

The Wine of Astonishment

Psalms 56:1 – 60:12

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~ David spent hours, days, months, and years in the wilderness; living in the caves of the earth, hiding from King Saul, while meditating on the Psalms he had composed, and which would eventually make up a large part of the Word of God. It is in the Word of God — and the Word of God *only* — whereby God communicates His truth to us, friends. Be not deceived; only in Holy Writ can our communication with the Creator of Heaven and earth begin. Likewise, I consider this Spiritual Safari a communication business, as I attempt to communicate the entire Word of God to the entire world in sound doctrine. Psalm sixty-eight verse eleven reads, “... *the Lord gave the Word: great was the company of those that published it.*” I thank God always for those He has given to this so-called safari who help publish it.

The present state of this world has been brought about mostly by advanced capabilities in communication and transportation. Whether that is good or bad is not our subject, though. But the ability to communicate is one of the talents God has given to man; and it is largely what separates us from the animal world. As with any talent, communication comes in varying degrees of ability amongst different men and women. Every human being, irrespective of almost every condition they might find themselves in, can communicate on some level. Even the deaf, dumb, autistic and severely handicapped can make themselves known in some form. Even a newborn baby cries when it is hungry to communicate to you that it's time to care for them.

At the Tower of Babel, God dramatically slowed down our ability to communicate with each other. The one-world language in use at that time was confounded, and communication became impossible; to the degree that the men left off building and went their separate ways. The language barrier is the highest wall that can be constructed between two people. If one man is speaking French, and another is speaking Chinese, then that's a

problem that cannot be overcome without intervention. God confounded the language at that time to prevent man from plunging the entire inhabited world into open rebellion against Him. Those resulting boundaries of the Babel syndrome allowed the Lord to deal with one segment of the human race at a time; which, in turn, provided the nations with an escape from the shackles of sin.

After the salvation plan was completed by the Lord Jesus Christ dying on the cross, man was instructed to take the Gospel to the entire world. They began at Jerusalem, and moved out to Judaea and Samaria – and, finally, on to the ends of the earth. After more than two thousand years, you would think this instruction would have been fully executed, and the entire world would have heard of the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ — in their mother tongue. Unfortunately, the reality of the matter is that there are more unsaved people in the world today, in ratio, than there were at the time when the early church first began to function! Amazingly, there are also more self-professing Christians in the world today than at any other period in world history. That stark condition of contrast is what makes it imperative for those who have heard and believed to hasten an attempt to enlarge the process of getting the Word of God out to the world properly, correctly and completely.

Throughout modern history, man has worked tediously to translate the Bible into other languages; but it is likely impossible to print the whole Bible in all of the languages of the world. Tremendous strides have been made by faithful missionaries; and I don't think the task is totally hopeless; because Christians are not helpless – and we have translators for most of the major languages. Also, God has given us a remarkable tool to teach the Bible; one that allows almost every person on the planet to potentially be reached individually. Necessarily, though, that makes it hyper-critical that the entire Bible be taught in an educated, sincere, Spirit-led and Spirit-filled manner; as opposed to the fractured and disconnected — and just plain false — theories of theology that constitute and pass for contemporary Christian discourse. Frankly, any unsound doctrine is the doctrine of Satan. It simply cannot be otherwise.

The language barrier has been almost completely eliminated as I write this report and you read it. I have readers who can understand my writing on all seven major continents, and in the most remote cities and towns of the countries on those continents. This Spiritual Safari provides the communicator and the communication; and modern technology has provided all the tools for the rest of this work to complete itself. The factual matter is that this media alone can reach everywhere God has intended for the Gospel to go. The iron and bamboo curtains have been potentially dissolved by technology; and any reader of these reports could have a part in this tremendous enterprise.

Laymen and women alike mistakenly think they know all there is to know about the Bible. Our contemporary so-called leadership only seeks to make merchandise of the Lord Jesus Christ; and the rest sit idly by — either looking for entertainment — or a way to pass a few minutes of a dull and boring existence. In short, we have a real problem, friends. We are commanded to support the teaching of the Bible, but *ONLY* when it is taught properly, correctly and completely. There are myriad multitudes promoting abject heresy, blasphemy, and worldly philosophy or religious theory — all with a little Jesus sprinkled in for credibility. I am telling you that “Bible teaching” is quickly being reduced to a religious racketeering scheme; and the door for sound doctrine is getting ready to be slammed shut in man’s face. When that happens, everyone will say the devil is a liar — and he is — but they will be buying the lies of the devil while thinking they are fighting against him. It’s bad, my beloved — really bad — I seriously doubt you understand how bad our condition truly is. I seriously doubt I understand the depths of how bad things really are. We should both thank God for that.

