

The Song of the Slandered Saint

by Shane Idleman

The sermon explores the theme of slander and persecution faced by believers, emphasizing the necessity of faith and trust in God through trials.

Duration: 46:15

Scripture: Psalm 7:1

Topics: "Trust in God", "Suffering"

Description

Shane Idleman explores the theme of suffering and slander in his sermon 'The Song of the Slandered Saint,' drawing from Psalm 7. He emphasizes the importance of trusting God amidst persecution and the necessity of faith in prayer, highlighting that true joy and peace can emerge from trials. Idleman reflects on the struggles faced by believers today, particularly in the face of societal pressures and slander, and encourages the congregation to maintain a passionate pursuit of God. He reminds listeners that God is a just judge who will ultimately defend the righteous and that our relationship with Him deepens through adversity.

Transcript

The title of tonight's message is The Song of the Slandered Saint. The Song of the Slandered Saint. You try saying that three times fast.

Now, where did I get this? Well, from Charles Spurgeon looking in his Treasuries of David. This title just jumped out at me, and I wanted to just borrow it. The Song of the Slandered Saint.

And what you're going to find is, throughout Psalm 7, we're in Psalm 7, if you want to turn your Bibles there, he's going to switch from triumphant victories to complaining. Have you ever been there? Mountaintop experiences to valleys. And that song we just sang, it's going to be very near and dear to your heart as the church gets more and more persecuted.

Because he's standing there with you in the fire, standing with you when the waves in the ocean overcome you. And one of the hardest things I think it was for me to learn about being a Christian, and I'm sure you've noticed this, is that it's not all a bed of roses. I learned that a long time ago.

This is a fight, this is a struggle, there's conflict, there's controversy, there's mountaintop experiences. Like I don't know if you're here Sunday, but I left here just, oh, this is close to heaven. And then Monday gets

here, and different things.

It gets difficult. If you have the article in front of you, bowing to the LGBTQ agenda, tolerance only validates sin, was actually pulled from our local paper. It was going to be in this weekend, it's not now, it's been pulled from Facebook.

So you might want to hold on to it, it might be worth some money someday. But the enemy is ramping up his attack, his assault on believers. And we know that Facebook does a lot of what they call shadow banning, where they'll, you know, videos that will have hundreds of likes will then have three, because on the back end they just hide it from everyone.

The media, entertainment, there's so many things that are coming against those who truly believe in Jesus. Amen? You can get through life and not have a lot of controversy as long as you don't get serious about Jesus. Serious about God's word, serious about holiness, serious about his standard of righteousness.

Then you're going to get persecuted. But why a song? The song of the slandered saint. But why a song? Because a song reflects joy, it reflects trust, and it reflects peace.

And that's what David would do, many Old Testament writers, especially in the book of Psalms, the whole book, is a lot of these are songs where people would actually sing from their heart and lift God up. It wasn't just writing, it was a joy-filled expression of what God is doing in their heart. C.S. Lewis famously wrote in *The Problem of Pain*, I don't know if you've read that book, he said, God whispers to us in our pleasures, he speaks in our consciousness, but he shouts in our pain.

It is the megaphone to rouse a deaf world. And conflict is going to sometimes rise us up out of our slumber, get us on the right footing again. I don't know if you've heard of a lady, I believe it was shared, John Piper shared her story, I think I've heard on Focus on the Family or different places.

Her name is Vanitha Reisner, and she went from sickness in infancy to childhood surgeries and bullying to relational heartbreak and the parental nightmare of losing a child. And she says, in suffering, I often see God most clearly, perhaps because I am more desperate to find him. Isn't that true? Your relationship with God is directly related to how well you pursue him.

Little pursuit, little relationship. And I wish it wasn't the case, but she is right on the money. In suffering, I often see God most clearly, perhaps because I am more desperate to find him.

And now she's suffering what they call post-polio syndrome. She says, as my body weakens, withers away, God has become more real and present than ever. And that's one thing that Christians can understand about pain and persecution.

