

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Psalms: God's Nurture Of The Inner Man In The Life Of Faith

XVII. Turning To God To Handle Dangerous, Sinful Foes

(Psalm 17:1-15)

I. Introduction

- A. 2 Timothy 3:1-5 warns of spiritually dangerous people in our era who will produce outrageous, harsh, fierce (*chalepos*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 735; Moul. & Mill., The Voc. Of The Grk. N. T., 1972, p. 682) times.
- B. David faced people like that in his time as revealed in Psalm 17:1-15, so we view the psalm for our insight:

II. Turning To God To Handle Dangerous, Sinful Foes, Psalm 17:1-15.

- A. The introductory notes in the English Bible involve the first part of verse one in the Hebrew text (Kittel, Biblia Hebraica, p. 986), so we will stay with the verse numbering of the English Bible for clarification in this lesson.
- B. Accordingly, we translate Psalm 17:1-15 as follows:
 - 1. "Hear, O Jahweh (Covenant God), my righteous [plea], give attention to my ringing cry (*rinnah*, B. D. B., A Heb.-Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 943); listen to my prayer from lips without deceit, treachery," Psa. 17:1.
 - 2. "From Your face may my vindicating judgment (*mishpat*, Ibid., p. 1048; Ibid., Kittel) come forth; may Your eyes behold [with satisfaction] (*hazah*, Ibid., B. D. B., p. 302) what is upright [in me]," Psalm 17:2.
 - 3. "Though You test (*bahan*, Ibid., p. 103) my heart and observe (*paqad*, Ibid., p. 823; Ibid., Kittel) me at night, though you smelt me [as metal] (*saraph*, Ibid., B. D. B., p. 864), You will not detect (*masa'*, Ibid., p. 592ff) [evil in me re: the issue]; I purposed (*zamam*, Ibid., p. 273) not to sin with my mouth," Psa. 17:3.
 - 4. "Concerning (*li*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 510-518) the deeds of men, by the word of Your lips, I (em. pron.) have kept myself from the ways of the violent one (*paris*, Ibid., p. 829)," Ps. 17:4 (KJV, ESV).
 - 5. "My steps have held firmly to Your well-worn [obviously upright] tracks [trails] (*ma'gal*, Ibid., p. 722-723); my feet have not slipped [from them in sinful waywardness] (*mot*, Ibid., p. 556-557)," Psalm 17:5.
 - 6. "I (emph. pron.) call on You since You will answer me, O Elohim (Creator God); incline Your ear to me; hear my words," Psalm 17:6.
 - 7. "Show the wonder (*palah*, Ibid., p. 811) of your loyal love, grace (*hesed*, Ibid., Kittel; H. A. W., Theol. Wrdbk. of the O. T., 1980, v. I, p. 305-307), You Who save by Your right hand [of might and honor, Z. P. E. B., v. Three, p. 28) those who seek refuge in You from those who raise themselves up (*qum*, Ibid., p. 877-879; Hithpoel = intens. reflexive stem; Ibid., Kittel) [in pride]," Psalm 17:7.
 - 8. "Guard me as the [lit.] pupil (*'ayshon*, Ibid., B. D. B., p. 36) of Your eye; in the shadow of Your wings [cause me to be] concealed, hidden, sheltered (*satar*, Ibid., p. 711; Hiphil stem = causative) me," Psa. 17:8.
 - 9. "From the face of the wicked who deal violently (*shadad*, Ibid., p. 994) with me, from the enemies of my life principle (*nepesh*, Ibid., Kittel; Robert B. Girdlestone, Syns. of the O. T., 1973, p. 56-59; emotional, mental, physical, spiritual life) who surround (*napaph*, Ibid., B. D. B., p. 668-669) me," Psalm 17:9.
 - 10. "They close up (*sagar*, Ibid., p. 688-689) their fat [fig. of unreceptive, irreconcilable hearts] (*heleb*, Ibid., p. 316-317) and their mouths speak with pride (*ge'ut*, Ibid., p. 145)," Psalm 17:10.
 - 11. "They tracked me and now surround me with their eyes alert to throw me to the ground," Psalm 17:11.
 - 12. "As a lion (*'aryeh*, Ibid., p. 71) he is hungry for prey, as a young [strong] lion (*kephir*, Ibid., p. 498) [he is] crouching in cover [preparing to attack]," Psalm 17:12.
 - 13. "Rise up (*qum*, cf. v. 7), O Jahweh, confront him (*qadam*, Ibid., p. 869-870), bring him down; rescue my life principle (*nepesh*, cf. v. 9) from the wicked by Your sword," Psalm 17:13.
 - 14. "From men by Your hand, O Jahweh, from men of the era, world (*heled*, Ibid., p. 317) whose portion is in [this] life; and by Your hand will You fill their belly (*beten*, Ibid., p. 105-106) [in judgment]; they will be satiated with sons and leave the residue [of Your judgment] to their children," Psa. 17:14 with Ex. 20:5b-6. [I am indebted to Joseph A. Alexander, The Psalms, 1975, p. 73 for help in translating this difficult verse.]
 - 15. "I (emph. pron.) in righteousness will behold with satisfaction (*hazah*, cf. v. 2) Your face; when I awake [in the morning, cf. v. 3], I will be satisfied with seeing your likeness [in a prophetic trance]," Ps. 17:15. [Some hold v. 15 predicts the resurrection, but the context implies an awakening from sleep, Ibid., p. 74.]

Lesson: *In the night with evil, dangerous foes surrounding him, David asked God to deliver him, making sure he was not guilty of sin, thus expecting to go to sleep and fellowship with God when he safely awoke in the morning.*

Application: *If facing dangerously sinful, destructive foes, may we follow David's example in this psalm.*