

## Confidence in Stormy Times

### Psalm 57

Greetings...where for 7 Sundays, living rooms have been converted to sanctuaries of the Living God.

\*Notes poured in this week as dozens of people expressed thanks to our media/tech team. 3 examples:

*"New Hope Tech Team **YOU ROCK!** What appeared **seamless on our end** was like **scaling a mountain on your end!** THANK YOU! The church could not have left the building without each of you!*

*"You have made it possible for us to attend a church that has always made me feel like I just spent **an hour in Heaven!**"*

*"P.S. Your enthusiasm and spirit of worship is **more contagious than Covid-19!**"*

\*Also, a great amount of people wanted "Revival Blend Coffee" I mentioned last week.

\*Now you can **GET** Revival, **PRAY** revival, and **DRINK** Revival. In **partnership with Espresso Bay...**

\***Espressobay.com** praying for **Revival**; generously sending proceeds to support Mission India.

\*For the 6<sup>th</sup> time, we turn our attention to the book of Psalms, for Confidence. (**Psalm 57**)

*"Confidence in...Troubled, Anxious, Fearful, Deadly, Dangerous...and Stormy Times."*

#### 1. Life can be "Stormy", (v.1-3)

v.1: "...storms of Destruction..."

\*Psalm 57 is written **IN THE MIDDLE** of a **Storm**; it is life at its most challenging of moments.

\*During David's **70 years**, he faced **violent storms** that: **Disrupted life & Dismantled security**

\***Life was Disrupted.** Everything about his present was **upside down**; Nothing was the same.

\***Security was Dismantled.** Everything about the future **up in the air**; no idea how it would end.

\*IOW: The "**Storm of Destruction**" in **Ps. 57** is like our present crisis.

\*It has **disrupted** our life (robbing us of comforts), and **dismantled** our security.

\*And what makes this storm so difficult...it **blind-sided us**. Nobody saw it coming.

\***One N.H. Business owner wrote:**

*"Just last fall and end of the year we were all feeling pretty **bullish and optimistic** about life in general and the future [of our company]...And now, just 8 weeks or so later we are **fighting for the very survival** of the company...Wow!"*

\***Maybe this describes your present storm.** Life Disrupted. Security Dismantled.

\*Yet David writes Ps. 57 with confidence in the storm...based on 3 guarantees:

- **1<sup>st</sup> GUARANTEE: God is a refuge** (v.1)

*"1 Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me, for in you my soul takes **refuge**; in the shadow of your wings I will take **refuge**, till the **storms of destruction** pass by."*

\*David is in the MIDDLE of a storm he **didn't ask for; he doesn't like; he doesn't know when it will end; and he doesn't know what life will look like after it passes.**

\*Pretty much summarizes our storm. Many people feel life will irreversibly change.

\*A number of people have said things like: *"I just want this to be over."*

\*But instead of **Fear**, David turns to God for **REFUGE** in the storm.

\*IOW: He turns his attention to God, to get emotional and spiritual perspective.

\*When life is disrupted and turned **upside down**, he goes to God to get **right-side up**.

\*When his future is **shaken**, he runs to God whose kingdom is **unshakeable**.

\***One N.H. Grandma sent a letter about how God is her refuge:**

*"I'm **not sleeping** very well because I **miss** my grandkids and my great-grand babies so much. Not being able to see them is **so hard** for me right now. I **cry myself to sleep** most every night, **but talking to my Savior** is a big help; **He calms me** and it helps me to rest and fall asleep, and face the next day. I know I'm not alone because **He is with me** at all times."*

\*This is what David does. This is what we can do. **Cry out to our Lord for help.**

\*Bring our fears and worries of present and future; and trust He is with us at all times.

● **2<sup>nd</sup> GUARANTEE: God is at work (v.2)**

*"2 I cry out to God Most High, to God who **fulfills his purpose** for me."*

\*David has confidence in the storm because he knows: **God's purposes are not shaken!**

\*Even if the storm **shuts down** the entire economy, David **knows**: God is **open for business**.

\*Even if the storm **causes massive job loss**, David knows: God is **not unemployed**.

\***Do you believe this?** At the core of your conviction, are you confident that God will:

**\*Fulfill his purpose. Accomplish his plan. Build His church.**

\***One N.H. woman wrote an email, clinging to this truth:**

*"I am looking forward to **seeing what the Lord has promised to do** and thank Him in advance! I am making it my mission to reach out to people...sending them messages of faith and Scripture... messages of hope for the future...You are right: **He has this!**"*

**\*New Hope, this is a guarantee: Not one of God's promises has failed; not one of God's plans has changed.** He is working in **Big Ways** to "fulfill his purposes."

\*Who would've thought **God would accomplish his plans** through global storm?

● **3<sup>rd</sup> GUARANTEE: God will send "Stimulus" (v.3)**

v.3 **He will send from heaven and save me; he will put to shame him who tramples on me. **God will send out his steadfast love and his faithfulness!****

\*David has confidence in the future, though much is uncertain: **“God will...” 3x...**

**“Send from heaven”** – God is still sending help, and his shipments won’t arrive late!

**“Put to shame him who tramples on me”** – God will take what is evil, turn it into good.

**“Send out his love & faithfulness.”** – God will send massive stimulus signed by his name

\*New Hope, as we **look at the future and wonder how life will look**, here are guarantees:

\*Better than **Amazon Prime delays in shipping**, is God’s shipments which are never late.

\*Better than a **Payroll Protection Plan** to help keeps businesses open, is God’s **Payment Protection Plan** that paid for sins and keeps the doors of heaven open.

\*Better than a **government stimulus check** that meets a short-term financial need, is the **massive stimulus** that guarantees God’s love and faithfulness.

