

# Psalm 7: God the Righteous Judge

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**C**an you think of some occasion where you were wrongly accused? Can you think of how much it hurt when someone jumped to false conclusions about you and questioned your reputation? Maybe someone threatened your job security? Maybe for a few readers, a threat was made on one's life?

The heading says this psalm was written by David because of Cush, a Benjamite. We do not know of this man from any other passage, but he was probably a relative of King Saul. It is possible that this psalm originated from the period when Saul was trying to hunt David down and unjust accusations were being made against David (1 Sam. 21-26). The psalm itself suggests that David was being wrongly accused and that his life was in danger. He was praying and begging for justice from God.

Prayer for salvation: "O Lord my God, I take refuge in you; save and deliver me from all who pursue me, or they will tear me like a lion and rip me to pieces with no one to rescue me" (Ps. 7:1-2). Here David not only has enemies, his life is threatened. Likewise, we should pray to God when we are in trouble. Prayer to God in a time of difficulty is natural. It is what God wants us to do. When we are unable to do any more, that does not mean that God is out of options.

A plea of innocence: "O Lord my God, if I have done this and there is guilt on my hands—if I have done evil to him who is at peace with me or without cause have robbed my foe—then let my enemy pursue and overtake me; let him trample my life to the ground and make me sleep in the dust" (Ps. 7:3-5). David claims the accusations against him are false. In these specific incidents, David prefigured the Christ, because Christ would be falsely accused and put to death on trumped up charges. While

David was not a sinless man, he was sinless of the charges against him that are alluded to in these verses.

A plea for justice: "Arise, O Lord, in your anger; rise up against the rage of my enemies. Awake, my God; decree justice. Let the assembled peoples gather around you. Rule over them from on high; let the Lord judge the peoples. Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, according to my integrity, O Most High. O righteous God, who searches minds and hearts, bring to an end the violence of the wicked and make the righteous secure" (Ps. 7:6-9).

God hates injustice, so when human justice goes wrong, that does not mean there is no recourse. God still will render his decision. He is the searcher of minds and hearts. His justice will be perfect because he knows all. God is not only concerned with what we do, but also with why we do what we do. God searches our motives. We are often misjudged by others, because people jump to conclusions about what our motives are. And they often guess wrongly. That will not happen with God's judgment.

Praise of God as a righteous judge: "My shield is God Most High, who saves the upright in heart. God is a righteous judge, a God who expresses his wrath every day. If he does not relent, he will sharpen his sword; he will bend and string his bow. He has prepared his deadly weapons; he makes ready his flaming arrows" (Ps. 7:10-13). David's enemies used swords and bow and arrows to try to kill him. God is pictured here as a warrior who will fight for the oppressed and who will wage war on those who are evil in order to bring about justice.

Evil and sin are self-defeating: "He who is pregnant with evil and conceives trouble gives birth to disillusionment. He who digs a hole and scoops it out falls into the pit he has made. The trouble he causes recoils on himself; his violence

comes down on his own head" (Ps. 7:14-16). These verses allude to the principle of reaping what you sow, which is a common theme in the Scriptures. As Moses said, "You may be sure that your sin will find you out" (Num. 32:23). Psalm 9:15 provides a parallel thought: "The nations have fallen into the pit they have dug." And the wisdom of Proverbs strikes a similar tone: "If a man digs a pit, he will fall into it; if a man rolls a stone, it will roll back on him" (Prov. 26:27).

One of the most poignant examples of this in all of history is the story of Haman and Mordecai in the book of Esther. Haman had plotted Mordecai's destruction and through much intrigue he was almost successful. He even had a gallows built for Mordecai's execution, but God arranged it so that the king could not sleep one night, and he realized that he had not rewarded Mordecai for his help. The king asked Haman the next day what should be done to reward someone greatly. Haman wrongly thought he would be the recipient of this reward. Haman had to arrange for Mordecai to be rewarded and led through the street in a ceremony of honor. Later Haman's evil plots were uncovered, and he was executed on the very gallows he had built for Mordecai.

A final word of praise and thanksgiving: "I will give thanks to the Lord because of his righteousness and will sing praise to the name of the Lord Most High" (Ps. 7:17). God is all powerful, so we ought to fear him. But since God is perfectly good and just, we respect, reverence, and love him.

Conclusion: God is fair; he will judge rightly. We can appeal to God when things are not just in this life. Evil people will fail in the end, because God will not let them get away with their wicked designs. Evil is self-defeating, but righteousness will be victorious in the end.