The Psalms

תהילים

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תְּהִלִּים

The Psalms, including those used in Jewish liturgy for weekdays and festivals,
a new translation with full transliteration and notes
by Irrev. Dr. Joe Lewis



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In loving memory
Nev Lewis
ניסן בן מתתיהו הלוי

Distinguished rabbis of Venice endorsed Salomone Rossi's copyright when he published "The Song of Songs" in 1623, threatening any Jewish person who stole or bought stolen intellectual property with:

The decree of angels,	גְּזֵרַת עִירִין	gezerat irin
the sentence of the holy ones,	וּמֵימַר קַדִּישִׁין	umeimar kadishin,
with the biting snake.	בְּנָחָשׁ הַנּוֹשֵׁךְ	banachash hanoshech

I am grateful to Professor Marty Herman for bringing this early copyright warning to my attention, and I hope that anyone who is tempted to copy this work without permission will think better of it! For a copyright violation is a bit like a snakebite: it may seem like nothing at first, but it can spread through the body and grow until it's out of control. So it is with the theft of intellectual property: by the time the author finds out it's happened, it's very difficult to stop. So please, if you want to copy part of this book, ask first. Thank you.

Introduction

I wanted to make a book of the psalms that appear in Jewish liturgy with my usual constraints: three columns, no male pronouns for God, translation and transliteration side-by-side with Hebrew phrases. Jewish liturgy uses about half the psalms, so I decided to work on the rest of the 150. The work will never be done since whenever I review my work I know I'll find another typo, a better way to translate or transliterate, or a note worth adding to jog my memory or entertain the reader.

As I looked at some of the translations, I couldn't help wondering if I could get them to rhyme.

Psalms are poetry; in English, poetry often rhymes. Sure, rhythm and alliteration and heightened vocabulary are features of all poetry, but rhyme has been a common feature of English poetry since Chaucer's time.

And once you get going with rhyme, it begins to draw you, beckon to you: "Joe, you can rearrange those words to fix the rhythm; and then you have a bunch of words you can use to make it rhyme. Joe, have you used the word 'emolument'? You can rhyme it with 'parliament' or 'condiment.' Or even 'what you want.' The psalm poets use imagery; you can copy their images closely, but what's wrong with calling a sword an 'armament'? Rhymes with 'condiment,' like I told you."

So speaks my muse, dear reader. And sometimes the result seems silly on reflection, sometimes felicitous, and then silly on further reflection. Sometimes, said Gibbon, poetry becomes "rather an amusement of the fancy than a passion of the soul," and I fear that my rhymes degrade the religious ardor of the Hebrew poets. But my muse is hard to ignore.

I hope you'll read the translation with an eye to the Hebrew and judge whether the English is a valid interpretation of the original. Perhaps you'll be surprised by a turn of phrase and consider it justifiable, though it sees the meaning differently than any of the standard translations.

Above all, I hope you'll enjoy both the original and the translation as you read these efforts.

Authors

Most of us think of King David as the author of the psalms, but many appear to be attributed to other authors, from Moses (Psalm 90) to the day of Shabbat (Psalm 92); Bava Batra 14a lists several authors and collaborators. The attribution "מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד / mizmor leDavid" could mean a tune/song by David, for David, to David, in the style of David—and David might be King David or another David. However, the fervor and yearning and confidence in God found in the psalms is typical (I like to think) of David himself, and a better writer for these poems would be hard to find.

I often wish the psalms would spend less time invoking God's anger on enemies, more time in praise and gratitude. But I know how deeply hurt I can be by a perceived slight, and perhaps seeing my own failing in a poet's expression will help me to avoid it and become a better person.

Typography

In the translation, *italics* are for words not strictly in the Hebrew but inserted for one or more of these reasons: to avoid using pronouns for God; to make up the rhythm or rhyme; or to clarify the meaning of the elliptical Hebrew. Each verse begins with a capital letter, even if it continues a sentence from the previous verse.

Some Words

The psalms often mention testimony, justice, and righteousness.

For "testimony," I think the basic theological point is this: taking for granted that the story of the Torah is history, the events of this history prove that God makes a commitment and keeps it, and this means we can be confident that God promised a patch of land to Abraham; that God freed us from servitude in Egypt; that God

brought us to the promised land; that because of our sins we would lose this land; and that eventually God would restore us to our land. So the term עֵדֹתֶיךָ ("testimonies") means what a witness (עד) would testify in court as proof. The miracles recorded in the Torah are this kind of testimony: if you read the book and believe it, you will not doubt God's promise.

צֶדֶק ("righteousness," "justice") is one of God's attributes. But remember the discussion at the beginning of Plato's *Republic*: Thrasymachus contends that justice is for the sake of society's leaders, and Socrates has a hard time refuting this. Someone suffers a loss—for example, of money—and it seems only "just" that the victim should get the money back, plus something for his or her inconvenience. But what if the victim didn't have a valid claim to the money? Thrasymachus' view seems familiar, with courts and judges and police and prisons. But sometimes the whole system seems to keep the rich rich and the poor poor, preserving the status quo even when the status quo is plainly unfair and the rich gained their riches by inequitably taking advantage of the poor. No wonder we can all agree we want justice, since we can harbor opposing views of the practical meaning of the term. The word צֶדֶק sometimes means charitable—perhaps giving charity to the poor (whether deserving or not), perhaps mitigating stern justice with kindness, and perhaps understanding mitigating circumstances.

A related word is מִשְׁפָּט; I understand this to be the result of having a judge (שׁוֹפֵט)—a court sentence or verdict. It's one outcome of a system of justice, but it isn't always "just"; don't we hope and pray that our imperfect human system can more often than not bring about a result that all can agree is "just"?

Translation Sources

I used various tools and sources for the translations: Dictionaries, concordances and editions (Anchor Bible Commentary on Psalms, ed. Mitchell Dahood; Soncino Psalms, ed. A. Cohen; ArtScroll Tehillim); online, Sefaria and BlueLetterBible; other translations into English prose and verse. The Targum, Septuagint and Vulgate—ancient translations—can suggest meanings which are not chosen by versions in English. The King James with its recent revisions and the JPS versions are standards from which I sometimes depart in order to offer an alternative. Some people will be shocked that I didn't confine myself to Jewish sources, but some wise people have said you should seek wisdom wherever it may be found.

One More Thing ...

A better person would have rendered these ancient poems into English more capably than I, and many fine poets—Bacon, Milton, Mary Sidney Herbert and others—have rendered psalms into English verse. But their poems stand alone, not side by side with the Hebrew original and transliteration. I may not be the best, but I have done what I could, while experimenting with a variety of approaches in different psalms—rhyme as well as rhythmic prose, full as well as light annotation. I hope you will find the result interesting, perhaps instructive and enjoyable. Perhaps you will be moved to think about people's relationship with God in ancient times, and your own relationship with God today.

"Psalms are not interesting," said young Jane Eyre. Some of us may disagree.

Table of Contents

Psalm 1 13
Psalm 2 14
Psalm 3 16
Psalm 4 17
Psalm 5 18
Psalm 6 20
Psalm 7 21
Psalm 8 23
Psalm 9 25
Psalm 10 28
Psalm 11 31
Psalm 12 33
Psalm 13 35
Psalm 14 36
Psalm 15 38
Psalm 16 39
Psalm 17 41
Psalm 18 44
Psalm 19 49
Psalm 19 (Rhyming) 52
Psalm 20 54
Psalm 21 56
Psalm 22 58
Psalm 23 62
Psalm 24 63
Psalm 25 65
Psalm 26 67
Psalm 27 69
Psalm 28 72
Psalm 29 74
Psalm 30 76
Psalm 31 78
Psalm 32 82
Psalm 33 84
Psalm 34 86
Psalm 35 88
Psalm 36 92
Psalm 37 94
Psalm 38 99
Psalm 39 101
Psalm 40 103
Psalm 41 106
Psalm 42 108
Psalm 43 110
Psalm 44 111
Psalm 45 115
Psalm 46 118
Psalm 47 120
Psalm 48 121
Psalm 49 123
Psalm 50 125
Psalm 51 128
Psalm 52 131
Psalm 53 133
Psalm 54 134
Psalm 55 135
Psalm 56 138
Psalm 57 140
Psalm 58 142
Psalm 59 144
Psalm 60 147
Psalm 61 149
Psalm 62 151
Psalm 63 153
Psalm 64 155
Psalm 65 157
Psalm 66 159
Psalm 67 162
Psalm 68 163
Psalm 69 169
Psalm 70 174
Psalm 71 175
Psalm 72 178
Psalm 73 181
Psalm 74 185
Psalm 75 188
Psalm 76 190
Psalm 77 192
Psalm 78 195
Psalm 79 202
Psalm 80 204
Psalm 81 206
Psalm 82 208
Psalm 83 209

Psalm 84 211
Psalm 85 213
Psalm 86 215
Psalm 87 217
Psalm 88 218
Psalm 89 221
Psalm 90 226
Psalm 91 228
Psalm 92 230
Psalm 93 232
Psalm 94 233
Psalm 95 235
Psalm 96 237
Psalm 97 239
Psalm 98 241
Psalm 99 242
Psalm 100 244
Psalm 101 245
Psalm 102 247
Psalm 103 250
Psalm 104 252
Psalm 105 256
Psalm 106 261
Psalm 107 267
Psalm 108 272
Psalm 109 274
Psalm 110 278
Psalm 111 279
Psalm 112 280
Psalm 113 282
Psalm 114 283
Psalm 115 285
Psalm 116 287
Psalm 117 289
Psalm 118 290
Psalm 119 293
Psalm 120 315
Psalm 121 316
Psalm 122 317
Psalm 123 318
Psalm 124 319
Psalm 125 320
Psalm 126 321
Psalm 127 322
Psalm 128 323
Psalm 129 324
Psalm 130 325
Psalm 131 326
Psalm 132 327
Psalm 133 329
Psalm 134 330
Psalm 135 331
Psalm 136 333
Psalm 137 335
Psalm 138 337
Psalm 139 338
Psalm 140 342
Psalm 141 344
Psalm 142 346
Psalm 143 348
Psalm 144 350
Psalm 145 352
Psalm 146 354
Psalm 147 355
Psalm 148 357
Psalm 149 359
Psalm 150 360
Notes 361

Liturgical Use of Psalms

Groups of Psalms

Several groups of psalms feature in Jewish liturgy:

- Early morning prayers: Psalm 30 (in many communities), then 100 and 145-150; on Shabbat, festivals and Hoshana Rabba, instead of Psalm 100 we read Psalms 19, 34, 90, 91, 135, 136, 33, 92 and 93 and continue with 145-150. (Since Psalm 100 is a psalm of thanks, we skip it on days when a thanksgiving offering would not be brought in the Temple.)
- To welcome Shabbat on Friday evening: Psalms 95-99 and 29 (we omit these on festival evenings that fall on Friday night); then Psalms 92 and 93.
- Hallel on Rosh Chodesh, festivals and Chanukah: Psalms 113-118. On Rosh Chodesh and Chanukah we skip parts of 115 and 116.
- A psalm for the day in morning services: 24 for Sunday, 48 for Monday, 82 for Tuesday, 94 for Wednesday, 81 for Thursday, 93 for Friday, and 92 for Shabbat;[1] 104 for Rosh Chodesh and (some say) 32 on Yom Kippur.
- For the weekday evening service:
    - When said after dark, some add psalms 24, 8 and 29.
    - On days of the Omer (between Pesach and Shavuot) when Tachanun is not said, some add 25 for Sunday, 32 for Monday, 38 for Tuesday, 51 for Wednesday and 86 for Thursday.
- During the winter, after the Amidah on Shabbat minchah, some add psalms 104, and 120-134. From Shabbat Bereshit (after Simchat Torah) until Shabbat Hagadol (before Pesach), some add these psalms after the Shabbat afternoon amidah. 120-134 are are all "a song of going up / שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת / shir hama a lot," a phrase sometimes translated as "a song of ascents" or "a song of degrees" or "a gradual song." The root seems to be עַל, "up" or "above" or "upon," perhaps implying steps or stairs. Some think pilgrims sang these psalms as they went up to Jerusalem for a festival, or Levites sang them as they ascended the fifteen steps in the Temple.
- On the intermediate days of Sukkot, in the Temple, psalms 29, 50, half of 94, the rest of 94, 81, and 82 (see BT Sukkah 55a).

Some divide the 150 poems into five "books": 1-41 (mostly by David); 42-72 (David and Korah); 73-89 (Asaph); 90-106 (Anonymous); 107-150 (David).

[1] BT Rosh Hashanah 31a records a tradition that these seven psalms allude to the seven days of creation.

Psalm by Psalm

1 In England, this psalm begins the service for setting a tombstone.
3 Part of the prayer before going to bed at night.
6 Verses 2-11 are part of the morning penitential prayers after the Amidah.
8 Sometimes added in the evening service.
15 In England, used in the service for consecrating a house.
16 Sometimes added to morning prayers in a house of mourning; in England part of the burial service.
19 Part of the morning service on Shabbat, holidays and Hoshana Rabba.
20 Used in the conclusion of the weekday morning service.
23 In England, used in the prayer for a sick person.
24 The daily psalm for Sunday, the first day of the week; also recited when the Torah scroll is returned to the Ark (except on Shabbat morning).
25 Sometimes added to the weekday evening service on a Sunday.
27 Added to morning and evening services from the beginning of Elul until Hoshana Rabba.
29 Recited to welcome Shabbat on Friday evening, and when returning the Torah scroll on Shabbat morning.
30 Often used to conclude the first section of morning prayer.
32 Sometimes added to the evening service on a Monday; some use this psalm for the daily psalm on Yom Kippur.
33 Added to the early morning service on Shabbat, festivals and Hoshana Rabbba.
34 Added to the early morning service on Shabbat, festivals and Hoshana Rabbba.
38 Sometimes added to the evening service on a Tuesday.
39 Some add this to prayers in a house of mourning.
42 Some add this to prayers in a house of mourning.
47 Added to the end of the morning service on Monday, the second dsay of the week.
48 For the second day of the week, Monday.
49 Added in a house of mourning on certain occasions.
51 For Wednesday.
67 Some add this psalm to the weekday evening service concluding Shabbat.
81 For Thursday, the fifth day of the week.
82 For Tuesday, the third day of the week.
83 For Friday, the sixth day of the week, also part of welcoming Shabbat.
86 Some add this to the weekday evening service on Thursday.
90 Read in the early part of the morning service on Shabbat, festivals and Hoshana Rabba.
91 Included in the early morning service on Shabbat and festivals, in the prayers for going to bed, and in the psalms for the evening service after Shabbat.
92 Included in the psalms welcoming Shabbat, and in the early morning service on Shabbat, festivals and Hoshana Rabba.
93 Included in the psalms welcoming Shabbat, and in the early morning service on Shabbat, festivals and Hoshana Rabba.
94 For the fourth day of the week, Wednesday.
95 Included in the psalms welcoming Shabbat.
96 Included in the psalms welcoming Shabbat.

97 Included in the psalms welcoming Shabbat.
98 Included in the psalms welcoming Shabbat.
99 Included in the psalms welcoming Shabbat.
100 Included in the early morning service except on Shabbat, festivals and Hoshana Rabba; on the day before Pesach and during Pesach, and on Yom Kippur.
103 Appropriate to read in the service for a sick person.
104 The daily psalm for Rosh Chodesh; some also read this on winter Shabbat afternoons.
112 For a service when making collections for hospitals.
113 included in Hallel.
114 included in Hallel.
115 included in Hallel.
116 included in Hallel.
117 included in Hallel.
118 included in Hallel.
126 Introduces Grace after Meals on festive days, and is read on certain Shabbat afternoons.
127 Sometimes added in Shabbat mincha.
128 In the evening service after Shabbat, and sometimes added in Shabbat mincha.
129 Sometimes added in Shabbat mincha.
130 Sometimes added in Shabbat mincha.
131 Sometimes added in Shabbat mincha.
132 Sometimes added in Shabbat mincha.
133 Sometimes added in Shabbat mincha.
134 Begins weekday evening service when said after nightfall; sometimes added in Shabbat mincha.
135 In the early morning service on Shabbat, festivals and Hoshana Rabba.
136 In the early morning service on Shabbat, festivals and Hoshana Rabba.
137 Some begin Grace After Meals with this psalm on non-festive days. I haven't seen it in the British rite; it should probably be R-rated for a verse of violent vengefulness.
139 Selections used in service for a sick person.
144 Some add this psalm to the weekday evening service after Shabbat
145 Twice in the morning service; afternoon service.
146 Morning service.
147 Morning service.
148 Morning service.
149 Morning service.
150 Morning service.

Psalm 1[1]

[1] Lucky are they who never sought	אַשְׁרֵי־הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר לֹא הָלַךְ	Ashrei ha'ish asher lo halach
advice from folks of evil will,	בַּעֲצַת רְשָׁעִים	be'atzat resha'im,
gave sinners' ways a second thought	וּבְדֶרֶךְ חַטָּאִים לֹא עָמָד	uvederech chata'im lo amad,
or settled down in Scoffersville,[2]	וּבְמוֹשַׁב לֵצִים לֹא יָשָׁב	uvemoshav letzim lo yashav,
[2] For God's law was their sole delight,	כִּי אִם בְּתוֹרַת יהוה חֶפְצוֹ	Ki im beTorat Adonai cheftzo,
their constant study day and night.[3]	וּבְתוֹרָתוֹ יֶהְגֶּה יוֹמָם וָלָיְלָה	uveTorato yeh'geh yomam valaylah.
[3] They'd be like a tree	וְהָיָה כְּעֵץ שָׁתוּל	Vehaya ke'etz shatul
planted where rivers meet;	עַל־פַּלְגֵי מָיִם	al palgei mayim,
fruiting dependably,	אֲשֶׁר פִּרְיוֹ יִתֵּן בְּעִתּוֹ	asher piryo yiten be'ito
leaves lush despite the heat,	וְעָלֵהוּ לֹא־יִבּוֹל	ve'alehu lo yibol,
thriving ceaselessly![4]	וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר־יַעֲשֶׂה יַצְלִיחַ	vechol asher ya'aseh yatzli'ach.
[4] The wicked are not so:	לֹא־כֵן הָרְשָׁעִים	Lo chen har'sha'im:
like dry chaff they must go	כִּי אִם־כַּמֹּץ	ki im kamotz
wherever wind may blow.	אֲשֶׁר־תִּדְּפֶנּוּ רוּחַ	asher tidfenu ru'ach.
[5] In court the wicked can't prevail;	עַל־כֵּן לֹא־יָקֻמוּ רְשָׁעִים בַּמִּשְׁפָּט	Al ken lo yakumu resha'im bamishpat
among the righteous, sinners fail.[5]	וְחַטָּאִים בַּעֲדַת צַדִּיקִים	vechata'im be'adat tzadikim,
[6] God's path is where the righteous tread;	כִּי־יוֹדֵעַ יהוה דֶּרֶךְ צַדִּיקִים	Ki yode'ah Adonai derech tzadikim,
for sinners, ruin lies ahead![6]	וְדֶרֶךְ רְשָׁעִים תֹּאבֵד	vederech resha'im toved.

[1] This psalm contrasts the good person, who studies God's way, with the wicked.

[2] "Lucky/happy-*is*-the-person/man who not has-walked / into/in/with-the-advice/counsel-of the-wicked / and-in the-way/path-of sinners not has-stood / and-in-the-dwelling-of scoffers not has-sat/settled."

[3] "For only in-the-law/guidance/way-of God *would be* his-delight, / and-in-*God's*-way/Torah he-would-concentrate/study day and-night."

[4] "He-would-be like-a-tree / planted at-the-division-of waters (i.e., where streams divide, with ample water) / so-that-its-fruit it-produces/yields at-its-time (i.e., reliably) / and-its-leaf not would-wither / and-everything that-he-will-do will-succeed." The translation continues the metaphor of a tree more concretely than the Hebrew.

[5] "That's-why they-can't-prevail/stand up, the-wicked, in-judgement / and-sinners *can't prevail* in-the-counsel/council-of the-righteous."

[6] "For God knows the-way/path-of the-righteous (it's God's path because God knows it well), and-the-way-of the-wicked will-perish (leads to destruction)."

Psalm 2

[1] Why are those peoples so distressed,	לָמָּה רָגְשׁוּ גוֹיִם	Lamah rag'shu goyim
with futile reveries obsessed?[1]	וּלְאֻמִּים יֶהְגּוּ־רִיק	ule'umim yeh'gu rik?
[2] Mortal kings may take a stand,	יִתְיַצְּבוּ מַלְכֵי־אֶרֶץ	Yityatzvu malchei eretz
their nobles plot their devious plans	וְרוֹזְנִים נוֹסְדוּ־יָחַד	veroznim nosdu yachad
God and *God's* chosen king to oppose.[2]	עַל־יהוה וְעַל־מְשִׁיחוֹ	al Adonai ve'al meshicho.
[2] Let's snap the shackles they impose	נְנַתְּקָה אֶת־מוֹסְרוֹתֵימוֹ	Nenatkah et mosroteimo,
their cruel slavery cut short.[3]	וְנַשְׁלִיכָה מִמֶּנּוּ עֲבֹתֵימוֹ	venashlicha mimenu avoteimo.
[4] To God above they'll be for sport,	יוֹשֵׁב בַּשָּׁמַיִם יִשְׂחָק	Yoshev bashamayim yis'chak;
dismissed with a derisive snort.[4]	אֲדֹנָי יִלְעַג־לָמוֹ	Adonai yilag lamo.
[5] Then *God* will voice *God's* blazing ire	אָז יְדַבֵּר אֵלֵימוֹ בְאַפּוֹ	Az yedaber elemo ve'apo
and shock them with *God's* fury dire.[5]	וּבַחֲרוֹנוֹ יְבַהֲלֵמוֹ	uvacharono yevahalemo,
[6] While I my sovereign set in state	וַאֲנִי נָסַכְתִּי מַלְכִּי	Va'ani nasachti malki
on Zion's mountain consecrate.[6]	עַל־צִיּוֹן הַר־קָדְשִׁי	al Tziyon, har kodshi.
[7] This is the firm decree God promised me:	אַסַּפְּרָה אֶל חֹק יהוה אָמַר אֵלַי	Asaprah el chok Adonai amar elai,
"You are my child. Today I gave you birth[7]	בְּנִי אַתָּה אֲנִי הַיּוֹם יְלִדְתִּיךָּ	"Beni atah: ani hayom yelidtich.
[8] "Ask *anything* of me—	שְׁאַל מִמֶּנִּי	"She'al mimeni
"I'll grant *you* nations for your heritage	וְאֶתְּנָה גוֹיִם נַחֲלָתֶךָ	"ve'etnah goyim nachalatecha,
"and land possessions over all the earth.[8]	וַאֲחֻזָּתְךָ אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ	"va'achuzatecha afsei aretz.
[9] "Bash *foreign nations* with an iron bar,	תְּרֹעֵם בְּשֵׁבֶט בַּרְזֶל	"Tero'em beshevet barzel;
"shatter them like a terracotta jar."[9]	כִּכְלִי יוֹצֵר תְּנַפְּצֵם	"kichli yotzer tenaptzem."

[1] "Why are those *non-Jewish* peoples upset, / and *non-Jewish* nations meditate on futility?"
[2] "They-can/will-stand, kings-of-earth / and-nobles plot-together / against-God and-against-*God's*-anointed."
[3] Or, "shuffle off their heavy coils"—less literal, but more Shakespearean. "Let's-break their-restraints / and-we'll-send-away from-us their-thick-*ropes."*
[4] "The-one-who-dwells in-the-sky will laugh *at them, / God* will hold them in derision."
[5] After toying with the misguided, God will send them into a panic. "Then *God*-will-speak to-them in-*God's*-anger / and-in-*God's*-wrath send-them-into-a-panic."
[6] "While-I will-have-anointed my-sovereign / upon-*Zion*, mountain-of my-holiness."
[7] "I-shall-speak/recount to the-engraved-law God said to-me, / 'My child are you; today I birthed you."
[8] "Ask from-me / and-I'll-grant peoples as-your-inheritance / and-your-*land*-holding *to* earth's-limits."
[9] "Break-them with-a-bar of-iron / like-a-utensil-of a-potter shatter-them."

[10] Now, *proud* kings, this you must understand;	וְעַתָּה מְלָכִים הַשְׂכִּילוּ	Ve'atah, melachim, haskilu;
be well advised, *you* rulers of the land.[1]	הִוָּסְרוּ שֹׁפְטֵי אָרֶץ	hivasru, shoftei aretz.
[11] Serve God with holy reverence	עִבְדוּ אֶת־יהוה בְּיִרְאָה	Ivdu et Adonai beyirah
and cheerfully God's terror sense.[2]	וְגִילוּ בִרְעָדָה	vegilu biradah.
[12] Hold virtue close,[3] lest *God* be wrath	נַשְּׁקוּ־בַר פֶּן־יֶאֱנַף	Nashku var pen ye'enaf
and you stray from your proper path	וְתֹאבְדוּ דֶּרֶךְ	vetovdu derech
when *God's* ire smolders. Happy are they	כִּי־יִבְעַר כִּמְעַט אַפּוֹ	ki yivar kimat apo.
who trust in *God* to lead the way.	אַשְׁרֵי כָּל־חוֹסֵי בוֹ	Ashrei kol chosei vo.

[1] "And-now, kings, be-smart; / be-advised, judges-of the-earth."

[2] "serve/worship God lest-*God*-get-angry, / and-rejoice in-trambling."

[3] נַשְּׁקוּ־בַר probably means "embrace purity," but the King James version is "Kiss the Son" (בַּר can mean son). Translators sometimes find what they seek. "Kiss virtue, lest-*God* get-angry / and you-lose *your*-way / when-will-smolder, almost, *God's*-anger; / Fortunate *are* all-who-rely on-*God.*"

Psalm 3

Part of the prayer before going to bed at night.

[1] A psalm of David	מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	Mizmor leDavid
when he fled from Avshalom his son.	בְּבָרְחוֹ מִפְּנֵי אַבְשָׁלוֹם בְּנוֹ	bevorcho mipnei Avshalom beno.
[2] God, how many are my troubles;	יהוה מָה־רַּבּוּ צָרָי	Adonai mah-rabu tzarai;
so many *troubles* rise against me.	רַבִּים קָמִים עָלָי	rabim kamim alai.
[3] Many *people* say of me,	רַבִּים אֹמְרִים לְנַפְשִׁי	Rabim omrim lenafshi,
"There's no way God will save him."[1]	אֵין יְשׁוּעָתָה לּוֹ בֵּאלֹהִים	"Ein yeshuatah lo vElohim."
Selah.	סֶלָה	Selah.
[4] *Even so,* God, you are a shield for me—	וְאַתָּה יהוה מָגֵן בַּעֲדִי	Ve'atah, Adonai, magen ba'adi—
my glory, who sets me upright.[2]	כְּבוֹדִי וּמֵרִים רֹאשִׁי	kevodi umerim roshi.
[5] I'll direct my voice to God[3]	קוֹלִי אֶל־יהוה אֶקְרָא	Koli el Adonai ekrah
who will answer me from *God's* holy height.	וַיַּעֲנֵנִי מֵהַר קָדְשׁוֹ	vaya'aneni mehar kodsho.
Selah.	סֶלָה	Selah.
[6] I lay down and slept;	אֲנִי שָׁכַבְתִּי וְאִישָׁנָה	Ani shachavti va'ishanah;
I woke up *knowing* that God supports me.	הֱקִיצוֹתִי כִּי יהוה יִסְמְכֵנִי	hekitzoti ki Adonai yismecheni.
[7] I won't fear myriads of people	לֹא־אִירָא מֵרִבְבוֹת עָם	Lo irah merivevot am
who besiege me.[4]	אֲשֶׁר סָבִיב שָׁתוּ עָלָי	asher saviv shatu alai.
[8] Rise, God; save me, my God;	קוּמָה יהוה הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי אֱלֹהָי	Kumah, Adonai; hoshi'eni, Elohai;
you slapped all my enemies *in the* face,	כִּי־הִכִּיתָ אֶת־כָּל־אֹיְבַי לֶחִי	ki hikita et kol oyvai lechi,
you broke the teeth of *the* evil people.	שִׁנֵּי רְשָׁעִים שִׁבַּרְתָּ	shinei resha'im shibarta.
[9] Salvation belongs to God;	לַיהוה הַיְשׁוּעָה	lAdonai hayeshuah,
your blessing is on your people. Selah.	עַל־עַמְּךָ בִרְכָתֶךָ סֶלָה	al amcha virchatecha. Selah.

[1] "There-is-no salvation for-him through-God."
[2] "My glory, and *the one who is* raising my head."
[3] "My-voice to-God shall-I-call."
[4] "Who around have-positioned against-me."

Psalm 4

[1] For the leading instrumentalist,	לַמְנַצֵּחַ בִּנְגִינוֹת	Lamnatze'ach binginot,
a psalm by David.	מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	mizmor leDavid.
[2] When I call, answer me, God of my right;	בְּקָרְאִי עֲנֵנִי אֱלֹהֵי צִדְקִי	Bekori, aneni, Elohei tzidki;
in *my* trouble, you gave me relief,	בַּצָּר הִרְחַבְתָּ לִי	batzar hir'chavta li;
so now be kind to me and hear my prayer.	חָנֵּנִי וּשְׁמַע תְּפִלָּתִי	choneni, ushemah tefilati.
[3] O people,	בְּנֵי אִישׁ	Benei ish,
how long must my dignity be shame?	עַד־מָה כְּבוֹדִי לִכְלִמָּה	ad meh chevodi lichlimah?
What you love is futility,	תְּאֶהֱבוּן רִיק	Te'ehavun rik,
what you seek is falsehood. Selah.	תְּבַקְשׁוּ כָזָב סֶלָה	tevakshu chazav. Selah.
[4] Know that God distinguishes	וּדְעוּ כִּי־הִפְלָה יהוה	Ude'u ki hiflah Adonai
the one who is devoted to *God.*	חָסִיד לוֹ	chasid lo.
God will listen when I call on *God.*	יהוה יִשְׁמַע בְּקָרְאִי אֵלָיו	Adonai yishmah bekori elav.
[5] Tremble with awe; do not sin.	רִגְזוּ וְאַל־תֶּחֱטָאוּ	Rigzu, ve'al techeta'u.
Speak to your heart as you lie in bed	אִמְרוּ בִלְבַבְכֶם עַל־מִשְׁכַּבְכֶם	Imru vilvavchem al mishkavchem
but make no sound. Selah.	וְדֹמּוּ סֶלָה	vedomu. Selah.
[6] Offer sacrifices of righteousness	זִבְחוּ זִבְחֵי־צֶדֶק	Zivchu zivchei tzedek
and trust in God.	וּבִטְחוּ אֶל־יהוה	unvit'chu el Adonai.
[7] A lot of people say,	רַבִּים אֹמְרִים	Rabim omrim,
"If only *God* would show us some good."	מִי־יַרְאֵנוּ טוֹב	"Mi yarenu tov."
God, shine on us the light of your presence![1]	נְסָה־עָלֵינוּ אוֹר פָּנֶיךָ יהוה	Nesah aleinu or panecha, Adonai!
[8] You have given me more happiness	נָתַתָּה שִׂמְחָה בְלִבִּי	Natata simchah velibi
than a plentiful harvest of corn and wine.[2]	מֵעֵת דְּגָנָם וְתִירוֹשָׁם רָבּוּ	me'et deganam vetirosham rabu.
[9] In peace will I both lie down and sleep,	בְּשָׁלוֹם יַחְדָּו אֶשְׁכְּבָה וְאִישָׁן	Beshalom yachdav eshkevah ve'ishan,
for you, God,	כִּי־אַתָּה יהוה	ki atah, Adonai,
will settle me alone in security.	לְבָדָד לָבֶטַח תּוֹשִׁיבֵנִי	levadad lavetach toshiveni.

[1] "Lift up for us (reading נְשָׂא for נְסָה) the light of your face, God."

[2] "You have given joy to my heart, more than the time when their corn and wine are plentiful"; i.e., God gives more pleasure to the poet than farmers get from a good harvest.

Psalm 5

[1] For the leader with flutes,[1]	לַמְנַצֵּחַ אֶל־הַנְּחִילוֹת	Lamnatze'ach el han'chilot,
a psalm by David.	מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	mizmor leDavid.
[2] Listen to my words, God;	אֲמָרַי הַאֲזִינָה יהוה	Amarai ha'azinah, Adonai;
understand what I am thinking.	בִּינָה הֲגִיגִי	binah hagigi.
[3] Hear the sound of my cry,	הַקְשִׁיבָה לְקוֹל שַׁוְעִי	Hakshivah lekol shavi,
my ruler, my God,	מַלְכִּי וֵאלֹהָי	malki vElohai,
for to you I pray.	כִּי־אֵלֶיךָ אֶתְפַּלָּל	ki elecha etpalal.
[4] God, in the morning you will hear my voice,	יהוה בֹּקֶר תִּשְׁמַע קוֹלִי	Adonai, boker tishmah koli;
in the morning I'll prepare for you and look out,	בֹּקֶר אֶעֱרָךְ־לְךָ וַאֲצַפֶּה	boker e'erach lecha va'atzapeh.
[5] for you are not a God who likes evil;	כִּי לֹא אֵל־חָפֵץ רֶשַׁע אָתָּה	Ki lo El chafetz reshah atah
wickedness cannot dwell with you.	לֹא יְגָרְךָ רָע	lo yegur'cha rah.
[6] Braggarts cannot stand in your sight;	לֹא־יִתְיַצְּבוּ הוֹלְלִים לְנֶגֶד עֵינֶיךָ	Lo yityatzvu holelim leneged einecha;
you hate all evildoers.	שָׂנֵאתָ כָּל־פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן	saneta kol po'alei aven.
[7] You destroy those who speak lies;	תְּאַבֵּד דֹּבְרֵי כָזָב	Te'abed dovrei chazav;
God loathes a person of blood and guile.	אִישׁ־דָּמִים וּמִרְמָה יְתָעֵב יהוה	ish damim umirmah yeta'ev Adonai.
[8] With your great kindness,	וַאֲנִי בְּרֹב חַסְדְּךָ	Va'ani berov chasdecha
I come to your house;	אָבוֹא בֵיתֶךָ	avo veitecha;
I bow to your holy sanctuary	אֶשְׁתַּחֲוֶה אֶל־הֵיכַל־קָדְשְׁךָ	eshtachaveh el heichal kodshecha
in reverence to you.	בְּיִרְאָתֶךָ	beyir'atecha.
[9] God, lead me in your righteousness	יהוה נְחֵנִי בְצִדְקָתֶךָ	Adonai, necheni vetzidkat'cha
against those who have power over me;	לְמַעַן שׁוֹרְרָי	lema'an shorerai;
straighten your path for me.	הַיְשַׁר[2] לְפָנַי דַּרְכֶּךָ	hayshar lefanai darkecha.

[1] The word נְחִילוֹת doesn't appear anywhere else in scripture. If it's related to the root חלל, hollow, it could well mean a wind instrument (such as a חָלִיל, flute of pipe). Or it could suggest a string instrument with a cavity to amplify the sound. Or it could be related to נחל, valley, perhaps implying an echo or reverberation; or the phrase אֶל־הַנְּחִילוֹת may indicate not an instrument but a musical or poetic style.

[2] A manuscript has the spelling הושר, and some editors use the word הוֹשֶׁר, with the same meaning.

10 For nothing from their lips is true—	כִּי אֵין בְּפִיהוּ נְכוֹנָה	Ki ein befihu nechonah—
their heart[1] is an empty void,	קִרְבָּם הַוּוֹת	kirbam havot,
their throat an open grave,	קֶבֶר־פָּתוּחַ גְּרוֹנָם	kever patu'ach gronam;
though their speech is smooth.[2]	לְשׁוֹנָם יַחֲלִיקוּן	leshonam yachalikun.
11 Hold them guilty, God;	הַאֲשִׁימֵם אֱלֹהִים	Ha'ashimem, Elohim;
let them fall by their *own* schemes.	יִפְּלוּ מִמֹּעֲצוֹתֵיהֶם	yiplu mimo'atzoteihem.
Resist them in their great sinfulness	בְּרֹב פִּשְׁעֵיהֶם הַדִּיחֵמוֹ	berov pisheihem hadichemo
as they rebel against you.	כִּי־מָרוּ בָךְ	ki maru vach.
12 All who find shelter in you will rejoice;	וְיִשְׂמְחוּ כָל־חוֹסֵי בָךְ	Veyismechu kol chosei vach,
forever they will shout for joy	לְעוֹלָם יְרַנֵּנוּ	le'olam yeranenu
while you shelter them.	וְתָסֵךְ עָלֵימוֹ	vetasech aleimo,
Let those who love your reputation exult with you.	וְיַעֲלְצוּ בְךָ אֹהֲבֵי שְׁמֶךָ	ve'yal'tzu vecha ohavei shemecha.
13 You will bless the righteous, God;	כִּי־אַתָּה תְּבָרֵךְ צַדִּיק יהוה	Ki atah tevarech tzadik, Adonai;
like a shield *your* favor encases *them.*	כַּצִּנָּה רָצוֹן תַּעְטְרֶנּוּ	katzinah ratzon ta'terenu.

[1] "Their inside."
[2] "Their-tongue they-smoothe."

Psalm 6

Verses 2-11 are part of the morning penitential prayers after the Amidah.

[1] For the leader with tunes on the eighth,	לַמְנַצֵּחַ בִּנְגִינוֹת עַל־הַשְּׁמִינִית	Lamnatze'ach binginot al hashminit,
a psalm of David.	מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	mizmor leDavid.
[2] God, don't rebuke me in your anger	יְהוָה אַל־בְּאַפְּךָ תוֹכִיחֵנִי	Adonai, al be'ap'cha tochicheni,
nor punish me in your fury.	וְאַל־בַּחֲמָתְךָ תְיַסְּרֵנִי	ve'al bachamat'cha teyasreni.
[3] Be kind to me, God, for I am miserable;	חָנֵּנִי יְהוָה כִּי אֻמְלַל אָנִי	Choneni, Adonai, ki umlal ani;
heal me, God, for I feel shattered.[1]	רְפָאֵנִי יְהוָה כִּי נִבְהֲלוּ עֲצָמָי	refa'eni, Adonai, ki nivhalu atzamai.
[4] I am completely dismayed,	וְנַפְשִׁי נִבְהֲלָה מְאֹד	Venafshi nivhalah me'od,
and you, God, how long *must I wait for your help?*	וְאַתָּה יְהוָה עַד־מָתָי	ve'atah, Adonai, ad matai?
[5] Return, God, give me strength,	שׁוּבָה יְהוָה חַלְּצָה נַפְשִׁי	Shuvah, Adonai, chaltzah nafshi;
save me, to show your kindness.	הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי לְמַעַן חַסְדֶּךָ	hoshi'eni lema'an chasdecha.
[6] If you let us die, we can't remember you;	כִּי אֵין בַּמָּוֶת זִכְרֶךָ	Ki ein bamavet zichrecha;
in the Underworld, who can acknowledge you?[2]	בִּשְׁאוֹל מִי יוֹדֶה־לָּךְ	biShe'ol, mi yodeh lach?
[7] I'm tired of moaning.	יָגַעְתִּי בְּאַנְחָתִי	Yagati be'an'chati;
every night I flood my bed;	אַשְׂחֶה בְכָל־לַיְלָה מִטָּתִי	as'cheh vechol laylah mitati;
with my tears, I soak my *sleeping* couch.	בְּדִמְעָתִי עַרְשִׂי אַמְסֶה	bedim'ati ar'si amseh.
[8] My sight is clouded by *tears of* vexation,	עָשְׁשָׁה מִכַּעַס עֵינִי	Asheshah mika'as eini;
blinded by my troubles.	עָתְקָה בְכָל־צוֹרְרָי	ot'kah bechol tzorerai.
[9] Get away from me, all you evildoers,	סוּרוּ מִמֶּנִּי כָּל־פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן	Suru mimeni kol po'alei aven,
for God has heard the noise of my weeping.	כִּי־שָׁמַע יְהוָה קוֹל בִּכְיִי	ki shamah Adonai kol bich'yi.
[10] God has heard my pleas;	שָׁמַע יְהוָה תְּחִנָּתִי	Shamah Adonai techinati;
God will accept my prayer.	יְהוָה תְּפִלָּתִי יִקָּח	Adonai tefilati yikach.
[11] All my foes will wither and be baffled;	יֵבֹשׁוּ וְיִבָּהֲלוּ מְאֹד כָּל־אֹיְבָי	Yevoshu vibahalu me'od kol oy'vai;
they will turn back in sudden shame.	יָשֻׁבוּ יֵבֹשׁוּ רָגַע	yashuvu, yevoshu ragah!

[1] "My bones are terrified."

[2] "For there-is-no in-death memory-of-you; in She'ol, who will acknowledge you?" She'ol/שְׁאוֹל is perhaps from the root שאל, question, so it might mean the Unknown.

Psalm 7

1 A fervent song[1] by David	שִׁגָּיוֹן לְדָוִד	Shigayon leDavid
that he sang to God	אֲשֶׁר־שָׁר לַיהוה	asher shar lAdonai
about Chush, son of Yemini.[2]	עַל־דִּבְרֵי־כוּשׁ בֶּן־יְמִינִי	al divrei Chush ben Yemini.
2 God, my God, I found shelter in you;	יהוה אֱלֹהַי בְּךָ חָסִיתִי	Adonai, Elohai, becha chasiti;
save me from every pursuer,[3]	הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי מִכָּל־רֹדְפַי	hoshi'eni mikol rodfai
and rescue me	וְהַצִּילֵנִי	vehatzileni
3 lest he maul me like a lion,	פֶּן־יִטְרֹף כְּאַרְיֵה נַפְשִׁי	pen yitrof ke'aryeh nafshi,
split me beyond rescue.	פֹּרֵק וְאֵין מַצִּיל	porek, ve'ein matzil.
4 God, my God, if I did this *bad thing,*	יהוה אֱלֹהַי אִם־עָשִׂיתִי זֹאת	Adonai, Elohai, im asiti zot,
if there is sin on my hands,	אִם־יֶשׁ־עָוֶל בְּכַפָּי	im yesh avel bechapai,
5 if I repaid my ally with evil	אִם־גָּמַלְתִּי שׁוֹלְמִי רָע	im gamalti sholmi rah
and helped my unjustified attackers,	וָאֲחַלְּצָה צוֹרְרִי רֵיקָם	va'achaltzah tzoreri reikam,
6 then let the foe chase me, catch *me,*	יִרַדֹּף אוֹיֵב נַפְשִׁי וְיַשֵּׂג	yiradof oyev nafshi veyaseg,
trample my life into the dirt,	וְיִרְמֹס לָאָרֶץ חַיָּי	veyirmos la'aretz chayai,
and leave my honor in the dust. Selah.	וּכְבוֹדִי לֶעָפָר יַשְׁכֵּן סֶלָה	uchevodi le'afar yashken. Selah.
7 Rise, O God, in your anger,	קוּמָה יהוה בְּאַפֶּךָ	Kumah, Adonai, be'apecha,
rise at the rage of my enemies	הִנָּשֵׂא בְּעַבְרוֹת צוֹרְרָי	hinaseh be'avrot tzorerai
and rouse for me your sentence *against them.*[4]	וְעוּרָה אֵלַי מִשְׁפָּט צִוִּיתָ	ve'urah elai mishpat tzivita.
8 Let nations muster to surround you—	וַעֲדַת לְאֻמִּים תְּסוֹבְבֶךָּ	Va'adat le'umim tesoveveka,
above them all you'll return on high.[5]	וְעָלֶיהָ לַמָּרוֹם שׁוּבָה	ve'aleha lamarom shuvah.

[1] שִׁגָּיוֹן could be a musical instrument, could be an emotional state. The root שגה can mean to sin unintentionally, to reel or stagger, or to increase or prosper.

[2] Rashi identifies Chush with Saul, who sought David's death. Saul was of the tribe of Benjamin—a Benjaminite or "Binyamini," and Rashi explains Chush because just as Chushites look different (from people with fairer skin; with what sad persistence people note differences in skin tone!), so Saul's accomplishments looked different (from David's). This explanation seems to be a stretch since the names Chush and Yemini don't appear in our accounts of David's life. So perhaps the psalm isn't autobiographical, and perhaps David was inspired by something that happened to someone else.

[3] "All my pursuers."

[4] "the judgement you have commanded *against them,"* or "rouse against me the judgement you have commanded."

[5] "And the assembly of nations can surround you / and above *that assembly,* to the height, return!"

[9] God will judge those peoples;	יְהוָה יָדִין עַמִּים	Adonai yadin amim;
judge me *too,* God,	שָׁפְטֵנִי יְהוָה	shofteni, Adonai,
in my honesty and in my innocence.	כְּצִדְקִי וּכְתֻמִּי עָלָי	ketzidki uchetumi alai.
[10] Please, let evil repay the wicked	יִגְמָר־נָא רַע רְשָׁעִים	Yigmor nah rah resha'im
while you support the righteous;	וּתְכוֹנֵן צַדִּיק	utechonen tzadik,
probing hearts and minds[1]	וּבֹחֵן לִבּוֹת וּכְלָיוֹת	uvochen libot uchelayot
is the role of righteous God.	אֱלֹהִים צַדִּיק	Elohim tzadik.
[11] My defence rests with God,	מָגִנִּי עַל־אֱלֹהִים	Magini al Elohim,
who saves honest people.[2]	מוֹשִׁיעַ יִשְׁרֵי־לֵב	moshi'ah yishrei lev.
[12] God judges the innocent *fairly*	אֱלֹהִים שׁוֹפֵט צַדִּיק	Elohim shofet tzadik,
but every day God is angry *at evildoers.*	וְאֵל זֹעֵם בְּכָל־יוֹם	ve'El zo'em bechol yom.
[13] If *they* do not repent,	אִם־לֹא יָשׁוּב	Im lo yashuv,
God whets *God's* sword—	חַרְבּוֹ יְלַטּוֹשׁ	charbo yiltosh,
God's bow is drawn and ready[3]	קַשְׁתּוֹ דָרַךְ וַיְכוֹנְנֶהָ	kashto darach vayechoneneha.
[14] And *God's* fatal weapons are prepared,	וְלוֹ הֵכִין כְּלֵי־מָוֶת	Velo hechin kelei mavet,
setting the arrows aflame.[4]	חִצָּיו לְדֹלְקִים יִפְעָל	chitzav ledolkim yifal.
[15] Look *at the evildoer,* laboring with sin,	הִנֵּה יְחַבֵּל־אָוֶן	Hineh yechabel aven
pregnant with trouble, delivering falsehood,	וְהָרָה עָמָל וְיָלַד שָׁקֶר	veharah amal veyalad shaker.
[16] *who* has dug a pit and hollowed it out,	בּוֹר כָּרָה וַיַּחְפְּרֵהוּ	Bor karah vayachperehu,
only to fall into the ruin he made!	וַיִּפֹּל בְּשַׁחַת יִפְעָל	vayipol beshachat yifal.
[17] Let his mischief come back upon him	יָשׁוּב עֲמָלוֹ בְרֹאשׁוֹ	Yshuv amalo verosho,
his violence descend on his *own* head!	וְעַל קָדְקָדוֹ חֲמָסוֹ יֵרֵד	ve'al kadkodo chamaso yered.
[18] I thank God for *God's* justice	אוֹדֶה יְהוָה כְּצִדְקוֹ	Odeh Adonai ketzidko,
and sing the reputation of God on high.	וַאֲזַמְּרָה שֵׁם־יְהוָה עֶלְיוֹן	va'azamrah shem Adonai elyon.

[1] "And prober of hearts and innards (i.e., our inner thoughts and intentions)."
[2] "The upright of heart."
[3] "*God* has drawn *God's* bow and has made it ready."
[4] The root דלק means burning (it's the name of a gasoline company in Israel). Many translators understand this word דלקים ("flaming things") metaphorically—those evildoers who pursue the righteous. But perhaps it means that God is making flaming arrows to attack the evildoers.

Psalm 8

Sometimes added in the evening service.

[1] For the leader, on the harp,[1]	לַמְנַצֵּחַ עַל־הַגִּתִּית	Lamnatze'ach al hagittit,
a tune by David.	מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	mizmor leDavid.
[2] God, our ruler,	יהוה אֲדֹנֵינוּ	Adonai, adoneinu,
how great is your reputation	מָה־אַדִּיר שִׁמְךָ	mah adir shim'cha
in all the earth,	בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ	bechol ha'aretz,
and your glory is described as	אֲשֶׁר תְּנָה הוֹדְךָ	asher tenah hod'cha
higher than the skies.	עַל־הַשָּׁמָיִם	al hashamayim
[3] From the mouths of infants and nursing babies	מִפִּי עוֹלְלִים וְיוֹנְקִים	Mipi olelim veyonkim
you established power *of speech*	יִסַּדְתָּ עֹז	yisadta oz
to respond to your foes,	לְמַעַן צוֹרְרֶיךָ	lema'an tzorerecha,
to still the enemy who strikes back.[2]	לְהַשְׁבִּית אוֹיֵב וּמִתְנַקֵּם	lehashbit oyev umitnakem.
[4] When I see your *vast* sky,	כִּי־אֶרְאֶה שָׁמֶיךָ	Ki er'eh shamecha,
formed by your fingers,	מַעֲשֵׂי אֶצְבְּעֹתֶיךָ	ma'asei etzbe'otecha,
the moon and stars that you established,	יָרֵחַ וְכוֹכָבִים אֲשֶׁר כּוֹנָנְתָּה	yare'ach vechochavim asher konanta,
[5] *I wonder* how you could notice one person	מָה־אֱנוֹשׁ כִּי־תִזְכְּרֶנּוּ	Mah enosh ki tizkerenu
or acknowledge a human being.[3]	וּבֶן־אָדָם כִּי תִפְקְדֶנּוּ	uven adam ki tifkedenu—
[6] Yet you made *them only* a little less than God[4]	וַתְּחַסְּרֵהוּ מְּעַט מֵאֱלֹהִים	Vatechasrehu me'at me'Elohim,
and crowned *them* with glory and splendor.	וְכָבוֹד וְהָדָר תְּעַטְּרֵהוּ	vechavod vehadar te'atrehu.

[1] The "gittit" is mentioned in psalms 8, 81 and 84 and is often thought to be a string instrument. The word may well be an adjective from the town of Gath. "Gath-like" could refer to an instrument, a style of music, or a particular song. The word "gath" can also mean a wine-press, so "gath-like" may refer to a song for the wine harvest, or an instrument made from a winepress. Gath was a Philistine town mentioned in 2:Samuel 1:20, David's lament for Jonathan and Saul.

[2] "To make enemy and retaliator stop." What is the power that comes from the mouths of "infants and nursing babies"? Although "infant" is from the Latin *in-fans,* "not-speaking," the poet may be referring to the human power of speech. Although we usually think of the struggle between good and evil as an armed conflict, one might say it's a struggle to vindicate God's reputation as a kind, caring and reliable force, and its ultimate victory will be diplomatic rather than military, through words rather than arms, when all people acknowledge God's nature.

[3] "What is a man that you should acknowledge him or the child of a human being that you should notice him?"

[4] Or, "You made *a human being* less, a little, than gods (or authority figures)"; the Hebrew uses the third person masculine singular pronoun, but the translation tries to avoid sexist implications.

[7] You put *them* in charge of your handiwork	תַּמְשִׁילֵהוּ בְּמַעֲשֵׂי יָדֶיךָ	Tamshilehu bema'asei yadecha;
and made everything subservient to *them*.[1]	כֹּל שַׁתָּה תַחַת־רַגְלָיו	kol shatah tachat raglav.
[8] Flocks and herds, all of them,	צֹנֶה וַאֲלָפִים כֻּלָּם	Tzoneh va'alafim kulam,
even the *wild* animals of the field,	וְגַם בַּהֲמוֹת שָׂדָי	vegam behemot sadai,
[9] Birds of the sky, fish of the sea,	צִפּוֹר שָׁמַיִם וּדְגֵי הַיָּם	Tzipor shamayim udegei hayam,
crossing the paths of the seas.	עֹבֵר אָרְחוֹת יַמִּים	over or'chot yamim.
[10] God, our ruler,	יהוה אֲדֹנֵינוּ	Adonai adoneinu,
How awesome is your reputation	מָה־אַדִּיר שִׁמְךָ	mah adir shimcha
in the whole world!	בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ	bechol ha'aretz!

[1] "You placed everything beneath *the human being's* feet." And with power to dominate the earth, our ecologists teach us, comes the great responsibility to use our power wisely.

Psalm 9

[1] For the leader, (the son's disappearance,)[1]	לַמְנַצֵּחַ עַלְמוּת לַבֵּן	Lamnatze'ach almut laben
a psalm of David:	מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	mizmor leDavid:
[2] I give God thanks with all my heart,	אוֹדֶה יהוה בְּכָל־לִבִּי	Odeh Adonai bechol libi,
whose wonders I'll declaim,	אֲסַפְּרָה כָּל־נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ	asaprah kol nifle'otecha.
[3] Rejoicing with delight in you,	אֶשְׂמְחָה וְאֶעֶלְצָה בָּךְ	Esmecha ve'e'eltza vach,
singing your lofty name.	אֲזַמְּרָה שִׁמְךָ עֶלְיוֹן	azamra shimcha elyon.
[4] When *all* my foes are driven back—	בְּשׁוּב־אוֹיְבַי אָחוֹר	Beshuv oyvai achor—
before you fallen, done—	יִכָּשְׁלוּ וְיֹאבְדוּ מִפָּנֶיךָ	yikashlu veyovdu mipanecha—
[5] While you bring justice, law for me,	כִּי־עָשִׂיתָ מִשְׁפָּטִי וְדִינִי	Ki asita mishpati vedini,
firm on your judgement throne.[2]	יָשַׁבְתָּ לְכִסֵּא שׁוֹפֵט צֶדֶק	yashavta lechiseh shofet tzedek.
[6] Away with heathens! Crush the bad!	גָּעַרְתָּ גּוֹיִם אִבַּדְתָּ רָשָׁע	Ga'arta goyim, ibadta rasha;
blot out their name entirely;[3]	שְׁמָם מָחִיתָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד	shemam machita le'olam va'ed.
[7] *My* foe, the damage is all done,	הָאוֹיֵב תַּמּוּ חֳרָבוֹת לָנֶצַח	Ha'oyev, tamu chorovot lanetzach
towns razed from memory,[4]	וְעָרִים נָתַשְׁתָּ אָבַד זִכְרָם הֵמָּה	ve'arim natashta; avad zichram hema.
[8] While God forever sits enthroned,	וַיהוה לְעוֹלָם יֵשֵׁב	VAdonai le'olam yeshev,
ready to issue just decree.[5]	כּוֹנַן לַמִּשְׁפָּט כִּסְאוֹ	konen lamishpat kiso.

[1] If you want the psalms to be autobiographical (and why not?) you may side with those who read עַלְמוּת לַבֵּן as עַל מוּת לַבֵּן, "upon death for-the-son/al mut laben." David saw three of his sons die: Bathsheba's first baby, Amnon and Absalom. Trying to follow the wording as printed in our source, I translate עַלְמוּת as "disappearance," from the root עלם: "disappearance relating to the son." Some think it should be עַל מוּתלַבֵּן and think מוּתלַבֵּן is the name of a place or a person, a musical instrument or a musical style, so they think it means "relating to Mutlaben" or "on a Mutlaben" or "in the style of Mutlaben." The root לבן can suggest white, or brick, or Jacob's father-in-law Laban. So maybe it's a song for the "death" of the "brick"—the end of the workday if you're a brickmaker. Or a song for the "death" of the "white"—the end of the workday if you're whitewashing or plastering. Or maybe it's a good tune if you're missing a customary white or brick-like instrument and have to make do with an incomplete orchestra.

[2] "You have sat on (lit., "to") *the* throne-of a-judge-of righteousness."

[3] "You drove off the nations, destroyed the bad person, / their name you blotted forever and ever."

[4] "O enemy, to-an-end-have-come wreckages forever"—the ruins you caused have come to an end and you can't cause more ruin, ever; or, the eternal ruins you caused have come to an end and you can't do any more—"and-towns you-uprooted / lost *is* their-memory for-them"—and the towns you razed, well, they're gone from memory altogether.

[5] "But God is seated forever, preparing for-judgement *God's*-throne."

[9] *God* judges earth in righteousness,	וְהוּא יִשְׁפֹּט־תֵּבֵל בְּצֶדֶק	Vehu yishpot tevel betzedek,
with equity tries nations;	יָדִין לְאֻמִּים בְּמֵישָׁרִים	yadin le'umim bemeisharim.
[10] God offers refuge to the oppressed,	וַיְהִי יהוה מִשְׂגָּב לַדָּךְ	Vihi Adonai misgav ladach,
shelter from tribulations[1]—	מִשְׂגָּב לְעִתּוֹת בַּצָּרָה	misgav le'itot batzarah.
[11] And those who know you, know	וְיִבְטְחוּ בְךָ יוֹדְעֵי שְׁמֶךָ	Veyivtechu vecha yodei shemecha
you will repay our dedication.[2]	כִּי לֹא־עָזַבְתָּ דֹרְשֶׁיךָ יהוה	ki lo azavta dorshecha, Adonai.
[12] Sing to God, you who live in Zion,	זַמְּרוּ לַיהוה יֹשֵׁב צִיּוֹן	Zamru lAdonai, yoshev Tziyon;
tell *God's* deeds to nations:	הַגִּידוּ בָעַמִּים עֲלִילוֹתָיו	hagidu va'amim alilotav,
[13] God knows their guilt and seeks redress,	כִּי־דֹרֵשׁ דָּמִים אוֹתָם זָכָר	Ki doresh damim, otam zachar,
forgets no pauper's cry.[3]	לֹא־שָׁכַח צַעֲקַת עֲנָוִים[4]	lo shachach tza'akat anavim.
[14] Kind God, behold my deep distress;	חָנֵּנִי יהוה רְאֵה עָנְיִי	Choneni, Adonai: re'eh onyi:
o'er dangers raise me high![5]	מְשֹׂנְאָי מֵרוֹמְמִי מִשַּׁעֲרֵי מָוֶת	misonai meromemi, misha'arei mavet
[15] So I can tell your praise:	לְמַעַן אֲסַפְּרָה כָּל־תְּהִלָּתֶיךָ	Lema'an asapra kol tehilatecha;
to Zion's gates with joy I'm carried,[6]	בְּשַׁעֲרֵי בַת־צִיּוֹן אָגִילָה בִּישׁוּעָתֶךָ	besha'arei bat Tziyon agil bishu'atecha.
[16] While foes fall in the pit they dug,	טָבְעוּ גוֹיִם בְּשַׁחַת עָשׂוּ	Tavu goyim beshachat asu,
tripped[7] by that snare they buried!	בְּרֶשֶׁת־זוּ טָמָנוּ נִלְכְּדָה רַגְלָם	bereshet zu tamanu nilkedah raglam.
[17] God is renowned, gave judgement, *and*	נוֹדַע יהוה מִשְׁפָּט עָשָׂה	Noda Adonai, mishpat asah;
for evil cast the net.[8]	בְּפֹעַל כַּפָּיו נוֹקֵשׁ רָשָׁע	befo'al kapav nokesh rasha.
(Meditation: Selah.)[9]	הִגָּיוֹן סֶלָה	Higayon. Selah.

[1] "And-will-be, God, shelter for-the-oppressed, / shelter for-times of-trouble."

[2] "And-they-will-rely on-you those-who-know-of your-name/reputation, / that not you-have-abandoned those-who-seek-you (or, those-whom-you-seek), God."

[3] "For *God* seeks payment/blood/blood-guilt; them *God* has-remembered; not has-forgotten the-screaming-of the-poor."

[4] A manuscript has the reading עניים.

[5] "Be kind to me, God; see my poverty; above my enemies raise me, above the gates of death."

[6] "So that I can recount all your praises / at the gates of the daughter/suburb of Zion I shall express joy in your salvation."

[7] "Conquered are their legs/feet"—they hid the net to catch birds but they tripped up and got ensnared. Tee-hee.

[8] "Through-the-work-of *God's*-palms is-ensnared the-evil-person."

[9] The meaning of הִגָּיוֹן/higayon is uncertain but may suggest meditation. The meaning of סֶלָה/selah is also uncertain and may suggest repetition. Maybe when this psalm was recited it was interrupted for a repeated musical passage of meditation.

18 The wicked shall return to Sheol[1]—	יָשׁוּבוּ רְשָׁעִים לִשְׁאוֹלָה	Yashuvu resha'im liSheolah,
all they who God forget.	כָּל־גּוֹיִם שְׁכֵחֵי אֱלֹהִים	kol goyim shechechei Elohim.
19 God won't forever shun the poor,	כִּי לֹא לָנֶצַח יִשָּׁכַח אֶבְיוֹן	Ki lo lanetzach yishachach evyon,
nor leave their prayers unmet.	תִּקְוַת עֲנִיִּים[2] תֹּאבַד לָעַד	tikvat aniyim tovad la'ad.
20 Rise, God: let people not prevail;	קוּמָה יהוה אַל־יָעֹז אֱנוֹשׁ	Kuma, Adonai: al ya'oz enosh;
let nations be judged by you.	יִשָּׁפְטוּ גוֹיִם עַל־פָּנֶיךָ	yishfetu goyim al panecha.
21 Fill them with dread so they can know	שִׁיתָה יהוה מוֹרָה לָהֶם	Shita, Adonai, morah lahem:
empires[3] are mortal too.	יֵדְעוּ גוֹיִם אֱנוֹשׁ הֵמָּה	yedu goyim enosh hemah.
Selah.	סֶלָה	Selah.

[1] From the same root as question, Sheol is the unknown nether region that claims the dead.
[2] A manuscript has the reading ענוים.
[3] Lit. "peoples"; even great empires run their course and fade, while God is eternal.

Psalm 10

[1] O God, why do you stand afar—	לָמָּה יהוה תַּעֲמֹד בְּרָחוֹק	Lamah, Adonai ta'amod berachok,
invisible—in times of care?[1]	תַּעְלִים לְעִתּוֹת בַּצָּרָה	talim le'itot batzarah?
[2] Evil's pride inflames the poor:	בְּגַאֲוַת רָשָׁע יִדְלַק עָנִי	Bega'avat rasha yidlak ani,
let rogues be trapped in their own snare.[2]	יִתָּפְשׂוּ בְמִזְמוֹת זוּ חָשָׁבוּ	yitafsu bimzimot zu chashavu.
[3] Evil boasts his heart's desire	כִּי־הִלֵּל רָשָׁע עַל־תַּאֲוַת נַפְשׁוֹ	Ki hilel rasha al ta'avat nafsho
and greed extols what God finds worst.[3]	וּבֹצֵעַ בֵּרֵךְ נִאֵץ יהוה	uvotze'a berech ni'etz Adonai.
[4] The rogue's too haughty to seek *God*	רָשָׁע כְּגֹבַהּ אַפּוֹ בַּל־יִדְרֹשׁ	Rasha kegovah apo bal yidrosh;
so all his plots are godless, cursed.[4]	אֵין אֱלֹהִים כָּל־מְזִמֹּתָיו	ein Elohim kol mezimotav.
[5] Let him turn where he may go—	יָחִילוּ דְרָכָיו בְּכָל־עֵת	Yachilu derachav bechol et.
your justice hangs above him, though	מָרוֹם מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ מִנֶּגְדּוֹ	Marom mishpatecha minegdo,
for now he can blow off his foe.[5]	כָּל־צוֹרְרָיו יָפִיחַ בָּהֶם	Kol tzorerav, yafi'ach bahem.
[6] He thinks, "I'll never take a fall,"	אָמַר בְּלִבּוֹ בַּל־אֶמּוֹט	Amar belibo, "Bal emot";
while he remains from trouble free.[7]	לְדֹר וָדֹר אֲשֶׁר לֹא־בְרָע	ledor vador asher lo verah.
[7] Oaths fill his mouth, deceit and fraud;	אָלָה פִּיהוּ מָלֵא וּמִרְמוֹת וָתֹךְ	Alah pihu maleh, umirmot vatoch;
his tongue toils for dishonesty.[8]	תַּחַת לְשׁוֹנוֹ עָמָל וָאָוֶן	tachat leshono amal va'aven.

[1] "Why, God, do you stand/stay far *away,* / conceal *yourself* at times of trouble?"

[2] "At the pride of the wicked is inflamed the poor person (the poor person burns *with indignation* because of the proud wicked people); / let *the wicked* be trapped in the plots—this is what they've been planning (let the wicked be "hoist with his own petard," in Hamlet's phrase [III.4.207]).

[3] "For the wicked has praised/exulted over the desires of his personality / and blessed greed, *which* God detests."

[4] "The wicked according to the height of his nose (he holds his head up high, haughtily) lest he should seek (and would not seek for God, being too haughty); / there is no*thing* God-*like in* all his plots."

[5] "Let his paths twist (יָחִילוּ from the root חוּל, meaning writhe or twist, sometimes in labor pangs) at any time (i.e., wherever he runs to), / high *are* your judgements in relation to him (i.e., God's justice hangs over him like the sword of Damocles); / all his foes, he blows at them (i.e., he doesn't take his foes' attacks seriously—but one day God will come crashing down on him!)"

[6] A manuscript has the spelling דרכו, "his way."

[7] "He said in his heart/mind, "Lest I should be dislodged" (i.e., I'm firm, like a rock!); / from age to age, *in* that *he is* not in bad *circumstances.*"

[8] "A curse/oath his mouth fills, and deceptions and falsehood; / under his tongue are pain/toil and evil/sorrow"; (i.e., when he uses his tongue pain and sorrow slip out from underneath).

[8] He lurks in ambush near the square	יֹשֵׁב בְּמַאְרַב חֲצֵרִים	Yeshev bemarav chatzerim;
to slay the sinless from his lair,	בַּמִּסְתָּרִים יַהֲרֹג נָקִי	bemistarim yaharog naki;
face cloaked to dodge his victim's stare:[1]	עֵינָיו לְחֶלְכָה יִצְפֹּנוּ	einav lechel'cha yitzponu.
[9] A lion lurking in his lair	יֶאֱרֹב בַּמִּסְתָּר כְּאַרְיֵה	Ye'erav bamistar ke'aryeh;
to snatch the victim unaware	בְּסֹכּוֹ יֶאֱרֹב לַחֲטוֹף עָנִי	vesuko ye'erov lachatof ani,
to seize the prey lured to his snare.[2]	יַחְטֹף עָנִי בְּמָשְׁכוֹ בְרִשְׁתּוֹ	yachtof ani bemoshcho verishto.
[10] Crouching as if his force is spent	יִדְכֶּה[4] יָשֹׁחַ וְנָפַל	Yidkeh, yasho'ach venafal—
he pounces on the innocent.[3]	בַּעֲצוּמָיו חֵיל כָּאִים[5]	ba'atzumav cheil ka'im.
[11] He thinks, "God's hidden, pays no heed,	אָמַר בְּלִבּוֹ שָׁכַח אֵל	Amar belibo, "Shachach El,
never to see a wicked deed."[6]	הִסְתִּיר פָּנָיו בַּל־רָאָה לָנֶצַח	histir panav bal ra'ah lanetzach."
[12] O God, rise up, seize power: show	קוּמָה יהוה אֵל נְשָׂא יָדֶךָ	Kuma, Adonai; El, nesah yadecha;
how well poor wretches' pain you know.[7]	אַל־תִּשְׁכַּח עֲנוּים[8]	al tishkach anavim.
[13] Why do the wicked spurn God? They	עַל־מָה נִאֵץ רָשָׁע אֱלֹהִים	Al mah ni'etz rasha Elohim?
are sure they'll never have to pay.[9]	אָמַר בְּלִבּוֹ לֹא תִדְרֹשׁ	Amar belibo, "Lo tidrosh."

[1] Verses 8 and 9 expand on one idea, that the evil person is always looking for a victim, with many words repeated, and that's one reason why the rhyme is the same for both verses. "He stays in ambush *of* open spaces (i.e., he lies in wait near open spaces where everyone walks through) / in concealed places he murders the clean/innocent; / his eyes at the hapless victim he hides (i.e., he masks his face/eyes so the victim can't identify him)."

[2] "He will ambush from a concealed place like a lion; / in a shelter he *lies in* ambush to catch the poor; / he'll catch the poor by luring *him* by means of his wickedness."

[3] "He crouches, acts humble, falls down (i.e., he looks powerless, like a lion crouching, but ready to pounce); / with his bones/limbs/strength inflicts pain on the victims." בַּעֲצוּמָיו is from עצם, bone or essential part; חֵיל I take to be from חוּל and here to mean inflict pain; כָּאִים from the root כָּאָה, grieved or broken. My interpretation is certainly speculative, but so far I haven't seen a better way to make sense of these rare words.

[4] A manuscript has ודכה.

[5] A manuscript combines two words into something unfamiliar: חלכאים.

[6] "He says in his heart/mind, 'God has forgotten; *God* has hidden *God's* face/presence lest *God* should see, ever (i.e., God will never notice my wickedness.)"

[7] "Rise up, God, lift up your hand (i.e., raise your power); / don't forget the poor."

[8] A manuscript has עניים

[9] "For what *reason* has the wicked person spurned God? / He has said in his heart/mind, "*God* will not seek *me* (i.e., to punish me)."

[14] But *God*, you see them! All their harm	רָאִתָה כִּי־אַתָּה עָמָל	Ra'itah ki atah amal
and mischief you well know. Your arm	וָכַעַס תַּבִּיט	vacha'as tabit
will reach them! Let the penniless	לָתֵת בְּיָדֶךָ	latet beyadecha;
yield to your care, the parentless	עָלֶיךָ יַעֲזֹב חֵלְכָה	alecha ya'azov chelecha;
trust you for help *when troubles press*.[1]	יָתוֹם אַתָּה הָיִיתָ עוֹזֵר	yatom atah hayita ozer.
[15] Break the hold of wicked mind;	שְׁבֹר זְרוֹעַ רָשָׁע וָרָע	Shevor zero'a rashah varah;
hunt evil till there's none to find.[2]	תִּדְרוֹשׁ־רִשְׁעוֹ בַל־תִּמְצָא	tidrosh risho val timtza.
[16] Eternally God's in command,	יהוה מֶלֶךְ עוֹלָם וָעֶד	Adonai melech olam va'ed;
heathens perished from *God's* land.[3]	אָבְדוּ גוֹיִם מֵאַרְצוֹ	avdu goyim me'artzo.
[17] God, you have heard the pauper's prayer,	תַּאֲוַת עֲנָוִים שָׁמַעְתָּ יהוה	Ta'avat anavim shamata, Adonai;
inclined your ear and soothed their care,[4]	תָּכִין לִבָּם תַּקְשִׁיב אָזְנֶךָ	tachin libam, takshiv oznecha
[18] To vindicate the orphan poor,	לִשְׁפֹּט יָתוֹם וָדָךְ	Lishpot yatom vadach
that people, terrified no more,	בַּל־יוֹסִיף עוֹד לַעֲרֹץ	bal yosif od la'arotz
live fearless, under rule of law.[5]	אֱנוֹשׁ מִן־הָאָרֶץ	enosh min ha'aretz.

[1] Perhaps this is the hardest verse to understand. "You (God) have seen. For you pain/toil / and anger will see (i.e., God will take note of the pain and anger caused by the wicked), / to place into your hand (i.e., to take control of these wicked people); / upon you will release the poor (i.e., the victim will release himself into God's care), / *for* the orphan you have been a help."

[2] "Break the forearm (i.e., power) of a wicked person and *of* evil; / seek/hunt his wickedness lest you find *any* (i.e., keep hunting until there's none left for you to find)."

[3] "God is sovereign forever and ever; / they are lost, peoples, from *God's* land/earth"; presumably the "peoples" are pagan folk.

[4] "The desire of the poor you have heard, God; / you will fix their heart/mind, you will make your ear hear."

[5] "To judge (i.e., to vindicate in court) the orphan and destitute / lest *the wicked* should continue to terrify / a person *and drive him* from the land." I think this difficult verse means that God will bring judgement (i.e., the rule of law) so as to prevent the wicked from terrorizing people.

Psalm 11

[1] For the leader, to David.	לַמְנַצֵּחַ לְדָוִד	Lamnatze'ach, leDavid.
God is my shelter. Why tell me,	בַּיהוה חָסִיתִי אֵיךְ תֹּאמְרוּ לְנַפְשִׁי	BAdonai chasiti. Eich tomru lenafshi,
"Fly off, bird, to your mountain height"?[1]	נוּדִי[2] הַרְכֶם צִפּוֹר	"Nudi har'chem, tzipor"?
[2] But see, the wicked arc their bow—	כִּי הִנֵּה הָרְשָׁעִים יִדְרְכוּן קֶשֶׁת	Ki hineh harsha'im yidrechun keshet,
with arrow fixed on bowstring tight,	כּוֹנְנוּ חִצָּם עַל־יֶתֶר	konenu chitzam al yeter,
aimed slyly at a heart upright.[3]	לִירוֹת בְּמוֹ־אֹפֶל לְיִשְׁרֵי־לֵב	lirot bemo ofel leyishrei lev.
[3] If earth's supports should fail,	כִּי הַשָּׁתוֹת יֵהָרֵסוּן	Ki hashatot yeharesun,
Can righteous folk prevail?[4]	צַדִּיק מַה־פָּעָל	tzadik mah pa'al?
[4] But God is in *God's* holy place,	יהוה בְּהֵיכַל קָדְשׁוֹ	Adonai beheichal kodsho;
enthroned in sky,	יהוה בַּשָּׁמַיִם כִּסְאוֹ	Adonai bashamayim kiso,
with searching eye,	עֵינָיו יֶחֱזוּ	einav yechezu,
to scrutinize humanity.[5]	עַפְעַפָּיו יִבְחֲנוּ בְּנֵי אָדָם	afapav yivchanu benei Adam.
[5] God probes the righteous, but abhors	יהוה צַדִּיק יִבְחָן	Adonai tzadik yivchan
the evil, who delight in wars.[6]	וְרָשָׁע וְאֹהֵב חָמָס שָׂנְאָה נַפְשׁוֹ	verasha ve'ohev chamas sanah nafsho.

[1] "In God I have found shelter. / How can you say to me, / "Fly to your mountain, bird"? I presume the bird is advised to flee to its mountain because that's where its nest is. The bird expects no danger since it has God's protection, but oh, the archers have drawn their bows! The root נוד implies wandering, being of no fixed position, hence flying away or fleeing.

[2] A manuscript has the spelling נודו. To the untrained eye, נוּדִי seems like a feminine singular imperative (Go away!) which matches the feminine singular noun צִפּוֹר. But הַרְכֶם seems second-person plural.

[3] "For see, the wicked tread the bow (use their foot to bend the bow) / fix their arrow on the string (יתר usually implies something extra, hence an overhang, hence an overhanging piece of string, hence a string—even a bow-string) / to shoot with darkness (i.e., furtively, slyly) at the upright of heart."

[4] "When the supports are destroyed, / the righteous person—what does s/he do?" If everything on which we rely (such as community mores) fails, will the righteous person be able to survive? שת can mean a literal support such as a column or foundation, or a figurative support such as a leader or a moral principle. The word occurs in this psalm and in Isa 19:10, but perhaps it's related to שית, meaning "set" or "put in place" since supports need to be firmly fixed in place.

[5] "God is in *God's* holy place (or, the palace of God's holiness); / God—in the sky is *God's* throne; / *God's* eyes see; / *God's* eyelids probe the descendants of Adam."

[6] "God probes the righteous / and *as for* the wicked and one who loves violence, *God's* self hates *him."*

[6] For them, let *God* send flaming air and sulphurous whirlwind as their share.[1]	יַמְטֵר עַל־רְשָׁעִים פַּחִים אֵשׁ וְגָפְרִית וְרוּחַ זִלְעָפוֹת מְנָת כוֹסָם	Yamter al resha'im pachim esh vegofrit veru'ach zilafot menat kosam.
[7] For righteous God loves honesty; the upright will *God's* presence see.[2]	כִּי־צַדִּיק יהוה צְדָקוֹת אָהֵב יָשָׁר יֶחֱזוּ פָנֵימוֹ	Ki tzadik Adonai, tzedakot ahev; yashar yechezu faneimo.

[1] "May there rain upon the wicked / coals/sheets of fire (i.e., sheet lightning; פח implies something spread out, a thin sheet of metal or a fowler's net) / and Sulphur/brimstone and blazing/burning-hot wind/storm; / *let this be* the portion of their cup (i.e., what they get for drink)."

[2] "But righteous is God, righteous acts does *God* love; / the upright shall see *God's* face/presence."

Psalm 12

[1] For the leader on the eight-*stringed lyre,*	לַמְנַצֵּחַ עַל־הַשְּׁמִינִית	Lamnatze'ach al hashminit,
a tune for David.	מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	mizmor leDavid.
[2] Help, O God. The good are done,	הוֹשִׁיעָה יהוה כִּי־גָמַר חָסִיד	Hoshi'ah, Adonai, ki gamar chasid,
the faithful gone from humankind.[1]	כִּי־פַסּוּ אֱמוּנִים מִבְּנֵי אָדָם	ki fasu emunim mibnei Adam.
[3] Each to another with forked tongue	שָׁוְא יְדַבְּרוּ אִישׁ אֶת־רֵעֵהוּ	Shav yedabru ish et re'ehu
dissembles with deceitful mind.[2]	שִׂפַת חֲלָקוֹת בְּלֵב וָלֵב יְדַבֵּרוּ	sefat chalakot; belev valev yedaberu.
[4] O God, cut off these lying lips,	יַכְרֵת יהוה כָּל־שִׂפְתֵי חֲלָקוֹת	Yachret, Adonai, kol siftei chalakot,
the tongues that falsely claim renown,[3]	לָשׁוֹן מְדַבֶּרֶת גְּדלוֹת	lashon medaberet gedolot,
[5] That say, "With speeches we shall win,	אֲשֶׁר אָמְרוּ לִלְשֹׁנֵנוּ נַגְבִּיר	Asher amru, "Lilshonenu nagbir,
speak as we please and bow to none."[4]	שְׂפָתֵינוּ אִתָּנוּ מִי אָדוֹן לָנוּ	sefateinu itanu—mi adon lanu?"
[6] "For pauper's pain, for beggar's cry,"	מִשֹּׁד עֲנִיִּים מֵאַנְקַת אֶבְיוֹנִים	"Mishod aniyim, me'ankat evyonim,
says God, "Right now, I'm standing by	עַתָּה אָקוּם יֹאמַר יהוה	atah akum," yomar Adonai,
to bring relief from menace sore."[5]	אָשִׁית בְּיֵשַׁע יָפִיחַ לוֹ	"Ashit beyesha yafi'ach lo."
[7] God's words are sayings *always* pure,	אִמָּרוֹת יהוה אֲמָרוֹת טְהֹרוֹת	Imarot Adonai amarot tehorot,
like silver from earth's rich veins mined,	כֶּסֶף צָרוּף בַּעֲלִיל לָאָרֶץ	kesef tzaruf ba'alil la'aretz,
seven and seven times refined.[6]	מְזֻקָּק שִׁבְעָתָיִם	mezukak shivatayim.

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[1] "Save, God, for ended is the devout person / for vanished have the faithful from the descendants of Adam." Some editors combine verses 1 and 2.

[2] "Vanity/falsehood they speak, one person with his neighbor; / lip/edge of smoothnesses/divisions with heart and heart they speak." I.e., these people tell each other lies; their words are smooth or duplicitious (the root חלק implies both smooth and division); with a double intention they speak."

[3] "May God cut off all those lips of smoothnesses/duplicities, / a tongue that speaks great things (i.e., a person who makes himself sound impressive)."

[4] "That say, 'To/for our tongues shall we become powerful; / our tongues are with us (i.e., in our control); who is a boss for us?'" I.e., these people feel they can say what they like and nobody can restrain them.

[5] "'From the pain of the poor people, from the cry of the destitute / now I *am moved to* stand up,' says God. / 'I shall place into salvation/rescue/security *the one* whom someone is trying to entrap.'" The last phrase in this verse is often interpreted differently. I favor the idea that God promises to save one who is under threat—with trap/פח as the root of יָפִיחַ—while others feel that יָפִיחַ implies blowing or breathing and hence speaking, so that God speaks reassurance. The poet may of course intend both ideas.

[6] "The sayings of God are pure sayings / *like* silver refined in a crucible (since עָלִיל occurs nowhere else in Hebrew scripture, we can guess its meaning from the context) at the ground (i.e., perhaps a crucible too big to be placed anywhere but on the ground, or perhaps the "crucible" is in the ground and the silver is so pure that it's smelted before it's mined), / refined/strained double-seven (some say this means seven times, not double-seven)."

[8] Guard them, God, O save them yet
in this *false* age of endless threat.[1]
[9] For the wicked walk on every side
when vilest folk are glorified.[2]

אַתָּה־יהוה תִּשְׁמְרֵם תִּצְּרֶנּוּ
מִן־הַדּוֹר זוּ לְעוֹלָם
סָבִיב רְשָׁעִים יִתְהַלָּכוּן
כְּרֹם זְלוּת לִבְנֵי אָדָם

Atah, Adonai, tishmerem, titzrenu
min hador zu, le'olam.
Saviv resha'im yit'halachun
kerum zulut livnei Adam.

[1] "You, God, guard them; save him/it / from this generation forever." Why the poet switches from plural (guard them) to singular (save him) I don't know; but the poet thinks we live in a bad time.
[2] "Around the wicked stroll / at the elevation of baseness for children of Adam"—bad people can walk out in public when all kowtow to the vile people.

Psalm 13

[1] For the leader, a tune for David.	לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	Lamnatze'ach, mizmor leDavid.
[2] You always disregard me, God. How long—	עַד־אָנָה יהוה תִּשְׁכָּחֵנִי נֶצַח	Ad anah, Adonai, tishkacheni netzach?
You hide from me—	עַד־אָנָה תַסְתִּיר אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי	Ad anah tastir et panecha mimeni?
how long will this go on?[1]		
[3] To worry and make rescue plans—	עַד־אָנָה אָשִׁית עֵצוֹת בְּנַפְשִׁי	Ad anah ashit etzot benafshi—
All day, how long—	יָגוֹן בִּלְבָבִי יוֹמָם	yagon bilvavi yomam—
With bitter enemies at hand?[2]	עַד־אָנָה יָרוּם אֹיְבִי עָלָי	ad anah yarum oyvi alai?
[4] Look *down*, God, answer me: show why	הַבִּיטָה עֲנֵנִי יהוה אֱלֹהָי	Habitah, aneni, Adonai, Elohai;
I should have hope—else I shall die[3]	הָאִירָה עֵינַי פֶּן־אִישַׁן הַמָּוֶת	ha'irah einai, pen ishan hamavet,
[5] Defeated by a gleeful foe	פֶּן־יֹאמַר אֹיְבִי יְכָלְתִּיו	Pen yomar oyvi, "Yechaltiv!"
Who celebrates as down I go.[4]	צָרַי יָגִילוּ כִּי אֶמּוֹט	Tzarai yagilu ki emot.
[6] Yet still I trust your kind benevolence	וַאֲנִי בְחַסְדְּךָ בָטָחְתִּי	Va'ani bechasdecha vatachti—
And praise you, when you bring deliverance	יָגֵל לִבִּי בִּישׁוּעָתֶךָ	yagel libi bishu'atecha:
And grant, *for all my woes, apt* recompense.[5]	אָשִׁירָה לַיהוה כִּי גָמַל עָלָי	ashira lAdonai ki gamal alai.

[1] "Until when, God, will you always forget me? / Until when will you conceal your presence from me?"

[2] "How long shall I place advice on myself (how long shall I make plans)? / *Or* worry on my mind/heart by day? / How long will the enemy rise against me?"

[3] "Look, answer me, God, my ruler; / bring light to my eyes lest I sleep the *sleep of* death." I understand 'light to the eyes' to mean some reason for hope.

[4] "Lest my enemy say, 'I defeated him.' / My enemies will rejoice if I stumble."

[5] "And me, I *have come to* trust in your kindness; / my heart will rejoice in your salvation: / I will sing to God, who has brought recompense for me." I presume the recompense is to make up for all the poet's woes.

Psalm 14

[1] For the leader. For David.	לַמְנַצֵּחַ לְדָוִד	Lamnatze'ach. LeDavid.
Fools think there is no God *at all.*	אָמַר נָבָל בִּלְבּוֹ אֵין אֱלֹהִים	Amar naval belibo, "Ein Elohim."
They run to ruin; their deeds appall.	הִשְׁחִיתוּ הִתְעִיבוּ עֲלִילָה	Hishchitu. Hitivu alilah.
None of them acts with love.[1]	אֵין עֹשֵׂה־טוֹב	ein oseh tov.
[2] From skies on high God looks on us,	יהוה מִשָּׁמַיִם הִשְׁקִיף עַל־בְּנֵי־אָדָם	Adonai mishamayim hishkif al benei adam
searching for anyone curious	לִרְאוֹת הֵיֵשׁ מַשְׂכִּיל	lirot hayesh maskil,
to seek out God *above.*[2]	דֹּרֵשׁ אֶת־אֱלֹהִים	doresh et Elohim.
[3] All turn aside, all putrefied;	הַכֹּל סָר יַחְדָּו נֶאֱלָחוּ	Hakol sar. Yachdav ne'elachu.
no-one does right, no-one in sight.[3]	אֵין עֹשֵׂה־טוֹב אֵין גַּם־אֶחָד	Ein oseh tov. Ein gam echad.
[4] Those evildoers, don't they know—	הֲלֹא יָדְעוּ כָּל־פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן	Halo yadu, kol po'alei aven—
destroying people for their bread—	אֹכְלֵי עַמִּי אָכְלוּ לֶחֶם	ochlei ami achlu lechem—
they ought to give God thanks?[4]	יהוה לֹא קָרָאוּ	Adonai lo kara'u.
[5] They'll be afraid of their own fear	שָׁם פָּחֲדוּ פָחַד	Sham pachadu fachad.
while God stands with us over here![5]	כִּי־אֱלֹהִים בְּדוֹר צַדִּיק	Ki Elohim bedor tzadik.

[1] "The fool has said in his heart (i.e., a fool thinks), "There is no God." / They have become corrupt. They have been offensive/disgusting in *their* action*s*. / There is none *that* does good."

[2] "God from skies has looked *down* upon the children of Adam (God looks down upon humanity, assuming that God's "place" is in the sky above or the Beyond—if we understand שָׁמַיִם as the duplicate plural of שָׁם, 'there') / To see if there's anyone with sense / searching for God." Proverbs says wisdom starts with respect for God, but perhaps it's curiosity that brings wisdom.

[3] "All turn aside, / together, rotten. / Not one does good, / not even one."

[4] "Don't they know, all who do evil, / eaters of my people—they have eaten food (they consume my people as if my people were just another meal), / God they did not call (and they did not acknowledge God for the benefit of their food)."

[5] "There they will have feared fear *itself* / while God is in the group of the righteous": The evildoers over there are afraid of fear since God stands with the righteous over here. דור usually means generation, but a generation is a group of people, and today we often use the term "cohort" for Generation X or Y.

[6] The pauper's voice they spurn with scorn	עֲצַת־עָנִי תָּבִישׁוּ	Atzat ani tavishu,
though God is his sure bastion.[1]	כִּי יהוה מַחְסֵהוּ	ki Adonai machsehu.
[7] Would that from Zion *God* would send	מִי יִתֵּן מִצִּיּוֹן	Mi yiten miTziyon
Israel's deliverance, to mend	יְשׁוּעַת יִשְׂרָאֵל	yeshu'at Yisra'el;
our people's *harsh* captivity,	בְּשׁוּב יהוה שְׁבוּת עַמּוֹ	beshuv Adonai shevut amo;
with joy for our community![2]	יָגֵל יַעֲקֹב יִשְׂמַח יִשְׂרָאֵל	yagel Ya'akov, yismach Yisra'el.

[1] "The advice of the poor person they would scorn / but/for God is his shelter": Even though the pauper speaks with God's perspective, they ignore the advice.

[2] "Would that *God* would grant from Zion / the redemption of Israel / as God returns the captivity of *God's* people: / *Then* Jacob will rejoice and Israel delight." The translation uses "our community" for both Jacob and Israel, and it's not a bad rhyme for "captivity."

Psalm 15

In England, used in the service for consecrating a house.

[1] A poem by David:	מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	Mizmor leDavid:
O God: Who dwells in your abode,	יהוה מִי־יָגוּר בְּאָהֳלֶךָ	Adonai, mi yagur be'oholecha,
who settles on your holy peak?[1]	מִי־יִשְׁכֹּן בְּהַר קָדְשֶׁךָ	mi yishkon behar kodshecha?
[2] One who just walks the blameless road	הוֹלֵךְ תָּמִים וּפֹעֵל צֶדֶק	Holech tamim, ufo'el tzedek,
in whose *pure* heart *plain* truth will speak;[2]	וְדֹבֵר אֱמֶת בִּלְבָבוֹ	vedover emet bilvavo.
[3] Who never wags his tongue	לֹא־רָגַל עַל־לְשֹׁנוֹ	Lo ragal al leshono,
to do his neighbor wrong	לֹא־עָשָׂה לְרֵעֵהוּ רָעָה	lo asah lere'ehu ra'ah,
or shame his friend with scorn;[3]	וְחֶרְפָּה לֹא־נָשָׂא עַל־קְרֹבוֹ	vecherpah lo nasah al kerovo.
[4] Who shuns all who deserve disdain	נִבְזֶה בְּעֵינָיו נִמְאָס	Nivzeh be'einav nimas,
but honors all who fear God's *name*	וְאֶת־יִרְאֵי יהוה יְכַבֵּד	ve'et yirei Adonai yechabed;
and staunchly denies evil's claim;[4]	נִשְׁבַּע לְהָרַע וְלֹא יָמֵר	nishbah leharah velo yamir.
[5] Who takes no interest for a loan,	כַּסְפּוֹ לֹא־נָתַן בְּנֶשֶׁךְ	Kaspo lo natan beneshech,
whom bribery cannot suborn—	וְשֹׁחַד עַל־נָקִי לֹא לָקָח	veshochad al naki lo lakach:
This one *from bliss* is never torn![5]	עֹשֵׂה־אֵלֶּה לֹא יִמּוֹט לְעוֹלָם	oseh eileh lo yimot le'olam.

[1] "Abode": the root אהל, often used for "tent," also means some residential structure. הַר—mountain or "peak."

[2] "Who goes/walks simply/purely and effects righteousness / And speaks truth in his heart"; i.e. (I think), even when silent, without the risk of speaking out and being contradicted, he says only the truth.

[3] "Not he-has-travelled/walked-far upon his-tongue, / has not done to-his neighbor wrong, / and shame he has not raised upon his close associate." The first line could refer to someone who talks his way through life or talks a whole lot, or says nasty things about others.

[4] "Disdained in his eyes is the disgusting one / but those who fear God, he honors; / he has sworn *to stay away from doing* evil, and he will not change."

[5] "His cash, he has not given out for *earning* interest, / and a bribe against an innocent person he has not accepted; / who*ever* performs these *things* will not be dislodged, forever."

Psalm 16

Sometimes added to morning prayers in a house of mourning;
in England part of the burial service.

[1] A poem[1] by David: "Guard me, God,	מִכְתָּם לְדָוִד שָׁמְרֵנִי אֵל	Michtam leDavid: Shomreni El,
for I have found shelter with you."	כִּי־חָסִיתִי בָךְ׃	ki chasiti vach.
[2] You[2] said to God, "You are my God.	אָמַרְתְּ לַיהוה אֲדֹנָי אָתָּה	Amart lAdonai: "Adonai atah:
Without you, I have nothing good."	טוֹבָתִי בַל־עָלֶיךָ׃	tovati bal alecha!"
[3] Holy people who are on earth—	לִקְדוֹשִׁים אֲשֶׁר־בָּאָרֶץ הֵמָּה	Likdoshim asher ba'aretz hemah,
the best—all my delight is with them.	וְאַדִּירֵי כָל־חֶפְצִי־בָם׃	ve'adirei, kol cheftzi vam.
[4] Let *other people* have lots of idols	יִרְבּוּ עַצְּבוֹתָם	Yirbu atzvotam,
and hurry to worship another god:[3]	אַחֵר מָהָרוּ	acher maharu,
I won't offer their bloody libations	בַּל־אַסִּיךְ נִסְכֵּיהֶם מִדָּם	bal asich niskeihem midam,
nor form their names on my lips.	וּבַל־אֶשָּׂא אֶת־שְׁמוֹתָם עַל־שְׂפָתָי׃	uval esah et shemotam al sefatai.
[5] God is my inheritance, my cup:[4]	יהוה מְנָת־חֶלְקִי וְכוֹסִי	Adonai, menat chelki vechosi,
my future is in your control.[5]	אַתָּה תּוֹמִיךְ גּוֹרָלִי׃	atah tomich gorali.
[6] I like the borders assigned to me;[6]	חֲבָלִים נָפְלוּ־לִי בַּנְּעִמִים	Chavalim naflu li ban'imim,
yes, I have a fine inheritance.[7]	אַף־נַחֲלַת שָׁפְרָה עָלָי׃	af nachalat shafra alai.

[1] The meaning of מִכְתָּם is uncertain. Psalms 56-60 are also called by this word.
[2] The poet speaks to himself, or someone speaks to the poet.
[3] "Many-will-be their-troubles/idols; / *to an*other they-hurried."
[4] I.e., the poet does not need to be involved in idolatrous drink-offerings.
[5] "You hold/grasp my lot/destiny/fate/future."
[6] "The *surveyor's* lines fell out for me nicely"—i.e., I'm happy with the inheritance I got when the land was divided by lot. חֲבָלִים can mean ropes, and ancient surveyors might use ropes or chains (less stretchy) for measuring land.
[7] "Yes, the inheritance was fine for me."

[7] I bless God who advised me—	אֲבָרֵךְ אֶת־יהוה אֲשֶׁר יְעָצָנִי	Avarech et Adonai asher ye'atzani,
yes, at night my body guides me.[1]	אַף־לֵילוֹת יִסְּרוּנִי כִלְיוֹתָי	af leilot yisruni chilyotai.
[8] I have always set God before me	שִׁוִּיתִי יהוה לְנֶגְדִּי תָמִיד	Shiviti Adonai lenegdi tamid
and can't be swayed from my purpose.[2]	כִּי מִימִינִי בַּל־אֶמּוֹט	ki mimini bal emot.
[9] So my heart is glad, my honor content,	לָכֵן שָׂמַח לִבִּי וַיָּגֶל כְּבוֹדִי	Lachen samach libi, vayagel kevodi;
my flesh will dwell in safety:	אַף־בְּשָׂרִי יִשְׁכֹּן לָבֶטַח	af besari yishkon lavetach.
[10] You won't abandon me to She'ol[3]	כִּי לֹא־תַעֲזֹב נַפְשִׁי לִשְׁאוֹל	Ki lo ta'azov nafshi liShe'ol,
you won't let your devoted follower	לֹא־תִתֵּן חֲסִידְךָ	lo titen chasid'cha
face destruction.	לִרְאוֹת שָׁחַת	lir'ot shachat.
[11] Teach me[4] the path of life:	תּוֹדִיעֵנִי אֹרַח חַיִּים	Todi'eni orach chayim,
perfect joy is in your presence,[5]	שֹׂבַע שְׂמָחוֹת אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ	sova semachot et panecha,
contentment at your right hand, forever.	נְעִמוֹת בִּימִינְךָ נֶצַח	ne'imot bimin'cha netzach.

[1] "Even at night my kidneys teach/instruct/discipline (from root יסר) me." Ancient cultures knew that the brain's role in guiding a person's actions was limited. B.T. Berachot 61a speculates on the mysterious process by which people speak what they think: "The Rabbis taught: the kidneys give advice, the heart understands, the tongue articulates, and the mouth finishes." The root יָסַר can imply corporal punishment (Deu. 21:18) as well as moral instruction (Deu. 4:36). With maturity, some people get night-time instructions from their bladder.

[2] "Because from my right hand, I can't be moved."

[3] Nafshi can be translated as "my soul," and She'ol is sometimes translated as "the Pit" or "the underworld." Translators' views of the psalmist's ideas of an afterlife influence their translations.

[4] "Make me know," or "You will make me know."

[5] "The satisfaction of joys is with your presence."

Psalm 17[1]

[1] A prayer for David.

תְּפִלָּה לְדָוִד

Tefillah leDavid.

God, hear *my* righteous innocence,
hear my cry, attend my prayer
because I tell no lie.[2]

שִׁמְעָה יהוה צֶדֶק
הַקְשִׁיבָה רִנָּתִי הַאֲזִינָה תְּפִלָּתִי
בְּלֹא שִׂפְתֵי מִרְמָה

Shimah, Adonai, tzedek;
hakshivah rinati, ha'azina tefilati
belo siftei mirmah.

[2] From you must come my true defence;
justice is in your eye.[3]

מִלְּפָנֶיךָ מִשְׁפָּטִי יֵצֵא
עֵינֶיךָ תֶּחֱזֶינָה מֵישָׁרִים

Milfanecha mishpati yetzeh;
einecha techezena meisharim.

[3] You probed my heart in dark of night,
assayed, but never found *offence*;
I'd pledged to speak no sin.[4]

בָּחַנְתָּ לִבִּי פָקַדְתָּ לַיְלָה
צְרַפְתַּנִי בַל־תִּמְצָא
זַמּוֹתִי בַל־יַעֲבָר־פִּי

Bachanta libi, pakadta layla;
tzeraftani val timtza;
zamoti bal ya'avor pi.

[4] People's dealings—as you told—
I've watched: the fate of those too bold.[5]

לִפְעֻלוֹת אָדָם בִּדְבַר שְׂפָתֶיךָ
אֲנִי שָׁמַרְתִּי אָרְחוֹת פָּרִיץ

Lifulot adam bidvar sefatecha,
ani shamarti or'chot paritz.

[5] My path is well hemmed in
lest faltering my steps should stray.[6]

תָּמֹךְ אֲשֻׁרַי בְּמַעְגְּלוֹתֶיךָ
בַּל־נָמוֹטוּ פְעָמָי

Tamoch ashurai bemaglotecha
bal namotu fe'amai.

[6] God who replies, to you I pray;
bend down to hear my voice;[7]

אֲנִי־קְרָאתִיךָ כִּי־תַעֲנֵנִי אֵל
הַט־אָזְנְךָ לִי שִׁמַע אִמְרָתִי

Ani keraticha chi ta'aneni El;
hat oznecha li, shema imrati.

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[1] The rhyme scheme is (mostly) AABCCB; AA and CC have four beats, while B and B have three. The stanzas of the translation cross over some verses. Some ideas, elliptical in the original, are clarified in the translation. Some translators think the poet looks forward to an afterlife, others translate differently to avoid that imputation. In poetry, do we not look to find ourselves? So if we think the poem ought to promise an afterlife, we'll seek and find; and if we think the afterlife doesn't belong in Jewish theology of scriptural times, we shall expunge it from our Psalms.

[2] "Hear, God, *a* righteous/innocent *person;* / listen to my (joyful) cry, hear my prayer, / *which is* without words of deceit."

[3] "From before you my judgement/sentence will emerge (God is the judge, pronouncing judgement on the poet); / your eyes will see *what is* fair (what seems fair in God's estimation/eyes is truly fair)."

[4] "You probed my heart, took note at night, / tested me without finding *anything bad;* / I determined that my mouth should not transgress." The root **צרף** implies testing, or refining precious metals, so we use the word 'assay.'

[5] "As for the doings of humanity according to the utterance of your lips, / I watched the paths of bursting" —i.e., You said what people would be doing (transgressing); I watched them as they went out of bounds (or, I saw what happened to them [their courses] as they went out of bounds).

[6] "You constrain (or, support) my steps in your circles / lest my strokes/steps should falter."

[7] "I called on you because you will reply to me, God; / incline your ear to me, hear my utterance."

[7] Show kindness to us, who rely	הַפְלֵה חַסְדֶיךָ מוֹשִׁיעַ חוֹסִים	Hafleh chasadecha, moshi'a chosim
on you to oppose our enemy.[1]	מִמִתְקוֹמְמִים בִימִינֶךָ	mimitkomemim biminecha.
[8] Keep me like treasure choice;	שָׁמְרֵנִי כְּאִישׁוֹן בַּת־עָיִן	Shomreni ke'ishon bat ayin,
in sheltering shade shield me from harm,[2]	בְצֵל כְנָפֶיךָ תַסְתִירֵנִי	betzel kenafecha tastireni.
[9] My mortal foes at once disarm,	מִפְנֵי רְשָׁעִים זוּ שַׁדּוּנִי	Mipnei resha'im zu shaduni,
circling to strike me dead.[3]	אֹיְבַי בְנֶפֶשׁ יַקִיפוּ עָלָי	oyvai benefesh yakifu alai.
[10] Deaf to compassion's tender plea	חֶלְבָּמוֹ סָגָרוּ	Chelbamo sagru,
they speak nothing but vanity[4]	פִימוֹ דִבְּרוּ בְגֵאוּת	pimo dibru vege'ut.
[11] And block where we would tread.	אֲשֻׁרֵינוּ עַתָּה סְבָבוּנוּ[6]	Ashureinu atah sevavunu,
They view the earth with haughty stare—[5]	עֵינֵיהֶם יָשִׁיתוּ לִנְטוֹת בָּאָרֶץ	eineihem yashitu lintot ba'aretz.
[12] But *God* waits, lion in his lair	דִמְיוֹנוֹ כְּאַרְיֵה יִכְסוֹף לִטְרוֹף	Dimyono ke'aryeh yichsof litrof,
concealed, to snatch the prey.[7]	וְכִכְפִיר יֹשֵׁב בְּמִסְתָּרִים	vechich'fir yoshev bemistarim.
[13] Rise, God, pounce	קוּמָה יהוה קַדְּמָה פָּנָיו	Kuma, Adonai, kadma fanav,
and trounce *my foes*,	הַכְרִיעֵהוּ	hachri'ehu;
with your sword rescue me from woes.[8]	פַּלְטָה נַפְשִׁי מֵרָשָׁע חַרְבֶּךָ	palta nafshi merasha charbecha.

[1] "Reveal your compassion, rescue those who rely on you / from those who rise up *against them* (or, against you), with your right hand," i.e., use your power to save us who rely on you.

[2] "Keep me like the apple of your eye, / in the shadow of your wings/corners conceal me." The translation uses "treasure choice" to mean a highly valued (choice) precious item (treasure).

[3] "From the presence of wicked people *who wish to* despoil me, / my mortal enemies *who* circle around me."

[4] "Their fats/best parts have closed up; / their mouths have spoken with pride." The fat is the best part when you're not dieting, and some people translate the word 'heart.' Whatever body part this may be, I think it's an organ of compassion, and it's closed up.

[5] "Our steps now they have surrounded (so we can't get away); / their eyes they have aimed (set aslant) at the ground," i.e., they look down upon the earth with haughty demeanor.

[6] A manuscript would have סבבוני, "surround me."

[7] "*God's* likeness *is* a lion that longs to tear *its prey* / and a lion cub that sits in concealed places."

[8] "Rise, God, get in front of him and make him submit, / save my life from the evil one *with* your sword." The enemy is singular in this verse, plural in the next verse, and the translation uses plural enemies in both verses.

14 Though they but do your will,	מִמְתִים יָדְךָ יהוה	Mimtim yadcha, Adonai,
This life is all they have in store,	מִמְתִים מֵחֶלֶד חֶלְקָם בַּחַיִּים	mimtim mecheled chelkam bachayim
But we (your treasure) look for more:	וּצְפוּנְךָ[2] תְּמַלֵּא בִטְנָם	utzefun'cha temaleh vitnam,
Our children's *hopes* fulfill,	יִשְׂבְּעוּ בָנִים	yisbe'u vanim,
With surplus for their *cherished* brood.[1]	וְהִנִּיחוּ יִתְרָם לְעוֹלְלֵיהֶם	vehinichu yitram le'oleleihem.
15 I'll view your presence (just and good)	אֲנִי בְצֶדֶק אֶחֱזֶה פָּנֶיךָ	Ani betzedek echezeh fanecha,
On waking, with your vision filled.[3]	אֶשְׂבְּעָה בְהָקִיץ תְּמוּנָתֶךָ	esbe'ah vehakitz temunecha.

[1] "… from the group of people *of* your hand/power, God (i.e., even though they're my enemies they're doing what God wants, even if it's to punish me!), / from the group of people *who* from the earth is their portion during life (i.e., their only reward is in this life with nothing left as a reward in the life to come), / and as your concealed *treasure* (i.e., your devotees), fill their bellies, / satisfy their children / so that they will leave their surplus to their offspring." The wicked are part of God's plan, says the poet (in my interpretation), but they get no reward in an afterlife; we who love God, on the other hand, seek full satiety of reward, with enough for our children to leave to their children.

[2] A manuscript would have וצפינך.

[3] "I in righteousness/innocence/vindication will view your face/presence; / I shall be satisfied when I awake *with* your picture"; i.e., Since I am good, I will get to contemplate God's presence, and when I awake (from the slumber of death or the slumber of inattentive living) I shall be content as I see the image of God. Other interpretations are possible, of course.

Psalm 18

[1] For the leader,	לַמְנַצֵּחַ	Lamnatze'ach,
for God's servant David,	לְעֶבֶד יהוה לְדָוִד	le'eved Adonai, leDavid,
who spoke to God	אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר לַיהוה	asher diber lAdonai
the words of this poem	אֶת־דִּבְרֵי הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת	et divrei hashirah hazot
on the day God saved him	בְּיוֹם הִצִּיל־יהוה אוֹתוֹ	beyom hitzil Adonai oto
from the power of his enemies	מִכַּף כָּל־אֹיְבָיו	mikaf kol oyvav
and the hand of Sha'ul.	וּמִיַּד שָׁאוּל	umiyad Sha'ul.
[2] He said, "I love you, God, my strength;	וַיֹּאמַר אֶרְחָמְךָ יהוה חִזְקִי	Vayomer, "Ercham'cha Adonai chizki;
[3] God is my rock, my refuge, my rescuer,	יהוה סַלְעִי וּמְצוּדָתִי וּמְפַלְטִי	Adonai sali umetzudati umefalti,
my God is my mainstay[1] where I shelter,	אֵלִי צוּרִי אֶחֱסֶה־בּוֹ	Eli tzuri echeseh bo,
my shield and my promise[2] of salvation,	מָגִנִּי וְקֶרֶן־יִשְׁעִי	magini vekeren yishi,
my citadel *of refuge*!	מִשְׂגַּבִּי	misgabi!
[4] I shall call God 'praised,'	מְהֻלָּל אֶקְרָא יהוה	Mehulal ekrah Adonai
and from my enemies shall I be saved.	וּמִן־אֹיְבַי אִוָּשֵׁעַ	umin oyvai ivashe'a.
[5] The cords of death trussed me up,	אֲפָפוּנִי חֶבְלֵי־מָוֶת	Afafuni chevlei mavet,
torrents of ruin terrified me.	וְנַחֲלֵי בְלִיַּעַל יבעתוני	venachalei veliya'al yeva'atuni.
[6] The cords of the Unknown[3] circled me,	חֶבְלֵי שְׁאוֹל סְבָבוּנִי	Chevlei She'ol sevavuni,
fatal traps confronted me.	קִדְּמוּנִי מוֹקְשֵׁי מָוֶת	kidmuni mokshei mavet.
[7] In my trouble I called on God;	בַּצַּר־לִי אֶקְרָא יהוה	Batzar li ekrah Adonai
To my God I wept aloud:	וְאֶל־אֱלֹהַי אֲשַׁוֵּעַ	ve'el Elohai ashave'ah;
From *God's* palace, *God* heard my voice,	יִשְׁמַע מֵהֵיכָלוֹ קוֹלִי	yishma meheichalo koli
and my cry came right to *God's* ears,[4]	וְשַׁוְעָתִי לְפָנָיו תָּבוֹא בְאָזְנָיו	veshavati lefanav tavo ve'oznav,
[8] While the Earth trembled and groaned,	וַתִּגעַשׁ וַתִּרעַשׁ הָאָרֶץ	Vatigash vatirash ha'aretz
the mountain's bases moved and shook	וּמוֹסְדֵי הָרִים יִרְגָּזוּ וַיִּתְגָּעֲשׁוּ	umosdei harim yirgazu vayitga'ashu
because *God* was angry.	כִּי־חָרָה לוֹ	ki charah lo.

[1] "Rock."
[2] "Horn"; because a horn is conspicuous, it implies a declaration or promise of salvation.
[3] שְׁאוֹל / She'ol is a term for a place after death. The word is related to the Hebrew root for question, so it's an Unknown—in Hamlet's words, an "undiscovered country" (3.1.80).
[4] "And-my-cry before-*God* would-come into-*God's*-ears."

[9] Smoke rose in *God's* nostrils	עָלָה עָשָׁן בְּאַפּוֹ	Alah ashan be'apo
and consuming flame from *God's* mouth;[1]	וְאֵשׁ־מִפִּיו תֹּאכֵל	ve'esh mipiv tochel,
glowing coals blazed from it.	גֶּחָלִים בָּעֲרוּ מִמֶּנּוּ	gechalim ba'aru mimenu.
[10] *God* bent the sky[2] and came down,	וַיֵּט שָׁמַיִם וַיֵּרַד	Vayet shamayim vayerad,
with thick cloud beneath *God's* feet,	וַעֲרָפֶל תַּחַת רַגְלָיו	va'arafel tachat raglav,
[11] Mounted a cherub and flew off,	וַיִּרְכַּב עַל־כְּרוּב וַיָּעָף	Vayirkav al keruv vaya'of,
darting over gusts[3] of wind,	וַיֵּדֶא עַל־כַּנְפֵי־רוּחַ	vayedeh al kanfei ru'ach,
[12] Placed darkness as a screen,	יָשֶׁת חֹשֶׁךְ סִתְרוֹ	Yashet choshech sitro,
encircling *God like* a dwelling—	סְבִיבוֹתָיו סֻכָּתוֹ	sevivotav sukato—
damp gloom, clouds in the sky.	חֶשְׁכַת־מַיִם עָבֵי שְׁחָקִים	cheshchat mayim avei shechakim.
[13] *Away* from the brightness that reflects *God,*	מִנֹּגַהּ נֶגְדּוֹ	Minogah negdo
God's clouds have coursed—	עָבָיו עָבְרוּ	avav avru,
hail and burning embers.[4]	בָּרָד וְגַחֲלֵי־אֵשׁ	barad vegachalei esh.
[14] God thundered in the sky,	וַיַּרְעֵם בַּשָּׁמַיִם יהוה	Vayarem bashamayim Adonai
the High One gave voice—	וְעֶלְיוֹן יִתֵּן קֹלוֹ	ve'elyon yiten kolo,
hail and burning embers—	בָּרָד וְגַחֲלֵי־אֵשׁ	barad vegachalei esh,
[15] Sent arrows and scattered them,	וַיִּשְׁלַח חִצָּיו וַיְפִיצֵם	Vayishlach chitzav vayfitzem,
shot lightning bolts and rattled[5] them.	וּבְרָקִים רָב וַיְהֻמֵּם	uverakim rav, vayhumem.
[16] Stream*bed*s were revealed	וַיֵּרָאוּ אֲפִיקֵי מַיִם	Vayera'u afikei mayim
and earth's foundations exposed	וַיִּגָּלוּ מוֹסְדוֹת תֵּבֵל	vayigalu mosdot tevel
at your rebuke, God,	מִגַּעֲרָתְךָ יהוה	miga'arat'cha, Adonai,
at the blast of your snorting.[6]	מִנִּשְׁמַת רוּחַ אַפֶּךָ	minishmat ru'ach apecha.
[17] *God* reached down from high above, took me *up*,	יִשְׁלַח מִמָּרוֹם יִקָּחֵנִי	Yishlach mimarom, yikacheni,
pulled me out of the surging water,	יַמְשֵׁנִי מִמַּיִם רַבִּים	yamsheni mimayim rabim,

[1] "And-fire *that* would-consume from-*God's*-mouth."
[2] Can the sky bend? If the gravitational field that we call "space" can bend and ripple, why not?
[3] "Corners" or "wings" are the common translations. Winds have neither corners nor wings, so perhaps the poet is thinking of gusts.
[4] "From-the-brightness opposite-*God* / *God's*-thicknesses crossed-over / hail and-coals-of-fire." The brightness and the clouds both seem to belong to God, who is greater than celestial phenomena.
[5] Made noise with them, discomfited them—both meanings are possible.
[6] "From the breathing/wind of the spirit/wind of your nose/anger."

[18] Rescued me from my fierce foe, my enemies;	יַצִּילֵנִי מֵאֹיְבִי עָז וּמִשֹּׂנְאָי	Yatzileni me'oyvai az umisonai,
oh—they're too strong for me!	כִּי־אָמְצוּ מִמֶּנִּי	ki amtzu mimeni.
[19] They thwarted me[1] on the day of my disaster—	יְקַדְּמוּנִי בְיוֹם־אֵידִי	Yekadmuni veyom eidi
but God was my support	וַיְהִי־יְהוָה לְמִשְׁעָן לִי	vihi Adonai lemishan li
[20] And released me at large,	וַיּוֹצִיאֵנִי לַמֶּרְחָב	Vayotzi'eni lamer'chav,
saved me because *God* likes me.	יְחַלְּצֵנִי כִּי חָפֵץ בִּי	yechaltzeni ki chafetz bi.
[21] God treats me as I deserve,	יִגְמְלֵנִי יְהוָה כְּצִדְקִי	Yigmeleni Adonai ketzidki,
rewards me for my innocence.[2]	כְּבֹר יָדַי יָשִׁיב לִי	kevor yadai yashiv li.
[22] For I have kept to God's paths	כִּי־שָׁמַרְתִּי דַּרְכֵי יְהוָה	Ki shamarti darchei Adonai
and have not strayed into evil, away from God,	וְלֹא־רָשַׁעְתִּי מֵאֱלֹהָי	velo rashati meElohai,
[23] For all *God's* decisions are before me,	כִּי כָל־מִשְׁפָּטָיו לְנֶגְדִּי	Ki chol mishpatav lenegdi,
I have not spurned *God's* rules	וְחֻקֹּתָיו לֹא־אָסִיר מֶנִּי	vechukotav lo asir meni
[24] But will be with *God* in innocence	וָאֱהִי תָמִים עִמּוֹ	Va'ehi tamim imo
and keep myself from sin,	וָאֶשְׁתַּמֵּר מֵעֲוֹנִי	va'eshtamer me'avoni,
[25] So God will reward me for my merit,	וַיָּשֶׁב־יְהוָה לִי כְּצִדְקִי	Vayashev Adonai li chetzidki,
for my innocence in *God's* eyes.	כְּבֹר יָדַי לְנֶגֶד עֵינָיו	kevor yadai leneged einav.
[26] With a loyal person, you are loyal;	עִם־חָסִיד תִּתְחַסָּד	Im chasid titchasad;
with an honest man, you are honest.	עִם־גְּבַר תָּמִים תִּתַּמָּם	im gevar tamim titamam.
[27] With the pure, you are pure—	עִם־נָבָר תִּתְבָּרָר	Im navar titbarar,
but with the perverse, you are devious,	וְעִם־עִקֵּשׁ תִּתְפַּתָּל	ve'im ikesh titpatal.
[28] For you rescue humble folk	כִּי־אַתָּה עַם־עָנִי תוֹשִׁיעַ	Ki atah am ani toshi'a
and topple the haughty stare,	וְעֵינַיִם רָמוֹת תַּשְׁפִּיל	ve'einayim ramot tashpil,
[29] For you light my lamp, God,	כִּי־אַתָּה תָּאִיר נֵרִי יְהוָה	Ki atah ta'ir neri, Adonai,
my God, you illuminate my darkness.	אֱלֹהַי יַגִּיהַּ חָשְׁכִּי	Elohai, yagi'ah choshki.
[30] With you, I can storm an army,	כִּי־בְךָ אָרֻץ גְּדוּד	Ki vecha arutz gedud
with my God, I can leap over a wall.[3]	וּבֵאלֹהַי אֲדַלֶּג־שׁוּר	uvElohai adaleg shur.

[1] The root of יְקַדְּמוּנִי is קדם, early (or East)—perhaps the poet says his enemies got there first (wherever "there" might be), so the poet could not avoid a disaster.

[2] "God would requite me / pay me back according to my *degree of* righteousness / according to the purity of my hands would restore *favor* to me."

[3] "For with you I could/can/will run *at* a troop *of soldiers* / and with my God I could/can/will skip *over* a wall."

[31] God's path is straightforward;	הָאֵל תָּמִים דַּרְכּוֹ	Ha'El—tamim darko;
God's commitment is proven;	אִמְרַת־יהוה צְרוּפָה	imrat Adonai tzerufah;
God protects all who rely on *God.*	מָגֵן הוּא לְכֹל הַחֹסִים בּוֹ	magen hu lechol hachosim bo.
[32] Who is a god, except for *our* God,	כִּי מִי אֱלוֹהַּ מִבַּלְעֲדֵי יהוה	Ki mi elo'ah mibaladei Adonai,
who is a rock except for our God?	וּמִי צוּר זוּלָתִי אֱלֹהֵינוּ	umi tzur zulati Eloheinu?
[33] God, who equips me with strength	הָאֵל הַמְאַזְּרֵנִי חָיִל	Ha'El hame'azreni chayil
and makes my path straightforward,	וַיִּתֵּן תָּמִים דַּרְכִּי	vayiten tamim darki,
[34] Who makes my legs *swift* as deer's	מְשַׁוֶּה רַגְלַי כָּאַיָּלוֹת	Meshaveh raglai ka'ayalot
and stands me on *strategic* heights,	וְעַל בָּמֹתַי יַעֲמִידֵנִי	ve'al bamotai ya'amideni,
[35] Trains my hands for battle	מְלַמֵּד יָדַי לַמִּלְחָמָה	Melamed yadai lamil'chamah
so my arms can bend a sinuous bow.[1]	וְנִחֲתָה קֶשֶׁת־נְחוּשָׁה זְרוֹעֹתָי	venichata keshet nechusha zero'otai.
[36] You grant me your salvation as a shield,	וַתִּתֶּן־לִי מָגֵן יִשְׁעֶךָ	Vatiten li magen yishecha
your right hand supports me,	וִימִינְךָ תִסְעָדֵנִי	vimin'cha tisadeni,
your modesty makes me *look* great.	וְעַנְוָתְךָ תַּרְבֵּנִי	ve'anvat'cha tarbeni.
[37] You let me take great strides	תַּרְחִיב צַעֲדִי תַּחְתָּי	Tar'chiv tza'adi tachtai
and my feet have not slipped.	וְלֹא מָעֲדוּ קַרְסֻלָּי	velo ma'adu karsulai.
[38] I chase the foe and catch them	אֶרְדֹּף אוֹיְבַי וְאַשִּׂיגֵם	Erdof oyvai ve'asigem
and do not turn back until they are destroyed.	וְלֹא־אָשׁוּבעַד־כַּלּוֹתָם	velo ashuv ad kalotam.
[39] I strike them down: they cannot rise:	אֶמְחָצֵם וְלֹא־יְכֻלוּ קוּם	Emchatzem velo yuchlu kum,
they fall beneath my feet.	יִפְּלוּ תַּחַת רַגְלָי	yiplu tachat raglai.
[40] But you equip me with strength for battle,	וַתְּאַזְּרֵנִי חַיִל לַמִּלְחָמָה	Vat'azreni chayil lamil'chamah,
crush under me those who stand against me.	תַּכְרִיעַ קָמַי תַּחְתָּי	tachri'a kamai tachtai.
[41] My foes *ran*—you gave me their backs *to see*—	וְאֹיְבַי נָתַתָּה לִּי עֹרֶף	Ve'oyvai natata li oref
and I destroyed my enemies.	וּמְשַׂנְאַי אַצְמִיתֵם	umesanai atzmitem.
[42] They screamed but got no help,	יִשְׁוְּעוּ וְאֵין־מוֹשִׁיעַ	Yeshavu ve'ein moshi'a,
screamed for God, but *God* gave them no answer.	עַל־יהוה וְלֹא עָנָם	al Adonai, velo anam.

[1] Some translate קֶשֶׁת־נְחוּשָׁה as "bronze bow." Bronze, copper and snake all share the root נחש (perhaps a snake's shiny skin has a metallic glint). Ancient bows might be of animal horn (like Pandarus' bow, Iliad 4:105ff.) or wood. Metal might be added for decoration or fittings (presumably like Apollo's "silver" bow in Homer). Or a bow might be sinuously snakelike, notably curvy like bows of the Paeonians (Iliad 2:848).

[43] I pulverized them like windswept dust,	וְאֶשְׁחָקֵם כְּעָפָר עַל־פְּנֵי־רוּחַ	Ve'eshchakem ke'afar al penei ru'ach,
spread them like gravel for a *dirt* road.[1]	כְּטִיט חוּצוֹת אֲרִיקֵם	ketit chutzot arikem.
[44] You save me from global conflict,	תְּפַלְּטֵנִי מֵרִיבֵי עָם	Tefalteni merivei am,
make me leader of *other* nations—	תְּשִׂימֵנִי לְרֹאשׁ גּוֹיִם	tesimeni lerosh goyim,
people I never knew *now* serve me!	עַם לֹא־יָדַעְתִּי יַעַבְדוּנִי	am lo yadati ya'avduni.
[45] As soon as they hear, they obey me;	לִשְׁמַע אֹזֶן יִשָּׁמְעוּ לִי	Leshema ozen yishamu li;
foreign-born *people* cower before me.[2]	בְּנֵי־נֵכָר יְכַחֲשׁוּ־לִי	benei nechar yechachashu li.
[46] The foreign-born will surrender	בְּנֵי־נֵכָר יִבֹּלוּ	Benei nechar yibolu
and stagger from their bunkers.[3]	וְיַחְרְגוּ מִמִּסְגְּרוֹתֵיהֶם	veyachargu mimisgeroteihem.
[47] God lives; blessed is my Rock;	חַי־יהוה וּבָרוּךְ צוּרִי	Chai Adonai, uvaruch tzuri,
let the God of my salvation be exalted—	וְיָרוּם אֱלוֹהֵי יִשְׁעִי	veyarum Elohei yishi—
[48] God, who grants me revenge	הָאֵל הַנּוֹתֵן נְקָמוֹת לִי	Ha'El hanoten nekamot li
and subdues *enemy* nations beneath me,	וַיַּדְבֵּר עַמִּים תַּחְתָּי	vayadber amim tachtai,
[49] Rescues me from my foes,	מְפַלְטִי מֵאֹיְבָי	Mefalti me'oyvai,
you lift me above the reach of my enemies,[4]	אַף מִן־קָמַי תְּרוֹמְמֵנִי	af min kamai teromemeni,
save me from the attacker.[5]	מֵאִישׁ חֲמָסִ תַּצִּילֵנִי	me'ish chamas tatzileni.
[50] For this, I will thank you,	עַל־כֵּן אוֹדְךָ	Al ken od'cha
God, among the peoples,	בַּגּוֹיִם יהוה	vagoyim, Adonai,
and sing to your reputation.	וּלְשִׁמְךָ אֲזַמֵּרָה	uleshimcha azamerah.
[51] *God* rescues *God's* king more and more,	מַגְדִּיל[7] יְשׁוּעוֹת מַלְכּוֹ	Magdil yeshu'ot malko
Treating *God's* anointed with kindness	וְעֹשֶׂה־חֶסֶד לִמְשִׁיחוֹ	ve'oseh chesed limshicho
for David and his descendants, for ever."[6]	לְדָוִד וּלְזַרְעוֹ עַד־עוֹלָם	leDavid ul'zaro ad olam.

[1] "Like dirt/clay for roads/courtyards I emptied them"—spread them out like spreading gravel to make dirt roads.
[2] "At the hearing of ear (as soon as they hear) they will/would obey me; / descendants of foreigners will/would cringe/cower/deceive for/before me."
[3] "The descendants of foreigners will become weak (or, waste away) and tremble *as they emerge* from their shut-up places."
[4] "Even away-from my-attackers (those-who-stand-up-against-me) you-will/would-raise-me.
[5] אִישׁ חֲמָסִ, a violent/cruel person.
[6] "*God* makes greater the salvations of *God's* king / and performs kindness for *God's* anointed, / for David and for *David's* seed, until forever."
[7] A manuscript has the spelling מגדל. This verse is also 2 Samuel 22:51.

Psalm 19

Part of the morning service on Shabbat, holidays and Hoshana Rabba, this psalm show how we can learn about God both from God's world of nature (vss. 1-7) and from Torah (vss. 8-12).[1]

[1] For the Conductor: a psalm of David.	לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	LaMenatze'ach: mizmor leDavid.
[2] The skies declare God's glory,	הַשָּׁמַיִם מְסַפְּרִים כְּבוֹד־אֵל	Hashamayim mesaprim kevod El,
their expanse tells God's handiwork.[2]	וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו מַגִּיד הָרָקִיעַ	uma'aseh yadav magid haraki'ah.
[3] Day shares speech with day,[3]	יוֹם לְיוֹם יַבִּיעַ אֹמֶר	Yom leyom yabi'a omer
and night communicates[4] with night;	וְלַיְלָה לְלַיְלָה יְחַוֶּה־דָּעַת	velaylah lelaylah yechaveh da'at.
[4] without speech, without a word:	אֵין־אֹמֶר וְאֵין דְּבָרִים	Ein omer, ve'ein devarim
their voice cannot be heard.	בְּלִי נִשְׁמָע קוֹלָם	beli nishma kolam.
[5] Their voice has crossed the world,	בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ יָצָא קָוָּם	Bechol ha'aretz yatza kavam
their words have reached Land's End;	וּבִקְצֵה תֵבֵל מִלֵּיהֶם	uviktzei tevel mileihem;
In them *God* pitched the sun's tent.[5]	לַשֶּׁמֶשׁ שָׂם־אֹהֶל בָּהֶם	lashemesh sam ohel bahem—
[6] And like a bridegroom,	וְהוּא כְּחָתָן	Vehu kechatan
the sun leaves its canopy,	יֹצֵא מֵחֻפָּתוֹ	yotzei mechupato,
rejoices like an athlete to run a race.	יָשִׂישׂ כְּגִבּוֹר לָרוּץ אֹרַח	yasis kegibor larutz orach.
[7] It starts at the end of the sky	מִקְצֵה הַשָּׁמַיִם מוֹצָאוֹ	Miktzei hashamayim motza'o,
and comes[6] to its other edge,	וּתְקוּפָתוֹ עַל־קְצוֹתָם	utekufato al ketzotam,
and nothing is hidden from its heat.	וְאֵין נִסְתָּר מֵחַמָּתוֹ	ve'ein nistar mechamato.

[1] I am indebted to Rabbi Shai Held for explaining the two aspects of this psalm.

[2] "The skies (or heavens) declare (or count) the glory of God, and the work of *God's* hands recites/tells the expanse *of the sky*."

[3] יַבִּיעַ from נבע—pour out, gush forth, express.

[4] יְחַוֶּה from לְחַוּוֹת—state, make known, relate; דָּעַת—knowledge.

[5] קָו—"voice" (Sefaria translation); others translate "measuring line," but voice accords with "words" of the next half-line. "For the sun, *God* set a tent in them"; some place this half-line with verse 6, not verse 5. The sun's tent could be among the silent words, or somewhere in the lands of day and night. BT Pesachim 94b gives ancient views of the sun's travels, and Cosmas Indicopleustes is an interesting non-Jewish view.

[6] "Its תְּקוּפָה (circuit) is up to *the skies'* other edge."

[8] God's law is perfect,	תּוֹרַת יהוה תְּמִימָה	Torat Adonai temimah,
restoring the soul.	מְשִׁיבַת נָפֶשׁ	meshivat nafesh;
God's testimony[1] is faithful,	עֵדוּת יהוה נֶאֱמָנָה	edut Adonai ne'emanah,
making bright the dimwit.	מַחְכִּימַת פֶּתִי	machkimat peti;
[9] God's commands are right	פִּקּוּדֵי יהוה יְשָׁרִים	Pikudei Adonai yesharim,
and gladden the heart.	מְשַׂמְּחֵי־לֵב	mesamchei lev.
God's rule is clean;	מִצְוַת יהוה בָּרָה	Mitzvat Adonai barah,
it brightens the eyes.	מְאִירַת עֵינָיִם	me'irat einayim;
[10] God's fear is pure,	יִרְאַת יהוה טְהוֹרָה	Yir'at Adonai tehorah,
lasting forever.	עוֹמֶדֶת לָעַד	omedet la'ad;
God's decrees are truth,	מִשְׁפְּטֵי־יהוה אֱמֶת	mishpetei Adonai emet,
all of them right.	צָדְקוּ יַחְדָּו	tzadku yachdav.
[11] Lovelier than gold,	הַנֶּחֱמָדִים מִזָּהָב	Hanechemadim mizahav,
lots of gold;	וּמִפַּז רָב	umipaz rav,
sweeter than honey,	וּמְתוּקִים מִדְּבַשׁ	umetukim midvash
the oozing comb.	וְנֹפֶת צוּפִים	venofet tzufim;
[12] Even I[2] am bright with them;	גַּם־עַבְדְּךָ נִזְהָר בָּהֶם	Gam avdecha nizhar bahem
it's well worth keeping them.[3]	בְּשָׁמְרָם עֵקֶב רָב	beshomram ekev rav.

[1] עֵדוּת is sometimes considered a synonym for Torah.

[2] "Your servant," a humble way in which the poet refers to himself or herself.

[3] "In observing them *there is* great consequence." עֵקֶב "heel" is the last part of a body that passes by, and sometimes it's a metaphor for what comes after.

13 Mistakes—who understands them?	שְׁגִיאוֹת מִי־יָבִין	Shegi'ot mi yavin,
Cleanse me from hidden *faults*.	מִנִּסְתָּרוֹת נַקֵּנִי	ministarot nakeni.
14 Keep your servant from the proud;[1]	גַּם מִזֵּדִים חֲשֹׂךְ עַבְדֶּךָ	Gam mizeidim chasoch avdecha:
don't let them boss me.	אַל־יִמְשְׁלוּ־בִי	al yimshelu vi;
Then I'll be perfect	אָז אֵיתָם	az eitam,
and cleared of the great crime.	וְנִקֵּיתִי מִפֶּשַׁע רָב	venikeiti mipesha rav.
15 Let my words match your will,	יִהְיוּ לְרָצוֹן אִמְרֵי־פִי	Yiheyu leratzon imrei fi
my thoughts come to you,[2]	וְהֶגְיוֹן לִבִּי לְפָנֶיךָ	vehegyon libi lefanecha,
God, my rock and redeemer.	יהוה צוּרִי וְגֹאֲלִי	Adonai tzuri vego'ali.

[1] Or "from faults of pride; / don't let them control me."
[2] "Let the words of my mouth be to *your* liking, and the thought of my heart *be* in your presence."

Psalm 19 (Rhyming)

Here is a rhyming translation of this psalm.
For details of the meaning of each verse consult the non-rhyming version.

[1] For the Conductor: a psalm of David.	לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	LaMenatze'ach: mizmor leDavid.
[2] The skies declare God's glory and	הַשָּׁמַיִם מְסַפְּרִים כְּבוֹד־אֵל	Hashamayim mesaprim kevod El,
the firmament God's active hand.	וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו מַגִּיד הָרָקִיעַ	uma'aseh yadav magid haraki'ah.
[3] Each day proclaims this to each day	יוֹם לְיוֹם יַבִּיעַ אֹמֶר	Yom leyom yabi'a omer
and night to night does this convey—	וְלַיְלָה לְלַיְלָה יְחַוֶּה־דָּעַת	velaylah lelaylah yechaveh da'at.
[4] But can there be a speech or word	אֵין־אֹמֶר וְאֵין דְּבָרִים	Ein omer, ve'ein devarim
without a speaker being heard?	בְּלִי נִשְׁמָע קוֹלָם	beli nishma kolam.
[5] *Yet* all the earth their arcs have spanned,	בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ יָצָא קַוָּם	Bechol ha'aretz yatza kavam
their "words" reach edge to edge of land,	וּבִקְצֵה תֵבֵל מִלֵּיהֶם	uviktzei tevel mileihem;
the sun's abode at *God's* command.	לַשֶּׁמֶשׁ שָׂם־אֹהֶל בָּהֶם	lashemesh sam ohel bahem—
[6] Like a new-wedded groom the sun	וְהוּא כְּחָתָן יֹצֵא מֵחֻפָּתוֹ	Vehu kechatan yotzei mechupato,
its daily course will gladly run—	יָשִׂישׂ כְּגִבּוֹר לָרוּץ אֹרַח	yasis kegibor larutz orach.
[7] From the skies' edge begins its race,	מִקְצֵה הַשָּׁמַיִם מוֹצָאוֹ	Miktzei hashamayim motza'o,
across the sky its warm beams trace	וּתְקוּפָתוֹ עַל־קְצוֹתָם	utekufato al ketzotam,
and nothing hides from its bright face.	וְאֵין נִסְתָּר מֵחַמָּתוֹ	ve'ein nistar mechamato.
[8] God's law is simple	תּוֹרַת יהוה תְּמִימָה	Torat Adonai temimah,
and restores the soul;	מְשִׁיבַת נָפֶשׁ	meshivat nafesh;
God's proof is certain	עֵדוּת יהוה נֶאֱמָנָה	edut Adonai ne'emanah,
and makes wise the fool.	מַחְכִּימַת פֶּתִי	machkimat peti;
[9] God's rules are right	פִּקּוּדֵי יהוה יְשָׁרִים	Pikudei Adonai yesharim,
and bring the heart delight;	מְשַׂמְּחֵי־לֵב	mesamchei lev.
God's laws are clear	מִצְוַת יהוה בָּרָה	Mitzvat Adonai barah,
and to the eye bring light.	מְאִירַת עֵינָיִם	me'irat einayim;
[10] Reverence of God is pure,	יִרְאַת יהוה טְהוֹרָה	Yir'at Adonai tehorah,
and stands forever;	עוֹמֶדֶת לָעַד	omedet la'ad;
God's judgements are all truth,	מִשְׁפְּטֵי־יהוה אֱמֶת	mishpetei Adonai emet,
righteous together.	צָדְקוּ יַחְדָּו	tzadku yachdav.

11 Than purest gold more precious,[1]	הַנֶּחֱמָדִים מִזָּהָב	Hanechemadim mizahav
	וּמִפַּז רָב	umipaz rav,
than honey more delicious!	וּמְתוּקִים מִדְּבַשׁ	umetukim midvash
	וְנֹפֶת צוּפִים	venofet tzufim;
12 I serve you and these precepts guard,	גַּם־עַבְדְּךָ נִזְהָר בָּהֶם	Gam avdecha nizhar bahem
for keeping them brings great reward.	בְּשָׁמְרָם עֵקֶב רָב	beshomram ekev rav.
13 Our own faults can we ever see?	שְׁגִיאוֹת מִי־יָבִין	Shegi'ot mi yavin,
Cleanse me from sins concealed from me!	מִנִּסְתָּרוֹת נַקֵּנִי	ministarot nakeni.
14 Keep me from overconfidence;	גַּם מִזֵּדִים חֲשֹׂךְ עַבְדֶּךָ	Gam mizeidim chasoch avdecha:
help me resist its influence.	אַל־יִמְשְׁלוּ־בִי	al yimshelu vi;
Then plain and simple shall I be;	אָז אֵיתָם	az eitam,
cleanse me of great iniquity.	וְנִקֵּיתִי מִפֶּשַׁע רָב	venikeiti mipesha rav.
15 May I say what you want to hear	יִהְיוּ לְרָצוֹן אִמְרֵי־פִי	Yiheyu leratzon imrei fi
and meditate as you are near,	וְהֶגְיוֹן לִבִּי לְפָנֶיךָ	vehegyon libi lefanecha,
O God, who keeps me far from fear.	יְהוָה צוּרִי וְגֹאֲלִי	Adonai tzuri vego'ali.

[1] "More pleasant than gold and much pure gold / and sweeter than honey, the oozing honeycomb."

Psalm 20

Used in the conclusion of the weekday morning service.

[1] For the Conductor: a psalm of David.	לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	Lam'natze'ach; mizmor leDavid.
[2] When trouble calls, may God reply—	יַעַנְךָ יהוה בְּיוֹם צָרָה	Ya'an'cha Adonai beyom tzarah,
may Jacob's God be your defense,[1]	יְשַׂגֶּבְךָ שֵׁם אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב	Yesagev'cha shem Elohei Ya'akov
[3] Sending help from the Temple Mount,	יִשְׁלַח־עֶזְרְךָ מִקֹּדֶשׁ	Yishlach ezrecha mikodesh,
from Zion bringing sustenance,[2]	וּמִצִּיּוֹן יִסְעָדֶךָּ	umiTziyon yis'adekah.
[4] Recalling every sacrifice,	יִזְכֹּר כָּל־מִנְחֹתֶךָ	Yizkor kol min'chotecha,
accepting your burnt offerings,[3]	וְעוֹלָתְךָ יְדַשְּׁנֶה סֶלָה	ve'olat'chah yedashneh. Selah.
[5] Granting the hopes held in your heart,	יִתֶּן־לְךָ כִלְבָבֶךָ	Yiten lecha chil'vavecha,
Fulfilling the designs you chart.[4]	וְכָל־עֲצָתְךָ יְמַלֵּא	vechol atzat'cha yemaleh.
[6] *God*, saved by you, in joy we'll cry,	נְרַנְּנָה בִּישׁוּעָתֶךָ	Neranenah bishu'atecha,
Our flag with God's name flying high—	וּבְשֵׁם־אֱלֹהֵינוּ נִדְגֹּל	uveshem Eloheinu nidgol;
May God your every need supply.[5]	יְמַלֵּא יהוה כָּל־מִשְׁאֲלוֹתֶיךָ	yemaleh Adonai kol mishalotecha.
[7] Now I know, *with firm belief*	עַתָּה יָדַעְתִּי	Atah yadati
that God saves *God's* anointed chief,	כִּי הוֹשִׁיעַ יהוה מְשִׁיחוֹ	ki hoshi'ah Adonai meshicho,
responds from holy heavens' height,	יַעֲנֵהוּ מִשְּׁמֵי קָדְשׁוֹ	ya'anehu mishmei kodsho;
rescuing with powerful might.[6]	בִּגְבוּרוֹת יֶשַׁע יְמִינוֹ	bigvurot yeshah yemino.
[8] Fine horse or chariot *warriors praise*,	אֵלֶּה בָרֶכֶב וְאֵלֶּה בַסּוּסִים	Eileh varechev, ve'eileh vasusim;
but we	וַאֲנַחְנוּ	va'anachnu
call on our ruling God;[7]	בְּשֵׁם־יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ נַזְכִּיר	beshem Adonai Eloheinu nazkir.

