

Psalm 035 - Imprecatory Psalm: A Prayer for Deliverance

David is once again being hounded by Saul and slandered by Saul's men, many of whom had been David's friends (Cf. 1 Sam 19:5; 20:1; 23:25; 24:9-15; 25:29; 26:18-19).

Psalm 35

[A Psalm of David]

A Prayer for Deliverance

1 Contend, LORD, with those who contend with me; Fight against those who fight against me.

1 Contend, O LORD, with those who contend with me; Fight against those who fight against me.

1 Argue my case, LORD, against those who argue against me. Fight against those who fight against me.

1 Plead my cause, O LORD, with them that strive with me: fight against them that fight against me.

2 Take hold of buckler and shield And rise up as my help.

2 Take hold of buckler and shield And rise up for my help.

2 Take up the buckler and the shield, and rise up to help me.

2 Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help.

3 Draw also the spear and the battle-axe to meet those who pursue me; Say to my soul, "I am your salvation."

3 Draw also the spear and the battle-axe to meet those who pursue me; Say to my soul, "I am your salvation."

3 Take out the spear and the ax to confront the one who pursues me; say to me, "I am your deliverer!"

3 Draw out also the spear, and stop the way against them that persecute me: say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.

4 Let those be ashamed and dishonored who seek my life; Let those be turned back and humiliated who devise evil against me.

4 Let those be ashamed and dishonored who seek my life; Let those be turned back and humiliated who devise evil against me.

4 Let those who seek my life be ashamed and disgraced; let those who plot evil against me be driven back and confounded.

4 Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt.

5 Let them be like **chaff** before the wind, With the **angel of the LORD** driving *them* on.

5 Let them be like chaff before the wind, With the angel of the LORD driving *them* on.

5 Make them like the chaff before the wind, as the messenger of the LORD pushes them aside.

5 Let them be as chaff before the wind: and let the angel of the LORD chase them.

- "...chaff" - weightless, worthless, defenseless, and harmless...

— Criticizing David for v4-8 shouldn't overlook that David first prayed for their help and healing

- "...angel of the LORD" - appears only 3x in the Psalms (Ps 34:7; 35:5-6)

6 Let their way be dark and slippery, With the angel of the LORD pursuing them.

6 Let their way be dark and slippery, With the angel of the LORD pursuing them.

6 May their path be dark and slippery, as the messenger of the LORD tracks them down.

6 Let their way be dark and slippery: and let the angel of the LORD persecute them.

7 For they hid their net for me without cause; Without cause they dug a pit for my soul.

7 For without cause they hid their net for me; Without cause they dug a pit for my soul.

7 Without justification they laid a snare for me; without justification they dug a pit to trap me.

7 For without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul.

8 Let destruction come upon him when he is unaware, And let the net which he hid catch him; Let him fall into that very destruction.

8 Let destruction come upon him unawares, And let the net which he hid catch himself; Into that very destruction let him fall.

8 Let destruction come upon them unawares, and let the net that he hid catch him; let him fall into destruction.

8 Let destruction come upon him at unawares; and let his net that he hath hid catch himself: into that very destruction let him fall.

9 So my soul shall rejoice in the LORD; It shall rejoice in His salvation.

9 And my soul shall rejoice in the LORD; It shall exult in His salvation.

9 My soul will rejoice in the LORD and be glad in his deliverance.

9 And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD: it shall rejoice in his salvation.

10 All my bones will say, "LORD, who is like You, Who rescues the afflicted from one who is too strong for him, And the afflicted and the poor from one who robs him?"

10 All my bones will say, "LORD, who is like You, Who delivers the afflicted from him who is too strong for him, And the afflicted and the needy from him who robs him?"

10 All my bones will say, "LORD, who is like you? Who delivers the weak from the one who is stronger than he, and the weak and the needy from the one who wants to rob him?"

10 All my bones shall say, LORD, who is like unto thee, which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the poor and the needy from him that spoileth him?

- Each of David's three requests is followed with a song of praise to the Lord (v9-10; v17-18; v27-28)

11 Malicious witnesses rise up; They ask me things that I do not know.

11 Malicious witnesses rise up; They ask me of things that I do not know.

11 False witnesses stepped forward and questioned me concerning things about which I knew nothing.

11 False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not.

- David states that the evidence proved he was innocent

12 They repay me evil for good, To the bereavement of my soul.

12 They repay me evil for good, To the bereavement of my soul.

12 They paid me back evil for good; my soul mourns.

12 They rewarded me evil for good to the spoiling of my soul.
- On two occasions David could have killed Saul (1 Sam 24; 26)
— Saul even admitted David was the better man (1 Sam 24:17)

13 But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth; I humbled my soul with fasting, But my prayer kept returning to me.

13 But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth; I humbled my soul with fasting, And my prayer kept returning to my bosom.

13 But when they were sick, I wore sackcloth, humbled myself with fasting, and prayed from my heart repeatedly for them.

13 But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom.

14 I went about as though it were my friend or brother; I bowed down in mourning, like one who mourns for a mother.

14 I went about as though it were my friend or brother; I bowed down mourning, as one who sorrows for a mother.

14 I paced about as for my friend or my brother, and fell down mourning as one weeps for one's mother.

14 I behaved myself as though he had been my friend or brother: I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother.

15 But at my stumbling they rejoiced and gathered themselves together; The afflicted people whom I did not know gathered together against me, They slandered me without ceasing.

