

Psalms 35,36

Psalms 36:7,8 How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Your wings. They are abundantly satisfied with the fullness of Your house, and You give them drink from the river of Your pleasures.

Psalms 35 is the prayer of a desperate man. Psalms 36 contrasts the ways of the wicked with what can be known and experienced through relationship with God.

Psalms 35: Have you ever felt that someone was out to get you, that they wanted to destroy you in any way they could? Now, I hope this did not happen but in that circumstance did you ever allow yourself to fantasize or let your imagination run with problems that might befall the one who is troubling you? If you ever let your mind run in this way, then you are David in Psalms 35.

There are problems with this kind of thinking. First, if you allow your enemy to become your focus then you will never solve the problem. You will find yourself stuck in a situation that never changes. Second, blaming your enemy will blind you to your own faults. Many situations that we

encounter are complicated and even though you may not be the primary cause of the chaos, you may have contributed in some small way and if you correct the wrong you did, it could make a big difference to the larger picture.

In spite of these critiques, the psalm is positive because David took these thoughts to the Lord. You know on one level that the Lord knows your thoughts. When you acknowledge that by rehearsing those thoughts before Him then You are conscious of what he knows in a way that will allow Him to influence those thoughts. Here, David takes his imagination and shares it with God and then imagines God's response and what it will look like. His despair then becomes triumph and vindication.

Psalms 36: Where Psalms 35 is emotional, Psalms 36 is thoughtful. The circumstance may have been different but it could have been the same, it is not what is happening but how we respond that makes a difference. In this case David gives thought to the character of the wicked and he analyzes their behavior. His observations include: no fear of God, self flattery, hatred and iniquity in words of wickedness and deceit, the loss of wisdom and good

intentions, self destruction and "no problem" with evil.

Now David turns his thoughts to the Lord. Using the same powers of thought and analysis David matches God's character qualities of mercy, faithfulness, righteousness and judgment with the heavens, clouds, great mountains, and a great deep. The heavens are the atmosphere, the sky, stars, moon and sun. The clouds bring rain. The great mountain stands surely, a landmark, an objective and a focal point of beauty and imagination. A great deep is mysterious, unexplored, and even dangerous for the careless

Beginning with verse 7, the objective potential of God is experienced. God's lovingkindness is valued and so He is trusted to provide protection when troubles come. To be with the Lord is the ultimate experience of satisfaction and pleasure. He is the fountain of life and He is light.

The concluding prayer asks God to continue to regard those who know Him with lovingkindness and with righteousness. He asks for protection against pride and the influence of those who are wicked knowing that when they fall, they are not able to rise.