

Psalm 7

A Shiggaion of David, which he sang unto the LORD,

Concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite

“Psalm 7”:

The superscription indicates that the psalm was written while David was being ruthlessly assailed by “Cush the Benjamite”, who was evidently one of Saul’s radical kinsmen.

David is confident in both his own innocence (verses 3-5), and the certainty of divine retribution on the much-deserving Cush (verses 6-17).

Verses 1-17:

This psalm is basically a plea for divine vindication in the light of the oppressor’s allegations and their actions.

David’s confidence in the Divine Judge is the backbone of Psalm 7 (compare Abraham in Genesis 18:25).

As this truth grips him more and more, he will be moved from a tense anxiety to a more transcendent assurance.

This psalm follows David through 3 progressively calming stages of expression in response to the painfully false accusations that were being hurled against him

1. Stage One: David’s Concern as He Passionately Begg the Attention of the Divine Judge (7:1-5).
2. Stage Two: David’s Court Appearance as He Painstakingly Argues His Case before the Divine Judge (7:6-16).
3. Stage Three: David’s Composure as He Patiently Waits for the Verdict of the Divine Judge (7:17).

Psalm 7 introduces one of the more enigmatic terms found in superscriptions of the psalms, “a Shiggaion (Hebrew), of David”.

It is probably related to the idea of wondering, reeling, veering, or weaving.

Consequently, the term may also indicate the song’s irregularity in rhythm (compare Hab. 3:1).

“He sang”:

Also indicates that this was a vocal solo.

On this occasion, “concerning Cush, a Benjamite”, it cannot be readily identified from the historical books.

However, whoever this was or whatever the name represented, some enemy had obviously been falsely charging David (compare Shimei, 2 Sam. 16:5; 19:16).

Psalm 7:1 "O LORD my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me:"

All my hope and confidence are in thy favor, and faithfulness to fulfil thy promise made to me.

"Save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me":

Persecution is no new thing to the people of God.

David had his persecutors, and many of them.

The Church in Jeremiah's time, had theirs; the saints, in the times of the apostles, and in all ages since, have had theirs.

Every one that will live godly in Christ Jesus must expect persecution in one shape or another.

And there is none can save and deliver them from it but God.

And he can and will in his own time (2 Cor. 1:10).

David was aware of this, and therefore makes this request to God alone.

And not to an arm of flesh, to his friends, or to neighboring princes and powers.

Strong's Concordance says the word Shiggaion (The word denotes a lyrical poem composed under strong mental emotion; and a song of impassioned imagination which is accompanied with suitable music).

Some noted scholars call this Psalm the Song of the Slandered Saint.

Cush, the Benjamite, does accuse David before Saul.

Saul would have been quick to receive this accusation, even though it was not true.

The cry of all who know God, is O LORD God.

This not only recognizes God, but declares that He is LORD of our lives.

I have said it over and over, many know Jesus as their Savior, but few recognize Him as LORD.

Notice also the word “my”.

When we say that Jesus is our Savior and LORD, we are recognizing the blood covenant relation we have with Him.

He shed His blood and became our Savior and LORD in the process.

We spoke in an earlier lesson, how this is a personal relationship of one person and Jesus.

Without faith, it is impossible to please God.

David declares immediately that he trusts God.

David is like Christians down through the ages.

The only one we can trust is God.

We read that Jesus would build a hedge around His own that no harm would come to them.

This is what David wants here. He wants the supernatural protection of God.

Just as Moses delivered the children of Israel from Egypt (the world).

David knows God can and will deliver him.

Realize who the enemy is and pray for God to deliver you.

My LORD will send a Moses to lead you out.

Psalm 7:2 "Lest he tear my soul like a lion, rending [it] in pieces, while [there is] none to deliver."

“Tear my soul like a lion”:

Often the psalmist’s enemies are symbolized by vicious, attacking animals, with “the king of beasts” occurring frequently (Psalms 10:9; 17:12; 22:13, 16, 21).

With no shepherd near to protect or rescue, a “lion” can pounce on a defenseless lamb, tear it into pieces, break all its bones, and devour it completely.

David uses this graphic image to portray a person who feels the destructive powers of the enemy (see Psalm 57:4).

If God is not David's help, there is no hope.

Saul would have destroyed David, had it not been for God’s protection.

Verses 3-5:

Such self-pronounced curses are powerful protestations of innocence (not sinlessness), in the context of being falsely charged (compare the boldness of Job in 31:5).

