

# Psalm 52

## Psalm 52:1–22

## A Reckless, Deceitful Tongue

### Outline of Chapter 52:

Inscription	<b>Psalm 52 Inscription</b>
vv. 1–4	<b>Doeg’s Evil Lying Tongue</b>
v. 5	<b>What God will do to Doeg</b>
vv. 6–7	<b>The Righteous Will Observe and Take Note of the Futility of Doeg’s Life</b>
vv. 8–9	<b>David Presents His Own Trust in God by Way of Contrast</b>

Although in the outline, I have made this psalm very specific in its application (David as the growing believer and Doeg as the self-serving, lying sack of shit), this of course has much wider application to the believer who is growing in God’s grace and knowledge as versus the man who will lie and commit other sins of the tongue in order to get whatever it is that he wants in life. There are men who will say or do anything in order to improve their lives, to gain the approbation of others and in order to advance their positions.

### Charts and Maps:

Introduction	<b>The Use of Elohim and Jehovah in the Psalms</b>
Introduction	<b>The Elohimic Maskil</b>
v. 4	<b>Doeg’s Options:</b>
v. 7	<b>A Summary of Psalm 52:7</b>
v. 8	<b>How David and Doeg Are Polar Opposites</b>
v. 8	<b>Psalm 52 Organized by Parallel Thoughts</b>
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v. 9	<b>Similarities Between Doeg and the Man of Sin to Come</b>
v. 9	<b>A Summary of Barnes’ Thesis on When Do You Convey Information and When Do You Keep Your Mouth Shut?</b>

Doctrines Covered		Doctrines Alluded To	
Olive Tree	House of Elohim	Sins of the Tongue	

**Introduction:** Psalm 52 is one of the most excoriating of the psalms. The occasion for this psalm is when Doeg the Edomite goes to Saul and tells him where David is, which results in the slaughter of the priests of Nob. David rakes Doeg over the coals in the psalm, probably more than any other individual. I suspect that David and Doeg had some sort of a relationship—they knew each other, were friendly toward one another. Doeg is called the *chief of Saul’s shepherds* in I Sam. 21:7, and David, in his younger days had been a shepherd for his family’s flock. So we would have expected David to look up Doeg early on during his tenure at the palace. If you found yourself at a dinner party with 20 people that you barely knew, you might gravitate toward those whose vocation is similar to yours. David did the same thing. He was not a brown-noser, he was not originally a soldier, he was not an old friend of Saul’s—but he was a shepherd, so no doubt, David looked up the king’s shepherd and we might expect that they knew each other well.

To help draw you a picture, Saul was estranged from the spiritual aspects of Israel since his second fall out with Samuel. He had done things that were the prerogative of a priest (offering sacrifices); so when Samuel cut Saul off, Saul ended any sort of relationship that he might have had with the priests and the Tent of God. In fact, during Saul's kingship, he made no attempt to bring the Ark of God to the Tent of God, and he offered no support to the priests of God. So, we have no relationship between Saul and those in the priestly line (which will become apparent when he slaughters them). Therefore, there is probably no one in Saul's regime who has a spiritual edge to them, apart from Jonathan (and David and Jonathan became quick friends). Therefore, apart from Jonathan, the man in Saul's cabinet that David would have the most in common with would be Doeg. So we can expect that David spend some time with Doeg. Whether they had anything else in common, we don't know. We know for certain that Doeg did not possess any of David's integrity.

David went to Nob, the city of the priests, soon after he left his royal home (I Sam. 19:12-21:1). He had already been to the city of prophets. He had no real plan, apart from getting some food to eat and Goliath's sword. Because Saul had no real contact with the priests, David knew that he could go there, and not be recognized by any of Saul's men—as they would not be there. However, David was surprised to see Doeg the Edomite (I Sam. 21:7). Doeg, as we have seen in I Sam. 23, was a man who desperately wanted to fit in. He was an outsider, an Edomite, so, even though Saul was not a supporter of the spiritual side of Israel, Doeg still went to Nob, the city of priests, with the intention of fitting in better in Israel. Apparently, several of Saul's servants had been there, but they had gone (David very likely observed this); with the exception of Doeg. So, while talking to Ahimelech, the priest, David looks over the man's shoulder and sees a familiar face, Doeg. There is no indication that they talked, waved, or did anything to acknowledge seeing one another. David had told Ahimelech that he was on a secret mission from Saul, so he didn't need anyone else contradicting that story...so David certainly did not call Doeg over to talk. So they parted, Doeg and David, wordlessly, not even acknowledging the other's presence. However, they both kept this fact in mind.

Doeg did not run right to Saul and say, "David's at Nob. You need to hurry, or you will miss him." It is clear that Doeg waited, and David not only left Nob, but had been to and left Gath as well. Saul called a cabinet meeting and threw a royal fit about David. I Sam. 22:5-10. Doeg, deciding that his information might provide him with an *in* with Saul, says, "Well, I believe that I saw David at Nob." Now, Doeg has to be careful. That was a few weeks ago. Doeg can't bring this up, and let it stay at that. Otherwise, Saul would have Doeg executed for not telling him sooner. He has to deflect Saul's anger to the priests. "[He \[Ahimelech\] inquired of Jehovah for him \[David\], gave him food and gave him Goliath's sword.](#)" (I Sam. 22:10). David is long-gone from there, so what does Doeg hope to accomplish? He simply wants to be on Saul's good side. And he has to deflect any animosity that Saul might put on him. In other words, the content of Doeg's information is completely self-serving. I should add that Doeg probably contemplated the following, "What if Saul finds out that David was in Nob the same time that I was? I had better tell Saul before he finds out this information on his own." So part of Doeg's decision to reveal this to Saul could have been motivated by self-preservation. Doeg knows what a madman Saul is; if Saul ever suspected that Doeg knew something about David but did not reveal it, Doeg would be executed for certain. Knowing that Saul was a madman, Doeg gave little consideration to what Saul would do to the inhabitants of Nob when he went there to find David long gone. In fact, the end result will not only be that Saul slaughters the priests of Nob, but that Doeg will do the actual slaughtering himself.

The result of all this is David's psalm, an ode to Doeg, a man that David apparently once counted as a friend and ally, but who was now willing to sell his own mother, so to speak, for Saul's approbation and for his own self-preservation. So, what you should expect is that David will speak rather strongly and negatively about Doeg, and his actions. What Doeg did was an immoral betrayal. David will pull no punches.

I originally introduced this psalm at the time that Doeg stands up and tells Saul, "I've seen David in Nob." However, that is not when David actually wrote this. David didn't sit straight up in his bed one night and suddenly say, "Doeg's selling out the priests" as if from some dream. He wrote this psalm because of this act of Doeg's. However, David will become aware of the act when the last living priest, Abiathar ben Ahimelech (probably a teenager at the time), comes to David and tells him about the slaughter of Nob (I Sam. 22:20-23). This would have been the actual time of David writing this psalm. Therefore, even though many commentaries make reference to this psalm back in I Sam. 22:9, it more properly belongs here, after I Sam. 22:22, after we have seen what Doeg has done.

One of the reasons that I read several commentaries when I prepare this, is that they occasionally give me a fresh perspective or thought or question to pursue. Although I have several commentaries which have been gathered by the e-Sword guy (Rick Meyers), when I read McGee's take on this psalm, he provided a completely different initial view: McGee suggests that this psalm introduces a series of psalms about the man of sin to come, the antichrist (Psalms 52–55). McGee, for those who don't know him, taught the entire Bible over a period of 5 years on the radio, book by book, although not always verse by verse (which would have been an impossible task). This trip was done several times, and now it is rebroadcast nearly two decades after McGee passed away to be with God. McGee never did go crazy with eschatology; he taught it when he came to it, and avoided making wild predictions. In fact, he writes, *Many wild things are being said today in the field of prophecy. There is fanaticism in the great department of eschatology, the doctrine of future things; and some things are being said that should not be said. Because of the anxiety and uncertainty of this day and age in which we live, many folk are turning to the Word of God. Prophetic conferences are springing up everywhere, sponsored by churches that never before were interested in prophecy. Many speakers are attempting to be sensational by making prophetic statements that have no foundation in the Word of God.*<sup>1</sup> However, like I said, when McGee got to a prophetic passage, he did not shy away from it. And what McGee suggests is that, we have all of these villains in the life of David who have cropped up, and as David wrote about them, he wrote also about the man of sin as well. That is, there was a double meaning that could be inferred in David's writings. While I hesitate only slightly in supporting McGee's position here, there is doubtless many parallels between Doeg and the man of sin to come.

Psalm 52 begins a series of what are known as *Elohimic maskils*, that is, psalms in which the name Elohim is prominent, and that these are identified as *maskil* or instructive psalms. In all actuality, *Elohim* occurs 3 times in this psalm, 7 times in Psalm 53, 4 times in Psalm 54, and 5 times in Psalm 55. Although there are several psalms where we do not find the name (or title) *Elohim* (e.g., 1, 2, 6, 11, 12), the number of times *Elohim* occurs in these psalms is not out of the ordinary (for instance, *Elohim* is found 9 times in Psalm 56 and 8 times in Psalm 66). The number of verses, the theme of the psalm, the meter of the verse and the doctrinal points being made have just as much to do with the selection of the title *Elohim* and the number of times we find it used. The proper name, *Jehovah*, is found only once in Psalm 54 and twice in Psalm 55 (it is found 10 times, for instance, in Psalm 30–31). There has been an inordinate amount of thought concerning this by the JEPD crowd, and their solution is that one author wrote all the *Jehovah* passages and another all the *Elohim* passages. The result is, blocks of chapters of individual books are assigned to the *Jehovist* and other blocks to the *Elohimist*. What they ignore is style, theme, meter and doctrinal emphasis. The end result is, the books of Moses are not written by Moses, the book of Joshua is not written by Joshua, etc. Religious types composed these at a much later date, and other religious types then interwove these books after that. Of course, the end result is that Scripture could not be inspired under these circumstances (as we understand Scriptural inspiration to be), which is the end result of many various Satanic attacks upon Scripture. This ignores, for instance, the psalms where these name occurs roughly the same number of times.

I have seen a JEPD theorist present his ideas on television, and he seemed reasonable. He said something along the lines of, "When you begin to notice that some passages have *Elohim* in them and others *Yahweh*, the contrast is at first interesting. But then when you find these uses in large groups and throughout the Old Testament, you begin to recognize that there is some sort of a pattern." And since very few people know the Bible, they buy into this theory, not realizing that, yes, there are many passages when one term is found almost to the exclusion of the other; but then there are many passages where they are found in roughly equal numbers together.

*Elohim* is a plural noun which refers to the Trinity. Strong's #430 BDB #43. *Jehovah* is a proper noun which usually stands for the revealed member of the Trinity, but it can also refer to any member of the Trinity. Strong's #3068 BDB #217.

For the claims of the JEPD crowd to be true, we would expect to find psalms with either the name of *Jehovah* or the title *Elohim*, but we should not expect to find these terms used in great numbers together in the same psalm.

<sup>1</sup> J. Vernon McGee, *Psalms Chapters 42–89*, ©1991 by J. Vernon McGee; Thomas Nelson, Inc.; p. 69.

