

COMMEMORATIVE COMPETITION: PINDAR'S NEMEAN 5

1) SIMONIDES (a fragment on the dead at Thermopylae)

Τῶν ἐν Θερμοπύλαις θανόντων  
εὐκλεῆς μὲν ἄ τύχα, καλὸς δ' ὁ πότμος,  
βωμὸς δ' ὁ τάφος, πρὸ γόν δὲ μνᾶσις, ὁ δ'  
οἶκτος ἔπαινος.  
ἐντάφιον δὲ τοιοῦτον εὐρῶς  
οὐθ' ὁ πανδαμάτωρ ἀμαυρῶσει χρόνος.  
ἀνδρῶν ἀγαθῶν ὅδε σηκὸς οἰκέταν εὐδοξίαν  
Ἑλλάδος εἶλετο. μαρτυρεῖ δὲ καὶ Λεωνίδα,  
Σπάρτας βασιλεύς, ἀρετᾶς μέγαν λελοιπῶς  
Κόσμον ἀέναόν τε κλέος.

5

Of those who died at Thermopylae: Well-famed is their fate, beautiful their lot. Their tomb is an altar, for lamentations they have remembrance, and groaning is now praise. Such a shroud enwraps them that neither a stain nor all-conquering time will darken them. This shrine of worthy men has the praise of Greece as its attendant. Leonidas, the Spartan king, also bears witness, leaving behind a great ornament of victorious excellence and an ever-flowing fame.\*

2) MIDAS EPIGRAM

Χαλκῆ παρθένος εἰμί, Μίδα δ' ἐπὶ σήματι κεῖμαι.  
ἔστ' ἄω ὕδωρ τε νάη καὶ δένδρεα μακρὰ τεθήλη,  
ἠελίος τ' ἀνιῶν λάμπη, λαμπρὰ τε σελήνη,  
[καὶ ποταμοὶ γε ῥέωσιν, ἀνακλύζη δὲ θάλασσα,]  
αὐτοῦ τῆδε μένουσα πολυκλαύτῳ ἐπὶ τύμβῳ,  
ἀγγελέω παριοῦσι, Μίδα δὲ ὅτι τῆδε τέθαπται.

5

I am a bronze maiden, and I rest upon Midas' tomb. As long as water will flow and tall trees blossom, as long as the sun rises and shines and also the moon shines, and the rivers flow and the sea ebbs and flows, as I remain at this very spot upon this much-wept tomb, I shall proclaim to all passing by that Midas is buried here.

3) SIMONIDES 581 PMG

Τίς κεν αἰωήσειε νόῳ πίσυνος Λίνδου ωαέταν  
Κλεόβουλον  
ἀεναίοις ποταμοῖς ἀνθεσί τ' εἰαρινοῖς  
ἀελίου τε φλογὶ χρυσέας τε σελάνας  
καὶ θαλασσαῖασι δίνης ἀντιθέντα μένος στάλας;  
ἅπαντα γὰρ ἔστι θεῶν ἦσσω - λίθον δὲ  
καὶ βρότεοι παλάμαι θραύοντι - μωροῦ φωτὸς ἄδε  
βουλά.

5

Who in his right mind would praise Kleoboulos, the resident of Lindus, who sets beside ever-flowing rivers and spring flowers, and the flame of the sun and of the golden moon, and the eddies of the deep the power of a stele? For all things are weaker than the gods—and a stone even mortal hands are able to crush into pieces; this is the work of a fool.

4) NEMEAN 5.1-5

οὐκ ἀνδριαντοποιός εἰμ', ὥστ' ἐλινύσοντα ἐργάζεσθαι  
ἀγάλματ' ἐπ' αὐτᾶς βαθμίδος  
ἔσταότ': ἄλλ' ἐπὶ πάσας ὀλκάδος ἔν τ' ἀκάτῳ,  
γλυκεῖ' ἀοιδά,  
στεῖχ' ἀπ' Αἰγίνας, διαγγέλλοισ', ὅτι  
Λάμπωνος υἱὸς Πυθέας εὐρυσθενῆς  
νίκη Νεμείοις παγκρατίου στέφανον

5

I am no sculptor, fashioning motionless statues to stand on the same pedestals. But go, sweet song, on every craft and boat leaving Aegina, announcing that Pytheas, the mighty son of Lampon, won the crown in the pankration at the Nemean games.

## 5) NEMEAN 5.14-18

αιδέομαι μέγα εἰπεῖν ἐν δίκῃ τε μὴ κεκινδυνευμένον,  
 πῶς δὴ λίπον εὐκλέα νᾶσον, καὶ τίς ἄνδρας ἀλκίμους 15  
 δαίμων ἀπ' Οἰνώνας ἔλασεν. στάσομαι: οὐ τοι ἅπαντα  
 κερδίων  
 φαίνοισα πρόσωπον ἀλάθει ἄτρεικῆς:  
 καὶ τὸ σιγᾶν πολλακίς ἐστὶ σοφώτατον ἀνθρώπων νοῆσαι.

I am ashamed to tell of an enormous and unjust venture, how indeed they left the glorious island, and what Divinity drove the brave men from Oenone. I will stop: it is not always beneficial for the exact truth to show her face, and silence is often the wisest thing for a man to heed. (Trans. Svarlien 1990, with slight changes)

## 6) NEMEAN 5.19, 20

εἰ δ' ὄλβον ἢ χειρῶν βίαν ἢ σιδαρίταν ἐπαινήσαι πόλεμον  
 δεδόκηται, μακρὰ μοι  
 αὐτόθεν ἄλμαθ' ὑποσκάπτει τις: ἔχω γονάτων ἐλαφρὸν  
 ὄρμάν

But if there is resolve to praise wealth, or the strength of hands, or iron war, let someone mark off a long jump for me from this point. I have a light spring in my knees, and eagles swoop over the sea. (Trans. Svarlien 1990)

## 7) NEMEAN 5.22-25

πρόφρων δὲ καὶ κείνοις ἄειδ' ἐν Παλίῳ  
 Μοισᾶν ὁ κάλλιστος χορὸς, ἐν δὲ μέσαις  
 φόρμιγγ' Ἀπόλλων ἑπτάγλωσσον χρυσέῳ  
 πλάκτρῳ διώκων  
 ἀγείτο παντοίων νόμων 25

The most beautiful chorus of Muses sang gladly for the Aeacids on Mt. Pelion, and among them Apollo, sweeping the seven-tongued lyre with a golden plectrum, led all types of strains. (Trans. Svarlien 1990)

## 8) NEMEAN 5.50-54

εἰ δὲ Θεμίστιον ἴκεις, ὥστ' ἀείδειν, μηκέτι ῥίγει: δίδοι 50  
 φωνάν, ἀνὰ δ' ἰστία τεῖνον πρὸς ζυγὸν καρχασίου,  
 πύκταν τέ νιν καὶ παγκρατίῳ φθέγξαι ἐλεῖν  
 Ἐπιδαύρῳ διπλόαν  
 νικῶντ' ἀρετάν, προθύροισιν δ' Αἰακοῦ  
 ἀνθέων ποιάεντα φέρε στεφανώματα σὺν ξανθαῖς  
 Χάρισσιν.

But if you come to Themistius to sing, no longer remain frozen still. Lift up your voice and hoist the sails to the top-most yard; proclaim him as a boxer and tell how he won double excellence with his victory in the pankration at Epidaurus. Bring to the porch of Aeacus green garlands of flowers, together with the golden-haired Graces. (Trans. Svarlien 1990, with slight changes)

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\*Translations mine unless otherwise indicated.