



Valley Life Community Church

Pastor Vinnie Hanke

Psalms 2023: Jesus' Songbook

May 21, 2023

Psalm 7

We're going to begin and continue our series in the Psalms. We're in Psalms, chapter 7, so if you have your Bible, you can turn your way there, and if you're a brave individual who's like, "I don't need any Table of Contents," you can just set your Bible on your lap and let it open, and you might get somewhere close to Psalm 7.

While you do that, let me read to you what Ray Ortlund has to say about the Psalms and why we're dedicating every summer to the study of them. He says this:

In all circumstances, joyful and tragic, confident and fearful, calm and anxious, righteous, hopeful, and despairing David and other psalmists wrote songs of prayer to God. These are not tidy, polite, or fake. They are honest expressions from real people, getting real with God and finding a real help.



That's one of the reasons we're turning our attention to them every single summer. Because no matter what circumstances you find yourself in today the book of Psalms can speak to you and address it in real time. Five things to keep in mind as we continue our study:

1. **The Psalms are worship songs.** They model praise and devotion to God from the hearts of God's people, in the midst of all kinds of circumstances. There is never not a reason to worship God.
2. **God reveals himself in the Psalms.** Not only are these the psalmists' laments or songs of thanksgiving and gratitude, but ultimately, they point to the God of the Psalms by revealing his character, his steadfast and faithful love and his righteous judgment and his glorious creativity.
3. **The Psalms are evangelical and gospel centered.** The Psalms have a prophetic dimension in that they point us forward to the coming King in Jesus Christ.
4. **The Psalms are full of hope.** Not the hope that we kind of have in Western culture, like wishful thinking, like I hope we have good weather this week but more of a confident expectation of good. That despite the suffering in this world we can live with a confident expectation of good. That God will set things right.



5. **The Psalms help build community among people.** They're a reflection of the community of God's people as they worship together using them, as they witness to his mighty deeds, as they read them, and ultimately, they put them to work in their life together in studying the Scripture.

We're going to be in Psalm 7 today, so if you would, if you have Bible or an app open would you stand with me for the reading of the Word. This is something we do as a church out of reverence and awe for who God is and what he has delivered to us in the Scriptures. With a clear mind, with a willing spirit and a ready heart would you hear the Word of the Lord coming from Psalm 7.

***LORD my God, I seek refuge in you;
save me from all my pursuers and rescue me,
or they will tear me like a lion,
ripping me apart with no one to rescue me.***

***LORD my God, if I have done this,
if there is injustice on my hands,
if I have done harm to one at peace with me
or have plundered my adversary without cause,
may an enemy pursue and overtake me;
may he trample me to the ground
and leave my honor in the dust.***

Selah

***Rise up, LORD, in your anger;
lift yourself up against the fury of my adversaries;
awake for me;
you have ordained a judgment.
Let the assembly of peoples gather around you;
take your seat on high over it.
The LORD judges the peoples;
vindicate me, LORD,
according to my righteousness and my integrity.***



***Let the evil of the wicked come to an end,
but establish the righteous.
The one who examines the thoughts and emotions
is a righteous God.
My shield is with God,
who saves the upright in heart.
God is a righteous judge
and a God who shows his wrath every day.***

***If anyone does not repent,
he will sharpen his sword;
he has strung his bow and made it ready.
He has prepared his deadly weapons;
he tips his arrows with fire.***

***See, the wicked one is pregnant with evil,
conceives trouble, and gives birth to deceit.
He dug a pit and hollowed it out
but fell into the hole he had made.
His trouble comes back on his own head;
his own violence comes down on top of his head.***

***I will thank the LORD for his righteousness;
I will sing about the name of the LORD Most High.***

This is the Word of the Lord, church. Amen. Amen. Let me pray.

God, again we ask humbly that by your Spirit you'd illuminate our minds, you'd convict and challenge our hearts, and you would transform our lives. That God, you would use your Word in this place to glorify yourself. Would you allow me the ability to carefully and clearly preach it to your people, keeping none of the glory for myself but all for you. Take center stage now and be the God that David claims that you are: righteous, holy, and just. Help us, we pray through Christ. Amen.



