

23,77 P.M.

WHEN YOUR WORLD FALLS APART

Psalm 59

~~June 2~~
 in 1839, Abner Doubleday, laid out the first baseball diamond at Cooperstown, New York. It is impossible to estimate the physical, moral, and recreational effect that baseball has had upon the American life. "Clarence Hawkes saw his last baseball game with his own eyes in 1883. He said, "The game was much slower then. ^A ~~The~~ ^{was} ~~batsmen were~~ allowed seven balls before he took his base. ~~And~~ ~~As~~ there was no foul strike rule, when he had taken six bad balls, and two strikes, and had fouled perhaps a half a dozen more pitches, you begin to get sick of that particular batsman."

Clarence Hawkes is the story of one whose world fell apart and what he did about it.

Mr. Hawkes was born, as he says, at the end of a road. It was a lonely country road. He had been deprived of his eye sight when a young man, and further, he had been crippled by the loss of a leg when he was nine years of age. He said, finally, that he had to create his own soul - a sunshine factory, if he was to live a happy normal life and get along in life. He was blinded by his father ~~As~~ the result of a heart breaking accident, while the two were out shooting wild fowl. The accident was ~~far more~~ ^{most} painful to the victim - because ~~of~~ the loss of sight came on top of the earlier loss of a leg. And all of this had happened to him at the tender (age of 13 1/2). "Every morning, he said, "I rose, and went to the head of the stairs to test my waning vision. He said that fateful day was burned in his memory. His father had invited him to go hunting. He had a new shot gun, ^{which} ~~that~~ he had had only a couple of weeks. ^{After a time} ~~And they were~~ in the woods, and he had grown a little tired and sat down by a tree. ~~And~~ he heard the wings of a wood cock and he turned to see the bird skimming the brush. And then he heard the report of his father's gun. And he felt a blast of wind against his face and the tree,

and the feeling of red hot augers boring into his hands and face. There was little strength, he ^{said} ~~says~~, left in him. They were two miles from the highway. And he had 30 - #10 bird-shot in his body. ^{one} Each throbbing. Two fingers were broken. And the horrible thing was, three shot were sticking in his right eye and one into his left. He knew that he had been left totally blind. For six weeks, ^{he was} they kept ~~him~~ in bed with ~~ice~~ cold cloths layed over his eyes. And then he was sent to be operated upon. And finally, the Doctor would talk hopeful one day, ~~and then,~~ not encouraging the next. He said the operations were simply undescibeable. They were carried on without any ^{kind} ~~deadening~~ of ^{anesthetic} local medication. And he ^{after} ~~says~~ gradually this torture ~~plus the other~~ torture - his eyesight left him.

Hawkes tells us that he began to master (gospel hymns.) He turned to the (Bible) for strength. His grandfather read it to him. He went on to Perkins Institute, and he mastered braille, ^{and} he learned to use his typewriter.

So having been crippled at age nine, losing his left leg below the knee. Now at age 13, he lost his eyesight and he faced life without many friends or resources.

^{then} But he began to lecture. And ~~then~~ he began to write. ~~and~~ He wrote books on nature. And he wrote wonderful stories ^{about animals} that adults, as well as children, enjoyed about

animals. And people were amazed that he had such knowledge of animals. In the series that he was able to put together. He wrote a book, on Hitting the Dark Trail.

^{which} ~~That~~ was published in many languages. - He could identify 80 species of birds, beetles & insects & flowers & novels & novels

- He loved Baseball - even though blind, he could trace the ball by sound -

" Now his world had collapsed, ^{fallen apart} But he said partly he conquered, ^{partly} because he tore

out of his (dictionary) the page whereon the word (defeat) was printed. People wrote to him - "I want to thank God, that such a man as you lives." He said, "The best way out of difficulty is through it. Often ^{life} ~~it~~ brings afflictions upon us to draw us closer to ^{God} ~~himself~~. Sometimes we are rather careless and unappreciative of God's wonderful gifts. Many times we think of these things as faith and if we stop to

Clarence Hawker, said his Philosophy of life is best expressed in this little couplet

[Two men looked out through prison bars,
and one saw mud, the other stars.]

count over our blessings, we learn that we have been abundantly blessed.

Now David was such a man whose ^{fell} world had ~~to fall~~ apart. We consider in this message, Psalm 59. In this Psalm there are three or four things that we might discover. First, the ^{gathering} growing cloud. V. 1-7. Second, the growing calmness. V. 8-15. Third, the genuine citadel. V. 16-17.

