

Psalm 23 (NRSV)

The Divine Shepherd

A Psalm of David.

¹The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.

²He makes me lie down in green pastures;

he leads me beside still waters;

³he restores my soul.

He leads me in right paths

for his name's sake.

⁴Even though I walk through the darkest valley,

I fear no evil;

for you are with me;

your rod and your staff—

they comfort me.

⁵You prepare a table before me

in the presence of my enemies;

you anoint my head with oil;

my cup overflows.

⁶Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me

all the days of my life,

and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD

my whole life long.

Psalm 22 (NRSV)

Plea for Deliverance from Suffering and Hostility

To the leader: according to The Deer of the Dawn. A Psalm of David.

¹My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?

²O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer;

and by night, but find no rest.

³Yet you are holy,

enthroned on the praises of Israel.

⁴In you our ancestors trusted;

they trusted, and you delivered them.

⁵To you they cried, and were saved;

in you they trusted, and were not put to shame.

⁶But I am a worm, and not human;

scorned by others, and despised by the people.

⁷All who see me mock at me;

they make mouths at me, they shake their heads;

⁸Commit your cause to the LORD; let him deliver—

let him rescue the one in whom he delights!’

⁹Yet it was you who took me from the womb;

you kept me safe on my mother's breast.

¹⁰On you I was cast from my birth,

and since my mother bore me you have been my God.

¹¹Do not be far from me,

for trouble is near

and there is no one to help.

¹²Many bulls encircle me,

strong bulls of Bashan surround me;

¹³they open wide their mouths at me,

like a ravening and roaring lion.

¹⁴I am poured out like water,

and all my bones are out of joint;

my heart is like wax;

it is melted within my breast;

¹⁵my mouth is dried up like a potsherd,

and my tongue sticks to my jaws;

you lay me in the dust of death.

¹⁶For dogs are all around me;

a company of evildoers encircles me.

My hands and feet have shrivelled;

¹⁷I can count all my bones.

They stare and gloat over me;

¹⁸they divide my clothes among themselves,

and for my clothing they cast lots.

¹⁹But you, O LORD, do not be far away!

O my help, come quickly to my aid!

²⁰Deliver my soul from the sword,

my life from the power of the dog!

²¹Save me from the mouth of the lion!

From the horns of the wild oxen you have rescued me.

²²I will tell of your name to my brothers and sisters;

in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:

²³You who fear the LORD, praise him!

All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him;

stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!

²⁴For he did not despise or abhor

the affliction of the afflicted;

he did not hide his face from me,

but heard when I cried to him.

²⁵From you comes my praise in the great congregation;

my vows I will pay before those who fear him.

²⁶The poor shall eat and be satisfied;

those who seek him shall praise the LORD.

May your hearts live for ever!

²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember

and turn to the LORD;

and all the families of the nations
shall worship before him.

²⁸For dominion belongs to the LORD,
and he rules over the nations.

²⁹To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down;
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
and I shall live for him.

³⁰Posterity will serve him;
future generations will be told about the Lord,
³¹and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn,
saying that he has done it.

Psalms 121 (NRSV)

Assurance of God's Protection

A Song of Ascents.

¹I lift up my eyes to the hills—
from where will my help come?

²My help comes from the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.

³He will not let your foot be moved;
he who keeps you will not slumber.

⁴He who keeps Israel

will neither slumber nor sleep.

⁵The LORD is your keeper;

the LORD is your shade at your right hand.

⁶The sun shall not strike you by day,

nor the moon by night.

⁷The LORD will keep you from all evil;

he will keep your life.

⁸The LORD will keep

your going out and your coming in

from this time on and for evermore.
