

Day 331 - MONDAY: January 1st

Psalms 7, 8 & 9

Psalms 7:1-17 NKJV

A Meditation Of David, Which He Sang to the LORD Concerning the Words of Cush, a Benjamite. O LORD my God, in You I put my trust; Save me from all those who persecute me; And deliver me, Lest they tear me like a lion, Rending me in pieces, while there is none to deliver. O LORD my God, if I have done this: If there is iniquity in my hands, If I have repaid evil to him who was at peace with me, Or have plundered my enemy without cause, Let the enemy pursue me and overtake me; Yes, let him trample my life to the earth, And lay my honor in the dust. Selah Arise, O LORD, in Your anger; Lift Yourself up because of the rage of my enemies; Rise up for me to the judgment You have commanded! So the congregation of the peoples shall surround You; For their sakes, therefore, return on high. The LORD shall judge the peoples; Judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness, And according to my integrity within me. Oh, let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, But establish the just; For the righteous God tests the hearts and minds. My defense is of God, Who saves the upright in heart. God is a just judge, And God is angry with the wicked every day. If he does not turn back, He will sharpen His sword; He bends His bow and makes it ready. He also prepares for Himself instruments of death; He makes His arrows into fiery shafts. Behold, the wicked brings forth iniquity; Yes, he conceives trouble and brings forth falsehood. He made a pit and dug it out, And has fallen into the ditch which he made. His trouble shall return upon his own head, And his violent dealing shall come down on his own crown. I will praise the LORD according to His righteousness, And will sing praise to the name of the LORD Most High.

Psalms 8:1-9 NKJV

To the Chief Musician. On the Instrument of Gath. A Psalm of David. O LORD, our Lord, How excellent is Your name in all the earth, Who have set Your glory above the heavens! Out of the mouth of babes and

nursing infants You have ordained strength, Because of Your enemies, That You may silence the enemy and the avenger. When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained, What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, All sheep and oxen—Even the beasts of the field, The birds of the air, And the fish of the sea That pass through the paths of the seas. O LORD, our Lord, How excellent is Your name in all the earth!

Psalms 9:1-20 NKJV

To the Chief Musician. To The Tune of "Death of the Son." a Psalm of David. I will praise You, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will tell of all Your marvelous works. I will be glad and rejoice in You; I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High. When my enemies turn back, They shall fall and perish at Your presence. For You have maintained my right and my cause; You sat on the throne judging in righteousness. You have rebuked the nations, You have destroyed the wicked; You have blotted out their name forever and ever. O enemy, destructions are finished forever! And you have destroyed cities; Even their memory has perished. But the LORD shall endure forever; He has prepared His throne for judgment. He shall judge the world in righteousness, And He shall administer judgment for the peoples in uprightness. The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, A refuge in times of trouble. And those who know Your name will put their trust in You; For You, LORD, have not forsaken those who seek You. Sing praises to the LORD, who dwells in Zion! Declare His deeds among the people. When He avenges blood, He remembers them; He does not forget the cry of the humble. Have mercy on me, O LORD! Consider my trouble from those who hate me, You who lift me up from the gates of death, That I may tell of all Your praise In the gates of the daughter of Zion. I will rejoice in Your salvation. The nations have sunk down in the pit which they made; In the net which they hid, their own foot is caught. The LORD is known by

the judgment He executes; The wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Meditation. Selah The wicked shall be turned into hell, And all the nations that forget God. For the needy shall not always be forgotten; The expectation of the poor shall not perish forever. Arise, O LORD, Do not let man prevail; Let the nations be judged in Your sight. Put them in fear, O LORD, That the nations may know themselves to be but men. Selah

Daily Deep Dive:

Psalm 7:

The UCG reading program states: "The superscription of Psalm 7 in the New King James Version calls it a "meditation" of David. The Hebrew for meditation is *higgaion*, as in Psalm 9:16, but the word at the beginning of Psalm 7, as the KJV superscription shows, is actually *shiggaion*, which occurs only here in the Bible. Its plural form, however, is used in the psalm of Habakkuk 3. Repeating from the Beyond Today Bible Commentary on that passage, "The word *shiggayon* comes from *shagah*, 'to wander,' a wandering song" (*Adam Clarke's Commentary*, note on Psalm 7; see note on Habakkuk 3:1). "It may derive from a verbal root meaning 'to reel' or 'to err,' and if so points to some irregular rhythmic mode" (*New Bible Commentary*, note on Habakkuk 3:1). David names Cush the Benjamite the superscription of Psalm 7. This man, mentioned nowhere else in Scripture, has apparently spoken on behalf of a group of persecutors who accused David of wrongdoing and were bent on his destruction. Whether they actually believed him guilty of wrong or were just making this up to justify action against him is not clear. Some today speculate that the distinct reference to Cush being a Benjamite may indicate his being a supporter or agent of King Saul. In any case, Cush and his comrades must have been dangerous opponents

because David cries out that, if God does not deliver him, his persecutors would "tear me like a lion, and rip me in pieces" (verses 1-2).

In his appeal to God, David takes an oath of innocence in which he invites God to give him into the hands of the enemies who seek to take his life if he is guilty of any of the charges they bring against him (verses 3-5). David is so confident of his innocence that he asks God to judge his righteousness, his integrity (verse 8), his heart and mind (verse 9). "In the Hebrew, *hearts and minds* is literally 'hearts and kidneys'—an ancient way of describing the innermost person" (*Nelson Study Bible*, note on verses 9-10). We should note that in praying to God the words "Judge me according to my righteousness," David does not mean for God to judge every aspect of his life by this standard. (As with any of us, God would in such an inventory find sins worthy of condemnation. Indeed, other prayers of David show him praying for forgiveness where he has fallen short.) Rather, David in his prayer here is asking for God's judgment in the matter at hand—to judge him according to his deeds and even inward motivations with respect to the accusations that have been made against him. In these, he knows that the righteous and just God will see his complete innocence and fully absolve him.

Against the wicked, however, David describes God as a just Judge and an angry Warrior who will "sharpen His sword," prepare "deadly weapons" and make ready "flaming arrows" to satisfy justice (verses 11-13). Yet David recognizes that the wicked create their own problems for themselves, reaping what they sow (compare Galatians 6:7-8). They *conceive* trouble, which then returns on their own heads (verses 14, 16). "The wicked become 'mothers' to trouble. They will give birth to their

own destruction" (note on verses 14-16). They fall into the pits they themselves have dug to trap their prey (verse 15). David therefore knows that those who have plotted his destruction have set up the circumstances for their own demise. Perhaps it was in the midst of his prayer that God inspired David with this reminder—moving him to sing God's praises (see verse 17)." [END]

Verse 8 – Righteousness is not a word we really use outside of a religious context. I often substitute one of the Brown-Driver-Briggs definitions of "what is right". Here David wanted God to simply judge whether he had done right by people.

Verse 12 – This verse contains a principle found throughout God's Word. If a sinner will repent and change their behavior ("turn back to God"), God will be merciful, but if someone continues to practice sin and doesn't change, God will correct them to hopefully bring about change (compare Ezekiel 18:23, Ezekiel 33:19, 2 Peter 3:9).

Verse 15 – This brings to mind the example of Haman in Ester 7:10 (he was hanged on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai).

Psalm 8:

The UCG reading program states: "Psalm 8. "At this juncture in the Psalter," says the *Zondervan NIV Study Bible* in its note on Psalm 8, "this psalm surprises. After five psalms [3-7] (and 64 Hebrew poetic lines—following the introduction to the Psalter...Psalms 1-2) in which the psalmists have called on Yahweh to deal with human perversity, this psalm's praise of Yahweh for his astounding endowment of the human race with

royal 'glory and honor' (v. 5) serves as a striking and unexpected counterpoint. Its placement here highlights the glory (God's gift) and disgrace (humanity's own doing) that characterize human beings and the corresponding range of difference in God's dealings with them. And after five more psalms [9-13] (and 64 poetic lines), this psalm in turn receives a counterpoint...[in Psalm 14]."

