

Addressing God

'God' translates the Hebrew word for God (usually 'Elohim).

'God*' translates the Hebrew word for lord ('Adonai). (38 times)

See, for example, Psalm 22 verse 30.

'GOD' (upper case) translates the Hebrew YHWH. (758 times)

When GOD is being addressed, I have sometimes replaced GOD with YOU.

See, for example Psalm 28 verse 7 and verse 8.

Heading 1. Praying Psalm X with Jesus

This covers most of the psalms. The idea is to pray the psalms in Jesus' company, listening to him pray them, and joining him in prayer.

- Sometimes there are verses that Jesus cannot pray because they involve an admission of sin. However, we can pray them in his presence. Such verses are placed in brackets. See, for example, Psalm 6 verse 1; Psalm 7 verses 3-5. If the whole psalm is a penitential one it is introduced with '**Praying Psalm X in Jesus' Company.**' See Psalms 39 and 50.

- Sometimes there are verses that Jesus cannot pray because the image of God presented is not the way Jesus experienced or revealed God. These verses have been omitted. If Jesus cannot pray such verses with us, they do not pass as Christian prayer. We listen as Jesus says: 'It was said to you of old, but I say to you' (Matthew 5:21-22). When many verses have to be omitted I have used the heading: **Praying excerpts from Psalm X with Jesus.** See Psalms 2 and 35.

Heading 2. Reflecting on Psalm X in Jesus' company

This introduces psalms that are not prayers. Since we are not attempting to make the sentiments of these psalms part of our own prayer, I saw no need to omit any verses and have presented them in Calibri Regular font, not in **Palatino Bold**. See Psalms 37, 45 and 49. This heading also introduces psalms that are in the form of a prayer, but are inappropriate on Jesus' lips. See Psalm 44.

Praying Psalm 1 with Jesus

¹Blessed and happy are you who do not follow those with no place for God in their hearts, who do not linger in the way of sinners, or sit and scoff with cynics.

²Find your delight in the law of GOD.
Meditate on it night and day.

³If you do this, you will be like a tree planted by running water, bearing fruit in season, its leaves always green, its yield always abundant.
All that you do will prosper.

⁴Not so for those whose hearts are closed to God.
They are like chaff scattered by the wind.

⁵It will go ill with them at the judgment.
They will have no place among the just.

⁶GOD looks with love on the way of the just.
The way of sinners leads only to destruction.

Praying excerpts from Psalm 2 with Jesus

¹My people,
why do you resist my Anointed One?

⁶It is I who have established him
on Zion, my holy mountain.

⁷This is what GOD said to me:

‘You are my son, today I have begotten you.

⁸Ask, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance,
the ends of the earth for your possession.’

¹⁰Come to your senses, take heed.

¹¹Serve GOD [with fear], pay God your homage.

Put your trust in God

and you will be blessed and filled with joy.

Praying Psalm 3 with Jesus

¹O GOD, how daunting the forces massed against me!

²They jeer at me: 'God will not save you!'

³But you, O GOD, are my shield, my glory.

You hold my head high.

⁴When I call, you answer me

from your holy mountain.

⁵I rest easy at night and rise in the morning,

sustained by your protection.

⁶I am not afraid of those ranged against me.

⁷Rise up, O GOD, and rescue me.

⁸Saving help is from you.

Your blessing is for your people

for You are our Saviour.

Praying Psalm 4 with Jesus

¹Answer me when I call, O God,
defender of my just cause.
You opened up an escape for me.
Be gracious to me. Hear my prayer.

²How long, proud fools, will you insult me?
How long will you love what is false
and chase after lies?

³GOD has set me apart, for I am faithful.
I belong to GOD, who always hears my call.

⁴Tremble with fear and stop your sinning.
Commune in your heart and be silent.

⁵Worship with integrity,
trusting always in GOD.

⁶Many ask themselves:
'Who is going to enjoy a good life,
if the light of your face, O GOD,
does not shine upon us?'

⁷You give my heart more joy than all their grain and wine.

⁸I sleep secure at night.
For you, O GOD, are watching over me.
I place my trust in you.

Praying Psalm 5 with Jesus

¹O GOD, listen to my words, give heed to my groaning.

²Attend to the sound of my cry, my King and my God.

O GOD, it is to you I pray.

³In the morning hear my voice.

In the morning I plead my case, watching and waiting.

⁴You are not one who wills evil.

⁷Thanks to your great love,

I have access to your house.

I bow down toward your holy temple,
filled with awe in your presence.

⁸In your justice, O GOD, guide me.

Make clear your way before me.

⁹There is no truth in those who accuse me.

Inside they are only empty caverns.

Their throats are wide-open graves;
all honey their speech.

¹¹Let all who take refuge in you sing for joy.

Spread over them your protection,

that they may exult in you,

when they call on your name.

¹²You bless the just, O GOD;

you cover them from above.

You surround them with the shield of your love.

Praying Psalm 6 with Jesus

¹O GOD, rebuke me, but not in anger;
discipline me, but not in wrath!]

²Be gracious to me, O GOD, for I am languishing.
Heal me, for I am shaking with terror.

³My whole being is racked with pain,
but you, O GOD – how long?

⁴Turn to me, O GOD, hold back my life from the grave.
In your covenant love save me.

⁶I am exhausted with my groaning.
All night long I drench my pillow with tears,
I soak my couch with weeping.

⁷My eyes waste away with grief.
My life is ebbing away. Everything is against me.

⁸Depart from me, all you who do evil.
GOD has heard my weeping.

⁹GOD hears my pleading
and welcomes my prayer.

¹⁰My enemies fall back, struck with terror,
foiled and suddenly confounded.

Praying Psalm 7 with Jesus

¹O GOD, in you I take refuge;
save me from those who pursue me,
²lest like a lion they tear me to pieces,
and drag me off with no one to save me.

[³O GOD, if I have done this,
if there is crime on my hands,
⁴if I have repaid with harm
one who has come to me in peace
or taken advantage of one who
has attacked me without cause,
⁵then let the enemy pursue and overtake me,
let them trample my life to the ground,
and lay my entrails in the dust.]

⁶Rise up, O GOD,
stir yourself against the fury of my enemies;
awake, O my God, and pronounce in my favour
in the judgment to which I am summoned.

⁷An assembly of nations gathers around you.
Take your seat above them on high,
⁸O judge of the nations. Declare me innocent, O GOD.

⁹Uphold the just, you who test mind and heart.
¹⁰My shield is God, who saves the upright of heart,
¹¹who pronounces a judgment that is just.

¹⁴Look at them! They conceive evil.

They are pregnant with malice, and give birth to lies.

¹⁵They made a pit, dug it deep,

but fell into the trap they made.

¹⁶Their wicked deeds recoil upon themselves.

On their own heads fall their cruel blows.

¹⁷I celebrate GOD's justice and sing in praise: 'GOD Most High.'

Praying Psalm 8 with Jesus

¹*O GOD of the universe,
all your creation proclaims how wonderful you are.*

²**I want to worship you
with the worship of infants and babes at the breast.
They gaze with wonder at the star-studded heavens.
Their wonder reduces to silence
the enemy and the rebel.**

³**When I look at your heavens,
the work of your hands,
the moon and the stars
that you have set in place,**

⁴**what are we, mortal human beings,
that you are mindful of us, that you care for us?**

⁵**You have made us a little lower than gods.
You have crowned us with glory and honour.**

⁶**To us you have entrusted the earth.
You have made us responsible for all you have made:**

⁷**sheep and oxen,
wild beasts of the plain,**

⁸**birds of the air,
and fish that make their way through the waters.**

⁹*O GOD of the universe,
all your creation proclaims how wonderful you are.*

Praying Psalm 9 with Jesus

¹O GOD, with a full and grateful heart
I proclaim your wonderful deeds.

