

Psalms 64

This evening - we're continuing our overview of the Old Testament book titled Psalms.

With this as our focus - let's open our Bibles to Psalms chapter 64 - and as we make our way to the 64th Psalm...

...I wanna begin by first pointing out that this Psalm was written by king David - - and for the purpose of corporate praise.

And while we aren't provided with the historical context surrounding the lyrics of this Psalm...

...what we do know is that David wrote this song at a time when he was wrestling with great fear...

...as he considered how his enemies were plotting to kill him.

It's possible that David wrote the lyrics of this Psalm - during the days when King Saul was trying to kill him.

It's also possible that David wrote this song - during the days of Absalom's rebellion.

Regardless of the historical context - what we can say for sure is that...

...David wrote this song as a prayerful petition to the Lord - so that he could overcome his fear of the enemy.

And as we make our way through this chapter tonight...

...we'll see how King David was able to shift his focus from the fear of the enemy...

...to the fear that enables us to walk in the wisdom of God.

As we consider King David's example - it's my prayer that our study of this Psalm will help us to realize that...

...the fear of man will only bring a snare - - and the fear of the enemy will keep us from trusting in the Lord.

In contrast to this - the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.

Therefore - we'll all do well to shift our focus - from the fear of man - which can destroy our faith...

...to the fear of the One - Who alone can save us from every enemy.

In order to explain my point - let's consider the lyrical content found here in the 64th Psalm.

Look with me beginning there at verse 1 - where King David writes...

Psa 64:1 To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.
Hear my voice, O God, in my meditation;
Preserve my life from fear of the enemy.

Here in the first verse of this Psalm - we find King David - presenting his prayerful petition - as he cried out to God.

And we must not fail to notice that - he didn't begin by asking the Lord to protect him from the attacks of the enemy...

...no - instead - he asked God to preserve his life from the
FEAR of the enemy.

That word - fear - found there in verse 1 - was translated from a Hebrew word - which can also be rendered - terror - - and dread.

It's for this reason that the scholars who created the Legacy Standard Bible rendered verse 1 in this way...

Psa 64:1 Hear my voice, O God, in my complaint;
Guard my life from dread of the enemy.

And the scholars who created the Amplified Bible rendered the words of David in this way...

Psa 64:1 Hear my voice, O God, in my complaint;
Guard my life from the terror of the enemy.

To sum it up with simplicity - King David was asking God to help him overcome his fear of the enemy.

And one reason why is due to the fact that - the fear of man will always result in the emotional bondage...

...that keeps us from walking by faith with God.

I like the way that King Solomon put it - in Proverbs chapter 29 - it's verse 25 - where he declared...

Pro 29:25 The fear of man brings a snare,
But whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe.

Here in this verse - we find King Solomon - using a synonymous Hebrew word for FEAR...

...as he assured his audience that - those who live in the fear of man - will be caught in a snare.

Conversely - those who trust in the LORD shall be safe.

Those who truly trust in Yahweh will be set securely on high.

And it's for this reason that we should exchange the fear of the enemy...

...for the fear of God that fills our hearts with hope.

I like the way that King Solomon explained it - in Proverbs chapter 19 - it's verse 23 - where he declared...

Pro 19:23 The fear of the LORD leads to life,
And he who has it will abide in satisfaction;
He will not be visited with evil.

For the sake of clarity - Solomon was using another Hebrew word - which was rendered - fear - here in our English translation.

And in this case - the word - fear - in this context - speaks of the fearful reverence - that results in respect.

And while it's true that the dreadful fear of man brings a believer into bondage...

...it's also true that the respectful fear of God helps us to abide in the hope of everlasting life.

I like the way that the Psalmist explained it - in the 147th Psalm - - it's verse 11 - where we learn that...

Psa 147:11 The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him,
In those who hope in His mercy.

That's right - the LORD is pleased with those who fear and worship Him -with awe-inspired reverence...

...and He shows favor to those who wait for His mercy and lovingkindness.

And it's for this reason that King David fearfully asked the Lord...

...to preserve his life from the dreadful fear of the enemy.

Not only that - but - he also asked the Lord to protect him from the secret schemes of sinful men.

Let's consider how he put it - here in the 64th Psalm - look with me beginning there at verse 2 - where King David declared...

