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## Psalm 109

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

## Psalm 109.

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### Topics.

- Be not silent, O God for deceitful men are speaking against me.
- Let an accuser stand at the right hand side of my accuser.
- Let the wicked be cut off from the earth; for he did not show kindness.
- My knees are weak through fasting; my body gaunt, with no fat.
- I will give great thanks to the LORD in the midst of the throng.

**FOR INFORMATION:** concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

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### INTRODUCTION

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Psalms are songs and prayers offered to God by the nation Israel, they cover the range of human emotion, expressing praise, faith, victory, sorrow, despair, depression, frustration and the troubled heart of a mourner. They contrast the righteous with the wicked, and include the wisdom and the treasure of God's word. Psalms were written at the beginning of the 15th century BC and probably collected in their final form in the 3rd century.

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### BOOK FIVE (PSALM 107-150)

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### PSALM 109:1-5

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To the Choirmaster. A Psalm of David.

#### **Be not Silent, O God for Deceitful Men are Speaking Against Me.**

- **Psalm 109:1-5:** Be not silent, O God of my praise! <sup>2</sup>For wicked and deceitful mouths are opened against me, speaking against me with lying tongues. <sup>3</sup>They encircle me with words of hate, and attack me without cause. <sup>4</sup>In return for my love they accuse me, but I give myself to prayer. <sup>5</sup>So they reward me evil for good, and hatred for my love.

Verse twenty-two shows that David has been fasting for so long that his body is weak and feeble. Added to these troubles wicked and deceitful men are speaking lies and words of hate against him and verbally attacking him for no apparent cause, but returning evil for good by rewarding the love he has shown them with hatred.

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### PSALM 109:6-14

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#### **Let an Accuser Stand at the Right Hand Side of My Accuser.**

- **Psalm 109:6-14:** Appoint a wicked man against him; let an accuser stand at his right hand. <sup>7</sup>When he is tried (judged in KJV) let him come forth guilty; let his prayer be counted as sin! <sup>8</sup>May his days be few; may another take his office! <sup>9</sup>May his children be fatherless and his wife a widow! <sup>10</sup>May his children wander about and beg, seeking food far from the ruins they inhabit! <sup>11</sup>May the creditor seize all that he has; may strangers plunder the fruits of his toil! <sup>12</sup>Let there be none to extend kindness to him, nor any to

pity his fatherless children! <sup>13</sup>May his posterity be cut off; may his name be blotted out in the second generation! <sup>14</sup>May the iniquity of his fathers be remembered before the LORD, and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out!

The wicked man may be understood to refer to any of the following: -

- Doeg, Saul, Ahithophel or some other familiar friend that had betrayed him.
- Some wicked tyrant, which may have ruled him with oppression and cruelty.
- All David's enemies and adversaries collectively since the Psalm, speaks of more than one person in various verses.
- All tyrannical princes and governors who were set over David's kingdom, but are now acting against him.
- One particular enemy, who was worse than all of the rest who were acting against David. In colloquial language we would say today, "The ring leader of the bunch."

Since David was speaking to God who knew his thoughts, he did not consider it necessary to mention the enemy by name which means the application of the Psalm can apply to any enemy of any generation of a similar nature and who is acting in the same manner. It is important to notice that David is not seeking to take out vengeance himself, but committing it to God that He would take vengeance on them.

**Appoint a wicked man against him:** (v6) David prays that his foe would be subjected to the wickedness of having a man placed over him like himself: meaning a man who is devoid of justice, truth, and has no care for what is right or any respect to character and propriety in the same way the wicked in focus has no respect for any of these things. It is a prayer that the wicked would be punished according to his offences. David desires that, this wicked man would be treated according to his wicked character and is praying that he would be treated with the same lack of compassion and mercy and as cruelly and harshly as he has treated others. Under the law it was not considered wrong for the faithful to desire that the wicked would be treated as they treat others and the following Scriptures of the Levitical law show that it was not wrong to desire that, the wicked would be treated according to the wickedness of their own character:

- If you do harm to another, then you shall pay life for life, <sup>24</sup>eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, <sup>25</sup>burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe. (Exodus. 21:23-24).
- If anyone injures his neighbour, as he has done it shall be done to him, <sup>20</sup>fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; whatever injury he has given a person shall be given to him. (Lev. 24:19-20)
- The judges shall inquire diligently, and if the witness is a false witness and has accused his brother falsely, <sup>19</sup>then you shall do to him as he had meant to do to his brother. So you shall purge the evil from your midst. <sup>20</sup>And the rest shall hear and fear, and shall never again commit any such evil among you. <sup>21</sup>Your eye shall not pity. It shall be life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot. (Deut. 19:18-21).

