

Psalm 109:1–15

Holy Praying and Singing of Curses in Union with Christ

Tuesday, January 9, 2024 ▫ Read Psalm 109:1–15

Questions from the Scripture text: Into whose hands was this Psalm entrusted (superscript)? Of whom was this Psalm? What is his opening plea (v1a)? What does he call God (v1b)? Who most definitely have not been silent (v2)? What have they used their mouths to do (v3)? In return for what (v4a, 5)? What is David using his mouth to do (v4b)? What does the wicked deserve (v6a)? Whom does David pray to have at the wicked's right hand (v6b)? What does David pray would be the outcome in v7a? What else does he pray against the wicked's own praying in v7b (cf. Isa 1:15)? What does David, in his office, pray against the wicked, in his office (v8)? What does he pray against the wicked in his family relations (v9)? What does he pray against his offspring (v10, 12–13; as opposed to what the righteous hope, everlastingly, for their offspring)? What does he pray against the fruitfulness of his labor (v11)? What covenant blessing, that the righteous hope for, do v14–15 pray against the wicked?

What can believers pray and sing, when they are taking the brunt of the world's opposition to Christ? Psalm 109:1–15 prepares us for the opening portion of public worship on the Lord's Day. In these fifteen verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **when believers are taking the brunt of the world's opposition to Christ, they may pray against the haters of Christ the very opposite of the blessing that comes to those who trust in Him.**

Battle of speech. David's enemies' weapon of choice is the deceitful mouth (v2a–b) and lying tongue (v2c). It is with words that they hate and fight (v3). But the speech of Another is David's hope, so the great plea in v1a is "do not keep silent!" He is praying not that God would take a reflexive vengeance in hasty wrath like that of a man, but that the Righteous Judge would open His mouth and judge justly (v7).

And David, also, employs his mouth. He habitually opens his mouth in praise (v1b). What a blessing this is: that when we come to the Lord in our trouble, we are coming to the God Whom we are constantly praising! I hope that you know Him as the "God of your praise." He also uses his mouth in prayer (v4b). And gives his prayer, under the inspiration of the Spirit, into the hands of the Choir Master (superscript) for us to pray. Let us take care what we do with our mouths; what comes out of them is profoundly significant (cf. Ja 3:8–10).

But should we talk like this? In the imprecatory (cursing) Psalms, it is important to remember that we pray and sing them in our union with Jesus. There are many sorts of Psalms that we can only sing in union with Christ, and this is certainly one of them. In fact, this Psalm should wake us up to what is really happening when believers are attacked.

If we realize what is happening when a believer is attacked, we would be so careful of our hearts and mouths with respect to our brothers and sisters. And if we realize it in connection with when we are attacked, how gladly we would leave vengeance and judgment to the Lord (cf. Ja 1:19–20; Rom 12:19–21). Indeed, knowing that the Spirit has put such a song in our mouths about the Lord's own vengeance, we are freed from taking ours and can turn our hearts instead to loving our enemy and doing him good.

Singing and praying this Psalm in union with Christ. Singing and praying this Psalm in union with Christ is more natural, when we remember whom the Spirit first made to sing and pray it. David is YHWH's anointed king, imitating YHWH's character with love even to his enemies (v4a, 5). To attack him (v3) is to attack Christ, to attack YHWH (cf. Ps 2:1–3).

But this is not reserved for kings. Scripture has made it plain that all believers are saved by being united to Christ. So, the song is sent to the Chief Musician, for the priestly choir to lead the people as a whole in singing, in their corporate union with Christ. Now, the Lord Jesus applies this not only corporately (cf. Ac 9:4), but personally, even to the least individual (cf. Mt 25:34–46).

We mustn't sing in a manner as if God's vengeance against the wicked is merely for our own sake, or that this vengeance is according to our character. His vengeance is for His Name's sake, for Christ's sake, and according to His own character. As we sing and pray, let us not give in to the heat of our flesh against men, but let us embrace the honor and vindication of Christ, and of us as belonging to Him and united to Him.

