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## Text: Psalm 1:1-6

**Theme:** Take refuge with the blessed Man.

**Introduction:** The Psalms, in addition to being a hymnbook, develop the Davidic Covenant (Psalm 89). For example, Psalm 1 identifies the “blessed man” (singular) as someone who delights on the Law of the Lord (cf. Deut. 17:18-19). Then Psalm 2 develops the Davidic King as God’s Son (2:7) who will crush the wicked (2:9). Who is this Davidic King? Could it be David? Psalm 3 reminds us in the title that David was a deeply flawed man and stirs us to long for a future King who will bring blessing on His people (3:8).

- I. Those who take refuge with the blessed Man prosper (1-6).
  - A. This blessed man is the ideal Davidic King (1-3).
    1. Notice the shift from singular to plural (1-3; 4-6). Poetry is intended to be read carefully. When we see the blessed man (singular) in contrast to the wicked (plural), we are intended to highlight this difference.

**Application:** What does it look like to trust in man? The Psalmist describes it as a progression—walk, stand, sit (1). Perhaps today, we walk in the counsel of the wicked by the shows that we watch on Netflix. Let us be careful to guard ourselves from walking in the counsel of the wicked.

2. Just like the ideal Davidic King avoids 3 things that turn his heart from God (Deut. 17:16-17), so this blessed man avoids 3 things that turn his heart from God (1). In addition, this blessed Man delights in all God’s Law (cf. John 10:34, Law refers to Psalms) just like the ideal Davidic King (Deut. 17:18-19). In fact, the ideal King would write out the whole Torah in order to observe all God’s Law.
    3. Jeremiah clearly alludes to this passage (Jer. 17:5-8), but then moves to the ideal Davidic King (Jer. 17:12-13). Jeremiah likely viewed the blessed Man in Psalm 1 as referring to the Lord who is the hope of Israel (cf. Jer. 17:13).
    4. Psalm 1 and 2 are intended to be read together. Notice that Psalm 1 begins with “blessed” and the last phrase in Psalm 2 ends with “blessed.” Psalm 2 identifies the blessed Man in Psalm 1 to be God’s Son.
  - B. How blessed are all who take refuge in *Him* (6; 2:12).
    1. Psalm 1 and 2 are intended to be read together. Neither Psalm has a title. Psalm 1 begins with “blessed” and Psalm 2 ends with “blessed.” In addition, there are numerous parallels between these 2 Psalms (“way” 1:1 & 2:12; “sit” 1:1 & 2:4; “meditate 1:2 & 2:1; “perish” and “way” 1:6 & 2:12).

2. Since the blessed Man (singular; switches to plural in v. 4-6) in Psalm 1:1 is Christ, how do we become blessed? We are blessed by taking refuge in Him (2:12; cf. 34:8) because the Lord knows the way of the righteous (1:6).
  3. Jeremiah understood Psalm 1 as referring to trusting in the Lord rather than man (Jer. 17:5-8). Instead of saying that the blessed man *delights in the Law of the Lord*, Jeremiah says that the blessed man “trusts in the Lord.” Jeremiah emphasizes this by saying, “whose trust is the Lord” (Jer. 17:7). Jeremiah understood Psalm 1 as taking refuge in the Lord.
  4. The prosperous tree is intended to remind us of the Garden of Eden where the 4 rivers flowed and caused the trees to prosper (Gen. 2:8-10).
- C. The wicked are not so (4-6).
1. The wicked are like chaff—they perish (4, 6). Here today and gone tomorrow.
  2. Psalm 2 develops the result of the wicked—broken with a rod of iron and shattered like earthenware (2:9).

**Application:** Perhaps you are concerned over what the wicked may do (Ps. 37)? There is no need to worry. God knows the way of the righteous. Trust in His care.

**Conclusion:** Instead of taking refuge with the wicked, take refuge in this ideal Davidic King—Christ Jesus!

## Text: Psalm 2:1-12

**Theme:** Take refuge with the blessed Man.

**Introduction:** The NT authors clearly understood Psalm 2 through the lens of the Davidic Covenant (Heb. 1:5; Heb 5:5; Acts 13:33-34). Notice that the author of Hebrews combines Psalm 2:7 with 2 Samuel 7:14 which is a Davidic Covenant passage (Heb. 1:5). In addition, the author of Hebrews was not saying that Jesus is greater than angels because He is called a “Son” (cf. Job 1:6). Rather, the author of Hebrews is saying that Jesus is the anticipated Son who would rule on the throne of David.

- I. Those who take refuge with God’s Royal Son will be blessed (1-12).
  - A. The wicked reject the Lord and His Anointed (1-3).
    1. Instead of meditating on God’s Law (1:2), the wicked meditate on their plans to overthrow God (2:1).
    2. Just like the wicked in Psalm 1 (1:1), they take counsel together (2:2).

