Psalm 95

1 Come, let’s sing to God!
Let’s make a ‘ruah sound before the Rock of our
deliverance!
2 Let’s walk thankfully into God's presence
With singing, with ‘ruah sounds,
Meant just for You:
3 A great God is Adonai,
The great ruler over all those
Whom we permit to rule over us.
4 The earth’s remotest sites,
The crags of the highest mountains—
All belong to You.
5 The roiling ocean
Is Your quiet pond—
You designed it;
Your hand sculpted the dry land’s vast expanse.
6 So, come!
Let’s bow down and bend our knees,
Singing praise before Adonai who made us.
7 For You are our God!
We are the people who graze in Your pasture,
The flock who know Your guiding hand.

If you would only hearken to God’s voice today!
8 “Do not harden your hearts
As you did at Meribah, the Waters of Strife,
When you stormed at Moses to strike the rock;
Nor that day at Massah, the Testing Place in the
wilderness,
When all you could think of was your thirst.
9 How your ancestors tried Me, tested Me,
Though they had seen My work!
10 For forty years I loathed that generation,
I called them “People of a Wandering Heart,”
For they did not know My paths.
11 And so in anger I took an oath:
They shall not enter the land
Where My rest is to be found.”
Psalm 96

1 Sing to God a new song,
   Sing all earth,
As though Song itself were new!
2 Sing to Adonai,
Praise the Name,
Spread the good news from day to day
   Of God's deliverance!
3 Tell God's glorystories to all the nations,
   God's wondertales to all the peoples!
4 Adonai is great,
To be praised and praised,
More to be revered
   Than anything we allow to rule us.
5 What the nations allow to rule them
Are empty clods, mere godlets—
   But Adonai made the heavens!
6 In faces full of honor and glory
We see the face of God,
In nature's strength and beauty
   We see God's holy palace.
7 Salute Adonai, O families of the peoples,
Salute Adonai for glory and power,
8 Salute Adonai for the glory of the Name!
Carry in gifts, enter God's courts!
9 Bow low to Adonai—holy radiance will surround you,
   Whirl about before God, all the earth!
10 Spread the word among the nations: Adonai rules!
And so the planet's in place, it will not be swayed;
God judges peoples fairly, all sides will be weighed.
11 Make a simchah in heaven, let the earth rejoice,
Let the sea squall, and all sealife sing!
12 Let the golden fields celebrate,
The trees in the forest all rustle with song—
13 Before God:
"Adonai is coming!
Coming to judge the earth,
To test the earth for justice;
All the peoples will be faithfully weighed!"
Psalm 97

1 Adonai is sovereign, let the earth rejoice,
Let a myriad of isles delight!

2 Cloud and thunderhead surround the Holy One,
Justice and judgment are the foundation of the Throne.

3 Fire walks on ahead,
Engulfing every enemy in flame.

4 God’s lightnings lit the world,
The earth looked—and whirled!

5 The mountains melted like wax before Adonai,
Before Adon, the Superior One of all the earth.

6 The heavens have told tales of God’s justice,
And all the peoples have seen the glory of the Eternal.

7 All who serve idols shall be shamed,
They glorify themselves with godlets—
Bow down to the One, you “gods”!

8 Zion heard and hailed,
The daughters of Judah rejoiced,
Because of Your judgments, Adonai.

9 For You are Adonai on High—
High above all the earth,
You are raised very high above all the “gods”!

10 Lovers of God, hate evil;
God guards the lives of the covenanted,
Delivering them from the hand of the wicked.

11 Light is sown for the just,
Delight for the upright of heart.

12 Delight in Adonai, O doers of justice,
Give thanks to the presence of the holiness of God.

Justice and judgment. As we have seen before, “justice” (tzedek) is the divine ideal, while “judgment” (mishpat) is the human reality as realized by judges (shaftim). Even the imperfect justice of human jurists has its basis in the throne of God. The seat on which the human judge sits, this verse suggests, shares some of the holiness of the Lord.
Psalm 98

1 A psalm.

Sing a new song to Adonai,
Who has done wonders:
The triumphs of God’s right hand,
The bared forearm of the holy will!

2 Adonai has made deliverance known,
Revealed divine justice in the eyes of the nations.

3 God has made covenantal love and faithfulness present for the House of Israel,
Each of the ends of the earth has seen
The deliverance of our God!

4 Sound t’ruah for Adonai, all the earth,
Shout out, sing aloud, burst into song!

5 Tune your lyre to sing for God,
Your lyre, then your lyric voice,
6 Your trumpets, then your sonorous shofar—
Sound t’ruah before majestic Adonai!

7 Let the sea roar, the waves resound,
Let the world and everything alive ring out!
8 Let the rivers clap their hands,
Let the hills harmonize, hill with hill,
9 As they escort Adonai
Who has come to judge the earth:
Let God judge this world by justice;
And the peoples, by their upright deeds!

1. Who has done wonders. We have tried to stanch the flood of gendered pronouns in this psalm, which requires rendering some words less precisely. More literally, “For [He] has done wonders.”

We have also employed periphrastic translations to capture more of this psalm’s musical tone and drama. Had we composed this psalm, we might have added a headnote “for the conductor,” in the light of verses 4–8!

The triumphs of God’s right hand. More literally, “His right hand and His holy arm have delivered.” We have turned this phrase into examples of God’s “wonders.”

The bared forearm of the holy will! “Bared” is not in the Hebrew, but is an English expression of strength.

2. Adonai has made deliverance known. More literally, “His deliverance.”

Revealed divine justice. The poet sees God showing the nations the ideal of tzedek, “justice.”

