

Sunday Night Message

February 2, 2014

Psalm 54

Series – The Psalms

Text – Psalm 54

Introduction

"To the chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil, A Psalm of David, when the Ziphims came and said to Saul, Doth not David hide himself with us?"

"Neginoth" - Neginoth – most likely means stringed instruments. We have seen this word already in Psalm 4 and 6. Here and in most other psalms the word is transliterated.

In Habakkuk 3:19, the word, Neginoth is not transliterated; but is rather translated into the phrase "stringed instruments":

"The LORD God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places. To the chief singer on my stringed instruments." – (Habakkuk 3:19)

It is also translated into the words "song" in Job 30:9, Psalms 69:12, Psalm 77:6, Isaiah 38:20, Lamentation 3:14. It is translated into the word "musick" in Lamentations 5:14.

"Maschil" – We have seen this word 6 times previously, and will see it again 6 more times for a total of 13 times, always in the introductory material in various Psalms. It is defined as a poem or song of contemplation. It comes from a root word that means to ponder or consider. Some have said that these Psalms are particularly intended to give instruction.

Context of the Psalm – Turn to 1 Samuel 23:19 – 29; 1 Samuel 26

The Ziphites lived about 15 miles southeast of Hebron, which would later become David's capitol city. Twice they had betrayed the location of David to King Saul who was trying to kill him, and twice the Lord delivered David out of Saul's hand.

Preaching Point - Your enemies cannot do a thing to you unless God allows them to.

I David's Prayer (vs. 1 – 3)

Save me, O God, by thy name, and judge me by thy strength." (Psalms 54:1)

"Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth." (Psalms 54:2)

"For strangers are risen up against me, and oppressors seek after my soul: they have not set God before them. Selah." (Psalms 54:3)

Notice that David is a namedropper – He reminds God of his own name.

*"And he hewed two tables of stone like unto the first; and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone. And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation. And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped."
(Exodus 34:4-8)*

“By your name” means “on the basis of your character,” especially His strength (v. 1) and faithfulness (v. 5). David promised to praise God’s name after the great victory (v. 6). He used three different names of God in this brief psalm: Elohim (vv. 1, 2, 3, 4), Adonai (Lord, v. 4), and Jehovah (LORD, v. 6).¹

I have been reminding God a lot lately of His promises while I am praying. I think God is pleased when we are trusting in what He has said.

Notice – “strangers” in v. 3 – doesn’t mean Gentiles. The Ziphites actually belonged to David’s own tribe of Judah. The word “strangers” has to do with their turning their back on David. They were estranged from David. These people had ignored the will of God, and had sided with Saul.

¹ Wiersbe, W. W. (2004). *Be worshipful* (1st ed., p. 192). Colorado Springs, CO: Cook Communications Ministries.

Notice the phrase “they have not set God before them”. Contrast these “strangers” with David.

"I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved." (Psalms 16:8)

These Ziphites are like the guys we talked about in Psalm 14 and Psalm 53 – “no God”.

II David’s Promise (vs. 4 - 5)

"Behold, God is mine helper: the Lord is with them that uphold my soul." (Psalms 54:4)

"He shall reward evil unto mine enemies: cut them off in thy truth." (Psalms 54:5)

Notice “with them that uphold my soul” – It is interesting that David was encouraged by somebody right around the time that the Ziphites turned on him.

"And David abode in the wilderness in strong holds, and remained in a mountain in the wilderness of Ziph. And Saul sought him every day, but God delivered him not into his hand. And David saw that Saul was come out to seek his life: and David was in the wilderness of Ziph in a wood. And Jonathan Saul's son arose, and went to David into the wood, and strengthened his hand in God. And he said unto him, Fear not: for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee; and that also Saul my father knoweth. And they two made a covenant before the LORD: and David abode in the wood, and Jonathan went to his house." (1 Samuel 23:14-18)

Jonathon was an encourager to David – he upheld his soul, like Aaron and Hur held up the arms of Moses. It is very encouraging, very strengthening to have people around that will encourage you. Barnabas was an encourager to Paul, and later to John Mark.

Notice also the boldness of David – encouragement will bring confidence.

David knew that he was basically invincible as long as he stayed inside the will of God. God had made some promises to him. He had told him that he was going to sit on the throne of Israel. David knew that was going to happen, and there wasn’t anything Saul or the Ziphites could do about it. David was very bold because he knew that God was with him.

*"The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion."
(Proverbs 28:1 KJV)*

Paul was also very bold, because he knew that he was perfectly in the center of God's will.

Peter and John were also very bold:

"Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." (Acts 4:13)

III David's Praise (vs. 6 - 7)

*"I will freely sacrifice unto thee: I will praise thy name, O LORD; for it is good."
(Psalms 54:6)*

*"For he hath delivered me out of all trouble: and mine eye hath seen his desire
upon mine enemies." (Psalms 54:7)*

Whether we ever see the victory in our lifetime or no, we know that we have the victory. God will bring everything to pass in His time. You can take that to the bank.