

PSALM 5:8-12

You Have A Prayer



*With belief in yourself
and faith in God, you'll
accomplish great things.*



WHAT'S THE SECRET TO SUCCESS?

"To succeed in anything you do, you've got to believe in it, you've got to put together a plan, you've got to work your plan, you've got to push, and you've got to just pray."

“You Don’t Have A Prayer”

- You may have heard of George Shinn as the rags-to-riches owner of a network of colleges called Rutledge Education Systems, or maybe as the owner of the Hornets Basketball team in the 1990’s, or maybe for his moral failures that prompted his (and the Hornets’) move from Charlotte to New Orleans, or maybe for his “Humanitarian of the Year” award from the Red Cross in New Orleans for his foundation’s aid to Hurricane Katrina victims - or his more recent aid work in Haiti. He was apparently interviewed by *Guideposts* magazine some time back, where he related the importance of prayer early on in his life story. (Read excerpts from Frank Barker’s *Psalms That Give Perspective*, pp 25-26.)

Translation

8. Yahweh, guide me in your righteousness
because of my opponents;
level your way in front of me.

9. Because in [every] mouth there is nothing that will stand;
their innards are empty-desires,
an open grave their larynx;
they flatter [with] their tongue.

10. Judge them guilty, God!

They will fall as a result of their counsels.

Cause them to go away through multiplication of their transgressions
because they are resistant with You.

11. Meanwhile, all refugees in You will be happy,
they will sing out forever,
you will even fabricate shelter over him,
and lovers of Your name will exult in You!

12. Because You yourself really bless a righteous [person];
like a big shield, Yahweh, you encircle him with favor.

REVIEW OF PSALM 5:1-7

God should listen because...

1. I'm praying to Him (v.2)

(6 promises to pray in vs. 2, 3, 7)

2. Evil is afoot, and it's not o.k. with God (v.4)

(stated 6 ways in vs. 4, 5, 6)

OVERVIEW OF PSALM 5:8-12

FOUR ACTUAL REQUESTS:

v.8 Two Imperatives Re: Self (“Lead me... Make way straight”)

v.9 Reason: “For” (omitted by NAS & NIV) their 4 depraved organs of speech could pull me off course

v.10a Two Imperatives Re: Enemies (“Judge guilty... Cast out”)

v.10b Reason: “For” they are rebels

SIX RESULTS ANTICIPATED BY THIS PRAYER (vs.10-12)

- 1. Wicked will fall**
- 2. Refugees in God will rejoice**
- 3. His Wards will sing**
- 4. God-Lovers will exult**
- 5. LORD will bless righteous**
- 6. LORD will surround with favor**

Request #1a - "Lead me" (v.8)

"in Your righteousness" Has to do with the process of Salvation

- **"In Your righteousness deliver me and rescue me... save me"
Psalm 71:2**
- **"I long for Your precepts; revive me in Your righteousness"
Psalm 119:40**
- **"...answer me in Your righteousness and faithfulness and do not judge Your servant, because no one living is righteous" Psalm 143:1-2**
- **"Send forth your light and your truth, let them lead me... to your holy hill and Your dwelling" Psalm 43:3**
- **"The kindness of God leads you to repentance" Rom. 2:4**
- **"...the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and will guide them to springs of the water of life; and God will wipe every tear from their eyes." Rev. 7:17**

Request #1a - “Lead me” (v.8)

Has to do with the process of Salvation Ps. 71:2, Rom 2:4, Rev 7:17

God has led His people in the past

- God “led” Abraham’s servant (Gen 24), Israel through the wilderness (Ex. 13), and constellations through the sky (Job 38:32)
- “He leads me in paths of righteousness” Psalm 23:3
- “I have seen his [Israel’s] ways, but I will heal him and lead him...” Isa. 57:18
- “He [Jesus] will guide our feet into the way of peace” Luke 1:79 (cf. John 10:3, 2 Cor. 2:14)
- “The Holy Spirit will guide you into all truth” John 16:13

Request #1a - “Lead me” (v.8)

Has to do with the process of Salvation Ps. 71:2, Rom 2:4, Rev 7:17

God has led His people in the past Ps. 23:3, Luke 1:79, John 16:13

We need God to lead us!

