

# (Through the Bible) Psalms 51-60

by Chuck Smith

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*In this sermon, Chuck Smith explores Psalm 51, emphasizing the importance of confession, God's mercy, and the restoration of joy through forgiveness.*

**Duration:** 1:05:28

**Scripture:** Psalm 14:4-51, Romans 3:10

**Topics:** "Divine Accountability", "Faith And Patience"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the concept of God having the ability to record and playback every scene of our lives. He compares this to the experience of watching old home movies with family. The speaker suggests that if we were to deny any accusations brought against us, God could easily show us the evidence on a giant screen in heaven. The sermon also mentions the book of remembrances and the book of life in heaven, where the names of those who have received Jesus Christ are recorded. The speaker concludes by encouraging the audience to keep their eyes on the Middle East and to run the race of faith with patience, looking to Jesus as the author and finisher of their faith.

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## Transcript

Shall we turn now in our Bibles to Psalm 51. David is surely one of the most outstanding characters of the Old Testament. He was greatly hated and greatly loved.

He had the capacity to inspire tremendous emotions in people on both ends of the spectrum. He's always talking about his enemies that are trying to do him in. But yet, there was a great number of people who'd really followed David with great devotion.

David was called a man after God's own heart. And this appellation was given to David not because he was sinless, but because his heart was always open towards God, pliable. God could work with David.

God could deal with him. When David was wrong, God could deal with him. Inasmuch as none of us are sinless too, it's important that God is able to deal with us when we're in our faults, when we're in our sin.

That we'd be open to the dealings of God. The 51st Psalm has as its background God's dealing with David concerning his sin. For David, one day while on his roof, which over there they have flat roofs and they have their gardens and couches and hammocks and all out on their roofs.

As he was walking on his rooftop, he spied over on a neighboring roof, a beautiful lady bathing and the lust of David's flesh got the better of him. He sent a message to her to come on over. She responded and as the result of their encounter, she became pregnant.

David tried to cover it by having her husband come home from the service for a while, but he did not cooperate in that he did not go home to be with his wife during his leave of absence from active duty. So David compounded his sin of adultery by ordering Joab to put the fellow in the place of jeopardy in the battle where he would be sure to be killed. And as a result, he was put to death by the enemy.

And at this time, Nathan the prophet came to David with the parable in which David was the character only in a different setting. David, there was a man in your kingdom, very wealthy, had all kinds of sheep, goods, possessions, servants. Next door to him there lived a very poor man who had only one lamb.

He loved it like his own daughter. It ate at his own table. The rich man had company come, he ordered his servants to by force go to his neighbor's house and take away the lamb by force that they might kill it and feed it to his company.

David became angry, he said to Nathan, that man shall surely be put to death. Nathan pointed his finger at David and said, David, you are the man. The application was very clear.

David had many wives, concubines, all that a person could desire, and yet he took away the wife, the only wife of his neighbor. And upon hearing this, upon the sense of his own guilt, David wrote this 51st Psalm in which he cries out for mercy. Mercy is not getting what you deserve.

Justice is getting what you deserve. He's got it coming, that's justice. He hasn't coming, he doesn't get it, that's mercy.

And David is crying out now to God for mercy. Have mercy upon me, O God. Not according to the fact that I'm a good guy and I deserve it, but according to Thy loving kindness.

According to the abundance or the multitude of Thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. David's prayer for forgiveness. Casting himself upon the mercy of God.

The Bible teaches us much about God's mercy. He declares that He is a merciful God. He will abundantly pardon.

According to the multitude of Thy tender mercies, David said, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions and my sin is ever before me.

Now, David was trying to hide his guilt. But yet you can't hide it from yourself. And David speaks about his sin being ever before me.

I'm ever conscious of my guilt. You can't run from guilt. You can't hide from guilt.

It's there. David said, I acknowledge my transgressions. Now you're on the road back.

The Bible says, if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. But I have to be honest with God. I have to confess my sin.

I have to acknowledge my transgression. If God is going to be able to deal with me. As long as I'm trying to hide my sin, as long as I'm trying to justify myself.

