

there has been a reciprocal act of hatred. No doubt we must take his word for the fact that he has correctly performed as he tells us. The Psalm would have no point if this were not the case. Therefore in the first division we find a total repulse of all the good the Psalmist tried to do and the ones who hated him hated him all the more.

The second part of the Psalm is the prayer of imprecation (vss. 6-20) in which the writer expresses his will for the enemy in strong language, calling upon God to act as executor. Since the prayer of imprecation is the "objectionable" part, it is well to analyze it more closely. The interested Hebrew scholar will understand the key verbs as being jussive. It is the language of sincere, fervent, emphatic prayer so that there is no doubt about the urgency of the Psalmist regarding the content or feeling of his prayer. He does not "just wish" these things, he craves them from God. The prayer of imprecation falls into five divisions so far as content (not form) is concerned. These are given with brief notes in the following paragraphs.

Verse 7 gives the first part of the prayer and the Psalmist seeks for the wicked man his just deserts. "Let his prayer be sin."

6. Set thou a wicked man over him and let Satan stand at his right hand.
7. When he shall be judged, let him be condemned; and let his prayer become sin.

and what else will the prayer of the unconverted be? Having refused the grace of God the very pretense of religion further shows the depraved heart. In this there is very little that is imprecatory. The writer seeks that the wicked might become subject to the afflictions which are ultimately due him. He is mirroring the same truth that is seen in Proverbs 15:8, etc. The simple truth is that no act of religious fervor as done by the wicked will "make-up" before God for his basic attitude of unbelief.