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[The Holy God Who Treads Down Our Enemies](#)

2026-06-28 - Psalms 60

As we walk in our earthly pilgrimage seeking the Lord and His honor and glory, we know we face enemies and trials. Where do we turn? Where do we go to find strength and help? Where do we turn when we face defeats or setbacks? Where do we go when we have no words? Someone once wisely said, The Psalms not only are God's true Word to us but the Psalms also speak for us. When we have no words in trials and suffering the Psalms speak for us. They are an incredible aid and an unrivaled gift for the people of God in trials. Join us as we dwell on amazing truth and precious reminders from Psalm 60. With God's help we will better understand that salvation ultimately from all earthly and eternal suffering is certain because our Holy Savior who secures it. We will be reminded of who He is and what He has done and be reoriented around Christ's Lordship in our trials. May Christ be praised! Soli Deo Gloria!

Good morning. Good morning. It's great to gather together. Let's all stand and sing.

"Wonderful, merciful Savior"

Morning, everyone. How are we doing today? Morning. As you know, today we have a fellowship meal after second service. If you're here for this service, we also have adult Sunday school going on at 10:30. We're going through the book of James. You're welcome to join us for that. My name's Sal. Pastor Ashton, come on up. Pastor Stephen. We're excited for today. We're excited for what the Lord's doing. We had soccer camp this week. Wanted to share some pictures. I sent them to Paula. Paula, by the way, our Admin, she does great work. If you ever see her, thank her. But we had a lot of fun here this week. The verse we've had the kids memorize was **1 Thessalonians 5:16–18**: *"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."* We're teaching them the difference between joy and happiness and that joy comes from the Lord. I'm seeing some of the guys that helped volunteer. You know who you are. Thank you for all that. And yeah, this summer we're going to have a bunch of family fun days coming up. So the first one is scheduled for **July 11th, 12 to 3**. More to follow, stay tuned. If you sign up for the emails, you'll get informed. Pastor Stephen.

Grace and peace to you from God our Father, through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. As I mentioned, my name is Pastor Stephen. It is my joy to welcome you to our very first joint service between Christ the King Reformed Baptist Church and Cornerstone Church. We're so grateful to be here with you all, to fellowship with you all, and we're so glad to worship God as one body in Christ. So we look forward to the next nine weeks to be with each other in that. So we encourage you to join—again, as Sal mentioned—the fellowship after this 10:30 a.m. service. Please join us for that. And also just for our church, we are having our evening service next Sunday evening at 5:30 p.m. And also Cornerstone is invited to come to that as well. That will be at our church building there in Nile. So again, 5:30 p.m., our evening service. We continue our way through the book of Philippians and we invite you to join us for that.

Thank you, Pastor Stephen. Well, if you don't know me, I am Pastor Ashton. And this morning I will be reading **Psalm 5**. So if you would please rise if you are able for the reading of God's Word.

**Psalm 5** (a Psalm of David):

*“Listen to my words, Lord. Consider my sighing. Pay attention to the sound of my cry, my King and my God, for I pray to you. In the morning, Lord, you hear my voice. In the morning I plead my case to you and watch expectantly. For you are not a God who delights in wickedness. Evil cannot dwell with you. The boastful cannot stand in your sight. You hate all evildoers. You destroy those who tell lies. The Lord abhors violent and treacherous people. But I enter your house by the abundance of your faithful love. I bow down toward your holy temple in reverential awe of you. Lord, lead me in your righteousness because of my adversaries. Make your way straight before me. For there is nothing reliable in what they say. Destruction is within them. Their throat is an open grave; they flatter with their tongues. Punish them, God; let them fall by their own schemes. Drive them out because of their many crimes, for they rebel against you. But let all who take refuge in you rejoice. Let them shout for joy forever. May you shelter them, and may those who love your name boast about you. For you, Lord, bless the righteous one. You surround him with favor like a shield.”*

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Let's continue to worship and sing.

“Come Thou Fount”  
“We Will Glorify”

*Lord, we come before you as a church, and we pray that you will be pleased with the condition of our hearts. Lord, we thank you for this time of worship, that we can set our hearts at rest in your presence, that we can lift our voices together as your people, as your children. You are exalted, Lord, above all of the earth, for your glory is over all the earth. Be exalted, Lord. Be exalted in our individual personal lives, in our homes, in our workplace, in our families, with our friendships, in our ministries. Be exalted, O Lord. Be pleased with the condition of our hearts, Lord. May the words of our mouths and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer.*

*Lord, I thank you that we can pray to you, that you're the God who hears. Thank you, Lord, that we can lift up our worship to you, to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, three in one, the one true God. We are prone to wander, Lord, but we thank you for your Spirit who holds us by your grace. And we thank you, Lord, for your work. Lord, be exalted in us. May Christ be praised. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Please be seated. Amen.

Before the sermon this morning, please join me now in our pastoral prayer. Please join me now to pray to our Almighty God.

*Gracious God and Father, as we just sang, we will glorify the King of Kings, we will glorify the Lamb, we will glorify the Lord of Lords, who is the great I Am. Father, you are the great I Am. And you do not depend on anything to be who you are. You do not need air or water. You do not need angels and seraphim. You do not need creation, space, and time. You do not need Christ the King Reformed Baptist Church or Cornerstone Church or me or our prayers and our worship. God, as you say in **Acts**, "You are not served by human hands as though you needed anything." God, you need nothing to be who you are. You are glorious, happy, all wise, and all sufficient in yourself. You depend on nothing to exist. You are simply there. You are the great I Am.*

*So God, we come to you, the self-sufficient one, and confess that we have sinned against you. God, you know our present deadness, our unfitness for service, our coldness of heart, how we sin in thought, word, and deed. And it is one thing to sin against an animal, it is another thing to sin against a fellow human, it is an even greater thing to sin against an archangel, but we have sinned not against rocks and donkeys and princes, but against the great I Am. God, who are we that we should come before you, our only holy God?*

