

Psalm 56

Background:

- Jo-nath-e-lem-re-cho-kim: “The cry of the dove in the distant terebinth trees.” You hear sometimes the doves in the morning - David’s cry is like that of the doves.
- Another Michtam: a wisdom Psalm or a learning song.
- I’m not so sure if David was taken as much as he gave himself to the Philistines.

V: 1-3 As soon as he presented himself there at the Philistine capital of Gath, Goliath’s home town, there at the gates, he realized that he’d made a terrible mistake.

- David is describing being overwhelmed, consumed by the world and that when He is afraid he will trust in the Lord.

Psalm 61:1-2 “¹Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. ²From the end of the earth will I cry unto Thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.”

V: 4 In those times when David is afraid he will focus on the Lord:

- When we’re focused on the Lord, praising Him, worshipping Him, the cares and fears of this life seem pretty small.

Psalm 118:6 “The Lord is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?”

Hebrews 13:6 “So that we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me?”

V: 5-7 His enemies twist his words, always thinking how to tear him down. They hide themselves, they lay their traps.

- They won’t escape, God will deal with them.
- We too have an enemy that will twist our words, twist our minds, and lay traps for us - who is always looking for a way to ensnare us:

1 Peter 5:8 “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”

V: 8-9 Tear bottles, the book of tears?

- Lamb's book of life. **Revelation 21:27**
- God's book of remembrance.

Malachi 3:16 “Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name.”

- David is looking forward to that time when God will turn his enemies back, to that time when he's been delivered from death, turmoil, and tears.

Psalms 116:8-9 “⁸For Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling. ⁹I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.”

- According to **Revelation 21:4** There is a day coming when God will wipe away every tear, and there will be no more sorrows.

V: 9b “... *for God is for me.*” David had that confidence, and we should as well. God is for us!

Romans 8:31 “... if God be for us, who can be against us?”

V: 10-11 Same tactic as before: focusing on the Lord, focusing on, allowing the Word of God to minister to us.

- David has been there before:

Psalms 27:14 “Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait I say, on the Lord.”

- David declares multiple times that he's not going to worry about what men might do to him, he's focused on the Lord.

Proverbs 29:25 “The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.”

Jesus taught us:

Matthew 10:28 “And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”

V: 12-13 David declares that he's made vows before God and that he will keep them, that he will render praise and worship unto his God.

- David was delivered from the hand of king Achish; David no doubt prayed at that time; “Lord if you’ll get me out of this, I’ll....” He’d made a vow and now he intended to keep it.
- David declares that God has saved him for a purpose, that he might walk before God in the light of the living. Not just the land of the living, but the light of the living.
- I believe he’s talking about eternity; walking in the light with the Lord. (Jesus)

1 John 1:7 “But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

Psalm 57

- As the title declares; this was written when David was fleeing from Saul, when he fled from Saul in the cave of Engedi.
- “Al-tas-chith” - used here and Psalms 58, 59, and 75 refers to the tune or melody of “destroy not.”
- Saul and his men entered the cave to rest, not knowing that David and his men were in the back of the cave. David is back there trying to figure out what to do, hoping nobody sneezes.
- It’s better to be in God’s will in a cave, than to be out of His will in a king’s palace.
- This basically describes a day in the life of David. V: 4 he’s lying down, V: 8 he’s rising up.

V: 1-3 David once again cries out to God for mercy, affirming that his real refuge, his real place of safety is under the shadow of His wings.

Psalm 91:1-4 “¹He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. ²I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in Him will I trust. ³Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. ⁴He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall be thy shield and buckler.”

- God hears him, God answers his prayers - God will send forth His mercy and His truth.

Kind of like:

Psalm 43:3 “O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto Thy Holy hill, and to Thy tabernacles.”

- It's only because of the shed blood of Jesus that God can send out both His mercy and His truth, otherwise He'd have to send out His justice and His truth, it's only because of His blood that we can be partakers of His mercy, we would have to get what we deserve - justice.

V: 4-5 David see's the problem, he's surrounded by dangerous men, Saul and his army, or even his own men, he's lying among dangerous men, his own men who are a ruff bunch, like a bunch of lions. He's lying in close proximity to Saul's men, lion's with swords. Either way, he see's the problem and he employs the solution; he begins to praise the Lord.

- Again, as he begins to exalt the Lord and to worship Him, focussing on the Lord - God gets bigger, and his problems get smaller.

V: 6-7 They've prepared their traps, their nets, their pits - my soul is bowed down, I'm bummed about that - but they've fallen into the pit that they dug.

Speaking of evil men:

Psalm 7:14-16 “¹⁴Behold, he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood. ¹⁵He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made. ¹⁶His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate.”

