

Psalm 5 & 7.**Title: The Conflict against slanderous & evil people.****Psalm 5**

Give ear to my words, O LORD, Consider my meditation.

² Give heed to the voice of my cry, My King and my God, For to You I will pray.

³ My voice You shall hear in the morning, O LORD; In the morning I will direct *it* to You, And I will look up.

⁴ For You *are* not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness, Nor shall evil dwell with You.

⁵ The boastful shall not stand in Your sight; You hate all workers of iniquity.

⁶ You shall destroy those who speak falsehood; The LORD abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.

⁷ But as for me, I will come into Your house in the multitude of Your mercy; In fear of You I will worship toward Your holy temple.

⁸ Lead me, O LORD, in Your righteousness because of my enemies; Make Your way straight before my face.

⁹ For *there is* no faithfulness in their mouth; Their inward part *is* destruction; Their throat *is* an open tomb; They flatter with their tongue.

¹⁰ Pronounce them guilty, O God! Let them fall by their own counsels; Cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions, For they have rebelled against You.

¹¹ But let all those rejoice who put their trust in You; Let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them; Let those also who love Your name Be joyful in You.

¹² For You, O LORD, will bless the righteous; With favor You will surround him as *with* a shield.

Psalm 7

O LORD my God, in You I put my trust; Save me from all those who persecute me; And deliver me,

² Lest they tear me like a lion, Rending *me* in pieces, while *there is* none to deliver.

³ O LORD my God, if I have done this: If there is iniquity in my hands,

⁴ If I have repaid evil to him who was at peace with me, Or have plundered my enemy without cause,

⁵ 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*

⁶ 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!

⁷ So the congregation of the peoples shall surround You; For their sakes, therefore, return on high.

⁸ The LORD shall judge the peoples; Judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness, And according to my integrity within me.

⁹ Oh, let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, But establish the just; For the righteous God tests the hearts and minds.

¹⁰ My defense *is* of God, Who saves the upright in heart.

¹¹ God *is* a just judge, And God is angry *with the wicked* every day.

¹² If he does not turn back, He will sharpen His sword; He bends His bow and makes it ready.

¹³ He also prepares for Himself instruments of death; He makes His arrows into fiery shafts.

¹⁴ Behold, *the wicked* brings forth iniquity; Yes, he conceives trouble and brings forth falsehood.

¹⁵ He made a pit and dug it out, And has fallen into the ditch *which* he made.

¹⁶ His trouble shall return upon his own head, And his violent dealing shall come down on his own crown.

¹⁷ I will praise the LORD according to His righteousness, And will sing praise to the name of the LORD Most High.

Introduction

In Psalm 5 and Psalm 7 there is a conflict going on in the heart and mind of the writer.

He is concerned with the sinfulness and evil behaviour of people.

We will mainly concentrate on Psalm 5 today.

The reason for this is that Psalm 5 is classified as one of the "**imprecatory psalms**".

What does this word "**imprecatory**" mean?

The word means "**curse**" or "**judgement**".

There are a number of Psalms where the writer describes a God of wrath who can hardly wait to destroy sinners.

(Psalms 12, 35, 37, 58, 59, 79, 83, 109, 139, 140 are imprecatory psalms)

In these Psalms the writer conveys the idea that he is seeking revenge against his enemies.

Before we come to any conclusions about the writers of these Psalms, their intentions, and the character of God, **we need to consider several facts.**

1. **The first fact** is contained **in v. 10 of Psalm 5.** The enemies here are described as **rebels against the Lord.** So these enemies are actually **fighting against God.**
A spiritual war is going on in this situation, although it has manifested itself in physical terms.
2. **The second fact** we need to understand is that the Jewish people were in a **covenant relationship with God.** God had promised to protect them as long as they obeyed Him.
(Leviticus 26 & Deuteronomy 27-29)
When God made a covenant with Abraham, He promised to bless those who blessed Israel and to **curse those who cursed Israel.**

(Genesis 12: v.1-3)

Now the LORD had said to Abram:

“Get out of your country,

From your family

And from your father’s house,

To a land that I will show you.

² I will make you a great nation;

I will bless you

And make your name great;

And you shall be a blessing.

³ I will bless those who bless you,

And I will curse him who curses you;

And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

When the Jews asked God to deal justly with their wicked enemies, they were only asking Him **to fulfil His covenant promises.**

The Bible teaches us that **God is Love** – 1 John 4: v. 8, 16, but **God is also Light** – 1 John 1: v.5.

