

SHORT PSALMS

Psalm 11 - Pursuit by the Wicked

I. INTRODUCTION

This is another in the short Psalm series. We are studying the Psalms that are primarily 7 verses or less. However we may “waive” that rule from time to time as the Lord moves upon our heart to study other Psalms. We would be right in doing so, being it is the Lord's leading and it is God's World we are preaching.

This Psalm was more than likely written during the time when David was on the run from King Saul. Because of the context of verse 1, it leads us to believe it was probably written somewhere in the time frame between 1 Samuel 21 and 1 Samuel 29. This was after he had amassed a following and before the death of King Saul. This was the most troublesome time of his life.

APPLICATION: My Christian friend, are you in a low point in your life? Does it seem like you are on the run from your “enemies” and even your friends seem like they may not be on your side? Let us study this “short Psalm” and see how the Psalm encourages us to continue when everything may be against you in continuing your faith.

II. EXEGESIS – PURSUIT BY THE WICKED AND GOD'S JUSTICE

VERSES 1 – 3: THE PLIGHT OF THE RIGHTEOUS

VERSE 1: *“In the LORD put I my trust:”*

David is saying right up front and without any hesitation that he puts his total trust in the Lord. He so trusts the Lord, that he has no doubt about the abilities of God to protect or deliver him.

“...how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain? “

David was most likely talking to those men who were following him, who were close to him, and that could have been his advisers. “Fleeing as a bird to your mountain?” carries the meaning in Hebrew of getting away and escaping from trouble to where no one could get to you or even hassle you. Today's phrase that would be equivalent would be to “go and get away from it all”.

David is verbally rebuking these men for the “advice” they just gave. If he is trusting in the Lord to provide, how can he flee from his enemies? How can he flee when God is bigger than his enemies?

(Addition: The Apostle Paul asked for an “open...door of utterance”. Colossians 4:3)

APPLICATION: Do you trust in the Lord completely? Often times in life, we do not practice what we say we believe. Are we sometimes the ones giving wrong advice to our Christian brother or sister. We need to be the one to remind our Christian brother or sister that no matter how tough the trial gets, that they can trust in the Lord and they do not need to “get away from it all” to have peace and even security during the most difficult of trials.

VERSE 2: *“For, lo, the wicked bend their bow,”*

David is reminding those who were with him just how his enemy is WELL prepared. The wicked here is most likely a reference to the men of King Saul's army that are pursuing him as David is “on the lam” so to speak. Notice the emphasis on the weaponry of the wicked here. Let us see how the enemy plans to destroy David.

The expression “bend the bow” is a reference of the enemy reading their bows to shoot their arrows. They are testing their bows for proper tension and functionality. They are reading themselves to “fire” their arrows upon David.

“...they make ready their arrow upon the string,”

They are not undecided or hesitant in their intent. They are putting their arrows in their bows to fire. Notice no delay in preparing to fire.

“...that they may privily shoot at the upright in heart.”

The words “privily shoot” carry in the Hebrew language the meaning “with secrecy or obscurity” They were probably shooting at David from an obscure or secret location from David's perspective as to not get caught and killed by David's and/or his men. This was a common technique used in combat in ancient times. If they were shooting an arrow from a bow in the open they could come under attack before or after shooting an arrow. They could be even killed before firing the first arrow while still in preparation to shoot themselves.

APPLICATION: The wicked often attack Christians “privily”. They often attack in disguise as something else and/or without warning. The best kind of enemy attack upon the Christian is a “sneak attack” when his defenses could be down or weak. This principle is true in most attacks by Satan and/or his demonic forces. These attacks are often unseen and not forewarned as well. These attacks cannot be postponed or called off. They are going to come and need to be on guard for them. Ephesians 6:11 tells us how to prepare for the attacks of the wicked.

Ephesians 6:11 - “Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”

VERSE 3: “If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?”

The word “foundations” make reference here in the foundation of law and government upon which government must rest, or specifically legitimate government. Because of the pursuit of King Saul, the legitimate government at that time, David is expressing his despair of having no one on this earth, at that moment, that he could turn to for assistance or relief from his being mistreated at the hands of King Saul.

APPLICATION: You may not always be able to turn to man's legal system or authority for help when in trouble. That is the time to trust God even more!!

VERSES 4 – 5: THE PERFECT OBSERVATION BY GOD

VERSE 4: “The LORD *is* in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne *is* in heaven...:”

We see here where God is during these times of attack by the enemy. He is **STILL** on his throne in Heaven, and has not abdicated his power or he ever will abdicate his power. The Jewish temple is a pictorial description of Heaven and his throne is forever located there. God position and power remain unchanged.