And this is one of the things that we are constantly having to deal with in our own lives. Is that endeavor to justify our actions. But there isn't forgiveness in justifying your actions.

The forgiveness comes when you confess your transgression. I acknowledge my transgression. Good.

Now God can deal with it. But as long as you're trying to hide it, cover it, excuse it. God can't deal with it.

So important that we be totally open and honest with God. In order that he might deal with the issues of our lives. Then David said, against thee and thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight.

God is the one who has established the law. Sin is against the holy law of God. The holy nature of God.

Now if we would look at this, it would seem to us that he had sinned against Uriah. The husband of Bathsheba. It would even seem that he sinned against Bathsheba.

Inviting her to this kind of a relationship. But David declares against thee and thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight. Now if David had been conscious of God and of the fact that God sees.

If he'd been more conscious of the presence of God, it could very well be he had never gotten into this. I think that one of the real problems that we have is our lack of the sense of God's presence with us. We forget that he's right there.

Now we oftentimes do things that suddenly we find that, you know, someone was there and watching and we get so embarrassed. Because we thought that, you know, nobody knew us or nobody was watching. And when we suddenly find someone there, I've had occasions in the past to have to make calls on the homes.

And sometimes as I would be walking up to the front door, I'd hear all kinds of screaming and yelling in the house. And then, you know, you ring the doorbell and you hear a flurry of motion and all. And pretty soon the doors open and they see you.

And they just, you know, there have been times that I'd never rung the doorbell. I've just gone. I was too embarrassed.

I didn't want to embarrass them. You know, they say, oh, you know, we didn't even start into that kind of stuff. But you see, who am I? Man, I know what it is to yell and get angry.

Who am I? What we need to realize is that God is there. In Him, we live and move and have our being, Paul said. We need to become more conscious of the fact that God is with us.

Against thee, and thee only have I done this in, and done this evil in thy sight. God was watching. God knew all about it.

David thought that he had cleverly covered his guilt. After all, Uriah has been killed in battle now. So, who's going to object to David taking a pretty young widow into his harem, you know? After all, her husband was killed out fighting David's wars.

And David thought he had covered his tracks. But God saw. And when the prophet came to him and said, David, you are the man, David realized that he had not hid anything from God.

I've done this evil in your sight. In order that you might be justified when you speak and be clear when you judge. Now, David confesses actually the nature of sin.

Behold, I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, you desire truth in the inward parts. And in the hidden part, thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean. The hyssop was a little shrub that grows over there in the Holy Land. And in Egypt, in those areas.

And it was the little bush that they used to sprinkle the blood. When in Egypt they were to sprinkle the blood upon the linens of the doorpost of the house, they used the hyssop bush in the sprinkling of the blood. And so because it was the little bush that was used to sprinkle the blood, he said, purge me with hyssop.

That would be referring to the blood of the sacrifice. And I shall be clean. Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.

David's concept of God's total and complete forgiveness. And it is important that we also have that same concept of God's total and complete forgiveness. God said in Isaiah, come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord.

Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they be red as crimson, they shall be as white as wool. Wash me and I shall be as white as snow.

You know, there is nothing in all the world that can remove your guilt complex. Like just confessing to God and receiving the cleansing and the forgiveness from Him. Guilt complex is a weird thing.

The guilt complex does create a subconscious desire for punishment. That subconscious desire for punishment is manifested in neurotic behavior patterns. The neurotic behavior patterns are designed to bring punishment to you.

You start doing weird things. People say, what's wrong with you? Why are you doing that? That's weird, man. Well, I don't know why I'm doing it.

Because it's a subconscious thing. I'm feeling guilty over something and I need to be punished. And so I am going now into an abnormal behavior that is going to bring disapproval and punishment upon me.

And I continue with this neurotic behavior pattern until someone really tells me what a nut I am. How weird and how I, you know, belong ostracized from society or something. And I feel great because they have punished me and I feel the relief of my guilt.

