

**Tuesday, January 23, 2024 • Read Psalm 109:22–31**

*Questions from the Scripture text: What condition of the psalmist (v22a) appeals to the steadfast love of God? How has his heart responded to this condition (v22b)? How closely does he feel like he is to death (v23a)? What is his strength level (v23b)? What, especially, has contributed to this weakness (v24)? In addition to hating him, how do his enemies think of him (v25)? But to Whom does the psalmist cry for help (v26a)? What does he have hope to be saved (v26b)? What does he want out of salvation (v27)? What makes the cursing of the enemy tolerable (v28a)? What (v28c) will put the enemy to shame (v28b)? How shameful (v29)? What will the psalmist do (v30a)? How much? With what? With whom (v30b)? What does the Lord do, for whom, to elicit this praise (v31a)? From whom does he save them (v31b)?*

**What strong arguments can a believer plead when he feels like his enemies and circumstances are killing him?** Psalm 109:22–31 prepares us for the opening portion of public worship on the Lord’s Day. In these ten verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **a believer has strong arguments before God in his own poverty and in God’s praise, even as he gives himself to God’s praise.**

**Strong arguments from God’s people.** v22 begins, “For I.” What sort of argument can God’s people make with Him in hope of being vindicated from the accusations that the wicked lay against them? Our God has saved us in compassion, loving us from before the world began with the love that He has for His Son (cf. Eph 1:3–4). He is immovable by what we call emotion, but that which is properly in Him, toward others, according to His pleasure, goes out to us.

Dear, “poor and needy” (v22a) believer, whose “heart is wounded within” you (v22b), your weakness and woundedness is a strong argument with the almighty and good God! Behold, how David continues to show the extent of his weakness. How do we think of David? The mighty warrior and stealthy strategist? Here is his strong argument with God: he feels that his shadow is lengthening (v23a, a Hebrew metaphor for being at the point of death, cf. Ps 102:11), and he feels like a husk of a man like a locust that is easily “shaken off” (v23b).

David’s response was to fast, but this expression of weakness before God made his “knees weak” (v24a) and his “flesh feeble” (v24b). His enemies saw this and thought they had won against this pathetic weakling (v25).

**Strong arguments in God Himself.** v26–31 take us back to the point introduced in v21. YHWH is our Lord; He is our covenant God (v21a). He acts for the praise of His Name, which He has placed upon His elect (v21b). His covenant love is good, and He is pleased to display it (v21c). I hope that the Spirit will write this lesson on our hearts, dear reader: let us not only plead on the basis of ourselves (our weakness and neediness) and our circumstances, but especially let us plead that which is in God Himself!

- v26a appeals to the covenant relationship between us and the Lord: “YHWH my God!” Note both the covenant Name and the possessive pronoun.
- v26b appeals to the kessed of God (“mercy” in NKJ).
- v27 appeals to the giving of praise and honor to God: “that they may know” implies a display of God for praise. “Your hand” points especially to God’s power, often represented by His “hand.” “You, YHWH, have done it!” emphasizes the identity of the powerful Doer Who has done the powerful deed.
- v28–29 appeals to the sovereignty of God. There is a competition between David’s enemies and David’s Lord; the one curses, but the Other blesses. Who will win? God will be glorified if blessing prevails; let the enemies be put to shame.

**Strong praise.** When all is said and done, David will be praising YHWH (v30a), so he uses his mouth already as it is intended to be used. Do you know the purpose of your mouth, dear reader? Do you use it for that purpose, with all your heart and strength? David says “I will greatly praise YHWH with my mouth.” Greatly! He will approximate now, as well as possible, the way that he will praise in the great congregation, “the multitude” (v30b). It will be a multitude of “poor” at whose right hand the Lord stood (v31a). It will be a multitude of those who were saved from condemnation (v31b). Believers who are in times when praise is harder do well to remember that coming time when glorious praise, of an innumerable multitude of redeemed, is certain.

