

Part 2 – God Puts Down and Sets Up

In part 1 we learned that this is another Psalm (*or* Song) of Asaph, and is written in response to the last Psalm's call (74:22) for God to rise up and 'plead His cause', because of the wickedness that the enemy was doing in His Sanctuary. Thus, this Psalm is a warning to the wicked, but also a comfort to those who love, fear and obey Him. And we saw the Psalmist praise God for His wondrous works, which were *anticipating the nearness* of God's judgment, and thanking Him *for that* before it happened (*that's* true faith). And we also saw God 'speak' in the Psalm about the soon to come judgment. He promised that He has a 'set time' for it (judgment) and that, when it does come, He will judge uprightly (*without* partiality). And we also saw God point out that, even if the entire world were to be screwed up by mankind actions, God is still in full control. He, therefore, won't let His earth (or His people) be totally destroyed, because He is the one that holds up the 'pillars' of it all. And we also ended the last verse with a 'selah', which always means to 'stop and think' about what *has been said* (vs 3) with what is *about to be said* (vs 4). The Selah is therefore connecting the 'set time' of judgment with the judgment itself, as it will affect the wicked *and* the righteous, which we will now learn about...

Psalm 75

4 I said unto the fools, Deal not foolishly: and to the wicked, Lift not up the horn:

Now, this is still God (our Creator, who is the Supreme God, #430 'Elohim') 'speaking' in this verse. And He is warning the fools not to deal foolishly. The words 'fool' and 'foolishly' are the same Hebrew word that means *to be clear* (orig. of sound, but usually of color) or *to shine*; hence, it also means *to make a show*, *to boast*; and thus *to be* (clamorously) *foolish* as well as *to rave*, to *celebrate* and even to *stultify* (#1984). So, in the context of this verse, it means that God is warning those who are foolish (even vocally so) not to boast. Most likely this is a warning for them not to boast about 'getting away' with the wicked things they are doing because (as we learned earlier) this Psalm is a warning to the wicked that God's judgment is near. So, they are not going to be 'getting away' with their wickedness very long; that's the point here. The Proverbs have *so much* to say about this. Prov 10:14 says: *Wise men lay up knowledge: but the mouth of the foolish is near destruction*. Prov 14:3 says: *In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride: but the lips of the wise shall preserve them*. Prov 13:16 says: *Every prudent man dealeth with knowledge: but a fool layeth open his folly*. Prov 14:16 says: *A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident*. Prov 17:10 says: *A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool*. Prov 18:2 *A fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself*. Prov 29:11 says: *A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards*. These Scriptures help us to understand what 'foolishness' God is warning the wicked to refrain from. Prov 1:22-33 also gives a very thorough warning from 'wisdom' (another name for our Heavenly Father) of what 'judgment' will come upon them if they refuse to repent and change from their 'foolishness' (i.e. sins).

And then, He also gives warning to the ‘wicked’, which are *morally wrong* or (actively) *bad people* (#7563). And the word ‘horn’ is figurative *for power* (#7161), and is frequently used in the Psalms this way (Ps 18:2, 89:17,24, 92:10, 112:9, 132:17, 148:14). But it’s also used quite a bit throughout the rest of the Old Testament (Jer 48:25; Lam 2:3,17; Ezek 29:21; Mic 4:13; Ezekiel 1:21) and even in the New Testament (Lk 1:69). And, in the book of Daniel, it’s used a lot in the 7th (vs 8,11,20-21) and 8th (vs 5,8,9,21) chapters too. The *Companion Bible* also has a note on the word ‘horn’ which tells us that it’s also being used as another figure of speech (*Metonymy*, of adjunct., apx 6) here in this verse; this figure of speech is when one name, or noun, is used instead of another, to which it stands in a certain relation. So, the word ‘horn’ is put for the pride connected with the wearing of it. So again, God is warning the wicked (who are fools) not to be arrogant about seeming success in doing wickedly, and not to think they are going to get away with it. And throughout the Word, our Heavenly Father also warns those who love, fear and obey Him not to ‘fret’ (worry or get angry) about the seeming success of the wicked because ‘their day’ (for judgment) **is** coming. He’s even given us a couple of precious Psalms (37 and 73 specifically) that really ‘hammer home’ this point...

