

SBC – Oct. 1, 2023
Psalm 5:1-12 (NKJV)
“A Prayer for Guidance”

Intro:

Psalm 5 is another Psalm of David in which he is desperately seeking for God’s help in prayer and yet we are not certain of the occasion. I think God orchestrated this so that it would have application to a whole host of situations common to life’s people struggles in general.

This Psalm has been called a “Lament Psalm” as well as an “Imprecatory Psalm”. A lament Psalm denotes the wailing of the heart before God as it cries out to God for help. Imprecatory Psalms invoke God to bring down calamity, judgment, or curses upon the enemy. Psalm 5 is a combination of lament and imprecatory.

The title is...

To the Chief Musician. With Flutes. A Psalm of David.

It is directed to the senior worship leader – the chief musician. And David specifically calls for this Psalm to be accompanied with flutes.

Slide # 1

Psalm 5

Theme: A Prayer for Guidance

Outline:

- A. vv. 1-3 David Approaches God in the Morning
- B. vv. 4-8 A Contrast Between the Wicked and the Godly
- C. vv. 9-10 Description and Destiny of the Wicked
- D. vv. 11-12 Description and Destiny of the Righteous

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

Right out of the blocks – first thing in the day David is coming to God in prayer – and specifically asking God to give ear to his prayer and to consider his meditation.

To give ear is to attend carefully to what someone is saying.

David's dependence upon God was his first priority. The very first thing he is doing is looking to God. He recognizes that he needs God's help. That is a great place to begin your day when you are facing all kinds of life and people pressures.

And it is interesting that David asks God to take into consideration his meditation – his thoughts as he is working this through in his mind. Some translate “meditation” as “groaning” (NASB) or “sighing” (HCSB).

In the NT we have this assurance...

Slide # 2

Romans 8:26 (NKJV)

26 Likewise the **Spirit also helps in our weaknesses**. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes **intercession for us with groanings** which cannot be uttered.

David is asking God not only to respond to his words but also to the ethos of his struggle.

Slide # 3

Exodus 3:7 (NKJV)

7 And the LORD said: “I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt, and have **heard their cry** because of their taskmasters, for **I know their sorrows**.

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

The Hebrew method of emphasizing something is through parallelism. Here we have the same idea repeated three times.

Slide # 4

- v. 1 Give ear...
- v. 1 Consider...
- v. 2 Give heed...

This reflects earnest, urgent, and sincere prayer that is totally God-focused in orientation.

Sometimes we can “pray” without really being focused. We need to consciously focus on God. In teaching us HOW to pray the very first emphasis of Jesus was to FOCUS on God as “***Our Father in heaven, hallowed by Your name.***” (Mt. 6:9). This is where effective prayer begins. It is so simple and yet it is easy to overlook and not really consciously focus on God. It is easy to just kind of go through the motions.

We have all heard or perhaps inadvertently ourselves began a prayer by saying, “***Lord we pray for*** – instead of ***pray for***. God-honoring prayer focuses very intently on God Himself. It’s not just a matter of saying words – but a matter of FOCUS!

David in his crying out to God recognizes His sovereign authority as his King. David was king (or would be) but realizes that God is the real ultimate KING who is KING over him. He calls Him, “My King and my God”. God was his King!

That is a good reminder. It is good to remind ourselves and to acknowledge to God Who He is to us as our sovereign ruler Who has absolute authority over us. It is to Him David said, “For to You I will pray.” David was praying to the One Who is in charge over him and sovereign over all!

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.

Note the DOUBLE emphasis on “morning” here in verse 3. For this reason, Psalm 5 has been called “A morning Psalm”.

It is good to begin our day by focusing on God front and center – first and foremost. David said in the morning the LORD would hear his voice, in the morning he would DIRECT his prayer to God.

It is a privilege to PRAY. If you received a call from a famous dignitary who wanted to meet with you – you would count it an honor. It would be a priority and take precedent over lesser things. How about meeting with GOD ALMIGHTY?

We often emphasize to new Christians that as a believer they have now entered into a PERSONAL relationship with God. Key to all healthy relationships is communication. And the way it works is that we talk to God in prayer and God speaks to us through His Word. In this way we communicate with God and He communicates with us. Want to hear God speak – open the Bible and read His Word – He will speak to you – it is amazing!

