

Hypocritical Mockers in Feasts

Psalms Thirty-Four and Thirty-Five

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~ The only means by which you and I can discern if the Lord Jesus Christ, presenting Himself as God, is true to His Word, will be through a deliberate learning of Holy Writ from truth to experience. All the theological knowledge and doctrinal training in the world, absent direct life-application to said laws and precepts, will only be half of a whole. Our Christianity must be able to walk down the sidewalk and through the streets of this world functioning purposefully in the marketplace, university, workshop, and home of this life — or it's no good. In such a state of spiritual dysfunction, all we have is an empty pseudo-religio-philosophy that may sound great; but the end thereof is death. We have too much "Christianity" that's only designed for roughly a half-hour Sunday morning service. After the doxology is sung, you can't differentiate many of the congregation members from a lost man in this dying world. Some services cannot be differentiated from a rock and roll concert in the first place.

Our Spiritual Safari is reading the writing from one of the most precarious times in David's life as we follow forward in this leg of our expedition across the majestic sands of the Bible in this desert Book of Psalms. David's life could have easily ended at the time Psalm thirty-four was written. The most widely accepted assignment for the time period this Psalm was authored is made a part of the inspired text; and it is when David changed his behaviour before Abimelech; who drove him away, and David departed.

Our safari camel train is a slow caravan because, frankly, I could write a full report for every verse or two we have examined thus far in the Psalms. And since I can't think of a better place to be than in the Book of Psalms, we're not going to rush it. After all, we're going through the entire Bible, and we're not really on a schedule; so, I am trying to point out as many of the sights and sounds as I can. This is a time when Saul was chasing a very young David. David was in fear of his life as he zigzagged from one cave to another, hiding in the wilderness down by the Dead Sea. That area is a frightful wasteland — even today; and it would be almost impossible for

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anyone reading this report to survive out there alone. But David knew the area well; and wilderness living as a shepherd trained him to be the rugged, rough man-of-war he later became. Even so, David grew weary of running, and his faith became very weak and thin at this particular time. That's when he decided to leave the land of Israel, and go to the land of the Philistines.

The critic typically isolates this Psalm in an attempt to raise a question concerning the integrity and inerrancy of Scripture. You will recall from our studies in first Samuel that the Philistine king, at that time, received David; but there were men around the king who convinced him David was not his friend. This is when the Israelites were singing songs about how Saul had killed thousands, but David had killed tens of thousands – *of Philistines!* Goliath was a fresh wound in the mind of the Philistine army at that time! The result was: the king decided it was best to get rid of David. That left David totally alone – again.

1 Samuel 21:10 *And David arose, and fled that day for fear of Saul, and went to Achish the king of Gath. 11 And the servants of Achish said unto him, Is not this David the king of the land? did they not sing one to another of him in dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands? 12 And David laid up these words in his heart, and was sore afraid of Achish the king of Gath. 13 And he changed his behaviour before them, and feigned himself mad in their hands, and scrabbled on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle fall down upon his beard. 14 Then said Achish unto his servants, Lo, ye see the man is mad: wherefore then have ye brought him to me? 15 Have I need of mad men, that ye have brought this fellow to play the mad man in my presence? Shall this fellow come into my house? ~*

There were deep superstitions concerning the insane person in that day. They didn't kill them — but they turned them out of society. Think of the man among the tombs in Gad possessed with demons. Well, acting crazy was the only way David escaped being put to death by old man Achish! David returned to Israel and found another cave to hide in – the cave of Adullam – and I can just picture David laying on the floor of that cave and thinking to himself '*I should have trusted God.*' Of course, that's the background for this Psalm.

Notice the record in first Samuel reveals Achish was the king; but, here, it records Abimelech as king. This is where the critic comes along – and there are many critics – who say this is not an inspired Psalm but, rather, is an error in the Bible. Well, ‘*Abimelech*’ was the title of every Philistine king; and this Abimelech was Achish! Just as in Egypt, all of the kings were a Pharaoh, but that wasn’t the name of each individual Egyptian Pharaoh! Amongst the Amalekite’s, the title for rulers was ‘*Agagite*.’ Agag was the royal family but, again, each one had a proper individual name. Well, that’s but one example of the abject ignorance the critic will latch onto when they are determined to make an attempt at disproving the Bible.