I. ^{Gathering} THE GROWING CLOUDS - V. 1-7

Psalm 59 - the context of it, I think to understand it, reaches way back in the life of David when he was being persecuted and his world literally collapsed upon him.

We go back for the background of this to the book of I Samuel 19:11. "Saul sent messengers unto David's house. To slay him in the morning. And Michelle told him saying, if thou save not my life, tonight - tomorrow thou shalt be slain. So, his wife, let him down through a window. And he went and fled and escaped."

1 Sam 19:13 "

V. 13 - Michelle took an image and layed it in the bed. And put a pillow of goat's hair for his bolster. And covered it with cloth. When Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, "He is sick." And Saul sent the messengers again to see David, saying - "Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may slay him." When the messengers were come in, behold there was the image in the bed. With the pillow of goat's hair for his bolster. And Saul said unto Michelle, "Why hast thou deceived me so. And sent away mine enemy that he might escape. And Michelle answered, Saul, he said unto me - let me go. Why should I kill thee. So David fled and went on his way to visit Samuel the prophet."

The clouds were gathering over David - and Saul was watching his house day and night. Word had come that he was going to be put to death in the morning.

Now this was the beginning of a very unhappy time in David's life. It was a dark, lonely experience. And it was something that moved David to come to God in prayer. And as we study the 59th Psalm, it's context, we see what is happening to David. It approaches with a clear insight of this record of I Samuel. You remember, it had been said in (I Samuel 16:21), that Saul had slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands. And Saul was very jealous. And he eyed him daily. 18:7-9. Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with him. 18:12. And Saul was more afraid of David, and became his enemy. And sought how he might put him to death. He tried to smite him. Do you really see how the pressure is growing on him and the clouds are gathering rising. And his world is falling apart breaking up. Here is Saul in a fit of jealousy. And Saul wanted to murder David. That was the only thing that would satisfy him.

You remember, there were many attempts made by Saul, upon the life of David. He made him captain in his Army over 1,000 men ^{in his army}. And he ordered him to do this because he wanted him killed in battle. He demanded of him 100 dead Philistines as the price for marrying his daughter. And David, produced twice that many. ^{And} ~~So~~ twice Saul tried to pin him to the wall ^{with his spear}. And finally, he sent a messenger to his house to kill him. And even the story of David being sick in bed did not discourage ^{Saul} ~~him~~. He said, "Bring the bed, David, and all." Only through the warning of his wife had he been able to escape.

These must have been unhappy days for ^{David} ~~him~~. He was separated from his home, ^{by} the pressures of Saul's hatred. Now this was not David's fault. For he had done nothing to deserve it.

V. 3 - He talked about the mighty gathering against him. Not for my transgressions or my sins, oh Lord. David acknowledges that he knows no reason at all why he should be under such strain. Not that he was claiming that he was not a sinner.

But that he did not know ^{why} ~~of anything~~ that he ^{was under} deserved the pressure that ~~he~~ ^{him} was threatened to be crushed ~~with~~ so completely.

Before I go any further, I wonder if you might be facing a like situation. From one angle or another, the pressure on you is being applied. It has almost overwhelmed you and broken you. As far as you know, you are clear of guilt. There is nothing to justify the attack, that is being made upon you. Yet, this cloud has gathered. You saw it coming - you tried to avoid it - but you could not. You find yourself in the middle of a real storm and there is no escape. And how real ^{is} the pressure of the gathering cloud ~~is~~.

Now this is very true of those who do Christian work. The pressure of criticism, the pressure of financial problems, and the pressure of a 1001 details. The gathering cloud that presses deeply upon you is very real.

It may be in your home life. It may be in terms of sorrow or hardship, suffering or persecution. All of us, at one time or another experience that ~~the~~ gathering cloud which we cannot avoid.

The whole area of our lives ^{has} ~~have~~ become darkened - until it is black. We find ourselves right in the pathway of real persecution.

Now if you find yourself in that setting, we need to learn a lesson from David's reaction - and how you might triumph in such a situation. And through this prayer, he grows in confidence. ~~What, how David reacts to this pressure.~~ ^{AND} You may learn a lesson here that will bless you the rest of your life. Indeed, I think it will help you to understand why these clouds may come.