## The Use of Elohim and Jehovah in the Psalms

A Similar Number of Times		A Large Number of Times	
Elohim	Jehovah	Elohim	Jehovah
Psalm 7 (5 times)	Psalm 7 (8 times)	Psalm 18 (6 times)	Psalm 18 (19 times)
Psalm 14 (3 times)	Psalm 14 (4 times)	Psalm 41 (1 times)	Psalm 41 (6 times)
Psalm 40 (4 times)	Psalm 40 (9 times)	Psalm 42 (9 times)	Psalm 42 (1 time)
Psalm 69 (9 times)	Psalm 69 (4 times)	Psalm 50 (9 times)	Psalm 50 (1 time)
Psalm 70 (3 times)	Psalm 70 (2 times)	Psalm 68 (24 times)	Psalm 68 (1 time)

What we do find is *Jehovah* being used, in general, much more often than the title *Elohim*. And we find Psalms with one name used almost exclusively. However, what this chart also tells us is that, there are psalms where neither term is used exclusively. This chart, by the way, is not exhaustive, but the psalms listed are given by way of examples.

Are there any patterns? Certainly—*Elohim* is found in almost every psalm between 35 and 100 and 143–147, but in about half of the other psalms. The name *Jehovah* is found in almost every psalm from 1–41 and from 68–149, and *Jehovah* is found in about half of the others. You will notice that there is a fair amount of overlap.

Furthermore, this silly JEPD theory ignores the hundreds of times that *Jehovah* and *Elohim* occur together in the same verse throughout Scripture. In fact, these names are found together in the same verse 1161 times in the Old Testament. Recall that the title *Jehovah Elohim* (or, the *LORD God*) is found hundreds of times in the Old Testament.

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Keil and Delitzsch call Psalm 52 the *first of the Elohimic maskils*, which of course implies that the next few psalms will be Psalms of Instruction where we find the name of Elohim over and over again.

### The Elohimic Maskils

Psalm	The Number of Times Jehovah Occurs	The Number of Times Elohim Occurs
52	0	3
53	0	7
54	1	4
55	2	5
56	1	9

All of these psalms, except the last one, are called Maskils. In every case, the name of *Elohim* is more prominent than the name of *Jehovah*.

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## Psalm 52 Inscription

Slavishly literal:

**To the Preeminent [One]. A maskil [or, an instructive psalm] to David. In a coming of Doeg the Edomite and so he makes known to Saul and so he says to him, “Had come David unto a house of Ahimelech.”**

Psalm  
52 inscription

Moderately literal:

**To the Preeminent One. An instructive psalm by David. When Doeg the Edomite came to Saul and made [it] known that [lit., and made known to Saul and so he says] David had gone to the house of Ahimelech.**

**To the Preeminent One. An instructive psalm written by David. This psalm was inspired by Doeg the Edomite going to Saul and revealing to him that David had gone to the house of Ahimelech.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Early translations:

The Septuagint                      For the end, [a psalm] of instruction by David, when Doeg the Idumean came and told Saul, and said to him, “David is gone to the house of Abimelech.”

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV                                      *[A special psalm by David for the music leader. He wrote this when Doeg from Edom went to Saul and said, “David has gone to Ahimelech’s house.”]*

NJB                                      *For the choirmaster Poem Of David When Doeg the Edomite went and warned Saul, ‘David has gone to Abimelech’s house.’*

NLT                                      *For the choir director: A psalm of David, regarding the time Doeg the Edomite told Saul that Ahimelech had given refuge to David.*

TEV                                      **God’s Judgment and Grace** [Hebrew Title: *A poem by David, after Doeg the Edomite went to Saul and told him that David had gone to the house of Ahimelech*]

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

*God’s Word™*                      For the choir director; a *maskil*; a psalm by David when Doeg (who was from Edom) told Saul that David had come to Ahimelech’s home.

JPS (Tanakh)                      For the leader. A *maskil* of David, when Doeg the Edomite came and informed Saul, telling him, “David came to Ahimelech’s house.” [In the JPS, this is vv. 1–2].

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

*The Amplified Bible*              To the Chief Musician. A skillful song, or a didactic or reflective poem. [A *Psalm*] of David, when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, David has come to the house of Ahimelech.

NASB                                      For the choir director. A *Maskil* of David, when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, and said to him, “David has come to the house of Ahimelech.”

*Young’s Updated LT*              To the Overseer. —An instruction by David, in the coming in of Doeg the Edomite, and he declares to Saul, and says to him, “David came in to the house of Ahimelech.”

**What is the gist of this verse?** David dedicates this psalm to God. It is a psalm of instruction written on the occasion that Doeg the Edomite revealed to Saul that David had been in Nob speaking with Ahimelech, the priest.

In the Hebrew, the first half of this inscriptions (parts a and b) are v. 1, and parts c and d are v. 2. Our English v. 1 is the Hebrew v. 3. In the Greek, this inscription (or title) and the verse that follows make up v. 1.

### Psalm 52 inscription a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>o</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
nâtsach (נָצַח) [pronounced naw- TZAHKH]	<i>to oversee, to supervise; to be preeminent, to be enduring; the Preeminent One</i>	Piel participle with the definite article	Strong's #5329 BDB #663

The Piel participle of nâtsach is given a wide variety of renderings: *overseer* (Young), *the music leader* (CEV), *choir director* (NASB, NLT), *choirmaster* (Owens), *leader* (NRSV, NEB, NAB) and *chief musician* (Rotherham).

**Translation: To the Preeminent One.** As you can see, there are a variety of renderings for this Piel participle, including *music leader*, *overseer*, *choirmaster*, and *chief musician*. This psalm could be dedicated to God and it could be for the *Overseer of the Music*. What we have in Psalm 59, if you recall, is that David wrote: **To the Preeminent One: do not destroy [me]!** Although we could interpret this as being dedicated to Saul, who was out to destroy David, or to God, Who has the power to destroy David; this would hardly be applicable to the *Chief Musician* or to the *Choir Director*. Given the use of this word in Psalm 59, which was written prior to Psalm 56, we may reasonably give nâtsach a similar meaning here as found in Psalm 59; hence, the psalm is dedicated or written to God. Now, if we go with this understanding, the first question would be, *why not dedicate this psalm to Elohim or to Jehovah?* In the psalms, there are a number of style differences and word usage tends to be different as well. This does not preclude the use of *Elohim* or *Jehovah*, it simply recognizes that there may be words used in the psalms which also refer to God, but are not used elsewhere in that manner. Again, go back to Psalm 59—there are few traditional interpretations of the word nâtsach which make sense. However, as a dedication to God, this makes perfect sense.

### Psalm 52 inscription b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mas <sup>o</sup> kîyl (מַסְכִּיֵּל) [pronounced mahs <sup>o</sup> - KEEL]	<i>an instructive psalm; a contemplative poem; transliterated maskil</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4905 BDB #968

Gesenius lists this as the Hiphil of sâkal (סָכַל) [pronounced saw-KAHL], which means (in the Hiphil) *to look at, to attend to, to turn the mind to; to be understanding, to become understanding, to be prudent; to be successful, to act prosperously; to instruct, to make prudent, to teach*. In any case, mas<sup>o</sup>kîyl comes from sâkal. Strong's #7919 BDB #968.

lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>o</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיֵּד) [pronounced daw- VEED]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

**Translation: An instructive psalm by David,...** Although many good translations tend to transliterate this as *maskil*, I think that we can safely refer to this as an *instructive psalm*, given that there is no question about this words ties to the Hiphil (causal stem) of sâkal, which means *to instruct, to make prudent, to teach*. We find this used in the

titles of Psalms 32, 42, 44, 45, 52–55, 74, 78, 88, 89, and 142. David is specifically mentioned in half of those psalms, with the following exceptions: no one is listed as the author for Psalms 42 44 45; Asaph is named as the writer of Psalms 74 78, Heman for Psalm 88 and Ethan for Psalm 89. After we cover a few more of these instructive psalms of David, then we will look at them as a whole.

## Psalm 52 inscription c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's# none BDB #88
When verbs in the infinitive construct are preceded by the bēyth preposition, b <sup>e</sup> acts as a temporal conjunction; that is, <i>in their being created</i> = <i>when they were created</i> (Gen. 2:4); <i>in their being in the field</i> = <i>when they were in the field</i> (Gen. 4:8). <sup>2</sup>			
bōw' (בּוֹ) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #935 BDB #97
Dō'êg (דּוֹעֵג) [pronounced doh-AYG]; also spelled דּוֹעֵג	<i>anxious, concerned, fear and is transliterated Doeg</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1673 BDB #178
'ēdōwmîy (אֶדוֹמִי) [pronounced eh-doh-MEE]	<i>reddish; and is transliterated Edomite; also Syrian</i>	gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #123 BDB #10
Sulpicius Severus calls Doeg a Syrian, following the Greek version of 1Sam. 21:7; and so does Josephus; the problem, apparently, is the confounding of the letters ד and ר, so that he is called an Aramite instead of an Edomite. <sup>3</sup>			
wa or va (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâgad (נִגַּד) [pronounced naw-GAHD]	<i>to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to explain, to declare, to inform, to confess, to make it pitifully obvious that</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #5046 BDB #616
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Shâ'ûwl (שׂוּאֵל) [pronounced shaw-OOL]	which is transliterated Saul; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982

**Translation:** [When Doeg the Edomite came to Saul and made \[it\] known that](#) [lit., and made known to Saul and so he says]... We have already discussed the history of this. Doeg the Edomite was an outsider to Israel and was the chief shepherd of the royal herds. David and Doeg no doubt knew one another and probably had an association

<sup>2</sup> *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew-English Lexicon*; Hendrickson, ©1979, pp. 90–91.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 52 introduction.

which was cordial, if not friendly. However, Doeg, in order to get on Saul's good side (and to cover his own butt), makes it known to Saul that David had been in Nob, the city of the priests.

Psalm 52 inscription d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>h</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
bôw' (בּוֹא) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced e/]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced BAH-yith]	<i>house, household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1004 BDB #108
ʾăchîmelek <sup>e</sup> (אָחִימֶלֶךְ) [pronounced uh-khee-MEH-lek]	<i>brother of Melek or brother of a king and is transliterated Ahimelech</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #288 BDB #27

**Translation:** ...David had gone to the house of Ahimelech. As we will study in the remainder of I Sam. 22, Doeg will deftly guide Saul's rage to fall upon Ahimelech, so that, once Doeg has revealed this information to Saul, Saul's anger will seethe against Ahimelech (you see, when Doeg reveals this information to Saul, he takes the chance that Saul will be pissed at him, so he has to deflect Saul's anger toward someone else). David probably does not know much more at this time than the fact that Doeg sold him out and sold out these priests. I don't believe that there is another psalm which reveals such intense anger against an enemy than this psalm.

One of the things which we noted in the exegesis of I Sam. 22:10, was the fact that Doeg embellished his story to Saul somewhat. He told Saul that the High Priest of Nob, Ahimelech, helped David by giving him guidance from God. This was patently untrue, and we noted the reasons why we knew his testimony was false (which included v. 3 of this psalm). To remind you, Doeg told Saul that David had receive a weapon from Ahimelech, as well as bread (both of which are true) and also said that David received divine guidance through Ahimelech. It was this addition to the actual facts which upset Saul the most. However, this was Doeg's plan—if Saul thought that David has simply deceived Ahimelech the priest, and that Doeg held back this information that David had been to Nob, then Saul might take his anger out on Doeg. However, since Doeg distorted David and Ahimelech's meeting, making it sound as though Ahimelech was in collusion with David. The result of this lie will be that Saul will first kill all of the priests, and then he will go into Nob and slaughter all of their families—their wives and children—and all of their livestock. Although we haven't covered this in I Sam. 22 yet, Saul will call of all of the priests to come to him. Then, when they arrive, he will accuse them and order their deaths. Even Saul's hardened soldiers will



not lift their swords against the priests, so Doeg will personally kill all 85 of them. This is how evil and depraved that Doeg is. He is willing to do anything in order to receive Saul's approbation.

