

Praise Him in the Storm

Psalm 57

I. Introduction

- A. Storms... NJ averages 30 thunderstorms a year.
- B. Emma's Birthday Party Story
- C. Metaphorically, storms hit us all the time
 - 1. Health, finances, work, seasonal problems
 - 2. Small storms from relational crisis with friends
 - 3. Big storms that seem to be beyond our control
- D. The question isn't really about how to avoid a storm in life, or how to cut it short (though that's what everyone thinks about... how do I STOP this?)
- E. The real question is: When a storm hits, where do you run?
 - 1. On that beach we ran for cover
- F. What about in life?
- G. Well, David is in the thick of a torrentuous storm as we have seen
 - 1. Saul is after his life
 - 2. Friends are turning him in
 - 3. His wife was given to another man
- H. Here he is, living in a cave, hiding from the enemy
 - 1. He's got to be sneaky... he's got to be quiet... Saul could find him any day
- I. It's in that place, that David writes this Psalm

II. MOVEMENT #1

- A. *[1] Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me, for in you my soul takes refuge; in the shadow of your wings I will take refuge, till the storms of destruction pass by.*
 - 1. Here's David... he's an innocent man, running as a fugitive
 - 2. But what does he pray for? Mercy.
 - a) Mercy: God not giving us what we deserve
 - b) We would think he would cry for justice, but that's not what he does
 - c) RC Sproul → Justice vs. Mercy. Cry for mercy
 - 3. Why should God show David mercy? "For my soul takes refuge in Him"
 - a) God is a merciful God... God is a God of refuge, but only for those who run to him for cover
 - b) If you run to yourself, to your own abilities, to your own awesomeness... God won't be your refuge
 - (1) He could be, but you are refusing
 - c) Lance Armstrong... "Thank God..." "Don't thank God. Thank me."
 - (1) Look out for the lightning bolt, bro
 - 4. Run to God. For how long? Until the storm passes
 - a) So often we run for a minute and then run back outside
 - b) Run and stay with the good, merciful God

B. [2] *I cry out to God Most High, to God who fulfills his purpose for me. [3] He will send from heaven and save me; he will put to shame him who tramples on me [the shamer].*

Selah

1. Selah, they think, is a musical term like “interlude”
 - a) It’s a break in the music (these were songs) to think about it, chew on it
 - b) So... let’s chew on it
2. I cry out to God who is the MOST HIGH → He’s the King
3. I cry out to God who ALONE can fulfill HIS purposes for me (David was anointed king, after all, not by himself but by God)
4. Let me ask you a question:
 - a) In your stormy life, do you cry out to God, or first do you call every single person in your contact list?
 - b) Such a strange culture with social media. We will vent our grievances and private stuff online, but not pray to the Lord for help
 - c) Why is it so easy to complain and so hard to pray?
5. After all, he fulfills his purpose (in the storm, thru it)
 - a) Can your friends, co-workers, or family solve your problems?
6. God is your defender, your justifier, remover of your shame

C. SELAH → Point #1: In life’s storms, run to God

1. You see the interesting balance of trust and action here. David hides in a cave (action), but trusts in prayer that only God can actually protect him (trust)
2. Actively seek God’s protection by calling out to Him when facing trials and difficulties, acknowledging Him as your ultimate refuge, but also use your head
3. Trust that God hears your prayers and will send His help from heaven, affirming His power and willingness to save those who depend on Him.
4. Embrace the comfort of being in God’s protective presence, just as David describes being sheltered under God’s wings.
5. When you do this, what happens?

III. MOVEMENT #2

A. [3b] *God will send out his steadfast love and his faithfulness!*

1. After thinking... after praying... after running... yes, God will send out his steadfast love
2. Steadfast love: chesed, JSBible
3. Faithfulness: unwavering commitment to you
4. How does he send it out? Consolation of the Spirit; consolation of his saints
 - a) For David he sent him merry men and his family
 - b) He sent him favor beyond measure
 - c) The storm was still there, but there was comfort in the storm

B. [4] *My soul is in the midst of lions; I lie down amid fiery beasts—the children of man, whose teeth are spears and arrows, whose tongues are sharp swords.*

1. David is still struggling
2. Comfort on the horizon, but what’s the situation RIGHT NOW? Lions... fiery beasts... PEOPLE who are vicious with their words and actions
3. Who can relate to that? We all can. So what does David do?

