

## Part 2 – When Surrounded By the Enemy

In part 1 we learned that this was another *Mich'-tam* Psalm of David, which means what's written is so important we should write (engrave) it into our heart and mind. And it was written when Saul sent men to 'watch' David at his own house, for the purpose of *murdering* him. Though David had been a faithful servant to Saul – playing the harp for him and even fighting in the military for him – Saul became *very* jealous of David's success in warfare. So much so that he began to *hate* David and *thrice* tried to kill him with a javelin, when David was playing the harp for him. After the third failed attempt to kill David himself, Saul then sent men to David's house to kill him. And that's why this Psalm began by David asking God (our Creator and the Supreme God) to not only defend him, but also *deliver* him, from the morally depraved men who were lying in wait to murder him. He also pointed out to the Lord (YHVH) that they were not seeking his life for any *just* reason (for any sin or transgression he had committed), because he had truly *always* been faithful to Saul, Israel *and* our Heavenly Father. And that's the thought we pick up with in this great Psalm...

### *Psalm 59*

*4 They run and prepare themselves without my fault: awake to help me, and behold.*

David again pleads his innocence to our Heavenly Father because these wicked (morally depraved) men 'run' (are *rushing* to kill him, #7323) and 'prepare' (set up, #3559) themselves to kill him. This is likely referring to the way they were encircling his house at night, which he'll speak more of in a bit. And the word '**fault**' here means **perversity** or **moral evil** (#5771). So, David is (again) pointing out his innocence and asking the Lord (YHVH) to 'awake'. Now, our Heavenly Father doesn't sleep. Psalm 11:4 (another Psalm of David) tells us that He's *always* watching what's going on in the earth, and so He very well knows what's happening. Ps 34:15 (yet another Psalm of David) also says that *the eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry*. So, this is a figure of speech, frequently used in the Psalms, that's used when someone *really* wants the *attention* of our Heavenly Father. David's basically asking the Lord to *look* at what's happening to him, because he needs help *quickly*.

### *Psalm 59*

*5 Thou therefore, O LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel, awake to visit all the heathen: be not merciful to any wicked transgressors. Selah.*

David now uses several words for our Heavenly Father when (again) calling on Him to 'awake'. The word 'LORD' is **Yehovah** (#3068), (the) *self-Existent* or *Eternal*. Yehovah is the Eternal or Immutable One, He Who WAS, and IS, and IS TO COME. And then the word God (both times) is '**Elohiym**' (#430), which means *the Supreme God*, who is our *Creator*. 'Elohiym (or 'Elohim) is

God the Creator putting His omnipotence ('*El*) into operation. So, while 'Elohim is God as the Creator of all things, Yehovah is *the same God* in covenant relation to those whom He has created. And then the word '**hosts**' is the Hebrew word *tsaba'* or *tseba'ah* (#6635) which means *a mass of persons* (or figuratively, things), especially reg. **organized for war** (*an army*); by implication, *a campaign*, literally or figuratively (specifically, hardship, worship) (#6635).

So, the words "Lord God of hosts" here is actually what the *Companion Bible* calls a 'title' of Yehovah (apx 4 II). And the notes in the *Companion Bible*, in 1 Sam 1:3, explain that this 'title' of Yehovah, denotes *God of Israel as the Lord of all the hosts* (armies) *of heaven and earth*. And this is important because David uses this 'title' in asking our Heavenly Father to wake up and 'visit' the heathen. You can be assured that he's not asking for a 'nice' visit. The word '**visit**' here means *to visit with either friendly or hostile intent* and, by analogy, means to *oversee, muster, charge, care for, miss, deposit*, etc. (#6485). It's also been translated as 'avenge' and 'punish', among many other things. So really, what David is asking for is that our Heavenly Father punish the 'heathen'. Yet, these men who were seeking to kill David were *Israelites*, not 'gentiles', nor of a foreign nation, which is what the term 'heathen' technically means (#1471). And this says a lot because David is saying that these Israelite men were acting like the heathen. And, as such, he asks the *LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel* to punish them as though they were heathen, *because they were morally depraved men* (which is what the term heathen implies, still to this very day).

