

A Letter of Athanasius, Our Holy Father, Archbishop of Alexandria, to Marcellinus on the Interpretation of the Psalms

1. I marvel at your conduct in Christ, dear Marcellinus. Indeed you are successfully enduring the present trial, although you have suffered many tribulations in it, and you do not neglect the discipline.¹ For when I inquired from your letter-bearer how you fare in your continuing illness, I learned that you maintain a studious attitude toward all the holy Scripture, but that you read most frequently the Book of Psalms, and strive to comprehend the meaning contained in each psalm. On the basis of this, then, I commend you, since I too have a great fondness for the same book—just as I have for all the Scripture. Indeed, it so happens that I had a conversation with a learned old man, and I wish to write you those things that old master of the Psalter told me about it. For there is a certain grace and persuasiveness combined with the reasonable statement. He said this:

2. *All Scripture* of ours, my son—both ancient and new—is *inspired by God and profitable for teaching*, as it is written.² But the Book of Psalms possesses a certain winning exactitude for those who are prayerful. Each sacred book supplies and announces its own promise. The Pentateuch, for instance, relates the beginning of the world and the deeds of the patriarchs, both the exodus of Israel out of Egypt and the decree of the legislation. The Triteuch³ tells the possession of the land and the exploits of the judges, as well as David's ancestral line. The books of the Kings and Chronicles recount the stories of the rulers. And Esdras⁴ describes the release from the captivity, the return of the people, and the construction of the temple and the city. The books of the Prophets contain foretellings about the sojourn of the Saviour, admonitions concerning divine commands and reprimands against transgressors, as well as prophecies for the gentiles. Yet the Book of Psalms is like a garden containing things of all these kinds, and it sets them to music, but also exhibits things of its own that it gives in song along with them.

3. It sings the events of Genesis in Psalm 18: *The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims the work of his hands*, and in Psalm 23: *The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof the world, and all that dwell in it. He has founded it upon the seas*. The themes of Exodus and Numbers and Deuteronomy it chants beautifully in Psalms 77 and 113 when it says: *At*

*the going forth of Israel from Egypt, of the house of Jacob from a barbarous people, Judea became his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion.*⁵ It hymns the same events in Psalm 104: *He sent forth Moses his servant, and Aaron whom he had chosen. He established among them his words, and his wonders in the land of Cham. He sent forth darkness, and made it dark; yet they rebelled against his words. He turned their waters into blood, and he destroyed their fish. Their land produced frogs abundantly, in the chambers of their kings. He spoke, and the dog-fly came, and lice into all their coasts.*⁶ And it is possible to discover that this whole psalm generally and Psalm 105 were written concerning these same events. And matters pertaining to the priesthood and the tabernacle it proclaims in the “going out from the tabernacle”⁷ in Psalm 28: *Bring to the Lord, you sons of God, bring to the Lord young rams; bring to the Lord glory and honour.*

4. The things concerning Joshua and the judges it manifests somehow in the one hundred and sixth when it says: *And they establish for themselves cities of habitation, and they sow fields and plant vineyards.* For the land of the promise was given over to the people of Joshua. And when it says repeatedly in the same psalm, *Then they cried to the Lord in their affliction, and he delivered them from their distresses,* it signifies the Book of Judges. When they cry out, he raises judges in the right time and saves his people from their tribulations. The stories of the kings it sings, surely, in the nineteenth psalm, stating: *Some glory in chariots, and some in horses: But we will glory in the name of the Lord our God. They are overthrown and fallen: But we are risen, and have been set upright. O Lord, save the King, and hear us in whatever day we call upon you.* The events of Esdras in Psalm 125 (of the gradual psalms)⁸ it sings: *When the Lord overturned the captivity of Sion, we became as comforted ones,* and again in 121: *I was glad when they said to me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet stood in your courts, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is built as a city whose fellowship is complete. For to that place the tribes went up, the tribes of the Lord, as a testimony for Israel.*

5. The pronouncements of the Prophets are declared in nearly every psalm. About the visitation of the Saviour, and that he will make his sojourn as one who is God, so it says in the forty-ninth psalm: *The Lord our God shall come manifestly, and shall not keep silence,* and in the one hundred and seventeenth: *Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord: We have blessed you out of the house of the Lord. God is Lord and he has shined upon us.* And that this one is the Word of the Father, so it sings in Psalm 106: *He sent his Word,*

and healed them, and delivered them out of their destructions. The Coming One is God himself, and the Word who is sent. Because the Psalter knows that this Word is the Son of God, it chants the voice of the Father in the forty-fourth psalm: *My heart has uttered a good Word.* And again in Psalm 109: *I have begotten you from the womb before the morning.* What else would someone say the offspring of the Father is except his Word and his Wisdom? Because Scripture knew that it was this one to whom the Father said, *Let there be light, and firmament and all things,*⁹ this book also contains the saying, *By the Word of the Lord the heavens were established; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.*¹⁰

6. It knew Christ himself as the Coming One and indeed it especially speaks concerning him in the forty-fourth psalm: *Your throne, O God, is forever and ever: The sceptre of your Kingdom is a sceptre of righteousness. You have loved righteousness and hated iniquity. Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your fellows.* And lest someone suppose that he comes only in semblance, it makes clear that this same one will become man and that this is he through whom all things were made,¹¹ as it says in Psalm 86:¹² *Mother of Sion shall say, a man, and a man was begotten in her, and the Most High himself formed her.* This is tantamount to saying, *And the Word was God, and all things were made through him, and the Word became flesh.*¹³ On this account also, since it knows that this was from a virgin, the Psalter was not silent, but immediately gives some clear expression in the forty-fourth psalm, saying, *Hear, O daughter, and see, and incline your ear; forget also your people and your father's house, because the King has desired your beauty.* Again, this is like that which is said by Gabriel, *Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you!*¹⁴ For indeed, having stated that he is Christ, soon thereafter it made known the human birth from the virgin in saying, *Hear, O daughter.*¹⁵ Take note that Gabriel calls Mary by name, since he is dissimilar to her in terms of origination, but David the Psalmist properly addresses her as *daughter*, because she happened to be from his seed.

