Grace Fellowship Church, September 14,1986 Rick Griffith

**When the Finger is Pointed at You**

**Psalm 64**

**Introduction**

1. My wife Susan was once slandered by a former Christian boss who took her to court.

2. What would you do in such a situation? Here's what some people recommended to us:

 a. One Christian suggested that we report the boss to the Better Business Bureau.

 b. Another encouraged us to take him to court and "sue the pants off him."

3. This is an issue we all have to address. As long as we live on earth we will have people speaking evil of us, so how should we respond?

4. Today's passage will speak to the issue of how a believer should respond when verbally attacked by others. What should we do when people slander us? The answer is found in Psalm 47 where we'll read how David reacted in this kind of situation.

**I. The Problem: David experiences the pain of being slandered by others (1-6).**

A. David requests God for protection and complains to God about his plight (1-6; we should pray also).

1. David requests God for protection (1-2).

a. He cries out to God in his anguish (1a).

b. He prays for protection (1b-2).

2. David complains to God about his plight (3-6).

a. Enemies are throwing accusations at him (3; "sharpen tongues"; Ehud).

b. Accusers secretly and fearlessly speak malicious words about him (4; "innocent" Job).

c. Slanderers work together to think up secret, evil plans against him (5-6a; ILL: castle archers, church plot to oust pastor).

d. Connivers plan malicious schemes from their wicked thoughts (6b; "cunning")

B. Perhaps you are facing a situation where someone is slandering you right now.

1. People are slandering you to ruin your reputation.

a. You know that you're about to be bypassed in the company because of a jealous supervisor who won't be honest about your good work (ILL: Morey).

b. You have a close friend who is spreading rumors about you.

2. Accusers secretly and fearlessly speak malicious words about you.

a. I once was falsely accused of being involved in a homosexual relationship.

b. Perhaps you are in a very vulnerable position and thus are an easy target.

3. Critics work together on a plan to hurt you when you don't suspect trouble.

a. The Sawi Indians valued treachery above all else.

b. Joseph's brothers put their heads together to undo him.

4. Connivers plan malicious schemes from their wicked thoughts.

a. Proverbs 23:7 says about the selfish, "as he thinks within himself, so he is."

b. Some people have a very difficult time thinking that others have pure motives because they can't imagine a selfless motive in themselves. Perhaps you are the victim of such corrupt thoughts which lead to corrupt words spoken against you.

(Well, we've talked enough about the problem, but what do you do when you're in such dire straits? Should you aim right back at them with equally vicious arrows? Should you plan the ole "counterattack?" Should you just give your attacker the cold shoulder? David first brought it to the Lord in prayer in verses 1-6, but then he "turned the other cheek" and let them have it, right? No, in the next section we'll see that he left his problem with God…)

**II. The Solution: When slandered we should leave the revenging to God (7-9).**

 A. God will suddenly judge those who slander us (7).

1. The archery imagery used of the enemies in verses 3-4 reappears here in reference to God who "strikes them down" by defeating their plans (ILL: pastor's slanderers ousted and not the pastor, Joseph's outcome). God is not a mamby-pamby, benevolent grandfather who's afraid of dealing out the justice which fits the crime.

2. It doesn't say when God will judge, but that He will (Saul pursued David 14 yrs).

B. God will cause their own speech to boomerang upon them (8a).

1. Another wordplay appears here where the tongue which they sharpened for others (verse 3) will return upon themselves!

2. Susan's boss got caught in his own words by God's design.

3. Dr. Bill Bright has a personal policy never to respond to slander.

C. People will scorn those who slander us (8b).

1. The question which the enemies posed in verse 5 is answered here. Everyone will see the snares they set and will scorn them, not the intended victim.

2. Voltaire was a scorner eventually scorned by others.

D. People will stand in awe of God and give Him praise (9).

1. Verse 4 refers to the wicked who do not fear evil (arrogance), but here we see all men who do fear God (humility)!

2. "Ponder" refers to gaining insight as a result of seeing God's activity (Is 41:20).

**Conclusion**

1. We have seen that the best solution to being slandered is to leave the revenging to God (Main Idea). When slandered we should follow the example of David who did not take vengeance into is own hands but rather sought vindication from the Lord.

2. When you think about it and ponder it, it makes sense to let God be the judge. He's very qualified! He knows all the variables, every angle, every side of the story.

3. David summed up what we should do in a slander situation in verse 10:

 "Let the righteous rejoice in the LORD and take refuge in him;

 let all the upright in heart praise him!"

4. How will you respond towards that person who is slandering you now? Give God the opportunity to glorify His name by not retaliating. Leave the responsibility to Him.

**Psalm 64 Sermon Manuscript**

During my third year at Dallas Seminary my wife Susan laid hold of a tremendous, new job. She worked as the administrative assistant to the vice-president of a real estate development corporation in Dallas which built apartment complexes. The company paid her extremely well and on top of a super paycheck she received a $6,000 bonus after working only three months!

Not only was her work a super job, but to top it off her boss was a Christian, active in another Bible church in the city. This man had a tremendous ministry to refugees in the area and I thoroughly enjoyed talking to him every time there was a company party. He was warm and friendly and I especially enjoyed speaking with him about spiritual things since there was an affinity with him that I did not have with any of the non-Christians in the company.

He was a delight, his wife was super, the job paid well, and the hours were just right. To paraphrase what David once said, "The lines had fallen for us in pleasant places!"

Ten months later Susan and her employer sat next to one another before a judge who would render a verdict on the lawsuit brought against Susan by her employer…

It was a pathetic scene: the employer had fired Susan only a few weeks earlier, a total shock in itself. Due to our checking account balance which had dwindled down to $6.12, she applied for unemployment insurance. She was pregnant and unemployed, and therefore had the unenviable task of looking for a decent job to last only seven months. Many tears were shed during those three weeks of searching before she found a job, but the ultimate blow came when we received notice for a court of hearing initiated by her former employer.

So we found ourselves as two Christians facing a non-Christian judge, witnessing unbelievable accusations from her former employer. He believed that no one should ever apply for unemployment "since so many starving people exist in the world." Our ears could hardly believe themselves as we heard slanderous remarks proceed from the mouth of her formerly fair and reasonable boss. "She's incompetent…" "She can't add up numbers…" "She shouldn't be allowed unemployment but should have to pay the $400 unemployment money back…"

What would you do in such a situation? One believer suggested that we report the boss to the Better Business Bureau. When another Christian from church heard of our plight he called to offer these consoling words, "Hey, I know of a good Christian lawyer who will help you take him to court and 'sue the pants off him.'" We agonized over that situation! It's never a picnic to be publicly slandered by another…

I wish this account of slander was an isolated situation, but this is an issue we all have to address. In fact, maybe you, too, are the victim of a verbal barrage aimed at you by someone else. As long as we live on earth we will have people speaking evil of us, but how should we respond when it happens?

Today's passage will speak to the issue of how a believer should respond when verbally attacked by others. We will first examine the problem, then the solution. The Scripture will spell out the painful reality of slander followed by God's remedy for these situations. What should we do when people slander us? The answer is found in Psalm 64 where we'll read how David reacted in this kind of situation. Please turn to the 64th Psalm, a psalm of David. Psalm 64 …

Let's first take a look at the problem seen in verses 1-6. David experiences the pain of being slandered by others. His dilemma lies in the stinging realization that others are accusing him to bring about his ruin. Notice how David requests God for protection and complains to God about his plight. First he requests protection, then he complains.

First let's see how he requests God for protection in verses 1 and 2. Notice how he cries out to God in his anguish,

 "Hear me, O God, as I voice my complaint"

and then he prays for protection,

 "protect my life from the threat of the enemy.

 Hide me from the conspiracy of the wicked,

 from that noisy crowd of evildoers."

David did the best thing he could do in such a situation: when outnumbered in a conspiracy against him, he brought the matter before God. I think this is where some of us often fail in knowing how to deal with being slandered: we get exhausted thinking through all the possible strategies to protect ourselves before ever asking God for **His** protection.

Notice also that he complains to the Lord. I've had some people tell me that it's wrong to complain to God. Not so. God wants to hear the deepest needs of our heart! He complains about a noisy crowd who's out to get him, translated "tumult" in the New American Standard and "insurrection" in the KJV. The point is that David is outnumbered and he doesn't know what to do.

After requesting God for protection in verses 1-2 we see David complaining to God about his plight in verses 3-6. He complains about four things:

First of all, he complains that enemies are throwing accusations at him. Notice what is said about the enemies in verse 3, that they

 "sharpen their tongues like swords and aim their words like bitter arrows."

Obviously, his enemies don't have a Stanley file to whittle their tongue down to a sharp object. The point here (no pun intended) is that his slanderers worked painstakingly to achieve the kind of abusive speech which would, like a sword or arrow, pierce and strike down David suddenly and ruthlessly. Remember zealous Peter in the Garden of Gethsemene? He went after the head of the High Priest's slave Malchus with his sword. That's the idea except the swords here really are **words** destined to destroy.

The second thing David complains about is that accusers secretly and fearlessly speak malicious words about him. Take a look at verse 4,

 "They shoot from ambush at the innocent man;

 they shoot at him suddenly, without fear."

The word translated "innocent" here is the same word used to describe righteous Job. It refers to one who, although oppressed by slanders, in God's sight is innocent of the attacks directed at him.

The archery imagery continues here where you can almost see the men directing treacherous words towards innocent David from their hiding places like an archer would shoot an arrow from an opening in a wall.

A few months ago on channel 13 I saw a documentary on the castles of England. It mentioned that the English devised an ingenious strategy. Archers could stand at a single spot behind the wall and either shoot through a crack on the right or the left. They had nothing to fear since no one could reach them. This is how David depicted his enemies, except he was on the outside on the wall and every crack in the wall seemed to be firing malicious words at him. It looked like David's slanderers had nothing to fear since no one could even see where they were.

The third thing David complains about is in verses 5 and the beginning of 6. Slanderers are working together to think up secret, evil plans against him:

 "They encourage each other in evil plans,

 they talk about hiding their snares;

 they say, 'Who will see them?'

 They plot injustice and say,

 'We have devised a perfect plan!'"

Here we see the slanderers working together on secret schemes to trap an innocent man. This reminds me of a plot once conceived in a church with which I was associated where a group of people in the congregation became convinced that God desired to use them to oust the pastor. They met in several secret meetings to solidify their evil intent with prayer against the unsuspecting minister of the gospel! This particular group even passed around a petition in the community to slander the pastor before non-believers.

