Trusting in God's Steadfast Love

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[0:00] We're in Psalm 52, and the psalm is titled, To the Choir Master, a mass scale of David, when Doag the Edomite came and told Saul, David has come to the house of Ahimelech.

So I'll read it out loud, and then we'll talk about the psalm for a little bit. Why do you boast of evil, O mighty man? The steadfast love of God endures all the day.
Your tongue plots destruction like a sharp razor, you worker of deceit. You love evil more than good, and lying more than speaking what is right, Selah.
You love all words that devour, O deceitful tongue. But God will break you down forever. He will snatch and tear you from your tent. He will uproot you from the land of the living, Selah.
The righteous shall see and fear, and shall laugh at him, saying, See the man who would not make God his refuge, but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and sought refuge in his own destruction.
[1:17] But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God. I trust in the steadfast love of God forever and ever. I will thank you forever because you have done it.

I will wait for your name, for it is good in the presence of the godly. This is Psalm 52. And so the title that mentions Doeg the Edomite, and this is an allusion to 1 Samuel 21 to 22.
And so David is fleeing from King Saul because King Saul is really kind of mad. He's bent on killing his most loyal servant, David.
And he's pursuing him, and David flees to Nob. And when he gets to Nob, he entreats the hospitality of Ahimelech the priest. And Ahimelech gives him the bread of presence to eat because he's hungry, and furnishes him with the sword of Goliath, which was stored there after the defeat of Goliath.
And then also inquires of the Lord for him and sends him away. But David, at that point, doesn't tell Ahimelech what he's doing. He doesn't tell him that he's fleeing from Saul because he just tells him that he's on an urgent mission on behalf of Saul because he doesn't want Ahimelech to be associated with treason and later endanger his own life.
[2:37] So David doesn't tell him that. But then later, when Saul comes to Nob to find David, finds that David's not there anymore. And so he's interrogating everybody.

And there's a man named Doeg the Edomite. And Doeg the Edomite happened to be right there when Ahimelech was providing all this stuff for David. And so he was lurking there.
And he heard everything that Ahimelech did. And even though Ahimelech didn't know what David was doing, that he was fleeing from Saul, so Doeg the Edomite implicates him in this kind of conspiracy.
And so he's lying in a way, even though he's telling the truth of what Ahimelech did. But he's implicating that Ahimelech was supporting him in treason, which he wasn't doing because he had no idea that David was fleeing from Saul.
And so by doing that, he enrages Saul. And Saul wants to kill all the priests and tells the soldiers to kill all the priests.
[3:39] But the soldiers fear God, so they don't kill the priests. And then so Saul's like, okay, well then Doeg the Edomite, you kill him. And Doeg the Edomite has no qualms, and he kills 85 priests that day.

And so that's what this Psalm 52 here is alluding to in the title, that when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, David has come to the house of Ahimelech. So David presumably heard about this, and then he penned this psalm.
And so in this psalm, he teaches us that unlike the evil men, like Doeg, who disregard the steadfast love of God, that we should trust in the steadfast love of God in the way we live.

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So that's the main point. And we're talking about the way of evil, verses 1 to 4, and God's judgment in verse 5, and the way of righteousness in verses 6 to 9. And first, David begins with the portrait of what the wicked live, how the wicked live, in the way of evil in verse 1.
Why do you boast of evil, O mighty man? So this evil person is dressed as a mighty man. Doeg the Edomite was a chief herdsman of Saul, so he was obviously close to Saul, but was also quite wealthy and influential, likely.
[4:48] So he's described here as a mighty man, and others like him. So the evil people, they stylize themselves as mighty, and they boast in their evil. But David calls their boasting into question in verse 1.

He says, why do you boast of evil? Because for David, he believes that they shouldn't boast. In fact, they have no grounds to boast, since the steadfast love of God endures all the day. So that's an interesting contrast.
He's saying that because God loves his people in a steadfast way, there's no reason for the mighty men to boast in evil. They should be loyal to him. They should be faithful to him, not disregard his steadfast love and boast in evil.
And then verses 2 to 4, he tells us more specifically how this mighty man boasts of evil. He says, your tongue plots destruction like a sharp razor, you worker of deceit. You love evil more than good and lying more than speaking what is right, Selah.
You love all words that devour, O deceitful tongue. So it's interesting because he's described as a mighty man, but this mighty man's weapon of choice is not a sword. It's his tongue, right, which he brandishes like a sharp razor, he says.
[5:57] And he works destruction through his deceit, which is mentioned twice. He loves evil more than good and lying more than speaking what is right. So his priorities are inverted. He's backwards. And it's not that he just does evil.

