

Political Psalms



by

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Political Psalms 1.0



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Preface

“Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.” (Psalm 76:10)

Listening to the news about the lunacy of politics is maddening. What can anyone do to change the psychopathic nature of politicians? Armenian News broadcasters are shouting at us to do something: protest, write, organize, vote, yell and shout. But, there is nothing one man can do to change the grubby world of politics.

Personally, I often turn off the news and read a psalm in order to remember that God is sovereign, and that only the Lord can restrain these madmen.

All psalms are political in nature, but here is a few that directly provide insight into politics and give hope and rest to the troubled heart.

Disclaimer

This book is not anti-government. It is anti-corruption in government.

Because the present political climate is pro-Zionism, pro-lawlessness, pro-censorship, anti-Christ, and anti-Christian: and, because government employees and government media is more sensitive than a step-mother about criticism, it is necessary to warn government officials of the following:

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Political Psalms

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Psalm 2 - Kiss the Son All Ye Nations

Nations in Rebellion Against Christ



We live in times of political chaos where madmen grip the helm of government. Against the surf and foam of political strife is the Source of peace and prosperity. Before us is the reason for all political conflict in the world today, and the solution to every political problem in seed form.

The Psalmist Speaks

Psalm 2:1 Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?

The word “why” is an interrogatory that can be translated “how” or “what” or “how much.” It is a question asked for our benefit. The word “heathen” should be translated “nations.” The word “go'em” is translated “people” and “nations” in Genesis 10:5. In Jewry, the term *goy* is a derogatory term for non-Jews, but that is not the case here. Jews are part of the rebellion.

The verb “rage” (*raqash*) is only used here, and it means to be in “tumult” or “commotion.” The psalmist is asking, “Why are the nations always in a furor, a frenzy, a constant state of irritation, full of madness and hostility?”

The word “imagine” is the imperfect Hebrew verb “hagah.” It is translated “roar” or “moan” or “growl” in Isaiah 31:4 of a lion roaring over its prey. It is translated “plot” in the ESV and “meditate” in Psalm 1:2.

The word “vain” is the Hebrew verb “reek,” used adverbially. It is translated “armed” in the KJV and “led forth” in the ESV in Genesis 14:14. It is translated “the seven empty ears” blasted with east wind which is a reference to the seven years of famine in Genesis 41:27; and, “emptied their sack” in Genesis 42:35. The idea here is of kings “emptying their nets” of destruction and mercilessly killing people. We need only look at the madness of the Bolsheviks, Lenin, Stalin and others to grasp the harvest of this rage against God.

Before us is the question of the ages:

Why can't nations live in peace? Why are nations always at war, always in an uproar, always existing in the surf and foam of the sea of conflict?

As we listen to the news, it seems that there is always a regional dispute, a political debate, an infringement, a group of rebels protesting some perceived inequity, a nation in political chaos ravaged by civil war. Some nation somewhere is “emptying his net” aggressively shelling another country for power and wealth and revenge, or defending itself against rocket fire with weapons of mass destruction.

2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying,

The kings have set themselves against the LORD.

The name “LORD” is the Tetragrammaton and clearly refers to God’s sovereignty and authority.

The title “anointed” is the Hebrew name for Messiah, *mashiyach*, meaning “anointed”—a reference to Christ, the Son of God. Several facts about the verb “set” needs to be noticed.

First, the verb “set” (tithyetsebu) is a Hebrew Hithpael, reflexive verb; that is, the kings of the earth are stirring themselves up. The hostility clearly resides in the kings who are constantly declaring war against the LORD God; that is, they want to be gods among men and the only sovereigns on earth.

Second, the verb “set” is in the emphatic position in the sentence and clearly emphasizes the intense, independent, rebellious nature of kings.

The preposition “against” is properly translated, but could also be worded “upon” or “over” the LORD; that is, the kings of the earth have stationed themselves as masters over men. They claim sovereignty over matters pertaining to the LORD God. The rulers of the earth do not recognize the authority of God and His Law-word over them. They see themselves as the only sovereign.

When Chief Justice Roy Moore placed the Ten Commandments in the corridor of the Alabama courthouse and explained that it represented the need of all Judges to surrender to the authority of the LORD God and His Law-word, the federal judge would have nothing to do with it. The Federal Court declared that, “the state may not acknowledge the sovereignty of the Judeo-Christian God”(morallaw.org).

Before us is a continuation of the question:

“Why have the kings of the earth set themselves up as lords and masters in opposition to the sovereignty of God and His anointed King, the Lord Jesus Christ”?

The Rulers of the Earth Speak

3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

Now the kings speak to one another. The Hebrew Piel, plural verb “let us break” is cohortive in form and meaning . . . and it is in the emphatic position. The Piel verb communicates intense determination to break from Puritan Christianity. Being in the emphatic position this verb clearly communicates the excessive vigor and profound madness of political leaders united in a new world order that incites rebellion against the Triune God and His law-order.

The term “their bands” is a feminine plural, a reference to the Trinity.

“Their” would be a reference to the “us” of Genesis 1:26-28.

The words “bands” and “cords” refer to chains or ropes that tether animals. These terms designate the Claim the Creator-God has on all the people of the earth. They are used metaphorically of the sovereignty of the LORD God and the absolute binding authority of His law over mankind.

The new world order encourages rebellion against the authority of Christ and His Law-word, and is hell-bent on initiating dramatic changes to build the utopia of despots — wealth, power, and control of man’s destiny.

Are there any rulers who have taken an oath to the LORD God and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ to uphold His law? Maybe one, the Queen of England. But, she has so violated her oath. Isn’t this treason against God and the British people? At best, kings take oaths to uphold the laws of man—which by the way, are almost always hostile to God’s law-order.

Heaven’s Response to the Rebellion

4 He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.

To an informed Christian the hostility of congressmen and our nation’s leaders is like a burr under our saddle. Righteous men are constantly irritated and agitated by the insanity of our political leaders. Rightly so! Thus, we pray, “Hallowed be thy name; thy Kingdom come;”

How does God respond to the sociopathic madness of kings? Well, He certainly isn’t threatened by any . . . or all of them! “He laughs!”

The term “laugh” (shachaq) is translated “to make sport of” in Judges 16:25. It is a term of contempt. The word “derision” (la-ag) means “to mock” and is translated “laughed thee to scorn” in 2 Kings 19:21. The temporal power of weak, proud rulers is no threat to the omnipotent power of the eternal God.

5 Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.

What is the future of the rebel kings? He has a message for them.

The verbs “speak” (Piel) and “vex” (Piel) in Hebrew poetry are complementary terms. Both clearly state intense energetic action.

The word “vex” is translated “troubled” (Genesis 45:3), “dismayed” (Exodus 15:15) and “terrified” (ESV 1 Samuel” 28:21). God is not some sweet, indulgent passive Santa Claus type figure. Before us is a reflection of deliberate, controlled, intense action of an angry God.

The word “wrath” and “sore displeasure” are also complementary terms.

The Hebrew word for “wrath” is “nostril” (aph); that is, when a man feels wronged, his nostrils flare.

The Hebrew word for “sore displeasure” means “heat” or “burning anger.” The imagery before us is that of an angry dragon with flared nostrils blasting balls of fire upon his adversaries. The sudden stroke and death of Lenin (1924) after his order (1922) to starve five million Russian peasants comes to mind.

To put it bluntly, God is not happy with the rebel nations. Is there any government committed to His law-order? Consequently, He is opposed to the proud, humanistic states. It is not his will that any of them succeed. All will fail. He will vex them in His wrath.

The Father Speaks

6 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

“I have set” is the Hebrew Qal perfect verb *nacak* which means “to pour out.” The imagery before us is that of a metallurgist heating iron ore in a blast furnace at a smelting plant to pour hot iron into a mold to make steel. The Father emphatically states that He has His king, and He has installed him permanently on His holy hill.

The “holy hill” is a reference to the Heavenly Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the assembly of the saints, the heavenly Jerusalem of which carnal Jerusalem was a type.

This is a decree “written in stone!” It is an iron-clad, perpetual, indisputable fact. In contrast to antlers that fall among deer and elk every season, are permanent horns of power like that of a ram. In contrast to the changing winds and the sands of time are the eternal shores; in contrast to the fading grass on the prairie are the mighty rocks and boulders of the earth; in contrast to the fragile tents of man are the pyramids of Almighty God. In contrast to fragile, weak, temporal rulers is God’s eternal, immutable, anointed King. In contrast to the weak, flawed egotists that arise to power out of the sea of politics to ride the wave of temporal power to the sand castles of nations is God’s chosen King, the Lord Jesus Christ, established forever on God’s holy, eternal mountain. God rules, not man!

Before us is the SOLUTION to all political disputes — recognition of and submission to the Lord Jesus Christ as Head of the Nations. Oh, that the kings of the earth were humbly submitted to the authority of Christ, under oath to obey His Law-word. How different the evening news!

The Son Speaks

7 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

A public notice is given. The term “decree” refers to a resolve, order, or statute.

The first usage of the word “decree” (choq) is in reference to land given to the priests by Pharaoh which Joseph, Vice-regent of Egypt, was not permitted to seize or sell (Genesis 47:22); that is, Pharaoh’s decree was set in stone. His decree was absolute and permanent. It is like an executive order, but more firm. Thus, God’s decree to the Son is absolute, permanent, forever, immutable, and unchangeable.

The decree is one of relationship. The Son is the God-man, very God of God, eternal, from the beginning. But, at a point in time, if we dare use the term “time,” the Father declared His relationship to the Second Person of the Triune God as that of a father to a son. He is now “The Son.” The term “begotten” does not refer to an actual birth, but the genesis of a legal relationship.

In the movie “Ben Hur,” Ben Hur wins the affection of a Roman Senator, receives his freedom, and is declared a son. He existed before the declaration. The decree did not initiate his existence; only a new status. The same is true between the Father and the Son. The Second Person of the Triune God was declared a Son.

8 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. 9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.

Favored by the Father, the Son is granted special favors. All He has to do is ask, and the nations are His.

This is the Spirit’s way of informing us that Christ claims jurisdiction over all men and their institutions. Both the right and power to rule the nations belong to Christ: “Who is the head of all rule and authority” (Colossians 2:10). But, Christ has done more than ask. He has purchased the nations with His own blood, the currency of the spirit world. The iron scepter is in nail pierced hands. The nations are as fragile as pottery. The One who made a whip and cleansed the temple will use His rod of iron to smash the nations. Rebels who will not bow the knee will be broken into hundreds of pieces.

The Spirit Speaks

10 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

The Spirit of God gives sweet counsel to the rulers of the earth. The objects of instruction are kings, presidents, parliaments, public officials in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. They are exhorted to be wise and receive the following instruction.

Unfortunately, however, the nations seems to be in the hands of fools and madmen.

11 Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

The word “serve” means “to work” or “to labor” or “to obey.” The kings of the earth are exhorted to serve the LORD; that is, to obey His Law-word.

The command “rejoice” refers to voluntary service. Holy fear ought to mix with joy and the privilege of serving the LORD God. Ancient Israel found out how great a sin it is to not serve the Lord with joy.

Deuteronomy 28:47 “Because you did not serve the LORD your God joyfully and gladly in the time of prosperity...”

Governments are in place to serve the interest of Heaven and the law of the LORD God; to protect human rights and freedom; and, to punish those who infringe on the rights of others.

The phrases “with fear” and “with trembling” is a call to careful and precise obedience to His commands and purpose (Deuteronomy 5:29; 6:2, 13, 24; 8:6; 10:12, 20; 13:4; 17:19; 19:20).

The Spirit is calling for allegiance to the Word of God, not allegiance to a political party or the new world order or to the U.S. Constitution. Oh, what a different place the world would be if we had Christian leaders committed to the will of God and served His purposes to the best of their knowledge and ability. Today, however, it seems we have madmen ruling nations who are hell bent on serving their own lust or Marxist program or the agenda of the new Zionist world order to mention a few.

12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

“Kiss” refers to the ancient tradition of subjects kissing the ring or scepter of a king — of demonstrating devotion and loyalty to the crown. Kings take no pleasure in rebels. To arouse the wrath of a king is to perish like Haman before Xerxes. After the Earl of Essex “half” drew his sword against Queen Elizabeth, she ordered him to be executed.

All the kings of the earth all called to “kiss the Son:”

Kiss Him as the Son of God, the historical Christ who appeared in Bethlehem.

- Kiss Him as the Creator for “by Him all things are Created.”
- Kiss Him as the King of the rulers of the earth.
- Kiss Him as the only Lawgiver, King, Priest, and Prophet.
- Kiss Him as the Savior King Who gave His life to save His people from their sins.
- Kiss Him as the Way, the Truth, and the Life.
- Kiss Him as the Gateway to God.
- Kiss Him as the Mediator between Heaven and Earth.
- Kiss Him as the Lamb of God, the Sin-bearer.
- Kiss Him as the Way of Salvation.
- Kiss Him as the True Israel of God, the fulfillment of all OT promises.
- Kiss Him as the Head of the Church.

- Kiss Him as the risen, ascended Savior and Lord sitting at the Right hand of God.
- Kiss the Son lest He be angry you perish in the way.
- Kiss the Son that you may be truly blessed of God with eternal life and enter His kingdom.

“Kiss the Son” is equivalent to invitation terms like “receive Christ as Lord and Savior,” “believe,” “repent,” “bow the knee to Christ,” and “Confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raise him from the dead” (Romans 10:9). The psalmist is telling us to “look to Christ” and be saved. To reject Christ is to perish, for “whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God” (John 3:18).

The term “blessing” refers to salvation. To “kiss the Son” is to be reconciled to God and to possess eternal life and the blessings of the age to come.

A blessing is promised to rulers and all those who put their trust in him. Trust here is more than an occasional glance toward heaven, but a genuine commitment to trust and obey. “In God we Trust,” is our nation’s motto. Oh, that it would be more than mere words. Oh, that we might acknowledge there is only one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.

The schism between the United States and Russia or between Hamas and Israel are the result of nations rejecting God’s Law-order. The solution between the United States and Russia and between Gaza and Israel is for all parties to “kiss the Son.” There is peace at the cross. If Jews and Gentiles can find peace at the cross, so can Arabs and Jews, Americans and Russians.

Before us is the reason for all political conflict in the world today, and the solution to every political problem known to man in seed form. The problems are not political, but spiritual; likewise, the solution is not political diplomacy or war, but confession of and surrender to the Son. Kiss the Son and be reconciled to God.

Source: Stockton, (2015). “Towards Exegetical Eschatology”

Psalm 9 - When My Enemies Are Turned Back

Put Them in Fear, O Lord!



This psalm could just as easily be titled, "At the Gates of Death," or "Praise in the Gates," or "The Snare of the Wicked," or "Fear God, Oh Ye Nations," or "God Never Forgets," or "Let Not Man Prevail."

This is called an "Alphabet Psalm" because every clause of the first stanza begins with the Hebrew letter Aleph. Psalms 9 and 10 comprise a continuous acrostic psalm. Every other line begins with a new letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

It is a psalm for people who are concerned about the lack of justice in this world, and Psalm 9 must be read with Psalm 10.

Credited to David, this royal psalm beams with kingly concerns about the frictions caused by warmongering nations.

To the chief Musician upon Muthlabben, A Psalm of David."

To the chief musician upon Muth-labben" is the title of (Psalm 9:1) which has given rise to infinite conjecture. "Muthlabben" is a title meaning "to die for the son." "To the chief musician upon Muth-labben" is a title which has given rise to infinite conjecture.

"It may be either upon the death (muth) of the fool (labben), as an anagram on Nabal or as Gesenius, "to be chanted by boys with virgins voices," i.e. in the soprano" (Bible Study Tools).

The Psalmist's Address to the LORD

(Aleph) 1 I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.

"praise" (yadah) means to "throw up the hands" as in a victory celebration. Healthy souls praise a big God; suffering souls groan over big problems. Strong souls sing with a whole heart; diseased souls sound like a sound track for a sunset.

The word "marvelous works" is one word in Hebrew (pala) which means "surpassing," or "extraordinary" — a reference for God doing difficult things.

"Is anything too hard (pala) for the Lord?" (Genesis 18:14).

2 I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.

"glad" -- The Hebrew word *samach* means to rejoice.

“rejoice” -- The Hebrew word *alats* means to rejoice or exalt as in a victory celebration.

Gladness, rejoicing, and singing are evidence of spiritual health.

The object of David’s praise is “O Most High.” The term was first used by Melchizedek in when he blessed Abraham (Genesis 14:19 - 20) — a title that proclaims the solitary, absolute authority of the LORD above man’s idols and institutions. The LORD is higher in rank, in title and beauty, in position and intelligence than any man or officer in an institution of government.

(Bet) 3 When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence.

There are reasons for the sunshine in David’s soul.

First reason for praise: Seeing with the eye of faith the conquest of his enemies by acts of God, David praises the LORD. David did not credit victory to his military might or to his brave army, but to “Thy Presence” (*panim* or the face of God).

“The triumphs of the Redeemer ought to be the triumphs of the redeemed.”
(Matthew Henry).

The word “face” (*panim*) is first translated “moving upon the face of the waters” in Genesis 1:2.

The principle of “know your enemy” was true in David’s day as it is our time. David fought enemies foreign and domestic. In modern times, our enemies are primarily domestic; that is, the government that is supposed to protect our rights has forsaken its duty in order to plunder the people and pirate their property.

Christians have adversaries because men have made themselves enemies of Christ. Governments are often led by regimes that are made up of secret-anti-Christ.

One look at the angry *panim* of God is sufficient to strike fear into the enemies of the gospel.

4 For thou hast maintained my right and my cause; thou satest in the throne judging right.

Second reason to praise: The Judge not only granted him a hearing in His chambers, but sustained his cause over the objections of his adversaries. The LORD sustained his cause because his cause was God’s cause.

God is not neutral in conflict. The Lord does not take sides. His side is the right side. He is the incorruptible-arbitrator of all the events of history. Because God is always rights and His law is always right, let us find God’s side and stand with Him.

5 Thou hast rebuked (ga’ar) the heathen (gowy), thou hast destroyed the wicked (rasha’m), thou hast put out their name for ever and ever.

Third reason to praise: God took judicial action against Israel’s enemies — particular enemies of the psalmist. The words “rebuked,” “destroyed,” and “put out” their name are terms related to summary judgment rulings by the Supreme Court of Heaven.

The word “rebuke” (ga’ar) refers to a death-sentence issued by the Judge from His chambers in heaven.

The Hebrew word “destroyed” (‘abad) means to “perish, vanish, go astray or to kill.”

The Hebrew word “put out” (machah) is translated “blotted out” in Deuteronomy 9:14.

The Psalmist’s Address to Enemy Nations

6 O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end: and thou hast destroyed cities; their memorial is perished with them.

“O thou enemy” represents a change in address. It is a vocative or apostrophe — a literary technique where the author addresses someone that is not present and can’t respond to the immediate pronouncement. In this case, David has a message of doom for his enemy.

Terms like “destruction” (dried up), “perpetual end,” “destroyed cities,” and “perished” refers to Divine judgment on David’s adversaries.

“memorial” -- literally means their very memory is perished: “the name of the wicked shall rot” (Proverbs 10:7). For this reason, David does not list his defeated enemies by name.

7 But the Lord shall endure for ever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment.

In contrast to temporal, vulnerable nature of human civilizations, David announces the permanent, unmovable, eternal character of the Lord and the fixed position of God’s throne (authority). God’s court is open and active throughout history 24/7.

The contrast in this verse is **not** between David and his enemies, or the righteous and the unrighteous, but between mortal man and the everlasting God.

8 And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.

The term “world” refers to the “habitable earth” where all “the people,” regardless of their status, are subject to Divine jurisdiction. The pronoun “he” is in the emphatic position in the sentence. Simply stated, the “Most High” will judge pompous, puny man in righteousness.

“Righteousness” and “uprightness” describes the character of God’s throne. Unlike modern judicial forums, God’s Court is not blind, corrupt, crooked, twisted, prejudiced, perverted, or lured by money. Because Court decisions are based on His law and His character, matters before the Court are guided by the strictest principles of justice.

Because God crushed his enemies, David infers that God will continue to judge the enemies of righteousness throughout history.

A millennium later the Apostle Paul confidently declared to the Athenians, “He shall judge the world in righteousness” (Acts 17:31).

9 The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.

David announces another truth about this Court; i.e. another reason to praise God. The Judge is not only guided by strict principles of justice, but by compassion for those crushed by the rich and powerful.

The word “trouble” says Maclaren is used only here. It means “to be cut off” from justice among men; that is, when justice fails in the court, there is a Judge who understands the victim’s frustration.

This Court cares about the oppressed and troubled; i.e. He feels their pain. Therefore, his mercies are new every morning (Lamentations 3:22-23).

10 And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.

“know thy name” infers a personal relationship between the Creator and the creature. David did not see himself as superior to other men. Aware of his own weaknesses, he reasons to the conclusion that God acted against his enemies not because he (David) was faultless, but because the Most High was faithful to His covenant; that is, God is reliable to reward His people for their trust in Him.

To know the name of God is to know him in the context of His revelation and historical manifestations to men; that is, “they” that know thy name are students of the Holy Scripture. These are God-fearing people. When they hear the name of the Lord, they call to remembrance His great acts in history.

David continues his proclamation to his enemies. The word “seek” (darash) means “to inquire, petition, and consult.” A reference to a litigant seeking justice for injuries incurred by lawlessly men.

The promise: God never abandons His people even though negative circumstances may provoke feelings of being forsaken.

The Psalmist’s Address to the People of God

11 Sing praises to the Lord, which dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people his doings.

Because a healthy nation is theocentric, and a disordered nation is anthropocentric, David exhorts the people to sing praises to the Lord and to declare the works of Providence.

“Sing” and “declare” (preaching) as means of glorifying God are joined together, and it is remarkable that, connected with all revivals of gospel ministry, there has been a sudden outburst of the spirit of song. Luther’s Psalms and Hymns were in all men’s mouths, and in the modern revival under Wesley and Whitfield, the strains of Charles Wesley, Cennick, Berridge, Toplady, Hart, Newton, and many others, were the outgrowth of restored piety.” (Spurgeon)

12 When he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them: he forgetteth not the cry of the humble.

The phrase “inquisition for blood” refers to “the avenger of blood.” It is an allusion to the *goel*, the nearest relative of a murdered man responsible, according to Oriental custom, to avenge death of a near relative.

The “them” refers to the victims of oppression – “the humble.” God’s remembers the weak and forgotten who are crushed under the claws of greed and injustice in man’s courts. The blood of Abel spoke to God (Genesis 4:10), and the blood of Nabal was seen by God (2 Kings 9:26) (Spurgeon).

The Psalmist’s Address to the Lord for Himself

13 Have mercy upon me, O Lord; consider my trouble which I suffer of them that hate me, thou that liftest me up from the gates of death:

Wisely, David does not seek justice but mercy. Even at his best, David needed grace.

The word “trouble” (only) refers to oppression, affliction, and poverty. Think of Hagar’s affliction in the desert after fleeing the maltreatment of Sarah (Genesis 16:11). In her trouble, Hagar learned “Thou God seest me.”

At “the gates of death” (verge of the grave), King David painfully feels his humanity. Petitioning the Lord to overlook his faults and deficiencies, he motions the court to consider his claim against his adversaries. David was flawed, but not dissolute; weak, but not wicked; a sinner, but not a rebel.

He prays the Judge would “consider” his trouble; i.e. that the Lord would be pleased to investigate the facts regarding the injuries he received from social predators, in this case, enemies foreign and domestic.

14 That I may shew forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy salvation.

“gates” refer to public knowledge as city gates were the place where people assembled to hear news and to adjudicate legal matters between residents in the city.

While his motion for injunctive relief is personal, his petition is far from being boorish and self-centered. If the nation was to be God-centered and God-focused, the people had to have a basis of trust. Military victories over warring tyrants added reasons for the “daughter of Zion” to rejoice in “thy salvation.” Remembering “all” victories supplies inexhaustible themes for praise.

15 The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken.

The word “pit” is a metaphor for the Luciferian traps set up by imperialistic regimes to snare innocent people, steal their wealth, and make them slaves.

David’s proclaims his ground for confidence. His enemies, who thought themselves to be invincible, actually imploded from the troubles they sought to inflict on others. Setting snares for the innocent, they stepped in their own longstring trap.

16 The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgaion. Selah.

The term “Higgaion” refers to a thought that is so important it had to be put to music so people can meditate upon it. The word “Selah” has come to infer “to stop and think about this.”

David proclaims a paramount truth: As Judge of all the earth, the Lord does what is right. He executes judgment upon the wicked in history. Study it. Look for it. Wait for it. Recognize it when it comes.

“By this it is known, there is a God who judgeth in the earth: that he is a righteous God, and one that hates and will punish sin; by this the ‘wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.’” (Benson).

“The wicked is snared in the work of his own hands” proclaims the fact that advocates of totalitarianism are the most frustrated people on earth because they are trapped by lack of resources, detailed entanglements, and uncooperative populations.

The one who sells his soul to the Prince of Darkness faces a black future.

17 The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.

David continues his Higgaion:

The “wicked” (rasha’ m’) are seasoned criminals, trespassers, and lawbreakers who show contempt for God’s law-order. This professional class of perverts will be defeated and destroyed.

The word “hell” refers to *Sheol* or the grave; that is, these lawbreakers bring about their own ruin setting up traps to defraud others of their rights to life, liberty, and property.

18 For the needy (poor) shall not always be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever.

In this life, sophisticated legislators enact “laws for thee, but not for me;” and corrupt magistrates provide “justice for the rich, but not for the poor.” And, sometimes vice-a-versa.

This text teaches us that the ground of hope for those suffering under the heavy hand of tyrants will be realized . . . their cause righted . . . their motion heard.

It may appear that God forgets the poor and denies their pleas, but delay is not a denial. A promise is provided: their hope of receiving help from God will **not** perish forever. Though men may forget God, God does not forget the needy or their plight.

19 Arise, O Lord; let not man prevail: let the heathen be judged in thy sight.

While it appears that the plans of men in high office dominate the ethical minority, we have a soldier's plea, "let not man prevail."

"Arise, O Lord" is a priestly-military order / prayer calling upon God to go before Israel's armies to give them victory over the enemy (Numbers 10:35; Psalm 3:7; 7:6; 10:12; 68:1).

Because delayed justice pains the soul, David prays: Lord, wake up, sit up, stand up, consult your honor and let not the conspiracies of the arrogant prevail against your kingdom plans.

20 Put them in fear, O Lord: that the nations may know themselves to be but men. Selah.

Every inter-relational problem can be reduced to the pride of men; and, every international crisis can be traced to a lack of fear . . . a lack of God consciousness . . . a lack of holy-respect for God's law-order by miscreants in positions of power.

Therefore, we have this power-prayer: "Put them in fear, O Lord" . . . humble them . . . knock the wind out of their arrogance . . . make them afraid of standing before your holiness.

Luke 12:5 "Fear the One who, after you have been killed, has authority to throw you into hell."

The reason for this prayer is that government officials and corporate figures might know they are not God; that prime ministers might know there is a King of kings; that legislators might know they are accountable to the True Lawgiver and His law-order (James 4:12).

Psalm 10 - When God Hides Himself

Why, O LORD, do you stand afar off?



Enter into this imprecatory psalm—a prayer to be prayed when society seems to be overrun with proud men who mock the Christian faith and who subvert good among us. It should be read with Psalm 9.

It is one of the Acrostic Psalms. Taken together, Psalm 9 and 10 form an acrostic psalm sequencing the letters in the Hebrew alphabet. Every other line begins with a new letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Moreover Psalm 10 does not have a heading as other psalms do.

The Psalmist's Complaint About the Lord

Psalm 10:1 Why, O LORD, do you stand afar off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?

The mood shifts from one of triumph in Psalm 9 to one of distress over the wicked in Psalm 10.

Every religion, including Christianity, must deal with the hiding of God. Where is God when I need Him?

The delight of the church is that God is with her: “Lo, I am with you even until the end of the age.” But, it is better than this. Each Christian has the Spirit of God living in his soul -1 Peter 3:15.

But, none is so miserable as the doubting child who feels like God has forsaken him and that He is nowhere to be found.

God is supposed to be a “very present help in the time of trouble,” but often more scarce than drinking water in Death Valley. His presence is a great joy for the people of God, but nothing is more troubling than an eclipse of His presence.

“Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?”

It is not the trouble that bothers us, but the sense of being separated from our Father’s love that shakes our soul.

We are sentient beings. Feelings are often interpreted as facts. When we “feel” forsaken, we are tempted to conclude that God has abandoned us.

No answer is given to the Psalmist’s question. Perhaps, the Lord hides Himself to see if we are sunshine patriots or true men (Psalm 11:5).

The Psalmist's Complaint Against the Wicked

The psalmist describes the character of the wicked during his time. What was true then is true now!

The term "wicked" is a Biblical term that refers to autonomous, self-willed men: rebels, fornicators, Sodomites, feminists, thieves, rapists, con-artist, and covenant breakers.

The wicked were powerful, political troublemakers: politicians, judges, magistrates, and rulers.

Regardless of the office they hold, these vile characters devour the helpless. Their programs enrich the elite and impoverish the simple through clever commercial schemes designed to transfer wealth from the pocket of the poor to the treasury of the affluent.

Good people have friends, but wise men know their enemy. If a man does not know his true enemy, he wars in vain. All resistance is futile. Thus, it behooves Christians to study their enemies in politics and the media: liberalism, socialism, Marxism, and the like.

Moreover, it would be folly to merely attribute one's conflicts to an invisible spirit and not recognize the Devil's "flesh and blood" agents. Evil is not in the environment, it is in men. Evil is not floating through the air, but residing in the hearts of sinners.

2 In arrogance the wicked hotly pursue the poor; let them be caught in the schemes that they have devised.

It is much too simple to say that everything good comes from God and everything bad comes from the Devil. The discerning recognize evil presents itself as a genial figure feigning to be just. Moreover, goodness from God often arrives in humble packages.

The wicked do not wear a sign on their chest that says, "I am wicked;" rather, they carry signs that read, "Feminists," "Free love," "Women's Rights," "I LUV LGBT," "No One is Illegal," "Pro-Choice," "Socialism Sign up Here," "Support the Extinction of Old White Men," etc.

The Psalmist wishes his antagonists would be exposed, humbled, and trapped in their own snares.

3 For the wicked boasts of the desires of his soul, and the one greedy for gain curse and renounces the LORD.

By "wicked," we should not assume David is addressing thugs on the street, but faces in the media, individuals in positions of power, and clever hand shakers in high places.

His adversaries are not street urchins, but men (and women) in blue suits. Invisible players lurking in the shadows multiply programs that violate the Tenth Commandment with faces wrinkled with lusts.

Covetous schemers have greed in their hearts and money on their mind. Cash is the power which makes the celebrity relevant. Therefore, money is his god. Thus, in the mind of the world, the lack of money is the root of all evil.

Henry Fielding observed, "Make money your God and it will plague you like the Devil."

Money is important to all men, but not an end in itself. It is tool to be used for God . . . or the Devil. We can control it, or it can control us.

The worship of cash indicates the man has renounced the Lord as his God. "No man can serve two masters," said Jesus.

4 In the pride of his face the wicked does not seek him; all his thoughts are, "There is no God."

Arrogance and theological atheism is another mark of the wicked.

These schemers are anti-Christians who act pragmatically and perversely. Their hearts are so full of pride, it marks their faces like tattoos.

"Seek Him," is not in the original text, but supplied by the translators . . . and, rightfully so.

The self-centered man has no room for God in His thought life. He does not seek the proofs of God's existence or evidence of His Providence in history.

Moreover, He has no curiosity about the character of the Creator, His will, or His law. All his thoughts are faithless and Godless. He serves the religion of "none." The proud man, being the center of his own universe, expects the world to revolve around his utopian dream.

5 His ways prosper at all times; your judgments are on high, out of his sight; as for all his foes, he puffs at them.

Another outstanding characteristics of the wicked is their assertive, unyielding, steel-boot, in-your-face confidence. These people do not suffer from an inferiority complex. They have entered through the gates of self-esteem holding a key, "Yes, we can!" They wear a banner, "I am the Captain of my soul; the Master of my fate."

"According to Yogic culture, all superiority complexes demand suffering. The person deemed less than in whatever way the others feel superior, must suffer. But the person who feels superior suffers an abundance of confidence while lacking clarity and is therefore more willing to move forward in error for long periods of time." (Author Unknown- Rumor Mill News).

The phrase "prosper at all times" or "are grievous" (yāchiylû) has been difficult to articulate. The Latin Vulgate and LXX translates it, "His ways are defiled." Coverdale renders it, "His ways are always filthy." Others transcribe it, "His ways are confident."

The original Hebrew word (chul) means "to turn round, to twist, to whirl." Thus, the word refers to a strong twisted object indicating the character of the evil man — that He is strong,

relentless, hard, tireless, unbending, and full of sentiment that his perverted, twisted ways are always right. He cannot admit wrong, but he's a hootie owl squawking about other people's faults. He believes he is born good and is one of the lovable in the cult of self-esteem. The liberal media and popular cultural icons come to mind.

David's enemies are God's enemies. God "puffing" or blowing at them communicates contempt and scorn. They roost in an ivory tower for a time, but they can be removed as easily as a maid blows the dust off an attic lamp shade.

6 He says in his heart, "I shall not be moved; throughout all generations I shall not meet adversity."

Another characteristic of the wicked is the invincibility of these people.

"He says," reflects his settled, iron-forged beliefs. The perverse are aggressive. Thinking they are bulletproof and untouchable, they fear neither sickness nor adversity. Though the wicked's foundation is built on the fault lines of fables, myths, and fictions, he is an indomitable rock in own mind.

7 His mouth is filled with cursing and deceit and oppression; under his tongue are mischief and iniquity.

Another way to recognize the wicked is by what they say. The tongue is the pen of the mind. It never tires of complaining. While we fear the chaos of war, nothing compares to the destruction caused by a tongue set on fire by the lies of hell. The humanist has an arrogance and potty mouth about him that spews out blasphemy and profanity like a Cajun whore. But, he may be all polish. Wax covers his cracks while he recruits the malleable for his Devilish purposes.

These are the motor-mouthed reporters who spin the news, publish fake stories, and twist facts to prejudice the public against their political opponents so no one can uncover the truth. (The four year drama where Democrats and Rinos accused President Trump of colluding with Russia comes to mind (2016-2019).)

Put an "s" in front of his "words" and it becomes "swords." Add another "s" to the word gossip and you have the sound of a hissing snake.

8 He sits in ambush in the villages; in hiding places he murders the innocent. His eyes stealthily watch for the helpless; 9 he lurks in ambush like a lion in his thicket; he lurks that he may seize the poor; he seizes the poor when he draws him into his net. 10 The helpless are crushed, sink down, and fall by his might.

Notice the terms "ambush," "hiding places," and "stealthily." The Spirit uses the metaphor of a pouncing lion to instruct the righteous about the ways of the wicked. Their method of crushing their adversaries and overturning God's law in favor of Utopianism comes through the art of deception and surprise. Rogue politicians with the help of the media adopted a covert strategy that accelerates myths and lies.

Murdering political adversaries marks the broadcasting industry. Slander, propaganda, and disinformation are weapons of choice. Their victims are described as a lion's prey, helpless, and poor — like a gazelle caught in a net.

11 He says in his heart, "God has forgotten, he has hidden his face, he will never see it."

The weakness of the wicked is not a lack of knowledge, but willful ignorance; and, the adoption of an ideology that accuses God of willful neglect.

These enemies of righteousness are not lambs, but lions; not worms, but cobras.

If the wicked say, "God has forgotten." Evil is at work in our hearts if we think God has abandoned us. Beware of entertaining thoughts contrary to the promises of God.

The Psalmist's Cry for God to Take Action

Seeing the pride and crushing ways of the depraved upon the innocent, David calls his silent God to stir Himself, to "break the arm" of the villainous, and to remember the plight of the righteous.

It is a graver error to presume God is unaware of their deeds. The God of the Bible knows all things. Just because we suddenly become aware of evil at work in society does not mean that God is ignorant about political corruption.

