

Daily Encouragement from Adam – Wednesday 20th May

Psalm 55

For the director of music. With stringed instruments. A *maskil* of David.

David writes this psalm in severe distress. Some who are persecuting him now were once close and trusted friends. This is a psalm of betrayal. It is believed that Ahithophel, David's mentor is the one who David is referring to in this Psalm at the time of Absalom's rebellion (2 Sam 15).

¹ Listen to my prayer, O God,
do not ignore my plea;
² hear me and answer me.
My thoughts trouble me and I am distraught
³ because of what my enemy is saying,
because of the threats of the wicked;
for they bring down suffering on me
and assail me in their anger.

Human beings feel real pain and David here shares his honest thoughts and feelings. He may be a leader of God's people, a leader of the faith, but he is first and foremost a human being.

⁴ My heart is in anguish within me;
the terrors of death have fallen on me.
⁵ Fear and trembling have beset me;
horror has overwhelmed me.
⁶ I said, "Oh, that I had the wings of a dove!
I would fly away and be at rest.
⁷ I would flee far away
and stay in the desert;
⁸ I would hurry to my place of shelter,
far from the tempest and storm."

David longs to fly far away from his troubles. Isn't that our own reaction when faced with difficulties and opposition? He is wrestling with his thoughts. But he is not wrestling alone, he is taking his struggles to and is wrestling with God in prayer.

He feels like giving up... but will he? No- He trusts that God will sort it all out.

⁹ Lord, confuse the wicked, confound their words,
for I see violence and strife in the city.
¹⁰ Day and night they prowl about on its walls;
malice and abuse are within it.
¹¹ Destructive forces are at work in the city;
threats and lies never leave its streets.

David is facing an enemy from within, not a foreign army. It makes it all the more tragic and horrible for him that his close friend, companion and fellow 'worshipper' has become his enemy.

¹² If an enemy were insulting me,
I could endure it;
if a foe were rising against me,
I could hide.
¹³ But it is you, a man like myself,
my companion, my close friend,
¹⁴ with whom I once enjoyed sweet fellowship
at the house of God,
as we walked about
among the worshippers.

¹⁵ Let death take my enemies by surprise;
let them go down alive to the realm of the dead,
for evil finds lodging among them.

¹⁶ As for me, I call to God,
and the LORD saves me.

¹⁷ Evening, morning and noon
I cry out in distress,
and he hears my voice.- God hears the prayers of his people

¹⁸ He rescues me unharmed
from the battle waged against me,
even though many oppose me.

¹⁹ God, who is enthroned from of old,
who does not change—
he will hear them and humble them,
because they have no fear of God.

Our circumstances change, but God does not change. God is enthroned and is in control. He sees all that goes on.

²⁰ My companion attacks his friends;
he violates his covenant.

²¹ His talk is smooth as butter,
yet war is in his heart;
his words are more soothing than oil,
yet they are drawn swords.

His enemy is turning against the Lord's anointed King and thus the Lord (violating his covenant).

How must the Lord Jesus have felt when he was betrayed by Judas, one of his close disciples?!

²² Cast your cares on the LORD
and he will sustain you;
he will never let
the righteous be shaken.

²³ But you, God, will bring down the wicked
into the pit of decay;
the bloodthirsty and deceitful
will not live out half their days.
But as for me, I trust in you.

We react naturally to terrible and terrifying situations as human beings. Fear and anguish can occupy our thoughts at such times. The question is then, 'what next?'. Will we wrestle with our thoughts alone, or take them to the Lord? Will we run away from difficult situations or will we entrust them to God? God never promises to take difficulties away immediately, but He does promise to sustain us as His people as we cast our cares on Him. (verse 22 and see 1 Peter 5:7).

*What a friend we have in Jesus
All our sins and griefs to bear
And what a privilege to carry
Everything to God in prayer*

*Oh, what peace we often forfeit
Oh, what needless pain we bear
All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer*

*Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged
Take it to the Lord in prayer*

*Can we find a friend so faithful
Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness
Take it to the Lord in prayer*