A further psalm written by David, which is imprecatory in nature – asking God, in strong terms, to defeat and destroy the enemies of His people. Other such psalms include: **5, 10, 17, 58, 69, 70, 83, 109, 129, 137** and **140**, of which **7** is considered the mildest, whilst **109** has over 30 curses contained within it.

As with other psalms of David it is not possible to attach it to a particular period of David’s life. However, the way **v1** is written is similar to what David said to Saul in **1 Samuel 24:15**, **may the Lord therefore be judge and give sentence between me and you, and see to it and plead my cause and deliver me from your hand**, so it may possibly be written as Saul pursued him.

#### 1-3

**Plead my cause, O LORD, with those who strive with me; fight against those who fight against me. Take hold of shield and buckler and stand up for my help. Also draw out the spear and stop those who pursue me. Say to my soul, ‘I am your salvation.’**

**Plead my cause, O LORD, with those who strive with me**: This was a prayer from a man who generally lived in God’s will and those who fought against him were opposed to God.

**Take hold of shield and buckler and stand up for my help**: David calls upon God to put on His own armour, to fight on David’s behalf. The idea that God has armour is also expressed in **Isaiah 59:17**.

**Also draw out the spear**: A **shield** *magen* is a small shield and a **buckler** is a *sinnah*, a large rectangular shield often carried by a shield-bearer. These two are primarily defensive weapons, but David also called upon God to be on the offensive for him, using a **spear**.

**Say to my soul, ‘I am your salvation’**: David looks to God to reassure him that He was his sole salvation.

#### 4-8

**Let those be put to shame and brought to dishonour who seek after my life; let those be turned back and brought to confusion who plot my hurt. Let them be like chaff before the wind and let the angel of the LORD chase them. Let their way be dark and slippery and let the angel of the LORD pursue them. For without cause they have hidden their net for me in a pit, which they have dug without cause for my life. Let destruction come upon him unexpectedly and let his net that he has hidden catch himself; into that very destruction let him fall.**

**Let those be put to shame and brought to dishonour who seek after my life**: David asked God to not only protect him, but also to prove him right. He wanted it to be seen and known that he really did serve and obey God and that those who opposed him were made **like chaff before the wind**.

‘Viewing sinners as men, we love them and seek their good, but regarding them as enemies of God, we cannot think of them with anything but detestation, with a desire for the confusion of their ways. No loyal subject can wish well to rebels.’ (Spurgeon)

Twice David calls for **the angel of the LORD chase**/**pursue them**. ‘Knowingly or not, David called upon God the Son for His help. In my judgment this figure was a preincarnate manifestation of the second person of the Trinity, the Lord Jesus Christ, which is why he is regularly called ‘the LORD.’’ (Boice) ‘The angel of the Lord is either our salvation or our doom…’ (Kidner) Exodus **23:20-22**.

‘Chaff driven before the wind may rest against a wall; but where shall they rest who are chased by an angel?’ (Trapp)

**Let his net that he has hidden catch himself**: David prayed that the guilty one would truly be caught in his own trap - and the guilty one was his adversary. David prayed that **destruction** would come upon his adversary **unexpectedly**.

We can pray similarly against our spiritual adversaries, the principalities and powers that battle against us in the spiritual realm. The devil has snares **1 Timothy 3:7**, **2 Timothy 2:26** and he has strategies set against us **2 Corinthians 2:11**.

#### 9-10

**My soul shall be joyful in the LORD; it shall rejoice in His salvation. All my bones shall say,**
**‘LORD, who is like You, delivering the poor from him who is too strong for him, yes, the poor and the needy from him who plunders him?’**

**My soul shall be joyful in the LORD… All my bones shall say, ‘LORD, who is like You’**: After pleading to God for deliverance and protection, David knows that his **soul** and entire being will be happy in the LORD and give honour to Him, who delivers **the poor from him who is too strong for him**.

#### ‘We do not triumph in the destruction of others, but in the salvation given to us of God.’ (Spurgeon)

#### 11-14

**Fierce witnesses rise up; they ask me things that I do not know. They reward me evil for good, to the sorrow of my soul. But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth; I humbled myself with fasting; and my prayer would return to my own heart. I paced about as though he were my friend or brother; I bowed down heavily, as one who mourns for his mother.**

**They reward me evil for good**: David remembers his enemies, who did **evil** to him, as he did **good** – all **to the sorrow of** his **soul**.

**They reward me evil for good…**: ‘This was never more literally true of David, than it was of the holy Jesus, when, standing before Pontius Pilate. He received no other return from the Jews, for all the gracious words which he had spoken and all the merciful works which he had done among them, than that of being slandered, and put to death.’ (Horne)

**…to the sorrow of my soul**: ‘To be misunderstood or be made the deliberate target of false accusation is great sorrow. God might allow such a sorrowful trial.

