

Psalm 101

This psalm was perhaps written by David between his being made king over Judah, and his being made king over all the tribes. He resolves to order his kingdom in righteousness and justice.

And he did:

- **2 Samuel 8:15** - "And David reigned over all Israel; and David executed judgment and justice unto all his people."

The connection with the Torah reading in **Numbers 14:11-45** is **verse 4** - "A froward heart shall depart from me," and the reference to slander in verse 5 - all representing the cursed generation that would die in the wilderness.

Psalm 101:1 - "I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O LORD, will I sing."

God is the source of mercy and justice. Singing about them consequently directs our song to God Himself.

- **Micah 6:8** - "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

But the Targum gives it a Job-like interpretation:

Targum: Whether you show mercy to me or treat me with justice, for both of them I will sing praise; in your presence, O Lord, I will make music.

Psalm 101:2 - "I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart."

"wisely" - *sakal* - wisdom, understanding, prudence

Used of the Messiah:

- **Isaiah 53:13** - "Behold, my servant shall deal prudently (*sakal*), he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high"

"perfect" - *tamiym* - without blemish, perfect, upright, without spot

A word used of the Passover lamb: **Exodus 12:5** - "Your lamb shall be without blemish..."

Jewish translation: I shall concern myself with the way of integrity. When will it come to me? I shall walk with the innocence of my heart within my house.

NET: I will walk in the way of integrity. When will you come to me? I will conduct my business with integrity in the midst of my palace.

This is looking past David as a just king to Messiah and his perfect kingdom.

A "perfect heart" uses a slightly different word - *tamam* - which means completed, finished, whole, totally consumed, and therefore upright, clean, simple as opposed to a heart full of schemes and mischief, and innocent.

Used as a plural in the Urim and Thummim of the High Priest's breastplate - "lights and perfections" and therefore also "truth."

Rashi - "in my house": I shall walk with the integrity of my heart even within my house, in private as well as in public.

Targum: in "the house of my doctrine" possibly referring to the Temple, and therefore to Messiah:

- **Isaiah 2:3** - "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem."

The Targum has it as a question from God and a reply by David:

Targum: God said, "I will make you wise in the perfect way; when will you come unto me?" David said, "I will walk in the perfection of my heart within my house of instruction."

Psalm 101:3 - "I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me."

Targum: "I will not propose to my heart" - i.e. "in my thought." I will not set up an evil thing in my imagination.

This points directly back to Adam and Eve:

- **Genesis 3:6** - "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."

Instead:

- **Psalm 16:8** - "I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved."

Psalm 101:4 - "A froward heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked person."

"person" is in italics in the KJV.

NET: I will have nothing to do with a perverse person; I will not permit evil.

The Targum is even more specific:

Targum: "Let the twisted heart pass from me; I shall not know the evil impulse." This is the evil inclination.

This can only be referring to Christ, who was without sin.

- **2 Corinthians 5:21** - "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Psalm 101:5 - "Whoso privily slandereth his neighbor, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer."

Targum: "he that speaketh with a triple tongue against his neighbor, him will I destroy, and he shall be smitten with the leprosy."

"a triple tongue" because slander kills three persons; him that carries the slander, him that receives it, and him of whom it is about.

Slander was always associated with leprosy because of Miriam's affliction (Numbers 12)

Psalm 101:6 - "Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me."

Christ walked a perfect way. We are called to the same walk.

- **Luke 9:23** - "And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."

Psalm 101:7-8 - "He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight. I will early destroy all the wicked of the land; that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the LORD."

"early" - in the morning, when judicial sentences are handed down:

Targum: "in the world to come, which is like to the light of the morning, I will destroy all the wicked of the earth:"

- **Revelation 21:27** - "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."