What situations have felt the most unbearable to you? How does this part of the psalm teach you to cry out to God when things are like that? Who have accused you and cursed you? Who are likely to do so to you in the future? But Who has blessed you? How can you appeal to what is in Him? How does praising Him now help you lay hold of a certain future?

*Sample prayer: O Lord, our God, we are poor and needy, but You are compassionate to the poor and needy. Your covenant love is good; help us, now, according to that love! Show the power of Your hand to help us worship, so that all may see that You have done it. By Your Spirit, make us to praise You greatly with our mouths in the assembly of Your people in Your Son, through Whom we ask it, AMEN!*

**Suggested songs: ARP109D “I Am Very Poor and Needy” or TPH236 “To God Be the Glory”**

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via [hopewellarp.org](http://hopewellarp.org))

Psalm 109 verse 22 through 31. These are God's words. Fry and pour and needy, and my heart is wounded within me. I am gone like a shadow and it lengthens I'm shaking off like a locust. My knees are weak through fasting. And my flesh is feeble from lack of fatness.

I also have become a reproach to When they look at me, they shake their heads. Help me. Oh y'all win my God. Oh, save me. According to your mercy. That they may know that this is your hand that you Yahweh have done it. Let them curse, but you bless when they arise, let them be ashamed but let your servant Rejoice.

Like my accusers, be clothed for shame, let them cover themselves with their own, disgraces with a mantle I will greatly praise Yahweh with my mouth. Yes, I will praise him among the multitude. For he shall stand at the right hand of the poor. To save him from. Who condemn him?

Amen, this ends this reading of Inspired. And And Aaron toward, All right, it is in this last third or so of the psalm in which the psalmist starts giving his reasons. And he

teaches us how to plead with our God of Almighty power. But also our god of Um, unmerited.

Grace. And especially, Our god of compassion. Uh, we're gonna take verse 21 into account when we get to verses 26 through 29. Because the way the particular psalter that our Sidod has Divides up, the psalm verse 21 is kind of oddly attached back to verse 20, Uh, but we see.

Uh, the sorts of arguments to make with God In Prayer. Uh, two primarily. Strong argument. Uh, one strong argument with God is our neediness Our helplessness verses 22 through 25. Another is a strong argument found. Not in. Uh, but in God himself. And his character verses 26-29. Uh, and then Uh, in verse 30 and 31.

We have not a strong argument with God, but a strong argument with the psalmist's own soul. And this is something that we need to do by scripture. We're taught to do by many scriptures. Just over overcome wrong thoughts. Uh, by God's word. So, first strong arguments to make with God, Uh, when you reason with somebody, Uh, who is not God when you reason with a man?

Um, Now, ordinarily you argue on behalf of your greatness and your ability to repay them or your worthiness. There's none of that here. Uh, here he is arguing for I am poor. And needy. And my heart is wounded within me. Uh, what a gracious and compassionate, God, how tender hearted he is to That these are the strong arguments for us to use with him, not that God is affected.

Uh, buy anything. Uh, he doesn't have emotions, like, we do where we are affected by things, but he instead affects everything else. And so, there is a proper relation, a proper motion of God. Towards them in, which he acts upon that, none can really Um, I thank God at all.

But in his motions, especially, Toward the elect. You have this electing Everlasting love. Where he has known us in the Sun from before the world began. And if he knows us in the sun, Then he knows us and the one who is his beloved eternally? Beloved. Uh and um the one in whom he takes Eternal pleasure.

And so his for knowing us in Jesus, is of course, to for love us in Jesus, or to elect us in his love. And so with the compassion that he has towards us, not just as creatures. Um, but as Uh his elect and then when we have come to Faith as those who are in Union with his son, Uh, if it were possible that would increase Um, his love has certainly increases uh, in A loveliness lovability, perhaps to use a more modern word, we use the word loveliness to mean something else.

