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Psalm 58

(2019)

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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 58.

Topics.

- Your hearts devise wrong you gods who judge wickedly.
- The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray from birth.
- Break the teeth and tear out the fangs of the young lions, O LORD.
- The righteous will rejoice when vengeance falls upon the wicked.
- There is reward for the righteous a God who judges on earth.

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.

INTRODUCTION

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.

BOOK TWO (PSALM 42-72)

1

PSALM 58:1-5

To the Choirmaster: According to "Do Not Destroy." A Miktam of David.

Your Hearts Devise Wrong you gods who Judge Wickedly.

- **Psalm 58:1-5:** Do you indeed decree what is right, you gods? Do you judge the children of man uprightly? ²No, in your hearts you devise wrongs; your hands deal out violence on earth. ³The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray from birth, speaking lies. ⁴They have venom like the venom of a serpent, like the deaf adder that stops its ear, ⁵so that it does not hear the voice of charmers or of the cunning enchanter.

Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the LORD, saying:

- Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders? (Exodus 15:11).

This verse implies that there are other gods in the world, but the invisible, immortal Almighty God the creator of all things and source of all life is the greatest and only true God.

- Jethro said, "Blessed be the LORD, who has delivered you (Moses and Israel) out of the hand of the Egyptians and out of the hand of Pharaoh and has delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians. ¹¹Now I know that the LORD is greater than all gods, because in this affair they dealt arrogantly with the people." (Exodus 18:10-11)

Idol gods made of stone and wood that cannot see, talk or walk have no power to deal arrogantly with people. The gods who dealt arrogantly with the people of Israel in this context refers to Pharaoh the king of Egypt and the princes and taskmasters of Egypt who treated the people of Israel

with cruel slavery. They are referred to as gods because of their power over people and because of their power the Egyptian people looked up to them as gods. One of the Ten Commandments is:

- You shall have no other gods before me. (Exodus 20:3).

This clearly implies that there are other gods in the world that men and women can believe in. These are of course gods created by the imagination of man, and not real gods at all, though they can have a powerful influence over those who believe in them.

David wrote:

- Do you indeed decree what is right, you gods? Do you judge the children of man uprightly? (Psalm 58:1).

Idol gods made of stone and wood that cannot see, talk or walk have no power to decree anything nor are they able to judge men and women. In this context the gods refer to wicked men who have the power and authority to judge. They are referred to as gods because they do have power to judge as God the eternal Judge does.

Asaph wrote:

- God has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods he holds judgment² "How long will you judge unjustly, and show partiality to the wicked? (Psalm 82:1).

The picture painted here is of a divine courtroom with a panel of human judges (called gods) sitting at a long bench in the courtroom with God the Almighty sitting at the head holding all honest and righteous justice above all other judges. Neither gods of wood and stone or gods of the imagination have any power to judge righteously or wickedly the following verses of this Psalm clearly show that the gods in focus here are human judges given the title gods because they have the power to judge as God the true Judge does.

2

Asaph wrote:

- I said, "You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you; ⁷nevertheless, like men you shall die, and fall like any prince." (Psalm 82:6-7).

The context of this Psalm shows that the gods in focus here are men who have been appointed judges over the children of Israel who are robbing the weak and the fatherless and the afflicted and the destitute from honest justice. This is why Asaph said, "You are gods, sons of the Most High nevertheless like men you shall die," meaning like unsaved and wicked men. (Psalm 82:6-7).

Ezekiel wrote:

- Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, Thus says the Lord GOD: "Because your heart is proud, and you have said, 'I am a god, I sit in the seat of the gods, in the heart of the seas,' yet you are but a man, and no god, though you make your heart like the heart of a god (Ezekiel 28:2).

This verse shows that the king of Tyre was so full of pride he believed he was a god. It was common during the early ages for men who had great power, authority and rule to exalt themselves as a god.

Zechariah wrote:

- The household gods utter nonsense, and the diviners see lies; they tell false dreams and give empty consolation. Therefore the people wander like sheep; they are afflicted for lack of a shepherd. (Zech. 10:2).

The household gods here refers to idols made of wood and stone, obviously they can't talk or give council, but people in the house do

believe that these wooden statutes speak to them so the gods in focus here are those in the house who speak what they believe their idols are inspiring them to say.

John wrote:

- The Jews answered Jesus, “It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God.” ³⁴Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your Law, ‘I said, you are gods’? ³⁵If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be broken— ³⁶do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God?’” (John 10:33-36).

Asaph said, “You are gods,” in (Psalm 82:6) to those who had been appointed as judges over God’s people. He referred to them as gods because they had the power to judge the people.

In the book of Acts it is written:

- When the crowds saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in Lycaonian, “The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!” (Acts 14:11).

Here we see that people of the apostles’ era believed that human men could be gods.

Paul wrote:

- For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords” (1 Cor. 8:5).

Paul acknowledges that there are many gods in the world, this of course does not mean there are many real gods, but refers to all the gods people around the world believe in such as idols and the gods man has created by his own imagination. Even though these gods are not real they do affect a person’s emotions and behaviour according to the level of belief they are given.

This is because the human nervous system does not have a brain of its own and therefore cannot tell the difference between a real image on the imagination of the mind or a fantasy one and therefore responds to the image as though it is real. The image is given power by belief, the stronger the belief the greater the power the image has over the emotions and the mind and the greater the power to influence behaviour. For further information see the title:

- Demons in, Satan and his Family (ON WEBSITE MENU).

The gods David has in focus in this Psalm are human judges (which includes kings, rulers and anyone who has authority and power over others) who are so wicked and corrupt in their hearts that they lie and devise violent plans (including wars) on earth to expand their own empire (religious or secular) and to increase their own selfish ambition and their riches, power and wealth. David describes these so-called gods as being like scorpions and poisonous serpents with the voice of a cunning enchanter. Meaning though they are grossly corrupt they do not outwardly appear so. They are men who flatter and charm while all the time have hidden evil agenda’s and use others to achieve their own greed and selfish ambition.

