

# “If the Foundations Be Destroyed...”

Psalm 11

## REVIEW

Does there come a point when a nation is lost and it's time to pull up stakes and flee? That question is raised in Psalm 11. Let's first get the context and then make the application to our own state of affairs.

**:1** – The psalm begins with a temptation to distrust God. Possibly it is presented by David's enemies in King Saul's court who hope to entrap David and then charge him with breach of duty or cowardice.

A. This is a common device of Satan to destroy us: using even our closest associates to argue us out of our confidence. See, for example, Job's wife – “Curse God and die.”

B. And it is a forceful argument, cutting deeply – “How say ye to my *soul*?”

C. The counsel is to flee as a bird (not that birds go to mountains, but that they fly quickly from danger).

D. “Mountain” represents the place of common refuge where there are dens and caves, a personal hiding place of safety and security. Compare Judges 6:2.

**:2** – A powerful argument is presented based upon observation of facts – “Lo” (Look!).

A. Wicked people (not restrained by morality or propriety) are on the cusp of action (bow is bent) with painful and deadly devices (arrows) to be carried out in secrecy so as not to be detected (privily – not in a fair fight, treacherously) against the upright in heart (so, being on the right won't save you).

**:3** – “If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?”

A. The construction analogy – houses become push-overs if their base is shot.

B. The cultural application – when certain underpinnings of a society are lost, conditions can degenerate past salvaging. There's a tipping point where the righteous see much cost and little profit in staying.

C. 2 Questions: 1. What's the application for David? and 2. Does the analogy apply/hold?

1. The application for David: this could be a reference to Doeg the Edomite's murdering of the 85 priests at the command of Saul (I Sam. 21-22).

a. The priests were the preservers of truth and spirituality. Divine worship was destroyed. What will a national leader do, what shall be the fate of a country, where even *this* can occur? The very foundations of law and justice were destroyed under Saul's unrighteous government.

b. Foundations are those things on which society rests and social order is sustained. In this case,

1. Truth is no longer respected.

2. Justice no longer prevails.

3. Character and virtue no longer are exalted!

c. And note: David *did* flee at that very time from the king of Gath to a cave (22:1).

2. But does the argument hold for the godly man, David? See his answer declared in the first sentence of the psalm and now explained starting from :4.

**:4** – The gist: are the *mountains* where God is? NO! He is in His temple, and I can reach Him from *here*. Compare Hab. 2:20, Mic. 1:2, Rev. 16:17. The Lord is in control and not ignorant of what is happening.

1. “His eyes behold” – He sees everybody.
2. “His eyelids try” – He sees through everybody.
3. “the children of men” – this means everybody.
4. David’s conviction is: God may be out of our sight, but we are not out of His.

**:5** – God will use experiences to refine His own beloved people. Trials are not to be escaped. They are channels of blessing. God is not only not ignorant of what the enemy is doing but also of what we need. He will suffer nothing to come upon us except what he governs to a positive end (Deut. 8:15-16).

**:6** – This verse describes the abundant, sudden, furious, and utter destruction of God’s enemies in His timing.

1. Persecutors may appear to prevail for a while, but they abide under the gathering cloud of the wrath of God and will soon enough perish.
2. “He that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death.” (Prov. 8:36)

**:7** – Here is the prism through which all national events and man’s response to them must be seen: Who is the Lord and what does He love? **RIGHTEOUSNESS!**

1. God *loves* the righteous and will always care for them. They are the apple of His eye.
2. Of interest: “his countenance” is literally “their faces.” Here is a veiled reference to the Trinity. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit all do behold the righteous.

**In summary:** What we find is an attempt to discourage David’s confidence in God based on the visible circumstances of his culture. The argument is, in the face of danger, device, and degeneration all about you, as the very foundations of society are being destroyed, what can the righteous do but flee? His answer: What are all these things to a man whose trust is in God alone? What can the righteous *not* do?

The attempt to discourage David’s confidence in God incites in him all the more zeal. Shake a tree and the roots actually go deeper and grip harder. (That’s what should be happening to us at this time in our history.)