[1] "May God answer you on the day of trouble; may the name/reputation of the God of Jacob protect/exalt you."
[2] "May *God* send your help from the holy [place] (i.e., the Temple) and from Zion give you sustenance."
[3] "May *God* recall your every minchah offering (afternoon grain offering) and remove the ashes for your burnt-offering" (removing the ashes was part of the process, so this is a wish that the process be completed properly).
[4] "May *God* grant for you according to your heart (i.e., grant your heart's wishes), and may *God* complete your every plan."
[5] "Let us shout for joy at your salvation/rescue, and in/with the name/reputation of our God let us fly our flag; may God fulfill all of your requests."
[6] "Now I have come to know that God has rescued *God's* anointed, that *God* will answer him from the skies of *God's* holiness with the powers for rescuing that are associated with *God's* right hand." i.e., I'm confident that God will act to save the anointed king of Israel.
[7] "These *people rely* on a chariot; those *people rely* on horses. But we will recall the name/reputation of our ruling God." I.e., other peoples rely on their military equipment, but what we talk about is God's power!

[9] They've slumped and fallen *in despair*	הֵמָּה כָרְעוּ וְנָפָלוּ	Hemah kar'u venafalu,
but we still stand, with strength to spare![1]	וַאֲנַחְנוּ קַמְנוּ וַנִּתְעוֹדָד	va'anachnu kamnu venit'odad.
[10] O God, bring rescue *for us all*,	יהוה הוֹשִׁיעָה	Adonai hoshi'ah,
O Ruler, answer when we call!	הַמֶּלֶךְ יַעֲנֵנוּ בְיוֹם־קָרְאֵנוּ	hamelech ya'anenu beyom koreinu.

[1] "They (the people who talk about their military equipment) have bent over and fallen down, but we have stood up and gained strength."

Psalm 21

[1] For the Conductor: a psalm of David.	לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	LaMenatze'ach: mizmor leDavid.
[2] From you, God, stems all royal power;	יהוה בְּעֻזְּךָ יִשְׂמַח־מֶלֶךְ	Adonai, be'oz'cha yismach melech
when saved by you, how kings rejoice,[1]	וּבִישׁוּעָתְךָ מַה־יָּגֵל[2] מְאֹד	uvishu'at'cha mah yagel me'od.
[3] When you grant them their dearest wish	תַּאֲוַת לִבּוֹ נָתַתָּה לוֹ	Ta'avat libo natata lo
nor block the entreaty of their voice.[3]	וַאֲרֶשֶׁת שְׂפָתָיו בַּל־מָנַעְתָּ	va'areshet sefatav bal manata.
Selah	סֶלָה	Selah.
[4] You're first to offer blessings true,	כִּי־תְקַדְּמֶנּוּ בִּרְכוֹת טוֹב	Ki tekadmenu bir'chot tov,
place on the head a crown of gold;[4]	תָּשִׁית לְרֹאשׁוֹ עֲטֶרֶת פָּז	tashit lerosho ateret paz.
[5] The life he sought from you, you grant—	חַיִּים שָׁאַל מִמְּךָ נָתַתָּה לוֹ	Chayim sha'al mimcha natata lo;
long years, too many to be told.[5]	אֹרֶךְ יָמִים עוֹלָם וָעֶד	orech yamim olam va'ed.
[6] Honored through your deliverance	גָּדוֹל כְּבוֹדוֹ בִּישׁוּעָתֶךָ	Gadol kevodo bishu'atecha;
with majesty and dignity,[6]	הוֹד וְהָדָר תְּשַׁוֶּה עָלָיו	hod vehadar teshaveh alav,
[7] With blessings that will never end	כִּי־תְשִׁיתֵהוּ בְרָכוֹת לָעַד	Ki teshitehu verachot la'ad,
in your presence, with joy and glee.[7]	תְּחַדֵּהוּ בְשִׂמְחָה אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ	techadehu vesimchah et panecha,
[8] A sovereign who trusts in God's	כִּי־הַמֶּלֶךְ בֹּטֵחַ בַּיהוה	Ki hamelech bote'ach bAdonai
high favor need not vacillate,[8]	וּבְחֶסֶד עֶלְיוֹן בַּל־יִמּוֹט	uvechesed Elyon, bal yimot.
[9] For your power reaches all your foes,	תִּמְצָא יָדְךָ לְכָל־אֹיְבֶיךָ	Timtza yadcha lecho oyvecha;
your might exposes those you hate.[9]	יְמִינְךָ תִּמְצָא שֹׂנְאֶיךָ	yemin'cha timtza sonecha.

[1] "O God, in/through-your-power will/would-rejoice a-king / and-in/through-your-rescue/salvation how/what would/shall-he-rejoice greatly": the power a monarch enjoys comes from God, and a monarch should be happy and grateful when God provides rescue (in war or in more spiritual ways). Monarchs may find support for the theory of divine right of kings; democratic republics may read this to mean that monarchs must be limited by God's will.

[2] A manuscript has יגיל but we read יָגֵל.

[3] "The-desire-of his-heart have-you-granted to-him / and-the-entreaty-of his-lips you-have-not-withheld." Some say אֲרֶשֶׁת means utterance, others say it means desire or request, hence entreaty or prayer.

[4] "For/when you-shall-be-early-*to-give*-him blessings good, / you-shall-place for-his-head a-crown of-gold."

[5] "Life he-requested from-you, you-granted *it* to-him, / length-of days forever and-ever"—the king asked for a long reign or an eternal afterlife, or both.

[6] "Great *is* his honor in/with/through-your-rescue/saving, / splendor and-majesty shall-you-set upon-him."

[7] "For you-place-upon-him blessings forever, / you-gladden-him with-joy with-your-presence/face."

[8] "For the-king trusts in-God / and-in-the-kindness-of the-High-One, so-that-he-need-not-falter."

[9] "You-shall-come-upon *with* your-hand/power to-all your-enemies (your power will reach all your enemies); / your-right-*hand* will-find your-haters (whom you hate and/or who hate you)."

10 You set them like a kiln, ablaze	תְּשִׁיתֵמוֹ כְּתַנּוּר אֵשׁ	Teshitemo ketanur esh
when you approach (in vengeful days);	לְעֵת פָּנֶיךָ	le'et panecha;
God, you engulf them in your ire,	יהוה בְּאַפּוֹ יְבַלְּעֵם	Adonai, be'apo yevalem
incinerate them *with your* fire,[1]	וְתֹאכְלֵם אֵשׁ	vetochlem esh.
11 Destroy their earthly legacy	פִּרְיָמוֹ מֵאֶרֶץ תְּאַבֵּד	Piryamo me'eretz te'abed
and all their human progeny![2]	וְזַרְעָם מִבְּנֵי אָדָם	vezaram mibnei adam
12 Against you evil they devised,	כִּי־נָטוּ עָלֶיךָ רָעָה	Ki natu alecha ra'ah,
plots that they couldn't realize.[3]	חָשְׁבוּ מְזִמָּה בַּל־יוּכָלוּ	chashvu mezimah bal yuchalu.
13 You made them turn their craven backs	כִּי תְשִׁיתֵמוֹ שֶׁכֶם	Ki teshitemo shechem
faced with your ready bow's attacks.[4]	בְּמֵיתָרֶיךָ תְּכוֹנֵן עַל־פְּנֵיהֶם	bemetarecha techonen al peneihem.
14 Exalted God with power on high,	רוּמָה יהוה בְּעֻזֶּךָ	Rumah, Adonai, be'uzecha;
in song your might we glorify![5]	נָשִׁירָה וּנְזַמְּרָה גְּבוּרָתֶךָ	nashira unezamra gevuratecha.

[1] "You-set-it (the collective enemy) like-an-oven-of fire / at-the-time-of your-presence (when you approach) / God in-*God's*-anger will-swallow-them / and-will-consume-them fire (fire will consume them)." From this verse on, the psalmist predicts the punishment of the foe. The rhyme changes: instead of rhyming each pair of verses we rhyme each pair of half-lines.

[2] "Their-fruit from-the-land you-shall-destroy / and-their-offspring from-the-descendants-of Adam."

[3] "For they-stretched-out (planned) against-you evil, / devised a-scheme they-couldn't-execute."

[4] "For you-placed-them shoulder-blades (you made them show their shoulders—turn their backs and run away) / when-your-bowstrings you-would-prepare/fix/draw against their-faces." When God attacked, they ran.

[5] "Be-made-high, God, in/with-your-power; / we-shall-sing-of and-make-music-for your-might."

Psalm 22[1]

[1] For the Conductor, on the Hind of the Dawn.[2]	לַמְנַצֵּחַ עַל־אַיֶּלֶת הַשַּׁחַר	LaMenatze'ach al Ayelet haShachar:
A psalm by David.	מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	mizmor leDavid.
[2] My God, my God, why have you left me,	אֵלִי אֵלִי לָמָה עֲזַבְתָּנִי	Eli, Eli, lamah azavtani,
you are so far from saving me,	רָחוֹק מִישׁוּעָתִי	rachok mishu'ati,
so distant from my words of anguish.	דִּבְרֵי שַׁאֲגָתִי	divrei sha'agati.
[3] I cry, "God!" at daytime,	אֱלֹהַי אֶקְרָא יוֹמָם	"Elohai!" ekrah yomam
but you don't answer;	וְלֹא תַעֲנֶה	velo ta'aneh;
I cry at night without respite.	וְלַיְלָה וְלֹא־דוּמִיָּה לִי	velaylah, velo dumiyah li.
[4] Still, you are holy,	וְאַתָּה קָדוֹשׁ	Ve'atah kadosh,
resting on the praises of Israel.	יוֹשֵׁב תְּהִלּוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל	yoshev tehilot Yisra'el.
[5] Our ancestors relied on you,	בְּךָ בָּטְחוּ אֲבֹתֵינוּ	Becha bat'chu avoteinu.
relied *on you,* and you rescued them.	בָּטְחוּ וַתְּפַלְּטֵמוֹ	bat'chu vatfaltemo.
[6] They cried out to you; you saved them;	אֵלֶיךָ זָעֲקוּ וְנִמְלָטוּ בְּךָ	Elecha za'aku, venimlatu becha,
they relied *on you* and were not left in disgrace.	בָּטְחוּ וְלֹא־בוֹשׁוּ	vat'chu velo voshu.
[7] But me, I'm a worm, not a man—	וְאָנֹכִי תוֹלַעַת וְלֹא־אִישׁ	Ve'anochi tola'at velo ish,
the scorn of men, the shame of society.	חֶרְפַּת אָדָם וּבְזוי עָם	cherpat adam uvezui am.
[8] All who see me mock me,	כָּל־רֹאַי יַלְעִגוּ לִי	Kol ro'ai yaligu li,
curl their lip *in scorn* and wag their head,	יַפְטִירוּ בְשָׂפָה יָנִיעוּ רֹאשׁ	yaftiru vesafa, yani'u rosh.
[9] *Saying,* "Let him get to God, let *God* save him;	גֹּל אֶל־יְהוָה יְפַלְּטֵהוּ	"Gol el Adonai, yefaltehu;
let *God* rescue him if *God* likes him!"	יַצִּילֵהוּ כִּי חָפֵץ בּוֹ	yatzilehu ki chafetz bo!"

[1] This psalm is famous. For Christians it's the psalm Jesus quoted (in Aramaic translation) on the cross; for Jews, it's a reference to Queen Esther, who saved the Jewish people. The Talmud (BT Yoma 29a) suggests Esther is like a hind in that her husband's love never diminishes; and like the dawn, for like Esther's miraculous deliverance, the dawn ends the night. In BT Megilla 15b, Rabbi Levi says that the divine presence abandoned Esther when she took the initiative to see Ahasuerus, so she recited verse 2, "Why have you left me?" The discussion of Esther's story points out her great courage and all that she had to lose, even if her life were spared. She was not culpable for yielding to Ahasuerus at first, for this was under compulsion. But a voluntary visit to Ahasuerus' "inner chamber" (Esther 5:1) would not be innocent—she felt the loss of the divine presence as she entered the chamber. When read with care, the Talmud points out the gravity of Esther's situation and the courage she mustered to save her people, and it reminds us that an innocent victim can feel soiled, abandoned and guilty.

[2] אַיֶּלֶת הַשַּׁחַר, the Hind of the Dawn, could mean a musical instrument (Rashi), or perhaps a musical mode (not mentioned elsewhere), or Esther herself, or something else.

[10] You pushed me[1] from *my mother's* womb,	כִּי־אַתָּה גֹחִי מִבָּטֶן	Ki atah gochi mibaten,
soothed me at my mother's breasts.	מַבְטִיחִי עַל־שְׁדֵי אִמִּי	mavtichi al shedei imi.
[11] To you was I sent from birth,	עָלֶיךָ הָשְׁלַכְתִּי מֵרָחֶם	Alecha hoshlachti merachem,
from my mother's womb you have been my God.	מִבֶּטֶן אִמִּי אֵלִי אָתָּה	mibeten imi Eli atah.
[12] Don't leave me when trouble is near,	אַל־תִּרְחַק מִמֶּנִּי כִּי־צָרָה קְרוֹבָה	Al tir'chak mimeni ki tzarah kerovah,
when *there's* no *other* helper.	כִּי־אֵין עוֹזֵר	ki ein ozer.
[13] A herd of *angry* bulls surround me;	סְבָבוּנִי פָּרִים רַבִּים	Sevavuni parim rabim,
those warriors of Bashan overwhelm me.[2]	אַבִּירֵי בָשָׁן כִּתְּרוּנִי	abirei Vashan kitruni.
[14] They widen their *menacing* mouths at me	פָּצוּ עָלַי פִּיהֶם	Patzu alai pihem,
like a roaring lion that tears *into its prey*.[3]	אַרְיֵה טֹרֵף וְשֹׁאֵג	aryeh toref vesho'eg.
[15] I melt *in terror*;	כַּמַּיִם נִשְׁפַּכְתִּי	Kamayim nishpachti
my bones are disjointed;	וְהִתְפָּרְדוּ כָּל־עַצְמוֹתָי	vehitpardu kol atzmotai;
my courage is sapped like melting wax	הָיָה לִבִּי כַּדּוֹנָג נָמַס	hayah libi kadonag namess
within me.[4]	בְּתוֹךְ מֵעָי	betoch me'ai.
[16] My spirit is dry as a dish from the kiln,	יָבֵשׁ כַּחֶרֶשׂ כֹּחִי	Yavesh kacheres kochi
my tongue is stuck to the roof of my mouth—	וּלְשׁוֹנִי מֻדְבָּק מַלְקוֹחָי	uleshoni mudbak malkochai,
you're handing me over to dusty death.[5]	וְלַעֲפַר־מָוֶת תִּשְׁפְּתֵנִי	vela'afar mavet tishpeteni.

[1] גחי is of uncertain meaning. Malbim relates it to גחון, belly (Gen. 3:15), and says it means "extract from the belly," while Rashi relates it to water rushing out as in Job 40:23.

[2] "They have surrounded me, many bulls; / chiefs of Bashan have crowned me (they're all around me, over my head)." Though this seems the only reference in scripture to bulls of Bashan, they became famous: Shakespeare's Antony says, "Oh, that I were / Upon the hill of Basan, to outroar / The horned herd" (3.3 128ff.)

[3] "They spread their mouths at me / like a lion that tears *its prey* and roars." פָּצוּ, they have spread, is from the root פצה, spread or disperse.

[4] "Like water am I poured out; / and separated are all my bones; / my heart has become like melting wax inside my guts."

[5] "Dry as a potsherd is my strength / and my tongue stuck to my cheek / and to dust of death you consign me." I translated "a dish from the kiln" because it's slightly more familiar than an ancient potsherd (of archeological interest). In Biblical times moist was better than dry, partly because rain was scarce and treasured and partly because old and wizened people have lost some of "the youthful hue [that] / Sits on thy skin like morning dew," in Marvell's words.

[17] Dogs *yap and snap* all around me,	כִּי סְבָבוּנִי כְלָבִים	Ki sevavuni kelavim,
a pack of villains encircles me	עֲדַת מְרֵעִים הִקִּיפוּנִי	adat mere'im hikifuni
like a lion *to maul* my hands and feet.[1]	כָּאֲרִי יָדַי וְרַגְלָי	ka'ari yadai veraglai.
[18] I'll count all my *unbroken* bones	אֲסַפֵּר כָּל־עַצְמוֹתָי	Asaper kol atzmotai;
while they watch and stalk me.	הֵמָּה יַבִּיטוּ יִרְאוּ־בִי	hemah yabitu, yiru vi.
[19] They've *already* decided who gets my clothes,	יְחַלְּקוּ בְגָדַי לָהֶם	Yechalku vegadai lahem
they've tossed the dice for my cloak.[2]	וְעַל־לְבוּשִׁי יַפִּילוּ גוֹרָל	ve'al levushi yapilu goral.
[20] But God, don't be distant,	וְאַתָּה יהוה אַל־תִּרְחָק	Ve'atah, Adonai, al tir'chak,
my strength; hurry to help me![3]	אֲיָלוּתִי לְעֶזְרָתִי חוּשָׁה	eyaluti; le'ezrati chusha!
[21] Save my life from the sword,	הַצִּילָה מֵחֶרֶב נַפְשִׁי	Hatzilah mecherev nafshi,
save my dear self from the power of the dog!	מִיַּד־כֶּלֶב יְחִידָתִי	miyad kelev yechidati.
[22] Rescue me from the lion's mouth	הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי מִפִּי אַרְיֵה	Hoshi'eni mipi aryeh
or the horns of the wild ox[4]—answer me!	וּמִקַּרְנֵי רֵמִים עֲנִיתָנִי	umikarnei remim anitani.
[23] *Then* I can recount your reputation to my friends;	אֲסַפְּרָה שִׁמְךָ לְאַחָי	Asaprah shimchah le'echay,
among *that* assembly shall I praise you.	בְּתוֹךְ קָהָל אֲהַלְלֶךָּ	betoch kahal ahaleleka.
[24] Let God-fearing people praise *God,*	יִרְאֵי יהוה הַלְלוּהוּ	Yirei Adonai haleluhu,
all the descendants of Jacob;	כָּל־זֶרַע יַעֲקֹב	kol zerah Ya'akov;
honor and respect *God,*	כַּבְּדוּהוּ וְגוּרוּ מִמֶּנּוּ	kabduhu veguru mimenu,
all the descendants of Israel.	כָּל־זֶרַע יִשְׂרָאֵל	kol zerah Yisra'el.

[1] Who is like the lion—the poet (to resist them, perhaps in vain), or the attackers (to maul the poet)? The commentators disagree. "For dogs have surrounded me, / a congregation of evildoers has encircled me, / like the lion my hands and my feet."

[2] "They have divided up my clothes among them / and for my garment/cloak they have thrown a lot/die"; in ancient times a dead person's clothes had more value than today, when first-world closets are bursting with barmitzvah tshirts.

[3] "And you, God, do not be far away, / my strength; to my assistance hurry." אֲיָלוּתִי, my strength, may be related to אַיֶּלֶת הַשַּׁחַר in אַיֶּלֶת הַשַּׁחַר. The root אול is not used as a verb but may underlie nouns with connotations of strength, from ram to chieftain—but also the hind or female deer.

[4] Many think רֵמִים is the same as רְאֵמִים, a powerful beast that may be the extinct aurochs or wild ox or mythical unicorn. Ibn Ezra notes that he's heard the beast can bounce down a hill on its horns without breaking them, so its horns must be extra strong.

[25] For *God* has not scorned nor spurned	כִּי לֹא־בָזָה וְלֹא שִׁקַּץ	Ki lo vazah velo shiketz
the humility of the lowly,	עֱנוּת עָנִי	enut ani,
nor concealed *God's* presence from them,	וְלֹא־הִסְתִּיר פָּנָיו מִמֶּנּוּ	velo histir panav mimenu,
but listened to them when they wept.	וּבְשַׁוְּעוֹ אֵלָיו שָׁמֵעַ	uveshavo elav shame'ah.
[26] For you I offer prayers in the great assembly;	מֵאִתְּךָ תְהִלָּתִי בְּקָהָל רָב	Me'it'cha tehilati bekahal rav
I'll fulfill my pledges in sight of the devout.	נְדָרַי אֲשַׁלֵּם נֶגֶד יְרֵאָיו	nedarai ashalem neged yere'av.
[27] Let the lowly eat their fill;	יֹאכְלוּ עֲנָוִים וְיִשְׂבָּעוּ	Yochlu anavin veyisba'u;
let those who seek God offer praise;	יְהַלְלוּ יהוה דֹּרְשָׁיו	yehalelu Adonai dorshav;
let their good cheer continue forever.[1]	יְחִי לְבַבְכֶם לָעַד	yechi levavchem la'ad.
[28] Let them remember and return to God,	יִזְכְּרוּ וְיָשֻׁבוּ אֶל־יהוה	Yizkeru veyashuvu el Adonai
all ends of the earth;	כָּל־אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ	kol afsei aretz,
let them worship you,	וְיִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְפָנֶיךָ	veyishtachavu lefanecha
all families of other peoples.	כָּל־מִשְׁפְּחוֹת גּוֹיִם	kol mishpechot goyim.
[29] For sovereignty is *rightly* God's,	כִּי לַיהוה הַמְלוּכָה	Ki lAdonai hamlucha
the *power to* rule over *all* peoples.	וּמֹשֵׁל בַּגּוֹיִם	umoshel bagoyim.
[30] They eat *first* and *then* worship,	אָכְלוּ וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ	Achlu veyishtachavu
all the earth's well-fed people;	כָּל־דִּשְׁנֵי־אֶרֶץ	kol dishnei eretz;
let all who descend to dust bow to you,	לְפָנָיו יִכְרְעוּ כָּל־יוֹרְדֵי עָפָר	lefanav yichre'u kol yordei afar,
those who can't keep themselves alive.[2]	וְנַפְשׁוֹ לֹא חִיָּה	venafsho lo chiyah.
[31] *Future* generations *who* serve *God*	זֶרַע יַעַבְדֶנּוּ	Zerah ya'avdenu
will be counted as God's generation![3]	יְסֻפַּר לַאדֹנָי לַדּוֹר	yesupar lAdonai lador.
[32] They'll come and tell *God's* righteousness	יָבֹאוּ וְיַגִּידוּ צִדְקָתוֹ	Yavo'u veyagidu tzidkato
to people *yet to* be born, for *God* has acted.[4]	לְעַם נוֹלָד כִּי עָשָׂה	le'am nolad, ki asah.

[1] "Let it live, their heart, forever."

[2] "And-his-soul/personality/self not he-can-cause-to-live."

[3] "Seed will-serve-*God* / it/he-will-be-counted/included to-God for-a-seed": those who serve God will be included in God's group; or, our future generation will serve God and so God will consider them a notable generation.

[4] God's past actions prove that God is righteous.

Psalm 23

In England, used in the prayer for a sick person.

[1] David's psalm:	מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	Mizmor leDavid.
God is my shepherd; I have all I need,	יהוה רֹעִי לֹא אֶחְסָר	Adonai ro'i lo echsar.
[2] Grazing in lush, soft mead	בִּנְאוֹת דֶּשֶׁא יַרְבִּיצֵנִי	Bin'ot deshe yarbitzeini,
By waters still and clear,	עַל־מֵי מְנֻחוֹת יְנַהֲלֵנִי	Al mei menuchot yenahaleni:
[3] From doubts and fears I'm freed.	נַפְשִׁי יְשׁוֹבֵב	Nafshi yeshovev
You guide me right,	יַנְחֵנִי בְמַעְגְּלֵי־צֶדֶק	Yancheni vema'gelei tzedek
to show your power is near.[1]	לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ	lema'an shemo.
[4] When I walk in the vale of gloom, I fear	גַּם כִּי־אֵלֵךְ בְּגֵיא צַלְמָוֶת	Gam ki elech begei tzalmavet,
No wrong, for you are here:	לֹא־אִירָא רָע כִּי־אַתָּה עִמָּדִי	lo ira ra ki atah imadi.
Your staff won't let me stray;	שִׁבְטְךָ וּמִשְׁעַנְתֶּךָ	Shivtecha umish'antecha
Your rod will bring me cheer.	הֵמָּה יְנַחֲמֻנִי	hemah yenachamuni.
[5] To spite my foes (*or*, despite my woes),	תַּעֲרֹךְ לְפָנַי שֻׁלְחָן	Ta'aroch lefanai shulchan
for me a feast you lay.[2]	נֶגֶד צֹרְרָי	neged tzorerai.
You made me royal:	דִּשַּׁנְתָּ בַשֶּׁמֶן רֹאשִׁי	Dishanta vashemen roshi
it is too much. I say	כּוֹסִי רְוָיָה	kosi revayah.
[6] That good and love will stay	אַךְ טוֹב וָחֶסֶד יִרְדְּפוּנִי	Ach tov vachesed yirdefuni
Close by me all my days,	כָּל־יְמֵי חַיָּי	kol yemei chayay,
And in your house I'll pray	וְשַׁבְתִּי בְּבֵית־יהוה	veshavti beveit Adonai
Forever, when I end life's winding ways.[3]	לְאֹרֶךְ יָמִים	le'orech yamim.

[1] "David's psalm. / God is my shepherd—I shall not lack— / laying me in lush grass, / leading me to placid waters, / reviving my spirit/soul, setting me in the circle of virtue (within the bounds of good behavior) / for *God's* reputation." Instead of "reviving," יְשׁוֹבֵב could mean "wander"(my attention wanders but your guidance brings me back,) Eli Finkelman credits Gene Schramm with this intriguing suggestion.

[2] "Though I walk in the vale of gloom, / I fear no wrong, for you are with me; / your shepherd's staff and walking stick, / they comfort me. / You set the table before me, / in front of my foes/woes." צֹרְרָי can mean both foes and woes; my thanks to Rev. Katie Eichenlaub White for this insight.

[3] "You poured oil on my head *for a coronation ceremony;* / my cup overflows. / Goodness and mercy will follow me / every day of my life, / and I will sit in God's house / for a long time." For anointment of a ruler or high priest, the common root is משח (pour) and שמן (oil), not דשן; דשן implies oil and fat (usually חלב) as well as ash (from the Temple altar). Perhaps ash is good for compost and encourages luxuriant vegetation, the "fat" of the land—though that phrase in Genesis 45:18 uses the root חלב, not דשן. At her coronation, Queen Elizabeth II was "anointed" on the palms of both hands, the breast, and crown of the head.

Psalm 24

The daily psalm for Sunday, the first day of the week;
recited when the Torah scroll is returned to the Ark (except on Shabbat morning).

[1] A psalm by David.[1]	לְדָוִד מִזְמוֹר	LeDavid mizmor:
God's is the world, with all it holds,	לַיהוה הָאָרֶץ וּמְלוֹאָהּ	LAdonai ha'aretz um'lo'ah,
the land on which all people dwell,[2]	תֵּבֵל וְיֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ	tevel veyoshvei vah,
[2] For *God* fixed earth on running streams	כִּי־הוּא עַל־יַמִּים יְסָדָהּ	ki hu al yamim yesadah,
spread land o'er mighty oceans' swell.[3]	וְעַל־נְהָרוֹת יְכוֹנְנֶהָ	ve'al neharot yechon'neha.
[3] On God's hill, who can make th'ascent	מִי־יַעֲלֶה בְהַר־יהוה	Mi ya'aleh vehar Adonai,
to reach *God's* holy station?	וּמִי־יָקוּם בִּמְקוֹם קָדְשׁוֹ	umi yakum bimkom kodsho?
[4] The pure of heart, the innocent:	נְקִי כַפַּיִם וּבַר־לֵבָב	Neki chapayim uvar levav,
without equivocation,	אֲשֶׁר לֹא־נָשָׂא לַשָּׁוְא נַפְשִׁי	asher lo nasah lashav nafshi,
their vow is their intent.[4]	וְלֹא נִשְׁבַּע לְמִרְמָה	velo nishbah lemirmah!
[5] God's blessing will upon them smile,	יִשָּׂא בְרָכָה מֵאֵת יהוה	Yisa verachah me'et Adonai,
defending them in every trial.[5]	וּצְדָקָה מֵאֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעוֹ	utzedakah me'Elohei yish'o.
[6] For these are Jacob's children, who	זֶה דּוֹר דֹּרְשָׁיו	Ze dor dorshav,
seek only, *God*, to be with you. Selah.[6]	מְבַקְשֵׁי פָנֶיךָ יַעֲקֹב סֶלָה	mevakshei fanecha, Ya'akov. Selah.
[7] Now raise your beams, O gates, stretch high;	שְׂאוּ שְׁעָרִים רָאשֵׁיכֶם	Se'u she'arim rosheichem,
doors of the world, reach to the sky—	וְהִנָּשְׂאוּ פִּתְחֵי עוֹלָם	vehinas'u pit'chei olam,
the glorious sovereign is nigh![7]	וְיָבוֹא מֶלֶךְ הַכָּבוֹד	veyavo melech hakavod.

[1] The Talmud (BT Shabbat 30a) tells how Solomon quoted this psalm on completing the Temple.
[2] "To God belongs the world and its contents, the lived-on land and its inhabitants."
[3] "For *God* founded it above waters, and established it above rivers."
[4] "The clean of hands and pure of heart, who has not held me in balance (i.e., has not given me an elusive answer, or equivocated) nor sworn deceitfully."
[5] "Such a person will bear a blessing from God, vindication from the God of his/her salvation."
[6] "This is the generation of his (Jacob's) generations (i..e., these are Jacob's distant descendants), who seek your presence—Jacob!" As for the meaning of "Selah," if I knew, I would have given it an English equivalent. It may be a musical instruction for the singing of the psalm.
[7] "Oh gates, raise your heads; / be lifted up, doors of the world, / and the sovereign of glory will enter." No earthly gate is high enough to admit God.

[8] Who is this sovereign glorious?	מִי זֶה מֶלֶךְ הַכָּבוֹד	Mi zeh melech hakavod?
It's mighty God, *who fights for us,*	יהוה עִזּוּז וְגִבּוֹר	Adonai izuz vegibor,
unfailingly victorious![1]	יהוה גִּבּוֹר מִלְחָמָה	Adonai gibor milchamah.
[9] Now raise your beams, O gates, stretch high;	שְׂאוּ שְׁעָרִים רָאשֵׁיכֶם	Se'u she'arim rosheichem,
doors of the world, reach to the sky—	וּשְׂאוּ פִּתְחֵי עוֹלָם	use'u pit'chei olam,
the glorious sovereign is nigh!	וְיָבֹא מֶלֶךְ הַכָּבוֹד	veyavo melech hakavod.
[10] Who is this sovereign glorious?	מִי הוּא זֶה מֶלֶךְ הַכָּבוֹד	Mi hu zeh melech hakavod?
The God of hosts, *who fights for us;*	יהוה צְבָאוֹת	Adonai tzeva'ot,
God is the sovereign glorious.[2] Selah!	הוּא מֶלֶךְ הַכָּבוֹד סֶלָה	hu melech hakavod. Selah!

[1] "Who is this ruler of glory? God, mighty and heroic; God is a hero of war."
[2] "Who is this ruler of glory? God of armies: *God* is the ruler of glory."

Psalm 25

Sometimes added to the weekday evening service on a Sunday.

[1] *A poem* by David:	לְדָוִד	LeDavid:
Toward you, O God, I raise myself;	אֵלֶיךָ יהוה נַפְשִׁי אֶשָּׂא	Elecha, Adonai, nafshi esah.
[2] My God, I have trusted you,	אֱלֹהַי בְּךָ בָטַחְתִּי	Elohai, becha vatachti,
don't let me feel shame,	אַל־אֵבוֹשָׁה	al evoshah,
don't let my enemies gloat over me.	אַל־יַעַלְצוּ אֹיְבַי לִי	al ya'altzu oyvai li.
[3] No, those who hope in you will not feel shame;	גַּם כָּל־קֹוֶיךָ לֹא יֵבֹשׁוּ	Gam kol kovecha lo yevoshu;
those who cheat for fun[1] will be ashamed!	יֵבֹשׁוּ הַבּוֹגְדִים רֵיקָם	yevoshu habogdim reikam.
[4] Show me your paths, God;	דְּרָכֶיךָ יהוה הוֹדִיעֵנִי	Derachecha, Adonai, hodi'eni;
teach me your ways.	אָרְחוֹתֶיךָ לַמְּדֵנִי	or'chotecha lamdeni.
[5] Lead me in your truth and teach me	הַדְרִיכֵנִי בַאֲמִתֶּךָ וְלַמְּדֵנִי	Hadricheni va'amitecha, velamdeni
that you are the God who rescues me—	כִּי־אַתָּה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעִי	ki atah Elohei yish'i—
every day I have expected you.	אוֹתְךָ קִוִּיתִי כָּל־הַיּוֹם	ot'cha kiviti kol hayom.
[6] Remember your mercies, God,	זְכֹר־רַחֲמֶיךָ יהוה	Zechor rachamecha, Adonai,
and your kindnesses,	וַחֲסָדֶיךָ	vachasadecha,
for they have been *unchanged* forever.[2]	כִּי מֵעוֹלָם הֵמָּה	ki me'olam hemah.
[7] Forget the sins and faults of my youth;	חַטֹּאות נְעוּרַי וּפְשָׁעַי אַל־תִּזְכֹּר	Chatot ne'urai ufesha'ai al tizkor;
in your mercy think of me	כְּחַסְדְּךָ זְכָר־לִי־אַתָּה	kechasdecha zechor li atah
for the sake of your goodness,[3] God.	לְמַעַן טוּבְךָ יהוה	lema'an tuv'cha, Adonai.
[8] God is good and upright,	טוֹב־וְיָשָׁר יהוה	Tov veyashar Adonai;
so *God* sends sinners along the path.	עַל־כֵּן יוֹרֶה חַטָּאִים בַּדָּרֶךְ	al ken yoreh chata'im badarech.
[9] God guides the humble into justice	יַדְרֵךְ עֲנָוִים בַּמִּשְׁפָּט	Yadrech anavim bamishpat
and teaches the humble *God's* way.	וִילַמֵּד עֲנָוִים דַּרְכּוֹ	vilamed anavim darko.
[10] All God's ways are kindness and truth	כָּל־אָרְחוֹת יהוה חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת	Kol or'chot Adonai chesed ve'emet
to those who keep *God's* contract and proofs.[4]	לְנֹצְרֵי בְרִיתוֹ וְעֵדֹתָיו	lenotzrei verito ve'edotav.

[1] "They-being-empty"; i.e., when they have no reason to cheat.

[2] "For from-forever *are* they"; i.e., God's kindness is evident from earliest history.

[3] I.e., so that I can enjoy your goodness, and so that you will polish your reputation by proving once again that you are kind.

[4] "To those who keep/guard the contract with God (i.e., the contract made with God at Sinai, or perhaps one of the other contracts in the Torah) and *God's* testimonies (i.e., the historical evidence that God is compassionate and reliable)."

[11] For the sake of your reputation, God,	לְמַעַן־שִׁמְךָ יהוה	Lema'an shimcha, Adonai,
forgive my wrongs, though they are many.	וְסָלַחְתָּ לַעֲוֹנִי כִּי רַב־הוּא	vesalachta la'avoni, ki rav hu.
[12] Who is a person who respects God?	מִי־זֶה הָאִישׁ יְרֵא יהוה	Mi zeh ha'ish yereh Adonai?
God shows this person the way to choose,	יוֹרֶנּוּ בְּדֶרֶךְ יִבְחָר	yorenu bederech yivchar.
[13] So as to sleep the sleep of the just	נַפְשׁוֹ בְּטוֹב תָּלִין	Nafsho betov talin
and have children who will inherit the earth.[1]	וְזַרְעוֹ יִירַשׁ אָרֶץ	vezaro yirash aretz.
[14] God guides those who respect *God;*	סוֹד יהוה לִירֵאָיו	Sod Adonai lire'av
God teaches them their responsibility.[2]	וּבְרִיתוֹ לְהוֹדִיעָם	uverito lehodi'am.
[15] I always look to God,	עֵינַי תָּמִיד אֶל־יהוה	Einai tamid el Adonai,
for *God* frees my feet from the *hunter's* net.	כִּי הוּא־יוֹצִיא מֵרֶשֶׁת רַגְלָי	ki hu yotzi mereshet raglai.
[16] Oh, turn towards me, take pity on me,	פְּנֵה־אֵלַי וְחָנֵּנִי	Peneh elai vechoneni
for I am all alone, and miserable.	כִּי־יָחִיד וְעָנִי אָנִי	ki yachid ve'ani ani.
[17] My heartfelt troubles have swollen;	צָרוֹת לְבָבִי הִרְחִיבוּ	Tzarot levavi hir'chivu
take me out of my distress!	מִמְצוּקוֹתַי הוֹצִיאֵנִי	mimtzukotay hotzi'eni.
[18] See my misery and my struggle,	רְאֵה עָנְיִי וַעֲמָלִי	Re'eh onyi va'amali,
and put up with all my faults.	וְשָׂא לְכָל־חַטֹּאותָי	vesah lechol chatotai.
[19] See my enemies, how numerous *they are,*	רְאֵה־אוֹיְבַי כִּי־רָבּוּ	Re'eh oyvai ki rabu
and the spiteful malice of their hatred.[3]	וְשִׂנְאַת חָמָס שְׂנֵאוּנִי	vesin'at chamas sene'uni.
[20] Protect me and rescue me;	שָׁמְרָה נַפְשִׁי וְהַצִּילֵנִי	Shamrah nafshi vehatzileni;
don't shame me, for I seek refuge with you.	אַל־אֵבוֹשׁ כִּי־חָסִיתִי בָךְ	al evosh, ki chasiti vach.
[21] May *my* simplicity and honesty keep me *safe*	תֹּם־וְיֹשֶׁר יִצְּרוּנִי	Tom vayosher yitzruni
while I wait for you.	כִּי קִוִּיתִיךָ	ki kiviticha.
[22] O God, redeem Israel	פְּדֵה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל	Pedeh Elohim et Yisra'el
from all its troubles!	מִכֹּל צָרוֹתָיו	mikol tzarotav.

[1] "His self/soul will spend the night in goodness, and his offspring will inherit/control the world."
[2] "God's secret *counsel is* for those who respect *God* (i.e., God gives advice to those who respect God), / and *God's* agreement, to make it known to them (i.e., people who respect God can enter a 'covenant' or agreement with God, and God will let them know what they must do to fulfill their part of the agreement)."
[3] "And the hatred of cruelty *with which* they hate me."

Psalm 26

[1] Of David:	לְדָוִד	LeDavid:
Justify me, God, for I	שָׁפְטֵנִי יהוה כִּי־אֲנִי	Shofteni, Adonai, ki ani
have made my way in honesty,	בְתֻמִּי הָלַכְתִּי	betumi halachti
trusting God unswervingly.[1]	וּבַיהוה בָּטַחְתִּי לֹא אֶמְעָד	uvAdonai batachti; lo emad.
[2] Test me, God, examine me—	בְּחָנֵנִי יהוה וְנַסֵּנִי	Bechoneni, Adonai, venaseni;
probe me through and through.[2]	צָרְפָה כְלָיוֹתַי וְלִבִּי	tzarfah chilyotai velibi
[3] Your kindness *always* in my view,	כִּי־חַסְדְּךָ לְנֶגֶד עֵינָי	Ki chasdecha leneged einai
I've walked, with faith in you.[4]	וְהִתְהַלַּכְתִּי בַּאֲמִתֶּךָ	vehit'halachti ba'amitecha.
[4] I stayed with no deceivers,	לֹא־יָשַׁבְתִּי עִם־מְתֵי־שָׁוְא	Lo yashavti im metei shav
from tricksters kept away,[5]	וְעִם נַעֲלָמִים לֹא אָבוֹא	ve'im na'alamim lo avo,
[5] I hated gangs of criminals,	שָׂנֵאתִי קְהַל מְרֵעִים	Saneti kehal mere'im
with rogues I would not stay.[6]	וְעִם־רְשָׁעִים לֹא אֵשֵׁב	ve'im resha'im lo eshev.
[6] I wash my hands in innocence	אֶרְחַץ בְּנִקָּיוֹן כַּפָּי	Erchatz benikayon kapai
your altar, God, to ring,[7]	וַאֲסֹבְבָה אֶת־מִזְבַּחֲךָ יהוה	va'asoveva et mizbachacha, Adonai,
[7] To raise my voice in thanks,	לַשְׁמֵעַ בְּקוֹל תּוֹדָה	Lashmi'a bekol todah
of all your miracles to sing.[8]	וּלְסַפֵּר כָּל־נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ	ulesaper kol nifle'otecha.

[1] "To/for David: / Judge/vindicate me, God, for I / in my simplicity have walked / and in God I have trusted; I would not falter *in my trust in God."*

[2] "Test me, God, and try me; / test/assay my kidneys and my heart." צָרְפָה may be have connotations of melting or smelting, as a metallurgist examines a metal. (Perhaps it's related to the name צרפת, the town in Sidon where Elijah helped the widow (1 Kings 17); in modern Hebrew it's the word for France.) Kidneys and heart were thought to have a role in cogitation and hence in sin and guilt. I thought modern readers would understand through and through more readily than kidneys and heart.

[3] A manuscript has צרופה

[4] "For your kindness *is* in front of my eyes / and I have made my way with your faith (faith in you or your faith in me, or both).

[5] "I have not sat down with people of equivocation (who don't clearly distinguish true from false) / and with hidden ones (people who hide things, perhaps like cardsharps) I would not come along."

[6] "I have hated a congregation of evildoers / and with bad people I would not sit/stay."

[7] "I would wash in cleanliness my palms / and I would encircle your altar, God."

[8] "To make heard with a voice of thanks/acknowledgement / and to recount all your wonders."

[8] O God, I love your domicile,	יְהוָה אָהַבְתִּי מְעוֹן בֵּיתֶךָ	Adonai, ahavti me'on beitecha
the place your glory dwells.[1]	וּמְקוֹם מִשְׁכַּן כְּבוֹדֶךָ	umekom mishkan kevodecha.
[9] Don't count me in with sinners,	אַל־תֹּאסֵף עִם־חַטָּאִים נַפְשִׁי	Al te'esof im chata'im nafshi
with blood-stained criminals,[2]	וְעִם־אַנְשֵׁי דָמִים חַיָּי	ve'im anshei damim chayai,
[10] Whose power is in treachery,	אֲשֶׁר־בִּידֵיהֶם זִמָּה	Asher bideihem zimah
whose expertise is fraud.[3]	וִימִינָם מָלְאָה שֹׁחַד	viminam malah shochad.
[11] I wish to lead a simple life—	וַאֲנִי בְּתֻמִּי אֵלֵךְ	Va'ani betumi elech—
grant this as my reward:[4]	פְּדֵנִי וְחָנֵּנִי	pedeni vechoneni:
[12] Set me to stand on firm terrain,	רַגְלִי עָמְדָה בְמִישׁוֹר	Ragli amdah vemishor,
God's blessings to proclaim.[5]	בְּמַקְהֲלִים אֲבָרֵךְ יְהוָה	bemak'helim avarech Adonai.

[1] "God, I have come to love the dwelling-place of your house / and the location of the sanctuary of your glory."
[2] "Don't include with sins/sinners my self / and with men of blood (violent criminals) my life."
[3] "In whose hands/power is deceit / and their right hand (their strength or talent or expertise) fills bribery (or financial shenanigans).
[4] "But I, in simplicity I would *like to* proceed; / take note of me and be nice to me."
[5] "My foot should stand on level ground / *and* in congregations (i.e., in public) I would bless God."

Psalm 27

Added to morning and evening services from the beginning of Elul until Hoshana Rabba.

[1] *A psalm* of David:	לְדָוִד	LeDavid
God lights my way and saves me from alarm.	יְהוָה אוֹרִי וְיִשְׁעִי מִמִּי אִירָא	Adonai ori veyish'i, mimi irah?
God is my life-force. Who can do me harm?	יְהוָה מָעוֹז־חַיַּי מִמִּי אֶפְחָד	Adonai ma'oz chayai, mimi efchad?
[2] When evil people came	בִּקְרֹב עָלַי מְרֵעִים	Bikrov alai mere'im
my flesh to eat,	לֶאֱכֹל אֶת־בְּשָׂרִי	le'echol et besari
my irksome foes slipped,	צָרַי וְאֹיְבַי לִי	tzarai ve'oy'vai li
fell down at my feet.[1]	הֵמָּה כָשְׁלוּ וְנָפָלוּ	hemah kashlu venafalu.
[3] Though I'm besieged,	אִם־תַּחֲנֶה עָלַי מַחֲנֶה	Im tachaneh alai machaneh
I won't give in to fear.	לֹא־יִירָא לִבִּי	lo yirah libi;
Though I face war,	אִם־תָּקוּם עָלַי מִלְחָמָה	im takum alai mil'chamah
I stand by this idea.	בְּזֹאת אֲנִי בוֹטֵחַ	bezot ani vote'ach.
[4] One thing I asked of God,	אַחַת שָׁאַלְתִּי מֵאֵת־יְהוָה	Achat sha'alti me'et Adonai,
for this I pray:	אוֹתָהּ אֲבַקֵּשׁ	otah avakesh:
to sit in God's own house	שִׁבְתִּי בְּבֵית־יְהוָה	shivti beveit Adonai
living each day,	כָּל־יְמֵי חַיַּי	kol yemei chayai,
to view God's grace,	לַחֲזוֹת בְּנֹעַם־יְהוָה	lachazot beno'am Adonai
and in *God's* Temple stay.[2]	וּלְבַקֵּר בְּהֵיכָלוֹ	ulevaker beheichalo.
[5] For *God* will keep me safe in evil days,	כִּי יִצְפְּנֵנִי בְּסֻכֹּה בְּיוֹם רָעָה	Ki yitzpeneni besuko beyom ra'ah,
hide me in secret tent	יַסְתִּרֵנִי בְּסֵתֶר אָהֳלוֹ	yastireni beseter oholo
on mountain raised.	בְּצוּר יְרוֹמְמֵנִי	betzur yeromemeni.

[1] "A Psalm of David: / God is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? / God is the power of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? / When evil people came at me, / to devour my flesh— / my troubles, my enemies— / they stumbled and fell!"

[2] "If an *army* camp camps against me, my heart will not fear. If war rises against me, this is what I'll rely on. One thing I asked from God, this is my request: to sit in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to view the sweetness of God and to be a visitor in *God's* Temple."

[6] And now I'm high above	וְעַתָּה יָרוּם רֹאשִׁי	Ve'atah yarum roshi
my enemies round;	עַל אֹיְבַי סְבִיבוֹתַי	al oy'vai sevivotai
I'll offer in *God's* tent	וְאֶזְבְּחָה בְאָהֳלוֹ	ve'ezbechah ve'oholo
my joyful sound.[1]	זִבְחֵי תְרוּעָה	zivchei teru'ah;
With song to God my music will resound.[2]	אָשִׁירָה וַאֲזַמְּרָה לַיהוה	ashirah va'azamrah lAdonai.
[7] God, hear my cry,	שְׁמַע־יהוה קוֹלִי אֶקְרָא	Shema Adonai, koli ekrah;
and answer in your grace.	וְחָנֵּנִי וַעֲנֵנִי	vechoneni va'aneni.
[8] My heart implored you, *God*, "O seek my face,"	לְךָ אָמַר לִבִּי בַּקְּשׁוּ פָנָי	Lecha amar libi, "Bakshu fanai."
As I seek yours.	אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ יהוה אֲבַקֵּשׁ	Et panecha Adonai avakesh.
[9] Don't hide your face from me,	אַל־תַּסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי	Al tas'ter panecha mimeni,
Don't send away your servant angrily.[3]	אַל־תַּט־בְּאַף עַבְדֶּךָ	al tat be'af avdecha.
You helped me;	עֶזְרָתִי הָיִיתָ	Ezrati hayita:
don't spurn or abandon me.[4]	אַל־תִּטְּשֵׁנִי וְאַל־תַּעַזְבֵנִי	al titsheni, ve'al ta'azveni.
O God, you save me, *time and time again.*	אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעִי	Elohei yish'i—
[10] My parents left me,	כִּי־אָבִי וְאִמִּי עֲזָבוּנִי	Ki avi ve'imi azavuni,
God will take me in.[5]	וַיהוה יַאַסְפֵנִי	vAdonai ya'asfeni.
[11] Show me your way, *God*,	הוֹרֵנִי יהוה דַּרְכֶּךָ	Horeni Adonai darkecha,
set me on level ground	וּנְחֵנִי בְּאֹרַח מִישׁוֹר	unecheni be'orach mishor
To stand against those who can boss me around![6]	לְמַעַן שׁוֹרְרָי	lema'an shorerai.

[1] "Zivchei teru'ah," sacrifices of shouting, could imply lots of animals bellowing at their slaughter. On the other hand, it may imply that a voice raised in song and praise is itself an acceptable offering, perhaps even an alternative to the blood and guts of the sacrificial system.

[2] "For *God* will hide me in *God's* shelter on a bad day, conceal me in the secrecy of *God's* tent, lift me up on a rock! And now my head is raised above my enemies all around, and I'll offer in *God's* tent sacrifices of joyous shouting, I'll sing and make music to God."

[3] "Listen, God; I'll call with my voice: take pity on me and answer me. My heart said to you, 'Seek my face.' Lord, I shall seek your face! Don't hide your face from me; Don't turn your servant away in anger."

[4] "You have been my help: Don't throw me off, don't abandon me."

[5] "O Lord, *you are* my savior. For my father and mother abandoned me, and God will take me in."

[6] "God, show me your path and lead me on a level road (no ups and downs!) because of those people who can ruin my day!" "Shorerai" means those who have power over me; they can ruin my day and put ups and downs in my daily path.

[12] Don't turn me over to my enemies,	אַל־תִּתְּנֵנִי בְּנֶפֶשׁ צָרָי	Al titneni benefesh tzarai,
False witnesses,	כִּי קָמוּ־בִי	ki kamu vi
who breathe brutality.[1]	עֵדֵי־שֶׁקֶר וְיִפַּח חָמָס	edei sheker vife'ach chamas.
[13] What had I been, had I not known I'd spy	לוּלֵא הֶאֱמַנְתִּי לִרְאוֹת	Lulei he'emanti lir'ot
God's goodness here on earth before I die?	בְּטוּב־יהוה בְּאֶרֶץ חַיִּים	betuv Adonai be'eretz chayim.
[14] Wait for God, *wait and trust.*	קַוֵּה אֶל־יהוה	Kaveh el Adonai:
Though God come late,	חֲזַק וְיַאֲמֵץ לִבֶּךָ	chazak veya'ametz libecha:
Be strong, take heart.	וְקַוֵּה אֶל־יהוה	vekaveh el Adonai.
And wait for God, *just wait.*[2]		

[1] "Don't turn me over to the will of my foes, for there have risen against me witnesses who lie, breathing violence."
[2] "If I had not trusted that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living *what would have become of me!* Wait for the Lord: keep your heart strong and resolute, and wait for the Lord."

Psalm 28

[1] *A poem* by David:	לְדָוִד	LeDavid:
To you, God, do I call;	אֵלֶיךָ יהוה אֶקְרָא	elecha, Adonai, ekrah;
my rock, don't fail to answer me	צוּרִי אַל־תֶּחֱרַשׁ מִמֶּנִּי	tzuri, al techerash mimeni,
for if you don't respond to me	פֶּן־תֶּחֱשֶׁה מִמֶּנִּי	pen techesheh mimeni
I may as well be in my tomb.[1]	וְנִמְשַׁלְתִּי עִם־יוֹרְדֵי בוֹר	venimshalti im yordei vor.
[2] Hear my prayers' sound	שְׁמַע קוֹל תַּחֲנוּנַי	Shema kol tachanunai
as I cry out for help from you,	בְּשַׁוְּעִי אֵלֶיךָ	beshavi elecha,
my *pleading* hands stretched out *in hope*	בְּנַשְּׂאִי יָדַי	benasi yadai
toward your most secluded room.[2]	אֶל־דְּבִיר קָדְשֶׁךָ	el devir kodshecha.
[3] Don't drag me off with villains	אַל־תִּמְשְׁכֵנִי עִם־רְשָׁעִים	Al timshecheni im resha'im
nor with sinful miscreants,	וְעִם־פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן	ve'im po'alei aven,
who speak with kindness to their friends,	דֹּבְרֵי שָׁלוֹם עִם־רֵעֵיהֶם	dovrei shalom im re'ehem—
then swindle them *unwittingly*![3]	וְרָעָה בִלְבָבָם	vera'ah bilvavam.
[4] Treat them as their actions warrant	תֵּן־לָהֶם כְּפָעֳלָם	Ten lehem kefo'olam
for the malice of their deeds;	וּכְרֹעַ מַעַלְלֵיהֶם	uchero'ah ma'aleleihem;
Treat them as their deeds deserve—	כְּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיהֶם תֵּן לָהֶם	kema'aseh yedeihem ten lahem—
recompense them fittingly!	הָשֵׁב גְּמוּלָם לָהֶם	hashev gemulam lahem.
[5] God's actions they can't understand,	כִּי לֹא יָבִינוּ אֶל־פְּעֻלֹּת יהוה	Ki lo yavinu el pe'ulot Adonai
nor God's *great* works. Let God command	וְאֶל־מַעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו	ve'el ma'aseh yadav;
ruin for them, not helping hand.[4]	יֶהֶרְסֵם וְלֹא יִבְנֵם	yehersem velo yivnem.
[6] Blessed be God, who has heard	בָּרוּךְ יהוה כִּי־שָׁמַע	Baruch Adonai, ki shama
the sound of *every* prayer*'s word.*[5]	קוֹל תַּחֲנוּנָי	kol tachanunai.

[1] "To/for David: / To you, God, I call; / my rock, do not be silent to me, / lest if you withhold response from me / then I would be compared with those who descend into a *burial* pit."

[2] "Toward the sanctuary of your holiness" or "your holy sanctuary" or "your inner sanctum"—perhaps referring to the location in the Temple or Mishkan which only the High Priest would enter, once a year, on Yom Kippur.

[3] "… Speakers of peace with their neighbors/friends, and *holding* evil in their heart"—i.e., they smile and reassure their acquaintances while plotting something nasty against the poor unsuspecting souls.

[4] "For they do not give attention to the deeds of God / nor to the work of *God's* hands. / May *God* tear them down, not build them up."

[5] "Blessed be God, who has listened to / the sound of my prayers."

[7] God is my power and my defence:	יְהוָה עֻזִּי וּמָגִנִּי	Adonai uzi umagini:
when I trust God, *God's* help I sense	בּוֹ בָטַח לִבִּי וְנֶעֱזָרְתִּי	bo vatach libi, vene'ezarti,
with all my heart; and I rejoice,	וַיַּעֲלֹז לִבִּי	vaya'aloz libi
my thanks in grateful song to voice.[1]	וּמִשִּׁירִי אֲהוֹדֶנּוּ	umishiri ahodenu.
[8] God is our[2] strength; *God* is the fort	יְהוָה עֹז־לָמוֹ וּמָעוֹז	Adonai oz lamo uma'oz
to save *God's* chosen sovereign.[3]	יְשׁוּעוֹת מְשִׁיחוֹ הוּא	yeshu'ot meshicho hu.
[9] *God,* save your folk;	הוֹשִׁיעָה אֶת־עַמֶּךָ	Hoshi'ah et amecha
your legacy bless	וּבָרֵךְ אֶת־נַחֲלָתֶךָ	uvarech et nachalatecha
forever, to sustain and tend.[4]	וּרְעֵם וְנַשְּׂאֵם עַד־הָעוֹלָם	ur'em venasem ad olam.

[1] "God is my power/might and my protection/defence; / in *God* my heart has trusted and I was helped / and my heart rejoiced / and from my song shall I acknowledge/thank *God."*
[2] "Their strength"
[3] "Anointed" or "Messiah" (which simply means "anointed").
[4] "Save your people / and bless your inheritance / and tend and uphold them forever."

Psalm 29

Recited to welcome Shabbat on Friday evening, and when returning the Torah scroll on Shabbat morning.

[1] A psalm of David:	מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	Mizmor leDavid:
To God, the mightiest people grant,	הָבוּ לַיהוה בְּנֵי אֵלִים	Havu lAdonai benei elim,
To God they grant glory and might;	הָבוּ לַיהוה כָּבוֹד וָעֹז	havu lAdonai kavod va'oz,
[2] To God they grant glory by right,	הָבוּ לַיהוה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ	havu lAdonai kevod shemo,
To God they bow, a holy sight.[1]	הִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לַיהוה בְּהַדְרַת־קֹדֶשׁ	hishtachavu lAdonai behadrat kodesh.
[3] God's voice will soar when waters roar,	קוֹל יהוה עַל־הַמָּיִם	Kol Adonai al hamayim,
The God of splendor lets them yell,	אֵל־הַכָּבוֹד הִרְעִים	El hakavod hir'im;
For God out-roars the oceans' swell.[2]	יהוה עַל־מַיִם רַבִּים	Adonai al mayim rabim.
[4] In all that's strong or fair,	קוֹל־יהוה בַּכֹּחַ	Kol Adonai bako'ach;
God's voice is somehow there.[3]	קוֹל יהוה בֶּהָדָר	kol Adonai behadar.
[5] God's *thunder* claps—the cedar snaps—	קוֹל יהוה שֹׁבֵר אֲרָזִים	Kol Adonai shover arazim,
Shattering the lofty tree	וַיְשַׁבֵּר יהוה	vayeshaber Adonai
In Lebanon where land leaps in air	אֶת־אַרְזֵי הַלְּבָנוֹן	et arzei haLevanon,
[6] With calf's agility,	וַיַּרְקִידֵם כְּמוֹ־עֵגֶל	vayarkidem kemo egel—
While Syrian hills dance their quadrilles	לְבָנוֹן וְשִׂרְיֹן	Levanon veSiryon—
Like oxen's progeny.[4]	כְּמוֹ בֶן־רְאֵמִים	kemo ven re'eimim.
[7] Lightning is God's voice too:	קוֹל־יהוה חֹצֵב	Kol Adonai chotzev,
Fire-blades slash and hew.[5]	לַהֲבוֹת אֵשׁ	lahavot esh.
[8] God's voice can make the desert quake,	קוֹל יהוה יָחִיל מִדְבָּר	Kol Adonai yachil midbar,
The Kadesh wasteland shake.	יָחִיל יהוה מִדְבַּר קָדֵשׁ	yachil Adonai midbar Kadesh.
[9] God's thunder startles *forest* deer,	קוֹל יהוה יְחוֹלֵל אַיָּלוֹת	Kol Adonai yecholel ayalot,
While trees shed all their leaves *in fear*	וַיֶּחֱשֹׂף יְעָרוֹת	vayechesof ye'arot,
And in *God's* shrine all cry, "Oh dear!"[6]	וּבְהֵיכָלוֹ כֻּלּוֹ אֹמֵר כָּבוֹד	uveheichalo, kulo omer, "Kavod!"

[1] "Grant to God, O children of the powerful, / grant to God glory and power; / grant to God the glory of *God's* reputation; / bow to God in *God's* splendor of holiness."
[2] "God's voice *is* above/more than the waters, / the God of glory made it loud, / Adonai *is* over the many waters."
[3] "God's voice *is* in strength; / God's voice *is* in splendor."
[4] "God's voice shatters cedars; / God has shattered / the cedars of Lebanon. / *God* will make them dance like a calf, / Lebanon and Syria, / like a young ox."
[5] "God's voice hews, / blades of flame."
[6] "Oh dear!" is literally, "Glory!"—presumably a cry of consternation.

[10] God, enthroned, sent forth the Flood;	יהוה לַמַּבּוּל יָשָׁב	Adonai laMabul yashav,
God's reign will never cease;	וַיֵּשֶׁב יהוה מֶלֶךְ לְעוֹלָם	vayeshev Adonai melech le'olam.
[11] God with *God's* people ever stood,	יהוה עֹז לְעַמּוֹ יִתֵּן	Adonai oz le'amo yiten,
And blesses them with lasting peace.[1]	יהוה יְבָרֵךְ אֶת־עַמּוֹ בַשָּׁלוֹם	Adonai yevarech et amo vashalom.

[1] "God sat *enthroned* at the *time of the* Flood, / God will sit as ruler forever. / God gives strength to *God's* people; / God will bless *God's* people with peace."

Psalm 30

Often used to conclude the first section of morning prayer.

[1] A psalm, a song to dedicate the Temple,	מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר־חֲנֻכַּת הַבַּיִת	Mizmor shir chanukat haBayit
by David:	לְדָוִד	leDavid:
[2] I exalt you, God; you raised me tall;	אֲרוֹמִמְךָ יהוה כִּי דִלִּיתָנִי	Aromimcha Adonai ki dilitani,
my enemies could not cheer my fall.[1]	וְלֹא־שִׂמַּחְתָּ אֹיְבַי לִי	velo simachta oyvai li.
[3] O God, to you I screamed in pain,	יהוה אֱלֹהָי שִׁוַּעְתִּי אֵלֶיךָ	Adonai Elohai shivati elecha,
my God, you made me well again.	וַתִּרְפָּאֵנִי	vatirpa'eni.
[4] O God, you raised my soul from She'ol,	יהוה הֶעֱלִיתָ מִן־שְׁאוֹל נַפְשִׁי	Adonai he'elita min She'ol nafshi,
so I survived the Pit alive.[2]	חִיִּיתַנִי מִיָּרְדִי־בוֹר	chiyitani miyordi vor.
[5] To God sing out, all you devout,	זַמְּרוּ לַיהוה חֲסִידָיו	Zamru lAdonai chasidav,
give thanks for holiness, speak out![3]	וְהוֹדוּ לְזֵכֶר קָדְשׁוֹ	vehodu lezecher kodsho.
[6] *God's* anger flashes past,	כִּי רֶגַע בְּאַפּוֹ	Ki rega be'apo,
God's favor ever lasts;	חַיִּים בִּרְצוֹנוֹ	chayim birtzono,
if weeping spends the night,	בָּעֶרֶב יָלִין בֶּכִי	ba'erev yalin bechi,
joy comes with morning light.[4]	וְלַבֹּקֶר רִנָּה	velaboker rinah.
[7] Poised and composed, I'd often say	וַאֲנִי אָמַרְתִּי בְשַׁלְוִי	Va'ani amarti veshalvi
I never could be pushed away.[5]	בַּל־אֶמּוֹט לְעוֹלָם	bal emot le'olam.
[8] O God, should you grant favor,	יהוה בִּרְצוֹנְךָ	Adonai birtzoncha
you'd stand me high, a tower of power;[6]	הֶעֱמַדְתָּה לְהַרְרִי עֹז	he'emad'ta lehar'ri oz,
but should you hide your face,	הִסְתַּרְתָּ פָּנֶיךָ	histarta fanecha,
I'd be abashed, *in terror cower*.	הָיִיתִי נִבְהָל	hayiti nivhal.
[9] To you, God, I shall call,	אֵלֶיךָ יהוה אֶקְרָא	Elecha Adonai ekra,
to my ruler bring my plea:	וְאֶל־אֲדֹנָי אֶתְחַנָּן	ve'el Adonai et'chanan.

[1] "I will make you high, God, because you picked me up / and did not let my enemies rejoice over me."
[2] "You made me live despite my going down *into the* Pit."
[3] You might translate this line, "give thanks for *God's* holiness," but that omits the word זכר, "memory of" (זכר refers not only to memory but also to thinking about or even pronouncing. The phrase seems to mean, "Give thanks for/by/through meditating/remembering/pronouncing *God's* holiness."
[4] "Because a moment in *God's* anger, / *brings* a lifetime in *God's* favor; / at evening weeping may *come and* stay overnight, / and in the morning rejoicing."
[5] "And I said in my confidence, / 'Lest I be moved forever.'"
[6] "You would cause *me* to stand, to raise *me* like a mountain of my strength"; the Hebrew is rather elliptical.

10 Could my silence serve a purpose,	מַה־בֶּצַע בְּדָמִי	Mah betzah bedomi
deep in my sepulcher;	בְּרִדְתִּי אֶל־שָׁחַת	berid'ti el shachat,
as *dry* dust could I thank you,	הֲיוֹדְךָ עָפָר	hayodcha afar,
your constant faith aver?[1]	הֲיַגִּיד אֲמִתֶּךָ	hayagid amitecha.
11 God, hear me graciously,	שְׁמַע־יְהוָה וְחָנֵּנִי	Shema Adonai vechoneini,
God, be a help to me!	יְהוָה הֱיֵה־עֹזֵר לִי	Adonai heyeh ozer li.
12 You changed to dance my mournful care,[2]	הָפַכְתָּ מִסְפְּדִי לְמָחוֹל לִי	Hafachta mispedi lemachol li,
for sack-cloth gave me joy to wear.[3]	פִּתַּחְתָּ שַׂקִּי וַתְּאַזְּרֵנִי שִׂמְחָה	pitachta saki, vat'azreini simchah.
13 That my best part[4] may sing *your praise,*	לְמַעַן יְזַמֶּרְךָ כָבוֹד	Lema'an yezamer'cha chavod
and not fall dumb;	וְלֹא יִדֹּם	velo yidom,
O God, my God, I'll bring you thanks	יְהוָה אֱלֹהַי	Adonai Elohai
for endless time to come.	לְעוֹלָם אוֹדֶךָּ	le'olam odeka.

[1] "What profit *could there be* in *spilling* my blood (or in my silence), / in my going down into my grave (or destruction); / would dust thank (or acknowledge) you, / would it tell your faithfulness?" Those who think בְּדָמִי means "in *spilling* my blood" will transliterate the word "bed**a**mi"; those who think it means "in my silence" will transliterate it "bed**o**mi." Perhaps the poet intends both meanings.

[2] מִסְפְּדִי, mourning, lament, funeral oration.

[3] שַׂקִּי is "my sackcloth" or mourning clothes (today, the widow's weeds of earlier times have often shrunk to a black ribbon). "Opened my sackcloth (took off my mourning clothes) and girded me with joy."

[4] כָּבוֹד, honor, glory; hence, the best of human nature.

Psalm 31

[1] For the leader, a tune for David.	לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	Lamnatze'ach, mizmor leDavid.
[2] In you, God, have I found refuge;	בְּךָ יהוה חָסִיתִי	Becha, Adonai, chasiti;
may I never be disheartened;	אַל־אֵבוֹשָׁה לְעוֹלָם	al evosha le'olam;
be my advocate and save me![1]	בְּצִדְקָתְךָ פַּלְּטֵנִי	betzidkat'cha falteni.
[3] Quick, listen to me![2] Save me!	הַטֵּה אֵלַי אָזְנְךָ מְהֵרָה הַצִּילֵנִי	Hateh elai oznecha; mehera hatzileni!
Be my stronghold of rock,	הֱיֵה לִי לְצוּר־מָעוֹז	Heyeh li letzur ma'oz,
a fortress to keep me safe.[3]	לְבֵית מְצוּדוֹת לְהוֹשִׁיעֵנִי	leveit metzudot, lehoshi'eni.
[4] My rock, my fortress—it's you;	כִּי־סַלְעִי וּמְצוּדָתִי אָתָּה	Ki sali umetzudati atah,
for your name's sake	וּלְמַעַן שִׁמְךָ	ulema'an shimcha
you lead and guide me.[4]	תַּנְחֵנִי וּתְנַהֲלֵנִי	tan'cheni utenahaleni.
[5] Extract me from this trap they laid for me,	תּוֹצִיאֵנִי מֵרֶשֶׁת זוּ טָמְנוּ לִי	Totzi'eni mereshet zu tamnu li
for you are my stronghold.	כִּי־אַתָּה מָעוּזִּי	ki atah ma'uzi.
[6] I will entrust my spirit to you:	בְּיָדְךָ אַפְקִיד רוּחִי	Beyad'cha afkid ruchi,
you have set me free, ruling God of truth![5]	פָּדִיתָה אוֹתִי יהוה אֵל אֱמֶת	padita oti, Adonai, El emet.
[7] I despise fruitless *moral* equivalence	שָׂנֵאתִי הַשֹּׁמְרִים הַבְלֵי־שָׁוְא	Saneti hashomrim havlei shav,
for I rely on God *for guidance*.[6]	וַאֲנִי אֶל־יהוה בָּטָחְתִּי	va'ani el Adonai batachti.
[8] I'll be happy and rejoice in your kindness,	אָגִילָה וְאֶשְׂמְחָה בְּחַסְדֶּךָ	Agila ve'esmecha bechasdecha,
that you saw my humiliation	אֲשֶׁר רָאִיתָ אֶת־עָנְיִי	asher ra'ita et onyi,
and noted my personal troubles,	יָדַעְתָּ בְּצָרוֹת נַפְשִׁי	yadata betzarot nafshi,

[1] "In your righteousness/justification, save me." The root of בְּצִדְקָתְךָ means right in the moral and the legal sense. If your lawyer defends you successfully, you are judged innocent and "right." I think the poet is asking God to provide support and advocacy against legal as well as other adversaries.

[2] "Incline your ear to me."

[3] "Be for me a rock for a fortress/stronghold, / for a house/building of stronghold to save me." The stronghold of rock could be a natural formation, whereas the fortress could be a defensive structure such as a castle keep.

[4] "And for the sake of your name (i.e., to preserve the reputation you have earned as defender of those who rely on you), you will *continue to* lead me and guide me,"

[5] "Into your hand (i.e., into your power) I commend my spirit; you have taken notice of me (so you know who I am; or, you redeemed me), Ruler, God of truth."

[6] "I have come to hate those who regard/respect the fruitless *views of moral* equivalence." Some say there is no true right and wrong, and the poet despises such people because s/he relies on God's moral guidance. (Though of course Bible-thumping self-righteous people are not necessarily moral.)

[9] *That you* didn't shut me up in my enemy's grasp	וְלֹא הִסְגַּרְתַּנִי בְּיַד־אוֹיֵב	Velo hisgartani beyad oyev;
but left me free to walk away.[1]	הֶעֱמַדְתָּ בַמֶּרְחָב רַגְלָי	he'emadta vamer'chav raglai.
[10] Pity me, God, for I am in trouble;	חָנֵּנִי יהוה כִּי צַר־לִי	Choneni, Adonai, ki tzar li;
vexation has drained	עָשְׁשָׁה בְכַעַס	ashesha vecha'as
my tears, my vigor and verve.[2]	עֵינִי נַפְשִׁי וּבִטְנִי	eini, nafshi uvitni.
[11] My life is worn out with worry,	כִּי כָלוּ בְיָגוֹן חַיַּי	Ki chalu veyagon chayai,
my years weakened with groaning;	וּשְׁנוֹתַי בַּאֲנָחָה כָּשַׁל	ushenatai ba'anachah kashal;
guilt has drained my strength and resolve.[3]	בַּעֲוֹנִי כֹחִי וַעֲצָמַי עָשְׁשׁוּ	ba'avoni chochi va'atzamai asheshu.
[12] All my foes have made me an object of scorn,	מִכֹּל־צֹרְרַי הָיִיתִי חֶרְפָּה	Mikol tzorerai hayiti cherpah
especially among my neighbors,	וְלִשְׁכֵנַי מְאֹד	velishachenai me'od,
an object of terror to my acquaintances—	וּפַחַד לְמְיֻדָּעָי	ufachad limyuda'ai—
whoever sees me outside avoids me.[4]	רֹאַי בַּחוּץ נָדְדוּ מִמֶּנִּי	ro'ai bachutz nadadu mimeni.
[13] I'm ignored as if I were dead;	נִשְׁכַּחְתִּי כְּמֵת מִלֵּב	Nishkachti kemet milev;
I'm *treated* like an object *given up for* lost.[5]	הָיִיתִי כִּכְלִי אֹבֵד	hayiti kichli oved.
[14] *Oh,* I heard them *all* slandering *me,*	כִּי שָׁמַעְתִּי דִּבַּת רַבִּים	Ki shamati dibat rabim,
all anxious around *me,*	מָגוֹר מִסָּבִיב	magor misaviv,
as they laid their plot against me	בְּהִוָּסְדָם יַחַד עָלַי	behivasdam yachad alai—
and conspired to take my life[6]	לָקַחַת נַפְשִׁי זָמָמוּ	lakachat nafshi zamamu.
[15] While I relied on you, God,	וַאֲנִי עָלֶיךָ בָטַחְתִּי יהוה	Va'ani alecha vatachti, Adonai,
and declared you are my God.	אָמַרְתִּי אֱלֹהַי אָתָּה	amarti Elohai atah.

[1] "And you did not close me in the hand of my enemy— / you stood my feet/legs in the wide expanse."
[2] "Be gracious to me, God, for constraint is at me (I am constrained). / Worn away in anger/annoyance are / my eye (tears), my self (personality, leaving me depressed and exhausted) and my belly (my ability to take action, since gastrointestinal distress is debilitating)."
[3] "By/through *guilt for* my sinfulness my strength and my bones/resolve are drained."
[4] "From (because of) all my troubles/tormentors I have become an *object of* scorn / and for my neighbors very much / and a fear/horror for those who know me; / those who see me outside (in the street) wander/flee away from me."
[5] "I-have-been-forgotten like-a-dead-person from-the-mind; / I-have-become like-an-article/object *that was* lost."
[6] "For I-have-heard slander-of many, / fear from-around, / as-they-establish *a plan* together against-me; / to-take my-life have-they-conspired."

[16] The events of my life[1] are in your hands;	בְּיָדְךָ עִתֹּתָי	Beyadcha itotai;
save me from the power of my enemies	הַצִּילֵנִי מִיַּד־אוֹיְבַי	hatzileni miyad oyvai
and from those who pursue me.	וּמֵרֹדְפָי	umerodfai.
[17] Smile upon me (your servant);[2]	הָאִירָה פָנֶיךָ עַל־עַבְדֶּךָ	Ha'ira fanecha al avdecha;
rescue me with your kindness.	הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי בְחַסְדֶּךָ	hoshi'eni vechasdecha.
[18] God, let me not feel shame	יהוה אַל־אֵבוֹשָׁה	Adonai, al evosha
that I called on you *for help;*	כִּי קְרָאתִיךָ	ki keraticha;
let the wicked feel shame	יֵבֹשׁוּ רְשָׁעִים	yevoshu resha'im—
and be silenced in the grave.[3]	יִדְמוּ לִשְׁאוֹל	yidmu liShe'ol.
[19] Let lying lips be silenced	תֵּאָלַמְנָה שִׂפְתֵי שָׁקֶר	Te'alamna siftei shahker
that proudly slander the righteous	הַדֹּבְרוֹת עַל־צַדִּיק עָתָק	hadovrot al tzadik atak
with a self-righteous sneer.[4]	בְּגַאֲוָה וָבוּז	bega'ava vavuz.
[20] How great is the goodness	מָה רַב־טוּבְךָ	Mah rav tuvcha
you have stored away for those who revere you,	אֲשֶׁר־צָפַנְתָּ לִירֵאֶיךָ	asher tzafanta lire'echa,
made for those who take refuge in you	פָּעַלְתָּ לַחוֹסִים בָּךְ	pa'alta lachosim bach
in sight of *all those* other people.[5]	נֶגֶד בְּנֵי אָדָם	neged benei adam.
[21] Shield them with your sheltering presence;	תַּסְתִּירֵם בְּסֵתֶר פָּנֶיךָ	Tastirem beseter panecha;
hide them away from opposition,	מֵרֻכְסֵי אִישׁ תִּצְפְּנֵם	meruchsei ish titzpenem,
from quarrelsome tongues.[6]	בְּסֻכָּה מֵרִיב לְשֹׁנוֹת	besukah meriv leshonot.
[22] Blessed be God,	בָּרוּךְ יהוה	Baruch Adonai
who revealed *God's* kindness to me	כִּי הִפְלִיא חַסְדּוֹ לִי	ki hifli chasdo li
in a fortified town …	בְּעִיר מָצוֹר	be'ir matzor …

[1] "My times"; good times and bad times all come from God, say the commentators.
[2] "Make-shine your-presence/face/countenance upon-your-servant."
[3] "She'ol," the underworld or Unknown.
[4] "Let-them-be-silenced, lips-of falsehood / that-speak against-the-righteous-person arrogance / with-arrogance and-contempt."
[5] "Against children of *the* earthling"; the psalmist hopes for triumphant salvation in sight of all those who don't deserve it.
[6] "Conceal-them in-the-shelter-of your-presence; / from-the-ridges/obstacles-of people store-them-away in-a-shelter, / from-the-quarreling-of tongues."

[23] While I was too quick to say.	וַאֲנִי אָמַרְתִּי בְחָפְזִי	Va'ani amarti bechofzi,
"I'm cut off from your sight."	נִגְרַזְתִּי מִנֶּגֶד עֵינֶיךָ	"Nigrazti mineged einecha."
Then you listened to the sound of my pleas	אָכֵן שָׁמַעְתָּ קוֹל תַּחֲנוּנַי	Achen shamata kol tachanunai
as I cried for you.	בְּשַׁוְּעִי אֵלֶיךָ	beshavi elecha.
[24] All you who are devoted, love God,	אֶהֱבוּ אֶת־יהוה כָּל־חֲסִידָיו	Ehevu et Adonai kol chasidav;
for God preserves the faithful	אֱמוּנִים נֹצֵר יהוה	emunim notzer Adonai,
but amply pays back the proud offender.[1]	וּמְשַׁלֵּם עַל־יֶתֶר עֹשֵׂה גַאֲוָה	umeshalem al yeter oseh ga'avah.
[25] Be strong and resolute,	חִזְקוּ וְיַאֲמֵץ לְבַבְכֶם	Chizku veya'ametz levav'chem,
all who wait for God.	כָּל־הַמְיַחֲלִים לַיהוה	kol hamyachalim lAdonai.

[1] "And-repays upon-more (i.e., more than required) the-one-who-acts *with*-arrogance."

Psalm 32

Sometimes added to the evening service on a Monday;
some use this psalm for the daily psalm on Yom Kippur.

[1] A teaching-poem[1] by David:	לְדָוִד מַשְׂכִּיל	LeDavid maskil:
lucky is one whose fault is borne,	אַשְׁרֵי נְשׂוּי־פֶּשַׁע	Ashrei nesu'i peshah,
with wrongs concealed *from penalty,*[2]	כְּסוּי חַטָּאָה	kesu'i chata'ah
[2] Lucky is one—	אַשְׁרֵי אָדָם	Ashrei adam
whose sins God never calculates	לֹא יַחְשֹׁב יהוה לוֹ עָוֹן	lo yachshov Adonai lo avon
(though *God* abhors dishonesty).[3]	וְאֵין בְּרוּחוֹ רְמִיָּה	ve'ein berucho remiyah.
[3] When *of my faults* I said no word,	כִּי־הֶחֱרַשְׁתִּי	Ki hecherashti
my power ebbed, I sobbed all day,[4]	בָּלוּ עֲצָמַי בְּשַׁאֲגָתִי כָּל־הַיּוֹם	balu atzamai besha'agati kol hayom.
[4] For day and night I felt your might:	כִּי יוֹמָם וָלַיְלָה תִּכְבַּד עָלַי יָדֶךָ	Ki yomam valaila tichbad alai yadecha:
my moist *loam* turned to arid *clay*.[5]	נֶהְפַּךְ לְשַׁדִּי בְּחַרְבֹנֵי קָיִץ	nehpach leshadi becharvonei kayitz.
Selah.	סֶלָה	Selah.
[5] I spoke my faults, my sins I bared.	חַטָּאתִי אוֹדִיעֲךָ וַעֲוֹנִי לֹא־כִסִּיתִי	Chatati odi'acha va'avoni lo chisiti;
"I'll tell God of my sins," I said;	אָמַרְתִּי אוֹדֶה עֲלֵי פְשָׁעַי לַיהוה	Amarti, "Odeh alei fesha'ai lAdonai."
you bore all wrongs *that I declared.* Selah.	וְאַתָּה נָשָׂאתָ עֲוֹן חַטָּאתִי סֶלָה	Ve'atah nasata avon chatati. Selah.

[1] If the Hebrew word מַשְׂכִּיל is related to the root שכל, common sense, it may mean a poem that imbues people with שכל, common sense or intelligence, as in verse 8.

[2] "Happy/Lucky the-tolerated-of-sin (one who hasn't been punished yet), hidden of transgression." Happy used to refer to someone who benefited from happenstance, so it's like the modern word lucky. The poet is feeling pretty good because he knows he's done wrong but hasn't had to pay for it—yet.

[3] "Lucky *is* a-man *of whom* God does not calculate his wrongdoing, and in his spirit/character is no deception"; the spirit/character might be the man's, might be God's, and in this translation we attribute it to God. So the poet still thinks God's letting him off, but a little voice tells him this can't go on for long because God's going to get at the truth.

[4] "When/because I was silent *about my faults* my bones weakened while I moaned (some say "roared") all the day." I like to think this means that the poet failed to admit his faults and as this tool a toll on his energy and equanimity, reducing him to a sniveling weakling.

[5] "For day and night would-be-heavy upon-me your-hand/power (you treated me heavy-handedly); / it was-turned, my-moisture, into/through the-drynesses/heats-of summer (my moisture/energy withered)." I was a sniveling weakling because God treated me pretty roughly, and all my energy dried up. Selah is of uncertain meaning.

[6] Let all devout ones frame to you—	עַל־זֹאת יִתְפַּלֵּל כָּל־חָסִיד	Al zot, yitpalel kol chasid
when you are found—their speech;	אֵלֶיךָ לְעֵת מְצֹא	elecha le'et metzo.
though surging torrents overflow	רַק לְשֵׁטֶף מַיִם רַבִּים	Rak leshetef mayim rabim
God lies beyond their reach.[1]	אֵלָיו לֹא יַגִּיעוּ	elav lo yagi'u.
[7] You shield me—from my foe defend—	אַתָּה סֵתֶר לִי מִצַּר תִּצְּרֵנִי	Atah seter li mitzar titzreni;
surrounding me with boisterous friends.[2] Selah.	רָנֵי פַלֵּט תְּסוֹבְבֵנִי סֶלָה	ranei falet tesoveveni. Selah.
[8] I'll make you wise—	אַשְׂכִּילְךָ	Askil'cha
the proper path advise—	וְאוֹרְךָ בְּדֶרֶךְ־זוּ תֵלֵךְ	ve'or'cha bederech zu telech;
and guide you, ever watching with my eyes.[3]	אִיעֲצָה עָלֶיךָ עֵינִי	i'atzah alecha eini.
[9] Don't be like horse or mule,	אַל־תִּהְיוּ כְּסוּס כְּפֶרֶד	Al tiheyu kesus, kefered:
brute with no sense	אֵין הָבִין	ein havin,
with bit and bridle decked—	בְּמֶתֶג־וָרֶסֶן עֶדְיִי	bemeteg varesen edyo
to curb offense.[4]	לִבְלוֹם בַּל קְרֹב אֵלֶיךָ	livlom bal kerov elecha.
[10] The wicked many griefs must bear;	רַבִּים מַכְאוֹבִים לָרָשָׁע	Rabim machovim larashah,
the faithful	וְהַבּוֹטֵחַ בַּיהוָה	vehabote'ach bAdonai,
rest within God's care.[5]	חֶסֶד יְסוֹבְבֶנּוּ	chesed yesovevenu.
[11] Rejoice in God, just folk, and cheer,	שִׂמְחוּ בַיהוָה וְגִילוּ צַדִּיקִים	Simchu vAdonai vegilu tzadikim
rejoice, all you whose thoughts are clear.[6]	וְהַרְנִינוּ כָּל־יִשְׁרֵי־לֵב	veharninu kol yishrei lev.

[1] "Upon-this/for-this-*reason*, let-pray every devout-one / to-you at-a-time *of* finding. / Only/however at-overflowing-of water abundant, / to-him not can-they-reach." At-a-time *of* finding: a time when God can be found or reached through devout prayer, as imagined in Psalm 69:14; BT Berachot 8a discusses the phrase. Any time is good for prayer, but sometimes God seems more accessible or responsive than others. Poor Claudius, trying to repent: "My words fly up, my thoughts remain below" (Hamlet, 3:3). However, prayer is difficult because even with torrents of tears we can't be confident that we'll bridge the gap between human and divine.

[2] "You *are* a hiding-place for me; from trouble/enemy you save/protect me; / *with* joyful shouts of rescue you surround me." I presume the shouts of rescue are from the rescue party whooping and hollering as they swoop in to save the embattled poet.

[3] I shall give you understanding / and show you on which path you are to go; I shall provide advice for you *with* my eye"; i.e., (assuming that God speaks verses 8 and 9) God promises to watch the poet and set him on the right path. "I shall give you understanding," from the same root as the name for this type of poem.

[4] Some translators find the last line of this verse difficult. לִבְלוֹם means to restrain, as with a bridle or bit; בַּל קְרֹב אֵלֶיךָ is "lest coming-close to-you"; this could mean that the bridle prevents the animal from approaching its master with rebellious intentions, or it could mean that the bridle restricts the animal lest it fail to approach at the master's wish.

[5] "Many pains/headaches *are* for the wicked *person,* / while the one who trusts in God, / kindness surrounds him."

[6] "Rejoice in God and take delight, righteous ones, / and shout for joy everyone of the upright heart."

Psalm 33

Added to the early morning service on Shabbat, festivals and Hoshana Rabbba.

[1] You righteous, rejoice in God;	רַנְּנוּ צַדִּיקִים בַּיהוה	Ranenu, tzadikim, bAdonai,
for upright people, giving praise feels right.	לַיְשָׁרִים נָאוָה תְהִלָּה	la'y'sharim nava tehilah.
[2] Give thanks to God with the harp,	הוֹדוּ לַיהוה בְּכִנּוֹר	Hodu lAdonai bechinor,
play for God on the ten-stringed lyre.	בְּנֵבֶל עָשׂוֹר זַמְּרוּ־לוֹ	benevel asor zamru lo.
[3] Sing to *God* a new song;	שִׁירוּ־לוֹ שִׁיר חָדָשׁ	Shiru lo shir chadash,
add shouts to make the music better!	הֵיטִיבוּ נַגֵּן בִּתְרוּעָה	hetivu nagen bitru'ah.
[4] For God's word is direct	כִּי־יָשָׁר דְּבַר־יהוה	Ki yashar devar Adonai,
and all *God's* works are made with truth.	וְכָל־מַעֲשֵׂהוּ בֶּאֱמוּנָה	vechol ma'asehu be'emunah.
[5] *God* loves justice and judgement;	אֹהֵב צְדָקָה וּמִשְׁפָּט	Ohev tzedakah umishpat,
God's kindness fills the earth.	חֶסֶד יהוה מָלְאָה הָאָרֶץ	chesed Adonai mal'ah ha'aretz.
[6] By God's command the skies were made	בִּדְבַר יהוה שָׁמַיִם נַעֲשׂוּ	Bidvar Adonai shamayim na'asu
and all their hosts by *God's* breath.	וּבְרוּחַ פִּיו כָּל־צְבָאָם	uveru'ach piv kol tzeva'am.
[7] *God* masses seas in heaping waves[1]	כֹּנֵס כַּנֵּד מֵי הַיָּם	Koness kaned mei hayam
and stores in vaults the surging deeps.	נֹתֵן בְּאֹצָרוֹת תְּהוֹמוֹת	noten be'otzarot tehomot.
[8] All the earth *stands* in fear of God,	יִירְאוּ מֵיהוה כָּל־הָאָרֶץ	Yir'u me'Adonai kol ha'aretz,
all earth-dwellers dread *God.*	מִמֶּנּוּ יָגוּרוּ כֹּל־יֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל	mimenu yaguru kol yoshvei tevel.
[9] For *God* spoke, and so it was;	כִּי הוּא אָמַר וַיֶּהִי	Ki hu amar, vayehi:
Gave the order, and it was done.[2]	הוּא־צִוָּה וַיַּעֲמֹד	hu tziva, vaya'amod.
[10] God has upset the nations' *evil* plots,	יהוה הֵפִיר עֲצַת־גּוֹיִם	Adonai hefir atzat goyim,
thwarted the peoples' *wicked* plans,	הֵנִיא מַחְשְׁבוֹת עַמִּים	heni machshevot amim.
[11] But God's plan stands forever,	עֲצַת יהוה לְעוֹלָם תַּעֲמֹד	Atzat Adonai le'olam ta'amod,
God's strategy lasts from age to age.	מַחְשְׁבוֹת לִבּוֹ לְדֹר וָדֹר	machshevot libo ledor vador.
[12] Lucky the people who worship God,	אַשְׁרֵי הַגּוֹי אֲשֶׁר־יהוה אֱלֹהָיו	Ashrei hagoy asher Adonai Elohav,
the people *God* chose to possess.	הָעָם בָּחַר לְנַחֲלָה לוֹ	ha'am bachar lenachalah lo.
[13] From heaven, God looked down	מִשָּׁמַיִם הִבִּיט יהוה	Mishamayim hibit Adonai,
and saw all of humanity.	רָאָה אֶת־כָּל־בְּנֵי הָאָדָם	ra'ah et-kol-benei ha'adam.

[1] כַּנֵּד—"like a mound/heap/jar." The idea is that God has complete control of this slippery, surging stuff; it goes wherever God wants to put it, whether into mountainous waves or into currents far below the surface. Literally, "*God* gathers like a heap (or inserts as *in* a jar) the waters of the sea, places into storehouses the deeps."

[2] וַיַּעֲמֹד is from the root for "stand"; God gave the command, and—one might say—it became a "standing order."

[14] From where *God* sits, *God* watched	מִמְּכוֹן־שִׁבְתּוֹ הִשְׁגִּיחַ	Mimchon shivto hishgi'ach,
all those who dwell on earth—	אֶל כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ	el kol yoshvei ha'aretz.
[15] *God* forms their hearts as one	הַיֹּצֵר יַחַד לִבָּם	Hayotzer yachad libam,
and understands all they do.	הַמֵּבִין אֶל־כָּל־מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם	hamevin el kol ma'aseihem.
[16] No king is saved by a great army,	אֵין־הַמֶּלֶךְ נוֹשָׁע בְּרָב־חָיִל	Ein hamelech nosha berav chayil,
no hero rescued by great strength.	גִּבּוֹר לֹא־יִנָּצֵל בְּרָב־כֹּחַ	gibor lo yinatzel berav ko'ach.
[17] A horse can never keep you free	שֶׁקֶר הַסּוּס לִתְשׁוּעָה	Sheker hasus lit'shu'ah,
nor can its great power rescue you.[1]	וּבְרֹב חֵילוֹ לֹא יְמַלֵּט	uverov cheilo lo yimalet.
[18] See, God's eye is on those who fear *God*,	הִנֵּה עֵין יהוה אֶל־יְרֵאָיו	Hineh, ein Adonai el yere'av,
those who hope for God's kindness,	לַמְיַחֲלִים לְחַסְדּוֹ	lamyachalim lechasdo.
[19] *Hoping God will* save their lives from death	לְהַצִּיל מִמָּוֶת נַפְשָׁם	Lehatzil mimavet nafsham,
and keep them alive in famine.	וּלְחַיּוֹתָם בָּרָעָב	ulechayotam bara'av.
[20] Our souls wait for God,	נַפְשֵׁנוּ חִכְּתָה לַיהוה	Nafsheinu chiktah lAdonai,
who helps and protects us.	עֶזְרֵנוּ וּמָגִנֵּנוּ הוּא	ezrenu umaginenu hu.
[21] We find delight in *God,*	כִּי־בוֹ יִשְׂמַח לִבֵּנוּ	Ki vo yismach libenu,
in whose holy name we place our trust.	כִּי בְשֵׁם קָדְשׁוֹ בָּטָחְנוּ	ki veshem kodsho vatachnu.
[22] God, let your kindness be with us,	יְהִי־חַסְדְּךָ יהוה עָלֵינוּ	Yehi chasdecha Adonai aleinu,
just as we have hoped for you.	כַּאֲשֶׁר יִחַלְנוּ לָךְ	ka'asher yichalnu lach.

[1] שֶׁקֶר "vain"; מלט "rescue." Literally, "Useless *is* the-horse for-saving, / and-with-the-abundance-of its-power (or, "the-*king's*-*fighting*-force") not shall-it-rescue."

Psalm 34

Acrostic poem, added to the early morning service on Shabbat, festivals and Hoshana Rabba.

[1] Of David:	לְדָוִד	LeDavid:
when he changed his behavior	בְּשַׁנּוֹתוֹ אֶת־טַעְמוֹ	beshanoto et ta'mo
to seem mad in front of Avimelech,[1]	לִפְנֵי אֲבִימֶלֶךְ	lifnei Avimelech,
who sent him away.	וַיְגָרְשֵׁהוּ וַיֵּלַךְ	vay'garshehu vayelach.
[2] I will bless God at all times;	אֲבָרְכָה אֶת־יהוה בְּכָל־עֵת	**A**var'cha et-Adonai bechol et;
God's praise *will be* always in my mouth.	תָּמִיד תְּהִלָּתוֹ בְּפִי	tamid tehilato befi.
[3] In God my soul will find praise;	בַּיהוה תִּתְהַלֵּל נַפְשִׁי	**B**Adonai tit'halel nafshi;
the poor will hear and rejoice.	יִשְׁמְעוּ עֲנָוִים וְיִשְׂמָחוּ	yishme'u anavim veyismachu.
[4] Make God great with me	גַּדְּלוּ לַיהוה אִתִּי	**G**adlu lAdonai iti,
and together we'll exalt[2] God's name.	וּנְרוֹמְמָה שְׁמוֹ יַחְדָּו	uneromamah shemo yachdav.
[5] I sought God; God answered me	דָּרַשְׁתִּי אֶת־יהוה וְעָנָנִי	**D**arashti et Adonai ve'anani,
and saved me from all my fears.	וּמִכָּל־מְגוּרוֹתַי הִצִּילָנִי	umikol megurotai hitzilani.
[6] They *who* looked to *God* shone *with joy*;	הִבִּיטוּ אֵלָיו וְנָהָרוּ	**H**ibitu elav venaharu,
their faces were never downcast.[3]	וּפְנֵיהֶם אַל־יֶחְפָּרוּ	ufeneihem al yechparu.
[7] This beggar cried, and God heard	זֶה עָנִי קָרָא וַיהוה שָׁמֵעַ	**Z**eh ani kara vAdonai shame'ah,
and saved him from all his troubles.	וּמִכָּל־צָרוֹתָיו הוֹשִׁיעוֹ	umikol tzarotav hoshi'o.
[8] God's angel[4] camps	חֹנֶה מַלְאַךְ־יהוה	**C**honeh mal'ach Adonai
around those who fear *God*, to save them.	סָבִיב לִירֵאָיו וַיְחַלְּצֵם	saviv lire'av, vayechaltzem.
[9] Taste, and see how good is God;	טַעֲמוּ וּרְאוּ כִּי־טוֹב יהוה	**T**a'amu ure'u ki tov Adonai;
lucky is the hero who flees to *God*.[5]	אַשְׁרֵי הַגֶּבֶר יֶחֱסֶה־בּוֹ	ashrei hagever yecheseh bo.
[10] Stand in awe of God, you holy ones;	יְרָאוּ אֶת־יהוה קְדֹשָׁיו	**Y**'ru et Adonai kedoshav,
Those who fear God never lack.	כִּי־אֵין מַחְסוֹר לִירֵאָיו	ki ein machsor lire'av.

[1] See I Sam 21:11-16, where David escapes from Achish, the king of Gath. Maybe Achish also had the royal name Avimelech.

[2] The Hebrew word means "make high," from the root רם, and so does "exalt."

[3] Or "They looked to *God* and were radiant, and their faces were not downcast."

[4] What is an angel? A messenger, perhaps—or the method by which a message comes from God. The term "angel" could be a symbol of what happens when we perceive God's influence in the world. מַלְאָךְ is angel, מְלָאכָה is work, so perhaps an angel is one who does God's work, a human agent as much as a supernatural being.

[5] "Lucky/happy is the strong person who finds shelter in *God*." Even the most powerful or accomplished people are sometimes on the run, and they find shelter in God.

[11] Even lion cubs go poor and hungry,	כְּפִירִים רָשׁוּ וְרָעֵבוּ	**K**efirim rashu vera'evu,
but those who seek God	וְדֹרְשֵׁי יהוה	vedorshei Adonai
will lack nothing that's good.	לֹא־יַחְסְרוּ כָל־טוֹב	lo yachseru chol tov.
[12] Come on, children; listen to me:	לְכוּ־בָנִים שִׁמְעוּ־לִי	**L**echu vanim, shim'u li:
respect for God I'll teach you.	יִרְאַת יהוה אֲלַמֶּדְכֶם	yir'at Adonai alamedchem.
[13] Who is it that enjoys life,	מִי־הָאִישׁ הֶחָפֵץ חַיִּים	**M**i ha'ish hechafetz chayim,
Loves each day to see *what* good *it holds?*	אֹהֵב יָמִים לִרְאוֹת טוֹב	ohev yamim lir'ot tov.
[14] Keep your tongue from evil words	נְצֹר לְשׁוֹנְךָ מֵרָע	**N**etsor leshoncha merah
and your lips from speaking lies.	וּשְׂפָתֶיךָ מִדַּבֵּר מִרְמָה	usefatecha midaber mirmah.
[15] Turn away from bad and do good,	סוּר מֵרָע וַעֲשֵׂה־טוֹב	**S**ur merah va'aseh tov,
seek peace and pursue it.	בַּקֵּשׁ שָׁלוֹם וְרָדְפֵהוּ	bakesh shalom verodfehu.
[16] God's eyes are on the righteous	עֵינֵי יהוה אֶל־צַדִּיקִים	**E**inei Adonai el tzadikim,
and God's ears are *tuned* to their cry.	וְאָזְנָיו אֶל־שַׁוְעָתָם	ve'oznav el shav'atam.
[17] God is watching those who do wrong,	פְּנֵי יהוה בְּעֹשֵׂי רָע	**P**enei Adonai be'osei ra,
to wipe all traces of them from the earth.[1]	לְהַכְרִית מֵאֶרֶץ זִכְרָם	lehachrit me'eretz zichram.
[18] They cried; God listened	צָעֲקוּ וַיהוה שָׁמֵעַ	**T**za'aku, vAdonai shame'ah,
and saved them from all their trouble.	וּמִכָּל־צָרוֹתָם הִצִּילָם	umikol tzarotam hitzilam.
[19] God is close when your heart is broken[2]	קָרוֹב יהוה לְנִשְׁבְּרֵי־לֵב	**K**arov Adonai lenishberei lev,
and saves you when your spirit is crushed.	וְאֶת־דַּכְּאֵי־רוּחַ יוֹשִׁיעַ	ve'et dakei ru'ach yoshi'ah.
[20] Plentiful are the troubles of the righteous,	רַבּוֹת רָעוֹת צַדִּיק	**R**abot ra'ot tzadik,
and God saves them from every one.	וּמִכֻּלָּם יַצִּילֶנּוּ יהוה	umikulam yatzilenu Adonai.
[21] *God* guards every bone in their body;	שֹׁמֵר כָּל־עַצְמוֹתָיו	**S**homer kol atzmotav;
not one of them is broken.	אַחַת מֵהֵנָּה לֹא נִשְׁבָּרָה	achat mehenah lo nishbarah.
[22] But evil brings death to the wicked,	תְּמוֹתֵת רָשָׁע רָעָה	**T**emotet rashah ra'ah,
and enemies of the good are condemned.	וְשֹׂנְאֵי צַדִּיק יֶאְשָׁמוּ	veson'ei tzadik yeshamu.
[23] *God* is watching out for *God's* servants;	פּוֹדֶה יהוה נֶפֶשׁ עֲבָדָיו	Podeh Adonai nefesh avadav,
all who take shelter in God will survive.[3]	וְלֹא יֶאְשְׁמוּ כָּל־הַחֹסִים בּוֹ	velo ye'shemu kol hachosim bo.

[1] "To root out their memory from the earth."
[2] "To those whose heart is broken."
[3] "*God* takes note of the person/soul of those who serve *God,* / and they will not be destroyed, all who take shelter in *God."*

Psalm 35

[1] *A poem* by David.	לְדָוִד	LeDavid.
God, resist those who oppose me;	רִיבָה יהוה אֶת־יְרִיבַי	Rivah, Adonai, et yerivai,
attack those who attack me.	לְחַם אֶת־לֹחֲמָי	lecham et lochamai.
[2] Grab *your* shield and spike[1]	הַחֲזֵק מָגֵן וְצִנָּה	Hachazek magen vetzinah
and stand to help me.	וְקוּמָה בְּעֶזְרָתִי	vekumah be'ezrati.
[3] Pull out[2] *your* spear	וְהָרֵק חֲנִית	Veharek chanit
and block them as they chase me;	וּסְגֹר לִקְרַאת רדְפָי	usegor likrat rodfai;
tell me, "I'm going to save you!"[3]	אֱמֹר לְנַפְשִׁי יְשֻׁעָתֵךְ אָנִי	emor lenafshi, "Yeshu'atech ani."
[4] Let them be discredited and thwarted,	יֵבֹשׁוּ וְיִכָּלְמוּ	Yevoshu veyikolmu
the people who seek my life;	מְבַקְשֵׁי נַפְשִׁי	mevakshei nafshi;
let them fall back in disgrace,	יִסֹּגוּ אָחוֹר וְיַחְפְּרוּ	yisogu achor veyachperu
the people who plan to harm me.	חֹשְׁבֵי רָעָתִי	choshvei ra'ati.
[5] Let them be like chaff *borne* on the wind,	יִהְיוּ כְמֹץ לִפְנֵי־רוּחַ	Yiheyu kemotz lifnei ru'ach
with God's messenger driving *them on.*	וּמַלְאַךְ יהוה דּוֹחֶה	umalach Adonai docheh.
[6] Let their path be dark and slick,[4]	יְהִי־דַרְכָם חֹשֶׁךְ וַחֲלַקְלַקּוֹת	Yehi darkam choshech vachalaklakot
with God's messenger chasing them.	וּמַלְאַךְ יהוה רֹדְפָם	umalach Adonai rodfam.
[7] Without cause they have laid a trap	כִּי־חִנָּם טָמְנוּ־לִי שַׁחַת	Ki chinom tamnu li shachat rishtam,
and dug *a pit* to kill me.[5]	רִשְׁתָּם	chinom chafru lenafshi.
	חִנָּם חָפְרוּ לְנַפְשִׁי	

[1] צִנָּה is usually translated "buckler," a small shield. צִנָּה is also used for thorn. Some bucklers have a nasty spike sticking out the middle for attack, and that could be the kind of weapon in the poet's mind.

[2] The root of וְהָרֵק is (in my humble opinion) רק, empty; the verb is used for drawing a sword by emptying out the scabbard. The same root gives us the word for expectorate, the action of emptying one's phlegm.

[3] "And-empty *the-container-for-your*-spear / and-shut-*the-way* for-the-encounter-with those-who-pursue-me; / say to-my-soul/person, 'Your-rescuer *am* I.'"

[4] חֲלַקְלַקּוֹת is related to חלק, smooth—a path with a surface so smooth you can't help slipping.

[5] The Hebrew syntax is different from the English: "For without-cause they-have-hidden for-me the-destruction-of their-net; / without-cause they-have-dug *a pit* for-my-soul/life."

[8] Let disaster take them by surprise	תְּבוֹאֵהוּ שׁוֹאָה לֹא־יֵדָע	Tevo'ehu sho'ah lo yeda
and their hidden trap catch them	וְרִשְׁתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר־טָמַן תִּלְכְּדוֹ	verishto asher taman tilkedu
as devastation comes upon them.[1]	בְּשׁוֹאָה יִפֹּל־בָּהּ	besho'ah yipol bah.
[9] While I shall rejoice with God	וְנַפְשִׁי תָּגִיל בַּיהוה	Venafshi tagil bAdonai,
and celebrate in *God's* deliverance.	תָּשִׂישׂ בִּישׁוּעָתוֹ	tasis bishu'ato.
All my bones shall say,	כָּל עַצְמוֹתַי תֹּאמַרְנָה	Kol atzmotai tomarna:
"God, who is like you?	יהוה מִי כָמוֹךָ	"Adonai, mi chamocha?
You save the poor person from the mugger,[2]	מַצִּיל עָנִי מֵחָזָק מִמֶּנּוּ	Matzil ani mechazak mimenu,
the pauper and beggar from the thief."	וְעָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן מִגֹּזְלוֹ	ve'ani ve'evyon migozlo."
[11] Lying witnesses come forward	יְקוּמוּן עֵדֵי חָמָס	Yekumun edei chamas,
and interrogate me about what I don't know.	אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָדַעְתִּי יִשְׁאָלוּנִי	asher lo yadati yish'aluni.
[12] They repay with evil the good *I have done,*	יְשַׁלְּמוּנִי רָעָה תַּחַת טוֹבָה	Yeshalmuni ra'ah tachat tovah—
trying to destroy my life.[3]	שְׁכוֹל לְנַפְשִׁי	shechol lenafshi.
[13] Yet when they were sick I mourned,[4]	וַאֲנִי בַּחֲלוֹתָם לְבוּשִׁי שָׂק	Va'ani bachalotam levushi sak,
I pained myself with fasting—	עִנֵּיתִי בַצּוֹם נַפְשִׁי	ineiti vatzom nafshi—
may my prayer bring health to me![5]	וּתְפִלָּתִי עַל־חֵיקִי תָּשׁוּב	utefilati al cheiki tashuv.
[14] I acted as if they were friends, my brothers;	כְּרֵעַ־כְּאָח לִי הִתְהַלָּכְתִּי	Kere'ah, ke'ach li hit'halachti,
as if grieving for my mother, I slumped down.[6]	כַּאֲבֶל־אֵם קֹדֵר שַׁחוֹתִי	ka'avel em koder shachoti.

[1] The poet switches from plural enemies to singular, but the translation continues with plural pronouns. "Let-there-come-upon-it devastation *that* it-would-not-know/anticipate / and-its-net/trap which it-hid catch-it / when-devastation will-fall upon-it."
[2] "From one who is too strong for him."
[3] "They would pay me back evil instead of good, / *for the* bereavement/destruction of my life/soul."
[4] "My garment was sackcloth," a sign of mourning.
[5] "And-my-prayer *for their health,* upon-my-*own*-breast may it return."
[6] "Like-a-mourner *who mourns* a-mother, I-mourned, I-bowed-down."

[15] When I tripped, they partied;	וּבְצַלְעִי שָׂמְחוּ וְנֵאָסָפוּ	Uvetzali sam'chu vene'esafu,
thugs ganged up on me—I had no clue—	נֵאָסְפוּ עָלַי נֵכִים וְלֹא יָדָעְתִּי	ne'esfu alai nechim velo yadati,
they tore *at me* without stopping.[1]	קָרְעוּ וְלֹא־דָמּוּ	karu velo damu.
[16] As those flippant hypocrites feasted,	בְּחַנְפֵי לַעֲגֵי מָעוֹג	Bechanfei la'agei ma'og
they gnawed at me *with* their teeth.[2]	חָרַק עָלַי שִׁנֵּימוֹ	charok alai shineimo.
[17] God, how long will you look on?	אֲדֹנָי כַּמָּה תִּרְאֶה	Adonai, kamah tireh?
save me from their ravages,	הָשִׁיבָה נַפְשִׁי מִשֹּׁאֵיהֶם	hashivah nafshi misho'eihem,
save my precious *life* from *those* lions.	מִכְּפִירִים יְחִידָתִי	mikfirim yechidati.
[18] I shall thank you in a great crowd;	אוֹדְךָ בְּקָהָל רָב	Od'cha bekahal rav;
in a mighty throng shall I praise you.	בְּעַם עָצוּם אֲהַלְלֶךָּ	be'am atzum ahalelekah.
[19] Don't let my unjust enemies exult over me	אַל־יִשְׂמְחוּ־לִי אֹיְבַי שֶׁקֶר	Al yismechu li oyvai sheker,
(they hate me for no reason) nor insult me.[3]	שׂנְאַי חִנָּם יִקְרְצוּ־עָיִן	sonei chinom yikretzu ayin.
[20] For they don't speak of peace;	כִּי לֹא שָׁלוֹם יְדַבֵּרוּ	Ki lo shalom yedaberu
to hurt people too weak to resist	וְעַל רִגְעֵי־אֶרֶץ	ve'al rigei eretz
they plan swindles *and scams*.[4]	דִּבְרֵי מִרְמוֹת יַחֲשֹׁבוּן	divrei mirmot yachashovun.

[1] "And at my limping/stumbling they rejoiced and assembled (i.e., they had a party) / they gathered against me, thugs, and I did not know; / they tore and they did not stop." The word נֵכִים appears only here in scripture; some compare it to Jonathan's son in 2 Samuel 4:4—נֹכֵה רַגְלַיִם, smitten of legs/feet—so it could refer to people who smite.

[2] "For-hypocrites-of-jesters-of *there was* feasting, / to-grind at-me their-teeth." A difficult verse. The word חנף is rare; it appears several times in *Job,* a book replete with unusual words. It seems to imply hypocrisy. לַעֲגֵי and מָעוֹג may both come from the same root; מָעוֹג may mean a feast (in modern Hebrew, עוגה is cake), and לַעַג may mean someone who talks funny, a foreigner, or a jester who entertains at a feast with riddles and ribaldry—a jolly dinner guest who is prized for nothing else. Gnashing the teeth is an ancient expression of frustration and rage—and the poet's foes are enraged as they tear him to pieces but angry when God rescues him from their machinations. King Alfred used "gristbitedon," they bit down on grist (grain) or perhaps unchewable gristle.

[3] "Let them not rejoice at me, my enemies *who are* wrong *to oppose me, / nor* those who hate me gratuitously narrow the eye (wink)." You can imagine the gang of enemies winking at each other before they set upon the poor poet, and in some situations winking at the poet could be a grave insult.

[4] "For not peace do they speak / and against those who rest *on* earth / matters of deception they devise." רִגְעֵי־אֶרֶץ may imply those who rest because they're dead, or those who rest low on the earth because they occupy a humble position in society, or those who have little time ("moments of the land"), so I have made what sense I could of the phrase.

[21] They gape at me	וַיִּרְחִיבוּ עָלַי פִּיהֶם	Vayar'chivu alai pihem,
and say, "Ha, ha,	אָמְרוּ הֶאָח הֶאָח	amru, "He'ach, he'ach,
look at him!"[1]	רָאֲתָה עֵינֵינוּ	ra'ata eineinu."
[22] God, you see this. Don't be quiet!	רָאִיתָה יהוה אַל־תֶּחֱרַשׁ	Ra'ita, Adonai; al techerash!
God, don't be distant from me!	אֲדֹנָי אַל־תִּרְחַק מִמֶּנִּי	Adonai, al tir'chak mimeni.
[23] Get up, wake up, for my defence—	הָעִירָה וְהָקִיצָה לְמִשְׁפָּטִי	Ha'irah vehakitzah lemishpati,
my God, O my God—for my fight.	אֱלֹהַי וַאדֹנָי לְרִיבִי	Elohai vAdonai, lerivi.
[24] Judge me as if I'm as blameless as you,	שָׁפְטֵנִי כְצִדְקֶךָ	Shofteni chetzidkecha,
O God, my God,	יהוה אֱלֹהָי	Adonai, Elohai,
so *my enemies* can't rejoice at my defeat.[2]	וְאַל־יִשְׂמְחוּ־לִי	ve'al yismechu li.
[25] Don't let them think,	אַל־יֹאמְרוּ בְלִבָּם	Al yomru velibam,
"Aha, that's just perfect!";	הֶאָח נַפְשֵׁנוּ	"He'ach nafshenu";
don't let them say, "We've destroyed him!"[3]	אַל־יֹאמְרוּ בִלַּעֲנוּהוּ	al yomru, "Bila'anuhu."
[26] Let them all be ashamed and abashed	יֵבֹשׁוּ וְיַחְפְּרוּ יַחְדָּו	Yevoshu veyachperu yachdav,
they who rejoice at my suffering;	שְׂמֵחֵי רָעָתִי	semechei ra'ati;
let them wear disgrace and reproach,	יִלְבְּשׁוּ־בֹשֶׁת וּכְלִמָּה	yilbeshu voshet uchelimah,
they who think they're better than I.[4]	הַמַּגְדִּילִים עָלָי	hamagdilim alai.
[27] Let those who cherish my cause rejoice	יָרֹנּוּ וְיִשְׂמְחוּ חֲפֵצֵי צִדְקִי	Yaronu veyismechu chafetzei tzidki
and say "Let God be ever praised,	וְיֹאמְרוּ תָמִיד יִגְדַּל יהוה	veyomru, "Tamid yigdal Adonai,
who wishes *God's* worshipper peace."	הֶחָפֵץ שְׁלוֹם עַבְדּוֹ	hechafetz shelom avdo."
[28] My tongue will voice your righteousness	וּלְשׁוֹנִי תֶּהְגֶּה צִדְקֶךָ	Uleshoni teh'geh tzidkecha,
every day, your praise.	כָּל־הַיּוֹם תְּהִלָּתֶךָ	kol hayom tehilatecha.

[1] "And they have widened against me their mouths; / they have said, "Aha, aha, our eyes have seen." Presumably the enemies are pointing and mocking.

[2] "Judge-me as-your-innocence/righteousness (consider me as blameless as you, or judge me according to your own exacting standard of righteousness), / O-God, my-God, / and-let-them-not-rejoice-at-me (taking pleasure in my downfall)."

[3] "Let-them-not-say in-their-hearts, / "Aha, our life" (i.e., this is just what we wanted, to see him fall); / let-them-not-say, "We-have-swallowed-him-up."

[4] הַמַּגְדִּילִים, "they who make themselves great" in comparison to me.

Psalm 36

[1] For the leader,	לַמְנַצֵּחַ	Lamnatze'ach,
for God's servant, for David.	לְעֶבֶד־יהוה לְדָוִד	le'eved Adonai, leDavid
[2] Sin tells bad folk (I hear it too),	נְאֻם־פֶּשַׁע לָרָשָׁע בְּקֶרֶב לִבִּי	Ne'um pesha larasha bekerev libi,
"I don't fear God, so why should you?"[1]	אֵין־פַּחַד אֱלֹהִים לְנֶגֶד עֵינָיו	ein pachad Elohim leneged einav.
[3] He's sure he's smooth, he's sure he's in	כִּי־הֶחֱלִיק אֵלָיו בְּעֵינָיו	Ki hechelik elav be'einav
till he's detested for his sin.[2]	לִמְצֹא עֲוֹנוֹ לִשְׂנֹא	limtzo avono lisno.
[4] His every word is foul falsehood:	דִּבְרֵי־פִיו אָוֶן וּמִרְמָה	Divrei fiv aven umirmah;
he wouldn't think of doing good.	חָדַל לְהַשְׂכִּיל לְהֵיטִיב	chadal lehaskil leheitiv.
[5] All night, he thinks up ways to hurt,	אָוֶן יַחְשֹׁב עַל־מִשְׁכָּבוֹ	Aven yach'shov al mishkavo;
he rises to pursue his dirt;	יִתְיַצֵּב עַל־דֶּרֶךְ לֹא־טוֹב	yityatzev al derech lo tov;
with evil he will gladly flirt.[3]	רָע לֹא יִמְאָס	rah lo yimas.
[6] Your kindness, God, is high as sky,	יהוה בַּהַשָּׁמַיִם חַסְדֶּךָ	Adonai, behashamayim chasdecha;
up to the clouds your truth can fly.[4]	אֱמוּנָתְךָ עַד־שְׁחָקִים	emunat'cha ad shechakim.
[7] Your justice matches mountain heights,	צִדְקָתְךָ כְּהַרְרֵי־אֵל	Tzidkat'cha keharerei el;
your judgements plumb profoundest sites,	מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ תְּהוֹם רַבָּה	mishpatecha tehom rabah;
God, setting man and beast to rights.[5]	אָדָם־וּבְהֵמָה תוֹשִׁיעַ יהוה	adam uvehemah toshi'ah, Adonai.

[1] "Says-Sin to-the-evil-person (in-the-closeness-of my-heart) / there-is-no-fear-of God across-from his-eyes": Sin tells an evil person (and I feel it right inside me, so I know) that there is no cause to fear God, as far as he can see; Sin cheats people into thinking there's no reason to fear God. Obviously, interpretations of this elliptical verse will differ!

[2] "For he-has-made-smooth to-himself in-his-eyes / to-find his-sin for-hating." The subject of this difficult verse (as I understand it) is the wicked person who has just been hearing Sin say there's no reason to fear God. This person gets comfortable with not believing in God (it seems smooth going, הֶחֱלִיק אֵלָיו בְּעֵינָיו) only to find out (לִמְצֹא) that his sin earns him the disgust of other people. I hope nobody will feel excluded by the male pronouns, since the male in this case is deplorable.

[3] "Harm he would/will-calculate upon his-bed/couch; / he-stands-himself on-a-path not-good; / evil not will/would-he-avoid/detest." At night he plans to harm people; when he gets up he chooses an evil path (a path that leads to evil, or a dirt road of rocks and puddles, or both); he embraces evil instead of avoiding it.

[4] "God, in-the-sky/heaven *is* your-kindness/mercy/grace; / your-truth *is* up-to the-skies." The word בַּהַשָּׁמַיִם would normally be contracted to בַּשָּׁמַיִם.

[5] "Your-justice *is* like-hills-of-God (high mountains); / your-judgements *are like* depth great (God's judgements display great profundity); / human and-beast you-save, God." I take this to mean that God's amazingly clever pronouncements of justice settle the knottiest disputes for all living creatures.

[8] Your mercy, God, is prized so high—	מַה־יָּקָר חַסְדְּךָ אֱלֹהִים	Mah yakar chasdecha, Elohim,
on your protection	וּבְנֵי אָדָם בְּצֵל כְּנָפֶיךָ	uvenei Adam betzel kenafecha
all rely.[1]	יֶחֱסָיוּן	yechesayun.
[9] On gourmet treats they eat their fill	יִרְוְיֻן מִדֶּשֶׁן בֵּיתֶךָ	Yirveyun mideshen beitecha,
and slake their thirst from Eden's rill.[2]	וְנַחַל עֲדָנֶיךָ תַּשְׁקֵם	venachal adanecha tashkem.
[10] The source of life, with you it lies;	כִּי־עִמְּךָ מְקוֹר חַיִּים	Ki im'cha mekor chayim;
your light illuminates our eyes.[3]	בְּאוֹרְךָ נִרְאֶה־אוֹר	be'or'cha nireh or.
[11] To those who know you, grace impart—	מְשֹׁךְ חַסְדְּךָ לְיֹדְעֶיךָ	Meshoch chasdecha leyodecha
to those of just and upright heart.[4]	וְצִדְקָתְךָ לְיִשְׁרֵי־לֵב	vetzidkat'cha leyishrei lev.
[12] Let no oppressor's foot come near	אַל־תְּבוֹאֵנִי רֶגֶל גַּאֲוָה	Al tevo'eni regel ga'avah,
to crush, or banish us from here.[5]	וְיַד־רְשָׁעִים אַל־תְּנִדֵנִי	veyad resha'im al tenidevi.
[13] Let sinners be shoved to the floor,	שָׁם נָפְלוּ פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן דֹּחוּ	Sham naflu po'alei aven: dochu,
never to get up any more.[6]	וְלֹא־יָכְלוּ קוּם	velo yachlu kum.

[1] "How prized *is* your-mercy, God; / and-descendants-of Adam in-the-shadow-of your-wings / take-shelter."
[2] "They-are-sated from-the-rich-food-of your-house, / and-the-stream-of your-delights/Edens you-give-them-to-drink." דֶּשֶׁן is here translated as rich food, but it sometimes means ashes or compost, which are rich food for a garden and indirectly for people. עֲדָנֶיךָ is your-Edens (I know, there was only one) or your-delights or your-pleasures. "Shall I experience pleasure (עֶדְנָה) though I'm worn out?" asks Sarah (Gen 18:12; she should talk to Dr. Ruth!)
[3] "For with-you *is* the-source-of-life; / in-your-light we-see light."
[4] "Extend (pull-along) your-mercy to-your-knowers / and-your-vindication/justice to-the-upright-of heart."
[5] "Let-it-not-come-to-me the-foot-of the-arrogant-person, / and-the-hand/power-of-the-wicked-people let-it-not-banish-me."
[6] "There have-fallen doers-of-evil; let-them-be-pushed / and-not let-them-be-able to-stand-up."

Psalm 37

[1] *Attributed* to David.	לְדָוִד	leDavid.
At people who do bad, don't fret;	אַל־תִּתְחַר בַּמְּרֵעִים	Al tit'char bamre'im;
nor at wrongdoers get upset.	אַל־תְּקַנֵּא בְּעֹשֵׂי עַוְלָה	al tekaneh be'osei avlah.
[2] For soon like grass they'll be mown down	כִּי כֶחָצִיר מְהֵרָה יִמָּלוּ	Ki chechatzir meherah yimalu,
or like green fields wither to brown.	וּכְיֶרֶק דֶּשֶׁא יִבּוֹלוּן	ucheyerek desheh yibolun.
[3] Rely on God and do what's good;	בְּטַח בַּיהוה וַעֲשֵׂה־טוֹב	Betach bAdonai va'aseh tov;
so live on earth with truth for food.[1]	שְׁכָן־אֶרֶץ וּרְעֵה אֱמוּנָה	shechon eretz ure'eh emunah.
[4] With God you'll surely find all bliss	וְהִתְעַנַּג עַל־יהוה	Vehitanag al Adonai,
and *God* can grant your dearest wish.[2]	וְיִתֶּן־לְךָ מִשְׁאֲלֹת לִבֶּךָ	veyiten lecha mishalot libecha.
[5] Let God lay bare the road you'll run;	גּוֹל עַל־יהוה דַּרְכֶּךָ	Gol al Adonai darkecha,
trust God to help you get things done,[3]	וּבְטַח עָלָיו וְהוּא יַעֲשֶׂה	uvetach alav, vehu ya'aseh.
[6] To see your blameless cause is won	וְהוֹצִיא כָאוֹר צִדְקֶךָ	Vehotzi cha'or tzidkecha,
with judgement clear as noonday sun.[4]	וּמִשְׁפָּטֶךָ כַּצָּהֳרָיִם	umishpatecha katzohorayim.
[7] Wait for God, though you feel stress;	דּוֹם לַיהוה וְהִתְחוֹלֵל לוֹ	Dom lAdonai vehit'cholel lo;
don't fume when *evil* finds success,	אַל־תִּתְחַר בְּמַצְלִיחַ דַּרְכּוֹ	al tit'char bematzli'ach darko,
winning by sly deceitfulness.[5]	בְּאִישׁ עֹשֶׂה מְזִמּוֹת	be'ish oseh mezimot.
[8] Temper *your* rage; leave wrath;	הֶרֶף מֵאַף וַעֲזֹב חֵמָה	Heref me'af va'azov chemah;
don't fret,	אַל־תִּתְחַר	al tit'char
lest you do something you'll regret.[6]	אַךְ־לְהָרֵעַ	ach lehare'ah.
[9] For sinners *all* will come to grief—	כִּי־מְרֵעִים יִכָּרֵתוּן	Ki mere'im yikaretun
but Earth's for those with true belief.[7]	וְקֹוֵי יהוה הֵמָּה יִירְשׁוּ־אָרֶץ	vekovei Adonai, hemah yirshu aretz.

[1] "And graze on truth/faith/reality/fidelity"; these abstractions unfortunately fill the mind rather than the belly.
[2] "And give yourself delight upon God / so that *God* may give you the requests of your heart."
[3] "Unroll/uncover (or, roll) upon God (with God's guidance) your way / and *place your* trust upon *God* and *God* will do"; i.e., if you take the path God intends, you can rely on God to make things happen as you wish.
[4] "And *God* will bring out like light your innocence/righteousness / and your judgement like noon"; i.e., if you take God's path as in verse 4, then God will make your innocence plain as daylight (when enemies accuse you).
[5] "Be quiet for God and begin (or twist about, get excited) for *God;* / don't fret at the success of *your enemy's* way, / *or* at *the success of* a person who performs deceit." The first line may mean to wait patiently until God tells us to get excited.
[6] "Weaken *your* anger, abandon wrath, do not fret / only to do evil." Others translate, "and don't do any evil."
[7] "For evildoers shall be cut off (or executed by divine punishment) / and those who hope in God, they will inherit the earth."

10 The wicked soon will be no more;	וְעוֹד מְעַט וְאֵין רָשָׁע	Ve'od me'at ve'ein rashah,
you'll view the void they filled before.[1]	וְהִתְבּוֹנַנְתָּ עַל־מְקוֹמוֹ וְאֵינֶנּוּ	vehitbonanta al mekomo, ve'einenu.
11 The Earth is destined for the meek,	וַעֲנָוִים יִירְשׁוּ־אָרֶץ	Va'anavim yirshu aretz,
to enjoy with all the good they seek.[2]	וְהִתְעַנְּגוּ עַל־רֹב שָׁלוֹם	vehitangu al rov shalom.
12 The guilty frame the innocent—	זֹמֵם רָשָׁע לַצַּדִּיק	Zomem rasha latzadik
gnashing their teeth, their rage they vent.[3]	וְחָרֹק עָלָיו שִׁנָּיו	vechorek alav shinav.
13 But God sees all and smiles, for they	אֲדֹנָי יִשְׂחַק־לוֹ כִּי־רָאָה	Adonai yis'chak lo ki ra'ah
will soon meet their *last judgement* day.[4]	כִּי־יָבֹא יוֹמוֹ	ki yavo yomo.
14 The wicked brandish sword and bow	חֶרֶב פָּתְחוּ רְשָׁעִים	Cherev pat'chu resha'im
to slay the poor with fatal blow,	וְדָרְכוּ קַשְׁתָּם לְהַפִּיל עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן	vedar'chu kashtam lehapil ani ve'evyon,
those honest hearts to overthrow.[5]	לִטְבוֹחַ יִשְׁרֵי־דָרֶךְ	litvo'ach yishrei darech.
15 Their blades will strike at their own heart,	חַרְבָּם תָּבוֹא בְלִבָּם	Charbam tavo velibam
and their *fine* bows will split apart.[6]	וְקַשְׁתוֹתָם תִּשָּׁבַרְנָה	vekashtotam tishavarna.
16 Better to be good, and poor,	טוֹב־מְעַט לַצַּדִּיק	Tov me'at latzadik
than wicked, with enough and more.[7]	מֵהֲמוֹן רְשָׁעִים רַבִּים	mehamon resha'im rabim.
17 For sinners' arms will surely fail	כִּי זְרוֹעוֹת רְשָׁעִים תִּשָּׁבַרְנָה	Ki zero'ot resha'im tishavarnah,
while God will make the good prevail.[8]	וְסוֹמֵךְ צַדִּיקִים יְהוָה	vesomech tzadikim Adonai.

[1] "And-still a-little and-there-is-no wicked-person / and-you-will-contemplate his-*empty*-place and-he-doesn't-exist."
[2] "And-meek-people will-inherit the-Earth / and-they-will-enjoy-*it* upon/with a-great-amount-of peace."
[3] "Cheats the-wicked the-blameless / and-grinds at-him his-teeth"; i.e., the bad person frames the good person, trying to make the innocent person look guilty, and the bad person appears furious (gnashing teeth to contort the face) either because he's angry to see the innocent vindicated or because he tries to intimidate them with threats and fury.
[4] "God smiles at him (the guilty) for *God* has *fore*seen / that will-come his day *of reckoning*."
[5] "Sword have-opened the-wicked-people (the wicked have drawn their swords) / and-they-have-trodden their-bows (used their feet to steady their bows as they strung them) to-bring-down the-poor and-the-unfortunate, / to-slaughter the-upright-of-heart."
[6] "Their sword will come *back* at their heart / and their bows will shatter."
[7] "Better *is a* little for the righteous / than lots *of stuff for* the many wicked."
[8] "For the forearms of the wicked will be shattered / and-supports the-righteous God (God helps the good)."

[18] God knows the Day of the Pure, an age	יוֹדֵעַ יְהוָה יְמֵי תְמִימִם	Yode'ah Adonai yemei temimim,
to be their lasting heritage.[1]	וְנַחֲלָתָם לְעוֹלָם תִּהְיֶה	venachalatam le'olam tiheyeh.
[19] Without a care when times are ill,	לֹא־יֵבֹשׁוּ בְּעֵת רָעָה	Lo yevoshu be'et ra'ah,
in famine *rogues* still eat their fill.[2]	וּבִימֵי רְעָבוֹן יִשְׂבָּעוּ	uvimei re'avon yisba'u.
[20] The wicked vanish like a thought,	כִּי רְשָׁעִים יאבֵדוּ	Ki resha'im yovedu,
God's foes, like rich grass singed to naught	וְאֹיְבֵי יְהוָה כִּיקַר כָּרִים כָּלוּ	ve'oyvei Adonai kikar karim kalu,
With smoke *and fire* to ruin brought.[3]	בֶּעָשָׁן כָּלוּ	ve'ashan kalu.
[21] The wicked take but don't repay;	לוֶֹה רָשָׁע וְלֹא יְשַׁלֵּם	Loveh rashah velo yeshalem,
the righteous gladly give away.[4]	וְצַדִּיק חוֹנֵן וְנוֹתֵן	vetzadik chonen venoten.
[22] *God's* blessed are this earth's sure heirs;	כִּי מְבֹרָכָיו יִירְשׁוּ אָרֶץ	Ki mevorachav yirshu aretz,
God's cursed will die *broken by cares*.[5]	וּמְקֻלָלָיו יִכָּרֵתוּ	umekulalav yikaretu.
[23] Good people's steps God sets aright	מֵיְהוָה מִצְעֲדֵי־גֶבֶר כּוֹנָנוּ	Me'Adonai mitzadei gaver konenu,
and in their progress takes delight.[6]	וְדַרְכּוֹ יֶחְפָּץ	vedarko yechpatz.
[24] And though they teeter they'll not fall	כִּי־יִפֹּל לֹא־יוּטָל	Ki yipol, lo yutal,
for God's firm grasp will hold them tall.[7]	כִּי־יְהוָה סוֹמֵךְ יָדוֹ	ki Adonai somech yado.

[1] "God knows the days of the pure (God knows when they will get their reward) / and their inheritance forever will exist.

[2] "Not-shall-they-feel-shame in-time-of evil / and-in-days-of famine they-shall-be-satisfied."

[3] "For the wicked shall vanish/be-destroyed / and-foes-of God like-richness-of meadows (or, lambs) are-consumed, / in-smoke they-are-consumed." כָּרִים can refer to lambs or a meadow (perhaps because it's associated with sheep) or some kind of cloth (perhaps used for a saddle, from the idea of spreading out like a pasture, or a pillow because it's soft to sit on); but here it's easiest (in my opinion) to think of a meadow that gets burned to stubble in the next line. However, you might think the poet is thinking of fatted lambs that will go up in smoke as sacrifices. Or, of course, both.

[4] "The wicked person borrows and will not repay, / and the righteous person is gracious and gives."

[5] "For those blessed by *God* will inherit the Earth / and those cursed by *God* will be cut off (or die suddenly)"; the punishment of כָּרַת is imposed by heaven, not by terrestrial courts.

[6] "From God the steps of the strong person (or, hero or warrior) are established, / and his path *God* will like."

[7] "When/if he falls he won't drop *completely* / for God supports his hand."

[25] Since I was young (and now I'm grey)	נַעַר הָיִיתִי גַם־זָקַנְתִּי	Na'ar hayiti, gam zakanti,
I've not seen good folk cast away,	וְלֹא־רָאִיתִי צַדִּיק נֶעֱזָב	velo ra'iti tzadik ne'ezav
their children forced for food to pray.[1]	וְזַרְעוֹ מְבַקֶּשׁ־לָחֶם	vezaro mevakesh lachem.
[26] They've always food to give away,	כָּל־הַיּוֹם חוֹנֵן וּמַלְוֶה	Kol hayom chonen umalveh,
their children are blessed, *people say*.[2]	וְזַרְעוֹ לִבְרָכָה	vezaro livrachah.
[27] Shun bad; be good, be ethical;	סוּר מֵרָע וַעֲשֵׂה־טוֹב	Sur merah va'aseh tov
so shall you live long, long and well.[3]	וּשְׁכֹן לְעוֹלָם	ushechon le'olam.
[28] For God loves justice well dispensed—	כִּי יהוה אֹהֵב מִשְׁפָּט	Ki Adonai ohev mishpat
the faithful get their recompense	וְלֹא־יַעֲזֹב אֶת־חֲסִידָיו	velo ya'azov et chasidav;
(forever watched *by God's keen eye*)	לְעוֹלָם נִשְׁמָרוּ	le'olam nishmaru,
while seed of evil sure will die.[4]	וְזֶרַע רְשָׁעִים נִכְרָת	vezerah resha'im nichrat.
[29] The righteous will possess *this* earth,	צַדִּיקִים יִירְשׁוּ־אָרֶץ	Tzadikim yirshu aretz
forever to enjoy its worth.[5]	וְיִשְׁכְּנוּ לָעַד עָלֶיהָ	veyishkenu la'ad aleha.
[30] The good speak wisely, speak with care,	פִּי־צַדִּיק יֶהְגֶּה חָכְמָה	Pi tzadik yeh'geh chochmah,
with tongue to render sentence fair.[6]	וּלְשׁוֹנוֹ תְּדַבֵּר מִשְׁפָּט	uleshono tedaber mishpat.
[31] God's law's within them, deep inside,	תּוֹרַת אֱלֹהָיו בְּלִבּוֹ	Torat Elohav belibo;
unfalteringly their steps to guide.[7]	לֹא תִמְעַד אֲשֻׁרָיו	lo timad ashurav.
[32] The wicked hunt the innocent:	צוֹפֶה רָשָׁע לַצַּדִּיק	Tzofeh rasha latzadik
to kill them off is their intent.[8]	וּמְבַקֵּשׁ לַהֲמִיתוֹ	umevakesh lahamito.
[33] God spares the good from evil's power,	יהוה לֹא־יַעַזְבֶנּוּ בְיָדוֹ	Adonai lo ya'azvenu veyado,
defends them in their judgement hour.[9]	וְלֹא יַרְשִׁיעֶנּוּ בְּהִשָּׁפְטוֹ	velo yarshi'enu behishofto.

[1] "A lad have I been; what's more, I have grown old (or bearded), / and I have not seen a righteous person left abandoned / and his offspring seeking food." Would that this were common experience!
[2] "All day (or, every day) he is gracious/generous and lends, / and his offspring are considered a blessing."
[3] "Turn away from evil and do *what is* good, / and live/dwell forever."
[4] "For God loves justice / and will not abandon *God's* devotees; / forever they are guarded/watched— / and the offspring of evil people is cut off (executed by divine action)."
[5] "The righteous will inherit the Earth / and will dwell forever upon it."
[6] "The tongue of the righteous will meditate/deliberate *on* wisdom, / and his tongue will utter justice."
[7] "The law/way of his God is in his heart; / he will not slide/slip *with respect to* his steps."
[8] "He-scouts (searches), the-guilty-person, for-the-righteous (the guilty person hunts the innocent person) / and-seeks to-kill-him."
[9] "God will not abandon him (the innocent person) in his (the guilty person's) power / and-not make-him-*appear*-guilty in-*God's*-judgement."

[34] Trust God, keep to *God's virtuous* path:	קַוֵּה אֶל־יהוה וּשְׁמֹר דַּרְכּוֹ	Kaveh el Adonai ushemor darko
God can raise you to rule the Earth	וִירוֹמִמְךָ לָרֶשֶׁת אָרֶץ	viromim'cha lareshet aretz;
and see the wicked done to death.[1]	בְּהִכָּרֵת רְשָׁעִים תִּרְאֶה	behikaret resha'im tireh.
[35] The wicked seemed invincible,	רָאִיתִי רָשָׁע עָרִיץ	Ra'iti rashah aritz
a thriving tree, unstoppable—[2]	וּמִתְעָרֶה כְּאֶזְרָח רַעֲנָן	umitareh ke'ezrach ra'anan—
[36] They're gone as if they never were:	וַיַּעֲבֹר וְהִנֵּה אֵינֶנּוּ	Vaya'avor, vehineh einenu,
I seek them, but there's nothing there.[3]	וָאֲבַקְשֵׁהוּ וְלֹא נִמְצָא	va'avakshehu velo nimtzah.
[37] Observe the blameless, view the pure,	שְׁמֹר־תָּם וּרְאֵה יָשָׁר	Shemor tam ure'eh yashar
for their fair future is assured,[4]	כִּי־אַחֲרִית לְאִישׁ שָׁלוֹם	ki acharit le'ish shalom,
[38] While sinners will together rot;	וּפֹשְׁעִים נִשְׁמְדוּ יַחְדָּו	Ufoshim nishmedu yachdav:
their future is to come to naught.[5]	אַחֲרִית רְשָׁעִים נִכְרָתָה	acharit resha'im nichratah.
[39] From God, the good receive salvation,	וּתְשׁוּעַת צַדִּיקִים מֵיהוה	Uteshu'at tzadikim me'Adonai,
courage in their desperation.[6]	מָעוּזָּם בְּעֵת צָרָה	ma'uzam be'et tzarah.
[40] God helps them in their jeopardy,	וַיַּעְזְרֵם יהוה וַיְפַלְּטֵם	Vayazrem Adonai vayefaltem,
rescues them from iniquity	יְפַלְּטֵם מֵרְשָׁעִים	yefaltem mersha'im,
when they to *God* for shelter flee.[7]	וְיוֹשִׁיעֵם כִּי־חָסוּ בּוֹ	veyoshi'em ki chasu vo.

[1] "Trust (or, hope) toward God and keep to *God's* path / and *God* will raise you to possess the Earth; / upon the punishment (cutting-off) of the wicked people you shall look." If you do right, God will give you earthly power so that you can see justice done upon the wicked.

[2] "I saw a wicked person, powerful, / and spreading itself like a flourishing native tree."

[3] "And it has passed, and see, it's no longer in existence; / and I could look for it, but it is not *to be* found."

[4] "Watch the simple and see the upright / for the end for *such* a person is peace."

[5] "And sinners will be destroyed together: / the end for wicked people is being cut off."

[6] "And the rescue of the righteous *is* from God, / their protective shelter in time of trouble."

[7] "God helps them and rescues them, / rescues them from wicked people / and saves them when/for they seek shelter in/with *God.*"

Psalm 38

Sometimes added to the evening service on a Tuesday.