At least one commentator (Spurgeon) suggested that Doeg hated David. This is not the case. Had that been the case, Doeg would have given up David long ago—or brought him in from Nob when he saw him. Doeg weighed the options and determined that letting Saul know what David had been was the best way to advance his career. He did not tell Saul when he got back from Nob, and surely Doeg knew of Saul's interest in David's capture. Doeg waited till part way through this meeting before he spoke up. He was weighing the pros and cons. He didn't hate David; he just recognized that this would properly further his career, and garner a little approbation from Saul.

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## Doeg's Evil Lying Tongue

Slavishly literal:

**Why do you praise yourself in evil, O strong man?  
Grace of God all the days.**

Psalms  
52:1

Moderately literal:

**How can you boast in [your] evil, man of [worldly] strength [and power]?  
God's grace [is] all day long [lit., *all the day*].**

**How can you boast in your evil, How can you boast in [your] evil, man of worldly strength and power?  
God's grace remains all the day long.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

### Early translations:

The Septuagint

Why do you, O mighty man, boast of iniquity in mischief? All the day... [This is part of v. 1; also the Greek lacks the phrase *the grace of God*].

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	You people may be strong and brag about your sins, but God can be trusted day after day.
NAB	Why do you glory in evil, you scandalous liar? All day long...
NJB	Why take pride in being wicked, you champion in villainy, all day long....
NLT	You call yourself a hero, do you? Why boast about this crime of yours, you who have disgraced God's people?
REB	YOU MIGHTY man, why do you boast all the day of your infamy against God's loyal servant? [ <b>against</b> : probable reading; compare Syriac; Hebrew omits].

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	Why do you brag about the evil you've done, you hero? The mercy of God lasts all day long!
JPS (Tanakh)	Why do you boast of your evil, brave fellow? God's faithfulness never ceases [lit., <i>is all the day</i> ]. [This is v. 3 in the JPS].

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Why boast you of mischief done against the loving-kindness of God [and the godly], O mighty [sinful] man, day after day?
<i>Updated Emphasized Bible</i>	Why do you boast of wickedness, O mighty man?   The lovingkindness of God   [lasts] all the day.
NASB	Why do you boast in evil, O mighty man? The lovingkindness of God <i>endures</i> all day long.
NRSV	Why do you boast, O mighty one, of mischief done against the godly? All the day... [A correction was made in the text, as the transmission of the text was determined to be faulty. Compare the Syriac targum. Heb. <i>the kindness of God</i> ].
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	What, do you boast in evil, O mighty one? The kindness of God <i>is</i> all the day.

Whenever you see a slew of translations, that means that rendering this verse is going to be difficult. You will see that there were several general approaches. Several translations took the phrase *all day long* and placed it with the following verse (e.g., NAB, NJB, NRSV). Many assert that the second line is *not* “God’s grace [endures] all day long.” There is good contextual evidence for this approach. Whereas, it is not unusual for a writer of poems or psalms to contrast the godly with the wicket, God’s path versus man’s path; we would expect this parallel to run for several verses. However, vv. 2–4 do not have a similar parallel, nor does God’s grace seem to be a prominent theme of this psalm. Therefore, it is possible that the second half of this verse is the result of a faulty transmission of text.

**What is the gist of this verse?** David sets up a contrast between a man of great power who boasts in his evil, and God, Who’s grace is continual and consistent. There is some debate with regards to second statement about God’s grace.

Psalm 52:1a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
māh (מַה) [pronounced <i>maw</i> ]	<i>what, how, why</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong’s #4100 BDB #552
hālal (לָלַל) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHL</i> ]	<i>to be praised; to glory, to boast oneself, to be celebrated</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Hithpael imperfect	Strong’s #1984 BDB #237
<p>This, interestingly enough, is one form of the verb that we found back in I Sam. 21:13: <b>Then David changed his behavior before them</b> [lit., <i>in their eyes</i>] <b>and he feigned madness in their presence</b>. The Hithpael is the passive (as per Gesenius) or reflexive (as per Zodhiates) of the Piel (intensive) stem. This verb appears to have an active use here in this psalm (and whenever else it has <i>God</i> as the object as in Isa. 41:16 Jer. 4:2). The meaning of this verb, and there are several, appear to stay within the general boundaries of their stems.</p>			
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong’s# none BDB #88
rā’āh (רָעָה) [pronounced <i>raw-ḠAW</i> ]	<i>evil, misery, distress, disaster, injury, iniquity, aberration, that which is morally reprehensible</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong’s #7451 BDB #949

## Psalm 52:1a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
gibbôwr (גִּבּוֹר) [pronounced <i>gib-BOAR</i> ]	<i>strong man, mighty man, soldier, warrior, combatant, veteran</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1368 BDB #150

The original word would be properly applied to one of rank or distinction; a man of “power” — power derived either from office, from talent, or from wealth. It is a word which is often applied to a hero or warrior: Isa. 3:2 Ezek. 39:20 II Sam. 17:10 Psalm 33:16 120:4 127:4 Daniel 11:3 Gen. 6:4 Jer. 51:30.<sup>4</sup>

**Translation:** [How can you boast in \[your\] evil, man of \[worldly\] strength \[and power\]?](#) Calling Doeg a *mighty man* or a *soldier* is a dig. It is irony. Doeg is the head shepherd, an important position in Saul's cabinet, but he is not a warrior. Saul looked Doeg over and decided, “Rather than put you on the front lines, I think you'll do better overseeing my livestock.” Doeg would have no power and no position, apart from Saul. Doeg probably thinks that he has done well or that he has done right to inform on David. His informing Saul about David and Ahimelech the priest was evil, and even more so, as he and David had a relationship before and he knows David's character.

## Psalm 52:1b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
cheçed (חֶסֶד) [pronounced <i>KHEH-sed</i> ]	<i>grace, benevolence, mercy, kindness</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #2617 BDB #338
ʿêl (אֵל) [pronounced <i>ALE</i> ]	<i>God, God, mighty one, strong, hero</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #410 BDB #42
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i> ]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i> ]	<i>day; today (with a definite article)</i>	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398

**Translation:** [God's grace \[is\] all day long](#) [lit., *all the day*]. Although this is a true statement, and although this is what we have in the Hebrew, *God's grace* is missing from the Greek, so that *all the day* goes along with v. 2.

Both approaches make ample sense. Interpreting the Hebrew: David first asks, “[How can you possibly boast in \[your\] evil, you man of strength?](#)” There is nothing to boast about. In contrast, [God and His grace](#), which sustain and protect David, [are continual](#). That is, if you are going to boast, why not boast in God's grace? Doeg had nothing that he could boast about. On the other hand, God's grace, trumped Doeg's evil. No matter what Doeg planned, no matter what evil he does, how could he boast about it when that evil is nullified by God's grace?

Interpretation of the Greek: David excoriates Doeg for several verses: in vv. 1–4, David does nothing but talk about just how vicious, self-serving and evil that Doeg is. Then, in v. 5, we find out what God will do to Doeg. This is a much cleaner approach: first Doeg and his approach to life, and then what God would do to Doeg. If we have this contrast between God's grace and Doeg in v. 1, we would expect that to be followed throughout. This approach appears to be less disjointed and easier to follow—it is much easier to outline, actually. I find this second approach to be the most sensible.

<sup>4</sup> Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Psalm 52:1.



**What is the gist of this verse?** Doeg carefully considers and devises plans and engineers deceits which carefully exalt him over the shoulders (and sometimes dead bodies) of others.

### Psalm 52:2a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
havvâh (הַוָּה) [pronounced <i>hahv-VAW</i> ]	<i>desire; ruin, fall, calamity, destruction; injury, mischief; chasm, deep pit, hell, gulf</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #1942 BDB #217
châshab (בַּשֵּׁחַב) [pronounced <i>khaw-SHAHBV</i> ]	<i>to think, to mediate, regard, to account, to count, to determine, to calculate, to impute, to reckon</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2803 BDB #362

**Translation:** You devise [lit., think] ruin [destruction and injury]. It is possible that *all day long* belongs with this phrase, giving us, *You devise ruin [destruction and injury] all day long*. What Doeg will do will go far beyond what we have seen so far. He doesn't just turn David in; he doesn't just rat on David. When every man in Saul's entourage will refuse to kill the priests of Nob, Doeg will come forward and he will kill them all himself. There is no evil act that Doeg would not do to further his own career.

Recall that what Doeg did was not impulsive. He didn't let it slip out where he saw David. He didn't run to Saul with this information as soon as he got it. He thought this through, and presented it in such a way as to gain him the most mileage. Some people may have seen David, told Saul, and then thought back on this mistake, saying, "I wish I hadn't told him that." Or even, "Maybe I shouldn't have revealed that information to Saul." When Doeg revealed this information to Saul, it was cool and calculated, and he added information which was untrue in order to deflect Saul's anger. More on that later.

**Application:** The business world is filled with men who will do anything to get ahead; they will do any evil thing in order to further the interests of their company (as long as those interests further their own). You cannot approach your business apart from your spiritual life. Other men should be able to take you at your word. A handshake should be sufficient to seal any deal with you (although I don't recommend that in many cases). A believer should be able to be taken at their word, and there should not be some hidden agenda.

**Application:** Some lawyers will do anything to justify themselves. When a criminal defense lawyer puts a criminal back on the street, he will blame the prosecutor or police for not doing their job. He will say it's the system; he will blame anyone else. However, he will do his very best to free criminals because that will make him rich. He will do his best to see that a criminal does not have to account for his own actions, because if he didn't, he would not get any more cases.

### Psalm 52:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâshôwn (לְשׁוֹן) [pronounced <i>law-SHOHN</i> ]	<i>tongue; lapping; tongue-shaped</i>	masculine singular noun with a 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3956 BDB #546
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כּ) [pronounced <i>k<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453

## Psalm 52:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ṭā'ar (תַּעַר) [pronounced TAH-ġahr]	razor, sheath	masculine singular noun	Strong's #8593 BDB #789
āṭash (אִטַּשׁ) [pronounced law-TASH]	to sharpen, to hammer	Pual participle	Strong's #3913 BDB #538
āsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced ġaw-SAWH]	a doer of, a maker of, a constructor of, a fashion of, a preparer of	Qal active participle, masculine singular construct	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
rēmīyyâh (רַמְיָאָה) [pronounced r <sup>e</sup> -mee-YAW]	a letting down or relaxing of [the hands], indolence, slothful; deception, deceit, fraud	feminine singular noun	Strong's #7423 BDB #941

**Translation:** Your tongue is a sharp razor, [you] master [lit., doer] of deceit. Doeg initiated his evil with his tongue. He did not need to speak up. There was no need for him to turn David in. There was no need for him to expose the priests of Nob, as though they had done anything wrong.

Clarke comments: *Like a sharp razor, working deceitfully - Which instead of taking off the beard, cuts and wounds the flesh; or as the operator who, when pretending to trim the beard, cuts the throat.*<sup>5</sup> And Barnes comments: *His slanders were like a sharp knife with which one stabs another. So we say of a slanderer that he "stabs" another in the dark.*<sup>6</sup>

The analogy to the razor is apt; a razor is a small instrument capable of shaving off an entire beard and just as capable of inflicting great damage; even death. Similarly, the tongue is a small member of the body, but capable of initiating great destruction to a person's life. James 3:6–8: **And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. So the tongue is set among our members, spotting all the body and inflaming the course of nature, and being inflamed by hell. For every kind of animals, and of birds, and of reptiles, and of sea-animals, is tamed, and has been tamed by mankind. But no one can tame the tongue, it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.** One of the great themes of the Bible is the viciousness and destructiveness of the tongue. We studied the **Sins of the Tongue** back in Lev. 19:16.

