphor comes from metallurgy; "slag" is the substance left over after the metallic ore has been refined.

¹⁴ sn As he explains in the next verse, the psalmist's fear of judgment motivates him to obey God's rules.

¹⁵ tn Heb "my flesh."

¹⁶ tn The Hebrew verb סָמַר (*samar*, "to tremble") occurs only here and in Job 4:15.

¹⁷ tn Heb "from fear of you." The pronominal suffix on the noun is an objective genitive.

¹⁸ tn Heb "do justice and righteousness."

¹⁹ tn Heb "be surety for your servant for good."

²⁰ tn Heb "my eyes fail for your deliverance." The psalmist has intently kept his eyes open, looking for God to intervene, but now his eyes are watery and bloodshot, impairing his vision. See the similar phrase in v. 82.

²¹ tn Heb "and for the word of your faithfulness."

²² tn Heb "do with your servant according to your loyal love."

²³ tn or "know." The cohortative verbal form with vav (ו) conjunctive indicates purpose/result after the preceding imperative.

²⁴ tn "For this reason" connects logically with the statement made in v. 126. Because the judgment the psalmist fears (see vv. 119-120) is imminent, he remains loyal to God's law.

²⁵ tn Heb "for this reason all the precepts of everything I regard as right." The phrase "precepts of everything" is odd. It is preferable to take the *kaf* (כ) on כֹּל (*kol*, "everything") with the preceding form as a pronominal suffix, "your precepts," and the *lamed* (ל) with the following verb as an emphatic particle. See L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 138.

²⁶ tn Heb "every false path."

²⁷ tn Heb "the doorway of your words gives light." God's "words" refer here to the instructions in his law (see vv. 9, 57).

²⁸ tn Heb "it [i.e., the doorway] gives."

²⁹ tn Or "the [morally] naive," that is, the one who is young and still in the process of learning right from wrong and distinguishing wisdom from folly. See Pss 19:7; 116:6.

119:131 I open my mouth and pant,
because I long¹ for your commands.
119:132 Turn toward me and extend mercy
to me,
as you typically do to your loyal follow-
ers.²
119:133 Direct my steps by your word!³
Do not let any sin dominate me!
119:134 Deliver me⁴ from oppressive men,
so that I can keep⁵ your precepts.
119:135 Smile⁶ on your servant!
Teach me your statutes!
119:136 Tears stream down from my eyes,⁷
because people⁸ do not keep your law.

צ (Tade)

119:137 You are just, O LORD,
and your judgments are fair.
119:138 The rules you impose are just,⁹
and absolutely reliable.
119:139 My zeal¹⁰ consumes¹¹ me,
for my enemies forget your instructions.¹²
119:140 Your word is absolutely pure,
and your servant loves it!
119:141 I am insignificant and despised,
yet I do not forget your precepts.
119:142 Your justice endures,¹³
and your law is reliable.¹⁴
119:143 Distress and hardship confront¹⁵
me,
yet I find delight in your commands.
119:144 Your rules remain just.¹⁶
Give me insight so that I can live.¹⁷

ק (Qaf)

119:145 I cried out with all my heart, “An-
swer me, O LORD!
I will observe your statutes.”
119:146 I cried out to you, “Deliver me,
so that I can keep¹⁸ your rules.”
119:147 I am up before dawn crying for
help.

I find hope in your word.
119:148 My eyes anticipate the nighttime
hours,
so that I can meditate on your word.
119:149 Listen to me¹⁹ because of²⁰ your
loyal love!
O LORD, revive me, as you typically do!²¹
119:150 Those who are eager to do²²
wrong draw near;
they are far from your law.
119:151 You are near, O LORD,
and all your commands are reliable.²³
119:152 I learned long ago that
you ordained your rules to last.²⁴

ר (Resh)

119:153 See my pain and rescue me!
For I do not forget your law.
119:154 Fight for me²⁵ and defend me!²⁶
Revive me with your word!
119:155 The wicked have no chance for
deliverance,²⁷
for they do not seek your statutes.
119:156 Your compassion is great, O LORD.
Revive me, as you typically do!²⁸
119:157 The enemies who chase me are
numerous.²⁹
Yet I do not turn aside from your rules.
119:158 I take note of the treacherous and
despise them,
because they do not keep your instruc-
tions.³⁰
119:159 See how I love your precepts!
O LORD, revive me with your loyal love!
119:160 Your instructions are totally reli-
able;
all your just regulations endure.³¹

¹ tn The verb occurs only here in the OT.

² tn Heb “according to custom toward the lovers of your name.” The “lovers of” God’s “name” are the Lord’s loyal followers. See Pss 5:11; 69:36; Isa 56:6.

³ tn God’s “word” refers here to his law (see v. 11).

⁴ tn Or “redeem me.”

⁵ tn The cohortative verbal form with vav (ו) conjunctive indicates purpose/result after the preceding imperative.

⁶ tn Heb “cause your face to shine.”

⁷ tn Heb “[with] flowing streams my eyes go down.”

⁸ tn Heb “they”; even though somewhat generic, the referent (people) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁹ tn Heb “you commanded [in] justice your rules.”

¹⁰ tn or “zeal.”

¹¹ tn Heb “destroys,” in a hyperbolic sense.

¹² tn Heb “your words.”

¹³ tn Heb “your justice [is] justice forever.”

¹⁴ tn Or “truth.”

¹⁵ tn Heb “find.”

¹⁶ tn Heb “just are your rules forever.”

¹⁷ tn The cohortative verbal form with vav (ו) conjunctive indicates purpose/result after the preceding imperative.

¹⁸ tn The cohortative verbal form with vav (ו) conjunctive indicates purpose/result after the preceding imperative.

¹⁹ tn Heb “my voice.”

²⁰ tn Heb “according to.”

²¹ tn Heb “according to your custom.”

²² tn Heb “those who pursue.”

²³ tn Or “truth.”

²⁴ tn Heb “long ago I knew concerning your rules, that forever you established them.” See v. 89 for the same idea. The translation assumes that the preposition כִּי (min) prefixed to “your rules” introduces the object of the verb יָדַע (yada’), as in 1 Sam 23:23. Another option is that the preposition indicates source, in which case one might translate, “Long ago I realized from your rules that forever you established them” (cf. NIV, NRSV).

²⁵ tn Or “argue my case.”

²⁶ tn Heb “and redeem me.” The verb “redeem” casts the LORD in the role of a leader who protects members of his extended family in times of need and crisis (see Ps 19:14).

²⁷ tn Heb “far from the wicked [is] deliverance.”

²⁸ tn Heb “according to your customs.”

²⁹ tn Heb “many [are] those who chase me and my enemies.”

³⁰ tn Heb “your word.”

³¹ tn Heb “the head of your word is truth, and forever [is] all your just regulation.” The term “head” is used here of the “sum total” of God’s instructions.

שׁ/שׁ (Sin/Shin)

119:161 Rulers pursue me for no reason, yet I am more afraid of disobeying your instructions.¹

119:162 I rejoice in your instructions, like one who finds much plunder.²

119:163 I hate and despise deceit; I love your law.

119:164 Seven³ times a day I praise you because of your just regulations.

119:165 Those who love your law are completely secure;⁴ nothing causes them to stumble.⁵

119:166 I hope for your deliverance, O LORD, and I obey⁶ your commands.

119:167 I keep your rules; I love them greatly.

119:168 I keep your precepts and rules, for you are aware of everything I do.⁷

ת (Tav)

119:169 Listen to my cry for help,⁸ O LORD!

Give me insight by your word!

119:170 Listen to my appeal for mercy!⁹ Deliver me, as you promised.¹⁰

119:171 May praise flow freely from my lips, for you teach me your statutes.

119:172 May my tongue sing about your instructions,¹¹

for all your commands are just.

119:173 May your hand help me, for I choose to obey¹² your precepts.

119:174 I long for your deliverance, O LORD;

I find delight in your law.

119:175 May I¹³ live and praise you! May your regulations help me!¹⁴

119:176 I have wandered off like a lost sheep.¹⁵

¹ **tn** Heb “and because of your instructions my heart trembles.” The psalmist’s healthy “fear” of the consequences of violating God’s instructions motivates him to obey them. See v. 120.

² **tn** Heb “like one who finds great plunder.” See Judg 5:30. The image is that of a victorious warrior who finds a large amount of plunder on the field of battle.

³ **tn** The number “seven” is used rhetorically to suggest thoroughness.

⁴ **tn** Heb “great peace [is] to the lovers of your law.”

⁵ **tn** Heb “and there is no stumbling to them.”

⁶ **tn** Heb “do.”

⁷ **tn** Heb “for all my ways [are] before you.”

⁸ **tn** Heb “may my cry approach before you.”

⁹ **tn** Heb “may my appeal for mercy come before you.”

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “according to your speech.”

¹¹ **tn** Heb “your word.”

¹² **tn** The words “to obey” are not in the Hebrew text, but have been supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons and for clarity.

¹³ **tn** Heb “my life.”

¹⁴ **tn** God’s regulations will “help” the psalmist by giving him moral and ethical guidance.

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “I stray like a lost sheep.” It is possible that the point of the metaphor is vulnerability: The psalmist, who is threatened by his enemies, feels as vulnerable as a straying,

Come looking for your servant, for I do not forget your commands.

*Psalm 120*¹⁶

A song of ascents.¹⁷

120:1 In my distress I cried out to the LORD and he answered me.

120:2 I said,¹⁸ “O LORD, rescue me¹⁹ from those who lie with their lips²⁰ and those who deceive with their tongue.²¹”

120:3 How will he severely punish you, you deceptive talker?²²

120:4 Here’s how!²³ With the sharp arrows of warriors, with arrowheads forged over the hot coals.²⁴

120:5 How miserable I am!²⁵ For I have lived temporarily²⁶ in Meshech;

I have resided among the tents of Kedar.²⁷

lost sheep. This would not suggest, however, that he has wandered from God’s path (see the second half of the verse, as well as v. 110).

¹⁶ **sn** *Psalm 120*. The genre and structure of this psalm are uncertain. It begins like a thanksgiving psalm, with a brief notice that God has heard the psalmist’s prayer for help and has intervened. But v. 2 is a petition for help, followed by a taunt directed toward enemies (vv. 3-4) and a lament (vv. 5-7). Perhaps vv. 2-7 recall the psalmist’s prayer when he cried out to the Lord.

¹⁷ **sn** The precise significance of this title, which appears in Pss 120-134, is unclear. Perhaps worshippers recited these psalms when they ascended the road to Jerusalem to celebrate annual religious festivals. For a discussion of their background see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 219-21.

¹⁸ **tn** The words “I said” are supplied in the translation for clarification. See the introductory note for this psalm.

¹⁹ **tn** Or “my life.”

²⁰ **tn** Heb “from a lip of falsehood.”

²¹ **tn** Heb “from a tongue of deception.”

²² **tn** Heb “What will he give to you, and what will he add to you, O tongue of deception?” The psalmist addresses his deceptive enemies. The LORD is the understood subject of the verbs “give” and “add.” The second part of the question echoes a standard curse formula, “thus the LORD/God will do ... and thus he will add” (see Ruth 1:17; 1 Sam 3:17; 14:44; 20:13; 25:22; 2 Sam 3:9, 35; 19:13; 1 Kgs 2:23; 2 Kgs 6:31).

²³ **tn** The words “here’s how” are supplied in the translation as a clarification. In v. 4 the psalmist answers the question he raises in v. 3.

²⁴ **tn** Heb “with coals of the wood of the broom plant.” The wood of the broom plant was used to make charcoal, which in turn was used to fuel the fire used to forge the arrowheads.

²⁵ **tn** Or “woe to me.” The Hebrew term *oyah*, “woe” which occurs only here, is an alternate form of *oy*.

²⁶ **tn** Heb “I live as a resident foreigner.”

²⁷ **sn** *Meshech* was located in central Anatolia (modern Turkey). *Kedar* was located in the desert to east-southeast of Israel. Because of the reference to Kedar, it is possible that Ps 120:5 refers to a different Meshech, perhaps one associated with the individual mentioned as a descendant of Aram in 1 Chr 1:17. (However, the LXX in 1 Chr 1:17 follows the parallel text in Gen 10:23, which reads “Mash,” not Meshech.) It is, of course, impossible that the psalmist could have been living in both the far north and the east at the same time. For this reason one must assume that he is recalling his experience as a wanderer among the nations or that he is using the geographical terms metaphorically and sarcastically to suggest that the enemies who surround him are like the barbarians who live in these distant regions. For a discussion of the problem, see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 146.

120:6 For too long I have had to reside with those who hate¹ peace.

120:7 I am committed to peace,² but when I speak, they want to make war.³

*Psalms 121*⁴

A song of ascents.⁵

121:1 I look up⁶ toward the hills.

From where⁷ does my help come?

121:2 My help comes from the LORD,⁸ the Creator⁹ of heaven and earth!

121:3 May he not allow your foot to slip!

May your protector¹⁰ not sleep!¹¹

121:4 Look! Israel's protector¹² does not sleep or slumber!

121:5 The LORD is your protector; the LORD is the shade at your right hand.

121:6 The sun will not harm you by day, or the moon by night.¹³

121:7 The LORD will protect you from all harm;

he will protect your life.

121:8 The LORD will protect you in all you do,¹⁴ now and forevermore.

*Psalms 122*¹⁵

A song of ascents,¹⁶ by David.

122:1 I was glad because¹⁷ they said to me, "We will go to the LORD's temple."

122:2 Our feet are¹⁸ standing inside your gates, O Jerusalem.

122:3 Jerusalem¹⁹ is a city designed

to accommodate an assembly.²⁰

122:4 The tribes go up²¹ there,²²

the tribes of the LORD, where it is required that Israel give thanks to the name of the LORD.²³

122:5 Indeed,²⁴ the leaders sit²⁵ there on thrones and make legal decisions,

on the thrones of the house of David.²⁶

122:6 Pray²⁷ for the peace of Jerusalem!

May those who love her prosper!²⁸

122:7 May there be peace inside your defenses,

¹ **tn** The singular participial form probably has a representative function here. The psalmist envisions the typical hater of peace who represents the entire category of such individuals.

² **tn** *Heb* "I, peace."

³ **tn** *Heb* "they [are] for war."

