

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

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

LVIII: God's Promised Judgment Of Unrighteous Judges

(Psalm 58:1-11)

I. Introduction

- A. We live in an era where verdicts made at the district, superior or even the highest levels of our court systems at times are dreadfully unbiblical, cases like the sanctioning of abortion on demand and gay marriage.
- B. Psalm 58:1-11 addresses this problem, telling of God's coming judgment on it, with applicable insight for us:

II. God's Promised Judgment Of Unrighteous Judges, Psalm 58:1-11.

- A. The introductory remarks in the English Bible comprise the first verse in the Hebrew text (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 1024), so we stay with the verse numbering system of the English Bible for clarity with this lesson.
- B. We thus translate Psalm 58:1-11 as follows:
 - 1. "Do you rulers indeed speak righteously? Do you judge uprightly among the sons of men?" (Psalm 58:1)
 - 2. "But **no** (*'ap*, expression of greater reality; here, a contrasting "No!" [B. D. B., A Heb.-Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 64-65]), in your heart you devise injustice and your hands mete out violence on the earth," Psa. 58:2.
 - 3. "Even from birth the wicked go astray; from the womb they are wayward and speak lies," Psalm 58:3.
 - 4. "Their venom is like the venom of a serpent, like that of a cobra that has stopped its ears," Psalm 58:4.
 - 5. "Which will not hearken to the tune of the charmer, however skilled the enchanter may be," Psalm 58:5.
 - 6. "O Elohim, break the teeth in their mouths; tear out the fangs of the lions, O Jahweh," Psalm 58:6.
 - 7. "Let them vanish like water that flows away; when they draw the bow, let their arrows be blunted," v. 7.
 - 8. "Like a slug melting away as it moves along; like a stillborn child, may they not see the sun," Psalm 58:8.
 - 9. "Before your [cooking] pots can feel the heat of the thorns [kindling] -- be they green or dry -- the wicked will be swept away," Psalm 58:9.
 - 10. "The righteous will be glad when they are avenged, when they bathe their feet in the blood of the wicked," Psalm 58:10.
 - 11. "Then men will say, 'Surely (*'ap* again [cf. v. 2], here emphasizing "yea," Ibid.) the righteous still are rewarded; surely (*'ap* again as "yea") there is an Elohim Who judges the earth," Psalm 58:11.
- C. We note significant observations and applications of this psalm (as follows):
 - 1. Though human judges are set up to rule righteously and justly as is implied in the wording of verse 1, in reality (*'ap*), some wickedly devise injustice and their hands mete out violence on the earth by their errant decisions, Psalm 58:2. Like every other profession, there are good and there are evil people, those judges who are evil stray from justice and uprightness even from birth, Psalm 58:3.
 - 2. Wrongful, unjust verdicts greatly harm society much as the venom of a poisonous serpent harms people (v. 4), but even more insidious is the case where justices refuse to pay heed to all the evidence presented to them in court, judges who stop up their ears like a poisonous cobra that refuses to heed the enchanter so that it bites and harms the enchanter and/or onlookers, v. 5. An evil judge in a powerful position as judge who willfully makes verdicts to promote an agenda versus heeding the law does enormous harm in society.
 - 3. David thus called for the severest judgment on wicked judges (v. 6-8), judgment so swift it destroys as a fire does thorns, be they dry or even green, consuming and reducing them to ashes before the pot over the firewood can feel their heat, v. 9. (B. K. C., O. T., p. 837; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Psa. 58:9)
 - 4. The picture of bathing one's feet in blood in v. 10 "suggests a military victory" over wrongdoers, a severe but just punishment due to the willful damage done by judges, Ibid.
 - 5. The severe judgment God will administer on wicked judges is necessary in order to protect the rule of law in society: only when people see God's retribution on such judges (v. 11a) do they recognize that there still is a God Who judges on the earth (v. 11b), thereby preserving the rule of law among men in society.

Lesson: *Due to the enormous influence judges over society have on the sense of the rule of law in society, God must and will severely judge those who willfully judge wickedly to the harm of the social order and the rule of law.*

Application: *(1) If we are concerned over how judges rule in wickedness, may we rest assured that God has His eyes on the problem and that He will surely and severely deal with it to preserve the rule of law in society in the Church era (1 Timothy 2:1-4). (2) If we are put into a position of making a judgment regarding the affairs of subordinates, may we sense our accountability to Almighty God and judge righteously.*