

Psalm 7 “The Lord Defends Me”

Intro:

Let's begin to set the stage for this Psalm, which is referred to as a Davidic Psalm because it's written by none other than David. Last week, we had taken a closer look at Psalm 6 and we noted that not all Psalms give us the occasion for their being written. Some certainly do, but not all. Here in Psalm 7, we **are** given the specific occasion as to why David composed this particular song. The text tells us that David had suffered some unjust and malicious accusation and slander at the hands (“mouth”) of his enemy(s). So David goes before the Lord seeking favor and then pleads his innocence of the things he's accused of before God. David then goes on to ask the Lord to judge in favor of him against his prosecutors, and while expressing confidence that the Lord would do that, that God would also return the evil meant for David upon the heads of those who made these vile accusations. Finally, David then promises to give God the glory for His deliverance.

I think that this Psalm is of particular comfort to those of us who have ever been lied about, have been the subject of hurtful gossip, have been the target of slander, or those of who have faced retribution for things which we haven't done. God Himself vindicates us and we can rest in the words of Isaiah in Chapter 54:17, “...*no weapon that is fashioned against you shall succeed, and you shall refute every tongue that rises against you in judgment...*”.

(Read Psalm 7, starting with the superscript above verse 1)

-I'm reading from the ESV-

Verse 1:

Immediately we are presented with 2 issues:

1. We don't know exactly what a "Shiggaion" is (was)
And
2. We don't know exactly WHO Cush, the Benjaminite, was.

Firstly, a "Shiggaion" is a word that even Hebrew scholars scratch their heads at. It could be a type of varied and frenzied singing, it could be a liturgical term relating to music or song that is sung with heavy emotion, or it could mean "wandering". Either way, this word only appears one other time in Scripture and is found in the 3rd Chapter of Habakkuk. In the end though, the exact meaning is lost on us today.

Now the second issue: the "Cush the Benjaminite" mentioned here leaves us searching for the meaning of who David specifically refers to. Some say that the reference to Cush was to Saul himself, the archenemy of David. We don't know for sure.

But in Verse 1, we see David going before the Lord to plead against the one who had accused him of these treacherous charges. We would be remiss, no matter the occasion, if we didn't FIRST go to the Lord in our own defense. Are we as confident in

our own reliance upon God as David was? Whatever emergency may come, whatever circumstance may arise, we must exercise our reliance upon our Heavenly Father by bowing our knees before Him FIRST. In our trouble, we will do good to remember that we have been loved too long and bought at too great a price to be now forgotten by God. So let us always find ourselves at the foot of the cross before our Lord in humble submission and prayer in our times of great need. And actually, the great irony is that we are EVER in great need and so therefore, we are reminded to ALWAYS be at the foot of the cross, communing with our great Lord. Pray without ceasing, always mindful of the Lord and His hand upon us.

What assurance we have in, those of us in Christ, when we go to our Father in Heaven. When we have resolved to trust in Him and Him alone for our redemption and rescue. David says, "O LORD my God, in you do I take refuge; save me from all my pursuers and deliver me...". In YOU do I take refuge. Scripture is replete with descriptions of the Lord as a mighty fortress. Though our lives may reel, though the sea of life's difficulties and circumstances cause us to be tossed to and fro, though uncertainty in our infirmities and fear in our hearts may come like a sudden raging storm, catching us out in the open, let us run to our Refuge, let us stand upon our Rock. As Christians, we are sealed by the blood Covenant of Christ, our lives have been paid for with a price, we are in full communion with the Alpha and the Omega, the Most High God. We have no excuse NOT to run to Him. You will NEVER trust Christ in vain. If your faith and hope are in God, then you have a security that none can destroy. We might shake and tremble, but the Rock upon which we stand will NEVER move.

David goes on to lay the burdens of his heart before the Lord in describing his “pursuers” and asking to be saved from them. His enemies were on all sides and any one of them would have swallowed him up in their hatred of him. We would do well to approach the Lord of mercy and pray the same: “Rescue me from the traps and snares of sin. Deliver me from the false accusations of my own “Cush the Benjaminite”. You see, prayer is that open door that no one can shut. Enemies may surround you on all sides, but the way upward is always open. So keep praying.

Verse 2:

In verse 2, David makes a plea in great fear as he says, “...*lest like a lion they tear my soul apart, rending it in pieces, with none to deliver.*”. Either this Cush the Benjaminite (or the one he appealed to) was a mighty enemy - at least one with the ferocity and likeness to that of a lion. We who are in Christ have our own “Cush the Benjaminite”, don’t we? One who goes about like a lion, seeking whom he may devour.

David then writes, “...*rending it in pieces, with none to deliver.*”. Keep in mind, David was a Shepherd at one time. This was a picture of what happens when a lion gets ahold of a defenseless lamb and makes it his dinner. I don’t think this is an over-exaggeration concerning the accusations which came against David. After all, physical wounds can be healed from. But the venomous slander of the tongue cuts much deeper and those wounds are not so quickly healed. We’re told later, in Proverbs 18 (verse 21) that “*life and death are in the power of the tongue*”. Being the subject of gossip or slander or lies is something we all face.