How do we deal with gossip? What about slander? What about the loss of our reputation that we worked so hard to build? It seems like only takes a moment for someone to say the wrong thing, to the wrong person, at the wrong time, and all of a sudden we live under suspicion and accusation. What happens when the path of our life and the circumstances we find ourselves in suddenly steer us, even though we've made choices, into an unforeseen path? They take us far off the course we had charted of our life. What do we do when the death of a dream becomes a nightmare?

Perhaps, our first instinct, like Adam and Eve, is to run from God, or perhaps to blame him for not answering our prayers, or for treating us this way, even though we have tried to honor him with acts of obedience. Even though we've done the right thing and now we're experiencing the wrong thing, we become frustrated and maybe we run from him.

In Psalm 7, despite whatever your circumstances might be, the Word of God declares that if you are in Christ your future is both hopeful and bright. My main idea, if you like to take notes, is this: **Disciples trust in God's righteousness and justice, granting them peace regardless of the immediate outcome of their circumstances.** I know it's a long one but that ending is important.

Disciples can trust in God's righteousness and justice, and doing that will grant us peace regardless of the immediate outcome of our circumstances that we find ourselves in. We're going to see this, I hope, lay itself out through Psalm 7. Let's begin. The historical note there... You'll see that there's an interesting



word, it's a Hebrew word, in your Bibles: *shiggaion*. It's not translated into English. Do you know why? Because nobody has any idea of what it means. So they just left it alone, which I think was wise.

It's a Hebrew word that could be a musical instruction, or it could be a category of psalm or a song that was _____ (7:39) to David's time. We're just not sure. But whatever it is, it classifies what David is doing here. He's essentially writing a psalm. Then he gives us the historical context for the occasion for David's writing. He says, "**...which he sang to the LORD concerning the words of Cush, a Benjamite.**"

Psalm 7 is a psalm or a song of a falsely accused person.

I don't know that it's country music, but it feels like it would be country music, right? Just describing your life circumstances in song when you're sad feels a very "country" thing to do. But it's a song of an accused person. The note tells us that Cush has verbally assaulted David, and then we're told he's a Benjamite. Now, this is historical guesswork but perhaps the ill words were connected to David's anointing as King in place of Saul.

If you know the story, Saul was the first king chosen by God, but his heart wandered from allegiance and obedience to God, and he disobeyed God in a variety of ways to the point that God chose to remove Saul from the throne and supplant him with David. There's some historical evidence in the Old Testament to suggest that the Benjamites, who were Saul's tribe, did not take this very well and began to insult and accuse David. So what we have here is most likely Cush, a Benjamite, a member of Saul's tribe, leveling accusations and slander against David because he's the successor to Saul.



Psalm 7 is comprised of two stanzas. Ok, so we have two sections. The first is verses 1-9. This is a prayer prayed directly to God in which David asks for deliverance in the first two verses, pleads his innocence in the next three verses, and once again asks for deliverance in the final two verses. The second section begins in verse 10 and carries all the way through to the end in verse 17. This is a confession about the outworking of God's justice. About the enemy's wickedness and the ultimate outcome for that. Its followed and finished with a vow to thank God for his righteousness and his justice.

Let's begin with the first two verses. ***"LORD my God..."*** David sings. ***"I seek refuge in you; save me from all my pursuers and rescue me, or they will tear me like a lion, ripping me apart with no one to rescue me."*** Once again, we'll see this theme throughout the Psalms every summer, but David seeks refuge in the personal and ever-so-close relational Lord.

Remember the Psalms will use two names for God. They're not interchangeable, they're complimentary. David will use the word *Lord* when he's describing the relational God. He's using God's name there that he has delivered to the nation of Israel himself. When you see the word *Lord*, David is referring to the God who is a personal God, who's connected relationally with him.