*So Father, we look again this morning, not to ourselves and our feeble works but to the crucified sin-bearer. We glorify the Lamb, the Incarnate, despised, rejected, wrath-absorbing Lord of Lords. We thank you for the good news that we are forgiven and made righteous in your sight not because of us but because of the cross of Jesus Christ. Amen.*

*So God we come here and although this is a joint service, and then sometimes it can feel that we are two bodies, two churches, two congregations, God, we come with one voice, with one heart, with one faith, to worship the one true God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. So we pray that you unify us under the headship of Jesus Christ, unify us under the authority of God's word, and may your praise be multiplied this morning.*

*God, we also pray for other local churches in the Chicagoland area. We pray for New Hope Community Church in Palatine. God, give them boldness and witness and protect them in light of the recent news about these progressive homosexual advocacy groups protesting outside their church. God, strengthen this congregation and save those protesters by the power of the gospel. We also pray for our local elected officials. We pray for Governor Pritzker, who supports the slaughter of innocent human lives in the womb, and the unjust ideology of critical race theory. God, we ask that he govern according to your standards of righteousness. So we ask, God, in light of the election coming up in November, God, give him a new heart, or give us a new governor.*

*Finally, Lord, we do pray for the nations, and we lift up the country of Nigeria. We pray whether by saving the persecutors or by the sword of the civil government. God, stop the bloody persecution, the kidnappings, the mass killings, the machetes hacking Christian men and women and their children to pieces by the thousands there in Nigeria. God, stop the hand of Fulani Muslims killing Christians and protect your people from violence.*

*So God, we pray then, we thank you for hearing our prayers, and we pray all of this in the precious name of Jesus Christ. Amen.*

With grace and peace from God our Father, through Jesus Christ, our risen, ruling, one day returning Lord and the only Savior, brothers and sisters in Christ and friends, it is good to be with you on this Lord's Day. And in many ways, it is a historic day and a wonderful day to gather together as brothers and sisters in Christ under the banner of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

In just a moment, I'm going to read **Psalm 60**, the text for today. But let me first just offer a few words that I pray are helpful as we introduce this *Summer in the Psalms* sermon series. The last few years, our church has gone through, and we have looked at the Psalms together, and we happen to be in the middle of the Psalms here in Psalm chapter 60.

The Psalms, as most of you will know, are beloved by the people of God. They are beloved by the people of God, and they speak often of themes of God as Creator, of the sovereign, sustaining work of God, of Him being the sole Savior. And the Psalms are poetry. They are a hymn book of ancient Israel. Psalms are deeply personal, but they're also corporate confessionals. It's not either/or, they're both/and, and context helps us understand how to read them. And we should read these Psalms carefully, reverently, and meditate on them with an expectation that God will speak to us, but also that in the Psalms, incredibly, we find words when we lack those words. And so some have said that the Lord speaks to us through the Psalms, but also for us in the Psalms when we lack words as well.

"Although all Scripture breathes the grace of God, yet sweet beyond all others is the Psalms. History instructs, the Law teaches, Prophecy announces, rebukes, chastens, Morality persuades; but in the Psalms we have the fruit of these, and a kind of medicine for the salvation of men."

-Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, Italy (340-397 AD)

Here's just a few quotes you might say from those in church history of the past. Ambrose, influential church figure on Augustine, one of the most important theologians in church history. Here's what Ambrose of Milan said: "Although all Scripture breathes the grace of God," and he mentions some different genres. He said, "*The Psalms in particular are a kind of medicine for the salvation of men.*" That's what the pastor of Milan, Italy there said in the ancient church.

"The message of the Psalms always pulls the soul to Christ and His great saving work. As was said in the ancient church, "Always a psalm in the mouth, always Christ in the heart" (semper in ore psalmus, semper in corde Christus). The Psalms intensify our fellowship with Christ."

W. Robert Godfrey

Further, W. Robert Godfrey in his excellent book on the Psalms, *Learning to Love the Psalms*, said this: "The message of the Psalms always pulls the soul to Christ and His great saving work. As was said in the ancient church, always the Psalm in the mouth, always Christ in the heart." And so the Psalms intensify, Godfrey says, our fellowship with Christ.

The Psalms are reflections of Israel's history. They capture virtually every human emotion, so much so that John Calvin would call them "the anatomy of all parts of the soul". In other words, there's not a single emotion that is lacking in the Psalms. You can look at the Psalms and you will find every emotion represented: grief, sorrow, self-pity, worry, and so on and so forth.

The Psalms also bear witness to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. And so Jesus Christ not only cried out on the cross, *“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”* (Psalm 22:1), after the Lord Jesus had been crucified and rose from the dead, here’s what he said:

These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets **and the Psalms must be fulfilled.**

(Luke 24:44)

*“These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled”* (Luke 24:44). So the Psalms speak about Jesus. Jesus would have known the Psalms, and to this day, our risen Lord, who is ascended and seated, loves when his people gather underneath the Psalms. He loves when his people delight in the Psalms.

Let me just make a quick note as well about the Psalms that will help us as we read this passage here momentarily in Psalm chapter 60. A couple comments on this that will help us. First the Psalms are not something that are to be detached and removed from the people of God with the new covenant. Not at all.

...be filled by the Spirit: **speaking to one another in psalms**, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making music with your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of Christ.

(Ephesians 5:18b-21)

In fact the Lord to the Apostle Paul says this, he says that we are called to be filled by the spirit and the first thing that is a mark of being filled by the spirit, according to the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 5 is this that we are **speaking to one another in Psalms**. **We are speaking to one another in Psalms** and we’re doing this and so we’re singing the Psalms, we’re loving the Psalms but we need to understand the Psalms in their context. what did they first mean and also what do they mean to us today. First of all, we as Christians in the New Covenant never read the Psalms detached or divorce from Jesus Christ. It’s always through the cross. It’s always through what Jesus Christ, Our Lord, has done. So here’s a few notes on the Psalms just to help us. Three quick notes that will help us I think before we read Psalm 60.

