

Psalm 5

How to Deal with Lies and Slander, Psalm 5:1-12

Psalm 5:1-12 (NKJV)

¹ Give ear to my words, O Lord, Consider my meditation.

² Give heed to the voice of my cry, My King and my God, For to You I will pray.

³ My voice You shall hear in the morning, O Lord; In the morning I will direct *it* to You, And I will look up.

⁴ For You *are* not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness, Nor shall evil dwell with You.

⁵ The boastful shall not stand in Your sight; You hate all workers of iniquity.

⁶ You shall destroy those who speak falsehood; The Lord abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.

⁷ But as for me, I will come into Your house in the multitude of Your mercy; In fear of You I will worship toward Your holy temple.

⁸ Lead me, O Lord, in Your righteousness because of my enemies; Make Your way straight before my face.

⁹ For *there is* no faithfulness in their mouth; Their inward part *is* destruction; Their throat *is* an open tomb; They flatter with their tongue.

¹⁰ Pronounce them guilty, O God! Let them fall by their own counsels; Cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions, For they have rebelled against You.

¹¹ But let all those rejoice who put their trust in You; Let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them; Let those also who love Your name Be joyful in You.

¹² For You, O Lord, will bless the righteous; With favor You will surround him as *with* a shield.

(Psalm 5:1-12) Introduction: since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Japan) on August 6 and 9, 1945, the world has lived in fear of nuclear destruction. The most dangerous weapon known to humanity, however, is far simpler and more common than sophisticated nuclear warheads. It has damaged and destroyed far more people than all the collective weapons of war in world history.

It is extremely deadly and each of us possesses it:

James 3:5-8 NKJV

⁵ Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles!

⁶ And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.

⁷ For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind.

⁸ But no man can tame the tongue. *It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.*

Sinful and self-centered people use words to ruthlessly destroy others. When we are stabbed by slander and lies, we usually feel helpless to defend ourselves. It is just impossible to know everybody who has heard an untrue rumor or story about us. It is even more impossible to control whether they believe it. Sinners enjoy a juicy morsel of gossip and are prone to believe the worst without caring to verify its truth. **What can we do when others slander and lie about us?**

The historical setting of **Psalm 5** is not provided in Scripture. The context of its writing is clear, however, from **verses six** and **nine**: David's enemies were trying to overthrow him by slandering him.

Psalm 5:6 (NKJV)

⁶ You shall destroy those who speak falsehood; The Lord abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.

Psalm 5:9 (NKJV)

⁹ For *there is no faithfulness in their mouth; Their inward part is destruction; Their throat is an open tomb; They flatter with their tongue.*

Many good commentators think it is to be included with **Psalms 3** and **4** and connected to Absalom's rebellion. Some solid scholars agree with liberal critics who argue that David could not be the author, and that the biblical notation is incorrect. They date its writing after the completion of Solomon's temple, based on **verse seven**.

Psalm 5:7 (NKJV)

⁷ But as for me, I will come into Your house in the multitude of Your mercy; In fear of You I will worship toward Your holy temple.

The *Bible Knowledge Commentary* explains that this is a weak argument: "the Hebrew word used here for "temple" (*hêkāl*) is also used of the tabernacle (cf. **1 Sam. 1:9; 3:3**).

1 Samuel 1:9 (NKJV)

⁹ So Hannah arose after they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of the tabernacle of the Lord.

1 Samuel 3:3 (NASB)

³ And before the lamp of God went out in the tabernacle of the Lord where the ark of God was, and while Samuel was lying down.

Furthermore, the word ‘house’ in **Psalm 5:7** can refer to the tabernacle (cf. ‘house of the Lord’ in **23:6**; **Joshua 6:24**; **1 Sam. 1:24**) as well as the temple.”

Psalm 23:6 (NKJV)

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the Lord Forever.

Joshua 6:24 (NKJV)

²⁴ But they burned the city and all that was in it with fire. Only the silver and gold, and the vessels of bronze and iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord.

1 Samuel 1:24 (NKJV)

²⁴ Now when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with three bulls, one ephah of flour, and a skin of wine, and brought him to the house of the Lord in Shiloh. And the child was young.