3. What cords do the wicked cast away (2:3)? They refuse to be bound by God's Law (1:2). Since they reject God, He gives them over to degrading passions (Rom. 1:24-32).
- B. God laughs at the rebellion of the wicked (4-6).
1. God, who "sits in the heavens" (4) is contrasted with the kings "of the earth" (2).
  2. The wicked will be terrified (5). This is the same word used to describe Joseph's brothers when they found out he was alive and ruler in Egypt (Gen. 45:3).
  3. God's plan to thwart the wicked was bound up in the Davidic Covenant (6)—He sets His King in Zion!
- C. The Royal Son proclaims the decree from the Father (7-9).
1. Although David is the author of this Psalm (cf. Acts 4:25-26), the anointed One—Christ—is rehearsing the promise—"I will tell of the decree."
  2. When the author of Hebrews (1:5) connects 2 Samuel 7:14 and Psalm 2:7, it should strike us as odd. Clearly, 2 Sam. 7:14 refers to Solomon (i.e. "when he commits iniquity"). Yet, Psalm 2:7 connects the Son promise with Christ. Clearly, the author of Hebrews is picking up on the idea that this Son is the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant (Ps. 89:3-4).
  3. His kingdom will include the nations and the ends of the earth (8).
  4. Just like an iron rod smashes a clay pot, so this Son will smash all those who rise up in rebellion against Him (9).
- D. Let the wicked be warned (10-12).
1. The wicked rulers are warned to "show discernment" (10). This is the same word used in Joshua 1:7-8 as "success." This success comes with careful attention to God's Word (Josh. 1:7-8; cf. Ps. 1:2).
  2. Worship the Lord with fear and trembling (11). Why? Because He crushes the wicked (12).

**Application:** The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. But what does it mean to fear the Lord? During the plagues in Egypt, Moses warned of a massive hailstorm that would kill man and beast. There were some servants of Pharaoh who heard this warning and feared the Lord (Ex. 9:20-21). Because they feared the Lord, they brought the livestock into their houses.

**Conclusion:** There is nowhere to hide. This anointed King *will* crush the wicked. Your only hope is to take refuge in the Lord. To take refuge in the Lord is to turn away from the counsel of the wicked.

## Text: Psalm 3:1-8

**Theme:** Confidence in the midst of adversity.

**Introduction:** David echoes God's promise to Abraham when the Abrahamic Covenant was given—"I am a shield to you" (Gen. 15:1; cf. Ps. 3:3). For David, the Davidic covenant is a continuation and further development of the Abrahamic Covenant. In addition, David sees a connection between his enemies and the enemy of the Seed of the woman (Gen. 3:14-16). The Seed of the woman would crush the head of the seed of the serpent. David's enemies would be smitten on the cheek and their teeth would be shattered (7).

- I. You can have confidence in the midst of adversity (1-8).
  - A. You can have confidence even though the adversity is great (1-2).
    1. 3 times David refers to how *many* enemies he has (1-2). David is referring to Absalom's rebellion. During that rebellion, Ahithophel counseled Absalom to allow him to take 12,000 men to attack David while he was weary (2 Sam. 17:1-2).
    2. The wicked had taken counsel together against God's anointed (cf. Ps. 2:2). This time, they are claiming that God cannot deliver him (2).
  - B. You can have confidence because God is your shield (3-6).
    1. Why does David refer to God as his shield? He gets this from God's conversation with Abraham (Gen. 15:1). In Genesis 14:20, God was a "deliverer" (same Hebrew word as shield) for Abraham. God was a "shield" to Abraham in battle when he rescued Lot. No doubt, this story brought great encouragement to David.
    2. The Lord was his *glory* (3). Perhaps David was reminding himself of God's covenant promise to him that through his Seed his kingdom would be established (2 Sam. 7:12-13).
    3. David employs a term that was connected with the Davidic Covenant. In Psalm 110, the Lord shatters kings, judges nations, and will lift up *His* head. Since David takes refuge in the Lord (2:12), part of the blessing is that his head is also lifted.
    4. The context of this Psalm comes from Absalom's rebellion in 2 Samuel 15-17. David was fleeing for his life (2 Sam. 15:14). As he flees for his life he becomes weary (2 Sam. 16:14; 17:2). Ahithophel's plan to take out David that very night while he was weary (2 Sam. 17:1-2) matches David's words—"I lay down and slept; I awoke for the Lord sustains me" (5-6).

**Application:** As David prepared to lay down after a long and exhausting day. He knew that his life was hanging by a thread. As he called out to God, God heard and answered his prayer. Just as David took refuge in the Lord, so you ought to take refuge in Him.

- C. You can have confidence because the serpent's head has already been crushed (7-8; cf. Gen. 3:15).
1. David anticipates the serpent's head being crushed. Not only is there an allusion to the cross, but David explicitly states that salvation belongs to the Lord (8).
  2. Instead of cursing (Ps. 1:1-3; cf. Jer. 17:5-6), God gives blessing for His people (8).
- Application:** For David, the anticipation of the cross produced a confidence. He knew the outcome.

