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"If I have repaid my ally with evil or without cause have robbed my foe." Psalms 7:4

Main Idea: When one is innocent, what does one do when they are besieged by enemies and attacks? Here is a passionate Psalm where David is fleeing from an enemy into the loving arms of our Lord. He cries out, "Oh, my God, I run and hide in you", because David knows that only God is our refuge and strength, no matter what is happening. He has pursers who are out for blood, his faith is tested and his options are none. He knows if he is caught, his life will be over; it probable that ridicule and torture await him. He knows of God's power and ability to intervene, and David seeks the Lord. Then, David takes an honest reflection before God. If David was in the wrong, if he was the author of injustice, then he is willing to take the justice. But, if they are in the wrong, David seeks justice. He seeks that God's just anger and vengeance be their judge and his protection and vindication. He knows that our Lord is good and righteous and will do what is right; he is making his plight to be in God's sight. He knows that God knows our heart and motivations; He has the right and does judge, as He seeks our repentance and integrity and hates our wickedness and lies. Our only true shield and defense is God. The counter of this is that our own unrepentant sins will be our own undoing, as we fall into the very trap we set up. David closes this song with thanksgiving and praise for God's righteousness and justice.

Contexts and Background:

This Psalm 7, perhaps of David, does not have a specific category, because it is like a four-in-one. It is a lament, an oath, a trust in The Kingship of God, and a thanksgiving hymn. This Psalm is also set in the theme of the 'houses of refuge,' where one can go for sanctuary when accused of murder; a judge will hear the case and the accused will safe, in the meantime, from the revenge of the family. David states his case before God so that The Just Judge hears the case and decides. David has firm confidence in God's power and provisions, that He does care for His children, even though he is not experiencing it at this time. He trusts in God anyway. He seeks God through prayer and is honest, because he knows God's righteousness and hatred of evil. He appeals and waits upon God to vindicate while he praises God's faithfulness.

The applications are real. There will be oppositions in life by crooked people going after God's faithful. David is suffering it here. Allow God's defense, be honest, abide in God's precepts and truth, do not fear people; rather, fear God (Ex. 21:13; Num. 2:5-13; 35:6-7, 24-28; Psalm 11; 17; 26; 27; 31; 71; Heb. 6:18).

David ends up not fighting Saul or his men even though God did deliver Saul twice to him. Rather, he escapes, allowing God to intervene. So, his trust was in God for his care in his situation. When we trust in Christ during hard-hitting times, it not only builds our character, it helps us have a deeper faith, a deeper love for God and others, and even to enjoy more confidence and joy in life (1 Samuel 23-24, 26; Psalm 5).

Commentary—Word and Phrase Meanings:

- *Cush / Kish.* This is a 'court liar,' a person who flattered Saul and hated David, and he may have falsely accused David of treason and conspiracy, inciting Saul against him. Saul passionately pursued young David for evil reasons--to take his life. But, it was all about jealousy, and it was God who was ridding Saul for his treason against Him (1 Sam. 24:9).

Verses 1-2: The Lament: Help me, oh God, I come running to you!

- *Lord my God.* A firm statement of confidence in God, and a confession of faith, *Yahweh*, Lord God, Creator of all things, and Sovereign Lord over all. He made the universe and He gets to run it, including you and me! For us, this also foreshadows to Jesus being fully God, *Immanuel*, which means "God is with us" (Ex. 15:11; Isa. 6:3; Matt. 1:23; John 1:1-7; 20:28; Rev. 1:6; 4:11; 19:10; 22:9).

- *Refuge*. An intimate phrase of protection and closeness, that we have a relationship with God. God knows our deepest needs. He alone is our shield and defense. God is being compared to a fort, a safe haven. God is the One we can come to; the sinful one who seeks evil has no place to go (Psalm 91:4).
- *Save and deliver me*. A cry of anguish to God for deliverance of one's situation (1 Sam. 23:28; 24:14; 25:29; 26:18).
- *Pursue me*. Innocence will not protect a goodly person from an accuser who is malevolent and does not care for truth or real justice.
- *Tear me / soul apart*. David feels his predicament is like being mauled by a lion (Isa. 5:29; Nah. 2:11-12; Psalm 10:9; 17:12; 22:12-13, 16, 20-21; 35:17; 57:4; 58:6; 124:6).
- *Like a lion*. Lions were common in David's time. They were terrifying, ruthless, relentless, deadly, and a symbol of power. When David was a boy, he was a shepherd and was attacked by lions (1 Sam. 17:34-35).