Now, Um, Before him. Uh, but the psalm presents, uh, to us a God, who cares that we are poor. He cares that we are needy. He cares that our hearts are wounded. Not not only does he care. These are the arguments you make with him in prayer, Because of how sure his response is to be to us.

And so, David continues gone, like a shadow when it lengthens. Um, a phrase that implies nearing death. Uh, we saw that back. Uh, Psalm 102 verse 11. He used the same thing. I'm shaking off like a Locust perhaps even. A dead Locust. Uh, just a husk that easily shakes off.

And one of the reasons why. Uh, here's He is so weak and feeble now. Is because he has continued trusting in God, hoping not in his strength. Uh, not not in himself as his strength but in God as his strength. So he is fasted and prayed. Uh, and fasting and praying didn't make him stronger, it made him weaker.

He says My Flesh is feeble. From lack of fatness. And so here David is becoming weaker and weaker. Uh, and what do his enemies think? Who have been accusing him, who have had these plots against him? Who have had no compassion on him and they see him getting weaker.

They laugh at him. They he is a reproach to them. And when they look at him, they shake their heads. Um, they're despising him. But that, which the world despises that weakness, which the world despises The Lord has compassion upon. And so, when we feel overwhelmed, when we feel that we don't have The external.

Uh, resources, we are poor Or we ourselves are not able, we are needy. Uh, when our hearts are wounded within We have a god with whom Dozer. Those are strong arguments to bring dim in prayer, but they're not the strongest arguments to bring to him in prayer. Uh, yes, he is compassionate and good and we're appealing to that When we bring those arguments the stronger arguments are in God himself and in verses 26 through 29 we have An expansion.

Uh of what? What he had begun appealing. 2 in verse 21 verse 21, he said, but you Yahweh the Lord He uses a covenant name. He's appealing to that Covenant bond between himself and the Lord deal with me for your name's sake. Also, Covenant bond. Because the Lord has put his name upon David.

But now also appealing to the praise of God and the honor of God. Uh, for if the one with whom God is covenanted, Um, it was in trouble and And the Lord delivers him. Then honor comes to the Lord whose name is Is put upon him. Because your mercy, your steadfast love.

Your Covenant love is good. Deliver me. And so his, his Covenant love and his goodness and those those three things come out And, Uh, a little bit of a different order. The first one is the same verse 26. Help me o Yahweh. My God. Uh and that Yahweh. My God is an abbreviation of the great Covenant promise.

I will be your God and you will be my people, he's appealing to Covenant bond with God and you too. You come to him in faith and you've had the the sign and seal of the Covenant, applied to you in baptism. And you're a member of his church, and you, Are not just a member of his visible church, but trusting in Jesus, you know, that you are bound to God by the blood of Christ, and that you're actually a member of that great congregation in glory.

Of which ours is a visible and imperfect satellite. Uh, ours on Earth is a visible and imperfect satellite. And so you come and you lay hold of God by his Covenant, by his promise, by the bond that he has made, and signified to you and sealed upon you and confirmed at the supper.

Every time you take the cop, you remember and you trust in Christ that you are a participant in the New Covenant that is in his blood. And so you come and you just when you say oh Yahweh my God, lord my God, my Lord, my savior. Uh, you come and you say those things not just in the ordinary use of a possessive pronoun.

Uh but trusting that God is faithful. Uh to those connections that he has made. So you plead his Covenant And you plead his Mercy. Oh, save me. According to your mercy. Again. Uh, we sing and pray Dreadful things. Things that we deserve that are the opposite of what you have by fearing the Lord by trusting in Christ.

Which was the only way properly to fear the lord and to come into the fear of the Lord, we sing and pray Dreadful things that are the opposite of that. Um, in the bulk of this. And so we don't come to God saying, but save me for I am so different than they are.

Uh, we come to God saying, save me according to your mercy. Even whatever differences are in us. Are from that Mercy. And so sometimes you see pleadings like that, but they're still pleadings of his Mercy that they may know that this is your hand. So this is now we are on to God acting for his own praise, that you Yahweh have done it.