[1] A psalm by David, *trying* to get attention.	מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד לְהַזְכִּיר	Mizmor leDavid, lehazkir.
[2] God, don't rebuke me in your anger	יהוה אַל־בְּקֶצְפְּךָ תוֹכִיחֵנִי	Adonai, al beketzpecha tochicheni
or punish me in your fury.	וּבַחֲמָתְךָ תְיַסְּרֵנִי	uvachamat'cha teyasreni.
[3] Your arrows have pierced me,	כִּי־חִצֶּיךָ נָחֲתוּ בִי	Ki chitzecha nichatu vi
and your hand has landed on me!	וַתִּנְחַת עָלַי יָדֶךָ	vatin'chat alai yadecha.
[4] My whole body aches[1]	אֵין־מְתֹם בִּבְשָׂרִי	Ein metom bivsari
because of your anger;	מִפְּנֵי זַעְמֶךָ	mipnei zamecha;
there's no rest in my bones	אֵין־שָׁלוֹם בַּעֲצָמָי	ein shalom ba'atzamai
because of my sin.	מִפְּנֵי חַטָּאתִי	mipnei chatati.
[5] Oh, my faults overwhelm me;[2]	כִּי עֲוֹנֹתַי עָבְרוּ רֹאשִׁי	Ki avonotai avru roshi;
like a heavy weight they overburden me.	כְּמַשָּׂא כָּבֵד יִכְבְּדוּ מִמֶּנִּי	kemasah chaved yichbedu mimeni.
[6] My wounds stink and fester	הֵבְאִישׁוּ נָמַקּוּ חַבּוּרֹתָי	Hivishu, namaku chaburotai
because of my stupidity.	מִפְּנֵי אִוַּלְתִּי	mipnei ivalti.
[7] I am utterly miserable and depressed;	נַעֲוֵיתִי שַׁחֹתִי עַד־מְאֹד	Na'aveiti, shachoti ad me'od;
every day I walk in sadness.	כָּל־הַיּוֹם קֹדֵר הִלָּכְתִּי	kol hayom koder hilachti.
[8] My thighs feel like they're burning—	כִּי־כְסָלַי מָלְאוּ נִקְלֶה	Ki chesalai mal'u nikleh,
my whole body aches![3]	וְאֵין מְתֹם בִּבְשָׂרִי	ve'ein metom bivsari.
[9] I'm utterly sapped and crushed;	נְפוּגוֹתִי וְנִדְכֵּיתִי עַד־מְאֹד	Nefugoti venidketi ad me'od;
I've been groaning in anguish.[4]	שָׁאַגְתִּי מִנַּהֲמַת לִבִּי	sha'agti minahamat libi.
[10] God, everything I want is obvious to you,[5]	אֲדֹנָי נֶגְדְּךָ כָל־תַּאֲוָתִי	Adonai, negdecha chol ta'avati,
and my groaning is not hidden from you.	וְאַנְחָתִי מִמְּךָ לֹא־נִסְתָּרָה	ve'an'chati mim'cha lo nistarah.
[11] I'm dizzy, my energy is gone;	לִבִּי סְחַרְחַר עֻזָּבַנִי כֹחִי	Libi secharchar, azavani chochi,
I can't even see.[6]	וְאוֹר־עֵינַי גַּם־הֵם אֵין אִתִּי	ve'or einai, gam hem, ein iti.

[1] "*There is* no uninjured *part* of my flesh"
[2] "For my-sins have-passed *over* my-head."
[3] "For my loins/hips are filled with burning/roasting (or disgrace), and *there is* no uninjured *part* of my flesh."
[4] "I have roared/groaned from the groaning/disquiet of my heart."
[5] "All my desire is in front of you / *laid out* across from you."
[6] "My heart/mind goes around (i.e., my heart flutters or my mind whirls), my strength has left me, and my eyes' light (i.e., my vision), even they, they are not with me."

[12] My dearest, closest friends	אֹהֲבַי וְרֵעַי	Ohavai vere'ai
stay away from my disease—	מִנֶּגֶד נִגְעִי יַעֲמֹדוּ	mineged nigi ya'amodu,
even my family keep far away.[1]	וּקְרוֹבַי מֵרָחֹק עָמָדוּ	ukerovai merachok amadu.
[13] They try to trap me; they want to kill me;	וַיְנַקְּשׁוּ מְבַקְשֵׁי נַפְשִׁי	Vayenakshu mevakshei nafshi,
they seek my ruin; they plot *my* destruction;	וְדֹרְשֵׁי רָעָתִי דִּבְּרוּ הַוּוֹת	vedorshei ra'ati dibru havot,
all the time they plan to trick me.[2]	וּמִרְמוֹת כָּל־הַיּוֹם יֶהְגּוּ	umirmot kol hayom yeh'gu.
[14] But I'm deaf *to them*: I won't listen;	וַאֲנִי כְּחֵרֵשׁ לֹא אֶשְׁמָע	Va'ani checheresh lo eshmah,
I'm dumb *to them*; I won't say a word![3]	וּכְאִלֵּם לֹא יִפְתַּח־פִּיו	uche'ilem lo yiftach piv.
[15] I'm like someone who hears nothing,	וָאֱהִי כְּאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר לֹא־שֹׁמֵעַ	Va'ehi ke'ish asher lo shome'ah,
whose mouth can voice no objection.	וְאֵין בְּפִיו תּוֹכָחוֹת	ve'ein befiv tochachot.
[16] For I'm waiting for you, God;	כִּי־לְךָ יהוה הוֹחָלְתִּי	Ki lecha, Adonai, hochalti;
you'll answer *them,* ruling God.	אַתָּה תַּעֲנֶה אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהָי	atah ta'aneh, Adonai, Elohai.
[17] I didn't want them to rejoice in my defeat;	כִּי־אָמַרְתִּי פֶּן־יִשְׂמְחוּ־לִי	Ki amarti, pen yismechu li;
if I slip up, they'll surpass me.[4]	בְּמוֹט רַגְלִי עָלַי הִגְדִּילוּ	bemot ragli, alai higdilu.
[18] I've almost lost my balance,[5]	כִּי־אֲנִי לְצֶלַע נָכוֹן	Ki ani letzelah nachon,
and my pain is always with me.	וּמַכְאוֹבִי נֶגְדִּי תָמִיד	umachovi negdi tamid.
[19] So I'll confess my faults	כִּי־עֲוֹנִי אַגִּיד	Ki avoni agid;
and feel remorse for my sin,	אֶדְאַג מֵחַטָּאתִי	ed'ag mechatati.
[20] While my enemies maintain their strength,	וְאֹיְבַי חַיִּים עָצֵמוּ	Ve'oyvai chayim atzemu,
and more people hate me for no reason.[6]	וְרַבּוּ שֹׂנְאַי שָׁקֶר	verabu sonai shaker.
[21] People who repay good with bad	וּמְשַׁלְּמֵי רָעָה תַּחַת טוֹבָה	Umeshalmei ra'ah tachat tovah
hate me because I seek *what is* good.	יִשְׂטְנוּנִי תַּחַת רָדְפִי־טוֹב	yistenuni tachat rodfi tov.
[22] Don't abandon me, my ruling God;	אַל־תַּעַזְבֵנִי יהוה אֱלֹהָי	Al ta'azveni, Adonai, Elohai,
don't distance yourself from me.	אַל־תִּרְחַק מִמֶּנִּי	al tir'chak mimeni.
[23] Hurry to help me, my ruler, my savior!	חוּשָׁה לְעֶזְרָתִי אֲדֹנָי תְּשׁוּעָתִי	Chushah le'ezrati, Adonai, teshu'ati.

[1] "Those who love me, and my friends, / stand across from my affliction (i.e., stay away because I have an affliction), / and those who are close to me stand far away."
[2] "And they *try to* trap me, those who seek my life, / and those who seek evil for me have spoken *of* destruction (i.e., they plotted my destruction among themselves), / and all day they plan deceitful things."
[3] "And I, like a deaf *person,* I won't hear, / and like a dumb *person*, I won't open my mouth."
[4] "For I said, 'Lest they exult over me *when I fall.'* / If my foot slips, upon me they will make themselves great."
[5] "For I to the side *am* ready," i.e., I am leaning far over on my side and have almost fallen.
[6] "And *yet* my enemies, living, are strong (or, keep strong in life), / and more are those who hate me for nothing."

Psalm 39

Some combine the first two verses and renumber the rest of the verses.
Most of the translation uses the rhyme scheme AABCCB.

[1] For the leader, *composed* by Yedutun,[1]	לַמְנַצֵּחַ לִידוּתוּן[2]	Lamnatze'ach lidutun,
a psalm for David.	מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	mizmor leDavid.
[2] I said I'd not stray into sin	אָמַרְתִּי אֶשְׁמְרָה דְרָכַי מֵחֲטוֹא	Amarti, eshmera derachai mechato;
but watch my tongue and hold it in	בִּלְשׁוֹנִי אֶשְׁמְרָה לְפִי מַחְסוֹם	vilshoni eshmerah lefi machsom
even to a crooked cad.[3]	בְּעֹד רָשָׁע לְנֶגְדִּי	be'od rasha lenegdi.
[3] I curbed my tongue; silent I stood;	נֶאֱלַמְתִּי דוּמִיָּה	Ne'elamti, dumiyah:
I spoke no word, even for good—	הֶחֱשֵׁיתִי מִטּוֹב	hechesheti mitov,
But oh, it hurt so bad![4]	וּכְאֵבִי נֶעְכָּר	uche'evi nehkar.
[4] Inside, my heart was hot with ire,	חַם־לִבִּי בְּקִרְבִּי	Cham libi bekirbi;
my thoughts ablaze with angry fire:	בַּהֲגִיגִי תִּבְעַר־אֵשׁ	bahagigi tivar esh;
my tongue just had to speak.[5]	דִּבַּרְתִּי בִלְשׁוֹנִי	dibarti bilshoni.
[5] How long I'll live, God, let me know,	הוֹדִיעֵנִי יְהוָה קִצִּי	Hodi'eni Adonai kitzi
how many days I've yet to go,	וּמִדַּת יָמַי מַה־הִיא	umidat yamai mah hi:
I know that I am weak.[6]	אֵדְעָה מֶה־חָדֵל אָנִי	edah meh chadel ani.
[6] A brief span is the time you grant,	הִנֵּה טְפָחוֹת נָתַתָּה יָמָי	Hineh tefachot natatah yamai
For you to care it's all too scant:	וְחֶלְדִּי כְאַיִן נֶגְדֶּךָ	vechedli che'ayin negdecha;
the best of us is aimless. Selah.[7]	אַךְ כָּל־הֶבֶל כָּל־אָדָם נִצָּב סֶלָה	ach kol hevel kol adam nitzav. Selah.

[1] Psalms 39, 62 and 77 are associated with Yedutun; the name is listed as a minister who served when David placed the Ark with Obed-Edom (I Chron 16:38).

[2] A manuscript has לידיתון

[3] "I said, I'd watch the paths I tread *to keep away* from sinning. / For my tongue, I'd keep it with the edge of a bridle (I'd muzzle my tongue), / even when a bad person/thing *would be* in front of me." It's hard to keep silent in the face of evil but the psalmist resolved to do it.

[4] "I was silent. *With* silence. / I kept quiet from good (I didn't speak, even about good things). / And my pain was stirred up."

[5] "Hot was my heart in my inside, / in my thinking a fire burned; / I spoke with my tongue (I couldn't hold it in)."

[6] "Let me know, God, my end; / and *let me know* the measure of my days, what it is. / I know how frail I am."

[7] "See, handfuls have you dispensed for my days (you've granted me a short time to live) / and my frailty is like nothing before you (I'm weak, I'm a nothing before you, so how can you care about little me?). / But surely all pointlessness is every human standing (we humans are useless). Selah."

[7] Ah, through dark shadows people drift,	אַךְ־בְּצֶלֶם יִתְהַלֵּךְ־אִישׁ	Ach betzelem yit'halech ish,
perplexed by shapes that ever shift.	אַךְ־הֶבֶל יֶהֱמָיוּן	ach hevel yehemayun;
Wealth passes to the nameless.[1]	יִצְבֹּר וְלֹא־יֵדַע מִי־אָסְפָם	yitzbor, velo yeda mi osfam.
[8] God, what can I anticipate?	וְעַתָּה מַה־קִּוִּיתִי אֲדֹנָי	Ve'atah, mah kiviti Adonai?
For you *alone* do I await,[2]	תּוֹחַלְתִּי לְךָ הִיא	Tochalti lecha hi.
[9] Rescue me from my sin.	מִכָּל־פְּשָׁעַי הַצִּילֵנִי	Mikol pesha'ai hatzileni;
Don't leave me like a fool, ashamed:[3]	חֶרְפַּת נָבָל אַל־תְּשִׂימֵנִי	cherpat naval al tesimeni!
[10] I held my peace, my tongue was tamed,	נֶאֱלַמְתִּי לֹא אֶפְתַּח־פִּי	Ne'elamti: lo eftach pi
while you brought discipline.[4]	כִּי אַתָּה עָשִׂיתָ	ki atah asita.
[11] Withhold your blow *of punishment*—	הָסֵר מֵעָלַי נִגְעֶךָ	Haser me'alai nigecha;
before your strike, my nerve is spent.[5]	מִתִּגְרַת יָדְךָ אֲנִי כָלִיתִי	mitigrat yad'cha ani chaliti.
[12] When our wrongs you reprove,	בְּתוֹכָחוֹת עַל־עָוֹן יִסַּרְתָּ אִישׁ	Betochachot al avon yisarta ish
moth-tattered is our finest dress	וַתֶּמֶס כָּעָשׁ חֲמוּדוֹ	vatemes ka'ash chamudo,
and human *pride* all meaningless. Selah.[6]	אַךְ הֶבֶל כָּל־אָדָם סֶלָה	ach hevel kol adam selah.
[13] God, at my prayer be moved:	שִׁמְעָה־תְפִלָּתִי יהוה	Shimah tefilati, Adonai,
take notice of my anguished sigh,	וְשַׁוְעָתִי הַאֲזִינָה	veshavati ha'azinah;
speak comfort to my tear-filled cry,	אֶל־דִּמְעָתִי אַל־תֶּחֱרַשׁ	el dim'ati al techerash
for I am not like you:	כִּי גֵר אָנֹכִי עִמָּךְ	ki ger anochi imach,
you endure, but we must die.[7]	תוֹשָׁב כְּכָל־אֲבוֹתָי	toshav kechol avotai.
[14] Spare me from your scrutiny	הָשַׁע מִמֶּנִּי וְאַבְלִיגָה	Hashah mimeni ve'avligah
before my life is through.[8]	בְּטֶרֶם אֵלֵךְ וְאֵינֶנִּי	beterem elech ve'eineni.

[1] "But in an illusion a person walks around (the perceived world is illusory), / pointlessness confuses a person, / a person accumulates wealth but doesn't know who will take it *after death*."
[2] "And now, what do I hope for (wait for), God? / My hope is in you!"
[3] "From all my sins, save me. / The shame of *being* a fool, don't place it on me!"
[4] "I was silent; I didn't open my mouth, / for you took action." I assume the action was punishment for someone—the poet, or the poet's enemies.
[5] "Remove from me your plague/punishment; / from the striking of your hand I am extinguished"—"from" the slap means (to me) that the poet shrinks from God's blow, cringes and surrenders utterly at the very thought.
[6] "With rebukes against sin you correct a person / and you eat away like a moth the person's appeal (the translation, associating moths with clothing, is more concrete than the Hebrew). / Pointless is every human. Selah."
[7] "Listen to my prayer, God, / and hear my cry; / at my tears don't be silent (i.e., speak something comforting). / For an alien am I with you (i.e., when I'm with you I feel like a foreigner who doesn't belong—because I'm a mortal and God is eternal), / a temporary resident like all my ancestors (i.e., all human generations are mortal).
[8] "Look *away* from me so that I can recover *from your scrutiny* / before I go *from life* and I no longer exist."

Psalm 40

[1] For the leader, a tune *attributed* to David.	לַמְנַצֵּחַ לְדָוִד מִזְמוֹר	Lamnatze'ach, leDavid mizmor.
[2] I hoped and hoped for God until	קַוֹּה קִוִּיתִי יהוה	Kavo kaviti Adonai,
God turned toward me and heard my cry,	וַיֵּט אֵלַי וַיִּשְׁמַע שַׁוְעָתִי	vayet elai vayishmah shavati.
[3] Raised me from the pit of decay,	וַיַּעֲלֵנִי מִבּוֹר שָׁאוֹן	Vaya'aleni mibor sha'on,
from slippery mud,	מִטִּיט הַיָּוֵן	mitit hayaven,
and stood my feet on a high rock,	וַיָּקֶם עַל־סֶלַע רַגְלַי	vayakem al selah raglai,
steadying my steps,	כּוֹנֵן אֲשֻׁרָי	konen ashurai.
[4] Placed on my lips a new song,	וַיִּתֵּן בְּפִי שִׁיר חָדָשׁ	Vayiten befi shir chadash,
glory to our God:	תְּהִלָּה לֵאלֹהֵינוּ	tehilah lEloheinu:
let crowds of people see and show respect	יִרְאוּ רַבִּים וְיִירָאוּ	yiru rabim veyira'u,
and trust in God.	וְיִבְטְחוּ בַּיהוה	veyivtechu bAdonai.
[5] Happy *is* the person	אַשְׁרֵי הַגֶּבֶר	Ashrei hagever
who has placed trust *in* God,[1]	אֲשֶׁר־שָׂם יהוה מִבְטַחוֹ	asher sam Adonai mivtacho
who has not turned to the arrogant *for guidance*	וְלֹא־פָנָה אֶל־רְהָבִים	velo fanah el rehavim
nor to people who stray into falsehood.	וְשָׂטֵי כָזָב	vesatei chazav.
[6] Much have you done, sovereign God:	רַבּוֹת עָשִׂיתָ אַתָּה יהוה אֱלֹהַי	Rabot asita atah Adonai Elohai:
your miracles and concerns for us	נִפְלְאֹתֶיךָ וּמַחְשְׁבֹתֶיךָ אֵלֵינוּ	nifle'otecha umachshevotecha eleinu
cannot be arrayed before you;	אֵין עֵרֶךְ אֵלֶיךָ	ein aroch elecha;
I would describe and tell *them*,	אַגִּידָה וַאֲדַבֵּרָה	agidah va'adaberah—
but they are too much to relate!	עָצְמוּ מִסַּפֵּר	atzmu misaper!
[7] You wanted no animal- or grain-offerings—	זֶבַח וּמִנְחָה לֹא־חָפַצְתָּ	Zevach umin'chah lo chafatzta—
you told me right in my ears![2]—	אָזְנַיִם כָּרִיתָ לִי	oznayim karita li—
and you asked for no burnt- or sin-offerings.	עוֹלָה וַחֲטָאָה לֹא שָׁאָלְתָּ	olah vachata'ah lo sha'alta.
[8] So I said, "Here I come	אָז אָמַרְתִּי הִנֵּה־בָאתִי	Az amarti, "Hineh vati
with a book-scroll written about me;	בִּמְגִלַּת־סֵפֶר כָּתוּב עָלָי	bimgilat sefer katuv alai,
[9] To do your will, O my God, is my wish,	לַעֲשׂוֹת־רְצוֹנְךָ אֱלֹהַי חָפָצְתִּי	La'asot retzon'cha, Elohai, chafatzti,
and your law is deep inside me."[3]	וְתוֹרָתְךָ בְּתוֹךְ מֵעָי	veTorat'cha betoch me'ai.

[1] "Who has set God as his/her trust."
[2] "Ears you dug out for me"; i.e., you cleared out my ears so I would hear you.
[3] "And your Torah/law is in my guts": God's way is innate in me, instinctive.

[10] I spoke of virtue to a large crowd.	בִּשַּׂרְתִּי צֶדֶק בְּקָהָל רָב	Bisarti tzedek bekahal rav.
Look, I won't shut my mouth.[1]	הִנֵּה שְׂפָתַי לֹא אֶכְלָא	Hineh, sefatai lo echlah.
God, you know it.	יהוה אַתָּה יָדָעְתָּ	Adonai, atah yadata.
[11] I didn't hide your righteousness inside:	צִדְקָתְךָ לֹא־כִסִּיתִי בְּתוֹךְ לִבִּי	Tzidkat'cha lo chisiti betoch libi:
I spoke of your fidelity and salvation;	אֱמוּנָתְךָ וּתְשׁוּעָתְךָ אָמָרְתִּי	emunat'cha uteshu'at'cha amarti;
I didn't bury your kindness and fidelity	לֹא־כִחַדְתִּי חַסְדְּךָ וַאֲמִתְּךָ	lo chichadti chasdecha va'amit'cha
before *that* large crowd.	לְקָהָל רָב	lekahal rav.
[12] God,	אַתָּה יהוה	Atah, Adonai,
don't keep your compassion from me—	לֹא־תִכְלָא רַחֲמֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי	lo tichlah rachamecha mimeni;
your kindness and faithfulness	חַסְדְּךָ וַאֲמִתְּךָ	chasdecha va'amit'cha
always protect me.	תָּמִיד יִצְּרוּנִי	tamid yitzruni.
[13] For troubles surround me,	כִּי אָפְפוּ־עָלַי רָעוֹת	Ki afafu alai ra'ot
innumerable *troubles;*	עַד־אֵין מִסְפָּר	ad ein mispar;
my sins have caught up with me—	הִשִּׂיגוּנִי עֲוֹנֹתַי	hisiguni avonot
I can't see!	וְלֹא־יָכֹלְתִּי לִרְאוֹת	velo yacholti lirot.
they're more than the hairs of my head	עָצְמוּ מִשַּׂעֲרוֹת רֹאשִׁי	atzmu misa'arot roshi
and my courage[2] has left me.	וְלִבִּי עֲזָבָנִי	velibi azavani.
[14] God, choose to save me;	רְצֵה יהוה לְהַצִּילֵנִי	Retzeh, Adonai, lehatzileni;
God, hurry to help me.	יהוה לְעֶזְרָתִי חוּשָׁה	Adonai, le'ezrati chushah.
[15] Let them be both shamed and frustrated,	יֵבֹשׁוּ וְיַחְפְּרוּ יַחַד	Yevoshu veyachperu yachad,
those who seek to destroy my life;	מְבַקְשֵׁי נַפְשִׁי לְסִפּוֹתָהּ	mevakshei nafshi lispotah;
let them be repulsed and dismayed,	יִסֹּגוּ אָחוֹר וְיִכָּלְמוּ	yisogu achor veyikalmu,
those who wish for my harm.	חֲפֵצֵי רָעָתִי	chafetzei ra'ati.
[16] Let them be ruined for shaming *me,*	יָשֻׁמּוּ עַל־עֵקֶב בָּשְׁתָּם	Yashomu al ekev bashtam,
those who say "Ha ha!" to *embarrass* me.[3]	הָאֹמְרִים לִי הֶאָח הֶאָח	ha'omrim li "He'ach, he'ach."
[17] Let them rejoice and celebrate with you,	יָשִׂישׂוּ וְיִשְׂמְחוּ בְךָ	Yasisu veyismechu becha
all who seek you;	כָּל־מְבַקְשֶׁיךָ	kol mevakshecha;
let them say, "May God be exalted forever!"	יֹאמְרוּ תָמִיד יִגְדַּל יהוה	yomru, "Tamid yigdal Adonai!"
those who cherish your deliverance.	אֹהֲבֵי תְשׁוּעָתֶךָ	ohavei teshu'atecha.

[1] "My lips I shall not stop."
[2] "My heart."
[3] "Let-them-be-desolate upon because-of their-shaming-*me,* / those-who-say at-me 'He'ach, he'ach'."

[18] Oh, I am poor and needy;	וַאֲנִי עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן	Va'ani ani ve'evyon;
God, think up some way to help me.[1]	אֲדֹנָי יַחֲשָׁב לִי עֶזְרָתִי	Adonai yachashav li ezrati.
For you are my rescuer;	וּמְפַלְטִי אַתָּה	Umefalti atah;
my God, don't delay!	אֱלֹהַי אַל־תְּאַחַר	Elohai, al te'achar!

[1] "God devise for me my help."

Psalm 41

[1] For the leader, a tune *attributed* to David.	לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	Lamnatze'ach, mizmor leDavid.
[2] Happy are they who think of the poor	אַשְׁרֵי מַשְׂכִּיל אֶל־דָּל	Ashrei maskil el dal;
for God will save them in bad times.[1]	בְּיוֹם רָעָה יְמַלְּטֵהוּ יהוה	beyom ra'ah yemaltehu Adonai.
[3] God will guard them and give them life,	יהוה יִשְׁמְרֵהוּ וִיחַיֵּהוּ	Adonai yishmerehu vichayehu
made happy on Earth;	וְאֹשַׁר[3] בָּאָרֶץ	ve'ushar ba'aretz,
God, don't cede them to their enemies' will.[2]	וְאַל־תִּתְּנֵהוּ בְּנֶפֶשׁ אֹיְבָיו	ve'al titnehu benefesh oyvav.
[4] God will nourish them on their sickbed,	יהוה יִסְעָדֶנּוּ עַל־עֶרֶשׂ דְּוָי	Adonai yis'adenu al eress devai;
transforming them when they lie sick.[4]	כָּל־מִשְׁכָּבוֹ הָפַכְתָּ בְחָלְיוֹ	kol mishkavo hafachta vecholyo.
[5] I said, "God, be nice to me.	אֲנִי־אָמַרְתִּי יהוה חָנֵּנִי	Ani amarti, "Adonai, choneni:
Heal me though I have sinned before you."	רְפָאָה נַפְשִׁי כִּי־חָטָאתִי לָךְ	refa'ah nafshi ki chatati lach."
[6] My foes[5] speak ill of me—	אוֹיְבַי יֹאמְרוּ רַע לִי	Oyvai yomru ra li—
when will they die and be forgotten?[6]	מָתַי יָמוּת וְאָבַד שְׁמוֹ	matai yamut ve'avad shemo?
[7] *Foes* who come to see *me* won't be frank;	וְאִם־בָּא לִרְאוֹת שָׁוְא יְדַבֵּר	Ve'im bah lirot shav yedaber,
they'll store up complaints *about me,*	לִבּוֹ יִקְבָּץ־אָוֶן לוֹ	libo yikbatz aven lo;
and voice them once they're outside *my house.*[7]	יֵצֵא לַחוּץ יְדַבֵּר	yetzeh lachutz yedaber.
[8] Together, my enemies all whisper about me	יַחַד עָלַי יִתְלַחֲשׁוּ כָּל־שֹׂנְאָי	Yachad alai yitlachashu kol sonai;
as they plan harm for me.	עָלַי יַחְשְׁבוּ רָעָה לִי	alai yachshevu ra'ah li.
[9] "Something awful has come upon him;	דְּבַר־בְּלִיַּעַל יָצוּק בּוֹ	"Devar beliya'al yatzuk bo;
he's flat on his back and he'll never get up."[8]	וַאֲשֶׁר שָׁכַב לֹא־יוֹסִיף לָקוּם	va'asher shachav, lo yosif lakum."

[1] "Happy is one who gives thought to the poor; in a bad day God will save him."

[2] "God will guard him and give him life to be made happy on Earth; and don't give him into the will/soul/initiative of his enemies."

[3] A manuscript has the reading יאשר (he would be made happy) for וְאֹשַׁר (and he is made happy).

[4] "All his lying you have changed during his sickness": when they lay sick, God changed their condition (and restored their health).

[5] "My foes"—plural in the first half of the verse, singular in the second. In translation we allow masculine pronouns for bad people, hoping that evil people who prefer different pronouns won't feel excluded.

[6] "When will-he-die and-will-be-lost his-name?"

[7] "And if *someone* comes to see/visit *me* / he'll speak with equivocation (he won't admit to what he thinks); / his heart will gather transgressions to himself (he'll be making a list of all my mistakes) / *but when* he goes out to the outside he will speak (i.e., he'll report all the bad stuff about me)."

[8] "And as he has lain down, he will not continue to rise." They're speaking about the poet.

[10] Even a friend I trusted	גַּם־אִישׁ שְׁלוֹמִי אֲשֶׁר־בָּטַחְתִּי בוֹ	Gam ish shelomi asher batachti vo
to share a meal has shown me his back![1]	אוֹכֵל לַחְמִי הִגְדִּיל עָלַי עָקֵב	ochel lachmi higdil alai akev.
[11] O God, be nice to me.[2]	וְאַתָּה יהוה חָנֵּנִי	Ve'atah, Adonai, choneni,
Get me up so I can pay them back!	וַהֲקִימֵנִי וַאֲשַׁלְּמָה לָהֶם	vahakimeni va'ashalmah lahem!
[12] Here's how I know you like me:	בְּזֹאת יָדַעְתִּי כִּי־חָפַצְתָּ בִּי	Bezot yadati ki chafatzta bi:
when my enemies can't harm me!	כִּי לֹא־יָרִיעַ אֹיְבִי עָלָי	ki lo yari'ah oyvai alai
[13] In my honesty you have supported me,	וַאֲנִי בְּתֻמִּי תָּמַכְתָּ בִּי	Va'ani betumi tamachta bi,
so place me in your presence forever!	וַתַּצִּיבֵנִי לְפָנֶיךָ לְעוֹלָם	vatatziveni lefanecha le'olam.
[14] Blessed be the ruling God of Israel	בָּרוּךְ יהוה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל	Baruch Adonai, Elohei Yisra'el,
from forever to forever,	מֵהָעוֹלָם וְעַד הָעוֹלָם	meha'olam ve'ad ha'olam.
let this be doubly true![3]	אָמֵן וְאָמֵן	Amen ve'amen.

[1] "Even a person *who was* my peace (someone I could rely on), whom I relied on / eating my bread/food, has made great against me the heel/back." עָקֵב can mean heel or rear.
[2] "And you, God, be gracious to me."
[3] "Amen (it's true) and amen (it's true)."

Psalm 42

[1] For the leader: a teaching-poem[1]	לַמְנַצֵּחַ מַשְׂכִּיל	Lamnatze'ach, maskil
by the sons of Korach.[2]	לִבְנֵי קֹרַח	livnei Korach.
[2] As the hart thirsts for the stream,[3]	כְּאַיָּל תַּעֲרֹג עַל אֲפִיקֵי מָיִם	Ke'ayal ta'arog al afikei mayim,
so does my spirit long for you, God.	כֵּן נַפְשִׁי תַּעֲרֹג אֵלֶיךָ אֱלֹהִים	ken nafshi ta'arog elechai, Elohim.
[3] My spirit thirsts for God,	צָמְאָה נַפְשִׁי לֵאלֹהִים	Tzam'ah nafshi lElohim,
the living God:	לְאֵל חָי	le'El chai;
When am I to come and appear	מָתַי אָבוֹא וְאֵרָאֶה	matai avo ve'er'eh
in God's presence?	פְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים	penei Elohim?
[4] My tears have been my *only* food	הָיְתָה לִּי דִמְעָתִי לֶחֶם	Haytah li dim'ati lechem,
day and night;	יוֹמָם וָלָיְלָה	yomam velaylah,
all day they say to me,	בֶּאֱמֹר אֵלַי כָּל הַיּוֹם	be'emor elai kol hayom,
"Where is your God?"	אַיֵּה אֱלֹהֶיךָ	"Ayeh Elohecha?"
[5] I think of this	אֵלֶּה אֶזְכְּרָה	Eileh ezkerah
and pour out my spirit—	וְאֶשְׁפְּכָה עָלַי נַפְשִׁי	ve'eshpecha alai nafshi,
how *once* I would join the procession,	כִּי אֶעֱבֹר בַּסָּךְ	ki e'evor basach,
walk with them to God's house,	אֲדַדֵּם עַד בֵּית אֱלֹהִים	edadem ad beit Elohim
a happy crowd, shouting joy and thanks.	בְּקוֹל רִנָּה וְתוֹדָה הָמוֹן חוֹגֵג	bekol rinah vetodah hamon chogeg.
[6] Why are you cowed, my spirit,	מַה תִּשְׁתּוֹחֲחִי נַפְשִׁי	Mah tishtochachi nafshi,
moaning inside me?	וַתֶּהֱמִי עָלָי	vatehemi alai?
Hope in God:	הוֹחִלִי לֵאלֹהִים	hochili lElohim
one day I shall thank	כִּי עוֹד אוֹדֶנּוּ	ki od odenu
God's saving presence.	יְשׁוּעוֹת פָּנָיו	yeshu'ot panav.
[7] O God, my spirit is cowed,	אֱלֹהַי עָלַי נַפְשִׁי תִשְׁתּוֹחָח	Elohai, alai nafshi tishtochach
so I think of you from the land of Jordan,	עַל כֵּן אֶזְכָּרְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ יַרְדֵּן	al ken ezkar'cha me'eretz Yarden
the Hermon hills, the hill of Mitzar.	וְחֶרְמוֹנִים מֵהַר מִצְעָר	veChermonim mehar Mitz'ar.

[1] If the Hebrew word **מַשְׂכִּיל** is related to the root **שכל**, common sense, it may mean a poem that imbues people with **שכל**, common sense or intelligence.
[2] Psalms 42-49, 84, 85, 87 and 88 are by the "sons of Korach," who "did not die" with their father (Num. 26:11).
[3] "Streams of water."

[8] Chasm calls to chasm,	תְּהוֹם אֶל תְּהוֹם קוֹרֵא	Tehom el tehom koreh
echoing your waterfalls;	לְקוֹל צִנּוֹרֶיךָ	lekol tzinorecha;
all your breakers and waves	כָּל מִשְׁבָּרֶיךָ וְגַלֶּיךָ	kol mishbarecha vegalecha
have passed above me.	עָלַי עָבָרוּ	alai avaru.
[9] By day God will command mercy,	יוֹמָם יְצַוֶּה יהוה חַסְדּוֹ	Yomam yetzavah Adonai chasdo
at night a song for me,	וּבַלַּיְלָה שִׁירָה עִמִּי	uvalaylah shiroh imi,
a prayer to the God of my life.	תְּפִלָּה לְאֵל חַיָּי	tefilah le'El chayai.
[10] I shall ask God, my rock:	אוֹמְרָה לְאֵל סַלְעִי	Omrah le'El sal'i,
"Why have you forgotten me,	לָמָּה שְׁכַחְתָּנִי	"Lamah shechachtani,
why am I walking in sadness,	לָמָּה קֹדֵר אֵלֵךְ	lamah koder elech
oppressed by the enemy?"	בְּלַחַץ אוֹיֵב	belachatz oyev?"
[11] I feel murder in my bones[1]	בְּרֶצַח בְּעַצְמוֹתַי	Beretzach be'atzmotai
when my foes taunt me,	חֵרְפוּנִי צוֹרְרָי	cherfuni tzorerai
when they say, all day:	בְּאָמְרָם אֵלַי כָּל הַיּוֹם	be'omram elai kol hayom,
"Where is your God?"	אַיֵּה אֱלֹהֶיךָ	"Ayeh Elohecha?"
[12] O my spirit, why are you cowed,	מַה תִּשְׁתּוֹחֲחִי נַפְשִׁי	Mah tishtochachi, nafshi,
why moaning inside me?	וּמַה תֶּהֱמִי עָלָי	umah tehemi alai?
Set your hopes on God,	הוֹחִילִי לֵאלֹהִים	hochili lElohim
that one day I shall be thankful	כִּי עוֹד אוֹדֶנּוּ	ki od odenu
for salvation—for me, from God.[2]	יְשׁוּעֹת פָּנַי וֵאלֹהָי	yeshu'ot panai vElohai.

[1] "With murder in my bones"—i.e., when my enemies taunt me, I become so exasperated I want to kill them!
[2] "The salvations of my presence and of my God."

Psalm 43

[1] Bring justice, God, and fight for me	שָׁפְטֵנִי אֱלֹהִים וְרִיבָה רִיבִי	Shofteni, Elohim, verivah rivi
against those heretics;	מִגּוֹי לֹא־חָסִיד	migoy lo chasid;
from evil people rescue me,	מֵאִישׁ־מִרְמָה וְעַוְלָה תְּפַלְּטֵנִי	me'ish mirmah ve'avlah tefalteni.
from all their lying tricks.[1]		
[2] For you, God, are my sole relief;	כִּי־אַתָּה אֱלֹהֵי מָעוּזִּי	Ki atah Elohei, ma'uzi;
why have you cast me off?	לָמָּה זְנַחְתָּנִי	lamah zenachtani?
Why must I stagger crushed with grief	לָמָּה־קֹדֵר אֶתְהַלֵּךְ	Lamah koder et'halech
while cruel bullies scoff?[2]	בְּלַחַץ אוֹיֵב	belachatz oyev?
[3] Send out your light, and your good will—	שְׁלַח־אוֹרְךָ וַאֲמִתֶּךָ	Shelach or'cha va'amit'cha;
sure comfort they provide—	הֵמָּה יַנְחוּנִי	hemah yan'chuni;
and bring me to your holy hill	יְבִיאוּנִי אֶל־הַר־קָדְשֶׁךָ	yevi'uni el har kodshecha
where you yourself abide.[3]	וְאֶל־מִשְׁכְּנוֹתֶיךָ	ve'el mishkenotecha.
[4] Then to God's altar shall I bring,	וְאָבוֹאָה אֶל־מִזְבַּח אֱלֹהִים	Ve'avo'ah el mizbach Elohim,
my radiant bliss to God	אֶל־אֵל שִׂמְחַת גִּילִי	el El simchat gili,
singing my thanks with well-tuned string	וְאוֹדְךָ בְכִנּוֹר	ve'od'cha vechinor,
to God, whom I applaud.[4]	אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהָי	Elohim, Elohai.
[5] Why need I suffer, dark and dazed?	מַה־תִּשְׁתּוֹחֲחִי נַפְשִׁי וּמַה־תֶּהֱמִי	Mah tishtochachi nafshi umah tehemi?
With God I take my stand,	עָלַי הוֹחִילִי לֵאלֹהִים	Alai hochili lElohim
whom I will ever thank and praise	כִּי־עוֹד אוֹדֶנּוּ	ki od odenu
for rescue close at hand.[5]	יְשׁוּעֹת פָּנַי וֵאלֹהָי	yeshu'ot panai vElohai.

[1] "Judge me, God, and fight my fight (God, as judge vindicate me, as defense lawyer fight for me) / from the people *who are* not religious/virtuous, / from the person *who is* deceitful and unjust, rescue me."

[2] "For you are the God of my stronghold. / Why have you spurned me? / Why must I go grieving / under my foe's oppression?"

[3] "Send your light and friendliness; / these will bring me comfort. / Bring me to your holy mountain / and to your dwelling place."

[4] "Then shall I bring to God's altar, / to God, the joy of my delight; / and with my string instrument I shall thank / God, my God." In modern Hebrew כִּנּוֹר is a violin, but historians may disagree about the Psalmist's access to a bowed string instrument. The Hebrew וְאוֹדְךָ (and I shall acknowledge or give thanks) is the source for "singing" (to the accompaniment of a string instrument) and "applaud."

[5] "My spirit, why are you dark and dazed/astonished? / For me, find hope in God / for I continue to thank *God*, my *ever*-present rescuer and my God." יְשׁוּעֹת פָּנַי, "savings of my face," to me implies visible imminent rescue.

Psalm 44

[1] For the leader, for Korach's descendants, a teaching-poem.	לַמְנַצֵּחַ לִבְנֵי־קֹרַח מַשְׂכִּיל	Lamnatze'ach, livnei Korach, maskil.
[2] O God, we listened all enthralled to the account our parents told, how your deeds were so grand and bold when they were young, in days of old—[1]	אֱלֹהִים בְּאָזְנֵינוּ שָׁמַעְנוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ סִפְּרוּ־לָנוּ פֹּעַל פָּעַלְתָּ בִּימֵיהֶם בִּימֵי קֶדֶם	Elohim, be'ozneinu shamanu— avoteinu sipru lanu— po'al pa'alta vimeihem, bimei kedem.
[3] How you yourself the venture led those *pagan* folk to dispossess, planted our parents in their stead, banished their foes to dire distress.[2]	אַתָּה יָדְךָ גּוֹיִם הוֹרַשְׁתָּ וַתִּטָּעֵם תָּרַע לְאֻמִּים וַתְּשַׁלְּחֵם	Atah yad'cha goyim horashta, vatita'em; tarah le'umim vatshal'chem.
[4] We did not win with weaponry nor did our power win the fight, but yours alone was victory, your favor and your presence bright.[3]	כִּי לֹא בְחַרְבָּם יָרְשׁוּ אֶרֶץ וּזְרוֹעָם לֹא־הוֹשִׁיעָה לָמוֹ כִּי־יְמִינְךָ וּזְרוֹעֲךָ וְאוֹר פָּנֶיךָ כִּי רְצִיתָם	Ki lo vecharbam yarshu aretz uzero'ah lo hoshi'a lamo, ki yemin'cha uzero'acha ve'or panecha, ki retzitam.
[5] O God—the ruler I obey— for Jacob*'s seed* decree release;[4] [6] with your help, our foes we can slay and trample on our enemies.[5]	אַתָּה־הוּא מַלְכִּי אֱלֹהִים צַוֵּה יְשׁוּעוֹת יַעֲקֹב בְּךָ צָרֵינוּ נְנַגֵּחַ בְּשִׁמְךָ נָבוּס קָמֵינוּ	Atah hu malki, Elohim: tzaveh yeshu'ot Ya'akov. Becha tzareinu nenage'ach; beshim'cha navus kameinu.

[1] "God, with our *own* ears we heard— / our ancestors told us— / *of* the *great* work you performed in their time, long ago"

[2] "*How* you yourself (you—your hand/power) / drove out *those heathen* nations / and planted them, *our ancestors, instead, / but* punished/made-it-bad-for those *other* people and sent them off."

[3] "*How* they won the land not by the sword, / nor did their strong arm help them, / but your right hand and strong arm / and the radiance of your presence—because you favored them." "They" in the literal translation refers to our ancestors; the verse translation uses "we" for our side.

[4] "You are my ruler, God: / command deliverance for Jacob!"

[5] "With you, we can pierce/gore our attackers; / in your name we can trample those who rise against us."

[7] I'll not rely upon my bow,	כִּי לֹא בְקַשְׁתִּי אֶבְטָח	Ki lo vekashti evtach,
my sword won't save me *in the field,*[1]	וְחַרְבִּי לֹא תוֹשִׁיעֵנִי	vecharbi lo toshi'eni.
[8] But you save us from every foe;	כִּי הוֹשַׁעְתָּנוּ מִצָּרֵינוּ	Ki hoshatanu mitzareinu,
disgraced, our enemies must yield.[2]	וּמְשַׂנְאֵינוּ הֱבִישׁוֹתָ	umesaneinu hovishota.
[9] Each day our God we proudly praise	בֵּאלֹהִים הִלַּלְנוּ כָל־הַיּוֹם	BElohim hilalnu chol hayom,
and God's repute forever raise. Selah[3]	וְשִׁמְךָ לְעוֹלָם נוֹדֶה סֶלָה	veshim'cha le'olam nodeh. Selah.
[10] Yet you have spurned us, brought us down;	אַף־זָנַחְתָּ וַתַּכְלִימֵנוּ	Af zanachta vatachlimenu,
without your help our armies fought.[4]	וְלֹא־תֵצֵא בְּצִבְאוֹתֵינוּ	velo tetze betzivoteinu,
[11] We fled: our foes had your support	תְּשִׁיבֵנוּ אָחוֹר מִנִּי־צָר	Teshivenu achor mini tzar,
and plundered everything they sought,[5]	וּמְשַׂנְאֵינוּ שָׁסוּ לָמוֹ	umesaneinu shasu lamo.
[12] While meek like sheep for slaughter bound	תִּתְּנֵנוּ כְּצֹאן מַאֲכָל	Titnenu ketzon ma'achal,
you scattered us to every port.[6]	וּבַגּוֹיִם זֵרִיתָנוּ	uvagoyim zeritanu.
[13] At bargain rates you sell your folk	תִּמְכֹּר־עַמְּךָ בְלֹא־הוֹן	Timkor am'cha velo hon,
and make no profit from the trade;[7]	וְלֹא־רִבִּיתָ בִּמְחִירֵיהֶם	velo ribita bim'chireihem.
[14] Our neighbors see the cruel joke,	תְּשִׂימֵנוּ חֶרְפָּה לִשְׁכֵנֵינוּ	Tesimenu cherpah lishcheneinu,
the locals scoff as we're dismayed.[8]	לַעַג וָקֶלֶס לִסְבִיבוֹתֵינוּ	la'ag vekaless lisvivoteinu.

[1] "For not on my bow shall I rely, / and my sword won't save me."
[2] "But you have saved us from our attackers / and dishonored those who hate us."
[3] "We brag about God every day / and uphold your reputation. Selah." Selah is of uncertain meaning.
[4] "Still, you have spurned and shamed us. / You wouldn't go-out-with/accompany our armies …"
[5] "You made us retreat before the foe, / and let our enemies plunder as they wish."
[6] "You leave us like sheep to be eaten up, / and you have scattered us among the *other* nations."
[7] "You sell off your people for cheap (for no fortune) / and gain no advantage by the sale (and you have not increased *your wealth* through their being sold)."
[8] "To our neighbors, you make us a reproach, / a*n object of* mockery and scorn for those around us."

[15] A well-known cautionary tale	תְּשִׂימֵנוּ מָשָׁל בַּגּוֹיִם	Tesimenu mashal bagoyim,
are we, for all to scorn and rail.[1]	מְנוֹד־רֹאשׁ בַּל־אֻמִּים	menod rosh bal umim.
[16] All day I face my own disgrace;	כָּל־הַיּוֹם כְּלִמָּתִי נֶגְדִּי	Kol hayom kelimati negdi,
humiliation masks my face—	וּבֹשֶׁת פָּנַי כִּסָּתְנִי	uvoshet panai kisatni
[17] The heretic vociferous,	מִקּוֹל מְחָרֵף וּמְגַדֵּף	Mikol mecharef umegadef,
bent on revenge, challenges us.[2]	מִפְּנֵי אוֹיֵב וּמִתְנַקֵּם	mipnei oyev umitnakem.
[18] Despite all this we worship you—	כָּל־זֹאת בָּאַתְנוּ וְלֹא שְׁכַחֲנוּךָ	Kol zot ba'atnu, velo shechachanucha,
our promise we shall not betray—[3]	וְלֹא־שִׁקַּרְנוּ בִּבְרִיתֶךָ	velo shikarnu bivritecha.
[19] Our hearts will not recoil *from you*	לֹא־נָסוֹג אָחוֹר לִבֵּנוּ	Lo nasog achor libenu
nor from your path shall our steps stray.[4]	וַתֵּט אֲשֻׁרֵינוּ מִנִּי אָרְחֶךָ	vatat ashureinu mini or'checha.
[20] Though down into a snakepit thrust	כִּי דִכִּיתָנוּ בִּמְקוֹם תַּנִּים	Ki dikitanu bimkom tanim
with black death hovering overhead,[5]	וַתְּכַס עָלֵינוּ בְּצַלְמָוֶת	vat'chas aleinu vetzalmavet—
[21] Only in our God may we trust—	אִם־שָׁכַחְנוּ שֵׁם אֱלֹהֵינוּ	im shachachnu shem Eloheinu
no pagan idol dare we dread,[6]	וַנִּפְרֹשׂ כַּפֵּינוּ לְאֵל זָר	vanifros kapeinu le'el zar,
[22] For God probes deep to expose deceit	הֲלֹא אֱלֹהִים יַחְקָר־זֹאת	Halo Elohim yachakor zot,
and knows the thoughts our hearts secrete.[7]	כִּי־הוּא יֹדֵעַ תַּעֲלֻמוֹת לֵב	ki hu yode'ah ta'alumot lev.

[1] "You have set us as an example/story among the *other* nations, a shaking of the head (in laughter or wonderment at our ill fortune) among the peoples (בַּל־אֻמִּים is read as בְּלֹא־אֻמִּים, 'among the peoples')." It's as if parents tell their children: "You'd better do as I say because you don't want to end up like *them,* do you?"

[2] "At the voice of the critic and blasphemer, / at the presence of the enemy and avenger."

[3] "All this has come to us, but we have not forgotten you / nor betrayed your agreement *with us*."

[4] "Not would-recoil back our-heart, / and-swerve our-steps from your-path."

[5] "Though you would crush us in the place of reptiles / and would cover above us with death-shade."

[6] "If we could (or, we never would) forget our God's reputation / and reach out our hands *in supplication* to a foreign deity"

[7] "Surely, God would find this out / for *God* knows the heart's secrets."

23 For you we're murdered every day	כִּי־עָלֶיךָ הֹרַגְנוּ כָל־הַיּוֹם	Ki alecha horagnu chol hayom,
like sheep—for slaughterer's knife the prey.[1]	נֶחְשַׁבְנוּ כְּצֹאן טִבְחָה	nechshavnu ketzon tiv'cha.
24 Wake, God; will you still slumber more?	עוּרָה לָמָּה תִישַׁן אֲדֹנָי	Urah, lamah tishon, Adonai?
Rise up, this scornful judgement stay![2]	הָקִיצָה אַל־תִּזְנַח לָנֶצַח	Hakitzah! Al tiznach lanetzach.
25 Why hide your presence and ignore	לָמָּה־פָנֶיךָ תַסְתִּיר	Lamah fanecha tastir,
the pain and pressure we endure?[3]	תִּשְׁכַּח עָנְיֵנוּ וְלַחֲצֵנוּ	tishkach onyenu velachatzenu?
26 We're each of us sunk in the dust—	כִּי שָׁחָה לֶעָפָר נַפְשֵׁנוּ	Ki shachah le'afar nafshenu,
flat on the ground our selves we fling;[4]	דָּבְקָה לָאָרֶץ בִּטְנֵנוּ	davkah la'aretz bitnenu.
27 Rise for your kindness' sake, grant us	קוּמָה עֶזְרָתָה לָּנוּ	Kumah, ezratah lanu,
relief, and your salvation bring.[5]	וּפְדֵנוּ לְמַעַן חַסְדֶּךָ	ufedenu lema'an chasdecha.

[1] "For you we are murdered every day; / we are considered like sheep/flock *for* slaughter."
[2] "Wake up! God, why are you sleeping? / Get up! Don't reject us forever!" "This scornful judgement stay" is supposed to mean, You have scorned us (justly, since God is just) but don't let this go on forever (stay the judgement!).
[3] "Why do you conceal your presence / and forget our misery and oppression?"
[4] "We are sunk in the dust, / our belly lies stuck in the dirt."
[5] "Rise up, help us, / and rescue us for the sake of your kindness."

Psalm 45

[1] For the leader. To *the tune of* "Roses."	לַמְנַצֵּחַ עַל־שֹׁשַׁנִּים	Lamnatze'ach al shoshanim
For the descendants of Korach.	לִבְנֵי־קֹרַח	livnei Korach,
A song of deduction for seduction.[1]	מַשְׂכִּיל שִׁיר יְדִידֹת	maskil shir yedidot.
[2] My heart is sparkling with something good;	רָחַשׁ לִבִּי דָּבָר טוֹב	Rachash libi davar tov;
I'll tell the king what I'm working on;	אֹמֵר אֲנִי מַעֲשַׂי לְמֶלֶךְ	omer ani ma'asai lemelech;
my tongue is the pen of an expert scribe.	לְשׁוֹנִי עֵט סוֹפֵר מָהִיר	leshoni et sofer mahir.
[3] You[2] are the most beautiful of people;	יָפְיְפִיתָ מִבְּנֵי אָדָם	Yafyafita mibnei adam;
grace is poured into your lips	הוּצַק חֵן בְּשִׂפְתוֹתֶיךָ	hutzak chen besfetotecha;
so that God[3] has blessed you forever.[4]	עַל־כֵּן בֵּרַכְךָ אֱלֹהִים לְעוֹלָם	al ken berach'cha Elohim le'olam.
[4] Strap your sword upon your thigh,	חֲגוֹר־חַרְבְּךָ עַל־יָרֵךְ	Chagor charbecha al yarech,
warrior, with your glory and splendor.	גִּבּוֹר הוֹדְךָ וְהַדָרְךָ	gibor, hod'cha vahadarecha.
[5] And *in* your splendor, succeed and ride on	וַהֲדָרְךָ צְלַח רְכַב	Vahadar'cha tzelach rechav
in the cause of truth and humble justice,	עַל־דְּבַר־אֱמֶת וְעַנְוָה־צֶדֶק	al devar emet ve'anvah tzedek,
and may your power lead you to amazing feats.[5]	וְתוֹרְךָ נוֹרָאוֹת יְמִינֶךָ	vetor'cha nora'ot yeminecha.
[6] Your arrows are sharp	חִצֶּיךָ שְׁנוּנִים	Chitzecha shenunim
(peoples will fall beneath you)	עַמִּים תַּחְתֶּיךָ יִפְּלוּ	(amim tachtecha yiplu)
in the heart of the enemies of the ruler.	בְּלֵב אוֹיְבֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ	belev oyvei hamelech.

[1] I don't think we know what these instructions are; I presume they're notes to the band- or choirleader. The roses (or lilies) could be a reference to some familiar musical mode, instrument, rhythm or tune; or maybe it's a good song if you're trying to win a lady's heart with roses. In case you thought Korach and all his crew fell into the pit (Num. 16:33), it seems the "sons" were spared (Num 26:11); perhaps these preserved not his genes but a literary and/or musical tradition. The song is a מַשְׂכִּיל (maskil), from the root שכל for brain or common sense, so perhaps it's a very complex song requiring serious brainpower, and perhaps it stimulates brainpower, an early example of the Mozart Effect. That's why I call it a song of deduction. יְדִידֹת could mean darlings, objects of emotional or religious attachment, but the psalm covers some royal techniques for seducing a captive princess, so it could be a song of seduction.

[2] The object of praise is a beautiful warrior with a dash of androgyny—יְרֵךְ (your thigh) in verse 3 uses the feminine possessive (to my eye, at least) but for the rest the object of praise seems masculine.

[3] Or, "authorities, powerful people."

[4] Verses 1 and 2 are combined in some versions. To me, verse 1 seems like standard rubric introducing a psalm while verse 2 looks like the poet sharing excitement about the content of the poem.

[5] "And-may-it-lead/show/teach-you awesome-deeds your-right-hand."

[7] Your throne, God, is forever;	כִּסְאֲךָ אֱלֹהִים עוֹלָם וָעֶד	Kisacha Elohim olam va'ed;
a sceptre of justice is the sceptre of your rule.	שֵׁבֶט מִישׁוֹר שֵׁבֶט מַלְכוּתֶךָ	shevet mishor shevet mal'chutecha.
[8] You love righteousness and hate evil,	אָהַבְתָּ צֶדֶק וַתִּשְׂנָא רֶשַׁע	Ahavta tzedek vatisnah reshah;
so your supreme God[1] has anointed you	עַל־כֵּן מְשָׁחֲךָ אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֶיךָ	al ken meshachacha Elohim Elohecha
with oil of joy, more than your peers.[2]	שֶׁמֶן שָׂשׂוֹן מֵחֲבֵרֶיךָ	shemen sason, mechaverecha.
[9] Myrrh, aloe and cassia cloak you,	מֹר־וַאֲהָלוֹת קְצִיעוֹת כָּל־בִּגְדֹתֶיךָ	Mor va'ahalot ketziyot kol bigdotecha
brought from ivory pleasure-halls.	מִן־הֵיכְלֵי שֵׁן מִנִּי שִׂמְּחוּךָ	min heichlei shen, mini simchucha.
[10] Princesses are your favorites,	בְּנוֹת מְלָכִים בְּיִקְרוֹתֶיךָ	Benot melachim beyikrotecha;
and the *next* consort stands ready	נִצָּבָה שַׁגַּל לִימִינְךָ	nitzvah shegal limin'cha
decked in gold from Ophir.[3]	בְּכֶתֶם אוֹפִיר	bechetem Ofir.
[11] "Dear girl," *they tell her,* "Listen well:	שִׁמְעִי־בַת וּרְאִי וְהַטִּי אָזְנֵךְ	Shimi vat ure'i, vehati oznech,
forget your people and your father's house."[4]	וְשִׁכְחִי עַמֵּךְ וּבֵית אָבִיךְ	veshich'chi imech uveit avich.
[12] "Let the king lust for your beauty:	וְיִתְאָו הַמֶּלֶךְ יָפְיֵךְ	Veyitav hamelech yofyech
he is your master; submit to him."	כִּי־הוּא אֲדֹנַיִךְ וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִי־לוֹ	ki hu adonayich vehishtachavi lo.
[13] "And, Tyrian princess,[5] with a bribe	וּבַת־צֹר בְּמִנְחָה	Uvat Tzor, bemin'cha
the wealthy will court your favor."[6]	פְּנֵיךְ יְחַלּוּ עֲשִׁירֵי עָם	panayich yechalu ashirei am.

[1] "The God of your Gods."

[2] Verse 7 addresses God, verse 8 addresses the ruler, perhaps the same person as in verses 3-6.

[3] Verses 9 and 10 could be addressed to the same person as the warrior in verses 3-6, or perhaps someone else with royal splendor. Verse 9: "Myrrh and aloe and cassia *are* all your garments / from palaces of *ivory*-tooth from they-delighted-you." Verse 10: "Daughters of kings *are* in-your-favorites; / stands a-consort on-your-right / in gold of Ophir." The root שגל (consort) can mean violate or ravish. Ophir gold is supposed to be of high quality.

[4] "Listen, girl, and see, and incline your ear, / and forget your people and your father's house."

Verses 11-18 are the seduction. Someone tries to persuade the princess (Tyrian princess in verse 13) to be ravished willingly, since she'll be a royal favorite with power (v. 13), sons to inherit royal power (v. 17), fine clothes and attendants (vv. 14-15), the king's exclusive favor (v. 14) and enduring fame (18). If you're a captive with no choice, some of this might mitigate your misery, until you remember how suddenly fortunes can change.

[5] Jezebel was a Tyrian princess. One could read the word צר, Tyre, as trouble or affliction.

[6] "Your-presence will-propitiate the-rich-people-of the-nation"—the rich will try to bribe you since you have the king's ear in bed.

[14] The princess's splendor is for no one else;[1]	כָּל־כְּבוּדָּה בַת־מֶלֶךְ פְּנִימָה	Kol kevudah vat melech penimah;
woven with gold is her gown.	מִמִּשְׁבְּצוֹת זָהָב לְבוּשָׁהּ	mimishbetzot zahav levushah.
[15] In *fine* embroidery is she brought to the king	לְרִקְמוֹת תּוּבַל לַמֶּלֶךְ	Lirkamot tuval lamelech
with maids in waiting as her companions,	בְּתוּלוֹת אַחֲרֶיהָ רֵעוֹתֶיהָ	betulot achareha, re'oteha,
all brought to you.	מוּבָאוֹת לָךְ	muva'ot lach.
[16] They are brought with joy and gladness;	תּוּבַלְנָה בְּשִׂמְחֹת וָגִיל	Tuvalnah bismachot vagil;
they enter the king's palace.	תְּבֹאֶינָה בְּהֵיכַל מֶלֶךְ	tevo'ena beheichal melech.
[17] "Instead of your fathers, you shall have sons;[2]	תַּחַת אֲבֹתֶיךָ יִהְיוּ בָנֶיךָ	Tachat avotecha yiheyu vanecha;
you will make them princes over all the land."	תְּשִׁיתֵמוֹ לְשָׂרִים בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ	teshitemo lesarim bechol ha'aretz.
[18] "I'll speak your name in every age,	אַזְכִּירָה שִׁמְךָ בְּכָל־דֹּר וָדֹר	Azkira shimcha bechol dor vador;
so nations will praise you forever."	עַל־כֵּן עַמִּים יְהוֹדְךָ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד	al ken amim yehoducha le'olam va'ed.

If the king in this psalm is like Ahasuerus in Ester *or the caliph of the Arabian Nights—working through a host of pretty girls who have no choice, but for whom royal favor is not the worst fate—the situation in this psalm is deplorable by modern standards. However, some see the psalm as a song for a king's marriage to a Tyrian princess; the court poet sings of God's choice of the king, his right to rule, and his sweet-smelling splendor; of the princess's options, her splendor, and her golden future. The poem may have begun as a secular epithalamion, later interpreted as a spiritual poem worthy of a place among the psalms.*

[1] כָּל־כְּבוּדָּה–I can't help reading this as כְּלַל־כְּבוּדָּה, "her splendor," moving the dot from ד to ה. פְּנִימָה implies inside—the princess's splendor is reserved for the king exclusively. "All-her-splendor, *of* the-daughter-of-the-king, *is an* internal *matter.*"

[2] "There will be your sons/children." The pronoun is masculine, but Hebrew seems less precise about gender differences than many people like, and this seems to refer to the princess.

Psalm 46[1]

[1] For the leader, for the sons of Korach,	לַמְנַצֵּחַ לִבְנֵי־קֹרַח	Lamnatze'ach, livnei Korach
a song on alamot.[2]	עַל־עֲלָמוֹת שִׁיר	al alamot shir.
[2] God is our shelter and strength—at hand	אֱלֹהִים לָנוּ מַחֲסֶה וָעֹז	Elohim lanu machaseh va'oz,
to comfort our anxiety[3]	עֶזְרָה בְצָרוֹת נִמְצָא מְאֹד	ezrah vetzarot nimtzah me'od.
[3] So we need fear no quaking land	עַל־כֵּן לֹא־נִירָא בְּהָמִיר אָרֶץ	Al ken lo nirah behamir aretz
nor landslide down into the sea,[4]	וּבְמוֹט הָרִים בְּלֵב יַמִּים	uvemot harim belev yamim.
[4] When raging ocean flood	יֶהֱמוּ יֶחְמְרוּ מֵימָיו	Yehemu yechmeru meimav
breaks mountains *down to mud*. Selah.[5]	יִרְעֲשׁוּ־הָרִים בְּגַאֲוָתוֹ סֶלָה	yirashu harim bega'avato. Selah.
[5] A branching brook delights God's town,	נָהָר פְּלָגָיו יְשַׂמְּחוּ עִיר־אֱלֹהִים	Nahar; pelagav yesamchu ir Elohim,
the Exalted's holy residence.[6]	קְדֹשׁ מִשְׁכְּנֵי עֶלְיוֹן	kedosh mishkenei Elyon.
[6] With God inside, the town stands firm;	אֱלֹהִים בְּקִרְבָּהּ בַּל־תִּמּוֹט	Elohim bekirbah bal timot,
when day dawns, God is our defence.[7]	יַעְזְרֶהָ אֱלֹהִים לִפְנוֹת בֹּקֶר	yazreha Elohim lifnot boker.
[7] Nations tremble and shake;	הָמוּ גוֹיִם מָטוּ מַמְלָכוֹת	Hamu goyim, matu mamlachot;
God's voice melts land to lake.[8]	נָתַן בְּקוֹלוֹ תָּמוּג אָרֶץ	natan bekolo tamug aretz.

[1] The Shakespeare psalm—an insight for which I thank my friend Isabel Packevicz. In the King James version, "shake" is word 46 (nudge, nudge!) from the start and "spear" 46 from the end (if you count just right): *hidden* traces of the poet's possible contribution to the KJV. And maybe Shakespeare's works were really written by Aemilia Bassano, a *young woman* (עלמה) of converso family—i.e., of *hidden* (עלם) origins. Eerie coincidences!

[2] Some think alamot are musical instruments. Or the term may mean a method of tuning. Some think it's associated with female voices since עלמה can mean a young woman. The root עלם can mean "unnoticed," but how this could relate to psalmistry seems like an open question.

[3] "God *is* for-us shelter and-strength, / help in-troubles is-found greatly"; i.e., God is our shelter and strength, one who is very present or exists (is found) in our time of troubles.

[4] "For-this-reason not shall-we-fear quaking of ground / *or* shifting-of mountains into-the-heart-of the-sea."

[5] "They-will-roar (or, Let them roar), they-will-boil/foam/bubble (like fermenting wine), its waters; / they-will-tremble, hills (or, *the waters* will cause the hills to shudder) with-its-swelling/surging."

[6] "*There is a* river; its divisions bring delight *to* the town of God, / holy dwellings of the High One."

[7] "God is inside it (God stays inside the town to defend it) lest it should shake (perhaps to prevent the residents from trembling in fear); / *God* will help *the town* at the appearance of morning."

[8] "Nations (perhaps other nations, or pagan nations, or non-Jewish nations) tremble (or cry out in anguish; the root המה implies being astonished or moved, physically and emotionally), empires/realms/states are moved; / *when God* has given *God's* noise/voice, earth melts (or the Earth melts away, dissolving *into primal chaos*).

[8] The God of Hosts is at our side,[1]	יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת עִמָּנוּ	Adonai tzeva'ot imanu,
Jacob's God our bastion. Selah.	מִשְׂגָּב־לָנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב סֶלָה	misgav lanu Elohei Ya'akov. Selah.
[9] Go out, see what God has done	לְכוּ־חֲזוּ מִפְעֲלוֹת יְהוָה	Lechu, chazu mifalot Adonai
bringing ruin far and wide …[2]	אֲשֶׁר־שָׂם שַׁמּוֹת בָּאָרֶץ	asher sam shamot ba'aretz.
[10] Yet God will end *all* wars worldwide,	מַשְׁבִּית מִלְחָמוֹת עַד־קְצֵה הָאָרֶץ	Mashbit mil'chamot ad ketze ha'aretz,
destroy the armies' weaponry	קֶשֶׁת יְשַׁבֵּר וְקִצֵּץ חֲנִית	keshet yeshaber vekitzetz chanit,
and burn up their machinery.[3]	עֲגָלוֹת יִשְׂרֹף בָּאֵשׁ	agalot yisrof ba'esh.
[11] You know it's God who says: "Stop war!	הַרְפּוּ וּדְעוּ כִּי־אָנֹכִי אֱלֹהִים	Harpu ude'u ki anochi Elohim,
O'er realms, o'er Earth, on high I soar!"[4]	אָרוּם בַּגּוֹיִם אָרוּם בָּאָרֶץ	arum bagoyim, arum ba'aretz.
[12] The God of Hosts is at our side,	יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת עִמָּנוּ	Adonai tzeva'ot imanu,
Jacob's God our place to hide (Selah).[5]	מִשְׂגָּב־לָנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב סֶלָה	misgav lanu Elohei Ya'akov. Selah.

[1] "At our side"—lit., "with us." Some would prefer to think God is "on" our side, but surely that depends on the worth of our endeavors.

[2] "Go, view the works of God / in that *God* set ruins on Earth."

[3] "*God is* one-who-ends wars to-the-edge-of the-Earth; / *the warrior's* bow *God*-breaks, and-cuts-off (or breaks in two) a spear; / wagons (to transport warriors or weapons) *God*-burns with-fire."

[4] "Get-weak *so you have to stop fighting* (or, Be quiet!) and-know that-I, God, / I-will-rise above-the-nations (pagan nations, perhaps), I-will-rise above-the-Earth."

[5] Verse 8 is repeated. "The God of Hosts is with us, / a citadel (high place, easier to defend) for us *is* the God of Jacob. Selah."

Psalm 47

[1] For the leader, a tune by Korach's children.	לַמְנַצֵּחַ לִבְנֵי־קֹרַח מִזְמוֹר	Lamnatze'ach livnei Korach mizmor.
[2] Everybody, clap your hands	כָּל־הָעַמִּים תִּקְעוּ־כָף	Kol ha'amim tiku chaf,
and shout to God a cry of joy[1]	הָרִיעוּ לֵאלֹהִים בְּקוֹל רִנָּה	hari'u lElohim bekol rinah
[3] That God above is *totally* grand,	כִּי־יהוה עֶלְיוֹן נוֹרָא	Ki Adonai elyon norah,
great sovereign over every land,[2]	מֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל עַל־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ	melech gadol al kol ha'aretz,
[4] Commanding nations to obey	יַדְבֵּר עַמִּים תַּחְתֵּינוּ	Yedaber amim tachteinu
and peoples to accept our sway.[3]	וּלְאֻמִּים תַּחַת רַגְלֵינוּ	ule'umim tachat ragleinu.
[5] *God* chose our treasured legacy,	יִבְחַר־לָנוּ אֶת־נַחֲלָתֵנוּ	Yivchar lanu et nachalatenu,
our esteemed Jewish history.[4] Selah.	אֶת גְּאוֹן יַעֲקֹב אֲשֶׁר־אָהֵב סֶלָה	et ge'on Ya'akov asher ahev. Selah.
[6] With laudatory cries God soars	עָלָה אֱלֹהִים בִּתְרוּעָה	Alah Elohim bitru'ah,
high, as the braying shofar roars.[5]	יהוה בְּקוֹל שׁוֹפָר	Adonai bekol shofar.
[7] Make songs for God and sing them out,	זַמְּרוּ אֱלֹהִים זַמֵּרוּ	Zamru Elohim, zameru,
sing to our sovereign, tuneful shout,[6]	זַמְּרוּ לְמַלְכֵּנוּ זַמֵּרוּ	zamru lemalkenu, zameru,
[8] That God rules over everything;	כִּי מֶלֶךְ כָּל־הָאָרֶץ אֱלֹהִים	Ki melech kol ha'aretz Elohim;
sing with a fancy tune, but sing!	זַמְּרוּ מַשְׂכִּיל	zamru maskil.
[9] God is ruler of everyone,	מָלַךְ אֱלֹהִים עַל־גּוֹיִם	Malach Elohim al goyim,
seated on *God's* holy throne.[7]	אֱלֹהִים יָשַׁב עַל־כִּסֵּא קָדְשׁוֹ	Elohim yashav al kiseh kodsho.
[10] United, nations all agree	נְדִיבֵי עַמִּים נֶאֱסָפוּ	Nedivei amim ne'esafu,
to serve Abraham's deity,	עַם אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם	am Elohei Avraham,
for Earth's defense is holy toil,	כִּי לֵאלֹהִים מָגִנֵּי־אָרֶץ	ki lElohim maginei eretz,
acknowledging that God is royal![8]	מְאֹד נַעֲלָה	me'od na'alah.

[1] "All the peoples, make noise with palm*s*, / cry out to God with a sound/voice of joy."
[2] "Over all the Earth."
[3] "*God* tells peoples *to submit* under us / and nations *to lie obediently* under our feet."
[4] "*God* chooses for us our inheritance/legacy, / the pride of Jacob whom *God* loved. Selah."
[5] "*God's praise* has risen with a *shofar*-noise, / God *is exalted* with the sound of the shofar."
[6] "Make music/song for God, make music/song, / make music/song for our ruler, make music/song."
[7] "God has become ruler over nations; God has sat down on the throne of *God's* glory."
[8] "The leaders/philanthropists of the peoples were gathered / *to become* a people of the God of Abraham, / for to God are the protectors of the Earth (i.e., those who protect the Earth work for God, it's God's work); / greatly is *God* exalted (i.e., those who do God's work by protecting the Earth exalt God)."

Psalm 48

for Monday, the second day of the week.

[1] A song, a tune, for Korach's sons.[1]	שִׁיר מִזְמוֹר לִבְנֵי־קֹרַח	Shir mizmor livnei Korach.
[2] Great is God and greatly praised	גָּדוֹל יהוה וּמְהֻלָּל מְאֹד	Gadol Adonai umehulal me'od
In God's town, *on* God's holy hill.	בְּעִיר אֱלֹהֵינוּ הַר־קָדְשׁוֹ	be'ir Eloheinu, har kodsho.
[3] A lovely place, joy of the earth,	יְפֵה נוֹף מְשׂוֹשׂ כָּל־הָאָרֶץ	Yefeh nof, mesos kol ha'aretz,
Is *Zion's* Mount, far to the North,2	הַר־צִיּוֹן יַרְכְּתֵי צָפוֹן	Har Tziyon, yarketei tzafon,
[A] great king's city.	קִרְיַת מֶלֶךְ רָב	kiryat melech rav.
[4] In *all* its strongholds God is known	אֱלֹהִים בְּאַרְמְנוֹתֶיהָ נוֹדַע	Elohim be'armenoteha nodah
As strongest *citadel* of all.*3*	לְמִשְׂגָּב	lemisgav.
[5] For look, those kings all came to see—,	כִּי־הִנֵּה הַמְּלָכִים נוֹעֲדוּ	Ki hineh hamlachim no'adu,
They travelled as one company;	עָבְרוּ יַחְדָּו	avru yachdav.
[6] They gazed in awe ("Can this be real?"),	הֵמָּה רָאוּ כֵּן תָּמָהוּ	hemah ra'u, ken tamahu;
They panicked and took to their heels;[4]	נִבְהֲלוּ נֶחְפָּזוּ	nivhalu, nechpazu;
[7] Shuddering seized that royal gang	רְעָדָה אֲחָזָתַם שָׁם	re'adah achazatam sham,
Like a woman racked by labor pangs.	חִיל כַּיּוֹלֵדָה	chil kayoledah.
[8] God sends a tempest from the East	בְּרוּחַ קָדִים	Beru'ach kadim
To shatter grand ships of Tarshish	תְּשַׁבֵּר אֳנִיּוֹת תַּרְשִׁישׁ	teshaber oniyot Tarshish.
[9] We had heard of it, and then we saw![5]	כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְנוּ כֵּן רָאִינוּ	Ka'asher shamanu, ken ra'inu
In God's town (hosts at God's command)—	בְּעִיר־יהוה צְבָאוֹת	be'ir Adonai Tzeva'ot,
The God whom we address with awe—	בְּעִיר אֱלֹהֵינוּ	be'ir Eloheinu—
(May God forever let it stand!). Selah.	אֱלֹהִים יְכוֹנְנֶהָ עַד־עוֹלָם סֶלָה	Elohim yechoneneha ad olam. Selah.

[1] This psalm may be written by Korach's descendants (just as many psalms are "by" King David), or it may have been used by them in the Temple service.

[2] In the northern part of Jerusalem.

[3] "God, among its strongholds, is known as a stronghold." בְּאַרְמְנוֹתֶיהָ may be translated as "in its palaces" instead of "strongholds": a royal residence is both luxurious, a palace, and well-protected, a stronghold. The great fortresses of Jerusalem, where the great king lives, concede that it's safer to be with God than to seek shelter in any citadel.

[4] "They saw; and-so they-panicked; / they-took-fright *and* they-were-hurried-away."

[5] "As we had heard, so did we see."

[10] O God, we felt your sympathy	דָּמִינוּ אֱלֹהִים חַסְדֶּךָ	Diminu, Elohim, chasdecha
Ensconced within your sanctuary[1]	בְּקֶרֶב הֵיכָלֶךָ	bekerev heichalecha.
[11As] limitless your fame extends,	כְּשִׁמְךָ אֱלֹהִים	Keshim'cha, Elohim,
So your praise reaches the world's ends:	כֵּן תְּהִלָּתְךָ עַל־קְצְוֵי־אֶרֶץ	ken tehilat'cha al katzvei eretz:
All on your power for good depends.[2]	צֶדֶק מָלְאָה יְמִינֶךָ	tzedek mal'ah yeminecha.
[12] Mount Zion will cry out in glee	יִשְׂמַח הַר־צִיּוֹן	Yismach Har Tziyon,
And Judah's suburbs joyfully	תָּגֵלְנָה בְּנוֹת יְהוּדָה	tagelnah benot Yehudah
Praise all the justice you decree![3]	לְמַעַן מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ	lema'an mishpatecha.
[13] Fair Zion circumambulate,	סֹבּוּ צִיּוֹן וְהַקִּיפוּהָ	Sobu Tziyon vehakifuha,
Her high defences calculate,4	סִפְרוּ מִגְדָּלֶיהָ	sifru migdaleha.
[14] Her solid bulwarks well construe	שִׁיתוּ לִבְּכֶם לְחֵילָהּ	Shitu libchem lecheilah
From high apartments see[5] the view	פַּסְגוּ אַרְמְנוֹתֶיהָ	pasgu armenoteha,
And tell a generation new[6]	לְמַעַן תְּסַפְּרוּ לְדוֹר אַחֲרוֹן	lema'an tesapru ledor acharon.
[15] That this is God, who makes this so:	כִּי זֶה אֱלֹהִים	Ki zeh Elohim,
Our constant God, and when we go	אֱלֹהֵינוּ עוֹלָם וָעֶד	Eloheinu olam va'ed;
Past death to us our path will show.[7]	הוּא יְנַהֲגֵנוּ עַל־מוּת	hu yenahagenu al mut.

[1] דָּמִינוּ can mean "we thought" as well as "we resembled"—"We-thought, God, *of* your-kindness / in-the-midst-ot your-sanctuary" and "Our nature became like your kind nature, God, / when we were in your sanctuary."

[2] "Like-your-reputation, God, / so *is* your-praise upon-the-edges-of-land (i.e., people give praise worthy of your reputation); / justice has-filled your-hand (i.e., all the power in your hand is justice)."

[3] I.e., when God executes judgement on bad people.

[4] "Surround-Zion and-proceed-around-her; / count her-towers."

[5] פַּסְגוּ is a plural imperative, "Be-*at*-the-top-*of* her-towers *with your eyes*."

[6] "Give your-attention to-her-*defensive*-force; / look-down-*from* her palaces/fortresses / so-that you-can-tell *this* to the final generation."

לְחֵילָהּ "to her *defensive* force" is from the root חיל, which gives us words for armed force, soldier, and bulwark, as well as birth pangs and terror, such as חיל in verse 7. לְחֵילָהּ is "to/for-force-of-her," and elsewhere the possessive feminine (of-her) suffix would typically have a dot (mappiq), לְחֵילָהּ; Gesenius considers this preferable.

פַּסְגוּ from a root פסג (I think) connotes summit or climax, and seems related to Pisgah, the mountain from which Moses was granted a panoramic view of the Promised Land. I imagine people looking down from a height at the town's fine buildings, and the Targum implies looking down (דְּמַן לְעֵיל). However, most scholars see connotations of dividing and passing through, perhaps following the LXX (καταδιέλεσθε) and Vulgate (in moenibus separate palatia eius).

[7] "That this *is* God, / Our-God forever-and-ever: / *God* will-guide-us beyond-death."

Psalm 49

Added in a house of mourning on certain occasions.

[1] For the leader: a song by Korach's sons.	לַמְנַצֵּחַ לִבְנֵי קֹרַח מִזְמוֹר	Lamnatze'ach livnei Korach mizmor.
[2] Hear this, all nations,	שִׁמְעוּ זֹאת כָּל הָעַמִּים	Shim'u zot, kol ha'amim;
listen, all who live in the world,	הַאֲזִינוּ כָּל יֹשְׁבֵי חָלֶד	ha'azinu, kol yoshvei chaled.
[3] With parents common or distinguished,[1]	גַּם בְּנֵי אָדָם גַּם בְּנֵי אִישׁ	Gam benei adam, gam benei ish,
rich and poor together,	יַחַד עָשִׁיר וְאֶבְיוֹן	yachad ashir ve'evyon.
[4] My mouth will speak wisdom,	פִּי יְדַבֵּר חָכְמוֹת	Pi yedaber chochmot
my reflections[2] *will speak* understanding.	וְהָגוּת לִבִּי תְבוּנוֹת	vehagut libi tevunot.
[5] I lend my ear to the example,	אַטֶּה לְמָשָׁל אָזְנִי	Ateh lemashal ozni,
and to the lyre, I explain my mystery:[3]	אֶפְתַּח בְּכִנּוֹר חִידָתִי	eftach bechinor chidati.
[6] Why need I be afraid on bad days,	לָמָּה אִירָא בִּימֵי רָע	Lama irah bimei rah
surrounded by the evil of swindlers,	עֲוֹן עֲקֵבַי יְסוֹבֵנִי	avon akevai yesubeni,
[7] Those who trust their power	הַבֹּטְחִים עַל חֵילָם	Habot'chim al cheilam
and praise their great wealth?	וּבְרֹב עָשְׁרָם יִתְהַלָּלוּ	uverov oshram yit'halalu.
[8] One person[4] can never save another;	אָח לֹא פָדֹה יִפְדֶּה אִישׁ	Ach lo fado yifdeh ish,
one person can't ransom another from God.	לֹא יִתֵּן לֵאלֹהִים כָּפְרוֹ	lo yiten lElohim kofro.
[9] The ransom for a life is very costly—	וְיֵקַר פִּדְיוֹן נַפְשָׁם	Veyekar pidyon nafsham,
it can never be paid off—[5]	וְחָדַל לְעוֹלָם	vechadal le'olam.
[10] To let someone live forever,	וְיִחִי עוֹד לָנֶצַח	Vihi od lanetzach,
never to face destruction,	לֹא יִרְאֶה הַשָּׁחַת	lo yir'eh hashachat.
[11] For one sees that even the wise die;	כִּי יִרְאֶה חֲכָמִים יָמוּתוּ	Ki yir'eh chachamim yamutu,
fool and brute are lost together,	יַחַד כְּסִיל וָבַעַר יאבֵדוּ	yachad kesil vava'ar yovedu,
leaving their power to others.	וְעָזְבוּ לַאֲחֵרִים חֵילָם	ve'azvu la'acherim cheilam.
[12] *Rich people* think their houses will last	קִרְבָּם בָּתֵּימוֹ לְעוֹלָם	Kirbam bateimo le'olam,
and their estates span generations;	מִשְׁכְּנֹתָם לְדוֹר וָדֹר	mishkenotam ledor vador,
they name lands after themselves.	קָרְאוּ בִשְׁמוֹתָם עֲלֵי אֲדָמוֹת	kar'u bishmotam alei adamot.

[1] "Both the children of common men and the children of distinguished men."
[2] "The meditation of my heart."
[3] "I incline my ear to a parable and open to the lyre my riddle."
[4] "A brother cannot save …"
[5] "It is never done" or "it ceases *only after* an eternity."

[13] A person cannot rest in honor	וְאָדָם בִּיקָר בַּל יָלִין	Ve'adam bikar bal yalim,
but is curbed, like beasts for slaughter.[1]	נִמְשַׁל כַּבְּהֵמוֹת נִדְמוּ	nimshal kab'hemot nidmu.
[14] That's how they are, foolish;	זֶה דַרְכָּם כֵּסֶל לָמוֹ	Zeh darkam, kesel lamo,
so are those who agree with them. Selah.	וְאַחֲרֵיהֶם בְּפִיהֶם יִרְצוּ סֶלָה	ve'achareihem befihem yirtzu. Selah.
[15] Like a flock of sheep bound for hell,[2]	כַּצֹּאן לִשְׁאוֹל שַׁתּוּ	Katzon liShe'ol shatu;
death is their shepherd.	מָוֶת יִרְעֵם	mavet yir'em,
Tomorrow the upright will rule them,	וַיִּרְדּוּ בָם יְשָׁרִים לַבֹּקֶר	vayirdu vam yesharim laboker
while their bodies will fade in hell,	וְצוּרָם לְבַלּוֹת שְׁאוֹל[3]	vetzuram levalot She'ol
far from heaven.	מִזְּבֻל לוֹ	mizvul lo.
[16] But God will save my spirit	אַךְ אֱלֹהִים יִפְדֶּה נַפְשִׁי	Ach Elohim yifdeh nafshi
from the power of hell,	מִיַּד שְׁאוֹל	miyad She'ol
when God takes me. Selah.	כִּי יִקָּחֵנִי סֶלָה	ki yikacheni. Selah.
[17] Don't worry when others[4] get rich	אַל תִּירָא כִּי יַעֲשַׁר אִישׁ	Al tirah ki ya'ashir ish
and their households win great honor,	כִּי יִרְבֶּה כְּבוֹד בֵּיתוֹ	ki yirbeh kevod beito,
[18] For they take none of it when they die;	כִּי לֹא בְמוֹתוֹ יִקַּח הַכֹּל	Ki lo vemoto yikach hakol,
honor does not follow them down under.	לֹא יֵרֵד אַחֲרָיו כְּבוֹדוֹ	lo yered acharav kevodo.
[19] In life, maybe they praised themselves:	כִּי נַפְשׁוֹ בְּחַיָּיו יְבָרֵךְ	Ki nafsho bechayav yevarech,
"People admire you if you do well for yourself."	וְיוֹדֶךָ כִּי תֵיטִיב לָךְ	veyoducha ki teitiv lach.
[20] They too will die,[5]	תָּבוֹא עַד דּוֹר אֲבוֹתָיו	Tavo ad dor avotav,
and such people will never see the light.	עַד נֶצַח לֹא יִרְאוּ אוֹר	ad netzach lo yir'u or.
[21] A prosperous person who does not see this	אָדָם בִּיקָר וְלֹא יָבִין	Adam bikar velo yavin,
is curbed like beasts, which are silenced.[6]	נִמְשַׁל כַּבְּהֵמוֹת נִדְמוּ	nimshal kab'hemot nidmu.

[1] "And-a-person in-high-price lest he-should-spend-the-night / is-overcome as-domesticated-animals are-silenced"—a person cannot sleep/relax/remain in an honored position / but is subjugated as beasts are sent to silence; i.e., we meet the same fate as Elsie the cow. See our note on verse 21 for another attempt at this line.

[2] Hell may not be a precise translation of שְׁאוֹל; it depends what we mean by hell and what the Psalmist meant by שְׁאוֹל.

[3] The traditional text is written וצירם and read וְצוּרָם.

[4] The Hebrew in verses 17-20 uses singular masculine pronouns; we use plural pronouns to avoid specifying gender.

[5] "It (his spirit / himself) will meet the generation of his ancestors"—i.e., such a man will meet his ancestors in death.

[6] "An earthling in-prosperity and-not understands *this* / *is* compared like-beasts they-are-silenced/they-perish." נִדְמוּ connotes being silenced or perishing. People who think language is the difference between people and animals will understand that a person silenced is like a beast and a corpse. See our note on verse 13 for another attempt at this line.

Psalm 50

[1] A tune by/for Asaf.	מִזְמוֹר לְאָסָף	Mizmor le'Asaf.
God, God, God has decreed	אֵל אֱלֹהִים יהוה דִּבֶּר	El Elohim Adonai diber
and summoned Earth	וַיִּקְרָא־אָרֶץ	vayikra aretz
from East to West.[1]	מִמִּזְרַח־שֶׁמֶשׁ עַד־מְבוֹאוֹ	mimizrach ad mevo'o.
[2] From Zion, of towns the loveliest,	מִצִּיּוֹן מִכְלַל־יֹפִי	miTziyon, michlal yofi,
God radiates *bright streams of light*.	אֱלֹהִים הוֹפִיעַ	Elohim hofi'ah.
[3] May God come, clamoring for a fight[2]	יָבֹא אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאַל־יֶחֱרַשׁ	Yavo Eloheinu ve'al yecherash:
with flames devouring all before	אֵשׁ־לְפָנָיו תֹּאכֵל	esh lefanav tochel
while all around fierce tempests roar.[3]	וּסְבִיבָיו נִשְׂעָרָה מְאֹד	usevivav nis'arah me'od.
[4] From high above, God called for sky	יִקְרָא אֶל־הַשָּׁמַיִם מֵעָל	Yikrah el hashamayim me'al
and land, *God's* people's case to try.[4]	וְאֶל־הָאָרֶץ לָדִין עַמּוֹ	ve'el ha'aratz ladin amo.
[5] "Gather my loyal followers	אִסְפוּ־לִי חֲסִידָי	"Isfu li chasidai,
who sealed my pact with sacrifice.	כֹּרְתֵי בְרִיתִי עֲלֵי־זָבַח	kortei veriti alei zavach.
[6] "Let sky declare their innocence	וַיַּגִּידוּ שָׁמַיִם צִדְקוֹ	Veyagidu shamayim tzidko
for God will ponder their defence." Selah.[5]	כִּי־אֱלֹהִים שֹׁפֵט הוּא סֶלָה	ki Elohim shofet hu." Selah.
[7] "Listen, folks, when I tell you,	שִׁמְעָה עַמִּי וַאֲדַבֵּרָה	"Shim'ah ami va'adaberah,
Israel, what you know is true:	יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָעִידָה בָּךְ	Yisra'el, ve'a'idah bach:
I am the only God for you.[6]	אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֶיךָ אָנֹכִי	Elohim Elohecha anochi.
[8] I don't nit-pick your offering,	לֹא עַל־זִבְחֶיךָ אוֹכִיחֶךָּ	Lo al zevachecha ochichecha
the routine sacrifice you bring,[7]	וְעוֹלֹתֶיךָ לְנֶגְדִּי תָמִיד	ve'olotecha lenegdi tamid;

[1] The name Asaf is associated with several psalms. The name could be related to gathering or harvesting, so maybe Asaf poems are harvest poems. The poet uses three terms for God.

[2] וְאַל־יֶחֱרַשׁ is literally "let *God* not keep silence"; i.e., let God arrive noisily, ready for a fight to help us.

[3] "And-around-*God* it-is-stormy exceedingly."

[4] "*God*-would-call to-the-sky from-above / and-to-the-land, to-pass-judgement-on *God's*-people."

[5] "For God judges. Selah" i.e., God acts as judge, so God considers (ponders) the evidence.

[6] "Hear, my-people, and-I-shall-speak (when I speak), / Israel, and-I-shall-witness (when I declare) to-you: / God, your-God, *am* I."

[7] "Not regarding-your-sacrifices shall-I-dispute-with-you / and-your-burnt-offerings in-front-of-me regularly." תָמִיד means always or continual, but it also refers to the daily sacrifices to be brought in the Temple.

[9] Yet for your bull I have no yen	לֹא־אֶקַּח מִבֵּיתְךָ פָּר	Lo ekach mibeit'cha par,
nor *tender* goat raised in your pen,[1]	מִמִּכְלְאֹתֶיךָ עַתּוּדִים	mimichle'otecha atudim,
[10] For mine is every woodland beast	כִּי־לִי כָל־חַיְתוֹ־יָעַר	Ki li chol chayto ya'ar,
that roams a thousand hills to feast;[2]	בְּהֵמוֹת בְּהַרְרֵי־אָלֶף	behemot beharerei alef.
[11] Each bird I know in mountain *nest*,	יָדַעְתִּי כָּל־עוֹף הָרִים	Yadati kol of harim,
while field-game come to me for rest.[3]	וְזִיז שָׂדַי עִמָּדִי	veziz sadai imadi.
[12] If I want food, you won't be told—	אִם־אֶרְעַב לֹא־אֹמַר לָךְ	Im er'av, lo omer lach,
for Earth is mine, with all it holds.	כִּי־לִי תֵבֵל וּמְלֹאָהּ	ki li tevel umelo'ah.
[13] The flesh of bulls—that's what I eat?	הַאוֹכַל בְּשַׂר אֲבִירִים	Ha'ochel besar abirim?
A swig of goats' blood—that's my treat?[4]	וְדַם עַתּוּדִים אֶשְׁתֶּה	Vedam atudim eshteh?
[14] No, just bring me thanks instead,	זְבַח לֵאלֹהִים תּוֹדָה	Zevach lElohim todah,
keep the pledges you have made,[5]	וְשַׁלֵּם לְעֶלְיוֹן נְדָרֶיךָ	veshalem le'Elyon nedarecha,
[15] Call on me when you are down;	וּקְרָאֵנִי בְּיוֹם צָרָה	Ukera'eni beyom tzarah:
I'll save you and win great renown."[6]	אַחַלְּצְךָ וּתְכַבְּדָנִי	achaletzcha utechabdeni."
[16] But to the wicked God declared:	וְלָרָשָׁע אָמַר אֱלֹהִים	Velarasha amar Elohim:
"How dare you speak my *holy* laws	מַה־לְּךָ לְסַפֵּר חֻקָּי	"Mah lecha, lesaper chukai
or voice my covenant through your jaws?	וַתִּשָּׂא בְרִיתִי עָלֵי־פִיךָ	vatisah veriti alei ficha?
[17] You, who despise *my* discipline	וְאַתָּה שָׂנֵאתָ מוּסָר	Ve'atah sanetah musar,
and trade my guiding words for sin[7]	וַתַּשְׁלֵךְ דְּבָרַי אַחֲרֶיךָ	vatashlech devarai acharecha.
[18] To join the thief in robbery	אִם־רָאִיתָ גַנָּב וַתִּרֶץ עִמּוֹ	Im ra'ita ganav, vataretz imo,
and share in *base* adultery.[8]	וְעִם מְנָאֲפִים חֶלְקֶךָ	ve'im mena'afim chelkecha.

[1] God doesn't complain about the sacrifices we bring, but clearly they don't bring God any benefit. "I-wouldn't-take from-your-house a-bull, / from-your-animal-pens goats."

[2] "For-mine-*is* every-wild-animal-of-the-forest, / beasts on-the-mountains-of-a-thousand (or, of-an-ox)."

[3] "I-have-come-to-know all-fowl of-hills (all the birds that fly among the hills) / and-moving-creatures-of my-fields with-me"; the little field creatures are readily accessible to God and since they're already "with" God they perhaps feel some sense of comfort and security.

[4] "Would-I-eat the-flesh-of strong-animals? / And-blood-of goats would-I-drink?"

[5] "Sacrifice to-God thanks (i.e., giving thanks is the best sacrifice one can bring) / and-pay to-the-High-One your-pledges."

[6] "And-call-me on-a-day-of trouble; / I-will-save-you and-you-shall-honor-me."

[7] "And-you-send-away my-words behind-you" (you ignore my instructions/advice).

[8] "If you-saw a-thief you-would-accept with-him (you would approve of him) / and-with adulterers is-your-lot."

[19] You lend your mouth to wicked *speech*,	פִּיךָ שָׁלַחְתָּ בְרָעָה	Picha shalachta vera'ah
and false is everything you preach.[1]	וּלְשׁוֹנְךָ תַּצְמִיד מִרְמָה	uleshon'cha tatzmid mirmah.
[20] You slander your own mother's son,	תֵּשֵׁב בְּאָחִיךָ תְדַבֵּר	Teshev be'achicha tedaber,
tell all his failings *just for fun*.[2]	בְּבֶן־אִמְּךָ תִּתֵּן־דֹּפִי	beven imcha titen dofi.
[21] If silently I stood aside	אֵלֶּה עָשִׂיתָ וְהֶחֱרַשְׁתִּי	Eileh asita vehecherashti,
you thought we both took the same side,	דָּמִיתָ הֱיוֹת־אֶהְיֶה כָמוֹךָ	dimita heyot eh'yeh chamocha:
but I confront you now and chide![3]	אוֹכִיחֲךָ וְאֶעֶרְכָה לְעֵינֶיךָ	ochichacha ve'e'er'cha le'einecha!
[22] You who forget God, don't you see	בִּינוּ־נָא זֹאת שֹׁכְחֵי אֱלוֹהַּ	Binu nah zot, shoch'chei Elo'ah,
I could hurt you irremediably?[4]	פֶּן־אֶטְרֹף וְאֵין מַצִּיל	pen etrof ve'ein matzil!
[23] But bringing thanks—	זֹבֵחַ תּוֹדָה יְכַבְּדָנְנִי	Zevo'ach todah yechabdan'ni
if that's your goal—	וְשָׂם דֶּרֶךְ	vesam derech,
I'll bring you to salvation whole."[5]	אַרְאֶנּוּ בִּישׁוּעַת אֱלֹהִים	erenu beyesha Elohim."

[1] "Your-mouth you-have-sent to-wickedness / And-your-tongue you-will-join-with guile."

[2] "You-would-sit; at-your-brother you-would-speak; / at-the-son-of your-mother you-would-present fault (you declare your brother's failings)."

[3] "These-things have-you-done and-*if*-I-was-silent / you-thought to-be-I-would-be (I would certainly be) like-you / *but* I-will-remonstrate-with-you and-I-shall-set-you-in-order before-your-eyes (make you aware of your failings)."

[4] "Understand-please this, you-who-forget God, / lest-I-shall-tear-*you* and-there-is-no deliverer."

[5] "The-one-who-sacrifices thanks will-honour-me; / and-*if-that-person*-places a-way/path/direction *then* I-will-show-that-person in-salvation-of God"; i.e., one who takes the path of bringing thanks for sacrifice will find salvation.

Psalm 51

for Wednesday.

[1] For the leader, a poem by David,	לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	Lamnatze'ach, mizmor leDavid,
[2] When Nathan the prophet came to him,	בְּבוֹא־אֵלָיו נָתָן הַנָּבִיא	Bevo elav Natan Hanavi,
after he came in to BatShava.[1]	כַּאֲשֶׁר־בָּא אֶל־בַּת־שָׁבַע	ka'asher ba el BatShava.
[3] Be kind to me, God, as you are kind;	חָנֵּנִי אֱלֹהִים כְּחַסְדֶּךָ	Choneni, Elohim, kechasdecha,
in your great mercy wipe away my wrong.	כְּרֹב רַחֲמֶיךָ מְחֵה פְשָׁעָי	kerov rachamecha mecheh fesha'ai.
[4] Thoroughly[2] rinse off my sin	הַרְבֵּה כַבְּסֵנִי מֵעֲוֹנִי	Herev kabseni me'avoni,
and clean off my wrongdoing.	וּמֵחַטָּאתִי טַהֲרֵנִי	umechatati tahareni.
[5] For I admit my wrongs,	כִּי־פְשָׁעַי אֲנִי אֵדָע	Ki fesha'ai ani edah,
and I am always aware of my sin.[3]	וְחַטָּאתִי נֶגְדִּי תָמִיד	vechatati negdi tamid.
[6] I have wronged you, only you,[4]	לְךָ לְבַדְּךָ חָטָאתִי	Lecha levad'cha chatati,
and done what you consider evil.	וְהָרַע בְּעֵינֶיךָ עָשִׂיתִי	veharah be'einecha asiti
Now you will pronounce a just sentence;	לְמַעַן תִּצְדַּק בְּדָבְרֶךָ	lema'an titzdak bedovrecha,
you will be just in your judgement.	תִּזְכֶּה בְשָׁפְטֶךָ	tizkeh veshoftecha.
[7] Look, I was born for wrong;	הֵן־בְּעָוֹן חוֹלָלְתִּי	Hen be'avon cholalti,
for sin my mother conceived me.[5]	וּבְחֵטְא יֶחֱמַתְנִי אִמִּי	uvechet yechamatni imi.
[8] Look, you want honesty deep inside me,	הֵן־אֱמֶת חָפַצְתָּ בַּטֻּחוֹת	Hen emet chafatzta vatuchot,
and you will teach me wisdom in my heart.[6]	וּבְסָתֻם חָכְמָה תוֹדִיעֵנִי	uvesatum chochmah todi'eni.

[1] 2 Sam. 11-12. Overcome by lust on seeing BatSheva bathing, David arranged for her husband's death and took her as his wife. Nathan rebuked David, and David repented. The psalm articulates David's remorse. The end of the psalm refers to sacrifices in Jerusalem, which didn't take place until after David's death. Some will say this shows David couldn't have composed the psalm, and others will say this proves his prophetic power.

[2] The Hebrew text as written has the word הרבה; this is read as הַרְבֵּ֫ה and understood to come from the root רב, "much" or "many" and therefore "thoroughly."

[3] "And my sin is across from me, all the time."

[4] The poet does not mention Uriah, whose death David arranged; BatSheva, deprived of her husband; and BatSheva's baby, who died as a punishment for David. However, the poet may consider that any wrong is a wrong against God above all, for God can exact punishment whereas the people whom David wronged cannot call him to account. Maybe BatSheva can complain, but how easily can a widow berate the king?

[5] Some understand this verse to imply that humans are born with a burden of sin and that sex is sinful. But, the Hebrew can be understood in different ways. The poet may simply mean that, like all people, the poet has faults. Verse 12 contradicts the idea that all humans are born in sin. "Look, with-misdeed (or writhing) I-was-in-labor, / and-with-sin conceived-me (grew hot with me, or, kept me warm) my-mother."

[6] "Look, truth/honesty/integrity you have desired for my innards/kidneys (i.e., God wants a human being to be honest through and through), and in my concealed part wisdom shall you make known to me."

[9] Cleanse me with hyssop,[1] and I'll be clean;	תְּחַטְּאֵנִי בְאֵזוֹב וְאֶטְהָר	Techatenu ve'ezov, ve'et'har;
wash me, and I'll be whiter than snow.	תְּכַבְּסֵנִי וּמִשֶּׁלֶג אַלְבִּין	techabseni, umisheleg albin.
[10] Make me hear joy and gladness	תַּשְׁמִיעֵנִי שָׂשׂוֹן וְשִׂמְחָה	Tashmi'eni sason vesimchah;
so that the bones you crushed can rejoice.	תָּגֵלְנָה עֲצָמוֹת דִּכִּיתָ	tagelnah atzamot dikita.
[11] Hide your face from my sins	הַסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ מֵחַטָּאָי	Has'ter panecha me'chata'ai,
and wipe away all my wrongs.	וְכָל־עֲוֹנֹתַי מְחֵה	vechol avonotai mecheh.
[12] Make for me a pure heart, God;	לֵב טָהוֹר בְּרָא־לִי אֱלֹהִים	Lev tahor berah li, Elohim,
renew inside me an upright spirit!	וְרוּחַ נָכוֹן חַדֵּשׁ בְּקִרְבִּי	veru'ach nachon chadesh bekirbi.
[13] Don't send me away from you	אַל־תַּשְׁלִיכֵנִי מִלְּפָנֶיךָ	Al tashlicheni milfanecha,
nor remove your holy spirit from me.	וְרוּחַ קָדְשְׁךָ אַל־תִּקַּח מִמֶּנִּי	veru'ach kodshecha al tikach mimeni.
[14] Restore to me the delight of your salvation,	הָשִׁיבָה לִּי שְׂשׂוֹן יִשְׁעֶךָ	Hashivah li sasson yishecha,
so that a generous mood can sustain me.[2]	וְרוּחַ נְדִיבָה תִסְמְכֵנִי	veru'ach nedivah tismecheni.
[15] *Then* I can teach sinners your ways,	אֲלַמְּדָה פֹשְׁעִים דְּרָכֶיךָ	Alamdah foshim derachecha,
and wrongdoers will return to you.	וְחַטָּאִים אֵלֶיךָ יָשׁוּבוּ	vechata'im elecha yashuvu.
[16] Free me from *blood*guilt,[3] God,	הַצִּילֵנִי מִדָּמִים אֱלֹהִים	Hatzileni midamim, Elohim,
God of my salvation,	אֱלֹהֵי תְשׁוּעָתִי	Elohei teshu'ati;
so my tongue can sing your righteousness.	תְּרַנֵּן לְשׁוֹנִי צִדְקָתֶךָ	teranen leshoni tzidkatecha.
[17] Ruler, *just* open my lips	אֲדֹנָי שְׂפָתַי תִּפְתָּח	Adonai, sefatai tiftach,
and my mouth will declare your praise.	וּפִי יַגִּיד תְּהִלָּתֶךָ	ufi yagid tehilatecha.
[18] For you don't want sacrifice*s*—	כִּי לֹא־תַחְפֹּץ זֶבַח	Ki lo tachpotz zevach,
otherwise, I would bring *them*—	וְאֶתֵּנָה	ve'etenah;
but you want no burnt-offering.	עוֹלָה לֹא תִרְצֶה	olah lo tirtzeh.
[19] God's *favorite* sacrifices are a broken spirit;	זִבְחֵי אֱלֹהִים רוּחַ נִשְׁבָּרָה	Zivchei Elohim ru'ach nishbarah;
the broken, crushed heart	לֵב־נִשְׁבָּר וְנִדְכֶּה	lev nishbar venidkeh,
God will not spurn.	אֱלֹהִים לֹא תִבְזֶה	Elohim lo tivzeh.
[20] *God,* in your favor mend Zion,	הֵיטִיבָה בִרְצוֹנְךָ אֶת־צִיּוֹן	Hetivah virtzon'cha et Tziyon;
rebuild Jerusalem's walls.	תִּבְנֶה חוֹמוֹת יְרוּשָׁלָ͏ִם	tivneh chomot Yerushala'im.

[1] Hyssop was used for the first Passover, and for ceremonies that restored people to the community after they had recovered from leprosy (Lev. 14) or had come into contact with the dead (Num. 19).
[2] "A spirit of generosity"; i.e., if the poet is happy again, he or she can feel generous toward others.
[3] Perhaps we remember how David sent Uriah to his death.

[21] Then you will delight in	אָז תַּחְפֹּץ	Az tachpotz
the sacrifices of the righteous,	זִבְחֵי־צֶדֶק	zivchei tzedek,
burnt-offering and whole-offering;	עוֹלָה וְכָלִיל	olah vechalil;
then *sacrificial* bulls will go up on your altar.	אָז יַעֲלוּ עַל־מִזְבַּחֲךָ פָרִים	az ya'alu al mizbachachah farim.

Psalm 52

[1] For the leader, a teaching-poem of David,[1]	לַמְנַצֵּחַ מַשְׂכִּיל לְדָוִד	Lamnatze'ach, maskil leDavid
[2] When Do'eg the Edomite came	בְּבוֹא דֹואֵג הָאֲדֹמִי	bevo Do'eg haAdomi
and told Sha'ul, and said to him:	וַיַּגֶּד לְשָׁאוּל וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ	vayaged leSha'ul, vayomer lo:
"David has come to Achimelech's place."[2]	בָּא דָוִד אֶל־בֵּית אֲחִימֶלֶךְ	"Bah David el beit Avimelech."
[3] Why praise a warlord's cruelty?	מַה־תִּתְהַלֵּל בָּרָעָה הַגִּבּוֹר	Mah tit'halel bera'ah hagibor?
Each day God grants clemency![3]	חֶסֶד אֵל כָּל־הַיּוֹם	chesed El kol hayom!
[4] Your clever tongue talks of a scam,	הַוּוֹת תַּחְשֹׁב לְשֹׁונֶךָ	Havot tachshov leshonecha,
sharp as a razor, but a sham.[4]	כְּתַעַר מְלֻטָּשׁ עֹשֵׂה רְמִיָּה	keta'ar melutash oseh remiyah.
[5] You favor evil over good	אָהַבְתָּ רָע מִטּוֹב	Ahavta rah mitov,
speak no truth but tell falsehood. Selah.[5]	שֶׁקֶר מִדַּבֵּר צֶדֶק סֶלָה	sheker midaber tzedek. Selah.
[6] Destructive gossip, that's your style,	אָהַבְתָּ כָל־דִּבְרֵי־בָלַע	Ahavta chol divrei valah,
devious speech that's full of guile.[6]	לְשׁוֹן מִרְמָה	leshon mirmah.
[7] So God will tear you down at last	גַּם־אֵל יִתֶּצְךָ לָנֶצַח	Gam El yitatz'cha lanetzach,
drag you from your home, and blast	יַחְתְּךָ וְיִסָּחֲךָ מֵאֹהֶל	yachtecha veyisachacha me'ohel,
your future back into the past.[7]	וְשֶׁרֶשְׁךָ מֵאֶרֶץ חַיִּים	vesheresh'cha me'eretz chayim.
Selah.	סֶלָה	Selah.
[8] The righteous will see and be stunned	וְיִרְאוּ צַדִּיקִים וְיִירָאוּ	Veyiru tzadikim veyira'u,
but still they'll poke a little fun:[8]	וְעָלָיו יִשְׂחָקוּ	ve'alav yis'chaku.

[1] The Septuagint combines verses 1-3 as verse 1, so Christians and Jews number the verses differently.
[2] See 1 Samuel 21:9 for the story.
[3] "Why would you boast of the evil of a strong man? / The kindness of God is all/every day." This elliptical verse seems to mean that there's no point being impressed by the deeds of a warrior (גבור connotes grown man, warrior, hero, soldier, and in this case I think it suggests strongman/despot/tyrant), for these deeds can't avoid evil (damage to the innocent), whereas the really powerful one, God, is always nice.
[4] "Calamities does your tongue calculate/engineer; / like-a-razor sharpened it-performs deceit."
[5] "You love evil more than good, / *you love* lying *more* than speaking what's right. Selah."
[6] "You-love all-words-of-swallowing-up (destruction), / language-of guile."
[7] "Also God will-tear-you-down finally, / will-seize-you and-tear-you-away from-*your*-tent/dwelling / and-up-root-you from-the-land-of the-living. / Selah."
[8] "The righteous will see and fear, / and over him (the wicked one) they will rejoice."

[9] "In God such folk sought no defence;	הִנֵּה הַגֶּבֶר לֹא יָשִׂים אֱלֹהִים מָעוּזּוֹ	Hineh hagever lo yasim Elohim ma'uzo
they trusted in their affluence,	וַיִּבְטַח בְּרֹב עָשְׁרוֹ	vayivtach berov oshro,
fixed in their ways to cause offence."[1]	יָעֹז בְּהַוָּתוֹ	ya'oz behavato.
[10] But I'm like an olive tree, abloom	וַאֲנִי כְּזֵית רַעֲנָן	Va'ani kezayit ra'anan
where God has granted me some room:	בְּבֵית אֱלֹהִים	beveit Elohim;
on God's great kindness I rely	בָּטַחְתִּי בְחֶסֶד־אֱלֹהִים	batachti vechesed Elohim
from now and for eternity,[2]	עוֹלָם וָעֶד	olam va'ed.
[11] Your deeds I tell unceasingly,	אוֹדְךָ לְעוֹלָם כִּי עָשִׂיתָ	Od'cha le'olam ki asita,
hoping you'll do such deeds for me	וַאֲקַוֶּה שִׁמְךָ	va'akaveh shim'cha,
as for your every devotee.[3]	כִּי־טוֹב נֶגֶד חֲסִידֶיךָ	chi tov neged chasidecha.

[1] "See, that warlord/strongman/warrior/man would-not-place God *as* his-defence / and-he-trusted in-the-large-amount-of his-wealth; / he-would-be-firm in-his hurtfulness (or concupiscence)." The translation uses plural pronouns for the singular pronouns of the Hebrew.

[2] "And-I like-an-olive-tree flourishing / in-the-house-of God / have-trusted in-the-kindness-of God / forever."

[3] "I-shall-thank/acknowledge-you forever, for you-have-acted, / and-I-shall-maintain-hope *in* your name (because of your reputation for helping those who rely on you) / that good is-facing your-devotees (that good is in store for us who trust in you)."

Psalm 53

[1] For the leader, upon the *instrument called* machalat,	לַמְנַצֵּחַ עַל־מָחֲלַת	Lamnatze'ach al machalat,
a teaching-poem of David:	מַשְׂכִּיל לְדָוִד	maskil leDavid:
[2] The fool thinks God just isn't there:	אָמַר נָבָל בִּלְבּוֹ אֵין אֱלֹהִים	Amar naval belibo, "Ein Elohim."
sin and debauchery everywhere	הִשְׁחִיתוּ וְהִתְעִיבוּ עָוֶל	Hish'chitu vehit'ivu ahvel;
and not a one does right.[1]	אֵין עֹשֵׂה־טוֹב	ein oseh tov.
[3] And God peers down from up on high	אֱלֹהִים מִשָּׁמַיִם הִשְׁקִיף	Elohim mishamayim hishkif
to find one who might qualify	עַל־בְּנֵי אָדָם	al benei adam
(with enough sense to reason why)	לִרְאוֹת הֵיֵשׁ מַשְׂכִּיל	lirot hayesh maskil
to be God's acolyte.[2]	דֹּרֵשׁ אֶת־אֱלֹהִים	doresh et Elohim.
[4] They've gone back to their wicked ways	כֻּלּוֹ סָג יַחְדָּו נֶאֱלָחוּ	Kulo sag yachdav ne'elachu;
abandoned any hope of praise—	אֵין עֹשֵׂה־טוֹב	ein oseh tov;
all evildoers, all.[3]	אֵין גַּם־אֶחָד	ein gam echad.
[5] How can those sinners just assume	הֲלֹא יָדְעוּ פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן	Halo yadu po'alei ahven,
my people are theirs to consume?	אֹכְלֵי עַמִּי אָכְלוּ לֶחֶם	ochlei ami achlu lechem;
On God they never call.[4]	אֱלֹהִים לֹא קָרָאוּ	Elohim lo kara'u.
[6] They'll feel a dread they've never known	שָׁם פָּחֲדוּ־פַחַד לֹא־הָיָה פָחַד	Sham pachadu fachad lo hayah fachad
When God scatters their hostile bones,	כִּי־אֱלֹהִים פִּזַּר עַצְמוֹת חֹנָךְ	ki Elohim pizar atzmot chonach,
dishonored with God's hate.[5]	הֱבִשֹׁתָה כִּי־אֱלֹהִים מְאָסָם	hevishotah ki Elohim me'asam.
[7] From Zion, *God*, bring our salvation;	מִי יִתֵּן מִצִּיּוֹן יְשׁוּעוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל	Mi yiten miTziyon yeshu'ot Yisra'el;
God, restore our exiled nation;	בְּשׁוּב אֱלֹהִים שְׁבוּת עַמּוֹ	beshuv Elohim shevut amo
then we'll celebrate![6]	יָגֵל יַעֲקֹב יִשְׂמַח יִשְׂרָאֵל	yagel Ya'akov, yismach Yisra'el.

[1] "Said the-fool in-his-heart, "There's no God"; / *people*-are-corrupt and-they-do-horrible-things, iniquity: / no-one does good." The fool could refer to Naval himself, whose widow Abigail became David's wife. Naval's parents didn't expect much when they named him "fool."

[2] "God from-skies looks / upon children-of people / to-see, Is-there a-sensible-one / seeking God?"

[3] "They-all have-reverted, together become-corrupted; / none does good, / there-isn't even one."

[4] "Don't they know, evildoers, / eaters of my people *as if* they were eating food, / *to* God they did not call."

[5] "There they fear a dread; there has not been *such* fear, / when God has scattered the bones of your besieger, / shamed *them* for God despises them."

[6] "Would that from Zion would come the salvations of Israel; / when God returns the captivity of Israel, / Jacob will rejoice and Israel will celebrate."

Psalm 54

[1] For the leader on *an instrument called* neginot,	לַמְנַצֵּחַ בִּנְגִינֹת	Lamnatze'ach binginot,
a teaching poem by David:	מַשְׂכִּיל לְדָוִד	maskil leDavid
[2] When people from Ziph came to tell	בְּבוֹא הַזִּיפִים וַיֹּאמְרוּ לְשָׁאוּל	Bevo haZiphim vayomru leSha'ul,
Sha'ul, "Hey, David is hiding with us."[1]	הֲלֹא דָוִד מִסְתַּתֵּר עִמָּנוּ	"Halo David mistarer imanu."
[3] God, for your reputation save me	אֱלֹהִים בְּשִׁמְךָ הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי	Elohim, beshimcha hoshi'eni,
and with your power judge me *kindly*.	וּבִגְבוּרָתְךָ תְּדִינֵנִי	uvigvurat'cha tedineni.
[4] God, hear me as I pray,	אֱלֹהִים שְׁמַע תְּפִלָּתִי	Elohim, shema tefilati,
listen to what I say.	הַאֲזִינָה לְאִמְרֵי־פִי	ha'azina le'imrei fi.
[5] My foes are ready to attack—	כִּי זָרִים קָמוּ עָלַי	Ki zarim kamu alai
they want to stab me *in the back*.	וְעָרִיצִים בִּקְשׁוּ נַפְשִׁי	va'aritzim bikshu nafshi;
Any sense of God they lack. Selah.[2]	לֹא שָׂמוּ אֱלֹהִים לְנֶגְדָּם סֶלָה	lo samu Elohim lenegdam. Selah.
[6] God is my help, you see;	הִנֵּה אֱלֹהִים עֹזֵר לִי	Hineh Elohim ozer li,
God helps to sustain me.[3]	אֲדֹנָי בְּסֹמְכֵי נַפְשִׁי	Adonai besom'chei nafshi.
[7] May *God* requite that wicked crew—	יָשִׁיב[5] הָרַע לְשֹׁרְרָי	Yashiv harah leshorerai,
destroy them, *and to us* be true![4]	בַּאֲמִתְּךָ הַצְמִיתֵם	ba'amit'cha hatzmitem.
[8] My pledge I gladly volunteer,	בִּנְדָבָה אֶזְבְּחָה־לָּךְ	Bindavah ezbechah lach,
sure that your goodness will appear.[6]	אוֹדֶה שִׁמְךָ יהוה כִּי־טוֹב	odeh shimcha, Adonai, ki tov.
[9] From all my woes *God* rescued me	כִּי מִכָּל־צָרָה הִצִּילָנִי	Ki mikol tzarah hitzilani
my foes' *discomfiture* to see![7]	וּבְאֹיְבַי רָאֲתָה עֵינִי	uve'oyvai ra'atah eini.

[1] I Samuel 23:19: "The Ziphites went up to Sha'ul, to the height, to say, 'You can be sure that David is hiding with us / וַיַּעֲלוּ זִפִים אֶל־שָׁאוּל הַגִּבְעָתָה לֵאמֹר הֲלוֹא דָוִד מִסְתַּתֵּר עִמָּנוּ / va'ya'alu Ziphim el Sha'u haGivatah lemor, Halo David mistater imanu …'"

[2] "For strangers have risen against me / and oppressors seek my life; / they have not placed God before them. Selah."

[3] "See, God helps me, / God *is* among the supporters of my life."

[4] "May *God* bring back the evil to my enemies; in your faithfulness destroy them." שׁרְרִי may come from a root meaning "see"—Rashi refers to אֲשׁוּרֵנּוּ in Numbers 24:17—so some translate "watchful enemies."

[5] A manuscript would read ישוב (*God* will return) but יָשִׁיב (*God* will bring back) makes better sense.

[6] "Voluntarily I shall sacrifice to you, / acknowledge your reputation, God, *in* that it is good."

[7] "That from-all trouble *God*-has-saved-me / and-at-my-foes *God has* let-see my-eyes."

Psalm 55

[1] For the leader on *the instrument called a* neginot,	לַמְנַצֵּחַ בִּנְגִינֹת	Lamnatze'ach binginot,
a teaching-poem by David:	מַשְׂכִּיל לְדָוִד	maskil leDavid:
[2] God, listen to my prayer	הַאֲזִינָה אֱלֹהִים תְּפִלָּתִי	Ha'azinah Elohim tefilati,
and do not hide from my pleading.	וְאַל־תִּתְעַלַּם מִתְּחִנָּתִי	ve'al titalam mit'chinati.
[3] Hear me, answer me,	הַקְשִׁיבָה לִּי וַעֲנֵנִי	Hakshivah li va'aneni;
though I can only moan incoherently[1]	אָרִיד בְּשִׂיחִי וְאָהִימָה	arid besichi ve'ahimah
[4] Because of the enemy's noise,	מִקּוֹל אוֹיֵב	Mikol oyev,
the harassment of the wicked—	מִפְּנֵי עָקַת רָשָׁע	mipnei akat rasha,
they try to make me look guilty[2]	כִּי־יָמִיטוּ עָלַי אָוֶן	ki yamitu alai ahven,
and bitterly detest me.	וּבְאַף יִשְׂטְמוּנִי	uve'af yistemuni.
[5] My heart shudders inside	לִבִּי יָחִיל בְּקִרְבִּי	Libi yachil bekirbi,
and deathly terrors descend upon me.	וְאֵימוֹת מָוֶת נָפְלוּ עָלָי	ve'eimot mavet naflu alai.
[6] Fear and trembling assail me	יִרְאָה וָרַעַד יָבֹא בִי	Yirah vara'ad yavo vi,
and I'm enveloped in horror.	וַתְּכַסֵּנִי פַּלָּצוּת	vat'chaseni palatzut.
[7] I cry, "I wish I had wings like a dove;[3]	וָאֹמַר מִי־יִתֶּן־לִי אֵבֶר כַּיּוֹנָה	Va'omar, "Mi yiten li ever kayonah;
I'd fly away and settle *elsewhere*."	אָעוּפָה וְאֶשְׁכֹּנָה	a'ufah ve'eshkonah.
[8] Yes, I'd roam far, far away;	הִנֵּה אַרְחִיק נְדֹד	Hineh ar'chik nedod,
I'd find rest in the desert. Selah.	אָלִין בַּמִּדְבָּר סֶלָה	alin bamidbar. Selah.
[9] I'd rush to my refuge	אָחִישָׁה מִפְלָט לִי	Achisha miflat li
away from windstorm, from tempest.	מֵרוּחַ סְעָה מִסָּעַר	meru'ach so'ah, misa'ar.
[10] Engulf, God, divide *my enemies'* counsel[4]	בַּלַּע אֲדֹנָי פַּלַּג לְשׁוֹנָם	Balah Adonai, palag leshonam,
so that I'd see violence and fighting in town.	כִּי־רָאִיתִי חָמָס וְרִיב בָּעִיר	ki ra'iti chamas veriv ba'ir.
[11] Day and night	יוֹמָם וָלַיְלָה	Yomam valaylah
they'd surround its walls,	יְסוֹבְבֻהָ עַל־חוֹמֹתֶיהָ	yesovevuha al chomoteha,
with trouble and toil within:	וְאָוֶן וְעָמָל בְּקִרְבָּהּ	ve'aven ve'amal bekirbah.

[1] אָרִיד בְּשִׂיחִי, "I cast about/wander/search for words, as I speak."
[2] "They let-fall upon-me wickedness"—attack me with evil, or portray me as evil.
[3] Mendelssohn's "O for the wings, for the wings of a dove," is based on this psalm.
[4] "Their tongue"; the poet asks God to set the enemies at odds.

[12] Yearning *for relief* inside *the town,*	הַוּוֹת בְּקִרְבָּהּ	Havot bekirbah,
and from its streets would not depart	וְלֹא־יָמִישׁ מֵרְחֹבָהּ	velo yamish mer'chovah
fighting and treachery.	תֹּךְ וּמִרְמָה	toch umirmah.
[13] For it's no enemy who scorns me	כִּי לֹא־אוֹיֵב יְחָרְפֵנִי	Ki lo oyev yecharfeni
(that *is something* I could endure)	וְאֶשָּׂא	(ve'esah)
nor a foe *who* boasts at me	לֹא־מְשַׂנְאִי עָלַי הִגְדִּיל	lo mesanai alai higdil
(I could hide from him),	וְאֶסָּתֵר מִמֶּנּוּ	(ve'ester mimenu),
[14] But *it's* you, fellow, *someone* like me,	וְאַתָּה אֱנוֹשׁ כְּעֶרְכִּי	Ve'atah, enosh, ke'erki,
my companion and colleague[1]—	אַלּוּפִי וּמְיֻדָּעִי	alufi umeuda'i,
[15] We shared sweet confidences	אֲשֶׁר יַחְדָּו נַמְתִּיק סוֹד	Asher yachdav namtik sod,
and in friendship went to God's house.[2]	בְּבֵית אֱלֹהִים נְהַלֵּךְ בְּרָגֶשׁ	beveit Elohim nehalech beragesh.
[16] May death take him by surprise,	יַשִּׁי מָוֶת[4] עָלֵימוֹ	Yashi mavet aleimo,
let them descend into the Unknown alive	יֵרְדוּ שְׁאוֹל חַיִּים	yerdu She'ol chayim
for evil *is* in their houses, among them.[3]	כִּי־רָעוֹת בְּמְגוּרָם בְּקִרְבָּם	ki ra'ot bimguram, bekirbam.
[17] I shall call out to God,	אֲנִי אֶל־אֱלֹהִים אֶקְרָא	Ani el Elohim ekrah,
and God will save me.	וַיהוה יוֹשִׁיעֵנִי	vAdonai yoshi'eni.
[18] Evening, morning and noon	עֶרֶב וָבֹקֶר וְצָהֳרַיִם	Erev vavoker vetzohorayim
shall I pray and yearn	אָשִׂיחָה וְאֶהֱמֶה	asicha ve'ehemah,
that *God* may hear my voice.	וַיִּשְׁמַע קוֹלִי	vayishmah koli.
[19] *God* saved my life, unharmed in battle	פָּדָה בְשָׁלוֹם נַפְשִׁי מִקְּרָב־לִי	Padah veshalom nafshi mikarav li
when many were *fighting* with me.[5]	כִּי־בְרַבִּים הָיוּ עִמָּדִי	ki verabim hayu imadi.
[20] God will hear and answer *my enemies*—	יִשְׁמַע אֵל וְיַעֲנֵם	Yishma El veya'anem,
God who reigned since the beginning (Selah),	וְיֹשֵׁב קֶדֶם סֶלָה	veyoshev kedem (Selah)
God who has no substitute—	אֲשֶׁר אֵין חֲלִיפוֹת לָמוֹ	asher ein chalifot lamo,
since they did not fear God.	וְלֹא יָרְאוּ אֱלֹהִים	velo yaru Elohim.

[1] "And known to me," my close acquaintance.

[2] "With whom, together, we would make discussion sweet (or, we would enjoy friendly intimacies); to the house of God we would go with feeling (or warm friendship)."

[3] I don't know why the verse switches from one former friend to several.

[4] A manuscript would read ישימות, emended to יַשִּׁי מָוֶת; commentators understand יַשִּׁי as יַשִּׁיא (Rashi refers to הִשִּׁיאַנִי, "deceived me," in Genesis 3:13).

[5] "*God*-saved in-security my-life from-a-confrontation against-me / when among-many there-were with-me."

[21] *My friend who betrayed me* attacked his allies,	שָׁלַח יָדָיו בְּשִׁלְמָיו	Shalach yadav bishlomav,
broke his pact.	חִלֵּל בְּרִיתוֹ	chilel berito.
[22] His talk was smoother than butter	חָלְקוּ מַחְמָאֹת פִּיו	Chalku machma'ot piv
but war was in his heart;	וּקְרָב־לִבּוֹ	ukarav libo;
his words were gentler than lotion,	רַכּוּ דְבָרָיו מִשָּׁמֶן	raku devarav mishamen,
yet they were unsheathed blades.[1]	וְהֵמָּה פְּתִחוֹת	vehemah fetichot.
[23] Cast your burden upon God;	הַשְׁלֵךְ עַל־יהוה יְהָבְךָ	Hashlech al Adonai yehav'cha
God will sustain you—	וְהוּא יְכַלְכְּלֶךָּ	vehu yechalkelecha—
God will never let the righteous stumble.	לֹא־יִתֵּן לְעוֹלָם מוֹט לַצַּדִּיק	lo yiten le'olam mot latzadik.
[24] But, God, take them down	וְאַתָּה אֱלֹהִים תּוֹרִדֵם	Ve'atah, Elohim, toridem
to the pit of destruction,	לִבְאֵר שַׁחַת	liv'er shachat,
those men of blood and guile—	אַנְשֵׁי דָמִים וּמִרְמָה	anshei damim umirmah—
let them not live *even* half their days.[2]	לֹא־יֶחֱצוּ יְמֵיהֶם	lo yechetzu yemeihem.
I'm relying on you.	וַאֲנִי אֶבְטַח־בָּךְ	V'ani evtach bach.

[1] פְּתִחוֹת is drawn or unsheathed swords or blades from פתח, the root meaning open. Rashi suggests it means curses.

[2] "Not may-they-halve their-days."

Psalm 56

[1] For the leader,	לַמְנַצֵּחַ	Lamnatze'ach
on *The Dove Barely Heard in the Distance,*[1]	עַל־יוֹנַת אֵלֶם רְחֹקִים	al yonat elam rechokim
a poem[2] by David	לְדָוִד מִכְתָּם	leDavid michtam
when Felishtim seized him in Gat.[3]	בְּאֶחֹז אֹתוֹ פְלִשְׁתִּים בְּגַת	be'ochez oto Pelishtim beGat.
[2] Pity me, God; I'm being chased—	חָנֵּנִי אֱלֹהִים כִּי־שְׁאָפַנִי אֱנוֹשׁ	Choneni, Elohim, ki she'afani enosh;
an armed man hounds me constantly.[4]	כָּל־הַיּוֹם לֹחֵם יְלָחֲצֵנִי	kol hayom lochem yilchatzeni.
[3] My enemies, panting in their haste,	שָׁאֲפוּ שׁוֹרְרַי כָּל־הַיּוֹם	Sha'afu shorerai kol hayom
Exalted *God,* crowd after me![5]	כִּי־רַבִּים לֹחֲמִים לִי מָרוֹם	ki rabim lochamim li, marom.
[4] But when I fear, with you I stand—[6]	יוֹם אִירָא אֲנִי אֵלֶיךָ אֶבְטָח	Yom ira, ani elecha evtach.
[5] With God, whose promise I shall praise;	בֵּאלֹהִים אֲהַלֵּל דְּבָרוֹ	BElohim ahalel devaro,
in God I trust, and I'm not scared	בֵּאלֹהִים בָּטַחְתִּי לֹא אִירָא	bElohim batachti, lo ira
what someone does to me or says[7]	מַה־יַּעֲשֶׂה בָשָׂר לִי	mah ya'aseh vasar li.
[6] To twist the good that I've declared	כָּל־הַיּוֹם דְּבָרַי יְעַצֵּבוּ עָלַי	Kol hayom devarai ye'atzevu alai;
to evil they can understand.[8]	כָּל־מַחְשְׁבֹתָם לָרָע	kol machshevotam larah.

[1] Perhaps a well-known tune, or an instrument that sounded like the faint cooing of a dove in the distance: "A-dove-of silence of-distant-ones." The rhyme scheme in the translation is ababcdedec.

[2] The meaning of מִכְתָּם is uncertain. The word is used for Psalms 16 and 56-60.

[3] Felishtim is presumably Philistines; Gat is usually spelled Gath though the final H is silent. The story of David in Gath is told in 1 Samuel 21:10-14.

[4] "Be-gracious-to-me, God, for has-chased-me (or pursued or panted after or thirsted for the blood of or trampled upon) a man; / all the-day a-fighter oppresses-me."

[5] "They chase *me,* my enemies (or, those who watch me), all the day / for many *are* the fighters against me, *O God on* high."

[6] "*On a* day *when* I fear, I in you will trust …"

[7] "… in God; I shall praise *God's* word; / in God I trust; I shall not fear; / what can flesh (a human or beast) do to *hurt* me?"

[8] "All day (or, always) my matters/words they twist upon me; / all their thoughts are toward evil." The enemies twist the poet's words to make them seem evil since the enemies can think of nothing else.

[7] They lie in wait	יָגוּרוּ יִצְפְּנוּ[2] הֵמָּה	Yaguru, yitzponu hemah,
and watch each move	עֲקֵבַי יִשְׁמֹרוּ	akevai yishmoru,
I make, hoping to see me die.[1]	כַּאֲשֶׁר קִוּוּ נַפְשִׁי	ka'asher kivu nafshi.
[8] Shall sin their absolution prove?	עַל־אָוֶן פַּלֵּט־לָמוֹ	Al ahven palet lamo?
God, fling them down in dudgeon high.[3]	בְּאַף עַמִּים הוֹרֵד אֱלֹהִים	Be'af amim hored, Elohim!
[9] My *stateless* wandering you tell,	נדי סָפַרְתָּה אָתָּה	Nodi safarta atah,
catch in your vase each *bitter* tear	שִׂימָה דִמְעָתִי בְנֹאדֶךָ	simah dimati benodecha;
to reckon up my misery.[4]	הֲלֹא בִסְפְרָתֶךָ	halo besifratecha?
[10] But my foes shall retreat in fear	אָז יָשׁוּבוּ אוֹיְבַי אָחוֹר	Az yashuvu oyvai achor
when I call God to rescue me,	בְּיוֹם אֶקְרָא	beyom ekrah;
God stands by me—this I know well![5]	זֶה־יָּדַעְתִּי כִּי־אֱלֹהִים לִי	zeh yadati ki Elohim li!
[11] I praise God for a verdict just	בֵּאלֹהִים אֲהַלֵּל דָּבָר	B'Elohim ahalel davar;
and praise God's merciful decree.[6]	בַּיהוה אֲהַלֵּל דָּבָר	bAdonai ahalel davar.
[12] I need not fear; in God I trust.	בֵּאלֹהִים בָּטָחְתִּי לֹא אִירָא	B'Elohim batachti; lo irah;
What can *frail* mortal do to me?[7]	מַה־יַּעֲשֶׂה אָדָם לִי	mah ya'aseh adam li?
[13] I've promised, God, a quid pro quo;	עָלַי אֱלֹהִים נְדָרֶיךָ	Alai Elohim nedarecha;
gladly my debts I shall repay,[8]	אֲשַׁלֵּם תּוֹדֹת לָךְ	ashalem todot lach.
[14] For from death you have rescued me.	כִּי הִצַּלְתָּ נַפְשִׁי מִמָּוֶת	Ki hitzalta nafshi mimavet;
My feet won't stumble on the way	הֲלֹא רַגְלַי מִדֶּחִי	halo raglai midechi
I take, to greet divinity,	לְהִתְהַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהִים	lehit'halech lifnei Elohim
guided by life's radiant glow.[9]	בְּאוֹר הַחַיִּים	be'or hachayim.

[1] "They gather, they hide; / my steps they watch / as they hope *to see the end of* my life."
[2] A manuscript would use יצפינו, possibly the causative of יִצְפְּנוּ. Both words are from the root צפן, hide.
[3] "By doing wrong—is that their escape? (Shall their wrongdoing get them off without punishment?) / In anger make peoples come down, God. (God, get angry, bring them down!)"
[4] "My wandering have you counted, you; / place my tears in your flask; / isn't this how you keep count?" Though spelled differently, נד (wandering) and נאד (flask) sound alike, a psalmist's play on words.
[5] "Then shall they return, my enemies, back, / on the day I call; / this I know since God is for me."
[6] "In God (of justice, by Jewish tradition) shall I praise a word/matter; / in God (of mercy, by Jewish tradition [see Ex 34:6-7]) shall I praise a word/matter." דָּבָר can mean a legal matter as well as word or thing,
[7] "In God I trust; I shall not fear; / what can a person do to me?"
[8] "I'm obliged, God, *by* vows *I made to* you; / I shall pay thanksgivings to you."
[9] "For you saved my life from death / and my legs from stumbling / to walk before God / in the light of life."

Psalm 57

[1] For the leader. Don't bring destruction![1]	לַמְנַצֵּחַ אַל־תַּשְׁחֵת	Lamnatze'ach. Al tash'chet.
A poem[2] by David	לְדָוִד מִכְתָּם	LeDavid michtam,
when he fled from Sha'ul into the cave.[3]	בִּבְרֹחוֹ מִפְּנֵי־שָׁאוּל בַּמְּעָרָה	bevor'cho mipnei Sha'ul bam'arah.
[2] Pity me, God, pity me,	חָנֵּנִי אֱלֹהִים חָנֵּנִי	Choneni, Elohim, choneni
for in you I take refuge[4]	כִּי בְךָ חָסְיָה נַפְשִׁי	ki vecha chasaya nafshi
and shelter beneath your wings	וּבְצֵל־כְּנָפֶיךָ אֶחְסֶה	uvetzel kenafecha ech'seh
until danger passes.	עַד יַעֲבֹר הַוּוֹת	ad ya'avor havot.
[3] I call to God on high,	אֶקְרָא לֵאלֹהִים עֶלְיוֹן	Ekrah lElohim elyon,
to God who fulfills *God's assurances* to me,	לָאֵל גֹּמֵר עָלָי	le'El gomer alai.
[4] Who will send *help* from above	יִשְׁלַח מִשָּׁמַיִם	Yishlach mishamayim
to spare me my oppressor's reproach. Selah.[5]	וְיוֹשִׁיעֵנִי חֵרֵף שֹׁאֲפִי סֶלָה	veyoshi'eni cheref sho'afi. Selah.
God will send *God's* kindness and truth.	יִשְׁלַח אֱלֹהִים חַסְדּוֹ וַאֲמִתּוֹ	Yishlach Elohim chasdo ve'amito.
[5] I can lie down among lions	נַפְשִׁי בְּתוֹךְ לְבָאִם אֶשְׁכְּבָה	Nafshi betoch leva'im eshkevah,
that injure people,	לוֹהֲטִים בְּנֵי־אָדָם	lohatim benei adam;
with teeth *like* spears and arrows	שִׁנֵּיהֶם חֲנִית וְחִצִּים	shineihem chanit vechitzim,
and tongues *like* a sharp sword.	וּלְשׁוֹנָם חֶרֶב חַדָּה	uleshonam cherev chadah.
[6] Rise *high* above the sky, God,	רוּמָה עַל־הַשָּׁמַיִם אֱלֹהִים	Rumah al hashamayim, Elohim;
with your glory over all the earth.	עַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדֶךָ	al kol ha'aretz kevodecha.
[7] They spread a net for my feet; I tripped.[6]	רֶשֶׁת הֵכִינוּ לִפְעָמַי כָּפְפָה נַפְשִׁי	Reshet hechinu lifamai, kafaf nafshi.
They dug a pit in front of me	כָּרוּ לְפָנַי שִׁיחָה	Karu lefanai shichah,
and fell into it themselves! Selah.	נָפְלוּ בְתוֹכָהּ סֶלָה	naflu vetocha. Selah.
[8] Without a doubt, God, without a doubt:[7]	נָכוֹן לִבִּי אֱלֹהִים נָכוֹן לִבִּי	Nachon libi, Elohim, nachon libi:
I shall sing and make music.	אָשִׁירָה וַאֲזַמֵּרָה	ashira va'azamerah.

[1] Al tash'chet may indicate that the poet sensed his own danger and could not afford to take a single false step. The phrase could also mean that the conductor should be extra careful not to make a mistake.
[2] The meaning of מִכְתָּם is uncertain. The word is used for Psalms 16 and 56-60.
[3] Presumably the cave of Adullam, 1 Samuel 22.
[4] "For in you has-found-shelter my-person/self/soul."
[5] "*God*-will-send *help* from-skies / and-*God*-will-save-me *from the* reproach-of my-trampler *who oppresses me.*"
[6] "A-net they-prepared for-my-steps; bowed my-self (I bent down)."
[7] "Firm/fixed/prepared *is* my heart/mind."

[9] Wake, my glory; wake, harp and lyre;	עוּרָה כְבוֹדִי עוּרָה הַנֵּבֶל וְכִנּוֹר	Urah chevodi, urah hanevel vechinor;
I shall wake *before* dawn![1]	אָעִירָה שָׁחַר	a'irah shachar.
[10] I shall acknowledge you among the peoples, God;	אוֹדְךָ בָעַמִּים אֲדֹנָי	Od'cha va'amim, Adonai;
I shall make music to you among the nations.[2]	אֲזַמֶּרְךָ בַּל־אֻמִּים	azamer'cha bal umim.
[11] *To declare* that your mercy is great as the sky	כִּי־גָדֹל עַד־שָׁמַיִם חַסְדֶּךָ	Ki gadol ad shamayim chasdecha,
and your truth *reaches* up to the heavens.	וְעַד־שְׁחָקִים אֲמִתֶּךָ	ve'ad shechakim amitecha.
[12] Rise *high* above the sky, God,	רוּמָה עַל־שָׁמַיִם אֱלֹהִים	Rumah al hashamayim, Elohim;
with your glory over all the earth.	עַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדֶךָ	al kol ha'aretz kevodecha.

[1] "I shall wake the dawn *with my musical instruments."* Berachot 3b discusses King David's sleep patterns, and recently some have argued that separate "first" and "second" sleep periods used to be common.

[2] We read בַּל־אֻמִּים as one word, בַּלְאֻמִּים or בַּאֻמִּים "Among the nations," to make sense of it; בַּל־אֻמִּים would mean something like "except for peoples."