Psa 64:2 Hide me from the secret plots of the wicked,
From the rebellion of the workers of iniquity,

Psa 64:3 Who sharpen their tongue like a sword,
And bend their bows to shoot their arrows—bitter words,

Psa 64:4 That they may shoot in secret at the blameless;
Suddenly they shoot at him and do not fear.

Here in these verses - we find King David - asking the Lord to keep him safe from the sinful schemers...

...who were secretly devising his destruction.

I like the way that Lancelot Brenton rendered the Hebrew found there in verse 2 - he put it like this...

Psa 64:2 Thou hast sheltered me from the conspiracy of them
that do wickedly; from the multitude of them that work iniquity;

In other words - David was rejoicing in the way that the Lord had already protected him...

...from the conspiracies of those who were scheming against him.

And from this perspective - David was asking for further protection.

I like the way that the scholars who created the New International Version of the Bible rendered verses 2 - 3 and 4 - they put it like this...

Psa 64:2 Hide me from the conspiracy of the wicked, from the plots of evildoers.

Psa 64:3 They sharpen their tongues like swords and aim cruel words like deadly arrows.

Psa 64:4 They shoot from ambush at the innocent; they shoot suddenly, without fear.

Here in this version of the Bible - we find the secret schemes of wicked men - being categorized as conspiracies.

And as we consider the concerns of King David - these conspiracies against him included...

...the slanderous speech of those who were spreading misinformation about him.

And not only that - but they were also attempting to ambush him...

...without any fear of attacking the anointed king of Israel.

This reminds me of the 36th Psalm - where King David writes...

Psa 36:1 An oracle within my heart concerning the transgression of the wicked:

There is no fear of God before his eyes.

Psa 36:2 For he flatters himself in his own eyes,
When he finds out his iniquity and when he hates.

Psa 36:3 The words of his mouth are wickedness and deceit;
He has ceased to be wise and to do good.

Psa 36:4 He devises wickedness on his bed;
He sets himself in a way that is not good;
He does not abhor evil.

According to King David - those who fail to walk in the fear of God...

...have hearts that are filled with hate - as they flatter themselves with foolish pride.

And whole it's true that their mouths are filled with wickedness and deceit...

...they also devise the works of wickedness - because they don't abhor evil.

It's for this reason that those who fail to walk in the respectful fear of the Lord...

...are also those who persecute the people of God.

Sadly - we've been watching this very thing playing out here in the US...

...as more and more unbelievers publicly call for the persecution of Christians - following the assassination of Charlie Kirk.

And I have no doubt that there are many Christians who are filled with fear...

...as we continue to watch the persecution of Christians being normalized - here in our nation.

It's possible that you feel like the unbelievers around you are persecuting you - because of your faith in Jesus.

There might be those who have sharpened their tongue against you like swords - as they aim cruel words like deadly arrows.

And it's possible that you're concerned about those who are trying to ambush you at work...

...or they might be trying to turn your family against you by spreading lies about your faith.

And the chances are - there are some here tonight - who are living in fear of the workers of iniquity.

If this sounds like your situation - I encourage you to remember what Paul wrote - in Hebrews 13 - its verse 6 - where he declared...

Heb 13:6 ...we may boldly say:
"The LORD is my helper;
I will not fear.
What can man do to me?"

Christian - listen - those who have a respectful fear of the Lord - don't need to fear those - who have no fear of God.

And the reason why is because - the LORD - Who is almighty King of kings - is our helper.

And while it might seem like those who persecute us have some sort of power over us...

...we must not forget that the God Who dwells within us - is greater than every enemy.

Here's how the apostle John put it - in 1st John chapter 4 - it's verse 4 where he declared...

1Jo 4:4 You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

That's right - the God Who dwells within those who trust in Jesus - is GREATER...

...than those who have made themselves the enemy of our Savior.

And with that being the case - we don't need to fear the secret schemes...

...of those who conspire against the servants of Christ.

In order to further make my case - let's consider how King David put it - here in the 64th Psalm.

Look with me - beginning there at verse 5 - where he declared...

Psa 64:5 They encourage themselves in an evil matter;
They talk of laying snares secretly;
They say, "Who will see them?"

Psa 64:6 They devise iniquities:
"We have perfected a shrewd scheme."

