

**PSALMS**

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Psalm 55 as we continue our study through the Word of God. We are told that David wrote this Psalm and I think it is the event that the Psalmist speaks of that clearly leads me to that conclusion, besides the fact that it says it is a Contemplation of David!

I believe that this Psalm is written after the rebellion of David's son Absalom who tried to usurp the throne from his father David. And David fled Jerusalem for a time, until the rebellion was put down.

And specifically in this Psalm we see the close friend of David, Ahithophel, his counselor, turn against him! I believe it was because of the situation between David and Bathsheba that turned Ahithophel against David. You see, Ahithophel was the grandfather of Bathsheba, and it is possible that because of David's actions against his son-in-law, killing him, and the sexual sin with his granddaughter that Ahithophel had a lot of bitterness in his heart towards David. And when the right time came, he gave David his due reward, and sided with his son Absalom. And David is heartbroken over this, for Ahithophel was one of David's closest friends. That is what we will see here in Psalm 55. (Story found in II Samuel 15).

This Psalm can be broken down like this. In verses 1 through 8 we see the distress of David as he went through this rebellion against him. Then, in verses 9 through 15 we see the indignation of David over what has come upon him. And then David concludes in verses 16 through 23 with his confidence in the Lord. And that should be the way we conclude all the situations we face, with confidence in the Lord. With that said, let's begin reading in verse 1 of Psalm 55 and see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word.

### **PSALM 55**

#### **VERSES 1-8**

1. Have you ever felt like this before? Have you ever felt you just wanted to fly away, run away, get away from the situations that are before you? That is how David felt and I think we can all understand what he was feeling. And as you look over David's life, this period of time had to be one of his lowest. He recognized that the things that he was going through were the consequences of his sin with Bathsheba, but to have his own son turn on him like he did hurt David tremendously. And not only had his son Absalom, but his closest friend, Ahithophel turned against him as well as many of his own men during this time.

2. Now when the river is running high, when trouble is all around us how do we feel? Not good and David is expressing those feelings in this Psalm. David is heartbroken over what has transpired, and fear has come upon him.

And what is interesting here is that the solution to his problem is to run away. Now how can this man of God come to that solution? Because he is focused on the situation, which is overwhelming, instead of the Lord and thus, he wants to run away until this all passes over!

And the reality is you can't run away from your problems. They will always be there and you will have to deal with them. The key, as we will see, is you have to face them in the strength of the Lord, that is the only solution to your problems, the LORD!

3. Jacob is an example of one who was constantly on the run every time he was in trouble and he would burn the bridges behind him in the process. He deceived his brother Esau, and then high tailed it out of there before his brother killed him, heading to his uncle Laban's house. After spending some time there he heads back home, only to find out that his brother is coming to meet him.

So Jacob is once again trying to come up with a plan to get away. And that night he has an encounter with the Lord, and the Lord cripples him. Why? Because now Jacob, heel-catcher, supplanter, could no longer run away from his problems, he was going to have to face them. And it is at this point that the Lord changes his name from Jacob, heel-catcher, to Israel, or governed by God. Don't run away from your problems, cry out to God, bring them before Him, and He will help you through them. And yes, it may not be easy, but it is the right thing to do because you can never truly run away from your problems.

4. And obviously we can see the distress in David over the situations that were before him. Now as we move on we will see the indignation of David over the situation that was before him, the righteous anger he had toward what his son and his best friend were perpetrating against him!

#### VERSES 9-15

1. David opens up by speaking of Absalom's men who have taken control of the city and in doing so they are ruling in iniquity, causing violence to fill the city because they are evil. It is as Proverbs 29:2 says, "**When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; But when a wicked man rules, the people groan.**" And yes, David was not in Jerusalem at this time, but he was getting word of what was going on in the city of God and it broke his heart!

2. So we have seen that David's son, Absalom turned against him. Some of David's men turned against him. And now David speaks of his close friend, Ahithophel, who sided with Absalom, turning his back on David. As I have said, Ahithophel was the grandfather of Bathsheba and I don't think he ever forgave David for destroying his granddaughter's marriage. And that bitterness grew and grew until it poisoned his life and was manifested in actions, in rebellion. If this was an enemy, David could have handled it, but this was his close friend, and that broke his heart.