²In festive jubilation, I celebrate you,
singing your name to music, O Most High.

³As my enemies are turned back,
they stumble and perish before you.

⁴From your throne, O just judge,
you pass judgment in my favour.

⁷GOD sits enthroned forever, issuing judgment.

⁸Justly you judge the world and govern the nations.

⁹You are a stronghold for the oppressed.
You strengthen them in times of trouble.

¹⁰Those who know you put their trust in you.
You never forsake those who seek you.

¹¹Sing praises to GOD who dwells in Zion,
declare his deeds to the people.

¹²God never neglects the cry of the afflicted.

¹³Pour your grace over me, O GOD.

Look how oppressed I am. You are the one
who draws me back from the gates of death,

¹⁴that I may recount your praises at the gates of Zion,
and celebrate your deliverance.

¹⁸The needy will not always be forgotten,
nor the hope of the poor be in vain.

Praying Psalm 10 with Jesus

¹Why, O GOD, do you stand far off?

Why do you hide yourself in time of trouble?

²The wicked in their arrogance hound the poor,
but they are tangled in their own intrigues.

³The wicked boast of their ambition,
the greedy are full of self-adulation.

⁴They do not care about GOD:

‘There is no god to whom I must give an account!’

What schemes they devise!

How twisted their lives!

⁵They have no concern for your judgments.

They defy all who disagree with them.

⁶They think in their heart: ‘I will never be shaken,
nothing will get in my way!’

⁷From their mouths come deceit and fraud;
their speech is full of malice and lies.

⁸They wait in ambush to murder the innocent
under cover of secrecy.

Stealthily they watch for the helpless.

⁹They lurk in secret like a lion in its den,
that they may seize the poor and drag them away.

¹⁰The innocent, weighed down with oppression,
cannot withstand the violence of the wicked.

¹¹They think: ‘God has forgotten.
God has hidden from us and will never notice.’

¹²Rise up, O GOD. Do something.

Do not forget the oppressed.

**¹³Why should the wicked spurn you, God,
and say in their hearts, 'God will not call us to account'?**

¹⁴You are the helper of the orphan.

**¹⁷ O GOD, you hear the longing of the poor;
you listen to them and strengthen their hearts.**

**¹⁸Protect the rights of the orphan and the oppressed.
Never again may they sow terror,
mortal human beings made from the earth.**

Praying Psalm 11 with Jesus

¹In GOD I take refuge; how can you say to me:

'Flee like a bird. Flee to the mountains?'

²Those with no regard for God are bracing their bow.

They are fitting their arrows to the string;

they shoot at the upright from the shadows.

³When foundations are destroyed, what can the just do?

⁴GOD dwells in the holy temple,

GOD, whose throne is in heaven,

whose eyes look down on the world,

whose gaze is on the people on the earth.

⁷GOD is just and loves justice.

The upright will behold God's face.

Praying Psalm 12 with Jesus

¹Give us your saving help, O GOD,
for no one respects the covenant.
Sincerity has disappeared from the human race.

²People utter lies to each other.
They speak from hearts that are false.

⁴They say, 'With our tongues we will always prevail.
We can say whatever we like. Who is our master?'

⁵'Because of violence against the poor,
because the needy groan', says GOD,
'I will now rise up.
I will keep them safe as they give their testimony.'

⁶GOD's words are pure,
like silver refined in a furnace.

⁷It is you, O GOD, who will take us into your care.
It is you who protect us from those who do evil.

⁸See how the wicked prowl on every side,
while the worthless are highly prized.

Praying Psalm 13 with Jesus

¹O GOD, will you again remember me?

How long will you hide your face from me?

²How long must my soul be stricken with grief?

I carry sorrow in my heart day and night.

How long will my enemies prevail over me?

³Look at me, O GOD; answer me!

Shed your light on me, or I will die.

⁴Do not let my enemy say, 'I have prevailed.'

Do not let my foes rejoice to see me fall.

⁵As for me, I trust in your covenant love;

my heart rejoices in your saving help.

⁶I will sing to you, O GOD,

because of the good you have bestowed on me.

Praying Psalm 14 with Jesus

**¹Fools tell themselves 'There is no God.'
They are corrupt. They perpetrate dreadful deeds.
None of them does good.**

**²GOD looks down on the human race
to see if there is anyone who is wise,
anyone who seeks after God.**

**³They have all gone astray,
they are all depraved.
There is no one who seeks God, no, not one.**

**⁴Do they know nothing, these evildoers?
They devour my people like so much bread.
They never pray.**

**⁵Well, then, you will cringe with fear,
for God's cause is with the just.**

**⁶You may have the power to thwart the plans of the poor,
but know that GOD is their refuge.**

**⁷O that deliverance for Israel would come from Zion!
When GOD restores the fortunes of the people,
then Jacob will be glad. Israel will rejoice.**

Praying Psalm 15 with Jesus

¹GOD, who can be a guest in your tent?
Who may live on your holy mountain?

²Those who live with integrity;
who do what is right;
who speak the truth with courage;

³who do not spread slander;
or abuse friends; or cast a slur against a neighbour;

⁴who honour those who live their faith in GOD;

who stand by their word, whatever the cost;

⁵who lend without seeking interest;
who refuse to accept a bribe to condemn the innocent.

Such are the just. They stand firm for ever.

Praying Psalm 16 with Jesus

¹Protect me, O GOD. I turn to you for help.

²You are my greatest good.

³You have put into my heart a marvellous love
for the faithful who dwell in the land.

⁴Those who run after strange gods
multiply their sorrows.

⁵You, O GOD, are my chosen portion and my cup.
It is you yourself who are my prize.

⁶The lot marked out for me is my delight.
Welcome indeed the heritage that is mine.

⁷I thank you for all your blessings.
It is you who give me counsel.
Even at night you direct my heart.

⁸O GOD, I keep you always before me.
With you at my side I will not waver.

⁹Therefore my heart is glad.
A profound joy wells up within me.
Even my flesh rests secure,
for in You I place my trust.

¹⁰You do not abandon me to death.
You do not let your faithful see the grave.

¹¹You show me the path to life.
Your presence fills me with joy.

Praying Psalm 17 with Jesus

¹O GOD, hear my appeal for justice.
Attend to my cry. Listen to my plea.
My lips are free of deception.

²Let my judgment come from you,
for you can see that I am upright.

³You scrutinize my heart. You probe it by night.
You will find in me no wickedness.

⁴There is no error in what I have said
about how people are behaving.

Following the instructions from your lips
I have remained vigilant.

⁵Even on steep paths I have kept my footing.
Keeping to your way, I have not strayed.

⁶I call upon you, my God; attend to me, hear my voice.

⁷Show me your wonderful love,
you who save those who trust you.

⁸Guard me as the pupil of your eye.
Hide me in the shade of your wings

⁹from the wicked who attack me,
and hunt me down to take my life.

¹⁰They lack all feeling. Their speech is arrogant.

¹¹They track me down and hem me in.

**They fix their eyes on me,
determined to strike me to the ground.**

**¹²They are like lions eager for prey,
like young lions lurking in ambush.**

**¹⁴Ensure that those you protect are saved from starving.
May their children be satisfied.
May they have more than enough for their little ones.**

**¹⁵As for me, I have been righteous.
I will behold your face.
When I awake, I will see you. That is all I want.**

Reflecting on Psalm 18 in Jesus' Company

¹I love you, O GOD, my strength,
²my rock, my fortress, my Saviour,
my God, my shield, my mighty help, my stronghold.
³I praise you. I call upon you,
and I am rescued from my enemies.