You've heard me say it before, this isn't new, that it can drive you to the cross, drive you to worship times, drive you to prayer meetings, drive you to church, and drive you to God, and then you can look back and say, I didn't want to go through that, but I'm glad I did. And any time I get persecuted, whether it's any number of areas, it really makes me appreciate who God is. But the context for Psalm 7 is this.

It could be that Cush the Benjamite accused David of treason under Saul's leadership, because it begins like this. David sang to the Lord concerning Cush a Benjamite. So it could be, they speculate, that he was, this guy Cush was not very nice, and he would go to Saul and try to get David in trouble.

And they didn't mess around in the Old Testament, I'm telling you. When a king would be dethroned, they would kill the family of the heirs if they're fighting for the kingdom. And it was just a bloody, messy, the Old Testament is ruthless.

It reminds me of some third world countries today. If you go to, let's say, Syria or Iraq or what you're seeing, the rise of ISIS and what happened recently, it's brutal. It's Old Testament brutality.

So David knew this could eventually end his life, whatever's going on. So he opens in 7.1, Oh Lord my God, in you I put my trust. Now highlight that because you need to open your mornings with this.

This will get you back on track. Not, oh woe is me. Woe is me.

Here's another day. Oh God, I'm complaining. Why do I live here? My friends get to move.

And you look at Facebook and everybody's having fun, except me. But he clarifies it. It's a very good point.

Oh Lord my God, in you I put my trust. Save me from all those who persecute me and deliver me lest they tear me like a lion rendering me in pieces while there is none to deliver. So I don't know if you've been here, but there's a threat coming against him.

Maybe a relational issue. I mean it's hard for us because we read this and they take it up to the next level. You know, we've never had somebody pursuing you to kill you, most of us.

We haven't had, you know, being tore to pieces by lions and beasts and different things. It was a very difficult period to live in. So what he's saying, Lord, I'm putting my trust in you because there are those after me and they want to tear me like a lion.

So here's the key from this first point. You must have faith when praying to God. Prayer without trusting God is futile or futile, depending on how you pronounce it.

You have to have trust in God as you pray. And we've been talking about prayer the last few weeks. You must have faith when you pray to God.

Go to God believing that he will answer, believing that he hears you. But Shane, I don't see anything. Right, that's faith.

Faith is the evidence of things not seen. It's things we hope for. That's what faith is.

So we begin, we're ending this series on prayer, even though the message isn't titled prayer, it really is focusing on building our faith and trusting in God. And here's what we have to learn. Faith is like, how many of you have lifted weights before? And you get stronger, you get stronger, you get stronger, your muscle adapts to that.

That's what faith often has to do. It has to be challenged. And you want to say, God, I want to trust, Lord, I want to trust you with all of my heart.

Be careful, because how do you develop trust? You have to go through situations where trust is challenged, where trust is built up. I remember, it was 1950s, I believe, A.W. Tozer, maybe the 40s, he was a little bit young. He told a man, he said, oh, I want to live for God more than anyone in my generation.

And he said, Tozer, be ready to suffer. That is very true. There's what they call the furnace of affliction.

Have you heard that term before? The furnace of affliction. They would put gold into a furnace or precious metals, and the heat would bring out all the impurities. And what would be left would be the fine gold, the fine silver.

They would get rid of what they called the dross. It was not good. But they had to go through the furnace in order for that to happen.

So they call it the furnace of affliction, when the world or the enemy or whoever afflicts us. And through that affliction, you come out better and stronger and more in love with God and trusting him. See, the thought that Christianity is easy and carefree really was brought in, part of the American gospel, to be healthy and wealthy.

And Jesus just wants to be your butler and that genie in the bottle. And man, it's just wonderful. It's battle.

It's warfare. It's warfare. I wake up every day realizing I'm going to battle for my family, for my children, for this church, for our nation.

And I don't want to look back on my life and say I didn't do much. I thank God that he's called us to make a difference in our society, don't you? Could you imagine living your whole life and, well, I did get at work. I saved.

I retired. I've got a good 401k. I'm going to go, you know, just relax now and doing nothing for God? The Christian life is a life of battling and struggling, contending and building.

