

Psalm 11

by Carl Armerding

The psalmist's question of how to escape the difficulties of life is answered by the truth of the high priesthood of Jesus, who can be touched with our infirmities and give us sympathy.

Duration: 39:45

Scripture: Hebrews 4:14-15, Hebrews 7:26, Hebrews 9:11, Hebrews 10:21

Topics: "Psalms"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the question of what the righteous can do when the foundations of society are destroyed. He emphasizes the importance of finding escape and refuge in the Lord, rather than seeking worldly solutions. The speaker highlights the role of Jesus as the great high priest who offers hope and salvation to believers. He also discusses the erosion of political and moral foundations in society, expressing concern over the decisions made by the Supreme Court and the behavior of legislative members.

Transcript

Teaching the Lord, yet early in the evening, Wanderers on the mountains away, Come unto me, yet early in the evening, Where comest thou, Master, speaking today? Going afar, How can I go on, Failing from mercy, Following Christ from death? Truly it is wonderful when we seek the lost, when we point them to the Lord Jesus Christ, and they find out that their sins can be blotted out. The next hymn we are going to sing is, My Sins Are Blotted Out, I Know. I hope that each one here this evening knows that your sins are blotted out.

My Sins Are Blotted Out Are we turning our hymn book to number 90? My Sins Are Blotted Out Our speaker for this evening, Dr. Armady. For our meditation this evening, I'm asking you to turn again to the book of Psalms, and tonight we'll take a look at Psalm 11. Psalm 11.

Notice the title is one we have really considered before. Chief Musician, Psalm of David. I think we've said enough about that too.

Skip over it this evening. In the Lord that I might trust, I'll say to my soul, Flee as a bird through your mountains. Below the wicked bend their bow, They make ready their arrow from the string, That they may privily or in darkness Shoot at the upright in heart.

If the foundations be destroyed, What can the righteous do? The Lord is in his holy temple, The Lord grown is in heaven. His eyelids behold, his eyelids cry, The children of men. The Lord crieth the righteous, But the wicked in him that loveth violence His whole soul hateth.

Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, Fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest. This shall be the portion of their cup. For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness, His countenance doth behold the upright.

There are two questions in this psalm which I want to use as sort of a starting point tonight. The one is used by the psalmist himself when he says, How say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountains. The second question is found in the third verse, If the foundations be destroyed, What can the righteous do? The first question I think is one which might well be asked by many people today, especially when we find under the pressure of life such as we live it in these days, that people keep suggesting some sort of an escape.

And some find their escape in one way, and some find it in another. And you get all kinds of advice as to how to escape some of the difficulties and maybe the realities of life. Some of course do this very nicely by giving more time to meditation over the word of God, or meeting together as we're meeting here in this conference.

For I can't conceive of a better way for one to get away from the things which press upon us throughout our daily lives and come together as we have this week to consider the word of God, to have fellowship with each other, and to learn to know our Lord better. But then there are others again who think they need something besides this. And so we find them indulging in all sorts of things, and using tranquilizers, and some even going so far as to use some of these hallucinatory drugs such as LSD, and what not.

All of this is an attempt to get away from reality. And here the psalmist is faced with exactly that kind of a question. Why don't you get away from it all? Why don't you flee as a bird to your mountain? But you'll notice he puts down in the first verse the big reason why he doesn't.

He says, And if I were to give you the very literal translation of that, it would go like this. I've already found a place of retreat, you see. And this is something that every true child of God can say.

He can say, And he's sufficient. No matter how hard the lot may be, how tough the going may be. Yes, he's sufficient.

And this is the psalmist's answer to the question. Well, but somebody says, yes, but you know we're constantly being aimed at by the enemy. That's true, the psalmist knows that.

He says that in the second verse here when he says, Yes, each and every one of us as a child of God becomes a target of the enemy. You're made to realize that almost from the first hour of your conversion. That the enemy is out to get you.

