

Part 1 – Protection from Wicked Counsel

In chapter sixty-three, part 1, we learned that it was another Psalm written by David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah. However, there were several times recorded that David was in the wilderness of Judah. And there were only two reasons: one, he was fleeing from Saul – the first king of Israel who tried to kill him (for years) simply out of jealousy. And the other reason was due to Absalom’s rebellion, which happened much later in David’s life, when he had already been king of Israel for quite a while. Due to the context of the Psalm itself, we can conclude that it was most likely written during the time of Absalom’s rebellion. We also learned how David used two ‘titles’ for our Heavenly Father (both translated in the English as ‘God’) to stress certain characteristics about our Heavenly Father, when calling upon him *for help*. And David also pointed out that he would seek God early, which we learned, from the Hebrew, that this also meant he would seek God sincerely and diligently. David then went on to use an analogy – based on his own experience being in a dry wilderness (desert) with very little water – to explain how his soul longed for God. Just as dry land ‘thirsts’ for water, so too did his soul long for God. That’s how much David longed to be *spiritually* close to our Heavenly Father; and we too should have that deep ‘thirst’ inside our soul to be close to God, because *that’s* what keeps us studying His Word diligently and sincerely every day! We can only be close to our Heavenly Father when we put His Word (the truth) into our inner man and let His blessed Holy Spirit lead us every day.

In part 2 we learned that, while David was rather homesick, and wanted to be back in Jerusalem where God’s physical Tabernacle (and the Ark of the Covenant) was, he still worshiped God ‘in the spirit’, which is truly how we are *supposed* to worship our Heavenly Father (John 4). And thus, we also learned just how deep David’s love and loyalty was to our Heavenly Father. For he valued his relationship with our Heavenly Father much more than his physical life. And he likened the perfect peace and joy, he had when being close to God (in his heart and mind) to being as spiritually satisfied (peaceful and happy, even during hard times) as one feels satisfied after they’ve just had a really good meal. And David’s love, loyalty and service to God was not part time. From early in the morning to when he was laying upon his bed at night, he kept God’s Word in his heart and mind; it was *that* precious to him. For David well knew that our Heavenly Father is our only true source of life. Both in the flesh body and in the spirit. That’s why he followed so ‘hard’ after God. And in response, our Heavenly Father upheld David both physically and spiritually. Not only by saving David (time and time again) from people who wanted to kill him, but also by giving David strength in his inner man to make it through all the hard times. And his past experiences being saved by God gave David the confidence that those who were rebelling against him (as being king of Israel) would also be destroyed so that they could not speak lies, nor do wickedly, anymore. And David therefore knew that, everyone who truly worships our Heavenly Father (and remains faithful to Him) will glory *in Him, because* He’s our Savior. And, as it was back then, so it is today as well (Ecc 1:9). So long as we don’t forsake our Heavenly Father, He’ll never forsake us!

Now, we come again to another Psalm of David, and this Psalm is *still* in the ‘Second Book’ (Exodus) of the Psalms and it’s also *still* part of the Psalms (chapters 61-72) that are ‘**Concerning Israel’s Redemption**’, just as the last few chapters have been. And let’s remember that Psalms 61 spoke about David’s *trusting* that he would be restored to his rightful throne, even though his son, Absalom, had led an insurrection against him. And Psalm 62 taught us how we are to wait (as David did) for God’s deliverance from the wicked ones who persecute us because He will help us if we remain faithful to Him. And the last Psalm (Ps 63) also taught us how important it is to trust in our Heavenly Father, and remain faithful servants to Him, if we want to be saved from the wicked ones...

Psalm 64
1 A Psalm of David.

