

Praise for God's Ultimate Justice

Psalm 9:1-12
SS Lesson for 10/10/2021

Devotional Scripture: Ps 72:1-5

OUTLINE

LESSON BACKGROUND AND KEY VERSE

Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

Key Verse: Psalm 9:8

Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary

MAJOR THEME ANALYSIS

PRAISE GOD FOR HIS RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENTS (PS 9:1-8)

Praise through worship (1-2)

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Worship to glorify God (Phil 3:3)

Worship with reverence and awe (Heb 12:28)

Worship by rejoicing in God (Phil 4:4)

Worship God with joy, gladness and thanksgiving (Ps 100:2-4)

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Praise for vindication of righteousness (3-6)

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Vindication of righteousness because God judges with righteousness (Isa 11:4)

Vindication of righteousness because God upholds the cause of the needy (Ps 140:12)

Vindication of righteousness because God hears the plea of His people (2 Chron 6:35)

Praise for merciful judgments (7-8)

Merciful judgments should prompt us to be merciful to others (Matt 18:28-33)

Merciful judgments because it is a blessing (Matt 5:7)

Merciful judgments for those who give mercy (Matt 18:32-35)

Merciful judgments because God wants us to be also (Luke 6:36)

Merciful judgments because mercy triumphs over judgment (James 2:13)

Merciful judgments because God is gracious and slow to anger (Ps 103:8-9)

PRAISE GOD FOR HIS SAFE REFUGE (PS 9:9-12)

Refuge from trouble (9)

Refuge from trouble that man is born into (Job 5:6-7)

Refuge from troubles at work (Eccl 2:22-23)

Refuge from trouble starting at birth (Jer 20:18)

Refuge from today's trouble (Matt 6:34)

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Trustworthy because God is our fortress and shield (Ps 18:2)

Trustworthy because God is good (Ps 34:8)

Trustworthy because God is all powerful (Ps 46:1)

Trustworthy because God is for the righteous (Prov 10:29)

Trustworthy through His word (Prov 30:5)

Trustworthy to those who trust in Him (Nah 1:7)

Refuge through answered prayer (12)

Answered prayers because God's eyes are on the righteous (Ps 34:15)

Answered prayers because God promises to answer even before speaking (Isa 65:24)

Answered prayers because God promises to fulfill answers and seeking (Matt 7:7-8)

Answered prayers because of obedience (1 John 3:21-22)

Answered prayer for wisdom (James 1:5)

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CONCLUSION AND OTHER THOUGHTS

COMMENTARY THOUGHTS FROM C. H. SPURGEON

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS FROM THE NIV STANDARD LESSON COMMENTARY

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS FROM THE ECHOES COMMENTARY

Lesson Background and Key Verse

Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

Found in Book I of the Psalter, Psalm 9 is one of several alphabetic acrostics scattered throughout the psalms (other examples: Psalms 119; 145). An alphabetic acrostic is one in which each verse, stanza, or other pattern of lines begins with a successive letter of the alphabet. This technique helps with memorization. But sadly, that help is usually “lost in translation” as alphabets vary among languages. The acrostic format that begins in Psalm 9:2 continues into Psalm 10. This suggests that these two poems were originally one. From the standpoint of content, this makes perfect sense: Psalm 9 focuses on God’s deliverance of the righteous, whereas Psalm 10 dwells on God’s judgment on the wicked. For the psalmist and throughout much of Scripture, these two concepts go hand in hand. God’s justice entails both lifting the oppressed and lowering their oppressors (example: Proverbs 10:30). Two other factors further suggest that these two psalms were originally one: (1) Psalm 9 has a beginning superscript that introduces the psalm, whereas Psalm 10 lacks such a feature, which all other psalms in Book I have except for Psalms 1 and 2; and (2) Psalm 9 ends with the term “Selah.” That term does not appear in the text, although its presence may be indicated by a footnote. The word is likely a musical notation that indicates a pause in the recitation of a song. As a result, the old Greek translation of the book of Psalms combines Psalms 9 and 10 into one psalm. (This further results in the numbering of subsequent psalms to differ from that of our English translations until Psalm 147.) Dozens of psalms begin like this one in being addressed “For the director of music.” “A psalm of David” identifies the author. The Psalter attributes 73 of its 150 psalms to him, “the hero of Israel’s songs” (2 Samuel 23:1). The New Testament increases this tally (see Acts 1:16–20; 2:25–28; 4:25–26; Romans 4:6–8; 11:9–10).

