

Psalm 57:1–11

MPS Be confident that God will fulfil all His purposes for you.

INTRO:

We are going through some of the Psalms this summer.

Psalm 57 arose from Saul's persecution of David.

Be confident that God will fulfill all His purposes for you.

OPEN:

Superscription: 'To the choirmaster: according to Do Not Destroy [either the name of the tune to be sung in OR the theme or tone of the song]. A Miktam [possibly means 'liturgy' or type of music] of David, when he fled from Saul, in the cave.'

- Most likely, David was alone in his faith among the fugitives he led, trusting God's promise while hunted by a king he once served.
- I'm going to attempt to tell his story from his perspective... as if David himself were standing here, narrating the tale. **A First-Person Narrative/Monologue: Biblical Dramatic Retelling:**
- Imagine David, years after these events, having written Psalm 57. I'll read directly from Scripture at times, but I'll also take some liberty to paint the scene, to help us feel what it must have been like in those desperate, defiant moments. Let's hear David's story, Close your eyes if you like:

David's story prt 1

Picture this, the sun is sinking behind the hills of Judah – you know that aroura look, casting long shadows over our desolate cave. I'm crouched in the shadows of the cave of Adullam, surrounded by a ragtag band of men—a few hundred men who've got nowhere else to go. We are fugitives, hunted like wolves by a king I once served with my whole heart.

I am David, and this is my story

It started with an out-of-breath young man stumbling into our cave, his face pale, eyes wide with terror. His name is Abiathar [Uh-BUY-a-thar], a young priest, his robes torn, his hands trembling. I knew something was wrong before he even spoke. "David," he gasped, "Saul—he's lost his mind. He slaughtered them... all of them." I asked, "who? The kid still breathing hard – "The priests at Nob. Eighty-five men, their families, even the children. All because they helped you."

My heart sank ... Eighty-five priests. Dead because of me. I'd sent them to their doom without knowing it. I looked into Abiathar's eyes, saw the fear, the grief. I took his shoulders, looked him square in the face, and said, *"Stay with me; don't be afraid. The man who is seeking your life is seeking mine also. You will be safe with me."* I meant it because I believed the promise God gave me that I would be king AND my throne would be forever – He can't lie... He will do it. I'm confident.

Later that night, I slipped away from the camp, just me and the stars. The weight of it all pressed down—Saul's madness, the blood of those priests, the lives of these men depending on me. I whispered to myself, "What kind of crazed man would kill eighty-five priests? And now, Saul's got his eyes locked on me, a spear in his hand, and murder in his heart. But yet again, I felt it—a quiet strength, a whisper from God: *I am with you. My mercy holds you.*

Then came Keilah [key-EYE-la] – a city in the region. Word reached us that the Philistines were raiding the city, stealing grain from the threshing floors, leaving families to starve. My men were weary, but I couldn't stand by and do nothing. Not while God's people suffered. I knelt in the dirt, closed my eyes, and asked, "Lord, shall I go and fight these Philistines?" His answer was clear: *Go*. So we went. The Philistines didn't stand a chance. We drove them out, saved Keilah, and hauled their stolen livestock back to the city. Victory. Every time God speaks to me, I can be confident in victory.

But the relief didn't last. Saul heard I was in Keilah, and his obsession flamed hotter than ever. He thought he had me trapped, like a fox in a snare. I got word he was coming. The most powerful man on the planet—thousands of his men, marching to pin me down.

I turned and prayed to God again. "Lord, will Saul come? Will the people of Keilah betray me?" The answer came swift: *He's coming. They'll turn you over*

The people of Keilah, the ones we'd just saved, were ready to hand me over to Saul to save their own skins. After all we'd done, they'd betray me. It stung, but I didn't curse them. Fear makes people do desperate things.

We slipped out of Keilah under cover of night, my men trailing behind me like ghosts through the wilderness. The hills of Ziph became our refuge, but not for long. Saul's spies were everywhere, sniffing us out. It was a deadly game of cat and mouse—us darting from cave to cave. My men, four hundred strong mind you, looked to me for food, for hope, for a plan. Rations were thin, and sleep was hard to come by. I carried the guilt of those priests, the sting of betrayal, the ache of knowing Saul—my king—hated me for doing right. This was my reward for loyalty? For playing the harp to soothe his tormented soul? For slaying Goliath for his glory?

Yet even in the dark, I felt God's hand. He was my rock, my refuge. I clung to that truth as Saul's men drew closer, their torches flickering in the distance, their footsteps echoing in the night.

