

Part 1 – Approaching our Heavenly Father in Prayer

In chapter forty-five, part 1, we learned that this was another *Maschil* Psalm, which means it had some very wise instruction that gives us great understanding *if* we absorb the lessons within it. And we also learned that it was another Psalm of David, and we were even told what time in his life it was written. So, we also learned some history about that time. And we found out that, when David was running for his life from Saul (and the Israelite army), the inhabitants of Ziph (Ziphites, i.e. Ziphims) ‘ratted out’ David to Saul. In other words, they (twice) told Saul when David and his men were hiding out in the wilderness, and woods, near their town. And not only that, they even offered to take Saul to David and his men. So, they were very much ‘on board’ with trying to help David get killed even though David was truly an innocent man. While Saul called him a traitor, David was not rebelling against him nor trying to steal his throne – i.e. he was not trying to cause an insurrection or what we’d call a ‘military coup’ today. Yet, because Saul was troubled by an evil spirit, he was ‘hell bent’ on killing David; and, unfortunately, many other people in Israel were willing to help him seek the life of an innocent man. So, that’s why this Psalm began with David calling on God (#430 Elohim, our Creator who is the Supreme God) to save Him and even vindicate him of his enemies, who were *unjustly* trying to kill him. And he pointed out that profane men were seeking his life. Thus, he pointed out how he was being unrightly persecuted by men who didn’t truly worship our Heavenly Father. David well understood that *the LORD preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy*, as he wrote in Ps 145:20.

In part 2 we learned that God alone is our helper. While he will punish those who unjustly persecute His faithful servants, He will make sure that His faithful servants (saints) will get the help (strength and understanding) they need to make it through all the hard times that come. After all, when we serve Jesus Christ, we are entitled to His protection. And, He’ll also always make sure to give us what we need to serve Him, even when hard times come. And for this reason, we who truly do love and serve Jesus Christ (our Heavenly Father) freely give our Heavenly Father the ‘inward’ worship He truly desires by worshiping Him with praise, thankfulness, doing what’s right and helping others to come to Him by planting seeds of truth and using our gift(s) devotedly. So long as we never forsake Him, He’ll never forsake us...

We now come to yet another Psalm of David, and this Psalm is *still* in the ‘Second Book’ (Exodus) of the Psalms and it’s also *still* part of the Psalms (chapters 50-60) that are ‘Concerning Israel’s Redeemer’, just as the last four Psalms have been. And let’s remember that Psalms 50 spoke of Israel’s Redeemer (the Lord, YHWH) ‘breaking silence’ to warn the people to repent and worship Him *sincerely* or else He’ll ‘tear them in pieces’. And then in Psalms 51 we saw the ‘people’s response’ to His ‘breaking silence’, by making a *good* repentance. And in Psalms 52 we saw the Lord give us instruction on how to defeat the enemy, who was Doeg at that time, but it applies to all the wicked ones who love to lie, and do wickedly, but hate truth and righteousness.

And then, in Psalms 53, we saw how the Lord *will* smite (*and* defeat) the fools who deny that there is a *Supreme* God (who is our Creator) and cause them to greatly fear His punishments for ‘eating up’ His people with their wicked devices. And then in the last chapter (Psalms 54) we saw David call for God to help (and vindicate) him when perverse men (Saul and the Ziphims) rose up against David, unjustly, by chasing after him in the wilderness; trying to kill him when he had not done any of them wrong. We learned that, even though they were urgently seeking David’s life, he still relied (trusted in) on the Lord (YHVH) for help. And he knew the Lord would ‘cut them off’ and punish them for their evil works. And David promised to praise our Heavenly Father for this deliverance that he knew was coming. So, it again (as the past three chapters) taught us how to ‘defeat the enemy’ *by trusting in the Lord (YHVH) for help*. And, remember, we can only be assured His help *if* we ‘continue’ (to abide) in His Word (John 8:31), meaning we not only study His Word but sincerely strive to obey it, *from the heart*. This next chapter will also teach us the same lesson; therefore, it too can be titled as ‘**Instruction as to the Defeat of Enemies**’...