⁴ **sn** *Psalms 121*. The psalm affirms that the Lord protects his people Israel. Unless the psalmist addresses an observer (note the second person singular forms in vv. 3-8), it appears there are two or three speakers represented in the psalm, depending on how one takes v. 3. The translation assumes that speaker one talks in vv. 1-2, that speaker two responds to him with a prayer in v. 3 (this assumes the verbs are true jussives of prayer), and that speaker three responds with words of assurance in vv. 4-8. If the verbs in v. 3 are taken as a rhetorical use of the jussive, then there are two speakers. Verses 3-8 are speaker two's response to the words of speaker one. See the note on the word "sleep" at the end of v. 3.

⁵ **sn** The precise significance of this title, which appears in Pss 120-134, is unclear. Perhaps worshipers recited these psalms when they ascended the road to Jerusalem to celebrate annual religious festivals. For a discussion of their background see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 219-21.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "I lift my eyes."

⁷ **tn** The Hebrew term מַיִן (*me'ayin*) is interrogative, not relative, in function. Rather than directly stating that his source of help descends from the hills, the psalmist is asking, "From where does my help come?" Nevertheless, the first line does indicate that he is looking toward the hills for help, probably indicating that he is looking up toward the sky in anticipation of supernatural intervention. The psalmist assumes the dramatic role of one needing help. He answers his own question in v. 2.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "my help [is] from with the LORD."

⁹ **tn** Or "Maker."

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "the one who guards you."

¹¹ **tn** The prefixed verbal forms following the negative particle אַל appear to be jussives. As noted above, if they are taken as true jussives of prayer, then the speaker in v. 3 would appear to be distinct from both the speaker in vv. 1-2 and the speaker in vv. 4-8. However, according to GKC 322 §109.e), the jussives are used rhetorically here "to express the conviction that something cannot or should not happen." In this case one should probably translate, "he will not allow your foot to slip, your protector will not sleep," and understand just one speaker in vv. 4-8.

¹² **tn** *Heb* "the one who guards Israel."

¹³ **sn** One hardly thinks of the moon's rays as being physically harmful, like those of the sun. The reference to the moon may simply lend poetic balance to the verse, but it is likely that the verse reflects an ancient, primitive belief that

the moon could have an adverse effect on the mind (note the English expression "moonstruck," which reflects such a belief). Another possibility is that the sun and moon stand by metonymy for harmful forces characteristic of the day and night, respectively.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "your going out and your coming in."

¹⁵ **sn** *Psalms 122*. The psalmist expresses his love for Jerusalem and promises to pray for the city's security.

¹⁶ **sn** The precise significance of this title, which appears in Pss 120-134, is unclear. Perhaps worshipers recited these psalms when they ascended the road to Jerusalem to celebrate annual religious festivals. For a discussion of their background see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 219-21.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "in the ones saying to me." After the verb שָׂמְחָה (*samakh*), the preposition בְּ (*bet*) usually introduces the reason for joy.

¹⁸ **tn** Or "were."

¹⁹ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

²⁰ **tc** *Heb* "Jerusalem, which is built like a city which is joined to her together." The meaning of the Hebrew text is unclear. Many regard this as a description of the compact way in which the city was designed or constructed. The translation assumes an emendation of the verb הִבְרָה (*khubb'rah*, "is joined") to a noun הִבְרָה (*khevrah*, "association; company"). The text then reads literally, "Jerusalem, which is built like a city which has a company together." This in turn can be taken as a reference to Jerusalem's role as a city where people congregated for religious festivals and other civic occasions (see vv. 4-5).

²¹ **tn** Or "went up."

²² **tn** *Heb* "which is where the tribes go up."

²³ **tn** *Heb* "[it is] a statute for Israel to give thanks to the name of the LORD."

²⁴ **tn** Or "for."

²⁵ **tn** Or "sat."

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "Indeed, there they sit [on] thrones for judgment, [on] thrones [belonging] to the house of David."

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* "ask [for]."

²⁸ **tn** Or "be secure."

and prosperity⁴ inside your fortresses!²
122:8 For the sake of my brothers and my neighbors
 I will say, “May there be peace in you!”
122:9 For the sake of the temple of the LORD our God
 I will pray for you to prosper.³

*Psalm 123*⁴

A song of ascents.⁵

123:1 I look up⁶ toward you, the one enthroned⁷ in heaven.
123:2 Look, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a female servant look to the hand of her mistress,⁸ so my eyes will look to the LORD, our God, until he shows us favor.
123:3 Show us favor, O LORD, show us favor!
 For we have had our fill of humiliation, and then some.⁹
123:4 We have had our fill¹⁰ of the taunts of the self-assured, of the contempt of the proud.

*Psalm 124*¹¹

A song of ascents,¹² by David.

124:1 “If the LORD had not been on our side” –
 let Israel say this! –
124:2 if the LORD had not been on our side, when men attacked us,¹³
124:3 they would have swallowed us alive, when their anger raged against us.
124:4 The water would have overpowered us;

the current¹⁴ would have overwhelmed¹⁵ us.¹⁶
124:5 The raging water would have overwhelmed us.¹⁷
124:6 The LORD deserves praise,¹⁸ for¹⁹ he did not hand us over as prey to their teeth.
124:7 We escaped with our lives,²⁰ like a bird from a hunter’s snare. The snare broke, and we escaped.
124:8 Our deliverer is the LORD,²¹ the Creator²² of heaven and earth.

*Psalm 125*²³

A song of ascents.²⁴

125:1 Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion;
 it cannot be upended and will endure forever.
125:2 As the mountains surround Jerusalem,²⁵ so the LORD surrounds his people, now and forevermore.
125:3 Indeed,²⁶ the scepter of a wicked king²⁷ will not settle²⁸ upon the allotted land of the godly. Otherwise the godly might do what is wrong.²⁹
125:4 Do good, O LORD, to those who are good,
 to the morally upright!³⁰
125:5 As for those who are bent on

¹⁴ tn Or “stream.”

¹⁵ tn Heb “would have passed over.”

¹⁶ tn Heb “our being.” The Hebrew term נפש (nefesh) with a pronominal suffix is often equivalent to a pronoun, especially in poetry (see BDB 660 s.v. נפש; 4.a).

¹⁷ tn Heb “then they would have passed over our being, the raging waters.”

¹⁸ tn Heb “blessed [be] the LORD.”

¹⁹ tn Heb “[the one] who.”

²⁰ tn Heb “our life escaped.”

²¹ tn Heb “our help [is] in the name of the LORD.”

²² tn Or “Maker.”

²³ sn Psalm 125. The psalmist affirms his confidence in the Lord’s protection and justice.

²⁴ sn The precise significance of this title, which appears in Pss 120-134, is unclear. Perhaps worshipers recited these psalms when they ascended the road to Jerusalem to celebrate annual religious festivals. For a discussion of their background see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 219-21.

²⁵ map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

²⁶ tn Or “for.”

²⁷ tn Heb “a scepter of wickedness.” The “scepter” symbolizes royal authority; when collocated with “wickedness” the phrase refers to an oppressive foreign conqueror.

²⁸ tn Or “rest.”

²⁹ tn Heb “so that the godly might not stretch out their hands in wrongdoing.” A wicked king who sets a sinful example can have an adverse moral and ethical effect on the people he rules.

³⁰ tn Heb “pure of heart.” The “heart” is here viewed as the seat of one’s moral character and motives. The “pure of heart” are God’s faithful followers who trust in and love the LORD and, as a result, experience his deliverance (see Pss 7:10; 11:2; 32:11; 36:10; 64:10; 94:15; 97:11).

¹ tn or “security.”

² tn The psalmist uses second feminine singular pronominal forms to address personified Jerusalem.

³ tn Heb “I will seek good for you.” The psalmist will seek Jerusalem’s “good” through prayer.

⁴ sn Psalm 123. The psalmist, speaking for God’s people, acknowledges his dependence on God in the midst of a crisis.

⁵ sn The precise significance of this title, which appears in Pss 120-134, is unclear. Perhaps worshipers recited these psalms when they ascended the road to Jerusalem to celebrate annual religious festivals. For a discussion of their background see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 219-21.

⁶ tn Heb “I lift my eyes.”

⁷ tn Heb “sitting.” The Hebrew verb יָשָׁב (yashav) is here used metonymically of “sitting enthroned” (see Pss 9:7; 29:10; 55:19; 102:12).

⁸ sn Servants look to their master for food, shelter, and other basic needs.

⁹ tn Heb “for greatly we are filled [with] humiliation.”

¹⁰ tn Heb “greatly our soul is full to it.”

¹¹ sn Psalm 124. Israel acknowledges that the Lord delivered them from certain disaster.

¹² sn The precise significance of this title, which appears in Pss 120-134, is unclear. Perhaps worshipers recited these psalms when they ascended the road to Jerusalem to celebrate annual religious festivals. For a discussion of their background see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 219-21.

¹³ tn Heb “rose up against us.”

traveling a sinful path,¹
 may the LORD remove them,² along with
 those who behave wickedly!³
 May Israel experience peace!⁴

Psalms 126⁵

A song of ascents.⁶

126:1 When the LORD restored the well-being of Zion,⁷
 we thought we were dreaming.⁸

126:2 At that time we laughed loudly
 and shouted for joy.⁹

At that time the nations said,¹⁰
 “The LORD has accomplished great things
 for these people.”

126:3 The LORD did indeed accomplish
 great things for us.

We were happy.

126:4 O LORD, restore our well-being,
 just as the streams in the arid south are
 replenished.¹¹

126:5 Those who shed tears as they plant
 will shout for joy when they reap the
 harvest.¹²

126:6 The one who weeps as he walks
 along, carrying his bag¹³ of seed,
 will certainly come in with a shout of joy,
 carrying his sheaves of grain.¹⁴

Psalms 127¹⁵

A song of ascents,¹⁶ by Solomon.

127:1 If the LORD does not build a house,¹⁷
 then those who build it work in vain.

¹ **tn** *Heb* “and the ones making their paths twisted.” A sinful lifestyle is compared to a twisting, winding road.

² **tn** *Heb* “lead them away.” The prefixed verbal form is understood as a jussive of prayer here (note the prayers directly before and after this). Another option is to translate, “the LORD will remove them” (cf. NIV, NRSV).

³ **tn** *Heb* “the workers of wickedness.”

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “peace [be] upon Israel.” The statement is understood as a prayer (see Ps 122:8 for a similar prayer for peace).

⁵ **sn** *Psalms 126*. Recalling the joy of past deliverance, God’s covenant community asks for a fresh display of God’s power and confidently anticipate their sorrow being transformed into joy.

⁶ **sn** The precise significance of this title, which appears in Pss 120-134, is unclear. Perhaps worshipers recited these psalms when they ascended the road to Jerusalem to celebrate annual religious festivals. For a discussion of their background see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 219-21.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “turns with a turning [toward] Zion.” The Hebrew noun *שִׁיבָה* (*shivat*) occurs only here in the OT. For this reason many prefer to emend the form to the more common *שְׁבִית* (*shevut*) or *שְׁבוּת* (*shvut*), both of which are used as a cognate accusative of *שׁוּב* (*shuv*; see Ps 14:7). However an Aramaic cognate *שְׁבִיתָא* appears in an eighth century B.C. Old Aramaic inscription with the verb *שׁוּב*. This cognate noun appears to mean “return” (see J. Fitzmyer, *The Aramaic Treaties of Sefire* [BibOr], 119-20) or “restoration” (see *DNWSI* 2:1125). Therefore it appears that *שְׁבִיתָא* should be retained and understood as a cognate accusative of *שׁוּב*. In addition to Fitzmyer (119-20) see L. C. Allen, who offers the literal translation, “turn with a turning toward” (*Psalms 101-150* [WBC], 170). Allen takes *שְׁבִיתָא* as construct and understands “Zion” as an objective genitive.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “we were like dreamers.” This could mean the speakers were so overcome with ecstatic joy (see v. 3b) that they were like those who fantasize about pleasurable experiences in their sleep (see Isa 29:7-8). Since dreams are more commonly associated in the OT with prophetic visions, the community may be comparing their experience of God’s renewed favor to a prophet’s receiving divine visions. Just as a prophetic dream sweeps the individual into a different dimension and sometimes brings one face-to-face with God himself (see Gen 28:11-15; 1 Kgs 3:5-15), so the community was aware of God’s presence in a special way in the day of Zion’s restoration. Though the MT as it stands makes good sense, some choose to understand a homonymic root here meaning “to be healthy; to be strong” (see BDB 321 s.v. *רָחַם*) and translate, “we were like those restored to health.” This reading appears to have the support of several ancient translations as well as 11QPs^a. See L. C. Allen (*Psalms 101-150* [WBC], 170-71) for a discussion of the viewpoints.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with a shout.”

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “they said among the nations.”

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “like the streams in the Negev.”

sn *The streams in the arid south*. Y. Aharoni writes of the streams in the Negev: “These usually dry wadis collect water on rainy days from vast areas. The situation is also aggravated by floods from the desert mountains and southern Judah. For a day or two or, more frequently, for only a few hours they turn into dangerous torrents” (Y. Aharoni, *The Land of the Bible*, 26). God’s people were experiencing a “dry season” after a time of past blessing; they pray here for a “flash flood” of his renewed blessing. This does not imply that they are requesting only a brief display of God’s blessing. Rather the point of comparison is the suddenness with which the wadis swell during a rain, as well as the depth and power of these raging waters. The community desires a sudden display of divine favor in which God overwhelms them with blessings.

¹² **sn** O. Borowski says regarding this passage: “The dependence on rain for watering plants, the uncertainty of the quantity and timing of the rains, and the possibility of crop failure due to pests and diseases appear to have kept the farmer in a gloomy mood during sowing” (*Agriculture in Iron Age Israel*, 54). Perhaps the people were experiencing a literal drought, the effects of which cause them to lament their plight as they plant their seed in hopes that the rain would come. However, most take the language as metaphorical. Like a farmer sowing his seed, the covenant community was enduring hardship as they waited for a new outpouring of divine blessing. Yet they are confident that a time of restoration will come and relieve their anxiety, just as the harvest brings relief and joy to the farmer.

¹³ **tn** The noun occurs only here and in Job 28:18 in the OT. See HALOT 646 s.v. *מִשְׁבָּח* which gives “leather pouch” as the meaning.

