

# A Fierce Enemy Met by a Faithful God

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[ 0 : 00 ] If your Bible's turned to Psalm chapter, the 129th Psalm, the 129th Psalm, and while you're turning there, if I could tell you a story, Second World War, Battle of Bastogne, it's incredible, a lot of people have written about it, shows been made about it, all sorts of great things like that.

The 101st Airborne had an issue. They were trained in Dacota, Georgia, you know, from here it makes me happy, but they were trained here, and they were really close together, the original guys, everyone who went to boot camp together, but as war goes on, there's casualties, and there's losses, and so on and so forth, but you get replacements.

And what's neat about military structure is you'll have a guy who's called your first sergeant or your master sergeant. He's not a commissioned officer, but he's been there the longest, knows this stuff, battle hard and battle tested.

What ended up happening was, is the Easy Company and the 101st fought and fought and fought, they begin to lose lieutenants, lose lieutenants, lose lieutenants, the officers. Well, what the headquarters decides to do is they send them a batch of new lieutenants, who actually graduated from West Point on June 6, 1944, D-Day, when these guys were jumping out of planes.

I think it's ironic, they send them there, and they show up, these lieutenants' uniforms are nice, fresh, crisp, and green. These soldiers, they are wet, their uniforms are kind of brown at this point, they are battle-hardened and seasoned, but they've been there a lot longer, they're just not commissioned, that's the only difference.

[ 1 : 14 ] The lieutenants begin to walk through and point out all the things he doesn't like. He says, he says, this machine gun's mounted the wrong way, you couldn't be smoking on the line, this, this, this, this, helmets too shiny, so on and so forth. The master sergeant looks at him in frustration one day and says, sir, kind of a joke, he's older than the guy, been in more battles than the guy, but he says, sir, this machine gun shot yesterday, it's shooting today, I know it's killed today, and I'm confident that it's going to kill tomorrow.

That's just a way of saying, when something's battle-tested and battle-hardened has been proven, it's easy to trust it when the war starts. And in the same way, a lot of times we find ourselves in a battle or an issue or a struggle, it's hard to know if God's going to pull through for us, or it's easy to doubt it.

If I can tell you, if he took care of us yesterday, he's taking care of us today, there's a good chance he's going to take care of us tomorrow, as Hebrews 13:5 helps illustrate. Psalm 129 is a song of a sense.

It's unattributed in its authorship, falls in about 10 psalms of these pilgrim psalms that don't have an author that is attributed to it, but we do know that God inspired it. It was sung and practiced by God's people as they traveled to Jerusalem to worship is what people believe.

And maybe you found yourself in a similar situation to the psalm writer here. Have you ever found yourself in a battle or an issue or something going on that just seems to be unrelenting? You can almost call this like a chronic battle, a war of attrition, a fight after fight after fight after fight, bad phone call after bad phone call after bad phone call, job after job per se, worry after worry, illness after illness, you just can't get healthy.

[ 2 : 44 ]     Bad news after bad news. Maybe it's thought after thought or it's bill after bill or whatever it might be. Issue after issue. You just seems like you can't catch a break. You get so much bad news.

If you answer yes to this one that makes you human and two that puts you in the same category as the children of Israel, specifically in this psalm. So song of decrees. Let's go ahead and read. Many a times they afflicted me from my youth.

May Israel now say, verse two, many a time they afflicted me from my youth, yet they have not prevailed against me. Verse three, the plowers plowed upon my back. They made long their furrows. We're going to say that they're going through it.

It's real bad. It's the psalmist emphasizes this twice. Many a time, many a time says it twice from my youth, from my youth. What have they done? They've afflicted the psalmist. It gets so bad. Look at what happens in verse number three.

Look at the imagery in the poetry is here. The plowers plowed upon my back. They made long their furrows. That is a very picturesque, grotesque way of saying it was like I was the ground and I was laying there and they ran a plow over my back.

[ 3 : 43 ]     There's not good. But in all this, look at what look at what the psalmist writes in verse number four. The Lord is righteous. He has cut us under the cords of the wicked. Let them that be confounded and turn back the hate Zion.

Let them be as the grass upon the house, which withereth the four, it groweth up. Wherewith the mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom. Neither do they say, neither when they go by, which they say the blessing of the Lord be upon you.

