

Casting Our Burdens On the Lord

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Preacher: Shawn Woo

[0 : 00] Heavenly Father, though our days and our weeks change and our mood, our sense of well-being changes, Lord, you are unchanging, Lord, you are always faithful, you are constant, and you are eager, as always, to listen to us, to speak to us, to minister to us, Lord, and so we are here, Lord, that we come from different states of mind, Lord, we come from different weeks and days, Lord, we have gathered in the same place to seek the one true God, Lord, to seek you, Lord.

So we pray, God, that you would address us from your word, that you would lead us as we pray, that you would empower us in our prayers. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

So we're in Psalm 55. The title of the psalm is, To the Choir Master with Stringed Instruments, A Maskile of David.

I will read it out loud. Psalm 55. Give ear to my prayer, O God, and hide not yourself from my plea for mercy.

Attend to me and answer me. I am restless in my complaint, and I moan because of the noise of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked, for they drop trouble upon me, and in anger they bear a grudge against me.

[2 : 00] My heart is in anguish within me. The terrors of death have fallen upon me. Fear and trembling come upon me, and horror overwhelms me.

And I say, O that I had wings like a dove. I would fly away and be at rest. Yes, I would wander far away. I would lodge in the wilderness. I would hurry to find a shelter from the raging wind and tempest.

Destroy, O Lord. Divide their tongues. For I see violence and strife in the city. Day and night they go around it on its walls, and iniquity and trouble are within it.

Ruin is in its midst. Oppression and fraud do not depart from its marketplace. For it is not an enemy who taunts me. Then I could bear it.

It is not an adversary who deals insolently with me. Then I could hide from him. But it is you, a man, my equal, my companion, my familiar friend.

[3 : 04] We used to take sweet counsel together. Within God's house we walked in the throng. Let death steal over them. Let them go down to Sheol alive.

For evil is in their dwelling place and in their heart. But I call to God, and the Lord will save me. Evening and morning and at noon I utter my complaint and moan, and he hears my voice.

He redeems my soul in safety from the battle that I wage. For many are arrayed against me. God will give ear and humble them, he who is enthroned from of old.

Because they do not change and do not fear God. My companion stretched out his hand against his friends. He violated his covenant. His speech was smooth as butter, yet war was in his heart.

His words were softer than oil, yet they were drawn swords. Cast your burden on the Lord, and he will sustain you. He will never permit the righteous to be moved.

[4 : 10] But you, O God, will cast them down into the pit of destruction. Men of blood and treachery shall not live out half their days. But I will trust in you.

I guess end of the school year and end of the week, right, all of us are carrying some kind of burdens, right?

And as we are carrying those burdens, I want you to think today about what it is that's weighing your heart down.

What's burning your heart, right? Maybe it's a difficult relationship, or maybe it's a difficult situation at work. Maybe it's a problem you're facing. But there's much comfort that's offered in this psalm about the burdens of the heart.

And David was a man who was familiar with these struggles and these heavy burdens of the heart. And so he teaches us in this psalm that those who cast their burdens on the Lord will be sustained by him.

[5 : 13] And in verses 1 to 8, we see his plea. And in verses 9 to 15, we find his plight. And then in verses 16 to 23, we see his profession, his profession of faith.

So first we see David's plea in verses 1 to 8. In verses 1 to 3, David cries out to God, Give ear to my prayer, O God, and hide not yourself from my plea for mercy.

Attend to me and answer me. I am restless in my complaint, and I moan because of the noise of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked, for they drop trouble upon me, and in anger they bear a grudge against me.

You could kind of sense the desperation of David's plea in the fourfold verbs in succession. So he says, Give ear to me. Hide not yourself from me. Attend to me.

Answer me. So whatever he's facing, David's feeling quite at the end of himself and isolated. So he turns to God in that situation. And then in verses 4 to 5, he describes in greater detail what he's actually feeling.

[6 : 20] He says, My heart is in anguish within me. The terrors of death have fallen upon me. Fear and trembling come upon me, and horror overwhelms me. So we can relate to this to a degree, right?

There's again, there's a fourfold plea in verses 1 to 3. Here there's a fourfold description of his anguish. So the words he uses, anguish, terror, fear, trembling, and horror.

And David's so overwhelmed by his circumstances that he actually just wants to get away. He wants to escape. And we see his escapist fantasy in verses 6 to 8. And I say, Oh, that I had wings like a dove.