¹⁴ **tn** The Hebrew noun *אֲדָמָה* (*adummah*, “sheaf”) occurs only here and in Gen 37:7 in the OT.

sn Verse 6 expands the image of v. 5. See the note on the word “harvest” there.

¹⁵ **sn** *Psalms 127*. In this wisdom psalm the psalmist teaches that one does not find security by one’s own efforts, for God alone gives stability and security.

¹⁶ **sn** The precise significance of this title, which appears in Pss 120-134, is unclear. Perhaps worshipers recited these psalms when they ascended the road to Jerusalem to celebrate annual religious festivals. For a discussion of their background see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 219-21.

¹⁷ **sn** The expression *build a house* may have a double meaning here. It may refer to the surface level to a literal physical structure in which a family lives, but at a deeper, metaphorical level it refers to building, perpetuating, and maintaining a family line. See Deut 25:9; Ruth 4:11; 1 Sam 2:35; 2 Sam 7:27; 1 Kgs 11:38; 1 Chr 17:10, 25. Having a family line provided security in ancient Israel.

If the LORD does not guard a city,¹
 then the watchman stands guard in vain.
127:2 It is vain for you to rise early, come
 home late,
 and work so hard for your food.²
 Yes,³ he can provide for those whom he
 loves even when they sleep.⁴
127:3 Yes,⁵ sons⁶ are a gift from the
 LORD,
 the fruit of the womb is a reward.
127:4 Sons born during one's youth
 are like arrows in a warrior's hand.⁷
127:5 How blessed is the man who fills his
 quiver with them!
 They will not be put to shame⁸ when
 they confront⁹ enemies at the city gate.

1 sn The city symbolizes community security, which is the necessary framework for family security.

2 tn *Heb* "[it is] vain for you, you who are early to rise, who delay sitting, who eat the food of hard work." The three substantial participles are parallel and stand in apposition to the pronominal suffix on the preposition. See לַחֶמֶךְ (*lakhem*, "for you").

3 tn Here the Hebrew particle כֵּן (*ken*) is used to stress the following affirmation (see Josh 2:4; Ps 63:2).

4 tn *Heb* "he gives to his beloved, sleep." The translation assumes that the Hebrew term שָׁנָה (*shena*, "sleep," an alternate form of שָׁנָה, *shenah*) is an adverbial accusative. The point seems to be this: Hard work by itself is not what counts, but one's relationship to God, for God is able to bless an individual even while he sleeps. (There may even be a subtle allusion to the miracle of conception following sexual intercourse; see the reference to the gift of sons in the following verse.) The statement is not advocating laziness, but utilizing hyperbole to give perspective and to remind the addressees that God must be one's first priority. Another option is to take "sleep" as the direct object: "yes, he gives sleep to his beloved" (cf. NIV, NRSV). In this case the point is this: Hard work by itself is futile, for only God is able to bless one with sleep, which metonymically refers to having one's needs met. He blesses on the basis of one's relationship to him, not on the basis of physical energy expended.

5 tn or "look."

6 tn Some prefer to translate this term with the gender neutral "children," but "sons" are plainly in view here, as the following verses make clear. Daughters are certainly wonderful additions to a family, but in ancient Israelite culture sons were the "arrows" that gave a man security in his old age, for they could defend the family interests at the city gate, where the legal and economic issues of the community were settled.

7 tn *Heb* "like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so [are] sons of youth." Arrows are used in combat to defend oneself against enemies; sons are viewed here as providing social security and protection (see v. 5). The phrase "sons of youth" is elliptical, meaning "sons [born during the father's] youth." Such sons will have grown up to be mature adults and will have children of their own by the time the father reaches old age and becomes vulnerable to enemies. Contrast the phrase "son of old age" in Gen 37:3 (see also 44:20), which refers to Jacob's age when Joseph was born.

8 tn Being "put to shame" is here metonymic for being defeated, probably in a legal context, as the reference to the city gate suggests. One could be humiliated (Ps 69:12) or deprived of justice (Amos 5:12) at the gate, but with strong sons to defend the family interests this was less likely to happen.

9 tn *Heb* "speak with."

*Psalms 128*¹⁰

A song of ascents.¹¹

128:1 How blessed is every one of the
 LORD's loyal followers,¹²
 each one who keeps his commands!¹³
128:2 You¹⁴ will eat what you worked so
 hard to grow.¹⁵
 You will be blessed and secure.¹⁶
128:3 Your wife will be like a fruitful
 vine¹⁷
 in the inner rooms of your house;
 your children¹⁸ will be like olive branch-
 es,
 as they sit all around your table.
128:4 Yes indeed, the man who fears the
 LORD
 will be blessed in this way.¹⁹
128:5 May the LORD bless you²⁰ from
 Zion,
 that you might see²¹ Jerusalem²² prosper
 all the days of your life,
128:6 and that you might see²³ your grand-
 children.²⁴
 May Israel experience peace!²⁵

10 sn *Psalms 128*. The psalmist observes that the godly individual has genuine happiness because the Lord rewards such a person with prosperity and numerous children.

11 sn The precise significance of this title, which appears in Pss 120-134, is unclear. Perhaps worshipers recited these psalms when they ascended the road to Jerusalem to celebrate annual religious festivals. For a discussion of their background see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 219-21.

12 tn *Heb* "every fearer of the LORD."

13 tn *Heb* "the one who walks in his ways."

14 tn The psalmist addresses the representative God-fearing man, as indicated by the references to "your wife" (v. 3) and "the man" (v. 4), as well as the second masculine singular pronominal and verbal forms in v. 2-6.

15 tn *Heb* "the work of your hands, indeed you will eat."

16 tn *Heb* "how blessed you [will be] and it will be good for you."

17 sn The metaphor of the *fruitful vine* pictures the wife as fertile; she will give her husband numerous children (see the next line).

18 tn One could translate "sons" (see Ps 127:3 and the note on the word "sons" there), but here the term seems to refer more generally to children of both genders.

19 tn *Heb* "look, indeed thus will the man, the fearer of the LORD, be blessed."

20 tn The prefixed verbal form is understood as a jussive of prayer (note the imperatives that are subordinated to this clause in vv. 5b-6a). Having described the blessings that typically come to the godly, the psalmist concludes by praying that this ideal may become reality for the representative godly man being addressed.

21 tn The imperative with prefixed vav (ו) conjunctive indicates purpose/result after the preceding jussive.

22 map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

23 tn The imperative with prefixed vav (ו) conjunctive indicates purpose/result after the jussive in v. 5a.

24 tn *Heb* "sons to your sons."

25 tn *Heb* "peace [be] upon Israel." The statement is understood as a prayer (see Ps 125:5).

*Psalm 129*¹

A song of ascents.²

129:1 “Since my youth they have often attacked me,³ let Israel say.

129:2 “Since my youth they have often attacked me, but they have not defeated me.

129:3 The plowers plowed my back; they made their furrows long.

129:4 The LORD is just; he cut the ropes of the wicked.³

129:5 May all who hate Zion be humiliated and turned back!

129:6 May they be like the grass on the rooftops which withers before one can even pull it up,⁴

129:7 which cannot fill the reaper’s hand, or the lap of the one who gathers the grain!

129:8 Those who pass by will not say,⁵ “May you experience the LORD’s blessing! We pronounce a blessing on you in the name of the LORD.”

*Psalm 130*⁶

A song of ascents.⁷

130:1 From the deep water⁸ I cry out to you, O LORD.

130:2 O Lord, listen to me!⁹ Pay attention to¹⁰ my plea for mercy!

¹ **sn** *Psalm 129*. Israel affirms God’s justice and asks him to destroy the enemies of Zion.

² **sn** The precise significance of this title, which appears in Pss 120-134, is unclear. Perhaps worshipers recited these psalms when they ascended the road to Jerusalem to celebrate annual religious festivals. For a discussion of their background see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 219-21.

³ **tn** The background of the metaphor is not entirely clear. Perhaps the “ropes” are those used to harness the ox for plowing (see Job 39:10). Verse 3 pictures the wicked plowing God’s people as if they were a field. But when God “cut the ropes” of their ox, as it were, they could no longer plow. The point of the metaphor seems to be that God took away the enemies’ ability to oppress his people. See L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 187.

⁴ **tn** The Hebrew verb שָׁלַף (*shalaf*) normally means “to draw [a sword]” or “to pull.” BDB 1025 s.v. suggests the meaning “to shoot up” here, but it is more likely that the verb here means “to pluck; to pull up,” a nuance attested for this word in later Hebrew and Aramaic (see Jastrow 1587 s.v. שָׁלַף).

⁵ **tn** The perfect verbal form is used for rhetorical effect; it describes an anticipated development as if it were already reality.

⁶ **sn** *Psalm 130*. The psalmist, confident of the Lord’s forgiveness, cries out to the Lord for help in the midst of his suffering and urges Israel to do the same.

⁷ **sn** The precise significance of this title, which appears in Pss 120-134, is unclear. Perhaps worshipers recited these psalms when they ascended the road to Jerusalem to celebrate annual religious festivals. For a discussion of their background see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 219-21.

⁸ **tn** Heb “depths,” that is, deep waters (see Ps 69:2, 14; Isa 51:10), a metaphor for the life-threatening danger faced by the psalmist.

⁹ **tn** Heb “my voice.”

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “may your ears be attentive to the voice of.”

130:3 If you, O LORD, were to keep track of¹¹ sins,

O Lord, who could stand before you?¹²

130:4 But¹³ you are willing to forgive,¹⁴ so that you might¹⁵ be honored.¹⁶

130:5 I rely on¹⁷ the LORD, I rely on him with my whole being;¹⁸

I wait for his assuring word.¹⁹

130:6 I yearn for the LORD,²⁰ more than watchmen do for the morning, yes, more than watchmen do for the morning.²¹

130:7 O Israel, hope in the LORD, for the LORD exhibits loyal love,²² and is more than willing to deliver.²³

130:8 He will deliver²⁴ Israel from all the consequences of their sins.²⁵

*Psalm 131*²⁶

A song of ascents,²⁷ by David.

131:1 O LORD, my heart is not proud, nor do I have a haughty look.²⁸

I do not have great aspirations, or concern myself with things that are beyond me.²⁹

131:2 Indeed³⁰ I am composed and quiet,³¹ like a young child carried by its mother;³²

I am content like the young child I carry.³³

131:3 O Israel, hope in the LORD now and forevermore!

¹¹ **tn** Heb “observe.”

¹² **tn** The words “before you” are supplied in the translation for clarification. The psalmist must be referring to standing before God’s judgment seat. The rhetorical question expects the answer, “No one.”

¹³ **tn** Or “surely.”

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “for with you [there is] forgiveness.”

¹⁵ **tn** Or “consequently you are.”

¹⁶ **tn** Heb “feared.”

¹⁷ **tn** Or “wait for.”

¹⁸ **tn** Heb “my soul waits.”

¹⁹ **tn** Heb “his word.”

²⁰ **tn** Heb “my soul for the master.”

²¹ **tn** Heb “more than watchmen for the morning, watchmen for the morning.” The words “yes, more” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

²² **tn** Heb “for with the LORD [is] loyal love.”

²³ **tn** Heb “and abundantly with him [is] redemption.”

²⁴ **tn** Or “redeem.”

²⁵ **tn** The Hebrew noun אָוֹן (*avon*) can refer to sin, the guilt sin produces, or the consequences of sin. Only here is the noun collocated with the verb פָּדַח (*padah*, “to redeem; to deliver”). The psalmist may refer to forgiveness per se (v. 4), but the emphasis in this context is likely on deliverance from the national consequences of sin. See L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 192.

²⁶ **sn** *Psalm 131*. The psalmist affirms his humble dependence on the Lord and urges Israel to place its trust in God.

²⁷ **sn** The precise significance of this title, which appears in Pss 120-134, is unclear. Perhaps worshipers recited these psalms when they ascended the road to Jerusalem to celebrate annual religious festivals. For a discussion of their background see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 219-21.

²⁸ **tn** Heb “and my eyes are not lifted up.”

²⁹ **tn** Heb “I do not walk in great things, and in things too marvelous for me.”

³⁰ **tn** Or “but.”

³¹ **tn** Heb “I make level and make quiet my soul.”

³² **tn** Heb “like a weaned [one] upon his mother.”

³³ **tn** Heb “like the weaned [one] upon me, my soul.”

Psalm 132¹

A song of ascents.²

132:1 O LORD, for David's sake remember all his strenuous effort,³

132:2 and how he made a vow to the LORD, and swore an oath to the powerful Ruler of Jacob.⁴

132:3 He said,⁵ "I will not enter my own home,⁶ or get into my bed.⁷

132:4 I will not allow my eyes to sleep, or my eyelids to slumber,

132:5 until I find a place for the LORD, a fine dwelling place⁸ for the powerful Ruler of Jacob."⁹

132:6 Look, we heard about it¹⁰ in Ephrathah,¹¹ we found it in the territory of Jaar.¹²

132:7 Let us go to his dwelling place! Let us worship¹³ before his footstool!

132:8 Ascend, O LORD, to your resting place, you and the ark of your strength!

¹ **sn** Psalm 132. The psalmist reminds God of David's devotion and of his promises concerning David's dynasty and Zion.

² **sn** The precise significance of this title, which appears in Pss 120-134, is unclear. Perhaps worshipers recited these psalms when they ascended the road to Jerusalem to celebrate annual religious festivals. For a discussion of their background see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 219-21.

³ **tn** *Heb* "all his affliction." This may refer to David's strenuous and tireless efforts to make provision for the building of the temple (see 1 Chr 22:14). Some prefer to revocalize the text as עֲנִיּוּתוֹ ('*anavato*, "his humility").

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "the powerful [one] of Jacob."

⁵ **tn** The words "he said" are supplied in the translation to clarify that what follows is David's vow.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "the tent of my house."

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "go up upon the bed of my couch."

⁸ **tn** The plural form of the noun may indicate degree or quality; David envisions a special dwelling place (see Pss 43:3; 46:4; 84:1).

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "the powerful [one] of Jacob."

¹⁰ **tn** Rather than having an antecedent, the third feminine singular pronominal suffix here (and in the next line) appears to refer to the ark of the covenant, mentioned in v. 8. (The Hebrew term אֲרוֹן [*aron*, "ark"] is sometimes construed as grammatically feminine. See 1 Sam 4:17; 2 Chr 8:11.)

