

Opening Words

David believed in God’s worldwide sovereignty. He was not just king over Israel. He was king over the world and David envisioned a time when all nations of the world will assemble before God the King.

Psalm 7

Have you ever been unjustly accused? Have you ever been misunderstood? Have you ever been doing well in your relationship with the Lord and found others coming against you? These questions express problems that I know many of you have encountered at least once in your lives. It seems that no matter what you do, you are misunderstood and accused. These are tough situations aren’t they, and they call for great patience and great faith in the Lord.

King David experienced this in his life and today we look at a psalm where he wrote about this kind of trouble. It’s a psalm about trouble he had with a man called Cush, a man from the tribe of Benjamin. The only problem is, when we look at the story of King David in the books of Samuel and Chronicles, we don’t find any story about a man named Cush. That shouldn’t surprise us – God’s Word is not an exhaustive biography of its main characters. If it were, the Bible would be as large as the Encyclopedia Britannica. But in this psalm, in the heading, we find a note that David wrote it about a man named Cush who was causing him problems. I guess we don’t need to know the details. All we need to know is how David responded.

Listen to Psalm 7.

LORD my God, I take refuge in you;
save and deliver me from all who pursue me,
²or they will tear me apart like a lion
and rip me to pieces with no one to rescue me.
³LORD my God, if I have done this
and there is guilt on my hands—
⁴if I have repaid my ally with evil
or without cause have robbed my foe—
⁵then let my enemy pursue and overtake me;
let him trample my life to the ground
and make me sleep in the dust.
⁶Arise, LORD, in your anger;
rise up against the rage of my enemies.
Awake, my God; decree justice.
⁷Let the assembled peoples gather around you,
while you sit enthroned over them on high.
⁸ Let the LORD judge the peoples.
Vindicate me, LORD, according to my righteousness,
according to my integrity, O Most High.
⁹Bring to an end the violence of the wicked
and make the righteous secure—

you, the righteous God
who probes minds and hearts.
¹⁰ My shield is God Most High,
who saves the upright in heart.
¹¹ God is a righteous judge,
a God who displays his wrath every day.
¹² If he does not relent,
he will sharpen his sword;
he will bend and string his bow.
¹³ He has prepared his deadly weapons;
he makes ready his flaming arrows.
¹⁴ Whoever is pregnant with evil
conceives trouble and gives birth to disillusionment.
¹⁵ Whoever digs a hole and scoops it out
falls into the pit they have made.
¹⁶ The trouble they cause recoils on them;
their violence comes down on their own heads.
¹⁷ I will give thanks to the LORD because of his righteousness;
I will sing the praises of the name of the LORD Most High.

As I studied this psalm, one thing that jumped out at me from the beginning is David's extraordinary restraint. In a world where kings were tyrants and ruled as if they were above the Law, David's first response was not to strike this man down. David's first response was to pray about the situation – to call upon the Lord and his second response was to examine himself. He did these two things even though Cush was pursuing him like a wild animal. Look at how David describes this man in verse 2, "Lord, they are going to tear me apart like a lion and rip me to pieces." That's the way life was in the ancient world – a world of great violence. That's the way the world is in many places today. Humans who reject the true God become less than human and become more like animals.

But we see David's first response is to call upon the Lord and seek refuge in him. He says, "O Lord my God, I take refuge in you. Save me and deliver me from all who pursue me."

Then we move into a remarkable section. After David prays for protection, he examines himself! "Lord if I have done what they are saying I have done, if there is injustice in my hands, if I have rewarded evil to my friend, if I have plundered an enemy without cause, then let them do these things to me, let them overtake me and trample me into the ground."