3. Have you ever had a close friend do that to you, break your heart, come against you? I am sure you have and you may be wondering why that happened, how that can happen? Sin is very destructive and let me also say this, you are in good company! You see, not only did David have a close friend rebel against him, but the Son of David, Jesus had Judas rebel against Him.

What does that have to do with me? Because Jesus said in John 15:20,

**“Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’**

**If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will**

**keep yours also.”** Don’t let those things cause you to become bitter, angry, run away but

you need to face them in the Lord. You need to give them to the Lord, you need to seek

His direction, you need to rest in Him and that is exactly what we will see David do as he

concludes this Psalm.

#### VERSES 16-19

1. I don’t know about you but for me, just when I think things are going to settle down, that things are going to get just a little easier, catastrophe comes my way and things get crazy! Why does God allow that? Why does God do that? The answer is really very simple, we have to depend upon Him, we have to look to Him because we can’t do it on our own. And if we try, we will mess it up. The Lord keeps us dependent upon Him and the reason He does that is so He can direct us. We will not rely on our own strength but His!

2. And think about it, change keeps us alert, it keeps us focused. I remember when we were driving to Oklahoma to see Julie's family and as we were going through St. Louis I had to stay alert because of the lane changes I needed to make to get on the right road. I think the Lord is doing the same for us, to keep us alert so we stay on the road He has for us! Once we become complacent, lazy in our walk with the Lord, then look out, it will get ugly. God uses these situations so that we are focused on Him, it keeps us pure, and as we go through these times and others see it, they may be encouraged in the things they are facing!

David's confidence was in the Lord and that is a great lesson for us in any situation we face in life. It is not going to be easy, Jesus never promised that, but He did promise that He would always be with us and guide us through these times of life.

#### VERSES 20-23

1. Now David has the right perspective, he understands their ultimate end. The difficulty that he has is that they talk sweetly to his face and then stab him in the back. It is hard to be nice to people like that, but do it unto the Lord. Don't look for the pat on the back, or a thank you, for our service is truly unto God. We are bondslaves to the Lord, servants of God!

2. Now here is something to think about. How do you handle tough situations? No, you don't make them a deal they can't refuse! You need to give it to the Lord! You mean that there is no retaliation on my part, no revenge, no trying to get even or paying them back for what they did to me? Absolutely not! You see, you need to give it to the Lord and you need to turn your enemies over to the Lord. Paul said in Romans 12:17-21, **“Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. Therefore if your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”**

This tells me that it may not always be possible to live at peace with people but don't use this as an excuse. It is not because of your actions; it is that they refuse to! The great black scientist, George Washington Carver once said: “I will never let another man ruin my life by making me hate him.” Good advice! Try to live at peace with people, do all you can!

The problem for us many times is that we want to give people what they deserve and that is wrong. God will deal with everyone, even us! Paul tells us that we are to care for our enemies, give to them what they need to live and it will be like heaping coals of fire upon their head. And some of you are thinking, "Good, I'll heap those coals high on your head!" That is not the point. Some feel that Paul is referring to an ancient Egyptian custom that when a person wants to demonstrate a public repentance, he would carry a pan of burning coals upon his head. Thus, by our doing good, it may cause them to see their evil and repent. In other words, love them to death!

Now if we refuse to give it to the Lord and we fight back, it will affect our own lives. You see, we can allow evil to overcome us if we stew in a situation, if we refuse to let it go, if we refuse to do good. Darby said, "If my bad temper puts you in a bad temper, you have been overcome of evil."

A great example of what should be done regarding evil is given to us by Abraham Lincoln. You see, Massachusetts's congressman, Thaddeus Stevens, wanted to completely crush the south after the Civil War. But Abraham Lincoln wanted to make peace, to heal the wounds and forgive. But Thaddeus Stevens slammed his fist down on the table and said, "Mr. Lincoln, I think enemies ought to be destroyed!" Abraham Lincoln very quietly responded and said, "Mr. Stevens, don't I destroy my enemy when I have made him my friend?" You see, destroy the enemy with the love of God, point them to Jesus and make them your friend, a child of God. May we learn from Lincoln's example! And if they refuse, God will deal with them, we don't have too!