The mindset of the Old Testament faithful was that the wicked should be judged and punished according to what pain and harm they had afflicted upon their victims. The following verses show that Jesus in his famous Sermon on the Mount totally reversed this Old Testament mindset:

- You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' <sup>39</sup>But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. <sup>40</sup>And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. <sup>41</sup>And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. <sup>42</sup>Give

to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you.  
<sup>43</sup>"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'  
<sup>44</sup>But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, <sup>45</sup>so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. <sup>46</sup>For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? <sup>47</sup>And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? <sup>48</sup>You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect. (Matt. 5:38-48).

Since the Old Testament faithful lived under the Levitical law and the rule of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth it was not wrong for them to desire that those who had treated others cruelly would be treated themselves with the same type of cruelty.

**Let an adversary stand at his right hand:** (v6) meaning let an antagonist and opponent stand as a counsellor and adviser to the wicked man. It is most likely the wicked man David had in focus had acted as David's counsellor and adviser in the administration of the government and not only betrayed him, but also turned against him, should this be so David's prayer is that the wicked man might experience and know the hurt and what it was like to have such a man as his counsellor and adviser. David had such counsellors as anyone in authority has. The language used seems to imply that David refers specifically to someone who David had appointed to a position of trust and who had betrayed his trust and given him deceitful and harmful counsel and used his position to promote his own interests at the expense of David's. David's prayer is that such a man might be punished according to his own wicked ways and that he might know what it was like to have a bad and wicked adviser and counsellor working at his right hand side that does not have his best interest at heart, but is deceitfully seeking his downfall.

**When he is tried (judged) let his prayer become sin:** (v7) means when God (the judge) hears the prayer of the wicked let Him be the more provoked and enraged by it. The state of the wicked man that is praying who David has in focus is of a harsh, cruel and deceitful man praying without true sorrow and repentance and without faith, mercy or charity in his heart. Most likely praying God would give him greater power, authority and victory. Much like religious people today who have no interest in living a lifestyle that honours God, but nevertheless pray, but not because they want to know God, but because they want the benefits, they believe God is able to benefit them with.

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## PSALM 109:15-20

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### Let the Wicked be cut off; For He did Not Show Kindness.

- Psalm 109:15-20:** Let them (the wicked mans sins) be before the LORD continually, that he may cut off the memory of them from the earth! <sup>16</sup>For he did not remember to show kindness, but pursued the poor and needy and the brokenhearted, to put them to death. <sup>17</sup>He loved to curse; let curses come upon him! He did not delight in blessing; may it be far from him! <sup>18</sup>He clothed himself with cursing as his coat; may it soak into his body like water, like oil into his bones! <sup>19</sup>May it be like a garment that he wraps around him, like a belt that he puts on every day! <sup>20</sup>May this be the reward of my accusers from the LORD, of those who speak evil against my life!

These verses shine a spotlight on how grossly wicked the man David had in mind was. Rather than show kindness to the helpless, the hurting and the poor he aggressively sought after them to kill them (perhaps to take ownership of their homes, land and farms) and spoke lies and deceit about David to turn people against him and bring him to ruin. David's prayer seems at times to have one accuser in focus, but the language of the entire prayer embraces all who are accusing David without a cause which means that in certain places David's mind was solely focused upon the

chief of the group, while at other times it was focused upon the entire group. It is certain David was greatly wounded emotionally and felt a sense of rage as he witnessed this wicked man leading a number of others killing and slaughtering the poor, needy, the innocent and helpless. As one travels through David's Psalms it becomes clear that he genuinely cared about the poor and those who were being oppressed. At first glance a Christian maybe shocked that a man after God's own heart could pray such a prayer, but David had been deeply hurt, and betrayed his heart is transparent before the LORD, he is praying from what he is honestly feeling in his heart without any fear that God is going to reject him just because what he prays may not always be considered the nice or right thing to say.

Besides this prior to Jesus saying:

- You have heard it said, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, but I say to you, Do not return evil for evil." (Matt. 5:38-39).
- You have heard it said, "Love your neighbour and hate your enemy, but I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, and in this way you will be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Matt. 5:43-48).

