

**Psalm**

**My Soul Longs for the Courts of the LORD**

<sup>1</sup>How lovely is your | dwelling place, \*

O | LORD of hosts!

<sup>2</sup>My soul longs, yes, faints

for the courts | of the LORD;\*

my heart and flesh sing for joy

to the | living God.

<sup>3</sup>Even the sparrow finds a home,

and the swallow a nest for herself,

where she may | lay her young, \*

at your altars, O LORD of hosts,

my King | and my God.

<sup>4</sup>Blessèd are those who dwell | in your house, \*

ever sing- | ing your praise!

<sup>5</sup>Blessèd are those whose strength is | in you, \*

in whose heart are the highways to | Zion.

<sup>6</sup>As they go through the Valley of Baca

they make it a | place of springs;\*

the early rain also covers | it with pools.

<sup>7</sup>They go from | strength to strength;\*

each one appears before God in | Zion.

<sup>8</sup>O LORD God of hosts, | hear my prayer;\*

give ear, O God of | Jacob!

<sup>9</sup>Behold our shield, | O God;\*

look on the face of your a- | nointed!

<sup>10</sup>For a day in your courts is better

than a thousand | elsewhere. \*

I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God

than dwell in the tents of | wickedness.

<sup>11</sup>For the LORD God is a sun and shield;

the LORD bestows favor and | honor. \*

No good thing does he withhold

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from those who walk up- | rightly.

<sup>12</sup>O | LORD of hosts,\*

blessèd is the one who | trusts in you!

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son\*

and to the Holy | Spirit;

as it was in the be- | ginning,\*

is now, and will be forever. | Amen.

## Old Testament Reading

*Isaiah 55:10–13*

<sup>10</sup>“For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven  
and do not return there but water the earth,  
making it bring forth and sprout,

giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,

<sup>11</sup>so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;

it shall not return to me empty,

but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,

and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

<sup>12</sup>“For you shall go out in joy

and be led forth in peace;

the mountains and the hills before you

shall break forth into singing,

and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

<sup>13</sup>Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress;

instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle;

and it shall make a name for the LORD,

an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.”

## Gradual

*Psalm 83:18, 13*

[Let your enemies] know that you alone, whose name | is the LORD,\*  
are the Most High over | all the earth.

O my God, make them like | whirling dust,\*

like chaff be- | fore the wind.

**Epistle***2 Corinthians 11:19–12:9*

<sup>19</sup>For you gladly bear with fools, being wise yourselves! <sup>20</sup>For you bear it if someone makes slaves of you, or devours you, or takes advantage of you, or puts on airs, or strikes you in the face. <sup>21</sup>To my shame, I must say, we were too weak for that!

But whatever anyone else dares to boast of—I am speaking as a fool—I also dare to boast of that. <sup>22</sup>Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they offspring of Abraham? So am I. <sup>23</sup>Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one—I am talking like a madman—with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. <sup>24</sup>Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. <sup>25</sup>Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; <sup>26</sup>on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; <sup>27</sup>in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. <sup>28</sup>And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches. <sup>29</sup>Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to fall, and I am not indignant?

<sup>30</sup>If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness. <sup>31</sup>The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, he who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. <sup>32</sup>At Damascus, the governor under King Aretas was guarding the city of Damascus in order to seize me, <sup>33</sup>but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall and escaped his hands.

**Paul's Visions and His Thorn**

<sup>1</sup>I must go on boasting. Though there is nothing to be gained by it, I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. <sup>2</sup>I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. <sup>3</sup>And I know that this man was caught up into paradise—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—<sup>4</sup>and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter. <sup>5</sup>On behalf of this man I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. <sup>6</sup>Though if I should wish to boast, I would not be a fool, for I would be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think more of me than he sees in me or hears from me. <sup>7</sup>So to keep me from being too elated by

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the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from being too elated. <sup>8</sup>Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. <sup>9</sup>But he said to me, “**My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.**” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

### Tract

*Psalm 60:1–2, 5*

O God, you have rejected us, broken our de- | fenses;\*  
you have been angry; oh, re- | store us.  
You have made the land to quake; you have torn it | open;\*  
repair its breaches, for it | totters.  
That your beloved ones may be de- | livered,\*  
give salvation by your right hand and | answer us!

### Holy Gospel

*Luke 8:4–15*

#### The Parable of the Sower

<sup>4</sup>When a great crowd was gathering and people from town after town came to [Jesus], he said in a parable: <sup>5</sup>“**A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell along the path and was trampled underfoot, and the birds of the air devoured it. <sup>6</sup>And some fell on the rock, and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. <sup>7</sup>And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up with it and choked it. <sup>8</sup>And some fell into good soil and grew and yielded a hundredfold.**” As he said these things, he called out, “**He who has ears to hear, let him hear.**”

#### The Purpose of the Parables

<sup>9</sup>And when his disciples asked him what this parable meant, <sup>10</sup>he said, “**To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God, but for others they are in parables, so that ‘seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.’ <sup>11</sup>Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. <sup>12</sup>The ones along the path are those who have heard. Then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. <sup>13</sup>And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy. But these have no root; they believe for a while, and in time of testing fall away.**”

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<sup>14</sup>And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature. <sup>15</sup>As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience.”

### **Acknowledgments**

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