Now, this is another Psalm of David but, unfortunately, the title does not tell us *when* it was written. However, as with many of the recent Psalms we’ve studied (Ps 55, 58, 61, 62) we can make an ‘educated guess’ when it was written, simply by the context of the Psalm itself. Since David will be calling on God’s protection against the falseness of men (their evil, and secret, counsels against him) and also speaks of an insurrection, it’s likely this is another Psalm David wrote at the time his own son, Absalom, led a rebellion against him, when he was king of Israel. So, it’s very much in line with the last few chapters we’ve been studying, which is why it is again titled as “**Israel’s Redemption, Waited For**” ...

Psalm 64
1 ... Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy.

Like he often does in his Psalms, David calls upon God (#430, ‘Elohim, who is our *Creator* and the *Supreme* God) to hear his prayer. The word ‘**hear**’ here means *to hear intelligently*, often *with implication of attention* and *obedience* (#8085). So, David’s asking not only asking that God pay *close* attention to his prayer, but also that God will respond to (*answer by helping him*) his prayer as well. While God hears all prayers (since He closely watches what’s going on in all the hearts and minds of His children, Ps 11:4, 44:21, 1 Kings 8:39, 1 Chron 28:9), He doesn’t *answer* those who are not willing to *hear Him*. When we hold iniquity in our heart and refuse to repent for, and clean out, our own sins, He simply *won’t help us until* we’re ready to repent and listen to (and obey) Him (Ps 66:18, Isa 59, 1 Chron 28:9). So, David’s asking for God to hear his prayers means David sincerely feels his heart is right with God. And that’s why he also asks that God will ‘preserve’ (guard and protect, #5341) his life (in the flesh, #2416) from the ‘fear of the enemy’. Now, here’s the first clue that this Psalm is likely written during Absalom’s insurrection. For the word ‘fear’ here is not the usual word used for fear (#3372). In this verse, the word ‘**fear**’ means a (sudden) **alarm** (properly, *the object feared*, by implication, *the feeling*) (#6343) and

comes from a word that means *to be startled* (by a sudden alarm); hence, *to fear in general* (#6342). So, David's fear came *suddenly*, which is in line with what we're told about how David first heard of Absalom's 'power grab' for his throne...

12 And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, from his city, even from Giloh, while he offered sacrifices. And the conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom.

13 And there came a messenger to David, saying, The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom.

14 And David said unto all his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not else escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.

2 Sam 15:12-14

Now, David was a very mighty, and very seasoned, warrior. So, not much would have scared him. But what did put *great* fear in his heart was being *betrayed*. Not only by his own son, but also by his own *nation*. So, when he heard Absalom was leading a rebellion against him, and nearly all of Israel was following him – David was *so shocked* by this news that he didn't think he would be able to escape death. And he surely did not want his family to be killed either, nor any other innocent people in Jerusalem. Furthermore, before David fled Jerusalem, he didn't know who was faithful to him, and who was not - so, *he didn't know who he could trust*. And, therefore, he didn't even know if his own military would protect him. So, he fled. And this betrayal of his own nation (led by his own son) explains why he had 'fear of the enemy' when he wrote this Psalm. But, even though he was afraid, David (as usual) knew who to turn to for help...

Psalm 64

2 Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity:

Again, this verse also indicates that this Psalm was written during the time of Absalom's rebellion. For, when he was persecuted by Saul (the first king of Israel) *David* was the one *accused* of insurrection (even though that was a lie). But here, David is asking God to protect him *from those* in the insurrection. Now, the *Companion Bible* points out that this word 'hide' is a figure of speech (*Metonymy*, of adunct., apx 6) that means he's asking for God to *protect* him. Indeed, the meaning of the word itself means *to hid by covering* (#5641). And the words '**secret counsel**' means *a session*, i.e. *company of persons* (*in close deliberation*); by implication, *intimacy, consultation, a secret* (#5475). So, the 'secret counsel' here could even be translated as a *conspiracy*, which had been ongoing for some time, as 2 Sam 15:1-6 explains. But, there was also more 'secret counsel' given to Absalom *after* David fled Jerusalem. While Absalom first took over Hebron (2 Sam 15:9-10) he then moved on to Jerusalem. And 2 Sam 16:20-17:4 tells