Psalm 7:3 "O LORD my God, if I have done this; if there be iniquity in my hands;"

The crime which Saul and his courtiers charged him with, namely, that he lay in wait for Saul, and sought his life to take it away (1 Sam. 24:9), was made so public that everybody knew it.

It was, therefore, needless to particularly mention it.

"If there be iniquity in my hands":

Not that he was without sin, he had it in his heart.

Nor that he lived without the actual commission of sin.

But his sense is, that there was no iniquity, as not in his heart, purpose, and design, so not in his hand, nor attempted by him, of the kind he was accused of (1 Sam. 24:11).

Otherwise, we often hear him complaining of the depravity of his nature, and acknowledging his sins and transgressions (Psalm 32:5).

Psalm 7:4 "If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me; (yea, I have delivered him that without cause is mine enemy:)"

I.e. to Saul, when he was peaceable and friendly towards me.

For David was charged with evil designs against Saul before Saul broke out into open enmity against him.

"Yea":

This is here used by way of correction or opposition, as it is also (Psalm 2:6; Prov. 6:16).

So far have I been from doing this, that I have done the contrary.

"I have delivered him":

When it was in my power to destroy him (as 1 Sam. Chapters 24 and 26).

"Without cause": Without any provocation on my part.

Psalm 7:5 "Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take [it]; yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honor in the dust. Selah."

David is saying here, try me LORD and see if I have done wrong.

He also says, if I have done wrong, I deserve to be destroyed.

David knows that he has done no wrong, that these are false accusations against him.

Psalm 7:6 "Arise, O LORD, in thine anger, lift up thyself because of the rage of mine enemies: and awake for me [to] the judgment [that] thou hast commanded."

“Arise”:

The battle cry relating back to (Numbers 10:35 recurs; compare Psalms 9:19; 10:12; 17:13; 44:26; 102:13).

David feels safe in the judgement God makes, because he knows it is just.

God never sleeps, so the awake here is just symbolic.

Sometimes when a believer is being persecuted, it seems that God is asleep and letting this happen to us.

We should rejoice in the fact that God is longsuffering.

If He is longsuffering with us, we should be happy that He is longsuffering with others, in the outside chance that they should repent and come to God.

Jesus is the Judge of the whole earth.

We may not see the sinner judged on the earth for his or her wrong doing, but they will be judged by Jesus on judgement day.

Psalm 7:7 "So shall the congregation of the people compass thee about: for their sakes therefore return thou on high."

By "the congregation of the people" are meant the nation of the Jews, the twelve tribes of Israel, called an assembly of people, and a company of nations (Gen. 28:3).

And this is to be understood not of their gathering together in a hostile manner about David to take him.

Which might be interpreted compassing God himself about, David being as dear to him as the apple of his eye.

Which is the sense of several Jewish commentators.

But rather of their encompassing and surrounding the altar of God with songs of deliverance, upon David's being rid of his enemies and advanced to the throne of the kingdom (Psalm 26:6).

Unless it should have regard to the pure worship of God by David, which was greatly neglected in Saul's time.

And then the sense is, that the psalmist prays that he might be established in his kingdom, as God had appointed and commanded.

When he would fetch up the ark of God, and encourage the worship of God, and rectify all disorders in it.

That so the several tribes might come up to Jerusalem and encompass the ark, the symbol of the divine Presence, and worship in his holy mountain.

"For their sakes therefore return thou on high":

Take, the throne of justice, high and lifted up, and vindicate the cause of the oppressed.

Deliver me from all my troubles, put me into the peaceable possession of my kingdom.

If not for my sake, yet for the sake of thy church and people, and for the sake of thy worship and thy glory.

The Targum paraphrases it, "return thou to the house of thy Shekinah".

David brings those believers who have sided with him to the attention of the LORD.

He is saying in essence, LORD, I am not the only one who is waiting to hear your judgement.

We see a pleading that the entire congregation will suffer until the LORD intervenes.

Psalm 7:8 "The LORD shall judge the people: judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity [that is] in me."

"My righteousness ... mine integrity":

These are not declarations of sinlessness but of innocence in this "court case".

David shows in this, that to the best of his ability he has followed the ways of God.

David feels that he is not afraid to be judged by a righteous Judge.

David feels that he has nothing to worry about from God.

We Christians could look at this and know that we could not stand before the righteous Judge in our own right, but we have an agreement with God that the righteousness of Christ will save us from judgement.

We need not run away from the righteous Judge, any more than David did here.

When Father God looks at the Christian, He sees the blood of His righteous Son, Jesus Christ.

Psalm 7:9 "Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins."