\*Hear this guarantee loud and clear: **WE CAN COUNT ON GOD DURING THE STORM!**

\***Last week, a local ministry sent us a note thanking N.H. for being the hands & feet of Jesus:**

*“In these uncertain times, being able to **count on** your gifts each month is **a beacon of hope** for us! Your gifts are keeping us going and **providing** the vital supplies and support our community needs right now...Thank you for being the **hands and feet of Jesus** through these difficult times. We need you now more than ever.”*

\*Know this: In our **uncertain and difficult times**, we need God more than ever. The confidence we have: **God is a refuge; God is at work; God will send stimulus.**

## 2. **...and people can be nasty,** (v.4-6)

*4 My soul is in the midst of lions; I lie down amid fiery beasts—the children of man, whose **teeth are spears** and arrows, whose **tongues are sharp swords**...6 They **set a net** for my steps; my soul was bowed down. They **dug a pit** in my way, but they have fallen into it themselves.*

\*Now we find out what is causing the **storm of destruction!** v.4 & 6 tell us that David is running to God for shelter because he is having a problem with... (ready for it?): **“People!”**

\***Pastor Rick reminds our staff often: “What business are we in?” People Business.**

\*Here’s the truth: The biggest storms of life are often caused by People Problems.

\***Disease** is nasty. **Unemployment** is nasty. **Financial hardship** is nasty. Even more nasty: People

\*David describes these people as **“lions and fiery beasts”** with **“sharp teeth/tongues.”**

\*You’ve heard: **“Sticks and stones will break my bones, but words...never hurt me!”**

\*It’s not true. Nothing cuts deeper than **harsh words, verbal attacks, and slander.**

\*David faced **massive storms that were caused by relational pain:**

\*Giants **mocked him**.

\*Politicians **attacked him**.

\*Friends **unfriended him**.

\*Parents **abandoned him**.

\*Brothers **slandered him**.

\*If **social media had been around**, David would have been the most **attacked person**.

\*And all of these attacks left David feeling **socially isolated**.

\***Here's the reality: People can be nasty in D.C...but also right here in T.C.**

\***Watch what David does. In the middle of the storm...and the middle of v.4/6, he praises:**

v.5: *"Be exalted, O God, above the heavens! Let your glory be over all the earth!"*

\*See that? In the middle of relational pain & social isolation, he turns his heart to God!

\*One **NH man wrote a letter this week of how isolation has turned him to God:**

*"I am very new to New Hope...Prior to Coronavirus and forced isolation, I took life for granted and ignored the important things in life. Isolation has forced me into a corner; **either I break, or I awaken**. I have chosen to live a better life and search for peace that a relationship with God gives. [New Hope] has helped me **reset my commitment** to be better and to work for a closer relationship with God.*

\*New Hope, in our time of relational pain and social isolation, we have a choice:

\*Either we **break...or awaken**? Either we turn from God...or turn to God?

\*In the middle of the storm, I encourage you: **Turn to God. Reset your commitments. Reorder time around a relationship with Christ.**

### 3. ...but two things about God never change! (v.7-11)

*7 My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast! I will **sing** and make **melody**! 8 Awake, my glory! Awake, O **harp** and **lyre**! I will awake the dawn! 9 I will **give thanks** to you, O Lord, among the peoples; I will **sing praises** to you among the nations.*

\*These 3 verses are a **worship leaders dream**. He Sings. He plays instruments. HE makes melody **(like Josh Groban...a song rises in his heart and he HUMS...thinking of the words.)**

**HUM: "BECAUSE HE LIVES...I CAN FACE TOMORROW...ALL FEAR IS GONE..."**

\*Even as the storm rages, David's heart sings a concert of praise to His God. Why?

**He sings, because 2 things about God remain unchanged!**

*10 For your steadfast love is great to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds.*

\***Two towers remain standing firm. Two rocks remain unmoved.**

- **God is Good.** His love is deeper than the ocean blue.
- **God is Faithful.** His faithfulness stretches further than the galaxies.

**\*Don't pass by this too quickly.** These 2 truths are at the core of our Christian faith.

\*When a storm of destruction comes, what we believe about these will determine our response:

**Is God Good? If he is,** we can trust His plan for us. **If not,** we will be full of fear.

**Is God faithful? If He is,** we can trust His promises to us. **If not,** we will fear the future.

\*These **two truths about God are helping one N.H. business owner, who wrote last week:**

*"We have laid off 2/3 of our staff, and are working with a skeleton crew in the office and in the field...But how comforting, in these difficult, distressing times to know the reality that **God is Love and God is Good, and He can't change!!**"*

\*This is our confidence. This is our hope. God is Good. God is Faithful. God can't Change.

### Action Steps:

#### **Take tears/fears to God.**

\*Your tears of present pain, and fears of future have a safe place in the Lord.

#### **Sanitize your Heart.**

\*With the emphasis on clean hands, remember the thing God wants most: Clean hearts.

\*The Bible says: ***"Wash your hands you sinners & purify your hearts...Draw near to God and He will draw near to you."***

\*It is interesting that the way we **draw near to God is by Him cleansing our hearts.**

#### **Every "Mouth" needs a Mask.**

\*Our Governor wants everyone to wear a mask to stop the spread of virus.

\*Our God wants us to know that **the tongue is sharp; it has the power of life & death.**

\*With our tongues, **we curse men, and with it we praise God who is forever blessed.**

\*It is not wise to voice opinions/comments/attacks on every issue; digital words included.

#### **Expect God's Stimulus.**

\*He will...He will...He will... Guaranteed. His Love and Faithfulness are 2 unchangeable realities.

#### **Exalt God in the Storm.**

\*The end of the matter...David **concludes Ps. 57 the way we should conclude all our storms:**

*v.11 Be exalted, O God, above the heavens! Let your glory be over all the earth!*