3. May we remember the words of David and apply them to our life, “**But I will trust in You.**” May we learn to do that, trust in the Lord, rest in Him!

### **PSALM 56**

The heading on this Psalm reads, “**A Michtam of David when the Philistines captured him in Gath.**” That means that this Psalm is born out of the time when David, on the run from King Saul, fled from the city of Nob, to the Philistine city of Gath. This was the home of Goliath, the Philistine giant that David killed. And as David sought safety down there, knowing that Saul would not try to catch him there, that is the only reason I can think he would go and try to live with the enemy, they recognized David as the giant killer, and the killer of their people. They recognized that he was the one that was being sung about in that top 10 song that was playing throughout Israel. “**Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.**” I Samuel 21:11.

You can imagine how David felt as he was recognized as the one who slew their warrior Goliath! And so David, fearing now for his life, pretends to be mad. He starts scratching the walls and letting saliva drip down his face onto his beard. And kind Achish says, “**. . . ‘Look, you see the man is insane. Why have you brought him to me? Have I need of madmen, that you have brought this fellow to play the madman in my presence? Shall this fellow come into my house?’**” I Samuel 21:14-15.

Thus, David is let go and flees to the cave of Adullam, and there he is accompanied by all those that were in distress, in debt and discontented. These became David's mighty men, but they did not start out that way. And they accomplished this by being close to David, they learned from him.

Now while in this cave, David had much time to contemplate his actions and probably felt bad that he did not trust the Lord to deliver him but was placing his trust in his own plan, which failed miserably. So as David looks back on what he has done in the Philistine stronghold, the city of Gath, he is writing this Psalm.

#### VERSES 1-7

1. I like the way that David opens up because I think we have all felt that way. The enemies are fighting against us and David is crying out for God's mercy upon his life, that he would be delivered from their attacks upon him. Make no mistake about it; David had many enemies that wanted him dead. And as Christians, as we expose the truth, teach the truth, it causes many to come after us and try to destroy us.

Not physically, at least not yet, but to tear us down and make us ineffective. Don't become discouraged; just know that you are on the right track. Listen to the words of Jesus in John 16:33 where He said, "**These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.**" True peace during difficult times as well as easy times is only found in Jesus!

2. I have said this many times over the years but perspective is everything. And that is exactly what David is doing here, he is giving us a proper perspective of the situation that he faced and the ones we are facing or will face. Notice what he says, “**What can flesh do to me?**” and in verse 11, “**What can man do to me?**”

The most man can do to us is destroy us, this temporary dwelling place, these bodies. But that does not give them victory, for to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. Thus, David is saying that he is going to trust God, according to His Word, and because of that, he will not fear.

3. Now do we as Christians become afraid at times? Of course we do. We aren't above that. Even Paul the apostle experienced times when he was afraid. While Paul was in Corinth, that immoral area of the world, one night the Lord spoke to Paul and said, “**. . . ‘Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city.’**” Acts 18:9-10.

Now for the Lord to tell Paul not to be afraid tells me that Paul was afraid. But the Lord is comforting Paul and encouraging Paul to go on. You see, it is the Word of God that helps us to focus back on the only one that can help us, the Lord. Thus, we are told in I John 4:18, “**There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.**” When we look to the one who loves us, and we understand His love for us according to His Word, fear is removed!

VERSES 8-11

1. Do you think God cares for you? If you don't think God cares for you, that He loves you then look at verse 8 again. God knows everything we are going through and He even places our tears in a bottle, He is aware of everything we are going through!

Now on this idea of putting tears into a bottle, The New Scofield Bible says "Sometimes, in older days in the east, mourners would catch their tears in bottles (wine skins) and place them at the tombs of their loved ones" - to show how much they had grieved. John Bunyan said of this verse, "God preserves our tears in a bottle, so that He can wipe them away." And how true that is, for in Isaiah 25:8 we read, "**He will swallow up death forever, And the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces; The rebuke of His people He will take away from all the earth; For the LORD has spoken.**" One day all our tears will be wiped away!

Not only does God keep track of all our tears, but as I have said, God also keeps a record of all we do, all we go through. Malachi 3:16 tells us, "**Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, And the LORD listened and heard them; So a book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the LORD And who meditate on His name.**"

Now there is another book that God keeps for those that don't fear Him, the unsaved. In Revelation 20:12, we read of the Great White Throne Judgment, "**And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.**" God keeps very good records!