⁴The waves of Death overwhelmed me;
the torrents of destruction struck me down;
⁵the cords of the Underworld entangled me;
the nets of Death held me trapped.

⁶I called upon you, O GOD, I cried out for help,
and my cry pierced through to your presence.
⁷Then the earth reeled and trembled;
the mountains were shaken to their foundations,
they shuddered at your terrible anger.
⁸Smoke issued from your nostrils,
a scorching fire from your mouth; and fiery rocks erupted.

⁹God, you tore open the heavens, and came down;
a black cloud under your feet.

¹⁰You rode on the back of a cherub
and came swiftly upon the wings of the wind.

¹¹You made darkness your covering,
wrapped in a canopy of thick black storm clouds.

¹²Lightning announced God's presence,

with hailstones and flashes of fire.

¹³ GOD thundered in the heavens,
the voice of the Most High resounded.

¹⁴ You shot your arrows, and scattered them,
causing terror by the crashing of the lightning.

¹⁵ Then the bottom of the ocean was revealed,
and the foundations of the world laid bare
at your rebuke, O GOD, at the fire issuing from your nostrils.

¹⁶ You reached down from on high and held me.

¹⁷ You rescued me from powerful enemies,
from those who were too strong for me.

¹⁸ They came against me on a disastrous day,
but GOD sustained me,

¹⁹ opened for me an escape,
rescued me because God took pleasure in me.

²⁰ O GOD, you rewarded me because I was just;
repaid me because my actions were pure,

²¹ because I have kept your ways,
and have not repudiated my God;

²² because I have kept before my eyes all your judgments,
and I have not set aside your statutes.

²³ I kept blameless before God,
and I guarded myself against all guilt.

²⁴ O GOD, you recompensed me for being just,
for keeping my actions pure in your sight.

²⁵With the faithful you show your covenant love;
with the blameless you show yourself blameless;

²⁶with the pure you show yourself pure;
with the crooked you show yourself astute.

²⁷You give your saving help to the humble,
and you humble those who are proud.

²⁸It is you, O GOD, who light my lamp.
It is you who illumine my darkness.

²⁹With you I can leap into the fray,
with my God I can scale any wall.

³⁰O God, your way is perfect. Your word is true.
YOU are a shield for all who take refuge in GOD.

³¹Who is God apart from YOU? Who is the rock if not our God?

³²You gird me with strength. You guide me to achieve my goal.

³³You make my feet like those of a deer.
You set me secure on the heights.

³⁴You train my hands for war and my arms to bend the heavy bow.

³⁵You have given me your saving shield,
your right hand has supported me,
you have assisted me in every way.

³⁶You have widened the path for my steps,
and I have kept my footing.

³⁷I pursued the enemy and overtook them;
and did not turn back until they were annihilated.

³⁸I struck them down, so that they were not able to rise.

They fell under my feet.

³⁹For you girded me with strength for the battle;
you made my assailants fall down before me.

⁴⁰You put my enemies to flight,
and reduced to silence my adversaries.

⁴¹They cried for help, but there was no one to save them;
they cried to GOD, but there was no answer.

⁴²You crushed them fine as dust before the wind;
You trod them down like dirt in the streets.

⁴³You rescued me from the wrangling of my people.

You made me head of the nations.

A foreign people took me as their lord,

⁴⁴because of my fame they submitted to me.

Foreigners came cringing to me,

⁴⁵foreigners lost heart,
and came trembling out of their strongholds.

⁴⁶GOD lives! Blessed be my rock!

Be exalted, my God and Saviour!

⁴⁷God, you avenged me and subdued peoples under me,

⁴⁸you rescued me from my enemy,
you exalted me above my adversaries
and rescued me from their violence.

⁴⁹For this I will extol you, O GOD, among the nations,
and sing praises to your name.

⁵⁰You show love to your anointed.
You reveal your love for David
and for his descendants for ever.

Praying Psalm 19 with Jesus

¹The heavens proclaim the glory of God,
displaying the magnificence of God's creation.

²Day unto day takes up the story;
night unto night makes known the message.

³Without a word, without a sound,
without a voice being heard,

⁴their announcement goes out through all the earth,
their proclamation to the utmost bounds of the world.

⁵In the heavens God has set a tent for the sun.

It comes forth

like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy,

like an athlete eager to run the race.

⁶It rises in one extremity of the heavens,

and its course runs to the other.

Nothing escapes its burning heat.

⁷GOD's law is perfect; it revives the soul.

GOD's decrees are sure; they make wise the simple.

⁸GOD's precepts are right; they delight the heart.

GOD's commandment is clear; it enlightens the eyes.

⁹The awe inspired by GOD is pure and enduring.

GOD's judgments are true and all of them just.

¹⁰More precious are they than gold, than the finest gold;

sweeter are they than honey dripping from a comb.

¹¹Your servant is enlightened by them.

In keeping them there is great reward.

¹²Who is so sensitive as to observe hidden sins?

Forgive me mine, O my God.

¹³Keep my pride in check; break its grip upon me.

Then I will be blameless, innocent of grave sin.

¹⁴Let the words of my mouth

and the reflections of my heart

be acceptable to You, my GOD, my rock.

Praying Psalm 20 with Jesus

¹In time of trouble may GOD respond to your plea.

May the God of Jacob protect you.

²From the sanctuary may God send you help,
giving you support from Zion.

³May God recall your many offerings,
and look with favour upon your sacrifices.

⁴May God grant you the desire of your heart,
and fulfil every one of your plans.

⁵May we shout for joy over your deliverance.
May we raise our standards in triumph.

“GOD will fulfil all your petitions.”

⁶Now I know that GOD’s anointed will be victorious.
The Holy One will grant him deliverance,
giving strength to his victorious right arm.

⁷Some boast of chariots and horses, but we invoke GOD.

⁸They will waver and fall, but we will stand firm.

⁹Give victory to the king, O GOD.

Answer us when we cry out to you.

Praying Psalm 21 with Jesus

¹O GOD, the king rejoices in your power.

He celebrates your victory.

²You have given him his heart's desire.

You have not refused his prayer.

³You came to meet him, blessing him with success.

You have placed on his head a golden crown.

⁴He asked you for life. You gave it to him,

length of days forever and ever.

⁵His glory is great, thanks to your help;

you have bestowed on him honour and majesty.

⁶You pour out an abundance of blessings upon him.

You have filled him with joy in your presence.

⁷The king trusts in GOD.

Through the kindness of the Most High

he will not waver.

¹³Rise up, GOD, in your power.

To the sound of instruments

we will sing of your mighty Love.

Praying Psalm 22 with Jesus

¹My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?
How far from saving me, the words I groan!

²I call all day, my God, but you do not answer.
All night long I call, and I cannot rest.

³You dwell in the holy temple, you, the praise of Israel.

⁴In you our ancestors trusted;
they trusted, and you rescued *them*.

⁵To you they cried, and *they* escaped;
they trusted in you, and never in vain.

⁶But here am I, more worm than human,
scorned and despised.

⁷All who see me deride me,
they toss their heads and sneer:

⁸He relied on GOD, let GOD save him!
Let GOD come to his aid if GOD loves him so much.'

⁹Yet it was you who took me from the womb;
you entrusted me to my mother's breasts.

¹⁰Placed on your lap from my birth,
from my mother's womb You have been my God.

¹¹Come close to me. Trouble is near
and I have no one to help me!