What Doeg did was to mix lies in with the truth. It was the truth that he had seen David in Nob. It was true that Ahimelech, the High Priest, gave David a sword and bread; however, Ahimelech had been deceived by David, into thinking that he was furthering some cause of Saul's. So he had done nothing wrong. Doeg could not simply tell Saul the truth and nothing else. If he said, "You know, I saw David last month in Nob" then Saul would have killed Doeg because he knew where David was, and didn't tell Saul until it was too late. He couldn't even tell Saul that Ahimelech gave David a sword and food, and let it go at that, because that could have been gotten by deception (which it was). Doeg had to add the detail that Ahimelech procured divine guidance for David (1 Sam. 22:10). That nails Ahimelech down as a co-conspirator. And Saul's anger, which might have been directed at Doeg, is now focused firmly on Ahimelech (and Saul will bear some gratitude for Doeg's information).

**You desired evil more than good;  
deception more than speaking righteousness.  
Selah!**

Psalm  
52:3

**You love evil more than [you love] good;  
[and] deception more than speaking  
righteousness. Pause.**

<sup>5</sup> Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 52:2.

<sup>6</sup> Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Psalm 52:2.



**Translation:** You love evil more than [you love] good;... The implication of this verse is, Doeg can distinguish between right and wrong. David has spent time with him and Doeg has gone to the city of priests. In fact, he has even remained there for additional training or encouragement (1 Sam. 21:7). However, when it comes to making a choice, Doeg chooses evil over good.

Psalm 52:3b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
sheqer (שֶׁקֶר) [pronounced SHEH-ker]	a lie, lying words, deception, falsehood; a liar; whatever deceives, fraud, vanity; falsely [absolute used as adverb]	masculine singular noun	Strong's #8267 BDB #1055
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than, greater than	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
dâ <sup>b</sup> var (דַּבַּר) [pronounced daw <sup>b</sup> -VAHR]	to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce	Piel infinitive construct	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
tsedeq (צֶדֶק) [pronounced TZEH-dehk]	righteousness, rightness, vindication	masculine singular substantive	Strong's #6664 BDB #841
çelâh (חֶלֶה) [pronounced seh-LAW]	to lift up, to elevate, to exalt [with one's voice], to gather, to cast up [into a heap]; it is transliterated <i>Selah</i>	interjection	Strong's #5542 BDB #699

The verbal cognate is 'âlâh (חֶלֶה) [pronounced saw-LAW], which means *to lift up and toss aside*. In the Piel stem, it means *to weigh*, which involves lifting up the object and placing it upon the balance. Gesenius gives the meaning of çelâh as *rest, silence, pause*, as çelâh does not necessarily have to match the meaning of its cognates. My thinking, which is a combination of BDB and Gesenius, is that the voices build up to a crescendo here, and, very likely, they are then followed by a vocal (but not necessarily, musical) silence. This would reconcile the points made by Gesenius and still make this compatible with its cognates.<sup>7</sup> Another very reasonable possibility is that the instruments *are lifted up* for a musical interlude. The NLT translation of *Interlude* is very good.

**Translation:** ...[and] deception more than speaking righteousness. Pause. Doeg could choose to stand up for what is right or he can choose to back that which is wrong. All of Saul's men will oppose killing these priests of Nob. Doeg will step forward and kill them with his own hand. Interestingly enough, David does not even focus on this aspect of Doeg's character. Just like anyone else, when I look back at 1 Sam. 22, the fact that Doeg is willing to kill all of these priests is an act which is horrendous and vile. But David focuses in on Doeg's tongue. David focuses in on what Doeg said.

<sup>7</sup> For more discussion, see H.W.F. Gesenius, *Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*; ©1979 by Baker Books; p. 588.





**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

*God's Word™* You love every destructive accusation, you deceitful tongue!  
*JPS (Tanakh)* You love all pernicious words,  
 treacherous speech.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

*The Amplified Bible* You love all destroying *and* devouring words, O deceitful tongue.  
*NASB* You love all words that devour,  
 O deceitful tongue.

*Young's Updated LT* You have loved all devouring words,  
 O you deceitful tongue.

**What is the gist of this verse?** If we have two lines here, the David is saying that Doeg loves words that will consume, as well as a deceitful tongue. If there is but one line here, then David is addresses the *tongue* of Doeg, and tells him, *You love consuming words.*

Psalm 52:4a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾâhêb (אָהֵב) [pronounced aw-HAYV <sup>b</sup> ]	<i>to desire, to breathe after; to love; to delight in</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #157 BDB #12
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	with a plural noun, it is rendered <i>all of; any of</i>	masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
dâ <sup>b</sup> vâr (דְּבָר) [pronounced daw <sup>b</sup> -VAWR]	<i>words, sayings, doctrines, commands; things, matters, reports</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
bela <sup>r</sup> (בִּלַּעַ) [pronounced BĒH-lahg]	<i>a swallowing, a devouring; a consuming, destruction</i>	masculine singular noun; pausal form	Strong's #1105 BDB #118

The spelling here is the same as the verb.

**Translation:** *You love all words [that] devour [and destroy];...* Doeg chooses words which deliberately destroy the lives of others. He does not care that his words are so destructive...in fact, he chooses words with that end in mind.

Doeg had several choices when it came to his siting of David at Nob. They are listed below:

**Doeg's Options:**

1. Doeg could have told Saul about David when he first returned from Nob; or as soon as he heard that Saul was after David. He chose not to do this. What this suggests to me is:
  - a. Doeg had some sort of a friendship with David, although he had no true concept of friendship. Since Doeg's position as the head shepherd for Saul is made known, and since David was a shepherd, we may reasonably surmise that Doeg and David knew one another. It is very likely that David looked Doeg up and shook his hand. For this reason, Doeg chose not to betray David immediately.

### Doeg's Options:

- b. Or, Doeg judged that telling Saul as that time would not have been advantageous to him.
2. Doeg could have kept quiet about the whole thing. The problems with that are as follows:
  - a. If Saul found out that Doeg had withheld information, he might execute him.
  - b. If Saul did not find out, Doeg would always be concerned that he might find out.
3. Doeg can tell Saul, right at this time, that David had been in Nob. The results are:
  - a. Saul is excited and does not realize that he is getting stale information.
  - b. Saul is so infuriated with the priests of God that he gives no thought to Doeg.

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One could make the argument that, all Doeg did was tell a white lie; he exaggerated the truth. He covered his own ass—what's wrong with that? After all, prevailing human viewpoint is, *look out for #1*. Doeg's choice to lie about David would result in the deaths of hundreds of innocent men, women and children. You cannot place this blame on Saul, even though Saul gave the order. Saul's men knew that Saul was a little *tetched*. They even brought David in originally to soothe his tendencies. Given that this was well-known, Saul's men did not choose to share everything with Saul. If there was something that would set Saul off, these men held back. If he issued an order that was too crazy, these men stepped back. We know that because Saul will order these soldiers to kill the priests from Nob and they will refuse to carry out this order (I Sam. 22:17). Doeg will follow Saul's orders, and thus ingratiate himself to Saul as well as remove the living evidence that what he told Saul was a lie. Because so many innocent people died from Doeg's lie, David excoriates Doeg in this passage.

### Psalm 52:4b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâshôwn (לְשׂוֹן) [pronounced law-SHOHN]	<i>tongue; lapping; tongue-shaped</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #3956 BDB #546
mir <sup>o</sup> mâh (מִרְמָה) [pronounced mir <sup>o</sup> -MAW]	<i>deceit, deception, duplicity, evil cunning, treachery</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4820 BDB #941

**Translation:** ...[you love] a deceitful tongue. This could be seen in two ways. The pausal form of *bela'* (which is according to Owen) would suggest that this is a new line, in which case the lack of a verb would suggest that we insert a verb. The most reasonable verb to insert would be the previous verb *you love*. If we take this as being two lines, we have 4 stanzas of 5 lines each; and this v. 4 parallels the thinking of v. 3.

The second interpretation is that this is a vocative, and that David so addresses Doeg as *O deceitful tongue!* This would give us: *You love all words [that] devour [and destroy], O deceitful tongue.* This would be known as a metonymy, where David is not really referring to Doeg's deceitful tongue, but he is talking about Doeg when he deceives.

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### What God Will Do to Doeg

Also, God pulls you down to forever;  
He will take you and pull you out from a tent,  
and He has rooted you out from the land of the  
living. Selah.

Psalm  
52:5

Furthermore, God will tear you down forever.  
He will seize you and tear you out from [your]  
tent;  
He will uproot you from the land of the living.  
Pause.

Furthermore, God will tear you down forever;  
He will seize you and take you out from your tent;  
He will uproot you from the land of the living. Musical interlude.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Early translations:

The Septuagint                      Therefore may God destroy you forever; may He pluck you up and utterly remove you from [your] dwelling, and your root from the land of the living. Pause.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV                                      God will destroy you forever!  
He will grab you and drag you from your homes.  
You will be uprooted and left to die.

NLT                                      But God will strike you down once and for all.  
He will pull you from you home  
and drag you from the land of the living. *Interlude*

REB                                      So may God fling you to the ground, [**So may God:** or So God will]  
sweep you away, leave you ruined and homeless,  
uprooted from the land of the living. *[Selah]*

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

*God's Word™*                      But God will ruin you forever.  
He will grab you and drag you out of your tent.  
He will pull your roots out of this world of the living. *Selah*

JPS (Tanakh)                      So God will tear you down for good,  
will break you and pluck you from your tent,  
and root you out of the land of the living.

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

*The Amplified Bible*              God will likewise break you down *and* destroy you for ever; He will lay old of you and pluck you out of your tent, and uproot you from the land of the living. Selah [pause, and calmly think of that]!

NASB                                      But [or, *Also*] God will break you down forever;  
He will snatch you up, and tear you away from *your* tent,  
And uproot you from the land of the living.                      [Selah.]

*Young's Updated LT*              Also—God breaks you down forever,  
He takes you, and pulls you out of the tent,  
And He has uprooted you  
Out of the land of the living. Selah.

**What is the gist of this verse?** Now David tells Doeg what will happen to him. Doeg was making a life for himself in Israel, but God will uproot him from Israel and from life itself.

## Psalm 52:5a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
gam (גַּם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i> ]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
ʾêl (אֱל) [pronounced <i>ALE</i> ]	<i>God, God, mighty one, strong, hero</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #410 BDB #42
nâthats (נָתַתְּ) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHTS</i> ]	<i>to pull down, to tear down, to break down, to destroy; to break out</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5422 BDB #683
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
nêtsach (נָצַח) [pronounced <i>NAY-tsahkh</i> ]	<i>forever, constantly, perpetuity, eternity, continually</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #5331 BDB #664

Since so many of the translations incorrectly render this word *Glory* or *Strength*, I should offer some Scripture where this word is consistently and reasonably rendered *forever*: II Sam. 2:26 Psalm 9:6 77:8 79:5 Jer. 50:39 Amos 1:11. Although both Gesenius and BDB offer a plethora of meanings for this word, the ones given should suffice for Scripture.

**Translation:** *Furthermore, God will tear you down forever;...* A person who behaves as Doeg has will face God's wrath. This man will be torn down forever. God will destroy him and whatever he has built for himself.

You will recall that I mentioned **McGee's viewpoint** on this psalm, that it is as much about the man of sin during the Tribulation as it is about Doeg the Edomite. Although I have not spend any time with that viewpoint apart from the introduction, I will cover the **Parallels Between the Man of Sin and Doeg** at the end of this exegesis. However, now would be a good time to reintroduce that thought. No one gets away with anything on this earth. It may appear to us that they do, but they don't. God will tear down or beat down Doeg; and God will tear down the man of sin during the Tribulation. He will become the most powerful man on earth, whose rule can be opposed by no man; yet God will take him down.

