

When I've Been Wronged

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[0 : 00] If you've never been wronged by someone, I'm going to ask you to please stand and just say glory. No one.

Well, I'm going to assume that everyone is being honest and that everyone present has been wronged, at least once in their life.

This is the third in our five-part series titled When Life Happens. And that title means exactly what it says, When Life Happens.

When things happen in everyday life. In other words, it's a part of living when life happens. Today our focus is specifically on when I have been wronged.

At so many levels, I must confess, this is a difficult passage, a difficult message.

[1 : 43] First, because for many of us, the pain from being wronged remains.

And I hardly consider myself qualified to lecture anyone on this subject. And second, your pastor's chose a very difficult text to preach this message from.

So those two things make it very, very challenging. But I hope that there is nothing that I will say today that will give the impression that I'm being casual or flippant about this issue.

Because it's very serious. When I've been wronged. When I've been wronged, perhaps it's caused a financial impact.

When I've been wronged relationally to a loved one. When I've been wronged contractually to some agreement.

[2 : 53] when I've been scandalized. When I've received poor service resulting in meaningful implications, whether it's medical or some structural thing that someone was professional must have done.

But when I've been wronged, these are just a handful of examples we can point to. And while the scripture that we come to today clearly shows that the perpetrator or the perpetrators had a clear intent to cause wrong, it's not always the case that when we experience wrong that it was intentional.

Please turn in your Bible to Psalm 109. And before we read this rather relatively lengthy psalm let us pray.

Amen. Lord, we ask for your help in this moment. Help us, O Lord, to speak clearly and to hear rightly.

Lord, cause only that which you would wish to go forth to come out of our mouths. Lord, we pray that you would bring comfort to your people.

[4 : 46] in the name of Jesus we pray. Amen. Let's read this psalm.

Psalm 109. Be not silent, O God, of my praise. For wicked and deceitful mouths are opened against me, speaking against me with lying tongues.

They encircle me with words of hate and attack me without cause. In return for my love they accuse me, but I give myself to prayer.

So they reward me evil for good and hatred for my love. Continuing, appoint a wicked man against him.

Let an accuser stand at his right hand. When he is tried, let him come forth guilty. Let his prayer be counted as sin.

[5 : 54] May his days be few. May another take his office. May his children be fatherless and his wife a widow. May his children wander about and beg, seeking food far from the ruins they inhabit.

May the creditor seize all that he has. may strangers plunder the fruits of his toil. Let there be none to extend kindness to him, nor any to pity his fatherless children.

May his posterity be cut off. May his name be blotted out in the second generation. May the iniquity of his fathers be remembered before the Lord, and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out.

Let them be before the Lord continually that he may cut off the memory of them from the earth. For he did not remember to show kindness, but pursued the poor and needy and the brokenhearted to put them to death.

He loved to curse. Let curses come upon him. He did not delight in blessing. May it be far from him. He clothed himself with cursing as his coat.

[7 : 11] May it soak into his body like water, like oil into his bones. May it be like a garment that he wraps around him, like a belt that he puts on every day.

May this be the reward of my accusers from the Lord, of those who speak ill against my life. But you, O God, my Lord, deal on my behalf for your name's sake, because your steadfast love is good. Deliver me, for I am poor and needy, and my heart is stricken within me. I am gone like a shadow at evening. I am shaken off like a locust.

My knees are weak through fasting. My body has become gaunt with no fat. I am an object of scorn to my accusers.

When they see me, they wipe their heads. Help me, O Lord, my God. Save me according to your steadfast love.

[8 : 22] Let them know that this is your hand. You, O Lord, have done it. Let them curse, but you will bless. They arise and are put to shame, but your servant will be glad.

May my accusers be clothed with dishonor. May they be wrapped in their own shame as in a cloak. With my mouth, I will give thanks to the Lord.

I will praise him in the midst of the throng. For he stands at the right hand of the needy one to save him from those who condemn his soul to death.

That's quite a mouthful. I believe that this psalm, when read in view of the new dispensation, might be summarized as follows.

Ultimately, when believers, when wronged, rather, ultimately, when wronged, the believer should look to Christ for comfort and vindication.

[9 : 51] Ultimately, when wronged, the believer should look to Christ for comfort and vindication. Using the psalm, I have chosen to examine the topic, when life happens, under three distinct headings.

Unbelievable betrayal, betrayal, a natural reaction, and biblical response. Unbelievable betrayal, a natural reaction, how you and I would naturally respond to being betrayed.

