

Israel's Hymnal
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PSALM SEVEN

[Pss 7:1] O Jehovah my God, in thee do I take refuge: Save me from all them that pursue me, and deliver me,

[Pss 7:2] Lest they tear my soul like a lion, Rending it in pieces, while there is none to deliver.

[Pss 7:3] O Jehovah my God, if I have done this; If there be iniquity in my hands;

[Pss 7:4] If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me; (Yea, I have delivered him that without cause was mine adversary;)

[Pss 7:5] Let the enemy pursue my soul, and overtake it; Yea, let him tread my life down to the earth, And lay my glory in the dust. Selah

[Pss 7:6] Arise, O Jehovah, in thine anger; Lift up thyself against the rage of mine adversaries, And awake for me; thou hast commanded judgment.

[Pss 7:7] And let the congregation of the peoples compass thee about; And over them return thou on high.

[Pss 7:8] Jehovah ministereth judgment to the peoples: Judge me, O Jehovah, according to my righteousness, and to mine integrity that is in me.

[Pss 7:9] O let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, but establish thou the righteous: For the righteous God trieth the minds and hearts.

[Pss 7:10] My shield is with God, Who saveth the upright in heart.

[Pss 7:11] God is a righteous judge, Yea, a God that hath indignation every day.

[Pss 7:12] If a man turn not, he will whet his sword; He hath bent his bow, and made it ready.

[Pss 7:13] He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; He maketh his arrows fiery *shafts*

[Pss 7:14] Behold, he travaileth with iniquity; Yea, he hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood.

[Pss 7:15] He hath made a pit, and digged it, And is fallen into the ditch which he made.

[Pss 7:16] His mischief shall return upon his own head, And his violence shall come down upon his own pate.

[Pss 7:17] I will give thanks unto Jehovah according to his righteousness, And will sing praise to the name of Jehovah Most High.

THE PSALMIST IMPLORES JEHOVAH TO DEFEND HIM AGAINST THE WICKED

I. David's plea for deliverance upon the basis of his innocence (vss. 1-5).

II. Prayer for personal intervention (vss. 6-9).

III. God ready to punish evil doers (vss. 10-13).

IV. Man reaps what he sows (vss. 14-16).

V. Praise to God (vs. 17).

According to the superscription of this psalm David composed it in response to the words of Cush, a Benjamite. As we read the first five verses it becomes apparent that Cush had spoken against David and was fomenting strife against the king, his design being to overthrow David's regime and if possible to have him slain. One is led to believe, moreover, that David had done nothing but good for Cush.

Notwithstanding this fact, the latter was repaying the king for his kindnesses by returning evil for good. It is also apparent that David became aware of this undercurrent of feeling and plot against him. He therefore prayed to the Lord to intervene and bring deliverance. He thus invoked the divine aid because he was conscious of the fact that God punishes evil everyday--if men will not repent. The Lord is cognizant of the various things which they do and will make their evil designs prove to be boomerangs against themselves.

I. David's plea for deliverance upon the basis of his innocence

"O Jehovah my God, in thee do I take refuge:
 Save me from all them that pursue me, and deliver me,
 Lest they tear my soul like a lion,
 Rending it in pieces, while there is none to deliver.
 O Jehovah my God, if I have done this;
 If there be iniquity in my hands;
 If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me;
 (Yea, I have delivered him that without cause was mine adversary);
 Let the enemy pursue my soul, and over take it;
 Yea, let him tread my life down to the earth,
 And lay my glory in the dust" (vss. 1-5).

In the beginning of his petition, the king called the Lord's attention to the fact that he had taken refuge in Him. This was an acknowledgment of his utter dependence upon the Lord for protection. He therefore asked the Almighty to save him from them that were pursuing him and deliver him. From this petition we see that there were those under the influence of Cush who were plotting against the king. David realized that his only hope was by divine intervention and protection.

In verse 2 we see that the men who were in the plot had designs against David's life, for he prayed that God would deliver, "Lest they tear my soul like a lion, Rending it in pieces, while there is none to deliver." The word rendered "soul" in this verse also means "life." Since these literal enemies could not rend David's soul, this word should have been rendered "life." As the wild beasts catches its prey and tears one limb from another, thus David thought of these bloodthirsty opponents of his as vicious wild beasts that would delight to tear him limb from limb if they could only lay their hands upon him.