¹¹ **sn** Some understand *Ephrathah* as a reference to Kiriath-jearim because of the apparent allusion to this site in the next line (see the note on "Jaar"). The ark was kept in Kiriath-jearim after the Philistines released it (see 1 Sam 6:21-7:2). However, the switch in verbs from "heard about" to "found" suggests that Ephrathah not be equated with Jair. The group who is speaking heard about the ark while they were in Ephrathah. They then went to retrieve it from Kiriath-jearim ("Jaar"). It is more likely that Ephrathah refers to a site near Bethel (Gen 35:16, 19; 48:7) or to Bethlehem (Ruth 4:11; Mic 5:2).

¹² **tn** *Heb* "fields of the forest." The Hebrew term יַעַר (*ya'ad*, "forest") is apparently a shortened alternative name for קִרְיַת יַעֲרִים (*qiryat ya'arim*, "Kiriath-jearim"), the place where the ark was kept after it was released by the Philistines and from which David and his men retrieved it (see 1 Chr 13:6).

¹³ **tn** Or "bow down."

132:9 May your priests be clothed with integrity!¹⁴

May your loyal followers shout for joy!

132:10 For the sake of David, your servant,

do not reject your chosen king!¹⁵

132:11 The LORD made a reliable promise to David,¹⁶

he will not go back on his word.¹⁷

He said,¹⁸ "I will place one of your descendants¹⁹ on your throne.

132:12 If your sons keep my covenant and the rules I teach them, their sons will also sit on your throne forever."²⁰

132:13 Certainly²⁰ the LORD has chosen Zion;

he decided to make it his home.²¹

132:14 He said,²² "This will be my resting place forever;

I will live here, for I have chosen it."²³

132:15 I will abundantly supply what she needs;²⁴

I will give her poor all the food they need.²⁵

132:16 I will protect her priests,²⁶ and her godly people will shout exuberantly.²⁷

132:17 There I will make David strong;²⁸ I have determined that my chosen king's dynasty will continue.²⁹

132:18 I will humiliate his enemies,³⁰ and his crown will shine.

¹⁴ **tn** Or "righteousness."

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "do not turn away the face of your anointed one."

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "the LORD swore an oath to David [in] truth."

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "he will not turn back from it."

¹⁸ **tn** The words "he said" are supplied in the translation to clarify that what follows are the LORD's words.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "the fruit of your body."

²⁰ **tn** Or "for."

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "he desired it for his dwelling place."

²² **tn** The words "he said" are added in the translation to clarify that what follows are the LORD's words.

²³ **tn** *Heb* "for I desired it."

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* "I will greatly bless her provision." The infinitive absolute is used to emphasize the verb.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "her poor I will satisfy [with] food."

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "and her priests I will clothe [with] deliverance."

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* "[with] shouting they will shout." The infinitive absolute is used to emphasize the verb.

²⁸ **tn** *Heb* "there I will cause a horn to sprout for David." The horn of an ox underlies the metaphor (cf. Deut 33:17; 1 Kgs 22:11; Pss 18:2; 92:10). The horn of the wild ox is frequently a metaphor for military strength; the idiom "exalt the horn" signifies military victory (see 1 Sam 2:10; Pss 89:17, 24; 92:10; Lam 2:17). In the ancient Near East powerful warriors would sometimes compare themselves to a goring bull that used its horns to kill its enemies. For examples, see P. Miller, "El the Warrior," *HTR* 60 (1967): 422-25, and R. B. Chisholm, "An Exegetical and Theological Study of Psalm 18/2 Samuel 22" (Th.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1983), 135-36.

²⁹ **tn** *Heb* "I have arranged a lamp for my anointed one." Here the "lamp" is a metaphor for the Davidic dynasty (see 1 Kgs 11:36).

³⁰ **tn** *Heb* "his enemies I will clothe [with] shame."

*Psalms 133*¹

A song of ascents,² by David.

133:1 Look! How good and how pleasant it is

when brothers live together!³

133:2 It is like fine oil poured on the head which flows down the beard⁴ –

Aaron's beard, and then flows down his garments.⁵

133:3 It is like the dew of Hermon,⁶ which flows down upon the hills of Zion.⁷

Indeed,⁸ that is where the LORD has decreed a blessing will be available – eternal life.⁹

*Psalms 134*¹⁰

A song of ascents.¹¹

134:1 Attention!¹² Praise the LORD, all you servants of the LORD, who serve¹³ in the LORD's temple during the night.

134:2 Lift your hands toward the sanctuary and praise the LORD!

134:3 May the LORD, the Creator of heaven and earth,

bless you¹⁴ from Zion!¹⁵

*Psalms 135*¹⁶

135:1 Praise the LORD!

Praise the name of the LORD!

Offer praise, you servants of the LORD,

135:2 who serve¹⁷ in the LORD's temple, in the courts of the temple of our God.

135:3 Praise the LORD, for the LORD is good!

Sing praises to his name, for it is pleasant!¹⁸

135:4 Indeed,¹⁹ the LORD has chosen Jacob for himself,

Israel to be his special possession.²⁰

135:5 Yes,²¹ I know the LORD is great, and our Lord is superior to all gods.

135:6 He does whatever he pleases in heaven and on earth,

in the seas and all the ocean depths.

135:7 He causes the clouds to arise from the end of the earth,

makes lightning bolts accompany the rain, and brings the wind out of his storehouses.

135:8 He struck down the firstborn of Egypt,

including both men and animals.

135:9 He performed awesome deeds²² and acts of judgment²³

in your midst, O Egypt,

against Pharaoh and all his servants.

135:10 He defeated many nations, and killed mighty kings –

135:11 Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan,

and all the kingdoms of Canaan.

135:12 He gave their land as an inheritance, as an inheritance to Israel his people.

135:13 O LORD, your name endures,²⁴ your reputation, O LORD, lasts.²⁵

135:14 For the LORD vindicates²⁶ his people,

¹ **sn** *Psalms 133*. The psalmist affirms the benefits of family unity.

² **sn** The precise significance of this title, which appears in Pss 120-134, is unclear. Perhaps worshippers recited these psalms when they ascended the road to Jerusalem to celebrate annual religious festivals. For a discussion of their background see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 219-21.

³ **sn** This statement refers to the extended family structure of ancient Israel, where *brothers* would often live in proximity to one another (Deut 25:5), giving the family greater social prominence and security. However, in its later application in the Israelite cult it probably envisions unity within the covenant community. See L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 212-15.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "[it is] like the good oil on the head, going down on the beard."

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "which goes down in accordance with his measured things." The Hebrew phrase מִדְּוֹתָיו (*middotayv*, "his measured things") refers here to the robes worn by Aaron. HALOT 546 s.v. *מִדָּה derives the form from מִדָּה (*midah*, "robe") rather than מִדָּה (*midah*, "measured thing"). Ugaritic *md* means "robe" and is pluralized *mdt*.

⁶ **sn** *Hermon* refers to Mount Hermon, located north of Israel.

⁷ **sn** The hills of Zion are those surrounding Zion (see Pss 87:1; 125:2). The psalmist does not intend to suggest that the dew from Mt. Hermon in the distant north actually flows down upon Zion. His point is that the same kind of heavy dew that replenishes Hermon may also be seen on Zion's hills. See A. Cohen, *Psalms* (SoBB), 439. "Dew" here symbolizes divine blessing, as the next line suggests.

⁸ **tn** Or "for."

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "there the LORD has commanded the blessing, life forever."

¹⁰ **sn** *Psalms 134*. The psalmist calls on the temple servants to praise God (vv. 1-2). They in turn pronounce a blessing on the psalmist (v. 3).

¹¹ **sn** The precise significance of this title, which appears in Pss 120-134, is unclear. Perhaps worshippers recited these psalms when they ascended the road to Jerusalem to celebrate annual religious festivals. For a discussion of their background see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 219-21.

¹² **tn** *Heb* "Look!"

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "stand."

¹⁴ **tn** The pronominal suffix is second masculine singular, suggesting that the servants addressed in vv. 1-2 are responding to the psalmist.

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "may the LORD bless you from Zion, the maker of heaven and earth."

¹⁶ **sn** *Psalms 135*. The psalmist urges God's people to praise him because he is the incomparable God and ruler of the world who has accomplished great things for Israel.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "stand."

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "for [it is] pleasant." The translation assumes that it is the LORD's "name" that is pleasant. Another option is to understand the referent of "it" as the act of praising (see Ps 147:1).

¹⁹ **tn** Or "for."

²⁰ **sn** *His special possession*. The language echoes Exod 19:5; Deut 7:6; 14:2; 26:18. See also Mal 3:17.

²¹ **tn** Or "for."

²² **tn** Or "signs" (see Ps 65:8).

²³ **tn** Or "portents"; "omens" (see Ps 71:7). The Egyptian plagues are alluded to here.

²⁴ **tn** Or "is forever."

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "O LORD, your remembrance [is] for a generation and a generation." See Ps 102:12.

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "judges," but here the idea is that the LORD "judges on behalf of" his people. The imperfect verbal forms here and in the next line draw attention to the LORD's characteristic actions.

and has compassion on his servants.¹

135:15 The nations' idols are made of silver and gold, they are man-made.²

135:16 They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but cannot see,

135:17 and ears, but cannot hear.

Indeed, they cannot breathe.³

135:18 Those who make them will end up⁴ like them,

as will everyone who trusts in them.

135:19 O family⁵ of Israel, praise the LORD!

O family of Aaron, praise the LORD!

135:20 O family of Levi, praise the LORD!

You loyal followers⁶ of the LORD, praise the LORD!

135:21 The LORD deserves praise in Zion⁷ – he who dwells in Jerusalem.⁸

Praise the LORD!

Psalm 136⁹

136:1 Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,

for his loyal love endures.¹⁰

136:2 Give thanks to the God of gods, for his loyal love endures.

136:3 Give thanks to the Lord of lords, for his loyal love endures,

136:4 to the one who performs magnificent, amazing deeds all by himself,

for his loyal love endures,

136:5 to the one who used wisdom to make the heavens,

for his loyal love endures,

136:6 to the one who spread out the earth over the water,

for his loyal love endures,

136:7 to the one who made the great lights,

for his loyal love endures,

136:8 the sun to rule by day,

for his loyal love endures,

136:9 the moon and stars to rule by night,

for his loyal love endures,

136:10 to the one who struck down the firstborn of Egypt,

for his loyal love endures,

136:11 and led Israel out from their midst, for his loyal love endures,

136:12 with a strong hand and an outstretched arm,

for his loyal love endures,

136:13 to the one who divided¹¹ the Red Sea¹² in two,¹³

for his loyal love endures,

136:14 and led Israel through its midst,

for his loyal love endures,

136:15 and tossed¹⁴ Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea,

for his loyal love endures,

136:16 to the one who led his people through the wilderness,

for his loyal love endures,

136:17 to the one who struck down great kings,

for his loyal love endures,

136:18 and killed powerful kings,

for his loyal love endures,

136:19 Sihon, king of the Amorites,

for his loyal love endures,

136:20 Og, king of Bashan,

for his loyal love endures,

136:21 and gave their land as an inheritance,

for his loyal love endures,

136:22 as an inheritance to Israel his servant,

for his loyal love endures,

136:23 to the one who remembered us when we were down,¹⁵

for his loyal love endures,

136:24 and snatched us away from our enemies,

for his loyal love endures,

136:25 to the one who gives food to all living things,¹⁶

for his loyal love endures.

136:26 Give thanks to the God of heaven, for his loyal love endures!

¹ **sn** Verse 14 echoes Deut 32:36, where Moses affirms that God mercifully relents from fully judging his wayward people.

² **tn** *Heb* “the work of the hands of man.”

³ **tn** *Heb* “indeed, there is not breath in their mouth.” For the collocation אף אין (‘af’ en, “indeed, there is not”) see Isa 41:26. Another option is to take אף as “nose” (see Ps 115:6), in which case one might translate, “a nose, [but] they have no breath in their mouths.”

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “will be.” Another option is to take the prefixed verbal form as a prayer, “may those who make them end up like them.”

sn Because the idols are lifeless, they cannot help their worshipers in times of crisis. Consequently the worshipers end up as dead as the gods in which they trust.

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “house” (here and in the next two lines).

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “fearers.”

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “praised be the LORD from Zion.”

⁸ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

⁹ **sn** *Psalm 136*. In this hymn the psalmist affirms that God is praiseworthy because of his enduring loyal love, sovereign authority, and compassion. Each verse of the psalm concludes with the refrain “for his loyal love endures.”

¹⁰ **tn** Or “is forever.”

¹¹ **tn** Or “cut.”

¹² **tn** *Heb* “Reed Sea” (also in v. 15). “Reed Sea” (or “Sea of Reeds”) is a more accurate rendering of the Hebrew expression יַם סוּף (*yam suf*), traditionally translated “Red Sea.” See the note on the term “Red Sea” in Exod 13:18.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “into pieces.”

¹⁴ **tn** Or “shook off.”

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “who, in our low condition, remembered us.”

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “to all flesh,” which can refer to all people (see Pss 65:2; 145:21) or more broadly to mankind and animals. Elsewhere the psalms view God as the provider for all living things (see Pss 104:27-28; 145:15).

Psalm 137¹

137:1 By the rivers of Babylon
we sit down and weep²
when we remember Zion.
137:2 On the poplars in her midst
we hang our harps,
137:3 for there our captors ask us to com-
pose songs;³
those who mock us demand that we be
happy, saying:⁴
“Sing for us a song about Zion!”⁵
137:4 How can we sing a song to the LORD
in a foreign land?
137:5 If I forget you, O Jerusalem,
may my right hand be crippled!⁶
137:6 May my tongue stick to the roof of
my mouth,
if I do not remember you,
and do not give Jerusalem priority
over whatever gives me the most joy.⁷
137:7 Remember, O LORD, what the
Edomites did
on the day Jerusalem fell.⁸
They said, “Tear it down, tear it down,⁹
right to its very foundation!”
137:8 O daughter Babylon, soon to be
devastated!¹⁰
How blessed will be the one who repays
you
for what you dished out to us!¹¹
137:9 How blessed will be the one who
grabs your babies
and smashes them on a rock!¹²

¹ sn Psalm 137. The Babylonian exiles lament their condi-
tion, vow to remain loyal to Jerusalem, and appeal to God for
revenge on their enemies.

