

Adam Clarke:

Introduction

David continues instant in prayers Psalm 5:1, Psalm 5:2; makes early application to God, Psalm 5:3; and shows the hatred which God bears to the workers of iniquity, Psalm 5:4-6. His determination to worship God, and to implore direction and support, Psalm 5:7, Psalm 5:8. He points out the wickedness of his enemies, Psalm 5:9, and the destruction they may expect, Psalm 5:10; and then shows the happiness of those who trust in the Lord, Psalm 5:11, Psalm 5:12.

This Psalm is inscribed to the chief Musician upon Nehiloth, A Psalm of David. As neginoth may signify all kinds of instruments struck with a plectrum, stringed instruments, those like the drum, cymbals, etc.; so nechiloth, from χ — $\chi\alpha$ (chal), to be hollow, to bore through, may signify any kind of wind instruments, such as the horn, trumpet, flute, etc. See on Psalm 4:1-8 (note). The Septuagint have, $\hat{\iota}\hat{\nu}\hat{\iota}$, $\hat{\iota}$, $\hat{\iota}\hat{\iota}$ $\hat{\iota}$, $\hat{\iota}\hat{\mu}\hat{\iota}$ $\hat{\iota}\hat{\iota}$, $\acute{\alpha}\frac{1}{2}\hat{\iota}\hat{\iota}\hat{\mu}\hat{\iota}$ $\hat{\iota}$, $\hat{\iota}$, $\hat{\iota}$, $\hat{\iota}\hat{\iota}$ $\hat{\iota}$ $\hat{\iota}\hat{\iota}$ $\hat{\iota}\frac{1}{2}\hat{\iota}\hat{\iota}$ $\hat{\iota}\hat{\iota}$... $\hat{\iota}\hat{\iota}$, , $\hat{\alpha}\hat{\epsilon}\hat{\alpha}$ In favor of her who obtains the inheritance. $\hat{\alpha}\hat{\epsilon}$ The Vulgate and Arabic have a similar reading. The word χ χ — $\chi\text{TM}\chi\alpha\chi\text{TM}\chi\alpha$ (nechiloth) they have derived from χ χ — $\chi\alpha$ (nachal), to inherit. This may either refer to the Israelites who obtained the inheritance of the promised land, or to the Church of Christ which obtains through him, by faith and prayer, the inheritance among the saints in light. This Psalm is, especially, for the whole Church of God.

Verse 1

Give ear to my words - This is properly a morning hymn, as the preceding was an evening hymn. We have seen from the conclusion of the last Psalm that David was very happy, and lay down and slept in the peace and love of his God. When he opens his eyes on the following morning, he not only remembers but feels the happiness of which he spoke; and with his first recollections he meditates on the goodness and mercy of God, and the glorious state of salvation into which he had been brought. He calls on God to give ear to his words; probably words of God's promises which he had been pleading.

Verse 2

Hearken unto the voice of my cry - We may easily find the process through which David's mind was now passing:

1. We have seen from the preceding Psalm that he lay down in a very happy frame of mind, and that he had enjoyed profound repose.
2. As soon as he awakes in the morning, his heart, having a right direction, resumes its work.
3. He meditates on God's goodness; and on his own happy state, though pursued by enemies, and only safe as long as God preserved him by an almighty hand and especial providence.
4. This shows him the need he has of the continual protection of the Most High; and therefore he begins to form his meditation and the desires of his heart into words, to which he entreats the Lord to give ear.
5. As he was accustomed to have answers to his prayers, he feels the necessity of being importunate! and therefore lifts up his voice.
6. Seeing the workers of iniquity, liars, and blood-thirsty men strong to accomplish their own purposes in the destruction of the godly, he becomes greatly in earnest, and cries unto the Lord: $\hat{\alpha}\hat{\epsilon}$ Hearken unto the voice of my cry. $\hat{\alpha}\hat{\epsilon}$
7. He knows that, in order to have a right answer, he must have a proper disposition of mind. He feels his subjection to the supreme authority of the Most High, and is ready to do his will and obey his laws; therefore he prays to God as his lying: $\hat{\alpha}\hat{\epsilon}$ Hearken, my King and my God. $\hat{\alpha}\hat{\epsilon}$ I have not only taken thee for my God, to save, defend, and make me happy; but I have taken thee for my King, to govern, direct, and rule over me.
8. Knowing the necessity and success of prayer, he purposes to continue in the spirit and practice of it: $\hat{\alpha}\hat{\epsilon}$ Unto thee will I pray. $\hat{\alpha}\hat{\epsilon}$ R. S. Jarchi gives this a pretty and pious turn: $\hat{\alpha}\hat{\epsilon}$ When I have power to pray, and to ask for the things I need, then, O Lord, give ear to my words; but when I have no power to plead with thee, and fear seizes on my heart, then, O Lord, consider my meditation! $\hat{\alpha}\hat{\epsilon}$

Verse 3

My voice shalt thou hear in the morning - We find from this that he had not prayed in vain. He had received a blessed answer; God had lifted upon him the light of his countenance, and he therefore determines to be an early applicant at the throne of grace: $\hat{\alpha}\hat{\epsilon}$ My voice shalt thou hear in the morning. $\hat{\alpha}\hat{\epsilon}$ He finds it good to begin the day with God; to let Divine things occupy the first place in his waking thoughts; as that which first occupies the mind on awaking is most likely to keep possession of the heart all the day through.

Verse 9

No faithfulness in their mouth - They make professions of friendship; but all is hollow and deceitful: "They flatter with their tongue."

Very wickedness - Their heart is full of all kinds of depravity.

Their throat is an open sepulcher - It is continually gaping for the dead; and sends forth effluvia destructive to the living. I fear that this is too true a picture of the whole human race, totally corrupt within, and abominable without. The heart is the center and spring of this corruption; and the words and actions of men, which proceed from this source, will send out incessant streams of various impurity; and thus they continue till the grace of God changes and purifies the heart.

Verse 10

Destroy thou them, O God - All these apparently imprecatory declarations should be translated in the future tense, to which they belong; and which shows them to be prophetic. Thou Wilt destroy them; thou Wilt cast them out, etc.

Verse 11

Let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice - Such expressions as these should be translated in the same way, declaratively and prophetically: "All those who put their trust in thee Shall rejoice, - Shall ever shout for joy."

Verse 12

For thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous - A righteous soul is a peculiar object of God's affectionate regards; and therefore will be a subject of continual blessing.

With favor - Literally, Like a shield, thy favor will crown him. God loves such; and this love is their defense. In all places, times and circumstances, it will preserve them. "Keep yourselves," says the apostle, "in the love of God." He who abides in this love need not fear the face of any adversary. Thus ended the morning's devotion of this excellent man: a model by which every Christian may frame his own.