7. And having declared that he would become man, afterwards the Psalter also points to his passibility in the flesh. Perceiving, then, that there would be a plot on the part of the Jews, it sings in Psalm 2, *Wherefore did the heathen rage, and the nations imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers gathered themselves together against the Lord and against his Anointed.* In the twenty-first it tells the manner of the death from the

Saviour's own lips: ... *you have brought me down to the dust of death. For many dogs have surrounded me; the assembly of the wicked has attacked me on all sides. They pierced my hands and feet. They counted all my bones. They divided my garments among themselves, and cast lots upon my raiment.* When it speaks of the piercing of the hands and feet, what else than a cross does it signify? After teaching all these things, it adds that the Lord suffers these things not for his own sake, but for ours. And it says again through his own lips in Psalm 87, *Your wrath has pressed heavily upon me,* and in Psalm 68, *Then I restored that which I did not take away.* For although he was not himself obliged to give account for any crime, he died—but he suffered on our behalf, and he took on himself the wrath directed against us on account of the transgression, as it says in Isaiah, *He took on our weaknesses.*¹⁶ This is evident also when we say in Psalm 137, *The Lord will recompense them on my behalf,*¹⁷ and the Spirit says in the seventy-first, *and he will save the children of the needy, and shall bring low the false accuser ... for he has delivered the poor from the oppressor; and the labourer, who had no helper.*

8. On this account it foretells his bodily ascension into heaven, and says in Psalm 23, *Lift up your gates, you princes, and be lifted up, you everlasting doors, and the king of glory shall come in.* And in the forty-sixth, *God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with a sound of a trumpet.* It announces the session at God's right hand, and says in Psalm 109, *The Lord said to my Lord, Sit on my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.* And in the ninth psalm it shouts aloud the destruction of the devil that took place: *You sat on the throne, as one judging righteousness. You have rebuked the nations, and the ungodly one has perished.* It did not even conceal the fact that he received all the authority of judgment from the Father, but also announces that he is coming as judge of all in Psalm 71: *O God, give your judgment to the king, and your righteousness to the king's son, that he may judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with judgment.* And in the forty-ninth it says: *He shall summon the heaven above, and the earth, that he may judge his people.... And the heavens shall declare his righteousness, for God is judge.* And in the eighty-first we read: *God stands in the assembly of the gods; and in the midst of them he will judge gods.* Also one may learn from it about the calling of nations—in many psalms, but best in Psalm 46: *Clap your hands, all nations; shout to God with a voice of exultation.* Likewise in the seventy-first: *The Ethiopians shall fall down before him, and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tharsis, and the isles, shall bring presents. The kings of the Arabians and Sheba shall offer gifts. And all kings of the earth shall*

worship him; all the gentiles shall serve him. These things are sung in the Psalms, and they are foretold in each of the other books of Scripture.

9. And not being ignorant, the old man then would say: In each book of Scripture the same things are specially declared. This report exists in all of them, and the same agreement of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, just as it is possible to discover in this book things in the others, so also things in this book are frequently found in the others. For Moses writes a hymn, and Isaiah is hymning, and Habakkuk prays with a hymn.¹⁸ Furthermore, in each book one is able to find prophecies and legislations and narratives. For the same Spirit is over all, and in each case in accordance with the distinction that belongs to it, each serves and fulfils the grace given to it, whether it is prophecy, or legislation, or the record of history, or the grace of the psalms. Since it is one and the same Spirit,¹⁹ from whom are all distinctions, and it is indivisible by nature—because of this surely the whole is in each, and as determined by service the revelations and the distinctions of the Spirit pertain to all and to each severally. Furthermore, according to the reserved need, each frequently, when the Spirit takes over, serves the Word. Therefore, as I said previously, when Moses is legislating, sometimes he prophesies and sometimes sings, and the Prophets when they are prophesying sometimes issue commands, like *Wash yourselves, be clean. Cleanse your heart from wickedness, O Jerusalem,*²⁰ and sometimes recount history, as Daniel does the events surrounding Susanna²¹ and Isaiah does referring to Rabshakeh and Sennacherib.²² In this way the Book of Psalms, possessing the characteristic feature of the songs, itself chants those things in modulated voice that have been said in the other books in the form of detailed narrative, as already mentioned. And sometimes at least, it also legislates: *Cease from anger, and forsake wrath,*²³ and *Turn away from evil and do what is good; seek peace, and pursue it.*²⁴ And it narrates at times about the journeying of Israel, and prophesies concerning the Saviour, as was said previously.

10. Let there be such a common grace of the Spirit in all, and let it be found existing in each one, the same grace among all, whenever the need demands and the Spirit desires. The more and the less in this need do not differ, as each unstintingly accomplishes and completes its own service. But even so, the Book of Psalms thus has a certain grace of its own, and a distinctive exactitude of expression. For in addition to the other things in

which it enjoys an affinity and fellowship with the other books, it possesses, beyond that, this marvel of its own—namely, that it contains even the emotions of each soul, and it has the changes and rectifications of these delineated and regulated in itself. Therefore anyone who wishes boundlessly to receive and understand from it, so as to mould himself, it is written there. For in the other books one hears only what one must do and what one must not do. And one listens to the Prophets so as solely to have knowledge of the coming of the Saviour. One turns his attention to the histories, on the basis of which he can know the deeds of the kings and saints. But in the Book of Psalms, the one who hears, in addition to learning these things, also comprehends and is taught in it the emotions of the soul, and, consequently, on the basis of that which affects him and by which he is constrained, he also is enabled by this book to possess the image deriving from the words.²⁵ Therefore, through hearing, it teaches not only not to disregard passion, but also how one must heal passion through speaking and acting. Now there certainly are in the other books preventive words that forbid wickedness, but in this book is also prescribed how one must abstain.²⁶ Of such a sort is the commandment to repent—for to repent is to cease from sin. Herein is prescribed also how to repent and what one must say in the circumstances of repentance. Furthermore, the Apostle said, *Suffering produces endurance in the soul, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us.*²⁷ In the Psalms it is written and inscribed how one must bear sufferings, what one must say to one suffering afflictions, what to say after afflictions, how each person is tested, and what the words of those who hope in God are. Furthermore, there is a command to give thanks in all circumstances,²⁸ but the Psalms also teach what one must say when giving thanks. Then hearing from others that as many as wish to live a godly life will be persecuted,²⁹ from these we are taught how one must call out while fleeing, and what words must be offered to God while being persecuted and after being delivered subsequent to persecution. We are asked to bless the Lord, and to acknowledge him. But in the Psalms we are instructed how one must praise the Lord and by speaking what words we properly confess our faith in him. And in the case of each person one would find the divine hymns appointed for us and our emotions and equanimity.