² tn Heb “there we sit down, also we weep.”

³ tn Heb “ask us [for] the words of a song.”

⁴ tn Heb “our [?] joy.” The derivation and meaning of the
Hebrew phrase תִּשְׂמְחוּ (to^lalenu, “our [?]”) are uncertain. A
derivation from תָּלַל (talal, “to mock”) fits contextually, but this
root occurs only in the Hiphil stem. For a discussion of various
proposals, see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 236.

⁵ tn Heb “from a song of Zion.” Most modern translations
read, “one of the songs of Zion,” taking the preposition מִן
(min, “from”) as partitive and “song” as collective. The pres-
ent translation assumes the mem (ם) is enclitic, being misun-
derstood later as the prefixed preposition.

⁶ tn Heb “may my right hand forget.” In this case one must
supply an object, such as “how to move.” The elliptical nature
of the text has prompted emendations (see L. C. Allen, *Psalms
101-150* [WBC], 236). The translation assumes an emenda-
tion of תִּכְשַׁח (tikshakh), from an otherwise unattested root
כִּשַׁח, meaning “to be crippled; to be lame.” See HALOT 502
s.v. כִּשַׁח, which cites Arabic cognate evidence in support of
the proposal. The corruption of the MT can be explained as an
error of transposition facilitated by the use of שָׁכַח (shakhakh,
“forget”) just before this.

⁷ tn Heb “if I do not lift up Jerusalem over the top of my
joy.”

⁸ tn Heb “remember, O LORD, against the sons of Edom,
the day of Jerusalem.”

⁹ tn Heb “lay [it] bare, lay [it] bare.”

¹⁰ tn Heb “O devastated daughter of Babylon.” The psalm-
ist dramatically anticipates Babylon’s demise.

¹¹ tn Heb “O the happiness of the one who repays you your
wage which you paid to us.”

¹² sn For other references to the wholesale slaughter of ba-
bies in the context of ancient Near Eastern warfare, see 2 Kgs

Psalm 138¹³

By David.

138:1 I will give you thanks with all my
heart;
before the heavenly assembly¹⁴ I will
sing praises to you.
138:2 I will bow down toward your holy
temple,
and give thanks to your name,
because of your loyal love and faithful-
ness,
for you have exalted your promise above
the entire sky.¹⁵
138:3 When¹⁶ I cried out for help, you
answered me.
You made me bold and energized me.¹⁷
138:4 Let all the kings of the earth give
thanks¹⁸ to you, O LORD,
when they hear the words you speak.¹⁹
138:5 Let them sing about the LORD’s
deeds,²⁰
for the LORD’s splendor is magnificent.²¹
138:6 Though the LORD is exalted, he
takes note of the lowly,
and recognizes the proud from far away.
138:7 Even when I must walk in the midst
of danger,²² you revive me.
You oppose my angry enemies,²³
and your right hand delivers me.

8:12; Isa 13:16; Hos 13:16; Nah 3:10.

¹³ sn Psalm 138. The psalmist vows to thank the Lord for
his deliverance and protection.

¹⁴ tn The referent of the Hebrew term אֱלֹהִים (‘elohim) is un-
clear. It refers either to the angelic assembly (see Gen 3:5;
Ps 8:5) or to the pagan gods (see Pss 82:1, 6; 86:8; 97:7), in
which case the psalmist’s praise takes on a polemical tone.

¹⁵ tc The MT reads, “for you have made great over all your
name your word.” If retained, this must mean that God’s
mighty intervention, in fulfillment of his word of promise, sur-
passed anything he had done prior to this. However, the state-
ment is odd and several emendations have been proposed.
Some read, “for you have exalted over everything your name
and your word,” while others suggest, “for you have exalted
over all the heavens your name and your word.” The transla-
tion assumes an emendation of “your name” to “your heav-
ens” (a construction that appears in Pss 8:3 and 144:5). The
point is that God has been faithful to his promise and the reli-
ability of that promise is apparent to all. For a fuller discus-
sion of these options, see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC),
244.

¹⁶ tn Heb “in the day.”

¹⁷ tn Heb “you made me bold in my soul [with] strength.”

¹⁸ tn The prefixed verbal forms here and in the following
verse are understood as jussives, for the psalmist appears
to be calling upon the kings to praise God. Another option is
to take them as imperfects and translate, “the kings of the
earth will give thanks...and will sing.” In this case the psalmist
anticipates a universal response to his thanksgiving song.

¹⁹ tn Heb “the words of your mouth.”

²⁰ tn Heb “ways.”

²¹ tn Heb “great.”

²² tn Or “distress.”

²³ tn Heb “against the anger of my enemies you extend
your hand.”

138:8 The LORD avenges me.¹
O LORD, your loyal love endures.
Do not abandon those whom you have
made!²

Psalms 139³

For the music director, a psalm of David.

139:1 O LORD, you examine me⁴ and
know.

139:2 You know when I sit down and
when I get up;
even from far away you understand my
motives.

139:3 You carefully observe me when I
travel or when I lie down to rest;⁵
you are aware of everything I do.⁶

139:4 Certainly⁷ my tongue does not
frame a word
without you, O LORD, being thoroughly
aware of it.⁸

139:5 You squeeze me in from behind and
in front;
you place your hand on me.

139:6 Your knowledge is beyond my com-
prehension;

it is so far beyond me, I am unable to
fathom it.⁹

139:7 Where can I go to escape your
spirit?

Where can I flee to escape your presence?¹⁰

139:8 If I were to ascend¹¹ to heaven, you
would be there.

If I were to sprawl out in Sheol, there you
would be.¹²

139:9 If I were to fly away¹³ on the wings
of the dawn,¹⁴

and settle down on the other side¹⁵ of the
sea,

139:10 even there your hand would guide
me,

your right hand would grab hold of me.

139:11 If I were to say, "Certainly the
darkness will cover me,¹⁶
and the light will turn to night all around
me,"¹⁷

139:12 even the darkness is not too dark
for you to see,¹⁸
and the night is as bright as¹⁹ day;
darkness and light are the same to you.²⁰

139:13 Certainly²¹ you made my mind
and heart;²²
you wove me together²³ in my mother's
womb.

139:14 I will give you thanks because your
deeds are awesome and amazing.²⁴
You knew me thoroughly;²⁵

"dawn" may find its roots in mythological traditions about the god Shachar, whose birth is described in an Ugaritic myth (see G. R. Driver, *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, 126) and who is mentioned in Isa 14:12 as the father of Helel.

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "at the end."

¹⁶ **tn** The Hebrew verb שָׁחַף (*shuf*), which means "to crush; to wound," in Gen 3:15 and Job 9:17, is problematic here. For a discussion of attempts to relate the verb to Arabic roots, see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 251. Many emend the form to יִשְׁכְּנֵנִי (*yeshukkeniy*), from the root שָׁכַח ("to cover," an alternate form of סָכַח), a reading assumed in the present translation.

¹⁷ **tn** Heb "and night, light, around me."

¹⁸ **tn** The words "to see" are supplied in the translation for clarification and for stylistic reasons.

¹⁹ **tn** Heb "shines like."

²⁰ **tn** Heb "like darkness, like light."

²¹ **tn** Or "for."

²² **tn** Heb "my kidneys." The kidneys were sometimes viewed as the seat of one's emotions and moral character (cf. Pss 7:9; 26:2). A number of translations, recognizing that "kidneys" does not communicate this idea to the modern reader, have generalized the concept: "inmost being" (NAB, NIV); "inward parts" (NASB, NRSV); "the delicate, inner parts of my body" (NLT). In the last instance, the focus is almost entirely on the physical body rather than the emotions or moral character. The present translation, by using a hendiadys (one concept expressed through two terms), links the concepts of emotion (heart) and moral character (mind).

²³ **tn** The Hebrew verb כָּבַד (*sakhakh*, "to weave together") is an alternate form of שָׁבַד (*sakhakh*, "to weave") used in Job 10:11.

²⁴ **tc** Heb "because awesome things, I am distinct, amazing [are] your works." The text as it stands is syntactically problematic and makes little, if any, sense. The Niphal of פָּלַח (*pala*) occurs elsewhere only in Exod 33:16. Many take the form from פָּלַח (*pala*); see GKC 216 §75.qq, which in the Niphal perfect means "to be amazing" (see 2 Sam 1:26; Ps 118:23; Prov 30:18). Some, following the LXX and some other ancient witnesses, also prefer to emend the verb from first to second person, "you are amazing" (see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* [WBC], 249, 251). The present translation assumes the text conflates two variants: נִפְלְאוֹתַי, the otherwise unattested masculine plural participle of פָּלַח (*nifla'ot*), the usual (feminine) plural form of the Niphal participle. The latter has been changed to a verb by later scribes in an attempt to accommodate it syntactically. The original text likely read, וְנִפְלְאוֹתַי מְבַשֵּׁיךָ, "your works [are] awesome [and] amazing".

²⁵ **tc** Heb "and my being knows very much." Better parallelism is achieved (see v. 15a) if one emends יָדַעַת (*yoda'at*), a Qal active participle, feminine singular form, to יָדַעַתָּה (*yada'at*),

¹ **tn** Heb "avenges on my behalf." For the meaning "to avenge" for the verb גָּמַר (*gamar*), see HALOT 197-98 s.v. גָּמַר.

² **tn** Heb "the works of your hands." Many medieval Hebrew MSS read the singular, "work of your hands."

³ **sn** Psalm 139. The psalmist acknowledges that God, who created him, is aware of his every action and thought. He invites God to examine his motives, for he is confident they are pure.

⁴ **tn** The statement is understood as generalizing – the psalmist describes what God typically does.

⁵ **tn** Heb "my traveling and my lying down you measure." The verb זָרַח (*zarah*, "to measure") is probably here a denominative from זָרַת (*zarat*, "a span; a measure"), though some derive it from זָרָה (*zarat*, "to winnow; to sift"; see BDB 279-80 s.v. זָרָה).

⁶ **tn** Heb "all my ways."

⁷ **tn** Or "for."

⁸ **tn** Heb "look, O LORD, you know all of it."

⁹ **tn** Heb "too amazing [is this] knowledge for me, it is elusive, I cannot attain to it."

¹⁰ **tn** Heb "Where can I go from your spirit, and where from your face can I flee?" God's "spirit" may refer here (1) to his presence (note the parallel term, "your face," and see Ps 104:29-30, where God's "face" is his presence and his "spirit" is the life-giving breath he imparts) or (2) to his personal Spirit (see Ps 51:10).

¹¹ **tn** The Hebrew verb סָלַח (*salah*, "to ascend") occurs only here in the OT, but the word is well-attested in Aramaic literature from different time periods and displays a wide semantic range (see DNWSI 2:788-90).

¹² **tn** Heb "look, you."

¹³ **tn** Heb "rise up."

¹⁴ **sn** On the wings of the dawn. This personification of the

139:15 my bones were not hidden from you,
when¹ I was made in secret
and sewed together in the depths of the
earth.²

139:16 Your eyes saw me when I was in-
side the womb.³

All the days ordained for me
were recorded in your scroll
before one of them came into existence.⁴

139:17 How difficult it is for me to fathom
your thoughts about me, O God!⁵

How vast is their sum total!⁶

139:18 If I tried to count them,
they would outnumber the grains of sand.
Even if I finished counting them,
I would still have to contend with you.⁷

139:19 If only⁸ you would kill the wick-
ed, O God!

Get away from me, you violent men!⁹

139:20 They¹⁰ rebel against you¹¹ and act
deceitfully.¹²

a Qal perfect second masculine singular perfect. See L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 252.

¹ **tc** The Hebrew term אָשֶׁר (*asher*, “which”) should probably be emended to כְּאֲשֶׁר (*ka’asher*, “when”). The *kaf* (כ) may have been lost by haplography (note the *kaf* at the end of the preceding form).

² **sn** The phrase *depths of the earth* may be metaphorical (euphemistic) or it may reflect a prescientific belief about the origins of the embryo deep beneath the earth’s surface (see H. W. Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament*, 96-97). Job 1:21 also closely associates the mother’s womb with the earth.

³ **tn** *Heb* “Your eyes saw my shapeless form.” The Hebrew noun גֵּלֶם (*golem*) occurs only here in the OT. In later Hebrew the word refers to “a lump, a shapeless or lifeless substance,” and to “unfinished matter, a vessel wanting finishing” (Jastrow 222 s.v. גֵּלֶם). The translation employs the dynamic rendering “when I was inside the womb” to clarify that the speaker was still in his mother’s womb at the time he was “seen” by God.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “and on your scroll all of them were written, [the] days [which] were formed, and [there was] not one among them.” This “scroll” may be the “scroll of life” mentioned in Ps 69:28 (see the note on the word “living” there).

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “and to me how precious are your thoughts, O God.” The Hebrew verb יָקַר (*yaqar*) probably has the sense of “difficult [to comprehend]” here (see HALOT 432 s.v. יָקַר qal.1 and note the use of Aramaic יָקַר in Dan 2:11). Elsewhere in the immediate context the psalmist expresses his amazement at the extent of God’s knowledge about him (see vv. 1-6, 17b-18).

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “how vast are their heads.” Here the Hebrew word “head” is used of the “sum total” of God’s knowledge of the psalmist.

⁷ **tc** *Heb* “I awake and I [am] still with you.” A reference to the psalmist awaking from sleep makes little, if any, sense contextually. For this reason some propose an emendation to הִקְבִּיטוֹתַי (*haqibitotai*), a Hiphil perfect form from an otherwise unattested verb הִקְבִּיט (*qatsat*) understood as a denominative of קָץ (*qets*, “end”). See L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 252-53.

⁸ **tn** The Hebrew particle אִם (*im*, “if”) and following prefixed verbal form here express a wish (see Pss 81:8; 95:7, as well as GK3 321 §109.b).

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “men of bloodshed.”

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “who.”

¹¹ **tc** *Heb* “they speak [of] you.” The suffixed form of the verb אָמַר (*amar*, “to speak”) is peculiar. The translation assumes an emendation to יַמְרִיכָהּ (*yamrukha*), a Hiphil form from מָרָה (*marah*, “to rebel”; see Ps 78:40).

