

S.N. April 16, 78 A.M.
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HANDLING FALSE ACCUSATIONS

Psalm 109

We are faced here with a common problem which all have experienced. No doubt there is not a single individual listening to me who has not at one time in your life has been unjustly accused, or wrongfully treated.

You may have been set upon by those who attempted to destory you. Yet, without a cause.

It is always a puzzling thing in life, and perhaps no one can give the answer to it. Why is an individual often ready to believe the person he thinks to be the biggest liar or gossip in the community.

Slander and accusation is a terrible thing. There are some tests people give. Is it the truth. Is it fair to all concerned. Will it build good will and better friendship. And fourth, will it be beneficial to all concerned. By using such tests we could do away with a great deal of slander and false accusations.

Now we should not think that this is strange language here, in the book of Psalms because David takes this right out of his life. It is difficult today to tell all of the experiences that he had about being falsely accused.

In laying the foundation for what we want to say, and we will try to say it in three words--ammunition, V. 1-5. Apostasy, V. 6-20. Anchorage, V. 21-30. In the foundation, I want to first give you three or four incidents in which David was falsely accused.

Let me list for you first of all these names. We have not time to go through

all the Bible and to give you the details of what happened.

First, Shimei. 2 Sam. 16:5-6, V. 12-13. It is an interesting story how David and his men went along, and this man falsely accused David throwing stones and dust at his mighty men.

Saul. I Sam. 18:10, 11. David was falsely accused by the king. And on this occasion he cast his javelin at him. He sought to kill David. And there were several experiences in which Saul falsely accused him.

Doeg. Is another man mentioned here in the Scriptures I Sam. 21. I Sam. 22:9, 18-23 tells about Doeg. He was present when Ahimelech, the priest, gave food to David when he was weak. And the king was informed by this enemy. This man was present when the food was given. He immediately went and told King Saul and King Saul brought in the priest and had them killed. And Abiathar escaped. And fled to David. And David said, you abide with me for he that seeketh my life, seeketh thy life.

So this was an enemy for him.

Then Ahithophel - 2 Sam. 17:2. This man was a man who chose Absalom that while David was weak that he would get together a group and would go and smite the king.

Nabal. The husband of Abigail. I Sam. 25. David had such an experience, we are told something about the record there. And it was something that he was falsely accused of. So this man with all of these problems facing him, what was he to do.

Really, what could he do. How would he handle it.

I. First, AMMUNITION. V. 2-3-4-5. He talks about the ammunition they used to accuse him. These unprincipled people brought their abuse and their slander.

In V. 2, they were deceitful with their mouth. For wicked and deceitful mouths are open against me. He was being attack by people and obviously they were saying, he is guilty of this or that. Now David said they were deceitful and they were wicked. They are determined upon evil and they do not say what they say about me, or what they do to destroy me.

V. 2 - Lying tongue. They speak against me with a lying tongue. Some of you have had such an experience. Some of you have been unjustly accused by someone who deliberately sought to (slander) you. They have talked about your character, they have tried to ruin your reputation.

He says, V. 3, without cause. They do this - they are wholly unjustified. Now the Psalmist here, we take him to be (an honest man). He sees absolutely no reason for this ammunition, of slander being used against him. And they are evicting him and upsetting him.

V. 4-5, He says, that they have beset me with their hatred and they have returned unto me evil for good. I tried to remedy the situation but it is humanly hopeless.

David said I gave back a soft answer to turn away wrath. I have tried this on them. I have prayed for them and they have despitefully used him.

He said I have tried to love those that have persecuted me, and I have tried to do good toward them. And the enemies did not cease their attack. They were malicious, they were vicious, and they were fierce. Not knowing what to do next, it sounds like David would just have to give up somehow.

In the sermon on the mount it says, if one shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn the other cheek.

And some people say, oh no, let him have it. Their ammunition was certainly something terrific.

