

Surrounded But Not Defeated | Psalm 83

Psalm 83 urges turning to the Lord in prayer when facing overwhelming evil. It appeals to God, recalls his past deliverance, and seeks his glory.

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Automatic Shownotes

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Long Summary

Psalm 83 | Psalm 83 2026-08-30• Erik Raymond• Psalm 83 Main Point: When facing overwhelming evil, turn to the Lord in prayer. Outline: 1. Make your appeal to God (vv. 1–8) - Asaph opens with an urgent plea for God not to be silent. - He describes enemies who oppose both God and God's people. - Their aim is to destroy Israel and erase its name. - The threat is presented as overwhelming: many nations, united, and strong. 2. Base your appeal on God's Word (vv. 9–12) - Asaph asks God to act as he did in earlier deliverances. - He cites the victories over Midian, Sisera, Jabin, and later Gideon's victory over Midian. - These examples show God defending his covenant people through unexpected means and apparent weakness. - The prayer rests on what God has already revealed and done. 3. Pray for God's glory (vv. 13–18) - Asaph asks God to scatter the enemies like dust and chaff. - He prays that they would be humbled, come to know the Lord, and seek his name. - The goal is that God alone would be known as Most High over all the earth. - The sermon connects this to Christ's victory, his prayers in suffering, and the call to pray against evil while seeking God's glory.

Brief Summary

Psalm 83 | Psalm 83 2026-08-30• Erik Raymond• Psalm 83 Main Point: Turn to the Lord in prayer when facing overwhelming evil. Outline: 1. Appeal to God 2. Recall his past deliverance 3. Seek his glory

Tags

Psalm 83, Erik Raymond, Main Point, Lord in prayer, overwhelming evil, Appeal to God, past deliverance, Seek his glory, Psalm, Outline

Transcript

Prayer and Psalm 83

Facing Overwhelming Evil

Asaph's Urgent Plea

[3:23] Would you join me in praying after reading God's Word? Lord, we thank you for your Word, that every bit of it is your inspired Word, that you have given it to us for teaching and correction and reproof and training, that we'd be adequate, equipped for every good work. And so we pray that even from this psalm this morning, that you would equip us to understand your Word, but not only that, to apply it, help us to grow in this way. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

[3:54] Well, we come here to the 83rd Psalm. And if you noticed, and as Gideon just read that a few moments ago, that the intensity of this psalm is turned up. This is an intense psalm. The people in the psalm that the writer is speaking about are facing a lot of adversity, and he responds with prayer. It's also one that has pretty specific and gritty prayer requests that are made in it. So I think as we think through this, we're going to be thinking about what were the circumstances he was facing and how does this apply for us? So we're going to spend a higher amount of time trying to think about the original audience and what they were going through at that time. And then we'll make some application at the end. Usually we're weaving that application throughout. Out this morning. We're going to actually hold that off into the end so we can kind of see what's going on here. I think the main point, what you find in the 83rd Psalm, the main point is that when you're facing overcoming evil, turn to the Lord with prayer.

[4:56] That seems to be clear from the situation what's going here. And I want to show you how to make that appeal to God or how to respond in prayer. And it moves in three movements. First is make your appeal to God in verses 1 through 8, and then to base your appeal on God's word in verses 9 through 12, and then finally to pray for God's glory. So if you are facing evil or evil comes to you and you're facing it, how do you respond? You make your appeal to God, you base that upon what God's

word says, and you always are aiming for the glory of God. That's how the psalm works itself out. So let's think about what's going on in this psalm. Let's think about first your appeal to God. Make your appeal to God. What is going on here in Psalm 83? Well, you'll notice in the subscription right next to the number 83 in your Bible, it says a psalm of Asaph. So that's telling us who wrote this psalm. And this is Asaph. And we learned a little bit about him a little while ago when Pastor Timothy preached the 50th psalm. He wrote Psalm 50, and then he wrote.