You might wonder, "How is it that even those who supposedly love God can be so slanderous?" David answers the question at the end of verse 6 with his fourth complaint: Connivers plan malicious schemes from their wicked thoughts,

 "Surely the mind and heart of man are cunning."

The word here for "cunning" (or "deep" in the New American Standard and King James) is also used in Ecclesiastes of wisdom which you can't attain and in Job of the mysteries which only God knows. David reflects here that only God knows his enemies' thoughts. He can't even defend himself against his accusers since he doesn't know what they will say.

Perhaps you are facing a situation where someone is slandering you right now. Maybe David's four complaints sound all too disgustingly familiar to you.

First, like David, people are slandering you to ruin your reputation. You know that you're about to be bypassed in the company because of a jealous supervisor who won't be honest about your good work. I once had a supervisor who felt very threatened with my presence. Morey wouldn't teach me any more than was absolutely necessary. I ended up losing the job due to his slandering me before the owner. Maybe you even have a very **close** friend who is spreading rumors about you, a believer who used to be very close to you, one whom you really trusted.

Secondly, like David, accusers secretly and fearlessly speak malicious words about you. I once was even falsely accused of being involved in a homosexual relationship with a man whom I was discipling. Perhaps you are in a very vulnerable position and thus are an easy target.

Thirdly, perhaps like David, critics work together on a plan to hurt you when you don't suspect trouble. Maybe you're familiar with the Sawi Indians with whom the famous missionary Don Richardson shared the gospel. Of all their values, they esteemed treachery above all else. Joseph's brothers also put their heads together to undo him, leaving him for dead. Maybe out of envy someone would really like to see you out of the way, too.

Fourthly, your situation might be like David's in that connivers are planning malicious schemes against you from their wicked thoughts. Proverbs 23:7 says about the selfish man, "as he thinks within himself, so he is." Some people have a very difficult time thinking that others have pure motives because they can't imagine a selfless motive in themselves. Perhaps you are the victim of such corrupt thoughts which lead to corrupt words leveled against you.

Can you relate to any of these situations? I hope you can't, but I know that for some of you your backs are against the wall as hungry dogs revile and attack you.

Well, we've talked enough about the problem, but what do you do when you're in such dire straits? Should you aim right back at them with equally vicious arrows? Should you plan the ole "counterattack?" Should you just give your attacker the cold shoulder? David first brought it to the Lord in prayer in verses 1-6, but then he "turned the other cheek" and let them have it, right? No, in the next section we'll observe that he left his problem with the LORD…

Verses 7-9 record David's solution and our solution to slander. The solution: when slandered we should leave the vengeance to God. If there's anything you remember from this message let it be this principle: Don't take your own revenge! When you're faced with your accusers, don't retaliate, don't plan a vendetta, but instead let the LORD deal with them. When you leave it in His hands you know what will happen? Verses 7-9 cite four results of leaving it in God's hands:

The first result of leaving those who reproach us in His hands is that God will suddenly judge those who slander us. Notice verse 7,

 "But God will shoot them with arrows;

 suddenly they will be struck down."

The archery imagery used of the enemies in verses 3-4 reappears here in reference to God who will "strike them down" by defeating their plans. Before we saw the wicked shooting at the innocent, but notice who's doing the shooting here! **God** takes up the offense for His people so that **He** shoots arrows at the wicked! God is not a mamby-pamby, benevolent grandfather who's afraid of dealing out the justice which fits the crime.

Remember the church members whom I mentioned earlier, those who slandered the pastor to get him ousted? Well, the pastor made it his conviction not to retaliate, but to leave it in the Lord's hands. And as it turned out, the whole 200 of them were ousted, not the pastor! Returning back to the story of Joseph and his brothers, you know the final chapter there. The brothers who worked together on an evil plan were pierced to the heart by God through grief over what they had done to Joseph and it was only Joseph's mercy that spared them. God takes care of those who slander us when we leave it with Him.

I should note one other thing, though. The text affirms **that** God will judge slanderers, but it doesn't say **when**. "Suddenly" here doesn't mean "immediately" but only swiftly and surprizing to the slanderer. Even the author of these words, David, lived as a fugitive for 14 years until God's arrows finally caught up with Saul, the pursuer. Be confident that as you leave your attackers in God's hands He'll see that justice fits the crime, but let Him do it in His own time.

So, the first result of not retaliating is that God will judge. Notice the second result of leaving the situation in His hands in the first part of verse 8: God will cause their own speech to boomerang upon them,

 "He will turn their own tongues against them

 and bring them to ruin."

Their own words will come back upon them in judgment. We've seen this word for "tongue" before in verse 3. Another wordplay appears here where the tongue which they sharpened for others will return to pierce themselves!

I began this message with the story of my wife's former employer who denounced her before the judge. Well, Susan's boss got caught in his own words by God's design just like this verse says. The judge asked him for evidence of her negligence and he responded, "She can't add." "May I see the figures?" asked the judge. "I don't have them," he responded. "What were the numbers she miscalculated?" "I don't know." "What should the figures have been?" "I don't know." We just sat quietly and spoke only when necessary while God vindicated us…

Dr. Bill Bright, as president of Campus Crusade for Christ in such a visible position, seems to always get attacked from non-Christians and Christians alike. Yet he has a personal policy never to respond to slander but to let God deal with his accusers. That's an excellent standard to follow. God never forgets, and He knows how to trip up those pointing the finger at us.

A third result of letting God deal with those who speak malicious words against us is that people will scorn those who slander us. You can observe this at the end of verse 8,

 "All who see them [the accusers] will shake their heads in scorn."

The question which the enemies posed in verse 5 is answered here. After setting up plans to ruin the righteous they declare in arrogance, "Who will see them?" The answer? **Everyone** will see them, wagging their heads! Scorn will come upon **them**, not the intended victim! Those of you with King James Bibles will notice that rather than "shake their heads in scorn" it says "flee away." This is also a good translation since the word in the Hebrew can have either meaning. The point is that people will scorn those who have scorned us who desire to please God.

Perhaps you're familiar with the 18th century French philosopher, Voltaire. He wrote the comedy *Candide* which ridiculed everything Christians believe. In arrogance he announced that within 100 years Christianity would no longer exist, but fifty years after his death his home was being used to print Bibles! He ended up being a scorner eventually scorned by others.

A fourth and final result of allowing God's hand to deal with our incriminators is found in verse 9: People will stand in awe of God and give Him praise,

 "All mankind will fear;

 they will proclaim the works of God

 and ponder what he has done."

"Fear" here means to stand in awe of God's "works," referring to His judgment of the wicked. You'll remember that verse 4 refers to the wicked who, in their arrogance, do not fear evil. Here we see **all** men fearing, but in a different sense. They fear **God** in humility!

The word for "ponder" refers to gaining insight as a result of seeing God's activity. It's used in Isaiah 41:20 of people seeing God's restoration of the land of Israel, mulling it over and concluding that God Himself did it. David's purpose in using it here is to say, "Hey, when you allow God to vindicate you people will look up, take notice, and stand in awe of God because He does the job just right. People will praise Him!"

After all, isn't God's glory more important than seeking your own revenge? Aren't you more concerned that God use even your difficulties to be a testimony for Him than you are in avenging yourself? He is a refuge during those times when we go through the troubled seas, and He deserves all the praise for being our shelter and hope.

(LORD OF THE TROUBLED SEAS)

During those times when others are verbally attacking us we need to remember that His grace is enough. Psalm 64 has shown us that the best solution to being slandered is to leave the vengeance to God, trusting in His grace and justice. When slandered we should follow the example of David who did not take vengeance into his own hands but rather sought vindication from the Lord.

When you think about it, when you ponder it, it really makes sense to let God be the judge. He's much more qualified than us in giving what's fair! He knows all the variables, every angle, every side of the story.

So what do you do when someone trumps up a charge against you? David summed up what we should do in a slander situation in verse 10,

 "Let the righteous rejoice in the LORD and take refuge in him;

 let all the upright in heart praise him!"

We need to rejoice in God, we need to find our refuge in Him, and we need to praise Him.

Will you bow in prayer with me now?

Before we pray I'd like to ask you, "How will you respond towards that person who is slandering you now?" How can we leave it in God's hands? Three suggestions: Pray for your accusers, don't retaliate, and trust in God's timing and justice.

Should God give you an opportunity to defend yourself, well, speak up in meekness and humility like Job, but don't **demand** an opportunity to even have a chance to speak in your own defense.

Glorify God's name by not retaliating and leaving the responsibility to Him.

Thank you, Father, that you are the vindicator of the righteous. When we are accused, Lord, help us learn some new insights about ourselves and how we appear to others. Most of all, give us the strength to leave each situation in your hands, for your sake, Amen.

O.T. 104B: Principles of Hebrew Exegesis (Psalms) Rick Griffith

Dr. Robert L. Chisholm Box 1130

Expositional Paper August 15, 1986

When the Finger is Pointed at You...

**Psalm 64**

**Sermon Outline**

**Introduction**

1. My wife Susan was once slandered by a former Christian boss who took her to court.

2. What would you do in such a situation? Here's what some people recommended to us:

 a. One Christian suggested that we report the boss to the Better Business Bureau.

 b. Another encouraged us to take him to court and "sue the pants off him."

3. This is an issue we all have to address. As long as we live on earth we will have people speaking evil of us, so how should we respond?

4. Today's passage will speak to the issue of how a believer should respond when verbally attacked by others. What should we do when people slander us? The answer is found in Psalm 47 where we'll read how David reacted in this kind of situation.

**I. The Problem: David experiences the pain of being slandered by others (1-6).**

A. David requests God for protection and complains to God about his plight (1-6; we should pray also).

1. David requests God for protection (1-2).

a. He cries out to God in his anguish (1a).

b. He prays for protection (1b-2).

2. David complains to God about his plight (3-6).

a. Enemies are throwing accusations at him (3; "sharpen tongues"; Ehud).

b. Accusers secretly and fearlessly speak malicious words about him (4; "innocent" Job).

c. Slanderers work together to think up secret, evil plans against him (5-6a; ILL: castle archers, church plot to oust pastor).

d. Connivers plan malicious schemes from their wicked thoughts (6b; "cunning")

B. Perhaps you are facing a situation where someone is slandering you right now.

1. People are slandering you to ruin your reputation.

a. You know that you're about to be bypassed in the company because of a jealous supervisor who won't be honest about your good work (ILL: Morey).

b. You have a close friend who is spreading rumors about you.

2. Accusers secretly and fearlessly speak malicious words about you.

a. I once was falsely accused of being involved in a homosexual relationship.

b. Perhaps you are in a very vulnerable position and thus are an easy target.