Therefore, as God is also **“Holy”** He must punish sin.

Ever since Adam and Eve disobeyed God, as recorded in Genesis chapter 3, there has been a battle going on in the world between **truth and lies** and **justice and injustice** and **right and wrong.**

As Christians we can’t be neutral in this battle.

God has told us what is right and what is wrong from the **10 commandments.**

Therefore, we should never forget to **view sin from God’s perspective.**

All sin is ultimately against God and His word.

When David committed adultery, he later repented of that sin, and his repentant prayer is recorded in **Psalm 51.** In this prayer he said **“Against You, You only have I sinned** and done this evil in your sight.”

(Psalm 51: v.4a)

David knew that his sin was ultimately against God.

3. **The third thing** that we need to know about is what other writers in the Bible have said. There are a number of writers in the Bible that teach a very similar view to the writers of these imprecatory psalms.

Jeremiah 15: v. 15.

¹⁵ O LORD, You know;

Remember me and visit me,

And take vengeance for me on my persecutors.

In Your enduring patience, do not take me away.
Know that for Your sake I have suffered rebuke.

Matthew 23: v. 23-33 in N.K.J.

²³ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier *matters* of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. ²⁴ Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!

²⁵ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. ²⁶ Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also.

²⁷ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead *men’s* bones and all uncleanness. ²⁸ Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

²⁹ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous,³⁰ and say, ‘If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.’

³¹ “Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. ³² Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers’ *guilt*. ³³ Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell?

There is also the request from the Martyrs in heaven in **Rev. 6: v. 9-11 in N.K.J.**

⁹ When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. ¹⁰ And they cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” ¹¹ Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both *the number of* their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they *were*, was completed.

C.S. Lewis is quoted as saying

“We don’t hate sin enough to get upset at the wickedness and godlessness around us.”

The problem today is that we are surrounded by **so much evil and godless behaviour**, that we are **no longer shocked or disturbed about it.**

This ultimately leads to **diluting our feelings about sin.**

When God the Holy Spirit, **convicts us about our sin**, we need to take it very seriously.

Therefore, when people are committing acts of sin, they are doing it against God and He is entitled to punish them and judge them for their actions.

I hope this helps us to understand “**imprecatory**” psalms a little better?

We now come to understand Psalm five.

I will divide the Psalm into three sections.

1. **Preparing to meet God – v. 1-3.**
2. **Seeking to please God – v. 4-6.**
3. **Submitting to God – v. 7-12.**

1. Preparing to meet God – v. 1-3.

If we had had an invitation to the Royal wedding at Windsor England last week, then I expect that we would have spent some time preparing for this meeting.

We would have carefully selected the clothes we would wear, and made sure that we had made everything ready for this important meeting.

However, David, God’s chosen King had a much more important meeting every morning. **That meeting was with God Himself, creator of the whole world.**

David designated his early morning as the most important time to spend with God.

Twice David says that He spends time with God in prayer **in the morning.**

(v. 3)

In actual fact you might be surprised to learn that in our O.I.C. discipleship course we recommend that you prepare for your morning devotions **before you go to bed at night. Why?**

Well, have you noticed that the first thing that is in your mind when you wake in the morning, are the things you were thinking or concerning yourself with before you went to bed?

This is a natural outworking of our brain.

So if you want to have good devotions in the morning when you wake up, then you will need to **start preparing the night before.**

You need to get your Bible open and marked at your Bible reading for the next day. Also make sure your devotional book, if you use one, is by your bed side, or within easy reach.

You will also need a note book with important things to pray about.

Making these preparations the night before will definitely **enhance your devotional period the next morning.**

David was **not just faithful in his morning devotions,** but he was also **orderly and systematic.**

In v. 3 the word “**direct**” that is used is a Hebrew word that was used to describe the placing of the pieces of the animal sacrifices in a specific order on the altar. (**Lev. 1: v. 8**)

It is also the word used to describe the arranging of the wood on an altar. (**Gen. 22: v. 9**)

David wasn't careless in his praying. He did it in an orderly fashion.

This word also has a military meaning. It describes a soldier presenting himself to his commander in order to receive orders.

So David regarded his prayer time in the morning as a way of submitting to God and making himself available to serve Him on that day.

David was a **physical soldier,** ready for a **spiritual battle.**

Whatever our devotion times with God consist of, they should always be times of submitting our lives afresh to God and asking **Him to guide and direct our day.**

If we can do our work **without God,** then **God can do His work without us.**

God wants **to work in and through us,** according to His will, plans, and purposes.