¹² **tn** *Heb* “by deceit.”

your enemies lie.¹³

139:21 O LORD, do I not hate those who
hate you,

and despise those who oppose you?¹⁴

139:22 I absolutely hate them,¹⁵
they have become my enemies!

139:23 Examine me, and probe my
thoughts!¹⁶

Test me, and know my concerns!¹⁷

139:24 See if there is any idolatrous ten-
dency¹⁸ in me,

and lead me in the reliable ancient path!¹⁹

Psalm 140²⁰

For the music director; a psalm of David.

140:1 O LORD, rescue me from wicked
men!²¹

Protect me from violent men,²²

140:2 who plan ways to harm me.²³

All day long they stir up conflict.²⁴

140:3 Their tongues wound like a serpent;²⁵

¹³ **tc** *Heb* “lifted up for emptiness, your cities.” The Hebrew text as it stands makes no sense. The form נָשִׂיא (*nasu*; a Qal passive participle) should be emended to נָשִׂיא (*nos’u*; a Qal perfect, third common plural, “[they] lift up”). Many emend עָרֶיךָ (*arekha*, “your cities”) to עָלֶיךָ (*alekha*, “against you”), but it is preferable to understand the noun as an Aramaism and translate “your enemies” (see Dan 4:16 and L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* [WBC], 253).

¹⁴ **tc** *Heb* “who raise themselves up against you.” The form וּבִמְתָקֵימֶיךָ (*uvitqom’mekha*) should be emended to וּבִמְתָקֵימֶיךָ (*uv’mitqom’mekha*), a Hitpolel participle (the prefixed *mem* [מ] of the participle is accidentally omitted in the MT, though a few medieval Hebrew mss have it).

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “[with] completeness of hatred I hate them.”

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “and know my heart.”

¹⁷ **tn** The Hebrew noun שְׂרָעָי (*sar’apay*, “concerns”) is used of “worries” in Ps 94:19.

¹⁸ **tn** Many understand the Hebrew term עֵצֶב (*otsev*) as a noun meaning “pain,” and translate the phrase הִרְרָה עֵצֶב (*der-ekh otsev*) as “of pain,” but this makes little sense here. (Some interpret it to refer to actions which bring pain to others.) It is preferable to take עֵצֶב as “idol” (see HALOT 865 s.v. עֵצֶב) and understand “way of an idol” to refer to idolatrous actions or tendency. See L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 253.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “in the path of antiquity.” This probably refers to the moral path prescribed by the LORD at the beginning of Israel’s history. See Jer 6:16; 18:15, as well as L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC), 253.

²⁰ **sn** *Psalm 140*. The psalmist asks God to deliver him from his deadly enemies, calls judgment down upon them, and affirms his confidence in God’s justice.

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “from a wicked man.” The Hebrew uses the singular in a representative or collective sense (note the plural verbs in v. 2).

²² **tn** *Heb* “a man of violent acts.” The Hebrew uses the singular in a representative or collective sense (note the plural verbs in v. 2).

²³ **tn** *Heb* “they devise wicked [plans] in [their] mind.”

²⁴ **tc** *Heb* “they attack [for] war.” Some revocalize the verb (which is a Qal imperfect from גָּר, *gur*, “to attack”) to גָּרָה (*y’garu*), a Piel imperfect from גָּרָה (*garah*, “stir up strife”). This is followed in the present translation.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “they sharpen their tongue like a serpent.” Ps 64:3 reads, “they sharpen their tongues like sword.” Perhaps Ps 140:3 uses a mixed metaphor, the point being that “they sharpen their tongues [like a sword],” as it were, so that when they speak, their words wound like a serpent’s bite. Another option is that the language refers to the pointed or forked nature of a serpent’s tongue, which is viewed metaphorically as “sharpened.”

a viper's¹ venom is behind² their lips.
(Selah)

140:4 O LORD, shelter me from the power³
of the wicked!

Protect me from violent men,
who plan to knock me over.⁴

140:5 Proud men hide a snare for me;
evil men⁵ spread a net by the path;
they set traps for me. (Selah)

140:6 I say to the LORD, "You are my
God."

O LORD, pay attention to my plea for
mercy!

140:7 O sovereign LORD, my strong deliverer,⁶

you shield⁷ my head in the day of battle.

140:8 O LORD, do not let the wicked have
their way!⁸

Do not allow their⁹ plan to succeed
when they attack!¹⁰ (Selah)

140:9 As for the heads of those who surround me –
may the harm done by¹¹ their lips overwhelm them!

140:10 May he rain down¹² fiery coals
upon them!

May he throw them into the fire!
From bottomless pits they will not escape.¹³

140:11 A slanderer¹⁴ will not endure on¹⁵
the earth;

calamity will hunt down a violent man
and strike him down.¹⁶

140:12 I know¹⁷ that the LORD defends the
cause of the oppressed
and vindicates the poor.¹⁸

140:13 Certainly the godly will give
thanks to your name;
the morally upright will live in your presence.

*Psalms 141*¹⁹

A psalm of David.

141:1 O LORD, I cry out to you. Come
quickly to me!

Pay attention to me when I cry out to
you!

141:2 May you accept my prayer like incense,
my uplifted hands like the evening offering!²⁰

141:3 O LORD, place a guard on my
mouth!

Protect the opening²¹ of my lips!²²

141:4 Do not let me have evil desires,²³
or participate in sinful activities
with men who behave wickedly.²⁴

I will not eat their delicacies.²⁵

141:5 May the godly strike me in love and
correct me!

May my head not refuse²⁶ choice oil!²⁷
Indeed, my prayer is a witness against
their evil deeds.²⁸

1 tn The Hebrew term is used only here in the OT.

2 tn Heb "under."

3 tn Heb "hands."

4 tn Heb "to push down my steps."

5 tn Heb "and ropes," but many prefer to revocalize the noun as a participle (הַבְּלִיַּים, *khov^hlīm*) from the verb הִבֵּיל (*khal-*, "act corruptly").

6 tn Heb "the strength of my deliverance."

7 tn Heb "cover."

8 tn Heb "do not grant the desires of the wicked."

9 tn Heb "his." The singular is used in a representative sense (see v. 1).

10 tn Heb "his plot do not promote, they rise up." The translation understands the final verb as being an unmarked temporal clause. Another option is to revocalize the verb as a Hiphil and take the verb with the next verse, "those who surround me lift up [their] head," which could refer to their proud attitude as they anticipate victory (see Ps 27:6).

11 tn Heb "harm of their lips." The genitive here indicates the source or agent of the harm.

12 tn The verb form in the *Kethib* (consonantal Hebrew text) appears to be a Hiphil imperfect from the root נוּט (*nut*, "to sway"), but the Hiphil occurs only here and in Ps 55:3, where it is preferable to read יַמְטִירוּ (*yamtiru*, "they rain down"). In Ps 140:10 the form יַמְטֵר (*yamter*, "let him rain down") should probably be read.

13 tn Heb "into bottomless pits, they will not arise." The translation assumes that the preposition בֵּ- (*bet*) has the nuance "from" here. Another option is to connect the line with what precedes, take the final clause as an asyndetic relative clause, and translate, "into bottomless pits [from which] they cannot arise." The Hebrew noun מַהְמֹרָה (*mahmorah*, "bottomless pit") occurs only here in the OT.

14 tn Heb "a man of a tongue."

15 tn Heb "be established in."

16 tn Heb "for blows." The Hebrew noun מַדְכְּהֶפֶה (*madkhefeh*, "blow") occurs only here in the OT.

17 tc The translation follows the *Qere* and many medieval Hebrew MSS in reading a first person verb form here. The *Kethib* reads the second person.

18 tn Heb "and the just cause of the poor."

19 sn *Psalms 141*. The psalmist asks God to protect him from sin and from sinful men.

20 tn Heb "may my prayer be established [like] incense before you, the uplifting of my hands [like] an evening offering."

21 tn Heb "door." The Hebrew word occurs only here in the OT.

22 sn *My mouth...my lips*. The psalmist asks God to protect him from speaking inappropriately or sinfully.

23 tn Heb "do not turn my heart toward an evil thing."

24 tn Heb "to act sinfully in practices in wickedness with men, doers of evil."

25 sn *Their delicacies*. This probably refers to the enjoyment that a sinful lifestyle appears to offer.

26 tn The form יָנִי (*yaniy*) appears to be derived from the verbal root נָא (*nu'*). Another option is to emend the form to יָנָא (*y^ana'*), a Piel from נָאָה (*na'ah*), and translate "may choice oil not adorn my head" (see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* [WBC], 271). In this case, choice oil, like delicacies in v. 4, symbolize the pleasures of sin.

27 sn *May my head not refuse choice oil*. The psalmist compares the constructive criticism of the *godly* (see the previous line) to having refreshing olive oil poured over one's head.

28 tc Heb "for still, and my prayer [is] against their evil deeds." The syntax of the Hebrew text is difficult; the sequence כִּי-עוֹד-וּ (*kiy-^ood u-*, "for still and") occurs only here. The translation assumes an emendation to כִּי עוֹד הַבְּלִיַּיִתִּי ("indeed a witness [is] my prayer"). The psalmist's lament about the evil actions of sinful men (see v. 4) testifies against the wicked in the divine court.

141:6 They will be thrown down the side
of a cliff by their judges.¹
They² will listen to my words, for they
are pleasant.
141:7 As when one plows and breaks up
the soil,³
so our bones are scattered at the mouth
of Sheol.
141:8 Surely I am looking to you,⁴ O
sovereign LORD.
In you I take shelter.
Do not expose me to danger!⁵
141:9 Protect me from the snare they have
laid for me,
and the traps the evildoers have set.⁶
141:10 Let the wicked fall⁷ into their⁸
own nets,
while I escape.⁹

*Psalms 142*¹⁰

A well-written song¹¹ by David, when he was in
the cave,¹² a prayer.

142:1 To the LORD I cry out;¹³

¹ **tn** *Heb* “they are thrown down by the hands of a cliff, their judges.” The syntax of the Hebrew text is difficult and the meaning uncertain. The perfect verbal form is understood as rhetorical; the psalmist describes the anticipated downfall of the wicked as if it had already occurred. “Their judges” could be taken as the subject of the verb, but this makes little, if any, sense. The translation assumes the judges are the agents and that the wicked, mentioned earlier in the psalm, are the subjects of the verb.

² **tn** It is unclear how this statement relates to the preceding sentence. Perhaps the judges are the referent of the pronominal subject (“they”) of the verb “will listen,” and “my words” are the referent of the pronominal subject (“they”) of the phrase “are pleasant.” The psalmist may be affirming here his confidence that he will be vindicated when he presents his case before the judges, while the wicked will be punished.

³ **tn** *Heb* “like splitting and breaking open in the earth.” The meaning of the statement and the point of the comparison are not entirely clear. Perhaps the psalmist is suggesting that he and other godly individuals are as good as dead; their bones are scattered about like dirt that is dug up and tossed aside.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “my eyes [are] toward you.”

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “do not lay bare my life.” Only here is the Piel form of the verb collocated with the term נֶפֶשׁ (*nefesh*, “life”). In Isa 53:12 the Lord’s servant “lays bare (the Hiphil form of the verb is used) his life to death.”

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “and the traps of the doers of evil.”

⁷ **tn** The prefixed verbal form is understood as a jussive of prayer. Another option is to translate, “the wicked will fall.”

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “his.”

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “at the same [that] I, until I pass by.” Another option is to take יָרַד (*yakhaad*) with the preceding line, “let the wicked fall together into their own nets.”

¹⁰ **sn** *Psalms 142*. The psalmist laments his persecuted state and asks the Lord to deliver him from his enemies.

¹¹ **tn** The meaning of the Hebrew term מַשְׁכִּיל (*maskil*) is uncertain. The word is derived from a verb meaning “to be prudent; to be wise.” Various options are: “a contemplative song,” “a song imparting moral wisdom,” or “a skillful [i.e., well-written] song.” The term occurs in the superscriptions of Pss 32, 42, 44, 45, 52-55, 74, 78, 88, 89, and 142, as well as in Ps 47:7.

¹² **sn** According to the superscription, David wrote this psalm while in “the cave.” This probably refers to either the incident recorded in 1 Sam 22:1 or to the one recorded in 1 Sam 24:3. See the superscription of Ps 57.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “[with] my voice to the LORD I cry out.”

to the LORD I plead for mercy.¹⁴
142:2 I pour out my lament before him;
I tell him about¹⁵ my troubles.
142:3 Even when my strength leaves me,¹⁶
you watch my footsteps.¹⁷
In the path where I walk
they have hidden a trap for me.
142:4 Look to the right and see!
No one cares about me.¹⁸
I have nowhere to run;¹⁹
no one is concerned about my life.²⁰
142:5 I cry out to you, O LORD;
I say, “You are my shelter,
my security²¹ in the land of the living.”
142:6 Listen to my cry for help,
for I am in serious trouble!²²
Rescue me from those who chase me,
for they are stronger than I am.
142:7 Free me²³ from prison,
that I may give thanks to your name.
Because of me the godly will assemble,²⁴
for you will vindicate me.²⁵

*Psalms 143*²⁶

A psalm of David.

143:1 O LORD, hear my prayer!
Pay attention to my plea for help!
Because of your faithfulness and justice,
answer me!
143:2 Do not sit in judgment on²⁷ your
servant,
for no one alive is innocent before you.²⁸
143:3 Certainly²⁹ my enemies³⁰ chase me.
They smash me into the ground.³¹
They force me to live³² in dark regions,³³
like those who have been dead for ages.
143:4 My strength leaves me,³⁴

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “[with] my voice to the LORD I plead for mercy.”

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “my trouble before him I declare.”

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “my spirit grows faint.”

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “you know my path.”

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “there is no one who recognizes me.”

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “a place of refuge perishes from me.”

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* “there is no one who seeks for the sake of my life.”

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “my portion.” The psalmist compares the LORD to landed property, which was foundational to economic stability in ancient Israel.

²² **tn** *Heb* “for I am very low.”

²³ **tn** *Heb* “bring out my life.”

²⁴ **tn** Or “gather around.”

²⁵ **tn** The Hebrew idiom גָּמַל לְאִלִּים (*gamal 'al*) means “to repay,” here in a positive sense.

