

Psalm Prayers

PSALM 5

Give ear to my words, O LORD;
understand my sighing.
Attend to the sound of my cry,
my king and my God!
For to you I will pray, LORD;
in the morning you will hear my voice;
in the morning I will plead before you and
wait.

II

You are not a god who delights in evil;
no wicked person finds refuge with you;
the arrogant cannot stand before your eyes.
You hate all who do evil;
you destroy those who speak falsely.
A bloody and fraudulent man
the LORD abhors.

III

But I, through the abundance of your mercy,
will enter into your house.
I will bow down toward your holy sanctuary
out of fear of you.
LORD, guide me in your justice because of my
foes;
make straight your way before me.

IV

For there is no sincerity in their mouth;
their heart is corrupt.
Their throat is an open grave;
on their tongue are subtle lies.
Declare them guilty, God;
make them fall by their own devices.
Drive them out for their many sins;
for they have rebelled against you.

V

Then all who trust in you will be glad
and forever shout for joy.
You will protect them and those will rejoice in
you
who love your name.
For you, LORD, bless the just one;
you surround him with favor like a shield.

PSALM 10

Why, LORD, do you stand afar
and pay no heed in times of trouble?
Arrogant scoundrels pursue the poor;
they trap them by their cunning schemes.

II

The wicked even boast of their greed;
these robbers curse and scorn the LORD.
In their insolence the wicked boast:
“God does not care; there is no God.”
Yet their affairs always succeed;
they ignore your judgment on high;
they sneer at all who oppose them.
They say in their hearts, “We will never fall;
never will we see misfortune.”
Their mouths are full of oaths, violence, and
lies;
discord and evil are under their tongues.
They wait in ambush near towns;
their eyes watch for the helpless
to murder the innocent in secret.
They lurk in ambush like lions in a thicket,
hide there to trap the poor,
snare them and close the net.
The helpless are crushed, laid low;
they fall into the power of the wicked,
Who say in their hearts, “God has forgotten,
shows no concern, never bothers to look.”

III

Rise up, LORD! God, lift up your hand!
Do not forget the poor!
Why should the wicked scorn God,
say in their hearts, “God does not care”?
But you do see;
you take note of misery and sorrow;
you take the matter in hand.
To you the helpless can entrust their cause;
you are the defender of orphans.
Break the arm of the wicked and depraved;
make them account for their crimes;
let none of them survive.

IV

The LORD is king forever;
the nations have vanished from his land.
You listen, LORD, to the needs of the poor;
you strengthen their heart and incline your
ear.
You win justice for the orphaned and
oppressed;
no one on earth will cause terror again.

PSALM 17

Hear, LORD, my plea for justice;
pay heed to my cry;
Listen to my prayer
from lips without guile.
From you let my vindication come;
your eyes see what is right.
You have tested my heart,
searched it in the night.
You have tried me by fire,
but find no malice in me.
My mouth has not transgressed
as others often do.
As your lips have instructed me,
I have kept from the way of the lawless.
My steps have kept to your paths;
my feet have not faltered.

II

I call upon you; answer me, O God.
Turn your ear to me; hear my speech.
Show your wonderful mercy,
you who deliver with your right arm
those who seek refuge from their foes.
Keep me as the apple of your eye;
hide me in the shadow of your wings
from the wicked who despoil me.

III

My ravenous enemies press upon me;
they close their hearts,
they fill their mouths with proud roaring.
Their steps even now encircle me;
they watch closely, keeping low to the ground,
Like lions eager for prey,
like a young lion lurking in ambush.
Rise, O LORD, confront and cast them down;
rescue my soul from the wicked.

Slay them with your sword;
with your hand, LORD, slay them;
snatch them from the world in their prime.
Their bellies are being filled with your friends;
their children are satisfied too,
for they share what is left with their young.
I am just—let me see your face;
when I awake, let me be filled with your
presence.

PSALM 35

Oppose, O LORD, those who oppose me;
war upon those who make war upon me.
Take up the shield and buckler;
rise up in my defense.
Brandish lance and battle-ax
against my pursuers.
Say to my soul,
“I am your salvation.”
Let those who seek my life
be put to shame and disgrace.
Let those who plot evil against me
be turned back and confounded.
Make them like chaff before the wind,
with the angel of the LORD driving them on.
Make their way slippery and dark,
with the angel of the LORD pursuing them.

II

Without cause they set their snare for me;
without cause they dug a pit for me.
Let ruin overtake them unawares;
let the snare they have set catch them;
let them fall into the pit they have dug.
Then I will rejoice in the LORD,
exult in God’s salvation.
My very bones shall say,
“O LORD, who is like you,
Who rescue the afflicted from the powerful,
the afflicted and needy from the despoiler?”

