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Lesson 6: Psalm 9

Psalm 9

Author: David

Background: It is impossible to date the psalm to a certain period in David's (Israel's) history.

Theme: David thanks the Lord for rescuing him and boasts that the Lord helps the helpless and punishes the wicked.

A note of praise is found throughout the psalm (vv. 1, 2, 11, 14) as an antidote to fear. The psalm gives to the needy child of God a sense of confidence in God's just rule (vv. 4, 7–9, 16, 19–20), faithfulness to his promises (vv. 9–10, 12, 18), and hope in the acts of God on behalf of his children. Lament changes into praise, and fear becomes victorious joy. Though the need was immediate and God may have responded to that particular need, the psalm looks forward to a time when all wickedness will be removed. There is an eschatological dimension to the psalm, with the expectation of the rule of God on earth and the fear of the nations (v. 20). The focus of the psalm is on God's kingship and his goodness to his children who cry out for deliverance from the vexations of this world.¹

Outline (This outline comes from Wilmington's Outline Bible with additional notes from the Expositor's Bible Commentary.)

¹ Gaebelein, F. E., VanGemern, W., Ross, A. P., Wright, J. S., & Kinlaw, D. F. (1991). *The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 5: Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (115). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

I. GOD'S RIGHTEOUS REDEMPTION OF THE ELECT (9:1-3, 9-14, 18)

A. What the **Lord** had done (9:1-3, 9-10, 18)

He exhorts himself to praise the Lord, not only as a therapy to forget his troubles for a moment, but to deepen his trust in the Lord. The depth of gratitude and joy finds expression in five synonymous verbs expressive of praise: "I will praise ... tell.... be glad ... rejoice ... sing praise."²

1. *He protected them* (9:1-3, 9-10).

The prayer is that the Lord will "turn back" (6:10; 56:9) the enemies so that they will be no more.³

When God makes the enemies to flee, they will stumble and perish. "Before you" may be interpreted as "from your presence," "because of your presence," or "in your presence."⁴

2. *He provided for them* (9:18).

B. What the **psalmist** would do (9:11-14): He would sing God's praises at the gates of Jerusalem.

II. GOD'S RIGHTEOUS RESISTANCE OF EVIL (9:5-6, 15-17, 19-20)

A. The **foolishness** of the godless (9:15-16): They eventually fall into their own pits and are caught by their own nets!

B. The **fury** upon the godless (9:5-6, 17, 19-20)

1. *God will fill them with terror* (9:19-20).

2. *God will blot out their very names from memory* (9:5-6).

The "rebuke" of God is an expression both of his wrath against the enemy and of his defense of the righteous. He is the Divine Warrior who "rebukes" in a revelation of his power over the world and of his deep love for his own (cf. Ps 76, esp. v. 6). In the end it will seem as if the wicked have never existed.⁵

3. *God will cast them into hell* (9:17).

III. GOD'S RIGHTEOUS **RULE** OVER THE EARTH (9:4, 7-8)

A. He will **rule** justly.

B. He will **rule** eternally.

² Gaebelein, F. E., VanGemern, W., Ross, A. P., Wright, J. S., & Kinlaw, D. F. (1991). *The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 5: Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (116). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

³ Gaebelein, F. E., VanGemern, W., Ross, A. P., Wright, J. S., & Kinlaw, D. F. (1991). *The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 5: Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (117). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

⁴ Gaebelein, F. E., VanGemern, W., Ross, A. P., Wright, J. S., & Kinlaw, D. F. (1991). *The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 5: Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (117). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

⁵ Gaebelein, F. E., VanGemern, W., Ross, A. P., Wright, J. S., & Kinlaw, D. F. (1991). *The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 5: Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (117). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

IV. THE LORD'S RULE (9:7-10, 12, 17-18): The Lord reigns over the whole world with fairness and helps the oppressed. Because he reigns (cf. 11:4; 103:10), there is hope. He is the "refuge" and "stronghold" for his children (v. 9).⁶

V. THE LORD'S RESCUE (9:1-6, 9-16, 18-20)

- A. **What the Lord does** (9:3-6, 15-16): He lets the wicked fall into their own pits and get caught by their own nets!
- B. **What David does** (9:1-2, 11-14): David sings praises to the Lord and calls others to do the same. The praise of the godly rises out of their conviction that God cares. The psalmist has already exhorted himself to sing and has encouraged the godly by reminding them of the acts of God (vv. 1-2). He now calls on all of them to join with him in singing a hymn, the focus of which is God's just rule.⁷
- C. **What David wants the Lord to do** (9:13-14, 19-20): David asks the Lord for mercy and for rescue from his enemies.⁸ The intensity of the suffering is comparable with death. David feels as if hell ("the gates of death") is here. Life has turned into a trial of alienation, affliction, and disaster. He cannot dig his way out but prays that God will show him "mercy" (cf. 4:1). The "gates of death" is a hyperbolic expression, synonymous with great adversity⁹

⁶ Gaebelein, F. E., VanGemern, W., Ross, A. P., Wright, J. S., & Kinlaw, D. F. (1991). *The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 5: Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (119). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

⁷ Gaebelein, F. E., VanGemern, W., Ross, A. P., Wright, J. S., & Kinlaw, D. F. (1991). *The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 5: Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (120). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

⁸ Willmington, H. L. (1999). *The Outline Bible* (Ps 9). Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers.

⁹ Gaebelein, F. E., VanGemern, W., Ross, A. P., Wright, J. S., & Kinlaw, D. F. (1991). *The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 5: Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (120). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.