

A few years ago the Nike corporation came out with a commercial that featured one of the world's great female distance runners of the time whose name was Priscilla Welch. In the commercial she is running up a hill in San Francisco and the commercial said, "Who says you can't run away from your problems?"

We live in a world that promotes the idea that you can run away from your problems. The advice of many politicians, psychologists and psychiatrists is just that. Many promote the idea that instead of facing your problems blame someone else. Many will say go off to some resort or retreat and forget about the problems. Others will say get a prescription filled and the medication will enable you to cope with your problems. The basic premise of all of these ideas is run away to escape your problems. However, there is another option.

No man faced as many dangers, pressures or personal problems more than King David. In his case there were many who literally wanted to see him dead. David's friends were worried about him so they advised him to run, to flee to the mountain. But David saw another option. He had a different solution. **David's philosophy was not one that ran from problems, but one that trusted God and depended on God through the problems.**

The theme of this psalm and the lesson to learn is:

**GOD'S PEOPLE DO NOT NEED TO RUN AWAY FROM PROBLEMS BUT MAY TAKE REFUGE IN GOD, REALIZING THAT GOD DOES WATCH AND GOD WILL REWARD.**

We could call this psalm having "clear faith in present danger." Satan will tell us to run from our problems and God's Word will tell us to trust Him through our problems and wait for His deliverance.

Psalm 11 is a little psalm, a powerful psalm and as J. Vernon McGee said, "a wonderful" psalm (*Psalms*, p. 686). There are three simple parts to this psalm.

**PART #1** – David's refuge was in the LORD. **11:1a**

David opens the psalm with a powerful statement which gives us the essence of David's theology. He found his refuge in the LORD. David had tremendous faith in Jehovah. When he was surrounded by enemies, he exercised that faith and drew himself close to the LORD. He believed that God would protect and preserve him and he was not one who would run away.

This confidence was, as one commentator said, "grounded in years of walking with God." David had learned as a teenager that you can trust in the Lord and time and time again David did that and God never failed him. He had learned to truly believe that his refuge and protection was God and this was the reason he didn't run from problems.

**PART #2 – David’s friends gave faithless counsel . 11:1b-3**

David’s friends did not have the confidence in God that David had. They were advising him to flee like a bird to the mountains. It is interesting in **verse 1** that they call them “your” mountains. That tells us that the mountain range they had in mind was one David knew. They knew that in those mountains David would be very safe because he knew all of the places to hide. The assumption of the friends was David can survive easily in the mountains because he knows the country well. **But here is the problem; this advice places all of the survival ability and trust in David , not on God .**

David’s thought was why should I flee or run anywhere when my refuge is the Lord? In other words, since God is protecting and preserving me, why should I run or why should I hide? David’s safety was not in his mountaineering skills, it was in the Lord.

Keep in mind that David’s friends did truly care about David and they are giving him very logical and reasonable advice, but it is not spiritual advice. God’s will was not that David run away, but that David trust Him. There may be times when even those who love you and care about you give you wrong counsel.

Now the friends of David presented two reasons why David should run to the mountains:

**(Reason #1) - Because the wicked are out to destroy David . 11:2**

The wicked were out to kill David and the wicked are still out to do the same to God’s people. The image here is that the wicked have the righteous in their sights and are ready to release their dark and destructive arrows into the heart of one righteous.

Wickedness aims at the heart of one righteous. It is not just interested in shooting at the external, it is after the heart. David’s friends saw all of the wicked enemies aiming at David and they advised him to flee.

**(Reason #2) - Because the wicked have destroyed the foundations . 11:3**

Wicked people seem to control everything. They did not care about God’s Word or God’s will. They were not interested in the true worship of God for if they were, they would not want to destroy David.

David’s friends were basically saying “Look David, what else can you do? You don’t have any other options. Flee because godly foundations no longer exist.” To David’s friends, the obvious thing for him to do, in light of the fact that the biblical foundations were destroyed, was to run and to flee. David’s decision was to stay and trust God. Truth is **God’s foundations cannot ever be destroyed.**

We are living in a time when biblical foundations are being attacked. No longer do many churches even care if they accurately know the Word of God, much less submit to it.