III

Malicious witnesses rise up,
accuse me of things I do not know.
They repay me evil for good;
my soul is desolate.
Yet I, when they were ill, put on sackcloth,
afflicted myself with fasting,
sobbed my prayers upon my bosom.
I went about in grief as for my brother,
bent in mourning as for my mother.
Yet when I stumbled they gathered with glee,
gathered against me and I did not know it.

They slandered me without ceasing;
without respect they mocked me,
gnashed their teeth against me.

IV

O Lord, how long will you look on?
Restore my soul from their destruction,
my very life from lions!
Then I will thank you in the great assembly;
I will praise you before the mighty throng.
Do not let lying foes rejoice over me,
my undeserved enemies wink knowingly.
They speak no words of peace,
but against the quiet in the land
they fashion deceitful speech.
They open wide their mouths against me.
They say, “Aha! Good!
Our eyes have seen it!”
You see this, LORD; do not be silent;
Lord, do not withdraw from me.
Awake, be vigilant in my defense,
in my cause, my God and my Lord.
Defend me because you are just, LORD;
my God, do not let them rejoice over me.
Do not let them say in their hearts,
“Aha! Our soul!”*
Do not let them say,
“We have devoured that one!”
Put to shame and confound
all who relish my misfortune.
Clothe with shame and disgrace
those who lord it over me.
But let those who favor my just cause
shout for joy and be glad.
May they ever say, “Exalted be the LORD
who delights in the peace of his loyal servant.”
Then my tongue shall recount your justice,
declare your praise, all the day long.

PSALM 58

Do you indeed pronounce justice, O gods;
do you judge fairly you children of Adam?
No, you freely engage in crime;
your hands dispense violence to the earth.

II

The wicked have been corrupt since birth;
liars from the womb, they have gone astray.
Their venom is like the venom of a snake,
like that of a serpent stopping its ears,
So as not to hear the voice of the charmer
or the enchanter with cunning spells.

III

O God, smash the teeth in their mouths;
break the fangs of these lions, LORD!
Make them vanish like water flowing away;
trodden down, let them wither like grass.
Let them dissolve like a snail that oozes away,
like an untimely birth that never sees the sun.
Suddenly, like brambles or thistles,
have the whirlwind snatch them away.
Then the just shall rejoice to see the
vengeance
and bathe their feet in the blood of the
wicked.
Then people will say:
“Truly there is a reward for the just;
there is a God who is judge on earth!”

PSALM 59

Rescue me from my enemies, my God;
lift me out of reach of my foes.
Deliver me from evildoers;
from the bloodthirsty save me.
They have set an ambush for my life;
the powerful conspire against me.
For no offense or misdeed of mine, LORD,
for no fault they hurry to take up arms.
Come near and see my plight!
You, LORD God of hosts, are the God of
Israel!
Awake! Punish all the nations.
Have no mercy on these worthless traitors.
Each evening they return,
growling like dogs, prowling the city.
Their mouths pour out insult;
sharp words are on their lips.
They say: "Who is there to hear?"
But you, LORD, laugh at them;
you deride all the nations.
My strength, for you I watch;
you, God, are my fortress,
my loving God.

II

May God go before me,
and show me my fallen foes.
Slay them not, God,
lest they deceive my people.
Shake them by your power;
Lord, our shield, bring them down.
For the sinful words of their mouths and lips
let them be caught in their pride.
For the lies they have told under oath
destroy them in anger,
destroy till they are no more.
Then people will know God rules over Jacob,
yes, even to the ends of the earth.
Each evening they return,
growling like dogs, prowling the city.
They roam about as scavengers;
if they are not filled, they howl.

III

But I shall sing of your strength,
extol your mercy at dawn,
For you are my fortress,
my refuge in time of trouble.
My strength, your praise I will sing;
you, God, are my fortress, my loving God.

PSALM 69

Save me, God,
for the waters² have reached my neck.
I have sunk into the mire of the deep,
where there is no foothold.
I have gone down to the watery depths;
the flood overwhelms me.
I am weary with crying out;
my throat is parched.
My eyes fail,
from looking for my God.
More numerous than the hairs of my head
are those who hate me without cause.
Those who would destroy me are mighty,
my enemies without reason.
Must I now restore
what I did not steal?

II

God, you know my folly;
my faults are not hidden from you.
Let those who wait in hope for you, LORD of
hosts,
not be shamed because of me.
Let those who seek you, God of Israel,
not be disgraced because of me.
For it is on your account I bear insult,
that disgrace covers my face.
I have become an outcast to my kindred,
a stranger to my mother's children.
Because zeal for your house has consumed
me,
I am scorned by those who scorn you.
When I humbled my spirit with fasting,
this led only to scorn.
When I clothed myself in sackcloth;
I became a byword for them.
Those who sit in the gate gossip about me;
drunkards make me the butt of songs.