Both the inward thought and the heart of man are deep.
Psa 64:7 But God shall shoot at them with an arrow;
Suddenly they shall be wounded.
Psa 64:8 So He will make them stumble over their own tongue;
All who see them shall flee away.

Here in these verses - we find King David - describing those who were secretly scheming against him.

And and while they were certain that no one knew about their conspiracy...

...what they failed to realize is that - there is a God in heaven -
Who is all knowing.

And He is the One Who knows the inward thoughts and
the deep desires hidden in the heart of man.

And it's for this reason that King David rejoiced as he
considered how God was able to save him.

Let's consider again how he put it - here in our text tonight - look with me
again - beginning there at verse 5 - where David declared...

Psa 64:5 They encourage themselves in an evil matter;
They talk of laying snares secretly;
They say, "Who will see them?"
Psa 64:6 They devise iniquities:
"We have perfected a shrewd scheme."
Both the inward thought and the heart of man are deep.
Psa 64:7 But God shall shoot at them with an arrow;
Suddenly they shall be wounded.
Psa 64:8 So He will make them stumble over their own tongue;
All who see them shall flee away.

Here in these verses - we find King David - celebrating the fact
that...

...God was able to expose the secret schemes of the enemy.

And while it's true that they were conspiring to kill King David...

...it's also true that God was able to turn the tables...

...on those who were devising iniquities against His anointed king.

If I were to sum up these verses - here's how I would put it...

...the enemies of King David tried to kill him - - BUT GOD stopped them.

And listen - this - BUT GOD - shift in circumstances is a reoccurring theme...

...that we find throughout the Bible .

For example - it's in 1st Samuel chapter 23 - verse 14 - where we learn that...

1Sa 23:14 David stayed in strongholds in the wilderness, and remained in the mountains in the Wilderness of Ziph. Saul sought him every day, but God did not deliver him into his hand.

Saul sought to kill David every day - - BUT GOD did not deliver him into his hand.

God is clearly able to protect His people - from the attacks of the enemy.

We should also consider the shift in circumstances that Moses recorded in Genesis 48 - it's there where we learn that...

Gen 48:21 Israel said to Joseph, "Behold, I am dying, but God will be with you and bring you back to the land of your fathers

It was on his death bed - when Israel encouraged his son Joseph to realize that...

...while it's true that he was dying - it was also true that God was going to be with Joseph...

...as the Lord prepared to led the children of Israel - back to the land of promise.

We also find Joseph - describing the shift in circumstances that took place after his brothers sold him into slavery.

Here's how he put it - in Genesis chapter 50 - it's verse 20 where he declared...

Gen 50:20 ...as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive

Remember - Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery - because they were jealous of him.

BUT GOD used this - as a way to place Joseph in a position of authority - there in the land of Egypt.

And in this way - God shifted the circumstances for the children of Israel.

We find the prophet Isaiah - sharing a similar sentiment in the 17th chapter of his book - it's verse 13 where Isaiah declared...

Isa 17:13 The nations will rush like the rushing of many waters;
But God will rebuke them and they will flee far away,
And be chased like the chaff of the mountains before the wind,
Like a rolling thing before the whirlwind

Here in this apocalyptic prophecy - we find the prophet Isaiah - pointing to the day...

...when the enemies of Israel will attempt to conquer the land of promise.

But God will change the circumstances - as Christ Jesus returns - and rebukes the enemies of Israel.

We also find Paul describing the way that God shifted the circumstances for sinners like us through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

It's in Romans chapter 5 - beginning at verse 7 - where he declared...

Rom 5:7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die.

Rom 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Knowing that we are all unrighteousness sinners - who deserve the punishment of God...

...we can rejoice in the fact that - God stepped in and shifted the circumstances...

...through the substitutionary sacrifice of our Savior Jesus Christ.

I like the way that Paul put it - in Ephesians chapter 2 - it's beginning at verse 2 - where he declared...

Eph 2:2 ...you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,

Eph 2:3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

Eph 2:4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

Eph 2:5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)

It was the stain of original sin that caused us to become children of wrath - by nature.

BUT GOD decided to shift the circumstances - by providing us with a way to receive His gracious gift of forgiveness...

