

Manifold Sorrows Psalm 55

by Pastor Roy Hogan

Of all the personalities in the Word of God, David may have, aside from Job, been the most troubled. Trouble seemed to follow him. Some of his troubles, he brought on himself. He failed God woefully in the affair with Bathsheba and paid dearly for his sin.

It is believed this Psalm is written at a time when David was being threatened by his eldest son. His eldest son plotted to take his throne from his father, David. This may have been the deepest burden of sorry David had to carry. However, David never gave up. Perhaps you are in a time of burden. The load is heavy. You may be tempted to give up in the battle for the Lord. I encourage you to do as David. He flung himself into the arms of the Lord. Once again, Jehovah God came to his rescue. Please do not give in or give up.

You will notice in your Bible the word *maschil* appears at the heading of this Psalm. This word means *to instruct*. There are thirteen such Psalms. Some attach the word sermon to the word *maschil*. In other words, there is a message of instruction and direction in a *maschil* Psalm.

55:1-2

Give ear to my prayer, O God; and hide not thyself from my supplication. 2 Attend unto me, and hear me: I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise;

Have you ever felt as if the heavens were shut up to your prayers? It is a challenge to pray when it seems as if God is a thousand miles away. All we can do is pray by faith. God's children are saved by faith. Once saved, our life becomes faith-based. We live by faith. Our walk is by faith. We also must pray by faith believing that God hears when it seems he is closed for business.

David must find himself in a situation where he does not feel as if he has a connection to God. He pleads for God's ear. He asked God to not only to hear him, but to refrain from hiding from him. He is

praying in the fashion of mourning, that is, moaning. He is making noise not because God is deaf as thought the prophets of Baal on Mt Carmel, but because his heart and his human flesh is deeply sorrowful. The fashion in which David is praying is likely not foreign to any one of us.

55:3

Because of the voice of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked: for they cast iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me.

The word *enemy* has the meaning of *lawless one*. Absalom, the eldest of David's sons, was lawless. He wanted his father's throne even if it meant the death of his father.

Lawless is used in the New testament to describe the Devil's messiah, that is, the antichrist. He will be a lawless tormentor of humanity and a champion God-hater.

The enemies of David were engaged in *oppression*. Oppression means outcry. As of yet, not a shot had been fired at David. At this moment, he was only hearing the outcry of his wicked enemies. He was having to listen to their ugly threats against his as they boasted of taking his throne from him.

55:4-5

My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me. 5 Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me.

It does not necessarily require a bullet or an arrow to strike one's heart to cause dreadful pain. Words alone can make one feel as if they have been stricken by an arrow. The tongue is a swift arrow. The tongue is a double-edged sword. David has the taste of death in his mouth. He tells us death's terrors have befallen him. He is trembling with fear. Fear is awful, but *horror* is fear on steroids.

55:6-8

And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest. 7 Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain

in the wilderness. Selah 8 I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest.

I have been where David describes himself as being in verse 6. I have seen a time when I wished and dreamed, I could fly away from it all. I think about folks who have long-term health ailments. I have met some saints *never have a single good day*. To live is a challenge to them. I have a saying that goes like this- “If you think life’s problems are bad, wait until life *is* the problem.” Because of poor health, Job despised the day he was born. When he lay down at night, he prayed to God that he would not have to see the sunrise of the next morning.

I believe David’s suffering is two-fold. He is still bearing the consequences of the Bathsheba affair, and he is facing the challenge of Absalom, his son, and Ahithophel, his chief counselor seeking his overthrow. Certainly, God forgives sin. David is a forgiven man. However, for reasons unknown to most of us, God allows to consequences of the sin to linger.

Possibly, David lay his head on a pillow, closed his eyes, and dreamed of taking on the wings of the dove and flying to a faraway place. There, he says, I could *be at rest*. Life’s burdens take our energy away. Life’s burdens wound our human spirit. The old-times would say when they became weary and tired- “my giddy up and go has done gotten up and gone.”

55:9

Destroy, O Lord, and divide their tongues: for I have seen violence and strife in the city.

God has many weapons. He can work in ways so mysterious to man. God does not need F16 fighter jets or AK-47s. If he chose to destroy an enemy with such weapons, he could do so. God has an arsenal unknow to mankind.

David prays to the Lord to *divide their tongues*. God answered David’s prayer. Ahithophel, David chief advisor, forsook David and

joined Absalom in his revolt against his father. Hushai was a friend of David's, and he visited David while he was in exile. David instructed Hushai to return to Jerusalem. Ahithophel had formulated a plan to conquer the kingdom and had passed his plan to Absalom. Along came Hushai, whom Absalom trusted, and he, too, gave Absalom a plan to conquer that he thought would be better than Ahithophel's plan. The divided-tongue strategy worked. Absalom became confused between the two plans. Ultimately, he chose Hushai's plan. Little did Absalom know that Hushai's plan favored David. Absalom failed, and David won. For sure, God won for it was he who sat David on the throne of the nation Israel.

God has unlimited methods of defeating the Devil. It is good to be on the Lord's side. Every wise man fears God.