III

But I will pray to you, LORD,
at a favorable time.
God, in your abundant kindness, answer me
with your sure deliverance.
Rescue me from the mire,
and do not let me sink.
Rescue me from those who hate me
and from the watery depths.
Do not let the flood waters overwhelm me,
nor the deep swallow me,
nor the pit close its mouth over me.
Answer me, LORD, in your generous love;
in your great mercy turn to me.
Do not hide your face from your servant;
hasten to answer me, for I am in distress.
Come and redeem my life;
because of my enemies ransom me.
You know my reproach, my shame, my
disgrace;
before you stand all my foes.
Insult has broken my heart, and I despair;
I looked for compassion, but there was none,
for comforters, but found none.
Instead they gave me poison for my food;
and for my thirst they gave me vinegar.

IV

May their own table be a snare for them,
and their communion offerings a trap.
Make their eyes so dim they cannot see;
keep their backs ever feeble.
Pour out your wrath upon them;
let the fury of your anger overtake them.
Make their camp desolate,
with none to dwell in their tents.
For they pursued the one you struck,
added to the pain of the one you wounded.
Heap punishment upon their punishment;
let them gain from you no vindication.
May they be blotted from the book of life;
not registered among the just!

V

But here I am miserable and in pain;
let your saving help protect me, God,
That I may praise God's name in song
and glorify it with thanksgiving.
That will please the LORD more than oxen,
more than bulls with horns and hooves:
"See, you lowly ones, and be glad;
you who seek God, take heart!
For the LORD hears the poor,
and does not spurn those in bondage.
Let the heaven and the earth praise him,
the seas and whatever moves in them!"

VI

For God will rescue Zion,
and rebuild the cities of Judah.
They will dwell there and possess it;
the descendants of God's servants will inherit
it; those who love God's name will dwell in it.

PSALM 70

Graciously rescue me, God!
Come quickly to help me, LORD!
Let those who seek my life
be confused and put to shame.
Let those who desire my ruin
turn back in disgrace.
Let those who say “Aha!”
turn back in their shame.
But may all who seek you
rejoice and be glad in you,
Those who long for your help
always say, “God be glorified!”
I am miserable and poor.
God, come to me quickly!
You are my help and deliverer.
LORD, do not delay!

PSALM 79

O God, the nations have invaded your inheritance;
they have defiled your holy temple;
they have laid Jerusalem in ruins.
They have left the corpses of your servants
as food for the birds of the sky,
the flesh of those devoted to you for the
beasts of the earth.
They have poured out their blood like water
all around Jerusalem,
and no one is left to do the burying.
We have become the reproach of our
neighbors,
the scorn and derision of those around us.

II

How long, LORD? Will you be angry forever?
Will your jealous anger keep burning like fire?
Pour out your wrath on nations that do not
recognize you,
on kingdoms that do not call on your name,
For they have devoured Jacob,
laid waste his dwelling place.
Do not remember against us the iniquities of
our forefathers;
let your compassion move quickly ahead of
us,
for we have been brought very low.

III

Help us, God our savior,
on account of the glory of your name.
Deliver us, pardon our sins
for your name's sake.
Why should the nations say,
"Where is their God?"¹
Before our eyes make known to the nations
that you avenge the blood of your servants
which has been poured out.

IV

Let the groaning of the imprisoned come in
before you;
in accord with the greatness of your arm
preserve those doomed to die.
Turn back sevenfold into the bosom of our
neighbors
the insult with which they insulted you, Lord.
Then we, your people, the sheep of your
pasture,
will give thanks to you forever;
from generation to generation
we will recount your praise.

PSALM 83

God, do not be silent;
God, do not be deaf or remain unmoved!
See how your enemies rage;
your foes proudly raise their heads.
They conspire against your people,
plot against those you protect.
They say, "Come, let us wipe them out as a
nation;
let Israel's name be remembered no more!"
They scheme with one mind,
they have entered into a covenant against you:
The tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites,
of Moab and the Hagarites,
Geba, Ammon, and Amalek,
Philistia and the inhabitants of Tyre.
Assyria, too, in league with them,
backs the descendants of Lot.

II

Deal with them as with Midian;
as with Sisera and Jabin at the wadi Kishon,
Those destroyed at Endor,
who became dung for the ground.
Make their nobles like Oreb and Zeeb,
all their princes like Zebah and Zalmunna,
Who made a plan together,
"let us take for ourselves the pastures of
God."
My God, make them like tumbleweed,
into chaff flying before the wind.
As a fire raging through a forest,
a flame setting mountains ablaze,
Pursue them with your tempest;
terrify them with your storm-wind.
Cover their faces with shame,
till they seek your name, LORD.
Let them be ashamed and terrified forever;
let them perish in disgrace.
Let them know that your name is LORD,
You alone are the Most High over all the
earth.