"The righteous God trieth the hearts and reins":

The just judge has perfect insight (compare God examining the heart and mind in Jer. 17:10; also compare Acts 1:24; 15:8).

"Hearts and reins" would literally be translated "hearts and kidneys", which is a word picture to describe all of the immaterial feelings that reside within mankind.

God knows all of our emotions, desires, thoughts, and motivations (1 Sam. 16:7).

Psalm 7:10 "My defense [is] of God, which saveth the upright in heart."

The meaning here is, that God was his protector, and that in his troubles he confided in him.

The original word here, as in (Psalm 3:3 and 5:12 notes), is "shield."

"Which saveth the upright in heart":

Whom he that searches the heart (Psalm 7:9), seems to be upright; or sincere, truthful, and just.

The writer says that it is a characteristic of God that he saves or protects all such ones.

And conscious of his innocence of the charges against himself, he appeals to him on that ground, and confides in his protection because he sees that in this respect he was blameless.

Christians are looking forward to the time when they can stand before the righteous Judge and hear the Lord say, well done thy good and faithful servant.

They are also thinking, Lord how long will it be until the righteous Judge brings to an end the works of the evil ones?

God does not judge by what we say, or from the appearances from the outside.

God judges the heart of man.

Many who profess to be Christians will be turned away, and Jesus will say, I never knew you.

Jesus looks into the heart of man and judges by what He sees.

Jesus is the advocate of the true believer.

1 John 2:1 "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:"

Our defense is belief in Jesus Christ.

Verses 11-13: This shows yet another blending of the Divine Warrior and Divine Judge themes.

Psalm 7:11 "God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry [with the wicked] every day."

Not all that are thought to be righteous, or think themselves to be so, are such.

Nor is any man naturally righteous, either of himself, nor by virtue of his obedience to keeping the law of works.

But such only are righteous who are made so by the obedience of Christ.

These God governs and protects, and avenges their injuries and defends their persons.

Some render the words, "God is a righteous Judge"; he is so now in the administrations of his government of the universe, and he will be so hereafter in the general judgment of the world.

"And God is angry with the wicked every day":

Wicked men are daily sinning, and God is always the same in his nature, and has the same aversion to sin continually.

And though he is not always making men examples of his wrath, yet his wrath is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness of men.

And there are frequent instances of it.

And when he is silent he is still angry, and in his own time will stir up all his wrath, and rebuke in his hot displeasure.

Psalm 7:12 "If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready."

Not God, but the enemy, or the wicked man, spoken of (Psalm 7:5).

If he turns not from his wicked ways of life, to the LORD to live for him, according to his will.

Unless he is converted and repents of his sin, and there is a change wrought in him, in his heart and life.

The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, "If ye turn not", or "are not converted", an apostrophe to the wicked.

"He will whet his sword":

God is a man of war, and he is sometimes represented as equipped with military weapons (see Isa. 59:17).

And among the rest with the sword of judgment, which he may be said to whet, when he prepares sharp and sore judgments for his enemies (Isa. 27:1).

"He hath bent his bow, and made it ready":

Drawn his bow of vengeance, and put it on the full stretch, and made it ready with the arrows of his wrath.

Levelled against the wicked, with whom he is angry.

Which is expressive of their speedy and inevitable ruin, in case of impenitence (see Lam. 2:4).

Or "trode his bow", as is the usual phrase elsewhere (see Psalm 11:2); which was done by the feet, and was necessary when the bow was a strong one (as Jarchi on Psalm 11:2 observes).

2 Peter 3:9 "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

God wants all to be saved.

As we have said so many times, the righteous are those who have accepted Jesus as their Savior and have been washed in His blood.

We have taken on His righteousness.

Jesus is the Judge of all the world.

Sin is anything that displeases God.

God not only hates sin, but is angry with those who continue in sin.

There is a day of judgement coming. Then it will be too late to repent.

Psalm 7:13 "He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors."

The weapons of his indignation (Isa. 13:5); which, will issue both in the first and second death, corporeal and eternal.

The instruments of the former are diseases of various kinds, and judgments, as famine, pestilence, etc.

And of the latter not only the law is an instrument of it, that being the letter which kills, and is the ministration of condemnation and death.

But even the Gospel itself to wicked men is the savor of death unto death. And devils will be the executioners of it.

"He ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors":

The word for persecutors signifies "hot" or "burning", and designs such persons who burn in malice and wrath.

In rage and fury, against the saints, and hotly pursue after them, as Laban did after Jacob (Genesis 31:36).