Psalms 55

I Mas'-chil, A Psalm of David.

Yet again, this is another ‘Mas'-chil’ Psalm. But, it’s now the now the **eight** out of thirteen (32, 42, 44, 45, 52, 53, 54, 55, 74, 78, 88, 89 & 142) of such Psalms. And, let’s remember, the word **Mas’-chil** means *instructive*, i.e. *a didactic poem* (#4905). And it comes from the prime root *sakal* (#7919) that means **to be** (causatively, *make* or *act*) *circumspect* and hence, *intelligent*. And apx. 65 XI further explains **it’s an ‘Understanding’ or ‘Instruction’ Psalm**, for public use (worship and learning). Unlike the “Michtam” Psalms (which are all by David) these ‘Mas-chil’ Psalms are by various authors, except for six of them, which are by David (as this one is). Apx. 65 also tells us that ‘Mas-chil’ means *to look at, scrutinize, to look well into anything* (1 Sam 18:30); hence the noun will mean *understanding arising from deep consideration* (Prov 13:15, Neh 8:8). Thus, theses ‘Maschil’ Psalms **gives us the basis of all true instruction and understanding**.

Indeed, the **first** ‘Maschil’ Psalm, chapter 32, taught us the importance of sincerely repenting and how to do so. It showed us that true repentance not only requires acknowledging our sins (breaking God’s Laws), transgressions (rebellion against God) and iniquities (having a corrupted/perverse, or even evil spirit) – but that we must also study God’s Word to learn *how* to do what’s right (which is what cleans our heart and mind) and learning to actually implement His Word into our daily thoughts, desires, words and actions. And true repentance also requires trusting in our Father’s Word; meaning the promises He’s given us for doing what’s right in obeying His Word. So, that was essentially the first great lesson of the “Mas’-chil” Psalms and the **second** one (chpt 42) followed up that lesson by teaching us to kick out our worries and fears, and trust in the Lord (YHVH) *no matter what happens to us*. And then the **third** ‘Mas’chil’

Psalms (44), taught us to remember history (that which the Bible teaches us) because it shows that our Heavenly Father is *always* true to His word to punish the wicked and reward the righteous. But it also showed us that, even after we've sincerely repented for our sins, we will also have to endure the chastisements that come from our Heavenly Father (because we sinned); but that is to our benefit, as Heb 12 explains. If we keep humble and obedient to Him, then blessings *will* come. And then the **fourth** 'Mas'chil' Psalm (45), taught us about the 'royal marriage' that's soon to come between Jesus Christ and His virgin Bride, who are His faithful 'saints'. And then in the **fifth** 'Mas'chil' Psalm (Ps 52) we learned how our Heavenly Father *will* punish the wicked ones – those who hate righteousness and truth but cleave to lies and wickedness. The wicked truly do not get away with anything. And then in the **sixth** 'Mas'chil' (Ps 53) we saw our Heavenly Father speak of the 'depravity of man' and His faithfulness to *defeat* it. And then in the last chapter (Ps 54, the **seventh** 'Mas'chil' Psalm), we saw David speak of the perverse men who were unjustly seeking his life in the wilderness, and his calls that the Lord would reward them evil (punish them) for their wickedness by 'cutting them off', which did happen to Saul, eventually, for he was killed in battle with the Philistines.

So, of a truth, these Psalms are *great* 'instruction' and give us understanding in how to 'defeat our enemies'. It *only* comes by *trusting in our Heavenly Father* – His Word, His promises, His Laws, His Son (Jesus Christ) and in His Holy Spirit – for guidance, comfort strength and understanding that we need to endure all the hard times. For hard times *are* coming (Rev 12:7-17, 2 Thess 2) and we'll need these critical 'instructions' on how to 'defeat the enemy' at that time, and likely before then too! And let's always remember, as 1 Cor 10:13 tells us, our Heavenly Father won't let us be tested (or tempted) above what we can handle. He'll *always* give us the strength and understanding to get through anything that comes our way *if* we continue to bind our 'inner man' to Him *wholeheartedly* and 'keep His way', meaning to obey Him with all our heart, mind, soul *and strength* (Mk 12:30). And that important Scripture (1 Cor 10:13) also tells us the things we go through are not uncommon. Others have dealt with the same kinds of temptations, and tribulations, as David's life well points out. So, we *should* learn from the beautiful examples in God's Word (in the Psalms as well), as 1 Cor 10:11 tells us too...