Where the NKJV superscription of Psalm 8 has "On the instrument of Gath," the KJV has "upon Gittith" and the NIV has "According to *gittith*." "The Hebrew word perhaps refers to either a winepress ('song of the winepress') or the Philistine city of Gath ('Gittite lyre or music'; see 2 Samuel 15:18)" (note on Psalm 8). David opens and closes the psalm praising the excellence of God's name (verses 1, 9)—representing God's power, His character and His purpose. The name here is the Hebrew *YHWH*—the Tetragrammaton (i.e., four letters)—often transliterated into English as *Yahweh*, as above. The name means "He Is Who He Is" (the Eternal One). David declares God's name excellent "in all the earth." Wherever one looks on earth—and up from earth to the heavens above—the glory of God is revealed. God introduced Himself to Moses by the first person form of the Tetragrammaton, saying, "I AM WHO I AM" (Exodus 3:14). "The One who spoke to Moses declared Himself to be the Eternal One—uncaused and independent. Only the Creator of all things can call Himself the I AM in the absolute sense; all other creatures are in debt to Him for their existence" (*Nelson Study Bible*, note on Exodus 3:14). David observes that "from the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies" (verse 2, NIV). While the word for "praise" could also be rendered "strength," as in the KJV and NKJV, "praise" seems the better translation since

Jesus quoted the verse this way when the common people (figuratively children) praised Him while the "mature" religious leaders who opposed Him wanted to squelch them but could not (Matthew 21:16). Perhaps David simply meant that despite the scorn of the wicked, there were always new generations of children to gaze in wonder at God's creation and express awe. Yet God who inspired the psalm also had the more specific prophetic fulfillment in mind.

David's reflections on the grandeur of the heavens (verse 3) gives rise to the question, "What is man?" (verse 4). "The Heb[rew] word here [for man] is *'enos*, which emphasizes man's mortality and weakness. David is stunned that the all-powerful Creator should exalt in such puny beings by caring for us and by giving us dominion over His earth" (*Bible Reader's Companion*, note on Psalm 8). Who are we in comparison to the Creator? Why would He even think of us? Why would He care for us or have anything to do with us? (verse 4). The word for "visit" here in the NKJV has the sense of "see to" or "deal with," which can have either a positive or negative sense. Here the meaning is positive. In verses 5-8, David muses further about man's place in the scheme of things—that he is the pinnacle of God's earthly creation.

In verse 5, the word translated "angels" is *elohim*, the word used throughout the Old Testament for God. The Moffatt Translation says, "Thou hast made him little less than divine." Yet it does not seem reasonable to say that man is only a little lower than God. After all, David himself was thinking about how man was basically nothing next to God's majesty as revealed in the sky above. And God Himself tells human beings, "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My

thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:9). Perhaps it was because of this that the Targums (ancient Jewish paraphrases of Scripture) and the Septuagint (the Jewish rendering of the Old Testament in Greek) translated the word *elohim* here as meaning "angels." Yet human beings seem rather far below the amazing power and abilities of angels too.

It should be noted that the words "little less" or "little lower" could also be rendered "for a little *while* lower." The literal meaning would then be that man has been created for a little while lower than God, implying that man after that little while will ultimately share God's plane of existence. This is in fact man's destiny—to be part of *Elohim*, the family of God (see also Psalm 82:6 and our free booklet, [Who Is God?](#)). Yet such a rendering would no doubt have made early Jewish translators even more uncomfortable. So we can see why they would prefer the word "angels" over "God" in Psalm 8:5 in any case. Of course, it is certainly true that for the time being man has been made lower than the angels as well as God, so the writer of the New Testament book of Hebrews (probably the apostle Paul) had no problem using the translation the Jews were familiar with, giving the Greek word for angels rather than God (see Hebrews 2:7).