Psalm 99

1 Adonai is sovereign, let the peoples quake; Before the one enthroned on winged creatures, let the earth tremble!
2 Adonai is grand in Zion, High above all the peoples.
3 Let them praise Your name, so grand and awesome, So holy.
4 O mighty monarch, loving justice, You defined uprightness, You wrought judgment and justice in Jacob.
5 Raise high Adonai our God, Bow low before God's earthly power, The footstool of the Divine, So holy.
6 Moses and Aaron are among the priests, Samuel among those who call out God's name— Calling out to Adonai, Who answers them, Speaking to them in a pillar of cloud. They kept God's testimonies, And You gave them a law.
7 Adonai our God—You answered them! A forgiving God were You to them, An avenging God when they transgressed.
8 Raise high Adonai our God, Bow low before the mountain where God's holiness appears, So holy

Is Adonai our God.

1. Adonai is sovereign. See Psalm 93:1. Let the peoples quake. “The peoples” here refers to nations other than Israel. They are to quake because God the sovereign will judge them for their actions.

Enthroned on winged cherubim. An image from the mishkan, the Tabernacle in the wilderness (see Exodus 25:18-22). The cherubim (k'ruvim in Hebrew) represented the most powerful aspects of God's creations. In ancient Israelite art, they were depicted as having a human head, the body of a lion, and wings of eagles. God's seat on top of them is another image of God's enthronement as Sovereign.

3. So grand and awesome. We have added "So holy." to the translation (no such particle is present in the Hebrew).
Psalm 29

1 A psalm of David.

Present to Adonai, O godlike beings,
Present to Adonai resplendence and strength;
2 Present to Adonai the resplendence due God’s name,
Bow down to Adonai in the beauty of a holy place.

3 The voice of Adonai—
Over the billows!
The resplendent God has bellowed—
Adonai, above the crashing billows!

4 The voice of Adonai—
In strength!
The voice of Adonai—
In splendor!
5 The voice of Adonai—
Shattering cedars!
Adonai is shattering the cedars of the Lebanon—
6 Making them dance like a spindly calf—
Shaking the Lebanon, all her forests—
Turning Sirion, all of Mount Hermon,
Into a wild, young skipping ox!

7 The voice of Adonai—
Carving leaping sheets of flame!
8 The voice of Adonai—
Tossing up the sands of the desert,
The entire Kadesh desert
Whirling in the air!
9 The voice of Adonai—
Startling the deer, whirling them about,
Stripping bare the forests—
While in the Palace all the populace proclaims:
“Resplendence!”

10 Adonai sat as monarch of the Flood;
Adonai shall sit as monarch for all time.
11 Adonai is giving strength to the people;
Adonai is blessing the people with peace.
Psalm 92

A psalm, a song of the Day of Shabbat.
It is good to offer thanks to Adonai
And to sing to Your name, Most High,
To tell tales of Your covenantal love in the morning
And Your faithfulness in the nights
On a ten-string and on a lute,
On meditative strumming of a lyre.
For You have given me joy through Your acts;
Of the work of Your hands I shall sing:
"How great are Your works, Adonai,
How very deep Your thoughts."

An ignorant man will not know,
A fool will not understand this:
When wicked people sprout up like grass
And all the doers of iniquity peep through the ground—
They will be stamped out for eternity,
But You are on high forever, Adonai!
For behold, Your foes, Adonai,
For behold, Your foes shall fall away—
All the workers of iniquity shall be scattered.
But You hold up my horn like a hoary ox,
I luxuriate in scented oils.
My eye can spot those who are watching me,
My ear detects the evildoers rising up against me.
A just person sprouts up like the palm,
Growing tall like a cedar in the Lebanon,
Planted in the House of Adonai,
They will sprout nobly in the courts of our God.
They shall be fruitful even in old age,
Green and luxuriant shall they be,
Branching out in tales of the uprightness of Adonai:
"My Rock,
In whom no imperfection can be found."
Psalm 93

1 Adonai is Sovereign,
   Robed in nobility!
   Robed is Adonai,
   Girded with strength.
   Now the world is set firm,
   It will not be shaken;
2 As Your throne was set firm since the beginning
   of time,
   You have been
   Forever.
3 Though the rivers leap up, Adonai,
   The rivers leap up full-voiced,
   Though the rivers leap up in crashing cadence—
4 More powerful than their sound,
   Than the crash of all the mighty breakers of the
   sea below,
   Is the might on high of Adonai.
5 Your testimonies are very faithful.
   Holy beauty will curtain Your house,
   Adonai,
   For long days,
   Long, long days.

1. **Adonai is Sovereign.** The Hebrew is Adonai malach, “Adonai has ruled” or “has been ruling.” As is often conveyed by the perfect form, the past action continues into the present.

2. **From the beginning of time.** The Hebrew is mei-az, “from then.”
   
   You have been / Forever. “Have been” is implied by the Hebrew mei-olam atah, literally “You from forever.”

3–4. Until God tamed them, the waters were the most powerful force in the universe.

3. **Leap up.** This is a more dramatic rendering of the Hebrew nas’u, “have lifted up.”
   
   In crashing cadence. The Hebrew dochyam literally means “their crushing” or “their pounding.” We tend to think of the sound and appearance of waves reaching
   
   the shore as “crashing” rather than “crushing.”

4. **The mighty breakers . . . the might on high of Adonai.** The Hebrew adir (“might”) is used for the breakers and for God. This is another example of how Creation is the robe of God.

5. **Holy beauty will curtain Your house.** The Tabernacle in the wilderness, and the Temple that succeeded it (two examples of God’s “house”) are microcosms of Creation—small enough for the Israelites to be able to encounter there the author of the Creation. The phrase “will robe Your house” would better echo the image of verse 1, but the verb “curtain” seems more appropriate for a house than “robe.”

   For long days, / Long, long days. As in Psalm 91:16, this phrase echoes the end of the 23rd Psalm.