

Psalm 42-50 choral reading

CHARACTERS:

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes/page

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 42-50 (HCSB)

Psalm 42 by the Sons of Korah.

2 Chronicles 20:19 Then the Levites from the sons of the Kohathites and the Korahites stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel shouting with a loud voice.

CHARACTERS: David, All (sons of Korah), Antagonist

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 42 (HCSB)

DAVID: *As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God.*

ALL: *My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.*

DAVID: *When can I go and meet with God?*

ALL: *My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me all day long,*

ANTAGONIST: *(sneering)* *Where is your God?*

ALL: *These things I remember as I pour out my soul:*

DAVID: *how I used to go to the house of God under the protection of the Mighty One*

ALL: *with shouts of joy and praise among the festive throng.*

DAVID: *Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me?*

ALL: *Put your hope in God,*

DAVID: *for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.*

ALL: *Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls;*

DAVID: *all your waves and breakers have swept over me.*

ALL: *By day, the Lord directs his love,*

DAVID: *at night his song is with me— a prayer to the God of my life.*

ALL: *I say to God my Rock,*

DAVID: *Why have you forgotten me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?*

ALL: *My bones suffer mortal agony as my foes taunt me, saying to me all day long,*

ANTAGONIST: *(sneering)* *Where is your God?*

DAVID: *Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me?*

ALL: *Put your hope in God,*

DAVID: *for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.*

Psalm 43

CHARACTERS:

David, All

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 43 (HCSB)

DAVID: Vindicate me, my God, and plead my cause against an unfaithful nation.

ALL: Rescue me from those who are deceitful and wicked.

DAVID: You are God my stronghold. Why have you rejected me?

ALL: Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?

DAVID: **Send me your light and your faithful care,****ALL: let them lead me;****DAVID: let them bring me to your holy mountain,****ALL: to the place where you dwell.**

DAVID: Then I will go to the altar of God, to God, my joy and my delight.

ALL: I will praise you with the lyre, O God, my God.

DAVID: Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me?

ALL: Put your hope in God,

DAVID: for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

Psalm 44 by the Sons of Korah.

CHARACTERS: David, All (sons of Korah)

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 44 (HCSB)

DAVID: We have heard it with our ears, O God;

ALL: our ancestors have told us what you did in their days,

DAVID: in days long ago.

ALL: With your hand you drove out the nations and planted our ancestors;

DAVID: you crushed the peoples and made our ancestors flourish.

ALL: It was not by their sword that they won the land,

DAVID: nor did their arm bring them victory;

ALL: it was your right hand, your arm,

DAVID: and the light of your face, for you loved them.

ALL: You are my King and my God, who decrees victories for Jacob.

DAVID: Through you, we push back our enemies;

ALL: Through your name, we trample our foes.

DAVID: **I put no trust in my bow; my sword does not bring me victory;**

ALL: but you give us victory over our enemies,

DAVID: you put our adversaries to shame.

ALL: In God, we make our boast all day long,

DAVID: and we will praise your name forever.

ALL: But now you have rejected and humbled us;

DAVID: you no longer go out with our armies.

ALL: You made us retreat before the enemy,

DAVID: and our adversaries have plundered us.

ALL: You gave us up to be devoured like sheep and have scattered us among the nations.

DAVID: You sold your people for a pittance, gaining nothing from their sale.

ALL: You have made us a reproach to our neighbors,

DAVID: the scorn and derision of those around us.

ALL: You have made us a byword among the nations; the peoples shake their heads at us.

DAVID: I live in disgrace all day long, and my face is covered with shame at the taunts of those who reproach and revile me,

ALL: because of the enemy, who is bent on revenge.

DAVID: All this came upon us, though we had not forgotten you;

ALL: we had not been false to your covenant.

DAVID: Our hearts had not turned back;

ALL: our feet had not strayed from your path.

DAVID: But you crushed us and made us a haunt for jackals;

ALL: you covered us over with deep darkness.

DAVID: If we had forgotten the name of our God or spread out our hands to a foreign god,

ALL: would not God have discovered it, since he knows the secrets of the heart?

DAVID: Yet for your sake, we face death all day long;

ALL: we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.

DAVID: Awake, Lord! Why do you sleep?

ALL: Rouse yourself! Do not reject us forever.

DAVID: Why do you hide your face and forget our misery and oppression?

ALL: We are brought down to the dust; our bodies cling to the ground.