Key Verse: Psalm 9:8

He shall judge the world in righteousness, and He shall administer judgment for the peoples in uprightness

Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary

Psalms 9 and 10 may have originally been one psalm, as they are in the Septuagint. They are connected by their form in the Hebrew, for nearly each stanza (approximately every other verse) begins with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Also the two psalms have similar wording. For example, “in times of trouble” is found in 9:9 and 10:18, and in only two other passages in the Psalms. Also each of the two psalms closes with an emphasis on mortal men (9:20; 10:18). Finally each psalm mentions “the nations” (9:5, 15, 17, 19-20; 10:16). Yet there is warrant for the two psalms being separate. Psalm 9 is a triumphant song of thanksgiving, while Psalm 10 is a complaint and prayer over godless men in the nation. Because Psalm 9 is complete in itself, it is better to regard Psalm 10 as a related psalm. Psalm 9 is a song of thanksgiving for vindication. Ascribed to David, this psalm is set “to the tune of ‘The Death of the Son.’” What that means is unknown. In the psalm David praised the Lord for manifesting His righteousness in judging wicked nations, and for being a true and eternal Judge in whom the afflicted may trust. He then prayed that God would give him further cause for praise by seeing his affliction and removing it from him.

9:1-2. The first portion of the psalm (vv. 1-12) speaks of God as the true Judge and the Hope of the afflicted. In view of this, David resolved to **praise** Him wholeheartedly, to **tell of His wonders**, to be joyful in God, and to **sing** to Him. “Wonders” (*nīplā’ōt*, “things extraordinary or surpassing”) is used frequently of God’s works in the Psalms

9:3-6. The cause for David’s praise is recorded in these verses. The Lord manifested His righteousness (v. 4) by vindicating David’s cause. His **enemies** were turned **back** (v. 3), **rebuked**, and **destroyed** (v. 5). Even the **name of the nations** (also mentioned in vv. 15, 17, 19-20) was **blotted out**. Such a description vividly portrayed their defeat—not even their name would be perpetuated. **Memory of them** was destroyed after **their cities** were demolished (v. 6). All of this, David wrote, was evidence that God **upheld his cause**, and rules **righteously** from His **throne** (v. 4).

9:7-10. On the basis of the deliverance spoken of in verses 3-6, David declared that **the LORD** is a true and eternal Judge and a Fortress for the afflicted. The psalmist’s praise at first was directed to **the LORD** and His eternal reign over the earth (vv. 7-8). Then David applied that truth to people’s needs. The afflicted and **the oppressed**, those who are most frequently ignored or abused by human judgment, are championed by the righteous Judge. The Lord God is their **Refuge** and **Stronghold in times of trouble**. The word *mišgob* used twice in verse 9 and translated both “refuge” and “stronghold,” suggests security and protection in a high, safe place of retreat. *Mišgob*, one of several words used in the Psalms to speak of security and safety in God, is translated “stronghold” in Psalms 18:2; 144:2, and “fortress” in 46:7, 11; 48:3; 59:9, 16-17; 62:2, 6; 94:22. Another Hebrew word translated “refuge” in the Psalms is *maḥseh*, “shelter from danger.” It

is used in 14:6; 46:1; 61:3; 62:7-8; 71:7; 73:28; 91:2, 9. Still another word translated “refuge” in the Psalms in the NW is *mānōs* (“a place to flee to,” 59:16; 142:5). Knowing of God’s security and protection, His own can trust Him.

9:11-12. This praise section (vv. 1-12) closes with the psalmist’s exhortation to the people, especially **the afflicted** whom God **does not ignore** (v. 12), to **sing praises to the LORD** (cf. v. 2) and tell **what He has done** (v. 11).

9:13-14. In view of God’s past deliverances, David now called on God to respond to his affliction and give him reason to praise. The psalmist asked the **LORD** to notice **how his enemies persecute** him. In danger of dying, he called on God to rescue him **from the gates of death** (cf. Job 38:17; Ps. 107:18; Isa. 38:10). If delivered, he would then praise the Lord **in the gates of the Daughter of Zion** (i.e., the tabernacle in Jerusalem).

9:15-16. David’s prayer was supported by his confident trust in **the LORD**. In verses 15-18 David rehearsed the reputation God has for destroying the wicked who afflict the needy. Verse 15 may have been written in anticipation of the enemy’s destruction as is done in the “confidence” sections in various psalms. If so, David foresaw how the wicked would fall **into their own pit** (cf. 7:15) and **net** (cf. 35:8; 57:6). Nevertheless the Lord’s **justice** is well **known**, for the evil that **the wicked** devise returns on them.

9:17-18. The destiny of **the wicked**, who **return to the grave** (*šē’ōl*, sheol), is contrasted with **the needy** and **afflicted** (cf. vv. 9, 12), who **will** see their **hope** fulfilled. The expression **forget God** is sometimes contrasted in the Psalms with the word “remember,” a term that signifies faith and prayer. Those who reject and ignore the Lord have no hope.

9:19-20. The psalm closes with the prayer that the **LORD** would **arise** and put mortal **man** (*’ēnōs*; cf. comments on 8:4) to fear in a terrifying judgment. Such a destruction would make the wicked realize that **they are but human** (*’ēnōs*) and that they cannot oppress those who trust in the **LORD**.