11. There is also this astonishing thing in the Psalms. In the other books, those who read what the holy ones say, and what they might say

concerning certain people, are relating the things that were written about those earlier people. And likewise, those who listen consider themselves to be other than those about whom the passage speaks, so that they only come to the imitation of the deeds that are told to the extent that they marvel at them and desire to emulate them.³⁰ By contrast, however, he who takes up this book—the Psalter—goes through the prophecies about the Saviour, as is customary in the other Scriptures, with admiration and adoration, but the other psalms he recognises as being his own words. And the one who hears is deeply moved, as though he himself were speaking, and is affected by the words of the songs, as if they were his own songs. And for the sake of clarity of expression, do not hesitate, as the blessed Apostle says, to repeat the very things they say.³¹ Most words belong to the patriarchs, and were spoken as their own. And Moses used to speak and God answered, and both Elijah and Elisha, situated on Mount Carmel, would call on the Lord, and they would say: *As the Lord lives, before whom I stand today.*³² And the principal words of the holy Prophets are those concerning the Saviour. Thereafter a great number have to do with both the gentiles and Israel. Nevertheless no one would ever utter the words of the patriarchs as his own, nor would anyone dare to imitate and to say Moses' own words; those of Abraham about his slave and Ishmael, and the things concerning the great Isaac no one, even if the same need might perforce seize him, would boldly utter as his own. And if anyone should sympathise with those who suffer, and at some time should hold a desire for something better, he would never speak as Moses: *Reveal yourself to me!*³³ and again, *If you will forgive their sin, forgive it; and if you will not forgive, blot me out of your book which you have written.*³⁴ But neither would anyone, taking the books of the Prophets as his own words, blame or praise those doing things similar to these, whom the prophets blamed and praised. Nor would anyone imitate by uttering as if his own the saying, *As the Lord lives, before whom I stand today.* Indeed, it is clear that one who reads the books utters them not as his own words, but as the words of the saints and those who are signified by them. But contrariwise, remarkably, after the prophecies about the Saviour and the nations, he who recites the Psalms is uttering the rest as his own words, and each sings them as if they were written concerning him, and he accepts them and recites them not as if another were speaking, nor as if speaking about someone else. But he handles them as if he is speaking about himself. And the things spoken are such that he lifts them up to God as himself acting and speaking them from

himself. For not as in the case of the sayings of the patriarchs and Moses and the other Prophets will he be cautious of these things, but he who chants these will be especially confident in speaking what is written as if his own and about him. For the Psalms comprehend the one who observes the commandment as well as the one who transgresses, and the action of each. And it is necessary for everyone to be constrained by these, and either as a keeper of the law or as its transgressor, to speak the words that have been written about each.

12. And it seems to me that these words become like a mirror to the person singing them, so that he might perceive himself and the emotions of his soul, and thus affected, he might recite them. For in fact he who hears the one reading receives the song that is recited as being about him, and either, when he is convicted by his conscience,³⁵ being pierced, he will repent, or hearing of the hope that resides in God, and of the succour available to believers—how this kind of grace exists for him—he exults and begins to give thanks to God. Therefore, when someone sings the third psalm, recognising his own tribulations, he considers the words in the psalm to be his own. And then when someone sings the eleventh and sixteenth he considers how he is one making announcement in reference to his own confidence and prayer, and in the fiftieth, how it is speaking the proper words of his own repentance. When someone sings the fifty-third, the fifty-fifth, the fifty-sixth, and the one hundred and forty-first, he considers not how someone else is persecuted, but how he, being the one who suffers, is affected. And these words, as his own, he chants to the Lord. And so, on the whole, each psalm is both spoken and composed by the Spirit so that in these same words, as was said earlier, the stirrings of our souls might be grasped, and all of them be said as concerning us, and the same issue from us as our own words, for a remembrance of the emotions in us, and a chastening of our life. For what those who chant have said, these things also can be examples and standards for us.

13. Again, the same grace is from the Saviour, for when he became man for us he offered his own body in dying for our sake, in order that he might set all free from death. And desiring to show us his own heavenly and well-pleasing life, he provided its type in himself, to the end that some might no more easily be deceived by the enemy, having a pledge for protection—namely, the victory he won over the devil for our sake. For this reason,

indeed, he not only taught, but also accomplished what he taught, so that everyone might hear when he spoke, and seeing as in an image, receive from him the model for acting, hearing him say, *Learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart.*³⁶ A more perfect instruction in virtue one could not find than that which the Lord typified in himself. For whether the issue is forbearance of evil, or love for mankind, or goodness, or courage, or compassion, or pursuit of justice, one will discover all present in him, so that nothing is lacking for virtue to one who considers closely this human life of his. Cognisant of this, Paul said, *Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.*³⁷ Those legislators among the Greeks possess the grace as far as speaking goes, but the Lord, being true Lord of all and one concerned for all, performed righteous acts, and not only made laws but offered himself as a model for those who wish to know the power of acting. It was indeed for this reason that he made this resound in the Psalms before his sojourn in our midst, so that just as he provided the model of the earthly and heavenly man in his own person, so also from the Psalms he who wants to do so can learn the emotions and dispositions of the souls, finding in them also the therapy and correction suited for each emotion.

14. If the point needs to be put more forcefully, let us say that the entire Holy Scripture is a teacher of virtues and of the truths of faith, while the Book of Psalms possesses somehow the perfect image for the souls' course of life. For as one who comes into the presence of a king assumes a certain attitude, both of posture and expression, lest speaking differently he be thrown out as boorish, so also to the one who is running the race of virtue and wishes to know the life of the Saviour in the body the sacred book first calls to mind the emotions of the soul through the reading, and in this way represents the other things in succession, and teaches the readers by those words. In order that in that book one may observe closely this first of all, there are psalms that are said in narration, and those consisting of moral admonition, and those in prophecy, and those in prayer and those in confession. Those cast in the form of narrative are Psalms 18, 43, 48, 49, 72, 76, 88, 89, 106, 113, 126, and 136. Those in the form of prayer are 16, 67, 89, 101, 131, and 141. Those spoken in petition and in prayer and in entreaty are 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 15, 24, 27, 30, 34, 37, 42, 53, 54, 55, 56, 58, 59, 60, 63, 82, 85, 87, 137, 139, and 142. And that in the mode of appeal and thanksgiving is 138. Those that feature petition only are 3, 25, 68, 69, 70, 73, 78, 79, 108, 122, 129, and 130. Psalms 9, 74, 91, 104, 105, 106, 110, 117,

