

PSALM 5

I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- Possibly—like **Psalms 3-4**—Absalom’s rebellion against David
- David—betrayed by close friends and ‘mighty men’—only a small remnant faithful
- ‘All the men of Israel’—opposed to David—and seeking his life

II. TEXT

1 Give ear to my words, O Lord, consider my groaning. **2** Heed the sound of my cry for help, my King and my God, for to You I pray. **3** In the morning, O Lord, You will hear my voice; in the morning I will order my prayer to You and eagerly watch. **4** For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness; no evil dwells with You. **5** The boastful shall not stand before Your eyes; You hate all who do iniquity. **6** You destroy those who speak falsehood; the Lord abhors the man of bloodshed and deceit. **7** But as for me, by Your abundant lovingkindness I will enter Your house, at Your holy temple I will bow in reverence for You. **8** O Lord, lead me in Your righteousness because of my foes; make Your way straight before me. **9** There is nothing reliable in what they say; their inward part is destruction itself. Their throat is an open grave; they flatter with their tongue. **10** Hold them guilty, O God; by their own devices let them fall! In the multitude of their transgressions thrust them out, for they are rebellious against You. **11** But let all who take refuge in You be glad, let them ever sing for joy; and may You shelter them, that those who love Your name may exult in You. **12** For it is You who blesses the righteous man, O Lord, You surround him with favor as with a shield.

III. INTRODUCTION

A. TYPE OF PSALM

1. ONE OF THE LAMENTATIONS—[more than 60]
 - o The **third** of five in a row—**Psalms 3-7**
 - o Tone of whole Psalm—expressed in the cry for help—**v2**—“*My king and my God!*”
2. DIRECTION GIVEN TO CHOIR DIRECTOR
 - a. To be accompanied with ‘Nehiloth’
 1. Root word = ‘bore’ or ‘perforate’
 2. Meaning = wind instruments—flutes
 3. Opposite of soothing tones of ‘stringed instruments’ for Evening Psalm 4
 - b. This direction given only in Psalm 5

3. PROBABLY A ‘MORNING PSALM’

v3—*in the morning I will order my prayer to You*

B. AUTHORSHIP

- PSALM OF DAVID—ATTRIBUTED IN HEADING

C. SUBJECT

1. ACCUSATION OF THE WICKED—AND VINDICATION OF THE PSALMIST
2. SUMMARY
 - o Prayer of a pious man
 - o Surrounded by ungodly enemies
 - o Asks for God’s guidance, blessing, and protection
 - o Calls for punishment of ungodly enemies
 - o Both petitions are based on righteousness of god, who rules Israel as king
 - o Pronounces the way and blessings of the righteous

D. STRUCTURE—FIVE STANZAS

1. STANZA ONE—*verses 1-3*
 - o Invocation—Hear My Prayer, O Lord
2. STANZA TWO—*verses 4-6*
 - o The Case against Ungodly Enemies
3. STANZA THREE—*verses 7-8*
 - o Petition on the Psalmist’s Behalf
4. STANZA FOUR—*verses 9-10*
 - o Call for Punishment of Ungodly Enemies
5. STANZA FIVE—*verse 11-12*
 - o The Way and Blessings of the Godly

III. EXPOSITION

A. STANZA ONE—*verses 1-3*—INVOCATION—HEAR MY PRAYER, O LORD

1 Give ear to my words, O Lord, consider my groaning. 2 Heed the sound of my cry for help, my King and my God, for to You I pray. 3 In the morning, O Lord, You will hear my voice; in the morning I will order my prayer to You and eagerly watch. [NASB]

KJV—1 Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my meditation. 2 Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray. 3 My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.