Psalm 75

5 Lift not up your horn on high: speak not with a stiff neck.

Again, we see the use of the word ‘horn’ in a figurative way. God is warning the wicked (who are foolish) not to ‘lift up’ their ‘horn’ on high, which simply means not to be arrogant about the power they have, *nor* to boast about it. And the word ‘stiff’ here means *impudent*, which is *a contemptuous or cocky boldness or disregard of others* (#6277). The analogy of a ‘high horn’ comes from when an animal lifts up its horns high *in defiance* of its ‘master’. The same is true of the reference to the neck: an animal *resisting its master's commands* does so most immediately by *refusing to move its head when it is told*. These analogies are common when the Bible speaks about obstinate sin (Exodus 33:5; Nehemiah 9:29; Proverbs 29:1). God also explained this analogy quite well in Isa 1:2-3, when speaking of His *own* ‘chosen’ people, Israel. And He also calls them ‘*impudent children and stiffhearted*’ in Ezek 2:3-4. And it was because they were so impudent and stiff hearted that He was sure they would not regard Ezekiel’s warnings to them (Ezek 3:7). Yet, He still wanted them warned *before* the punishments came. And, that’s essentially what He is doing to the wicked, here in this Psalm. Our Heavenly Father is *always* fair. So, even if there is little chance people will repent (because they are rebellious and hard hearted), He *still* wants them warned *before* He punishes them, because *that’s the right thing to do*. And the hardened hearts of His children was why His prophets were so often mistreated. They were sent to people who were very sinful and didn’t want to change. But, God still warned them (through His prophets) because He is just and righteous and truly desires people to repent, no matter how bad they are (Ezek 18, 33, 2 Pt 3:9).

We should also understand how God views rebellion and idolatry. In 1 Sam 15:23, Samuel told Saul (the first man king of Israel) that *rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry*. So, having a ‘stiff neck’ (being hard hearted, i.e. stubborn and rebellious) is looked upon as witchcraft (#7081 divination; trying to communicate with evil spirits), iniquity (#205 vanity, wickedness) and even *idolatry*, which is being devoted to (lusting after) anything other than the one and only true God, Yehovah (Col 3:5). When anything, or anyone, is more important to us (in our heart) than our Heavenly Father, then we’ve made it into an idol. The *Companion Bible* also has an interesting note on part of this verse that says “*speak not with a stiff neck*”. It says, according to the primitive orthography, this means: “*nor speak arrogantly of the Rock*”, which is God Almighty. The *Moffett Bible*’s translation backs this up, for it renders this verse as: “*No, never flaunt your power thus proudly, defy not God thus loudly*”. So, in all their boastings of the wicked things they do (and think they get away with) they are truly speaking arrogantly *against* our Heavenly Father Himself. For, they don’t think He will (or *can*) stop them. And *this* will be their downfall...

Psalms 75

6 For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south.

The word ‘**promotion**’ here is the same Hebrew word that was translated as ‘**lift not up**’ in the prior verse (5). It means *to be high actively, to rise or raise* (in various applications, literally or figuratively, #7311). This word has also been rendered as *exalt* (self) and to be *lofty* (among many other things). And then God goes on to speak of *three* of the four cardinal directions. So, he’s warning the wicked that ‘promotion’ (glory and power) *doesn’t* come from the east, west or the south. Why? Well, reference to *three* of the four cardinal directions *could* mean that they should not rely on help from other nations, nor the natural resources found there, for their power. But, notice there is a direction that is missing: the north. *Why doesn’t* God say they should *not* rely on the north? Again, the *Companion Bible* has a helpful note. It points out that ‘promotion’ (power) comes *only* from the North *because that is the place of God’s throne* (Ex 26:33-35, Ezek 8:14). Isaiah also tells us Satan covets the ‘sides of the north’ *because that is where the ‘Most High’ sits*. Verses 13-14 quote what Satan says in his defiled heart: *I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High*. So, this is why ‘promotion’ (power, honor and glory) only truly comes ‘from the north’ – *because that is where God sits*. In other words, **power, honor and glory only come from our Heavenly Father**. Any other power, honor or glory that is gotten without the ‘Most High’ *is not lasting and it will be torn down*.

