

Psalm 35: The Folly of David's Accusers

Description

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A Word For the Tempted and Tried

by Trent Wilde

The psalms of David have proven to be a continuing fountain of truth in the present message of righteousness. In these prophetic songs, our Heavenly Family has provided plain scriptural testimony to help each branch candidate face every temptation in these days of the restoration of the tabernacle of David (Amos 9:11).

Truly, those being called into the priesthood of righteousness under the Davidic order are to meet severe tests and trials. This should come as no surprise to the student of scripture for every true revival and reformation in the history of our God's people has been marked, not only by the restoration of the ceremonial service, i.e. the gospel, but also by the desperate attempts of the enemy to foil Heaven's work.¹

Evidence has been borne out in the previous issues of *The Silver Trumpet* as to the current restoration of the ceremonial service. Wisdom has also seen fit to reveal the attacks of the enemy against this message as disclosed in such passages as Zechariah 3, Psalm 2, and Psalm 7. The faithful and wise will doubtless be (or become) familiar with these passages so that they can answer every temptation with an "it is written."

The devil's attacks today are no different than in previous days in that they consist in insinuations of doubt and baseless accusations. By employing these same methods in increasingly subtle ways, he hopes to rob the hearers of truth from its efficacy. So, when the enemy suggests doubts as to the truthfulness of the message, how must one answer if he would be on the path of life? Must it not be with an "it is written"? Likewise, when accusations are made against the message or those bearing it, how must one find out whether the accusations be true or not? Again, is it not with an "it is written"?

To the law and the testimony: If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. "Isaiah 8:20

As we begin to study our main passage, let us do it right. If your purpose is not to learn the truth and to live by it, your attempts at understanding will be vain. We absolutely must come to the scriptures with the humility of remembering our own nothingness. We cannot arrive at truth by our own wisdom, but only by the Spirit of God (1 Cor. 2). Pray earnestly, then, for the guidance of Heaven. Plead with Wisdom to search you out and remove anything in your thinking that would prevent you from a clear understanding of Her word. As we enter upon the investigation of scripture, we enter onto holy ground. All trifling and jesting must be put aside. He that has an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit says.

Let the reader ask, "What does Psalm 35 mean? Is it for today? What lessons am I supposed to learn from it?" What is the answer? Surely if it is for today, our Heavenly Family will reveal its meaning and impress its lessons upon your heart.

Our Sister wants to reason with us (Isa. 1:18). The Voice of reason says, "Have I not been revealing these psalms to you? Is not a psalm a song and a song a prophecy? Is this not a psalm of David? Do you see that I have been establishing my tabernacle among you and that it is the tabernacle of David?"

Present truth is what the flock needs now (EW 68). Let us consider the prophecy then and see what David says by the Inspiration of the Spirit:

Yahweh, contend with those who contend with me! Attack those who attack me! â?? Psalm 35:1

Clearly, there are those contending with and attacking David. But since David is hemmed in by the Spirit (Ps. 139:5) and since his tongue does not frame a word without Yahweh (Ps. 139:4), the attack is really against our Heavenly Family (See Ps. 2:2).

Grab your shield and buckler; rise up to help me. Ready the spear and the javelin against those who pursue me. Say to my soul, â??I am your deliverer!â?? â?? Psalm 35:2-3

David asks our Heavenly Family to fight for him. His request for Yahweh to take up two shields and two spears reveals his perceived need for more than one Yahweh to take up arms on his behalf since it would be unnatural for him to expect one person to wield two spears and at the same time two shields. Is his prayer answered? What do the scriptures say?

In my call, you answer me, Goddess of my righteousness. In the narrow position you make wideness for me. You are gracious to me. You hear my request. â?? Psalm 4:1

Yes, both his King and his Goddess pay attention to the sound of his cry for help (Ps. 5:2) and They come to his aid.

May those who seek my life be embarrassed and humiliated! May those who plan my misfortune be turned back and ashamed! â?? Psalm 35:4

Will not even this request be granted to David? Futile then is any attempt to plan his misfortune or seek his life.

May they be like wind-blown chaff as the Angel of Yahweh pushes them. May their path be darkness and destruction as the Angel of Yahweh chases them! â?? Psalm 35:5-6

As this wind blows, so does the Spirit. The parallelism shows the Angel in this instance to be the Spirit. David's attackers are faced with the Gods of Heaven as their adversaries. The fact that the Spirit chases them away tells us that they were at one point near to David and the fact that he prays for their path to be darkness and destruction shows that they once were on the path of light.

