



Psalm 35:1–10

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Main idea: **What others intend for evil, the LORD fully repays, not only to them by subjecting them to corresponding punishment but also to us, by intending it for the greatest possible good, and accomplishing for us the greatest possible good: enjoyment of Himself**

A Psalm of David.

¹ Plead my cause, O LORD, with those who strive with me;
Fight against those who fight against me.

² Take hold of shield and buckler,
And stand up for my help.

³ Also draw out the spear,
And stop those who pursue me.
Say to my soul,
“I am your salvation.”

⁴ Let those be put to shame and brought to dishonor
Who seek after my life;
Let those be turned back and brought to confusion
Who plot my hurt.

⁵ Let them be like chaff before the wind,

And let the angel of the LORD chase them.

⁶ Let their way be dark and slippery,

And let the angel of the LORD pursue them.

⁷ For without cause they have hidden their net for me in a pit,
Which they have dug without cause for my life.

⁸ Let destruction come upon him unexpectedly,
And let his net that he has hidden catch himself;
Into that very destruction let him fall.

⁹ And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD;
It shall rejoice in His salvation.

¹⁰ All my bones shall say,

“LORD, who is like You,

Delivering the poor from him who is too strong for him,

Yes, the poor and the needy from him who plunders him?”

In vv1–10, David pleads with God to take up his case, set things straight, and receive honor and praise for doing so. In vv11–16, David presents the data that demonstrates the contrast between the wicked and himself. In vv17–28, David asserts that the Lord has seen this data and will bring His people to rejoice over His avenging.

This week, we begin the Psalm by considering David’s initial pleadings with God.

Tagging Yahweh in, vv1–3. We must be careful to remember that the LORD is always fighting for us, but we are forgetful of this nonetheless. So, He gives us a prayer that asks Him to tag in. People are striving with David, and he asks the Lord to strive (‘plead’ is translating the same verb) with them in David’s behalf. The word picture in vv2–3 is vivid, as they exchange equipment, and David asks for one last encouraging word at the end of v3.

Let us not miss the sweetness and strength of this last bit. Not only is the LORD actually our salvation in reality, but He also communicates that reality to us for the cheering of our hearts. It is one thing to preach to ourselves as we have already seen in the Psalter and see most famously in Ps 42–43. But it is another thing when the Living God Himself says it to our soul. How we ought to desire that God the Spirit would employ His Word to impress upon our soul, “I am your salvation”!

Knocking the enemy out, v4–8. Being put to shame (v4a) means not merely embarrassment (v4b) but defeat. In this case, it is destruction. They have gone after David’s life (v4b, 7b), and he is praying that they receive exactly according to their own plans and preparations (v7a, 8b–c). He has given no cause for their attack (v7a,b), but their attack can be seen as precise cause for their destruction.

Not only does he pray for them to be destroyed (v8c) but even terrorized as the chase in v5b, 6b sandwiches in the frightful language of the “dark and slippery” way of the one being pursued.

But this is more than just decisive and devastating; it is personal. David asks that the angel of Yahweh Himself would personally terrorize and track them (v5b, 6b).

Lifting Yahweh’s Name up, v9–10. The personal terror of the wicked’s facing the LORD is in utter contrast to the effect upon David of personal interaction with the LORD.

The LORD Who made David’s soul safe in v4a makes it exceedingly glad in v9.

Not just his soul, but even his bones—indeed, ALL his bones—wonder (literally!) at the LORD. That is to say that His whole being cries out to the LORD in these interrogatives of praise. This song and prayer that God has given us should train our hearts and mouths, our souls and bones, to do the same to Him, crying out, “LORD, who is like You?!”

One of the reasons for poverty and weakness to exist is exactly for the LORD to deliver them from the strong oppressor (v10c–d). Our weakness and suffering is intentional. His grace is sufficient for us; His strength is made perfect in weakness; therefore, let our weakness and suffering be the occasion of rejoicing and boasting in the LORD (cf. 2Cor 12:8–10)!!

