

SBC – Nov 10, 2024

Psalm 52 (NKJV)

“Judgment on the Deceitful”

Psalm 52 is a Psalm of David. The setting is found in 1 Sam. 21-22 where David was on the run from king Saul. He came to the priests who were living at a place called Nob. David lied, saying he was on an urgent mission from king Saul and asked for food and the sword of Goliath, which was stored there. The priests had no idea that he was running from Saul and took David at his word and helped him out.

It so happened that the chief herdsman for Saul (1 Sam. 21:7), named Doeg, was there with the priests when this happened. Later he informed Saul (lied) about how this went down and incriminated the priests as being in with David. So Saul had Doeg kill off all the priests and he also proceeded to massacre everyone in the village of Nob. It was really vicious and ugly.

Some believe that Doeg is a type of Antichrist in character and that there are echoes of Antichrist typology in Psalms 52, 53, 54, and 55.

Slide # 1

Psalm 52

“Judgment on the Deceitful”

vv. 1-4 – Character of the Evildoer

vv. 5-7 – Doom of the Evildoer

vv. 8-9 – Contrast of the Godly

Psalm 52 (NKJV)

To the Chief Musician. A Contemplation of David When Doeg the Edomite Went and Told Saul, and Said to Him, “David Has Gone to the House of Ahimelech.”

Here in the superscription, David gives us the occasion for this Psalm. Once again, it is addressed to the Chief Musician, indicating it is to be incorporated into the worship life of Israel.

Where it says “A Contemplation of David” some translations have it as “A Davidic Maskil”. The word Maskil is thought to designate it as either a contemplative or a teaching poem.

Again, the occasion is when Doeg the Edomite went and told Saul that David had visited the House of Ahimelech who was high priest over the city of priests called Nob.

Slide # 2



Doeg was an Edomite which means that he was a descendant of Esau, who were the long-standing traditional enemies of God's people – the descendants of Jacob. In general, they represent the enemies of God's people, and that is certainly true in this Psalm.

Wherever you find Edomites in the Bible, you consistently have trouble for God's people, and in the end, God is going to judge them severely for it.

Slide # 3

Obadiah 18 (NKJV)

18 The house of Jacob shall be a fire, And the house of Joseph a flame; But the house of Esau shall be stubble; They shall kindle them and devour them, And **no survivor shall remain of the house of Esau,** For the LORD has spoken.

1 Why do you boast in evil, O mighty man? The goodness of God endures continually.

Doeg the Edomite is the evil man in this context. He boasted about his evil doings, and in context, this included the massacre of 85 priests and the entire village where they lived.

Slide # 4

1 Samuel 22:18–19 (NKJV)

18 And the king said to Doeg, "You turn and kill the priests!" So Doeg the Edomite turned and struck the priests, and **killed on that day eighty-five men who wore a linen ephod.**

19 Also **Nob**, the city of the priests, he struck with the edge of the sword, **both men and women, children and nursing infants, oxen and donkeys and sheep**—with the edge of the sword.

Various commentators believe the phrase “***O mighty man***” is actually a mockery spoken derisively.

“*O mighty man!* he speaks ironically. O valiant captain! O glorious action! to kill a few weak and unarmed persons in the king’s presence, and under the protection of his guards! Surely thy name will be famous to all ages for such heroical courage.”

- ***Matthew Poole***

“A mighty man indeed to kill men who never touched a sword! He ought to have been ashamed of his cowardice.” - ***Charles Spurgeon***

Doeg was no mighty man – he was a phony full of himself!

In contrast to the fleeting boastful brashness of “mighty man” is the “goodness of God” which “endures continually”.

In the face of treachery with men like Doeg this is where the people of God find comfort – in the goodness of God that endures forever.

Wicked men are but for a moment but God’s faithfulness is forever!

The word “goodness” is the rich Hebrew word “hesed”. It emphasizes God’s loyal love or steadfast faithfulness.

The word “hesed” is used 248 times in the OT (cf. Jer. 9:24; 32:18; Lam. 3:22; Dan. 9:4). It has been called an undefinable word because it so rich with meaning. The KJV translators initially translated it 14 different ways eventually ending up with the compound word “loving-kindness”. It is often translated as “steadfast love” or “loyal love”.

Here in Psalm 52 it is translated as “goodness” in verse 1 and as “mercy” in verse 8.