#### The Psalms

Superscription = introduction (ex. For the choir master of David, etc); part of the original Hebrew Bible; help context

Selah = 71 times 39 Psalms; exact meaning uncertain & debated: some tie it to words “hang”, “suspend” or “weigh” as a musical cue to pause, consider, meditate on what has been sung; congregational response (Jerome); cue for posture change (Anthony Selvaggio, Ligonier article)

Miktam = uncertain meaning, golden truth? (J.A.Moyter)

First, the Psalms have what’s called a superscription at the beginning. The superscription just means introduction. No one uses the word superscription, but it’s one of those Hebrew Bible words or those words that Bible scholars love to throw around that act like they’re smarter than people, and that’s not quite right. But it just means introduction. Introduction.

So you have an example of this: “For the choirmaster. Of David.” Part of the original Hebrew Bible was actually this introduction. So that’s why we will read it here momentarily. We read in 75 of these Psalms that same line “for the choir director.” And David himself penned 75 of these Psalms.

There’s also a phrase you will see 71 times in 39 of these Psalms: “Selah”. “Selah”. The exact meaning is uncertain, but Anthony Salvaggio said this. He said that some tie it to the word “hang” or “suspend your way.” It’s almost a musical cue to pause, to consider, to meditate, or perhaps some have suggested it was a congregational response. That’s what Jerome, the ancient church father, suggested. Others would say maybe that was a time when a congregation would change their posture, to fall prostrate before the Lord. But the truth of the matter is we don’t really know, and yet at the same time we do know this is in the context of a musical book, the hymn book of Israel.

There’s also another phrase you’ll see—there’s others too—but for our purposes today, “miktam”. What’s a “miktam”? So you’re not thrown off by that when I read it momentarily here. The meaning is uncertain. J. A. Motyer, Old Testament scholar, now with the Lord, mentioned how there is a Hebrew word “golden” that is related to this, but the truth is we don’t really know what the word “miktam” means. It’s also in this hymn book, but we don’t know what that means, but don’t let that throw you off.

So the superscription introduction in **Psalms 60** here is actually the longest one in all the Psalms. So I’ll make a few comments on that. So it doesn’t derail you or throw you off, but actually helps to contextualize this Psalm in a way that the ancient people of God would have been familiar with. So as we read **Psalms 60** momentarily, hopefully because of the context of this superscription, you’ll be able to read it with the eyes of faith.

Here’s what we read concerning this “miktam”. The “miktam” says this in **Psalms 60**: “To the chief musician. Set to ‘The Lily of the Testimony.’ This was a familiar tune, a battle hymn perhaps, a *miktam* of David for teaching, when he fought against Aram Naharaim and Aram Zobah, and Joab returned and killed twelve thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt.” So this was something from David, the warrior poet of Israel, for teaching. It was supposed to instruct the people of God. And the specific occasion is there when he fought against Mesopotamia—or your translation might say Aram—and Syria of Zobah, or Aram Zobah. And Joab the nephew of King David returned and killed 12,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt.

Here’s some of the context of what’s going on so you understand. To the west of Israel you have where the Philistines were—Philistia, enemy, who worship and serve false gods. So you have from the west Philistia, you have down to the south and the east Edom and Moab, also enemies of the people of God, and further north you have Aram. What David, the king of Israel, was doing, he had pushed further into the north, was battling against Aram. And then on this occasion, or as he’s reflecting back on this occasion, writing this Psalm, there were enemies from the southeast who were coming up and were delivering defeat upon defeat amongst Israel, the people of God. And so you have David in this moment where he thinks he’s achieving victory to the north, and then in the south, enemies are coming up. And yet he writes this, and he’s thinking through the time when he was in this situation where there were enemies all around him, there were uncertainties of what’s going to happen to the kingdom.

You mentioned Joab, his nephew, this warrior of Israel, the checkered past. You remember Joab did David's dirty work? Whenever he covered up the murder of Uriah the Hittite, it was Joab who sent him to the front lines. But Joab was also an effective commander, a warrior of Israel, the one who defeated here, the text says, 12,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt. One of the amazing things about the Bible is it pushes us deeper and deeper into the Bible, and so incredibly, the book of **2 Samuel** and **1 Chronicles** is also mentioned, and it recounts this for us. And so you have to know some about the history of this to understand. So that battle is recorded for us. We won't read that today. But understand that the Psalms, right here in the superscription, are pushing you and me deeper and deeper into redemptive history, and in the record of what God has told us in two other books of the Bible.

And so with that context in mind, David, trying to hold together his kingdom, internal strife and battle, David telling the people of Israel, this is what I want to instruct you and to do whenever you face these uncertainties, these enemies. This is then what David prays, this is what David sings.

So if you are able, would you please now stand for the reading of God's word as we read **Psalm chapter 60**. Hear now the word of the living Creator God.

For the choir director: according to "The Lily of Testimony." A *Miktam* of David for teaching. When he fought with Aram-naharaim and Aram-zobah, and Joab returned and struck Edom in Salt Valley, killing twelve thousand. God, you have rejected us; you have broken us down; you have been angry. Restore us! You have shaken the land and split it open. Heal its fissures, for it shudders...

...You have made your people suffer hardship; you have given us wine to drink that made us stagger. You have given a signal flag to those who fear you, so that they can flee before the archers,

Selah

Save with your right hand, and answer me, so that those you love may be rescued...

...God has spoken in his sanctuary: "I will celebrate! I will divide up Shechem. I will apportion the Valley of Succoth. Gilead is mine, Manasseh is mine, and Ephraim is my helmet; Judah is my scepter. Moab is my washbasin. I throw my sandal on Edom; shout in triumph over Philistia..."

...Who will bring me to the fortified city? Who will lead me to Edom? God, haven't you rejected us? God, you do not march out with our armies. Give us aid against the foe, for human help is worthless. With God we will perform valiantly; he will trample our foes.