2. The Bible is very clear, God loves us, He cares for us, He is always with us but that information is useless! How can that be? It is useless if we don't apply those truths to our lives. What good is it to know something, like smoking is dangerous to your health, if you don't apply that to your life and don't smoke! And I truly believe it is as we apply the truths of God found in the Word of God to our lives that we are encouraged, we can forge ahead in the work that God has called us to do.

3. Now, in saying that we need to understand that the enemy is getting people away from the truths of God found in the Word of God! And sadly, many are now gravitating to experience instead of the Word. The Emerging Church is very big on experiences even if they go contrary to the Word of God! In her book, *Growing Up Gifted*, Barbara Clark of the California State University System advocates the practice of yoga, visualization and the development of psychic powers. And listen to what she has to say, "Transpersonal communication is designed to help people learn to trust. . . . Their personal experiences and accept . . . These experiences as their best source of wisdom and truth." That is exactly what the church is buying into today, and it is contrary to God's Word. David could put his trust in God to deliver him from his enemies because David believed and applied God's Word to his life. Let's wake up!

VERSES 12-13

1. Notice what David is basing his present situation upon. He is saying that he has seen how God has delivered him from past situations and that has given him the confidence in the present situation that he is in. God delivered him then and He will do so again! And it is out of those experiences that David is a witness of the true and living God. He is showing others what God can and will do in the lives of those He loves!

2. Jude tells us, **“Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.”** Jude 24. Jude is telling us that the Lord can keep us from stumbling when we look to Him. Then what is the problem? Many times we take our eyes off of Him and we do fall. But God places us back on our feet. You see, in a positional sense, we are perfect before Him in Christ. On a practical level, we still sin, but He is right there with us. We are eternally secure in Him. And it is out of our life experiences, how God has delivered us from various situations that we can shine for Jesus, we can be a light to this world of the living God! (Ephesians 1:13-14. John 5:24. John 10:28-29. I John 5:13).

**PSALM 57**

We are told in the heading that this is, **“A Michtam of David when he fled from Saul into the cave.”** We are not exactly sure what cave David is speaking of and thus, this Psalm could have been written during the time David was in the cave of Adullam, spoken of in I Samuel 22. But I tend to lean towards the time when David was fleeing Saul in the wilderness of En Gedi. There Saul had with him 3,000 men, and David and his men only amounted to some 600.

And David and his men were hiding out in this cave from Saul. While they were in the back part of the cave, King Saul enters the front part of the cave to take care of some personal business. Keep in mind that they didn't have bathrooms in those days and this was your ultimate “out house.” And while in there David came upon Saul and cut a corner of Saul's robe off. As Saul left the cave David went after him, asking the King why in the world he was looking to kill him, why did he want David dead!

You see, David could have killed Saul, but he didn't. And Saul realized that his actions were wrong against David, and let David go this time. But Saul was so messed up in his mind, one minute he wanted him dead, the next minute he was calling him his son. And Saul continued to go after David for some 10 years or more before Saul was killed in battle. Thus, this Psalm was born out of this time of David hiding in this cave. (I Samuel 24).

VERSES 1-3

1. When the heat is turned up, when the enemy comes against him, David says that he will seek refuge in the shadow of God's wings. This is a beautiful illustration of how God protects us just as a mother hen protects her chicks, under her wings, a place of shelter.

Now let's think about that for a minute. If we are taking refuge under the shadow of His wings that means for anyone to get at us, what do they have to do? They have to go through God! I like that and I bet you do too!

VERSES 4-6

1. David describes his enemies like lions who are ready to destroy their prey. They want to tear him to pieces like wild animals. But David's help will not come from his strength, his might, but from God who will answer his hearts cry. And the same is true for us today. God will allow situations to come into our lives not to destroy us but to help us to grow. On the other hand, the Devil brings temptations into our lives to destroy us, to get us to fall, to sin. And it is the same situations and how we go through them will determine if they are a test or trial from God that we passed or a temptation of Satan that we have succumbed to!