135, and 137 have the form of confession. Those having confession and narrative interwoven are 9, 74, 105, 106, 117, and 137. A psalm that has confession interwoven with narrative, along with praise, is 110. And Psalm 36 features exhortation. Those containing prophecy are 20, 21, 44, 46, and 75. In 109 there is announcement along with prophecy. The psalms that urge and prescribe are 28, 32, 80, 94, 95, 96, 97, 102, 103, and 113. Psalm 149 was spoken as exhortation combined with the singing of praise. Those expressing praise are 90, 112, 116, 134, 144, 145, 146, 148, and 150. Psalms 8, 9, 17, 33, 45, 62, 76, 84, 114, 115, 120, 121, 123, 125, 128, and 143 are songs of thanksgiving. Those announcing a promise of blessedness are 1, 31, 40, 118, and 127. Another demonstrative of holy readiness in song is Psalm 107. Psalm 80 is one that exhorts to courage. Those that lay charges against the impious and lawbreakers are 2, 13, 35, 51, and 52. And the fourth psalm has to do with invocation. There are also those that announce supplications to God, like 19 and 63. Those proclaiming words that boast in the Lord are 22, 26, 38, 39, 41, 61, 75, 83, 96, 98, and 151. Those that arouse a sense of shame are 57 and 81. And Psalms 47 and 64 voice the phrases of a hymn. Psalm 65 is one of exultation, and concerns resurrection. Another that speaks only exultant words is 99.

15. Therefore, since the arrangement of the Psalms is of such a kind, it is then possible for the readers (as I said before) to discover in each one the stirrings and the equanimity of the soul appropriate to them, just as they can discover in relation to each the type and teaching. And it can be learned, likewise, what one says to be able to gratify the Lord, and by what sort of expressions it is possible to make amends for himself and to return thanks to the Lord. All this is to prevent falling into impiety on the part of the one who speaks strictly according to such phrases. For not only because of deeds, but also because of idle speech, we are obliged to render an account to the Judge. And if you wish, moreover, to bless someone, you learn how you ought to do so, and in whose name, and what it is necessary to say, in Psalms 1, 31, 40, 111, 118, and 127. Should you wish to censure the treachery of the Jews against the Saviour, you have the second psalm. If you are being persecuted by your own people, and you have many who rise up against you, say the third psalm. And if, being afflicted in this manner, you begged the Lord for help, and having been heeded, you desire to give thanks, sing the fourth, as well as Psalms 74 and 114. And whenever, spying the evildoers who want to set a trap for you, you want the Lord to

hearken to your prayer, sing the fifth, rising early in the morning. And when you perceive a threatening from the Lord, should you see that you are disturbed for this reason, it is possible to say Psalms 6 and 37. And even if some people take counsel against you, as Achitophel did against David, and someone reports this to you, sing Psalm 7 and place your confidence in the God who defends you.

16. When you behold the Saviour's grace, which has been extended everywhere, and the human race, which has been rescued, if you wish to address the Lord, sing the eighth. And once more, if you wish to sing of the vintage, giving thanks to the Lord, you have the same Psalm 8, as well as the eighty-third. But in honour of conquest of the enemy and the preservation of creation, not boasting in yourself, but knowing the Son of God who accomplished this, recite the ninth psalm, which is spoken to him. Whenever someone seeks to provoke you excessively, hold your boldness in the Lord, and sing the tenth. And when you see the arrogance of the multitude and the evil that abounds, so that nothing is holy as far as men are concerned, flee to the Lord for refuge and say Psalm 11. But if the treachery that comes from your enemies becomes chronic, do not become neglectful, like one forgotten by God, but entreat the Lord, chanting the twelfth psalm. Should you hear people blaspheming against God's providence, do not share with them in their irreligion, but say Psalms 13 and 52, making your appeal to God. And then, if you wish to learn what sort of person the citizen of the kingdom of heaven is, chant Psalm 14.

17. Let us say you stand in need of a prayer because of those who have opposed you and encompass your soul; sing Psalms 16, 85, 87, and 140. Or you want to learn how Moses offered prayer—you have Psalm 89. You were preserved from your enemies, and you were delivered from your persecutors. Sing also Psalm 17. You marvel at the order of creation, and the grace of the providence in it, and the holy precepts of the Law. Sing the eighteenth and the twenty-third. When you see those who suffer tribulation, encourage them, praying and speaking the words in Psalm 19. Should you become aware that you are being shepherded and led in the right path by the Lord, sing Psalm 22, rejoicing in this. Again, let us suppose the enemies are all around you. Nevertheless, lifting your soul up to God, say Psalm 24, and he sees that your adversaries commit their wrongs to no avail. They abide still, possessing nothing other than bloody

hands, and seeking to wound and destroy you. Do not entrust to a man the judgment over them (for all things human are suspect), but counting God worthy to be judge (for he only is just), say the things in the twenty-fifth, thirty-fourth, and forty-second psalms. And if they savagely attack you, and the enemies become multitudinous, as rank upon rank, eyeing you with contempt, as if you have not yet been visited by grace—and on this account they wish to do battle—do not crouch in fear, but sing the twenty-sixth psalm. But since the nature of humankind is weak, should those who lay snares act shamelessly, call out to God in order that you may disregard them, reciting what is in Psalm 27. And if, in giving thanks, you wish to learn what it is necessary to offer to the Lord, while you think spiritually, chant the twenty-eighth. Further, when consecrating your house—that is, the soul that is being received by the Lord and the somatic house in which you dwell bodily—give thanks and say the twenty-ninth and the one hundred and twenty-sixth, which are among the gradual psalms.

18. When you see that you are despised and persecuted for the truth's sake by all your friends and relatives, do not give up concern either for them or for yourself. And if you see your acquaintances turning against you, do not be alarmed, but separate yourself from them and turn your mind to the future and sing Psalm 30. When you see those who are baptised and redeemed from their corrupt birth, and you are filled with wonder over God's love for mankind, before these people sing your praise in the thirty-first psalm. If you wish to sing in the company of many, gathering men who are righteous and erect in their living, recite also Psalm 32. When you encounter your foes, and wisely escape them and avoid their treachery, if you want to express gratitude, summoning gentle men, sing Psalm 33 in their presence. Should you spy the zeal for evil among those who transgress the Law, do not think that the evil is in their very nature, which is what the heretics assert.³⁸ But say Psalm 36 and you will see that they themselves are responsible for the sinning. If you witness worthless people committing numerous lawless acts and exalting themselves against humbler people, and you wish to exhort someone not to devote himself to their service, nor to emulate them—for they are quickly vanished—say the thirty-sixth psalm both to yourself and to the others.