That's also why he asks the Lord (YHVH) not to be merciful (kind or favorable, #2603) to them because they are *truly* '**wicked**', which means *vain* and *wicked* men who worshiped idols, and *not* our Heavenly Father. As Apx 44 iii in the *Companion Bible* points out, this word for 'wicked' ('*aven* #205) means *iniquity specially connected with idolatry* and thus, *denotes a course of bad conduct flowing from the evil desires of fallen nature* (our carnal mind, Rom 8:5-8). And then he also calls them '**transgressors**' which actually means, figuratively, *to act covertly*; by implication, *to pillage* (#898). The *Companion Bible* even renders this as 'hypocrites'. So, the men who were lying in wait to murder David (an innocent man) were really a bad group of people. And that's why David asks the Lord not to show them any mercy. Of course, our Heavenly Father doesn't show mercy to people who are like this. Which is why Ps 18:25-26 (another Psalm of David) says: *With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright; With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward*. In other words, our Heavenly Father does not show mercy to those who are truly wicked because they never show mercy to others. Our Heavenly Father is always fair in His judgment. As Prov 11:20 also says, *they that are of a froward heart are abomination to the LORD: but such as are upright in their way are his delight*. To be an abomination to the Lord (YHVH) means they are disgusting in His sight. And wickedness is disgusting in His sight; that's why He shows no mercy to them. They're totally unrepentant and

don't care about Him or His children so they are deserving of punishment. And, in the book of Exodus, our Heavenly Father also makes this point clear...

*4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:*

*5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, **visiting the iniquity** of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;*

*6 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.*

Ex 20:4-6

When God gave Israel the Ten Commandments, He specifically told them not to make any graven images. And, interestingly, He even uses the same term (visiting) as David does here in this Psalm. He will 'visit' the iniquity of those that hate Him - to each individual, and generation, that *continues* to do wickedly (disobey Him). But, to each individual, and generation, who love Him and keep His commandments - He'll show mercy. So, there's definitely a stipulation to obtaining God's mercy and David's pointing out here that these men don't qualify for His mercy... but he does! David is doing a really good job of 'making his case' before the Lord (YHVH) to obtain His help. And that's actually what our Heavenly Father wants. As He said in Isa 43:26: *Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified.* So, our Heavenly Father wants us to 'put Him in remembrance' (as David is doing here in this Psalm 59) ... not that He *needs* to be reminded, for He sees all and knows all *and does not forget*. But, He wants us to 'put Him in remembrance' for several reasons. One reason is that we show Him we *know* His promises and another is that we feel we are doing 'our part' to obtain His help, and His promises... something David is being really diligent to do here in this Psalm. And the other reason is so that, if we are *not* doing what we need to in order to obtain His promises, then He can help us see what we're doing wrong - so we can *fix it* and then come back to Him and ask for His blessings and/or help we need.

And putting our Heavenly Father 'in remembrance' is *still* something we should do today. As Paul said in Phil 4:6-7: *Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And **the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*** The word 'careful' here actually means *to be anxious about* (#3309). So, Paul's simply telling us *not* to worry, but to take our concerns (fears, anxieties, worries, etc.) to Him in prayer (in Jesus' name, John 14:13-14, John 15:17, John 16:23-26) – always remembering to give Him thanks for all He's done for us – and *then trust* that He'll help us. And, throughout David's prayers, he is *always* careful to give God praise *and* thanks. If we do this also, we too will find help in need - but we'll also be given the precious peace of mind and heart that 'passeth all understanding'...

