

All Things From His Hand

A Sermon on Psalm 60

by

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1. Introduction

2. The Hand of God Brings Affliction (vv. 1-5).

a. “O God, You have rejected us. You have broken us; You have been angry; O, restore us. You have made the land quake, You have split it open; heal its breaches, for it totters. You have made Your people experience hardship; You have given us wine to drink that makes us stagger.” (vv. 1-3).

i. The psalmist begins by bringing forth a series of complaints against God.

1. The context of this psalm deals with a military defeat—but the psalmist doesn’t look at the circumstances of the battle and conclude they did something wrong.

a. There is no record of the Israelites asking if they can make some strategic alliances with other nations, to build up their arsenal, or anything of the sort.

b. This will become incredibly important when we get to the end, but I want to draw your attention to the fact that all throughout this psalm, they recognize that God’s sovereign hand is at work in all things.

2. Notice how he frames his complaints against God in verses 1-3.

a. “O God, You have rejected us” (v. 1).

b. “You have broken us” (v. 1).

c. “You have been angry” (v. 1).

d. “You have made the land quake” (v. 2).

- e. “You have split it open” (v. 2).
 - f. “You have made Your people experience hardship” (v. 3).
 - g. “You have given us wine to drink that makes us stagger” (v. 3).
3. Seven times the psalmist looks upon their plight and recognizes that this affliction has come straight from the hand of God Himself.
- a. This makes all the difference in the world between a “fair-weather fan” of God’s sovereignty and one who truly “gets it.”
 - b. The book of Job shows that affliction, even demonic affliction at that, comes by the hand of God.
- ii. What shook the psalmist to the core was not that they lost the battle, but they had come face to face with the Sovereignty of God.
- 1. God had afflicted them to the point where everything lay in ruins and they were staggering about like a man who had too much to drink.
 - a. They don’t ultimately know why God has afflicted them as He has—but they knew it was because of His anger.
 - b. Yet the Israelites are not looking to reconcile this with what they already know about God.
 - 2. They recognize God has afflicted them—and what they do with it is just cry right back out to God for help in verses 1-2.
 - a. You have rejected us, Lord, restore us. You have split open the earth, mend it back together.
 - b. What they innately recognized was that there were not competing truth claims when it came to the ways God works.

b. “You have given a banner to those who fear You, that it may be displayed because of the truth.

That Your beloved may be delivered, save with Your right hand, and answer us!” (vv. 4-5)

i. Depending on what translation you might be using, verse 4 is rendered a couple of different ways.

1. In either case, the point is much the same: when danger arises, the Lord is the One we flee to.

2. God Himself is the rallying point, or banner, to all who are afflicted and we are to flee to Him for safety.

ii. As the Lord raises the “banner,” we fall back to the only place of sure safety and strength.

1. In spite of God being the One to bring affliction He does not leave us in ruin. He still calls us His “beloved” (v. 5).

a. It is quite easy for us to see our hardships and sufferings as if God has utterly abandoned us and no longer cares for us, but in fact the opposite is just the case.

b. It is when the danger overwhelms us that we see God is in fact more near to us than ever before.

2. When you recognize that the hand of the Lord is sovereign in all things—especially in your suffering—you will come to see that this same hand is the One that delivers you.

3. The Hand of God Demonstrates His Might (vv. 6-8).

a. “God has spoken in His holiness: ‘I will exult, I will portion out Shechem and measure out the valley of Succoth. Gilead is Mine, and Manasseh is Mine; Ephraim also is the helmet of My

head; Judah is My scepter. Moab is My washbowl; over Edom I shall throw My shoe; shout loud, O Philistia, because of Me!" (vv. 6-8)

- i. The psalmist begins by recounting the promise of God—and notice, this is not some ordinary proclamation of a king, but the King of all kings.
 1. From days long ago, they recall the promise that God, on the basis of His own holiness, revealed that He will accomplish what He has set out to do.
 2. The psalmist contrasts the people of Israel against their enemies to show His promises are sure.
 - a. These three nations were always at war with God and His people Fierce as they may be, they cannot revoke God's promises.
 - b. God owns the land and He will give it to whomever He pleases. He will go forth as a warrior for His people.
- ii. In every aspect, the psalmist is highlighting the fact that the sovereign hand of the Lord will demonstrate His might and power over all.
 1. They may have suffered a humiliating defeat, but in the end, they recognize that this was not because their enemies had triumphed over God and His promises.
 - a. It was God who afflicted them and it will ultimately be God who raises them up yet again.
 - b. All of it is based on the sheer promise of God to them.
 2. In much the same way, you may be defeated, dejected, demoralized, and everything in between—but if you are in Jesus Christ, the sheer fact of the matter is that God's promises do not depend on you.
 - a. Though you may be afflicted and brought low—the promises of Scripture ensure that on that final day, you will be exalted if you trust in Christ.

- b. At some point, we must turn the corner in seeing that God’s sovereignty is not merely a panacea to quell our emotions, but the occasion for joy in knowing God’s promises remain intact.

4. The Hand of God Delivers Victory (vv. 9-12).

- a. “Who will bring me into the besieged city? Who will lead me to Edom? Have You Yourself, O God, rejected us? And will You not go forth with our armies, O God? O give us help against the adversary, for deliverance by man is in vain. Through God we shall do valiantly, and it is He who will tread down our adversaries” (vv. 9-12).
 - i. In light of everything thus far, the psalmist looks back to his current circumstances and once more orients his heart to trust in God.
 - 1. Verses 9-10 are framed in rhetorical questions, and they are designed to highlight the all-important truth that verses 11-12 bring us to see.
 - 2. Even that great rival Edom will be put down—but only through the Lord.
 - ii. Thus, the psalmist cries out to God once more in verse 11. “O give us help against the adversary.” Why? “For deliverance by man is vain.”
 - 1. There is no salvation, or help, outside of God Himself. In the end, to find one’s strength outside of the sovereignty of God is a fool’s errand.
 - a. This is a profoundly easy thing to do—yet when all is taken from us, we find out what we truly trust in.
 - b. Yet it is, and will always be, God and God alone who can save us.
 - 2. “Through God we shall do valiantly, and it is He who will tread down our adversaries” (v. 12).
 - a. This is what it looks like to see that all things come from the hand of God.