Psalm 58

[1] For the leader. Don't bring destruction![1]	לַמְנַצֵּחַ אַל־תַּשְׁחֵת	Lamnatze'ach. Al tash'chet,
A poem[2] by David.	לְדָוִד מִכְתָּם	leDavid michtam.
[2] You're mute? Speak out for what is just—	הַאָמְנָם אֵלֶם צֶדֶק תְּדַבֵּרוּן	Ha'umnam elem? Tzedek tedaberun!
Impartial justice is a must![3]	מֵישָׁרִים תִּשְׁפְּטוּ בְּנֵי אָדָם	Meisharim tishpetu, benei adam!
[3] To evil work you turn your hand	אַף־בְּלֵב עוֹלֹת תִּפְעָלוּן	Af belev olot tifalun,
and tolerate a lawless land.[4]	בָּאָרֶץ חֲמַס יְדֵיכֶם תְּפַלֵּסוּן	be'eretz chamas yedeichem tefalesun.
[4] The wicked shun compassion's cries;	זֹרוּ רְשָׁעִים מֵרָחֶם	Zoru resha'im merachem,
they're bad from birth and full of lies,[5]	תָּעוּ מִבֶּטֶן דִּבְּרֵי כָזָב	ta'u mibeten, dovrei chazav.
[5] Venomous like the serpent's bite,	חֲמַת־לָמוֹ כִּדְמוּת חֲמַת־נָחָשׁ	Chamat lamo kidmut chamat nachash,
deaf as a viper, deaf for spite,[6]	כְּמוֹ־פֶתֶן חֵרֵשׁ יַאְטֵם אָזְנוֹ	kemo feten cheresh yatem ozno,
[6] That will not hear the sorcerer's spell,	אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִשְׁמַע לְקוֹל מְלַחֲשִׁים	Asher lo yishma lekol melachashim,
enthralling charm, words woven well.[7]	חוֹבֵר חֲבָרִים מְחֻכָּם	chover chavarim mechukam.

[1] Al tash'chet may indicate that the poet sensed his own danger and could not afford to take a single false step. The phrase could also mean that the conductor should be extra careful not to make a mistake.

[2] The meaning of מִכְתָּם is uncertain. The word is used for Psalms 16 and 56-60.

[3] "Is-there-really silence/speechlessness? Justice you-should-speak. (Why this silence? Come on, speak up for justice!) / Equitably you-should-judge, descendants-of Adam." Translating אֵלֶם as mute/silent is based on Chullin 89a but many translators think the word means a crowd, like a bundle bound together, as in Gen 37:7. For this meaning we could translate: "Can a crowd judge a sentence just?" or "Can-really a-crowd justice declare?" Some think the word means strong and translate the word as "mighty ones."

[4] "But in-*your*-heart evil-things you-are-doing (you're making wicked plans); / on-the-earth violence *in*-your-hands you-weigh (you weigh or consider or tolerate violence in the land)." עולת could mean burnt offerings instead of evil things.

[5] "They-are-estranged, the-wicked, from-the-womb/from-compassion (רחם means both womb and compassion, so this can mean that the wicked have no pity and/or the wicked are mean from birth); / they-have-erred from-the-belly/womb, speakers-of-falsehood."

[6] "Poison of-it *is* like-the-appearance-of poison-of a-snake, / like an-adder/viper, deaf, will-plug-up its-ear." Perhaps the belief that adders stop their ears deliberately, to avoid the charms of the snake-charmer, originates in this verse. "Art thou, like the Adder, waxen deaf?" asks Shakespeare's Queen Margaret (2 Henry VI, 3:2). Snakes have no visible ears, yet some think the adder puts one ear on the ground and plugs the other with dirt.

[7] "Which (referring to the adder) not-will-listen to-the-voice-of whisperers/conjurors, / binding bound *words* (magic spells) cleverly"; the adder is supposed to plug its ears so it can't be affected by magic spells. מְחֻכָּם is related to חכם, wise person. The root חבר gives us friend, one with whom one has a bond; notebook (bound pages), and magic incantation (special words bound into a spell, or words that enthrall/bind the listener), חֹבֵר חָבָר in Deut 18:11.

[7] God, crush the teeth that fill his maw,	אֱלֹהִים הֲרָס־שִׁנֵּימוֹ בְּפִימוֹ	Elohim, haras shineimo befimo,
like lions' fangs their prey to gnaw,[1]	מַלְתְּעוֹת כְּפִירִים נְתֹץ יהוה	malte'ot kefirim netotz, Adonai!
[8] To melt like water,	יִמָּאֲסוּ כְמוֹ־מָיִם	Yima'asu chemo mayim
quick to flow,	יִתְהַלְכוּ־לָמוֹ	yit'hal'chu lamo,
(and, strung for arrows, snap his bow)[2]	יִדְרֹךְ חִצָּיו׀ כְּמוֹ יִתְמֹלָלוּ	yidroch chitzav kemo yitmolalu.
[9] Like snails who trace in slime their way	כְּמוֹ שַׁבְלוּל תֶּמֶס יַהֲלֹךְ	Kemo shablul temes yahaloch,
Or stillbirth ne'er in sun's survey.[4]	נֵפֶל אֵשֶׁת בַּל־חָזוּ שָׁמֶשׁ	nefel eshet bal chazu shamesh.
[10] Before such thorns can build a fence,	בְּטֶרֶם יָבִינוּ סִירֹתֵיכֶם אָטָד	Beterem yavinu siroteichem atad
wild and ferocious, whirl them hence.[5]	כְּמוֹ־חַי כְּמוֹ־חָרוֹן יִשְׂעֲרֶנּוּ	kemo chai, kemo charon, yisarenu.
[11] The good will cheer to see just war	יִשְׂמַח צַדִּיק כִּי־חָזָה נָקָם	Yismach tzadik ki chazah nakam,
and wallow in their enemies' gore,[6]	פְּעָמָיו יִרְחַץ בְּדַם הָרָשָׁע	pe'amav yir'chatz bedam harashah.
[12] "The righteous thrive," then all will say,	וְיֹאמַר אָדָם אַךְ־פְּרִי לַצַּדִּיק	Vayomer adam, "Ach peri latzadik,
"when justice on the earth holds sway."[7]	אַךְ יֵשׁ־אֱלֹהִים שֹׁפְטִים בָּאָרֶץ	ach yesh Elohim shoftim ba'aretz."

[1] "God, destroy its teeth in its mouth / the teeth/fangs of young lions break, God."

[2] "Let them melt like water / flowing / let it tread (i.e., brace the bow with the foot to string it) its arrows, as if cut in pieces." Perhaps the arrows are to be cut in pieces and (so to speak) toothless; perhaps the bow is to be snapped and useless as a weapon.

[3] A manuscript would read חצו.

[4] "As a snail melts as it moves (leaving its trail of slime), / *or as* the stillbirth of a woman not seen by the sun (or that never sees the sun)." Stillbirth is from the root נפל, fall, a foetus that drops from the womb prematurely. Perhaps the poet thought snails dissolve as they leave their traces of slime. Medieval manuscripts often show a knight battling a snail, and perhaps snails once held some iconographic meaning that is lost on me.

[5] "Before they-can-build their-thorns *into* a-bramble (before their thorns can become a bramble hedge), / like a wild *beast or* like anger, whirl-it-away." Some translate סִירֹתֵיכֶם as their pots, not their thorns.

[6] "The righteous will rejoice when he sees revenge; / his footsteps shall he bathe in the blood of the wicked."

[7] "And someone will say, 'But *after all, now I see* there is fruit for the righteous person; *now I see* there-are-judges dispensing-justice in-the-land.'" The plural word אֱלֹהִים (judges) often means God, but it agrees with the plural adjective שֹׁפְטִים so I suppose it refers to many humans dispensing justice.

Psalm 59

[1] For the leader. Don't bring destruction! [1]	לַמְנַצֵּחַ אַל־תַּשְׁחֵת	Lamnatze'ach. Al tash'chet,
A poem[2] by David. When Sha'ul sent *men*	לְדָוִד מִכְתָּם בִּשְׁלֹחַ שָׁאוּל	leDavid michtam. Bishlo'ach Sha'ul
to watch *David's* house, to kill him.[3]	וַיִּשְׁמְרוּ אֶת־הַבַּיִת לַהֲמִיתוֹ	vayishmeru et habayit lahamito.
[2] God, save me from my enemies,	הַצִּילֵנִי מֵאֹיְבַי אֱלֹהָי	Hatzileni me'oyvai, Elohai,
protect me from my attackers.	מִמִּתְקוֹמְמַי תְּשַׂגְּבֵנִי	mimitkomemai tesagveni.
[3] Save me from evildoers,	הַצִּילֵנִי מִפֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן	Hatzileni mipo'alei aven,
rescue me from murderers.[4]	וּמֵאַנְשֵׁי דָמִים הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי	ume'anshei damim hoshi'eni.
[4] Look, they're lying in wait for me,	כִּי הִנֵּה אָרְבוּ לְנַפְשִׁי	Ki hineh arvu lenafshi,
warriors waiting for me:	יָגוּרוּ עָלַי עַזִּים	yaguru alai azim:
not *for* my sin nor my crime, God.	לֹא־פִשְׁעִי וְלֹא־חַטָּאתִי יְהוָה	lo fishi velo chatati, Adonai.
[5] *I'm* blameless, *but* they rush to get ready;	בְּלִי־עָוֹן יְרוּצוּן וְיִכּוֹנָנוּ	Beli avon yerutzun veyikonanu;
rouse *yourself* to meet me, and look!	עוּרָה לִקְרָאתִי וּרְאֵה	urah likrati, ure'eh!
[6] But you, God, God of armies,	וְאַתָּה יְהוָה־אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת	Ve'atah, Adonai Elohim tzeva'ot,
God of Israel,	אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל	Elohei Yisra'el,
wake to bring to account all those peoples;	הָקִיצָה לִפְקֹד כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם	hakitzah lifkod kol hagoyim;
don't spare all those evil deceivers. Selah.	אַל־תָּחֹן כָּל־בֹּגְדֵי אָוֶן סֶלָה	al tachon kol bogdei aven. Selah.
[7] They come back *each* evening	יָשׁוּבוּ לָעֶרֶב	Yashuvu la'erev,
growling like dogs, circling the city.	יֶהֱמוּ כַכֶּלֶב וְיסֹבְבוּ עִיר	yehemu chakalev visovevu ir.
[8] Look, their mouths are drooling,	הִנֵּה יַבִּיעוּן בְּפִיהֶם	Hineh, yabi'un befihem,
sharp fangs between their lips.	חֲרָבוֹת בִּשְׂפָתוֹתֵיהֶם	charavot besiftoteihem.
They think no-one cares.[5]	כִּי־מִי שֹׁמֵעַ	Ki mi shome'ah?

[1] Al tash'chet may indicate that the poet sensed his own danger and could not afford to take a single false step. The phrase could also mean that the conductor should be extra careful not to make a mistake.
[2] The meaning of מִכְתָּם is uncertain. The word is used for Psalms 16 and 56-60.
[3] 1 Samuel 19:11-14, Michal saves David.
[4] "Men of blood."
[5] "For who is listening?" They think no-one pays attention, so they can be as brutal as they wish.

[9] But, God, you will laugh at them	וְאַתָּה יהוה תִּשְׂחַק־לָמוֹ	Ve'atah, Adonai, tis'chak lamo,
and make fun of all those *evil* peoples.	תִּלְעַג לְכָל־גּוֹיִם	tilag lechol goyim.
[10] What strength *they have; but* I'm waiting for you,[1]	עֻזּוֹ אֵלֶיךָ אֶשְׁמֹרָה	Uzo; elecha eshmorah
for *you,* God, are my refuge.	כִּי־אֱלֹהִים מִשְׂגַּבִּי	ki Elohim misgabi.
[11] Kind God will reach me before they do.[2]	אֱלֹהֵי חַסְדִּי[3] יְקַדְּמֵנִי	Elohei chasdi yekadmeni;
God will let me see my oppressors *destroyed.*	אֱלֹהִים יַרְאֵנִי בְשׁוּרָרָי	Elohim yareni veshorerai.
[12] Don't kill them—my people might forget	אַל־תַּהַרְגֵם פֶּן־יִשְׁכְּחוּ עַמִּי	Al tahargem pen yishkechu ami;
that you saved me; shatter them by your power	הֲנִיעֵמוֹ בְחֵילֶךָ	hani'emo vecheil'cha
and strike them down, chief, our protector.	וְהוֹרִידֵמוֹ מָגִנֵּנוּ אֲדֹנָי	vehoridemo, maginenu Adonai.
[13] Let sinful speech, their spoken word,[4]	חַטַּאת־פִּימוֹ דְּבַר־שִׂפְתֵימוֹ	Chatat pimo devar sefateimo,
trap them in their pride	וְיִלָּכְדוּ בְגְאוֹנָם	veyilachdu vige'onam
for the curses and lies they tell.	וּמֵאָלָה וּמִכַּחַשׁ יְסֻפָּרוּ	ume'alah umikachash yesaperu.
[14] Finish them off in *your* fury;	כַּלֵּה בְחֵמָה	Kaleh vechemah;
finish them off so they're totally gone.	כַּלֵּה וְאֵינֵמוֹ	kaleh ve'einemo.
Then they'll realize that God	וְיֵדְעוּ כִּי־אֱלֹהִים	Veyedu ki Elohim
governs the Jewish community everywhere.[5]	מֹשֵׁל בְּיַעֲקֹב לְאַפְסֵי הָאָרֶץ	moshel beYa'akov le'afsei ha'retz.
Selah.	סֶלָה	Selah.
[15] Let them come back each evening	וְיָשׁוּבוּ לָעֶרֶב	Veyashuvu la'erev,
growling like dogs, circling the city.	יֶהֱמוּ כַכֶּלֶב וְיסֹבְבוּ עִיר	yehemu chakalev visovevu ir.
[16] Let them roam in search of food;	הֵמָּה יְנִיעוּן[7] לֶאֱכֹל	Hemah yeni'un le'echol;
if they don't *find* enough, they can whine.[6]	אִם־לֹא יִשְׂבְּעוּ וְיָלִינוּ	im lo yisbe'u vayalinu.

[1] "Its/his-strength; for-you shall-I-wait." I think this means the enemies have great power so it's tempting to join them, but the psalmist will wait for God since God is the more reliable refuge.

[2] "The-God-of my-kindness (or the God of kindness to me, who is kind to me) will-make-me-earlier (will advance me, or will come to help me before my enemies arrive)

[3] A manuscript would have חסדו, his/its/*God's* kindness.

[4] "The sin of their mouth, the word of their lips …"

[5] "… governs Jacob to the ends of the earth." If they're gone, how will they realize anything? Poetry!

[6] Or, "…they can go to sleep *hungry, for all I care."* The root לון means "spend the night" and "complain."

[7] A manuscript has ינועון. I can't see the difference in spelling makes much difference.

[17] While I will sing *of* your strength	וַאֲנִי אָשִׁיר עֻזֶּךָ	Va’ani ashir uzecha
and delight at daylight *in* your kindness	וַאֲרַנֵּן לַבֹּקֶר חַסְדֶּךָ	va’aranen laboker chasdecha
when you have been my protection	כִּי־הָיִיתָ מִשְׂגָּב לִי	ki hayita misgav li
and my refuge in my day of trouble.	וּמָנוֹס בְּיוֹם צַר־לִי	umanos beyom tzar li.
[18] *With all* my strength I will make music for you	עֻזִּי אֵלֶיךָ אֲזַמֵּרָה	Uzi elecha azamerah
to declare that God is my protection,	כִּי־אֱלֹהִים מִשְׂגַּבִּי	ki Elohim misgabi,
the God who is kind to me.[1]	אֱלֹהֵי חַסְדִּי	Elohei chasdi.

[1] “The God of my kindness.”

Psalm 60

[1] For the leader on Shushan Edut	לַמְנַצֵּחַ עַל־שׁוֹשַׁן עֵדוּת	Lamnatze'ach al Shushan Edut
by David, a poem for instruction[1] …	מִכְתָּם לְדָוִד לְלַמֵּד	michtam leDavid, lelamed …
[2] …when he beat Aram Naharayim	בְּהַצּוֹתוֹ אֶת אֲרַם נַהֲרַיִם	… behatzoto et Aram Naharayim
and Aram Tzovah,	וְאֶת־אֲרַם צוֹבָה	ve'et Aram Tzovah,
and Yoav returned and struck Edom	וַיָּשָׁב יוֹאָב וַיַּךְ אֶת־אֱדוֹם	vayashav Yo'av vayach Edom
in Salt Valley, 12,000 *soldiers.*[2]	בְּגֵיא־מֶלַח שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר אָלֶף	beGei Melach, shneim asar alef.
[3] God, you spurned and shattered us—	אֱלֹהִים זְנַחְתָּנוּ פְרַצְתָּנוּ	Elohim, zenachtanu, feratztanu.
you were angry—but *now* return to us.	אָנַפְתָּ תְּשׁוֹבֵב לָנוּ	Anafta; teshovev lanu.
[4] You shook the earth, broke it *open;*	הִרְעַשְׁתָּה אֶרֶץ פִּצַּמְתָּהּ	Hir'ashta eretz, petzamtah;
heal those breaks, for it *still* shakes.	רְפָה שִׁבָרֶיהָ כִּי־מָטָה	refah shevareha chi matah.
[5] You showed your people a harsh time	הֶרְאִיתָה עַמְּךָ קָשָׁה	Hirita am'cha kashah,
and gave us drink, a powerful wine.[3]	הִשְׁקִיתָנוּ יַיִן תַּרְעֵלָה	hishkitanu yayin tarelah.
[6] You gave your worshippers a banner	נָתַתָּה לִירֵאֶיךָ נֵס	Natata lire'echa nes
with which to signal reality. Selah.[4]	לְהִתְנוֹסֵס מִפְּנֵי קֶשֶׁט סֶלָה	lehitnoses mipnei koshet. Selah.
[7] To save your devoted followers,	לְמַעַן יֵחָלְצוּן יְדִידֶיךָ	Lema'an yechaltzun yedidecha,
take action, rescue and answer me![5]	הוֹשִׁיעָה יְמִינְךָ וַעֲנֵנִי[6]	hoshi'ah yemin'cha, va'aneni.

[1] שׁוֹשַׁן עֵדוּת may refer to a musical instrument; or it may mean Shushan-type testimony—Shushan is the capital city in the Purim story, and there was a representation of the city in the Temple (Midot 1:3; Leibel Reznick, "The Riddle of the Shushan Gate," has suggested that a floral (Corinthian) column capital would hint at Shushan [see I Kings 7:19]). מִכְתָּם is used for Psalms 16 and 56-60. לְלַמֵּד means to teach, but in this context it may mean that someone took care to teach the words or melody or both to the performers. Obviously I haven't found a way to explain the terms of this verse.

[2] See II Samuel 8 and I Chronicles 18.

[3] "Wine of staggering," wine that leaves one staggering.

[4] "You-gave to-those-who-respect/worship-you a-banner/sign/miracle / to-display-a-banner (or perhaps, publicize a miracle) in-front-of truth. Selah."

[5] "So-that they-will-be-delivered, those-who-hold-you-dear (or, whom you hold dear), / save *with* your-right-hand and-answer-me."

[6] A manuscript would have ועננו, "answer us."

[8] God spoke in holiness;	אֱלֹהִים דִּבֶּר בְּקָדְשׁוֹ	Elohim diber bekodsho;
I rejoice; I'll divide up Shechem	אָעֲלֹזָה אֲחַלְקָה שְׁכֶם	eloza; achalkah Shechem,
and survey the valley of Sukkot.[1]	וְעֵמֶק סֻכּוֹת אֲמַדֵּד	ve'emek Sukkot amaded.
[9] Gilad*'s region* is mine, mine is Menashe*'s region;*	לִי גִלְעָד וְלִי מְנַשֶּׁה	Li Gilad, veli Menashe,
Ephraim*'s region is my* fortress.	וְאֶפְרַיִם מָעוֹז	ve'Efrayim ma'oz.
My capital is Judah'*s region*, where I make laws.[2]	רֹאשִׁי יְהוּדָה מְחֹקְקִי	Rosh Yehudah mechokeki.
[10] *But* Moab is my bathtub;	מוֹאָב סִיר רַחְצִי	Mo'av sir rachtzi;
on Edom I toss my shoes;	עַל־אֱדוֹם אַשְׁלִיךְ נַעֲלִי	al Edom ashlich na'ali;
Peleshet, cheer for me![3]	עָלַי פְּלֶשֶׁת הִתְרֹעָעִי	alai, Peleshet, hitro'a'i.
[11] Who will lead me *to* a fortress-city,	מִי יוֹבִלֵנִי עִיר מָצוֹר	Mi yovileni ir matzor,
who will bring me to Edom?	מִי נָחָנִי עַד־אֱדוֹם	mi nachani ad Edom?
[12] Won't you, God? *But* you've spurned us;	הֲלֹא־אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים זְנַחְתָּנוּ	Halo atah, Elohim? Zenachtanu;
God doesn't attack with our troops.	וְלֹא־תֵצֵא אֱלֹהִים בְּצִבְאוֹתֵינוּ	velo tetze Elohim betzivoteinu.
[13] Give us relief from trouble	הָבָה־לָּנוּ עֶזְרַת מִצָּר	Havah lanu ezrat mitzar
since people's support is ineffective.	וְשָׁוְא תְּשׁוּעַת אָדָם	veshav teshu'at adam.
[14] With God we will be brave	בֵּאלֹהִים נַעֲשֶׂה־חָיִל	BElohim na'aseh chayil
for *God* can trample our foes.	וְהוּא יָבוּס צָרֵינוּ	vehu yavus tzareinu.

[1] God spoke in answer to the request in the previous verse, and the poet rejoices because of the answer. Confident of God's favor, the poet feels ready to take possession of the land and plans to parcel out Shechem and survey or measure out the valley of Sukkot, the valley of huts.

[2] The root חקק can mean engrave or legislate. מְחֹקְקִי implies that Judah's region is the legislative center.

[3] "Moav *is* a-pot-of my-washing; / upon-Edom I-toss my-shoe; / on-account-of-me, Peleshet (Philistia), shout-out."

Psalm 61

[1] For the leader, in David's style.[1]	לַמְנַצֵּחַ עַל־נְגִינַת לְדָוִד	Lamnatze'ach al neginat leDavid.
[2] God, listen to my fervent cry,	שִׁמְעָה אֱלֹהִים רִנָּתִי	Shimah Elohim rinati,
and to my *earnest* prayer attend.[2]	הַקְשִׁיבָה תְּפִלָּתִי	hakshiva tefilati.
[3] I call upon you from land's end	מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ אֵלֶיךָ אֶקְרָא	Miktzeh ha'aretz elecha ekrah
plunged into gloom; you raise me high	בַּעֲטֹף לִבִּי בְּצוּר־יָרוּם	ba'atof libi, betzur yarum
above my self to stand secure.[3]	מִמֶּנִּי תַנְחֵנִי	mimeni tancheni.
[4] Into your shelter I can go—	כִּי־הָיִיתָ מַחְסֶה לִי	Ki hayita machseh li,
a tower of power to face the foe—[4]	מִגְדַּל־עֹז מִפְּנֵי אוֹיֵב	migdal oz mipnei oyev.
[5] abiding with you evermore,	אָגוּרָה בְאָהֳלְךָ עוֹלָמִים	Agurah ve'ohol'cha olamim,
in your embrace where I belong—selah—[5]	אֶחֱסֶה בְסֵתֶר כְּנָפֶיךָ סֶלָה	echeseh veseter kenafecha. Selah.
[6] for, God, my solemn vows you heard,	כִּי־אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים שָׁמַעְתָּ לִנְדָרָי	Ki atah Elohim shamata lindarai,
and granted me virtue's reward.[6]	נָתַתָּ יְרֻשַּׁת יִרְאֵי שְׁמֶךָ	natata yerushat yirei shemecha.

[1] "Upon/according-to the music/playing/musical-style of-David." The rhyme in verses 2ff. is abba cdde, etc., though the last five lines are abbaa.

[2] "Hear, God, my-cry/shout (רִנָּה often means a shout of joy, but many translators here make it a cry of anguish), / listen-to my-prayer."

[3] "From-the-edge/end-of the-land/earth to-you I-will-call / in-the-cloaking-of my-heart (when my thinking is all shrouded with gloom) / onto-a-rock it-will-rise away-from-me (above where I am when I'm in the dumps) you-will-set/lead-me."

[4] "For you-have-been a-shelter for-me, / a-tower-of-strength in-the-presence/face-of the-enemy."

[5] "I-shall-lodge in-your-tent *for* eons/worlds, / I-shall-take-shelter in-the-concealment-of your-wings/corners. Selah."

[6] "For-you, God, have-listened to-my-pledges, / you-have-granted the-inheritance-of the-fearers-of your-name." I.e., the poet made promises, God listened, and God rewarded the poet's intention with the reward of the righteous.

[7] The sovereign's rule you will prolong,	יָמִים עַל־יְמֵי־מֶלֶךְ תּוֹסִיף	Yamim al yemei melech tosif;
from age to age the ruler's time[1]	שְׁנוֹתָיו כְּמוֹ־דֹר וָדֹר	shenotav kemo dor vador.
[8] before God, a lasting dynasty,	יֵשֵׁב עוֹלָם לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהִים	Yeshev olam lifnei Elohim,
sustained by truth and sympathy.[2]	חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת מַן יְנַצְּרֵהוּ	chesed ve'emet man yintzeruhu.
[9] Your reputation I enshrine,	כֵּן אֲזַמְּרָה שִׁמְךָ לָעַד	Ken azamrah shimcha la'ad
and more I owe than this poor rhyme.[3]	לְשַׁלֵּמִי נְדָרַי יוֹם יוֹם	leshalmi nedarai yom yom.

[1] "Days upon-the-days-of the-ruler you-shall-add, / *the-ruler's*-years like generation and-generation." It seems the poet is happy, knowing that God will prolong the current administration. In an elected democracy, this feeling is rare because there's always some elected official to deplore. But in a monarchy, stability is often comforting: the people like knowing the ruler has an heir who can be trained from birth to execute royal duties with wisdom. Some monarchs, though, execute more suspected enemies than duties.

[2] "*The ruler* will-sit *on the throne* eternally in-front-of God; / kindness and-truth *God*-prepared *and they* will-keep-him." מַן could be related to וַיְמַן of Jonah 4:6, "God **prepared** a gourd" (Rashi).

[3] "Thus I-shall-make-music-for *celebrating* your-reputation/name, / for-my-paying-off my-pledges day day (every day)." The poet's poetry or music is a way to fulfill the promise to bring honor to God's reputation.

Psalm 62

[1] For the leader, *composed* by Yedutun,[1]	לַמְנַצֵּחַ עַל־יְדוּתוּן	Lamnatze'ach al Yedutun,
a psalm for David.	מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	mizmor leDavid.
[2] Oh, for God I'm waiting, waiting,	אַךְ אֶל־אֱלֹהִים דּוֹמִיָּה נַפְשִׁי	Ach el Elohim dumiya nafshi;
for from *God* comes my salvation.[2]	מִמֶּנּוּ יְשׁוּעָתִי	mimenu yeshu'ati.
[3] God's the rock by which I'm saved,	אַךְ־הוּא צוּרִי וְיִשׁוּעָתִי	Ach hu tzuri vishu'ati,
my haven—I don't have to cave.[3]	מִשְׂגַּבִּי לֹא־אֶמּוֹט רַבָּה	misgabi lo emot rabah.
[4] How long will you rush me, you all,	עַד־אָנָה תְּהוֹתְתוּ עַל אִישׁ	Ad anah tehotetu al ish,
to fell me like a tilting wall	תְּרָצְּחוּ כֻלְּכֶם כְּקִיר נָטוּי	teratz'chu chul'chem kekir natu'i,
or fence you shove until it fall?[4]	גָּדֵר הֲדֻחוּיָה	gader had'chuyah.
[5] They plot to oust me from my place,	אַךְ מִשְּׂאֵתוֹ יָעֲצוּ לְהַדִּיחַ	Ach mi'seto ya'atzu lehadi'ach,
wishing ill but feigning grace,	יִרְצוּ כָזָב בְּפִיו יְבָרֵכוּ	yirtzu chazav befiv yevarechu
cursing in private, not to my face. Selah.[5]	וּבְקִרְבָּם יְקַלְלוּ־סֶלָה	uvekirbam yekalelu. Selah.
[6] For God I must wait patiently,	אַךְ לֵאלֹהִים דּוֹמִי נַפְשִׁי	Ach lElohim domi nafshi
the only source of hope for me.[6]	כִּי־מִמֶּנּוּ תִקְוָתִי	ki mimenu tikvati.
[7] My savior, on whom I rely,	אַךְ־הוּא צוּרִי וְיִשׁוּעָתִי	Ach hu tzuri vishu'ati,
haven whence I need never fly.[7]	מִשְׂגַּבִּי לֹא אֶמּוֹט	misgabi lo emot.
[8] God saves and grants me dignity,	עַל־אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁעִי וְכְבוֹדִי	Al Elohim yishi uchevodi,
a solid rock, my sanctuary.[8]	צוּר־עֻזִּי מַחְסִי בֵּאלֹהִים	tzur uzi, machsi bElohim.

[1] Psalms 39, 62 and 77 are associated with Yedutun; the name is listed as a minister when David placed the Ark with Obed-Edom (I Chron 16:38).

[2] "Waiting/salvation"—that's a rhyme? Silence, you critics! The meaning: "Even/but/surely towards-God is-silent my-person/soul; / from-*God is* my-salvation."

[3] "Even/but/surely *God is* my-rock and-my-salvation, / my-haven *so that* I-won't-falter greatly."

[4] "Until-when will-you-rush against a-man, / murder *me*, all-of-you, like-a-wall leaning, / a-fence pushed?" The root of תְּהוֹתְתוּ is up for discussion; the word may mean "gather to attack" or "attack verbally."

[5] "But from-his-being-raised (elevated position) they-would-plan to-push *him out,* / they-would-take-delight-in lying *but* to-his-mouth/face they-would-bless / and-in-their-inside they-would-curse. Selah." The translation uses first person pronouns instead of the Hebrew's third person.

[6] "But for-God be-quiet, O-my-personhood, / for from-*God is* my-hope."

[7] "But *God is* my-rock and-my-salvation, / my-haven/refuge—not shall-I-be-moved."

[8] "*Dependent*-on-God *is* my-salvation and-my-dignity, / rock of-my-strength; my-refuge *is* in-God."

[9] People, trust *God* evermore,	בִּטְחוּ בוֹ בְכָל־עֵת עָם	Bit'chu vo bechol et, am;
your *weeping* hearts before *God* pour;	שִׁפְכוּ־לִפָנָיו לִבַּכֶם	shifchu lefanav levav'chem;
for God protects us *weak and poor.* Selah.[1]	אֱלֹהִים מַחֲסֶה־לָנוּ סֶלָה	Elohim machaseh lanu. Selah.
[10] Mortals—an insubstantial dream—	אַךְ הֶבֶל בְּנֵי־אָדָם כָּזָב	Ach hevel benei adam kazav,
laid in the balance weightless seem,	בְּנֵי אִישׁ בְּמאזְנַיִם לַעֲלוֹת	benei ish bemoznayim la'alot;
lighter than air, *can't tip the beam.*[2]	הֵמָּה מֵהֶבֶל יָחַד	hemah mehevel yachad.
[11] Don't trust your power;	אַל־תִּבְטְחוּ בְעֹשֶׁק	Al tivtechu ve'oshek
with fraud don't sport.	וּבְגָזֵל אַל־תֶּהְבָּלוּ	uvegazel al tehbalu.
Can force prevail?	חַיִל כִּי־יָנוּב	Chayil ki yanuv
Perish the thought![3]	אַל־תָּשִׁיתוּ לֵב	al tashitu lev.
[12] God uttered just one single word;	אַחַת דִּבֶּר אֱלֹהִים	Achat diber Elohim,
two are the lessons that I heard:	שְׁתַּיִם־זוּ שָׁמָעְתִּי	shtayim shamati:
power is a quality divine,[4]	כִּי עֹז לֵאלֹהִים	ki oz lElohim
[13] And so is simply being kind.	וּלְךָ־אֲדֹנָי חָסֶד	Ulecha Adonai chased,
For God's reward to every one	כִּי־אַתָּה תְשַׁלֵּם לְאִישׁ	ki atah teshalem le'ish
depends upon what they have done.[5]	כְּמַעֲשֵׂהוּ	kema'asehu.

[1] "Trust in-*God* at-every time, people. / Pour-out before-*God* your-hearts. / God serves-as-a-shelter for-us. Selah."

[2] "But vanity/insubstantiality *are* children-of earthling, falsehood / children-of a-human in-the-scales to-go-up (i.e., they have no weight so their side of the scales jumps up), / they *go up* more-*quickly*-than-insubstantiality, together." "Tip the beam" is to continue the image of a balance or scale on which mortals just don't register. Our bathroom scale may tell us something else, but are we not evanescent like bubbles on a frothy shore?

[3] "Don't rely on-force/oppression, / and with-falsehood/theft don't waste-your-time (don't indulge in vanity); / *on* force, though-*sometimes*-it-flourishes, / don't set *your* heart." Don't rely on oppression (as a means for success), nor waste time with falsehood. Sometimes strongarm tactics seem to work, but don't give them any thought; whatever success they bring cannot last.

[4] "One-thing said God; / two, these, did-I-hear: / that power belongs-to-God … "

[5] "… and-to-you, God, *belongs* kindness. / For you-will-pay to-a-person according-to-his-deeds." I admit that when I corrected English composition papers I would have marked that the pronouns one and they don't agree in number.

Psalm 63

[1] A tune by David, *composed*	מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	Mizmor leDavid
when he was in the Judean wilderness.[1]	בִּהְיוֹתוֹ בְּמִדְבַּר יְהוּדָה	biheyoto beMidbar Yehudah.
[2] God, you are my deity;	אֱלֹהִים אֵלִי אַתָּה	Elohim, Eli atah;
to search for you, I rise at dawn,	אֲשַׁחֲרֶךָּ	ashachareka;
seeking like a soul athirst	צָמְאָה לְךָ נַפְשִׁי כָּמַהּ לְךָ בְשָׂרִי	tzama lecha nafshi, kama lecha vesari
in arid desert, tired and worn.[2]	בְּאֶרֶץ־צִיָּה וְעָיֵף בְּלִי־מָיִם	be'eretz tziya ve'ayef beli mayim.
[3] Yes, I sensed you in the Temple	כֵּן בַּקֹּדֶשׁ חֲזִיתִיךָ	Ken bakodesh chaziticha
where I viewed your glorious might.[3]	לִרְאוֹת עֻזְּךָ וּכְבוֹדֶךָ	lirot uz'cha uch'vodecha.
[4] Your kindness betters life itself;	כִּי־טוֹב חַסְדְּךָ מֵחַיִּים	Ki tov chasdecha mechayim,
your *glorious* praise my lips recite.[4]	שְׂפָתַי יְשַׁבְּחוּנָךְ	sefatai yeshab'chun'cha.
[5] Surely I'll bless you while I live,	כֵּן אֲבָרֶכְךָ בְחַיָּי	Ken avarech'cha vechayai,
to you direct my earnest plea,[5]	בְּשִׁמְךָ אֶשָּׂא כַפָּי	beshimcha esah chapai.
[6] Sated with the richest fare,	כְּמוֹ חֵלֶב וָדֶשֶׁן תִּשְׂבַּע נַפְשִׁי	Kemo chelev vadeshen tisba nafshi
my lips will praise you joyfully.[6]	וְשִׂפְתֵי רְנָנוֹת יְהַלֵּל־פִּי	vesiftei renanot yehalel pi.

[1] When he was fleeing Saul, says Rashi, presumably as recorded in 1 Samuel 23:7-29. "A song/tune by/for-David / at-his-being in-the-wilderness/desert-of Judah."

[2] "God, my-God *are* you; / I-shall-dawn-you/seek-you (the root שחר connotes dawn and seek as well as black) / has-thirsted for-you my-self/spirit, so-much for-you my-flesh/body / in-a-land of-dryness, and-tired, without water": God, you are my God; I get up early to seek an encounter with you; as much as my spirit thirsts for you, so does my body, *as if I were stranded* in an arid desert, exhausted and parched.

[3] "Surely in-the-holy-*place* I-had-a-vision-of-you / to-see your-power and-your-glory." I made the holy place the Temple, though if you think King David wrote this psalm you'll remember that David never saw the Temple built, but he collected materials for it and may well have envisioned what it would be like.

[4] "For/that good *is* your-kindness, *more*-than-life (my vision assured me that God's favor is better than life itself); / my-lips will-praise-you."

[5] "Yes/certainly I-shall-bless-you in-my-life (while I live, as long as I live); / in-your-name/for-your-reputation shall-I-raise my-palms"; presumably raising palms is a method of worship, implying a prayer to God above, though modern cosmology requires us to rethink God's location.

[6] "As if *with* fat/rich-food and-sumptuous-food shall-be-sated my-self/soul / and-my-lips *with* joyful-cries shall-hail/praise my-mouth."

[7] When on my bed I think of you,	אִם־זְכַרְתִּיךָ עַל־יְצוּעָי	Im zecharticha al yetzu'ai
ponder the watches of the night,[1]	בְּאַשְׁמֻרוֹת אֶהְגֶּה־בָּךְ	be'ashmurot ehegeh bach.
[8] I know it's you who brings me help,	כִּי־הָיִיתָ עֶזְרָתָה לִּי	Ki hayita ezratah li,
your sheltering wing brings me delight,[2]	וּבְצֵל כְּנָפֶיךָ אֲרַנֵּן	uvetzel kenafecha aranen.
[9] Resolute to tread your path,	דָּבְקָה נַפְשִׁי אַחֲרֶיךָ	Davkah nafshi acharecha
aware of your sustaining hand,[3]	בִּי תָמְכָה יְמִינֶךָ	bi tamcha yeminecha,
[10] While those who seek my utter loss	וְהֵמָּה לְשׁוֹאָה יְבַקְשׁוּ נַפְשִׁי	Vehema lesho'ah yevakshu nafshi,
will plummet deep below the land.[4]	יָבֹאוּ בְּתַחְתִּיּוֹת הָאָרֶץ	yavo'u betachtiyot ha'aretz.
[11] May their blood flow, slashed by the sword,	יַגִּירֻהוּ עַל־יְדֵי־חָרֶב	Yagiruhu al yedei charev,
let them be served as jackals' food,[5]	מְנָת שֻׁעָלִים יִהְיוּ	menat shu'alim yiheyu,
[12] While the king delights in God	וְהַמֶּלֶךְ יִשְׂמַח בֵּאלֹהִים	Vehamelech yismach bElohim,
and the devout praise as they should,	יִתְהַלֵּל כָּל־הַנִּשְׁבָּע בּוֹ	yit'halel kol hanishba bo,
when liars' tongues are stopped for good.[6]	כִּי יִסָּכֵר פִּי דוֹבְרֵי־שָׁקֶר	ki yisacher pi dovrei shahker.

[1] "When/if I-have-mentioned/thought-of-you upon my-sleeping-couches, / at-the-watches would-I-meditate-upon-you." Night was divided into three watches; later, under Roman rule, there were four.

[2] "For you-have-been a-help for-me / and-in-the-shadow-of your-wings/corners I-shall-shout-with-joy."

[3] "It-has-become-attached, my-soul/person, after-you (I follow you closely); / in/with-me has-sustained your-right-hand."

[4] "And-they to-ruin would-seek my-soul/person (they who want to see me ruined); / let-them-come into-the-nether-reaches-of the-earth."

[5] "May-they-gush-out by-the-action-of-a-sword, / a-portion-for jackals/foxes let them be."

[6] "And-the-king will-rejoice in-God / will-praise everyone-who-swears by-*God* (everyone who believes in God will give praise) / for/when will-be-stopped the-mouth-of speakers-of-falsehood."

Psalm 64

[1] For the leader, a tune for David.	לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	Lamnatze'ach, mizmor leDavid.
[2] Hear my voice, God, as I speak;	שְׁמַע־אֱלֹהִים קוֹלִי בְשִׂיחִי	Shema, Elohim, koli vesichi;
guard me from dangerous enemies.[1]	מִפַּחַד אוֹיֵב תִּצֹּר חַיָּי	mipachad oyev titzor chayai.
[3] Hide me from their wicked schemes,	תַּסְתִּירֵנִי מִסּוֹד מְרֵעִים	Tastireni misod mere'im,
a gang that works what harm they please,[2]	מֵרִגְשַׁת פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן	merigshat po'alei ahven,
[4] Who whet their slanderous tongues like knives	אֲשֶׁר שָׁנְנוּ כַחֶרֶב לְשׁוֹנָם	Asher shanenu chacherev leshonam,
and thrust with piercing calumnies,[3]	דָּרְכוּ חִצָּם דָּבָר מָר	dar'chu chitzam davar mar,
[5] They ambush us poor innocents,	לִירוֹת בַּמִּסְתָּרִים תָּם	Lirot bamistarim tam,
strike suddenly with rash confidence.[4]	פִּתְאֹם יֹרֵהוּ וְלֹא יִירָאוּ	pitom yoruhu velo yira'u.
[6] Powered by slurs,	יְחַזְּקוּ־לָמוֹ דָּבָר רָע	Yechazku lamo davar ra,
trapping with words,	יְסַפְּרוּ לִטְמוֹן מוֹקְשִׁים	yesapru litmon mokshim,
their stealth unobserved.[5]	אָמְרוּ מִי יִרְאֶה־לָּמוֹ	amru mi yireh lamo.
[7] Their hidden wrongs will be exposed,	יַחְפְּשׂוּ־עוֹלֹת תַּמְנוּ חֵפֶשׂ מְחֻפָּשׂ	Yachpesu olot tamnu; chefes mechupas,
however deep, however close,[6]	וְקֶרֶב אִישׁ וְלֵב עָמֹק	vekerev ish velev amok,

[1] "Hear, God, my-sound in-my-speaking (the sound I make as I speak); / from-the-fear-of my-enemy guard my-life."

In the eleven verses of this psalm, verse 1 is the introduction; 2-5 are one part (2-4 rhyme and 5 has its own rhyme to conclude the first part); 6 has three phrases, so its rhyme is different; 7-11 are the second part (7-10 rhyme, and 11 has its own rhyme).

[2] "Hide-me from-the-secret-*conspiracy*-of evildoers, / from-the-ganging-up-of doers-of evil."

[3] "Who have-sharpened like-the-sword their-tongue, / have-trodden their-arrow-*shooter*, a-word/thing bitter (have drawn their bow *to shoot* a bitter word)."

[4] "To-shoot in-hidden-places an-innocent-one, / suddenly they-would-shoot-him and-not they-would-be-afraid." They wish to ambush the innocent, without putting themselves at risk. There's a bit of a pun on the roots ירה (shoot) and ירא (fear).

[5] "They-strengthen-themselves *with* a-word-of evil; / they-speak in-order-to-hide snares (their words are traps); / they say, 'Who will see me?'" They hide their evil intentions and are sure they won't be found out.

[6] "They-probe iniquities *that* they-have-hidden (other people will find out the hidden iniquities of my enemies) a-probing probed (through a thorough investigation), / and/though close-to the-person and-*in*-heart deep." Other people will find out their evil, however closely they hide it and however deep in their heart.

[8] And God will discharge arrows swift	וַיֹּרֵם אֱלֹהִים חֵץ פִּתְאֹם	Vayorem Elohim chetz pitom,
to strike them down with *crushing* blows,[1]	הָיוּ מַכּוֹתָם	hayu makotam,
[9] Undone by their own wicked tongues,	וַיַּכְשִׁילוּהוּ עָלֵימוֹ לְשׁוֹנָם	Vayachshiluhu aleimo leshonam,
abhorred, for everyone sees and knows.[2]	יִתְנֹדְדוּ כָּל־רֹאֵה בָם	yitnodadu kol ro'eh vam.
[10] For all will see and surely say:	וַיִּירְאוּ כָּל־אָדָם וַיַּגִּידוּ	Vayiru kol adam vayagidu,
"In God's work, *God's* great wisdom shows."[3]	פֹּעַל אֱלֹהִים וּמַעֲשֵׂהוּ הִשְׂכִּילוּ	"Po'al Elohim uma'asehu hiskilu."
[11] The righteous trust God with delight	יִשְׂמַח צַדִּיק בַּיהוה וְחָסָה בוֹ	Yismach tzadik bAdonai vechasa vo,
and all praise God with heart upright.[4]	וְיִתְהַלְלוּ כָּל־יִשְׁרֵי־לֵב	veyit'halelu kol yishrei lev.

[1] "And-will-shoot, God, an-arrow suddenly / may-they-be (may the arrows be) blows-for-them."
[2] "And-may-they-make-to-fall upon-themselves their-tongue (may they hurt themselves with their own tongues); / may-they-become-abhorrent *to* anyone-who-looks at-them."
[3] "And-they-will-see, every person, and-they-will-declare / "The-work-of God and-what-*God*-does are-wise."
[4] "Will-rejoice the-righteous in-God and-rely on-*God*; / and-they-will-praise-*God,* all upright-of heart."

Psalm 65

[1] For the leader, a tune for David, a song.	לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד שִׁיר	Lamnatze'ach, mizmor leDavid, shir.
[2] In Zion, God, your praise[1] is due—	לְךָ דֻמִיָּה תְהִלָּה אֱלֹהִים בְּצִיּוֹן	Lecha dumya tehila, Elohim, beTziyon,
our pledges will be paid to you.[2]	וּלְךָ יְשֻׁלַּם־נֶדֶר	ulecha yeshulam neder.
[3] You who *every* prayer hear,	שֹׁמֵעַ תְּפִלָּה	Shome'ah tefilah,
to you all creatures will draw near.[3]	עָדֶיךָ כָּל־בָּשָׂר יָבֹאוּ	adecha kol basar yavo'u.
[4] My crimes are far too grave for me	דִּבְרֵי עֲוֹנֹת גָּבְרוּ מֶנִּי	Divrei avonot gavru meni,
but you forgive iniquity.[4]	פְּשָׁעֵינוּ אַתָּה תְכַפְּרֵם	pesha'einu atah techaprem.
[5] Happy is one you choose and bring	אַשְׁרֵי תִּבְחַר וּתְקָרֵב	Ashrei tivchar utekarev;
to live within your own dwelling,	יִשְׁכֹּן חֲצֵרֶיךָ	yishkon chatzerecha;
where of your good we'll richly dine,	נִשְׂבְּעָה בְּטוּב בֵּיתֶךָ	nisbe'ah betuv beitecha,
in holy place and temple shrine.[5]	קְדֹשׁ הֵיכָלֶךָ	kedosh heichalecha.
[6] Answer us with deeds of awe	נוֹרָאוֹת בְּצֶדֶק תַּעֲנֵנוּ	Nora'ot betzedek ta'anenu,
and justice, God, our savior,	אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעֵנוּ	Elohei yishenu,
trusted where distant people dwell—	מִבְטָח כָּל־קַצְוֵי־אֶרֶץ	mivtach kol katzvei eretz
Land's End, far o'er the ocean's swell,[6]	וְיָם רְחֹקִים	veyam rechokim,
[7] Who founded mountains with your might,	מֵכִין הָרִים בְּכֹחוֹ	Mechin harim bechocho,
with powerful dominion dight,[7]	נֶאְזָר בִּגְבוּרָה	nezar bigvurah,

[1] In Temple times, our sacrifices were obligations. Now, we have an obligation to praise and pray instead. This verse suggests that we will meet our prayer obligations. Zion may refer to Temple worship.

[2] "To-you *is* fitting praise, God, in-Zion; and-to-you will-be-paid a-pledge."

[3] "You-who-hear prayer, / up-to-you all flesh will-come." God is for every living thing. People who live with animals sometimes have trouble convincing themselves that animals can't think or pray or feel gratitude to a creator. We had a border collie so intelligent that she could fold laundry, but she was too smart to let on. She'd watch me do it, though, with a gloomy and judgemental eye.

[4] "Matters/things/words-of transgressions have-been-too-strong for-me; / Our-sins, you will-pardon-them.

[5] "Happy/lucky-*are*-they-*whom* you-will-choose and-you-will-bring-close, / *who*-will-dwell-*in* your-courtyards; / we-shall-be-sated with-the-goodness-of your-house, / holy *is* your-sanctuary."

[6] "*With* awesome-deeds in-justice answer-us / God-of our-salvation, / on-whom-rely *people who inhabit* all-edges-of-the-Earth / and-sea far-away."

[7] "Who-prepares hills with-*God's*-strength, / girded with-greatness."

[8] Who soothes the roar of raging sea—	מַשְׁבִּיחַ שְׁאוֹן יַמִּים	Mashbi'ach she'on yamim,
waves crashing incessantly—	שְׁאוֹן גַּלֵּיהֶם	she'on galeihem
and peoples clamoring noisily.[1]	וַהֲמוֹן לְאֻמִּים	vahamon le'umim.
[9] From East to West, signs of your might	וַיִּירְאוּ יֹשְׁבֵי קְצָוֹת מֵאוֹתֹתֶיךָ	Vayiru yoshvei ketzavot me'ototecha,
rouse awe, mingled with true delight.[2]	מוֹצָאֵי־בֹקֶר וָעֶרֶב תַּרְנִין	motza'ei voker va'erev tarnin.
[10] You tend the earth with irrigation	פָּקַדְתָּ הָאָרֶץ וַתְּשֹׁקְקֶהָ	Pakadta ha'aretz vat'shokekeha,
enrich it beyond estimation;	רַבַּת תַּעְשְׁרֶנָּה	rabat tashrenah;
canals—God's gift—with water flow	פֶּלֶג אֱלֹהִים מָלֵא מָיִם	peleg Elohim maleh mayim
so that the grain we eat may grow.[3]	תָּכִין דְּגָנָם כִּי־כֵן תְּכִינֶהָ	tachin deganam ki chen techineha.
[11] You fill the furrows,	תְּלַמֶּיהָ רַוֵּה	Telameha raveh
edges smoothe,	נַחֵת גְּדוּדֶיהָ	nachet gedudeha,
soften with showers,	בִּרְבִיבִים תְּמוֹגְגֶנָּה	birvivim temogegenah,
and bless the growth.[4]	צִמְחָהּ תְּבָרֵךְ	tzimchah tevarech.
[12] Your bounty o'er the year is spread,	עִטַּרְתָּ שְׁנַת טוּבֶךָ	Itarta shenat tovatecha
abundance oozes where you tread.[5]	וּמַעְגָּלֶיךָ יִרְעֲפוּן דָּשֶׁן	umagalecha yirafun dashen.
[13] The arid pastures drink their fill	יִרְעֲפוּ נְאוֹת מִדְבָּר	Yirafu ne'ot midbar,
and joy girds every watered hill.[6]	וְגִיל גְּבָעוֹת תַּחְגֹּרָנָה	vegil geva'ot tachgorna.
[14] Flocks cloak the mountains' high domain	לָבְשׁוּ כָרִים הַצֹּאן	Lavshu charim hatzon,
while valleys wear their coat of grain,	וַעֲמָקִים יַעַטְפוּ־בָר	va'amakim ya'atfu var,
voicing a jubilant refrain.[7]	יִתְרוֹעֲעוּ אַף־יָשִׁירוּ	yitro'a'u af yashiru.

[1] "Who-soothes the-roar-of seas, / the-roar-of their-waves, / and-*of*-crowds-of peoples." The root שבח, here translated as soothe or still or quiet, also connotes praise. Perhaps the underlying idea is propitiate—you say something nice in order to propitiate the powerful.

[2] "And-they-shall-be-awed/respectful/fearful, those-who-dwell-at edges-*of-the-earth,* at-your-signs, / those-who-find morning (i.e., who live in the East) and evening (in the West) shall-rejoice."

[3] "You-have-taken-notice-of (or administered/tended) the-Earth and-you-have-watered-it; / to-a-great-degree you-have-enriched-it; / the-division-of God is-filled-with water (what marks off one part of land from another, a field boundary, a canal); / you-prepare their-grain (the grain for humans) / for indeed it's-your-preparing (i.e., it's God who makes it all grow)."

[4] "Its-furrows *are* saturated, / smoothed-out *are* its-clods; / with-showers do-you-soften-it; / its-sprouting you-bless."

[5] "You-have-crowned the-year-of your-goodness, / and-your-circuits (customary paths) ooze ripeness."

[6] "They-ooze, the-pastures-of the-desert, / and-joy the-hills gird."

[7] "They-wear, the-hills, the flock, / and-valleys don grain; / they-cry-out-with-joy, they-even-sing."

Psalm 66

[1] For the leader, a song, a tune:	לַמְנַצֵּחַ שִׁיר מִזְמוֹר	Lamnatze'ach, shir mizmor:
Shout out for God, from every land,[1]	הָרִיעוּ לֵאלֹהִים כָּל־הָאָרֶץ	Hari'u lElohim, kol ha'aretz,
[2] Sing of *God's* glorious reputation,	זַמְּרוּ כְּבוֹד־שְׁמוֹ	Zamru chevod shemo,
with eulogies in manner grand.[2]	שִׂימוּ כָבוֹד תְּהִלָּתוֹ	simu chavod tehilato.
[3] Tell God,	אִמְרוּ לֵאלֹהִים	Imru lElohim,
"How awesome are your deeds:	מַה־נּוֹרָא מַעֲשֶׂיךָ	"Mah norah ma'asecha,
By your great power	בְּרֹב עֻזְּךָ	berov uzecha
your foes are cowed[3]	יְכַחֲשׁוּ לְךָ אֹיְבֶיךָ	yechachashu lecha oyvecha.
[4] All the earth will worship you	כָּל־הָאָרֶץ יִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְךָ	Kol ha'aretz yishtachavu lecha
and sing your praises, sing aloud."	וְיַזַּמְּרוּ־לָךְ יְזַמְּרוּ שְׁמֶךָ	vizamru lach, yezamru shimcha."
Selah.[4]	סֶלָה	Selah.
[5] Go see the works that God has wrought,	לְכוּ וּרְאוּ מִפְעֲלוֹת אֱלֹהִים	Lechu ure'u mif'alot Elohim,
things wonderful for humankind,[5]	נוֹרָא עֲלִילָה עַל־בְּנֵי אָדָם	norah alilah al benei Adam.
[6] Sea turned to land,	הָפַךְ יָם לְיַבָּשָׁה	Hafach yam leyabashah;
we crossed the flood	בַּנָּהָר יַעַבְרוּ בְרָגֶל	banahar ya'avru veragel;
and there rejoiced in work divine.[6]	שָׁם נִשְׂמְחָה־בּוֹ	sham nismecha bo.

[1] "For-the-leader, a-song, a-tune: / Shout-to/for God, all the-earth." The rubric for most psalms is a verse of its own but here is the first part of the first verse.
[2] "Sing/make-music-for the-glory-of *God's*-name/reputation, / set glory in-*God's*-praise."
[3] "Say to-God, "How awesome *are* your-deeds, / at-the-abundance-of your-power will-cringe your-enemies."
[4] "All the-earth will-worship you / and-they-will-sing to-you, they-will-sing your-name/reputation. / Selah."
[5] "Go and-see works-of God; / awesome *is God's* deed upon/for the-children-of Adam." עֲלִילָה looks like it's from the same root as עוֹלֲלֵיהֶם in Psalm 57:14; but here the root is עלל, deed, and there the root is עול, suckle.
[6] "*God* turned sea to-dry-*land;* / in-the-stream they-would-cross on-foot; / there we-would-rejoice at-it (or, at-*God).*" The sea became dry for Moses, the river became dry for Joshua.

[7] *God* rules the world,	מֹשֵׁל בִּגְבוּרָתוֹ עוֹלָם	Moshell bigvurato olam,
surveys each realm—	עֵינָיו בַּגּוֹיִם תִּצְפֶּינָה	einav bagoyim titzpenah—
let not the wayward act so vain!	הַסּוֹרְרִים אַל־יָרוּמוּ[2] לָמוֹ	hasorerim al yarumu lamo!
Selah.[1]	סֶלָה	Selah.
[8] O peoples, sanctify our God	בָּרְכוּ עַמִּים אֱלֹהֵינוּ	Bar'chu amim Eloheinu,
and loud and clear *God's* praise proclaim,[3]	וְהַשְׁמִיעוּ קוֹל תְּהִלָּתוֹ	vehashmi'u kol tehilato.
[9] Who brought our life-force into life	הַשָּׂם נַפְשֵׁנוּ בַּחַיִּים	Hasam nafshenu bachayim,
and kept our path from blunders gross,[4]	וְלֹא־נָתַן לַמּוֹט רַגְלֵנוּ	velo natan lamot raglenu,
[10] Though God has set us searching tests,	כִּי־בָחַנְתָּנוּ אֱלֹהִים	Ki vechantanu Elohim,
to purify our sinful dross.[5]	צְרַפְתָּנוּ כִּצְרֹף־כָּסֶף	tzaraftanu kitzraf kasef.
[11] You lured us to a cruel trap,	הֲבֵאתָנוּ בַמָּצוֹד	Havetanu vamtzudah,
that crushed our legs, ensnared by stealth,[6]	שַׂמְתָּ מוּעָקָה בְמָתְנֵינוּ	samta mu'akah vemotneinu,
[12] Sent riders to destroy us, yet	הִרְכַּבְתָּ אֱנוֹשׁ לְרֹאשֵׁנוּ	Hirkavta enosh leroshenu;
from fire and flood	בָּאנוּ־בָאֵשׁ וּבַמָּיִם	banu va'esh uvamayim
brought us to wealth.[7]	וַתּוֹצִיאֵנוּ לָרְוָיָה	vatotzi'enu larvayah.
[13] With offerings I reach your abode	אָבוֹא בֵיתְךָ בְּעוֹלוֹת	Avo veit'cha ve'olot,
to pay the pledges that I owe,[8]	אֲשַׁלֶּם לְךָ נְדָרָי	ashalem lecha nedarai,
[14] That burst out from my anguished lips	אֲשֶׁר־פָּצוּ שְׂפָתָי	Asher patzu sefatai
when I spoke in my bitter woe.[9]	וְדִבֶּר־פִּי בַּצַּר־לִי	vediber pi batzar li.

[1] "*God* rules in-*God's*-strength *the* world; / *God"s* eyes on-the-nations survey; / the-strayers, let-them-not-exalt-themselves for-them. / Selah."

[2] A manuscript would have ירימו.

[3] "Bless, O-peoples, our God, / and-make-heard the-sound-of *God's*-praise,"

[4] "Who-has-set our-life-force into-life (perhaps, put our souls into earthly life) / and-not has-given to-stumbling our-feet."

[5] "For/yet has-examined-us God, / refined-us like-the-refining-of silver."

[6] "You-brought-us into-the-snare, / you-placed pressure on-our-loins." מוּעָקָה may come from a root עוק, a burdensome weight. Perhaps the poet thinks of an animal trap that releases a weight to stop the prey.

[7] "You-caused-to-ride a-person at-our-heads (God sent someone to attack us); / we-came through-fire and-through-water, and-you-brought-us-out to-plenty."

[8] "I-shall-come *to* your-house with-upward-sacrifices/burnt-offerings; / I-shall-pay to-you my-promises …"

[9] "That burst *from* my-lips, / and-uttered my-mouth in-the-constraint of-me."

[15] Fat sheep I bring	עֹלוֹת מֵחִים אַעֲלֶה־לָּךְ	Olot mechim a'aleh lach
and fragrant rams,	עִם־קְטֹרֶת אֵילִים	im ketoret eilim;
with bulls and goats *for altar fit*.	אֶעֱשֶׂה בָקָר עִם־עַתּוּדִים	e'eseh vakar im atudim.
Selah[1]	סֶלָה	Selah.
[16] Hear as I tell you,	לְכוּ־שִׁמְעוּ וַאֲסַפְּרָה	Lechu, shimu, va'asaprah,
who fear God,	כָּל־יִרְאֵי אֱלֹהִים	kol yirei Elohim,
how *God* worked for my benefit.[2]	אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לְנַפְשִׁי	asher asah lenafshi.
[17] To *God* I called out with acclaim—	אֵלָיו פִּי־קָרָאתִי	Elav pi karati,
my lips had not yet formed a word—[3]	וְרוֹמַם תַּחַת לְשׁוֹנִי	veromam tachat leshoni.
[18] (Had evil thinking stained my heart	אָוֶן אִם־רָאִיתִי בְלִבִּי	Aven im ra'iti velibi
my prayer God would not have heard)[4]	לֹא יִשְׁמַע אֲדֹנָי	lo yishmah Adonai.
[19] But God already heard my voice	אָכֵן שָׁמַע אֱלֹהִים	Achen shamah Elohim,
and heeded my *impassioned* plea.[5]	הִקְשִׁיב בְּקוֹל תְּפִלָּתִי	hikshiv bekol tefilati.
[20] Blessed be God who never blocked	בָּרוּךְ אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא־הֵסִיר	Baruch Elohim asher lo hesir
my prayer, nor *God's* kind care, from me.[6]	תְּפִלָּתִי וְחַסְדּוֹ מֵאִתִּי	tefilati vechasdo me'iti!

[1] "Burnt/upward-offerings-of fatlings (מֵחַ, fatness) shall-I-offer-up to-you / with fragrance-of rams; / I shall prepare cattle with male-goats. Selah."
[2] "Go and-hear and-I-shall-tell, / all fearers-of God, / what *God*-did for-me."
[3] "To-*God with* my-mouth I-called, / and-*God*-was-exalted under my-tongue." "Under my tongue" could imply the praise was in the poet's heart, or (as I understand it) the praise had not reached the tip of the tongue.
[4] "Wrongdoing if I-had-seen in-my-heart, / not would-have-listened God."
[5] "Indeed listened God, / made-heard at-the-sound-of my-prayer."
[6] "Blessed *be* God who not turned-away / my-prayer and *God's*-kindness from-me."

Psalm 67

Some add this psalm to the evening service concluding Shabbat.

[1] For the leader, with instruments,	לַמְנַצֵּחַ בִּנְגִינֹת	Lamnatze'ach binginot,
a song, a tune.	מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר	mizmor shir.
[2] May God be gracious to us and bless us,	אֱלֹהִים יְחָנֵּנוּ וִיבָרְכֵנוּ	Elohim yechanenu vivar'chenu;
looking at us[1] *with favor.* Selah.	יָאֵר פָּנָיו אִתָּנוּ סֶלָה	ya'er panav itanu. Selah.
[3] To make known on earth your way,	לָדַעַת בָּאָרֶץ דַּרְכֶּךָ	Lada'at ba'aretz darkecha,
your rescue, among all nations.	בְּכָל־גּוֹיִם יְשׁוּעָתֶךָ	bechol goyim yeshu'atecha.
[4] Peoples will acknowledge you, God,	יוֹדוּךָ עַמִּים אֱלֹהִים	Yoducha amim, Elohim,
all peoples will acknowledge you.	יוֹדוּךָ עַמִּים כֻּלָּם	yoducha amim kulam.
[5] Nations will rejoice and sing with delight	יִשְׂמְחוּ וִירַנְּנוּ לְאֻמִּים	Yismechu viranenu le'umim
that you bring equal justice to peoples;	כִּי־תִשְׁפֹּט עַמִּים מִישׁוֹר	ki tishpot amim mishor
you will guide the nations on earth. Selah.[2]	וּלְאֻמִּים בָּאָרֶץ תַּנְחֵם סֶלָה	ule'umim ba'aretz tan'chem. Selah.
[6] Peoples will acknowledge you, God,	יוֹדוּךָ עַמִּים אֱלֹהִים	Yoducha amim, Elohim,
all peoples will acknowledge you.	יוֹדוּךָ עַמִּים כֻּלָּם	yoducha amim kulam.
[7] The earth yields its produce;	אֶרֶץ נָתְנָה יְבוּלָהּ	Eretz nat'nah yevulah;
may God, our God, bless us.	יְבָרְכֵנוּ אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵינוּ	yevar'chenu Elohim, Eloheinu.
[8] When God blesses us,	יְבָרְכֵנוּ אֱלֹהִים	Yevar'chenu Elohim,
every part of the earth[3] will respect *God.*	וְיִירְאוּ אֹתוֹ כָּל־אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ	veyiru oto kol afsei aretz.

[1] "May *God* shine *God's* face/presence/appearance."
[2] "The nations on earth, you will guide them."
[3] "All the edges/ends/outer limits of the earth."

Psalm 68

[1] For the leader, by David, a tune, a song.	לַמְנַצֵּחַ לְדָוִד מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר	Lamnatze'ach, leDavid mizmor shir.
[2] Let God rise and scatter *God's* foes,	יָקוּם אֱלֹהִים יָפוּצוּ אוֹיְבָיו	Yakum Elohim, yafutzu oyvav
so *God's* enemies will flee before *God.*	וְיָנוּסוּ מְשַׂנְאָיו מִפָּנָיו	veyanusu mesanav mipanav.
[3] As smoke is dispersed, disperse them;	כְּהִנְדֹּף עָשָׁן תְּנַדֹּף	Kehindof ashan tindof,
as wax melts before fire,	כְּהִמַּס דּוֹנַג מִפְּנֵי־אֵשׁ	kehimes donag mipnei esh,
so let the wicked perish before God	יֹאבְדוּ רְשָׁעִים מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים	yovdu resha'im mipnei Elohim,
[4] While the righteous rejoice,	וְצַדִּיקִים יִשְׂמָחוּ	Vetzadikim yismechu,
exult before God	יַעֲלְצוּ לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהִים	ya'altzu lifnei Elohim
and rejoice in celebration.	וְיָשִׂישׂוּ בְשִׂמְחָה	veyasisu vesimcha.
[5] Sing to God, make music for *God's* reputation,	שִׁירוּ לֵאלֹהִים זַמְּרוּ שְׁמוֹ	Shiru lElohim, zamru shemo,
exalt the one who rides the skies[1]	סֹלּוּ לָרֹכֵב בָּעֲרָבוֹת	solu larochev ba'aravot,
(whose name is *God*), and rejoice before *God.*	בְּיָהּ שְׁמוֹ וְעִלְזוּ לְפָנָיו	beYah shemo, ve'ilzu lefanav.
[6] The orphans' parent and widows' justice	אֲבִי יְתוֹמִים וְדַיַּן אַלְמָנוֹת	Avi yetomim vedayan almanot
is God, in *God's* holy abode.[2]	אֱלֹהִים בִּמְעוֹן קָדְשׁוֹ	Elohim bim'on kodsho.
[7] God sends solitary *prisoners* home,	אֱלֹהִים מוֹשִׁיב יְחִידִים בַּיְתָה	Elohim moshiv yechidim baytah,
releases prisoners with pardon;[3]	מוֹצִיא אֲסִירִים בַּכּוֹשָׁרוֹת	motzi asirim bakosharot;
but rebels must dwell in the dry desert.	אַךְ סוֹרְרִים שָׁכְנוּ צְחִיחָה	ach sorarim shochnu tzechichah.

[1] סלו: imperative plural of סלל meaning exalt, heap up (as if to make a highway); perhaps an instruction to exalt God, perhaps an instruction to build a highway for God to ride. God is רכב בערבות, the one who rides through the … well, עֲרָבָה has several meanings. It's a willow tree, so maybe the psalmist thought of God as the wind in the willows, invisible but palpable; it's a desert area in the south of Israel; it's often translated as a plain (the Plains of Moab, Num 22:1). But some translators think the poet thinks God rides a chariot through the sky, maybe much flatter than a rocky plain, unless the clouds are bumpy. This is not only anthropomorphic—God has a chariot like Pharaoh?—but also Greekly pagan—God rides through the sky like Apollo? Some will prefer to think of God traversing terrestrial plains and thanking people who want to ease God's route by building a nice road that's too high to flood in the rain. Even if you accept that Biblical anthropomorphisms and pagan imagery merely help humans understand God in familiar terms—in this case the idea that God gets from place to place (how can God move, if God is everywhere, eh?)—every line of reasoning to explain this poetic phrase seems to land us in theological hot water. Maybe the wind in the willows really is the best image for this line.

[2] "Parent *who protects* orphans and judge *who ensures justice for* widows" (a judge can be called a justice, and this judge makes sure widows, with no male to represent them in ancient society, get proper treatment); "Abode of *God's* holiness," idiomatic Hebrew syntax for "*God's* holy abode."

[3] I assume בַּכּוֹשָׁרוֹת is related to כשר, kosher or fit.

[8] God, when you headed your people*'s army*,	אֱלֹהִים בְּצֵאתְךָ לִפְנֵי עַמֶּךָ	Elohim, betzet'cha lifnei amecha,
marching through the desert (selah),	בְּצַעֲדְךָ בִישִׁימוֹן סֶלָה	betzad'cha vishimom (selah),
[9] The earth shuddered, the sky wept *in fear*	אֶרֶץ רָעָשָׁה אַף־שָׁמַיִם נָטָפוּ	Eretz ra'asha, af shamayim natfu
before God—this *was at* Sinai—	מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים זֶה סִינַי	mipnei Elohim—zeh Sinai—
before God, the God of Israel.	מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל	mipnei Elohim, Elohei Yisra'el.
[10] *With* bounteous rain	גֶּשֶׁם נְדָבוֹת	Geshem nedavot
you showered, God, *the land of* your heritage;	תָּנִיף אֱלֹהִים נַחֲלָתֶךָ	tanif, Elohim, nachalat'cha;
when *the land* was parched, you revived it.[1]	וְנִלְאָה אַתָּה כוֹנַנְתָּהּ	venilah, atah chonantah.
[11] Your creatures[2] settled there;	חַיָּתְךָ יָשְׁבוּ־בָהּ	Chayat'cha yashvu vah;
you bountifully helped the poor, God.[3]	תָּכִין בְּטוּבְךָ לֶעָנִי אֱלֹהִים	tachin betovat'cha le'ani, Elohim.
[12] God would give instruction *in Hebrew*, *and*	אֲדֹנָי יִתֵּן־אֹמֶר	Adonai yiten omer,
a host of interpreters *would pass it on*.[4]	הַמְבַשְּׂרוֹת צָבָא רָב	hamevasrot tzavah rav.
[13] Besieging generals would beat a retreat,	מַלְכֵי צְבָאוֹת יִדֹּדוּן יִדֹּדוּן	Malchei tzeva'ot yidodun yidodun
and the housewife would divide the spoil.[5]	וּנְוֵת בַּיִת תְּחַלֵּק שָׁלָל	unevat bayit techalek shalal.

[1] נְדָבוֹת, voluntary gifts; God sent rain from God's bounty, not for our merit; תָּנִיף, you would wave/lift-up/let-fall; וְנִלְאָה, and *if* it became weak/exhausted/parched; כוֹנַנְתָּהּ you sustained it.

[2] חַיָּתְךָ from the root חיה, live, often connotes a wild beast (rather than a domesticated animal). In II Samuel 23:11 it's a military force (וַיֶּאֱסְפוּ פְלִשְׁתִּים לַחֲיָה, the Philistines gathered in force), and here it may mean a community of believers.

[3] "You-provided in-your-goodness/bounty for-the-poor-person, God."

[4] "The-female-announcers *were* a-company large." The female announcers—perhaps the poet thinks women transmit God's instructions most reliably. Or "female announcers" may refer to different languages (language/tongue is a feminine noun in Hebrew), so God's word would reach all lands; as Rabbi Yochanan says (BT Shabbat 88b), God's word was distributed via the seventy languages of the world. "Announcers" is related to the word for meat—good news is like a good meal for the dispirited (though a real meal is probably better).

[5] "Rulers-of hosts/armies would-retreat/wander-off, would-retreat/wander-off, (i.e., the enemy armies would run away in haste) / and-the-one-who-stays-in the-house would-divide the-spoil."

[14] When you lie to rest among the sheepfolds,	אִם־תִּשְׁכְּבוּן בֵּין שְׁפָתָיִם	Im tishkevun bein shefatayim,
the dove's wings shimmer with silver,	כַּנְפֵי יוֹנָה נֶחְפָּה בַכֶּסֶף	kanfei yonah nechpah vakesef,
her feathers like glancing gold.[1]	וְאֶבְרוֹתֶיהָ בִּירַקְרַק חָרוּץ	ve'evroteha birakrak charutz.
[15] When *God* overcasts rulers with it*s plumage*,	בְּפָרֵשׂ שַׁדַּי מְלָכִים בָּהּ	Befares Shadai melachim bah,
they feel it's a blinding blizzard.[2]	תַּשְׁלֵג בְּצַלְמוֹן	tashleg betzalmon.
[16] Towering mountain, Mount Bashan,	הַר־אֱלֹהִים הַר־בָּשָׁן	Har Elohim, har Bashan,
jagged mountain, Mount Bashan—[3]	הַר גַּבְנֻנִּים הַר־בָּשָׁן	har gavnunim, har Bashan—
[17] Why glare in envy,[4] jagged mountains?	לָמָּה תִּרְצָדוּן הָרִים גַּבְנֻנִּים	Lamah teratzdun harim gavnunim?
The mountain God desired as a dwelling,	הָהָר חָמַד אֱלֹהִים לְשִׁבְתּוֹ	hahar chamad Elohim leshivto,
that's where God will reside forever.	אַף־יְהוָה יִשְׁכֹּן לָנֶצַח	af Adonai yishkon lanetzach.
[18] God's chariot force is myriads,	רֶכֶב אֱלֹהִים רִבֹּתַיִם	Rechev Elohim ribotayim,
thousands and thousands;	אַלְפֵי שִׁנְאָן	alfei shinan;
God *is* with them *as at* Sinai, in the holy	אֲדֹנָי בָּם סִינַי בַּקֹּדֶשׁ	Adonai vam Sinai, bakodesh.
place.[5]		

[1] "If/though/when you-lie/sleep among the-sheepfolds/animal-stalls (the King James says pots, but perhaps this is a typographical error for lots, meaning allotments, like the LXX's κλῆρος; however, Ibn Ezra mentions שפות הסיר, the rims [?] of a pot), / the-wings-of a-dove covered-with silver / and-its-pinions/feathers with-yellow/green gold." This could be a promise of wealth and love for the oppressed (sleep with the animals but dream of golden doves), or a vision of security and love (sleep with the sheep, not worried about predators, with visions of golden doves). We often think of doves as white (as, perhaps, in *Song of Songs* 5:12), but the dove/pigeon family includes birds with brilliant colored plumage, and even the plumage of a white dove can appear iridescent in the right light.

[2] "At-the-spreading-of the-Almighty *over* kings with-it / it-would-snow in-Tzalmon/as-shadow." The dove's gorgeous wings bring delight to some but blinding obscurity to powerful kings. Some think צַלְמוֹן is a place name, others think it's like a shadow of darkness. Verse 14 sees the dove's brilliant plumage; in this verse its wings obscure the light of day.

[3] Does the poet address these mountains? "Towering mountain" is literally "Mountain of God" or perhaps "Mountain of people with authority." Is the "Mountain of God" merely a towering, majestic peak like Hermon (situated in the ancient kingdom of Bashan), 9,232 feet above sea level and covered with snow in winter? Is the "jagged" mountain Mount Hermon, with three distinct peaks?

[4] תִּרְצָדוּן is from an otherwise unknown Hebrew root, רצד, but experts associate it with an Arabic word, to watch one's prey, so it implies enmity and perhaps envy. The high mountain of Bashan may be envious and resentful of the chosen, humble Mount Sinai or Temple Mount.

[5] Some think the chariot force consists of angels, since we have heard that God is escorted by myriads of "holy ones," that could be angels (Deut. 33:2). A myriad is (usually) 10,000, and רִבֹּתַיִם, a dual plural, implies twice as many. אַלְפֵי שִׁנְאָן could be "thousands of repetition," multiple thousands. If this is how you count, your math teacher may heave a despondent sigh.

[19] You ascended on high, captured prisoners,	עָלִיתָ לַמָּרוֹם שָׁבִיתָ שֶּׁבִי	Alita lamarom, shavita shevi,
took gifts from people,	לָקַחְתָּ מַתָּנוֹת בָּאָדָם	lakachta matanot ba'adam
even rebels,	וְאַף סוֹרְרִים	ve'af sorerim,
so that God would dwell *with them*.[1]	לִשְׁכֹּן יָהּ אֱלֹהִים	Lishkon Yah Elohim.
[20] Blessed is God	בָּרוּךְ אֲדֹנָי	Baruch Adonai
who sustains us each day,	יוֹם יוֹם יַעֲמָס־לָנוּ	yom yom ya'amos lanu,
the God of our salvation. Selah.[2]	הָאֵל יְשׁוּעָתֵנוּ סֶלָה	ha'El yeshu'atenu. Selah.
[21] God is our God of salvation,	הָאֵל לָנוּ אֵל לְמוֹשָׁעוֹת	Ha'El lanu El lemosha'ot,
and ruling God has a way to escape death.[3]	וְלַיהוִה אֲדֹנָי לַמָּוֶת תּוֹצָאוֹת	vele'Adonai, Adonai lamavet totza'ot.
[22] God will bash *God's* enemies' heads—	אַךְ־אֱלֹהִים יִמְחַץ רֹאשׁ אֹיְבָיו	Ach Elohim yimchatz rosh oyvav—
the hairy pate of one who walks in guilt.[4]	קָדְקֹד שְׂעַר מִתְהַלֵּךְ בַּאֲשָׁמָיו	kadkod se'ar mit'halech ba'ashamav.
[23] God said, "I'll go get *them* from Bashan,	אָמַר אֲדֹנָי מִבָּשָׁן אָשִׁיב	Amar Adonai, "MiBashan ashiv,
I'll go get *them* from the depths of the sea	אָשִׁיב מִמְּצֻלוֹת יָם	ashiv mimtzulot yam
[24] So you can splash through *their* blood,	לְמַעַן תִּמְחַץ רַגְלְךָ בְּדָם	Lema'an timchatz raglecha bedam,
so your dogs can slurp their enemy gore."[5]	לְשׁוֹן כְּלָבֶיךָ מֵאֹיְבִים מִנֶּהוּ	leshon kelavecha me'oyvim minehu."

[1] Some think this verse means that God won some battle, took captives (or captured captivity itself as an abstract noun, so let's toast a world of freedom), accepted tribute from the winners and ransom from the losing rebels, and finally dwelt with the people just as they always hoped. Others think the rebels didn't want God to dwell with them (too much of a constraint on baser instincts—you'd better watch your manners when God is watching you!). "You-ascended to-the-height, you-captured captivity/captives, you-took gifts among-humanity and-also/even those-who-turn-aside / to-dwell, God, God (the poet uses two different terms for God)."

[2] Sustain" could also be "burden," as if to say "God loads us [with blessings]." Or, "Blessed be God every day. If someone burdens us, God is our salvation."

[3] "The-God *is* for-us God for-salvations / and-to-God our-ruler *belong* relating-to-death ways-out (i.e., God has ways to escape death)." וְלַיהוִה is not the standard way to add vowels to God's four-letter name.

[4] "But-surely God will-bash the-head-of *God's*-enemies / the-crown/pate-of hair-of one-who-walks-around in-his-guilt."

[5] "So-that you-will-bash/splash your-feet in-blood, / the-tongue-of your-dogs from-your-enemies, from-them." מִנֶּהוּ may mean "from them," but some translate it as "their portion of food"—the dogs slurp the enemy gore for a snack.

[25] *People* have seen your *victory* parades, God, my sovereign God's processions to holiness.[1]	רָאוּ הֲלִיכוֹתֶיךָ אֱלֹהִים הֲלִיכוֹת אֵלִי מַלְכִּי בַקֹּדֶשׁ	Ra'u halichotecha, Elohim, halichot Eli malki vakodesh!
[26] Singers went first, musicians followed, among girls with timbrels.[2] *They sang:*	קִדְּמוּ שָׂרִים אַחַר נוֹגְנִים בְּתוֹךְ עֲלָמוֹת תֻּפֵּפוֹת	Kidmu sharim, achar nognim, betoch alamot tofefot.
[27] "Bless God in *your* gatherings—God, the source of Israel!"	בְּמַקְהֲלוֹת בָּרְכוּ אֱלֹהִים יְהוָה מִמְקוֹר יִשְׂרָאֵל	"Bemak'helot bar'chu Elohim Adonai, mimkor Yisra'el.
[28] "There is young Benjamin ruling them, leaders of Judah commanding them, leaders of Zebulun and leaders of Naftali.	שָׁם בִּנְיָמִן צָעִיר רֹדֵם שָׂרֵי יְהוּדָה רִגְמָתָם שָׂרֵי זְבֻלוּן שָׂרֵי נַפְתָּלִי	"Sham Binyamin tza'ir rodem, sarei Yehudah rigmatam,, sarei Zevulun, sarei Naftali.
[29] "Your God ordered strength for you—strengthen, God, this that you did for us.	צַוָּה אֱלֹהֶיךָ עֻזֶּךָ עוּזָּה אֱלֹהִים זוּ פָּעַלְתָּ לָּנוּ	"Tzivah Elohecha uzecha— uzah, Elohim, zu pa'alta lanu.
[30] "For your sanctuary at Jerusalem rulers will bring you tribute."[3]	מֵהֵיכָלְךָ עַל־יְרוּשָׁלִָם לְךָ יוֹבִילוּ מְלָכִים שָׁי	"Mehechalecha al Yerushala'im lecha yovilu melachim shai."

[1] Maybe these are processions to the Temple—built after David's time, but he wanted to build that structure and could have imagined (or prophetically envisioned) processions toward it. If not, then this psalm could be by someone other than David, in tribute to his poetic power. "They-have-seen your-marches/parades/processions, God, / processions-of my-God, my-ruler, to-the-holiness/holy-place."

[2] The "girls" could be unmarried or recently married; "timbrels" are hand-held drums, like tambourines but without the jingling metal disks. The anthropologist with fertile imagination will no doubt have more to add.

[3] מֵהֵיכָלְךָ could mean "from your Temple"; the prefix מ often implies direction, but it could also mean "on account of your Temple/sanctuary/palace." עַל־יְרוּשָׁלִָם could mean "above Jerusalem," referring to a heavenly structure hovering above the earthly city.

[31] Rebuke the swamp creature,	גְּעַר חַיַּת קָנֶה	Ge'ar chayat kaneh,
that mighty force among people's cattle	עֲדַת אֲבִירִים בְּעֶגְלֵי עַמִּים	adat abirim be'eglei amim
running amok among silver coins.	מִתְרַפֵּס בִּרְצֵי־כָסֶף	mitrapess beratzei chasef.
Scatter the peoples who love battle![1]	בִּזַּר עַמִּים קְרָבוֹת יֶחְפָּצוּ	Bizar amim keravot yechpatzu.
[32] Generals will come from Egypt;	יֵאֱתָיוּ חַשְׁמַנִּים מִנִּי מִצְרָיִם	Ye'etayu chashmanim mini Mitzrayim;
Ethiopia will hurry to ally with God.[2]	כּוּשׁ תָּרִיץ יָדָיו לֵאלֹהִים	Kush taritz yadav lElohim.
[33] Earthly realms, sing to God,	מַמְלְכוֹת הָאָרֶץ שִׁירוּ לֵאלֹהִים	Mamlechot ha'aretz, shiru lElohim,
make music *to* our sovereign (selah),	זַמְּרוּ אֲדֹנָי סֶלָה	zamru Adonai (selah)
[34] To *God* who rides the ancient sky	לָרֹכֵב בִּשְׁמֵי שְׁמֵי־קֶדֶם	Larochev bishmei shemei kedem;
and speaks with mighty thunder.[3]	הֵן יִתֵּן בְּקוֹלוֹ קוֹל עֹז	hen yiten bekolo kol oz.
[35] Grant that God is mighty,[4]	תְּנוּ עֹז לֵאלֹהִים	Tenu oz lElohim;
whose majesty is over Israel	עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל גַּאֲוָתוֹ	al Yisra'el ga'avato,
and whose power is in the clouds;	וְעֻזּוֹ בַּשְּׁחָקִים	ve'uzo bash'chakim
God, no building can match your splendor.[5]	נוֹרָא אֱלֹהִים מִמִּקְדָּשֶׁיךָ	nora Elohim mimikdashecha;
[36] It's Israel's God,	אֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא	El Yisra'el hu,
who grants power and strength to the people.	נֹתֵן עֹז וְתַעֲצֻמוֹת לָעָם	noten oz veta'atzumot la'am.
Blessed is God!	בָּרוּךְ אֱלֹהִים	Baruch Elohim!

[1] I think there's an image of some horrible swamp creature (the id clambers out of its sewer) gone wild among the beasts for sacrifice in the (future) Temple, which are valued in silver coin. The poet asks God to keep that creature under control, and do the same for people who love the violence of war. "Rebuke the-wild-beast-of the-reed-*marsh*, / the-congregation-of powerful-ones among-the-calves-of the-people, / which-tramples among-bits-of silver; / scatter peoples *who* military-confrontations desire." Others translate more like this: "Rebuke the company of spear-carrying warriors (the "reed troop," seeing a reed as a little spear and חיה as a company of people, as in verse 11), the herd (congregation) of bulls (mighty creatures) among the calves of the people, which (referring to the herd of bulls) submits itself (gets itself trodden) with bits of silver. Scatter peoples who battle-fronts (or perhaps some other close encounter) desire."

[2] "They-will-come, leaders from Egypt; / Ethiopia (Cush) will-hurry its-hands/powers to/for-God." חַשְׁמַנִּים seems to mean some kind of leader, and today the Catholic church in Israel uses this word for a cardinal.

[3] "*Make music* to-the-one-who-rides in-the-skies-of the-skies-of-old (or of-the-East); / look, *God*-gives through-*God's*-voice/sound a-sound-of power."

[4] "Grant might to God."

[5] "God is (or God: you are) more awesome than your holy places" or "God is awesome from your holy places." I prefer the first interpretation, where the psalmist says that the sense of awe we feel where we hold religious services is a poor shadow of the awe that God deserves. The second interpretation implies that holy places are a source of God's awesomeness.

Psalm 69

[1] For the leader, on "Lilies,"[1] by David.	לַמְנַצֵּחַ עַל־שֹׁושַׁנִּים לְדָוִד	Lamnatze'ach al shoshanim leDavid.
[2] Save me, God, *I'm overwhelmed:*	הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי אֱלֹהִים	Hoshi'eni Elohim
the water's up above my head.[2]	כִּי בָאוּ מַיִם עַד־נָפֶשׁ	ki va'u mayim ad nafesh.
[3] Deep in the mire, no place to stand,	טָבַעְתִּי בִּיוֵן מְצוּלָה וְאֵין מָעֳמָד	Tavati biven metzula v'ein ma'omad.
I'm plunged into	בָּאתִי בְמַעֲמַקֵּי־מָיִם	Bati vema'amakei mayim
the surging flood.[3]	וְשִׁבֹּלֶת שְׁטָפַתְנִי	veshibolet shetafatni.
[4] My voice is gone, my throat is sore,	יָגַעְתִּי בְקָרְאִי נִחַר גְּרוֹנִי	Yagati vekori, nichar geroni,
my tears are spent, waiting for God.[4]	כָּלוּ עֵינַי מְיַחֵל לֵאלֹהָי	kalu einai, meyachel lElohai.
[5] Packed tighter than hair on my head,	רַבּוּ מִשַּׂעֲרוֹת רֹאשִׁי	Rabu misa'arot roshi
these enemies whom I've never harmed	שֹׂנְאַי חִנָּם	sonai chinom;
gather their power to see me dead;	עָצְמוּ מַצְמִיתַי	atzmu matzmitai,
with vicious falsehoods they are armed.	אֹיְבַי שֶׁקֶר	oyvai sheker.
They call me thief, and what I earn	אֲשֶׁר לֹא־גָזָלְתִּי	Asher lo gazalti,
they would compel me to return![5]	אָז אָשִׁיב	az ashiv?
[6] God, you know my foolishness,	אֱלֹהִים אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ לְאִוַּלְתִּי	Elohim, atah yadata le'ivalti,
from you my sins are not concealed.	וְאַשְׁמוֹתַי מִמְּךָ לֹא־נִכְחָדוּ	ve'ashmotai mim'cha lo nich'chadu.
[7] Don't let disgrace shame *us,* who trust	אַל־יֵבֹשׁוּ בִי קֹוֶיךָ	Al yevoshu vi kovecha,
you, Sovereign God, *to be our shield.*[6]	אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה צְבָאוֹת	Adonai Elohim tzeva'ot;

[1] Perhaps lilies (or roses) is an instrument, or a style of music, or a familiar tune.

[2] "Save-me, God, / for they-have-arrived, waters, up-to *my*-life/soul (to the point where my life is in danger, over my head)."

[3] "I-have-immersed in-clay/muck depths and-there-is-no foothold; / I-have-come into-depths-of water / and-a-gathering-of-streams has-flowed-over-me." שִׁבֹּלֶת often means a sheaf (a collection of stalks of grain) but here instead of stalks we may think of water-channels.

[4] "I-am-exhausted in-my-calling, has-grown-sore my-throat, / spent-are my-eyes *from tears,* waiting-for my-God."

[5] "They-outnumber the-hairs-on my-head / those-who-hate-me without-cause. / They-have-become-powerful, those-who-wish-to-see-me-dead, / my-enemies-of falsehood. / That-which not I-stole, *even* so, I-am-to-return-*it?"* The question at the end of the verse is indignant.

[6] "Let-them-not-be-ashamed through-me, those-who-hope-in-you, / Ruler, God of-hosts." Hosts could mean hosts of angels, hosts of military troops, or both.

To those who seek you—Israel's God—	אַל־יִכָּלְמוּ בִי מְבַקְשֶׁיךָ	al yikolmu vi mevakshecha,
let not my errors bring disgrace.[1]	אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל	Elohei Yisra'el.
[8] Though I've worn shame on your behalf	כִּי־עָלֶיךָ נָשָׂאתִי חֶרְפָּה	Ki alecha nasati cherpah,
and been abashed with blushing face.[2]	כִּסְּתָה כְלִמָּה פָּנָי	kistah chelimah fanai.
[9] I'm now a stranger to my kin—	מוּזָר הָיִיתִי לְאֶחָי	Muzar hayiti le'echai
my own siblings won't take me in.[3]	וְנָכְרִי לִבְנֵי אִמִּי	venochri livnei imi.
[10] Zeal for your people has consumed me,	כִּי־קִנְאַת בֵּיתְךָ אֲכָלָתְנִי	Ki kinat beit'cha achalatni
and reproaches of people who blame you	וְחֶרְפּוֹת חוֹרְפֶיךָ	vecherpot chorfecha
have come down upon me.[4]	נָפְלוּ עָלָי	naflu alai.
[11] I wept and fasted to repent,	וָאֶבְכֶּה בַצּוֹם נַפְשִׁי	Va'evkeh vatzom nafshi,
got blame instead of sympathy.[5]	וַתְּהִי לַחֲרָפוֹת לִי	vat'hi lacharafot li.
[12] Rough sack-cloth were the clothes I wore,	וָאֶתְנָה לְבוּשִׁי שָׂק	Va'etnah levushi sak
but they laughed at me all the more.[6]	וָאֱהִי לָהֶם לְמָשָׁל	va'ehi lahem lemashal.
[13] Idlers told lies about my wrongs	יָשִׂיחוּ בִי יֹשְׁבֵי שָׁעַר	Yasichu vi yoshvei sha'ar,
while boozers roared sarcastic songs.[7]	וּנְגִינוֹת שׁוֹתֵי שֵׁכָר	uneginot shotei shechar.
[14] But let my prayer to you, O God,	וַאֲנִי תְפִלָּתִי־לְךָ יְהוָה	Va'ani, tefilati lecha Adonai
in welcome moment *come to you*;	עֵת רָצוֹן	et ratzon.
In your abundant kindness, God,	אֱלֹהִים בְּרָב־חַסְדֶּךָ	Elohim, berov chasdecha
answer me with salvation true.[8]	עֲנֵנִי בֶּאֱמֶת יִשְׁעֶךָ	aneni be'emet yishecha.

[1] "Let-them-not-be-shamed through-me, those-who-seek-you, / God of Israel."
[2] "For on-you*r-behalf* I-have-borne shame, / has-covered embarrassment my-face."
[3] "Alienated have-I-become to-my-brothers / and-a-stranger/unbeliever to-the-children-of my-mother."
[4] "For zeal-for your-house/community has-consumed-me / and-reproaches-of those-who-reproach-you have-fallen upon-me."
[5] "And-I-wept during-the-fast-of my-self, / and-this-was for-reproaches to-me."
[6] "And-I-provided my-clothing sackcloth, / and-I-became to-them an-example (something to point at and blame or ridicule)."
[7] "They-conversed about-me, those-who-sit-at the-*city*-gate (i.e., the idlers and rumormongers) / and *I was the theme of* taunting-songs *by* drinkers-of liquor."
[8] "And-as-for-me, *may* my-prayer to-you, God, / *be at* a-time acceptable. / God, in-the-abundance-of your-compassion, / answer-me in-the-truth-of your-salvation."

[15] Let me not sink deep in the mud	הַצִּילֵנִי מִטִּיט וְאַל־אֶטְבָּעָה	Hatzileni mitit, ve'al etba'ah;
but save me from my enemies,	אִנָּצְלָה מִשֹּׂנְאָי	inatzlah misonai
from drowning in the surging seas.	וּמִמַּעֲמַקֵּי־מָיִם	umima'amakei mayim.
[16] Let me not drown in raging flood,	אַל־תִּשְׁטְפֵנִי שִׁבֹּלֶת מַיִם	Al tishtefeini shibolet mayim,
let no deep chasm's yawning maw	וְאַל־תִּבְלָעֵנִי מְצוּלָה	ve'al tivla'eni metzulah,
gulp me down and shut its door.[1]	וְאַל־תֶּאְטַר־עָלַי בְּאֵר פִּיהָ	ve'al tetar alai be'er piha.
[17] In your great kindness, God, reply,	עֲנֵנִי יהוה כִּי־טוֹב חַסְדֶּךָ	Aneni, Adonai, ki tov chasdecha;
in your great mercy turn toward me.[2]	כְּרֹב רַחֲמֶיךָ פְּנֵה אֵלָי	kerov rachamecha peneh alai.
[18] From me your servant, do not flee,	וְאַל־תַּסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ מֵעַבְדֶּךָ	Ve'al taster panecha me'avdecha
but quick! calm my anxiety![3]	כִּי־צַר־לִי מַהֵר עֲנֵנִי	ki tzar li; maher, aneni!
[19] Come close to me and bring relief,	קָרְבָה אֶל־נַפְשִׁי גְאָלָהּ	Korvah el nafshi ge'alah;
deliver me from all my grief.[4]	לְמַעַן אֹיְבַי פְּדֵנִי	lema'an oyvai pedeni.
[20] You know	אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ	Atah yadata
my shame, my disgrace and my humiliation.	חֶרְפָּתִי וּבָשְׁתִּי וּכְלִמָּתִי	cherpati uvashti uchelimati.
All my troubles are *disclosed* before you.[5]	נֶגְדְּךָ כָּל־צוֹרְרָי	Negdecha kol tzorerai.
[21] Shame has broken my heart: I'm in despair.	חֶרְפָּה שָׁבְרָה לִבִּי וָאָנוּשָׁה	Charpah shavrah libi, va'anusha.
I hoped for compassion:[6] there was none,	וָאֲקַוֶּה לָנוּד וָאָיִן	Va'akaveh lanud va'ayin,
hoped for comfort but found none.	וְלַמְנַחֲמִים וְלֹא מָצָאתִי	velamnachamim velo matzati.

[1] "Let-not-flow-over-me the-confluence-of waters (verse 3 also uses שִׁבֹּלֶת) / and-let-not-swallow-me depths / and-let-not-close upon-me the-pit its-mouth."
[2] "Answer-me, God, for/in-that good/abundant *are* your-kindnesses; / according-to-the-abundance-of your-mercies, face toward-me."
[3] "And-do-not-hide your-face from-your-servant / when/for it's-difficult for-me; hurry answer-me."
[4] "Come-close to my-self, redeem *it; /* because-of my-foes deliver-me."
[5] "You have-come-to-know / my-shame and-my-disgrace and-my-humiliation. / Before-you *are* all my-troubles."
[6] "לָנוּד / lanud" connotes motion and emotion.

[22] They fed me rot for sustenance	וַיִּתְּנוּ בְּבָרוּתִי רֹאשׁ	Vayitnu bevaruti rosh
and vinegar my thirst to quench.[1]	וְלִצְמָאִי יַשְׁקוּנִי חֹמֶץ	velitzma'i yashkeni chometz.
[23] Let them be poisoned at their meal	יְהִי־שֻׁלְחָנָם לִפְנֵיהֶם לְפָח	Yehi shulchanam lifneihem lefach
their healthy choice a toxic stench.[2]	וְלִשְׁלוֹמִים לְמוֹקֵשׁ	velishlomim lemokesh.
[24] Let their eyes fail and see all dim	תֶּחְשַׁכְנָה עֵינֵיהֶם מֵרְאוֹת	Techshachna eineihem merot
let tremors shake their every limb.[3]	וּמָתְנֵיהֶם תָּמִיד הַמְעַד	umotneihem tamid ham'ad.
[25] Pour down your anger over them,	שְׁפָךְ־עֲלֵיהֶם זַעְמֶךָ	Shefoch aleihem za'amecha,
with burning fury chase them down.[4]	וַחֲרוֹן אַפְּךָ יַשִּׂיגֵם	vacharon ap'cha yasigem.
[26] Let their fine houses be laid waste	תְּהִי־טִירָתָם נְשַׁמָּה	Tehi tiratam neshamah;
and desolate their once-thriving towns,[5]	בְּאָהֳלֵיהֶם אַל־יְהִי יוֹשֵׁב	be'oholeihem al yehi yoshev.
[27] For they hunt *us* whom you rebuked,	כִּי־אַתָּה אֲשֶׁר־הִכִּיתָ רָדָפוּ	Ki atah asher hikita radafu
worsen the wound made by your thrust.	וְאֶל־מַכְאוֹב חֲלָלֶיךָ יְסַפֵּרוּ	ve'el machov chalalecha yesaperu.
[28] Let them add sin upon their sin	תְּנָה־עָוֹן עַל־עֲוֹנָם	Tenah avon al avonam,
and never stand among the just.[6]	וְאַל־יָבֹאוּ בְּצִדְקָתֶךָ	ve'al yavo'u betzidkatecha.
[29] Cull them from your righteous throng	יִמָּחוּ מִסֵּפֶר חַיִּים	Yimachu misefer chayim,
for saints with sinners don't belong.[7]	וְעִם צַדִּיקִים אַל־יִכָּתֵבוּ	ve'im tzadikim al yikatevu.

[1] "And-they-gave *what should have been sustenance* for-my-health poison / and-for-my-thirsting they-gave-me-to-drink vinegar"—they gave me poison instead of healthy food and vinegar for my thirst.
[2] "Let-it-be, their-table before-them, a-trap / and-for-their-health/wholeness as-a-snare"; i.e., may the food they eat for their health poison them.
[3] "May-they-get-dark, their-eyes, from-seeing / and-their-loins forever totter/shake."
[4] "Pour-out upon-them your-wrath / and-the-anger-of your-*firebreathing*-nostril, let-it-overtake-them."
[5] "Let-it-be, their-fenced-*community,* laid-waste; / in-their-dwellings/communities let-there-not-be a-dweller."
[6] "Add sin upon their-sin / and let-them-not-come into-your-righteousness."
[7] "Let-them-be-blotted-out from-your-roll/scroll-of-living / and with righteous-people do-not-inscribe-*them*."

[30] But me—I'm poor and hurting;	וַאֲנִי עָנִי וְכוֹאֵב	Va'ani ani vecho'ev;
your salvation, God, will raise me high.[1]	יְשׁוּעָתְךָ אֱלֹהִים תְּשַׂגְּבֵנִי	yeshu'at'cha, Elohim, tesagveni.
[31] I'll sing praise to hail God's reputation	אֲהַלְלָה שֵׁם־אֱלֹהִים בְּשִׁיר	Ahalelah shem Elohim beshir,
and extol *God* with thanks.	וַאֲגַדְּלֶנּוּ בְתוֹדָה	va'agadlenu vetodah.
[32] To God, *thanks* is *a* fitter *offering*	וְתִיטַב לַיהוה	Vetitav lAdonai
than a bull with horns and split hooves.[2]	מִשּׁוֹר פָּר מַקְרִן מַפְרִיס	mishor par makrin mafris.
[33] The humble see, God's seekers cheer,	רָאוּ עֲנָוִים יִשְׂמָחוּ דֹרְשֵׁי אֱלֹהִים	Ra'u anavim, yismachu dorshei Elohim
their hearts revive *as hopes return*[3]	וִיחִי לְבַבְכֶם	vichi levav'chem
[34] When God the needy deigns to hear,	כִּי־שֹׁמֵעַ אֶל־אֶבְיוֹנִים יהוה	Ki shome'ah el evyonim Adonai
the captive*'s prayer* doesn't spurn.[4]	וְאֶת־אֲסִירָיו לֹא בָזָה	ve'et asirav lo vazah.
[35] Sky and land will honor *God,*	יְהַלְלוּהוּ שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ	Yehaleluhu shamayim va'aretz,
with teeming creatures of the sea,[5]	יַמִּים וְכָל־רוֹמֵשׂ בָּם	yamim vechol romess bam,
[36] When Zion God from ruin spares	כִּי אֱלֹהִים יוֹשִׁיעַ צִיּוֹן	Ki Elohim yoshi'a Tziyon
and Judah's ravaged towns repairs	וְיִבְנֶה עָרֵי יְהוּדָה	veyivneh arei Yehudah,
for us to grant to future heirs.[6]	וְיָשְׁבוּ שָׁם וִירֵשׁוּהָ	veyashvu sham vireshuha.
[37] For God's true servants, a bequest	וְזֶרַע עֲבָדָיו יִנְחָלוּהָ	Vezera avadav yinchaluha,
to pass to generations blessed.[7]	וְאֹהֲבֵי שְׁמוֹ יִשְׁכְּנוּ־בָהּ	ve'ohavei shemo yishkenu vah.

[1] "And-I *am* poor and-aching, / your-salvation, God, will-support-me."

[2] "Than-an-ox-bovine producing-horns and-producing-split-hooves." The root of מַפְרִיס, פרס, implies both split and hoof (and maybe Persia, too!); Lev. 11:3 uses the phrase מַפְרֶסֶת פַּרְסָה, "which splits the hoof." שׁוֹר פָּר, "ox-bovine" is an idiom similar to Iliad 17:389, where Homer speaks of people tanning the hide of a bull-cow: ταύροιο βοὸς … βοείην. Created head first (horns before hooves) and fully mature (שׁוֹר is a newborn ox, פָּר is a mature three-year old), this must have been the first bull created; we have a tradition that Adam sacrificed it in gratitude when days started to get longer after the winter solstice (BT Avodah Zarah 8a).

[3] "They-have-seen, the-lowly-*people*; they-would-rejoice, those-who-seek God, / and-it-would-revive, their-heart."

[4] "That/for/when listens to-poor-people God, / and-those-who-are-bound-to/for-*God*, not has-*God*-spurned."

[5] "They-will/would-hail-*God,* sky and-land, / seas and-all-that-crawls in-them."

[6] "When/for God will-save Zion / and-will-build the-towns-of Judah / and-they-will-dwell there and-will-possess-it."

[7] "And-the-seed/offspring-of *God's*-servants will-inherit-it / and-those-who-cherish *God's*-reputation/name will-dwell-in-it."

Psalm 70

[1] For the leader, for David, to keep minutes.[1]	לַמְנַצֵּחַ לְדָוִד לְהַזְכִּיר	Lamnatze'ach leDavid, lehazkir.
[2] O God, come quickly, rescue me	אֱלֹהִים לְהַצִּילֵנִי	Elohim lehatzileni,
O God, help me, and don't delay![2]	יהוה לְעֶזְרָתִי חוּשָׁה	Adonai, le'ezrati—chushah!
[3] Bring mortifying shame upon	יֵבֹשׁוּ וְיַחְפְּרוּ	Yevoshu veyachperu
those who would take my life away—	מְבַקְשֵׁי נַפְשִׁי	mevakshei nafshi;
their only wish is for my harm—	יִסֹּגוּ אָחוֹר וְיִכָּלְמוּ	yisogu achor veyikolmu
God, send them packing in dismay.[3]	חֲפֵצֵי רָעָתִי	chafetzei ra'ati.
[4] They point at me; "It's him," they say—	יָשׁוּבוּ עַל־עֵקֶב בָּשְׁתָּם	Yashuvu al ekev bashtam,
embarrass them in the same way![4]	הָאֹמְרִים הֶאָח הֶאָח	ha'omrim, "He'ah, he'ah!"
[5] But bring good cheer and joy to those	יָשִׂישׂוּ וְיִשְׂמְחוּ בְךָ	Yasisu veyismechu becha
who take the path that leads to you	כָּל־מְבַקְשֶׁיךָ	kol mevakshecha;
who always state, "Our God is great,"	וְיֹאמְרוּ תָמִיד יִגְדַּל אֱלֹהִים	veyomru, "Tamid yigdal Elohim,"
and ache with love for your rescue.[5]	אֹהֲבֵי יְשׁוּעָתֶךָ	ohavei yeshu'atecha.
[6] I'm destitute and penniless.	וַאֲנִי עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן	Va'ani ani ve'evyon.
God, hurry, here with me to stay.	אֱלֹהִים חוּשָׁה־לִּי	Elohim, chushah li;
You are my help, my rescuer	עֶזְרִי וּמְפַלְטִי אַתָּה	ezri umefalti atah.
God, *save me now,* and don't delay![6]	יהוה אַל־תְּאַחַר	Adonai, al te'achar!

[1] לְהַזְכִּיר is the role of a מַזְכִּיר, the secretary who keeps meeting minutes, an official record that's a treasure trove for those who seek historical trivia. Had Ahasuerus not kept an official diary, Haman would have prevailed.

[2] "God, to-rescue-me, / God, to-my-aid, hurry."

[3] "Let-them-feel-shame and-let-them-feel-mortification/embarrassment, / those-who-seek *to destroy* my-life/self; / let-them-retreat back and-let-them-feel-shame, / those-who-are-desirous-of harm-for-me." The translation switches the order of lines three and four of this verse.

[4] The translation switches the order of lines in this verse: "Let-them-return on-the-heel their-embarrassment, / those-who-say, 'Hey, hey!'"; i.e., let the humiliation they cause me by pointing at me and saying, "Ha, ha, *look at the jerk,"* come back to them! עַל־עֵקֶב implies a sharp turn, like the shape of a heel, and in this case it seems to mean that the shame should come directly back upon those who try to dispense shame.

[5] "Let-them-rejoice and-let-them-be-happy with/in-you / all-those-who-seek-you, / and-let-them-say always "Let-be-magnified God," / those-who-love your-salvation."

[6] "And-I *am* poor and needy; / God, hurry-to-me; / my-help and-my-rescuer *are* you; / God, don't-delay."

Psalm 71

[1] With you, God, I have found shelter;	בְּךָ־יהוה חָסִיתִי	Becha, Adonai, chasiti;
let me never feel shame.	אַל־אֵבוֹשָׁה לְעוֹלָם	al evoshah le'olam.
[2] In your righteousness save and rescue me;	בְּצִדְקָתְךָ תַּצִּילֵנִי וּתְפַלְּטֵנִי	Betzidkat'cha tatzileni utefalteni;
listen to me, and save me.	הַטֵּה־אֵלַי אָזְנְךָ וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנִי	hateh elai oznecha, vehoshi'eni.
[3] Be my mountain refuge	הֱיֵה לִי לְצוּר מָעוֹן	Heyeh li letzur ma'on
where I can always go;	לָבוֹא תָּמִיד	lavo tamid;
you have decreed that I be saved,	צִוִּיתָ לְהוֹשִׁיעֵנִי	tziviti lehoshi'eni,
for you are my rock, my fortress.	כִּי־סַלְעִי וּמְצוּדָתִי אָתָּה	ki sali umetzudati atah.
[4] My God, save me from the power of evil,	אֱלֹהַי פַּלְּטֵנִי מִיַּד רָשָׁע	Elohai, palteni miyad rasha,
from the grasp of the wicked and cruel,[1]	מִכַּף מְעַוֵּל וְחוֹמֵץ	mikaf me'avel vechometz,
[5] For you are my hope, ruling God,	כִּי־אַתָּה תִקְוָתִי אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה	Ki atah tikvati, Adonai Elohim,
whom I have trusted since I was young.	מִבְטַחִי מִנְּעוּרָי	mivtachi mine'urai.
[6] I have relied on you since the womb;	עָלֶיךָ נִסְמַכְתִּי מִבֶּטֶן	Alecha nismachti mibeten,
you drew me out of[2] my mother's belly;	מִמְּעֵי אִמִּי אַתָּה גוֹזִי	mime'ei imi atah gozi;
you are the constant object of my praise.	בְּךָ תְהִלָּתִי תָמִיד	becha tehilati tamid.
[7] I was an example[3] for many	כְּמוֹפֵת הָיִיתִי לָרַבִּים	Kemofet hayiti lerabim,
as you were my strong refuge.	וְאַתָּה מַחְסִי־עֹז	ve'atah machasi oz.
[8] My mouth was filled with your praise—	יִמָּלֵא פִי תְהִלָּתֶךָ	Yimaleh fi tehilatecha,
all day—your glory.	כָּל־הַיּוֹם תִּפְאַרְתֶּךָ	kol hayom tif'artecha.
[9] Don't discard me when I'm old	אַל־תַּשְׁלִיכֵנִי לְעֵת זִקְנָה	Al tashlicheni le'et ziknah;
nor abandon me when my strength is gone.	כִּכְלוֹת כֹּחִי אַל־תַּעַזְבֵנִי	kichlot kochi al ta'azveni.

[1] Of course, the root of וְחוֹמֵץ is חמץ—sour like vinegar or fermented like bread dough that we avoid on Pesach. Some think dough that has risen may symbolize an inflated ego, so Pesach is a time for humility.

[2] גּוֹזִי (root גָּזָה) connotes cut (as a mason cuts and forms stone), divide, shear.

[3] An example—a conspicuous example either of pride or of shame. Alternatively, גּוֹזִי in the previous verse means "the one who cut me out," perhaps referring to cutting the umbilical cord, or to delivery by Cesarian Section, which could make the poet a wonder or מוֹפֵת. Cesarian sections may have been performed in ancient times.

[10] For my enemies have spoken out against me,	כִּי־אָמְרוּ אוֹיְבַי לִי	Ki amru oyvai li,
and my own guards[1] have conspired with them[2]	וְשֹׁמְרֵי נַפְשִׁי נוֹעֲצוּ יַחְדָּו	veshomrei nafshi no'atzu yachdav,
[11] To say, "God has abandoned him;	לֵאמֹר אֱלֹהִים עֲזָבוֹ	Lemor, "Elohim azavo;
hunt him, catch him—no-one can save *him."*	רִדְפוּ וְתִפְשׂוּהוּ כִּי־אֵין מַצִּיל	ridfu vetifsuhu, ki ein matzil."
[12] God, don't distance yourself from me;	אֱלֹהִים אַל־תִּרְחַק מִמֶּנִּי	Elohim, al tir'chak mimeni,
God, hurry to help me.	אֱלֹהַי לְעֶזְרָתִי חוּשָׁה[3]	Elohai, le'ezrati chushah.
[13] May those who hate me perish in shame;	יֵבֹשׁוּ יִכְלוּ שֹׂטְנֵי נַפְשִׁי	Yevoshu, yichlu, sotnei nafshi;
may they be covered in shame and disgrace,	יַעֲטוּ חֶרְפָּה וּכְלִמָּה	ya'atu cherpah uchelimah,
those who seek my ruin,	מְבַקְשֵׁי רָעָתִי	mevakshei ra'ati,
[14] While I will hope forever	וַאֲנִי תָּמִיד אְיַחֵל	Va'ni tamid ayachel
and add to all your praises.	וְהוֹסַפְתִּי עַל־כָּל־תְּהִלָּתֶךָ	vehosafti al kol tehilatecha.
[15] I will recount your righteousness,	פִּי יְסַפֵּר צִדְקָתֶךָ	Pi yesaper tzidkatecha,
all day your rescue,	כָּל־הַיּוֹם תְּשׁוּעָתֶךָ	kol hayom teshu'atecha,
though it's too much for me to tell.[4]	כִּי לֹא יָדַעְתִּי סְפֹרוֹת	ki lo yadati seforot.
[16] I come with the power of *my* ruling God,	אָבוֹא בִּגְבֻרוֹת אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה	Avo bigvurot Adonai Elohim,
to recall your righteousness, yours alone.	אַזְכִּיר צִדְקָתְךָ לְבַדֶּךָ	azkir tzidkat'cha levadecha.
[17] God, you have taught me since my youth,	אֱלֹהִים לִמַּדְתַּנִי מִנְּעוּרָי	Elohim limadtani min'urai
up to now, *so* I retell your wonders.	וְעַד־הֵנָּה אַגִּיד נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ	ve'ad henah; agid nifle'otecha.
[18] Even when old and elderly,	וְגַם עַד־זִקְנָה וְשֵׂיבָה	Vegam ad ziknah vesevah,
God, don't leave me	אֱלֹהִים אַל־תַּעַזְבֵנִי	Elohim al ta'azveni
until I can proclaim your power to people today[5]	עַד־אַגִּיד זְרוֹעֲךָ לְדוֹר	ad agid zero'acha ledor
and your might for all who are to come.	לְכָל־יָבוֹא גְּבוּרָתֶךָ	lechol yavo gevuratecha.

[1] "And the watchers of my self"; this may refer to the poet's security guards or those who watch for the poet's destruction.

[2] "For-they-have-spoken, my-enemies, to/at/against-me / and-the-guards-of my-self/life have-plotted together"; i.e., my enemies have accused me, and those who should guard my life (or those who are just waiting for me do die!) have colluded together *with my enemies.*

[3] A manuscript would have חישה instead of חוּשָׁה.

[4] "For/though not have-I-come-to-know tellings."

[5] "To people today" is literally "to a generation," i.e., the current generation of people.

[19] Your righteousness, God, is ultimate;	וְצִדְקָתְךָ אֱלֹהִים עַד־מָרוֹם	Vetzidkat'cha Elohim ad marom;
you have performed great deeds;	אֲשֶׁר־עָשִׂיתָ גְדֻלוֹת	asher asita gedolot;
God, who is like you—	אֱלֹהִים מִי כָמוֹךָ	Elohim, mi chamocha—
[20] Who made me aware of	אֲשֶׁר הִרְאִיתַנִי[1]	Asher hiritani
many sore trials	צָרוֹת רַבּוֹת וְרָעוֹת	tzarot rabot vera'ot;
but you will return to revive me	תָּשׁוּב תְּחַיֵּינִי[2]	tashuv techayeini
and raise me from the depths of the earth.	וּמִתְּהֹמוֹת הָאָרֶץ תָּשׁוּב תַּעֲלֵנִי	umitehomot ha'aretz tashuv ta'aleni.
[21] You will enlarge my greatness	תֶּרֶב גְּדֻלָּתִי	Terev gedulati
and turn to comfort me.	וְתִסֹּב תְּנַחֲמֵנִי	vetisov tenachameni.
[22] I too will thank you with a lyre—	גַּם־אֲנִי אוֹדְךָ בִכְלִי־נֵבֶל	Gam ani od'cha vichli nevel—
of your truth, God, I shall sing to you	אֲמִתְּךָ אֱלֹהָי אֲזַמְּרָה לָךְ	amit'cha, Elohai, azamra lecha
with a harp, O holy one of Israel.	בְּכִנּוֹר קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל	vechinor, kedosh Yisra'el.
[23] My lips will rejoice as I sing to you,	תְּרַנֵּנָה שְׂפָתַי כִּי אֲזַמְּרָה־לָּךְ	Teranenah sefatai ki azamra lach,
and my whole self, which you have saved.	וְנַפְשִׁי אֲשֶׁר פָּדִיתָ	venafshi asher padita.
[24] My tongue, too, all day	גַּם־לְשׁוֹנִי כָּל־הַיּוֹם	Gam leshoni kol hayom
will dwell on your righteousness,	תֶּהְגֶּה צִדְקָתֶךָ	teh'geh tzidkatecha,
while shamed and embarrassed are	כִּי־בֹשׁוּ כִי־חָפְרוּ	ki voshu chi chafru
those who wish evil for me.	מְבַקְשֵׁי רָעָתִי	mevakshei ra'ati.

[1] A manuscript would have הראיתנו ("showed US") instead of הִרְאִיתַנִי ("showed ME").
[2] A manuscript would have תחיינו ("you gave US life") instead of תְּחַיֵּינִי ("you gave ME life").

Psalm 72

[1] *A poem* for Solomon.[1]	לִשְׁלֹמֹה	Lishlomo.
God, grant your justice to the king	אֱלֹהִים מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ לַמֶּלֶךְ תֵּן	Elohim, mishpatecha lemelech ten
and your righteousness to the prince,	וְצִדְקָתְךָ לְבֶן־מֶלֶךְ	vetzidkat'cha leven melech.
[2] To judge your people rightly	יָדִין עַמְּךָ בְצֶדֶק	Yadin amcha vetzedek
and your humble *devotees* with justice.	וַעֲנִיֶּיךָ בְמִשְׁפָּט	va'aniyecha vemishpat.
[3] May mountains bring peace to the people	יִשְׂאוּ הָרִים שָׁלוֹם לָעָם	Yisu harim shalom la'am
and the hills, with justice.[2]	וּגְבָעוֹת בִּצְדָקָה	ugeva'ot bitzdakah.
[4] May *such a prince* judge lowly people,	יִשְׁפֹּט עֲנִיֵּי־עָם	Yishpot aniyei am,
deliver the children of the needy	יוֹשִׁיעַ לִבְנֵי אֶבְיוֹן	yoshi'a livnei evyon
and shatter the oppressor.	וִידַכֵּא עוֹשֵׁק	vidakeh oshek.
[5] Let them respect you in sunshine	יִירָאוּךָ עִם־שֶׁמֶשׁ	Yira'ucha im shamesh
or in moonlight, for generations.[3]	וְלִפְנֵי יָרֵחַ דּוֹר דּוֹרִים	velifnei yare'ach, dor dorim.
[6] May *such a prince* descend as dew on mown *grass,*	יֵרֵד כְּמָטָר עַל־גֵּז	Yered kematar al gez,
like showers that soak the ground.	כִּרְבִיבִים זַרְזִיף אָרֶץ	kir'vivim zarzif arets.
[7] May the righteous flourish in *the prince's* days	יִפְרַח־בְּיָמָיו צַדִּיק	Yifrach beyamav tzadik
with peace in plenty until the moon is no more.	וְרֹב שָׁלוֹם עַד־בְּלִי יָרֵחַ	verov shalom ad beli yare'ach.
[8] May he rule from sea to sea	וְיֵרְדְּ מִיָּם עַד־יָם	Veyerd miyam ad yam
and from the river to Land's End.	וּמִנָּהָר עַד־אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ	uminahar ad afsei aretz.
[9] Let wilderness dwellers[4] bow to him	לְפָנָיו יִכְרְעוּ צִיִּים	Lefanav yichre'u tziyim
and his enemies lick the dust.	וְאֹיְבָיו עָפָר יְלַחֵכוּ	ve'oyvav afar yelachechu.

[1] Or "by Solomon." If it's "for" Solomon, the last verse is a farewell from his father David, with a prayer for Solomon's success, and this helps to make sense of the psalm. Or maybe it's a different Solomon anyway.

[2] Perhaps the "mountains" symbolize our ancestors, whose merit brings us God's favor (since we are meritless ourselves). Perhaps they symbolize uninhabited places of unknown danger, and the poet hopes that even such places will be sources of peace and not danger. The poet hopes for peace with justice, perhaps because in the world we inhabit an uncontroversial (peaceful) decision is hard to reach.

[3] Perhaps (following many translators) as long as sun and moon endure. Literally, "Let-them-fear/respect-you (or, they-shall-fear/respect-you) with-*the*-sun and-before *the*-moon, generation-of generations."

[4] **צִיִּים**, people who live off the grid, in remote locations without government support (or interference); even these people will acknowledge our prince's authority.

[10] Rulers of Tarshish and the islands	מַלְכֵי תַרְשִׁישׁ וְאִיִּים	Malchei Tarshish ve'iyim
will send *their* offering;	מִנְחָה יָשִׁיבוּ	minchah yashivu;
rulers of Sheva and Saba[1]	מַלְכֵי שְׁבָא וּסְבָא	malchei Sheva uSeva
will bring tribute.	אֶשְׁכָּר יַקְרִיבוּ	eshkar yakrivu.
[11] All rulers will bow to him;	וְיִשְׁתַּחֲווּ־לוֹ כָּל־מְלָכִים	Veyishtachavu lo chol melachim;
all peoples will serve him.	כָּל־גּוֹיִם יַעַבְדוּהוּ	kol goyim ya'avduhu.
[12] For he saves the sobbing[2] pauper	כִּי־יַצִּיל אֶבְיוֹן מְשַׁוַּע	Ki yatzil evyon meshave'ah
and the lowly who has no helper.	וְעָנִי וְאֵין־עֹזֵר לוֹ	ve'ani, ve'ein ozer lo.
[13] May he pity the humble and poor	יָחֹס עַל־דַּל וְאֶבְיוֹן	Yachos al dal ve'evyon,
and save the lives of the needy.	וְנַפְשׁוֹת אֶבְיוֹנִים יוֹשִׁיעַ	venafshot evyonim yoshi'a.
[14] He redeems their lives from fraud and force	מִתּוֹךְ וּמֵחָמָס יִגְאַל נַפְשָׁם	Mitoch umechamas yigal nafsham
and places a high value on their lives.[3]	וְיֵקַר דָּמָם בְּעֵינָיו	veyekar damam be'einav.
[15] May he live and receive gold of Sheva;	וְיִחִי וְיִתֶּן־לוֹ מִזְּהַב שְׁבָא	Vichi, veyiten lo miz'hav Sheva,
may people pray for him constantly	וְיִתְפַּלֵּל בַּעֲדוֹ תָּמִיד	veyitpalel ba'ado tamid;
and may he be blessed every day.	כָּל־הַיּוֹם יְבָרְכֻנְהוּ	kol hayom yevar'chenhu.
[16] May the land yield handfuls of grain,	יְהִי פִסַת־בַּר בָּאָרֶץ	Yehi fisat bar ba'aretz,
even on *barren* mountaintops;	בְּרֹאשׁ הָרִים	berosh harim;
may its grain*fields* wave like Lebanon*'s*	יִרְעַשׁ כַּלְּבָנוֹן פִּרְיוֹ	yirash kaLevanon piryo
and city folk flourish like grass of the earth.[4]	וְיָצִיצוּ מֵעִיר כְּעֵשֶׂב הָאָרֶץ	veyatzitzu me'ir ke'esev ha'aretz.
[17] May his fame last forever;	יְהִי שְׁמוֹ לְעוֹלָם	Yehi shemo le'olam;
while the sun lasts, may his name endure;	לִפְנֵי־שֶׁמֶשׁ יִנּוֹן[5] שְׁמוֹ	lifnei shemesh yinon shemo;
may all nations find blessing through him	וְיִתְבָּרְכוּ בוֹ כָּל־גּוֹיִם	veyitbar'chu vo kol goyim—
and consider him happy.	יְאַשְּׁרוּהוּ	ye'ashruhu.
[18] May Ruling God be blessed—	בָּרוּךְ יהוה אֱלֹהִים	Baruch Adonai Elohim,
Israel's God,	אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל	Elohei Yisra'el,
who alone performs miracles.	עֹשֵׂה נִפְלָאוֹת לְבַדּוֹ	oseh nifla'ot levado;

[1] Lands sometimes identified with Ethiopia. Sheba (whose queen was famous for visiting King Solomon) is Sheva—a single Hebrew letter serves for both "b" and "v"—and Sava could be a neighboring land.
[2] מְשַׁוַּע can mean "crying out."
[3] "And-shall-be-valued their-blood in-his-eyes/opinion."
[4] The city people can flourish when farmers can supply them with ample food.
[5] A manuscript would have ינין. ינון occurs only here in Hebrew scripture, so its meaning could be uncertain.

[19] and *God's* famous name be ever blessed,	וּבָרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹדוֹ לְעוֹלָם	Uvaruch shem kevodo le'olam,
and may *God's* glory fill the whole world:	וְיִמָּלֵא כְבוֹדוֹ אֶת־כָּל הָאָרֶץ	veyimaleh chevodo et kol ha'aretz:
Let it really be so!	אָמֵן וְאָמֵן	amen ve'amen.
[20] So end the prayers of David, son of Jesse.[1]	כָּלוּ תְפִלּוֹת דָּוִד בֶּן־יִשָׁי	Kalu tefilot David ben Yishai.

[1] Perhaps this was David's last poem before he died (Malbim). Perhaps this verse is an editorial note at the end of this group of psalms (Ibn Ezra, citing R. Yehudah). Some (cited by Ibn Ezra) wonder if the poem was concluded without being perfected (כללו יפייך, "they perfected your beauty" [Ezek. 27:4] ואיננו נכון, "but something is lacking.")

Psalm 73

[1] A tune by/for Asaf.	מִזְמוֹר לְאָסָף	Mizmor leAsaf.
Surely God is good to Israel,	אַךְ טוֹב לְיִשְׂרָאֵל אֱלֹהִים	Ach tov leYisra'el Elohim,
to the pure of heart.	לְבָרֵי לֵבָב	levarei levav.
[2] And me, my feet almost strayed,	וַאֲנִי כִּמְעַט נָטָיוּ[1] רַגְלָי	Va'ani, kimat natayu raglai,
my steps almost fell into nothing …	כְּאַיִן שֻׁפְּכוּ[2] אֲשֻׁרָי	ke'ayin shup'chu ashurai
[3] …When I envied fools	כִּי־קִנֵּאתִי בַּהוֹלְלִים	Ki kineti baholelim
and saw the wellbeing of evil people,	שְׁלוֹם רְשָׁעִים אֶרְאֶה	shelom resha'im ereh,
[4] Since they suffer no pangs at death	כִּי אֵין חַרְצֻבוֹת לְמוֹתָם	Ki ein chartzubot lemotam
and those big-bellies[3] are healthy.	וּבָרִיא אוּלָם	uvari ulam.
[5] They don't work like other people	בַּעֲמַל אֱנוֹשׁ א�ינָמוֹ	Ba'amal enosh einemo
nor suffer like the rest of us.[4]	וְעִם־אָדָם לֹא יְנֻגָּעוּ	ve'im adam lo yenuga'u.
[6] So they wear pride like a chain of office,	לָכֵן עְנָקַתְמוֹ גַאֲוָה	Lachen anakatmo ga'avah,
wrap themselves in a cloak of violence.[5]	יַעֲטָף־שִׁית חָמָס לָמוֹ	ya'ataf shit chamas lamo.
[7] Their eyes peer out of their fat *face,*	יָצָא מֵחֵלֶב עֵינָמוֹ	Yatza mechelev einemo,
they are beyond anything you can imagine.[6]	עָבְרוּ מַשְׂכִּיּוֹת לֵבָב	avru maskiyot levav.
[8] They sneer and speak contempt,	יָמִיקוּ וִידַבְּרוּ בְרָע	Yamiku vidabru verah,
from their pride they plot oppression.[7]	עֹשֶׁק מִמָּרוֹם יְדַבֵּרוּ	oshek mimarom yedaberu.

[1] A manuscript would have נטוי.

[2] A manuscript would have שפכה.

[3] And you thought אוּלָם was a word for a big hall like a wedding venue? Well, the word אוּל can mean something prominent like a big macher or a protuberant belly on a well-fed person. So in this case we understand the word אוּל to mean body, and it's not a compliment, so וּבָרִיא אוּלָם means "and-healthy *are* their-big-bellies."

[4] "At-the-laboring-of a-human-being they-are-not-present / and-along-with-a-regular-person not they-are-afflicted."

[5] "So has-necklaced-them pride, / would-wrap *as* a-garment violence them." The root ענק can refer to a necklace or to a giant, so the first line of this verse could be "So pride has made them *feel like* giants."

[6] A verse with many possible interpretations: "Emerges from-fat its-eye / they-went-beyond/they-transgressed fancies-of the-heart (or, their *wild* imaginings went beyond any thinking heart)."

[7] "They-bring-about-corruption (make others look bad) and-they-speak of-evil; / *of*-oppression from-high they-speak."

[9] They think their speech is divinely inspired	שַׁתּוּ בַשָּׁמַיִם פִּיהֶם	Shatu vashamayim pihem,
and their voice goes around the world.[1]	וּלְשׁוֹנָם תִּהֲלַךְ בָּאָרֶץ	uleshonam tihalach ba'aretz.
[10] And so *God's* people will return here,	לָכֵן יָשׁוּב[3] עַמּוֹ הֲלֹם	Lachen yashuv amo halom,
and those feeble *misconceptions* will ebb away.[2]	וּמֵי מָלֵא יִמָּצוּ לָמוֹ	umei maleh yimatzu lamo.
[11] They will ask, "How does God know—	וְאָמְרוּ אֵיכָה יָדַע־אֵל	Ve'amru, "Eicha yada El—
is there knowledge up there *to see through lies*?"[4]	וְיֵשׁ דֵּעָה בְּעֶלְיוֹן	veyesh de'ah ve'elyon?"
[12] Look, these are the wicked;	הִנֵּה־אֵלֶּה רְשָׁעִים	Hineh eleh resha'im,
ever complacent, they amass wealth and power.[5]	וְשַׁלְוֵי עוֹלָם הִשְׂגּוּ־חָיִל	veshalvei olam hisgu chayil.
[13] For sure, in vain I made my heart worthy	אַךְ־רִיק זִכִּיתִי לִבָּבִי	Ach rik zikiti levavi,
and washed my palms to cleanse them.[6]	וָאֶרְחַץ בְּנִקָּיוֹן כַּפָּי	va'erchatz benikayon kapai.
[14] Since I was tormented all the time	וָאֱהִי נָגוּעַ כָּל־הַיּוֹם	Va'ehi nagu'ah kol hayom,
and punished *anew* every morning,[7]	וְתוֹכַחְתִּי לַבְּקָרִים	vetochachti lab'karim,
[15] Had I decided to speak of this,	אִם־אָמַרְתִּי אֲסַפְּרָה כָמוֹ	Im amarti asaprah chemo,
I would have betrayed all your disciples.[8]	הִנֵּה דוֹר בָּנֶיךָ בָּגָדְתִּי	hineh dor banecha vagadti.

[1] "They-have-set in-the-skies their-mouth / and-their-tongue/language/speech travels/walks in/on-the-earth." This could mean they think their speech is heavenly and everyone listens, or it could mean that with their mouths they challenge heaven and their talk spreads everywhere (like a nasty rumor). Or maybe the poet prophetically suggests these nasty people use Cloud-based social media rumors that spread widely.

[2] A difficult verse: "And-so will-return *God's*-people here / and-waters-of full will-be-drained for-them." I translate as if the English idiom "wet" (what a wet idea!) applies to Hebrew, so the "wet" ideas of the bad people in verse 9 are drained by the time God's people return.

[3] A manuscript would have ישיב, "And so *God*-will-return *God's*-people here" instead of "And so *God's* people will return here."

[4] "And-they-would-say, 'How did-know God, / and-is-there knowledge in-the-height/with-the-Most-High?'" Knowledge about what? Presumably to see through the posturing of the smug proud and wicked.

[5] "See, these *are* bad; / and-the-complacent-of the-world/all-time have-amassed wealth/power." חַיִל connotes both wealth and power.

[6] "Surely/but emptily/in-vain I-made-worthy my-heart / and-I-washed in-cleansing my-palms."

[7] "And-I-was plagued all-the-day/every-day / and-I-suffered-rebuke in-the-mornings."

[8] "If I-said, 'I'll-talk thus," / look, the-generation-of your-children I-would-cheat." I assume the generation means the whole group, and the children are those who follow God, so the generation of your children becomes all your disciples.

[16] *So* I gave it thought and tried to grasp it;	וָאֲחַשְּׁבָה לָדַעַת זֹאת	Va'achashvah lada'at zot;
it felt like hard work[1] …	עָמָל הוּא[2] בְּעֵינָי	amal hu ve'einai.
[17] … Until I entered God's sanctuary	עַד־אָבוֹא אֶל־מִקְדְּשֵׁי־אֵל	Ad avo el mikdeshei El,
and realized what would happen to them.[3]	אָבִינָה לְאַחֲרִיתָם	avinah le'acharitam.
[18] Though you make it easy for them *now*,	אַךְ בַּחֲלָקוֹת תָּשִׁית לָמוֹ	Ach bachalakot tashit lamo,
you'll plunge them into ruin.[4]	הִפַּלְתָּם לְמַשּׁוּאוֹת	hipaltam lamashu'ot.
[19] How suddenly they are ruined,	אֵיךְ הָיוּ לְשַׁמָּה כִּרְגַע	Eich hayu leshamah cheragah,
done for, overcome with disasters.[5]	סָפּוּ תַּמּוּ מִן־בַּלָּהוֹת	safu, tamu min balahot.
[20] As when roused from a nightmare, God,	כַּחֲלוֹם מֵהָקִיץ אֲדֹנָי	Kachalom mehakitz Adonai,
awake you'd spurn what you saw in your dream.[6]	בָּעִיר צַלְמָם תִּבְזֶה	ba'ir tzalmam tivzeh.
[21] For my stomach went sour	כִּי יִתְחַמֵּץ לְבָבִי	Ki yit'chametz levavi,
and my innards felt sharp pangs,[7]	וְכִלְיוֹתַי אֶשְׁתּוֹנָן	vechilyotai eshtonan.
[22] And I was stupid and ignorant,	וַאֲנִי־בַעַר וְלֹא אֵדָע	Va'ani va'ar velo edah,
like a brute before you.[8]	בְּהֵמוֹת הָיִיתִי עִמָּךְ	behemot hayiti imach.
[23] Yet I was always with you;	וַאֲנִי תָמִיד עִמָּךְ	Va'ani tamid imach;
you held *me* by *your* right hand.[9]	אָחַזְתָּ בְּיַד־יְמִינִי	achazta beyad yemini.
[24] You led me with your guidance	בַּעֲצָתְךָ תַנְחֵנִי	Ba'atzat'cha tan'cheni,
and brought me towards honor.[10]	וְאַחַר כָּבוֹד תִּקָּחֵנִי	ve'achar kevod tikacheni.

[1] "And-I-thought *in order* to-understand this; / hard-work it-*is* in-my-eyes/opinion.

[2] A manuscript would have היא, the feminine relative pronoun, but עָמָל is a masculine noun, so we read הוּא.

[3] "Until I-came to-the-holy-places-of God; / I-understood about-their-future."

[4] "But with-smoothnesses you-place for-them (although you make it easy for them now), / you'll-bring-them-down to-ruins."

[5] "How they-were *brought* to-destruction in-a-moment, / they-have-come-to-an-end, they-are-astonished from-terrors."

[6] "Like-a-dream from-which-*God*-has-awoken, God, / in-waking their-image you-spurn (when you waken, you scorn the image you saw in the dream)." God never sleeps, of course, but if God shared that human experience the poet imagines what could happen. "Their-image" might suggest that the nightmare was a dream in which the bad people appeared.

[7] "For/when went-sour/leavened my-heart (my thinking organ) / and-*in*-my-innards I-felt-sharp-*pain.*"

[8] "And-I-*was*-simple and-not did-I-know, / *like* beasts I-was with-you."

[9] "and-I *was* always with-you; / you-grasped-*me* with-*your*-right-hand."

[10] "With-your-advice you-led-me, / and-after/towards honor you-brought-me."

[25] Who is there for me in the sky?	מִי־לִי בַשָּׁמָיִם	Mi li vashamayim?
When I have you, I need no one on earth.[1]	וְעִמְּךָ לֹא־חָפַצְתִּי בָאָרֶץ	Ve'im'cha lo chafatzti va'aretz.
[26] My body and my heart are fading;	כָּלָה שְׁאֵרִי וּלְבָבִי	Kalah she'eri ulevavi,
God is my courage, my share forever.[2]	צוּר־לִבָּבִי וְחֶלְקִי אֱלֹהִים לְעוֹלָם	tzur levavi vechelki Elohim le'olam.
[27] Those who stay far from you perish;	כִּי־הִנֵּה רְחֲקֶיךָ יֹאבֵדוּ	Ki hineh rechekecha yovedu;
you destroy all who stray from you.[3]	הִצְמַתָּה כָּל־זוֹנֶה מִמֶּךָּ	hitzmata kol zoneh mimeka.
[28] Being close to God is good for me;	וַאֲנִי קִרְבַת אֱלֹהִים לִי־טוֹב	Va'ani kiravat Elohim li tov;
I have made my ruling God my refuge,	שַׁתִּי בַאדֹנָי יְהוִה מַחְסִי	shati bAdonai Elohim machsi,
that I may declare all your *good* works.[4]	לְסַפֵּר כָּל־מַלְאֲכוֹתֶיךָ	lesaper kol malachotecha.

[1] "Who *is there* for-me in-the-skies? / And-with-you *present* not-have-I-felt-longing on-the-earth (when you are with me, I need nobody else on earth)."

[2] "Finished-are my-flesh and-my-heart. / The-rock-of my-heart and-my-portion *is* God forever."

[3] "For see, those-who-are-distant-from-you will-perish; / you-have-destroyed all-who-stray from-you."

[4] "And-I, proximity-to God for-me *is* good; / I-have-set in-ruling God my-shelter, / to-recount all-your-achievements."

Psalm 74

[1] A teaching-poem by Asaf.	מַשְׂכִּיל לְאָסָף	Maskil le'Asaf.
God, why would you forever spurn *us*,	לָמָּה אֱלֹהִים זָנַחְתָּ לָנֶצַח	Lamah, Elohim, zanachta lanetzach,
let your anger smolder at the flock you tend?	יֶעְשַׁן אַפְּךָ בְּצֹאן מַרְעִיתֶךָ	yeshan ap'cha betzon maritecha?
[2] Remember, you acquired this throng long ago,	זְכֹר עֲדָתְךָ קָנִיתָ קֶדֶם	Zechor adat'cha kanita kedem,
rescued the tribes of your heritage,	גָּאַלְתָּ שֵׁבֶט נַחֲלָתֶךָ	ga'alta shevet nachalatecha,
Mount Zion where you yourself dwell.	הַר־צִיּוֹן זֶה שָׁכַנְתָּ בּוֹ	har Tziyon zeh shachanta bo.
[3] Step up	הָרִימָה פְעָמֶיךָ	Harima fe'amecha
to the incalculable ruin—	לְמַשֹּׁאוֹת נֶצַח	lemashu'ot netzach,
all your foes' misdeeds in the sanctuary.[1]	כָּל־הֵרַע אוֹיֵב בַּקֹּדֶשׁ	kol herah oyev bakodesh.
[4] Your attackers made a commotion	שָׁאֲגוּ צֹרְרֶיךָ	Sha'agu tzorerecha
right in your sanctuary;	בְּקֶרֶב מוֹעֲדֶךָ	bekerev mo'adecha;
they set up their banners	שָׂמוּ אוֹתֹתָם	samu ototam
to replace our banners.[2]	אֹתוֹת	otot.
[5] *They chopped the Temple woodwork.*		
It was like swinging *axes* overhead,	יִוָּדַע כִּמֵבִיא לְמָעְלָה	Yivadah kemevi lemalah
axes in a woody thicket.[3]	בְּסָבָךְ־עֵץ קַרְדֻּמוֹת	bisavach etz kardumot.
[6] Now, all at once, its carvings	וְעַתָּה׳ פִּתּוּחֶיהָ יָחַד	Ve'atah pitucheha yachad
they demolish with axes and hammers.[4]	בְּכַשִּׁיל וְכִילַפּוֹת יַהֲלֹמוּן	bechashil vechelapot yahalomun.
[7] They tossed your sanctuary into the bonfire,	שִׁלְחוּ בָאֵשׁ מִקְדָּשֶׁךָ	Shil'chu va'esh mikdashecha,
razed to the ground your habitation.[6]	לָאָרֶץ חִלְּלוּ מִשְׁכַּן־שְׁמֶךָ	la'aretz chilelu mishkan shemecha.
[8] They thought, "Let's destroy them altogether!"	אָמְרוּ בִלְבָּם נִינָם יָחַד	Amru velibam, "Ninam yachad!"
They burned all God's holy sites in the land.	שָׂרְפוּ כָל־מוֹעֲדֵי־אֵל בָּאָרֶץ	Sarfu chol mo'adei El ba'aretz.