We bless you in the name of the Lord. It's a psalm that we find prayer in. We see pain in. We see hope in. And I think as we go throughout our battles, maybe the consistent ones, the ones that seem like there's no end in sight, no light at the end of the tunnel.

But I can tell you, let's look at verse four. The Lord is righteous and he has cut us under the cords of the wicked. God wins. He's powerful. He'll make it right. And he is righteous.

Let's go, Lord, in prayer. Father, thank you for your goodness and mercy. Thank you for the privilege we have to study your word this evening. Lord, I pray that you would help us learn from your word and apply your word, Lord. I pray that you'd help us live out its truths.

[ 4 : 44 ]     God, I'm thankful that you are righteous even when our enemy and our adversary is not righteous, when the trials are bad. I'm thankful that you're consistent and you're faithful and you're trusted and we can count on you. And all we go through, Lord, I pray that you bless the teaching and reading of your word.

In the name I pray, amen. Um, yeah, let's, let's go and jump in here. The first thing is, let's look at verses number one and two. First thing we notice about the enemy here is notice about this battle or this illustration the psalmist is using.

First thing is look at it says the, the enemy here is they many a time you read it. It's not a very specific enemy. If a verse number two is going to let us know this is about the children of Israel. It says, let the children of Israel say that gives us a pretty good hint as a who's talking here.

But as we read this, he says many of times they have. Let's let us know that it's a, it's a plural thing. It's more than one battle, several battles in a very literal way. Israel had quite a lot of enemies.

You ever read like the first five books of the Bible. You see the Egyptians, the Canaanites, Philistines, Syrians, Assyrians, the Edomites. You see a lot of different people. They had to fight and who tried to afflict them. You read the rest of scripture.

[ 5 : 42 ] You see, it may be the Edomites. You see, it may be the Romans. It may be the Babylonians. There's over and over and over and over again. Israel as a nation has been afflicted. They've been hurt. They've been harmed.

They make the statement twice. Notice they say they many a time. We need to realize the fight is real. Realize the reality of the enemy. For Israel, the enemy was quite literally a guy coming down the street with a sword in a very real way.

And I think a lot of times in church circles or Christian circles, this idea of a spiritual battle may be overstated or said too much, but it's a very real thing. Look at what the Bible says in Ephesians 6, 12.

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers and darkness of the world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. If I can tell you, child of God, we too are in a battle. We too are in a war.

It may not be the same kind of war that they dealt with, with somebody literally trying to come over your gate and hurt you. But in a very real way, we are in a spiritual battle with real enemies, with real consequences, with real things at stake here.

[ 6 : 40 ] We're in a real battle. There's real realities of this. And Ephesians 6, 12 lets us know we wrestle not against flesh and blood. It's not against people. It's a spiritual battle. That's the battle we go through. We need to realize our enemy is real.

Look what the Bible is going to tell us in Hebrews 12, 4 about this battle we are in. For you have not resisted unto blood, striving against sin. Again, it's a spiritual battle. It's not people against people. It's not flesh against flesh, but it is a spiritual battle.

We need to realize that with a whole lot of enemies. I think it's great how the psalm says they, and it says many a time. It's a whole lot of different enemies, a whole lot of different battles. In a very similar way, we have a whole lot of enemies ourselves.

We live in a sinful world. As James 4 forward tells us, You adulterers and adulterers, know ye not that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is an enemy of God. The world is our enemy, not like people out in the world, but the world is systems.

And everything that is set up against God is an direct enmity and contradiction of God. We live in a sinful world with the sinful will. Look what the Bible reads in 1 Peter 2, 11. Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.

[ 7 : 46 ] So we've seen over, we've seen twice now that our enemies, we've got the world, the world and its system set up against God. Sinful lust and desire is the heart. But then there's also the devil's working, Satan's working. Look what the Bible reads in 1 Peter 5, 8.

Be sober, be vigilant because your adversary, the devil, like a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour. There's three enemies right there. You've got sinful desire, sinful world, Satan's working.

Those are three enemies right there who are very real, very active, who can be subtle and sneaky at times, but we're warned, they are our enemies. 1 Peter 5, 8 calls us to be vigilant, be sober. Watch out for this, guys.

