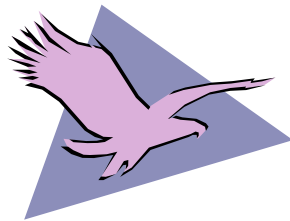


# Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs: The Master Musician's Melodies

Bereans Sunday School  
Placerita Baptist Church  
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by  
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## Psalm 17 — In the Shadow of His Wings

### 1.0 Introducing Psalm 17

#### 1.1 “Prayer of David”

- Identical psalm inscription at Psalm 86.
  - Psalm 142 – “Maskil of David, when he was in the cave. A Prayer.”
  - Psalm 72:20 – “The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.” This verse concludes Book 2 of the Psalms.
  - Psalm 90 – “A Prayer of Moses, the man of God.”
  - Psalm 102 – “A Prayer of the Afflicted when he is faint and pours out his complaint before the LORD.”

#### 1.2 Common Themes in Psalms 15-18

- Immovable or unshaken believers confident in the Lord.
  - 15:5; 16:8; 17:5; 18:36 (different Hebrew wording)
- The presence of God.
  - 15:1; 16:11; 17:15
- Refuge in God.
  - 16:1; 17:7; 18:2

## 2.0 Reading Psalm 17

17:1 A Prayer of David.

Hear a **just** cause, O LORD,  
Give heed to my cry;  
Give ear to my prayer,  
Which is not from deceitful lips.

17:2 Let my judgment come forth from Your presence;  
Let Your eyes look with equity.

17:3 You have **tried** my heart;  
You have **visited** *me* by night;  
You have **tested** me and You find nothing;  
I have purposed that my mouth will not transgress.

17:4 As for the deeds of men, by the word of Your lips  
**I** have kept from the paths of the violent.

17:5 **My steps** have held fast to Your paths.  
My feet have not slipped.

17:6 **I** have called upon You, for You will answer me, O God;  
Incline Your ear to me,  
Hear my speech.

17:7 Wondrously show **Your lovingkindness,**  
**O Savior of those who take refuge at Your right hand**  
From those who rise up *against them*.

17:8 **Keep me as the apple of the eye;**  
**Hide me in the shadow of Your wings**

17:9 From the wicked who despoil me,  
My deadly enemies who surround me.

17:10 They have closed their unfeeling *heart*,  
With their mouth they speak proudly.

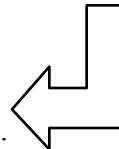
17:11 They have now surrounded us in **our steps;**  
They set their eyes to cast *us* down to the ground.

17:12 He is like a lion that is eager to tear,  
And as a young lion lurking in hiding places.

17:13 **Arise, O LORD,** confront him,  
bring him low;

Deliver my soul from the wicked with Your sword,

17:14 From men with Your hand, O LORD,  
From men of the world,  
whose portion is in *this* life,  
And whose belly You fill with Your treasure;  
They are satisfied with children,



And leave their abundance to their babes.

**17:15** As for me, I shall behold Your face in righteousness.

I will be satisfied with Your likeness when I awake.

For the choir director.

### 3.0 Understanding Psalm 17

#### 3.1 Outline

- I. The Prayer of an Obedient Man (vv. 1-5)
- II. The Petition of an Embattled Man (vv. 6-12)
- III. The Plea of an Emboldened Man (vv. 13-15)



#### 3.2 Notes

- **v. 1** “a just cause”
  - Literally, “the righteousness” or “the right.”
  - Same word occurs in v. 15. The two form an inclusio or envelope figure for the psalm.
- **v. 3** “tried ... visited ... tested”
  - These verbs could be requests: “Try me ...”
  - The first and the last employ the figure of smelting and refining precious metals. See 11:4-5.
  - The middle verb describes a careful examination.
  - The objects of scrutiny are:
    - ✓ The heart (v. 3a)
    - ✓ The mouth (v. 3d)
    - ✓ The paths (v. 4b) = behavior
- **v. 4** “As for the deeds of men”
  - See Proverbs 24:12.
- **v. 4** “by the word of Your lips”
  - See Psalm 119:9, 101-102, 105, 133
- **vv. 4, 5** “paths”
  - In verse 4 the word indicates a path like one left when a military expedition passes through the countryside on a single occasion.
  - In verse 5 the word indicates a path wagon wheels followed repeatedly from journey to journey. It is a safe route, free of highway robbers and with locations where the wagons can be circled for additional protection.