us that Ahithophel (a formerly very trusted friend, and counselor of David) supported Absalom's rebellion, and advised him (shortly after he first took the stolen throne from David) to sleep with the ten concubines of David who were left to take care of his palace. Absalom took this counsel quite willingly (2 Sam 16:20-22). Now, David didn't know at first that Ahithophel was in on the conspiracy; it wasn't until after he fled that he was informed that Ahithophel had also betrayed him (2 Sam 15:31), and that was something something that hurt him *very* deeply (as Ps 55:12-14, 20-21 explained). So, by the time he wrote this Psalm, he knew that Ahithophel and Absalom would be having some 'secret counsel' - and he prayed to God (in 2 Sam 15:31) that He would turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness. He made this prayer because David well knew what incredibly good advice Ahithophel gave. 2 Sam 16:23 tells us that his counsel was *so good* that most people considered it to be *as if a man had inquired at the oracle of God*. So thankfully, the Lord (YHWH) did grant David's request by causing Absalom to refuse Ahithophel's *second* 'secret counsel', regarding how to 'go after' David and those who followed him, in 2 Sam 17:5-14. This decision of Absalom (which was guided by God Himself) gave David and his followers enough time to get far away from the Israelite military, get organized and ready for the war they knew was going to come *to them*, sooner or later...

Psalm 64

3 Who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words:

David's still speaking about the workers of iniquity who were insurrectionist (vs 2). And he uses some rather graphic analogies to explain how deeply hurt he was by people he trusted so much. And, to really understand why David was hurt so much, it's good to remember some history about these men. For a while (3 years), Absalom actually fled the country because he had *murdered* his own half brother (David's son, Amnon) for raping his full blood sister (2 Sam 13). And it was only because of his cousin's intervention (David's nephew and best general, Joab) that Absalom was allowed to come back (2 Sam 14:1-24). But, even though David allowed Absalom to come back to the country, David refused to see him for two more years. So, Joab intervened *again* to help Absalom get David's total forgiveness (2 Sam 14:28-33). [Side note here: considering this, it's not hard to understand why Joab had no problem with being the first one to thrust darts into Absalom's heart when Absalom was left hanging on a tree branch (that his long hair got stuck on) when he led Israel's army to try and kill David and his men (2 Sam 18:4). Joab was obviously pretty angry at Absalom for the insurrection, because Joab had just helped him get back in favor with David. So, Joab had also been greatly deceived (*and used*) by Absalom, which is something Joab did *not* forget (nor forgive)].

And, after Absalom was finally forgiven by David, he then began to work to steal the hearts of Israel away from his own father (1 Sam 15:1-6). Likely part of his success was not only in his terribly deceitful lies, and flatteries, but also in the fact that he was *exceptionally* good looking (2

Sam 14:25). And furthermore, 2 Sam 15:7-10 tells us how, even right before he made a power grab for David's throne, he was *still* being really nice to David *and* even claimed he worshiped the Lord (YHWH). But it was all just a ruse – an 'act' – to fool David. For shortly after that is when he made his power grab. So, Absalom was really quite a deceitful and wicked man, which makes him an excellent type for Satan himself [<https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/423>]. And he not only deceived his father but also his cousin, Joab, who was the top general in David's military.

And then there is Ahithophel - one who was a very trusted counselor to David. He undoubtedly was counseling David clear up to the time of Absalom's power grab... all the while conspiring, *behind his back*, to support Absalom's insurrection. So, he too had been pretending to be faithful to David, just as Absalom. And this likely hurt David *even more* than Absalom's betrayal. After all, David had only recently 'made amends' with his son (who he had not seen face to face for five years) but he had been friends with Ahithophel for a long time. So likely, his betrayal was very likely even more painful than that of his own son, which Psalms 55 implies.