[6:09] Psalms 73 through 83. So he's got 10 or 11 Psalms that he wrote. Who is he? Well, he's a Levite. He was a singer. And oftentimes his Psalms are reflective of the lament over the apparent prosperity of the wicked. So here he is, a godly guide living, and he is feeling the sense of the success, apparently, of the wicked. And he's saying, what is going on? This isn't the way It should be, God, I need you to do something. And this psalm finds itself in what we would call an imprecatory psalm, or actually praying God's judgment upon these enemies. So again, the intensity is turned up. It begins with something that most of the psalms begin with, is a prayer. And this prayer says right in the beginning, but you notice it's not a casual entry into prayer.

[7:06] But a very intense one. I'm guessing many of your prayers this week didn't begin like this as you call upon the Lord. Maybe it did. Maybe you did face a situation that required you to get right to it like this with an exclamation point type prayer. But that's what we see here. Look at verse one. Oh God, do not keep silence. Do not hold your peace or be still. Oh God. He's essentially saying hear and answer me. Give ear and act. Whatever you do, God, don't be still. Don't be silent. I need you to act. This is an emergency. This is definitely a 911 style prayer, right? This is 100% emergency. This is intensity. I need some help. He's not just shaking the tree. He is pulling on it. Come on, let's go, God. I need you. Rousing him to action, so to speak, through his prayer. Well, why would you have a prayer like this? What's going on that would get the psalmist Asaph to get his heart rate up so high that he's beginning his prayer like this? What is he facing? That's what he shows us in verses two through eight. He shows us what he's facing, the difficulty.

[8:24] There's these enemies that are established here in verse 2. And we know why this is such a big situation because of who they oppose. Notice there's two markings of who they oppose. First is that they are called God's enemies. Look at verse 2. For behold, your enemies make an uproar. Those who hate you have raised their heads. And then again in verse 5, they conspire with one accord against you, they make a covenant. So that's the lead foot, the front foot that the psalmist is leaning in here. The issue here, why he's so urgent about this prayer request, is because these enemies of God have reared their ugly heads, so to speak, and they're coming after God's interests. And so he's saying, God, you would have particular concern about what's happening here, because these are your enemies. In fact, the reason why they have roused themselves and making an uproar and raised their heads is because they hate you. That's who they are. So he believes that God would be particularly concerned about what these people are doing.

[9:42] Because they're enemies of God. That's the first aspect. But then there's another aspect of it to why he's so, urgent with this appeal and so intense is because of their relationship of opposition to

God's people. Look at verse 3. They, that is the enemies, lay crafty plans against your people. They consult together against your treasured ones. Then we see it again in verse 4. They say, come, let us wipe them out as a nation. Let the name of Israel be remembered no more. So now he's saying that the reason why he's so urgent is because they are coming

[10:25] after God's people, his treasured ones, his nation, Israel. He wants to wipe them out. So they're opposing God and they're opposing God's people. And in the psalmist's mind, there's solidarity between those two. God's interests and God's people are united. You're attacking God, you're attacking God's people. You're attacking God's people, you're attacking God. God is concerned with his people.

Praying by Scripture

[10:55] The whole underlying premise to this prayer and this concern is the fact that God has a covenant relationship with his people. That is, that God made promises to his people. He said that he will do certain things for his people. He was required his people to do certain things. He chose Israel to be his nation. So the historical setting of this is in the nation of Israel. It's before Jesus has come. The time of Jesus' birth in the New Testament church. This is ancient Israel time period, after the time of David. And for these people, they're a nation that's trying to be preserved as a nation. And by the way, the important purpose for Israel was to be preserved as a nation so that the Messiah could come through Israel. So the implications here are disastrous. If these people, these enemies succeed and they wipe Israel out, what do they effectively do?

[11:56] The promises are gone. The chance of salvation is gone. It's not just the people are gone, but the whole hope for the whole world hangs in the balance. So if these enemies succeed, God's plans are thwarted. That's what's at stake here. This covenant relationship as they oppose God and his people. That's why he's praying. He believes God would have a vested interest in answering this prayer. And we see what they aim to do in verse 4 is wipe them out and destroy this plan. This plan has been God's plan since before there was time. God made a plan that he would save his people. And he announced in time, right when Adam and Eve sinned in Genesis 3.15, that he would save his people.