Verses 3-5:

Now the second part of Psalm 7 is where we see David protest his innocence before God. David invites the wrath of God upon his own head should he be guilty of the charge that Cush the Benjaminite makes against him. With a clear conscience, David is effectively telling God to search his soul for any wrongdoing in this matter and indeed has no need to fear the curse of God upon him because HAS a clear conscience. It's been joked that having "a clear conscience is the sure sign of a bad memory." [Twain]. I think we also have an application point in integrity here: men and women in Christ should mean what they say and say what they mean. This is one of the highest qualities in the world, but it should be, at the very least, something one should expect from a Christian. This is what we all should be — a person who believes what he or she says and shows this by seeking to put it into practice. And David knew that before God Himself, that he had practiced integrity in this situation and that he was indeed innocent of this accusation and therefore could walk as in the sight of God with a clear conscience. David feared no guilt because in the very sight of God, he knew he could plead his case innocently.

Verse 6:

And now having avowed himself before the Lord of his innocence, in the next 4 verses we'll see David cry out for the coming judgement of God upon those who have come against him. Beginning here in verse 6 for example, David now prays, "*Arise, O LORD, in your anger; lift yourself up against the fury of my enemies; awake for me; you have appointed a judgment.*" In the preceding verses, David appears to be content with

deliverance. But here his plea takes on a boldness, a cry for the punitive Divine retribution upon his enemies. It's probably not uncommon, at least owing to the great patience and long-suffering nature of God, that we (like David) assume God to be sleeping when we don't see instantaneous justice. Or when we see gross injustices on a global scale and it may seem that God is asleep. Take heart - God neither sleeps nor slumbers. And actually, we should bear with the evils we see because it is evidence of God's patience with sinners. And isn't that great news for us? If God wasn't so patient with sinners, you and I would never have had the chance to be brought to Christ. Remember that Christ died for us while we were yet sinners. He gave Himself for us while we were still His enemies. And we are to adopt that same heart.

Verse 7 & 8:

The rendering of Verse 7 here where David writes, "*Let the assembly of the peoples be gathered about you; over it return on high...*" is something of a picture of God, who has now come over His people who have congregated before Him having been awakened by the cries of David.

Continuing on with his prayer, David writes in verse 8, "*The LORD judges the peoples; judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness and according to the integrity that is in me.*". David now imagines the Lord seated upon His throne in His Majestic splendor, holding proper Court where now David stands before Him and pleads his case afresh. David continues to insist upon his innocence, upon his integrity in this matter and cries

out solemnly with all due humility and sincerity, “*judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness and according to the integrity that is in me...*”.

Verses 9 & 10:

In verse 9, David cries out, “*Oh, let the evil of the wicked come to an end, and may you establish the righteous - you who test the minds and hearts, O righteous God!*”. Isn’t that what all of us in Christ truly desire? Is that not the deepest longing of the church, the body of Christ? It might be worth noting that David’s prayer is not for the destruction of the wicked, but of their **wickedness**. And since this prayer is further girded by David’s declaration of God as righteous, then we who view all of the seemingly unending triumph of evil in the world around us are now capable of hope in the final judgement of God against wickedness and the rescue of all redeemed by the blood of Christ. We who are in Christ have claim on God because by His covenant with us in Christ, He has claim on us! Chin up fellow Christians, our deliverance from wickedness draws near.

And that last line of verse 9 is wonderful, “*you who test the minds and hearts*”. What a heavy and solemn thing that the depth of God’s Divine knowledge of those He rules is. According to Hebrews 4:13, “*...no creature is hidden from His sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.*”. Solemn indeed.

“My shield is with God, who saves the upright in heart.” “My shield is with God” is to presume that God Himself bears the defense of those who place their entire trust in Him. It was certainly true for David and it is certainly true for those of us in Christ.

The last part of that verse, speaking of the Lord *“who saves the upright in heart”* shows us, on this side of the Cross, that God saves those of us who have received the righteousness of Christ, with an eternal salvation and that God will therefore preserve us to glory in Him. We take great hope and great comfort knowing that He will save us out of our present troubles. Therefore, if you have come to a saving knowledge of Christ, you are safe and you ought to consider yourself under the divine protection of God Himself. You are after all, in that instance, His adopted child and there isn't any enemy on this earth that can keep you from Him when He has fixed His eyes upon you, His beloved child. So take heart!

