

Psalm 17, A Devotional Exposition

“A Prayer of David”, a singular and personal prayer of Davis directed to the Lord, with no clear divisions and therefore best studied word by word, line by line, in the context of the whole.

1. 17:1
 - a. “Hear a just cause”, that prayer which accords with God’s justice, and by extension His other attributes as well.
 - b. If it not be so, James 4:3 applies. What is the nature of your prayers?
 - c. “Attend to my cry”, if the earthly parent will readily respond to the cry of a child, how much more so will the All-Compassionate God respond to the cries of His children.
2. 17:2
 - a. From whence our vindication comes
 - b. Though our works be as “filthy rags” (Isaiah 64:6), that God may judge as “upright” those things done right with right heart and spirit
3. 17:3
 - a. “You have tested my heart”, a refined heart leads to a refined life (Proverbs 4:23-27), refined as illustrated in 1 Corinthians 3:11-15
 - b. “visited me in the night”, when nobody else is observing, God is, as David well knew (1 Samuel 16:7,12; 2 Samuel 12:9)
 - c. Taming the tongue a mark of Christian maturity (James 3:2)
4. 17:4
 - a. the Word of God known and applied our best defense against sin
 - b. Avoiding sinful situations, Ephesians 5:11
5. 17:5
 - a. God has His paths, Satan has his paths
 - b. It is not God’s path that is slippery, the problem is with our feet!

6. 17:6

- a. Confidence that God hears prayers is learned through personal experience, and not the experiences of others, Try it!

7. 17:7

- a. “Your right hand”, the Almighty hand of power and strength, re: salvation

8. 17:8

- a. “apple of your eye”, “iyshon” in Hebrew meaning “little man” or more commonly translated by common usage as “the daughter of the eye”, referring to the “pupil” of the eye
- b. Used elsewhere of Israel (Deuteronomy 32:10; Zechariah 2:8) and the Law of God (Proverbs 7:2), but here used in the most personal sense
- c. Pupil is carefully guarded by eyelids, eyelashes, and 3 layers within the eye itself, and is therefore an apt metaphor for the guarding of man by God
- d. “shadow of Your wings” also denotes divine protection

9. 17:9-12

- a. Imagery consistent with 1 Peter 5:8 in describing those who act after the manner of Satan’s designs
- b. Verse 11, “surrounded us in our steps”, but not completely, ibid 17:4

10. 17:13

- a. Urgent need for divine help leads to the more urgent plea

11. 17:14

- a. Portion of the godly vs. Portion of the ungodly, consider what these are

12. 17:15

- a. The conclusion, unwavering confidence of the saints in God’s final salvation, in which not only spirit but body fit to be reunited with the spirit in God’s presence (1 Corinthians 15:42-49)