[12:47] But he also announced at that time that there was going to be a battle, a long battle between the offspring of Satan and the offspring of Eve. And there's going to be a constant pressure and pursuit by Satan's people, Satan's workers to snuff out the offspring of Eve, the promise. Just picture the promise as a flickering light and just a continual attempt to take the oxygen and just wipe it out and snuff it out. The light is the promise and the people are the ones who keep the torch of the promise. Israel is keeping the torch going.

[13:27] And as the enemies come to wipe them out, it would take out the promise.

Deborah and Sisera

[13:32] And so obviously, Asaph is wrapped up in this personally, but bigger picture is God's promise. That's why it's so urgent. There's another aspect to why it's so urgent is it's because it's quite overwhelming for the person for Asaph notice the way he layers this in in Psalm 83.

[13:57] In verses 6 through 8, he lists different people. And it's not just one enemy. It's not just, oh, it's the Canaanites, it's the Assyrians, it's the Babylonians. This is a whole string of peoples. In fact, there's 10 of them. 10 listed. And it's the people all around. It's kind of like the bad guys, the villains against Israel throughout Old Testament history. It's like he's marshalling all of these enemies and he's bringing them together. And he's showing how big they are. It's bad enough to have to fight and deal with one or two of them, but all 10 of these guys all together.

[14:39] And then he adds in Assyria at the end. Verse 8, Asher has also joined them. They're the strong arm of the children of Lot. What's the point? These guys are many and they're strong. And on top of that, verse 5, they're united. They're of one mind. They're very strong, and they're coming after them. This is a very strong army coming after them, and they want to do harm to Israel. What's the conclusion? Asaph and Israel are saying, we're in big trouble. We are in big trouble. We are facing overwhelming evil. And what do you do? When you face overwhelming evil, Asaph shows us, you turn to the Lord in prayer. He brings it to the Lord in prayer.

[15:35] So that's the first move. When facing overwhelming evil, turn to the Lord in prayer. Make your appeal to God. Second, base your appeal on God's Word. How do we even know? How do we even begin to pray in a situation like this? We're in desperate trouble. Self-interest would say, save me. I need help. That's not hard to figure out. If you're in trouble, you call out for help. But how do we know God wants to help us? How do we know we're on the right side? And how do we know that God would even care and show up and defend us? Those are the types of questions. Well, how would you know anything like that?

[16:16] How would you know that God would help you? How would you know that God helps people like you? How do you know that God actually defends against this type of thing?

[16:28] This book, the Bible, the Bible teaches us how to pray. The Bible is God's word. This is what he's given. We can learn a lot about God

[16:39] in nature, but we cannot learn enough about God in nature to worship him rightly. You don't know that you need to be saved by watching the sunset. You know there's a God that should be worshiped, but you don't know enough about how to be saved. You need this book. The Bible is God's sufficient word. It tells us everything we need to know about God to love him, to serve him, to worship him, to obey him. He teaches us how to get saved from our sin, how to follow him faithfully, how to live as a student, how to live as a teacher, how to be a mom, how to be a dad, how to be a pastor, how to be a church member. Anything we need that is either explicitly laid down in the scripture or by good and necessary inference found in it.

Gideon's Impossible Victory

[17:28] We can read the scripture. We have what we need. So we're in a situation like this. Asaph's in trouble. What do you do? You read the Bible. And this is what Asaph does. He reads the Bible. And essentially he says, do it again. Do it again. Do what you did before, again, right now. Do it. That's his prayer. But he's basing this appeal on what God's word says. And to do this, he gives two surprising stories of triumph.

[18:02] They're not surprising that he chose them, but they're surprising to the people in the stories. It's really Judges 4 through Judges 8. These are the stories that he gives us in Psalm 83, verses 9 through 12. Look at verse 9.