Curses that are opposite the blessing that is in Christ. v8 prays for the exact opposite of the blessing that belonged to David in Christ: an office that would last forever. The curses in vv9–15 are almost an exact reverse of the blessings of Psalm 128. Happy, fruitful wife and children (v9, 10, 12; cp. 128:3). Enjoyment of his own fruitful labor (v11; cp. 128:2). Ongoing generations of covenant blessing (v13; cp. 128:6a). Redemption, forgiveness, and blessing for his people, from whom he came (v14–15; cp. 128:5, 6b).

Blessed are all who fear YHWH (cf. 128:1), who kiss the Son and trust in Him (2:12). But the curses that will come on the wicked who resist Him and His Christ (including and especially who attack His people) are exactly opposite these blessings. Let us marvel at His justice, let us beware provoking Him by attacking His people, let us take comfort from His identifying with and avenging us, and let us love our enemies to leave room for His wrath.

What is the right way for you to think and pray and sing this Psalm? What wrong way must you watch against singing and praying it? Whom do you need to be careful not to attack? How does singing something like this actually help you love your enemy?

Sample prayer: God, Your Messiah and Your people are continually rejected and attacked in this world. Open Your mouth against Your enemies and ours. Grant that Your Spirit would open our mouths in prayer and in praise. And open Your mouth to us in Your Word read, sung, prayed, and preached. We leave all vengeance to You. Do not keep silent, O God of our praise! Hear us and address us in Your worship, we ask through Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP109A "God of My Praise" or TPH389 "Great God, What Do I See and Hear!"

(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)

Psalm 109 verses one through 15. Let us take heed how we hear. And all for our hearing, as worship for these are the words of god. To the chief musician of psalm of david. Do not keep silent.

Oh god, of my praise. For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful have opened against me. They have spoken against me with a lying tongue. They've also surrounded me with words of hatred and fought against me. Without a cause. And returned from i love, they are my accusers.

But i give myself to prayer. Thus they have rewarded me. Evil for good. And hatred for my love. Set a wicked man over him. And let an accuser stand at his right hand when he is judged, let him be found guilty and let his prayer become sin. Let his days be few, let another take us office, but his children be fatherless and his wife, a widow.

Let his children continually be vagabonds and beg. Let them seek their bread. Also from their desolate places. Let the creditor sees all that he has and let strangers plunder his labor. Let there be none to extend mercy to him. Nor let there be any to favor his fatherless children, Let his posterity be cut off and in the generation following, let their name.

Be blotted out. Let the iniquity of his father's be remembered before, yahweh. And let not the sin of his mother be blooded out. Let them be continually before you all say that he may cut off the memory of them. From the earth. So far the reading of gods inspired and And Aaron twerk.

Reading Psalm 2 that The nation's rage in kings and people's plot in vain to. Throw off the rule of god and of his anointed. And has anointed. Uh, at first, the first annoying, great and good, anointed king, i guess, uhaul was the first anointed king but until christ Uh, the one who embodies the The messianic the anointed kingship.

Over god's people, and of god's kingship over his people. And overall people is david, david is the one of course, Who wrote this psalm as we just read and heard in the super script, which, of course is Hebrew scripture. And ought to be in our english bibles. Not distinguished as it often is.

In the printings. And so, david is aware whenever he is attacked, whenever his reign is resisted whenever he is accused. That what is happening is not just an attack upon him personally or even his throne politically Uh, but it is against his, uh, his anointing. Uh, covenantly. And mediatory.

And against god himself. Now, we see this not in terms of Is the Anointed kingship of david. Uh, but even More fully in revelation 12. In that, which is done against christ, who is, of course, The, the child of the woman who the ancient serpent, the devil hates and wants, to destroy, and tries to destroy, but he's caught up into heaven.

And yet the woman has left behind with her children. And the dragon, the ancient serpent in his rage against christ. Attacks. Uh, christ's church and the children of his church, the individual believers. Who remain upon the earth? Uh, so that we can have that perspective, which the apostle paul learned on the road to Damascus, Knowing that even if someone doesn't know that he is in, The the, in bondage to the devil that he's in service to the devil.

Anyone who attacks christ, anyone who attacks, Uh, christians rather is attacking christ himself. Which paul learned from jesus, when he was. Had pretty much cleaned up the market for attacking christians in jerusalem. And was going to damascus to attack christians. There you remember and the lord jesus. Um, Appeared to him, literally knocked him down with his glory.