He loves evil, he says, right? And so that's the way of the evil. And then David expresses his confidence in God's future judgment in verse 5.
He says, but God will break you down forever. He will snatch and tear you from your tent. He will uproot you from the land of the living, Selah. And this is, it sounds quite forceful, right, and violent, but imagine being on that receiving end of injustice and oppression.
And this is such a gratifying justice, right? It's a satisfying justice. Even though the mighty man seems to be getting his way in life, God will ultimately bring him to judgment.
And even though Dweg the Edomite at this point seemed to triumph, right, he's ingratiated himself to King Saul. Now he has his favor. He seems fairly planted in the kingdom. But in the end, he will be uprooted in the land of the living.
[7:04] And in the Hebrew, it's even more emphatic because the second person pronoun is repeated with every verb. So it's like God will break you, snatch you, tear you, uproot you. Like, I mean, it's like, it's a frightening series of words.

And David says that's what will happen to those who boast in evil, those who follow the way of evil. So that's God's judgment. And having seen God's future judgment, David tells us about the way of the righteous in verse 6 to 9.
It says in verse 6 to 7, The righteous shall see and fear and shall laugh at him, saying, See the man who would not make God his refuge, but trusted in the abundance of his riches and sought refuge in his own destruction.
So unlike the evil mighty man, so-called mighty man, who is characterized by his boasting, this righteous man is characterized by fear of God, right?
Instead of flaunting his own might, the righteous understand and are aware of God's power. And because of that, they live in humility and conduct themselves with appropriate awe and reverence before God, right?
[8:09] And so, and it's this righteous person, the righteous who will ultimately get the final laugh, right? Because it's the righteous shall laugh at him, the wicked, saying, To see the man who would not make God his refuge, but trusted in the abundance of his riches and sought refuge in his own destruction.

And then, in a really cool way, verses 8 to 9, this psalm takes a personal turn, right? So David talked kind of abstractly about the way of the evil and the way of the righteous, but now he starts using the first person pronoun to talk about this.

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And so he says, I am like a green olive tree in the house of God. I trust in the steadfast love of God forever and ever. And this is so helpful and cool to see because, you know, this faith in God's justice was not just this abstract truth for David that had no bearing on his life.
It's what he banked on in his life. It's how he lived, right? When Doeg the Edomite triumphed, he banked on that truth and put his hope in God. And he, when he was being pursued by Saul unjustly, likewise, it's what sustained him because he believed this truth.
This truth wasn't just in his head. It wasn't just cognitive. It was an experiential faith. He had truth, truth that he lived. And he contrasts the fact that the evil person, right, trusts in the abundance of his riches, but the righteous person trusts in the steadfast love of God, right?
[9:35] And so the question we should all ask ourselves in line of this text is, is our trust in God's steadfast love real and personal like David's is, right? Is it something, are we putting our trust in something else in our life, right?

Does our sense of well-being in our life depend on how padded our bank account is, right? Or does our sense of well-being depend on how others perceive us or whether they think we're competent or accomplished or smart, right?
Or does our sense of well-being depend on how our life seems to be progressing? Like, you know, are we making progress? Are we getting ahead of life? Are we doing better in work?
And are we, you know, it's, because if any of these other things is where we place our trust, they will all, in the end, ultimately disappoint us because they're an inadequate basis for our trust.
Trust. So instead, it says, trust in the steadfast love of God, right? It's because his love is steadfast, right? It's unchanging. It's constant. It's a worthy basis.
[10:41] It's worthy of our trust. He's worthy of our complete confidence. And so then even when our lives are topsy-turvy, right? Even when our, you know, people around us are being fickle and petty, right?

It's even when everything in the world, all of our life circumstances seem to go awry, we could still hold on to the steadfast love of God, and we can trust in that.
And that's what will sustain us because God's irrevocably and reasonably committed to us as he was to David. And, of course, for us, we have an even greater assurance of that steadfast love in what Christ has done for us, right?
Because that was the climactic display of God's steadfast love and that Jesus, God sent his only son, his one beloved son, right, to die for our sins, right?
And that's why he was able to be patient with David in Israel, right? Because he was looking ahead. He had ordained already that his son would die to pay the penalty for his people's sins.
[11:44] And because of that, so he was forbearing of their sins and failures. And when Jesus came, he died for us. He died for us willingly. He died to reconcile us to the Father. He died so that we might be adopted into his family.

He died so that we can be forgiven of our sins and reconciled to God the Father instead of being his enemies. And that's the ultimate display of steadfast love. And if we live in light of that, if we look at the cross in our life, then that's what's going to help us when we look around in our life.
After having looked at the cross, that's when we have eyes of faith to be able to see God's steadfast love in the midst of it all. And so let's turn our attention to that this evening.
And the result is awesome, right? He says, And I am like a green olive tree in the house of God. Olive trees, I mean, Israel is known for olive trees, right?
And olive trees is such a great picture of enduring fruit and life because it could last centuries. It bears fruit for centuries. And it's an evergreen, right?
[12:47] So it's always in season, right? So it's such a cool picture. And I learned this this week that olive tree, even if the main trunk dies, apparently it lets off other shoots and it continues to live.

So it's like, wow, that's a pretty cool picture. That's the life. So it will be our life, we'll be enduring, have life, we'll be fruitful if we trust in God's steadfast love.
So let's seek to do that every day in our lives and let's turn to prayer tonight as an expression of that trust in God. Maybe we can sing a song.

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