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Psalm 7: A Shiggaion of David, which he sang to the LORD concerning Cush a Benjaminite.

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Psalm 7

A Shiggaion of David, which he sang to the LORD concerning Cush a Benjaminite.

(RSV)

- 1 O LORD my God, in thee do I take refuge;
save me from all my pursuers, and deliver me,
2 lest like a lion they rend me,
dragging me away, with none to rescue.**
- 3 O LORD my God, if I have done this,
if there is wrong in my hands,
4 if I have requited my friend with evil
or plundered my enemy without cause,
5 let the enemy pursue me and overtake me,
and let him trample my life to the ground,
and lay my soul in the dust.**
- 6 Arise, O LORD, in thy anger,
lift thyself up against the fury of my enemies;
awake, O my God; ^(a) thou hast appointed a judgment.**
- 7 Let the assembly of the peoples be gathered about thee;
and over it take thy seat ^(b) on high.**
- 8 The LORD judges the peoples;
judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness
and according to the integrity that is in me.**
- 9 O let the evil of the wicked come to an end,
but establish thou the righteous,
thou who triest the minds and hearts,
thou righteous God.**
- 10 My shield is with God,
who saves the upright in heart.**
- 11 God is a righteous judge,
and a God who has indignation every day.**
- 12 If a man ^(c) does not repent, God ^(d) will whet his sword;
he has bent and strung his bow;
13 he has prepared his deadly weapons,
making his arrows fiery shafts.**
- 14 Behold, the wicked man conceives evil,
and is pregnant with mischief,
and brings forth lies.**
- 15 He makes a pit, digging it out,
and falls into the hole which he has made.**

Selah

**16 His mischief returns upon his own head,
and on his own pate his violence descends.**

**17 I will give to the LORD the thanks due to his righteousness,
and I will sing praise to the name of the LORD, the Most High.**

Footnotes:

- a. (v.6) Or *for me*
- b. (v.7) Cn: Heb *return*
- c. (v.12) Heb *he*
- d. (v.12) Heb *he*

Psalm 7 is the prayer of one who has been accused of all sorts of wrong-doing, but who protests vigorously his own innocence. He pleads with God to give judgment for him against his enemies, and in his righteousness to bring the unrepentant to a well-deserved end, while at the same time vindicating the righteous person, namely himself. Note especially verse 8b & 8c: “Judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness, and according to the integrity that is in me.”

Who dares to speak this Psalm? Traditionally, David is understood to be the original speaker here, and no doubt in earthly matters he may have spoken quite truly. But to come before God and plead complete innocence is another matter. Such complete innocence can be claimed by no mortal man, only by Jesus Christ, the one of whom Peter declares, “He committed no sin, no guile was found in his lips,” (1 Peter 2:22). So when we pray this Psalm, we can do so only because we are “in” Christ. For it is “in” Christ that, on the one hand, our unrighteousness is heaped upon his innocent suffering and his atoning death, and where, on the other hand, he lends us his righteousness to cover and heal our unrighteousness when we step before the heavenly Father.

Prayer to accompany Psalm 7:

Lord God, righteous judge of the nations, you expose us for what we are. Purge us of all sin, set a firm guard on our thoughts, and make us your people because of the Just One, Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.