

# Preaching the Psalms Series

(27)

## Psalm 7

### *How to Be Delivered from Evil Pursuers, [Psalm 7:1-17](#)*

#### **Psalm 7:1-17 (NASB)**

<sup>1</sup> “O LORD my God, in You I have taken refuge; Save me from all those who pursue me, and deliver me,

<sup>2</sup> Or he will tear my soul like a lion, Dragging me away, while there is none to deliver.

<sup>3</sup> O LORD my God, if I have done this, If there is injustice in my hands,

<sup>4</sup> If I have rewarded evil to my friend, Or have plundered him who without cause was my adversary,

<sup>5</sup> Let the enemy pursue my soul and overtake *it*; And let him trample my life down to the ground And lay my glory in the dust. Selah.

<sup>6</sup> Arise, O LORD, in Your anger; Lift up Yourself against the rage of my adversaries, And arouse Yourself for me; You have appointed judgment.

<sup>7</sup> Let the assembly of the peoples encompass You, And over them return on high.

<sup>8</sup> The LORD judges the peoples; Vindicate me, O LORD, according to my righteousness and my integrity that is in me.

<sup>9</sup> O let the evil of the wicked come to an end, but establish the righteous; For the righteous God tries the hearts and minds.

<sup>10</sup> My shield is with God, Who saves the upright in heart.

<sup>11</sup> God is a righteous judge, And a God who has indignation every day.

<sup>12</sup> If a man does not repent, He will sharpen His sword; He has bent His bow and made it ready.

<sup>13</sup> He has also prepared for Himself deadly weapons; He makes His arrows fiery shafts.

<sup>14</sup> Behold, he travails with wickedness, And he conceives mischief and brings forth falsehood.

<sup>15</sup> He has dug a pit and hollowed it out, And has fallen into the hole which he made.

<sup>16</sup> His mischief will return upon his own head, And his violence will descend upon his own pate.

<sup>17</sup> I will give thanks to the LORD according to His righteousness And will sing praise to the name of the LORD Most High.”

**([Psalm 7:1-17](#)) Introduction:** all of us have a measure of control over our emotions. For some that level is much higher than it is in others. Some of us have short fuses; we are very easily and quickly incited. Others of us have a great deal of control over our feelings. Our patience is long, and it takes a great deal to push us to the point of becoming excited or distressed over a situation. Every individual, however, has a point at which his or her emotions are aroused.

David had reached that point when he penned [Psalm 7](#). He added the term *Shiggaion* to the introduction, which means that it was to be sung with intense emotion. This psalm was not originally composed for congregational use; David sang it directly to the Lord. As in [Psalm 5](#), David was being falsely accused, and the stakes were high. Cush the Benjamite was seeking to tear him apart, the way a lion ravages its prey ([v. 2](#)). David had reached his breaking point and cried out to the Lord to intervene on his behalf.

**Psalm 7:2 (NASB)**

**<sup>2</sup>“Or he will tear my soul like a lion, Dragging me away, while there is none to deliver.”**

Scripture does not reveal who Cush was. In fact, this is the only time he is mentioned in the Bible. The one detail provided about him is that he was a Benjamite, which identified him as a relative of Saul.

Because of this, most commentators speculate that the historical setting was Saul’s pursuit of young David, when some of Saul’s men spied on David and reported lies about him ([1 Samuel 24:9-10](#)); or the rebellion of Absalom, when some of Saul’s relatives rose up against him ([2 Samuel 16:5-8](#)).

This is, *How to Be Delivered from Evil Pursuers*, [Psalm 7:1-17](#).

**1 Samuel 24:9-10 (NASB)**

**<sup>9</sup>“David said to Saul, “Why do you listen to the words of men, saying, ‘Behold, David seeks to harm you’?”**

**<sup>10</sup>Behold, this day your eyes have seen that the LORD had given you today into my hand in the cave, and some said to kill you, but *my eye* had pity on you; and I said, ‘I will not stretch out my hand against my lord, for he is the LORD’S anointed.’”**

**2 Samuel 16:5-8 (NASB)**

**<sup>5</sup>“When King David came to Bahurim, behold, there came out from there a man of the family of the house of Saul whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera; he came out cursing continually as he came.**

**<sup>6</sup>He threw stones at David and at all the servants of King David; and all the people and all the mighty men were at his right hand and at his left.**

**<sup>7</sup>Thus Shimei said when he cursed, “Get out, get out, you man of bloodshed, and worthless fellow!**

**<sup>8</sup>The LORD has returned upon you all the bloodshed of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned; and the LORD has given the kingdom into the hand of your son Absalom. And behold, you are *taken* in your own evil, for you are a man of bloodshed!”**

1. **Take refuge in the Lord (vv. 1-2).**
2. **Search your heart to see if you are guilty of offending others (vv. 3-5).**
3. **Ask God to execute true justice and judgment (vv. 6-8).**
4. **Ask God to put an end to wickedness and to make the righteous secure (vv. 9-10).**