## Psalm 52:5b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
châthâh (חָתַח) [pronounced <i>khaw-THAW</i> ]	<i>to take, to take a hold of, to seize; to snatch up, to take away from</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2846 BDB #367
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

## Psalm 52:5b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nâçach (נָצַח) [pronounced naw-SACHKH]	<i>to pull out, to tear away; to drive into exile</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5255 BDB #650
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ʾohel (אֹהֶל) [pronounced OH-hel]	<i>tent, tabernacle, house, temporary dwelling</i>	masculine plural noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #168 BDB #13

**Translation:** ...He will seize you and tear you out from [your] tent;... Someday, God will essentially reach down and grab Doeg and pull him out from his tent, away from his family and possessions. In fact, away from everything that Doeg has schemed and fought for. We have an illustration of this in the book of Esther. Haman, second in command in the greatest empire in the world at that time, decided that he would pick on God's people the Jews (Esther 1–6). It is as though this passage was written for him: [God will seize you and tear you out from your tent and He will uproot you from the land of the living.](#)

## Psalm 52:5c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shârash (שָׁרַשׁ) [pronounced shaw-RAHSH]	<i>to root out, to pull up by the roots; to take root</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel imperfect with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8327 BDB #1057
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ʾerets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #776 BDB #75
chayyîym (חַיִּים) [pronounced khay-YEEM]	<i>being alive, being vigorous, having life, sustaining life, living prosperously—it is life as opposed to death</i>	Masculine substantive plural abstract with the definite article	Strong's #2416 BDB #313
çelâh (חֲלֵה) [pronounced seh-LAW]	<i>to lift up, to elevate, to exalt [with one's voice], to gather, to cast up [into a heap]; it is transliterated Selah</i>	interjection	Strong's #5542 BDB #699

## Psalm 52:5c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
<p>The verbal cognate is ʿâlâh (אֲלָח) [pronounced saw-LAW], which means <i>to lift up and toss aside</i>. In the Piel stem, it means <i>to weigh</i>, which involves lifting up the object and placing it upon the balance. Gesenius gives the meaning of ʿelâh as <i>rest, silence, pause</i>, as ʿelâh does not necessarily have to match the meaning of its cognates. My thinking, which is a combination of BDB and Gesenius, is that the voices build up to a crescendo here, and, very likely, they are then followed by a vocal (but not necessarily, musical) silence. This would reconcile the points made by Gesenius and still make this compatible with its cognates.<sup>10</sup> Another very reasonable possibility is that the instruments <i>are lifted up</i> for a musical interlude. The NLT translation of <i>Interlude</i> is very good.</p>			

**Translation:** ...He will uproot you from the land of the living. **Pause.** There will be a time when Doeg dies. The perfect tense here means that God has already determined that time. It is a certainty. This means, everything that Doeg has done, to put him where he is, is for naught. Every lie, every time that Doeg spoke up to further his own career at the detriment of other—all the gain from these things—will be lost to Doeg forever.

I also need to point out the internal evidence that we have here. We have just studied Psalm 142, and we found in that psalm the phrase *the land of the living*. David is looking for Doeg to die...maybe not today or tomorrow, but he is looking for Doeg to die and to face God in judgment. That is Doeg being snatched from the *land of the living*. However, in Psalm 142, David's emphasis is upon his own portion in this life; and God is there for him in *the land of the living* (Psalm 52:5). Finding this same phrase suggests to us that these psalms could have been written by the same person during the same time period.

**Application:** If you are willing to cheat and lie and cut corners in order to gain material abundance, realize that God will remove that from you; particularly if you have done evil against another believer (as, you would not be hearing this unless you are a believer). It will not last. God is fully capable of destroying whatever tiny little empire that you build for yourself. **Don't be deceived, God is not mocked. Whatever a man sows, so will he reap** (Gal. 6:7). The world tells you that you need to look out for #1, and that you have to step on other people in order to get where you are going; but that is not what God desires for you. Furthermore, God will uproot you from this that you build for yourself when it is based upon what you have taken from others, and He will judge you.

We noted a pause at the end of v. 3, and then there is another one here. In vv. 1–3 we were introduced to Doeg, a man of lies, and man who devises evil against others so that he could elevate himself. At the end of v. 5, we have now seen what God will do to such a man. So, one observes this man of lies, and he pauses, perhaps pondering the ideals of justice; then one observes what God does to this man, and he pauses again, recognizing God's ultimate justice.

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### The Righteous Will Observe and Take Note of the Futility of Doeg's Life

**And see, righteous ones, and fear,  
and over him they laugh.**

Psalm  
52:6

**And righteous ones will see and be in awe [or,  
fear],  
and they will laugh in regards to him.**

**Righteous men will see him and be in awe of God's power;  
they will laugh at Doeg's portion in life.**

<sup>10</sup> For more discussion, see H.W.F. Gesenius, *Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*; ©1979 by Baker Books; p. 588.





## Psalm 52:6a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yârê' (יָרֵא) [pronounced yaw-RAY]	<i>to fear, to fear-respect, to reverence, to have a reverential respect</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3372 BDB #431

**Translation:** *And righteous ones will see and be in awe* [or, *fear*],... Bob Thieme often remarked as to how a person with doctrine could look at history and properly evaluate it. Here, righteous men, referring not only to believers, but those who have matured, can look at Doeg, and his life, and what God has done to him, and properly understand that our God is a God of power and direct involvement. Because of what happens to Doeg, they will fear and be in awe of God's power.

I want you to observe something else here: David does not call upon anyone besides God to execute judgment against Doeg; nor does he do so himself. The ideal in this life is to pray for your enemies, as Christ died for them just like He died for you. Here, by his actions, it is clear that Doeg is not a believer, even though he spent time with the priests at Nob. He is an opportunist and he will use God, if it suits him. Therefore, David has no problem with this imprecatory prayer—that is, a prayer asking for Doeg's destruction. But, if you are the vigil ante type, take note that David takes no direct action himself.

## Psalm 52:6b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wê (or vê) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced ʿahl]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

When not showing a physical relationship between two things, ʿal can take on a whole host of new meanings: *on the ground of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, concerning, besides, in addition to, together with, beyond, above, over, by on to, towards, to, against, in the matter of, concerning, as regards to*. It is one of the most versatile prepositions in Scripture. This word often follows particular verbs. In the English, we have *helping verbs*; in the Hebrew, there are *helping prepositions*.

sâchaq (שָׂחַק) [pronounced saw-KHAHK]	<i>to laugh; by extension, it means to sport, to play, to jest; to mock, to hold in derision</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7832 BDB #965
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**Translation:** *...and they will laugh in regards to him*. Doeg has chosen the path that he chose in order to get the attention of Saul and to better his lot in life. Righteous men observe this and properly mock him or hold Doeg in derision. Men who step on others in order to better themselves, do not become quiet consumers and gatherers of wealth; they desire approbation. They want others to look up to them and to be jealous. They want others to desire what they have. So, Doeg did more than the evil that we will observe in I Sam. 22; Doeg would lord this over the people around him. He would strut his stuff; he would show off; he would do the touchdown dance in the end zone. His entire attitude was, "I am greater than you; I have more than you." So when he falls, all those around him laugh and hold him in derision. They may have been jealous and angered and intimidated before, but when Doeg goes down, they will laugh at him and mock him.

Earlier, I used the illustration of Mordecai and Haman from the book of Esther. Haman was the #2 man in the Persian empire; however, he could not get Mordecai, a Jew, to bow down to him in worship. So Haman sought to not only kill all of the Jews in Persia, but to personally impale Mordecai himself. God will see to it that Mordecai, the righteous, will observe Haman, the man of evil, be impaled (Esther 7).<sup>11</sup>

We have another parallel passage from the viewpoint of God: Psalm 2:1–4: *Why do the nations rage, and the peoples meditate on a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers plot together, against Jehovah and against His anointed, saying, Let us break their bands in two and cast away their cords from us. He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; Jehovah shall mock at them.* See also Psalm 58:10 64:9-10 Prov. 1:26

<p><b>“Behold, the man—he does not make God his means of safety; and so he trusts in an abundance of his riches. He is strengthened in his desire.”</b></p>	<p>Psalm 52:7</p>	<p><b>“Observe the man who [lit., he] does not make God his refuge, that he trusts in the abundance of his riches. He is strengthened in his desire [or, becomes stronger in his lust; or, He is strengthened in his ruin].”</b></p>
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**“Observe the man who does not make God his refuge so that he trusts instead in the abundance of his own riches. He becomes stronger in his lusts.”**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Early translations:

The Septuagint	Behold, the man who has not made God his help, but has trusted in the abundance of his wealth, and strengthened himself in his vanity.
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#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	“Just look at them now! Instead of trusting God, they trusted their wealth and their cruelty.”
NAB	“That one did not take God as a refuge, but trusted in great wealth, relied on devious plots.”
NJB	‘So much for someone who would not place his reliance in God, but relied on his own great wealth, and made himself strong by crime.’
NLT	“Look what happens to mighty warriors who do not trust in God. They trust in their wealth instead and grow more and more bold in their wickedness.”

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God’s Word™</i>	“Look at this person who refused to make God his fortress! Instead, he trusted his great wealth and became strong through his greed.”
JPS (Tanakh)	“Here was a fellow who did not make God his refuge, but trusted in his great wealth,

<sup>11</sup> This illustration comes to mind because I am presently studying the book of Esther under my pastor. However, this also occurred to Spurgeon, who mentions it in his exegesis of this passage. Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *A Treasury of David*; e-Sword, Psalm 52:6.

relied upon his mischief.”

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

- The Amplified Bible* See, this is the man who made not God his strength — his stronghold and high tower; but trusted *and* confidently relied on the abundance of his riches, seeking refuge *and* security for himself through his wickedness.
- Updated Emphasized Bible* Lo! The man who did not make God his refuge, — But trusted in the abundance of his riches, Encourages himself [or, *makes himself bold*] in his wealth.<sup>b</sup> [<sup>b</sup> So it should be (with Aramaic Translation and Syriac version)]
- NASB “Behold, the man who would not make God his refuge, But trusted in the abundance of his riches, *And was strong in his evil desire* [or, *his destruction*].
- NRSV “See the one who would not take refuge in God, but trusted in abundant riches, and sought refuge in wealth!” [as per Syriac targum; Hebrew *in his destruction*].
- Young's Updated LT* “Lo, the man who makes not God his strong place, And trusts in the abundance of his riches, He is strong in his mischiefs.”

**What is the gist of this verse?** This appears to be a quotation of the righteous man, who sees Doeg’s fall. He observes, “This is a man who did not depend upon God. He trusted in his own riches. He continues to strengthen his own lusts.”

Psalm 52:7a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
hinnêh (תִּהַּ) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i> ]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong’s #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
geber (גִּבֹּר) [pronounced <i>GĒH<sup>b</sup>-vehr</i> ]	<i>men, as separate from women and children</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong’s #1397 (& #1399) BDB #149
lô’ (לֹא or לֹא־) [pronounced <i>low</i> ]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong’s #3808 BDB #518
sîym (שָׂם) [pronounced <i>seem</i> ]	<i>to put, to place, to set, to make</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #7760 BDB #962
’ēlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i> ]	<i>gods or God; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong’s #430 BDB #43
mâ’ōwz (מְעוֹז) [pronounced <i>maw-GOHZ</i> ]	<i>place of safety, means of safety, place or means of protection, a refuge, a fortified place, a fortress, a stronghold</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong’s #4581 BDB #731

**Translation:** “Observe the man who [lit., *he*] does not make God his refuge,... We have God taking Doeg down in v. 5. In v. 6, the mature believer observes God’s takedown of Doeg and he laughs at Doeg, but he also fears

God. In this verse, we have what the mature believer says, as he watches Doeg. Here, in v. 7, he makes apt, correct observations. He describes exactly what he sees in Doeg. The mature believer tells us why he laughs at Doeg and why he simultaneously fears God.