Verses 3-5: An Oath: Be honest with God; for He already knows. Do not allow your whys to get in His Way. Here is a plea of reflection and honesty, "What did I do to deserve this? If it is me, let me know".

- *If I have done this*. David asks God to search his heart for any disloyalty to Him or others. He knows he is of sin, as we all are; but, feels he is innocent of his accusers persecution of specific charges, and he asks God for justice and if he is in the wrong, he is willing to take their justice.
- *Guilt / wrong*. David knows he was careful acting with integrity. He pours out his heart after God and asks that He acts now either way, rescue or judgment. David seems surprised that God is allowing this, if he is innocent. Yet, he trusts in God, no matter what.
- *Without cause*. God is righteous, and David seeks that He takes a look at the situation and act swiftly.

Verses 6-16: Our Lord's Kingship: Waiting on God can be frustrating on our timing. We need to let God be the Judge and Vindicator and wait on Him. Here is a plea for mercy and action, that God can intervene and rectify the situation.

- *Arise*. Here, David expresses his anguish, impatience, and frustration. David feels God needs to be provoked to act, like a more passionate cry, so he turns His attention to his plight. This is a Jewish battle cry and an expression of a call to action that means to urgently engage, to "GET UP NOW!". Grammatically, it is an imperative, seeking quick and decisive action. It is OK to ask God to help you--He wants that. Just make sure your call is just and right, and not out of petty retribution or for selfish gain (Ex. 12:31, Num. 10:35; Duet. 2:13; Judg. 7:9; Psalm 3:7; 68:1; 80:2; 78:65; Isa. 51:9).
- *Anger*. The picture is God Who is righteous with just wrath for sin and wrongdoing. Yet, He protects the godly, his repentant children. David asks that it be exercised to those who seek to do evil against him.
- *Assembled / gathered peoples*. Here, those who will witness God's intervention and judgment and rectification.
- *Judge*. God is the One Who is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. No one is sinless before Him. His integrity alone makes for clear judgment. He will judge at the appropriated and appointed time. Thus, David asks God to decide between him and his accusers.
- *Vindicate / wicked come to an end*. God can and will renew us. God seeks those who are loyal with an upright heart and judges the wicked.
- *Righteous God*. The image here is a righteous warrior with weapons bent on eradicating those who are wicked and refuse to repent.

- *My shield.* It is a simple prayer of protection, as God protects. Our faith in God will help protect us from the evil and the intimidation we face; we need to be interlocked with others for group protection, making us invincible (Eph. 6:10-17).
- *Righteous judge.* God Who separates the bad away from the good, so the good are not hurt. We can ask God to search our heart if we are in Christ and He is our atonement, covering.
- *Wrath / indignation.* God's just anger is against sin that is destructive to relationships, life and wellbeing of all. So, He seeks to protect by attacking what hurts us all.
- *Flaming arrows / fiery shafts.* This is a metaphor for God's inescapable righteous judgment. Arrows dipped in pitch and set on fire, a weapon of terror, set our confidence in the faithfulness of Christ (Phil. 1:6).
- *Pregnant with evil / mischief.* An image that one is born in sin and filled with evil like a woman with child about to give birth. That once wickedness is conceived, it grows into more lies, violence, and more trouble to all around.
- *Falls into the pit they have made / makes a pit.* We reap what we sow; crime does not pay. Don't do the crime unless you can do the time. Sin causes its own retribution, that evil conspires upon itself and will take down those who engage in it by natural consequences (Psalm 26:27; Mark 7:21-22; 26:52; James 1:14-15).