Um, Announced to him from heaven. Addressed him. From heaven saw saw, why are you persecuting me? Uh, saw new who it was, he was talking to or at least. Um, the title. Of who it was who's talking to but he didn't know how it could be. That he had been attacking him.

He said, lord, who are you? And he says, i am jesus. Whom you are persecuting jesus, yahweh in the flesh, taking personally, what is done, not only against his anointing and his throne, but even every one of those who are united to him by faith. Now, that Uh, That knowledge of.

The attack that is made upon god's king. God's anointed. And Uh, now as we understand. Uh, union with christ and how we are saved. How faith unites us to him. Uh, more fully. From the whole of scripture, especially the new testament. Uh, We understand. How? A believer who is under attack.

Might rightly sing and pray this psalm. Now, we'll, we'll give some guardrails some theological and And spiritual guardrails to that in a moment, but just the to the chief musician. Right? Which means it's given to the levitical choir. The priestly choir. For the people of god, as a whole to sing in their corporate union.

With the lord god and in their corporate union and representation, even with king david who is in his person. Um, A representative. Of the nation, the kingdom. Of god's people. And so, you know, they sang incorporate union with himself already. And in incorporate union, they prayed incorporate union With.

With the king. This psalm looking forward to the son of david. Uh, who Of whom all these things that were already. True of david would be most completely and fully. And finally, everlastingly true, the forever king, who had been promised In second samuel 7. Uh one of the differences for us though as we've already mentioned is we don't just sing incorporate union with a king on earth, who upon whom physical oil has been poured.

Uh, we do sing and behalf of the church. We do pray and behalf of the church. Especially the persecuted churches as we often pray for instance and in the prayer meetings because we try to pray in a way that's shaped. By the bible. But we also now know that every believer individually, Has such a union with christ.

That jesus. Um, That jesus would say and matthew 25 verses 34 through 46. Whatever has been done for one of the least of his brethren, or against one of the least of his brethren. And so, in that case, not just the church generally, not just the kingdom, generally not just christ.

Specifically by name. Uh, but even one of the least the The smallest one. Who is united to him? Is united to him. And so that actually expands for us our understanding and application of psalm 109. So don't listen to people who say, oh well Psalm 109 is one of those old testament prayers.

And one of those old testaments songs, actually, it belongs more to the new testament, believer. By virtue of his conscious union with christ through faith, then it did even in the Old Testament. Psalms. Like, this are more appropriate to be prayed and more appropriate to be sung. Through union with christ.

But there must be some. Only through. Union with christ. We'll see that. In a moment, this all introduces itself. Well, further introduction is introduces itself and the super script which we have just spent The time so far upon? But after that, it introduces this battle of speech. Do not keep silent.

Oh god of my praise. He's david is praying. He's teaching us to pray and to sing that god would enter the fray and open his mouth as it were that he would declare his judgment. We sing that of course, with respect to the last day and which he will literally Uh declare, uh judgment.

As we think about and verse 7, but there are also all of these provinces In which the justice and the justness of god breaks into time. Where those who have been lied about are vindicated where those who have been oppressed are delivered, where those who have lifted themselves up are brought down, and god.

Um, Opposes and destroys and humiliates. The proud when that which was done, wickedly in secret is exposed. As sometimes we'll have to wait for the judgment but often, In the course of his providence, he causes to happen. And we bless the justness and the justice of god. At those times.

Those are all openings of the mouth of the judge. Um, the one whom. Um the one whom we praise. So why does he want god to open? His mouth is because the mouth of the wicked verse 2 is already opened. The mouth of the wick of the mouth of the deceitful have opened against me.

And so, he's He's praying for something to occur, not just in the last day, but in time, that is, as god opening his mouth to shut, The math that has been opened against us, and we do this, of course, in submission to god, knowing That the vengeance of god is sure knowing that the wrath of god is sure knowing that the vindication of the name of christ who already sits exalted on the throne of glory, in his in his mediatorial, king mediatorial kingship.