(Psalm 60:1-2)

*For the choir director, according to 'The Lily of Testimony,' a miktam of David for teaching, when he fought with Aram Naharaim and Aram Zobah. And Joab returned and struck Edom in the Valley of Salt, killing 12,000.*

*God, you have rejected us; you have broken us down; you have been angry; restore us.*

*You have shaken the land and split it open; heal its fissures, for it shudders.*

*You have made your people suffer hardship; you have given us wine to drink that made us stagger.*

*You have given a signal flag to those who fear you so that they can flee before the archers.*

*Selah*

*Save with your right hand and answer me, so that those you love may be rescued.*

*God has spoken in his sanctuary: 'I will celebrate; I will divide up Shechem; I will apportion the Valley of Succoth. Gilead is mine, Manasseh is mine, Ephraim is my helmet, Judah is my scepter. Moab is my washbasin; I throw my sandal on Edom. I shout in triumph over Philistia.'" (Psalm 60:1-8)*

***Who will bring me to the fortified city? Who will lead me to Edom? God, haven't you rejected us? God, you do not march out with our armies. Give us aid against the foe, for human help is worthless. With God we will perform valiantly; he will trample our foes. (Psalm 60:9–12)***

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Well, ours is the day of feelings. You hear things like, “He’s just so passionate.” “She is a fierce feeler.” “The heart wants what it wants.” “She was overcome by emotion.” “If it feels right, do it. If it doesn’t feel right, don’t do it.” We know our society is often dominated by the false but also deceptive god of feelings. Feelings from virtually everything—if people feel strongly about something, it seems that no facts, no logic, no truth can penetrate the fortress of feeling.

This is true not only for those out in the world who reject Jesus Christ; it’s often far too tragically true for those who claim to belong to Jesus Christ. Feelings wrongly elevated have torn apart friendships, they’ve divided churches, they’ve fractured families. Feelings unchecked have hindered the work of the kingdom of God. Unsanctified feelings not under the lordship of Jesus Christ—they will ruin marriages, they will destroy relationships, and they will lead people to affirm what is evil. They will lead you straight to hell.

Why are we talking about feelings here after **Psalm 60** was read? Well, because as Christians we are those in this world who have feelings. We are not stoics. We are those whom God has called to be joyful in the Lord. We are those whom God has called to be passionate and zealous for Christ and for His kingdom. And the book of Psalms, in particular **Psalm 60**, helps us do this. There’s instruction here for us when we face enemies, sufferings, trials, uncertainties, even defeat itself in this earthly life. I don’t know every one of your situations and circumstances, but the Lord does, and His word is sufficient. And along with that, understand that there are resources here, there’s instruction here for you and me that is precious that will help us when the battle is raging.

Sometimes we’re tempted to read stories and Scriptures and think to ourselves something along the lines of, well, thanks be to God, I don’t have to deal with those enemies that David had to deal with. And on the one hand, yes, we understand that. But on the other hand, we should not deceive ourselves, friends. We should not act as if we do not have enemies.

“The war between the saint and Satan is such a bloody one that the cruelest war ever fought by men will be as but sport and child’s play compared to this...It is a spiritual war that you shall read of; not a history of what was fought many ages past and is now over, but of a war now going on—the tragedy is present with us, and it is not taking place at the farthest end of the world; it concerns you and everyone who reads of it...The stage on which this war is fought is every man’s soul. There are no neutrals in this war. The whole world is engaged in the quarrel, either for God against Satan or for Satan against God.”

—William Gurnall, *The Christian in Complete Armor*

What do I mean by this? Well, I want you to understand what William Gurnall said in his classic book “*The Christian in Complete Armor*”. Here’s what he said: “*The war between the saint and Satan is such a bloody war that the cruelest war ever fought by men will be as much sport in child’s play compared to this. It is a spiritual war that you shall read of, not a history of what was fought many ages past and is now over. But of the war now going on, the tragedy is present with us, and it is not taking place at the farthest end of*

*the world. It concerns you and everyone who reads in it. The stage on which this war is fought is every man's soul. There are no neutrals in this war. The whole world is engaged in the quarrel either for God against Satan or for Satan against God."*

A saint—one who has trusted in Jesus Christ, has repented of his or her sins, and has called upon the Lord for grace and mercy and forgiveness, not trusting in his or her own works, but Christ alone. A saint, that is what a saint is according to the Bible. That's the saint that Gurnall has in mind. My friends, you are in a battle. Do you believe this? Do you recognize this? Do you live like this? And do you worship like this, do you pray like this, that you are in a battle?

"The Psalms teach us to pray. The Lord's Prayer [in Luke 11:2-4 and Matthew 6:9-13] is the tip of a great Bible iceberg of God teaching and training us to pray, of which the Psalms are perhaps the most significant part."

-Christopher Ash

The Psalms are an amazing book because they teach us to pray. They teach us how to pray in the battle. Here's what Christopher Ash, who's written probably most profoundly about the Psalms and is living today, said this: *The Psalms teach us to pray. The Lord's Prayer in Luke 11 and Matthew 6 is the tip of the great iceberg of the Bible when it comes to the teaching and training of prayer, but the Psalms are perhaps the most significant part.* In other words, we can't act as if all I need is the Lord's Prayer and nothing else in the Scripture. The Psalms teach us to pray. And with the Lord's help today we're going to walk through three instructions and some features of those instructions to help us to pray. And so let's walk through those together, friends. Let's realize that we are in a battle. Don't think that you're not in a battle. Please, you take nothing else away from this. Understand, my friends, you are in a battle. You are in a battle.

"With a corrupt heart, a busy devil, in an ensnaring world, we must either fight or be lost."

J.C. Ryle

J.C. Ryle puts it this way so memorably: *"With a corrupt heart, a busy devil, in an ensnaring world, we must either fight or be lost."* And that's the truth, friends. If you are a Christian committed to Jesus under His lordship, held by His grace, He will sustain you to the end. But there's a fight, there's a struggle that ensues.