[1] "Lift your-measured *steps* / *to approach* to-the-ruins everlasting, / all *that* did-bad the-enemy in-the-sanctuary."

[2] "They-roared, your-troublers, in-the-midst-of your-sanctuary/meeting-places/holy-times; / they-set their-signs *for* signs." מוֹעֵד means special time or place, so perhaps the enemies destroyed the Temple, and perhaps they disrupted the services, and perhaps they did both.

[3] "It-was-known like-one-who-brings overhead / in-a-thicket-of-wood axes." Some translators understand that one who chopped a lot got extra praise.

[4] כַּשִּׁיל and כִּילַף can both be translated as axe. Today, we might use bladed tools such as cold chisels, axes, and hatchets, as well as sledgehammers—and, of course, the Sawzall with a demo blade.

[5] A manuscript would have ועת, but it's easier to make sense of וְעַתָּה

[6] "To-the-ground they-desecrated the-dwelling-place-of your-name/reputation"; they dishonored the sanctuary as much as possible, down to the metaphorical ground..

[9] We haven't seen our *guiding* signals,[1]	אֹתֹתֵינוּ לֹא רָאִינוּ	Ototeinu lo ra'inu,
there's no prophet left *to lead us,*	אֵין־עוֹד נָבִיא	ein od navi,
and nobody here knows how long *this will go on*.[2]	וְלֹא־אִתָּנוּ יֹדֵעַ עַד־מָה	velo itanu yode'ah ad mah.
[10] How long, God, will the enemy taunt *us?*	עַד־מָתַי אֱלֹהִים יְחָרֵף צָר	Ad matai, Elohim, yecharef tzar,
Will the foe revile your reputation forever?	יְנָאֵץ אוֹיֵב שִׁמְךָ לָנֶצַח	yena'etz oyev shimcha lanetzach?
[11] Why hold back your power, your right hand?	לָמָּה תָשִׁיב יָדְךָ וִימִינֶךָ	Lamah tashiv yad'cha viminecha?
Move it off your chest![3]	מִקֶּרֶב חֵיקְךָ[4] כַּלֵּה	Mikerev cheik'cha chaleh!
[12] God has long been my sovereign,	וֵאלֹהִים מַלְכִּי מִקֶּדֶם	VElohim malki mikedem,
delivering *us* anywhere on earth.[5]	פֹּעֵל יְשׁוּעוֹת בְּקֶרֶב הָאָרֶץ	po'el yeshu'ot bekerev ha'aretz.
[13] By your power you split the sea,	אַתָּה פוֹרַרְתָּ בְעָזְּךָ יָם	Atah forarta ve'oz'cha yam,
shattered the chief monsters at the water.[6]	שִׁבַּרְתָּ רָאשֵׁי תַנִּינִים עַל־הַמָּיִם	shibarta rashei taninim al hamayim.
[14] You crushed *sinuous* Leviathan's heads,[7]	אַתָּה רִצַּצְתָּ רָאשֵׁי לִוְיָתָן	Atah ritzatzta rashei Livyatan,
made it prey for the desert-dwelling people.[8]	תִּתְּנֶנּוּ מַאֲכָל לְעָם לְצִיִּים	titnenu ma'achal le'am letziyim.
[15] You unblocked fountain and flood,	אַתָּה בָקַעְתָּ מַעְיָן וָנָחַל	Atah vakata mayan venachal,
you dried up mighty rivers.	אַתָּה הוֹבַשְׁתָּ נַהֲרוֹת אֵיתָן	atah hovashta naharot eitan.

[1] Or signs or banners—perhaps people looked for a supernatural sign to bring hope or warn of doom, perhaps they felt lost without banners around which to rally their troops.

[2] "Our-banners/signals/signs not have-we-seen; / no-longer *is there* a-prophet; / and-not with-us *is there anyone* who-knows until-what."

[3] "From-the-midst-of your-chest be-finished-*with-leaving-it*!" The poet complains that God's hand rests idly on God's chest instead of waging war against the enemy.

[4] A manuscript would have חוקך.

[5] "And-God *has been* my-sovereign from-of-old, / performing deliverances/rescues in-the-midst-of the-land/earth." This could refer to deliverance inside our land, Israel, or (as I translate above) anywhere we (or perhaps any people) need help on the terrestrial globe, such as when God brought us from Egypt.

[6] "You split/broke by-your-strength *the* sea, / you-shattered the-heads-of monsters upon/at-the-waters." רָאשֵׁי, heads-of, may refer to monster: תַּנִּין can mean monster, sea-serpent, crocodile, dinosaur, etc. It may refer to a huge and powerful beast (at last, here is proof of Nessie's origin!), or perhaps it's a symbol for a large and terrible army such as Pharaoh's. If you think the monsters are beasts, then their heads get smashed. If you think they represent nasty forms of attack, you can think it's their leaders that get smashed.

[7] Leviathan is a mythological sea-snake—some think the root of its name means tortuous (hence, sinuous); the Hebrew indicates plural heads—chiefs of a resourceful enemy that can twist and turn to retreat and attack, or heads of a Hydra-like monster.

[8] One way to understand this is to say that God destroyed the Leviathan (Israel's powerful enemy) and delivered it as sustenance for the people who lived in the desert 40 years. צִיָּה means dry (אֶרֶץ צִיָּה, parched land, Ps. 63:2), so צִיִּים could be residents of such a place. Tradition says the righteous will dine on Leviathan in the next world.

[16] Night and day belong to you;	לְךָ יוֹם אַף־לְךָ לָיְלָה	Lecha yom af lecha lailah,
you prepared *both* luminary and sun.	אַתָּה הֲכִינוֹתָ מָאוֹר וָשָׁמֶשׁ	atah hachinota ma'or vashamesh.
[17] You fixed all the borders of the land;	אַתָּה הִצַּבְתָּ כָּל־גְּבוּלוֹת אָרֶץ	Atah hitzavta kol gevulot aretz;
you created summer and winter.	קַיִץ וָחֹרֶף אַתָּה יְצַרְתָּם	kayitz vachoref, atah yetzartam.
[18] Think how the enemy taunts, God,	זְכָר־זֹאת אוֹיֵב חֵרֵף יהוה	Zechor zot: oyev cheref, Adonai,
and foolish people despise your reputation.	וְעַם נָבָל נִאֲצוּ שְׁמֶךָ	ve'am naval ni'atzu shemecha.
[19] Don't give your dove to a murderous gang	אַל־תִּתֵּן לְחַיַּת נֶפֶשׁ תּוֹרֶךָ	Al titen lechayat nefesh torecha;
nor ever ignore your humble followers.[1]	חַיַּת עֲנִיֶּיךָ אַל־תִּשְׁכַּח לָנֶצַח	chayat aniyecha al tishkach lanetzach.
[20] Attend to *your* pact *with our ancestors*	הַבֵּט לַבְּרִית	Habet labrit
for the shadows of earth are filled with	כִּי מָלְאוּ מַחֲשַׁכֵּי־אֶרֶץ	ki malu machashakei eretz
havens for violence.	נְאוֹת חָמָס	ne'ot chamas.
[21] Don't send back the oppressed disappointed;	אַל־יָשֹׁב דַּךְ נִכְלָם	Al yashov dach nichlam;
let the poor and needy praise your reputation.	עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן יְהַלְלוּ שְׁמֶךָ	ani ve'evyon yehalelu shemecha.
[22] Rise, God; fight your fight;	קוּמָה אֱלֹהִים רִיבָה רִיבֶךָ	Kumah, Elohim; rivah rivecha;
remember, fools taunt you	זְכֹר חֶרְפָּתְךָ מִנִּי־נָבָל	zechor cherpat'cha mini naval
endlessly.[2]	כָּל־הַיּוֹם	kol hayom.
[23] Don't ignore the noise of your foes,	אַל־תִּשְׁכַּח קוֹל צֹרְרֶיךָ	Al tishkach kol tzorerecha,
your assailants' ever-increasing commotion.[3]	שְׁאוֹן קָמֶיךָ עֹלֶה תָמִיד	she'on kamecha oleh tamid.

[1] "Do-not-give to-a-gang-of life (murderous gang) your *gentle* dove; / the-gang-of your-humble-ones do-not-forget/ignore forever."
[2] "Remember your-taunting by-the-foolish every-day."
[3] "The-noise-of those-who-rise-up-at-you going-up always."

Psalm 75

[1] For the leader. Don't bring destruction![1]	לַמְנַצֵּחַ אַל־תַּשְׁחֵת	Lamnatze'ach. Al tash'chet.
A tune by Asaf, a song.	מִזְמוֹר לְאָסָף שִׁיר	Mizmor le'Asaf, shir.
[2] O God, to you our thanks we owe,	הוֹדִינוּ לְךָ אֱלֹהִים	Hodinu lecha, Elohim,
with thanks we feel your presence near	הוֹדִינוּ וְקָרוֹב שְׁמֶךָ	hodinu vekarov shemecha;
as folk your wondrous deeds report.[2]	סִפְּרוּ נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ	sipru nifle'otecha.
[3] *You say,* "When I select my time,	כִּי אֶקַּח מוֹעֵד	"Ki ekach mo'ed,
I'll bring fair verdict *for each crime.*[3]	אֲנִי מֵישָׁרִים אֶשְׁפֹּט	ani meisharim eshpot.
[4] Earth with its dwellers all can fade	נְמֹגִים אֶרֶץ וְכָל־יֹשְׁבֶיהָ	Nemogim eretz vechol yoshveha;
for I'm the source of its support." Selah.[4]	אָנֹכִי תִכַּנְתִּי עַמּוּדֶיהָ סֶלָה	anochi tikanti amudeha." Selah.
[5] I said to fools, "Do not be fools";	אָמַרְתִּי לַהוֹלְלִים אַל־תָּהֹלּוּ	Amarti laholelim, "Al taholu,"
to criminals, "Do not defy—	וְלָרְשָׁעִים אַל־תָּרִימוּ קָרֶן	velarsha'im, "Al tarimu karen—
[6] "Do not defy the One on high,	אַל־תָּרִימוּ לַמָּרוֹם קַרְנְכֶם	"Al tarimu lamarom karn'chem,
nor speak that stubborn, mulish talk[5]	תְּדַבְּרוּ בְצַוָּאר עָתָק	tedabru vetzavar atak
[7] "For not from east, and not from west	כִּי לֹא מִמּוֹצָא וּמִמַּעֲרָב	"Ki lo mimotza umima'arav
comes help, nor from the mountain waste.[6]	וְלֹא מִמִּדְבַּר הָרִים	velo mimidbar harim.
[8] "The only judge is God alone,	כִּי־אֱלֹהִים שֹׁפֵט	"Ki Elohim shofet:
who raises high and casts back down."[7]	זֶה יַשְׁפִּיל וְזֶה יָרִים	zeh yashpil vezeh yarim."

[1] Al tash'chet may indicate that the poet sensed his own danger and could not afford to take a single false step. The phrase could also mean that the conductor should be extra careful not to make a mistake.

[2] "We-have-given-thanks to-you, God, / we-have-given-thanks, and-nearby *is* your-name/reputation (i.e., your presence). / *People* have-recounted your-wonders."

[3] "When I-shall-take/appoint the-time/season, / I with-equity/fairness shall-judge." God (I assume) speaks verses 3 and 4.

[4] "Melted/dissolved *shall-be* earth and-all its-dwellers; / I established its-pillars/supports. / Selah."

[5] "Do-not-raise at-the-high-one your-horn (presumably, a symbol of vaunting pride), / *nor*-speak with-neck stiff/arrogant/defiant."

[6] "For not from-the-emergence-*of-the-sun* (east) nor-from-the passing-*of-the-sun* (west) / and-not from-wilderness-of hills" or, "and-not from-wilderness are-elevations (i.e., support or help)." Hills seem like a wilderness for those who prefer to settle and farm the plains, though the Nabateans in Petra might hold a different view.

[7] "For/only God *is* judge; / this *one God* lowers and-this *one God* raises."

[9] A goblet *rests* within God's hand	כִּי כוֹס בְּיַד־יהוה	Ki chos beyad Adonai,
from which mixed wine all foaming spills	וְיַיִן חָמַר מָלֵא מֶסֶךְ וַיַּגֵּר	veyayin chamar maleh mesech vayager
for those who swig it to the dregs,	מִזֶּה אַךְ־שְׁמָרֶיהָ יִמְצוּ יִשְׁתּוּ	mizeh ach shemareha yimtzu, yishtu
the wicked *drunkards* of the earth.[1]	כֹּל רִשְׁעֵי־אֶרֶץ	kol rishei aretz.
[10] But I shall endlessly declare,	וַאֲנִי אַגִּיד לְעֹלָם	Va'ani agid le'olam,
and sing to Jacob's God an air—[2]	אֲזַמְּרָה לֵאלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב	azamra lElohei Ya'akov—
[11] The sinners' pride shall I hew down	וְכָל־קַרְנֵי רְשָׁעִים אֲגַדֵּעַ	Vechol karnei resha'im agade'ah,
but raise the virtuous person's crown.[3]	תְּרוֹמַמְנָה קַרְנוֹת צַדִּיק	teromamna karnot tzadik.

[1] "For a-cup *is* in-the-hand/power-of God / and-wine red/foaming *is* full-of mixture, and-it-pours-out (or, and-*God*-pours); / from-this-*cup* even its-leftovers (i.e. lees or dregs) they-suck, they-drink, / all the-wicked-people-of the-earth." שְׁמָרֶיהָ is here translated as dregs but in modern Hebrew שְׁמָרִים is yeast, so perhaps we should says "its fermentation" instead of "its dregs."

The translation is uncertain. I'm not sure why the psalmist inserts an image of God with a wine cup for the wicked. Perhaps the wine is to keep them wicked so they'll earn a full measure of punishment, not a pleasant theological thought.

חָמַר can mean foaming or red; it's related to words for fermentation, donkey, stricture, and more. Perhaps this can describe fermenting grape juice.

מֶסֶךְ is usually translated "mixed"; some think wine was mixed with spices, but the ancients mixed their wine with water (BT Eruvin—see Rashi's comment on על החמין חייב ועל הצונן פטור; or see 2 Maccabees 15:39, "It's unhealthy to drink wine by itself, but it's good mixed with water …"). The word may be related to מַסֵּכָה, an adjective for the "golden" calf of Ex 32:8, so perhaps it has something to do with "mask." Or it could be related to נָסַךְ, a libation. Perhaps מָלֵא מֶסֶךְ means "full, for libation."

יִמְצוּ from מָצָה, drain or squeeze, implies that the drinkers don't leave a drop in the cup, even from what remains (שְׁמָרֶיהָ) in the bottom.

[2] "And-I shall-tell forever, / I-shall-sing-a-song to-the-God-of Jacob."

[3] "And-all the-horns-of (horns presumably represent self-importance) the-wicked-people shall-I-cut-down; / they-shall-be-raised, the-horns-of a-virtuous-person." Perhaps God is supposed to speak this final verse.

Psalm 76

[1] For the leading instrumentalist,	לַמְנַצֵּחַ בִּנְגִינֹת	Lamnatze'ach binginot,
a tune by Asaf, a song.	מִזְמוֹר לְאָסָף שִׁיר	mizmor le'Asaf, shir.
[2] God is well known in Judah's land;	נוֹדָע בִּיהוּדָה אֱלֹהִים	Nodah biYehudah Elohim,
all Israel knows *God's* reputation.[1]	בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל גָּדוֹל שְׁמוֹ	beYisra'el gadol shemo.
[3] In Shalem *God* makes a home,	וַיְהִי בְשָׁלֵם סֻכּוֹ	Vayehi veShalem suko,
in Zion is *God's* habitation.[2]	וּמְעוֹנָתוֹ בְּצִיּוֹן	ume'onato veTziyon.
[4] There *God* snuffed the archer's flame,	שָׁמָּה שִׁבַּר רִשְׁפֵי־קֶשֶׁת	Shamah shibar rishfei kashet,
cracked shield and sword in battle station.[3]	מָגֵן וְחֶרֶב וּמִלְחָמָה	magen vecherev umil'chamah.
Selah.	סֶלָה	Selah.
[5] You *far* outshine and *far* surpass	נָאוֹר אַתָּה אַדִּיר	Na'or atah, adir
the hills *where roam cruel beasts* of prey.[4]	מֵהַרְרֵי־טָרֶף	mehararei taref.
[6] Bold-hearted *warriors,* disarmed,	אֶשְׁתּוֹלְלוּ אַבִּירֵי לֵב	Eshtolelu abirei lev,
in slumber snored the time away,	נָמוּ שְׁנָתָם	namu shenatam
and lost all power to do harm …[5]	וְלֹא־מָצְאוּ כָל־אַנְשֵׁי־חַיִל יְדֵיהֶם	velo matzu chol anshei chayil yedeihem
[7] When Jacob's God rang the alarm	מִגַּעֲרָתְךָ אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב	Miga'arat'cha, Elohei Ya'akov,
and stunned both horse and charioteer.[6]	נִרְדָּם וְרֶכֶב וָסוּס	nirdam verechev vasus.

[1] "Known in-*the-territory-of*-Judah *is* God; / in-Israel*'s-territory* great *is God's*-name/reputation"; God is famous through both of the Jewish territories (the Northern kingdom seceded after Solomon's death).

[2] "And-it-is in-Shalem, *God's*-shelter; / and-*God's*-dwelling *is* in-Zion." Are both these locations in Jerusalem, Judah's territory? The politics could be a headache!

[3] "There *God*-broke the-fire-*arrows*-of the-archer / shield and-sword and war. / Selah." רֶשֶׁף could mean a live coal (perhaps from שרף, burning) or a lightning-bolt, or a fire-arrow, or perhaps any arrow as it flashes through the air.

[4] "Illuminated *are* you, splendid— / more-than-the-hills-of-prey."

[5] "They-were-plundered, the-mighty-of heart; / they-slumbered their-sleep / and-they-did-not-find, all-the-men-of-the-army, their-hands/powers …"

[6] "At-your-alarming-intervention, God of Jacob, were-stunned both-chariot and-horse." גְּעָרָה is usually translated "rebuke, reproof" but it causes terrestrial upheavals—earthquakes (Job 26:11) dry seas (Psa 18:25)—so I think it's like a terrible natural disaster.

[8] For you (O God) so daunting are—	אַתָּה נוֹרָא אַתָּה	Atah, norah atah,
who dares to face your rage severe?[1]	וּמִי־יַעֲמֹד לְפָנֶיךָ מֵאָז אַפֶּךָ	umi ya'amod lefanecha me'az apecha?
[9] From sky you made your guidance known,	מִשָּׁמַיִם הִשְׁמַעְתָּ דִּין	Mishamayim hishmata din;
which earth in silence did revere …[2]	אֶרֶץ יָרְאָה וְשָׁקָטָה	eretz yarah veshakata …
[10] When God rose verdict to declare,	בְּקוּם־לַמִּשְׁפָּט אֱלֹהִים	Bekum lamishpat Elohim
to save earth's meek *from undue fear*.	לְהוֹשִׁיעַ כָּל־עַנְוֵי־אָרֶץ	lehoshi'a kol anvei eretz.
Selah.[3]	סֶלָה	Selah.
[11] The fiercest will submit to you,	כִּי־חֲמַת אָדָם תּוֹדֶךָ	Ki chamat adam todeka,
to you cede their residual zeal.[4]	שְׁאֵרִית חֵמוֹת תַּחְגֹּר	she'erit chemot tachgor.
[12] Pledge—and pay your debt to God,	נִדְרוּ וְשַׁלְּמוּ לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם	Nidaru, veshalmu lAdonai Eloheichem;
whose council to their master kneel.[5]	כָּל־סְבִיבָיו יוֹבִילוּ שַׁי לַמּוֹרָא	kol sevivav yovilu shai lamora.
[13] *God* curbs impulsive presidents,	יִבְצֹר רוּחַ נְגִידִים	Yivtzor ru'ach negidim,
and *God's* dread, worldly sovereigns feel.[6]	נוֹרָא לְמַלְכֵי־אָרֶץ	nora lemalchei aretz.

[1] You—fearful/awesome *are* you, / and-who-can-stand before-you because-of-the-power-of your-anger?"
[2] "From-the-sky/heaven you-made-to-be-heard law/judgement; / Earth reverenced and-was-silent …"
[3] "At-the-standing-of for-*delivering*-the-verdict God (when God stood to deliver the verdict) / to-save all-the-meek/humble/oppressed-of-Earth. / Selah."
[4] "For-the-ferocity-of humanity will-acknowledge-you (i.e., even the most belligerent of people will eventually acknowledge and submit to God's power); / the-remainder-of *their* ferocity you-will-wear-like-a-belt (i.e., whatever ferocity is left after they submit to God, they'll hand it over to God so that God can be adorned with it as a garment)."
[5] "Make-a-pledge, and-pay-it-off, to-God your-God; / all-who-surround-*God* (God's council) will-bring tribute to-the-awesome-one (I translate "to their master kneel" because their tribute demonstrates submission).
[6] "*God*-curbs the-spirit-of chiefs; / aswesome *is God* to-kings-of-the-earth."

Psalm 77

[1] For the leader, *composed* by Yedutun,[1]	לַמְנַצֵּחַ עַל־יְדוּתוּן[2]	Lamnatze'ach, al Yedutun,
a psalm for Asaf.	לְאָסָף מִזְמוֹר	le'Asaf mizmor.
[2] I voice my cry toward *merciful* God;	קוֹלִי אֶל־אֱלֹהִים וְאֶצְעָקָה	Koli el Elohim, ve'etzakah;
to God I cry, that *God* may hear me.[3]	קוֹלִי אֶל־אֱלֹהִים וְהַאֲזִין אֵלָי	kol el Elohim, veha'azin elai.
[3] In my day of distress I sought for God;	בְּיוֹם צָרָתִי אֲדֹנָי דָּרָשְׁתִּי	Beyom tzarati, Adonai darashti;
at night, my power ebbed without respite,	יָדִי לַיְלָה נִגְּרָה וְלֹא תָפוּג	yadi layla nigra velo tafug;
I rebuffed all who tried to cheer me.[4]	מֵאֲנָה הִנָּחֵם נַפְשִׁי	me'ana hinachem nafshi.
[4] I'd mention God but groan *in pain;*	אֶזְכְּרָה אֱלֹהִים וְאֶהֱמָיָה	Ezkerah Elohim ve'ehemaya;
speaking was too much for me.	אָשִׂיחָה וְתִתְעַטֵּף רוּחִי	asicha vetitatef ruchi.
Selah.[5]	סֶלָה	Selah.
[5] You propped open my eyelids;	אָחַזְתָּ שְׁמֻרוֹת עֵינָי	Achazta shemurot einai;
I'm overtired and can't say anything.[6]	נִפְעַמְתִּי וְלֹא אֲדַבֵּר	nifamti velo adaber.
[6] I've been counting the days since creation,	חִשַּׁבְתִּי יָמִים מִקֶּדֶם	Chishavti yamim mikedem,
the years of the world's existence, *to fall asleep.*[7]	שְׁנוֹת עוֹלָמִים	shenot olamim.

[1] Psalms 39, 62 and 77 are associated with Yedutun; the name is listed as a minister when David placed the Ark with Obed-Edom (I Chron 16:38).

[2] A manuscript would have יְדִיתוּן, but יְדוּתוּן is more familiar.

[3] "My-voice *is directed* toward-God when-I-cry; / my-voice *is directed* toward-God, so-that-*God*-may-listen to-me."

[4] "In-the-day-of my-trouble, God did-I-seek; / my-hand/power at-night ebbed (or, my sore oozed all night) and-not did-it-slow-down; / it-refused to-be-comforted, my-self."

[5] "I-would-remember/mention God and-I-would-groan; / I-would-*try-to*-speak, and-wrapped/overwhelmed-would-be my-spirit. / Selah."

[6] "You-grasped the-lids-of my-eyes; / I-am-swung-like-a-pendulum and-not could-I-speak." The word שְׁמֻרָה occurs only here in Hebrew scripture; it could be related to "guard" because eyelids protect the eye, or "watch, guard duty" because people on guard duty should stay awake. The root of נִפְעַמְתִּי is פעם, a regular beat like a footstep or the clapper of a bell or heart going pit-a-pat, or a repeatable instance, and so on. It can mean disturbance, since one's heart may beat faster; or one may be beaten with repeated strokes of a cane, like an English schoolboy in times past, but in living memory (ouch).

[7] "I-calculated the-days since-long-ago, / the-years-of forevers." Presumably all this counting was an attempt to get to sleep.

[7] I'd think of a favorite lullaby,	אֶזְכְּרָה נְגִינָתִי בַלָּיְלָה	Ezkerah neginati balayla,
I'd spend time with my musings;	עִם־לְבָבִי אָשִׂיחָה	im levavi asicha,
my thoughts ranged far and wide.[1]	וַיְחַפֵּשׂ רוּחִי	vayechapess ruchi.
[8] Will God reject *me* forever	הַלְעוֹלָמִים יִזְנַח אֲדֹנָי	Hale'olamim yiznach Adonai
and never again favor *me?*[2]	וְלֹא־יֹסִיף לִרְצוֹת עוֹד	velo yosif lirtzot od?
[9] Is *God's* mercy completely finished,	הֶאָפֵס לָנֶצַח חַסְדּוֹ	He'afess lanetzach chasdo,
the promise cancelled forever and ever?	גָּמַר אֹמֶר לְדֹר וָדֹר	gamar omer ledor vador?
[10] Has God forgotten compassion?	הֲשָׁכַח חַנּוֹת אִם	Hashachach chanot El?
Has *God's* pity collapsed into anger?[3]	אִם־קָפַץ בְּאַף רַחֲמָיו	Im kafatz be'af rachamav?
Selah.	סֶלָה	Selah.
[11] I had to concede it was my own failing,	וָאֹמַר חַלּוֹתִי הִיא	Va'omar, "Chaloti hi,
the change *I felt* in God's effectiveness.[4]	שְׁנוֹת יְמִין עֶלְיוֹן	shenot yemin Elyon."
[12] I would remember divine actions	אֶזְכּוֹר[6] מַעַלְלֵי־יָהּ	Ezkor ma'alalei Yah
as I'd recall your wonders of long ago.[5]	כִּי־אֶזְכְּרָה מִקֶּדֶם פִּלְאֶךָ	ki ezkerah mikedem pilecha.
[13] I'd think of all your deeds	וְהָגִיתִי בְכָל־פָּעֳלֶךָ	Vehagiti vechol po'olecha,
and speak of your accomplishments.[7]	וּבַעֲלִילוֹתֶיךָ אָשִׂיחָה	uva'alilotecha asicha.
[14] God, in holiness your path goes;	אֱלֹהִים בַּקֹּדֶשׁ דַּרְכֶּךָ	Elohim bakodesh darkecha;
what deity is great like God?[8]	מִי־אֵל גָּדוֹל כֵּאלֹהִים	mi El gadol kElohim?
[15] You are the God who works wonders;	אַתָּה הָאֵל עֹשֵׂה פֶלֶא	Atah ha'El oseh feleh;
you displayed your power among the nations.[9]	הוֹדַעְתָּ בָעַמִּים עֻזֶּךָ	hodata va'amim uzecha.

[1] "I-would-remember my-song-of night-time (i.e., my lullaby; but נְגִינָה could also refer to taunting, satirical songs, so this could be, 'I remember the taunts *I endured* during the night, *when my enemies sang humiliating ditties about me.*'); / with my-heart I-would-hold-a-conversation, / and it-would-seek, my-spirit (i.e., my thoughts would search far and wide)."

[2] "Forever, will God reject *me?* / And-not-continue to-grant-favor *ever* more?"

[3] "Has-he-forgotten kindnesses, God? / *I wonder* whether-*they*-have-sprung into-anger, his-mercies."

[4] "I'd-say, 'My-weakness *is the cause of* this, / the-change-of the-right-hand-of the-High-One.'"

[5] "I-would-recall/mention the-deeds-of-God / when-I-would-recall/mention from-earliest-times your-wonders."

[6] A manuscript would have אזכיר, "I would cause someone to recall."

[7] "And-I-would-meditate on-all-your-wonders / and-of-your-deeds I-would-converse."

[8] "God, in/toward-the-holy-*place is* your-path; / who-*is*-a-God great as-God?"

[9] "You *are* the-God who-performs a-miracle; / you-made-known among-the-nations your-strength."

[16] You yourself saved your people,	גָּאַלְתָּ בִּזְרוֹעַ עַמֶּךָ	Ga'alta bizro'ah amecha,
Jacob's descendants, and Joseph.	בְּנֵי־יַעֲקֹב וְיוֹסֵף	benei Ya'kov veYosef.
Selah.[1]	סֶלָה	Selah.
[17] The waters saw you, God,	רָאוּךָ מַיִם אֱלֹהִים	Ra'ucha mayim Elohim,
the waters saw you and surged;	רָאוּךָ מַיִם יָחִילוּ	ra'ucha mayim—yachilu;
even the depths quaked.	אַף יִרְגְּזוּ תְהֹמוֹת	af yirgezu tehomot.
[18] Thick *clouds* gushed rain;	זֹרְמוּ מַיִם עָבוֹת	Zormu mayim avot;
skies produced thunderous noise;	קוֹל נָתְנוּ שְׁחָקִים	kol natnu shechakim;
and your arrows of *lightning* flew forth.	אַף־חִצָּיְךָ יִתְהַלָּכוּ	af chatzatzecha yit'halachu.
[19] Your booming thunder was in the whirlwind;	קוֹל רַעַמְךָ בַּגַּלְגַּל	Kol ra'am'cha bagalgal;
lightning-flashes lit the ground;	הֵאִירוּ בְרָקִים תֵּבֵל	he'iru verakim tevel;
the earth trembled and shook.	רָגְזָה וַתִּרְעַשׁ הָאָרֶץ	ragzah vatirash ha'aretz.
[20] Through the sea *goes* your road	בַּיָּם דַּרְכֶּךָ	Bayam darkecha
and your path through great waters	וּשְׁבִילְךָ[3] בְּמַיִם רַבִּים	ushevil'cha bemayim rabim—
yet your trail is undetectable.[2]	וְעִקְּבוֹתֶיךָ לֹא נֹדָעוּ	ve'ikvotecha lo noda'u.
[21] You led your people like a flock *of sheep,*	נָחִיתָ כַצֹּאן עַמֶּךָ	Nachita chatzon amecha
guided by Moses and Aaron.	בְּיַד־מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן	beyad Moshe ve'Aharon.

[1] "You-saved with-outstretched-arm (i.e., with personal intervention) your-people, / children-of-Jacob, and-Joseph. / Selah." Joseph is one of Jacob's children, but the poet singles him out.

[2] "… and-your-footsteps not are-known."

[3] A manuscript would have ושבילך, "your paths (plural)."

Psalm 78

[1] A teaching poem for Asaf.	מַשְׂכִּיל לְאָסָף	Maskil le'Asaf.
My people, hear my teaching;	הַאֲזִינָה עַמִּי תּוֹרָתִי	Ha'azinah, ami, Torati;
listen to what I say.	הַטּוּ אָזְנְכֶם לְאִמְרֵי־פִי	hatu oznechem le'imrei fi.
[2] I'll start with an example,	אֶפְתְּחָה בְמָשָׁל פִּי	Eftecha vemashal pi,
I'll solve problems of the past[1]	אַבִּיעָה חִידוֹת מִנִּי־קֶדֶם	abi'ah chidot mini kedem
[3] That we've heard, that are familiar,	אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְנוּ וַנֵּדָעֵם	Asher shamanu vaneda'em
since our ancestors told them to us.	וַאֲבוֹתֵינוּ סִפְּרוּ־לָנוּ	va'avoteinu sipru lanu.
[4] We won't keep them from their children;	לֹא נְכַחֵד מִבְּנֵיהֶם	Lo nechached mibneihem;
we tell the next generation	לְדוֹר אַחֲרוֹן מְסַפְּרִים	ledor acharon mesaprim
God's praises and power	תְּהִלּוֹת יהוה וְעֻזּוֹ	tehilot Adonai ve'ezuzo,
and wonders *God* has done.	וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה	venifle'otav asher asah.
[5] *God* established a principle for Jacob	וַיָּקֶם עֵדוּת בְּיַעֲקֹב	Vayakem edut beYa'akov
and gave guidance to Israel,	וְתוֹרָה שָׂם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל	veTorah sam beYisra'el,
commanding our ancestors	אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֶת־אֲבוֹתֵינוּ	asher tzivah et avoteinu
to teach these matters to their children	לְהוֹדִיעָם לִבְנֵיהֶם	lehodi'am livneihem
[6] So a future generation would know—	לְמַעַן יֵדְעוּ דּוֹר אַחֲרוֹן	Lema'an yedu dor acharon—
children yet to be born—	בָּנִים יִוָּלֵדוּ	banim yivaledu—
and grow up and tell their children,	יָקֻמוּ וִיסַפְּרוּ לִבְנֵיהֶם	yakumu visapru livneihem,
[7] So they would place their hope[2] in God	וְיָשִׂימוּ בֵאלֹהִים כִּסְלָם	Veyasimu vElohim kislam
and not forget God's deeds,	וְלֹא יִשְׁכְּחוּ מַעַלְלֵי־אֵל	velo yishkechu ma'alelei El,
but keep *God's* commandments.	וּמִצְוֹתָיו יִנְצֹרוּ	umitzvotav yintzoru.
[8] So they wouldn't be like their ancestors,	וְלֹא יִהְיוּ כַּאֲבוֹתָם	Velo yiheyu ka'avotam,
a misled and rebellious generation,	דּוֹר סוֹרֵר וּמֹרֶה	dor sorer umoreh,
a wishy-washy generation	דּוֹר לֹא־הֵכִין לִבּוֹ	dor lo hechin libo,
that wouldn't rely on God who gave them life.[3]	וְלֹא־נֶאֱמְנָה אֶת־אֵל רוּחוֹ	velo ne'emnah et El rucho.

[1] "I-shall-open with-a-parable/story/example my-mouth; / I-shall-enquire-into enigmas from-the-past."

[2] From כֶּסֶל, which means loins or flank, folly or stupidity, and confidence or hope—a strange group of connotations. כסל occurs five times in Leviticus, referring to part of a sacrificial animal, thirteen times in our scripture.

[3] "And-not shall-they-be like-their-ancestors, / a-generation straying and-rebellious, / a-generation that-did-not-settle its-heart / and-was-not-trusting-in God its-spirit (i.e., its breathing-enabler or life-giver)." סוֹרֵר וּמֹרֶה recalls the "stubborn and rebellious child" of Deut. 21:18.

[9] The Ephraimites,	בְּנֵי־אֶפְרַיִם	Benei Efrayim,
were well equipped with archers,	נוֹשְׁקֵי רוֹמֵי־קָשֶׁת	noshkei romei kashet,
but still turned tail in the battle.[1]	הָפְכוּ בְיוֹם קְרָב	hafchu beyom kerav.
[10] They didn't keep the agreement with God	לֹא שָׁמְרוּ בְּרִית אֱלֹהִים	Lo shamru berit Elohim,
and refused to follow *God's* teaching.[2]	וּבְתוֹרָתוֹ מֵאֲנוּ לָלֶכֶת	uveTorato me'anu lalechet.
[11] They forgot *God's* deeds,	וַיִּשְׁכְּחוּ עֲלִילוֹתָיו	Vayishkechu alilotav,
the marvels *God* showed them.	וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר הֶרְאָם	venifle'otav asher her'am.
[12] In front of their ancestors *God* did wonders	נֶגֶד אֲבוֹתָם עָשָׂה פֶלֶא	Neged avotam asah feleh
in the land of Egypt, *in the* plain of Tzo'an:[3]	בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם שְׂדֵה־צוֹעַן	be'eretz Mitzrayim, sedeh Tzo'an:
[13] *God* split the sea and brought them through it,	בָּקַע יָם וַיַּעֲבִירֵם	Bakah yam vaya'avirem,
made water stand *solid* as a wall,	וַיַּצֶּב־מַיִם כְּמוֹ־נֵד	vayatzev mayim kemo ned,
[14] Led them by day with a cloud	וַיַּנְחֵם בֶּעָנָן יוֹמָם	Vayan'chem be'anan yomam
and all the *dark* night with the light of fire,	וְכָל־הַלַּיְלָה בְּאוֹר אֵשׁ	vechol halaylah be'or ha'esh,
[15] Split rocks in the *arid* desert	יְבַקַּע צֻרִים בַּמִּדְבָּר	Yevakah tzurim bamidbar
and gave them drink as if from great depths,	וַיַּשְׁקְ כִּתְהֹמוֹת רַבָּה	vayashk kit'homot rabah,
[16] Brought streams out of a boulder,	וַיּוֹצֵא נוֹזְלִים מִסָּלַע	Vayotzi nozlim misalah,
made water run down like rivers—	וַיּוֹרֶד כַּנְּהָרוֹת מָיִם	vayored kanharot mayim—
[17] But still they kept on sinning against *God*	וַיּוֹסִיפוּ עוֹד לַחֲטֹא־לוֹ	Vayosifu od lachato lo,
to spite the One on High, in the wilderness.	לַמְרוֹת עֶלְיוֹן בַּצִּיָּה	lamrot Elyom batziyah.
[18] They thought to test God,[4]	וַיְנַסּוּ־אֵל בִּלְבָבָם	Vaynasu El bilvavam,
demanding food to keep them alive,	לִשְׁאָל־אֹכֶל לְנַפְשָׁם	lishal ochel lenafsham,

[1] A midrash based on I Chron. 7:21 tells that Ephraimites miscalculated the date of the Exodus and left Egypt 30 years too early, and were beaten in battle at Gath. (Rabbi David Adani's *Midrash Hagadol*, vol. II of the Berlin edition, page 131 on Ex 13:17). "The-children-of-Ephraim, / *though* equipped-with shooters-of-bows, / turned-back on-the-day-of battle."

[2] "And-with-*God's*-Torah/teaching/guidance they-refused to-walk."

[3] A place mentioned in verse 43, Num 13:22, Isa 19:11, and others.

[4] "And-they-tested-God in-their-heart."

[19] And they challenged God, saying:	וַיְדַבְּרוּ בֵאלֹהִים אָמְרוּ	Vayedabru bElohim; amru,
"Can God	הֲיוּכַל אֵל	"Hayuchal El
make a meal[1] in the desert?	לַעֲרֹךְ שֻׁלְחָן בַּמִּדְבָּר	la'aroch shulchan bamidbar?
[20] Sure, *God* struck a rock	הֵן הִכָּה־צוּר	Hen, hikah tzur
and water flowed, rivers gushed;	וַיָּזוּבוּ מַיִם וּנְחָלִים יִשְׁטָפוּ	vayazuvu mayim unechalim yishtofu;
but can *God* give *us* food too,	הֲגַם־לֶחֶם יוּכַל תֵּת	hagam lechem yuchal tet,
can *God* fix us some meat *to eat*?"[2]	אִם־יָכִין שְׁאֵר לְעַמּוֹ	im yachin she'er le'amo?"
[21] God heard this and became cross,	לָכֵן שָׁמַע יהוה וַיִּתְעַבָּר	Lechen shamah Adonai vayitaber,
fire blazed against Jacob*'s family*	וְאֵשׁ נִשְּׂקָה בְיַעֲקֹב	ve'esh niskah veYa'akov,
and anger rose against Israel	וְגַם־אַף עָלָה בְיִשְׂרָאֵל	vegam af alah veYisra'el
[22] Since they didn't believe in God	כִּי לֹא הֶאֱמִינוּ בֵאלֹהִים	Ki lo he'eminu bElohim
nor trust in *God's* salvation	וְלֹא בָטְחוּ בִּישׁוּעָתוֹ	velo vat'chu bishu'ato.
[23] Though *God* had told the heavens above	וַיְצַו שְׁחָקִים מִמָּעַל	Vayetzav shechakim mima'al
and had opened the doors of the sky	וְדַלְתֵי שָׁמַיִם פָּתָח	vedaltei shamayim patach,
[24] To rain manna upon them, to eat,	וַיַּמְטֵר עֲלֵיהֶם מָן לֶאֱכֹל	Vayamter aleihem man le'echol
and had given them grain from heaven.	וּדְגַן־שָׁמַיִם נָתַן לָמוֹ	udegan shamayim natan lamo.
[25] Each person ate food *fit* for champions[3]	לֶחֶם אַבִּירִים אָכַל אִישׁ	Lechem abirim achal ish;
since *God* had sent them plenty of provisions.	צֵידָה שָׁלַח לָהֶם לָשֹׂבַע	tzedah shalach lahem lasovah.
[26] *God* sent the east *wind* in the sky	יַסַּע קָדִים בַּשָּׁמָיִם	Yasah kadim bashamayim,
and drove the south *wind* by *God's* power,	וַיְנַהֵג בְּעֻזּוֹ תֵּימָן	vaynaheg be'uzo teiman,
[27] Rained meat on them, like *a coating of* dust,	וַיַּמְטֵר עֲלֵיהֶם כֶּעָפָר שְׁאֵר	Vayamter aleihem ke'afar she'er,
winged birds like the sand of the sea,	וּכְחוֹל יַמִּים עוֹף כָּנָף	uchechol yamim of kanaf,
[28] Dropped *the birds* right in their camp,	וַיִּפֹּל בְּקֶרֶב מַחֲנֵהוּ	Vayapel bekerev machaneihu,
around their living quarters.	סָבִיב לְמִשְׁכְּנֹתָיו	saviv lemishkenotav.
[29] They ate and were completely satisfied—	וַיֹּאכְלוּ וַיִּשְׂבְּעוּ מְאֹד	Vayochlu vayisbe'u me'od,
all that they longed for came to them.	וְתַאֲוָתָם יָבֹא לָהֶם	veta'avatam yavi lahem.

[1] "To set a table."

[2] "*We wonder* whether-*God*-will-prepare flesh for-*God's*-people."

[3] Champions, or warriors, or heroes, or even angels; some translate this as angels' food.

[30] But before they were rid of their craving,[1]	לֹא־זָרוּ מִתַּאֲוָתָם	Lo zaru mita'avatam,
with the food still in their mouths,	עוֹד אָכְלָם בְּפִיהֶם	od ochlam befihem,
[31] God's anger rose against them;	וְאַף אֱלֹהִים עָלָה בָהֶם	Ve'af Elohim alah vahem;
God slew their greasy *chops*	וַיַּהֲרֹג בְּמִשְׁמַנֵּיהֶם	vayaharog bemishmaneihem,
and crushed Israel's chosen *leaders.*	וּבַחוּרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הִכְרִיעַ	uvachurei Yisra'el hichri'ah.
[32] Despite this, they kept on sinning	בְּכָל־זֹאת חָטְאוּ־עוֹד	Bechol zot chatu od
and did not believe in *God's* wonders,	וְלֹא־הֶאֱמִינוּ בְּנִפְלְאוֹתָיו	velo he'eminu benifle'otav,
[33] So *God* ended their days in a puff of air	וַיְכַל־בַּהֶבֶל יְמֵיהֶם	Vayechal bahevel yemeihem
and their years in *mortal* terror.	וּשְׁנוֹתָם בַּבְּהָלָה	ushenotam babehalah.

[34] When *God* struck them, they tried to find *God,*	אִם־הָרָגָם וּדְרָשׁוּהוּ	Im haragam uderashuhu
they returned and rose early to seek God.[2]	וְשָׁבוּ וְשִׁחֲרוּ־אֵל	veshavu veshicharu El.
[35] They remembered that God is their rock,	וַיִּזְכְּרוּ כִּי־אֱלֹהִים צוּרָם	Vayizkeru ki Elohim tzuram,
God on high their redeemer.	וְאֵל עֶלְיוֹן גֹּאֲלָם	ve'El elyon go'alam.
[36] But they deceived *God* when they spoke	וַיְפַתּוּהוּ בְּפִיהֶם	Vayfatuhu befihem,
and lied to *God* with their language.	וּבִלְשׁוֹנָם יְכַזְּבוּ־לוֹ	uvilshonam yechazvu lo.
[37] Their aims were not aligned with *God*	וְלִבָּם לֹא־נָכוֹן עִמּוֹ	Velibam lo nachon imo,
nor were they true to *God's* contract.	וְלֹא נֶאֶמְנוּ בִּבְרִיתוֹ	velo ne'emnu bivrito.
[38] Yet *God* is merciful, excuses sin	וְהוּא רַחוּם יְכַפֵּר עָוֹן	Vehu rachum yechaper avon
and will not destroy *us*,	וְלֹא־יַשְׁחִית	velo yashchit,
often withholds divine anger	וְהִרְבָּה לְהָשִׁיב אַפּוֹ	vehirbah lehashiv apo,
and does not arouse all *God's* rage.[3]	וְלֹא־יָעִיר כָּל־חֲמָתוֹ	velo ya'ir kol chamato.
[39] So *God* remembered that they're mortals,	וַיִּזְכֹּר כִּי־בָשָׂר הֵמָּה	Vayizkor ki vasar hemah,
a breath that passes but never returns.	רוּחַ הוֹלֵךְ וְלֹא יָשׁוּב	ru'ach holech velo yashuv.

[1] "Not they-had-separated from-their-craving / still their-food *was* in-their-mouths."

[2] The root שָׁחַר is the word for dawn; as a verb it's understood as "seek early," implying wholehearted remorse.

[3] "And-*God who is* merciful will-pay-off wrongdoing/offense/sin and-not will-destroy and-has-acted-repeatedly to-turn-back *God's*-anger and-not will-awaken all *God's*-anger." Even if we suffer, we say that we deserve worse, and so our suffering shows God's mercy. The word יְכַפֵּר is in "Yom Kippur"; the concept we translate as "atonement" also carries the idea of paying off required compensation for a misdeed—paying a fine, or ransom money. If life were Monopoly, God would be our Get Out of Jail Free card.

[40] They defied *God* so often in the desert	כַּמָּה יַמְרוּהוּ בַמִּדְבָּר	Kamah yamruhu vamidbar,
and grieved *God* in the wilderness!	יַעֲצִיבוּהוּ בִּישִׁימוֹן	ya'atzivuhu bishimon!
[41] Repeatedly, they challenged God	וַיָּשׁוּבוּ וַיְנַסּוּ אֵל	Vayashuvu vaynasu El,
and brought pain to Israel's Holy One.	וּקְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל הִתְווּ	uKedosh Yisra'el hitvu.
[42] They forgot *God's* power—	לֹא־זָכְרוּ אֶת־יָדוֹ	Lo zachru et yado—
the day *God* saved them from their oppressors,	יוֹם אֲשֶׁר־פָּדָם מִנִּי־צָר	yom asher padam mini tzar,
[43] When *God* placed *God's* signs in Egypt	אֲשֶׁר־שָׂם בְּמִצְרַיִם אֹתוֹתָיו	Asher sam beMitzrayim ototav
and marvels in the region of Tzo'an,[1]	וּמוֹפְתָיו בִּשְׂדֵה־צוֹעַן	umoftav bisdeh Tzo'an,
[44] Turned their rivers into blood	וַיַּהֲפֹךְ לְדָם יְאֹרֵיהֶם	Vayahafoch ledam ye'oreihem
and made their streams undrinkable,	וְנוְזֵלֵיהֶם בַּל־יִשְׁתָּיוּן	venozleihem bal yishtayun,
[45] Sent swarms *of beasts* to devour them[2]	יְשַׁלַּח בָּהֶם עָרֹב וַיֹּאכְלֵם	Yeshalach bahem arov vayochlem
and frogs to ruin them,	וּצְפַרְדֵּעַ וַתַּשְׁחִיתֵם	utzefarde'a vatashchitem,
[46] Gave their crops over to bugs	וַיִּתֵּן לֶחָסִיל יְבוּלָם	Vayiten lechasil yevulam
and their produce to locusts,	וִיגִיעָם לָאַרְבֶּה	vigi'am la'arbeh,
[47] Killed off their vines with hail	יַהֲרֹג בַּבָּרָד גַּפְנָם	Yaharog babarad gafnam
and their sycamores with frost,[3]	וְשִׁקְמוֹתָם בַּחֲנָמַל	veshikmotam bachanamal,
[48] Delivered their beasts to hail,	וַיַּסְגֵּר לַבָּרָד בְּעִירָם	Vayasger labarad be'iram
their livestock to lightning,[4]	וּמִקְנֵיהֶם לָרְשָׁפִים	umikneihem larshafim,
[49] Sent them blazing anger,	יְשַׁלַּח־בָּם חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ	Yeshalach bam charon apo,
wrath, and fury, and trouble,	עֶבְרָה וָזַעַם וְצָרָה	evra, vaza'am, vetzarah,
a pack of devils,	מִשְׁלַחַת מַלְאֲכֵי רָעִים	mishlachat mal'achei ra'im,
[50] Cleared a path for *unchecked* anger,	יְפַלֵּס נָתִיב לְאַפּוֹ	Yefaless nativ le'apo,
gave them over to death[5]	לֹא־חָשַׂךְ מִמָּוֶת נַפְשָׁם	lo chasach mimavet nafsham,
and yielded their lives to pestilence.	וְחַיָּתָם לַדֶּבֶר הִסְגִּיר	vechayatam ladever hisgir.

[1] A place mentioned in verse 12, Num 13:22, Isa 19:11, and others.

[2] The root ערב means a mixture, so the plague of עָרֹב could be an attack of wild beasts—lions and tigers and bears, oh my!—but it could also be a mixture of something else. Or, the same root with different vowel is used for raven or crow. וַיֹּאכְלֵם means "and they ate them"—the lions *threatened to* eat the Egyptians or maybe the Egyptians ate crow.

[3] Some say חֲנָמַל is frost (the LXX uses πάχνη from the Greek for frost), perhaps alluding to the hail that rained down; others think it's some kind of pest that killed the trees.

[4] Ex. 13:24, the hail was mixed with fire, perhaps a storm with hail and lightning.

[5] "Did-not-keep from-death their-lives."

[51] *God* struck every firstborn in Egypt,	וַיַּךְ כָּל־בְּכוֹר בְּמִצְרָיִם	Vayach kol bechor beMitzrayim,
their foremost strength,[1] in the tents of Cham,	רֵאשִׁית אוֹנִים בְּאָהֳלֵי־חָם	reshit onim be'oholei Cham,
[52] *God* sent *God's* people like sheep,	וַיַּסַּע כַּצֹּאן עַמּוֹ	Vayasah katzon amo,
led them like a flock in the wilderness;	וַיְנַהֲגֵם כַּעֵדֶר בַּמִּדְבָּר	vaynahagem ka'eder bamidbar,
[53] *God* guided them safely—they had no fear,	וַיַּנְחֵם לָבֶטַח וְלֹא פָחָדוּ	Vayan'chem lavetach, velo fachadu,
for the sea had engulfed their enemies.	וְאֶת־אוֹיְבֵיהֶם כִּסָּה הַיָּם	ve'et oyveihem kisah hayam,
[54] *God* brought them to the holy *land's* border,	וַיְבִיאֵם אֶל־גְּבוּל קָדְשׁוֹ	Vayvi'em el gevul kodsho,
this mountain *God's* power[2] had acquired,	הַר־זֶה קָנְתָה יְמִינוֹ	har zeh kantah yemino,
[55] And supplanted *other* nations before them	וַיְגָרֶשׁ מִפְּנֵיהֶם גּוֹיִם	Vaygaresh mipneihem goyim,
to land them in ancestral territory,[3]	וַיַּפִּילֵם בְּחֶבֶל נַחֲלָה	vayapilem bechevel nachalah,
settled in *those people's* dwellings	וַיַּשְׁכֵּן בְּאָהֳלֵיהֶם	vayashken be'oholeihem
the tribes of Israel.	שִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל	shivtei Yisra'el.
[56] Yet they tested and defied God on high	וַיְנַסּוּ וַיַּמְרוּ אֶת־אֱלֹהִים עֶלְיוֹן	Vaynasu vayamru et Elohim elyon,
and did not keep *God's* commands.	וְעֵדוֹתָיו לֹא שָׁמָרוּ	ve'edotav lo shamaru,
[57] They dodged and cheated, like their ancestors,	וַיִּסֹּגוּ וַיִּבְגְּדוּ כַּאֲבוֹתָם	Vayisogu vayivgedu ka'avotam,
turned back like a treacherous archer,[4]	נֶהְפְּכוּ כְּקֶשֶׁת רְמִיָּה	nehpechu kekeshet remiyah,
[58] Angered *God* with their *illicit* altars	וַיַּכְעִיסוּהוּ בְּבָמוֹתָם	Vayachisuhu bevamotam,
and provoked *God's* indignation with their idols.	וּבִפְסִילֵיהֶם יַקְנִיאוּהוּ	uvifsileihem yakni'uhu.
[59] God heard of this and got cross,	שָׁמַע אֱלֹהִים וַיִּתְעַבָּר	Shamah Elohim vayitabar,
completely disgusted with Israel,	וַיִּמְאַס מְאֹד בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל	vayimass me'od beYisra'el,
[60] Abandoned the tabernacle at Shiloh,	וַיִּטֹּשׁ מִשְׁכַּן שִׁלוֹ	Vayitosh mishkan Shiloh,
God's dwelling, placed among people,	אֹהֶל שָׁכַן בָּאָדָם	ohel shiken ba'adam,
[61] And sent *God's* power to the *former* captive,	וַיִּתֵּן לַשִּׁבְי עֻזּוֹ	Vayiten lashvi uzo,
God's splendor to the enemy's control,[5]	וְתִפְאַרְתּוֹ בְּיַד־צָר	vetifarto veyad tzar,

[1] "The-first-of their-generative-power" (some think successive children receive less and less parental vigor).
[2] "Right *hand."*
[3] "And-brought-them-down into-the-territory-of their-heritage"; *their* heritage could be the heritage of expelled nations who had lived in that land for some generations, or the heritage of the Israelites who had been promised that land since Abraham's time.
[4] "They-were-overturned/reversed like-an-archer's-bow-of deceit"; like archers who turn and run, I presume, as the Ephraimites in verse 9.
[5] "And-*God*-gave to-the-captive *God's*-power, / and-*God's*-splendor into-the-hand/power-of-an-enemy."

[62] Delivered *God's* people to the sword	וַיַּסְגֵּר לַחֶרֶב עַמּוֹ	Vayasger lacherev amo,
since God was angry at *God's* own inheritance.	וּבְנַחֲלָתוֹ הִתְעַבָּר	uvenachalato hitabar.
[63] Fire consumed *God's* young men,	בַּחוּרָיו אָכְלָה־אֵשׁ	Bachurav achlah esh,
God's young women earned no praise,	וּבְתוּלֹתָיו לֹא הוּלָלוּ	uvetulot lo hulalu,
[64] *God's* priests fell by the sword	כֹּהֲנָיו בַּחֶרֶב נָפָלוּ	Kohanav bacherev nafalu,
and *God's* widows exhausted their tears.	וְאַלְמְנֹתָיו לֹא תִבְכֶּינָה	ve'almenotav lo tivkenah.
[65] But God arose, as if from sleep,	וַיִּקַץ כְּיָשֵׁן אֲדֹנָי	Vayikatz keyashen Adonai,
like a *tipsy* warrior roused from wine,	כְּגִבּוֹר מִתְרוֹנֵן מִיָּיִן	kegibor mitronen miyayin,
[66] Who smote the foe and drove them back,	וַיַּךְ־צָרָיו אָחוֹר	Vayach tzarav achor,
delivered them to endless shame.	חֶרְפַּת עוֹלָם נָתַן לָמוֹ	cherpat olam natan lamo.
[67] But loathed Joseph's community	וַיִּמְאַס בְּאֹהֶל יוֹסֵף	Vayimass be'ohel Yosef,
and would not choose Ephraim's kin.	וּבְשֵׁבֶט אֶפְרַיִם לֹא בָחָר	uveshevet Efrayim lo vachar,
[68] Who instead favored Judah's tribe	וַיִּבְחַר אֶת־שֵׁבֶט יְהוּדָה	Vayivchar et shevet Yehudah,
with Zion Hill, *God's* favored place	אֶת־הַר צִיּוֹן אֲשֶׁר אָהֵב	et Har Tziyon asher ahev,
[69] And built the sanctuary as high	וַיִּבֶן כְּמוֹ־רָמִים מִקְדָּשׁוֹ	Vayiven kemo ramim mikdasho,
as Earth's eternal bedrock base,	כָּאָרֶץ יְסָדָהּ לְעוֹלָם	ke'eretz yesadah le'olam,
[70] Chose David as *God's* minister,	וַיִּבְחַר בְּדָוִד עַבְדּוֹ	Vayivchar beDavid avdo,
and took him from the shepherd's fold,	וַיִּקָּחֵהוּ מִמִּכְלְאֹת צֹאן	vayikachehu mimichle'ot tzon,
[71] Brought him from *looking* after nursing lambs	מֵאַחַר עָלוֹת הֱבִיאוֹ	Me'achar alot hevi'o
to tend Jacob*'s descendants, God's* people,	לִרְעוֹת בְּיַעֲקֹב עַמּוֹ	lirot beYa'akov amo
and Israel, *God's* heritage:[1]	וּבְיִשְׂרָאֵל נַחֲלָתוֹ	uveYisra'el nachalato
[72] With pure heart *David* tended them	וַיִּרְעֵם כְּתֹם לְבָבוֹ	Vayirem ketom levavo
and guided them with skillful hands.	וּבִתְבוּנוֹת כַּפָּיו יַנְחֵם	uvitvunot kapav yan'chem.

[1] "To-shepherd with-Jacob *God's*-people and-with-Israel *God's*-heritage" (instead of "God's" people and heritage the poet may mean David's people and heritage)

Psalm 79

[1] A tune for Asaf.	מִזְמוֹר לְאָסָף	Mizmor le'Asaf.
God, strangers seize your legacy	אֱלֹהִים בָּאוּ גוֹיִם בְּנַחֲלָתֶךָ	Elohim, ba'u goyim benachalatecha,
your holy Temple they defile	טִמְּאוּ אֶת־הֵיכַל קָדְשֶׁךָ	timu et heichal kodshecha,
Jerusalem in ruins pile.[1]	שָׂמוּ אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם לְעִיִּים	samu et Yerushala'im le'iyim.
[2] They left your servants' corpses bare	נָתְנוּ אֶת־נִבְלַת עֲבָדֶיךָ	Natnu et nivlat avadecha
to the sky, the swooping vulture's fare,	מַאֲכָל לְעוֹף הַשָּׁמָיִם	ma'achal le'of hashamayim,
flesh for the forest beasts to tear.[2]	בְּשַׂר חֲסִידֶיךָ לְחַיְתוֹ־אָרֶץ	besar chasidecha lechayto aretz.
[3] Their blood gushed through Jerusalem	שָׁפְכוּ דָמָם כַּמַּיִם סְבִיבוֹת	Shafchu damam kamayim sevivot
and no-one cares to bury them.[3]	יְרוּשָׁלָם וְאֵין קוֹבֵר	Yerushalayim, ve'ein kover.
[4] Our neighbors view us in disgrace	הָיִינוּ חֶרְפָּה לִשְׁכֵנֵינוּ	Hayinu cherpah lishcheneinu,
with scorn and blame wherever we face.[4]	לַעַג וָקֶלֶס לִסְבִיבוֹתֵינוּ	la'ag vakeless lisvivoteinu.
[5] How long, God, must your ire prevail,	עַד־מָה יהוה תֶּאֱנַף לָנֶצַח	Ad mah, Adonai, te'enaf lanetzach,
your blazing indignation rail?[5]	תִּבְעַר כְּמוֹ־אֵשׁ קִנְאָתֶךָ	tivar kemo esh kinatecha?
[6] May your anger overwhelm	שְׁפֹךְ חֲמָתְךָ אֶל־הַגּוֹיִם	Shefoch chamat'cha el hagoyim
the nations who ignore you,	אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יְדָעוּךָ	asher lo yeda'ucha
and *engulf* each *heathen* realm	וְעַל מַמְלָכוֹת	ve'al mamlachot
whose people ne'er implore you.[6]	אֲשֶׁר בְּשִׁמְךָ לֹא קָרָאוּ	asher beshimcha lo kara'u.
[7] For Jacob they have swallowed,	כִּי אָכַל אֶת־יַעֲקֹב	ki achal et Ya'akov
left his home in devastation.[7]	וְאֶת־נָוֵהוּ הֵשַׁמּוּ	ve'et navehu heshamu.

[1] "A-psalm/tune for/by-Asaf / / God, they-have-come, *foreign*-peoples into-your-heritage/legacy (foreigners have invaded God's land); they-have-desecrated the-sanctuary-of your-holiness (the Temple); / they-have-set Jerusalem to-piles (they've made it a pile of ruins)."

[2] "*The invaders* provided the-corpses-of your-servants/worshippers / *as* food for-a-bird-of the-skies, / flesh-of your-devotees for-the-undomesticated-animal-of-the-land."

[3] "They-poured their-blood like-water around / Jerusalem, and-there-is-no burier."

[4] "We-became a-disgrace to-our-neighbors / scorn and-derision for-those-around-us."

[5] "Until-what, God, will-you-fume-*angrily* to-an-extreme-degree (נֶצַח often implies preeminence, victory or eternal endurance), / will-burn like-fire your-zealousness?"

[6] "Pour-out your-anger upon-the-peoples / that have-not-known/acknowledged-you, / and-upon the-realms / that on-your-name/reputation not have-called."

[7] "For *such-a-nation*-has-consumed Jacob, / and-his-abode they-have-devastated."

[8] Don't blame us for offenses by	אַל־תִּזְכָּר־לָנוּ עֲוֹנֹת	Al tizkor lanu avonot
the founders of our nation;	רִאשֹׁנִים	rishonim;
quick, let your mercies reach us first,	מַהֵר יְקַדְּמוּנוּ רַחֲמֶיךָ	maher, yekadmunu rachamecha
plunged into desolation![1]	כִּי דַלּוֹנוּ מְאֹד	ki dalonu me'od.
[9] Help us, God who rescues us,	עָזְרֵנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעֵנוּ	Ozrenu, Elohei yish'enu,
for your glorification;	עַל־דְּבַר כְּבוֹד־שְׁמֶךָ	al devar kevod shemecha,
save us and forgive our sins	וְהַצִּילֵנוּ וְכַפֵּר עַל־חַטֹּאתֵינוּ	vehatzilenu, vechaper al chatoteinu,
for your *great* reputation.[2]	לְמַעַן שְׁמֶךָ	lema'an shemecha.
[10] Why may those heathen nations ask,	לָמָּה יֹאמְרוּ הַגּוֹיִם	Lamah yomru hagoyim,
"Where is their *Hebrew* God *they serve*?"	אַיֵּה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם	"Ayeh Eloheihem?"
God, show us how you take to task	יִוָּדַע בַּגּוֹיִם לְעֵינֵינוּ	Yivadah bagoyim le'eineinu
our enemies, as they well deserve![3]	נִקְמַת דַּם־עֲבָדֶיךָ הַשָּׁפוּךְ	nikmat dam avadecha hashafuch!
[11] Attend the convicts' anguished cry;	תָּבוֹא לְפָנֶיךָ אֲנָקַת אָסִיר	Tavo lefanecha enkat asir;
show how you save those doomed to die.[4]	כְּגֹדֶל זְרוֹעֲךָ הוֹתֵר בְּנֵי תְמוּתָה	kegodel zero'acha hoter benei temuta.
[12] Pay back our neighbors—enemies!—	וְהָשֵׁב לִשְׁכֵנֵינוּ	Vehashev lishcheneinu,
and let them feel a thousandfold	שִׁבְעָתַיִם אֶל־חֵיקָם	shivatayim el cheikam;
the shame of lies and calumnies	חֶרְפָּתָם	cherpatam
about you, God, they boldly told.[5]	אֲשֶׁר חֵרְפוּךָ אֲדֹנָי	asher cherfucha, Adonai.
[13] While we, your folk, the flock you tend,	וַאֲנַחְנוּ עַמְּךָ וְצֹאן מַרְעִיתֶךָ	Va'anachnu am'cha vetzon mar'itecha
will voice our thanks without an end,	נוֹדֶה לְךָ לְעוֹלָם	Nodeh lecha le'olam,
from age to age your praise commend.[6]	לְדֹר וָדֹר נְסַפֵּר תְּהִלָּתֶךָ	ledor vador nesaper tehilatecha.

[1] "Do-not-recall-upon-us the-sins-of / *our*-first-*ancestors*; / quick, let-them-come-earlier, your-mercies (let your mercy come before your anger reaches us) / for we-are-fallen-low very-much." Perhaps דַּלּוֹנוּ is related to דל, a bucket, since a bucket works by being lowered into a well.

[2] "Help-us, God, our-rescuer / in-the-matter-of/for-the-sake-of the-seriousness-of your-name/reputation, / and-save-us, and-grant-forgiveness for-our-sins / for-the-sake-of your-name/reputation."

[3] "Why will-they-say, the-nations, / "Where *is* their-God?" / Let-it-be-known among-the-nations before-our-eyes / the-revenge-for your-servants'-blood that-was-spilled."

[4] "Let-it-come before-you, the-cry-of the-prisoner; / according-to-the-greatness-of your-power, release those-who-are-subject-to death."

[5] "And-bring-back upon-our-neighbors / double-seven-times, at-their-chest/heart / their-calumnies / with which they-smeared-you, God."

[6] "And-we, your-people, and-the-flock-of your-shepherding, / shall-give-thanks to-you forever, / from-generation to-generation we-shall-tell your-praise."

Psalm 80

[1] For the leader, for "roses,"[1]	לַמְנַצֵּחַ אֶל־שֹׁשַׁנִּים	Lamnatze'ach el shoshanim,
a testimony by Asaf, a tune.	עֵדוּת לְאָסָף מִזְמוֹר	edut le'Asaf, mizmor.
[2] Israel's shepherd, listen;	רֹעֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל הַאֲזִינָה	Ro'eh Yisra'el, ha'azinah;
you who guide Joseph as *your* flock,	נֹהֵג כַּצֹּאן יוֹסֵף	noheg katzon Yosef,
enthroned *above* the angels,[2] appear!	יֹשֵׁב הַכְּרוּבִים הוֹפִיעָה	yoshev hakeruvim, hofi'ah!
[3] For Efrayim, Binyamin and Menashe,	לִפְנֵי אֶפְרַיִם וּבִנְיָמִן וּמְנַשֶּׁה	Lifnei Efrayim uVinyamin uMenashe,
rouse your power	עוֹרְרָה אֶת־גְּבוּרָתֶךָ	orerah et gevuratecha
and proceed toward our salvation.	וּלְכָה לִישֵׁעָתָה לָּנוּ	ulecha lishu'atah lanu.
[4] God, bring us back:	אֱלֹהִים הֲשִׁיבֵנוּ	Elohim, hashivenu:
smile,[3] and we are saved.	וְהָאֵר פָּנֶיךָ וְנִוָּשֵׁעָה	veha'er panecha, venivashe'ah.
[5] Ruling God of Hosts,	יהוה אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת	Adonai Elohim tzeva'ot,
how long have you smoldered *in anger*	עַד־מָתַי עָשַׁנְתָּ	ad matai ashanta
at your people's prayer?	בִּתְפִלַּת עַמֶּךָ	bitfilat amecha?
[6] You have fed them tears for their bread	הֶאֱכַלְתָּם לֶחֶם דִּמְעָה	He'echaltam lechem dimah,
and let them drink gallons for tears.[4]	וַתַּשְׁקֵמוֹ בִּדְמָעוֹת שָׁלִישׁ	vatashkemo bidma'ot shalish.
[7] You set us at odds[5] with our neighbors,	תְּשִׂימֵנוּ מָדוֹן לִשְׁכֵנֵינוּ	Tesimenu madon lishcheneinu,
and our enemies jeer at us among themselves.	וְאֹיְבֵינוּ יִלְעֲגוּ־לָמוֹ	ve'oyveinu yilagu lamo.
[8] God of Hosts, turn us around *to face you*;	אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת הֲשִׁיבֵנוּ	Elohim Tzeva'ot, hashivenu,
beam your smile *upon us*, and we'll be saved.	וְהָאֵר פָּנֶיךָ וְנִוָּשֵׁעָה	veha'er panecha—venivashe'a.
[9] You brought a vine *(our people)* from Egypt:	גֶּפֶן מִמִּצְרַיִם תַּסִּיעַ	Gefen miMitzrayim tasi'ah;
expel the foreigners[6] and plant this *vine!*	תְּגָרֵשׁ גּוֹיִם וַתִּטָּעֶהָ	tegaresh goyim, vatita'eha!

[1] In the style of a song or mode called roses (or lilies), or for the entertainment of people known as roses or lilies, or on an instrument called roses or lilies, among other possibilities.

[2] "Sitting/dwelling-(i.e., enthroned)-upon cherubs (angels)." כְּרוּבִים can mean cherubs, a type of angel (Jewish angelology is not as schematic as that of Pseudo-Dionysius, Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, etc.). The word can also mean cabbage; with great leaves around its tangy ball, perhaps it looks ready to take off as a winged head.

[3] הָאֵר פָּנֶיךָ is literally, "illuminate your countenance," here and in verses 8 and 20.

[4] "You-caused-them-to-eat bread tears / and-you-had-them-drink in/with-tears third/chief." The first line seems to mean either or both of these: You gave them tears for their only sustenance, or You gave them food only so they could make tears. The second line seems to mean either or both of these: And you caused them to drink in (or with) tears a leader's (large) amount (שָׁלִישׁ in Ex. 14:7 and 15:4 seems to mean captain), or And you caused them to drink in/with tears a third measure, after two previous oppressions (Egypt, etc.).

[5] מָדוֹן a noun from a root for judgement implies a (possibly legal) dispute.

[6] "*Other* nations"; the Torah says nations living in the Promised Land would be expelled for their bad behavior.

[10] You cleared space for it and rooted it,	פִּנִּיתָ לְפָנֶיהָ וַתַּשְׁרֵשׁ שָׁרָשֶׁיהָ	Pinita lefaheha vatashresh sharasheha,
and it spread to fill the land.	וַתְּמַלֵּא־אָרֶץ	vatmaleh aretz.
[11] Its shadow covered the hills	כָּסוּ הָרִים צִלָּהּ	Kasu harim tzilah
and its boughs *were big as* God's cedars.	וַעֲנָפֶיהָ אַרְזֵי־אֵל	va'anafeha arzei El.
[12] You spread its boughs as far as the sea	תְּשַׁלַּח קְצִירָהּ עַד־יָם	Teshalach ketzireha ad yam
and its shoots to the *famous* river.[1]	וְאֶל־נָהָר יונְקוֹתֶיהָ	ve'el nahar yonkoteha.
[13] Why did you breach its *bordering* walls	לָמָּה פָּרַצְתָּ גְדֵרֶיהָ	Lamah paratzta gedereha,
so that all passers-by pick *its fruit?*	וְאָרוּהָ כָּל־עֹבְרֵי דָּרֶךְ	ve'aruha kol ovrei darech?
[14] Forest swine tear off *the fruit*	יְכַרְסְמֶנָּה חֲזִיר מִיָּעַר[3]	Yecharsemena chazir miya'ar,
and wild animals[2] graze on it.	וְזִיז שָׂדַי יִרְעֶנָּה	veziz sadai yirenah.
[15] God of Hosts, come back;	אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת שׁוּב־נָא	Elohim Tzeva'ot, shuv nah;
look down from the sky and see;	הַבֵּט מִשָּׁמָיִם	habet mishamayim
take note of this vine, *Israel,*	וּרְאֵה וּפְקֹד גֶּפֶן זֹאת	ure'eh ufekod gefen zot,
[16] *Whose* root you planted yourself	וְכַנָּה אֲשֶׁר־נָטְעָה יְמִינֶךָ	Vechanah asher natah yeminecha
and *whose* stock you took for your own,	וְעַל־בֵּן אִמַּצְתָּה לָּךְ	ve'al ben imatzta lach,
[17] Now burned with fire, demolished,	שְׂרֻפָה בָאֵשׁ כְּסוּחָה	Serufah va'esh, kesucha—
destroyed by your personal scolding.	מִגַּעֲרַת פָּנֶיךָ יאבֵדוּ	miga'arat panecha yovedu.
[18] Give your hand to your closest aide,	תְּהִי־יָדְךָ עַל־אִישׁ יְמִינֶךָ	Tehi yad'cha al ish yeminecha,
to the man whom you encouraged,[4]	עַל־בֶּן־אָדָם אִמַּצְתָּ לָּךְ	al ben adam imatzta lach,
[19] So that we will not turn from you:	וְלֹא־נָסוֹג מִמֶּךָּ	Velo nasog mimeka:
revive us, and we'll publicize your reputation.[5]	תְּחַיֵּנוּ וּבְשִׁמְךָ נִקְרָא	techayenu, uveshimcha nikra.
[20] Ruling God of Hosts, bring us back;	יהוה אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת הֲשִׁיבֵנוּ	Adonai Elohim Tzeva'ot, hashivenu;
show us your favor and we shall be saved.	הָאֵר פָּנֶיךָ וְנִוָּשֵׁעָה	ha'er panecha venivashe'ah!

[1] Often thought to mean the Euphrates, which runs from Turkey in the North to Kuwait in the East. Some may think this has bearing on the ideal borders of the land promised to Abraham's descendants..

[2] זִיז, literally "moving thing"—something other than a rock.

[3] A manuscript would have an oversized ע in מִיָּעַר. Typographical idiosyncracies in Hebrew scripture undermine the theory that these works grew from oral sources.

[4] "Let your hand (of help, or of further punishment) be upon the man of your right hand / upon the child of man (the human being) *whom* you encouraged/strengthened for yourself."

[5] "Give-us-lfe and-in-your-name we-shall-call."

Psalm 81

for Thursday, the fifth day of the week.

[1] For the conductor, on the gittit,[1] by Asaf.	לַמְנַצֵּחַ עַל־הַגִּתִּית לְאָסָף	Lamnatze'ach, al hagittit, le'Asaf.
[2] To God, our refuge, sing in joy,	הָרִנִּינוּ לֵאלֹהִים עוּזֵּנוּ	Harninu lElohim uzenu,
to Jacob's God call out in glee:	הָרִיעוּ לֵאלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב	hari'u lElohei Ya'akov.
[3] Raise your voice and beat the drum,	שְׂאוּ־זִמְרָה וּתְנוּ־תֹף	Se'u zimrah utenu tof
with harp and lyre *for harmony.*[2]	כִּנּוֹר נָעִים עִם־נָבֶל	kinnor na'im im nahvel.
[4] Let shofar blasts hail the new moon[3]	תִּקְעוּ בַחֹדֶשׁ שׁוֹפָר	Tik'u vachodesh shofar,
to mark our day's festivity.	בַּכֶּסֶה לְיוֹם חַגֵּנוּ	bakeseh leyom chageinu.
[5] For this is Israel's rule,	כִּי חֹק לְיִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא	Ki chok leYisra'el hu,
studied in God's own school![4]	מִשְׁפָּט לֵאלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב	mishpat lElohei Ya'akov.
[6] Joseph heard this law when he	עֵדוּת בִּיהוֹסֵף שָׂמוֹ	Edut biY'hosef samo
left foreign tongue in Egypt land	בְּצֵאתוֹ עַל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם	betzeto al eretz Mitzrayim,
(a language hard to understand)![5]	שְׂפַת לֹא־יָדַעְתִּי אֶשְׁמָע	sefat lo yadati eshmah.
[7] I freed his shoulder from its toil,	הֲסִירוֹתִי מִסֶּבֶל שִׁכְמוֹ	Hasiroti misevel shichmo,
from *servant's* pail I took his hand.	כַּפָּיו מִדּוּד תַּעֲבֹרְנָה	kapav midud ta'avorna.
[8] You cried in pain, I set you free,	בַּצָּרָה קָרָאתָ וָאֲחַלְּצֶךָּ	Batzarah karata va'achaltzeka;
in thunder met your mute demand.[6]	אֶעֱנְךָ בְּסֵתֶר רַעַם אֲבְחָנְךָ	e'en'cha beseter ra'am evchan'cha
You opposed me, even so,	עַל־מֵי מְרִיבָה סֶלָה	al mei merivah. Selah.
where Meribah's waters flow. Selah.[7]		
[9] My people, if you heed my call	שְׁמַע עַמִּי וְאָעִידָה בָּךְ	Shema ami, ve'a'idah bach;
Israel, listen to me now!	יִשְׂרָאֵל אִם־תִּשְׁמַע־לִי	Yisra'el, im tishmah li,

[1] What is a "gittit"? Nobody is sure; perhaps a musical instrument popular in Goliath's town of Gat (גת).

[2] The drum could be like a tambourine (perhaps without bells), the kinnor is a type of lyre; in Sumer, a lyre could be a big thing you rest on the ground. As for נֵבֶל, lyre, the root נבל (shameful) is derogatory; perhaps jokingly, the Midrash on Psalms says it gets its name because its sound shames (מְנַבֵּל) other instruments.

[3] The new moon may refer to Rosh Hashanah, when we use this verse for evening kiddush.

[4] "A judgement for the God of Jacob."

[5] "Testimony with-Y'hoseph (tradition says Joseph's name became Y'hoseph—with an extra letter ה, possible symbol of divine favor—after he refused Potiphar's wife in Gen. 39.) *God*-placed / on-his-departing up-from-the-land Egypt / a-language *that* I-knew-not *when* I-would-hear-*it*."

[6] Translators differ over who was thunder and who was mute: did Israel cry out with thunderous voice and God answer quietly, or did Israel cry out quietly and God answer in thunder? We can appreciate the Psalmist's contrast between God's public salvation and the Israelites' private pain.

[7] God tested the Israelites at Meribah (Num. 20).

[10] No heathen deities will you take,	לֹא־יִהְיֶה בְךָ אֵל זָר	Lo yih'yeh vecha el zar,
to foreign gods you shall not bow.	וְלֹא תִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לְאֵל נֵכָר	velo tishtachaveh le'el nechar.
[11] I am your God: I raised you, I,	אָנֹכִי יהוה אֱלֹהֶיךָ	Anochi Adonai Elohecha,
from Egypt. *I fulfilled my vow*.[1]	הַמַּעַלְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם	hama'al'cha me'eretz Mitzrayim:
Gape, *like the bird's young brood:*	הַרְחֶב־פִּיךָ וַאֲמַלְאֵהוּ	har'chev picha va'amalehu.
I'll fill you full of food.[2]		
[12] My people would not hear my voice—	וְלֹא־שָׁמַע עַמִּי לְקוֹלִי	Velo shama ami lekoli,
Israel refused, would not obey.	וְיִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא־אָבָה לִי	veYisra'el lo avah li.
[13] I let them chase their every lust	וָאֲשַׁלְּחֵהוּ בִּשְׁרִירוּת לִבָּם	Va'ashalchehu bishrirut libam,
and after their own folly stray.	יֵלְכוּ בְּמוֹעֲצוֹתֵיהֶם	yel'chu bemo'atzoteichem.
[14] I wish my folk had heeded me,	לוּ עַמִּי שֹׁמֵעַ לִי	Lu ami shome'ah li,
and Israel walked my *sinless* way.	יִשְׂרָאֵל בִּדְרָכַי יְהַלֵּכוּ	Yisra'el bidrachai yehalechu.
[15] In a flash, I'd trounce their foes,	כִּמְעַט אוֹיְבֵיהֶם אַכְנִיעַ	Kim'at oyveihem achni'ah
my hand would crush their woes.[3]	וְעַל צָרֵיהֶם אָשִׁיב יָדִי	ve'al tzareihem ashiv yadi.
[16] God's enemies will crawl	מְשַׂנְאֵי יהוה	Mesan'ei Adonai
cringing[4] from their tricks;	יְכַחֲשׁוּ־לוֹ	yechachashu lo,
their time *for punishment* is ever *fixed*.	וְיִהְי עִתָּם לְעוֹלָם	vihi itam le'olam.
[17] But you shall feast on choicest cream of wheat,	וַיַּאֲכִילֵהוּ מֵחֶלֶב חִטָּה	Vaya'achilehu mechelev chitah,
on honey from the Rock—all you can eat![5]	וּמִצּוּר דְּבַשׁ אַשְׂבִּיעֶךָּ	umitzur devash asbi'eka.

[1] God promised Abraham that his descendants would suffer and then be saved (Gen. 15).
[2] As God fed them with quails and manna in the desert (Num. 11).
[3] I would turn my hand against their troubles / oppressors.
[4] The root כחש means deceive and become weak, "cringe" and "tricks" suggest both meanings.
[5] "And-*God*-fed-it from-the-fat-of wheat / and-from-the-rock honey I-would-satisfy-you." The fatty or creamy part of the wheat berry is a delicacy (sorry, kids); at least, it beats a spoonful of bran! Honey from the Rock is perhaps solid sweetener or rock candy; who knows?

Psalm 82

for Tuesday, the third day of the week.

[1] A tune by Assaf.[1]	מִזְמוֹר לְאָסָף	Mizmor leAssaf.
God stands in the courthouse[2]	אֱלֹהִים נִצָּב בַּעֲדַת־אֵל	Elohim nitzav ba'adat El,
judging among the judges.[3]	בְּקֶרֶב אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁפֹּט	bekerev elohim yishpot.
[2] "How long will you people judge unfairly,	עַד־מָתַי תִּשְׁפְּטוּ־עָוֶל	"Ad matai tishpetu avel
showing deference to the wicked? Selah![4]	וּפְנֵי רְשָׁעִים תִּשְׂאוּ־סֶלָה	ufenei resha'im tis'u? Selah.
[3] Judge the poor and the orphan;	שִׁפְטוּ־דַל וְיָתוֹם	Shiftu dal veyatom;
do justice for the humble and destitute.	עָנִי וָרָשׁ הַצְדִּיקוּ	ani varash hatzdiku.
[4] Rescue the poor and needy	פַּלְטוּ־דַל וְאֶבְיוֹן	Paltu dal ve'evyon;
save *them* from the power of the wicked."	מִיַּד רְשָׁעִים הַצִּילוּ	miyad resha'im hatzilu.
[5] They don't know, don't understand—	לֹא יָדְעוּ וְלֹא יָבִינוּ	Lo yad'u, velo yavinu;
they walk in darkness,	בַּחֲשֵׁכָה יִתְהַלָּכוּ	bachashecha yit'halachu—
weakening the world's foundations.[5]	יִמּוֹטוּ כָּל־מוֹסְדֵי אָרֶץ	yimotu kol mosdei aretz.
[6] I told them, "You are judges,	אֲנִי־אָמַרְתִּי אֱלֹהִים אַתֶּם	Ani amarti, "Elohim atem,
all of you children of the Most High;	וּבְנֵי עֶלְיוֹן כֻּלְּכֶם	uvenei Elyon kul'chem.
[7] *even so,* you will die like *any* mortal	אָכֵן כְּאָדָם תְּמוּתוּן	Achen, ke'adam temutun,
and fall like some *petty* potentate."	וּכְאַחַד הַשָּׂרִים תִּפֹּלוּ	uche'achad hasarim tipolu."
[8] O God, arise and judge the world,	קוּמָה אֱלֹהִים שָׁפְטָה הָאָרֶץ	Kumah, Elohim, shaftah ha'aretz,
bringing your rule to every nation.[6]	כִּי־אַתָּה תִנְחַל בְּכָל־הַגּוֹיִם	ki atah tin'chal bechol hagoyim.

[1] Psalms 73-83 are לְאָסָף, to or for or by Assaf.

[2] "In the congregation of God"; presumably, because true justice is a divine attribute, the place where justice is dispensed is a place where people congregate to acknowledge God.

[3] While אֱלֹהִים is often a term for God, sometimes it seems to refer to human judges. When applied to God, it suggests divine justice (rather than compassion).

[4] "And raise the face of the wicked," making them the opposite of our word "downcast."

[5] "All the foundations of the world are moved." If justice is one of the founding principles of the world, unjust judges may weaken the very existence of the world.

[6] "For you shall inherit all nations" implies that God will control and impose God's beneficial will upon the nations.

Psalm 83

for Friday, the sixth day of the week, also part of welcoming Shabbat.

[1] A song, a tune by Assaf	שִׁיר מִזְמוֹר לְאָסָף	Shir, mizmor leAssaf
[2] God, don't keep quiet;	אֱלֹהִים אַל־דֳּמִי־לָךְ	Elohim, al domi lach;
don't be silent or still, God,	אַל־תֶּחֱרַשׁ וְאַל־תִּשְׁקֹט אֵל	al techerash, ve'al tishkot, El!
[3] While your enemies make a fuss	כִּי־הִנֵּה אוֹיְבֶיךָ יֶהֱמָיוּן	Ki hineh oyvecha yehemayun,
and your foes raise their heads *in pride.*	וּמְשַׂנְאֶיךָ נָשְׂאוּ רֹאשׁ	umesan'echa nas'u rosh.
[4] They scheme in secret against your people	עַל־עַמְּךָ יַעֲרִימוּ סוֹד	Al am'cha ya'arimu sod,
and plot against your own hidden *treasure,*	וְיִתְיָעֲצוּ עַל־צְפוּנֶיךָ	veyitya'atzu al tzefunecha.
[5] Saying, "Let's destroy them as a people,	אָמְרוּ לְכוּ וְנַכְחִידֵם מִגּוֹי	Amru, "Lechu venach'chidem migoy,
so the name 'Israel' is all forgotten."	וְלֹא־יִזָּכֵר שֵׁם־יִשְׂרָאֵל עוֹד	velo yizacher shem Yisra'el od."
[6] They have all agreed,	כִּי נוֹעָצוּ לֵב יַחְדָּו	Ki no'atzu lev yachdav;
they've sealed a pact against you.	עָלֶיךָ בְּרִית יִכְרֹתוּ	alecha berit yichtoru.
[7] The camp of Edom and the Ishmaelites,	אָהֳלֵי אֱדוֹם וְיִשְׁמְעֵאלִים	Oholei Edom, veYishme'elim,
Moab and the Hagrites,[1]	מוֹאָב וְהַגְרִים	Mo'av veHagrim,
[8] Geval, Ammon and Amalek,	גְּבָל וְעַמּוֹן וַעֲמָלֵק	Geval ve'Ammon, va'Amalek,
Philistia with people of Tzor,	פְּלֶשֶׁת עִם־יֹשְׁבֵי צוֹר	Peleshet, im yoshvei Tzor,
[9] Ashur too went with them—	גַּם־אַשּׁוּר נִלְוָה עִמָּם	Gam Ashur nilvah imam—
they were a *fighting* arm for Lot's descendants.	הָיוּ זְרוֹעַ לִבְנֵי־לוֹט	hayu zero'a livnei Lot.
Selah.	סֶלָה	Selah.
[10] Treat them like Midian, like Siserah,	עֲשֵׂה־לָהֶם כְּמִדְיָן כְּסִיסְרָא	Aseh lahem keMidyan, keSiserah,
like Yavin at the brook of Kishon,	כְּיָבִין בְּנַחַל קִישׁוֹן	cheYavin benachal Kishon,
[11] *who were* destroyed at Ein Dor—	נִשְׁמְדוּ בְעֵין־דֹּאר	Nishmedu ve'Ein Dor;
they became manure *to fertilize* the ground.	הָיוּ דֹמֶן לָאֲדָמָה	hayu domen la'adamah.

[1] Verses 7-12 list tribes or their leaders who fought ancient Israel. The camp of Edom is literally the "tents" of Edom. Geval is mentioned in Ezekiel 27 as an ally of Tzor (usually translated as Tyre). Ashur is usually translated as Assyria. Sisera and Yavin were defeated by Deborah and Barak (Judges 4). Oreb and Ze'ev, Zevach and Tzalmunah are Midianite leaders mentioned in Judges 7:25 and 8:5. The Hagrites or Hagarenes may be associated with Hagar (perhaps, then, they were descendants of Abraham; perhaps they were Hagar's native people from the time before she met Abraham); I Chron 5:18-22 records a battle with הַגְרִיאִים / Hagri'im.

[12] Treat their leaders	שִׁיתֵמוֹ נְדִיבֵמוֹ	Shitemo nedivemo
like Orev and Ze'ev,	כְּעֹרֵב וְכִזְאֵב	ke'Orev vechiZe'ev,
like Zevach and Tzalmunah,[1]	וּכְזֶבַח וּכְצַלְמֻנָּע	ucheZevach ucheTzalmuna
all their chiefs,	כָּל־נְסִיכֵמוֹ	kol nesichemo
[13] Who said,	אֲשֶׁר אָמְרוּ	Asher amru,
"We will seize *their* God's houses."	נִירְשָׁה לָּנוּ אֶת נְאוֹת אֱלֹהִים	"Nirashah lanu et ne'ot Elohim."
[14] Oh, God, set them whirling *in the wind*,	אֱלֹהַי שִׁיתֵמוֹ כַגַּלְגַּל	Elohai, shitemo chagalgal,
like chaff in a breeze,	כְּקַשׁ לִפְנֵי־רוּחַ	kekash lifnei ru'ach,
[15] Like fire devouring a forest,	כְּאֵשׁ תִּבְעַר־יָעַר	Ke'esh tiv'ar ya'ar,
like a flame burning a hill—	וּכְלֶהָבָה תְּלַהֵט הָרִים	uchelehavah telahet harim.
[16] Chase them with a twister,	כֵּן תִּרְדְּפֵם בְּסַעֲרֶךָ	Ken tirdefem besa'arecha
Stun them with a storm!	וּבְסוּפָתְךָ תְבַהֲלֵם	uvesufat'cha tevahalem.
[17] Coat their faces with disgrace,	מַלֵּא פְנֵיהֶם קָלוֹן	Maleh feneihem kalon,
so they'll have to seek you, God![2]	וְיְבַקְשׁוּ שִׁמְךָ יהוה	vivakshu shim'cha, Adonai.
[18] Let them be shamed and stunned forever,	יֵבֹשׁוּ וְיִבָּהֲלוּ עֲדֵי־עַד	Yevoshu veyibahalu adei-ad,
let them be ashamed and disoriented,	וְיַחְפְּרוּ וְיֹאבֵדוּ	veyachperu veyovedu.
[19] So they'll know that you, called "God,"	וְיֵדְעוּ כִּי־אַתָּה שִׁמְךָ יהוה	Veyed'u ki atah shim'cha, Adonai,
alone are high above the whole world!	לְבַדְּךָ עֶלְיוֹן עַל־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ	levadecha elyon al kol ha'aretz.

[1] Orev can mean raven, Ze'ev can mean wolf, Zevach can mean sacrifice and Tzalmuna can mean shade-deprived (exposed and vulnerable).

[2] "And they will *have to* seek your name (i.e., reputation, renown, what you're known for)."

Psalm 84

[1] For the leader, on the harp,[1]	לַמְנַצֵּחַ עַל־הַגִּתִּית	Lamnatze'ach al hagittit,
a tune by Korach's descendants.	לִבְנֵי־קֹרַח מִזְמוֹר	livnei Korach mizmor.
[2] How lovely are your dwellings,[2]	מַה־יְּדִידוֹת מִשְׁכְּנוֹתֶיךָ	Mah yedidut mishkenotecha,
God of Hosts!	יהוה צְבָאוֹת	Adonai Tzeva'ot.
[3] I'm pale and weak, pining[3]	נִכְסְפָה וְגַם־כָּלְתָה נַפְשִׁי	Nichsefah vegam kaltah nafshi
for God's courtyards;	לְחַצְרוֹת יהוה	lechatzrot Adonai;
my heart and body *want to*	לִבִּי וּבְשָׂרִי	libi uvesari
scream for joy to the God of life.	יְרַנְּנוּ אֶל אֵל־חָי	yeranenu el El chai.
[4] Even a bird has its living-space,	גַּם־צִפּוֹר מָצְאָה בַיִת	Gam tzipor matzah vayit,
the run of its nest[4]	וּדְרוֹר קֵן לָהּ	uderor ken lah,
in which to set its young	אֲשֶׁר־שָׁתָה אֶפְרֹחֶיהָ	asher shatah efrocheha
next to your altars,[5]	אֶת־מִזְבְּחוֹתֶיךָ	et mizbechotecha,
God of Hosts, my ruler, my God.	יהוה צְבָאוֹת מַלְכִּי וֵאלֹהָי	Adonai Tzeva'ot, malki vElohai.
[5] Lucky are they who live at your house;	אַשְׁרֵי יוֹשְׁבֵי בֵיתֶךָ	Ashrei yoshvei veitecha;
they will praise you continually.[6]	עוֹד יְהַלְלוּךָ סֶלָה	od yehalelucha selah.
[6] Lucky is one for whom you are a fortress	אַשְׁרֵי אָדָם עוֹז־לוֹ בָךְ	Ashrei adam oz lo vach,
while he thinks about the *perilous* roads *outside.*[7]	מְסִלּוֹת בִּלְבָבָם	mesilot bilvavam.

[1] The "gittit" is mentioned in psalms 8, 81 and 84 and is often thought to be a string instrument. The word may well be an adjective from the town of Gath. "Gath-like" could refer to an instrument, a style of music, or a particular song. Goliath the giant may have come from Gath, so if David strummed a little lyre maybe Goliath held a huge harp. The word "gath" can also mean a wine-press, so "gath-like" may refer to a song for the wine harvest, or an instrument made from a winepress. Gath was a Philistine town mentioned in 2:Samuel 1:20, David's lament for Jonathan and Saul.

[2] "How-*great-is*-the-beauty/amiability-of your-dwellings/neighborhoods …"

[3] "Made-pale and-also-exhausted *is* my-self."

[4] Some say these two lines mention two kinds of birds, צִפּוֹר (sparrow, for the Hebrew root has tSPR) and דְּרוֹר (swallow, or liberty, with a sense of wheeling around like the swallow in flight), but I translate דְּרוֹר as "run"(i.e., liberty to roam in) merely to offer this alternative.

[5] You may wonder why a bird would nest close to the altar—like pitching your tent next to your grave—but perhaps we are to learn that the bird knows its fate and celebrates its sacrificial destiny.

[6] Oh, those lucky birds in verse 4, nesting at the altar (where they are to be sacrificed?). We say this verse thrice daily.

[7] "Lucky *is* a-man, strength/stronghold-for-him *is* with-you; / highways *are* in-their-heart/thinking." In addition to highway peril, these people may be thinking of the roads they take for pilgrimages to Jerusalem.

[7] When they tread the vale of tears	עֹבְרֵי בְּעֵמֶק הַבָּכָא	Ovrei be'emek habachah
they view it as a living spring—	מַעְיָן יְשִׁיתוּהוּ	mayan yeshituhu—
even a downpour brings its blessings.[1]	גַּם־בְּרָכוֹת יַעְטֶה מוֹרֶה	gam berachot yateh moreh.
[8] They go from high point[2] to high point,	יֵלְכוּ מֵחַיִל אֶל־חָיִל	Yel'chu mechayil el chayil,
to be seen before God in Zion.	יֵרָאֶה אֶל־אֱלֹהִים בְּצִיּוֹן	yera'eh el Elohim beTziyon.
[9] God, God of Hosts,	יהוה אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת	Adonai Elohim tzeva'ot,
hear my prayer;	שִׁמְעָה תְפִלָּתִי	shimah tefilati;
listen, God of Jacob. Selah.	הַאֲזִינָה אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב סֶלָה	ha'azinah Elohei Ya'akov. Selah.
[10] See our protector, God,	מָגִנֵּנוּ רְאֵה אֱלֹהִים	Maginenu re'eh, Elohim,
view the presence of your anointed,	וְהַבֵּט פְּנֵי מְשִׁיחֶךָ	vehabet penei meshichecha,
[11] For a day in your courtyard is better	כִּי טוֹב־יוֹם בַּחֲצֵרֶיךָ	Ki tov yom bachatzerecha
than a thousand *anywhere else;*	מֵאָלָף	me'alef;
I'd choose to linger in God's house	בָּחַרְתִּי הִסְתּוֹפֵף בְּבֵית אֱלֹהָי	bacharti histofef beveit Elohai
than dwell in the homes of the wicked!	מִדּוּר בְּאָהֳלֵי־רֶשַׁע	midur be'oholei reshah!
[12] Sun and shield is divine God,[3]	כִּי שֶׁמֶשׁ וּמָגֵן יהוה אֱלֹהִים	Ki shemesh umagen Adonai Elohim,
God grants grace and glory,	חֵן וְכָבוֹד יִתֵּן יהוה	chen vechavod yiten Adonai,
and does not withhold good	לֹא יִמְנַע־טוֹב	lo yimnah tov
from those who live in innocence.	לַהֹלְכִים בְּתָמִים	lahol'chim betamim.
[13] God of Hosts,	יהוה צְבָאוֹת	Adonai tzeva'ot,
Happy is the person who relies on you.	אַשְׁרֵי אָדָם בֹּטֵחַ בָּךְ	ashrei adam bote'ach bach.

[1] "Those-who-traverse through-the-valley-of weeping (or dripping balsam tree, or muddy path) / a-spring they-consider-it; / even-blessings wraps-itself-in a-shooter (a storm of shooting rain, or a teacher who "shoots" students into their learning journey)." בְּרָכוֹת can mean wells or cisterns; the rains may be inconvenient but they fill/cover/enwrap the cisterns.

These lucky folks see life through rose-colored glasses. Flood? More watersports. Hurricane? Free test for building engineers. Global warming? Crops in the frozen taiga.

[2] חַיִל can refer to an army, perhaps a conspicuous group of people (that's why they are seen), and perhaps it suggests high place since the pilgrimage to Jerusalem means climbing up and up, as avid cyclists well know.

[3] I.e, God provides light and warmth and protection. This is not a call to worship a planet or armaments.

Psalm 85

[1] For the leader, for Korach's followers,	לַמְנַצֵּחַ לִבְנֵי־קֹרַח	Lamnatze'ach, livnei Korach,
a tune.	מִזְמוֹר	mizmor.
[2] Once, God, you showed grace to your land	רָצִיתָ יהוה אַרְצֶךָ	Ratzita, Adonai, artzecha;
and brought us from captivity,[1]	שַׁבְתָּ שְׁבִית[2] יַעֲקֹב	shavta shevit Ya'akov.
[3] Forgave your people's *flagrant* crime,	נָשָׂאתָ עֲוֹן עַמֶּךָ	Nasata avon amecha,
cloaked over their iniquity (Selah),[3]	כִּסִּיתָ כָּל־חַטָּאתָם סֶלָה	kisita chol chatatam (Selah),
[4] You packed up all your *righteous* wrath,	אָסַפְתָּ כָּל־עֶבְרָתֶךָ	Asafta chol evratecha,
withdrew, though by fierce fury seized;[4]	הֵשַׁבְתָּ מֵחֲרוֹן אַפֶּךָ	heshivota mecharon apecha.
[5] Now bring us back, our saving God,	שׁוּבֵנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעֵנוּ	Shuvenu, Elohei yishenu,
and let your anger be appeased.[5]	וְהָפֵר כַּעַסְךָ עִמָּנוּ	vehafer ka'as'cha imanu.
[6] Will you resent us evermore,	הַלְעוֹלָם תֶּאֱנַף־בָּנוּ	Hale'olam te'enaf banu,
your wrath from age to age sustain?[6]	תִּמְשֹׁךְ אַפְּךָ לְדֹר וָדֹר	timshoch ap'cha ledor vador?
[7] Surely you'll come to us, restore	הֲלֹא־אַתָּה תָּשׁוּב תְּחַיֵּנוּ	Halo atah tashuv, techayenu,
your people, bring them cheer again.[7]	וְעַמְּךָ יִשְׂמְחוּ־בָךְ	ve'am'cha yismechu vach.
[8] Show us, God, your kindly grace,	הַרְאֵנוּ יהוה חַסְדֶּךָ	Harenu, Adonai, chasdecha,
and grant us your deliverance;[8]	וְיֶשְׁעֲךָ תִּתֶּן־לָנוּ	veyeshacha titen lanu.
[9] Let me hear God's heartening word	אֶשְׁמְעָה מַה־יְדַבֵּר הָאֵל יהוה	Eshme'ah ma yedaber ha'El Adonai
when God will promise sweet repose	כִּי יְדַבֵּר שָׁלוֹם	ki yedaber shalom
for us and all *God's* followers	אֶל־עַמּוֹ וְאֶל־חֲסִידָיו	el amo ve'el chasidav,
lest we return to foolishness,[9]	וְאַל־יָשׁוּבוּ לְכִסְלָה	ve'al yashuvu lechislah.

[1] "You-desired/favored, God, your-land; / you-restored the-captivity-of Jacob (i.e., the Jewish people, translated as 'us')."

[2] A manuscript would have שבות as the "written" form of the word, but the pronounced form is שבית; the two forms are interchanged more than 20 times in Hebrew scripture.

[3] 'You-tolerated the-iniquity-of your-people, / covered all-their-sin. Selah."

[4] "You-gathered-in all-your-anger, / turned-back from-the-anger-of your-nostrils."

[5] "Bring-us-back, God-of our-salvation, / and-cancel your-anger at-us."

[6] "Forever will-you-be-angry at-us, / will-you-continue you-anger from-generation to-generation?"

[7] "Surely-you will-return, will-revive-us / and-your-people shall-rejoice-in/with-you."

[8] "Show-us, God, your-kindness, / and-your-salvation grant-to-us."

[9] "I-shall-hear what-will-say the-God, God, / when *God*-will-speak peace / to-*God's*-people and-to-*God's*-devotees, / and-let-them-not-return to-folly."

[10] For *God's* salvation is at hand	אַךְ קָרוֹב לִירֵאָיו יְשׁוּעוֹ	Ach karov lire'av yisho,
to settle glory in our land.[1]	לִשְׁכֹּן כָּבוֹד בְּאַרְצֵנוּ	lishkon kavod be'artzenu.
[11] Kindness and truth now coincide,	חֶסֶד־וֶאֱמֶת נִפְגָּשׁוּ	Chesed ve'emet nifgashu,
a kiss joins peace with equity.[2]	צֶדֶק וְשָׁלוֹם נָשָׁקוּ	tzedek veshalom nashaku.
[12] Truth sprouts up from the earth below	אֱמֶת מֵאֶרֶץ תִּצְמָח	Emet me'eretz titzmach,
from heaven above justice will see;[3]	וְצֶדֶק מִשָּׁמַיִם נִשְׁקָף	vetzedek mishamayim nishkaf.
[13] As God sends beneficial *rain*	גַּם־יְהוָה יִתֵּן הַטּוֹב	Gam Adonai yiten hatov
and our land yields abundantly.[4]	וְאַרְצֵנוּ תִּתֵּן יְבוּלָהּ	ve'artzenu titen yevulah.
[14] Before *God,* justice takes the lead;	צֶדֶק לְפָנָיו יְהַלֵּךְ	Tzedek lefanav yehalech
God will with measured steps proceed.[5]	וְיָשֵׂם לְדֶרֶךְ פְּעָמָיו	veyasem lederech pe'amav.

[1] "But-certainly close for-those-who-respect-*God is God's*-salvation / to-settle/dwell glory in-our-land."

[2] "Kindness-and-truth have-met, / justice and-peace have-kissed."

[3] "Truth from-land sprouts / and-justice from-the-skies looks-down."

[4] "Also/what's-more God grants goodness (i.e., rain, from the farmer's point of view) / and-our-land produces its-yield."

[5] "Justice before-*God* proceeds/walks / and-he/it-places for/on-the-path its/*God's*-measured-steps." Perhaps justice sets its steps on the path, perhaps God sets God's steps on the path, and perhaps both. פְּעָמָיו, which I translate as measured steps is from the root for an instance—once, twice, and so on. It implies regular and repetitive motion. The same root gives us the word for a bell, פעמון, a device with a clapper that sways repeatedly and regularly like a pendulum.

Psalm 86

Some add this to the weekday evening service on Thursday.

[1] A prayer by David.	תְּפִלָּה לְדָוִד	Tefillah leDavid.
Listen closely, God,[1] and answer me,	הַטֵּה־יהוה אָזְנְךָ עֲנֵנִי	Hateh, Adonai, oznecha; aneni;
for I am poor and penniless.	כִּי־עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן אָנִי	ki ani ve'evyon ani.
[2] Protect my life,[2] for I am pious;	שָׁמְרָה נַפְשִׁי כִּי־חָסִיד אָנִי	Shomrah nafshi, ki chasid ani;
rescue your servant (you are my God)	הוֹשַׁע עַבְדְּךָ אַתָּה אֱלֹהַי	hoshah avdecha (atah Elohai)
who relies on you.	הַבּוֹטֵחַ אֵלֶיךָ	habote'ach elecha.
[3] Be gracious to me, Ruler,	חָנֵּנִי אֲדֹנָי	Choneni, Adonai,
for I call on you *only,* all the time.	כִּי אֵלֶיךָ אֶקְרָא כָּל־הַיּוֹם	ki elecha ekrah kol hayom.
[4] Bring happiness to your servant's mood,	שַׂמַּח נֶפֶשׁ עַבְדֶּךָ	Same'ach nefesh avdecha
for toward you, Ruler, I raise my thoughts.	כִּי אֵלֶיךָ אֲדֹנָי נַפְשִׁי אֶשָּׂא	ki elecha, Adonai, nafshi esah.
[5] Ruler, you are good and forgiving,	כִּי־אַתָּה אֲדֹנָי טוֹב וְסַלָּח	Ki atah, Adonai, tov vesalach,
very kind to all who call on you.	וְרַב־חֶסֶד לְכָל־קֹרְאֶיךָ	verav chesed lechol korecha.
[6] Ruler, listen to my prayer,	הַאֲזִינָה יהוה תְּפִלָּתִי	Ha'azinah, Adonai, tefilati,
hear the sound of my pleas.	וְהַקְשִׁיבָה בְּקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנוֹתָי	vehakshivah bekol tachanunotai.
[7] In time of trouble I call on you,	בְּיוֹם צָרָתִי אֶקְרָאֶךָּ	Beyom tzarah ekra'ekah
for you will answer me.	כִּי תַעֲנֵנִי	ki ta'aneni.
[8] Among the gods, none is like you, Ruler,	אֵין־כָּמוֹךָ בָאֱלֹהִים אֲדֹנָי	Ein kamocha va'elohim, Adonai,
and nothing can compare with your deeds.	וְאֵין כְּמַעֲשֶׂיךָ	ve'ein kema'asecha.
[9] All the peoples you made	כָּל־גּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ	Kol goyim asher asita
will come and worship you,	יָבוֹאוּ וְיִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְפָנֶיךָ	yavo'u veyishtachavu lefanecha,
Ruler, and honor your reputation.	אֲדֹנָי וְיכַבְּדוּ לִשְׁמֶךָ	Adonai, vichabdu lishmecha.
[10] For you are great,	כִּי־גָדוֹל אַתָּה	Ki gadol atah,
and you work wonders,	וְעֹשֵׂה נִפְלָאוֹת אַתָּה	ve'oseh nifla'ot atah,
God, you alone.	אֱלֹהִים לְבַדֶּךָ	Elohim, levadecha.

[1] "Bend down your ear, God."

[2] This poem uses the Hebrew word נֶפֶשׁ/nefesh several times. The usual English translation is "soul," which is widely believed to refer to something incorporeal that survives death, so "protect my soul" (verse 1) could be a prayer for a happy afterlife. However, for the psalmist the phrase may well mean simply, "protect me"—my bones, my skin, my thinking parts, all of my personality. I translate the word נֶפֶשׁ/nefesh as "soul," "mood" and "thoughts" (v. 4), "me" (v. 13), "life" (v. 2, 14)

[11] God, show me your way—	הוֹרֵנִי יהוה דַּרְכֶּךָ	Horeni, Adonai, darkecha—
I *want to* walk in your *path of* truth—	אֲהַלֵּךְ בַּאֲמִתֶּךָ	ahalech ba'amitecha—
help me focus on respect for your reputation.[1]	יַחֵד לְבָבִי לְיִרְאָה שְׁמֶךָ	yached levavi leyirah shemecha.
[12] *So that* I *can* thank you, ruling God,	אוֹדְךָ אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהָי	Od'cha, Adonai, Elohai
wholeheartedly,	בְּכָל־לְבָבִי	bechol levavi,
and honor your reputation for ever.	וַאֲכַבְּדָה שִׁמְךָ לְעוֹלָם	va'achabdah shimchah le'olam.
[13] For your kindness to me is great;	כִּי־חַסְדְּךָ גָּדוֹל עָלָי	Ki chasdecha gadol alai,
you rescued me from the abyss below.[2]	וְהִצַּלְתָּ נַפְשִׁי מִשְּׁאוֹל תַּחְתִּיָּה	vehitzalta nafshi miShe'ol tachtiyah.
[14] God, the proud rose up against me,	אֱלֹהִים זֵדִים קָמוּ־עָלַי	Elohim, zedim kamu alai,
a band of bullies sought my life—	וַעֲדַת עָרִיצִים בִּקְשׁוּ נַפְשִׁי	va'adat aritzim bikshu nafshi—
they are not aware of you![3]	וְלֹא שָׂמוּךָ לְנֶגְדָּם	velo samucha lenegdam.
[15] But you, Ruler, gracious and kind God,	וְאַתָּה אֲדֹנָי אֵל־רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן	Ve'atah, Adonai, El rachum vechanun
are patient, very kind, and truthful.	אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם וְרַב־חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת	erech apayim, verav chesed ve'emet.
[16] Turn to me, be gracious to me,	פְּנֵה אֵלַי וְחָנֵּנִי	Peneh elai vechoneni;
grant your strength to *me,* your servant,	תְּנָה־עֻזְּךָ לְעַבְדֶּךָ	tenah uz'cha le'avdecha,
and rescue *me,* the child of your servant-woman.	וְהוֹשִׁיעָה לְבֶן־אֲמָתֶךָ	vehoshi'ah leven amatecha.
[17] Show me a promising sign—	עֲשֵׂה־עִמִּי אוֹת לְטוֹבָה	Aseh imi ot letovah,
let my enemies see it and feel dismayed—	וְיִרְאוּ שֹׂנְאַי וְיֵבֹשׁוּ	veyir'u sonai veyevoshu,
that you, God,	כִּי־אַתָּה יהוה	ki atah, Adonai,
have brought me help and comfort.	עֲזַרְתַּנִי וְנִחַמְתָּנִי	azartani venichamtani.

[1] "Unite my heart to have respect for your name/reputation."

[2] Or, "You saved my soul from She'ol below." Some think She'ol refers to an afterlife underworld, familiar from many mythological systems. For the psalmist, it may be a place or a state of mind, it may refer to something in this life or something in a future condition.

[3] "They have not set you before them," i.e., they ignore God.

Psalm 87

A refreshingly universal poem: people feel they come from one place or another,
but in truth we all come from the same place, as children of God and of God's favorite location.

[1] By Korach's people, a poem, a song.	לִבְנֵי־קֹרַח מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר	Livnei Korach mizmor shir;
It's based on "Holy Hills."[1]	יְסוּדָתוֹ בְּהַרְרֵי־קֹדֶשׁ	yesudato be-"Harerei Kodesh."
[2] God prefers Zion's gates	אֹהֵב יהוה שַׁעֲרֵי צִיּוֹן	Ohev Adonai sha'arei Tziyon
to all the *other* dwellings of Jacob*'s people.*	מִכֹּל מִשְׁכְּנוֹת יַעֲקֹב	mikol mishkenot Ya'akov.
[3] Glorious praise is spoken of you,	נִכְבָּדוֹת מְדֻבָּר בָּךְ	Nichbadot medubar bach,
city of God. Selah.	עִיר הָאֱלֹהִים סֶלָה	ir ha'Elohim. Selah.
[4] I remind my friends of Rahav and Bavel,	אַזְכִּיר רַהַב וּבָבֶל לְיֹדְעָי	Azkir Rahav uVavel leyodai:
I point out Feleshet and Tzor, with Kush[2]—	הִנֵּה פְלֶשֶׁת וְצוֹר עִם־כּוּשׁ	Hineh Pheleshet veTzor im Kush—
"*Look*, this one was born right there."	זֶה יֻלַּד־שָׁם	"Zeh yulad sham."
[5] But of Zion shall it be said	וּלְצִיּוֹן יֵאָמַר	ulaTziyon ye'omar,
it's the source of all humanity,[3]	אִישׁ וְאִישׁ יֻלַּד־בָּהּ	ish ve'ish yulad bah,
and the One on High will establish it.	וְהוּא יְכוֹנְנֶהָ עֶלְיוֹן	vehu yechoneneha Elyon.
[6] God will recount in every foreign script,	יהוה יִסְפֹּר בִּכְתוֹב עַמִּים	Adonai yispor bichtov amim,
"This one *too* was born there, *in Zion*." Selah.	זֶה יֻלַּד־שָׁם סֶלָה	"Zeh yulad sham." Selah.
[7] Singing and dancing, *all will say,*	וְשָׁרִים כְּחֹלְלִים	Vesharim kecholelim,
"*Zion,* I come from you!"[4]	כָּל־מַעְיָנַי בָּךְ	"Kol mayanai bach."

[1] "For/to/by-the-descendants-of Korach, a-poem, a-song; / its base/foundation on/in/at-hills-of holy." Maybe this was set to a tune known as "Holy Hills," maybe the poem was composed near hills (commentators mention that Jerusalem has lots of hills).

[2] My friends—"Those who know me"; Bavel—Babylon; Rahav—perhaps refers to Egypt; Feleshet—Philistia; Tzor—Tyre; Kush—Ethiopia. The poet names geographical regions and points out that people feel they come from these different places.

[3] "Person and-person (everybody) was-born-in-it"; i.e., people think they come from different countries but the origin and source of all humanity is (a symbolic) Zion, so that ethnic distinctions are illusory.

[4] "All-my-sources *are* in-you."

Psalm 88

[1] A song, a tune for Korach's people,	שִׁיר מִזְמוֹר לִבְנֵי קֹרַח	Shir mizmor livnei Korach,
for the leader on "Pain and Shame,"	לַמְנַצֵּחַ עַל־מָחֲלַת לְעַנּוֹת	lamnatze'ach al machalat le'anot,
a teaching-poem for Heiman the citizen.[1]	מַשְׂכִּיל לְהֵימָן הָאֶזְרָחִי	maskil leHeiman ha'ezrachi.
[2] O God, my God, my savior,	יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יְשׁוּעָתִי	Adonai, Elohei yeshu'ati,
whenever I cried for you at night[2]	יוֹם־צָעַקְתִּי בַלַּיְלָה נֶגְדֶּךָ	yom tza'akti valailah negdecha
[3] Before you would my prayer come;	תָּבוֹא לְפָנֶיךָ תְּפִלָּתִי	Tavo lefanecha tefilati;
Now turn your ear to hear my cry!	הַטֵּה־אָזְנְךָ לְרִנָּתִי	hateh oznecha lerinati!
[4] My heart[3] is filled with misery,	כִּי־שָׂבְעָה בְרָעוֹת נַפְשִׁי	Ki savah vera'ot nafshi
plunged in a cavernous abyss,[4]	וְחַיַּי לִשְׁאוֹל הִגִּיעוּ	vechayai liShe'ol higi'u.
[5] Think of me down in the pit,	נֶחְשַׁבְתִּי עִם־יוֹרְדֵי בוֹר	Nechshavti im yordei vor,
a warrior left powerless,[5]	הָיִיתִי כְּגֶבֶר אֵין־אֱיָל	hayiti kegever ein eyal.
[6] Free as the dead, like all the slain	בַּמֵּתִים חָפְשִׁי כְּמוֹ חַלְלִים	Bametim chofshi kemo chalalim,
who lie *all lifeless* in their tomb	שֹׁכְבֵי קֶבֶר	shochvei kever,
where you give them no further thought—	אֲשֶׁר לֹא זְכַרְתָּם עוֹד	asher lo zechartam od—
beyond your reach *in their dread gloom*.[6]	וְהֵמָּה מִיָּדְךָ נִגְזָרוּ	vehemah miyad'cha nigzaru.
[7] You've placed me in the deepest chasm,	שַׁתַּנִי בְּבוֹר תַּחְתִּיּוֹת	Shatani bevor tachtiyot,
too dark for light to penetrate;[7]	בְּמַחֲשַׁכִּים בִּמְצֹלוֹת	bemachashakim, bimtzolot.
[8] Above me your stern anger storms,	עָלַי סָמְכָה חֲמָתֶךָ	Alai samchah chamatecha,
crushed by your surging breakers' weight.	וְכָל־מִשְׁבָּרֶיךָ עִנִּיתָ	vechol mishbarecha inita.
Selah.[8]	סֶלָה	Selah.

[1] "Korach's people"—Korach's sons or descendants, perhaps inheritors of his tradition; מחלה means sickness, לְעַנּוֹת means to answer (perhaps in a responsive chant) or to be humble or miserable; אֶזְרָחִי/ezrachi could be a name, could refer to someone's civic status (citizen, not alien), and could refer to family ties.

[2] "Day-I-cried-out at-night before-you," i.e., *If* I cried at daytime, at night I was before you—whenever I cried out, at night-time I was in your *comforting* presence.

[3] נַפְשִׁי refers to one's self, essential part, the "heart," though it's often translated as soul.

[4] "And-my-life to-the-underworld has-arrived."

[5] "I-am-considered as-those-who-have-descended *into the* pit; / I-have-become like-a-grown-man/warrior and-there-is-no strength (or help)."

[6] "And-they from-your-hand/power/reach are-cut-off."

[7] "You-have-placed-me in-a-pit-of depths, / in-darknesses, in-depths."

[8] "Above-me has-covered/pressed-down your-anger, / and-*with*-all-your-breakers have-you-crushed/humbled *me."*

[9] You've distanced all my friends from me,	הִרְחַקְתָּ מְיֻדָּעַי מִמֶּנִּי	Hir'chakta meyuda'ai mimeni,
made me disgusting in their eyes;	שַׂתַּנִי תוֹעֵבוֹת לָמוֹ	shatani to'evot lamo;
detained[1] *at home*, I may not leave.	כָּלֹא וְלֹא אֵצֵא	kalu, velo etzeh.
[10] My eye aches with this agony;	עֵינִי דָאֲבָה מִנִּי עֹנִי	Eini da'avah mini oni;
I call to you, God, every day,	קְרָאתִיךָ יהוה בְּכָל־יוֹם	keraticha, Adonai, bechol yom,
with hands outstretched to you I plead.[2]	שִׁטַּחְתִּי אֵלֶיךָ כַּפָּי	shitachti elecha chapai.
[11] Will you work wonders for the dead,	הֲלַמֵּתִים תַּעֲשֶׂה־פֶּלֶא	Halametim ta'aseh peleh,
shall shades arise their thanks to show?[3]	אִם־רְפָאִים יָקוּמוּ יוֹדוּךָ	im refa'im yakumu yoducha?
Selah.	סֶלָה	Selah.
[12] Will grace be told from *moldy* graves,[4]	הֲיְסֻפַּר בַּקֶּבֶר חַסְדֶּךָ	Hayesupar bakever chasdecha,
your constancy from deep below?[5]	אֱמוּנָתְךָ בָּאֲבַדּוֹן	emunat'cha ba'avadon?
[13] In darkness, are your marvels known,	הֱיִוָּדַע בַּחֹשֶׁךְ פִּלְאֶךָ	Hayivadah bachoshech pilecha,
your justice in oblivion?[6]	וְצִדְקָתְךָ בְּאֶרֶץ נְשִׁיָּה	vetzidkat'cha be'eretz neshiyah?
[14] But me, I cry to you, O God;	וַאֲנִי אֵלֶיךָ יהוה שִׁוַּעְתִּי	Va'ani elecha Adonai shivati,
my prayer comes to you each day;[7]	וּבַבֹּקֶר תְּפִלָּתִי תְקַדְּמֶךָּ	uvaboker tefilati tekadmeka;
[15] Why, God, do you spurn my plea,	לָמָּה יהוה תִּזְנַח נַפְשִׁי	Lamah, Adonai, tiznach nafshi,
why do you turn your face away?[8]	תַּסְתִּיר פָּנֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי	tastir panecha mimeni?

[1] כָּלֹא means restrained, shut up; after Noah's flood, the rain was כָּלָא, restrained (Gen. 8:2).
[2] "I-have-stretched-out toward-you my-palms"—palms stretched out in supplication or to show they're empty, the prayer unanswered.
[3] "Whether-the-weak shall-arise, acknowledge-you?" רְפָאִים can mean ghosts/shades, or weak/frail people.
[4] "Shall-be-recounted in-the-grave your-kindness?"
[5] בָּאֲבַדּוֹן, "from-the-place-of-loss/ruin/destruction (the grave)," from the root אבד.
[6] "Or-your-justice in-a-land-of oblivion;" נְשִׁיָּה only occurs here, and commentators agree it means forgetting, for all is forgotten (the psalmist implies) after death.
[7] "… and-in-the-morning my-prayer comes-early-before-you."
[8] "Why, God, will-you-spurn me, / *why* will-you-turn-aside your-presence/face from-me?"

[16] Since childhood I've been poor and weak,	עָנִי אֲנִי וְגֹוֵעַ מִנֹּעַר	Ani ani vegove'ah mino'ar,
cowed by your rage, nowhere to flee.[1]	נָשָׂאתִי אֵמֶיךָ אָפוּנָה	nasati emecha, afunah.
[17] Above me have your furies raged,	עָלַי עָבְרוּ חֲרוֹנֶיךָ	Alai avru charonecha;
your terrors have blockaded me;[2]	בִּעוּתֶיךָ צִמְּתוּתְנִי	bi'utecha tzimtutuni;
[18] Daily, like a swirling stream	סַבּוּנִי כַמַּיִם כָּל־הַיּוֹם	Sabuni chamayim, kol hayom,
they mingle to encompass me.	הִקִּיפוּ עָלַי יָחַד	hikifu alai yachad.
[19] You've distanced me from everyone	הִרְחַקְתָּ מִמֶּנִּי אֹהֵב וָרֵעַ	Hir'chakta mimeni ohev vare'ah;
I've known—all into darkness gone.[3]	מְיֻדָּעַי מַחְשָׁךְ	meyuda'ai machshach.

[1] אָפוּנָה occurs only here; perhaps related to פנה, corner, implying turning from one direction to another, hence perturbed or perplexed (the Vulgate is conturbatus sum). Wherever the poet turns, he or she faces the same metaphorical barrier. "I-have-endured your-anger, *although* I-have-turned *this way and that to escape it."*

[2] "Your-terrors have-stymied-me"; the root צמת implies the end of a road (it's the word for a crossroads in modern Hebrew).

[3] "You-have-distanced from-me friend, / and-neighbor (or, shepherd/guide/mentor) *and* my-acquaintances, *into* darkness."

Psalm 89

[1] A teaching-poem for citizen Eitan.[1]	מַשְׂכִּיל לְאֵיתָן הָאֶזְרָחִי	Maskil leEitan ha'ezrachi.
[2] God's kindness I shall always sing,	חַסְדֵי יהוה עוֹלָם אָשִׁירָה	Chasdei Adonai olam ashira,
forever voice *God's* constancy,	לְדֹר וָדֹר אוֹדִיעַ אֱמוּנָתְךָ בְּפִי	ledor vador odi'a emunat'cha befi,
[3] For I say kindness builds the earth	כִּי־אָמַרְתִּי עוֹלָם חֶסֶד יִבָּנֶה	ki amarti olam chesed yibaneh,
while constancy sustains the sky.	שָׁמַיִם תָּכִן אֱמוּנָתְךָ בָהֶם	shamayim tachin emunat'cha vahem.
[4] "I've settled with my chosen one,	כָּרַתִּי בְרִית לִבְחִירִי	"Karati verit livchiri,
my servant David I assure:[2]	נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לְדָוִד עַבְדִּי	nishbati leDavid avdi:
[5] "Your line forever I'll protect,	עַד־עוֹלָם אָכִין זַרְעֶךָ	"Ad olam achin zarecha,
sustain your reign for evermore."[3]	וּבָנִיתִי לְדֹר־וָדוֹר כִּסְאֶךָ	uvaniti ledor vador kis'acha."
Selah.	סֶלָה	Selah.
[6] Your wonders, God, the heavens praise,	וְיוֹדוּ שָׁמַיִם פִּלְאֲךָ יהוה	Veyodu shamayim pilacha, Adonai,
your constancy among the saints,[4]	אַף־אֱמוּנָתְךָ בִּקְהַל קְדֹשִׁים	af emunatecha bikhal kedoshim.
[7] For who above compares to God,	כִּי מִי בַשַּׁחַק יַעֲרֹךְ לַיהוה	Ki mi bashachak ya'aroch lAdonai,
or seems divine among the powers?	יִדְמֶה לַיהוה בִּבְנֵי אֵלִים	yidmeh lAdonai bivnei elim?
[8] The holy council all fear God,	אֵל נַעֲרָץ בְּסוֹד־קְדֹשִׁים	El na'aratz besod kedoshim,
more great and grand than all around.[5]	רַבָּה וְנוֹרָא עַל־כָּל־סְבִיבָיו	rabah venorah al kol sevivav.
[9] God who commands *angelic* hosts—	יהוה אֱלֹהֵי צְבָאוֹת	Adonai Elohei tzeva'ot,
who can compare to your great might?	מִי־כָמוֹךָ חֲסִין יָהּ	mi chamocha, chasin Yah?
Around you dwells your constancy.[6]	וֶאֱמוּנָתְךָ סְבִיבוֹתֶיךָ	Ve'emunat'cha sevivotecha.
[10] The swelling sea yields to your might;	אַתָּה מוֹשֵׁל בְּגֵאוּת הַיָּם	Atah moshel bege'ut hayam,
you silence towering, crashing waves.[7]	בְּשׂוֹא גַלָּיו אַתָּה תְשַׁבְּחֵם	beso galav atah teshabchem.

[1] Ezrachi could be part of Eitan's name, could refer to his civic status (citizen, not alien), and could refer to family ties. Or, Rav (in Bava Batra 15a) says Eitan is Abraham the "easterner"—the root of הָאֶזְרָחִי is זרח, to shine as the sun rises in the East.

[2] "I-have-made a-pact for-my-chosen-one, / I-have-sworn to-David my-servant,"

[3] "To-the-*end-of-the*-world I-have-fixed your-descendants / and-have-built from-age-to-age your-throne."

[4] "Saints" or "holy ones" may mean angels, or good people who have gone to an afterlife, near God.

[5] "God is-feared/respected in-the-council-of-holy-ones/saints/angels, / great and-awesome above-all-those-who-are-around-*God."*

[6] "God, God-of hosts, / who-*is*-like-you, mighty God? / And-your-constancy *is* around-you."

[7] "You rule-over the-swelling-of the-sea; / at-the-rising-of its-waves you still-them."

11 You crushed the monster[1] like a corpse,	אַתָּה דִכִּאתָ כֶחָלָל רָהַב	Atah dikita chechalal rahav,
scattered your foes with mighty arm.	בִּזְרוֹעַ עֻזֶּךָ פִּזַּרְתָּ אוֹיְבֶיךָ	bizro'a uz'cha pizarta oyvecha.
12 Yours are the skies and yours the land,	לְךָ שָׁמַיִם אַף־לְךָ אָרֶץ	Lecha shamayim, af lecha aretz,
for you made Earth and all it holds.	תֵּבֵל וּמְלֹאָהּ אַתָּה יְסַדְתָּם	tevel umelo'ah atah yesadtam.
13 North and South,[2] you made them both;	צָפוֹן וְיָמִין אַתָּה בְרָאתָם	Tzafon veyamin atah veratam,
Tavor and Chermon sing your praise.	תָּבוֹר וְחֶרְמוֹן בְּשִׁמְךָ יְרַנֵּנוּ	Tavor veChermon beshimcha yeranenu.
14 Yours is power, yours is strength:	לְךָ זְרוֹעַ עִם־גְּבוּרָה	Lecha zero'ah im gevurah,
might in your hand, height in your arm.	תָּעֹז יָדְךָ תָּרוּם יְמִינֶךָ	ta'oz yad'cha, tarum yeminecha.
15 On right and justice stands your throne,[3]	צֶדֶק וּמִשְׁפָּט מְכוֹן כִּסְאֶךָ	Tzedek umishpat mechon kis'echa,
kindness and truth herald your presence.	חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת יְקַדְּמוּ פָנֶיךָ	chesed ve'emet yekadmu fanecha.
16 Happy the folk who hear the shofar;	אַשְׁרֵי הָעָם יוֹדְעֵי תְרוּעָה	Ashrei ha'am yod'ei teru'ah;
God, they walk in the light of your presence.[4]	יהוה בְּאוֹר־פָּנֶיךָ יְהַלֵּכוּן	Adonai, be'or panecha yehalechun.
17 They rejoice in your name every day	בְּשִׁמְךָ יָגִילוּן כָּל־הַיּוֹם	Beshim'cha yegilun kol hayom,
and are dignified by your righteousness.[5]	וּבְצִדְקָתְךָ יָרוּמוּ	uvetzidkat'cha yarumu.
18 You are the glory of their power;	כִּי־תִפְאֶרֶת עֻזָּמוֹ אָתָּה	Ki tiferet uzamo atah,
through your favor we shall succeed![6]	וּבִרְצֹנְךָ תָּרוּם[7] קַרְנֵנוּ	uvirtzon'cha tarum karneinu.
19 God is our *true* protector,	כִּי לַיהוה מָגִנֵּנוּ	Ki lAdonai maginenu
and Israel's holy one our *true* ruler.[8]	וְלִקְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל מַלְכֵּנוּ	velikdosh Yisra'el malkenu.

[1] רָהַב can be translated as pride, storm, a sea monster, or a symbol of Egypt. Rashi says it means Egypt.
[2] יָמִין usually means "right (hand)," so if you have the Mediterranean Sea behind you, right is south.
[3] "Right and justice are the foundation of your throne"; i.e., God's ruling the world is founded on the idea that God's sovereignty is right and just.
[4] "Lucky/happy are they who are familiar with the Shofar's sound; God, they walk in the light of your face."
[5] "Through your name (i.e., reputation) they will rejoice all day, and through your righteousness they will be raised up." Being in the company of one who has earned such an exalted reputation ("name"), they too are exalted.
[6] "For (or, in that) you are the splendor of *their* strength (i.e., whatever is glorious about their power comes from you), and in your favor (or, through your will) shall our horn be raised." Raising the horn is an idiom expressing success.
[7] A manuscript would have תרים.
[8] "For *belonging*-to-God *is* our-protection / and-*belonging*-to-the-holy-one-of Israel *is* our-sovereignty," a way of saying that God is our defence and ruler.

[20] To your devotees you disclosed:	אָז דִּבַּרְתָּ־בְחָזוֹן לַחֲסִידֶיךָ	Az dibarta vechazon lachasidecha,
"I gave help to a warrior,	וַתֹּאמֶר שִׁוִּיתִי עֵזֶר עַל־גִּבּוֹר	vatomer, "Shiviti ezer al gibor,
and from the people made my choice.[1]	הֲרִימוֹתִי בָחוּר מֵעָם	harimoti vachur me'am;
[21] "My servant David have I found,	מָצָאתִי דָוִד עַבְדִּי	"Matzati David avdi,
anointed him with holy oil	בְּשֶׁמֶן קָדְשִׁי מְשַׁחְתִּיו	beshemen kodshi meshachtiv
[22] "For my power will stay with him,	אֲשֶׁר יָדִי תִּכּוֹן עִמּוֹ	"Asher yadi tikon imo,
my own might will give him strength.	אַף־זְרוֹעִי תְאַמְּצֶנּוּ	af zero'i te'amtzenu.
[23] "No enemy dares tackle him	לֹא־יִשָּׂא אוֹיֵב בּוֹ	"Lo yisa oyev bo,
nor can attacker vanquish him.[2]	וּבֶן־עַוְלָה לֹא יְעַנֶּנּוּ	uven avla lo ye'anenu.
[24] "I crush the enemies in his way	וְכִתּוֹתִי מִפָּנָיו צָרָיו	"Vechatoti mipanav tzarav
and smash the foes who bear him hate.	וּמְשַׂנְאָיו אֶגּוֹף	umesanav egof.
[25] "My faith and kindness are with him	וֶאֱמוּנָתִי וְחַסְדִּי עִמּוֹ	"Ve'emunati vechasdi imo,
to bring him fame through my great name.[3]	וּבִשְׁמִי תָּרוּם קַרְנוֹ	uvishmi tarum karno.
[26] "I give him power at the sea	וְשַׂמְתִּי בַיָּם יָדוֹ	"Vesamti vayam yado
and over rivers might and sway.[4]	וּבַנְּהָרוֹת יְמִינוֹ	uvanharot yemino.
[27] "He'll say, 'From your stock am I bred,[5]	הוּא יִקְרָאֵנִי אָבִי אָתָּה	"Hu yikra'eni 'Avi atah,
my God, reliable savior.'	אֵלִי וְצוּר יְשׁוּעָתִי	Eli vetzur yeshu'ati.'
[28] "I'll choose him as my first-born *heir*,	אַף־אֲנִי בְּכוֹר אֶתְּנֵהוּ	"Af ani bechor etnehu,
the highest sovereign on earth.	עֶלְיוֹן לְמַלְכֵי־אָרֶץ	elyon lemalchei aretz.
[29] "Forever shall I favor him,	לְעוֹלָם אֶשְׁמָר־לוֹ חַסְדִּי	"Le'olam eshmor lo chasdi,
my pact with him will always stand.[6]	וּבְרִיתִי נֶאֱמֶנֶת לוֹ	uveriti ne'emenet lo.
[30] "I'll ever guard his royal line	וְשַׂמְתִּי לָעַד זַרְעוֹ	"Vesamti la'ad zaro,
and throne as long as sky shall last.[8]	וְכִסְאוֹ כִּימֵי שָׁמָיִם	vechiso kimei shamayim.

[1] "Then you-spoke-through-a-vision to-those-who-favor-you/to-those-whom-you-favor, / and-you-said, "I-have-extended help for-a-warrior, / I-have-raised-up a-chosen-person from-the-people."

[2] "Not-will-raise-*arms* foe against-him, / and-son-of-an-unworthy-person not will-humble/afflict-him." לא־ישא means "he will not lift up"; Isaiah 2:4 uses a similar idiom, לא־ישא גוי אל־גוי חרב "Nation will not lift up sword against nation."

[3] "And-through-my-name/reputation shall-rise his-horn/eminence."

[4] "And-I-have-placed on-the-sea his-hand/power, / and-on-the-rivers his-right-hand/power."

[5] "My-parent *are* you."

[6] "Forever shall-I-preserve for-him my-kindness, / and-my-pact *is* constant/reliable/faithful toward-him."

[7] A manuscript would have אשמור. As far as I can see this would mean the same.

[8] "And-I-will-set forever his-seed/offspring, / and-his-throne *will last* like-the-days-of the-skies."

31 "But if his line forsake my law	אִם־יַעַזְבוּ בָנָיו תּוֹרָתִי	"Im ya'azvu vanav Torati
and fail to follow my just rules,	וּבְמִשְׁפָּטַי לֹא יֵלֵכוּן	uvemishpatai lo yelechun,
32 "If they repudiate my rules	אִם־חֻקֹּתַי יְחַלֵּלוּ	"Im chukotai yechalelu
and fail to keep my *just* commands,	וּמִצְוֹתַי לֹא יִשְׁמֹרוּ	umitzvotai lo yishmoru,
33 "Then shall I flog them for their sins	וּפָקַדְתִּי בְשֵׁבֶט פִּשְׁעָם	"Ufakadti veshevet pisham
bring on disease for their offense.[1]	וּבִנְגָעִים עֲוֹנָם	uvin'ga'im avonam.
34 "Yet I won't quash[2] my love for him,	וְחַסְדִּי לֹא־אָפִיר מֵעִמּוֹ	"Vechasdi lo afir me'imo,
I won't betray my constancy.	וְלֹא־אֲשַׁקֶּר בֶּאֱמוּנָתִי	velo ashaker be'emunati.
35 "My promises I'll not revoke	לֹא־אֲחַלֵּל בְּרִיתִי	"Lo achalel beriti,
nor change the vow my lips have voiced.[3]	וּמוֹצָא שְׂפָתַי לֹא אֲשַׁנֶּה	umotza sefatai lo ashaneh.
36 "In holiness one pledge I made,	אַחַת נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי בְקָדְשִׁי	"Achat nishbati vekodshi,
that David I would never fail.	אִם־לְדָוִד אֲכַזֵּב	im leDavid achazev.
37 "His line forever would endure,	זַרְעוֹ לְעוֹלָם יִהְיֶה	"Zaro le'olam yihyeh,
his throne like the sun at my side,[4]	וְכִסְאוֹ כַשֶּׁמֶשׁ נֶגְדִּי	vechiso chashemesh negdi.
38 "Or the moon, forever firm,	כְּיָרֵחַ יִכּוֹן עוֹלָם	"Keyare'ach yikon olam,
a constant witness in the sky."	וְעֵד בַּשַּׁחַק נֶאֱמָן	ve'ed bashachak ne'eman."
Selah[5]	סֶלָה	Selah

39 But, *God,* you spurned in sheer disgust	וְאַתָּה זָנַחְתָּ וַתִּמְאָס	Ve'atah zanachta vatimas,
and anger your anointed *king,*[6]	הִתְעַבַּרְתָּ עִם־מְשִׁיחֶךָ	hitabarta im meshichecha,
40 Voided your servant's *ancient* pact	נֵאַרְתָּה בְּרִית עַבְדֶּךָ	Ne'arta brit avdecha,
and fouled his crown upon the ground.	חִלַּלְתָּ לָאָרֶץ נִזְרוֹ	chilalta la'aretz nizro.
41 You broke down all his barriers	פָּרַצְתָּ כָל־גְּדֵרֹתָיו	Paratzta chol gederotav,
and brought his castles to collapse;	שַׂמְתָּ מִבְצָרָיו מְחִתָּה	samta mivtzarav mechita.