God calls men to account for their secret sins. Rest your head on three pillows: He sees. He knows. He cares.

12 Arise, O LORD; O God, lift up your hand; forget not the afflicted.

Two imperatives are found in this text and the third verb (forget not, a Jussive) acts like a command. "Arise! Wake up!" cries the psalmist. "Lift up your hand! "Forget not the afflicted."

God appears to be so indifferent to human affairs . . . even asleep at the wheel. Therefore, the struggling psalmist appeals to the God of covenant to intervene in this human drama, and to rescue the afflicted from the snares of these power mongers. Consider the tyranny of the police state, asset forfeiture, clever IRS lien and seizure programs, the banking loan-foreclosure scheme, and debt scams.

"Perhaps a clear sign of Christian maturity is the willingness to worship God when He has determined to be God hidden" – John Rushdoony.

13 Why does the wicked renounce God and say in his heart, "You will not call to account"?

Bad idea; bad theology!

The righteous suffer from a mild case of cognitive dissonance; i.e. because they do not lie or steal from other men, they have a hard time understanding the callous disregard for morals and truth that is so prevalent in the "liberal" mind.

14 But you do see, for you note mischief and vexation, that you may take it into your hands; to you the helpless commits himself; you have been the helper of the fatherless. 15 Break the arm of the wicked and evildoer; call his wickedness to account till you find none.

The psalmist, though sailing his ship in the middle of a political storm, anchors his soul to Biblical theology: God sees, God knows; and God cares for me.

We can confidently pray that God that will break the teeth of the lions preying upon God's lambs. He helps the fatherless, the oppressed, and the abandoned among men. Therefore, the psalmist boldly prays the LORD would lift up his hand, and metaphorically speaking, deliver a heavenly karate chop to the schemers giving them a Monteggia fracture in the forearm. But, it is more than this. He wants God to give them no quarter, no clemency or mercy . . . even refusing to spare the life of his political opponents.

The difficulty in modern times, however, is that wickedness is not sequestered. Depravity has been institutionalized by corrupt politicians hell-bent on empowering Big Government to crush the rights of man. The problem is not just flawed agents or judges, but corrupt institutions. The cute, little serpent in Genesis has now become a hideous, fire-breathing monster with seven heads coming out of the sea of politics (Revelation 12-13).

“If you are awaiting a finding of “clear and present danger,” then I can only say that the danger has never been more clear and its presence has never been more imminent . . . For we are opposed around the world by a monolithic and ruthless conspiracy that relies primarily on covert means for expanding its sphere of influence--on infiltration instead of invasion, on subversion instead of elections, on intimidation instead of free choice, on guerrillas by night instead of armies by day. It is a system which has conscripted vast human and material resources into the building of a tightly knit, highly efficient machine that combines military, diplomatic, intelligence, economic, scientific and political operations.” (John F. Kennedy – Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York City, April 27, 1961).

The Psalmist's Confidence the King has Heard his Plea

The psalmist progresses in his prayer from one of feeling forsaken to a feeling of confidence that God has heard his prayer; from feeling like his Commander was absent in the battle, to an understanding that God is a competent King actively saving His people from their enemies.

16 The LORD is king forever and ever; the nations perish from his land.

Let us remember that the LORD is King — all heads of state are required to acknowledge His reign. It was the gospel of “another king, Jesus” that turned the world upside down (Acts 17:6-7; Psalm 2, 97, 110).

17 O LORD, you hear the desire of the afflicted; you will strengthen their heart; you will incline your ear 18 to do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed, so that man who is of the earth may strike terror no more.

What spiritual progress!

David begins the psalm as a spiritual pauper blind to God's work among men. At the end of his spiritual quest, God-confidence reigns over the battlefield of his heart. The Lord actively works among the nations saving the poor and judging the wicked.

Salvation is one means of bettering society; purging out evil is another. We not only pray that God would save souls (execute mercy), we pray the Lord will expose and depose the wicked among us in our time.

Psalm 37 - Stop Fretting

Stop Fretting Over Wicked Rulers in Positions of Power



Are you burdened by the calamitous legislation of higher functioning psychopaths and sociopaths working at the seat of power in governmental institutions? Then this psalm is for you.

Because of the mass media, we are in touch with more political corruption than our little minds and hearts can manage. If your heart is righteous, you are probably angry at the injustice of our time.

This psalm is the voice of grey-haired wisdom. Consider the following Spirit-inspired promises about the wicked — those planners and schemers who introduce corruption into society in the name of freedom and fairness.

Addressed to the godly men, this psalm is about the temporal prosperity of the wicked and God's permanent protection of the righteous.

You can be at rest by considering the destiny of the wicked in your time.

God orders His people to cease fretting over the temporary success of *the wicked (rasha – singular; rasha'm plural)*.

1 (A Psalm of David.) Fret not thyself (tit'har) because of evildoers (ra'im), neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.

'Fret not thyself' is a reflexive verb which prohibits God's man from fueling his anger by stoking the fire with reports about what "evildoers" (pl.) *ra'im* is doing.

The word "fret" (*charah*) is translated by the word "hot" ten times; "angry" nine times, "fret" four times, and "burn" once in Scripture. The word "fret" is the same word used in Genesis 4:5: "And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell;" that is, he was angry enough to kill. Selah.

The word "wroth" is our word "fret" in Psalm 37:1. "Fret" is a Hithpael verb (reflexive, future) which means the one fretting is causing himself to suffer emotional strain by burning with anger. The one who feeds the furnace of anger injures himself.

Some reports about the success of the *ra'im* are disturbing. Consequently, some men are tempted to "envy" (*qana*) and be jealous of their financial and social success.

The “evildoers” (ra’im) are the movers and shakers in society promoting transgression of God’s law-order. . . . people in blue suits and red ties in the Municipal Corporation in the District of Columbia.

“workers of iniquity” (asah-evil) is contrasted with those who do good in verse 3. These are the people that sow tares in the wheat field with malice aforethought. The *rasha’m’m* are more than sinners. They are committed to evil as a means of advancement in society.

The opposite of fretting is trusting (3), delighting (4), committing (5), and resting (7).

The grounds of this “rest” are twofold: (1) God knows and protects the righteous; (2) God knows and punishes the wicked.

Reasons Not to Fret

God slashes the hope of the wicked.

2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.

“cut down” (namal) is the verb that also introduces the act of circumcision. “soon” is an adverb.

The psalmist addresses the *ra’im* as a group (“they”) or in the plural. This metaphor pictures the wicked prospering, then perishing.

3 Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

There two imperatives in this text: “trust” and “do-good.” The word “trust” means to “rest on,” “lean on,” “put your confidence in” the LORD. It is the opposite of being your own counselor and going your own way.

“Thou shalt pasture on *faithfulness*, i.e., be supported by God’s truth and righteousness as by a rich pasture. (Comp. Psalm 23:1, and, for the expression, Proverbs 15:14, “feedeth on foolishness.”). The faithfulness of God is the security of man” (Ellicott).

4 Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

“Delight” (anag) is a Hithpael imperative. Cause yourself to “delight” in the Lord. Develop a taste for His Word. Consider this autumn wisdom by a seasoned saint. Life with its many reversals did not sour or disquiet him.

5 Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.

“Commit” (galal) is another imperative meaning “to roll down;” that is, roll all your concerns on to the LORD.

“Trust” (batach) is an imperative repeated a second time in these first few verses.

The Hebrew word “the way” (der’ke’kah) contains a Kafh (כ). Rabbinical mystics say the Kafh represents a palm as it look like a backward C or a cupped palm; that is, trust in the Lord and he will hold you in the palm of his hand.

6 And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.

Expensive things like gold, silver, and rubies come from the dark caverns of the earth. Likewise, the righteous man is hidden, but the LORD has a way of bringing that righteousness into the light as a shining in the darkness.

7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

There are three imperatives in this verse.

The command “rest” (damam) means “to be silent, dumb, and be still” — an action that calls for us to restrain impulses to be nervous and anxious . . . to talk . . . to complain . . . and to nervously do things. When we are anxious our tongues seem to be tied in the middle and flappin’ at both ends. “Rest, soul, rest!” “Restrain yourself!”

The command “wait patiently” (chuwl with a Hith-polel suffix) is verb requiring intense, vigorous action on one’s self to fulfill the command “to wait.” It means “to dance,” “writhe,” or “twist.” The opposite of waiting are acts of the flesh. That is “waiting patiently” requires all the energy a man can muster from within himself to “rest” and chain down his soul to the stake of contentment.

The command “fret not” (charah) means “to be hot with anger.” It is a repeat of the command in verse one. Saying it twice confirms the divine will to not fuel the furnace of anger with the deadwood of evil reports.

8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.

The command “cease” (raphah) means “to relax, to sink down, and to deflate.”

The imperative “forsake” (azab) means “to leave, abandon, or divorce” one’s self from “wrath” (chema) or the heat and fever caused by anger.

So important are the commands in Psalm 37 the Spirit commands us NOT to “fret” a third time. Repeating a command three times is like adding three exclamation points to an English sentence!!!

But, the Spirit adds a warning about “giving up,” “resigning or giving into the evil trying to shackle us in its chains. No man is authorized to fight sin with sin.

God thwarts the expectations of the wicked and limits their influence.

9 For evildoers (ra’im) shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.

Now the author provides the grounds of rest: God will deal with the *ra'im* in His time and His way. Selah! The verbal action "cut off" is terminal. It means "to cut" and "to kill." It refers to circumcision, cutting off the boughs of a tree, cutting a covenant in blood, and cutting off a man's head.

Before us is a big promise with a big condition. "Wait" is a tough command for ambitious men as it requires one to quietly "trust and obey." Earth, not heaven, is the destiny of the righteous.

Those that wait upon the LORD are the righteous, the meek, and the humble. The term "wait" refers to one Source of hope and protection. Some trust government to deliver them; the meek trust the LORD.

10 For yet a little while, and the wicked (rasha) shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.

We like the guarantee the wicked shall be cut off. It's the in a "little while" that tests the souls of the *tzadikkim*.

In the second stanza of the couplet we have the promise, "thou shall diligently consider his place," but this is a poor translation. The verb "diligently see" (biyn with Hith-Polel prefixes) implies an intense seeing — that believers will see (perceive) the ruination of the *rasha'm*. The Hebrew word "place" (me'kow'mo) refers to one's status, post in life, or abode. The wicked will fall, and the righteous will see it.

The text does **not** say "thou" shall see ALL the *ra'im* disappear or even see the downfall of particular *rasha'm*. But, the text does declare the Christian man who has his eyes open will see the ceiling collapse on the *rasha'm*. How many careers of politicians and Hollywood perverts have we seen crumble like a house of cards or suffer a sudden death in our lifetime? The verb "diligently consider" requires acute observation on our part. We must look for it.

11 But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

This is another strong promise.

The "meek" (*anah'vim*) are the opposite of the *ra'im* (the wicked); that is, the "meek" are the poor, righteous souls who have placed their trust in the Lord and His promises; and, the *ra'im* are the antinomian Christ-rejecters. Shalom awaits the *anah'vim* and the horrors of judgment await the *ra'im*.

The earth belongs to those who submit to the dominion mandate, the *anah'vim*, and not the *ra'im*.

God ordains an end for the wicked.

12 The wicked (rasha'm) plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth.

For literary, communication purposes the terms “wicked” (*rasha’im*) and the just (*tzaddik*) are in the singular but we can generally apply the principle propounded to apply to more than one *rasha’im*; that is, the schemes and legislation of the *ra’im* stem from secret motivations to crush the righteous. They are motivated by hate and they take out their animus on the *tzadikkim*.

13 The Lord shall laugh at him: for he seeth that his day is coming.

“his day” is the Day of Trouble . . . the Day of Judgment.

The language of “laugh” does not refer to God jumping up and down with joy, but an attitude of One who knows that all the plans of the *ra’im* are vain – as not worthy of serious thought, or worry, or care; that all plans to thwart the will of God will crash on the roadway of life. Each individual *rasha’im* will have his “bad day!” This fact provides more reasons to rest and be at peace while the *ra’im* initiate their plots against the *tzadikkim*.

God destroys the wicked by using their own schemes against them.

14 The wicked (rasha’im) have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright conversation.

The reports of wicked schemes are often true. They have drawn out their sword and have pointed their bows at the poor and needy with the intent of slying the upright. The phrase “upright conversation” (*yasar derek*) refers to a “straight road” – a metaphor describing the honorable ambitions of the *tzadikkim*.

15 Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken.

The psalmist switches back to the plural. Another strong promise that evil plans of the *ra’im* will boomerang back on them.

16 A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked (rasha’im).

This text addresses the insecurities of the *tzadikkim*. Great riches involve many cares. This text assures the reader the few assets that the righteous (*tzaddik*) possess is a better status than the status of the *ra’im* with all their treasures.

God crushes the strength of the wicked.

17 For the arms of the wicked (rasha’im) shall be broken: but the LORD upholdeth the righteous.

Another powerful promise that God will break the power of the *ra’im* and sustain the *tzadikkim*.

“Arms” is a metaphor for strength and power. God will break the “arms” (power) of the *ra’im* but He is a sling for the *tzadikkim*.

18 The LORD knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be for ever.

As the *ra'im* prospers and the *tzadikim* anguish over their troubles, the godly man is tempted to think his trials are evidence the LORD has forgotten him. However, this text assures us that God knows all the troubles in all the days of the *tzadikim*.

19 They shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.

Here is another powerful promise. Evil times come upon all men in every generation, but the *tzadikim* have divine assurance of His provision and protection. For insight on the word “ashamed” (*buwsh*) see Genesis 2:25; Ezra 8:22; 9:6; and Psalm 25:2.

“Jesus wept!” And, the reason for His grief may have been because Mary and Martha were not taking sufficient comfort in His presence or His promises — an exhortation to believe more and doubt less. Oh, how the Lord must be grieved by the pain caused by our skepticism.

God consumes the wicked and diminishes their power.

20 But the wicked (rasha'm) shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.

Two metaphors shore up the confidence of the *tzadikim* — “fat of lambs” refers to the sacrificial part of lambs; like “smoke” blown away for the wicked (*ra'im*). Smoke is a symbol of temporary prosperity.

21 The wicked (rasha'm) borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth.

The Spirit provides a mark of the *ra'im* — they do not pay their debts; and, a mark of the *tzadikim* — they show mercy and pay their debts. By debt, we mean a contract that involves an exchange of tangible assets — and, not fake debt due to fake loans base on intangible money of account.

We learn from this text the wicked are takers, and the righteous are givers.

22 For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off.

The Spirit repeats the promise in verse 11 — double assurance that His promise is true, correct, and not misleading.

23 The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.

The word “good” (*tov*) is not in the text, but it can be assumed that the man God delights is the *ish tov*, the *ish anav* (meek man of v. 11), and the *ish tzaddik* of verse 16.

24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.

The Spirit addresses a troubling concern of the *tzadikkim* — many are often shadowed by their own particular spiritual failures on the road to the Celestial City. The righteous may stumble and fall, but the LORD enables the humiliated to rise and be restored. Solomon informs us the righteous fall seven times and arise, but the wicked fall down and stay down (Proverbs 24:16).

25 I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

The psalmist now confirms the promises of God with his own experience. In his entire life, he cannot recall seeing a truly pious man destitute as if he had been forsaken by the Lord and constrained to beg at the back door of the *ra'im*.

26 He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed.

The “He” in this text refers to the *ish tzaddik* who is characterized as merciful and generous — a family man who not only cares for his children, but shows concerns for the plight of his neighbors.

Again, the *tzadikkim* are givers and not takers. Society is made better by holy men.

27 Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell for evermore.

The lesson is clear: since the above text shows the provision and protection of God upon the righteous, let us too depart from evil and to do good. Let us be generous, pay our debts, and shun covetous practices.

“dwell for evermore” is a general promise of not only life in heaven, but for a long life on earth.

God uses the wicked to exterminate the offspring of the wicked.

28 For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked (rasha'm) shall be cut off.

God loves to do what is right (*misphat*) toward the *tzadikkim* and towards the *ra'im* (evildoers). He preserves His saints (*ha'se'dim*) and punishes the seed of the *ra'im*.

The word “forsaketh” (*azab*) means “to leave, abandon, or neglect.” The “not” negates the verb. The *tzadikkim* may feel forsaken, but those feelings are a lie. The LORD forsaketh not His holy ones.

In contrast to the *tzadikkim* this text informs us that the seed (children, offspring) of the *rasha'm* “shall be cut off.”

Application: Stop fretting about abortion. God uses baby killers to fulfill his promise to exterminate the offspring of wicked people who want to kill their babies.

Psalm 21:10 Their fruit shalt thou destroy from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men.

Proverbs 24:20 For there shall be no reward to the evil man; the candle of the wicked shall be put out.

29 The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever.

The promise that the meek shall inherit the earth is now extended to the righteous; that is, the “meek” (anah’vim) are the *tzadikkim*. The terms “poor” and “humble” are synonyms for the righteous (tzaddik).

30 The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment.

The psalmist continues to identify the marks of the *tzadikkim*. Not only do they do good, they speak with wisdom. The word “speak” (haga) refers to a lion’s roar or to the *ish* (man) that moans and groans out thoughts on wisdom (chokmah) and justice (misphat).

31 The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide.

Another mark of the *ish tzaddik* is that the Law of the LORD God rules his heart. He thinks, speaks, moans, does, and talks about *misphat* (justice) and *amet* (truth).

The Hebrew word “truth” (אמת) (Psalm 31:5) begins with the letter Aleph and ends with letter Tav, the first and last letter of the Hebrew alphabet; that is, truth is about the Lord Jesus Christ, the Aleph and Tav, the A and the Z, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.

God frustrates the plans of the wicked to ravage the righteous.

32 The wicked (rasha’m) watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him.

The distinguishing marks of the *ra’im* and the *tzadikkim* are clear. While the *tzadikkim* think about *mishpat* (justice and goodness); the *ra’im* cast an evil eye on the righteous man with the intent to ruin him. Evildoers look for the right time to cast aspersions at the righteous in order to crush their careers and families.

33 The LORD will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged.

The *ra’im* devise schemes to attack and destroy the *tzadikkim*, but the Lord restrains their power and provides a way of escape. There are seasons where the *tzaddik* comes under the evil influence of the *ra’im* but the LORD will preserve His own; that is, we are not to interpret troublesome times as God’s abandonment of the *tzaddik*.

34 Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked (rasha’m) are cut off, thou shalt see it.

Two more ordinances are issued to the *tzadikkim*: wait and keep. The imperative “wait” (qavah) is a Piel verb requiring intense vigor to trust God and to fulfill one’s duty . . . even when troubled by the *rasha’m*.

His way is the way of righteousness and love as defined in His law.

The *tzadikim* have the promise that God will “exalt” them and pull them out of trouble to experience goodness in the land of the living whereas the *ra'im* are ruined in this life and the life to come.

Duty is ours and the righteous embrace it.

We have a promise: “thou shall see it;” that is, the observant man will see with his own eyes the fall of the wicked. What have you observed in the last month on how God is using the wicked to destroy the wicked? Wars, shootings, political reversals, abortion, and falls from power are evidence that God is fulfilling His promise to “cut off” the wicked in verse 28.

God impairs the prosperity of the wicked and tempers their influence

35 I have seen the wicked (rasha'm) in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree.

Now the author affirms the promises supra from his own experience. In his experience, he marveled at the prosperity of the *rasha'm*.

36 Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.

In time, the psalmist saw not only the rise of the *ra'im* (evildoers) to positions of power, but their complete fall from power.

37 Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.

But, the *ish tzaddik* has a different set of circumstances that the individual *rasha'm*.

The author exhorts us to carefully observe the course of the righteous. The word “perfect” (*tam*) adds to the list of synonyms for a righteous man: meek, poor, humble, and now the word “complete.” A righteous man has many troubles, but at the finish line there is peace.

Ellicott reads this text as “Mark the honest man, and behold the upright; for a posterity (shall be) to the man of peace.” Benson interprets this text as the righteous man moving from trouble to triumph.

God counters the ambitions of the wicked and scourges their future.

38 But the transgressors (pasha) shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked (rasha'm) shall be cut off.

“Transgressors” (*pasha*) is another name for the wicked. It refers to lawbreakers and rebels against God’s law-order. Just as the term “poor” (37:4), “meek” (37:22), “humble” (34:2) and “perfect” (37:37) are synonyms for the righteous man (37:16), the term *pash'im* (37:38) is a synonym for the *ra'im* (evildoers; transgressors) and the *rasha'm* or wicked (37:1).

39 But the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD: he is their strength in the time of trouble.

Duty is ours and we must do it; but, the results belong to the LORD. Though a saint may experience deep troubles in this life, his future is everlasting peace. Two powers of God are at work: His power to save the *tzadikkim*; and, His power to affect the ruin of the *ra'im*.

The *tzadikkim* are secure. They know power is not their own, but solely due to the salvation of God working on their behalf.

40 And the LORD shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked (rasha'm), and save them, because they trust in him.

This psalm begins with a command to the meek not to be angry over the fleeting prosperity of the wicked and ends with a golden promise that God will deliver the *tzadikkim* from the snares of the *ra'im*. Because they trust God (ha'saw) and not themselves, the LORD will help them (azar), deliver them (palat), and save them (yasha).

The general thought in this psalm is that any prosperity the *ra'im* experience is temporary, and that the righteous are eternally safe and secure in the palm of His hand (37:24); that the troubles of the meek are temporary and the troubles of the wicked are permanent.

Note

“yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be,” and, “thou shalt see it.”

Consider the untimely fall of the following: Elvis Presley, Playmate Marilyn Monroe, River Phoenix, Kurt Cobain, Gary Hart, O. J. Simpson, Anna Nicole Smith, Al Franken, Robin Williams, Amy Winehouse, Whitney Houston, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Harvey Weinstein, Jeffery Epstein, David Cameron, Jacinda Ardern,

Notes on Psalm 37:28

Stop Fretting About Abortion

Psalm 37:1 Fret not thyself because of evildoers

Righteous people are concerned about the spread of evil in their lifetime. Christians are trained by the media to do something . . . anything: listen, learn, vote, write, protest, jump up and down and scream, etc.

In fact, it is a mark of a good Christian to be burdened down by abortion, homosexuality, gun violence, sex change surgeries, and other degradations. But, this chapter tells us to STOP FRETTING ABOUT ABORTION . . . WARS . . . and GUN VIOLENCE.

The Imperative

Psalm 37:1 Fret not thyself (tit'har) because of evildoers (ra'im), neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.

'Fret not thyself' is a reflexive verb which prohibits God's man from fueling his anger by stoking the fire with reports about what the ra'im are doing.

Believers know they should not fret, but they do. They fret because they do not rest very well on the bed of God's promises; that is, they have not found the grounds on which to live a worry free, fret free life.

You can stop fretting by growing in the knowledge of God.

First, know that it is God's job to judge the wicked; that is, to separate the husks from the corn, the goats from the sheep, the tares from the wheat, and the wicked from among the righteous. We have a duty to remove the leaven from our own lives, but we have NO duty or power to remove malice and evil in society.

Second, know that God has promised to judge the wicked.

2 For the wicked shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. . . . 9 For evildoers shall be cut off. . . . 14 The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow . . . 5 Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken. . . . 17 For the arms of the wicked shall be broken: . . . 20 But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD shall be as the fat of lambs: 28 . . . but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.

Third, know that God is removing the wicked from society NOW!

28 For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.

The "seed" here refers to the babies, children, and families of the wicked.

Psalm 21:10 Their fruit shalt thou destroy from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men.

Fourth, know that God uses the wicked to cut off the seed of the wicked.

—Stop fretting about abortion. God is using wicked abortion "doctors" to fulfill His promise to cut off the seed (babies, children, offspring) of the wicked — promiscuous fornicators and adulterers in Hollywood, NYC, Chicago, London, Berlin, Paris, and the inner cities.

-Stop fretting about war and the casualties of war. God is using war to fulfill His promise to cut off the seed of the wicked.

-Stop fretting about gun violence in Chicago. God is using gun violence to fulfill His promise to cut off the seed of the wicked.

-Stop fretting about vaccine injuries and deaths. God is using the vax jabs to fulfill His promise to cut off the seed of the wicked.

-Stop fretting about child sex-change operations. God is using these monstrous procedures to sterilize the children of the wicked in order to fulfill His promise to cut off the seed of the wicked.

-Stop fretting about the elite's plan to reduce the world population by billions. God is using these wicked schemers to fulfill His promise to cut off the seed of the wicked.

Open your eyes and see. God is using the wicked to cut off the seed of the wicked.

Fret not!

Rest, soul, rest!

Disclaimer: Reasoning from the general to the specific is generally faulty reasoning. A faulty generalization is a true statement wherein a faulty conclusion is drawn from specifics of the major premise that is not mentioned in the statement.

It is true all dogs have four legs, but it is not true that Zebras are dogs because they have four legs.

It is true the wicked die, but not everyone who dies is wicked.

It is true that God shall cut off the seed of the wicked, but it does not mean every mother that has had a miscarriage is wicked. Some distresses, said Jesus, are for the glory of God (John 9:3).

Psalm 37:28 should not be used to label grieving parents who have lost children children and to judge them as wicked. Psalm 37:28 is a general promise that should encourage us, but not empower us to sit as judges on specific persons and their trying circumstances and then to conclude they must be evil. God forbid!

Psalm 46 - Nothing to Fear

Be Still and Know that I am God



This has been called “Martin Luther’s Psalm.” When all seemed lost, Luther would say, “Well, let us sing Psalm 46.”

This is a big psalm about a big God for people with big problems.

It is the ultimate assurance psalm based on the experience of the Hebrews that practiced the “discipline of being still” during the Assyrian invasion of Judah (circa 722 B.C.).

“Being still” and practicing “silence” is a rule of Orthodox monasteries, and we would do well to learn the discipline of compline after the noise and business of the day.

46:1 (To the chief Musician for the sons of Korah, A Song upon Alamoth.)

Great lessons in life call for great compositions by great composers — “the chief Musician for the sons of Korah” – conductor of Israel’s national choir.

The term “alamoth” denotes music in the high soprano range — music fit for Hebrew virgins to carol. How fitting for the most vulnerable of Israel’s population to dance and sing about the glories of their Protector; that is, this song is not for religious men. It is for true Christians leaning on the everlasting arms.

Stanza One

Nothing to Fear

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Like many psalms, the writer introduces the conclusion of his study first . . . but, this is not where he began his journey.

Some trust in chariots, some in armies, some in science, some in government, some in the will of the masses, and some in white-coat doctors. But, we trust in the Creator of Heaven and Earth.

The pronoun “our” applies to the true Israel, the church militant, waging war at the gates of hell.

Just as Assyria was unable to annihilate ancient Israel, it is impossible for Satan to destroy the body of Christ. The church is invincible.

2 Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;

“Therefore” refers to the wonderful effect of trusting in the Lord.

Have you noticed the chill factor in listening to the media? In the topsy-turvy world of politics, you get the idea that pompous, blathering buffoons in government are going to pass legislation that will split the earth and hurl the mountains into the midst of the sea. Wars and rumors of wars blacken the future.

The “therefore” announces the application. Graphite confidence fills the heart of all who trust Him. Trust feeds courage. Doubt feeds fear. Fear then, is a preposterous, irrational, absurd response for those claiming to trust God. Fear and trust cannot soldier together.

With so many enemies in positions of power assaulting the true Israel of God, how strong is this confidence?

The conjunction “though” is an argument that introduces the extent of this trust. Confidence in God leans on the breast of His love and the muscle of His power. This assurance is true “even if” mountain ranges like the Alps and Andes melt like wax.

“Evil is powerless when the good are unafraid” (Ronald Reagan).

Let us listen to our faith, not our fears! Let us believe God, not our foes.

3 Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

In this spiritual masterpiece the psalmist uses the term “Selah” three times. The word is a musical notation, but to some it means to “STOP AND THINK ABOUT THIS!”

The conjunction “though” introduces another hypothetical extreme to demonstrate the diamond-quality of this trust — trust that grows as one examines the steel powers of the LORD God. Confidence in God’s protection should reign in the heart “even if” the earth rumbles with tower-cracking earthquakes and mountain peaks smoking with volcanic ash while spewing out fire-red lava that flows into the deep blue sea.

Roaring seas and volcanic mountains are metaphors describing the surf and foam of politics and fiery on of kings lusting for power. When we have no answers for stupidity on stilts and these hot-tempered eruptions that scorch the earth, we boldly trust God.

Stanza Two

Everything Provided

4 There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High.

The river that makes glad the people of God is not a literal water source in Jerusalem, nor is it the muddy Jordan in the Jericho Valley. Rather, it is a refreshing metaphor for the water of eternal life which flows from “the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city” — the ideal picture of the gospel of grace (Revelation 22:2).

5 God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early.

“God in the midst of her” informs the audience that His help is near and sure; that the enemies of God can only go so far before they are restrained and crushed by God’s armies.

This psalm has the same fragrance as Isaiah 36-39 where the Lord crushed the Assyrian invasion during the reign of Hezekiah without Israel having to shoot an arrow.

“And that right early” means God is seldom early, never late, and right on time.

6 The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted.

“The heathen raged” is the psalmist’s way of describing the fiery furnace of politics – especially the invasion of Assyria during the days of Hezekiah. Because psychopaths rule the nations, news is filled with lava-hot conflicts and madmen preparing for war.

That “kingdoms were moved” inform us of the confusion that occurs when armies are on the march. Israel trembled with knocking knees and pounding hearts when they heard the news that Sennacherib’s army defeated Lachish and advanced towards Jerusalem. The earth trembled, and hearts melted.

The Chorus

7 The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

We have the second “selah” in this verse – a musical and literary notation.

“The Lord of hosts” is a reference to the armies of God — a lesson the people in Jerusalem learned after God’s armies crushed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers.

“The God of Jacob” refers to undercover providence and the release of grace to protect people despite their many flaws. Nobody loved Jacob, but God did!

“That God is with us” must have been in doubt when the citizens of Jerusalem peered over the wall and stared at the Assyrian infantry setting up camp around their walls.

The next day, when the people of Jerusalem woke up and saw the corpses of their enemies strewn on the battlefield, they shouted with joy, “God IS with us! He IS, He IS, He IS! He IS our refuge!”

This knowledge came after their mighty deliverance and without a soldier lifting his sword against the Assyrians.

Selah notes a musical pause, but spiritually speaking, let us “STOP AND THINK ABOUT THIS!”

Stanza Three

Something to Behold and Believe

8 Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth.

Soldiers dead. Corpses everywhere. Chariots and supplies abandoned, the nation became street-hawking evangelists: “Come, behold the works of the Lord!” That is, this is the psalmist’s invitation to come and share in the lessons they learned after this great victory.

“Desolations” refers to the crushing of Sennacherib’s troops and the plague of death that decimated the Assyrian army.

9 He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire.

“He maketh wars to cease” refers to the sudden end of the Assyrian campaign against Judah.

Breaking the bow and burning the chariots with fire refers to the wings of death and destruction that smashed the Assyrians when they entered the killing fields of the Lion of Judah.

Likewise, the Lord frustrates the plans of generals. A strange force is at work preventing war hawks from launching nuclear strikes. Look and see. Hear and learn. He crushes cynical ambitions for war in our day. He does not make all wars to cease, but He does prevent many wars.

Threaten His lambs, and you are a dead man!

10 Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

The main application of the psalm is wrapped up in two verbs: “Be still, and know that I am God” — a difficult command for the hyperactive Christian. The Hebrew Hiphil imperative verb is causative; that is, take steps to calm yourself . . . to be still . . . to be quiet.

There are times when we are not permitted to exercise “freedom of speech” or to run around in a panic waving our hands and crying out for Christians to do something . . . anything . . . to do more . . . to pray more . . . to write more . . . to vote more. . . more, more, more. Our hope is in God, not the nervous activity of religious zealots.

Hezekiah ordered the inhabitants of Jerusalem to be silent. The people were not permitted to speak a word during the Assyrian siege. Every tongue begged to be free of the king’s order and to blather about the size of the Assyrian army, to complain about personal discomforts, and to share fear with anyone who would listen.

“But the people remained silent and said nothing in reply, because the king had commanded, “Do not answer him.” (Isaiah 36:21)

What wisdom by Hezekiah!

The first discipline we learn when facing adversaries is to “Be still!”

The Spirit of God instructs His people: when you face problems bigger than you . . . “Be still in your spirit . . . and practice the discipline of silence.”

The word “be still” (raphah) means “to cast down, to sink, to relax, or to abandon” a course. It is translated “idle” in Exodus 5:8; “forsake” in Deuteronomy 4:31; and “let alone” in Deuteronomy 9:14. Compare with Exodus 14:13, “Stand still, and see the salvation of God.”

We live in a world of noise, chatter, commercials, causes, protests and sirens where peace and quiet is a treasured commodity.

Many of us are “go getters.” Nervous energy burns within the furnace of our hearts when troubles arise. We want to solve them . . . to do something . . . anything. We have difficulty learning the discipline of being still. Our impatient voice mutters, “Are we there yet?”

“Being still” is not merely external, but an internal state where a man is prepared to hear the voice of God. Hearing the voice of God is not to be taken “literally.” Rather, the phrase refers to a soul finding rest by believing the Holy Scriptures.

The second discipline follows the first. The purpose of being still is so a person can know God in an undistracted way.

In every age, the most spiritual among us seek golden silence and the knowledge of God. It was the key in Habakkuk’s day:

“But the LORD is in His holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before Him.”
(Habakkuk 2:20).

During “Compline” (9:00 PM) Orthodox monks take time for personal prayer and meditation. Speaking is strictly forbidden.

Some problems are bigger than the man, bigger than the family, and bigger than the nation. Silence with a trust in God is the need of the hour!

“Know that I am God . . .” – that is, think about the greatness of God, and not the greatness of our problems.

When facing giants, we need to abandon worry and ponder the power of God. “Know” the Lord Jesus Christ is God . . . enthroned at the right hand of the Father . . . having all authority and power “to crush Satan under your feet” (Matthew 28:18; Romans 16:20).

Knowing God means to know that God is God, and that we are not in charge of the universe. We are not in control. We are not in command, and therefore we do not need to be giving orders to others! The Spirit calls us to rest and harness all nervous energy erupting from the inferno of our anxiety. Our need is to arrange ourselves under His authority, His will, and His law — not to act like a general ordering subordinates to do something.

I will be exalted in the earth.

Your battle may not be about you, but about God being exalted (Heb: rum = lifted up – Genesis 14:22) among the nations.

“I will defend this city and save Jerusalem for my sake and for the sake of David my servant!” (Isaiah 37:35).

The final vision of history is not one where Satan wins by enslaving every man to vices rooted in darkness. Rather, the Prophet Habakkuk informs us . . .

“For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea” (Habakkuk 2:14).

History is not going around in circles. It is headed toward the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth.

“I will be exalted in the earth” infers the conversion of the Gentiles by the gospel of Christ: when “the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever” (Revelation 11:15).

When His glory is at stake, we know the battle is won. He is reigning now. He will defeat all His enemies! Our duty is “to be still” and to know that God will defend His honor and deliver His people.

Sometimes we have to “let go” and “let God” engage the enemy. He does not need our counsels or nervous energy feeling like we have to do something . . . anything. Further, He does not need the wheel of government to accomplish His purposes: “Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.” (Isaiah 40:15)

In these global developments there is little a single patriot can do to deter the anti-God forces. Huge headaches call us to forsake complaining and to trust God . . . to forsake the harvest of our anxiety . . . to diligently know that the risen Christ is our Commander . . . that He is in control of all the events of history.

Do not hear what is not being said. The Spirit is not encouraging irresponsibility or telling us to despise duty. Many of our personal problems can be resolved through prayer, planning, and perseverance in doing good.

Remember what Robert E. Lee told his son, “Do your duty in all things. You can’t do more, and you should never wish to do less.”

But, when the problem is bigger than the man, it is time to practice the discipline of “being still” — to know that God is God . . . that He is our Refuge and Present Help in the time of trouble. . . . that He will be exalted among the nations!

The Chorus

11 The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

This verse contains the third “selah” in the psalm. Be still like a cow chewing on its cud mulling over these promises in our minds. Rest, Soul, rest!