[18:21] Do to them as you did to Midian, as to Sisera and Jabin at the river Kishon, who were destroyed at Endor, who became dung for the ground. What's going on there? Well, if you're familiar with your Bibles, you can flip back to Judges 4. I'm going to highlight a couple of verses. Studying this this week made me want to preach through Judges because it's such rich stuff to see. And such sobering stuff to see. I'm going to highlight a few of the verses, but we can't do an entire sermon on these two stories. But we can show that there's solidarity between why Asaph picked these two.

[19:06] Judges, the book, essentially, every man does what's right in his own eyes. There's no king in Israel. God is not feared. And it's just this continual cycle of people sinning. God raises up a judge, delivers the people. The people respond with joy. And then they go right back to sin again. God rings up another judge, delivers his people and this just keeps going. What happens in chapter four is Ehud had just gone. He's died and now there's more sin and God's gonna raise up another judge. But as he's doing it, we see in chapter four.

Pray for God's Glory

[19:40] There's a king from Canaan in verse two, Jabin's the king of Canaan. And he has a commander, essentially a general of the army, Sisera, who is leading this, and he becomes a main character in the story. And they're oppressing and opposing God's people. Look at verse 3.

[19:59] The people of Israel cried out to the Lord for help, for he had 900 chariots of iron and oppressed the people of Israel cruelly for 20 years. That sounds like Psalm 83. Strong army, lots of oppression, long duration. That's what's happening. So God's going to do something. What does he do? In 4 through 9, he raises up a prophetess named Deborah. And Deborah is faithful, and she seeks the Lord. And she basically directs the general in the Israeli army to move the troops and then eventually attack and says to him, essentially, you're not going to get the glory for this. God's going to actually win this battle through a woman. And she's not talking about herself, but somebody else. And so the enemy is mounting and this leader, Barak, leads them out. They end up getting confused and running away. And Sisera, verse 7, runs off to escape. He says, the Lord will draw out, well, via Deborah,

Sisera, the general of Jabin's army, to meet you by the river, Kishon, with his chariots and troops, and I'll give you in his hands. And so that's what ends up happening. And then verses 9 through 14.

[21:21] Ends up going further down. And then Sisera ends up finding out that Barak, the leader, had gone out to Mount Tabor. So he ends up running away and trying to escape. And he gets away from everybody. And where does he happen to go? It says in verse 17, he fled on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber, the Canaanite, for there was peace between them. And so Jael says to him, she goes out and meets Sisera, says in verse 18, turn aside, come into the tent. She goes in. He asks for some water to be refreshed. And this is one of those stories you never forget once you read it.

[22:01] He ends up giving, she gives him the milk, takes care of him. And then it says that he asks if there's anyone there. And then JL verse 21, the wife of Heba took a tent peg and took a hammer in her hand. And she went softly to him and drove the peg into his temple. And it went down into the ground while he was lying fast asleep. So he died. And then later on, Jabin, the king of Canaan, was also destroyed and captured. So what's to say? Big, strong army, oppressing God's people, aiming to wipe them out. God delivers them through this oppression, through a surprising means. God does it. And chapter 5 is all praise Coming from Deborah to God For hearing that and delivering So when Asaph says, Do it again Lord Deliver your people Against this strong army That has come after us.

[23:02] Do it just like you did in Midian. Deliver us in a way that shows that you are faithful. Even though we are sinful, you are faithful. And chapter 4, 23 summarizes it. So that day, the gods subdued Jabin, the king of Canaan, before the people of Israel. And the hand of the people of Israel pressed harder and harder against Jabin, the king, until they destroyed Jabin, the king.

[23:27] Great story. God's faithfulness to deliver his people, even through unlikely, apparently weak, comparing the woman in the tent to a strong army. Apparently weak means, but yet God used her strongly. Then in Judges 6-8, you have another story.

