8 **150 Psalms** Suffering

Sun 1 Mar 2020, 8pm, St Francis Xavier Cathedral

Netherlands Chamber Choir Peter Dijkstra, Conductor Anthony Hunt, organ

Introduction by Tim Costello AO

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)	Psalm 22, Mein Gott, warum
Philibert Jambe de Fer (1515-1566)	Psalm 25, A toi, mon Dieu
Kate Moore (b. 1979)	Psalm 3 (world premiere)*
Jean Berger (1909-2002)	Psalm 145, The eyes of all wait upon Thee
Isaac Albéniz (1860-1909)	Psalm 6, Domine in furore tuo
Otto Nicolai (1810-1849)	Psalm 31
Elena Kats-Chernin (b. 1957)	Psalm 13 (world premiere)*
Claudin de Sermisy (1490-1562)	Psalm 10, Dont vient cela
Constantijn Huygens (1596-1687)	Psalm 35, Dilataverunt super me
Costanzo Porta (1529-1601)	Psalm 142, Voce mea
Albert Becker (1834-1899)	Psalm 53, Die Toren sprechen in ihrem Herzen
Hubert Parry (1848-1918)	Psalm 39, Lord, let me know mine end

Presenting Partner

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Netherlands Chamber Choir is supported by the Performing Arts Fund NL

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Tim Costello AO, speaker

Tim Costello AO is one of Australia's most respected community leaders and a sought after voice on social justice issues, leadership and ethics. He was Chief Executive of World Vision Australia for thirteen years, stepping down in 2016, and continues to place the challenges of global poverty on the national agenda. Tim is Senior Fellow for the Centre for Public Christianity.

Psalm 13. 'How long, My Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart?' And then skipping down to verse six 'But I have trusted in your steadfast love. My heart shall rejoice in your salvation. I will sing to the Lord, because he has dealt bountifully with me.'

How do we speak of suffering? Let me start with my first encounter with mass suffering and what I observed. Over the last 16 years I have been to so many disasters in my former work as CEO of World Vision Australia: disasters natural and human, that have played out in different religious contexts. In 2004 I responded within 24 hours to the Boxing Day tsunami. I first went to Sri Lanka because it was from there we first heard the extent of the tragedy which had unfolded and then later I went to Bandeh Aceh in Indonesia. I was struck then how much context determines the questions we ask about suffering.

Faith was the only resource people in the Tsunami devastated areas had. They had lost everything else. So their conversation was God give me the strength to get up tomorrow and start to bury my loved ones and then start rebuilding my home. Without God or gods there was no strength to bounce back. Without faith that God was with them then in their lives despair and passivity overwhelmed. But faith was the energy field that said your life still has meaning. Belief was the resource at hand for hope and action.

When I came back to Australia many people including journalists asked me a similar question but emphasized they asked me as a Reverend, "Where is God? How can you believe when your God who is meant to be all loving and all powerful allowed this tragedy?" It is a fair question. But I remember being struck by the contextual dissonance. The context back here at home was of self-sufficiency and affluence and the questioners posed the question philosophically not existentially. But that wasn't the question survivors I had met and worked alongside were asking out there in the devastated coastal areas of Asia.

All religions speak of suffering. For the Sri Lanka Buddhist population the reality of suffering is their first Noble truth. The second truth is that this suffering is caused by attachment to personal desires that can be overcome when attachment to desires ceases. This state is called enlightenment. This was not just theoretical as thousands of Sri Lankans packed their cars to immediately help. The Colombo –Galle 4 hour trip to get to the epicentre took me 18 hours because so many hit the road in their cars to respond. But those hours were also peppered with conversation about spiritual perspectives about ignorance and attachment.

When I left and went to Bandeh Aceh the most religiously conservative province in Indonesia and where the wave of destruction took over 100,000 lives I was struck again by the conversation. In the face of reconfigured coastline mosques were often the only buildings to survive the force of the wave. I learnt that in Islam suffering is a result of sin or a test. It tests the true belief and a true Muslim will remain faithful through the trials. It reveals the hidden self to God. Suffering opens up the soul and reveals it to God. Again I saw in Muslims it was faith in the face of pain and suffering that mobilised action and courage.