But you know, many of you that have worked out before, back to the muscle analogy, don't you feel better? I mean, when I can get up and I can go run for an hour or jog, I don't run. I should probably jog or walk fast. But I feel better.

I've done something, done something laborious. And I remember one thing I miss about construction, some people make fun of my construction background, like everybody should be a lawyer, I guess. But one thing I miss is getting home and you did something.

You know, you builders have built houses or done something. I was in heavy equipment. I was all underground utilities.

I did everything underground. Dugged for Southern California Edison, Southern California Gas. And you got off of work and you're dirty.

I'd use eight Q-tips, getting all the dirt out of my ears and nose and did something. You're created to do something. You felt good to do that work.

And now that's also what's happening you're seeing in America is this entitlement society. I don't know if you know what that is, but the reason socialism is popular now among young adults and millennials is because I don't have to work as hard. And doesn't that sound good? It sounds good, but it's not even biblical.

Because God rewards those who are diligent and work hard. And we're supposed to help those in need. I'm not talking about that.

But people will feel good about themselves when they contribute to society. Just getting a check in the mail and having a house payment paid and food paid and you just sit around and get a check in the mail all the time doesn't make people feel well. They don't feel like they've done anything.

And that's why a lot of times they're crabby or in a bad mood. And again, disclaimer, because I don't want to get, anytime we're talking about this, I get emails, people saying, well, you know, I'm the exception to the rule. Yes, yes.

We need to help people, but we are helping way too many people the wrong way. And there's something about working hard and making a difference. But I want to, this really stood out.

Oh Lord, my God, and you, I put my trust. For some reason I saw passion, position, and promise. Boy, that's a good sermon.

I found three Ps, three points there. But there's a passion when you go into prayer. If you just wake up just tired, and I guess I got to do this.

You think, do you think that's going to be dynamic? Passion. There has to be a passion. God, hear me this morning.

I got up this morning. I said, God, I need to hear from you. Just turn the little light on and, and just want to hear from you and read the word and God speak to me.

And there's a passion because you're hungry for it. This type of hunger is never satisfied. Is it? The hunger for God is never satisfied.

I want to, I have a thirst. I have a thirst for God that no earthly stream can fulfill. I've got a thirst for God.

No river here on this, on planet earth can fulfill that thirst. This is a deep thirst of, of deep calling deep. So there's a passion, but there's also a position.

Lord, my God, this really struck me this week because I thought about how many, do you know how many billions of people are on the earth? Of course, nobody knows. They speculate between six, 7 billion. Do you know what percentage can actually say, my God, my God, can you the, the, the, the, the gravity of that, the way you can call him God, your God, and you can come before God and say, my God, my savior, my King.

And he listens. So there's a passion. There's a position that he is your God.

And there's a promise. Lord, I put my what in you, my trust in you. So I really want to encourage people to enter prayer that way, to wake up with a passion, but Shane, I don't wake up for a passion for prayer.

I can guarantee it's because what you're feeding your mind the day before. Almost nine times out of 10, we can cultivate a passion and a desire for God, or we can quench it by how we live our life. Can you imagine saying, Lord, I'm turning off the television tonight.

I don't care if it's game seven. I'm going to read your word. I'm going to pray.

I'm going to, I'm going to have my office already cleaned and ready. I'll have the, the coffee or the tea ready or whatever it is. And I'm going to get up in the morning.

I've got my journal out. I'm looking forward to spending time with you. I'm going to get to bed early so I can get up early and meet you in the morning before I, and you're looking forward to, to that.

There's a, there's a passion. There's a position. God is your God.

And there's a promise. As you put your trust in him, he will see you through. But it's interesting there.

He said, avoid them from, or help me, Lord, don't let them rend me in pieces. What does that mean? Well, a shepherd would often see a lion or a beast take away a lamb. And so this, I'm sure he saw this before.

I've told you a while back, I saw my little puppy get taken by a coyote. And it's not a good thing to see. I cannot catch that thing if I tried.

He just grabs it and just takes off about 25, 30 feet away. And, and you, life experience, life experience will teach you how to pray. Life, oh, life will teach you how to pray.