And then, we're going to consider number three and finally, what the Bible says, what the Bible tells us. about how we ought to respond.

Let's start now with number one, unbelievable betrayal. After that, we turn to Psalm 109, verses 1 through 5.

David writes strongly about these people who would speak evil about him.

[11 : 15] He writes, be not silent, O God, of my praise. For wicked and deceitful mouths are opened against me, speaking against me with lying tongues.

They encircle me with words of hate and attack me without cause. In return for my love, they accuse me.

But I give myself to prayer, so they reward me evil for good and hatred for my love. And perhaps right now, you are thinking, you know, I have found myself in situations, maybe not exactly like that, but very close to it.

perhaps you say, you know, there were certain times in my office setting when I was as generous to X, Y, Z, but in return, I received quite the opposite.

Or perhaps a neighbor, or perhaps a family member. David says, the wicked and deceitful people have determined that his name ought to be scandalized, that they ought to lie about him without cause.

[12 : 38] He was, as it were, encircled. He was overwhelmed by the things that they were saying about him, the negative things that they were saying about him.

He said in these verses that he had given them no reason whatsoever for the hatred that they were spewing out. And I'm wondering how often you and I come to places in our lives, when in our relationships we say the exact same thing.

why is this happening to me? Why am I at the receiving end of such betrayal, such hatred?

David goes on to say, not only was he not saying anything unkind about these people, but he was demonstrating love and in return for his love, they gave him and showed him anger.

Yet he prayed for them. They rewarded him evil for good and hatred for love. love. But how many of you know it is painful to be hurt by anyone, but it is excruciating to be hurt by someone you love and care about.

[14 : 27] The psalmist actually describes the effect on him in verses 22 through 25.

And I want us to take a look at that so we get a sense of the pain and the agony that David was going through. David writes in these verses, David says that he was affected financially, poor and needy.

He was affected emotionally. He had a broken heart, gone like a shadow in the evening. I suspect he was in bed early.

He was fearful, shaken off like a locust, physically weak knees because of fasting. He had lost weight, was gaunt.

Reputationally, he was the object of scorn. When his accusers saw him, they wagged their heads and turned.

[15 : 48] Don't answer this question, but have you ever been in a place like that? Have you ever been in a place where your name was scandalized when they said things about you?

Perhaps, just perhaps, there was some modicum, there was some bit of truth to what was being said, but it was not entirely correct, or maybe, just maybe, it was entirely correct, but there was no value in treating you the way you were being treated.

When life happens, when things happen to us, David here tells us, David, remember now, David was king.

David is talking about his experience, and David is saying, this is what I went through. Imagine you and me, King David.

But having been the victim of the scandal, one would expect that there would be a natural human reaction, response to what was happening to David.

[17 : 27] This takes me to my point number two. Let's admit it. Our natural response is for us to wish harm to come to those who harm us.

That's a natural. even if just for a little while, even if just for a little while, I want them to experience exactly what they caused me, the pain that they caused me, or they are causing me.

I want them to feel the financial stress, the emotional stress. I want them to have sleepless nights. I want them to know what it means to be alone when I thought this would be a lifetime commitment. I want them to feel the pain and the agony when I am wronged, when someone does something wrong.

I don't want them to just go about having a potty all the time. I want a little bit of pain. David, in verses 6 through 20, David asks the Lord to destroy his enemy, as it were.

[19 : 02] David uses, in this book of Psalms, 24 imprecations. An imprecatory prayer is a prayer in which one asks the Lord to cause evil to fall on someone.

And so David, as it were, asked the Lord, I want 24 bits of evil things to happen to these people who were messing with me.

David was not an easy guy. David said, I want you to do some of these things. I mean, listen to what David says here. David says, I want you to appoint a wicked man against him.

In verse 6, and let an accuser stand at his right hand. When he has tried, let him be found guilty. In verse 8, David says, may his days be few, and let another take his office.

Listen to this one in verse 9. May his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow. May his children wander about and beg, seeking food far from the ruins they inhabit.

[20 : 25] Poetic and very specific. may his creditor seize all that he has. Let there be none to extend kindness to him.

David says in verse 13, may his posterity be cut off. David said, let it stop. May his name be blotted out in the second generation.

May the iniquity of his father say, don't even the sins that his father committed. Lord, I don't want you to forgive them. I don't want you to forgive the sins of his mother. Let them be before the Lord continually, for he did not remember to show kindness to me.