The Word of God is being replaced by vain philosophies of men. If you are serious about preaching the Word of God you will discover there is a “new morality” (which is really an old immorality) that will laugh at the old-fashioned ideas. It used to be that God and His precious Word were taught and believed in schools. That foundation has been demolished. It used to be that graduating classes were prayed for and committed to God. That foundation has been demolished. It used to be that people in blatant sin would not ever be considered for leadership roles in the church. That foundation has been demolished. What should we do? Should we run to some Christian commune and hide? Should we stop going out into the world to do business? Should we back away or back down? Or, should we stand our ground and trust God in the face of foundational destruction. For David, the answer was simple. Take refuge in the Lord and live life out in the open in front of the wicked.

**PART #3** – David’s faith was in the LORD. **11:4-7**

David was not shaken by any of the threats or intimidations because his faith and confidence was in the Lord. There are four critical elements to David’s faith that we see very clearly here which gave him such great confidence:

**Critical Faith Element #1** - David believed God reigned over all. **11:4a**

Even though it appears at times that the wicked are calling the shots on earth, David’s faith was in One far above the earth, the living God who reigned from His throne in heaven. David’s faith was in a living and reigning God. It is God who sits on His throne. It is God who sovereignly runs the world, not man.

**Critical Faith Element #2** - David believed God sees all. **11:4b**

David believed in the omnipresence of God. The emphasis on “eyes” and “eyelids” is one in Hebrew that implies God watches things very closely. David did not run because he personally believed that God was watching him and also watching his wicked enemies. God was David’s refuge and David knew God was closely and carefully watching him.

That is even what a good shepherd does. He carefully and closely monitors everything and everyone.

**Critical Faith Element #3** - David believed God tests all. **11:4c-5a**

Charles Spurgeon said since we are living in the wilderness of the world and not in the paradise of heaven, we may expect one trouble after another from time to time. David came to a very mature level in his spiritual life.

He viewed difficulties as tests of faith. He believed that God sovereignly controlled everything and would put both the faithful and the wicked into various situations in order to test them and prove them. He viewed difficulties as tests of faith.

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When a faithful believer like David ends up in some test, he will, in the end, always prove to be faithful. David will always end up proving his trust and dependency on God.

On the other hand, when a wicked person ends up in some test, he will always prove to be faithless and will prove his trust and dependency on himself.

David stood his ground and would not back down because he viewed the hardships and difficulties as tests that came to him from the sovereign hand of a Sovereign God.

**Critical Faith Element #4** - David believed God rewards all. **11:6-7**

David believed that both the righteous and the unrighteous would be rewarded. God loves the righteous and the upright that trust in Him and He hates the wicked that don't.

For the wicked, their end result will be a reward of fire and brimstone.

For the righteous, the end result will be protection and blessings from the throne of God.

Now it is specifically stated at the end of **verse 7** that “the upright will behold His face.”

There are two applications we may make concerning Church truth.

**(Application #1)** - Every believer will escape hell and see Jesus Christ.

Every believer will face the Bema Seat Judgment, which will feature Jesus Christ as judge to determine whether one receives or loses rewards.

**(Application #2)** - Every faithful believer will actually see and have access to Jesus Christ during His millennial reign. Ezekiel 44:10-16; Zech. 3:7; Heb. 12:13-17

David was not about to run from threats or intimidations because he viewed that as an opportunity to trust God. He took refuge in the Lord and he knew God was watching him and would reward him.

### **Practical Lessons:**

1. We need to boldly trust God in the face of threatening people and situations.
2. We must not listen to counsel of well-meaning family and friends if it is not true to God's Word.
3. We need to live a life of faith that believes God reigns, sees, tests and rewards.
4. We need to learn to find our refuge in God and His Word and not hide or run from the pressures of this world.