Then, a miracle. The Philistines raided again, hitting the land hard. Saul had to turn his army to face them. For the first time in weeks, I could breathe. My men could rest. We were still hunted, still running, but God had given us a reprieve. Well, at least for now. It is then, I sat down by the fire, just me and God, and wrote in my journal... *'Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me, for in you my soul takes refuge; in the shadow of your wings I will take refuge, till the storms of destruction pass by. I cry out to God Most High, to God who fulfills his purpose for me...'*

- I want us to feel what David must have felt back then...
- You and I should be able to connect with David here
 - Keeping up your responsibilities during a trial
 - The heartache of betrayal – do something good but repaid something bad
 - Someone you love now hating you and wanting the worst for you
 - Seems like your enemy has come in to kill steal and destroy
 - Persecution
- All of us will face something that David faced and we will have to turn to something or someone.
- David turned to His Lord and so do we.

1. Confident Request for Mercy. (2. Confident expectation of victory)

Vs 1 *Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me, for in you my soul takes refuge; in the shadow of your wings I will take refuge, till the storms of destruction pass by.*

- Hiding in the Lord until the destructions have passed over... like a bunker during a tornado, sometimes life gets so intense, you just have to hide in the Lord until the destruction passes over. (God's voice, ear, and people).

Vs 2 *I cry out to God Most High, to God who fulfills his purpose for me.*

- David ascribes God as "El Gomer Alay" which means 'the God who fulfills his purposes for me.'
- David identifies God as the Most High, asserting that there is none higher in dignity, authority, or power. No principality outranks him, none were before him, and none supersede him

- *God who fulfills his purpose for me.* David had to deal with the difficulties Saul caused for him even though God had chosen David to be king.
- He could have just asked, “Lord, why are you letting this be so hard – it’s you that called me to his position.”
- But in actuality, God was preparing David through difficulties for the position of king. David knew the call and expected to enter it, therefore he prayed with confidence for mercy.

You can **Be confident that God will fulfil all His purposes for you**, but that doesn’t mean it’s going to be easy street.

- He keeps his promises – when you are on the run, in the dark, under stress, attacked, betrayed, under the gun, grieving, can you ascribe to El Gomer Alay? Can you quickly remind yourself of the promises of God?

You find the promises of God in the Word of God.

He works all things for good
 He will never leave you
 He goes to prepare a place for you
 He is coming back to get you
 He will complete the good work he started in you
 If He is for you who could be against you
 His promises are yes and amen for those in Christ
 You are the apple of his eye
 He loves you
 He is for you
 He cares for you
 He will direct your paths
 He will strengthen you

- He is **El Gomer Alay** – the God who keeps his promises and the God who fulfils them for you.
- There is no amount of stress, grief, pain, persecution, attack, or negative experience that is stronger than El Gomer Alay – He will see you through. Trust him
- How can we know this is true? While you were separated from him, his enemy, God kept his promise to save you – he did so by sending his son who paid the ultimate price. The one who was persecuted by a more evil Saul (satan) but became the greater David (Jesus) who took on your greatest stressor – your sin that separates you from the Father – He took that so you could have eternal refuge and then he disarmed all your Sauls in

your life... they may try to take you out, but El Gomer Alay will not allow it. Press on my brothers and sisters.

John 16:33 (ESV) 33 *I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."*

Vs 3 *He will send from heaven and save me; he will put to shame him who tramples on me. Selah God will send out his steadfast love and his faithfulness!*

Exodus 34:6 (ESV) 6 *The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness,*

David is reflecting on the Word and what he has learned about God's dealings with His people in past history – much like we are doing this morning.

Vs 4 *My soul is in the midst of lions; I lie down amid fiery beasts— the children of man, whose teeth are spears and arrows, whose tongues are sharp swords.*

- He's possibly thinking about Doeg the Edomite.

Vs 5 *Be exalted, O God, above the heavens! Let your glory be over all the earth!*

- David knows that when God defends him and delivers him, it will show God's glory over all the earth.

2. Confident Expectation of Victory.

Vs 6-7 *They set a net for my steps; my soul was bowed down. They dug a pit in my way, but they have fallen into it themselves. Selah 7 My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast! I will sing and make melody!*

- In the midst of his difficulties David sings about God's greatness...
- In the midst of difficulties, we are a people who sing to the God who can!

Vs 8 *Awake, my glory! Awake, O harp and lyre! I will awake the dawn!*

- The reference to the dawn perhaps points to a sort of resurrection light rising on the new day of David's reign.

Vs 9-11 *I will give thanks to you, O Lord, among the peoples; I will sing praises to you among the nations. 10 For your steadfast love is great to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds. 11 Be exalted, O God, above the heavens! Let your glory be over all the earth!*

Where do you need his mercy, how will you thank him in advance?

