

TRUST GOD IN TIMES OF DANGER

Psalm 57

I. INTRODUCTION: I

- I. **2** David was a man acquainted with danger.
 - A. In Psalm 57 we find David pleading with God for help.
 - B. Most likely this Psalm was penned in response to Saul's jealous rage towards David.
 - (1) Saul's jealousy begins in I Samuel 18:6-9.
 - (2) In his paranoia Saul orders David's death: **I Sam. 19:1**: "Now Saul spoke to Jonathan his son and to all his servants, that they should kill David;"
 - (3) For a period of about 8 years (1018-1010 B.C.) Saul and his men pursued David in his attempt to kill and destroy him (I Sam. 19-30).
2. Can you imagine having Saul, with all his royal power, constantly pursuing you with the intent of killing you!
3. **3** During all of this time David behaved in a godly manner with proper respect for Saul as God's anointed king (I Sam. 26:7-12).
4. Fortunately for our benefit David's prayer has been preserved for us (Rom. 15:4): **Psa. 57:1**:
*"Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me!
For my soul trusts in You;
And in the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge,
Until these calamities have passed by."*
 - A. Sooner or later all of us will face trials, dangers and distresses; hence, we need to be like David and call on God for help; and, we all need to learn how to help other distressed souls to call on God for help like David.
 - B. As the saying goes, "If we fail to prepare we are preparing to fail."
5. David penned the 57th Psalm 57 over 3,000 years ago, but it remains as relevant today as it did in his time.
 - A. David defeated danger by trusting God.
 - B. We will defeat danger by trusting God.
6. **4** Let's consider some lessons we can learn from David and Psalm 57:1.

II. DISCUSSION:

- I. **5** David Defeated Danger by Trusting God:
 - A. David fled King Saul's wrath:
 - (1) The superscription of Psalm 57 refers to David hiding from Saul in a cave.
 - (2) This is probably a reference to the "cave of Adullam" in I Sam. 22:1 where David hid himself from Saul because of Saul's constant attempts to kill him.
 - B. Let's read Psalm 57:1-6:
*I Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me!
For my soul trusts in You;
And in the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge,
Until these calamities have passed by.*

*2 I will cry out to God Most High,
To God who performs all things for me.
3 He shall send from heaven and save me;
He reproaches the one who would swallow me up.*

Selah

God shall send forth His mercy and His truth.

*4 My soul is among lions;
I lie among the sons of men
Who are set on fire,
Whose teeth are spears and arrows,
And their tongue a sharp sword.*

*5 Be exalted, O God, above the heavens;
Let Your glory be above all the earth.*

*6 They have prepared a net for my steps;
My soul is bowed down;
They have dug a pit before me;
Into the midst of it they themselves have fallen.*

- (1) Note that in v. 1 David cries for mercy for a disaster over which he has no control, he is essentially helpless (sound familiar, when disasters strike you, don't you feel you have no control? Don't you have similar feelings of helplessness?)
 - (a) David compares himself to a helpless bird who seeks refuge under his mother's wings.
 - (b) He has no knowledge of how long it will take this danger to pass, but simply puts his faith in God's care for however long it will take.
- (2) In v. 2 David expresses his faith in God's power; nothing is beyond God's power—as He delivered in the past, He can deliver now (Eph. 3:20; **Heb. 11:3**: "...the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.").
- (3) In v. 3 David feels Saul's army pursuing him on every side, yet David maintains his trust in God's mercy and fidelity to care for him.
- (4) In v. 4 David expresses the ferocity of his enemies; they are like lions and sharp weapons (1 Pet. 5:8).
- (5) In v. 5 David calls on God to express His glory in delivering him.

C. In vv. 6-11 David further expresses his triumphant trust:

*6 They have prepared a net for my steps;
My soul is bowed down;
They have dug a pit before me;
Into the midst of it they themselves have fallen.
Selah*

*7 My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast;
I will sing and give praise.
8 Awake, my glory!
Awake, lute and harp!
I will awaken the dawn.*

*9 I will praise You, O Lord, among the peoples;
I will sing to You among the nations.
10 For Your mercy reaches unto the heavens,*

And Your truth unto the clouds.

I I Be exalted, O God, above the heavens;

Let Your glory be above all the earth.

- (1) In v. 6 David notes that the wicked ultimately defeat themselves (in 1 Samuel 24 we can read of Saul falling into his own trap; **1 Sam. 24:16-17**: “And Saul lifted up his voice and wept. 17 Then he said to David: ‘You are more righteous than I; for you have rewarded me with good, whereas I have rewarded you with evil.’”).
- (2) In v. 7 we can see that David’s heart is steadfastly set on God (how about us when trouble comes?).
- (3) In vv. 8-11 David sings out his praises to God for deliverance! Thankfulness! Something we must never forget!

2. **6** We Defeat Danger by Trusting God:

A. Satan is constantly planning our defeat.

- (1) Satan sent sin to destroy us (e.g., garden of Eden), God sent Christ to save us:

Rom. 5:12: “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned”

Rom. 5:21: “so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

- (2) Satan is constantly on the prowl and has many weapons at his disposal he uses in attempting to destroy our faith:

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

Eph. 6:11: “Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”

2 Cor. 2:11: Satan has many “devices”; 2 Cor. 11:3: refers to Satan’s “craftiness.”

B. Satan attacks our souls through temptation.

- ☛ Recall 1 Jn. 2:15-17? Satan is well-practice in using the three avenues to destroy our love for God:

- ☛ In such times we need to cry out like David:

Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me!