²⁶ **sn** *Psalms 143*. As in the previous psalm, the psalmist laments his persecuted state and asks the Lord to deliver him from his enemies.

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* “do not enter into judgment with.”

²⁸ **tn** *Heb* “for no one living is innocent before you.”

²⁹ **tn** Or “for.”

³⁰ **tn** *Heb* “an enemy.” The singular is used in a representative sense to describe a typical member of the larger group of enemies (note the plural “enemies” in vv. 9, 12).

³¹ **tn** *Heb* “he crushes on the ground my life.”

³² **tn** Or “sit.”

³³ **sn** *Dark regions* refers to Sheol, which the psalmist views as a dark place located deep in the ground (see Ps 88:6).

³⁴ **tn** *Heb* “my spirit grows faint.”

I am absolutely shocked.¹
143:5 I recall the old days;²
 I meditate on all you have done;
 I reflect on your accomplishments.³
143:6 I spread my hands out to you in
 prayer,⁴
 my soul thirsts for you in a parched⁵ land.⁶
143:7 Answer me quickly, LORD!
 My strength is fading.⁷
 Do not reject me,⁸
 or I will join⁹ those descending into the
 grave.¹⁰
143:8 May I hear about your loyal love in
 the morning,¹¹
 for I trust in you.
 Show me the way I should go,¹²
 because I long for you.¹³
143:9 Rescue me from my enemies, O LORD!
 I run to you for protection.¹⁴
143:10 Teach me to do what pleases you,¹⁵
 for you are my God.
 May your kind presence¹⁶
 lead me¹⁷ into a level land.¹⁸

1 tn Heb "in my midst my heart is shocked." For a similar use of the Hitpolel of שָׁמַע (shamem), see Isa 59:16; 63:5.

2 tn Or "ancient times"; Heb "days from before."

3 tn Heb "the work of your hands."

4 tn The words "in prayer" are supplied in the translation to clarify that the psalmist is referring to a posture of prayer.

5 tn Heb "faint" or "weary." See Ps 63:1.

6 tc Heb "my soul like a faint land for you." A verb (perhaps "thirsts") is implied (see Ps 63:1). The translation assumes an emendation of the preposition לְ (ke, "like") to בְּ (be, "in," see Ps 63:1; cf. NEB "athirst for thee in a thirsty land"). If the MT is retained, one might translate, "my soul thirsts for you, as a parched land does for water/rain" (cf. NIV, NRSV).

7 tn Heb "my spirit is failing."

8 tn Heb "do not hide your face from me." The idiom "hide the face" (ל) can mean "ignore" (see Pss 10:11; 13:1; 51:9) or (2) can carry the stronger idea of "reject" (see Pss 30:7; 88:14).

9 tn Heb "I will be equal with."

10 tn Heb "the pit." The Hebrew noun בּוֹר (bor, "pit; cistern") is sometimes used of the grave and/or the realm of the dead. See Ps 28:1.

11 tn Heb "cause me to hear in the morning your loyal love." Here "loyal love" probably stands metonymically for an oracle of assuring promising God's intervention as an expression of his loyal love.

sn The morning is sometimes viewed as the time of divine intervention (see Pss 30:5; 59:16; 90:14).

12 sn The way probably refers here to God's moral and ethical standards and requirements (see v. 10).

13 tn Heb "for to you I lift up my life." The Hebrew expression לָקַח נַפְשׁוֹ (na'af nesh, "to lift up [one's] life") means "to desire; to long for" (see Deut 24:15; Prov 19:18; Jer 22:27; 44:14; Hos 4:8, as well as H. W. Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament*, 16).

14 tn Heb "to you I cover," which makes no sense. The translation assumes an emendation of נָסִיתִי (nastiy, "I flee," a Qal perfect, first singular form from נוּס, nos). Confusion of kaf (kaf) and nun (n) is attested elsewhere (see P. K. McCarter, *Textual Criticism* [GBS], 48). The collocation of נוּס ("flee") with אֵל ("el, "to") is well-attested.

15 tn Or "your will." See Ps 40:8.

16 tn Heb "your good spirit." God's "spirit" may refer here to his presence (see the note on the word "presence" in Ps 139:7) or to his personal Spirit (see Ps 51:10).

17 tn The prefixed verbal form is taken as a jussive. Taking the statement as a prayer fits well with the petitionary tone of vv. 7-10a.

18 sn A level land (where one can walk free of obstacles)

143:11 O LORD, for the sake of your reputation,¹⁹ revive me!²⁰
 Because of your justice, rescue me from trouble!²¹
143:12 As a demonstration of your loyal love,²² destroy my enemies!
 Annihilate²³ all who threaten my life,²⁴
 for I am your servant.

*Psalms 144*²⁵

By David.

144:1 The LORD, my protector,²⁶ deserves praise²⁷ –
 the one who trains my hands for battle,²⁸
 and my fingers for war,
144:2 who loves me²⁹ and is my stronghold,
 my refuge³⁰ and my deliverer,
 my shield and the one in whom I take
 shelter,
 who makes nations submit to me.³¹
144:3 O LORD, of what importance is the
 human race,³² that you should notice
 them?
 Of what importance is mankind,³³ that
 you should be concerned about them?³⁴
144:4 People³⁵ are like a vapor,

here symbolizes divine blessing and protection. See Pss 26:12 and 27:11 for similar imagery.

19 tn Heb "name," which here stands metonymically for God's reputation.

20 tn The imperfect verbal forms in vv. 11-12a are understood as expressing the psalmist's desire. Note the petitionary tone of vv. 7-10a.

21 tn Heb "by your justice bring out my life from trouble."

22 tn Heb "in [or "by"] your faithfulness."

23 tn The perfect with vav (ו) consecutive carries on the mood of the preceding imperfect.

24 tn Heb "all the enemies of my life."

25 sn Psalm 144. The psalmist expresses his confidence in God, asks for a mighty display of divine intervention in an upcoming battle, and anticipates God's rich blessings on the nation in the aftermath of military victory.

26 tn Heb "my rocky summit." The LORD is compared to a rocky summit where one can find protection from enemies. See Ps 18:2.

27 tn Heb "blessed [be] the LORD, my rocky summit."

28 sn The one who trains my hands for battle. The psalmist attributes his skill with weapons to divine enablement (see Ps 18:34). Egyptian reliefs picture gods teaching the king how to shoot a bow. See O. Keel, *The Symbolism of the Biblical World*, 265.

29 tn Heb "my loyal love," which is probably an abbreviated form of "the God of my loyal love" (see Ps 59:10, 17).

30 tn Or "my elevated place."

31 tn Heb "the one who subdues nations beneath me."

32 tn Heb "What is mankind?" The singular noun אִנּוּשׁ ('enosh) is used here in a collective sense and refers to the human race. See Ps 8:5.

33 tn Heb "and the son of man." The phrase "son of man" is used here in a collective sense and refers to human beings. For other uses of the phrase in a collective or representative manner, see Num 23:19; Ps 146:3; Isa 51:12.

34 tn Heb "take account of him." The two imperfect verbal forms in v. 4 describe God's characteristic activity.

35 tn Heb "man," or "mankind."

their days like a shadow that disappears.¹

144:5 O LORD, make the sky sink² and come down!³

Touch the mountains and make them smolder!⁴

144:6 Hurl lightning bolts and scatter them!

Shoot your arrows and rout them!⁵

144:7 Reach down⁶ from above!

Grab me and rescue me from the surging water,⁷

from the power of foreigners,⁸

144:8 who speak lies, and make false promises.⁹

144:9 O God, I will sing a new song to you!

Accompanied by a ten-stringed instrument, I will sing praises to you,

144:10 the one who delivers¹⁰ kings, and rescued David his servant from a deadly¹¹ sword.

144:11 Grab me and rescue me from the power of foreigners,¹²

who speak lies, and make false promises.¹³

144:12 Then¹⁴ our sons will be like plants,

that quickly grow to full size.¹⁵
Our daughters will be like corner pillars,¹⁶ carved like those in a palace.¹⁷

144:13 Our storehouses¹⁸ will be full, providing all kinds of food.¹⁹

Our sheep will multiply by the thousands and fill²⁰ our pastures.²¹

144:14 Our cattle will be weighted down with produce.²²

No one will break through our walls, no one will be taken captive, and there will be no terrified cries in our city squares.²³

144:15 How blessed are the people who experience these things!²⁴

How blessed are the people whose God is the LORD!

*Psalm 145*²⁵

A psalm of praise, by David.

145:1 I will extol you, my God, O king! I will praise your name continually!²⁶

145:2 Every day I will praise you!

I will praise your name continually!²⁷

145:3 The LORD is great and certainly worthy of praise!

No one can fathom his greatness!²⁸

145:4 One generation will praise your deeds to another,

¹ *tn* *Heb* "his days [are] like a shadow that passes away," that is, like a late afternoon shadow made by the descending sun that will soon be swallowed up by complete darkness. See Ps 102:11.

² *tn* The Hebrew verb נָטָה (*natah*) can carry the sense "to [cause to] bend; to [cause to] bow down." For example, Gen 49:15 pictures Issachar as a donkey that "bends" its shoulder or back under a burden. Here the LORD causes the sky, pictured as a dome or vault, to sink down as he descends in the storm. See Ps 18:9.

³ *tn* *Heb* "so you might come down." The prefixed verbal form with *vav* (ו) conjunctive indicates purpose after the preceding imperative. The same type of construction is utilized in v. 6.

⁴ *tn* *Heb* "so they might smolder." The prefixed verbal form with *vav* (ו) conjunctive indicates purpose after the preceding imperative.

⁵ *sn* Arrows and lightning bolts are associated in other texts (see Pss 18:14; 77:17-18; Zech 9:14), as well as in ancient Near Eastern art (see R. B. Chisholm, "An Exegetical and Theological study of Psalm 18/2 Samuel 22" [Th.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1983], 187).

⁶ *tn* *Heb* "stretch out your hands."

⁷ *tn* *Heb* "mighty waters." The waters of the sea symbolize the psalmist's powerful foreign enemies, as well as the realm of death they represent (see the next line and Ps 18:16-17).

⁸ *tn* *Heb* "from the hand of the sons of foreignness."

⁹ *tn* *Heb* "who [with] their mouth speak falsehood, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood." The reference to the "right hand" is probably a metonymy for an oath. When making an oath, one would raise the hand as a solemn gesture. See Exod 6:8; Num 14:30; Deut 32:40. The figure thus represents the making of false oaths (false promises).

¹⁰ *tn* *Heb* "grants deliverance to."

¹¹ *tn* *Heb* "harmful."

¹² *tn* *Heb* "from the hand of the sons of foreignness."

¹³ *tn* *Heb* "who [with] their mouth speak falsehood, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood." See v. 8 where the same expression occurs.

¹⁴ *tn* Some consider אָשֶׁר (*asher*) problematic, but here it probably indicates the anticipated consequence of the preceding request. (For other examples of אָשֶׁר indicating purpose/result, see BDB 83 s.v. and HALOT 99 s.v.) If the psalmist – who appears to be a Davidic king preparing to fight a battle (see vv. 10-11) – is victorious, the whole nation will

be spared invasion and defeat (see v. 14) and can flourish. Some prefer to emend the form to אֲשֶׁרִי ("how blessed [are our sons]!"). A suffixed noun sometimes follows אָשֶׁרִי (*ashrey*; see 1 Kgs 10:8; Prov 20:7), but the presence of a comparative element (see "like plants") after the suffixed noun makes the proposed reading too awkward syntactically.

¹⁵ *tn* *Heb* "grown up in their youth." The translation assumes that "grown up" modifies "plants" (just as "carved" modifies "corner pillars" in the second half of the verse). Another option is to take "grown up" as a predicate in relation to "our sons," in which case one might translate, "they will be strapping youths."

¹⁶ *tn* The Hebrew noun occurs only here and in Zech 9:15, where it refers to the corners of an altar.

¹⁷ *tn* *Heb* "carved [in] the pattern of a palace."

¹⁸ *tn* The Hebrew noun occurs only here.

¹⁹ *tn* *Heb* "from kind to kind." Some prefer to emend the text to קִיּוֹן גֵּיל קִיּוֹן (*mazon' al mazon*, "food upon food").

²⁰ *tn* *Heb* "they are innumerable."

²¹ *tn* *Heb* "in outside places." Here the term refers to pastures and fields (see Job 5:10; Prov 8:26).

²² *tn* *Heb* "weighted down." This probably refers (1) to the cattle having the produce from the harvest placed on their backs to be transported to the storehouses (see BDB 687 s.v. כָּבַל). Other options are (2) to take this as reference to the cattle being pregnant (see HALOT 741 s.v. כָּבַל or (3) to their being well-fed or fattened (see L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* [WBC], 288).

²³ *tn* *Heb* "there [will be] no breach, and there [will be] no going out, and there [will be] no crying out in our broad places."

²⁴ *tn* *Heb* "[O] the happiness of the people who [it is] such to them."

²⁵ *sn* *Psalm 145*. The psalmist praises God because he is a just and merciful king who cares for his people.

²⁶ *tn* Or, hyperbolically, "forever."

²⁷ *tn* Or, hyperbolically, "forever."

²⁸ *tn* *Heb* "and concerning his greatness there is no searching."

and tell about your mighty acts!¹

145:5 I will focus on your honor and majestic splendor,
and your amazing deeds!²

145:6 They will proclaim³ the power of
your awesome acts!

I will declare your great deeds!

145:7 They will talk about the fame of
your great kindness,⁴

and sing about your justice.⁵

145:8 The LORD is merciful and compassionate;

he is patient⁶ and demonstrates great
loyal love.⁷

145:9 The LORD is good to all,
and has compassion on all he has made.⁸

145:10 All he has made will give thanks to
the LORD.

Your loyal followers will praise you.

145:11 They will proclaim the splendor of
your kingdom;

they will tell about your power,

145:12 so that mankind⁹ might acknowl-
edge your mighty acts,
and the majestic splendor of your king-
dom.

145:13 Your kingdom is an eternal king-
dom,¹⁰

and your dominion endures through all
generations.