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)

Psalms, 35 verses 1 through 10. These are God's words. A psalm of David plead my cause, oh, Yahweh with those, who strive with me, fight against those who fight against me. Take hold of shield and buckler and stand up for my help.

Also draw out the spear and stop those who pursue me say to my soul. I am your salvation. Let those be put to shame and brought to dishonor who seek after my life, let those be turned back and brought to confusion. Who plot my hurt? Let them be like, chaff before the wind.

Let the angel of Yahweh chase them let their way be dark and slippery and let the angel of Yahweh pursue them for without cause they have hidden their net for me in a pit which they have dug without cause for my life, let destruction come upon him unexpectedly and let his net that he has hidden catch himself into that.

Very destruction. Let him fall and my soul shall be joyful in Yahweh. It shall rejoice in his salvation. All my bones shall say. You always who is like, you delivering the poor from him, who is too strong for him? Yes, the poor and the needy from him. Who plunders him.

Amen, this ends this reading of God's inspired and inerrant word.

Well in this Psalm in verses 1 through 10 David pleads with God to take up his case and sets set things straight and that God would receive honor and praise for doing so. And then Next week, the Lord helping us, we'll find have David presents. The data that demonstrates a contrast between the wicked and himself.

So in verses 11 through 16, he describes what the wicked are like with him, who is kind to them, and how he is the opposite with them, who are wicked to him. And then in verses 17, through 28, David asserts that the Lord has seen this. The Lord has seen what is going on and that he will bring his people to rejoice.

As he both gives the wicked what they deserve and blesses, the righteous, according to his steadfast love and His mercy and His grace. So since the Psalm is fairly large, we'll be taking it in those three parts. And tonight, we just have these 10 verses that we that we have just read in which David pleads with God, to take up his case and set things straight and receive honor and praise for doing so.

Well, in the first three verses we have, as it were David asking the Lord to intervene and perhaps this this language doesn't help some of you tagging. Yahweh, in tagging Yahweh. In, I know my children at least humor me and they seem to like to hear stories from my childhood, but the rest of you will have to humor me along with them.

One of the things that we did actually in private school more than in public school. And I did attend both at different times on recess, as we would have wrestling, and we would have it was two on two, but only one would wrestle at a time. And if you got yourself into a bind, you'd reach out to tag your pal and he would jump in for you.

Well there's actually something similar in this word picture in verses 1 through 3. David is in trouble and he says, strive for my cause, oh, yahweh with those who strive with me. I know it looks like plead in the New King James because it is, but the verb in the original is the same verb.

And the point is that, David is in a struggle, he's in a fight and there are those who are fighting him, and they are too strong for him. And he needs the Lord to be the one who fights on his side. And so he says, strive for my cause oh Yahweh with those who strive with me, fight against those who fight against me.

And then in verse 2 and part of verse 3, what you have is a exchange of equipment as it were, You remember, probably when Goliath was the champion of the Gittites of the Philistines and he was coming out and challenging the Israelites and we know that there was an Israelite there who was head and shoulders taller than any of the other Israelites.

That's how he got to be king, but he was hiding in his tent and win. Finally, there was one who was willing to act as Israel's champion. He tried to put his armor on him, There was that exchange of equipment, only the best stuff, only the kingly armor. And you know, that David didn't need the kingly armor because he didn't come with sword and spear and shield.

He came in the name of Yahweh of hosts. But here, when he's pleading with God, to be the one who fights the battle for him, he says take hold of shield, big shield and buckler a little or shield and stand up for my help. Also draw out the spear and stop those who pursue me That is they are right on top of me and right there.

And in verse 3, it's almost like they are really hurrying to transfer the equipment because the the enemy is right there and he's and the picture is the Lord getting the stuff on right in time and stopping him. Now, God is always already fighting for his people and he doesn't need any equipment.

But he's describing something with urgency and substitution that corrects our unbelief and strengthens our faith. We often feel and David is going to feel like this the time we get to the last third of the Psalm and we saw him, We saw him talking in a similar way, in, in other.

Psalms earlier, We often feel like the, the Lord is not acting in our behalf. That's why we must always go with what God says, over what we feel. Because he's right and our feelings are wrong. And when he describes the request for the Lord to intervene in these words, it doesn't mean that the Lord has not been fighting and will fight and will cause all of this to be for his good.