“...his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.:”

The words, “eyelids” is a description used in Hebrew to describe the penetrating gaze of God upon the affairs of men. This description is the same attributes that the penetrating gaze of the eyes of our Lord Jesus that are given in Revelation 1: 14.

Revelation 1:14 - “...and his eyes were as a flame of fire;”

The eyes of God penetrate through the flesh to the very inside of man and reveal man's true feelings and intentions. Nothing is hidden that God cannot see.

APPLICATION: The wicked cannot hide their sin from God. If we as Christians disobey or misbehave as his children, we cannot hide from the penetrating gaze of the Lord Jesus either.

VERSE 5: “The LORD trieth the righteous...:”

God allows trials to come into the lives of those who are truly are born again into God's family. These are those who are truly righteous. Parents of earthly children sometime allow their children to experience unpleasant things in order for them to know not to do them again. Likewise our perfect heavenly Father, allows things to happen to us to teach us to trust in him even more.

“...but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.”

Notice here that God specifically mentions “him that loveth violence”. God, because of the sins of the wicked, hates the sinner in his fallen condition. You have two categories of those that God despises. The wicked here are those who knowing of the grace of God, have openly rejected his grace and now are so far removed from God. Then you have those who have gone away from God so far and so long that enjoy the prospect and even participation in violence. God despises both groups.

APPLICATION: God allows trials to come. They often come in forms of attacks by the wicked but can come in many different forms. God despises those who reject him and even further despises those who have become vile in their wickedness.

VERSES 6: THE PUNISHMENT OF GOD FULFILLED

VERSE 6: “Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest:”

Now we see the specifics of the judgment of God upon the wicked. Notice it often does not come right away but may take a while from our perspective, but it is sure to come. Notice what he rains, or brings upon, the wicked:

- **Snares** – God will set traps to catch the wicked, often in their own devices or plans.
- **Fire and Brimstone** – A reference to the judgment that God brought down Sodom and Gomorrah. That judgment was total and complete, of which no one survived.
- **Horrible Tempest** – A strong wind that sweeps away everything in its path.

“...this shall be the portion of their cup.”

The word “portion” carries the meaning of allotment or share. This is God's portion that he has planned for the wicked who reject his grace and then go after his children with vicious attacks. Portion also carries the meaning of the judgment being full and complete. When God's judgment comes, often delayed from our perspective but perfect in his time, it will be full and complete, without leaving out anything.

APPLICATION: If one accepts the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, they are no longer part of this group who hates God. They have God's promise of eternity that he will keep. They will never have to worry about his judgment. That took place for the redeemed upon the cross. The Lord Jesus took that punishment upon himself.

VERSE 7: THE PROVISION OF THE RIGHTEOUS

VERSE 7: "For the righteous LORD loveth righteousness;"

We see here the love for the righteous. The righteous are again those are born again children of God. We see here that God LOVES them in contrast to the HATE he has for the wicked.

"...his countenance doth behold the upright."

The word "countenance" carries the meaning of the look on one's face or his facial expression. God expression on his face is with great pleasure and satisfaction with those who are "upright" or are straight in the sight of God. God is going to provide for the needs of the righteousness.

Who are the righteous here? They were those who have done like Abraham.

Romans 4:3: For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

The rest of Romans 4, deals with how Abraham was justified by faith and the Apostle Paul here is quoting Genesis 15:6. Therefore we know that Abraham's justification and therefore anyone who was justified in the Old Testament was justified by faith in the

APPLICATION: God can only be pleased with the righteous. He is never pleased with the wicked in their unregenerate state. Once the righteousness of Christ is imputed through accepting Christ as Saviour, it is as if the Christian has never sinned and God is pleased with the status of the upright.

Romans 4:24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;

Romans 3:25-26: (25) Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;
(26) To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

The word "propitiation" carries the meaning of a covering or an atoning victim. The Lord Jesus sacrifice on the cross was the covering for our sins, just like the sacrifice made by the Jewish high priest once a year. He would sprinkle the blood of that sacrifice on the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant and the sins of the nation of Israel were atoned for one year. Likewise the blood of the Lord Jesus sprinkled on us covers our sins and it is as though we have never sinned.

III. CONCLUSION

- 1. Do we trust in God when the trials of life get difficult? Do we trust him COMPLETELY?**
- 2. The attacks of the wicked will come, and often if not mostly come with secrecy and/or subtlety.**
- 3. God knows the hearts of the men and nothing is hidden from his piercing gaze. God tests men's hearts to see if they will accept him or reject him.**
- 4. God hates the wicked and will bring judgment in his own time to the wicked. His judgment of them will be complete and full.**
- 5. God however will provide redemption to those who have accepted him and is pleased with their regenerated condition.**
- 6. In which group are you: The WICKED or the UPRIGHT?**