

**TRUTH B-P CHURCH**  
**Adults Sunday School**

**PSALM 7 – THE FIRST IMPRECATORY PSALM**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

This is the first imprecatory psalm. Imprecatory means seeking for God’s judgment and punishment upon the wicked. There are a total of 10 imprecatory psalms in the Bible (Psalms 7, 35, 55, 58, 59, 69, 109, 139 by David; Psalms 79, 137 by Asaph and an unknown psalmist).

Imprecatory psalm is to be studied with much prayer and in the spirit of humility. These psalms do not justify any form of anger against the wicked, except righteous anger that is according to the revealed will of God, namely God’s Word.

It is not meant for us to take things in our own hands to deal with the wicked in order to appease our anger and dissatisfaction. It is always a plea for God to intervene, and at all times be found in full submission to His will.

**A. Title**

The preface of the psalm reads, “Shiggaion of David, which he sang unto the LORD, concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite.” The meaning of “Shiggaion” is unknown. However it was believed to be a musical note to indicate mournful meditation in the singing of this psalm. The same word appears in the plural form in Habakkuk 3:1.

Cush the Benjamite was unknown to us since the Bible did not have any detailed record of him in the life of David. He was likely an enemy of David, like King Saul, who wanted him dead. Since Saul was a Benjamite, it was believed that Cush was none other than Saul himself. It is unlikely since there is no reason why David would use a pseudonym for King Saul. It was the same reasoning for Shimei.

**B. Author**

No doubt David is the author. He sang unto the LORD, not as a professional singer but one whose heart is stirred up and being emotionally drained due to the injustice that he is facing from his enemy. Sometimes we are comforted by the hymns we sung when the lyrics described exactly our situation. We thank God for using David as he poured out his heart to the Lord in songs and psalms in order that we may also be comforted and be encouraged by God in His precious Word.

**C. Summary**

This psalm is divided into three parts: First the plea for deliverance (verses 1 to 5), second is the plea for God’s justice (verses 6 to 16), and finally is the praise of thanksgiving (verse 17). The psalmist experienced great forces of opposition from his enemy. For David who has experienced the mighty power of God when he overcome wild beasts as a shepherd boy and also single-handedly defeated the Philistines champion Goliath, yet he is human like any one of us, weak and fragile and capable of falling into despair and desperation.

We see the progression of David’s plea for deliverance and then for God’s justice to be meted against his enemy. David shows to us that God is worthy to be counted on because He is righteous and just and will not abandon His own people. And there is every reason to praise God and thank Him for His goodness and faithfulness. May God help us as we study and apply this psalm into our life.

## II. THE PLEA FOR DELIVERANCE

As David pleads for God's deliverance, we see clearly the basis of his plea. It is twofold. He knew God is trustworthy, and for God to hear his plea, he must bear a clear conscience. For if he regards iniquity in his heart, God will not hear him (see Psalm 66:18).

### A. Trust in God (verses 1 to 2)

**Verse 1, "O LORD my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me:"**

When David was under attack by Cush the Benjamite, all he could do was to trust in God. And he called God, "my God" after invoking the covenantal name of God "LORD." David cried unto God whom he had a personal relationship with. And it is a close and intimate one. He had been walking close with God and this cry reaffirms their relationship that they were enjoying. David prays that God will save and deliver him from all those who persecute him.

**Verse 2, "Lest he tear my soul like a lion, rending *it* in pieces, while *there is none to deliver.*"**

David was aware of the merciless hand of the enemy, should he fall into his hands. I doubt David is afraid to die or that his faith has wavered that he begins to lose his standing before God. David is expressing his full trust in God and what He can do. He is acknowledging that without God, he truly can do nothing. And there is no other who is able to save and deliver him except God. He likened that kind of destruction he might face when his soul is being torn into pieces by a lion without anyone to deliver him.

### B. Bearing A Clear Conscience Before God (verses 3 to 5)

**Verse 3, "O LORD my God, if I have done this; if there be iniquity in my hands;"**

**Verse 4, "If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me; (yea, I have delivered him that without cause is mine enemy:)"**

**Verse 5, "Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take *it*; yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust. Selah."**

In verse 3, including verse 4, there are 3 "if" and all of them are in the first class condition, meaning to say that it is written with the assumption that the statement made is true. In other words, the psalmist is reasoning now that he is more than willing to pay for what he has done if he has truly done evil or in any form of wickedness upon his enemy. And this is a prayer made unto God and therefore it is a serious charge should he truly be found guilty.

But the psalmist knew what he was uttering before God. He dared to make these assumptions because he has a clear conscience. He was not afraid that he will be found guilty because he did not do anything that sins against his enemy. If he did, he is more than willing to be taken to task for that.

He has nothing to be afraid of since he bears a clear conscience before God. And this is important because God can see through our heart and mind, including our hidden intention and secret desire. We must be like the psalmist, to bear such a clear conscience before the God who can see all things.

This part of the psalm ends with a selah. And indicates the end of one section and the new section is going to begin in the next verse. After the plea for deliverance, we see the psalmist is pleading for God's justice.