Now, this verse also ends in a ‘Selah’, which always means for us to ‘*stop and think*’ about what *has been said* (vs 5) with what’s *about to be said* (vs 6). This ‘selah’ thus connects the wicked transgressors with their *true* character, as dogs of the Gentiles. It also marks off, and connects the two prayers in verses 1-5 with verses 11-13...

### *Psalms 59*

*6 They return at evening: they make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.*

So again, David is now explaining the true character of those who are lying in wait to murder him. The word ‘**return**’ means *to turn back, retreat or again* (#7725) and ‘**evening**’ means *dusk* (#6153). And the word ‘**noise**’ here means to *make a loud sound like* the English word “*hum*” and, by implication, also means *to be in great commotion or tumult, to rage, war, moan, clamor* (#1993). The words ‘**move about**’ mean to *revolve, surround, or border* (#5437) and the word ‘**city**’ means not only *a city* but also can mean *a mere encampment or post* (#5892), so it could refer to David’s house, not just the city. Now, the phrase ‘they make a noise like a dog’ has been interpreted different ways. Some think it means a bark or a howl, but it’s unlikely they were being *that* noisy because they came *at dusk to avoid being spotted*; so, they surely would not have been so noisy as to bark or howl, as that would have caught someone’s attention. So, it more likely means they were doing something like growling or snarling like a dog. And the noises they made (whatever it really sounded like) reflected their threatening and menacing behavior.

So, the image that David is conveying here is that of his enemies being as vicious and relentless as wild dogs, prowling around the city at night, seeking their prey. This metaphorical language emphasizes the fear and tension David felt during this situation, as well as his utter *disgust* for the men seeking his life. You see, in that culture, dogs were considered unclean and unworthy animals. They were almost never kept as pets and were feral animals roaming in packs to scavenge or attack the weak (1 Kings 14:11). Even today, packs of feral dogs can be dangerous within a city at night. You could also think of packs of coyotes that roam the countryside to get the picture that David is conveying here. Truly, the “bloodthirsty” men coming to attack David (Psalm 59:1–4) were indeed acting like wild dogs. So, while today we have a very positive (and even loving) image of dogs, this description is not merely negative, but also *greatly* insulting. As that’s why it’ll be repeated near the end of this Psalm (vs14). So, these wicked men were going around David’s house (and possibly even the city) to try and keep him from escaping, so they could murder him...

### *Psalms 59*

*7 Behold, they belch out with their mouth: swords are in their lips: for who, say they, doth hear?*

Now, the word ‘**belch**’ back in the days, when this was first translated into English, had a *much* different meaning that it does for us today. David is not saying that they were burping. The word belch can also mean to *issue forth spasmodically*, as in *to gush*. Which is why the Hebrew means **to gush forth**; figuratively, **to utter** (good or bad words) – and yes, it can even mean to emit (a foul odor) (#5042). So again, David’s painting us a picture of the morally depraved men surrounding him so they could try and murder him. Their mouths were ‘gushing forth’ with lies (and sounds like a dog) that figuratively ‘smelt’ worse than a horribly foul burp. That’s why David likens their lips (what was coming out of them) to a sword. In other words, he likens their wicked devising to murder him to a sword trying to kill him. And they are obviously doing it ‘in secret’ in the dark of the night, *when they think no one will see them*. Yet, David saw them (likely as he was escaping through the city and/or from his window) and our Heavenly Father did too. Which is why He helped David get out of the city *unharm*ed, thanks to the help of his loving wife. Always remember that our Heavenly Father sees all that we do *and* hears all that we say. He even knows what’s going on in our heart (desires, emotions, intentions, motivations) and mind (thought process), as the Scriptures declare ( 1 Chron 28:9, 1 Kings 8:39, Ps 7:9, Ps 11:4-5, Prov 17:3, Ps 44:20-21, Ps 94:11, Jer 16:17, Jer 17:9-10, Matt 9:4, Matt 12:25, Luke 5:22, Luke 6:8, Luke 11:17, Luke 24:38, Acts 15:7-9, 1 Cor 3:20, Heb 4:12, 1 Thess 2:4, Rom 8:26-27, 1 John 3:20-21; Heb 4:12-13).