Bad news. And those are listed as our enemies. What do they want to do? Devour. The wages of sin is death. The world is against God. There's several things here with real wages at stake.

We have a real enemy. And I think a lot of times, like Israel, we can say, I don't know how many times or I don't know who, that's kind of what they're saying here, but in a very real way, plenty of enemies. And I think that looks different for all of us.

[ 8 : 40 ] Maybe it's different thoughts that are quite intrusive and they tend to, they're against God, against his truth. Maybe there's different people in your life who consistently come through and they push you, push you towards doing wrong.

Maybe it's different temptations and battles and stresses and struggles we go through. Whatever it might be, there's plenty of enemies out there and we need to remember to stay sober and to stay vigilant because we're in a real battle with real stakes and real consequences.

Just like Israel have plenty of enemies, children of God and the spiritual battle, there are real enemies here. But not just that, we see their enemies. But then we're going to look at the endurance of the enemies. Look what the Bible says here in verse number one and two.

Many times they afflicted me from my youth. Many times they afflicted me from my youth. Again, these battles are long term. They're not short term. They're not just skirmish. You can almost call them wars in and of themselves based on how long they last.

Israel had literally been attacked from their youth. I think that's a very important spot to stop. In a very literal way, again, for Israel's history, they were attacked from their youth. Look what the Bible reads in Hosea 2.15.

[ 9 : 39 ] And I will give her vineyards from thence in the valley of Acor for a door of hope. And she shall sing there as in the days of her youth and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt. So in a very real way, Israel's youth is compared to when they were in Egypt, when they were there.

And notice the way and the manner of attack mentioned here. I think it's kind of underhanded. The enemy doesn't fight fair. Who fights a youth? I mean, that's the equivalent of going outside and fighting a kid. And that's what they're saying happened here many a time from their youth.

As youth, a point of vulnerability, weakness, inexperience. And that's the way the enemy fights. Unfairly, underhanded, throws sand, that kind of thing. Notice that it also says when they were in Egypt.

Egypt was a place they went to for a break. A place they went to when they were hungry, famished, looking for something. And that place they went to for a break became a place of bondage, a place of slavery. And in a very real way, the enemy fights like that, underhanded.

The place they went to looking for a small break became a place of bondage. That's an excellent warning for us. This enemy of ours does not play fair. They don't fight on level ground. They don't fight eye to eye. It's subtly, sneaky, as our enemies tend to be.

[ 10 : 42 ] And notice it also says from my youth. This indicates the length to the battle as well. It would indicate the battle was from that time. It just didn't start and stop or didn't come and go. But it says from my length.

It's a war of attrition, a war seeming to never end. It's a pretty, pretty scary thing. So there's a lot of enemies fighting a really long battle, a war that's never going to end. Seems never ending.

But then not just that. This battle, this war was also, as the Bible would say, it was excruciating. Notice here in verse number one, it says, Many a time they have afflicted me. Affliction is not a good thing. In this sense, it literally means to cause harm to.

And that is what their enemies have done. A lot of times, my enemies from the time I was young have caused me a lot of harm. This pain was excruciating. War hurts. And in the spiritual war we're in, there may be real pain.

First thing is, sin really hurts. Genesis chapter three, where it was perfect in chapter two. Sin comes in with things like sorrow, worry, stress, anxiety. All the pain in life comes in the third chapter of Genesis.

- [ 11 : 37 ] Sin can bring a heavy heart. According to Proverbs 12, 25, heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop. Maybe it's just bad news or worry or stress, whatever it is. It makes the heart stoop. Maybe sometimes in the spiritual war, in just trying to do the right thing, we can see that there's some hurt there.

Look what the Bible reads in Hebrews 11, 25, and 26. They're talking about Moses. It's choosing rather to suffer the affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season. They seem in the reproach of Christ greater than the riches of Egypt for your respect and the recompense of the reward.

Doing the right thing sometimes hurts. Maybe it's sin and the consequences of sin that hurts. Maybe it's a heavy heart because of bad news stresses the worries of this world, the worries of life that would also cause pain. It's all the sadness we see about this enemy here.

It almost looks kind of hopeless, right? You get bad news after bad news, thing after thing, battle after battle. You have a real enemy. The real enemy here causes pain.