### III. THE PLEA FOR JUSTICE

#### A. Call For God's Intervention (verses 6 to 7)

**Verse 6, "Arise, O LORD, in thine anger, lift up thyself because of the rage of mine enemies: and awake for me to the judgment that thou hast commanded."**

Both "arise" and "awake" are in the imperative. Why did David cry to God so desperately and urgently? He gave his reason: "because of the rage of mine enemies." In other words, David was crying for just retribution from God. In fact, the word "awake" is even stronger than "arise" and implied as if God is sleeping and that he has to wake up for his sake. If we do not understand David, we might think that he is so arrogant to tell God what to do. No, far from insolent behaviour which David might seem to have if not for the end phrase of the verse. It is all because for the sake of the judgment which God Himself has commanded.

You and I need to arrive at such passionate and zeal for God's judgment to be fulfilled. It was nothing to do with anything that is personal. It was all because God's law was broken, or even His name was undermined, that you and I who bear the name of Christ, ought to have stood up for the defense of God's name and truth, especially when the enemies of God blasphemed and made fun of God's name and truth.

**Verse 7, "So shall the congregation of the people compass thee about: for their sakes therefore return thou on high."**

When God's justice is fulfilled, His own people will be encouraged and want to worship God even more and praised Him for His unfailing Truth. It is a testimony of God's faithfulness, righteousness and goodness upon His own people that others may see clearly.

It was for such a reason that the psalmist calls for God to intervene for His people's sake. Do you think God will hear the plea of the psalmist? The answer is obvious, isn't it?

#### B. Believe in God's Defense (verses 8 to 10)

**Verse 8, "The LORD shall judge the people: judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is in me."**

Truly David is correct in his theology on what God will do. He will judge the people. For He is the Judge. He is not a judge like what a man serves as a judge. The human judge can make mistakes. He depends on many factors in order to help him make a good, right and fair judgment. Even then, he can still make mistakes. But for God, He will never make any mistakes. He had all the evidences in Him for He can see all things from eternity past to the future. Moreover He can read man's inner mind and intention, emotion of all sorts, and able in the end make the correct, true and perfect judgment.

And for David to call upon God to judge me was indeed a brave move. Who would dare to "challenge" God to judge him, and according to his righteousness and integrity. What righteousness is this? This is not the righteousness of a sinner still unconverted to the faith. A sinner's righteousness is not good enough for heaven no matter how he tried to be righteous. However, the righteousness of a believer receives his righteousness from Christ. It was a perfect righteousness that is bestowed upon you. As such, it was upon this righteousness that was given by Christ that enabled him to live in righteousness.

And David even dared God to check his integrity, proves that David is thoroughly blameless. Not that he has become a perfect man and now no more struggle with sin. Not at all! David knew he has not done anything wrong to his enemies. Now that he is under attack by them, David appealed to God for defence.

**Verse 9, “Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.”**

How will any child of God tolerate the ungodliness and worldliness that surround him or her? It seems like forever that all these ungodliness and worldliness do not seem to end. Do not lose hope! As the psalmist says, “Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end.” It will come to the end that all the wicked will receive their just “rewards” in the Lake of Fire.

David also calls for God to establish the just. Only God can do it, simply because He is God. The establishment of the just would be something that enable a believer to live out loud his or her Christian testimony.

It needs not necessary be troubles and difficulties all the time to cry out to God for establishment of our faith. It should and must be all the time since this is the purpose why we are here. The purpose to establish the just means that God reigns supremely and His truth prevails. Many a time, it may seem like the world is having her upper hand. They are already in the majority since all are born in sin. But God has a list of those whom He has appointed to save and serve.

**Verse 10, “My defence is of God, which saveth the upright in heart.”**

This is the confidence of David who is rightly the man after God’s own heart. What he is saying literally is: God is my defense. Not only defense comes from God or God provides defense for him, but that God is his defense. You have God, you have everything you need on this earth. In fact, the opposite way of saying can also be true: If we have God, we need nothing else because God alone is everything.

Defence means the act of defending or resisting an attack. David sees God as his defence. No one can touch him without God’s permission. That’s how assured David was in his God. We wish God would come to our defence when we are bullied and mocked at because of our faith. We wish to be delivered and be protected all the time.

This is important to Israel as a sign of God’s presence with them. It serves to all the other pagan nations around that they will not be able to fight against Israel because God is their defence. As a nation, they have such a testimony. But, how about an individual? Is God interested to defend an individual or will it be seen as a waste of power to focus on one? He could have easily created an invincible army that will never be destroyed. He could but He didn’t.

This means that you and I must be convinced that God is our defence because He is the only One who can fulfil this impossible task. Surely He will save the upright in heart. Those whom He had elected, He draws them in and made them His. They experience a total change spiritually. Now they are no more condemned and undone in God’s sight because of Christ. They became upright because Christ’s obedience to the law enabled them now to walk uprightly before God and men.