In case the reader didn’t catch the supreme truth that conquers fear, he repeats his lesson on theology: “The Lord of hosts with all his angelic armies is with us; the God of Jacob, the God of all grace is with us.”

Therefore, “BE STILL! REMEMBER GOD! DO NOT FEAR! Fear and faith never shake hands.

Selah: Some think this is a musical notation, but others think it means, “STOP AND THINK ABOUT THIS!” It certainly applies here. The wicked will not win! The LORD God will be exalted among the nations!

Psalm 47 - The Great King

The Lord Reigns Over the Nations



This psalm feels like a king's coronation; like the time David brought the ark to Jerusalem. But, it is more than this. Because of expressions like "nations" and "earth" and "shall chose," we interpret this passage in the broadest sense of Christ's authority.

This psalm challenges our faith. For those people who read scores about the politics of madmen, it seems like we are ruled by patients from an insane asylum. It is one thing to say "the Lord is in control," but it takes eyes of faith to believe "the Lord reigns" when we walk on a knife's edge.

Psalm 47:1 <To the chief Musician, A Psalm for the sons of Korah.>

Reasons for Victory Shouts

O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph.

The LORD summons the whole world to salute His ascension with applause and shouts of triumph. God's reigns is the gospel of the Old Testament (Psalm 97:1; 99:1: 47:8). This truth ought to bring hands together in loud claps and voices that whoop and holler.

In the following verses the psalmist gives reasons for this shout of victory.

2 For the LORD most high is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth.

"terrible" (yare') means "to be feared."

Reason One: There are many gods, but the LORD is the Most High — a God to be feared (terrible) by all the nations of the earth. We are not slaves under some despot; we are made kings under the Most High.

The phrase "a great King over all the earth" is the principal message of this psalm. He rules the world. Nations rise and fall because He is the universal sovereign. He governs. He leads. He restrains. He rewards and He punishes. His grace and justice is upon all. And, He does no man wrong.

In Hebrew parallelism, "great" and "most high" are comparable adjectives.

Clap and shout for the Most High God is great in power, great in knowledge, and great in mercy. Cherubims above the mercy seat stand ready to serve His sovereignty, and marvel that His mercy endures for ever. He brings gentiles into his fold, not for slaughter, but for salvation.

3 He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet.

Reason Two: He reigns over us for our good.

The verb “subdue” can mean “to chose” or “to speak” or “to command.” It feels like He is saying, “I intentionally chose you as my inheritance to be your guide on the rocky trails of life;” or, “He shall speak (command) the people to be under us;” that is, He chose us to be rulers and not slaves.

“it is reasonable to conclude, that the bringing the nations of the earth to the knowledge and worship of Jehovah, and under subjection to the gospel, whereby, instead of being slaves, they were made free from the bondage of sin and death, was the great subject signified by these magnificent expressions” (Benson).

His Word is the agency of nations subjecting themselves to His authority. What kind of Champion is Christ who conquers people, and then showers them with gifts fit for a king (Ephesians 4:3-10)?

4 He shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom he loved. Selah.

Reason three: “He shall choose our inheritance for us” referring to the land of Canaan as the inheritance of Israel, or more completely, He chose us to participate in the glories of His kingdom by giving us land.

“the excellency of Jacob” refers to the Holy Land (Deuteronomy 8:7-9; 2 Kings 18:22). Psalm 47:4).

The verb “choose” (bachar) is in an imperfect — a future tense causing us to consider God choosing the church to share in the “common wealth of Israel” and in the glories of His salvation. The view “that all the promises are mine” comes into play here.

Moreover, “the meek shall inherit the earth.”

5 God is gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.

Reason four: The LORD has ascended His throne and is ruling over the affairs of men.

Trumpets were used in Israel to warn, to proclaim, and to announce important events.

“gone up” refers to the Ark being brought to Jerusalem in triumphal procession to install Him as King of the Nations — a marvelous celebration where the LORD ascended His throne to rule over a grateful people.

Picture in your mind's eye people shouting, clapping, and trilling when the Ark was brought to Mt. Moriah (Jerusalem) to reign over Israel; moreover, consider the ascension of Christ when the Son completed his work on earth and ascended the throne at the right hand of the Father with trumpets blasting and angelic choirs singing.

Reasons to Sing and to Praise God

6 Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises.

The command “sing” and the word “praises” is repeated four times in this verse. Emotional interjections of shouts and clapping are not enough. Poets compose artistic lyrics and choirs must be organized to celebrate the reign of the King . . . the reign of the sovereign, merciful LORD God. Men have yet to exhaust their talents in commemorating the glorious reign of this triumphant Savior-King.

7 For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding.

Before us is another prime statement: “For God is the King of all the earth.”

The Lord is not just King of Israel, but King over all the earth. He is not only my King, but King of the Nations. It is one thing to say “God is the King of all the earth;” and, it is another matter to understand it and to “stand under” this truth in the time of trouble. It was this message of King Jesus that “turned the world upside down” (Acts 17:6-7).

8 God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness.

This text is the cardinal truth of this psalm: *The Lord Reigns Over the Nations*.

Biblical minds understand that God reigns over His people, but it takes a spiritually dilated mind to perceive He rules over the nations with all their imperfections.

The word “heathen” (gowy) refers to the nations.

“God sitteth upon the throne” is Hebrew parallelism for the foremost statement, “God reigneth.”

“upon the throne of holiness” instructs us that His reign includes judgment as well as beneficence.

9 The princes of the people are gathered together, even the people of the God of Abraham: for the shields of the earth belong unto God: he is greatly exalted.

“shields” is a metonym for the protection governments provide for their people.

The “princes of the earth” refer to kings, chancellors, and heads of state. The “shields of the earth” include the kings of ancient Israel descended from Abraham and the armies of Babylon, Persian, Greece, Rome, Egypt, Syria, Britain, France, Germany, China, Japan, Australia, India, Angola, Libia, Argentina, Canada, and the United States. All are under His authority and injunction.

The psalmist ends with a final thought: “He is greatly exalted.” Consider our Lord Jesus Christ Who is sitting . . . not just upon the throne of David . . . but at the right hand of the Father on the throne of God in majesty, glory, and power with all things under His feet.`

The fulfillment (Acts 2) is always greater than the promise (2 Samuel 7).

Living in an insane asylum? Walking on a knife's edge? The Lord reigns! Know it; believe it, rest in it.

Psalm 52 - The Wicked Tongue

The Goodness of the Lord Endureth Forever



The background of this story is found in 1 Samuel 22 and Saul's slaughter of the priests at Nob.

The value of the psalm is that it is the only commentary on the tragic killings that took place in 1 Samuel 22; that is, this psalm explains the terrible slaughter of innocent priests and their households.

No doubt the HEADLINES for the liberal Gibeon Post would read:

"The King Orders the Execution of Rebel Priests and their Families."

The HEADLINES from the conservative Hebron Times would read quite differently:

"A Holocaust to Remember: The Government Goes on a Killing Rampage Murdering 85 Innocent Priests, 200 Helpless Women, Children and Babies . . . and 1000 Harmless Baby Lambs and Goats!"

The "wicked tongue" refers to the blabbermouth tongue of Doeg the Edomite, descendent of Esau. a duplicitous, money-hungry, power-seeking man among the servants of Saul.

Psalm 52:1 <To the chief Musician, Maschil, A Psalm of David, when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, and said unto him, David is come to the house of Ahimelech.>

In fleeing from Saul, David came to the tabernacle where Ahimelech served as high priest. Pretending to be on a military mission, David requested bread to eat, and Ahimelech gave David's men sacramental loaves from off the holy table — a lesson demonstrating that necessity takes priority over ceremony.

Doeg, according to the Talmud, was one of the most learned men of his time — "the greatest rabbinist" (Ellicott).

Calling Doeg an Edomite associated him with Esau who sought the destruction of Jacob, the Israel of God; that is, the one who persecuted David, the one destined to be king of Judah.

Doeg, "who stood with Saul's servants," saw Ahimelech show kindness to David. During the early days of Saul's pursuit of David, Doeg reported to Saul Ahimelech's mercy to the young general — not for the love of truth, but for political gain . . . as proof of loyalty to Saul who was beginning to show signs of delirium.

Saul ordered Ahimelech and the priests to appear before him to give account of their kindness to David. Saul represents the de facto government. More killing is done in the name of government than any other name. Governments killed over 160 million people in 20th century.

Thus, the government of Saul charged the priests with criminal conspiracy. Without due process, the Supreme Court Judge (Saul) issued a summary judgment for his military to execute the priests for high treason. But, his officers protested with silence refusing to carry out the groundless order. The king-judge of Israel's government, operating on the principle "guilty until proven innocent," barked out the execution order to Doeg, the government sycophant.

Eager to please Saul, he vigorously murdered Ahimelech along with 85 other priests. Moreover, Doeg rushed to the city of Nob and lifted up his sword against helpless wives, children, babies and livestock belonging to the dead, innocent priests — a Jewish holocaust against a Levite priestly family. Only Abiathar escaped.

During WWII the navy posted signs, "Loose lips sink ships" And this psalm is about Doeg's wicked tongue that censored the truth resulting in the tragic, inexcusable genocide of Abimelech's family.

Doeg the Edomite, in order to secure the favor of Saul, gladly obeyed the king's twisted order.

One of the main lessons of this psalm is that no man has the duty to tell the truth to men of power who will abuse the truth. Wisely, Saul's other officers remained silent. Doeg's legalistic dedication to a "tell all" policy and his perverted devotion to his rebellious boss was the cause of hundreds of deaths. Because he put devotion to the government above devotion to God, innocent people died.

The Damnable Character of the Informer

Why boastest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man? the goodness of God endureth continually.

"mischief" (ra) means "evil."

The word "boastest" (halal) means "to shine." It is at the root of "hallelu-jah" except in this case Doeg shined for evil; that is, he thought of pleasing the king and being an executioner of priests made this man's face to light up with Devilish delight.

"Those that glory in sin, glory in their shame" (Matthew Henry).

"O mighty man" is sarcasm and not a compliment. Doeg was mighty in evil, in wickedness, and in depravity. More like a powerful thug, gang leader, or mafia figure, he lacked all the virtues of an *el gibbor*. Rejecting the omnipotent power of Almighty God, Doeg sought political power from the king of Israel.

"Clearly, if man will not worship God he will worship that which he believes will give him power" — Rushdoony.

“the goodness of God endureth continually” is the main lesson of the psalm. Literally it means “all day long” — the idea here is that Doeg’s blow to the priesthood appeared to be a substantial victory by the powers of darkness. However, David assures us the goodness of God endures and prevails over evil; that Doeg’s genocide did not diminish or damage the goodness of God; that there is nothing that evil men like Doeg can do to derail the purposes of God . . . the mercy of God . . . or the power of God.

“All things are working together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28).

Let us learn a lesson here. The media seems to possess a subtle joy in reporting negative news around the globe, but there is nothing the rich and powerful can do to frustrate the eternal purposes of the LORD God and His goodness toward men. History is headed toward the kingdom of God and there is nothing that deceivers can do to spoil God’s plan.

- The King Saul’s order to kill the priests of Nob did not diminish the goodness of God.
- The slaughter of men, women, children, and babies did not abate the goodness of God.
- The sudden death of a beloved family member does not arrest the goodness of God.
- The slaughter of innocents by governments does not frustrate the goodness of God.
- The senseless killing of Christians in church by an insane terrorist does not fetter the goodness of God.
- My death or your death will not disrupt the goodness of God.

God is good and always good. Even in bad times, rest under the cedar tree of God’s goodness. It “endures all day long.”

“Perhaps a clear sign of Christian maturity is the willingness to worship God when He has determined to be God hidden” – Rushdoony.

2 Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully.

“Thy tongue” is a metonym for Doeg . . . and his twisted ambitions. A sophisticated man, his words could not be trusted.

“deviseth” means “to plan, scheme, calculate, or invent.”

“mischiefs” (hav’vah) is a feminine, plural absolute in the emphatic position in the sentence; that is, this man’s mind was filled with devilment, Machiavellian motives, and venom.

“the tongue of man creates nearly all the mischief of the world” (writer Edwin Paxton Hood).

“like a sharp razor” is a metaphor for treachery, malice, and unrestrained recklessness. Doeg’s tongue was as sharp as a razor and it resulted in the bloody deaths of over 200 innocent people.

“Doeg, pretending only to vindicate himself from the imputation of disloyalty, 1 Samuel 22:8, really intended to expose the priests, who were friends to David, to the king’s fury and cruelty” (Benson).

3 Thou lovest evil more than good; and lying rather than to speak righteousness. Selah.

Doeg’s feigned political devotion to King Saul could easily be misinterpreted as loyalty and patriotism. David, however, takes us to the core of truth on this matter. Doeg murdered these innocent priests not for love of country but because he loved evil (Isaiah 5:20).

“Thou lovest . . . lying rather than to speak righteousness.” For the undiscerning legalist, it might appear Doeg did what he did because he loved the truth. However, this mess had nothing to do with truth and everything to do with fraud and financial gain.

His account was a lie about David being a disloyal servant . . . a lie about the motives of Ahimelech who exercised love and kindness toward hungry men; that is, helping David was not an act of disloyalty to Saul but an act of kindness acceptable to God. Saul concluded from Doeg’s report that David hated him; that Ahimelech had taken a political position against King Saul, and Doeg did nothing to defend David, Ahimelech, the innocent priests, or the truth. Doeg was a man willing to countenance the lie that this whole affair was a conspiracy against Saul. True men protest when their superiors jump to the wrong conclusion based on a distortion of facts.

“to speak righteousness” refers to the standard of speech — that is, God calls men to guard their tongues, to do what is right, and to speak what is right. In a sinful world where men are hell bent on doing evil, you do not owe the truth to men who will abuse the truth. Abraham did not share the absolute truth to Pharaoh (Genesis 12); the midwives did not share the truth to Pharaoh (Exodus 1); and, Daniel did not share the whole truth to Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 2). And, Doeg, instead of telling the whole truth only told the facts that fed Saul’s prejudice.

4 Thou lovest all devouring words, O thou deceitful tongue.

Again the “tongue” is a metonym for Doeg . . . his thinking processes and the instrument of lies.

The phrase “devouring words” refers to chosen words that “swallow up” . . . that trap and immediately persuade crowds . . . that appeal to one’s biases . . . that stir the emotions to support a political perspective. In the instant case, Doeg’s report about the alleged treason of David and Abimelech seemed plausible and credible . . . words that caused Saul to jump to conclusions with no need for investigation.

“devouring words” that if believed would result in death and destruction . . . like whales swallowing men whole . . . like lions tearing a man to shreds and then eating them.

“deceitful tongue” refers to the intent to defraud and to destroy — to malice aforethought.

Modernists call this fake news, rumor, hearsay, scandal, prejudicial reporting, propaganda, and brainwashing.

The Destruction of the Informer

5 God shall likewise destroy thee for ever, he shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling place, and root thee out of the land of the living. Selah.

“destroy” means “to tear down” or “beat down” as demolishing a building.

“take thee away” — means to seize and carry away like cold coals from a fireplace. Barnes sees this as a man carrying a pan of hot coals out the house so they don’t burn the house down. James’ metaphor for the tongue as fire and venom comes into focus here (James 3).

Changing metaphors from fires to gardening. David uses terms like “pluck up” and “root thee out” of the land to define how God is going to deal with weedy tongues. Liars and murderers are not welcome in God’s house . . . and choking weeds of malice are not welcome in His garden. Tares will be gathered and burned.

6 The righteous also shall see, and fear, and shall laugh at him:

Here we have the reaction of the pious to God’s judgment on liars and murderers. When the righteous see the collapse of deceivers, they experience mingled feelings of solace in the overthrow of the wicked and fear due to the power of God.

7 Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness.

The particle of interjection “Lo” means to “stop and study this.”

Gill says, the Targum renders it, “that made not the Word of the Lord his strength.” Literally, however, it should be translated, “Behold, the man does not set (or make) God his means of safety and protection.”

“this man” refers directly to Doeg the liar-murderer and all that follow in his footsteps. This is a man who trusted in his riches . . . in his wicked king . . . in political power instead of the God of power.

Here is a man “willing to purchase Saul’s favor at the expense of God’s displeasure” (Matthew Poole).

“Right or wrong, he would get what he could, and keep what he had, and ruin any one that stood in his way” (Matthew Henry).

“but trusted in his riches” -- Gill calls Doeg an anti-Christian whore boasting of his riches and trusting them. In actuality, he was a government sycophant. Merriam-Webster defines sycophant as “a servile self-seeking flatterer.” In layman’s terms, a sycophant is a brownnoser, a flunky, or a suck-up.

“and strengthened himself in his wickedness” -- Doeg not only invested his soul in money . . . he increasingly shed his interest in the Almighty while adding more stock in shekels to his portfolio.

The Destiny of David

8 But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God: I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever.

“green olive tree” is a metaphor for prosperity. “green” represents the color of the tree and not its age.

While Doeg was investing his hope in money, David invested his precious all in the kingdom of God . . . “in the mercy of God.”

“for ever and ever” teaches us that David believed trusting God was not only a benefit in this life, but had eternal consequences. David was a green olive tree in the house of God because the power of love overcame the love of power.

9 I will praise thee for ever, because thou hast done it: and I will wait on thy name; for it is good before thy saints.

David has no praise for the rich man who gained the favor of Saul by obeying his wicked orders.

“I will praise thee because thou hast done it” — The “it” refers to the destruction of David’s unrelenting enemies and his exaltation as King in Judah.

“done it” seems to mean that David saw the destruction of Doeg, and David saw the establishment of his throne in the divided nation.

As a prince, David’s trust in God was on display. The establishment of his kingship justified his trust in God — a key event in the history of the nation — a major reversal that was good for the saints. Not only did David rejoice in his new found success, but the whole nation reaped the benefits of his election to power.

Psalm 55 - Know Your Enemies

Cast Your Burden on the Lord



The Christian is at war with enemies within and without.

Sun Tzu taught:

“If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.”

Ellicott says this psalm “is one of the most passionate odes of the whole collection—bursts of fiery invective alternating with the most plaintive and melancholy reflections: it has supplied to Christianity and the world at least two expressions of intense religious feeling, the one ([Psalm 55:6-7](#)) breathing despair, the other ([Psalm 55:22](#)) the most restful hope.”

The Troubled Soul

Psalm 55:1 (To the chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil,

Since David penned this psalm after the Absalom revolt, we would do well to learn the major lesson that came out of David’s conflicts.

Great conflicts inspire great thoughts, and great thoughts require great songs.

The term “Neginoth” refers to a vigorous tempo to express villainy as well as conquest.

A Psalm of David.) Give ear to my prayer, O God; and hide not thyself from my supplication.

Forced to flee Jerusalem during the Absalom revolt, David was unsure if God was pleased with him. Fearing that God might ignore his pleas and turn away from him in his troubles, he pleads with the LORD to not shut His eyes nor close His ears to the frailty of his person or to the fractures in his prayers.

Pounded by critics, David prays that God would hear his prayer. O God, you hear many prayers, but hear my prayer. May my moans be sweetened by the Spirit and ascend to heaven sprinkled with the incense of Christ.

That God “hides himself” is a fact all men face; but, let it never enter our mind that God has abandoned His children. Hiding maybe, but forsaken? May it never be (Hebrews 13:5–6; Deuteronomy 31:6–8).

David prays that God would come out of his chambers, appear in court, and make a ruling in his favor. When the pilgrim feels like God is hiding Himself, let him remember there was only one man in history from whom God hid his face and that was when our Lord became sin for us upon that old rugged cross. As long as we are alive, there is hope God will hear our prayers and bless them.

2 Attend unto me, and hear me: I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise;

A “complaint” is a formal charge before a competent judge against an adversary that caused substantial harm.

“Attend” is an imperative, the mood of prayer in God’s Courtroom. David motions the Court to hear his verifiable complaint. He realizes that his imperfect pleading is like a loud noise that disturbs the peace of the Court. Nevertheless, he pleads that the Most High would patiently consider the facts of his case.

Linearly thinking, David’s enemies were Ahithophel and co-conspirators in the Absalom revolt.

Geometrically thinking, the Christian would do well to consider that his enemies are those in rebellion against God’s law-order. These would include tyrants in foreign countries, government officers, corporations, neighbors in society, and even wives, husbands, children, who are hostile to God (John 7:7). King Ahab (the government) called Elijah his enemy (1 Kings 20). Jesus warned the disciples that in choosing to follow Christ, enemies would arise from their own household (Matthew 10:36). Eve enticed Adam. Miriam was struck with leprosy because she had the arrogance to criticize Moses (Numbers 12). Jewish leaders prosecuted the apostles (Acts 3, 5-7, 12).

3 Because of the voice of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked: for they cast iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me.

In referring to the “voice of the enemy,” David may be thinking of Ahithopel, Absalom, Shemei, and loyalists to Saul who plotted David’s downfall.

Geometrically speaking, godly men and women are surrounded by government agents, news broadcasters, and members of their family that launch missiles of slanderous commentary against them. Contentious women can drive a man out of the house. Adulterous husbands make themselves an enemy of faithful women. Rebellious children can blame and castigate responsible parents making themselves an enemy of the family.

4 My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me.

The political criticism, much of which was untrue, plagued this lamb-king. The mutiny shook the foundation of David’s throne. And, then, there was the matter relating to Uriah — an arrow of bitter-truth that pierced his own soul.

5 Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me.

Like thieves breaking into one's house at midnight, these pirates of peace stirred up fear and caused David to respond with sweaty palms, shortness of breath, and knocking knees. One can tolerate an open belligerent, but who can manage covert conventions and whispers of revolt by secret conspirators? Many a good man has been the victim of a conspiracy taking place around the office water-fountain. More pastors have lost their pastorate for following Christ than for any other reason.

6 And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest.

“dove” -- At this moment in the king's life, David felt like the last leaf on a winter's limb. If he could not stomp his enemies like an elephant, he would escape like a dove. Lonely, afraid, and surrounded by political adversaries, this monarch wanted to disappear into the evening sky to escape the steel traps set for his slaughter.

7 Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness. Selah.

Deserts are death for large armies, but David saw the wilderness as a place of safety. Israel in its flight from Egypt was sustained by God in the desert. Like Israel, David wanted to flee, be alone, and experience the calm of a Bedouin life. Wise men always seek peace and quiet so they can escape the hustle and bustle of city life to commune with God and gain perspective.

8 I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest.

A storm was brewing, and David wanted to flee his post like a little dove. Indecision meant certain death. Unable to bear a direct confrontation with the rebels, this little bird-king fled Jerusalem to reach the calm in the Jordan Valley . . . and to avoid a massacre of the innocent.

But, dear reader, you are not a bird and you have no wings. But, you can “take refuge in the shadow of His wings until the disaster has passed” (Psalm 57:1).

9-11 Destroy, O Lord, and divide their tongues: for I have seen violence and strife in the city.

In his flight from Absalom, David whispered a quick prayer.

The word “destroy” means “to swallow up.”

David saw the political parties convening and plotting for power in Jerusalem. He knew Jerusalem was divided in their loyalties. Because “divide and conquer” is a well-known strategy for conquest, David prays that God would divide their counsel . . . their unity . . . and ambitions; that He would turn their words into babel and divide the gang of mutineers. And, He did (1 Samuel 15, 16).

Forget trying to manipulate rebels. Pray and trust! Pray and rest! Pray and do not resort to covert manipulation.

Day and night they go about it upon the walls thereof: mischief also and sorrow are in the midst of it. Wickedness is in the midst thereof: deceit and guile depart not from her streets.

The very heart of the capital city was rotten to the core. Where noble statesmen should meet, corruption poisoned justice. Crime abounded. Treason seized motives. Bribes captured hearts. Proud psychopaths coveted the throne. Trustees became treacherous. Commoners became commanders. Thieves prospered. Law and order vanished. Despair set in like a London fog.

12-14 For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him: 13 But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company.

The most troubling aspect of the Absalom revolt was not that loyalist to Saul cheered the rebellion, but that Ahithophel, his trusted counselor, joined the revolt and counseled Absalom on how to destroy David's company.

When chatter through the grapevine reached David that Ahithophel betrayed him, the report crushed his confidence in man. David could endure invectives from sworn enemies, but betrayal from a trusted friend? A turncoat by a brother in the faith was more than his heart could endure. A friend becoming a foe? It was easier to face Goliath than it was to grasp the fact that Ahithophel had turned into a Judas. The dagger of treachery thrust deep into his soul. "Et tu Brute?"

There was nothing in this political rebellion that discouraged David, except that his trusted friend and counselor had joined the coup. Likewise, Christians in pursuit of holiness are not rattled by the malice of anti-Christ, but nothing shakes a godly man more than to learn close friends have joined a conspiracy to end his career, or ministry, or life. It is even worse when these traitors turn out to be a wife, son, or "brother" in Christ.

If you have a Judas in your ministry, you know that you are in the will of God. If you are a Judas, repent deeply!

15 Let death seize upon them, and let them go down quick into hell: for wickedness is in their dwellings, and among them.

The king orders a death sentence. With his sense of justice provoked, David erupts with disgust spewing out fire and fumes in every direction. Like a good soldier, he wished for conquest over his enemies. His enemies driven by madness sought to kill him, and the king determined to defeat them. When you can't live with your enemies, they must die. Love is the answer for some troubles, but death is the answer for rebels. Those who seek peace with God will find the olive branch of salvation, but those who war against God will only hear the gavel pounding condemnation.

"wickedness in their dwellings" addresses the nature and character of the wicked. Covetousness controls their conversations. They live in a den of iniquity with hatred, violence, and fraud. Their hearts are fountains of pride and lusts. These swine love the pigsty and must be rooted out by the justice of good men and the judgment of Almighty God.

“hell” or hades: There is justice in this age. Some sinners are judged now in this life, and others will fry like bacon when they are cast into hell.

16 As for me, I will call upon God; and the LORD shall save me. 17 Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.

The word “cry aloud” (hamah) means “to murmur, groan, or growl.” That is, David would find a way to give expression to the roaring taking place in his soul. Generals rely upon planning and counter plots; but, David relied upon prayer. His confidence is astounding.

David made his stand: Let others drown themselves in a sea of selfish ambition, but for me and my house, we will trust the Lord. I know not what course others may take to secure their future, but as for me, I will pray “evening, and morning, and at noon.”

“He shall hear my voice” expresses faith. Faith speaks positively of the LORD . . . but not necessarily about the riffraff on stage in this political theater. While determined to pray, David knew that deliverance was not far away.

18 He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me: for there were many with me.

The verb “delivered” (padah) is a perfect tense meaning “to ransom;” that is, even though the revolutionaries outnumbered David’s forces, he views God as already having redeemed him from defeat and death. Though Absalom had military muscle, God blessed David with tactical superiority. In this civil war, Absalom was killed and David lived.

“For there were many with” should be translated, “For there were many fighting against me.” Many or few, great or small, strong or weak, God has the power to deliver those trusting in Him.

19 God shall hear, and afflict them, even he that abideth of old. Selah. Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God.

“Afflict” (anah) means “to answer.” That is, when the enemy complains, God has an answer; when the enemy strikes a blow, God delivers a counterblow; when enemies lie, the Lord speaks truth and slays them.

“he that abideth of old” refers to unrepentant adversaries settled in their crusty habits of corruption.

“they have no changes” refers to the relentless pursuit of enemies. Because these political adversaries did not fear God, they could not turn back, change their course, or retreat from their evil intent to murder David.

20-21 He hath put forth his hands against such as be at peace with him: he hath broken his covenant. The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords.

“He” is a poetic device used to express the character of the whole.

“put forth his hands against such as be at peace with him” refers to the treachery of these actors who outwardly speak peace but inwardly love death and criminally assault peaceful men who have not injured them (Proverbs 8:36).

Broken covenant: Faithless people break contracts, treaties, promises, rules, and the restraints of law.

Benson: I speak especially of “that perfidious person, who hath not only violated all the laws of friendship, but profanely broken his promise and oath of fidelity, wherein he was engaged to me.” — Bishop Patrick.”

The phrase “smoother than butter” and “softer than oil” expresses the charming deceitfulness of traitors. There is a difference between what the wicked say and what they do; between how they talk and how they walk. That speaks peace, but practice war; they promise change, but promote revolution; they have the smile of a panda, but a sting of a cobra: they offer an olive branch in one hand, but have a sword in the other.

The phrase “smoother than butter” literally means “curd mouth,” “milk mouth,” or smooth mouth. “Smooth are the butterings of his mouth” (Benson quoting Alexander). Using modern expressions we label these snake oil salesmen self-appointed cheerleaders, traders of lies, slickster tricksters, and charlatans. These grumblecakes offer you dessert, but feed you arsenic.

The Remedy for a Troubled Soul

Now the Psalmist applies the lesson he learned during the Absalom Revolt to us.

Psalm 55:22 Cast your burden on the LORD (the protasis), and he will sustain you (apodasis); he will never permit the righteous to be moved (the apodasis).

The Hebrew word for “burden” is *yehab*, and it means “lot” or “what is given.”

God handed a grievous burden for king David to bear. The background of Psalm 55 is the Absalom Revolt including the treason of Ahithophel, and David’s flight from Jerusalem during the coup d’etat — a wretched revolt against his administration that led to a ghastly civil war.

Here the sweet psalmist of Israel shares a valuable lesson learned during the uncertainty of the chaos: trials are a gift of God!

Barnes says, “This may be regarded as an address of the psalmist to his own soul – an exhortation to himself to roll all his care upon the Lord and to be calm.” But, the lesson of the psalm applies to us.

The Hebrew word for “cast” is *shalak* — a Hiphil imperative calling for intense, deliberate action of the will: “Stir yourself and cast” your burdens on the LORD.

The Hebrew verb *shalak* means “to cast,” “to put,” “to throw,” or “to hurl.” It is translated

“put (shalak) under one of the bushes” in Genesis 21:15;

“throw (shalak) him into one of the pits” in Genesis 37:20;

“cast (shalak) into the Nile” in Exodus 1:22;

“throw (shalak) it on the ground” in Exodus 4:22;

“they spread a cloak, and every man threw (shalak) in it the earrings of his spoil” in Judges 8:25; that is, just as the men of Israel threw (shalak) in their gold trinkets on to the cloak as a gift, we are to throw (shalak) our lot in life on to the LORD.

The word “**burden**” (yehab) is a noun which refers to one’s lot or what is given. It is translated

“give” (yehab) in Genesis 29:21; 30:1; 47:15; Joshua 18:4; Judges 1:15; 20:7;

“take or choose” (yehab) in Deuteronomy 1:13; “ascribe” in Deuteronomy 32:3; Psalm 29:2;

“make me a gift” (yehab) in Job 6:22;

“grant” (yehab) in Psalm 60:11; “give” and “give” in Proverbs 20:15;

“give (yehab) me my wages” in Zechariah 11:12;

and “burden” (yehab) in Psalm 55:22.

It could easily be translated throw your ‘lot,’ or throw “what is given to you’,” or throw “the gift of your trial” upon the LORD.

In the New Testament, the word “**burden**” is translated “cares of this life” (1 Peter 5:7; Luke 21:34), and the word “cast” is translated, “throwing their cloaks on the colt” (Luke 19:35).

The first promise is that the one who “cast what is given to him” upon the LORD will be “**sustained**” (apodosis).

The condition is “cast your burden on the Lord” (the protasis) “and he will **sustain** you” (apodosis)

The Hebrew word for “sustain” is *kul* — a rare Pihel (Piel) verb form which implies intense action. It means “to contain,” “to sustain,” and “to maintain.”

The Hebrew word *kul* (“sustain” in English) translated:

“There I will provide (*kul*) for you, for there are yet five years of famine to come,” in Genesis 45:11;

“and Joseph provided (kul) his father, his brothers, and all his father’s household with food” in Genesis 47:12;

“do not fear; I will provide (kul) for you and your little ones” in Genesis 50:21;

“He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher (kul) of your old age . . . ” in Ruth 4:15;

“those officers supplied provision (kul) for King Solomon” in 1 Kings 4:27;

“I have commanded the ravens to feed (kul) you there” in 1 Kings 17:4;

“I have commanded a widow there to feed (kul) you” in 1 Kings 17:9;

“Forty years you sustained (kul) them in the wilderness” in Nehemiah 9:21; and,

“he will guide (kul) his affairs with discretion” in Psalm 112:5.

The second, or complementary part of the apodosis (the conclusive part of the promise) is that “He will never permit the righteous to be moved.”

The noun “**moved**” (mote) means “to totter, shake, or slip.”

The verb “**permit**” means “to give, bestow, grant, ascribe, employ, devote, deliver, stretch out, extend, or designate.” It is preceded by a negation “**never**”; that is, our God will never permit us to “be moved.”

There is a testing that could destroy our faith and demolish our God-confidence. The promise here is that God will never let that happen. He will not permit the “righteous” (Romans 5:1) to totter and fall, but He may permit storms to enter their lives that cause them to tether themselves tighter to the promises.

Barnes puts it this way,

“He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved – literally, “He will not give moving forever to the righteous.” That is, he will not so appoint, arrange, or permit things to occur, that the righteous shall be “ultimately” and “permanently” removed from their steadfastness and their hope; he will not suffer them to fall away and perish.”

23 But thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction: bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days; but I will trust in thee.

In contrast to the protection of the righteous, David informs us of the fate of bloody and deceitful men – a short life. In contrast to the wicked, David trusts the Lord.

Need protection, provision, or navigation? “Throw what has been given to you” on to the LORD. Roll your lot upon your Creator.

Psalm 66 - The Need of the Nations

A Call to Worship

"All the earth shall worship thee . . ."



This psalm addresses the supreme need of the nations which is to come and study the work of God in the history of redemption — not to read into what they want to see, but to come as students to learn theology.

We don't know the name of the author nor the exact time the psalm was composed.

Some commentators make a good argument that this is a post exilic psalm though this assessment is not totally conclusive. We do know, however, it was written after some personal calamity (10-12). Possibly, the pronoun "I" is a literary device to represent Israel's troubles and deliverance.

We despise trouble, but trouble has a way of driving us to the Lord for help. Since this be the case, trouble is not an enemy as much as it is a gift of God that leads us to the "still waters" of answered prayer and a calm soul (19).

A Call to Worship

Psalm 66:1 <To the chief Musician, A Song or Psalm.> Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands:

We have in this text a call to worship.

"noise" means "to shout."

"lands" means "earth" – the earth is personified; that is, this is a call to all people in every nation to praise God for what He has done for His people.

2 Sing forth the honour of his name: make his praise glorious.

Worship includes singing, honor, praise, intensity, and artistry. There is nothing casual and "ho-hum" about worship. The psalmist calls for our best; that is, to employ our finest talents and skills to honor Him.

The term "glorious" includes the idea of abundance, splendor, and reverence.

“Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.” Dress up and clean up. Get rid of casual. Take off the hats (men). Adorn yourself with a headcovering (woman). Sing your best, read your best, be alert and wholehearted in church.

3 Say unto God, How terrible art thou in thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee.

“Say” (amar) is an imperative.

“terrible” (yare’) means “fearful,” or “awesome.”

“submit” (kachash) has a large range of meanings. The context supports the idea of “submit,” or “cringe,” or “yield because of some defeat.”

“greatness of Thy power . . . submit to thee” — implies that the nations will be forced by the raw power of God to bow the knee to the Lord, or will necessarily and miraculously submit to Him having seen His power at work among the nations.

4 All the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee; they shall sing to thy name. Selah.

History is headed toward the kingdom of God and nothing will stop the universal worship of the LORD God. Thus, the need of the nations is to turn to the God of Scripture and worship Him.

“worship” is a Hithpael verb (reflexive) inferring that the people of the earth will act on themselves to bow the knee to the LORD.

“sing” is a Piel verb. It implies intense action. All worship and singing should involve the whole man.

It is God’s will that men voluntarily surrender to His authority. By His grace the elect will confess His authority and arrange their affairs under His government.