My child, if you receive my words, and store up my commands within you, by making your ear attentive to Wisdom and by turning your heart to Understandingâ?! if you seek for Her like silver and search for Her like hidden treasure, then you will know how to fear Yahwehâ?! For Wisdom will enter your heart and knowledge will be pleasant to you. Discretion will protect you, understanding will guard you, to deliver you from the way of the wicked, from those who speak perversities, who leave the paths of uprightness and walk in the ways of darkness. â?? Proverbs 2:1-2, 4, 10-13

Those on the path of darkness, speaking perversities, have not Wisdom nor life (Prov. 8:10; 12:28).

For without cause they hid a net to catch me and dug a pit to trap me. â?? Psalm 35:7

Evidently, David had done nothing deserving of their wicked schemes. Nonetheless, they dug a pit â??without cause,â?• or â??without reason,â?• even more fully stated, â??due to lack of reason.â?• What saith the scripture concerning their fate?

He who digs a pit shall fall in it. â?? Proverbs 26:27

May destruction take them by surprise! May the net they hid catch them! May they fall into destruction. Then my soul shall rejoice in Yahweh and be happy in his deliverance. All my bones will say, "Yahweh, who is like you? You rescue the oppressed from those who try to overpower them; the oppressed and needy from those who try to rob them." Psalm 35:8-10

The attackers are evidently trying to overpower David and to rob him. Since David's wealth is in his words of Inspiration (Ps. 19:9-10; 119:72, 127; Prov. 8:10), that must be the thing which the attackers are attempting to steal.

Though this psalm is directly applicable in our day, we can find examples in the past which will help us to understand what it means to rob the truth. Such is the example of the *Messenger* party:

In the summer of 1854 there appeared among the Sabbath-keeping Adventists the first disaffection, or apostasy. Two men who had been preaching the message were reproofed through the spirit of prophecy for a harsh, censorious spirit, for avarice, and for extravagance in the use of means placed in their hands. Becoming embittered instead of repentant, they joined with a few others in unjust recrimination against Elder and Mrs. White and other leaders, making false charges against them. Although continuing to advocate the Sabbath truth, they began the publication of a slanderous sheet which they called *The Messenger of Truth*.²

You see that because of their unwillingness to receive reproof from Inspiration, these men turned against James and Ellen White and started to attack their characters, all the while still advocating at least some of the very truths which they received from the message which came through the very ones they were accusing! Not only was their mode of operation an act of robbery to James and Ellen, but it was also robbery against those to whom they spoke slanderous words concerning James and Ellen, for by turning people from them, they turned them from their only true opportunity of receiving the righteousness of Christ.

So it is today. There are those who advocate certain truths which they learned through the messengers of our Heavenly Family, but because of unwillingness to receive reproof have turned against them and began a slanderous report. From such turn away; for,

The one who associates with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm. Proverbs 13:20

As for the experience of the robbers of truth we are told,

Bread gained by deceit is sweet to a person, but afterward his mouth is full of gravel. Proverbs 20:17

Malicious witnesses rise up and falsely accuse me. Psalm 35:11

Again, one may ask, "Are the accusations against David true or false?" What do the scriptures say? The scriptures are your only safeguard to know the truth.

They repay me evil for the good I have done: this is ravaging my soul. As for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth, and I afflicted myself through fasting. If I am lying, may my prayers return to me unanswered! I walked like they were my friend or my brother. I mourned for them like I would for my mother. But at my adversity they rejoiced and gathered together; they, smiters, gathered together to ambush me. They did not desist from slandering me. Psalm. 35:12-15

David had done good to his attackers; namely, telling them the truth concerning themselves offering reproof and instruction. In return, he was repaid with evil. While David sees the sickness of their condition it causes him to go into deep affliction for they were unto him as a close associate, and even more, a friend, nay even as family. Despite all this, the slanderers do not cease attacking with their lips.

As profane mockers with scorn they gnashed their teeth at me. Lord, how long will you idly watch? Rescue me from their destructive attacks; guard my face from the young lions [See Ps. 7:2]! I will thank you in the great

congregation; I will praise you among numerous people! Do not let those who are my enemies with a lie gloat over me! Do not let those who hate me without cause wink their eye. For they do not try to make peace, but plan ways to deceive those who are unsuspecting. â?? Psalm 35:16-20

All it would take for Davidâ??s slanderers to make peace is to cease from strife and heed Wisdomâ??s reproof (Prov. 20:3). Sadly, they are instead occupying themselves with trying to deceive the unsuspecting. Now, let the unsuspecting be aware. Let the study of the scriptures make you wise unto salvation. Psalm 35 must mean something, must it not? Let the truth be told.

They open wide their mouth against me and say, â??Aha, Aha! Our own eye has seen him.â?? Look Yahweh! Lord, be not far from me. Bestir yourself and rise up for my justice. My Goddess and my Lord, defend my just cause! Vindicate me by your justice, Yahweh my Goddess. Do not let them gloat over me. â?? Psalm 35:21-24

Evidently, Davidâ??s slanderous opposers claim to have some sort of special insight into him due to their first hand experience with him. Justice and righteousness though, demand the vindication of David. His Saviors come to his aid.

