

PSALMS 7

The title of this Psalm includes the word Shiggaion. This probably refers to the style of the psalm. Its root is from the verb *shagah*, "to reel about through drink" which has led some to interpret the title as an erratic or wandering ode. It is a song or poem that consisted of various meters and was sung to a variety of notes or tunes.

The title also includes a reference to Cush the Benjamite. Some commentators think this is a (nick) name for Saul. Saul was the son of Kish of the tribe of Benjamin.

{1} O LORD my God, I take refuge in you; save and deliver me from all who pursue me, {2} or they will tear me like a lion and rip me to pieces with no one to rescue me.

Saul's intent was to destroy David. As the king, Saul had great resources available to him. Consequently, there were "many" who were after David. As David recognized, all our hope from the power and oppression of the enemy must be in God and Him alone rather than in our own strength.

The description of the consequences of getting captured by the enemy forces shows the cruelty of humanity to other humans. The various versions of the Bible I checked are about equally divided between using the word "me" or "soul" in verse 2. David was probably not very concerned about what Saul would do to his soul as he was about what Saul would do to him physically if David were to be captured. In application to our situation today, our concern is more legitimately directed to what the spiritual enemy of our lives does to our souls rather than to our physical body. This verse should bring to mind the warning from Peter regarding Satan who (as a roaring lion) wanders about seeking whom he may devour.

PRAYER: Lord, help us in the spiritual battles that are all around us. Protect us and deliver us from getting trapped in the clutches of the enemy of our souls.

{3} O LORD my God, if I have done this and there is guilt on my hands-- {4} if I have done evil to him who is at peace with me or without cause have robbed my foe-- {5} then let my enemy pursue and overtake me; let him trample my life to the ground and make me sleep in the dust. Selah

These verses seem to be an attempt at self examination to determine if the persecution that he was undergoing was justified by anything he had done. David also expressed willingness to suffer the consequences of any wrong action.

Look at David's words "if I have done this." Saul had accused David of plotting to overthrow him and take his life as an excuse to try to kill David. David had already been anointed to be the new king (of God's own choosing) but he was waiting for God's own timing in the matter. In our situation, we are heirs of God and joint heir with Christ; however, we too must wait for God's timing to see the manifestation of this blessing.

David had an accuser and so do we. The "accuser of the brethren" is none other than the devil. In Revelations 12:10 it is said that he stands before God and accuses them day and night. However, we have an Advocate (someone to argue for us) with the Father Who is Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. In various times throughout the history of the church, Christians have been accused of being responsible for a variety of things such as famines, wars, pestilence, etc. Nero accused them of burn Rome. Today, Christians are charged with being homophobes, intolerant, narrow minded, against freedom of choice, etc.

(Another possible of interpretation of these verses is that David saw these things as exactly what Saul was doing to him. David could be saying - in the hypothetical - that if he had done to someone else what Saul was doing to him, then he would be experiencing the consequences of his life being trampled into the ground and his dying. This then, led David to make the appeal to God for comparable treatment for his enemies that begins in verse 6.)

PRAYER: Lord, help us to contend for the gospel without being contemptuous about it. Help us to bring conviction rather and condemnation to those who are without Christ. Help us to always be redemptive rather and vengeful in our interpretation of problems others are experiencing.

{6} Arise, O LORD, in your anger; rise up against the rage of my enemies. Awake, my God; decree justice.

This is almost as if David is pleading for God to become aware of the great injustice that is happening to him. It is as if God did not know what was going on. We want action now when we sense that we are being wronged. We become frustrated when God seems to wait before He acts. It may be that God is using the circumstances as a means to refine and transform us so we can be of greater use to Him in His kingdom. It is said even of Christ "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;" (Heb 5:8).

{7} Let the assembled peoples gather around you. Rule over them from on high; {8} let the LORD judge the peoples. Judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness, according to my integrity, O Most High. {9} O righteous God, who searches minds and hearts, bring to an end the violence of the wicked and make the righteous secure.