He clothed himself, in verse 18, with cursing as his coat. may it soak into his body like water, like oil into his wounds.

May it be like a garment that he wraps around him. David wants this man, these people to suffer pain because of the agony, because of what he has gone through.

[21 : 57] But how should we as believers regard these evil sayings, these imprecations?

things. We're not told to pray this way for those who mistreat us.

We're not told to do that, certainly not in the New Testament. the imprecatory psalm most quoted in the New Testament, and there are several in the book of psalm, but the one that is most quoted is psalm 69.

And then one examines that psalm and its interplay in the New Testament. One gets a sense of what David was actually doing and how we ought to treat and have regard for this particular psalm. I want us to just consider a couple examples. If we want to look at Romans chapter 11 verses 9 through 11, this is what Paul writes.

[23 : 31] Paul writes, and David says, David, now Paul is quoting Psalm 69, one of the imprecatory psalms.

And Paul writes, and David says, let their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block, and a retribution for them.

Let their eyes be darkened, so that they cannot see and bend their backs forever. Paul does not see the words of David as something personal and vindictive, but rather prophetic.

he sees the words of David as judgment against Israel. He quotes David in this instance as something that he says will happen to the Israelites.

In other instances, we see Jesus using the words of David as well to refer to him on his own self.

[24 : 49] on several occasions, we see Jesus referring to these words as if he were the one actually being mistreated.

He, as if he were the one who was being disregarded and under the weight of all of these curses, as it were.

But we are not to pray in this way.

And I know growing up my grandmother, my great grandmother actually, talked about turning the Bible down and those kinds of things.

I don't know if you guys heard about that. I think the older ones must have. But they talked about things like that and they talked about praying some of these prayers for their enemies.

[25 : 50] But that is not what Scripture teaches us. Instead, we find in the New Testament a clear biblical response.

Nowhere in the New Testament are we told to pray curses on our enemy. In fact, quite the opposite. it. And Brother Troy helped us with one just at the very outset this morning in 1 Peter.

Peter says, listen, don't reward evil for evil. Luke 6, 27 tells us, but I say to you who hear, love your enemies.

Do good to those who hate you. bless those who curse you. Pray for those who abuse you.

Now, that's a hard saying. You and I know that's a hard hard saying. Because you and I know that some of us have gone through some things and some of us are going through some things right now that are really difficult.

[27 : 02] And in fact, we have said to ourselves, you know what, I've done this before. I've forgiven before. I have blessed before.

I have prayed before. I have loved before. And then I've been disappointed again and again and again. And it's painful. It's hard. But this is what we are commanded to do in Scripture.

Love your enemies. And in Romans, Romans 12 tells us, beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it for the wrath of God.

For it is written, vengeance is mine. I will repay, says the Lord. To the contrary, if your enemy is hungry, feed him.

If he is thirsty, give him something to drink. For by so doing, you will heat burning coals on his head. that's what the Scripture says.

[28 : 12] And I want to give you just one other. 1 Peter chapter 2 beginning at verse 19. Peter writes, for this is a gracious thing, when mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly.

For what credit is it when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure. But when you do good and suffer for it, you endure.

This is a gracious thing in the sight of God. What Peter is saying, Peter is saying, listen, if you are beaten justly, he says, and you endure that, he says, okay, big deal.

He says, but if you are beaten unjustly, if you are wrongly accused, and you endure it, then praise to God for that.

That's what Peter is saying to us. But that's what we are called to do. A few moments ago, I told you a little bit about David.

[29 : 23] I said to you that David, reminded us that David was the king of Israel. And these words were penned by David. And how many of you know that David had the authority and the ability to act against these people?

In fact, I want to share a quote with you from David Guzik. This is what he writes. He left vengeance up to God. Yet, we remind ourselves that David refused to act upon these curses. He left vengeance up to God.

This is especially relevant regarding David, who knew what it was to take life with the sword. When David withheld vengeance, it was because he chose to, not because he lacked the opportunity, skill, or courage.

So what is the message to you and to me today? The message to us is that we ought to leave this up to the Lord.

[30 : 41] Leave it up to the Lord. That what we are called to do, we are called to bless our enemies. We are called to pray for them. We are called to love them. And nobody says that that's easy.

Nobody says that we are always going to wake up in the morning wanting to do that. But as we continue reading, examining this psalm, we see in verses 26 through 28, the psalmist says, Help me, O Lord my God.