¹²A pack of bulls encircles me,
fierce bulls of Bashan close in on me;
¹³for me they open wide their jaws,
like ravenous, roaring lions.
¹⁴I am poured out like water; all my bones are out of joint.
My heart is like wax, melting within my breast.
¹⁵My mouth is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue sticks to my jaw.
You lay me in the dust of death.
¹⁶Dogs hunt me; a gang of villains closes me in.
They tear at my hands and feet,
determined to take my life.
¹⁷I can count all my bones. They glare at me and gloat.
¹⁸They divide up my clothes, and cast lots for my robe.

¹⁹But you, O GOD, do not leave me.
O my strength, come quickly to my aid.
²⁰Rescue me from the sword,
my life from the mauling of the dogs!
²¹Save me from the lion's jaws,
from the horns of the wild bulls.
²²and I will proclaim your name
to my brothers and sisters;
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.

.....

²³Let your praise ring out, you who revere GOD!
Give glory to God, all you children of Jacob!
Stand in awe, all you children of Israel!
²⁴For God did not despise or scorn
the condition of this wretch.
God's love remained fixed on me, hearing my cry.

²⁵**Yours, O God, is my praise in the great congregation.
My vows I will pay before your faithful.**

²⁶**The poor eat and are satisfied.
Those who seek GOD utter praise.
May they never lose heart.**

²⁷**All the ends of the earth
will remember and turn to GOD.
All the families of nations will worship GOD**

²⁸**who rules over the nations.**

²⁹**To God, indeed, will bow, all who go down to the dust.
And I, too, with all my being, if God preserves me.**

³⁰**My descendants will worship;
future generations will be told about God (the Lord),**

³¹**and will proclaim God's justice to a people yet unborn:
'Look what God has done!'**

Praying Psalm 23 with Jesus

¹You, O GOD, are my shepherd. You are all I need.

²In green pastures I rest with you.

You lead me to tranquil waters

³to revive my drooping spirit.

You guide me along the right path.

You are true to your name.

⁴Though I should walk in death's dark valley

I fear no evil, for you are with me.

Your rod and your staff give me comfort.

⁵You prepare a banquet for me

in the presence of my foes.

You anoint my head with perfumed oil;

my cup is overflowing.

⁶Surely your goodness and kindness will accompany me
all the days of my life.

I will dwell in GOD's house my whole life long.

Praying Psalm 24 with Jesus

¹The earth is yours, O GOD, and all its creatures,
the world and all its peoples.

²It is you who set the land on the seas,
and anchored it in the deep.

³Who is fit to climb GOD's mountain,
and stand in the GOD's holy place?

⁴Those who act with integrity,
from hearts that are pure,
whose longing is for the real God, not idols,
who do not live a lie.

⁵These will receive blessing from GOD,
and justice from the God who saves.

⁶Such is the company of those who seek you;
who seek your face, O God of Jacob.

⁷*You, gates, reach to heaven, open high and wide.
Make way for the king of glory.*

⁸*Who is the king of glory?*
The GOD of power and might, the conqueror of chaos.

⁹*You, gates, reach to heaven, open high and wide.
Make way for the king of glory.*

¹⁰*Who is the king of glory?*
The Mighty GOD, your glorious king.

Praying Psalm 25 with Jesus

¹All my longing is for you, O GOD. In you I trust.

²Do not let my enemies gloat over me. Do not fail me.

³Those who hope in you will not be disappointed.

Disgrace is for those who are wantonly unfaithful.

⁴O GOD, show me how to live. Teach me your way.

⁵Direct me to your truth, and guide me.

For you are God my saviour, my constant hope.

⁶O GOD, be mindful of your tender compassion,
your kindness since ancient times.

[⁷Remember me, not the sins of my youth
or the ways I have been unfaithful.]

⁸Good and upright is GOD, guiding those who stray.

⁹God leads the poor, guiding them along the right path.

¹⁰YOUR paths are covenant love and faithfulness
for those who keep your covenant.

[¹¹Pardon my guilt, for it is great.]

¹²For those conscious of God's awesome presence,
GOD will reveal the path to choose.

¹³They will live a full life,
and their heirs will inherit the land.

¹⁴GOD counsels the faithful,
instructing them through the covenant.

**¹⁵My eyes are fixed on GOD,
who will free me from the trap.**

**¹⁶Turn to me and be gracious,
for I am lonely and afflicted.**

**¹⁷Relieve the troubles of my heart.
Free me from my distress.**

¹⁸Observe my affliction and my pain.

[¹⁸Forgive all my sins.]

¹⁹See how many are my foes.

How violent is their hatred towards me.

²⁰Rescue me and preserve my life.

Do not let me be put to shame.

In you I take refuge.

²¹May integrity and uprightness preserve me,

For in you, O God, I hope.

²²Rescue Israel from every danger.

Praying Psalm 26 with Jesus

¹Pass judgment on me, O GOD,
for I am living an honest life
I trust in YOU, O GOD, without wavering.
Put me to the test.

²Probe my feelings. Purify my heart.

³Your covenant love is ever before my eyes.
I walk boldly in your faithfulness.

⁶I wash my hands, and take my place, O GOD,
around your altar.

⁷I sing a song of thanksgiving,
and recount your wondrous deeds.

⁸I love your dwelling place, O GOD,
the home where your glory abides.

¹¹I live an honest life. Rescue me and be gracious to me.

¹²I continue to walk in an upright way.

In the great congregation I will bless YOU, O GOD.

Praying Psalm 27 with Jesus

¹GOD is my light and my salvation; whom will I fear?
GOD is the stronghold of my life;
before whom will I shrink?

²When evildoers attack to devour me,
it is they, my adversaries and foes, who stumble and fall.

³Though an army encamp against me,
my heart will not fear.
Though I have to engage in battle, even then I will trust.

⁴One thing I ask of you, O GOD, for this I long:
to live in your house all the days of my life,
to behold your beauty while at prayer in your temple.

⁵You hide me there in the hour of danger.
There, set on a rock,
concealed under the cover of your tent,

⁶I offer sacrifices with shouts of joy,
to the sound of music,
praising GOD in song.

⁷Hear me, O GOD, when I cry to you,
be gracious and answer me!

⁸Your voice within me says, "Come, seek my face!"
It is your face that my heart seeks.

⁹Do not hide from me. Do not turn your servant away.
Do not reject me, for it is you who uphold me.

**Do not cast me off. Do not forsake me,
O God my saviour!**

**¹⁰Even if my father and mother were to forsake me,
I know you would welcome me.**

**¹¹Teach me your way, O GOD, lead me on a safe path.
My enemies are waiting in ambush.**

**¹²Do not give me up to their will.
False witnesses have risen against me,
breathing out violence.**

**¹³I believe that I will see the goodness of GOD
in the land of the living.**

**¹⁴Hope in GOD. Be strong. Be brave.
Put your trust in GOD.**

Praying Psalm 28 with Jesus

¹I call on you, GOD, my rock. Do not refuse to hear me.
Do not be silent. Without you I will die.

²Hear the sound of my pleading, as I cry to you for help,
as I lift up my hands in prayer toward your temple.

³Do not drag me away with the wicked,
with those who speak peace to their neighbours,
while mischief is in their hearts.

⁶Blessed are you, O GOD.

You hear the sound of my pleading.

⁷YOU are my strength and my shield,
in whom my heart trusts.

When help comes to me, my heart exults,
and with my song I give God thanks.

⁸YOU are the strength of the people,
the saving refuge of God's anointed.

⁹Help your people, and bless your heritage.
Sustain them. Be their shepherd forever.

Praying Psalm 29 with Jesus

¹Acclaim GOD, you beings of heaven.

Acclaim the glory and might of GOD.

²Acclaim GOD's glorious name.