[1] "Then-shall-I-punish with-a-stick their-sin / and-with-diseases their-transgression."
[2] אָפִיר, perhaps related to פּוּרָה, winepress; cf. Isaiah 63:3, פּוּרָה דָּרַכְתִּי לְבַדִּי, "A winepress (or vintage) I trod out by myself."
[3] "Not-shall-I-forsake my-agreement / and-what-came-from my-lips not shall-I-change."
[4] "His-seed forever will-live / and-his-throne/seat like-the-sun next-to-me/across-from-me."
[5] "Like-the-moon he-is-established ever, / and-*it-is*-a-witness in-the-sky faithful. / Selah."
[6] "And-you-spurned and-you-detested, / you-became-angry with-your-anointed-*king."*

[42] Passers-by all ransack *the rubble*—	שַׁסֻּהוּ כָּל־עֹבְרֵי דָרֶךְ	Shasuhu kol ovrei darech—
a disgrace for the neighborhood.[1]	הָיָה חֶרְפָּה לִשְׁכֵנָיו	hayah cherpah lishchenav.
[43] You have raised his enemies' power,	הֲרִימוֹתָ יְמִין צָרָיו	Harimota yemin tzarav,
given them reason to rejoice.	הִשְׂמַחְתָּ כָּל־אוֹיְבָיו	hismachta kol oyvav.
[44] You twisted his sword *from his hand*	אַף־תָּשִׁיב צוּר חַרְבּוֹ	Af tashiv tzur charbo
and left him bare to fall in war,[2]	וְלֹא הֲקִימוֹתוֹ בַּמִּלְחָמָה	velo hakemoto bamil'chama.
[45] You brought his luster to an end	הִשְׁבַּתָּ מִטְהָרוֹ	Hishbata mit'haro,
threw his throne down on the ground,	וְכִסְאוֹ לָאָרֶץ מִגַּרְתָּה	vechiso la'aretz migarta.
[46] Shortened his days of lusty youth,	הִקְצַרְתָּ יְמֵי עֲלוּמָיו	Hiktzarta yemei alumav,
wrapped him in embarrassment. Selah.	הֶעֱטִיתָ עָלָיו בוּשָׁה סֶלָה	he'etita alav busha. Selah.
[47] O God, forever will you hide,	עַד־מָה יהוה תִּסָּתֵר לָנֶצַח	Ad mah, Adonai, tisater lanetzach,
your anger smoldering like fire?[3]	תִּבְעַר כְּמוֹ־אֵשׁ חֲמָתֶךָ	tivar kemo esh chamatecha?
[48] Remember me, how short my life—	זְכָר־אֲנִי מֶה־חָלֶד	Zechor ani meh chaled—
why did you make us all like this?[4]	עַל־מַה־שָּׁוְא בָּרָאתָ כָל־בְּנֵי־אָדָם	al mah shav barata chol benei adam?
[49] What man can live and not meet death,	מִי גֶבֶר יִחְיֶה וְלֹא יִרְאֶה־מָוֶת	Mi gever yichyeh velo yireh mavet,
save himself from the great unknown? Selah.	יְמַלֵּט נַפְשׁוֹ מִיַּד־שְׁאוֹל סֶלָה	yemalet nafsho miyad She'ol? Selah.
[50] God, where is the former grace	אַיֵּה חֲסָדֶיךָ הָרִאשֹׁנִים אֲדֹנָי	Ayeh chasadecha harishonim, Adonai,
you pledged to David, faithfully?	נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לְדָוִד בֶּאֱמוּנָתֶךָ	nishbata leDavid be'emunatecha?
[51] God, think of the insults we've endured,	זְכֹר אֲדֹנָי חֶרְפַּת עֲבָדֶיךָ	Zechor, Adonai, cherpat avadecha,
borne in our bosom *from* all those folks	שְׂאֵתִי בְחֵיקִי כָּל־רַבִּים עַמִּים	se'eti vecheki kol rabim amim
[52] Who sneer at us—those enemies, God—	אֲשֶׁר חֵרְפוּ אוֹיְבֶיךָ יהוה	Asher cherfu oyvecha, Adonai.
who mock your anointed at every step.	אֲשֶׁר חֵרְפוּ עִקְּבוֹת מְשִׁיחֶךָ	asher cherfu ikvot meshichecha.
[53] May God be blessed forever—	בָּרוּךְ יהוה לְעוֹלָם	Baruch Adonai le'olam:
this is really true!	אָמֵן וְאָמֵן	amen ve'amen.

[1] "They-have-plundered-it, all-who-pass-by-*on the*-road; / it's-become a-disgrace for-its-neighbors."
[2] "Even-you'd-turn-back the-blade-of his-sword / and-did-not keep-him-upright in-the-battle."
[3] "Until-what, God, will-you-hide forever? / Will-you-make-burn like-fire your-anger?"
[4] "Remember me, how-transient *am I*; / for-what-*reason*-equal did-you-create all-descendants-of-Adam?" שָׁוְא/shav could mean level, or equal, or useless.

Psalm 90

Read in the early part of the morning service on Shabbat, festivals and Hoshana Rabba.

[1] A prayer of Moses, God's agent:[1]	תְּפִלָּה לְמֹשֶׁה אִישׁ־הָאֱלֹהִים	Tefilah leMosheh, ish ha'Elohim.
God, you have been our shelter	אֲדֹנָי מָעוֹן אַתָּה הָיִיתָ לָּנוּ	Adonai, ma'on atah hayita lanu
from generation to generation.	בְּדֹר וָדֹר	bedor vador—
[2] Before the hills were born,	בְּטֶרֶם הָרִים יֻלָּדוּ	Beterem harim yuladu
before you birthed earth and the livable world,	וַתְּחוֹלֵל אֶרֶץ וְתֵבֵל	vat'cholel eretz vetevel:
from forever to forever you are God.	וּמֵעוֹלָם עַד־עוֹלָם אַתָּה אֵל	ume'olam ad olam atah El.
[3] You turn a person back into pulp,	תָּשֵׁב אֱנוֹשׁ עַד־דַּכָּא	Tashev enosh ad dacah,
saying, "Return, humanity."	וַתֹּאמֶר שׁוּבוּ בְנֵי־אָדָם	vatomer, "Shuvu, venei adam!"
[4] For a thousand years to you	כִּי אֶלֶף שָׁנִים בְּעֵינֶיךָ	Ki elef shanim be'einecha
are like yesterday—gone—	כְּיוֹם אֶתְמוֹל כִּי יַעֲבֹר	keyom etmol—ki ya'avor—
like one night's watch.	וְאַשְׁמוּרָה בַלָּיְלָה	ve'ashmurah valaylah.
[5] They rush past like sleep:	זְרַמְתָּם שֵׁנָה יִהְיוּ	Zeramtam shenah yiheyu,
in the morning they wither like grass.[2]	בַּבֹּקֶר כֶּחָצִיר יַחֲלֹף	baboker kechatzir yachalof.
[6] In the morning, it blossoms and sprouts,	בַּבֹּקֶר יָצִיץ וְחָלָף	Baboker yatzitz vechalaf,
but in the evening it wilts and shrivels.	לָעֶרֶב יְמוֹלֵל וְיָבֵשׁ	la'erev yemolel veyavesh.
[7] For we are destroyed by your fury	כִּי־כָלִינוּ בְאַפֶּךָ	Ki chalinu ve'apecha,
and scared by your anger.	וּבַחֲמָתְךָ נִבְהָלְנוּ	uvachamat'cha nivhalnu.
[8] You have set down our sins before you,	שַׁתָּה עֲוֹנֹתֵינוּ לְנֶגְדֶּךָ	Shata avonoteinu lenegdecha,
our hidden *faults* in the light of your presence.	עֲלֻמֵנוּ לִמְאוֹר פָּנֶיךָ	alumeinu lim'or panecha.
[9] All our days *we* faced your anger;[3]	כִּי כָל־יָמֵינוּ פָּנוּ בְעֶבְרָתֶךָ	Ki chol yameinu panu ve'evratecha,
we finished our years like a sigh.	כִּלִּינוּ שָׁנֵינוּ כְּמוֹ־הֶגֶה	kilinu shaneinu chemo hegeh.

[1] "The man of God." But what is a "man of God"? Someone who carries out God's will, as Moses did when God sent him to save Jacob's descendants.

[2] זְרַמְתָּם, their-rushing, from זרם —flow, pour down, sweep away, flood; חלף—change, vanish, pass away; or come anew, shoot forth.

[3] "For all our days turned towards your עֶבְרָה, anger."

[10] Our years of life	יְמֵי־שְׁנוֹתֵינוּ	Yemei shenoteinu—
have seventy years	בָהֶם שִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה	vahem shiv'im shanah,
and eighty years for extra strength:	וְאִם בִּגְבוּרֹת שְׁמוֹנִים שָׁנָה	ve'im bigvurot shemonim shanah.
their pride[1] is pain and trouble,	וְרָהְבָּם עָמָל וָאָוֶן	Verah'bam amal va'aven,
for life hurries by, and we are gone.[2]	כִּי־גָז חִישׁ וַנָּעֻפָה	ki gaz chish vena'ufah.
[11] Who knows your anger's power	מִי־יוֹדֵעַ עֹז אַפֶּךָ	Mi yode'ah oz apecha
or how much to dread your disfavor?[3]	וּכְיִרְאָתְךָ עֶבְרָתֶךָ	ucheyir'at'cha evratecha?
[12] Teach us to use each day,	לִמְנוֹת יָמֵינוּ כֵּן הוֹדַע	Limnot yameinu ken hoda,
to bring our hearts to wisdom.[4]	וְנָבִא לְבַב חָכְמָה	venavi levav chochmah.
[13] Come back, God—how long will it be?—	שׁוּבָה יהוה עַד־מָתָי	Shuvah Adonai—ad matai?
and take pity on us, your servants.	וְהִנָּחֵם עַל־עֲבָדֶיךָ	vehinachem al avadecha.
[14] Fill us at dawn with your kindness;	שַׂבְּעֵנוּ בַבֹּקֶר חַסְדֶּךָ	Sab'einu vaboker chasdecha,
we'll rejoice and be happy	וּנְרַנְּנָה וְנִשְׂמְחָה	uneranenah venismechah
every day.	בְּכָל־יָמֵינוּ	bechol-yameinu.
[15] Give us joy to equal our days of pain,	שַׂמְּחֵנוּ כִּימוֹת עִנִּיתָנוּ	Samcheinu kimot initanu
the years we have seen trouble.	שְׁנוֹת רָאינוּ רָעָה	shenot ra'inu ra'ah.
[16] So your work will be shown to your servants,	יֵרָאֶה אֶל־עֲבָדֶיךָ פָּעֳלֶךָ	Yera'eh el avadecha fo'olecha
your splendor to their children.	וַהֲדָרְךָ עַל־בְּנֵיהֶם	vahadar'cha al beneihem.
[17] May we feel God's tenderness;	וִיהִי נֹעַם אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהֵינוּ עָלֵינוּ	Vihi no'am Adonai Eloheinu aleinu,
may *God* confirm our efforts;	וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵינוּ כּוֹנְנָה עָלֵינוּ	uma'asei yadeinu konenah aleinu,
God, confirm our efforts.[5]	וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵינוּ כּוֹנְנֵהוּ	uma'asei yadeinu koneneihu.

[1] רהב—boast; רָהְבָּם—what they boast about, their pride.

[2] Tough Hebrew. גז is shear, clip, cut short; חִישׁ is quickly. נָּעֻפָה is from the same root as wing. Maybe the image is like sheep shearing, "A hurried shearing, and we are blown away (by the wind, like little bits of clipped hair)." Maybe we can imagine the barber's shop: "A quick trim, and we're tossed in the air."

[3] "Or—as it should be feared—your opposition."

[4] "To-portion/apportion/count our-days indeed/yes make-known / and-we-shall-bring heart wisdom."

[5] A tough passage, yielding the traditional translation: "yea, the work of our hands establish thou it." Literally, "and the work of our hands (i.e., whatever we manage to achieve in our lifetime), *God,* make it last for our sake, and the work of our hands, make it last."

Psalm 91

In the early morning service on Shabbat and festivals, bedtime, and evening service after Shabbat.

[1] Whoever dwells with God on high	יֹשֵׁב בְּסֵתֶר עֶלְיוֹן	Yoshev beseter elyon,
In sacred shelter will find ease.[1]	בְּצֵל שַׁדַּי יִתְלוֹנָן	betzel Shadai yitlonan.
[2] "My God, my home, my castle," I	אֹמַר לַיהוה מַחְסִי וּמְצוּדָתִי	Omar lAdonai, "Machsi um'tzudati,
Tell God, "upon you I rely."[2]	אֱלֹהַי אֶבְטַח־בּוֹ	Elohai; evtach bo."
[3] From fowler's snare God will release	כִּי הוּא יַצִּילְךָ	Ki hu yatzil'cha
You, saving you from dread disease.[3]	מִפַּח יָקוּשׁ מִדֶּבֶר הַוּוֹת	mipach yakush, midever havot.
[4] You hide beneath God's sheltering wing;	בְּאֶבְרָתוֹ יָסֵךְ לָךְ	Be'evrato yasech lach,
Your shield and armor 'gainst all harm	וְתַחַת־כְּנָפָיו תֶּחְסֶה	vetachat kenafav tech'se
Is God's own trusty arm.[4]	צִנָּה וְסֹחֵרָה אֲמִתּוֹ	tzina vesochera amito.
[5] For you, dread nights no terror bring	לֹא־תִירָא מִפַּחַד לָיְלָה	Lo tira mipachad laylah;
Nor arrows shot in light of day,[5]	מֵחֵץ יָעוּף יוֹמָם	mechetz ya'uf yomam.
[6] Nor, through the gloom, the sickening	מִדֶּבֶר בָּאֹפֶל יַהֲלֹךְ	Midever ba'ofel yahaloch,
Nor noontime torment lingering.[6]	מִקֶּטֶב יָשׁוּד צָהֳרָיִם	miketev yashud tzohorayim.
[7] Though pestilence fells the array	יִפֹּל מִצִּדְּךָ אֶלֶף	Yipol mitzid'cha elef,
Of myriads at your side—while they	וּרְבָבָה מִימִינֶךָ	urevavah miminecha
Succumb, you are untouched, secure.[7]	אֵלֶיךָ לֹא יִגָּשׁ	elecha lo yigash.
[8] But look, and see within your view	רַק בְּעֵינֶיךָ תַבִּיט	Rak be'einecha tabit,
The wicked get their due.[8]	וְשִׁלֻּמַת רְשָׁעִים תִּרְאֶה	veshilumat resha'im tir'eh.

[1] "Whoever dwells in the High One's secret *place* will/can sleep in the Almighty's shade."

[2] "I say to God, 'My shelter! My fortress! My God in whom I trust'" or "I say: 'To God belongs my shelter, my fortress/stronghold—my God whom I trust.'"

[3] "For God will deliver you from the bird trap (פַּח—snare or trap; יָקוּשׁ or יָקוּשׁ—fowler, someone who catches birds for a living), from the ruinous plague (הַוּוֹת—trouble, destruction)."

[4] "God will cover you under *God's* wing; beneath God's pinions you will hide; shield and armor are *God's* truth/forearm." אֲמִתּוֹ comes from אֱמֶת (truth) and/or אַמָּה (forearm/cubit and other meanings).

[5] "You shall not be afraid of the terror of night, or of the arrow that will fly in the day."

[6] "Of the plague that will walk around in the gloom or the sickness/epidemic that torments (acts like a demon in) the noon."

[7] "A thousand will fall at your side, and a myriad at your right hand—*the sickness* won't touch you."

[8] "Only glimpse with your eyes, and you'll see wicked people get what's coming to them." וְשִׁלֻּמַת רְשָׁעִים is the "payment" or "recompense" of the wicked.

[9] Say, "God, you are my sheltering *shore!*	כִּי־אַתָּה יהוה מַחְסִי	Ki atah Adonai machsi;
You've made on high your dwelling," and [1]	עֶלְיוֹן שַׂמְתָּ מְעוֹנֶךָ	elyon samta me'onecha.
[10] You'll host no evil visitor,	לֹא־תְאֻנֶּה אֵלֶיךָ רָעָה	Lo t'uneh elecha ra'ah,
No sickness dares approach your door.[2]	וְנֶגַע לֹא־יִקְרַב בְּאָהֳלֶךָ	venega lo yikrav be'oholecha.
[11] Heaven's messengers by *God's* command	כִּי מַלְאָכָיו יְצַוֶּה־לָּךְ	Ki mal'achav yetzaveh lach,
Will guard your step where'er you stand;[3]	לִשְׁמָרְךָ בְּכָל־דְּרָכֶיךָ	lishmor'cha bechol derachecha.
[12] They'll bear you in their hands, to ride	עַל־כַּפַּיִם יִשָּׂאוּנְךָ	Al kapayim yisa'un'cha,
High above the path rough-hewn,	פֶּן־תִּגֹּף בָּאֶבֶן רַגְלֶךָ	pen tigof ba'even raglecha.
With jagged boulders strewn.[4]		
[13] On lion and cub you'll boldly stride	עַל־שַׁחַל וָפֶתֶן תִּדְרֹךְ	Al shachal vafeten tidroch,
And trample on the poisonous snake.[5]	תִּרְמֹס כְּפִיר וְתַנִּין	tirmos kefir vetanin.
[14] Says God: "You sought me: I replied	כִּי בִי חָשַׁק וַאֲפַלְּטֵהוּ	Ki vi chashak va'afaltehu,
To guard you—in my name you cried.[6]	אֲשַׂגְּבֵהוּ כִּי־יָדַע שְׁמִי	asagvehu ki yada shemi.
[15] I wipe your tears; in all your grief	יִקְרָאֵנִי וְאֶעֱנֵהוּ	Yikra'eini ve'e'eneihu
I'm at your side to bring relief	עִמּוֹ־אָנֹכִי בְצָרָה	imo anochi vetzarah,
And honor, and to grant your wish—[7]	אֲחַלְּצֵהוּ וַאֲכַבְּדֵהוּ	achaltzeihu va'achabdeihu.
[16] Long life and full. You'll live to see	◊ אֹרֶךְ יָמִים אַשְׂבִּיעֵהוּ	◊ Orech yamim asbi'eihu
Me bring you liberty!"	וְאַרְאֵהוּ בִּישׁוּעָתִי	ve'ar'eihu bishu'ati.

[1] "For *if you say,* 'God, you are my refuge,' you have made the High One your dwelling (or made your dwelling on high)." As we get to the second half of the psalm, we take up the idea introduced at the beginning: Whoever dwells on high is protected by God. Now the Psalmist says, if you declare that you rely on God, you'll be in that position. In the verse translation, "shore" is added for the rhyme; מַחְסִי means "my shelter."

[2] "Evil will not come upon you, and sickness will not approach your tent."

[3] "For God will tell the angels for you to guard you in all your ways (wherever you go)."

[4] "They will bear you on their hands lest your foot should strike a stone."

[5] "You'll step on lion and snake, trample on lion's cub and serpent." **Important:** do not try this at home.

[6] God speaks in the rest of this psalm, speaking in the third person ("he"). The verse translation changes this to the second person ("you"). "Because *he* longed for me, and I'll save him, I'll protect him because he knew my name (i.e., called for my help)."

[7] "He will call me; I, *God,* will answer him. I am with him in trouble. I will release him and make him honored."

Psalm 92

Included in the psalms welcoming Shabbat,
and in the early morning service on Shabbat, festivals and Hoshana Rabba.

[1] A psalm, a song for Shabbat:[1]	מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר לְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת	Mizmor shir leyom haShabbat:
[2] O God, to you our thanks are due,	טוֹב לְהֹדוֹת לַיהוה	Tov lehodot lAdonai
to sing on high your praise,	וּלְזַמֵּר לִשְׁמְךָ עֶלְיוֹן	ulezamer leshimcha elyon
[3] Each day to express your gentleness,	לְהַגִּיד בַּבֹּקֶר חַסְדֶּךָ	Lehagid baboker chasdecha
each night your faithful ways;	וֶאֱמוּנָתְךָ בַלֵּילוֹת	ve'emunat'cha baleilot.
[4] With song tuned to the lyre, each hears	עֲלֵי־עָשׂוֹר וַעֲלֵי־נָבֶל	Aley asor va'aley nahvel,
the ten-stringed music of the spheres.[2]	עֲלֵי הִגָּיוֹן בְּכִנּוֹר	aley higayon bechinor
[5] Your deeds, O Sovereign, bring me cheer,	כִּי שִׂמַּחְתַּנִי יהוה בְּפָעֳלֶךָ	Ki simachtani Adonai befo'olecha,
joy in your works I've found;	בְּמַעֲשֵׂי יָדֶיךָ אֲרַנֵּן	bema'asei yadecha aranen.
[6] How grand, O God, your deeds appear,	מַה־גָּדְלוּ מַעֲשֶׂיךָ יהוה	Mah gadlu ma'asecha Adonai,
how deep your thoughts profound.	מְאֹד עָמְקוּ מַחְשְׁבֹתֶיךָ	me'od amku machshevotecha.
[7] The ignoramus can't conceive,	אִישׁ־בַּעַר לֹא יֵדָע	Ish ba'ar lo yeda
for this the fool is too naive:	וּכְסִיל לֹא־יָבִין אֶת־זֹאת	uchesil lo yavin et zot:
[8] Though thugs spread like a noxious weed	בִּפְרֹחַ רְשָׁעִים כְּמוֹ עֵשֶׂב	Bifro'ach resha'im kemo esev
and villains propagate their seed,	וַיָּצִיצוּ כָּל־פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן	vayatzitzu kol po'alei aven
toward endless ruin *they proceed*.[3]	לְהִשָּׁמְדָם עֲדֵי־עַד	lehishamdam adei ad.
[9] And you … Supremacy …	וְאַתָּה מָרוֹם	Ve'atah marom
Eternally … Divinity.[4]	לְעֹלָם יהוה	le'olam Adonai.

[1] This is the only psalm that's associated with a day, and our tradition understands this association surprisingly. This psalm is "for the day of Shabbat / לְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת / leyom haShabbat": When a psalm is "for David / לְדָוִד / leDavid," we assume David wrote it. So our tradition holds that Shabbat itself wrote this psalm!

[2] Midrash on Psalm 81 explains that the seven-stringed harp was for our time, an eighth string would be added for Messianic times, and in the perfect time to come, there would be 10 strings.

[3] "When bad people flourish like grass (in-the-flowering/fruiting-of bad-people like herbal-growth), / and all malefactors sprout, / *it's only* for their destruction eternally."

[4] This elliptical verse of four words is the center of the psalm. If you skip the first verse, "A psalm, a song for Shabbat," there are seven verses and 52 words before this short verse, and the same number after. These four words—You … Height … Forever … God—perhaps help the mind light on the immanent and the transcendent, the immediate (You) and the remote (the essence of height, the farthest reaches of time, and that which is divine), and intuitively apprehend their connection. Shabbat is the time for such contemplation. For these insights I am indebted to Benjamin Segal, the Detroit Conservative community's Scholar-in-Residence in October, 1999.

[10] For see! O God, your enemies—	כִּי הִנֵּה אֹיְבֶיךָ יהוה	Ki hineh oy'vecha, Adonai,
your enemies shall be lost,	כִּי־הִנֵּה אֹיְבֶיךָ יֹאבֵדוּ	ki hineh oy'vecha yovedu
all sunk in their iniquities	יִתְפָּרְדוּ כָּל־פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן	yitpardu kol po'alei aven.
from place to place be tossed.[1]		
[11] Like proud-horned ox I'll stand upright,	וַתָּרֶם כִּרְאֵים קַרְנִי	Vatarem kir'eim karni
anointed with rich flowing oil;	בַּלֹּתִי בְּשֶׁמֶן רַעֲנָן	baloti beshemen ra'anan
[12] My enemies will—in my sight—	וַתַּבֵּט עֵינִי בְּשׁוּרָי	Vatabet eini beshurai
though they attack *be beaten back;*	בַּקָּמִים עָלַי מְרֵעִים	bakamim alay mere'im.
I'll hear *their plans all foiled.*[2]	תִּשְׁמַעְנָה אָזְנָי	tishma'na oznai!
[13] The righteous flourish like the palm	צַדִּיק כַּתָּמָר יִפְרָח	Tzaddik katamar yifrach
as Lebanon's lofty cedar soars;	כְּאֶרֶז בַּלְּבָנוֹן יִשְׂגֶּה	ke'erez baL'vanon yisgeh,
[14] Rooted in the house of God,	שְׁתוּלִים בְּבֵית יהוה	Shetulim beveit Adonai
they blossom in God's *inner* courts;	בְּחַצְרוֹת אֱלֹהֵינוּ יַפְרִיחוּ	bechatzrot Eloheinu yafrichu.
[15] They bear fruit when they're elderly,	עוֹד יְנוּבוּן בְּשֵׂיבָה	Od yenuvun beseivah
fertile and fresh eternally,	דְּשֵׁנִים וְרַעֲנַנִּים יִהְיוּ	deshenim vera'ananim yiheyu.
[16] To show God is reliable,	לְהַגִּיד כִּי־יָשָׁר יהוה	Lehagid, ki yashar Adonai
my *steady* rock, impeccable.	צוּרִי וְלֹא־עַוְלָתָה בּוֹ	tzuri velo avlata bo.

[1] "They shall disperse themselves, all workers of wickedness."
[2] "May my eye look upon my foes *being destroyed* when they rise against me, evildoers; listen, my ears, *to their discomfiture!*"

Psalm 93

Included in the psalms welcoming Shabbat,
and in the early morning service on Shabbat, festivals and Hoshana Rabba.

[1] God reigns, enrobed in regal grace,	יְהוָה מָלָךְ גֵּאוּת לָבֵשׁ	Adonai malach: ge'ut lavesh,
Robed in grace and cloaked in power;	לָבֵשׁ יְהוָה עֹז הִתְאַזָּר	lavesh Adonai, oz hit'azar.
Earth cannot slip in *God's* embrace;	אַף־תִּכּוֹן תֵּבֵל בַּל־תִּמּוֹט	Af tikon tevel bal timot.
[2] Firm is your throne from the first hour;	נָכוֹן כִּסְאֲךָ מֵאָז	Nachon kis'acha me'az,
Eternal is your place.	מֵעוֹלָם אָתָּה	me'olam atah.
[3] God, streams have raised,	נָשְׂאוּ נְהָרוֹת יְהוָה	Nas'u neharot, Adonai,
yes raised their voice;	נָשְׂאוּ נְהָרוֹת קוֹלָם	nas'u neharot kolam,
The rivers crash and roar:	יִשְׂאוּ נְהָרוֹת דָּכְיָם	yis'u neharot dochyam.
[4] Let mighty waters make their noise,	מִקֹּלוֹת מַיִם רַבִּים	Mikolot mayim rabim
The breakers on the shore:	אַדִּירִים מִשְׁבְּרֵי־יָם	adirim mishberei yam,
God's strength is more, much more!	אַדִּיר בַּמָּרוֹם יְהוָה	adir bamarom Adonai.
[5] Your promises will be fulfilled:	עֵדֹתֶיךָ נֶאֶמְנוּ מְאֹד	Edotecha ne'emnu me'od
Your sacred house you shall rebuild,	לְבֵיתְךָ נַאֲוָה־קֹדֶשׁ	levet'cha na'avah kodesh,
Sovereign, for evermore.	יְהוָה לְאֹרֶךְ יָמִים	Adonai, le'orech yamim.

Psalm 94

For the fourth day of the week, Wednesday.

[1] God of vengeance, God!	אֵל־נְקָמוֹת יהוה	El nekamot, Adonai,
God of vengeance, show yourself!	אֵל נְקָמוֹת הוֹפִיעַ	El nekamot, hofi'a.
[2] Arise, judge of the world:	הִנָּשֵׂא שֹׁפֵט הָאָרֶץ	Hinaseh, shofet ha'aretz,
give the arrogant what they deserve!	הָשֵׁב גְּמוּל עַל־גֵּאִים	hashev gemul al ge'im.
[3] How long will the wicked, O God,	עַד־מָתַי רְשָׁעִים יהוה	Ad matai resha'im, Adonai,
how long will the wicked rejoice?	עַד־מָתַי רְשָׁעִים יַעֲלֹזוּ	ad matai resha'im ya'alozu?
[4] They bluster and brag,	יַבִּיעוּ יְדַבְּרוּ עָתָק	Yabi'u, yedabru atak;
they boast, all *these* evildoers.	יִתְאַמְּרוּ כָּל־פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן	yit'amru kol po'alei aven.
[5] They bully your people	עַמְּךָ יהוה יְדַכְּאוּ	Am'cha, Adonai, yedak'u,
and humiliate your own.	וְנַחֲלָתְךָ יְעַנּוּ	venachalat'cha ye'anu.
[6] They kill the widow and stranger,	אַלְמָנָה וְגֵר יַהַרֹגוּ	Almanah veger yaharogu,
murder the orphan.	וְיתוֹמִים יְרַצֵּחוּ	vitomim yerachetzu.
[7] They say, "God won't see;	וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא יִרְאֶה־יָהּ	Vayomru, "Lo yir'eh Yah,
Jacob's God won't know!"	וְלֹא־יָבִין אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב	velo yavin Elohei Ya'akov."
[8] Wise up, you brutes among the people;	בִּינוּ בֹעֲרִים בָּעָם	Binu, bo'arim ba'am,
fools, when will you realize?	וּכְסִילִים מָתַי תַּשְׂכִּילוּ	uchesilim, matai taskilu?
[9] *God* gave us ears: *you think God* can't hear?	הֲנֹטַע אֹזֶן הֲלֹא יִשְׁמָע	Hanotah ozen, halo yishmah?
God made the eye: can *God* not see?[1]	אִם־יֹצֵר עַיִן הֲלֹא יַבִּיט	Im yotzer ayin, halo yabit?
[10] *God* punishes nations: will *God* not chide,	הַיֹּסֵר גּוֹיִם הֲלֹא יוֹכִיחַ	Hayoser goyim, halo yochi'ach,
who teaches humans whatever they know!	הַמְלַמֵּד אָדָם דָּעַת	hamelamed adam da'at?
[11] God knows people's thoughts,	יהוה יֹדֵעַ מַחְשְׁבוֹת אָדָם	Adonai yode'ah machshevot adam,
how silly they are.	כִּי־הֵמָּה הָבֶל	ki hemah havel.
[12] Lucky is the person whom God chides	אַשְׁרֵי הַגֶּבֶר אֲשֶׁר־תְּיַסְּרֶנּוּ יָהּ	Ashrei hagever asher teyasrenu Yah
and teaches from *God's* law—	וּמִתּוֹרָתְךָ תְלַמְּדֶנּוּ	umiTorat'cha telamdenu,
[13] To be at peace in evil days	לְהַשְׁקִיט לוֹ מִימֵי רָע	lehashkit lo mimei rah
until a grave is dug for the wicked!	עַד יִכָּרֶה לָרָשָׁע שָׁחַת	ad yikareh larashah shachat.
[14] God will not desert *God's* people	כִּי לֹא־יִטֹּשׁ יהוה עַמּוֹ	Ki lo yitosh Adonai amo,
nor abandon *God's* own.	וְנַחֲלָתוֹ לֹא יַעֲזֹב	venachalato lo ya'azov.

[1] "The one who planted ears *in our heads, God, do you think God* won't hear *what you say? Do you seriously think* that the one who formed the eye will not look *at what you do*?"

[15] The verdict will return to justice,	כִּי־עַד־צֶדֶק יָשׁוּב מִשְׁפָּט	Ki ad tzedek yashuv mishpat,
and all the upright will follow it.	וְאַחֲרָיו כָּל־יִשְׁרֵי־לֵב	ve’acharav kol yishrei lev.
[16] Who will stand up to the wicked,	מִי־יָקוּם לִי עִם־מְרֵעִים	Mi yakum li im mere’im,
stand with me against evildoers?	מִי־יִתְיַצֵּב לִי עִם־פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן	mi yityatzev li im po’alei aven?
[17] If God had not helped me,	לוּלֵי יהוה עֶזְרָתָה לִּי	Lulei Adonai ezratah li,
my spirit would soon have been at peace!	כִּמְעַט שָׁכְנָה דוּמָה נַפְשִׁי	kim’at shochnah dumah nafshi!
[18] Had I said, “My foot has slipped,”	אִם־אָמַרְתִּי מָטָה רַגְלִי	Im amarti, “Matah ragli,”
your kindness, God, had nurtured me.	חַסְדְּךָ יהוה יִסְעָדֵנִי	chasdecha, Adonai, yis’adeni.
[19] When I am absorbed in my thoughts,[1]	בְּרֹב שַׂרְעַפַּי בְּקִרְבִּי	Berov sar’apai bekirbi,
your comforts bring me delight.	תַּנְחוּמֶיךָ יְשַׁעֲשְׁעוּ נַפְשִׁי	tan’chumecha yesha’ashu nafshi.
[20] Can an unjust court be your companion	הַיְחָבְרֶךָ כִּסֵּא הַוּוֹת	Hayechovrecha kiseh havot,
since it makes mischief the law?[2]	יֹצֵר עָמָל עָלֵי־חֹק	yotzer amal alei chok?
[21] They conspire against the just	יָגוֹדּוּ עַל־נֶפֶשׁ צַדִּיק	Yagodu al nefesh tzadik,
and condemn innocent blood.	וְדָם נָקִי יַרְשִׁיעוּ	vedam naki yarshi’u.
[22] But God is my stronghold,	וַיְהִי יהוה לִי לְמִשְׂגָּב	Vihi Adonai li lemisgav,
my God is my safe refuge.[3]	וֵאלֹהַי לְצוּר מַחְסִי	vElohai letzur machsi.
[23] *God* will turn their evil against them,	וַיָּשֶׁב עֲלֵיהֶם אֶת־אוֹנָם	Vayashev aleihim et onam,
cut them off in their wickedness;	וּבְרָעָתָם יַצְמִיתֵם	uvera’atam yatzmitem,
God, our God, will cut them off!	יַצְמִיתֵם יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ	yatzmitem Adonai Eloheinu!

[1] “There being many thoughts within me”—this may refer to the distractions of an active brain, or the meditations of a peaceful heart.
[2] “Could your companion be the *official* seat of evil, *which* makes trouble *founded* upon law?”
[3] “The rock of my protection,” for one may feel safe hiding behind a rock.

Psalm 95

Included in the psalms welcoming Shabbat.

[1] Come, sing for joy to God *on high*,	לְכוּ נְרַנְּנָה לַיהוה	Lechu neranena lAdonai;
on whose salvation we rely.[1]	נָרִיעָה לְצוּר יִשְׁעֵנוּ	nari'ah letzur yish'enu.
[2] Approach God with a thankful heart	נְקַדְּמָה פָנָיו בְּתוֹדָה	Nekadmah fanav betodah
with songs of praise *to take your part.*	בִּזְמִרוֹת נָרִיעַ לוֹ	Bizmirot, nari'ah lo.
[3] For a great God is Adonai,	כִּי אֵל גָּדוֹל יהוה	Ki El gadol Adonai
above all powers[2] ruling high,	וּמֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל עַל־כָּל־אֱלֹהִים	umelech gadol al kol elohim.
[4] Who holds the deepest chasms and	אֲשֶׁר בְּיָדוֹ מֶחְקְרֵי־אָרֶץ	Asher beyado
the loftiest peaks in *powerful* hand,	וְתוֹעֲפוֹת הָרִים לוֹ	mechkerei aretz veto'afot harim lo,
[5] Who made the sea (it's *God's* own brand),[3]	אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ הַיָּם וְהוּא עָשָׂהוּ	asher lo hayam vehu asahu,
whose hands gave form to the dry land.	וְיַבֶּשֶׁת יָדָיו יָצָרוּ	veyabeshet yadav yatzaru.
[6] Come, let us fall, bow down *in zeal*	בֹּאוּ נִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה וְנִכְרָעָה	Bo'u nishtachaveh venichra'ah,
to *bless* our maker; let us kneel.	נִבְרְכָה לִפְנֵי־יהוה עֹשֵׂנוּ	nivrechah lifnei Adonai oseinu
[7] To God we pray—and we can be	כִּי הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ וַאֲנַחְנוּ	ki hu Eloheinu—va'anachnu
the Shepherd's flock to guard, to lead[4]	עַם מַרְעִיתוֹ וְצֹאן יָדוֹ	am mar'ito, vetzon yado,
today! if you *God's* voice will heed.	הַיּוֹם אִם־בְּקֹלוֹ תִשְׁמָעוּ	hayom! im bekolo tishma'u.
[8] Don't be hard-hearted, as you were	אַל־תַּקְשׁוּ לְבַבְכֶם	Al takshu levav'chem
at Merivah and at Massah	כִּמְרִיבָה כְּיוֹם מַסָּה	kiMerivah, keyom Massah
when in the desert *Moses struck*	בַּמִּדְבָּר	bamidbar.
the rock to halt rebellious talk.[5]		
[9] Your parents saw what I could do,	אֲשֶׁר נִסּוּנִי אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם	Asher nisuni avoteichem
yet still they tried my patience too!	בְּחָנוּנִי גַּם־רָאוּ פָּעֳלִי	bechanuni gam ra'u fo'oli.
[10] For forty years they angered me;	אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה אָקוּט בְּדוֹר	Arba'im shana akut bedor
I said, "Their hearts are all at sea,[6]	וָאֹמַר עַם תֹּעֵי לֵבָב הֵם	va'omar, "Am to'ei levav hem,
they have not understood my way";	וְהֵם לֹא־יָדְעוּ דְרָכָי	vehem lo yad'u derachai."

[1] "Sing to the rock of our salvation"; the rock is a firm foundation for our faith
[2] "Powers"—the Hebrew could be "gods" or "heavenly powers."
[3] "Who owns the sea, since *God* made it."
[4] "The people whom *God* shepherds, the flock of *God's* hand (i.e., under God's guidance)."
[5] At Massah and Merivah in the desert, the people complained at their lack of water. Moses got water from a rock (Ex. 17:1-7, Num. 20:1-13).
[6] "I said, 'They are a people whose heart strays *from the proper path.'*"

[11] And in my indignation swore	אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי בְאַפִּי	Asher nishbati ve'api
they'd never reach my restful *shore*.	אִם־יְבֹאוּן אֶל־מְנוּחָתִי	im yevo'un el menuchati.

Psalm 96

Included in the psalms welcoming Shabbat.

[1] Sing out to God, sing a new song!	שִׁירוּ לַיהוה שִׁיר חָדָשׁ	Shiru lAdonai shir chadash,
Sing out to God, sing every place,[1]	שִׁירוּ לַיהוה כָּל־הָאָרֶץ	shiru lAdonai, kol ha'aretz,
[2] Sing out to God, and bless *God's* name;	שִׁירוּ לַיהוה בָּרֲכוּ שְׁמוֹ	shiru lAdonai, bar'chu shemo,
declare each day *God's* saving grace.	בַּשְּׂרוּ מִיּוֹם־לְיוֹם יְשׁוּעָתוֹ	basru miyom leyom yeshu'ato.
[3] Tell *God's* renown to every race,	סַפְּרוּ בַגּוֹיִם כְּבוֹדוֹ	Sap'ru vagoyim kevodo,
God's wonders among every folk;	בְּכָל־הָעַמִּים נִפְלְאוֹתָיו	bechol ha'amim nifle'otav,
[4] For God is great and greatly praised,	כִּי גָדוֹל יהוה וּמְהֻלָּל מְאֹד	ki gadol Adonai umehulal me'od,
no other can such awe evoke.[2]	נוֹרָא הוּא עַל־כָּל־אֱלֹהִים	norah hu al kol elohim.
[5] Those other "gods" are but a joke,[3]	כִּי כָּל־אֱלֹהֵי הָעַמִּים אֱלִילִים	Ki kol elohei ha'amim elilim,
for *our* God did the heavens form.	וַיהוה שָׁמַיִם עָשָׂה	vAdonai shamayim asah.
[6] Glory and majesty herald *God*,	הוֹד־וְהָדָר לְפָנָיו	Hod vehadar lefanav,
strength, grace, *God's* holy place adorn.	עֹז וְתִפְאֶרֶת בְּמִקְדָּשׁוֹ	oz vetif'eret bemikdasho.
[7] People, wherever you were born,	הָבוּ לַיהוה מִשְׁפְּחוֹת עַמִּים	Havu lAdonai mishpechot amim,
declare God's power and *God's* fame!	הָבוּ לַיהוה כָּבוֹד וָעֹז	havu lAdonai kavod va'oz.
[8] Bring offerings to the temple courts,	הָבוּ לַיהוה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ	Havu lAdonai kevod shemo;
declare the glory of *God's* name.[4]	שְׂאוּ־מִנְחָה וּבֹאוּ לְחַצְרוֹתָיו	se'u mincha uvo'u lechatzrotav.
[9] Worship God in sacred space,	הִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לַיהוה בְּהַדְרַת־קֹדֶשׁ	Hishtachavu lAdonai behadrat kodesh,
tremble, O earth, before *God's* face;	חִילוּ מִפָּנָיו כָּל־הָאָרֶץ	chilu mipanav kol ha'aretz;

[1] "Sing out to Adonai, all the earth."
[2] "*God* is awesome, more than all *other* Gods."
[3] "For all the *pagan* gods of *other* peoples are powerless deities."
[4] "Ascribe to God, clans of peoples, ascribe to God glory and power, ascribe to God the glory of *God's* name; take an offering and come to *God's* courtyards."

10 Tell nations, “God is sovereign,	אִמְרוּ בַגּוֹיִם יהוה מָלָךְ	imru vagoyim “Adonai malach,
earth cannot slip in *God’s* embrace,	אַף־תִּכּוֹן תֵּבֵל בַּל־תִּמּוֹט	af tikon tevel bal timot,
who justly weighs each nation’s case.”[1]	יָדִין עַמִּים בְּמֵישָׁרִים	yadin amim bemeisharim.”
11 Sky will delight and earth rejoice,	יִשְׂמְחוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְתָגֵל הָאָרֶץ	Yismechu hashamayim vetagel ha’aretz
the teeming sea will roar, the lea[2]	יִרְעַם הַיָּם וּמְלֹאוֹ	yir’am hayam um’lo’o.
12 And all its creatures will exult,	יַעֲלֹז שָׂדַי וְכֹל־אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ	ya’aloz sadai vechol asher bo,
and forests answer joyfully	אָז יְרַנְּנוּ כָּל־עֲצֵי־יָעַר	az yeranenu kol atzei ya’ar
13 As God comes near—comes presently	לִפְנֵי יהוה כִּי בָא	Lifnei Adonai ki va,
with judgement for the world below.	כִּי בָא לִשְׁפֹּט הָאָרֶץ	ki va lishpot ha’aretz.
the earth will see its just reward,	יִשְׁפֹּט־תֵּבֵל בְּצֶדֶק	yishpot tevel betzedek,
and all its dwellers truth shall know.[3]	וְעַמִּים בֶּאֱמוּנָתוֹ	ve’amim be’emunato.

[1] “*God* fixed the earth so it cannot slip, and justly judges nations.”
[2] “The sea and what fills it will roar”; a lea is a meadow.
[3] “*God* will judge the earth in righteousness and peoples in faithfulness.”

Psalm 97

Included in the psalms welcoming Shabbat.

[1] When God reigns, all earth will rejoice	יהוה מָלָךְ תָּגֵל הָאָרֶץ	Adonai malach, tagel ha'aretz,
And scattered islands add their voice;	יִשְׂמְחוּ אִיִּים רַבִּים	yismechu iyim rabim;
[2] In swirling clouds and darkest night,	עָנָן וַעֲרָפֶל סְבִיבָיו	anan va'arafel sevivav,
God's throne is borne by truth and right.[1]	צֶדֶק וּמִשְׁפָּט מְכוֹן כִּסְאוֹ	tzedek umishpat mechon kis'o.
[3] A tongue of flame before *God* goes,	אֵשׁ לְפָנָיו תֵּלֵךְ	Esh lefanav telech,
Devouring all around *God's* foes,	וּתְלַהֵט סָבִיב צָרָיו	utelahet saviv tzarav,
[4] *God's* lightning strikes the world alight;	הֵאִירוּ בְרָקָיו תֵּבֵל	he'iru verakav tevel,
Earthdwellers tremble at the sight.	רָאֲתָה וַתָּחֶל הָאָרֶץ	ra'ata vatachel ha'aretz.
[5] Mountains like wax will melt away	הָרִים כַּדּוֹנַג נָמַסּוּ	Harim kadonag namasu
Before God,	מִלִּפְנֵי יהוה	milifnei Adonai,
The power who holds all th' earth in sway.	מִלִּפְנֵי אֲדוֹן כָּל־הָאָרֶץ	milifnei adon kol ha'aretz.
[6] Heaven did *God's* righteousness declare,	הִגִּידוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם צִדְקוֹ	higidu hashamayim tzidko,
All peoples at *God's* glory stare;	וְרָאוּ כָל־הָעַמִּים כְּבוֹדוֹ	vera'u chol ha'amim kevodo;
[7] Pagans, for their idolatries	יֵבֹשׁוּ כָּל־עֹבְדֵי פָסֶל	yevoshu kol ovdei fesel
Ashamed, pursued vain deities	הַמִּתְהַלְלִים בָּאֱלִילִים	hamit'halelim ba'elilim;
That kneel to *God's* divinity.[2]	הִשְׁתַּחֲווּ־לוֹ כָּל־אֱלֹהִים	hishtachavu lo kol elohim.
[8] Zion rejoiced on hearing this	שָׁמְעָה וַתִּשְׂמַח צִיּוֹן	Sham'ah vatismach Tziyon
While Judah's daughters smiled in bliss,	וַתָּגֵלְנָה בְּנוֹת יְהוּדָה	vatagelnah benot Yehudah
O Judge, whose justice will not miss.[3]	לְמַעַן מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ יהוה	lema'an mishpatecha, Adonai.
[9] God,	כִּי־אַתָּה יהוה	Ki atah Adonai
above all the world you tower,	עֶלְיוֹן עַל־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ	elyon al kol ha'aretz,
Exalted above every power.	מְאֹד נַעֲלֵיתָ עַל־כָּל־אֱלֹהִים	me'od na'aleita al kol elohim.

[1] "Many islands will rejoice; cloud and darkness are around *God*, righteousness and judgement the place of *God's* throne."
[2] "They will feel ashamed, all idolators (who worship idols); all *pagan* gods have kneeled to *God*."
[3] "For the sake of your judgements, Adonai."

[10] Those who love God must evil shun;	אֹהֲבֵי יהוה שִׂנְאוּ רָע	Ohavei Adonai, sin'u ra;
The guardian of faithful souls	שֹׁמֵר נַפְשׁוֹת חֲסִידָיו	shomer nafshot chasidav
Will save them from the evil hand.	מִיַּד רְשָׁעִים יַצִּילֵם	miyad resha'im yatzilem.
[11] Before the righteous, light is sown	אוֹר זָרֻעַ לַצַּדִּיק	Or zaru'a latzadik
And joy before the upright heart;	וּלְיִשְׁרֵי־לֵב שִׂמְחָה	uleyishrei lev simchah;
[12] The good rejoice before God*'s throne*	שִׂמְחוּ צַדִּיקִים בַּיהוה	simchu tzadikim bAdonai,
And gratefully *God's* name impart.	וְהוֹדוּ לְזֵכֶר קָדְשׁוֹ	vehodu lezecher kodsho.

Psalm 98

Included in the psalms welcoming Shabbat.

[1] A psalm:	מִזְמוֹר	Mizmor:
Sing out to God, sing a new song	שִׁירוּ לַיהוה שִׁיר חָדָשׁ	Shiru lAdonai shir chadash
For wonders *God* has done,	כִּי־נִפְלָאוֹת עָשָׂה	ki nifla'ot asah;
Helped only by the strong right hand	הוֹשִׁיעָה־לּוֹ יְמִינוֹ	hoshi'ah lo yemino
And arm of the holy one.	וּזְרוֹעַ קָדְשׁוֹ	uzero'ah kodsho.
[2] God displayed *God's* saving might—	הוֹדִיעַ יהוה יְשׁוּעָתוֹ	Hodi'ah Adonai yeshu'ato
God's truth—in every nation's sight.	לְעֵינֵי הַגּוֹיִם גִּלָּה צִדְקָתוֹ	le'einei hagoyim gilah tzidkato.
[3] Remembering kindness, *God* has kept	זָכַר חַסְדּוֹ וֶאֱמוּנָתוֹ	Zachar chasdo ve'emunato
True faith with Israel's nation;	לְבֵית יִשְׂרָאֵל	leveit Yisra'el;
[4] The ends of the earth bore witness	רָאוּ כָל־אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ	ra'u chol afsei aretz
When God brought our salvation.	אֵת יְשׁוּעַת אֱלֹהֵינוּ	et yeshu'at Eloheinu.
[5] Call out to God, all the earth;	הָרִיעוּ לַיהוה כָּל־הָאָרֶץ	Hari'u lAdonai kol ha'aretz,
Cry out in joy and songs of mirth.	פִּצְחוּ וְרַנְּנוּ וְזַמֵּרוּ	pitzchu veranenu vezameru.
[6] Sing to God, *sing* with the lyre,	זַמְּרוּ לַיהוה בְּכִנּוֹר	Zamru lAdonai bechinor,
Your voice tuned to the strings;[1]	בְּכִנּוֹר וְקוֹל זִמְרָה	bechinor vekol zimrah;
With trumpet and with shofar blast,	בַּחֲצֹצְרוֹת וְקוֹל שׁוֹפָר	bachatzotz'rot vekol shofar,
Sing to our Sovereign.[2]	הָרִיעוּ לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ יהוה	hari'u lifnei hamelech Adonai.
[7] The teeming sea in joy will cry,	יִרְעַם הַיָּם וּמְלֹאוֹ	Yir'am hayam um'lo'o,
Land and its creatures will reply.	תֵּבֵל וְיֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ	tevel veyoshvei vah.
[8] Rivers will clap hands in delight,	נְהָרוֹת יִמְחֲאוּ־כָף	Neharot yimcha'u chaf
Together cry each mountain height	יַחַד הָרִים יְרַנֵּנוּ	yachad harim yeraneinu
[9] Before God, who comes *here presently*	לִפְנֵי־יהוה כִּי בָא	lifnei Adonai ki vah
With judgement for the world below.	לִשְׁפֹּט הָאָרֶץ	lishpot ha'aretz.
The earth will see its just reward,	יִשְׁפֹּט־תֵּבֵל בְּצֶדֶק	Yishpot tevel betzedek,
And justice will its creatures know.[3]	וְעַמִּים בְּמֵישָׁרִים	ve'amim bemeysharim.

[1] "Sing to God with the lyre, with the lyre and voice of song."
[2] "Sing before the ruler, God."
[3] "*God* will judge the earth in righteousness, and people in equity."

Psalm 99

Included in the psalms welcoming Shabbat.

[1] God reigns: let peoples quake.	יהוה מָלָךְ יִרְגְּזוּ עַמִּים	Adonai malach, yirgezu amim.
Above the cherubs *God* sits serene,	יֹשֵׁב כְּרוּבִים	Yoshev keruvim
while earth can shake.	תָּנוּט הָאָרֶץ	tanut ha'aretz.
[2] In Zion, God is great,	יהוה בְּצִיּוֹן גָּדוֹל	Adonai beTziyon gadol,
above all peoples, high in state.	וְרָם הוּא עַל־כָּל־הָעַמִּים	veram hu al kol ha'amim.
[3] Thanks they will bring	יוֹדוּ	Yodu
to your great and awesome name,	שִׁמְךָ גָּדוֹל וְנוֹרָא	shimcha gadol venorah,
a sacred thing.	קָדוֹשׁ הוּא	kadosh hu.
[4] And kingly power, based	וְעֹז מֶלֶךְ	Ve'oz melech,
on love of law, you founded;[1]	מִשְׁפָּט אָהֵב אַתָּה כּוֹנַנְתָּ	mishpat ahev atah konanta.
equity, justice and right,	מֵישָׁרִים מִשְׁפָּט וּצְדָקָה	Meisharim, mishpat utzedakah
in Jacob's tribe you grounded.	בְּיַעֲקֹב אַתָּה עָשִׂיתָ	beYa'akov atah asita.
[5] Exalt our sovereign's regal seat,	רוֹמְמוּ יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ	Romemu Adonai Eloheinu
bow at the stool where rest *God's* feet,	וְהִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לַהֲדֹם רַגְלָיו	vehishtachavu lahadom raglav;
holy is *God*.[2]	קָדוֹשׁ הוּא	kadosh hu.
[6] As priests Moses and Aaron served,	מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן בְּכֹהֲנָיו	Moshe ve'Aharon bechohanav,
and Samuel would *God's* name invoke;	וּשְׁמוּאֵל בְּקֹרְאֵי שְׁמוֹ	uShemu'el bekor'ei shemo,
they called on God, and *God* replied—[3]	קֹרְאִים[4] אֶל־יהוה וְהוּא יַעֲנֵם	kor'im el Adonai vehu ya'anem.
[7] In a pillar of cloud *God* spoke.	בְּעַמּוּד עָנָן יְדַבֵּר אֲלֵיהֶם	Be'amud anan yedaber aleihem.
signs of divinity they observed;	שָׁמְרוּ עֵדֹתָיו	Shamru edotav
God gave them rules they must abide.	וְחֹק נָתַן־לָמוֹ	vechok natan lamo.

[1] "And the power of a king, loving judgement, you established."
[2] "Exalt Adonai our God, bow at *God's* footstool; *God* is holy."
[3] "Moses and Aaron among *God's* priests, and Samuel among those who called *God's* name—they would call on God and *God* would answer them."
[4] The expected spelling is קֹרְאִים, but the Leningrad Codex has קראים (p. 776 of the pdf file).

[8] You answered, ruling God, their call,	יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ אַתָּה עֲנִיתָם	Adonai Eloheinu atah anitam,
forgave their sins and bore their pride;[1]	אֵל נֹשֵׂא הָיִיתָ לָהֶם	El noseh hayitah lahem,
their enemies' evil plots you stalled.[2]	וְנֹקֵם עַל־עֲלִילוֹתָם	venokem al alilotam.
[9] Set high our sovereign God, and fall	רוֹמְמוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ	Romemu Adonai Eloheinu
in worship at *God's* mountain*side;*	וְהִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְהַר קָדְשׁוֹ	vehishtachavu lehar kodsho;
our sovereign God is sanctified.	כִּי־קָדוֹשׁ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ	ki kadosh Adonai Eloheinu.

[1] "A tolerant God you were to them."
[2] The Hebrew can also mean, "You avenged plots against them" or "You punished their sins."

Psalm 100

Included in the early morning service except on Shabbat, festivals and Hoshana Rabba;
on the day before Pesach and during Pesach, and on Yom Kippur.
In England, it's used in the choral marriage service, and in my opinion
S. Alman's arrangement in Voice of Prayer and Praise
is the most beautiful Jewish melody I've ever heard.

[1] A psalm of thanks.[1]	מִזְמוֹר לְתוֹדָה	Mizmor letodah.
Shout out to God, O every land,[2]	הָרִיעוּ לַיהוה כָּל־הָאָרֶץ	Hari'u lAdonai, kol ha'aretz.
[2] Worship God with happiness,	עִבְדוּ אֶת־יהוה בְּשִׂמְחָה	Ivdu et Adonai besimchah,
gladly before *God* to stand.[3]	בֹּאוּ לְפָנָיו בִּרְנָנָה	bo'u lefanav birnanah.
[3] Know this is the God we bless.[4]	דְּעוּ כִּי־יהוה הוּא אֱלֹהִים	De'u ki Adonai, hu Elohim.
God made us; *now God* owns us, and[5]—	הוּא־עָשָׂנוּ וְלוֹ אֲנַחְנוּ	Hu asanu, velo anachnu;
God's people—we graze *God's lush* land.[6]	עַמּוֹ וְצֹאן מַרְעִיתוֹ	amo, vetzon mar'ito.
[4] With thanks approach the entry ways;[7]	בֹּאוּ שְׁעָרָיו בְּתוֹדָה	Bo'u she'arav betodah,
to *Temple* courtyards bring your praise;	חֲצֵרֹתָיו בִּתְהִלָּה	chatzerotav bit'hilah.
with thanks *God's* reputation raise!	הוֹדוּ־לוֹ בָּרֲכוּ שְׁמוֹ	Hodu lo, bar'chu shemo!
[5] For God is good and always kind;	כִּי־טוֹב יהוה לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	Ki tov Adonai, le'olam chasdo,
age after age God's truth will find![8]	וְעַד־דֹּר וָדֹר אֱמוּנָתוֹ	ve'ad dor vador emunato.

[1] Or, "A psalm as a Thanksgiving Offering," as if saying this psalm is like bringing the offering; that's why many people stand for this psalm, and that's why we skip this psalm on days when there was no thanksgiving offering: Shabbat, festivals, the eve of Passover and its middle days, and the day before Yom Kippur.

[2] "Cry out *joyfully* to God, all the earth."

[3] "Serve God with happiness, come before God with delight."

[4] "Know that God is God."

[5] The written text reads ולא but we read וְלוֹ instead (a difference between text as written and as read is not unusual in Hebrew scriptures). In this case, the pronunciation is the same. The written text means, "*God* made us, we did not make ourselves"; the text as read means "*God* made us, and to *God* we belong."

[6] "*We are God's* people, and the flock of *God's* pasturing" (i.e., God is our shepherd.)

[7] "Approach *God's* gates with thanks, *God's* courtyards with praise; acknowledge (or thank) *God*, bless *God's* name."

[8] "For God is good; *God's* kindness *lasts* forever; from generation to generation *God's* truthfulness endures."

Psalm 101

[1] A poem by David.	לְדָוִד מִזְמוֹר	LeDavid mizmor.
I sing of kindness and of right	חֶסֶד־וּמִשְׁפָּט אָשִׁירָה	Chesed umishpat ashira;
to you, O God, my song.[1]	לְךָ יהוה אֲזַמֵּרָה	lecha, Adonai, azamera.
[2] I scan the road for righteous folk—	אַשְׂכִּילָה בְּדֶרֶךְ תָּמִים	Askilah bederech tamim;
why must I wait so long?	מָתַי תָּבוֹא אֵלָי	matai tavo elai?
With simple heart I'll wend my way	אֶתְהַלֵּךְ בְּתָם־לְבָבִי	Et'halech betam levavi
right here, where I belong.[2]	בְּקֶרֶב בֵּיתִי	bekerev beiti.
[3] I'd never set before my eyes	לֹא־אָשִׁית לְנֶגֶד עֵינַי	Lo ashit leneged einai
any impiety,	דְּבַר־בְּלִיָּעַל	devar beliya'al;
for crooked dealings I detest—	עֹשֵׂה־סָטִים שָׂנֵאתִי	asoh setim saneti—
let them not stick with me!	לֹא יִדְבַּק בִּי	lo yidbak bi.
[4] Perverted thoughts, keep far away;	לֵבָב עִקֵּשׁ יָסוּר מִמֶּנִּי	Levav ikesh yasur mimeni,
I only wish for good.[3]	רָע לֹא אֵדָע	ra lo eda.
[5] Whoever would betray his friend,	מְלָשְׁנִי[5] בַסֵּתֶר רֵעֵהוּ	Melashni vaseter re'ehu,
I'd trounce him if I could!	אוֹתוֹ אַצְמִית	oto atzmit;
The haughty eye and prideful heart	גְּבַהּ־עֵינַיִם וּרְחַב לֵבָב	geva einayim urechav levav,
I simply can't abide.[4]	אֹתוֹ לֹא אוּכָל	oto lo uchal.

[1] "To-David a-song/poem. / Kidness-and-justice I-shall-sing / to-you, God, I-shall-make-music."

[2] "I-shall-be-clever about-the-path/road-of the-simple/forthright; / when will-*that-path*-come to-me (I'm waiting to meet up with the path on which the simple, good people travel); / I-shall-take-my-walk in-the-simplicity-of-my-heart, / in-the-inside-of my-house." I think this means, "I've been waiting to join the crowd of good people, but instead of waiting I'm going home to think about being good (simple instead of duplicitous)."

[3] "Heart twisted may-it-turn-away from-me; / evil not shall-I-acknowledge."

[4] "One-who-slanders in-secret his-friend/neighbor, / him would-I-ruin; / high-of-eye (supercilious) and-wide-of-heart (capaciously rapacious), / him not can-I-*abide.*"

[5] A manuscript would have מלושני.

[6] I look for constant people, who	עֵינַי בְּנֶאֱמְנֵי־אֶרֶץ	Einai bene'mnei eretz
can dwell here at my side,	לָשֶׁבֶת עִמָּדִי	lashevet imadi;
someone who treads a blameless path,	הֹלֵךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ תָּמִים	holech bederech tamim,
to help me as my guide.[1]	הוּא יְשָׁרְתֵנִי	hu yesharteni.
[7] May nobody stay in my house	לֹא־יֵשֵׁב בְּקֶרֶב בֵּיתִי	Lo yeshev bekerev beiti
who cheats and deals in lies	עֹשֵׂה רְמִיָּה	oseh remiyah;
for tricksters never should endure	דֹּבֵר שְׁקָרִים לֹא־יִכּוֹן	dover shekarim lo yikon
before my *probing* eyes.	לְנֶגֶד עֵינָי	leneged einai.
[8] First thing each day I'd execute	לַבְּקָרִים אַצְמִית	Labkarim atzmit
all villains in the state,	כָּל־רִשְׁעֵי־אָרֶץ	kol rishei aretz,
all evildoers from God's town	לְהַכְרִית מֵעִיר־יהוה	lehachrit me'ir Adonai
I would eradicate.[2]	כָּל־פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן	kol po'alei aven.

[1] "My-eyes *are* on-the-faithful-of-the-earth / to-dwell with-me; / one-who-walks on-the-path-of the-simple / that's-the-one-who can-help/serve/be-useful-to-me."

[2] "In-the-mornings I'd-destroy / all-the-wicked-of-the-earth/land, / to-cut-off from-the-city-of-God / all-evildoers."

Psalm 102

Good for changing your mood from misery to cheerfulness and vice versa.

[1] A prayer for an overwhelmed victim	תְּפִלָּה לְעָנִי כִי־יַעֲטֹף	Tefilah le'ani chi ya'atof
who pours out feelings to God.	וְלִפְנֵי יהוה יִשְׁפֹּךְ שִׂיחוֹ	velifnei Adonai yishpoch sicho.
[2] God, hear my prayer;	יהוה שִׁמְעָה תְפִלָּתִי	Adonai, shim'ah tefilati,
let my cry reach you.	וְשַׁוְעָתִי אֵלֶיךָ תָּבוֹא	veshav'ati elecha tavo.
[3] Don't hide from me	אַל־תַּסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי	Al taster panecha mimeni
in my time of trouble;	בְּיוֹם צַר לִי	beyom tzar li;
listen to me when I call;	הַטֵּה־אֵלַי אָזְנֶךָ בְּיוֹם אֶקְרָא	hateh elai oznecha beyom ekrah;
hurry, answer me,	מַהֵר עֲנֵנִי	maher, aneni!
[4] For my days are done, like smoke,	כִּי־כָלוּ בְעָשָׁן יָמָי	Ki chalu ve'ashan yamai
my bones scorched like a fireplace.	וְעַצְמוֹתַי כְּמוֹ־קֶדׇח נֶחָרוּ	ve'atzmotai kemo ked nicharu.
[5] My heart is withered like cut grass;	הוּכָּה־כָעֵשֶׂב וַיִּבַשׁ לִבִּי	Hukah cha'esev, vayivash libi,
I can't think of eating my food.	כִּי־שָׁכַחְתִּי מֵאֲכֹל לַחְמִי	ki shachachti me'achol lachmi.
[6] *Only* the noise of my groaning	מִקּוֹל אַנְחָתִי	Mikol an'chati
keeps bone and flesh together!	דָּבְקָה עַצְמִי לִבְשָׂרִי	davka atzmi livsari!
[7] I'm like a pelican[2] in the desert,	דָּמִיתִי לְקָאַת מִדְבָּר	Damiti lik'at midbar,
like an owl in the ruins.	הָיִיתִי כְּכוֹס חָרָבוֹת	hayiti kechos choravot.
[8] I don't sleep; I'm like a bird	שָׁקַדְתִּי וָאֱהְיֶה כְּצִפּוֹר	Shakadti, va'ehyeh ketzipor
all alone on a rooftop.	בּוֹדֵד עַל־גָּג	boded al gag.
[9] My enemies ridicule me all day,	כָּל־הַיּוֹם חֵרְפוּנִי אוֹיְבָי	Kol hayom cherfuni oyvai,
my foes use me as a curse![3]	מְהוֹלָלַי בִּי נִשְׁבָּעוּ	meholalai bi nishba'u.
[10] I've been eating ashes for food,	כִּי־אֵפֶר כַּלֶּחֶם אָכָלְתִּי	Ki efer kalechem achalti,
and adding tears to whatever I drink	וְשִׁקֻּוַי בִּבְכִי מָסָכְתִּי	veshikuvai biv'chi masachti
[11] Because of your anger and wrath:	מִפְּנֵי־זַעַמְךָ וְקִצְפֶּךָ	mipnei za'am'cha vekitzpecha,
you lifted me up and threw me down!	כִּי נְשָׂאתַנִי וַתַּשְׁלִיכֵנִי	ki nesatani vatashlicheni.
[12] My days are like a long *evening* shadow	יָמַי כְּצֵל נָטוּי	Yamai ketzel natui,
and I am shriveling like grass,	וַאֲנִי כָּעֵשֶׂב אִיבָשׁ	va'ani ka'esev ivash—

[1] Some read "כְּמוֹקֵד" but the meaning is more or less the same.
[2] From a root relating to vomit, the word for pelican may describe a creature that regurgitates its food.
[3] I.e., when they want someone to be as miserable as me: "I hope you suffer like what's-his-name!"

[13] But you, God, last forever;	וְאַתָּה יהוה לְעוֹלָם תֵּשֵׁב	ve'atah, Adonai, le'olam teshev,
from parent to child, they speak of you.[1]	וְזִכְרְךָ לְדֹר וָדֹר	vezichrecha ledor vador.
[14] You will rise *again* and comfort Zion:	אַתָּה תָקוּם תְּרַחֵם צִיּוֹן	Atah takum, terachem Tziyon,
it's time to pity her: the time is here!	כִּי־עֵת לְחֶנְנָהּ כִּי־בָא מוֹעֵד	ki et lechenenah, ki vah mo'ed!
[18] You have turned to the ruined ones' prayer	פָּנָה אֶל־תְּפִלַּת הָעַרְעָר	Panah el tefilat ha'arar,
and have not scorned their plea.	וְלֹא־בָזָה אֶת־תְּפִלָּתָם	velo vazah et tefilatam.
[19] This will be recorded for the end of time[2]	תִּכָּתֵב זֹאת לְדוֹר אַחֲרוֹן	Tikatev zot ledor acharon
so that future generations[3] will praise God!	וְעַם נִבְרָא יְהַלֵּל־יָהּ	ve'am nivrah yehalel Yah
[20] For *God* looked from the holy height,	כִּי־הִשְׁקִיף מִמְּרוֹם קָדְשׁוֹ	ki hishkif mimrom kodsho,
God glanced from heaven down to earth	יהוה מִשָּׁמַיִם אֶל־אֶרֶץ הִבִּיט	Adonai mishamayim el eretz hibit
[21] To hear the prisoner's groaning,	לִשְׁמֹעַ אֲנָקַת אָסִיר	lishmo'ah enkat asir,
to release them from death row,	לְפַתֵּחַ בְּנֵי תְמוּתָה	lefate'ach benei temutah,
[22] To tell of God's power[4] in Zion,	לְסַפֵּר בְּצִיּוֹן שֵׁם יהוה	lesaper beTziyon shem Adonai
God's praise in Jerusalem,	וּתְהִלָּתוֹ בִּירוּשָׁלָם	utehilato bIrushalayim,
[23] When the peoples are gathered together,	בְּהִקָּבֵץ עַמִּים יַחְדָּו	behikavetz amim yachdav
and *their* countries, to serve God!	וּמַמְלָכוֹת לַעֲבֹד אֶת־יהוה	umamlachot la'avod et Adonai.
[24] *But God* sapped my strength on the way	עִנָּה בַדֶּרֶךְ כֹּחִי	Inah vaderech kochi;
and shortened my days.	קִצַּר יָמָי	kitzar yamai.
[25] I said, "God, don't take me too soon,[5]	אֹמַר אֵלִי אַל־תַּעֲלֵנִי בַּחֲצִי יָמָי	Omar, "Eli, al ta'aleni bachatzi yamai;
while you continue for generations."[6]	בְּדוֹר דּוֹרִים שְׁנוֹתֶיךָ	bedor dorim shnotecha."
[26] You established the earth long ago,	לְפָנִים הָאָרֶץ יָסַדְתָּ	Lefanim ha'aretz yasadta,
and the sky is your handiwork.	וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֶיךָ שָׁמָיִם	uma'aseh yadecha shamayim.

[1] Or, "Memory of you *and what you have done lasts* from generation to generation."
[2] "The final generation."
[3] "A people that is *yet to be* created."
[4] "God's name"—but the "name" we can use to describe God, God's nature, is what we know of intervention to rescue the needy.
[5] "In the middle of my days," i.e., when my life is only half done.
[6] "To generation of generations are your years," i.e., God lasts for endless human lives, so why not let this one schlemiel enjoy a whole life instead of dying before his or her time.

[27] They will perish but you will endure,	הֵמָּה יֹאבֵדוּ וְאַתָּה תַעֲמֹד	Hemah yovedu, ve'atah ta'amod;
they will all wear out like a piece of cloth;	וְכֻלָּם כַּבֶּגֶד יִבְלוּ	vechulam kabeged yivlu,
like clothes, you'll change them;	כַּלְבוּשׁ תַּחֲלִיפֵם	kalvush tachalifem
they'll be replaced *with fresh ones.*	וְיַחֲלֹפוּ	veyachalofu.
[28] But you are *God,*	וְאַתָּה־הוּא	Ve'atah hu,
and your years will have no end.	וּשְׁנוֹתֶיךָ לֹא יִתָּמּוּ	ushenotecha lo yitamu.
[29] The children of your servants will continue;	בְּנֵי־עֲבָדֶיךָ יִשְׁכֹּונוּ	Benei avadecha yishkonu,
their descendants will be secure in your presence.[1]	וְזַרְעָם לְפָנֶיךָ יִכּוֹן	vezar'am lefanecha yikon.

[1] "And their seed (the descendants of those who serve God) before you will be established/secure."

Psalm 103

Appropriate to read in the service for a sick person.

[1] My soul, bless God![1]	בָּרְכִי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יהוה	Barachi nafshi et Adonai!
How great, my ruling God, you are,	יהוה אֱלֹהַי גָּדַלְתָּ מְאֹד	Adonai Elohai gadalta me'od;
fame and glory have you donned.	הוֹד וְהָדָר לָבָשְׁתָּ	Hod vehadar lavashta.
[2] My soul, bless God	בָּרְכִי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יהוה	Barachi nafshi et Adonai,
and never forget all *God's* rewards—	וְאַל־תִּשְׁכְּחִי כָּל־גְּמוּלָיו	ve'al tishkechi kol gemulav—
[3] Who forgives your every fault,	הַסֹּלֵחַ לְכָל־עֲוֹנֵכִי	hasole'ach lechol avonechi,
who cures each of your maladies,	הָרֹפֵא לְכָל־תַּחֲלֻאָיְכִי	harofeh lechol tachalu'aychi,
[4] Who saves your life from ruin,	הַגּוֹאֵל מִשַּׁחַת חַיָּיְכִי	hago'el mishachat chayaychi,
who crowns you with kindness and mercy,	הַמְעַטְּרֵכִי חֶסֶד וְרַחֲמִים	hame'atrechi chesed verachamim,
[5] Who fills with good your empty pomp,	הַמַּשְׂבִּיעַ בַּטּוֹב עֶדְיֵךְ	hamasbi'ah batov edyech,
restoring (eagle-like) your youth.[2]	תִּתְחַדֵּשׁ כַּנֶּשֶׁר נְעוּרָיְכִי	tit'chadesh kanesher ne'uraychi.
[6] *God* performs righteous deeds,	עֹשֶׂה צְדָקוֹת יהוה	Oseh tzedakot Adonai
brings judgements for all the oppressed.	וּמִשְׁפָּטִים לְכָל־עֲשׁוּקִים	umishpatim lechol ashukim.
[7] *God* revealed *God's* ways to Moses,	יוֹדִיעַ דְּרָכָיו לְמֹשֶׁה	Yodi'ah derachav leMoshe,
God's works to Israel's descendants.	לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲלִילוֹתָיו	livnei Yisra'el alilotav.
[8] Compassionate and gracious is God,	רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן יהוה	Rachum vachanun Adonai,
patient and abundant in kindness.	אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם וְרַב־חָסֶד	erech apayim verav chased.
[9] *God* does not dispute interminably	לֹא־לָנֶצַח יָרִיב	Lo lanetzach yariv
nor forever maintain *conflict.*	וְלֹא לְעוֹלָם יִטּוֹר	velo le'olam yitor.
[10] *God* has not treated us as our sins *merit*	לֹא כַחֲטָאֵינוּ עָשָׂה לָנוּ	Lo chachata'einu asah lanu,
nor requited us for our faults.	וְלֹא כַעֲוֹנֹתֵינוּ גָּמַל עָלֵינוּ	velo cha'avonoteinu gamal aleinu,

[1] "Bless/praise, *O* my soul/personality, God." This is ripe for interpretation. When I speak to נַפְשִׁי, my something, am I speaking to myself or to a part of myself? If I speak to my whole self, which part of me speaks? And how can I bless or praise God, who is theologically beyond all praise? An answer is given in BT Berachot 7a, where God asks Rabbi Ishmael for a blessing; it's a short passage worthy of careful thought.

[2] "Who satisfies with good your ornament: / your youth/vigor renews itself as the eagle *renews its coat*." Usually עֶדְיֵךְ refers to ornament (Ex. 33:4-6, for example) and possibly something on the head (Rashi on Ex. 33:4 says "crowns," referring to BT Shabbat 88a; and Ps. 32:9); by extension some think it refers to the mouth. I think the verse means that whatever useless ornamentation you use—whether jewelry or vain ceremony, for example—God makes it worthwhile and beneficial. If we aspire to don a "crown" of Torah, may it be filled with good! As for the eagles in the second line, eagles molt and look tatty but grow new feathers; debunked legends claim that they renew their talons and beak, too.

[11] Rather, as sky is high[1] above land	כִּי כִגְבֹהַּ שָׁמַיִם עַל־הָאָרֶץ	Ki chigvo'ah shamayim al ha'aretz
so *God's* kindness towers over those who fear *God.*	גָּבַר חַסְדּוֹ עַל־יְרֵאָיו	gavar chasdo al yere'av.
[12] As far as from East to West	כִּרְחֹק מִזְרָח מִמַּעֲרָב	Kir'chok mizrach mima'arav
God has distanced our faults from us.	הִרְחִיק מִמֶּנּוּ אֶת־פִּשָׁעֵינוּ	hir'chik mimenu et pesha'einu.
[13] As a father has compassion for children	כְּרַחֵם אָב עַל־בָּנִים	Kerachem av al banim
God has been kind to those who fear *God.*	רִחַם יהוה עַל־יְרֵאָיו	richam Adonai al yere'av.
[14] For *God* well knows how we are formed;	כִּי־הוּא יָדַע יִצְרֵנוּ	Ki hu yada yitzrenu;
clearly,[2] we are *but* dust.	זָכוּר כִּי־עָפָר אֲנָחְנוּ	zachur ki afar anachnu.
[15] A mortal's days are like grass,	אֱנוֹשׁ כֶּחָצִיר יָמָיו	Enosh kechatzir yamav;
sprouting just like the vegetation in a field,	כְּצִיץ הַשָּׂדֶה כֵּן יָצִיץ	ketzitz hasadeh, ken yatzitz.
[16] But a wind passes through it and it's gone;	כִּי רוּחַ עָבְרָה־בּוֹ וְאֵינֶנּוּ	Ki ru'ach avrah bo, ve'einenu,
without a trace of its existence.[3]	וְלֹא־יַכִּירֶנּוּ עוֹד מְקוֹמוֹ	velo yakirenu od mekomo.
[17] But God's kindness *comes* from before time;	וְחֶסֶד יהוה מֵעוֹלָם	Vechesed Adonai me'olam;
it lasts forever for those who fear *God;*	וְעַד־עוֹלָם עַל־יְרֵאָיו	ve'ad olam al yere'av;
God's righteousness continues for generations	וְצִדְקָתוֹ לִבְנֵי בָנִים	vetzidkato livnei vanim,
[18] For those who keep *God's* pact *with us,*	לְשֹׁמְרֵי בְרִיתוֹ	Leshomrei verito
who remember and perform *God's* precepts.	וּלְזֹכְרֵי פִקֻּדָיו לַעֲשׂוֹתָם	ulezochrei fikudav la'asotam.
[19] God set *God's* throne in the sky,	יהוה בַּשָּׁמַיִם הֵכִין כִּסְאוֹ	Adonai bashamayim hechin kiso,
and *God's* rule controls everything.	וּמַלְכוּתוֹ בַכֹּל מָשָׁלָה	umal'chuto bakol mashala.
[20] Bless God, O *God's* messengers,	בָּרֲכוּ יהוה מַלְאָכָיו	Barachu Adonai malachav,
champions of power who perform *God's* bidding,	גִּבֹּרֵי כֹחַ עֹשֵׂי דְבָרוֹ	giborei cho'ach, osei devaro,
listening for the sound of *God's* word.	לִשְׁמֹעַ בְּקוֹל דְּבָרוֹ	lishmo'ah bekol devaro.
[21] Bless God, all *God's* hosts,	בָּרֲכוּ יהוה כָּל־צְבָאָיו	Barachu Adonai, kol tzeva'av,
ministers who carry out *God's* will.	מְשָׁרְתָיו עֹשֵׂי רְצוֹנוֹ	meshartav osei retzono.
[22] Bless God, all *God's* works,	בָּרֲכוּ יהוה כָּל־מַעֲשָׂיו	Barachu Adonai kol ma'asav,
to every place *God's* rule extends;[4]	בְּכָל־מְקֹמוֹת מֶמְשַׁלְתּוֹ	bechol mekomot memshalto;
O my soul, bless God!	בָּרֲכִי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יהוה	bar'chi nafshi et Adonai.

[1] "Like the height of sky above land."
[2] "It's remembered," or no reminder is needed, that we are dust.
[3] "And-not can-one-perceive any-more its-place," you can't tell where it was.
[4] "In/to all places *is God's* territory/administration/control"; Every place is under God's control, and/or every place ought to be under God's control.

Psalm 104

The daily psalm for Rosh Chodesh; some also read this on winter Shabbat afternoons.

[1] My soul, bless God!	בָּרֲכִי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יהוה	Barachi nafshi et Adonai!
How great, my ruling God, you are,	יהוה אֱלֹהַי גָּדַלְתָּ מְאֹד	Adonai Elohai gadalta me'od;
Fame and glory are your veil,	הוֹד וְהָדָר לָבָשְׁתָּ	Hod vehadar lavashta.
[2] Wrapped as in a cloak of light,	עֹטֶה־אוֹר כַּשַּׂלְמָה	Oteh or kasalmah;
Spreading heaven like a sail,	נוֹטֶה שָׁמַיִם כַּיְרִיעָה	Noteh shamayim kay'riyah.
[3] You roof with rain its upper heights,	הַמְקָרֶה בַמַּיִם עֲלִיּוֹתָיו	Hamkareh vamayim aliyotav,
The misty clouds you ride,	הַשָּׂם־עָבִים רְכוּבוֹ	Hasam avim rechuvo,
Walk the wind far and wide.	הַמְהַלֵּךְ עַל־כַּנְפֵי־רוּחַ	Hamhalech al kanfei ruach.
[4] Of winds you make your messengers,	עֹשֶׂה מַלְאָכָיו רוּחוֹת	Oseh mal'achav ruchot,
Ministers of blazing fire.	מְשָׁרְתָיו אֵשׁ לֹהֵט	Meshartav esh lohet.
[5] Upon its place you firmly fix	יָסַד־אֶרֶץ עַל־מְכוֹנֶיהָ	Yasad eretz al mechoneha,
The Earth, lest it should ever slip.[1]	בַּל־תִּמּוֹט עוֹלָם וָעֶד	Bal timot olam va'ed.
[6] The Deep once clothed it like a cloak,	תְּהוֹם כַּלְבוּשׁ כִּסִּיתוֹ	Tehom kalvush kisito,
Seas surged above each mountain tip.	עַל־הָרִים יַעַמְדוּ־מָיִם	Al harim ya'amdu mayim.
[7] At your rebuke *the waters* fled	מִן־גַּעֲרָתְךָ יְנוּסוּן	Min ga'arat'cha yenusun,
And hurried from your stern command,[2]	מִן־קוֹל רַעַמְךָ יֵחָפֵזוּן	Min kol ra'amcha yechafezun.
[8] Climbed hills, and into valleys poured	יַעֲלוּ הָרִים יֵרְדוּ בְקָעוֹת	Ya'alu harim yerdu veka'ot
To where you ordered them to stand.[3]	אֶל־מְקוֹם זֶה יָסַדְתָּ לָהֶם	El mekom zeh yasadta lahem.
[9] You fixed a border they can't pass,	גְּבוּל־שַׂמְתָּ בַל־יַעֲבֹרוּן	Gevul samta bal ya'avorun;
Lest they return to drown the land.	בַּל־יְשׁוּבוּן לְכַסּוֹת הָאָרֶץ	Bal yeshuvun lechasot ha'aretz.
[10] You send springs to join the brooks;	הַמְשַׁלֵּחַ מַעְיָנִים בַּנְּחָלִים	Hamshale'ach mayanim ban'chalim,
Among the hills they make their way,	בֵּין הָרִים יְהַלֵּכוּן	Bein harim yehalechun.
[11] With water for the woodland beasts,	יַשְׁקוּ כָּל־חַיְתוֹ שָׂדָי	Yashku kol chayto saday;
Wild asses' thirst the streams allay.	יִשְׁבְּרוּ פְרָאִים צְמָאָם	Yishberu fera'im tzema'am.
[12] Here live the birds that wing the sky;	עֲלֵיהֶם עוֹף־הַשָּׁמַיִם יִשְׁכּוֹן	Aleihem off hashamayim yishkon;
They offer song among the leaves.	מִבֵּין עֳפָאִים יִתְּנוּ־קוֹל	Mibein ofayim yitnu kol.

[1] "Lest it stir forever and ever."

[2] "Stern command" is literally "raised voice."

[3] Because these verses are about water on the move, I translate the first line of this verse as water climbing hills and pouring into valleys, but this line could mean that the hills rose and valleys sank. The second line is literally, "To this place you founded for them."

[13] With rising mist you bathe the hills:	מַשְׁקֶה הָרִים מֵעֲלִיּוֹתָיו	Mashke harim me'aliyotav;
Fruit of your work the wide Earth fills.[1]	מִפְּרִי מַעֲשֶׂיךָ תִּשְׂבַּע הָאָרֶץ	Mipri ma'asecha tisba ha'aretz.
[14] You sprout *lush* grass for pasturing	מַצְמִיחַ חָצִיר לַבְּהֵמָה	Matzmi'ach chatzir lab'hemah;
And by our labor crops you bring—	וְעֵשֶׂב לַעֲבֹדַת הָאָדָם	Ve'esev la'avodat ha'adam,
Food, from the earth we till and tread,[2]	לְהוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן־הָאָרֶץ	Lehotzi lechem min ha'aretz.
[15] And font of hearty cheer, sweet wine	וְיַיִן יְשַׂמַּח לְבַב־אֱנוֹשׁ	Veyayin yesamach levav enosh
To flush the face with glowing shine,	לְהַצְהִיל פָּנִים מִשָּׁמֶן	lehatzhil panim mishamen,
And staff of life, nurturing bread.[3]	וְלֶחֶם לְבַב־אֱנוֹשׁ יִסְעָד	velechem levav enosh yis'ad.
[16] Lebanon's cedars drink their fill—	יִשְׂבְּעוּ עֲצֵי יהוה	Yisbe'u atzei Adonai,
God planted them *in fertile loam*—[4]	אַרְזֵי לְבָנוֹן אֲשֶׁר נָטָע	arzei Levanon asher nata,
[17] Where fluttering birds nest, and the stork	אֲשֶׁר־שָׁם צִפֳּרִים יְקַנֵּנוּ	asher sham tziporim yekanenu,
In shady cypress makes her home;[5]	חֲסִידָה בְּרוֹשִׁים בֵּיתָהּ	chasidah beroshim beitah.
[18] Goats leap upon the mountain crest;	הָרִים הַגְּבֹהִים לַיְעֵלִים	Harim hag'vohim lay'elim,
Low boulders are the badgers' rest.[6]	סְלָעִים מַחְסֶה לַשְּׁפַנִּים	sela'im machseh lashfanim.
[19] *God* made the moon for festive times,[7]	עָשָׂה יָרֵחַ לְמוֹעֲדִים	Asah yare'ach lemo'adim,
The sun has learned its evening home.[8]	שֶׁמֶשׁ יָדַע מְבוֹאוֹ	shemesh yadah mevo'o.
[20] You bring the dark; now it is night:	תָּשֶׁת־חֹשֶׁךְ וִיהִי לָיְלָה	Tashet choshech vihi layla,
When forest creatures *wake and* roam,	בּוֹ־תִרְמֹשׂ כָּל־חַיְתוֹ־יָעַר	bo tirmos kol chayto ya'ar,
[21] Young lions roaring for their prey,	הַכְּפִירִים שֹׁאֲגִים לַטָּרֶף	Hakfirim sho'agim lataref
Asking God their food to grant.	וּלְבַקֵּשׁ מֵאֵל אָכְלָם	ulevakesh me'El ochlam.

[1] "From the fruit of your deeds the land/Earth is satiated."

[2] "You-cause-to-sprout grass/vegetation for-cattle / and-grass/vegetation for-labor-of humanity / to-extract food/bread from-the-earth." Ĭ added "tread" to imply that we often trample the ground that feeds us.

[3] "And-wine *that* delights the-heart-of-humanity / to-make-shine faces more-than-oil / and-bread/food the-heart-of-humanity it-sustains." Oil may be a symbol for rich produce, or it may simply mean that we get a good crop of oil and use it to make our faces shiny. Richard Henry Dana in *Two Years Before the Mast* met Russian sailors whose faces gleamed from the grease in their diet.

[4] "They-would-sate-themselves, trees-of God / cedars-of Lebanon which *God* planted."

[5] "Where [which there] birds nest, / the-stork among-cypresses *makes* her-home.

[6] "The high hills are for the mountain goats; rocks are shelter for the badgers."

[7] "*God* made the moon for the seasons (or festivals)." The Jewish calendar of festivals is a lunar calendar. God made sun and moon לְמוֹעֲדִים וּלְיָמִים וְשָׁנִים / lemo'adim uleyamim veshanim / "for seasons and for days and for years" (Gen. 1:14). If you reckon that the sun marks the years and both sun and moon mark the days, then it's for the moon to mark the מוֹעֲדִים, the festival times, which fall at specific places in the lunar month.

[8] "The sun has learned *the place* where it sets."

[22] At sunrise, they are gathered in,	תִּזְרַח הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ יֵאָסֵפוּן	Tizrach hashemesh ye'asefun
Sent into their dens to lie.	וְאֶל־מְעוֹנֹתָם יִרְבָּצוּן	ve'el me'onotam yirbatzun.
[23] Then people go about their work	יֵצֵא אָדָם לְפָעֳלוֹ	Yetze adam lefo'olo
To labor until night draws nigh.	וְלַעֲבָדָתוֹ עֲדֵי־עָרֶב	vela'avodato adei arev.
[24] How many are your works, O God—	מָה־רַבּוּ מַעֲשֶׂיךָ יהוה	Mah rabu ma'asecha Adonai—
In wisdom you made every one.	כֻּלָּם בְּחָכְמָה עָשִׂיתָ	kulam bechochmah asita,
Your *varied* creatures[1] fill the world.	מָלְאָה הָאָרֶץ קִנְיָנֶךָ	mal'ah ha'aretz kinyanecha.
[25] Look at the vast and spacious sea,	זֶה הַיָּם גָּדוֹל וּרְחַב יָדָיִם	Zeh hayam gadol ur'chav yadayim,
Teeming with life immeasurable,[2]	שָׁם־רֶמֶשׂ וְאֵין מִסְפָּר	sham remes ve'ein mispar,
Small and great together swirled.[3]	חַיּוֹת קְטַנּוֹת עִם־גְּדֹלוֹת	chayot ketanot im gedolot.
[26] There ships pass; here's Leviathan,	שָׁם אֳנִיּוֹת יְהַלֵּכוּן	Sham oniyot yehalechun,
God's creature made for play at sea.	לִוְיָתָן זֶה־יָצַרְתָּ לְשַׂחֶק־בּוֹ	Livyatan zeh yatzarta lesachek bo.
[27] All of them depend on you	כֻּלָּם אֵלֶיךָ יְשַׂבֵּרוּן	Kulam elecha yesaberun
To grant their food appropriately.[4]	לָתֵת אָכְלָם בְּעִתּוֹ	latet ochlam be'ito.
[28] They gather what you give them—food—	תִּתֵּן לָהֶם יִלְקֹטוּן	Titen lahem yilkotun
With open hand fill them with good.	תִּפְתַּח יָדְךָ יִשְׂבְּעוּן טוֹב	tiftach yadcha yisbe'un tov.
[29] But hide your face, they're struck with dread;	תַּסְתִּיר פָּנֶיךָ יִבָּהֵלוּן	Tastir panecha yibahelun
Collect their spirit, and they're dead,	תֹּסֵף רוּחָם יִגְוָעוּן	tosef rucham yigva'un
Back to the dust *from which they're bred*.	וְאֶל־עֲפָרָם יְשׁוּבוּן	ve'el afaram yeshuvun.
[30] Now send your breath: new women and men	תְּשַׁלַּח רוּחֲךָ יִבָּרֵאוּן	Teshalach ruchacha yibare'un
Will populate the Earth again.[5]	וּתְחַדֵּשׁ פְּנֵי אֲדָמָה	utechadesh penei adamah.
[31] May God's glory last forever	יְהִי כְבוֹד יהוה לְעוֹלָם	Yehi chevod Adonai le'olam
While *God* delights in *God's* endeavor—	יִשְׂמַח יהוה בְּמַעֲשָׂיו	yismach Adonai bema'asav.

[1] "Your creatures (or possessions)" is from the word for "own" or "buy." Earth is filled with God's possessions; having made it all, God owns it all.

[2] "There *are* teeming things, and there is no number (or counting)."

[3] "Living things small with great." The sea contains creatures both tiny and huge.

[4] "To give them food at its *proper* time."

[5] "You-will-send/may-you-send your-breath/spirit, they-are-created / and-you-will-renew/and-may-you-renew the-surface-of the-ground." In the previous verse, when God collects spirit, creatures die; now, when God sends God's spirit, creatures are created, and they "renew" the ground by populating the surface of the earth. Today's Zero Population Growth advocates may not approve, but in ancient times population growth was in favor.

[32] Whose glance makes earth shudder in fright,	הַמַּבִּיט לָאָרֶץ וַתִּרְעָד	Hamabit la'aretz vatir'ad
Whose touch scorches the mountain height.[1]	יִגַּע בֶּהָרִים וְיֶעֱשָׁנוּ	yiga beharim veye'eshanu.
[33] Alive, to God I'll bring my song,	אָשִׁירָה לַיהוה בְּחַיָּי	Ashirah lAdonai bechayay
Sing to my God my whole life long.	אֲזַמְּרָה לֵאלֹהַי בְּעוֹדִי	azamrah lElohai be'odi.
[34] May *God* my *prayerful* speech enjoy	יֶעֱרַב עָלָיו שִׂיחִי	Ye'erav alav sichi
For I in God find *all my* joy.[2]	אָנֹכִי אֶשְׂמַח בַּיהוה	anochi esmach bAdonai.
[35] Let earth be free from sin,	יִתַּמּוּ חַטָּאִים מִן־הָאָרֶץ	Yitamu chata'im min ha'aretz
the wicked be no more.[3]	וּרְשָׁעִים עוֹד אֵינָם	uresha'im od einam.
My soul, bless God—	בָּרֲכִי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יהוה	Barachi nafshi et Adonai
Halleluyah!	הַלְלוּ־יָהּ	Haleluyah.

[1] "Who-glances at-the-earth and-it-shakes (like an earthquake), *God*-will-make-contact with-hills and-they-smoke (as if struck by lightning)."
[2] "May-it-give-pleasure upon-*God,* my-speech; I delight in-God.
[3] "Let-them-come-to-an-end, sins, from-the-earth, and-wicked-people any-more let-them-not-exist."

Psalm 105

[1] Give thanks to God, call on *God's* name.	הוֹדוּ לַיהוה קִרְאוּ בִשְׁמוֹ	Hodu lAdonai kir'u vishmo,
Tell the nations of *God's* deeds.	הוֹדִיעוּ בָעַמִּים עֲלִילֹתָיו	hodi'u va'amim alilotav.
[2] Sing to *God*, make songs to *God*,	שִׁירוּ לוֹ זַמְּרוּ־לוֹ	Shiru lo, zamru lo,
Speak of all *God's* miracles.	שִׂיחוּ בְּכָל־נִפְלְאֹתָיו	sichu bechol nifle'otav.
[3] Share praises in *God's* holy name,	הִתְהַלְלוּ בְּשֵׁם קָדְשׁוֹ	Hit'halelu beshem kodsho,
Let them rejoice, who ask for God.	יִשְׂמַח לֵב מְבַקְשֵׁי יהוה	yismach lev mevakshei Adonai.
[4] Seek out God and power divine,	דִּרְשׁוּ יהוה וְעֻזּוֹ	Dirshu Adonai ve'uzo,
Seek *God's* presence all the time.	בַּקְּשׁוּ פָנָיו תָּמִיד	bakshu fanav tamid.
[5] Think of the wonders *God* has done,	זִכְרוּ נִפְלְאוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה	Zichru nifle'otav asher asah,
The signs and judgements *God* decreed.[1]	מֹפְתָיו וּמִשְׁפְּטֵי־פִיו	moftav umishpetei fiv.
[6] Children of Abraham, *God's* servant,	זֶרַע אַבְרָהָם עַבְדּוֹ	Zera Avraham avdo,
are Jacob's seed, *God's* chosen ones.	בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב בְּחִירָיו	benei Ya'akov bechirav.
[7] This one is our ruling God,	הוּא יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ	Hu Adonai Eloheinu,
whose judgements *are* in all the earth,	בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ מִשְׁפָּטָיו	bechol ha'aretz mishpatav.
[8] Who always keeps our mutual pact,	זָכַר לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתוֹ	Zachar le'olam berito,
decreed to last a thousand ages,	דָּבָר צִוָּה לְאֶלֶף דּוֹר	davar tzivah le'elef dor.
[9] *The pact God* sealed with Abraham,	אֲשֶׁר כָּרַת אֶת־אַבְרָהָם	Asher karat et-Avraham,
and undertook with Isaac *too*,	וּשְׁבוּעָתוֹ לְיִשְׂחָק[2]	ushevu'ato leYis'chak.
[10] That *God* confirmed as Jacob's law,	וַיַּעֲמִידֶהָ לְיַעֲקֹב לְחֹק	Vaya'amideha leYa'akov lechok,
for Israel an eternal pledge:	לְיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרִית עוֹלָם	leYisra'el berit olam.
[11] "Canaan's land I give to you;	לֵאמֹר לְךָ אֶתֵּן אֶרֶץ־כְּנָעַן	Lemor, "Lecha eten eretz Kena'an,
this part is your inheritance."	חֶבֶל נַחֲלַתְכֶם	chevel nachalat'chem."
[12] When they numbered but a few,	בִּהְיוֹתָם מְתֵי מִסְפָּר	Biheyotam metei mispar,
a small group who were staying there,	כִּמְעַט וְגָרִים בָּהּ	kim'at vegarim bah.
[13] And they trudged from land to land,	וַיִּתְהַלְּכוּ מִגּוֹי אֶל־גּוֹי	Vayit'halchu migoy el goy,
from state to state they made their way,[3]	מִמַּמְלָכָה אֶל־עַם אַחֵר	mimamlacha el am acher.

[1] "And-the-verdicts-of-*God's*-mouth."
[2] יִצְחָק is the usual spelling of Isaac's name, but it's spelled this way in one other place, Jeremiah 33:26.
[3] "From *one* realm to another people," i.e., from one nation to another.

[14] *God* let no one do them harm—	לֹא־הִנִּיחַ אָדָם לְעָשְׁקָם	Lo hini'ach le'ish le'oshkam
God reprimanded kings for them!	וַיּוֹכַח עֲלֵיהֶם מְלָכִים	vayochah aleihem melachim.
[15] "Don't injure my anointed ones,	אַל־תִּגְּעוּ בִמְשִׁיחָי	"Al tig'u vimshichai
or do my prophets any harm."	וְלִנְבִיאַי אַל־תָּרֵעוּ	uvinvi'ai al tarei'u."
[16] *God* decreed famine for the land,	וַיִּקְרָא רָעָב עַל־הָאָרֶץ	Vayikra ra'av al ha'aretz,
ruined every source of food,[1]	כָּל־מַטֵּה־לֶחֶם שָׁבָר	kol mateh lechem shavar,
[17] Arranged to send to them a man	שָׁלַח לִפְנֵיהֶם אִישׁ	Shalach lifneihem ish
called Joseph, as a lowly slave;	לְעֶבֶד נִמְכַּר יוֹסֵף	le'eved, nimkar Yosef.
[18] His leg they bound with fetters *strong*,	עִנּוּ בַכֶּבֶל רַגְלוֹ[3]	Inu vakevel raglo,
and iron shackles *held* him *fast*[2]	בַּרְזֶל בָּאָה נַפְשׁוֹ	barzel ba'ah nafsho.
[19] Until his prophecy came true	עַד־עֵת בֹּא־דְבָרוֹ	Ad et bo devaro,
and God declared his innocence.[4]	אִמְרַת יהוה צְרָפָתְהוּ	imrat Adonai tzerafat'hu.
[20] The king sent word for his release,	שָׁלַח מֶלֶךְ וַיַּתִּירֵהוּ	Shalach melech vayatirehu,
ruler of nations set him free,	מֹשֵׁל עַמִּים וַיְפַתְּחֵהוּ	moshel amim vayefat'chehu.
[21] Made him master of his house,	שָׂמוֹ אָדוֹן לְבֵיתוֹ	Samo adon leveito
manager of all he owned,	וּמֹשֵׁל בְּכָל־קִנְיָנוֹ	umoshel bechol kinyano,
[22] To curb his chiefs as he saw fit	לֶאְסֹר שָׂרָיו בְּנַפְשׁוֹ	Lesor sarav benafsho
and teach his sages wiser ways,[5]	וּזְקֵנָיו יְחַכֵּם	uzekenav yechakem.
[23] So Israel came to Egypt *too*,	וַיָּבֹא יִשְׂרָאֵל מִצְרָיִם	Vayavo Yisra'el Mitzrayim,
in Cham's domain did Jacob dwell.	וְיַעֲקֹב גָּר בְּאֶרֶץ־חָם	veYa'akov gar be'Eretz Mitzrayim.

[1] "And-*God*-called/decreed famine upon-the-land, / every-staff-of-food-*God*-broke"; a "staff" is something to rely on, so God ruined every reliable source of food, such as (for Egypt) the regular flooding of the Nile.
[2] "Iron came *to* his-person."
[3] A manuscript would have רגליו, "his feet/legs."
[4] "Until-the-time-of coming-*true* his-prediction (until his prediction came to pass); / the-utterance-of God purged-him (cleared him of guilt)." God told Joseph what to say when he interpreted the butler's and baker's dreams, and after his prediction came true he was recommended as interpreter of Pharaoh's dreams.
[5] "To-restrain *Pharaoh's*-chiefs according-to-himself (i.e., as he saw fit) / and-*Pharaoh's*-elders/sages he-would-make-wise."

[24] *God* made *God's* people fruitful[1] there,	וַיְּפֶר אֶת־עַמּוֹ מְאֹד	Vayefer et amo me'od
more vigorous than *God's* enemies,	וַיַּעֲצִמֵהוּ מִצָּרָיו	vaya'atzimehu mitzarav,
[25] Whose hearts *God* turned against *God's* folk,	הָפַךְ לִבָּם לִשְׂנֹא עַמּוֹ	Hafach libam lisno amo,
to cheat *God's* servants with deceit	לְהִתְנַכֵּל בַּעֲבָדָיו	lehitnakel ba'avadav.
[26] But sent Moses, servant *of God,*	שָׁלַח מֹשֶׁה עַבְדּוֹ	Shalach Moshe avdo,
and Aaron, *God's* selected *priest*,[2]	אַהֲרֹן אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר־בּוֹ	Aharon, asher bachar bo.
[27] Gave them signs and miracles,	שָׂמוּ־בָם דִּבְרֵי אֹתוֹתָיו	Samu vam divrei ototav,
wonders for the land of Cham.[3]	וּמֹפְתִים בְּאֶרֶץ חָם	umoftim be'eretz Cham.
[28] *God* sent darkness—how dark it was!—	שָׁלַח חשֶׁךְ וַיַּחְשִׁךְ	Shalach choshech vayachshich,
they didn't rebel against *God's* word.[4]	וְלֹא־מָרוּ אֶת־דְּבָרוֹ[5]	velo maru et devaro.
[29] *God* changed the water into blood	הָפַךְ אֶת־מֵימֵיהֶם לְדָם	Hafach et meimeihem ledam,
and killed off all their *river's* fish,	וַיָּמֶת אֶת־דְּגָתָם	vayamet et degatam,
[30] Brought frogs to swarm through the land,	שָׁרַץ אַרְצָם צְפַרְדְּעִים	Sharatz artzam tzefarda'im
even in the royal private rooms.[6]	בְּחַדְרֵי מַלְכֵיהֶם	bechadrei malcheihem.
[31] Gave the word and confusion[7] came,	אָמַר וַיָּבֹא עָרֹב	Amar, vayavo arov,
lice *swarming* through their whole domain,[8]	כִּנִּים בְּכָל־גְּבוּלָם	kinim bechol gevulam,

[1] The root of וַיְּפֶר is the same as in פרי, fruit.

[2] "*God*-sent Moses, *God's*-servant / and-Aaron, which *God*-chose-him (i.e., "Aaron, whom God chose," but the Hebrew syntax is different from that of modern English)."

[3] Noah had three sons; the middle one was Cham, the Hebrew for hot. Egypt is at the north end of the hot continent, Africa. I know it gets cold in Africa and there's snow on Kilimanjaro, but African winters are warmer than in Michigan.

[4] "*God*-sent darkness and-made-it-dark, / and-**they**-didn't-rebel-against *God's*-instruction." Who didn't rebel? Maybe the Egyptians, who sat still during the plague of darkness; maybe Moses and Aaron, who followed orders; maybe the Israelites, who (for once) didn't complain.

[5] A manuscript would have an extra letter: אֶת־דבורו

[6] Frogs? We sing about frogs at the Seder, but it might have been something else such as crocodiles, much more terrifying. Royal private rooms, "In their kings' chambers."

[7] Most people translate עָרֹב as wild beasts, but the word seems related to mixture, evening, crow/raven, pledge, enjoyment. If you're an executive director, I suppose you worry more about pledges than wild beasts, because sometimes it's easier to cage a lion than collect a pledge.

[8] "In all their borders."

[32] Sent fiery hail instead of rain,	נָתַן גִּשְׁמֵיהֶם בָּרָד אֵשׁ	Natan gishmeihem barad esh,
tongues of fire in the land,[1]	לֶהָבוֹת בְּאַרְצָם	lehavot be'artzam,
[33] Struck at fig trees and at vines,	וַיַּךְ גַּפְנָם וּתְאֵנָתָם	Vayach gafnam ute'enam,
shattered the trees inside the realm.[2]	וַיְשַׁבֵּר עֵץ גְּבוּלָם	vayeshaber etz gevulam.
[34] Ordered locusts, a swarming cloud	אָמַר וַיָּבֹא אַרְבֶּה	Amar vayavo arbeh
of locusts beyond numbering[3]	וְיֶלֶק וְאֵין מִסְפָּר	veyelek, ve'ein mispar.
[35] To eat every blade of grass	וַיֹּאכַל כָּל־עֵשֶׂב בְּאַרְצָם	Vayochal kol esev be'artzam,
and fruit *growing* from the ground,[4]	וַיֹּאכַל פְּרִי אַדְמָתָם	vayochal peri admatam.
[36] Struck every firstborn in the realm,	וַיַּךְ כָּל־בְּכוֹר בְּאַרְצָם	Vayach kol bechor be'artzam,
the best of all their vital power,	רֵאשִׁית לְכָל־אוֹנָם	reshit lechol onam,
[37] Led Israel out with silver and gold	וַיּוֹצִיאֵם בְּכֶסֶף וְזָהָב	Vayotzi'em bechesef vezahav,
(of *Israel's* clans not one delayed).	וְאֵין בִּשְׁבָטָיו כּוֹשֵׁל	ve'ein bishvatav koshel.
[38] Egypt rejoiced when *Israel* left	שָׂמַח מִצְרַיִם בְּצֵאתָם	Samach Mitzrayim betzetam
for they were overcome with fear.[5]	כִּי־נָפַל פַּחְדָּם עֲלֵיהֶם	ki nafal pachdam aleihem.
[39] *God* spread a cloud to cover *them*	פָּרַשׂ עָנָן לְמָסָךְ	Paras anan lemasach
and fire to brighten the dark night.	וְאֵשׁ לְהָאִיר לָיְלָה	ve'esh leha'ir laila.
[40] *God* sent quail at their request	שָׁאַל וַיָּבֵא שְׂלָו	Sha'al vayaveh slav,
and bread from heaven to feed them full,[6]	וְלֶחֶם שָׁמַיִם יַשְׂבִּיעֵם	velechem shamayim yasbi'em
[41] Cracked a rock and water flowed,	פָּתַח צוּר וַיָּזוּבוּ מָיִם	Patach tzur vayazuvu mayim,
a river in the desert land—[7]	הָלְכוּ בַּצִּיּוֹת נָהָר	hal'chu batziyot nahar—
[42] For *God* recalled the solemn vow	כִּי־זָכַר אֶת־דְּבַר קָדְשׁוֹ	Ki zachar et devar kodsho,
with Abraham *God's* servant *true*[8]	אֶת־אַבְרָהָם עַבְדּוֹ	et Avraham avdo

[1] "Gave *as* their-rains hail and-fire, / flames in-their-land." Our tradition tells us that the plague of hail was fiery hail, big chunks of ice that burst into flame on reaching the ground. Yikes!

[2] "And-*God*-struck their-grape-vines and-their-fig-*trees* / and-*God*-broke wood/trees *throughout* their-border."

[3] "And-*God*-spoke and-there-came a-locust-swarm, / and-young-locust and-there-is-not number (beyond counting)."

[4] "And-it-ate-up all-the sprouting-vegetation in-their-land, / and-it-ate-up the-fruit-of their-soil."

[5] "Rejoiced Egypt at-their-leaving / for-fell fear-of-*Israel* upon-*Egypt*."

[6] "*The-people*–asked, and-*God*-brought quail, / and-*with*-bread/food-of heaven/skies *God*-sated-them."

[7] "*God*-opened a-rock and there-oozed-out waters, /*waters*-went into-dry-land, a-river."

[8] "For-*God*-remembered the-matter-of *God's*-holiness (God's holy concern), / Abraham, *God's*-servant."

[43] And led the people cheerfully,	וַיּוֹצֵא עַמּוֹ בְשָׂשׂוֹן	Vayotzi amo vesason,
with joy *God's* dear community,[1]	בְּרִנָּה אֶת־בְּחִירָיו	berinah et bechirav,
[44] Granted them lands from other folk,	וַיִּתֵּן לָהֶם אַרְצוֹת גּוֹיִם	Vayiten lahem artzot goyim,
the wealth of nations their bequest[2]	וַעֲמַל לְאֻמִּים יִירָשׁוּ	ve'amal le'umim yirashu.
[45] If they'd observe *God's* firm decrees	בַּעֲבוּר יִשְׁמְרוּ חֻקָּיו	Ba'avur yishmeru chukav,
and keep *God's* counsel. Hail to God.[3]	וְתוֹרֹתָיו יִנְצֹרוּ הַלְלוּ־יָהּ	vetorotav yintzoru. Halleluyah.

[1] "And-*God*-brought-out *God's*-people with-joy, / with-rejoicing *God's*-chosen-ones."
[2] "And-*God*-gave to-*the*-*Jewish*-*people* lands-of *other*-peoples, / and-the-toil-of *other*-nations *God*-gave-them-to-inherit"
[3] "So-that (or, so long as) they-would-observe *God's*-statutes / and-they-would-keep *God's*-teachings. Halleluyah."

Psalm 106

[1] Hail God!	הַלְלוּיָהּ	Halleluyah!
Give thanks to God for *God's* is good,	הוֹדוּ לַיהוה כִּי־טוֹב	Hodu lAdonai ki tov,
God's graciousness forever *lasts*.	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	ki le'olam chasdo.
[2] Who can recount God's mighty deeds,	מִי יְמַלֵּל גְּבוּרוֹת יהוה	Mi yemalel gevurot Adonai,
voice all the praise that *God* has earned?[1]	יַשְׁמִיעַ כָּל־תְּהִלָּתוֹ	yashmi'a kol tehilato?
[3] Lucky people do what's right,	אַשְׁרֵי שֹׁמְרֵי מִשְׁפָּט	Ashrei shomrei mishpat,
with moral action every time.[2]	עֹשֵׂה צְדָקָה בְכָל־עֵת	oseh tzedakah vechol et.
[4] Include me in your people's grace,	זָכְרֵנִי יהוה בִּרְצוֹן עַמֶּךָ	Zochreni, Adona, birtzon amecha;
include me when you rescue *them,*[3]	פָּקְדֵנִי בִּישׁוּעָתֶךָ	pokdeni bishu'atecha,
[5] To see you favor your elect	לִרְאוֹת בְּטוּבַת בְּחִירֶיךָ	Lirot betovat bechirecha,
and cheer your people's happiness—	לִשְׂמֹחַ בְּשִׂמְחַת גּוֹיֶךָ	lismo'ach besimchat goyecha—
I'll join your people in their praise.[4]	לְהִתְהַלֵּל עִם־נַחֲלָתֶךָ	lehit'halel im nachalatecha.
[6] We've sinned, as did our ancestors;	חָטָאנוּ עִם־אֲבוֹתֵינוּ	Chatanu im avoteinu,
we've gone astray with wickedness.	הֶעֱוִינוּ הִרְשָׁעְנוּ	he'evinu, hirshanu.
[7] Our ancestors, in Egypt's land,	אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בְמִצְרַיִם	Avoteinu beMitzrayim
your wonders did not understand,	לֹא־הִשְׂכִּילוּ נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ	lo hiskilu nifle'otecha,
forgot your ample sympathy	לֹא זָכְרוּ אֶת־רֹב חֲסָדֶיךָ	lo zachru et rov chasadecha,
and flouted you at the Reed Sea.[5]	וַיַּמְרוּ עַל־יָם בְּיַם־סוּף	vayamru al yam, beYam Suf.
[8] *God* saved them, to defend *God's* name,	וַיּוֹשִׁיעֵם לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ	Vayoshi'em lema'an shemo,
and publicize *God's* sweeping power—[6]	לְהוֹדִיעַ אֶת־גְּבוּרָתוֹ	lehodi'a et gevurato,

[1] "Make-heard all *God's* praise"

[2] "Lucky-*are*-they who-observe justice, / *and so is* one-who-does what-is-right at-every-time."

[3] "Keep-me-in-mind, God, when-*you-feel*-favor-for your-people; / take-note-of-me at-your-rescue-*of-them.*"

[4] "To-look into-*your*-good for-your-chosen ((so that I will be able to see the good you do for your chosen people) / to-rejoice in-the-joy-of your-people / to-praise with-your-inheritance/legacy (so that I will be able to praise you along with the people you have chosen as your legacy)."

[5] "Our-ancestors in Egypt / did-not-understand your-wonders; / they-did-not-remember the-abundance-of your-kindness, / and-they-rebelled at-the-sea, at-the-Sea-of-Reeds." The poet blames the Hebrews more than some of us might. They may have hesitated at the shore of the Red Sea as Egyptian chariots rushed toward them, but the poet stresses the sin (of ingratitude and doubt).

[6] "And-*God*-rescued-them for-the-sake-of *God's*-name/reputation, / to-make-known *God's* strength."

[9] *God's* angry blast the Reed Sea fled;	וַיִּגְעַר בְּיַם־סוּף וַיֶּחֱרָב	Vayigar beYam Suf vayecherav,
God led them through the dry seabed,[1]	וַיּוֹלִיכֵם בַּתְּהֹמוֹת כַּמִּדְבָּר	vayolichem bat'homot kamidbar,
[10] Rescued them from enemy power,	וַיּוֹשִׁיעֵם מִיַּד שׂוֹנֵא	Vayoshi'em miyad soneh,
delivered them from hostile might[2]	וַיִּגְאָלֵם מִיַּד אוֹיֵב	vayigalam miyad oyev
[11] (The sea engulfed their enemies—	וַיְכַסּוּ־מַיִם צָרֵיהֶם	(Vayechasu mayim tzareihem—
not one of them remained alive)[3]	אֶחָד מֵהֶם לֹא נוֹתָר	echad mehem lo notar)
[12] And they believed *God's* promises,	וַיַּאֲמִינוּ בִּדְבָרָיו	Vaya'aminu vidvarav,
sang praises *to their savior,*	יָשִׁירוּ תְּהִלָּתוֹ	yashiru tehilato,
[13] But soon forgot what *God* had done	מִהֲרוּ שָׁכְחוּ מַעֲשָׂיו	Miharu, shach'chu ma'asav;
too rash to wait and see *God's* plan.[4]	לֹא־חִכּוּ לַעֲצָתוֹ	lo chiku la'atzato.
[14] Seized with desire in the desert,	וַיִּתְאַוּוּ תַאֲוָה בַּמִּדְבָּר	Vayitavu ta'avah bamidbar,
they tried God in the barren land.[5]	וַיְנַסּוּ־אֵל בִּישִׁימוֹן	vayenasu El bishimon.
[15] *God* granted their request for food	וַיִּתֵּן לָהֶם שֶׁאֱלָתָם	Vayiten lahem she'elatam
but let them wither into death,[6]	וַיְשַׁלַּח רָזוֹן בְּנַפְשָׁם	vayeshalach razon benafsham.
[16] Jealous of Moses in the camp,	וַיְקַנְאוּ לְמֹשֶׁה בַּמַּחֲנֶה	Vayekanu leMoshe bamachaneh,
and Aaron, God's holy minister.[7]	לְאַהֲרֹן קְדוֹשׁ יהוה	le'Aharon, kedosh Adonai.
[17] Earth opened and swallowed Dathan,	תִּפְתַּח־אֶרֶץ וַתִּבְלַע דָּתָן	Tiftach eretz vativla Datan,
engulfed Aviram's *evil* bloc;[8]	וַתְּכַס עַל־עֲדַת אֲבִירָם	vatechas al adat Aviram,
[18] Fire burned among their throng,	וַתִּבְעַר־אֵשׁ בַּעֲדָתָם	Vativar esh ba'adatam,
flames licked at those who had done wrong.[9]	לֶהָבָה תְּלַהֵט רְשָׁעִים	lehavah telahet resha'im.

[1] "And-*God*-rebuked *with wind* the-Reed-Sea, and-it-dried-up, / and-*God*-led-them through-the-depths (i.e., the seabed) as-*dry-as*-the-desert."

[2] "And-*God*-rescued-them from-the-hand/power-of the-enemy / and-saved-them from-the-hand/power-of the-foe."

[3] "And-the-waters-covered their-troublers; / *a single* one of-them not was-left *to survive."*

[4] "They-hurried, forgot *God's*-deeds, / they-did-not-wait for-*God's*-plan"; they were too impatient to see God's plan work.

[5] "And-they-desired a-desire in-the-desert, / and-they-tested-God in-the-wasteland/Yeshimon."

[6] "And-*God*-gave to-them their-request / and-sent leanness in-their-selves": (1) God granted their request for food, but those over 20 died in the desert because of the incident with the scouts/spies.

[7] "And-they-became-jealous towards-Moses in-the-camp, / *and* towards-Aaron, *the*-holy-*minister-of* God." This refers to the revolt of Korach, though he is not named. In the next verse, his close associates Datan and Aviram are named.

[8] "The-earth-opened and-swallowed Datan / and-covered over-the-congregation-of Aviram."

[9] Numbers 16:35 and 26:9 mention the fire that destroyed Korach's supporters.

19 They made a cow-god at Choreb	יַעֲשׂוּ־עֵגֶל בְּחֹרֵב	Ya'asu egel beChorev,
and bowed low to an empty form,	וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְמַסֵּכָה	vayishtachavu lemasecha.
20 Gave up the glorious God they knew[1]	וַיָּמִירוּ אֶת־כְּבוֹדָם	Vayamiru et kevodam
for the statue of a grazing ox,	בְּתַבְנִית שׁוֹר אֹכֵל עֵשֶׂב	betavnit shor ochel esev.
21 Forgot the God who rescued them	שָׁכְחוּ אֵל מוֹשִׁיעָם	Shach'chu El moshi'am,
did mighty deeds in Egypt's land,	עֹשֶׂה גְדֹלוֹת בְּמִצְרָיִם	oseh gedolot beMitzrayim,
22 Marvels in the realm of Cham,	נִפְלָאוֹת בְּאֶרֶץ חָם	Nifla'ot be'eretz Cham,
awesome feats at the Sea of Reeds.	נוֹרָאוֹת עַל־יַם־סוּף	nora'ot al Yam Suf.
23 So *God* decreed *the Hebrews'* ruin—	וַיֹּאמֶר לְהַשְׁמִידָם	Vayomer lehashmidam—
had not *God's* chosen, Moses, stood	לוּלֵי מֹשֶׁה בְחִירוֹ עָמַד	lulei Moshe vechiro amad
in the breach before *God's dread approach*	בַּפֶּרֶץ לְפָנָיו	baperetz lefanav
to repel *God's* destructive wrath.	לְהָשִׁיב חֲמָתוֹ מֵהַשְׁחִית	lehashiv chamato mehash'chit.
24 They spurned the lovely *promised* land	וַיִּמְאֲסוּ בְּאֶרֶץ חֶמְדָּה	Vayim'asu be'eretz chemda;
and doubted *God's* assurance *true*,	לֹא־הֶאֱמִינוּ לִדְבָרוֹ	lo he'eminu lidvaro,
25 Muttered objections in their tents	וַיֵּרָגְנוּ בְאָהֳלֵיהֶם	Vayeragnu ve'oholeihem,
and wouldn't listen to God's voice.	לֹא שָׁמְעוּ בְּקוֹל יהוה	lo shamu bekol Adonai.
26 So *God* raised the hand *of discipline*	וַיִּשָּׂא יָדוֹ לָהֶם	Vayisa yado lahem,
to fell them in the wilderness,	לְהַפִּיל אוֹתָם בַּמִּדְבָּר	lehapil otam bamidbar,
27 Sent their children to other folk	וּלְהַפִּיל זַרְעָם בַּגּוֹיִם	Ulehapil zaram bagoyim
and scattered them to foreign realms.[2]	וּלְזָרוֹתָם בָּאֲרָצוֹת	ulezarotam ba'aratzot.
28 They joined the throng of Baal Pe'or,	וַיִּצָּמְדוּ לְבַעַל פְּעוֹר	Vayitzamdu leVa'al Pe'or,
ate offerings slaughtered for the dead,[3]	וַיֹּאכְלוּ זִבְחֵי מֵתִים	vayochlu zivchei metim,
29 Provoked *God's* ire with *such* misdeeds	וַיַּכְעִיסוּ בְּמַעַלְלֵיהֶם	Vayachisu bema'aleleihem,
until a plague afflicted them.	וַתִּפְרָץ־בָּם מַגֵּפָה	vatifratz bam magefah.

[1] "And-they-changed their-glory"; they exchanged their glorious God for an empty mask or statue. The poet seems to make the idol both female and male bovine. What's the big deal? Don't worship it!

[2] "And-to-send-down their-offspring among-the-*other*-nations / and-to-scatter-them among-the-countries."

[3] Don't you wonder what those naughty pagans used to do? Now you know one thing: sacrifices to the dead, perhaps in order to propitiate ancestral spirits. Now, someone is going to pipe up and say, "But we Jews remember the dead too, with Kaddish and Yizkor." Yes, but our remembrance is with prayer to God, not sacrifices to ancestral spirits. (Giving tzedakah in memory of the departed is … is that a problem?)

[30] But Pinchas rose to intercede	וַיַּעֲמֹד פִּינְחָס וַיְפַלֵּל	Vaya'amod Pin'chas vayefalel,
and caused the pestilence to cease,	וַתֵּעָצַר הַמַּגֵּפָה	vate'atzar hamagefah,
[31] A deed counted as righteousness	וַתֵּחָשֶׁב לוֹ לִצְדָקָה	Vatechashev lo litzdakah
from age to age, forevermore.[1]	לְדֹר וָדֹר עַד־עוֹלָם	ledor vador, ad olam.
[32] They goaded *God* at Merivah—	וַיַּקְצִיפוּ עַל־מֵי מְרִיבָה	Vayaktzifu al mei Merivah,
poor Moses suffered for their sake[2]	וַיֵּרַע לְמֹשֶׁה בַּעֲבוּרָם	vayera leMoshe ba'avuram
[33] For their incitement maddened him	כִּי־הִמְרוּ אֶת־רוּחוֹ	Ki himru et rucho
and he voiced words he would regret.[3]	וַיְבַטֵּא בִשְׂפָתָיו	vayevateh bisfatav.
[34] They never conquered *all* the folk	לֹא־הִשְׁמִידוּ אֶת־הָעַמִּים	Lo hishmidu et ha'amim
that God had listed off for them[4]	אֲשֶׁר אָמַר יהוה לָהֶם	asher amar Adonai lahem,
[35] But mingled with those multitudes	וַיִּתְעָרְבוּ בַגּוֹיִם	Vayitarvu vagoyim
and learned from their *immoral* ways,[5]	וַיִּלְמְדוּ מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם	vayilmedu ma'aseihem,
[36] Serving their futile deities,	וַיַּעַבְדוּ אֶת־עֲצַבֵּיהֶם	Vaya'avdu et atzabeihem
ensnared in their idolatry,[6]	וַיִּהְיוּ לָהֶם לְמוֹקֵשׁ	vayiheyu lahem lemokesh,
[37] With human sacrifice of boys	וַיִּזְבְּחוּ אֶת־בְּנֵיהֶם	Vayizbechu et beneihem
and girls to their demonic gods.[7]	וְאֶת־בְּנוֹתֵיהֶם לַשֵּׁדִים	ve'et benoteihem lashedim,

[1] "And-*it*-was-reckoned for-him for-righteousness, / to-generation and-generation until *the-end-of-the*-world." Pinchas' action and reward (בְּרִית כְּהֻנַּת עוֹלָם, a pact of eternal priesthood) are in Num. 25.

[2] "And-they-made-*God*-angry over-the-waters-of Merivah, / and-it-was-bad for-Moses on-their-account" because Moses struck the rock and lost his chance to enter the land, as told in Num. 20.

[3] "For they-embittered his-spirit (or, rebelled against his expectation, when they complained for water) / and-he-spoke-unadvisedly with-his-lips." What was Moses' transgression, hitting the rock or yelling at the people ("Listen up, you rebels!")? See Num. 20:10.

[4] "Not-they-destroyed the-peoples / *of* which told God to them (of which God told them)"; God listed the nations whom the Hebrews were to dispossess, but in the book of Joshua we find the job was never completed.

[5] "And-they-became-mixed among-those-peoples / and-they-learned their-way-of-doing-things."

[6] "And-they-served/worshipped their-deities / and-*those-other-peoples*-became for-*the-Hebrews* as-a-snare."

[7] "And-they-sacrificed their-sons / and-their-daughters to-the-demons." Now we know something else about pagan worship, as reported by an inimical (though not necessarily incorrect) critic.

[38] They shed the blood of innocents,	וַיִּשְׁפְּכוּ דָם נָקִי	Vayishpechu dam naki,
of sons and daughters—blameless child	דַּם־בְּנֵיהֶם וּבְנוֹתֵיהֶם	dam beneihem uvenoteihem,
offered to Canaan's idols *cruel*—	אֲשֶׁר זִבְּחוּ לַעֲצַבֵּי כְנָעַן	asher zib'chu la'atzabei Chena'an,
and with pure blood the soil defiled.[1]	וַתֶּחֱנַף הָאָרֶץ בַּדָּמִים	vatechenaf ha'aretz bedamim.
[39] Polluted with their evil deeds,	וַיִּטְמְאוּ בְמַעֲשֵׂיהֶם	Vayitme'u vema'aseihem,
they played the whore with *all* their crimes.[2]	וַיִּזְנוּ בְּמַעַלְלֵיהֶם	vayiznu bema'aleleihem.
[40] God's anger at this people flared;	וַיִּחַר־אַף יהוה בְּעַמּוֹ	Vayichar af Adonai be'amo,
disgusted with such heritage,[3]	וַיְתָעֵב אֶת־נַחֲלָתוֹ	vayeta'ev et nachalato,
[41] *God* ceded them to foreign power,	וַיִּתְּנֵם בְּיַד־גּוֹיִם	Vayitnem beyad goyim,
so that their foes reigned over them,[4]	וַיִּמְשְׁלוּ בָהֶם שֹׂנְאֵיהֶם	vayimshelu vahem soneihem,
[42] Their enemies maltreated them,	וַיִּלְחָצוּם אוֹיְבֵיהֶם	Vayil'chatzum oyveihem,
crushed them under their control.[5]	וַיִּכָּנְעוּ תַּחַת יָדָם	vayikanu tachat yadam.
[43] Time and again *God* rescued them,	פְּעָמִים רַבּוֹת יַצִּילֵם	Pe'amim rabot yatzilem,
but purposely they spurned *God's way*	וְהֵמָּה יַמְרוּ בַעֲצָתָם	vehemah yamru va'atzatam,
and sank beneath their *leaden* sin.[6]	וַיָּמֹכוּ בַּעֲוֹנָם	vayamoku ba'avonam.
[44] *At last, God* saw their suffering,	וַיַּרְא בַּצַּר לָהֶם	Vayar batzar lahem
and heard their anguish-laden cry,[7]	בְּשָׁמְעוֹ אֶת־רִנָּתָם	beshom'o et rinatam,
[45] Thought of their treaty, *long ago*—	וַיִּזְכֹּר לָהֶם בְּרִיתוֹ	Vayizkor lahem berito,
and in great kindness solaced them,[8]	וַיִּנָּחֵם כְּרֹב חֲסָדָיו[9]	vayinachem kerov chasadav,

[1] "And-they-spilled the-blood-of the-innocent, / blood-of-their-sons and-their-daughters, / which they-sacrificed to-the-idols-of Canaan, / and-polluted-was the-land with-blood."
[2] "And-they-became-polluted through-their-actions / and-they-prostituted-themselves through-their-deeds."
[3] "And-nostril-flared of-God at-*God's*-people / and-*God*-felt-disgusted with-*God's*-heritage/inheritance/legacy."
[4] "And-*God*-gave-them into-the-power-of-*other*-nations / and-*the-foreigners*-reigned over-*the-Hebrews*, their-enemies."
[5] "And-they-oppressed-them, their-enemies, / and-they-were-bowed under their-power."
[6] "Times many *God*-would-rescue-them / but-they rebelled deliberately/according-to-their-planning, / and-they-sank in-their-sinning."
[7] "And-*God*-looked at-the-trouble of-them (God saw their trouble) / when-*God*-heard their-cry."
[8] "And-*God*-remembered for-them *God's*-pact, / and-*God*-comforted-them (or, God-relented) according-to-the-abundance-of *God's*-kindness."
[9] A manuscript would read חסדו, "*God's* kindness," instead of חֲסָדָיו, "*God's* kindnesses."

[46] Granting them beguiling charm
to mollify their prison-guards.[1]
[47] Save us, God, our Deity,
collect us from those *several* realms,
to recognize your holy name
and dignify you with our praise.[2]
[48] Blessed is the Ruler, Israel's God,
From now until eternity.
To this, the people said, "It's true!"
and, "Hail to *our great* Deity!"[3]

וַיִּתֵּן אוֹתָם לְרַחֲמִים
לִפְנֵי כָּל־שׁוֹבֵיהֶם
הוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
וְקַבְּצֵנוּ מִן־הַגּוֹיִם
לְהֹדוֹת לְשֵׁם קָדְשֶׁךָ
לְהִשְׁתַּבֵּחַ בִּתְהִלָּתֶךָ
בָּרוּךְ יהוה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
מִן־הָעוֹלָם וְעַד הָעוֹלָם
וְאָמַר כָּל־הָעָם אָמֵן
הַלְלוּ־יָהּ

Vayiten otam lerachamim
lifnei kol shoveihem.
Hoshi'enu, Adonai Eloheinu,
vekabtzenu min hagoyim,
lehodot leshem kodshecha,
lehishtabe'ach bit'hilatecha.
Baruch Adonai Elohei Yisra'el
min ha'olam ve'ad ha'olam.
Ve'amar kol ha'am, "Amen!
Halelu-Yah!"

[1] "And-*God*-gave them to-mercy / before all-their-captors." They were taken into captivity, under foreign rule, but God granted them the ability to win favor from their captors (but not always, our sad history tells us).
[2] "Save-us, God, our-God, / and-collect/gather-us from-the-nations / to-give-acknowledgement/thanks to-the-name-of your-holiness (your holy name), / to-offer-praise in-the-praise-of-you."
[3] "Blessed *is* God, God-of Israel / from-eternity and-until eternity (or, from world until world; or, from *this* world to *the next* world). / And-they-said, all-the-people, 'Amen/it's-true; Halelu-Yah/praise-God.'"

Psalm 107

[1] "Thank *our* God, for *God* is good,	הֹדוּ לַיהוה כִּי־טוֹב	Hodu lAdonai ki tov
with kindness everlasting."	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	ki le'olam chasdo.
[2] God's rescued *flock* should say these words,	יֹאמְרוּ גְּאוּלֵי יהוה	Yomru ge'ulei Adonai
saved from the enemy's *cruel* power,[1]	אֲשֶׁר גְּאָלָם מִיַּד־צָר	asher ge'alam miyad tzar
[3] Whom *God* retrieved from *distant* lands,	וּמֵאֲרָצוֹת קִבְּצָם	Ume'aratzot kibtzam,
from East, West, North	מִמִּזְרָח וּמִמַּעֲרָב מִצָּפוֹן	mimizrach umima'arav mitzafon
and from the sea,[2]	וּמִיָּם	umiyam
[4] Who wandered down a desert path	תָּעוּ בַמִּדְבָּר בִּישִׁימוֹן דָּרֶךְ	Ta'u vamidbar bishimon darech;
and found no town to settle down,[3]	עִיר מוֹשָׁב לֹא מָצָאוּ	ir moshav lo matza'u.
[5] Plagued with hunger, parched with thirst	רְעֵבִים גַּם־צְמֵאִים	Re'evim gam tzeme'im,
that sapped all their vitality.[4]	נַפְשָׁם בָּהֶם תִּתְעַטָּף	nafsham bahem titataf.
[6] They cried to God in their distress	וַיִּצְעֲקוּ אֶל־יהוה בַּצַּר לָהֶם	Vayitzaku el Adonai batzar lahem,
to save them from their sorry plight.[5]	מִמְּצוּקוֹתֵיהֶם יַצִּילֵם	mimtzukoteihem yatzilem.
[7] *God* led them straight along the route	וַיַּדְרִיכֵם בְּדֶרֶךְ יְשָׁרָה	Vayadrichem bederech yesharah,
to reach a town to settle down.[6]	לָלֶכֶת אֶל־עִיר מוֹשָׁב	lalechet el ir moshav.
[8] Let them thank God for kindliness	יוֹדוּ לַיהוה חַסְדּוֹ	Yodu lAdonai chasdo
and wonders for humanity.[7]	וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו לִבְנֵי אָדָם	venifle'otav livnei Adam.
[9] *God* quenched their thirst and satisfied	כִּי־הִשְׂבִּיעַ נֶפֶשׁ שֹׁקֵקָה	Ki hishbi'a nefesh shokekah,
their hunger with abundant good.[8]	וְנֶפֶשׁ רְעֵבָה מִלֵּא־טוֹב	venefesh re'evah mileh tov.

[1] "Let-them-say *these words*, the-rescued-ones-of God (the ones God rescued) / who saved-them from-the-hand/power-of-the-enemy."

[2] "And-from-countries *God*-gathered-them, / from-East and-from-West / from-North and-from-the-sea." Why not the South? The poet may want to include the remote islands of the sea.

[3] "They-wandered in-the-desert, in-the-wasteland a-path; / a-town-for dwelling not did-they-find."

[4] "Hungry, also-thirsty, / their-life-force inside-them wrapped-itself"—their energy retreated inside, leaving them weak.

[5] "And-they-cried-aloud to-God in-the-distress *that had come* to-them, / that from-their-troubles *God*-should-rescue-them.

[6] "And-*God*-led-them on-a-path straight / to-go to-a-town, a-settlement."

[7] "Let-them/may-they/they-will-acknowledge of-God *God's*-kindness / and-*God's*-wonders for-the-descendants-of-Adam."

[8] "For-*God*-satisfied the-person/soul parched / and-the-person/soul hungry *God*-filled-*with* good."

[10] Plunged into darkness and deep gloom,	יֹשְׁבֵי חֹשֶׁךְ וְצַלְמָוֶת	Yoshvei choshech vetzalmavet,
fettered in iron penury,[1]	אֲסִירֵי עֳנִי וּבַרְזֶל	asirei oni uvarzel,
[11] When they rebelled at God's commands	כִּי־הִמְרוּ אִמְרֵי־אֵל	Ki himru imrei El
and spurned the plan of the Most High,[2]	וַעֲצַת עֶלְיוֹן נָאָצוּ	va'atzat Elyon na'atzu,
[12] Then *God* subdued them with harsh toil;	וַיַּכְנַע בֶּעָמָל לִבָּם	Vayachnah be'amal libam:
they staggered, with no one to help[3]	כָּשְׁלוּ וְאֵין עֹזֵר	kashlu, ve'ein ozer.
[13] And cried to God in their distress	וַיִּזְעֲקוּ אֶל־יהוה בַּצַּר לָהֶם	Vayizaku el Adonai batzar lahem,
to save them from their sorry plight.[4]	מִמְּצוּקֹתֵיהֶם יוֹשִׁיעֵם	mimtzukoteihem yoshi'em.
[14] God freed them from darkness and gloom	יוֹצִיאֵם מֵחֹשֶׁךְ וְצַלְמָוֶת	Yotzi'em mechosheck vetzalmavet,
severed the bonds that held them fast.[5]	וּמוֹסְרוֹתֵיהֶם יְנַתֵּק	umosroteihem yenatek.
[15] Let them thank God for kindliness	יוֹדוּ לַיהוה חַסְדּוֹ	Yodu lAdonai chasdo
and wonders for humanity,[6]	וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו לִבְנֵי אָדָם	venifle'otav livnei Adam.
[16] For *God* broke down those brazen gates	כִּי־שִׁבַּר דַּלְתוֹת נְחֹשֶׁת	Ki shibar daltot nechoshet
and smashed the iron barricades.[7]	וּבְרִיחֵי בַרְזֶל גִּדַּע	uverichei varzel gide'ah.

[1] "People-living-in darkness and-gloom, / constrained-in poverty and-iron,"

[2] "When-they-rebelled-at the-words-of-God / and-the-plan-of the-High-One they-rejected,"

[3] "And-*then*-*God*-subdued with-labor their-heart/spirit, / they-staggered and-there-was-no helper."

[4] "And-they-cried-aloud to-God in-the-distress *that had come* to-them, / that from-their-troubles *God*-should-rescue-them." Verses 6 and 28 have וַיִּצְעֲקוּ instead of וַיִּזְעֲקוּ, but the meaning is substantially the same. Some will no doubt find the difference significant.

[5] "*God*-brought-them-out from-darkness and-gloom, / and-their-bonds *God*-would-break."

[6] "Let-them/may-they/they-will-acknowledge of-God *God's*-kindness / and-*God's*-wonders for-the-descendants-of-Adam."

[7] "For-*God*-broke the-doors-of brass/copper/bronze / and-the-bars-of iron *God*-broke."

[17] But fools—inured to sinful ways,	אֱוִלִים מִדֶּרֶךְ פִּשְׁעָם	Evilim, miderech pisham
brought low by their iniquities—[1]	וּמֵעֲוֹנֹתֵיהֶם יִתְעַנּוּ	ume'avonoteihem yitanu.
[18] Could not abide *God's* sustenance	כָּל־אֹכֶל תִּתְעַב נַפְשָׁם	Kol ochel teta'ev nafsham,
and reached the portals of demise.[2]	וַיַּגִּיעוּ עַד־שַׁעֲרֵי מָוֶת	vayagi'u ad sha'arei mavet.
[19] They cried to God in their distress	וַיִּזְעֲקוּ אֶל־יהוה בַּצַּר לָהֶם	Vayizaku el Adonai batzar lahem,
to save them from their sorry plight.[3]	מִמְּצוּקוֹתֵיהֶם יוֹשִׁיעֵם	mimtzukoteihem yoshi'em.
[20] *God* gave the word and they were healed,	יִשְׁלַח דְּבָרוֹ וְיִרְפָּאֵם	Yishlach devaro veyirpa'em,
delivered from the wretched Pit.[4]	וימַלֵּט מִשְּׁחִיתוֹתָם	vimalet mishchitotam.
[21] Let them thank God for kindliness	יוֹדוּ לַיהוה חַסְדּוֹ	Yodu lAdonai chasdo
and wonders for humanity,[5]	וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו לִבְנֵי אָדָם	venifle'otav livnei Adam.
[22] Let them bring offerings of thanks	וְיִזְבְּחוּ זִבְחֵי תוֹדָה	Veyizbechu zivchei todah
and joyfully recount *God's* deeds.[6]	וִיסַפְּרוּ מַעֲשָׂיו בְּרִנָּה	visapru ma'asav berinah.
[23] People who go to sea in ships,	יוֹרְדֵי הַיָּם בָּאֳנִיּוֹת	Yordei hayam ba'oniyot,
who ply their trade across the seas,[7]	עֹשֵׂי מְלָאכָה בְּמַיִם רַבִּים	osei melacha bemayim rabim,
[24] They too have seen God's *mighty* work,	הֵמָּה רָאוּ מַעֲשֵׂי יהוה	Hemah ra'u ma'asei Adonai
the wonders of the deep abyss.[8]	וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו בִּמְצוּלָה	venifle'otav bimtzula.
[25] God's word whips up a furious gale,	וַיֹּאמֶר וַיַּעֲמֵד רוּחַ סְעָרָה	Vayomer vaya'amed ru'ach se'arah,
the storm-lashed waves tower on high,[9]	וַתְּרוֹמֵמְנָה גַּלָּיו	vatromem galav,

[1] "Fools! Because-of-the-way-of their-sinning / and-because-of-their-transgressions they-were-afflicted."
[2] "All-food would-disgust their-senses/souls / and-they-reached to-the-gates-of death."
[3] "And-they-cried-aloud to-God in-the-distress *that had come* to-them, / that from-their-troubles *God*-should-rescue-them."
[4] "*God*-would-send *God's*-word/decree and-it-would-heal-them / and-it-would-deliver-*them* from-their-destruction."
[5] "Let-them/may-they/they-will-acknowledge of-God *God's*-kindness / and-*God's*-wonders for-the-descendants-of-Adam."
[6] "And-let them-sacrifice sacrifices-of thanks / and-let-them-recount *God's*-deeds with-joy."
[7] "People-who-go-down-to the-sea in-ships, / people-who-do their-work in-waters many"
[8] "They have-seen the-works-of God / and-*God's*-wonders in-the-deep."
[9] "And-*God*-spoke, and-*God*-raised a-wind-of storm / and-it-raised its-waves."