That that his name and his honor are going to be vindicated repeatedly throughout history. You know, we already have him as our great and last prophet we already have him as our, our forever great high priest, after the order of Melchizedek, and we already have him as our forever king the fulfiller.

Of the Of the prophecy and the promise. In second, samuel. Seven. And so it is appropriate for us to sing and to pray not only for the final opening of god's mouth, but these opening of god's mouth throughout the course of history that correspond to various shuttings of the mouth of the wicked, he shuts them up.

By what he does in history. And this, this has happened with regularity for the last three thousand years in which this has been sung and prayed and every generation of believers. Who are reviled and persecuted and slandered, which we are guaranteed to happen as we've just heard recently in matthew 5 and not that long ago.

And second Timothy, Every generation of believers who are. Uh reviled and persecuted and slandered have psalm 109 to pray and to sing in union with christ

because the mouths of the wicked are open. And we may pray and sing that in moments of history. God would open his mouth.

But we do. So as those who are not opening our mouths for the first time, if we want to pray and sing this, well, then we need to be those whose mouths are already being employed. To serve the lord that we not offer. Our lips as instruments of unrighteousness.

As. With a book of James. Warns us in chapter 3 verses 8 through 10. Uh, that praise and person should not come from the same mouth. So even our memory verse this week and how the way we use our mouths with one another needs to obey the sixth commandment because our mouths were created to obey the first four commandments, and David is praying and singing here.

And by the spirit, and teaching us also by the spirit to do the same. Do not keep silent. Oh God, of my praise. So, is David silent until Uh, the psalm 109 situation comes around. No. He uses his mouth to praise God. And that's why even these who are his enemies against him, he has loved with his tongue in return.

For my love verse 4, they are my accusers. They've rewarded me evil for good and hatred for my love. Verse 5. And so verse 4 is actually the, the middle line there that we just skipped. Implies praying for his enemies. Which we have seen him say before you remember, the solvent, which this man who is hating him, who is turning on him when, when he was in trouble.

Claude prayed for or when he was in trouble. This almost prayed for him. Like it was his mom who was in trouble. His brother who is in trouble. As he says, I give myself to prayer verse 4. So the believer in the course of psalm, 109 is not someone who under the the accusation and the hatred and the opposition, the distress that he's in.

At the time is opening his, his mouth for the first time. Now here's one whose mouth is already being employed in God's. Praise already being employed in prayer and that's one of the reasons why when his enemy curses him, he doesn't respond with reviling for reviling. But he blesses. He prays for those who persecute him, why?

Because his mouth is trained already in its purpose. By that life of praise unto God by that life of prayer unto God. And so if we want to be prepared for when people attack us, we need to use our mouths well on an ongoing continuing basis and dependence upon God that the grace of Christ would control our lips.

So that when we are attacked, we would not, we would not sin back at the person who attacks us. But we would turn our lips to the God of our praise to the one who we already. Pray to all the time and so, okay. God, open your mouth and my behalf.

Because my mouth is occupied in praising. You and in praying. So there's a battle of speech. Um, going on here. Now, it's important to remember. When we? Uh, when we pray and sing like this, that there is that dynamic of here, not going to war. With attack upon our enemy from our lips.

But going to war. By prayer unto God. That God would take his vengeance. There are many other sorts of psalms that we can only sing in union with Christ. Especially like psalms. Um, asking God to declare us righteous or to teach or to treat us in, according with our righteousness, or But this one, the that God would destroy Uh, those who are enemies and curse them, this can only be sung in union with Christ because it's not so much.

The fact that they are our enemies, but that by virtue of union within, they are his enemies. That make all of these things. Appropriate to pray and appropriate to sing and indeed remembering then that Jesus also loves his enemies and died for his enemies. And desiring. That enemies would be eliminated by becoming subjects and by becoming adopted children in Christ and praying for the conversion.

Um, of of wicked kings and those and high position. And Of those who attack us, those who persecute us and so forth. Uh, so this psalm Should really wake us up to the great conflict between Satan and Christ and how those who attack believers are actually entering or acting on the wrong side of that conflict.

And sometimes that is us. We're on the right side of the conflict if we're in union with Christ. But don't we attack Jesus to. If we attack those who belong to him. And especially, since he says the least of Uh, of them in Matthew 25 and And so we should.

