

Psalm 17

Psalms 17:1-5 [NIV] *“Hear, O LORD, my righteous plea; listen to my cry. Give ear to my prayer, it does not rise from deceitful lips. May my vindication come from you; may your eyes see what is right. Though you probe my heart and examine me at night, though you test me, you will find nothing; I have resolved that my mouth will not sin. As for the deeds of men, by the word of your lips I have kept myself from the ways of the violent. My steps have held to your paths; my feet have not slipped.”*

David was not claiming that he was sinless, but his relationship with his Creator God was so close that his constant attitude of repentance would result in his forgiveness for his sins.

This close relationship was based on his constant seeking to know and fulfil the will of God in his life.

David freely acknowledged his sins as **Psalms 32 and 51** show.

1 John 1:8-10 [NIV] *“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.”*

The apostle John reminds us that we can have this same confidence when we approach our Creator God.

This prayer of David was the prelude to a call for protection, which dominates the rest of the prayer.

If these claims of David sound extravagant remember that the Creator God Himself used such language of Job, [**Job 1:8; Job 42:8**].

God confirmed all that Job’s friends had said was incorrect, they did not know Job as He did.

1 John 3:18-21 [NIV] *“Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God”*

If we are seeking to live in harmony with the Creator God’s life of love then we can have the same confidence as David.

Psalms 17:6-9 [NIV] *“I call on you, O God, for you will answer me; give ear to me and hear my prayer. Show the wonder of your great love, you who save by your right hand those who take refuge in you from their foes. Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings from the wicked who assail me, from my mortal enemies who surround me.”*

This prayer of David is now a straightforward plea to a friend and protector, it is **not** a case presented to a judge.

“The apple of your eye” is the pupil of the eye through which we concentrate on what is directly in front of us.

“Shadow of your wings” is a figure of speech symbolising God’s protection.

The Creator God desires to protect us as a mother bird protects her young by covering them with her wings.

“Mortal enemies” refers to the temptations that Satan’s society, [**2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 John 5:19**] that is all around us, as well as his direct assault on us, [**1 Peter 5:8**].

Psalms 17:10-12 [NIV] *“They close up their callous hearts, and their mouths speak with arrogance. They have tracked me down, they now surround me, with eyes alert, to throw me to the ground. They are like a lion hungry for prey, like a great lion crouching in cover.”*

This is a study of heartlessness, described both in terms of the predator both human or animal.

This ugly scene of encirclement reappears in Psalms 22:12-18, which prophesied the crucifixion scene of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Psalms 17:13-14 [NIV] *“Rise up, O LORD, confront them, bring them down; rescue me from the wicked by your sword. O LORD, by your hand save me from such men, from men of this world whose reward is in this life. You still the hunger of those you cherish; their sons have plenty, and they store up wealth for their children.”*

We deceive ourselves when we measure our happiness or contentment in life by the amount of wealth that we possess.

When we put riches at the top of our value system we allow it to overshadow the eternal value of our relationship with our Creator God.

The true measurement of joy and contentment is found in God’s love and in doing His will for our lives.

Psalms 17:15 [NIV] *“And I, in righteousness I shall see your face; when I awake, I shall be satisfied with seeing your likeness.”*

David believed in the resurrection after death to a life with his Creator God.

This belief is not widespread in the Old Testament, but was partially understood by some, [**Job 19:25-27; Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:2, 13; Ezekiel 37:1-14**].