PSALM 109

O God, whom I praise, do not be silent,
for wicked and treacherous mouths attack me.
They speak against me with lying tongues;
with hateful words they surround me,
attacking me without cause.
In return for my love they slander me,
even though I prayed for them.
They repay me evil for good,
hatred for my love.

II

Appoint an evil one over him,
an accuser to stand at his right hand,
That he may be judged and found guilty,
that his plea may be in vain.
May his days be few;
may another take his office.
May his children be fatherless,
his wife, a widow.
May his children wander and beg,
driven from their hovels.
May the usurer snare all he owns,
strangers plunder all he earns.
May no one treat him with mercy
or pity his fatherless children.
May his posterity be destroyed,
their name rooted out in the next generation.
May his fathers' guilt be mentioned to the
LORD;
his mother's sin not rooted out.
May their guilt be always before the LORD,
till their memory is banished from the earth,
For he did not remember to show mercy,
but hounded the wretched poor
and brought death to the brokenhearted.
He loved cursing; may it come upon him;
he hated blessing; may none come to him.
May cursing clothe him like a robe;
may it enter his belly like water,
his bones like oil.
May it be near as the clothes he wears,
as the belt always around him.

May this be the reward for my accusers from
the LORD,
for those speaking evil against me.

III

But you, LORD, are my Lord,
deal kindly with me for your name's sake;
in your great mercy rescue me.
For I am poor and needy;
my heart is pierced within me.
Like a lengthening shadow I am gone,
I am shaken off like the locust.
My knees totter from fasting;
my flesh has wasted away.
I have become a mockery to them;
when they see me, they shake their heads.
Help me, LORD, my God;
save me in your mercy.
Make them know this is your hand,
that you, LORD, have done this.
Though they curse, may you bless;
arise, shame them, that your servant may
rejoice.
Clothe my accusers with disgrace;
make them wear their shame like a mantle.
I will give fervent thanks to the LORD;
before a crowd I will praise him.
For he stands at the right hand of the poor
to save him from those who pass judgment
on him.

PSALM 129

Viciously have they attacked me from my youth,
let Israel say now.
Viciously have they attacked me from my youth,
yet they have not prevailed against me.
Upon my back the plowers plowed,
as they traced their long furrows.
But the just LORD cut me free
from the ropes of the wicked.

II

May they recoil in disgrace,
all who hate Zion.
May they be like grass on the rooftops
withered in early growth,
Never to fill the reaper's hands,
nor the arms of the binders of sheaves,
And with none passing by to call out:
"The blessing of the LORD be upon you!
We bless you in the name of the LORD!"

PSALM 137

By the rivers of Babylon
there we sat weeping
when we remembered Zion.
On the poplars in its midst
we hung up our harps.
For there our captors asked us
for the words of a song;
Our tormentors, for joy:
“Sing for us a song of Zion!”
But how could we sing a song of the LORD
in a foreign land?

II

If I forget you, Jerusalem,
may my right hand forget.
May my tongue stick to my palate
if I do not remember you,
If I do not exalt Jerusalem
beyond all my delights.

III

Remember, LORD, against Edom
that day at Jerusalem.
They said: “Level it, level it
down to its foundations!”
Desolate Daughter Babylon, you shall be
destroyed,
blessed the one who pays you back
what you have done us!
Blessed the one who seizes your children
and smashes them against the rock.

PSALM 140

Deliver me, LORD, from the wicked;
preserve me from the violent,
From those who plan evil in their hearts,
who stir up conflicts every day,
Who sharpen their tongue like a serpent,
venom of asps upon their lips.

II

Keep me, LORD, from the clutches of the
wicked;
preserve me from the violent,
who plot to trip me up.
The arrogant have set a trap for me;
they have spread out ropes for a net,
laid snares for me by the wayside.
I say to the LORD: You are my God;
listen, LORD, to the words of my pleas.
LORD, my master, my strong deliverer,
you cover my head on the day of armed
conflict.
LORD, do not grant the desires of the wicked
one;
do not let his plot succeed.

III

Those who surround me raise their heads;
may the mischief they threaten overwhelm
them.
Drop burning coals upon them;
cast them into the watery pit never more to
rise.
Slanderers will not survive on earth;
evil will hunt down the man of violence to
overthrow him.
For I know the LORD will take up the cause
of the needy,
justice for the poor.
Then the righteous will give thanks to your
name;
the upright will dwell in your presence.