Finally my Tsunami relief work took me to India. Hinduism with 50 million gods is a deeply spiritual society so alien to our secular ways. Suffering is a result of free choices in a past life. This karma then determines ones caste and conditions in this life. Whilst it is a neat answer something in me rebels at thought that free choices and resultant karma in a past life mean social fatedness in this life. But there was no shortage again of galvanising to rebuild that emerged from that great reservoir of a faith resource.

Which brings me to my own faith. My faith is embedded in a Judeo-Christian tradition of the Psalms that acknowledge that suffering is real. It is not an illusion nor simply sinful choices. It has an arbitrary nature but this does not mean God has abandoned us. The Psalms that we will shortly hear sung tonight are ancient Israel's hymnal. The rawness of cry "How long o Lord?" is the cry from deep suffering. If we were to sing hymns today like that then our hymns would be about cancer, redundancy, divorce and depression. In offering this in song we own despair. Disenfranchised despair leads to hopelessness. Owned despair can take us through to resilience and hope.

I have friends who suffer from serious mental illnesses but evince a strong Christian faith. For them it is the consolation that God hears their cry, knows their desperation and will never abandon them nor judge them. Their worth is that they carry the image of God whatever the severity of psychotic episodes. In Christian faith the cross is central to this meaning making about God. As a symbol of power, torture and humiliation for slaves the son of God dies abandoned to the fate of the cross. So God is on the side of the most despised and vulnerable and weakness is more dignified than power and rule. The orientation is to believe in a God who suffers and so affirms my suffering is real.

But this God on the side of those who suffer is not the final word. Death, pain, and suffering is not the final word. As Verse one of our Psalm says, 'How long, My Lord, will you forget me?' is the cry of Jesus on that cross. "My God, my God why have vou forsaken me?" he cries out in his final hour. This suffering is existential. It results in a lonely death. But resurrection follows. It a resurrection where the nail prints are still in the hand of the crucified Christ, the spear wound in his side so suffering is not obliterated but speaks of a God who takes suffering and death into his own being and still remains God. This is the basis for hope that we are not abandoned.

We live in a culture which has shifted from a focus on the meaning of life, even accompanied by suffering, to a focus on the quality of life. But faith is fundamentally important as the Psalmist ends "that I have trusted in your steadfast love. My heart shall rejoice in your salvation. I will sing to the Lord". This is hope. Hope is different to just optimism because optimism is a preference or a desire about the future. Hope is a choice that I am not abandoned and will not fear the worst. Hope as a choice is different to just a desire. Despite the facts of suffering I choose to be hopeful. I will act as if a world carries meaning and I choose to be hopeful. For me, that comes not from a 'Pollvannerish' outlook, which does not look at the facts. Hope is steeped in experience of knowing one is loved and held - even in the midst of great difficulty. My lived experience bears it out.

Programme note by Oek de Jong

Gerard Swüste: 'The laments almost all follow the same pattern: lament prayer - expression of trust. The clearest example of this pattern is found in Psalm 13. People pour out their tale of woe about suffering injustice and about everything that has befallen them. These are the cries of powerless people. In the Psalms illness, need and pain are not seen as a punishment from God. These are just things that happen to people." Despite all the trust in the unchangeable changeability of life and in the power and justice of the good leaders, man experiences a great deal of despair and suffering. He feels abandoned (Mein Gott, warum hast Du mich verlassen? - Mendelssohn) or he is afraid of being abandoned (Herr, auf Dich traue ich -Nicolai).

This programme brings together two world premieres by **Kate Moore** and **Elena Kats-Chernin** with four psalm traditions: 1) According to the Church of Rome, with a polyphonic setting by **Constanzo Porta**; As Psalm 13 finishes: 'I choose to sing the Lord's praise for he has been good to me'. To that, I say Amen.

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847) Psalm 22, Mein Gott, warum

2. Mein Gott, mein Gott, warum hast du mich verlassen? Ich heule, aber meine Hülfe ist fern.

3. Mein Gott, des Tages rufe ich, so antwortest du nicht; und des Nachts schweige ich auch nicht.

4. Aber du bist heilig, der du wohnest unter dem Lobe Israels.

5. Unsre Väter hofften auf dich; und da sie hofften, halfest du ihnen aus.

6. Zu dir schrieen sie, und wurden errettet; sie hofften auf dich, und wurden nicht zu Schanden.

7. Ich aber bin ein Wurm, und kein Mensch, ein Spott der Leute, und Verachtung des Volks.

8. Alle, die mich sehen, spotten meiner, sperren das Maul auf, und schütteln den Kopf:

9. 'Er klage es dem Herrn, der helfe ihm aus, und errette ihn, hat er Lust zu ihm.'