3. Critics work together on a plan to hurt you when you don't suspect trouble.

a. The Sawi Indians valued treachery above all else.

b. Joseph's brothers put their heads together to undo him.

4. Connivers plan malicious schemes from their wicked thoughts.

a. Proverbs 23:7 says about the selfish, "as he thinks within himself, so he is."

b. Some people have a very difficult time thinking that others have pure motives because they can't imagine a selfless motive in themselves. Perhaps you are the victim of such corrupt thoughts which lead to corrupt words spoken against you.

(Well, we've talked enough about the problem, but what do you do when you're in such dire straits? Should you aim right back at them with equally vicious arrows? Should you plan the ole "counterattack?" Should you just give your attacker the cold shoulder? David first brought it to the Lord in prayer in verses 1-6, but then he "turned the other cheek" and let them have it, right? No, in the next section we'll see that he left his problem with God…)

**II. The Solution: When slandered we should leave the revenging to God (7-9).**

 A. God will suddenly judge those who slander us (7).

1. The archery imagery used of the enemies in verses 3-4 reappears here in reference to God who "strikes them down" by defeating their plans (ILL: pastor's slanderers ousted and not the pastor, Joseph's outcome). God is not a mamby-pamby, benevolent grandfather who's afraid of dealing out the justice which fits the crime.

2. It doesn't say when God will judge, but that He will (Saul pursued David 14 yrs).

B. God will cause their own speech to boomerang upon them (8a).

1. Another wordplay appears here where the tongue which they sharpened for others (verse 3) will return upon themselves!

2. Susan's boss got caught in his own words by God's design.

3. Dr. Bill Bright has a personal policy never to respond to slander.

C. People will scorn those who slander us (8b).

1. The question which the enemies posed in verse 5 is answered here. Everyone will see the snares they set and will scorn them, not the intended victim.

2. Voltaire was a scorner eventually scorned by others.

D. People will stand in awe of God and give Him praise (9).

1. Verse 4 refers to the wicked who do not fear evil (arrogance), but here we see all men who do fear God (humility)!

2. "Ponder" refers to gaining insight as a result of seeing God's activity (Is 41:20).

**Conclusion**

M.I. 1. We have seen that the best solution to being slandered is to leave the revenging to God. When slandered we should follow the example of David who did not take vengeance into his own hands but rather sought vindication from the Lord.

 2. When you think about it and ponder it, it makes sense to let God be the judge. He's very qualified! He knows all the variables, every angle, every side of the story.

3. David summed up what we should do in a slander situation in verse 10:

 "Let the righteous rejoice in the LORD and take refuge in him;

 let all the upright in heart praise him!"

4. How will you respond towards that person who is slandering you now? Give God the opportunity to glorify His name by not retaliating. Leave the responsibility to Him.

**Psalm 64 Sermon Manuscript**

During my third year in seminary my wife Susan laid ahold of a tremendous, new job. She worked as the secretary to the vice-president of a real estate development corporation in Dallas which built apartment complexes. The company paid her extremely well and on top of a super paycheck she received a $6,000 bonus after working only three months! Her boss was a Christian, active in another Bible church in the city. To paraphrase what David once said, "The lines had fallen for us in pleasant places!"

Ten months later Susan and her employer sat next to one another before a judge who would render a verdict on the lawsuit brought against Susan by her employer…

It was a pathetic scene: the employer had fired Susan only a few weeks earlier, a total shock in itself. Due to our checking account balance which had dwindled down to $6.12 she applied for unemployment insurance. She was pregnant and unemployed, and therefore had the unenviable task of looking for a decent job to last only seven months. Many tears were shed during those three weeks of searching for a job, but the ultimate blow came when we received notice for a court of hearing initiated by her former employer.

So we found ourselves facing the judge, witnessing unbelievable accusations from her former employer. He had convictions that no one should ever apply for unemployment "since so many starving people exist in the world." Our ears could hardly believe themselves as we heard slanderous remarks proceed from the mouth of her formerly fair and reasonable boss. "She's incompetent…" "She can't add up numbers…" "She shouldn't be allowed unemployment but should have to pay the $400 unemployment money back…"

What would you do in such a situation? One believer suggested that we report the boss to the Better Business Bureau. When another Christian from church heard of our plight he called offered these consoling words,"Hey, I know of a good Christian lawyer who will help you take him to court and 'sue the pants off him.'" We agonized over that situation! It's never a picnic to be publicly slandered by another…

I wish this account of slander was an isolated situation, but this is an issue we all have to address. In fact, maybe you, too, are the victim of a verbal barrage aimed at you by someone else. As long as we live on earth we will have people speaking evil of us, but how should we respond when it happens?

Today's passage will speak to the issue of how a believer should respond when verbally attacked by others. We will first examine the problem, then the solution. The Scripture will spell out the painful reality of slander followed by God's solution. What should we do when people slander us? The answer is found in Psalm 47 where we'll read how David reacted in this kind of situation. Please turn to the 47th Psalm, a psalm of David. Psalm 47…

Let's first take a look at the problem seen in verses 1-6. David experiences the pain of being slandered by others. His dilemma lies in the stinging realization that others are accusing him to bring about his ruin. Notice how David requests God for protection and complains to God about his plight. First he requests protection, then he complains.

First let's see how he requests God for protection in verses 1 and 2. Notice how he cries out to God in his anguish,

 "Hear me, O God, as I voice my complaint"

and then he prays for protection,

 "protect my life from the threat of the enemy.

 Hide me from the conspiracy of the wicked,

 from that noisy crowd of evildoers."

David did the best thing he could do in such a situation: when outnumbered in a conspiracy against him, he brought the matter before God. I think this is where some of us often fail in knowing how to deal with being slandered: we get exhausted thinking through all the possible strategies to protect ourselves before ever asking God for **His** protection.

After requesting God for protection in verses 1-2 we see David complaining to God about his plight in verses 3-6. He complains about four things:

First of all, he complains that enemies are throwing accusations at him. Notice what is said about the enemies in verse 3, that they

 "sharpen their tongues like swords and aim their words like bitter arrows."

Obviously, his enemies don't have a Stanley file to whittle their tongue down to a point. The point (no pun intended) here is that his slanderers worked painstakingly to achieve the kind of abusive speech which would, like a sword or arrow, pierce and strike down David suddenly and ruthlessly. Remember Ehud, Israel's deliverer in Judges 3 who with his double edged sword struck down that fatso, Eglon the king of Moab? That's the idea except the swords here are **words** destined to destroy.

The second thing David complains about is that accusers secretly and fearlessly speak malicious words about him. Take a look at verse 4,

 "They shoot from ambush at the innocent man;

 they shoot at him suddenly, without fear."

The word translated "innocent" here is the same word used to describe righteous Job. It refers to one who, although oppressed by slanders, in God's sight is innocent of the attacks directed at him.

The archery imagery continues here where you can almost see the men directing treacherous words towards innocent David from their hiding places like an archer would shoot an arrow from an opening in a wall.

Not too long ago I saw a documentary on the castles of England. It mentioned that the English devised an ingenious strategy. Archers could stand at a single spot behind the wall and either shoot through a crack on the right or the left. They had nothing to fear since no one could reach them. This is how David depicted his enemies, except he was on the outside on the wall and every crack in the wall seemed to be firing malicious words towards him.

The third thing David complains about is in verses 5 and the beginning of 6. Slanderers are working together to think up secret, evil plans against him:

 "They encourage each other in evil plans,

 they talk about hiding their snares;

 they say, 'Who will see them?'

 They plot injustice and say,

 'We have devised a perfect plan!'"

Here we see the slanderers working together on secret schemes to trap an innocent man. This reminds me of a plot once conceived in a church I was associated with where a group of people in the congregation became convinced that God desired to use them to oust the pastor. They met in several secret meetings to solidify their evil intent with prayer against the unsuspecting minister of the gospel!

You might ask, "How is it that even those who supposedly love God can be so slanderous?" David answers the question at the end of verse 6 with his fourth complaint: Connivers plan malicious schemes from their wicked thoughts,

 "Surely the mind and heart of man are cunning."

The word here for "cunning" (or "deep" in the New American Standard) is also used in Ecclesiastes of wisdom which you can't attain and in Job of the mysteries which only God knows. David reflects here that only God knows his enemies' thoughts. He can't even defend himself against his accusers since he doesn't know what they will say.

Perhaps you are facing a situation where someone is slandering you right now. Maybe David's four complaints sound all too disgustingly familiar to you.

First, like David, people are slandering you to ruin your reputation. You know that you're about to be bypassed in the company because of a jealous supervisor who won't be honest about your good work. I once had a supervisor who felt very threatened with my presence. Morey wouldn't teach me any more than was absolutely necessary. I ended up losing the job due to his slandering me before the owner. Maybe you even have a very **close** friend who is spreading rumors about you.

Secondly, like David, accusers secretly and fearlessly speak malicious words about you. I once was even falsely accused of being involved in a homosexual relationship with a man whom I was discipling. Perhaps you are in a very vulnerable position and thus are an easy target.

Thirdly, perhaps like David, critics work together on a plan to hurt you when you don't suspect trouble. Remember the Sawi Indians to whom the famous missionary Don Richardson shared the gospel? Of all their values, they esteemed treachery above all else. Joseph's brothers also put their heads together to undo him, leaving him for dead. Maybe out of envy someone would really like to see you out of the way, too.

Fourthly, your situation might be like David's in that connivers are planning malicious schemes against you from their wicked thoughts. Proverbs 23:7 says about the selfish man, "as he thinks within himself, so he is." Some people have a very difficult time thinking that others have pure motives because they can't imagine a selfless motive in themselves. Perhaps you are the victim of such corrupt thoughts which lead to corrupt words leveled against you. Can you relate to any of these situations? I hope you can't, but I know that for many of you your backs against the wall as hungry dogs revile and attack you.

Well, we've talked enough about the problem, but what do you do when you're in such dire straits? Should you aim right back at them with equally vicious arrows? Should you plan the ole "counterattack?" Should you just give your attacker the cold shoulder? David first brought it to the Lord in prayer in verses 1-6, but then he "turned the other cheek" and let them have it, right? No, in the next section we'll observe that he left his problem with the LORD…

Verses 7-9 record David's solution and our solution to slander. The solution: when slandered we should leave the revenging to God. When you're faced with your accusers, don't retaliate, don't plan a vendetta, but instead let the LORD deal with them. Verses 7-9 cite at least four things that will happen when we leave it in God's hands:

The first result of leaving those who reproach us in His hands is that God will suddenly judge those who slander us. Notice verse 7,

 "But God will shoot them with arrows;

 suddenly they will be struck down."