**Conclusion:** Worry and anxiety is the opposite of trusting in the Lord. When you find yourself anxious about what the wicked may do, take comfort that God through Christ has already dealt the final death blow.

Text: Psalm 4:1-8

**Theme:** God graciously hears the prayers of the righteous.

**Introduction:** When God thwarts the plans of the wicked, they are left with one reasonable response—to repent (offer sacrifices) and trust in the Lord who hears the righteous (5).

- I. God graciously hears the prayers of the righteous (1-8).
  - A. Because *God* maintains my righteousness, He hears me when I call (1; cf. 3).
    1. There is some debate as to the meaning of the phrase “God of my righteousness.” It could refer to God's righteousness (i.e. my righteous God). But the context (cf. 3) and the surrounding Psalms (7:8) suggests that David is referring to his integrity. But even Psalm 7 quickly jumps to God's righteousness (7:17). For David, the righteous are those whose sins have been covered (32:1-2, 11).
    2. God is under no obligation to hear us (1). Yet, because He is a gracious God, He hears and answers our prayers.

**Application:** God hears the prayers of the righteous! But why do we not pray? We don't pray because we see our own sinfulness and think that God will not hear us.
  - B. The wicked, in contrast, find themselves frustrated (4) because God hears the prayer of the righteous (2-5).
    1. In verse 1, David speaks to God, but in verses 2-5, David turns his attention to the wicked (i.e. sons of men).
    2. Although there is no evidence to suggest that Psalm 4 continues the story of Psalm 3. The story from Psalm 3 does have an example of the wicked dishonoring the righteous (cf. 2 Sam. 16: 7). Shimei cursed David as he fled from Absalom. The sons of men actually love what is worthless (2).

3. The reason the sons of men find themselves frustrated (i.e. trembling; 4) is because God hears the righteous (3). He has set them apart for Himself.

**Illustration:** There is nothing more frustrating than when a referee sides with one team on every call. Yet, this is exactly what God does for the righteous—He tips the scale in their favor every time.

4. The primary way that the word “tremble” is used, is to refer to agitation from an emotion like anger (TWOT). In this context, David is referring to the wicked who find themselves frustrated that God has thwarted their plans to overthrow the righteous (4). Paul quotes this verse in a similar way in Eph. 4:26. The righteous in Eph. 4:22, 25 are told to lay aside the old man—namely, the frustration that comes from going against God’s plans.

**Explanation:** Some have taken this verse as a command from God to be angry concerning the sin of this world, but that interpretation does not fit with the context.

5. As the wicked lay in their bed, frustrated over their plans being thwarted, they are encouraged to be silent (4). In addition, they should offer sacrifices (i.e. repent) and trust in the Lord. We find here, a clear example of the Gospel.

**Application:** Do you find yourself frustrated with God’s plans. Perhaps your frustration comes because you are not part of His Kingdom. Repent and trust in the Lord!

C. In contrast to the sons of men, the righteous have joy and peace (6-8).

1. Although many are saying (cf. 3:2) that God will not give good to the righteous (6), God does (7). Although the “good” may not be good things, He does put gladness in our hearts.
2. In addition, peace is only found in the Lord (8). You can lie down in peace because God is your shield.

## Text: Psalm 5:1-12

**Theme:** God hears the righteous because He is righteous.

**Introduction:** Psalm 5 continues to develop ideas found in the previous Psalms. For example, many have been falsely accusing David (Ps. 3:2; 4:6), but now, he reminds himself that God destroys those who speak falsehood (5:6). In addition, David has access to God in His Temple (Ps. 5:7) where God hears his prayers (Ps. 3:4) and has installed His King (2:6). Finally, David lays down and is sustained (Ps. 3:5; 4:8) and in the morning calls out to God (Ps. 5:3).

- I. God hears the righteous because He is righteous (1-12).
  - A. The righteous can call out to God because He hears (1-3).

1. David identifies with the blessed man in Psalm 1:2. He uses the same root word for “meditate” when he says “consider my *groaning*.”
2. Instead of plotting *against* the Lord (Ps. 2:2), the righteous pledge his allegiance to the Lord (5:2; “my King and my God”).

**Application:** When the dust settles from your adversity (i.e. “in the morning”) what is the first thing you find yourself doing? For David, the only reasonable response is to call out to the One who rescued him.

B. The wicked have no access to God (4-7).

1. God can have nothing to do with the wicked because of His character. He is a righteous God. He does not delight in wickedness nor does evil dwell within Him (4-5a). The wicked have no access to God (cf. 7).

**Explanation:** Paul identifies the fate of the wicked in Romans 3:10-19 (cf. Ps. 5:9; Rom. 3:13). When they are confronted with their rebellion against God, they will be silent (Rom. 3:19).

2. God’s disposition towards the wicked is spelled out with abundant clarity—He *hates* the wicked (5b-6). It is common to hear Christians say that God loves the sinner, but hates the sin. Even though there is a sense in which God has compassion/patience for the wicked, God’s disposition is clear.