A Call to See the Works of God

5 Come and see the works of God: he is terrible in his doing toward the children of men.

This verse begins with two imperatives: “come” and “see;” that is, come and see what God has done in history and is doing in His work of providence. Let your hearts be stirred by His doings — particularly His work in delivering His people from Egypt (v. 6) . . . and more importantly the exodus He provides at the cross.

“terrible” (yare’) means “fearful,” or “awesome.”

6 He turned the sea into dry land: they went through the flood on foot: there did we rejoice in him.

Deliverance at the Red Sea demonstrates His power. They didn't tread through mud, but walked and pulled their carts on dry land.

7 He ruleth by his power for ever; his eyes behold the nations: let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah.

Because He reigns, every generation has access to His power of redemption. But, be warned: His power can and will be exercised against rebels in every generation.

The Hithpael verb "exalt" contains the idea of rising up in rebellion against the law of the LORD God. The adverb "not" negates the verb; i.e. do not allow the spirit of rebellion to seize hold of national leadership. Nations ought to exercise self-restraint and not plunge into liberalism while granting to themselves a license to do evil.

A Call To Bless God for His Grace upon Israel

8 O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard:

"bless" is another Piel imperative.

"make" is a Hiphil imperative meaning "cause" your voice to be heard.

9 Which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved.

Two reasons to bless the Lord are provided: His protection and preservation.

"in life" means "among the living."

"suffereth not our feet to be moved" refers to God's power working in our lives to prevent us from stumbling while walking on the road to the Celestial City.

10 For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.

"proved us" means that God tests the reality of our faith with trials and troubles.

"tried us, as silver is tried" implies repetition and intensity. The holy zeal of God for our perfection and separation from sin involves profound and blistering heat that causes imperfections to rise to the surface in order to make us like His Son.

11 Thou broughtest us into the net; thou laidst affliction upon our loins.

"Thou" refers to the Lord God. He is sovereign over the good and bad of our lives.

God permits us to be drawn into the net to be captured, enslaved, and even abused. Sometimes God allows enemies to succeed — possibly a reference to the Babylonian Captivity (605-536).

"thou laidst affliction upon our loins" — The people were tested to the core of their being . . . as much as their strength could endure; that is, they were tried to the breaking point and then delivered. In so doing, they came out their affliction stronger, better, and improved in holiness.

12 Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.

The psalmist doesn't let go of his theme. He wants us to know that the nation was subjected to the whip, to slavery, to the will of another.

"fire" and "water" differentiate the trials. Fire burns; water chokes; i.e. the trials were hot and the people choked in the flood of captivity.

"wealthy place" means "refreshing" or "comfortable" place.

"but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place" informs us that God does not leave His people in the furnace or the flood; that He provides relief, rest, and reconstruction. There is a path out of trials, but God has to show the way. A willingness to stay under pressure until we are refined may be the ultimate test of sincerity and devotion.

Know, however, that God will provide a way of escape (1 Corinthians 10:13).

A Promise to Pay Vows Made During the Time of Trouble

13 I will go into thy house with burnt offerings: I will pay thee my vows, 14 Which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble. 15 I will offer unto thee burnt sacrifices of fatlings, with the incense of rams; I will offer bullocks with goats. Selah.

"burn offerings," "sacrifice of rams," "incense of rams," and offering "bullocks with goats" are expressions of intense worship, devotion, and commitment to the Will of Heaven (Leviticus 1-6).

In begging God for deliverance, many people made vows of devotion . . . to make changes in their life after deliverance. Here the psalmist, representing the nation, commits himself to pay his vows and devote himself to the absolute God.

"I will" is promised twice — a double commitment to pay his vows.

A Call to Hear What God has Done

16 Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.

Again, the "I" may be a literary "I" speaking for the nation — a type of true personification.

The audience are those that "fear" God — true worshipers of Elohim.

"soul" literally means "for my life." The phrase embraces all that God has done to protect and preserve the nation. Another clue, that the psalmist may be reflecting on the nation's deliverance from Babylon.

17 I cried unto him with my mouth, and he was extolled with my tongue.

“my mouth” may include the voices and prayers of the whole nation held captive in Babylon.

“was extolled with my tongue” should be translated “shall be lifted up with my tongue” — the volitional jubilant response to God’s marvelous deliverance.

18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:

The psalmist references the name “Elohim” (God) eight times in this psalm, and the name “Adonai” (Lord) only once (v. 18). The title “Adonai” means “Master.” How can man claim to follow the Lord and not obey him? Either start obeying Him or stop calling him “Lord.” Amen?

The verb “regard” (ra’ah) would better be translated “perceive,” “possess,” or “cherish.” All Christians know that sin acts like a peddler soliciting customers, but the pious rebuke these appeals. No man can discharge sin from his unregenerated being, but he can deny it power.

Fellowship with sin means hinder-fellowship with the Lord; to agree with sin is to disagree with God; cooperation with sin is opposition to Him. The one unwilling to disassociate with sin cannot commune with the Lord: “Why do you call men ‘Lord, Lord’ and do not what I say?”

19 But verily God hath heard me; he hath attended to the voice of my prayer.

God delights in rescuing His children and delivering them from danger. Apparently, the psalmist had evidence of answered prayer which increased his desire to be wholly-devoted to the Lord.

20 Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.

Because God mercifully answered his prayer, he could not help but erupt with praise, “Blessed by God”; that is, may his name be forever honored by me.

Though he had turned away from sin to God, there is no claim of merit. He simply acknowledges the mercy of God.

Psalm 67 - The World Evangelism Prayer

The Farmer's Cry

" . . . let the nations be glad and sing for joy"



Perhaps, this psalm is the most magnanimous, dilated psalm in the Royal Hymnal. The mind of this psalmist lacks the parochial perspective of modern, cultic, racist Jews. The healthy perspective of this regenerated Hebrew is blessed with a vision for world evangelism -- a figure of spiritual health.

Q: How do you know if you are a healthy, spiritual Christian?

A: When your heart hums with this purpose: "That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving salvation among all nations."

Psalm 67:1 <To the chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm or Song.>

"To the chief Musician," occurs at the beginning of 53 psalms. It means "to lead."

"Neginoth" refers to stringed instruments. The subject of this psalm takes a champion maestro to compose and conduct this carol.

A Prayer for Mercy and Favor

God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah.

As the people neglected God, God withdrew his tokens of favor upon the people. This is a prayer for mercy, not justice; favor and not fairness – for His sunshine to fall upon a weak and flawed people.

There is an allusion to the language in Numbers 5:24-26 – A benediction that the Lord would lead, guide, and bestow blessings on the people despite their many failures.

The Purpose of Prayer

2 That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.

"thy way" refers to the laws of the LORD God, His rules, His government, His truth, his justice, His mercy, and what He loves and hates.

"health" refers to "salvation" which would include his power to provide earthly blessings and eternal salvation for the soul. More specifically, this is a prayer that men might come to know

Jesus (Yeshua the Savior) who “is the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). This is not a prayer, however, that men might become more religious, more loving, and less hateful.

This is an evangelical prayer. The purpose of all prayer is that friends and neighbors might come to know the Lord Jesus Christ and to live for Him (praise). This is a prayer that an evangelical awakening might visit mankind and that the whole world might hum with hymns of praise to God.

A Prayer for the People

3 Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

“the people” refers to Israel . . . to God’s people – the church.

“praise” must be viewed in its uttermost operation -- a soul that thinks about and talks about God’s works, righteousness, holiness, justice, mercy, love, law, Scripture, Christ and His gospel.

The personal name “LORD” is not used in this psalm. Rather, the appellation “God” is used six times. This is not an omnistic creation of man. This text addresses the God of the Bible, the Creator of Heaven and earth.

“praise” is a general term referring to Godly conduct, a God-centered focus, and a mind occupied with the glories of the Creator.

The purpose of God is set in stone – that the whole earth be filled with His glory.

“For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, As the waters cover the sea” (Habakkuk 2:14).

Because men are prone to complain, praising God is a miracle in the heart. This is a prayer that all men might perceive God’s grace upon them and to lift up their voices in thanksgiving and praise to Him. Praise releases clouds of blessings to rain life upon the earth (Psalm 50:23).

A Prayer for the Nations

4 O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah.

Nothing is more needed among the nations than for men to perceive the government of God and to surrender to it.

“shalt judge the people righteously” – God injures no man. Men injure men because they are in rebellion against God’s law-order. The gifts of His government are not only fair and righteous; they are wrapped up in ribbons of mercy.

When men contemplate the law of the LORD, they will burst into song with gladness of heart singing praises to God for His wisdom, justice, and mercy. Nothing will bring more joy to the world than for men to seek God and to discover His goodness and righteousness.

5 Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

This evangelical psalmist expresses his ultimate wish – that all people in America, China, Africa, Europe, and the Middle East might be so occupied with the greatness of God they cannot help but praise God and to live for Him.

You may hear a politician say, “God bless America,” but, you may never hear one say, “Let us Praise the Lord!” However, that day is coming.

A mind caught up with the wonders of God will not be burdened down with the wretchedness of his fellow man.

The Blessing Prayer Brings to the Nations

6 Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us.

“Then” means “at that time” men shall see. A lack of praise means a minimal harvest; praising hearts opens the flood gates of heaven for an abundant harvest. Believest thou this?

When men are freed from their sins and pray to God, the earth is liberated from its grief and is inclined to yield its increase. Right now the earth surrenders its harvests sparsely because of drought, blight, storms, pests, mildew, and frost. The abundance of the harvest on earth appears to be in proportion to the exuberance of grateful prayers lifted to heaven.

7 God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.

Because God has blessed us, the Christian wants to bless others. He goes forth into a cold world preaching to chilly hearts, “The Lord reigns” (Psalm 97:1) and with it blesses the world.

Making Him known is the highest favor that Christians can bestow on the world. This work is given to men and not angels. Evangelism is the greatest work of men on earth as blessings from Heaven are commensurate to the praise offered to God by converted men. Blessed are the feet of them that preach the gospel!

“How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, “Your God reigns!” (Psalm 52:7).

Gill has this to say: “The Holy Spirit blesses with regenerating and renewing grace; with faith, comfort, joy and peace, by shedding abroad in the heart the love of the Father and the Son by applying precious promises; by testifying adoption; by making meet for heaven and happiness, and working up for the selfsame thing eternal glory . . .”

“God shall bless us and all the ends of earth” is the evangelical voice of faith – the highest calling of Christians.

[Note: The United Nations’ doctrines of sustainable development are creations of conniving, devious, reprobate creatures bankrupt in virtue and poor in spirit. None see God as the

Provider and Sustainer. All models of production are based on meager harvests and a non-existent Creator. O, that men might wake up and see that God reigns . . . that He can cause rain to fall and crops to grow. . . . to see His hand in the affairs of men and to realize the potential of earth to yield charitable harvests for the good of mankind.)

Psalm 72 - David's Final Prayer

Thy Kingdom Come

The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.



We have the final prayer by David for his son Solomon centered around the North-Star glories of the coming King.

The psalm concludes with the phrase, "The prayers of David are ended."

This fact causes us to conclude this prayer involved a vision of David's greater son, the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ. The psalm beams with Messianic overtones. Here David gained a glimpse of the kingdom of God on earth and the blessings to follow.

The prayers of all men end, sort of speak, when they see the climax of history and the establishment of God's kingdom on earth in and through the reign of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The arrival of kingdom of God in its first fruits form in Christ is the major message of the New Testament (Matthew 4:17). That God reigns is the gospel of the Old Testament (Psalm 97:1).

Enough of statist flim flam with their misleading rhetoric, name-calling, tacit assumptions, and mud-slinging that do nothing to make this this world safer or freer or more just. Governments' wrongdoings, lies, power grabs, brutality, meanness, inhumanity, immorality, greed, corruption, debauchery and tyranny have exhausted the patience of the righteous.

"Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord. Amen!"

A Prayer for Solomon

Psalm 72:1 <A Psalm for Solomon.> Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son.

The "king's son" refers directly to Solomon and indirectly to the Messiah.

"judgments" refers to making executive decisions in government that promote righteousness, responsibility, and freedom for the people — something modern democratic despots in the graveyard of corruption seem unable to do.

"righteousness" is a big word that includes goodness, conformity to law, truthfulness, and faithfulness to duty.

"God" (Elohim) is the first word in the Hebrew stanza. "Give" is an imperative — the language of prayer.

The name “God” (Elohim) occurs three times in this psalm. The Tetragrammaton is used only once (72:18).

To rule over a people having whirlwinds flowing through the mind for their good and to make decisions that sweeten the daily life of the people is a gift of God. Most overlords make decisions that cheer their handlers, increase their own profits, and provide \$\$ privileges to their supporters.

A Prophecy About the Blessing of Messiah

2 He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment.

Contrast this hope with our times where we endure self-seeking politicians lying about legislation, starting wars, and introducing sophisticated, immoral aberrations into society that bamboozle the common man.

The king-son judges the people according to fixed standards of righteousness instead of willy-nilly impulses sprouting like thorns from the Poisonous Tree of utopian ideals.

Use of “the poor” implies the king is consistent; that is, He applies the same standards to the poor as he does the rich.

3 The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness.

In using the term “mountains” and “hills,” David may have in mind bandits that hide in the terrain to attack and plunder vulnerable travelers. Under the policies of the New King hills hum with peace with blossoming flowers begging for attention.

“peace to the people” refers to judgments that make victims of crime whole again.

4 He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor.

A good administrator saves the poor by purging evil men from society through a consistent application of law. Righteous kings scatter the proud like casting dice on the table in order to relieve stress in the middle class. Correct applications of law heal victims of oppression as well as crush the oppressors. Righteous judgment makes men whole, not the government rich.

5 They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations.

The key to this king’s success is the fear of the Lord . . . a consistent, abiding discretion that shrinks from that which offends His holiness.

David employs the metaphor “as long as the sun and moon endure” to emphasize the enduring blessings of the Messiah’s administration. The windfalls from godly kings are short lived, but the salvation-bounties of the Messiah-King endure forever.

6 He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth.

David compares the reign of the Messiah to an abundance of gentle rain that refreshes cut grass. How much more will quality of life revive when the Messiah reigns upon the earth as the King of kings?

7 In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth.

The reign of this king (the Messiah) shall scatter the wicked like feathers in the wind and cause the righteous to flourish like cedars bathed with continual kisses of rain.

International Blessings of the Messianic Reign

8 He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.

The word “dominion” (radah) could be translated “may he tread down” rebellious nations from sea to sea. This hyperbolic wish for Solomon became a reality in the ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ to the throne of Almighty God.

“from sea to sea” stretched the faith of Hebrews to believe ancient Israel could have sovereignty from the Red Sea in the south to Mediterranean Sea in the north . . . even to the Euphrates River. Ultimately, however, this vision extends to the reign of the Messiah from sea to sea, from shore to shore, from the North Pole to the South Pole; and, from heaven to earth.

Zechariah 9:10 And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth.

9 They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust.

The term “wilderness” (tsiy’iy) is better understood as “wild beasts.” They that “dwell” (pa’nah) can be translated, “They that face wild beasts” – a reference to nomadic tribes that live in the desert – rugged, barbaric, traditional enemies of the nation.

David employs the metaphor “lick the dust” to express the death of the wicked.

10 The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.

“kings of Tarshish” refer to nations (isles) east of Israel as far away as Mediterranean Spain. “kings of Sheba” appear to represent southern Arabian nations; and “kings” of “Seba” (Saba) represent African countries south of Egypt.

But, this was as far as the Hebrew mind could stretch. The text obviously refers to the global rule of Messiah Whose authority extends to the four corners of the earth.

“bring presents” refers to worship – to the esteem and appreciation nations will have for Israel’s Messiah-King.

11 Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him.

In case the reader is in doubt about this extravagant promise that reaches for the stars, David repeats it a second time for assurance.

Solomon, a type of the Messiah-King, saw kings from the east and west acknowledge His talent and authority. The Queen of Sheba marveled at his wisdom. However, this is a prophesy regarding David's greater son and the reign of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Even the Jewish expositors understood it of the kingdom of the Messiah" (Matthew Henry)

Even now there are men in every nation on earth who raise their hands to Christ as the Most High. In every nation, to the end of time, men will swear by His name and open their lips to praise Him.

Judicial Blessings of Messiah

12 For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper.

Contrast the following hope with the corruption of our age: preferential treatment for the rich, oppression of the poor by the police state, taxation into poverty, cruelty with prison terms, State robbery, ruthless feminist leaders, propaganda, lies by government officials, censorship, bribes, secret spy agencies, and promotion of depravity.

In our time we have seen Hitler's Germany, Stalin's Russia, Mussolini's Italy, Mao's revolution in China, and Obama's "Yes, we can." The rise of strongmen and demagogues, the ascendancy of profit-driven politics over deep-seated principles, the warring of race-baiting politics that divide and conquer infuriate us. Our time is one of callous disregard for basic human rights with politicians claiming war is the means to peace.

The "needy" and "the poor" refer to vulnerable youth and to feeble senior citizens. The fame of His merciful government shall spread like happy smiles causing many to bow to His rule and to model his mercy and justice.

The imperfect verb "deliver" means "to rescue, to snatch, or to free" from oppression. The Messiah sees the injustice and shall deliver those that cannot help themselves.

The cross that saves the poor is the opening pledge of his glorious redemption by blood.

13 He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy.

Unlike modern elected leaders to whom money is everything, this highly exalted Messiah-King is not out of touch with the struggle and stresses of the poor. His mercy extends to the dirty slums and cement ghettos of this world. He not only saves the souls of those who know they need Him, He protects and provides for them.

This conquest of the poor is not by armies having steel tanks with scorpion stings in their tails, but with an abundance of tender-humane principles smothered with fragrances of mercy and grace picked from the Tree of Life.

14 He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight.

The psalmist identifies the problem with this world and the reason for the affliction of the poor – fraud and violence from brain-boiled trolls in government – fraud in taxation, fraud in banking, fraud in commerce, fraud in medicine, fraud in advertising, fraud in the courts, fraud in history and the sciences; and, violence by officers in the executive branch of the State apparatus.

The term “deceit” refers to commercial scams and oppression. “violence” refers to the cruelty and tyranny of psychopathic leaders.

“and precious shall their blood be in his sight” alludes to the Messiah’s protection for those who trust Him. “- He will rescue their lives from the hands of tyrants who practice deceit and oppression. The death of the saints is precious to God . . . and precious to us (Psalm 116:15-19).

Men are lied to about history, science, religion, and commerce. The reign of the Lord Christ will be one of truth with utter intolerance of “black hat” schemes to deceive, brainwash, trap, and plunder the poor.

The Blessings Showered Upon Messiah

15 And he shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer also shall be made for him continually; and daily shall he be praised.

What does a perfect society look like?

There was a time in England when curtains in every home were closed because fathers read Scripture and had devotions with their families before they headed to work. There is coming a day when men will be eager to find new ways to express their thankfulness to the LORD.

The Scripture informs us that those who are benefactors of His protection and provision will love the Messiah so much they will bring thank offerings out of their golden treasure chests to present to Him.

True prayers shall ascend into heaven with frankincense, “the sweets of the gods,” to the delight of the Lord. No longer will men rise and rush off to work to earn a shekel. Rather, men will rise early and live to praise Him, thank him, and to adore Him.

Let the redeemed say so . . . and start now!

16 There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.

“handful” (piccah) = “abundance.” The idea here is that even nature will respond with energetic thanksgiving to the Messiah by yielding bumper crops of corn on the earth. During our day the earth grieves and grudgingly yields its fruits. But, there is a day coming when crops will beam like sunflowers with smiles of gratitude for grace given to man by the King.

Even the mountains and valleys will shout for joy and supply golden cereals for men to enjoy.

The problem today is not global warming or a shortage of fertilizers but a paucity of praise and thankfulness in the hearts of men.

17 His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed.

Oh, the blessedness of His name. Jesus is the “sweetest name I know.” Just the mention of His name causes men to sprout seeds of honesty, integrity, and generosity. In Him is life, and His life is the light of men (John 1:4).

Because He lives, we will live; Because He is the Source of all things sweet, men are recipients of the honey-coated gifts of nature. To the end of time, redeemed men shall hum praises to His name. Happiness will sit down at every meal with those blessed by the Christ of God.

Blessings on the LORD God of Israel

18 Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things.

“wondrous” (pala) refers to something extra ordinary, something that surpasses human possibilities – of butterfly strength to lift buckets of silver.

The noun “only” (bad) is a term expressing separation, uniqueness, and something set apart from man’s abilities – like immortality, or advanced intelligence, or the mysterious blessing of His omnipresence.

Blessed be the LORD God of Israel for showering his struggling people with the golden blessings of His presence. The redeemed shout, “Blessed are you Lord, our God, King of the Universe who brings forth bread from the earth.”

How much more shall the new Israel of God in Christ bless the Heavenly Father for giving them the riches of kingdom of God with all “spiritual blessings” in heavenly places (Ephesians 1:3). Solomon was a type of Messiah, but Christ turned shadows into realities. Blessed be His name. For all that He has done for men at Calvary, the church ought to inspire hearts to praise and to bless our Eternal Redeemer.

19 And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen.

“blessed be . . .” could be translated, “Let your glorious name be blessed forever.” “Amen” is used twice for certainty and emphasis.

The adjective “glorious” describes Hashem which fuels our imagination to consider His platinum attributes, His rose petal excellence, the aroma of the healing powers of His name that wages war on man’s moral enfeeblement.

“And let the whole earth be filled with his glory” — As the kings of Tarshish and Sheba brought gifts to Solomon, every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is the King of kings and Lord of lords. Let the redeemed honor him with their words, works, and wealth. Let every heart be filled with the praises of God. Amen! Amen!

20 The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.

The Pual verb “ended” is the first word in the Hebrew stanza — an intense passive of the Piel stem in the emphatic position: “Ended! are the prayers of David, the son of Jesse.

After he saw with eyes of faith the Christ of God and His kingdom established on earth, the prayers of David ended . . . not literally of course, but spiritually. With his coffers full, David rested.

Rest, Soul, rest!

Psalm 76 - Hope in Political Turmoil

“Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.”



Reviewing the headlines today is like reading the obituary of Christian causes.

Voters who appear to be suffering from traumatic brain disorders are electing criminal gangs into office. Immigrants swarm across the border like trails of ants searching for goodies left over after at an American picnic.

Images of violence, murder, and riots fill the evening news. Communists, feminists, and Sodomites demand center stage in the American theater. Drag queens are invited to read books to children in school libraries. Woke America doesn't know the difference between males and females, between XY and XX chromosomes. Steak lovers are expected to give up eating meat in order not to offend soy-vegetarians. Crazy politicians are wearing double masks and threatening truthers with forced drug therapy. Warmongers in CONgress talk about surviving a nuclear war as if it like recovering from the common cold. Is there any hope?

Tares are among us — an enemy has done this . . . and, the problem is bigger than any one of us (Matthew 13:28).

Here is a psalm bursting with assurance that God has command of politicians in rebellion against His law-order. The psalmist gives us assurance that the lunatics in power are limited by the steel arm of God's sovereign power.

The background of this psalm is the Assyrian invasion of Jerusalem under Sennacherib circa 701 B.C. Before us are the lessons the songwriter wants us to learn.

Psalm 76:1-2 To the chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm or Song of Asaph.

The composer delivered this psalm to the Chief Musician after the Assyrian invasion into Judah during the reign of Hezekiah. It is called a "Song of Asaph," the father of Hezekiah's secretary (2 Kings 18:18).

A poem set to music, this liturgical sonnet knuckles down on the dominion of God over tyrants and their imperialistic agendas.

Like a war-time correspondent, the psalmist publishes his triumphant report:

1 In Judah is God known: his name is great in Israel. 2 In Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion.

Do you want to know God? Where should you begin your search? Where can you find Him? China? Tibet? India? Mecca? Not hardly.

The grand truth of this psalm is that God can only be known by revelation . . . that He has revealed Himself to men . . . that ancient Hebrews were the steward of this light.

The search for God begins and ends with the record of the LORD's dealings with Abraham and his descendants? God is known in Israel, and nowhere else . . . until this era the birth of the true Israel of God (Christ) . . . and His representatives, the church.

[Note: Do not confuse modern Ashkenazi so-called "Israel" (fake Jews) with ancient Israel, a polity of Hebrews.)

The adjective "great" emphasizes the wonder of the manifestation of God among the Hebrews and the reverence they had for His Name.

(Ancient) Israel became His station to telegraph the knowledge of God to the nations. While all people on earth have access to the knowledge of creation, only this nation became the trustees of His special revelation to mankind.

The composer gives four metonyms to identify the locus of the knowledge of God: Judah, Israel, Salem, and Zion.

No man will find God in a Tibetan cave or some Buddhist Pagoda in Asia. But, He can be found in the history and theology of the Hebrews . . . and their NT counterparts.

The name "Israel" was the name given to Jacob, the father of the twelve tribes. Judah was the ruling tribe with its capital in Jerusalem a.k.a. "Salem" which means "peace" — the ancient name for Jerusalem. Zion is the high hill in Jerusalem—the place where Solomon built the temple. Zion is simply a metonym for the temple or the presence of God in the capital city.

The Glory was pleased to dwell among his people in that nation from 1440 BC to 586 BC, and in and through the personal visitation of the Lord Jesus Christ in the New Testament era whose body was the temple of God (John 2:19-20).

3 There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle. Selah.

"There" refers to the landscape of Jerusalem.

With blazing fury, the Assyrians smashed the nations crushing opposing armies in the Levant. When they advanced to the gates of Jerusalem, knees knocked and teeth rattled. The veteran Assyrian infantry seemed undefeatable. Controlling all the roads, they shut Jerusalem in like "a caged bird." Their breath smelled foul and death wafted through the air.

The psalmist wasted no time in rifling his message to the people:

“There” at Jerusalem, God broke the arrows . . . bow . . . shield . . . sword . . . and the battle! The word “broke” is a Piel verb intensifying the meaning that God “crushed” and “smashed” the proud Assyrian Army.

The story of the Assyrian invasion and the events surrounding their defeat is described in 2 Kings 18-20; 2 Chronicles 28-32; and Isaiah 37-39.

In this account, God’s destroying angel massacred 185,000 Assyrian soldiers during the night. When sunlight kissed the eastern walls of Jerusalem, the watchmen saw nothing but corpses in the Assyrian camp (Isaiah 37-38). Instead of being ransacked, Hezekiah’s people plundered the Assyrians.

4 Thou art more glorious and excellent than the mountains of prey.



Stunned by God’s work, the psalmist burst into praise.

A few days before the smashing victory, the refugees in Jerusalem shook like leaves in the wind while considering the power of the invaders. No doubt the headlines in the “Jerusalem Post” read “City of David Faces Genocide By Assyrians.” A dark cloud of negativity settled on Jerusalem as the people faced the pragmatic reality that the greatest army on earth had surrounded Jerusalem eager to kill, capture, and plunder.

The “mountain of prey” refers to the territory belonging to the “Lion of Judah.” It was in the Lion’s killing fields wherein the hunter became the hunted; the victim became the victor; and the predator became the prey.

After the crushing defeat of Sennacherib’s army, the nation stood in awe of the glory and excellence of their God.

The psalmist teaches us a lesson that we should walk by faith and not by sight; that is, to stand confident in His power and grace even when we hear the thunder of war-rumors, soldiers marching, and drums pounding. Wait on the Lord, and barricade rashness and impetuosity.

5 The stouthearted are spoiled, they have slept their sleep: and none of the men of might have found their hands.

The “stouthearted” refers to the impressive Assyrian army.

“They have slept their sleep” publishes their devastating defeat.

“None of the men of might have found their hands” describes the helplessness of the Assyrian troops to fight against an angel of God.

When the fury of God's death angel struck the republican guard of Sennacherib's army, a strange stupor seized them so they couldn't even grasp their swords to defend themselves against the destroyer. Like bar-room drunks, they staggered through their tents unable to find their weapons . . . and, even if they possessed a sword, what good would it do against an angelic Spirit?

6 At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and horse are cast into a dead sleep.

Chariots and horses on those ancient battlefields were like an infantry facing a German Leopard Tank with sticks and stones.

God did not stop the Assyrian meat grinder from leaving Nineveh, or stop them on the killing fields of Phoenicia, Syria, Egypt, or Moab.

But, when they came to the gates of Jerusalem, the sovereign LORD God of Israel issued His command. Enough! Like the Egyptian charioteers were buried at the Red Sea, Assyrian corpses littered the treed landscape around Jerusalem like masses of poisoned ants.

When secular man seems to have gained the upper hand in the battle between good and evil, the Christian must remember that God is sovereign and that the wicked are crunched like crackers under His feet.

7 Thou, even thou, art to be feared: and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?

There is a classic riddle that asks, "What is black and blue and red all over?" In our mind appears the loser of an Irish bare knuckle street fight.

What is the answer to the question, "Who may stand when once Thou art angry?" The only fitting answer is . . . "No one!"

The pronoun "Thou" is used twice in the Hebrew making it emphatic: "You, and only You, O Lord, are to be feared!" We don't fear man, we fear Christ. We don't fear the condemnation of government; we fear the condemnation of God.

Barnes: The repetition of the word "thou" is emphatic, as if the mind paused at the mention of God, and remained in a state of reverence, repeating the thought.

It is an error to publish how great evil has become in society instead of how great "God is in the generation of the righteous" (Psalm 14:5).

Instead of slogging through the swamp of despair in the dark everglades of politics, we tread the highway of righteousness illuminated by the promises of God.

Instead of focusing on the muscle mass of swamp critters, let us gaze at the authority and power of the Lion of Judah Who commands victories for Jacob in His killing fields (Psalm 44:4).

Considering the might of the enemy instead of contemplating the historical conquests of Christ does nothing to increase confidence associated with faith. Faith does **not** lead to victory, it IS the victory that overcomes the world (1 John 5:4).

“Now faith IS the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen”
(Hebrews 11:1).

God is more interested in our study of Him than in our assessment of the strength of our opponents. Declaring the might of the enemy is to have more faith in the enemy than in the power of Christ!

To fear the wicked is to have more faith in man than in Christ. The only fear permitted in the Christian life is fear of Him who has the power to cast into hell (Luke 12:5).

God limits the power of the wicked (v. 10); unbelief limits the power of God.

The reason for this fear is the anger of God, an ominous virtue that demands expression against the unrighteousness of man.

Study God. Know God. Believe God. Those who challenge His authority will end up being black and blue and red all over.

8 Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven; the earth feared, and was still, 9 When God arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth. Selah.

Judgment (diy) refers to God’s intervention into history to punish the Assyrian troops with plunder on their minds and murder in their hearts. The roaring discharge of Divine justice pierced every ear. The earth shuddered. All stood at attention stunned by the devastation of unleashed anger on the Assyrians.

Attributing human characteristics (fear) to the earth is a figure of speech called personification.

The “meek of the earth” are the quiet souls in the land that do no harm. When dark clouds gather and naked fear invades souls because of the waves of injustice crashing on the shoreline, Christians know that when their Captain gives the order and says “enough is enough,” the heavens are silent and the earth is mute.

The verb “arose” is an anthropomorphism alluding to the fact men wake up from a sleep. Figuratively speaking, when our Captain awakes and shouts His command, the roaring sea of maritime powers gives way to peace and calm.

10 Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.

Which of us hasn’t felt utterly exasperated after listening to the evening news? The world is dangerously over populated with reporters that slant the news toward their defeated humanistic perspective. The depravity of politicians seems to have no boundaries. Psychopaths

seem to be in charge of powerful Western countries. We know there is a limit to intelligence, but there doesn't seem to be a limit to the madness of God's enemies.

"Two things are infinite: the universe and human stupidity; and I'm not sure about the universe." (Albert Einstein)

"Power is okay, and stupidity is usually harmless. Power and stupidity together are dangerous". (Patrick Rothfuss, *The Name of the Wind*)

"Never argue with stupid people, they will drag you down to their level and then beat you with experience." (Mark Twain)

Is there an anchor for the soul that can keep us together while lunatics captain the ship?

The conjunction "surely" (*kee*) announces the main lesson of the psalm—a detail about the sovereignty of God, that if grasped, can cause us to experience calm in the midst of political storms.

The phrase "wrath of man" refers to all the insane, imperial ambitions of politicians and social engineers.

Not all psychopaths are behind bars. Maniacs are in power and hold key positions in the apparatus of government institutions. Madmen run for office. Voting fails. Money talks. Justice broken. The status quo in the hands of unaccountable bureaucrats makes ordinary citizens feel as helpless as ants to stop the elephant stampede of lunacy thundering across the land.

"shall praise thee" (*todah*) means "to throw up the hands." Ellicott says, "Possibly we should render, '*and those who remain from their wrath shall celebrate a festival,*' since the suggested emendation is the word used in that sense."

The Cambridge Bible adds, "All rebellion against God's will must in the end redound to God's glory: it serves to set His sovereignty in a clearer light" ([Exodus 9:16](#)).

The Pulpit Commentary considers man's wrath "shall give occasion for great deeds on God's part – deeds which will bring him praise and honour."

The word "restrain" in Hebrew means "to fasten one's belt" or "to gird" with a sash (Exodus 12:11; 29:9). God restrains these nutcases. Like guard dogs, they are on a leash.

Benson: "thou shalt put it on as an ornament, which the girdle was; thou shalt adorn thyself with it as a conqueror adorns himself with the spoils of his enemies."

Barnes: "It is not that there was anything in the wrath itself, or in their plans or intentions, that was in itself "adapted" to honor God; but that it was overruled by him, so that he took "occasion" from it to display his own character."

Timothy, in his battle against heresiarchs in Ephesus, faced “madmen” (anoia) like the sorcerers, Jannes and Jambres, Pharaoh’s magicians. See 2 Timothy 3:9-10. In this passage Paul assures his son in the faith “they will make no further progress;” that is, there is a limit to what these lunatics can accomplish because God restrains them.

The great question for the godly is, “How much evil must these tyrants do before God shackles them?”

The answer is, “just enough;” that is, these belligerents are not capable of carrying out all their wicked schemes against innocent people. God limits the plans of those intent on world dominion.

The term “remainder of wrath” refers to the frustrated devices of ambitious politicians — evil plans they cannot legislate — cannot mandate — schemes and dreams they are precluded from executing while in office.

The trusting Christian is not in a panic because he knows that God has these devils on a chain. These criminals that appear to be unrestrained in their folly will be used for the glory and praise of God.

The problem with man is not something from without, but from within.

Jeremiah 17:9 “the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked, who can know it?”

No man knows the depth of his own wickedness. No man is as evil as he can be because God restrains evil.

And in our story, the might of Sennacherib and his army fell as corpses in that ancient theater in order to demonstrate the crushing, bone-breaking power of the Lion of Judah.

The invasion of the Assyrians to Jerusalem and their stunning slaughter resulted in praise to the LORD; their retreat from Jerusalem demonstrated how God restrains the wrath of man.

Now we come to the main application of the psalm.

11 Vow, and pay unto the LORD your God: let all that be round about him bring presents unto him that ought to be feared.

Since these heads of state are bridled, and God is the only One to be feared, believing men should fear God and obey Him Only! Godly men feed faith and starve doubt; proclaim the power of God and scoff at the illusory strength of rebels.

The psalmist calls upon God’s people to stay the course; to keep their vows to Him; to not be unraveled by the lunacy of these political clowns . . . to not retreat out of fear . . . and, to stand up for righteousness.

12 He shall cut off the spirit of princes: he is terrible to the kings of the earth.

The psalm ends with a great promise. The word “princes” refers to politicians and civil rulers.

The Hebrew word for “cut off” means “to lop off” like a vinedresser prunes a vine (Leviticus 25:5; 11). It is the first word in the sentence, the emphatic position, assuring us tyrants will be pruned.

The Hebrew word “terrible” (yaw rey) is translated “phobeo” in the LXX meaning the LORD is the fear of kings. An evil prince with standing armies is no match for an offended God.

The psalmist leaves us with a promise. Political leaders like Lenin and Stalin who seem so unrestrained by empathy or guilt, and those modern political leaders that are driven by unrestrained pity to spend a nation’s resources trying to solve all the world’s problems, shall be “cut off;” that is, God will terminate their ambitions and bring them to an end!!