The archery imagery used of the enemies in verses 3-4 reappears here in reference to God who will "strike them down" by defeating their plans. Before we saw the wicked shooting at the innocent, but notice who's doing the shooting here! **God** takes up the offense of His people so that **He** shoots arrows at the wicked! God is not a mamby-pamby, benevolent grandfather who's afraid of dealing out the justice which fits the crime.

Remember the church members whom I mentioned earlier, those who slandered the pastor to get him ousted? Well, as it turned out, the whole 200 of them who were ousted, not the pastor! Returning back to the story of Joseph and his brothers, you know the final chapter there. The brothers who worked together on an evil plan were pierced to the heart by God through grief over what they had done to Joseph and it was only Joseph's mercy that spared them. God takes care of those who slander us when we leave it with Him.

I should note one other thing, though. The text affirms **that** God will judge slanderers, but it doesn't say **when**. Even the author of these words, David, lived as a fugitive for 14 years until God's arrows finally caught up with Saul, the pursuer. Be confident that as you leave your attackers in God's hands He'll see that justice fits the crime, but let Him do it in His own time.

So, the first result of not retaliating is that God will judge. Notice the second result of leaving the situation in His hands in the first part of verse 8: God will cause their own speech to boomerang upon them,

 "He will turn their own tongues against them

 and bring them to ruin."

Their own words will come back upon them in judgment. We've seen this word for "tongue" before in verse 3. Another wordplay appears here where the tongue which they sharpened for others will return to pierce themselves!

I began this message with the story of my wife's former employer who denounced her before the judge. Well, Susan's boss got caught in his own words by God's design just like this verse says. The judge asked him for evidence of her negligence and he responded, "She can't add." "May I see the figures?" asked the judge. "I don't have them," he responded. "What were the numbers she miscalculated?" "I don't know." "What should the figures have been?" "I don't know." We just sat quietly and spoke only when necessary while God vindicated us…

Dr. Bill Bright, as president of Campus Crusade for Christ, seems to always get attacked from non-Christians and Christians alike. Yet he has a personal policy never to respond to slander but to let God deal with his accusers. That's an excellent standard to follow. God never forgets, and He knows how to trip up those pointing the finger at us.

A third result of letting God deal with those who speak malicious words against us is that people will scorn those who slander us. You can observe this at the end of verse 8,

 "All who see them [the accusers] will shake their heads in scorn."

The question which the enemies posed in verse 5 is answered here. After setting up plans to ruin the righteous they declare in arrogance, "Who will see them?" The answer? **Everyone** will see them, wagging their heads! Scorn will come upon **them**, not the intended victim!

Perhaps you're familiar with the 18th century French philosopher, Voltaire. He wrote the comedy *Candide* which riddled everything Christians believe. In arrogance he announced that within 100 years Christianity would no longer exist, but fifty years after his death his home was being used to print Bibles! He ended up being a scorner eventually scorned by others.

A fourth and final result of allowing God's hand to deal with our incriminators is found in verse 9: People will stand in awe of God and give Him praise,

 "All mankind will fear;

 they will proclaim the works of God

 and ponder what he has done."

"Fear" here means to stand in awe of God's "works," referring to His judgment of the wicked. You'll remember that verse 4 refers to the wicked who, in their arrogance, do not fear evil. Here we see **all** men fearing, but in a different sense. They fear **God** in humility!

The word for "ponder" refers to gaining insight as a result of seeing God's activity. It's used in Isaiah 41:20 of people seeing God's restoration of the land of Israel, mulling it over and concluding that God Himself did it. David's purpose in using it here is to say, "Hey, when you allow God to vindicate you people will look up, take notice, and stand in awe of God because He does the job just right. People will praise Him!"

After all, isn't God's glory more important than seeking your own revenge? Aren't you more concerned that God use even your difficulties to be a testimony for Him than you are in avenging yourself?

Today we have seen that the best solution to being slandered is to leave the revenging to God. When slandered we should follow the example of David who did not take vengeance into his own hands but rather sought vindication from the Lord.

When you think about it, when you ponder it, it really makes sense to let God be the judge. He's much more qualified than us in giving what's fair! He knows all the variables, every angle, every side of the story.

So what do you do when someone trumps up a charge against you? David summed up what we should do in a slander situation in verse 10,

 "Let the righteous rejoice in the LORD and take refuge in him;

 let all the upright in heart praise him!"

We need to rejoice in God, we need to find our refuge in Him, and we need to praise Him.

How will you respond towards that person who is slandering you now? Give God the opportunity to glorify His name by not retaliating. Leave the responsibility to Him.

O.T. 104B: Principles of Hebrew Exegesis (Psalms) Rick Griffith

Dr. Robert L. Chisholm Box 1130

Psalm 64 Preliminary Paper #2 July 30, 1986

Psalm 64

**Analysis of the Text**

**Verse 1**

**Hebrew:** .dw1d8l= romz=m1 j6X2n6m=l6 1

**Translation/Parsing:**

 "For the choir director. A psalm of David."

**Word Studies:**

 romz=m1 "psalm" properly refers to a "melody" (BDB 274c) which was "a technical term designating a song that is accompanied by the plucking of a stringed instrument" ("Principles of Hebrew Exegesis in the Psalms" by Allen P. Ross; cf. Mowinckel, II:208).

**Syntactical Relationships:**

 The preposition l= attached to dw1d8 is properly understood as a l= of authorship (GKC 129c). This is supported by the following evidence:

 1) Habakkuk 3:1 uses the l= for authorship by distinguishing the sender from the addressee (cf. Samaria Ostraca, Lachish Letters).

 2) Internal evidence includes mention of the wicked being destroyed by his own devices (v. 9 cf. Ps 35:8, another Davidic psalm) and the figure of arrows for God's judgment (cf. Ps 38:3, also Davidic).

**Verse 2**

**Hebrew**: .yY8j6 rX0T1 by2oa dj6P6m1 yj1yc1b= yl1oq ˜yh1l0a5-im6v= 2

**Translation/Parsing:**

 "O God, hear (Qal impv 3ms im6v8) my voice in my complaint.

 Guard (Qal impf 2ms rx6n8) my life from the dread of the enemy."

**Syntactical Relationships:**

 im6v= imperative of request, introducing the petition section (vv. 2-3).

 ˜yh1l0a5 nominative vocative, the request being directed towards God, ˜yh1l0a being the most used title of God in book 2 of the psalms.

 loq accusative direct object of im6v= denoting what is to be heard.

 y 1 genitive of possessor, identifying whose voice is to be heard.

 b= of accompaniement, "hear my voice which is accompanied with a complaint."

 yj1yc1 genitive object of the preposition b=.

 dj6P6m1 emphatic construct position beginning line 2, intensifying the feelings of David as he views his enemies as a threat to his life.

 by2oa genitive cause of the state of the construct ("dread").

 rX0T1 imperfect of injunction functioning like im6v is an imperative of request.

 yY8j6 accusative direct object of rX0T1 with a 1cs suffix functioning as a genitive of possessor.

**Word Studies:**

 yj1yc1b= "complaint, musing" (BDB 967a 1) identifies the psalm as a lament psalm and often denotes distraction due to the danger of enemies (cf. Ps 55:3f.; 102:1f.; 142:3f.). The KJV translation, "prayer," is too general and loses the intense impact of this word.

 dj6P6m1 "dread" (BDB 808c 1) is used of terrifying people to the point that they are incapable of action because they feared for their lives (cf. Is 2:10; 1 Sam 11:7; 2 Chron 17:10).

 rX0T1 "watch, guard, keep" (BDB 665d 2) denotes protection from dangers (Ps 12:8; 32:7).

**Figures of Speech:**

 dj6P6m1 "dread" is a metonymy of effect in which the psalmist states the effect ("dread") but intends the cause ("threat"). By stating his own response rather than "threat" David emphasizes his **own** fear of the impending danger of his adversaries.

**Poetical Features:**

 Formal parallelism, line 2 continuing the thought of line 1 by specifying how God should hear and respond.

**Verse 3**

**Hebrew:** .ˆw3a8 yl2i7P0 tv6g=r1m2 ˜yi1r2m= doSm1 yn1r2yT1s=T6 3

**Translation/Parsing:**

 "Hide me (Hiphil impf 2ms rT6s8 + 1cs suffix) from the counsel of the wicked;

 From the throng of the doing of [those who do] wickedness."

**Syntactical Relationships:**

 yn1r2yT1s=T6 imperfect of injunction with objective genitive suffix, continuing the petition section of the psalm (vv. 2-3).

 doSm1 is the construct of the genitive of agent ˜yi1r2m=, which really does not need the m= but has it for poetical effect (see below).

 ˆw3a8 yl2i7P0 tv6g=r1m2 has the first two words in construct to ˆw3a8 tying the three words together as a unit: "from evildoers."

 ˆw3a8 functions as the genitive of attribute of the construct yl2i7P0, describing the wicked type of lifestyle which characterizes David's enemies.

**Word Studies:**

 dos "council, counsel" (BDB 691c 1a or 2a) is used in a bad sense only of "counsel" (Ps 83:4; BDB 691c 2a), referring to the plans and crafty plotting in order to harm God's people. Therefore, "counsel" (plans) is better than "council" (people).

 hv8g=r1 "throng" (BDB 921c) is found in Psalm 68:28 referring to the multitude of men of Judah in the temple procession. The root is vg6r8 "be in tumult or commotion" (BDB 921c) so the noun as used here carries with it the concept of a noisy (NIV) caucus of men meeting with an evil intent.

**Figures of Speech:**

 yn1r2yT1s=T6 "hide" is a metonymy of cause in which the cause ("hide") is substituted for the effect ("protect"). David yearns for God's protection and realizes that should God hide him he will be protected from all harm.

**Poetical Features:**

 Incomplete parallelism without compensation ("hide" as an ellipsis) in synonymous parallelism:

 a - b - c

 Hide me from the counsel of the wicked

 from the throng of those doing wickedness

 m appears at the beginning of three consecutive words in tv6g=r1m2 ˜yi1r2m= doSm1 in poetical fashion to bring attention to the center of the verse where the enemies not only oppose the psalmist but do so in a conspiracy.

**Verse 4**

**Hebrew:** .rm8 rb8D8 ˜X8j1 ukr=D8 ˜n8ovl= br3j3k6 unn=v8 rv3a7 4

**Translation/Parsing:**

 "who sharpen (Qal perf 3cp nn6v8) their tongue like a sword,

 they aim (Qal perf 3cp ˚r6D8) a bitter word [like] their arrow."