**Explanation:** David could use no stronger word than “abhor.” David does not say that God abhors murder and deceit, but that God abhors the man of bloodshed and deceit.

**Application:** When we understand God’s disposition towards all those who are in rebellion against Him, We can’t help but marvel that while we were yet sinners Christ died for *us*. While God was rightfully angry towards us Christ satisfied God’s righteous anger.

3. In contrast, David has full access to God (7). If this Psalm is still referring to David’s flight from Absalom (see intro), then He is far from Jerusalem. During this time period, access to God was through the High Priest who was in the Temple.

**Explanation:** He has access because of God’s covenantal love (lovingkindness; *hesed*) for him not through any work he has done.

C. God hears the righteous because *He* gives them righteousness (8-12; cf. Jer. 23:5-6).

1. God is the One who is giving righteousness and blessing (i.e. “your righteousness” v. 8; “Your way” v. 8; “You shelter them” v. 11; “It is You who blesses” v. 12; “You surround him with favor” v. 12).
2. It may be tempting to interpret v. 9-10 as David comparing his righteousness with their wickedness. But that’s not how Paul interprets these verses. Paul argues that all are guilty before God (Rom. 3:9). In fact, righteousness can only come through faith in Christ (Rom. 3:21-22).
3. Those who take refuge in the Lord are glad, sing for joy, and exult in the Lord (11-12). There is no other reasonable response.



## Text: Psalm 6:1-10

**Theme:** Even in the midst of discipline, God hears the righteous.

**Introduction:** Some view Psalm 6 as a confession of sin because David asks the Lord not to rebuke Him in His anger (1). But there is no confession of sin in this Psalm (cf. Ps. 32:5; Ps. 38:18; Ps. 51:1-4). Although this Psalm is not a confession of sin, David is facing consequences because of his sin. Nathan the prophet told David that because he took Uriah's wife (2 Sam. 12:11-12), God will allow his neighbor to lie with his wives openly (cf. 2 Sam. 16:21-22).

- I. Even in the midst of discipline, God hears the righteous (1-10).
  - A. Discipline comes from the hand of God (1-3).
    1. David understood where discipline comes from. Every phrase in these first 3 verses ought to remind us of God's role in discipline.
    2. The author of Hebrews reminds us that God disciplines every one of His children (Heb 12:7-8). In fact, if you have not received discipline, then you are not one of His children (Heb. 12:8).

**Application:** When you are going through difficult times, do you pause to remember that God is not only allowing this discipline, but He has orchestrated it—it comes from His hand.

- B. God hears the righteous because of His covenantal (*hesed*) love (4-5).
  1. God had made a covenant with David that He would establish his kingdom (2 Sam. 7:12). If Absalom overthrows David, then God would not be faithful to His covenantal promise.
  2. What does David mean when he says that “in *Sheol* (grave) who will give you praise” (5)? Certainly, we will praise God for all eternity with the angels and elders (cf. Rev. 4:9-11). It seems like David is referring to his opportunity to stir up others to praise the Lord with him (cf. Ps. 150:6).

**Application:** In the midst of trial, we have a great opportunity to stir up others to praise the Lord with us. When David was collecting the money for the future temple, his actions stirred up the people to praise the Lord (1 Chron. 29:9-10).

- C. The present suffering is intended to point us to Christ's future rule (6-10).
  1. There is no doubt that David suffered severely at the hands of his enemies (6-7). But this suffering should not surprise us. Paul faced similar trials throughout his life.
  2. In the midst of the suffering, David anticipates the destruction of the wicked (8-10). The Psalmist links Psalm 6:10 with Psalm 2:5 by using the same Hebrew word (“dismayed” 6:10 and “terrify” 2:5). Although David does not explicitly mention the rule of Christ, this passage is linked back to Psalm 2 which anticipates Christ's rule.

3. In the midst of suffering God hears our prayers (8-9). Perhaps David recognizes our struggle to pray during difficult times, so he tells us 3 times that God hears.

**Application:** Why are you suffering in silence? God hears your prayers. Call out to Him.

**Conclusion:** Suffering is intended to point us to Christ's future rule when God puts all His enemies under His foot. All those who are in rebellion against Him will be crushed and there will be no more suffering.

Text: Psalm 7:1-17

**Theme:** Give praise to God because He is righteous.

**Introduction:** All the other historical subtitles clearly refer to specific known events (3, 18, 34, 51, 52, 54, 56, 57, 59, 60, 63, and 142), so we should assume that Psalm 7 refers to a specific known event. But we have no record of a Benjamite named Cush. Saul's father, who was a Benjamite, was named Kish (cf. 1 Sam. 10:11). Jeremiah 13:23 uses Cushite to refer to a person of dark skin, but then refers to people who do evil. So, David may be using Cush to refer to the character of Shimei. Since Psalm 3 refers to Absalom's rebellion (2 Sam. 14-16); and since Shimei was a Benjamite (2 Sam. 16:5, 11); and since Shimei's words are similar to the words of Cush (Ps. 7:4 with 2 Sam. 16:7-8); and since Shimei's end result is the same as this man named Cush (Ps. 7:16 with 1 Kings 2:36-46); we should assume that Shimei and Cush refer to the same person.