DAVID: Rise up and help us;

ALL: rescue us because of your unfailing love.

Psalm 45 by the Sons of Korah, A wedding song.

CHARACTERS: David, All (sons of Korah), All women

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 45 (HCSB)

KORAH: My heart is stirred by a noble theme as I recite my verses for the king;

ALL: my tongue is the pen of a skillful writer.

KORAH: You are the most excellent of men

ALL: and your lips have been anointed with grace, since God has blessed you forever.

KORAH: Gird your sword on your side, you mighty one;

ALL: clothe yourself with splendor and majesty.

KORAH: In your majesty ride forth victoriously in the cause of truth, humility and justice;

ALL: let your right hand achieve awesome deeds.

KORAH: Let your sharp arrows pierce the hearts of the king's enemies;

ALL: let the nations fall beneath your feet.

KORAH: **Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever;**

ALL: a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom.

KORAH: You love righteousness and hate wickedness;

ALL: therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.

KORAH: All your robes are fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia;

ALL: from palaces adorned with ivory the music of the strings makes you glad.

KORAH: Daughters of kings are among your honored women;

ALL: at your right hand is the royal bride in gold of Ophir.

ALL WOMEN: Listen, daughter, and pay careful attention:

ALL: Forget your people and your father's house.

ALL WOMEN: Let the king be enthralled by your beauty;

ALL: honor him, for he is your lord.

KORAH: The city of Tyre will come with a gift,

ALL: people of wealth will seek your favor.

ALL WOMEN: All glorious is the princess within her chamber;

ALL: her gown is interwoven with gold.

KORAH: In embroidered garments she is led to the king;

ALL WOMEN: her virgin companions follow her— those brought to be with her.

KORAH: Led in with joy and gladness, they enter the palace of the king.

ALL WOMEN: Your sons will take the place of your fathers;

ALL: you will make them princes throughout the land.

KORAH: I will perpetuate your memory through all generations;

ALL: therefore the nations will praise you for ever and ever.

Psalm 46 by the Sons of Korah

CHARACTERS: David, Korah, All (sons of Korah), Voice of God

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 46 (HCSB)

DAVID: God is our refuge and strength,

KORAH: an ever-present help in trouble.

ALL Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,

DAVID: though its waters roar and foam

ALL: and the mountains quake with their surging.

DAVID: There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,

ALL: the holy place where the Most High dwells.

KORAH: God is within her, she will not fall;

ALL: God will help her at break of day.

DAVID: Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall;

ALL: he lifts his voice, the earth melts.

KORAH: The Lord Almighty is with us;

ALL: the God of Jacob is our fortress.

DAVID: Come and see what the Lord has done,

ALL: the desolations he has brought on the earth.

KORAH: He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth.

ALL: He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;

KORAH: he burns the shields with fire. He says,

VOICE of GOD: Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.

DAVID: The Lord Almighty is with us;

ALL: the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Psalm 47 by the Sons of Korah

CHARACTERS: David, All (sons of Korah)

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 47 (HCSB)

DAVID: Clap your hands, all you nations;

ALL: shout to God with cries of joy.

DAVID: **For the Lord Most High is awesome, the great King over all the earth.**

ALL: He subdued nations under us, peoples under our feet.

DAVID: He chose our inheritance for us, the pride of Jacob, whom he loved.

ALL: God has ascended amid shouts of joy, the Lord amid the sounding of trumpets.

DAVID: **Sing praises to God, sing praises;**

ALL: **sing praises to our King, sing praises.**

DAVID: **For God is the King of all the earth, sing to him a psalm of praise.**

ALL: **God reigns over the nations; God is seated on his holy throne.**

DAVID: The nobles of the nations assemble as the people of the God of Abraham,

ALL: **for the kings of the earth belong to God; he is greatly exalted.**

Psalm 48 by the Sons of Korah

CHARACTERS: David, All (sons of Korah)

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 48 (HCSB)

DAVID: Great is the Lord, and most worthy of praise

ALL: in the city of our God, his holy mountain.

DAVID: God is in her citadels;

ALL: he has shown himself to be our fortress.

DAVID: As we have heard, so we have seen

ALL: God makes us secure forever.

DAVID: Within your temple, O God, we meditate on your unfailing love.

ALL: **Like your name, O God, your praise reaches to the ends of the earth;**

DAVID: your right hand is filled with righteousness.

