

The Deceitful Tongue

Psalm 52

Historical Context: 1 Samuel 21:7; 22:6-23

Inscription: To the chief Musician, Maschil, A Psalm of David, when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, and said unto him, David is come to the house of Ahimelech.

Poetical Structure: Synonymous Parallelism and Antithetical Parallelism

Poetical layout

- 1) Why boastest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man?
The goodness of God endureth continually.
- 2) Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs;
Like a sharp razor, working deceitfully.
- 3) Thou lovest evil more than good;
And lying rather than to speak righteousness.
Selah.
- 4) Thou lovest all devouring words,
O thou deceitful tongue.
- 5) God shall likewise destroy thee for ever,
He shall take thee away,
and pluck thee out of thy dwelling place,
And root thee out of the land of the living.
Selah.

- 6) The righteous also shall see, and fear,
And shall laugh at him:
- 7) Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength;
But trusted in the abundance of his riches,
And strengthened himself in his wickedness.
- 8) But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God:
I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever.
- 9) I will praise thee for ever,
because thou hast done it:
And I will wait on thy name;
for it is good before thy saints.

Outline

- I. Doeg's despicable sin (v.1-5)
 - A. David's denouncement of Doeg (v. 1-4)
 1. His parading pride (v. 1)
 2. His poisoned tongue (v. 2-4)
 - B. Doeg's predictable demise (v. 5)
- II. David's demeaning scorn (v. 6-8)
 - A. His scorn was initiated by what he saw (v. 6)
 - B. His scorn was expressed by what he said (v. 7)
 - C. His scorn was established by where he stood (v. 8)
- III. David's declarative song (v. 9)
 - A. His song of praise (v. 9a)
 - B. His song of patience (v. 9b)

Definitions

Boastest - a self-confident boasting about one's self. (It comes from the same root word as Hallelujah and praise)

Deviseth - to think, account, plan, devise

Mischief - destruction, ruin

Destroy - to beat down

Praise (v. 9) - to confess

Wait - to await, to hope

Meditation Guide

1. How do you interpret the psalmist's description of the wicked person's behavior in Psalm 52?
2. What does this psalm teach us about the consequences of deceit and evil actions?
3. In what ways do you see the psalmist contrasting the wicked with the righteous?
4. How does Psalm 52 challenge our understanding of power and success in the world?
5. How can we apply the message of Psalm 52 to our lives today, particularly in relation to integrity and trustworthiness?
6. Reflecting on the psalmist's plea for God's justice, how do you reconcile the concept of divine justice with the injustices we often see in the world?
7. What insights can we gain from Psalm 52 about the importance of using our words wisely and truthfully?
8. How does the imagery used in the psalm, such as the "green olive tree in the house of God," deepen our understanding of God's faithfulness and provision?
9. How does Psalm 52 encourage us to find refuge and hope in God, even in the face of opposition and wickedness?
10. Can you relate any personal experiences or situations to the themes and ideas presented in Psalm 52?