And it is not the outward uprightness that is talking about here but the internal change in the heart that only God can transform it from a heart of stone to become a heart of flesh. The heart describes the moral standing in which controls our thoughts, words and actions. Since our heart has been made righteous and upright, we now able to understand God’s Word with much discernment and we are therefore able to live out what is required of us to please God and to glorify Him.

### C. Trust in the Just God (verses 11 to 13)

**Verse 11, “God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry *with the wicked every day.*”**

Judgment is not only for the wicked but also the righteous. If we have such thinking, this verse has proven us wrong. As such we must stop thinking that judgment is only for the wicked. Why is God judging the righteous? The reason God is judging the righteous, which I believe, is not because they had done any thing wrong, but they had done rightly according to God’s command.

The word “judge” means to form an opinion or passing a sentence. God judges the righteous means that God has concluded him to be righteous. This is God’s conclusion. And therefore you and I have every reason to trust in this just God. The conclusion drawn is not what we have done but what Christ has done for us. That is justice.

Likewise, God will also judge the wicked and His attitude towards them is His burning wrath. Since they sinned every day, God is angry with them every day. How fearful it is to fall into the hands of the living God with His wrath burning against sin and sinners!

**Verse 12, “If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready.”**

One has rightly commented, “The LORD will condemn only the guilty. These guilty ones are unrepentant as well. If they repent of their sins and evil ways, the LORD will forgive them.” If not, they better prepare themselves for the impending judgment and be punished for it for eternity.

The LORD will get ready his sword of judgment, bend his bow, and make them ready for punishment. The impending wrath of God can fall upon sinners at any time if they procrastinate and refuse to repent of their sins.

**Verse 13, “He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors.”**

The LORD has also prepared instruments of death for the wicked. God has ordained his arrows to pierce through the persecutors. They are the wicked men who had no regard for God or fear Him. They will surely be judged and killed. Even the instruments to bring about their eternal death are ordained. This is a sure judgment!

Repentance is the only way out if anyone wants to be saved from sin. The enemies of David ought to have repented, had they known their depraved condition and what evil they were doing to God and His servant. Who can fight God and win? No one absolutely!

### D. The Wicked Are Judged (verses 14 to 16)

**Verse 14, “Behold, he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood.”**

Why should the wicked be judged for what they had done wickedly? This is because God is just. If they should get away with it, then where is justice? You may even question where is God! Which is why oftentimes when we see that justice seems to be ignored and abandoned, we almost immediately question whether God is with us or not? Is that not true? The psalmist has no doubt at all that God will surely judge! It is only a matter of time!

As we all can see by now, the psalmist was praying that the wicked ones be judged and punished. And now he was describing their wickedness as one who was going through childbirth. It probably contains the highest degree of pain that a single human being could bear. The wicked had conceived mischief as a woman conceives a child. The result is giving birth to falsehood. From beginning to the end, it was a painful process. Why did the wicked still refuse to repent and avoid the pain?

**Verse 15, “He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch *which* he made.”**

The probability of being deceived was likely a high one. He might be led to think that it will not hurt very much and was persuaded to indulge for that moment of pleasure. What he failed to realize is the pain which results in death and hell. He has dug his own grave. He was supposed to dig a pit to trap his own prey. Yet in the end, he fell into it. He suffered tremendously the consequences of his own doing.

**Verse 16, “His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate.”**

Indeed it is true that one sows what he reaps. It comes in a full circle. God is not mocked. Those who did evil and commit grievous sin as if God is dead, even though they were warned time and time against it, will ultimately come to regret for their own doing but will be too late to repent. That would be the worst end that could happen to any one, isn't it? No one will be able to get away with what he has done wickedly against God unless they accept Christ and repent.

It is like the boomerang effect. The violent acts that the wicked had done will return to destroy them. All the evil will return upon them. They thought they were destroying others but in the end they were destroyed themselves. God indeed is just. The wicked will pay for what they had done. And God will not underpunish or overpunish. Their punishment will be a just one. As for the righteous, God will usher them into His kingdom and reward them accordingly. Will you repent of your sins or will you still keep them? You decide, but God's judgment will not wait for you. It is coming soon. And when it comes, will just God be judging you as the wicked or the righteous?

#### **IV. PRAISE OF THANKSGIVING (V17)**

**Verse 17, “I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high.”**

If you have “chosen” to be the righteous, it is not because you are given the power to choose God, but because God has already chosen you to be saved from eternity past. He is the One who gave you the faith to choose life, and not death. He is the One who gave you the wisdom to see your beautiful end by faith, and not blinded to the destructive end as an evildoer. Salvation is of the Lord. If not for God's love, mercy and grace through Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord, where do you think we will be right now?

As such, it is most appropriate for the psalmist to end with thanksgiving to God. Indeed because God is righteous and will surely punish the wicked justly, we must praise Him and worship Him in the highest honour and glory. We cannot keep quiet because it must overwhelm our entire body to exalt Him in worship and praise. God certainly deserves all the glory to be rendered to Him by His creatures. And we should count it the highest honour and privilege to be able to do so. Make sure you are on the Lord's side. Make sure you are not deceived by the evil one to go against God and His Word. Be found doing God's will all the days of your life. May God help us. Amen.