David begins a prayer in V. 1 by praying to God for deliverance. ~~He prays~~ ~~himself~~ - He is in a sense of helplessness. And he prays himself into a sense of confidence. Then he is going on to a song. He begins down in the depths and he cries out to God, that he would save him. And then he moves on to some assurance that he gets from God, that God is in control.

And he prays about these traps and these snares that are layed for him all around. But he seems somehow or other to escape the panic and to find some rest in the Lord.

~~The first thing~~ in his prayer under these clouds - ~~is that~~ (he defines his enemies) V. (2) - he describes them as criminals. Rescue me from these criminals. Save me from these murderers.

V. (3) - He describes them as lying in wait. Lurking to ambush ^{him} them.

He describes them as being strong and united against him.

He pleads that he feels there is no sin or fault, or offense within himself, that has gotten him in this position.

He in V. (4) - he said they run to prepare themselves. They take special care to get ahead of me and to prepare.

V. (5) - He pleads with God not to have mercy upon these wicked transgressors. They are villians and traitors of God.

V. (6) - He describes these enemies as (dogs). Return at evening time. They make

a great deal of noise. They come out and make their rounds - prowling through the town.

V. (7) - He says, their mouths are filled with swords coming out of their teeth. And these enemies are described as (slanderers). He compares them to dogs. So David commences this Psalm by casting himself upon the Lord.

V. (5) - He says, therefore, oh God of hosts, the God of Israel wake to visit all the heathen, be not merciful to any wicked transgressor. Now if you will notice what he calls God. As a matter of fact, he brings together all the titles that he can think about, to call upon Heaven for aid. Oh (Lord Jehovah), (elohim of Sabbath), (Lord God of hosts) nothing less than all of thy resources are going to be adequate for me at this moment in my life. I need all there is of Thee. Every attribute of thy power and grace. Faithfulness and strength. Lord, just at this moment, in the teeth of this wind when thy clouds are engulfing me, I need every bit of thy omnipotence.

Now this prayer was (not) a foolish prayer. David knew that in this particular situation, he was innocent. And therefore he describes his enemies as workers of iniquity. Transgressors. How was he sure that this was really an attack of the enemy upon him? Because (he knew that Saul was fighting against God). Samuel had told Saul, that he had been rejected from the kingdom. And David had been anointed king. David knew that the pressure was coming from an enemy ^{Who} ~~And~~ was battling against the will of God. In his attempt, to take David's life, Saul was deliberately seeking to frustrate God's purpose.

Nor is he the last many who have stepped into the arena of life to defile God. Nor the only one to be crushed and doomed.

Now David prays through the gathering clouds and describes these enemies as he pours out his heart - and he comes to a new sense of feeling in this reaction.

A millionaire lay dying. He had lived a life indifferent to the claims of God. Called his doctor in - said weakly - 'if I leave a \$1,000,000 to go to God, will it help get me into Heaven?' Doctor - cautiously answers 'I wouldn't like to be positive, but it's well worth trying.'

II. GROWING CALMNESS

v. 8 David here in the 8th verse, expresses his conviction that his enemies are God's enemies. He does not say, only his immediate enemies, but all the heathen. In other words, he is reasoning with himself and with God this way. Lord my deliverance in this situation, is but a part of thy great plan for the whole world to establish truth and righteousness.

Now if God can add a little dew drop to a flower in the morning, the same God can put out the stars at night in their place. He can care for all that belong to him. And that was David's argument. And I am refreshed to believe that such an argument is mine. For whenever the pressures of gathering clouds for which we are not responsible for, your position in life - whatever it may be - you are in it because God has put you there. You know that you can lay hold of all of his powers to see you through. For your surrender to God in Jesus Christ means, he has guaranteed to deliver you from all of your afflictions. Because that is only a small part of his great delivering purpose for his people. If God can take care of the whole universe, he can care for you and your little need this day.

May I say a word, if there is someone who is putting pressure upon a servant of God. Who may be causing many things because of unkindness, or by spreading false rumors, gossip, or by criticism. Beware, you are fighting against God as Saul.

Alan Redpath, someone who was indifferent and ungodly said - that before my

life of conversion, if you had known it - you could not have imagined my being saved. But he says, in less than three months, I was saved. For a time, I was fighting against God. And I will tell you how I did it. I was putting the pressure upon a Christian - and giving him Hell on earth. I was mean, I was unkind, critical - spreading false stories about his character. I was doing every thing that I could to force him away from the circle of my life, but I wasn't fighting him, I discovered. I was fighting God. Who lived within him.

