

## Psalm 57 Hiding in the Cave

by Pastor Roy Hogan

As is the subject of many of the Psalms of David, Psalm 57 is another Psalm that addresses a time of danger in David's life. I doubt that few of this earth's inhabitants have had an enemy as aggressive toward them as was Saul toward David. Saul hunted David as one would hunt a game-bird. On the occasion of this Psalm, David had hidden in a cave referred to as Adullam. You may read of this event in I Samuel 22:1-5. It is on this occasion that David, thinking he was alone in hiding, looked out the mouth of the cave and God had sent 400 friends to help him. What a surprise this must have been!

57:1

*Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.*

We note first of all in this verse, David begins by pleading for mercy. In fact, he makes a double plea for God's mercy. David is in big trouble. His heart is overwhelmed. He is hidden in a cave possibly thinking he does not have a friend in the world. Has there been a time in your life when you were alone and afraid? Most likely, we have all been there at some point in our lifetime. It is a strange and certainly uncomfortable feeling. Fear combined with loneliness is certainly dreadful. I imagine David, though he was a tough warrior, is also at the point of fatigue physically from the endless pursuit.

Mercy from the Lord is something that we all can cherish. Where would anyone be without God's mercy? Lamentations 3:22 *It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.* Forty times the Scripture records the sweet words *his mercy endureth forever.*

David pleads for safe hiding “in the shadow of thy wings.” There are innumerable safety shelters around the world. However, there is no shelter like being beneath the wings of Holy God. The nation Israel has constructed what is referred to as an “iron dome” over Jerusalem. The dome is a defense mechanism to defend the city against incoming harm. I recall as a child talk of the Cold War with the communist world. I stood as a 6-year-old boy and watched a neighbor construct what was termed a bomb-shelter on the hillside across from our home. Repeatedly, it was supplied with food and water intended to last several days should the Communist attack the land. A mother hen broods over her chicks in the time of danger. Any threat to her young must first be addressed with her.

The greatest of all shelters is found beneath the wing of the LORD. There, we are hidden from the sight of danger. I love to be where the Devil can't see me. I cannot be in such a place unless danger is imminent. Beneath the wing of the Lord, I can feel his heartbeat. Oh my, what a sensation far more soothing than a spa. Beneath his wing, there is warmth. Nothing can warm the heart of a child of God like the bosom of the father. For the Devil to get to me, he must first go through God. Glory to his name. I am glad that I am hid with Christ in him, Colossians 3:3.

Storms come and go in life. I like the “going” part best. I despise to see them coming. We often sing a beautiful song entitled *Til' the Storm Passes By*. David has been in storms. All storms have an ending. He believes this calamity will pass.

57:2

*I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth all things for me.*

Being beneath the Lord hidden from the storm, we have access to his ear. Close to his bosom, his ear is nearby. One song often sung through the ages bears the title *He Whispers Sweet Peace to Me*.

David cried to *God Most High*. This combination of names for God means *God the supreme ruler, the final authority*. The Devil may say “I am going to hurt you.” God must then grant or deny permission. He has the final say. Bless the name of the Lord.

This verse tells us *God performeth all things for me*. The translation of the word *performeth* in this verse is *gomer* which means *perfect*, or complete. When God does a job, he does it right. I have been guilty of performing task half-heartedly and incomplete. This is not God’s way. He does all thing well and complete. I think of the account of the man wounded on the road to Jericho in Luke 10. The good Samaritan came by and met, not part, but all his needs. He provided the wounded man oil for his wound, wine for his pain, he gave him his donkey to ride to the inn, he spent the night with him at the inn, he paid the bill the next morning, and he set up an account for any incidental charges. This is a good picture of the complete care God provided to his children. David was in a tough place but was in good hands. We are in good hands.