- Or another way of putting it - “what goes around, comes around.”
- Again acknowledging the problem, again acknowledging the solution - “*My heart is fixed on the Lord, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise.*”
- David reiterates that the solution is a right focus.
- In another Psalm, David prays a fascinating prayer:

Psalm 86:11 “Teach me Thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear Thy name.”

- So often one of the problems we have is that of a “divided heart.” Our desire is to please God yes, but also the desire to satisfy our flesh, to cling to the things of the world.

“Lord unite my heart, give me a singleness of heart - to walk in your ways and to please you.”

James 1:8 “A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.”

James 4:8 “Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded.” (What to / how to)

V: 8-11 “Awake up!” Literally it is “I will wake up the morning.”

- As David declares wake up psaltry and harp - these musical instruments used to worship God, he says “I will wake early too.” David would make himself to be an instrument of praise and worship.
- He will praise the Lord among the people, among the nations - he’s not ashamed to do so.
- David declares that God’s mercy is great or above the heavens - His truth is high above the clouds.
- ¹¹Repeats V: 5. As David lays down to sleep, he’s exalting the Lord, as He wakes up - he’s doing the same!
- His desire is that God would be exalted above the heavens and above all the earth!

Psalm 58

- This Psalm hearkens again back to that time when David was living in exile, running from Saul, trying to stay alive - waiting to receive his kingdom.
- Saul had led the nation to political and spiritual ruin.
- David was concerned about the judicial process and the breakdown of law and order. Neither Saul, nor the judges who were following Saul’s example were judging justly, acting rightly - David was being persecuted, hunted, all contrary to the Law. He’d done nothing amiss.

V: 1 Do you speak righteousness, O congregation? (O, ye judges, rulers, gods?)
He’s questioning their integrity, their honesty. Do you judge up-rightly or correctly?

V: 2 Your heart isn’t right, you can’t judge rightly.

- We've all seen that. Judges that have a problem or a penchant in a certain area - a judge that has a drinking problem often goes easy on alcohol related issues in their court.
- When Prop. 8 (2008) was voted into law by the majority of Californians defining marriage as being between a man and a woman; it was subsequently and arbitrarily overturned by a federal judge who was himself a practicing homosexual - no justice there.
- Like David, we're seeing the breakdown of our own judicial system, the common thread being the rejection of God's law, the 10 commandments, and so on.

V: 3 Poetic hyperbole; an obvious exaggeration to make the point. Seemingly there are some people who have a wicked bent from the womb. None of that is too surprising.

Isaiah 53:6 "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way;..."

V: 4-5 Speaking of the wicked, these un-just judges. He compared them to snakes and lions - both images of the Devil. Their words being like venomous poison that hurt people instead of helping them. They were like deadly snakes that can't be charmed or turned away from their evil.

V: 6-9 Seeing innocent people suffer because of un-just judges angered David, as a shepherd we would not stand by and watch the sheep be harmed.

- I remember joking around in Jr. High school - "*May the fleas of a thousand camels infest your arm pits, and may your arms be too short to scratch...*"
- But wow, David is passionate, when he prays God's judgment or cursings upon his enemies, he doesn't hold back: Bear in mind David didn't actually do these things, he asked God to do it for him.
- Break their teeth in their mouth. First that would be very painful, secondly it would lead to a slow death of starvation. He's just getting started.
- ⁷You pour out a cup of water on the grass, or in the sand - and it just melts away, like a vapor, it just disappears, it's powerless.
- When they bend their bow, may their arrows be cut in pieces, may they have blunted shafts, no arrowheads - unable to pierce a body, in -effective, useless.
- ⁸Like pouring salt on a snail, (cruel) or watching it dry up in the extreme heat.

- May the sudden panic of an untimely birth, a pre-mature birth come upon them that results in them not seeing the sun. May both mother and child die in child birth.
- ⁹They would use the thorns in the fires for heating the pots, and before the pot could feel the heat from it they would be taken away, in a whirlwind.
- A desperate traveller in the wilderness might not gather real firewood to cook their meal. Sometimes for expediency sake they might grab some bits of brush, or thorny bushes to start their fire. David is saying - may it be extinguished by a sudden wind before the pan could heat up. May the frustration of cold and hunger be upon them, may they just be a "flash in the pan."

V: 10-11 The day will come when God will judge in righteousness, and it will be a blood bath!

- After a battle the victorious soldiers would walk back through the battlefield and takes the spoils, removing any kind of valuables from the bodies of their fallen enemies, in the process their feet would be stained by the blood of their enemies.

Revelation 19:11-13 ¹¹And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. ¹²His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written, that no man knew, but He Himself. ¹³And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God."