

Psalm 5

Introduction – The worship of God’s people is to include petitions for God to destroy His enemies. But doesn’t God love everyone? Let us learn to think God’s thoughts after Him with regard to sin and to sinners like us. With right understanding and by faith, there are great expectations for those who sing this prayer to God.

Give Ear, Consider, Give Heed (vv1-3) – David is earnest, honest, persistent, and expectant (“*I will look up*”) in his prayers before God. **My King and My God** – David recognizes who it is that is hearing his prayers. This is his personal king and God and so he may surrender his cares before Him.

Directed Prayers – The Hebrew word is translated “direct” as in to arrange, set in order, to prepare, or to set forth as in a legal case. Non-spontaneous, well thought out, and even written prayers, are not less genuine. Quite the contrary, I show my genuineness through my thoughtful preparation and delivery of my message of praise or petition to my King. Ecclesiastes 5:2 warns us not to be rash with our mouth before the Lord. The psalms are all examples of thoughtfully scripted and shaped prayers.

“Do we not miss very much of the sweetness and efficacy of prayer by a want of careful meditation before it, and of hopeful expectation after it?” – Spurgeon.

The Hatred of Jehovah (vv4-6) – We have already seen God’s abhorrence of evil in the psalms. It is declared in several different ways in these verses, including the fact that God hates the sinner and not just the sin. He plans to destroy liars, and every unrepentant liar should tremble at such a statement.

Common Grace – But what of God’s love upon all men? Luke 7:35 says, “*For He is kind to the unthankful and evil.*” He gives rain and sunshine to the just and the unjust (Matt 5:45). Romans 2:4-11 describes the purposes of God’s kindness. It will either lead one to repentance or heap guilt and condemnation upon the hardened God-hater, both to the glory of God. Not all are loved redemptively; and considered redemptively, God hates the wicked, those who are not in Christ.

Multitudes of Mercy (vv7-8) – One of the complaints over statements like those above is that Christians think they are better than others. But biblical thinking is just the opposite. The tax-collector in Luke 18:11-12 was the one who was justified, not the self-righteous Pharisee. What has motivated you to come and worship, an overwhelming overflow of mercy or a proper fear of the One who ordains all things? David’s answer is – both. And because of both he entreats the Lord to lead him and show him the ways to go.

The Odor of Unbelief (v9) – Imagine the smell of death left uncovered. Paul uses this and several other verses from the Psalms and Isaiah to describe the situation of everyone, Jew and Gentile, who is without Christ (Rom 3:10-18).

Imprecatory Psalm (v10) – It is appropriate to pray for God’s judgment to fall upon the unrepentant. It is also appropriate to pray for God’s mercies to extend to the ends of the earth. Both are biblical prayers and as the psalms become ours, we learn how to balance our prayers and thoughts according to God and not our own devising.

Resultant Joy (vv11-12) – Those who grow in confidence of God’s complete control in everything do not become dull or fatalistic. They shout for joy and rejoice in all things, even in the midst of struggling with their enemies. These verses teach us that we are permitted to rejoice in all things, we are commanded to do so, we are to petition such joy for one another and we are promised that it will be ours. His favor and His blessing are around us as a shield.

Selahs on Psalm 5 – It might be easy to think of this psalm’s application for them, out there. But like David, we must first consider its application right here in the midst of the assembly.

Distinguishing the Sin from the Sinner – It is only at the cross that God hates the sin and loves the sinner. It is only in Christ that we find sinners not thrown into the lake of fire. And this warning was given to those in covenant with God in David’s day. It is given to this assembly as well today. Jesus has real people to whom He will turn on that final day and say, “*Depart from men, I never knew you.*” But call upon the multitudes of His mercy and they are yours.

The Lies of our Unbelieving Culture – Our current popular culture is built upon lies painted in jazzy colors, a rockin’ backbeat, and sensual perfume. But that odor underneath is the odor of death. It is not enough to claim that you hate fornication, that you hate idolatry, that you hate bloodthirsty violence, and that you hate adulteries, debaucheries, drunkenness and the like. Evil is not allowed to dwell with God. Why do you allow it to dwell with you – in your entertainments, in your movies, in your music, in your amusements? It is as though we believe the idea of that bumper sticker; “How much sin can you get away with and still go to heaven?” Because that culture is built upon a refusal to acknowledge the antithesis, we must understand that being faithful will mean that we will look weird at times to the world around us.

The Joy that comes from Faith – Joy is connected to trust in the living, Almighty God, a God who loves and works all things for good to those who love Him. “But I lack joy,” you cry. Cry to God, then, returning to the beginning of Psalm 5 – that is where to begin and where to continue and where to look for an answer. This is because God grants faith; we cannot manufacture it. And since He wrote this prayer, I am confident that He will answer this prayer.