He's a coward, he stands in darkness to do it. But he's out to get you. And the psalmist is fully aware of that here.

That is, if he is saying these words. For it may be that those who already said, why don't you get away from it all, because don't you know that the enemy is really out to get you? He is. But you know, to be forewarned is to be forearmed.

And we have plenty of warnings, especially in the New Testament, concerning our archenemy, the devil. And not only the devil, but the world itself. Saint Paul tells us we're not ignorant of Satan's devices.

We're not ignorant of his methods. We're not ignorant of the way in which he proceeds to undo the life and work of a Christian. And Peter tells us he goes about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

So we're aware of these things. And to be aware of them is to be forearmed in a way. Because you don't go around with your head in the clouds and say, well, everything's all right, I just can't be tripped up.

That's the kind of a person it usually is. But the person who's on the alert, who knows that he's got enemies to face, and goes into the presence of the Lord to be forearmed and protected against this very thing. But in the second question, which is raised in the third verse, we get something which I think is even much more serious.

Because here the question is raised, if the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do? Now notice, please, that the word foundations is in the plural. In the singular, referring to our blessed Lord and Savior, as we have it in 1 Corinthians, brother foundation can no man lay, and that is laid, which is Jesus Christ, that foundation can never be destroyed. What then do these foundations, what do they speak of? Well, it has been suggested, and I agree with the suggestion, that these refer to those great fundamental things in our lives, such as, shall I say, the whole structure rests upon.

The foundation of family life, for example, how that has been destroyed in a day like this hasn't. I couldn't help but think, as we were consulting with the group of candidates for the Central American Mission, I might explain here that I am connected with the Central American Mission, which was founded by Dr. C.I. Schofield some 77 years ago, and which operates in Mexico and Central America, all the republics including Panama. There are some 275 to 300 missionaries connected with this mission, and about that same number of national workers, and it's been my delight to be associated with this type of work.

But each year we have a candidate school when young people who have been approached in the cities in which they live come together in Dallas for a time of orientation, and also for examination, to pass an examination, shall I say, by the executive council, of which I happen to be a member, and in this way to see whether they're really the Lord's chosen ones to go forth into the mission field. This year we had 17, and the biggest surprise I got, as I think of that lot of 17 people, there were six couples making 12, and then there were five single people. Practically all of them, with I think one or two exceptions, came out of broken homes.

To me this was astounding, because most of our missionary material has come from people who had strong Christian backgrounds. But here we had these almost 17 young people, young couples, telling us that they'd come out of broken homes. This is a sad state of affairs.

To me, of course, it was a matter of deep thankfulness to God that these young people had triumphed over that very thing, and were now out to give their lives for service on the mission field in South America and Mexico. But think of this. This is just a little bit of it.

Then we think of other things in which the foundations have been destroyed. Take our educational system, for example. When we think of what damage has been done to our educational system, and having been in this work for some years, I have watched this thing at close range to see how the philosophy of men like John Dewey and others have destroyed the very fundamentals of our educational

work in America.

Of course, somebody will say, yes, but you're a schoolteacher of five gone days, yes, but you know, schoolteachers never die, they just fail to make the grade. We believe that there's still place for these old standards, but they've been destroyed. Take the political foundation of our country.

As we read over the Declaration of Independence, we read the Constitution, we say these are tremendous documents, and yet how we have seen, through one decision after another by the Supreme Court of the United States, these things being undermined. Not only that, but members of our legislative bodies actually standing up as sinful men. These things give me pause as an American.

Yes, they do. The foundations destroyed. Then there's another way in which this word foundations could have been translated, because elsewhere in the Old Testament, the same Hebrew word is used for leaders.

If the leaders be destroyed, and how the devil has aimed at these leaders among God's servants, men who have gone on sometimes for years in the Lord's work, and then suddenly something happens. At least it appears to happen suddenly, but none of these things actually happen suddenly. There's always something that leads up to them.