The Gospel Through Weakness

[23:49] Of course, the cycle continues. Chapter 6, verse 1, the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. And the Lord gives them into the hands of the Midians for seven years. And what happens? In verses one through five, we see that Midian continues to oppress them. Verse five, they would come up like livestock in their tents. They would come up with their livestock in their tents. They would be like locusts in number. So many of them. They chased Israel out of their homes made them hide in caves. They're displaced.

[24:21] And there's so many of these enemies that are coming after them, and it's just this persistent oppression. And then chapter 6, verse 16, God's going to raise somebody up. Who does he raise up? He raises up this man named Gideon. And when Gideon finds out about that, verse 15, he says, how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I'm the least in my father's house. I'm weak. I can't do it. Just like Jael. How is somebody going to deliver against this strong army. God's

going to do it through apparent weak means. And here comes Gideon asking for faithfulness of God. And God says in verse 16, I will be with you and you shall strike the Midianites as one man. And that's what ends up happening. But not before God proves his point again, that it's he that delivers his people. He is faithful even when they are outnumbered. And to make that point, chapter 7, God whittles the army of Gideon down. He starts out with an army of 32,000 men, a good army to battle against it. But that's not the way that the Lord wants to win the battle. He whittles it down to 10,000. And then finally to 300 men. And it's through Gideon and his men that God brings the victory over them.

[25:46] And they fear and they run and then God triumphs them powerfully. We see it again in chapter 8, verse 28, the end of the story. So Midianite was subdued before the people of Israel and they raised their heads no more and the land had rest 40 years in the day of Gideon. God's faithfulness. Again, against overwhelming odds, through seemingly insignificant number. On paper, they should have no business winning. But God was faithful to deliver his people, keep his covenant promises. No bully is too big for God. God can beat them back, and he does do it. And so Asaph is saying, do it again, Lord. Do it again, just like you did. In Judges 4, with Deborah and Jael, just like you did in Judges 6-8 with Gideon, defeat that enemy. So the appeal that he makes to answer, to be strong, to not be still, is based upon God's word. He's appealing based upon what God has done. Third, pray for God's glory. Pray in light of God's glory So now we're back to Psalm 83 Let's conclude it And then we'll think about application.

[27:14] His prayer in verses 13 through 15 is essentially defeat them, defeat the enemies. He uses, he marshals very visual language for us to see how he wants this done. He wants those who seem like they're overwhelming opponents to be overwhelmed by God. Notice what he does. He calls for the high wind. He calls for fire. He calls for storm. He calls for a hurricane. Look at verse 13. Oh my God, make them like whirling dust, like chaff before the wind. No anchor, just blown away, just gone, just like a high wind, bringing the tops off of the flower. Bring it all away. As fire consumes the forest, as the flame sets the mountains ablaze, so may you pursue them with your tempest and terrify them with your hurricane. It's like lighting on fires, just uncontrollable as the fire moves across.

[28:10] And so too with hurricanes. We've seen this in the last 10 years, regrettably, all kinds of wildfires in the West and hurricanes in the South and up the coast.

Applying the Psalm Today

[28:21] And what happens when these things come? There's no stopping it. It's just enduring it, doing your best to endure because there's a power greater than something we can control. And that's the imagery that Asaph is marshalling here. God, for your glory, bring this judgment and do it. Well, what does he want it to look like? He wants them to be humbled. Look at verse 16. Fill their faces with shame, that they may seek your name, O Lord. Let them be put to shame and dismayed forever. Let them perish in disgrace, that they may know you alone, whose name is the Lord, are the most high

over all the earth. This is what his prayer is. His prayer is that they would be humbled. The accompanying shame would be because of their pride and the way that they have opposed God and attempted to thwart his plans. But he doesn't just pray for their destruction as though that's part of it. He prays from shame to seeking. Notice what he said.

[29:20] Verse 16, fill their faces with shame that they may seek your name. Cause them to be aware of their sin and their pride that they would seek you. This is just like praying for any unbeliever or anybody that you'd be praying for. Lord, would you cause them to see their sin that they would seek you? It's the prayer of asking that God would turn their hearts from arrogant opposition to God to humble worship of God.