Prostrate yourselves in GOD's holy temple.

³The voice of our glorious God
thunders above the mighty waters!

⁴The voice of GOD, full of power.

The voice of GOD, full of splendour.

⁵The voice of GOD shatters the cedars of Lebanon,

⁶makes Lebanon leap like a calf,

Sirion like a young wild ox.

⁷The voice of GOD flashes flames of fire,

⁸shaking the wilderness of Kadesh.

⁹GOD's voice rends the oak tree,

and strips the forest bare.

In your temple, O GOD, all cry: 'Glory!'

¹⁰For you rule over the mighty waters.

Your rule is for ever.

¹¹Give strength to your people, O GOD.

Bless your people with peace.

Praying Psalm 30 with Jesus

¹I will praise you, GOD, for you have raised me up.

You have not let my foes gloat over me.

²I cried to you for help, O GOD.

³I was dying and you restored me to life.

⁴Sing praises to GOD, you faithful,
give thanks as you shout aloud the holy name.

⁵GOD's favour lasts a lifetime.

Weeping may linger for the night,
but joy comes with the dawn.

⁶When all was going well,

⁷I thought that, with God's powerful blessing,
I could stand as secure as a mountain.

Then you hid your face and I shook with fear.

⁸I cried out, 'O GOD! O GOD!' I begged, I pleaded:

⁹What good is there in my death,
in my going down to the grave?

¹⁰GOD listened, was moved with pity,
and came to my help.

¹¹You turned my mourning into dancing.
You clothed me with joy.

¹²I witness to your glory.

I praise you and will not be silent.

O GOD, I will never stop thanking you.

Praying Psalm 31 with Jesus

¹In you, O GOD, I seek refuge. Let me not suffer shame.
May your justice be my security.

²Come close to hear me! Come quickly to rescue me!
Be my rock of refuge, my mighty stronghold.

³You are indeed my rock, my fortress.
Go before me; be my guide.

⁴The net tightens around me.
Release me, for you are my protector.

⁵Into your hands, O GOD, I commit my spirit.
You have redeemed me, faithful God.

⁶I place my trust in you.

⁷I exult and celebrate your kindness.

You saw my affliction.

You watched over me while I was in danger.

⁸You did not put me at the mercy of the enemy.
You set me on open ground.

⁹Be gracious to me, O GOD, for I am in distress.

My eyes are swollen from grief. I am racked with pain.

¹⁰Sorrow consumes my life. My days are filled with sighs.
[Guilt saps my strength.] My bones waste away.

¹¹My enemies mock me. I am the butt of their jokes.

I am an object of dread to those who see me.

They turn and run the other way.

¹²No one thinks of me. It is as though I was dead.

I am of no use, like a discarded pot.

¹³I can hear the whispering of the crowd:

'Attack from every side!' They scheme to take my life.

¹⁴But I trust in you, O GOD. You are my God.

**¹⁵My life is in your hands. Rescue me from my enemies
Ruthlessly they hunt me down.**

¹⁶Show your servant your radiant face.

In your covenant love save me.

¹⁹How abundant is your goodness

to those who revere you,

to those who find in you their refuge.

Let everyone see how good you are.

**²⁰In the secret hiding place of your presence
you protect us from their scheming.**

In your tent you hold us safe

from the tongues of the violent.

²¹Blessed be GOD, who has shown me wonderful love.

²²I said in my alarm, 'I am excluded from your presence.'

But you heard my supplications

when I cried to you for help.

²³Love GOD, all you who are faithful.

GOD preserves those who believe,

but repays in full those who act in pride.

²⁴Be strong, let your heart take courage,

all you who hope in GOD.

Praying Psalm 32 with Jesus

¹Blessed and happy are they whose sins are forgiven.

²Blessed and happy are they
to whom GOD imputes no guilt,
whose spirit is no longer darkened by sin.

³If you remain silent, you will waste away,
⁴weighed down by sin day and night,
your strength dried up as in a summer drought.

⁵If you acknowledge your sin and stop hiding your guilt,
if you confess your transgressions,
your God will forgive your sin and remove your guilt.

⁶This is why the faithful pray to GOD in danger.
Even the rush of a mighty flood will not touch them.

⁷You, O God, are my hiding place;
you free me from danger.
When I cry for help you encircle me with love.

⁸I will instruct you
and show you the road you must follow.
I will watch over you and give you counsel:

⁹'Do not be a horse or mule, without understanding,
needing bridle and bit before anyone can approach you.'

¹⁰Many are the torments of the wicked,
but kindness surrounds those who trust in GOD.

¹¹Be glad and rejoice in GOD, O you just.
Shout for joy, all you upright of heart.

Praying Psalm 33 with Jesus

¹Ring out your joy to GOD, you lovers of justice.

How right it is to praise!

²Give thanks to GOD upon the lyre.

Make music with the ten-stringed harp.

³In a new song raise your voice to God.

Play skilfully on the strings.

⁴For the word of GOD is true. What God says, God does.

⁵GOD, the lover of justice and truth,

fills the earth with love.

⁶By GOD's word the heavens were made,

and by God's breath all their starry host.

⁷God collects and stores the waters of the sea.

⁸Let all the inhabitants of the earth pay homage.

Let them stand in awe of God.

⁹GOD speaks and the world comes into existence.

GOD commands and creatures spring into being.

¹⁰GOD brings the designs of the nations to nothing,

frustrating their plans.

¹¹It is GOD's designs that stand,

the plans of God's heart from age to age.

¹²Blessed and happy is the nation whose God is GOD,

the people whom GOD has chosen.

¹³From heaven God sees all the inhabitants of the earth,

¹⁴From where God sits enthroned,

**¹⁵God fashions the hearts of them all,
knowing all their deeds.**

**¹⁶Kings are not helped by their armies,
nor soldiers because of their strength.**

**¹⁷The warhorse is a vain hope for deliverance.
Despite its strength, it cannot save.**

**¹⁸GOD looks with love on those who believe,
on those who count on God's love**

**¹⁹to deliver them from death,
to keep them alive in famine.**

**²⁰With all our being we wait for GOD,
our strength and our shield.**

²¹Our heart finds joy in GOD, in whom we place our trust.

**²²Let your love be upon us, O GOD,
for we place all our hope in you.**

Praying Psalm 34 with Jesus

¹I will bless GOD at all times,
praise continually on my lips.

²With thanksgiving I glory in GOD.
Let the lowly hear and be glad.

³Join with me in singing of GOD greatness,
together let us praise our God.

⁴I sought and GOD replied,
setting me free from all my fears.

⁵Look to GOD, and be radiant.

⁶This poor person cried, and GOD heard me,
and saved me from every danger.

⁷The angel of GOD encamps
around those who revere GOD.

⁸O taste and see that GOD is good.
Blessed are you who take refuge in God.

⁹Live in awe, you holy ones. You will want for nothing.

¹⁰The rich and powerful suffer want and go hungry.
Those who seek GOD lack nothing good.

¹¹Come children, listen to me;

I will teach you to cherish GOD.

¹²Do you desire life, and time to enjoy success?

¹³Well then, keep your tongue from evil,
and your lips from speaking deceit.

¹⁴Finish with evil. Learn to do good.

Seek peace, and pursue it.

**¹⁵The eyes of GOD are on the just,
to attend to their cry for help.**

**¹⁷Cry out for help. GOD hears,
and rescues from every danger.**

**¹⁸GOD is near to those whose hearts are broken,
helping those whose spirits are crushed.**

**¹⁹Many are the afflictions of the just,
but GOD rescues from them all.**

**²⁰GOD keeps guard over all their bones;
not one of them will be broken.**

**²¹Evil brings death to the wicked.
Those who hate the just will be condemned.**

**²²GOD redeems the lives of GOD servants.
No one who takes refuge in GOD will be rejected.**

Praying excerpts from Psalm 35 with Jesus

⁹I will rejoice in you, O GOD,

celebrating what you have done for me.