For these more especially God has determined in his eternal purposes and decrees, and for these he has provided in his quiver, arrows of wrath and vengeance, fiery ones.

And against these will he bring them forth, direct them, and shoot arrows at them (Psalm 64:7).

Matthew 25:32-34 "And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth [his] sheep from the goats:" "And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left." "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:"

Matthew 25:41 "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:"

There is a day of reckoning coming and Jesus Christ the righteous is the Judge.

You can see from the verses here, the terrible fate of those who neglect so great a salvation.

Verses 14-16: Often the principle of exact retribution surfaces in the psalms (compare the maxim of Prov. 26:27 and the judgment of Hab. 2:15-18).

Psalm 7:14 "Behold, he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood."

The poet's thought recurs to the calumniator, whose sin has deserved all this Divine wrath, and he sees the truth that God's judgments are not arbitrary.

But follow naturally on sin as its consequence.

"Travaileth":

Gives the general figure, which is elaborated in the two clauses which describe the stages of conception and pregnancy (for the image, compare Job 15:35).

"Conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood":

This metaphor notes his deep design, and continued course, and vigorous endeavors for the doing of mischief, and his restlessness and pain till he has accomplished it.

Psalm 7:15 "He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch [which] he made."

That is, he digged a pit, and made it very large and capacious, to answer his purposes.

"And is fallen into the ditch which he made":

So it is said of the Heathen (Psalm 9:15); and is exemplified in the case of Haman, who was hanged upon the gallows he had built for Mordecai.

Kimchi explains this of Saul's falling upon his own sword, and dying by it, which he drew against David.

This phrase is proverbial (Prov. 26:27).

The sense of this and the above figurative expressions is literally, and they can be found in the next verse.

Psalm 7:16 "His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate."

The mischief which he had designed for others.

"Shall return upon his own head":

Shall come upon himself.

The blow which he aimed at others shall recoil on himself.

This is but stating in another form the sentiment which can be seen in the two previous verses.

"And his violent dealing":

Which he shows to others.

The word rendered violent dealing means violence, injustice, oppression, wrong.

"Shall all come down upon his own pate":

The word here rendered "pate" means properly vertex, top, or crown; as of the head.

The idea is that it would come upon himself. He would be treated as he had designed to treat others. The sentiment here expressed is found also in (Psalms 9:15; 35:8; 37:15).

We see from these Scriptures that, the sinner mentioned here has no one to blame but himself.

God gave him a chance, and he refused it.

This person mentioned above is not just a sinner, but is in fact, full of sin.

The fate he planned for others has come unto him.

Jesus really does not have to judge him, his own choices he makes here on this earth judge him guilty as charged.

We must remember that God is not only a loving God and a forgiving God, but He is also, the Judge of the world.

This man has been weighed in the balance and been found guilty as charged.

Psalm 7:17 "I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high."

"The Lord most high":

This is a title seldom found outside the Psalms.

It is first encountered in the story of Melchizedek and Abram (Gen. 14:18-22).

David uses this title to announce God's power and rule over all nations (47:2; 78:35).

We find that David, as well as all those who have received the righteousness of Christ, have much to rejoice about.

Philippians 2:10-11 "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of [things] in heaven, and [things] in earth, and [things] under the earth;" "And [that] every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ [is] Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Not only will all praise the name of Jesus which is above all names, but all will bow to that name as well.

Psalm 7 Questions

1. What is the song concerning that David sang unto the LORD in chapter 7?
2. Of what tribe was Cush?
3. What personal name does David call God in verse 1?
4. What request did David make to God in verse 1?
5. The Strong's Concordance says Shiggaion means what?
6. What name do many noted scholars call this Psalm?
7. Who accused David before Saul?
8. When we say Jesus is our Savior and Lord, what are we recognizing?
9. Who delivered the Israelites from Egypt?
10. What does Egypt symbolize?
11. What would Saul have done to David, if God had not protected him?
12. David says, if he has done wrong, what does he deserve?
13. Why does David feel safe in the judgement of God?
14. God is not neglecting punishing the evil ones, but is _____.
15. When will the sinner be judged and by whom?
16. In verse 8, David says to judge him, how?
17. When God the Father looks at the Christian, what does He see?
18. What 2 things does the righteous God try from verse 9?
19. What are the Christians looking forward to hearing Jesus say on Judgement day to them?

20. Who is our Advocate with the Father?
21. How often is God angry with the wicked?
22. What is sin?
23. What does the 25th chapter of Matthew tell us about the separation of the saved and lost?
24. Who has the sinner to blame for his fate?
25. Who will bow to the name of Jesus?