* To humble His people.
* To cause them to seek Him in urgent prayer.
* To prevent them from pursuing the very thing falsely accused of.
* To test whether His people will rely upon Him in all things.
* To teach them how to behave toward others when they are falsely accused.
* To warn them against making false accusations against others.’ (Spurgeon)

**When they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth**: David described one way in which he did good to his enemies **when they were sick** – he made their problems his own and cared for them **as though** they **were my friend or brother**.

#### 15-16

**But in my adversity they rejoiced and gathered together; attackers gathered against me and I did not know it; they tore at me and did not cease; with ungodly mockers at feasts they gnashed at me with their teeth.**

**But in my adversity they rejoiced**: David contrasts his treatment of those enemies, with the way that they were happy and **rejoiced**, in David’s time of crisis. ‘This mobbing of one who has suddenly become vulnerable, whose goodness has put men to shame, was eagerly re-enacted at the trial of Jesus.’ (Kidner)

**Attackers gathered against me and I did not know it**: David is saying these attacks were worsened as they came upon him by surprise.

#### 17-18

**Lord, how long will You look on? Rescue me from their destructions, my precious life from the lions. I will give You thanks in the great assembly; I will praise You among many people.**

**Lord, how long will You look on?** David spoke honestly before God, saying he felt God was indifferent to his problems and he begged God to **rescue**. The lions refers to those who would attack him.

**I will give You thanks in the great assembly**: David knows God will bring victory and vows to give God the glory for His deliverance and that he will do it publicly.

#### 19-22

**Let them not rejoice over me who are wrongfully my enemies; nor let them wink with the eye who hate me without a cause. For they do not speak peace, but they devise deceitful matters against the quiet ones in the land. They also opened their mouth wide against me and said, ‘Aha, aha! Our eyes have seen it.’ This You have seen, O LORD; do not keep silence. O Lord, do not be far from me.**

**Let them not rejoice over me who are wrongfully my enemies**: David continued his prayer, asking God to vindicate him before his **enemies**.

**…who hate me without a cause**: ‘Jesus identified with those who suffer without apparent cause, as He quotes **v19 & 69:4** about himself **John 15:25**.’ (VanGemeren)

**They devise deceitful matters against the quiet ones in the land**: David prayed for vindication against his enemies because they plotted against God’s humble, simple people.

The German Lutheran Bible translated the phrase **the quiet ones in the land** as die Stillen im Lande, which later became a phrase to describe believers in Germany, especially those who lived simple lives, trusting in God to defend them.

**This You have seen, O LORD… O Lord, do not be far from me**: David continued his plea to God, using two different names for God in the Hebrew text.

* **LORD** – in capital letters, translates the Hebrew word Yahweh – the covenant name of God.
* **Lord** - regular letters, translates the Hebrew word Adonai – the ancient Hebrew word for Lord. Sometimes Adonai has the sense of Sir and sometimes it has the sense of God.

**This You have seen, O LORD**: ‘God has seen the facts of the case and these include not only David’s innocence, but also that he is being falsely accused and slandered.’ (Boice)

#### 23-26

**Stir up Yourself and awake to my vindication, to my cause, my God and my Lord. Vindicate me, O LORD my God, according to Your righteousness; and let them not rejoice over me. Let them not say in their hearts, ‘Ah, so we would have it!’ Let them not say, ‘We have swallowed him up.’**

**Let them be ashamed and brought to mutual confusion who rejoice at my hurt; let them be clothed with shame and dishonour who exalt themselves against me.**

**Stir up Yourself and awake to my vindication**: David continues to call upon God to move from His apparent indifference, to act on his behalf.

**My God and my Lord**: David uses another word God, the word Elohim – commonly translated as **God**. In this case he uses the plural form as in **Genesis 1:1**.

**Let them be ashamed and brought to mutual confusion who rejoice at my hurt**: David again asks that God be his defence before his enemies.

#### 27-28

**Let them shout for joy and be glad, who favour my righteous cause; and let them say continually,**
**‘Let the LORD be magnified, who has pleasure in the prosperity of His servant.’ My tongue shall speak of Your righteousness and of Your praise all the day long.**

**Let them shout for joy and be glad, who favour my righteous cause**: Although David does not claim to be sinless, he does claim God on his side in many of the disputes with his enemies and David doesn’t appear to have any self-doubt in these matters.

**Let the LORD be magnified**: Whilst David speak of his needs and troubles, he rightfully ends by focussing on and praising God. He thought of the people of God enlarging the LORD in their hearts and minds, and of his continual praise to God (**my tongue shall speak of Your righteousness and of Your praise all the day long**).

‘Mine enemies’ great design is to magnify themselves (**v26**), but my chief desire is that God may be magnified.’ (Poole)