But there is nothing in the world like coming to God and letting Him wash you. And He takes away completely that guilt complex that has been plaguing you. David said, make me to hear joy and gladness that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

Hide thy face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O Lord. And here's the problem.

David's getting right down to the issue. Oh God, create a clean heart within me. Renew a right spirit within me.

How easy it is when we feel guilty to start having a wrong spirit, a wrong attitude towards the saints of God and towards God Himself. Because I am feeling guilty, I start sort of closing myself in and my spirit gets wrong. But renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from thy presence and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. The wages of sin is death. Spiritual death, separation from God.

Cast me not away from thy presence, O Lord. Remove not or take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation and uphold me with a free spirit, thy free spirit.

So, the prayer for the restoring of the joy of salvation, it's amazing the way sin can just rob you. Unconfessed sin can just rob you of God's joy in your life. There are so many Christians who are borderline Christians.

They try to live as close to the world and still be a Christian as they can. And they're always just trying to find out how close that is. Always experimenting, just living on the edge.

Flirting with the other side. And they have the dilemma of having too much of Christ to be happy in the world, but too much of the world to be happy in Christ. Restore unto me, Lord, the joy of my salvation and uphold me with your free spirit.

Then will I teach transgressors thy ways and sinners shall be converted unto thee. In other words, once you've experienced the grace and the goodness of God, then you go out and share it with others. I'll teach transgressors thy ways.

Deliver me from blood guiltiness. This is no doubt that being guilty of the blood of Uriah. Actually, David was a conspirator in his murder.

Praying now forgiveness from that, O God, thou God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness. O Lord, open thou my lips and my mouth shall show forth thy praise. For you don't desire a sacrifice, else I would give it.

You don't delight in burnt offerings. But the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit and a broken and a contrite heart. O God, you will not despise.

What God really desires is only your being broken over your sin. God isn't asking or requiring sacrifice. God, you don't want sacrifice, else I would give it.

But what you really want is just a broken spirit. Do good in your good pleasure unto Zion. Build the walls of Jerusalem.

And then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with the burnt offering, the whole burnt offering. And then shall they offer the bullocks upon your altar. Psalm 52 is to the chief musician.

It's a prayer of David. It's a poem or a song that he wrote when Doeg, the Edomite, came and told Saul and said unto him, David is come to the house of Ahimelech. Now David, when he was fleeing from Saul, went up to Bethel and there he went into the priest.

And he asked for some food for he and his men. And the priest said, well, I don't have anything but the showbread. And only the priest was supposed to eat this showbread.

It was the bread, 12 loaves that they put out on the table, each loaf representing one of the tribes of Israel. And it was set out on the table in order that the idea was that God might be constantly reminded of each of the 12 tribes. It was there within the tabernacle on the right hand side as the priest would enter into the tent.

On the right hand side, there was this table with the 12 loaves of bread. Now we say loaves of bread and you picture, you know, the white wonder bread loaf or something. But actually what they have was it's a flat bread and it's round.

Loaves about, oh, 12 inches in diameter. And when they bake it, it may rise about an inch or an inch and a half. It is good.

It's got a lot of substance to it. It's chewy and, you know, you really know you're eating bread when you eat that bread. It is so good.

Over in Bethlehem, right near the Hokie church that they say is where Jesus was born in a cave underneath of it, tourists, it seems, always want to see the site of the birth of Jesus. And so they've got a Hokie tradition that the site is there down in this cave. And so they take you in and it's a trip.

I don't like to go in there. The guide always is laughing at me because he says, now this year it's your turn to take him in. He doesn't like to go in there either.

And we're always trying to, you know, outdo each other so that we don't have to go in there. Because I like to go up the street, up one of the side streets there, there is a baker and he has this, he's sort of the public baker in a sense. He has this oven there, open fire in it.

And the ladies come with big pans of dough and they sit there in this little dark room. And he's down in a little sort of a dugout place with this oven going. And he has a big spoon, much like they use in the pizza parlors.

Big flat kind of a shovel thing. And these ladies will sit there visiting with each other and each of them have their own pan of dough. And every once in a while they'll knead their dough and all.

