

PSALMS 11, 12, and 13

David cries to Yahweh for help at a time when men, faithful to their God and king, are oppressed by the ascendance of proud and deceitful persons. He expresses his confidence that the God of mercy and truth, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning, will arise and comfort and assist the afflicted. God will preserve them from the evil of those days when wicked men in power put virtue to rebuke. And as it is said that he will preserve them forever, so we may trust that after they have escaped the pollution of this world, he will conduct them safe to the mansions of eternal purity where the Lord God omnipotent reigns. Although the 13th and many other psalms have a mournful beginning, they have a triumphant end, thus showing us the prevailing power of devotion. They convince us that prayer brings with it the comforts of heaven and revives our weary spirits in the gloomy seasons of sorrow and temptation.

Psalm 11

For the choir director. A Psalm of David.

- 1 In YAHWEH I take refuge; how can you say to my soul, “Flee like a bird to your mountain,
2 for behold, the wicked bend the bow; they have fitted their arrow to the string
to shoot in the dark at the upright in heart;
3 if the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?”
- 4 YAHWEH is in his holy temple; YAHWEH's throne is in heaven;
his eyes see, his eyelids test the children of man.
- 5 YAHWEH tests the righteous,
but his soul hates the wicked and the one who loves violence.
- 6 Let him rain coals on the wicked;
fire and sulfur and a scorching wind shall be the portion of their cup.
- 7 For YAHWEH is righteous; he loves righteous deeds; the upright shall behold his face.

Psalm 12

For the choir director; upon an eight-stringed lyre. A Psalm of David.

- 1 Save, O YAHWEH, for the godly one is gone;
for the faithful have vanished from among the children of man.
- 2 Everyone utters lies to his neighbor;
with flattering lips and a double heart they speak.
- 3 May YAHWEH cut off all flattering lips, the tongue that makes great boasts,

- 4 those who say, "With our tongue we will prevail,
our lips are with us; who is master over us?"
- 5 "Because the poor are plundered, because the needy groan,
I will now arise," says YAHWEH;
"I will place him in the safety for which he longs."
- 6 The words of YAHWEH are pure words,
like silver refined in a furnace on the ground, purified seven times.
- 7 You, O YAHWEH, will keep them; you will guard us from this generation forever.
- 8 On every side the wicked prowl, as vileness is exalted among the children of man.

Psalm 13

For the choir director. A Psalm of David.

- 1 How long, O YAHWEH? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?
- 2 How long must I take counsel in my soul and have sorrow in my heart all the day?
How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?
- 3 Consider and answer me, O YAHWEH my God;
light up my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death,
4 lest my enemy say, "I have prevailed over him,"
lest my foes rejoice because I am shaken.
- 5 But I have trusted in your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.
- 6 I will sing to YAHWEH, because he has dealt bountifully with me.

PRAYER

O Lord, you are our hope and refuge, the exceeding great reward of all who trust in you. Have mercy upon us your servants, whose confidence is in your infinite goodness and loving-kindness. Defend us from all dangers, both spiritual and physical; for you know we have no power of our own, but our sufficiency is solely in you. Be present, therefore, to help us whenever we are surrounded with iniquity. Let not man have the upper hand, but stretch forth your right hand to save and defend us. And being delivered from all adversities here, we look forward to the day when we are admitted into the glorious fellowship of saints and angels through the merits and for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.