¹⁰With all my heart I cry: 'O GOD, who is like you?

You deliver the poor from those who are too strong,
from those who take away what little they have.'

¹¹Malicious witnesses rise up,

accusing me of things about which I know nothing.

¹²They repay me evil for good, leaving me forlorn.

¹³I prayed for them with my head bowed on my bosom,

¹⁴as though I grieved for a friend or a brother.

I went about as one who laments for a mother,
bowed down in mourning.

¹⁵But they gathered against me.

The mob took me by surprise,
and together they assaulted me.

¹⁶Lacking piety, they mocked again and again,
gnashing their teeth.

¹⁷Rescue me from their ravages.

¹⁸Then I will thank you.

In the congregation I will praise you.

²²O GOD, you see it all! Do not be silent!

God*, do not be distant from me!

²³Wake up! Bestir yourself for my defence,
for my cause, O my God!

**²⁴Vindicate me, O GOD, according to your justice,
and do not let them rejoice over me.**

**²⁷Let those who desire justice for me
shout for joy and be glad,
and say evermore, 'Great is GOD,
who delights in the welfare of God's servant.'**

**²⁸Then I will tell of your justice,
and praise you all day long.**

Praying Psalm 36 with Jesus

¹Sin speaks to sinners in the depths of their hearts.
God is watching them, but still they experience no fear.

²They so flatter themselves in their mind
that they know not their guilt.

³In their hearts are mischief and deceit.
All wisdom is gone.

⁴They plot the defeat of goodness
as they lie on their beds.
Committed to evil, they have no regrets.

⁵O GOD, your covenant love extends to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the skies.

⁶Your justice is like the high mountains,
your judgments are like the great deep.
You give life to all living beings.

⁷How precious is your covenant love, O God!
People take refuge in the shade of your wings.

⁸They feast on the abundance of your house.
You slake their thirst from the river of your delights.

⁹For with you is the fount of life.
In your light we see light.

¹⁰Keep on loving those who know you,
doing justice to upright hearts.

¹¹Do not let the arrogant trample over me,
or wicked hands assault me.

¹²See how those who do evil lie prostrate.
Flung down, they are unable to rise.

Reflecting on Psalm 37 in Jesus' company

¹Do not fret because people act badly;
do not envy those who do wrong.

²They wither like grass,
and fade like the green of the fields.

³Trust in GOD, and do good, cultivate faithfulness.

⁴Let GOD be your delight,
and you will be given what your heart is seeking.

⁵Commit your life to GOD.

Trust God to act on your behalf.

⁶and your justice will shine forth like the dawn,
your judgments like the sun at noon.

⁷Rest in GOD and wait patiently.

Do not fret over those who prosper
as they carry out their evil schemes.

⁸Restrain your anger. Control your rage.

Fretting leads only to evil.

¹¹It is the meek who will inherit the land,
and enjoy abundant prosperity.

¹²The wicked plot against the just, and gnash their teeth.

¹³Their end is near.

¹⁴The wicked unsheathe the sword and draw the bow
to bring down the poor and needy,
to kill those who live upright lives.

¹⁵Their sword will enter their own heart,
their bow will be broken.

¹⁶Better the few things owned by the just
than to be wealthy and do evil.

¹⁷The power of the wicked will be broken.
GOD sustains the just.

¹⁸GOD watches over the lives of the blameless;
their heritage will go on for ever.

¹⁹They are not put to shame in evil times,
in the days of famine they have all they need.

²⁰The wrongdoers will pass away like the flowers,
vanish like smoke.

²¹The wicked borrow, and do not repay.
The just are generous and keep giving.

²²Those blessed by GOD will inherit the land.

²³GOD makes our steps secure,
holding us in love as we journey through life.

²⁴We might stumble, but we will not fall,
for GOD is holding us by the hand.

²⁶The just are always giving liberally and lending,
and their children will be blessed.

²⁷Avoid evil, and do good,
and you will always have a home.

²⁸For GOD loves justice, and will not forsake the faithful.

³⁰The just utter wisdom,

the judgments they pronounce are true.

³¹They carry the law of God in their hearts.

They do not falter.

³²The wicked watch for the just, seeking to kill them.

³³GOD will not abandon the just to their power,

or let them be condemned

when they are brought to trial.

³⁴Hope in GOD. Keep to the way of Love.

³⁷Observe the blameless, keep your eyes on the upright.

Prosperity is for the peacemakers.

³⁸There is no future for those

who cut themselves off from God.

³⁹The deliverance of the just comes from GOD,

their refuge in time of trouble.

⁴⁰GOD rescues them from the wicked, and saves them.

Psalm 38 Listening to Jesus

The psalm is composed as a prayer. I have adapted it to have Jesus speaking to us as we listen.

**¹God is rebuking you, but not in anger;
disciplining you, but not in wrath.**

**²The arrows of Love are striking you,
the hand of Love lies heavy upon you.**

**³No part of your flesh is free from wounds
because of your indignation.**

**There is no sound bone in your body
because of your sin.**

**⁴Yes, your guilty deeds are overwhelming you
their burden too heavy for you to bear.**

**⁵Your wounds grow foul and fester
because of your folly.**

**⁶I know you are utterly bowed down and prostrate,
mourning all day long.**

⁷You are burning with fever.

No part of your body is free from pain.

⁸You are utterly spent and crushed.

You groan because of the anguish in your heart.

**⁹God (the Lord) knows all your longing;
your sighing is not hidden from God.**

- ¹⁰Your heart is pounding, your strength is spent;
the light of your eyes is gone.**
- ¹¹Friends and neighbours avoid you,
keeping their distance.**
- ¹²Those who seek your life lay snares for you.
Those who seek to hurt you speak of ruin.
They think up treachery all the day long.**
- ¹³Like the deaf who cannot hear,
like the dumb unable to speak,
¹⁴you have no words for your defence.**
- ¹⁵In GOD you can hope. God will answer you.**
- ¹⁶They are gloating over you,
those who make fun of you when you stumble.**
- ¹⁷On the point of collapsing,
you have no relief from your pain.**
- ¹⁸Confess your guilt.
It is your sin that fills you with dismay.**
- ¹⁹Your enemies are strong.
There are many who hate you for no reason.**
- ²⁰They render you evil for good;
they attack you for seeking what is right.**
- ²¹Your God will not forsake you. Your God is close.
God* is hastening to come to your aid.**

Praying Psalm 39 in Jesus' company

¹I said to myself: 'I will watch my behaviour
lest I sin with my tongue.
I will control what I say when confronted by the wicked.'

²I was silent and held myself back, but to no avail.
The prosperity of the wicked stirred my grief,
³my heart was burning within me.

While I was attempting control,
the fire inside me blazed.
I found myself unable to hold my tongue.

⁴GOD, what will become of me? How fleeting is my life!

⁵A short span you have given me.
My days are as nothing in your sight.

We human beings are no more than a breath.

⁶We pass away like a shadow, our life passes by.
We amass possessions,
not knowing who will enjoy them.

⁷So what am I waiting for?
My God*, my hope is in you.

⁸Free me from all my transgressions.
Do not make me the taunt of the fool.

⁹I am silent. I do not open my mouth,
since this is all your doing.

¹⁰Stop tormenting me.
I am worn down by the blows of your hand.