The world is still listening, but so few people have so little to say that is right, and so much to say that is wrong, that all of this Bible stuff we see happening today will change almost overnight very soon. Hard rock music posing as worship, and a soft, watered down message posing as preaching will soon poison the entire human race. The True and Living church will be gone. Harpazo! What we see today is not quite what the Lord Jesus Christ had in mind when He said, “.... *go ye into all the world and make disciples.*” See, a seminar on marriage, a quasi-spiritual pep talk on business ethics, or

a motivational speech on how to live your best life now just don't happen to be the true and complete Gospel of Who Christ was and is – and will be. Most people seem to preach from the Word *about* the Word, but rarely teach sound doctrine. May God help us as we slip into the nothingness of meaninglessness.

Alright, that brings our Spiritual Safari expedition almost halfway across the desert of the Book of Psalms — to another delightful cluster that forms a lush oasis. These are all “*Michtam*” Psalms – and that means several things, primarily “*instruction*” — but it can also mean “*prayer*,” “*engraved*,” “*substantial*,” “*durable*,” “*endurance*,” “*fixed*,” “*unmovable*,” “*steadfast*,” “*lasting*,” “*permanency*” and “*stability*.” All of those meanings are wrapped up in this one little Hebrew word. Psalm fifty-six has been called the “.... *cheerful courage of a fugitive*.” Remember, in our last Psalm, David spoke of having the “.... *wings of a dove*” so he could just fly away from all of his problems. Well – no further comment from me on that. The wicked enemy was on David’s heels at every step; and David and his men were in danger of their lives every time they took a breath. Through it all, God graciously and continually delivered David from all of his troubles....

לָזַד ~ (*To the chief Musician upon Jonath-elem-rechokim, Michtam of David, when the Philistines took him in Gath*)

1 Be gracious unto me, O God: for man would swallow me up; by fighting me throughout the day my enemies oppress me greatly.

2 My enemies watch me every day and want to swallow me up: many want to fight against me in their pride, O thou most High.

3 When I am afraid, I will trust in Thee.

4 In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.

5 Every day they wrest my words: all their thoughts are against me for evil.

6 They gather themselves together, they hide themselves, they mark my steps, when they wait for my soul.

7 Shall they escape by iniquity? in thine anger cast down the people, O God.

8 Thou knowest all of my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?

9 When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for God is for me.

10 In God will I praise his word: in the LORD will I praise his word.

11 In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.

12 Thy vows are upon me, O God: I will render praises unto thee.

13 For thou hast delivered my soul from death: wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?

~ Psalm fifty-six was written when David was captured by the Philistines, and it chronicles his experience. This is another prophetic picture of the nation Israel during the Great Tribulation period, too; and somewhere between the historical experience of David and the future prophecy for Israel the Holy Spirit has a real spiritual message and application for our hearts and lives today. When we consider the Book of Psalms this way – which is proper – then they are *ALL* applicable to us right now. However, to take them out of that context as the primary setting is to over-spiritualize them; and there is great danger of doing that – because it will inevitably lead to doubt – and doubt will eventually lead to disbelief. That type of disbelief results in despising God.

I have used parts of another translation that was made by a man that I respect greatly; you may want to compare what I have written with your Authorized Version text; I think it will help very much. This is the type of

prayer one is likely to pray when they are utterly surrounded by the enemy. Do you ever get afraid? David was definitely afraid for his life when he wrote this. Some people act as if any kind of fear signals something wrong in our faith in God. Well, I don't think so, friends. Actually, fear can accentuate our faith in the Lord in our life. Those people who just recline in every situation and flippantly say they never fear anything are usually insensitive to the imminent reality of their circumstances - or they are lying - or they are just plain foolish. David said he was afraid.