People have all sorts of things which they trust in. David has learned, as we have seen in this and previous psalms, that his only safety is in God. However, this psalm is about the scoundrel Doeg, whose safety and security lie in his own wealth. In a free enterprise society, many people put their faith in their wealth. The more a society is socialized, the more others will have tendency to put their faith and security in their government. There are some whose security is in their job, in their family, in the approbation they receive, in their power.

As a member of Saul’s staff and as a man to whom Saul is beholden, Doeg certainly received financial consideration. For this reason, even though we found him in Nob, city of the priests, Doeg’s interest and financial safety are his money and material gains, not God. This is the observation of the mature believer.

Psalm 52:7b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
bâṭach (בָּטַח) [pronounced baw-TAHKH]	<i>to trust, to rely upon, to have confidence in, to be secure in</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #982 BDB #105
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong’s# none BDB #88
rôb (רַב) [pronounced roh <sup>b</sup> ]	<i>multitude, abundance, greatness</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong’s #7230 BDB #913
‘ôsher (עֲשֵׂר) [pronounced GOH-sheh]	<i>riches</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong’s #6239 BDB #799

**Translation:** ...that he trusts in the abundance of his riches. As mentioned, Doeg no doubt was far richer than the average person. He would do anything for Saul’s approbation—he would even kill every priest of God. So he was no doubt remunerated for his dedication. And here is where he places his trust—in his financial gain, in his money—instead of in God. Again, the mature believer has observed that Doeg was faced with spiritual enlightenment—he spent time with the priests at Nob, but instead, he has chosen to trust in his own personal wealth.

Let me again allude to McGee’s suggestion that this is also a reference to the antichrist during the Tribulation. Like today, politicians must be rich in order to make it in the political arena. The antichrist will be rich and he will become a popular and beloved leader. It will be his personal wealth which will help to put him into office.

We actually have several parallel verses; the first is Psalm 40:4: *Blessed is the man who makes Jehovah his trust and does not turn to the proud, nor to those who turn aside to a lie.* Also Psalm 49:6–9: *Those who trust in their wealth, and their many riches, boast themselves. A man cannot at all redeem a brother, nor give to God a ransom for him, for the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceases forever, yea, he shall yet live forever; he shall never see corruption.* The psalmist examines the wealth of a rich man, and points out that no rich man has enough to redeem his brother; meaning that his riches are not enough to purchase salvation. Or, let’s look at

Prov. 18:10–11: **The name of Jehovah is a strong tower; the righteous man runs into it and is safe. The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as a high wall in his own mind.** Recall that Psalm 52:7 are said to be the words of the righteous man. In Proverbs, we have the contrast between what the righteous man depends upon and what the rich man depends upon.

Barnes comments: *From this it would seem that Doeg was a rich man, and that, as a general thing, in his life, and in his plans of evil, he felt confident in his wealth. He had that spirit of arrogance and self-confidence which springs from the conscious possession of property where there is no fear of God; and into all that he did he carried the sense of his own importance as derived from his riches. In the particular matter referred to in the psalm the meaning is, that he would perform the iniquitous work of giving "information" with the proud and haughty feeling springing from wealth and from self-importance - the feeling that he was a man of consequence, and that whatever such a man might do would be entitled to special attention.*<sup>12</sup>

**Application:** Our faith, our trust, our dependence should be upon God. This is not some ethereal, inexplicable thing. God has told us who He is in His Word. We know God's character in His Word. We know what God will do in many situations, as this is covered in His Word. We have promises from God; we have divine operating assets<sup>13</sup> given to us from God. God and His Word should be the center of our lives. When difficult circumstances come upon us, we should be able to look to God's Word for comfort and guidance and eventual deliverance, either from or while in these difficult circumstances.

### Psalm 52:7c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿāzaz (אָזַז) [pronounced ʿaw-ZAHZ]	<i>to strengthen, to make strong; to make secure; to become strong, to be made strong; to be strong, robust, powerful</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5810 BDB #738
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's# none BDB #88
havvâh (הַוָּה) [pronounced hahv-VAW]	<i>desire; ruin, fall, calamity, destruction; injury, mischief; chasm, deep pit, hell, gulf</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1942 BDB #217

In my translation, I have chosen to render this *desire* rather than *destruction, injury, mischief* or *chasm*, which seem to be closer in meaning. If you are critical, then this should lead you to ask, *Is hawvâh used elsewhere in this manner?* and, *how do we get those divergent meanings?* The answer to the first question is yes, Prov. 10:3, where these other renderings would make little sense.

Answer to your second question: the verbal cognate is onomatopoeic hâvâh (הָוָה) [pronounced haw-VAW], which properly means *to breathe*. Our noun is taken from the Piel or intensive stem, which would mean *to breathe heavily*, as if you are running after something. When you chase after something, it is because you desire it or lust after it. This can also mean that you rush headlong into something, which could mean your *fall, ruin, calamity, injury*, or even *deep pit*.

<sup>12</sup> Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Psalm 52:7.

<sup>13</sup> Chiefly, the ability to be in fellowship with Him by naming our sins to Him. Secondly, we have God's Word and the teaching of a pastor teacher to guide us and to give us strength.

## Psalm 52:7c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
<p>Owen has <i>his riches</i> here instead, and begins with word with a n(cheth) instead of a n (hê). The word which it matches is <i>life</i>. This would give us, <i>He is strengthened in his life</i>. The NRSV and REB have <i>wealth</i>, and both note the Syriac version.</p>			

**Translation:** [He is strengthened in his desire](#) [or, *He becomes stronger in his lust*; or, *He is strengthened in his ruin*].” This final word has a veritable plethora of meanings; plus, it is not even certain that this is the proper word. However, a man who would kill all the priests of God merely to gain Saul’s approbation is a man ruled by his own lusts or desires. He desires money and wealth, and performing Saul’s tasks is the easiest way to gain that. He gives full reign to the lust pattern of his soul. We all know of various businessmen or salesmen who will alter or distort the truth in order to make a deal or to close a sale. They are acting without personal honor and allowing the lusts of their soul to guide them. Perhaps they want to move ahead in their profession, perhaps they needed the bonus from the extra sale. For whatever reason, they are not willing to be honest and forthright. The very same dishonest businessmen as salesmen will then boast of their deals, of their sales; they strengthen themselves in following their lusts and placing their personal desires before all else.

I have said that this word has a couple of meanings. The psalmist chose such a word, because, as Doeg strengthens himself in his own lusts, he also insures his own eventual ruin, fall or calamity. As he strengthens or intensifies his lusts, he also further guarantees his own fall. These go hand-in-hand. In poetry, the writer is often more inclined to venture out into sarcasm, veiled meanings, and double meanings.

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It is important for us to grasp what is being said here. Therefore, let us examine...

### A Summary of Psalm 52:7

1. Doeg has some spiritual background. He has been to Nob. He was even detained in Nob by the priests. Although we do not know exactly what went on, we may expect that Doeg received spiritual information. Doeg may have left Nob with some understanding of the gospel.
2. Doeg is like the dog who has returned to his vomit. Recall, he did not turn David in immediately. It is possible that Doeg understood the gospel, was thinking about it, and simultaneously, chose not to turn David in.
3. Peter describes a condition where a dog returns to his own vomit. The circumstances are:
  - a. They come face to face with some sort of act which is wrong. They choose not to act. In this case, Doeg observed David in Nob, but he did not turn him in to Saul. No doubt, he had an opportunity to turn David in prior to the meeting that Saul called. Doeg chose not to. This is like the dog who vomits something up. The dog’s stomach rejected that food. Doeg’s conscience rejects the act of turning David in.
  - b. Doeg considers the gospel. He considers faith in Jehovah Elohim. He apparently rejects Jesus Christ as He was revealed in the Old Testament.
  - c. Then Doeg reconsiders turning in David. He is like the dog who returns to his vomit. The dog’s stomach has rejected what he ate, but he goes back and looks over his own vomit, determining if perhaps there might have been some tasty morsel in there that he should take back. When someone is faced with the gospel, and they understand it, but then they reject it, they will often commits acts that, previously they have rejected. This is what Doeg is doing. He did not turn David in, he ponders the God of the Jews, rejects Jehovah Elohim, and now does that which he formally chose not to do. He is a dog returning to his vomit.

## A Summary of Psalm 52:7

4. Psalm 52:7 is an observation made by *the righteous man*. The righteous man, or mature believer, looks at Doeg and his actions and notices several things:
  - a. Doeg does not trust in God. Doeg has not made God his refuge.
  - b. Doeg instead decides to trust in money. Doeg is an outsider to the Jews; he is an Edomite. He now has one of the highest positions in the country. Along with position comes power and financial reward. Doeg has decided that financial reward is more important and can be trusted more than one trusts God.
  - c. The result is, Doeg strengthens his lust pattern. When you have money, power and approbation, you find that it is often never enough. After all, there is always someone who is richer. There is always someone who has a larger house. There is always someone who drives a better car. There is always someone who wields more power. There is always someone who is better thought of. The result is, the more you get, the more you lust for. The more you lust for, the more you are willing to do to get that which you lust for.
  - d. As Doeg strengthens his lusts and desires, he also better insures his own downfall, his own calamity, his own ruin. Although he thinks the more money he acquires, the more secure that he will be. However, the opposite is true. It becomes a vicious circle. He acquires more money, so he wants more money. He desires more money, so he is willing to debase himself even more to obtain more money. As he acquires this money, he then wants more. As he desires more, he is willing to debase himself more for it. The more he continues in this pattern, he spirals downward, toward his own ruin.
5. Conclusion: Doeg's security is in his own wealth. However, the more he desires wealth, the more he is willing to do to acquire it. The more he acquires, the more he desires. This pattern causes him to spiral downward, affording him actually less security in his present position of power and wealth.
6. Doeg's life is the antithesis of what Paul described: **I have learned to be content in whatever circumstance I find myself in. I know how to get along with little, and I know how to live in prosperity. In any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, in having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him Who Strengthens me** (Philip. 4:11b–13).
7. Doeg's eventual end will be ruin, which he has brought upon himself.

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### David Presents His Own Trust in God by Way of Contrast

In this Psalm, David spends a great deal of time excoriating the evil Doeg (vv. 1–7) and much less time presenting the way that things should be done (vv. 8–9). In these final two verses, David presents his own life by contrast. Now, recall that Doeg has the approbation of Saul and he is rich and successful. David has the approbation of God and he is on the run from Saul. Doeg is rich, powerful and he has a nice home. David is without financing, he is a fugitive and he has no home. However, both of these men will suffer/enjoy a reversal of fortune. Doeg depends upon a man, Saul, to advance him in life; David depends upon God for all things.

**And I as a olive tree, green, in a house of  
Elohim;  
I trust in grace of Elohim forever and forever.**

Psalm  
52:8 **But I am like a green olive tree in the house of  
Elohim;  
I will trust in the grace of God forever and [to]  
perpetuity.**

**But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God;  
I will trust in the grace of God forever and even.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

**Early translations:**

The Septuagint But I am as a fruitful olive in the house of God; I have trusted in the mercy of God forever, even for evermore.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV But I am like an olive tree growing in God’s house, and I can count on his love forever and ever.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

JPS (Tanakh) But I am like a thriving olive tree in God’s house; I trust in the faithfulness of God forever and ever.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

*The Amplified Bible* But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God; I rust *and* confidently rely on the loving-kindness *and* the mercy of God for ever and ever.  
*Updated Emphasized Bible* But ||1|| am like a flourishing olive-tree in the house of God, I have put confidence in the lovingkindness of God for times age-abiding and beyond.  
 NASB But as for me, I am like a green olive tree in the house of God; I trust in the lovingkindness of God forever and ever.  
*Young's Updated LT* And I, as a green olive in the house of God, I have trusted in the kindness of God, To the age and forever.