Just as the LORD God was terrible to the Assyrian army, He will be terrible to modern rulers. He is to be feared because He has them ALL on a leash. He can defeat their imperial ambitions. And, he will subject their evil plans to His will. He will cut down the antagonists and destroy them forever. It is not God’s will that humanistic regimes succeed. Napoleon, Hitler, Mussolini, Mao Tse Tung, Pol Pot, Stalin, Idi Amin, Saddam Hussein and their dictatorial ambitions are dead.

These mighty monarchs that thunder on earth for a time have a *terminus ad quem*, but the kingdom of God shall endure forever. The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea (Isaiah 11:9).

Onward Christian soldiers, onward!

Forget being “safe.” We live in a maximum liability universe where living life involves risks!

Don’t leave the battlefield. Be true. Be strong. Be free. Take risks. Believe God.

Psalm 78 - The Apostasy of Ephraim

“They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in his law.”

This is a psalm of Asaph, a Levite — possibly a musical family within the tribe of Levi. It was composed after he carefully considered why the Northern Ten Tribes were defeated and carried away captive to Assyria.

The psalm was composed after the time of David . . . after the civil war and political division in 1 Kings 12. The nation split over the issue of taxation, but this political issue was only the fruit of a deeper sin — the lust of the king for shekels, and the idolatry of the north.

The background of this psalm is Ephraim’s revolt against Rehoboam and the formation of a new government with its golden calf worship erected at Dan and Bethel; that is, the apostasy of the ten northern tribes called “Israel,” “Samaria,” or “Ephraim.”

The purpose of the psalm is to warn the nation of apostasy. Apostasy is the deliberate, willful denunciation of the faith. Thus, this psalm exposes backsliders contemplating desertion from Christ and the gospel. It establishes the fundamental argument for being faithful to the Lord and for avoiding unbelief, complaining, and backsliding.

Secondarily, it shows us why a nation (or church) must defend its fundamental principles. If leaders do not protect the country’s cardinal values, it will drift into the sea of idealism, humanism, utopianism, communism, feminism, and equalitarianism. All offense and no defense is a loser’s strategy. Ephraim had bows and arrow for its military might, but they dropped their shields when it came to defending the nation’s religious base.

The value of the psalm is that it explains why God rejected Ephraim (the Ten Tribes). It does not tell us why He was pleased to choose Judah to lead the nation in its theocracy. The reason God chose Jerusalem is wrapped up in the eternal promises of God and not the virtue of Judah.

Thus, this psalm contains the most important, fundamental lesson Christians can ever learn.

Asaph’s Call to Remain Steadfast to the Faith

Psalm 78:1 <Maschil of Asaph.> Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

See notes below on the word “maschil” which refers to wise instruction.

“Give ear” is a command by a king or ruler or priest, or even Asaph to stand at attention and pay attention. What he says has the force of law because his instructions are grounded on the Word of God.

2 I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old:

Asaph's wisdom reaches back into antiquity; and, his method of conveying wisdom was by storytelling.

3 Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.

This tried and trusted wisdom was handed down from generation to generation by wise fathers.

4 We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.

Asaph speaks for the people and renews the commitment of his generation to be faithful in passing on the praise (gospel) of the LORD to future generations. Indeed, God will strengthen and purify His people for this very purpose.

The Lord's Command to Be a Theocentric Nation

5 For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children:

"testimony" refers to the two tablets, the Ten Commandments, in the Ark of the Covenant, a "law in Israel."

"Jacob" is another name for Israel. The "law" was given not as a mediator between God and man, but as a rule to produce a happy, safe, productive society governed by the rule of law.

The bedrock of a nation's strength is Christ-centered families.

God's purpose is to redeem men in every nation of the world because He is not willing that any people group in the world be without hope of salvation. Consequently, Israel was His beach head or base of gospel operation to reach the world with the good news of Who He is and what He had done from men through His Son at Calvary.

"And appointed a law in Israel" – The LORD gave the law to Israel, an act of Sovereignty and love, to the Hebrews on Mt. Sinai. Their laws were not man-made statutes, but authoritative rules for all people. There are few things more derelict than the notion that Christian men are at liberty to choose the law which they will serve. The Word of God, not the Constitution, is the highest law in the land. The Ten Commandments and relevant case law is a direct reflection of the character of God.

The word "testimony" is a reference to the "Tabernacle of Testimony" which contained the "Ark of Testimony" which contained the two tablets which were called "the Testimony" – the law which was the objective testimony of God's character.

Exodus 25:21 And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony (the Ten Commandments on tablets) that I shall give thee.

Exodus 25:22 And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony,

Exodus 38:21 This is the sum of the tabernacle, even of the tabernacle of testimony . . .

“that they should make them known to their children” — The purpose of God is to create a godly generation and this is primarily accomplished through the family. It is the duty of every parent, every Christian, and every church to teach and train their children in the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and His law-order.

6 That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children:

It is the duty of every generation to pass down the history, wisdom, and maxims of law to secure the spiritual prosperity of their children and grandchildren.

Note that when liberals talk about the need for change they are advancing rebellion against God’s law and the principles that make nations great; that is “change” is the term used to advance a secular revolution . . . and, fools fall for it. “Change” introduces a movement towards the gods of chaos so legal anarchist and political subversives can make man into their own image. The first building block of revolution is “separation of church and state” so they can build society on their religion of feminism, humanism, secularism, and the other religious isms without calling it a religion.

The hope of the world is not in children, but in parents with an ambition to train their children “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”

7 That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments:

A generation that builds society on “hope in God” exhibits health: “We are endowed by our Creator with unalienable rights”, but a society that builds its society on man commits suicide.

8 And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not stedfast with God.

Israel’s history contains a rebellious segment, and Asaph exhorts his generation to reject the gods of chaos for self-evident reasons.

Consider the Apostasy of Ephraim

Refusal to Defend Their Brethren

9 The children of Ephraim, being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle.

“Ephraim” is a hypernym for the northern tribes a.k.a. Samaria.

“Turned back in the day of battle” – that is, these rebel tribes refused to do their duty to help the nation to defend itself against political enemies . . . and . . . to defend its lawful, theocratic government in Jerusalem.

“being armed, and carrying bows” informs us that Ephraim failed to join the national battle to defend the solidarity of the nation not for lack of military might, but because of willful rebellion. Secondly, “bows” may imply the nation trusted in its own military resources to defend itself, and that they felt no need to rely upon the unseen powers of the living God to protect them.

Moreover, they refused to defend the nation’s religious foundation or the nation’s constitution formed at Mt. Sinai. Not only did Ephraim not defend Israel’s theocracy, it did not rally to defend the nation’s theology. Ephraim revolted, and then liberalized the northern tribes by tolerating and practicing Baalism in Dan, Samaria, and Bethel. Baalism, the belief that the State was the source of law and that the highest good was to die for the State was the State religion of neighboring countries. Baalism is a hypernym for State worship, emperor worship, patriotism to the State regardless of its character.

That is, Ephraim did not stand by their brethren, or assist them in defending their country. They refused to defend their brethren, and gave themselves to their commercial interest; that is, they willfully and intentionally declined to join with the tribes of Judah and Benjamin in defense of the nation’s lawful government.

Unfaithfulness and Breach of Trust

10 They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in his law;

Ephraim’s political revolt was more serious because it involved rebellion against God . . . a breach of the covenant . . . a breaking away from their contract and agreement to obey — an act of infidelity, disloyalty, betrayal, perfidy, and treachery.

Willful Forgetfulness

11 And forgat his works, and his wonders that he had shewed them.

“forgat” does not mean Ephraim casually failed to remember the LORD and what He did for them, but that they deliberately, intentionally, and maliciously refused to read, cite, quote or practice the law; that is, they willfully enacted a policy of separation of church and state. They revolted from the faith and set a bold new course of self-reliance for the nation which ended up in its demolition by Assyria.

When people are driven by lusts, they develop amnesia.

Americans would do well to remember the apostasy of the Supreme Court in 1947: The Separation of Church and State: *Everson v. Board of Education* — the opening of Pandora's Box: teen pregnancy, abortion, pornography, feminism, Sodomy, and transvestism.

Consider the unreasonableness of Ephraim's rebellion in light of God's goodness.

Asaph rehearses the marvelous history of the nation, its deliverance from Egypt, and their treacherous journey through the wilderness in order to expose the unreasonableness, thanklessness, and ungratefulness of the ten tribes.

In this section, Asaph uncloaks the senseless treachery of Ephraim — an unforgiveable sin. Furthermore, the psalmist sheds light on Ephraim's apostasy and how they deserted the faith like the murmuring unbelievers did in the wilderness after the exodus.

This section contains a list of marvelous things God did for the Hebrews and a list of the senseless, illogical rebellion of the ten tribes.

Consider the Unreasonableness of Apostasy

12 Marvellous things did he in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan.

Ephraim apostatized from the faith despite God's judgment on Egypt and His preservation of Israel.

13 He divided the sea, and caused them to pass through; and he made the waters to stand as an heap.

Ephraim apostatized from the faith despite God's miracles at the Red Sea.

14 In the daytime also he led them with a cloud, and all the night with a light of fire.

Ephraim apostatized from the faith despite His gracious guidance by the pillar of fire at night and the cloud by day.

15 He clave the rocks in the wilderness, and gave them drink as out of the great depths.

Ephraim apostatized from the faith despite His miracle of providing water out of the rock.

16 He brought streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers.

Ephraim apostatized from the faith despite God's abundant provision to supply of water out of the rock at Horeb for two million people and their livestock.

Consider the Nature of the Apostasy

Sin and Rebellion

17 And they sinned yet more against him by provoking the most High in the wilderness.

The word “sin” (chata) means “to miss the mark.”

The word “provoking” (marah) means “to be contentious,” “to resist in a way that disturbs His peace. It is the same word used referring to the “Water of Marah” (Exodus 15).

Tempting God

18 And they tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their lust.

“tempted God” is much like what like the whining of a toddler that cries until it gets what it wants.

19 Yea, they spake against God; they said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?

The key here is the word “against.” They unreasonably challenge the powers of the Creator. The One Who created the heavens and the earth surely has the power to provide “a table” in the wilderness.

Doubt, Unbelief, Complaint, and Blasphemy

20 Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people?

Again, they challenged the powers of the Creator. The One Who can do the impossible caused water to pour out of a rock. Likewise, He buried the people in three feet of quail.

“A wind set in motion by GOD swept quails in from the sea. They piled up to a depth of about three feet in the camp and as far out as a day’s walk in every direction. All that day and night and into the next day the people were out gathering the quail—huge amounts of quail; even the slowest person among them gathered at least sixty bushels.” (Numbers 11:41-35)

21 Therefore the LORD heard this, and was wroth: so a fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel;

God cannot only provide water out of rock, His wrath can cause rocks to burn (Numbers 11:1-4).

Unbelief and Distrust

22 Because they believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation:

Israel saw mighty miracles, not because of their faith, but because of their unbelief and stubbornness of heart. A man can believe and see miracles – for his joy and edification, or he can whine and see God’s provision – a result which shrivels the soul (Psalm 106:15).

Consider the Unreasonableness of Unbelief and Apostasy

Stubbornness Despite God’s Goodness

23 Though he had commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of heaven,

He provided rain in the desert; that is, God has solutions to impossible problems.

24 And had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven. 25 Man did eat angels’ food: he sent them meat to the full.

He rained manna from heaven.

26 He caused an east wind to blow in the heaven: and by his power he brought in the south wind. 27 He rained flesh also upon them as dust, and feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea: 28 And he let it fall in the midst of their camp, round about their habitations. 29 So they did eat, and were well filled: for he gave them their own desire;

He provided the people quail to eat – so much so the quail covered the camp three feet high.

Lust and Greed

30 They were not estranged from their lust. But while their meat was yet in their mouths, 31 The wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and smote down the chosen men of Israel.

“not estranged from their lust” means they were not separated from their sins. The sad result of experiencing the miracles without faith is that these wonders did not motivate the people to forsake their sinful lusts. God’s testings are designed to improve the man, to separate Him from his sins, and to increase his confidence in the Lord.

The GREATEST TRAGEDY in life is to go through troubles and not be separated from your lusts; that is, not to reap a spiritual benefit from your trials.

“The great tragedy of the Christian life is not that we suffer, but that we fail to profit from our pressures” – Augustine.

For example: It would be stupid for a man to carry a hundred pounds of rocks up a hill and then demand that God level the mount. An intelligent man would take the rocks out of his backpack, and then continue his climb. Likewise, a pious Christian going through affliction will separate from his sins and continue his course.

More Sin and Unbelief

32 For all this they sinned still, and believed not for his wondrous works.

Unable to place their faith and their precious all into the hands of Almighty, they continued to sin . . . even after seeing these mighty wonders.

Consider Their Response to God's Judgment

Forty Years of Death and Trouble

33 Therefore their days did he consume in vanity, and their years in trouble.

God tested Israel ten times; and, each time they failed the test. Consequently, "their days did he consume in vanity."

Benson says it this way, "In tedious and fruitless marches hither and thither, sometimes forward and sometimes backward . . ." that is, they failed to reap an eternal benefit from their pain and suffering.

*34 When he slew them, then they sought him: and they returned and enquired early after God.
35 And they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer.*

The "they" refers to the survivors of God's judgments. Only when they saw the cold face of death, did they turn and seek His face.

What is about men that only a near death experience can cause them to cast off their sins and seek Him?

Men forget God until they need Him. In this case, He was pleased to be their Redeemer and their rock of Salvation.

Duplicity and Hypocrisy

36 Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues.

"Nevertheless" is a translation of the Hebrew Vav . . . and indicator that over time the people hid behind a hypocritical mask.

"flatter him" is a Piel verb implying intense deception and duplicity; that is, they "talked the walk, but failed to walk the talk. In modern vernacular, they became liars instead of truth tellers; deceivers instead of doers; retractable instead of reverential.

Disloyal, Treacherous, Faithless, Perfidious

37 For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant.

The word "right" means "firm, steadfast, or fixed." – the opposite of being "stedfast" or dutiful to the obligations of the covenant.

Betrayal in light of His Goodness

38 But he, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath. 39 For he remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.

While these tribulations revealed the hard heart of man, they also revealed the tenderness of God.

“full of compassion” is a Piel verb; that is, this is an excellent translation revealing that the Creator-Judge is more prone to care than to scorn, forgive than to condemn, to bless than to blame.

Contention and Intentional Rebellion

40 How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert!

The words “prove” and “grieve” inform us that the people’s behavior touched the heart of God in a negative way. God is a sentient Being. His heart is not a Sherman tank nor is it made of steel. He has feeling and emotions. He was hurt and injured by what Israel said and did.

41 Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.

The word “limited” (tavah) means “to pain, or to grieve.” It is translated “scrabble” in 1 Samuel 21:14 – a reference to David departing from his sentient reasoning and acting like a madman.

The English word “limited” means “a restriction on the size or amount of something permissible or possible.”

How can you limit the Almighty? These people grieved God and limited His power by turning away from His will and doing the opposite of what pleases Him.

Willful forgetfulness of His Judgments on Egypt and His Salvation of Israel

42 They remembered not his hand, nor the day when he delivered them from the enemy.

“his hand” refers to His redemptive power and works – a reference to the miracles in Egypt and at the Red Sea.

“not” negates the verb “remember” (zakar) and it is the first word in the sentence meaning that it is emphatic.

How could these people not remember His power in Egypt and at the Red sea? The answer is that they were so fixed on feeding their lusts; they could not or would not reflect on God’s love for them or on His power. When people are addicted to their sins, amnesia sets in like a London fog.

From verse 44-56, the psalmist recalls the mighty miracles of his hand that these people forgot.

Most of us would remember rivers turning to blood, millions of frogs jumping down the street, clouds of locusts, hails that prunes all the fruit off trees and levels fields, hail the size of baseballs the killed cattle and sheep, the sudden, inexplicable death of all the firstborn in the nation, the splitting of the Red Sea, water out of the rock, bread (manna) delivered to your doorstep, and the day you woke up covered in 3 feet of dead quail, the thunder and lightning around Mt. Sinai, the fall of Jericho and the staggering defeat of the Canaanites, and joyful be handed free houses, lands, and cities . . . **but, not these people.**

44 And had turned their rivers into blood; and their floods, that they could not drink. 45 He sent divers sorts of flies among them, which devoured them; and frogs, which destroyed them. 46 He gave also their increase unto the caterpillar, and their labour unto the locust. 47 He destroyed their vines with hail, and their sycamore trees with frost. 48 He gave up their cattle also to the hail, and their flocks to hot thunderbolts. 49 He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels among them. 50 He made a way to his anger; he spared not their soul from death, but gave their life over to the pestilence; 51 And smote all the firstborn in Egypt; the chief of their strength in the tabernacles of Ham:

52 But made his own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock. 53 And he led them on safely, so that they feared not: but the sea overwhelmed their enemies. 54 And he brought them to the border of his sanctuary, even to this mountain, which his right hand had purchased.

55 He cast out the heathen also before them, and divided them an inheritance by line, and made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents. 56 Yet they tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies:

The psalmist uses the word “tempted” three times in this psalms, and “provoked” twice to emphasize nature of the rebels and the effect of their sin. The opposite of tempted and provoked are praise, submission, and obedience.

Consider the Unfaithfulness of Ephraim

The question on the mind of every faithful Hebrew was “Why did God permit the Assyrians to kill, conquer, and destroy the largest tribe in Israel?” The psalmist doesn’t explain why He saved Judah, but he does clarify why God ordained the destruction of Ephraim (a.k.a. “Israel,” “Samaria,” or “the Northern Kingdom”)

“Behold the goodness and severity of God” (Romans 11:22).

Rebellion

57 But turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers: they were turned aside like a deceitful bow.

“turned back” refers to apostasy. “unfaithful” refers to their treachery.

Reckless Idolatry

58 For they provoked him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images.

“high places” refers to the small hills in northern Israel where Ephraim set up altars worship to false gods . . . where every man did what was right in his own eyes.

“jealousy” is a praise worthy zeal to preserve something precious; that is, Israel’s idolatry aggravated the anger and jealousy of the LORD.

Consider God’s Response to Apostasy and Rebellion

Anger

59 When God heard this, he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel:

It takes a lot to stir God’s righteous anger, but Ephraim managed to do with their idolatry. Asaph refers to His anger twice to emphasize the response of God to idolatry. Furthermore, the psalmist adds the adjective “greatly” to add to the intensity.

Abandonment

60 So that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which he placed among men;

“Shiloh” is where the tabernacle was set up during the Period of the Judges. Today, this site is known as Khirbet Seilun or Tel Shiloh.

Captivity

61 And delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemy’s hand.

The Ark is a symbol of power. During the time of Eli the High Priest God permitted the Ark to be stolen by the Philistines – a shame for Israel.

Likewise, Ephraim was considered the military strength of Israel (his glory). After the ten tribes plunged into idolatry, God assigned Ephraim to be destroyed by the Assyrians.

War and Death

62 He gave his people over also unto the sword; and was wroth with his inheritance.

Asaph informs the reader that Ephraim’s captivity and death by the sword was the result of Ephraim stirring up God’s wrath due to their apostasy.

63 The fire consumed their young men; and their maidens were not given to marriage.

“their maidens were not given to marriage” should be translated, “Their virgins were not praised in nuptial songs.”

To further emphasize the extent of God’s fiery anger against Ephraim, Asaph highlighted two of life’s great tragedies: the death of Israel’s young men and the absence of nuptial songs or choruses sung at weddings – a highpoint in every woman’s life. With young men dead and society destroyed, young virgins were destined to be old maids.

Intense Penetrating Judgments

64 Their priests fell by the sword; and their widows made no lamentation.

The priests here have to be the priests of Baal in Samaria, Dan, and Bethel. Not only did the false priests die, so did their widows; that is, the ravages of war prevented surviving widows from performing the customary practices of lamenting their husbands death.

This rhetoric may be a reference to the death of the wife of Phinehas who died in child birth after learning of the ark being stolen by the Philistines (1 Samuel 4).

Consider the Goodness and Severity of Providence

Awake in Anger

65 Then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep, and like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine.

Asaph compares God’s wrath to the emotions of one suddenly awakened from his sleep and to a mighty soldier exhilarated by wine.

Pursuit of Apostates

66 And he smote his enemies in the hinder parts: he put them to a perpetual reproach.

Asaph compares the wrath of God to an angry, energetic soldier pursuing fleeing adversaries and stabbing them with a sword in the back. Moreover, the death of Ephraim is compared to the shame of being killed while running away from advancing soldiers. It is the duty of soldiers to stand their ground and to defend their country. But, Ephraim ran away like scared rabbits. The word “coward” comes to mind.

Dismissal of Ephraim

67 Moreover he refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim:

Thus, the main warning of this psalm: God rejected Ephraim because they chose to sin against God like the apostates in the Wilderness.

Election of Judah

68 But chose the tribe of Judah, the mount Zion which he loved.

No reason is given. The reason God chose Jerusalem to be the Capital of the nation rests in the heart of God – not in the character of the people or the virtues of David.

The Blessing of a Skilled, Caring King-Shepherd

69 And he built his sanctuary like high palaces, like the earth which he hath established for ever. 70 He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds: 71 From following the ewes great with young he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance.

Asaph shines the spotlight on God’s favor toward Judah. Unlike Ephraim that perished, God elected, ordained, and established Judah as the object of His love and the heirs of His grace.

Pastoral Care of God over the People

72 So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands.

O, the foolishness of Ephraim to reject the grace, mercy, love, strength, kindness, guidance, compassion, and provision of the Lord God.

No wonder Asaph penned this lesson for all to learn the benefits of being faithful to the Lord.

Application

Americans would do well to learn Asaph’s lessons and apply it to their churches . . . and to their nation.

“Behold the goodness and severity of God” (Romans 11:22).

Notes:

1) on the term “maschil” from Barnes:

The word “Maschil” in the title – משכיל *maškiyl*, is derived from the verb – שָׂכַל *śakal* – meaning properly “to look at, to behold, to view;” and then, to be prudent, circumspect; to act prudently or circumspectly, as one does who looks attentively and carefully at objects; then it means to be intelligent, prudent, wise. The participle, which is the form used here (causitive of the Hiphil), means “making wise or prudent,” or “conveying instruction;” and this title is given to this psalm, as well as to many others, as conveying the idea that the psalm was adapted “to make wise,” or to impart instruction; and the sense would be well expressed by our phrase, “didactic song.” The title is prefixed also to the following psalms: Psalm 42:1-11; Psalm 44; Psalm 45; Psalm 52:1-9; Psalm 53:1-6; Psalm 54:1-7; Psalm 55; Psalm 74; Psalm 88; Psalm 89; Psalm 142:1-7.

On the Difference in these terms:

What is the difference between an Insurrection, a Rebellion, and a Revolution?

Insurrection – a violent uprising against a legitimate authority or government.

Rebellion – an act of violent or open resistance to God’s established government or ruler.

Note: Rebellion in the Bible is strictly against a God-ordained authority. It is not possible to “rebel” against a tyrant because the tyrant is the one rebelling against Heaven’s Will. Resistance to tyranny is service to God – not rebellion.

Revolution – a forcible overthrow of a government or social order.

Psalm 82 - A Charge to Magistrates

“How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked?”



We do not know the time or the occasion for this psalm, but we are very familiar with corruption in the courts and the reason for God addressing magistrates on earth.

Judicial administrators have the same problems as all men. Some are lazy, many are swayed by public opinion, and others are open to bribes.

A Statement about the Supreme Judge

Psalm 82:1 <A Psalm of Asaph.> God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods.

“God standeth in the congregation of the mighty” means that the Supreme Ruler of the Universe has standing to issue directives to judges in the courts of men. They are responsible to His law. Further, the Supreme Chief Justice holds these magistrates accountable to Himself and His law. These arrogant jurists will give account of their manipulation of law to enrich the State.

A Probing Question

2 How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah.

Can you say “bias, prejudice, corruption, and conflicts of interest”? Just as fraud and bribery dominated the agenda of the courts today, so did they in the psalmist’s time.

“A comprehensive analysis of nearly 57,000 corruption cases in federal courts spanning 30 years revealed that fraud and bribery dominated the types of conduct underlying criminal cases, accounting for 76% of the lead charges in cases resulting in convictions” (National Institute of Justice)

A Charge to Magistrates

3 Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy.

Duty One: It is a duty of magistrates to defend those who cannot defend themselves. It does not mean ruling in favor of the poor against the rich, but to see that right is done to them regardless of the favors being offered to a judge by the wealthy.

Two vulnerable defendants are mention, the poor that do not have the resources to defend themselves and the fatherless that are ignorant of the judicial process and do not have a father-attorney to intercede on their behalf.

4 Deliver the poor and needy; rid them out of the hand of the wicked.

Duty two: Deliver the poor and needy from the oppressive power of the sophisticated dexterity of those who would crush the weak.

The “wicked” would be rich, powerful plaintiffs.

A Word about Weakness Among Magistrates

5 They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course.

The psalmist addresses corruption in Israel’s courts.

Many judges suffer from tunnel vision; i. e. they can’t see the forest for the trees. But, in this case, these magistrates were willingly ignorant about religion, God’s law, and the rules of the court. These judges not only manufactured void judgments due to malicious prosecution, they had no desire to judge fairly. These vultures sitting on thrones of power took no pains to learn the facts or the law before they rendered a judgment.

A Warning to Judges

6 I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.

The appellation “gods” refers to the status of judges. Because the fate and destiny of men are in their hands, they have the power of gods.

The Lord gently reminds these surrogates that their status among men is temporary; that in time they will suffer the fate and destiny of common, unbelieving men.

7 But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.

He reminds these stuffy, nose-in-the-air magistrates who considered themselves superior to the common man that they are mortal like all men – *that they put their pants on one leg at a time.*

A Prayer Directive to the Supreme Court of Heaven

8 Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations.

“inherit” is the Biblical word for jurisdiction. The Creator has jurisdiction over what He creates.

Rather than take these matters to the courts of men, the psalmist appeals to the Supreme Court of Heaven to review these matters. “Come forth and see that justice is done on earth as it is in heaven.” The Judge of all men has a duty to do so seeing that He claims title over all nations.

Psalm 86 - Reasons God Should Answer My Prayer

"Lord, teach me to pray"



This psalm purports to be a psalm of David, and there is no good reason to dispute it.

This psalm buckles to no subdivisions.

The value of this psalm is that it provides reasons why God will answer prayer. Christians without stories about answered prayers is not normal.

"We have here a sheaf of arrows out of a good man's quiver, shot into heaven"
(MacLaren).

The great lesson of this psalm is that we should offer reasons why His answer to our prayers will glorify Him. Perhaps, this psalm provides missing parts to the power of prayer. The ideas enclosed are not unique as they are quotes from other psalms, yet when combined into one psalm, their power unites us to men of old who cried out to God and were graciously answered.

Lord, teach me to pray (Luke 11:1).

Learn the lesson this psalm provides, and God will be delighted to charter your ambitions to glorify Him. This prayer is very personal. Therefore, let us personalize this masterpiece to our own circumstances with the use of "me," "my," and "I."

Answer my prayer because I am poor and needy

Psalm 86:1 <A Prayer of David.> Bow down thine ear, O LORD, hear me: for I am poor and needy.

Need is a basis for all prayer. God's ears are always open to the cry of the poor and needy. Since I am poor and needy, I know that God is predisposed to answer my prayers.

Are you poor and needy? Then, you are a candidate for answered prayer.

Needs may be material or spiritual.

Philippians 4:19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

"for" can be translated "because"; that is, the preposition provides the reason God can answer prayer.

When praying use the names “LORD,” “Lord,” “God,” and the precious name of “Jesus. “ To pray “in His name” is a means of relying upon His great and infinite character. After all, “Jesus” (Iesous) is the sweetest name I know.

John 16:24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

Answer my prayer because I trust in You

2 Preserve my soul; for I am holy: O thou my God, save thy servant that trusteth in thee.

“Preserve my soul” — Sanctify and beautify my soul with joy and confidence because You answer prayer.

That “I am holy” is a reason God should answer prayers; that is, God answers the prayers of His holy ones, His called ones, His chosen ones, His justified ones, His separated ones, and His sanctified ones. Claim your *position* of being a “saint” in Christ; and, **not** your *condition* of imperfect holy development.

“I am holy”; i.e. I am one of your chosen ones . . . pious . . . declared “righteous,” and devoted to You. I am a member of Your covenant people. You called me and set me apart to live in dependence on You. Therefore, I have a right to be here and to pray to You — my covenant-keeping God.

“trusteth in thee” — How can God resist answering prayer for a child that truly trusts Him? You are the Grantor; He is the Trustee. Trust Him. He cannot fail.

Claim your legal standing in Christ as one united with His victorious history (Romans 6:1-16).

“I am one whom thou favourest, hast set apart for thyself, and made partaker of sanctifying grace” (Matthew Henry).

Answer my prayer because it is in Your character to be merciful.

3 Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto thee daily.

My poverty, needs, and wretchedness qualifies me for mercy. Therefore, I call to You daily pleading for mercy.

The person who continually knocks on the door will eventually have the door opened. The one who regularly stands before his throne is seen as a friend of the Court.

God answers prayer because it is His nature to be merciful . . . to supply my needs . . . to love me and to be to me what I need Him to be. Mercy, not justice, is the foundation of all prayer. The ground of perfected prayers builds on His mercy and not my merits. Therefore, I work to be consistent and not intermittent in offering prayer to my Lord and Savior.

Answer my prayer because answered prayer would make my soul joyful.

4 Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

The conjunction “for” or “because” introduces a new reason for God to answer my prayers.

Perhaps there is nothing more pathetic on earth than a defeated, depressed, downcast Christian-soul. A happy saint is more effective than a depressed, confused one. Answer my prayer that I might overflow with joy in You.

Moreover, I do not go to another. You, Lord, are my only remedy; my joy, and my only hope.

“It is God only that can put gladness into the heart, and make the soul rejoice; and it is the privilege of his servants to have joy, as well as peace, in believing; and they may pray in faith, not only that God would preserve their souls, but that he would rejoice their souls, and then the joy of the Lord will be their strength” (Benson).

Answer my prayer because You are good, forgiving, and merciful

5 For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.

Answered prayer provides evidence God is good, forgiving, and plenteous in mercy.

He does not demand perfection to receive answered prayer. He forgives imperfection, weakness, and sin due to the precious blood of Christ (1 Peter 1:18-19). Claim the power of His blood.

My sins haunt me. Your answer to my prayer would be proof that You are “ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy” to sinners who call upon Thee.

Claim the promise that God is near to those who call upon Him (Psalm 145:18).

6 Give ear, O LORD, unto my prayer; and attend to the voice of my supplications.

Lord, you hear many prayers, but hear my prayer. This is my pilgrimage on earth . . . my time. Hear my supplication.

Answer my prayer because You promised to answer prayer in the day of trouble

7 In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee: for thou wilt answer me.

In Psalm 50, God orders men to pray to Him in the day of trouble. In the day of trouble, plead the command; plead the promise.

Psalm 50:15 And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.

Lord, I am in trouble. Trouble is an opportunity to pray and to see You work. Hear my pleading, and You will be glorified.

Answer my prayer because You are the only God Who can do so

8 Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto thy works.

The background for this verse is in Exodus 15:11 — “Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?”

When praying, God’s people stand on the truth that there is only one, true absolute personal God; that He is **not** one among many, nor are all religions a path to God.

“None so wise, so mighty, so good; none so able and willing to hear and answer prayer” (Benson).

I am not calling on a dead, man-made, wooden idol or a figment of man’s imagination. But to YHWH — the God Who IS. There is nothing that the gods of the nations have done that can be a ground of confidence. Your works, Your Word, and Your character, Lord, are my ground of confidence that You can and will deliver me.

Answered prayer is proof of Your existence to those who profess no god and no hope.

Answering my prayer strengthens me to encourage agnostic men to put their trust in You. Answered prayer enables me to witness about Your grace to those who do not yet worship our Lord Jesus Christ.

Answer my prayer because it is consistent with your purpose that all come to worship you

9 All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name.

The final vision of the universe is where all nations come to worship You. Our Lord introduced us to the power of His kingdom, and it continues today. Answered prayer is consistent with Your desire and purpose that all men bow the knee to You and look to You as their God. Answer my prayer now because it conforms to your kingdom objective (Psalm 72:11, 17; Psalm 82:8).

Isaiah 2:2 And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD’S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

Isaiah 66:23 And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD.

Answer my prayer for doing so is consistent with Your unique wonders

10 For thou art great, and doest wondrous things: thou art God alone.

Men should wonder and ponder your greatness and marvelous works.

“The greatness and the power of God are reasons why we should appeal to him in our weakness, and in our times of trouble” (Barnes).

Because You have done wondrous things in the past, You can do wonders for me today.

My circumstances are difficult. Only Your wonders can provide a way of escape; and, it would be a privilege for me to see Your wonders. Answering my prayer provides an opportunity for me to prove there are no limits to Your goodness, mercy, and power.

Answer my prayer for doing so makes me more united with You

11 Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.

As You have taught me by Your Word, teach me by your Spirit. As You have taught me objectively Your truth, help me to subjectively experience Your truth. May my mind, words, and deeds conform to Your truth.

Answered prayer is a means of teaching me the ways of God . . . of helping me walk in Your truth . . . of increasing my love and respect for You.

“Unite my heart” — i.e. unite all my knowledge and powers and devote them to Your service.

Answer my prayer for it will be an occasion for me to glorify Your name forever

12 I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore.

Answering my prayer will increase my praise and admiration of You . . . of doing so with all my heart . . . of increasing the power of this witness to glorify You now and forever more. Lord, give me bragging rights!

Let me praise You with all my heart, mind, emotions, and will. Use my body for Your holy service and renew my mind in holy matters (Romans 12:1).

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

Answer my prayer for it is consistent with Your mercy and purpose for my life

13 For great is thy mercy toward me: and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell (sheol).

Answered prayer is consistent with Your merciful work of saving my soul. You rescued me in the past from violence and death (v. 14). Do so again. Didn't You save me to experience Your power, love, and goodness? Do it again!

Answer my prayer for enemies are real and substantially stronger than me

14 O God, the proud are risen against me, and the assemblies of violent men have sought after my soul; and have not set thee before them.

Answer my prayer because the people who oppose me oppose You. The people who are proud and ambitious trample down my rights and violent men have attempted to ruin my reputation, ministry, and confidence in You. If You answer my prayer, this answered prayer will be evidence that You are **not** like my enemies who seek my harm and defeat.

Lord, if you do not answer my prayer, my experience will be no different than that of an atheist . . . of an agnostic . . . of those who pray to false gods. Answer me that I might have a rejoinder to those who doubt and mock Your power.

Answer my prayer because to do so is consistent with Your character

15 But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.

God is not poor, broke, or destitute . . . nor stingy, miserly, or chintzy . . . nor reluctant, indisposed, opposed, or unwilling to answer prayer. He is a king with wealth to give. He sits on a throne and has the authority to provide all that I request.

David's assurance that the Lord will answer his prayer is firmly grounded on the character of God. He does not claim his own goodness as the reason God should answer prayer. Rather, he claims the goodness and treasures of God. He answers prayer because He is good, not because we are good. You answer prayer because of Who You are — a God of love; and, not because of who I am.

As a mother loves her children, You will have compassion on this child of Yours.

Furthermore, there is no thought here that God is indifferent, resentful, short-tempered or stingy with mercy and truth. To David, God answers prayer because He is "full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth;" that is, He is predisposed to be attentive and generous. It's in His nature to be merciful to answer my prayers.

God desires to give you the best, but you must sometimes wait for it. Waiting is an expression of praising the Lord.

"He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee" (Psalm 81:16).

Notice how positive Jesus was about prayer.

Matthew 7:7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

“If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?” (Luke 11:11).

Answering prayer to men in need is consistent with all that I know about You, O Lord. It is not in Your character to deny, harm, or deprive people of what they truly need. Answering my prayers is consistent with Your compassion, grace, patience, mercy, and truth. Because You are on Your throne, You have authority, riches, and power to answer my prayers; and, because Your throne is a throne of grace I have confidence You will overlook my weaknesses and the weaknesses of my prayers.