Now, I realize the Scriptures say "*.... perfect love casteth out all fear*" – but very few people know what perfect love is; and Jesus says, "*let not your heart be troubled;*" but how do we reach that place is the question. Well, we can definitely have faith and still be afraid of the appropriate problems. I say that as a comfort to someone who may be reading this, because there are many downright idiotic things being said today in this connection. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. See, most Bible teaching is not Scriptural – or is so far out of a correct context that it doesn't make sense – and, as a result, doesn't help anyone in the time of need and trouble.

Most people seem to think I am a bit too involved in the Word of God. Some have even said they were "*concerned*" about me, because I was everlastingly talking about the Bible. Well, friends, that's what David did. David said, "*.... in God will I praise His Word.*" See, there are so few people who actually praise the Word of God that I feel like I need to make up for their deficiency. It's wonderful to have this resource and recourse to God. In fact, if the Bible is the Word of God, then nothing else matters; and if the Bible is *not* the Word of God, then nothing matters!

This book called the Bible can deliver our soul from death, my beloved; I think it's more than important to know it, understand it, love it and cherish it like nothing else you own. If you really want to get down out of your infantile highchair and walk in the Spirit of God, then you're going to have to have your entire being based on the Word of God; it simply will not be otherwise. You are going to have to know what you are attempting to practice; and that can only happen *ONE* way – instruction in the Bible. You won't learn it on your own. You'll never reach that place of spiritual maturity if you are not walking in the Word every single day. This sure does

get right down to the bottom line, doesn't it? You might want to just write all that down....

לִשְׁמִינִי ~ (To the chief Musician, Altaschith, Michtam of David, when he fled from Saul in the cave)

1 Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.

2 I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth all things for me.

3 He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up. Selah. God shall send forth his mercy and his truth.

4 My soul is among lions: and I lie even among them that are set on fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.

5 Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; let thy glory be above all the earth.

6 They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down: they have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen themselves. Selah.

7 My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise.

8 Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will wake the morning dawn!

9 I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations.

10 For thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds.

11 Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: let thy glory be above all the earth.

~ Altaschith means “*destroy not.*” David spent a whole bunch of time in the caves that were along the Dead Sea. It’s very beautiful but extremely harsh terrain there. This may or may not have been the cave of Adullam where, you will remember, King Saul came in and went to sleep unaware that David was also in the cave. Well, either way, a very stressed out and suffering David penned this Psalm at that time. Again, I cannot stress enough that these Psalms speak of that day in the future when the nation Israel will be in a time of great trouble and testing in the Great Tribulation period. Prophecy, when considered contextually correctly, is really the wonder of the Word of God, friends. I don’t know about you dear readers, but verse one of Psalm fifty-seven is my prayer today. I need unending and everlasting *mercy* and graciousness from God. I don’t want God to execute justice on me in His righteousness because, quite candidly, if God did that, I would just get another whipping. Thank God He is a merciful God.

David found refuge in the wings of the Lord, but the nation Israel didn’t. Jesus said, “*how often would I have gathered you together like a hen gathers her chickens under her wings; but you would not.*” That’s Matthew chapter twenty-three verse thirty-seven. Are you willing to come under His wings today, friends? That means to be *obedient* unto Him. It means to *trust* Christ and love Him. Remember, Jesus said, “*if you love Me, keep My commandments.*” We’re still talking about walking in the Spirit. Well, read this Psalm very carefully because there are extraordinary statements in it.

Satan is the lion in verse four; and the devil goes up and down this world seeking whom he may devour – and Satan has a lot of little baby cubs that he needs to feed, too. If you’re reading this report, then you are being eyed as the next leg of lamb for the devil’s menu! Thank God verse seven marks a day *yet to come* for the nation Israel, when the long, dark night is over, and Satan’s rule is finished. The morning will then dawn, and the Son of righteousness will arise with healing in His wings....

℣℣℣℣ ~ (To the chief Musician, Altaschith, Michtam of David)

1 Do ye indeed speak righteousness, O congregation? do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men?

~ Most Bible expositors believe it was God Himself Who asked the question in verse one. I also believe that to be the case with the Lord using David as His pen. Everyone from the judge on the bench, who seem to have no accountability in our court systems today, to the unskilled and uneducated man digging a ditch, are going to turn in a report to the Lord Jesus Christ someday. Well, this is an imprecatory prayer and David asks for six things in his prayer — six destructions David asks for — of God; in relation to these enemies encompassing him and seeking to destroy him and his men. Again, the enemy is like a lion. David wants their teeth kicked out.