[26] They touch the heights, crash to the depths,	יַעֲלוּ שָׁמַיִם יֵרְדוּ תְהוֹמוֹת	Ya'alu shamayim, yerdu tehomot,
collapsing into nothingness,[1]	נַפְשָׁם בְּרָעָה תִתְמוֹגָג	nafsham bera'ah titmogag,
[27] Lurch and sway like a drunken man—	יָחוֹגוּ וְיָנוּעוּ כַּשִּׁכּוֹר	Yachogu veyanu'u kashikor
the mariners' skill is all engulfed.[2]	וְכָל־חָכְמָתָם תִּתְבַּלָּע	vechol chochmatam titbalah.
[28] They cried to God in their distress	וַיִּצְעֲקוּ אֶל־יהוה בַּצַּר לָהֶם	Vayitzaku el Adonai batzar lahem,
to save them from their sorry plight;[3]	וּמִמְּצוּקֹתֵיהֶם יוֹצִיאֵם	umimtzukoteihem yotzi'em.
[29] *God* stilled the gale, silenced the storm	יָקֵם סְעָרָה לִדְמָמָה	Yakem se'arah lidmamah,
and quieted the roaring waves.[4]	וַיֶּחֱשׁוּ גַּלֵּיהֶם	vayecheshu galeihem
[30] When all was still, the sailors cheered	וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ כִּי־יִשְׁתֹּקוּ	Vayismechu chi yishtoku,
and with *God's* help to harbor steered.[5]	וַיַּנְחֵם אֶל־מְחוֹז חֶפְצָם	vayan'chem el mechoz cheftzam.
[31] Let them thank God for kindliness	יוֹדוּ לַיהוה חַסְדּוֹ	Yodu lAdonai chasdo
and wonders for humanity,[6]	וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו לִבְנֵי אָדָם	venifle'otav livnei Adam.
[32] Exalt *God* among gathered crowds	וִירֹמְמוּהוּ בִּקְהַל־עָם	Viromemuhu bik'hal am,
hail *God* in senators' debates.[7]	וּבְמוֹשַׁב זְקֵנִים יְהַלְלוּהוּ	uvemoshav zekenim yehaleluhu.
[33] *God* can turn wetlands into waste	יָשֵׂם נְהָרוֹת לְמִדְבָּר	Yasem neharot lemidbar
and springs into a desert land,[8]	וּמֹצָאֵי מַיִם לְצִמָּאוֹן	umotza'ei mayim letzima'on,
[34] Fruitful soil to brackish marsh	אֶרֶץ פְּרִי לִמְלֵחָה	Eretz peri limlechah
when wicked people there reside;[9]	מֵרָעַת יֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ	mera'at yoshvei vah;

[1] "*The-waves*-rise to-the-sky, *they*-descend to-the-depths, / their-selves into-bad dissolve-themselves." I have translated בְּרָעָה as "into nothingness"; others would say "into evil" or "into misery." But I think dissipating into nothingness is a poor/sad/bad end for a mighty wave.

[2] "*The-waves*-dance and-move like-a-drunkard, / and-all *the-mariners'*-skill is-consumed/swallowed-up."

[3] "And-they-cried-aloud to-God in-the-distress *that had come* to-them, / and-from-their-troubles *God*-extracted-them.

[4] "*God*-established/formed the-storm into-silence (God silenced the storm) / and-they-became-quiet, their-waves (the storm's waves became quiet)."

[5] "And-they-rejoiced when/because-*the-waves*-fell-silent, / and-*God*-led-them to-the-harbor-of their-wish."

[6] "Let-them/may-they/they-will-acknowledge of-God *God's*-kindness / and-*God's*-wonders for-the-descendants-of-Adam."

[7] "So/and-exalt-*God* in-an-assembly-of-the-people, / and-in-a-session-of elders praise-God." מוֹשָׁב is related to the root for sit and settle, so it's a session (as in "court is in session"), a place where elders (senator is from Latin senex, old man) settle down for their bloviations.

[8] "*God*-would/could/will/can-change/place rivers into-wilderness / and-discharges-of water into-parched-conditions."

[9] "… land-of fruit into-saltiness / because-of-the-evil-of the-dwellers in-it."

[35] *God* can turn desert into pond	יָשֵׂם מִדְבָּר לַאֲגַם־מָיִם	Yasem midbar la'agam mayim
and barren land to flowing spring[1]	וְאֶרֶץ צִיָּה לְמֹצָאֵי מָיִם	ve'eretz tziyah lemotza'ei mayim,
[36] To settle hungry people who	וַיּוֹשֶׁב שָׁם רְעֵבִים	Vayoshev sham re'evim,
will build a city for their home,[2]	וַיְכוֹנְנוּ עִיר מוֹשָׁב	vaychonenu ir moshav,
[37] Sow the fields and plant their vines,	וַיִּזְרְעוּ שָׂדוֹת וַיִּטְּעוּ כְרָמִים	Vayizre'u sadot vayit'u cheramim
grow fruit and produce *for their needs*.[3]	וַיַּעֲשׂוּ פְּרִי תְבוּאָה	va'ya'asu peri tevu'ah.
[38] *God* blesses them with abundant crops	וַיְבָרְכֵם וַיִּרְבּוּ מְאֹד	Vayevarachem vayirbu me'od,
and ever-growing cattle herds.[4]	וּבְהֶמְתָּם לֹא יַמְעִיט	uvehemtam lo yamit.
[39] Once they were few, once they were crushed	וַיִּמְעֲטוּ וַיָּשֹׁחוּ	Vayimatu, vayashochu
by harsh oppression, woe and grief.[5]	מֵעֹצֶר רָעָה וְיָגוֹן	me'otzer ra'ah veyagon.
[40] *God* pours scorn on the rich and grand,	שֹׁפֵךְ בּוּז עַל־נְדִיבִים	Shofech buz al nedivim,
sets them adrift in unmapped paths[6]	וַיַּתְעֵם בְּתֹהוּ לֹא־דָרֶךְ	vayatem betohu lo darech,
[41] But lifts the poor from penury	וַיְשַׂגֵּב אֶבְיוֹן מֵעוֹנִי	Vaysagev evyon me'oni,
with flocks of children in the house.[7]	וַיָּשֶׂם כַּצֹּאן מִשְׁפָּחוֹת	vayasem katzon mishpachot.
[42] Let the upright watch and cheer	יִרְאוּ יְשָׁרִים וְיִשְׂמָחוּ	Yiru yesharim veyismachu,
while every sinner's mouth is stopped.[8]	וְכָל־עַוְלָה קָפְצָה פִיהָ	vechol avlah kaftzah piha.
[43] The wise will keep these things in mind	מִי־חָכָם וְיִשְׁמָר־אֵלֶּה	Mi chacham veyishmor eleh
and contemplate God's kindnesses.[9]	וְיִתְבּוֹנְנוּ חַסְדֵי יהוה	veyitbonenu chasdei Adonai.

[1] "*God*-would/could/will/can-change/place desert into-the-pool-of-water / and-land-of drought into-discharges-of-water."
[2] "And-*God*-can-settle there hungry-people / and-they-can-establish a-city-of dwelling."
[3] "And-they-can/will-sow fields and-they-can-plant vines / and-they- (the-people-or-the-fields-and-vines) -can-make produce-of crops."
[4] "And-*God*-blesses-them and-*God*-increases-*them* greatly / and-their-cattle not *God*-causes-to-diminish."
[5] "And-*once*-they-were-lessened, and-they-were-crushed / from-coercion, misery/evil and-sorrow."
[6] "*God*-pours scorn/shame upon-big-machers / and-makes-them-wander in-confusion/chaos *with* no-*marked*-path."
[7] "And-*God*-lifts the-poor from-poverty / and-sets like-a-flock *their*-families."
[8] Let-them-see, the-upright-ones, and-rejoice / and-every-wrong let-be-stopped its-mouth."
[9] "Who-*is*-wise and-keeps-these-*things*-*in*-*mind* / will-understand the-kindnesses-of God."

Psalm 108

[1] A song, a tune by David.	שִׁיר מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	Shir mizmor leDavid.
[2] My mind is set: I'll sing of God	נָכוֹן לִבִּי אֱלֹהִים אָשִׁירָה	Nachon libi: Elohim ashira
and chant as best I can.[1]	וַאֲזַמְּרָה אַף־כְּבוֹדִי	va'azamra af kevodi.
[3] Wake up, O harp; and wake, O lyre;	עוּרָה הַנֵּבֶל וְכִנּוֹר	Urah hanevel vechinor,
I'll rouse the very dawn.[2]	אָעִירָה שָׁחַר	a'irah shachar.
[4] In every land I'll sing of God,	אוֹדְךָ בָעַמִּים יהוה	Od'cha va'amim Adonai,
each realm, however far,[3]	וַאֲזַמֶּרְךָ בַּל־אֻמִּים	va'azamer'cha bal umim.
[5] That God's great grace outshines the sun,	כִּי־גָדוֹל מֵעַל־שָׁמַיִם חַסְדֶּךָ	Ki gadol me'al shamayim chasdecha,
God's truth touches the stars.[4]	וְעַד־שְׁחָקִים אֲמִתֶּךָ	ve'ad shechakim amitecha.
[6] God, rise above the distant skies,	רוּמָה עַל־שָׁמַיִם אֱלֹהִים	Rumah al shamayim, Elohim,
let Earth your glory see;[5]	וְעַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדֶךָ	ve'al kol ha'aretz kevodecha;
[7] Rescue your faithful followers	לְמַעַן יֵחָלְצוּן יְדִידֶיךָ	Lema'an yechaltzun yedidecha
with your power; answer me![6]	הוֹשִׁיעָה יְמִינְךָ וַעֲנֵנִי	hoshi'ah yemin'cha va'aneni.
[8] From holy *temple* God declared:	אֱלֹהִים דִּבֶּר בְּקָדְשׁוֹ	Elohim diber bekodsho:
"I'll cheerfully divide Shechem	אָעֲלֹזָה אֲחַלְקָה שְׁכֶם	"E'lozah, achalka Shechem,
and survey Sukkot Valley's plots,[7]	וְעֵמֶק סֻכּוֹת אֲמַדֵּד	ve'Emek Sukkot amaded,

[1] "Established *is* my-heart; God shall-I-sing / and-I-shall-make-music even-my-honor." Even my honor: To the height of my reputation as a great singer/poet/instrumentalist.

[2] "I shall wake the dawn *with my musical instruments."*

[3] "I-shall-acknowledge among-the-peoples God, / and-I-shall-make-music lest-peoples." Lest peoples: Until there aren't any more peoples to sing to.

[4] "That-great from-above-skies *is God's* kindness / and-up-to-the-skies *is* your-truth." The extent of God's truth is important in Jewish theology, for we rely on evidence that God fulfills God's promises.

[5] "Ascend above-the-skies/heavens, God, / and-above all-the-earth *is* your-glory"; the word for skies/heavens, שָׁמַיִם, could be the dual plural of שָׁם, "there"–"over there, over there" as you point to something distant.

[6] "In-order-that may-be-rescued your-lovers (those whom you love, and those who love you), / bring-about-salvation/rescue *with* your-right-*hand* and-answer-me!"

[7] "God spoke in-*God's*-holy-*place*, / I-will-triumph, I-will-parcel-out Shechem / and-the-valley-of Sukkot I-shall-measure." Many translators think this is God's promise that the poet's people will control the land: "God declared that I (the poet) will be able to parcel out Shechem and Sukkot Valley." But I think God says God is happy to parcel out those pieces of land but retains direct control of Gilead, etc., as in the next verse.

[9] "But these are all mine: Gilad *first,*	לִי גִלְעָד	"Li Gilad,
Menashe, Ephraim—my main fort—	לִי מְנַשֶּׁה וְאֶפְרַיִם מָעוֹז רֹאשִׁי	li Menashe ve'Efrayim, ma'oz roshi,
and Judah, who inscribes my law.[1]	יְהוּדָה מְחֹקְקִי	Yehudah mechokeki.
[10] "Moab's a tub to wash my foot	מוֹאָב סִיר רַחְצִי	"Mo'av sir rachtzi,
while on Edom I toss my boot	עַל־אֱדוֹם אַשְׁלִיךְ נַעֲלִי	al Edom ashlich na'ali,
and, to alarm Peleshet, shout."[2]	עָלַי־פְּלֶשֶׁת אֶתְרוֹעָע	al Feleshet etro'ah."
[11] Would I were brought to that stronghold,	מִי יְבָלְנִי עִיר מִבְצָר	Mi yevileni ir mivtzar,
led to Edom *with warriors bold!*[3]	מִי נָחָנִי עַד־אֱדוֹם	mi nachani ad Edom.
[12] But, God, you have rejected us	הֲלֹא־אֱלֹהִים זְנַחְתָּנוּ	Halo Elohim zenachtanu
and left our troops to fight alone.[4]	וְלֹא־תֵצֵא אֱלֹהִים בְּצִבְאֹתֵינוּ	velo tetze Elohim betzivoteinu.
[13] Help us resist our enemy	הָבָה־לָּנוּ עֶזְרַת מִצָּר	Havah lanu ezrat mitzar,
(human wit no remedy knows);[5]	וְשָׁוְא תְּשׁוּעַת אָדָם	veshav teshu'at adam;
[14] Through God *alone* can we prevail,	בֵּאלֹהִים נַעֲשֶׂה־חָיִל	bElohim na'aseh chayil,
who overthrows all of our foes![6]	וְהוּא יָבוּס צָרֵינוּ	vehu yavus tzareinu.

[1] "Mine *is* Gilead, / mine is *the region of* Menashe and-Ephraim, stronghold-of-my-head (my chief stronghold), / Judah, my-lawmaker/carver (carving laws into stone)."

[2] "Moab *is* a-washbasin/tub for-my-washing (I assume for washing feet since the shoe is off in the next line) / upon-Edom I-toss my-shoe; / at-Philistia/Pileshet I-shout-a-battle-cry."

[3] "Who would-lead-me (I wish someone would lead me; I wish I were led) *to* a-town-of fortification, / who would-take-me up-to-Edom."

[4] "Surely, God, you-have-spurned-us / and-not-you-will-go-out, God, among-our-forces."

[5] "Bring to-us the-help-of from-the-enemy (i.e., help from the enemy) / and-level (i.e., incapable of tipping the scales in our favor) *is* the-rescue-of a-human (i.e., people can't save us)."

[6] "Through-God shall-we-make-an-army; / and-*God* can-trample our-foes."

Psalm 109

[1] For the leader, a tune by David.	לַמְנַצֵּחַ לְדָוִד מִזְמוֹר	Lamnatze'ach leDavid mizmor:
God whom I praise, say something![1]	אֱלֹהֵי תְהִלָּתִי אַל־תֶּחֱרַשׁ	Elohei tehilati, al techerash!
[2] Wicked liars slander me,	כִּי פִי רָשָׁע וּפִי־מִרְמָה עָלַי פָּתָחוּ	Ki fi rasha ufi mirmah alai patachu:
they speak of me with lying tongue;[2]	דִּבְּרוּ אִתִּי לְשׁוֹן שָׁקֶר	dibru iti leshon shahker.
[3] All around me hate speech swirls	וְדִבְרֵי שִׂנְאָה סְבָבוּנִי	Vedivrei sinah sevavuni,
as they attack me without cause.[3]	וַיִּלָּחֲמוּנִי חִנָּם	vayilachamuni chinom.
[4] They hate me, though I offer love,	תַּחַת־אַהֲבָתִי יִשְׂטְנוּנִי	Tachat ahavati yistenuni,
so I devote myself to prayer.[4]	וַאֲנִי תְּפִלָּה	va'ani—tefilah!
[5] They return evil for my good	וַיָּשִׂימוּ עָלַי רָעָה תַּחַת טוֹבָה	Vayasimu alai ra'ah tachat tovah
and hatred for the love I bring.[5]	וְשִׂנְאָה תַּחַת אַהֲבָתִי	vesinah tachat ahavati.

Having spoken of many enemies, the poet now wishes punishment for one single representative.

[6] Inflict on him a wicked *king*	הַפְקֵד עָלָיו רָשָׁע	Hafked alav rasha
whose prosecutor stands to accuse;[6]	וְשָׂטָן יַעֲמֹד עַל־יְמִינוֹ	vesatan ya'amod al yemino
[7] Let the court send him to the jail,	בְּהִשָּׁפְטוֹ יֵצֵא רָשָׁע	Behishofto yetze rasha
pleading guilty to the charge.[7]	וּתְפִלָּתוֹ תִּהְיֶה לַחֲטָאָה	utefilato tiheyeh lachata'a
[8] Let his days be few and short—	יִהְיוּ־יָמָיו מְעַטִּים	Yiheyu yamav me'atim;
someone else will fill his job;[8]	פְּקֻדָּתוֹ יִקַּח אַחֵר	pekudato yikach acher.
[9] Leave his children fatherless,	יִהְיוּ־בָנָיו יְתוֹמִים	Yiheyu vanav yetomim
his widowed wife to mourn his death,[9]	וְאִשְׁתּוֹ אַלְמָנָה	ve'ishto almanah.

[1] "God-of my-praise (God to whom I direct my praise), do-not-be-silent (say something to help me!)"
[2] "For the-mouth-of the-wicked / and-the-mouth-of-deceit against-me have-opened; / they-speak of-me *with-a*-tongue-of falsehood."
[3] "And-words-of enmity have-surrounded-me, / and-they-make-war-on-me for-no-reason."
[4] "Instead-of my-love they-hate-me, / and-I – prayer! (i.e., since they return hatred for the love I offer, I devote myself to prayer.)"
[5] "And-they-place upon-me evil instead-of good / and-hatred instead-of my-love (the love I bring)."
[6] "Appoint over-him an-evil-*king* / and-the-accuser stands by-his-right-hand (i.e., the king's prosecuting attorney is in a trusted position)."
[7] "On-his-being-judged, let-him-emerge as-the-wicked-one / and-*let*-his-plea/prayer be for-the-wrong (i.e., let his plea be 'guilty')."
[8] "Let-his-days-be few; / his-position will-take someone-else."
[9] "May-his-children-be orphans / and-his-wife a-widow."

[10] Rootless beggars, all his brood,	וְנוֹעַ יָנוּעוּ בָנָיו וְשִׁאֵלוּ	Veno'ah yanu'u vanav, veshi'elu,
rummaging ruins for some food[1]	וְדָרְשׁוּ מֵחָרְבוֹתֵיהֶם	vedarshu mechorvoteihem.
[11] While creditors seize all his wealth	יְנַקֵּשׁ נוֹשֶׁה לְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ	Yenakesh nosheh lechol asher lo
and strangers paw through all he owned.[2]	וְיָבְזּוּ זָרִים יְגִיעוֹ	veyavozu zarim yegi'o.
[12] Let no-one show him sympathy,	אַל־יְהִי־לוֹ מֹשֵׁךְ חָסֶד	Al yehi lo moshech chased,
nor pity orphans left behind.[3]	וְאַל־יְהִי חוֹנֵן לִיתוֹמָיו	ve'al yehi chonen litomav.
[13] Childless let his children die,	יְהִי־אַחֲרִיתוֹ לְהַכְרִית	Yehi acharito lehachrit,
no-one to carry on their name.[4]	בְּדוֹר אַחֵר יִמַּח שְׁמָם	bedor acher yimach shemam.
[14] Let God well note his fathers' wrongs	יִזָּכֵר עֲוֹן אֲבֹתָיו אֶל־יהוה	Yizacher avon avotav el Adonai,
and not erase his mother's fault,[5]	וְחַטַּאת אִמּוֹ אַל־תִּמָּח	vechatat imo al timach.
[15] Let God never forget their sins	יִהְיוּ נֶגֶד־יהוה תָּמִיד	Yiheyu neged Adonai tamid,
though sinners be forgotten quite![6]	וְיַכְרֵת מֵאֶרֶץ זִכְרָם	veyachret me'eretz zichram.
[16] For he neglected to be kind,	יַעַן אֲשֶׁר לֹא זָכַר עֲשׂוֹת חָסֶד	Ya'an asher lo zachar asot chased
pursued the poor and destitute	וַיִּרְדֹּף אִישׁ־עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן	vayirdof ish ani ve'evyon
in desperation to their death.[7]	וְנִכְאֵה לֵבָב לְמוֹתֵת	venicheh levav lemotet.

[1] "And-on-the-move, let-them-be-on-the-move, his-children, and-let-them-beg, / and-let-them-seek-*sustenance* from-their-ruins (the ruins of their former mansion, or the ruins of the town, or the dilapidated hovels in which they shelter)."

[2] "Let-him-seize, the-creditor, all-that-is-his / and-let-them-dishonor, foreign-people, what-he-attained." יְנַקֵּשׁ may mean seize, or it may imply knock or tap (or paw at); maybe the picture is that the creditor handles everything in the house to see how sturdy it is and hence how valuable.

[3] "Let-him-not-have (not-let-there-be-for-him) one-who-drags kindness (someone who will show him kindness) / and-not-let-there-be someone-who-is-gracious to-his-orphans."

[4] "Let-be that-which-follows-him for-cutting-off (let his descendants be excised) / in-a-generation other let-be-blotted their-name (let their name be forgotten in a subsequent generation)."

[5] "Let-be-remembered the-sin-of his-ancestors to/before-God, (let it be remembered by God, or let the sin against God be remembered) / and-the-sin-of his-mother do-not-blot-away."

[6] "Let-them-be (his father's and mother's sins) before God, always; / and-may-it-be-cut-off from-Earth their-memory."

[7] "For that not he-remembered to-perform kindness / and-*instead*-pursued a-person-*who-was*-poor and-destitute, / and-cowed-of heart to-death (mortally despondent)."

[17] He loved to curse—let him be cursed!	וַיֶּאֱהַב קְלָלָה וַתִּבוֹאֵהוּ	Vaye'ehav kelalah vatvo'ehu,
He wouldn't bless—	וְלֹא־חָפֵץ בִּבְרָכָה	velo chafetz bivrachah—
let him be damned![1]	וַתִּרְחַק מִמֶּנּוּ	vatir'chak mimenu.
[18] Let curses wrap him like a cloak,	וַיִּלְבַּשׁ קְלָלָה כְּמַדּוֹ	Vayilbash kelalah kemado
seep like water into his guts	וַתָּבֹא כַמַּיִם בְּקִרְבּוֹ	vatavo chamayim bekirbo
and *ooze* like oil into his bones,[2]	וְכַשֶּׁמֶן בְּעַצְמוֹתָיו	vechashemen be'atzmotav.
[19] As the cloak in which he wraps himself	תְּהִי־לוֹ כְּבֶגֶד יַעְטֶה	Tehi lo keveged yateh
or as the belt he always wears.[3]	וּלְמֵזַח תָּמִיד יַחְגְּרֶהָ	ulemezach tamid yachgereha.
[20] That's what my foes should get from God,	זֹאת פְּעֻלַּת שָׂטָנַי מֵאֵת יהוה	Zot pe'ulat sotnai me'et Adonai
my enemies who slander me.[4]	וְהַדֹּבְרִים רָע עַל־נַפְשִׁי	vehadovrim rah al nafshi.
[21] But you, my God, my sovereign,	וְאַתָּה יְהוִה אֲדֹנָי	Ve'atah, Elohim Adonai,
act for me to show the world	עֲשֵׂה־אִתִּי לְמַעַן שְׁמֶךָ	aseh iti lema'an shemecha
your great compassion, and save me,[5]	כִּי־טוֹב חַסְדְּךָ הַצִּילֵנִי	ki tov chasdecha—hatzileni!
[22] Who am but poor and destitute,	כִּי־עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן אָנֹכִי	Ki ani ve'evyon anochi,
my heart shattered inside of me.[6]	וְלִבִּי חָלַל בְּקִרְבִּי	velibi chalal bekirbi.
[23] As a shadow lengthens, so I pass,	כְּצַל־כְּנָטּוֹתוֹ נֶהֱלָכְתִּי	Ketzel kintoto nehelachti,
shaken off like a pesky bug.[7]	נִנְעַרְתִּי כָּאַרְבֶּה	nigarti ka'arbeh.
[24] Hunger weakens my *poor* knees	בִּרְכַי כָּשְׁלוּ מִצּוֹם	Birkai kashlu mitzom
and strips the fat from all my flesh[8]	וּבְשָׂרִי כָּחַשׁ מִשֶּׁמֶן	uvesari kachash mishamen
[25] While I'm the object of their taunts—	וַאֲנִי הָיִיתִי חֶרְפָּה לָהֶם	Va'ani hayiti cherpah lahem:
they see me and toss their heads *in scorn*.[9]	יִרְאוּנִי יָנִיעוּן רֹאשָׁם	yiruni, yeni'un rosham.

[1] "And-he-loved cursing and-may-it-come-to-him (may he suffer the curse he gives), / and-not-did-he-take-pleasure in-blessing, / so-may-*blessing*-be-distant from-him."

[2] "And-let-him-wear cursing like-a-garment, / and-let-*cursing*-enter like-water into-his-innards, / and-like-oil into-his-bones."

[3] "Let-it-be (i.e., let the curses be) like-a-garment he-wears / and-like-a-belt always he-ties-on-himself."

[4] "This *should be* the-payment-for those-who-hate-me, from God, / and-*the-payment-for*-those-who-speak ill against-me."

[5] "And-you, God, Sovereign, / act-for/with-me for-the-sake-of your-reputation / that-good/abundant *is* your-kindness. Rescue me."

[6] "For-poor and-destitute *am* I, / and-my-heart *is* hollow/pierced/wrecked inside-me."

[7] "Like-a-shadow at-its-inclining/lengthening have-I-passed-by, / I-have-been-shaken-off like-a-locust."

[8] "My-knees fail from-fasting / and-my-flesh has-become-lean from-*its*-fat"

[9] "And-I have-become something-to-be-scorned for-them (my enemies); / *when*-they-see-me they-shake their-heads."

[26] Sovereign God, give me your help	עָזְרֵנִי יהוה אֱלֹהָי	Ozreni, Adonai, Elohai,
and save me in your kindliness—	הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי כְחַסְדֶּךָ	hoshi'eni chechasdecha,
[27] *People* will know this is your work,	וְיֵדְעוּ כִּי־יָדְךָ זֹאת	Veyedu ki yad'cha zot,
that you, God, made this come to pass.[1]	אַתָּה יהוה עָשִׂיתָהּ	atah, Adonai, asitah.
[28] *My foes* may curse, but you will bless;	יְקַלְלוּ־הֵמָּה וְאַתָּה תְּבָרֵךְ	Yekalelu hemah ve'atah tevarech;
let them rise—they'll come to grief	קָמוּ וַיֵּבֹשׁוּ	kamu vayevoshu,
while I who serve you will rejoice![2]	וְעַבְדְּךָ יִשְׂמָח	ve'avdecha yismach.
[29] Let my foes be clothed in shame	יִלְבְּשׁוּ שׂוֹטְנַי כְּלִמָּה	Yilbeshu sotnai kelimah
and cloak themselves in their disgrace,[3]	וְיַעֲטוּ כַמְעִיל בָּשְׁתָּם	veya'atu chame'il bashtam.
[30] While I will give great thanks to God	אוֹדֶה יהוה מְאֹד בְּפִי	Odeh Adonai me'od befi
and praise *God* among multitudes,[4]	וּבְתוֹךְ רַבִּים אֲהַלְלֶנּוּ	uvetoch rabim ahalelenu.
[31] For *God* stands at the pauper's side	כִּי־יַעֲמֹד לִימִין אֶבְיוֹן	Ki ya'amod limin evyon
to save him from a hanging judge.[5]	לְהוֹשִׁיעַ מִשֹּׁפְטֵי נַפְשׁוֹ	lehoshi'ah mishoftei nafsho.

[1] "And-*people*-will-know that-your-hand *is* this; / you, God, have-done-it."
[2] "They-will-curse, they, but-you will-bless; / they-have-stood-up *proudly* and-felt-shame / while-your-servant can-rejoice."
[3] "Let-them-be-clothed, my-enemies, *in* shame / and-let-them-wrap *themselves* as-*in*-a-coat their-shame."
[4] "I-shall-acknowledge/thank God greatly with-my-mouth / and-in-the-midst-of many *people* I-will-praise-*God."*
[5] "For-*God*-stands to-the-right-of a-pauper / to-rescue *the pauper* from-those-who-sentence *the pauper to lose* his-life."

Psalm 110

[1] A psalm of David:	לְדָוִד מִזְמוֹר	leDavid mizmor:
God told my boss, “Sit on my right;	נְאֻם יהוה לַאדֹנִי שֵׁב לִימִינִי	Ne’um Adonai ladoni, “Shev limini
I’ll crush your enemies at your feet.”[1]	עַד־אָשִׁית אֹיְבֶיךָ הֲדֹם לְרַגְלֶיךָ	ad ashit oyvecha hadom leraglecha.”
[2] From Zion, God, stretch your mighty mace,	מַטֵּה־עֻזְּךָ יִשְׁלַח יהוה מִצִּיּוֹן	Mateh uz’cha, yishlach Adonai miTziyon
and rule your enemies in defeat.[2]	רְדֵה בְּקֶרֶב אֹיְבֶיךָ	redeh bekerev oyvecha.
[3] Your people flock to fight with you	עַמְּךָ נְדָבֹת בְּיוֹם חֵילֶךָ	Amcha nedavot beyom cheilecha,
(in sacred pride) your righteous wars;	בְּהַדְרֵי־קֹדֶשׁ	behadrei kodesh,
since life began and daylight dawned	מֵרֶחֶם מִשְׁחָר	merechem mishchar
the power of youth is ever yours.[3]	לְךָ טַל יַלְדֻתֶיךָ	lecha tal yaldutecha.
[4] God promised and will not renege:	נִשְׁבַּע יהוה וְלֹא יִנָּחֵם	Nishba Adonai velo yinachem,
“You are a priest for ever, and	אַתָּה־כֹהֵן לְעוֹלָם	“Atah chohen le’olam,
by my decree a rightful king.”[4]	עַל־דִּבְרָתִי מַלְכִּי־צֶדֶק	al divrati malki tzedek.”
[5] God *always* stands at your right hand,	אֲדֹנָי עַל־יְמִינְךָ	Adonai al yemin’cha
to smash kings who provoke *God’s* wrath,[5]	מָחַץ בְּיוֹם־אַפּוֹ מְלָכִים	machatz beyom apo melachim.
[6] Punishing realms with piles of dead	יָדִין בַּגּוֹיִם מָלֵא גְוִיּוֹת	Yadin bagoyim maleh geviyot;
and shattering heads upon their earth.[6]	מָחַץ רֹאשׁ עַל־אֶרֶץ רַבָּה	machatz rosh al eretz rabah.
[7] *God* slakes *God’s* thirst along the path,	מִנַּחַל בַּדֶּרֶךְ יִשְׁתֶּה	Minachal baderech yishteh;
and stands to view the aftermath.[7]	עַל־כֵּן יָרִים רֹאשׁ	al ken yarim rosh.

[1] “For/to/by David, a psalm/song/tune. / Said God to-my-master, ‘Sit on-my-right / until I-position your-enemies *as* a-stool for-your-feet.”

[2] “The-staff/mace of-your-power will-send God from-Zion (God will stretch out a mighty mace from Zion); / dominate in-*their*-midst your-enemies.”

[3] “Your-people *are* volunteers on-the-day-of your-battle / in-the-splendors-of holiness; / since-*time-was-in-its*-womb, since-*the*-dawn-*of-the-first-day*, / yours *has-been* the-dew-of your-childhood (i.e., God’s power has not weakened with age).” The Psalmist means to say (I think) that God’s power has never weakened since the beginning of time. “Volunteers” seems to be feminine plural, and I don’t know why.

[4] “God swore and-not will-relent, ‘You *are* a-priest forever, / by-my-decree my-king-of-right.”

[5] “God *is* by-your-right-side, / smashes on-the-day-of-*God’s*-anger kings.”

[6] “*God* judges among-nations sufficiency-of bodies (i.e., God punishes lots of people), / smashes *their* head*s* on-the-ground plentifully.”

[7] “From-a-stream along-the-way *God*-drinks; / because-of-this *God* raises *God’s* head”; i.e., God stands at a vantage point to view the carnage.

Psalm 111

[1] Hail God!	הַלְלוּ יָהּ	Halelu Yah!
I thank my God with all my heart	אוֹדֶה יהוה בְּכָל־לֵבָב	Odeh Adonai bechol levav
when righteous people congregate.	בְּסוֹד יְשָׁרִים וְעֵדָה	besod yesharim ve'edah.
[2] *For* God's accomplishments are great,	גְּדֹלִים מַעֲשֵׂי יהוה	Gedolim ma'asei Adonai,
desired for each impressive trait.	דְּרוּשִׁים לְכָל־חֶפְצֵיהֶם	derushim lechol cheftzeihem.
[3] Splendor and glory are *God's* crafts	הוֹד־וְהָדָר פָּעֳלוֹ	Hod vehadar po'olo
with justice that forever lasts;[1]	וְצִדְקָתוֹ עֹמֶדֶת לָעַד	vetzidkato omedet la'ad.
[4] Miracles unforgettable	זֵכֶר עָשָׂה לְנִפְלְאֹתָיו	Zecher asah lenifle'otav:
show God is kind and merciful,[2]	חַנּוּן וְרַחוּם יהוה	chanun verachum Adonai.
[5] Supplying followers all they need	טֶרֶף נָתַן לִירֵאָיו	Teref natan lirei'av;
by endless promise as agreed.[3]	יִזְכֹּר לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתוֹ	yizkor le'olam berito.
[6] We saw the power of God's hand,	כֹּחַ מַעֲשָׂיו הִגִּיד לְעַמּוֹ	Ko'ach ma'asav higid le'amo,
deployed to bring us to our land.[4]	לָתֵת לָהֶם נַחֲלַת גּוֹיִם	latet lahem nachalat goyim.
[7] True and right *God's* every deed;	מַעֲשֵׂי יָדָיו אֱמֶת וּמִשְׁפָּט	Ma'sei yadav emet umishpat,
enduring is *God's* faithful creed,	נֶאֱמָנִים כָּל־פִּקּוּדָיו	ne'emanim kol pikudav,
[8] Sustained for all eternity,	סְמוּכִים לָעַד לְעוֹלָם	Semuchim la'ad le'olam,
crafted in truth and equity.	עֲשׂוּיִם בֶּאֱמֶת וְיָשָׁר	asuyim be'emet veyashar.
[9] *God* sent rescue for *God's* nation,	פְּדוּת שָׁלַח לְעַמּוֹ	Pedut shalach le'amo,
a promise with no termination—	צִוָּה־לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתוֹ	tzivah le'olam berito:
holy and grand is *God's* reputation.[5]	קָדוֹשׁ וְנוֹרָא שְׁמוֹ	kadosh venorah shemo.

[1] "Splendor-and-glorious *is God's*-work, / and-*God's*-justice stands forever."

[2] "Remembering did-*God*-make for-*God's*-miracles (God made us remember miracles), / *to show that* kind and-merciful *is* God."

[3] "Food/prey has-*God*-given to-those-who-respect-*God;* / let-*such*-a-person-remember forever *God's*-agreement."

[4] "The-power-of *God's*-deeds did-*God*-tell to-*God's*-people, / to-grant to-them an-inheritance/possession-of-peoples." God granted an inheritance of the kind all nations claim, or perhaps an inheritance that once belonged to other peoples.

[5] "Rescue *God*-sent for-*God's*-people, / commanded-forever *God's*-contract; / holy and-awesome *is God's*-name/renown/reputation."

Psalm 112

For a service when making collections for hospitals, appropriate for any fundraising campaign.

[1] Hail God!	הַלְלוּ יָהּ	Halelu Yah!
Lucky is one who respects God,	אַשְׁרֵי־אִישׁ יָרֵא אֶת־יהוה	Ashrei ish yareh et Adonai,
delighting in all *God's* command,[1]	בְּמִצְוֹתָיו חָפֵץ מְאֹד	bemitzvotav chafetz me'od.
[2] Whose children will have fame on earth,	גִּבּוֹר בָּאָרֶץ יִהְיֶה זַרְעוֹ	Gibor ba'aretz yiheyeh zaro,
praised as an honest, upright band.[2]	דּוֹר יְשָׁרִים יְבֹרָךְ	dor yesharim yevorach.
[3] Wealth and riches shall be theirs:	הוֹן־וָעֹשֶׁר בְּבֵיתוֹ	Hon va'osher beveito,
his merit ever still shall stand.[3]	וְצִדְקָתוֹ עֹמֶדֶת לָעַד	vetzidkato omedet la'ad.
[4] For the upright, light shines through dark,	זָרַח בַּחֹשֶׁךְ אוֹר לַיְשָׁרִים	Zarach bachoshech or laysharim,
kind, compassionate and right:	חַנּוּן וְרַחוּם וְצַדִּיק	chanun verachum vetzadik.
[5] The good are kind, and freely lend	טוֹב־אִישׁ חוֹנֵן וּמַלְוֶה	Tov ish chonen umalveh,
(with just financial oversight),[4]	יְכַלְכֵּל דְּבָרָיו בְּמִשְׁפָּט	yechalkel devarav bemishpat
[6] Never lost, never forgotten,	כִּי־לְעוֹלָם לֹא־יִמּוֹט	Ki le'olam lo yimot;
are lives lived upright and pure.[5]	לְזֵכֶר עוֹלָם יִהְיֶה צַדִּיק	lezecher olam yiheyeh tzadik.
[7] No fear of bad news can disturb	מִשְּׁמוּעָה רָעָה לֹא יִירָא	Mishmu'ah ra'ah lo yirah:
those whose trust in God is sure.[6]	נָכוֹן לִבּוֹ בָּטֻחַ בַּיהוה	nachon libo, batu'ach bAdonai.
[8] Their mind is fixed: they feel no fear:	סָמוּךְ לִבּוֹ לֹא יִירָא	Samuch libo, lo yirah,
they'll see their troubles *disappear*.[7]	עַד אֲשֶׁר־יִרְאֶה בְצָרָיו	ad asher yireh vetzarav.

[1] "Happy the person who respects God: / he delights greatly in *God's* commandments." The poet uses masculine pronouns, presumably without thinking of the implications, and we try to avoid them; sometimes we use plural pronouns.

[2] "Powerful/prominent on earth will be his offspring / a generation of upright ones will be blessed/praised."

[3] "Wealth and riches *will be* in his house (i.e., among his descendants), / and his righteousness stands/endures forever."

[4] "Good is the person who is gracious and makes a loan / he will arrange/complete his affairs in justice."

[5] "For forever he shall not be dislodged; / for memory eternal shall be a righteous person."

[6] "From bad tidings he does not have fear; / resolute is his heart/mind, trusting in God."

[7] "Relying *on God,* his heart/mind will not fear / until he will see his troubles." Perhaps this means he'll see his troubles or enemies overcome. But if he can view troubles objectively, perhaps they'll disappear.

9 To the poor they've given charity,	פִּזַּר נָתַן לָאֶבְיוֹנִים	Pizar natan la'evyonim;
their virtue stands eternally,	צִדְקָתוֹ עֹמֶדֶת לָעַד	tzidkato omedet la'ad;
their fame rises in dignity.[1]	קַרְנוֹ תָּרוּם בְּכָבוֹד	karno tarum bechavod.
10 The bad see this incensed with pique,	רָשָׁע יִרְאֶה וְכָעָס	Rashah yireh vecha'as;
grinding their teeth but growing weak	שִׁנָּיו יַחֲרֹק וְנָמָס	shinav yacharok venamas;
for they can't do the harm they seek.[2]	תַּאֲוַת רְשָׁעִים תֹּאבֵד	ta'avat resha'im toved.

[1] "He has distributed *alms,* he has given to the poor; / his righteousness stands/endures forever; / his horn (reputation, or source of income if it's a cornucopia type of horn) will be raised in dignity." One might expect the third person singular past of לְפַזֵּר to be פִּזֵּר and not פִּזַּר, but psalms 53:5 and 89:10 both use פִּזַּר.

[2] "The bad person will see *this* and get angry / his teeth he'll grind, and he'll melt/weaken. / The desire of the wicked will be lost (their plans will come to nothing)."

Psalm 113

113-118 are included in Hallel.

[1] Halleluyah,	הַלְלוּיָהּ	Halleluyah
God's servants, give praise!	הַלְלוּ עַבְדֵי יהוה	Hallelu avdei Adonai
Praise God's reputation!	הַלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יהוה	hallelu et shem Adonai,
[2] Now and forevermore	יְהִי שֵׁם יהוה מְבֹרָךְ	yehi shem Adonai mevorach
God's name be blessed.	מֵעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם	me'ata ve'ad olam;
[3] From where the sun begins its course,	מִמִּזְרַח־שֶׁמֶשׁ	mimizrach shemesh
until at last it comes to rest,	עַד־מְבוֹאוֹ	ad mevo'o
God's name be praised.	מְהֻלָּל שֵׁם יהוה	mehulal shem Adonai.
[4] Above all peoples God is high,	רָם עַל־כָּל־גּוֹיִם יהוה	Ram al kol goyim Adonai,
God's glory soars above the sky.	עַל הַשָּׁמַיִם כְּבוֹדוֹ	al hashamayim kevodo;
[5] Who is like our sovereign God,	מִי כַּיהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ	mi kAdonai Eloheinu,
whose throne is high *above the sky*,	הַמַּגְבִּיהִי לָשָׁבֶת	hamagbihi lashavet,
[6] Who deigns to peer	הַמַּשְׁפִּילִי לִרְאוֹת	hamashpili lir'ot
on us down here?[1]	בַּשָּׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ	bashamayim uva'aretz.
[7] *God* lifts the pauper from the dust,	מְקִימִי מֵעָפָר דָּל	Mekimi me'afar dal,
from ashes brings the mourner,	מֵאַשְׁפֹּת יָרִים אֶבְיוֹן	me'ashpot yarim evyon
[8] To seat him with the upper crust,	לְהוֹשִׁיבִי עִם־נְדִיבִים	lehoshivi im nedivim,
in the big givers' corner.[2]	עִם נְדִיבֵי עַמּוֹ	im nedivei amo.
[9] *God* gives the childless woman joys	מוֹשִׁיבִי עֲקֶרֶת הַבַּיִת	Moshivi akeret habayit
like a mother blessed with girls and boys.[3]	אֵם־הַבָּנִים שְׂמֵחָה	em habanim semecha:
Halleluyah!	הַלְלוּיָהּ	Halleluyah!

[1] Literally, "Who becomes lower in order to look on heaven/skies and earth"—God is so very high that even the heights of the sky barely deserve God's lofty attention.

[2] It would be more literal to translate verses 7 and 8, "The pauper in the dust, God stands him upright. The mourner in ashes, God lifts him up, to seat him with the big givers in the community." A נָדִיב is a magnanimous person as well as brand of cheap Israeli cigarettes.

[3] A pre-feminist way of saying that God grants our dearest wishes. "*God* sits the-barren-of household / *as* a-mother-of-children, happy. / Halleluyah!

Psalm 114

[1] When Jacob's house left Egypt land	בְּצֵאת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרָיִם	Betzeit Yisra'el miMitzrayim,
(They had been there too long!)	בֵּית יַעֲקֹב מֵעַם לֹעֵז	beit Ya'akov me'am lo'ez,
they left behind a place where people		
Spoke in foreign tongue.[1]		
[2] Judah was God's holy place—	הָיְתָה יְהוּדָה לְקָדְשׁוֹ	Hayta Yehudah lekodshoh,
a place God found among 'em.	יִשְׂרָאֵל מַמְשְׁלוֹתָיו	Yisrael mamshelotav;
Israel was in God's own grasp,		
and to their home God brung 'em.		
[3] The sea saw it and tried to split,	הַיָּם רָאָה וַיָּנֹס	Hayam ra'ah vayanos,
Upstream the Jordan ran.[2]	הַיַּרְדֵּן יִסֹּב לְאָחוֹר	haYarden yisov le'achor;
[4] Like lusty rams the mountains pranced,	הֶהָרִים רָקְדוּ כְאֵילִים	Heharim rakdu che'eilim
hills skipped around like lambs.[3]	גְּבָעוֹת כִּבְנֵי־צֹאן	geva'ot kivnei tzon.
[5] What's got you on the run,	מַה־לְּךָ הַיָּם	Mah lecha hayam
What is your problem, ocean?	כִּי תָנוּס	ki tanoos,
What's got you cringing, Jordan,	הַיַּרְדֵּן	haYarden
That backward is your motion?	תִּסֹּב לְאָחוֹר	tisov le'achor?
[6] What's put you all a-jitter—	הֶהָרִים	Heharim
You mountains jump like rams!	תִּרְקְדוּ כְאֵילִים	tirkedu che'eilim
What's put you all a-skitter,	גְּבָעוֹת	geva'ot
Hills gambolling like lambs?[4]	כִּבְנֵי־צֹאן	kivnei tzon?
[7] **At the presence of the Boss**[5]	מִלִּפְנֵי אָדוֹן	Milifnei Adon
The fearful earth will shiver	חוּלִי אָרֶץ	chuli aretz,
At the presence of the Boss,	מִלִּפְנֵי	milifnei
God of Jacob, it will quiver.	אֱלוֹהַּ יַעֲקֹב	Elo'ah Ya'akov—

[1] "When Israel came out of Egypt, / *when* Jacob's descendants left a people with a foreign language"
[2] "The sea saw and ran *away;* / the Jordan tried to turn backwards."
[3] Verses 1-4, literally: "When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob out of a people who spoke a strange language, Judah became *God's* holy thing, Israel *God's* possession. The sea saw it and fled; the Jordan ran backwards. The mountains danced like rams, the hills like lambs."
[4] "What's wrong, sea, that you run away? / Jordan, that you turn back? / Mountains, that you dance like rams? / Hills, like lambs?"
[5] "Adon" in Hebrew is for someone in charge; in our society, that's the Boss.

[8] **God made a pool of water**	הַהֹפְכִי הַצּוּר	Ha'hofchi hatzur
From rock that flanked a mountain;	אֲגַם־מָיִם	agam mayim,
That brittle flinty stone	חַלָּמִישׁ	Chalamish
Became a running fountain.[1]	לְמַעְיְנוֹ־מָיִם	lemay'no mayim.

[1] "Before God, dance, O earth, / Before the God of Jacob, / Who turned the rock into a pool of water, / The flinty rock into a fountain."

Psalm 115

[1] Not for us, God, not for us,	לֹא לָנוּ יהוה לֹא לָנוּ	Lo lanu, Adonai, lo lanu
but for the sake of your name grant *us* glory,	כִּי־לְשִׁמְךָ תֵּן כָּבוֹד	ki leshimcha ten kavod
for the sake of your kindness and truth.	עַל־חַסְדְּךָ עַל־אֲמִתֶּךָ	al chasd'cha al amitecha.
[2] Why should the other nations say *of us*,	לָמָּה יֹאמְרוּ הַגּוֹיִם	Lama yomru hagoyim,
"Where is their God?"	אַיֵּה־נָא אֱלֹהֵיהֶם	"Ayeh na eloheihem?"
[3] When our God is in heaven	וֵאלֹהֵינוּ בַשָּׁמָיִם	vEloheinu vashamayim,
doing whatever *God* wishes?	כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־חָפֵץ עָשָׂה	kol asher chafetz asah.
[4] Their idols are silver and gold,	עֲצַבֵּיהֶם כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב	Atzabayhem kesef vezahav,
work of human hands.[1]	מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵי אָדָם	ma'aseh yedei adam.
[5] They have a mouth but cannot speak;	פֶּה־לָהֶם וְלֹא יְדַבֵּרוּ	Peh lahem velo yedaberu,
eyes, but they cannot see.	עֵינַיִם לָהֶם וְלֹא יִרְאוּ	einayim lahem velo yir'u.
[6] They have ears, but they can't hear;	אָזְנַיִם לָהֶם וְלֹא יִשְׁמָעוּ	Oznayim lahem velo yishma'u,
a nose, but they can't smell—	אַף לָהֶם וְלֹא יְרִיחוּן	af lahem velo yerichun.
[7] Hands, but they can't feel;	יְדֵיהֶם וְלֹא יְמִישׁוּן	Yedeihem velo yemishun,
feet, but they can't walk;	רַגְלֵיהֶם וְלֹא יְהַלֵּכוּ	ragleihem velo yehalechu,
they can't make a sound with their throat.	לֹא־יֶהְגּוּ בִגְרוֹנָם	lo yeh'gu bigronam.
[8] Their makers are like the idols they make,	כְּמוֹהֶם יִהְיוּ עֹשֵׂיהֶם	Kemohem yih'yu oseihem,
and so are all who rely on them.	כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־בֹּטֵחַ בָּהֶם	kol asher bote'ach bahem.
[9] But Israel relies on God.	יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּטַח בַּיהוה	Yisra'el b'tach bAdonai,
God is their help and their shield.	עֶזְרָם וּמָגִנָּם הוּא	ezram umaginam hu.
[10] Aaron's household trusts in God;	בֵּית אַהֲרֹן בִּטְחוּ בַיהוה	Beit Aharon bit'chu bAdonai,
God is their help and their shield.	עֶזְרָם וּמָגִנָּם הוּא	ezram umaginam hu.
[11] Those who fear God trust in God;	יִרְאֵי יהוה בִּטְחוּ בַיהוה	Yir'ei Adonai bit'chu vAdonai,
God is their help and their shield.	עֶזְרָם וּמָגִנָּם הוּא	ezram umaginam hu.
[12] God has remembered us and will bless—	יהוה זְכָרָנוּ יְבָרֵךְ	Adonai zecharanu; yevarech—
will bless the household of Israel,	יְבָרֵךְ אֶת־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל	yevarech et beit Yisra'el,
will bless the household of Aaron,	יְבָרֵךְ אֶת־בֵּית אַהֲרֹן	yevarech et beit Aharon,

[1] This psalm brings to mind the Midrashic story of young Abram, later Abraham. His father (the story goes) made a living selling idols. One day, Abram smashed most of the idols in the shop, leaving one statue to hold the hammer. Dad was angry; Abram blamed the idol. "That's ridiculous," said Dad, "they're just stone." "In that case," says Abram, "how can you sell them and let people pray to them?"

[13] *God* will bless those who fear God,	יְבָרֵךְ יִרְאֵי יהוה	yevarech yir'ei Adonai,
both small and great.	הַקְּטַנִּים עִם־הַגְּדֹלִים	haktanim im hagdolim.
[14] God will give you more,	יֹסֵף יהוה עֲלֵיכֶם	Yosef Adonai aleichem,
you and your children.	עֲלֵיכֶם וְעַל־בְּנֵיכֶם	aleichem ve'al beneichem.
[15] You'll be blessed by God,	בְּרוּכִים אַתֶּם לַיהוה	Beruchim atem lAdonai,
the maker of heaven and earth.	עֹשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ	oseh shamayim va'aretz.
[16] Heaven is for God,	הַשָּׁמַיִם שָׁמַיִם לַיהוה	Hashamayim shamayim lAdonai,
who gave the earth to people.[1]	וְהָאָרֶץ נָתַן לִבְנֵי־אָדָם	veha'aretz natan livnei adam.
[17] Dead people don't hail God,	לֹא הַמֵּתִים יְהַלְלוּ־יָהּ	Lo hametim yehal'lu Yah,
nor do those who have gone down to silence.	וְלֹא כָל־יֹרְדֵי דוּמָה	velo kol yordei dumah.
[18] But we will bless God	וַאֲנַחְנוּ נְבָרֵךְ יָהּ	Va'anachnu nevarech Yah
from now on and forever. Hail God!	מֵעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם הַלְלוּ־יָהּ	me'atah ve'ad olam Hallelu Yah.

[1] "The heavens are the heavens of God, and *God* gave the earth to the children of Adam."

Psalm 116

[1] I love *it* when God hears	אָהַבְתִּי כִּי־יִשְׁמַע יהוה	Ahavti ki yishma Adonai
my voice, my prayers.	אֶת־קוֹלִי תַּחֲנוּנָי	et koli tachanunai,
[2] For *God* bent an ear to me,	כִּי־הִטָּה אָזְנוֹ לִי	ki hita ozno li
so I'll call *on God* all my days.	וּבְיָמַי אֶקְרָא	uv'yamai ekra.
[3] The bonds of death had tied me,	אֲפָפוּנִי חֶבְלֵי־מָוֶת	Afafuni chevlei mavet,
the narrow grave had found me;	וּמְצָרֵי שְׁאוֹל מְצָאוּנִי	um'tzarei She'ol metza'uni.
I had come to grief and trouble.	צָרָה וְיָגוֹן אֶמְצָא	tzara veyagon emtza.
[4] So I called in the name of God,	וּבְשֵׁם־יהוה אֶקְרָא	Uv'shem Adonai ekra,
"God, please! Save my soul!"	אָנָּה יהוה מַלְּטָה נַפְשִׁי	"Ana Adonai, malta nafshi!"
[5] God is gentle and righteous,	חַנּוּן יהוה וְצַדִּיק	Chanun Adonai vetzadik,
and our God acts kindly.	וֵאלֹהֵינוּ מְרַחֵם	vEloheinu merachem.
[6] God guards the simple;	שֹׁמֵר פְּתָאיִם יהוה	Shomer peta'im Adonai,
I was down, but *God* saved me.	דַּלּוֹתִי וְלִי יְהוֹשִׁיעַ	daloti veli yehoshi'a.
[7] O my soul, return and rest,	שׁוּבִי נַפְשִׁי לִמְנוּחָיְכִי	Shuvi nafshi limnuchaychi
because God has been kind to you	כִּי־יהוה גָּמַל עָלָיְכִי	ki Adonai gamal alaychi,
[8] And has saved my soul from death,	כִּי חִלַּצְתָּ נַפְשִׁי מִמָּוֶת	ki chilatzta nafshi mimavet,
my eyes from weeping,	אֶת־עֵינִי מִן־דִּמְעָה	et eini min dim'a,
and my legs from failing.	אֶת־רַגְלִי מִדֶּחִי	et ragli midechi.
[9] I'll walk before God	אֶתְהַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵי יהוה	Et'halech lifnei Adonai
in the lands of the living.	בְּאַרְצוֹת הַחַיִּים	be'artzot hachayim.
[10] I kept my faith even when I said,	הֶאֱמַנְתִּי כִּי אֲדַבֵּר	He'emanti ki adaber,
"I'm really suffering."	אֲנִי עָנִיתִי מְאֹד	"Ani aniti me'od."
[11] I said in my haste,	אֲנִי אָמַרְתִּי בְחָפְזִי	Ani amarti vechofzi,
"All people are liars."[1]	כָּל־הָאָדָם כֹּזֵב	"Kol ha'adam kozev."
[12] What can I do for God, in return	מָה־אָשִׁיב לַיהוה	Mah ashiv lAdonai
for all that *God* has done for me?	כָּל־תַּגְמוּלוֹהִי עָלָי	kol tagmulohi alay?
[13] I'll raise the cup of salvation,	כּוֹס־יְשׁוּעוֹת אֶשָּׂא	Kos yeshu'ot esah
and I'll call on the name of God.	וּבְשֵׁם יהוה אֶקְרָא	uv'shem Adonai ekra.

[1] The sense could be: "Even when I was suffering, and God seemed to have abandoned me, I trusted *God*. But as for people, I could see pretty quickly that they're not reliable."

[14] I'll pay off my pledges to God	נְדָרַי לַיהוה אֲשַׁלֵּם	Nedarai lAdonai ashalem
in front of all *God's* people.	נֶגְדָה־נָּא לְכָל־עַמּוֹ	negda na lechol amo.
[15] God sets a high price on	יָקָר בְּעֵינֵי יהוה	Yakar be'einei Adonai
the death of those *God* loves.	הַמָּוְתָה לַחֲסִידָיו	hamavtah lachasidav.
[16] God, I am your servant,	אָנָּה יהוה כִּי־אֲנִי עַבְדֶּךָ	Ana Adonai ki ani avdecha,
your servant, the child of your handmaid—	אֲנִי־עַבְדְּךָ בֶּן־אֲמָתֶךָ	ani avd'cha, ben amatecha—
so you have unshackled me.	פִּתַּחְתָּ לְמוֹסֵרָי	pitachta lemoseray.
[17] I'll bring you thank-offerings	לְךָ־אֶזְבַּח זֶבַח תּוֹדָה	Lecha ezbach zevach todah
and I'll call on the name of God.	וּבְשֵׁם יהוה אֶקְרָא	uv'shem Adonai ekra.
[18] I'll pay off my pledges to God	נְדָרַי לַיהוה אֲשַׁלֵּם	Nedarai lAdonai ashalem
in front of all *God's* people,	נֶגְדָה־נָּא לְכָל־עַמּוֹ	negda na lechol amo.
[19] In the courts of God's Temple,	בְּחַצְרוֹת בֵּית יהוה	Bechatzrot beit Adonai,
in your center, O Jerusalem.	בְּתוֹכֵכִי יְרוּשָׁלָם	betochechi Yerushalayim,
Hail God!	הַלְלוּ־יָהּ	Hallelu Yah!

Psalm 117

[1] Hail God, all you nations;	הַלְלוּ אֶת־יהוה כָּל־גּוֹיִם	Halelu et Adonai kol goyim,
praise *God*, all you peoples.	שַׁבְּחוּהוּ כָּל־הָאֻמִּים	shab'chuhu kol ha'umim;
[2] For *God's* kindness has overwhelmed us,	כִּי גָבַר עָלֵינוּ חַסְדּוֹ	ki gavar aleinu chasdo,
and God's truth, forever. Hail God.	וֶאֱמֶת־יהוה לְעוֹלָם הַלְלוּ־יָהּ	ve'emet Adonai le'olam. Hallelu Yah!

Psalm 118

[1] God is good, so we give thanks;	הוֹדוּ לַיהוה כִּי־טוֹב	Hodu lAdonai ki tov;
God's kindness is unlimited.	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	"Ki le'olam chasdo."
[2] Let this be sung by Israel's ranks;	יֹאמַר־נָא יִשְׂרָאֵל	Yomar nah Yisra'el,
God's kindness is unlimited.	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	"Ki le'olam chasdo."
[3] Let Aaron's children join the chorus:	יֹאמְרוּ־נָא בֵית־אַהֲרֹן	Yom'ru nah veit Aharon:
God's kindness is unlimited.	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	"Ki le'olam chasdo."
[4] Revere *and praise* what God does for us,	יֹאמְרוּ־נָא יִרְאֵי יהוה	Yom'ru nah yir'ei Adonai
God's kindness is unlimited.	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	"Ki le'olam chasdo."
[5] Bound in chains, I called on God;	מִן־הַמֵּצַר קָרָאתִי יָהּ	Min hametzar karati Yah
God answered me with liberty.	עָנָנִי בַמֶּרְחָב יָהּ	anani vamer'chav Yah
[6] God is on my side, so I won't worry;	יהוה לִי לֹא אִירָא	Adonai li lo ira;
what can a person do to me?	מַה־יַּעֲשֶׂה לִי אָדָם	mah ya'aseh li adam?
[7] God is on my side, with my friends,	יהוה לִי בְּעֹזְרָי	Adonai li be'ozrai,
so I can face my enemies.	וַאֲנִי אֶרְאֶה בְשֹׂנְאָי	va'ani er'eh v'son'ai.
[8] It's better to trust God	טוֹב לַחֲסוֹת בַּיהוה	Tov lachasot bAdonai
than rely on people.	מִבְּטֹחַ בָּאָדָם	mibto'ach ba'adam.
[9] It's better to trust God	טוֹב לַחֲסוֹת בַּיהוה	Tov lachasot bAdonai
than rely on princes.	מִבְּטֹחַ בִּנְדִיבִים	mibto'ach bindivim.
[10] All the nations surrounded me;	כָּל־גּוֹיִם סְבָבוּנִי	Kol goyim s'vavuni;
in the name of God I cut them down.	בְּשֵׁם יהוה כִּי אֲמִילַם	beshem Adonai ki amilam.
[11] They were all around me, hordes of them;	סַבּוּנִי גַם־סְבָבוּנִי	Sabuni gam s'vavuni;
in the name of God I cut them down.	בְּשֵׁם יהוה כִּי אֲמִילַם	beshem Adonai ki amilam.
[12] They swarmed like bees;	סַבּוּנִי כִדְבוֹרִים	Sabuni chidvorim;
they are quenched like a fire of thorns;	דֹּעֲכוּ כְּאֵשׁ קוֹצִים	do'achu ke'esh kotzim;
in the name of God I cut them down.	בְּשֵׁם יהוה כִּי אֲמִילַם	beshem Adonai ki amilam.
[13] You pushed and pushed me to make me fall,	דַּחֹה דְחִיתַנִי לִנְפֹּל	Dacho d'chitani linpol,
but God helped me.	וַיהוה עֲזָרָנִי	vAdonai azarani.
[14] God is my strength and my song,	עָזִּי וְזִמְרָת יָהּ	Ozi vezimrat Yah,
and this has been my salvation.	וַיְהִי־לִי לִישׁוּעָה	vay'hi li lishu'ah.

[15] There's a cry of joy and salvation	קוֹל רִנָּה וִישׁוּעָה	Kol rina viyshu'ah
in the tents of the righteous:	בְּאָהֳלֵי צַדִּיקִים	be'oholei tzadikim:
"God's right hand is valiant,	יְמִין יהוה עֹשָׂה חָיִל	"Yemin Adonai osah chayil,
[16] God's right hand is lifted up,	יְמִין יהוה רוֹמֵמָה	yemin Adonai romemah,
God's right hand is valiant."	יְמִין יהוה עֹשָׂה חָיִל	yemin Adonai osah chayil."
[17] I'm not going to die, but live	לֹא אָמוּת כִּי־אֶחְיֶה	Lo amut ki echyeh
and tell what God has done.	וַאֲסַפֵּר מַעֲשֵׂי יָהּ	va'asaper ma'asei Yah;
[18] God punished me severely,	יַסֹּר יִסְּרַנִּי יָהּ	Yasor yisrani Yah
but didn't give me over to death.	וְלַמָּוֶת לֹא נְתָנָנִי	velamavet lo netanani.
[19] Open the gates of righteousness;	◊ פִּתְחוּ־לִי שַׁעֲרֵי־צֶדֶק	◊ Pit'chu li sha'arey tzedek,
I will enter and thank God.	אָבֹא־בָם אוֹדֶה יָהּ	avo vam odeh Yah.
[20] This is the gate to God;	זֶה־הַשַּׁעַר לַיהוה	Zeh hasha'ar lAdonai
the righteous will enter it.[1]	צַדִּיקִים יָבֹאוּ בוֹ	tzadikim yavo'u vo.
[21] I thank you for answering me	אוֹדְךָ כִּי עֲנִיתָנִי	Od'cha ki anitani
and being my salvation.	וַתְּהִי־לִי לִישׁוּעָה	vat'hi li li'shu'ah.
[22] That block—it's now the keystone—	אֶבֶן מָאֲסוּ הַבּוֹנִים	Even ma'asu habonim
was rejected by the mason.	הָיְתָה לְרֹאשׁ פִּנָּה	haytah lerosh pinah.
[23] This success has come from God;	מֵאֵת יהוה הָיְתָה זֹּאת	Me'et Adonai haytah zot;
to us, it seems miraculous.	הִיא נִפְלָאת בְּעֵינֵינוּ	hi niflat be'eineinu.
[24] This is the day that God has made,	זֶה־הַיּוֹם עָשָׂה יהוה	Zeh hayom asah Adonai;
a day of joy and happiness!	נָגִילָה וְנִשְׂמְחָה בוֹ	nagilah venismechah vo.
[25] Please, God, save us;	אָנָּא יהוה הוֹשִׁיעָה נָּא	Ana Adonai hoshiah na;
Please, God, grant us success.	אָנָּא יהוה הַצְלִיחָה נָּא	Ana Adonai hatzlichah na.
[26] Welcome,[2] in God's name;	בָּרוּךְ הַבָּא בְּשֵׁם יהוה	Baruch haba beshem Adonay;
we bless you from God's temple.	בֵּרַכְנוּכֶם מִבֵּית יהוה	berachnuchem mibeit Adonay.

[1] Alexander the Great reached the portal to the Garden of Eden but couldn't enter because he wasn't one of the righteous but a pagan materialist (see BT Tamid 32b).

[2] בָּרוּךְ הַבָּא means "welcome" today, but literally it means "Blessed is the one who comes."

[27] God is the ruler who shines light upon us;	אֵל יהוה וַיָּאֶר לָנוּ	El Adonay vaya'er lanu;
bind the festive sacrifice with ropes[1]	אִסְרוּ־חַג בַּעֲבֹתִים	isru chag ba'avotim
to the horns of the altar.	עַד־קַרְנוֹת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ	ad karnot hamizbe'ach.
[28] You are my God and I will thank you,	אֵלִי אַתָּה וְאוֹדֶךָּ	Eli ata ve'odekah,
my ruler and I will exalt you.	אֱלֹהַי אֲרוֹמְמֶךָּ	Elohai arom'mekah.
[29] Thank God, for *God* is good,	הוֹדוּ לַיהוה כִּי־טוֹב	Hodu lAdonai ki tov,
for God's kindness lasts forever.	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	ki le'olam chasdo.

[1] It doesn't sound like a festive occasion for the sacrifice, does it?

Psalm 119

Psalm 119 (parts) for dedicating a house.
This psalm has eight verses for each of the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

א

[1]Who tread the plain path—lucky they,	אַשְׁרֵי תְמִימֵי־דָרֶךְ	Ashrei temimei darech,
with God their guide along the way.[1]	הַהֹלְכִים בְּתוֹרַת יהוה	hahol'chim beTorat Adonai.
[2] Lucky who prize signs from above	אַשְׁרֵי נֹצְרֵי עֵדְוָתָיו	Ashrei notzrei edotav,
and seek God with wholehearted love.[2]	בְּכָל־לֵב יִדְרְשׁוּהוּ	bechol lev yidreshuhu.
[3] Surely they have done no wrong	אַף לֹא־פָעֲלוּ עַוְלָה	Af lo fa'alu avlah;
but walk *God's* path *(though it be long)*.	בִּדְרָכָיו הָלָכוּ	bidrachav halachu.
[4] You commanded your decree	אַתָּה צִוִּיתָה פִקֻּדֶיךָ	Atah tzivita fikudecha
to be observed punctiliously.[3]	לִשְׁמֹר מְאֹד	lishmor me'od.
[5] Would I could know my way secure	אַחֲלַי יִכֹּנוּ דְרָכָי	Achalai yikonu derachai
to keep your statutes fixed and sure.[4]	לִשְׁמֹר חֻקֶּיךָ	lishmor chukecha.
[6] Then I'd not feel ashamed to scan	אָז לֹא־אֵבוֹשׁ	Az lo evosh
the vast range of your dear commands.[5]	בְּהַבִּיטִי אֶל־כָּל־מִצְוֹתֶיךָ	behabiti el kol mitzvotecha.
[7] I thank you with all honesty	אוֹדְךָ בְיֹשֶׁר לֵבָב	Od'cha beyosher levav
when learning of your just decrees.[6]	בִּלְמֹדִי מִשְׁפְּטֵי צִדְקֶךָ	belomdi mishpetei tzidkecha.
[8] Your statutes would I strictly heed;	אֶת־חֻקֶּיךָ אֶשְׁמֹר	Et chukecha eshmor;
don't leave me, for your help I need![7]	אַל־תַּעַזְבֵנִי עַד־מְאֹד	al ta'azveni ad me'od.

[1] Or, "God's Torah." I like to think that the root of Torah is the same as for driving rain, parents, teachers; see our note to 84:7. A teacher "shoots" students off to their learning journey, and the Torah guides us toward a worthy way of life.

[2] "Happy/lucky *are* the-ones-who-keep *God's* testimonies; / with-all-heart they-seek-*God."*

[3] "You commanded your-decree / *for-us*-to-keep very-much."

[4] "Would-that were-fixed my-paths / to-keep your-statutes." In scripture , אַחֲלַי occurs only here and in 2 Kings 5:3. Perhaps it's from a root אחל, to wish; if the root can be a gerund (wishing) then אַחֲלַי could be "my wishings *are* ..." Perhaps it's from the more common root or יחל, wait, hope, but the grammar is unusual.

[5] "Then I-would-not-be-ashamed / at-my-looking (when I would look) at-all-your-commands."

[6] "I-shall-thank/acknowledge-you with-directness-of heart (with an upright heart, honestly) / at-my-learning-of (when I learn of) the-verdicts-of your-righteousness."

[7] "Your-statutes I-shall/would/would-like-to-keep. / Do-not-abandon-me up-to-very-much (Don't forsake me utterly);" *i.e.*, as some commentators explain, if God removes God's support, the poet won't be able to keep the commandments.

ב

[9] How can a youth deserve to tread	בַּמֶּה יְזַכֶּה־נַּעַר אֶת־אָרְחוֹ	Bameh yezakeh na'ar et or'cho
according to the words you've said?[1]	לִשְׁמֹר כִּדְבָרֶךָ	lishmor kidvarecha?
[10] I sought for you with all my heart;	בְּכָל־לִבִּי דְרַשְׁתִּיךָ	Bechol libi derashticha;
from your rules don't make me part.	אַל־תַּשְׁגֵּנִי מִמִּצְוֹתֶיךָ	al tashgeni mimitzvotecha.
[11] Your word I treasured deep within	בְּלִבִּי צָפַנְתִּי אִמְרָתֶךָ	Belibi tzafanti imratecha
lest before you I fall in sin.[2]	לְמַעַן לֹא אֶחֱטָא־לָךְ	lema'an lo echeteh lach.
[12] God, you are blessed;	בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה	Baruch atah Adonai;
teach me your laws.	לַמְּדֵנִי חֻקֶּיךָ	lamdeni chukecha.
[13] I numbered off	בִּשְׂפָתַי סִפַּרְתִּי	Bisfatai siparti
the rules you voiced.[3]	כֹּל מִשְׁפְּטֵי־פִיךָ	kol mishpetei ficha.
[14] How I rejoiced to trace each sign	בְּדֶרֶךְ עֵדְוֹתֶיךָ שַׂשְׂתִּי	Bederech edotacha sasti
I found—as if all wealth were mine![4]	כְּעַל כָּל־הוֹן	ke'al kol hon.
[15] I learn your laws,	בְּפִקֻּדֶיךָ אָשִׂיחָה	Befikudecha asicha,
I glimpse your ways,[5]	וְאַבִּיטָה אׇרְחֹתֶיךָ	ve'abita or'chotecha.
[16] treasure your rules	בְּחֻקֹּתֶיךָ אֶשְׁתַּעֲשָׁע	Bechukotecha eshta'asha;
and words always.[6]	לֹא אֶשְׁכַּח דְּבָרֶךָ	lo eshkach devarecha.

[1] "By-what-*means* can-a-youth-deserve *that* his-course *should be* / to-keep-*himself* according-to-your-pronouncements?"

[2] "In-my-heart I-concealed your-utterance / so-that I-would-not sin-before-you."

[3] "With-my-lips I-numbered/told / all the-verdicts-of-your-mouth."

[4] "On-the-path-of your-testimonies I rejoiced / as-if-over all-wealth." I.e., As I made my way in the world I noticed signs of your favor or signs of your existence or signs of your involvement in human affairs, and I rejoiced to find such reassurance of God's presence; and I rejoiced as much as if I had won the lottery with a massive payout.

[5] "Of-your-rulings I-make-conversation / and-I-glimpse your-paths."

[6] "In-your-statutes I-take-delight; / not shall-I-forget your-word."

ג

[17] Reward your servant (I mean me)	גְּמֹל עַל־עַבְדְּךָ	Gemol al avdecha;
with life, to keep your *just* decree.[1]	אֶחְיֶה וְאֶשְׁמְרָה דְבָרֶךָ	ech'yeh ve'eshmerah devarecha.
[18] Open my eyes so I can see	גַּל־עֵינַי וְאַבִּיטָה	Gal einai ve'abitah
your Torah's wondrous mystery.[2]	נִפְלָאוֹת מִתּוֹרָתֶךָ	nifla'ot miToratecha.
[19] I'm but a stranger in the land;	גֵּר אָנֹכִי בָאָרֶץ	Ger anochi va'aretz;
don't hide from me your *dear* commands.[3]	אַל־תַּסְתֵּר מִמֶּנִּי מִצְוֹתֶיךָ	al taster mimeni mitzvotecha.
[20] Crushed am I, for I anxiously	גָּרְסָה נַפְשִׁי לְתַאֲבָה	Garsah nafshi leta'avah
hope for your verdicts ceaselessly.[4]	אֶל־מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ בְכָל־עֵת	el mishpatecha vechol et.
[21] The cursed arrogant you scold	גָּעַרְתָּ זֵדִים אֲרוּרִים	Ga'arta zedim arurim,
who disregard the rules you've told.[5]	הַשֹּׁגִים מִמִּצְוֹתֶיךָ	hashogim mimitzvotecha.
[22] Spare me their taunts and their contempt	גַּל מֵעָלַי חֶרְפָּה וָבוּז	Gal me'alai cherpah vavuz
for I cherish your testament.[6]	כִּי עֵדְוֹתֶיךָ נָצָרְתִּי	ki edotecha natzarti.
[23] Though rulers join to slander me	גַּם יָשְׁבוּ שָׂרִים בִּי נִדְבָּרוּ	Gam yashvu sarim, bi nidbaru;
your servant studies your decrees.[7]	עַבְדְּךָ יָשִׂיחַ בְּחֻקֶּיךָ	avdecha yasi'ach bechukecha.
[24] For your decrees are my great joy,	גַּם־עֵדְוֹתֶיךָ שַׁעֲשָׁעָי	Gam edotecha sha'ashu'ai,
faithful mentors I employ.[8]	אַנְשֵׁי עֲצָתִי	anshei atzati.

[1] "Give-recompense for-your-servant (i.e., for me), / *so that* I-shall-live and-I-shall-keep your-decrees."
[2] "Uncover-my-eyes that-I-may-see / wonders from-your-Torah/guidance."
[3] "A-stranger (or convert, or foreigner) *am* I in-the-land; / do-not-hide from-me your-rules."
[4] "Crushed *is* my-self for-desire (I'm consumed with longing) / toward-your-verdicts at-every-time."
[5] "You-have-scolded the-arrogant-people *who are* cursed / who-stray from-your-rules."
[6] "Unroll from-over-me taunt and-contempt, / for your-testimonies I-have-kept." I used "testament" in the translation to mean both a witness's evidence and a scriptural assurance such as an "Old Testament."
[7] "Also sat princes (people in power sat together, possibly in legal "session"), of-me did-they-talk (or, they accused me); / your-servant would-ponder about-your-statutes."
[8] "Also your-testaments *are* things-that-delight-me, / the-men-of my-advice (your testaments are my mentors)."

ד

[25] I'm on the verge of mortal dust;	דָּבְקָה לֶעָפָר נַפְשִׁי	Davka le'afar nafshi;
revive me! For your pledge I trust.[1]	חַיֵּנִי כִּדְבָרֶךָ	chayeni kidvarecha.
[26] I planned my path—you answered me—	דְּרָכַי סִפַּרְתִּי וַתַּעֲנֵנִי	Derachai siparti vata'aneni;
now teach me *to keep* your decrees.[2]	לַמְּדֵנִי חֻקֶּיךָ	lamdeni chukecha.
[27] Help me grasp your precepts' way	דֶּרֶךְ־פִּקּוּדֶיךָ הֲבִינֵנִי	Derech pikudecha havineni,
and your great wonders I'll relay.[3]	וְאָשִׂיחָה בְּנִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ	ve'asicha benifle'otecha.
[28] I am all tears, dissolved in grief;	דָּלְפָה נַפְשִׁי מִתּוּגָה	Dalfa nafshi mitugah;
raise me—to bolster my belief.[4]	קַיְּמֵנִי כִּדְבָרֶךָ	kaymeni kidvarecha.
[29] The path to lies—turn it aside	דֶּרֶךְ־שֶׁקֶר הָסֵר מִמֶּנִּי	Derech sheker haser mimeni,
and grant your Torah as my guide.[5]	וְתוֹרָתְךָ חָנֵּנִי	veTorat'cha chaneni.
[30] My chosen path's the truthful way;	דֶּרֶךְ־אֱמוּנָה בָּחָרְתִּי	Derech emunah vacharti,
your rules I've set down *lest I stray*.[6]	מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ שִׁוִּיתִי	mishpatecha shiviti.
[31] Your testaments, God, I embrace:	דָּבַקְתִּי בְעֵדְוֹתֶיךָ יהוה	Davakti ve'edotecha, Adonai;
don't send me down into disgrace.[7]	אַל־תְּבִישֵׁנִי	al tevisheni.
[32] To do your bidding do I run;	דֶּרֶךְ־מִצְוֹתֶיךָ אָרוּץ	Derech mitzvotecha arutz
you give me strength to carry on.[8]	כִּי תַרְחִיב לִבִּי	ki tarchiv libi.

[1] "It-has-attached to-dust, my-self (I am clinging to dust); / give-me-life according-to-your-word (as you promised)."

[2] "My-paths/ways I-recounted (I declared, or I told) and-you-answered-me; / teach-me your-statutes."

[3] "The-way/path-of your-precepts make-me-understand, / and-I-shall-converse of-your-wondrous-acts."

[4] "Drips/weeps my-self from-grief; / stand-me-up according-to-your-word/promise." I translate "according to your word" as "to bolster my belief" to show that fulfillment of God's promise is a reason for belief.

[5] "The-way-of-falsehood turn-aside from-me, / and-your-Torah graciously-grant-to-me."

[6] "The-way-of-faithfulness have-I-chosen; / your-verdicts have-I-placed *before me.*"

[7] "I-have-clung (דבק is a word for glue) to-your-testimonies, God; / don't-put-me-to-shame." עֵדְוֹתֶיךָ, "your testimonies/proofs/evidence/signs"—are proof of God's existence, compassion, justice and reliability to make good the promises we have heard.

[8] "The-way-of your-commandments I-run (I hurry along the path marked by your commandments); / for you-broaden my-heart." Taking broaden and heart as metaphors, this could mean that God gives the poet extra strength to follow God's commands, and it could also mean that God expands the poet's understanding.

ה

[33] Show me the way, God, of your laws	הוֹרֵנִי יהוה דֶּרֶךְ חֻקֶּיךָ	Horeni Adonai derech chukecha
that I may follow it for this cause.[1]	וְאֶצְּרֶנָּה עֵקֶב	ve'etzrena ekev.
[34] Help me grasp your just decree,	הֲבִינֵנִי וְאֶצְּרָה תוֹרָתֶךָ	Havineni ve'etzrah Toratecha
to keep it unreservedly.[2]	וְאֶשְׁמְרֶנָּה בְכָל־לֵב	ve'eshmerena vechol lev.
[35] Guide me on your precepts' path;	הַדְרִיכֵנִי בִּנְתִיב מִצְוֹתֶיךָ	Hadricheni bintiv mitzvotecha
above all, that is what I ask.[3]	כִּי־בוֹ חָפָצְתִּי	ki vo chafatzti.
[36] By your proofs let my heart be swayed,	הַט־לִבִּי אֶל־עֵדוֹתֶיךָ	Hat libi el edotecha
not by the gain I might have made.[4]	וְאַל אֶל־בָּצַע	ve'al el batzah.
[37] From falsehood turn aside my gaze,	הַעֲבֵר עֵינַי מֵרְאוֹת שָׁוְא	Ha'aver einai merot shav;
revive me through your *upright* ways.[5]	בִּדְרָכֶךָ חַיֵּנִי	bidrachecha chayeni.
[38] For me, your servant, keep that word	הָקֵם לְעַבְדְּךָ אִמְרָתֶךָ	Hakem le'avdecha imratecha
which those who reverence you heard.[6]	אֲשֶׁר לְיִרְאָתֶךָ	asher leyiratecha.
[39] Spare me the disgrace I fear	הַעֲבֵר חֶרְפָּתִי אֲשֶׁר יָגֹרְתִּי	Ha'aver cherpati asher yagorti
with verdicts that all blame can clear.[7]	כִּי מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ טוֹבִים	ki mishpatecha tovim.
[40] Your precepts have I long desired;	הִנֵּה תָּאַבְתִּי לְפִקֻּדֶיךָ	Hineh ta'avti lefikudecha;
with justice let me be inspired.[8]	בְּצִדְקָתְךָ חַיֵּנִי	betzidkat'cha chayeni.

[1] "And-I-shall-keep-*to*-it (from the root נצר, guard or preserve or keep) consequently."

[2] "Make-me-understand, so-that-I-may-keep your-Torah / and-so-that-I-may-guard-it with-all-*my*-heart."

[3] "Make-me-go on-the-path-of your-rules / because-for-that have-I-wished."

[4] "Incline-my-heart to-your-signs (let me be convinced by your proofs) / and-not to-profit."

[5] "Make-pass my-eyes from-looking-at falsehood; / though-your-ways give-me-life." I thnk of שָׁוְא meaning "level," as if you answer a question both yes and no and avoid giving a straight answer—what at times has been called equivocation: "th'equivocation of the fiend / That lies like truth" (Macbeth 5:5:42).

[6] "Confirm for-your-servant your-utterance/promise / which *is/was* for-those-who-revere-you."

[7] "Cause-to-pass my-disgrace which I-dread / For your-verdicts *are* good." What is a "good" verdict? For the accused, it's a verdict that exonerates.

[8] "See, I-have-yearned for-your-notice/precepts; / with-your-justice make-me-live." For the first line, many translators say לְפִקֻּדֶיךָ means "for your precepts," as if the poet longs for God's commands to be enforced. But in Gen. 21:1 the root פקד means God "took note" of Sarah, so perhaps the poet craves God's attention. For the second line, the poet may ask God to impose justice on others, or grant vindication for others' false accusations, with renewed life for the poet; or the poet may ask God to renew energy and purpose and life either through welcome administration of justice, or through inspiring the poet to pursue justice; or, of course, both.

ו

[41] God, may your kindness reach even me,	וִיבֹאֻנִי חֲסָדֶךָ יְהוָה	Vivo'uni chasadecha, Adonai,
to save me, by your guarantee,[1]	תְּשׁוּעָתְךָ כְּאִמְרָתֶךָ	teshu'at'cha, ke'imratecha.
[42] So to my taunters I'll reply	וְאֶעֱנֶה חֹרְפִי דָבָר	Ve'e'eneh chorfi davar
that on your promise I rely.[2]	כִּי־בָטַחְתִּי בִּדְבָרֶךָ	ki vatachti bidvarecha.
[43] Let me at least in candor state,	וְאַל־תַּצֵּל מִפִּי דְבַר־אֱמֶת עַד־מְאֹד	Ve'al tatzel mipi devar emet ad me'od
that your just verdict I await.[3]	כִּי לְמִשְׁפָּטְךָ יִחָלְתִּי	ki lemishpatecha yichalti.
[44] So I may keep your holy creed	וְאֶשְׁמְרָה תוֹרָתְךָ תָמִיד	Ve'eshmerah Torat'cha tamid,
and its eternal precepts heed,[4]	לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד	le'olam va'ed.
[45] To walk abroad, in liberty	וְאֶתְהַלְכָה בָרְחָבָה	Ve'et'hal'cha var'chavah
while following your just decree.[5]	כִּי פִקֻּדֶיךָ דָרָשְׁתִּי	ki fikudecha darashti.
[46] I'll speak your truths	וַאֲדַבְּרָה בְעֵדֹתֶיךָ	Va'adabra ve'edotecha
to powerful kings	נֶגֶד מְלָכִים	neged melachim
my bold tongue never faltering.[6]	וְלֹא אֵבוֹשׁ	velo evosh.
[47] In your commands I'll take delight,	וְאֶשְׁתַּעֲשַׁע בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ	Ve'eshta'ashah bemitzvotecha,
for they are cherished in my sight.[7]	אֲשֶׁר אָהָבְתִּי	asher ahavti.
[48] Welcoming your dear commands,	וְאֶשָּׂא־כַפַּי אֶל־מִצְוֹתֶיךָ	Ve'esa chapai el mitzvotecha
	אֲשֶׁר אָהָבְתִּי	asher ahavti,
I'll study all your *just* demands.[8]	וְאָשִׂיחָה בְחֻקֶּיךָ	ve'asicha vechukecha.

[1] "And-may-there-come-to-me your-kindnesses, God, / your-salvation, according-to-your-promise."
[2] "And-I-will-be-able-to-answer my-taunter *with*-something (I'll have something to retort to someone who taunts me), / for-I-trusted in-your-word."
[3] "Don't-strip from-my-mouth a-statement-of-truth utterly (don't prevent me from uttering a shred of the truth) / since for-your-verdicts/judgements I-have-hoped/waited."
[4] "And-I-will-*be-able*-to-observe your-Torah/law/guidance always / forever and-ever."
[5] "And-I-will-*be-able*-to-walk with-ample-space, / for your-decrees/details I-have-pursued/sought." The root of פִּקֻּדֶיךָ, פקד, gives us words for taking a count (of people, in a census) and taking account (of Sarah, when God fulfilled the promise of pregnancy for her); and in modern Hebrew, civil servant. So it can imply giving detailed attention—in this case, to God's laws.
[6] "And-I-shall-speak-of your-testimonies/proofs in-the-presence-of kings, / and-not shall-I-feel-shame."
[7] "And-I-shall-delight in-your-rules, / which I-have-loved."
[8] "And-I-shall-raise-my-palms (presumably as a gesture of welcome) toward-your-commandments / which I-have-loved, / and-I-shall-inquire into-your-statutes."

ז

[49] Recall the pledge you made to me,	זְכֹר־דָּבָר לְעַבְדֶּךָ	Zechor davar le'avdecha
to rouse hope in adversity.[1]	עַל אֲשֶׁר יִחַלְתָּנִי	al asher yichaltani.
[50] This cheers me in my penury;	זֹאת נֶחָמָתִי בְעָנְיִי	Zot nechamati ve'onyi
my life rests on your guarantee.[2]	כִּי אִמְרָתְךָ חִיָּתְנִי	ki imrat'cha chiyatni.
[51] Relentless scoffers—let them sneer,	זֵדִים הֱלִיצֻנִי עַד־מְאֹד	Zedim helitzuni ad me'od;
but from your law I would not veer.[3]	מִתּוֹרָתְךָ לֹא נָטִיתִי	miTorat'cha lo natiti.
[52] God, your rules, ever in my thoughts,	זָכַרְתִּי מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ מֵעוֹלָם יהוה	Zacharti mishpatecha me'olam Adonai
provide me comfort and support.[4]	וָאֶתְנֶחָם	va'et'necham.
[53] Seeing those rogues, I'm furious,	זַלָעָפָה אֲחָזַתְנִי מֵרְשָׁעִים	Zalafah achazatni mersha'im,
for they've abandoned all your laws.[5]	עֹזְבֵי תוֹרָתֶךָ	ozvei Toratecha.
[54] To me your laws were poetry	זְמִרוֹת הָיוּ־לִי חֻקֶּיךָ	Zemirot hayu li chukecha
to love wherever I might be.[6]	בְּבֵית מְגוּרָי	beveit megurai.
[55] At night I spoke, God, of your fame—	זָכַרְתִּי בַלַּיְלָה שִׁמְךָ יהוה	Zacharti valaila shimcha, Adonai,
your rule to keep, your law maintain.[7]	וָאֶשְׁמְרָה תּוֹרָתֶךָ	va'eshmerah Toratecha.
[56] This is the benefit I reap	זֹאת הָיְתָה־לִּי	Zot hayta li
for in detail your laws I keep.[8]	כִּי פִקֻּדֶיךָ נָצָרְתִּי	ki fikudecha natzarti.

[1] "Remember-the-word/matter/utterance *you made* to-your-servants / by which you-caused-me-to-hope." God's promise of salvation gives the poet hope.
[2] "This *is* my-comfort in-my-affliction/poverty, / so-that your-utterance gives-me-life (sustains/revives me)."
[3] "Proud-people have-mocked-me to-the-extreme; / from-your-Torah not have-I-turned-aside.
[4] "I-have-remembered your-judgements from-forever, God, / and-I-shall-be-comforted."
[5] "Burning-anger has-seized-me from-miscreants, / abandoners-of your-Torah."
[6] "Songs/psalms were-to-me your-statutes / in-the-house/dwelling-of my-sojourning/staying."
[7] "I-remembered/pronounced at-night your-name/fame/reputation, God, / so-that-I-would guard/keep/maintain your Torah."
[8] "This-*benefit* has-existed-for-me / because your-details-*of-law* I-have-guarded/kept."

ח

[57] I said, "I need God—nothing more,"	חֶלְקִי יהוה אָמַרְתִּי	"Chelki Adonai," amarti,
to keep the mutual pledge we swore.[1]	לִשְׁמֹר דְּבָרֶיךָ	lishmor devarecha.
[58] With all my heart for you I pined;	חִלִּיתִי פָנֶיךָ בְכָל־לֵב	Chiliti fanecha vechol lev;
as you pledged, now to me be kind.[2]	חָנֵּנִי כְּאִמְרָתֶךָ	choneni ke'imratecha.
[59] I mapped out *false* routes to pursue	חִשַּׁבְתִּי דְרָכָי	Chishavti derachai,
but turned again to follow you.[3]	וָאָשִׁיבָה רַגְלַי אֶל־עֵדֹתֶיךָ	va'ashiva raglai el edotecha.
[60] So then I rushed, brooked no delay	חַשְׁתִּי וְלֹא הִתְמַהְמָהְתִּי	Chashti velo hitmahmahti
to keep to your commandments' sway.[4]	לִשְׁמֹר מִצְוֹתֶיךָ	lishmor mitzvotecha.
[61] Though snared by perjurors' courtroom lies,	חֶבְלֵי רְשָׁעִים עִוְּדָנִי	Chevlai resha'im ivduni;
your Law I would not compromise.[5]	תּוֹרָתְךָ לֹא שָׁכָחְתִּי	Torat'cha lo shachachti.
[62] To give you thanks I rise at night,	חֲצוֹת־לַיְלָה אָקוּם לְהוֹדוֹת לָךְ	Chatzot lailah akum lehodot lach
for the just verdicts you indite.[6]	עַל מִשְׁפְּטֵי צִדְקֶךָ	al mishpetei tzidkecha.
[63] To all who fear you I'm a friend	חָבֵר אֲנִי לְכָל־אֲשֶׁר יְרֵאוּךָ	Chaver ani lechol asher yere'ucha
for your good guidance they maintain.[7]	וּלְשֹׁמְרֵי פִקּוּדֶיךָ	uleshomrei pikudecha.
[64] Your kindness, God, pervades this globe,	חַסְדְּךָ יהוה מָלְאָה הָאָרֶץ	Chasdecha, Adonai, malah ha'aretz;
so teach me how your rules to probe.[8]	חֻקֶּיךָ לַמְּדֵנִי	chukecha lamdeni.

[1] "'My-portion *is* God,' I-said; / *all I need is* to-observe/keep your-word." Or, "all I want in life is my relationship with God, and this I shall have if only I observe God's word." I translate "your word" as "mutual pledge" because our contract with God is a mutual pact: we promise to keep God's commandments, and on that condition God promises to protect us.

[2] "I-yearned/ached *to see* your-face/presence with-all-*my*-heart; / be-gracious-to-me according-to-your-utterance." חִלִּיתִי is related to the word for sick, infirm.

[3] "I-considered/calculated/planned my-*mistaken*-paths (I planned out paths to take, *but they would lead me astray*), / but-I-returned my-legs/feet to-your-testimonies/proofs."

[4] "I-hurried and-not did-I-delay / to-observe your-commandments."

[5] "The-ropes/travails/restraints-of malefactors coiled-around-me/testified-against-me; / your-Torah not would-I-forget."

[6] "*At* midnight I-shall/would-rise to-give-thanks to-you / for the-verdicts-of your-justice."

[7] "A-friend *am* I to-all-who fear/respect-you / and-to-those-who-observe your-details/rules." I think of the late Bernie Schiff, who often opined that "respect" is a better translation than "fear" for the root יראּ.

[8] "You-kindness, God, has-filled the-Earth; / your-statutes teach-to-me."

ט

[65] To me your servant you've brought good	טוֹב עָשִׂיתָ עִם־עַבְדְּךָ	Tov asita im avdecha,
O God, just as you said you would.[1]	יהוה כִּדְבָרֶךָ	Adonai, kidvarecha.
[66] Teach me good sense and knowledge too,	טוּב טַעַם וָדַעַת לַמְּדֵנִי	Tuv ta'am vada'at lamdeni,
for your decrees I know are true.[2]	כִּי בְמִצְוֹתֶיךָ הֶאֱמָנְתִּי	ki vemitzvotecha he'emanti.
[67] Before I fell I was astray	טֶרֶם אֶעֱנֶה אֲנִי שֹׁגֵג	Terem e'eneh ani shogeg,
but now your word I won't betray.[3]	וְעַתָּה אִמְרָתְךָ שָׁמָרְתִּי	ve'atah imrat'cha shamarti.
[68] You are good and you do good too:	טוֹב־אַתָּה וּמֵטִיב	Tova atah umetiv;
teach me how to follow you.[4]	לַמְּדֵנִי חֻקֶּיךָ	lamdeni chukecha.
[69] Though liars vain have slandered me	טָפְלוּ עָלַי שֶׁקֶר זֵדִים	Taflu alai sheker, zedim;
I keep your rules wholeheartedly.[5]	אֲנִי בְכָל־לֵב אֶצֹּר פִּקּוּדֶיךָ	ani bechol lev etzor pikudecha.
[70] Their minds are dull as clotted grease	טָפַשׁ כַּחֵלֶב לִבָּם	Tafash kachelev libam;
while your rules bring me joy and peace.[6]	אֲנִי תוֹרָתְךָ שִׁעֲשָׁעְתִּי	ani Torat'cha shi'ashati.
[71] It's good for me that I down I fell;	טוֹב־לִי כִּי־עֻנֵּיתִי	Tov li chi uneti
now I can learn your precepts well.[7]	לְמַעַן אֶלְמַד חֻקֶּיךָ	lema'an elmad chukecha.
[72] Better for me your spoken law—	טוֹב־לִי תוֹרַת־פִּיךָ	Tov li Torat picha
than mounds of gold, and silver ore.[8]	מֵאַלְפֵי זָהָב וָכָסֶף	me'alfei zahav vachasef.

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[1] "Good have-you-done with-your-servant (i.e., with me), / God, according-to-your-word/promise."

[2] "Goodness, reason and-knowledge teach-me, / for on-your-rules have-I-relied (or, for I have believed in your rules)." טַעַם means taste, both as flavor and as reasonable judgement, such as the reasoning that finds an explanation for the rules of Torah.

[3] "Before I-was-to-be-humbled, I *was* misdirected, / but-now your-utterance have-I-observed." אֶעֱנֶה can mean "I would/shall answer" as well as "I would/shall be brought low." Maybe we could translate: "Before I could say anything I was in error, ignorant," or "When I was an infant (literally, non-speaker, like a baby that hasn't learned language) I went wrong, / but now I have words, the ones that come from God, and I keep to those."

[4] "Good-*are*-you and-causing-good; / teach-me your-statutes."

[5] "They-have-smeared upon-me falsehood, proud-people; / I with-all-heart/mind will-keep/guard/store your-precepts/detailed-laws."

[6] "They-have-become-fat/sluggish like grease/fat, their-heart/mind; / *but* I your-Torah delight-in." The root טָפַשׁ with connotations of smearing gives us modern Hebrew's word for a fool, טִפֵּשׁ. The poet means those proud slanderers are slow thinkers. חלב ("grease") can connote both the best and richest part of food, or the type of fat that's forbidden by Jewish dietary laws. (The same root gives us words for milk, perhaps rich, creamy, whole milk.)

[7] "*It's* good-for-me that-I-was-humbled / in-order-that I-will/could-learn your-statutes."

[8] "Good-for-me *is* the-guidance/Torah-of-your-mouth, / more-than-thousands-of *measures-of* gold and silver."

י

[73] I'm shaped and finished by your hands;	יָדֶיךָ עָשׂוּנִי וַיְכוֹנְנוּנִי	Yadecha asuni vaychonenuni;
now tutor me in your commands.[1]	הֲבִינֵנִי וְאֶלְמְדָה מִצְוֹתֶיךָ	havineni, ve'elmeda mitzvotecha.
[74] On seeing me your worshippers cheer;	יְרֵאֶיךָ יִרְאוּנִי וְיִשְׂמָחוּ	Yere'echa yiruni veyismachu
O, how I long your word to hear![2]	כִּי לִדְבָרְךָ יִחָלְתִּי	ki lidvar'cha yichalti.
[75] Your verdicts, God, are just, I know,	יָדַעְתִּי יהוה כִּי־צֶדֶק מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ	Yadati Adonai ki tzedek mishpatecha
and justly have you brought me low.[3]	וֶאֱמוּנָה עִנִּיתָנִי	ve'emunah initani.
[76] May your compassion soothe my pain;	יְהִי־נָא חַסְדְּךָ לְנַחֲמֵנִי	Yehi nah chasdecha lenachameni
sweet words your worshippers sustain.[4]	כְּאִמְרָתְךָ לְעַבְדֶּךָ	ke'imrat'cha le'avdecha.
[77] Bring me to life through your compassion	יְבוֹאֻנִי רַחֲמֶיךָ וְאֶחְיֶה	Yevo'uni rachamecha ve'echyeh
for your Torah is my passion.[5]	כִּי־תוֹרָתְךָ שַׁעֲשֻׁעָי	ki Torat'cha sha'ashu'ai.
[78] Shame slanderers for their devious lies	יֵבֹשׁוּ זֵדִים כִּי־שֶׁקֶר עִוְּתוּנִי	Yevoshu zedim ki sheker ivtuni;
while I your detailed laws revise.[6]	אֲנִי אָשִׂיחַ בְּפִקּוּדֶיךָ	ani asi'ach befikudecha.
[79] May your admirers join with me,	יָשׁוּבוּ לִי יְרֵאֶיךָ	Yashuvu li yere'echa
who know truth in your testimony.[7]	וְיֹדְעֵי[8] עֵדֹתֶיךָ	veyodei edotecha.
[80] I'd be sincere in your decrees	יְהִי־לִבִּי תָמִים בְּחֻקֶּיךָ	Yehi libi tamim bechukecha
so I'd not bear indignity.[9]	לְמַעַן לֹא אֵבוֹשׁ	lema'an lo evosh.

[1] "Your-hands made-me and-established-me; / make-me-understand, and-I-will-study your-rules."
[2] "Those-who-revere-you will-see-me and-they-will-rejoice / for for-your-word I-have-hoped."
[3] "I-know, God, that-righteous *are* your-judgements/verdicts / and-dependably you-have-answered-me."
[4] "May-(please) your-kindness *serve* to-comfort-me / according-to-your-word/promise to-*me*-your-servant."
[5] "Cause-your-kindnesses-to-come-to-me so-that-I-will-live / for your-Torah *is* my-delight." שַׁעֲשֻׁעָי seems plural, "my delights."
[6] "Let-them-be-ashamed, proud-people, for-*in*-falsehood they-have-warped-me (they have twisted my reputation); / *but* I will-meditate-on your-detailed-precepts."
[7] "Let-them-return to-me, those-who-revere-you / and-those-who-know your-testimonies."
[8] A manuscript would have וידעו
[9] "Let-my-heart-be simple (not duplicitous) in-your-statutes / so-that not shall-I-be-ashamed."

כ

[81] My strength is gone; I wait for you	כָּלְתָה לִתְשׁוּעָתְךָ נַפְשִׁי	Kalta lit'shu'at'cha nafshi;
(as once you pledged) to bring rescue.[1]	לִדְבָרְךָ יִחָלְתִּי	lidvar'cha yichalti.
[82] I'm out of tears, waiting to hear	כָּלוּ עֵינַי לְאִמְרָתֶךָ	Kalu einai le'imratecha
when you at last will bring me cheer.[2]	לֵאמֹר מָתַי תְּנַחֲמֵנִי	lemor matai tenachameni.
[83] I'm like a dried-out water flask	כִּי־הָיִיתִי כְּנֹאד בְּקִיטוֹר	Ki hayiti kenod bekitor—
but still observe the rules you ask.[3]	חֻקֶּיךָ לֹא שָׁכָחְתִּי	chukecha lo shachachti.
[84] How long must I bear *this agony*?—	כַּמָּה יְמֵי־עַבְדֶּךָ	Kamah yemei avdecha?
Rogues chase me with impunity.[4]	מָתַי תַּעֲשֶׂה בְרֹדְפַי מִשְׁפָּט	Matai ta'aseh verodfai mishpat?
[85] The proud dug traps to capture me,	כָּרוּ־לִי זֵדִים שִׁיחוֹת	Karu li zedim shichot,
Contrary to morality.[5]	אֲשֶׁר לֹא כְתוֹרָתֶךָ	asher lo cheToratecha.
[86] Your precepts all are true and wise;	כָּל־מִצְוֹתֶיךָ אֱמוּנָה	Kol mitzvotecha emunah;
help me!—foes dog me with their lies.[6]	שֶׁקֶר רְדָפוּנִי עָזְרֵנִי	sheker redafuni—ozreni!
[87] On Earth they nearly finished me	כִּמְעַט כִּלּוּנִי בָאָרֶץ	Kimat kiluni va'aretz--
but your laws lived in my memory.[7]	וַאֲנִי לֹא־עָזַבְתִּי פִקּוּדֶיךָ	va'ani lo azavti fikudecha.
[88] Revive me, *God* benevolent,	כְּחַסְדְּךָ חַיֵּנִי	Kechasdecha chayeni,
that I may heed your testament.[8]	וְאֶשְׁמְרָה עֵדוּת פִּיךָ	ve'eshmerah edut picha.

[1] "Exhausted/finished *waiting*-for-your-salvation/rescue *is* my-life-force; / for-your-word have-I-waited." "For your word" could mean the poet waited for a verbal announcement that troubles were over, and it could also mean the poet waited for God to fulfill the ancient promise God made to save the Israelite people.

[2] "Exhausted-are my-eyes *waiting* for-your-utterance, / to-say when you-will-comfort-me."

[3] "For-I-have-become like-a-flask/bottle with-*water*-vapor; / your-statutes not have-I-forgotten." The flask with vapor may suggest an empty water flask with nothing left but vapor. Some translators think of a smoke-dried water flask; smoking hides can improve water-resistance.

[4] "How-many *are* the-days-of *anguish for* your-servant (how long must this misery last)? / When will-you-perform against-my-pursuers justice?" "They chase me with impunity" suggests that the people who are pursuing the poet have faced no punishment.

[5] "They-dug-for-me (to trap me), proud-people, pits, / which *is* not according-to-your-Torah."

[6] "All-of-your-laws *are* faithfulness; / *with*-falsehood they-have-pursued-me; help-me!"

[7] "Almost they-finished-me-off on-the-land/on-Earth, / but-I, not-did-I-leave your-detailed-precepts."

[8] "According-to-your-kindness, give-me-life / so-that-I-can-observe the-testimony-of your-mouth.

ל

[89] God, ever lasts your verdict just,	לְעוֹלָם יהוה דְּבָרְךָ	Le'olam, Adonai, devar'cha
unchanging, firm in sky to stand,[1]	נִצָּב בַּשָּׁמָיִם	nitzav bashamayim.
[90] While, here below, your lasting trust	לְדֹר וָדֹר אֱמוּנָתֶךָ	Ledor vador emunatecha;
sustains with care the settled land,[2]	כּוֹנַנְתָּ אֶרֶץ וַתַּעֲמֹד	konanta eretz vata'amod.
[91] Where waiting your decisions	לְמִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ עָמְדוּ הַיּוֹם	Lemishpatecha amdu hayom
all your servants form a faithful band.[3]	כִּי הַכֹּל עֲבָדֶיךָ	ki hakol avadecha.
[92] Were not your Torah my delight	לוּלֵי תוֹרָתְךָ שַׁעֲשֻׁעָי	Lulei Torat'cha sha'ashu'ai;
I'd perish in my misery.[4]	אָז אָבַדְתִּי בְעָנְיִי	az avadti ve'onyi.
[93] Your laws, lodged always in my heart,	לְעוֹלָם לֹא־אֶשְׁכַּח פִּקּוּדֶיךָ	Le'olam lo eschkach pikudecha
refresh my flagging energy.[5]	כִּי בָם חִיִּיתָנִי	ki vam chiyitani.
[94] I am for you, so rescue me;	לְךָ־אֲנִי הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי	Lecha ani hoshi'eni
I have pursued your *just* decrees.[6]	כִּי פִקּוּדֶיךָ דָרָשְׁתִּי	ki fikudecha darashti.
[95] Miscreants massed to bring me down	לִי קִוּוּ רְשָׁעִים לְאַבְּדֵנִי	Li kivu resha'im le'abdeni—
as I explored your testimonies.[7]	עֵדֹתֶיךָ אֶתְבּוֹנָן	edotecha etbonan.
[96] We toil within constraints, I see;	לְכָל תִּכְלָה רָאִיתִי קֵץ	Lechol tichlah ra'iti ketz;
only your law can set us free.[8]	רְחָבָה מִצְוָתְךָ מְאֹד	rechavah mitzvat'cha me'od.

[1] "Forever, God, *is* your-word, / erected in-the-skies"; I group the words according to the Masoretic punctuation though many translators prefer to keep נִצָּב as part of the previous phrase and translate: "Your word, God, is forever established in the heavens." Is justice only in heaven and not on earth? A good topic for earnest prayer.

[2] "From-generation to-generation *by* your-faithfulness / you-have-established land and/so-that-it-will-stand/endure."

[3] "*Waiting* for-your-verdicts they-have-stood today / for all *are* your-servants."

[4] "If-not your-Torah *were* my-delight, / then should-I-be-lost in-my-misery/poverty."

[5] "Forever not-shall-I-forget your-decrees (I'll never forget your laws but keep them in mind) / for through-them you-have-revived-me."

[6] "*Devoted*-to-you *am* I; save-me; / for your-decrees have-I-sought."

[7] "To-me (against me) gathered evil-people to-destroy-me; / your-testimonies would-I-study."

[8] "For-all completion (for every completed achievement) I-have-seen a-limit/end; / expansive *is* your-law very-much." To paraphrase this rather opaque verse: while God's work is without limit in time or scope, the poet sees that human achievement is limited; but God's law is expansive, not bound by the constraints of human endeavor.

מ

[97] How very much do I adore	מָה־אָהַבְתִּי תוֹרָתֶךָ	Mah ahavti Toratecha;
my daily study of your law[1]	כָּל־הַיּוֹם הִיא שִׂיחָתִי	kol hayom hi sichati.
[98] That schools me to outwit my foe	מֵאֹיְבַי תְּחַכְּמֵנִי מִצְוֹתֶךָ	Me'oyvai techakmeni mitzvotecha
and always at my side does go.[2]	כִּי לְעוֹלָם הִיא־לִי	ki le'olam hi li.
[99] Than all my teachers I've learned more	מִכֹּל־מְלַמְּדַי הִשְׂכַּלְתִּי	Mikol melamdai hiskalti
in study of your sacred law.[3]	כִּי עֵדְוֹתֶיךָ שִׂיחָה לִי	ki edotecha sichah li.
[100] More learned than old scholars, I	מִזְּקֵנִים אֶתְבּוֹנָן	Mizkenim etbonan
treasure your laws and lay them by.[4]	כִּי פִקּוּדֶיךָ נָצָרְתִּי	ki fikudecha natzarti.
[101] I've always shunned the evil way	מִכָּל־אֹרַח רָע כָּלֵאתִי רַגְלָי	Mikol orach ra kaliti raglai,
so that your words would with me stay.[5]	לְמַעַן אֶשְׁמֹר דְּבָרֶךָ	lema'an eshmor devarecha.
[102] From your rulings I have not turned	מִמִּשְׁפָּטֶיךָ לֹא־סָרְתִּי	Mimishpatecha lo sarti
but right from you my way have learned.[6]	כִּי־אַתָּה הוֹרֵתָנִי	ki atah horetani.
[103] Your words—the taste for which I long,	מַה־נִּמְלְצוּ לְחִכִּי אִמְרָתֶךָ	Mah nimletzu lechiki imratecha,
sweeter than honey on the tongue![7]	מִדְּבַשׁ לְפִי	midvash lefi!
[104] I learn insight from your decrees	מִפִּקּוּדֶיךָ אֶתְבּוֹנָן	Mipikudecha etbonan;
to spurn all paths toward fallacies.[8]	עַל־כֵּן שָׂנֵאתִי כָּל־אֹרַח שָׁקֶר	al ken saneti kol orach sha'ker.

[1] "How I-have-loved your-Torah; / all-day it *is* my-study."
[2] "More-than-my-enemies makes-me-wise your-law (your law makes me wiser than my enemies) / for always it (Torah study) *is* with-me."
[3] "More-than-all-my-teachers I-have-become-clever / for your-testimonies *are* a-subject-of-study for-me." A student claims to have learned more than his teacher? With such a claim you could shock some figures in our Talmud!
[4] "More-than-elders I-would-understand / for your-decrees I-have-stored-away."
[5] "From-every-path-of evil I-have-restrained my-legs / so-that I-could-keep your-word."
[6] "From-your-rulings/judgements/verdicts I-have-not-swerved, / for-you showed/taught-*them*-to-me."
[7] "How-they-have-been-smooth/pleasant/palatable to-my-cheek/mouth, your-utterances, / more-than-honey on-my-lips."
[8] "Fom-your-precepts I-would-gain-insight; / for-this have-I-hated every-path-of falsehood."

נ

[105] Your word is my guiding light,	נֵר־לְרַגְלִי דְבָרֶךָ	Ner leragli devarecha
on my *dark* path a lantern bright.[1]	וְאוֹר לִנְתִיבָתִי	ve'or lintivati.
[106] I promised and I'll see it through	נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי וָאֲקַיֵּמָה	Nishbati va'akayemah
to heed just rulings heard from you.[2]	לִשְׁמֹר מִשְׁפְּטֵי צִדְקֶךָ	lishmor mishpetei tzidkecha.
[107] I'm in such pain I can't bear more;	נַעֲנֵיתִי עַד־מְאֹד	Na'aneti ad me'od;
O God, revive me as you swore.[3]	יהוה חַיֵּנִי כִדְבָרֶךָ	Adonai, chayeni chidvarecha.
[108] My promised prayer, God, accept;	נִדְבוֹת פִּי רְצֵה־נָא יהוה	Nidvot pi retzeh nah, Adonai,
instruct me in your *just* precepts.[4]	וּמִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ לַמְּדֵנִי	umishpatecha lamdeni.
[109] I wear my heart upon my sleeve	נַפְשִׁי בְכַפִּי תָמִיד	Nafshi vechapi tamid,
and know for sure what I believe.[5]	וְתוֹרָתְךָ לֹא שָׁכָחְתִּי	veTorat'cha lo shachachti.
[110] Those villains set a trap for me	נָתְנוּ רְשָׁעִים פַּח לִי	Natnu resha'im pach li,
but I held fast to your decrees.[6]	וּמִפִּקּוּדֶיךָ לֹא תָעִיתִי	umipikudecha lo ta'iti.
[111] Your proofs, my lasting heritage,	נָחַלְתִּי עֵדוֹתֶיךָ לְעוֹלָם	Nachalti edotecha le'olam
cheer me and my heart's pain assuage.[7]	כִּי־שָׂשׂוֹן לִבִּי הֵמָּה	ki sason libi hemah.
[112] Toward your laws my thoughts I'll bend	נָטִיתִי לִבִּי לַעֲשׂוֹת חֻקֶּיךָ	Natiti libi la'asot chukecha,
Until "forever" meets its end.[8]	לְעוֹלָם עֵקֶב	le'olam ekev.

[1] "A-lamp-for-my-foot *is* your-word / and-a-light for-my-path." What is the word? Perhaps Torah, that guide to living. Perhaps the promise of God's Torah—of reward and punishment, or compassion and renewal. Something lights the poet's steps as he or she proceeds through life.

[2] "I-have-made-a-promise and-I-will-fulfill-it: / to-keep the-rulings/verdicts-of your-righteousness (your just rulings)."

[3] "I-have-suffered up-to-very-much (to the extreme); / God, give-me-life according-to-your-word (or promise, or ruling)."

[4] "The-voluntary-pledges-of my-mouth please-accept, God, / and-your-verdicts teach-me."

[5] "My-self (or, my metaphorical heart, or soul) *is* in-my-palm/hand (I'm in control of my self, or my destiny; or, my innermost self is out in public and easy to see) always, / and-your-Torah not have-I-forgotten (I am clear about what I believe)."

[6] "They-provided, bad-people, a-snare for-me / but-from-your-precepts not did-I-stray."

[7] "I-inherited your-proofs/testimonies forever / for-delight-of my-heart *are* they."

[8] "I-inclined my-heart (I determined) to-perform your-statutes / forever to-the-end." עֵקֶב can mean "heel," the very end of a moving person, so it can imply end, or consequence (what comes after),

ס

[113] Equivocators I abhor	סֵעֲפִים שָׂנֵאתִי	Se'afim saneti,
but your instruction I adore.[1]	וְתוֹרָתְךָ אָהָבְתִּי	veTorat'cha ahavti.
[114] You are my shelter and my guard	סִתְרִי וּמָגִנִּי אָתָּה	Sitri umagini atah;
I wait in hope to hear your word.[2]	לִדְבָרְךָ יִחָלְתִּי	lidvar'cha yichalti.
[115] Away from me, you evil fools,	סוּרוּ־מִמֶּנִּי מְרֵעִים	Suru mimeni mere'im,
for I'll keep my God's golden rules.[3]	וְאֶצְּרָה מִצְוֹת אֱלֹהָי	ve'etzrah mitzvot Elohai.
[116] For life, your promise pledged support;	סָמְכֵנִי כְאִמְרָתְךָ וְאֶחְיֶה	Sam'cheni che'imrat'cha ve'echyeh,
my cherished hope don't bring to naught.[4]	וְאַל־תְּבִישֵׁנִי מִשִּׂבְרִי	ve'al tevisheni misivri.
[117] When peril threatens, rescue me	סְעָדֵנִי וְאִוָּשֵׁעָה	Se'adeni ve'ivashe'ah,
to meditate on your decrees.[5]	וְאֶשְׁעָה בְחֻקֶּיךָ תָמִיד	ve'eshah vechukecha tamid.
[118] Those lost to your laws, you despise,	סָלִיתָ כָּל־שׁוֹגִים מֵחֻקֶּיךָ	Salita kol shogim mechukecha,
for all their treachery and lies.[6]	כִּי־שֶׁקֶר תַּרְמִיתָם	ki sheker tarmitam.
[119] You skim the scum who soil the land;	סִגִים חִשַּׁבְתָּ כָל־רִשְׁעֵי־אָרֶץ	Sigim hishbata chol rishei aretz;
that's why I cherish your command.[7]	לָכֵן אָהַבְתִּי עֵדֹתֶיךָ	lachen ahavti edotecha.
[120] In awe of you my body quakes,	סָמַר מִפַּחְדְךָ בְשָׂרִי	Samar mipachdecha vesari,
in fear of your just judgement shakes.[8]	וּמִמִּשְׁפָּטֶיךָ יָרֵאתִי	umimishpatecha yareti.

[1] "People-of-divided-mind (who can't or won't say either yes or no) I-hate, / and-your-Torah I-love."
[2] "My-shelter/hiding-place and-my-defence/shield *are* you; / for-your-word I-have-hoped/waited."
[3] "Get-away-from-me, evildoers / so-that-I-can-keep the-rules-of my-God."
[4] "Support-me according-to-your-pledge, that-I-may-live, / and-do-not-make-me-feel-ashamed of-my-hopes."
[5] "Sustain/feed/nourish-me that-I-may-be-saved, / that-I-may-meditate on-your-statutes forever."
[6] "You-throw-away all-who-stray from-your-statutes / for-falsehood *is* their-deceit.
[7] "*As-if-they-were*-dross have-you-stopped all-the-wicked-people-of-the-earth; / therefore have-I-loved your-testimonies."
[8] "It-shudders from-terror-of-you, my-flesh, / and-of-your-verdicts I-have-felt-fear."

ע

[121] Justly and right, that's how I act;	עָשִׂיתִי מִשְׁפָּט וָצֶדֶק	Asiti mishpat vatzedek
so bullies can't mount an attack.[1]	בַּל־תַּנִּיחֵנִי לְעֹשְׁקָי	bal tanicheni le'oshkai.
[122] My wellbeing you guarantee:	עֲרֹב עַבְדְּךָ לְטוֹב	Arov avdecha letov;
don't let the arrogant trample me.[2]	אַל־יַעַשְׁקֻנִי זֵדִים	al ya'ashkuni zedim.
[123] I've wept all my tears; when will you	עֵינַי כָּלוּ לִישׁוּעָתֶךָ	Einai kalu lishu'atecha
rescue me, and bring justice too?[3]	וּלְאִמְרַת צִדְקֶךָ	ule'imrat tzidkecha.
[124] Treat me with kindness—it's your way—	עֲשֵׂה עִם־עַבְדְּךָ כְחַסְדֶּךָ	Aseh im avdecha chechasdecha,
and teach me how to live each day.[4]	וְחֻקֶּיךָ לַמְּדֵנִי	vechukecha lamdeni.
[125] Your servant am I; make me wise,	עַבְדְּךָ־אֲנִי הֲבִינֵנִי	Avdecha ani: havineni,
your evidence to recognize.[5]	וְאֵדְעָה עֵדֹתֶיךָ	ve'edah edotecha.
[126] The time to act for God is now,	עֵת לַעֲשׂוֹת לַיהוָה	Et la'asot lAdonai—
when folks your Torah disavow![6]	הֵפֵרוּ תּוֹרָתֶךָ	heferu Toratecha.
[127] Here's why your law I value more	עַל־כֵּן אָהַבְתִּי מִצְוֹתֶיךָ	Al ken ahavti mitzvotecha
than gold assayed from nuggets pure,[7]	מִזָּהָב וּמִפָּז	mizahav umipaz.
[128] For right, I know, is your whole law,	עַל־כֵּן כָּל־פִּקּוּדֵי כֹל יִשָּׁרְתִּי	Al ken kol pikudei chol yisharti,
and every false path I abhor.[8]	כָּל־אֹרַח שֶׁקֶר שָׂנֵאתִי	kol orach sheker saneti.

[1] "I-have-performed justice and-righteousness / lest-you-should-leave-me to-my-oppressors." Justice and righteousness mean different things to different people. Sometimes a justice system gives an obviously unfair result.

[2] "Guarantee your-servant (me) for-good (assure me that you'll treat me well); / let-not-oppress-me arrogant-people (don't let the arrogant oppress me)."

[3] "My-*weeping*-eyes are-finished (I've emptied my tear ducts) *waiting* for-your-salvation / and-for-the-announcement-of your-justice (and for news that you're bringing justice)."

[4] "Do with-your-servant according-to-your-kindness (you are kind, so treat me that way) / and-your-statutes teach-me."

[5] Your-servant *am* I; give-me-understanding, / that-I-may-know/recognize your-proofs." The poet may be asking for discernment to grasp the evidence of God's nature.

[6] "*It's* time to-act for-God; / they-have-nullified your-Torah." Yoma 69b quotes this verse in connection with this story: the evil Cutheans convinced Alexander the Great to destroy the Temple. R. Shimon HaTatzaddik, wearing priestly garments (normally reserved for priestly functions) went to plead with Alexander to spare the Temple. Alexander recognized R. Shimon; his form had appeared to Alexander in battle, presaging success. R. Shimon told him the Jews prayed for Alexander in the Temple, and destroying the Temple could undermine Alexander's success. So Alexander gave the Cutheans into the power of the Jews, who treated them brutally.

[7] "For-this I-have-loved your-rules / more-than-gold and-lustrous-gold." Our sages describe seven, or five, or ten varieties of gold in BT Yoma 44b-45a.

[8] "For-this, all-precepts-of *your-law* entirely I-have-found-to-be-right/straightforward, / *and* every-path-of falsehood I-have-hated."

פ

129 Miracles prove you trustworthy;	פְּלָאוֹת עֵדְוֹתֶיךָ	Pela'ot edotecha;
I keep them in my memory.[1]	עַל־כֵּן נְצָרָתַם נַפְשִׁי	al ken netzaratam nafshi.
130 To voice your words is to give light,	פֵּתַח דְּבָרֶיךָ יָאִיר	Petach devarecha ya'ir,
perception to the dim of sight.[2]	מֵבִין פְּתָיִים	mevin petayim.
131 My mouth gapes, panting with desire—	פִּי־פָעַרְתִּי וָאֶשְׁאָפָה	Pi fa'arti va'eshafah
for your instructions I'm afire.[3]	כִּי לְמִצְוֹתֶיךָ יָאָבְתִּי	ki lemitzvotecha ya'avti.
132 With gracious love towards me turn,	פְּנֵה־אֵלַי וְחָנֵּנִי	Peneh elai vechoneni,
which those who prize your repute earn.[4]	כְּמִשְׁפָּט לְאֹהֲבֵי שְׁמֶךָ	kemishpat le'ohavei shemecha.
133 Instruct me where to place my feet	פְּעָמַי הָכֵן בְּאִמְרָתֶךָ	Pe'amai hachen be'imratecha,
never to stoop beneath deceit.[5]	וְאַל־תַּשְׁלֶט־בִּי כָל־אָוֶן	ve'al tashlet bi chol ahven.
134 From the oppressor rescue me	פְּדֵנִי מֵעֹשֶׁק אָדָם	Pedeni me'oshek adam,
that I may keep your just decree.[6]	וְאֶשְׁמְרָה פִקּוּדֶיךָ	ve'eshmerah pikudecha.
135 On me your beams of grace bestow;	פָּנֶיךָ הָאֵר בְּעַבְדֶּךָ	Panecha ha'er be'avdecha,
to me your rules of conduct show.[7]	וְלַמְּדֵנִי אֶת־חֻקֶּיךָ	velamdeni et chukecha.
136 Torrents of gushing tears I wept	פַּלְגֵי־מַיִם יָרְדוּ עֵינָי	Palgei mayim yardu einai,
to see your Torah face neglect.[8]	עַל לֹא־שָׁמְרוּ תוֹרָתֶךָ	al lo shamru Toratecha.

[1] "Wonders *are* your-testimonies; / therefore has-stored/kept-them my-self." God's miracles are testimony of God's love and power, and the poet says he or she keeps them in mind (in the conscious self) as reminders of God's fidelity.

[2] "The-opening/entrance-of your-words/statements will-give-light, / gives-understanding-to simple-people." What is the beginning of a word? I think it's the enunciation, merely saying the word, even if it's not immediately understood.

[3] "My-mouth has-gaped-open and-I-am-panting *with-desire* / because for-your-commandments have-I-longed."

[4] "Turn-towards-me and-be-kind-to-me / according-to-a-*just*-verdict for-those-who-love your-name/reputation"; i.e., those who protect God's reputation are entitled to God's kindness.

[5] "My-steps place-in-order through-your-utterance / and-don't subject-me-to all-wrongdoing."

[6] "Rescue-me from-the-oppression-of a-human-being / and-*then*-I-can-observe your-decrees."

[7] "Your-face/presence illumine at-your-servant (me) / and-teach-me your-statutes."

[8] "Confluences-of-water let-fall my-eyes / for not-did-they-observe your-Torah." פַּלְגֵי־מַיִם: the root פלג implies division—a point where two bodies of water (or streams of tears) join or part.

צ

[137] Your righteousness, God, is perfect	צַדִּיק אַתָּה יהוה	Tzadik atah, Adonai,
and *all* your verdicts are correct.[1]	וְיָשָׁר מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ	veyashar mishpatecha.
[138] You ordered right testimony	צִוִּיתָ צֶדֶק עֵדְוֹתֶיךָ	Tzivita tzedek edotecha,
and steadfastness in great degree.[2]	וֶאֱמוּנָה מְאֹד	ve'emunah me'od.
[139] With righteous anger I am seized	צִמְּתַתְנִי קִנְאָתִי	Tzimtatni kinati
when my foes flout your *just* decrees.[3]	כִּי־שָׁכְחוּ דְבָרֶיךָ צָרָי	ki shach'chu devarecha tzarai.
[140] Like purest *gold* is your decree,	צְרוּפָה אִמְרָתְךָ מְאֹד	Tzerufah imrat'cha me'od,
an object of pure love for me.[4]	וְעַבְדְּךָ אֲהֵבָהּ	ve'avdecha ahevah.
[141] Though I'm too young to win respect	צָעִיר אָנֹכִי וְנִבְזֶה	Tza'ir anochi venivzeh;
never do I your rules forget.[5]	פִּקֻּדֶיךָ לֹא שָׁכָחְתִּי	pikudecha lo shachachti.
[142] Your righteousness is ever true,	צִדְקָתְךָ צֶדֶק לְעוֹלָם	Tzidkat'cha tzedek le'olam,
your Torah steadfast through and through.[6]	וְתוֹרָתְךָ אֱמֶת	veTorat'cha emet.
[143] I've had my share of trouble and pain	צַר־וּמָצוֹק מְצָאוּנִי	Tzar umatzok metza'uni;
but your rules bring me joy again.[7]	מִצְוֹתֶיךָ שַׁעֲשָׁעָי	mitzvotecha sha'ashu'ai.
[144] Your proofs are right eternally;	צֶדֶק עֵדְוֹתֶיךָ לְעוֹלָם	Tzedek edotecha le'olam;
that I may live, teach them to me.[8]	הֲבִינֵנִי וְאֶחְיֶה	havineni ve'echyeh.

[1] "Righteous *are* you, God, / and-straight/straightforward/direct *are* your-verdicts."
[2] "You-commanded righteousness-of your-testimonies/proofs (*God* commanded that *God's* testimonies—proofs of *God's* saving grace—should be righteous) / and-reliability/trustworthiness to-a-great-degree."
[3] "It-has-stopped-me, my-zeal, / for-they-have-forgotten/ignored your-words/statements, my-troublers."
[4] "Refined (like a refined precious metal) is-your-utterance greatly / and-your-servant (me) cherishes-it."
[5] "Young *am* I and-despised / *but* your-detailed-rules not have-I-forgotten."
[6] "Your-righteousness *is* righteous forever, / and-your-Torah *is* truthful."
[7] "Constraint-and-distress have-found-me; / your-rules *are* my-delight."
[8] "Righteous *are* your-proofs forever; / make-me-understand *them* that-I-may-live."

ק

[145] Answer, God, my anguished plea	קָרָאתִי בְכָל־לֵב עֲנֵנִי יהוה	Karati vechol lev; aneni, Adonai!
so your commands will lodge with me.[1]	חֻקֶּיךָ אֶצֹּרָה	Chukecha etzorah.
[146] I called on you—now rescue me	קְרָאתִיךָ הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי	Keraticha; hoshi'eni,
that I may guard your testimony.[2]	וְאֶשְׁמְרָה עֵדֹתֶיךָ	ve'eshmerah edotecha.
[147] Before day dawns, I rise and pray	קִדַּמְתִּי בַנֶּשֶׁף וָאֲשַׁוֵּעָה	Kidamti vaneshef va'ashave'ah;
in hopes to hear this is the day.[3]	לִדְבָרְךָ[4] יִחָלְתִּי	lidvar'cha yichalti.
[148] I'd wake to see each changing guard,	קִדְּמוּ עֵינַי אַשְׁמֻרוֹת	Kidmu einai ashmurot
then meditate upon your word.[5]	לָשִׂיחַ בְּאִמְרָתֶךָ	lasi'ach be'imratecha.
[149] In your compassion hear my prayer,	קוֹלִי שִׁמְעָה כְחַסְדֶּךָ	Koli shimah chechasdecha:
God; grant me life (if that be fair).[6]	יהוה כְּמִשְׁפָּטֶךָ חַיֵּנִי	Adonai, kemishpatecha chayeni.
[150] They steal too close—wicked of mind—	קָרְבוּ רֹדְפֵי זִמָּה	Karvu rodfei zimah;
who leave your Torah far behind.[7]	מִתּוֹרָתְךָ רָחָקוּ	miTorat'cha rachaku.
[151] But God, you are right next to me,	קָרוֹב אַתָּה יהוה	Karov atah, Adonai,
your rules all fit reality.[8]	וְכָל־מִצְוֹתֶיךָ אֱמֶת	vechol mitzvotecha emet.
[152] Long have I studied your great acts—	קֶדֶם יָדַעְתִּי מֵעֵדֹתֶיךָ	Kedem yadati me'edotecha
enduring miracles, true facts.[9]	כִּי לְעוֹלָם יְסַדְתָּם	ki le'olam yesadtam.

[1] "I-called with-whole-heart; answer-me, God. / Your-statutes I-shall-store/keep."
[2] "I-called-upon-you; save/rescue-me; / and-I-will-*be-able-to*-keep/observe your-testimonies/proofs (the evidence of your nature, such as the well-attested miracles that freed us from slavery in Egypt)."
[3] "I-was-early in-the-predawn and-I-would-cry-out; / for-your-word (your announcement that the time is now) I-hoped/waited."
[4] A manuscript would have לדברין ("for your words") instead of לִדְבָרְךָ ("for your word").
[5] "They-came-earlier, my-eyes, than-the-watches (I opened my eyes before each of the night watches) / to meditate upon your pronouncement."
[6] "My-voice *of prayer* listen-to, according-to-your-compassion (I know you're nice, so listen to my request); / God, according-to-your-verdict/justice, give me life (if it's consistent with divine justice, let me live)."
[7] "They-have-come-close, pursuers-of wickedness; / from-your-Torah they-have-distanced-themselves."
[8] "Close *are* you, God, / and-all-your-rules *are* truth." "Your rules all fit reality" implies that God's system of living is not an inaccessible ideal but practical rules for real life, as Moses says in Deut. 30:12.
[9] "Long-ago I-came-to-know *your reliable nature* from-your-testimonies/proofs (the great miracles that God performed, which demonstrate God's salvation and power) / for forever you-established-them (they should never be forgotten, as true events)."

ר

[153] Give me strength to bear my grief—	רְאֵה־עָנְיִי וְחַלְּצֵנִי	Re'eh onyi vechaltzeni
in Torah is my firm belief.[1]	כִּי־תוֹרָתְךָ לֹא שָׁכָחְתִּי	ki Torat'cha lo shachachti.
[154] Rescue and help me in my strife;	רִיבָה רִיבִי וּגְאָלֵנִי	Rivah rivi uge'aleni;
by your *just* verdict grant me life.[2]	לְאִמְרָתְךָ חַיֵּנִי	le'imrat'cha chayeni.
[155] For scoundrels, rescue's far away,	רָחוֹק מֵרְשָׁעִים יְשׁוּעָה	Rachok mer'sha'im yeshu'ah,
for they scorn to pursue your way.[3]	כִּי־חֻקֶּיךָ לֹא דָרָשׁוּ	ki chukecha lo darashu.
[156] Your kindness, God, is manifold;	רַחֲמֶיךָ רַבִּים יְהוָה	Rachamecha rabim, Adonai;
in justice grant that I grow old.[4]	כְּמִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ חַיֵּנִי	kemishpatecha chayeni.
[157] Many hunt me and block my way,	רַבִּים רֹדְפַי וְצָרָי	Rabim rodfai vetzarai;
but my firm faith will not decay.[5]	מֵעֵדֹתֶיךָ לֹא נָטִיתִי	me'edotecha lo natiti.
[158] With deep disgust tricksters I saw	רָאִיתִי בֹגְדִים וָאֶתְקוֹטָטָה	Ra'iti vogdim ve'etkotata,
who disregard your stated law.[6]	אֲשֶׁר אִמְרָתְךָ לֹא שָׁמָרוּ	asher imrat'cha lo shamaru.
[159] See how I love the laws you give,	רְאֵה כִּי־פִקּוּדֶיךָ אָהָבְתִּי	Re'eh ki fikudecha ahavti;
O merciful God, so let me live![7]	יְהוָה כְּחַסְדְּךָ חַיֵּנִי	Adonai, kechasdecha chayeni.
[160] Truth leads all of your spoken laws,	רֹאשׁ־דְּבָרְךָ אֱמֶת	Rosh devar'cha emet,
and your just verdict long endures.[8]	וּלְעוֹלָם כָּל־מִשְׁפַּט צִדְקֶךָ	ule'olam kol mishpat tzidkecha.

[1] "See my-trouble and-give-me-strength, / for your-Torah not-have-I-forgotten."
[2] "Fight my-fight and-save-me; / according-to-your-spoken-*promise* give-me-life."
[3] "Far-away from-wicked-people *is* salvation / for-your-statutes not they-have-sought."
[4] "Your-mercies *are* many, God; / according-to-your-verdict, give-me-life."
[5] "Many *people are* my-pursuers and constrainers/foes (many people hunt me and make my progress difficult, or cause me trouble; the root צר often connotes narrow or constricted);/ from-your-testimonies not have-I-leaned/declined."
[6] "I-saw deceivers and-I-was-disgusted / in-that your-utterance not they-observed."
[7] "See that-your-detailed-laws I-have-loved; / God, according-to-your-mercy/kindness cause-me-to-live."
[8] "The-head/beginning-of your-word *is* truth, / and-forever *is* all-the-judgement/verdict-of your-righteousness/justice."

ש

[161] Princes pursue me for no cause—	שָׂרִים רְדָפוּנִי חִנָּם	Sarim redafuni chinom
but my worse fear is to fail your laws.[1]	וּמִדְּבָרְךָ[2] פָּחַד לִבִּי	umid'var'cha pachad libi.
[162] I so rejoice to hear your word	שָׂשׂ אָנֹכִי עַל־אִמְרָתֶךָ	Sas anochi al imratecha
as if I'd found a treasure hoard.[3]	כְּמוֹצֵא שָׁלָל רָב	kemotzeh shalal rav.
[163] I hate deceit, I abhor lies,	שֶׁקֶר שָׂנֵאתִי וַאֲתַעֵבָה	Sheker saneti va'ata'evah;
but your Torah with love I prize.[4]	תּוֹרָתְךָ אָהָבְתִּי	Torat'cha ahavti.
[164] I praise you seven times each day	שֶׁבַע בַּיּוֹם הִלַּלְתִּיךָ	Sheva bayom hilalticha
for your just rules, which I obey.[5]	עַל מִשְׁפְּטֵי צִדְקֶךָ	al mishpetei tzidkecha.
[165] Great peace for those who love your law,	שָׁלוֹם רָב לְאֹהֲבֵי תוֹרָתֶךָ	Shalom rav le'ohavei Toratecha,
for whom no barrier lies in store.[6]	וְאֵין־לָמוֹ מִכְשׁוֹל	ve'ein lamo michshol.
[166] For your salvation, God, I yearned,	שִׂבַּרְתִּי לִישׁוּעָתְךָ יהוה	Sibarti lishuat'cha, Adonai,
and followed your rules *that I learned*.	וּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ עָשִׂיתִי	umitzvotecha asiti.
[167] I kept your proofs deep within me	שָׁמְרָה נַפְשִׁי עֵדֹתֶיךָ	Shamrah nafshi edotecha,
and cherished them exceedingly.[7]	וָאֹהֲבֵם מְאֹד	ve'ohavem me'od.
[168] I kept your rules, your signs did heed,	שָׁמַרְתִּי פִקּוּדֶיךָ וְעֵדֹתֶיךָ	Shamarti fikudecha ve'edotecha
for toward you my steps all lead.[8]	כִּי כָל־דְּרָכַי נֶגְדֶּךָ	ki chol derachai negdecha.

[1] "Princes/leaders have-hunted-me for-no-cause / and-from-your-word *is the* fear-of my-heart"; i.e., somebody powerful is chasing me for no good reason, but my real fear is that I should fail to keep your laws, or that your laws should fall into neglect.

[2] A manuscript would have ומדבריך (plural) for ומִדְּבָרְךָ (singular), and I can't see why our tradition makes the change.

[3] "Delighted-am I on-account-of-your-utterance, / like-someone-who-discovers booty much."

[4] "Deceit I-have-hated and-I-would-despise-it; / *but* your-Torah I-have-loved."

[5] "Seven *times* in-the-day I-have-praised-you / on-account-of the-verdicts-of your-righteousness."

[6] "*Let there be* peace, great, for-the-lovers-of your-Torah, / and-there-is-no for-such-a-one impediment."

[7] "Guarded my-self your-testimonies / and-I-loved-them very-much."

[8] "I-guarded your-precepts and-your-testimonies / for all-my-ways *are* across-from-you."