19. Then you also, when you propose to attend to yourself, if you should see the foe attacking (for at that time he is especially roused against such people), and should you wish to fortify yourself for the contest against him, recite Psalm 38. And if, when the enemies set upon you, you persevere in the face of the trials, and you want to learn the advantage of endurance, sing Psalm 39. But when you see numerous people in need and poverty, and you wish to treat them mercifully, you are able, by saying Psalm 40, both to approve those who already act with compassion, and to urge others toward doing the same. Possessing, then, a great desire for God, if you should hear the adversaries chiding you, do not be disturbed, but knowing the imperishable fruit that comes from such yearning, cheer on your own soul by the hope placed in God. And in that hope supporting and mollifying the soul's sorrows in life, say the forty-first psalm. Wishing unceasingly to remember the kind acts of God accomplished for the fathers, and, concerning the exodus from Egypt and the time passed in the wilderness, how God is good, but the men are ungrateful, you have Psalms 43, 77, 88, 104, 105, 106, and 113. And flying to God and being kept safe from the tribulations that take place around you, if you want to thank God and to recount the philanthropy that has come to you, you have the forty-fifth.

20. But you sinned, and being ashamed, you repent and you ask to be shown mercy. You have in Psalm 50 the words of confession and repentance. And even if you suffered calumny from a wicked ruler, and you see the slanderer boasting, withdraw from that place and say also the things in the fifty-first. When you are being pursued and certain ones are perpetrating slander, hoping to deliver you up to justice, as the Ziphites and the alien tribes did in the case of David,³⁹ do not succumb to weariness, but being confident in the Lord and hymning him, recite the things in Psalms 53 and 55. And even if your pursuer overtakes you, and without knowing it enters the cave in which you are hiding,⁴⁰ you should not even so cower in fear, for you have in such a necessity the memorially inscribed⁴¹ words for encouragement found in Psalms 56 and 114. Should he who is plotting give the order for your house to be kept under surveillance, and you escape, express your gratitude to the Lord, inscribing it on your soul as on a monument—for it is a memorial to the fact that you were spared from destruction—and recite the verses in Psalm 58. And if the foes who afflict you hurl insults and the seeming friends, rising up, level accusations at you, and you are grieved in your meditation

for a while,⁴² nevertheless you also are able to be consoled, praising God and speaking the words of Psalm 54. Against those who posture and are outwardly boastful, say—for their humiliation—Psalm 57. But against those rushing savagely toward you, desiring to seize your soul, render your obedience to God, and take courage. For the more they rage, the more you are to submit yourself to the Lord, and say what is in Psalm 61. And if, when persecuted, you go out into the desert, do not be afraid, as though alone, but having God there and rising before dawn, sing the sixty-second psalm.⁴³ When the enemies frighten you away, never ceasing from their lying in ambush, and also searching everywhere for you, even if they are vast in number, do not give way, for when you sing Psalms 63, 64, 69, and 70, *their wounds* will be caused by *the weapons of the foolish children*.⁴⁴

21. Whenever you want to celebrate God in song, recite the things in Psalm 64. And if you wish to instruct some people about the resurrection, sing the words in Psalm 65. In chanting the sixty-sixth psalm, praise God while you beseech him to treat you mercifully. When you perceive the godless flourishing in peace and yet the righteous who suffer affliction living in complete dejection, say what is in the seventy-second psalm, lest you be caused to stumble and be shaken to the foundation. And whenever God's wrath is stirred against the people, you have for consolation in this circumstance the prudent words in Psalm 73. When you stand in need of confession of your sins, sing Psalms 9, 74, 91, 104, 105, 106, 107, 110, 117, 135, and 137. For the purpose of putting to shame the opinions of the Greeks and of the heretics, because the knowledge of God does not reside in a single one among them, but in the Catholic Church alone, you can, if you are so minded, sing and then recite the words in Psalm 75. But when the foes cut off your paths of escape, even if, being greatly oppressed, you are cast into confusion, do not despair, but pray. And when your cry is heard, thank God, reciting Psalm 76. Should the adversaries rush in and attack, and continuing their aggression, pollute the house of God and slay the saints and hurl their bodies to the winged creatures of the heaven, in order that you not lie cowering, recoiled on yourself, before their cruelty, you must sympathise with those who suffer, and make your appeal to God, reciting the seventy-eighth psalm.

22. Wishing to praise the Lord in a festival, when you summon together the servants of God, sing the things in Psalms 80 and 94. And again, when

the enemies are all gathered together from all points, and are both issuing threats against the house of God and forming a confederacy against true religion, lest you become despondent because of the magnitude of the crowd and its might, you possess as an anchor of hope the phrases in the eighty-second psalm. And seeing the house of God and his eternal tabernacles,⁴⁵ should you have zeal for these, as the Apostle did, say also the eighty-third psalm. After the wrath has abated and the captivity is ended, if you wish to give thanks, you have what is in Psalms 84 and 125 for the reciting. And if you want to know the excellence of the Church catholic in comparison with the convictions and actions of the schismatics, and to reprove the latter, you may say the words in the eighty-sixth. If you intend to make yourself bold and the others confident in right worship, since hope placed in God brings no shame, but instead makes the soul fearless, praise God with the expressions of Psalm 90. Do you wish to produce melody on the Sabbath? You have Psalm 91.

23. Do you wish to return thanks in the Lord's Day? You have the twenty-third. To chant your praises on the second day of the week? Recite Psalm 47.⁴⁶ Do you seek to glorify God in the day of preparation? You have the praise written in Psalm 92. For at that time when the crucifixion occurred, the house of God was built up, indeed, to hold off the enemies that assault it. On account of this victory it is fitting to sing to God, using the things said then in Psalm 92, and when captivity befalls you, should the house be destroyed and built once again, chant what is in Psalm 95.⁴⁷ When the land is secured by the warriors and thereafter remains tranquil, and the Lord reigns—if you wish to offer your praises for this, you have Psalm 96. Do you want to sing on the fourth day of the week? You have the ninety-third. For at that time the Lord began to exact vengeance, handing down the punishment unto death, and to declare himself in bold speech. When, therefore, while reading the Gospel, you see the Jews taking counsel in the fourth day of the week against the Lord, as you perceive him then speaking openly in punishment of the devil for our sake, chant the things bearing on this in Psalm 93. Seeing, again, the Lord's providence and his rulership in all things, and wishing to educate some people for trust and obedience in him, and prevailing upon them first to confess their faith, sing Psalm 99. And after coming to know his power for judging, and that the Lord makes a decision, tempering the judgment with mercy, should you wish to approach him, you have the words of Psalm 100 for this purpose.