It just means that David doesn't see that and he's crying out to the Lord to be and do what the Lord is. And as said he will do. That's what we do in prayer, isn't it? We're not asking God to change who he is and how he's operating with us.

We're asking him to be himself, according to his word prayer, is not an attempt to overcome God's reluctance. It is an embrace of His willingness and it is something he's chosen to act by. We ask him to do what he has planned to do and then he does the thing that he planned for us to ask because he had planned to do it by our asking, and he gives us the privilege of participating, but we are weak in faith.

And so you see in the end of verse 3, that the Lord isn't just fighting the enemy, He's encouraging his servant and David knows that he needs that encouragement. And so, he says, say to my soul, I am your salvation. Now, the scriptures teach us to address our own souls.

We see that a lot in the Salter And I think perhaps the most famously so in Psalm 42 and Psalm 43. Why? Oh my soul. Art thou cast down and yet If it is good for us to speak to our souls, by God's Word. How much better when God himself speaks His word brings that word home to our souls.

And so David knowing the weakness of his faith knowing that he ought to have more confidence that the Lord is as salvation. And yet, he lacks that confidence. He asks, for God's help, not just to fight the enemy, but to fight his own unbelief. Say to my soul. I am your salvation.

How often we know, theologically the truth of who God is to us in a particular circumstance, but that truth is not coming home to our hearts like we wish it would and we can cry out to God, to bring it home to our hearts that God. The Holy Spirit would drive home that wonderful state that wonder.

Oh, full statement. I am your salvation And so he's enlisting, the help of the Lord and asking for the Lord's intervention in verses, 1 through 3, and what he really wants. The Lord to do is knock the enemy out in verses 4 through 8. When he says, let those be put to shame and brought to dishonor, who seek after my life, he's not just saying let them be embarrassed.

We think of the word shame primarily in terms of embarrassment, But the language of being put to shame means let them utterly fail in what they are attempting to do. When we say he who calls upon the name of the Lord will not be put to shame. We mean the Lord will always deliver always save those who call upon him through Jesus Christ.

It is absolutely impossible that someone should call upon God in truth and not be saved. And so when he says let those be put to shame and brought to dishonor who seek after my life, He's not just saying let them be embarrassed or even let them be frustrated. He's saying let them utterly fail.

In fact, in verses four through eight, the main thing is let the destruction that they intended for me. After seeking. After my life verse 4, They dig without cause for my life verse 7. Let that which he has planned and he has hidden, let him fall on into that destruction.

So first part of verse 8, let's destruction come upon him unexpectedly. And last part of verse 8 into that, very destruction, let him fall. They have gone after David's life, and he is praying that they would receive exactly according to their own plans and their own preparations. One of the main points he makes here and that'll be the great theme of verses 11 through 16.

Is that David has given them? No, cause for their attack. They are attacking unjustly and so he's asking that the Lord would return that attack upon their own heads, and that he would do it justly that he would do it justly. And and dreadfully For, they're not just attacking a private person when they attack David David as the Lord's anointed.

David is the Lord's king, They're attacking the one in his name. The Lord has invested himself on earth. And in fact, when we get into the third part in verse 19, we'll find that this is a messianic. Psalm Those who lift up their heel against him without a, cause the Lord Jesus takes that as referring to himself.

And so they have attacked. God, not just God's people and we know that the Lord still does that with us today. Doesn't he says in much in, as much as you have done or haven't done it to the least of these, my brethren you have or haven't done it unto me.

And when he confronts Saul also called Paul on the way to Damascus. He, he says, why are you persecuting me? And so the Lord takes it personally and when the Lord comes after them personally it will be dreadful. The chase scene, the end of verse 5. And into verse 6 is quite frightening.

Indeed, Let the angel of Yahweh, chase them into verse 5 and let the angel of Yahweh pursue them into verse 6 and so here's one the angel of Yahweh, the captain of the armies of the Lord of hosts who is in almost every and perhaps every I don't think I've found one yet in which it couldn't be and in the vast majority of them.