To honor God as the first priority of the day sets the tone for the entire day. It is said at times Hudson Taylor (famous missionary to China) would arise at 2 AM in the morning so that he could have quiet hours to commune with God before the busy schedule of the day set in upon him.

We read of Jesus...

Slide # 5

Mark 1:35 (NKJV)

35 Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.

Now, I wouldn't want to be legalistic or ritualistic about this. However, as a pattern of life I think concentrated morning prayers are a great way to start the day, but in terms of rising up a long while before daylight – that might depend on a whole host of variables. But there are times when we have special burdens or are dealing with something pressing that we will want to have special concentrated times of prayer that may begin extra early.

But the point here is David emphasized seeking God in the morning – as in making this the first priority of his day.

The word “**direct**” means to “**to order**” or “**to arrange**”. David comes to God with very specific praying in mind. He is not just praying haphazardly or randomly, but rather very intentional and in an orderly way. David has very specific business he is dealing with before the LORD at this point.

Now there are all kinds of prayers and we are to pray without ceasing. But in view here David is dealing with a specific situation as we will see as we work through the chapter. For David this was a prayer session with very specific issues in view that he is bringing before the Lord.

David came to the Lord in the morning and thereby received the strength and joy he needed to make it through the day. Having prayed he then says, “I will look up”. Having prayed he looked up expectantly for God to work.

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

Here David begins marking out a stark contrast between the wicked and the godly. He noted that God is a HOLY God who has no pleasure in wickedness. Wicked is the idea of being morally wrong and opposed to God's law.

Furthermore evil will not dwell with God. God being HOLY can have no fellowship with evil. Dwell is more literally "sojourn" (meaning a temporary stay). God doesn't take in evil-doers for the night. They are not welcome!

This is a verse that I often use in sharing the gospel emphasizing that with sin on our record, we can't be in a saving relationship with God. God won't allow us into heaven with even ONE sin on our record. It was ONE sin that got Adam and Eve kicked out the garden of Eden and ONE sin will exclude us from heaven.

Evil will not dwell with Him. Somehow our identification with evil has to be dealt with. And of course, we know it was dealt with in FULL by Jesus at the cross. Jesus is the answer! And when we by FAITH accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior we are instantly and forever cleansed from all sin.

Slide # 6

Hebrews 10:14 (NKJV)

14 For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.

No longer are God's people identified as "sinners" but now we are "saints" – all because of Jesus and what He has done for us. We call this the gospel of GRACE. And now because of Jesus believers have ACCESS to God through Jesus our great High Priest. We have been cleansed by His blood and now through His life and intercession we have relationship and access to God and will live with Him forever.

Believers have an inside track to the throne of grace. Not so the ungodly. God cannot be tolerantly pleased with any form of wickedness. – **William MacDonald**

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

Here David gets even more specific. The boastful shall not stand before God. They don't have an audience with Him. They don't have a prayer.

Saving faith is a humbling reality. The only way we can approach God is in humbling ourselves. Saving faith is a humbling reality.

Slide # 7

Habakkuk 2:4 (NKJV)

4 “Behold **the proud**, His soul is not upright in him; But **the just shall live by his faith.**

And then David makes a very strong statement saying that God HATES all workers of iniquity (cf. Ps. 139:21-22). Iniquity in general is WRONG DOING!

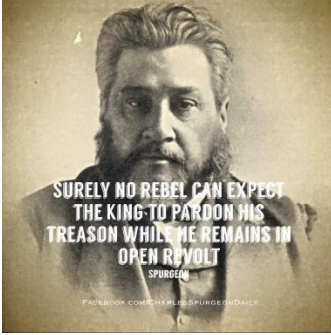
There is an interesting tension in the Scriptures. On the one hand God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son (Jn. 3:16). On the one hand God demonstrated His love in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us (Rom. 5:8).

That is so true, and yet on the other hand God takes it very personal – the sinners rebellion against Him. He hates the person in that role. He hates all that they stand for. His love has made provision for them to be reconciled. But in rebellion they stand in the category of being HATED. This is to say in their sin they are identified with what God hates and the WRATH of God abides on them (Jn. 3:36). Ps. 7:11 says God is angry with the wicked every day (cf. Ps. 11:5).