Now, three out of the last four Psalms were kind enough to give us a timeline for when they were written. But this Psalm – while we know it was a Psalm of David – does not specify in the title *when* it was written. However, we can make an 'educated guess' as to the time frame, simply by the context of what's written. It seems to have been written during the time of Absalom's rebellion, after David, most of his family and faithful followers had to flee Jerusalem (2 Sam 15). For, in this Psalm, David speaks of a traitor, who was a close friend and even a 'guide' (counselor) to him. This most likely is referring to Ahithophel, who was a good friend (and even one of the top councilors to David) (2 Sam 15:12,31, 16:15-17:23) who ended up betraying David by siding with David's son, Absalom, in his rebellion against David. Therefore, this Ahithophel is also a type even for Judas Iscariot, who betrayed our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ

as well as a type for Satan himself, who was the very first traitor when he turned on our Heavenly Father in the first earth age and caused 1/3 of God's children to also rebel (Ezek 28). So, without any further a due, let's look at what the rest of verse 1 says...

Psalm 55

1... Give ear to my prayer, O God; and hide not thyself from my supplication.

So, this is another Psalm where David humbly beseeched God to hear his prayer. And, as always, we *should* learn from this because it teaches us *how* to approach our Heavenly Father in prayer. And he begins by asking 'God' to 'give ear' to his prayer. This isn't an unusual request. David's already used it several times in the Psalms (5:1, 17:1, 39:12) and our Heavenly Father used this phrase as well (Ex 32:1, Isa 51:5) as did Moses (15:26) and Jeremiah (Jer 13:15). So, it's a common phrase used in the Bible. In fact, even today we still use this terminology when we *really* want people to pay *close* attention to what we're going to say. And the word 'God' here is one frequently used in the Psalms: '**Elohiym**' (#430), which means *the Supreme God*, who is our *Creator*. So, David's calling upon his Creator, who is the *Supreme God*, to listen closely to what he's about to 'say' in his prayer. And then he also asks God not to hide Himself from David's supplication. The word '**hide**' means *to veil from sight*, i.e. **conceal** (#5956) and the word '**supplication**' means an *entreaty*, even **graciousness** (#8467), so it implies that God is being gracious to listen to our prayers to Him. Indeed, He *is* being gracious to hear our prayers, because He does not have to!

Psalm 55

2 Attend unto me, and hear me: I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise;

David *again* asks the Lord to hear him. The word '**attend**' means (in the context of this verse) to **prick up the ears**, i.e. **hearken** (#7181) and the word '**hear**' means (in the context of this verse) **to heed**, i.e. **pay attention** and, by implication, **to respond** (#6030). So, *three* times (give ear, attend, hear) David asked the Lord to pay *close* attention to his prayer, showing this is an *urgent* request. Anytime something is reiterated more than once, in the Bible, it's done to give *great emphasis* on what's being stated. And David not only asks that God hears Him but, he's also asking for Him **to respond** (#6030) to his prayer. Truly, our Heavenly Father does hear all our prayers. So, when the Bible tells us that He won't 'hear' us, it means that He won't *answer*, or *respond*, to our prayers. But why does He not 'hear' in the aspect of answering (or responding) to our prayers? Ps 66:18 clearly answers this for us when it states that, if we 'regard' 'iniquity' in our heart, then the Lord will not 'hear'. The word '**regard**' here means **to see** (#7200) and the word '**iniquity**' means **vanity**, **wickedness**, or even **an idol** (#205). And the word '**hear**' means to **give attention** or even **obedience**, as in *responding* or *answering* our prayers (#8085). What this boils down to is that, if we don't hear *our Heavenly Father* (give Him our attention and respond with willing obedience) then He won't hear *us* (give us His attention and answer our prayer