Then when we read the word *God*, David is referring to the almighty God of the Universe. They are one in the same, but David is simply acknowledging that there are two attributes that he's appealing to. And



right now, in this circumstance he's appealing to the ever-close personal God who is near him and the almighty God of the Universe.

He's emphasizing God's personal relationship with his people and his power as he begins pleading with him. David is seeking refuge, salvation, and rescue from the ever-close personal God and from the almighty God of the Universe. David is pleading for salvation, refuge, and rescue from someone who cares about him and has the power to do something about it.

It's one thing to complain about a circumstance to someone who will just listen; it's another to bring that circumstance to someone who can do something about it. That's what David is emphasizing. He's bringing his complaint to God who cares but, also, God who's strong enough to do something about it. Then he gives us the seriousness of the circumstance. Whatever he's enduring from the words of Cush... We don't know exactly what these words are, but they are akin, he says here in verse 2, to a lion tearing him to pieces. There's some vivid imagery. That this circumstance that he's enduring, if God does not rescue him, he's experiencing something akin to being torn apart by a lion.

Verse 3: ***"LORD my God, if I have done this, if there is injustice on my hands, if I have done harm to one at peace with me or have plundered my adversary without cause, may an enemy pursue and overtake me; may he trample me to the ground and leave my honor in the dust."*** David proceeds to plead his innocence as a way of protesting the treatment that he's been receiving from Cush and those who listen



to him. Now what's implicit here, if we look at the text closely, is that David needs protection from the charges that he's guilty of: injustice, betrayal, and plundering.

Listen to the verses. David says, **"LORD my God, if I have done this..."** And what does he do? He lays out three things that he's accused of. **"...if there is injustice on my hands..."** That is, if I have done something wrong, if I have committed an injustice against someone, if I have acted in an unrighteous way, if I have withheld justice from someone who deserves it, or if I have treated someone unrighteously, committing an injustice.

Verse 4: **"...if I have done harm to one at peace with me..."** That is, if I have betrayed someone who I am in a good relationship with, if I've lied to them, if I've committed violence against them, if I've sinned against them, even though we were at peace. And then at the end of verse 4, **"...or have plundered my adversary without cause..."** That is, if I've taken something from an enemy that did not rightly belong to me, if I've stolen and plundered and taken with greediness in my heart.

Then in verse 5 he pronounces a curse over himself. He says, **"...may an enemy pursue and overtake me..."** That is, may I run as far and as fast as I can but not be able to get away. May that same enemy trample me to the ground and may my honor be left in the dust. Essentially, David is protesting and saying, "If I've done wrong then allow justice to be done." David is using a little bit of irony here because he's innocent of the charges. He stands before God and Lord, the almighty God of the Universe and his ever-close and personal God who cares about him, and he's asking to be examined.



He's pleading his innocence. He's saying, "If I have done these things then allow me to experience the penalty." One thing to note here, when David says, "If I have done wrong," or when he pleads his innocence, we can't take this out of context to think that David is declaring himself righteous, completely, and holy.

David is claiming innocence in this particular case. That is, whatever Cush is lying about, or saying about him, David is innocent of these charges. He is not comparing himself to the perfect, righteous standard of God, only to the accusations that have been thrown at him. In this particular case, David can claim innocence. He's not claiming sinlessness. He's pleading innocence in light of his enemy's charges. If God were to come down and demand an answer from David for his entirety of his life, under his own merit, the only appeal David would have is upon the mercy of God.

But that's not what David is doing. He's simply pleading and asking God to examine this particular instance. Because the truth is if God were to demand this of David, if he were to set David before him and say, "David, okay I'm going to judge you based on the entire merits of your life," his only hope would be the mercy of God. We cannot stand before a holy and perfect God because of our sin nature and the things we've done in disobedience to God's Word, his will, and his ways.

Yet, if God were to _____ (16:19) us and call us to stand before him in the throne, as believers in Christ we can have confidence that we would receive mercy. Not because we're innocent but because of



the absolute innocence of Christ. We can have confidence as David did and appeal to the throne of God when we're faced with accusations and mistreatment, because we are covered under the blood of Christ. Because we are covered by Jesus' innocence.