- “When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock” Psalm 61:2
- “If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost part of the sea, even there your hand will lead me... lead me in the way everlasting.” Psalm 139:9, 24
- “If God guide us, we shall be safe. If he forsake us, we shall all go astray. Divine conduct is the only sure preservative against superlative folly.” ~William Plumer, *Studies in the Book of Psalms*, 1866

Request #1b “Level your way”

Three senses of *yashar* “make straight”

- 1. God making life easier so we don't wipe out**
 - “In all your ways acknowledge Him and he will make your paths straight” Prov. 3:6
 - “righteousness will smooth the way, but wickedness makes the wicked fall” Prov. 11:5
 - “I will go before you and make the rough places level...” Isaiah 45:2
- 2. God making His ways more attractive so that we choose them more consistently**
 - *Yashar* usually indicates subjective evaluation
 - “the thing seemed right in the sight of the king” 2 Chr. 30:4
 - Samson said, “...she [Delilah] looks good to me!” Judg. 14:3
- 3. Living faithfully so we do not trip others up**
 - “Make straight in the desert a highway for God” Isa. 40:3
 - “The soul of the proud is not right, but the righteous shall live by faith” Hab. 2:4

Request #1b “Level your way”

Three senses of *yashar* “make straight”

1. God making life easier so we don't wipe out
2. God making His ways more attractive so that we choose them more consistently
3. Living faithfully so we do not trip others up

“It is right that we should pray to be kept in a plain way, and not be allowed to fall into darkness respecting either faith or practice, v. 8. Inscrutable points of doctrine, mysterious providences, and insolvable questions in casuistry are often occasions of terrible temptations. To ask for light on our path is therefore the same as praying not to be led into temptation. Satan loves to fish in muddy water. Mental confusion is unfriendly to the steady course of piety. Let us beg God to make crooked things straight.” ~William Plumer, *Studies in the Book of Psalms*, 1866

WHY Lead & Level?

Because of Total Depravity (v.9)

- v.8 because of my enemies^{KJV} foes^{NASB} opponents^{Strong} them that lie in wait^{AJV} (“fought against” & “trampled” David Psalm 56:2)
- There is no faithfulness^{KJV} truth^{NKJV} nothing reliable^{NASB} in their mouth - not a word can be trusted^{NIV}
 - Job 42:7 “you haven’t spoken what will stand like... Job has”
 - Departure from God’s righteousness (9th Commandment)
- Their inward part^{KJV} inmost self^{ESV} heart^{NIV} is wickedness^{KJV} destruction^{NKJV} a yawning gulf^{AJV} a vacuum^{NAW} that desires^{BDB} to suck in evil. (Note parallels and opposites below)
 - Job 6:30 Is there **injustice** on my tongue? Cannot my palate discern calamities
 - Psalm 52:3 You love evil more than **good**, and **Falsehood**...
 - Psalm 57:1b “...in the shadow of Your wings I will **take refuge** Until destruction passes by”
 - Prov. 11:6 The **righteousness** of the upright will deliver them, But the treacherous will be caught by *their own* greed
 - Psalm 52:2 Your tongue devises destruction (caused by words! cf. Ps. 38:12, Prov. 17:4, Micah 7:3)

WHY Lead & Level?

Because of Total Depravity (v.9)

- v.8 because of my enemies^{KJV} foes^{NASB}
- There is no faithfulness^{KJV} truth^{NKJV} reliability^{NASB} in their mouth
- Their inward part is wickedness^{KJV} destruction^{NKJV}
- **Their throat is an open grave**
 - Includes the larynx (Ps. 149:6a ESV “Let the high praises of God be in their throat” cf. Ps. 115:7, Isa. 58:1)
 - The grave = one of the 4 things never satisfied - Prov. 30:16
- **They flatter (make smooth^{AJV} speak deceit^{NIV}) with their tongue**
 - “Their tongue is skillfully adept at smoothing the rough edges of falsehood so that it becomes palatable... powerful images of the deadly consequences of slander!” ~GHW
 - Psalm 36:1-4 “Transgression speaks to the ungodly within his heart; There is no fear of God before his eyes. For it flatters him in his *own* eyes Concerning the discovery of his iniquity *and* the hatred *of it*. The words of his mouth are wickedness and deceit; He has ceased to be wise *and* to do good. He plans wickedness upon his bed; He sets himself on a path that is not good; He does not despise evil.”

WHY Lead & Level?

Because of Total Depravity (v.9)

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- Their inward part is wickedness^{KJV} destruction^{NKJV}
- Their throat is an open grave
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Every organ involved in speech is corrupt!