**What is the gist of this verse?** David now speaks of himself as a green olive tree in the house of God (a young, growing believer) who has trusted in God’s grace and kindness forever.

Psalm 52:8a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
ʾânîy (אֲנִי) [pronounced <i>aw-NEE</i> ]	<i>I, me</i> ; in answer to a question, it means <i>I am, it is I</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, personal pronoun	Strong’s #589 BDB #58
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כ) [pronounced <i>k<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition	No Strong’s # BDB #453
zayith (זַיִת) [pronounced <i>ZAH-teeth</i> ]	<i>olive, olive tree</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong’s #2132 BDB #268
raʿănân (רַעְנַן) [pronounced <i>rah-ġuh-NAWN</i> ]	<i>green; luxuriant, fresh</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong’s #7488 BDB #947
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong’s# none BDB #88



## Psalm 52:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced BAH-yith]	house, household, habitation as well as inward	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1004 BDB #108
ʿēlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced el-o-HEEM]	gods or God; transliterated Elohim	masculine plural noun	Strong's #430 BDB #43

**Translation:** [But I am like a green olive tree in the house of Elohim;](#)... The olive tree is a symbol found throughout Scripture. Although most of the references in the Old Testament are literal, it should be obvious that David is not saying that he is a literal olive tree in God's house. After all, very few people actually allow a tree to be grown inside a house. So, we need to examine: **The Olive Tree in Scripture**. Our conclusion is that David, as a green olive tree, is a growing but not mature believer (compare Psalm 1:3 Jer. 11:16). Once an olive tree reaches maturity, they will produce olives for another couple hundred years. Once David reaches maturity, he will produce for a long time as well (in fact, for thousands of years).

There is also the statement here, *the house of Elohim*. Since this is a difficult phrase to interpret, we need to therefore examine **The House of Elohim**. This is not so much a study of the Tabernacle or Temple of God, as it is a study of the occurrences of the phrase *House of Elohim* or the *House of Jehovah* in Scripture. Our conclusion is that this is generally a literal reference; however, there are a few instances, e.g. this one, where it simply refers to fellowship with God (compare Psalm 27:4–5). The reason this imagery is suggested, is that Doeg observed David at the House of Elohim (reasonably assuming that it was set up and functioning in Nob).

Barnes weighs in with the following: *The particular allusion here is to the "courts" of the tabernacle. An olive tree would not be cultivated in the tabernacle, but it might in the "courts" or "area" which surrounded it. The name "house of God" would be given to the whole area, as it was afterward to the entire area in which the temple was. A tree thus planted in the very courts of the sanctuary would be regarded as sacred, and would be safe as long as the tabernacle itself was safe, for it would be, as it were, directly under the divine protection. So David had been, notwithstanding all the efforts of his enemies to destroy him.*<sup>14</sup>

Given what we have just studied, David is a young, growing believer. He is not mature enough to produce much; however, he is receiving the greatest of care and his production will last for hundreds of years (in all actuality, it will last for thousands and thousands of years). That David is a growing *believer* is indicated by the phrase *House of God*. Since David is out running from Saul, and since we have no mention of him returning to Nob (which Saul will destroy), we know that this is the more rare Metaphorical use of the phrase.

## Psalm 52:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bāṭach (בָּטַח) [pronounced baw-TAHKH]	to trust, to rely upon, to have confidence in, to be secure in	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #982 BDB #105

<sup>14</sup> Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Psalm 52:8.

**Psalm 52:8b**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's# none BDB #88
cheçed (חֶסֶד) [pronounced KHEH-sed]	<i>grace, benevolence, mercy, kindness</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #2617 BDB #338
ʿĕlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced el-o-HEEM]	<i>gods or God; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #430 BDB #43
ʿōwām (עוֹלָם) [pronounced ō-LAWM]	<i>long duration, forever, perpetuity, antiquity, futurity</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5769 BDB #761
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿad (עַד) [pronounced ġahd]	<i>forever, perpetuity, eternity</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5703 BDB #723

This is a homonym; it also means *booty, prey* (as a noun) and *as far as, up to, until* as a preposition.

**Translation:** *I will trust in the grace of God forever and [to] perpetuity.* This is our point of reference in the plan of God: God's grace. Apart from His grace, we have nothing. Although grace is often called *God benevolent favor*, it is all that God is free to do for us on the basis of the cross. It is unclear as to how much David or any other Old Testament saint understood about the cross. The cross in Scripture was hidden, and the reason is obvious: if Satan realized that Jesus dying for our sins on the cross would be the pivotal point in history, which gave freedom and grace to all, then Satan would not have masterminded all that occurred leading up to the cross. He would have done everything possible to keep the cross from happening. However, because the cross is the central point of human history, the Old Testament has to be clear, in retrospect, that this is within the plan of God. When we examine Abraham's offering of Isaac, Psalm 22 or God's suffering servant in Isa. 53, it is clear that the cross was not some aberration or simply a miscarriage of justice. God clearly knew the end from the beginning and allowed us to see that He knew what was to come.

David has first presented Doeg, representative of men who will do anything to get ahead in their lives, and how easy it is for him to lie (vv. 1–4). Then he tells us what God will do with Doeg (v. 5) and how men will mock him when they see how God brings him down (vv. 6–7). What David is doing now is presenting himself in contrast to Doeg. He and Doeg are polar opposites.

**How David and Doeg Are Polar Opposites**

Doeg	David
Doeg boasts in evil (v. 1)	David gives thanks to God (v. 9)
Doeg will say anything which advances him in this world (v. 2–3)	David will wait upon God for whatever it is that he wants (v. 9)
Doeg loves words which advance him and destroy others (v. 4)	David trusts in God's grace (v. 8)

## How David and Doeg Are Polar Opposites

Doeg	David
God will uproot Doeg from his home, which is, by implication, everything that Doeg has lied and cheated to get (v. 5)	David is like a green olive tree, young but will produce for hundreds of years (planted) in the House of God (i.e., what David will be given will last forever) (v. 8)
The mature believer will observe Doeg and laugh (v. 6)	David's behavior is observed (and approved) by God's angels (v. 9)
Doeg has trusted in his own riches, which he has accumulated through deception and by the blood of others (v. 7)	David will trust in God's grace (v. 8)

Interestingly enough, this gives us an organization for this psalm based on the parallelisms found throughout:

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## Psalm 52 Organized by Parallel Thoughts

**Doeg** boasts in evil (v. 1)

**Doeg** will say anything to get what he wants, regardless of who it destroys (vv. 2–4)

God will uproot **Doeg** from his home and all of his accumulated wealth (v. 5)

Righteous men will see **Doeg** and laugh at him (v. 6)

**Doeg** does not trust in God, but in his own wealth (v. 7)

God will plant **David**, as a green olive tree, in His house (v. 8a)

**David** trusts in God's grace, which is eternal (v. 8b)

**David** gives thanks to God (v. 9a)

**David** will wait upon God to Get what He wants out of life (v. 9b)

Angels observe **David**; or righteous men will have prosperity placed before them (v. 9c)

As we have seen with David's other psalms, there is always a structure, always a overlying lattice of organization within which the psalm is placed. David does not simply start writing until he runs out of things to say, and then signs off *the end*. His psalms are organized, but they vary widely in the way that they are organized.

You may wonder, why am I doing the organization now? Why didn't I place this at the beginning, or do it at the end of verse 9? At the end, we will have seen everything, and we can wrap it all up, as it were. Here is the deal: the reading at the very end of v. 9 is disputed. There are manuscripts out there with alternate readings, and this readings may have been intentional changes in this psalm. The copyist could have looked at this psalm and decided, this makes no sense; this should be the *Gracious One* here. However, this psalm makes perfect sense, and the key to understanding v. 9c is understanding v. 6. When we examine this psalm as a whole, with its many sets of parallel thoughts, that explains and verifies the correct reading of v. 9c.

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Having examined this psalm as a whole, we will better understand v. 9 now, as it completes all of the parallelisms introduced earlier.

I confess [or, *give thanks*] [to] You to  
perpetuity for You have done [it].  
And I wait for Your name for [it is] good  
in front of your gracious ones [or, *Gracious  
One*].

Psalm  
52:9

I thank [*praise or celebrate*] you forever when  
[or, *because*] You have done [this].  
Furthermore, I will wait on Your name when  
goodness [or, *prosperity*] [is] in the sight of  
[or, *opposite*] Your gracious ones [or,  
*Gracious One*].

I further give you thanks forever because you have taken care of this matter.  
Furthermore, I will wait upon You when goodness and prosperity are before Your gracious ones.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Early translations:

The Septuagint I will give thanks to You forever, for You have done [it]; and I will wait on Your name,  
for [it is] good before your saints.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV I will always thank God for what he has done;  
I will praise his good name when his people meet.

NLT I will praise you forever, O God,  
for what you have done.  
I will wait for your mercies  
in the presence of your people.

REB I shall praise you for ever for what you have done,  
and glorify your name among your loyal servants,  
for that is good.

TEV I will always thank you, God, for what you have done;  
in the presence of your people  
I will proclaim that you are good.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

*God's Word*<sup>™</sup> I will give thanks to you forever  
for what you have done.  
In the presence of your godly people,  
I will wait with hope in your good name.

JPS (Tanakh) I praise You forever, for You have acted;  
I declare that Your name is good [*Meaning of Heb. uncertain; others "I will wait for  
Your name for it is good"*]  
in the presence of Your faithful ones.

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

*The Amplified Bible* I will thank You *and* confide in You for ever, because You have done it [delivered me  
and kept me safe]. I will wait, hope *and* expect in Your name, for it is good, in the  
presence of Your saints [Your kind and pious ones].

*Updated Emphasized Bible* I will praise You to times age-abiding,  
Because You did effectually work, —  
And I will wait on Your Name,  
Because it is good,  
In the presence of Your men [some codices: *man*] of lovingkindness.

Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	I will give thanks to You forever, that You have accomplished it; And I will wait on Your name, because it is so gracious, in the presence of Your saints.
NASB	I will give You thanks forever, because You have done <i>it</i> , And I will wait on Thy name, for <i>it is good</i> , in the presence of Thy godly ones.
Young's Updated LT	I thank You to the age, because You have done <i>it</i> , And I wait on Your name for <i>it is good</i> before Your saints.

**What is the gist of this verse?** David gives thanks to God (or praises and celebrates Him) forever. God's reputation is the true good of this life, and His believers are observed by angels.

### Psalm 52:9a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yâdâh (הַיָּדָה) [pronounced yaw-AWH]	<i>to profess, to confess; to show or point out [with the hand extended]; to give thanks, to praise, to celebrate</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Hiphil imperfect with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3034 BDB #392
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l <sup>e</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿôwlâm (עוֹלָם) [pronounced ʻô-LAWM]	<i>long duration, forever, perpetuity, antiquity, futurity</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5769 BDB #761
ʿôwlâm together with the lâmed preposition mean <i>forever</i>			
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
ʿâsâh (הַעֲשֵׂה) [pronounced ʻaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793

**Translation:** I thank [praise or celebrate] you forever when [or, because] You have done [this]. David is thanking God because He will take Doeg down and God will remove him from his home and uproot him from the land of the living (v. 5). On the other hand, God will plant David, as a green olive tree in the House of God. What God will do is a complete reversal of fortune on both David and Doeg. David is thanking God and praising God for that right now. David praises God for what He will do. This is faith rest; David knows God's promises and David knows what Doeg's end will be destruction, while his will be prosperity. David is on the run, and Doeg is in a position of power and approbation. David recognizes that all of that will change.

