

Psalm 55

by Henry Law

The sermon on Psalm 55 emphasizes the importance of trusting God and seeking refuge in Him during times of distress and betrayal.

Scripture: Psalm 55:1-22

Topics: "Trust In God", "Persistent Prayer"

Description

Henry Law preaches about David's unwavering trust in God amidst his troubles, finding refuge and deliverance in Him despite facing continuous challenges and betrayals. David's prayers reflect a deep reliance on God's faithfulness and the importance of persistent supplication. Through David's experiences, we see parallels to the path our great Redeemer walked, enduring mental agony and betrayal. Despite the intense turmoil, David longs for peace and rest, seeking refuge in God's promises of tranquility and deliverance.

Transcript

In the eventful life of David trouble follows trouble as wave succeeds to wave. His intervals of rest were very few. Throughout his days darkness seems often to gather clouds. But he finds refuge in God; and deliverance was his happy experience. This God is our God forever and ever. Let us trust. He will not fail us.

1, 2. "Listen to my prayer, O God. Do not ignore my cry for help! Please listen and answer me, for I am overwhelmed by my troubles."

It is a wondrous privilege that we may be importunate with God. It is no presumption to use holy boldness, and to give Him no rest in cries for audience. We are permitted to tell out our sorrows in mourning terms, and to pray that our sadness may attract attention. Strong crying and tears marked our Lord's hours of supplication. We cannot err in following Him.

3, 4, 5. "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. My heart is sorely pained within me; and the terrors of death have fallen upon me. Fear and trembling have come upon me, and horror has overwhelmed me."

It is good in prayer to specify the cause of our distress. What we deeply feel, we should distinctly state. David is cast down by the open reviling of his enemies, who scrupled not to impute all wicked ways to him.

Here we see the type of Him who suffered such malignant charges against His holy walk. The Psalmist states his agonized condition. Trust in God does not destroy feelings of alarm, though they restrain them from overwhelming force.

In this fearful description of his inward agony, can we fail to see the path which our great Redeemer trod? What was His state of mental misery when He felt the crushing burden of His people's sins, and was bowed to the earth by its overwhelming load? Sorrow was indeed the occupant of His heart when the exclamation was pressed out, "My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me?" We may be terrified, but we must never yield to despair.

6, 7, 8. "And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest. Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness. I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest."

It is a feeling common to the breast of man to flee turmoil and to desire rest. There is a charm in tranquil peace which sweetly attracts desire. Rest and peace are among the sweet promises from our great Lord's lips. "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you." Sweet is the promise, "The Lord Himself shall give you peace always and by all means." Therefore, as the timid dove with rapid wing flees to the lonely desert, and seeks shelter from tempestuous winds, so the soul longs for the tranquility of repose.

But in these desires there must be moderation. When called to combat we must not use the coward's flight. When called to patient endurance we must not show impatience. If we would win the crown we must not shrink from the cross. We may find rest in trouble, when rest from trouble is wisely withheld.

9, 10, 11. "Destroy them, Lord, and confuse their speech, for I see violence and strife in the city. Its walls are patrolled day and night against invaders, but the real danger is wickedness within the city. Murder and robbery are everywhere there; threats and cheating are rampant in the streets."

We have here an dreadful picture how sin will spread, and how sinful men sow seeds of mischief. When this is evident, let the godly man appeal to heaven, and pray God's power to check the evil. We have encouragement in the case of the Babel-builders, and thus may ask for plotting tongues to be confused.

12, 13, 14, 15. "For it was not an enemy who reproached me; then I could have borne it; neither was it he who hated me that magnified himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him; but it was you, a man my equal, my guide, and my acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked to the house of God in company. Let death seize upon them, and let them go down quick into hell; for wickedness is in their dwellings, and among them."

The bitterest pang is when hostility is found in one who was loved as an intimate friend, and trusted as a faithful guide, and sought as a confidential adviser, and walked with, as a fellow-worshiper. David drank this bitter cup; so did our beloved Lord. Judas from walking by His side hastened to the blackest crime. But he went to "his own place." Dreadful is the thought. It is recorded for our warning.

16, 17. "As for me, I will call upon God; and the Lord shall save me. Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud; and He shall hear my voice."

Under the pressure of such a weight of woe, David makes holy profession. Let the wicked rage--let foes prove treacherous--let malignity in every form assail, he will still look to God. The severest trials are only

blessings in disguise when they quicken our speed to the mercy-seat. Then burdens become light, and darkness brightens, and songs of deliverance break forth.

David resolves that he will not use his voice in lamentations or reproach, but will call upon God; and he will do so not in formality, or in lifeless exercise, but in the full assurance of faith, that audience will be given. Happy are they who know that they have free access to the ears of God, and that their petitions, perfumed with the Redeemer's blood, will encircle the mercy-seat with fragrant incense.

He resolves, also, that stated periods should be set apart by him for distinct worship. Doubtless, we should be always in a prayerful frame, and constant prayers should carry our desires on high. But still to prevent forgetfulness, it is the part of wisdom diligently to adhere to regulated times. Three times each day David made distinct supplications.

18. "He has delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me; for there were many with me."

Happy is the mind which is enriched with large experiences of felt mercies. No act of heavenly goodness should be forgotten. The catalogue is capable of almost daily enlargement, and it should be studied with devout thanksgiving. David had been a warrior from his youth. He had taken part in many battles. He had been preserved, not in safety only, but in peace. He had felt that God was on his side, and that in God's support he was stronger than all the hosts of men. While others trembled he knew no fears.

Is not this God our God forever and ever? Leaning on His arm, should we not realize immovable support? David felt that there were many with him. The eyes of Elijah's servant were opened to behold the surrounding mountains filled with horses of fire and chariots of fire. Is it not true that thus many are with us, and that the angel of the Lord encamps round about those who fear Him and delivers them?

19. "God shall hear, and afflict them, even He who abides of old. Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God."

David's faith grows stronger as his trials swell. Unwavering is his confidence that his prayers shall all be heard, and vengeance shall destroy his foes. He states the ground of his confidence, even his knowledge that God changes not, but is the same yesterday, and today, and forever. With Him there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. His mercy, which has been from everlasting, endures forever.

A reason is given why the ungodly disregard the Lord. They have no changes--they are at ease. Soft is the nest in which they quietly repose. They have comfort today, and they fondly think that it will always last. Whereas the children of the Lord, who are emptied from vessel to vessel, learn in each change to cling more closely to their God.

20, 21. "He has put forth his hands against those who are at peace with him; he has broken his covenant. The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart; his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords."

A picture is reproduced of the falsehood of the ungodly. They treacherously assail the friends who trust them--their pledged promises are wantonly disregarded. With gentle language and with oily tongue they flatter and profess love, while the bitterest enmity is lurking in their hearts.

This cruel trial burst with intensity on the head of Jesus. The traitor drew near with words of reverence and love, with treachery in his heart.

22, 23. "Cast your burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain you; He shall never allow the righteous to be moved. But You, 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 You."

A precious exhortation follows, supported by precious promises. It is acknowledged that burdens may press heavily upon the child of God; but he is exhorted not to sink beneath them, but to cast them on Him who is ever at hand to receive them, even the Lord. Oh, for faith most fully to obey, and thus to obtain entire relief! Let us clasp to our hearts the promise, "He shall sustain you." Amid most raging billows Peter did not sink. Mountains of adversity crushed not David.

Two inferences follow. He had full assurance that his cruel and treacherous foes were only digging the pit of misery for themselves, while his deliverance would only deepen his unfailing confidence in God. Oh for more of this happy trust! It is worth more than ten thousand worlds.

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