David finds confidence that he can appeal and entrust himself to God when accused of things that are untrue. Consider that. David is under false accusation. He's not done the things he's accused of doing. He's not been unjust, he has not betrayed, and he has not plundered, and yet, that is the rumor, that is what is true about him among the people.

Rather than starting a marketing campaign, rather than tweeting out the truth, rather than exposing a political blog, what does David do? He simply prays and appeals to God. Despite the wicked lies that are being said about him he remains quiet and prayerful.

This should remind us of another person in the Scriptures who committed themselves to silence and to prayer when faced with unjust accusations. Anybody have a name that comes to mind? It's kind of a big one. Jesus! Right. Every Sunday school kid's favorite answer, right? This is what Jesus did. When faced with false accusations, when faced with betrayal from friends, abandonment by his disciples, he stood before Pilate and was silent under accusation.

Listen to what Jesus says in John, chapter 19, verses 10 through 11. ***"So Pilate said to him, 'Do you refuse to speak to me?'"*** So Pilate's lobbing out questions to Jesus, and Jesus is simply silent. Pilate



continues. He says, ***“Don’t you know that I have the authority to release you and the authority to crucify you?”*** Listen to what Jesus says. ***““You would have no authority over me at all,’ Jesus answered him, ‘if it hadn’t been given you from above. This is why the one who handed me over to you has the greater sin.””***

When faced with false accusation and betrayal and impending death, Jesus didn’t jump to defend himself. He didn’t fight it off. He did what? He simply entrusted himself to the goodness of God and the sovereign plan of the King. Jesus made no defense against his accusers but entrusted and appealed himself to God.

When David does this in the midst of betrayal and belittling at the hands of Cush, he is modeling and foreshadowing what Christ would do later. Notice at the end of verse 5 we have that word *Selah*. We’ve talked about this quite a bit last summer and this summer, but simply this word means to pause, literally to breathe, so if it is a musical term and applied it just simply means for those who are performing or singing to take a pause and a moment to breathe.

But for those of us reading, it gives us a moment to pause and reflect, to consider what we’ve read thus far. It’s no accident that David puts this here. Why? Because in verses 3-5 what’s David doing? He’s asking to be examined, isn’t he? He’s saying, “If I have done these wrong things then let me endure this curse, or these circumstances, this penalty.” Then right after pleading his innocence he gives the reader time to pause and consider his life.



We pick up at verse 6. David continues his prayer, this time shifting to deliverance. ***“Rise up, LORD...”*** he cries. ***“...in your anger; lift yourself up against the fury of my adversaries; awake for me; you have ordained a judgment.”*** Listen to the verbs that David uses: *rise up*, *lift yourself up*, and *awake*.

Do we really think that God needs to rise up? That is, has he gone to sleep? Do we really think that God has laid down, needing to lift himself up? What is David getting after here? What he’s getting after is sometimes in the midst of our circumstances God can feel far away. Sometimes it can feel like God’s asleep and not paying attention.

David is simply putting that in writing. In his prayer time he’s asking God to move on his behalf. It’s not that God has gone to sleep and David has to cajole him and roust him and wake him up. David is simply asking God to pay attention and to move on his behalf. He concludes in verse 6 with this. ***“...you have ordained a judgment.”*** David is reminding God. Not that he has forgotten, but he’s reminding God that God has set a day of judgment in which he will set all wrong things right. This should both encourage us and warn us when we read about it.

The encouragement is this. If you are in the midst of suffering something unrighteously...that is, you have done no wrong and you are being accused of something that is wrong; or if you are suffering because of righteousness...that is, you’ve maintained right behavior and yet you are dealing with difficult



circumstances, the day of God judgment should fill you with hope that this is not all there is. That suffering for righteousness' sake is not all that your life is going to be.

