

The Hounded Man

Jesus in the Psalms

Psalm 59

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I. All the Nations Blessed in Abraham (Gen 18:16-21)

¹⁷And the LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing, ¹⁸since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? ¹⁹For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him." ²⁰And the LORD said, "Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave, ²¹I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, I will know."

God gives Abraham a lesson in _____. What do *just judges* do? They evaluate the truth of accusations; they don't act on hearsay. So why was it important for Abraham to understand such a thing? Because God intended to bless Abraham and to make of him *a great nation*, a just nation, and then to use that nation, Israel, to bless *all the nations of the earth*. So how would this promise be fulfilled? By Abraham teaching his children to *practice righteousness and _____ in the fear of God*.

II. The Hounded Man

A. Title (cf. 1 Sam 19)

B. First Stanza: Deliver the Innocent from Bloodthirsty Rulers (1-5)

¹Deliver me from my enemies, O my God; [Set me on high] from those who rise up against me. ²Deliver me from the workers of iniquity, And save me from bloodthirsty men. ³For look, they lie in wait for my life; The mighty gather against me, Not for my transgression nor for my sin, O LORD. ⁴They run and prepare themselves through no fault of mine. Awake to help me, and behold! ⁵You therefore, O LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel, Awake to punish all the nations; Do not be merciful to any wicked transgressors. Selah

C. Second Stanza: Judge these Vicious Dogs to Advance Your Reign (6-13)

⁶At evening they return, They growl like a dog, And go all around the city. ⁷Indeed, they belch with their mouth; Swords are in their lips; For they say, "Who hears?" ⁸But You, O LORD, shall laugh at them; You shall have all the nations in derision. ⁹I will wait for You, O You [my] Strength; For God is my defense. ¹⁰My God of mercy shall come to meet me; God shall let me see my desire on my enemies. ¹¹Do not slay them, lest my people forget; Scatter them by Your power, And bring them down, O Lord our shield. ¹²For the sin of their mouth and the words of their lips, Let them even be taken in their pride, And for the cursing and lying which they speak. ¹³Consume them in wrath, consume them, That they may not be; And let them know that God rules in Jacob To the ends of the earth. Selah

In the story in 1 Samuel 19, David's faith is rewarded. God uses both human means and supernatural means to rescue David from his enemies. First, God uses Michal's stratagems to deliver David from the captors who were watching his house. Second, God disarms the delegations sent to apprehend David, including Saul himself, by casting them into ecstatic visions.

D. Final Stanza: While the Wicked Plot, the Righteous Sing (14-17)

¹⁴And at evening they return, They growl like a dog, And go all around the city. ¹⁵They wander up and down for food, And howl if they are not satisfied. ¹⁶But I will sing of Your power; Yes, I will sing aloud of Your mercy in the morning; For You have been my defense And refuge in the day of my trouble. ¹⁷To You, O my Strength, I will sing praises; For God is my defense, My God of mercy.

III. What ought we to do when hounded by God's enemies?

A. Rest in the Sovereignty of God (cf. Ps 2:1-4)

If we face persecution for the faith, then how ought we to respond? What does faith look like in such dire straits? First, faith rests in the Sovereignty of God. As formidable as the power of the wicked often is (3b), God is more powerful still. God _____ at the plots of the wicked: *"But You, O Lord, shall laugh at them; You shall have all the nations in derision"* (8).

¹Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? ²The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, ³"Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us." ⁴He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The LORD shall hold them in derision. (Ps 2:1-4)

God's purposes are not thwarted by the plots of the wicked; God's power is not threatened by the plots of the wicked; therefore, God's people need not fear the plots of the wicked. Allen Ross writes:

David's prayer "encompasses all the nations of the world who think they can attack and destroy the righteous with impunity. And while the crisis is serious for the saints, for God it is ridiculous folly. He is the Sovereign Lord of creation and history; his response to the actions of little humans is to look on them with ridicule. This does not minimize the threat to the saints; but it puts it in proper perspective. Such crises are not threatening to God." (Ross, 322)

B. Rest in the Mercy of God

David also rests in God's mercy, His compassionate care directed toward those who are _____. Who is God? He is *"my God of mercy"* (10a, 17c). God's mercy is a source of personal comfort to David. God is with him and shall rescue him: *"My God of mercy shall come to meet me"* (10a). So David promises to praise God for His mercy: *"Yes, I will sing aloud of Your mercy in the morning"* (16b).

So when God meets David in His mercy, how will God's mercy manifest itself? God's *mercy* reveals itself in God's _____ on the wicked: *"God shall let me see my desire on my enemies"* (10b). *Mercy* and *judgment* work in harmony. How does God *show mercy to the innocent*? By *judging the _____* (5c).

God's judgments on the unjust serve a merciful purpose not only for the innocent but also for the _____. David wants God to judge the guilty *in wrath* (13a) so that men might *"know that God rules in Jacob to the ends of the earth"* (13c-d).

C. Sing the Praises of God (cf. 1 Pet 3:13-17)

Finally, David commits to praise God. He does not permit the growls of the wicked to turn him away from praising God. David remains faithful to God. *"Not for my transgression nor for my sin, O Lord. They run and prepare themselves through no fault of mine"* (3c,4a). If this was true of David, how much more was it true of our Lord Jesus? So Jesus sings to us in this psalm and reminds us to continue singing God's praises when suffering unjustly. Remember Peter's admonition:

¹³And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? ¹⁴But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. "And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled." ¹⁵But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; ¹⁶having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. ¹⁷For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. (1 Pet 3:13-17)

Peter reminds us that it is far better to suffer _____ than to suffer _____. For to suffer when innocent is to walk in the footsteps of our Lord. So if you *should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed* (14).

IV. Conclusion