The best, when you hear, do you ever hear people and go, that's a prayer warrior? Where did they learn that? They didn't learn it at, at school. They learned it through the school of hard knocks. They learned it through life's pressures, the travail of life, the difficulties of life.

So he says, Lord, don't let them rend me in pieces. And we think here, what father would remain silent when his son is being ripped apart by wild beasts? So that's how God, get that picture, get that picture in your head. I do, I have to, God, they're coming after your anointed.

God, they're ridiculing me. They're trying to pull us down. God, don't let them rip us in pieces.

Don't let them have their way. God, look, pray for our nation. Oh, cause you ain't pray that prayer.

God, look what they're doing to our children. Look what they're doing to those little boys and girls who need to be pointed to you, not to a sex change surgery. I can't even believe I'm saying this.

God, look what's happening. Cry, weep for our children and our grandchildren, the state of a nation. These little innocent lives that are being tossed to and fro and being used and abused.

Oh God, don't let them rip them apart. Don't let them rip my family apart. God, do something and say something.

And you call on God. Spurgeon said, we must be ready for trial, for a trial, for they will surely come. If God was slandered in Eden, we surely will be slandered in the land of sinners.

Gird up your loins, you children of the resurrection, for the fiery trial awaits you. Boy, they could write back then. In other words, put on your pants, get ready.

Get ready. This is battle. This is warfare.

This is why we're losing, because we don't understand that it's warfare. This is how I fight my battles, watching Netflix. This is how I fight my battles, staying busy.

I almost sound like Ronnie. No? Okay. Thank you.

I can't do Brant yet. Deep voice. Oh Lord, my God, verse three.

If I have done this, I have done what? If there is any iniquity in my hands. In other words, you go before God and you say, Lord, if there is anything in me that is not pleasing to you. How many of you pray that when you pray? When you go before God, and I do it often, Lord, is there anything in me that is not pleasing to you? And here comes that thought.

I got to deal with that. If I have repaid evil to him who was at peace with me, or if I have plundered my enemy without cause, let the enemy pursue me and overtake me. Yes, let him trample my life to the earth and lay my honor in the dust.

Why would David say all that? Well, he's just saying, God, if I've done anything wrong, I haven't. So what this guy is doing to me is not justified. God, would you hear my prayer? David was careful to guard God's anointed.

This is probably referring to where David could have killed King Saul twice. God told David, you're going to be king. Did you know that? God told David when he was a youth, that he was going to be king.

Samuel went to the house of Jesse, David's dad's house, and he said, I need to see your sons. And Jesse brought out all these sons, and oh man, this has got to be it. Because Samuel's looking at the eyes, looking at the appearance.

Oh, this has got to be God's anointed. Be careful who you think God is going to use. Often, he'll just switch it on you.

Connie West, or somebody, or me, or whoever. I mean, he just, the least likely, the least likely God will use. So anyway, Samuel was going, and he's going, not this one, not this one, not this one.

I must have missed God's will. I must have not heard him correctly, because it's not here. There's no one else? And Jesse goes, oh, there's a little lad in the back tending sheep.

And he said, go grab him. And when he saw David, he poured the oil over his head that signifies anointing of God. And the Bible says the oil flowed.

It was pleasing to God to anoint this man king. Now here's what's interesting. He was anointed, but he wasn't yet appointed.

I'm starting to sound like a TV preacher now. You're anointed, but you might not be appointed. But that's true.

That's true. He was called of God. And this might be for some of you, God has anointed you to do something.

Wait for his timing. Wait for his, wait. But Shane, what about if I miss it? You won't, because God pushes you when it's time.

God will open doors that no man can shut. He shuts doors that no man can open. Job actually says when he imprisons a man, there is no release.

When God does something, he sees it through. And David was called. He's anointed.

All right, what do I need to do? Go tend sheep for a while. But often knowing what you're going to do or knowing what God is calling you to do helps prepare you, because now you can start preparing for the weight of responsibility that you will carry someday. And again, quoting Spurgeon, as the shadow falls, I'm sorry, as the shadow follows a person, so envy pursues goodness.

