

## **PSALM 21 – The King shall Joy in Thy Strength! (part 2 of 2)**

**III. Kingly Protection Provided – 21:7-13** — The king as the head of God's people will surely be protected by the LORD. For in him is the spiritual life of the nation. If he is godly, the people will be godly as he will pass laws and enforce justice according to Holy Scriptures. If he is ungodly, he will pass laws that will be idolatrous and destroy the faith of many. The testimony of God's people would either be jeopardised or enhanced based upon the spiritual well being of the king. In this instance, the king was King David, the best king Israel ever had and will ever have. King David ought to be protected by the LORD for the spiritual well being of Israel. The LORD wants to protect His king. But the condition for protection is always the same, regardless of time and culture. It is based upon obedience to God's Word. Verse 7 reveals that the king continued to trust in the LORD despite the trials that he faced. He refused to lean on his own wisdom and strength. He did not listen to man-centred counsels. He trusted in the LORD continuously. Even though he trusted in the LORD, he knew that it was not because of his good deeds or his kingly position that caused the LORD to help him. Using synthetic parallelism, the psalmist emphasized his point. It would always be the mercies of the LORD that he appealed for. He called the LORD the most High, signifying that the LORD is the only all powerful and there is no one higher than Him. The LORD is above all. Because David knew that the mercies of the LORD would come, he would not be moved. He would continue to trust regardless of the external circumstances of life.

**Verse 8** (synthetic parallelism) – “Thine hand” has to refer to the hand of the LORD. The hand is used here to symbolize authority and power. The LORD will find out i.e. detect all His enemies. There is no one who can hide from the omniscient LORD. If the enemies think that they can hide from the LORD, then they are fools. These men who speak and plot in dark secret places away from the eyes of man and who think that they are safe and secure are fools. The only one they should be most afraid of is the LORD and not finite man. They can never escape from Him for He will find all His enemies. Not only will He find them, His right hand shall find, i.e. detect, those who hate Him. Hatred is a condition of the heart. This means that the LORD knows even the hearts of His enemies. They put up façades to deceive man by their hypocrisy and play acting in churches and in leadership. But the LORD knows them all including their heart conditions. Therefore all men must check their hearts and their actions and must never believe that they can ever hide from the LORD. The right hand is also the hand of judgement. He finds out and He will surely punish all His enemies.

**Verse 9** (synthetic parallelism) – How will the LORD deal with such enemies who hate Him and the LORD's people and the LORD's work? The psalmist says that the LORD will make them as a fiery oven in the time of the LORD's anger. This means that in the time of the LORD's anger, these enemies will be burned up as if they have been put inside a fiery oven. The fiery oven was known at that time to burn up anything and everything that was placed inside which will keep on burning and the temperature will rise. The enemies of the LORD will experience such an end. The LORD shall swallow them up in His wrath. The intensity of the LORD's anger is shown here. The first “anger” merely indicates the face of anger whereas the second “anger” (translated here as “wrath”) involves nostrils flaring whereby the anger is clearly observed. The word “swallow” indicates that these enemies will cease to exist, for anything that is swallowed disappears forever. The intensity of the second line in this verse adds the thought of the fire devouring them. Not only will they be swallowed and disappear from the face of the earth, they will also suffer the pains of the fiery furnace and of being totally consumed by the fire. This double emphasis of being swallowed and burned demonstrates the

fierceness of the LORD's anger against such kinds of enemies. To the people of God who continue to do God's work, such verses are very encouraging. They are an encouragement not because they like to see such devastation but they know that the justice of the LORD will ultimately prevail. It is a terrible thing to stand still and be helplessly persecuted, to not retaliate and to be buffeted for Christ's sake. The comforting fact is that if these evil and wicked men do not repent of their sins and turn to Christ through the humble testimony of God's people, then they will soon face the anger and wrath of God and will be thoroughly consumed by it.