According to verses 3-5 David protested his innocence. Here he declared,

"O Jehovah my God, if I have done this;
 If there be iniquity in my hands;
 If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me ...
 Let the enemy pursue my soul, and over take it;
 Yea, let him tread my life down to the earth,
 And lay my glory in the dust."

There evidently was some one thing with which they charged David and of which he was perfectly innocent. David would never have uttered this petition to God in any such manner as he did, if he had not been absolutely conscious of the fact that he was perfectly innocent and was not guilty of any of the things with which his opponents accused him. It is a marvelous thing to be innocent of crime when enemies create false accusations against a child of God. The Lord will pronounce them blessed when men say all manner of evil against them falsely for His sake. In order to obtain the blessing, the child of God must be innocent. The charges must be false and they must be made because of Christ's name. Frequently many of the children of God suffer because their own sins or their imprudence and lack of wisdom. Under such conditions they can not claim the blessing of this promise.

David was perfectly aware of the fact that he had not rewarded evil to those who were at peace with him. He had not double-crossed anyone. (In the *Los Angeles Times* I read the series of articles which gave the diary of the late Count Chiano, the foreign minister of Mussolini. I had read thirteen installments of this series when I wrote this exposition. It becomes apparent that there was little unity and agreement between Mussolini and Hitler and their aides. In fact, according to this diary there was double-crossing of one another on various occasions. Hatred, enmity, and jealousy were manifest throughout the period which the diary covers. Those leaders were ambitious and unscrupulous. They had little or no regard for life, liberty, or happiness of the people whom they were ruling. Thus intrigue, double-crossing, jealousy, hatred, selfish ambitions characterized every move that they made.) Doubtless in David's time there were rulers in various countries who were guilty of the things of which Chiano accuses both Hitler and Mussolini and their lieutenants. In the presence of God the Psalmist David denied that he was guilty of any intrigue or double-crossing. On the contrary, he asserted, "(Yea, I have delivered him that without cause was mine adversary)." In a prayer in the presence of God the psalmist would never have made this assertion if he had not been absolutely certain that his statement was true. David knew that "Who so rewardeth evil for good, Evil shall not depart from his house" (Prov. 17:13). He also understood that the one who renders good to the one who has mistreated him is in line for a blessing. May we who know the Lord Jesus Christ practice the Golden Rule toward everyone at all times: "All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets" (Matt. 7:12).

II. Prayer for personal intervention

"Arise, oh Jehovah, in thine anger;
 Lift up thyself against the rage of mine adversaries,
 And awake for me; thou hast commanded judgment.
 And let the congregation of the peoples compass thee about;
 And over them return thou on high.
 Jehovah ministereth judgment to the peoples:

Judge me, O Jehovah, according to my righteousness, and to mine integrity that is in me.
 Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end,
 but establish thou the righteous:
 For the righteous God trieth the minds and hearts" (vss. 6-9).

In the earlier books of the Scriptures we see the appearance of the angel of Jehovah who came to various servants of God and delivered certain messages. An examination of the different cases produces the conviction that this special angel was none other than one of the persons constituting the Godhead, namely, the Lord Jesus Christ in His prenatal state. In prophesying the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to be born in Bethlehem, Micah spoke of Him as the one "whose goings forth are of old, from everlasting" (Micah 5:2). In foretelling the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ at the end of the Tribulation, Isaiah spoke of Him and what He will do at that time as similar to that which He did "in the day of Midian" (Isa. 9:4). In Psalm 18 David prayed for the Lord to leave heaven and to come to his rescue and deliverance. In these verses which we have under consideration, the king prayed in the same manner. Thus he wanted the Lord to leave glory, and to come and deliver him from all his enemies. Having done that, he wanted the Lord to ascend from "the congregation of the peoples" that was encompassing Him and to return "on high" (vss. 6,7). David felt that the situation demanded the coming of Jehovah himself instead of His sending an angel. He therefore prayed, "Arise, O Jehovah, in thine anger; ... Lift up thyself ... And awake for me; thou hast commanded judgment." David realized that the wrath of God is stirred against all injustices such as those to which he was being subjected at that time by his enemies.

A careful scrutiny of verses 8 and 9 shows that the psalmist in his praying ceased to speak of his own dilemma and saw in vision the time when God will have to administer judgment to the nations of the earth. At this future time David wanted the Lord to judge according to His divine standards and according to His own integrity. David knew that he would not be judged and rewarded until the time comes when God administers judgment to the peoples of earth. This teaching is in perfect alignment with that of the New Testament.