That bad people getting away with bad things is not going to continue on forever. That there's going to be a day in which the Holy and Just Judge, the Creator of the universe, calls his creation into account. That should give all of those of us who suffer wrong things in this life great hope and great encouragement.

On the other hand, it should also give us a great warning. Why? Because not all of us have the ability to obey perfectly. For some of us we have pursued wickedness for wickedness' sake. The fact that God has ordained a day of judgment, a day of accountability, should warn us. It's a gracious warning. Don't get me wrong. It's not fire and brimstone, turn or burn, get right before you get left. (Sorry that's a little Southern Baptist for you.) It's a gracious warning that God has ordained a day of judgment and it is coming. But that day is not this day so turn and repent, turn from your wickedness and turn to obedience.

The day of judgment serves as an encouragement and a warning for both David and the reader. God's going to set everything right and all of the wrongs will pass away; so then, abandon your wickedness, reject it, and pursue righteousness in Christ. For the day is coming that we will have to give an account. That's David's appeal. "God, bring your day of account to bear because I'm suffering injustice."



When we think about God's day of judgment there are two ways to think about it. Oftentimes, as I just described, we think about it as Christians as a day far away in the future. We think of the heavenly final judgment, that God is going to make everything right. He's going to fix all the things that have gone wrong. He's going to bring righteousness and justice to all the injustice that has been suffered.

That day does exist and is true, but for the Jews they thought of God's day of judgment as immediate and pertaining to earthly circumstances right now. That's what David has in mind here. Not just the one day far away of ordained judgment but that the wicked would be punished for their wickedness right now. That God would actually move right now in David's real circumstances is what he's asking for. Both attributes of God's judgment are true. There is a day in the future in which all things wrong will be made right, but God is also actively bringing judgment and bearing his judgment upon this world even now. To a lesser degree than in the future but to a very real degree.

We're going to read about it in this psalm. Verse 7. David describes this far away judgment. He says, ***"Let the assembly of peoples gather around you; take your seat on high over it."*** What does David have in mind here? He has an assembly of all the people of all of history gathering around God's throne for the purpose of judgment. He wants God to take his throne on high and begin to right all the wrongs. This is the result of God rising, lifting, and awaking.

Something to notice here. David leaves retribution to God, doesn't he? Again, he doesn't start a capital campaign against Cush, the Benjamite. He doesn't start a rumor about Cush in response to the rumors



that Cush has started about him. He is simply quiet and prayerful when it comes to those who have levied accusations against him. He leaves retribution to God, who alone has the wisdom to know what people deserve as well as the power and the right to give it to them.

It is a sign of deep faith to refuse self-defense and, instead, entrust our outcome to God's judgment. Consider what happens naturally and most of the time, I'd imagine, in your personal relationship. When someone accuses you of doing something wrong and you know it to be untrue is your immediate position quiet reflection and prayer or self-defense? Self-defense, isn't it?

If you're married this one's easy. It's easy to recognize. Why? Because we want to be seen as righteous. We want to be seen as doing the right thing. We don't like the shame of being accused of doing something wrong, so we get defensive, especially if we know we're right. Especially if we know she didn't text us to ask to get the milk. That might be a little too personal. Whatever the circumstance it's a sign of deep faith to not jump to self-defense and instead to entrust your reputation and your honor and your glory to God himself.

This is David's practice. He trusts that God is going to judge correctly and rightly. Why? Look at verse 8. Because, "***The LORD judges the peoples...***" Then David cries out, "***...vindicate me, LORD, according to my righteousness and my integrity.***" David has not done the things that he is accused of and, therefore, seeks vindication from the one judge that matters. Not in the people's eyes but in God's eyes, according to his righteousness and integrity, again, in this circumstance. Again, he's not claiming sinlessness. He's



claiming righteousness and integrity in this circumstance. He has not done the things he's accused of doing.

He continues his prayer and appeal for deliverance in verse 9. ***"Let the evil of the wicked come to an end..."*** What's that line translated? Make it stop. Make it stop! Verse 9: ***"...but establish the righteous. The one who examines the thoughts and emotions is a righteous God."*** This is why David can appeal to God as the highest authority. Because God alone is a righteous judge.