What David does is recount what he believes. He is incited to cleave to his first principles and review them here to endure this temptation before him. He says as Nehemiah, and as should any saint, “Should such a man as I flee?” In review, here are his points:

- 1. There is a God in heaven.** He’s out of our sight, but we’re never out of His.
- 2. This God governs the world.** He’s on His throne.
- 3. He perfectly knows every man’s true character.** His eyes see; His eyelids try.
- 4. If He afflicts the righteous, it is for their improvement and His glory.**
- 5. Persecutors may appear to prevail for a while, but the wrath of God comes.**
- 6. God loves the righteous and will always care for them.**

Now let's make the application to today. Look at the features of King Saul and his times. The man was:

1. The choice not of God but the people who wanted change and to be like the other nations around them.
2. A charismatic, impressive leader outwardly but lacking good foundations inwardly.
3. Indeed, a vacillating, double-minded man who would speak of the God of the Bible but also consult a witch, who would call upon a prophet to pray but destroy the institutions of truth and worship.
4. A man who would shed innocent blood and waste government resources to do it.
5. A man who divided people into factions.

See any parallels to today? What is happening in our beloved country? Let's take a look at Recent Developments, Reasons We Are Burdened, and Our Response.

## **I. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS**

### **A. A few federal judges are overruling the overwhelming will of the people in individual states.**

1. **Arizona** voted English as their official language, but Federal Judges overruled. (9th Circuit, Prop. 106, March 3, 1997)
2. **Californians** voted to stop state-funded taxpayer services to illegal aliens, but Federal Judges overruled. (Prop. 187, Nov. 20, 1995)
3. **Colorado** citizens voted not to give special rights to homosexuals, but Federal Judges overruled. (Sup. Ct. *Romer v Evans*, 1992)
4. **Missouri** voters defeated a tax increase, but Federal Judges overruled. (8th Circuit, *Missouri v Jenkins*, Apr. 18, 1990)
5. **Missouri** passed "A Woman's Right to Know." The governor vetoed it. Legislators overrode his veto, but a Federal Judge overruled. (U.S. District Judge Scott O. Wright, Sep. 11, 2000)
6. **Nebraska** citizens passed a Marriage Amendment with 70% of the vote, but a Federal Judge overruled. (U.S. District Judge Joseph Batallion, May 12, 2005)
7. **New York** citizens voted against physician-assisted suicide, but Federal Judges overruled. (2nd Circuit, Apr. 2, 1996)
8. **Missouri** legislators passed a ban on partial birth abortion on Sept. 5, 1999. The Governor vetoed it. In a historic session, 1500 citizens knelt in prayer around the State Capitol as the Legislature overrode his veto. Days later a single Federal Judge suspended the law.
9. **Massachusetts** legislators were working to define marriage as between a man and a woman in 2003 when four State Supreme Court Judges ordered the State Legislature to pass a law within 180 days recognizing homosexual marriage.
10. **The U.S. Congress** passed a partial birth abortion bill that was signed by the President in 2003. The next day a Federal Judge suspended the law. In fact, thirty-one States passed bans on partial birth abortion only to have unelected Federal Judges suspend them.

### **B. One or two supreme court judges have made the difference in some of the most important legal and moral decisions our nation has ever faced.**

- 1. Socialized Health Care** – it is legally inconsistent, fiscally disastrous, and morally a train wreck as the assessments of relative worth, health and sickness, and life and death are placed in the hands of a bloated, inefficient, wasteful, and godless government.
- 2. Redefinition of Marriage** – somehow we have declined to a point where a single person, who in his decision displayed no particular legal talent and certainly no spiritual qualifications, provided the swing vote for our nation of 350 million people to dismiss the testimony of 6,000 years of civilization, the witness within every soul of man, the declaration of Holy Scriptures, and the pronouncement of God Himself, and this he has done without apparent awareness or fear.

## **II. REASONS WE ARE BURDENED These and other recent court decisions cause us concern for:**

- Disregard for language, law, and logic
- Dishonor for the USA and its Constitution
- Desensitizing of our culture
- Decline to further depths of darkness and depravity
- Division of the citizenry
- Defilement of souls
- Destruction of our liberties
- Demoralizing of our people

## **III. Our RESPONSE – Essentially, in terms of our calling, nothing has changed. As we see in Ps. 11 ...**

- 1. There is a God in heaven.** He's out of our sight, but we're never out of His.
- 2. This God governs the world.** He's on His throne.
- 3. He perfectly knows every man's true character.** His eyes see; His eyelids try.
- 4. If He afflicts the righteous, it is for their improvement and His glory.**
- 5. Persecutors may appear to prevail for a while, but the wrath of God comes.**
- 6. God loves the righteous and will always care for them.**

We're going to keep on. We will redouble our efforts in advancing the Gospel. And we will keep on. In the words of John Jay, the original Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, "All that the best men can do is to persevere in doing their duty . . . and leave the consequences to Him who made it their duty, being neither elated by success (however great) nor discouraged by disappointment (however frequent and mortifying)."

## DISCUSSION

Discuss what are your burdens as you observe current developments in our culture and how the Scriptures teach us that we should respond.