Shalom AZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption

"Stuck in the Middle of the Story? Sing Out!"

Rabbi Cosmo Panzetta

Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): Psalms 59; 89; *1 Sam. 19:10–18.*

Have you ever been watching a movie where you've already seen the trailer, you've heard how great the ending is, and you know it's going to turn out well—but somewhere in the middle of the movie, everything seems to be falling apart? The conflict is building, the main character is surrounded by impossible circumstances, and you find yourself wondering, "How in the world is this going to work out?" You know there's a good ending coming, but you have absolutely no idea how they're going to get there. And that's what makes the middle of the story so difficult. It's not necessarily that you doubt the ending. You just can't see how what's happening right now could possibly lead to what you've been promised.

That's where we find David in Psalm 59. God has already anointed him to be king. David knows what the Lord has promised, and he knows where the story is supposed to end. But presently, he's not sitting on a throne—he's running for his life! Saul is trying to kill him, enemies are surrounding his house, and David has no idea how long this is going to continue or how God is going to bring about His promise. And in Psalm 89, we find that same tension as the psalmist struggles to reconcile God's covenant promises with the devastation unfolding before him. Both are caught in the middle of a story whose resolution they cannot yet see. And isn't that where we so often find ourselves? We know who God is. We know His promises are true. We know He is faithful. But we don't always know HOW He's going to work everything out—or how long it's going to take. So how do we live in the middle of the story? Psalms 59 and 89 give us a powerful answer: Sing out!

1. WHEN YOU FEEL SURROUNDED, WATCH FOR YOUR STRONG TOWER (PS. 59:1–11). Psalm 59 takes us into a frightening moment in David's life. Saul has sent men to watch David's house and kill him. David's wife (Saul's daughter) Michal lowers David through a window so he can escape (1 Sam. 19:10–18). David has been anointed for a future he hasn't yet entered. The LORD has declared David will be king. But he's not sitting on the throne; he's running for his life. His enemies are rising up, surrounding him, snarling like dogs, with swords in their lips. David cries to ADONAI to snatch him away, to set him so high that those rising against him cannot reach him. The Hebrew language carries this beautiful picture of an inaccessibly high, fortified place—a *misgav*.

Then the focus changes. The enemies are still there, but David looks beyond them: *"But You, ADONAI, are laughing at them"* (Ps. 59:9). They think they've got him hemmed in, but the Lord isn't nervous. He's not confused or intimidated by what's threatening David. David declares that he will watch for God, because God Himself is his strong tower (Ps.

59:10). Notice that his security isn't ultimately found in an escape route or a change of circumstances. It's found in the Lord. The enemies may be surrounding David, but they don't surround ADONAI. When we feel trapped by something bigger than ourselves, where are our eyes fixed? On everything coming against us, or on the One who remains our refuge?

2. WHILE THE TROUBLE CONTINUES, SING OF HIS LOVINGKINDNESS (PS. 59:15–18). Near the end of Psalm 59, something remarkable happens. The psalmist describes his enemies returning in the evening, snarling and prowling around the city. They haven't gone away. Their threats haven't stopped. There's a relentlessness to what David is facing. But then comes this contrast: *"But I—I sing of Your strength!"* (Ps. 59:17). They are still prowling, but David is singing. In the morning he will sing of God's lovingkindness, His *chesed*, because the Lord has been his fortress and refuge in the day of distress. David doesn't have to pretend he is safe from every difficulty in order to declare that he is safe in the Lord.

Honestly, in the midst of our most difficult moments, we pause the praise. We put praise on hold until something changes. Once the test comes back clear, once the finances settle, once the conflict is resolved—then we'll rejoice. But David teaches us another way. In the day of trouble, we can say, *"O my strength, to You I sing praises"* (Ps. 59:18). The song is not a denial of the battle; it is a declaration about the One who holds us in it. We can praise Yeshua while there are tears in our eyes. We can worship when we don't have an explanation. The Lord's love wasn't first made true when we felt it. He loved us first, and He is still our fortress today.

