

Psalms 58:0 ¶ To the chief Musician, Altaschith, Michtam of David.

This is another psalm of David that he gave to the chief Musician for use at the tabernacle. After looking at the Hebrew, I believe the CJB gave the best explanation for “Altaschith,” that it was to be sung to the tune of “Do Not Destroy.” “Michtam” makes reference to a poem.

Psalms 58:1 ¶ Do ye indeed speak righteousness, O congregation? do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men?

Psalms 58:2 Yea, in heart ye work wickedness; ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth.

I think the NLT states the psalmist thoughts a bit more clearly: *“Justice—do you rulers know the meaning of the word? Do you judge the people fairly? No, all your dealings are crooked; you hand out violence instead of justice.”*

The Hebrew for “congregation” stated, “silence (i.e. mute justice).” In that regard, the CJB was more on target for the first part of verse 1: *“[Rulers,] does your silence really speak justice?”*

I think that is an important observation. When we are silent in the face of evil, it implies that we support the evil being done. I am reminded of this quote from Edmond Burke: *“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.”*

Psalms 58:3 The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.

Psalms 58:4 Their poison is like the poison of a serpent: they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear;

Psalms 58:5 Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely.

David states an important truth—We are born with a sin nature. Every parent knows that you don’t have to teach children to do what is wrong; they do that naturally. You have to teach them to do what is right. Wicked men have made a conscious choice to continue in sin rather than do what is right before God. Their anger is as effective as the venom of a poisonous snake. They are like snakes that ignore the music of even the most skillful snake charmers. They are intent upon pleasing self and inflicting harm to accomplish their own selfish purposes.

Psalms 58:6 ¶ Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth: break out the great teeth of the young lions, O Lord.

Psalms 58:7 Let them melt away as waters which run continually: when he bendeth his bow to shoot his arrows, let them be as cut in pieces.

Psalms 58:8 As a snail which melteth, let every one of them pass away: like the untimely birth of a woman, that they may not see the sun.

David the warrior calls for God to break the teeth of these wicked men and render them harmless. He calls for God to make them disappear like ice melting into water, to make their weapons ineffective.

David continues to make the point that he wants God to destroy these wicked men. He wants them to die like a snail that melts away in the heat or salt. He wants God to cause them to die, like a child that was miscarried and never saw the light of day.

Sober observation from Spurgeon: "Every unregenerate man is an abortion. He misses the true form of God made manhood; he corrupts in the darkness of sin; he never sees or shall see the light of God in purity, in heaven."

Psalms 58:9 Before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living, and in his wrath.

David is confident that the LORD is going to destroy the wicked quicker than it takes a pot to begin feeling heat from the thorns feeding the fire, as quick as a tornado destroys anything in its path. He expects God to judge them all in His wrath.

David was a warrior king that lived under the law that called for an eye for an eye and life for life. That is so different from how Jesus taught. He came to institute a new covenant, a covenant of grace. He taught us to love our enemies and do good to those that despitefully use us.

Matthew 5:44-45 "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

Luke 6:27-28 "But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you."

Luke 6:35 "But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil."

I think because of the grace and mercy that David experienced personally from the LORD, he did teach his son a bit on the subject as recorded in Proverbs.

Proverbs 25:21-22 "If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee."

Psalms 58:10 The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.

Psalms 58:11 So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.

I think the CJB is bit clearer: "*The righteous will rejoice to see vengeance done, they will wash their feet in the blood of the wicked; and people will say, 'Yes, the righteous are rewarded; there is, after all, a God who judges the earth.'*"

I have to admit that for so much of my life this thought would fit in with my way of thinking completely. I can't say that I look forward to God's vengeance against those that I care about that have rejected Him to this point. I so want to see them turn to the LORD in saving faith. I know that there are rewards for the righteous, and I know that God is a righteous judge. I am able at this point to more fully understand what an eternity in hell means, and I hate to think of such an eternity for anyone. I'm sure such merciful thoughts would be tested to the fullest if someone harmed any of my loved ones. The important truth is that I know that Jesus is Sovereign in righteousness and love. Though I may question things that happen in this lifetime from my limited perspective, I am sure that I will never question anything He does when I am living in His presence. These verses in Revelation affirm that truth.

Revelation 6:9–11 “And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.”

Revelation 19:1–3 “And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.”