We often say and I too have said that “***God loves the sinner but hates the sin***”. Properly understood this is true but it really needs to be qualified. You see you really can’t separate a sinner from his sin because the sinner is totally identified with sin. If God hates sin and the sinner is identified with sin then He also hates the sinner.

Sin cannot be separated from the sinner except by the forgiveness available in Christ alone. God hates lying, yes, but lying always involves a *person*—a liar—who chooses to lie. God cannot judge the lie without also judging the liar. – Gotquestions.org

Romans 5:10 says prior to salvation we were the enemies of God. We had a hostile relationship with Him. How terrible to be in the position of enemy of God. That in effect is what David is saying here. The good news is God invites His enemies to repent and be reconciled – to enter into a whole new relationship with Him through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Slide # 8

David enlarges on what he means by God hating the workers of iniquity in verse 6.

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

This assumes these people will not repent. If they persist in their state of rebellion God will destroy those who speak falsehood. These are chronic LIARS. And all liars shall have their part in the lake of fire (Rev. 21:8). And David at this point was really having a problem with these liars!

He then again emphasizes the HATRED of the LORD for these people, saying, “The LORD abhors (DETESTS or HATES passionately) the bloodthirsty and deceitful man. These people are “killers”. They are murderously deceitful. They are trying to take out David in any way that they can. They don’t care about his life at all!

David affirms twice – once in verse 5 and then again in verse 6 that God HATES them. God will have nothing to do with them. They are not welcome with Him (v. 4) and He HATES them (v. 5-6). That is some really strong language!

But in contrast....

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.

In contrast to the wicked David will come before the Lord in worship. But note he says he will come “*in the multitude of Your mercy*”. This is no “holier than thou”. David recognizes that he too needs mercy.

Mercy is actually the Hebrew word “hesed” meaning God’s loyal covenant love – or steadfast love.

It is because of God’s faithfulness that David can come. We are not perfectly faithful, but God is – and David recognizes this reality.

David here contrasts himself as a true worshiper of God with those who are wicked evildoers.

Slide # 9

The Hebrew word for **bow down [worship]** (often trans. “worshiped,” e.g., Ex. 34:8) signifies prostrating oneself, a posture that represents the proper inner attitude toward God in worship. The wicked are arrogant; a worshiper is humble before God.

– *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*

Footnote: Some have tried to argue that since David here referred to the temple that he could not have written this Psalm since the temple wasn’t even built until after he was gone by his son Solomon.

Slide # 10

It has been argued that because verse 7 mentions the temple (which Solomon built), David could not have written the psalm. But the Hebrew word used here for temple (*hēkāl*) is also used of the tabernacle (cf. 1 Sam. 1:9; 3:3). Furthermore the word “house” in Psalm 5:7 can refer to the tabernacle (cf. “house of the Lord” in 23:6; Josh. 6:24; 1 Sam. 1:24) as well as the temple.

– *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*

Not only does David recognize the need for God’s mercy (v. 7) but he also desires God to guide Him in regard to his enemies which is the key idea in verses 8-12.

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

When dealing with enemies it is easy to get off track. The most natural thing in the world is to fight flesh with flesh. We need prayer. David looked to the LORD to lead Him in the right way because of his enemies. He said, “Make Your way straight before my face.”

In effect, David was praying for God to make His way clear! A great prayer that I often pray – is to pray for CLARITY. We want to do right but we need God’s help – we need Him to make the way straight and clear.

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.

Whoever David was dealing with was bad news. In verse 6 he has already said they are those who speak falsehood and they are deceitful. Here he builds on that saying “there is no faithfulness in their mouth”. They are total liars! You can’t believe a word they say.

The phrase their throat is an open tomb is a way so saying that every thing that comes out of their mouth is rotten – it is decaying and putrid. Paul borrowed from this verse in his 14 indictment of sinful humanity in Romans 3.

Slide # 11

Romans 3:13 (NKJV)

13 “Their throat is an open tomb; With their tongues they have practiced deceit”; “The poison of asps is under their lips”;

Flattery on the surface sounds really good, but it is deceitful because the people don’t really mean what they say. They are “PRETEND FRIENDS” who are really enemies. They butter you up and warm you up – only so the knife goes in easier. There are few things more hurtful and harmful to a person than deceitful flattery.