Major Theme Analysis

(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)

Praise God for His Righteous Judgments (Ps 9:1-8)

- 1 I will praise You, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will tell of all Your marvelous works.
- 2 I will be glad and rejoice in You; I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High.
- 3 When my enemies turn back, they shall fall and perish at Your presence.
- 4 For You have maintained my right and my cause; You sat on the throne judging in righteousness.
- 5 You have rebuked the nations, You have destroyed the wicked; You have blotted out their name forever and ever.
- 6 O enemy, destructions are finished forever! And you have destroyed cities; Even their memory has perished.
- 7 But the Lord shall endure forever; He has prepared His throne for judgment.
- 8 He shall judge the world in righteousness, and He shall administer judgment for the peoples in uprightness.

Praise through worship (1-2)

Worship in spirit and truth (John 4:23-24)

23 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. 24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

Worship to glorify God (Phil 3:3)

3 For it is we who are the circumcision, we who worship by the Spirit of God, who glory in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh

Worship with reverence and awe (Heb 12:28)

28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe,

Worship by rejoicing in God (Phil 4:4)

4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!

Worship God with joy, gladness and thanksgiving (Ps 100:2-4)

2 Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. 3 Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. 4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.

Worship by bringing glory to God's Name (Ps 86:9)

9 All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, O Lord; they will bring glory to your name.

Praise for vindication of righteousness (3-6)

Vindication of righteousness because God judges with equity (Ps 98:9)

9 let them sing before the Lord, for he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples with equity.

Vindication of righteousness because God judges with righteousness (Isa 11:4)

4 but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.

Vindication of righteousness because God upholds the cause of the needy (Ps 140:12)

12 I know that the Lord secures justice for the poor and upholds the cause of the needy.

Vindication of righteousness because God hears the plea of His people (2 Chron 6:35)

35 then hear from heaven their prayer and their plea, and uphold their cause.

Praise for merciful judgments (7-8)

Merciful judgments should prompt us to be merciful to others (Matt 18:28-33)

28 "But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded. 29 "His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.' 30 "But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. 31 When the other servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and went and told their master everything that had happened. 32 "Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. 33 Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?'

Merciful judgments because it is a blessing (Matt 5:7)

7 Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Merciful judgments for those who give mercy (Matt 18:32-35)

32 "Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. 33 Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' 34 In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart."

Merciful judgments because God wants us to be also (Luke 6:36)

36 Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

Merciful judgments because mercy triumphs over judgment (James 2:13)

13 because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment!

Merciful judgments because God is gracious and slow to anger (Ps 103:8-9)

8 The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. 9 He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever;

Praise God for His Safe Refuge (Ps 9:9-12)

9 The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.

10 And those who know Your name will put their trust in You; For You, Lord, have not forsaken those who seek You.

11 Sing praises to the Lord, who dwells in Zion! Declare His deeds among the people.

12 When He avenges blood, He remembers them; He does not forget the cry of the humble.

Refuge from trouble (9)

Refuge from trouble that man is born into (Job 5:6-7)

6 For hardship does not spring from the soil, nor does trouble sprout from the ground. 7 Yet man is born to trouble as surely as sparks fly upward.

Refuge from troubles at work (Eccl 2:22-23)

22 What does a man get for all the toil and anxious striving with which he labors under the sun? 23 All his days his work is pain and grief; even at night his mind does not rest. This too is meaningless.

Refuge from trouble starting at birth (Jer 20:18)

18 Why did I ever come out of the womb to see trouble and sorrow and to end my days in shame?

Refuge from today's trouble (Matt 6:34)

34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Refuge because God delivers from troubles (Ps 34:19)

19 A righteous man may have many troubles, but the Lord delivers him from them all;

Refuge that can be trustworthy (10-11)

Trustworthy because God is our fortress and shield (Ps 18:2)

2 The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge. He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

Trustworthy because God is good (Ps 34:8)

8 Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.

Trustworthy because God is all powerful (Ps 46:1)

1 God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.

Trustworthy because God is for the righteous (Prov 10:29)

29 The way of the Lord is a refuge for the righteous, but it is the ruin of those who do evil.

Trustworthy through His word (Prov 30:5)

5 "Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.

Trustworthy to those who trust in Him (Nah 1:7)

7 The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him,

Refuge through answered prayer (12)

Answered prayers because God's eyes are on the righteous (Ps 34:15)

15 The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their cry;

Answered prayers because God promises to answer even before speaking (Isa 65:24)

24 Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear.

Answered prayers because God promises to fulfill answers and seeking (Matt 7:7-8)

7 "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

Answered prayers because of obedience (1 John 3:21-22)

21 Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God 22 and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him.

Answered prayer for wisdom (James 1:5)

5 If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

Answered prayer through being righteous (James 5:16-18)

16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. 17 Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. 18 Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.

Answered prayer through obedience (1 John 3:21-22)

21 Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God 22 and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him.