**Syntactical Relationships:**

 rv3a7 begins the relative clause describing the evildoers, thus ending the petition section of the psalm and introducing the lament (vv. 4-7).

 unn=v8 and ukr=D8 are present/characteristic perfects, referring to the state effected by their words (suddenly harming the innocent, v. 5) or the characteristic behavior of the enemy.

 k= is a comparative between a sword and a tongue, implying that both are able to wound people.

 ˜n8ovl= has a genitival suffix of possessor (1cp), identifying the responsibility for malicious speech as the wicked's own fault.

 rm8 rb8D8 ˜X8j1 has an elliptical comparative k= (implying a similarity between arrows and bitter words in that both are destructive). rm8 is an attributive adjective to rb8D8, specifying the evil intent behind the speech of the wicked.

**Figures of Speech:**

 "tongue" is a metonymy of the cause where the cause (the tongue) is stated but the effect (speech) is actually intended.

 "sharpen their tongue" is an idiom (?) meaning to prepare words which will attack one's foes in an easily piercing manner.

 "sharpen their tongue like swords" is a simile comparing abusive speech to swords which strike down enemies suddenly and ruthlessly.

 "aim a bitter word" is a synechdoche which exchanges the part (word) for the whole (speech which includes many words).

 "aim a bitter word like their arrow" is a simile comparing speech to arrows which pierce and kill victims quickly and decisively.

**Poetical Elements:**

 Complete synonymous parallelism expressing the concept of:

 preparation (a) of speech (b) in order to inflict others (c)

 "who sharpen their tongue like a sword,

 they aim a bitter word like their arrow."

 Stating this concept twice emphasizes the premeditated actions of the evil men.

 This verse begins an extended hypocatastasis extending to verse 6 where the slanderer and his "victim" are likened to a hunter and his prey.

**Verse 5**

**Hebrew:** .uar8yy1 al0w= uhr4y0 ˜a0t=P1 ˜T8 ˜yr1T8s=M1B6 toryl1 5

**Translation/Parsing:**

 "They shoot (Qal inf cst hr8y8) from hiding places at the morally innocent.

 Suddenly they shoot (Qal impf 3mp hr8y8; GKC 69r) and do not fear (Qal impf 3mp ar2y8)."

**Syntactical Relationships:**

 toryl1 infinitive construct used verbally with a l= of purpose (introducing the purpose clause), the goal of aiming bitter words (v. 4) being to harm the godly (˜T8 as the accusative direct object without the sign of the accusative).

 ˜yr1T8s=M1B6 is prefixed with a locative B=, specifying the secret places from which hurtful words come.

 ˜a0t=P1 is emphatic and may be contrastive with doSm1 in verse 3 in that while it takes long for the wicked to plan their wicked schemes, they strike in an instant at the unsuspecting.

 uar8yy1 and uhr4y0 are both habitual imperfects, suggesting that it is the normal practice of the wicked to maliciously attack others without fear. The understood direct object of uhr4y0 is the godly but is elliptical in the second line (supplied as "at him" in the NIV).

**Word Studies:**

 rT8s=m0 "hiding place" (BDB 712c 2b) is often used of the secret place in which the wicked performs his evil (cf. Ps 10:8, 9; 17:12; Hab 3:14).

 ˜T8 "complete, morally innocent, having integrity" (BDB 1071a 3) often refers to one who, although oppressed by slanderers, in God's sight is innocent of the attacks directed at him. This word is used of the righteous Job (Job 1:8; 2:3; 8:20; 9:20, 21, 22; cf. Prov 29:10; Ps 37:37).

**Figures of Speech:**

 This verse continues the extended hypocatastasis begun in the previous verse and extending to verse 6 where the slanderer and his "victim" are likened to a hunter and his prey.

 rts: this same root has been seen before in verse 3 (repetition in a wordplay); however, whereas formerly it expresses the psalmist's petition to be hidden "from" (ˆm1 in verse 3), now it denotes the wicked's position to attack "in" (B= in verse 5).

 uar8yy1 and uhr4y0 are a paronomasia (Bul 311), or repetition of words similar in sound, but not necessarily in sense. They give the idea of "fearless shooting" in a poetical manner.

**Verse 6**

**Hebrew:** .omL8-ha3r=y1 ym1 urm=a8 ˜yv1q=om ˆom;=l1 urP=s6y= ir8 rb8D8 oml8-uqZ=j6y= 6

**Translation/Parsing:**

 "They make firm (Piel impf 3mp qz6j8) to each other an evil plan;

 they talk (Piel impf 3mp rp6s8) about hiding (Qal inf cst ˆm6;8) snares;

 they say (Qal perf 3mp rm6a8), "Who will see (Qal impf 3mp ha8r8) them?"

**Syntactical Relationships:**

 uqZ=j6y= and urP=s6y= function as Piel habitual imperfects, tying into the same use of the imperfects uar8yy1 and uhr4y0 in verse 5 which continues the lament.

 oml8 is evidence of the reflexive use of the preposition l=, again suggesting how evil men work together on wicked scheming.

 ir8 rb8D8 is a construct relationship (ir8 as genitive attribute) acting as the direct object of oml8-uqZ=j6y=. The objective of their meeting is a plan to destroy others.

 ˜yv1q=om ˆom;=l1 has a l= of specification ("they talk about/with respect to hiding snares") connected to ˆom;=, an infinitive construct of object which answers what they talk about.

 omL8-ha3r=y1 ym1 urm=a8 begins with the instantaneous perfect and acts as an interrogative sentence introduced by the interrogative pronoun ym1, which adds a sense of immediacy/intensity to the psalm within the surrounding poetical language.

**Word Studies:**

 vq2om "prop. bait or lure in a fowler's net; then fig. snare" (BDB 430c) in its literal usage refers to a net for birds in Amos 3:5, "Does a bird fall into a trap on the ground when there is no bait in it?" Figuratively, it applies to plans made in secret to "trap" the innocent man.

**Figures of Speech:**

 This verse concludes the extended hypocatastasis begun in verse 4 where the slanderer and his "victim" are likened to a hunter and his prey. However, the archer imagery (vv. 4-5) changes to trap-setting imagery in this verse.

 Repetition is seen in the double usage of omL8 at the beginning and end of the verse (inclusio also). This sets the verse apart within the lament section with the trap-setting imagery mentioned above.

 vq2om, therefore, is a hypocatastasis which compares a literal snare (trap) with a scheme designed to hurt the unsuspecting righteous man.

 Catabasis (gradual descent) can be observed in the verb sequence from uqZ=j6y= to urP=s6y= to urm=a8. Each verb concerns speaking but each successive verb shows less intensity of concern (the very intense "make firm" degresses to "talk" and finally to the flippent "say"). The point is that the wicked trust completely in the "wisdom" of their plan.

**Poetical Elements:**

 A triple synonymous parallelism appears in the verse:

 Speech (a) Secrecy (b) Direct Object (c)

 "They make firm to each other an evil plan;

 they talk about hiding snares;

 they say, "Who will see them?"

 The threefold emphasis here heightens the fact that the godless men devise hidden works of destruction.

**Verse 7**

**Hebrew:**  .qm0i8 bl2w= vya1 br3q3w= cP8j4m= cp3j2 unm=T6 tl0oi-ucP=j=y6 7

**Translation/Parsing:**

 "They search for [i.e., devise] (Qal impf 3mp cp6j8) injustice, [saying],

 'We have completed (Qal perf 1cp mm6T8) a device well thought out (Pual pctp ms cp6j8).'

 Surely the inward thoughts and the heart of a man are unsearchable."

**Syntactical Relationships:**

 This verse completes the lament section (vv. 4-7), amplifying the plans waylaid in verse 6. This is seen in the last use of the habitual imperfects (ucP=j=y6) in sequence. tl0oi is joined by the *maqqeph* and functions as the accusative direct object of ucP=j=y6.

 unm=T6 is the first use of the perfect since verse 4 and acts as an inclusio in the lament section. Its definite past nuance alludes to the security the godless put into evil plans which have been worked out but are now completed.

 cP8j4m= cp3j2 expresses the accusative direct object of unm=T6 in which cP8j4m= functions attributively to cp3j2.

 qm0i8 bl2w= vya1 br3q3w= with the adversative *waw* conjunctive ("surely;" NIV) marks the end of the quote by the wicked and resumes the words of the psalmist. vya1 stands in a genitive of possessor relationship to both br3q3 and bl2. qm0i8 is the predicate nominative of an understood copula. This clause concludes the lament with a summary statement of the psalmist concerning the wicked, paraphrased as, "It's amazing how evil people can be when they put their mind to it!"

**Textual Problems:**

 unm=T6 (Qal perf 1cp mm6T; "we have completed") reads as unm=;8 (Qal perf 3mp ˆm6;8; "they have hidden") in many Hebrew manuscripts due to an unintentional error of confusing T and ; since they sound very similar. Both renderings are possible and make sense but since the MT is more difficult it is to be preferred.

**Word Studies:**

 qm0i8 "deep=unsearchable" (BDB 771b 2) is used of the unattainable immensity of wisdom (Ecc 7:24) and the mysteries which only God knows (Job 12:22). David's point in Psalm 64:7 is that no-one can search out the immensely evil thoughts of man (except God alone).

**Figures of Speech:**

 Repetition is seen in the triple usage of cpj at the beginning, middle and end of the first line (inclusio also) which brackets the first line of the verse and emphasizes the plan as totally thought out in cP8j4m= cp3j2.

 unm=T6 begins the quote with an elliptical rm0al2 "saying" (supplied by the NIV, NASB, and KJV). This ellipsis gives a sense of immediacy to the quote: "They devise injustice: 'We've completed…' "

 bl2w= br3q3w= is a hendiadys (two for one) suggesting that the nouns "inward parts" and "heart" express the one idea of "man's thoughts." Both nouns also function as metonomies of subject in which the container ("inner parts"/"heart") is substituted for the contents (man's totality of inner thoughts).

 tl0oi is a metonymy of adjunct whereby the attribute ("injustices") takes the place of the subject which it describes (unjust attacks).

 cp3j2 expresses a metonymy of cause in which the cause ("plot") is substituted for the effect (harm to the righteous).

**Poetical Elements:**

 The three lines are in a formal parallelism structure in that each line is compensation to the former line by continuing the thought. The second line demonstrates by qouting the wicked how injustice is devised and the third line gives the psalmist's conclusion to the lament section (vv. 4-7).