He alone is able to be unswayed by anything other than what is right and just to be done. Even the best of human judges is still susceptible to sin and brokenness. It is God alone who can judge all things, the whole entirety of a person, righteously. That's what David means when he says, ***"The one who examines the thoughts and emotions..."*** What he has here is the entirety of the human person, both the inner mind and the inner heart. That is, your attitudes and your convictions are judged by God.

Verse 10. David begins the second section. He says, ***"My shield is with God, who saves the upright in heart."*** As he transitions, he's going to be declaring God's righteousness as a judge and his declared power to judge all things and to find refuge and protection and rescue in him. David says, ***"My shield is with God, who saves the upright..."***

Now what did he just tell us about God in verse 9? He said that God righteously judges and examines the thoughts and the emotions of every human being. That would include David. What does that mean? It



means God, the righteous Judge, also examines all of the thoughts and all emotions of David himself.

David knows that if he were to be examined before God, all of his thoughts and all of his emotions, he would be found to be guilty and sinful.

So what does he being the second stanza with? The fact that his own alone rescue from that judgment is God as his shield who saves the upright in heart. God is declared to be a righteous judge and righteous warrior in the second section. The word for *shield* here is back to that smaller shield that we talked about two weeks ago. This is the nimble shield that can be used by the warrior to protect them at every angle and in every circumstance. God alone is David's defense from God's own judgment and examination.

Verse 11: ***"God is a righteous judge and a God who shows his wrath every day."*** David is being tried in the court of public opinion, and yet, he seeks to take refuge and protection in the highest court, in God's courtroom, where God is a righteous and just judge. That is there's no fault, no wickedness, no sinfulness in God's judgment. Then we get this weird line. The CSB translates it, ***"God is a righteous judge...who shows his wrath every day."*** Sometimes we can think of the consequences of sin as being far away and later. Sometimes even the temptation to sin can fool us into thinking that we can commit this sinful act and not have to answer for the consequences of it.



What David reminds us here in verse 11 is that no, no, God's judgment comes to bear each and every day. We should not neglect daily repentance from sin and daily obedience. Because what we'll see in the psalm is that God is actually revealing his wrath and judgment to bear even now.

So this morning, if you are in the midst of sin, if you are intentionally disobeying God and his Word and his will and his way and you're not suffering the immediate consequences of it... That is to say you're committing sin, you're disobeying God and you're not suffering for it, you may think that God is somehow is ignorant or blind, like you're getting away something.

But verse 11 should warn you here that God is not ignorant or blind of your sin. If you are not immediately suffering the consequences of it, it's not because God's judgment is super far down the road or that God is blind. If you have sinned and are not suffering the immediate consequences it is because God is being generously gracious toward you and giving you time to repent.

He's not an ignorant father who's in the other room while you're misbehaving. He knows what you're doing. Specifically. He can righteously examine all of your thoughts, all of the intentions of your heart and all of the actions of your hands. And if he has not borne the consequences of that misbehavior upon you right now, it's not because he's lazy, ignorant, or blind. It's because he's gracious and generous, allowing you time to repent.



He's being kind toward you. He's allowing you time to turn from your sin, and don't take advantage of that time, don't waste time, because the hour of his full judgement is only known to him. It could be this afternoon. It could be tomorrow. But there will be a day when God will demand a full accounting from every one of us. And we will either stand with Christ as our shield from God's wrath or we will be exposed for our sinful unrepentance and unbelief in Christ.

Listen to verse 12. The warning continues. ***"If anyone does not repent..."*** That is, to turn from sin and turn toward Christ. ***"...he will sharpen his sword; he has strung his bow and made it ready. He has prepared his deadly weapons; he tips his arrows with fire."*** What does David have in mind here? The righteous Judge now becoming the righteous Warrior to execute the sentence of judgment. He describes God as a warrior who sharpens his sword, as an archer who has strung his bow. Any archers in here?