ALL: **God is our God for ever and ever;**

DAVID: **he will be our guide even to the end.**

Psalm 49 by the Sons of Korah

CHARACTERS: David, Korah, All (sons of Korah)

RUN TIME: 2 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 49 (HCSB)

DAVID: Hear this, all you peoples;

ALL: listen, all who live in this world,

KORAH: both low and high,

ALL: rich and poor alike:

DAVID: My mouth will speak words of wisdom;

ALL: the meditation of my heart will give you understanding.

KORAH: I will turn my ear to a proverb;

ALL: With the harp, I will expound my riddle:

DAVID: Why should I fear when evil days come, when wicked deceivers surround me—

ALL: those who trust in their wealth and boast of their great riches?

KORAH: No one can redeem the life of another or give to God a ransom for them—

ALL: the ransom for a life is costly, no payment is ever enough—

DAVID: so that they should live on forever and not see decay.

ALL: For all can see that the wise die,

KORAH: that the foolish and the senseless also perish,

ALL: leaving their wealth to others.

DAVID: Their tombs will remain their houses forever,

ALL: their dwellings for endless generations,

KORAH: though they had named lands after themselves.

DAVID: **People, despite their wealth, do not endure;**

ALL: they are like the beasts that perish.

KORAH: This is the fate of those who trust in themselves,

ALL: and of their followers, who approve their sayings.

DAVID: They are like sheep and are destined to die;

KORAH: death will be their shepherd

ALL: (aside) but the upright will prevail over them in the morning.

DAVID: The forms of those who trust in themselves will decay in the grave,

ALL: far from their princely mansions.

KORAH: But God will redeem me from the realm of the dead;

ALL: he will surely take me to himself.

DAVID: Do not be overawed when others grow rich,

ALL: when the splendor of their houses increases;

KORAH: for they will take nothing with them when they die,

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ALL: their splendor will not descend with them.

DAVID: Though while they live they count themselves blessed—

ALL: and people praise you when you prosper—

KORAH: they will join those who have gone before them,

ALL: who will never again see the light of life.

DAVID: People who have wealth but lack understanding

ALL: are like the beasts that perish.

Psalm 50 by Asaph.

CHARACTERS: David, Asaph, All, Voice of God

RUN TIME: 2 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 50 (HCSB)

ASAPH: **The Mighty One, God, the Lord, speaks and summons the earth**

ALL: from the rising of the sun to where it sets.

ASAPH: From Zion, perfect in beauty, God shines forth.

ALL: Our God comes and will not be silent;

ASAPH: a fire devours before him,

ALL: and around him, a tempest rages.

ASAPH: He summons the heavens above,

ALL: and the earth, that he may judge his people:

VOICE of GOD: Gather to me this consecrated people, who made a covenant with me by sacrifice.

ASAPH: **The heavens proclaim his righteousness, for he is a God of justice.**

VOICE OF GOD: Listen, my people, and I will speak; I will testify against you, Israel: I am God, your God.

ASAPH: He brings no charges against us concerning our sacrifices

ALL: or concerning our burnt offerings, which are ever before Him.

VOICE OF GOD: **I have no need of a bull from your stall or of goats from your pens, for every animal of the forest is mine,**

ALL: and the cattle on a thousand hills.

VOICE OF GOD: **I know every bird in the mountains,**

ALL: and the insects in the fields are his.

VOICE OF GOD: **If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world is mine,**

ALL: and all that is in it.

VOICE OF GOD: Do I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats?

ALL: Sacrifice thank offerings to God; fulfill your vows to the Most High,

VOICE OF GOD: **Call on me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me.**

ASAPH: But to the wicked person, God says:

VOICE OF GOD: What right have you to recite my laws or take my covenant on your lips? You hate my instruction and cast my words behind you.

ALL: When you see a thief, you join with him; you throw in your lot with adulterers.

ASAPH: **You use your mouth for evil and harness your tongue to deceit.**

ALL: You sit and testify against your brother and slander your own mother's son.

VOICE OF GOD: **When you did these things and I kept silent, you thought I was exactly like you. But I now arraign you**

and set my accusations before you.

ASAPH: Consider this, you who forget God,

VOICE OF GOD: or I will tear you to pieces, with no one to rescue you:

ALL: Those who sacrifice thank offerings honor God

VOICE OF GOD: and to the blameless, I will show my salvation.