- I. Give praise to God because He is righteous (1-17).
  - A. Because God is righteous take refuge in Him (1-5).
    1. This is the third time David has mentioned taking refuge in God (2:12; 5:11). But now, for the first time, David gives the reason—his enemies will tear him like a lion (2). For David, taking refuge in God is his only hope.
    2. Because David knew he was in the right, he was willing to put his own life on the line (3-5).

**Explanation:** David actually viewed Shimei's cursing as coming from God (2 Sam. 16:11-12). How can David say that he is innocent, yet say that God told Shimei to say this? He knew that God would deal righteously.

- B. Because God is righteous let Him deal with the wicked (6-11).

**Explanation:** After Shimei cursed and threw stones at David (2 Sam. 16:5-6), Abishai, one of David's generals, wanted to cut off Abishai's head (2 Sam. 16:9). Even from a military perspective, you don't want your enemies following you as you hide (2 Sam. 16:13). Yet, David was willing to let God deal with the wicked.

1. David recognizes that vengeance belongs to God (6-7; cf. Rom. 12:19).

**Application:** We know that vengeance belongs to God. But we struggle to wait on God to deal with the wicked. When we pray and ask God to deal with the wicked, we need to leave it with God and not take vengeance in our own hands.

2. David knew the accusations were false (8-11). Shimei accused David of killing Saul and his household (2 Sam. 16:8). Yet, David actually spared Saul's life. So, he calls on God to judge righteously.

**Explanation:** David connects Psalm 7 with Psalm 3 by using the term "shield" (cf. Ps. 3:3 with Ps. 7:10). This again establishes the link between Absalom's rebellion (2 Sam. 14-16) and Shimei's cursing (2 Sam. 16).

C. Because God is righteous He deals with the wicked (12-16).

1. God is merciful to those who repent, but He sharpens His sword to those who stiffen their necks against Him (12-13).
2. God is righteous in dealing with the wicked because they deserve His wrath (14-16).

**Application:** No one can say that God is unfair when He condemns the wicked. They deserve every ounce of God's wrath.

**Conclusion:** The only correct response to God's righteousness is to sing praise to Him (17).

## Text: Psalm 8:1-9

**Theme:** God's name is majestic!

**Introduction:** How majestic is your name in all the earth! Throughout the Psalms, David regularly mentions the name of the Lord (7:17; 20:7; 25:11). But what name is David referring to? During the burning bush, God told Moses that *I am* (Yahweh) had sent him (Ex. 3:14). God then clarifies that this is His name forever (Ex. 3:15). But what does the name *I am* mean?

I. God's name is majestic (1-9)!

A. God stunningly establishes strength through infants(1-2).

1. Children and infants are vulnerable. Yet, God chose to use children to establish His strength instead of the mighty (1 Cor. 1:27). David does not say that children give God praise. Instead, he says that infants establish His strength (2).

**Explanation:** After Christ cleared the temple and healed a lame man, the children started shouting "Hosanna to the Son of David" (Mat. 21:14-16). Instead of establishing His authority through the religious leaders, Christ established His authority through children.

2. Ultimately, God's plan was to crush the head of His enemy (singular). This is clearly an allusion to Gen. 3:15 when the Seed of the woman would crush the serpent.

B. God surprisingly gives rule, not to angelic beings but to man (3-9; cf. Heb. 2:5-9).

**Explanation:** The author of Hebrews quotes and interprets Psalm 8:3-4. For example, the Hebrew word for *god* (Elohim) usually refers to God, but can refer to heavenly beings (Ps. 82:1). Hebrews 2:7 uses the Greek translation *angels*.

**Explanation:** According to Hebrews 2:9, this Son of Man refers to Jesus. But how? Earlier in verse 4, we have a clear reference to mortal man (*Enosh*; cf. Ps. 9:19-20; 10:18). The author of Hebrews recognizes that since Jesus was also a mortal man (while also God), then He also has been given rule over creation.

1. The Creator of the Universe gives thought to man (3). Although humanity is but a tiny portion of all of God's creation, yet He has made man the pinnacle of His creation—He made man in His own image (cf. Gen. 1:26).

2. In what way is man a little lower than angels (5)? Man tastes death (cf. Heb. 2:9, 14).

**Application:** Christ tasted death on our behalf so that we would no longer be in bondage to death (Heb. 2:15; Rom. 6:8-11). We no longer need to fear death. We have been freed from that master.

3. At creation, God gave the right to rule to mankind (6-8; cf. Gen. 1:26-28).

**Explanation:** Being made in the image of God specifically refers to man's right to rule. In Genesis 1:26, the result of being made in the image of God is rule.