It hurts. It's excruciating. And then this enemy endures in all this sadness and struggle. The question of can we even win seems very logical. It seems like it's the next great question to ask. And the answer to this question is addressed in the latter part of verse number two.

- [ 12 : 45 ] Look what the Bible says. Many of the time they afflicted me from my youth, yet they have not prevailed against me. I think that's great. It's this part about the odds being against them and us and so much is giving credit for the victory so much easier.

When you see a team that is outmatched and a champion comes on and the team starts winning, there's no doubt as to who the victor or who the credit goes to. I think in a very real way, these NBA finals that just ended, there's one guy who's getting all the credit because he did all the winning.

In a much larger, much more real way, when the Lord brings the victory and the Lord wins, he gets all the credit because it is undeniable that it was him that did it. Now, the great part about these odds being so stacked is that when it happens, God gets all the credit.

As a famous theologian named Captain Steve Rogers once said, weak men know the value of real strength. And the good part about being a child of God is when he gives us strength, we are then able to notice it. Where's this victory from?

As we come to find out, it's from the Lord. Let's look at what the Bible says here. Verse number four, This title may seem small, saying the Lord, but in a very real way, it's a great title to start with.

- [ 13 : 51 ] Israel has survived every crisis. There was a single, all-sufficient explanation. The Lord is righteous. That is a wonderful thing to say after the battle ends or after he delivers you. The Lord is righteous.

It almost seems kind of paradoxical because you don't think of winning a battle and righteousness is going hand in hand. But amazingly, when God does it, you can say he is righteous and he has won.

And we're going to look at where this victory came from. We have a real enemy, real consequences, real thing. He's real tough, endures a lot. But where is victory found? The faithful one is righteous. And that's what they're going to remind us of here first.

First thing is we see this victory in the title. You see Psalm 129, verse number four. It starts with the Lord. That's where the victory came from. That's where the wind came from. That's where the power came from. And it was from the Lord.

This title here implies ruler. It can seem small, but it's very important. It's more than just God's first name or more than God's government name or more than just something they put there. It has a real meaning behind this.

[ 14 : 45 ] Notice when God comes to Moses in Exodus chapter number six, that he comes using this title, the Lord. He comes using this title, this title inferring I'm a deliverer. I'm all powerful. I can help you. Exodus 6, 2 and 3 is going to say this.

God spake unto Moses and said unto him, I am the Lord. And I appeared unto Abraham and Isaac by the name of God Almighty. By the name Jehovah, I was not known unto him. Jehovah, the word behind Lord here.

He says that when he comes to deliver. Our Lord is a deliverer. And that's the statement they make here. Deliverance is found in the Lord. He's a deliverer. He's a covenant keeper. He keeps his promises.

And that ought to give us hope. If God delivered them, then we watch him deliver them all through the Bible in our very own battles. Now we can trust that he will deliver us. God introduced himself as a deliverer.

We can rest in this title of God. Let's look at some other uses of this. Psalm 97, 9 is going to say this. For thou, O Lord, art high above all the earth. Thou art exalted above all gods.

[ 15 : 39 ] The Lord God, Jehovah, he is high above all other gods. He is above them all. He's the most powerful. Look what the Bible reads in Psalm 1 and 2, verse number 12. But thou, O Lord, shall endure forever that word Jehovah again in remembrance of all generations.

He's all powerful. He's everlasting. That'll give us a lot of hope because that is the Lord we serve. So the first thing we see about this victory is, O Lord. That's a good thing there. It's a good title for us.

God is the Lord. He is Jehovah, all powerful deliverer. He really wins victories from the Lord. But not just that. They just don't give him the title Lord. Let's look at verse number four. The Lord is righteous.

Righteousness and winning wars don't seem like they align too often, but it's amazing how God does it. The Lord is righteous. God promised to preserve his covenant people. So God made a promise with them, said, I'm going to keep it, said, I'm going to deliver it.

And if the Lord did not deliver them and take care of them, those promises could have never come to fruition. Makes his promise, he's going to keep them. Makes his promise, he's going to take care of them. And he sees it through. He made his promise to preserve his covenant people of Israel.

[ 16 : 37 ] And he's faithful in delivering them. This is a demonstration of his righteousness. The fact that the Lord is righteous means that he will keep his promises, which is great. Because Christians, child of God, believers, he has made promises to us too.