Anybody string a bow? Consider how easy it is with the flip of an index finger to release the arrow. That's the image that David has for the day of judgment. That God has a bow aimed at the wicked and all he has to do is flinch and the day of judgment will be upon us. This is a warning. Again, not to frighten you but to beckon you come and rely upon the righteous mercy of God. Because if God has not flexed, if God has not flung his arrow, it's because he's given you time to repent, to turn from sin and to turn and trust him.

Verse 14: ***"See, the wicked one is pregnant with evil, conceives trouble, and gives birth to deceit."*** What David does here in verse 14 is he gives us a sequence of sin. How does willful disobedience occur in the



life of the wicked? This way. First the wicked one is pregnant with evil. That is, sin is given life in their innermost being. It's nurtured; it's supported; it's supplied with what it takes to grow.

The image is of a mother's womb. Think of an expectant mother and her womb, which has the power to nurture, protect, and grow life within it. David uses this imagery to describe the wicked when they commit evil. That is that sinful thought or that sinful activity, that sinful temptation. It's given everything it needs to be nurtured, to grow, and it's protected.

If you're a *Lord of the Rings* fan, Gollum comes to mind as I think about this. His obsession with the ring. He'll do whatever it takes to protect it, to nurture it, to keep it. That's the wicked one's attitude with evil. We're told in verse 14 that they then conceive trouble. The evil that is within them, that is growing and nurturing now gives life to trouble, anxiety, and affliction upon others. Ultimately, we're told here, in David's case, giving birth to deceit.

The wicked one gives birth to their sin. They bring and deliver it out into the world. For David's circumstances this was the untruth. This is the sequence of sin in our own lives when temptation grabs hold of us. We give it time and energy and thought. Our imagination begins to play out that sinful pleasure or activity. We begin to conceive trouble, and then we give birth to sin and deceit. To the lie that this thing is better than what we have. You can see this sequence prove itself out in Genesis 3, when Satan deceives Eve and gives birth to sin.



The alternative for us as Christians is to wage war against the sinful thoughts within us. The Apostle Paul will describe it this way in 2 Corinthians, chapter 10, verses 4 and 5. He says, ***“Since the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but are powerful through God for the demolition of strongholds. We demolish arguments and every proud thing that is raised up against the knowledge of God, and we take every thought captive to obey Christ.”***

My youth pastor growing up used to say it this way. He’d say, “Any temptation thought begins with a single thought, and if you do not take that single thought and take it captive to obedience to Christ...that is, you dismiss it as unacceptable or you compare it to the good and godly thing which God has already given to you and you dismiss it...do you know what follows the first thought? A second thought. Do you know what you're dealing with now? Not a thought but an argument. Now you're arguing within yourself.”

What James says is the war within that gives birth to sin, because we didn’t take that first thought captive and it gave life to a second thought and a third thought and now, we’re nurturing evil within us; we’re giving it life until ultimately it gives birth to sin and disobedience.

What Paul says here in 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 is that we need to demolish those arguments and every proud thing that is raised up against the knowledge of God. Verses 15 and 16: ***“He...”*** Speaking of the wicked one. ***“...dug a pit and hollowed it out but fell into the hole he had made. His trouble comes back on his own head; his own violence comes down on top of his head.”***



Listen, because we live in a sinful and broken world, many times there are acts of injustice that will go unpunished until the final day of judgment. There are just things that people have gotten away with that they have “gotten away with” for now. We’re not going to see them suffer justice and punishment until the next life.

However, there are moments in which God will display the irony and foolishness of wickedness in this life. Here’s how John Calvin describes verses 15 and 16. He says, “...they shall fall by their own sword. And this is not a thing that happens by chance; but God, by the secret direction of his own hand, causes the evil which they intended to bring upon the innocent to return upon their own heads.”

What is David describing here? He’s describing sometimes God’s real-time justice happens when the plans of the wicked do not fall upon the innocent but fall upon themselves. He gives illustration to this. That the wicked seeking to capture the innocent digs a hole, hollows it out, but ends up tripping and falling into it. We can hear the irony and foolishness of it, can’t we?