It was not wrong for the faithful of the Old Testament to pray that justice and punishment would come upon such wicked men equal to the pain and hurt they had caused others. For those who still have difficulty to understand such a hostile prayer it might help to imagine how we might feel if we were watching the News on TV and saw that ruthless teenagers have beaten up an eighty year old woman just to get a few dollars from her purse, or greedy and evil men have kidnapped a young thirteen year old girl to be sold and used as a sex slave, or you hear that a suicide bomber has gone into a family restaurant and killed and maimed hundreds of innocent children, fathers and mothers etc. Perhaps if we are honest (especially if we love justice and care for the innocent) we might pray the same prayer. David cared about the broken hearted the poor and the needy this is why he is so stirred up; he is not indifferent to another human's pain. David was passionate about justice and hated seeing the innocent abused and treated with such cruelty and unkindness.

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### PSALM 109:21-27

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#### **My Knees are Weak through Fasting; my Body Gaunt, with No Fat.**

- **Psalm 109:21-27:** But you, O GOD my Lord, deal on my behalf for your name's sake; because your steadfast love is good, deliver me! <sup>22</sup>For I am poor and needy, and my heart is stricken within me. <sup>23</sup>I am gone like a shadow at evening; I am shaken off like a locust. <sup>24</sup>My knees are weak through fasting; my body has become gaunt, with no fat. <sup>25</sup>I am an object of scorn to my accusers; when they see me, they wag their heads. <sup>26</sup>Help me, O LORD my God! Save me according to your steadfast love! <sup>27</sup>Let them know that this is your hand; you, O LORD, have done it!

Since it was well known amongst the nations that David proclaimed the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob the God of Israel he prays that God would answer his prayer so that God's name would be honoured amongst the nations. David was aware that his life was a witness before others to the LORD. Likewise, everyone who confesses to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ should have this same consciousness, we are not witnesses simply when we are sharing the Gospel or our testimony our entire life is a witness to those around us. This is why it is so important to walk in the Spirit (i.e., love, compassion, kindness, mercy, grace, forgiveness etc.), and not in the flesh (i.e., anger, bitterness, resentment, jealousy greed and such like things.). (Gal 5:16-23).

**I am gone like a shadow at evening:** (v23) shadows only last until the darkness of the night comes, David feels that darkness is closing in upon him and like a shadow vanishes in the night death will take him to the darkness of the grave.

**I am shaken off like a locust:** (v23) locusts are the most unwanted pests in the Middle East, whenever they are seen on anything fruitful, they are flicked off its leaf like an unwanted bug to its death. This is how David is feeling he is surrounded by a strong and influential evil man, who with a band of others, are seeking to destroy him. Added to these troubles David has been praying and fasting for so long that his body is weak and feeble.

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## PSALM 109:28-31

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### **I will Give Great Thanks to the LORD in the Midst of the Throng.**

- **Psalm 109:28-31:** Let them curse, but you will bless! They arise and are put to shame, but your servant will be glad! <sup>29</sup>May my accusers be clothed with dishonor; may they be wrapped in their own shame as in a cloak! <sup>30</sup>With my mouth I will give great thanks to the LORD; I will praise him in the midst of the throng. <sup>31</sup>For he stands at the right hand of the needy, to save him from those who condemn his soul to death.

The expression, "Let them curse, but you will bless!" Carries the idea that no matter how much David's enemies may speak lies and deceit against him and scoff and mock him, God will at the right time bless him. These verses again show that the underlying theme of David's prayer is that God would treat his enemies in the same way that they have treated him and others and would shame and humble them in the same way that they have humbled others and put them to shame.

**I will praise him in the midst of the throng:** (v30) here David's great faith is manifested in that even amongst all this turmoil, sorrow and grief he gives thanks and praise to the LORD. David's faith was such that in his mind's eye he not only saw God standing at his right and side, but also standing at the right hand side of all the needy to save them from those who seek to condemn them to death. This is the perfect picture every faithful man and woman who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ should have in their minds eye. Christ, by his Spirit, love and grace is standing on their right hand side to save all the faithful from the law of sin and death which states:

- All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," (Rom. 3:23).

All of us are born to die, but in Christ death is simply a long peaceful sleep until the Lord descends from heaven with the cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God and the dead in Christ are raised and those who are alive, who are left, are caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall they always be with the Lord. (1 Thess. 4:16-17).

Jesus said:

- All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. (John 6:37).
- I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. (John 10:28).

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*As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.*

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