4. Since man is given the right to rule (6-8), even more so the Son of Man is given the right to rule (cf. Heb. 2:8; 1 Cor. 15:27). Both the author of Hebrews and Paul assume that Ps. 8:6 also refers to Christ.

**Explanation:** The NT authors are not merely spiritualizing these OT texts. Instead, they are using logic. For example, the NT authors can confidently assume that Ps. 8 refers to Christ because Christ was also a man (while also God). So, what is true of man is also true of Christ.

**Conclusion:** The God of all creation has chosen infants to establish His strength and man to rule over all of His creation. How marvelous is His name!

**Text:** Psalm 9:1-20

**Theme:** Sing praise to the Lord because He is a righteous King.

**Introduction:** Instead of viewing the Psalms individually, David intended us to see them in groups. For example, Psalm 3-9 should be considered as one unit. This becomes obvious when you notice the similar wording between these Psalms (i.e. "I will Psalm your name" 9:2 & 7:17;

“the ones who know your name” 9:10 & 5:11; “the wicked caught in their own traps” 9:15-16 & 5:10, 7:15-16). Also, the title “on Muth-labben” can be translated as “to the death of a son.” The LXX has a similar translation. If so, this Psalm brings finality to Absalom’s rebellion.

I. Sing praise to the Lord because He is the righteous King (1-20)!

A. Because He is righteous He maintains the cause of the righteous (1-10).

1. Although David has a specific enemy in mind, he quickly turns to Yahweh’s rule over the nations (5, 17, 19, 20).

**Explanation:** The Davidic Covenant is central to David’s thinking. He views Yahweh as the fulfillment of the eternal King who rules over the nations (Psalm 2:2).

2. God has eliminated the wicked (5). In the immediate context, David is probably referring to Absalom. Absalom, who had no sons, had his name wiped out (5-6; cf. 2 Sam. 18:18). In contrast, God established David’s name.
3. The wicked, who are temporary, are contrasted with God’s eternal throne (7).
4. In contrast to the wicked kings (Ps. 2:1-2) who plot for their own advantage, this Davidic King judges righteously (7-8). He takes up the cause of the oppressed (9).

**Application:** When we care for the oppressed, we are following in the footsteps of our King (cf. James 1:27).

B. Because He is righteous, He cares for the oppressed (11-20).

**Explanation:** Although there are many ways to divide up this Psalm, verse 11 seems to be repeating the praise found in verse 1-2.

1. Because He is righteous, He avenges the blood of the innocent (12; cf. Gen. 9:5-6). When Cain killed Abel, God avenged his blood (Gen. 4:9-15).
2. Since God is righteous, our only hope is that He will be gracious to us (13-14). We all deserve what the wicked get because we are wicked.

**Application:** In order for God to be both just and a justifier (Rom. 3:26), He must redeem sinners through the blood of Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:24).

3. When God judges the wicked, they deserve every bit of God’s judgment. The pit that they fall into is the one they created (15-16). No one can say that they are innocent.
4. The fate of the wicked, those who forget God, is a return to *Sheol* (17). Perhaps the Psalmist is alluding to Gen. 3:19—“you are dust, and to dust you will return.”
5. God does care for the oppressed. In the midst of the struggle it may seem as though God has forgotten, but He has not (18-19).
6. What the wicked need is a healthy dose of the fear of the Lord (20). The Psalmist is repeating the theme originally found in Psalm 2:11-12.

**Application:** It’s easy for us to point our finger at the wicked as though we are somehow better. In reality, we deserve the same judgment until Christ took the Father’s wrath.

**Conclusion:** When the soldiers came to arrest Christ in the Garden on the night before His crucifixion, the soldiers turned back and fell to the ground (John 18:6). Although John is not quoting Psalm 9:3, the soldiers turned back, stumbled and perished from before His presence. In this story, we see a glimpse of the reality of Christ's rule.

## Text: Psalm 10:1-18

**Theme:** The wicked will soon find out that the Lord is King forever.

**Introduction:** Psalms 3-9 followed the story of Absalom's rebellion (3), Shimei's cursing (7), and finally, Absalom's death (9). But Psalm 10-14 picks up another theme—the foolish pride of the wicked. Again, we should expect to see repeated themes and ideas in Psalm 10-14. For example, the wicked speaks to himself (10:6, 11, 13; 14:1), but what does he say? He says, “there is no God” (10:4; 14:1).

I. The wicked will soon find out that the Lord is King forever (1-18)!

A. The wicked live as though there is no God (1-11).

1. Why does God wait to judge the wicked (1)? Certainly, it's not because the wicked don't deserve it.

**Explanation:** The Ninevites were well-known for their violence. So, when God had Jonah preach a message of repentance, Jonah wanted these wicked people to reject the message and face God's judgment. Yet, notice that it was God's compassion, specifically to the children, that caused Him to delay His wrath (Jonah 4:11).

2. Part of the issue with the wicked is their pride (2-4). Notice the words—arrogance (2), boast (3), and haughtiness (4). But how can he be so proud? He views God as non-existent (4).