And then when it's their turn, he takes and he has a flour board and he kneads it, flattens it out and he bakes it. And then when they get all of their loaves baked, they put them back in the pan, cover them with their towel and they take off with the pans of bread on top of their head. And you see the ladies walking up the steps with these pans of dough on top of their head coming to the baker to have him bake their bread.

Well, if you smile at the ladies and look hungry and hold out a little money, and I'm not quite sure yet which of the three it is that works, but anyhow, I always get some of this bread hot right out of the oven. Ooh, it's so good. But this is the same style of bread that they've baked there for millenniums.

Three thousand years ago when David was around. Same kind of, that's why I like to go in there because, man, you're stepping back into history. That hokey church has all kinds of gaudy baubles of Christmas tree ornaments and everything else.

And it just makes me sick. And I, the bread really makes me feel good. So I like to go up the street and watch this baking process.

I'm getting hungry. But all he had, now they would change this bread. And of course, this bread will just last a long time.

And they would change it once a week. And then the priest could eat the loaves of bread, but only he could eat them. No one else was to eat them.

But David came in and he had his men and he was hungry. And he says, you got anything to eat? He said, all I've got is this show bread. He said, well, we're so hungry.

And so he gave him the show bread. Now, it was not really lawful that David eat that, but it was an interesting thing that God's laws are flexible in that when a guy is hungry, then, you know, there could be a little overlooking of the rule, nobody eats this but the priest. It's the law of life and hunger that superseded.

And even Jesus in the New Testament acknowledged that it was all right. When they were trying to lay some trip on him because he had violated their traditions of the Sabbath. He said, don't you remember what David did when he was hungry? How he went in with his men and ate the bread, which was unlawful to eat for anybody but a priest.

And Jesus was pointing out even in their great King David, there was this thing where the need of an individual superseded the tradition of the law. The idea was here was a guy who was on the Sabbath day and he was sick and they didn't want Jesus to heal him because it was the Sabbath day. And Jesus pointed out this thing of David in order to show that human needs supersedes the traditions or the laws of the Sabbath, whatever human needs supersedes that.

Jesus said, is it lawful on the Sabbath to save a life or to kill a life, to do good or to do evil? And so the law of human need, Sabbath day or not, you can help them. Now, when Doeg came to Saul, he said David was up there and the priest helped him, gave him bread and gave him a Goliath sword. And Saul, in his stupid, blind anger, went up and killed the priest and his sons.

And David now is upset over this dog, Doeg, who told Saul that he was up there. So this psalm is directed against this Doeg. Why do you boast yourself in your mischief, O mighty man? And the goodness of God continues.

Your tongue devised mischiefs like a sharp razor working deceitfully. You love evil more than good and lying rather than to speak the right things. You love all devouring words, O thou deceitful tongue.

And God shall likewise destroy thee forever. He shall take thee away and pluck thee out of thy dwelling place and root thee out of the land of the living. The righteous also shall see in fear and shall laugh at him.

Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength, but trusted in the abundance of his riches and strengthened himself in his wickedness. But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God. I trust in the mercy of God forever.

I will praise thee forever because thou hast done it. And I will wait on thy name, for it is good before thy saints. So David's sort of prayer against and concerning this fellow who had caused the death of the priest who helped David.

Psalm 53 is the same as Psalm 14. These are similar psalms. There are about three places where psalms repeat themselves, not in total, such as this is pretty much in total with Psalm 14.

In others, maybe three or four verses are repeated. But this is the full psalm. The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God.

Paul said, because when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were they thankful. Their foolish hearts were dark, and in professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God.

You meet a person who says, I'm an atheist. According to God's word, he's a fool. Corrupt are they.

They've done abominable iniquity. There's none that doeth good. And God looked down from heaven upon the children of men to see if there were any that did understand and that did seek God.

And every one of them has gone back. They are altogether become filthy. There is none that doeth good.

No, not one. Paul quotes this in Romans chapter two. Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge who eat up my people as they eat bread? They have not called upon God.