Sometimes when you hear about all these things that I've been mentioning tonight, you say, well now, what can you do about it? What can you do about it? If the foundations, if the leaders be destroyed, what can the righteous do? Well, I'm thankful that the psalm gives us the answer. You'll notice please in verse four, and here's a real change in the tone of the whole psalm. Here we get a wonderful truth in this fourth verse.

It says the Lord is in his holy temple. That means, of course, that he's operating there as a priest. The Lord's throne is in heaven.

That speaks of his royalty, of his kingship. And as we were hearing from our beloved colleague this week, Dr. Thetford, bringing before us some of those things in the book of Zechariah, he shall be a priest upon his throne. Our Lord Jesus did not come of the tribe of Levi, therefore he could not be a priest after the Aaronic order.

But he's a priest after the order of Melchizedek, the man of whom you read so much in the seventh chapter of the epistles of the Hebrews. Some people actually think that Melchizedek wasn't a real person. But he certainly was.

We get notice of him first in the 14th chapter of the book of Genesis. When Abraham returned from the slaughter of the kings after he went to recover his nephew Lot and all his household, you remember that Melchizedek went out to meet him with bread and wine. And Abraham gave to him tithes of all.

Yes, he was a real individual. As I speak of this, I'm reminded of an incident that took place in Memphis. I was ministering the word there and staying at a hotel, the lovely Peabody.

And one morning, they knocked at my door while I was working on my book. I said, come. And the maid opened the door, and when she saw me, she said, excuse me, sir.

And back out, I said, come right along. I said, I'm going to be here a long time. You better come in and do your work.

So she did. She came in and did her work, cleaning up the room, fixing the bed, rearranging the bathroom. And I wondered if she had left the room.

Suddenly, though, I didn't hear her sound anymore. There she was standing with her bucket and so on, standing there waiting. I said, is there anything I can do for you? She said, please, sir.

She said, you look like you're the minister of the word of God. I said, yes. I was glad to hear her using that expression, the word of God.

She saw my open Bible. She said, may I ask you a question, sir? I said, what would be, what question? Well, she said, yesterday, our ministry, he preached us a sermon about Melchizedek. And she said, I was all mixed up.

I don't know whether Melchizedek was Jesus or whether he wasn't. So I said, well, now let's see what the Bible says about it. And if you keep your bookmark here, Psalm 11.

Let's turn to Hebrews 7 for a moment. Seventh chapter of Hebrews. And I did this with this, dear soul.

We opened up here. Again, back with Melchizedek in the first verse. For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being by interpretation king of righteousness.

That's Melchizedek, that's the meaning of it. And after that, king of Salem, which is king of peace. Without father, without mother, without descent or genealogy.

This doesn't mean that he didn't have them, but their names were not recorded for us. I mean, either beginning of days or end of life. This is the last sentence.

I hold this dear soul's attention to this. That he was made like unto the Son of God. Didn't you see this? Melchizedek was made like unto the Son of God.

I said, do you understand that? She said, you can't be made like somebody what you already is. She had it. Melchizedek was made like unto the Son of God.

In the omission of these details concerning his genealogy, you see. So that he becomes a perfect type, shall we say, of our Lord Jesus, the king priest. But now is the importance of this.

While you've got your Bible there open to Hebrews, turn back to chapter 4 for a moment. Chapter 4 of Hebrews and verse 14. Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but with an all points tempted or tried, like as we are, yet without sin or apart from sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. You know, here's the truth in these verses, that a lot of Christians have never looked at.

Some years ago, I was down here in the state of Florida. I was then connected with the Moody Bible Institute. And the late Dr. Donald Gray Barnhouse was ministering in a church in the city where I was also working with the Institute.