55:10-11

Day and night they go about it upon the walls thereof: mischief also and sorrow are in the midst of it. 11 Wickedness is in the midst thereof: deceit and guile depart not from her streets.

Jerusalem, the great city, is in turmoil. Day and night, discord prevailed. David names afflictions that have befallen the city: mischief, sorrow, wickedness, deceit, and guile. Twenty-four hours per day, discord reigns. Some likely supported David while others supported Absalom.

I am sorry for the present condition of my homeland, the United States of America. It is the land of the free and the home of the brave. There are enemy forces around the continent who have guns aimed at the USA desiring greatly to bring her down. Outside invasion seems less and less needful for the destruction of America. It seems America will be destroyed from within. It is time to weep and pray.

55:12-15

For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him: 13 But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. 14 We

took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company. 15 Let death seize upon them, and let them go down quick into hell: for wickedness is in their dwellings, and among them.

Has a friend ever attacked you? David was not attacked by an enemy. He writes in verse 12: *For it was not an enemy that reproached me.* It was not someone who simply hated David without cause. Saul comes to my mind. David was Saul's harp-player, his armorbearer, and his son-in-law. However, Saul chose to hate David. A friend attacked David. Ahithophel, David's friend and chief counselor in the kingdom, turned against David. David refers to Ahithophel, in verse 13, as *a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance.* In verse 14, we note that David and Ahithophel went to church together. They had sat down together on many occasions and formulated the course of the nation.

The words of verse 15 are not pleasant. David's wrath exploded. You may wish to skip over verse 15. It may be too harsh for your tender heart. I suppose we no longer live in a land where messengers "cry aloud and spare not," as did Isaiah. David wished death upon his two adversaries, Absalom and Ahithophel. Ahithophel committed suicide. Absalom was murdered.

There may be someone in your life who, for your sake, may be better off dead.

55:16-17

As for me, I will call upon God; and the LORD shall save me. 17 Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.

David has written his answer in stone. He will not waver. He will stay with God. His decision is final. He has placed his two enemies, Absalom and Ahithophel, in God's hands. David is going with the Lord. His seemingly favorite son, Absalom, is now his chief enemy. His best, most trusted friend is now his enemy. Job 19:14 reads *My kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me.*

In terms of human suffering in the Bible, I place David next to Job. It seems David's heart was as wounded as was Job's flesh.

55:18

He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me: for there were many with me.

The war has not yet been fought. However, God has given David victory. He has peace in his heart. Romans 8:31 reads *What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?* Before David ever laid eyes on Goliath, he had assurance from God that he would win the battle. I Samuel 17:26 *And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?* With God on our side, we can “count our chickens before the eggs hatch.” David wanted to know what the prize was for defeating Goliath before he fought him for he knew Goliath was going down.

David believed many were on his side in the fight against Absalom and Ahithophel. The Devil would have God's children to believe no one loves them, and no one is on their side. Let us think back to Elijah when he was threatened by Jezebel in I Kings 19. The prophet crawled under a juniper tree and asked God to allow him to die. Poor fellow believed he was the only one left on earth that was serving God. He saw no reason to live. God reminded him that there were still 7,000 that had not bowed a knee to Baal.

Saints, there are many on our side. It is easy to allow one opponent to take you under. Believe by faith that there are many who are on your side and that are still on the Lord's side.

55:19-21

God shall hear, and afflict them, even he that abideth of old. Selah Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God. 20 He hath put forth his hands against such as be at peace with him: he hath broken his covenant. 21 The words of his mouth were smoother

than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords.

God has been in operation a long, long time. It is he that *abideth of old*. One of the most difficult tasks for my mind to think on is the topic of eternity. There is a time and date on my birth certificate, and I have been counting hours and days since the day I was born. Having been around all eternity, God *has seen it all*. What Absalom and Ahithophel are doing against David, God has already experienced. Lucifer, the shining one. Rose up against God in Heaven. You can face no battle nor opposition that God has not already faced.

Verse 19 tells us that David's assailants do not fear God. When a man ceases to fear God, he becomes lawless and dangerous.

Verse 20 informs us that David, at one time, had peace with these two men. David felt in his heart that he had a covenant relationship with each of them. You can do all in your power to be helpful to someone, and when the fear of God leaves their life, they become fully capable of becoming your enemy. I have witnessed this in church the entire 65 years I have been in church. In the church world and in life, you simply cannot do enough for a person or for a family to prevent them from turning on you. You can bury their dead, marry their young, hold their hand through the valley of sickness, and pray for them and their loved ones only to have the Devil get in their heart, and they turn on you. Many times, I have witnessed this in life and, sadly, in church.

Let us look at verse 21. Apparently, butter and oil have been around a long time. The tongue has been around a long time as well. Adam and Eve had tongues. Do you believe the devil can do magic? He sure can. He turns butter and oil into a two-edged sword every hour of every day.

55:22

Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.

The righteous, of verse 22, surround themselves with truth and right. Every person here, me included, have at sometime had opportunity to do something a little wrong or deceitful in order to get gain. Every time I have tried to do so, it has backfired.

55:23

But thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction: bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days; but I will trust in thee.

Absalom was murdered. Ahithophel committed suicide. What more can we say?