We should talk and or we should sing and pray like this, but we should only sing and pray. Uh, like this. In the way of union with Christ. And if we're remembering that, then, Then we are going to be helped. Um, to be very careful of our hearts and mouths.

With respect to people in the church. Uh, with respect to Um, Those who profess Christ. Lest. Uh, last we should attack those who are united to him. This is one of the reasons why is very important to leave vengeance to God. That we not be. That we be slow to speed.

A quick to listen, slow to be, uh, become angry because the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God. That we not repay evil for evil. But leave vengeance to the Lord because he says vengeance is mine. I will repay says as the Lord and so he gives us instruction to love and do good to our enemy.

While why are we enabled to? Because we are so sure. Of the wrath of God, the vengeance of God. You know, we can pray and sing this with confidence because we know that God will do it, but his wrath and vengeance aren't just sure. They are immense, they are immeasurable.

We are unable. Even even if we were not indulging, the heat of our own wrath. In revenge. We would be unable to give the right kind of vengeance. It would not be as great as God's vengeance. And, As God's wrath. And so yes, we may sing and pray in this matter but it must only ever be in a union with Christ that is actually A union.

Uh, a union with him that learns to leave vengeance entirely to him. And we don't indulge the the heat of the wrath of our flesh as we sing psalm, 109 But we've seen some 109. In awe at the certainty of God's wrath, then vengeance. And the intensity of God's wrath and vengeance.

We ourselves, not giving into the intensity of our Wrath. And vengeance. And so as we do so, Uh we are prepared to see the rest of the passage that is before us really as opposite. The blessing, that is in Christ. For instance, set a wicked man over him.

Why? Well, he's rejected Jesus. They're the only other options are wicked men. If you will not be ruled by Christ by whom, will you be ruled horrors? You'll be ruled by yourself. Who is a wicked? Man would be ruled by someone else who we're all wicked men. We want to be ruled by Jesus.

And so it is exactly appropriate to pray and to sing that the one who is against Christ, and who is against his people, and who is against his kingdom, will be ruled by the wicked. That is God's just wrath towards them. Let an accuser stand to his right hand Why?

Because the only one who can advocate for a sinner is the Lord Jesus. The one who died for us, the one who has risen again on account of our justification. He is our advocate, he is our champion. He is the only one who can defend you at the judgment, who can stand at your right hand at the judgment and you will be vindicated.

The other option would be the devil. And actually the word accuser here. Is. Uh, word, that is Satan. Let's Satan stand. He doesn't want Christ. Uh, included in his judgment while he gets the devil. When he is judged, let him be found guilty and let his prayer become a sin.

So sad that even believers will read something like verse 7 and say oh as a prayer, become a sin, how horrible we could never pray like that. If you are not praying through the lord jesus, and in union with him, your prayer is always a sin. The only way, the only reason god ever hears, the prayer of a sinner is for the sake of his son, who puts away our sin by his cross and who merits, who earns our hearing and our standing before god by his own righteousness.

Every prayer that isn't prayed through. Jesus is a sin. And so god will say in places like isaiah chapter 1,

And elsewhere in the proverbs. And in the prophets that the prayers of his people were wicked to him because they were wicked. They were not Submitting themselves to him and coming through faith, in his promised christ, coming through faith, in the promised priest, and sacrifice the lord jesus. And so god, hated their prayers.

And treated them as wickedness. And so verse 7 also is righteous and judge and then just Verse 8. Again. The only forever king. Is jesus. That's why the promise and second samuel 7 of a forever king. Who had come from the line of david could only be jesus. It couldn't be solomon.

And then, as you read first kings and second kings, You find two big problems with each of these kings one, their sinners. So, they can't be the the Righteous king and to they keep on dying. But god says of his anointed in psalm 16 that his flesh wouldn't seek corruption.

And so what peter had preached from that psalm on the day of pentecost here, the psalm 109 is teaching us to pray of according to And that all, All authority that refuses to submit to christ would be destroyed. And that the administration's of these authorities would be short. Sometimes we do that, don't we even with administrations that are set over us.