15. Ich bin augeschüttet wie Wasser, alle meine Gebeine haben sich getrennt. Mein Herz ist in meinem Leibe wie zerschmolzenes Wachs.

16. Meine Kräfte sind vertrocknet wie eine Scherbe,

und meine Zunge klebt am Gaumen, und du legst mich in des Todes Staub.

17. Denn Hunde haben mich umgeben, und der Bösen Rotte

hat sich um mich gemacht;

sie haben meine Hände und Füsse durchgraben.

19. Sie teilen meine Kleider unter sich, und werfen das Loos um meine Gewand.

20. Aber du, Herr, sei nicht ferne. Meine Stärke, eile mir zu helfen.

21. Errette meine Seele vom Schwert, meine Einsame von den Hunden.

22. Hilf mir aus dem Rachen der Löwen, und errette mich von den Einhörnern.

23. Ich will deinen Namen predigen meinen Brüdern, ich will dich in der Gemeinde rühmen: 2. My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me? Why art Thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my groaning?

3. O my God, I cry in the daytime, but Thou hearest not; and in the night season I am not silent.

4. But Thou art holy, O Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.

5. Our fathers trusted in Thee; they trusted, and Thou didst deliver them.

6. They cried unto Thee and were delivered; they trusted in Thee and were not confounded.

7. But I am a worm and no man, a reproach of men and despised by the people.

8. All they that see me, laugh me to scorn; they shoot out their lip, they shake their head, saying,

9. 'He trusted in the Lord that He would deliver him; let Him deliver him, seeing He delighted in him!'

15. I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it has melted within me.

16. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and Thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

17. For dogs have surrounded me; the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet.

19. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

20. But be not far from me, O Lord; O My Strength, hasten Thee to help me!

21. Deliver my soul from the sword, my only one from the power of the dog.

22. Save me from the lion's mouth; for Thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.

23. I will declare Thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee.

2) According to Calvin's teaching, with Philibert Jambe de Fer and Claudin de Sermisy; 3) According to Luther, with Felix Mendelssohn, Otto Nicolai and Albert Becker; 4) According to the Anglican church, with Hubert Parry.

Constantijn Huygens' psalm settings occupy a special place in the genre. He was, after all, calvinist, but used Latin in his psalms; furthermore, his setting of Psalm 35 is not for choir, but is a reflective aria with organ accompaniment which, according to him—contrary to the traditional calvinists—could remedy the mediocre and often out of tune singing in the church. Finally, **Jean Berger** is an American composer of German-Jewish descent who has written many choral works, including Psalms.

Philibert Jambe de Fer (1515-1566) Psalm 25, A toi, mon Dieu

free after source text A toi, mon Dieu, mon coeur monte, ton amour est mon appui. Serai-je couvert de honte au gré de mes ennemis? Jamais ne sera deçu qui te prend pour espérance. Mais qu'ils soirent confondus, qui rompent ton alliance

Montre-moi, Seigneur, la route, guide moi dans la clarté. Ouvre a celui qui t'écoute un chemin de vérité. Je regarde a ton amour, au salut qu'en toi j'espere, je le verrai chaque jour, s'étendre sur cette terre.

Mon Dieu, dans ta grâca immense, qui dure éternellement, regarde en ta bienveilance et pardonne a ton enfant. Mets loin de ton souvenir, les péchés de ma jeunesse. Chaque jour, viens m'affermir, Seigneur, selon ta promesse!

Au plus humble tes secrets et, pour lui, tu es un maître qui te plais a l'enseigner. Ta parole est son appui, le bonheur son heritage et ses enfants comme lui, auront la terre en partage. To You, my God, I lift up my heart, Your love is my support. Must I be covered in shame in the sight of my enemies? He who trusts in You shall never be disappointed. But cause all who break the covenant with You to be confounded.