When you think about sarcasm and slander, it is really tragic. A young soldier was wounded and broken and was in the hospital. He had splints, and he had bloody bandages, and a sweet little old woman on a visit one day came to see him. "Oh, my dear boy, were you in the war." The soldier answered, "no madam, I was feeding a canary bird and it pecked me."

It is strange how we use different kind of ammunition. It is dreadful with the mouth and with the tongue.

II. APOSTASY

Now let us turn to see what the accounting here from the viewpoint of the enemy

that his problem which he faces. He says in V. 6, appoint a wicked man against him, and let an accuser bring him to trial.

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First, the viewpoint of the enemy is given here. V. 6 - He says give him over to the judgement. And what language, and some people say this is hostility here. Many have been in trouble by these as he goes along and presents these things.

V. 8 - He says I want to give them over to a hasty death. Let his days be few and let another take his office. Prov. 10:27, Ecc. 7:17, Acts 1:20.

He says, V. 9, I am giving him over to the destruction of his family. And in V. 10, the destruction of his children. V. 11, the destruction of his wealth.

In V. 12, the drying up of mercy toward him. V. 13, let there be a shortage of his future. V. 14, then make it an impossibility for forgiveness, Ex. 20:5. How do you explain this language like this in a Psalm. It is simple in these verses, this man is quoting what his enemies say about him. And he is simply running on. There are several clues. V. 5 - they reward me evil for good. They hate my love. V. 6, he says appoint a wicked man against him. It seems incredible that this man should have a sudden change from the warmth of love, but here is something that he talks about. He says, they, in V. 6. He becomes he. What he wants to happen to his enemies. The harsh words fit best in the mouths of the Psalmist and his accusers.

In V. 15 - He wants these enemies taken out of his memory. V. 16 - The shallowness and the soulness of the enemy. We could illustrate with Saul.

I Sam. 18:10, 20:30, 23:8, 14, 25.

In V. 17 Different things seem to happen here. The reasonableness here. V. 6-15, you might like to look at this in your Bible. By revealing what these people have said about him. And by quoting what some of them have said. Now many understand these verses to be that David is reviewing what the enemy has said about him. The devices they have used against him.

First, they want to (rig a big trial) They want to bring him in and charge him with false witnesses. Then they want to send him on out and murder him. And destroy him legally. And they want his days to be few and his children to be fatherless. And his wife, to be a widow. V. 8-9. And may your children wander around and beg.

V. 11-12 - They finally want to take everything he has. Their hatred is so terrible that they want to leave nothing for his wife and children and may the creditors cease all that he has.

Finally, they are so fierce in their revenge, that they want to carry it on before God himself. They attempt to make this part an eternal damnation. Even in V. 13-15, that the iniquities of his fathers that are remembered before the Lord, that all of their memories shall be cut off in the earth.

To put it bluntly, they are asking God (to damn this man.) Now isn't that rather revealing. That this is the commonest oath heard today. When (hatred rises) in a heart, the easiest thing for a man to say is - may God damn this man.

Or this person. Hatred seeks the ultimate destruction. The eternal destruction of an individual. The ultimate wish of hate is that God would damn some individuals.

Cursing these men do it rather lightly. And how terribly real it is with them. What makes this apostasy of cursing so terrible is that men take it upon themselves to pronounce such a sentence upon a fellow member of the human race. And they do it in the lightest way. When we hear some one say - may we be damned. Remember it is a terrible thing and an awful thing which only God has the power to say and to do.

He lists here the awful hatred.

V. 16 - From the viewpoint of his enemies, you see how strangely twisted they are. He did not sow any kindness but he pursued after the poor and the broken-hearted. Now, they were blaming him for crimes that they themselves had committed. And of course, they were getting exactly what they deserved.

And this was a fierce thing.

People do this today - here is somebody who has committed murder or rape. And they are brought before the jury and the judge. And they are sentenced to death and the papers are signed. And yet some of their friends will stand out and shake their fists at the judge and the jury and threaten them - charging them with injustice. Although here is a man who has been caught red-handed, he is guilty of this crime. And it is a strange reaction in humanity which blames another for things that they cause themselves.