...so that those who trust in Jesus - can be saved.

As we consider this reoccurring theme that helps us to see how God is able to shift our circumstances...

...I encourage you to realize that - God not only knows about the evil schemes of the enemy - He is able to shift the circumstances.

If you feel like the enemy is conspiring against you - and if it seems like there's no help - let alone hope...

...I invite you to remember that God is able to shift the circumstances...

...in the lives of those who walk in the respectful fear of the Lord.

At the same time - I should also remind you that there is coming a day - when everyone will bow before the Lord - with reverential fear.

Let's consider how King David put it - here in the final verses of the 64th Psalm look with me - beginning there at verse 9 - where he declared...

Psa 64:9 All men shall fear,
And shall declare the work of God;
For they shall wisely consider His doing.

Psa 64:10 The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and trust in Him.
And all the upright in heart shall glory.

Here in the final verses of this Psalm - we find King David - bringing us full circle - back to the topic of fear.

And while he began this Psalm with a prayerful petition - by asking the Lord to help him overcome the fear of his enemies...

...we also find the king of Israel - concluding this Psalm by describing the day...

...when everyone will finally fear the Lord - with reverential respect.

I like the way that the scholars who created the Amplified Bible rendered verse 9 - they put it like this...

Psa 64:9 Then all men will fear [God's judgment];
They will declare the work of God,
And they will consider and wisely acknowledge what He has done.

Now - as we consider this day - when everyone will fear the judgment of God...

...I have no doubt that King David was referring to the day of judgment...

...when every knee will bow - and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Let's consider how the Lord described that day - in Isaiah chapter 45 - beginning at verse 22 - where he declared...

Isa 45:22 "Look to Me, and be saved,
All you ends of the earth!
For I am God, and there is no other.
Isa 45:23 I have sworn by Myself;
The word has gone out of My mouth in righteousness,
And shall not return,
That to Me every knee shall bow,
Every tongue shall take an oath.
Isa 45:24 He shall say,
'Surely in the LORD I have righteousness and strength.
To Him men shall come,
And all shall be ashamed
Who are incensed against Him.

Here in these verses - we find the Lord - describing the day when every unbeliever will be brought before the Lord.

And it's at that point in time when those who were enraged against our God - will be ashamed...

...as they bow before the almighty - and confess that He is the LORD.

I like the way that Paul applied this prophecy to the Lord Jesus - in Philippians chapter 2 - beginning at verse 9 - he declared...

Phl 2:9 ...God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,

Phl 2:10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,

Phl 2:11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Christian - listen - there's coming a day when the enemies of God will be brought to their knees...

...as they finally confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

And it's at that point in time when those who rejected Jesus...

...will be conquered by the King of kings.

Let's consider how Paul put it - in 1st Corinthians chapter 15 - beginning at verse 24 - where he declared...

1Co 15:24 Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.

1Co 15:25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet.

1Co 15:26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.

Here in these verses - we find Paul describing the day when the enemies of the King will be conquered.

And it's at that point in time when they will be cast into the lake of fire...

...where the flames will never be quenched - and the worm never dies.

It's for this reason that we should help every unbeliever to understand that...

...everyone will eventually bow their knee before the Lord Jesus.

That being the case - it only makes sense for every person to submit to our Savior - here in this world...

...so that we can escape the condemnation that will come upon those...

...who wait until it's too late.

Let's consider again how King David explained it here in our text tonight.

Look with me again - beginning there at verse 9 - where he declared...

Psa 64:9 All men shall fear,
And shall declare the work of God;
For they shall wisely consider His doing.

Psa 64:10 The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and trust in Him.
And all the upright in heart shall glory.

While it's true that every knee will bow before the Lord - as unbelievers are finally brought to a place of fear...

...it's also true that those who received the imputation of righteousness by faith in our Savior Jesus...

...will glorify God - as we rejoice in the redemption of the Lord.

And it's at that point in time - when we will forever be free
- from the fear of the enemy.

Until that day - I encourage every Christian to pray like King David...

...as we ask the Lord to Preserve our lives from the fear of the enemy.

And at the same time - let's make sure that we're walking in the fear of the Lord...

...so that we can shift our focus - from the fear that destroys our faith...

...to the fear of the One - Who alone can save us from every enemy.