Living God, show me the way, lead me towards the light. Open up a path to wisdom to anyone who listens to You. I look forward to Your love, I have pinned my hopes on it. Every day I shall see it spreading over the earth.

My God, with Your immense goodness, which endures for ever, regard Your child benevolently, and forgive him his wrongdoing. Eradicate from Your memory the sins of my youth. Make me stronger every day, Living God, as You have promised.

You offer Your secrets to the most humble of men, and for him You are a teacher who loves giving him instruction. Your word affords him comfort, happiness awaits him. And both he and his children shall inherit the earth.

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Kate Moore (b. 1979) Psalm 3 (world premiere)

 A David psalm, when he fled from Absalom his son.
 LORD, how many are my foes, many, who rise up against me.
 Many who say of my life: "No rescue for him through God". (selah)
 And you LORD, a shield are for me, my glory, who lifts up my head.
 With my voice I cry out to the Lord, And he answers me from His holy mountain. (selah)
 I lie down and I sleep, I awake, for the lord has sustained me. 7. I fear not from myriads of troops that round about set against me.
8. Rise, LORD! Rescue me, my God.
For you strike all my foes on the cheek, (selah) the teeth of the wicked You smash.
9. Rescue is the LORD's!
On Your people Your blessing. (selah)

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A note from the composer

In setting the psalm, I found the music within the text, where the cantillation of the melody, sprang from the emotionality and deep resonance of the Psalm. Based upon the key of C minor, a dark key associated with suffering, the voices in canon grow from a solo mezzo voice, like branches of a tree riddled with knots. Distant portamenti between the voices, moving at different speeds, allude to the sirens of far-away emergency vehicles.

Psalm 3 is a harrowing and evocative plea from a place of despair where a broken leader prays for protection against his enemies. He knows that justice will be brought upon those named, whose evil ways cloud their higher judgement, because The Lord, creator, and protector of all can see all and will expose it. By calling out to The Lord, he upholds the faith that justice will be done, retribution against his enemies will be achieved and balance will once again be restored. In this, the divine king finds solace and comfort, finding peace within the storm.

Kate Moore



Kate Moore is an Internationally acclaimed composer. In 2017 she was awarded the prestigious Dutch composition award The Matthijs Vermeulen Prize. Her works are performed by Asko|Schönberg, Bang on a Can, Icebreaker, Slagwerk Den Haag, Ensemble Offspring, Australian String Quartet, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra and Groot Omroepkoor among others. In 2018/19 she was Zielsverwanten composer in residence at The Muziekgebouw aan't Ij and in 2018 composer in focus at November Music.

She has been a recipient of MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, Tanglewood and Civitella Ranieri fellowships. She holds a doctorate from The University of Sydney Conservatorium of Music, a masters from The Royal Conservatory of The Hague and an honours degree from The Australian National University, where she received the University Medal. In 2017 her oratorio *Sacred Environment* was premiered at The Holland Festival Proms in The Concertgebouw and in 2018 her Requiem *Lux Aeterna | VIVID* was premiered for the opening concert of November Music.

Jean Berger (1909-2002) Psalm 145, The eyes of all wait upon Thee

15. The eyes of all wait upon Thee; and Thou givest them their meat in due season.

16. Thou openest Thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing, of every living thing.

Isaac Albéniz (1860-1909) Psalm 6, Domine ne in furore tuo

2. Domine ne in furore tuo arguas me: neque in ira tua corripias me.

- 3. Miserere mei Domine, quoniam infirmus sum: sana me Domine, conturbata sunt ossa mea.
- 4. Et anima mea turbata est valde: sed tu Domine usquequo.
- 5a. Convertere Domine, et eripe animam: salvum me fac propter misericordiam tuam.
- 2. Domine ne in furore tuo arguas me.
- 5b. Requie aeternam dona ei Domine

2. O Lord, do not rebuke me in Your anger, and do not chastise me in Your wrath.

- 3. Be gracious to me, O Lord, because I languish; heal me, O Lord, because my bones are frightened.
- 4. And my soul is very frightened, and You, O Lord, how long?
- 5a. Return, O Lord, rescue my soul;
- 2. O Lord, do not rebuke me in Your anger,

5b. save me for the sake of Your loving-kindness.