And so let's walk through now three instructions, three instructions from the Lord our God when it comes to facing enemies, uncertainty, even defeat.

When God's people face enemies, uncertainties or defeat

1. Voice your sufferings to God

The first is this: Voice your sufferings to God. Voice your sufferings to God. **Psalm 60** is so instructive for us. It's amazing how many times David directs his laments to God. Again and again and again he goes back to the Lord. He does not detach the Lord from this. He puts the Lord at the center of it. And that is how Christians ought to pray. We voice our sufferings to God.

1. Voice your sufferings to God

- a. Humbly admit His sovereignty over it all.

God you, have rejected us...you have broken us down...you have been angry...You have shaken the land and split it open...You have made your people suffer hardship...you have given us wine to drink that made us stagger. (Psalm 60:1-3)

Here's the way that we can think about this when it comes to a feature of how to employ this in our own lives. What does it look like to do this, to voice our sufferings to the Lord? Well, one feature of this is we humbly admit His sovereignty over it all. Look at that in the text there, **Psalm 60**, in the first few verses: God, you, you, you, you—over and over again, we see this constant emphasis on the Lord. And so as we voice our sufferings to God, we say, “Lord, with reverence in our hearts, You're sovereign over this all.” It's been said before that there is nothing that touches the people of God that does not first pass through the hands of the Lord. I wonder if you believe that today. When you pray, do you say this? Do you voice those sufferings to God, and do you say, “God, you're sovereign over this? Even this, as hard, as painful as it is, even as uncertain as it is, even as strong as the enemies may seem.”

And you might say, “Pastor Brandon, that's obvious. Of course I should do that.” But here's my question. Do you do that? And to turn the screw a little bit in your own life and make it personal, again, I don't know what each and every one of you is going through or will go through, but the people of God will absolutely suffer in a fallen, sin-sick world. You will face slander, persecution. You will be belittled or mocked behind your back. You'll be excluded by family. You'll be looked down upon for taking Jesus too seriously. You'll be told to calm down whenever it comes to how seriously you take the claims of Jesus Christ. But understand this, friends, what the people of God neglect to pray, their souls become shallow. When God's people neglect to go to Him, they ignore Him and they dishonor Him. We don't honor the Lord if we ignore crying out to Him and calling upon Him.

David found himself the possessor of a tottering throne, troubled with the double evil of faction at home, and invasion from abroad. He traced at once the evil to its true source, and began at the fountainhead. His were the politics of piety, which after all are the wisest and most profound. He knew that the displeasure of the lord had brought calamity upon the nation, and to the removal of that displeasure he set himself by earnest prayer when divine desertion causes mourning and repentance, it will be partial and temporary. When a cast off soul sighs for its God it is not indeed cast off at all.”

-Charles Haddon Spurgeon

We voice our sufferings to God. We admit He is sovereign over it all. Here's the way Spurgeon put it, commenting in his wonderful *\*Treasury of David\**. He said, *David found himself a possessor of a tottering throne, troubled with the double evil of faction at home and invasion abroad. He traced at once the evil to its true source. He began at the fountainhead of him, because David's were the politics of piety, which were, after all, the wisest and most profound. David knew the displeasure of the Lord had brought calamity upon the nation. And the removal of the displeasure, to remove that displeasure, he set himself to earnest prayer.* And notice what this version says here at the end, he says this, *“When divine desertion causes mourning and repentance, it will be partial and temporary. When a cast-off soul sighs for its God, it is not indeed cast off at all.”* So when you're invited into prayer, you're saying, “Lord, Lord, you're sovereign over this. You control this. I don't understand what's happening.” Understand, my friends, you have not been cast off at all. We humbly admit His sovereignty over it all.

1. Voice your sufferings to God
  - b. Honestly describe your sense of rejection.

God, you have **rejected us**; you have **broken us down**; you have **been angry**. Restore us! You have **shaken the land and split it open**. Heal its fissures, for it shudders. You have made your people **suffer hardship**; you have given us wine to drink that **made us stagger**. (Psalm 60:1-3)

But that's not all. Another feature of how we voice our sufferings to the Lord is we honestly describe your sense of rejection. Look there at how vividly this is what God gave us: rejected us, broken us, you've been angry, you've shaken the land, split it open, the land shudders, you've made your people suffer hardship, you've given us wine to drink that made us stagger. There's vivid description here not attributed to some false god out there—it's no god at all—but David is saying, "Lord, this divine displeasure is from you. It is from your hand." So he is honestly describing his sense of rejection. He's wondering, why have you cast me off, Lord? Why does it seem like I am now in your disfavor? Why your people are in your disfavor? The feature of voicing our sufferings to the Lord is to honestly describe our sense of rejection. This is personal. This is heartfelt. All throughout the Psalms, we see examples of this. It is not disrespectful friends, but appropriate and honoring to God to cry out to the Lord and say, "Lord, this is happening to me." And you describe it in great detail. Don't think that those details, don't think that that vivid description dishonors the Lord when it's entrusted to the Lord by faith. It actually honors Him.

But notice as well, one of the things we see in this text is not only that we are called to have this humble disposition, that he is sovereign, to honestly describe our sense of rejection. But there's a kind of precision in this as well. We're not just exploding on the Lord. There's still a reverence here. There's still a cadence of saying, "Lord, you're sovereign, you're good." And so we approach God boldly and confidently, yes, but also reverently. We approach him reverently.