❖ *consider my groaning*

1. KJV—‘meditation’
2. Better translation—‘groaning’
 - a. Root word—related to ‘heat’
 - b. A simmering—burning—slow-heat—‘fervent murmuring’
3. Found elsewhere **only** in **Ps 39:3**—‘as I mused’—innermost—deepest thoughts
4. Compare to—loud outburst in **v3**)

❖ *my King and my God*

1. Highlights theocratic basis of Israel’s kingship
 - Though David is earthly king—God is still ultimately sovereign over Israel
2. Puts David’s authority—in proper context
 - David is a man under authority—not a dictatorial despot
 - He submits to the royal authority of God
3. Puts David’s ability to provide for the people—in proper context
 - David is not limited to only on his own means and ways
 - He can—and should—rely on God to provide
4. Compared to other ancient nations
 - a. They viewed their kings as divine-like rulers—‘men writ large’
 - b. But Israel’s divine ruler—is *truly* God
 - c. **Elohim**—the name used here
 1. Not Jehovah—the name of Israel’s covenant God
 2. But God of all Gods—creator God—supreme over all

❖ *In the morning*

1. In **Ps 55:17**—David lists three times for prayer
 - a. Times = morning—evening—noon
 - b. At each time, he says—***I will complain and murmur, and He will hear my voice***
2. Contrast—**Psalm 4**—was an **evening** prayer

3. Example of **noon** prayer

- Before his vision—Peter went to rooftop at noon to pray—**Acts 10:9**

❖ *I will order my prayer to You*

1. Highlights importance of proper self-preparation and attitude in prayer
2. Treats prayer as a sacrificial act
 - a. ‘order’—a priestly term—for laying out holy things
 - Wood for offering—Lev 1:7
 - Pieces of lamb to be offered—Lev 1:8
 - Holy lamps—Lev 24:8
 - Show bread—Lev 24:8
 - =
 - b. Like preparation for morning sacrifices—done daily by the priests

❖ *and eagerly watch*

1. Word picture—‘look-out’ stationed on tower—intensely focused on horizon
2. **watch**—used of prophets—posted to report the first sign of God answering His people
 - Isaiah 21:6, 8
 - Micah 7:7
 - Habakkuk 2:1
3. **At the ‘tent of meeting’—God would ‘speak there’—and people waited to listen**
4. **Anticipates Jesus’ instructions to His disciples**
 - a. After giving signs of coming tribulation
 - **Lk 21:36—watch—that you may be able to escape**
 - b. In the Garden of Gethsemane
 - **Mt 26; Mk 14—watch and pray that you will not fall into temptation**

NOTE ON VERSES 4-8: DAVID’S TWO APPEALS TO GOD

- ARE NOT BASED ON DAVID’S CHARACTER
- BUT ON GOD’S CHARACTER AND NATURE
- HIS HOLINESS—REJECTS WHAT IS BAD—**vv 4-6**
- HIS GRACIOUSNESS—ACCEPTS WHAT IS GOOD—**vv 7-8**

B. STANZA TWO—verses 4-6—THE CASE AGAINST UNGODLY ENEMIES

4 For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness; no evil dwells with You. 5 The boastful shall not stand before Your eyes; You hate all who do iniquity. 6 You destroy those who speak falsehood; the Lord abhors the man of bloodshed and deceit. [NASB]

KJV—4 For thou *art* not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee. 5 The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity. 6 Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the LORD will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.

- ❖ DAVID PRESENTS LEGAL CHARGES AGAINST THE UNGODLY
- ❖ THIS PROVIDES THE BASIS FOR HIS LATER PLEA FOR JUSTICE
- ❖ THE IRONY OF DAVID’S CASE—[AND OURS!]
 1. He goes to the Supreme Judge who has absolute integrity—and knows every sin/fault
 2. If God scrutinizes David too closely—David also falls short!
 3. David is not ‘perfect’ in character or deeds
 4. But David has a ‘perfect heart’—is wholeheartedly devoted to God
 5. David’s cause is just—compared to his enemies—who are *ungodly*
 6. We too struggle with this tension
 - a. We are sinners—who maintain a just cause
 - b. Our sinfulness—does not undo God’s righteous cause
 - c. Our sinfulness—does not excuse us from upholding God’s righteous cause
- ❖ *You are not a God who*
 1. God’s holy nature rejects *ungodliness*
 2. Ungodliness defined—in six ways
 - **Wickedness—v4**—criminal, violent wrong-doing
 - **Evil—v4**—malignant, bad, hurtful
 - **Boasting—v5**—‘foolish’ (KJV)—vainglorious, emptiness
 - **Iniquity—v5**—trouble-making, idolatry—making things into nothing
 - **Lies—v6**—‘leasing’ (KJV), untruth—as in **Psalm 4**
 - **Bloodshed—v6**—first used to describe Abel’s blood crying out from the land
 - **Deceit—v6**—fraudulent, treacherous, false, guile—as in **Psalm 4**
- ❖ THREE NEGATIVE CLAUSES—THEN THREE POSITIVE CLAUSES
 1. God **does not** tolerate—wickedness, evil, boasting
 2. God **does** take action against—*iniquity*, lying, bloodshed/deceit
- ❖ *no evil dwells with You*
 1. To ‘dwell’—implied three actions by householder—to a visitor
 - Allow access to the dwelling