And if we've seen him keep his promise, he's got a perfect credit score, a perfect track record. He's always going to keep his promise. We can take heart in this. He is a promise keeper. Look what the Bible reads in Philippians 1.6. Being confident in this very thing.

He that which hath begun a good work and you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. We can know that our God's going to keep his promises. When the odds seem insurmountable, seems like the attack's coming from all directions, there's no way out.

One thing is confident at the end of the day. God's going to keep his promises. He's going to see it come through. He's going to make it come to pass. How? We may not know, but we can trust this. He is a promise keeper. He is righteous. He is just.

And no matter how bad it may seem, that never changes. He's always righteous. He's going to make it. He's going to make it come to pass. Look what the Bible reads in 1 Thessalonians chapter number 5, verse 24. Faithful is he that calleth you and who will also do it.

[ 17 : 37 ] The God who saved us and called us and leads us into doing great things for him. He is faithful. He's going to do it. We can trust that. That's the promise we can take to the bank. No matter how bad it gets.

No matter how insurmountable it looks. No matter how many enemies there are. No matter how excruciating it may be. No matter the pain that's there. We can trust this. The Lord, deliverer, is righteous. He's going to keep his promises.

He's going to do what he said he's going to do. And he's going to make it. He's going to do it. He's righteous. He's going to keep his promise. He's not lying to you. He's going to keep his promise. We can take heart in the fact that he is righteous.

It's a great God we serve. But not just that. We see the Lord is righteous. We see the Lord is real. He's the real ruler. But he's also the rescuer. He does all the work here too. Let's continue to look at verse number 4.

The Lord is righteous. We see he's delivered. We see he's righteous. But also notice here. He's doing all of the work. The Lord is righteous. And that wasn't, wasn't, was, or will, or isn't righteous.

[ 18 : 32 ] It says he is righteous. Present tense. He is righteous. But notice what he did. He has cut, he has cut asunder the cords of the wicked. The Lord's done everything here. He was the deliverer. He is righteous.

And then he does the delivering. In fact, notice what it says. It says he did it. Not us. Not people. Not religion. But it was God himself who did the delivering there. This deliverance was totally of God. For Israel, they can say the deliverance was quite totally of God.

And in the stories mentioned here with the Exodus, when God made the seas part, it was the Lord. When God took care of them in the promised land, it was the Lord. When God brings victory after victory in the Bible, we see it was the Lord.

And I think a lot of times in life, the Lord provides for us and he delivers for us and he does something. But a lot of times you have credit issues. He deserves all the credit and all the praise and the glory for doing it. It is the Lord who's done it.

Notice it says he hath cut. Not us. Not programs. Not church attendance. Whatever that might be. It is God who's cut it. And that ought to give us hope. It's the Lord who's doing all the work. Not us.

[ 19 : 28 ] Not people. Not systems. It is God who's doing all the work. And this deliverance is totally of God. For Israel, that would be the Lord bringing victory in a very literal way. Like God, yeah, he beat the bad guys. That's great. But for us today, as children of God in 21st century, that is this.

It'd be the Lord Jesus bringing victory in our lives. Clause 215 is going to say this about what the Lord Jesus did. And having explored principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

In a very real way, in this spiritual war we were fighting, the spiritual war we're battling in, Jesus has already won it. He says he's triumphed over them openly. He's made a show of them. He has beat them down.

He has won. In a very real way, the Lord is our source of victory. He is why we win. He is there. And he is the all-powerful. And he wins it all. Jesus has won it all. He has brought victory.

In the spiritual battle we're in, the spiritual warfare we're in, we can leave resting assured that Jesus brings the victory. Look what the Bible says in John 16, 30. This is Jesus talking about himself. These things have I spoken unto you, that you might have peace.

[ 20 : 26 ] In the world you shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer. Why? I have overcome the world. The enemies we deal with in the spiritual battle, Jesus has already overcome them. He has won.

He's victorious. And we get to live in that victory as children of God, trusting in him. We have a, we, we're set up to win. It's incredible. The Lord's on our side. No matter how bad the battle seems, it can seem overwhelming at times when it seems like everything's just falling down around you.

We can trust that God is righteous. We can trust that he's the good ruler. We can trust that there's victory in him. We can trust that he is the deliverer. He's a rescuer. He does all the work. One in a very real way in salvation.

