

Psalm 55 – Week of May 22

Memory Verse Psalm 55:22

Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved.

“I don't deserve this!” Have you ever said this? Or if you would never say it out loud, have you ever thought this? This is what is striking in Psalm 55 as King David is crying out to the Lord. As he sees the treachery and threats being assailed against him, he does an interesting thing – He does NOT cry out for justice, as you would suppose, but he cries out for mercy!

As David enters the throne room of God in prayer, notice that he does not immediately argue his righteousness. At the very starting point in his petition, he is not demanding his rights, or arguing with God from a sense of entitlement. David pleads for mercy – rather than asking for what he deserves.

First, we should see that in our lives as we encounter struggles and difficulties, we must bring them to God. As obvious as this is, how often do we complain to our spouses, our friends, or our co-workers rather than to the One who has the power to make a difference in the situation? In verse 1 David is begging God to hear his request, and throughout the Psalm, David is imploring His God to hear him and take action – and so should we.

Second, as we have noted, David does not make his request in a way that is implying God owes him anything. By asking for mercy, David is acknowledging his own sinfulness and the fact that he is not deserving of anything good from the Lord. David knows that his sin is ever-present before the Lord, and he is asking for God's favor – to give him even what he doesn't deserve. This should cause us to reflect in how we cry out to the Lord in times of difficulty. Do we come before the God of the universe barking orders, or do we come humbly before Him, recognizing that any blessing that comes from His hand is undeserved?

Did David have legitimate concerns to bring before God? Absolutely! We see in v3 the complaints against David and the oppression coming from the wicked. Verses 4 & 5 show David is in fear for his life, and verses 9-11 show the violence, oppression and fraud in the city. His concerns are valid – and so are ours. We face very real struggles in life. And what would David like to do? Verses 6 & 7 show that he would like to “fly away!” He would love to be able to avoid these situations completely – and so would we! But God has placed us in this stage of life for reasons we can't always understand, and there are some struggles that cannot be avoided.

David's hardest struggle comes from a former friend. Verses 13 & 14, and then 20 & 21 show how this companion “stretched out his hand against his friends,” and here we cannot help but see the betrayal of Judas against our Lord. As we may see broken relationships in our lives, we must look to the example of Christ who, “when he was reviled, he did not revile in return” (1 Peter 2:23.) Instead, our Lord cried out to God in the garden.

Then what do we do in these difficulties? David proclaims the answer in verse 22 - “Cast your burdens

on the Lord..." These difficulties and hardships are like burdens that we are carrying around. We struggle under the weight of our concerns, our fears, and our unforgiveness toward others. This is a burden too large for us to carry, and we were never meant to struggle through life under its weight. So David gives the answer, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to CAST it on the LORD.

What a descriptive word! Cast it off! Throw it away! Heave it! Get the burden off of you! But this can only be accomplished if someone else can take the burden from us, and only our God can do that! We can, indeed we MUST throw off this burden and place it squarely on the shoulders of the only One capable of carrying it for us. Why would we continue to choose to carry that which is too heavy for us to bare? Spurgeon says "His wisdom casts it on thee, it is thy wisdom to cast it on Him." Can you picture the burden in your arms, and then handing it over to Jesus?

What is the result of this? "Cast your burden on the Lord, and He will sustain you..." Once you relinquish this burden, He enables you to continue on. He sustains you in the journey, and "He will never permit the righteous to be moved." Turning your burden over to the Lord enables you to be steadfast and immovable – not tossed to and fro. Christ Himself instructed us in this matter. "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. (Matt 11:28-30.)

So as you struggle under the weight of the difficulties of life, first take your concerns to Him; second, come before Him in humility recognizing that He owes us nothing; and then, DO something with your burdens – TAKE ACTION! "Cast your burdens on the Lord, and He will sustain you..." What burden will you hand over to Him today?

Written by: Greg Hostetler