Conclusion and Other Thoughts

Commentary Thoughts from C. H. Spurgeon

Ver. 1. With a holy resolution the songster begins his hymn;

I will praise thee, O Lord. It sometimes needs all our determination to face the foe, and bless the Lord in the teeth of his enemies; vowing that whoever else may be silent *we* will bless his name; here, however, the overthrow of the foe is viewed as complete, and the song flows with sacred fullness of delight. It is our duty to praise the Lord; let us perform it as a privilege. Observe that David's praise is all given to the Lord. Praise is to be offered to God alone; we may be grateful to the intermediate agent, but our thanks must have long wings and mount aloft to heaven.

With my whole heart. Half heart is no heart.

I will show forth. There is true praise to the thankful telling forth to others of our heavenly Father's dealings with us; this is one of the themes upon which the godly should speak often to one another, and it will not be casting pearls before swine if we make even the ungodly hear of the lovingkindness of the Lord to us.

All thy marvelous works. Gratitude for one mercy refreshes the memory as to thousands of others. One silver link in the chain draws up a long series of tender remembrances. Here is eternal work for us, for there can be no end to the showing forth of *all* his deeds of love. If we consider our own sinfulness and nothingness, we must feel that every work of preservation, forgiveness, conversion, deliverance, sanctification, etc., which the Lord has wrought for us, or in us is a *marvelous* work. Even in heaven, divine lovingkindness will doubtless be as much a theme of surprise as of rapture.

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND QUAIN T SAYINGS

Whole Psalm. We are to consider this song of praise, as I conceive, to be the language of our great Advocate and Mediator, "in the midst of the church giving thanks unto God, "and teaching us to anticipate by faith his great and final victory over all the adversaries of our peace temporal and spiritual, with especial reference to his assertion of his royal dignity on Zion, his holy mountain. The victory over the enemy, we find by the fourth verse, is again ascribed to the decision of divine justice, and the award of a righteous judge, who has at length resumed his tribunal. This renders it certain, that the claim preferred to the throne of the Almighty, could proceed from the lips of none but our MELCHISEDEC. *John Fry, B.A., 1842.*

Ver. 1. I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart. As a vessel by the scent thereof tells what liquor is in it, so should our mouths smell continually of that mercy wherewith our hearts have been refreshed: for we are called vessels of mercy. *William Cowper, 1612.*

Ver. 1. I will praise the Lord with my whole heart, I will shew forth all thy marvellous works. The words With my whole heart, serve at once to show the greatness of the deliverance wrought for the psalmist, and to distinguish him from the hypocrites the coarser, who praise the Lord for his goodness merely with the lips; and the more refined, who praise him with just half their heart, while they secretly ascribe the deliverance more to themselves than to him. All thy wonders, the marvellous tokens of thy grace. The psalmist shows by this term, he recognized them in all their greatness. Where this is done, there the Lord is also praised with the whole heart. *Half-heartedness*, and the depreciation of divine grace, go hand in hand. The *b* is the *b instrum*. The heart is the instrument of praise, the mouth only its organ. *E.W. Hengstenberg.*

Ver. 1. (second clause). When we have received any special good thing from the Lord, it is well, according as we have opportunities, to tell others of it. When the woman who had lost one of her ten pieces of silver, found the missing portion of her money, she gathered her neighbours and her friends together, saying, "Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I had lost." We may do the same; we may tell friends and relations that we have received such and such a blessing, and that we trace it directly to the hand of God. Why have we not already done this? Is there a lurking unbelief as to whether it really came from God; or are we ashamed to own it before those who are perhaps accustomed to laugh at such things? Who knows so much of the marvellous works of God as his own people; if they be silent, how can we expect the world to see what he has done? Let us not be ashamed to glorify God, by telling what we know and feel he has done; let us watch our opportunity to bring out distinctly the fact of his acting; let us feel delighted at having an opportunity, from our own experience, of telling what must turn to his praise; and them that honour God, God will honour in turn; if we be willing to talk of his deeds, he will give us enough to talk about. *P. B. Power, in "I Wills" of the Psalms.*

Ver. 1-2. I will confess unto thee, O Lord, with my whole heart, etc. Behold with what a flood of the most sweet affections he says that he **will confess, show forth, rejoice, be glad, and sing,** being filled with ecstasy! He does not simply say, "*I will confess, but, with my heart, and with my whole heart.*" Nor does he propose to speak simply of "*works, but of the marvellous works of God, and of all those "works."* Thus his spirit (like John in the womb) exults and rejoices in God his Saviour, who has done great things for him, and those marvellous things which follow. In which words are opened the subject of this Psalm: that is, that he therein sings the marvellous works of God. And these works are wonderful, because he converts, by those who are nothing, those who have all things, and, by the ALMUTH who live in hidden faith, and are dead to the world, he humbles those who flourish in glory, and are looked upon in the world. Thus accomplishing such mighty things without force, without arms, without labour, by the cross only and blood. But how will his saying, that he will show forth "*all*" his marvellous works, agree with that of [Job 9:10](#), "which doeth great things past finding out; yea, and wonders without number"? For, who can show forth all the marvellous works of God? We may say, therefore, that these things are spoken in that excess of feeling in which he said, ([Psalms 6:6](#)), "I will water my couch with my tears." That is, he hath such an ardent desire to speak of the wonderful works of God, that, as far as his wishes are concerned, he *would* set the "*all*" forth, though he *could* not do it, for love has neither bounds nor end: and, as Paul saith ([1 Corinthians 13:7](#)), "Love beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things; hence it can do all things, and does do all things, for God looketh at the heart and spirit. *Martin Luther.*