Psalm 5 is a song of lament to the Lord, and it is also the first *imprecatory* psalm (see Keys to Understanding Psalms). David cries out to God for the destruction of his enemies. Notice this contrast: in **Psalm 4** David pleads *with* his enemies; in **Psalm 5** he pleads *against* his enemies. *To the chief musician or director of music* indicates it is intended for use in the congregation. *Nehiloth* means that it is written for accompaniment by flutes. In this prayer of David, the Holy Spirit, the great Inspirer of Scripture, shows us what to do when we are lied about and slandered. It stands as a timeless pattern for us to follow as long as we live in a wicked, sin-cursed world.

This is, *How to Deal with Lies and Slander*, Psalm 5:1-12

- 1. Turn to the Lord for help (vv. 1-3).**
- 2. Confess God’s holiness: Five facts (vv. 4-6).**
- 3. Make a renewed commitment to be faithful in prayer and worship (v. 7).**
- 4. Pray for three major things (vv. 8-12).**

1. (Psalm 5:1-3) Turn to the Lord for help.

Psalm 5:1-3 (NKJV)

¹ Give ear to my words, O Lord, Consider my meditation.

² Give heed to the voice of my cry, My King and my God, For to You I will pray.

³ My voice You shall hear in the morning, O Lord; In the morning I will direct it to You, And I will look up.

Instead of rushing to defend himself throughout the kingdom or attacking enemies who were his fellow countrymen, David called upon the Lord to deliver him from this critical situation. He beseeched God to deal with those who were lying about him. Before David ever speaks about his enemies, he speaks to God. This is one of the defining characteristics of biblical faith. **The natural man immediately turns horizontally**—to defend his reputation, win public opinion, expose his critics, or retaliate against those who have wronged him.

The child of God first turns vertically, bringing every burden before the throne of grace.

Psalm 5 teaches that prayer is not the last refuge of the believer but the first response of faith. David understood that the greatest battle was not against Absalom's army but against the lies, deception, and slander that threatened to destroy the unity of God's covenant people. Although David possessed military power, political authority, and loyal soldiers, he recognized that none of these could change the hearts of men or expose hidden motives. Only God could distinguish truth from falsehood and vindicate His servant in His perfect time. This passage also reveals an important theological principle about God's sovereignty and providence. God is not merely aware of the conversations of men; He weighs every word. Every whisper, every rumor, every accusation, and every secret conversation is examined by the righteous Judge of all the earth (**Ecclesiastes 12:14; Hebrews 4:13**).

Ecclesiastes 12:14 NKJV

¹⁴ For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.

Hebrews 4:13 NKJV

¹³ And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must give* account.

Therefore, the believer does not ultimately entrust his reputation to public opinion but to the omniscient God who knows every motive and every fact. David's example ultimately points us to Jesus Christ. Our Lord endured false accusations from religious leaders, fabricated witnesses, political authorities, and an angry crowd. Yet **"when He was reviled, did not revile in return... but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously" (1 Peter 2:23)**.

1 Peter 2:23 NKJV

²³ Who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed *Himself* to Him who judges righteously.

David foreshadows the greater Son of David, who entrusted His entire cause to the Father. For the Christian today, **Psalm 5** reminds us that before answering critics, before posting a response, before defending ourselves, before seeking revenge, we must first seek the Lord. Prayers must always precede action. Both David and his enemies were Israelites, citizens of God's chosen nation and children of the covenant. **Why should the Lord listen to David over his enemies?** David's basis for expecting God to help him rather than his enemies is revealed in the following verses.

Biblical Illustrations

1. Hezekiah Took the Threatening Letter to the Lord

2 Kings 19:14-19 NKJV

¹⁴ And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it; and Hezekiah went up to the house of the Lord, and spread it before the Lord.

¹⁵ Then Hezekiah prayed before the Lord, and said: "O Lord God of Israel, *the One* who dwells *between* the cherubim, You are God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth.

¹⁶ Incline Your ear, O Lord, and hear; open Your eyes, O Lord, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to reproach the living God.