57:3

*He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up.*

*Selah God shall send forth his mercy and his truth.*

I believe God has an angel named mercy and an angel named truth. These two comprise the A-team. They minister to the saints. In studying angels in the Bible, I believe one angel is capable of contending with the entire population of the earth. I try the imagine the power of two angels. David is faced with possible injury. Mercy will take care of this matter. He is faced with injustice, that is, many false accusations. Truth will take care of this matter.

57:4

*My soul is among lions: and I lie even among them that are set on fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.*

This verse jolts us. This verse shakes us. It vividly paints a picture of the real and imminent danger David is facing. Reading the many references to lions in the Bible, I certainly have come to respect the power of the lion. Because of the power of the lion, Christ is referred to as the Lion of the tribe of Judah. This reference alone speaks volumes as to the lion's power.

Has a lion ever vexed your soul? David says his soul is among lions, lions being plural. One is enough. Saul alone was a lion no one should have to face. He had the power of the nation's army at his disposal. There were more lions than Saul in pursuit of David.

Men can turn to monsters. David describes men whose teeth have turned to *spears* and *arrows*. He describes men whose tongue has become a *sword*. Never underestimate the power of a human being under the control of Satan. I have witnessed it firsthand. In a moment of time, a "friend" can cut your heart out. A relative can slice you like a hot knife in butter. In your lifetime you will likely encounter men whose teeth are spears and arrows and whose tongue is as a sword. The mouth sure gets a bum rap in this verse, don't you agree?

57:5

*Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; let thy glory be above all the earth.*

*Romans 5:3-5 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*

No one likes trouble. However, it is in time of trouble that God can best be exalted. I appreciate David's attitude in this time of trouble. He is fleeing for his life. He is hidden in a cave afraid and alone,

yet, he desires that in all these things that God be exalted. This is truly a Christian attitude.

Some get mad at God in time of trouble. Some, in time of trouble, chose to leave God and go a different path. Sometimes in life, statements are made that pierce our heart and stay with us for a lifetime. Once, I heard it said that “if you get mad at God in time of trouble, you will be mad at the only one who can get you out of trouble.” This is an amazing truth that I desire to abide by my entire life. Yes, trouble in the life of a child of God can bring glory to the Lord.

57:6

*They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down: they have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen themselves. Selah*

My father grew up amidst Cherokee Indians in Western North Carolina. He spoke of the Indian hunter digging a pit in the forest and using brush to cover the mouth of the pit. The hunted game, such as a bear, would fall into the disguised pit and be trapped. Men dug pits for David hoping he would fall into the pit and be trapped. It never happened. His enemy fell into the pits they had dug for him. Selah, meditate.

57:7

*My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise.*

The number one hindrance to the spiritual growth of today's believers, aside from idols, is hesitance to make an unwavering covenant with God that they are going all the way with him let come what may. Hardly anyone can say their heart is fixed on God. As soon as trouble comes, they faint. As soon life presents a challenge, they waver. Few are fixed. It is easy for a pastor to stand in the pulpit and pick out the persons who are fixed. It can be seen in their Christian demeanor.

57:8-11

*Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early. 9 I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations. 10 For thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds. 11 Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: let thy glory be above all the earth.*

No one in the Scripture seemed to be able to praise and worship God like David did. He was a champion worshipper. I am at a loss as to why we, in this age, do not worship God. Only occasionally does someone lift a hand toward heaven in praise of him. I am appalled that no one can speak a word of glory to his precious name.

If you hang around David very long, you will get a glimpse of a champion worshipper. I am not sure I would be in a mood to worship God while trapped in a cave alone and afraid. Such a circumstance did not hinder David. He vowed that he would even arise early to get a head start on praising God. Yes, David is a champion when it comes to the art of worship. No one could worship God like he could. Circumstances, regardless of how dare, did not stop his worship of the Lord.

We often hear of performers *going on tour*. In verse 9, David went on tour performing for the Lord. He stated “I will sing unto thee among the nations.” David used the occasion of fleeing from Saul from nation to nation to broadcast the name of God.