EXPOSITION

Ver. 2. Gladness and joy are the appropriate spirit in which to praise the goodness of the Lord. Birds extol the Creator in notes of overflowing joy, the cattle low forth his praise with tumult of happiness, and the fish leap up in his worship with excess of delight. Moloch may be worshipped with shrieks of pain, and Juggernaut may be honoured by dying groans and inhuman yells, but he whose name is Love is best pleased with the holy mirth, and sanctified gladness of his people. Daily rejoicing is an ornament to the Christian character, and a suitable robe for God's choristers to wear. God loveth a *cheerful* giver, whether it be the gold of his purse or the gold of his mouth which he presents upon his altar.

I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High. Songs are the fitting expression of inward thankfulness, and it were well if we indulge ourselves and honoured our Lord with more of them. Mr. B. P. Power has well said, "The sailors give a cheery cry as they weigh anchor, the ploughman whistles in the morning as he drives his team; the milkmaid sings her rustic song as she sets about her early task; when soldiers are leaving friends behind them, they do not march out to the tune of the 'Dead March in Saul, 'but to the quick notes of some lively air. A praising spirit would do for us all that their songs and music do for them; and if only we could determine to praise the Lord, we should surmount many a difficulty which our low spirits never would have been equal to, and we should do double the work which can be done if the heart be languid in its beating, if we be crushed and trodden down in soul. As the evil spirit in Saul yielded in olden time to the influence of the harp of the son of Jesse, so would the spirit of melancholy often take flight from us, if only we would take up the song of praise."

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND QUAIN T SAYINGS

Ver. 1-2. I will confess unto thee, O Lord, with my whole heart, See Psalms on "Psalms 9:1" for further information.

EXPOSITION

Ver. 3. God's presence is evermore sufficient to work the defeat of our most furious foes, and their ruin is so complete when the Lord takes them in hand, that even flight cannot save them, they fall to rise no more when he pursues them. We must be careful, like David, to give all the glory to him whose presence gives the victory. If we have here the exultings of our conquering Captain, let us make the triumphs of the Redeemer the triumphs of the redeemed, and rejoice with him at the total discomfiture of all his foes.

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND QUAIN T SAYINGS

Ver. 3. When mine enemies are turned back, etc. *Were turned back*, repulsed, and put to flight. To render this in the present time, as our translators did, is certainly improper; it destroys the coherence, and introduces obscurity. Ainsworth saw this, and rendered in the past, "When mine enemies turned backward." "*At thy presence.*" That is, by thine anger. For as God's presence or face denotes his favour to such as fear and serve him, so it denotes his anger towards the wicked. "The face of Jehovah is against them that do evil." *B. Boothroyd, 1824.*

Ver. 3. They shall fall and perish. It refers to those that either faint in a march, or are wounded in a battle, or especially that in flight meet with galling haps in their way, and so are galled and lamed, rendered unable to go forward, and so fall, and become liable to all the chances of pursuits, and as here, are overtaken and perish in the fall. *Henry Hammond, D.D.*

EXPOSITION

Ver. 4. One of our nobility has for his motto, "I will maintain it; "but the Christian has a better and more humble one, "Thou hast maintained it." "God and my right, "are united by my faith: while God lives my right shall never be taken from me. If we seek to maintain the cause and honour of our Lord we may suffer reproach and misrepresentation, but it is a rich comfort to remember that he who sits on the throne knows our hearts, and will not leave us to the ignorant and ungenerous judgment of erring man.

EXPOSITION

Ver. 5. God rebukes before he destroys, but when he once comes to blows with the wicked he ceases not until he has dashed them in pieces so small that their very name is forgotten, and like a noisome snuff their remembrance is put out for ever and ever. How often the word "thou" occurs in this and the former verse, to show us that the grateful strain mounts up directly to the Lord as doth the smoke from the altar when the air is still. My soul send up all the music of all thy powers to him who has been and is thy sure deliverance.

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND QUAIN T SAYINGS

Ver. 5. Thou hast rebuked the heathen, etc. Augustine applies all this mystically, as is intimated (Psalms 9:1) that it should be applied, for, "I will speak, "saith he, "of all thy wonderful works; " and what so wonderful as the turning of the spiritual enemy backward, whether the devil, as when he said, "Get thee behind me, Satan; "or the old man, which is turned backward when he is put off, and the new man put on? *John Mayer.*

EXPOSITION

Ver. 6. Here the Psalmist exults over the fallen foe. He bends as it were, over his prostrate form, and insults his once vaunted strength. He plucks the boaster's song out of his mouth, and sings it for him in derision. After this

fashion doth our Glorious Redeemer ask of death, "Where is thy sting?" and of the grave, "Where is thy victory?" The spoiler is spoiled, and he who made captive is led into captivity himself. Let the daughters of Jerusalem go forth to meet their King, and praise him with timbrel and harp.