Let them curse, but you bless. And so he says, Lord let it be a competition, they are cursing me. But I know by your steadfast Love by your Covenant bond. With me that you have committed yourself to bless me. Uh, for the sake of your promise, for the sake of the sacrifice that you have provided.

Which of course, we know, now the sacrifices Christ. Yeah. And so I know you are committed to blessing. And since they are cursing, let the battle go on. Grant that you would win when they arise. Let them be ashamed. They lose the cursing verse blessing battle. But let your servant Rejoice.

So the Lord wins the battle to bless and the fact that David comes out rejoicing results in verse 29, let my accusers. Be clothed with shame. Let them cover themselves with their own disgrace. As with a mantle. And so you have God's power. And his, his Sovereignty and blessing that, that must Prevail.

The Lord is more. Determined to bless you. Then you are desirous to be blessed. Our desires are imperfect but what the Lord has willed to do, what the Lord has determined to do, what the Lord has promised to do, what the Lord gave his son to do, what the Lord has poured out is Spirit to do.

Must Prevail. Must Prevail. And so we have in verse 26 through 29 strong arguments in God, his Covenant, his love. His honor. His. And so you have the strong argument in the week. Uh, in verses 23, 20 to 25 you have strong arguments in the almighty God. Verses 26-29.

And Uh, turned to be a strong argument for us with our own soul. Very similar to. Uh, Psalm 42 verse 5, 42 verse 11 43 verse 5 and that refrain In those couple of Psalms together. Uh, why are you cast down my soul? Why are you so disquieted within me?

Hope. Now in God, I will praise him. Still For. He is the help of my countenance and my God. And, He reasons because he is going to praise God. Among the multitude. That God's determination to bless is what is what is going to con? Find its fulfillment uh in the outcome of all of history.

When there is this innumerable multitude that has been redeemed from the guilt of their sin delivered from the presence of their sin. Uh, delivered from all sorrow and suffering and all enemies, including The Last Enemy death, have been put away and what remains An innumerable multitude, praising God. And David knows he's going to be there one day.

And so the very things that he's been praying in verses 26-29, he now takes them all together and the outcome that they guarantee and he addresses himself, I will greatly praise Yahweh with my mouth. Yes, I will praise him among the multitude. For not only will the Lord deliver David.

He's going to deliver every one of his Saints. Who find themselves helpless. To find themselves without resource. And find themselves under accusation and attack and condemnation. Verse 31, for he shall stand. At the right hand of the pore. To save him. From those who condemn him.

So we have a strong argument to use with our own heart in such times and we need to argue with our own Hearts. Because in addition to praying to God and making the arguments that scripture teaches us to to plead in our prayers to God, we Don't want to be.

Uh, inappropriately. Discouraged and dismayed. And so we come and we reason with our own hearts that we are going to praise God. Then And so, we are determined to praise God. Now, And note, he said, I will greatly Praise Yahweh. With my mouth. Will the Lord give you to Learn and be exercised.

This reasoning with from your own condition, that provokes, his compassion. And reasoning from his character. And then reasoning with yourself. That what you really ought to be doing right now is praising him. Because that's what. Going to be doing forever. That's what you're created to do, that's what you're redeemed to do, and that's what we ultimately shall do.

Forever. Hey man. Let's pray.

Father, please help us to remember this. When it comes time. And we are. And a great discouragement. And we feel, Helpless. And so, I pray that you would give us By your spirit to meditate. Upon the greatness of your compassion, and The certainty of. Blessing in your love, according to your Covenant and your faithfulness to it.

Give us to meditate on those things. Lord, so that Our minds, our hearts will digest it. And it'll be ready to hand for crying out to you. When the evil day comes, And we pray, Lord that you would also Grant to us to take it into our hearts and our minds so that we will be readily equipped to reason with ourselves.

Grant it. Lord, we ask In Jesus name, amen.