**Verse 8**

**Hebrew:** .˜t8oKm6 uyh8 ˜oat=P1 Ùj2 ˜yh1l0a5 ˜r2Y0w6 8

**Translation/Parsing:**

 "But God will shoot them (Hi pret 3ms hr8y8 + 3mp suf) [with] an arrow;

 suddenly they will be struck down (Qal perf 3mp hy8h8) [lit., their wounds occurred]."

**Syntactical Relationships:**

 ˜r2Y0w6: Preterites such as this one can occasionally represent future actions (cf. Ps 49:15; 94:22f.). uyh8 also has the future nuance as a prophetic perfect (GKC 111w; Davidson 49b). Both verbs introduce the confidence section of the psalm by using verbs which normally refer to completed action. (The use of the preterite also signals a new section.) The psalmist's confidence that God will vindicate Himself is so sure that the certainty of God's judgment in the future is expressed as if it were a completed fact already. (This is also called the perfect of confidence.)

 Ùj2 (direct object) and the 3cp suffix (objective genitive) on ˜r2Y0w6 function as double accusatives (GKC 117ff), needing an elliptical "with" to complete the thought in English: "God will shoot them with an arrow."

 ˜oat=P1 is placed first in line 2 for emphasis as an adverb modifying uyh8. Whereas the wicked must take time to devise their schemes, God will bring their plans to nothing in an instant.

 ˜t8oKm6 is literally "their wounds" with the 3cp suffix acting as a genitive of possessor.

**Figures of Speech:**

 "arrow" is a hypocatastasis for God's "word" spoken against the wicked, indicating that God's verbal judgment will pierce evil men.

 "shooting with arrows" is an example of anthropomorphism, ascribing this human attribute to God (Bul 890 says anthropopatheia).

 "their wounds" is a hypocatastasis for the defeat of the plans of the enemies of David.

**Verse 9**

**Hebrew:**  .˜b8 ha2r0-lK8 udd7n0t=y1 ˜n8ovl= omyl2i8 uhulyv1k=Y6w6 9

**Translation/Parsing:**

 "They will make him stumble (Hiphil pret 3mp lv6k8 + 3ms suffix);

 their [own] tongue [will be] against them;

 all who see (Qal act ptcp ms ha8r8) them (B= of object) will flee away (Hithpoel impf 3mp dd6n8; BDB 622; GKC 130a re: construct)."

**Syntactical Relationships:**

 uhulyv1k=Y6w6 continues the confidence section with another future preterite, but this word has an indefinite plural subject, possibly referring to the arrows (v. 8). uh is singular but a distributive suffix ("each one") is in view because of the suffix on ˜n8ovl= (which stands in apposition to omyl2i8). Every wicked person's own speech will return upon him in judgment.

 omyl2i8 is evidence of the above meaning since the nuance of this word with a 3mp suffix (object of the adversative preposition li8) is reflexive (GKC 103p2).

 udd7n0t=y1 conveys a final imperfect nuance whether it is translated "will wag their heads" or "will flee away." The response of those who see the ultimate end of the wicked will be scorn of them.

 ˜b8 ha2r0-lK8 expresses a construct state with the wider (connecting) usage, especially when b= with a suffix follows the participle (GKC 130a). ha2r0 is a substantival active participle functioning as the subject and modified by -lK8. ˜b8 employs the less common object usage of b= identifying the word as the direct object of ha2r0-lK8.

**Word Studies:**

 dd6n8 "retreat, flee, depart, stray" (BDB 622c) or dun "wag their heads" (BDB 627a 2) are possible meanings of udd7n0t=y1. The first meaning is used in conjunction with ha8r8 in both Psalm 31:12 and Nahum 3:7 but the second finds a parallel in the Hithpolel imperfect in Jeremiah 48:27. Although either meaning may be possible, since Psalm 31 is also a Davidic lament psalm the parallel there carries greater weight making dd6n8 "retreat, flee" the preferred meaning. Its two references above refer to being scorned for lack of physical attractiveness (David's in Ps 31:12) and the bloody overthrow of Nineveh (Nah 3:7).

**Figures of Speech:**

 "stumble" is a hypocatastasis for undergoing God's judgment because of sin. God will demonstrate His justice by allowing the wicked to pay the price for their own speech (see next figure).

 "their [own] tongue [will be] against them" is a metonymy of the cause where the instrument (tongue) is put for the effect (speech).

 "flee away" acts as a metonymy of effect where the effect (fleeing away) is stated for the cause/action producing it (judgment by God). The result of God's vindication of the wicked will be scorn by those who observe.

**Verse 10**

**Hebrew:** .ulyK1c=h1 uhc2i7m6u ˜yh1l0a5 li6P0 udyG1Y6w6 ˜d8a8-lK8 uar=yY1w6 10

**Translation/Parsing:**

 "Then all men will fear (Qal pret 3mp ar2y8)

 and will declare (Hiphil pret 3mp dg6n8) the work of God,

 and will ponder (Hiphil perf 3mp lk6c8) what He has done (Hiphil pctp ms hc8i8 + 3ms suffix)."

**Syntactical Relationships:**

 uar=yY1w6 and udyG1Y6w6 continue the confidence section as future preterites, further describing how people will respond to God's judgment of the wicked (cf. verse 9). ˜d8a8-lK8 functions as the subject of uar=yY1w6 and the understood subect of udyG1Y6w6.

 ˜yh1l0a5 li6P0 acts as the accusative direct object of udyG1Y6w6, describing what men will declare. ˜yh1l0a5 is the subjective genitive of li6P0 since He performs the action (work) upon the wicked. Although the wicked ruin themselves (verse 9), God still gets the ultimate credit for their demise!

 ulyK1c=h1 uhc2i7m6u emphasizes the certainty of man's wonder at God's judgment through the use of the prophetic perfect (ulyK1c=h1) which takes uhc2i7m6u as an accusative direct object participle functioning substantivally. God's vindication will make men marvel.

**Word Studies:**

 lk6c8 "be prudent… give attention to, consider, ponder" (BDB 968b 2) conveys the concept of gaining insight as a result of witnessing God's activity (Is 41:20; 44:18). God held Israel accountable for their ignorance of His deeds on the nation's behalf (Deut 32:29) since Israel forsook God (v. 15).

**Figures of Speech:**

 "all men" is a synechdoche of the genus in which "all" really designates all those who see the destruction of the ungodly in verse 9. David's point is that everyone who witnesses the downfall of the wicked will stand in awe of God.

 Wordplay concerning two different meanings for ar2y8 is evident in the psalm. Whereas formerly the wicked fear no punishment (i.e., **arrogantly** attack) for their slander (verse 5), now the people fear (i.e., **humbly** stand in awe) because of the ultimate end of the wicked (verse 10)!

**Poetical Elements:**

 Incomplete parallelism without compensation (i.e., with the ellipsis ˜yh1l0a5 as a direct object in line 1 and the ellipsis ˜d8a8-lK8 absent in the second and third lines):

 a - b - c

 "Then all men will fear

 and will declare the work of God,

 and will ponder what He has done."

**Verse 11**

**Hebrew:** .bl2-yr2v=y1-lK8 ull=h6t=y1w= ob hs8j8w= hw8hyB6 qyD1x6 jm6c=y1 11

**Translation/Parsing:**

 "Let the righteous man rejoice (Qal jussive 3ms jm6c8) in the LORD

 and [let him] seek refuge (Qal perf 3ms hs8j8 + *waw* consec) in Him;

 let all the upright in heart praise [Him] (Hithpael jussive 3mp ll6h8)."

**Syntactical Relationships:**

 jm6c=y1 and ull=h6t=y1w= both function as jussives of counsel from David (the superior) to all Israel (the inferior). The king exhorts the nation in his advice to live for God (elliptical direct object), thus providing a fitting conclusion to the psalm.

 qyD1x6 is a singular subject of the verbs jm6c=y1 and hs8j8w= (subject understood), which stand in contrast to the plural subject (bl2-yr2v=y1-lK8) of ull=h6t=y1w=. This movement from the singular to the plural produces a heightened effect so that the psalm concludes in a climactic statement: "Let all the upright in heart praise Him!" bl2-yr2v=y1-lK8 has yr2v=y1-lK8 in construct to bl2 (genitive of attribute: "all who are inwardly upright").

 hw8hyB6 appears in the genitive case modifying qyD1x6 as an object of the preposition B= (with a locative nuance: "in the LORD;" similarly of oB). Rejoicing should not be in God's works alone, but especially in the God who performs the mighty deeds.

**Word Studies:**

 hs8j8 "seek refuge" (BDB 340b) is used of finding protection in the shade of a tree (Jud 9:15), of Pharaoh (Is 30:2), in Jerusalem (Is 14:32) and in gods (Deut 32:37). Psalm 64:11 indicates that God should be the source of protection of the righteous.

 ll6h8 "be boastful… 2. of glorying, making one's boast in" (BDB 239a 2) refers to exalting God (Ps 34:3) and boasting in the fact that one knows YHWH (Jer 9:23-24). "Praise" is the more general term to describe this kind of giving creddit to YHWH (cf. NIV "praise him").

**Figures of Speech:**

 "heart" is a metonymy of the subject in which a part of the body ("heart") is put for the adjunct connected with it ("thought" or "will").

 Whereas verses 8-10 all begin with a *waw* (anaphora), in contrast this last verse signals a new section (the final section) with a jussive.

 An ellipsis for the LORD appears at the end of the verse as the object of praise: "Let the upright in heart praise Him!"

**Poetical Elements:**

 The first two lines are in an incomplete parallelism without compensation ("righteous" being elliptical in the second line), and the third line has an elliptical direct object:

 a - b - c

 "Let the righteous man rejoice in the LORD

 and seek refuge in Him;

 Let all the upright in heart praise [Him]."

 (or "glory [in Him]").

**Psalm 64 Outline**

Division into Parts:

 1 Superscription

 2-3 Petition

 4-7 Lament

 8-10 Confidence of God's Deliverance

 11 Call to Praise and Rejoicing

Message:

Although distressed by his enemies' malicious speech and secret plans, the psalmist expresses confidence that God will glorify Himself by turning the wicked's schemes upon themselves.

Structure:

I. The psalmist cries to God for protection from his enemy and laments that they secretly speak against the unsuspecting righteous and devise injustice together from their wicked thoughts (2-7 [1-6]).

A. He cries to God and petitions protection from his enemy (2-3).

 1. David cries out to God to hear his complaint (2a).

 2. David petitions God to guard his life by hiding him from his enemies (2b-3).

B. He laments that his enemies secretly speak against the unsuspecting righteous and devise evil plans together from their wicked thoughts (4-7).