That are wicked, lord, shorten it. Yeah, maybe shorten it by converting him and change it in a moment. For shorten it in some other way, deliver us. From this tyranny that has been set over us. Let their days, be few, let another take their office. And then especially versus nine through 15, you could almost go to psalm 128.

Um, We usually sing it. Um, now Uh, bless them and that fears jehovah. And that walketh in his ways. Um, Like the old red version better, that's neither here nor there but it's the man who fears the lord. And walks in his ways and what sorts of blessings then.

Uh, does this man get well, he eats the labors of his hand. He is happy and it is well with him. Psalm 128 verse 2. What is the curse here that is prayed and sung? In part, let the creditor sees all that. He has, let's strangers plunder his labor Don't let him eat the work of his hands.

That's a blessing that comes in christ in the fear of the lord. Or the the next part. And and psalm 128 your wife shall be a, like a fruitful vine in the very heart of your house. But where is the wife of the cursed one? Who has opposed christ in psalm 109.

Let his children be fatherless and his wife, a widow. Let those children continually be vagabonds and beg. Let them seek their bread also from their desolate places. So they no longer have this godly husband and godly father. And they are not provided for in the home, they're not around the table at home.

Why? Because they're out of the home begging somewhere

Uh, some 128, the rest of verse three, your children, like all of plants all around your table, and we just, uh, just just read versus nine as children. Become a widow as children, continually be a vagabonds, And beg. Let there be none to extend mercy to him nor let there be any favor.

To his fatherless children. Continuing in Psalm 128. The whole thoughts are the man be blessed. If you're as you always you always bless you out of Zion. That you may see the good of jerusalem all the days of your life. Yes. May you see your children's children? Peace, be upon israel.

Consider the rest of our passage Let his posterity be cut off. And the generation following what their name. Be blotted out. Exactly the opposite. Of may you see your children's children? Verse 14. Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered before. He always let not listen of his mother be blotted out.

Exactly the opposite of the blessing upon zion and jerusalem and israel. That. That not only will your descendants, be blessed. But the nation from which you are descended, the father from whom you are descended That they would be blessed. But let there here rather than let them be blessed and god's peace be on israel.

But the sins of those from whom you're descended verse or from whom. He, the wicked is descended verse 15. Be continually before y'all way. That he may cut off the memory. Of them from the earth. And so, all blessing is in god and in his christ. And when someone sets himself against the lord jesus, when someone sets himself against a believer, What he is signing up for is the opposite of all blessedness.

And we sing with dreadful solemnity and seriousness. The curse. That god rightly ought. To bring upon the one who has set himself against god, set himself against christ, set himself against christians. Realizing. That he is bringing the fullness of curse upon his head. And so, Rather than having the heat of our fleshly vengeance.

Rise up against him. We sing and praise of god and in prayer to god, that he would act according to his own character. And his own covenant. Asking both. That those who are his enemies would be made subjects by redemption. And that those who, Remain enemies. Would be a cursed.

With God's curse. Realizing that we were those enemies. That 109 psalm 109 could rightly have been sung about us by jesus. But jesus gave himself for us. So, that the very blessings, That are renounced against the wicked. Have become ours in the lord, jesus christ. Only by, who he is.

And what he has done. And that in his personal, love to us. He's done it for us. And given us such a union with him. That not only are all of these blessings hours. That are listed in this psalm. But we are able to sing and pray the psalm itself.

In union with him. It's just wonderful and amazing. Praise god. Let's pray. Our father in heaven. We pray that you would help us. That your spirit would restrain the heat of our fleshly vengeance. And that he would. Make us to realize freshly how The one who rightly. Would have said and done all of these things about us and to us, Has given himself for us and united us to himself.

Help us to love the name of the lord. Jesus help us to love the authority of the lord jesus. Help us to love the blessedness of belonging to the lord jesus. So that when he is opposed or we are opposed and we know That he receives it personally or Whenever we are in danger of attacking others, That we would be able to pray and to sing this psalm.

With right hearts given by your spirit from. Your son, our lord jesus himself. And give us to live and this awareness. Of all things being Divided into the two categories either. With him and for him, Under him. Or opposed to him and a cursed by him. Help us, we pray about your spirit in.

The lord jesus. His own name. Amen.