- Treat visitor as a guest—with hospitality
 - Protect visitor from harm—provide sanctuary
2. God allows sinners seeking forgiveness to come into His presence
 3. But God’s holiness never allows evil to ‘dwell’ with Him
 - He never allows evil to cross His threshold
 - He never treats evil as a guest
 - He never gives evil sanctuary

❖ *the boastful shall not stand before your eyes*

1. To stand before the King—is a rare privilege
 - Extended to nobility—who were in good standing (loyal)
2. Contrast—King David’s opponents
 - Proud Absalom and David’s nobility who are now disloyal
 - They have fallen away—and have no ‘standing’ at court’
3. Compare—the heavenly court
 - a. There are *seven angels who stand before God*—Rev 8:2
 - b. Only one is identified in Scripture—**Gabriel**—Lk 1:19
 - c. Satan has been ‘thrown down’—Lk 10:18; Rev 12:9 and has no standing with God

❖ *bloodshed and deceit*

1. **David himself** was guilty of these two sins—so is keenly aware of their consequences
2. But—his heart was right—he repented and was forgiven
3. This refers to those who live habitually to destroy and deceive

C. STANZA THREE—verses 7-8—PETITION ON THE PSALMIST’S BEHALF

7 But as for me, by Your abundant lovingkindness I will enter Your house, at Your holy temple I will bow in reverence for You. 8 O Lord, lead me in Your righteousness because of my foes; make Your way straight before me. [NASB]

KJV—7 But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple. 8 Lead me, O LORD, in thy righteousness because of mine enemies; make thy way straight before my face.

❖ *I will enter Your house, at Your holy temple I will bow*

1. PROBLEMATIC REFERENCES TO ‘HOUSE’ AND ‘TEMPLE’
 - a. They cause some scholars to question Davidic authorship

- b. God's 'house'—the Temple—had not yet been built!
2. 'HOUSE'
 - a. Not a reference to a building
 - b. It means simply—wherever God dwells

Example: **Beth-el**—where Jacob met God—'House of God'—**Gen 28:17**

3. 'TEMPLE'
 - a. It can mean the literal 'Temple'
 - b. But often—it means—'palace'—or 'throne'
 - This fits David's description of God—as 'King'

❖ *By Your lovingkindness I will enter*

1. DAVID'S PROBLEM
 - a. David—is a man of bloodshed and deceit
 - b. So—he has no inherent right to enter God's house/temple
2. GOD'S SOLUTION
 - a. David petitions for permission to enter—does not presume the right arrogantly
 - b. He is allowed entry—by God's grace—His lovingkindness—[and forgiveness]

❖ *because of my foes*

1. FOES
 - a. Word for enemies = 'watchers'
 - b. These 'foes'—are intent—vigilant—intent on David's destruction
2. BECAUSE OF
 - a. These foes try to do two things
 1. Lead David away from God's righteousness
 2. Cause David to deviate from the God's 'straight' way
 - b. So—they cause David to make two petitions—in **v8**
 - *lead me in Your righteousness*
 - *make Your way straight before me*

❖ *lead me in Your righteousness*

1. Not just a destination—but becoming one with God's own character

2. David desires to know God Himself—not just His ways
3. If David knows and follows God—his destination will be the ‘right’ one
4. Righteousness is not David’s own goodness—but God’s righteousness imputed to him