This is profound. These are the words of a humble man whose example we should follow. Years ago, a wise man, a leader in world missions was in the church where I pastored and he shared a lesson he had learned when confronted by another. He called it the LEEP method and in this case he spelled "leep" L-E-E-P. The "L" stood for "listen," and he said, "I have learned that I must first listen to the complaints of others and really understand what they are saying. Next, I must "Examine" myself. That's what the first "E" stands for. Is there something in my life where I need to change? Next comes the second "E" and we must ask if we have been an encouragement to others. Finally comes the "P" and we must pray about the situation. L-E-E-P; Listen, Examine, Encourage, Pray.

Good advice isn't it! If we followed these steps it would de-fuse many arguments and problems. We see King David following at least some of these steps. He goes to the Lord in prayer and he examines his life.

But there does come a time when the truth must come out. In David's situation, he was innocent and so he asks God to act. "Rise O Lord in your anger. Awake O God and execute justice for me." In verses 6-9 we find several interesting concepts. Let me point them out to you.

First, we find that David is confident there will be a day of judgment. In one translation David says, "decree justice!" In another it says, "you have appointed a judgment." David was confident that the truth would come out and that judgment would be rendered to bring down the guilty and to vindicate him. We must have this kind of patience as well. Scripture tells us in many places, "Vengeance is mine. I will repay, says the Lord." We must put our well-being and vindication in the hands of God and trust that he will take care of us and that at the right time he will vindicate us.

Sometimes this vindication comes in this life, but sometimes it does not. Sometimes people go to the grave without being vindicated and hopefully they go to the grave in faith that there will be a great day of judgment when all truth will come out. This is our hope in the resurrection. Paul said in Romans 2:16 that on the day of judgment God will judge the secrets of men through Jesus Christ. Every secret, every word, every thought will be revealed before God, the truth for every situation will stand, and justice will be carried out.

This is our hope as Christians and this is the reason why the resurrection of Jesus is so important. Jesus' death on the cross was the greatest miscarriage of justice in the history of the world. The one who was completely sinless bore the judgment for mankind! What could be worse than that? Sometimes we get blamed for the failures of others. Jesus took the blame for the whole world.

But on the third day he rose and was vindicated. He was exalted and shown to be the sinless one who voluntarily bore the sins of the world. God executed justice for Jesus by raising him from the dead. We see a small foreshadowing of this in David's statement in verse 6 that God has appointed a day of judgment.

Here's a second great truth in this section. In verse 7 he says, "let the assembled people gather around you while you sit enthroned over them on high." We find in this verse David's faith in God's worldwide sovereignty. He was not just king over Israel. He was king over the world and David envisions a time when all nations of the world will assemble before God the King.

This again takes us to the Gospel of Christ. Jesus suffered for the sins of the world, but was vindicated on the third day by resurrection. God showed him to be innocent of all charges by raising him and that he was the sin-bearer of our sins, not his sins. Then, 40 days after the resurrection, God enthroned him at his right hand. God gave him all authority in heaven and on earth. All principalities and powers in heavenly places have already bowed the knee to Jesus and acknowledged his Lordship, and our Gospel message is that Jesus is enthroned as Lord of all and all nations must submit to him.

Finally, in verses 6-9 we find the truth that God's judgment will be righteous because he has all the information! David says, "O let the evil of the wicked come to an end and establish the righteous because the righteous God tries the hearts and minds of all." God knows what is in every heart and every mind. Nothing escapes him.

When David meditated and wrote these great truths his heart was lifted. He knew he would be fine. He finished his psalm by declaring that God was his shield, that God would save those whose heart was upright. He declared that God was a righteous judge.

If those who were bringing false accusation against David did not repent, God would bring judgment upon them. And the judgment is that the evil they were conceiving and giving birth to would turn around and harm them. All their plots would backfire. They would fall into the pit they were digging.

David finishes with a declaration of praise – "I will give thanks to the Lord because of his righteousness. I will sing the praises of the name of the Lord Most High."

We will sing too when we place our faith in God's judgment and vindication for his people. Trust in him. Go to him in prayer and humility and let him work things out for your life. I guarantee you this – if you do these things, you will have true soul satisfaction!