

# (How to Understand the KJV Bible) 39 Psalm 82

by Keith Simons

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*God judges the judges for their wickedness and calls on Himself to judge the earth, inheriting all nations and establishing His authority.*

**Duration:** 23:59

**Scripture:** Psalm 82:1

**Topics:** "KJV Bible", "Justice", "Divine Judgment"

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## Description

Keith Simons discusses Psalm 82, emphasizing God's judgment on unjust rulers who misuse their authority and fail to protect the weak and needy. He explains that the term 'gods' refers to those appointed by God to govern, but they have strayed from their responsibilities, leading to a world where the foundations are out of course. Simons highlights the call for these judges to act justly and defend the poor, warning that their failure will result in divine judgment. The sermon concludes with a reminder that God, as the ultimate judge, will hold all nations accountable for their actions.

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## Transcript

Welcome. Psalm 82 verse 5 makes the judgment all the foundations of the earth are out of course. That is a terrible judgment against the state of this world.

If the foundations of a house are out of course, then that house is unstable, it cannot stand, it will fall down. What happens if the foundations of the earth, the foundations of the world are out of course? Something very terrible must have happened, something that only God can deal with in judgment. So welcome, my name is Keith Simons, I'm a Bible teacher from England and you've joined one of our weekly talks on how to understand the King James Version of the Bible by looking at the Psalms, not preaching too many sermons, but going through a Psalm each week, verse by verse and word by word.

I hope you'll look at some of my previous talks when you've heard this one. So Psalm 82 begins with the title A Psalm of Asaph. Asaph was one of the temple musicians in God's house, the temple, and it seems that he wrote the times of great trouble in Israel.

Many of his Psalms refer to great troubles, great injustices, great suffering in Israel, and maybe these were happening during his own life or maybe he wrote about them in prophecy. Psalm 82 begins with an astonishing statement, verse one, God standeth in the congregation of the mighty, he judgeth among the gods. Now that last word there, gods, is the one that surprises us and perhaps disturbs us.

What we need to know is that the word God in the Hebrew language means the strong one, the mighty one, and the Hebrew language sometimes does use that word gods to refer to people who are strong and mighty and powerful. An example of this is Exodus 22 verses 8 to 9. If the thief be not found then the master of the house shall be brought unto the judges. And so it continues and it refers to the judges a few more times in those couple of verses.

Now that word judges is the same word as the word translated gods at the end of Psalm 82 verse 1. It's also the same word as God at the beginning of the verse. So what we are saying is that God, the mighty one, the ruler, the powerful one, has appointed people to be mighty and powerful and rulers and to have authority that in a way is like the authority of the true God, the one God who created the heaven and earth, but which is lesser than the authority of the true God. God hasn't lost his position, he hasn't lost his greatness, he hasn't lost his power as king of kings and as lord of lords, but he's appointed people to take on responsibilities in this world.

We see judges, the responsibility of judgment. Now rightly the responsibility for judgment belongs to God, but God's allowed people to have that responsibility. In ancient Israel the judges weren't just people who sat in court and made legal decisions, they were the rulers, they were the kings, they were the powerful people and sitting in judgment was just an extra thing, an extra duty which they did.

And something's gone wrong as we've seen already with these judges and that is why God is standing in their congregation, in the place where these mighty and powerful people have gathered together. God has come amongst them because he is their judge, they are responsible to him. God has appointed them to defend the weak people, to protect those, to deliver the needed, to deliver and rescue those who have troubles from powerful people oppressing them.

But these powerful people who are called gods in verse 1, well they're not doing God's work of rescuing those people, no, they're pleasing themselves, they're enjoying themselves, they like the power and the wealth and the riches and the importance that their position gives to them. They're taking advantage of what God has given to them for their own benefit. And so when God sees this, he doesn't remain inactive, he knows what they've done, he understands what they've done, he's given them a responsibility and they have misused it.

So now God comes amongst them in the wording of the psalm, he comes amongst them to make his judgment against them, to accuse them, to tell them what they're doing wrong and what he requires of justice in this world. Verse 2, God speaks, how long will ye judge unjustly and accept the persons of the wicked? He's saying to these rulers, these men who are so great that they have the title of God's powerful people, he's saying to them, your judgments are not like my judgments, what I judge is right, what you judge is evil, you're trying to please yourselves, you're accepting the persons of the wicked, persons in the Hebrew language is faces, you're allowing wicked people to look towards you, to come up to you, to come into your courts and you're trying to please them. Why are you trying to please them? Because you want to bribe from them.