There were they in great fear where no fear was. The wicked fear when there's no cause to fear. For God has scattered the bones of him that encamps against thee.

Thou hast put them to shame because God hath despised them. Oh, that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion. Now, this is a prayer, actually, for the future when Jesus shall come and establish the kingdom, the salvation of Israel coming out of Zion is always a reference to the glorious millennial reign of Christ.

When God brings back the captivity of his people, for Jacob shall rejoice and Israel shall be glad. Psalm 54 is to the chief musician on a stringed instrument, a prayer of David. When the Ziphons came and said to Saul, David's hiding down in the wilderness of Ziph.

And so even as he didn't care about Doeg telling Saul where he was, neither did he care about the Ziphons. And so he has a few choice words for them. Save me, O God, by thy name and judge me by thy strength.

Hear my prayer, O God, and give ear to the words of my mouth. For strangers, the Ziphites, are risen up against me, and the oppressors seek after my soul, and they have not set God before them. Behold, God is my helper.

The Lord is with them that uphold my soul. He shall reward evil unto my enemies. Cut them off in thy truth.

I will freely sacrifice unto thee. I will praise thy name, O Lord, for it is good. For he hath delivered me out of all trouble, and my eye hath seen the desire upon my enemies.

So David's prayer that God would honor him and take care of his enemies. Psalm 55. Give ear to my prayer, O God, and hide not thyself from my supplication.

Attend unto me and hear me. I mourn in my complaint and make a noise. Because of the voice of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked, for they cast iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate

me.

Told you David was capable of inspiring hate or love. He either loved the guy or hated the guy. And the feelings towards David were quite strong.

And he was always praying about his enemies, and those that were after him, and those that were seeking to destroy him. For they cast iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me. My heart is sore pain within me.

The terrors of death have fallen upon me. Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me. And I said, O that I had the wings like a dove, for I would fly out of this place and be at rest.

Lo, then I would wander far off and remain in the wilderness. I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and the tempest. Destroy, O Lord, and divide their tongues, for I have seen violence and strife in the city.

Day and night they go upon the walls thereof, and mischief also, and the sorrows are in the midst of it. Wickedness is in the midst thereof. Deceit and guile depart not from our streets.

Now David evidently wrote this psalm when he was fleeing from Absalom. For David's close counselor and friend Ahithophel actually revolted against David when Absalom did. He went with Absalom, and Ahithophel began to counsel Absalom on how to destroy David.

And this is the thing that really hurt David, uh, is that Absalom had turned against him. David said, for it was not an enemy that reproached me. Then I could have borne it.

Neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me. Then I would have hid myself from him. But it was you, a man mine equal, my guide, my acquaintance.

We took sweet counsel together. We walked into the house of God in company. And so David is so hurt because it really wasn't an enemy to David that had done such a dirty thing to him.

But it was a fellow that he had had beautiful fellowship with. They'd talked together. They'd counseled together.

They'd gone into the house of God in fellowship together. And yet he turned himself against David. And that's always, I think, some of the greatest hurts that we experience.

Are when men that we have trusted and put our confidence, utmost confidence in. And we've trusted them unquestionably. And they have worked together with us and labored together with us.

And we have given them great responsibilities. And suddenly, they turn and they begin to tell vicious lies. They violate the trust that you've put in them.

They turn against you. They take from you. And that hurts.

Because you've put all kinds of confidence in them. You've trusted them completely, implicitly. And suddenly, you realize, as did David, in verse 21, the words of his mouth were smoother than butter.

But war was in his heart. His words were softer than oil, yet they were like a drawn sword. And that's what really hurts.

Is when someone that you have really placed complete confidence and trust in and entrusted with a great part of the ministry, and then they turn and try to take it. That hurts beyond anything that I have ever had hurt, as far as the ministry goes. And David felt this very hurt himself.

The hurt of a friend, a comrade, an associate. One that you'd fellowshiped and trusted when they turn against you. So, David speaks about this, the turning of Ahithophel.

And David isn't so kind with him after he turned. He said, let death seize upon them. Let them go down quick into hell.

