

Sunday Night Message

March 23, 2014

Psalm 59

Series – The Psalms

Text – Psalm 59 (Read the text entirely before praying)

Introduction

"To the chief Musician, Altaschith, Michtam of David; when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him."

"Altaschith" – [אַל־תִּשְׁחַת] - *'Al tashcheth (Aramaic)* – literally means "do not destroy. This word is found only here and in Psalms 58, 59, and 75.

"Michtam" – of uncertain meaning. It could mean "a poem". This is one of several Psalms that are said to be Michtams. (Psalms 16; 56 – 60) Martin Luther called it a golden jewel Psalm. J. Vernon McGee says the word means "engraved", speaking of that which is durable, lasting, and unmoveable.

This is another imprecatory psalm, calling for judgment upon David's enemies. (see also Psalm 5,6,7,35, &58)

Notice that this psalm penned regarding a painful period of David's life was written to the "chief musician".

Preaching Point – God may have to allow pain in your life to produce music for others.

Spurgeon points out that this psalm written in the context of David's problems with Saul was used of God to be part of the Songbook of Israel.

For the context of this psalm, see 1 Samuel 19:1 – 18.

The context of this psalm comes chronologically before Psalm 56 and 57, and probably also before Psalm 58.

Prophetic Picture

This psalm regards literal events in David's life in the immediate context of his time on earth, but it also points to the time when God's people will be running

and hiding from Satan and His minister, the Anti-Christ during the future period of the Great Tribulation.

I want you to notice that David faced the opposition of King Saul for many years. God didn't deliver him from Saul right away, yet David remained faithful to God while awaiting the fulfillment of His promise. Abraham also waited for twenty years for God to fulfill His promise to him.

Preaching Point – Don't expect immediate results

We live in the day of instant gratification, instant wealth, and instant success. God doesn't work in our immediate timeframe. He takes years, even decades to work His plans in and through us. Don't give up so quickly. Be faithful to what God has called you to do:

"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." (Galatians 6:9)

Prevailing Pattern

This psalm follows a somewhat familiar pattern as other imprecatory psalms in that it includes the following elements:

- 1 There is a Problem Identified.**
- 2 There is a Prayer Request Made.**
- 3 There is Persistence in Faith.**
- 4 There is an Offering of Praise.**

Instead of breaking down the chapter into divisions, we just recognize these elements as they repeat themselves throughout the psalm.

"Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God: defend me from them that rise up against me." (Psalms 59:1)

Enemies - King Saul and others within his kingdom that were threatened by the obvious hand of God upon David.

"Deliver me from the workers of iniquity, and save me from bloody men." (Psalms 59:2)

Notice here that David calls Saul and his men workers of iniquity, so they were not just David's enemies, they were also enemies of God.

"For, lo, they lie in wait for my soul: the mighty are gathered against me; not for my transgression, nor for my sin, O LORD." (Psalms 59:3)

Notice here that David declares his innocence.

"They run and prepare themselves without my fault: awake to help me, and behold." (Psalms 59:4)

David is not stating here that he is sinless, or innocent before God, but he is claiming to be innocent of trying to usurp Saul's reign as king. David did nothing but help Saul.

We also have an enemy who is seeking to sift us like wheat. Satan would love to destroy us, devour us, and we did nothing to him except reject his kingdom in favor of God's; and now we remind him of God. He sees God in us, and he hates us for it.

Preaching Point – Don't be surprised when the devil's crowd hates you.

"Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets." (Luke 6:26)

"Thou therefore, O LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel, awake to visit all the heathen: be not merciful to any wicked transgressors. Selah." (Psalms 59:5)

David addressed Him as Jehovah (the God of the covenant), the Lord of Hosts (armies), and the God of Israel. David was Israel's anointed king and a son of the covenant God made with His people, so he had every right to seek God's help. Jehovah is the Lord of the Armies (Lord Sabaoth) and can defeat anyone who challenges His will. Since Saul and his men were the immediate problem, to whom was David referring when he spoke of "the nations" (vv. 5 and 8)? The nations around Israel were usually poised and ready to attack their old foe, and Saul's mismanagement of the kingdom would make such a move even easier. He was so obsessed with destroying David that he neglected his duties as king and made the nation vulnerable. But David was God's anointed king, and Saul's attacks were exactly what the Gentile nations would do if they could. Unlike Saul, David understood the unique position of Israel

among the nations and sought to maintain it (Gen. 12:1-3; Num. 23:9; 24:8-9).¹

Notice that David is asking God to “awake”. (see also Psalm 7:6) He knows that God is not asleep, but he wants Him to be alert to what is going on in David’s life. Sometimes it seems as if God is not there, or that he doesn’t care. You must not listen to that voice in your head. Take God at His word. He says that He is fully aware, and that He cares very deeply. Trust Him – He knows what He is doing.

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." (1 Peter 5:7)

"They return at evening: they make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city." (Psalms 59:6)

Saul had sent out search parties trying to find David.

"Behold, they belch out with their mouth: swords are in their lips: for who, say they, doth hear?" (Psalms 59:7)

Who is going to hear? God hears.

"But thou, O LORD, shalt laugh at them; thou shalt have all the heathen in derision." (Psalms 59:8)

The word “heathen” here again as in v. 5 refers to the Gentiles, but Saul’s actions are working against Israel, just as if the nation was under attack by one of the heathen nations.

“thou shalt have all the heathen in derision” – see Psalm 2:1 - 5

"Because of his strength will I wait upon thee: for God is my defence." (Psalms 59:9)

Notice here David’s declaration of dependence upon God. (also v. 17)

Preaching Point – We need to declare our dependence upon God.

The world, the flesh, and the devil are too strong for us to tackle by ourselves; but greater is He that is in us, than he that is in the world; and through Christ,

¹ Wiersbe, W. W. (2004). *Be worshipful* (1st ed., pp. 204–205). Colorado Springs, CO: Cook Communications Ministries.

we are more than conquerors. But in our own strength, we will fail miserably every time.

"The God of my mercy shall prevent me: God shall let me see my desire upon mine enemies." (Psalms 59:10)

"prevent me" – in the Bible that means go before me, meaning God goes before us as we fight against His enemies.

"Slay them not, lest my people forget: scatter them by thy power; and bring them down, O Lord our shield." (Psalms 59:11)

David didn't want Saul and his men destroyed utterly in a moment. He wanted God to gradually remove his influence upon the people, and slowly unravel Saul's kingdom.

Notice that David was expecting God to go before him and fight the battle for him.

We need to let God fight our battles as well. You don't need to defend yourself. David never defended himself against Saul. He did defend the nation from its enemies, but never did anything but evade Saul. God took care of Saul, however.

"For the sin of their mouth and the words of their lips let them even be taken in their pride: and for cursing and lying which they speak." (Psalms 59:12)

Saul had completely rejected God's will. His pride caused him to elevate himself, just as Satan had done. David wanted to see Saul go down.

"Consume them in wrath, consume them, that they may not be: and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth. Selah." (Psalms 59:13)

This was David's ultimate goal in life – let the people know that God rules.

"And at evening let them return; and let them make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city." (Psalms 59:14)

David repeats what he said in v. 6. It is almost as if he were saying, "let them do what they will".

"Let them wander up and down for meat, and grudge if they be not satisfied." (Psalms 59:15)

The enemies of God will have their short time on this earth, but someday, God will execute his judgment.

"But I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble." (Psalms 59:16)

David declares his trust in the Lord.

"Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing: for God is my defence, and the God of my mercy." (Psalms 59:17)

Notice that David sings before the deliverance comes. His faith caused him to know the victory would be there. He trusted that God would do what he had promised.