#### *Psalm 59*

*8 But thou, O LORD, shalt laugh at them; thou shalt have all the heathen in derision.*

The word ‘LORD’ here is God’s Sacred Name, **Yehovah** (#3068), which means (the) *self-Existent* or *Eternal*. While ‘Elohim is God as the Creator of all things, Yehovah is the same God in covenant relation to those whom He has created. Thus, Yehovah is the Eternal or Immutable One, He Who WAS, and IS, and IS TO COME. And David uses this Sacred Name of God here because he’s calling on the Lord (YHVH) to fulfill *His* promises to keep David safe; because David is truly and innocent man who loves and serves our Heavenly Father. He had not gone a whoring to idolatry, as the men who are seeking his life were. Which is why he, again, calls them ‘heathen’. Now the word ‘**derision**’ means **to deride** (#3932) which means *to laugh at or insult contemptuously, to subject to usually bitter or contemptuous ridicule or criticism, and to express a lack of respect or approval of*. And this is not the only Scripture that speaks of the Lord (YHVH) laughing at the heathen when they plot evil towards Him and His servants. Remember what the second Psalm said?

*1 Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?*

*2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying,*

*3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.*

*4 **He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.***

*5 Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.*

Ps 2:1-5

Even though the wicked leaders of the world plot against the Lord and His anointed (Jesus and His followers) – trying to devise their destruction, so they can get total rule over the world – our Heavenly Father’s response is to laugh at their puny efforts. He can laugh because He can see what’s going on in their heart and mind (Ps 11) and knows *exactly* what all their plans are. So, not only is He all powerful but He also knows how to perfectly spoil their plans because *He knows what their plans are*. And He will indeed ‘speak’ to them *with wrath* and vex them *sorely* when He ‘visits’ (punishes) them for their sins. Throughout the many years this earth age has existed, He continues to do so. Just look at what He did through Noah’s flood, confusing the language when they were trying to build the tower of Babel, how He destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah and even how He allowed His own chosen people to be carried away captive because they were acting like the heathen. There are so many examples in the Bible that shows us how our Heavenly Father doesn’t put up with the wicked. They are just too stupid to take heed to these warnings. And in the first chapter of the Proverbs, ‘wisdom’ (metaphorical of our Heavenly Father Himself) gives the wicked (foolish) ones this same warning...

*22 How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?*

*23 **Turn you at my reproof:** behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.*

*24 **Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;***

*25 **But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof:***

*26 **I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh;***

*27 **When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you.***

*28 **Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:***

*29 For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD:*

*30 They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof.*

*31 **Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.***

*32 **For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.***

*33 **But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.***

Prov 1:22-33

In this enlightening chapter, our Heavenly Father vividly expresses how He deals with those who do wickedly *and* refuse to repent when He calls them to do so. Because they refused to listen to Him (through ignoring their conscience, the prophets and His Word - which all warned them to stop sinning) He'll simply laugh at them when they 'get what they deserve'. He won't pity them nor feel sorry for them *because* they consistently refused to hear His warnings to stop sinning and do what's right (make a good repentance). And our Heavenly Father is not being mean for doing so, He's being *fair*. Anyone who thinks otherwise is either ignorant of what righteous judgment really is or they are wicked themselves. While our Heavenly Father's mercy is truly endless, He also values righteous judgment. As another Psalm of David pointed out...

*5 The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.*

*6 Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup.*

*7 For the righteous LORD **loveth righteousness**; his countenance doth behold the upright.*

Ps 11:5-7

So, punishing the wicked is what protects the righteous and the innocent. Never forget that. Our courts today would be wise to remember that fact as well. They are *supposed* to punish the wicked and protect the righteous and innocent. To do otherwise is to be evil yourself. As Paul says in Eph 5:11, we are to have *no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them*.