The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray from birth: (v3) the word estranged in this context carries the idea of being separated from, set against or turn to turn away from. The words “they are estranged from the womb” does not mean that certain babies are predestined to be born wicked and evil, but it can refer to any of the following three:

1. Those who refuse to listen to the counsel of their parents and separate themselves from them to go their own way and do their own thing.

2. Those who are separated from their parents and anyone else that loves them from the womb and because of this they go astray and are full of anger and lies, they learn cunning and their heart is hardened so that they do not hear instruction.
3. Those who have corrupt and wicked parents and are raised up under their influence and therefore grow up in the same way. The principal could be likened to those who are raised in false religions and grow up and continue to proclaim the same false teaching from generation to generation. Likewise, to those who are raised in crooked governments and continue to rule corruptly over those under their authority.

Naturally there are exceptions within each of these groups there always is to the general rule of all things, but whichever of these three it refers to is irrelevant since the important thing is that they are men who are abusing the power and authority they have for their own selfish and corrupt gain.

PSALM 58:6-9

Break the Teeth and Tear out the Fangs of the Young Lions.

- **Psalm 58:6-9:** O God, break the teeth in their mouths; tear out the fangs of the young lions, O LORD! ⁷Let them vanish like water that runs away; when he aims his arrows, let them be blunted. ⁸Let them be like the snail that dissolves into slime, like the stillborn child who never sees the sun. ⁹Sooner than your pots can feel the heat of thorns, whether green or ablaze, may he sweep them away!

The expression, "break the teeth in their mouths; tear out the fangs" refers to their deceit and lies that they spew out of their mouths clothed in charm and flattery. This prayer of David's is not a prayer from a spirit of hatred and from a lust and craving for revenge, but from a spirit that loves justice and greatly desires that the wicked and evil that plot harm and hurt upon others would be judged according to their evil deeds. As the reader travels through David's Psalms two things become very clear, firstly that David was far from being a perfect man and he knew it and secondly that David did care about the well-being of those in his kingdom and hated it when he saw the rich and those who had great authority and power cheating the helpless out of what was rightfully theirs by perverting justice and oppressing the poor for their own personal gain. This is one of the reasons God said of David:

- I have sought out a man after my own heart to be prince over my people. (1 Samuel. 13:14).

Paul after the reading from the Law and the Prophets said:

- God raised up David to be their king, of whom he testified and said, "I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will." ²³Of this man's offspring God has brought to Israel a Saviour, Jesus, as he promised. (Acts 13:22-23).

Imperfect as David was in his own personal life he had a heart of compassion for those in his kingdom and for the helpless and the poor. This is why he prays so vehemently against those who abuse them. It is not from a spirit of revenge David is praying but from the hatred he has toward seeing the innocent destroyed by war simply so that a king or ruler gains greater power, property wealth and land and seeing others abused and treated as second class citizens by those who consider themselves superior and elite. This is why he prays that the LORD will cast the wicked down into the pit of destruction.

PSALM 58:10

The Righteous will Rejoice when Vengeance falls on the Wicked.

- **Psalm 58:10:** The righteous will rejoice when he sees the vengeance; he will bathe his feet in the blood of the wicked.

Judgment at this time is delayed it could be said, "We are living in the long day of death and the long day of grace." The wicked, murder and steal and the rich and powerful oppress the poor and the helpless for their own selfish gain, and governments worldwide create wars to expand their own power and wealth and the innocent suffer. Because of these injustices it not only appears that there is no justice in the earth, but also deceives some into thinking there is no God. The righteous will rejoice when they see the wicked judged and punished, because those who have a righteous heart love justice and hate seeing the innocent suffer because of the hurt and afflictions the wicked inflict on them. If we as Christians are solely looking forward to Christ's return because we will be with him in glory it may mean we are still primarily focused on self. This is because the Lord's glorious return will mean no more hunger to starving children, no more innocent families killed in war, no young girls being sold as sex slaves and no innocent and naïve person being destroyed by drugs. It will mean no global companies will be able to make mega billions of \$\$\$ profit by oppressing the poor (i.e., third world countries) to make even greater profits etc. When we shift our eyes from self and toward others the majestic royal beauty and glory of Christ's return and the wonder and joy of it is magnified a hundred-fold.

PSALM 58:11

There is Reward for the Righteous a God who Judges on Earth.

- **Psalm 58:11:** Mankind will say, "Surely there is a reward for the righteous; surely there is a God who judges on earth."

5

When the heart of mankind worldwide is looked at as one collective heart it will be seen with a great desire to see honest justice done (of course there are exceptions) this is why when Christ returns and the wicked are judged those who love honest justice will say, "There is a God on earth." These last two verses (v10-11) will be fulfilled when the Lord Jesus Christ returns in glory as, King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to rule and reign from God's Holy City Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to establish God's Kingdom on earth during his glorious millennial reign. The dead in Christ (Old and New Testament) and the faithful, who are alive, will be gathered together in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6) to rule and reign as kings and priests with the Lord over those nations who are left outside the Holy City of God. Christ the King united with his people will not only bring peace to the Middle East, but establish God's Kingdom of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, joy and peace throughout the world and the glory of God will cover the earth. Jesus will do justice to the poor and oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever. He will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power. The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish. The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the wolf and everyone will eat of their own hands because all that they plant will produce. All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God.

The book of Revelation states:

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

In Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

The great prophet Isaiah wrote:

- They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. (Isaiah 11:9).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done. Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev. 20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory. For further information see titles:

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second Resurrection or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

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.