- Matthew 15:11b "...what proceeds out of the mouth, this defiles the man."
- Romans 3:9ff "...both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; as it is written, "THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE... THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN GRAVE, WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY KEEP DECEIVING... 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God..."
- Sin-riddled humans are trying to pull me away from righteousness and make Gods ways seem too difficult; that's why we pray these things!

Request #2a - “Judge guilty” (v.10)

- ***Ashem* is legal “guilt” for violating God’s law**
 - (cf. “guilt” offerings in Lev. 4 & 5)
 - (destruction^{KJV} is not in view, but will come)
 - (We’ll get to them falling by their councils later)
- ***Elohim* (“God” instead of “LORD”) is judge’s title**
 - Ethiopic, Arabic, Latin, and Greek translations of this verse use the verbal command “judge”
 - Not personal animosity but alignment with God’s character stated in vs. 4-5

Request #2b - “Cast out” (v.10)

- **Heddichaymo** – Cause to go away/Cast out /Banish^{NIV}
 - Excommunication from the people Deut. 13:5-13
 - Exile from the promised land Deut. 30:1
 - “...you will perish in your sin...” John 8:21
- **“in the multiplication of their transgressions “**
 - *Pesha'* = boundary-crossing (different from sin^{NIV})
 - Result of doing more evil rather than repenting.
 - Contrast with v.7 “in the multitude of Your mercies I will enter your house”

WHY Judge & Banish? Because of Rebellion (v.10)

- **Marah (“rebelled”)**
 - literally means “became stiff”
 - figuratively “became resistant”
 - opposite of wanting to be “lead” (v.8)
- **Sentence of banishment consistent w God’s law**
 - Israel in the wilderness “rebelled” (Deut. 9:23) ,
resulting in 40 years of desert wandering
 - “They have rebelled against the words... and the counsel of the most High” Ps. 107:11, cf. Ezek. 5:6
God answered David eventually - 70 years of exile

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- All Imperfect tense (future), not Imperative**
- “Prophecies” ~Augustine**
- Parallels 6 Promises to pray (vs. 2, 3, 7)**
- and 6 characteristics of God (vs. 4-6)**
- Total Redemption in contrast to Total Depravity**

RESULT #1 Wicked Fall - v.10

- The wicked will fall מִמְעַצְוֹתֵיהֶם as a result of their own councils^{KJV} devices^{NASB} intrigues^{NIV}
- Micah 6:16 For the statutes of Omri are kept; All the works of Ahab's house *are done*; And you walk in their counsels, That I may make you a desolation
- Example: Haman hanged on the gallows he built for Mordecai, and Mordecai got his office!
- “If God let a man have his own way he will soon be in hell. A withdrawal of restraint, of wisdom, and of mercy, will at once complete any one's ruin.” ~Plumer

RESULT #2 Refugees Rejoice - v.11

“Those who trust/take refuge” (*Chosay*) in God

- **“Are blessed” – Psalm 2:12**
- **Ruth 2:12 “...a full reward be given you by the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge.”**
- **Heb. 6:17-19 Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.**

“Will be happy/glad/rejoice” (*Samek*)

- **Deut. 12:12 “...you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes... And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God...”**
- **Logical order following “they have rebelled” recognizes the possibility that some guilty sinners may find refuge in God!**

RESULT #3 Wards Sing - v.11

Sing/shout for joy

- Deut. 32:43 **“Sing out, O Gentiles, with His people; For He will avenge the blood of His servants, And render vengeance to His adversaries; He will provide atonement for His land and His people.”**
- Isaiah 49:13 **Heavens, sing for joy, and earth, rejoice! Let mountains break forth into singing, for Jehovah has comforted His people, and will show compassion to His afflicted ones.**
- Different from non-singing shouts in Isaiah 12:6, 16:10, 24:14, 42:11, 44:23, 52:9, 54:1

You defend^{KJV} spread protection^{NIV} shelter^{NASB} (וְתַסִּיד) over them

- Weaving/fabricating something, usually to protect from view or shelter from exposure.
- 2 Thess. 3:3 **“The Lord is faithful and will strengthen and protect you from the evil One”**
- 1 Peter 1:5 **“...you are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation about to be revealed...”**

RESULT #4 Lovers Exult - v.11

“Those who love Your Name...”