Verse 11:

Verse 11, *“God is a righteous judge, and a God who feels indignation every day.”* Keep in mind, your enemies don't sit upon God's throne. Your Heavenly Father alone does. Your enemies can't remove your name from the Lamb's Book of Life. So don't wish for vengeance against your enemies, despite their venomous lies against you. God Himself will handle all things when His time is right. And besides, we should NEVER wish for God's vengeance upon those who come against us. Just remember, you too were once

God's enemy. What if YOUR enemy wished God's vengeance upon YOU? The shoe is on the other foot now, so let us, like Christ, forgive those who come against us and pray that God brings them all to the Cross of Christ's redemption.

Look, David says that God feels indignation every day. God detests sin. He doesn't wink at it. And more than His detestation of sin, His anger burns against those who continue to revel in it. Ironically, the impenitent sinner has no fear of God. There is no more fearsome a thing in all creation than to be found unrighteous in the hands of the Living, Holy, Just God. If you don't know Christ today, I urge you by way of the Holy Spirit, to turn to Him this day to be saved. You say, "How can I be saved?". You turn from your sin, and you turn towards the only One who can save you from it, and that is Christ Jesus. You put your whole trust in Him and you pray to receive His mercy. When you meet Christ, you either drop all the stuff that you've been counting on for your salvation and trust Christ alone, or you hold to all the stuff you've been holding on to for your salvation and reject Christ. You're either trusting yourself and your achievements or Christ. And when you come to trust Christ, all your achievements become rubbish. So I urge you to choose Life today if you haven't yet come to know Christ.

Verse 12 & 13:

We come to a part of David's prayer that, frankly, in my eyes at least, we find some terrifying language in which God is regarded as a fierce Enemy to those who oppose

Him. David writes in verses 11 & 12, “(11) *If a man does not repent, God will whet his sword; he has bent and readied his bow; (12) he has prepared for him his deadly weapons, making his arrows fiery shafts.*”. God will whet His sword against those who will not repent? His bow is bent and ready to fire? He has prepared fiery arrows? I can’t even imagine. Again, it’s ironic that the impenitent sinner, the very person who has no fear of God whatsoever, shouldn’t understand their imminent ruin lest they turn to the only One who can save them. This is what frustrates me most about the so-called modern American “evangelical” church today. They don’t teach on sin! Because a church that’s just LIKE the world has nothing to offer the world. Most of them seem to exist to serve the unregenerate as nothing more than motivational speakers, trying to get people to feel better about themselves. Teaching that Christ is a means to an end. Teaching that prayer is a means to move God to do your bidding.

Look, anybody that says that Jesus came and died to make us happy, healthy, and wealthy is preaching a false gospel. Jesus SAVED me! I was on the path to Hell. He snatched us from the flames of Hell and saved us from our sins. And when we see that God is whetting His sword against the unrepentant sinner and His bow is pulled back, ready to fire - how can we go on with our petty, small-minded discussions about fighting for the things of this world as though THIS was our kingdom? This is about souls!

Verses 14-16:

We now come towards the end of Psalm 7 where in verse 14, we see the 3-fold action of one who bears evil, utilizing the metaphor of conception, a full-term pregnancy, and birth. *“Behold, the wicked man conceives evil and is pregnant with mischief and gives birth to lies.”*. Somewhere along the way, this accuser of David had succumbed to his base nature, now pregnant with the DNA of sin, and now behold the metaphorical “child” of a most unholy birth. As we are told in James, sin always gives birth to death. You can just see how this plays out in the slanderer’s heart: in his sin, he begins to devise gossip and lies, therein is the “conception”. Then, he mulls it over and over, thinking on it constantly, licking his chops at what weapon he has formed, giving a malignant cancerous growth and unnatural life to the machinations in his heart. Therein we see the “pregnant with mischief” part. Finally, we see the “birth” aspect where the gossip, the lies, and the slander slither from his mouth, causing death in the hearts and minds of all who hear this metaphorical child being born.

But then in Verse 15, the accuser goes even further. David writes, *“He makes a pit, digging it out, and falls into the hole that he has made.”*. He meant to wreak absolute havoc on his subject. But in Verse 16, we see the surprise ending where David writes, *“His mischief returns upon his own head, and on his own skull his violence descends.”*. Beware the deadfall. He has spoken great evil against one of God’s own and has found it heaped upon his own head as his reward. Like the guy who intends to burn down his neighbor’s house but gets the gas all over himself and accidentally sets himself ablaze.

Verse 17:

And now finally we conclude Psalm 7 with verse 17 where David brings such a joyous and hopeful contrast to that evil which hounded him so closely and so painfully. David writes, *“I will give to the LORD the thanks due to his righteousness, and I will sing praise to the name of the LORD, the Most High.”* We now see that the end of David’s travails here are thanksgiving unto the Lord. That should always be the end of our own travails in our walk with Christ. Because no matter what, we who are truly in Christ Jesus, have the eternal assurance of a blessed completion in Him. That one day, every tear will be wiped away and all pain erased. We will know only joy. I will leave you with a quote from Charles Spurgeon: “Our infirmities become the black velvet on which the diamond of God’s love glitters all the more brightly”.