2. And yes, the enemy has set up traps to catch David in just as he has set traps to catch us in. But our God turns the tables and they are caught in their own traps. Saul thought he would get David, but the reality of the situation was that David could have killed King Saul, even though he was outnumbered 5 to 1. The enemy may far outnumber us but with God on our side, our victory is secure!



VERSES 7-11

1. Instead of being fixed upon the situation, David is saying that his heart is steadfast, fixed, it is undivided; it has totally been given over to God. How important that is, for a heart that is divided can't function like a heart that is whole.

And how true that is for us today as the enemies surround us, as things are heating up, that our heart needs to be fixed upon the Lord. That is what Paul admonishes us to do in Hebrews 12:2, **“looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”**

And Jesus said in Matthew 6:21, 24, **“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. . . . No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”**

What are your eyes fixed upon? Are they fixed upon the situations that are before you or are they fixed upon the Lord? You need to look to Him to be the strength of your life, to hide under the shadow of His wings!

2. During this time when things seemed dark, the sun breaks forth and joy bursts out of David's heart. Isn't it a joy to see God work and take a dark time in our life and make good come out of it! Don't you just want to shout from the mountain top on how good God is!

But I don't think the situation changed yet but David's attitude did. I still think it was a dark time for him. Then what changed? His focus! You see, in the midst of this dark time David was able to praise the Lord and it changed his countenance! When you are down, when you are discouraged, when things are dark, don't focus on the situation, but focus on the One who can see you through, focus on Jesus! Praise Him, thank Him, lift Him up, sing songs unto Him and when you do nothing will move you from the course that God has for you because your focus, your trust is in Him! You see, knowing God's love for us we should be able to shout His praise even during a dark and difficult time knowing He will see us through it, it will pass! As David said may we also say, "**Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; Let Your glory be above all the earth.**"

### **PSALM 58**

Some feel that this Psalm was written early in David's life, early in his reign as King. The reason I tend to lean in this direction is because David is coming against unrighteous judges that were destroying the nation and I believe that it was during the reign of King Saul that there was much unrighteousness in the land. Now David, as the King, is confronting the corruption that was in the judicial system. Something that we should apply to our nation, our judicial system today!

VERSES 1-2

1. Some feel this is God speaking here but I think David was speaking out against the corruption he saw growing in the nation that was fostered by judges that were not judging righteously. Obviously God is speaking through David so I guess both views are right.

Instead of judging righteously they just kept silent, they did not do what they were supposed to do. And we need to keep in mind that the judges, the judicial system in Israel were supposed to be God's representative. The reason being is that they had the power of life and death in capitol crime cases. And when the judicial system of any nation breaks down, when judges become silent towards evil, then violence will fill the land. That is what we see happening in this country today.

2. Look at our nation today and it seems that criminals have more rights than the victims do. Let me give you this example and it is a true story. We are told, "Crime doesn't pay? Ask mugger O. C. McClure. McClure, who admitted he robbed a Japanese tourist on San Francisco's Market Street, won \$24,595.00 yesterday for injuries suffered when cab driver Holden Hollum chased him down and pinned him against a building on Hayes Street near City Hall."

As unbelievable as this is the criminal took the hero to court and the criminal won! Fifty years ago, such a judgment would never have been rendered. As a society, we seem to have set aside our moral compass - if we have not put it away all together. And these judges that are suppose to be issuing out righteous judgment, are doing just the opposite, and we see the results!

And the key for me is that when you move away from the Lord, when you disregard the truths of God found in the Word of God, any society, any nation will deteriorate into chaos, immorality, unrighteousness! God has set His standard and we can listen or we can refuse to listen but God knows what He is talking about.

#### VERSES 3-5

1. Of course David is not saying that as soon as a child is born they go and rob a bank or steal a car or murder someone. What he is saying is that we are all born with a sin nature. David said in Psalm 51:5, “**Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.**”

You see, you don't have to teach children to grab toys from other children or to throw temper tantrums, or lie! It is part of their nature. What we try to do is train them up to do good, for if we don't, there is a good chance that they will be wild, out of control. You see, sinning doesn't make us sinners, we sin because we are sinners, it is our nature. Just as stealing a car does not make you a car thief, for unless you were a car thief, you wouldn't steal the car in the first place!