That verses 8 and 9 deal with this future judgment of the nations is evident from the statement in verse 9: "Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, but establish thou the righteous ..." This is the prayer that God will come, intervene, purge out all of the wicked, and establish righteousness upon the earth. These things the Lord will do at the time of the Tribulation and will complete the job at His second coming in glory and power. The Lord will enter into judgment with all for He is a righteous God who tries the minds and hearts of all men.

Having seen the import of verses 6-9, we know that the first two dealt exclusively with David's own case during his day and time. The king then blended with his appeal for deliverance the prediction of God's coming at the end of the present age to purge the wicked from the earth and to establish righteousness everywhere. These four verses then are an illustration of the law of double reference, to which we have had our attention called from time to time during this series of expositions on the Psalms.

III. God ready to punish evil doers

"My shield is with God,
 Who saveth the upright in heart.
 God is a righteous judge,
 Yea, a God that hath indignation every day.
 If a man turn not, he will whet his sword;
 He hath bent his bow, and made it ready;
 He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death;
 He maketh his arrows fiery shafts" (vss. 10-13).

According to verse 10 the Lord is a shield to His people and He always saves the upright in heart. The Lord's eyes are upon His people every moment. He is keeping a record of their lives--what they do and what is being done to them.

The Lord is a righteous judge and has indignation every day (vs. 11). Though the Almighty is a God of love, yet He has wrath and indignation. He could not act otherwise, because He is a holy God.

At the same time He is long-suffering and gives men ample and full opportunity to repent of their sins and to turn from their wickedness. This is asserted in verse 12. If a man is determined not to turn from his wickedness, the Lord will whet His sword, will place His arrow upon the bow and bend it--and will shoot His arrow of judgment at the wicked only after He has exhausted all means of grace to get him to turn from his wickedness. A righteous, holy, and just God cannot do otherwise than is thus stated.

IV. Man reaps what he sows

"Behold, he travaileth with iniquity;
 Yea, he hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood.
 He hath made a pit and digged it,
 And is fallen into the ditch which he made.
 His mischief shall return upon his own head,
 And his violence shall come down upon his own pate" (vss. 14-16).

Concerning the wicked the psalmist tells us that "he travaileth with iniquity; Yea, he hath conceived mischief, and brought falsehood." The wicked in his thinking is conceiving mischief against others. He is planning how he can beat the other person and how he can cheat him, if possible. Self is always first. No regard is paid to the rights and liberties of others.

Such men are represented here, according to verse 15, as having dug a pit in order that some innocent person might fall therein and be taken, but the Lord, who looks on and who understands all motives and desires, overrules and causes these unprincipled, unscrupulous ones to fall into the very pit that they have prepared for others. In this connection one may ask, Is this statement true with reference to all people who thus plot evil against innocent persons? My reply to this question is, Why yes, when all things are equal. The one against whom the plotting is done must be absolutely innocent, having given no occasion for such enmity. He must be trusting God and looking to Him alone to bring about his deliverance. The

enemies, under those conditions, will be ensnared in the devices and traps which they set for such an innocent one. God declares that He does this, that this is one of the principles upon which He deals with mankind.

In this connection I am thinking of a certain case which is a perfect illustration of this principle. There was a plan and a plot by certain ones to overthrow another who was faithful to God and who was absolutely innocent in the entire case. Notwithstanding this fact certain ones having selfish ambitions at heart attempted to smear the good name of this innocent person. God in a most miraculous manner intervened and prevented their doing this. Their wickedness came back as a boomerang upon their own heads. This is in perfect accord with the statement of verse 16 which states that "His mischief shall return upon his own head, And his violence shall come down upon his own pate."

V. Praise to God

"I will give thanks unto Jehovah according to his righteousness,
And will sing praise to the name of Jehovah Most High" (vs. 17).

The psalmist, being confident of his innocence and being fully persuaded that God would deliver him, concluded this marvelous composition with the affirmation that he would "give thanks unto Jehovah according to his righteousness," and that he would "sing praise to the name of Jehovah Most High." May we profit by the psalmist's experience. May we keep our heart right (by the power of the Spirit of God). May our lives be pure and clean, and may we give no occasion to the devil nor any man to do us an injustice. If, notwithstanding our innocence, men inspired by Satan trump up evil against us, let us not be afraid. On the other hand, let us trust God and watch Him work out all things together for our good since we love Him and are called according to His purpose (Rom. 8:28).

[Ed.] See also <http://www.biblicalresearch.info/page475.html> The Rapture in Psalm 7