This man was envious of David. It is only at the tree laden with fruit that men throw stones. If we would live without being slandered, we must wait till we get to heaven.

Let us be very needful not to believe the flying rumors which are always harassing gracious men. In other words, if you live for Jesus in this day and age, you will be harassed. You will be slandered.

Instead of us going, oh, oh, I feel so bad. That's kind of a badge of honor. Saying, okay, I'm doing something for, now remember, they can dislike the truth, but don't have them dislike you.

You should have a loving attitude, a gracious attitude, a humble attitude, but they're going to hate the truth that you proclaim, and they will slander you. You would be amazed at how many people have over the years and are currently trying to slander this church. It's stuff I even laugh at.

Like, where did they get that? They just make up stuff. They just completely make up stuff about that church. Oh, that's the cult up there.

Oh, they're into moralism, following all these rules, all this and all that. It's just a bunch of people that are disgruntled, slandering us. The LGBT community, which some of them I know, some of them I reach out to, I talk to them, but a lot of them call that just a mean, right-wing conspiracy theory, white supremacist.

I mean, they just start throwing all these things at you and slandering you, slandering you. Why? To try to discourage you. So, slander is going to come from anyone following Jesus.

So, it does beg the question, if you're not being slandered, if you can just go to work and nobody knows anything. Now, don't go get fired. You've got to use wisdom.

But when you have the light of Christ in you, you look a little bit different. People are going to see there's a difference there. And then verse 6, arise, oh Lord.

It's funny when the writers of the Bible say this. It's like, come on, God, get up. Get up, arise.

You ever tell your kids that? Come on, get up, we're running late. So, David's, come on, Lord, get up, we're running late. This is coming against me.

Come on, arise, Lord. Don't you do that? We don't say arise, Lord, but we say hurry up. I need to know by the month's end.

I need to know what's going on. I need to know, Lord, what to do. And many times, it's just wait.

Do what you're supposed to do. Show up on Wednesdays and preach. Show up on Sundays and preach.

Meet with people. Lead the church. Be faithful wife, be a faithful husband, tongue-tied tonight.

And do these things what I've called you to do. Just rest in what you already know to do. So, arise, oh Lord, in your anger.

Lift yourself up. Come on, God, get off the couch. You tell your kids that? Get off that couch.

Come on, do something. David's getting, and so, what I like about this is there's legitimate frustration. I say, come on, God, do something.

Don't let this drag on. And often, God will change my heart. Here's what happens.

I say, go get them, God. And I start to pray for them. Because do we really want God to go get them or save them? One of the things I'm praying for our legislators in this state is God either save them or remove them from office.

God, please, wake up. Wake up. Rise up for me to judgment.

You have commanded. So, the congregation of the people shall surround you for their sake. Therefore, return on high.

David may have felt that God was sleeping or inactive. Have you ever been there? God, you're not hearing me. This is not working.

I like what Psalm 121 says in the Berean Study Bible. Behold, the protector of Israel will not slumber or sleep. If you take anything away tonight, take that one.

The God you serve, that's why I love that word they use. Behold, the protector of Israel. The protector of his people.

That God never sleeps nor slumbers. He doesn't have to have seven hours of sleep. He's not resting.

He's not away somewhere. This is an ever-present help in time of need. You cry out and you call out to God.

But shame, he's not moving on my behalf. But at least he hears. At least he's saying, wait.

Wait. Wait on me. But what does waiting do? Those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.

They will mount up wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.

Those who wait on God, because see it's in the waiting time that my strength begins to get back. Isn't it interesting that Samson began to wait and began to tread with the oxen and his hair began to grow back. The anointing of God began to grow back on Samson's life.

As he waited on God, Lord, my eyes are gouged out. There's nothing I can do. But his anointing came back as he waited on God.

And that little boy took him by the hand. And he said he felt the pillars. He could literally feel the pillars of the Coliseum.

And he said, oh my God, avenge me for my two eyes and let this come down on the Philistines. Kill these wicked people. And the anointing of God came back on this man's life because he waited on God.