5. **Bear strong witness to the Lord; He is the righteous and fair judge (vv. 11-13).**
6. **Know that evil reaps bad results (vv. 14-16).**
7. **Praise God's Name: Praise Him because of His righteousness (v. 17).**

## 2. (**Psalm 7:3-5**) Search your heart to see if you are guilty of offending others.

### **Psalm 7:3-5 (NASB)**

<sup>3</sup>“O LORD my God, if I have done this, If there is injustice in my hands,  
<sup>4</sup>If I have rewarded evil to my friend, Or have plundered him who without cause was my adversary,  
<sup>5</sup>Let the enemy pursue my soul and overtake *it*; And let him trample my life down to the ground And lay my glory in the dust. Selah.”

Here is the most valuable lesson of this psalm: David sincerely invited the Lord to search him through and through to see if he had done anything to provoke his enemy. Before he dares ask the Lord to execute justice against Cush, David needed to establish that he was not guilty of any injustice toward him. *He humbly acknowledged the possibility that he was in the wrong, that he had caused Cush to do wrong.*

David's statements in these verses are likely a protest of his innocence, for he knew that he stood guiltless before his enemy and before God. The oath he swore is extreme and reflects his inflamed emotions at the situation (**v. 5**).

### **Psalm 7:5 (NASB)**

<sup>5</sup>“Let the enemy pursue my soul and overtake *it*; And let him trample my life down to the ground And lay my glory in the dust. Selah.”

Nevertheless, he opened himself completely to the Lord for an examination of his ways. He invited the one whose eyes see all—outward words and actions as well as inner thoughts and motives—to search him thoroughly.

#### a. The areas of possible sin (**vv. 3-4**).

##### **Psalm 7:3-4 (NASB)**

<sup>3</sup>“O LORD my God, if I have done this, If there is injustice in my hands,  
<sup>4</sup>If I have rewarded evil to my friend, Or have plundered him who without cause was my adversary.”

David named two specific accusations the Benjamite was making against him, or they may be serious hypothetical sins that David is saying he did not commit.

*The first* is creating or provoking a conflict for no reason with someone who was at peace with him. David called upon God to determine if he was guilty of picking a fight—stirring up unnecessary trouble with Cush, or more likely with Saul, Cush's relative and king.

*The second* is not as clear. Reliable translations and good commentators differ on the meaning of the Hebrew word *khalats* in this verse. This word is often translated as *deliver*, but it is also frequently used of soldiers who were armed for war. A variation of the word is used of plundering the enemy ([Judg. 14:19](#); [2 Sam. 2:21](#)). Most translations and the outline of the Scripture interpret it here as *plundering* or *robbing*.

### **Judges 14:19 (NASB)**

<sup>19</sup> “Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon him mightily, and he went down to Ashkelon and killed thirty of them and **took their spoil** and gave the changes of *clothes* to those who told the riddle. And his anger burned, and he went up to his father's house.”

### **2 Samuel 2:21 (NASB)**

<sup>21</sup> “So Abner said to him, “Turn to your right or to your left, and take hold of one of the young men for yourself, and **take for yourself his spoil.**” But Asahel was not willing to turn aside from following him.”

The **KJV**, however, translates it as *deliver* and understands it as a reference to David's refusal to take advantage of opportunities to slay Saul when Saul was pursuing him without just cause ([1 Samuel 24:1-11](#); [1 Samuel 26:6-12](#)). If this is the accurate meaning, it is valuable evidence for establishing the historical setting of this psalm.

### **1 Samuel 24:1-11 (NASB)**

<sup>1</sup> “Now when Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, he was told, saying, “Behold, David is in the wilderness of Engedi.”

<sup>2</sup> Then Saul took three thousand chosen men from all Israel and went to seek David and his men in front of the Rocks of the Wild Goats.

<sup>3</sup> He came to the sheepfolds on the way, where there *was* a cave; and Saul went in to relieve himself. Now David and his men were sitting in the inner recesses of the cave.

<sup>4</sup> The men of David said to him, “Behold, *this is* the day of which the LORD said to you, ‘Behold; I am about to give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it seems good to you.’” Then David arose and cut off the edge of Saul's robe secretly.

<sup>5</sup> It came about afterward that David's conscience bothered him because he had cut off the edge of Saul's *robe*.

<sup>6</sup> So he said to his men, “Far be it from me because of the LORD that I should do this thing to my lord, the LORD'S anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, since he is the LORD'S anointed.”

<sup>7</sup> David persuaded his men with *these* words and did not allow them to rise up against Saul. And Saul arose, left the cave, and went on *his* way.

<sup>8</sup> Now afterward David arose and went out of the cave and called after Saul, saying, “My lord the king!” And when Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the ground and prostrated himself.

<sup>9</sup> David said to Saul, “Why do you listen to the words of men, saying, ‘Behold, David seeks to harm you?’”