Answer my prayer and show me you have answered my mother’s prayers

16 O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me; give thy strength unto thy servant, and save the son of thine handmaid.

“handmaid” — a reference to David’s godly mother and grandmother Ruth.

In my present state it appears that You have turned away from me and that you are indifferent to my needs. You have taught me your mercy is higher than the heavens. Your answer to my prayer would be an act of mercy and by it your servant will be strengthened. Answering my prayer would show me that you heard the prayers of my mother . . . and my grandmother who prayed to you to guide me, to provide for me, and to strengthen me.

Answer my prayer so my enemies may see that it is You who help and comfort me.

17 Shew me a token for good; that they which hate me may see it, and be ashamed: because thou, LORD, hast holpen me, and comforted me.

Answered prayer is a sign of your goodness to me, and it is a means of rebuking those that hate me . . . that hate You. Answering my prayer would bolster my confidence in You and humble my adversaries. You have helped me in the past, help me now. You have comforted me before, do it now, in the name of Jesus for Your glory.

David is not teaching us that God is one, great-big Supper Daddy eager to spoil His people. The Lord is also a holy God zealous of holiness — a Heavenly Father Who disciplines His children so they can be partakers of His holiness. Yes, He is compassionate and merciful, but He is also zealous for our perfection.

Deuteronomy 32:15 But Jeshurun (Israel) waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.

Effective prayer is a mixture of confession, forsaking sin, and lying hold of His willingness to bless. This psalm seeks to correct our flawed theology, and does not deal with how to manage

our flaws. Therefore, if you are wrestling with God in prayer, you must repudiate your sins as well as claim and proclaim reasons God should answer your prayer.

“No!” is also an answer to prayer. Blessed be Thy Name. A “not yet,” is not a “No!” Waiting on God in silence is also a means of praising Him.

Psalm 94 - Why do the Wicked Prosper?

“Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law?”



The author looks around only to see the proud prospering, and it pricked his soul.

He knows that God is sovereign, but he is baffled by the LORD's lethargy and lack of action—the trial of the saints.

What should a good man do when the Sovereign LORD God seems so dilatory in performing His duty to judge the wicked?

The psalmist cries out in prayer, charges his adversaries with crimes before the Court, and publishes the truth about the ultimate triumph of good over evil.

Growing in perspective on God's chastisements, the author becomes convinced the LORD will judge evildoers. God not only condemns the wicked, He corrects the righteous. As important as confronting the wicked is, the psalmist realizes that the LORD is intensely devoted to improving His people. He concludes a man who endures His corrections as blessed.

Thus, we have another psalm dealing with dilemma of the thinking man, “Why do the wicked prosper?” This is another instance of a good man perplexed by the rapid success of godless men, and who comforts his own heart by remembering that God is sovereign.

We have a kingdom of God theme presented: The LORD who vigorously corrects His own, will in His own good time, with the assistance of the imprecatory prayers of His people, crush rebels in positions of power.

The Psalmist Cries out to the LORD to Take Action

Psalm 94:1 O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself.

“vengeance” (neqamah) refers to punishment or retribution for a wrong done.

The psalmist can see the wicked prosper in their lawlessness, but he struggles to see God's hand at work. Therefore, he prays God would come out of hiding and "shew thyself."

The Hebrew word for "shew" is *yapha* which means "to shine forth" as sunbeams. God seems to be masking Himself in the clouds. "Shine, God, shine" is the psalmist's prayer. This is a prayer for vengeance; that is, for God to deliver a counter blow against the proud who use political power for their own personal agenda.

Recited as a liturgical appeal, the Orthodox church says: "It is time for the Lord to act."

2 Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud.

The author knows that God is the Judge of all men and that it is His duty to administer justice. What he doesn't understand is why the wheels of Divine justice grind so slowly. Here he sees the Chief Justice asleep. "Rise up, get up, stand up" shouts the psalmist in agonizing prayer. "Do your duty" and try the proud traitor who forces his anarchy on society.

The Psalmist's Conundrum About the Prosperity of the Wicked

3 LORD, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph?

"Usquequo Domine" (Latin) – "How Long, O Lord" is the great question of the righteous stressed by the shadowy success of the wicked.

The term "wicked" (ra'sha) refers to those eating fruit from the Poisonous Tree: lawbreakers, criminals, thugs, rioters, warlords, lawmakers, rulers, and evil aristocrats intoxicated with power. He is not thinking of blue collar crime, but white collar criminals who use the power of their office to break the bones of God's lambs. Quite possibly, he refers to gloating politicians and public officials of his time.

4 How long shall they utter and speak hard things? and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves?

"Usquequo Domine" is asked a second time in order to emphasize the soul-stress of the righteous.

"hard things" refers to the yoke, the whip and chains, the profane place on citizens – violations of God's law that abrogate the rights of man.

"They" is plural. The wicked run in packs and God's lambs are frazzled by the administration of arrogant rulers.

The author has long endured the blasphemy, cursing, ignorance, boasting, spin, lies, slander, deception, censorship, and the arrogant commentary of the pompous against the righteous. He has had enough! Tired of the twisted propagandists and haughty officials, he wonders how long he has to endure these know-it-all, full-of-themselves psychopaths.

The psalmist had to learn what Henry Wadsworth Longfellow so eloquently wrote, "Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small; Though with patience He stands waiting, with exactness grinds He all."

The Psalmist's Complaint Against the Wicked

Like a prosecutor, the author presents his case against the sin-stained, elitist criminals.

5 They break in pieces thy people, O LORD, and afflict thine heritage.

"Break" and "afflict" are Piel verbs expressing intense action – a charge against civil officials.

He charges these tyrants with breaking the legs of God's lambs. Somehow, these monsters seem to enjoy spreading pain and misery among humanity. They seem to feel it is their duty to attack, assault, insult, denigrate, disparage, deny, twist, hammer, and crush the hard-working innocent in order to prove how important and powerful they are. They are guilty of crimes against humanity . . . of malfeasance . . . of violating the common law by injuring others and their property.

6 They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless.

The psalmist charges these wolves with violating the 6th Commandment, "Thou shall not kill."

Great societies protect all people, but especially the most vulnerable: the widow, old people, the alien, and children. Degenerate societies adopt State policies that plunder and slaughter the most vulnerable among them: the unborn, the aged, youth, and the legal immigrant.

7 Yet they say, The LORD shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it.

Particularly egregious to the writer was the disbelieving, willful ignorance of the autocratic man. Moreover, this theological callousness on the part of the arrogant was not directed toward general religion, but specifically toward the sovereign LORD God of the Bible, the God of all grace, the God of Jacob.

The Psalmist Condemns the Fools

8 Understand, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise?

The author describes the political behemoths as "brutish" which means "hot, kindled, fired up, or burning." Politicians never lack something to say. They have a utopian answer for all of man's problems.

Vigorously lobbying for "freedom from God's law," the proud man's energy and zeal for lawlessness appears boundless. The psalmist wonders how long it will take for them to learn the truth about God and be wise. "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom," but the despots seem unable to grasp the simplest truths about God. Thus, he calls them "fools."

Fools are proud and unreasonable men. Because fools are subjective and follow their feelings, they have the amazing ability to arrive at wrong conclusions about the great issues facing mankind 100% of the time.

9 He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?

The psalmist challenges the theology of the wicked with penetrating questions. Does not the One who made the ear hear, and the One who made the human eye see?

Cast in the sea of ontology (nature of being), they must swim against the current where they are forced to wrestled with questions about the origins of man and the cause of their own existence.

Such questions overwhelm the skeptic smothering him with confusion. Inquiries like this overload the circuits of his unused grey cells. Flooded by emotion, he is unable to think.

Remember, liberals are dreamers not thinkers; talkers, not problem solvers; idealists, not realists; egocentric, not lovers of God; and, feelers fretting about world problems while possessing delusions about their personal importance.

10 He that chastiseth (yacar) the heathen, shall not he correct (yakach: rebuke) ? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?

Again, the Psalmist overwhelms the heathen with questions. This time he throws them into the sea of epistemology to ponder the theory of knowledge.

The term epistemology comes from Greek word ἐπιστήμη, *epistēmē*, meaning 'knowledge'; and, λόγος, *logos*, meaning 'logical discourse'.

Epistemology is the branch of philosophy concerned with the theory of knowledge. Here the skeptic must wrestle with (1) the nature of knowledge and beliefs; (2) the reasons for skepticism; (3) the sources of knowledge and the justifiable reasons for belief claims; (4) proof of claim and the basis for knowledge and belief. Unless one lays hold of the Creator, the doubter will face a shoreless epistemological sea tossed to and fro by waves of conflict and contradiction.

True knowledge comes through the investigation of claims seeking proof of claim. Plato called knowledge "justified true belief;" that is, reasonable belief based on proof of claim (the foundation of conservatism) as distinguished from possibilities and utopian ideology (the foundation of liberalism).

In Christian epistemology, God is the Source of knowledge: In the beginning, God created the world and everything in it, including knowledge.

However, the idea that God knows everything may seem to be a simple concept, but the more we contemplate it, the more we come to understand what an amazing truth this is. The psalmist informs us, "He determines the number of the stars and calls them each by name. Great is our Lord and mighty in power; His understanding has no limit" (Psalm 147:4-5). Imagine, God not only knows how many stars are in the universe, He knows each of them by name. That God is omniscient means that He has never learned anything. Surely, the One who knows the names of stars, knows what the infidel does, says, and thinks.

History is inexplicable without the Christian God. All men know instinctively there are forces at work behind the scenes of history that cannot be explained by chance. History is a series of judgments, conflicts, wars, and mighty deliverances that can only be explained by the hand of God. Surely, He who judges nations knows the deeds of individual men and holds them accountable.

Thus, the Psalmist asserts the LORD knows the hidden secrets of men; that He is "the Chastiser of the Heathen" and the One Who charges and chastens the wicked.

11 The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.

God know the thoughts of man, but man does not know the thoughts of God unless He reveals them to men. And, He has through His Inspired Word.

The word "man" is *adam* in Hebrew and *anthropos* in Greek.

The psalmist proclaims a truth that God knows not only the words and actions of a man, He reads his thoughts. He deciphers them all, and summarizes their content as "vanity." In the Lord's estimation, no matter what cellophane man thinks, God regards the brainwork of the rebel as good-for-nothing.

The Psalmist's Confidence about God's Correction of the Righteous

12 Blessed is the man (giber; gibbor) whom thou chastenest (yacar), O LORD, and teachest him out of thy law;

Having laid out his charges against the wicked, the prosecutor rests.

The word "man" here is not *adam* or *anthropos* but *giber* – a mighty man in they eyes of God; that is, a strong Christian man.

Changing roles, the psalmist's soul contemplates the sweet melodies plying on the harps in the orchestra of afflicted saints. They are portrayed as being chastened and instructed by the LORD; that is, the righteous voluntarily seek the correction of God. Consequently, they are strong. Though often in pain and bewildered by their difficulties, they are blessed -- blessed because God knows them, loves them, and corrects them out of His Word – blessed because they are morally and spiritually stout.

The word "man" (*geber*) refers to a strong, military male that is instructed out of God's law. This "man" is not a sugar-addicted wussy suckin' on lollipops and caramel-glazed donuts. A soldier in God's boot camp, he trains for war. A student of law, under the One and Only Lawgiver, he becomes a powerful, discerning lawyer-advocate in the good sense of the term. He is blessed because he is being instructed out of the "perfect law of liberty" and prepared to enter the contest between good and evil.

13 That thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit (grave) be digged for the wicked.

The Hiphil infinitive "give him rest" (*hashakit*) expresses causative action; that is, there is rest from the LORD to those agitated by the proliferation of evil. Trained under the chastening hand of God and instructed out of His law, the believer must learn to rest in his position in Christ, to rest in service to humanity, and to rest in the long, drawn out battle against proud fools. The man of God is not permitted to wear anything that causes him to sweat in his service to Christ.

Nothing of the flesh can assist the Spirit. There is a grave prepared for the proud, but until this judgment, the Christian man must not fret (be hot) because of evildoers (Ezekiel 44:18; Psalm 37:1).

“until the pit (grave) be digged for the wicked” means that the wicked live as if they will not be punished . . . but even as they think this way, God is digging their grave. Thus, the righteous have to exercise patience.

14 For the LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance.

The author learned that no matter how hot the fire, how painful the switch, how hard the hammer, how scarce the rations, how uphill the path, how lonely the journey, the LORD will not forsake His people!

To express the certainty that the Lord will not "cast off" or "forsake" His inheritance, the psalmist employs the Hebrew negative "not" or "neither" (lo) before the two verbs. “not” is in the emphatic position to the verb and is used twice in this statement.

In Hebrews 13:5, the Spirit uses five negatives in Greek to express the impossibility of the righteous being forsaken by God: "He will never, never, no never, never forsake thee." Rest, soul, rest!

15 But judgment shall return unto righteousness: and all the upright in heart shall follow it.

The Judge will not delay justice forever. His gavel will be heard on the day of sentencing. The pirate ship of the wicked will be forced to dock in God’s judicial harbor, and when it does, the godly will rejoice. The kingdom of God will come, the righteous will be saved, and the wicked will be punished.

A ticker tape parade is coming to the joy of the righteous and to the grief of dignitaries, heads of state, and bully bureaucrats. God’s edelweiss, white flowers hidden in the crags of the rocks, who humbly served Him without recognition, will be showered with rewards along the "Walk of Heroes" near the Celestial City.

16 Who will rise up for me against the evildoers? or who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity?

Having laid out the fate of the wicked and the blessedness of the righteous, the psalmist can’t imagine who would not want to join the battle against entrenched lawlessness. He calls for champions to come forth and join His army to fight for the gospel of Christ against the citadels of wickedness.

The governments of this world have been in the hands of proud politicians way too long —in the hands of corrupt officials who use the powers of their office to crush the rights of men. Thus, the author blows the trumpet calling for the righteous to join him on the battlefield to lay siege to the fortress of government to reclaim civil offices reserved for the righteous.

The Psalmist's Comfort in Providence

17 Unless the LORD had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence.

18 When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O LORD, held me up.

19 In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.

Here slumps a soldier: exhausted, alone, and overwhelmed by the strength of his enemies who are as active as hinges on the gates of hell.

The author is no idealist. The mountains were high, the rivers wide, the clouds dark, the nights long, and enemies as numerous as maggots on a corpse. He admits exhaustion and loneliness. Resignation robbed him of strength. Yet, he remained in the fight by the strength of the LORD God and His sweet consolations.

The Psalmist's Conclusion About the Fate of the Wicked

20 Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law?

The “throne of iniquity” refers to government offices, legislatures, politicians, and statutory courts; presidents, governors, police officers, congressmen, legislators, bureaucrats, judges, magistrates, and administrators. Like in David's day, the political institutions of our time are a den of iniquity staffed with bottom-feeding scavengers.

“Mischief by a law” means these public officials use man-made statutes and executive mandates to control men, to tax their wealth, and to promote their totalitarian agenda. They do not believe in the rule of law; they believed in rule by law! Tyrants always exempt themselves from their own statutes. Further, they seek to use the force of government to achieve their ambitions. In a police state no one can breathe . . . or be safe from neck-breaking police tactics . . . from false arrests . . . from kangaroo prosecutions under color of law . . . and harsh imprisonment. Under despotism no one is safe from relaxation of constitutional restrictions of government by government.

Law is good if it is limited. While God's law serves mankind, the multiplication of man-made statutes cannot save humanity or regenerate society. Tyrants use legislative bills to force their will on the people. Such tactics destroy liberty and make the people slaves of the State.

21 They gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and condemn the innocent blood.

What unites this army of power mongers (misotheistic government officers and their goon squad) is their hatred of God, their love of death, and their determination to ravage the righteous.

In their world view money matters, government matters, Black lives matter, blue lives matter, politicians matter, powers matter, political philosophies matter . . . but innocent lives don't matter! Their king is money, ledgers, and profit.

Likewise, the power players on the gridiron of politics today see Christians as the ones blocking their global agenda. For it is Christians that are anti-utopianism, anti-fascism, anti-globalism, anti-feminism, anti-abortion, anti-pornography, and anti-Sodomy. In order for the infidels to achieve world domination, they must trick Christians into joining them . . . censor them in public debate . . . or kill them.

22 But the LORD is my defense; and my God is the rock of my refuge.

23 And he shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness; yea, the LORD our God shall cut them off.

The Psalm does not close with a sigh, but with a song. Having prayed through issues and renewed his mind with truth, he grows in confidence that God will be his rock. Though he is a chastened man, he is a blessed man.

While he feels better about his lot in life, he expresses solemn assurance the lawless man will be arrested by the Judge, indicted, and sentenced to a prison in darkness.

The phrase "shall cut them off" (tsamath) is repeated twice. The English word "yea" is not in the text. It is supplied by the translators to emphasize the certainty of the destruction of the wicked.

The psalm begins with a man drowning in grief over the prosperity of the wicked, but ends with the man buoyed up by promises. The psalm begins with a frustrated, imprecatory plea for the LORD God to rain down judgment on the wicked, and it ends with a double assurance: God will "cut off" . . . God will exterminate the wicked like a nest of termites. He will, He will, He will!!!

Psalm 97 - The Gospel of the Old Testament

"The LORD reigneth; let the earth rejoice"



Before us is the gospel from an Old Testament (O.T.) perspective. What was the O.T. gospel and what is the language of proclamation? Since there is only one gospel, it behooves the Bible student to understand its O.T. presentment in order to expand one's understanding of that glorious message.

The Gospel of God's Reign

Psalm 97:1 The LORD reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof.

Before us is the heart of the gospel: "the Lord reigneth."

When is the last time you heard this announcement in the classroom or from the media? You are more likely to hear "we are in power," than "God is in power!" The human doctrines of "man's choices" are more popular than the doctrine of God's elections.

While we take great comfort in our Lord's redemptive work, his core message was "the kingdom of God has come unto you" (Matthew 12:28); that is, the central message of Christ was the reign of God. God's rule entered history in and through the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ to defeat man's great enemies: Satan, sin, and death. The good news is that God is offering men peace with Himself on the grounds of Christ's doing and dying for us.

Paul quoted a verse from Isaiah declaring the excellence of gospel proclamation: "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace" (Romans 10:15). Paul's quote is from Isaiah 52:7 which say, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings . . . that saith to Zion, 'Thy God reigneth!'"

The theme "the LORD reigneth" is the crux of the Old Testament gospel; and, the New Testament is simply the grand manifestation of the reign of God in action.

We do not always feel like God reigns. The humanist says, "It matters not . . . how charged with punishments the scroll, I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul" (Invictus).

Madmen come to power to steal property under color of law. Murderers and butchers are protected by legislative statutes. Rulers permit monopolies and bribes for high ranking officials. Government agencies oppress and bully the weak into submission. Disease and death visit every family. Jobs end. Stock markets plunge. Automobiles crash. Things seem out of control . . . and they are depressing . . . unless, of course, we believe God reigns over all things in our lives.

Thus, the need of the hour is not more money, more organizations, and more self-esteem, but Christian men who proclaim the Lord reigns and that His dominions have entered history in and through His Son.

The good news is that God reigns over nations, over politics, over weather, over disease and tragedy, over health, and the nasty storms hovering over us . . . and for those who have repented of their rebellion against God's law order and surrender to His authority, His reign brings great joy and comfort.

One great cause of melancholy in our lives, is that we fail to take sufficient comfort from simple, but profound statements in Scripture. "The LORD reigneth" is the lightning bolt that lights up the cloudy skies during the cold, dark nights of our lives. The verbs "rejoice" and "be glad" are Hebrew jussives that enjoin all God's people to consider the dominions of our Lord and to join the triumphal procession taking place in Zion, the city of Almighty God, the general assembly of spiritual Israel. The people on vast continents as well as tribes on tiny islands (Pitcairn, Samoa), the great and small, are urged to take comfort in the Sovereignty of Christ.

Notice that the locus of joy is outside of man and in the Lord's dominions. Joy is not connected to introspection, self-esteem, or inner exploration. It is not coupled with knowledge of self. It is not associated with profit in business or a large bank account. This psalm takes us outside of self, outside of our pride, outside of human choices, to the Sovereignty of the Lord God. Rejoice!

Philippians 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.

The Gospel of Righteousness

2 Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. 3 A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about. 4 His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled. 5 The hills melted like wax at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. 6 The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory.

The reign of God is good news for those who have made their peace with God and surrendered to His law order, but it is not good news for rebels. In fact, it is rather disturbing for the self-willed, self-governed lawless man hell-bent on self-governance and asset accumulation.

The psalmist takes us back to Mt. Sinai. The clouds and darkness reminds us that the Lord is holy and unapproachable. There is a veiling of His splendor lest man be destroyed. Fire is an instrument of destruction stoked to consume the proud who refuse to acknowledge His supremacy. If the earth quakes and mountains melt in His presence, how much more should pagans tremble before Sovereignty and Glory.

"The heavens declare his righteousness . . . His justice in punishing his enemies"
– Gill.

Gospel Instructions to Idolaters

7 Confounded be (or be ashamed) all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all ye gods.

A better rendering of the original text is as follows: “Let all be ashamed who serve idols. Worship him all ye gods.” The first statement or jussive serves as a command.

There are two jussives (commands) in this verse informing us of the response the Lord seeks from those outside His fold.

The first jussive is “Be ashamed” (buwsh).

If a person understands the Lord reigns and that His law is the supreme law, then shame for transgression is the proper response to gospel proclamation.

The term “serve” (abad) implies a serf relationship to idols. An “idol” is a source of law and values that one feels obligated to follow.

The gospel announces the sinfulness of man and its effects by eating fruit from the poisonous tree. Man is not sick; he’s a sinner that sins. Shame is the sense of failure and guilt one has because of disobedience to righteous Authority. The proper response to God’s reign is fear, trembling, and a deep sense of shame that causes the naked spirit to reach for fig leaves.

The second jussive is the ONLY reasonable response to the reign of God which is “worship” (bow down).

The word “worship” is a rare form (Hithpael) and is difficult to translate because the verb is a reflexive action; i.e. the subject is ordered to act on himself. But, the psalmist is not asking men to worship themselves, but Him who reigns. Thus, the verb should be treated as follows: “Fall down! Bow your knee! Make yourself the object of the LORD’s affection!” Cease your war against Him and surrender to His authority!

He is not calling for sacerdotal worship here but total surrender of the total man to Absolute Sovereignty. This is God’s way of calling rebels to repent and to make peace with Him. Since the Lord reigns, the only reasonable, sensible response is acknowledgement of the rule of the Lord God and acceptance of his terms of peace.

Now if “be ashamed” and “bow down before Him” is the proper response, then the opposite action exposes of the plight of humanity.

All the problems we face as a society is because men have rebelled against God’s law order . . . and are not even ashamed about their pride and immorality.

What is wrong with men that are not ashamed of their filthy words and cursing; of their fornications and adultery; of their scams and schemes and fraud? Further, the reason we need a government police force is because men have declared war against God’s law order. Is not all the corruption in government a result of men who reject God’s law order—men who do not execute the duties of their office under the eye of His Sovereignty?

Notice the terms “idols” and “gods.” An idol is a fiction, a man-made thing or entity or corporation. The word “serve” (abad) is the word used of a slave who renders service to his masters. Think of it. People are absolutely in love with fictions and man-made things.

What’s wrong with man? Men have time to work, watch sports, take their kids to soccer games, watch T.V., eat and sleep. But, they don’t have time for God.

“Worship Him, all ye gods” could refer to “angels” as K & D suggest, or the term “gods” could refer to government officials such as judges and magistrates (Psalm 82:6). He calls “the gods” to bow down and worship, but the “gods” he is talking about is not “so-called” gods, but proud, arrogant man who sees himself as his own king. After all, Satan said to the first couple, “You shall be as gods;” that is, self-governed, autocratic people.

This text is God’s way of telling humanistic man to repent of sin and to surrender to the authority of the living God. The New Testament equivalent of this text is “Take my yoke upon you and learn from me;” (Matthew 11:29) or, “If we confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord” and believe in our heart that God raised him from the dead, we shall be saved (Romans 10:9); or, “God now command all men everywhere to repent” (Acts 17:30).

8 Zion heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of thy judgments, O LORD. 9 For thou, LORD, art high above all the earth: thou art exalted far above all gods.

The fact that the LORD reigns over all the earth and calls the pagans and infidels from every nation to repent and surrender to the LORD are sweet sounds in Zion. He is not just the God of Israel but of all men. He is not just the God of the hills but of the valleys, deserts, and seas. He knows the secret counsels of all the kings, foils their plans, and executes His will on the earth.

Zion is the community of the redeemed (the heavenly Jerusalem today), and they rejoice in God’s reign and His attention to call the rebels to order. The redeemed have repented of their sins and made peace with God on His terms. Because of their deep desire for others to find grace and forgiveness at the foot of the cross (judgments), there is joy for Christians in gospel proclamation.

“The faithful servants of God may well rejoice and be glad, because he is glorified; and whatever tends to his honor, is his people’s pleasure.” – Matthew Henry.

Gospel Instructions to Lovers of God

10 Ye that love the LORD, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked. 11 Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. 12 Rejoice in the LORD, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.

Just as the LORD has instructions for the pagans (7-9), God has instructions for believers. Between the two commands He reminds His beloved of the benefit of living under His

authority: preservation (eternal life), deliverance, light (increase light and perspective on truth), and gladness.

The first command: "hate evil."

The first command is not to "believe in yourself; or "to love your neighbor as yourself;" or, "be all you can be," or "reach your full potential;" but TO HATE evil! Toleration of evil is not Christian. Believers are called to hate fornication, adultery, homosexuality, theft, murder, covetousness, disrespect, and idolatry . . . and those who promote vice.

Evil is not floating through the air. It is in men!! It is not like the flu that comes on men for a short time and then leaves.

That believers are to love the sinner and hate sin is a modern Evangelical nicety that is anthropologically flawed, practically unattainable, and theologically preposterous. Perjurers lie because they are liars; fornicators fornicate because they are fornicators; burglars steal because they are thieves. The whole idea that a criminal did not mean to do what he did but is really a good man on the inside is absurd . . . but this is what the psychologists and the courts argue today.

While it is possible for a sinner to sin less, it is not anthropologically possible to be sinless. And, because it is not possible to amputate sin from the sinner, it is heresy to think that it is spiritually possible to separate sin from the sinner or for people to hate the sin and love the sinner. Oh, that it was that easy! While the Word can divide soul and spirit, it is not possible for men to separate sin from the sinner nor is it desirable to hate the sin and love the sinner. To call for an end of abortion without calling for the death penalty for abortionists is more Rousseauian than Christian. Rousseau would say, "I know the abortionists kill babies, but because they are trying to help women, they must be really good people."

Rousseau taught the world to judge him by his feelings, and not by his actions; that is, though he consorted with prostitutes, he felt he was really a good man with noble thoughts, honorable ambitions, and virtuous feelings. The belief that we should love the sinner and hate the sin is a product of Rousseauian "touchy-feely" anthropology that spreads the seeds of permissiveness and irresponsibility. That some crimes are hate crimes and others are love crimes, and that some criminals are good criminals and others are bad criminals is psychological non-sense. There is none good but God, said Jesus. But, there are many evil men who think they are good people (Mark 10:18).

America's youth are trained to be open-minded and to tolerate evil. Moral laxity marks our age. Permissiveness perpetuates immorality. Hate is associated with bigotry and nasty dogmatism. Love of pleasure, love of self, and love of money wins awards. Politicians believe money is the answer to all of man's problems. In fact, in the minds of modern man, the lack of money is the root of all evil. Everything is a commercial issue. Nothing is a human nature problem.

We don't see the sinfulness of sin or the ugliness of ugly. We are deaf to hissing of the snake near the poisonous tree. We are more concerned about the "economy" and "health issues" than

we are about evil at work in our own hearts. To hate evil is a positive command. It takes moral energy to hate evil. We are ordered by our Heavenly Father to break from the pack and to stoke the fires of hatred; i.e. to hate evil and evil men manufacturing evil. To shut down the “moonshine” industry, you must arrest the moonshiners. While modern humanists bifurcates man separating actions from feelings, and feelings from criminal acts, the Scripture does not sever the man from his actions. Evil is not out there in the environment. It is in the human heart. Man is seen a whole unit. Actions are evil because man’s heart forges evil.

Matthew 12:34 You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

Rousseau taught that man was good and that evil was in the environment. Only a Rousseau could sleep with a prostitute then try to convince her of the path of virtue. He sent his bastard children off to boarding school, and then wrote a book on how to raise children. Thus, severing the man from his actions and declaring the criminal virtuous has been a product of more than a little evil.

The second command: “rejoice in the Lord.” Gladness is a benefit of the gospel (97:11), but in this verse the LORD commands His own to rejoice (97:12). Because we live in a negative world bombarded with gloomy news stories, it takes moral energy to “rejoice” and “be glad” Thus, the Lord commands his saints to add fuel to fires of gladness by an act of the will. A singing saint is a powerful Christian. Maybe, for this reason, Satan tries so hard to keep the Christian defeated and depressed.

In conclusion, the O.T. gospel is not the offer of “fire insurance” against the flames of hell, but the proclamation of the reign of God. The need of the hour is not “feel good about yourself,” but a bold declaration that “The Lord rules over the affairs of men.” Things are not out of control. Our God reigns! Because His kingdom is now, men should repent and bow the knee to his authority. Those who enter His dominions will find “preservation” and “deliverance.” Likewise, those who have accepted the yoke have a duty to hate evil as well as to rejoice in His reign.

Note: Psalm 99 is also an OT gospel similar in style to Psalm 97.

It declares “The Lord reigns” in verse one.

The first word (Exalt) in verse five is a Piel imperative. This word means “to lift up” and is translated “I lift up my hand to the Most High, Maker of Heaven and Earth” in Genesis 14:22. The idea is that of allegiance and devotion. Thus, the imperative is a gospel invasion term calling the reader to pledge allegiance to the Lord God . . . by oath; that is, to enter into a covenant with Him.

Like Psalm 97, Psalm 99:5 publishes the Jussive or gospel invitation — to “worship” — a Hithpael Jussive verb meaning “to cause yourself to bow down” to Him Who is on the throne (v. 5).

How does one get saved in Psalm 99? The answer is to understand “the Lord reigns” . . . to bow down and acknowledge His authority . . . to “lift up your hand” and to enter into a covenant / oath of allegiance to Him.

Psalm 98 - Let the Sea Roar

“The LORD hath made known his salvation . . . let the sea roar”



The author of this psalm is unnamed. Many suppose that it was written after the completion of the second temple (516 B.C.), and indeed was proposed for that purpose. However, it is of such general character, it is appropriate for any occasion.

“Let the sea roar”: the psalmist makes use of personification and hyperbole as literary devices to arouse the human mind to consider the majesty and grandeur of God’s saving work in history. May the psalmist’s poetry not fall on dull minds!

“The very ‘reading’ of the psalm – so joyous – so jubilant – so animated – so exulting – is suited to awaken the mind to praise; to rouse it to thankfulness; to fill it with joy” (Barnes).

Psalm 98:1 <A Psalm.> O sing unto the LORD a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory.

While considering the great works of Providence, possibly the completion of the second temple, the psalmist calls for a new song to celebrate a recent victory — a victory given to the people, not by their own prowess, but by the right hand and holy arm of the Lord.

The word “victory” (yasha), a Hiphil verb, is more commonly rendered “salvation” — a reference to God’s intervention and deliverance from some kind of trouble.

If these “marvelous things” refer to the exile’s return from Babylon and the completion of the second temple, the “victory” (salvation) is none other than a reference to the nation’s resurrection from the dead (539-516 B.C.).

2 The LORD hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.

The noun “salvation” (yeshua) is translated “deliverance,” “help,” “victory,” and “salvation” 61 times. The Messiah is named *Yeshua*. In this stanza the word “salvation” is a metonym closely associated with “righteousness.”

In the New Testament “being declared righteous” by faith in Christ (justification) is the pinnacle consideration of the doctrine of salvation in the Book of Romans.

Apparently, the people had reason to doubt the purpose of God, but when He revealed His power, the people were delightfully stunned by the revelation of His salvation. This was not a private act, but a public achievement that even left the surrounding nations speechless.

3 He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

The word “salvation” is used a third time in this anthem. Whatever this “salvation” was for the nation, the house of Israel understood this deliverance was not the result of their own cunning, but the result of God keeping His Word . . . a marvelous display of sovereignty, mercy, and kindness to the nation.

“all the ends of the earth” is so strong we must conclude this work, possibly the return from Babylon to build the second temple, demanded the whole world’s attention.

In relation to Israel, there are four historical works that demand the world’s consideration: the exodus event, the defeat of the Assyrians under Hezekiah, the return of Israel from Babylon (Ezra & Nehemiah), and our Lord’s visitation in the New Testament.

4 Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise. 5 Sing unto the LORD with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm. 6 With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the LORD, the King.

The word “noise” (ruwa) means “shout of victory.” The imperative is addressed to all the earth. Not only should Israel shout “victory,” the nations of the earth should join the festivities.

Very few events in life demand an international celebration, but this work of God did. Orders like “make a joyful noise” and a “loud noise” inform us that this “salvation” (v.3) was so grand and monumental that it had to be celebrated with every voice and every musical instrument available to mankind.

Let us consider the fact that Gentiles now share in the benefits of salvation in Christ just like believing Jews.

“Let all the children of men rejoice in the setting up the kingdom of Christ, for all may benefit by it.” (Matthew Henry).

With trumpets and cornets, this psalm had the character of a military march with pounding drums and contrasting strains that release the heart to shout, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” (1 Corinthians 15:55-58)

7 Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. 8 Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together

“Let the sea roar”: A national band with a million member choir singing the praises of God with millions of instruments blaring away didn’t have enough force and strength to applaud the wonders of this salvation. This international orchestra is too small, too puny, and too frail to score the grand triumph of this mammoth salvation.

Consequently, the psalmist orders the roaring sounds of the surf and foam of the sea, and the sounds of rivers with their roaring waterfalls, and thundering, volcanic mountains to assist the chorale in celebrating this deliverance.

9 Before the LORD; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.

This psalm calls for universal praise. So great was this salvation that the psalmist calls every member of the human race to pick up their saxophone, violin, and drum and to join the jamboree.

The great lesson in this psalm is that our worship is too feeble and our choirs too passive in proclaiming the greatness of the Lord's salvation. The world has yet to produce a choir and to organize an orchestra appropriate for commemorating the glorious wonders of salvation in Christ.

His salvation demands more tenors, bases, and sopranos be added to the choir. There are not enough drums, trumpets, saxophones, tubas, and trombones on earth capable honoring the magnitude of God's salvation at Calvary.

Let the trees clap, the lions growl, the elephants roar, the cows moo, the birds chirp, and the dogs bark in celebrating his salvation.

May the Lord enable us to add our voices to that heavenly chorale (Revelation 5). Until then, let us sing our best, dress our best, act our best, and do our best to celebrate the wonders of the cross.

Sounds of a volcano: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m3okcIdkLjk>

Sounds of ocean waves: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RfPPPhYuq7I>

Psalm 99 - Bow the Knee to His Authority

“Worship at his footstool; for he is holy.”



The theme of this psalm is *the LORD Reigneth*. The foundation of all worship rests on the fact that He rules over the nations and is guiding history towards its ultimate conclusion.

That the Lord reigns is the subject of psalms 95-100 because “The LORD reigneth” is the gospel of the Old Testament.

It had to be put to music and sung as a Hebrew liturgy. The noble work of worship and service is built on this truth, “The LORD reigneth.”

The Foundation of Praise

Psalm 99:1 The LORD reigneth; let the people tremble: he sitteth between the cherubims; let the earth be moved.

“The LORD reigneth” means the LORD is installed as King; that He has authority to make law and to judge the people; that He is in charge, and not man!

The word “tremble” (ragaz) can mean “to quake,” “to be agitated,” “to rage,” or “to be perturbed.” The Spirit is NOT calling people to be angry with God, but to be properly moved by His status; that is, for men to take their appropriate place and to arrange themselves under His authority; for men to confess Him as King, Lord, and Master, and to surrender to His law-order.

“sitteth between the cherubims” refers to the Ark of the Covenant, the mercy seat, and the law of the LORD God; that is, “sitteth” makes NOTICE that He is the properly installed King.