These are wicked people, the very people who you ought to be punishing, the very people who you ought to be dealing with, the people who I have appointed you to rule over and to stop their evil deeds and you're encouraging them and you're accepting bribes and payments from them and you're as wicked as them, in fact you're worse than them because you are allowing them to do this evil thing. The word selah then appears there, a Hebrew word, it might be a word of praise to God but it might just be a word that indicates a pause

in the psalm and a point to reflect and to think about what's been said. Then in verse 3 God continues, he declares to these judges, defend the poor and fatherless, do justice to the afflicted and needy.

Quite often I do a little Hebrew word study before I do these talks and the reason I do this is that we can look at words like poor and afflicted and needy and we think they mean about the same thing but what the King James translators were doing was looking at the Hebrew words and trying to differentiate between the precise meaning of them and to choose English words that matched up. So when they read defend the poor, well the Hebrew word there means the weak, it's the weak who need to be defended and the fatherless, it means as it sounds like children who are without a father, maybe they're orphans, maybe they've lost both their parents or maybe they never knew their father, maybe their father wasn't faithful and left their mother to look after them on their own. They're weak, they don't have a father to defend them, they're lacking a defender to stand up for them.

So you, God says, as judges should be defending them. They are weak, you should help them, they have no father to fight for them, you the judges should be fighting for them. You should do justice to the afflicted and the needy.

The afflicted are those who are depressed and troubled, maybe they're troubled in their minds, maybe they're troubled because they're so poor and they don't have what they need. The needy expresses the idea of those who have nothing, then they have such troubles, they have no possessions, it's for you the judges to act in justice towards them, to sort out what their troubles are, to deal with those troubles, to give them their rights, to give them help and support. You should defend them and you should deliver them.

You should defend them by standing on their side, you should deliver them by rescuing them. Verse four, deliver the poor and needy. The word poor here is the same word we saw in verse three which means the weak.

The needy is not the same word as it appeared in the previous verse, this means those who need help. So deliver or rescue those who are weak and those who need help. Rid them out of the hand of the wicked.

The hand of the wicked means the power of wicked people and to rid them out of the hand of the wicked means to rescue them. Maybe wicked people are keeping them as slaves and they have no right to do so, then rescue them, set them free, take them away from those wicked people. God has said what needs to be done now, that his poor people need the help of those judges to be rescued from their great troubles.

God has told them to act, that they should act in support of those people with needs, that they should rescue them, that they should act against wicked people, that they should deliver judgments. That is what God has called them for. God has appointed them, he's made them into great mighty people, people who he even calls in verse one, gods, so that they can do this.

But now he as God, the one true God, the living God, the one who rules over these judges, he is going to make his verdict against these judges who have failed to do their work for him. Verse five, he declares about the judges, they know not, neither will they understand, they walk on in darkness. It's a terrible thing to walk in darkness.

Some people, because they're blind perhaps, have to do it, but even they look for things to help them. Even a blind person will take a stick to feel his way forward, or if he can get a guide dog to lead him, he will have a guide dog to be his eyes, to look for him. But if you truly walk in darkness, if you have none of

these aids and none of these supports, then think of the great danger you're in, think of how certain an accident is, think of how certain trouble is.

These judges have chosen on purpose not to obey God's commands, not to listen to the knowledge of God's law, the learning that God wants to teach them, not to care about his judgments. And so they've made themselves like people who walk in darkness. If God's law should be the light to direct them in their lives and in their activities, they are having none of that light.

They are choosing to live for themselves. They want to please themselves, to enjoy themselves. They like riches, they like money.

They don't care about the poor. Why should they help poor people? Let poor people help themselves, they say. But God says, all the foundations of the earth are out of course.

God says, I made this world that you will be the judges of it. I gave you power and authority over people. I made you to be mighty and important people, so that you would organize the world with justice and with judgment, the way I, God, wanted it to be organized.

And you're not doing it. That's why the structures which God has put in place are out of course. A foundation means a strong base of a building, the thing that supports that building, that gives its strength.