requests). Prov 1:22-33 explains this rather well, but Moses also warned of this too. For example, when the Lord (YHVH) was preparing Israel to enter the Promise Land, they wanted to send spies out to look at the land. And the Lord let them do that. But, when the spies came back, they made up an ‘evil report’ (slandered, #1681) about the Promised Land! (Num 13:32). And that caused the army to be too afraid to fight. Because of this, God condemned that generation to die in the wilderness and He promised that their children would inherit the land. And after Moses told this to the people, they were so upset that they decided to go ahead and try and enter the Promise Land, even though the Lord had just said they would not get to do so (because He would not be with them). And, in Deut 1:42-46, Moses reminded the children of the rebels about this. And he pointed out how it was because their parents (and grandparent) refused to hear God that they were then slaughtered in war. And when they came back crying to God about what happened, He refused to ‘hear’ them *because they were rebelling against Him*. So, the essence of being able to have our Heavenly Father ‘hear’ us, meaning that He’ll not only hear but *respond* (answer) our prayers, is that *we must be willing to hear Him*. In other words, we can’t be rebelling against Him, which is why Ps 66:18 says that if we ‘regard’ ‘iniquity’ in our heart, then the Lord will not ‘hear’ us. Again, it’s not that He doesn’t hear our prayers; but He won’t respond to (or answer) our prayers when we have a rebellious heart. And this is a critical point to remember if we want our prayers to be answered by our Heavenly Father. We can’t keep sin in our heart and expect Him to help us. He only helps those who fear and obey Him – those who are not rebelling against Him. As Ps 145:19 says, *He will fulfil the desire of them that **fear him**: he also will hear their cry, and will save them*. This word ‘fear’ not only means fear to do evil (Prov 16:6) but also to revere (love, honor and respect) our Heavenly Father.

Now, when David says (in the latter part of Ps 55:2) that he’s going to *mourn in my complaint, and make a noise*, he’s basically wanting to pour out his complaints to God. The word ‘**noise**’ here means to *make an uproar* or *to be greatly agitated* (#1949). And, this surely isn’t hard to understand. How many times have you, in your prayers to God, poured out your feelings and concerns? That’s what David’s doing too. And, to reiterate, **if we** are willing to ‘hear’ our Heavenly Father (and are sincerely trying to obey Him) **then He** will hear us, as well. But, always remember, the way that He answers our prayers is totally up to Him. Just because He doesn’t answer them when, and how, we want (or expect) doesn’t mean He didn’t hear, *or answer* our prayers. He always answers our prayers on His ‘timeline’ and in the way that best for us *and* His plan of salvation. Not surprisingly, Jesus Christ taught us a lot about how to pray to our Heavenly Father...

*9 And I say unto you, **Ask**, and it shall be given you; **seek**, and ye shall find; **knock**, and it shall be opened unto you.*

10 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?

12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

*13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: **how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?***

Luke 11:9-13

Jesus makes a very good point. When we have children, we enjoy giving them ‘good gifts’. And our Heavenly Father loves to do so to us, as well. But, He’s not going to give us something we ask for if it will hurt us. For example, having a lot of money might very well corrupt our spirit (1 Tim 6) so, unless we can handle it (and will use it for His will, not our lusts) then He won’t give us a lot of money. But, Jesus also told us that we should ‘ask’, ‘seek’, and ‘knock’ as well. As verse 8 says: *For every one that asketh **receiveth**; and he that seeketh **findeth**; and to him that knocketh it shall be **opened***. This means, we should not only be asking Him in prayer but also seeking the answers *through His Word*. And **if** we do *diligently* study His Word to find the answers (2 Tim 2:15) - and we still don’t have an answer - then we should ‘knock’ and ‘it shall be opened’. But, what does that mean? The word ‘**knock**’ in the Greek means **to rap** (#2925). And while we usually think of this in terms of rapping on a door with our hand, the word ‘rap’ actually has a quite insightful (yet less known) meaning: as a transitive verb it can mean **to talk freely and frankly to someone**. And to be ‘frank’ with someone means to speak with *free, forthright, and sincere* expression. Put another way, to be able to ‘knock’ on our Heavenly Father’s heart – i.e. to get Him to open His heart to us *and help us* – we must speak freely, honestly, sincerely and without guile, as well as humbly. And that means we must also *open our heart* to what *He* has to say *to us*. In the book of Isaiah, our Heavenly Father explains this more...