So, it's not hard to see why David says that these wicked rebels sharpened their tongues like they would a sword, and bent their bows to shoot out bitter words. Contrary to the old saying that 'sticks and stones may break my bones but words can never hurt me', words can be hurtful, and terribly so. As Prov 18:8 says, *the words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly*. The betrayal of Absalom and, even more so Ahithophel, hurt David *more* than if they'd just thrust him through with a sword. So, words can (and often are) even be more hurtful than physical wounds. And it's amazing how some figures of speech are timeless. Today we still have the saying that someone 'stabbed me in the back' to refer to betrayal. Truly, David had been 'stabbed in the back' by both his own son (Absalom) and one of his best friends (Ahithophel).

Psalms 64

4 That they may shoot in secret at the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not.

The subject is still the wicked rebels using their tongues like swords and arrows to lie and deceive with. The word '**perfect**' here means to be *competent* or *pious* (#8535), which is why it's also been translated as *undefiled* or *upright*. So, it's simply talking about those who love, serve and are faithful to our Heavenly Father. So, David's again explaining how the insurrection of Absalom took him by surprise. The wicked rebels simply had no fear of doing evil. And this verse sounds very much like an earlier Psalm of David. One he also likely wrote when he had to flee Jerusalem at Absalom's rebellion...

1 In the LORD put I my trust: How say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?

2 For, lo, the wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may privily shoot at the upright in heart.

3 If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?

4 The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD's throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.

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.

Psalms 11

In this Psalms 11, David begins by asking why he's being told he needs to flee. And then the answer is nearly identical to this 4th verse here in Psalm 64. Because the conspiracy was *so strong*, David decided to flee. And then the question was posed, what will the righteous do if the foundations (of a righteous government) are destroyed? The answer is that they must rely on our Heavenly Father for help. Because He's always on His throne, in heaven watching all of us... even the wicked ones who persecute the righteous. And while He tests the righteous to see how strong their faith and loyalty to Him really is, He is faithful to punish the wicked ones, because they are doing things He absolutely *hates*. And this gives us more insight into David's reasons for leaving Jerusalem. He was concerned that if he stayed in Jerusalem and tried to fight (not knowing who was on his side and who was not) he and his administration (government) would be all killed and then who would rule Israel? A very wicked government would then, for sure, rule. Absalom had already proved his rotten character by planning the murder of his brother for two years and then, after getting his father to finally forgive him for it, *he then betrayed his own father and was literally trying to kill him*. A very wicked man he was. This is why Prov 16:6 says that it's only *by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil*. If people don't have any faith in (or respect for) our Heavenly Father, there's no evil they won't fear to do.

Psalms 64

5 They encourage themselves in an evil matter: they commune of laying snares privily; they say, Who shall see them?

And David continues to speak of the wicked insurrectionists (such as Absalom and Ahithophel). The word 'encourage' means *to fasten upon*; hence, *to seize, be strong* (figuratively, *courageous*, causatively *strengthen, cure, help, repair, fortify*), *obstinate; to bind, restrain* and even *to conquer* (#2388). And the word 'matter' here also means *a word* or *a matter spoken of* (#1697). So, the rebels are steadfast in their evil plans. We use the term 'head strong' and 'dead set' to refer to people who have made up their mind to do something and there's no changing their mind. In this case, it was for very evil purposes. And then the word 'commune' means *to score with a mark as a tally or record*, i.e. (by implication) *to inscribe*, and also to *enumerate*;