I went to hearing one afternoon and he was preaching on the 7th chapter of Hebrews concerning the high priesthood of our Lord Jesus. And after the meeting, the minister of the church came to me and said, wasn't that a daring thing for Donald to do this afternoon? What do you mean? Well, he said, what do these people know about the high priesthood of Christ? I said, you're the pastor of this church? He said, yes. I said, how long have you been here? He said, 13 years.

And you know, then's when you like to take advantage of your gray hair. They were gray then, they're white now. I said, sir, shame on you! 13 years! And you've never told these people about the high priesthood of the Lord Jesus? Think of what they miss in not knowing that there's a person on the throne of God this very night who can be touched with a feeling of our infirmity.

This is a wonderful thing to me. I remember as a lad, we lived in a strong Roman Catholic neighborhood. And it was quite natural for us to get to discussing religion with our playmates.

And one day, I thought, well, I'll ask one of these little friends of mine to come along to our meeting. I wasn't saved myself, but I was loyal to my parents. And I thought, you get this boy coming to our meeting.

Well, he says, I'll have to ask my mother. So when he came back, he said, well, my mother says, I can go if you will first go with me to my church. Well, I said, I'm going to have to ask my father.

So, I went and I told Dad what I had proposed to this boy, this friend of mine, Bill Waters. And I said, he wants me to go to his church and then he'll come to our meeting. Dad says, take him up on it.

I was rather surprised that Dad fell in with the idea like this. Take him up on it. So I said, all right, Bill, I'll go with you to your church.

You know, I was really impressed. I'd never seen such fine vestments on men in all my life. Brought up in a rather plain neighborhood where brethren didn't dress up too much.

You'd go in there and see these priests with all those beautiful things on. Hear bells ringing, see smoke arising from the incense. Everything going on in a language I didn't understand.

You can imagine, little fella, I was really impressed. So, when he came out and said, what do you think of that? I said, wonderful. Well, I said, now you're coming with us to our meeting.

Well, I said, it's going to be a lot different. So, sure enough, his mother told him, well, he went with you. Now, you can go with him.

So, he came with me one sunny night to our meeting. So, when he came out of there, we sung two or three hymns, you know. Brother led in prayer and had a good, forceful, gospel meeting.

In fact, the brother who was there that night was extra faithful. You know what I mean? He saw one in the audience that he hadn't seen before. And he was preaching especially to this little fella.

But, you know, when he came out, I said, well, dear, what do you think of that? Well, he says, I guess it's all right. You ain't got no priest. You know, that bothers me.

It bothers me. I went home in silence, and my father asked me about it. And I said, well, listen, this is what happened.

And I said, he says, we ain't got no priest, and we ain't. Well, I said, I've never seen him. Well, he said, now I'll show him to you.

And he took me right here to this fourth chapter of Hebrew. Right here. He says, seeing then we have a grave.

Now notice he said that word grave. Not only a priest, but he's a grave priest. He's not only a grave priest, he's a grave high priest.

He says, it's Jesus, the son of God. He said, son, that's our priest. I could hardly wait for the next day.

When I saw my little friend, I had my little pocket testament that I'd been given as a boy. I had it open to this. I said, Bill, I was all wrong.

I said, we've got one. And I showed him this. I'm wondering if everybody present here tonight knows that.

That we have a grave high priest. Who can be touched with the feelings of our infirmities. This, my dear friends, is the answer to those questions in that 11th Psalm.

We'll come back to that now. You notice how these things are put together in that Psalm? The questions are raised, and what's the answer? The Lord is in his holy temple. The Lord's throne is in heaven.

You've got the high priesthood. The Melchizedek priesthood of the Lord Jesus. There he is.

That's the answer. Let me just say to any dear child of God here tonight who finds we're going tough at times. Here's something for you to lean on.

Something for you to take advantage of. What a wonderful thing this is. You know, if there's anything we enjoy when we're in trouble, it's sympathy.

That's exactly what we get when we come to the Lord Jesus. He can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He knows how to sympathize.