I say all of that to say this: there are no errors in the Bible, my friend; but there are errors in many peoples purported knowledge of the Bible. There are no contradictions in the Word of God; but there are *MANY* contradictions in our limited understanding capacity. Scripture is never the problem – the problem is always *Y-O-U* – and me. So, under the circumstances of David running away from an ordeal with King Saul that seemed like it would never end, except in defeat and death, discouragement, discontentment and dissatisfaction of life, David wrote this Psalm....

XXXXXX ~ (A Psalm of David, when he changed his behaviour before Abimelech; who drove him away, and he departed)

1 I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.

2 My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.

3 O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.

4 I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.

~ I have no problem praising God on a nice, warm sun-shiny day; but when the night is dark, and I can't seem to find my way – then, not so much. I really want all of you to join with me in magnifying the Lord and exalting His Name together by taking the entire Word of God to the entire world in sound doctrine! When we do that, we can seek the Lord, and God will deliver us from all of our fears. See, we're going to discover in future Psalms that the Name of God and the Word of God are synonymous. This is a halleluiah chorus of praise written by a man who had been saved out of deep distress and terrible troubles. Can you thank God today for the way He has led you in your life thus far — and where you're at? ~

5 They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed.

6 This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.

7 The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

~ This is the first mention of the 'angel of the Lord' in Psalms; and He is only mentioned one other time in this book. We learned all about the 'angel of the Lord' in Joshua, and we examined why our safari regards the 'angel of the Lord' as the pre-incarnate Christ. That designation applies to all references of an 'angel of the Lord' in the Old Testament. There is no mention of the 'angel of the Lord' in the New Testament. After Christ became a Man, He is only referred to as Jesus. In the New Testament, He is no longer an angel. Remember, Elisha prayed and saw the horses and chariots of fire encamped all around him at Dothan, in first Kings Chapter six. Well, that's what David is talking about here. If you don't quite believe all of this - then....

8 O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.

9 O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him.

10 The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing.

11 Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD.

12 What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good?

13 Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.

14 Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.

15 The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.

16 The face of the LORD is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

~ Keeping my tongue from speaking guile constantly requires a refresher course. Even then I don't always do so well. Seeking and pursuing peace just doesn't happen to be my strongpoint, friends. But, even so, I am going to make the following statement: we have a whole lot of sentimental rot in a whole lot of so-called Christianity today. Here comes the man of the world, living for the devil; drinking, cursing and hating God — and he comes home to find his momma has taken ill. So, he kneels down by the side of the bed — and he does all he possibly can to muster up what he thinks is a prayer. When he does, the other worldly ilk boo-hoo and a-men him up and down the entire street. Well, not only does God ignore that prayer — it makes Him sick enough to cut off the remembrance of them that do that evil — and it is evil — from off of the face of the earth.

The unsaved man has *NO RIGHT* to pray to God for anything except *ONE* thing: Lord save me. The fake routine of “.... forgive me if I have sinned” is as phony as phony gets. You *KNOW* you have sinned. God already has forgiveness worked out; what He doesn't have worked out is you trusting

and obeying Him. That's *YOUR* side of the responsibility equation. Most have utterly failed Him. Until we get that worked out, we can forget prayer. And I realize that's not nice – but – this is what God wants said and taught; and I intend to obey Him....

17 The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.

18 The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.

20 He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.

21 Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate.

22 The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.

~ Are you willing to take a place of humility and confess your sins, repent from them, and turn to God in trust and obedience? Anyone who does will be heard by God. Bear in mind, however, that doesn't mean you're going to suddenly be free from every trouble in this world and live in a field of roses and candy! Even the righteous have *MANY* afflictions; the difference is: the Lord delivers His own children from all of them. What a wonderful Psalm! Unfortunately, it is typically misquoted and abused more than is understood and rightly divided....

XXXV ~ (A Psalm of David)

1 Plead my cause, O LORD, with them that strive with me: fight against them that fight against me.

2 Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help.

3 Draw out also the spear, and stop the way against them that persecute me: say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.

~ In Psalm thirty-five, David is experiencing more persecution from King Saul; and David asks God for righteous judgment upon his enemy — upon the enemy of God — against those who persecute righteous people. Many people say this is not a prayer for Christians today. Well, Jesus gave a parable about a widow who went to a judge and asked to be avenged of her adversary. Of course, we're not to avenge ourself; but I happen to know we can we can pray for the lost man — that he will be chosen for salvation *AND* ask God that He will avenge us from them — all in His holiness, justice, and righteousness! Amazingly, God is able to take vengeance without being vindictive. We can't do that. Turning the enemy over to God in prayer can legitimately include asking they be stopped from hurting us; there's nothing wrong with that.

