

Psalms 101:0 ¶ A Psalm of David.

This psalm is specifically identified as being a composition of David, the shepherd king.

Psalms 101:1 ¶ I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O LORD, will I sing.

“mercy” = kindness; by implication (towards God)...beauty, favor, pity
“judgment” = judging according to divine law

As shown by so many psalms, the David’s music centered around his thoughts of God—as the Creator and Sovereign of the universe, as the God of Israel, and as His personal Lord and Savior. His songs were basically a result of his prayers put to music.

My first thought was that this verse was an expression of singing about God’s goodness and righteous faithfulness toward His people. After looking at Strong’s, I think he could be focused on the actions of God’s people as they evidence their love for God through acts of kindness and righteous judgment. I think this possibility is supported by the fact that the rest of the psalm is addressing the actions of men—both good and bad. In fact, it would seem to be a declaration from David to rule with “mercy and judgment.”

Psalms 101:2 I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.

This verse is an expression of David’s commitment to behave with intelligence and wisdom and in sincerity with integrity. The question in the middle of the verse indicates that David is experiencing a time of testing in which He is waiting for God to act on his behalf. I got the idea that he is trying to encourage God to act by promising to live before Him with a “perfect heart.” The Hebrew for “perfect” makes reference to moral innocence and integrity. He understands that it is who we are in private that best testifies to who we really are.

I decided to see what Webster had to say about integrity: “The state or quality of being entire or complete....Moral soundness; honesty; freedom from corrupting influence or motive....purity.” As Jesus so carefully explained in His teaching on the Beatitudes (Matthew 5-7), God is looking at our actions as the outworking of our motives. David is declaring his intent to live righteously and without deceit before God in his home (and before the people of Israel I believe is implied). We all know that to maintain our righteousness at home is the hardest. Family is the first to be able to spot insincerity and /or deceitfulness in our actions.

Psalms 101:3 I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; *it shall not cleave to me.*

I think scripture very strongly warns us that temptation often comes to us through our eyes. It certainly played a part in Eve falling for Satan’s lies.

Genesis 3:6 "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat...."

Proverbs 27:20 "Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied."

1 John 2:16 "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

David is committed to avoiding temptation by controlling what he chooses to put before his eyes. This is called being proactive in guarding his heart. I have made a similar commitment in later years that I sure wish I had made when I was young. It is so hard in today's culture to keep that commitment. Our entertainment industry is crafted around appealing the lust of the eyes and the flesh. Even if you are discerning about what you watch on television, you still have to deal with the commercials that utilize the same tactic of appealing to the lust of the eyes and the flesh.

David was motivated by a sincere hatred of the wickedness of those that choose to turn aside from God's commands (and embrace what is wicked is the implication). He is determined not to let such wickedness become a part of his life. He wants his life to be above reproach.

It is important to note that David is declaring hatred for the sin, but not for the sinner. That is in accordance with the heart of God.

Psalms 101:4 A froward heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked person.

A "froward heart" is a reference to being "distorted...false...perverse." It is evidenced by deliberate choices to embrace what is evil with a stubborn heart and rebellious spirit. David is determined that this will never be a description of him. He is determined not to have intimate fellowship with those who have such hearts.

Psalms 101:5 Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer.

David is determined not to tolerate those who would secretly slander his neighbor. Only cowards and/or those with immoral motives would make such accusations. Isn't it interesting that he connects those who slander with those who are proud and arrogant? He is determined not to tolerate such people in his administration.

Psalms 101:6 Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me.

David desires that his kingdom be enjoyed by those who are faithful to God and whose hearts are morally pure, honest and without deceit. He expects those who serve to do so with sincerity and integrity (as discussed in verse 2 above).

I was reminded of the words of Paul in his letter to the Corinthians.

2 Corinthians 6:14 "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"

David embraced this principle.

Psalms 101:7 He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.

Psalms 101:8 I will early destroy all the wicked of the land; that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the LORD.

David is determined that the wicked and deceitful not be allowed to serve in the palace; those who are liars will not be tolerated. His determination is to rid Israel of those who have rejected serving God and chosen to live in sin and rebellion against Him. He wants Jerusalem to be a city of only the faithful and obedient who accept God as LORD. I think this is basically a statement of committing to dispense righteous judgment as king.

Though David would prove to fall short in light of these commitments, he always responded with a heart of repentance and renewed obedience while maintaining his faith in his LORD. He was privileged to be identified in scripture as a "man after God's own heart."

Acts 13:22 "And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will."

As I looked back over this psalm, I thought how wonderful it would be if our government in America operated with these guidelines.

- To act with wisdom and integrity
- To hate what is evil and wicked according to God's word
- To limit service to those of moral character according to God's word
- To be intolerant of slander
- To disqualify for service those who lie or are deceitful
- To judge with righteous judgment according to the principles of God's word

I am convinced this will never be the norm until the Lord returns to establish His kingdom.