V. 17-18, the reason his enemies hated him is that they were trying to justify their own cursing. He loved to curse. Let curses come on him. He did not like blessing. May it be far from him. He clothed himself with cursings as his coat.

Cursing was his way of life.

This is a game found in human nature - is it not. May God damn you. But to justify it they say, well, that is what he said to us. You know, two children are fighting. One of them will be questioned who started this. And the little boy will say, (she did). She (hit me back).

How true. That is in our nature. We love to blame the other. We accuse others of the very things in which we are sometimes guilty. That is what happened here.

So here is a viewpoint, who started this thing. They say, well now David is the one that started it. V. 18 - 19 - They were saturated with it. Their terrible hatred and their terrible fierce reaction was filled with malice.

Now these words were taken in the New Testament and applied to Judas - may his days be few, may another ~~cease~~ his goods, may another take his office. The first chapter of Acts tells how the 11 Apostles gathered together to appoint a successor. Judas, and Peter quoted from two of the Psalms to justify the appointment. One was Psalm 69. Which said, may his habitation become desolate. Now the other verse is taken from this Psalm - 109: (May another take his office.)

Now, this might have been some prophecy applied to Judas. A terrible fate that awaited him - his wife, his children would be left desolate. And he, himself, would be damned of God. Now perhaps we could use this Scripture in the light of Jesus' own words. Matt. 26:24. Whoe to that man to whom the son of man is to be betrayed. It would have been better for that man if he had not been born. And here was a terrible situation of the apostasy that had taken place in the accusers. So they had their ammunition - they used their tongues, to slander. So the apostasy, they tried to turn on David the things that they were guilty of.

III. ANCHORAGE - V. 21-30

Finally we come to the place where David finds a harbor and a refuge, and safety. A place to anchor his soul.

V. 20 - He cries before God. He does not know what to do, now. That is a good starting point for every individual who has been falsely accused. To come to God, tell him, you just don't know what to do about this matter. But this is the right attitude, the right reaction, and the right way to handle such a situation.

V. 21 - The first thing he does, he puts the whole cause before God, along with his life. Oh, God, of my life - deal on behalf for thy namesake. Here is a man who understands the nature of reality. He knows the truth here.

In the Old Testament, he knew that vengeance was mine, saith the Lord, I will repay. Rom. 12:19. Vengeance is God's - don't try to get even. If you do, you will only make the matter worse. You will prolong a feud, that may go on for years.

It may destroy and damage others and create all kinds of difficulties both for you and for them.

No, vengeance is mine saith the Lord. I am the only one that is adequate in handling this problem.

Now the writer also understands something else - he understands that God's name is involved in all. And when God's people are being persecuted, when God's people are being accused - and they are going to be - it is up to God to defend his name and not man.

When Paul or Saul was on the road to Damascus, the Lord Jesus came in a bright light. And Saul cried, Lord, who are you. And Jesus said, I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. Saul was persecuting the Christians. But when he was doing that, he was farther persecuting (the Lord).

God is involved in what happens in and to his own people. The Psalmist knew this. God you deal with this - this is your problem. Take it in your name, that is involved. Is that thoroughly a Christian reaction.

Well, Peter shows us that this was exactly the reaction of the Lord Jesus. He committed no sin, no gile was found on his lips, when he was reviled - he did not revile in return. And when he suffered, he did not threaten - but he trusted to him who judges justly. I Peter 2:22.

F. B. Myers says we make a mistake trying always to clear ourselves. We should be walking and wanting to go straight. And humbly doing the next thing - leaving God to vindicate us. Now there may come hours in our lives when we may be misunderstood - slandered - falsely accused. At such times, it is very difficult not to act as men around the world do in public sometimes. In higher courts, etc.

