

Introduction

- Start with the lies and misunderstandings that so hurt and make life difficult for us
 - times when we feel battered and opposed
 - examples?
- This is the kind of opposition David was facing, or felt he was facing, in this Psalm
 - unlike Psalm 3 which we looked at before I was on holiday, we don't have a precise, specific historical occasion for this Psalm
 - but the heart of the opposition seems to have been the lies and negative propaganda David mentions in vs.8,9
- And it is in response to these that he pens these words:
 - comes in 5 strophes/chunks: 1-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-10, and 11-12
 - in the first, third and fifth chunks, David is turned full face to God
 - in the second and fourth are focused on denouncing the evil, the opposition David faces, denouncing it to God - kind of "this is what I'm facing, Lord" stuff
- Whole Psalm expresses the same trust that v.2 typifies - "my king and my God"
- Look at each chunk in turn...

The morning watch (v.1-3)

- **Sighing** - the inmost thoughts, the real deep feelings of David's heart
 - which then breaks forth first into a cry for help (v.2) and then into more structured, disciplined, expectant prayer (v.3)
- As David gives expression to his situation, as he turns it into prayer, he is very conscious of his **relationship** with God:
 - look at the repeated use of "my" in v.2
 - and also the fact that, as King, he places himself in submission to "my King" - placing his own rule into its right context
- Then, notice how v.3 speaks of, **first** a context of regular coming to God
 - probably in relation to the **daily sacrifice**, and with it allusions to his sin being atoned for, his approach to God secure because God has made the way clear
 - and **second** his coming is filled with expectancy - the word here is "watch" (translated "wait in expectation") - he comes "watching" for an answer to come from God - God will respond

The champion of right (v.4-6)

- He has come to God - **but what has brought him?** What is his cry for help?
 - starts to become clear...
 - it is a **plea for justice, to a holy judge**
- David comes, conscious of his own innocence in this matter:
 - now he is not claiming for himself perfection
 - the context of v.3, and the allusions to atonement sacrifice, make that clear
 - but, though imperfect, **he is the victim of injustice and evil**
 - and so he appeals to the judge of all the earth
 - in the expectation that **God will deal with evil** - not merely, in a partisan way, help David out - but deal with the wicked
 - because God is a holy God, he **"abhors bloodthirsty and deceitful men"** (v.6)

The pilgrim spirit (v.7-8)

- In the structure of the Psalm, David turns again to God in worship
 - as he came with morning prayers in v.3, now he comes to God to the central place of worship
 - (word Temple is a little odd, since Solomon built temple after David was dead!)

Probably a linguistic remnant of the "Temple" at Shiloh as a place of God's dwelling, or possibly later worshippers changed that one word to suit their own worship and situation?)

- he comes, not because he is good but because of God's mercy (v.7)
- and he comes, asking that he be led in the Lord's righteousness "because of my enemies"
- slightly strange! Thought seems to be that if he is appealing to God for help (v.1), in the context of a relationship with God (v.2), his desire is to be in-step with God...
- *(Do we skip over this turning and turning again to God? Do we plough on straight into our requests for help and never turn again to God?)*

The campaign of lies (v.9-10)

- Here is more detail on the opposition:
 - note the variety of words around speaking - **mouth, throat, tongue...**
 - this is where their evil is found, their lies echoing Satan's deceptions in the Garden of Eden and his later description as the Father of Lies
 - grimly David declares their fate - death, and the separation from God that death signifies
 - they are banished, in the grave, declared guilty
 - notice again that David's interest here is not merely his own self-interest - see the end of v.10, where he declares that they have **rebelled against God**
 - such lies are rebellion against God
 - and **such is the gravity of rebellion against him, turning our backs on God**
- *(Do we have such a concern for God's honour?)*

The sure defence (v.11-12)

- Now, at the end **danger is not forgotten:**
 - note how he still uses defensive words - **protection, shield, refuge**
- But, even though the danger is not forgotten, **he is aware that he is not alone:**
 - the perspective has shifted, **from alone in his troubles to joining with others to worship**
 - this is where trust in **"my God and King"** has brought him
 - to gladness, joy and security

Conclusion

- **Consciousness of God's faithfulness and help when we face such opposition**
 - this is not just a good moan!!
 - you ask for help from someone who can help, in whom you trust!!
- **But also an awareness, by implication, of the power our words have to negatively affect other people**
 - therefore guard our tongues!