24. Since our nature is feeble, when you come to be like a beggar because of life's distresses, if at some time you are exhausted and you wish to be encouraged, you have the one hundred and first psalm. And since it is appropriate for us to give thanks to God through and in all circumstances, when you wish to commend him, for this you must urge your own soul forward, and say Psalms 102 and 103. Do you want to give voice to your praise, and to know how and to whom it is necessary to express it, and what things it is fitting to say in the commendation? You have Psalms 104, 106, 134, 145, 146, 147, 148, and 150. Have you faith, as the Lord said, and when praying do you believe those things you are speaking? Say the one hundred and fifteenth. Do you perceive yourself as one who is progressing by deeds, so as to say, I forget *what lies behind* and I strain forward *to what lies ahead*?⁴⁸ For each advance you may recite the fifteen odes among the gradual psalms.

25. You were enthralled by foreign thoughts, and you perceived yourself as one being seduced, and in repentance determining to desist from this in the future (though remaining among those who seized you when you were in error) now you must sit still and utter your lament, as the people of Israel did then, reciting what is in Psalm 136. When you think of temptations as a testing for you, if you want to give thanks after the trials, you have the one hundred and thirty-eighth psalm. You might find yourself beleaguered once more by the enemies. Do you want to be rescued? Recite Psalm 139. Do you want to offer up supplications and prayers? Chant Psalms 5 and 142. Should a tyrannical foe rise up against the people and against you, as Goliath against David, do not tremble in fear. You too must have faith, like David, and say the things in Psalm 143. After marvelling at the kindnesses of God in all things and recalling his benevolence, which affects you and all the rest, if you wish to commend God on account of these, say David's words that he spoke himself in the one hundred and forty-fourth psalm. You want to address your praises to the Lord? For your recitation you have Psalms 92 and 97. If, though insignificant, you are selected for some sovereignty over your brothers, do not be exalted against them, but attributing the glory to God who chose you, chant Psalm 151, which is David's own. Let us say you want to sing those psalms that contain the alleluia to indicate how God has answered prayer⁴⁹—you may employ Psalms 104, 105, 106, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 117, 118, 134, 135, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, and 150.

26. When you desire, in private, to extol the events concerning the Saviour, you find such things in nearly every psalm, but you have particularly Psalms 44 and 109, which show forth his true generation from the Father and his incarnate appearance. There are Psalms 21 and 68, which foretell about the divine cross and what great treachery he submitted to on our behalf, and the number of things he suffered; and Psalms 2 and 108, which signal both the plotting and wickedness of the Jews and the betrayal by Judas Iscariot; and the twentieth, forty-ninth, and seventy-first, also making manifest his kingship, his power as judge and, again, his appearance in flesh for us, and also the calling of the gentiles. Psalm 15 demonstrates his resurrection from the dead. The twenty-third and forty-sixth announce his ascent into heaven, and while reading Psalms 92, 95, 97, and 98 you should be able to contemplate the benefits won for us by the Saviour through his sufferings.

27. Such, then, is the character of the assistance for mankind to be gained from the Book of Psalms, which contains psalms peculiar to itself, and has in the remainder more frequent prophecies concerning the bodily advent of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, as I said earlier. It is important not to pass over the question of why words of this kind are chanted with melodies and strains. For some of the simple among us, although they believe indeed that the phrases are divinely inspired, imagine, however, on account of the sweetness of sound, that also the psalms are rendered musically for the sake of the ear's delight. But this is not so. For Scripture did not seek out that which is pleasant and winning, but this also has been fashioned for the benefit of the soul, and for all number of reasons, but especially on account of two. First, because it is fitting for the Divine Scripture to praise God not in compressed speech alone, but also in the voice that is richly broadened. Things are said, then, in close sequence; such are all the contents of the Law and the Prophets and the histories, along with the New Testament. On the other hand, things are expressed more broadly; of this kind are the phrases of the psalms, odes, and songs. For thus will it be preserved that men love God with their whole strength and power. The second reason is that, just as harmony that unites flutes effects a single sound, so also, seeing that different movements appear in the soul—and in it is the power of reasoning, and eager appetite, and high-spirited passion,⁵⁰ from the motion of which comes also the activity of the parts of the body—the reason intends man

neither to be discordant in himself, nor to be at variance with himself. So the most excellent things derive from reasoning, while the most worthless derive from acting on the basis of desire, as is the case with Pilate when he says, *I find no crime in him*,⁵¹ and yet concurs in the purpose of the Jews. A person either craves the commonest things but is unable to do them, like the elders in the story of Susanna; or again he does not commit adultery, but he steals; or he forgoes stealing in favour of committing murder, or he does no murder, but commits blasphemy.

28. In order that some such confusion not occur in us, the reason intends the soul that possesses the mind of Christ, as the Apostle said,⁵² to use this as a leader, and by it both to be a master of its passions and to govern the body's members, so as to comply with reason. Thus, as in music there is a plectrum, so the man becoming himself a stringed instrument and devoting himself completely to the Spirit may obey in all his members and emotions, and serve the will of God. The harmonious reading of the Psalms is a figure and type of such undisturbed and calm equanimity of our thoughts. For just as we discover the ideas of the soul and communicate them through the words we put forth, so also the Lord, wishing the melody of the words to be a symbol of the spiritual harmony in a soul, has ordered that the odes be chanted tunefully, and the Psalms recited with song. The desire of the soul is this—to be beautifully disposed, as it is written: *Is anyone among you cheerful? Let him sing praise*.⁵³ In this way that which is disturbing and rough and disorderly in it is smoothed away, and that which causes grief is healed when we sing psalms. *Why are you very sad, O my soul, and why do you trouble me?*⁵⁴ That which causes stumbling will be discovered, as it says, *But my feet were almost overthrown*.⁵⁵ With regard to what he fears, he gains strength from hope by saying, *The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do to me*.⁵⁶

29. Those who do not recite the divine songs in this manner do not sing them wisely. They bring delight to themselves, but they incur blame, because *a hymn of praise is not suitable on the lips of a sinner*.⁵⁷ But when they chant in the way mentioned earlier, so that the melody of the phrases is brought forth from the soul's good order and from the concord with the Spirit, such people sing with the tongue, but singing also with the mind they greatly benefit not only themselves but even those willing to hear them. Blessed David, then, making music in this way for Saul, was himself

well pleasing to God, and he drove away from Saul the troubled and frenzied disposition, making his soul calm. The priests who sang thus summoned the souls of the people into tranquillity, and called them into unanimity with those who form the heavenly chorus. Therefore the Psalms are not recited with melodies because of a desire for pleasant sounds. Rather, this is a sure sign of the harmony of the soul's reflections. Indeed, the melodic reading is a symbol of the mind's well-ordered and undisturbed condition. Moreover, the praising of God in well-tuned cymbals and harp and ten-stringed instrument was again a figure and sign of the parts of the body coming into natural concord like harp strings, and of the thoughts of the soul becoming like cymbals, and then all of these being moved and living through the grand sound and through the command of the Spirit so that, as it is written, the man lives in the Spirit and mortifies the deeds of the body.⁵⁸ For thus beautifully singing praises, he brings rhythm to his soul and leads it, so to speak, from disproportion to proportion, with the result that, due to its steadfast nature, it is not frightened by something, but rather imagines positive things, even possessing a full desire for the future goods. And gaining its composure by the singing of the phrases, it becomes forgetful of the passions and, while rejoicing, sees in accordance with the mind of Christ, conceiving the most excellent thoughts.