V. 22 - He - slanders is difficult. He confesses that it is hard to endure. This is mental distress. It does something to you. It takes something out of you. And when I read the reaction here "Lord, is this what I do to people when I accuse them?" Have I made others feel like this? What an awful thing! Think about that. This man cries out. For help in his physical weakness. He says, I am poor, I am wounded.

V. 23 - I am a shadow. Lord, I have just become like an evening shadow.

I am like the locust - they just pass on away. And they last not long.

V. 24 - He says I have physical exhaustion. Oh, Dear Lord, he says - V. 24 - my knees are weak. I have been fasting, praying, and still I haven't somehow been able to conquer this thing. He is praying for help.

V. 25 - He says I have become also a reproach unto them. I wish we had just the time to talk about this one word.

There is a green hill far away

Without a city wall

And beyond that understanding, there was one who hung, suffered, cast out, despised, accused and rejected of men. And he gave up and yielded up the ghost.

Yes, sometimes we are reproached and accused. Even in the Gospel. This is the shame that the heart of the (cross) must have born. He faced it right or wrong.

He was (shut out) of the camp, he was barred outside the camp.

There are people today, like David. They are accused, they are shut out of the camp. Without hesitation quite often. ~~There~~ ^{There} are those who go to that little social engagement. And cocktail parties. And a man said, when I went in, we always keep a soft drink. And they lost what little taste they had for our company. It seemed incapable of fellowship without drink. And they think that I am the queer not to join them in it. And he said, I am really lonely.

I read the story about a lovely girl who lived in a seaside resort. Her husband was an officer in the Army. He was away from home much of the time. And someone asked her about the social life she had and the neighbors. Oh, she said, I have practically none. There are plenty of officers wives here, but all that they seem to care about is to play bridge from (morning, noon, and night). She says it isn't just playing the game - but it is always for money. And she said, because I won't join in, they think I am just stupid. It gets lonely.

Yes, we are accused for our puritan traditions.

Sometimes men suffer in their professional advancement. Because they are a Christian. They have love for the Lord and they want to be examples for Christ.

I read the story of a young man who was in the Army, and he hoped to get a promotion when a vacancy came due. But he didn't get it. And one day, one member of the staff enlightened him. He said, you know the officer in charge wouldn't have you. You finished it off with him some months ago, when you borrowed the education tent for a weekly meeting of prayer and Christian fellowship. You should have heard what he said when you were gone. Now he is the kind of man who carries picture post cards of nude women in his pockets. His mind is like a cesspool. And he said, when you were gone - referring to you, what ever happens here, we won't have that holy Joe on the staff. Yes, accused.

Christians, sometimes are actually made the blunt end of a joke. The opposite or the object sometimes because of their way of life. They are accused of madness.

Paul one time was accused by Agrippa and Festus, as much learning hath made thee mad.

Sarah Bentley, ^{Became Sam} was a lovely girl. She was a bar maid in George Inn. And every body said that she had gone daffy. Folks treated her like a mad woman. She must be left alone. Simply because she turned around from a pagan way of life.

Now David did not create his reproach unnecessarily. He was not accentric or a freak. He was a sweet, sane person.

One time John Wesley said something about the Quakers - they were already doing

a fine work. But he said, they had some odd things - that he couldn't approve. One of them was wearing garments that had been dyed. Saying that dying was a form of deceit. They had another way of not using the week days on the grounds that they were named after pagans. They would say the first day and the second day.

Now, I know there are some Christians who never use their vote - because they say they are going to keep themselves unspotted from the world. If therefore, the saint and a demon were rival candidates for an election - which pre-election publicity sometimes suggest, these people would still not vote. Contracting out as it were, from the issues of social life. Now David was not eccentric. He did not cultivate peculiar ideas that caused men to accuse him.

There are people who are accentric and who cancel everybody else.

Now I can't accuse or cancel everybody who smokes because I don't smoke. Because like one preacher said - I, myself, I bought my library out of tobacco that I never smoked. I think my health has been better.

