

Psalm 17

- A Psalm of David, actually a prayer of David. This is only one of 5 Psalms that are identified as prayers. (17, 86, 90, 102, 142)
- This is thought to have been written when David was being pursued by Saul because of the style. It's also thought to be one of his earlier Psalms.
- In David's earlier Psalms he asked the Lord to bless him for his righteousness, because of his goodness. That would change later in life.
- In the earlier parts of David's life he had and demonstrated this tremendous faith in God. We all remember the stories of his exploits because of his faith in God.
- Killing the lion and the bear as a child watching over his father's flock (**1 Samuel 17:34-35**)
- His willingness to go out against Goliath because of his trust in the Lord, even his response when threatened by Goliath:

1 Samuel 17:43-46 ⁴³And the Philistine said unto David, am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. ⁴⁴And the Philistine said to David, come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field. ⁴⁵Then said David to the Philistine, thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. ⁴⁶This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel."

- So, in David's earlier adventures, he had gone out in faith in a different way, acted very righteously and in his earlier Psalms he was more apt to bring this up, asking God for help based on his own righteousness.
- David was very respectful of God's anointed, even though he had every reason to turn on Saul, and the opportunity to do so, David didn't lift a hand against Saul because he recognized that God's anointing had been upon him, even though Saul was totally in the flesh, David wouldn't touch him.
- Later in life after having failed morally and otherwise, after having slipped and fallen a few times, he no longer asked God to remember him because of his righteousness, he then asked God to remember him or to deal with him according to God's mercy, according to God's righteousness, according to His unfailing grace.

- In fact David would pray “according to Thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions...”
- David’s tone changes to where he leans more fully on the character of God, on God’s righteousness, and the mercy of God, and His loving kindness.
- Here David is pleading his cause, his righteousness, which indicates that it is one of the earlier Psalms of David.
- So David starts out:

V: 1 “*Hear the right ...*” or the righteous, which of course is me, hear me Lord.
“Hear a just cause, hear my righteous plea.” “... my prayer...”

“... *that goeth not out of feigned / deceitful lips.*” No double talk, no deception.

V: 2 David is looking for equality, or fairness, for God to do what is up-right. Looking for his “sentence” for God to judge him.

- David has been innocent as far as his dealings with Saul, but Saul was accusing him of trying to destroy him and or usurp the kingdom. There were those within Saul’s court that were fomenting these thoughts in Saul’s mind, using it to gain favor with the king.
- But David was innocent of seeking any harm towards Saul so he says: V: 3

V: 3 Lord you’ve searched my heart, you know my thoughts, you’ve already tried me and found nothing. In the dark times you’ve tested me.

David would later write:

Psalm 139:23-24 “²³Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: ²⁴And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”

“... *You have visited me in the night...*” perhaps those times when David didn’t know if he’d see the morning, or those times of just communing with the Lord, looking up at the stars and thinking about the greatness of God, knowing that God knows all his thoughts.

- David purposed that his mouth would not transgress - he wouldn’t speak evil of Saul.

Ephesians 4:29 “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.”

V: 4 “... *by the Word of Thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer.*”

Psalm 119:11 “Thy Word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against Thee.”

- David is attributing his stand for righteousness to the fact that God’s Word was hidden in his heart.

Psalm 119:9 “*Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy Word.*”

- God’s Word is our power, our protection against sin:
- You’ve all heard the old adage: “*Either this book will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from this book.*”
- When Jesus was tempted by the enemy, how did He respond? “*It is written...*” Jesus quoted the Word of God as His defense. His Word is our defense as well.

Hebrews 4:12 “*For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*”

- The best defense is a good offense, so we need to know how to wield the “sword of the Spirit.”

Ephesians 6:17 “... *the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God:*”

- If we’re committed to partaking of the Word of God, to taking it in - then the Holy Spirit will bring it out when it’s time, and appropriate; when we come up against the power and subtleties of the enemy.

“... *by the Word of Your lips, I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer.*”

V: 5 This is David’s petition - hold me up in your ways, help me not to slip. Keep me.