Martin Luther was a Christian of another generation, became known as the great German reformer. And reflecting on God's truth on how to pray, his barber had asked him at one point, "I want to grow my prayer life. How do I pray? Can you help me pray?" He wrote a great little book, "On Prayer". And one of the lines in there Luther said was this, *a good and attentive barber keeps his thoughts, attention, and eyes on the razor and hair, and does not forget how far he has gotten with his shaving or cutting. If he wants to engage in too much conversation or let his mind wander or look somewhere else, he is likely to cut his customer's mouth, nose, or even his throat. Thus, if anything is to be done well, it requires the full attention of one's senses and members. As the proverb says, he who thinks of many things thinks of nothing and does nothing right. How much more, Luther says, does prayer call for concentration and singleness of heart if it is to be a good prayer.*

And so my friends, we are called to be those who focus on this vivid description and say, "Lord, here's what I'm seeing, here's what I'm sensing, here's what I'm feeling. It seems like this is what you've done," but we're doing it in a focused manner.

1. Voice **your sufferings to God**
  - c. Quickly request **His intervention**.

God, you have rejected us; you have broken us down; you have been angry. **Restore us!** You have shaken the land and split it open. Heal its fissures, for it shudders. You have made your people suffer hardship; you have given us wine to drink that made us stagger. (Psalm 60:1-3)

Another feature of how we voice our sufferings to the Lord is this: we quickly request his intervention. We quickly request his intervention. Notice, quickly after there's this vivid description, we read, "Restore us. Heal its fissures," speaking of the land that was open. That's probably a metaphor for the enemies that seem to be attacking, but also in ancient Israel's history, the Lord had opened up the land in the book of Numbers and swallowed up people who were his enemies, the sons of Korah. And so we don't know exactly what was happening or what that was referring to, but there is this sense of quickly requesting the intervention of the Lord. We need the Lord to intervene. When you face uncertainties, when you face a trial that is beyond you and your resources, you should quickly appeal to the Lord's intervention. "God, only you can help me."

2. Voice your sufferings to God

c. Quickly request His intervention.

Save with your right hand, and answer me, so that those you love may be rescued.

1. Voice your sufferings to God

d. Boldly declare it's His beloved people who suffer.

You have made your people suffer hardship.. (Ps 60:3a)

Save your right hand, an answer me, so that those you love may be rescued (Ps 60:5)

A fourth feature of voicing our sufferings to the Lord is this: we boldly declare it's his beloved people who suffer. It's his beloved people who suffer. Notice what the text says: "**You have made your people suffer. Save with your right hand and answer me, so that those you love may be rescued.**" God is glorified when we voice our sufferings and tell Him who's suffering. "God, I believe in your Son. I've trusted in Jesus. I've repented of my sins. Why am I suffering?" This is good for the people of God to remember.

Boldly declare it is his beloved people who suffer. The book of **Hebrews** tells us we can boldly approach the throne of grace to find help in time of need. And when we voice our sufferings to the Lord we can boldly say, "I am yours. I am yours. Why is this happening?" It's not dishonoring God; it actually pleases him, friends.

2. Voice your sufferings to God

e. Humbly appeal to God's past salvation.

You have set up a banner for those who fear you, that they may flee to it from the bow. Selah (Psalm 60:4)

Another feature of this is we humbly appeal to God's historic rescues. We humbly appeal to God's historic rescues. Psalm 60:4 says this: "**You have set up a banner for those who fear you, that they may flee to it from**

*the bow,*” or from the archers, some translations say. The bow or the archers of the enemy? And this banner that was set up has great symbolism in the life of ancient Israel and for the Church of Christ.

“Exodus 17:8–16 is the background to the psalm. Moses saw his uplifted hands as a banner, and also as hands reaching out to and touching God’s throne—both banner and prayer. The banner of prayer will avail against Edom too.”

–J. Alec Motyer, Christian Old Testament Scholar

J.L. Motyer, Old Testament scholar, notes that **Exodus 17:8–9** is the background of this. We read this very clearly, that there was a time when Moses uplifted his hands, the text says, as a banner, same word. And his hands are reaching out and touching God’s throne, saying, “Lord, help me, help me, help me.” The banner of prayer, Motyer says, will avail against Edom, too. That’s the connection for the people of God.

But we see this also in the major prophets of Isaiah and Jeremiah. They mention the same idea of a banner or a standard, your translation might say. **Jeremiah 4:21** “*Lift up a standard toward Zion. Seek refuge. Do not stand still, for I am bringing evil from the north and great destruction.*” And so the people of God were to go to that banner, to flee and find refuge there. For us the standard has been raised and that banner is the salvation found in Christ alone. Incredibly in **Isaiah 11** there’s this picture of this shoot that would spring up from the stem or the root of Jesse. The text of **Isaiah 11** says the Spirit of the Lord would rest on him. And we read this: *Then in that day the nations will resort to the root of Jesse, who will stand as a signal, a banner for the peoples, and his resting place will be glorious.* The Son of Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, did in fact come and this same language of being lifted up is something we can appeal to and look at and find refuge in. It’s in the New Testament as well. So **John 3:14–15**: “*Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him will have eternal life.*” The banner for Christians is Jesus Christ who was raised. The banner for us that we seek refuge in is the Lord Jesus. And this for the Old Testament people of God and us for the new covenant people of God is something to be encouraged by. When we pray and call upon the Lord, what do we do? We appeal to his past rescues. “God, look how you saved people. There at the time of Moses. There at the time of David. There at the time of the major prophets and supremely in Jesus Christ.” That, my friends, is an astonishing reality, that we can appeal to the God of heaven and say, “Look what you’ve done. Look what you’ve done.”

3. Recall **what God spoke**

a. God declared **His Holy promise triumphs over all.**

**God has spoken in his sanctuary [by his holiness]**

I will celebrate!

I will divide up Shechem.

I will apportion the Valley of Succoth

Gilead is mine, Manasseh is mine, and Ephraim is my helmet; Judah is my scepter (Ps. 60:6-7)

The second instruction for us from this text in **Psalm 60** is this: When we are in a situation where we face uncertainty, enemies, even defeats, we have to be those who recall **what God spoke**. Recall what God spoke. And there’s two main features of this from the text of **Psalm 60**. Note that God declared his holy promise triumphs over all. This is what the text tells us very clearly in **Psalm chapter 60**. Christopher Ash says, although the language is unfamiliar to us, Psalm 60:6–8 is a confident declaration of gospel promises.