❖ *Make your way straight before me*

1. This ‘straight’ way—is not necessarily the ‘easy’ way—not ‘smooth’
2. David wants God to:
 - Remove any impediments to righteousness
 - Make His way plain—clearly visible—not clouded by unrighteous people

D. STANZA FOUR—verses 9-10—CALL FOR PUNISHMENT OF UNGODLY ENEMIES

9 *There is nothing reliable in what they say; their inward part is destruction itself. Their throat is an open grave; they flatter with their tongue. 10 Hold them guilty, O God; by their own devices let them fall! In the multitude of their transgressions thrust them out, for they are rebellious against You.* [NASB]

KJV—9 *For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is very wickedness; their throat is an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue. 10 Destroy thou them, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions; for they have rebelled against thee.*

❖ *There is nothing reliable in what they say; their inward part is destruction itself*

1. FURTHER DESCRIPTION OF DECEITFUL AND BLOODTHIRSTY MEN—**v6**
2. THEY USE EVERY VERBAL MEANS TO SLANDER DAVID
 - a. Unreliable **mouth**—what they **say**
 - b. **Throat**—is an open grave
 - Implies more than death—but—putrid corruption
 - Imagery used in **Jer 5:16**—foretelling Judah’s destruction
 - Quoted—in **Rom 3:13**—to describe all persons—everyone is a sinner!
 - c. **Tongue**—flatters
 - Glib tongue—that ‘makes smooth’
3. THIS ALL SPRINGS FROM THEIR INNERMOST PART
 - a. Which is—‘destruction’ (NASB)—‘wickedness’ (KJV)
 - b. Literally = ‘chasm’
 1. Their innermost being is a deep (bottomless?) pit
 2. Implies ‘ruin’—‘destruction’

❖ *Hold them guilty . . .*

1. OPPOSITE OF DAVID RECEIVING GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS—**v8**
2. THREE ASPECTS OF GOD'S JUDGMENT
 - a. Exposure—*hold them guilty*
 - b. Collapse—*let them fall*
 1. Cause—*by their own devices*—*by their own counsel*
 2. They fall by the momentum of their own failure/sin—convict themselves
 3. Their own counsel turns against them
 - Illustrated by Ahithophel's failed advice to Absalom—**II Sam 15:31**
 - c. Expulsion—*thrust them out*

❖ *For they are rebellious against You*

1. DAVID'S PLEA—NOT BASED ON THEIR ACTIONS AGAINST DAVID
2. RATHER—THEY HAVE REBELLED AGAINST GOD
 - a. The source of all their evil motives and actions
 - b. Harkens back to **Psalm 2**—the nations rage/rebel against God
 - c. David's vindication—he remains loyal—opposing those who rebel against God

E. STANZA FIVE—verses 11-12—THE WAY AND BLESSINGS OF THE GODLY

11 *But let all who take refuge in You be glad, let them ever sing for joy; and may You shelter them, that those who love Your name may exult in You. 12* *For it is You who blesses the righteous man, O Lord, You surround him with favor as with a shield.* [NASB]

KJV—11 *But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee. 12* *For thou, LORD, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield.*

❖ DAVID—THE SPIRITUAL LEADER—KING OF HIS PEOPLE

1. David breaks out of his loneliness—praying for himself alone
2. Now he prays for his people—and rallies them to take refuge in God
3. He goes from despair—to call people to praise God

❖ TWO REASONS FOR PRAISE

1. God *blesses* the righteous man—**v 12**—who does two things
 - Takes refuge in the Lord—**v11**
 - Loves His name—**v11**

2. God *surrounds* the righteous man—**v 12**
 - a. ‘Surround’—to ‘encircle’—used only one other time
 - **I Sam 23:26**—a hostile force—closing in on David—from all around
 - b. *surround with favor as with a shield*
 1. Show favor = ‘acceptance’
 - As an acceptable worshiper or sacrifice—**Lev 7:18; 19:7**
 2. Like a shield
 - a. Allusion to **Ps 3:3**—God was a shield—protecting David on all sides
 - b. Very large shield—word used to describe Goliath’s shield—**I Sam 17:7**