Being ready every morning to receive our instructions from God will at least go some way to **being able to carry out His instructions.**

2. Seeking to please God - v. 4-6.

The Psalmist in v. 4-6 tells us what God hates.

He hates wickedness, evil actions, people who boast about their achievements, and people who speak lies against other people.

David starts off his prayer by affirming God's holiness and His hatred towards sin.

If rebel sinners can't be welcomed into God's presence, then who can be welcomed into God's presence? Q. **How can we please God?**

a) Psalm 147: v. 11 tells us. (in N.K.J.)

¹¹ The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him,
In those who hope in His mercy.

The fear of God is a healthy respect for who God is and what He has done for us. We please God when we understand who He is, what He has done, and respect His Holiness of character.

Fully understanding God's attributes and respecting those characteristics are the key to pleasing God.

If you are married and you want to please your wife or husband, you must know what they like and what they don't like.

When you love someone, you want to please them. If you love Jesus, you will want to please Him.

b) Psalm 69: v. 30-31 (from N.K.J.)

³⁰ I will praise the name of God with a song,

And will magnify Him with thanksgiving.

³¹ *This* also shall please the LORD better than an ox *or* bull,
Which has horns and hooves.

To please God, we must offer Him sincere praise.

God is looking for a sincere heart when we praise Him.

We can't praise God when we are sad or unhappy. Our hearts need to be right with God. Our hearts must be sincere towards God if we are to praise correctly.

c) **Hebrews Chapter 11: v. 6 – in the N.K.J.**

⁶ But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

So if we want to please God then we need **to live a life of “faith”.**

Faith is trusting in God's word, even if it may go against the thinking of others and the society in which we live.

d) **To please God, we need to be identified with His Son Jesus Christ.**

Matthew 3: v. 17.

¹⁷ And suddenly a voice *came* from heaven, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

God declared from Heaven that He was well pleased with Jesus Christ.

If we are going to please God, then we must not be afraid to identify with His Son, Jesus Christ.

Somebody in my last Church said to me once, I never tell people that I am I Christian, I always say to them “I Love Jesus”.

He said that by saying these words, it expressed how he felt in his heart and it always sparked a reaction with people.

He always got into a conversation with them. Sometimes they asked him, “Why do you love Jesus? or How do you love Jesus?”

He always managed to share the gospel clearly when he fully identified himself with Jesus.

e) **Finally, Hebrews Chapter 13: v. 16 – in N.K.J.**

¹⁶ But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

Doing practical things, out of a sacrifice of love towards God and sharing your life and possessions is something that pleases God.

Acts 4: v. 32.

³² Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common.

After the day of Pentecost when the Church began, the community of believers pleased God because they shared all that they had with others.

God expects those people who love Him, to love the things that He loves and to hate the things that He hates. It is as simple as that.

God loves the world of lost sinners, and He sent his only son Jesus Christ to die for them. –**John 3: v. 16.**

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

God's invitation to Salvation is sent to all who will believe and come to Jesus.

Matthew 11: v. 28-30.

²⁸ Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For My yoke *iseasy* and My burden is light."

God's grace and love are amazing.

But the glorious truth of God's love doesn't change the fact that **God hates sin and punishes sinners.**

God has no pleasure with these people and they will not dwell with Him. **(Psalm 5: v. 4)**

God's hatred of evil is an **expression of His Holiness.**

Warren Wiersbe says in his commentary

"If we want to fellowship with God at His Holy altar, then we need to feel that same anguish that God feels about sin, and the same love that God has for sinners."

In other words, Warren Wiersbe is saying that if you want to live the Christian life according to God's word, then you need to be born again and yielded to God's Holy Spirit.

3. Submitting to God v. 7-12. (Psalm 5)

In v. 7-12 David, through prayer submitted three requests to God.

Before David started to pray for these things, he first of all came to God with the right heart attitude.

In v. 7 we are informed that David came to God with a heart attitude that **appreciated God's mercy.**

Although David was God's chosen King to lead the Israelites, he was aware that it was only because of the mercy of God.

David had nothing of himself that would be attractive to God.

The only thing that God was impressed about was the **condition of David's heart.**

David was chosen because he had a **heart that wanted to honour God.**

We honour God when we are always aware of the mercy of God towards us.

Ephesians 2: v. 4-10. In N.K.J.

⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶ and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, ⁷ that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

It is through **God's mercy**, and by **God's grace**, that we are able to be **God's instruments.**

God has been merciful to us **through Jesus.**

Hebrews 10: v. 19-22. (N.L.T.)

