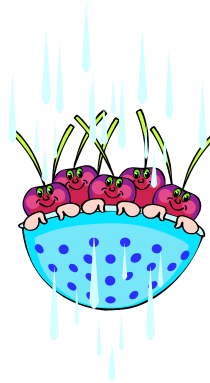


Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs: The Master Musician's Melodies

Bereans Sunday School
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Psalm 28 — The Sound of Silence?

1.0 Introducing Psalm 28

- Psalms 23–28 are set off by the references in 23:1 and 28:9 to the divine Shepherd. Note that in Psalm 23:1 the LORD is “my Shepherd” while in 28:9 He is “their shepherd.” In the same way, the LORD is “my strength” (28:7) and then “their strength” (28:8).
- Psalms 27 and 28 have a number of ties:
 - ◆ “Rock”: 28:1 and 27:5.
 - ◆ “Do not be deaf to me” (28:1) = “Do not hide Your face from me” (27:9).
 - ◆ “Holy sanctuary”: 28:2 and 27:4-5.
 - ◆ “Help”: 28:3 and 27:9.
 - ◆ “My song”: 28:7 and 27:6.
 - ◆ “Salvation”: 28:8, 9 and 27:1, 9.
- Themes of Psalm 28 include:
 - ◆ We ought to persist in prayer even when the Lord remains “silent.”
 - ◆ We are not called to escape suffering.
 - ◆ God will judge us (and all mankind) for the works that we perform.
- How does the “bowl” of cherries illustrate Psalm 28?
- How does Psalm 28 impact my life
 - ◆ in the home?
 - ◆ in the workplace?
 - ◆ in the church?

2.0 Reading Psalm 28 (NAU)

28:1 *A Psalm* of David.

To You, O LORD, I call;
My rock, do not be deaf to me,
For if You are silent to me,
I will become like those who go down to the pit.

28:2 **Hear the voice of my supplications** when I cry to You for help,
When I lift up my hands toward Your holy sanctuary.

28:3 Do not drag me away with the wicked
And with those who work iniquity,
Who speak peace with their neighbors,
While evil is in their hearts.

28:4 Requite them according to their work
and according to the evil of their practices;
Requite them according to the deeds of their hands;
Repay them their recompense.

28:5 Because they do not regard the works of the LORD
Nor the deeds of His hands,
He will tear them down and not build them up.

28:6 **Blessed** be the LORD,
Because He has **heard the voice of my supplication**.

28:7 **The LORD is my strength** and my shield;
My heart trusts in Him, and I am helped;
Therefore my heart exults,
And with my song I shall thank Him.

28:8 **The LORD is their strength**,
And He is a saving defense to His anointed.

28:9 Save Your people and **ble**ss Your inheritance;
Be **their shepherd** also, and carry them forever.

3.0 Understanding Psalm 28

3.1 Outline

- I. Supplication (vv. 1-5)
- II. Thanksgiving (vv. 6-9)



3.2 Notes

- vv. 1-2 Emphasis through repetition.
 - Repetition of words related to prayer creates a focus on that concept.
 - Verse 1: “I call” and “do not be deaf” = “answer me”

➤ Verse 2: “Hear,” “the voice of my supplications,” “when I cry to You,” and “When I lift up my hands”

➤ **How does this emphasis affect you in a family setting?**

■ Cf. vv. 3-5 with the emphasis on words for **work**.

➤ Verse 3: “work”

➤ Verse 4: “work,” “practices,” and “deeds”

➤ Verse 5: “works” and “deeds”

➤ **How does this emphasis affect you in a life setting?**

■ Cf. vv. 7-8 with the emphasis on **strength** through alliterated terms:

➤ “my strength” = **‘uzzî** (v. 7)

➤ “helped” = **wēne‘ēzārî** (v. 7)

➤ “exults” = **wayya‘ālōz** (v. 7)

➤ “strength” = **‘ōz** (v. 8)

➤ “defense” = **ûmā‘ôz** (v. 8)

➤ **How does this emphasis affect your marriage relationship?**



Named for its inventor, Uziel Gal, the Israeli Uzi means “my strength.”

● **v. 1** “I will become like those who go down to the pit”

■ “What David seems to be saying is not that he will be killed or die but that spiritually speaking he will be as good as dead unless God speaks to him. If God refuses to answer his prayers, how will David differ from the dying godless who have no relationship with God whatever?” — James Montgomery Boice, *Psalms*, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1994), 1:247.

● **v. 2** “When I lift up my hands toward Your holy sanctuary”

■ Lifting the hands is an ancient as well as a natural attitude in prayer.

➤ Associated with praise: Psalms 63:4; 134:2.

➤ Associated with supplication: Lamentations 2:19; 3:41.

■ The direction of the uplifted hands is toward an earthly sanctuary.

➤ The innermost sanctuary or Holy of Holies is here called by a specialized name (*debir*) found only here in the Psalms and elsewhere only in Kings and Chronicles.

➤ Directional prayer most often associated with the Temple: 1 Kings 8:29, 38; Daniel 6:10 (“toward Jerusalem”).

■ **Should we lift up our hands in prayer today in worship?**

● **vv. 3-5** Prayer for judgment on the wicked.

