

Psalm 52:1-9
I Will Hope on God's Name

Introduction: the seeming injustice in view is what occurred when (1) God ordained that Doeg communicate David's whereabouts, thereby placing David in greater danger and distress, followed by (2) Doeg's massacre of the priests and their families [85 people] at Nob, underscoring the seeming folly of God's withdrawing from Saul the ability to lead effectively. (MBC) But Doeg did this at the command of King Saul.

So, does this psalm describe Saul the King or Doeg the shepherd?

Superscription: *For the choir director. A Maskil of David. When Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul and said to him, "David has come to the house of Ahimelech."* (cf. 1 Sam. 22:6-23, esp. v. 9)

1) We need to recognize the reality of evil—52:1-3

- a) Challenging his self-satisfaction: ¹ *Why do you boast (praise) in **evil** [ra'ah], O mighty man [gibbor]?
 - i) Remember, we praise what we trust.*
- b) Correcting with sound theology: *The lovingkindness [hesed] of God endures all day long.*
- c) Exposing his character—52:2-3
 - i) His sinful speech:
 - (1) ² *Your tongue devises **destruction** [hawwah], like a sharp razor, O worker of **deceit** [remiyyah] (a con-man).*
 - (2) This reinforces what we learned in James 3.
 - ii) His sinful affections:
 - (1) ³ *You **love evil** [ra] more than good,*
 - (2) (You **love**) **falsehood** [sheqer] more than speaking what is right [tsedeq].
- d) *Selah.*

2) We need to recognize the reality of God's eternal judgment—52:4-7

- a) Restating the sinful affections—52:4
 - i) ⁴ *You **love** all words that **devour**, **deceitful** [mirmah] tongue.*
- b) State what God will do—52:5
 - i) Demolition in general: ⁵ *But God will break you down forever;*
 - ii) Demolition in specifics: *He will ...
 - (1) *snatch you up*
 - (2) *and tear you away from your tent*, (lit. a tent)
 - (a) Does this refer to the tabernacle or a personal tent?*

(3) *and uproot you from the land of the living.*
iii) *Selah.*

- c) State why will God do what He will do—52:6-7
- i) Observation and two-fold response: ⁶ *So that the righteous will **see** and **fear**/be in awe (cf. Ps. 40:3), and will **laugh** at him, saying, ⁷ “Behold, the man [*gibbor*, v. 1] who would not set God as his strength, but trusted [*batuach*] in the abundance of his riches and was strong in his destruction (his destructive plans).”*
 - (1) This is not self-centered happiness at the failure of others (Prov. 24:17-18), but rather Godward rejoicing that God’s purpose is being accomplished.
 - (2) The danger of trusting in our wealth (Prov. 11:28)

3) We need to recognize the reality of God’s eternal reward of believers—52:8-9

- a) Longevity and prosperity contrasted with demolition: ⁸ *But as for me, I **am like a green olive tree** in the house of God (the tabernacle);*
- b) Objects of faith contrasted: *I trust [*batuach*] in the lovingkindness [*hesed*] of God forever and ever.*
 - i) Not in the abundance of my riches like some people; v. 7
- c) Public gratitude intended: ⁹ *I will give You thanks [*yadah*] forever, because You have done it,*
 - i) This is done openly where failure, if God were to fail him, would be obvious to everyone. (Derek Kidner)
- d) Communal confident anticipation: *and I will hope [*qawah*] on Your name/reputation and character, for it (God’s name) is good, in the presence of Your holy ones [*hasid*].*
 - i) Ps. 119:68

4) Things to remember:

- a) False accusations, deceit, and destructive activities all characterize the world of unbelief. And the people of God who are trying to live faithfully are often the target of such animosity. (Allen Ross)
- b) People may boast of the sin they have done, but I need to boast in what God has done.