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Otto Nicolai (1810-1849) Psalm 31

2. Herr, auf dich traue ich, laß mich nimmermehr zu Schanden werden; errette mich durch deine Gerechtigkeit!

 Denn du bist mein Fels und meine Burg, und um deines Namens willen wollest du mich leiten und führen.

6. In deine Hände befehle ich meinen Geist; du hast mich erlöset, Herr, du treuer Gott.

7. Ich hasse, die da halten auf lose Ehre; ich hoffe aber auf den Herrn.

8. Ich freue mich und bin fröhlich über deine Güte,

daß du mein Elend ansiehest und erkennst meine Seele in der Not.

10. Herr, sei mir gnädig, denn mir ist angst; meine Gestalt ist verfallen vor Trauern, dazu meine Seele und mein Leib.

14. Denn viele schelten mich übel, dass jedermann sich vor mir scheuet, sie ratschlagen miteinander über mich und denken, mir das Leben zu nehmen.

15. Ich aber, Herr, hoffe auf dich und spreche: Du bist mein Gott!

16. Meine Zeit steht in deinen Händen. Errette mich von der Hand meiner Feinde und von denen, die mich verfolgen.

17. Laß leuchten dein Antlitz über deinem Knecht; hilf mir durch deine Güte!

22. Gelobet sei der Herr, daß er hat eine wunderbare Güte mir bewiesen in einer festen Stadt.

25. Seid getrost und zaget nicht, alle, die ihr des Herrn harret!

2. In Thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed; deliver me in Thy righteousness.

4. For Thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for the sake of Thy name, lead me and guide me.

6. Into Thine hand I commit my spirit; Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.

7. I have hated them that have regard for lying vanities;

but I trust in the Lord.

8. I will be glad and rejoice in Thy mercy, for Thou hast considered my trouble. Thou hast known my soul in adversities,

10. have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am in trouble; mine eye is consumed with grief, yea, my soul and my body?

14. For I have heard the slander of many; fear was on every side; while they took counsel together against me, they schemed to take away my life.

15. But I have trusted in Thee, O Lord; I said, 'Thou art my God.'

16. My times are in Thy hand; deliver me from the hand of mine enemies and from them that persecute me.

17. Make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant; save me for thy mercies' sake.

22. Blessed be the Lord, for He hath shown me His marvelous kindness in a stronghold city!

25. Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord.

Elena Kats-Chernin (b. 1957) Psalm 13 (world premiere)

Free after Robert Alter's translation of Psalm 13:

How long, O Lord? How long will you forget me? How long will you hide your face from me? How long shall the sorrow fill my heart, All day, all week, a year, or more that I can bear to wait How long will darkness loom over me. Regard, answer me, my Lord, my God. light up my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death. Lord, light up my eyes, my heart, all day, all week, a year around, wait for your love abound, how long will you elude me. But in your kindness I do trust, my heart exults in your rescue. Let me sing to the Lord, for he requited me. He did, he loved me.

(Text: from *The Book of Psalms* translated by Robert Alter. Copyright © 2007 by Robert Alter. Used by permission of George Borchardt, Inc., on behalf of the translator.)

A note from the composer

While composing the setting of Psalm 13 for the renowned Netherlands Chamber Choir, my main aim was to find a flavour to the music that would distill the meaning of the text. The more I read and re-read the words (starting with *How long, o Lord, will you forget me?*), the more it felt like quite a desolate situation of someone feeling abandoned, sometimes remote and resigned and sometimes quite desperate, dramatic and pleading. After a while certain patterns, rhythms and shapes of the vocal writing started to take flight. I feel that the whole piece carries a reflection of the memory of love.

Elena Kats-Chernin AO



Elena Kats-Chernin AO is an Australian composer based in Sydney. She has written works in nearly every genre, and has collaborated with some of the country's leading arts organisations on everything from chamber music to dance works, opera and silent film. Her music was featured at the opening ceremonies of both the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games and the 2003 Rugby World Cup, and recent albums of her compositions have hit #1 on the ARIA Core Classical charts.

Most recent opera premieres are *Whiteley* for Opera Australia (shortlisted in International Opera Awards 2020), *Jim Knopf* for Komische Oper and *Die Geschichte von Valemon* for Philharmonie Luxembourg.