30. Now, my son, it is necessary for each of the readers of that book to read it in its entirety, for truly the things in it are divinely inspired, but then to take benefits from these, as from the fruits of a garden on which he may cast his gaze when the need arises. For I believe that the whole of human existence, both the dispositions of the soul and the movements of the thoughts, have been measured out and encompassed in those very words of the Psalter. And nothing beyond these is found among men. For whether there was necessity of repentance or confession, or tribulation and trial befell us, or someone was persecuted, or, being plotted against, he was protected, or if, moreover, someone has become deeply sorrowful and disturbed and he suffers something of the sort that is described in the things just mentioned, and he either attends to himself as one who is advancing, being set free from his foe, or he wants to sing praises and give thanks to the Lord—for any such eventuality he has instruction in the divine Psalms. Let him therefore select the things said in them about each

of these circumstances, and reciting what has been written as concerning him, and being affected by the writings, lift them up to the Lord.

31. Do not let anyone amplify these words of the Psalter with the persuasive phrases of the profane, and do not let him attempt to recast or completely change the words. Rather let him recite and chant, without artifice, the things written just as they were spoken, in order for the holy men who supplied these, recognising that which is their own, to join you in your prayer, or, rather, so that even the Spirit who speaks in the saints, seeing words inspired by him in them, might render assistance to us. For as much better as the life of the saints is than that of other people, by so much also are their expressions superior to those we construct and, if one were to speak the truth, more powerful as well. For they greatly pleased God in these, and when saying them, as the Apostle put it, *they conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight, and women received their dead by resurrection.*⁵⁹

32. Therefore, reciting even now the same words, let each person be confident, for God will pay heed quickly to those who make supplications through these. Whether one is afflicted at the time he recites these things, he will regard as great the encouragement that is in them; or whether he is tested and persecuted while chanting thus, he will be shown forth as more worthy, and will be protected by the Lord, who watched over the one who originally said these things. In these he will overthrow the devil, and he will drive away his demons. By saying these things if he sinned, he will reprove himself and stop; but if he did not sin, he will see himself as one rejoicing. And he strains forward to *what lies ahead*,⁶⁰ and contending for the prize he will be strengthened when he sings in that way, and will not be shaken from the truth forever, but he will even bring to disgrace those who deceive and those who seize you, hoping to lead you into error. And of this man is not a guarantor, but the Divine Scripture itself. For God commanded Moses to write the great song⁶¹ and to teach it to the people, and he orders the one who is established as ruler to write Deuteronomy, to hold this in his hands, and to diligently obey its contents forever,⁶² since the words in it are sufficient both for recalling virtue to the mind and for bringing help to those who sincerely heed them. For instance, at the time Joshua entered

the land, he saw the battle array of the enemy and all the rulers of the Amorites amassed for war.⁶³ And confronted by the camps and swords he read Deuteronomy into all ears, calling the words of the Law to remembrance, and arming the people with them, and he prevailed over the foes. And King Josiah, when the book was discovered and was read in the hearing of all, was no longer afraid of the enemy.⁶⁴ And if at some time there was war in the land, the ark containing the tablets of Law went before them all, and provided sufficient help to them in the face of every army, unless someone was alongside its bearers, and sin and hypocrisy, which were prevalent beforehand, were in the people.⁶⁵ For theirs must be a disposition of faith and genuineness so that the Law may work in favour of the things sought through prayer.

33. The old man said, “Indeed, I have heard from wise men how long ago in Israel they drove demons away and turned aside the treacheries directed against them by merely reading the Scriptures.” For this reason he said those deserve judgment who abandon them, fashioning phrases meant to be persuasive in the pagan style, and naming themselves exorcists in the use of these. They indulge themselves too much in play, and they expose themselves to being mocked by those demons. How the Jews, the sons of Sceva, suffered when they attempted to exorcise in this manner!⁶⁶ When hearing these things issuing from such men, the demons began their sport with them, but they feared the words of the saints, and were not even able to endure them. For the Lord is in the phrases of the Scriptures, and since they cannot withstand him, they cry out, *I beseech you, do not torment me before the time.*⁶⁷ For seeing the Lord present, they were consumed. So Paul commanded the unclean spirits,⁶⁸ and likewise things demonic were subjected to the disciples.⁶⁹ And the hand of the Lord came over Elisha the prophet, and he prophesied about the waters to the three kings,⁷⁰ when he who chanted was singing in accordance with the Lord’s command. So also now, if someone is concerned for those who suffer, and he recites these things himself, he also will benefit the sufferer more, and will show his faith to be true and steadfast, with the result that God, seeing that, supplies perfect healing to those in need. Knowing this, the holy one said in the one hundred and eighteenth psalm: *I will meditate on your ordinances; I will not forget your words.*⁷¹ And again, *Your ordinances were my songs in the place of my sojourning.*⁷² For in those they were gaining salvation, saying, *Were it not that your law is my meditation, then I should have perished in*

*my affliction.*⁷³ It was for this reason also that Paul fortified his own disciple by these things, saying, *Practice these duties, devote yourself to them, so that your progress may become manifest.*⁷⁴ You too, practicing these things and reciting the Psalms intelligently in this way, are able to comprehend the meaning in each, being guided by the Spirit. And the kind of life the holy, God-bearing men possessed who spoke these things—this life you also shall imitate.

¹ In speaking of Marcellinus's *askēsis*, here translated “discipline,” Athanasius is probably referring not to “spiritual life” generally, but to monastic life in particular.

² 2 Tim. 3:16.

³ The Triteuch (or “three volumes”) consists of the books of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth.

⁴ Esdras = Ezra.

⁵ Ps. 113:1–2.

⁶ Ps. 104:26–31.