**Application:** Although it's easy to judge the wicked for their pride, in reality when we act as though God does not exist; we are stumbling into the same sort of pride.

3. In his pride, the wicked take advantage of the needy (2, 8, 9, 10).

4. Paul quotes Psalm 10:7 and 14:1 (Rom. 3:10, 14) to prove that the wicked deserve God's wrath. (The fact that Paul quotes both of these Psalms in the same section further proves that Psalm 10-14 is one unit).

**Explanation:** It may be tempting to view the cursing found in verse 7 as foul language, but the Hebrew word is typically translated as oath. The wicked have no intention of keeping the oaths that they make with the poor and needy.

5. Twice, the Psalmist mentions what the wicked say in their heart (6, 11). The wicked in their pride think that their plans will not be thwarted (6). Secondly, the wicked think that God will never find out (11).

- B. The righteous call out to for God to deal with the wicked (11-18).
  - 1. This phrase, “arise, Lord; God” has already been used multiple times by the Psalmist (3:7; 7:6; 9:19). It is right for the righteous to call out to God to deal with the wicked.
  - 2. The Psalmist begins to answer the wicked — “He will never see it (11). But God has, in fact, seen it (14).

**Application:** Although it appears as though the wicked have the upper hand, this will not last forever. God has seen their wickedness and He will deal with them.

- 3. The Psalmist again bases his understanding of God’s dealing with people on the Davidic Covenant—The Lord’s forever rule (16). Nations will not be able to withstand Him.
- 4. With His rule, He vindicates the orphan and oppressed. Typically, the orphan and oppressed would not get a hearing in the King’s court, but This King makes His ear attentive (17).

**Conclusion:** This Psalm intends to put God in His rightful place—on His throne. Even though the wicked have said that God does not see, He does. And He will deal with the wicked.

Text: Psalm 11:1-7

**Theme:** Only those who take refuge in the Lord enjoy His presence!

**Introduction:** Take refuge in the Lord! This is the fourth time the Psalmist has used this phrase (2:12; 5:11; 7:1; 11:1). But what does it look like to take refuge in the Lord? To take refuge in the Lord means to take shelter in Him (5:11). The one who takes refuge in the Lord has no need to fear (46:1-3). Because the Lord is a tower of strength against his enemies (61:3). Israel was seeking refuge in Egypt from the Assyrian army (Is. 30:2).

- I. Only those who take refuge in the Lord enjoy His presence (1-7)!
  - A. The taunts of the wicked seal their fate (1-3).
    - 1. The wicked tell the righteous to “flee as a bird to your mountain.” It’s as though the wicked view the righteous as a helpless bird needing to find protection.

**Explanation:** Instead of taking refuge in the mountains, the righteous take refuge in God (1).

**Application:** Where do you go for refuge? If God is your refuge, you can be content in whatever circumstance you find yourself in (Phil. 4:11).

- 2. The wicked are preparing for battle. The bow is bent back and an arrow is placed. But this attack happens in the dark of night (2).

**Explanation:** The wicked hate the righteous. Jeremiah the Prophet experienced this hatred on multiple occasions. Once, he warned the people that Babylon would capture the city

based on what God had told him. Instead of listening to the warning, the people threw him into a pit and he sunk in the mud (Jer. 38:2-6).

3. Although the precise meaning of verse 3 is difficult, it appears to refer to the plan of the wicked—destroy the foundation.

**Explanation:** Although the wicked plot and scheme, their plans will ultimately be thwarted by God.

B. The Royal Priest responds (4-7).

1. Notice that the Lord is in His holy temple *and* on His throne (4). He is a Royal Priest. As King, He judges the wicked. But as Priest, He offers sacrifices to atone for sins.

**Explanation:** Up to this point in Psalms, the emphasis has been on Christ's Royal role. The author of Hebrews develops this idea by pointing out that Christ offered a once-for-all-time sacrifice (Heb. 7:26-27).

2. The Lord sees (4; cf. 10:11). They cannot hide under the cover of darkness (2).
3. The Lord hates those who love violence (5; cf. 5:5). Again, our temptation is to claim that God loves the sinner but hates the sin. Yet, this is not how the Psalmist explains it.

**Explanation:** Prior to salvation, we were enemies of God (Rom. 5:10). We were conspiring against God (Ps. 2:2). Therefore, salvation is a work of God by which He takes an enemy and makes him a friend.

4. Sodom and Gomorrah experienced fire and brimstone (6). But those cities will not be alone. All those who oppose Him will face the same condemnation.
5. God's response towards the righteous is based on His character—He is righteous (7). Notice the gracious words—the upright will see His face. When Jacob saw the face of God, he expected to die (Gen. 32:30). Yet, instead of judgment, God is gracious to those who call on Him.