For wickedness is in their dwellings and among them. As for me, I will call upon God and the Lord shall save me. You know, it's not going to destroy me.

The Lord is going to take care of me. But the tragedies that will befall those. Evening and morning and at noon will I pray and cry aloud and he shall hear my voice.

He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me. For there were many with me. God shall hear and afflict them.

Even he that abideth of old, because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God. He hath put forth his hands against such as be at peace with him. He hath broken his covenant.

The broken promises and covenants. The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart. His words were softer than oil, yet they were like drawn swords.

David said, cast thy burden upon the Lord and he shall sustain thee. He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved. But thou, O God, shall bring them down into the pit of destruction.

Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days. But I will trust in thee. That's the only place to move into the Lord.

And there is comfort and blessing and joy. Psalm 56. This is the prayer of David when he heard a morning dove.

That is a morning m-o-u-r-n-i-n-g. Dove out in the distant terebinth trees. He no doubt heard these doves cooing off in the distance.

David, there's sort of something soulful and mournful about those doves when they're crying. He said, be merciful unto me, O God, for man would swallow me up. He fighting daily oppresseth me.

My enemies would daily swallow me up. For they be many that fight against me, O thou most high. But what time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.

What a good thing to learn. Whatever time that you might be afraid, just put your trust in the Lord. In God, I will praise his word.

In God, I have put my trust. I will not fear what flesh shall do unto me. Every day they rest my words.

All of their thoughts are against me for evil. They gather themselves together. They hide themselves.

They mark my steps when they wait for my soul. Shall they escape by iniquity? In thine anger cast down the people, O God. For you tell my wonderings, put my tears into thy bottle.

Are they not in thy book? Now, the Bible does teach that there is a book of remembrances that God keeps. The Bible tells us that at the great judgment day, the books will be open and people will be judged out of the things that are written in the books. Now, man is able to preserve many interesting records.

Today, a lot of you have preserved a lot of interesting records of your past. You've got movies of them. And every once in a while, you get out the movie projector when the family is over, and you look at the pictures when they were just kids, and you have an interesting evening of remembrance, you know, as you're looking at these films.

Now, I do believe that if man is able to develop such recording devices, that surely God, no doubt, is able to produce any scene that ever took place in your life at any time. So, if you want to try to deny before God some accusation that is brought against you, God probably has a giant screen up there, and suddenly you can watch yourself doing the thing, along with all of heaven. And I think as they shut it off, oh, okay, I confess, I'm guilty, you know.

Turn it off. In the book of remembrances, God's book, there is the book of life in heaven, in which your name has been recorded, you who have received Jesus Christ. When I cry unto thee, David said, then shall my enemies turn back.

This I know, for God is with me, or God is for me, actually. And I think that that is one of the most important concepts of God that we need to remember. God is for us.

So many times we picture God as being against us. We see God as just waiting for us to do something wrong, in order that he might smite us with his swift hand of justice. And we think of God so often as being against us, opposed to us.

But in reality, God is for us. And if God be for us, who can be against us? So important that we have the right concepts of God. In God, he said, will I praise his word, because I know that God is for me.

Praise fills my heart. In the Lord will I praise his word. In God have I put my trust.

I will not be afraid what man can do unto me. Thy vows are upon me, O God. I will render praises unto thee.

For thou hast delivered my soul from death. Will not thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living? Psalm 57, to the chief musician, and that Al-Tashkith is destroy not. It's a prayer of David when he fled from Saul and was hiding in the cave.

So, Saul is looking for David, he's hiding in the cave. And David says, be merciful unto me, O God. Be merciful unto me, for my soul trusts in thee.

Yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities are over. I will cry unto God most high, unto God that performs all things for me. He shall send from heaven and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up.

God shall send forth his mercy and his truth. My soul is among lions, and I lie even among them that are set on fire, even the sons of men whose teeth are spears and arrows and their tongue a sharp sword. Be

thou exalted, O God, above the heavens.

Thy glory be above all the earth. For they have prepared a net for my steps. My soul is bowed down.