I think today you have to beware, less that you do the same thing, in your attack upon some individual. You are really attacking God. Now it could be there is some Sunday School (Teacher), preacher, or missionary. If you are criticising and being unkind, ask yourself - is it the man I am attacking or is it the Lord for whom he stands. The message he proclaims - the witness he makes. In the midst of that cloud, David brought his arguments to God. He said, that thou, Oh Lord, shall laugh at them. Thou shalt have all the heathen in derision.

This is not a pleasant thing for anybody to laugh, at anybody or anything. But God is doing the laughing. And that is the horror of this.

So there is a calmness comes as he prays - and he is getting strength in a wonderful sense.

V. 9 - He prays that my strength - I look to thee, he says. In the King James - because of his strength, will I wait upon thee. For God is my defense. God is my high tower.

So if you get the Hebrew reading smoothly - my strength, I will wait upon thee. Instead of his strength. The translation is like thee - upon thee oh my strength, Will I wait for my God is my high tower. Now isn't that important within the compass of that verse that David prayed himself out of his panic, out of his fears, out of his

doubts. Now there was no change of circumstances around him. But he cries for deliverance - and he becomes calm waiting upon God. The enemies were pressing on all sides. How did such a thing happen to his soul.

I think David - his whole attitude here - (I will wait upon thee.) It is a word that means I will watch for thee as the shepherd watches the sheep. While he is on duty. Like I will lift up my ears and my eyes until the hills. From whence cometh my help. And (God watches) over his people. And I must also watch for the coming of his strength and his power. He looks down to care for me in the midst of the clouds. But I must look for him to pour out his blessing upon me.

Dear friend, if you fail to receive strength because of the pressure of a cloud. It is usually because you are (not) looking for it.

It is just like a (ship) coming in through the night - bring in help, grace, strength, courage, love and power. And they dock at your warf. But the ship goes out again because you do not unload it.

(We) pray but we don't wait. We ask but we do not expect to receive. We know but we depart from Heaven's door before it is opened to us. If you are overwhelmed with the pressures, and your world is collapsing. It isn't all God's fault. The fact is that your hands may be too full of other things to receive his strength. That will enable you to go on.

V. (10) - The God of mercy here, the God who cares for me is coming.

So God is (not) going to forget me. My soul waiteth for the Lord - more than those

I say, more than they that wait for the morning. Have you ever waited for the morning. A restless night - you have tossed, turned, and you have tried every possible position. And then you stand up and you lie down. And you go to the window and you sigh - when is it going to be light. And after a night of agony, you have longed for the morning. Wait, watch for the dawn. Psalm 130:6. That is the language of David. The help of God does not come to us when we are indifferent. It comes to us when we are dependent upon God in the thick of life. It comes to one who tarryes for vision and faith. It comes to one who believes that he is waiting upon the Lord. It comes to one who is resting upon the promises of the word. Who believes that before he calls - God will answer. It comes to the man who lives by faith - as he actually possesses the answer to his prayer. The enemy is still around him - it is faith that turns distress into singing.

III. GENUINE CITADEL

V. 16 - 17

Now we are going to really observe David's anchor, his hope, and his help. When his world falls apart. Who is this God to whom David went. How did he describe him. He says my strength and my high tower. God my strength means, God within me.

God my high tower - means God all around me, protecting me. God possessed and God encompassed. Was the sure anchor when his world collapsed. What then shall he fear, he speaks. I put God, my Saviour, between myself and all of my enemies. And I lie down in peace.

It is my strength, not that I receive strength from him, but rather - that I take him to be my strength and weakness. The name and character of the Lord is the

strong power. The righteous run to it and are safe. One must wait and watch.

Hidden in the hollow of his blessed hand
Never foe can follow, never traitor stand.
Not a surge of worry, not a shade of care
Not a blast of hurry, touched the spirit there.

Now we have talked about these (gathering clouds) that caused David's world to fall apart. And we have talked about the (growing calmness) that came over him and now we are thinking about the (genuine citadel) of the last two verses of the Psalm. When David beyond the simple calmness, beyond just rest, he becomes joyful in the Lord, with the enemy still on the attack all around him. He is living in an absolute victory in the midst of all of this.