There are many sins in the New Testament without us inventing any new ones. But the matter of accusation is a wretched sin. And many times as we look at this thing, we are going to have to bear reproach just like Jesus. What was his reproach - he was crucified, starved naked on a cross. How tragic it was that he had to bear this. Because Jesus is the name we treasure. A name beyond what words can tell. Name of gladness, name of pleasure. Earth, and heart delighting well. Name of sweetness passing measure, saving us from sin and Hell.

But it is a name that some find offensive. But it is a sweet name to us.

Prisella Stewart was a lovely girl. All the boys in the neighborhood admired her. They lined up to smile as she passed by. She met Christ and became a real disciple. She took up with the Salvation Army and she cast her lot with the despised people. And in days to come, they were to throw stones at her, bad oranges, bad eggs. But I want you to notice this, that even none of her earlier friends would hardly recognize her. She walked on the streets carrying out this work. There was something painful to her about this. She lost a lot - but she also gained. She went to China as a missionary. And became the wife of C. P. Studd. And going it out to camp, daring reproach. She gloried in it. This is what we ought to do.

I'm not ashamed to own my Lord
Or to defend his cause
Or maintain the honor of his word
The glory of his cross.

V. 26 - The man said, let it happen. Many things that happen, he prayed for his accusers. And to make not ashamed. For God to vindicate him. And to vindicate him in such a way that his accusers would be put to shame.

This sounds like I Peter 3 - in which he says, and you who are abused, those who revile you, your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. That is, keep your conscience clear. Don't curse, don't revile, don't attack. But walk with God.

That is something beautiful - isn't it.

V. (30) We read, he says, I will greatly praise the Lord with my mouth. That is how to handle this matter. The Psalm reflects the righteousness of God against ruthless evil. Those who abuse one of the least of God's creatures, are one with the executioners of Christ. Matt. 25:31.

When you are neglected or insulted, David says (thank God) for the experience.

When you seek to serve him faithfully, and you find yourself criticized, be patient. That is your victory.

When you are slandered and your motives are questioned - and you do not complain but receive it in love, that is victory. Such victory can only be won by giving thanks to God.

The accuser will stand here and be condemned before God. Praise ye the Lord, this is your Christian duty. To praise the Lord.

This is the way to handle false accusations. Though they may have ammunition through their tongues, pay no attention to these who are following the trend of apostasy, but anchor your soul in God. Yes, the darkest night has stars in it, and a Christian is a man who fixes not on the darkness, but on the stars. Especially on the bright morning star that always shines.

Francis Chavasse of Liverpool had a favorite sentence. Praise and service are great healers.

I think this is what David was doing. It is worth trying to get into the meaning of that. Praise and service are great healers. In other words, when life grows sore and wounded and it is difficult to be brave, praise God. And it is hard to make yourself do it. But the very act of praising God and praising the wound, will begin to heal. Sing something and you will really rally your own heart with a song. Praise and service are great healers. Praise brings the wounded back to life's firing line again.

It will get us back.

It is said, of Francis Xavier, a great missionary soldier of Jesus, that some of his friends when they had false accusations and problems in their lives, that if they could only come and look at him - and look at his face, that is how your praise can help. When you get in trouble, tangled up in this world, and people falsely accuse you. God knows that there is enough darkness in this world. And it is dark enough without you making it darker and deeper. And we need to come back and look into the face of God - and there win the anchorage for the soul which David won.

Maybe there are some who have had feelings of resentment. Some of you have been wanting to strike back. And we have done so. May we ask God to forgive us and to teach us from this Psalm how to handle this problem. To have confidence in the Lord.

And let us know today that his cause is much greater, and that he can vindicate himself. If we go on trusting him. And doing all things for his glory.

Stephen Acts 6:13 They set up false (occasional) witnesses -

Joseph ; Bro's saw him & conspired against him Gen 37:18

A Dreamer -

Sold 20 pieces of Silver v 28

Yr's - Famine ; Visit Bro's = 45:2 Wept aloud - Means of their Sal.

Jesus ; Mat. 26:60 "Many false witnesses came" Trial