

Treasure Hunt

- How do the first and last stanzas of Psalm 35 resemble each other, and differ from the central stanza?
- How do 35:7, 19 anticipate the Lord Jesus?
- Why do the imprecations in the Psalms make some Christians uncomfortable?
- How does Psalm 35 show that imprecations concern God's kingdom and not personal offenses?
- Why would *refusing* to pray the imprecations be wrong?
- Does the NT contain imprecations?
- Psalm 36, by its form, is a lament. What is David lamenting?
- How does he encourage himself in the face of a wicked world?

Psalms of the Sufferer

Book 1: 1-41

1-2: Opening

3-14: Strength in **Weakness**

3-7: Laments of the Tired

8: **Hymn:** Victory of Babes & Sucklings

9-14: Laments of the Poor

15-24: **Dwelling** with God

15: Keep the Law to dwell with God

19: **Hymn:** 2nd Torah Psalm

24: Keep the law to dwell with God

25: Acrostic of Humble Worship

26-32: Regal **Dwellingplace** Psalms

26-28: God's House for the Righteous

29: The Lord Enthroned on the Flood

30-32: God's Shelter for the Penitent

33: **Hymn:** Creation, Nations, Salvation

34-41: Psalms of the **Sufferer**

34-37: The Innocent Sufferer

38-41: The Guilty Sufferer

Possible parts of a Lament:

- Invocation
- **Plea** to God for help
- **Complaint**
(description of the problem)
- Confession of sin
- Assertion of innocence
- Curse on enemies (imprecation),
- Confidence in God's response
- Hymn or blessing

Structure of Psalm 35

1-10: Plea for Defense against Harm

- 1-3, Plea: **רִיב**
- 4-6, 8, **Imprecation**: Let them be **confounded** ... put to **shame** ... brought to **confusion**
- 7, Complaint: Net, Pit, **Without a Cause**

9-10, **Promise of Praise**

11-18: Complaint and Innocence

- 11-12, Complaint: False Witness
- 13-14, Innocence: **Intercession**
- 15-16, Complaint: Mockery
- 17, Plea: Rescue my Soul

18, **Promise of Praise**

19-28: Plea for Defense against Speech

- 19, Plea: **Without a Cause**
- 20-21, Complaint: deceit, accusation
- 22-25, Plea: **רִיב**
- 26, **Imprecation**: Let them be **ashamed** ... brought to **confusion** ... clothed with ... **dishonor**

27-28, **Promise of Praise**

Indicative Echos of Imprecations

| Imprecation in Psalm 35 | Indicative statement |
|---|--|
| <p>4 Let them be confounded בוש and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to confusion חפר that devise my hurt.</p> | <p>71:24 My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long: for they are confounded בוש, for they are brought unto shame חפר, that seek my hurt.</p> |
| <p>5 Let them be as chaff before the wind:</p> | <p>1:4 The ungodly <i>are</i> not so: but <i>are</i> like the chaff which the wind driveth away.</p> |
| <p>and let the angel of the LORD chase <i>them</i>. ... 6b let the angel of the LORD persecute them.</p> | <p>34:7 The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.</p> |
| <p>6 Let their way be dark and slippery:</p> | <p>3:18 Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction.</p> |
| <p>8 Let destruction come upon him at unawares; and let his net that he hath hid catch himself: into that very destruction let him fall.</p> | <p>9:15 The heathen are sunk down in the pit <i>that they made</i>: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken.</p> |

Does the NT Forbid Imprecation?

Mat 5:44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, **bless them that curse you**, do good to them that hate you, and **pray for them which despitefully use you**, and persecute you;

Rom 12:17 **Recompense to no man evil for evil.** ... 19 Dearly beloved, **avenge not yourselves**, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

1Pe 2:21 **Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:** 22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: 23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously:

Principles of Godly Imprecation (!)

Distinguish the Kingdom of God from our personal comfort.

Deu 32:35 **To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence;** their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.

Agree with what the Lord wants.

2Th 1:6 ***it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;*** 7 ... when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

Follow the New Testament (next slide).

Imprecations in the NT

Mat 25:41 Then shall [the King] say also unto them on the left hand, **Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:**

42 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: 43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

1 Cor. 16:22 If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, **let him be Anathema** [accursed.] Maranatha.

Gal. 1:8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, **let him be accursed.** 9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, **let him be accursed.**

2Ti 4:14 Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: **the Lord reward him according to his works:** 15 Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words.

Rev 6:9 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: 10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, **How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?** 11 And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they *were*, should be fulfilled.

Structure of Psalm 36

Psalm 36, Contrasting the Wicked and the Lord

1-9, Attributes

- 1-4, **Complaint** about the Wicked: Transgression, iniquity עוֹן, iniquity אָוֶן, deceit, mischief, not good, evil
- 5-9, **Confidence** in the Lord: Mercy / lovingkindness (2x), Faithfulness, righteousness, judgments, life, light

10-12, **Plea** for God's Help

- 10, Continue thy lovingkindness & righteousness
- 11-12, Deliver from pride & iniquity אָוֶן of the wicked

Ps 16:8 I have set the Lord always before me ...

Phi 4:6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. 8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.