### Psalm 52:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

## Psalm 52:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
qâvâh (הַיָּבֵּ) [pronounced kaw-VAW]	<i>to wait for, to wait expectantly for, to look for, to lie in wait for</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #6960 BDB #876
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027

**Translation:** [Furthermore, I will wait on Your name...](#) David will wait on God's name or reputation. The idea is, David knows that God will do this and David knows that God's timing is perfect. David does not even set up a time table with respect to God; he is willing to wait for God and depend upon God's reputation and character. Recall that Doeg has just received a reward and promotion from Saul (or we may assume that he has, based upon his information and actions in I Sam. 22); and David is still out in the wilds of Judea plotting his next move. David has no home, his family will be shipped to another land, and he will be a fugitive for several years. Here, David says to God, "I will wait on Your name." David trusts God. He does not look at his circumstances and say, "This is crap, Lord. Doeg has a nice house and promotion, and I'm here in some cave with a bunch of semi-reprobates. This is total crap!" David is willing to wait on God.

There are several parallel verses; allow me to quote a few of them: Psalm 20:1: [May Jehovah hear you in the day of trouble, the name of the God of Jacob set you on high.](#) And Psalm 25:3: [Yea, let none who wait on You be ashamed; let them be ashamed who sin without cause.](#) Psalm 25:21: [Let purity and uprightness keep me; for I wait on You.](#) Psalm 37:7: [Rest in Jehovah, and wait patiently for Him; do not fret yourself because of him who prospers in his way, because of him who practices wickedness.](#) (In fact, there are many similar sentiments to be found in Psalm 37; see vv. 9, 34). Isa. 8:17: [And I will wait on Jehovah, who hides His face from the house of Jacob; and I will look for Him.](#)

## Psalm 52:9c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
ṭûw <sup>b</sup> v (טוֹב) [pronounced too <sup>b</sup> v]	<i>good things, goodness, prosperity, well-being, beauty</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2898 BDB #375
neged (נֶגֶד) [pronounced NEH-ged]	<i>what is conspicuous when it is a substantive and, as a preposition, in front of, in the sight of, opposite to, before (in the sense of being in front of)</i>	preposition	Strong's #5048 BDB #617
châçîyd (חַסִּידִים) [pronounced khaw-SEED]	<i>kind, pious, gracious; gracious ones; saints, believers</i>	masculine plural adjective with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2623 BDB #339

Rotherham<sup>15</sup> tells us that some manuscripts have this word in the singular; so this could read...

<sup>15</sup> Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible*; ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 555.

## Psalm 52:9c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
châçîyd (חַיִּים) [pronounced <i>khaw-SEED</i> ]	<i>gracious, kind, pious; gracious one, pious one</i>	masculine singular adjective with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2623 BDB #339

**Translation:** ...when goodness [or, prosperity] [is] in the sight of [or, opposite] Your gracious ones [or, Gracious One]. There are quite a number of ways in which this portion of v. 9 may be translated, and therefore, we have several possible interpretations. It is uncertain whether we are seeing the time when Jesus Christ looks at the world and all is good and prosperous, or whether that placed before believers is all good. In either case, this would indicate the final culmination of all things. The interpretation that I will go with is, God's prosperity to the believer is revealed to the gracious ones, which are the angels of God. God's grace and prosperity to the growing believer is made abundantly clear to his angels. The reason that I side with this interpretation, is that it most closely parallels v. 6, which would have no parallel without this verse. As we have seen, there are neat parallels drawn throughout this psalm, so it would make sense that David would not drop the ball at this point. Righteous men observe Doeg and his fall; elect angels observe the prosperity which God lays upon David.

Another interpretation is, David would wait upon the reputation of God (v. 9b), for prosperity to be placed before His righteous ones—i.e., mature and growing believers (v. 9c). This interpretation, while it is an easier understanding of the Hebrew which is here; it is less of a direct parallel to what has already been.

Addendum: Interestingly enough, Barnes has an 8 page discussion at this point about when should a person be compelled to give up information about another. The idea, of course, is related to Doeg and his giving up information about David to Saul (although, as we have clearly seen, some of that information was false).

Now, before I launch into this, let me summarize what Doeg did that was wrong and why it was wrong:

### Doeg's Evil

1. Doeg did not report David's whereabouts to Saul initially.
2. Even when Saul called a meeting and demanded to know where David was, Doeg did not immediately speak up.
3. Doeg took time to weigh the pros and cons of turning David in first.
4. There had to be something in it for Doeg. He certainly expected a reward, a promotion and Saul's approbation.
5. Now, this does not mean that Doeg hated David; in fact, it is likely that they were at least acquaintances. After all, both were shepherds and both were outsiders (recall that David was not thought well of by his family nor was he a Benjamite, which made him and outsider, to some degree in the palace).
6. Since time had passed since Doeg had observed David and this meeting with Saul, Doeg could not just say that he saw David at Nob speaking to the priest. Saul would have blown a gasket and he would have killed Doeg for withholding this information.
7. He was not concerned about what would happen to the priests because of what he said because his own interests took priority.
8. Doeg had to finesse the situation so that all of Saul's anger would be deflected onto someone else.
9. Therefore, Doeg had to report to Saul more than what he actually saw.
10. Doeg did observe Ahimelech giving David bread and Goliath's sword. We know that David got these things from Ahimelech under false pretenses (he pretended that he was on a secret mission from Saul).
11. Had Doeg revealed only this information to Saul, Saul would have been angry at Doeg for not telling him sooner and he would have been mad at Ahimelech. Furthermore, had it come out that Ahimelech had been

## Doeg's Evil

- deceived, then Saul would have heaped all of his anger upon Doeg.
12. Therefore, if Doeg lied about Ahimelech procuring divine guidance for David, then Ahimelech would be clearly seen as Saul's enemy. This was an intelligent bit of deception, as Ahimelech could not claim to have been deceived by David—not if he provided David with guidance from God. God would have revealed to Ahimelech that he was being deceived. Therefore, Doeg's lie was diabolical. It redirected Saul's anger toward Ahimelech and preemptively it would make it difficult for Ahimelech to claim that David deceived him.
  13. Doeg's act was evil because (1) it was a calculated lie; (2) it was wholly and totally self-serving; (3) the result would most certainly endanger the life of Ahimelech.

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You will recall that I earlier referenced McGee and his suggestion that the man of sin is the person that David is actually speaking of in this psalm and the three psalms which follow. Bearing that in mind, let me offer to you...

## Similarities Between Doeg and the Man of Sin to Come

1. Doeg boasts in evil. Evil is the strategy of Satan to implement his plan and rule over the earth. Evil incorporates both sin and human good. The idea is, by any means necessary. The antichrist will do everything in his power to achieve the ends of Satan; this will include many acts of human good and benevolence, as well as vicious, underhanded acts, particularly against God's people, the Jews. Both Doeg and the man of sin not only embrace evil as a modus operandi, but they boast of their connection to evil.
2. As a sub-point, both Doeg and the man of sin will boast in their sins. All Christians sin; however, what is less likely is for the believer who has sinned to revel and boast in this sin. David is an example of this; he sinned in his union with Bathsheba; however, he did not boast of this union. He sought to keep it quiet and sought to fool her husband instead of flaunt it before him. Don't misunderstand me—David's attempts at coverup resulted in more discipline—but the key is that he was not proud of what he had done.
3. Doeg's tongue is said to devise destruction. The man of sin will be apparently a very eloquent and persuasive orator who will sway many to follow him and to do his bidding.
4. Obviously, the man of sin prefers evil over (divine) good (v. 3a).
5. There are men who would prefer to lie over telling the truth. It is just in their nature. Most people lie to protect themselves in one way or another; however, there are some who just prefer lies. This describes the man of sin, who is the consummate politician, and Doeg (v. 3b).
6. The present state of politics in the US essentially fosters this kind of approach. I cannot imagine two candidates for the presidency always telling the truth. As we saw with President Clinton, he had no problem about lying about his relationship to Monica Lewinsky. He was publically sincere and persuasive in his denials of his relationship. His denials not only cast a pall of shame on his own character, but upon the office which he held.
7. Few people have any concept as to just how damaging words can be, but the man of sin will be fully cognizant of how a few phrases will sentence many to death and torture. Doeg came to find that his words of deception would result in the deaths of the entire population of Nob—a destruction which he happily took part in, killing all of the priests with his own hand. I Sam. 22:16–18 Psalm 52:4
8. However, the end of these men will be the same. God will break them down; God will uproot them from their homes.
9. They trust in their own power and riches, and not in God, which will be their eventual undoing.

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I should reemphasize that the problem is more than Doeg revealing that he had seen David. For this reason, Barnes' lengthy discussion of when are you compelled to offer up information and when should you keep your mouth shut is not entirely pertinent.<sup>16</sup>

## A Summary of Barnes' Thesis on *When Do You Convey Information and When Do You Keep Your Mouth Shut?*

Introduction: This is an extremely important topic rarely alluded to in books on moral science or even in sermons. *in what cases is it our duty to give information which may be in our possession about the conduct of others; and in what cases does it become amoral wrong or crime to do it?* It's obvious that we cannot come up with answers which cover every situation in life, as well as the fact that we can conclude that we should always share such information or never share such information.

1. When is it right and when is it a duty to share information about others?
  - a. When the judge calls you forth to reveal the details of a crime which you have witnessed.
  - b. That which is revealed to a professional advisor or to a counselor should remain privileged. I personally question this. I'm not certain that I have seen any Biblical evidence that such information cannot be revealed. Obviously this runs counter to today's culture.
  - c. This does not exempt things revealed in a personal confidence or in a professional confidence from being revealed to police or in the courts. Barnes makes the comment: *the fact that it had been communicated in confidence, and for spiritual advice, does not constitute a reason for refusing to disclose it.*
2. When is a person wrong to share this information?
  - a. When this information is given up for *base purposes*. Where this is done to secure favor, or where it originates *from envy, spite, malice or revenge*. Three examples are given:
    - i. Doeg in this psalm. He received the approbation of Saul as well as probably a bump in salary and a promotion.
    - ii. The Ziphim from Psalm 54.
    - iii. Judas Iscariot in betraying our Lord. He received a paltry reward for this act. Judas knew our Lord was innocent, and even confessed that.
  - b. The innocent should never be betrayed.
    - i. One of the illustrations is Isa. 16:1–4, where fugitives are not to be turned into despot rulers.
    - ii. Deut. 23:15–16, which tells you if another man's slave escapes to you, then you are to keep him, but not return him to his previous master. And you are warned not to mistreat the slave.
    - iii. The idea is, in these unrepealed passages, is when someone is innocent but has been maltreated, you do not return them to those who would maltreat them. Barnes suggests that some of the most noble acts of history is giving asylum to the oppressed and the wronged. He adds, *how often, in the history of the church has life been thus endangered, because a refuge and a shelter was furnished to the persecuted Christian.*
    - iv. Similar thoughts are expressed on the inscription of the Statue of Liberty, the *Mother of Exiles*, erected in 1886: "...give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free."

<sup>16</sup> All italicized portions are direct quotes from Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes, Psalms; Volume 2*, reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; pp. 99–106. This can also be found on e-sword, under Barnes' discussion of Psalm 52:9. I have given a very condensed version of his discussion, so go to either of these two references for the full on discussion.