[29:53] But not only that, he takes it up the next level. Let them be put to shame and dismayed forever. Let them perish in disgrace. If that opposition to God continues, Lord, bring them judgment if they will not repent. And this looks a lot like eternity in hell. Dismayed forever, perish in disgrace. It is the idea of just ongoing judgment. And why? Why would he pray such heavy, weighty prayers? Verse 18, that they may know that you alone, whose name is the Lord, are the Most High over all the earth. That they may know that there is a God in heaven who rules and reigns. Lord, would you show them who, like Pharaoh, think that they are invincible and that there is no Lord? Who is the Lord that I should fear? Show them who you are by defending your people and thwarting their plans, that they would bow the knee. This is a prayer for the glory of God. There is no fear of God before their eyes, so there is no concern for any of God's interests. God, humble them. Bring them low. Very similar to praying the words that Jesus taught us, Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

[31:11] We might hear Asaph's psalm and think, whoa, that's heavy. That's a heavy, heavy psalm, and it is. But then we read Jesus' words in Matthew 6, and we think, that's a good prayer, and it is, but equally heavy. For if the kingdom of God is to come, then he must take it by overcoming those who do not do his will on earth as it is in heaven. He does that when he conquers us of our sin, and we go from doing our will to doing his will. And then big picture, if we want God's kingdom to come, then he's going to have to displace kings and kingdoms and constituents that do not honor him. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven, is a subversive prayer, a domination of Christ over this entire world to rule and to reign, as he deserves to be done, which is very similar to Asaph's prayer.

[32:18] So pray for God's glory. How do we think about this? Well, how in the world, before we think about application, I have two application points, but I got two gospel connections, two connections to the gospel, because what do we do with this? I mentioned we're not in Israel. We're not Israelis. We're not the nation of Israel or the church. So how do we think about this? Two things that help us with this, I think, from the standpoint of the gospel, is, one, And this psalm helps to train us of how to receive the gospel. It trains us on how to receive the gospel.

[33:00] Because what happens in the gospel is much like what the psalmist is praying

[33:03] for and is illustrated in the examples of Judges 4 through 8. A deliverance from strength via apparent weakness. A deliverance from strength via a parent with weakness. There's overwhelming power opposing the people of God in Psalm 83. And there in the life of Jesus was overwhelming power opposing him. Just think, even as his young days as a child, Herod was aiming to destroy all the children, all the male children that were born in his region. So much so he had to flee to Egypt. And then God brings him back. The seed of the serpent was hotly pursuing Christ in his infancy. His life and his ministry was hotly pursued. How many times in the gospel do they want to kill him? But Jesus is protected and moves away. So finally, when the Jewish government and the Romans finally prevail in the end to have him delivered up to death. And it looks like weakness because Jesus is arrested and surrounded and tried. It does look like weakness. How is he going to be delivered?

Pray Against Evil

[34:18] And then to take it even more so, he looks like absolute weakness because he's hung on a cross. He's nailed to a tree and people are mocking him. If you're the son of God, come down from that cross. He trusted in others. How's God going to deliver? The whole thing is a big joke to people. How is this one, this weak one going to deliver against this strong army. How's that going to happen? And if that wasn't enough, he bows his head in death. Has there ever been an enemy more consistent and undefeated than death? There is Jesus upon the cross. He bows his head in death and he dies.

[35:05] But on the third day, God shows that he knows how to deliver his people according to the promise. For on the third day, he rose from the dead, stood up, and walked around and proclaimed God's victory. A far greater victory than in Midian or, on the river Kishon. He demonstrated his victory over sin, Satan, and death. So, the gospel, this passage strains us to receive the gospel as that truth that is not about our strength and our ability, but God's strength through apparent humble means. See, this is where it hits home.