For my soul trusts in You;

And in the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge,

Until these calamities have passed by.

2 *I will cry out to God Most High,*

To God who performs all things for me.

3 *He shall send from heaven and save me;*

He reproaches the one who would swallow me up.

God shall send forth His mercy and His truth.

C. Satan attacks us by using our family and friends to try to bring us down.

- (1) All of us, to one degree or another, experience relationship problems, family problems, unfaithful family members, etc. Satan is exerting pressure on us, dragging us down, challenging our faith.

- (2) Satan uses these problems we all experience (some to a greater degree than others) to capture our souls!
- (3) When we experience these spiritual dangers we need to remember Satan is always behind it! Satan is the “adversary,” the “accuser.”

Jn. 8:44-45: *He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.”*

- (4) Despite the pain we experience at such times we must put first things first:

Matt. 10:36-39: *“and ‘a man’s enemies will be those of his own household.’ 37 He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. 38 And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. 39 He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.”*

D. Satan attacks us by using physical suffering.

- (1) Sooner or later we all experience some form of physical suffering (e.g., sickness, accident, infirmities of old age, etc.).

- (2) Satan can bear down hard on both soul and body at such times; remember Job:

Job 2:7-10: *“So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. 8 And he took for himself a potsherd with which to scrape himself while he sat in the midst of the ashes.”*

- (3) Here is Satan’s goal:

Job 2:9: *“Then his wife said to him, ‘Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!’”*

- (4) Job responded in faith and so must we!

Job 2:10: *“But he said to her, ‘You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?’ In all this Job did not sin with his lips.”*

- (5) We must put these things in perspective:

2 Cor. 4:16-17: *“Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,”*

E. Satan attacks us by using false doctrines and false religions.

- (1) False teachers and false teachers are an unfortunate fact of life:

2 Pet. 2:1: *“But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you,”*

1 Jn. 4:1: *“...many false prophets have gone out into the world.”*

Acts 20:29-30: *“For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.”*

- (2) False teachers are very deceptive because Satan is behind it all! deceiver, crafty, wiles of the devil

Matt. 7:15: *“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.”*

2 Cor. 11:13-14: *“For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.”*

- (3) If you really love the truth there can be nothing more disheartening than false teachers and false teaching (esp. when it hits close to home!).
- (4) This being the case, as Jesus said, we must always “Beware of false prophets!” (Matt. 7:15); we must prepare ourselves by knowing the Bible and summoning the courage to stand against false doctrine, regardless of where it arises!

2 Pet. 3:17-18: “You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; 18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

- (5) At such times we must apply Psalms 57.

F. Satan attacks by persecution.

- (1) Early Christians suffered terrible persecution:

Acts 5:40: “...they had called for the apostles and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus...”

Acts 8:3: “...Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison.”

Acts 12:1-2: “Now about that time Herod the king stretched out his hand to harass some from the church. 2 Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword.”

Rev. 20:4: “...Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands.”

- (2) We may never suffer persecution to the extreme degree of the early disciples, but we will suffer persecution in some form:

2 Tim. 3:12: “Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.”

- (3) Most likely the persecution from which we will suffer will be more subtle; but no less effective:

- ☛ “Why, you church of Christ people believe you’re the only one’s going to heaven!”
- ☛ “You don’t believe in evolution?! Don’t you believe in science?! Flat-earther!”
- ☛ “Only one church?! That is so arrogant and small-minded!”
- ☛ “Baptism necessary for salvation? You believe in water salvation?!”
- ☛ “You mean you really believe I can’t divorce my husband for just any old reason? Don’t you believe God wants me to be happy?!”

- (4) Through the deceptive schemes of Satan people will seek to shame us through all manner of false charges and psychological warfare.

1 Pet. 4:12-14: “Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; 13 but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. 14 If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.”

- (5) At such times we must apply Psalms 57.

G. Satan attacks by the experience of death.

- (1) Man lives in fear of death (**Heb. 2:15:** “...who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”).
- (2) Through our faith in Christ we overcome that fear: **Heb. 2:14-18**

- (3) Even though this is the case, Satan will inevitably cause us at some point(s) in life to forget this important truth (either in connection with our own mortality or the mortality of a loved one).
- (4) At such times we need to turn to God's word and be reminded of reality! Death is only temporary, victory in Christ is eternal! **I Cor. 15:51-57**

3. **7** God Delivers All Who Trust Him

"Jesus Savior, Pilot Me" (by Edward Hopper)

Jesus, Savior, pilot me,
Over life's tempestuous sea;
Unknown waves before me roll,
Hiding rock and treach'rous shoal;
Chart and compass came from Thee:
Jesus, Savior, pilot me.

8As a mother stills her child,
Thou canst hush the ocean wild;
Boist'rous waves obey Thy will
When Thou say'st to them, "Be still!"
Wondrous Sov'reign of the sea,
Jesus, Savior, pilot me.

9When at last I near the shore,
And the fearful breakers roar
'Twixt me and the peaceful rest,
Then, while leaning on Thy breast,
May I hear Thee say to me,
"Fear not, I will pilot thee."

III. CONCLUSION: 10

1. Invitation: Christ saves us from sin, our worst danger:

Rev. 20:15: *"And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire."*

Rom. 6:23: *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

Gal. 3:26-27: *"For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ."*

2. Trust him: submit to him and your worst dangers will pass!

Adapted from a sermon, "Trust God Till the Danger Passes," by Ron Halbrook.