

PSALMS 009

A Psalm of Thanksgiving for God's Justice.

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Roy Enoch (11-17-93).
- B. (For the Chief Musician; set to Muth-lab-ben. A Psalm of David).
- C. On the superscription, Coffman quotes Rawlinson, "No explanation hitherto given is satisfactory," and concludes that the meaning is totally unknown.
- D. There are some textual problems with this Psalm that most commentaries alert us to.
 - 1. 9:3 has two different translations. "When my enemies turn back," (KJV, NKJ, ASV). The NIV have "My enemies turn back," and others have "Because my enemies withdrew." The RSV has, "when my enemies turned back," which is similar to the latter. The former would make 9:1 a promise to thank God on the condition that He overthrows David's enemies, while the latter translation would have him thanking God because He had already given David victories. Coffman believes that the first translation is the proper one.
 - 2. Another textual problem is whether Psa. 9 and 10 are actually one Psalm or two. The Hebrew has two, but the Greek translation has one, as does the Latin Vulgate by Jerome. The main reasons for considering them one are:
 - 1. It was one Psalm in the Greek and Latin translations.
 - 2. There is no title for Psalm 10.
 - 3. Together the psalms form an imperfect acrostic.Coffman suggests that there is one insurmountable obstacle to accepting them as one psalm: They do not have the same subject matter, and further, the acrostic pattern is only partially followed here and there poorly. There are eight psalms which do follow the acrostic pattern and they are 10 (partially), 25, 34, 37, 111, 112, 119 and 145.

THE TEXT.

- 9:1** I will give thanks to the LORD with all my heart;
I will tell of all Your wonders.
- 2** I will be glad and exult in You;
I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High.
- 3** When my enemies turn back,
They stumble and perish before You.
- 4** For You have maintained my just cause;
You have sat on the throne judging righteously.
- 5** You have rebuked the nations, You have destroyed the wicked;
You have blotted out their name forever and ever.
- 6** The enemy has come to an end in perpetual ruins,
And You have uprooted the cities;
The very memory of them has perished.
- 7** But the LORD abides forever;
He has established His throne for judgment,
- 8** And He will judge the world in righteousness;
He will execute judgment for the peoples with equity.
- 9** The LORD also will be a stronghold for the oppressed,
A stronghold in times of trouble;
- 10** And those who know Your name will put their trust in You,
For You, O LORD, have not forsaken those who seek You.
- 11** Sing praises to the LORD, who dwells in Zion;
Declare among the peoples His deeds.
- 12** For He who requires blood remembers them;
He does not forget the cry of the afflicted.
- 13** Be gracious to me, O LORD;
See my affliction from those who hate me,

You who lift me up from the gates of death,
14 That I may tell of all Your praises,
 That in the gates of the daughter of Zion
 I may rejoice in Your salvation.
15 The nations have sunk down in the pit which they have made;
 In the net which they hid, their own foot has been caught.
16 The LORD has made Himself known;
 He has executed judgment.
 In the work of his own hands the wicked is snared. Higgaion Selah.
17 The wicked will return to Sheol,
Even all the nations who forget God.
18 For the needy will not always be forgotten,
 Nor the hope of the afflicted perish forever.
19 Arise, O LORD, do not let man prevail;
 Let the nations be judged before You.
20 Put them in fear, O LORD;
 Let the nations know that they are but men. Selah.

COMMENTS.

- A. **[v1,2]** David's praise in this psalm is because of God's deliverance of Israel, whether past, present or future. He describes God's righteous judgment and punish of the wicked in general. Therefore, it makes little different how 9:3 is translated.
- B. **[v3,4]** One indication of how little it matters how verse 3 is translated is the past tense of 9:4 which shows that David's faith is partly based on how God had been just in His righteous judgments in the past: "For you have maintained my right and my cause."
- C. **[v5,6]** He continues to reflect on God's punishment of the wicked as a basis for his hope of how God would continue to be just. It also may be that the final judgment is also in view here.
- D. **[v7,8]** This seems to clearly describe the final judgment.
- E. **[v9,10]** Knowing God's name clearly involves more than having heard it and being able to pronounce it. It is like Joel's statement in Joel 2:32. Jesus quotes this in Mt. 7:21 and shows that it means that we must do the will of the Father in heaven.
- F. **[v11,12]** "The Lord, who dwells in Zion" refers to God's presence in Jerusalem where His tabernacle was located, and later the temple built by David's son. "He remembers" indicates that no sin escapes God's notice, and that all will be punished. He also "does not forget the cry of the humble."
- G. **[v13,14]** David is now very personal in his petition. Coffman quotes Forsyth's contrast between the "gates of death" and "the gates of the daughter of Zion."
 - The gates of death are open for all men;
 - The gates of Zion are open only for the saved.
 - The gates of death open regardless of our will;
 - The gates of Zion open only by our choice.
 - The gates of death are dark with terror;
 - The gates of Zion are bright with hope and joy.
 Of course the "gates of Zion" represent the Lord's Church, see Heb. 12:22-24.
- H. **[v15,16]** This seems again to pick up the theme of the final judgment.
- I. **[v17,18]** Four times the word of God gives the solemn warning: "Beware lest thou forget the Lord thy God." But nations continue to forget him. See Rom. 1:28.
- J. **[v19,20]** Hear David prays for the Lord's righteous judgment. This is often referred to as an "imprecatory prayer" and sometimes it refers to placing a curse on another, but in the Psalms it usually is a prayer for God's righteous judgment.