He was broken and humble and he pushed with all his might and the Coliseum came down. And I love what the King James says, the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his

life. Meaning he finished strong.

He messed up but God used him again. And he is saying here, rise up to the judgment you have commanded so the congregation, so the congregation of the people you shall surround you. God, the congregation needs you.

Have you said that before? God, my family needs you. God, this church needs you. And then verse 8, the Lord shall judge the peoples.

Judge me, oh Lord, according to my righteousness and according to my integrity within me. And it's interesting. Some people don't like this part.

They're like, well, David's saying, you know, he's righteous and there's integrity within him. But God says that he will give every man and woman according to the fruit of their doing, according to their ways. Where's their heart? Do they have a heart of repentance? And he said here, according to my righteousness, according to my integrity within me.

Oh, let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end. But establish the just for the righteous God tests the hearts and minds. See, I knew I read that somewhere.

The righteous God tests the hearts. He tests the minds. Verse 10, I love this verse.

This week it really just ministered to me. My defense is God. Your defense is God.

Yes, they will be, you will be outnumbered. You will be outfunded. You won't have many voices.

But you plus God is what? A majority. My defense is God. Yes, it looks like the political system is falling apart.

It looks like, is there any Christians left in the planet? Or at least in America? Of course, we know that. But you look around, we're outnumbered. The media, the fake news, you know, you know, you can't believe everything you read on the internet.

And it's like just all avalanche to school districts. The government is like, Lord, we are being overrun. God says, no, you're not.

I'm still on the throne. My defense is God. God, you're my strong tower.

That's why I said we will live that song out. There's another in the fire. When all hell's breaking loose and everything's coming against you, there is another standing by you.

When the waves of adversity come to take you over, there is another one holding back the sea. See, that's what God does. He gives us what we can handle and begins to, or actually gives us more than we can handle.

And we begin to trust in him and rely on him and look to him and say, you are my defense. How are you going to say God's my defense unless you've ever been attacked? He saves the upright in heart. God is a just judge and God is angry with the wicked every day.

Remember I talked about earlier the mountains and the valleys and he's changing his tone here. Arise, God. You are my defense.

And God judges. God judges. When my enemy bears down, my strength only increases often because God is there holding me up.

He is a just judge. He is angry at wickedness and sin. You need to know that this evening.

Just because we don't see a lot of things happening, God is angry at sin. He's angry at wickedness. And then verse 12, if he does not turn back, he will sharpen his sword.

He bends his bow. In other words, if he does not turn back, notice how it's a not a capitalized he. If he does not turn back, if the warnings that God puts out there, if that person doesn't turn back, did you know that God is gracious? I'm just reading in Jeremiah this morning.

I can't believe how gracious God is. He tells Jeremiah, go prophesy against these people. They're not going to listen to you.

However, could it be that they relent? I'm sorry. Could it be that they turn back to me and I relent the disaster that I'm going to have come upon them? Could it be Jeremiah preached to these people? So it's the same thing here. If he doesn't turn back, God will sharpen his sword.

He bends his bow and makes it ready. Well, does God really have a sword or a bow? No. What he's saying here, what he's saying here is that God does not shoot at random.

You're going to read, he makes his arrows into fiery shafts. God does not shoot at random. It's precision and it's precise.

He also prepares himself instruments of death. He makes his arrows into fiery shafts. See, you have to read all of God's word to get his, understand his true nature.

So many people do daily devotionals and they turn right to the scriptures they like. Oh look, God is love. Jesus forgives me.

Don't, don't cast a first stone. Love your neighbor. But you have to read it, the whole scripture to see what his heart is.

God has set his standard. If he does not turn back, I will sharpen my sword, I will bend my bow and I will make it ready and I will prepare myself instruments of death. He makes his arrows into fiery shafts.

So remember this, God sets a standard that you have to turn back to. Now I don't know if this is for anyone here this evening, but it might be. It could be that you're unhappy.

Could it be that things are not going well. Could it be that you've drifted from God and that God says, return back to me. God's not going to go, oh, that's right.

Let's compromise. I told you this Sunday, God's not in heaven saying let's make a deal. What's he saying? This is the deal.

