

Our Spiritual Condition

Psalm 41:1-13

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May 31, 2023 p.m.

Introduction: Though not conclusive, the setting of this Psalm seems to be during the rebellion of Absalom against his father, David. He is also betrayed by Ahithophel, the grandfather of Bathsheba (see II Sam. 11:3; 23:34). This psalm is also a foreshadowing of Christ & therefore considered to be a Messianic psalm (particularly verse 9). It is used to address the age-old question: “Is all sickness the result of sin?” I see three parts to the psalm: David’s blessing for his “Blesser” (:1-4); His sickness & his enemies (:5-9); & his prayer & his thanksgiving (:10-13). But I want to follow Wiersbe’s outline as he describes the spiritual condition of David that we can draw parallels to us today. He would have us to evaluate our spiritual condition by asking & answering 4 questions: “Integrity: How do we treat others? (:1-4); Treachery: How do others treat us? (:5-9); Mercy: How does God treat us? (:10-12); & Glory: How do we treat God? (:13).”

I. Integrity: How do we treat others? (:1-4)

A. Blessing for the “Blesser” (:1-3) >

1. Deliverance:

- a. For the one with concern & compassion for the “*poor*” (materially or spiritually?).
- b. Not deliverance from trouble, but delivered in a time of trouble.

2. Preservation:

- a. Kept until on work on earth is done (see Psalm 39:4).
- b. Consider the lives of David & Christ.

3. Sustaining:

- a. During times of sickness.
- b. “*Make all his bed*” > a restoration of health.

Application: Note the word “*consider*” in verse one – means to be attentive to another’s needs while not judging them, as was the case with Job’s “friends” or the blind man of John 9:1-4). Note also II Cor. 8:9 & his compassion (Mt. 9:37-39 & His coming (Mk. 10:14).

B. Mercy for the merciful (:4) >

1. David’s confession (& cf. Psalm 66:18-20 & Proverbs 28:13).
2. God’s “consideration” (based on David’s treatment of others in verses 1-3).

Note: This is the only verse in the Psalm not applicable to Christ (the Sinless One).

II. Treachery: How do others treat us? (:5-9)

A. The attitude of David’s enemies (:5-8) >

1. Consider Absalom’s rebellion & Ahithophel’s “revenge”?
2. “*Devise hurt*” – Absalom wished to kill his father; Ahithophel betrayed David.
3. David’s sickness attributed to the “curse” of God (cf. Isa. 53:3-4).

B. The actions of David’s enemies (:9) >

1. “*Mine own familiar friend*” – literally “the man of my peace” referring to Ahithophel.
2. Quoted by Christ in John 13:18 (but without “*in whom I trusted*”) referring to Judas.

III. Mercy: How does God treat us? (:10-12)

A. David's prayer for mercy (:4, 10-11) >

1. His desire to "*requite*" (pay back) his enemies?
2. "*Favourest me*" – his enemy will not triumph over him.

B. David's affirmation of integrity (:12) >

1. Due to God's upholding him.
2. Due to God's facing him (smiled upon by the Lord?).

IV. Glory: How do we treat God? (:13)

A. Eternal praise & glory to God.

B. "*Hallowed be Thy name*" (Matthew 6:9).

Summary: " God answers prayer, not to make His people comfortable, but to bring glory to His name" (Wiersbe).

Conclusion: What is your spiritual condition tonight? How do you respond in times of trouble? How about when you are betrayed? Do you extend kindness & generosity to others, even when the return is duplicity & betrayal? Consider Christ's first words from the cross: "*Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.*"

Again I ask, what is your spiritual condition?