Psalms 75

7 But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.

The word ‘God’ here is yet again *‘Elohiym’* (#430), which means *the Supreme God*, who is our *Creator*. ‘*Elohiym*’ (or ‘*Elohim*’) is God the Creator putting His omnipotence (‘*El*’) into operation. And the word ‘**judge**’ means *to judge*, i.e. *pronounce sentence* (for or against); by implication, it means *to vindicate* or *punish*; by extension, it means *to govern*; and passively, *to litigate* (literally or figuratively) (#8199). So, God (our Creator, who is the Supreme God) is THE Judge *over all*. That means He not only judges (pronounces and executes sentence for or against, which is why vengeance belongs to Him alone, Deut 32:35) but He also governs and litigates. In other words, Yehovah is Judge, King and Ruler (the Supreme God) over all the earth (and in heaven). And that is why we shouldn’t trust any other ‘direction’ that judgement may come from.

And then the words ‘**he putteth down**’ mean *to depress* or *sink* (expec. figuratively, to *humiliate*, intransitive or transitive, #8213) and has also been translated as abase, bring (or cast, put) down, debase, humble as well as make low. And the words ‘**setteth up**’ are actually the same word that was translated as ‘**lift not up**’ in vs 4-5 and ‘**promotion**’ in the prior verse 6. So, it means *to be high actively*, *to rise* or *raise* (in various applications, literally or figuratively, #7311). And what this boils down to is that: our Heavenly Father is the one that *raises up* rulers and He also is the one who *puts them down*, which means to depose them from power. So, the point is that: mankind cannot promote himself over others, *without* our Heavenly Father’s approval. It doesn’t matter how much conspiring they do (Ps 2); they won’t be successful (for long) unless the Lord (YHVH) *allows* them to be.

As Paul points out in Rom 13:1, *there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God*. So, those who are in authority are allowed to be so, by God Himself. And this is true – for the good or the bad. However, this does not mean we must obey the bad ones IF they are trying to get us to disobey God. For, as Paul also points out in Rom 13:3-5, rulers are *supposed* to use their authority for good, not evil. But, as we all know, bad rulers are very common. And when we have bad rulers, it is because God is *chastising the people* for not seeking, and obeying *Him*. But thankfully, even if you do live in a country that has bad (crooked) rulers (and you probably do), you can still be protected and blessed by God if you *personally* seek Him and strive to do what’s right. So, we are to obey the government (i.e. we should still pay taxes and strive to obey civil laws) inasmuch as we can *without disobeying God’s Word*. But, when they try to get you to do things that go against God’s Word, simply *do not comply*. Yes, you’ll have to ‘suffer the consequences’ for non-compliance, but God will bless you for it, even if it’s only by giving you peace of mind and strength to endure it. But God does not want us to cause insurrections or be rebel rousers (Gal 5:19-21). He *will* put down the wicked ruler *when* He sees fit. And He *will* help you through your being persecuted by them too, as so many people’s life prove. Consider the lives of people like David, Daniel (Dan 6), Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego (Dan 3). These men didn’t try to rebel against the government; rather, they committed themselves to obeying God regardless of the consequences. David was thus saved from the hands of Saul; Daniel was saved from the lion’s den and the three others were saved from a fiery furnace. When

you serve the Most-High God, He won't let you die till it's your time. But, if it is your time (as it was for Stephen, Acts 7) then you will be greatly rewarded for your faithfulness to our Heavenly Father, as Jesus promised us in Mth 5:12.