2. And for the wicked, they don't want to hear anything. They just want to do what they want to do. They are deaf to the things of God and thus, God will allow them to go down that path but it is a path of destruction!

VERSES 6-8

1. We read this and we think, “This is not how a Christian is to act!” And that is very true. Thus, some feel that David is speaking out of the Law, the Old Testament and thus, this does not apply to us. I think it does. You see, our warfare is not against flesh and blood but against the spiritual forces of wickedness. Thus, we want to break the bonds they have on people. We want them destroyed. And the way we go against them is by putting on the whole armor of God as Paul tells us in Ephesians chapter 6!

2. Here in verse 8 David speaks of a snail and in that part of the world there is a snail called a “slime worm” which will actually melt away in the heat of the sun. David is asking God to make these wicked people vanish from sight. Not a bad prayer! He is also calling for them to die young, why? The reason he is praying this prayer is so that they will not continue on doing their evil.

3. We need to remember that just because we are Christians we are not pacifists. We are in a battle and it is time to take up the whole armor of God so we can put down the enemy, not fall prey to his scheming and see people saved from the pit of hell!

VERSES 9-11

1. David is praying that before water can boil the wind will blow out the fire, even before the kindling of thorns has a chance to warm a pot and that quickly their life will end. You did not want to get on David’s bad side! And think about that for a minute. Sometimes God’s judgment is very quick!

2. Now as we look at this nation and this world and see all the wickedness that is going on, we can't wait for the Lord to come back and righteousness fills this land! The wicked will not get away with anything, because they will have to stand before the Righteous Judge, Jesus Christ one day!

And maybe David is ultimately looking ahead to the time when the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ, comes back and treads the wine press of His wrath causing blood to flow 4 to 5 feet deep for over 200 miles in the valley of Megiddo as He destroys the wicked that came to do battle against Him. (Revelation 19). It will be in that day, as the Lord sets up His Kingdom, that we can rejoice as the Righteous Judge, Jesus Christ will rule and reign from Jerusalem.

### **PSALM 59**

Once again we are given insights into the time this Psalm was written, the circumstances of this Psalm. We are told that this is, **“A Michtam of David when Saul sent men, and they watched the house in order to kill him.”**

You may remember the story. Saul told his son Jonathan that he wouldn't kill David, and David came back and served the King, as he did before. And David once again, in a war against the Philistines, killed many men, and caused the Philistines to retreat in defeat. And Saul did not appreciate this for David was getting the honor and he wanted it. Saul saw David as a threat to his kingship and a distressing spirit came upon Saul.

One night as David played music for the King; the King threw his spear at David to kill him, and missed. Hey, when I sing people don't appreciate it but you have not thrown a spear at me, at least not yet! And David, seeing all this was wise enough to realize that was not love being expressed by Saul, so he runs home.

There, his wife Michal, who was Saul's daughter, meets him and tells him that Saul has sent some soldiers to watch the house, and if you don't leave tonight he will kill you. So David is let down through the window and escapes from Saul.

Michal then ran some interference for her husband David. She placed a false representation in bed for her husband and when the soldiers came in to get David for the King, she told them that he was sick in bed, which they could see. But that trick only lasted a short time, for they came back and pulled the covers back and found out they were deceived. But that allowed David enough time to escape and put some distance between them. And Saul asked his daughter why she turned on him, and she lied and said that David told her to let him go or he would kill her. Out of this, we see this Psalm emerge. (I Samuel 19).

#### VERSES 1-4a

1. David did nothing wrong against Saul, and yet Saul wanted him dead. This hatred began after David killed the Philistine giant, Goliath, and the people were praising David more than Saul. We are told in I Samuel 18:8-9, "**... 'They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed only thousands. Now what more can he have but the kingdom?? So Saul eyed David from that day forward.'**"

You see, Saul recognized that David would be King one day, and Saul was trying to prevent that from happening. But David did not try to usurp the throne or come against Saul. He respected Saul because he was the King, although he did not agree with everything Saul did. And Saul became a paranoid Schizophrenic over this, one minute he liked David, the next he wanted him dead. One minute he called David his son and the next he was throwing his spear at David! There is no peace of God in Saul's life because Saul did not make peace with God!

