

Psa. 11:0 To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

The chief Musician would be the music director at the Temple. David is submitting a new worship song to be used by the temple musicians.

Psa. 11:1 In the LORD put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?

The Hebrew for the word *trust* is referencing YHWH as one to whom David “flees for protection.” Evidently, the Psalmist is responding to one of his advisors who is recommending that David flee to the mountains for safety. We aren’t told the specific time in David’s life that brought about the writing of this Psalm, but it must have been a time when he was in danger. In David’s mind, he needs no other protection than that which YHWH provides. It is a powerful statement of faith.

Psa. 11:2 For, lo, the wicked bend *their* bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may privily shoot at the upright in heart.

“wicked” = morally wrong, bad person

“privily” = dusk, darkness, obscurity

In this verse David is making a statement about cowardly wicked men who make sneak attacks upon innocent, upright men. (This sure brings to mind the way the terrorists of today act.) David was not a perfect man by any means, but he was secure in his relationship to the Lord. He knew that he was an upright man in heart; his desire was to do the things pleasing to the Lord. Scripture affirms that his assessment was valid.

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.

Psa. 11:3 If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?

“foundations” = a basis, political or moral support, purpose

David knew that if he could not live his life according to the faith in God (He who is morally right) that he claimed as his support and purpose for living, then he was living a lie. If God is not the refuge and protection of the man of faith, that man is on his own against the attacks of wicked men.

Psa. 11:4 The LORD *is* in his holy temple, the LORD’S throne *is* in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.

“try” = test, investigate, examine, prove

David is confident that YHWH is on His throne in the temple in heaven. (Note: This tells me that he understood the truth that was depicted in the design of the tabernacle/temple.) This is another statement of the righteousness, power and authority of YHWH; the “holy temple” speaks of His holy and righteous character, while the throne speaks of His power and authority. God is aware of the actions of mankind. God’s testing speaks more to me of His dealings with men of faith rather than the wicked. God is the One in authority. He doesn’t

cause wicked men to act wickedly, but it is only by His permission that their wickedness can be directed against the man of faith. Is this proving something to God about that man of faith? No; He knows all about us—even the thoughts and intents of our heart. It is an opportunity for that man/woman to grow in their faith as they trust God to bring about His purpose through that time of testing.

1Chr. 28:9 ...for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts...

Psa. 11:5 The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.

This verse seems to affirm the conclusion I made in the previous verse. By the wording, it would seem that when the Lord tests a man, it is equated with His love for that person. Why would that be? Because He is working to produce growth in our faith in Him, which in turn will result in our living better lives in obedience to Him. Just like any good parent, God desires His children to be the best that they can be and for them to store up “treasures in heaven (Matthew 6:20).” The fact that testing is ascribed to the Lord, indicates that He is in control of the type, duration and intensity of the testing allowed. He knows what His child can endure and just how much is needed to accomplish His purpose(s) for that testing.

When we consider the subject of God’s testing of men, I think we usually think about it in the terms of the individual who is placed in the crucible. What I have learned through the years is that God’s testing of an individual is most often also a test for many others who are connected to that individual. For example, Job’s companions learned from the trials of Job’s testing just as surely as he did—they didn’t know as much as they thought they did. Joseph’s brothers learned a very important spiritual truth because Joseph was tested--God is always in control.

Job 42:7 And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: **for ye have not spoken of me *the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath.***

Job 42:8 Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you *after your folly*, in that ye have not spoken of me *the thing which is right*, like my servant Job.

Gen. 45:4 And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, *I am* Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.

Gen. 45:5 Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: **for God did send me before you to preserve life.**

Scripture is very clear about the things that God hates.

Prov. 6:16 These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him:

Prov. 6:17 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

Prov. 6:18 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,

Prov. 6:19 A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

Note that this list includes more than overt actions; it includes the attitudes and intents of the heart.

Psa. 11:6 Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: *this shall be the portion of their cup.*

“tempest” = wind; by resemblance breath, i.e. a sensible (or even violent) exhalation; figuratively, anger...

“cup” = a lot (as if a potion); (Webster) potion = a poisonous draught

The terms “fire and brimstone” make me think of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and of the lake of fire.

Gen. 19:24 Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven...

Rev. 20:10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet *are*, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Rev. 21:8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

The “horrible tempest” seems to be a reference to God’s anger. The “portion of their cup” seems to be a reference to a lethal dose of God’s anger.

Psa. 11:7 For the righteous LORD loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright.

“behold” = contemplate with pleasure

Just as scripture is clear about what God hates; it is clear about what He loves.

Psa. 37:28 For the LORD loveth judgment...

Psa. 87:2 The LORD loveth the gates of Zion...

2Cor. 9:7 ... for God loveth a cheerful giver.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son...

John 5:20 For the Father loveth the Son...

John 16:27 For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.

Heb. 12:6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth...

Righteousness includes everything that is right, morally virtuous, pure and holy. Although God hates the wicked (involves willful action and/or thinking), He loves the sinner (the condition of all men before God); in fact, He loves the sinner so much that He sent His Son Jesus as the Redeemer. He loves His Son Jesus and everyone who loves His Son (which again points back to the righteous). He loves those He chastens; if He didn’t care, He wouldn’t bother.

When God looks down upon the upright (the righteous), He is pleased. He may not be pleased with some of our actions, but He is pleased with our desire to serve Him and obey Him. He is pleased with a repentant and broken spirit when we fail. He is pleased with our desire to share His truth with others. He is pleased when we exhibit faith in His love and His word--not doubt. He is pleased when we show love to others—especially our enemies.