EXPOSITION

In the light of the past the future is not doubtful. Since the same Almighty God fills the throne of power, we can with unhesitating confidence, exult in our security for all time to come.

Ver. 7. The enduring existence and unchanging dominion of our Jehovah, are the firm foundations of our joy. The enemy and his destructions shall come to a perpetual end, but God and his throne **shall endure forever**. The eternity of divine sovereignty yields unfailing consolation. By the throne being **prepared for judgment**, are we not to understand the swiftness of divine justice. In heaven's court suitors are not worn out with long delays. Term time lasts all the year round in the court of King's Bench above. Thousands may come at once to the throne of the Judge of all the earth, but neither plaintiff nor defendant shall have to complain that he is not prepared to give their cause a fair hearing.

EXPOSITION

Ver. 8. Whatever earthly courts may do, heaven's throne ministers judgment in uprightness. Partiality and respect of persons are things unknown in the dealings of the Holy One of Israel. How the prospect of appearing before the impartial tribunal of the Great King should act as a check to us when tempted to sin, and as a comfort when we are slandered or oppressed.

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND QUAIN T SAYINGS

Ver. 8. He shall judge the world in righteousness. In this judgment tears will not prevail, prayers will not be heard, promises will not be admitted, repentance will be too late; and as for riches, honourable titles, sceptres, and diadems, these will profit much less; and the inquisition shall be so curious and diligent, that not one light thought nor one idle word (not repented of in the life past), shall be forgotten. For truth itself hath said, not in jest, but in earnest, "Of every idle word which men have spoken, they shall give an account in the day of judgment." Oh, how many which now sin with great delight, yea, even with greediness (as if we served a god of wood or of stone, which seeth nothing, or can do nothing), will be then astonished, ashamed, and silent! Then shall the days of thy mirth be ended, and thou shalt be overwhelmed with everlasting darkness; and instead of thy pleasures, thou shalt have everlasting torments. *Thomas Tymme.*

Ver. 8. He shall judge the world in righteousness. Even Paul, in his great address on Mars' Hill, a thousand years after, could find no better words in which to teach the Athenians the doctrine of the judgment day than the Septuagint rendering of this clause. *William S. Plumer.*

Ver. 8. The guilty conscience cannot abide this day. The silly sheep, when she is taken, will not bleat, but you may carry her and do what you will with her, and she will be subject; but the swine, if she be once taken, she will roar and cry, and thinks she is never taken but to be slain. So of all things the guilty conscience cannot abide to hear of this day, for they know that when they hear of it, they hear of their own condemnation. I think if there were a general collection made through the whole world that there might be no judgment day, then God would be so rich that the world would go begging and be a waste wilderness. Then the covetous judge would bring forth his bribes; then the crafty lawyer would fetch out his bags; the usurer would give his gain, and a double thereof. But all the money in the world will not serve for our sin, but the judge must answer his bribes, he that hath money must answer how he came by it, and just condemnation must come upon every soul of them; then shall the sinner be ever dying and never dead, like the salamander, that is ever in the fire and never consumed. *Henry Smith.*

HINTS TO THE VILLAGE PREACHER

Ver. 8. The justice of God's moral government, especially in relation to the last great day.

EXPOSITION

Ver. 9. He who gives no quarter to the wicked in the Day of Judgment, is the defense and refuge of his saints in the day of trouble. There are many forms of oppression; both from man and from Satan oppression comes to us; and for all its forms, a refuge is provided in the Lord Jehovah. There were cities of refuge under the law, God is our refuge city under the gospel. As the ships when vexed with tempest make for harbour, so do the oppressed hasten to the wings of a just and gracious God. He is a high tower so impregnable, that the hosts of hell cannot carry it by storm, and from its lofty heights faith looks down with scorn upon her enemies.

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND QUAIN T SAYINGS

Ver. 9. It is reported of the Egyptians that, living in the fens, and being vexed with gnats, they used to sleep in high towers, whereby, those creatures not being able to soar so high, they are delivered from the biting of them: so would it be with us when bitten with cares and fear, did we but run to God for refuge, and rest confident of his help. *John Trapp.*

EXPOSITION

Ver. 10. Ignorance is worst when it amounts to ignorance of God, and knowledge is best when it exercises itself upon

the name of God. This most excellent knowledge leads to the most excellent grace of faith. O, to learn more of the attributes and character of God. Unbelief, that hooting night bird, cannot live in the light of divine knowledge, it flies before the sun of God's great and gracious name. If we read this verse literally, there is, no doubt, a glorious fullness of assurance in the names of God. We have recounted them in the "Hints for Preachers," and would direct the reader's attention to them. By knowing his name is also meant an experimental acquaintance with the attributes of God, which are every one of them anchors to hold the soul from drifting in seasons of peril. The Lord may hide his face for a season from his people, but he never has utterly, finally, really, or angrily

forsaken them that seek him. Let the poor seekers draw comfort from this fact, and let the finders rejoice yet more exceedingly, for what must be the Lord's faithfulness to those who find if he is so gracious to those who seek.