They have digged a pit before me. And in the midst whereof they are fallen themselves. Remember, Saul came in and went to sleep there in the cave.

And David, when they were sound asleep, went down and he took his sword and cut off Saul's skirt. And then he got out of there and he got over a safe distance. He cried, Saul, look what I've got, you know.

And so he speaks about him falling in the net that he had prepared for me. My soul is bowed down. They've digged a pit before me.

Into the midst whereof they are fallen. My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed. I will sing and give praise.

Awake up, my glory. Awake, psaltery and harp. I myself will awake early.

For I will praise you, O Lord, among the people. I will sing unto thee among the nations. For thy mercy is great unto the heavens and thy truth unto the clouds.

Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens. And let thy glory be above all the earth. Psalm 58 is a prayer of David.

And I would not want to be one of David's enemies because of his prayers. Do you indeed speak righteousness, O congregation? Do you judge uprightly, O you sons of men? Yes, in heart you work wickedness. You weigh the violence of your hands in the earth.

The wicked are estranged from the womb. They go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies. Now, Paul is, I mean, David is talking about the nature, the sinful nature of man.

Now, I don't think there were any of you that had to teach your children how to tell a lie. You had to teach them to tell the truth. You don't say, well, now if you get in trouble and, you know, just lie about it, you know, and get out of it.

They seem to just do that naturally. So, you have to teach them. Now, you've got to tell the truth at all times.

So, David said, they went forth from the womb speaking lies. They're estranged from the womb. As soon as they're born, speaking lies.

Their poison is like the poison of a serpent. They are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear, which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely. Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth.

David didn't mess around. Break out the great teeth of the young lions, O Lord. Let them melt away as waters which run continually.

When he bends his bow to shoot his arrows, let them be cut in pieces. As a snail which melteth, let every one of them pass away. Have you ever poured salt on a snail and watched him melt? Like the untimely birth of a woman that may not see the sun, before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as the whirlwind, both living and in his wrath.

The righteous shall rejoice when he sees the vengeance. He shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked, so that a man shall say, Verily, there is a reward for the righteous. Verily, he is a God that judges in the earth.

Now, coming as we do from our Christian ethic, from the New Testament, we have difficulty with David's prayers. Because Jesus told us that we are to love those who hate us. We're to do good to those who spitefully use us.

Bless those that curse you. And the ethic that we have learned from Christ in the New Testament is much different. Now, I find David's ethic pretty satisfiable with me, you know.

I like vengeance. I like to see the bad guys get beat, you know, and the good guys win. And I like, you know, to see the wicked really taken care of, but good.

I must confess that I rejoice in such things, but I must also confess that such rejoicing is wrong according to the New Testament ethic, the Christian ethic. And yet, there's just something about my own nature that is similar to David's, in that when someone has really done something that is truly evil, I like to see vengeance come upon them. Now, where I have to be careful is that I so often want to bring vengeance on them myself.

And that's where I can really get in trouble. God said, vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. Now, notice David isn't really seeking to bring vengeance himself.

He's asking God to knock the teeth out of their mouths, asking God to take vengeance on them. I don't know that it's much better, but we must be careful about trying to take personal vengeance upon people who we feel have wronged us. Or who have wronged us.

We must learn to commit ourselves and our ways unto the Lord, and let the Lord take care of them. It is not mine to become Captain Avenger and go out and right all of the evils of the world. But David does pray in these psalms, but as I say, it is not in keeping with the New Testament ethic.

And I have to pray, not as David prayed, but I have to pray, Lord, keep my heart from devising vengeance, and keep me, Lord, from wanting to take vengeance. And, oh God, help me to have a forgiving attitude and spirit towards those that I feel this, you know, I'd like to take vengeance on. Psalm 59 is another one of those destroy not prayers of David, when Saul sent and they watched the house to kill him.

His wife, Michael, lit him out of the window in a basket and David escaped, but the men were watching the house of David to kill him. David wrote this psalm on that occasion, Deliver me from my enemy, O God, defend me from them that rise up against me, deliver me from the workers of iniquity, and save me from the bloody men. For lo, they lie in wait for my soul, the mighty are gathered against me, not for my transgressions, nor for my sin, O Lord.

