

## Persecuted, But Not Forsaken (A study in the life of David)

*Psalm 59:1-17*

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Introduction: The historical setting of this Psalm 59 is found in the title: “*To the chief Musician, Al-taschith, Michtam of David, when Saul sent, & they watched the house to kill him.*” That account is found in I Samuel 19:10-11, whereupon David flees for his life (:18). This event follows David being anointed by Samuel to be the next king as well as his victory over Goliath. As David is now on the run from Saul & experiencing difficult times, yet God is continuing to mold David’s character, as evidenced by this Psalm. I am indebted to Alan Redpath’s book, “*The Making of a Man of God*” for this devotional message in the message he preached, “Persecuted, but not forsaken.” Psalm 59 seems to fall into 3 sections, marked by the use of the word “*Selah.*” But our look tonight will vary slightly from those divisions.

### I. The presence of a gathering cloud (:1-4)

#### A. Saul’s jealousy:

1. Saul’s initial regard for David – I Samuel 16:14-23.
  2. Saul’s subsequent envy of David – I Samuel 18: 7-12; 29-30.
- Summary: Saul’s attempts to kill David – Psalm 59:1-3a.

#### B. David’s innocence:

1. David had not provoked Saul (:3b).
2. David was not sinless, but was undeserving of Saul’s treatment (:4).

Application: What about pressures upon us? Persecution? Criticism? Suffering? Difficult home situations with a spouse or child? Financial hardships?

Illumination: “All of us at one time or another know an experience of the gathering cloud which we cannot avoid. The horizon which recently was perfectly clear has darkened until it is black & ominous, & we find ourselves right in the path of a hurricane” (Redpath).

### II. The prayer of a growing confidence (:5-15)

[Note David’s reaction to the gathering cloud.]

#### A. David’s assurance:

1. His assurance that God was in control – note the names of God he uses (:5) >
  - a. “*O LORD God of hosts*” – Jehovah, Elohim of hosts (armies).
  - b. “*God of Israel.*”
2. His assurance that God’s resources were available to him > “Nothing less than all Thy resources are going to be adequate for me at this moment in my life. Lord, I need all there is of Thee, every attribute of Thy power & grace, faithfulness & strength” (Redpath).
3. His assurance that God would have “the last laugh” >
  - a. David’s real enemy, the devil, was using Saul to frustrate the purpose of God.
  - b. “It is not a pleasant thing to be laughed at by anybody, but when God is doing the laughing – oh, the horror of being laughed at by God!” (Redpath). See Psalm 2:4.

B. David's attitude: "*Will I wait upon Thee...*" (:9) >

1. As a shepherd watching over his sheep as a sentry on duty.
  2. As one watching for what God will do (cf. Psalm 122:1-2 & 130:5-6).
- Illustration: When we pray but don't wait (Redpath, p. 53).

C. David's anchor:

1. "*Because of His strength...*"
2. "*God is my defence.*"

Summary: God within him (his strength) & God around him (his tower). David is "possessed" by God & "encompassed" by God.

III. The praise of a genuine conviction (:16-17)

A. "*I will sing of Thy power.*"

B. "*I will sing aloud of Thy mercy.*"

C. "*I will sing: for God is my defence.*"

Summary: "With the enemy still on the attack all around him, he is living in absolute victory in the middle of the cloud. Many a hard-pressed child of God has learned to put the Lord Jesus between themselves & the enemy, & start singing! Have you learned that?" (Redpath).

Conclusion: In this Psalm we see David "fretting" in verses 1-4, then "resting" in verses 5-15, & finally "praising" in verses 16-17. When we find ourselves "in" or "under" a cloud, we need to remind ourselves that the hand of God is still in control of our life. We can learn from David in this Psalm as he says, "Lord, I called You my strength when I was so weak, & I meant it. I thought of You as my fortress when I was surrounded by my enemies, & I meant that, too. I know that You are still all those things to me, with my foes all around me & no relief from the pressure. You are still my strength & my high tower, but, Lord Jesus, You are something more: You are my mercy – the pressure of this gathering cloud has shown me Your tender pity. I never knew, Lord, how much You loved me, until You allowed this pressure to teach me to watch & wait on You" (Redpath).

Remember the previous illustration about ships bringing heavenly reinforcements. Be ready to unload them. "Do not be too busy about other things, with your hands so full attempting to meet the pressure in your own strength that when the ship comes with grace, patience, & love, you are not there. Wait & watch as a man watches for the morning; & so shall your waiting become the praise of a genuine conviction that this cloud is the mercy of God, & it has taken the pressure of it to drive you for shelter into the wounded side of a crucified Savior" (Redpath).

Will you & I learn this lesson from David?