¹¹You chastise us in our guilt,
like a moth consuming what we treasure.

We human beings are no more than a breath.

¹²Hear my prayer, O GOD, attend to my cry.
Do not ignore my tears. For I am your guest,
a stranger passing by
like all who have gone before me.

¹³Look away that I may breathe again,
before I depart and am no more.

Praying Psalm 40 with Jesus

¹I anxiously waited for YOU, O GOD.

At long last you stooped down to me.

You heard my cry

²and drew me up from the desolate pit.

From the miry bog you set me on solid ground.

³You put in my mouth a new song, a song of praise.

Witnessing this, many will be moved

to put their trust in YOU.

⁴Blessed and happy are those

who place their trust in GOD,

who are not seduced by idols, nor caught up in illusions.

⁵How many wonderful things you have done, O GOD.

How many graces you have thought up to favour us.

There is no one like you.

I am tempted to recount them,

but they surpass anything I could say.

⁶Sacrifice and offerings you do not desire.

You want a listening ear.

For burnt or sin offerings you have not asked.

⁷And so I say: 'Here I am.'

In the scroll of the book it is written of me

⁸that I am to carry out your will.

O my God, I long to do it.

Your law is etched in the depths of my heart.

⁹I proclaim the good news of your justice
to the great congregation.
See, I have not restrained my lips.
You know this, O GOD.

¹⁰I have not kept your justice hidden within my heart.
I have spoken of your faithfulness and your saving help.
I have not concealed your covenant love
and your faithfulness from the great congregation.

¹¹O GOD, do not withhold from me
your tender compassion.
Let your covenant love and your faithfulness
always keep me safe.

¹²I am beset with countless evils.
[My guilty deeds have overtaken me, until I cannot see.
They are more than the hairs of my head].
My heart sinks within me.

¹³Free me, O GOD. Hasten to help me.

¹⁶May all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you.
May those who love your saving presence keep saying,
'Great is GOD!'

¹⁷As for me, I am poor and needy,
but God (the Lord) think of me.
You are my helper, my deliverer.
O my God, do not delay.

Praying Psalm 41 with Jesus

¹Blessed and happy are those who care for the poor.

When times are hard, GOD will rescue them.

²GOD protects them, preserves their life,
and blesses them in the land.

GOD will not give them up to the will of their enemies,

³but on their sick bed will sustain them,
restoring them from sickness to health.

⁴I said, 'GOD, be gracious to me; heal me.'

⁵Enemies wish evil upon me:

'When will you die? When will your name be forgotten?'

⁶When they come to see me, they pretend to be friendly
but they are planning mischief in their hearts.

When they leave, they gossip about me.

⁷All who hate me gang up and plot evil against me.

⁸They say: 'He has contracted an incurable sickness;
Confined to bed he will never rise.'

⁹Even my bosom friend in whom I trusted,
who shared my table, has abandoned me.

¹⁰But you, O GOD, be gracious to me. Restore me to health,
so that I can show them how wrong they are.

¹¹I will know that you are pleased with me,
when my enemies do not triumph over me.

¹²You have restored my health.

Keep me in your presence for ever.

¹³Blessed be GOD, the God of Israel, for ever and ever.
Amen! Amen!

Praying Psalm 42 with Jesus

¹As the deer longs for running streams,
so my whole being longs for you, my God.

²With all the yearning of my soul
I thirst for you, the living God.
When will I come and see your face?

³My tears have been my food by day and by night,
as I hear it said all the day long: 'Where is your God?'

⁴These things I remember, as I pour out my soul:
how I would lead the rejoicing crowd
into the house of God,
amid cries of gladness and thanksgiving,
the throng wild with joy.

⁵*Why are you cast down, my soul? Why groan within me?
Hope in God. I will continue to praise you,
my Saviour and my God.*

⁶My soul is cast down within me as I think of you,
from the region of the Jordan and Mount Hermon,
from the hill of Mizar.

⁷Deep calls to deep in the roaring of the waters.
All your waves and your billows crash over me.

⁸By day GOD sends forth such gracious love.
By night I keep singing, pleading to the living God.

⁹**I say to God, my rock: *'Why have you forgotten me?
Why must I go mourning, oppressed by the foe?'***

¹⁰**With cries that pierce me to the heart
my enemies revile me,
*saying to me all the day long: 'Where is your God?'***

¹¹***Why are you cast down, my soul? Why groan within me?
Hope in God. I will continue to praise you,
my Saviour and my God.***

Praying Psalm 43 with Jesus

¹You be my judge, O God.

Defend my cause against a godless people.

Rescue me from the deceitful and unjust.

²You are God. I take refuge in you.

Why have you cast me off?

Why must I go mourning oppressed by the foe?

³Send forth your light and your truth;

let these be my guide;

let them bring me to your holy mountain,

to the place where you dwell.

⁴I will go to the altar of God,

to God, my exceeding joy;

and I will praise you on the harp,

O God, my God.

⁵*Why are you cast down, my soul?*

Why are you groaning within me?

Hope in God. I will continue to praise you,

my Saviour and my God.

Reflecting on Psalm 44 in Jesus' Company

Very little of this psalm could be prayed by Jesus, and, in view of Jesus' teaching about God and about how we should relate to people we think of as enemies, very little of it can be prayed by Jesus' disciples.

¹We have heard, O God, our ancestors have told us,
what deeds you performed in their days, in the days of old:

²with your own hand you drove out the nations,
and planted our ancestors there in their place;
you brought affliction on the peoples,
but brought prosperity to our ancestors.

³Not by their own sword did they win the land,
nor did their own arm give them victory.
It was your right hand, and your arm,
and the light of your countenance, for you delighted in them.

⁴You are my King and my God; you decree victories for Jacob.

⁵Through you we beat down our foes;
through your name we trample on our assailants.

⁶For not in my bow do I trust, nor can my sword save me.

⁷It is you who have saved us from our foes,
and have put to confusion those who hate us.

⁸In God we have boasted continually,
and we will call upon you in thanksgiving forever.

⁹Yet you have rejected us and shamed us.
You have not gone out with our armies.

¹⁰You made us retreat before the foe,
and our enemies plunder us at will.

¹¹You have made us like sheep for slaughter,
and have scattered us among the nations.

¹²You have sold your people for a trifle,
letting them go cheaply.

¹³You have made us the taunt of our neighbours,
the derision and scorn of those around us.

¹⁴You have made us a byword among the nations,
a laughing stock among the peoples.

¹⁵All day long my disgrace is before me,
my face is covered in shame

¹⁶at the insults of those taunting and reviling,
at the sight of the enemy attacking.

¹⁷All this has come upon us, yet we have not forgotten you,
or been false to your covenant.

¹⁸Our heart has not turned back,
nor have our steps departed from your way,

¹⁹yet you have broken us in the haunt of jackals,
and covered us with deep darkness.

²⁰If we had forgotten the name of our God,
or spread out our hands to a strange god,

²¹would not God discover this,
God who knows the secrets of the heart?

²²Because of you we are being killed all day long,
and accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

²³Rouse yourself, O God*! Why do you sleep.

Awake, do not reject us any longer!

²⁴Why do you hide your face?

Why do you forget our affliction and oppression?

²⁵We sink down to the dust,

our bodies unable to rise from the ground.

²⁶Rise up, come to our help.

Redeem us because of your covenant love.

Reflecting on Psalm 45 in Jesus' Company

¹My heart overflows with a noble theme.

I dedicate my verses to the king.

My tongue is as skilled as the pen of a scribe.

²You are the most handsome of men. How gracious is your speech.

How your God continues to bless you.

³O mighty one, gird your sword upon your thigh.