So, the fact is: because our Heavenly Father is the 'Supreme Judge', no one gets to be in power *unless He allows it*. That's why He can prophesy (hundreds, if not thousands of years in advance) of who will come to power (Dan 2). That's also why He can promise that Jesus Christ will be King of kings, forever, once He returns (Ps 2, Rev 19). And that's why vs 6 said 'promotion' (power) *only comes from him*. So, this verse (7) is now saying that God is the one who puts down, or sets up, the rulers on the earth. And again, the reason is because He is the Judge over all. The *Moffett Bible* renders this verse as: "*Tis God who rules o're men, this one he lowers, this one he lifts*". So again, the point is that: we should not try and lift ourself up to positions of authority; we should rely on our Heavenly Father to do so. As Jesus Christ taught...

3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

*4 Whosoever therefore shall **humble** himself as this little child, **the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.***

Matt 18:3-4

11 But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

12 And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

Matt 23:11-12

So, the way our Heavenly Father operates, is that His government is designed to serve (protect) the people, *not* to 'serve' themselves through oppression and tyranny (which is how the world runs, which is mirrored after Satan's way of governing). Jesus even gave us two parables explaining the importance of being humble (Luke 14:7-11, Luke 18:10-14). And the book of James also tells us...

*4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that **the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.***

5 Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?

*6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, **God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.***

7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

9 Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness.

10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

James 4:4-10

1 Peter 5:6 also tells us to *humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time*. So, the point is that our goal (desire) in life should not be to gain power and authority, nor money. As Prov 23:4 says: *labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom*. Far too many people in the world work to be the richest and the most powerful people they can be. But that's not wise, for *that is how you become the enemy of God* - i.e. befriending the world, to gain money and power, *is how you make yourself God's enemy*. And that's because, most of the time you have to 'sell out' your godly (Biblical) morals in order to succeed in the world. That's not *always* the case, but it is *much of the time*. As the Proverbs warns us...

31 Envy thou not the oppressor; and choose none of his ways.

32 For the froward is abomination to the LORD: but his secret is with the righteous.

33 The curse of the LORD is in the house of the wicked: but he blesseth the habitation of the just.

34 Surely he scorneth the scorners: but he giveth grace unto the lowly.

35 The wise shall inherit glory: but shame shall be the promotion of fools.

Prov 3:31-35

So, our purpose in life should be trying to find our God-given gifts (1 Cor 12) and use them the best we can (Mth 25:14-30). And most people, in this life, are not chosen by God to be rulers. Some are, undoubtedly, but most are not. And we should be happy with that because truly, ***you'll only be happy in life when you find the gift(s) God has given you and learn to use them as He wants you to***. As with the case of Moses and David (both who were mere shepherds before God called them), God really did want them to rule the nation of Israel. Poor Moses didn't even *want* that job (Ex 3)! But, he eventually submitted to God's will for him and was blessed for it. David also did not try to take authority, even though he was extremely popular with the people (1 Sam 18:5) and (more importantly) he was anointed, by God, to be king of Israel, when he was but a very young man (1 Sam 16:13). Yet still, he still refused to try and overthrow the existing king of Israel (Saul) – i.e. he did not try and cause an insurrection (or 'military coup') and therefore he had to run for his life (in the wilderness) for years (*decades*), until God finally 'put down' Saul by allowing him to be killed in battle. But David, *refused* to kill Saul himself, even when he had the chance to do so, *twice* – and he also refused to allow his followers to kill Saul, *twice* (1 Sam 24, 26).