Do not let them say in their hearts, â??Aha! Our throat!â?? Donâ??t let them say, â??We have devoured him!â?? May those who desire my misfortune be totally embarrassed and ashamed. May those who magnify themselves against me be clothed with shame and humiliation. â?? Psalm 35:25-26

Everyone has a right to choose their path. David, seeing that those that are magnifying themselves against him are not turning from their way, desires that they be embarrassed and ashamed and humiliated. He would rather their shame if it means the salvation of those whom they are trying to deceive, rather than leaving it for them to gloat in their hearts as they rest in their carnal security, thinking they are all right when they are all wrong.

Doubtless, Davidâ??s attitude toward his accusers may be interpreted as unkind or insensitive by those uneducated in the principles of truth, but it is better for Inspirationâ??s rebuke to be heard than to let sin go uncorrected for fear of hurt feelings.

The forerunner of Christâ??s first advent was a very plain-spoken man. He rebuked sin, and called things by their right names. He laid the ax at the root of the tree. He thus addressed one class of professed converts who came to be baptized of him in Jordan: â??O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruit meet for repentanceâ?!. And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.â??

In this fearful time, just before Christ is to come the second time, Godâ??s faithful preachers will have to bear a still more pointed testimony than was borne by John the Baptist. A responsible, important work is before them; and those who speak smooth things, God will not acknowledge as His shepherds. A fearful woe is upon them.³

Knowing that the mind of Christ is truth, reason, and love, we do not hesitate to speak the truth. Today there are those of the same class as those in Johnâ??s day. They are represented as Cush the Benjamite in Psalm 7 and as Davidâ??s attackers here in Psalm 35. Many of you have heard their slander and know their attacks, even though they attempt subtlety. Know that those attacking this message (and the one given responsibility to bear it) are a generation of vipers. They do not image our Heavenly Family but rather follow in the path of the serpent and are thus his children and likened unto him. The poison they breathe is sin and death.

For in their mouth, there is no truth; their inward part is futile and injurious; their throat is an open grave; their tongue is a smooth, slippery slope leading down into it. â?? Psalm 5:9

Those who bring forth such deathly fruits will be hewn down and cast into the fire. The message to them is, â??Repent! Before it is too late, Repent!â?•

The Gods (Elohim) judge righteously; God (El) is full of wrath in all the day. If a person does not repent, He sharpens His sword. His bow is bent and she is made ready. And for him He prepares His weapons of death; He gets ready his flaming arrows. Behold the one who is pregnant with evil and conceives mischief and births falsehood. He digs a pit and then falls into the hole he has made. His mischief returns on his own head and on the crown of his head shall come down his violence. • Psalm 7:11-16

Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right. • Proverbs 20:11

As you witness the works of David's attackers, remember all these scriptures.

May those who have a desire for my righteousness shout for joy and rejoice! May they continually say, • May Yahweh be praised for he desires the peace of his servant. • Then I will proclaim your justice and praise you all day long. • Psalm 35:27-28

Let the words of scripture dominate your thinking (Phil. 2:5). Is not this 35th psalm clear in its meaning? Hide these words in your heart that you might not sin against our Heavenly Family, for with these words in mind, the enemy's temptations to believe the lie lose their power. Depend upon a • thus saith the LORD. • It is time to settle into the truth and learn the lessons Heaven intends us to learn.

In closing, consider the principles set forth in the following testimony:

Remarks are thoughtlessly made • by some designedly, by others carelessly • concerning the burden bearers there and concerning those who stand at the head of the work. God has marked all these speeches and the jealousy and envy which prompted them; a faithful record is kept. Many thank God for the truth and then turn around and question and find fault with the very means which Heaven has ordained to make them what they are or what they ought to be. How much more pleasing to God it would be for them to act the part of Aaron and Hur and help hold up the hands of those who are bearing the great and heavy burdens of the work in connection with the cause of God. Murmurers and complainers should remain at home, where they will be out of the way of temptation, where they cannot find food for their jealousies, evil surmising, and faultfindings, for the presence of such is only a burden to the meetings; they are clouds without water.

Those who feel at liberty to find fault with and censure those whom God has chosen to act an important part in this last great work would better seek to be converted and to obtain the mind of Christ. Let them remember the children of Israel who were so ready to find fault with Moses, whom God had ordained to lead His people to Canaan, and to murmur against even God Himself. All these murmurers fell in the wilderness. It is easy to rebel, easy to give battle before considering matters rationally, calmly, and settling whether there is anything to war against. The children of Israel are an example to us upon whom the ends of the world are come.⁴

¹See *The Greater Purpose*, by A.T. Jones.

²*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 1, p. 714 (Appendix)

³*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 1, p. 321

⁴*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 1, p. 526-527