

The Threatened Man

Jesus in the Psalms

Psalm 64

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I. Knox Presbytery

II. The Threatened Man

A. Title and Setting

B. Plea for Help against the Threats of the Wicked (1-6)

¹Hear my voice, O God, in my meditation; Preserve my life from fear of the enemy. ²Hide me from the secret plots of the wicked, From the rebellion of the workers of iniquity, ³Who sharpen their tongue like a sword, And bend their bows to shoot their arrows—bitter words, ⁴That they may shoot in secret at the blameless; Suddenly they shoot at him and do not fear. ⁵They encourage themselves in an evil matter; They talk of laying snares secretly; They say, “Who will see them?” ⁶They devise iniquities: “We have perfected a shrewd scheme.” Both the inward thought and the heart of man are deep.

David is facing evil men who want to destroy him. So he takes himself to God, takes his internal fears to God, and prays that God would rescue him. So who are these enemies? David describes them as “wicked” and “workers of iniquity” (2). Then in verses 3-6 he describes their wickedness.

C. Expectation of Vindication for the Upright (7-10)

⁷But God shall shoot at them with an arrow; Suddenly they shall be wounded. ⁸So He will make them stumble over their own tongue; All who see them shall flee away. ⁹All men shall fear, And shall declare the work of God; For they shall wisely consider His doing. ¹⁰The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and trust in Him. And all the upright in heart shall glory.

God shall turn their arrows against the wicked and end their schemes. This judgment has an evangelistic purpose. As Solomon once remarked, “Strike a scoffer, and the simple will become wary” (Prov 19:25a). So here, when God vindicates the truth and overthrows the schemes of the wicked, all *who see them shall flee away* from such wickedness (8b), *fear* God (9a), and *declare* the wonder of His *works* (9b). In addition, the righteous will be confirmed in their faith.

III. Dealing with Threats

A. Petition God (Gen 32:9-12; Ps 140; Lk 18:1-8)

First, David teaches us to cry out to God for deliverance. God is not distant. When we are suffering, God delights to hear our prayer and to answer our cry. David teaches us to be like the importunate widow, who troubled the unjust judge until he acted on her behalf (Lk 18).

⁶Then the Lord said, “Hear what the unjust judge said. ⁷And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? ⁸I tell you that He will avenge them speedily...”

God loves His people and, though He bears long with them, He shall avenge us in time. God hears His people when they pray. So, worry less and pray more; fear less and pray more.

B. Act Wisely

1. Be innocent of wrongdoing (4a, 10 cf. 1 Pet 2:19-21)

First, to act wisely is to be *blameless, righteous, and upright of heart*. “For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps” (1 Pet 2:19-21).

2. Assess the situation honestly (Prov 22:3; 27:12; Mt 2:13-23)

Second, to act wisely is to *assess the situation honestly*. David candidly describes the schemes and plots of his enemies. There are two ways to err in this regard. First, we can take words more _____ than we ought. Solomon warns us, “Also do not take to heart everything people say, lest you hear your servant cursing you. For many times, also, your own heart has known that even you have cursed others” (Eccl 7:21-22). Don’t blow things out of proportion. Second, we can be _____ and foolish and fail to heed the warning signs that God has given us. “A prudent man foresees evil and hides himself, But the simple pass on and are punished” (Prov 22:3). A wise man keeps his eyes open.

C. Do not be afraid but trust God (Is 8:11-20; Mt 5:10-12; 10:24-39; 1 Pet 3:8-17)

David teaches us to rest in the knowledge that God is just, that He will bring the evil words and evil actions of evil men back on their own heads, and that He will do so in such a way as to cause unbelievers to come to faith and His people to rejoice. Do not fear. Heed the words of Jesus (Mt 10):

²⁴A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. ²⁵It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call those of his household! ²⁶Therefore do not fear them. For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known. ²⁷Whatever I tell you in the dark, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops. ²⁸And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father’s will. ³⁰But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. ³²Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. ³³But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven. ³⁴Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. ³⁵For I have come to ‘set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law’; ³⁶and ‘a man’s enemies will be those of his own household.’ ³⁷He 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. ³⁸And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁹He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.

Peter writes similarly (1 Pet 3):

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.

IV. Conclusion (Phil 4:6-8)