I would fly away and be at rest. And I say, Oh, that I had wings like a dove. I would fly away and be at rest. Yes, I would wander far away.

I would lodge in the wilderness, Selah. I would hurry to find a shelter from the raging wind and tempest. This desire to escape our present plight manifests itself in different ways, in different people, right?

[7 : 29] Some people really look forward to, all they look forward to is a vacation, or they live for vacations. Other people retreat and get away into an imaginary fantasy world of books and sports and games and pornography and movies.

Others entertain suicidal thoughts even as a way of escaping everything, putting an end to everything, right? And we see an example of that here in David.

He wants to escape it all because it's so painful to him. And so after his desperate plea, we turn to the second phase of Psalm, the plight, verse 9 to 15.

And in verses 9 to 11, he describes the damage that the enemies are doing to him, what's causing this plight. Destroy, O Lord, divide their tongues, for I see violence and strife in the city.

Day and night they go around it on its walls, and iniquity and trouble are within it. Ruin is in its midst. Oppression and fraud do not depart from its marketplace. So David's enemies are doing damage with physical as well as verbal violence.

[8 : 41] And so that's why David asks God to destroy, O Lord, divide their tongues, right? So the word translated destroy here also means to confuse. That's the way it's used in Isaiah 3.12, 19.3 and 28.7.

And that's how the NASB and the NIV translates it. So confuse instead of destroy. I think that's a better translation because it parallels the next verb, which is divide. And divide is a rare word in the Bible, but there's one notable occurrence of it in Genesis 10.25, where one of the descendants of Shem is named Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided.

That's a reference most likely to the Tower of Babel incident, when God divided and scattered the peoples by giving them, confusing their language or confusing their tongues.

And he scattered the people in that way. So really here David is asking God to do, act in judgment the same way he acted once at the Tower of Babel. He's saying, confuse, O Lord, divide their tongues.

And the reason why he prays this is because the violence of the wicked, the violence of his enemies seems to know no bound. Because in verse 10 he tells us that they work their evil day and night, which means all day long, right?

[10 : 03] And not only that, they go around this entire city and then they sow trouble in its midst. They go around it and they go in its midst. So they're encircling the city and infiltrating the city with their evil deeds.

And that's not even the worst of it, right? Because we find out exactly who is among David's enemies in verses 12 to 14. For it is not an enemy who taunts me, then I could bear it.

It is not an adversary who deals insolently with me, then I could hide from him. But it is you, a man, my equal, my companion, my familiar friend.

We used to take sweet counsel together. Within God's house we walked in the throng. So David's pain here is multiplied by the fact that the enemy that is so fiercely and thoroughly opposing him is not just typical adversary, but someone that was once his trusted companion, a familiar friend.

I'm personally fortunate to have loyal family and friends, right? So I have not experienced this, but I can only imagine the pain, how painful it must be to be stabbed in the back by someone that you trusted enough to reveal your back, right?

[11 : 20] And because this enemy came from David's own ranks, he can't bear it, he says. He can't hide from him. And as he recounts David's plight, he seems to be overwhelmed again.

So he calls for God's swift judgment in verse 15. Let death steal over them. Let them go down to Sheol alive. For evil is in their dwelling place and in their heart.

So this is David calling for a judgment similar to the judgment that fell on Korah and his followers in Numbers 16.

So in Numbers 16, Korah basically gathers 250 chiefs of the congregation and challenges Moses' authority. And because of that, God intervenes decisively on Moses' behalf.

And this is what happens. This is in Numbers 16, 32 to 33. And the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up with their households and all the people who belonged to Korah and all their goods.

[12 : 25] So they and all that belonged to them went down alive into Sheol. And the earth closed over them and they perished from the midst of the assembly. So just like Korah was someone who was among Moses' followers, among Israel, that rebelled against him.

So similarly, David's familiar friend and companion has risen up against him. And David now prays for a similar judgment as that fell on Korah. Sheol is just a reference to the realm of the dead.

So he's calling for them to go down into Sheol alive. So to be swallowed up by the earth with that kind of a decisive judgment. And here, of course, David's not calling for personal vengeance.

But he's because these are people who do not fear God. These are people who oppose God. So he's really calling for God's judgment on him. And so that's the plight that David is in.