- **v. 8** “apple of the eye ... shadow of Your wings”
  - The first phrase is literally “the little man of the daughter of the eye.” It refers to the pupil of the eye.
  - The second phrase depicts divine protection like that of a large bird protecting its little ones by outspread wings.
    - ✓ See Ruth 2:12; Psalms 36:7; 57:1; 63:7; 91:4; Matthew 23:37.
  - Both metaphors also were used in Deuteronomy 32:10-11.
  - Actually a chiasm in the Hebrew text:

Keep me  
                  as the apple of the eye;  
                  in the shadow of Your wings  
Hide me.
  
- **v. 13** “Arise, O LORD”
  - See Psalms 3:7; 7:6; 9:19; 10:12
  
- **v. 14** “men ... men of the world”
  - This Hebrew word for man is derived from the root “to die.” They are mortals subject to death—so much so that it is as though the psalmist wrote “from dead men.”
  - “World” here is the concept of this life.
  
- **v. 15** “As for me”
  - The psalm concludes with a personal declaration of faith.
  - The use of an emphatic “I” marks out sections in the psalm (vv. 4, 6, 15).
  
- **v. 15** “behold Your face”
  - See the theme of God’s presence in Psalms 11:7; 14:5; 15:1; and 16:11.
  - It is often mentioned within the context of the expression of hope.
  
- **v. 15** “I will be satisfied with Your likeness when I awake”
  - There is a strong contrast between the psalmist and the “dead men” immersed in this life (v. 14) whose greatest satisfaction is their children to whom they might leave their wealth.
    - ✓ See Ecclesiastes 2:18-19, 21; 6:3-4.
    - ✓ See Luke 15:13.
  - The believer, like the psalmist, is focused on the eternal and satisfied more with God and the life to come.
    - ✓ See 1 John 3:2.
  - “Awake” is best taken as a reference to resurrection.
    - ✓ See Isaiah 26:19 and Daniel 12:2.

#### 4.0 Singing Psalm 17

##### Under His Wings

Under His wings I am safely abiding,  
Though the night deepens and the tempests are wild,  
Still I can trust Him; I know He will keep me,  
He has redeemed me, and I am His child.

##### *Refrain*

Under His wings, under His wings,  
Who from His love can sever?  
Under His wings my soul shall abide,  
Safely abide forever.



Under His wings, what a refuge in sorrow!  
How the heart yearningly turns to His rest!  
Often when earth has no balm for my healing,  
There I find comfort, and there I am blessed.

##### *Refrain*

Under His wings, oh, what precious enjoyment!  
There will I hide till life's trials are o'er;  
Sheltered, protected, no evil can harm me,  
Resting in Jesus, I'm safe evermore.

##### *Refrain*

— Words: William Orcutt Cushing (1896)  
Music: Ira David Sankey

##### My Savior First of All

When my life work is ended, and I cross the swelling tide,  
When the bright and glorious morning I shall see;  
I shall know my Redeemer when I reach the other side,  
And His smile will be the first to welcome me.

##### *Refrain*

I shall know Him, I shall know Him,  
And redeemed by His side I shall stand,  
I shall know Him, I shall know Him,  
By the print of the nails in His hand.

Oh, the soul thrilling rapture when I view His blessed face,  
And the luster of His kindly beaming eye;  
How my full heart will praise Him for the mercy, love and grace,  
That prepare for me a mansion in the sky.

##### *Refrain*

Oh, the dear ones in glory, how they beckon me to come,  
And our parting at the river I recall;  
To the sweet vales of Eden they will sing my welcome home;  
But I long to meet my Savior first of all.

*Refrain*

Through the gates to the city in a robe of spotless white,  
He will lead me where no tears will ever fall;  
In the glad song of ages I shall mingle with delight;  
But I long to meet my Savior first of all.

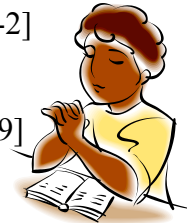


*Refrain*

— Words: Frances Jane (Fanny) Crosby (1894)  
Music: John Robson Sweney (1894)

**5.0 Praying Psalm 17**

- Hear me, Lord. My cause is just and I have been faithful. [vv. 1-2]
- Examine my heart, Lord. [v. 3]
- O God, keep me, hide me, preserve me from the wicked. [vv. 8-9]
- Lord, confront evildoers and bring them low. [v. 13]
- Satisfy me with Your presence and the hope of resurrection. [v. 15]



**6.0 Applying Psalm 17**

- The Lord is the Preserver of His people.
- The righteous man has nothing to fear from the Lord.
- True believers are focused on the eternal.

Psalm 17 “is a model prayer. It is urgent, perceptive, moving. But, most of all, it models prayer by the way the psalmist uses arguments to make his appeal to God. He does not merely ask for what he wants or needs. He argues his case, explaining to God why God should answer.”

— James Montgomery Boice, *Psalms*, 3 vols.  
(Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1994), 1:138