**Verse 10** (synonymous parallelism) – To have one's lineage terminated by the LORD was a punishment worse than death! Israel was the nation that the LORD must preserve in order for the LORD's prophecy that the Messiah must be born an Israelite to be fulfilled. Provision in the Law of Moses included the kinsman redeemer law whereby the lineage of the firstborn son continues through the next of kin so that the lineage does not die. But when the LORD Himself cuts a line off in Israel, this means that the sin of the person is very serious in the eyes of God. Some Old Testament examples of the LORD terminating a line included the deaths of Aaron's two older sons who offered strange fire while offering the sacrifices at the inaugural service in the Tabernacle (see Leviticus 9 and 10) and the line of Eli, the high priest of the lineage of Ithamar (Aaron's fourth and youngest son) when he allowed his sons to desecrate the office of the priests and failed to punish them. The psalmist says that the LORD will destroy the fruit of these evil men from the earth. This means that the descendents of these evil men will die with them because they probably will become like them in their sin. To emphasize the certainty of this severe judgement, the LORD used synonymous parallelism. The sins of the father passes on to the son as the son sees and imitates the father. This is a warning to be heeded by all parents. The father's waywardness might not die with him. He brings about the demise of his own descendents when he attacks God and His perfect Word.

**Verse 11** (synthetic parallelism) – Whatever evil they intended to do was not carried out yet because the LORD stopped them. However, the intention was in their heart and the LORD dealt with them so that they could do their damage! They intended evil against the LORD by attacking the LORD's servants and the Word and work of God. The LORD regarded these intended sins as completed sins. That is why they were severely punished for it. They imagined, i.e. fabricated or weaved, a mischievous device, i.e. an evil thing, to hurt the work of the LORD which includes saving souls or building up the faith of the believers. This was no accidental, spur of the moment act. They fabricated it like a person weaving a piece of tapestry. They carefully thought through what they wanted to do before they could make it into a reality. The end result was evil devices. The LORD stopped them and they did not have the ability or power to bring it to pass. Evil men planned and plotted to destroy the Word of God in the time of King David but the LORD destroyed them and their evil work.

**Verse 12** (synthetic parallelism) — The LORD would make them "turn their back", i.e. retreat from their attacks. They would either run, or stop sinning, or face the severe punishment of the LORD when the LORD made ready His arrows upon the strings against the face of these evil men. If these evil men have any sense left in them, they would stop sinning against the LORD and retreat. At least the evil men during King David's time had the sense to retreat and run from the LORD in the face of death! When it is evident that the opponents are stringing their arrows and about to fire, who would be foolish enough to continue running headlong toward these arrows? Is this not what many who attack the Word of God and the testimony of Christ today are doing? Do they not know that they are actually fighting against God when they attack God's Word? To say that the Bible has mistakes is one of the most foolish things to say, especially for believers who claim to have accepted Christ as their Lord

and Saviour. They undermine the very foundation that they believe in for their salvation, which is the perfect Word of God from which the gospel message originates, when they say that the Bible has mistakes. God will not allow such men to get away with these attacks. They will be dealt with most severely.

**Verse 13** (synthetic parallelism) – The conclusion of the psalmist exalts the Name of the LORD! To exalt is to lift high. Believers lift high the name of the LORD when they live a life of holiness and free themselves from sin. They continue to trust in their LORD regardless of the circumstances in life. The externals do not bother or affect their relationship with the LORD. The focus in the psalmist's exaltation is the strength of the LORD. The LORD's strength was used to punish these evil and wicked men. The power of God is promoted when evil men pay for their sins. The psalmist says that he will sing praise and praise the LORD's power because of what He has done to His enemies. Such a wonderful experience from the LORD must bring forth genuine and sincere praises from His people.

**CONCLUSION** – The strength of the LORD is His omnipotent power to save and to protect His own. His children must trust and continue to lean on Him regardless of the outward circumstances in life. This trust becomes more real and will surely grow stronger when the LORD'S people stand firm and true to Him in the presence of their enemies and when they overcome trials and adversities. Money cannot buy such a priceless experience. There is no other way to grow faith and trust. The king did it this way and so must every child of the most High God. Amen.

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