15 But at my stumbling they rejoiced and gathered themselves together; The smiters whom I did not know gathered together against me, They slandered me without ceasing.

15 But when I stumbled, they rejoiced and gathered together. They gathered together against me— attackers whom I did not know. They tore me apart and would not stop.

15 But in mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together: yea, the abjects gathered themselves together against me, and I knew it not; they did tear me, and ceased not:

16 Like godless jesters at a feast, They gnashed at me with their teeth.

16 Like godless jesters at a feast, They gnashed at me with their teeth.

16 Malicious mockers— they gnashed their teeth against me.

16 With hypocritical mockers in feasts, they gnashed upon me with their teeth.

17 Lord, how long will You look on? Rescue my soul from their ravages, My only *life* from the lions.

17 Lord, how long will You look on? Rescue my soul from their ravages, My only *life* from the lions.

17 LORD, how long will you just watch? Rescue me from their destruction, my precious life from these young lions.

17 Lord, how long wilt thou look on? rescue my soul from their destructions, my darling from the lions.

- There are many forms of betrayal and breach of loyalty

18 I will give You thanks in the great congregation; I will praise You among a mighty people.

18 I will give You thanks in the great congregation; I will praise You among a mighty throng.

18 Then I will give you thanks in front of the great congregation; in the midst of the mighty throng I will praise you.

18 I will give thee thanks in the great congregation: I will praise thee among much people.

19 Do not let those who are wrongfully my enemies rejoice over me; Nor let those who hate me for no reason wink maliciously.

19 Do not let those who are wrongfully my enemies rejoice over me; Nor let those who hate me without cause wink maliciously.

19 Do not let my deceitful enemies gloat over me, nor let those who hate me without justification mock me with their eyes.

19 Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me: neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause.

20 For they do not speak peace, But they devise deceitful words against those who are quiet in the land.

20 For they do not speak peace, But they devise deceitful words against those who are quiet in the land.

20 For they do not speak peace; they devise clever lies against the peaceful people of the land.

20 For they speak not peace: but they devise deceitful matters against them that are quiet in the land.

- Unlike Elijah, who felt he was fighting all alone (1 Kings 19:10-18), David knew that many people in Israel supported him, those who were living quietly in the land (v20)

21 They opened their mouth wide against me; They said, "Aha, aha! Our eyes have seen it!"

21 They opened their mouth wide against me; They said, "Aha, aha, our eyes have seen it!"

21 They open their mouth wide against me, claiming, "Yes! Yes! We saw him do it with our own eyes!"

21 Yea, they opened their mouth wide against me, and said, Aha, aha, our eye hath seen it.

22 You have seen it, LORD, do not keep silent; Lord, do not be far from me.

22 You have seen it, O LORD, do not keep silent; O Lord, do not be far from me.

22 You see this, LORD, so do not be silent. Lord, do not be far from me!

22 This thou hast seen, O LORD: keep not silence: O Lord, be not far from me.

23 Stir Yourself, and awake to my right And to my cause, my God and my Lord.

23 Stir up Yourself, and awake to my right And to my cause, my God and my Lord.

23 Wake up! Arouse yourself to vindicate me and argue my case, my God and my Lord.

23 Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment, even unto my cause, my God and my Lord.

24 Judge me, LORD my God, according to Your righteousness, And do not let them rejoice over me.

24 Judge me, O LORD my God, according to Your righteousness, And do not let them rejoice over me.

24 Judge me according to your righteousness, LORD my God! But do not let them gloat over me.

24 Judge me, O LORD my God, according to thy righteousness; and let them not rejoice over me.

- David's cause was the Lord's cause; the Lord's reputation was at stake

25 Do not let them say in their heart, "Aha, our desire!" Do not let them say, "We have swallowed him up!"

25 Do not let them say in their heart, "Aha, our desire!" Do not let them say, "We have swallowed him up!"

25 Don't let them say in their hearts, "Yes! We got what we wanted." Don't let them say, "We have swallowed him up."

25 Let them not say in their hearts, Ah, so would we have it: let them not say, We have swallowed him up.

26 May those be ashamed and altogether humiliated who rejoice at my distress; May those who exalt themselves over me be clothed with shame and dishonor.

26 Let those be ashamed and humiliated altogether who rejoice at my distress; Let those be clothed with shame and dishonor who magnify themselves over me.

26 Instead, let those who gloat over the evil directed against me be ashamed and confounded together; Let those who exalt themselves over me be clothed with shame and dishonor.

26 Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together that rejoice at mine hurt: let them be clothed with shame and dishonour that magnify themselves against me.

27 May those shout for joy and rejoice, who take delight in my vindication; And may they say continually, "The LORD be exalted, Who delights in the **prosperity** of His servant."

27 Let them shout for joy and rejoice, who favor my vindication; And let them say continually, "The LORD be magnified, Who delights in the prosperity of His servant."

27 Let those who delight in my vindication shout for joy and rejoice! Let them continuously say, "Magnify the LORD, who delights in giving peace to⁸ his servant."

27 Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.

- "...prosperity" - *shalom*, not just "peace," but well-being in every aspect of life

- David's experience reminds us of Christ:

- Hated without cause (John 15:25)
- Falsely accused

- The Father “spared not His own son” (Rom 8:32) but willingly gave Him to die for the sins of the world

28 And my tongue shall proclaim Your righteousness *And* Your praise all day long.

28 And my tongue shall declare Your righteousness *And* Your praise all day long.

28 My tongue will declare your righteousness and praise you all day long.

28 And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long.