Now there are many Christians today who have learned to put the Lord Jesus between themselves and the enemy and start singing. Have you learned that.

Do you notice that David has found yet another name for the Lord here. The moment of calm waiting he said - thou art my defense, thou art my high tower, thou art my strength. But he says something else, in this Psalm. (Thou art my mercy.) What a wonderful thought this is.

Because I will sing of thou power. I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning. For thou hast been my defense and refuge in the day of my trouble.

V. (16) I will acclaim, he says, your love. "Morning after morning - you have been my citadel."

Isn't this a tremendous thought as he reaches up into the presence of the Lord and glory fills the whole picture. Here is a man under the pressure of a

cloud, but his heart is right with God, and therefore he is full of praise and joy. He is saying in effect, Lord, I called you my strength when I was so weak. I meant it. I thought of you as my fortress when I was surrounded by my enemies - and I meant that too. I know that you are still all of those things to me - if my foes all around me and no relief from their pressure. You are still my strength and my high tower, but my Lord Jesus you are something more - you are my mercy. The pressure of this gathering cloud has shown me your tender pity. I knew Lord how much you loved me. Until you allowed this pressure to wait and to watch. And to look to thee.

Like David, some of you may have been deceived by enemies. You may have been crushed to pieces. Instead of finding your life in the grip of a loving wonderful God, using the cloud to teach you God's way, in a covenant of mercy in this world - this of Noah. "I will put my bow in the cloud." Now you never find a rainbow in a clear day on a blue sky. You find a cloud, a thick cloud. And it makes a beautiful rainbow. You find the mercy of God right in the thick of the cloud and the pressures of life.

The pressures of the gathering cloud that is upon your life today is under the hand of God. And under control. He knows when to say, thus far and no farther. So let there come from your life a prayer. My Lord, my strength, my defense. And even though there is a cloud, you are going to be not busy with other things. You are not going to have your hands full of so many things. In trying to meet the pressures of your own strength. But you are going to reach out and unload the ship of grace, the love, the mercy, and you are going to wait and watch for him.

V. 17 - Strength, I pray for you. God, himself, is my citadel. The God who cares for you.

Ye fearful saints fresh courage take
The clouds you so much dread
Are big with mercy and shall break
In blessings on your head.

In conclusion, there is the story of a ^{minister} ~~man~~ who got on the train some years ago - going to deliver a commencement address at a college, in North Carolina. As the train crossed the Virginia line, into Carolina, an old man sin scarred got on the train. He took his seat opposite the minister. He began to look out of the window and he broke into a weep. The minister asked him what the trouble was and if he could help him. "No, said the old man, you can't help me. Go back to your seat and let me cry it out alone." Many miles down the road, the old man got off at a little station. The minister went on to the college and delivered his sermon. A few days later, on his trip back, The train stopped at the same station. The old man who had gotten off, came aboard again. This time he had a small package wrapped and there was a sweet expression on his face.

The minister asked, aren't you the man who got off of the train a few days ago. The old man replied yes, and I am ready to talk now. I was reared in this community--and after my father died, I got into difficulty. (My whole world just crumbled.) And I left and went West. I used to write my mother every week. And the letters quit coming and I knew what had happened. And I went deeper and deeper into sin. And sin has served me badly. (A few weeks ago) I decided to come back to the old home. When I got off the train here the other day, I searched and tried to find a person who knew my mother. The old house had been torn away and I made my way into the oak grove, to the little brick church, and found the door unlocked. I went in, and I went up front where mother used to

worship. As she held me on her lap. Then picking up the (package) by his side, he unwrapped it. He said, I took this brick, it was the brick on which my mother's feet rested as she worshipped. He said, as I took up the brick, I got down on my knees, there where mother had held me in her arms, and carried me in the arms of her prayers many times. And the Lord saved me, ~~blotted out~~ my sins, and I am returning with the salvation and peace in my heart, as I go to the far West.

All about us today, there are (people whose world) has fallen apart. And they need to ~~come back to God~~. And they need to seek his way, rather than drowning out your troubles with (drink). Going to some unholy social pleasures. Christ is the only one who is able to say, thy sins be forgiven thee. There is no one else able to say that. There is no other name under heaven given unto Heaven, given whereby we must be saved.

Remember, David gives us a lesson. If there are clouds gathering around you, then follow his example and claim the Lord as your citadel.