It underscores God’s covenant FAITHFULNESS or covenant love. It is God’s FAITHFULNESS flavored with MERCY. It denotes undeserved kindnesses. It emphasizes God’s persistent, unconditional, love that never stops caring for His people.

It underscores tenderness, compassion, kindness, and mercy, that just won't quit. Above all it underscores God's unfailing FAITHFULNESS!

The most important answer to such evil [as that expressed by Doeg] is the confidence that the steadfast love of God endures [continually].

– *ESV Study Bible*

Doeg's evil was fleeting but God's goodness endures forever! What a comfort is this reality in the face of great evil!

2 Your tongue devises destruction, Like a sharp razor, working deceitfully.

There is a strong emphasis on sins of the mouth in verses 1-4. It seems probable that Doeg knew that the priests were actually innocent in this matter but that he lied about it. His tongue was like a sharp razor that worked deceitfully in a killer fashion. It resulted in the death of many people! And then to brag about it! This guy was some kind of special wicked!

3 You love evil more than good, Lying rather than speaking righteousness. Selah

Raw depravity loves evil more than good! Wicked people just love doing evil! He loved lying rather than righteousness.

Selah

Stop and think about how monstrous this evil was.

This speaks to his motivations – to the darkness of his heart. He loved evil and lying. This is devil-like to the core.

Slide # 5

John 8:44 (NKJV)

44 You are of your father **the devil**, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a **murderer** from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for **he is a liar** and the father of it.

Clearly, Doeg was of his father the devil and therefore did his desires.

David had done some wrong at the tabernacle of God at the city of Nob; he did lie to the priest Ahimelech. David did own up to his aspect of the responsibility in the matter ([1 Samuel 22:22](#)). Yet in this psalm he wisely and properly did not blame himself for the massacre of the priests there. This was the work of a man who loved **evil**. *There remain such men in the world.* – **David Guzik**

4 You love all devouring words, You deceitful tongue.

Some people love to destroy other people and they do it with their tongue. Again this is totally consistent with the devil and his ways.

The very name devil means "slanderer". The devil is good at SLANDER and using people in the process!

Gotquestions.org says, "Slander is making a false verbal statement that damages someone's reputation." Slander is generally a false charge intended to harm someone, but it can also be "a truth circulated insidiously and with a hostile purpose" (International Standard Bible Encyclopedia).

I am impressed at what the devil can do in this regard. He loves to RUIN people and he has perfected the craft of "slander" in this endeavor. The devil goes about like a roaring lion with a slanderous tongue seeking whom he may devour (cf. 1 Pet. 5:8).

Those that use devouring and deceitful words to destroy people are a tool of the devil. Many professing Christians are so used. Remember what Jesus said to Peter when he spoke contrary to what Christ said?

In Matt. 16:23 He said, "Get behind Me, Satan!" On that occasion Peter was the mouthpiece for Satan! Amazingly even God's people can in effect play the role of Satan when they speak devouring words.

The evildoers seemingly have their way with people – but only for so long. God is still in charge.

They are like a rabid dog but God has them on a chain and they can only go so far. David knew that in due time God would deal with the evil Doeg.

5 God shall likewise destroy you forever; He shall take you away, and pluck you out of your dwelling place, And uproot you from the land of the living. Selah

The FATE of the wicked ends with God and in due time God will destroy them FOREVER!

Note in four different ways David makes the same essential point in this verse.

Slide # 6

- 1) God shall likewise destroy you forever.
- 2) He shall take you away.
- 3) Pluck you out of your dwelling place.
- 4) Uproot you from the land of the living.

Selah

This reminds me of Psalm 73 where the Psalmist was so bothered by the prosperity of the wicked. It all seemed to be going their way.

Slide # 7

Psalm 73:16–19 (NKJV)

16 When I thought how to understand this, It was too painful for me—

17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God; Then I understood **their end.**

18 Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down to destruction.

19 Oh, how they are brought to desolation, as **in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors.**

The wise man thinks about the END! When you get to where you going where will you be!

This is the ultimate issue! It is impossible to escape the “God Factor”.

No matter how hard people try they cannot escape the fact that judgment day is coming.

Ultimately God will have His way with them!

6 The righteous also shall see and fear, And shall laugh at him, saying,

7 “Here is the man who did not make God his strength, But trusted in the abundance of his riches, And strengthened himself in his wickedness.”