*Psalm 59*

*9 Because of his strength will I wait upon thee: for God is my defence.*

David is now reiterating his determination, and commitment, to wait on our Heavenly Father to intervene on his behalf, instead of fighting his own countrymen. Even though they were acting like 'heathen', David still did not want to fight them. He knew he was innocent and trusted that God would fulfill His promise to save those who are righteous – those who love and obey (serve) Him. The word '**strength**' here means *strength* in various applications, such as *force, security, majesty, praise* (#5797). The *Companion Bible* notes that the phrase 'because of his strength' would have been better rendered as '**O my strength**' as it will be in verse 17. And the word '**wait**' is a very interesting word; one we've seen before, but it's more often translated as take heed, keep, observe - and is often used in warning us to guard our heart and mind from lusts and pride that cause us to whore after false gods and idols. But here, it's telling us that David will 'wait' on the Lord. So, the Hebrew word '**wait**' is *shamar* (#8104), a prime root that means *to hedge about* (as with thorns), i.e. *guard*; generally, *to protect, attend to*, etc. In other words, David is saying that He is going to wait on the Lord to protect Him instead of trying to take 'justice' in to his own hands. That's why he then says that God (#430 'Elohim, our *Creator* and

the *Supreme Judge*) is his ‘defense’, which means **a cliff** (or other lofty or inaccessible place); abstractly, **altitude** or, figuratively, a refuge (#4869). When we trust in our Heavenly Father to help and protect us – no matter how frightening or difficult our situation may seem – then we truly are ‘lifted up’ *in spirit* because our trust in Him is what frees us from worry and fear that only depresses us. These negative emotions also cloud our ability to think clearly and cause us to make *really* bad choices, and can even cause us to sin. So, it’s important to remember to discipline yourself when fear enters into your heart. It’s no sin to have fear but it is a sin to allow it to control you. Work to discipline yourself to *kick the fear out* and *trust in our Heavenly Father*. Remember God’s promises, ask for His help and think hard (focus) about what you should do (if anything). The Holy Spirit will show you a way to get out of, though, or around the threatening situation (just as He did for David over and over again) IF you *truly* trust in Him. As Paul wrote, after asking the Lord three times to remove the ‘thorn in the flesh’ (that God Himself sent to David to keep him humble) ...

*9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*

*10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.*

2 Cor 12:9-10

Our Heavenly Father wanted Paul to remain humble *and to trust in Him*. So, even when we have infirmities (fleshly ailments of our bodies), are being reproached by heathenistic people, or are being persecuted or in distress for Christ’s sake - we should not fret (worry) nor be scared. Why? Because when we’re at our weakest (physically and/or spiritually) then, that is when the Holy Spirit *will be strongest in us*. Never forget: so long as we don’t forsake Him, He’ll *never* forsake us – He’ll never let us down. He’ll *always* send help (in some way) when we need it. And that’s how both Paul, and David, had the confidence to boldly serve our Heavenly Father – despite being sometimes surrounded by really ungodly (morally corrupted) people. And we should remember this because, as Paul warned...

*12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*

*13 But evil men and seducers **shall wax worse and worse**, deceiving, and being deceived.*

*14 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;*

2 Tim 3:12-14

Truly, evil men and seducers are still waxing (growing) worse and worse. As such, even today, those who live godly (believe and follow Jesus Christ faithfully) will (and are) be persecuted.

But, we should *continue* (John 8:31) in the Word of God, knowing that – **if** we remain faithful to our Heavenly Father (continue to trust and obey Him) then He'll *always* help us out of whatever comes our way. And that's why our Heavenly Father is our 'defense' too, just as He was for David. As Ps 145:20 says, *the LORD preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy*. And Peter also reminds us that *the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations* (and trials, adversity #3986), *and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished* (2 Peter 2:9)...

We'll pick this up in part 3...

AMEN.