

## Psalm 55

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### Back ground:

- Absalom, David's son has rebelled against his father. For several months Absalom worked at stealing the hearts of the people.
- He had been conspiring to overthrow his father, he'd recruited several of his father's friends and allies in the process. He now begins to execute his plan by going to Hebron under the guise of offering sacrifices / paying his vows unto the Lord.

**2 Samuel 15:7-10** <sup>7</sup>And it came to pass after forty years, that Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the Lord, in Hebron. <sup>8</sup>For thy servant vowed a vow while I abode as Geshur in Syria, saying, If the Lord shall bring me again indeed to Jerusalem, then I will serve the Lord. <sup>9</sup>And the king said unto him, go in peace. So he arose, and went to Hebron. <sup>10</sup>But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, as soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, Absalom reigneth in Hebron."

- At Hebron he plans on gathering an army and marching back to Jerusalem in what would be a military campaign to kill his father and usurp the throne.
  - David is informed that Absalom is on his way to Jerusalem, and that his closest advisor and friend Ahithophel is with him, supporting him.
  - David is grieved, he knows he's in trouble - so what do you do when you're in trouble? You pray! Which is how this Psalm starts out.
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V: 1-2 Give ear to my prayer, please hear my supplication: Please pay attention, "I mourn" in my complaint - I'm "restless," "troubled," "panic stricken" - as I cry out to you.

- These different words used to translate his emotion at the time seems to cover the gambit of emotion.

V: 3 The reasons for his prayer, his grief:

1. Because of the voice of the enemy - who sadly is his son Absalom.
2. Because of the oppression of the wicked - those that have joined in the rebellion against him, Ahithophel.
3. They cast iniquity, blame, anger upon him.

- Living in the public eye can be a very tenuous, fickle kind of thing. David was a popular king, but there were times when he had his detractors as well. At one time they sang of David how he'd killed his "tens of thousands..." and now they were speaking evil against him.

V: 4-5 David's heart is aching, the terror of death, the reality that this might be the end has dawned upon him. Absalom, and Ahithophel are determined to kill David to secure the throne.

- <sup>5</sup>David is in his older years, he's not as strong or capable as he once was, he's more vulnerable to the threat, and he feels it.

V: 6-8 Oh how I'd like to run away, to hide, to not have to deal with these things...

- Who can't relate to that? David is in a tough place,
- So often our first thoughts when we're in a similar situation is "**how** can I get out of this?" When what we should really be asking is "**What** can I get out of this?"
- God so often allows these things in our lives to grow us, to strengthen us in our faith, to teach and instruct us in His ways.

**James 1:2-4** "<sup>2</sup>My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; <sup>3</sup>knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. <sup>4</sup>But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

- From David's perspective flying away sounds really good right now, to really deal with this rebellion would pit him directly against his own son, and against many that he loves.
- As he retreats from Jerusalem, he's avoiding that direct conflict, putting space between himself and his adversaries giving God a chance to deal with the issues, to give him the wisdom he desperately needs, knowing that he won't be able to avoid them all together.

V: 9-11 In his prayers, David doesn't pray or make "nice, nice" for his enemies, he pretty much pray's God's wrath upon them.

**Psalm 58:6** "Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth: break out the great teeth of the young lions, O Lord."

Jesus said:

**Matthew 5:39** "But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also."

- David hadn't heard that teaching from Jesus, and some times I wish I hadn't...

- As David prays he says “destroy” - which is easy enough to figure out. Then he prays: “*divide their tongues...*”
- Instead of everyone speaking with one voice - unity, break that up, cause them to speak contrary to each other, which is exactly what ended up happening.

David had prayed:

**2 Samuel 15:31** “And one told David, saying, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O Lord, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.”

- David then instructs another of his counsellors, Hushai to stay behind and be a spy for him, to counsel Absalom in such a way as to counter Ahithophel’s counsel.
- Absalom does eventually reject Ahithophel’s counsel which leads to his death, the defeat of Absalom’s army, and the death of Absalom as well.
- Their tongues were divided.
- David decries that fact that they’ve sewn discord, spread false rumors, spoken mischief.