It almost certainly is the Lord Jesus that he is a man of war and he is chasing hunting down the enemy. Now, as bad enough to have the angel of Yahweh pursuing, you The greatest warrior there ever was or ever could be, but when you're running from him you need light and good footing, but he puts in the middle of those two chase lines, let their way be dark.

Let them be unable to see where they put their foot and let the where they put their foot, betray them. Let their way be dark and slippery. And so it is a frightful dreadful thing. When God's judgment isn't just just isn't just decisive and devastating. But it's also personal that the Lord Himself is the avenger.

Well, that, which is the hell of. Hell is also the heaven of heaven. Second Thessalonians chapter. 1 tells us that in. Hell, those who those whom the Lord is taking vengeance upon them. When he appears and burning fire with his. Holy angels, that they will receive destruction from the presence of the Lord.

And from his glory forever. Hell is not separation. From God, hell is to be in God's immediate presence with your conscience, quickened, and none of his former restraining grace and he even shows common restraining grace to those with to whom he doesn't show saving grace. He endures patiently vessels that are that are prepared for wrath.

So that he may display the riches of his kindness on vessels that are prepared for mercy. And so there is a true sense in which the hell of hell is to be a sinner in the presence of the burning, angry holiness, and justice, and anger, and power of God forever.

And ever Now that was God different in help than he is in heaven. No, because God is always the same. The difference is that if you don't have any sin left because who took it all from you and there is no wrath left for you because who took it all upon himself and there's only favor and love and the power and glory of God is something that doesn't destroy you forever.

But is your reward forever is your joy and blessing forever because your, Jesus is your worthiness. And if you received every good thing in creation, put together, it still wouldn't be what Jesus is worthy of. And so only the glorious God can ultimately be your blessedness forever If you are righteous in Jesus Christ.

And so you see that that switch in this psalm, where it is, the Lord himself, who is the dread and destruction of the wicked in verses four through eight. And then same Lord opposite experience in verses 9 and 10, My soul shall be joyful in Yahweh. It shall rejoice in his salvation.

So the soul that the Lord that he's asked the Lord to say to it. In verse 3, I am your salvation that soul will come to know what the Lord has told him you to whom the Lord has come and His word and brought you to faith in Jesus Christ.

And he has said to you, I am your salvation. Your soul will know that to be true forever and ever. Your soul shall rejoice in Yahweh. It shall rejoice in his salvation. All my bones shall say Yahweh, who is like you? This is one of the reasons why the name Micah is such a good name.

That's what that that name means who is like Yahweh. And so we will literally wonder at him Who is like you we will cry out forever and ever body and soul to rejoice in him and notice what brings him to this knowledge of excuse me. This knowledge of the Lord in this rejoicing in him who is like, you versed in delivering the poor from him, who is too strong for him?

Yes. The poor and the needy from him. Who plunders him? You see, it's not just that the wicked do something, and then God turns that, which was evil into something, which was, which was for good, God has intended for good that which they intended for evil. This is something that the apostle Paul relates his own learning about to us.

In second Corinthians chapter 12. You remember, he had that thorn in the flesh that messenger from the devil and he prayed thrice. And that might be three times a day. That might be three extended seasons of fasting and prayer is probably not three. You know, punctilious moments that he asked for it.

And he prayed he prayed thrice that it would be taken away. And what was God's answer? My grace is sufficient for you. For my strength is made perfect and weakness. Do you see that in verses 9 and 10 that David and those who are in David, those who are in Christ are given our weakness.

That we might find the Lord to be our strength. One of the reasons for poverty and weakness to exist is exactly for the Lord to deliver believers from the strong. The presser Our weakness and our suffering is intentional because it is in that weakness and suffering that we learn the glory of His grace.

And that's why we rejoice in weakness because when we are weak, then we are strong. Because then we know what was always true that the Lord is our only strength and that anything that we seem to have is only derivative from him. So let our weakness and suffering, and be the occasion of rejoicing and boasting in the Lord.

Now, as we know we shall ultimately at last