

Psalm analysis paper

Business



The speaker then proceeds to make the simile of his prayer being “ set forth before hee as incense”; inferring his prayer is as a pleasant aroma permeating the air to please the Lord.

He follows this by asking that “ the lifting up of my hands” be his evening’s sacrifice. I feel as though he’s saying these things to entice the Lord to comply with his demand that he be heard. The first thing he asks God is to “ set watch” before his mouth, and “ keep the door” of his tongue. It appears as though he wants the Lord to know he has good intentions, but realizes he will speak evils, and wants the Lords help in staying his tongue.

He proceeds to ask that his heart not be inclined to do any evil thing, and that he not be allowed to enjoy the dainties of wicked men. Essentially, he’s further more asking the Lord to make sure that he stays righteous and true.

This is where I began feeling like whatever was lurking on the horizon for this person might be something he thinks is going to greatly test his beliefs and values. The speaker then asks that “ the righteous smite him” and “ reprove” him. At first I thought this simply meant he wanted his fellow brethren to aid him if he were to stray from the path of the Lord; that it would be “ a kindness” as he said.

But the more I read over it, the more I feel like there’s a double meaning here. What if he’s using the word “ righteous” in a cynical, sarcastic way? The full verse reads “ Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head: for yet my prayer also shall be in their calamities.

” Perhaps he’s saying, “ Go ahead and let those who suppose power persecute me and attempt to correct my beliefs with their own. By doing so they will be doing me the favor of allowing me to prove my faith to you, Lord, because I’m not budging.

I’m just going to pray to you, Lord, for their sakes. ” Perhaps this is what he knows awaits him, and he’s asking for the courage to do this; stay righteous. (I’m not entirely sure what the oil metaphor means if he’s using the word “ righteous” being righted in behavior and being baptized or anointed.

) In the next verse he says, “ When their Judges are overthrown in stony places, they shall hear my words; for they are sweet. ” He asserts that his words are “ sweet”, and carry more weight and truth than those of the Judges who will surely be overthrown.

This would seem to lend itself towards the “ sarcastic-righteous” theory, saying that only once their Judges are overthrown will his words be heard. One can only assume that Judges, as deciders of right and wrong, would only be overthrown if they were viewed as being intolerably in the wrong. The next verse takes a violent twist compared to the previous ones, saying, “ Our bones are scattered at the grave’s mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth.

” He’s speaking here of what I can only assume is the fate that most likely awaits him if he stays vigilant and true to the Lord.

But he next says “ But mine eyes are unto thee, O GOD, the Lord: in thee is my trust; leave not my soul to destitute. Here he seems to be asking God to

protect him. He says he trusts the Lord, but he immediately follows that statement with the plea, “leave not my soul to destitute.” This gave me the same feeling of desperation that the opening of this psalm gave me. That’s like saying “I trust you not to screw this up.

Seriously though, don’t screw this up.” It makes me question how much he really trusts the Lord here, especially after seeing the bones of his brethren scattered about graves like chopped wood.