

What is Your Source of Security?

Psalm 52

Studies in the Psalms #53

IN 2017 we Americans spend \$34 billion on the security services industry. That's \$34 billion for home security, online security, security guards, patrol services, and the list goes on. We obviously value ourselves and our things. We say, "The home is where the heart is," but we can just as easily say, "Where the money is there is our heart." Psalm 52 is a Psalm of security.

It begins like so many others with the heading: **To the choirmaster. A Maskil of David.** Then it adds this historical tidbit: **when Doeg, the Edomite, came and told Saul, "David has come to the house of Ahimelech."** This takes us back to 1 Samuel 21. There we read about David's meeting with Ahimelech the high priest when his men were on the run and hungry. David asked for bread and received the holy bread from the tabernacle instead. Then the narrative is interrupted in verse 7 with this: "Now a certain man of the servants of Saul was there that day, detained before the LORD. His name was Doeg the Edomite, the chief of Saul's herdsmen." That's strange. Then the narrative continues with David asking for weapons and getting Goliath's spear. Later in chapter 22 Doeg told Saul the whole story (vv. 9–10). Saul summoned the priests of Nob, interrogated them, then told his guard to kill them all; but

they wouldn't kill priests. When Saul commanded Doeg to do it, he willingly killed eighty-five men, women, children, infants, and animals (vv. 11–19).

In response to this story, David meditates in this Psalm about the source of security.

ONLY TWO OPTIONS (v. 1)

He opens with the reality that there are ONLY TWO OPTIONS for where you find your security.

The first option is the self: **Why do you boast of evil, O mighty man?**

The word behind **mighty man** is *gibbor*, which is usually used of the Lord.

David is reflecting that Doeg did the deed, was boastful that he did, and now he was the big man on campus! His head is so puffed up he thinks he's "the man." In other words, his security was in himself. In the words of Paul Simon:

I am a rock,
I am an island.
And a rock feels no pain;
And an island never cries.

Is your security yourself tonight?

The second option is God's covenant faithfulness: **the steadfast love of God endures all the day**. We've seen the word behind **steadfast love** many times; it's *chesed*. It speaks of the fact that the God who's made promises *keeps* promises. There's two things to note about it here. First, We normally hear in

the Psalms about the **steadfast love of *the LORD***, who is the one who redeemed Israel out of Egypt. But what does David say here? **The steadfast love of *God***. The Creator is their faithful Lord. Second, notice how it's used in contrast to the first part of the verse. **Why do you boast of evil, O mighty man?** is contrasted with **the steadfast love of God endures all the day**. In other words, the mighty man's evil that looks so impressive lasts for a moment; God's love lasts forever. *Where's your security tonight, my friends? These are your options.*

YOURSELF (vv. 2–5)

What does it look like to find security in yourself? Why is Doeg so self-confident? Look at his weapon of power: **your tongue plots destruction, like a sharp razor, you worker of deceit** (v. 2). Are you self-confident because of you have a way with words? Your words have wreak havoc and cut like razors. How many times have we read in our series through John the razor-like words of the Judean leadership?

But the tongue of the self-secured sinner is just a manifestation of their heart. Why is Doeg so self-confident? **You love evil more than good** (v. 3). Can you think of an illustration we've seen recently from John's Gospel? Remember how even after the Judean leaders affirmed Jesus' works were good and that he performed signs, they still sought his arrest, trial, and execution.

Notice how he goes on again to speak of the power of the tongue: **and lying more than speaking what is right. You love all words that devour, O deceitful tongue** (vv. 3, 4).

In David's meditation he ends with the result of being a self-reliant and self-secured person who will not acknowledge their sin and need of a Savior: **But God will break you down forever; he will snatch and tear you from your tent; he will uproot you from the land of the living** (v. 5). It's a violent image: **God will break...God will snatch...God will tear...God will uproot.** It's an image of ultimate destiny: God will do all these things **forever**. *Are you sure you want to be secure in yourself?*

GOD (vv. 6–9)

What does it look like to find security in God? It's described in ultimate ways here. The reality is that whether in this life or the next **the righteous shall see and fear, and shall laugh at** the wicked (v. 6). Remember Psalm 2? The LORD laughs at all the plots of the wicked to reject the Lord. While they came up with the plot of the cross he laughed because he knew the end of the story! David says we'll laugh too when we see God **break...snatch...tear...and uproot** the wicked either in this life or the life to come. When that happens, look at what we'll say: **"See the man who would not make God his refuge,**

but trusted in the abundance of his riches and sought refuge in his own destruction!” (v. 7) How fearful will that day be when all those we love who love this world so much that they lost their soul are destroyed?

What is the benefit of trusting the Lord? In contrast to the wicked David says, **but I am like a green olive tree in the house of God** (v. 8). We're not **br[o]k[en]...snatch[ed]...t[o]r[n]...or uprooted**; we're like **green olive tree[s]**. We're not snatched from tents but dwell **in the house of God**. Thus we can say, **“I trust in the steadfast love of God forever and ever”** (v. 8). Remember the image of Psalm 1? The righteous one is alive and fruitful. Just like our Lord, whom the wicked boasted over in his death, all the while God had already promised to raise his Son. Just like our Lord, who unlike the wicked in his resurrection and ascension is reigning and ruling over everything!

Look also at the last verse, which describes just how confident we can be that our security is in the Lord: **I will thank you forever, because you have done it. I will wait for your name, for it is good, in the presence of the godly** (v. 9). David vows *now* to thank God then when he's done all this; in fact, he says it's as good as done and that's he's already done it.

If find your security in this life and for the life to come in Lord, you don't have to pay anything; he's already paid the price! You're secure!