How is this the case? Look in your Bible at **Psalm 60** verses 6 through 8. Look what the text of God's word says there.

*"God has spoken in his holiness: 'I will rejoice; I will divide Shechem; I will apportion the Valley of Succoth. Gilead is mine, Manasseh is mine, Ephraim also is the helmet for my head; Judah is my scepter. Moab is my washpot; over Edom I will cast my shoe; Philistia, shout in triumph because of me.'" (Psalm 60:6–8)*

Now you might be reading that and wonder how on earth are there gospel promises in there? I don't even understand half those words. But here is how there are gospel promises found in this text. Let's learn this together. God made gospel promises with Abraham and said in you all the nations of the earth will be blessed. He made a promise to grant them the land, to grant them descendants, to give them blessings. And if the Lord did not keep any of those, he would have broken his promise. The salvation found in him would absolutely not be sure. The Lord through the apostle Paul in **Galatians 3:7–9** wrote that the gospel was preached ahead of time to Abraham, saying that all nations will be blessed through you.

And so at the time, David looked around, he saw enemies on every side of them. He saw enemies in his own kingdom. He said, I can't keep my house together, give the Lord. How am I supposed to keep much less all of Israel? And how are all the ends of the earth going to be blessed through this? But David was staring and often stared at himself, at his circumstances, at his enemies. And the word of God is constantly pulling us to look up, to look outward to the promise of God. See, Shechem is the heart of the Promised Land, west of the Jordan. Succoth is the heart of the trans-Jordan part of the Promised Land. You look at these other parts, Gilead, Manasseh, this is all part of the promised land. Ephraim is a shorthand way to say the northern kingdom. Judah is the royal tribe of David. It is called to have dominion over the whole world. And the idea here is that this land, one day, will be ultimately not only the Lord's under his dominion, but all the ends of the earth. Enemies on every side and those who seem to belong to God but are rejecting him as well. All belong to the Lord.

The list of sites here, David Adams says, in **Psalm 60:6–8** appears to provide a summary that both the Israelite and foreign territories are under the ownership of God Almighty. **Psalm 24** and other Psalms have already said this, *that the earth is the Lord's and the fullness therein*. He owns it all and just because you can't see his lordship over it all does not mean he is not Lord of all.

2. Recall **what God spoke**

a. God declared **He is the lone all-powerful owner.**

**God has spoken in his sanctuary [by his holiness]**

I will celebrate!

I will divide up Shechem.

I will apportion the Valley of Succoth

Gilead is mine, Manasseh is mine, and Ephraim is my helmet; Judah is my scepter (Ps. 60:6-7)\

A second feature of how we recall what God spoke is by recognizing God declared he is the lone all-powerful owner. Did you notice that whenever it says "mine, mine, mine" the Lord is talking about himself? It is the Lord who is speaking here. It's no longer David. You have to pay attention to this. It's an astonishing thing. "I will celebrate! I will rejoice." The Lord is saying, "I, the Lord of heaven and earth, the Creator, your

God, the God of the nations, I will be the one rejoicing.” This is not David. This is the Lord’s word. And so David recalls what God spoke. He is reminding himself of what the Lord has said, that “I will bless you.” It’s a shorthand way to remind themselves of the Abrahamic promises to bless all the nations. And ultimately we know that all the nations will be blessed through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, that seed and that offspring of Abraham. All these lands belong to the Lord, all these lands the Lord made good on his promise. All the enemies of God will ultimately be put under his feet.

Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, **for all the earth is Mine.** (Exodus 19:5)

Exodus 19:5 says this: “**Now then, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, then you shall be my own possession among all the peoples.** Notice this last expression, ‘**For all the earth is mine.**’” All the earth belongs to the Lord. Ancient Israel would have known that. They wouldn’t have always believed it or lived like it, but they would have known that.

So friends, understand, when you see someone defying the living, triune God, when you see an enemy mocking the Lord Jesus who seems to be in a position of power or preeminence, when you see someone who seems incredibly arrogant or deceived and is promoting sin left and right, when you see a nation who seems set on pushing out all influence of Christianity in the Bible, when you see that, and you see people tragically forsaking Christ. And as we see in Europe, so many forsaking that rich heritage that they have. Understand what the text of the word of God teaches us from **Psalm 60**. God owns it all. God owns all nations. They are like a drop in a bucket. That’s what the prophet Isaiah declares in **Isaiah 40:15**. **Daniel 4:35** says this, **that all peoples of the earth are counted as nothing. He does as he pleases with the army of heaven and the peoples of earth. There is no one who can restrain his hand** or say to him, “What have you done?” We read earlier in **Psalm 33:10–11**, “**The Lord frustrates the plans of the nations. He thwarts the devices of the peoples. The counsel of the Lord, though, stands forever, the purposes of his heart to all generations.**”

And so we are those who voice our sufferings to the Lord, who we face enemies and uncertainty, even defeat, and we are those who absolutely also recall what God has spoke. What has he said? For us in the New Covenant, we have his word, his sufficient word. We have more revelation, not less. And so we go to the scriptures and we’re reminded of what God has said. We’re reminded of—we recall that in our hearts and in our lives.

3. Trust **the Lord even before you see the victory**

How do you know you are trusting the Lord?

What evidence is there that your faith is in Him?

The third and the final instruction for us when it comes to pray is this: We are to trust the Lord even before we see the victory. We are to trust the Lord even before we see the victory. Look in your Bible in verse 10 and 12. We read this: “**Is it not you, O God, who cast us off, and you, O God, who did not go out with our armies? Give us aid against the foe, for the help of man is useless. Through God we will do valiantly, for it is he who shall tread down our enemies.**”

What does it mean to trust the Lord even before we see the victory? How can we do that as Christians? There’s three features of how we do this from this text. First, I would ask you personally to measure up

your life according to this. Is this what you do in your own life? What evidence is there that your faith in the Lord is being expressed through your prayers?