We can't help ourselves. We can't save ourselves. There's nothing we can do. He did all the work on the cross that says, show us the works of God, the works of the works of God, that you would believe on the gospel. You would trust, trust the Lord. He's done all the work, but also as Christians and children of God, we walk by faith.

We walk dependent on him. We walk trusting him in a very real way. He is the deliverer. He brings the victory. It's after this claim and statement that the psalmist issues almost a foreboding hope, something that they were hoping for and looking for to happen to these enemies.

[ 21 : 30 ] So we've seen the enemies really real, really exist in a different for all of us, whether it's workplace things, things in the home, fighting, conflict, stress, heart problems, sin, whatever it is.

We have a real enemy with real consequences and a real fallout. We're in a real spiritual war. But aren't you think we have a real faithful God? He's a ruler. He's righteous. He brings victory.

Jesus wins everything. He is overcome. Notice God did it. We can trust him and trust that he's did it. And if he did it yesterday, he's doing it today. We can trust he's going to do it tomorrow. And it's after this claim here, the psalmist kind of changes gears.

We see the psalmist somewhat shifts focus. He's going to change things here because earlier up into this point, he's been talking about what he's been through, what he's gone through, all the things that have happened to the psalmist as a nation, talking about what they've done to him, talks about God being righteous, how God has delivered them and taken care of them, rehearses some of that.

But then if you notice in verse number five, he then kind of changes gears. It's disputed as to if the psalmist is praying here, as if he's speaking forebodingly, issuing like an omen, like this is the end of them.

[ 22 : 35 ] This is what's going to happen. But we can say this. This is true in the context of the rest of scripture. Let's read this. Notice that the audience this is spoken over is the first thing is it was spoken over those against Zion.

So these spiritual enemies here, these people, we'd be in the battle with these things that are set up against God. Notice that it's spoken over the things which are against Zion. Let's look at verse number five. Let them all be confounded and turned about.

Who? That hate Zion. That's a really good question. I grew up wanting to know this. What in the world is Zion? It's all over the Bible. What is a solid definition of Zion? In a literal sense, it'd be a location near the old city of Jerusalem.

But in the Bible, it comes to signify itself as the eschatological hope of God's dwelling with his people. Temple mounts there. It carries a lot of significance. The Lord is going to rule and reign out of Zion. It matters a lot.

Zion's a really important place. You think of the center of worship, the place where God is, the place where God's going to dwell. Think of it as the good spot. Zion's a great thing. It comes to have a lot of great significance.



[ 23 : 34 ] Look at what the Bible says in Isaiah chapter eight, verse number 18. Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth where? In Mount Zion.

Psalms 76, verse two. In Salem is also a tabernacle and his dwelling place is in Zion. It's a great place. And notice there are the systems here, the enemies here, the things that we're fighting against. They don't like Zion, which gives us a really good indicator as to what kind of enemies we have.

They don't like God. The things that are enemies are against God. The things that are enemies don't like where God is, where God dwells, where God's working. Those are the enemies there. And the psalmist is speaking this, speaking this over them.

Notice he says this flight. He says, let them be ashamed, confounded and turn back. In reading this, you kind of read it. You're like, man, Mr. Psalmist, why are you saying this about them? This is kind of, it's kind of mean, but in a very real way, he's praying, God, turn back the bad guys from Zion, turn back their armies from Zion, turn back the people who are against you, who hate you.

This prayer that the wickedness and plans of the enemies won't work. He's praying this, Lord, turn their plans inside out. Lord, turn them around. Lord, please fix this. Make this right. God, send them back the way they came.

[ 24 : 39 ] And I think as Christians and believers that we can pray the same exact thing as we go through our own battles and our own struggles. Lord, this looks really bad right now, but I need you to take what the enemy is meant for evil. I need you to bring some good out of the sword.

I need you to change this. God, I know this looks defeated and this looks bad and there's no way out of the sword, but I'm going to trust you. I need you to bring victory in this. Lord, I am too weak to deal with this thing by myself.

I need your strength. I need your power. I need you to provide and take care of me. And he can do the impossible and what looks seemingly impossible or seemingly he can do the possible looks seemingly impossible.

