

**Israel's Songs of Hope**  
***The Book of Psalms***

**When You See Evil Starting to Be Undone**  
***Psalm 57***

*Prayer for Rescue from Persecutors.*

*For the choir director; set to Al-tashheth. A Mikhtam of David, when he fled from Saul in the cave.*

<sup>1</sup> Be gracious to me, O God, be gracious to me,  
For my soul takes refuge in You;  
And in the shadow of Your wings I will take refuge  
Until destruction passes by.

<sup>2</sup> I will cry to God Most High,  
To God who accomplishes all things for me.

<sup>3</sup> He will send from heaven and save me;  
He reproaches him who tramples upon me. Selah.

God will send forth His lovingkindness and His truth.

<sup>4</sup> My soul is among lions;  
I must lie among those who breathe forth fire,  
Even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows  
And their tongue a sharp sword.

<sup>5</sup> Be exalted above the heavens, O God;  
Let Your glory be above all the earth.

<sup>6</sup> They have prepared a net for my steps;  
My soul is bowed down;  
They dug a pit before me;  
They themselves have fallen into the midst of it. Selah.

<sup>7</sup> My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast;  
I will sing, yes, I will sing praises!

<sup>8</sup> Awake, my glory!  
Awake, harp and lyre!  
I will awaken the dawn.

<sup>9</sup> I will give thanks to You, O Lord, among the peoples;  
I will sing praises to You among the nations.

<sup>10</sup> For Your lovingkindness is great to the heavens  
And Your truth to the clouds.

<sup>11</sup> Be exalted above the heavens, O God;  
Let Your glory be above all the earth.

<sup>1</sup> Sam.22:1 So David departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam; and when his brothers and all his father's household heard of it, they went down there to him. <sup>2</sup> Everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him; and he became captain over them. Now there were about four hundred men with him. <sup>3</sup> And David went from there to Mizpah of Moab; and he said to the king of Moab, 'Please let my father and my mother come and stay with you until I know what God will do for me.' <sup>4</sup> Then he left them with the king of Moab; and they stayed with him all the time that David was in the stronghold. <sup>5</sup> The prophet Gad said to David, 'Do not stay in the stronghold; depart, and go into the land of Judah.' So David departed and went into the forest of Hereth.

## Questions

1. How does David seem to be feeling in this Psalm? Why do you think that?
2. In v.3, David says that 'He sends from heaven and saves me.' What does God send? Then there is a break or pause (selah).
  - a. What effect does it have if you were singing or reciting this Psalm to pause in the middle of v.3 like that?
3. How does it look here when God sends His love and faithfulness?
  - a. God is in the midst of trouble with David, just as v.5 is sandwiched between v.4 and 6.
  - b. God causes evil to come to an ironic end. Evil is self-defeating. Evil men dug and pit and fell into it themselves.
  - c. What could this be referring to in the narrative? I think it means that the people are actually coming to David. They are seeking him to be their king instead of Saul. Saul's behavior is causing him to lose credibility and support. God is transferring the kingdom to David. This is how evil is self-defeating in this case.
  - d. Notice that in Psalm 142:7, David prayed from the cave, 'Set me free from my prison, that I may praise your name; then the righteous will gather about me because of your goodness to me.' He sounded quite sad in Psalm 142 as a whole. But the righteous are starting to gather around David now, while he is in the cave! It's starting to happen!
  - e. In general, evil is self-defeating, like Gollum destroying the Ring of Power in *The Lord of the Rings*. Also, Jesus drew evil onto himself but then turned it around to defeat the fallen humanity he took to himself, so he could offer the Spirit of his new, cleansed humanity to us. God somehow works so that evil curves back on itself to destroy itself. We see that dynamic play out in some cases now, but ultimately it will be true in the end.
  - f. How do we see that?
  - g. What does that mean for us when we are confronting evil, both in ourselves and in others?
4. What role does the selah pause play in v.6? It shifts the Psalm to praise.
  - a. Notice that v.7 has the same structure as v.1:

<sup>1</sup> Be gracious to me, O God, be gracious to me,

<sup>7</sup> My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast;

- b. In v.8, David says that he will rise before dawn and sing to God as the sun rises. He has a lot of energy! Seeing God deliver you and seeing His own commitment to His good purposes is awesome.
- c. Why does David have this large, global scope in v.9 – 11? This is very much like Psalm 59. Somehow he knows that the nations will need to respond to God as the true king. So he is already shepherding them towards that posture.