#### VERSES 4b-5

1. David is calling for God to awaken, not that God sleeps, and destroy his enemies. And I think James Montgomery Boice gives us some interesting insights into the cry of David unto the Lord. He wrote,

One of the most striking features of this psalm is its names for God, and here they appear in profusion: "O LORD God Almighty, the God of Israel." In Hebrew this is quite a mouthful of names: Yahweh, the great personal name of God revealed to Moses on Sinai, means, "I am who I am." Elohim Sabaoth, "The God of hosts," refers to both the armies of Israel and to the heavenly hosts who stand behind them and give victory. Elohi Israel, "the God of Israel," refers to the God who has entered into a lasting covenant relationship with his people.



Leupold says, “The writer recalls God’s unique power by employing the various most familiar names by which he was known in Israel.” He is right. When we can pray, “Lord, God, Lord of hosts, God of Israel, my God,” we have said a great deal and have a powerful argument.

- James Montgomery Boice, Psalms

#### VERSES 6-7

1. Those dogs spoken of here are not your Lassie type dogs. These were wild dogs that hid themselves during the day but at night would run in packs, terrorizing areas, howling and searching for food. They would kill sheep, pets, and even humans depending on how big their pack was. And David is comparing the wicked to these wild dogs! They too do their evil in the dark and they destroy life! They cut people up with the words that they speak and they think no one is aware of what they are doing, but God is aware and will judge them accordingly.

#### VERSES 8-13

1. Again, the wicked are getting away with absolutely nothing. God is in control and is keeping track of all their actions. But David does not want God to wait but to send His judgment upon his enemies. And what is interesting is that David does not want God to completely wipe them out. He wants them around as an object lesson for others to see what happens to the wicked. And, with the hope that they would turn to the God of Israel, that they would get saved. And that is always our hearts desire, to see people saved!

VERSES 14-17

1. No matter how loud the wicked growl, David is not going to be afraid, because God will deal with them. And David is going to sing of God's power, God's mercy, and as others look to David, He will point them to the Lord, his defense.

2. Let me close this evening with these words of encouragement from James Montgomery Boice. He wrote regarding this last verse of Psalm 59,

Now we come to the refrain the second time around. It is a great testimony ("O my Strength, I sing praise to you; you, O God, are my fortress, my loving God" [v. 17]), particularly when we remember that outwardly the psalmist's circumstances had not changed a bit. The same situation that caused David to cry out to God in verses 1–2 is still there. But here at the end he is not only testifying that God is his "Strength" and "fortress." He is actually singing praises to God in the very midst of the danger. In fact, the singing begins even before this, in verse 16.

What has brought him to a point of vigorous jubilation? The answer is in the slight variation I noted earlier between verses 9 and 17. In verse 9 he is waiting on God, watching for his eventual deliverance. It is because he has been waiting and because God has provided encouragement, though not yet the expected deliverance, that David can sing. In the Hebrew the words *watch* and *sing* are identical except for one letter, which is a way of saying, I suppose, that keeping one's eyes on God is only a stroke away from singing his praises and otherwise rejoicing in him.

Do you lack joy? Is it hard for you to sing God's praises? If so, it is probably because you are not watching for God, are not looking to him. Remember Habakkuk, who was waiting on his watchtower to see what God would say to him. Nothing changed outwardly for him, either. He was as much in danger and as much perplexed at the end of his prophecy as at the beginning. But Habakkuk was changed as a result of waiting upon God, and for that reason his short book ends with what we can only regard as singing.

Though the fig tree does not bud  
and there are no grapes on the vines,  
though the olive crop fails  
and the fields produce no food,  
though there are no sheep in the pen  
and no cattle in the stalls,  
yet I will rejoice in the LORD,  
I will be joyful in God my Savior.  
The Sovereign LORD is my strength;  
he makes my feet like the feet of a deer,  
he enables me to go on the heights (Hab. 3:17–19).

Those are the words of one who has learned to wait on God and to trust him completely. They are words any Christian should be able to say.

Alexander Maclaren says, "Trust [God] as what he is, and trust him because of what he is, and see to it that your faith lays hold on the living God himself and on nothing besides." If you do that, regardless of the circumstances that surround you, even if you are surrounded by "dogs" who seek your life, you will end up singing.

- James Montgomery Boice, Psalms