He's been through it all. You and I haven't had an experience apart from sin that he hasn't been through. He knows what it means to hunger.

He knows what it means to thirst. He knows what it means to be forsaken. He knows what it means, dear.

He knows. This is a wonderful thing for us tonight. Now I see my time is gone.

I'm not going to take very much time on things which follow here in verses 4 and 5 and 6. It isn't because I don't think them important. They are important. The psalmist is very faithfully bringing before us those who do not have such a precious hope as this.

When he says, Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone. This shall be the portion of their cup. I tell you, friends, those are terrible words.

And they mean exactly what they say. They mean exactly what they say. And thank God there's escape from that tonight.

By trusting the Lord Jesus Christ. And how shall you escape if you neglect so great salvation? It may be that you've had this thing presented to you many times. But up until now you've never availed yourself of it.

This is what's ahead. Oh dear friends. When you look at this and think of this as being a future of a Christless life.

I'm sure that in itself would make you decide this very night. Come to the Lord Jesus Christ as your own personal Savior. But to pursue the thought with which I've been occupied most of the time.

Let me come to verse 7. The righteous Lord loveth righteousness. He isn't neglecting the righteous side of this whole thing. Whatever you and I are enduring, He's taking note of it.

You may be sure there'll be a righteous balance in the day to come. But oh, this last line for just now. His countenance doth behold the upright.

Just think of this. That no matter where we go in this dark sinful world. We can be sure as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

That His countenance, His face is beaming down upon us. And if that is true beloved. As we have been seeing in a previous study.

I'm sure there's going to be a reflection as a result. Because as you and I with open faith behold in the glass the glory of the Lord. We're bound to radiate and reflect some of that glory.

We're bound to do it. Oh the shining face. The shining face of Moses to which we referred the other day.

The shining face of Stephen the martyr. When they beheld his face as it had been the face of an angel. The shining faces of dozens of people with whom I've had to deal in the last hours of their lives.

In my work in the TV sanitarium in Albuquerque, New Mexico for ten years. I know something of what it means to look into the radiant face of a child of God. Yes, just a little over two and a half years ago.

Standing with my own beloved life partner. In the last few moments of her life. To see every line of pain leave the face.

She looked as though she had had a perfect facial. Her eyes opened with great joy and expectancy. I was certain that she'd seen the Lord.

Yes, this is it. I was talking along these lines one night in Old England. Soon I returned from New Zealand and Palestine and we stopped off in England.

My youngest daughter, who is now a mother of five, was just a little girl then. And she heard me talking about the desirability of a Christian's face. Shining.

On the way home from the meeting that night, she had my hand. She was a girl about five years up then. She said to me, Daddy, I said, what is it darling? She said, Daddy, you were talking about shining faces tonight.

I said, yes honey. Just girls don't like their faces to shine. I know the kind of shining I mean.

It isn't that kind. I said, I don't like that kind of a shine either. What I said, I like the kind of a shine that comes from within.

So I tried to explain to this dear young child what it means to have a radiant countenance as you witness about the Lord Jesus. Now she's got her five precious little children of her own. And I can tell that she's passing it on to them.

Beloved, you and I have been up here accompanying with the Lord Jesus. These have been wonderful days. To me, this has been a wonderful experience to be up here on this mountaintop with you all looking at the Word of God, fellowshiping around the throne of grace.

You know, every one of us ought to leave here with a radiant face. So that people who see us will take note of us that we've been with Jesus. Now having looked at our Savior in this way.

Will you please turn to hymn number 20. Christ has for sin atonement made. What a wonderful Savior.

We are redeemed. The price is paid. What a wonderful Savior.

Having had just a little warning this morning. He sent me to my bed for an hour or more. I'm going to ask him to come and lead us in.

Shall we sing? We are redeemed. The price is paid. What a wonderful Savior.

Wonderful Savior.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/8/SID8034.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/carl-armerding/psalm-11/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net