■ Praying in this fashion is not being self-righteous. Such prayers are from those who understand that he or she is able to act like the wicked apart from God’s grace.

■ We must keep in mind that David was the anointed king of Israel. He himself was the national judge, not a private citizen.



- Evil is not good and it ought to be punished. This is God’s own revealed will.
- **How does Ecclesiastes 8:11 relate to David’s prayer and our concerns?**
- The angels (see Ephesians 3:10; 1 Timothy 5:21; 1 Peter 1:12) and mankind are watching to see what God does with regard to the wicked. That which is right must be vindicated.
- v. 4 Chiasm (Mirror Structure)
 - Wilson treats this chiasm as “an inner parenthetical expression that makes the evil character of the work explicit and the anticipated judgment clear.” — Gerald H. Wilson, *Psalms Volume I*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2002), 495.
 - A Requite them
 - B according to their work
 - C and according to the evil of their practices;
 - B’ according to the deeds of their hands;
 - A’ Requite them
- v. 6 “He has heard the voice of my supplication”
 - Reveals that God responded to the prayer of David described in v. 2.
 - The repetition helps to mark off the two major sections of the psalm (vv. 1-5 and vv. 6-9) near the beginning of each section.
 - The division is also confirmed by the repetition of “blessed”/”bless” bracketing vv. 6-9.
- v. 8 “their”
 - Should this be altered to “His people”?
 - The Greek Septuagint translated it as “His people.”
 - An aural copying error is possible since “their” (*lāmô*) and “His people” (*lē’ammô*) are very similar in sound.
 - Altering the text does not alter the meaning. The Septuagint translators may have been clarifying the meaning rather than representing a different text. There is no need to change the text.
- v. 8 “His anointed”
 - King David or the Messiah? See v. 9.
 - Wilson (497-98) accepts a postexilic date for the psalm rather than holding to Davidic authorship. Therefore, he opts for the messianic interpretation since there would not have been any Israelite king on the throne in Jerusalem in that period of time.
- v. 9 “Your inheritance”
 - See Deuteronomy 4:20 and 1 Kings 8:51.



- See Psalm 94:14.
- v. 9 “carry them forever”
 - The timeframe (“forever”) eliminates a mere human king (see v. 8).
 - See Isaiah 40:11; 46:3-4; 63:9.
 - Compare how idolaters carry their gods instead of their gods carrying them (Isaiah 45:20; 46:1, 7; Jeremiah 10:5)!
 - **How does this truth help you and your family?**

4.0 Singing Psalm 28

1 To thee I'll cry, O Lord, my rock;
hold not thy peace to me;
Lest like those that to pit descend
I by thy silence be.

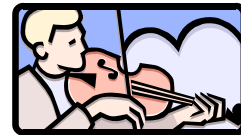
Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee

2 The voice hear of my humble pray'rs,
when unto thee I cry;
When to thine holy oracle
I lift mine hands on high.

3 With ill men draw me not away
that work iniquity;
That speak peace to their friends, while in
their hearts doth mischief lie.

Amazing Grace

4 Give them according to their deeds
and ill's endeavorèd:
And as their handy-works deserve,
to them be renderèd.



5 God shall not build, but them destroy,
who would not understand
The Lord's own works, nor did regard
the doing of his hand.

6 For ever bless-ed be the Lord,
for graciously he heard
The voice of my petitions,
and prayers did regard.

O, for a Thousand Tongues

7 The Lord's my strength and shield; my heart
upon him did rely;
And I am helpèd: hence my heart
doth joy exceedingly,

And with my song I will him praise.
8 My strength is God alone:
He also is the saving strength
of his anointed one.

9 O thine own people do thou save,
bless thine inheritance;
Them also do thou feed, and them
for evermore advance.

— Scottish Psalter

O Lord, to Thee I Cry

1 O Lord, to Thee I cry;
Thou art my Rock and Trust;
O be not silent, lest I die
And slumber in the dust.

2 O hear me when in prayer
Thy favor I entreat;
Hear, while I lift imploring hands
Before Thy mercy seat.

3 O draw me not away
With those of evil will;
With them who speak of peace indeed,
But still are plotting ill.

4 Requite them for their wrong,
Their evil deeds, O Lord;
O give them then their just desert,
And to their deeds reward.

5 Thy deeds they disregard,
Thy handiwork despise;
And therefore Thou wilt cast them down
And never let them rise.

6 But blessèd be the Lord
Who hearkens when I cry;
The Lord, my Strength, my Help, my
Shield,
On Him will I rely.

7 His help makes glad my heart,
And songs of praise I sing;
Jehovah is His people's Strength,
The Stronghold of their king.

8 Bless Thine inheritance,
Our Savior be, I pray;
Supply Thou all Thy people's need,
And be their constant Stay.

5.0 Praying Psalm 28

- O God, hear my prayer (vv. 1-2).
- Lord, don't treat me like the unbeliever and evil doer (v. 3).
- Bring Your justice into this world (vv. 4-5).
- I praise You, Father, for answered prayer (v. 6).
- I trust You and I sing my thanksgiving to You (v. 7).
- Bless Your people, O Lord (v. 8).

