

Saturday, March 18, 2017 - Day 76 – Deuteronomy 34, Psalm 64, Luke 22

It is November 30, 2016 as I reflect on psalm 64. This past month a number of events have occurred that have made the words of this prayer more relatable for me. There was the presidential campaign that exhibited much distasteful behavior and brought out some unsettling sentiments in our country. The same week as the election, I visited the new African American Museum in DC with a group of people from my church. The museum showed me pieces of our history that I had not been aware of – like the 1921 Tulsa Oklahoma race riot with burning, lynching and destruction. And, since the election there have been a growing number of acts of hatred, violence, and intimidation by individuals who seem to feel that their behavior and beliefs are now legitimized by the election. Fear and anxiety exist for many.

So as I read the first six verses, I heard my own feelings and fears in those words – protect my life, and the lives of others, from the threats of those who seek division. The psalm expresses the division that existed among God's people during David's time; that there were those who wickedly conspired and evildoers who plotted against innocents and did so without fear. People encouraged each other in evil plans and plotted injustice believing that their evil deeds would go unnoticed, perhaps hailed as victory, and saw their acts as perfect in what they hoped to accomplish.

As David expressed his concerns to God back then, I find myself with similar prayers today, November 30. (3.5 months before your reading of this reflection). And I feel that sense of fear and anxiety.

At another level, the wicked evil-doer can be seen as the devil with the temptations we face every day: shooting at the innocent without fear, encouraging us in evil plans, convincing us that his is a perfect plan and that it is all done in secret so no one else knows.

At both levels, verses 7 to 10 bring me back to hope through my faith and my deep belief that God is in everything and has a purpose for everything. Those verses speak of a trust in God to correct what the writer and others see as being against the teachings of our Lord, as being the doing of the devil.

And the final verse, "the righteous will rejoice in the Lord and take refuge in him; all the upright in heart will glory in him!" comforts me in taking refuge in the Lord no matter what is occurring in my life, or around me, and to glory in him and trust in him.

One of my favorite bible readings is Isaiah 55. In part, it reads, "As the rain and the snow fall from the heavens, and return not again without watering the earth, bringing forth growth; seed for sowing and bread for eating, so is my word that goes forth from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but it will accomplish that for which I purpose and will succeed in the thing for which I sent it."

This is further reassurance for me that whatever happens, God has a purpose for it; and more importantly, the purpose God has for each of us will be achieved.

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