ת

[169] That my appeal reach you on high,	תִּקְרַב רִנָּתִי לְפָנֶיךָ	Tikrav rinati lefanecha;
God, teach me how to form my cry.[1]	יהוה כִּדְבָרְךָ הֲבִינֵנִי	Adonai, kidvar'cha havineni.
[170] That to you may come my prayer,	תָּבוֹא תְחִנָּתִי לְפָנֶיךָ	Tavo techinati lefanecha;
(as once your promised) my life spare.[2]	כְּאִמְרָתְךָ הַצִּילֵנִי	ke'imrat'cha hatzileni.
[171] Your praise from my lips will flow	תַּבַּעְנָה שְׂפָתַי תְּהִלָּה	Tabana sefatai tehilah
when your laws to me you show.[3]	כִּי תְלַמְּדֵנִי חֻקֶּיךָ	ki telamdeni chukecha.
[172] Your statements shall my tongue repeat	תַּעַן לְשׁוֹנִי אִמְרָתֶךָ	Ta'an leshoni imratecha,
for all your rules are right and meet.[4]	כִּי כָל־מִצְוֹתֶיךָ צֶדֶק	ki chol mitzvotecha tzedek.
[173] Help me with your mighty hand	תְּהִי־יָדְךָ לְעָזְרֵנִי	Tehi yad'cha le'ozreni
for I follow your command.[5]	כִּי פִקּוּדֶיךָ בָחָרְתִּי	ki fikudecha vacharti.
[174] For your salvation, God, I yearn,	תָּאַבְתִּי לִישׁוּעָתְךָ יהוה	Ta'avti lishu'atecha, Adonai,
and with delight your law I learn.[6]	וְתוֹרָתְךָ שַׁעֲשָׁעָי	veTorat'cha sha'ashu'ai.
[175] I live but to declare your praise;	תְּחִי־נַפְשִׁי וּתְהַלְלֶךָּ	Techi nafshi utehaleleka,
your justice helps me *through my days*.[7]	וּמִשְׁפָּטְךָ יַעְזְרֻנִי	umishpatecha ya'azruni.
[176] Seek this lost lamb, shepherd kind,	תָּעִיתִי כְשֶׂה אֹבֵד בַּקֵּשׁ עַבְדֶּךָ	Ta'iti keseh oved; bakesh avdecha
for your rules stay in my mind.[8]	כִּי מִצְוֹתֶיךָ לֹא שָׁכָחְתִּי	ki mitzvotecha lo shachachti.

[1] "May-it-come-close, my-cry (of joy or of anguish), before-you; / God, according-to-your-word give-me-understanding." The translation understands the second line to imply that God will teach the poet how to form proper prayer.

[2] "May-it-come, my-plea, before-you (may my plea come before you); / according-to-your-utterance save-me (as you promised, save me)."

[3] "Let-them-pour-out, my-lips, praise *of you* / when/because you-will-teach-me your-statutes."

[4] "It-will-repeat/answer/echo, my tongue, your-statements (my tongue will repeat your statements) / for all-your-commands *are* justice."

[5] "Let-your-hand-be *appointed* to-help-me / for your-detailed-rules I-have-chosen *to observe."*

[6] "I-have-yearned for-your-salvation, God, / and-your-Torah *is* my-delight."

[7] "May-my-self-live so-that-it-can-praise-you, / and-your-verdicts will-help-me."

[8] "I-was-astray like-a-sheep being-lost; *O shepherd, God,* seek-for your-servant (me) / for your-commandments not have-I-forgotten."

Psalm 120

[1] A song of going up:	שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת	Shir hama a lot:
To God when I was in distress	אֶל־יהוה בַּצָּרָתָה לִי	El Adonai batzaratah li
I called, and *God* replied to me.	קָרָאתִי וַיַּעֲנֵנִי	karati vaya'aneni.
[2] God, save me from the liar's lips,	יהוה הַצִּילָה נַפְשִׁי מִשִּׂפַת־שֶׁקֶר	Adonai, hatzila nafshi misfat sheker,
the tongue that speaks deceitfully!	מִלְּשׁוֹן רְמִיָּה	milashon remiyah!
[3] What do you have, what more is yours,	מַה־יִּתֵּן לְךָ וּמַה־יֹּסִיף לָךְ	Mah yiten lecha, umah yosif lach,
O *lying* tongue full of deceit?[1]	לְשׁוֹן רְמִיָּה	lashon remiyah?
[4] Stinging arrows of the archer,	חִצֵּי גִבּוֹר שְׁנוּנִים	Chitzei gibor shenunim
juniper coals *of blistering heat*.[2]	עִם גַּחֲלֵי רְתָמִים	im gachalei retamim.
[5] Alas for me, *with* Meshech[3] dwelling,	אוֹיָה־לִּי כִּי־גַרְתִּי מֶשֶׁךְ	Oyah li ki garti Meshech,
settled among Kedar's tents.	שָׁכַנְתִּי עִם־אָהֳלֵי קֵדָר	shachanti im oholei Kedar.
[6] Long are my miserable days	רַבַּת שָׁכְנָה־לָּהּ נַפְשִׁי	Rabat shachnah lah nafshi
with those who view peace with contempt.	עִם שׂוֹנֵא שָׁלוֹם	im soneh shalom.
[7] I am *for* peace, but when I speak,	אֲנִי־שָׁלוֹם וְכִי אֲדַבֵּר	Ani shalom, vechi adaber,
on war, on war, they're all intent!	הֵמָּה לַמִּלְחָמָה	hemah lamil'chamah.

[1] "What does *God* give you (or, What is given you) and what else shall *God* give you (or, What else is to be given you), / O tongue of falsehood?" It's hard to be sure whether the verbs יִתֵּן and יֹּסִיף should be understood as passive, with an impersonal subject, or whether we're supposed to think that God is the subject. If God is the subject, as Rashi and Metzudat David suggest, the tongue has two guardians to keep it truthful: teeth are one guard and lips the other. If a false tongue escapes both its guards, the punishment (in verse 4) is painful. If we're not talking about body parts created by God for a moral purpose, then maybe we're asking the lying person what s/he gains or hopes to gain from deceit.

[2] "Arrows of a warrior, sharp/piercing, / with glowing coals of juniper."

[3] Meshech is the son of Yafet (Noah's son, Genesis 10:2), characterized as violent in Ezek. 32:26 and 38:2. Kedar is known for lovely black tents (Song of Songs 1:5), warriors (Isaiah 21:17) and sheep (Isaiah 60:7, Ezek 27:21). We learn in this psalm that both of these peoples are war-crazy.

Psalm 121

[1] A song for going up.	שִׁיר לַמַּעֲלוֹת	Shir lama a lot.
I lift my eyes to scan the hills:	אֶשָּׂא עֵינַי אֶל־הֶהָרִים	Esah einai el heharim:
where can I find a helping hand?[1]	מֵאַיִן יָבֹא עֶזְרִי	me'ayin yavo ezri?
[2] My help *comes* from God *alone*,	עֶזְרִי מֵעִם יהוה	Ezri me'im Adonai,
creator of both sky and land.	עֹשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ	oseh shamayim va'aretz.
[3] *God* won't allow your foot to slip.	אַל־יִתֵּן לַמּוֹט רַגְלֶךָ	Al yiten lamot raglecha,
nor will your guardian respite take;[2]	אַל־יָנוּם שֹׁמְרֶךָ	al yanum shomrecha.
[4] See, never drowsy nor asleep	הִנֵּה לֹא־יָנוּם וְלֹא יִישָׁן	Hineh lo yanum velo yishan,
is Israel's sentry, *wide awake.*	שׁוֹמֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל	shomer Yisra'el.
[5] God is your sentinel and shield,[3]	יהוה שֹׁמְרֶךָ יהוה צִלְּךָ	Adonai shomrecha, Adonai tzilcha
standing by your fighting arm.[4]	עַל־יַד יְמִינֶךָ	al yad yeminecha.
[6] By day, sun cannot strike you down,	יוֹמָם הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לֹא־יַכֶּכָּה	Yomam hashemesh lo yakekah
nor moon at night bring you to harm.[5]	וְיָרֵחַ בַּלָּיְלָה	veyare'ach balaylah.
[7] God shields you from all injury,	יהוה יִשְׁמָרְךָ מִכָּל־רָע	Adonai yishmor'cha mikol rah,
protects your true identity;[6]	יִשְׁמֹר אֶת־נַפְשֶׁךָ	yishmor et nafshecha.
[8] Going to and fro, God keeps you sure	יהוה יִשְׁמָר־צֵאתְךָ וּבוֹאֶךָ	Adonai yishmor tzet'cha uvo'echa
from now on and for evermore.[7]	מֵעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם	me'atah ve'ad olam.

[1] "From where will my help come?" (I don't know where to look for help) or "from where my help comes" (I get some sort of help by looking up [some think that looking up for help suggests idolatrous worship].)
[2] "Your guardian will not slumber."
[3] "God guards you and shades/shelters you."
[4] "At your right hand."
[5] "By day the sun will not strike you / and the moon at night."
[6] "God guards you from all evil / guards your self/soul/personhood/personality."
[7] "God guards your going and your coming / from now and for ever."

Psalm 122

[1] A song of going up, for David.	שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְדָוִד	Shir hama a lot. LeDavid
How I rejoiced when I was told,	שָׂמַחְתִּי בְּאֹמְרִים לִי	Samachti be'omrim li,
"Let's go *up* to the House of God."	בֵּית יהוה נֵלֵךְ	"Beit Adonai nelech."
[2] Our *pilgrim* feet came to a stand,	עֹמְדוֹת הָיוּ רַגְלֵינוּ	Omdot hayu ragleinu
Jerusalem, inside your gates—	בִּשְׁעָרַיִךְ יְרוּשָׁלִָם	bish'arayich, Yerushala'im,
[3] Jerusalem, a city built	יְרוּשָׁלִַם הַבְּנוּיָה	Yerushala'im habnuyah
compact, united into one,[1]	כְּעִיר שֶׁחֻבְּרָה־לָּהּ יַחְדָּו	ke'ir shechubra lah yachdav,
[4] To which the *twelve* tribes would ascend,	שֶׁשָּׁם עָלוּ שְׁבָטִים	Shesham alu shevatim,
the tribes of God, by Israel's law,	שִׁבְטֵי־יָהּ עֵדוּת לְיִשְׂרָאֵל	shivtei Yah, edut leYisra'el,
proclaiming God's *illustrious* name.[2]	לְהֹדוֹת לְשֵׁם יהוה	lehodot leshem Adonai.
[5] For there were found the judgment seats,	כִּי שָׁמָּה יָשְׁבוּ כִסְאוֹת לְמִשְׁפָּט	Ki shama yashvu chisot lemishpat,
the thrones of *royal* David's line.[3]	כִּסְאוֹת לְבֵית דָּוִיד	kisot leveit David.
[6] Seek concord for Jerusalem;	שַׁאֲלוּ שְׁלוֹם יְרוּשָׁלִָם	Sha'alu shelom Yerushala'im;
may those who love you feel secure.	יִשְׁלָיוּ אֹהֲבָיִךְ	yishlayu ohavayich.
[7] Let peace be *found* within your walls,	יְהִי־שָׁלוֹם בְּחֵילֵךְ	Yehi shalom becheilech,
repose within your palaces.	שַׁלְוָה בְּאַרְמְנוֹתָיִךְ	shalva be'armenotayich.
[8] For all my family and friends[4]	לְמַעַן אַחַי וְרֵעָי	Lema'an achai vere'ai
I say, "May peace *abide* with you!"	אֲדַבְּרָה־נָּא שָׁלוֹם בָּךְ	adabra nah, "Shalom bach."
[9] For the dwelling of our ruling God:	לְמַעַן בֵּית־יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ	Lema'an beit Adonai Eloheinu
"I seek the *very* best for you."	אֲבַקְשָׁה טוֹב לָךְ	avaksha tov lach.

[1] "Jerusalem, *which is* built / like a city that is gathered to itself, together."

[2] "Which-there up-went the-tribes, / the-tribes-of-God, testimony/evidence/law for-Israel, / to acknowledge/thank God's name/reputation." Line 1: Of course, the tribes went to Jerusalem for the three "pilgrim" festivals, Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkot. Line 2: But did they go towards the "testimony," a words sometimes used for the Tablets which were (eventually) housed in the Temple? Or was their pilgrimage "evidence" of their devotion? Or—since our tradition holds that they all found room in the town (Pirkei Avot 5:5)—was their pilgrimage evidence of this miracle? Or did they travel in observance of the "law" commanding the annual pilgrimages? Line 3: Did they go to give thanks for God's well-justified fame as a compassionate divinity who freed them from slavery, or to acknowledge that God's fame was well earned?

[3] "Thrones for/of the house of David."

[4] "My brothers/family/kinsfolk and friends."

Psalm 123

[1] A song of going up.	שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת	Shir hama a lot.
To you I raise my *pleading* eyes,	אֵלֶיךָ נָשָׂאתִי אֶת־עֵינַי	Elecha nasati et einai,
to you who dwell *high* in the skies.	הַיֹּשְׁבִי בַּשָּׁמָיִם	hayoshvi bashamayim.
[2] For see, as *fearful* servants shrink,	הִנֵּה כְעֵינֵי עֲבָדִים	Hineh che'einei avadim
eyeing their master's *cruel* hand,	אֶל־יַד אֲדוֹנֵיהֶם	el yad adoneihem,
like *worried* maidservants, who think	כְּעֵינֵי שִׁפְחָה	ke'einei shifcha
their mistress' fist on them will land,	אֶל־יַד גְּבִרְתָּהּ	el yad gevirta,
O ruling God, toward you we face,	כֵּן עֵינֵינוּ אֶל־יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ	ken eineinu el Adoai Eloheinu,
hoping that you will grant us grace.[1]	עַד שֶׁיְּחָנֵנוּ	ad sheyechonenu.
[3] Be gracious, God, pity us still:	חָנֵּנוּ יהוה חָנֵּנוּ	Chonenu, Adonai, chonenu,
of masters' scorn we've had our fill.[2]	כִּי־רַב שָׂבַעְנוּ בוּז	ki rav savanu vuz.
[4] We've had our fill—enough and more—	רַבַּת שָׂבְעָה־לָּהּ נַפְשֵׁנוּ	Rabat savah lah nafshenu
of scorn from idle shirkers,	הַלַּעַג הַשַּׁאֲנַנִּים	hala'ag hasha'ananim,
more than enough disdain from snobs	הַבּוּז לִגְאֵיוֹנִים	habuz ligeyonim.
too pompous to be workers.[3]		

[1] "See, as the eyes of servants / *are directed* toward their masters' hand, / as the eyes of a maidservant / *are directed* toward the mistress' hand, / so our eyes *are directed* toward the Boss, our God, / *waiting* until *God* will take pity on us." May we live in a world where teachers don't beat their pupils, parents their children, spouses their spouses, or employers their servants. In Torah times, beating servants was sadly normal (Ex. 21:20), and many centuries later Samuel Pepys gave servants many a thrashing: "Up betimes, and with my salt eel went down in the parler and there got my boy and did beat him till I was fain to take breath two or three times, yet for all I am afeard it will make the boy never the better, he is grown so hardened in his tricks, which I am sorry for, he being capable of making a brave man, and is a boy that I and my wife love very well" (April 24, 1663).

[2] "Be gracious to us, God, be gracious to us, / for greatly are we sated with contempt *from so-called betters."*

[3] "Much-of has-sated-for-itself our-person / the-scorning-of the-idlers, / the-contempt-of the-proud (We've had enough of lazybones' scorn and contempt)."

Psalm 124

[1] A song of going up. To David.	שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְדָוִד	Shir hama a lot. LeDavid.
Had not God been *fighting* for us—	לוּלֵי יהוה שֶׁהָיָה לָנוּ	Lulei Adonai shehayah lanu,
Israel would have to concede[1]—	יֹאמַר־נָא יִשְׂרָאֵל	yomar nah Yisra'el,
[2] Had not God been *fighting* for us	לוּלֵי יהוה שֶׁהָיָה לָנוּ	Lulei Adonai shehayah lanu
as foes struck us, in our need,[2]	בְּקוּם עָלֵינוּ אָדָם	bekum aleinu adam,
[3] They'd have swallowed us alive	אֲזַי חַיִּים בְּלָעוּנוּ	Azai chayim bela'unu
in burning wrath, to spill our blood,[3]	בַּחֲרוֹת אַפָּם בָּנוּ	bacharot apam banu.
[4] Water would have overwhelmed us,	אֲזַי הַמַּיִם שְׁטָפוּנוּ	Azai hamayim shetafunu,
over us the streaming flood.	נַחְלָה עָבַר עַל־נַפְשֵׁנוּ	nachlah avar al nafshenu.
[5] Yes, the waters would be surging	אֲזַי עָבַר עַל־נַפְשֵׁנוּ	Azai avar al nafshenu
proudly while we sink beneath.[4]	הַמַּיִם הַזֵּידוֹנִים	hamayim hazeidonim.
[6] O bless God, who did not leave us	בָּרוּךְ יהוה שֶׁלֹּא נְתָנָנוּ	Baruch Adonai shelo netananu
prey for their *rapacious* teeth.	טֶרֶף לְשִׁנֵּיהֶם	teref leshineihem.
[7] We were like a bird, set free	נַפְשֵׁנוּ כְּצִפּוֹר נִמְלְטָה	Nafshenu ketzipor nimletah
from fowlers' broken snare to flee,[5]	מִפַּח יוֹקְשִׁים הַפַּח נִשְׁבָּר	mipach yokshim—hapach nishbar,
rescued from captivity.[6]	וַאֲנַחְנוּ נִמְלָטְנוּ	ve'anachnu nimlatnu.
[8] In need, on God we always call—	עֶזְרֵנוּ בְּשֵׁם יהוה	Ezrenu beshem Adonai,
for sky and land, God made them all,	עֹשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ	oseh shamayim va'aretz.
and under God's authority they fall.[7]		

[1] Or "Let Israel say"; without God's help, we'd have to admit we'd have been destroyed.
[2] "As there rose against us someone."
[3] "In the burning of their wrath against us." "Wrath" is literally "noses"—the idiom for anger suggests someone so angry that fire comes from his nostrils.
[4] "Then would pass above our persons / the arrogant waters."
[5] "From the snare of the fowlers (bird-catchers)—the snare was broken."
[6] "And we were rescued."
[7] "Our help *is* in the name of God (i.e., we call on God for help), / who makes sky and land."

Psalm 125

[1] A song of going up.	שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת	Shir hama a lot.
God's faithful are like Zion Hill,	הַבֹּטְחִים בַּיהוה כְּהַר־צִיּוֹן	Habot'chim bAdonai kehar Tziyon:
unmoved, forever fixed in place.[1]	לֹא־יִמּוֹט לְעוֹלָם יֵשֵׁב	lo yimot, le'olam yeshev.
[2] Mountains surround Jerusalem	יְרוּשָׁלַם הָרִים סָבִיב לָהּ	Yerushala'im, harim saviv lah,
as God forever does embrace	וַיהוה סָבִיב לְעַמּוֹ	vAdonai saviv le'amo,
God's people, now and evermore,[2]	מֵעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם	me'atah ve'ad olam.
[3] So evil's rod can't come to rest	כִּי לֹא יָנוּחַ שֵׁבֶט הָרֶשַׁע	Ki lo yanu'ach shevet haresha
on land of blameless victims, nor	עַל גּוֹרַל הַצַּדִּיקִים	al goral hatzadikim,
would then the righteous, for defence,	לְמַעַן לֹא־יִשְׁלְחוּ הַצַּדִּיקִים	lema'an lo yishlechu hatzadikim
grasp sinful tools of violence.[3]	בְּעַוְלָתָה יְדֵיהֶם	be'avlatah yedeihem.
[4] Grant blessings, God, to people good,	הֵיטִיבָה יהוה לַטּוֹבִים	Heitiva, Adonai, latovim,
who choose a life of decency,[4]	וְלִישָׁרִים בְּלִבּוֹתָם	velisharim belibotam.
[5] But for the devious, crooked brood,	וְהַמַּטִּים עַקַלְקַלּוֹתָם	Vehamatim akalkalotam,
send them with rogues, God, to their destiny	יוֹלִיכֵם יהוה אֶת־פֹּעֲלֵי הָאָוֶן	yolichem Adonai et po'alei ha'aven.
that Israel may enjoy tranquillity.[5]	שָׁלוֹם עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל	Shalom al Yisra'el.

[1] "The ones who trust in God are like Mount Zion: / it won't be moved; it stays in place forever." But as Darwin observed, the landscape is ever-changing: "Daily it is forced home on the mind of the geologist, that nothing, not even the wind that blows, is so unstable as the level of the crust of this earth" (*Voyage of the Beagle*).

[2] "Jerusalem—hills are surrounding it / and God is surrounding *God's* people / from now and until forever."

[3] "For not shall-rest the rod (stick, staff) of evil / on the-lot-of the-righteous / so-that not they-will-send-forth against-the-wrong (i.e., weaponry) of-their-hands." שֵׁבֶט means stick or staff or tribe, but I used rod because it's a surveyor's measurement, $5\frac{1}{2}$ yards, and I imagine evil people encroaching on the land assigned by lot (גּוֹרָל) to one of the good Israelite families (see Deut. 26:55). So long as this can't happen, the righteous don't have to take up arms "against the sinning of their hands," destructive weaponry which I think the poet considers deplorable ("sinning"), even when unavoidable.

[4] "Be good, God, to the good / and to those who are upright in their hearts."

[5] "And those who lean over (and are not upright) their twistings (perversions), / may God lead them away, with those who do wrong. / Peace upon Israel."

Psalm 126

[1] A song of going up:	שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת	Shir hama'a lot:
when God returns the Jews,	בְּשׁוּב יהוה	Beshuv Adonai
takes us back to Zion,	אֶת־שִׁיבַת צִיּוֹן	et shivat Tziyon
we'll marvel at the news.[1]	הָיִינוּ כְּחֹלְמִים	hayinu kecholmim.
[2] Our talk will all be laughter,	אָז יִמָּלֵא	Az yimaleh
words can't tell our mirth;	שְׂחוֹק פִּינוּ	sechok pinu
no tongue can speak our joy,	וּלְשׁוֹנֵנוּ רִנָּה	ulshonenu rina.
no language upon earth.[2]		
Among the other folk they'll say,	אָז יֹאמְרוּ בַגּוֹיִם	Az yomru vagoyim,
"What God has done for them is great."[3]	הִגְדִּיל יהוה לַעֲשׂוֹת עִם־אֵלֶּה	"Higdil Adonai la'asot im eileh."
[3] God's done an awful lot for us;	הִגְדִּיל יהוה לַעֲשׂוֹת עִמָּנוּ	Higdil Adonai la'asot imanu;
filled with joy, we celebrate.[4]	הָיִינוּ שְׂמֵחִים	hayinu semechim.
[4] Take us back, God, back to our old land	שׁוּבָה יהוה אֶת־שְׁבִיתֵנוּ	Shuva Adonai et shevitenu
like streams returning to the arid sand.[5]	כַּאֲפִיקִים בַּנֶּגֶב	ka'afikim banegev.
[5] In mourning though they sow their seed,	הַזֹּרְעִים בְּדִמְעָה	Hazorim bedima
in happiness they'll reap their yield.[6]	בְּרִנָּה יִקְצֹרוּ	berina yiktzoru.
[6] To sow the seed, bowed with grief	הָלוֹךְ יֵלֵךְ וּבָכֹה	Haloch yelech uvacho
the plowman plods his weary way;	נֹשֵׂא מֶשֶׁךְ־הַזָּרַע	no'se meshech hazara,
his heart will surely feel relief	בֹּא־יָבוֹא בְרִנָּה	bo yavo verina
bringing in the sheaves on harvest day.[7]	נֹשֵׂא אֲלֻמֹּתָיו	no'se alumotav.

[1] "A-song-of ascents/degrees/steps (perhaps to be sung as officiants climb the steps to the Altar, perhaps to be sung as pilgrims make their ascent to Jerusalem): / at-the-returning-of God / *of* the-captivity-of Zion / we-were/we-would-be like-dreamers."
[2] "Then will-be-filled *with* joy our mouth, and our tongue with joy."
[3] "Then will-they-say among-the-nations / greatness-did God to-act for-these-*people."*
[4] "Greatness-did God to-act for-us; / we-have-become happy."
[5] "Return, God, our-captivity / like-streams in-the-desert."
[6] "They-who-sow in-sadness/silence / in-joy shall-reap."
[7] "One-who-walks *and* will-continue weeping / *and* carries the-equipment-for-sowing, / coming, will-come in-joy / carrying sheaves."

Psalm 127

[1] A song of going up, by Solomon.[1]	שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לִשְׁלֹמֹה	Shir hama a lot liShlomo.
If God does not build up a house,	אִם־יהוה לֹא־יִבְנֶה בַיִת	Im Adonai lo yivneh vayit,
in vain the builders do their work;	שָׁוְא עָמְלוּ בוֹנָיו בּוֹ	shav amlu vonav bo.
If God does not protect the town,	אִם־יהוה לֹא־יִשְׁמָר־עִיר	Im Adonai lo yishmor ir,
in vain the sentry stays alert.[2]	שָׁוְא שָׁקַד שׁוֹמֵר	shav shakad shomer.
[2] Up with the dawn and late to bed?	שָׁוְא לָכֶם	Shav lachem,
you waste your earnest toil—so much	מַשְׁכִּימֵי קוּם מְאַחֲרֵי־שֶׁבֶת	mashkimei kum, me'acharei shevet,
effort to win your crust of bread.	אֹכְלֵי לֶחֶם הָעֲצָבִים	ochlei lechem ha'atzuvim.
God's favorite sleeps and gets as much![3]	כֵּן יִתֵּן לִידִידוֹ שֵׁנָא	Ken yiten lidido shenah.
[3] Look, children are God's heritage,	הִנֵּה נַחֲלַת יהוה בָּנִים	Hineh nachalat Adonai banim,
fruit of the womb, God's *dearest* wage.[4]	שָׂכָר פְּרִי הַבָּטֶן	sachar peri habaten.
[4] Like arrows for an archer strong	כְּחִצִּים בְּיַד־גִּבּוֹר	Kechitzim beyad gibor,
are children of a couple young.[5]	כֵּן בְּנֵי הַנְּעוּרִים	ken benei hane'urim.
[5] Lucky is one with quiver filled	אַשְׁרֵי הַגֶּבֶר אֲשֶׁר מִלֵּא אֶת־אַשְׁפָּתוֹ	Ashrei hagever asher mileh et ashpato
with children honorable, skilled	מֵהֶם לֹא־יֵבֹשׁוּ	mehem; lo yevoshu
to fight or to negotiate	כִּי־יְדַבְּרוּ	ki yedabru
when foes besiege the *city* gate.[6]	אֶת־אוֹיְבִים בַּשָּׁעַר	et oyvim basha'ar.

[1] Or "for Solomon." Maybe this is the famous King Solomon.
[2] "If God does not build a house, / in vain have its builders toiled at it. / If God does not protect a city, / in vain has the guard/sentry kept alert."
[3] "You gain nothing, / early risers and late stayers / eaters of bread of toil/trouble: / so (i.e., the same amount, just as much) *God* gives to *God's* favorite sleeping." If God likes you, you'll earn as much by sleeping as people who toil the long day. Don't tell this to your children!
[4] "Look/see heritage/inheritance of God *are* children, / *the* wage *God pays is* fruit of the womb."
[5] "Like arrows in the hand/power/possession of a warrior/soldier, / so are the children of the young."
[6] "Happy/lucky is the man who has filled his quiver / with them (children)—they shall not be ashamed / when they speak (or contend or negotiate or defy) / enemies at the gate."

Psalm 128

[1] A song of going up:	שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת	Shir hama'a lot:
Happy is anyone who respects God,	אַשְׁרֵי כָּל־יְרֵא יהוה	Ashrei kol yereh Adonai,
who walks in *God's* ways.	הַהֹלֵךְ בִּדְרָכָיו	haholech bidrachav.
[2] When you eat what you have worked for,[1]	יְגִיעַ כַּפֶּיךָ כִּי תֹאכֵל	Yegi'ah kapecha ki tochel,
you are happy and contented.	אַשְׁרֶיךָ וְטוֹב לָךְ	ashrecha vetov lach.
[3] Your wife is like a fruitful vine	אֶשְׁתְּךָ כְּגֶפֶן פֹּרִיָּה	Eshtecha kegefen poriyah
inside your house;	בְּיַרְכְּתֵי בֵיתֶךָ	beyark'tei veitecha;
your children are like olive plants	בָּנֶיךָ כִּשְׁתִלֵי זֵיתִים	banecha kishtilei zeitim
around your table.	סָבִיב לְשֻׁלְחָנֶךָ	saviv leshulchanecha.
[4] Look, this is how one is blessed,	הִנֵּה כִי־כֵן יְבֹרַךְ	Hineh chi chen yevorach
a man who respects God.	גֶּבֶר יְרֵא יהוה	gaver yereh Adonai.
[5] May God bless you from Zion,	יְבָרֶכְךָ יהוה מִצִּיּוֹן	Yevarech'cha Adonai miTziyon,
so you can see good for Jerusalem	וּרְאֵה בְּטוּב יְרוּשָׁלִָם	ure'eh betuv Yerushala'im
every day of your life	כֹּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ	kol yemei chayecha.
[6] And see children of your children,	וּרְאֵה־בָנִים לְבָנֶיךָ	Ure'eh vanim levanecha,
peace for the whole Jewish community.	שָׁלוֹם עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל	shalom al Yisra'el.

[1] "The labor of your hands/palms"; I agree with those who say this psalm honors physical labor for earning a living, but others cite Chullin 44b, where Mar Zutra quotes Rav Chisda to imply that the reward is for study, service and self-reflection rather than for physical labor.

Psalm 129

[1] A song of going up.	שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת	Shir hama a lot.
They harried me since I was young,	רַבַּת צָרָרוּנִי מִנְּעוּרָי	Rabat tzeraruni mine'urai,
the land of Israel says;[1]	יֹאמַר־נָא יִשְׂרָאֵל	yomar-na Yisra'el;
[2] They harried me my whole life long;	רַבַּת צָרָרוּנִי מִנְּעוּרָי	Rabat tzeraruni mine'urai,
despite them, still I'm strong.[2]	גַּם לֹא־יָכְלוּ לִי	gam lo yachlu li.
[3] Ploughmen trod across my back	עַל־גַּבִּי חָרְשׁוּ חֹרְשִׁים	Al gabi charshu chorshim,
to cut their furrows long,	הֶאֱרִיכוּ לְמַעֲנִיתָם[3]	he'erichu lema'anitam.
[4] But righteous God set bounds for those	יהוה צַדִּיק קִצֵּץ	Adonai tzadik kitzetz
wide trenches[4] of the wrong.	עֲבוֹת רְשָׁעִים	avot resha'im.
[5] Let them dry up and shrink aback,	יֵבֹשׁוּ וְיִסֹּגוּ אָחוֹר	Yevoshu veyisogu achor
all Zion's enemies—	כֹּל שֹׂנְאֵי צִיּוֹן	kol sonei Tziyon.
[6] A harvest parched, like roof-dried straw,	יִהְיוּ כַּחֲצִיר גַּגּוֹת	Yiheyu kachatzir gagot
all withered in the field,[5]	שֶׁקָּדְמַת שָׁלַף יָבֵשׁ	shekadmat shalaf yavesh,
[7] Too thin to fill a reaper's fist,	שֶׁלֹּא מִלֵּא כַפּוֹ קוֹצֵר	Shelo mileh chapo kotzer
a proper sheaf to yield,[6]	וְחִצְנוֹ מְעַמֵּר	vechitzno me'amer,
[8] So travelers wouldn't stop and say,	וְלֹא אָמְרוּ הָעֹבְרִים	Velo amru ha'ovrim,
"God's blessing *rests* on you this day,	בִּרְכַּת־יהוה אֲלֵיכֶם	"Birkat Adonai aleichem;
to God's great name with you we pray."[7]	בֵּרַכְנוּ אֶתְכֶם בְּשֵׁם יהוה	berachnu et'chem beshem Adonai."

[1] "Much-of they-bothered-me from-my-youth / would Israel (please) say." I think the land of Israel itself is talking since she's ploughed. Perhaps the poet foresees that the Romans will plough the area (as was their wont) to found a new city on the ruins of Jerusalem; perhaps the poem was written after that event. See 137:7.

[2] "Even *so* they could not overcome me."

[3] A manuscript version would spell this word word למענותם.

[4] Some think עֲבוֹת means ropes; I think it means something thick—a cloud (Ex. 19:9), a rope (Psalm 118:27) or in this case a deep or wide furrow. Verse 4 means, "God, righteous, set limits for / the thicknesses of the evil people."

[5] "Let them be like straw of roofs (i.e., all dried out, since the roof would be the place to dry grain), / which-as-forerunner-of *the action when* someone-plucked/harvested *it,* it-is-dry (i.e., before harvest, the grain stalks got parched, as dry as roof-straw, yielding no grain for bread).

[6] "Which wouldn't fill the palm of the reaper / or the armful of the sheaf-maker."

[7] "We have blessed you in the name of God" or, "We bless with you, with the name of God."

Psalm 130

[1] A song of going up:	שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת	Shir hama'alot:
From the depths *of despair* I called to you, God:	מִמַּעֲמַקִּים קְרָאתִיךָ יהוה	Mima'amakim karaticha, Adonai.
[2] "God, hear my voice,	אֲדֹנָי שִׁמְעָה בְקוֹלִי	Adonai, shim'ah vekoli:
listen attentively[1]	תִּהְיֶינָה אָזְנֶיךָ קַשֻּׁבוֹת	tihyena oznecha kashuvot
to the sound of my pleas!"	לְקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנָי	lekol tachanunai.
[3] If you consider our sins, God—	אִם־עֲוֹנוֹת תִּשְׁמָר־יָהּ	Im avonot tishmor Yah,
O God, who will survive?[2]	אֲדֹנָי מִי יַעֲמֹד	Adonai, mi ya'amod?
[4] But pardon dwells with you,	כִּי־עִמְּךָ הַסְּלִיחָה	Ki im'cha haselichah,
so that you can be feared.	לְמַעַן תִּוָּרֵא	lema'an tivareh.
[5] God, I waited, my whole self waited,	קִוִּיתִי יהוה קִוְּתָה נַפְשִׁי	Kiviti, Adonai, kivta nafshi,
and in God's word do I hope.	וְלִדְבָרוֹ הוֹחָלְתִּי	velidvaro hochalti.
[6] My self waits for God	נַפְשִׁי לַאדֹנָי	Nafshi lAdonai
more *eagerly* than sentries wait for morning,	מִשֹּׁמְרִים לַבֹּקֶר	mishomrim laboker,
sentries for morning!	שֹׁמְרִים לַבֹּקֶר	shomrim laboker.
[7] Let Israel hope in God,	יַחֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־יהוה	Yachel Yisra'el el Adonai,
for kindness is with God,	כִּי־עִם־יהוה הַחֶסֶד	ki im Adonai hachesed,
and ample redemption is with *God*.	וְהַרְבֵּה עִמּוֹ פְּדוּת	veharbeh imo fedut.
[8] *God* will redeem Israel	וְהוּא יִפְדֶּה אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל	Vehu yifdeh et Yisra'el
from all its sins!	מִכֹּל עֲוֹנֹתָיו	mikol avonotav.

[1] "Let your ears be attentive" or "Let your ears be listening."
[2] "Who could stand up?"

Psalm 131

[1] A song of steps, by David.	שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְדָוִד	Shir hama'alot leDavid:
God, I am not a stuck-up snob,	יהוה לֹא גָבַהּ לִבִּי	Adonai, lo gavah libi
eyeing others haughtily;	וְלֹא רָמוּ עֵינָי	velo ramu einai,
I wouldn't step *into a job*	וְלֹא הִלַּכְתִּי	velo hilachti
beyond my own capacity.[1]	בִּגְדֹלוֹת וּבְנִפְלָאוֹת מִמֶּנִּי	bigdolot uvenifla'ot mimeni.
[2] No, I'm content; I lull my self[2]	אִם לֹא שִׁוִּיתִי וְדוֹמַמְתִּי נַפְשִׁי	Im lo shiviti vedomamti nafshi
like a baby at the breast,	כְּגָמֻל עֲלֵי אִמּוֹ	kegamul alei imo:
a baby nursing peacefully.[3]	כַּגָּמֻל עָלַי נַפְשִׁי	kagamul alai nafshi.
[3] Let Israel hope in God	יַחֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל יהוה	Yachel Yisra'el el Adonai
from now on, forever.	מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם	me'atah ve'ad olam.

[1] "God, my heart has not been haughty / nor my eyes arrogant, / nor have I stepped / into matters too great or wondrous for me."

[2] "Surely (lit., 'If not') I-have-calmed and-silenced myself."

[3] "Surely (lit., 'If not') I-have-calmed and-silenced myself. / like a weaned-*infant* upon its-mother, / like-a-weaned-*infant* upon-myself *is* my-soul." The root גמל, GML, gives us the third letter of the Hebew aleph-bet; camel; completion; recompense; weaning (Gen. 21:8); and perhaps the camel and the nursing infant both drink to satiation and contentment.

Psalm 132

[1] A song of going up.	שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת	Shir hama a lot.
Remember, God, on behalf of David,	זְכוֹר־יהוה לְדָוִד	Zechor, Adonai, leDavid
all his suffering,	אֵת כָּל־עֻנּוֹתוֹ	et kol unoto,
[2] How he swore to God	אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לַיהוה	Asher nishba lAdonai,
and pledged to the Power of Jacob:[1]	נָדַר לַאֲבִיר יַעֲקֹב	nadar laAvir Ya'akov:
[3] "I won't enter my house	אִם־אָבֹא בְּאֹהֶל בֵּיתִי	"Im avo be'ohel beiti,
nor go up to *my* bed,[2]	אִם־אֶעֱלֶה עַל־עֶרֶשׂ יְצוּעָי	im e'eleh al eres yetzu'ai.
[4] I'll banish sleep from my eyes,	אִם־אֶתֵּן שְׁנַת לְעֵינָי	Im eten shenat le'einay,
slumber from my eyelids[3]	לְעַפְעַפַּי תְּנוּמָה	le'afapai tenumah
[5] Until I find a place for God,	עַד־אֶמְצָא מָקוֹם לַיהוה	Ad emtza makom lAdonai,
a dwelling for the Power of Jacob."[4]	מִשְׁכָּנוֹת לַאֲבִיר יַעֲקֹב	mishkanot la'Avir Ya'akov.
[6] Look, we heard of this in Efrat,	הִנֵּה־שְׁמַעֲנוּהָ בְאֶפְרָתָה	Hineh shema'anuha ve'Efratah,
found *out about* it in the forest fields.[5]	מְצָאנוּהָ בִּשְׂדֵי־יָעַר	metzanuha bisdei ya'ar.
[7] Let's go to *God's* dwelling,	נָבוֹאָה לְמִשְׁכְּנוֹתָיו	Navo'ah lemishkenotav,
let's worship at *God's* footstool.	נִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לַהֲדֹם רַגְלָיו	nishtachaveh lahadom raglav.
[8] Go up, God, to your resting place,	קוּמָה יהוה לְמְנוּחָתֶךָ	Kumah, Adonai, limnuchatecha,
you and the ark of your might.	אַתָּה וַאֲרוֹן עֻזֶּךָ	atah va'aron uzecha.
[9] Your priests shall don righteousness	כֹּהֲנֶיךָ יִלְבְּשׁוּ־צֶדֶק	Kohanecha yilbeshu tzedek
and your devotees shout for joy.	וַחֲסִידֶיךָ יְרַנֵּנוּ	vachasidecha yeranenu.
[10] For the sake of your servant David,	בַּעֲבוּר דָּוִד עַבְדֶּךָ	Ba'avur David avdecha
don't turn away the face of your anointed.[6]	אַל־תָּשֵׁב פְּנֵי מְשִׁיחֶךָ	al tashev penei meshichecha.

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[1] "The Power of Jacob," the power which Jacob worshipped; Jacob was the first to make a vow to God, Gen. 28:20.

[2] אִם usually means "if" but in verse 3 it means "lest," a negative conditional. "Lest I should come into the tent of my house / lest I should go up onto the canopy-bed of my bed." עֶרֶשׂ is a crib or cradle, but also a canopy-bed; יְצוּעָי seems to be from a root that means strew or spread out—an essential action when making a bed—so the part (bedspread) represents the whole (bed). Since the poet uses two words for bed, it's hard to understand what subtle richness was here conveyed to the poet's first audience.

[3] "Lest I should grant sleep to my eyes or slumber to my eyelids."

[4] In 2 Samuel 7 David wants to build the Temple, and God tells him that his son will have this honor.

[5] "Forest fields," or in a place named Sedei Ya'ar.

[6] Verses 8-10 are part of the liturgy for returning the Torah to the ark.

[11] God made a true promise to David	נִשְׁבַּע־יהוה לְדָוִד אֱמֶת	Nishba Adonai leDavid emet;
and will not back away from it:	לֹא־יָשׁוּב מִמֶּנָּה	lo yashuv mimenah:
"From *among* your children[1]	מִפְּרִי בִטְנְךָ	mipri vitnecha
I shall place someone on your throne.	אָשִׁית לְכִסֵּא־לָךְ	ashit lechiseh lach.
[12] If your children keep the agreement with me	אִם־יִשְׁמְרוּ בָנֶיךָ בְּרִיתִי	Im yishmeru vanecha beriti
(and my *promise is* proof, *which* I shall teach them)	וְעֵדֹתִי זוֹ אֲלַמְּדֵם	ve'edoti zo alamdem,
their children too, forever,	גַּם־בְּנֵיהֶם עֲדֵי־עַד	gam beneihem adei ad
shall sit on your throne."	יֵשְׁבוּ לְכִסֵּא־לָךְ	yeshvu lechiseh lach."
[13] For God chose Zion,	כִּי־בָחַר יהוה בְּצִיּוֹן	Ki vachar Adonai beTziyon,
desired it as *God's* dwelling.	אִוָּה לְמוֹשָׁב לוֹ	ivah lemoshav lo.
[14] "This is my eternal repose;	זֹאת־מְנוּחָתִי עֲדֵי־עַד	Zot menuchati adei ad;
here I shall return because I like it;	פֹּה־אֵשֵׁב כִּי אִוִּיתִיהָ	po eshev ki ivitiha.
[15] Its supplies I shall greatly bless;	צֵידָהּ בָּרֵךְ אֲבָרֵךְ	Tzeidah barech avarech;
its poor people I shall satisfy *with* food;	אֶבְיוֹנֶיהָ אַשְׂבִּיעַ לָחֶם	evyoneha asbi'ah lachem.
[16] Its priests I shall clothe with salvation	וְכֹהֲנֶיהָ אַלְבִּישׁ יֶשַׁע	Vechohaneha albish yesha
and its devotees will shout for great joy.	וַחֲסִידֶיהָ רַנֵּן יְרַנֵּנוּ	vachasidecha ranen yeranenu.
[17] There shall I grow a horn for David;	שָׁם אַצְמִיחַ קֶרֶן לְדָוִד	Sham atzmi'ach keren leDavid;
I have provided a lamp for my anointed.[2]	עָרַכְתִּי נֵר לִמְשִׁיחִי	arachti ner limshichi.
[18] His enemies I shall clothe in shame	אוֹיְבָיו אַלְבִּישׁ בֹּשֶׁת	Oyvav albish boshet
while upon him will sprout his crown."	וְעָלָיו יָצִיץ נִזְרוֹ	ve'alav yatzitz nizro.

[1] "The fruit of your belly." The root בטן sometimes means womb or abdomen. Somewhere down there David produced sperm for his more than 20 children.

[2] A horn could be seen as a conspicuous ornament for the royal head, the crown of verse 18. Since bulls have horns, agricultural societies might think of horns as a sign of strength, fertility and (since few wish to confront an angry bull) of authority.

Psalm 133

[1] A song of going up, for David.	שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְדָוִד	Shir hama a lot leDavid.
How good and fine it is, you see,	הִנֵּה מַה־טּוֹב וּמַה־נָּעִים	Hineh mah tov umah na'im
when siblings dwell in unity—[1]	שֶׁבֶת אַחִים גַּם־יָחַד	shevet achim gam yachad—
[2] As fine anointing oil runs down	כַּשֶּׁמֶן הַטּוֹב עַל־הָרֹאשׁ	Kashemen hatov al harosh
to Aaron's beard, down from his crown,	יֹרֵד עַל־הַזָּקָן זְקַן־אַהֲרֹן	yored al hazakan, zekan Aharon,
reaching the collar of his gown;[2]	שֶׁיֹּרֵד עַל־פִּי מִדּוֹתָיו	sheyored al pi midotav;
[3] Like dew of *Mount* Chermon, that spills	כְּטַל־חֶרְמוֹן שֶׁיֹּרֵד	Ketal Chermon sheyored
down onto Zion's *holy* hills,	עַל־הַרְרֵי צִיּוֹן	al harerei Tziyon,
which (by God's order) blessing fills—	כִּי שָׁם צִוָּה יהוה אֶת־הַבְּרָכָה	ki sham tzivah Adonai et habracha—
living for eternity.[3]	חַיִּים עַד־הָעוֹלָם	chayim ad ha'olam.

[1] "See how good and pleasant *it is,* / for brothers//siblings to sit together" or "to dwell as siblings together."

[2] "Like the fine *anointing* oil *placed* upon the head / *which* descends upon the beard, the beard of Aaron, / which descends upon the opening of his garments." I never used to think that anointing oil would run down over the priest's head and beard and garments, but if oil signifies plenty you may as well be liberal with it!

The English method of anointment is more restrained: at the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, "The Dean [of Westminster] brought the Ampulla, the Golden Eagle containing the holy oil, and the Spoon. He poured the oil into the spoon and the Archbishop dipped his thumb into the Spoon and anointed the Queen upon the hands, the breast and the head."

Elizabeth I complained that "the oil was grease and smelt ill"(Elizabeth Jenkins, *Elizabeth The Great* [1960], 74).

[3] "Like dew of Chermon, which descends / upon the hills of Zion / for there God commanded the blessing, / life forever." Does dew run down from Mount Chermon to Jerusalem? Geographically unlikely. So commentators suggest that God intended the blessing of dew to reach Zion—not directly, but by way of Mount Chermon. This elevates the dignity of Chermon. The blessing that reaches Mount Chermon is physical dew (well, snow) but the blessing intended for Zion is spiritual, eternal life. This is one way to understand the verse.

Psalm 134

[1] A song of steps:	שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת	Shir hama'alot:
Look, may they bless God,	הִנֵּה בָרֲכוּ אֶת־יהוה	Hineh, barachu et Adonai
all God's servants,	כָּל־עַבְדֵי יהוה	kol avdei Adonai,
as they stand *on watch* in God's house	הָעֹמְדִים בְּבֵית־יהוה	ha'omdim beveit Adonai
at night.	בַּלֵּילוֹת	baleilot.
[2] Raise your hands in holiness	שְׂאוּ־יְדֵכֶם קֹדֶשׁ	Se'u yedeichem kodesh,
and bless God.	וּבָרֲכוּ אֶת־יהוה	uvarachu et Adonai.
[3] May God bless you from Zion,	יְבָרֶכְךָ יהוה מִצִּיּוֹן	Yevarech'cha Adonai miTziyon,
God who made sky and land.	עֹשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ	oseh shamayim va'aretz.

Psalm 135

[1] Hail God!	הַלְלוּ יָהּ	Haleluyah!
Hail God's name,	הַלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יהוה	Halelu et shem Adonai,
Hail it, God's servants,	הַלְלוּ עַבְדֵי יהוה	halelu, avdei Adonai,
[2] Who stand in God's house	שֶׁעֹמְדִים בְּבֵית יהוה	She'omdim beveit Adonai,
in the courtyards of our God's house.	בְּחַצְרוֹת בֵּית אֱלֹהֵינוּ	bechatzrot beit Eloheinu.
[3] Hail God, for God is good;	הַלְלוּ־יָהּ כִּי־טוֹב יהוה	Haleluyah ki tov Adonai;
sing to *God's* name—it's pleasant *to do*.	זַמְּרוּ לִשְׁמוֹ כִּי נָעִים	zamru lishmo, ki na'im.
[4] For Jacob, God chose him;	כִּי־יַעֲקֹב בָּחַר לוֹ יָהּ	Ki Ya'akov bachar lo Yah,
God took Israel as a treasure.	יִשְׂרָאֵל לִסְגֻלָּתוֹ	Yisra'el lisgulato.
[5] I know God is great,	כִּי אֲנִי יָדַעְתִּי כִּי־גָדוֹל יהוה	Ki ani yadati ki gadol Adonai,
our ruler *is greater* than all other gods.	וַאֲדֹנֵינוּ מִכָּל־אֱלֹהִים	va'adoneinu mikol Elohim.
[6] God does whatever *God* wants	כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־חָפֵץ יהוה עָשָׂה	Kol asher chafetz Adonai, asah—
in heaven and earth,	בַּשָּׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ	bashamayim uva'aretz,
in the sea and all its depths.	בַּיַּמִּים וְכָל־תְּהוֹמוֹת	bayamim vechol tehomot.
[7] *God* lifts clouds[1] from land's end,	מַעֲלֶה נְשִׂאִים מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ	Ma'aleh nesi'im miktzeh ha'aretz,
makes lightning for the rain,	בְּרָקִים לַמָּטָר עָשָׂה	berakim lamatar asah,
brings wind from *God's* storehouses.	מוֹצֵא־רוּחַ מֵאוֹצְרוֹתָיו	motzeh ru'ach me'otzrotav.
[8] *God* struck Egypt's firstborn,	שֶׁהִכָּה בְּכוֹרֵי מִצְרָיִם	Shehikah bechorei Mitzrayim,
both human and animal,	מֵאָדָם עַד־בְּהֵמָה	me'adam ad behemah.
[9] Sent signs and wonders	שָׁלַח אֹתוֹת וּמוֹפְתִים	Shalach otot umoftim
right inside your land, O Egyptians,	בְּתוֹכֵכִי מִצְרָיִם	betochechi Mitzrayim,
among Pharaoh and his servants.	בְּפַרְעֹה וּבְכָל־עֲבָדָיו	beFar'oh uvechol avadav.
[10] *God* struck many peoples	שֶׁהִכָּה גּוֹיִם רַבִּים	Shehikah goyim rabim,
and killed mighty kings—	וְהָרַג מְלָכִים עֲצוּמִים	veharag melachim atzumim.
[11] Sichon the Amorites' king	לְסִיחוֹן מֶלֶךְ הָאֱמֹרִי	LeSichon, melech ha'Emori,
and Og king of Bashan	וּלְעוֹג מֶלֶךְ הַבָּשָׁן	ule'Og, melech haBashan,
and all the states of Kena'an,	וּלְכֹל מַמְלְכוֹת כְּנָעַן	ulechol mamlechot Kena'an.
[12] And gave their land as an inheritance,	וְנָתַן אַרְצָם נַחֲלָה	Venatan artzam nachalah,
an inheritance to *God's* people Israel.	נַחֲלָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל עַמּוֹ	nachalah leYisra'el amo.

[1] נָשִׂיא is a person raised to pre-eminence, a prince or leader, and by extension something that rises from the ground, as a mist or cloud.

[13] God, your fame is forever,	יהוה שִׁמְךָ לְעוֹלָם	Adonai, shimcha le'olam;
your memory passes from parent to child.	יהוה זִכְרְךָ לְדֹר־וָדֹר	Adonai, zichrecha ledor vador.
[14] For God will judge God's people	כִּי־יָדִין יהוה עַמּוֹ	Ki yadin Adonai amo,
and be kind to God's servants.	וְעַל־עֲבָדָיו יִתְנֶחָם	ve'al avadav yitnecham.
[15] Other peoples serve silver and gold,[1]	עֲצַבֵּי הַגּוֹיִם כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב	Atzabei hagoyim kesef vezahav,
idols made by people.	מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵי אָדָם	ma'aseh yedei adam.
[16] They have mouths but can't speak,	פֶּה־לָהֶם וְלֹא יְדַבֵּרוּ	Peh lahem, velo yedaberu,
they have eyes but can't see,	עֵינַיִם לָהֶם וְלֹא יִרְאוּ	einayim lahem velo yir'u.
[17] Ears but can't hear,	אָזְנַיִם לָהֶם וְלֹא יַאֲזִינוּ	Oznayim lahem velo ya'azinu,
a nose but no breath.	אַף אֵין־יֵשׁ־רוּחַ בְּפִיהֶם	af ein yesh ru'ach befihem.
[18] People become like the idols they make,[2]	כְּמוֹהֶם יִהְיוּ עֹשֵׂיהֶם	Kemohem yiheyu oseihem,
anyone who places trust in them.	כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־בֹּטֵחַ בָּהֶם	kol asher bote'ach bahem.
[19] Israel's people bless God, *not idols*,	בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בָּרֲכוּ אֶת־יהוה	Beit Yisra'el bar'chu et Adonai,
Aaron's family bless God.	בֵּית אַהֲרֹן בָּרֲכוּ אֶת־יהוה	beit Aharon bar'chu et Adonai.
[20] Levi's family[3] bless God,	בֵּית הַלֵּוִי בָּרֲכוּ אֶת־יהוה	Beit haLevi bar'chu et Adonai,
Those who fear God, bless God.	יִרְאֵי יהוה בָּרֲכוּ אֶת־יהוה	yir'ei Adonai bar'chu et Adonai.
[21] God is blessed from Zion,	בָּרוּךְ יהוה מִצִּיּוֹן	Baruch Adonai miTziyon,
God who dwells in Jerusalem—	שֹׁכֵן יְרוּשָׁלָם	shochen Yerushalayim.
Hail God!	הַלְלוּ־יָהּ	Haleluyah.

[1] "Their toils/pains are silver and gold." עצב is toil or pain: worshippers take pains to serve these idols, vainly hoping for favor and sure only of toil and disappointment.

[2] "Like them (the idols) will become their makers": those who make idols will become like the idols; they will lose their humanity, their ability to see and speak and breathe.

[3] "The house of Levi" includes the house of Aaron, since Aaron (like Moses) was a Levite.

Psalm 136

[1] Thank God for being good,	הוֹדוּ לַיהוה כִּי־טוֹב	Hodu lAdonai ki tov
(*God's* kindness lasts forever);	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo);
[2] Thank the God of gods	הוֹדוּ לֵאלֹהֵי הָאֱלֹהִים	Hodu lElohei ha'elohim
(*God's* kindness lasts forever);	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo);
[3] Thank the Ruler of rulers	הוֹדוּ לַאֲדֹנֵי הָאֲדֹנִים	Hodu lAdonei ha'adonim
(*God's* kindness lasts forever);	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo);
[4] Who has done great wonders alone	לְעֹשֵׂה נִפְלָאוֹת גְּדֹלוֹת לְבַדּוֹ	Le'oseh nifla'ot gedolot levado
(*God's* kindness lasts forever).	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo).
[5] Who made heaven with insight	לְעֹשֵׂה הַשָּׁמַיִם בִּתְבוּנָה	Le'oseh hashamayim bitvunah
(*God's* kindness lasts forever)	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo)
[6] And spread earth on water	לְרֹקַע הָאָרֶץ עַל־הַמָּיִם	Leroka ha'aretz al hamayim
(*God's* kindness lasts forever),	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo),
[7] Who made great lights—	לְעֹשֵׂה אוֹרִים גְּדֹלִים	Le'oseh orim g'dolim
(*God's* kindness lasts forever),	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo),
[8] The sun to rule by day	אֶת־הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לְמֶמְשֶׁלֶת בַּיּוֹם	Et hashemesh lememshelet bayom
(*God's* kindness lasts forever),	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo),
[9] The moon and stars	אֶת־הַיָּרֵחַ וְכוֹכָבִים	Et hayare'ach vechochavim
to rule at night	לְמֶמְשְׁלוֹת בַּלָּיְלָה	lememshelot balayla
(*God's* kindness lasts forever);	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo);
[10] Who struck Egypt through their first-born	לְמַכֵּה מִצְרַיִם בִּבְכוֹרֵיהֶם	Lemakeh Mitzrayim bivchoreihem
(*God's* kindness lasts forever)	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo)
[11] And led Israel from their midst	וַיּוֹצֵא יִשְׂרָאֵל מִתּוֹכָם	Vayotze Yisra'el mitocham
(*God's* kindness lasts forever)	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo)
[12] With a strong hand and outstretched arm	בְּיָד חֲזָקָה וּבִזְרוֹעַ נְטוּיָה	Beyad chazaka uvizro'ah netuya
(*God's* kindness lasts forever),	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo),
[13] Who cut the Reed Sea in parts	לְגֹזֵר יַם־סוּף לִגְזָרִים	Legozer yam suf ligzarim
(*God's* kindness lasts forever)	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo)
[14] And brought Israel through the middle	וְהֶעֱבִיר יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּתוֹכוֹ	Vehe'evir Yisra'el betocho
(*God's* kindness lasts forever)	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo)

[15] And tumbled Pharaoh and his forces	וְנִעֵר פַּרְעֹה וְחֵילוֹ	Veni'er Par'oh vecheilo
into the Reed Sea	בְיַם־סוּף	veyam suf
(*God's* kindness lasts forever);	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo);
[16] Who guided our people in the desert	לְמוֹלִיךְ עַמּוֹ בַּמִּדְבָּר	Lemolich amo bamidbar
(*God's* kindness lasts forever),	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo),
[17] Who struck down great kings	לְמַכֵּה מְלָכִים גְּדֹלִים	Lemakeh melachim gedolim
(*God's* kindness lasts forever)	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo)
[18] And killed mighty kings	וַיַּהֲרֹג מְלָכִים אַדִּירִים	Vayaharog melachim adirim
(*God's* kindness lasts forever)—	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo)—
[19] Sichon, the Amorites' king	לְסִיחוֹן מֶלֶךְ הָאֱמֹרִי	LeSichon melech haEmori
(*God's* kindness lasts forever)	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo)
[20] And Og, king of Bashan	וּלְעוֹג מֶלֶךְ הַבָּשָׁן	UleOg melech haBashan
(*God's* kindness lasts forever)	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo)
[21] And gave their land as an inheritance,	וְנָתַן אַרְצָם לְנַחֲלָה	Venatan artzam lenachalah,
(*God's* kindness lasts forever)	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo)
[22] Inheritance to God's servant Israel	נַחֲלָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל עַבְדּוֹ	Nachalah leYisra'el avdo
(*God's* kindness lasts forever);	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo);
[23] Who remembered us when we were down	שֶׁבִּשְׁפִלֵנוּ זָכַר לָנוּ	Shebshiflenu zachar lanu
(*God's* kindness lasts forever)	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo)
[24] And got us out of trouble	וַיִּפְרְקֵנוּ מִצָּרֵינוּ	Vayifrekenu mitzarenu
(*God's* kindness lasts forever).	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo).
[25] *God* gives food to every creature	נֹתֵן לֶחֶם לְכָל־בָּשָׂר	Noten lechem lechol basar
(*God's* kindness lasts forever);	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo);
[26] Thank the God of heaven	הוֹדוּ לְאֵל הַשָּׁמָיִם	Hodu le'El hashamayim
(*God's* kindness lasts forever).	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	(ki le'olam chasdo).

Psalm 137

[1] By Babylon's rivers—there we lived—	עַל נַהֲרוֹת בָּבֶל שָׁם יָשַׁבְנוּ	Al naharot Bavel, sham yashavnu,
we thought of Zion and we wept.[1]	גַּם־בָּכִינוּ בְּזָכְרֵנוּ אֶת־צִיּוֹן	gam bachinu bezochrenu et Tziyon.
[2] Hung on the willows in that land,	עַל־עֲרָבִים בְּתוֹכָהּ	Al aravim betochah
unplayed, our instruments we kept.[2]	תָּלִינוּ כִּנֹּרוֹתֵינוּ	talinu kinoroteinu
[3] Our jailers asked us	כִּי שָׁם שְׁאֵלוּנוּ שׁוֹבֵינוּ	Ki sham she'elunu shoveinu
for a song,	דִּבְרֵי־שִׁיר	divrei shir
a jolly tune was their demand:	וְתוֹלָלֵינוּ שִׂמְחָה	vetolaleinu simcha:
"Your songs of Zion—sing us one!"[3]	שִׁירוּ לָנוּ מִשִּׁיר צִיּוֹן	"Shiru lanu mishir Tziyon."
[4] How could our sacred song be sung	אֵיךְ נָשִׁיר אֶת־שִׁיר־יהוה	Eich nashir et shir Adonai
here, in this foreign land?[4]	עַל אַדְמַת נֵכָר	al admat nechar?
[5] If I forget Jerusalem,	אִם־אֶשְׁכָּחֵךְ יְרוּשָׁלָם	Im eshkachech, Yerushalayim,
let all my skill desert my hand.[5]	תִּשְׁכַּח יְמִינִי	tishkach yemini,
[6] I'll never sing again unless,	תִּדְבַּק־לְשׁוֹנִי לְחִכִּי	Tidbak leshoni lechiki,
Jerusalem, you are my theme,	אִם־לֹא אֶזְכְּרֵכִי	im lo ezkerechi,
pinnacle of my happiness,	אִם־לֹא אַעֲלֶה אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם	im lo a'aleh et Yerushalayim
supreme delight in my esteem.[6]	עַל רֹאשׁ שִׂמְחָתִי	al rosh simchati.
[7] Remember, God, those Edomites,	זְכֹר יהוה לִבְנֵי אֱדוֹם	Zechor, Adonai, livnei Edom
on Jerusalem's day of woe	אֵת יוֹם יְרוּשָׁלָם	et yom Yerushalayim,
how eagerly they smashed her heights	הָאֹמְרִים עָרּוּ עָרּוּ	ha'omrim, "Aru, aru,
to level her *beneath the plough*.[7]	עַד הַיְסוֹד בָּהּ	at hayesod bah."

[1] "At/upon/by the rivers of Babylon (the Tigris and Euphrates), there we sat/settled/lived; / also/still we wept at our remembering Zion."

[2] "Upon the willows inside *Babylon* we hung our harps/lyres/violins/string instruments."

[3] "For there they requested/demanded, our captors, matters of song, / and our tormentors *demanded* joy: / 'Sing to us from the song of Zion.'"

[4] "How could we sing a song of God / in a foreign land?" (What of God's ubiquity?)

[5] "If I forget you, Jerusalem, / my stronger/right hand will forget *what it knows* (I won't be able to play what I know)." I.e., I cannot play without remembering my loss, and in that case I can't play for joy.

[6] "My tongue will stick to my cheek (I won't be able to sing) / if I don't mention/remember (sing of) you, *Jerusalem,* / if I don't raise Jerusalem / above the chief of my joys." I.e., I can't sing unless I sing of Jerusalem, my chief delight.

[7] "Remember, God, the children of Edom (in the Talmud, Edom usually means the Romans, who conquered the Jews and destroyed the Temple) / with the day of Jerusalem (i.e., the day when they destroyed Jerusalem), / who were saying, 'Knock it down, knock it down, / *down* to its foundation.'" Titus conquered Jerusalem and destroyed

[8] Doomed Babylon, you came to attack:	בַּת־בָּבֶל הַשְּׁדוּדָה	Bat Bavel hashdudah,
Some lucky man will pay you back	אַשְׁרֵי שֶׁיְּשַׁלֶּם־לָךְ אֶת־גְּמוּלֵךְ	ashrei sheyeshalem lach et gemulech
For pain you gave us, pillage and sack![1]	שֶׁגָּמַלְתְּ לָנוּ	shegamalt lanu.
[9] That lucky man will grab and knock	אַשְׁרֵי שֶׁיֹּאחֵז וְנִפֵּץ	Ashrei sheyochez venipetz
your babies' brains out on a rock.[2]	אֶת־עֹלָלַיִךְ אֶל־הַסָּלַע	et olalayich al hasalah.

the Temple in 70 CE. Jerusalem lay in ruins until Hadrian decided to rebuild it in 130 CE. After suppressing the Bar Kochba revolt in 135 CE, he decided to make the new city a Roman city, and the Roman method for building a city was to level the land and plough the area. Do I hear someone say we thought the psalms were written long before these events? Do I hear someone else respond that prophecy could explain this? See 129:3.

[1] "Dependent village (or daughter) of Babylon, destined for ruin, / happy/lucky is one who will repay you your earnings, / what you 'paid' to us."

[2] "Happy/lucky *the one* who will grasp and shatter / your little ones on the rock." A horrifying sentiment.

Psalm 138

[1] *A poem* Of David.	לְדָוִד	leDavid.
I acknowledge you with all my heart.	אוֹדְךָ בְכָל־לִבִּי	Od'cha vechol libi.
Before the mighty[1] I sing of you.	נֶגֶד אֱלֹהִים אֲזַמְּרֶךָּ	Neged elohim azamerka.
[2] I bow before your holy shrine,	אֶשְׁתַּחֲוֶה אֶל־הֵיכַל קָדְשֶׁךָ	Eshtachaveh el heichal kodshecha
praise your renown for your kind grace	וְאוֹדֶה אֶת־שִׁמְךָ עַל־חַסְדְּךָ	ve'odeh et shemecha al chasdecha
and faithfulness, for you've surpassed	וְעַל־אֲמִתֶּךָ כִּי־הִגְדַּלְתָּ	ve'al amitecha, ki higdalta
your fame and pledges of the past.[2]	עַל־כָּל־שִׁמְךָ אִמְרָתֶךָ	al kol shim'cha imratecha.
[3] When I have called, you've answered me,	בְּיוֹם קָרָאתִי וַתַּעֲנֵנִי	Beyom karati vata'aneni,
inspiring me with strong resolve.	תַּרְהִבֵנִי בְנַפְשִׁי עֹז	tar'hivenu venafshi oz.
[4] God, earth's kings all will voice your praise	יוֹדוּךָ יְהוָה כָּל־מַלְכֵי־אֶרֶץ	Yoducha, Adonai, kol mal'chei aretz
(for they have heard your spoken phrase)	כִּי שָׁמְעוּ אִמְרֵי־פִיךָ	ki shamu imrei ficha.
[5] And sing God's *ever-faithful* ways,	וְיָשִׁירוּ בִּדְרָכֵי יְהוָה	Veyashiru bedar'chei Adonai,
that God's magnificence is great.	כִּי גָדוֹל כְּבוֹד יְהוָה	ki gadol kevod Adonai.
[6] That God is great, the lowly sees;	כִּי־רָם יְהוָה וְשָׁפָל יִרְאֶה	Ki ram Adonai veshafal yireh,
the lofty from afar perceives.	וְגָבֹהַּ מִמֶּרְחָק יְיֵדָע	vegavo'ah mimer'chak yeyeda.
[7] Though among cares I make my way	אִם־אֵלֵךְ בְּקֶרֶב צָרָה	Im elech bekerev tzarah,
you give me life to spite my foes,[3]	תְּחַיֵּנִי עַל אַף אֹיְבַי	techayeni al af oyvai,
with hand outstretched	תִּשְׁלַח יָדֶךָ	tishlach yadecha
you rescue me.	וְתוֹשִׁיעֵנִי יְמִינֶךָ	vetoshi'eni yeminecha.
[8] For me, God has my ending planned:	יְהוָה יִגְמֹר בַּעֲדִי	Adonai yigmor ba'adi:
God, since your kindness never ends,	יְהוָה חַסְדְּךָ לְעוֹלָם	Adonai, chasdecha le'olam;
don't drop[4] work fashioned by your hand.	מַעֲשֵׂי יָדֶיךָ אַל־תֶּרֶף	ma'asei yadecha al teref.

[1] Or, "divine beings" or "people in authority."

[2] כִּי־הִגְדַּלְתָּ עַל־כָּל־שִׁמְךָ אִמְרָתֶךָ—"for-you-have-surpassed all-your-reputation *for reliability, and* your-utterance (your promises to rescue us)."

[3] תְּחַיֵּנִי עַל אַף אֹיְבַי" —"you-give-me-life over the-nose-of (despite the anger of) my-foes.

[4] אַל־תֶּרֶף—"do not forsake/abandon."

Psalm 139

[1] For the leader, a tune for David.[1]	לַמְנַצֵּחַ לְדָוִד מִזְמוֹר	Lamnatze'ach, leDavid mizmor.
God, you have probed me, and you know …	יהוה חֲקַרְתַּנִי וַתֵּדָע	Adonai, chakartani vatedah …
[2] You know me when I sit or stand;	אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ שִׁבְתִּי וְקוּמִי	Ata yadata shivti vekumi,
from far, my thoughts you understand,[2]	בַּנְתָּה לְרֵעִי מֵרָחוֹק	bantah lere'i merachok.
[3] Surround me, at rest or on the go,	אָרְחִי וְרִבְעִי זֵרִיתָ	Or'chi verivi zerita,
and all my pathways well you know.[3]	וְכָל־דְּרָכַי הִסְכַּנְתָּה	vechol derachai hiskanta.
[4] There's not a word I can express	כִּי אֵין מִלָּה בִּלְשׁוֹנִי	Ki ein milah bilshoni—
but God you know what I would say:[4]	הֵן יהוה יָדַעְתָּ כֻלָּהּ	hen, Adonai, yadata chulah.
[5] You mold me front and back and press	אָחוֹר וָקֶדֶם צַרְתָּנִי	Achor vakedem tzartani,
your hand; your palm on me you lay.[5]	וַתָּשֶׁת עָלַי כַּפֶּכָה	vatashet alai kapecha.
[6] Too wondrous is your mind for me,	פְּלִיאָה[7] דַּעַת מִמֶּנִּי	Peli'ah da'at mimeni;
high beyond my ability.[6]	נִשְׂגְּבָה לֹא־אוּכַל לָהּ	nisgevah lo uchal lah.
[7] Faster than wind, how could I race	אָנָה אֵלֵךְ מֵרוּחֶךָ	Anah elech meruchecha,
to flee your *omnipresent* face?[8]	וְאָנָה מִפָּנֶיךָ אֶבְרָח	ve'anah mipanecha evrach?

[1] Or, a tune for David, or composed by David—maybe King David or some other David.

[2] "You have come to know my sitting down and my standing up; you have understood my thinking from afar." The root of לְרֵעִי, רע, means bad, friend, or, in this case, thinking. The poet's point is that although God is distant, God understands humans intimately.

[3] אָרְחִי from ארח, path or way of life; וְרִבְעִי from רבע, square, or sand, or lie down, or copulate; זֵרִיתָ from זר, a border (Ex. 25:24, etc.), and perhaps what's across the border, a stranger or outlier; הִסְכַּנְתָּה from the root סכן, which usually makes us think of סכין (knife) or סכנה (danger), but in this case means "you have been familiar with" as in Num. 22:30. "My path (i.e., my going about) and my lying down you have surrounded/bordered/limited / and all my paths you have been familiar with."

[4] "For there is no word on my tongue; / see, God, you know it altogether."

[5] "Behind and in front you have formed me / and have placed upon me your palm." The poet here seems to celebrate God's discipline, including a hearty smack. BT Chagigah 12a understands צַרְתָּנִי as "you formed me"—Adam was formed twice, once as big as the universe and then shrunk closer to human size (or, I like to think, with a front and a back so humans should not think themselves unlimited). Avodah Zara 8a quotes this verse to explain why the Mishna mentions two Roman festivals, Calenda and Saturnalia, in reverse order. These are wintertime eight-day festivals. Remind you of Chanukah?

[6] "A miracle *is* knowledge, beyond me (i.e. knowing God, or God's understanding, is too wonderful for my ability) / *it is* high up so that I could not do it"; i.e., God's understanding is beyond me, too high for me to accomplish.

[7] A manuscript would have the word פלאיה. Our tradition transposes the א and י in order to make sense of the word.

[8] "Where shall I go from your wind/spirit, and where from your face/surface/presence shall I flee?" i.e., God is everywhere—as the wind, invisible but perceptible, may remind us; or as God's spirit that informs all creation

[8] You are there if I climb to the sky	אִם־אֶסַּק שָׁמַיִם שָׁם אָתָּה	Im esak shamayim, sham atah
and there if deep in Sheol I lie,[1]	וְאַצִּיעָה שְׁאוֹל הִנֶּךָּ	ve'atzi'ah She'ol, hineka.
[9] If I mount morning's earliest rays	אֶשָּׂא כַנְפֵי־שָׁחַר	Esah chanfei shachar,
or move far off beyond the waves,[2]	אֶשְׁכְּנָה בְּאַחֲרִית יָם	eshkenah be'acharit yam,
[10] Even there your guiding power will steer me	גַּם־שָׁם יָדְךָ תַנְחֵנִי	Gam sham yadcha tancheni,
and your mighty hold will cheer me.[3]	וְתאֹחֲזֵנִי יְמִינֶךָ	vetochazeni yeminecha.
[11] "Darkness may swamp me—but *death's* night	וָאֹמַר אַךְ־חֹשֶׁךְ יְשׁוּפֵנִי	Va'omar, "Ach choshech yeshufeni
for me," I say, "has turned to light."[4]	וְלַיְלָה אוֹר בַּעֲדֵנִי	velaylah or ba'adeni."
[12] The darkness cannot shroud your fame	גַּם־חֹשֶׁךְ לֹא־יַחְשִׁיךְ מִמֶּךָּ	Gam choshech lo yachshich mimecha
and night like day will brightly flame;	וְלַיְלָה כַּיּוֹם יָאִיר	velailah kayom ya'ir:
for you are light and dark the same,[5]	כַּחֲשֵׁיכָה כָּאוֹרָה	kachashecha ka'orah.

should help us to understand. Therefore, the poet says, we can't get away from God by racing the wind, and there's no place to flee from God's omnipresence.

[1] "If I climb the sky, there you are; / and *if I* make my bed in She'ol (the Great Unknown), there you are too"; אֶסַּק is unusual in Hebrew but similar to Aramaic as in Daniel 6:23: "And of Daniel *the king* said to lift him from the *lions'* den, and Daniel was lifted from the *lions'* den / וּלְדָנִיֵּאל אֲמַר לְהַנְסָקָה מִן־גֻּבָּא וְהַסַק דָּנִיֵּאל מִן־גֻּבָּא / uleDaniel amar lehansaka min gubah, vehusak Daniel min gubah."

[2] "*If I should* lift (or, rise up on) the corners/edges/wings of dawn, / *If I should* become a neighbor of the back of the sea"; i.e., if I get to the extreme East, edge of the earth where the first rays of dawn appear (an easy picture for members of the Flat Earth Society) or get to extreme West, beyond the (Mediterranean) sea …"

Some people used to think the Earth was surrounded by Okeanos, as in Homer, Od. 11:13 or Eruvin 22b: "דִּכּוּלָּא עָלְמָא נָמֵי מַקִּיף אוֹקְיָינוֹס, for Okeanos surrounds the entire Earth." As a result, "there should be no public domain anywhere in the world (Sefaria translation) and so "every land mass is a totally enclosed *reshus hayachid*" (ArtScroll, note 3 for this page).

[3] "Even there your hand will guide me and your right hand will grasp me." The translation assumes that God's hold is reassuring, and that's why I allowed myself to use "cheer" as a rhyme for "steer."

[4] "And I would say, 'Even darkness could consume me, / and night *would be* light for my sake.'" יְשׁוּפֵנִי is a rare verb, occurring in Gen 3:15 ("bruise") and Job 9:17. Rashi and others associate the word with נשף (Jer. 13:16, etc.), which could mean darkness or the evening breeze. The best I can understand it, the poet is saying that darkness will one day bite him (like the snake in Gen 3:15) or maybe swallow him (if it's like a snake, it's a big one), referring to death; but even in death the poet will enjoy light because he is confident of a jolly afterlife. This may be theologically anachronistic, but surely people think about mysteries in every age.

[5] "Even darkness isn't too dark for you / and *for you* night, like day, will light up— / darkness is like light *from your point of view.*" Continuing the idea of the previous verse, that the darkness of death can be light (for the righteous poet), we hear that for God, the difference between light and dark is insignificant.

[13] To you my inner self I owe;	כִּי־אַתָּה קָנִיתָ כִלְיֹתָי	Ki atah kanita chilyotai;
you sheltered me in utero.[1]	תְּסֻכֵּנִי בְּבֶטֶן אִמִּי	tesukeni beveten imi.
[14] I praise you for (all struck with awe)	אוֹדְךָ עַל כִּי נוֹרָאוֹת נִפְלֵיתִי	Odcha al ki nora'ot nifleiti;
the wonders you have wrought	נִפְלָאִים מַעֲשֶׂיךָ	nifla'im ma'asecha
I saw.[2]	וְנַפְשִׁי יֹדַעַת מְאֹד	venafshi yoda'at me'od.
[15] From you my essence was not hid	לֹא־נִכְחַד עָצְמִי מִמֶּךָּ	Lo nich'chad atzmi mimeka
though formed in secrecy, and knit	אֲשֶׁר־עֻשֵּׂיתִי בַסָּתֶר	asher useiti vaseter,
(sinew with bone) in shadowy pit.[3]	רֻקַּמְתִּי בְּתַחְתִּיּוֹת אָרֶץ	rukamti betachtiyot aretz.
[16] My unshaped limbs[4] were in your sight,	גֹּלְמִי רָאוּ עֵינֶיךָ	Golmi ra'u einecha
all foretold in the scroll you write,	וְעַל־סִפְרְךָ כֻּלָּם יִכָּתֵבוּ	ve'al sifrecha kulam yikatevu,
all formed as one when time was right.[5]	יָמִים יֻצָּרוּ וְלוֹ[6] אֶחָד בָּהֶם	yamim yutzaru velo echad bahem.
[17] O God, my thoughts of you I prize,	וְלִי מַה־יָּקְרוּ רֵעֶיךָ אֵל	Veli mah yakru re'echa, El;
how rich are such philosophies,[7]	מֶה עָצְמוּ רָאשֵׁיהֶם	meh atzmu rasheihem!

[1] "You possess my innermost parts; / you sheltered me in my mother's womb." Presumably, the poet thinks that God brings light to darkness, the darkness of death or the darkness of the womb. I thought in utero was common enough in birthing speech to be used as an English translation. Sorry if I was wrong. As for the question whether a person as a legal entity is formed in the womb, of course Jewish tradition says no (see Arachin 1:4).

[2] "I praise/acknowledge/thank you for awesome deeds I distinguished, / wonderful things are your works, / and my self knows *this* exceedingly"; i.e, I praise you because I have perceived *your* awesome deeds, and I am very aware of this. פלא means wonderful—something remarkable, like the Latin source of "monstrous" (monstro, I show). God's miracles are wonderful, and one who perceives them notices the exceptional. נִפְלֵיתִי is from פלה, to be distinct or notable.

[3] "My bone/essence/frame was not concealed from you / when I was made in secret; / I was knit/woven together in the depths of the earth," i.e., even before birth, God knew how the poet would turn out.

[4] The word גֹּלְמִי, "the golem of me," reminds us that Adam was formed from dust and became human when God breathed a life-force into his nostrils (Gen. 2:7).

[5] God foresaw the complete person in the unborn: "My unformed limbs did your eyes see, / and upon your book/scroll all of them were written; / *on the proper* days *the limbs* were formed, and for *the body these separate limbs were* one with them (i.e., several limbs, one body)." That last line is hard to interpret.

[6] A manuscript has ולא, which sounds the same but means "and not" instead of "and its."

[7] "And as for me, how precious are your thoughts, God; / how robust/formidable are their heads/topics." The thoughts could be the poet's thoughts of God or God's inaccessibly profound thoughts, or (of course) both. The poet uses "heads," a common metaphor for topics. I think the poet is admiring the richly engrossing study of metaphysics, and to those who say the Hebrews didn't study metaphysics I say here's one who did!

18 More than all grains of sand to sum.	אֶסְפְּרֵם מֵחוֹל יִרְבּוּן	Esperem mechol yirbun;
(I'll be with you when I am done.)[1]	הֱקִיצוֹתִי וְעוֹדִי עִמָּךְ	hekitzoti ve'odi imach.
19 God, when the wicked you will slay,	אִם־תִּקְטֹל אֱלוֹהַּ רָשָׁע	Im tiktol, Elo'ah, rasha,
"Away, attackers!" I shall say.[2]	וְאַנְשֵׁי דָמִים סוּרוּ מֶנִּי	ve'anshei damim suru meni,
20 They speak to you with falsehood base—	אֲשֶׁר יֹאמְרֻךָ לִמְזִמָּה	Asher yomrucha limzimah,
your enemies—lie to your face.[3]	נָשְׂא לַשָּׁוְא עָרֶיךָ	nasu lashav arecha.
21 Surely your foes, God, I shall hate—	הֲלוֹא־מְשַׂנְאֶיךָ יְהוָה אֶשְׂנָא	Halo mesanecha, Adonai, esnah,
rebels who well deserve their fate.[4]	וּבְתַקּוֹמְמֶיךָ אֶתְקוֹטָט	uvitkomemecha etkotat.
22 With utter odium, all those	תַּכְלִית שִׂנְאָה שְׂנֵאתִים	Tachlit sinah senetim,
enemies I count as my foes.[5]	לְאוֹיְבִים הָיוּ לִי	le'oyvim hayu li.
23 Probe and know my heart, God; calm	חָקְרֵנִי אֵל וְדַע לִבָּבִי	Chokreni, El, vedah levavi
with loving care my every qualm.[6]	בְּחָנֵנִי וְדַע שַׂרְעַפָּי	bechoneni, vedah sarapai.
24 Watch if my path leads toward pain	וּרְאֵה אִם־דֶּרֶךְ־עֹצֶב בִּי	Ure'eh im derech otzev bi,
and guide me back to life again.[7]	וּנְחֵנִי בְּדֶרֶךְ עוֹלָם	unecheni bederech olam.

[1] The two parts of this verse aren't obviously related. "I count them (the metaphysical topics of the previous verse); more than sand do they proliferate. / I come to an end (or, as in 3:6, I wake up *from my meditations*) , but still I am with you (or, by the time I finish the counting, I'll be with God)."

[2] "If you slay, God, the wicked, / then *to* men of blood *I'll say,* "Get away from me!"

[3] "Who speak to you for trickery, / with equivocation, those who stir against you." Equivocation is "borne evenly," meaning that someone doesn't give a straight answer but beats around the bush.

[4] "Surely those who hate you, God, I shall hate, / and at your enemies I feel loathing."

[5] "*With* entire hatred I hate them, / against the enemies who were against me."

[6] "Probe me, God, and know my heart / as you act graciously towards me and know my (unsettling) thoughts."

[7] "And see if a painful/troublesome way *is in store* for me, / and-lead-me *back* into-the-way-of eternity/the world."

Psalm 140

[1] For the leader, a tune of David.	לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	Lamnatze'ach, mizmor leDavid.
[2] Brace me, God, to face a crook,	חַלְּצֵנִי יהוה מֵאָדָם רָע	Chaltzeni, Adonai, me'adam ra,
and save me from his cruel sway,[1]	מֵאִישׁ חֲמָסִים תִּנְצְּרֵנִי	me'ish chamasim tintzereni
[3] Who secretly plots evil schemes,	אֲשֶׁר חָשְׁבוּ רָעוֹת בְּלֵב	Asher chashvu ra'ot belev,
provokes new quarrels every day.[2]	כָּל־יוֹם יָגוּרוּ מִלְחָמוֹת	kol yom yaguru mil'chamot.
[4] Like serpents do they whet their tongues,	שָׁנְנוּ לְשׁוֹנָם כְּמוֹ־נָחָשׁ	Shananu leshonam kemo nachash,
with vipers' venom on their lips.	חֲמַת עַכְשׁוּב תַּחַת שִׂפְתֵימוֹ	chamat achshuv tachat sefateimo.
Selah.[3]	סֶלָה	Selah.
[5] Keep me, God, from evil power,	שָׁמְרֵנִי יהוה מִידֵי רָשָׁע	Shomreini, Adonai, midei rasha,
save me from those lawless brutes	מֵאִישׁ חֲמָסִים תִּנְצְּרֵנִי	me'ish chamasim tintzereni,
who keep me shaking in my boots.[4]	אֲשֶׁר חָשְׁבוּ לִדְחוֹת פְּעָמָי	asher chashvu lid'chot pa'amai.
[6] Proud men hid ropes and set their snares,	טָמְנוּ־גֵאִים פַּח לִי וַחֲבָלִים	Tamnu ge'im pach li vachavalim,
spread out their nets beside the trail,	פָּרְשׂוּ רֶשֶׁת לְיַד־מַעְגָּל	parsu reshet leyad magal,
laid traps to catch me *unawares*.	מוֹקְשִׁים שָׁתוּ־לִי	mokshim shatu li.
Selah.[5]	סֶלָה	Selah.
[7] I said to God, "You are my God!"	אָמַרְתִּי לַיהוה אֵלִי אָתָּה	Amarti lAdonai, "Eli atah!"
Listen, God, as I voice my prayers.[6]	הַאֲזִינָה יהוה קוֹל תַּחֲנוּנָי	Ha'azinah, Adonai, kol tachanunai.
[8] Sovereign God, rescuing power,	יְהוִה אֲדֹנָי עֹז יְשׁוּעָתִי	Elohim Adonai, oz yeshu'ati,
my armor when the arrows fly,[7]	סַכֹּתָה לְרֹאשִׁי בְּיוֹם נָשֶׁק	sakota leroshi beyom nashek.
[9] Don't grant the wicked, God, their wish—	אַל־תִּתֵּן יהוה מַאֲוֵי רָשָׁע	Al titen, Adonai, ma'avayei rasha,
nor back their scheme, to rise up high.	זִמָּמוֹ אַל־תָּפֵק יָרוּמוּ	zemamo al tafek, yarumu.
Selah.[8]	סֶלָה	Selah.

[1] "Brace-me, God, from-a-man-wicked; / from-a-person-of violent-acts guard-me."
[2] "Who plot evils in-heart (in their hearts, secretly), / every-day (or all-day) provoke wars."
[3] "They-sharpen their-tongues like-a-snake, / poison-of the-viper *is* beneath their-lips. / Selah."
[4] "Protect-me, God, from-the-powers-of a-wicked-person, / from-a-person-of violent-acts guard-me / who plans to-shove my-steps (so I should be afraid where I go in case they come and mess with me!)."
[5] "They-hid, proud-*men,* trap*s* for-me and-ropes, / spread net*s* at-the-side-of-the-track; / snares they-placed-for-me. / Selah.
[6] "I-said to-God, 'My-God *is* you!' / Hear, God, the-sound-of my-supplications."
[7] "God, God, power-of my-salvation, / you-covered my-head on-the-day-of weapons."
[8] "Do-not-grant, God, the-desires-of the-wicked; / his-scheme do-not-bring-out, *for then* they will rise. / Selah.

[10] Those who beset me, may their heads	רֹאשׁ מְסִבָּי	Rosh mesibai,
drown in the malice of their lips.[1]	עֲמַל שְׂפָתֵימוֹ יְכַסֶּמוֹ[2]	amal sefateimo yechasemo.
[11] May burning coals shower down on them,	יָמוֹטוּ[3] עֲלֵיהֶם גֶּחָלִים	Yimotu aleihem gechalim,
plunge them in fire,	בָּאֵשׁ יַפִּלֵם בְּמַהֲמֹרוֹת	ba'esh yapilem, bemahamorot,
never to rise.[4]	בַּל־יָקוּמוּ	bal yekumu.
[12] Let liars not settle in this land;	אִישׁ לָשׁוֹן בַּל־יִכּוֹן בָּאָרֶץ	Ish lashon bal yikon ba'aretz,
let vice hunt thugs, to bring them down.[5]	אִישׁ־חָמָס רָע יְצוּדֶנּוּ לְמַדְחֵפוֹת	ish chamas, rah yetzudenu lemadchefot.
[13] I know that God will make the trials	יָדַעְתִּי[7] כִּי־יַעֲשֶׂה יהוה	Yadati ki ya'aseh Adonai
for meek and poor both just and right.[6]	דִּין עָנִי מִשְׁפַּט אֶבְיוֹנִים	din ani, mishpat evyonim.
[14] The righteous will praise your renown,	אַךְ צַדִּיקִים יוֹדוּ לִשְׁמֶךָ	Ach tzadikim yodu lishmecha,
the upright will live in your sight.[8]	יֵשְׁבוּ יְשָׁרִים אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ	yeshvu yesharim et panecha.

[1] "The-head-of those-who-surround-me (the chiefs of those enemies who beset me), / *may the* mischief-of their-lips cover-it."
[2] A manuscript would have יכסומו.
[3] A manuscript would have ימיטו.
[4] "May-there-fall upon-them glowing-coals; / into-fire make-them-fall, into-pits, / so-that-they-cannot-rise *again."*
[5] "A person *with an evil* tongue, let-*such-a-one*- not-become-established in-the-land. / *as for* a-person-of-violence, *may* evil hunt-him-down to-*his*-overthrow."
[6] "I-know that-*God*-will-make, God, / what-is-right-for the-meek, justice-for the-poor."
[7] A manuscript would have ידעת.
[8] "Sure, the-righteous will-give-thanks for-your-renown; / they-will-settle, the-upright, by-your-presence."

Psalm 141

[1] A poem by David:	מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	Mizmor leDavid:
God, I called you. Hurry to me.	יהוה קְרָאתִיךָ חוּשָׁה לִי	Adonai, keraticha. Chusha li.
Listen to my cry when I call to you.	הַאֲזִינָה קוֹלִי בְּקָרְאִי־לָךְ	Ha'azina koli bekori lach.
[2] May my prayer be as incense before you,	תִּכּוֹן תְּפִלָּתִי קְטֹרֶת לְפָנֶיךָ	Tikon tefilati ketoret lefanecha,
my outstretched hands[1] an evening sacrifice.	מַשְׂאַת כַּפַּי מִנְחַת־עָרֶב	masat kapai min'chat arev.
[3] God, place a guard before my mouth,	שִׁיתָה יהוה שָׁמְרָה לְפִי	Shita, Adonai, shomra lefi,
a watchman at the opening of my lips.	נְצֹרָה עַל־דַּל שְׂפָתָי	nitzra al dal sefatai.
[4] Don't tilt my thoughts toward evil acts,	אַל־תַּט־לִבִּי לְדָבָר רָע	Al tat libi ledavar ra,
to practice deeds in wickedness	לְהִתְעוֹלֵל עֲלִלוֹת בְּרֶשַׁע	lehitolel alilot beresha
with habitual miscreants—	אֶת־אִישִׁים פֹּעֲלֵי־אָוֶן	et ishim po'alei aven,
nor relish what they most enjoy.[2]	וּבַל־אֶלְחַם בְּמַנְעַמֵּיהֶם	uval el'cham bemanameihem.
[5] The righteous bash me? That's real love,	יֶהֱלְמֵנִי־צַדִּיק חֶסֶד	Yehelmeni tzadik? Chesed!
They tell me off? That's an accolade	וְיוֹכִיחֵנִי שֶׁמֶן רֹאשׁ	Veyochicheni? Shemen rosh,
not to refuse, however much;	אַל־יָנִי רֹאשִׁי כִּי־עוֹד	al yani roshi ki od
I pray their troubles quickly fade.[3]	וּתְפִלָּתִי בְּרָעוֹתֵיהֶם	utefilati bera'oteihem.
[6] May their accusers fall down hard—	נִשְׁמְטוּ בִידֵי־סֶלַע שֹׁפְטֵיהֶם	Nishmetu videi selah shofteihem
while they hear kind words I declare—[4]	וְשָׁמְעוּ אֲמָרַי כִּי נָעֵמוּ	veshamu amarai ki na'emu
[7] As, when an earthquake splits the ground,	כְּמוֹ פֹלֵחַ וּבֹקֵעַ בָּאָרֶץ	Kemo fole'ach uvoke'a ba'aretz,
at She'ol's mouth our bones are tossed.[5]	נִפְזְרוּ עַצְמֵינוּ לְפִי שְׁאוֹל	nifzeru atzameinu lefi She'ol.
[8] I look to you, O ruling God,	כִּי אֵלֶיךָ יְהוִה אֲדֹנָי עֵינָי	Ki elecha Elohim Adonai einai;
for refuge; do not leave me bare.[6]	בְּכָה חָסִיתִי אַל־תְּעַר נַפְשִׁי	bechah chasiti—al te'ar nafshi.

[1] "The-lifting/burden-of my-hands."

[2] "And-let-me-not-eat their-delicacies."

[3] "*If* a-righteous-person would–strike-me, *that would be* a-kindness. / And-*if-a-righteous-person*-would-reprove-me, *that would be like anointing* oil for-my-head, / *which* let-it-not-refuse, my-head, even-if-it's-more (my head would be happy to be doused again and again with anointing oil), / and-my-prayer *is* against-their-evils (against bad things happening to them, the righteous)."

[4] "Let-be-thrown-down into-the-power-of-rock their-judges (may the judges who wield power against those righteous people come crashing down on a rock) / and-*may-they*-hear my-utterances, which bring-pleasure."

[5] "As *when* there-is-a-split and-there-is-an-opening in-the-earth, / scattered-are our-bones at-the-entrance-of She'ol (the underworld)."

[6] "For upon-you, God, Boss, *are*-my-eyes; / in-you have-I-taken-shelter; do-not-expose me (do not leave me unprotected)."

[9] Shield me from traps they set for me	שָׁמְרֵנִי מִידֵי פַּח יָקְשׁוּ לִי	Shomreni midei fach yakshu li
and from the malefactors' snare.[1]	וּמוֹקְשׁוֹת פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן	umokshot po'alei aven.
[10] Let them trip in their own nets	יִפְּלוּ בְמַכְמֹרָיו רְשָׁעִים	Yiplu vemachmorav resha'im;
while I alone escape the scare.[2]	יַחַד אָנֹכִי עַד־אֶעֱבוֹר	yachad anochi ad e'evor.

[1] "Guard-me from-the-power-of a-trap they-would-set for-me / and-from-snares-of doers-of evil."
[2] "Let-them-fall into-their-nets, the-wicked-people; / alone I until-I-can-pass (let me be alone until I can get past those snares)."

Psalm 142

[1] A teaching-poem by David,	מַשְׂכִּיל לְדָוִד	Maskil leDavid
when he was at the cave;[1]	בִּהְיוֹתוֹ בַמְּעָרָה	biheyoto vam'arah;
a prayer.	תְּפִלָּה	tefillah.
[2] To God I'll voice my heartfelt cry,	קוֹלִי אֶל־יהוה אֶזְעָק	Koli el Adonai ezak;
for pity's sake to God I sigh.[2]	קוֹלִי אֶל־יהוה אֶתְחַנָּן	koli el Adonai et'chanan.
[3] Before *God* I pour out my prayer,	אֶשְׁפֹּךְ לְפָנָיו שִׂיחִי	Eshpoch lefanav sichi;
telling *God* my every care.[3]	צָרָתִי לְפָנָיו אַגִּיד	tzarati lefanav agid.
[4] When my shrinking courage folds,	בְּהִתְעַטֵּף עָלַי רוּחִי	Behitatef alai ruchi
as I step forward with great care,	וְאַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ נְתִיבָתִי	ve'atah yadata netivati,
you know the route and all it holds,	בְּאֹרַח־זוּ אַהֲלֵךְ	be'orach zu ahalech,
though I must fear a hidden snare.[4]	טָמְנוּ פַּח לִי	tamnu pach li.
[5] Look to the right; you'll see *for sure*	הַבֵּיט יָמִין וּרְאֵה	Habet yamin ure'eh,
I *'m all alone and* have no friend,	וְאֵין־לִי מַכִּיר	ve'ein li makir;
no place to flee, *no welcoming door*,	אָבַד מָנוֹס מִמֶּנִּי	avad manos li;
no-one my bitter cares to tend.[5]	אֵין דּוֹרֵשׁ לְנַפְשִׁי	ein doresh lenafshi.
[6] O God, to you I sobbed, for you're	זָעַקְתִּי אֵלֶיךָ יהוה	Za'akti elecha, Adonai,
my one protective shelter sure:	אָמַרְתִּי אַתָּה מַחְסִי	amarti, "Atah machsi,
in this life's world I crave no more.[6]	חֶלְקִי בְּאֶרֶץ הַחַיִּים	chelki be'eretz hachayim."

[1] In I Sam. 24, Saul pursues David and enters a cave to relieve himself. David creeps up and—to show that he would not harm Saul, the anointed king, even when Saul is in David's power—he cuts off a corner of Saul's robe.

[2] "*With* my-voice/sound to-God I-will-scream; / *with* my-voice/sound to-God I-will-implore.

[3] "I-shall-pour-out before-*God* my-speech; / my-trouble before-*God* I-shall-relate."

[4] "When-wraps-itself over-me my-spirit/courage (when my courage shrinks inside me) / and-you know my-path (I'm fearful because I don't know what's ahead, but you know every step of the way) / in-course-this I-will walk (I'm walking along a path that's familiar to you), / *but* they-have-hidden a-trap for-me (but I'm afraid of some trap ahead of me, which you see but I don't)"; i.e., God, I walk in fear of the unknown before me, though you know every detail of my path.

[5] "Look right and-see, / and-not-for-me *is* an-acquaintance (I have no friend); / gone *is* refuge from-me (I have no place to run); / there's-nobody to-seek-after my-life/self." The last line could mean "nobody cares for me" or "nobody seeks to end my life," which doesn't seem to fit the context.

[6] "I-screamed/cried to-you, God; / I-said, 'You *are* my-shelter, / my-portion in-the-land-of living-people (all I could want in this world)'."

[7] Hear my prayer	הַקְשִׁיבָה אֶל־רִנָּתִי	Hakshiva el rinati
when I've sunk low.	כִּי־דַלּוֹתִי מְאֹד	ki daloti me'od;
Let foes not catch me	הַצִּילֵנִי מֵרֹדְפַי	hatzileni merodfai
if I'm too slow.[1]	כִּי אָמְצוּ מִמֶּנִּי	ki amtzu mimeni.
[8] Set me free	הוֹצִיאָה מִמַּסְגֵּר נַפְשִׁי	Hotzi'ah mimasger nafshi
to honor you;	לְהוֹדוֹת אֶת־שְׁמֶךָ	lehodot et shemecha;
so the just will praise	בִּי יַכְתִּרוּ צַדִּיקִים	bi yachtiru tzadikim
when you grant my due.[2]	כִּי תִגְמֹל עָלָי	ki tigmol alai.

[1] "Listen to-my-cry / for/when I-have-fallen greatly; / rescue-me from-my-pursuers / when/for they-are-too-strong for-me."

[2] "Bring-out from-constraint/jail my-self / *so that I can* thank/acknowledge your-renown; / on-account-of-me will-crown/honor the-righteous / when/because you-will-requite me." The translation may seem a little concise, so here's an expanded version: Set me free (bring me out of jail) to honor you (to acknowledge your renown); so the just will praise (on account of me the righteous will crown *you with praise*) when you grant my due (when you will bring recompense for me—when you grant me what I deserve).

Psalm 143

[1] A tune by David.	מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	Mizmor leDavid:
God, hear my prayer,	יהוה שְׁמַע תְּפִלָּתִי	Adonai, shema tefilati,
heed my plea;	הַאֲזִינָה אֶל־תַּחֲנוּנָי	ha'azinah el tachanunai;
with truth and justice answer me.[1]	בֶּאֱמֻנָתְךָ עֲנֵנִי בְּצִדְקָתֶךָ	be-emunat'cha aneni, betzidkatecha.
[2] But don't condemn this humble drudge	וְאַל־תָּבוֹא בְמִשְׁפָּט אֶת־עַבְדֶּךָ	Ve'al tavo vemishpat et avdecha
though none are pure when you're the judge.[2]	כִּי לֹא־יִצְדַּק לְפָנֶיךָ כָל־חָי	ki lo yitzdak lefanecha chol chai.
[3] Foes hunted me	כִּי רָדַף אוֹיֵב נַפְשִׁי	Ki radaf oyev nafshi,
and crushed me down	דִּכָּא לָאָרֶץ חַיָּתִי	dikah la'aretz chayati,
in shadows among	הוֹשִׁיבַנִי בְמַחֲשַׁכִּים	hoshivani vemachashakim
lifeless wraiths.[3]	כְּמֵתֵי עוֹלָם	kemetei olam.
[4] My courage failed,	וַתִּתְעַטֵּף עָלַי רוּחִי בְּתוֹכִי	Vatitatef alai ruchi betochi,
my mind was dazed,[4]	יִשְׁתּוֹמֵם לִבִּי	yishtomem libi.
[5] Till I remembered times long gone	זָכַרְתִּי יָמִים מִקֶּדֶם	Zacharti yamim mikedem,
and thought of all the deeds you've done,	הָגִיתִי בְכָל־פָּעֳלֶךָ	hagiti vechol po'olecha,
to broadcast the renown you've won.[5]	בְּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֶיךָ אֲשׂוֹחֵחַ	bema'aseh yadecha asoche'ach.
[6] To you I stretched my feeble hands,	פָּרַשְׂתִּי יָדַי אֵלֶיךָ	Perasti yadai elecha,
like parched earth did I pine for you.	נַפְשִׁי כְאֶרֶץ־עֵיפָה לָךְ	nafshi ke'eretz ayefa lecha.
Selah.[6]	סֶלָה	Selah.

[1] "God, hear my-prayer, listen to-my-plea; / in-your-faithfulness answer-me, with-your-justice."
[2] "And-don't-come with-judgement for-*me*-your-servant, / for not-will-be-innocent in-your-presence any-living-thing."
[3] "For pursued the-foe my-self, (enemies pursued me) / crushed to-the-earth my-vitality, / brought-me-back among-shadows/darkness / like-the-dead-ones-of eternity (or, the dead of the earth)."
[4] "And-wrapped-itself-up for-me *did* my-spirit within-me (my courage went all internal); / dazed-was my-heart."
[5] "I-remembered days from-before, / I-meditated upon-all your-accomplishment; / of-the-work-of your-hands I-would-speak."
[6] "I-extended my-hands toward-you, / my-self *was* like-earth-exhausted for-you (I was like exhausted land—land drained of moisture and poor for agriculture, but longing for rain—*longing* for you). / Selah."

[7] Answer me soon, God, I'm out of breath;	מַהֵר עֲנֵנִי יהוה כָּלְתָה רוּחִי	Maher aneni, Adonai; kaltah ruchi;
stay at my side—do not hide,	אַל־תַּסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי	al taster panecha mimeni
lest with the damned I sink to death.[1]	וְנִמְשַׁלְתִּי עִם־יֹרְדֵי בוֹר	venimshalti im yordei vor.
[8] At break of day show me your grace	הַשְׁמִיעֵנִי בַבֹּקֶר חַסְדֶּךָ	Hashmi'eni vaboker chasdecha
for in you my trust I place;	כִּי־בְךָ בָטָחְתִּי	ki vecha vatachti;
show me the pathway I should trace	הוֹדִיעֵנִי דֶּרֶךְ־זוּ אֵלֵךְ	hodi'eni derech zu elech
for toward you my prayers I raise.[2]	כִּי־אֵלֶיךָ נָשָׂאתִי נַפְשִׁי	ki elecha nasati nafshi.
[9] O God, from my foes rescue me	הַצִּילֵנִי מֵאֹיְבַי יהוה	Hatzileni me'oyvai, Adonai;
you are my only sanctuary.[3]	אֵלֶיךָ כִסִּתִי	elecha chisiti.
[10] Teach me how to do your will	לַמְּדֵנִי לַעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹנֶךָ	Lamdeni la'asot retzonecha,
for you're the God whom I revere;	כִּי־אַתָּה אֱלוֹהָי	ki atah Elohai;
in your kindness lead me where	רוּחֲךָ טוֹבָה תַּנְחֵנִי	ruchacha tovah tan'cheni
for everyone the world is fair.[4]	בְּאֶרֶץ מִישׁוֹר	be'eretz mishor.
[11] For your renown, God, save my life;	לְמַעַן־שִׁמְךָ יהוה תְּחַיֵּנִי	Lema'an shimcha, Adonai, techayeni;
with justice, rescue me from strife.[5]	בְּצִדְקָתְךָ תוֹצִיא מִצָּרָה נַפְשִׁי	betzidkat'cha totzi mitzara nafshi.
[12] In kindness, ruin all my foes,	וּבְחַסְדְּךָ תַּצְמִית אוֹיְבָי	Uvechasdecha tatzmit oyvai
who trouble me—destroy all those!	וְהַאֲבַדְתָּ כָּל־צֹרְרֵי נַפְשִׁי	veha'avadta kol tzorarei nafshi,
For, God, it's you whose will I do.[6]	כִּי אֲנִי עַבְדֶּךָ	ki ani avdecha.

[1] "Quickly answer-me God; finished-up *is* my-spirit/vigor/breath; / do-not-hide your-face/presence from-me (reassure me that you're with me); / lest-I-become-like those-who-descend-to a-pit (i.e., the damned, who don't go 'up' to Heaven)."

[2] "Make-me-hear in-the-morning your-kindness / for in-you have-I-trusted; / make-me-know this-path I-am-to-take / for-toward-you I-have-raised my-self (I look up toward you in prayer)."

[3] "Save-me from-my-foes, God; / toward-you have-I-gone-for-shelter."

[4] "Teach-me to-do your-will / for-you *are* my-God (the God whom I worship); / your-spirit good (your goodwill) make-*it*-settle-upon-me / in-a-land *that is* level/fair."

[5] "For-the-sake-of-your-name/renown, God, cause-me-to-live; / with-your-justice/vindication, bring-out from-trouble/constraint my-self."

[6] "And-in-your-kindness destroy my-enemies / and-bring-to-ruin all-the-ones-who-trouble my-self, / for I *am* your-servant."

Psalm 144

[1] *A tune* by David:	לְדָוִד	LeDavid:
Blessed be God, my strength,	בָּרוּךְ יהוה צוּרִי	Baruch Adonai tzuri,
who trains my hands for the *battle* front,	הַמְלַמֵּד יָדַי לַקְרָב	hamelamed yadai lakrav,
my fingers for war.	אֶצְבְּעוֹתַי לַמִּלְחָמָה	etzbe'otai lamil'chamah.
[2] My kindness, my fortress,	חַסְדִּי וּמְצוּדָתִי	Chasdi umetzudati,
my citadel, my rescuer,	מִשְׂגַּבִּי וּמְפַלְטִי לִי	misgabi umefalti li,
my protector in whom I trust,	מָגִנִּי וּבוֹ חָסִיתִי	magini, uvo chasiti,
who subdues my people beneath me!	הָרוֹדֵד עַמִּי תַּחְתָּי	haroded ami tachtai.
[3] God, what is a human being? Yet you notice us.	יהוה מָה־אָדָם וַתֵּדָעֵהוּ	Adonai, mah adam vateda'ehu,
What is a person? Yet you think of us.[1]	בֶּן־אֱנוֹשׁ וַתְּחַשְּׁבֵהוּ	ben enosh vat'chashvehu?
[4] Humanity is like a breath,	אָדָם לַהֶבֶל דָּמָה	Adam lahevel damah;
its days like a passing shadow.	יָמָיו כְּצֵל עוֹבֵר	yamav ketzel over.
[5] God, tilt the sky and come down;	יהוה הַט־שָׁמֶיךָ וְתֵרֵד	Adonai, hat shamecha vetered
touch the mountains and make them smoke!	גַּע בֶּהָרִים וְיֶעֱשָׁנוּ	gah beharim veye'eshanu.
[6] Flash lightning, and shatter them;	בְּרוֹק בָּרָק וּתְפִיצֵם	Berok barak utefitzem;
shoot your *lightning* arrows, and stun them.	שְׁלַח חִצֶּיךָ וּתְהֻמֵּם	sh'lach chitzecha utehumem.
[7] Reach *down* your hands from above;	שְׁלַח יָדֶיךָ מִמָּרוֹם	Shelach yadecha mimarom;
save me, rescue me from the deep waters,	פְּצֵנִי וְהַצִּילֵנִי מִמַּיִם רַבִּים	petzeni vehatzileni mimayim rabim,
from the hand of those foreigners,[2]	מִיַּד בְּנֵי נֵכָר	miyad benei nechar
[8] Whose talk is misleading	אֲשֶׁר פִּיהֶם דִּבֶּר־שָׁוְא	Asher pihem diber shav,
and whose power is falsehood.[3]	וִימִינָם יְמִין שָׁקֶר	viminam yemin shahker.
[9] God, I'll sing you a new song;	אֱלֹהִים שִׁיר חָדָשׁ אָשִׁירָה לָּךְ	Elohim shir chadash ashirah lach;
on the ten-*stringed* harp I'll play for you,	בִּנְבֶל עָשׂוֹר אֲזַמְּרָה־לָּךְ	benevel asor azamrah lach.
[10] *You* who grant salvation to kings,	הַנּוֹתֵן תְּשׁוּעָה לַמְּלָכִים	Hanoten teshu'ah lamlachim,
who saves *God's* servant David	הַפּוֹצֶה אֶת־דָּוִד עַבְדּוֹ	hapotzeh et David avdo
from the sword of evil.	מֵחֶרֶב רָעָה	mecherev ra'ah.

[1] "Us" and "our" in verses 3 and 4 are literally "him" and "his."

[2] "Foreigners" is literally "children of the stranger." Their misleading or evasive talk in verse 8 may simply mean that the poet cannot understand their foreign language.

[3] "And their right hand (i.e., their most powerful limb) is a right hand of falsehood"; i.e., their most powerful attribute is falsehood.

11 Save me, rescue me	פְּצֵנִי וְהַצִּילֵנִי	Petzeni, vehatzileni
from the hand of those foreigners,	מִיַּד בְּנֵי־נֵכָר	miyad benei nechar,
whose talk is misleading	אֲשֶׁר פִּיהֶם דִּבֶּר־שָׁוְא	asher pihem diber shav,
and whose power is falsehood,	וִימִינָם יְמִין שָׁקֶר	viminam yemin shahker,
12 While our sons are like *strong* plants	אֲשֶׁר בָּנֵינוּ כִּנְטִעִים	Asher baneinu kinti'im,
grown from seed,	מְגֻדָּלִים בִּנְעוּרֵיהֶם	megudalim bin'ureihem,
our daughters like corner*stone*s,	בְּנוֹתֵינוּ כְּזָוִיֹּת	benoteinu chezaviyot,
carved, fit for a palace,[1]	מְחֻטָּבוֹת תַּבְנִית הֵיכָל	mechutavot, tavnit heichal,
13 Our storehouses full,	מְזָוֵינוּ מְלֵאִים	Mezaveinu mele'im,
dispensing food in plenty,	מְפִיקִים מְזַן אֶל־זַן	mefikim mizan el zan;
our flocks becoming thousands,	צֹאנֵנוּ מַאֲלִיפוֹת	tzonenu ma'alifot,
multiplying in our fields,[2]	מְרֻבָּבוֹת בְּחוּצוֹתֵינוּ	merubavot bechutzoteinu,
14 Our oxen loaded *with our plenty*—	אַלּוּפֵינוּ מְסֻבָּלִים	Alufeinu mesubalim,
none breaks through *the fence,* none bolts free	אֵין־פֶּרֶץ וְאֵין יוֹצֵאת	ein peretz ve'ein yotzet,
(there's no noisy chasing *them* in our grounds).	וְאֵין צְוָחָה בִּרְחֹבֹתֵינוּ	ve'ein tzevachah bir'chovoteinu.
15 Happy is such a people;	אַשְׁרֵי הָעָם שֶׁכָּכָה לּוֹ	Ashrei ha'am shekachah lo;
Happy are they who worship God.[3]	אַשְׁרֵי הָעָם שֶׁיְּהוָה אֱלֹהָיו	Ashrei ha'am she'Adonai Elohav.

[1] Or, "So that our sons can be … our daughters can be …" Literally: "Which our children/sons like plants raised in their youth, / our daughters like cornerstones, / carved, the likeness of a palace"; presumably, this means that our sons are (or, may they be) like plants grown from seed, *with stronger roots than transplants,* and our daughters are like cornerstones, *the most important blocks of stone in a building,* carved *instead of rough,* like *the cornerstones made* for a palace *or another of the very finest buildings*. "Cornerstones" is literally "corners," so the reference could be to some other architectural detail than cornerstones.

[2] "Storehouses" is from the rare Hebrew root מזו; "dispensing food in plenty" is literally "dispensing from food to food" (i.e., taking food from the storehouse to a place where there is already food—we have lots of food!); "multiplying" could also be translated as "becoming myriads (tens of thousands)"; the word "bechutzoteinu/בְּחוּצוֹתֵינוּ" for "in our fields" sometimes means "in our courtyards"—it means some place outside the house. When things are going well, you don't have to share your hovel with cows, sheep or goats.

[3] "Whose God is God."

Psalm 145

[1] David's praise:	תְּהִלָּה לְדָוִד	Tehilah leDavid:
Acclaim I'll give my sovereign, God,	אֲרוֹמִמְךָ אֱלוֹהַי הַמֶּלֶךְ	**A**romimcha Elohai hamelech,
And I'll bless your name forever.	וַאֲבָרְכָה שִׁמְךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד	Va'avar'cha shimcha le'olam va'ed.
[2] **B**lessing to you each day I'll bring,	בְּכָל־יוֹם אֲבָרְכֶךָּ	**B**echol yom avar'cheka,
I'll praise your name forever.	וַאֲהַלְלָה שִׁמְךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד	Va'ahalela shimcha le'olam va'ed.
[3] **G**reat is God and greatly praised,	גָּדוֹל יהוה וּמְהֻלָּל מְאֹד	**G**adol Adonai um'hulal me'od,
Great beyond all probing.[1]	וְלִגְדֻלָּתוֹ אֵין חֵקֶר	Veligdulato ein cheker.
[4] **D**eeds of yours praise every age;	דּוֹר לְדוֹר יְשַׁבַּח מַעֲשֶׂיךָ	**D**or ledor yeshabach ma'asecha,
Your mighty acts they ever speak —	וּגְבוּרֹתֶיךָ יַגִּידוּ	Ugevurotecha yagidu.
[5] **H**ailing the glory of your power,	הֲדַר כְּבוֹד הוֹדֶךָ	**H**adar kevod hodecha
In words your wonders stating,	וְדִבְרֵי נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ אָשִׂיחָה	Vedivrei nifle'otecha asicha.
[6] **V**oicing your awesome power,	וֶעֱזוּז נוֹרְאֹתֶיךָ יֹאמֵרוּ	**V**e'ezuz nor'otecha yomeru,
Your greatness, too, relating;	וּגְדֻלָּתְךָ אֲסַפְּרֶנָּה	Ug'dulat'cha asaprena.
[7] **Z**ealously recalling your great good,	זֵכֶר רַב־טוּבְךָ יַבִּיעוּ	**Z**echer rav tuvcha yabi'u
In your righteousness delighting.	וְצִדְקָתְךָ יְרַנֵּנוּ	Vetzidkat'cha yeranenu.
[8] **Ch**aritable and caring is God,	חַנּוּן וְרַחוּם יהוה	**Ch**anun verachum Adonai,
Patient and most gracious.	אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם וּגְדָל־חָסֶד	Erech apayim ug'dol chased.
[9] **T**o all creatures God is good,	טוֹב־יהוה לַכֹּל	**T**ov Adonai lakol,
And mercy informs all *God's* work.	וְרַחֲמָיו עַל־כָּל־מַעֲשָׂיו	Verachamav al kol ma'asav.
[10] **Y**our creatures all will know you, God,	יוֹדוּךָ יהוה כָּל־מַעֲשֶׂיךָ	**Y**oducha Adonai kol ma'asecha,
And your followers will bless you.	וַחֲסִידֶיךָ יְבָרְכוּכָה	Vachasidecha yevar'chucha.
[11] **K**ingdom's glory they will tell,	כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתְךָ יֹאמֵרוּ	**K**evod malchut'cha yomeru,
And your power they will speak.	וּגְבוּרָתְךָ יְדַבֵּרוּ	Ug'vurat'cha yedaberu.
[12] **L**et children sense your power well	לְהוֹדִיעַ לִבְנֵי הָאָדָם גְּבוּרֹתָיו	**L**ehodi'a livnei ha'adam gevurotav
And glory, your kingdom's splendor;	וּכְבוֹד הֲדַר מַלְכוּתוֹ	Uchevod hadar malchuto.
[13] **M**onarchy is yours in every world,	מַלְכוּתְךָ מַלְכוּת כָּל־עֹלָמִים	**M**alchut'cha malchut kol olamim,
And government in every age and time;	וּמֶמְשַׁלְתְּךָ בְּכָל־דּוֹר וָדוֹר	Umemshaltecha bechol dor vador.
[14] **S**upporting all who fall	סוֹמֵךְ יהוה לְכָל־הַנֹּפְלִים	**S**omech Adonai lechol hanoflim,
And bracing those who are bent over.	וְזוֹקֵף לְכָל־הַכְּפוּפִים	Vezokef lechol hakfufim.

[1] "And for *God's* greatness there is no probing/examination."

[15] **I**n hope all eyes are on you,	עֵינֵי־כֹל אֵלֶיךָ יְשַׂבֵּרוּ	**E**inei chol elecha yesaberu,
And you give them their food in its time,	וְאַתָּה נוֹתֵן־לָהֶם אֶת־אָכְלָם בְּעִתּוֹ	Ve'ata noten lahem et ochlam be'ito.
[16] **P**resenting your open hand	פּוֹתֵחַ אֶת־יָדֶךָ	**P**ote'ach et yadecha,
And filling every creature's wish.[1]	וּמַשְׂבִּיעַ לְכָל־חַי רָצוֹן	Umasbi'ah lechol chai ratzon.
[17] **T**rue[2] is God in every way[3]	צַדִּיק יהוה בְּכָל־דְּרָכָיו	**Tz**adik Adonai bechol derachav,
And loving in all deeds.	וְחָסִיד בְּכָל־מַעֲשָׂיו	Vechasid bechol ma'asav.
[18] **C**lose is God to those who call,	קָרוֹב יהוה לְכָל־קֹרְאָיו	**K**arov Adonai lechol kor'av,
To all who call on God sincerely.	לְכֹל אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָאֻהוּ בֶּאֱמֶת	Lechol asher yikra'uhu ve'emet.
[19] **R**espect God, and your wish comes true;	רְצוֹן־יְרֵאָיו יַעֲשֶׂה	**R**etzon yere'av ya'aseh,
God hears your cry and saves you,[4]	וְאֶת־שַׁוְעָתָם יִשְׁמַע וְיוֹשִׁיעֵם	Ve'et shav'atam yishma veyoshi'em.
[20] **Sh**eltering those who love God	שׁוֹמֵר יהוה אֶת־כָּל־אֹהֲבָיו	**Sh**omer Adonai et kol ohavav,
And destroying all the wicked.	וְאֵת כָּל־הָרְשָׁעִים יַשְׁמִיד	Ve'et kol har'sha'im yashmid.
[21] **T**ribute to God my mouth shall deliver;	תְּהִלַּת יהוה יְדַבֶּר־פִּי	**T**ehillat Adonai yedaber pi,
And let all creatures bless	וִיבָרֵךְ כָּל־בָּשָׂר	Vivarech kol basar
God's holy name forever.	שֵׁם קָדְשׁוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד	shem kodsho le'olam va'ed.

[1] This verse is one of the reasons the Talmud finds Ashrei so very important (B.T. Ber. 4b).
[2] I used the plain translation "true" for "tzadik" (righteous); few English words begin with the tz/ts sound.
[3] "In all *God's* ways."
[4] "The wish of those who respect *God*, *God* performs; and their cry *God* will hear, and *God* will save them."

Psalm 146

[1] Hail God!	הַלְלוּ־יָהּ	Haleluyah!
My soul, hail God!	הַלְלִי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יהוה	Haleli nafshi et-Adonai.
[2] I will hail God while I live,	אֲהַלְלָה יהוה בְּחַיָּי	Ahalelah Adonai bechayay,
I'll sing to God as long as I last.	אֲזַמְּרָה לֵאלֹהַי בְּעוֹדִי	azamrah lElohai be'odi.
[3] Don't put your trust in prophets,	אַל־תִּבְטְחוּ בִנְדִיבִים	Al tivtechu vin'divim—
in a person with no power to save,	בְּבֶן־אָדָם שֶׁאֵין לוֹ תְּשׁוּעָה	beven adam she'ein lo teshu'ah.
[4] Who turns to dirt when breath is gone,	תֵּצֵא רוּחוֹ יָשֹׁב לְאַדְמָתוֹ	Tetzei rucho, yashuv le'admato:
whose thoughts vanish on that day!	בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא אָבְדוּ עֶשְׁתֹּנֹתָיו	bayom hahu avdu eshtonotav.
[5] Lucky is one helped by Jacob's God,	אַשְׁרֵי שֶׁאֵל יַעֲקֹב בְּעֶזְרוֹ	Ashrei she'El Ya'akov be'ezro;
whose hope is in the Ruler, God,	שִׂבְרוֹ עַל־יהוה אֱלֹהָיו	sivro al Adonai Elohav,
[6] Who makes sky and earth,	עֹשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ	Oseh shamayim va'aretz,
the sea and all its contents,	אֶת־הַיָּם וְאֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־בָּם	et hayam ve'et kol asher bam,
who keeps faith forever,	הַשֹּׁמֵר אֱמֶת לְעוֹלָם	hashomer emet le'olam,
[7] Makes justice for the wronged,	עֹשֶׂה מִשְׁפָּט לָעֲשׁוּקִים	Oseh mishpat la'ashukim,
gives food to the starving—	נֹתֵן לֶחֶם לָרְעֵבִים	notein lechem lar'eivim.
God frees the constrained;	יהוה מַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים	Adonai, matir asurim;
[8] God gives sight to the blind;	יהוה פֹּקֵחַ עִוְרִים	Adonai, pokei'ach ivrim;
God straightens those who are bent over;	יהוה זֹקֵף כְּפוּפִים	Adonai, zokeif kefufim;
God loves the righteous;	יהוה אֹהֵב צַדִּיקִים	Adonai, ohev tzadikim;
[9] God protects the alien,	יהוה שֹׁמֵר אֶת־גֵּרִים	Adonai, shomer et gerim,
supports the mourner and the widow,	יָתוֹם וְאַלְמָנָה יְעוֹדֵד	yatom ve'almanah ye'oded,
and twists the path of the wicked.	וְדֶרֶךְ רְשָׁעִים יְעַוֵּת	vederech resha'im ye'avet.
[10] God will rule forever—	יִמְלֹךְ יהוה לְעוֹלָם	Yimloch Adonai le'olam,
Zion, your God *will rule* from age to age:	אֱלֹהַיִךְ צִיּוֹן לְדֹר וָדֹר	Elohayich, Tziyon, ledor vador:
hail God!	הַלְלוּ־יָהּ	Haleluyah!

Psalm 147

[1] Hail God!	הַלְלוּיָהּ	Haleluyah!
It's good to make music to our God—	כִּי־טוֹב זַמְּרָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ	Ki tov zamrah Eloheinu,
pleasant and pretty is praise!	כִּי־נָעִים נָאוָה תְהִלָּה	ki na'im nava tehilah.
[2] God rebuilds Jerusalem,	בּוֹנֵה יְרוּשָׁלַם יהוה	Boneh Yerushalayim Adonai,
gathers Israel's scattered people.	נִדְחֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יְכַנֵּס	nidchei Yisra'el yechaness.
[3] Healing shattered hearts,	הָרוֹפֵא לִשְׁבוּרֵי לֵב	Harofeh lishvurei lev
God bandages their pain.	וּמְחַבֵּשׁ לְעַצְּבוֹתָם	umechabesh le'atzvotam.
[4] *God alone* can number the stars,	מוֹנֶה מִסְפָּר לַכּוֹכָבִים	Moneh mispar lakochavim,
giving all of them their names.	לְכֻלָּם שֵׁמוֹת יִקְרָא	lechulam shemot yikra.
[5] Our God is great and very powerful,	גָּדוֹל אֲדוֹנֵינוּ וְרַב־כֹּחַ	Gadol Adoneinu verav ko'ach,
with infinite understanding.	לִתְבוּנָתוֹ אֵין מִסְפָּר	litvunato ein mispar.
[6] *God* sustains the oppressed	מְעוֹדֵד עֲנָוִים יהוה	Me'oded anavim Adonai,
and knocks the wicked to the ground.	מַשְׁפִּיל רְשָׁעִים עֲדֵי־אָרֶץ	mashpil resha'im adei aretz.
[7] Respond to God with thanks,	עֱנוּ לַיהוה בְּתוֹדָה	Enu lAdonai betodah,
with the harp make music to our God—	זַמְּרוּ לֵאלֹהֵינוּ בְכִנּוֹר	zamru lEloheinu vechinor,
[8] Who covers the sky with clouds,	הַמְכַסֶּה שָׁמַיִם בְּעָבִים	Ham'chaseh shamayim be'avim,
prepares rain for the ground	הַמֵּכִין לָאָרֶץ מָטָר	hamechin la'aretz matar,
and makes the hills grow grass,	הַמַּצְמִיחַ הָרִים חָצִיר	hamatzmi'ach harim chatzir.
[9] Who gives the animal its food,	נוֹתֵן לִבְהֵמָה לַחְמָהּ	Noten livhemah lachmah,
answers the call of the raven's brood.	לִבְנֵי עֹרֵב אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָאוּ	livnei orev asher yikra'u.
[10] *God* cares not for the horse's might,	לֹא בִגְבוּרַת הַסּוּס יֶחְפָּץ	Lo vigvurat hasus yechpatz,
admires no-one for *strong* legs,	לֹא־בְשׁוֹקֵי הָאִישׁ יִרְצֶה	lo beshokei ha'ish yirtzeh;
[11] *But* cares for those who fear God,	רוֹצֶה יהוה אֶת־יְרֵאָיו	Rotzeh Adonai et yerei'av,
those who hope for *God's* kindness.	אֶת־הַמְיַחֲלִים לְחַסְדּוֹ	et hamyachalim lechasdo.
[12] Jerusalem, praise your ruler;	שַׁבְּחִי יְרוּשָׁלַם אֶת־יהוה	Shabchi, Yerushalayim, et Adonai!
Zion, hail your God:	הַלְלִי אֱלֹהַיִךְ צִיּוֹן	haleli Elohayich, Tziyon!
[13] *God* fortified the bars of your gates,	כִּי־חִזַּק בְּרִיחֵי שְׁעָרָיִךְ	Ki chizak berichei she'arayich,
blessed your children in your midst,	בֵּרַךְ בָּנַיִךְ בְּקִרְבֵּךְ	berach banayich bekirbech.

[14] *God* grants your borders peace,	הַשָּׂם־גְּבוּלֵךְ שָׁלוֹם	Hasam gevulech shalom,
to fill you with the cream of wheat,[1]	חֵלֶב חִטִּים יַשְׂבִּיעֵךְ	chelev chitim yasbi'ech,
[15] Sends to earth divine command—	הַשֹּׁלֵחַ אִמְרָתוֹ אָרֶץ	Hashole'ach imrato aretz,
God's word runs fast *to take effect!*[2]	עַד־מְהֵרָה יָרוּץ דְּבָרוֹ	ad meherah yarutz devaro,
[16] *God* brings snow—it's like wool—	הַנֹּתֵן שֶׁלֶג כַּצָּמֶר	Hanoten sheleg katzamer,
and scatters frost, like ashes,	כְּפוֹר כָּאֵפֶר יְפַזֵּר	kefor ka'efer yefazer,
[17] Sows hail—like crumbs:[3]	מַשְׁלִיךְ קַרְחוֹ כְּפִתִּים	Mashlich karcho chefitim—
who can stand up to its cold?	לִפְנֵי קָרָתוֹ מִי יַעֲמֹד	lifnei karato mi ya'amod?
[18] *God* sends the word, and they melt;	יִשְׁלַח דְּבָרוֹ וְיַמְסֵם	Yishlach devaro veyamsem,
brings divine breath, and water flows,	יַשֵּׁב רוּחוֹ יִזְלוּ־מָיִם	yashev rucho—yizlu mayim.
[19] Telling divine words to Jacob,	מַגִּיד דְּבָרָיו לְיַעֲקֹב	Magid devarav leYa'akov,
statutes and judgments to Israel.	חֻקָּיו וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו לְיִשְׂרָאֵל	chukav umishpatav leYisra'el.
[20] God did not do this for every nation,	לֹא עָשָׂה כֵן לְכָל־גּוֹי	Lo asah chen lechol goy,
so they did not know such judgements:	וּמִשְׁפָּטִים בַּל־יְדָעוּם	umishpatim bal yeda'um:
Hail God!	הַלְלוּיָהּ	Haleluyah!

[1] I.e., a peaceful land yields good harvests, since the residents don't have to feed the army.

[2] Mitchell Dahood (Anchor Bible Commentary) interprets this verse in terms of weather—the swiftly moving noise from the sky is thunder, and it comes between a verse about harvest and another about winter—but he notes that many translators follow Isaiah 55:10-11 and connect the weather with God's commandment. To me, the psalm suggests that weather, human power and divine justice all spring from one source.

[3] The Old English poem *The Seafarer* calls hail "the coldest of grains" (line 33); the ancients felt the weather more keenly than we with our warm clothes and insulated houses.

Psalm 148

[1] Hail God!	הַלְלוּ יָהּ	Haleluyah!
Hail God from the sky;	הַלְלוּ אֶת־יהוה מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם	Halelu et Adonai min
hail God in the heights.	הַלְלוּהוּ בַּמְּרוֹמִים	hashamayim
		haleluhu bamromim.
[2] Hail God, all *God's* angels,	הַלְלוּהוּ כָּל־מַלְאָכָיו	Haleluhu chol malachav,
Hail God, all *God's* armies,[1]	הַלְלוּהוּ כָּל־צְבָאָיו	haleluhu kol tzeva'av,
[3] Hail God, you sun and moon,	הַלְלוּהוּ שֶׁמֶשׁ וְיָרֵחַ	Haleluhu shemesh veyare'ach,
Hail God, all you bright stars.	הַלְלוּהוּ כָּל־כּוֹכְבֵי אוֹר	haleluhu kol kochvei or.
[4] Hail God, the highest heavens,[2]	הַלְלוּהוּ שְׁמֵי הַשָּׁמָיִם	Haleluhu shemei hashamayim,
and the water that	וְהַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר	vehamayim asher
lies even higher![3]	מֵעַל הַשָּׁמָיִם	me'al hashamayim.
[5] Hail God's name,	יְהַלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יהוה	Yehalelu et shem Adonai,
for God gave the order, and it was done.	כִּי הוּא צִוָּה וְנִבְרָאוּ	ki hu tzivah venivra'u.
[6] God made *the order* stand forever;	וַיַּעֲמִידֵם לָעַד לְעוֹלָם	Vaya'amidem la'ad le'olam,
God gave a statute, never to lapse.	חָק־נָתַן וְלֹא יַעֲבוֹר	chok natan velo ya'avor.
[7] Praise God from the earth,	הַלְלוּ אֶת־יהוה מִן־הָאָרֶץ	Halelu et Adonai min ha'aretz,
sea monsters and all the deep *seas*.	תַּנִּינִים וְכָל־תְּהֹמוֹת	taninim vechol tehomot.
[8] Fire and thunder, snow and mist,	אֵשׁ וּבָרָד שֶׁלֶג וְקִיטוֹר	Esh uvarad, sheleg vekitor,
stormy winds follow God's orders.	רוּחַ סְעָרָה עֹשָׂה דְבָרוֹ	ru'ach se'arah osah devaro.
[9] The mountains and all the hills,	הֶהָרִים וְכָל־גְּבָעוֹת	Heharim vechol geva'ot,
the fruit tree and every cedar tree,	עֵץ פְּרִי וְכָל־אֲרָזִים	etz peri vechol arazim.
[10] The beast and all the cattle,	הַחַיָּה וְכָל־בְּהֵמָה	Hachayah vechol behemah,
the insect and the winged bird—	רֶמֶשׂ וְצִפּוֹר כָּנָף	remess vetzipor kanaf.
[11] Rulers on earth and all their folk,	מַלְכֵי־אֶרֶץ וְכָל־לְאֻמִּים	Malchei eretz vechol le'umim,
chiefs and every earthly judge,	שָׂרִים וְכָל־שֹׁפְטֵי אָרֶץ	sarim vechol shoftei aretz.
[12] Young men and young women too,	בַּחוּרִים וְגַם־בְּתוּלוֹת	Bachurim vegam betulot,
the elderly with the young—	זְקֵנִים עִם־נְעָרִים	zekenim im ne'arim.

[1] Today we think of צבא as an army, but it could mean something less military—a group of people engaged in public service.
[2] "The heavens of the heavens" or "the skies of the skies."
[3] "And the water that is higher than the skies."

[13] *Let them* all praise God's name,	יְהַלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יהוה	Yehalelu et shem Adonai,
for *God's* name alone is exalted:	כִּי־נִשְׂגָּב שְׁמוֹ לְבַדּוֹ	ki nisgav shemo levado:
God's glory surpasses earth and sky.	הוֹדוֹ עַל־אֶרֶץ וְשָׁמָיִם	hodo al eretz veshamayim.
[14] And *God* will bring us greatness,	וַיָּרֶם קֶרֶן לְעַמּוֹ	Vayarem keren le'amo,
glory for all who feel *God's* kindness[1]—	תְּהִלָּה לְכָל־חֲסִידָיו	tehila lechol chasidav—
Israel's children, the people close to *God*.	לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עַם־קְרֹבוֹ	livnei Yisra'el, am kerovo:
Hail God!	הַלְלוּ־יָהּ	Haleluyah!

[1] "And *God* will raise a horn for *God's* people" (possibly raising their heads so they can be proud); this idiom seems to imply greatness. "Glory for those who feel God's kindness"—חֲסִידָיו can mean "those who love *God*" or "those who are gracious toward *God*"; or it can mean "those who experience God's love/kindness." We usually translate the word as "righteous," referring to the most devout and religious people.

Psalm 149

[1] Hail God!	הַלְלוּ יָהּ	Haleluyah!
Sing God a new song—	שִׁירוּ לַיהוה שִׁיר חָדָשׁ	Shiru lAdonai shir chadash,
God's praise—among the righteous.	תְּהִלָּתוֹ בִּקְהַל חֲסִידִים	tehilato bik'hal chasidim.
[2] Let Israel rejoice in *God's* works;	יִשְׂמַח יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעֹשָׂיו	Yismach Yisra'el be'osav,
Zion's children celebrate their rule;	בְּנֵי־צִיּוֹן יָגִילוּ בְמַלְכָּם	benei Tziyon yagilu vemalkam.
[3] Hail *God's* name with dance,	יְהַלְלוּ שְׁמוֹ בְמָחוֹל	Yehalelu shemo vemachol,
drum and lyre;[1] make music for God.	בְּתֹף וְכִנּוֹר יְזַמְּרוּ־לוֹ	betof vechinor yezamru lo.
[4] For *God* takes delight in *God's* people	כִּי־רוֹצֶה יהוה בְּעַמּוֹ	Ki rotzeh Adonai be'amo,
and will honor the humble with salvation.	יְפָאֵר עֲנָוִים בִּישׁוּעָה	yefa'er anavim bishu'ah.
[5] The righteous will exult in glory;	יַעְלְזוּ חֲסִידִים בְּכָבוֹד	Ya'lzu chasidim bechavod,
they'll chuckle in bed,	יְרַנְּנוּ עַל־מִשְׁכְּבוֹתָם	yeranenu al mishkevotam.
[6] With high praise of God in their throat	רוֹמְמוֹת אֵל בִּגְרוֹנָם	Romemot El bigronam,
and the sharpened sword in their hands	וְחֶרֶב פִּיפִיּוֹת בְּיָדָם	vecherev pifiyot beyadam.
[7] To take revenge on the nations	לַעֲשׂוֹת נְקָמָה בַּגּוֹיִם	La'asot nekamah bagoyim,
and bring punishment to the peoples,	תּוֹכֵחֹת בַּל־אֻמִּים	tochechot bal-umim,
[8] To put their chiefs in chains	לֶאְסֹר מַלְכֵיהֶם בְּזִקִים	Le'sor malcheihem bezikim,
and their leaders in iron fetters,	וְנִכְבְּדֵיהֶם בְּכַבְלֵי בַרְזֶל	venichbedeihem bechavlei varzel,
[9] To make them suffer the written sentence—	לַעֲשׂוֹת בָּהֶם מִשְׁפָּט כָּתוּב	la'asot bahem mishpat katuv,
God is magnificent for the righteous:	הָדָר הוּא לְכָל־חֲסִידָיו	hadar hu lechol chasidav:
Hail God!	הַלְלוּ־יָהּ	Haleluyah!

[1] Experts will tell us about instruments of Biblical times. The drum could have been like a tambourine, perhaps without bells, the lyre a hand-held string instrument.

Psalm 150

[1] Hail God!	הַלְלוּ יָהּ	Haleluyah!
Hail God for holiness,	הַלְלוּ־אֵל בְּקָדְשׁוֹ	Halelu El bekodsho,
Hail *God* for far-reaching power,[1]	הַלְלוּהוּ בִּרְקִיעַ עֻזּוֹ	Haleluhu birki'ah uzo.
[2] Hail *God* as a role model,[2]	הַלְלוּהוּ בִּגְבוּרֹתָיו	Haleluhu vigvurotav,
Hail *God* according to God's greatness,	הַלְלוּהוּ כְּרֹב גֻּדְלוֹ	haleluhu kerov gudlo.
[3] Hail *God* with the trumpet blast,	הַלְלוּהוּ בְּתֵקַע שׁוֹפָר	Haleluhu beteka shofar,
Hail *God* with harp and lyre,	הַלְלוּהוּ בְּנֵבֶל וְכִנּוֹר	haleluhu benevel vechinor.
[4] Hail *God* with drum and dance,	הַלְלוּהוּ בְּתֹף וּמָחוֹל	Haleluhu vetof umachol,
Hail *God* with strings and song,	הַלְלוּהוּ בְּמִנִּים וְעוּגָב	haleluhu beminim ve'ugav.
[5] Hail *God* with loud music,	הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצְלֵי־שָׁמַע	Haleluhu vetziltzelei shama,
Hail *God* with loud voices![3]	הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצְלֵי תְרוּעָה	haleluhu betziltzelei teru'ah.
[6] Let every living thing hail God—	כֹּל הַנְּשָׁמָה תְּהַלֵּל יָהּ	Kol han'shamah tehalel Yah,
Hail God!	הַלְלוּ־יָהּ	Haleluyah!
Let every living thing hail God—Hail God!	כֹּל הַנְּשָׁמָה תְּהַלֵּל יָהּ הַלְלוּ־יָהּ	Kol han'shamah tehalel Yah, Haleluyah!

[1] "In the firmament of *God's* power"; could this be a force field permeating the universe?

[2] Role model? Yes! גְּבוּרוֹת is the name we give to the second blessing of the amidah; it means "power" or "heroic acts," but that blessing shows God as healer, liberator and supporter, not as some kind of military hero or sports figure.

[3] The last psalm of all reminds us of the music of the Temple; in sad memory of its loss, Jewish services were for centuries (and still are in most cases) without instrumental accompaniment.

Notes

רע *This two-letter root has at least three meanings—evil, neighbor and shepherd—roughly corresponding to the Id, Ego and Superego. Naughty, naughty Id! The root* רע *most commonly means bad—"The Egyptians treated us badly" (Deut. 26:6). But it's often translated as shepherd (PS 23:1). And neighbor—"Love your neighbor as yourself" (Lev 19:18). Maybe this phrase means we should acknowledge and "love" the bad part of our self, the controlling part of ourself, and the next-to-me part of myself. I hope I make myself obscure.*