145:14¹¹ The LORD supports all who fall,

and lifts up all who are bent over.¹²

145:15 Everything looks to you in antici-
pation,¹³

and you provide them with food on a
regular basis.¹⁴

145:16 You open your hand,
and fill every living thing with the food
they desire.¹⁵

145:17 The LORD is just in all his actions,¹⁶
and exhibits love in all he does.¹⁷

145:18 The LORD is near all who cry out
to him,

all who cry out to him sincerely,¹⁸

145:19 He satisfies the desire¹⁹ of his
loyal followers;²⁰

he hears their cry for help and delivers
them.

145:20 The LORD protects those who love
him,

but he destroys all the wicked.

145:21 My mouth will praise the LORD.²¹

Let all who live²² praise his holy name
forever!

*Psalm 146*²³

146:1 Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD, O my soul!

146:2 I will praise the LORD as long as I
live!

I will sing praises to my God as long as
I exist!

146:3 Do not trust in princes,
or in human beings, who cannot deliver!²⁴

146:4 Their life's breath departs, they re-
turn to the ground;
on that day their plans die.²⁵

146:5 How blessed is the one whose help-
er is the God of Jacob,
whose hope is in the LORD his God,
146:6 the one who made heaven and earth,
the sea, and all that is in them,
who remains forever faithful.²⁶

¹ **tn** The prefixed verbal forms in v. 4 are understood as imperatives, indicating how the psalmist expects his audience to respond to his praise. Another option is to take the forms as jussives, indicating the psalmist's wish, "may one generation praise...and tell about."

² **tn** *Heb* "the splendor of the glory of your majesty, and the matters of your amazing deeds I will ponder."

³ **tn** The prefixed verbal form is understood as an imperfect, indicating how the psalmist expects his audience to respond to his praise. Another option is to take the forms as a jussive, indicating the psalmist's wish, "may they proclaim."

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "the fame of the greatness of your goodness."

⁵ **tn** The prefixed verbal forms in v. 7 are understood as imperatives, indicating how the psalmist expects his audience to respond to his praise. Another option is to take the forms as jussives, indicating the psalmist's wish, "may they talk...and sing."

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "slow to anger" (see Pss 86:15; 103:8).

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "and great of loyal love" (see Pss 86:15; 103:8).

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "and his compassion is over all his works."

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "the sons of man."

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "a kingdom of all ages."

¹¹ **tc** Psalm 145 is an acrostic psalm, with each successive verse beginning with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet. However, in the traditional Hebrew (Masoretic) text of Psalm 145 there is no verse beginning with the letter *nun*. One would expect such a verse to appear as the fourteenth verse, between the *mem* (מ) and *samek* (ס) verses. Several ancient witnesses, including one medieval Hebrew manuscript, the Qumran scroll from cave 11, the LXX, and the Syriac, supply the missing *nun* (נ) verse, which reads as follows: "The LORD is reliable in all his words, and faithful in all his deeds." One might paraphrase this as follows: "The LORD's words are always reliable; his actions are always faithful." Scholars are divided as to the originality of this verse. L. C. Allen argues for its inclusion on the basis of structural considerations (*Psalms 101-150* [WBC], 294-95), but there is no apparent explanation for why, if original, it would have been accidentally omitted. The psalm may be a partial acrostic, as in Pss 25 and 34 (see M. Dahood, *Psalms* [AB], 3:335). The

glaring omission of the *nun* line would have invited a later redactor to add such a line.

¹² **tn** Perhaps "discouraged" (see Ps 57:6).

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "the eyes of all wait for you."

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "and you give to them their food in its season" (see Ps 104:27).

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "[with what they] desire."

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "in all his ways."

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "and [is] loving in all his deeds."

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "in truth."

¹⁹ **tn** In this context "desire" refers to the followers' desire to be delivered from wicked enemies.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "the desire of those who fear him, he does."

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "the praise of the LORD my mouth will speak."

²² **tn** *Heb* "all flesh."

²³ **sn** *Psalm 146*. The psalmist urges his audience not to trust in men, but in the LORD, the just king of the world who cares for the needy.

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* "in a son of man, to whom there is no deliverance."

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "his spirit goes out, it returns to his ground; in that day his plans die." The singular refers to the representative man mentioned in v. 3b.

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "the one who guards faithfulness forever."

146:7 vindicates the oppressed,¹
and gives food to the hungry.
The LORD releases the imprisoned.
146:8 The LORD gives sight to the blind.
The LORD lifts up all who are bent over.²
The LORD loves the godly.
146:9 The LORD protects those residing
outside their native land;
he lifts up the fatherless and the widow,³
but he opposes the wicked.⁴
146:10 The LORD rules forever,
your God, O Zion, throughout the genera-
tions to come!⁵
Praise the LORD!

Psalms 147⁶

147:1 Praise the LORD,
for it is good to sing praises to our God!
Yes,⁷ praise is pleasant and appropriate!
147:2 The LORD rebuilds Jerusalem,⁸
and gathers the exiles of Israel.
147:3 He heals⁹ the brokenhearted,
and bandages their wounds.
147:4 He counts the number of the stars;
he names all of them.
147:5 Our Lord is great and has awesome
power;¹⁰
there is no limit to his wisdom.¹¹
147:6 The LORD lifts up the oppressed,
but knocks¹² the wicked to the ground.
147:7 Offer to the LORD a song of thanks!¹³
Sing praises to our God to the accompa-
niment of a harp!
147:8 He covers¹⁴ the sky with clouds,
provides the earth with rain,
and causes grass to grow on the hillsides.¹⁵
147:9 He gives food to the animals,
and to the young ravens when they chirp.¹⁶
147:10 He is not enamored with the
strength of a horse,
nor is he impressed by the warrior's

strong legs.¹⁷
147:11 The LORD takes delight in his faith-
ful followers,¹⁸
and in those who wait for his loyal love.
147:12 Extol the LORD, O Jerusalem!
Praise your God, O Zion!
147:13 For he makes the bars of your gates
strong.
He blesses your children¹⁹ within you.
147:14 He²⁰ brings peace to your territory.²¹
He abundantly provides for you²² the best
grain.
147:15 He²³ sends his command through
the earth;²⁴
swiftly his order reaches its destination.²⁵
147:16 He sends the snow that is white
like wool;
he spreads the frost that is white like
ashes.²⁶
147:17 He throws his hailstones²⁷ like
crumbs.
Who can withstand the cold wind he
sends?²⁸
147:18 He then orders it all to melt;²⁹
he breathes on it,³⁰ and the water flows.
147:19 He proclaims his word to Jacob,
his statutes and regulations to Israel.
147:20 He has not done so with any other
nation;
they are not aware of his regulations.
Praise the LORD!

Psalms 148³¹

148:1 Praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD from the sky!
Praise him in the heavens!
148:2 Praise him, all his angels!³²
Praise him, all his heavenly assembly!³³
148:3 Praise him, O sun and moon!
Praise him, all you shiny stars!³⁴

¹ **tn** Heb "executes justice for the oppressed."

² **tn** Perhaps "discouraged" (see Ps 57:6).

³ **sn** God is depicted here as a just ruler. In the ancient Near Eastern world a king was responsible for promoting justice, including caring for the weak and vulnerable, epitomized by resident foreigners, the fatherless, and widows.

⁴ **tn** Heb "he makes the way of the wicked twisted." The "way of the wicked" probably refers to their course of life (see Prov 4:19; Jer 12:1). God makes their path tortuous in the sense that he makes them pay the harmful consequences of their actions.

⁵ **tn** Heb "for a generation and a generation."

⁶ **sn** *Psalms 147*. The psalmist praises the LORD for he is the sovereign ruler of the world who cares for the needs of his covenant people.

⁷ **tn** Or "for."

⁸ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

⁹ **tn** Heb "the one who heals."

¹⁰ **tn** Heb "and great of strength."

¹¹ **tn** Heb "to his wisdom there is no counting."

¹² **tn** Heb "brings down."

¹³ **tn** Heb "sing to the LORD with thanksgiving."

¹⁴ **tn** Heb "the one who covers."

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "hills."

¹⁶ **tn** Heb "which cry out."

¹⁷ **tn** Heb "he does not desire the strength of the horse, he does not take delight in the legs of the man." Here "the horse" refers to the war horse used by ancient Near Eastern chariot forces, and "the man" refers to the warrior whose muscular legs epitomize his strength.

¹⁸ **tn** Heb "those who fear him."

¹⁹ **tn** Heb "your sons."

²⁰ **tn** Heb "the one who."

²¹ **tn** Heb "he makes your boundary peace."

²² **tn** Heb "satisfies you with."

²³ **tn** Heb "the one who."

²⁴ **tn** Heb "the one who sends his word, the earth." The Hebrew term עֵרֶט (*erets*, "earth") is an adverbial accusative; one must supply a preposition before it (such as "through" or "to") in the English translation.

²⁵ **tn** Heb "swiftly his word runs."

²⁶ **tn** Heb "the one who gives snow like wool, frost like ashes he scatters."

²⁷ **tn** Heb "his ice."

²⁸ **tn** Heb "Before his cold, who can stand?"

²⁹ **tn** Heb "he sends his word and melts them."

³⁰ **tn** Heb "he blows his breath."

³¹ **sn** *Psalms 148*. The psalmist calls upon all creation to praise the Lord, for he is the creator and sovereign king of the world.

³² **tn** Or "heavenly messengers."

³³ **tn** Heb "all his host."

³⁴ **tn** Heb "stars of light."

148:4 Praise him, O highest heaven,
and you waters above the sky!¹
148:5 Let them praise the name of the LORD,
for he gave the command and they came
into existence.
148:6 He established them so they would
endure;²
he issued a decree that will not be re-
voked.³
148:7 Praise the LORD from the earth,
you sea creatures and all you ocean
depths,
148:8 O fire and hail, snow and clouds,⁴
O stormy wind that carries out his orders,⁵
148:9 you mountains and all you hills,
you fruit trees and all you cedars,
148:10 you animals and all you cattle,
you creeping things and birds,
148:11 you kings of the earth and all you
nations,
you princes and all you leaders⁶ on the
earth,
148:12 you young men and young women,
you elderly, along with you children!
148:13 Let them praise the name of the
LORD,
for his name alone is exalted;
his majesty extends over the earth and sky.
148:14 He has made his people victorious,⁷
and given all his loyal followers reason
to praise –
the Israelites, the people who are close
to him.⁸
Praise the LORD!

Psalm 149⁹

149:1 Praise the LORD!
Sing to the LORD a new song!
Praise him in the assembly of the godly!¹⁰
149:2 Let Israel rejoice in their Creator!
Let the people¹¹ of Zion delight in their

King!¹²
149:3 Let them praise his name with danc-
ing!
Let them sing praises to him to the ac-
companiment of the tambourine and
harp!
149:4 For the LORD takes delight in his
people;
he exalts the oppressed by delivering
them.¹³
149:5 Let the godly rejoice because of
their vindication!¹⁴
Let them shout for joy upon their beds!¹⁵
149:6 May they praise God
while they hold a two-edged sword in
their hand,¹⁶
149:7 in order to take¹⁷ revenge on the
nations,
and punish foreigners.
149:8 They bind¹⁸ their kings in chains,
and their nobles in iron shackles,
149:9 and execute the judgment to which
their enemies¹⁹ have been sentenced.²⁰
All his loyal followers will be vindicated.²¹
Praise the LORD!

Psalm 150²²

150:1 Praise the LORD!
Praise God in his sanctuary!
Praise him in the sky, which testifies to
his strength!²³
150:2 Praise him for his mighty acts!
Praise him for his surpassing greatness!
150:3 Praise him with the blast of the
horn!
Praise him with the lyre and the harp!
150:4 Praise him with the tambourine and
with dancing!
Praise him with stringed instruments and
the flute!
150:5 Praise him with loud cymbals!
Praise him with clanging cymbals!
150:6 Let everything that has breath praise
the LORD!
Praise the LORD!

¹ sn The “water” mentioned here corresponds to the “waters above” mentioned in Gen 1:7. See also Ps 104:3. For a discussion of the picture envisioned by the psalmist, see L. I. J. Stadelmann, *The Hebrew Conception of the World*, 47.

² tn Or “forever and ever.”

³ tn Heb “and it will not pass away.”

⁴ tn In Ps 119:83 the noun refers to “smoke,” but here, where the elements of nature are addressed, the clouds, which resemble smoke, are probably in view.

⁵ tn Heb “[that] does his word.”

⁶ tn Or “judges.”

⁷ tn Heb “and he lifted up a horn for his people.” The horn of an ox underlies the metaphor (see Deut 33:17; 1 Kgs 22:11; Ps 92:10). The horn of the wild ox is frequently a metaphor for military strength; the idiom “exalt/lift up the horn” signifies military victory (see 1 Sam 2:10; Pss 75:10; 89:17, 24; 92:10; Lam 2:17). Another option is to take the “horn” as a symbol for the Davidic king, through whom the LORD gives his people military victory.

⁸ tn “[there is] praise for all his loyal followers, to the sons of Israel, the people near him.” Here “praise” stands by metonymy for the victory that prompts it.

⁹ sn *Psalm 149*. The psalmist calls upon God’s people to praise him because he is just and avenges them.

¹⁰ tn Heb “his praise in the assembly of the godly ones.”

¹¹ tn Heb “sons.”

¹² sn The LORD is the *King* here, as the parallelism in the previous line (“their creator”) indicates.

¹³ tn Heb “he honors the oppressed [with] deliverance.”

¹⁴ tn Heb “in glory.” Here “glory” probably refers to the “honor” that belongs to the LORD’s people as a result of their deliverance (see v. 4).

¹⁵ tn The significance of the reference to “beds” is unclear. Perhaps the point is that they should rejoice at all times, even when falling asleep or awaking.

¹⁶ tn Heb “[May] praises of God [be] in their throat, and a two-edged sword in their hand.”

¹⁷ tn Heb “to do.”

¹⁸ tn Heb “to bind.”

¹⁹ tn Heb “they”; the referent (the enemies of the people of God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²⁰ tn Heb “to do against them judgment [that] is written.”

²¹ tn Heb “it is honor for all his godly ones.” The judgment of the oppressive kings will bring vindication and honor to God’s people (see vv. 4-5).

²² sn *Psalm 150*. The Psalter concludes with a resounding call for praise from everything that has breath.

²³ tn Heb “the sky of his strength.”