[35:52] Jesus offers salvation to everybody who will receive it. And his condition on that is that you have to receive it from him, meaning there's nothing you can do. It's really amazing when you think about it. He's offering it to all people. Anybody who would turn from their sin and receive him, you have to admit that I am a sinner and I have no way out of this thing. So what in effect Jesus is saying is, I will save you if I'm not beneath you. There needs to be a humbling to say, I need a Savior just like Jesus. And he will save you if he's not beneath you. And everybody who has bowed at the foot of the cross to receive Christ as Lord has said, no, no, you're not beneath me. I'm far beneath you. I sit under you. You're king. But the one who discards him, and friend, if you're discarding Jesus and rejecting him today, you are in effect saying, I don't need you.

[37:03] Good person, good teaching, I'll grant it, but Savior is too far because I don't need to be saved.

[37:11] He's in effect beneath you. This psalm shows us that God delivers people through apparent weak means as people rejoice and receive his good gifts. Receive him today.

[37:26] Brothers and sisters in Christ, rejoice in the truth that you've been delivered, from your great enemy, sin, Satan, and death through Christ. Second, Christ's connection is that Jesus models this very prayer, this very psalm in his prayer over and over again. And he continues, his life was facing evil, and he continued over and over again in his life to pray to God. Didn't he? Just over and over again. Whether he's praying all night, he's praying in the day. We see him in John 17, facing the cross, praying to his Father, restore to me the glory that I had with you before the world existed. I accomplished your will on earth. I've done what I'm supposed to do. Lord, I'm facing evil. Raise me from the dead and bring me back into heaven. and that's his prayer. Or in the Garden of Gethsemane, as he cries out to God about the cup being removed, or upon the cross as he cries out, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Over and over again, facing evil, he turns to the Lord in prayer, even facing the evil of those mocking him. What does he say when they mock him? Do you remember? Father, forgive them, for they know not what they did.

[38:43] It sounds an awful lot like, fill their faces with shame, that they may seek your name. Father, forgive them.

[38:54] That's Jesus. He models it in his life. This is how you pray. So he trains us to receive the gospel, and he shows us at every turn how to pray in a way when facing evil. So what about for us? How do we think about this? For application. Well, I mentioned earlier, and this is an important distinction because I think a lot of people get this confused today, especially in a very politically charged day and age that we're in. The assumption automatically for people is nation of Israel equals my country.

[39:34] So wherever you are, you automatically think the promises of God in the Old Testament to the nation of Israel automatically apply to your country. And I would just say, we're in America, it's wrong to automatically import Israel's Psalms to support the national interests of the United States of America. That's just wrong. It's bad hermeneutics. It's bad logic. It just doesn't apply. The nation of the United States of America, there's no indication that that is an eternal nation of God. Israel had promises associated to them as a theocratic monarchy, and they served their purpose. They brought Christ here. But it is just as irresponsible to take these promises and these statements and apply them to the United States of America, assuming we're on the side of righteousness, as it would be due to it for the People's Republic of China, or the United Kingdom, or Argentina, or Mexico, or Brazil, or any country.

[40:46] Because every country is flawed on their face, and no country has been promised by God this eternal blessing. And it would be wrong. So what do we do? We don't pray these psalms? We shouldn't use these? We definitely shouldn't assume that all of the psalms would apply to our countries, whatever that country might be. But there's still use for it. How? Well, I think it's correct to pray psalms like this or other imprecatory psalms in light of all of those who oppose God's rule and attack his design. That's evil. Opposing God's rule and attacking his design is evil. So it would be right for you as a Christian to be appropriately exercised when you see that and not fall off the side of two extremes. The other side is, well, one side is absolute hopelessness. God has lost it. And the other side is complete apathy. It doesn't matter. The right response is to see evil and respond to it with

appropriate indignation and asking God to thwart it and to restore his glory in it. So for example, a recent situation in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that would warrant this type of prayer.

