

Psalm 59:1-17

Introduction

The Christian often has to pray for deliverance from wicked enemies.

We find many examples of this in Book 2 of the Psalms and, in particular, in Psalm 59. According to the Title, or superscription, Psalm 59 was written "when Saul sent men to watch [David's] house in order to kill him."

Whilst Psalm 59 connects directly with this personal historical incident, David also applies its lessons more generally, seeing a parallel between his own rescue and God's care for all his persecuted people.

Summary

In Psalm 59, David records how God protected and delivered him from the encompassing hostile forces of King Saul, showing that God will protect and deliver His people from whatever enemies may surround them.

1. Petitioned Rescue vv. 1-7

David's first petition, is a standard appeal for God to deliver him from wicked foes. In the midst of his troubles, David remained calm and prayed thoughtfully, outlining three reasons why God should help him.

First: the grave danger he faced from blood-thirsty enemies (**Psalm 59:6-7**)

Secondly, his innocence in the situation (**Ps. 59:3-4**).

Thirdly, God's own character (**Psalm 59:3, 5**).

Christians should approach God with the same boldness that David displays in Psalm 59. First, let us pray on the basis of true and especially urgent needs. Secondly, let us present our innocence, even whilst we confess ourselves to be flawed sinners. Thirdly, let us come boldly on the basis of who God is and what he has promised.

2. First Watchful Refrain vv. 8-10

David's appeal to God's names and the promises that go with them leads him into the first refrain in the psalm in which he glories in God's salvation.

In the first refrain, David is watching and waiting expectantly for God to act.

Having reminded himself of who God is and of what promises God has made to his covenant people, David is watching for the Lord's deliverance.

David's expression "I will watch for you" (**Ps. 59:9**) reminds us of the Old Testament prophet Habakkuk, who became famous for erecting a watch-tower from which he looked for God's salvation.

King Jehoshaphat prayed: "O our God, ... we do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you" (**2 Chron. 20:12**). After you have prayed according to God's promises, make sure that you keep your eyes on God, setting up a watchtower in his Word.

3. Petitioned Judgment vv. 11-15

David's second petition asks for judgment on his enemies. He presents three reasons for the judgment of his evil foes.

First, the edifying instruction that such judgment would provide for God's people **(Psalm 59:11)**.

Secondly the sinfulness of his enemies **(Psalm 59:12-13)**.

Thirdly, his enemies are getting worse rather than better **(Psalm 59:14-15)**.

4. Seconding Praising Refrain vv. 16-17

Psalm 59 concludes with a repetition of the refrain, in which David celebrates his confidence in God's mighty strength and in the "steadfast love" that God shows to his trusting people **(Psalm 59:16-17)**.

Whereas in the first refrain, David said, "O my Strength, I will watch for you," **(Psalm 59:9)**, he now rejoices, "O my Strength, I will sing praises to you" **(Psalm 59:17)**.

When God's people turn to Him in trusting prayer: our fear gives way to faith so that those who watch for the Lord end up singing praises to God with great joy.

Notice that David does not begin praising the Lord because his outward circumstances have changed. The reason David now sings in praise is that he had been watching for the Lord's salvation.

Are you waiting for ideal circumstances before you sing praise to God?

Christians rejoice amidst trials because we remember God's faithful salvation in times past, we trust his promises to bless and provide, and we are watching in such a way that our hearts are encouraged and our attitudes are changed into joy.

Remember King Jehoshaphat, who admitted that he did not know what to do, but who prayed and set his eyes on God?

The Lord sent a prophet with news of a coming victory and told Jehoshaphat to march out with all the people singing **(2 Chron 20:14-23)**.

Remember Habakkuk in his watchtower.

The prophet was dismayed and confused, though he remembered God and trusted his grace. He sat up high, watching for what God would reveal to him.

Maybe the reason that God has delayed his rescue is so that we learn to sing His praise in the watchtower of faith.