¹⁷ Truly, Lord, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands,

¹⁸ and have cast their gods into the fire; for they *were* not gods, but the work of men's hands—wood and stone. Therefore, they destroyed them.

¹⁹ Now therefore, O Lord our God, I pray, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You *are* the Lord God, You alone."

When King Sennacherib mocked the God of Israel and threatened Jerusalem, Hezekiah did not first organize a public relations campaign or negotiate politically. He entered the house of the Lord, spread the threatening letter before God, and prayed. The Lord answered by destroying the Assyrian army without Judah lifting a sword.

Lesson: Great victories begin in the prayer room before they appear on the battlefield.

2. Hannah Poured Out Her Soul Before the Lord

1 Samuel 1:9-18 NKJV

⁹ So Hannah arose after they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of the tabernacle of the Lord.

¹⁰ And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed to the Lord and wept in anguish.

¹¹ Then she made a vow and said, “O Lord of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head.”

¹² And it happened, as she continued praying before the Lord, that Eli watched her mouth.

¹³ Now Hannah spoke in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. Therefore, Eli thought she was drunk.

¹⁴ So Eli said to her, “How long will you be drunk? Put your wine away from you!”

¹⁵ But Hannah answered and said, “No, my lord, I *am* a woman of sorrowful spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor intoxicating drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord.

¹⁶ Do not consider your maidservant a wicked woman, for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief I have spoken until now.”

¹⁷ Then Eli answered and said, “Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition which you have asked of Him.”

¹⁸ And she said, “Let your maidservant find favor in your sight.” So, the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer *sad*.

Hannah was misunderstood by Peninnah, judged by others, and deeply burdened by her barrenness. Rather than arguing with those who mocked her, she poured out her heart before God with tears and silent prayer. The Lord heard her cry and graciously answered.

Lesson: God often accomplishes more through one sincere prayer than through countless attempts to defend ourselves.

Modern-Day Illustrations

1. The Pastor Falsely Accused

A faithful pastor discovers that false rumors are circulating throughout the church. Members begin questioning his integrity, attendance declines, and trusted friends become distant. His first temptation is to defend himself publicly, call meetings, and answer every accusation. Instead, following David’s example, he spends hours

in prayer, asking God for wisdom, truth, patience, and justice. In God's providence, the facts eventually become known, the lies collapse under their own weight, and the church witnesses that God Himself defended His servant.

Lesson: A reputation defended by God is far stronger than one defended by man.

2. The Employee Slandered at Work

An employee is falsely blamed for a costly mistake at work. Coworkers begin whispering, promotions disappear, and management becomes suspicious. The temptation is to retaliate by exposing everyone else's failures. Instead, the believer prays first, entrusting the situation to the Lord while continuing to work faithfully and honestly. Weeks later, an audit uncovers the truth, the innocent employee is vindicated, and his Christlike response becomes a testimony to unbelieving coworkers.

Lesson: God often uses patient faithfulness under unjust criticism to display the reality of the Gospel.

Psalm 5 reminds every believer that **our first conversation in times of crisis should never be with our enemies, our friends, or social media—it should always be with God.** Before David addressed the kingdom, he addressed the King of kings. Before he looked around, **he looked up (Psalm 5:3).** This is the posture of every believer who trusts that the Lord hears, discerns, and judges righteously.

a. Ask Him to hear your words—your sighing—your cry for help (v. 1).

Psalm 5:1 (NKJV)

¹ Give ear to my words, O Lord, Consider my meditation.

Vicious lies about the king were flying throughout Jerusalem because Absalom's first plan of attack was a carefully strategized war of words. David's rebellious son charmed potential followers with flattering words, who in turn spread false rumors about the king to their friends and associates. David realized he was powerless to quench the vicious tongues of his foes, so he told his side of the story to the only One Who could help Him, the Lord. **Meditation** or **sighing (hagig)** literally means murmur or whisper.

Israel was buzzing with the murmuring of deceived followers of Absalom who whispered accusations against their king. In contrast, the godly, slandered king whispered only in the ears of the Lord. **Consider (bene)** means to separate mentally. David called upon God to discern between what was being said about him and the truth.