

## **Psalms 35 Observations**

Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?

Vs. 1-8: Description of David's enemies and what David wants God to do to his enemies.

Vs 9-10: What David is going to do.

Vs. 11-16: Contrast between how David treats these enemies and how they have treated him.

Vs. 17 Asking God for something

Vs. 18 What David will do

Vs. 19 Asking God for things again

Vs. 20-21 More descriptions (accusations?) of enemies.

Who?

- Author: David
- Opponents of David (who are they?),
  - o those who fight me (David) (vs. 1)
  - o my pursuers (vs. 3)
  - o intend to take my life (David) (vs 4)
  - o plan to harm me (vs 4)
  - o hid their net for me without cause (vs. 7) (what does net mean?) Would it be ok if they had cause?
  - o Dug a pit for me without cause (vs. 7) (What does dug a pit mean?) Would it be ok if they had cause?
  - o Malicious witnesses (David's enemies, or ones hired by them?) come forward questioning David about things he doesn't know. (What types of questions?) (vs 11)
  - o Repay evil for good (vs 12)
  - o Make him desolate (vs 12)
  - o Gathered in glee when David stumbled (rejoice in his misfortune) (15)
  - o Gathered against David (15)
  - o Assailants David did not know tore at him and did not stop (15)
  - o Godless mockery, gnashed their teeth at David (what does that mean?) (vs 16)
  - o Deceitful (vs. 19)
  - o Rejoicing over David/ his misfortune (vs. 19, 24, 26)
  - o Hate David without cause (v. 19)
  - o Do not speak in friendly ways (vs. 20)
  - o Contrive fraudulent schemes (vs 20)
  - o Open their mouths wide against David? (Is this their words? Are they trying to devour him, metaphorically?) (vs 21)
  - o Say, "Aha, aha, we saw it!" (What does that mean?) (vs 21)
  - o Exalting over David (vs 26)
  - o Is there a connection between descriptions of enemies and specific requests?
- Direct Audience: Lord

- What has God done/seen so far?
  - God is aware of the situation
    - He has looked on (vs 17)
    - He has seen what David's opponents have done (vs. 22)
  - Seems asleep (in His response so far?) (vs 23)
  - Takes pleasure in his servant's well being (conditional?) (vs. 27)
- Titles
  - "my God" (vs 23, 24)
  - "my Lord" (vs 23)
- Characteristics
  - Righteous (vs 24, 28)
    - One who vindicates (vs 24)
- Groups of people targeted by these evil people
  - David (main)
  - "those who live peacefully in the land" (vs 20)
- Angel of the Lord (agent of God?) (vs 5-6)
  - Agent of God?
  - Has the capacity to drive David's enemies away and chase them
- Great assembly/ many people (similar to Psalm 26:12?) (vs 18)
- Those who want my vindication (vs. 27)

What?

- What is David asking the Lord to do?
  - To his enemies:
    - Oppose them (vs 1)
    - Fight them (vs)
    - Draw spear and javelin against my pursuers (vs. 3)
    - Let them be disgraced and humiliated (vs 4)
    - Be turned back and ashamed (vs. 4)
    - Let them be like chaff in the wind (what does mean?) (vs 5)
    - Be driven away (vs. 5)
    - Let their way be dark and slippery (what does this mean?) (vs 6)
    - Be pursued (v 6) (see verse 3 description of enemies "pursue")
    - Be ruined unexpectedly (vs 8.) Why unexpectedly? What does that add? Is he afraid that they will be able to prepare?
    - Be ensnared by the net he (David's enemy) cast for David (vs. 8)
    - Fall into it (either net or pit?) to his ruin (vs 8)
    - Not let them rejoice over me/ my misfortune (vs 19, 24, 26)
    - Not let them wink at him maliciously (what does this mean?) (vs. 19)
    - Not let them say "We have swallowed him up" (What does this mean?)(vs. 25)
    - Be disgraced (vs 26)
    - Be humiliated (vs 26)
    - Be clothed with shame and reproach (sackcloth connection?)(vs 26)

- For him (David) and his allies:
  - Come to my aid (vs 2)
  - Assure me “I am your deliverance” (vs 3)
  - Rescue me from their ravages (vs 17)
  - Rescue my precious life from the young lions (David’s enemies?) (Why young lions?) (vs 17)
  - Not be silent (vs. 22)
  - Not be far from David. (vs 22.)
  - Wake up and rise to my defense (vs 23)
  - Defend David’s cause (vs 23)
  - Vindicate David (vs 24)
  - [those who want David’s vindication] to shout for joy (vs 27)
  - [those who want David’s vindication] to be glad (vs 27)
  - Let [those who want his vindication] say “The Lord be exalted. He takes pleasure in his servant’s well being”
- Take your shields – large and small
- What is David asking the Lord?
  - How long will He look on? (vs 17)
- What is David going to do? (“Then”, “So” – Is this a condition? Is it a result?)
  - Rejoice in the Lord (vs. 9)
  - Delight in his (who?, the Lord?) deliverance (vs 9)
  - Will say “Lord, who is like you?...” (vs 10)
  - Praise you (Lord) in the great assembly (vs. 18)
  - Exalt you among many people (vs 18)
  - Proclaim your righteousness (vs 28)
  - Proclaim your praise (vs 28)
- How has David treated his enemies (when they were sick, when they were down/vulnerable) so far. (**contrast to how they are treating him now**)
  - Good (vs 12)
  - Sackcloth (?), fasting, genuine prayer (contrast genuine with malicious witnesses?) (vs. 13)
  - Genuine mourning (14)
  - Genuinely grieved (14)

Where?

- Not a lot of detail.
- David is king of Israel, so maybe there? But David spends some time on the run near Israel.
- Where does this Psalm fit with other Psalms (grouping?)

When?

- Period in which David is being mistreated
  - From Saul?
  - From Absalom, his son?
  - Other?

Why?

- Why are David's enemies against him?
- Why hasn't God intervened yet? Or has he?

Other thoughts:

- Court case setting: David is building a case against these people and asking God to intervene.
- Themes of shallowing/ devouring
- Guilty/ innocent