This is the deal. We're not going to make a deal. This is the deal.

Turn back to me. He would cry out to the children of Israel. He would cry out to wayward nations.

He would cry out to his people. His cry goes out, turn back to me. But if you don't turn back, my judgment hand must fall.

Consequences must happen. Discipline must take place. And people say, but Shane, I don't understand that.

How could God do this? Here's why. Because God is truth. Once he sets truth in motion, it can't be discarded.

Then it becomes a lie. Then it becomes falsehood. So when God says, choose life that you may live, follow me, follow my commandments, your days will be well, I will be with you if you do these things.

And if we don't do these things, God can't go, well, you know what? Yeah, I take all that back. He sets truth in motion and truth will not return void. So that's why God's word is so important in these dire times.

We have to look to that. That's your gauge. And how many times did God say, if you turn back, I will relent.

If you turn back, I will relent. It's not a one time. He was constantly pleading with the people.

A man by the name of E.W. Hengstenberg, 1845, he said, so hard and stiff-necked and unabashed are the ungodly that however many threatenings may be urged against them, they will still remain unmoved. Have you ever met those people that are so prideful? Only God himself can move them. But in these words, he goes on to say, but in these words he forcibly describes how God's anger presses hard upon the ungodly, though they will never understand this until they actually experience it.

See, that's why God presses down on people so they experience that and they turn, they change. Like the pressure cooker, have you ever used those when the heat's turned up? Or pressure of a vice, vice, ow, okay. So when God turns on the pressure, that's when people hopefully respond.

And again, he makes his arrows into fiery shafts. In other words, he does not shoot at random. Remember that, guys.

He has a purpose. He is methodical. God is precise.

He does not miss it. He doesn't almost get it. He doesn't change course and change his mind and say, I could have things done better.

He's always on time. He's the on-time God. He's precise.

He's right to the point and according to his will. And then verse 14, behold. Behold means look at this, look at this.

The wicked brings forth iniquity. Yes, he conceives trouble and brings forth falsehood. That's what the wicked do.

That's what they're doing in our nation right now. They are conceiving trouble. They are bringing forth falsehood.

They are bringing forth lies. That's why so many, that's why I have a heart for the younger generation because they're believing lies. They hate our president.

They hate the direction of America because they're believing lies. Where do you get your information from? Ask them. Well, CNN and the Huffington Post.

Oh, well, that's not a good source usually. You have to go to God's word and you look at Christian character and you get the right information. Behold the wicked brings forth iniquity.

Yes, he conceives trouble and brings forth falsehood. He made a pit, dug it out and has fallen into the ditch which he has made. So the image is God will get the last word.

A foolish person, a wicked person, the people coming against you, they dig a pit. They dig their own grave. That's where that comes from.

They dig this up and they actually fall in what they were trying to prepare for you, Haman. The story of Esther. You remember that story? He builds these gallows.

He wants to hang Mordecai. He says, I'm going to hang that Jewish man. And it backfired on him.

The king hung him on those. So no matter how desperate it gets, no matter how hard life is getting, no matter what you're going through, remember God will have the final word. And I understand that might mean someday that he will not pull me out of the fire.

He might let me get burned and be with him sooner. This is really just resonating this week. Listen to that song, Another in the Fire.

I talked about this a few weeks ago. Remember those three Hebrew boys, Meshach, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. And they're in this fiery furnace.

And the king says, they're not burning. There's another one in the fire. But the reason they're in there is they said to the king, we will not bow down to this culture.

That's why I wrote the article. Bowing to the LGBT agenda is not good. Tolerance only validates sin.

And so they said, we will not bow down to you, king. In other words, we will not bow down to your system, your falsehood, your lies, your rejection of God. We will not bow down.

And our God will deliver us. That is faith. That is faith.

But you almost think they lost their faith. But no, they're wise. Here's what else they said.

But even if he doesn't deliver us. I love that part. I'm so glad that it's in the Bible.

Because he said God's going to deliver us. We're going to follow him faithfully. God's going to see us through.