Look at what Mary prays in Luke chapter one, verse number 72. She says this about the Lord to perform the mercy promised our fathers and remember his holy covenant to the earth which you swear of our father Abraham that he would grant unto us that we being delivered out of the hand of enemies might serve him without fear.

God does the impossible consistently over and over and looking back at how he's done it. We can take hope of it now. And this is kind of what the psalmist prays. He says, Lord, break their purposes. I think as we go throughout our own spiritual bodies, we can pray the exact same thing.

[ 25 : 40 ] Lord, fix this. Lord, make this right. Lord, turn this around. Lord, get me out of here. God, I need you. Help me. That's what the psalmist prays. He prays that they have a flight. But then he also noticed what else he speaks of here.

He says fruitlessness. Let's look at verse number six. Let them be as a grass upon the housetops, which withereth before it groweth up. Back then houses made of mud, dirt, sand, those kind of things there.

A lot of times somehow grass or seeds would end up on the rooftop of the houses. The soil there is not super shallow. You guys ever seen grass trying to grow in a gutter? You can think of the same exact thing. As soon as the sun starts to come out, grass is baked, falls right over.

It's good for nothing. And the psalmist issues a very real decree. He says, let them be as the grass on the rooftops. He says, let them be fruitless. In a very real way, anything that's against God and is devoid of God is ultimately fruitless.

There's no real harvest to it. There's no real profit to it. There's no real sustenance to it. You can't really use it for anything. The only things that matter are things that are done for the Lord, the things that the Lord does. Tony Evans says that the things that matter the most have eternal significance.

[ 26 : 45 ] In a very real way, things that are against God have no eternal significance. They don't last. They don't matter. Like grass will wither, so will everything that is against God. Evil, sin, wickedness will all be destroyed.

The things in our life that are unto God are also fruitless. This is a great reminder. Yes, those enemies and wickedness and evil things will cease to exist one day. How many things do we have in our life that are not for the Lord?

As Andrew taught, we're trying to gain the world. Things that won't matter. Things that won't last. Ultimately, they're fruitless. There's no real sustenance or goodness found in them. Look at what he says in verse number seven, whether the mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom.

When it comes harvest time, the harvester is not like, oh man, I can't wait to get that withered grass off of the roof. It's not what he's saying because it's good for nothing. It doesn't matter. It doesn't help. The things in the life that are anti-God are ultimately, they're pretty fruitless.

But notice the psalmist also prays something else. He says this in verse number eight. He says verse seven, wherewith let the mower that fills his hand, nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom, and then in verse number eight, neither do they which go by say the blessing of the Lord be upon you.

[ 27 : 50 ] We bless you in the name of the Lord. So he prays it. It's almost, it's not comical, but it can seem kind of funny. God, I'm praying that when people see them, they don't say God bless you. That's essentially what he's saying here. He's saying, I'm praying that when people see them, that they say they don't issue any good words to them, they say any blessings to them.

They just let them be. Now, it's kind of, what's going on with that? The psalmist prayed that these enemies of God would not enjoy the blessing of the Lord upon them. And his Bible, as with the whole knowledge of scripture in the Bible here, we know that those who are against God do not enjoy the blessing of God on them in a lasting matter.

He prayed that the pleasant picture of happy harvest work that we see in Ruth chapter two, verse four, would never be fulfilled for these enemies of Israel. Ruth had a blessed harvest. You know, she kind of went out there and Boaz was throwing everything down.

That's a very blessed harvest. And the psalmist says, I pray that it's not like that for you guys. I pray that it is hard. It is difficult. You do not find the blessing. And notice that he says, and when they walk by, they won't say, we bless you in the name of the Lord.

This blessing of God is the greatest thing that any human in life can enjoy. God's blessings are amazing. Giving goodness to every aspect of life. The psalmist prayed that none of this goodness would be given to those who hated Jerusalem, Israel, and Zion.

[ 28 : 59 ] And as we go further in our Bible, we know that sin and being against God, it does break blessing, which is also known as a curse. First, Galatians 3.10 is going to read this. For as many as are of the works of the law are under a curse, for it is written, curse is everyone that continueth not, and all the things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

Sin is a curse. Sin is not good. It's terrible. It brings no happiness, no joy, no fruitfulness. It breaks blessings. And that's ultimately what's stated here in Galatians chapter 3, verse 10.