Save me according to your steadfast love. The psalmist is coming now towards the end of this psalm. How are we, you and I, to respond in the face of difficulties, in the face of being wrong. The psalmist says, Help me, O Lord, pleading to the Lord for help. Save me according to your steadfast love. Let them know that this is your hand.

You, O Lord, have done it. Let them curse, but you will bless. They arise and are put to shame, but your servant will be glad.

[31 : 57] What David is saying to you and to me is that we ought to put it in the hands of the Lord. We ought to put our cases before him, make our cases to him, and watch him work it out, work things out for us.

That's the point that David is making. Let them know that this is your hand. And David is saying to, listen, God, do it in such a way that they know it was not me, but they know it was supernatural. They know it was extraordinary. And sometimes you and I, we can pray just like that. Lord, cause it to be so. Cause the situation to be worked out so that others around us can see your hand in it. David concludes the psalm and we have to hear this. If there's nothing else you hear today, you need to hear these two verses today.

David concludes this psalm with these words in verses 30 and 31. With my mouth I will give great thanks to the Lord.

[33 : 13] I will praise him in the midst of the throne for he stands at the right hand of the needy one to save him from those who condemn his soul to death.

I'm going to read that to you again because I want this to sink in. Remember David here is talking about being scandalized. talking about the impact on himself.

But David writes in verse 30, with my mouth I will give thanks to the Lord. I will praise him in the midst of the throne. For he stands at the right hand of the needy one.

Where does he stand? At the right hand of the needy one to save him from those who condemn his soul to death. The psalmist in these verses offers praise to God.

Notice that he does not say that he is well. David didn't suddenly say in verses 30 and 31 that his circumstance changed. That's not what David said.

[34 : 27] David says he is going to praise the Lord anyhow. David says he praises God in spite of his condition because he's got expectation.

My spirit is broken David says but I'm going to praise the Lord anyhow. my name has been scandalized.

I can hardly sleep at night but I'm going to praise the Lord anyhow because he stands at the right hand of the needy.

My finances are not what they should be but I'm going to praise the Lord anyhow. I've been wronged. I've been beaten down for no just cause.

Weak need David said buckling under but I'm going to praise the Lord as best as I can with tears running down my face.

[35 : 32] I'm going to praise the Lord anyhow. Perhaps you say if this circumstance or that circumstance had been different than I would have been in a different situation.

David says to us, he reminds us today that despite that we can, we ought to praise the Lord anyhow. That's the message for you and I today.

The message for you and I today is that no matter what the circumstance is, no matter what the condition, we can still praise the Lord because he stands at the right hand of the needy.

He is all powerful. You know, as I considered this Psalm of David, of David's, I was so glad that this was not David's only Psalm.

I was happy that it wasn't his only one. I remembered other Psalms, remember other words David talked about never seeing the righteous forsaken and seed begging for bread.

[37 : 02] How the Lord stands with the righteous. In a moment, just before we close, the praise team will come and lead us in a song.

What a friend we have in Jesus. I did a little bit of research and I learned that the song was written by one Joseph Scriven, an Irishman who lived in Canada.

And upon receiving word that his mother, who resided in Ireland, was unwell, he penned a poem and sent it to her.

The poem was titled by him, Pray Without Ceasing. That's the prayer. The poem that he wrote, he titled it, Pray Without Ceasing.

Later, it was made into a song, What a friend we have in Jesus. But isn't it ironic that he would title these words, What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear.

[38 : 27] What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer. And then he thought of it, he thought that the title for these words would be Pray Without Ceasing.

What a privilege we have to pray to a friend. What a friend we have in Jesus. Oh, what peace we often forfeit.

Oh, what needless pain we bear. all because we do not carry everything, everything to God in prayer.

All the pains, all of life's disappointments. No one says that the Christian walk would be easy. It hasn't been easy for me.

Not by a long shot. Not by a long shot. And I suspect it hasn't been easy for you. Let us pray.

[39 : 29] Lord, indeed, what a friend we have in Jesus. Lord, help us to take those words to heart.

Help cause those words to mean something to us in practical terms, Lord. All our sins and all our griefs to bear.

what a privilege, Lord, we have to carry everything to you in prayer. God, enable us to carry everything to you in prayer. Everything, Lord, whatever it is, all of the disappointments, all of the hurts, all of the pains, Lord, enable us to do that.

In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen. Amen. I'd like you to please stand as we sing what a friend we have in Jesus.

And what a friend we have in Jesus. And all our sins and griefs to bear.

[40 : 43] And what a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer.

And thought what peace be up and for Oh