Psalm 8:6 speaks of God giving man dominion over His creation. This is quoted in Hebrews 2:8. Yet where David goes on in Psalm 8:7-8 to focus on man's dominion over the animals of the earth, recalling Genesis 1-2, the book of Hebrews ends its quotation with Psalm 8:6, emphasizing the "all things" committed to man's rule in this verse—meaning, in its fullest sense, the entire universe and spirit realm. Man, Hebrews 2 explains, has not yet received this ultimate dominion with God—except for Christ, who is our forerunner." [END]

Psalm 9:

The UCG reading program states: "Psalm 9 and Psalm 10 may have initially been composed as one single psalm. "A number of indicators point in that direction. Psalm 10 is the only psalm from Psalm 3 to 32 that has no superscription, and the Hebrew text of the two psalms together appears to reflect an incomplete (or broken) acrostic structure" (*Zondervan NIV Study Bible*, note on Psalm 9). "Acrostic refers to the poetic practice of opening each line, verse, or stanza with a different letter of the alphabet. The acrostics are sometimes complete (Psalms 25; 34; 37; 111; 119; 145). Psalms 9 and 10 form an incomplete acrostic" (*Expositor's Bible Commentary*, introduction to Psalms). The Greek Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Bible treats them as a single psalm.

"Psalm 9 is predominantly praise (by the king) for God's deliverance from hostile nations.... It concludes with a short prayer from God's continuing righteous judgments (see v. 4) on the haughty nations. Psalm 10 is predominantly prayer against the rapacity of unscrupulous people within the realm—as arrogant and wicked in their dealings with the 'weak' (v. 2) as the nations were in their attacks on Israel (vv. 2-11 can serve equally as a description of both). The conjunction of these two within a single psalm is not unthinkable since the attacks of 'the wicked' (9:5; 10:4), whether from within or from without, on the godly community are equally threatening to true Israel.... Probably Ps 9-10 came to be separated for the purpose of separate liturgical [i.e., religious worship service] use" (*Zondervan*, note on Psalm 9).

"To {the tune of} [a now unknown song] 'Death of the Son'" could be the meaning of the Hebrew phrase *almuth labben* in the

superscription of Psalm 9, as in the NKJV and NIV. However there are other possibilities.

David says that those who seek God are those who know His name and put their trust in Him (verse 10). Those who reject God come to experience Him in a different way: "The Lord is known by the judgment He executes" (verse 16). David includes words relating to *judgment* six times in the psalm. God judges individuals (verse 3), nations (verses 5, 19) and the entire world (verse 8). God judges so that individuals and nations may learn that they are *but men* (verse 20) who live under the authority of the Creator. God has the power to destroy *wicked men* (verses 5-6) and to advance the cause of *righteous men* (verses 8-10, 12, 19). God's righteous judgment is a major factor in leading the humble to seek Him.

David, we should further note, also points out that the wicked bring about their own destruction (verses 15-16), just as was pointed out in Psalm 7:15-16. After making this point, the end of Psalm 9:16 notes: "Meditation. Selah." While the word translated "meditation" may be a musical notation, it could well be meant literally. Perhaps in conjunction with the musical term *selah*, which seems to indicate a pause or interlude, the idea here is to stop and think about what has just been sung. For all who would pursue a life of sin, it should be remembered that your sins will catch up with you. As Numbers 32:23 tells us, "Take note...be sure your sin will find you out."

Psalm 9:17 in the NKJV says that the wicked are headed for "hell." The Hebrew word here is *sheol*, which the NIV correctly translates as "the grave." (See our free booklet [Heaven & Hell: What Does the Bible Really Teach?](#)) The righteous, on the other hand, are brought "up from the gates of death" (verse 13) to

praise God "in the gates of the daughter of Zion" (verse 14). Besides speaking of present deliverance, this seems to anticipate the future actual resurrection of the saints and their dwelling with Christ in Jerusalem. Verses 19-20 call on God to act in accordance with His righteous judgment in the sight of all nations, foreshadowing the end of the age when God will do just that." [END]