I know many people say a Christian cannot pray this prayer; but, I pray that the Lord will absolutely deal with the devil by breaking his teeth and stopping his mouth. I don't consider that un-Christian like in any way, shape or form — because the Bible tells me so right here. So many so-called Christians have an impudent mouth today, too, by the way; they need to have the Lord shut them up! Then, the other five things David asks for from God's justice towards these enemies are in verses seven, eight and nine. David is under the Mosaic Law at this time, and he has an absolute right to ask for justice....

2 Yea, in heart ye work wickedness; ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth.

3 The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.

4 Their poison is like the poison of a serpent: they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear;

5 Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely.

6 Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth: break out the great teeth of the young lions, O LORD.

7 Let them melt away as waters which run continually: when he bendeth his bow to shoot his arrows, let them be as cut in pieces.

8 As a snail which melteth, let every one of them pass away: like the untimely birth of a woman, that they may not see the sun.

9 Before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living, and in his wrath.

10 The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.

11 So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.

LXX ~ (To the chief Musician, Altaschith, Michtam of David; when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him)

1 Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God: defend me from them that rise up against me.

2 Deliver me from the workers of iniquity, and save me from bloody men.

3 For, lo, they lie in wait for my soul: the mighty are gathered against me; not for my transgression, nor for my sin, O LORD.

4 They run and prepare themselves without my fault: awake to help me, and behold.

5 Thou therefore, O LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel, awake to visit all the heathen: be not merciful to any wicked transgressors. Selah.

6 They return at evening: they make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.

7 Behold, they belch out with their mouth: swords are in their lips: for who, say they, doth hear?

8 But thou, O LORD, shalt laugh at them; thou shalt have all the heathen in derision.

9 Because of his strength will I wait upon thee: for God is my defence.

10 The God of my mercy shall prevent me: God shall let me see my desire upon mine enemies.

11 Slay them not, lest my people forget: scatter them by thy power; and bring them down, O Lord our shield.

12 For the sin of their mouth and the words of their lips let them even be taken in their pride: and for cursing and lying which they speak.

13 Consume them in wrath, consume them, that they may not be: and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth. Selah.

14 And at evening let them return; and let them make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.

15 Let them wander up and down for meat, and grudge if they be not satisfied.

16 But I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble.

17 Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing: for God is my defence, and the God of my mercy.

LX ~ (To the chief Musician upon Shushan-eduth, Michtam of David, to teach; when he strove with Aramnaharaim and with Aramzobah, when Joab returned, and smote of Edom in the valley of salt twelve thousand)

1 O God, thou hast cast us off, thou hast scattered us, thou hast been displeased; O turn thyself to us again.

2 Thou hast made the earth to tremble; thou hast broken it: heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh.

3 Thou hast shewed thy people hard things: thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment.

4 Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah.

5 That thy beloved may be delivered; save with thy right hand, and hear me.

6 God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.

7 Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; Judah is my lawgiver;

8 Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe: Philistia, triumph thou because of me.

9 Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom?

10 Wilt not thou, O God, which hadst cast us off? and thou, O God, which didst not go out with our armies?

11 Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man.

12 Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies.

~ Psalm fifty-nine continues along the same lines; as David prays and we see the nation Israel in the Great Tribulation period — surrounded by enemies. You'll need to read that Psalm for yourself after praying for

wisdom, judgment and discernment. Then, Psalm sixty concludes this report from our Spiritual Safari through the Book Psalms with another great prayer. Psalm sixty brings about a time when David was victorious over his enemies. God has answered his prayers. The Edomites had been defeated by Joab in a great slaughter. That's a picture of deliverance the Lord will give to His people *in that day*. That will be accomplished only by God Himself as He restores His saints who will be in trouble and terrible difficulty – and even in sin. God is going to restore them. What a glorious little cluster of Psalms of praise we have come across; and they are all for our God Who is so very, very good, friends. I wish we could stay here forever but we will have to move on ~

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