¹⁹ And so, dear brothers and sisters, we can boldly enter heaven's Most Holy Place because of the blood of Jesus. ²⁰ By his death, Jesus opened a new and life-giving way through the curtain into the Most Holy Place. ²¹ And since we have a great High Priest who rules over God's house, ²² let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him. For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ's blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water.

Firstly, David prayed for guidance – v. 7-8.

In v. 8 David prayed for God's guidance because of his enemies.

David needed to know exactly what to do each day **because he had lots of enemies.**

His life depended upon God's help each day.

Notice that David says "**Lead me Lord in your "righteousness"**".

David was looking for clear guidance from God.

The enemies of David were slandering him unjustly and David wanted not only to **honour God by clearly being guided by God, but David wanted God to be glorified in his situation.**

When we cry to God in prayer for His help to guide us in any given situation, and we fully submit to God, believing that He has the best for us, then we must **trust God for the outcome.**

It is not always easy to do that.

Often we have our **own plans** and just want **God to bless what we have already decided to do.**

Isaiah 55: v. 8-13. (N.K.J.)

⁸ "For My thoughts *are* not your thoughts,
Nor *are* your ways My ways," says the LORD.

⁹ "For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth,
So are My ways higher than your ways,
And My thoughts than your thoughts.

¹⁰ "For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven,
And do not return there,
But water the earth,

And make it bring forth and bud,
That it may give seed to the sower
And bread to the eater,

¹¹ So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth;
It shall not return to Me void,
But it shall accomplish what I please,
And it shall prosper *in the thing* for which I sent it.

¹² "For you shall go out with joy,
And be led out with peace;
The mountains and the hills
Shall break forth into singing before you,
And all the trees of the field shall clap *their* hands.

¹³ Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress tree,
And instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree;
And it shall be to the LORD for a name,
For an everlasting sign *that* shall not be cut off."

Secondly David prayed for justice – v. 9-10.

It is clear in v. 9 that the problem was that **David's enemies were slandering David.**

It says "**there is no faithfulness in their mouth.**"

In the book of James, chapter three we are warned about the tongue.

We are told that it has **both the power to bless and the power to destroy.**

On the **negative side** we are told that the tongue is an **unruly evil, full of deadly poison.**

In this case David's enemies were using the **tongue to try and destroy him.**

Negative news about David was spreading like "**wild fire**".

David is wanting **justice against these people who are trying to destroy him.**

In v. 10 David is saying that their sin is actually in **rebellion against God.**

David said "**let them fall by their own counsels**".

The N.L.T. says "let them be caught in their own traps".

The amazing thing is that **God wonderfully answered David's prayer.**

2 Samuel Chapter 18: v. 6. (N.L.T.)

⁶ So the battle began in the forest of Ephraim,

There must have been traps set in the forest for David's men, but Absalom's men fell into them and died. Even Absalom was caught in his own hair by a low branch of a tree.

(2 Samuel Chapter 18: v. 9 – in N.L.T.)

⁹ During the battle, Absalom happened to come upon some of David's men. He tried to escape on his mule, but as he rode beneath the thick branches of a great tree, his hair got caught in the tree. His mule kept going and left him dangling in the air.

God is a God of justice, and He will perform acts of justice in His time and in His way.

Hebrews 10: v. 30 says "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, says the Lord".

It is not wrong to pray for justice to be done in our personal situations but we must leave the **workings of that justice to God Himself.**

Thirdly David prays for God's blessing – v. 11-12.

Twice in these two verses, David encourages God's people to **shout for joy, and to be joyful.** Joy is different from happiness. Joy depends on the condition of our heart towards God, but happiness depends upon our outward circumstances.

David knew that God would bless His people, He had made a covenant with them for blessing.

Therefore, it was a joyful thing to know that God was working on behalf of His people.

The people's joy was in their hearts, because they trusted in God.

In the book of Daniel chapter 11 v. 32 it says (in the N.K.J.)

³² Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out *great exploits*.

Knowing God personally, and believing in His word, can bring us great "Joy" in spite of our circumstances.

Nehemiah Chapter 8: v. 10 says **"do not sorrow, for the joy of the Lord is your strength"**

As Christian believers the outcome of our fellowship with the Lord should be "joy" in God's character, "joy" in God's promises, and "joy" in God's merciful answers to prayer.

David began his devotions seeking help for himself but ended his prayer seeking blessing for all of God's people.

Perhaps that is the way that our devotions ought to end?!!!