intensively, *to recount* (#5608). And the words ‘**laying**’ and ‘**privily**’ are actually both the same Hebrew word, which means *to hide by covering over* (#2934) while the word ‘**snare**’ means a **noose** (for catching animals) or, by implication, *a hook* (for the nose) (#4170). In other words, they devised their plans *very* carefully and went over them, again and again, before Absalom made the big ‘power grab’ for David’s throne. They also worked hard to cover their tracks and make sure there was no way they would lose, because to do so would likely mean death to all of the rebels. Absalom didn’t make a power grab until he had most all of the military, and citizenry, backing him; and he even had David’s very best counselor supporting him too. And Absalom also worked hard to get David to trust him again; he even fooled his father into thinking he was going to Hebron to worship the Lord (YHVH)... when in reality, that’s where he was starting his rebellion from! So, this insurrection was very well thought out, planned and gone over many times before it was executed. And the depth of the pre-meditated rebellion is part of what pained David so very much - because it meant, *for a long time*, he had been being deceived by people he really trusted. And these wicked conspirators truly didn’t think that God Almighty would care. They did not stop to think about whether or not he would bless their efforts to overthrow David. And that was a big mistake on their part because our Heavenly Father does see all. He knew about all their evil plannings, which is why He warned David...

10 Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.

11 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. [fulfilled in 2 Sam 16:20-22]

12 For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.
2 Sam 12:10-12

So, while God allowed Absalom’s conspiracy to grow, He did not let it ultimately prevail. As the above Scriptures point out, God allowed it to go on because it was chastisement for David’s sins of adultery and murder. And this humbled David deeply and caused him to seek our Heavenly Father (as the last chapter pointed out) even harder. But, David’s point is that – even though the rebels were allowed to succeed for a while – they were not truly pleasing to our Heavenly Father. They were not truly seeking God’s counsel on the matter; they were devising evil on their own and working to lay a trap that David nearly could not get out of. Yet, because David had wholeheartedly repented for his sins (Ps 51), God did forgive him (2 Sam 12:13). But that forgiveness didn’t mean there wasn’t some pretty tough chastisement coming for David. Yet, as Heb 12 points out, when God chastises us, it’s for our own good. Truly, even as bad as the rebellion was, it was really less than David deserved. For the punishment for adultery and murder is death. Yet, our Heavenly Father made sure David did not die and he was eventually restored to the king of Israel. And this entire experience made David not only much humbler but also made him seek our Heavenly Father even harder *and* reminded him just how much we truly

need the Lord (YHVH). For, without Him, we truly all as filthy rags (Isa 64:6). So, these experiences of David – and how he sought God even after being betrayed by people so close to him – should teach us too. For Jesus warned us that betrayals will happen again to those who faithfully serve Him. Yet, this is God's Will because it will give Him the opportunity to speak the Gospel, through His servants, when they are delivered up to counsels, so all the earth has the chance to hear the truth (and hopefully repent) *before* Jesus Christ returns to pour our God's wrath at the day of vengeance (Lk 21:12-19, Mth 24:9-13, Mk 13:11-13). So, even if (or when) we have some hard times (either from chastisements or simply because we are faithfully serving God) we should remember to respond to them as David did, by seeking our Heavenly Father's help, *wholeheartedly*. For, without Him, we can do nothing, as Jesus said...

*5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: **for without me ye can do nothing.***

6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

*7 **If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.***

8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

John 15:5-8

We *have* to learn to how to 'abide' in Jesus Christ and allow Him to 'abide in us' (Rom 8). We do this by *continuing* to study His Words and obey Him (wholeheartedly) the best we sincerely can (John 8:31-32). And when we learn to obey our Heavenly Father, then it won't matter if we are betrayed, or whatever happens to us. We'll learn to serve Him *no matter what*. And that is important because, only if we remain faithful servants to Him for the rest of our life here on earth (and repent sincerely when we fall short, like David did) will we be allowed to have eternal life *and* reign with Him. But those who fall away to false god and idols (like worshiping Satan and the beast when he's here – Rev 12-13, 2 Thess 2) will be told by Jesus Christ Himself to get away from Him *because* they are 'workers of iniquity' (Mth 7:21-23). So, let's stay on guard for the deceitful snares of the rebels (those who follow Satan) so we don't get caught up in deception...

6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

*8 **Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:***

9 Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

*10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, **make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.***

11 To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Peter 5:6-11

We'll pick this up in part 2...

AMEN.