David's story prt 2

A few months has passed by and we are in the wilderness of En Gedi, a maze of cliffs and canyons. The air is heavy with heat, the kind that makes your skin cling to your bones. I'm still a fugitive, still leading my band of four hundred men—We're hiding in a cave, deep and dark...Saul's out there, somewhere, with three thousand of his best men, scouring the hills to end me. But I'm not afraid. I call Him El Gomer Alay—the God who fulfills His purposes for me. His promise burns in my heart: I will be king, and my throne will endure forever and nothing can stop God's promises.

We'd been on the move since Keilah [key EYE la], dodging Saul's spies, sleeping in ravines, scraping by on whatever we could find in this barren land. Then, one day, we slipped into this cave, its coolness a brief refuge from the blistering sun. We pressed deep inside, the damp stone walls echoing our whispers. Suddenly, we heard it: footsteps on rocks, the clink of armor, voices outside. My men froze. I peered toward the entrance and saw him— it was Saul himself, alone, stepping into the cave. To be honest, it was a little awkward; the king of Israel coming into the cave to relieve himself – But he had no clue we were there. My men's eyes lit up, their hands gripping their swords. One whispered, "David, this is it! God's handed him over! Strike him down!"

I felt the weight of the moment, like a stone in my chest. Saul, the man who'd thrown spears at me, who'd hunted me like an animal, who'd slaughtered eighty-five priests because of me—he was right there, defenseless. I could end it all. One swing of my sword, and the chase would be over. My men urged me on, their voices low but fierce. But something stopped me. A voice—not theirs, not mine, but God's. This is not your fight, David. ~~I am El Gomer Alay, the God who fulfills My purposes for you. I am your victory.~~

I crept forward, silent as a shadow, my knife gleaming in the dim light. My men held their breath. I reached out, not for Saul's life, but for the edge of his cloak. A quick slice, and a piece of it came free in my hand. I slipped back to the shadows, my heart pounding. Saul finished his business and left, unaware of how close he'd come to death.

When he was a safe distance away, I stepped out of the cave, the scrap of cloak in my fist. I raised my voice, strong and clear. "My lord, the king!" Saul turned, his face a mix of shock and suspicion. I held up the cloth, letting it catch the light. "See this? I could have killed you today. I was close enough to cut this from your cloak, but I didn't touch you. I'm no traitor. I've done nothing but good to you, and yet you hunt me. Let God judge between us, but my hand will not be against you."

The words echoed across the canyon, and for a moment, time stopped. Saul's voice breaks the silence, "Is that you, David, my son?" He wept, right there in front of his army. "You're a better man than I am. You spared me when I would've killed you. May

the Lord reward you for this.” He turned and left, his men trailing behind him, their spears lowered.

My men were stunned. Some grumbled—why let him go? But I knew. God’s purpose for me wasn’t to take Saul’s life but to trust His timing. Saul could hunt me, betrayals could sting, but God’s plan was bigger. His promise was sure. I would be king—not because I forced it, not because I killed for it, but because God’s purposes cannot be prevented. What you know as Psalm 57 is my prayer and praise to El Gomer Alay... let it encourage you until He calls you home – let it increase your faith to trust in such a great God.

As we slipped back into the wilderness, I felt it again—that quiet strength, that unshakable hope. God was my rock, my refuge, my victory. And no spear, no army, no king could stand in His way.

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Conclusion

- Jesus is the sum and subject of the Psalms – it wasn’t Saul but Satan who came after Jesus through the religious leaders of that day – Jesus wasn’t cornered in a cave but crucified on a cross
- When the whole earth thought it was over, angels peering, heavenly host in suspense, the disciples’ hearts downcast – God the Son died on the cross but on the 3rd day “awake, my glory! Awake... I will awake the dawn with the resurrection of the Son of God!
- We have confidence that even when we are in the midst of difficulties and it feels like it’s over – we remember that Christ has risen from the grave – and because of our union with Him we too rise! We perpetually win even when it seems we’ve lost.

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PRAYER TIME: (remind people there will be folks ready to pray for them)

Psalm 57:9 (ESV) 9 *I will give thanks to you, O Lord, among the peoples; I will sing praises to you among the nations.*

God, thank you in advance for give me/us mercy in _____.

Finances

Health

Peace

Parenting

Marriage

Reconciliation in a relationship

Strength in a trial
Greif/loss
Direction/decisions

QUESTIONS FOR GROUPS:

1. What are some areas of your life where you need to lean on the promises of God? What are those promises?
2. Take some time to pray together, thanking God in advance (vs 9 'I WILL thank God') for His mercy in your lives.