"O hope of every contrite heart,

O joy of all the meek, To those who fall how kind thou art,

How good to those who seek.

"But what to those who find, ah, this

Nor tongue nor pen can show The love of Jesus what it is,

None but his loved ones know."

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND QUAIN T SAYINGS

Ver. 10. They that know thy name will put their trust in thee. Faith is an intelligent grace; though there can be knowledge without faith, yet there can be no faith without knowledge. One calls it quick sighted faith. Knowledge must carry the torch before faith. 2 Timothy 1:12. "For I know whom I have believed." As in Paul's conversion a light from heaven "Shined round about him" (Acts 9:3), so before faith be wrought, God shines in with a light upon the understanding. A blind faith is as bad as a dead faith: that eye may as well be said to be a good eye which is without sight, as that faith is good without knowledge. Devout ignorance damns; which condemns the church of Rome, that thinks it a piece of their religion to be kept in ignorance; these set up an altar to an unknown God. They say ignorance is the mother of devotion; but sure where the sun is set in the understanding, it must needs be night in the affections. So necessary is knowledge to the being of faith, that the Scriptures do sometimes baptize faith with the name of knowledge. Isaiah 53:11. "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many." Knowledge is put there for faith. *Thomas Watson.*

Ver. 10. They that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for, thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee. The mother of unbelief is ignorance of God, his faithfulness, mercy, and power. *They that know thee, will trust in thee.* This confirmed Paul, Abraham, Sarah, in the faith. "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." 2 Timothy 1:12. "He is faithful that promised," and "able also to perform." Hebrews 10:23 **Hebrews 10:11:11** **Chronicles 4:21**. The free promises of the Lord are all certain, his commandments right and good, the recompense of reward inestimably to be valued above thousands of gold and silver; trust therefore in the Lord, O my soul, and follow hard after him. Thou hast his free promise, who never failed, who hath promised more than possibly thou couldst ask or think, who hath done more for thee than ever he promised, who is good and bountiful to the wicked and ungodly; thou doest his work, who is able and assuredly will bear thee out. There is a crown of glory proposed to thee above all conceit of merit; stick fast unto his word, and suffer nothing to divide thee from it. Rest upon his promises though he seem to kill thee; cleave unto his statutes though the flesh lust, the world allure, the devil tempt, by flatteries or threatenings to the contrary. *John Ball, 1632.*

Ver. 10. They that know thy name will put their trust in thee. They can do no otherwise who savingly know God's sweet attributes, and noble acts for his people. We never trust a man till we know him, and bad men are

better known than trusted. Not so the Lord; for where his name is ointment poured forth, the virgins love him, fear him, rejoice in him, and repose upon him. *John Trapp*.

EXPOSITION

Ver. 11. Being full of gratitude himself, our inspired author is eager to excite others to join the strain, and praise God in the same manner as he himself vowed to do in the first and second verses. The heavenly spirit of praise is gloriously contagious, and he that hath it is never content unless he can excite all who surround him to unite in his sweet employ. Singing and preaching, as means of glorifying God, are here joined together, and it is remarkable that, connected with all revivals of gospel ministry, there has been a sudden outburst of the spirit of song. Luther's Psalms and Hymns were in all men's mouths, and in the modern revival under Wesley and Whitefield, the strains of Charles Wesley, Cennick, Berridge, Toplady, Hart, Newton, and many others, were the outgrowth of restored piety. The singing of the birds of praise fitly accompanies the return of the gracious spring of divine visitation through the proclamation of the truth. Sing on brethren, and preach on, and these shall both be a token that the Lord still dwelleth in Zion. It will be well for us when coming up to Zion, to remember that the Lord dwells among his saints, and is to be had in peculiar reverence of all those that are about him.

EXPOSITION

Ver. 12. When an inquest is held concerning the blood of the oppressed, the martyred saints will have the first remembrance; he will avenge his own elect. Those saints who are living shall also be heard; they shall be exonerated from blame, and kept from destruction, even when the Lord's most terrible work is going on; the man with the inkhorn by his side shall mark them all for safety, before the slaughtermen are permitted to smite the Lord's enemies. The humble cry of the poorest saints shall neither be drowned by the voice of the thundering justice nor by the shrieks of the condemned.