22 But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel.

23 Thou hast not brought me the small cattle of thy burnt offerings; neither hast thou honoured me with thy sacrifices. I have not caused thee to serve with an offering, nor wearied thee with incense.

24 Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices: but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities.

25 I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.

*26 **Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified.***

Isa 43:22-26

Our Heavenly Father is reasoning with Israel (a.k.a. Jacob) here and He points out that they are not sincerely calling to Him for help; in fact, they’ve been ‘weary’ (tired of, #3021) of Him,

which is why there weren't even bringing Him the physical sacrifices the Law of Moses called for. Instead, they were lustfully following after false gods and idols, which wearied (tired, #3021) our Heavenly Father. Yet, even at that, He was willing to forgive them if they would simply "*Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified*". Now, our Heavenly Father really does not (ever) need to be reminded of His promises, nor of what we've done. But His point is that: He wants them (and us) to come to Him and remind Him of His great promises to forgive them (and us) and He'll do so IF we sincerely repent.

So, He calls for us to 'put Him in remembrance' and 'plead' with Him, for several reasons. First off, it shows we *know* His promises, which shows we've *been seeking Him*. Secondly, it shows we *believe* in His promises, which shows we *believe in Him*. Thirdly, it shows we feel like we are doing *what is required to get His promises*. And this is really what 'knocking' to the Lord (YHVH) is all about. When you've asked Him, and sought answers in His Word and still don't have an answer (or solution to the problem) - then go back to our Heavenly Father in prayer (in Jesus' name, John 14:13-14, John 15:17, John 16:23-26) and pray to Him freely and frankly. Let Him know (again) what your problem(s) is (still are) and tell Him you've been searching His Word to find answers but still don't understand. You might also remind Him you've been trying hard to see your sins as well... *if* you actually have been trying to see your sins and change them. If not, *maybe* that's why you are not getting answers. But, if you are sincere, He'll help you see what you need to change. If there's nothing you need to change then you might just need to *be patient* (Lk 8:15, Rom 8:25, Heb 12:1). But don't stop talking (praying) freely and frankly with your Heavenly Father. And make sure you are *honestly* sincere with Him because *that's* the way you 'speak to' HIS heart. He *wants* our sincere 'inward' worship; He doesn't want us to be fake. And also make sure your heart is *open* to hear what He's got to say. *We* have to be willing to *hear* God's answer; because it *might* not be what we're expecting. He might show us that there are some things we need to change inside and we have to be 'open' to that. But, if you are truly sincere, and willing to change your sins, and there's still something you need help with (as David obviously did when writing this Psalm), Jesus gave us another parable to explain how 'men ought always to pray, and not to faint' (Lk 18:1) ...

2 Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:

3 And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

4 And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

5 Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

7 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

*8 I tell you that he will avenge them **speedily**. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?*

Luke 18:1-8

So, it also might *not be time* to have your prayers answered. This is especially so if you are asking for vengeance (or vindication) upon your enemies, as David so often prayed for. It doesn't usually happen overnight; it often takes time. So, *be patient* and willing to hear what the Holy Spirit has to say. In other words, make sure you do not have any preconceived ideas, or desires, about what response think the Lord *should* give you. Be open to what He *really* has to say and then you will get a response, even if it's only to comfort you while you patiently endure the hard times. As 2 Thess 3:3 says, *the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.*

35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.

36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

37 For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

*38 Now **the just shall live by faith**: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.*

*39 But **we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.***

Heb 10:35-39

We'll pick this up in part 2...

AMEN.