So, this is why this verse 7 says that God is the Judge (governor, ruler) - and He is the *ultimate Judge over all* that's in heaven and earth. And He therefore is the one who puts people in authority, as well as deposing them. But those who try to gain authority *on their own*, without

God's approval, are in for a rude awakening. And there is no better example for this than looking at Satan (i.e. the Devil, Rev 12:9, 20:2). While God *originally* put him in great authority, by making him the governor of the earth, [<https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/423>] in the first earth age, Satan began to *abuse* that authority, which is why God *deposed him*, as Ezek 28 explains. Yet, Satan *continues* to try and overthrow our Heavenly Father (as Isa 14 also explains). Psalms 2 explained how he continues this rebellion (by using people on earth) and other Scriptures (Dan 9, 11, 2 Thess 2, Rev 12-13, etc.) also tell us he's also going come to earth (when he's kicked out of heaven) and set himself up as God (ruler and king), even convincing people to *worship him* as God (the 'Savior' of the world). So, so he's not done rebelling yet. Yet, Ps 2 also told us God's response to man's (including Satan's) puny efforts to overthrow Him, which was merely to laugh at them. But, He *also* explained that He has chosen His own King (Jesus Christ) to rule *forever* (vs 6). And Jesus Christ *will* ruler, forever, once He returns to earth and 'puts down' all rebellion. Satan will only be given one more chance to deceive people, at the end of the Millennium; but that 'final rebellion' will be very short lived and put down *very* quickly, as Rev 20:7-10 tells us. And, at that time, all incorrigible rebels will all be pitched into the 'lake of fire', which means they'll be *totally blotted out of existence, never to exist in any form again*. So, our Heavenly Father truly is the Supreme God, the ultimate Judge over all. And, as Jesus said in John 5:26-27 and Matt 28:18, God has given Jesus Christ *all* power over *all* things in heaven and in earth; which means He's also got the authority to *execute* judgment also. Which is why Rev 19:16 says He is the *KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS* and Rev 19:11 tells us that *in righteousness he doth judge and make war*.

So, the ultimate 'putting down' and 'setting up another' was when God deposed Satan and set up Jesus Christ as King of kings forevermore. But, Jesus Christ won't be ruling by Himself. No, He will rule with the Body of Christ – who are all those who believe in Him, obey Him and remain faithful to Him. These are those who make the '*first resurrection*' (Rev 20:4-6) and are given eternal life, so they can rule with Jesus' Christ during the Millennium and truly, forevermore. This is why Paul wrote...

13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption [redemption, vs 23], whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Rom 8:13-18

This is why Jesus, and the apostles, told us to *humble* ourselves and God will exalt us ‘in due time’. If we humbly serve Him *now*, we’ll be greatly rewarded later. If we seek to be powerful rulers *now*, we’ll be humbled when Jesus Christ returns (or when we die; whichever comes first). And truly, those who do serve God *now*, are almost always severely persecuted; and that’s simply because the world does not like the truth being told. And the worldly system is also rigged not to let anyone who faithfully follows Jesus Christ into great authority. Now, there are expectations, of course. But this is rare. And, of course, God *allows* it because it’s the ‘negative’ part of his plan of Salvation; i.e. it’s how He tests His children to see who is fit to serve in His government and who is not. And, He also allows it to discern who is incorrigible and who is salvageable. So, we must learn to find our gift(s) God has given us and use them the best we can. And if (when) we are persecuted for serving God (Jesus Christ) then count it a joy. After all, as Jesus told us in Matt 5:10-12, there are great rewards ‘in heaven’ (and when He returns as well) for remaining loyal to Jesus, even when we are persecuted on earth for doing so. And in John 15:20, Jesus also reminds us: *Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, **they will also persecute you**; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.*

So, we should work not to be like the foolish and wicked people of the earth, who covet riches and power (Col 3:5). Because, those who want to be friends with this world, will also fall to the same terrible fate as they do. They will be ‘put down’ when Jesus Christ returns (or when they die) with horrible shame and humiliation. But those who do what’s right, and serve God faithfully – despite being persecuted for it – will be exalted to reign with Jesus Christ *and* be given eternal life. And that truly, is something worth putting up with persecutions for. As Paul said in Rom 8:19, *the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us...*

12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

*13 But **rejoice**, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when **his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy**.*

*14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, **happy are ye**; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.*

15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.

*16 Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, **let him not be ashamed**; but let him glorify God on this behalf.*

17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

18 And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

*19 Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God **commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing**, as unto a faithful Creator.*

1 Peter 4:12-19

We'll pick this up in part 3...

AMEN.