C. [5] *Be exalted, O God, above the heavens! Let your glory be over all the earth!*

1. Surrounded by lions and beasts? Remembers who is seated on high
 - a) Remember, he is the God Most High, the KING
2. This is a prayer that people would acknowledge his greatness.
3. The solution to our troubles is that all would turn and acknowledge the true king of glory
4. In the midst of his storm, David is honest about his situation and his solution.

D. [6] *They set a net for my steps; my soul was bowed down. They dug a pit in my way, but they have fallen into it themselves.*

1. The enemies are real and they seek to rally against David, but they will be defeated
2. Sometimes when I read passages like this I think "I don't have any enemies" but I do... the world, the flesh, and the devil
3. I pray, "Lord, thank you for defeating my enemies on the cross, and ultimately defeating them with finality when you return!"

E. SELAH → Point #2: Acknowledge what is true (about your situation and the solution); Ignorance is NOT bliss (Psalm 57:4-6)

1. Rose-colored glasses aren't helpful.
2. Honestly acknowledge the challenges and threats around you, recognizing the reality of your situation without giving in to fear.
3. At the same time, acknowledge what else is true:
 - a) God is seated on high. Storms don't change that.
 - b) God will swallow up evil. But not today.
 - c) People need Jesus → that's how true change happens

IV. MOVEMENT #3\

A. [7] *My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast! I will sing and make melody!*

1. He shames the shamer... destroys the accuser... justifies the repentant... steadys our hearts
 - a) Why? That we might turn and worship the LORD
2. The steadfast love of God makes ME steadfast, confident and assured
3. Having run to him, having acknowledged truth, I am now ready to worship him with all my heart
 - a) DESPITE the storm. IN the storm. THROUGH the storm
 - b) Now, that's more powerful than a storm just disappearing!

B. [8] *Awake, my glory! Awake, O harp and lyre! I will awake the dawn!*

1. Surrounded by lions and beasts? Time to worship
2. David, at the mouth of the cave awakens the dawn with his praise! (Come at me, bro!)

C. [9] *I will give thanks to you, O Lord, among the peoples; I will sing praises to you among the nations.*

1. Your sacrifice of praise is the greatest testimony in your suffering
2. What if what God wants to do in your suffering is not primarily to alleviate it, but to glorify himself through it?
 - a) What if our refusal to acknowledge that reality is choking out the miracle he actually wants to do? Glorify himself in/thru us

D. *[10] For your steadfast love is great to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds.*

1. Working through it, rather than removing it is also a sign of his steadfast love (and much harder to do!)
 - a) His love is hesed
 - b) His faithfulness is limitless and unwavering

E. *[11] Be exalted, O God, above the heavens! Let your glory be over all the earth!*

1. Again, this is a prayer that people would acknowledge his greatness.
2. One day every knee will bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is LORD

F. **SELAH → Point #3: Praise God in the storm and declare his faithfulness to others (Psalm 57:7-11)**

1. Decide to praise God wholeheartedly, regardless of your circumstances
 - a) This demonstrates your faith in His steadfast love and faithfulness.
2. Commit to starting each day with praise, awakening the dawn with your worship and gratitude,
 - a) This shows that your trust in God transcends your situation.
3. Proclaim God's greatness to those around you
 - a) This exalts His name in the heavens and declares His glory over all the earth,
 - b) It is a testament to His unwavering faithfulness and love.

V. **Conclusion:**

- A. Big Idea: Praise Him in the storm (Casting Crowns)
- B. Acknowledge the storm you are in
- C. Acknowledge the truth of who He is in the storm and despite the storm
- D. Run to HIM in prayer and trust his character
 1. Not right away to others (first to him)
 2. Not right away to your 'escapes' (first to him)
- E. Praise & proclaim HIM in the storm (not your grumblings)
 1. Tell him how faithful he is (b/c it will remind you)
 2. Tell others who good he is (b/c it will be a testimony in your pain)
- F. Do this and he will work in and through you during the storm
- G. The storm might not go away, but you will be made more like Christ in the process
- H. You will mature.

I. *James 1:2-4*

1. *[2] Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, [3] for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. [4] And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. (ESV)*