 1. They prepare speech to ruin the reputation of the Godly (4).

 2. They fearlessly attack the righteous in secret (5).

 3. They work together on an evil plan to hurt others unsuspecting of trouble (6).

 4. They carefully devise evil plans from their wicked thoughts (7).

II. The psalmist expresses confidence that God will judge the wicked through their own speech so that while they are scorned God's judgments will be praised and he exhorts the righteous to rejoice in, trust and praise the LORD (8-11 [7-10]).

A. He is confident that God will judge the wicked through their own speech so that others will scorn them but reverentially proclaim God's judgment (8-10).

 1. God will suddenly judge the wicked (8).

 2. God's actions will judge them through their own speech so that others will scorn them (9).

 3. People will stand in awe at God's judgment and tell others about it (10).

B. He exhorts the righteous to rejoice in, trust and praise the LORD (11).

O.T. 104B: Principles of Hebrew Exegesis (Psalms) Rick Griffith

Dr. Robert L. Chisholm Box 1130

Psalm 64 Preliminary Paper #1 July 21, 1986

Psalm 64

**Analysis of the Text**

**Verse 1**

**Hebrew:** .dw1d8l= romz=m1 j6X2n6m=l6 1

**Translation/Parsing:**

 "For the choir director. A psalm of David."

**Word Studies:**

 romz=m1 "psalm"

**Verse 2**

**Hebrew**: .yY8j6 rX0T1 by2oa dj6P6m1 yj1yc1b= yl1oq ˜yh1l0a5-im6v= 2

**Translation/Parsing:**

 "O God, hear (Qal impv 3ms im6v8) my voice in my complaint.

 Guard (Qal impf 2ms rx6n8) my life from the dread of the enemy."

**Textual Problems:**

 yY8j6 rX0T1: The Syriac *ntrjnj* was probably from yn1r2X=T1 (Qal impf 2ms rx6n8 + 1cs suffix, "guard me") rather than MT "guard my life." This is a late reading with little textual support so MT is better.

 yY8j6: The Septuagint and Aquila's Greek reclension has "my life" which is the same as MT (yY6j6 in pause resulting in yY8j6).

**Word Studies:**

 yj1yc1b= "complaint" (BDB 967)

 dj6P6m1 "dread" (BDB 808c 1)

 rX0T1 "watch, guard, keep" (BDB 665d 2)

**Figures of Speech:**

 dj6P6m1 "dread" is a metonymy of effect in which the psalmist states the effect ("dread") but intends the cause ("threat").

**Poetical Features:**

 Formal parallelism Line 2 specifying how God should hear and respond.

**Verse 3**

**Hebrew:** .~ˆw3a8 yl2i7P0 tv6g=r1m2 ˜yi1r2m= doSm1 yn1r2yT1s=T6 3

**Translation/Parsing:**

 "Hide me (Hiphil impf 2ms rT6s8 + 1cs suffix) from the council of the wicked;

 From the throng of the doing of [those who do] wickedness."

**Word Studies:**

 dos "council, counsel" (BDB 691c 1 or 2?)

 hv8g=r1 "throng" (BDB 921; cf. Ps 68:28)

**Figures of Speech:**

 yn1r2yT1s=T6 "hide" is a metonymy of the adjunct meaning "protect" (Bul 606).

**Poetical Features:**

 Incomplete parallelism without compensation ("hide" as an ellipsis) in synonymous parallelism:

 a - b - c

 Hide me from the council of the wicked

 from the throng of those doing wickedness

 m appears at the beginning of three consecutive words in tv6g=r1m2 ˜yi1r2m= doSm1.

**Verse 4**

**Hebrew:** .rm8 rb8D8 ˜X8j1 ukr=D8 ˜n8ovl= br3j3k6 unn=v8 rv3a7 4

**Translation/Parsing:**

 "who sharpen (Qal perf 3mp nn6v8) their tongue like a sword,

 they aim (Qal perf 3mp ˚r6D8) a bitter word [like] their arrow."

**Textual Problems:**

 Regarding ˜X8j1 "their arrow" (singular), the editor with the support of two Hebrew manuscripts suggests a reading of perhaps ˜yX1j1 "their arrows" (plural) in line with the [variant] reading of Psalm 11:2. This is supported by the Syriac as well as the sagittam. However, the MT is consistent in the use of the singular noun here with Psalm 11:2. The editor has suggested a variant based upon another variant reading!

**Word Studies:**

 nn6v8 "sharpen" (BDB 1041d)

 ˚r6D8 "aim" (BDB 202b 4)

**Figures of Speech:**

 "tongue" is a metonymy of the cause where the cause (the tongue) is stated but the effect (speech) is actually intended.

 "sharpen their tongue" is an idiom (?) meaning to prepare words which will attack one's foes in an easily piercing manner.

 "sharpen their tongue like swords" is a simile comparing abusive speech to swords which strike down enemies suddenly and ruthlessly.

 "aim a bitter word" is a synechdoche which exchanges the part (word) for the whole (speech which includes many words).

 "aim a bitter word like their arrow" is a simile comparing speech to arrows which pierce and kill victims quickly and decisively.

**Verse 5**

**Hebrew:** .uar8yy1 al0w= uhr4y0 ˜a0t=P1 ˜T8 ˜yr1T8s=M1B6 toryl1 5

**Translation/Parsing:**

 "They shoot (Qal inf cst hr8y8) from hiding places at the morally innocent.

 Suddenly they shoot (Qal impf 3mp hr8y8; GHS 69r) and do not fear (Qal impf 3mp ar2y8)."

**Textual Problems:**

 uar8yy1 in the Syriac (*nthzwn* ) is from uar8y2 (Piel perf 3mp hr8y8) meaning "make afraid, terrify" rather than the MT Qal "fear." The Syriac against the entire Masoretic tradition should not be accepted, especially since it is much later.

**Word Studies:**

 rT8s=m0 "hiding place" (BDB 712c 2b; cf. Ps 10:8, 9; 17:12; Hab 3:14).

 ˜T8 "complete, morally innocent, having integrity" (BDB 1071a 3; cf. Job 1:8; 2:3; 8:20; 9:20, 21, 22; Prov 29:10; Ps 37:37).

**Figures of Speech:**

 uar8yy1 and uhr4y0 are a paronomasia (Bul 311), or repetition of words similar in sound, but not necessarily in sense.

**Verse 6**

**Hebrew:** .omL8-ha3r=y1 ym1 urm=a8 ˜yv1q=om ˆom;=l1 urP=s6y= ir8 rb8D8 oml8-uqZ=j6y= 6

**Translation/Parsing:**

 "They make firm (Piel impf 3mp qz6j8) to each other an evil plan;

 they talk (Piel impf 3mp rp6s8) about hiding (Qal inf cst ˆm6;8; BDB 380b; cf. Job 31:33) snares;

 they say (Qal perf 3mp rm6a8), "Who will see (Qal impf 3mp ha8r8) it?"

**Textual Problems:**

 urP=s6y=: The editor proposes urP=j=y6 (Hiphil impf 3mp rP6j8; "they cause shame") with weak support from the Syriac. This substitutes j for the similar sounding s. MT is better due to late date of the Syriac.

 omL8 ("it," referring to a snare) is suggested by the editor to read unL8 ("us," referring to the evil men) with support from the Syriac and St. Jerome, translator of the Vulgate. MT is better due to the late daty of the Syriac.

**Word Studies:**

 uqZ=j6y= "make firm or fixed,= definitely adopt" (BDB 304d 4b)

 vq2om "prop. bait or lure in a fowler's net; then fig. snare" (BDB 430c)

**Figures of Speech:**

 Repetition is seen in the double usage of omL8 at the beginning and end of the verse (inclusio also).

**Verse 7**

**Hebrew:**  .qm0i8 bl2w= vya1 br3q3w= cP8j4m= cp3j2 unm=T6 tl0oi-ucP=j=y6 7

**Translation/Parsing:**

 "They search for [i.e., devise] (Qal impf 3mp cp6j8) injustice, [saying],

 'We have completed (Qal perf 1cp mm6T8) a device well thought out (Pual pctp ms cp6j8),'

 for the inward thoughts and the heart of a man are unsearchable."

**Textual Problems:**

 ucP=j=y6: Two Hebrew manuscripts, the LXX, the Syriac, and St. Jerome, translator of the Vulgate all have ucP=j8 (Qal perf 3mp cp6j8). The meanings of a characteristic perfect (ucP=j8) and a customary imperfect (ucP=j=y6) are essentially the same: "they as a way of life devise…" However, the MT (imperfect) is better since it continues in a progression of imperfects from the previous verse.

 unm=T6 ( Qal perf 1cp mm6T; "we have completed") reads as unm=;8 (Qal perf 3mp ˆm6;8; "they have hidden") in many Hebrew manuscripts due to an unintentional error of confusing T and ; since they sound very similar. Both renderings are possible and make sense but the variant may be better since it does not necessitate the addition of "saying" to make the statement a quote by the wicked.

 For vya1 ("man" as the absolute in a construct relationship) the editor proposes either vn4a8 (Pual pas pctp vn6a8) which would translate "for [their] inward thoughts are sick" or vyaB= ("in a man") due to haplo- graphy where the b should have been written twice rather than once. The editor proposes both of these possibilities without textual support and the passage makes good sense in the MT so MT should be followed.

**Word Studies:**

 br3q3 "inward part" (BDB 899b 2b; Is 16:11; Ps 5:10; 103:1)

 qm0i8 "deep=unsearchable" (BDB 771b 2)

**Figures of Speech:**

 Repetition is seen in the triple usage of cpj at the beginning, middle and end of the first line (inclusio also).

**Poetical Elements:**

 The three lines are in a formal parallelism structure in that each line is compensation to the former line by continuing the thought.

**Verse 8**

**Hebrew:** .˜t8oKm6 uyh8 ˜oat=P1 Ùj2 ˜yh1l0a5 ˜r2Y0w6 8

**Translation/Parsing:**

 "But God will shoot them (Hiphil pret 3ms hr8y8 + 3mp suffix) [with] an arrow (double accusatives; GKC 117ff).

 suddenly they will be struck down (Qal perf 3mp hy8h8; prophetic perfect; cf. GKC 111w, p. 330) [lit., their wounds occurred]."

**Textual Problems:**

 The editor suggests without textual support that the *'atnah* should be moved from under ˜oat=P1 to under Ùj2. This misplacement could have easily occurred by a Masorete scribe since the words are adjacent. The placement of the variant makes better parallelistic structure with three units in each line.