**Conclusion:** The taunts of the wicked are merely words. They cannot thwart God's plans!

Text: Psalm 12:1-8

**Theme:** The wicked knowingly speak lies; while the words of the Lord are pure.

**Introduction:** Have you felt overwhelmed by the words of the wicked? Perhaps it seems like there is no hope for the righteous. In this Psalm we find the prayer of the righteous. Again, the Psalmist looks to the Davidic Covenant and sees the Lord as the One who protects His people forever (7).



- I. The wicked knowingly speak lies; while the words of the Lord are pure (1-8).
  - A. It often seems as though the godly cease to be (1).
    1. Perhaps it's a lie of the devil, but we often feel like the godly no longer exist. Elijah felt like he was the only one left and that King Ahab was seeking to take his life (1 Kings 19:10). Yet, God had preserved 7,000 who had not bowed the knee to Baal (cf. Rom. 11:3-4).
  - B. The wicked knowingly speak lies (2-5).
    1. Do the wicked *knowingly* speak lies? Notice that David says that they speak with a double heart (2). The words they speak don't match what they know to be true in their heart.
    2. They speak lies, but what do they say? They refuse to recognize that the Lord is ruler over all—including them (4).

**Explanation:** These words of the wicked are spelled out for us in Psalm 2. They refuse to recognize His Lordship and instead cast off His shackles (Ps. 2:2-3).

- C. The wicked use their words to oppress the weak (5).
  1. The goal of the wicked is to take advantage of others. The weak tend to be the easiest targets.

**Application:** None of us would view ourselves as the “wicked.” Yet, when we take advantage of those who are weak we demonstrate that we are no different than the wicked.

- D. In contrast, the words of the Lord are pure (6-8).
  1. The world we live in is filled with deception and blatant lies, yet God's word is in complete contrast (6). When God makes a promise (i.e. the promises in the Covenants), He always fulfills every detail of that promise.

**Explanation:** Why does the Psalmist refer to God's words as “pure” (i.e. ceremonially clean)? Wouldn't it be more natural to say that His words are “true” or “reliable?” It seems as though the Psalmist may also be referring to the motivation behind those words (i.e. pure motivation) in addition to reliable.

**Illustration:** His words are like refined silver. Silver that has been refined 7 times has had all the impurities removed.

2. The reason His words are always trustworthy is that *He* keeps them (7). Part of the problem with our words is that we are unable to keep our words. But because God is omnipotent, He is able to keep His words.
3. In contrast, the wicked strut around as they deceive the weak and innocent (8).

**Conclusion:** Perhaps you've experienced the tyranny of the wicked. Take comfort, their words will be thwarted. David's Son will take His rightful place on the throne and thwart the plans and words of the wicked.

## Text: Psalm 13:1-6

**Theme:** When God delays justice, trust in Him.

**Introduction:** Waiting is something that we don't often do well. Specifically, we have a hard time waiting for God to bring justice on those who have wronged us. This Psalm helps us to trust in the Lord even when we are waiting for Him to act.

### I. When God delays justice, trust in Him (1-6).

#### A. How long must I wait (1-2)?

1. All 4 questions begin the same way—how long? Although we don't know the specific trial David is going through, the last question sheds some light. His enemies have continued to be exalted over him. It appears as though David is seeking help from his enemies who are probably unjustly persecuting him.

**Application:** Perhaps you've felt bad about asking God to answer quickly. There's no need to feel guilty. These questions are fair questions. David even experienced grief and anxiety (2). We just need to remember that when God delays the answer, we need to be willing to wait on Him.

#### B. When God delays justice it seems the stakes couldn't be higher (3-4).

1. If God does not hear David soon, he will certainly die (3). Perhaps this sounds like hyperbole to us, but for David, his life was hanging in the balance.

**Explanation:** David was asking God to consider his plight so that he would not die. Although we don't know which events David is referring to, he certainly experienced several times when his life was on the line because of his enemies.

2. If God does not hear David soon, his enemies will overcome him (4).

**Explanation:** David is concerned, not only with his well-being, but also God's name. If David is not rescued soon, his enemies would be able rejoice. Essentially, God would not have been faithful to David.

#### C. Even though God delays in answering, trust in Him (5-6).

1. There was no answer between verses 4 and 5, yet David trusted in God's faithfulness (5).

**Explanation:** What did David mean when he said he trusted in God's faithfulness? He was looking back to God's faithfulness in the past and found God to be trustworthy.

2. Even though he was waiting on God to answer, he was rejoicing (5).

**Explanation:** The only way someone can rejoice in the midst of injustice is by recognizing that the Lord will one day make all things right.

3. Rejoicing naturally results in singing (6). David was singing in the midst of the trials (cf. Acts 16:22-30) because he knew that God was looking after him.

**Application:** Perhaps it seems strange to you that anyone could sing praise to God in the midst of trials. This can only occur when you trust that God has been and will be faithful to His promises.

**Conclusion:** These Psalms were intended to be sung in order to teach God's people. We all face trials, and we all ask God the same question—how long? But until we learn to trust in His faithfulness, we will continue to struggle through the trial.