This reality reinforces the requirement for men to develop a new gestalt and to organize themselves before God’s throne — to accept His government and gladly acknowledge His dominion. In Latin the title “Lord” is “dominus” from which we get the term “dominion” and “dominate.”

“Let the earth be moved” is a call for the earth “to TAKE NOTICE,” “to shake,” and “to tremble,” not literally, but as a metaphorical example to men on how to properly respond to Divine authority. The description is taken from the fury of a storm with all its commotion on trees and seas — an example of His majesty and the terror of His power to which all men ought to prostrate themselves before Him.

Reasons to Praise

2 The LORD is great in Zion; and he is high above all the people.

“great in Zion” refers to the great acts of the LORD in redeeming and delivering His people from dangers. The idea is that God has interposed Himself when the nation was threatened by hostile nations to save His people and to discomfort His enemies. Consequently, Hebrews had high esteem for the LORD.

“high above all the people” refers to His status and jurisdiction; that He rules over the nations; that He has them under his control; that He rules over all men and all the hullabaloo behind politics; that the One ruling in Zion also exercises authority over all the nations of the earth. Because of this the people have a special reason to praise him.

3 Let them praise thy great and terrible name; for it is holy.

The first call (command) of this psalm is for people to acknowledge His authority and surrender to it.

The second call is for men to consider the virtue of His name; that is how great and large in scale He is to temporal men. He is great because his redemptive works represent the attributes of God and marvelous acts performed under this banner.

The adjective “terrible” means the mere mention of His name ought to cause men to pause, to tremble, and to honor Him with praise and thanksgiving.

His name “is holy” means that His name is set apart for honor because He is pure and righteous — a reasonable warning against cursing and blasphemy. You don’t keep your diamonds in a pigsty, and you don’t use the Lord’s name cheaply or degradingly. Things done under this holy appellative ought to bring out the best in us. “Hallowed be thy name” is a prayer that all men everywhere might honor and respect His holy name; that is, don’t use His name lightly or disparagingly. Reserve using His name for solemn matters in courts and in worship.

4 The king’s strength also loveth judgment; thou dost establish equity, thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob.

The psalmist provides another reason to praise the King.

“The king’s strength” refers to the power of God as a king and his exercise of authority among the nations.

“loveth judgment” means He is always on the side of what is right and just. God does not choose sides: He is always on the side of those promoting love and justice, and never on the side of those promoting party politics.

“establishes equity” is a common-law term referring to those who advance fairness and impartiality in controversial matters related to men.

“Thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob ” refers to God’s ability to arbitrate conflicts related to Israel; the ability to balance the interest of His holiness with the needs of the people for their good; to do what ought to be done; to do not only what is right but to do it lovingly for the good of Jacob even though no one else had his interests at heart.

5 Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy.

This is the **third and fourth call** in this psalm:

The Polel imperative “exalt” means “to rise up” intensely as if one was in church parading the Bible down the aisle or going into an honorable court – “All Rise!” It is a command for the people to stand up in His presence in a manner worthy of monarchs; to lift up His name with high honor so it stands out like a flag on a pole.

The word “worship” is a Hithpael imperative meaning “cause yourself to bow down” before His footstool; that is, humble yourself, kneel, bow, and prostrate yourself before His Majesty.

“Majesty, worship His majesty;
unto Jesus be all glory, honor and praise.
Majesty, kingdom authority,
flow from His throne unto His own; His anthem raise.
So exalt, lift up on high the name of Jesus.
Magnify, come glorify Christ Jesus, the King.”

This command answers the “Baptist” question, “How did people get saved in the Old Testament?” The answer is to confess Him as Lord, King, and Master; to bow the knee and acknowledge His supremacy; to arrange one’s precious all under His authority — the foundation of Romans 10: 9-10.

6 Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they called upon the LORD, and he answered them.

The official ministers of the Hebrew religion, Moses, Aaron, and Samuel bowed their knee to His authority and called upon His Holy name. And, God answered them. Likewise, followers of the Hebrew religion ought to follow this example as the grounds upon which petitions are granted.

7 He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar: they kept his testimonies, and the ordinance that he gave them.

Calling upon His name (v. 6) involves “listening to His Word as they did when He spoke from the “cloudy pillar,” and obeying His testimonies (law) and ordinances.

“He shall call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble: I will deliver him, and honor him” (Psalm 91:15).

“Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor Me”
(Psalm 50:15).

8 Thou answeredst them, O LORD our God: thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions.

“Thou answeredst them, O LORD our God” provides those approaching His throne with the assurance they too will be heard just like He heard Moses, Aaron, and Samuel. The God Christians worship is the same God that they worshiped. Therefore, we ought to feel the assurance of this promise.

The word “inventions” refers to misdeeds, sins, and wantonness.

“tookst vengeance” refers to judicial judgment and severe fatherly discipline.

We are often flogged by our own sins; and, this guilt hinders prayer. Likewise, the founding fathers of the nation were also flawed men; that is, they too were sinners who needed forgiveness. By “sinners” we do not mean rebels. They acknowledged the authority of the LORD and in following Him sometimes failed. In floundering, they sought to be reconciled to God and found Him faithful to forgive even though they were often the object of severe chastisement.

If they found forgiveness, so can we. The difference being that we know that forgiveness is based on the fact that Christ was punished for our sins and that He paid the redemption price with His own blood.

Psalm 86:5 For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.

Ephesians 1:7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

9 Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God is holy.

“Exalt” and “worship” is **the fifth and sixth command** in this psalm — obedience required by the certainty, “The LORD reigneth.”

“Exalt” and “worship” have the same meaning here as they do in verse five and for the same reason — His holiness:

The Polel imperative “exalt” means “to rise up” as if one was in church or going to court. It is a command for the people to stand up in His presence in a manner worthy of monarchs; to lift up His name with high honor so it stands out like a flag on a pole.

The word “worship” is a Hithpael imperative meaning “cause yourself to bow down” before His footstool; that is, humble yourself, kneel, bow, and prostrate yourself before His Majesty.

The word “holy hill” refers to Zion — a metonym for the authority of the LORD God as Creator of Heaven and Earth.

“God is holy” refers to the fact that the LORD God is not one among many, but that He is the One True God. All others are pretenders. He is the real God; therefore, let all men acknowledge His authority and surrender their precious all to His law and His care.

“All hail the pow’r of Jesus’ name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,”Ye chosen seed of Israel’s race,
Ye ransomed from the fall,
Hail Him who saves you by His grace,

And crown Him, crown Him, crown Him,
Crown Him Lord of all!”

Ye chosen seed of Israel’s race,
Ye ransomed from the fall,
Hail Him who saves you by His grace,

And crown Him, crown Him, crown Him,
Crown Him Lord of all!”

Psalm 101 - The Politician's Psalm

"I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes"



Shortly after David became king of Israel, he penned the policies that would guide his administration as king of Israel. Thus, we call this, "the Politician's Psalm."

Oh, that modern officials would be as contemplative and adopt the principles that David scribed for his public life. All men would do well to acquire virtues that will guide them during their pilgrimage on earth. King Alfred the Great did, Stonewall Jackson did it; Robert E. Lee did it. Successful politicians must also do it.

Government officials are required to take an oath to uphold and support the constitution of the united States of America before assuming the duties of office. They are not permitted to take an oath of office to support the laws of a foreign corporation.

Oaths sanction performance. In exchange for an oath, We the People grant politicians privileges and powers. Without an oath, there is no power and no duty to perform acts of office. Without an oath and bond, the acts of pretenders are null and void; that is, they become de facto rulers and not de jure public servants.

Further, the oath was to the LORD (Deuteronomy 6:13). The whole problem with American politics is that we do not have any men in office who have sworn an oath to obey the law of the LORD God – the ultimate law on which the common law is founded.

Look at this psalm as David's oath—his pledge to serve under the jurisdiction of truth as Israel's minister of justice.

Black's Law Dictionary defines "ministerial" as "that which is done under the authority of a superior; opposed to judicial: that which involves obedience to instructions, but demands no special discretion, judgment, or skill."

Psalm 101:1 I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O LORD, will I sing.

David's first pledge was to conduct his administration conscious of the LORD (YHWH).

Most politicians are men-pleasers instead of God-pleasers; servants of fictions instead of ministers of truth. Amidst the cacophony of officials feverously scratching their nails on government blackboards, David pledged to compose melodies and to make music; to light a candle amidst the darkness; to promote good over evil. And what was his grand theme? —the virtues of mercy and justice; velvet and steel; the sweets and the bitters; the cream and the

vinegar; the soft and the rough; the tender and the tough; forgiveness and vengeance; grace and truth — and, the choices that must be made between good and evil.

Few politicians today know the difference between right and wrong much less have the skills to compose songs with such grand themes. Training in righteousness is, therefore, necessary for success in politics.

It takes great skill to blend justice and mercy into a harmony that binds the wicked and frees the righteous; that refreshes the weak and reforms the wretched; that invigorates industry and stifles corruption. David made a choice to please God and not the bankers.

Thus every politician must choose whom he will serve, God or man, truth or fiction. “No man can serve two masters,” said Jesus.

Hopefully, the choices of a political leader will please his constituents. But, if a choice must be made to do what’s right and follow God’s will or to do what’s wrong and to please man, hopefully that politician will have the moral character to do what is right regardless of the consequences. Such character, however, is as rare as pretty on an ape.

2 I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.

David pledged to conduct himself with integrity; i.e. to be holy in his conduct. Holiness among government officials is a scarce commodity. Excellence in ethics, manners, temperament, and political skills must be studied. Few graduate from such a difficult course of study. Corruption is easy; perfection is hard. Precision is tedious; pettiness is effortless. David did not achieve his ambition, but it was good that it was in his heart.

Thus, all politicians must beware of eating fruits from the poisonous tree that compromises one’s integrity. No wonder David prayed to God asking Him “to come near unto me!” Holy ambition without His Holy presence leads to unholy action.

Politicians are sinners and sin’s sweet fragrances are a constant attraction. Power has its own temptations. In the hands of a good man power can be used for the benefit of the people, but in the hands of a weak man power corrupts. It is not natural to be pure and holy. For holiness must be studied and supported by the divine Presence. Oh, that more politicians would surrender to the jurisdiction of truth and justice.

David made a commitment to be holy at home as well as at work. It is too easy to be an angel in public and a devil in private; to sing in the choir and to sin in the corners; to be sweet away and sour at home; to be civilized to colleagues and uncivilized to the commoner; to be gentlemanly to the media and barbarous to the masses.

Like a lion following a herd of African antelope, duplicity stalks the life of every politician. There is no harmony so delightful as a gracious, consistent, and principled life among public officials.

3 I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me.

David pledged to resist the temptations that confront men of wealth and power. Like a burlesque, the charms of money and pleasure dance their way into the lives of politicians.

Politicians would do well to remember the pundit: “sow a thought, reap an act; sow an act, reap a habit; sow a habit reap a character; sow character and reap a destiny.”

David determined to grow flowers, not weeds; to nurture holy ambitions and to starve unholy passions. He failed, but his ambition was correct. Oh, that modern men would seek to do better than David. Technology channels temptations to us that men of antiquity never dreamed. Where are the politicians today that have made a covenant to “set no wicked thing” before their eyes? Little wonder, Christianity has a little impact on the culture. Political leaders are laden with sins of pride, of wealth, and lust . . . and so are the people.

David says he hated the work of evildoers. On another occasion, he declared, “Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? (Psalm 139:21). He not only hated the deeds of the wicked, he hated them—the source of evil infecting other men!! David is not saying that he hated weak and flawed sinners, but a special class of sinners — those who made a pact with the Devil’ for those content to remain in the jurisdiction of darkness. He called these people, “the wicked”, “the bloody,” and “thine enemies” (Psalm 139-18-21).

The willingness of politicians to take bribes (donations) seems to find their way into the niches of government. Evildoers are not just street vermin, but government officials dressed in blue suits.

It is “woke” today to disparage the necessity of hate. Our government is ready to indict men for hate speech, hate crimes, and hateful thoughts. Balderdash! It is impossible to be a godly man who does not hate wicked politicians. Where in the Bible does it say we are “to hate the sin, but love the sinner?” Wicked deeds come from wicked men, and we are called to hate both.

Politicians today have more sweets than a candy store. Christians are called to be salt, not sugar. Life is not about being nice, but about being holy . . . and holy men hate tomcats in the fish market; i.e. chubby politicians gorging themselves from the public trough. It must be so!

4 A froward heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked person.

David pledged to clean up the deep state—to “drain the swamp” of political alligators and water moccasins. To not “know a wicked person” means that David was not going to employ crooks in his cabinet.

It has been said that 98% of lawyers make the other 2% look bad. The problem with presidents is that they are surrounded by crafty bureaucrats and canny cabinet members that have perfected the art of duplicity. “When the wicked rule, the people mourn” (Proverbs 29:2).

It was said of “Honest Abe” that he was one of the cleverest men to ever hold office, and that he often cloaked his real ambitions behind noble suggestions. Such cleverness is not to be admired, but to be feared.

David, therefore, determined to surround himself with godly men and to cleanse his staff of two-faced, double-minded, double-tongued, double-hearted shysters. David was flawed, but not corrupt. He did not promote miscreants to cabinet posts.

As important as personal integrity is, the decision of one’s political counselors is just as critical. Many a president has been ruined by his own advisers. President Woodrow Wilson, following the advice of a close cabinet member said to his friends, just before he died, that he had been “deceived” and that “I have betrayed my Country.” No doubt he did! (The Zionists were all over him).

5 Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer.

David pledged to cleanse his cabinet of mudslingers devoted to utopian fantasy. Every organization has snipers hiding in the bushes firing arrows of criticism at their boss.

All politicians instinctively understand the politics of personal destruction. Legislators know that the way to destroy an adversary is to slander him; that is, invent a despicable accusation and leak it to the media. Politicians are masters of the attack ad. They know how to ruin their opponents through backbiting and character assassination.

David had no room in his pool for camouflaged cobras and vipers. He was committed to rid his administration of proud and pompous counselors. David suffered greatly from Saul’s slanderous accusations against him, and he purposed that even his political foes should not suffer the same fate. Truth “Yes, but slander “No.” David zealously promoted his political agenda, but he did not employ propagandists skilled in the art of smear campaigns. Mudslingers need not apply.

6 Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me.

David pledged to employ men of integrity. A good master chooses good servants.

Emily Dickenson said, “Her friends were her estate”; that is, all her wealth and hope and success centered on the friends she possessed. “A faithful man who can find?” Godly friends give good advice, but pretenders poison the soup. Friends rush in when foes rush out.

A man is rich indeed who has men around him that are committed to integrity and to his success. David made it his ambition to find them, employ them, and to take care of them. Take care of your friends and they will take care of you. Superficial men walk out when you are weak and failing, but your true friends will draw near to protect you in a time of crisis.

7 He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.

David pledged to cleanse his staff of schemers; i.e. men skilled in the art of defrauding people of their wealth and property. Working deceit is not simple theft, but grand plots by clever politicians to plunder the assets of the people for their own political ends. It is called “covetousness” — a violation of the 10th Commandment.

David is not judging the hearts of men, but the actions of duplicitous government officers maximizing their positions of power to exploit the weak. International bankers and government officials throughout history have conspired against the people so that the profits of industry flow into their hands. This was true during the middle ages in serfdom where lords enslaved the masses, and it is true in our day wherein government officials promote the modern “income tax” scheme to skim the milk off every man’s paycheck before the worker tastes the fruit of his labor.

Jesus had no tolerance for these workers of deceit. His first confrontation was with the moneychangers in the temple, and eventually they had him arrested and crucified for exposing their fraud.

Behind all schemes to enslave men and deprive mankind of their property is the art of the lie. The wretched thing about lies and deceit is that that the deceived do not know they are being fooled. Such economic schemes of socialism, communism, democracies, and fascism are clever plots to shift power from the masses to the elite. David sought to cleanse his court of these dirty, double-minded, double-crossing, double-dealing, double agents . . . and, righteous politicians would do well to do the same.

8 (Morning by morning – ESV) I will early destroy all the wicked of the land; that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the LORD.

The first word in this sentence in Hebrew is “mornings” (labarim, plural). The ESV translates this “morning by morning.”

In law, we call this “Morning Justice.” For every court is under the original-jurisdiction of truth and justice; every officer is under the perpetual-oversight of the one, true Lawgiver (James 4:12).

The only question is whether or not judges will surrender their court to the jurisdiction of truth or whether they will surrender to foreign-fiction-jurisdiction and alien laws that punish the sovereign-citizen party.

For justice is the end of government; the ambition of a just society. For relieving the oppressed and punishing the oppressors is the daily concern of all good men. Equity, not impossible equality, are the sunbeams that enlighten the heart of all judges.

David pledged to faithfully perform his duties as Israel's chief law enforcement officer. The first duty of the State is to surrender itself to the rule of God; i.e. to seek first the kingdom of God and arrange itself under the jurisdiction of justice (Psalm 2; Matthew 6:33).

God's law is not a private matter demanding something from Christians but leaving other men to do as they please. The law is valid for the Christian because it is valid for all people. God's law is not only right for me, but for all men, and all of man's institutions. As Israel's commander and chief, the king had two duties: (1) to punish those who violate the rights of men (the "wicked"), and (2) secondarily to protect the people from those who abuse the liberties of a free people. So, when David says "he will cut off all the wicked," he is saying he will faithfully perform the duties of the executive branch of government.

If you are a politician, you serve in one of the three branches of government. And, whatever your duties, God calls you to know your duty, to do it, and to limit your authority to the jurisdiction of truth and justice.

Two great evils among politicians must be avoided: (1) dereliction of duty; that is, a slack hand in the performance of official responsibilities; and, (2) ultra vires acts; that is, assuming powers and authority beyond the scope of your office — the latter being the sin of most politicians — the sin of not limiting government to its constitutional restrictions.

In conclusion, this is called the "politicians psalm" because it outlines the principles upon which king David sought to govern his administration. He turned the psalm into an oath to faithfully perform his duty. Modern government employees know little of this psalm or its lofty ideals . . . thus, the reason so few people have confidence in government. It has been said, "If you aim at nothing, you shall surely hit it." Likewise, every politician would do well to sit down and write out the principles upon which he is going to conduct his public service . . . and a man would do better by adopting the pledge that David penned.

Psalm 109 - An Imprecatory Plea for Justice

“For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me: they have spoken against me with a lying tongue.”



This psalm is credited to David. A righteous man with many enemies, there is no reason to doubt his authorship.

Furthermore, this psalm is quoted in the NT in regards to Judas (Acts 1:20). Like Jesus, David had enemies willing and ready to betray him to the highest bidder.

There are two ways to improve society; (1) the salvation of souls, and (2) justice applied toward the wicked. Both the saving of life and the taking of life are duties of men. This psalm prays that God would rain down justice on those who verbally assaulted him.

Psalm 109: A Prayer lying the Grounds of His Claim

1 To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.> Hold not thy peace, O God of my praise;

“hold not thy peace” is an expression used by David appealing to God to intervene in his defense. The Hebrew word literally means “don’t stop ploughing.”

“O God of my praise” -- David grounds his prayer on the character of God, particularly His justice, to intervene that he might have more reasons to praise Him. Spiritually speaking, David claims the best thing about himself is God; that He is his treasure.

Slander

2 For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me: they have spoken against me with a lying tongue.

The wrong done to David is described as slander – the weapon of choice of political opponents – a violation of the Sixth Commandment, “Thou shall not kill”; that is, defamation and libel are auxiliary violations of the law against murder.

Matthew 5:22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

Verbal Assault

3 They compassed me about also with words of hatred; and fought against me without a cause.

“They compassed me” implies the vilifiers came at him from every direction attacking his character and assaulting him to any who would listen.

“without cause” implies David had not injured any of his accusers; that he violated no law; that all their accusations were malicious and wrongfully inspired. David is not saying he is not a sinner. Rather, He claims innocence in relation to the verbal charges laid against him.

Malicious Mud Racking

4 For my love they are my adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer.

“For my love” -- David had shown love to his accusers and they repaid him with libel, slur, and insults.

When David did good, they reimbursed him with evil; that is, they repaid his kindness with backstabbing unfaithfulness.

Instead returning evil for evil, David prayed *for them*.

Personal Wrongdoing

5 And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love.

David did good toward His enemies and did not retaliate in like kind. Rather, they returned hate for love, bitterness for goodness.

“David's enemies laughed at him for his devotion, but they could not laugh him out of it.” (Matthew Henry)

A Prayer for Retribution upon the Wrongdoer

6 Set thou a wicked man over him: and let Satan stand at his right hand.

Since these malicious accusers could not be corrected by David's love or prayer for them, he prays for strict justice – that God would place a wicked taskmaster over them that would treat them like they had treated him.

“let Satan stand at his right hand” - at the side of the taskmaster's counselor and adviser. Since Satan is the master of accusation, David prays his enemies might be made to feel the pain and terror of slander against them.

When a man criticizes a pastor or elder, he gives permission for others to belittle him.

7 When he shall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become sin.

Unlike David who had not violated the law and who was falsely accused, he prays that his accusers might be held accountable for their actual violations of law; that is, for the very thing

they were doing, David appeals to strict justice. Lord, when they are judged for their sins of slander, let them be condemned.

“let his prayer become sin” in court; that is, may the judge reject the maligner’s plea for mercy. This text informs us that David’s accusers were religious men claiming a holy status before the Lord – a presumption that was proved false by their duplicity.

“When men reject the salvation of Christ, even their prayers are numbered among their sins” (Matthew Henry).

This imprecatory prayer was David’s hope and a supposition, and not an immediate actuality.

8 Let his days be few; and let another take his office.

This petition is consistent with Psalm 37 that God would cut off the wicked. No good man would pray that God would forgive the unrepentant or that they might live a long, prosperous life. He wants these wicked governors removed from office.

9 Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow.

Again, this imprecatory prayer is consistent with God’s promises in Psalm 37. Crimes deserve punishment and David pleads with God to punish these criminals and to prevent them from multiplying quibblers like themselves.

10 Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg: let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places.

David does not want to see evil men with children who will do the same things as their fathers. He prays that the seed of the blasphemers would be cut off so they could not multiply more minions. The early death of the offspring of the wicked is a one way to improve society.

“desolate places” = barren lands, deserts, and the wilderness where men have to work day and night for one meal.

“Let his family share the punishment, his children be as wandering beggars to prowl in their desolate homes, a greedy and relentless creditor grasp his substance, his labor, or the fruit of it, enure to strangers and not his heirs, and his unprotected, fatherless children fall in want, so that his posterity shall utterly fail” (Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary).

11 Let the extortioner catch all that he hath; and let the strangers spoil his labour.

“Let the extortioner” or debt collector harass, hound, and pester him.

“let the strangers spoil his labour”; i. e. let foreigners seize and possess what he has earned.

12 Let there be none to extend mercy unto him: neither let there be any to favour his fatherless children.

The sense behind this petition-curse is that the slanderer and his family might never experience comfort, compassion, or pity from anyone.

“See what hurries some to shameful deaths, and brings the families and estates of others to ruin; makes them and theirs despicable and hateful, and brings poverty, shame, and misery upon their posterity: it is sin, that mischievous, destructive thing” (Matthew Henry).

13 Let his posterity be cut off; and in the generation following let their name be blotted out.

This prayer is consistent with Psalm 37:28 – “but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.” It is a blessing to the world when liars, slanderers, murderers, fornicators, lesbians, and Sodomites do not have children or that their children are killed. Thus, this is a prayer for pure justice.

14 Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the LORD; and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out.

“Be remembered with the Lord” is a Biblical doctrine that God “visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate” him (Exodus 20:5). It is an inescapable fact that children and children's children regularly suffer from the errors, crimes, and sins of their parents.

“The sweet of vengeance lies in its completeness. The curse must strike backwards as well as forwards, and the root as well as the branch be destroyed” (Ellicott).

In his prayer, David seeks to purge society of evil men and their reprobate children – a noble, beneficial, profitable strategy. We don't need more liars and fornicators on earth. Plants that produce bad fruit must be plucked up.

15 Let them be before the LORD continually, that he may cut off the memory of them from the earth.

“Let them be before the Lord continually”; that is, may God never forget their sins and may He work to cause others to forget them. Thus, this is a prayer for pure justice.

“Let their sins never pass from the mind of God. Let him never so forget them as not to inflict punishment for them (Barnes).

16 Because that he remembered not to shew mercy, but persecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even slay the broken in heart.

David's imprecatory prayer is not extreme or unjust. It is fair and proper. Because they did not show mercy to the poor and needy, David petitions the Lord to withdraw His mercy from them even if they have a broken heart during prosecution. Isn't this what the Day of Judgment is all about?

17 As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him.

In regard to these slanderers, David prays that they would be cursed because they loved cursing him; that because they despised mercy and compassion, God would not show mercy and compassion to them; because they took pleasure in vilifying others, that God would treat them as villains; because they took pleasure in smearing others, they might be smeared; and, because they showed no compassion to their victims, that God might not show them any compassion -- a prayer for pure justice.

18 As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones.

“clothed himself with cursing” is a metaphor meaning these miscreants clothed, dressed, and robed themselves with blasphemy.

Like “water” and “oil” are necessities of life; the psalmist wants their whole being drenched with damnation as easily as water and oil can be splashed on a body.

19 Let it be unto him as the garment which covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually.

Like a leper clothed with rags, David wishes these reprobates to be eternally clothed with curses, condemnation, and hopelessness.

20 Let this be the reward of mine adversaries from the LORD, and of them that speak evil against my soul.

“reward” – Let them receive the curses I have prayed because they deserve them.

Because they tried to ruin me with their lies and slander, let them be ruined forever.

A Prayer for Personal Deliverance and Protection

21 But do thou for me, O GOD the Lord, for thy name's sake: because thy mercy is good, deliver thou me.

Unlike his accusers who broke the 6th and 9th Commandments, David prays for mercy . . . not because he was a flawless man, but (1) because he did not injure those that sought his ruin, and (2) because it is God’s nature to be merciful.

22 For I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.

Though a king, David saw himself as an ordinary, poor, and needy man . . . but, more than this – a true victim of defamation. David was not plying the victim; he was truly an injured party of intentional, premeditated, undeserved murder.

“Whoever files, attempts to file, or conspires to file, in any public record or in any private record which is generally available to the public, any false lien or encumbrance against the real or personal property of an individual described in section 1114, on account of the performance of official duties by that individual, knowing or having reason to know that such lien or encumbrance is false or contains any materially false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement or representation, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned for not more than 10 years, or both” (18 U.S.C. § 1521).

23 I am gone like the shadow when it declineth: I am tossed up and down as the locust.

David uses the metaphor of a shadow and a locust in the wind to describe the wobbly, precarious position his accusers put him in when they sought to destroy him through slander . . . that is, the slander worked to destabilize him.

24 My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh faileth of fatness.

So effective was the malicious slander, it caused David to take leave of his kingly responsibilities, to pray and to fast over this plot to ruin him as king. The more he prayed the weaker he became.

25 I became also a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me they shaked their heads.

Perhaps, the most devastating result of this defamation campaign to demolish his reputation was that others believed the mudslingers. When the victims of defamation looked upon David, they shook their heads in contempt; that is, they believed the carpers even though they had no evidence against David.

26 Help me, O LORD my God: O save me according to thy mercy:

Trapped between backstabbers and those who believed them, David felt alone.

Christians can be fair weather friends, and when the black storms of slander hit the sails, they jump ship. When government is god in the minds of Christians, you cannot expect them not to betray you when you are accused of wrongdoing.

27 That they may know that this is thy hand; that thou, LORD, hast done it.

David looked to God to save him from traducement and to do it in such a way that the whole community would know that God stood with him and saved him.

28 Let them curse, but bless thou: when they arise, let them be ashamed; but let thy servant rejoice. 29 Let mine adversaries be clothed with shame, and let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a mantle.

David could survive the slander, but he could not live without God’s blessing. Let them continue their gossip, but God please don’t discontinue your blessing. Work on my behalf. Let

them be ashamed and let me rejoice in You! Let their shame be so complete that it would cover them like a garment.

A Prayer Expressing Clean Hands

30 I will greatly praise the LORD with my mouth; yea, I will praise him among the multitude.

Having prayed this imprecatory prayer, David bursts into praise knowing that the God of justice heard his prayer and that the matter was in His hands.

31 For he shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save him from those that condemn his soul.

David finds rest for his soul without finding a clear remedy for the slander. Knowing that God was with him sustained him during this assault on his character and status as king.

To save him from those that condemn his soul - - Margin, "from the judges of his soul." The Hebrew is, "from those that judge his soul" (Barnes).

The LORD is the poor man's advocate just as Satan is the poor man's accuser (Ellicott).

"Jesus, unjustly put to death, and now risen again, is an Advocate and Intercessor for his people, ever ready to appear on their behalf against a corrupt world, and the great accuser (Matthew Henry).

Let us all find rest for our souls knowing that matters of concern are in His hands.

Psalm 113 - The Blessed Works of God

“From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the LORD’S name is to be praised.”



This is a general “Hallel” psalm sung at various festivals extolling the great works of God. The author is unknown as the focus is upon the LORD and not man.

Psalm 113:1 Praise ye the LORD. Praise, O ye servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD.

The command “praise” (hallel) is used three times. The LORD is the object of praise and His name is also used three times. Healthy people are occupied with the glories of God; sick people moan and groan about unfulfilled lusts. Servants (Levites) are addressed because his ministers have a special mission to proclaim the glories of the LORD.

2 Blessed be the name of the LORD from this time forth and for evermore.

“Blessed,” an intense Pual passive participle, means “to adore” or “or to be endowed with beauty;” i.e. let the name of the LORD be blessed for ever and ever.

The eternal nature of this absolute God who loves us and sent His Son to die for us has a claim on our mind and affections. Praise Him today; praise Him tomorrow; and praise Him with your last breath. Honor Him this minute, this hour, and this day.

3 From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the LORD’S name is to be praised.

From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same implies universal jurisdiction wherein all men have a blessed duty to honor and reverence His name; likewise, the phrase conveys men have a duty during waking hours to acknowledge the wonders of the Creator and to praise Him. Praise Him at sunlight, noon, and twilight.

” Praise Him! Praise Him! Praise Him in the morning, Praise Him in the noontime. Praise Him! Praise Him! Praise Him when the sun goes down! .”

This is not religious fanaticism! It is a description of spiritual health in contrast to sick men who love the world all day long.

4 The LORD is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens.

“high above the nations” implies the LORD has universal sovereignty over kingdoms of men; that He rules the nations; that He is a greater priority and has greater pre-eminence than the

kings of the earth. As the God of the Chinese, Africans, Europeans, and South Americans, He warrants the praise of all men.

5 Who is like unto the LORD our God, who dwelleth on high,

Who can be compared to the LORD our God? He is the one, true, infinite, personal, triune Spirit Who is the Creator of all things and the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is high above His creation . . . above the thrones of kings . . . and above the tussle and fray in the cities of men.

6 Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth!

God is so great and so far above kings and politics, He has to humble Himself to observe affairs of men on earth. He is so humble, He sent His Son to become a man.

For you and I to become a worm would not be as humiliating as God becoming a man. The difficulty with God's humility is that we have to be humble to draw near to Him. He humbles Himself and this requires men to humble themselves. Be humble or stumble.

7 He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill;

"poor" is a metonym referring to common sinners among us. This God is so humble, He works in the dust, the back alleys, and the garbage pits of this life to rescue those in need of Him. He doesn't always work in this manner, but it is among the great works of God on behalf of men.

"For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth"
(1Corinthians 1:36).

8 That he may set him with princes, even with the princes of his people.

Among His many works of redemption consider that He seeks out average men, touches them by His grace, and exalts them to conditions of wealth, rank, and honor. He not only has power to do it, He actually does it. He does not always make kings out of paupers, but it is among the great works of God on behalf of men.

Most of us are just common people called to serve an extraordinary God and to minister to Him. We work alongside ordinary people for the good of the common man. Praise the Lord.

9 He maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the LORD.

His work among us includes graciously granting children to barren women who long for children. He doesn't give every woman children, but blessing women with motherhood is part of His great works. He doesn't always work in this manner, but it is among the great works of God on behalf of men.

Other women are set free from these blessed duties to serve Him in other essential ways during their sojourn on earth. Praise the Lord!

Psalm 117 - The Spirit's Command to the Nations



This is a short psalm that was used to open or close temple services. It is a liturgical exhortation for the nations of the world to join Heaven's choir and to exalt the Lord.

Psalm 117:1 O praise the LORD (YHWH), all ye nations (goy): praise him, all ye people (ommah).

2 For his merciful kindness (hesed) is great toward us (Hebrews/Gentiles): and the truth of the LORD endureth for ever. Praise ye the LORD.

This is the shortest psalm in the royal hymnal.

It has all the feel of a doxology sung at the end of a temple service by Levites with praise on their lips and a sword on their hips:

“Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two edged sword in their hand” (Psalm 149:6).

The appellation “God” is not mentioned in the psalm — only the sacred name “YHWH” in Hebrew or “LORD” in English. YHWH means “I am that I am.”

The letter aleph (X-meaning sovereignty) is used three times and the letter Hey (H-breath of life) four times; “(X) I am (X) that (X) I am;” and with the hey as “I am (Hey, Yod, Hey) that I am (Hey, Yod, Hey).”

The Spirit's command to the nations is to praise the LORD.

The command is not to praise religion or government. The command excludes secular-pagan gods like Molech, Pan, Ra, Apollo, Jupiter, Aten, Horus, Krishna, Vishnu, Shiva, Brahama, Allah, education, science, beauty, sex, family, or medicine.

All religions are **not** the same, nor are there many roads to heaven. All religions are false except one. Therefore, praise the LORD.

According to the Holy Scriptures, there is only one true God and one true creed. Consequently, the nations are commanded to order their affairs under the authority of the LORD, the sacred name of Elohim (See the Shema: Deuteronomy 6:4).

“Praise” encompasses all the duties of man: to hear, to know, to surrender, to believe, to love, to honor, to esteem, to obey, to follow, to confess, and to bow the knee to the LORD (YHWH) as the true and only God.

Praise is commanded two times in verse one.

The first word for “praise” (hallelujah) is a Piel imperative—a powerful, emphatic command to yield to His authority and to enter into the wonders and mysteries of the majesty of the LORD — to glorify Him with a clear, loud voice. From this Hebrew word (halal), we get the term, “Hallelujah” which means to clearly “shine” forth the praises of God.

The second word for “praise” (shabach) is also a Piel verb urging vigor and intensity of focused attention. It means “to soothe” and is translated “still” in Psalms:

Psalm 65:7 who stills (shabach) the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, the tumult of the peoples,

Psalm 89:9 You rule the raging of the sea; when its waves rise, you still (shabach) them.

Matthew 4:39 He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

Against the cacophony of the clangs and clashes of politics, Habakkuk issued his order:

2:20 But the Lord is in his holy temple (sovereignty): let all the earth keep silence before him (surrender).

Be still all ye politically minded who roar. Be quiet. Shut your mouth. Zip the lip. Open your ears. Listen to the Word of the LORD.

World Peace can only be found when men seek truth and not power; truth and not fiction; knowledge and not propaganda; shalom and not supremacy; the cross and not control. Only when agitated men surrender to the authority of the LORD God, His gospel, and His law-order can there be shalom.

The lyric proclaims one grand truth — that this Creator-God claims jurisdiction over all nations, all peoples, on all the continents; that all the nations of the earth are under obligations to know and to worship the LORD as King of the Nations.

Knowing and loving the LORD is a duty of all men.

“He is not the God of the Hebrew people only, but of all people; his praise should be celebrated not merely by one nation, but by all” (Barnes Notes: Psalm 117:1).

“Who would not fear Thee, O King of the nations? Indeed it is Thy due! For among all the wise men of the nations, And in all their kingdoms, There is none like Thee” (Jeremiah 10:7).

What a magnificent theme! Men and women from every nation, tongue, color, and race under one creed rejoicing in the goodness, kindness, and mercy of the LORD to mankind.

“For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea” (Isaiah 11:9).