⁷ In the Septuagint, the superscription of Psalm 28 contains the words *exodiou skēnēs*.

⁸ Psalm 125 is one of those with the heading: *Odē tōn anabathmōn*.

⁹ Cf. Gen. 1:3ff.

¹⁰ Ps. 32:6.

¹¹ Two aspects of Gnostic Christian belief are ruled out in this sentence: (1) docetic Christology, which envisioned the Saviour in the guise of fleshly humanity while he remained supra-corporeal, and (2) the dissociation of Christ from the creation of the world, which in Gnostic circles was a work attributed to the Demuirge, a lesser being.

¹² The usual reading of Psalm 86:5 in the Septuagint yields a different meaning: *A man shall say, Sion is my mother; and such a man was born in her; and the Highest himself has founded her.*

¹³ Jn. 1:1, 2, 14.

¹⁴ Lk. 1:28.

¹⁵ Ps. 44:10.

¹⁶ Athanasius takes Isaiah's words not from the Septuagint, but from Mt. 8:17.

¹⁷ The Septuagint reads: *O Lord, you shall recompense them on my behalf.*

¹⁸ Hab. 3:1, which commences the poetry of the latter half of the book, reads: *Proseuchē Ambakoum tou prophetou meta ōdēs* (a prayer of the prophet Ambacum, with a song).

¹⁹ See 1 Cor. 12:4ff.

²⁰ Is. 1:16 and Jer. 4:14.

²¹ See Dan. 12.

²² See Is. 36–37.

²³ Ps. 36:8.

²⁴ Ps. 33:14.

²⁵ Athanasius suggests that hearing the Psalms produces a triple effect: One learns the history and prophecies available in other biblical books; beyond that, the Psalter cultivates the emotions, both by stirring and modulating them; hearing the Psalms consequently allows a conceptualization that is fuller than the initial understanding—a comprehension of the image produced by the phrases in a psalm that uniquely involves the hearer as the psalm’s speaker and actor. This last aspect is elaborated in chapters 11 and 12 of the letter.

²⁶ Reading *apechesthai* in place of the erroneous *upechesthai* in the Migne text.

²⁷ Rom. 5:3, 5. The phrase *tē psychē* is an addition by Athanasius.

²⁸ Cf. 1 Thess. 5:18.

²⁹ Cf. 2 Tim. 3:12.

³⁰ This passage in Athanasius’s letter contains a number of difficulties and grammatical obscurities. The essential point, however, is clear: In comparison with other books in Scripture, certain of the Psalms possess an immediacy that enables the reader to appropriate their words as his or her own.

³¹ Athanasius’s allusion is not altogether clear. See the similarly problematic phrase in Phil. 3:1, and also Rom. 12:11.

³² 3 Kings 17:1; 4 Kings 3:4 (EB: 1 and 2 Kings).

³³ Ex. 33:13.

³⁴ Ex. 32:32.

³⁵ For the phrase *elegchomenos hypo tou suneidotos*, see Philo *De Jos.* 48; *Spec. Leg.* 3, 54.

³⁶ Mt. 11:29.

³⁷ 1 Cor. 11:1.

³⁸ Athanasius’s remarks stand within a long and embattled tradition of defense of the free moral activity of rational beings. Against philosophers’

fatalist schemes that seemed to undermine the pursuit (and reward!) of virtue, Christian apologists stressed the importance of free choice (as in Justin, *Apol.* 43). It was in opposition to the supposed dogma of some Gnostic Christians that beings possessed predetermined “natures” that dictated the level of their spiritual capacity and of their behavior that Irenaeus (see, e.g., *Adv. Haer.* 1.1.11–12, 1.6.2–4), Origen (*De prin.* Preface [5], 1.5, 8; 2.8–11; 3.1), and others developed the insistent arguments concerning the moral autonomy of rational creatures. By the fourth century, the idea has come to be the theological, or anthropological, commonplace Athanasius here repeats. On the question of “natures” in Gnostic teaching, see F. Sagnard, *La Gnose valentinienne et le temoignage de Saint Irenee* (Paris, 1947), and the fine reappraisal of the issues involved in E. Pagels, *The Johannine Gospel in Gnostic Exegesis* (New York, 1973).

³⁹ 1 Sam. 23:13ff. (EB: 1 Sam. 23:13ff.).

⁴⁰ 1 Sam. 24:3.

⁴¹ Reading *chrēsimos* for *chrēsmous*. The term *stēlographia* (*memorial*) is in the superscription of Ps. 56.

⁴² *Adoleschia* has this sense in Ps. 54:2.

⁴³ The early rising is noted in the psalm’s opening line.

⁴⁴ Ps. 63:7.

⁴⁵ Athanasius, in *exp. Ps.* 113:7, signifies Christian churches by *ta aiōnia skēnōmata* (*eternal tabernacles*).

⁴⁶ The heading specifies that Psalm 47 is *deutera sabbatou*.

⁴⁷ Again, Athanasius paraphrases language found in the LXX heading of the psalm: *When the house was built after the captivity, a song of David*.

⁴⁸ Phil. 3:14.

⁴⁹ These psalms are headed by the *Allelouia*.

⁵⁰ For the parts of the soul, see Plato *Rep.* 4:439ff., and T. M. Robinson, *Plato’s Psychology* (Toronto, 1970). Also, Origen, *De Princ.* 3.4.1.

⁵¹ Jn. 18:38.

⁵² Cf. 1 Cor. 2:16.

⁵³ Jas. 5:13b.

⁵⁴ Ps. 41:6, 11.

⁵⁵ Ps. 72:2.

⁵⁶ Ps. 117:6.

⁵⁷ Ecclus. 15:9.

⁵⁸ Cf. Rom. 8:13.

⁵⁹ Heb. 11:33–36a.

⁶⁰ Phil. 3:16.

⁶¹ See Deut. 31:19ff.

⁶² Deut. 17:18–19.

⁶³ See Josh. 8:9ff.

⁶⁴ 4 Kings 22:8ff. (EB: 2 Kings 22:8).

⁶⁵ Josh. 3:2ff. and 1 Sam. 2–4 (EB: 1 Sam. 2–4).

⁶⁶ Acts 19:14–16.

⁶⁷ Lk. 8:28 and Mt. 8:29.

⁶⁸ Acts 16:18.

⁶⁹ Lk. 10:17.

⁷⁰ 4 Kings 3:15 (EB: 2 Kings 3:15).

⁷¹ Ps. 118:6.

⁷² Ps. 118:54.

⁷³ Ps. 118:92.

⁷⁴ 1 Tim. 4:15.