When we turn adversarial people, who do troubling things to us, over to the Lord, and leave it in His hands, you can trust me on this: God is going to handle it. Frankly, there are several people I have turned over to the Lord in my lifetime, and have asked Him to literally break them down to dust. Now, be careful when you do that, because when the Lord does act, you may find yourself mysteriously troubled with their demise. Prayer is nothing to trifle with — it is very real and very effective. Nonetheless, there are many people I would like to just punch on the nose. There's no use beating around the bush — you have had that feeling, too. We need to learn to walk this pathway with God; and if you think I am out of line in my theology then — guess what? — *YOU* are out of line with God.

David likely prayed day and night as he ran from King Saul during those years. Some fundamental conservative theological scholars believe this time period recorded in first Samuel chapter twenty-four may have lasted for up to ten years in David's life. David spared Saul's life more than once during those years by refusing to avenge himself; and Saul told David that he knew God had chosen David to be king. Saul knew it would come to pass that way — so, why didn't Saul repent, and bring David into his rightful place? Well, because Saul was Satan's man, friends. So, David doesn't play

around in his imprecatory prayers; he doesn't pull any punches and he doesn't make any apologies for his extreme requests....

4 Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt.

5 Let them be as chaff before the wind: and let the angel of the LORD chase them.

6 Let their way be dark and slippery: and let the angel of the LORD persecute them.

7 For without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul.

8 Let destruction come upon him at unawares; and let his net that he hath hid catch himself: into that very destruction let him fall.

9 And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD: it shall rejoice in his salvation.

10 All my bones shall say, LORD, who is like unto thee, which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the poor and the needy from him that spoileth him?

11 False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not.

12 They rewarded me evil for good to the spoiling of my soul.

13 But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom.

14 I behaved myself as though he had been my friend or brother: I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother.

15 But in mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together: yea, the abjects gathered themselves together against me, and I knew it not; they did tear me, and ceased not:

16 With hypocritical mockers in feasts, they gnashed upon me with their teeth.

17 Lord, how long wilt thou look on? rescue my soul from their destructions, my darling from the lions.

18 I will give thee thanks in the great congregation: I will praise thee among much people.

19 Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me: neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause.

20 For they speak not peace: but they devise deceitful matters against them that are quiet in the land.

21 Yea, they opened their mouth wide against me, and said, Aha, aha, our eye hath seen it.

22 This thou hast seen, O LORD: keep not silence: O Lord, be not far from me.

23 Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment, even unto my cause, my God and my Lord.

24 Judge me, O LORD my God, according to thy righteousness; and let them not rejoice over me.

25 Let them not say in their hearts, Ah, so would we have it: let them not say, We have swallowed him up.

26 Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together that rejoice at mine hurt: let them be clothed with shame and dishonour that magnify themselves against me.

***27 Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause:
yea, let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, which hath
pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.***

***28 And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all
the day long.***

~ So, this leg of our expedition ends in a Psalm of great comfort and solace for the soul of God's man. Keep in mind that David was a poor man at this time. The men who were with David were also poor, and in debt, distressed, and discontented. David was a Robin Hood in some ways. I am convinced the author of the book '*Robin Hood*' conceived his idea here. This is also where David begins to build up an army. The enemy is mocking David; and a mocker in the time in which we are studying was a court jester. Their sole function was to amuse guests at parties and banquets. They were always rank and vile hypocrites.

Those types are everywhere about us today. You'll find many of them in your church. They ridicule and ignore God's chosen men. They lie in the most pious and vicious ways. I realize there is no perfect church – mostly because we are there – but, either way, God has an interest in the testimony of men who truly believe God, trust Christ, follow Him, and love Him; and, quite honestly, someone needs to do some cleaning up inside our contemporary churches. That cleaning up starts with teaching the Bible properly, correctly and completely. I love this Psalm – as I love all the Psalms.

As our Spiritual Safari continues in our next report, we're going to view a nasty picture of the wicked. We're going to examine the human heart laid bare under an electron microscope; and we will see it revealed as we have never seen it on safari before! All of us have a wicked heart. We don't all believe we have a wicked heart – but – we do. There is an oracle of transgression in the human heart; and that means our old sinful Adamic nature. Well, God also has a remedy for our heart trouble; and we'll get His prescription filled in our next report. The medicine is bitter and *extremely* potent – but highly effective. I hope you'll take some with us ~

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