Here's three features of how we trust the Lord even before we see the victory.

3. Trust in the Lord even before you see the victory

a. Direct **your questions and doubts to Him**

God, haven't you rejected us?

God, you do not march out with our armies.

(Psalm 60:10)

First, direct your questions and doubts to Him. Direct your questions and doubts to Him. What it says there in verse 9 and 10: **"Who will bring me to the strong city? Who will lead me to Edom? Is it not you, O Lord, who cast us off?"** There are questions in David's heart and mind. "Lord, who's going to lead us? We're to the north, our enemies are coming from the southeast." And he's recounting and recalling this so that all of Israel and all the people of God throughout all history would be reminded that we can direct our questions and our doubts to the Lord. "Is it not you, O God, who cast us off? But Lord, look what you did. Look what happened. Why?" Those are all appropriate questions to direct to the Lord.

3. Trust in the Lord even before you see the victory

b. Confess **the vanity of all human saviors**

Give us aid against the foe, for **human help is workless**

(Psalm 60:11)

A second feature of this is to confess the vanity of all human saviors. Every human savior and every salvation that will be found by human beings is vain, friends. Everyone. That's true for David, that's true for us as well. If you try to seek refuge in a savior that is not the Lord, that is not the living Creator, that is not the God-man Jesus Christ, it is vain. It will disappoint you, it will destroy you, it will betray you. So confess the vanity of all human saviors. "Human help is worthless," or vain, your translation might say. It's useless. It can't deliver us from these earthly enemies, much less the eternal enemies that face us, the spiritual, cosmic enemies of Satan and those who accuse the people of God. And so what do we do to trust the Lord? Sure, we trust Him, we say, "Lord, here's my questions, here's my concerns. Here's what I'm facing," but we also say this, we also say gladly, "Lord, no human savior can save me."

3. Trust in the Lord even before you see the victory

c. Affirm **God's presence confident in His power**

With God we will perform valiantly; **he will trample our foes.** (Psalm 60:12)

And that leads us to the third and final feature, and it's this: We affirm God's presence, confident in his power. We affirm God's presence, confident in his power. How do you know you're trusting in the Lord? You might not see the victory, David truly didn't at the time, but he is saying to all of Israel and the Lord

Jesus, by his word here, by his Spirit, is saying to all of us that we can affirm God's presence in our lives and be confident in his power. You can too, beloved, brother or sister in Christ. Affirm God's presence. ***"With you we shall do valiantly."*** "God, I'm going in a situation, a circumstance where I'm outnumbered, where I don't see a future, where I don't see a hope, but you are with me. You are with me and you have said, 'I will never leave you, I will never forsake you.'" Far too often Israel went off their alliances and put their trust in men. They demanded a king like other nations, and multiple times throughout their history they looked for human saviors. But David here is saying, "I would lift your eyes to the Lord. I would lift your eyes to affirm God's presence. Confident in His power, He will put every single enemy underneath His feet."

And isn't that interesting, friends, that in the New Testament we read of one who does this, who tramples down his foes, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will put all enemies underneath his feet, including that last enemy of death.

In 2023, there was a Christian song that came out by Shane and Shane titled "You've Already Won," a very encouraging song, urging you to listen to it. I want to read some of these lyrics as I close here today: *"I'm fighting a battle you've already won. No matter what comes my way, I will overcome. Don't know what you're doing, but I know what you've done. I'm fighting a battle you've already won. When the sea is raging, your spirit is my help. You'll fix my eyes on Jesus. No more fear in life or death. I know how the story ends. I'm fighting a battle you've already won."*

An anonymous author once said, *"We know in the end everything will be right. So if it is not right, it is not the end."* Loved brothers and sisters in Christ, there is no battle, there is no enemy, there is no uncertainty that the Lord Jesus Christ does not have complete and perfect dominion over. Amen. He will go before you, he will fight that battle, and it is not a question of if, but when that enemy is defeated and when that uncertainty becomes clear. We assert with confidence that we can face these enemies and we can trust the Lord, and our souls should not despair.

Charles Spurgeon one time called the writings of William Binnie, "The Pathway to the Psalms", unlike any others, an amazing book. And William Binnie said this in the mid-19th century. He said this,

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*"Till the judgment day, it will never be known how many souls who would otherwise cast themselves down in despair have been encouraged by David's example, assisted by his Psalms to embrace the promise and to hope in the mercy of God."*

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My friends, may you hope afresh in the mercy of God found in Jesus Christ, the one who will put all enemies underneath his feet, the Lion from the tribe of Judah, the one who will make all things right and put all things in order.

Let's pray.

*Almighty God, merciful Father, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. God, we marvel at your grace and do this to sinners like us, the Lord who has given us such sure promises. Thank you for Psalm 60 and the wisdom and the truth therein, the instruction that helps us to pray. God, help us to be those who pray quickly, who request your aid, who cast off all trust in the vain hope of men. We look to you, the Lion from the tribe of Judah. We look to you, the Lord who is our Savior, and the Lord in whom we will do valiantly. We trust ourselves to you and pray, God, that we rejoice in the salvation that will be ours. We pray this all in Jesus' name and all God's people say, Amen.*

Amen.

“Come, Christians Join to Sing”

What joy it is to sing praises to our great worthy God, amen? Amen.

We have victory in the Lord. He is supreme, he is sovereign, and one day he will put all enemies under his feet. And so we rejoice in that with great confidence, brothers and sisters in Christ. We read in the New Testament wonderful words from the Apostle Paul concerning our future and concerning a future that is ours securely because of the grace of God in Jesus Christ. Verses that over the years have not only been geared to me and so many other saints down through history, but are strengthening an antidote for us in a fallen world. **1 Thessalonians 5:9–11: “For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.”** Amen.