<sup>10</sup> “Behold, this day your eyes have seen that the LORD had given you today into my hand in the cave, and some said to kill you, but *my eye* had pity on you; and I said, ‘I will not stretch out my hand against my lord, for he is the LORD’S anointed.’”

<sup>11</sup> “Now, my father, see! Indeed, see the edge of your robe in my hand! For in that I cut off the edge of your robe and did not kill you, know and perceive that there is no evil or rebellion in my hands, and I have not sinned against you, though you are lying in wait for my life to take it.”

### **1 Samuel 26:6-12 (NASB)**

<sup>6</sup> “Then David said to Ahimelech the Hittite and to Abishai the son of Zeruah, Joab's brother, saying, “Who will go down with me to Saul in the camp?” And Abishai said, “I will go down with you.”

<sup>7</sup> So David and Abishai came to the people by night, and behold, Saul lay sleeping inside the circle of the camp with his spear stuck in the ground at his head; and Abner and the people were lying around him.

<sup>8</sup> Then Abishai said to David, “Today God has delivered your enemy into your hand; now therefore, please let me strike him with the spear to the ground with one stroke, and I will not strike him the second time.”

<sup>9</sup> But David said to Abishai, “Do not destroy him, for who can stretch out his hand against the LORD’S anointed and be without guilt?”

<sup>10</sup> David also said, “As the LORD lives, surely the LORD will strike him, or his day will come that he dies, or he will go down into battle and perish.”

<sup>11</sup> “The LORD forbid that I should stretch out my hand against the LORD’S anointed; but now please take the spear that is at his head and the jug of water, and let us go.”

<sup>12</sup> So David took the spear and the jug of water from *beside* Saul's head, and they went away, but no one saw or knew *it*, nor did any awake, for they were all asleep, because a sound sleep from the LORD had fallen on them.”

**b. The needed attitude: To acknowledge that one deserves to be punished for sin (offending others) ([v. 5](#)).**

### **Psalm 7:5 (NASB)**

<sup>5</sup> “Let the enemy pursue my soul and overtake *it*; And let him trample my life down to the ground And lay my glory in the dust. Selah.”

David’s unwavering confidence in his innocence is reflected in his taking a severe oath. If he was guilty of the accusations against him, he deserved a punishment equal to his crimes. If the Lord examined him and found him at fault, he was willing to accept an appropriate sentence for his offense. He invited God to lay upon him the same justice he was seeking against Cush. If David had unjustly provoked Saul or was guilty of rebellion against Saul or had ambitiously seized Saul’s throne, then he deserved a death sentence. His unjust actions had cost King Saul his throne and his life. David’s language is graphically intense and emotionally charged. He cursed himself to a violent, humiliating death: to be trampled into the dirt in utter disgrace.

**Thought 1.** David's *ifs* are not the *ifs* of insincere, half-hearted apologies ([vv. 3-4](#)).

**Psalm 7:3-4 (NASB)**

<sup>3</sup>“O LORD my God, if I have done this, If there is injustice in my hands,  
<sup>4</sup>If I have rewarded evil to my friend, Or have plundered him who without cause was my adversary.”

Many people offer hypocritical apologies composed with an *if* statement: “*If I offended you,*” “*If I did what you say,*” “*If I wronged you in anyway...then I am sorry.*” Such apologies are usually not genuine, and they do little to restore relationships. Sincere, effective apologies own up to the wrong done and repent of it.

Although he is convinced of his innocence, David is acknowledging the possibility that he is at fault, and he is accepting responsibility if, in fact, he is. Every believer should possess this attitude. We should recognize the fact that we are not always in the right and that we may unintentionally cause offense to others without realizing it. We should be willing to accept responsibility for our role in a conflict or misunderstanding and be willing to do what is necessary to right the wrong we have committed against another person. In any instance of conflict with another, we should invite the Lord to search us and reveal to us any trespass we have committed.

Note that David ends [verse 5](#) with *selah*.

**Psalm 7:5 (NASB)**

<sup>5</sup>“Let the enemy pursue my soul and overtake *it*; And let him trample my life down to the ground And lay my glory in the dust. Selah.”

It is a good place for us to pause and, in reflection on these truths, examine our hearts and actions toward others.

**Romans 12:16-18 (NASB)**

<sup>16</sup>“Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.

<sup>17</sup>Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men.

<sup>18</sup>If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.”

**Romans 14:19 (NASB)**

<sup>19</sup>“So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.”

**Ephesians 4:1-3 (NASB)**

<sup>1</sup>“Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,

<sup>2</sup>with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love,

<sup>3</sup>being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

**Psalm 139:23-24 (NASB)**

<sup>23</sup> “Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts;

<sup>24</sup> And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way.”

**Proverbs 3:30 (NASB)**

<sup>30</sup> “Do not contend with a man without cause, If he has done you no harm.”