Just because of Saul's jealousy, it wasn't that David had done anything wrong. They run and prepare themselves without my fault, await to help me, and behold, thou therefore, O God, O Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel, await to visit all of the heathen, and be not merciful to the wicked transgressors. Just be merciful to me, Lord, in my wickedness.

Isn't that the way it goes? They return at evening, they make a noise like a dog, and they go around about the city. So here are these guys out there, and they were barking like dogs, and David knew that they

were, you know, who they were. And they belch out with their mouth, and swords are in their lips, for who say they does hear, but thou, O Lord, shall laugh at them, and thou shall have all of the heathen in derision.

Because of his strength will I wait upon thee, for God is my defense. The God of my mercy shall prevent me. God shall let me see my desires upon my enemies.

Slay them not, lest my people forget. Scatter them by thy power, and bring them down, O Lord, our shield. 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.

Consume them in wrath, consume them that they may not be. Let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth. And at evening, let them return, and let them make a noise like a dog, and go around about the city.

Let them wander up and down for meat, and grudge if they be not satisfied. But I will sing of thy power, yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning. For thou hast been my defense, and refuge in the day of my trouble.

Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing, for God is my defense, and the God of my mercy. So, three times over in the Psalm, God is spoken of as David's defense, and it's surely neat to have God as our defense. Now, I have discovered that God will be my defense as long as I let Him be my defense.

But if I seek to take up my own defense, then God will let me defend myself. And I have found that I really can't defend myself adequately. And so, I have learned not to seek to defend myself, but to leave my defense completely in the hands of God.

Now, if you want God to defend you, then you've got to just commit yourself to God, and not seek to defend yourself. God is my defense. Psalm 60, O God, thou hast cast us off, thou hast scattered us, thou hast been displeased, O turn thyself to us again, for thou hast made the earth to tremble, thou hast broken it, heal the breaches thereof, for it shakes.

You have showed your people hard things, you have made us to drink the wine of astonishment, you have given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth, that your beloved may be delivered, save with your right hand and hear me. God has spoken in his holiness, and I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and meet out the valley of Sukkot. Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine, Ephraim also is the strength of mine head, Judah is my lawgiver, Moab is my washpot over Edom, while I cast out my shoe, Philistia, triumph thou because of me.

This psalm is, these verses actually here, in this particular part, are repeated. Verses 5 to 12 are identical to Psalm 108, 6 to 13. So we'll get these further on again.

Who will bring me into the strong city? Who will lead me into Edom? Will not thou, O God, which hast cast us off, and thou, O God, which did not go out with our armies, give us help from trouble, for vain is the help of man. Through God we shall do valiantly, for he it is that shall tread down our enemies. Give us help, O God, vain is the help of man.

Another place, David said, it's time for you to work, O Lord, for vain is the work of man. Oh, that we would learn to just trust in God, call upon Him for our help, rather than looking to man, look to God. We've always

are scheming, we're always devising, we're always trying to figure out one more angle.

So many people try to use me in their devices and in their scheming. They've tried every game in the book, every trick, and they finally think, well, if I can just get Chuck, you know, they'll listen to him. And it's just another one of their schemes.

They're not willing to leave it in God's hands completely. They just can't leave it with God. They say, oh, I'm just turning my life over to God.

And then they're still scheming, still, you know, conniving, still trying to work another angle. Why don't we just give up and let God take over completely? It's a great day when I just yield to God all of the issues of my life and I trust Him completely. Give us help from trouble for vain is the help of man.

Through God, we shall do valiantly. Father, we thank you tonight for your word. Let your spirit planted in our hearts.

May we grow thereby in Jesus name. Amen. May the Lord bless and keep and strengthen and guide your life through this week.

Keep looking up. We're getting so close. Keep your eyes on the Middle East.

It's coming down. The day of the Lord is at hand. Let us lay aside every weight, sin, which doth so easily beset us.

And let's run with patience the race that has been set before us as we look unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith.

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