**Word Studies:**

 hK8m6 "blow, wound, slaughter" (BDB 647a 1c)

**Figures of Speech:**

 "arrow" is a hypocatastasis for God's "word" spoken against the wicked.

 "shooting with arrows" is an example of anthropopatheia, ascribing this human attribute to God (Bul 890).

**Verse 9**

**Hebrew:**

 .˜b8 ha2r0-lK8 udd7n0t=y1 ˜n8ovl= omyl2i8 uhulyv1k=Y6w6 9

**Translation/Parsing:**

 "They will make him stumble (Hiphil pret 3mp lv6k8 + 3ms suffix);

 their [own] tongue [will be] against them (omyl2i8 as 3mp; GKC 103p2);

 all who see (Qal act ptcp ms ha8r8) them (B= of object) will flee away (Hithpoel impf 3mp dd6n8; BDB 622; GKC 130a re: construct)."

**Textual Problems:**

 omyl2i8 uhulyv1k=Y6w6 is proposed by the editor as yl2i7 oml2yv1k=Y6w6 ("He will make them stumble against them;" Hiphil pret 3ms lv6k8 + 3mp suffix). There is no textual support for transposition of the verb's subject and suffix or for dropping the om- so MT is best.

 udd7n0t=y1 ("they will flee away"): Two Hebrew manuscripts have dd6ont=y1 (Hithpoel impf 3ms dd6n8; "He will flee away") but the subject ha2r0-lK8 is plural so MT is superior.

 ha2r0 in many Hebrew manuscripts, the LXX, the Syriac and Jerome's Vugate is ya2r0 (Qal act ptcp ms ha8r8 + 3ms suffix; "all who see him [God]") but this would leave ˜b8 dangling so MT is preferred.

**Word Studies:**

 lv6k8 "stumble, stagger, totter" (BDB 506a 1a)

 dd6n8 "retreat, flee, depart, stray" (BDB 622c) cf. "wag their heads" (?)

**Figures of Speech:**

 "their [own] tongue [will be] against them" is a metonymy of the cause where the instrument (tongue) is put for the effect (speech).

**Verse 10**

**Hebrew:**

 .ulyK1c=h1 uhc2i7m6u ˜yh1l0a5 li6P0 udyG1Y6w6 ˜d8a8-lK8 uar=yY1w6 10

**Translation/Parsing:**

 "Then all men will fear (Qal pret 3mp ar2y8)

 and will declare (Hiphil pret 3mp dg6n8) the work of God,

 and will ponder (Hiphil perf 3mp lk6c8) what He has done (Hiphil pctp ms hc8i8 + 3ms suffix)."

**Textual Problems:**

 uar=yY1w6 ("they will fear") is the alternate spelling (by the omission of a *yod* ) of uar=Y1w6 ("they will fear") in many Hebrew manuscripts and in the reclension by Symmachus.

 uhc2i7m6u ("what He has done") in the Syriac is from the Hebrew wyd8yd hc2i7m6u ("what the hand of God has done") by the addition of the common phrase wyd8yd in the text. Due to the Syriac's late date the MT is best.

**Word Studies:**

 lk6c8 "be prudent… give attention to, consider, ponder" (BDB 968b 2)

**Poetical Elements:**

 Incomplete parallelism without compensation (i.e., with the elipsis ˜d8a8-lK8 absent in the second and third lines):

 a - b - c

 "Then all men will fear

 and will declare the work of God,

 and will ponder what He has done."

**Verse 11**

**Hebrew:**

 .bl2-yr2v=y1-lK8 ull=h6t=y1w= ob hs8j8w= hw8hyB6 qyD1x6 jm6c=y1 11

**Translation/Parsing:**

 "Let the righteous man rejoice (Qal jussive 3ms jm6c8) in the LORD

 and [let him] seek refuge (Qal perf 3ms hs8j8 + *waw* consec) in Him;

 then all the upright in heart will glory (Hithpael impf 3mp ll6h8)."

**Word Studies:**

 hs8j8 "seek refuge" (BDB 340b)

 ll6h8 "be boastful… 2. of glorying, making one's boast in" (BDB 239a 2)

**Figures of Speech:**

 "heart" is a metonymy of the subject in which a part of the body ("heart") is put for the adjunct connected with it ("thought" or "will").

**Poetical Elements:**

 The first two lines are in an incomplete parallelism without compensation ("righteous" being eliptical in the second line), but the third line adds a new idea ("will glory"):

 a - b - c

 "Let the righteous man rejoice in the LORD

 and seek refuge in Him;

 then all the upright in heart will glory."

**Preliminary Outline**

Division into Parts:

 1 Superscription

 2a Address

 2b-3 Cry to God (Introductory Cry)

 4-7 Lament

 8-9 Confidence of God's Deliverance

 10-11 Declarative Praise

Message:

The psalmist cries to God for protection from his enemy's secret speech and injustice against him and expresses confidence that God will suddenly judge him through his own speech so that he will be scorned but God's judgments will be praised, resulting in praise and trust in God.

Structure:

I. The psalmist cries to God for protection from his enemy and laments that they secretly speak against the unsuspecting righteous and devise injustice together in their inner wickedness (2-7 [1-6]).

A. He cries to God and petitions protection from his enemy (2-3).

 1. David cries out to God to hear his complaint (2a).

 2. David petitions God to guard his life by hiding him from his enemies (2b-3).

B. He laments that his enemies secretly speak against the unsuspecting righteous and devise injustice together in their inner wickedness (4-7).

 1. They prepare speech to ruin the reputation of the Godly (4).

 2. They fearlessly attack the righteous in secret (5).

 3. They work together on an evil plan to hurt others unsuspecting of trouble (6).

 4. They carefully devise injustice from their inner wickedness (7).

II. The psalmist expresses confidence that God will suddenly judge the wicked through their own speech so they they will be scorned but God's judgments will be praised and God Himself will be praised and trusted by all the righteous (8-11 [7-10]).

A. He is confident that God will suddenly judge the wicked through their own self-inflicting speech so that others will scorn them (8-9).

 1. God will suddenly judge the wicked (8).

 2. God's actions will judge them through their self-inflicting speech so that others will scorn them (9).

B. He declares praise of God's judgment and exhorts others to rejoice, trust God and praise Him (10-11).

 1. People will stand in awe at God's judgment and tell others about it (10).

 2. Each righteous person should rejoice in and trust the LORD so that the congregation will praise Him (11).

**Translation of Psalm 64**

1 "For the choir director. A psalm of David."

2 "O God, hear (Qal impv 3ms im6v8) my voice in my complaint.

 Guard (Qal impf 2ms rx6n8) my life from the dread of the enemy."

3 "Hide me (Hiphil impf 2ms rT6s8 + 1cs suffix) from the council of the wicked;

 from the throng of the doing of [those who do] wickedness."

4 "who sharpen (Qal perf 3mp nn6v8) their tongue like a sword,

 they aim (Qal perf 3mp ˚r6D8) a bitter word [like] their arrow."

5 "They shoot (Qal inf cst hr8y8) from hiding places at the morally innocent.

 Suddenly they shoot (Qal impf 3mp hr8y8; GHS 69r) and do not fear (Qal impf 3mp ar2y8)."

6 "They make firm (Piel impf 3mp qz6j8) to each other an evil plan;

 they talk (Piel impf 3mp rp6s8) about hiding (Qal inf cst ˆm6;8; BDB 380b; cf. Job 31:33) snares;

 they say (Qal perf 3mp rm6a8), "Who will see (Qal impf 3mp ha8r8) it?"

7 "They search for [i.e., devise] (Qal impf 3mp cp6j8) injustice, [saying],

 'We have completed (Qal perf 1cp mm6T8) a device well thought out (Pual pctp ms cp6j8),'

 for the inward thoughts and the heart of a man are unsearchable."

8 "But God will shoot them (Hiphil pret 3ms hr8y8 + 3mp suffix) [with] an arrow (double accusatives; GKC 117ff).

 suddenly they will be struck down (Qal perf 3mp hy8h8; prophetic perfect; cf. GKC 111w, p. 330) [lit., their wounds occurred]."

9 "They will make him stumble (Hiphil pret 3mp lv6k8 + 3ms suffix);

 their [own] tongue [will be] against them (omyl2i8 as 3mp; GKC 103p2);

 all who see (Qal act ptcp ms ha8r8) them (B= of object) will flee away (Hithpoel impf 3mp dd6n8; BDB 622; GKC 130a re: construct)."

10 "Then all men will fear (Qal pret 3mp ar2y8)

 and will declare (Hiphil pret 3mp dg6n8) the work of God,

 and will ponder (Hiphil perf 3mp lk6c8) what He has done (Hiphil pctp ms hc8i8 + 3ms suffix)."

11 "Let the righteous man rejoice (Qal jussive 3ms jm6c8) in the LORD

 and [let him] seek refuge (Qal perf 3ms hs8j8 + *waw* consec) in Him;

 then all the upright in heart will glory (Hithpael impf 3mp ll6h8)."

**Hebrew Text**

.dw1d8l= romz=m1 j6X2n6m=l6 1

.yY8j6 rX0T1 by2oa dj6P6m1 yj1yc1b= yl1oq ˜yh1l0a5-im6v= 2

.~ˆw3a8 yl2i7P0 tv6g=r1m2 ˜yi1r2m= doSm1 yn1r2yT1s=T6 3

.rm8 rb8D8 ˜X8j1 ukr=D8 ˜n8ovl= br3j3k6 unn=v8 rv3a7 4

.uar8yy1 al0w= uhr4y0 ˜a0t=P1 ˜T8 ˜yr1T8s=M1B6 toryl1 5

 .omL8-ha3r=y1 ym1 urm=a8 ˜yv1q=om ˆom;=l1 urP=s6y= ir8 rb8D8 oml8-uqZ=j6y= 6

 .qm0i8 bl2w= vya1 br3q3w= cP8j4m= cp3j2 unm=T6 tl0oi-ucP=j=y6 7

.˜t8oKm6 uyh8 ˜oat=P1 Ùj2 ˜yh1l0a5 ˜r2Y0w6 8

.˜b8 ha2r0-lK8 udd7n0t=y1 ˜n8ovl= omyl2i8 uhulyv1k=Y6w6 9

.ulyK1c=h1 uhc2i7m6u ˜yh1l0a5 li6P0 udyG1Y6w6 ˜d8a8-lK8 uar=yY1w6 10

.bl2-yr2v=y1-lK8 ull=h6t=y1w= ob hs8j8w= hw8hyB6 qyD1x6 jm6c=y1 11