3. WHEN GOD'S PROMISE SEEMS DISTANT, REMEMBER WHO HE IS (PS. 89:1–53) Psalm 89 begins with a determined announcement: *"I will sing of the love of ADONAI forever"* (Ps. 89:2). The psalmist will make God's faithfulness known to every generation. He remembers the covenant God made with David and the promise that his throne would endure. He rehearses the Lord's power over the swelling sea, His mighty arm, His righteousness and justice, His lovingkindness and truth. Two words keep returning: *chesed*, God's steadfast covenant love, and *emunah*, His faithfulness and reliability. These aren't passing feelings. They are who God is. His promises are backed by His character, and His character doesn't change.

But then the psalm takes a hard turn. The throne appears cast down, the walls are broken, enemies rejoice, and the psalmist cries, *"How long, ADONAI, will You hide Yourself?"* (Ps. 89:47). He asks where God's former lovingkindness has gone. That's the tension of living in the middle of the larger story. We know the promises, but we can't yet see their fulfillment. Yet the psalm ends, *"Blessed be ADONAI forever. Amen and Amen"* (Ps. 89:53). The questions haven't all been answered. Still, he blesses the Lord. We see a fuller picture in Yeshua, the promised Son of David, the King who is seated at the Father's right hand. The story is not finished, but the King is on His throne. God hasn't abandoned His covenant or forgotten His word.

CONCLUSION

There are seasons when we are living somewhere between the promise and its fulfillment. We're not where we were, but we're not yet where we're going. David wasn't yet king when Saul hunted him. The writer of Psalm 89 couldn't see how the promises concerning David's throne would unfold. And sometimes we can't see how the Lord is going to bring about His purposes in our lives either. We can wrestle honestly with Him. We can ask, "Where are You, Lord? How long, Lord? I don't understand, Lord." Faith doesn't require that we silence those questions. It asks us to bring them to the God whose lovingkindness and faithfulness endure.

Today, bring the unfinished story to Yeshua. Bring the fear, the disappointment, the unanswered prayer, and the place where your soul feels hemmed in. If you've been trusting your ability to manage it all, lay that down. If you've stopped singing because you haven't seen the answer, choose to worship Him again. If you've never entrusted your life to Messiah Yeshua, turn to Him now, receive His mercy, and follow Him as your Lord and King. We don't have to wait until the darkness lifts to declare that He is worthy. As long as there's breath in our lungs, we can lift our eyes and say, "I trust Your goodness. I trust Your promises. I trust You." Stuck in the middle of the story? **Sing out!**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does David's situation in Ps. 59 teach us about trusting ADONAI before His promises have visibly come to pass?
2. How does the picture of God as David's *misgav*, his inaccessibly high fortress, change the way you see the pressures surrounding you?
3. What ongoing situation in your life has tempted you to postpone praise until you finally receive an answer?
4. When news, finances, relationships, or uncertainty make you feel hemmed in, what practical step can help you turn your attention from the threat to the Lord?
5. How does Ps. 89 hold honest lament and confidence in God's covenant faithfulness together, and how can you practice both this week?

CLOSING PRAYER

ADONAI, You know the story we're in, including every part we cannot see. You know the places where we feel surrounded, where we've grown weary, and where we've been asking how long. Forgive us when we look more intently at the trouble than at You. Be our strong tower, our refuge, our strength. Remind us of Your *chesed* and Your *emunah*—Your lovingkindness and Your faithfulness. Teach us to trust You when circumstances remain unresolved, and give us the courage to sing in the middle. Yeshua, You are our Messiah and King. We surrender our unfinished stories to You, confident that You will accomplish all You have promised. May our lives and our mouths make Your faithfulness known.

B'Shem Yeshua, In the name of Yeshua, amen.