Solomon would later write:

**Proverbs 6:16-19** “<sup>16</sup>These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto Him: <sup>17</sup>A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, <sup>18</sup>An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, <sup>19</sup>A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.”

V: 12-14 There is a prophetic element in these verses as they relate to Jesus’ disciple Judas Iscariot who betrayed Him.

- David expresses his dismay. I thought you were my friend. It’s a hard thing, a difficult thing when like David we experience that betrayal, the heart break of someone you counted a friend, someone you’d taken into your confidence that turns from you to become an enemy.
- It was a painful thing for David’s own son to turn against him, and for his close friend and counselor Ahithophel to do the same. David doesn’t call him a friend here because he’s proven himself not to be.
- As the prophetic application is made we see that Jesus experienced the same thing in the betrayal of a close friend - He’s suffered through or experienced the same things we do.

**Hebrews 4:15** “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”

V: 15 They’ve made themselves enemies, so David deals with them as enemies, he prays God’s righteous judgment upon them as enemies.

Jesus said:

**Matthew 12:30** “He that is not with Me is against Me, and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth abroad.”

- There is no middle ground with Jesus, no neutral stance - you are His friend, or you are His enemy. We have to make a choice.

V: 16 As for me, unlike you - when I call upon God He will save me.

- David is confident in his God, in his relationship with God, he knows as well that he is God’s anointed king over Israel, knowing that this hasn’t changed - so that God will protect and keep him.
- Part of walking in faith, trusting the Lord (**Hebrews 11:6**) - is trusting by faith that we really are saved.

**2 Peter 1:10** “Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if we do these things, ye shall never fall.”

- “Diligence”: **2 Timothy 2:15, Romans 10:17**

V: 17-20 David is constantly in prayer, evening, morning, and noon.

- He’s delivered my soul in the past, and David is confident that he’ll do it again.

**Psalm 34:17** “The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.”

“<sup>20</sup>*He has put forth his hands against such as be at peace, ...*” David has been attacked for no good reason, no provocation.

**Psalm 35:6-7** “<sup>6</sup>Let their way be dark and slippery: and let the angel of the Lord persecute them. <sup>7</sup>For without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul.”

“... *He’s broken his covenant.*” At some point perhaps Ahithophel had sworn allegiance to David, or some expression of loyalty which was now broken.

V: 21 He could be referring to either Absalom or Ahithophel, or perhaps both - smooth slippery, buttery words, but in their heart - war, rebellion, betrayal.

- Drawn swords, able to wound, to kill even.

**Proverbs 27:6** “Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.”

V: 22 To me this sounds an awful lot like the words of Jesus:

**Matthew 11:28-30** “<sup>28</sup>Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup>Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. <sup>30</sup>For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.:

- David again expresses his faith, his confidence that God will take care of the righteous, take care of him.

**Psalm 37:5** “Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass.”

V: 23 But on the contrary, those who’ve attacked the innocent, those who drew first blood so to speak, who’ve been deceitful - they won’t live out half their days.

- Ahithophel would soon be dead, by his own hand. Absalom would be dead as well at the age of 40, not having lived out half his days.
- Another contrast, a reiteration of what has already been declared:

“<sup>23b</sup> ... *but I will trust in Thee.*”

- As mentioned earlier, David could no longer lead an army into battle as he had before, but oh boy could he pray:

**2 Corinthians 10:3-4** “<sup>3</sup>For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh. <sup>4</sup>For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.”

- One of the things that impresses me about this Psalm is how literally David’s prayers were answered.

1. One of the first things he prays for is that God would simply hear him, and He obviously did.

2. In verse 6 he wishes he could fly away and be at rest. David in fact fled from Jerusalem, and was received by those who protected and supported him until such a time as he might return.

**2 Samuel 17:27-29** Shobi, the son of Nahash, and Machir the son of Ammiel, and Baarzillai - brought beds, and basins, and food, and took David and his entourage in.

3. V: 9 Destroy and divide - the plans of the enemy were destroyed, the counsel of the wicked was divided and made of no effect.
4. 15, 23 Let death seize upon them, let them be quick to go down to hell, let them only live out half their lives - and that is what actually happened.

**James 5:16** “Confess our faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”