[42:11] Within the last month, Governor Healy removed all restrictions on abortion. So that means formally there was restrictions after 24 weeks in Massachusetts on abortions. Governor Healy effectively removed that. So there's now no cutoff for abortion. It's all left to the doctor's discretion, even at the very end of pregnancy. That is absolute evil.

[42:40] And it would be right to pray against us that God would reverse that, that people would know that God is a God alone, that his name is the Lord and that these plans would be thwarted. So things like that should exercise us and we shouldn't be apathetic and we shouldn't be defeated, but we should pray in the face of evil.

[43:03] Other, there's more, but that's an example that's close to home. There's also persecution that's facing the church. In America, we face relatively little. Even in a biblically illiterate area where people are largely indifferent or polite, impolite, it doesn't matter. It's not the issue. There's real persecution. For example, in Algeria, churches are being closed at an alarming rate where it's illegal to be a Christian. And they're facing persecution and people being removed from their homes. In Mozambique, 14 Christians killed by the Islamic State. Recently, within the last month, burned churches, burned homes, burned buildings because they're Christians. That's evil. The army is surrounded. So we would pray, frustrate their plans, overwhelm them. Don't be still, protect them. In India, there's anti-conversion laws, which with the combination of that and the strong fundamentalist anti-Christian laws.

[44:19] Operation that is working through the government. You have many Christians that have been asked or physically removed from their homes because of the escalating violence. They can't even be home. This is months now because of religious extremists. They can't even go home. There's armed religious extremists. I heard just this week of a pastor in India who had these religious extremists coming in, disrupting their worship service, interrogating worshipers, looking for baptism certificates to see if there were any evidences of conversion, preaching in India in the last week, taking all the women and putting them in the room and interrogating them to scare them. For hours.

[45:14] To that and to thousands of other things that are happening in 2026. We should say frustrate their plans, overwhelm, don't be still. Make it stop that they may seek your name and until that day, give them endurance. Grant them endurance to not waver or collapse, but keep turning to you in prayer. This psalm, I think, gets at the heartbeat of a heart that loves God and loves his name and loves his people and clings to his promises. So brothers and sisters, when we face overwhelming evil, turn to the Lord in prayer. How? Appealing based on his word and a long for his glory. Let's pray.

[46:21] Our Father, now we think about this word from this psalmist that is so much for us to think about and to learn, to grow in. We pray that we would be concerned with the things that are threatening your name and your promises on how to be turned to you and to your word. We pray that we would be

reading your word for looking for highlights, the high-right reels of your triumphs throughout history, that we can call them to mind and play them before you in prayer, showing you victories and encouraging our hearts that you can do it again, even as we pray for that. And Lord, we have our minds and hearts fixed on your glory and your glory alone. And Lord, we pray for the reality in our state, with the abortion restrictions removed and just the cavalier attitude towards life and presumption upon personal authority and autonomy. We pray, Lord, that you would reverse that, that you would protect the children, unborn babies, that you would grant a renewal and refreshment and the value of life, that you would bring about an end I'll see you next time.

[47:42] To the aggressive assault on your image. Lord, pray that you would bring that even through an unbelieving government. Father, we pray for our brothers and sisters, even gathering around the world today on the Lord's Day. Lord, we think of those in Algeria and Mozambique and India and countless other places where it is a real threat to be a Christian. We pray you would frustrate the plans of those that oppose them. And even as they look at the great number of people and the loud voices and the solidarity of the, opponents to the gospel, that they would be like Asaph and they would remember, that these armies and these opponents are nothing to you, the God of all the earth. Would they entrust themselves to you and would you protect them? That you would.

[48:31] Be frustrate and undermine the plans of these opponents. I pray they would be like chaff and a high wind That the plans would not stick They would blow away That you would cause the gospel to flourish in these places, Lord, give us an increased awareness Of your mission and the persecution in this world, That we might be resolved to live faithfully here and now That we might, pull the rope And pull our weight in prayer and devotion to you, even as we aim to live faithfully for you. Give us an increased sensitivity of the need to pray. Show us again and again in your word how to pray. Help us now, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.