- Zeph. 3:12 “they will take refuge in the name of the LORD”
- Isaiah 56:6 “...those joined upon Jehovah to minister to Him and to love the name of Jehovah, to belong to Him as servants, all who keep the Sabbath from violating it and who keep a strong grasp in my covenant...”
- Heb. 6:10 “... your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in ... ministering to the saints”

“...will exult^{NASB} be joyful^{KJV} rejoice^{NIV} jump up^{Strong} in You”

- 1 Sam. 2:1 Hannah prayed... “My heart exults in the LORD; My horn is exalted in the LORD, My mouth speaks boldly against my enemies, Because I rejoice in Your salvation.
- 1 Pet. 1:8 though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory

Total Redemption to counter Total Depravity!

Faith lifts our minds to happiness, lifts our voices in praise, and lifts our bodies in exultation!

RESULT #5 Blessing - v.12

- Intense: You yourself really bless the righteous
- Both blessing & righteousness come from God
 - “Lead me in Your righteousness” (v.8)
 - THE Righteous One is Jesus, who imputes His righteousness to us
 - Righteous = “all who take refuge in [God]... who love [God’s] name” (v.11)

RESULT #6 Favor Shield - v.12

“You compass^{KJV} surround^{NKJV} cover^{ESV} crown^{LXX} w. favor”

- You surround him with glory and honor Psalm 8:5
- He crowns you with lovingkindness and compassion and redeems your life from the pit Psalm 103:4

SIMILE: “As with a shield” (כִּצְיֹנָה)

- Large shield – total coverage (Psalms 3 & 18 is smaller one)
- Carried by shield-bearer (1 Sam. 17)
- Made of metal (2 Ch. 9:15)
- Psalm 91:1-5 He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High Will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress, My God, in whom I trust!" For it is He who delivers you from the snare of the trapper And from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with His pinions, And under His wings you may seek refuge; His faithfulness is a shield and bulwark. You will not be afraid of the terror by night or the arrow... by day
- “A mighty fortress is our God!” ~Martin Luther

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NIV Application Commentary on Psalms (Gerald H. Wilson)

“[T]he Psalmist’s words call us to remember that Jesus was never afraid to call evil what it was or to take a firm stance of condemnation against all its forms. We too must take evil seriously, aligning ourselves with God’s essential character of holiness.”

“God’s holiness offers sinful humanity both its greatest problem and its greatest hope... Not only is it incompatible with evil, demonstrated by his rejection of evil and judgment of the evildoer; it is also characterized by his ‘relentless goodness’ toward his creation and those humans who live in it... Judgment and mercy, therefore, are not two competing characteristics of Yahweh but are two inseparable consequences of his holiness... In the final analysis... [our] hope is grounded not in the swirling press of circumstance but on the unchanging sovereignty of holy Yahweh... He is the king who establishes justice and security. He is the sovereign who leads us in the paths of righteousness and divine blessing.”

St. Augustine's Exposition on Psalms

“These are the arms whereby the enemy is overcome... when he suggests despair of our salvation through the multitude of tribulations and temptations... ‘Who will bring accusation against God’s elect?’ Again, ‘if God be for us, who can be against us? Who spared not His Only Son, but delivered Him up for us all.’ (Rom. 8:31-33) “For if, when we were enemies, Christ died for us; much more being reconciled shall we be saved from wrath through Him.’ (Rom. 5:10) This is that unconquerable shield, whereby the enemy is driven back!”

What kind of enemies challenge you?

You do have a prayer!

“Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil”

Credits

- **Bible translations include Psalm 5 by Nate Wilson, NASB, and some NIV quotes.**
- **Commentary Bibliography**
 - **Augustine: Expositions on the Book of Psalms By Saint Augustin, Bishop of Hippo, Edited, with brief annotations, and condensed from the six volumes of the oxford translation By A. Cleveland Coxe, D.D., 1888**
 - **Cohen: The Soncino Books of the Bible, vol. 9, The Psalms, by The Rev. Dr. A. Cohan, M.A, Ph.D, D.H.L, Revised by Rabbi E. Oratz, 1992**
 - **Delitzsch: Commentary on the Psalms by Franz Delitzsch (1813-1890)**
 - **Boice: Psalms, Vol. 1 by James Montgomery Boice, 1994, Baker Book House**
 - **Plumer: Studies in the Book of Psalms: Being a Critical and Expository Commentary, With Doctrinal and Practical Remarks on the Entire Psalter., By William S. Plumer, D.D.,LL.D., 1866**
 - **Barker: Psalms That Give Perspective, a series of Sermons by Dr. Frank M. Barker, Jr., 2009, Briarwood Presbyterian Church**
 - **GHW: The NIV Application Commentary: Psalms- Vol. 1, ©2002 by Gerald H Wilson.**