The same theme is found in Deuteronomy 32 and Romans 15. The design of which is “to show that the Old Testament speaks of the Gentiles as called on to celebrate the praises of God; of course, the apostle infers that they are to be introduced to the same privileges as his people” (Barnes Notes).

What hope! -- The Gentiles sharing in the commonwealth of Israel and the benefits of the gospel. History is not going in circles. The wicked are not winning. Though sins are being repeated, things are not getting worse. All things are headed toward the kingdom of God and the exaltation of His Messiah Son. There are people in every nation that worship Christ.

“ . . . that in all things he might (hina) have the preeminence (first in time, first in mind)” (Colossians 1:18). (“hina” a purpose clause).

Though we see proud men rising to power on the violent sea of politics that appear for a short time on the crest of a powerful wave and then suddenly disappear below the surf and foam of the angry sea, the final vision of the universe is one where men from every nation and tribe bow to the Lamb to proclaim the wonders of His accomplishments at Calvary.

Our vision for America should not be “one nation under God,” but “one nation under the LORD God.”

One day millions in China, Japan, Indonesia, Pakistan, Sudan, Niger, Chad, and the United States will bow the knee to the Savior and acknowledge the greatness of the Lord (Isaiah 2, 11, 9, 66; Revelation 5).

Psalm 138 - A King's Praise

"All the kings of the earth shall praise (yadah) thee, O LORD,"



This is a kingly hymn composed by a manly king praising the merits of his eternal King to other kings.

It has been said that thankfulness is the queen of virtues. This being so, then praise is the king of virtues while complaining is the gremlin that pours grit and grime in our gears.

A King's Praise is Wholehearted

Psalm 138:1 <A Psalm of David.> I will praise (todah) thee with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise (zamar) unto thee.

This great king shares a great song to great men about a great God and His great deliverance from a great battle.

We learn from David that praise is a king's business, and that all who praise God are the true kings upon the earth.

What a healthy heart!

Though composed by a king, before us is a snapshot of a healthy kingdom saint. This is not a monarch drunk with power or intoxicated with his own self-importance.

What a healthy will!

Think of the wonder of a man who is totally occupied with the beauty of Another.

Praise is a choice: "I will" praise thee—another indicator of a solid, wholesome, resolute, vigorous, confirmed strong, unwavering soul. Man is altogether better when He expresses thankfulness for the blessings of God in his life.

What a healthy occupation!

Notice the term "praise" (toda). It means to "throw up the hands" either as an act of worship or as one taking an oath.

Notice the object of praise, "Thee" (LORD God). Men are more often than not occupied with self. Our psychologized society has taught men to turn inward and to take archaeological journeys into their feelings. Self-discovery has become the great occupation of neo-pagans. But,

here is a saint that is outside of himself enthralled with the glories of Heaven's King. He is Theocentric, not anthropocentric; Christ-centered, not self-centered.

Men are often enthralled with the beauty of women, beautiful weather, or beautiful mountain scenes. But, here is a vigorous heart that has been captured by the loveliness of the LORD God. Delivered from wretched subjectivism, he takes us outside of ourselves to behold the wonders of the one, true God.

What a healthy commitment!

This is no bifurcated, double-minded, divided, bi-polar, duplicitous, partite, half-hearted man: "I will praise Thee with my whole heart."

The phrase "before the gods" informs us that David was not afraid to sing the praises of God before kings, magistrates, judges, parliamentarians, and government agents who think of themselves as some kind of god.

Psalm 138: 2 I will worship (shachah) toward thy holy temple, and praise (yada) thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.

The word "worship" (shachah) means to bow in honor of another. It is in the emphatic position in the sentence. Men bow to One greater than themselves. David is no idolater. He "bowed down" to the God Who made heaven and earth; the God who revealed himself to Israel and tabernacled among them.

David's first concern was the honor of God's name and the glorious fountain of virtue and truth flowing from all that His name represents. All that is wrong with society begins with the neglect of God and the debasement of His name in the minds of men. When men are blasphemous, they turn towards darkness. To remedy man's dark, dwarfed, and diluted views of God, the king interjects steroids of praise about YHWH to increase man's faith.

Moreover, David was more spirited about revelation than creation. The preposition "above" could just as easily be translated "over thy name." All truth about God is controlled by His Word. All that a man needs to know about God is found in the Bible; and, if a truth claim cannot be verified by the Scriptures "there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20). To study Scripture, is to know God; to know God, is to study Scripture.

When you think of God what comes to your mind? When David reflected on the character of God, he was astonished by his "loving kindness;" that is, His *royal hesed* — the graciousness of this King. Here is a King that overlooks the flaws, fractures, and faults of His people when they appear before Him.

Psalm 138:3 In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.

David takes us to the first sweet reason for his hymn of praise. God rescues. Deliverances, protections, provisions, disentanglements, and answers to prayer create a waterfall of blessings

that fill the healthy heart with praise. A man who knows and feels God's emancipations will rise to be a king that emancipates men. It is fitting for a king to praise the Creator; that is, those who praise God become kingly.

The noblest men among us think about Christ and extol His greatness. Praise is the excellence of princes.

[Note: the word "strengthenest" (rahab) means "to storm" or "to make bold."]

A King's Praise is Kingly

Psalm 138: 4 All the kings of the earth shall praise (yadah) thee, O LORD, when they hear the words of thy mouth.

The Bible is good for me because it is good for all men. It not only commands my attention, but it commands the obedience of princes. Scripture was made for kings, and true kings honor Him. Those who possess the praises of God are priest-kings on earth, and all true kings praise God (Revelation 1:5).

Psalm 138: 5 Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD: for great is the glory of the LORD.

A second sweet reason to praise God is addressed: "Great is the glory of the LORD."

David anticipated a time when the kings of the earth would unite and sing praises to the ways of the Lord; that is, they would promote the righteousness and justice of God (Genesis 18:19). All the virtues of the King are compacted into the term "glory." Like clouds, the glory of the Lord is in full view of the nations. Jeremiah confirms the international intrigue by announcing Him as the "King of Nations" (Jeremiah 10:7); just, good, wise, fair, tough, tender, and stable.

Again, kings sing the praises of God, and all who praise Him are the true kings. And, all kings who do not praise God are twigs assigned to the fires of hell.

The knowledge of the God of Scripture is not only good for all men but for all civil rulers. Oh, how much better our world would be if politicians would take time to reflect on the greatness of God and their duty to Honor Him!

In the present order of things, the world is dangerously crowded with crazy people. Spiritual paupers rule the nations. Madmen sit on thrones. Parliaments are filled with psychopaths. The insane bark out orders to the bewilderment of all. True kings are afoot, and fools ride on horseback. One day, the true kings of the earth (Christians) will be revealed and they shall reign with Him forever and ever (Ecclesiastes 10:7; 2 Timothy 2:12; Revelation 20:6).

Psalm 138: 6 Though the LORD be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off.

We have a contrast between the LORD on high (ruwn), the lowly (shaphal), and the proud who masquerade as being high (gaboahh).

David expounds a third sweet reason to praise God. God's greatness, majesty, and power reach into the stars. Yet, this transcendent God condescends to listen to the likes of you and me. He stands tall among the gods, but he bends his ear to hear the prayers of peasants. But . . . the proud? He has had enough of their blabbering, whining, and boasting.

[Note: The word "high" (fuwm) is first translated "lift up above the earth" in Genesis 7:17. The term "lowly" (shapal) is translated "lower" in Leviticus 13:20, 21 and the context refers to an indentation or depression in the skin — a pox mark. It is often translated "low." The Hebrew word *shapel* (lowly) ends in with a Lamed (ל), the tallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet, a symbol of a lightning strike from heaven to earth. Stand tall by being small in your own eyes.

The word "respect" is the Hebrew word ra'ah which means "to see." It is first translated in Genesis 1:4 as "God saw the light . . ." In this text the Spirit wants us to know that God sees the lowly (the dependent man) but is blind to the proud (the high man). It is translated "the LORD appeared" unto Abraham in Genesis 18:1-2 inferring in our text that God makes Himself known to small, humble, child-like people. Be humble or stumble.]

A King's Praise Paves the Way for Revival

Psalm 138: 7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.

The term "trouble" (tsarah) refers to distress and adversity (Genesis 35:3) and is translated "adversary" in 1 Samuel 1:6. What saint does not feel the distress of our times due to adversaries in high places promoting the total subjection of the total man to total government? The stress of living in a society that promotes feminism, homosexuality, and war is the work of enemies. Troubles torment us and tear our sails into tattered rags.

Notice the subject and object of the verb "revive." "(You) will revive ME! Revival is of God, not man. Revival does not happen because a church plans it. Revival is an act of God in response to thankful people (Psalm 50:23). Furthermore, you can't revive a corpse. You can only revive the living. Revival is for Christians, not the neo-pagans buried under rubble caused by their sins.

Having given three sweet reasons to praise God, the psalmist rises from his chapel of praise with a new assurance that though his life is complex and has its ups and downs and its twists and turns, God will revive him in the midst of the dangers. A new confidence emerges that God will protect him from the plots of those whose tongues are like daggers with mouth-a-foul.

David not only expected general protection from gremlins with an evil eye, but he anticipated more answers to prayer that could be characterized as personal, special, specific, particular, timely, powerful deliverances by the mighty hand of this condescending God. No wonder David expected kings to praise Him! And, all kingly Christians do (Revelation 1:6).

Psalm 138: 8 The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me . . .

A second assurance grows within this king's heart like a mighty oak. The trials of life were not there to make him bitter, but to make him better; that through it all, God would be with him to protect, to purify, and to perfect the outcome of his duties both temporal and eternal.

[Note: The word "perfect" means "to complete." It is translated "come to an end" in Psalm 7:10, and "performs" or "accomplishes" in Psalm 57:2.]

Psalm 138:8 . . . thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands

A third assurance breaks the ground. The mercy of the LORD endure through time. David did not attribute his survival and military successes to his own talent, skills, or acumen. Before us is a humble man aided by a humble God. This king attributed his escapes on the battlefield and victories in combat to the mercy of God.

This king ends his praise with a prayer: "forsake not the work of thy hands!" Perhaps, being aware of his own moral frailty, faults, and failures to do what he ought, he cries out to God, "Forsake me not."

Being "forsaken" by God seems to be a common fear among God's children. Men who are in touch with the greatness of God are also in touch with great weaknesses of their own. That God will not forsake His people, even when they fail, is expressed in the most emphatic terms in Hebrews 13:5 wherein God uses five negations to express the impossibility of abandonment, "I will never, never, desert you, no never never forsake (abandon) you."

Though having much to praise God for, the king closes his song in utter dependence on his God for future deliverances. Creation was a colossal prize, but the "new creation" is His greatest treasure (2 Corinthians 5:17).

The most intelligent, knowledgeable, skilled men among us know God, think about God, and are inspired by His Spirit to speak about Him, write about Him, and exhort others to surrender to Him. If you are not praising the King of the Nations, you are not the King's son; and if you are not a king's son, then you are not in His kingdom. True kings surrender to God's law-order, and worship the King of kings (Matthew 11:29; Romans 10:9; Revelation 17:14)

1 O worship the King all-glorious above,
O gratefully sing his power and his love:
our shield and defender, the Ancient of Days,
pavilioned in splendor and girded with praise.

2 O tell of his might and sing of his grace,
whose robe is the light, whose canopy space.
His chariots of wrath the deep thunderclouds form,
and dark is his path on the wings of the storm.

3 Your bountiful care, what tongue can recite?
It breathes in the air, it shines in the light;
it streams from the hills, it descends to the plain,
and sweetly distills in the dew and the rain.

4 Frail children of dust, and feeble as frail,
in you do we trust, nor find you to fail.
Your mercies, how tender, how firm to the end,
our Maker, Defender, Redeemer, and Friend!

5 O measureless Might, unchangeable Love,
whom angels delight to worship above!
Your ransomed creation, with glory ablaze,
in true adoration shall sing to your praise!

Psalter Hymnal, (Gray)

A man never stands taller than when he is on his knees. Be humble, or stumble. Be prayerful and cheerful. Praise is a manly and thoughtfully kingly. When done regularly and joyfully, praise adds power to our life.

Psalm 142 - A Prayer for the Accused

No Man Cared for my Soul



Have you ever been falsely accused by state actors?

Maybe, you have been falsely accused of violating “the law” (a man-made statute) in some “commercial scheme” by gang members working for a State corporation dressed in a black uniform—a scheme wherein the corporation makes millions every year by falsely accusing citizens of “crimes” (mala prohibita) – a statutory prohibition but not a crime.

Maybe, you are involved in politics, and your opponent used the “politics of personal destruction” to slander and malign you. Maybe a feminist accused you to the board for sexual harassment because you simply tried to open the door for this woman.

Slander is Satan’s favorite weapon to destroy the godly man. A six inch tongue can slay a man six feet tall.

In this psalm, we have a glimpse into the terrified soul of young David who was falsely accused of treason against the State by King Saul. Hiding in the Cave of Adullam from the man hunt, David uttered this prayer.

The Jerusalem Times was saturated with sick lies and personal attacks by the bias media quoting politicians loyal to Saul’s administration.

David was simple and naïve—unprepared to deal with a covert war against him by vicious political adversaries. In this psalm, he bears his soul.

Furthermore, if you are not on some government hate list, you are either young in the Lord, or you are not living for Christ.

If you are falsely accused, you can obtain injunctive relief by appealing your case to the Supreme Court of Heaven.

An Appeal to the Supreme Court in Heaven

Psalm 142:1 <Maschil of David; A Prayer when he was in the cave.> I cried unto the LORD with my voice; with my voice unto the LORD did I make my supplication.

Trouble is good if it leads us to seek Him.

When David penned this prayer, he was considered an outlaw, a fugitive from “justice,” and a traitor to his king.

A meritless warrant was issued for his arrest by the de facto government. Hiding in a mountain shelter, this prince-in-training had to take a course on the art of prayer. Thus, we have a Maschil of David—a psalm that teaches us lessons on supplications—a prayer from a cave by a fugitive from tyranny.

Concealed in the Cave of Adullam from political ambush, this innocent patriot pleaded his case before the Supreme Court of Heaven.

2 I poured out my complaint before him; I shewed before him my trouble.

The imagery before us is that of a boy holding his clay jug while pouring water into another vessel. David took the burden he carried and placed it into the lap of the Lord.

The word “trouble” is compared to a “broken tooth or a sprained ankle” (Proverbs 25:19). The false charges hurt.

The term “shewed” means “to announce, publish, and fully declare.” Literally, the last phrase could be translated, “I caused my anguish to be published before His face.” Like a forensic accountant, David lays bare his books. The troubles on his ledger were opened for the Judge’s inspection.

A plaintiff, David introduces his cause to the Honorable Judge in the Superior Court.

3 When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path. In the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me.

David wanted us to know the importance of the timing of his plea. This was not a “now I lay myself down to sleep” prayer.

He coughed up his plea when his spirit was submerged under the waves of legal concerns.

The term “overwhelmed” means “enveloped” or “fully covered.” The word is used to describe “feeble” starving cattle during Egypt’s terrible famine in Genesis 30:42. It is translated “swoon” in Jonah 2:8 when Jonah woke up in the belly of a whale; that is, this prayer gushed out of him when he was hiding from Saul’s Gestapo in his mountain hide-away; when he was shelled by political slander.

David was innocent of the charges against him. He had injured no man or his property—and he was a true patriot.

The de facto king saw the prince as a threat to his position. Saul was desperately trying to retain his power as head of state. Engaged in the politics of personal destruction, the king’s hatchet men slanderously accused David in order to prejudice the court of public opinion.

Saul's officials set a political trap in order to snare David and destroy his military career. Branded a threat to national security, Saul placed the Captain of his Special Guard on his "Wanted Dead or Alive List." The plan was simple: accuse, capture, and kill!

Saul's Special Forces were ordered to kill first and ask questions later. Saul's equivalent of the FBI, CIA, IRS, and federal S.W.A.T. teams searched for this fugitive from justice in order to terminate him.

A dead David was better than a popular giant slayer. Stunned by the shifting winds of these events, God's man prayed . . . and oh, how he must have prayed.

4 I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul.

The term "know" (makir) means "to discern" or "recognize" or "analyze"; that is, there was no man that could objectively and impartially investigate David's meritorious actions and advocate his innocence in the king's court.

David was truly alone and no one understood his personal distress. He had no friends to come along side to comfort him.

When indicted by "THE GOVERNMENT", true friends are hard to find. Most people will believe government propaganda, and the rest will scurry like cockroaches for cover in order to avoid guilt by association.

When the government must be obeyed in the minds of men, they will turn you over to the State to be abused by a goon squad.

Think of it! David said there was no man that cared about his soul, whether he was healthy or sick, glad or mad, saved or unsaved. How many unbelievers attend church and never get a visit from a deacon; or be asked a question about the state of their soul; or be queried about their relationship to their Creator?

When was the last time you took an interest in the condition of a person's soul? People care more about their pet gerbil than about the souls of men.

The statement "no man cared for my soul" is perhaps one of the greatest indictments against Christian people in the Word of God.

What is it about Christian folk that they abandon their wounded—especially those that are falsely accused by the godless, tyrannical State? Why is it believers avoid the hurting, the troubled, and the accused? Why is it Christians will believe the media, the gossip columns, and police blogs and seldom request evidence or proof of claim from government officials? Why do churchmen make it their duty to assist government agents in their lawless, tyrannical unconstitutional commercial schemes?

When government is god in the minds of Christians, they cannot be trusted not to betray you.

5 I cried unto thee, O LORD: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.

Having no kindred spirit, David appealed his case to the Supreme Court of Heaven.

God was not just important to David, He was all important. The LORD was his refuge; his fortress; his hiding place.

Alone, David identified the LORD as his “portion” in the land of the living. The word “portion” refers to a “tract of land” or one’s personal property. On the street without a roof over his head and foraging for food on the land, his relationship to God was the only possession of which he could boast. David had one jewel in his pouch and that gem was a personal relationship with His Creator.

6 Attend unto my cry; for I am brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I.

David had three petitions (6-7). Each are Hiphil imperatives. The use of the command is the language of prayer just as “demands” and “orders” are the language of the court. David moved the Judge to stir Himself and to grant him injunctive relief from his political adversary.

His first plea is for the Lord to hear his prayer. “Open your eyes! Open your ears! Don’t ignore my request,” was David’s argument.

The second plea was for deliverance from his adversaries. What is a man supposed to do when the putative government as protector of the people becomes the agent of destruction of its citizens? What is a man supposed to do when the government that should be obeying God’s law disobeys its own laws and terrorizes the people?

David was maligned, misjudged, and slandered. Media personalities are especially good at this. Assassins and the dog hounds hunted for his den in order to devour him. He needed God to defend him against this government plot to murder him.

What a statement: “They are stronger than I.” Who can fight against the State with all its financial resources, paramilitary SWAT teams, and hoards of unscrupulous Philadelphia lawyers?

What individual has the wealth to prevail against a State indictment with government paid prosecutors and government paid witnesses and government paid juries and government paid judges? Who can match the government’s war chest or survive it law-fare?

This court with wolf-like, flunky bailiffs in attendance was looking for a sacrifice—and David was their lamb.

It wasn’t until 1215 AD in England that the legal plying field was leveled.

Thank God for the Barons who remedied the imbalance of power by insisting King John sign the Magna Carta — a legal charter that prevented agents of the king from bringing charges

against a baron by government paid prosecutors and government paid witnesses (sheriffs) to government paid judges. We call it bias, favoritism, and prejudice.

Out of this stew of injustice, the barons devised the whole concept of a trial by jury—a jury made up of fellow barons.

To be charged for a crime in England, government prosecutors needed “faithful witnesses;” that is, two witness from the private sector that were not suckin’ slop at the king’s trough.

[Note, if you are being charged for a victimless crime, insist the state follow the “rules of common law” – 7th Amendment).

7 Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: the righteous shall compass me about; for thou shalt deal bountifully with me.

David’s third plea was for deliverance from prison. Oh, how the chains of fear, or doubt, or anxiety, or anger, or terror, or discouragement can imprison a soul.

When falsely accused, the litigant finds himself in an emotional, legal prison. Warrants for victimless crimes strangle liberty.

With a frivolous warrant for his arrest, David’s freedom to travel upon public highways became impossibility. He was on the run! He was behind bars in his own prison of despair.

Confined in southern Judah, David was in hiding from Saul’s secret police. Fear and bewilderment shackled his soul. In spiritual chains and hunted like a mad dog, David cried out to God for a remedy.

The purpose of David’s prayer was not limited to his own well-being, but included the glory of God. Praise is the grand objective of history (Revelation 5).

How could he join the throng of the redeemed in joyful adoration if he did not have a story to tell about God’s deliverance? How could he praise God if he was not free of these unfounded charges?

More was at stake here than David’s comfort. At stake was the reputation of his God. No test; no testimony. No problems; no praise. No help; no honor. No deliverance; no dancing; no contest; no victory!

David expresses a confidence that God heard his prayer, and that his loneliness would end—that he would soon be joined by righteous men—non-government agents; regular folk who shared his love of God’s law and God’s glory.

Further, he ends this prayer with a quiet confidence that God would deal “bountifully” with him; that is, that God would provide a remedy in his case against the false statutory charges against him; that Christ would advocate his cause and that his plea would be granted.

If you have not been falsely accused because you have broken the common law, you need to repent deeply, make restitution, and plead the mercy of the court.

If you have been falsely accused by State actors and trapped in some commercial scheme and you have harmed no man or his property, this is a prayer for you.

Fellow Christians will not understand. But, God is your refuge and your portion. Appeal your case to the Supreme Court of Heaven.

Psalm 144 - God Gives the Victory

"Happy is that people, whose God is the LORD."



This psalm is ascribed to David and there is no reason not to assume that he is the author.

As a newly installed king, David raises this prayer against the nations that attempted to crush the Hebrews by warring against the commonwealth and pillaging the countryside.

Psalm 144:1 <A Psalm of David.> Blessed be the LORD my strength, which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight:

Because Satan seeks to overthrow the church in every generation, each believer must learn the art of war. Fight or become a slave.

Considering the LORD equipped him with the skills of a warrior, David blessed the God of his strength. In this case, the dexterity of an archer, swordsman, and commander.

David's example teaches us that every man must gain skills in the art of self-defense; that is, he must become a man who can defend life, liberty, and property. Likewise, every Christian must become competent in the art of apologetics so he can defend the faith against critics of the gospel.

2 My goodness, and my fortress; my high tower, and my deliverer; my shield, and he in whom I trust; who subdueth my people under me.

David saw the Lord as his Source of goodness, virtue, and strength. All that he hoped to be as a warrior-king was found in God.

Note the defensive nature of this text: fortress, high tower, deliverer, and shield.

Enemy soldiers desired to have David's head. To this general in the Lord's army, God was his defender, "fortress, high tower, deliverer, and shield. He expresses that it was the power of God and not his prowess that gave his army victory on the battlefield.

3 LORD, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him! or the son of man, that thou makest account of him!

King David seems to lack the pride and arrogance characteristic of most military men. Impressed by the Lord's care of him, he marvels that the Most High God would take such an interest in the affairs of such tiny, little, creatures as himself here below.

“What is man” is an analytical question designed to provoke admiration for the Lord. We think too much of ourselves and not enough of the majesty of God. The same question is asked in Psalm 8.

On the other hand, there is a crisis in anthropology. Man is more than a speck of dust.

Bernard of Clairvaux on man (1091-1153): ". . . nothing but fetid sperm, a sack of dung . . . Oh, food for worms! Oh heap of dust! oh vanity of dew!

On the tomb of Cardinal Lagrange has written: "Miserable one, what reason have you to be proud? Soon you will be as we, a fetid cadaver, food for worms.

Prince William, a member of the illuminati and royal family, once said, "I want to come back as a virus and kill most of the population."

Francis Pharcellus Church wrote (1839-1906), "In this great universe of ours man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect, as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth and knowledge."

Daphne Du Maurier, English author and playwright (1907-1988), called man a "fungus on the surface of one of the minor planets."

What claim has one so weak and temporal upon the unchanging, eternal God? What is there in man that entitles him to so much consideration by the Creator? Why has he placed such an imperfect creature over the works of his hands? Why did He send the Son of God to save His people from their sins? Why has so much honor and authority been conferred on him, and why did the LORD give man dominion over the world (Genesis 1:26-38)?

The answer of course is not in man, but in the mind of God. He loves, not because of who we are, but because of Who Is, a God of love — a God of humility that bows to hear men pray.

4 Man is like to vanity: his days are as a shadow that passeth away.

For men who think too much of themselves, the psalmist requires us to consider the meaning of the term “vanity.”

By “vanity” David refers to the shortness of man’s life on earth. He appears as a shadow, a puff of smoke, a tap on the drum in a back alley band, and in a moment he is gone never to be seen or heard from again?

We need balance. Man is not a god to be worshiped, nor is man a worm to be crushed under foot.

A Prayer for Intervention

5 Bow thy heavens, O LORD, and come down: touch the mountains, and they shall smoke.

Though as tiny as an ant in the eyes of God, David pleads with the LORD to stoop to hear his prayer and to assist him in his fight against man-haters.

One glance, one touch and the mountains smoke like a volcano — a metaphor for God's intervention in a duel between armies.

6 Cast forth lightning, and scatter them: shoot out thine arrows, and destroy them.

Drawing illustrations from nature like bolts of lightning, David pleads with the LORD to pull back his bow and strike the enemy in order to scatter them. The wicked must die in order for sheep to live.

7 Send thine hand from above; rid me, and deliver me out of great waters, from the hand of strange children;

Using anthropomorphism as a literary device, David calls upon God to employ his hands to reach down and to save him from drowning in sea of angry soldiers.

“strange children” refer to alien armies hostile to the law of the LORD God; i.e., sinners in rebellion against God's law-order.

8 Whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood.

“vanity” refers to the lies, slander, fictions, and distortions that promoted an unjust war against the Hebrews.

“right hand” is the dominant hand meaning that the whole culture of these foreign nations were dominated by deceit and lies.

Consider all the lies and propaganda that the U.S. government has inflicted up the people in regards to fake science, politics, religion, taxation, and law. Evolution, “gay” marriage, feminism, and fake vaccines come to mind.

9 I will sing a new song unto thee, O God: upon a psaltery and an instrument of ten strings will I sing praises unto thee.

While the heathen curse and spout lies, David sang praises to the God of truth. Drawing deep upon his musical skills David employed all his talents to worship.

10 It is he that giveth salvation unto kings: who delivereth David his servant from the hurtful sword.

“salvation” refers to acts of God that rescue kings from defeat and shame. Kings seem to be powerful, invincible men, but like all men, they are dependent on God for deliverance. As great a warrior as the Goliath-killer was, he attributes his victories and survival to the LORD.

11 Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood:

David repeats his plea found in verse 10 so that he might highlight the marvelous benefits of trusting God in such dangerous wars.

12 That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace:

Family: David fought the battles of the LORD against violent men who would enslave men and abuse women. He prayed for victory so that the nation's sons might grow up and flourish alike carefully nurtured plants; that their little girls might mature to be works of art like polished stones in a king's palace.

13 That our garners may be full, affording all manner of store: that our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets:

Commerce and production: David fought battles against pirates, thieves, and plunderers. He sought the LORD for victory in battle that the nation's farmers and ranchers might experience prosperity and surplus in their businesses.

14 That our oxen may be strong to labour; that there be no breaking in, nor going out; that there be no complaining in our streets.

David fought against lusty butchers who would have slaughtered the nation's livestock for banquets in honor of their gods. He prayed for victory so that domesticated animals might be safe.

15 Happy is that people, that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people, whose God is the LORD.

The whole purpose of religion is to produce a happy, productive people contented with peace and provision from the LORD. Worthless idols disappoint and embitter men. True happiness and joy comes from the religion of YHWH.

The nation that wants to be happy must put away its idols, speak truth, and keep His laws.

Psalm 146 - An Election Psalm

Self Talk of a Godly Man



Do ever ever talk to yourself? What do you talk about?

This is one of the Hallelujah Psalms that records the self-talk of a godly man.

There are three commands in this psalm. In verse one the psalmist orders his own soul to hallelu-jah twice. The conclusion of the psalm contains the same command.

Does your self-talk include commands to your own soul to praise God?

This psalm is also called an “artillery” psalm because preachers fired their blazing cannons from the pulpit before elections at carnal minds warning their parishioners not to trust political figures. Voters would do well to reflect on this psalm during election season.

In verse 3, we have a Jussive verb enjoining God’s people to trust God and not to trust princes (nadyb) — the ruling class. This is the Spirit’s way of telling us, “Don’t put your trust in politicians!” but, put your trust in the LORD.

1 Praise ye the LORD. Praise the LORD, O my soul.

Every psalm tells the story of the author’s spiritual quest. This psalmist begins his chorus with the conclusion of His investigation. With renewed conviction, he engraves his purpose in Holy Writ: *Hallelu-jah!!*

The verb “Praise” is a Piel imperative – a jolt to the soul to get out of doldrums and to shift his focus to the glories of the LORD. Praise is evidence of spiritual fitness– visible, tangible, empirical proof of a healthy heart. What health is to the body, praise is to the soul.

A sick soul can’t praise God, and a wicked soul won’t praise God. An obsessive, impulsive mind with a heart two-sizes to small is wrapped up with the ups and downs and the ins and outs of politics.

Possibly, the fire in the hearth of the psalmist’s heart had cooled to the point where the author needed to incite the flames of wonder so he could fully adore his Creator. People drowning in the sea of politics have a way of splashing cold water on fires of devotion to Christ. Twice the psalmist lifts his head above the surf and foam of politics to summon his own soul to praise HaShem (LORD).

The issue isn’t whether the Lord is worthy of praise, but whether men can escape their idolatrous fixation on politics on earth to explore the wonders of the Creator in Heaven.

Because we live in a humanistic culture where man is fascinated with the accomplishments of man, worship takes holy energy. It must be fueled by a desire to know God and reflection on His revelation.

He did not praise his own soul. He was not concerned about self-esteem, but Christ-esteem.

2 While I live will I praise the LORD: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being.

I will not live forever, but while I live on this earth, I will focus on the beauties of Another. Charged with the duty to love the Lord with all my heart and soul, let my flame in this holy choir glow to the ends of the earth.

If ever a redeemed man had a duty to sing His praises, it is me. Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb . . . Praise the LORD, Oh my soul. Sing, soul, sing!

Rising stars in government compete for our affections, but the psalmist would have none of it. We can't be too daring in our devotion to our Redeemer. This saint shares the reasons why.

Six Reasons to trust God and not the Government

#1 Princes cannot help you.

3 Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.

The great error among us is to trust man below instead of God above; to depend on fickle princes on this earth instead of the faithful Creator in heaven. The Spirit commands us not to put our trust in candidates, political parties, legislatures, utopian agendas, and popular trends.

To be disappointed with politicians is to have trusted them. Why should we look to flawed, frail, fickle men lusting for power to help us with our personal problems? Corruptocrats are often the most psychotic imbalanced, spiritually-sick people on the planet.

The middle verse in the middle of the Bible warns us against trusting the rich and powerful (Psalm 118):

⁸It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man.

⁹It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes

#2 Princes are flawed and perish like every man.

4 His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.

No matter how high a prince rises in government, he ends up six feet underground. Only a fool trusts a dying man.

“Dead men tell no tales.” When the wicked die, their dreams die with them. But, those who invest praise to HaShem obtain stock in the kingdom of God.

When a politician is in office, citizens consider him an expert on everything, and after he leaves office he returns to the status of a moron. He begins his political career with lofty dreams, and ends his career with failed policies and nightmares for all. He promises his constituents heaven in the cosmos, but creates hell on earth. These envied creatures are made of dust and return to dust. Why build on the ground of men who will end up under the ground? Their dreams will fall like drops of rain because they are built upon earthly hopes.

The Christian hope, on the other hand, is established on Christ raised from the grave sitting at the right hand of the Father in heaven. Trust the Prince of the kings of earth and not pauper princes proudly parading around like pied-pipers with magical flutes and alluring powers.

#3 The God of Jacob (grace) is the true Source of happiness.

5 Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God: 6 Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is: which keepeth truth for ever:

True happiness lies in an understanding of law and grace. The LORD was pleased to declare Himself as “the God of Jacob” because God loved him when no other man cared for his soul. This title of grace used 25 times informs us that when man fails us, there is a God in Heaven the helps broken men. He that made the cosmos can move heaven and earth to help us. He who preserves all can preserve us. He who protects the poor can protect us from rich politicians. He that saved Israel from the wrath of Pharaoh can save us from the ambitions of princes. He who prepared a path to save His people at the Red Sea can save us from pet projects planned by black-hat bureaucrats.

The ground of this hope is that the God of Jacob will never permit His promises to pass away. He is the One who keeps truth forever; that is, He is true to His character, true to His promises, true to His Word, and true to His people. He is the God Who is (YHWH); and because He is, He is the God who can be trusted now and forever.

Like the Sun that appears from behind the clouds, truth cannot hide forever. Like the Sun sends its golden rays to the earth for the benefit of all, God’s truth blesses all men.

#4 The Lord helps the oppressed.

7 Which executeth judgment for the oppressed: which giveth food to the hungry. The LORD looseth the prisoners: 8 The LORD openeth the eyes of the blind: the LORD raiseth them that are bowed down: the LORD loveth the righteous: The LORD preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow:

Feel oppressed by the difficulties of life . . . by political ineptitude? There is help for you.

The LORD surpasses all because He does not regard the rank and status of men. He loves His creatures unmindful of their wealth and power. He is the Champion of the poor and powerless. Politicians rob, oppress, and enslave. His triple blessings are food, justice, and liberty.

Oscar Ameringer said, "politics is the gentle art of getting votes from the poor and campaign funds from the rich, by promising to protect each from the other."

When criminal politicians hide behind the majority, the God of Jacob acts in history to deliver the helpless from their ambitions. Nine types of people are beneficiaries of His love: the oppressed, the hungry, prisoners, and the blind, the bowed down, the righteous, aliens / strangers, the fatherless, and the widows.

Eight redemptive acts are highlighted: executeth judgment, giveth food, looseth, openeth, raiseth, loveth, preserveth, and relieveth. In using these terms we see justice, provision, freedom, enlightenment, restoration, grace, protection, and relief.

#5 The Lord frustrates the plans of criminals.

9 . . . but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.

The Hebrew term for "wicked" (*rasha'm-im*) refers to criminals. The world of troubles God has planned for these lawbreakers is compressed into the Hebrew word *avath*, a Piel imperfect (intense action), which can be translated "flip upside down," "turn inside out," or "toss around in circles."

This is God's way of informing us that behind the scenes of history, He is at work frustrating the schemes of corrupt politicians setting up roadblocks and throwing sand in their gears. For this reason ambitious politicians are generally angry, frustrated folks because the opposing party defies their agenda, and because of a lack of money to achieve their ambitions to control the world. Frustrated party officials are evidence God is at work turning the way of the wicked upside down.

We tend to worry about politics when we lose sight of God's work of frustrating the evil schemes of politicians. "Fret not thyself because of evil doers . . . for they shall be cut down like grass" (Psalm 37:1-2).

Believest thou this, my soul?

#6 The Lord reigns continually.

10 The LORD shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the LORD.

Mark Twain said, "Politicians and diapers must be changed often, and for the same reason."

In contrast to the topsy turvy world of politics is the sovereign reign of the Lord Christ.

That the Lord reigns is the gospel of the Old Testament. Unlike politicians that you can never talk to or get an appointment to see, God's Court is always in session. This King never sleeps. His office is open 24/7.

The great joy of Christians is that God's rule entered history in and through the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ to defeat man's great enemies: Satan, sin, and death. He reigns, not Satan; He rules, not man. He is moving history towards its ultimate destiny – the will of God and not the will of princes, potentates, and politicians.

The great prayer of Christians is, "Thy kingdom come," may your will be done now, on earth. May men recognize your kingdom rule and submit to it now.

The great message of this psalm is to trust God and not princes; to praise Him and not politicians.

May we be like the psalmist with self-talk that orders our own soul to praise the Lord and not to be so focused on the turbulent world of politics. Our spiritual health depends on it.

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