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND QUAIN T SAYINGS

Ver. 12. When he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them. There is a time when God will make inquisition for innocent blood. The Hebrew word *doresh*, from *darash*, that is here rendered *inquisition*, signifies not barely to seek, to search, but to seek, search, and enquire with all diligence and care imaginable. Oh, there is a time coming when the Lord will make a very diligent and careful search and enquiry after all the innocent blood of his afflicted and persecuted people, which persecutors and tyrants have spilt as water upon the ground; and woe to persecutors when God shall make a more strict, critical, and careful enquiry after the blood of his people than ever was made in the inquisition of Spain, where all things are carried with the greatest diligence, subtlety, secrecy, and severity. O persecutors, there is a time coming, when God will make a strict enquiry after the blood of Hooper, Bradford, Latimer, Taylor, Ridley, etc. There is a time coming, wherein God will enquire who silenced and suspended such and such ministers, and who stopped the mouths of such and such, and who imprisoned, confined, and banished such and such, who were once burning and shining lights, and who were willing to spend and be spent that sinners might be saved, and that Christ might be glorified. There is a time when the Lord will make a very narrow enquiry into all the actions and practices of ecclesiastical courts, high commissions, committees, assizes, etc., and deal with persecutors as they have dealt with his people. *Thomas Brooks*.

Ver. 12. When he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them. There is *vox sanguinis*, a voice of blood; and "he that planted the ear, shall he not hear?" It covered the old world with waters. The earth is filled with cruelty; it was [*vox sanguinis* that cried, and the heavens heard the earth, and the windows of heaven opened to let fall judgment and vengeance upon it. *Edward Marbury, 1649*.

Ver. 12. When he maketh inquisition for blood, etc. Though God may seem to wink for a time at the cruelty of violent men, yet will call them at last to a strict account for all the innocent blood they have shed, and for their unjust and unmerciful usage of meek and humble persons; whose cry he never forgets (though he doth not presently answer it), but takes a fit time to be avenged of their oppressors. *Symon Patrick, D.D., 1626-1707*.

Ver. 12. He maketh inquisition for blood. He is so stirred at this sin, that he will up, search out the authors, contrivers, and commissioners of this scarlet sin, he will avenge for blood. *William Greenhill*.

Ver. 12. He forgetteth not the cry of the humble. Prayer is a haven to the shipwrecked man, an anchor to them that are sinking in the waves, a staff to the limbs that totter, a mine of jewels to the poor, a healer of diseases, and a guardian of health. Prayer at once secures the continuance of our blessings, and dissipates the clouds of our calamities. O blessed prayer! thou art the unwearied conqueror of human woes, the firm foundation of human happiness, the source of ever enduring joy, the mother of philosophy. The man who can

pray truly, though languishing in most extreme indigence, is richer than all beside, whilst the wretch who never bowed the knee, though proudly sitting as monarch of all nations, is of all men most destitute. *Chrysostom.*

(Adapted from URL:<https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/eng/dcc/psalms-9.html>)

Concluding Thoughts from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

Oppression comes in all shapes and sizes; it is a global epidemic. The God of Israel did not ignore oppression, and neither should his people of any era. But we must not be lured by the fearmongering ways of this world. Careful attention to Scripture is the answer. Only such study will yield a biblical view of oppression. Psalm 9 offers one small window in that regard. It shows us that those who know, trust, and seek the one true God have a powerful ally who fights for them. For Christians, this energizes us to spread the gospel; the accounts of the person and work of Jesus are ever new. But we need not stop with the events of Scripture. What wonders has God worked in our lives? Have we grown tired of telling those stories? Are we even experienced in telling those stories? May we boldly proclaim the God we know and trust so that our hope may indeed become the hope of this world.

Concluding Thoughts from the Echoes Commentary

Worshiping God in Joy - David wrote Psalm 9 joyfully, praising God as a righteous arbitrator. God showed forth His power, wiping out the injustice against His people by enemy nations. David started the psalm by exhorting God with his entire being. He directed his affections exclusively toward the Father. He emphasized the Lord's wonderful deeds, His astonishing miracles, as well as the daily routines of life. No one doubted David's joy and admiration toward God Almighty. He found rest in acknowledging God's kindness. He worshiped in song, addressing God as El Elion, the highest.

God Our Defense - During David's life, enemies often attacked him. David recognized God as His defense. The opposition had to buckle when confronted by God; it was a complete wipeout. The Father sits on the judge's bench of the highest court in all the universe, the ultimate Judge. He has and will continue to bring down a righteous sentence upon the wicked. In this psalm, David spoke directly to those coming against him; it is useless. The Lord's victory banner stands.

God Our Judge and Safe Place - David made it clear that God judges, and it is foolish—dangerous—to be in opposition to Him. On the other hand, David offered assurance to those in trouble, distress, or despair. God is secure, a safe place. Our faith increases as we see God as majestic. We need more understanding of the greatness of the Almighty, the fact that He never forsakes or forgets.

Let All Praise God - David also said to lift your voice and with music express praise! God has never turned nor ever will turn His back, ignoring the requests of His children, especially when faced with unfair opposition. God listens to the cry of distressed people driven to distraction and ruin. His judge's chair is established in heaven, now and always.