



Psalm 5: *Lead Me to Your Righteousness*

Introduction

Authorship

Historical

Genre / Instructions

This one is a Lament-- for times when all is not well, the psalmist opens his heart honestly to God, with sadness, loneliness, perplexity, grief, abandonment, fear, or anger. The laments almost always turn to the Lord with confidence at the end.

To the choirmaster for the flutes. What were they like back then? Why flutes?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x4O301lbkiU> from 6:25 to 7:21

(Rabbi David Louis, *The Music and the Mikdash*, The Temple Institute, Jul 12, 2011)

Structure

Two Parts –

1. An urgent request – HEAR ME! (v1-7)
2. A second request – Lead Me in Your Righteousness (v8-12)

Five Stanzas –

Hear Me! (v1-3)

David describes the spirit in which we should pray:

- with urgency/seriousness (give ear, consider, give attention)
- with persistence
- with expectancy (and watch)

David describes the types of prayers:

- with words
- with groanings/sighs
Rom 8:26 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.
- with cries

David describes the relationship we must have with God:

- my King and my God.
John 20:28 My Lord and my God
Ps 84:3 Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.
- To you do I pray.
Ps 65:2 O you who hear prayer, to you shall all flesh come
- I prepare a sacrifice.



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The God Who Loves Justice (v4-6)

For you are not a God who delights in wickedness.

- David refers to wicked people as those whose prayers the Lord will not hear and in whom he has no pleasure.

- David is distinguishing himself from evil persons, reminding himself that he must be different if he would be heard by God.

- Another psalmist will say, "If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened." But since he has not done this he adds, "God has surely listened and heard my voice in prayer" (Ps. 66:18–19).

Evil may not dwell with you.

Hab 1:13 You who are of purer eyes than to see evil and cannot look at wrong

Isa 33:14 The sinners in Zion are afraid; trembling has seized the godless:

"Who among us can dwell with the consuming fire? Who among us can dwell with everlasting burnings?"

You hate all evildoers.

- Ps 11:5 The Lord tests the righteous, but his soul hates the wicked and the one who loves violence.

- Have you heard the phrase: God hates the sin, not the sinner?

You destroy those who speak lies; the Lord abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.

- The wicked's reward—eternal torment.

Rev 21:8 But as for ... and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.

Ps. 55:23 But you, O God, will cast them down into the pit of destruction; men of blood and treachery shall not live out half their days.

But I, (v7)

through the abundance of your steadfast love, will enter your house.

- "Though evil persons are excluded from God's presence because of their sin, it does not follow that the psalmist is admitted by virtue of his own goodness. It was only God's grace and covenant love (hesed) toward his people which made entrance into his presence possible." Craigie, Psalms 1–50, 87.

I will bow down toward your holy temple in the fear of you.

Lead Me in Your Righteousness (v8)

This is the beginning of the second prayer and the thesis of the Psalm.



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because of my enemies;

- or, because of the evil of the world.

make your way straight before me.

- The Lord will never lead people into sin, but only down paths towards righteousness.

The Righteous and the Wicked (v9-10)

For there is no truth in their mouth; their inmost self is destruction;

- Paul quoted part of verse 9 in his great summary of the sin of the race in Romans 3:10–18.

- The human race is utterly and incurably wicked: "there is no one who does good, not even one" (Rom. 3:12).

their throat is an open grave; they flatter with their tongue.

- An open grave had a horrible stench

Jn 11:39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days.")

Make them bear their guilt, O God;

- v10 is the Psalter's first imprecatory prayer--asking for judgment on the wicked.

- the guilt of sin must be borne—there must be restitution to a holy and just God for our sin. For the wicked, that's an eternity of torment in hell. For the righteous, Jesus Christ has paid our penalty.

let them fall by their own counsels;

- or the famous phrase from Shakespeare's Hamlet "hoisted by their own petard" which means blown up by their own bomb.

because of the abundance of their transgressions cast them out, for they have rebelled against you.

- and David asks God to banish them to hell

Can and should we pray this kind of prayer?

Rev 6:9-10 When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne. They cried out with a loud voice, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"

God Blesses the Righteous (v11-12)

- Only the righteous receive blessing. As was preached on Psalm 1:3, what does it mean to be blessed?

He plants us - He provides us with living water - He makes us fruitful - He keeps our faith evergreen

He makes makes us prosperous

- Shields of ancient times were full body and provided total protection



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Application

1. When praying, use words AND groaning, and it's okay to cry out, remember to honor God
2. Pray at the start of your day; get your ducks in a row, and expect an answer!
3. Reflect: you were once in the same company as those whom God hates. Be thankful!
4. Reflect: if it wasn't for God's grace, you wouldn't even be having a conversation with God, let alone entering His presence. Be thankful!
5. Pray for the unrighteous. You were one of them once. It is not going to go well for them.
6. Rejoice in the protection the Lord provides to those He has called.