That the one who commits trouble ends up having that same trouble committed to him. The one who commits violence actually has violence committed against them. To put it another way, haters are going to be hated, deceivers are going to be deceived, and gossips would be gossiped about.



What David tells us here should serve as a sign of God's justice happening in real time. This points forward to ultimate justice in the future. But it should also serve as a reminder, again, against our own folly of choosing evil. Because sometimes the fate of those that choose evil and wickedness is to suffer that very thing that they chose. Sometimes God will give you exactly what you want, and that's not a good thing. Sometimes the harshest penalties God can enact upon his people is to allow them to embrace full sin without restraint, to allow sin to have its way with you.

We need to remember this, both that God's just is happening now, that it points forward to ultimate justice, and that it would keep us from committing evil and sin and wickedness. Because this serves as a warning to us, that sometimes the wicked plan lands on themselves. Once again, repentance is held out as an alternative to having sin come upon you. To put it another way, if you're digging a hole put down the shovel. Or better yet perhaps use the shovel to fill it in.

Psalm 7, verse 17, the end. ***"I will thank the LORD for his righteousness; I will sing about the name of the LORD Most High."*** So let me ask you, do we read anywhere in which God resolved the circumstances? No. What does this mean? It means David is still suffering in the midst of these false accusations. All David has done has been quiet and prayerful, pleading to God for deliverance, but we're not told that God has granted deliverance or enacted judgment upon Cush. We don't have that here.

But what we do have in verse 17 is David's commitment to worship anyway. Do you remember from last week, I talked about parallelism? That is the first line of a psalm will give us the description of what David



is doing and then the second line of the psalm will bring us greater clarity and deeper meaning, so listen, David says, ***"I will thank the Lord for his righteousness..."*** That is, I'm going to thank God that he's the righteous Judge even though I haven't experienced deliverance.

And then the second line that is parallel to the first tells us how David is going to do that. How is David going to thank the Lord for his righteousness? He's going to do what? He's going to ***"...sing about the name of the Lord Most High."*** That despite the circumstances and wickedness he's enduring David is going to sing to God with thankfulness. Why? Because God is righteous.

He invites us to do the same now. The psalm once again shows us that God will give us true rest and reassurance despite our circumstances only when we look to him. Real rest for your heart, mind, and soul in the midst of difficult or challenging circumstances comes only through active faith and trust in Christ, our defense and our advocate. There are two things you must believe and one thing you must do to experience this rest.

1. **You must believe God's Word when it says that you cannot help yourself spiritually.** That sin has separated us from God and that we cannot overcome that separation on our own.
2. **You must believe that Jesus has done what you cannot do.** That he is our great advocate. That he stands and bears the wrath of God and now stands as our shield between us and God the Father. It is his innocence granted to us and our sin granted to him that allows us to be reconciled to God.



If you believe these two things the final thing you must do is **you must submit yourself to God in all things**. You must submit yourself to Christ as Savior and Lord. Romans, chapter 10, helps us. It says, ***“One believes with the heart, resulting in righteousness, and one confesses with the mouth, resulting in salvation. [...] For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”***

Would you this morning find the same refuge, salvation, and rescue that David sought in God in Psalm 7?

Let me pray for you.

God, thank you for the life of David. Thank you that he serves as a model for what we might pursue when we suffer wickedness and injustice. Help us, Father, when we are like David and suffering, but also help us when we are like Cush and we willfully disobey. We thank you for the warning of your Word, that judgment comes one day in the future and that you have given us time to turn from our wickedness.

We thank you for that and ask you to give us the courage to do that right now. To trust you with the outcome of our circumstances. To tear down the strongholds of deceit that temptation and sin have in our mind and in our soul and in our life and to submit to you in all things. Would you help us now to fulfil Psalm 7:17, to sing of your name with great joy. We ask this in Christ’s name, amen.