So we see his plea and we see his plight. And then finally we see his profession in verses 16 to 23. And deliverance hasn't come for David yet. But nevertheless, he professes his faith in God's coming deliverance in verses 16 to 19.

[13 : 36] But I call to God and the Lord will save me. Evening and morning and at noon I utter my complaint and moan. And he hears my voice. He redeems my soul in safety from the battle that I wage.

For many are arrayed against me. God will give ear and humble them. He who is enthroned from of old. Selah. Because they do not change and do not fear God.

So in contrast to the enemies who are doing evil deeds day and night, David here says he prays to God evening and morning and at noon. So it seems like he's praying three times a day at set times.

Much like Prophet Daniel did. As we see in Daniel 6.10. And so this is helpful for us. Because as much as his enemies are burning his heart, weighing him down, David in equal measure is casting all his burdens on God.

And that's why he's able to be sustained through the situation. And David's assured that God can redeem his soul and save him. And the reason for that is because he says God is the one who is enthroned from of old.

[14 : 40] God has always been king over the entire cosmos. And he never abdicated his throne. So he still sits enthroned. And that's why David can trust him.

And so this is helpful for us to remember. No matter what we're going through. No matter what we are, what's burdening our hearts, weighing us down. Whatever we might fear or worry about. To remember that the Lord is the one who is enthroned from of old.

And he can save us. And because God's people are on his side. But that doesn't mean that David isn't bothered anymore by the betrayal or the pain that he's going through.

He still feels the pain. And we see that again in verses 20 to 21. So he returns again to his bitter musings about his former friend. So my companion stretched out his hand against his friend.

He violated his covenant. His speech was smooth as butter, yet war was in his heart. His words were softer than oil, yet they were drawn soared. It seems as though, as David says, the wounds are still fresh, right?

[15 : 42] There's a tone of disbelief and indignation in his words. And this is actually one of the unique features of this psalm. Usually the psalms follow a very clear, logical flow.

But here it's kind of uneven. The psalm is uneven. There's abrupt changes in thought. And it's almost as if it's intended to convey this kind of emotional roller coaster that David himself is on.

But nevertheless, even though he is deeply pained by his friend's betrayal, he is, in the end, returns to a profession of faith.

And in verses 22 to 23, he exhorts the whole people of God to similarly cast their burdens on the Lord. He says, So the ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament, which the New Testament authors used, translates this verse as, Cast your anxieties on the Lord.

So 1 Peter 5, 7 may very well be alluding to this verse of the psalm. Because it says, Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, so that at the proper time he may exalt you.

[17 : 05] Casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. So Peter had written to believers who are facing persecution for their faith, and had exhorted them to cast all their anxieties on him.

And that's what we are to do as believers. And there's only one stout and steady shoulder upon which we could lay all the burdens of the heart, and that's, of course, the shoulders of Jesus Christ, who said in Matthew 11, 28, Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Because God's once and for all, and unreservedly demonstrated his steadfast love and faithfulness toward us in Jesus, and because Jesus lived and died and rose again for our salvation and vindication, and because Christ is our advocate, who is enthroned at the right hand of the Father, and because he is sovereign and in full control, that's why we don't have to be burdened with fear and anxiety.

And because Christ is our mediator in the presence of God the Father, because of him, there is, for those who trust in him, full remission of sin. All our debts are paid and our sins are forgiven.

And because of that, we don't need to be burdened by guilt, weighed down by guilt. And so whatever situation you're in then, whatever burden of the heart that you have been carrying this week, or this day, or this year, the exhortation is to cast your burden on the Lord.

[18 : 35] And he will sustain you. He will never permit the righteous to be moved. And that's really the main point of the psalm, and it's really a wonderful picture, the idea of casting our burden on the Lord, right?

It's literally throwing our burdens onto him, so that we do not have to carry it, but that he would carry it for us. And we could fling it to him, throw it to him, cast it aside to him, and have no more cares and anxieties, because Jesus is a sufficient burden bearer on our behalf.

So those who cast their burdens on the Lord will be sustained by him. So let's turn to him in prayer and cast our burdens on him. And that's a great dei, to give a mentions estava every thing for him.

Let me know a little bit, I'll continue to think of the Pallel. And I've been recording it book. Now you can see I'm going to turn the Pallel tour So the road feet are left off