But even if he allows us to die, we will not bow down to you, king. In other words, don't try to predict God. There's too many people, especially charismatics, often they'll try to speak exactly for God, what God's going to say, what God's going to do.

And then they get upset later because it doesn't unfold quite like they thought. The reason is a lot of times we like to add hamburger helper to the meat. But that is so important.

God's going to deliver me. God's going to get me through. I'm not going to jail.

This is not going to happen. But even if he doesn't, he's going to walk with me through the furnace of affliction. So either way, you're covered.

Either way, you're covered. You will not be let down, understanding that. So again, I want to remind you of this.

He dug a pit. He fell into it. His trouble shall return upon his own head and his violent dealing shall come down on his own crown.

Jeremiah Burroughs, they used to quote him, some of the Puritans. 1660 he lived. He said, it is reported of tigers that they enter into a rage upon the scent of fragrant spices.

Did you know that? So do ungodly men at the savor of godliness. That is so true. People rage at godliness.

When you talk about godliness and holiness and living for Christ, that smell is a stench to them. What smells great to you and what you love, it's a stench to them. It's a conviction of the heart.

It's a don't shine that light in my eyes. Get away from me. Remember, I know I've told you a lot, but I want to tell you again because I like it.

I like this part. But when I was younger, I would get ready. I already had a few beers.

I had my heavy metal music. I was heading out. I was going to go somewhere and do something.

My mom said, I'm going to, and I told my mom, you don't, you dare pray for me. I want to have fun tonight. Get away.

I don't want to see you. I don't want to run into a pastor. I don't want to run into a Christian.

I don't want to run into anybody as I've got highway to hell blasting and getting drunk and smoking pot and doing whatever. I don't want anything to conviction around me. I don't want you to talk to me about my walk.

I don't want you to talk to me about God. They hate the smell of righteousness. The culture hates the smell of God's word.

And then he goes on to say, I have read that some wicked nations who, when the sun shines hot upon them, they end up, they try shooting fiery darts at the sun. They want to get rid of that heat, get rid of that conviction. And then verse 17, he closes with this.

I will praise the Lord according what to my righteousness. I will praise the Lord according to his righteousness and I will sing praise to the name of the Lord. Most high.

This is so interesting how this song began, where it is in the middle and where it is now. He goes over valleys and mountaintops and this, I want to just read this to you from the treasury of David. From at the beginning, the dangerous stated and a prayer was offered.

Self-examination is carried out and a plea goes to the Lord. He hears the slander saint. The Lord clears his servant and he threatens the wicked.

The slander seen in a vision being a curse upon his own head while David retires from trial, singing a hymn of praise to his righteous God. And that is what is going to get you through life. The song of the slandered saint.

Yes, life is difficult but you begin to cry out to God. You begin to praise God. You begin to self-examination in your own life.

Good reminder, God has a purpose. He is methodical in what he is doing in your life. He is precise.

Did you know that random chance is not random chance? Random chance has to submit to God's sovereignty. And when you say good luck, you better say God's sovereignty. He's in control.

His kingdom will never be thwarted. His plans will never be stopped. He doesn't get frustrated, concerned or worried.

So what we have to do as a body of believers, we have to get back to the truth of God and who he is and begin to lift him up like I said earlier. Oh God, my God, hear my prayer. How many people on the planet can say that and truly call out to God? The God who created the universe wants to hear your prayers.

He wants to answer your prayers. He wants you to pray according to his will. He wants to give you peace and assurance.

He wants to give you the peace that surpasses all understanding. He wants to give you the fulfilled life. When Jesus said, if you believe on me, out of your belly will flow rivers of living water.

The abundant life that Christ spoke of. Abundance doesn't just mean plentiful and sitting at home and doing nothing. It's fulfilling, abundant.

I'm fulfilled because I'm doing what God's called me to do. Yes, I told you, I think a couple weeks ago, I'm going to walk to heaven with a limp. Maybe a broken shoulder and crutches and issues going, but you go broken because the battles, the battle of war has wearied you down, but it's not caused you to fail because you're trusting in God.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/31/SID31848.mp3>

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