If that foundation is out of course, if it's out of place, the building will shake, it will tremble, it will fall, there will be a disaster. God continues to speak in verse 6. He says, I have said, ye are gods. That's a verse that Jesus quotes in John chapter 10 and verse 34.

But what is meant by this psalm here is that these powerful people to whom God's word came in this situation, that they were appointed to be great. God wanted them to be great. He wanted them to do his work on earth.

That's why God gave them that special title. That's why God gave them such honor. They were children of the Most High.

They were appointed to do that by God. In other words, just as someone's children maybe continue the same family work and the family business, so they as the children of the Most High God were given an elevated position among people so that they would do the work of God. But that great elevated position, their great importance, their great honor, the honor of being those whom God called by his own title, they would lose that.

Verse 7, God's judgment against them, but ye shall die like men and fall like one of the princes. His judgment against them is a judgment of death. A God should live forever.

The true God does live forever. He is yesterday, today, and forever the same. He never loses his position.

He never loses his authority. He appointed these rulers to be great, but they are doing evil things. They are as wicked or worse than the wicked people who should be punishing.

So God's judgment against such rulers is that they should die like common men. Just like an ordinary man, they would die and then they would face the judgment of God and God would not be pleased with them. They had a high position as children of the Most High, verse 6. But God declares, verse 7, they will fall like one of the princes.

They might think themselves great in their power and in their wealth and in their luxury. They might think that they have such power and authority, but they would fall. They would be no better than any other prince or ruler whom God had judged before.

They were not in a better position. They were in the same position. And just as God has judged in the past, so he would judge them now.

They would lose their high position. They would lose their honorable places. They would lose their importance.

And what a great fall it is if you're in a high place and you fall. And so it is if you are in a high place as a ruler of people, if you are over people as their ruler and you lose that place and you fall from it. That is a terrible thing.

And so the psalm concludes its judgment against them. We began by saying that they were called gods because of the authority that the true God had given to them. But now they've lost that authority and that power because the one true God, the living God, the creator of heaven and earth, never lost his authority over them.

They might have imagined that God had handed his authority to them and that God would never call them to account. If so, they discover that they are very foolish because God, the true God, is the judge of all people, even of the most powerful and authoritative people on earth. And when they misuse nations and misuse poor people for their own benefit, then God will certainly make his judgment against them.

So we conclude with verse 8. Arise, O God, judge the earth. The psalmist calls on God to stand up, to take his position as judge. The time for evil people to rule this world is coming to an end.

The time for evil powers to have so much power over the poor and the weak must end. For, because thou shalt inherit all nations. The whole world, not just Israel, is your possession.

I suppose that Asaph, writing his psalm in Israel and seeing the troubles in Israel, had been thinking about Israel's people and Israel's judges and their wrong acts. But now, Asaph turns his attention to every nation. And across the world, rulers and powerful people have used poor people for their own advantage, have failed to act properly against evil and wicked people.

And where they have done so, then God will act in judgment against them. There are, of course, judges who judge rightly. There are, of course, rulers and powerful people who use their judgments in the right and proper way and use their authority in the way that pleases God.

But where that has not been done, God will act. God shall inherit all nations. He shall be the judge of all right across the world.

Abraham said, shall not the judge of all the earth do right? Yes, God will do right. He will establish his authority. He already has authority over all the rulers, all the nations of the earth.

That's why he is called in the book of Revelation, king of kings and lord of lords, the king who rules over all kings, the lord or the master who rules over all lords. He is the judge in the same way of all judges. Please write to me, my email address is 333kjv at gmail.com. Be nice to hear from you, to know which country you've come from and how you find these podcasts.

The email address again, 333kjb at gmail.com. Now let me read to you the whole psalm, Psalm 82, a psalm of Asaph. God standeth in the congregation of the mighty. He judgeth among the gods.

How long will ye judge unjustly and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah. Defend the poor and fatherless. Do justice to the afflicted and needy.

Deliver the poor and needy. Rid them out of the hand of the wicked. They know not, neither will they understand.

They walk on in darkness. All the foundations of the earth are out of course. I have said, ye are gods and all of you are children of the most high.

But ye shall die like men and fall like one of the princes. Arise, O God, judge the earth, for thou shalt inherit all nations.

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