⁴In splendour and majesty ride on victorious,
for the cause of truth and goodness and right.

In defence of justice let your right hand show your dread deeds.

⁵Your arrows are keen. To you armies surrender.

The king's enemies lose heart.

⁶Your throne is the throne of God. Your reign endures for ever.

Your royal sceptre is a sceptre of equity.

⁷You love justice and hate what is evil.

Therefore God, your God, has anointed you
with oil of gladness beyond your companions.

⁸Your robes are fragrant with aloes and myrrh.

From the ivory palace you are greeted with music.

⁹Daughters of kings are among your loved ones.

On your right stands the queen mother in gold of Ophir.

¹⁰Listen, O daughter, mark these words:

Leave your family behind, forget your father's house.

¹¹The king is infatuated with your beauty.

Since he is your lord, you must bow to him.

¹²The city of Tyre comes with gifts, seeking your favour.

¹³The richest of the peoples honour you.

¹⁴The king's daughter is clothed with splendour;
her robes embroidered with pearls set in gold.
They are leading her to the king.

¹⁵She and her maiden companions
are escorted amid gladness and joy
into the palace of the king.

¹⁶In the place of your ancestors you will have sons.
They will be princes over all the land.
Your name will be celebrated for ever.

¹⁷The peoples will never cease thanking you
from one generation to the next,
giving praise to you through this song.

Praying Psalm 46 with Jesus

¹God is our refuge and strength,
a helper close at hand in time of trouble.

²So we will not fear, though the earth should tremble,
though mountains collapse into the sea,
³though waters roar and foam,
though the mountains shudder
before the crashing waves.

The Mighty GOD is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

⁴There is a river whose streams
gladden the city of God,
home of the Holy One,
our God, the Most High.

⁵God is in the midst of the city.
It cannot be shaken.
God will be its help
when the morning dawns.

⁶Peoples revolt.
Kings mobilise their armies.
The earth shudders
whenever God thunders.

⁷The Mighty GOD is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

⁸Come, behold the formidable things
GOD has brought about on the earth:
⁹everywhere God puts an end to war,
breaking the bow.

God shatters the spear,
burns the chariot in a pyre.
An end to your fighting!

¹⁰Be still and know that I am God.
I am exalted above the nations,
supreme on the earth.

¹¹*The Mighty GOD is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.*

Praying Psalm 47 with Jesus

¹Clap your hands, all you peoples!
Acclaim your God, singing for joy.

²For GOD, the Most High, we must revere,
great king over all the earth.

⁴Our inheritance, our glory, is from God,
given to Jacob out of love.

⁵God goes up with shouts of joy,
ascends to the blast of the trumpet.

⁶Sing praise to God, sing praise;
sing praise to our King, sing praise.

⁷For God is king of all the earth;
sing praise with all your skill.

⁸God is king over the nations;
God reigns on the holy throne.

⁹The princes of the peoples are assembled
with the people of Abraham's God.
All the rulers on the earth belong to God,
who reigns over all.

Praying Psalm 48 with Jesus

¹Great is GOD and most worthy of praise
in the city of our God.

²God's holy mountain rises in beauty,
the crowning joy of all the earth.

Mount Zion, true pole of the earth, city of the great King.

³God, in the midst of its citadels, is its sure defence.

⁴Look, the kings are assembling,
they advance together.

⁵As soon as they see it, they are astounded;
they panic, and take to flight.

⁶Trembling takes hold of them,
like the pangs of a woman in labour,

⁷as when the east wind causes shipwreck
to a merchant fleet.

⁸As we have heard, so we have seen:
this is the city of the Mighty GOD,
the city of our God,
who has established it for ever.

⁹In your temple, O God, we ponder your covenant love.

¹⁰Your praise, O God, like your reputation,
reaches to the ends of the earth.

Your right hand is filled with justice.

¹¹May Mount Zion be glad.
At the sight of your judgments
may the towns of Judah rejoice.

¹²Walk through Zion, walk all around it,
count its towers, admire its ramparts,
¹³take note of its citadels,
that you may tell the next generation:

¹⁴'This is God, our eternal God,
who is for ever our guide.'

Reflecting on Psalm 49 in Jesus' Company

¹Hear this, all you peoples!

Listen, inhabitants of the world,

²people both high and low,

rich and poor alike.

³I have wisdom you need to hear.

My heart is full of insight.

⁴I turn my mind to an enigma.

To the sound of the harp I will present my challenge.

⁵Why should I fear times of trouble,

when criminals track me down to destroy me,

⁶people who trust in their wealth

and boast of the abundance of their riches?

⁷Yes, none of us can buy our own freedom,

or pay a ransom to God for our lives.

⁸For the ransom is too high, well beyond our means.

⁹There is no escaping death, no avoiding the grave.

¹⁰Look, even the wisest die.

They perish just like the foolish and the stupid.

They have to leave their wealth to others.

¹¹The grave is their home forever, their final dwelling,

even if their names spread wide through the land.

¹²*Human beings in their opulence cannot endure;
like the animals they must succumb to silence.*

¹³Such is the lot of those
who find their security in themselves:
just like sheep
they are being driven to the grave.

¹⁴Death shepherds them.
Straight to the grave they descend,
and their form wastes away.
The realm of the dead is their home.

¹⁵But I know God will rescue me,
snatching me from the grip of death.

¹⁶Do not be concerned when people become rich,
when the wealth of their house increases.

¹⁷When we die we will take nothing with us.
There is no place for wealth in the grave.

¹⁸Though in their life they consider themselves blessed –
for you are praised when you do well for yourself –
¹⁹they will go down to join their ancestors,
and will never again see the light.

²⁰*Human beings in their opulence cannot endure;
like the animals they must succumb to silence.*

Praying Psalm 50 in Jesus' Company

¹The mighty God, the High GOD, speaks,
summoning the earth
from the rising of the sun to its setting.

²Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,
God shines forth.

³Our God is coming and will not be silent.

First comes a devouring fire; then a mighty tempest.

⁴From on high God summons the heavens and the earth
to witness the judgment of the people:

⁵Gather to me my people,
who made a covenant with me by sacrifice.'

⁶The heavens declare God's justice,
for God is coming in person as judge.

⁷Listen, my people, for I will speak; Israel, I testify against you.
I am God, your God. I accuse you. I lay the charge before you.

⁸I find no fault with your sacrifices;
your offerings are always before me.

⁹I do not ask for more bullocks from your stalls,
or goats from your herds.

¹⁰Every wild animal of the forest is mine,
and the cattle in their thousands on my mountains.

¹¹I know all the birds of the air;
all that moves in the field is at my disposal.

¹²If I were hungry, I would not tell you,
for the world and all that is in it is mine.

¹³Do you think I eat the flesh of bulls,
or drink the blood of goats?

**¹⁴Offer to me a sacrifice of confession
and pay your vows to the Most High.**

**¹⁵Call on me in the day of trouble;
I will deliver you, and you will honour me.'**

¹⁶To the wicked God says:

'How dare you quote to me my law.

How dare you invoke the covenant,

¹⁷you who hate discipline, and turn away when I speak?

¹⁸You make friends with a thief when you see one.

You keep company with adulterers.

**¹⁹You give your mouth free rein for evil,
and your tongue plots deceit.**

**²⁰You sit and speak against your kin;
you slander your own mother's child.**

²¹This is how you behave and should I be silent?

Do you think that I am like you?

I will accuse you to your face.

²²Mark you this, you who never think of God!

I will not punish you

without offering you an escape.

**²³They honour me who bring to me as their sacrifice
admission of their guilt.**

**I will see that those who correct their conduct
will enjoy my salvation.'**