Verse 17: A Thanksgiving Hymn: Bring your gratitude to God, even when you do not see it. I will sing praises to The Most High and learn to walk in His victories, while I learn to go to Him in my troubles.

- *Give thanks.* This means being grateful. It is more than a vow to praise if things go my way; it is a trust in God and an expression of love no matter what. Having an attitude of gratitude is essential to our faith and practice, no matter what we have been through or have lost. (Rom. 1:8; 1 Cor. 1:14; Eph. 1:6; 5:8-20; Philp. 1:3-4; Col. 1:12; 2:7; 3:15-17; 4:2).
- *Sing the praises.* Like a 'thank offering' done at the Temple. Praise must follow deliverance, as prayer springs from our need; however, real faith will allow our prayers and praise to go out before, during, and after. It does not matter what people do to us as long as we have a God Who cares and knows us and our situation. Our goal should be to learn and glorify our Lord temple (Psalm 5:11; 50:14-15, 23).

Devotional Thoughts and Applications:

Many times, we are frustrated with God, because He seems to not care or move. But, in our waiting, there will be our faith. This Psalm 7 lets us know God is our Refuge and deliverer; we are always to look to Him as our rescue. We are reminded that as children of God, we will be attacked by evil people who hate God and all who represent Him. They do not want to be found out, that they are the ones who have no honor or character; so, they will attack us, betray us, slander us so they look good and throws the undiscerning and careless of them and onto another target. Yet, in this trouble, we can run to Christ as our shield, be self-reflective to make sure we did not do anything to bring this about, and if so rectify it with honesty and authenticity. We are not to be fearful or fretful; rather smart and faithful and gracious. We are to pray hard and long. Life for the Christian is a wonderful journey of our faith development and deployment. It is not about going easy. We may not get a rescue on this side of eternity; however, we are not to bend our character or faith, and we praise our Lord with all of our might.

This passage also reminds us not to make premature judgments, hear gossip, and jump to conclusions on any matter. We are to look to character and facts, investigate and not assume. We do not know what God is doing always, but we can evaluate the situation and do our due diligence to protect one another who are in the right and not assume.

Christian Life Principle: Our battle ground is prayer! Our ONLY True Deliver and Vindicator is Jesus Christ, our Creator, Sustainer and Savior. So, we are to look to Him; as we fight our battles, first and foremost, in prayer (Matt. 6: 5-15; 7: 7-12).

The Essential Inductive Questions (for more Inductive questions, see Inductive Bible Study):

- What does this passage say?
- What does this passage mean?
- What is God telling me?
- How am I encouraged and strengthened?
- Is there sin in my life for which confession and repentance is needed?
- How can I be changed, so I can learn and grow?
- What is in the way of these precepts affecting me? What is in the way of my listening to God?
- How does this apply to me? What will I do about it?
- What can I model and teach?
- What does God want me to share with someone?

Additional Questions:

1. What have you done when you are overwhelmed by slander, people coming against you, while you are innocent?
2. What cries and or promises have you made to God?
3. How does it make you feel that a passionate David is fleeing from an enemy into the loving arms of our Lord? What does he cry out? Is he having an easy time of it? What should we learn from this?
4. Why is it that waiting on God can be frustrating on our timing? How will it help if we let God be the Judge and Vindicator and wait on Him?
5. How has God been your refuge and strength? How is He your shield, no matter what is happening?
6. Do you know of God's power and ability to intervene? How have you sought it out?
7. Have you taken an honest reflection before God, to make sure you are not in the wrong, by the decisions or actions or words when trouble comes? Why do many not?
8. God's just, His anger is righteous, He has the right to judge and He is the One to seek vengeance. How does this give you relief when things go wrong in your life? How should we seek His protection and vindication?
9. How can this theme from the Psalm give you hope, that our Lord is good and righteous and will do what is right?
10. What does one do when they are besieged by enemies and attacks, while they are innocent?
11. What do we learn from this Psalm when we are in trouble?
12. Why should we praise and give thanks to God when our life is a mess? What will this do? How will it make you feel? How can you do this when the good ending is not seen?