Jeremiah 10:23 “O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps.”

Proverbs 3:5-6 “⁵Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. ⁶In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.”

V: 6 David’s prayer is that God would grant him an audience, that God would listen. Later he praises God for doing just that.

Psalm 116:2 “Because He hath inclined His ear unto me, therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live.”

V: 7 David asks God to show His kindness unto him once again, declaring that God saves those by His mighty right hand, those who put their trust in Him.

- There is a truth that we learn as we grow in the Lord and walk with Him; that is that if we seek to defend ourselves from accusations, and false charges - if I try to defend myself - God will let me, but it never seems to work.
- But, if I trust in Him, if I'm committed to Him, and allow Him to defend me - then He will defend me, He is my defense.

Psalm 62:6 “He only is my Rock and my Salvation: He is my defence; I shall not be moved.”

- That is what David is saying that God saves them that put their trust in Him.

V: 8 David is referring to a scripture that all Jewish boys memorized from their youth:

Deuteronomy 32:10-12 “¹⁰He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; He led him about, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye. ¹¹As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: ¹²So the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him:”

- The apple of the eye is that place of focus and attention. Part of the anatomy of the eye, there is the sclera, the white part of your eye, then there is the “iris” which is the colored part of your eye, and the “pupil” which is the opening into your eye, covered by the lens. At the back of your eye is the retina, which is part of the optic nerve, kind of a receiver and in the middle of the retina is a little depression called the “fovea” where the visual acuity is the highest. It's where the vision is the most focused as opposed to peripheral vision.
- The apple of the eye is that place of focus and attention, front and center - “keep your eye on me Lord.”
- Keep your eye on me, protect me, hide me, keep me under the shadow of your wings.

Psalm 91:1-4 “¹He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. ²I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. ³Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. ⁴He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall be thy shield and buckler.”

V: 9-13 Hide me from the wicked who would oppress me. From my enemies who surround me.

- There were those times when David out maneuvered or out smarted Saul, those times when Saul had no clue where David was. I love the one account how David and some of his men snuck down into Saul's camp, he being surrounded by his body guards including Abner, and David went down and took Saul's spear which was lying at Saul's side while he slept.
- But there were also those times when David was surrounded or cornered as he was fleeing from Saul, and Saul just about had him.
- 1 Samuel 23 records how Saul just about had David a couple of times:

1 Samuel 23:26-28 *"²⁶And Saul went on this side of the mountain, and David and his men on that side of the mountain: and David made haste to get away for fear of Saul; for Saul and his men compassed David and his men round about to take them. ²⁷But there came a messenger unto Saul, saying, haste thee, and come; for the Philistines have invaded the land. ²⁸Wherefore Saul returned from pursuing after David..."*

- The Lord delivered David from his enemies, from those who would oppress him. From the lion about to pounce.

V: 13 Do you think Saul was disappointed when he was forced to turn back from pursuing David? Oh yeah! Was David pretty excited and glad? Oh yeah!!

V: 14 So true. So many men of this world, their only portion is what they get in this life, because in the next they will be destitute and afflicted.

Lazarus and the rich man:

Luke 16:25 *"But Abraham said, son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented."*

- *"You have only one life and it will soon be past, and only what's done for Christ will last" Chuck Smith:*
- There are too many that have invested everything in this life, instead of the life to come. They don't just pass on their material goods to their children, they also pass on their attitude towards God and what is really important, their view of eternity and God's Word.

V: 15 David is speaking of the hope that he personally has for eternal life, and one day standing in the presence of God.

1 Corinthians 13:12 “For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.”

- He shall be satisfied, he’s looking forward to awakening in His likeness!

1 John 3:2 “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.”

- Our lives are part of a process that God initiates in the life of a believer: why is this happening in my life? Look at Christ and know you’re being changed, conformed, altered...

2 Corinthians 3:18 “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

Part of the ministry of the church:

Ephesians 4:12-13 “¹²For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: ¹³till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”

- I’m with David, I look forward to the completion of that process and getting to be in His presence!