“Always beware of people who flatter you, and especially when they tell you that they do not flatter you, and that they know you cannot endure flattery, for you are then being most fulsomely flattered, so be on your guard against the tongue of the flatterer.” (Spurgeon)

David acutely felt the sting of the wicked words of the lying flatterer. And he cried out to God about it saying...

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.

This is called an imprecatory prayer where David calls on God to harshly judge his enemies. Some have come down hard on David for these kinds of prayers. Some have a hard time with this because Jesus said to turn the other cheek and pray for your enemies (Mt. 5:39, 44).

They point to Christ's example on the cross and how He prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." (Lk 23:34).

However, we should note that David in keeping with his prayer for the LORD to lead him does not seek to deal with this in the flesh, but rather is appealing to God to redress the wrongs being perpetrated against him.

It is one thing to take matters into your own hands, it is quite another to ask God to deal with it commensurate with the evil being perpetrated -which is what David was doing. It is proper to commit a situation to the LORD when one is being mistreated and sinfully abused. The Bible in both the OT and NT says that vengeance belongs to God and that He will repay. In that sense it is right and proper to give it over to God (cf. Deut. 32:35; Prov. 20:22; Rom. 12:19).

And note that David very clearly says their ultimate issue is that "they have rebelled against You." Yes, they were sinfully abusing David, but their real issue was with God.

In taking on David (God's anointed) they were really taking on God. God made a covenant with David (the Davidic Covenant) which involved the Messiah. To try and take out David was in effect an attempt to wipe out God's salvation plan. This was extremely wicked and the prayer for God to judge it was appropriate.

Of course, it is always appropriate to pray for repentance. God desire this. As He says He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked (cf. Ezek. 33:11). What David is saying seems to assume these people are HARDENED in their rebellion to the point they won't repent and therefore he calls for their judgment.

David specifically calls them to "fall by their own counsels". He prays that their evil schemes would boomerang on them. In the OT wicked Haman experienced this kind of justice as he was hung on the very same gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai (Esther 7:9-10).

David prayed this very type of prayer in regard to the counsel of Ahithophel when he was on the run from Absalom. Previously Ahithophel had been a trusted counselor, but then he defected and followed Absalom. He is a type of Judas.

Slide # 12

2 Samuel 15:31 (NKJV)

31 Then someone told David, saying, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." And David said, "**O LORD, I pray, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness!**"

Here in Psalm 5:10 David in effect prays "Give them what they deserve" but the NT emphasis is to pray for God's GRACE to intervene knowing that in the end if they don't repent they will get what they deserve – which is HELL.

Slide # 13

These prayers describe the judgment that must eventually fall on those...who harden themselves to persecute the godly because to harm the godly is to attack God. – ***ESV Study Bible***

But in contrast, he prayed...

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.

There is a lot of request for JOY in this verse. David prays this for those who trust in the Lord and love Him. Their JOY would be because of God's defending them.

And then he concludes the Psalm with this affirmation...

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

David is confident the LORD will bless the righteous – that He will favor them with His protection as He surrounds them with a SHIELD. The picture is that of God shielding the godly who trust in Him.

This is the greatest blessing of all – the **favor** of God. Knowing that God looks on us with favor and pleasure is the greatest knowledge in the world. This is our standing in *grace*. – **David Guzik**

So often we see David starting out a Psalm with a tone of desperation and then as he pours out his heart in prayer to God he ends up with a spirit of confidence and joy. Psalm 5 is indicative of that pattern.

We see this same pattern emphasized in the NT.

Slide # 14

Philippians 4:6–7 (NKJV)

6 Be anxious for nothing, but in **everything by prayer** and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

7 and **the peace of God**, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

The godly handle life with PRAYER. It is how we cope and as we do so we experience the supernatural peace of God which surpasses all understanding. It is real, but it is supernatural.

And so we say with David, let all those who put their trust in the LORD shout for joy because God is our defender. He ever surrounds us with His shield of protection.

Thank the LORD for His protecting favor!