So when the psalmist writes this and issues this, he's praying it happens, and it ultimately does. Sin does not bring blessedness. Sin brings cursing. Sin does not help. But the excellent part for the believer, the child of God, when we have the whole Bible, God finishes this picture.

In Galatians 3.13, we find out that Christ has broken this curse. Look at what he says. Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. For it is written, curse is everyone that hangeth on the tree, that the blessedness of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

That curse, those sins, the battle, the bad stuff about sin. Jesus came to this life, the Son of God, died on the cross. The very Son of God died on the cross, dying that I should have died.

[ 30 : 09 ] And so that way, God could treat us like sons. He treated his son like he should have treated me, and he treats me like he should have treated his son. It was a great exchange there. And Jesus, in doing so, breaks the curse of sin. And that's the story that we see in this psalm.

First thing we can take note of as we go back through this psalm is we're in a real battle. We've got a real war. And it looks different for all of us, whether it be coworkers, conflict, stress, that email, that feeling you get in your heart when you get some bad news, whatever it is, I think it all hits us in different ways.

We're in a very real battle. The fact that you're in a battle doesn't make you any less loved by God. It makes you human as well. We're in a real battle with real stakes and real consequences.

The fight is real. One of the most dangerous places to be is to be in a war zone and not know you're in a war zone. And as children of God, we need to wake up to the reality we are in a real battle with real stakes and real consequences.

Let us leave the night realizing we're in a real war. The enemy does not like us. They do not play fair. They do not want us to win. This enemy being the world, the devil, sin. The enemy does not play fair. They attack from the spot of a youth.

[ 31 : 09 ] The enemy is persistent and will not quit. And this war, the faithful one is righteous. We can trust him to deliver us and take care of us and to be there for us and to help us and to give us victory in this because God wins always.

And as we serve him, he brings victory. The Lord is the ruler. He is a righteous one. And he is a rescuer. He brings all deliverance. Not us. Not trying to white knuckle it. Not trying to fight it out.

But in trusting him, trusting his word, seeking his guidance and faith through him, we can have victory in this battle. But notice also, at the end of this, the foreboding omen, not a prayer statement made over the people who are against God.

First thing is, anything that's against God is ultimately fruitless. I think that looks different for all of us. Maybe it means when you get home, it's leading an app, having some conversations, getting rid of some things, whatever that might be. Anything that's against the Lord is ultimately fruitless.

It doesn't add any real eternal value. It's also a fight we're in. It's fruitless. The end of it is brokenness. And no, it doesn't last. And then also, it just leads to famine.

[ 32 : 13 ] I just, my iPad just totally changed pages on me. We'll continue here. The iPad, it just leads, it just leads to famine. It doesn't help. And the psalmist prayed that, he prayed that, he prayed that over them.

They won't enjoy the blessing of the Lord, those things that are against God. As we go into our life, make sure we put the Lord first. Make sure we trust him. Make sure we seek him. Make sure we follow him. Do what he would have us to do. Because anything that's not is fruitless.

This psalm, although short and although seems like it's cut up in subject matter, is a great reminder for us in this pilgrim journey. Seek him. Trust him. When the battle's intense, call upon him.

Lean upon him. Depend upon him. Because in him there is victory. And without him there is just total defeat. Fruitlessness, famine, there's no winning. And the psalmist here prays, let them turn back from it.

Let them leave it. And in our life, whatever that might be that's against God, one, I pray that we leave it. I pray that we seek him totally. Seek him wholly. Trust him. And depend upon him. Let's go, Lord, in prayer. Father, thank you for goodness and mercy.

[ 33 : 10 ] Thank you for the opportunity you give us to study your word. Lord, I pray for us in this room tonight. Lord, anything that we have in our life that's against you. When the battle seems like we just can't win it, it's overwhelming, Lord.

Help us leave trusting you, Lord. Depending upon you. Leaning on you, Lord. Trusting your word. Lord, God, I'm thankful that you win and you bring victory. Lord, I pray that you help us live a life and live a life of faith, trusting that.

God, I pray for all my friends in here as we go out into our life, Lord, when the battle hits, we learn to depend upon you. God, help us be people who are wholly dependent and trusting in you, Father. In your name I pray. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.