As David continues in his call for God to act on his behalf, it seems that he is calling for Judgment Day to come. On Judgement Day all (living and dead) will stand before the bar of justice.

Though David waited upon the Lord to bring about the time when he would be established as king he wished that day would arrive and the times of trouble would be over. David's intent toward Saul was such that he felt justified in his own conscious that he was doing the right thing. He had occasion to kill Saul and end the matter but he would not because he realized that Saul was to be dealt with by God.

We see injustices around us all the time. We see such things as drug abuse, abortion, child abuse, organized crime, atrocities in war torn areas, bribery, crooked politicians, and similar things and we wonder why God does not do something. We long for judgment and justice. We would like to put an end to all the evil and see the perpetrators get their comeuppances. Why doesn't that happen? The grace and mercy of God is the only explanation. As Peter wrote, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Pet 3:9) **PRAYER:** Father, even though we long for the day when evil will end, we know that You are merciful and kind and are waiting to give Your church the opportunity to tell the world about Your salvation. Give us the resolve to share the gospel with all who are lost so that not all are condemned in the Judgment when it does come.

{10} My shield is God Most High, who saves the upright in heart.

The idea of God being protection for the believer is recurring in the Scripture. In the Gospel of John, Chapter 10, Jesus said {28} I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. {29} My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.

{11} God is a righteous judge, a God who expresses his wrath every day. {12} If he does not relent, he will sharpen his sword; he will bend and string his bow. {13} He has prepared his deadly weapons; he makes ready his flaming arrows.

The most ancient texts render verse 11 as "God is a righteous judge, and is NOT angry every day." (See also Young's Literal Translation.) This is in better agreement with other passages in Scripture and "conveys a strong intimation of the longsuffering of God, whose hatred of sin is unchangeable, but whose anger against transgressors is marked by infinite patience, and does not burst forth in vengeance every day (John Morrison, in 'An Exposition of the Book of Psalms,' 1829)." (Notice in the KJV that text has been added "*with the wicked*" so that the statement is more in line with the character of God.)

The verse that follows should cause us to not presume upon the patience of God since He is prepared to bring judgment upon those who continue to do evil.

{14} He who is pregnant with evil and conceives trouble gives birth to disillusionment.

We can entertain evil thoughts and these develop into mischief or perverseness in our character. Eventually, these characteristics will express themselves in wrong actions or a life built on a false foundation. Every false foundation will fail and lead to disillusionment. The devil will take our disillusionment and try to turn it into despair in a effort to destroy us. The converse to this downhill slide on the slippery slope of sin is the upward way that starts with goodness and righteousness that conceives love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, temperance, and faith. These manifest themselves in hope and in life that has an eternal quality.

PRAYER: Lord, we appreciate Your salvation that saves and protects us as Your children. We thank you that You do show mercy to those who err – otherwise, we would not be saved and could not stand in the judgment in our own righteousness. Teach us to always be about that which is good and holy and pleasant and not get caught up in the sordid and sensual things of the world so that the fruit we bear is pleasing to You and pleasant to us.

{15} He who digs a hole and scoops it out falls into the pit he has made. {16} The trouble he causes recoils on himself; his violence comes down on his own head.

Not only do our thoughts influences our outcome and "being" but our actions and attitudes toward others will influence the judgment of God toward us. Just as forgiveness from God is predicated upon our forgiveness of others, our ill treatment of others will call forth for the same kind of treatment for ourselves.

{17} I will give thanks to the LORD because of his righteousness and will sing praise to the name of the LORD Most High.

What a comfort to know that the God of all creation does and will judge rightly. We can be discouraged when we see the unrighteous person prospering, but we take heart in knowing that God is still in control and has prepared everything that is needed for the Day of Judgment. We must be thankful for His mercy even toward the

ungodly because if it were not for such mercy then all would perish -- there is none who is righteous.

PRAYER: Lord, help us to walk out the Golden Rule in our everyday life. Help us to shown others that You are a righteous God by demonstrating righteousness in our live as a result of Your salvation.