Photo: Steven Godbee

Claudin de Sermisy (1490-1562) Psalm 10, Dont vient cela

1. Dont vient cela, Seigneur, je vous supplie, que loin de nous te tiens, les yeux couvers?

2. Te caches tu, pour nous mettre en oublie? Mesmes au temps, qui est dur, et divers?

3. Par leur orgueil sont ardants les pervers q tourmenter l'humble, qui peu se prise: fais que sur eux tombe leur entreprise. 1. How come, o Lord, I beg Thee, that You hide Your eyes from me?

2. You hide yourself, You forget us? Where are You in times of trouble?

3. Evil people radiate conceit and the oppressed man is sick with misery.May they become ensnared in their own plans.

Constantijn Huygens (1596-1687) Psalm 35, Dilataverunt super me

Sung by Mónica Monteiro

21. Dilataverunt super me os suum; dixerunt: euge, euge, viderunt oculi nostril.22. Vidisti, Domine, ne sileas; Domine ne discedas a me. 21. Yea, they opened their mouths wide against me and said, 'Aha, aha! Our eyes have seen it.'22. This Thou hast seen, O Lord; keep not silence; O Lord, be not far from me.



Costanzo Porta (1529-1601) Psalm 142, Voce mea

2. Voce mea ad Dominum clamavi, voce mea ad Dominum deprecatus sum.

 Effundo in conspectu ejus orationem meam, et tribulationem meam ante ipsum pronuntio.
 28:2 Exaudi, Domine, vocem deprecationis meae dum oro ad te. 2. I cried unto the Lord with my voice; with my voice unto the Lord did I make my supplication.

3. I poured out my complaint before Him; I laid before Him my trouble.

28:2 Hear the voice of my supplications when I cry unto Thee.

Albert Becker (1834-1899) Psalm 53, Die Toren sprechen in ihrem Herzen

 Die Toren sprechen in ihrem Herzen: es ist kein Gott.
 Sie taugen nichts und sind ein Greuel mit ihrem Wesen; da ist keiner, der Gutes tut.

3. Gott schauet vom Himmel auf der Menschen Kinder, daß er sehe, ob jemand klug sei und nach Gott frage.

4. Aber sie sind alle abgewichen und allesamt untüchtig; da ist keiner, der Gutes tue, auch nicht einer.

5. Will denn der Übeltäter keiner das merken, die mein Volk fressen, daß sie sich nähren? Aber den Herrn rufen sie nicht an.

6. Da fürchten sie sich aber, wo nichts zu fürchten ist; denn Gott zerstreut die Gebeine derer, die dich belagern. Du machst sie zu Schanden; denn Gott verschmäht sie.

7. Ach daß Hilfe aus Zion über Israel käme und der Herr sein gefangen Volk erlösete; So würde Jakob gröhlich sein und Israel sich freuen. 2. The fool hath said in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt and have done abominable iniquity; there is none that doeth good.

3. God looked down from heaven upon the children of men to see if there were any that understood, that had sought God.

4. Every one of them has turned back; they have altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

5. Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge those who eat up my people as they eat bread? They have not called upon God.

6. There they were in great fear, where no fear was; for God hath scattered the bones of him that encampeth against Thee; Thou hast put them to shame, because God hath despised them.

7. O that the salvation of Israel might come out of Zion! When God bringeth back His aptive people, Jacob shall rejoice and Israel shall be glad. 5. Lord, let me know mine end and the number of my days, that I may be certified how long I have to live.

6. Thou hast made my days as it were a span long; and mine age is as nothing in respect of Thee, and verily, ev'ry man living is altogether vanity.

7. For man walketh in a vain shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain, he heapeth up riches and cannot tell who shall gather them.

8. And now, Lord, what is my hope? Truly my hope is even in Thee.

9. Deliver me from all mine offences, and make me not a rebuke to the foolish.

10. I became dumb and opened not my mouth, for it was Thy doing.

11. Take Thy plague away from me, I am even consumed by means of Thy heavy hand.

12. When Thou with rebukes does chasten man for sin, Thou makest his beauty to consume away, like as it were a moth fretting a garment; every man therefore is but vanity.

13. Hear my prayer, O Lord, and with Thine ears consider my calling, hold not Thy peace at my tears! For I am a stranger with Thee and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.

14. O spare me a little, that I may recover my strength before I go hence and be no more seen.