

2001

Psalm 52: To the choirmaster. A Maskil of David, when Doeg, the Edomite, came and told Saul, "David has come to the house of Ahimelech."

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Recommended Citation

Keller, Walter E., "Psalm 52: To the choirmaster. A Maskil of David, when Doeg, the Edomite, came and told Saul, "David has come to the house of Ahimelech."" (2001). *Walter E. Keller's Devotional Studies of Psalms*. 59.

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Psalm 52

To the choirmaster. A Maskil of David, when Doeg, the Edomite, came and told Saul,
"David has come to the house of Ahimelech."
(RSV)

- ¹ Why do you boast, O mighty man,
of mischief done against the godly?
All the day ² you are plotting destruction.
Your tongue is like a sharp razor,
you worker of treachery.
- ³ You love evil more than good,
and lying more than speaking the truth. *Selah*
- ⁴ You love all words that devour,
O deceitful tongue.
- ⁵ But God will break you down for ever;
he will snatch and tear you from your tent;
he will uproot you from the land of the living. *Selah*
- ⁶ The righteous shall see, and fear,
and shall laugh at him, saying,
- ⁷ "See the man who would not make
God his refuge,
but trusted in the abundance of his riches,
and sought refuge in his wealth!"
- ⁸ But I am like a green olive tree
in the house of God.
I trust in the steadfast love of God
for ever and ever.
- ⁹ I will thank thee for ever,
because thou hast done it.
I will proclaim thy name, for it is good,
in the presence of the godly.

Psalm 52 is a lament in which the Psalmist contrasts his commitment to God to the evil person who ultimately trusts in his wealth. Rather than beginning this Psalm with the more typical entreaty to be heard and an appeal for deliverance, David addresses this lament directly to the enemy (for the presumed occasion for this Psalm, read 1 Samuel 21 & 22). David details some of the moral faults of his foe in verses 1-4, and then proclaims God's judgment on his adversary in verses 5-7. The Psalmist concludes with his renewal of trust in the steadfastness of God, along with his resolve to speak of the goodness of God.

Prayer to accompany Psalm 52:

Heavenly Father, you cut down the unfruitful branch for burning and prune the fertile to make it bear more fruit. Make us grow like rich olive trees in your kingdom, firmly rooted in the power and mercy of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.