David anticipates that when the demise of Doeg comes the righteous shall see and fear. They will recognize that this is a total God-thing and it will cause them to reverence God all the more.

When it says they “shall laugh at him,” it means they will note the absurdity of those who wickedly give themselves over to the dark side like Doeg did.

The “last laugh” belongs to the Lord’s people. – **Warren Wiersbe**

They will say, “Here is the man who did not make God his strength, but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness.”

The great issue in life is this: What are you trusting in? What you make as your strength is what you trust in. It’s what you depend on!

The wicked rely on their own resources and in their own twisted ways to put them in a good position. But SUDDENLY it is gone! Suddenly, they are taken away. In a moment they find themselves “utterly consumed with terrors”. What then? That position is laughably absurd!

Here is the great issue in life. There are those make God their strength. They depend upon Him. They trust in Him. And then there are those who make themselves and their own resources their strength. You can’t have it both ways.

Slide # 8

Jeremiah 17:5–6 (NKJV)

5 Thus says the LORD: “**Cursed** is the man who **trusts in man And makes flesh his strength**, Whose heart departs from the LORD.

6 For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, And shall not see when good comes, But shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, In a salt land which is not inhabited.

Slide # 9

Jeremiah 17:7–8 (NKJV)

7 “Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, And whose hope is the LORD.

8 For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, Which spreads out its roots by the river, And will not fear when heat comes; But its leaf will be green, And will not be anxious in the year of drought, Nor will cease from yielding fruit.

We often quote “the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked” but we should note that verse has a context. It follows immediately on the heels of contrasting the curse man who makes flesh his arm with the blessed man who trusts in the LORD.

Slide # 10**Jeremiah 17:9 (NKJV)**

9 “The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?”

Our deceitful hearts are so quick to lead us away from trusting in God and to look to the flesh to strengthen us. It is good to be aware of this. We constantly need to guard our hearts and keep our focus on the Lord.

In contrast to wicked Doeg who did not make God his strength was David as seen in verses 8 and 9.

8 But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God; I trust in the mercy of God forever and ever.

David put his trust in the LORD. And metaphorically saw himself as a green olive tree being nourished in the very presence of God.

Olive trees were known for their longevity. They can live somewhere between 500 and 1500 years. There are some old olive trees in the Holy Land that we believe were there in the time of Jesus.

A green olive tree is a picture of vitality, beauty, and fruitfulness. The picture is one of abiding with the blessing of God resting upon him.

And in that position, David says, “***I trust in the mercy of God forever and ever.***” What a great statement of faith!

The sentence begins with the word “But” which is a contrast word. Diametrically opposed to Doeg who did not trust in the Lord but rather in himself was David who voiced his trust in the mercy of God forever. The LORD was his strength!

Again we note the word “mercy” here is the Hebrew word “hesed”. It is translated “goodness” in verse 1. It speaks of God’s loyal/faithful love. David trusted that God would always be there for Him. This brought stability to his life for time and eternity!

The wicked are like uprooted trees that are soon plucked up and removed, but the righteous are like flourishing olive trees that will continue forever.

9 I will praise You forever, Because You have done it; And in the presence of Your saints I will wait on Your name, for it is good.

David in faith anticipates God is going to turn the tables. He will destroy Doeg and preserve His servant. And because this David says he will praise God forever! God is to be praised for what He does for us!

Note the emphasis on God has “done it”. David recognizes this a God-thing. It would be God who deals with Doeg. David is so confident of God bringing it to pass that he states it as an already accomplished fact.

However, in the meantime, he is still waiting on God to intervene. He says, **“And in the presence of Your saints I will wait on Your name, for it is good.”** Sometimes when the evildoers for the moment are having their way all we can do is wait on God in the fellowship of the saint. And we can do this knowing God is good!

Ultimately we know that all things are working together for the good of those who love God, even when things are difficult (Rom. 8:28). This too is an expression of faith! In due time God will vindicate His own! It’s just a matter of time.

In times of great difficulty, I have often reminded myself and God’s people: **“God is sovereign, and God is good!”** Therefore we can TRUST Him. And often waiting on the Lord is an expression of our TRUST. As David said in Psalm 27:14...

Psalm 27:14 (NKJV)

14 Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!