

PSALM 54

BETRAYED BY THE ZIPHITES

The title of this Psalm explains the particular trial that David was exercised with at this time, which drove him to the mercy-seat. The history of that part of David's life may be found in 1 Samuel 23. But while we behold David in the historical part connected with this Scripture, we have hopefully now seen so much in David's history that we will consider him to be a lively picture, in many instances, of David's Lord! Surely the Holy Spirit intended to direct the eyes of the Church away from the many details of this man's history and writings, and toward the One Who is far greater than he. Indeed, He is the Chief Subject in all the Scriptures! Therefore, in the repeated attempts made on David's life by the Ziphims and others who endeavored to deliver him into the hands of Saul, there are strong allusions made to the perfidy and baseness of Judas the traitor – as well of the scribes and Pharisees – to deliver the Lord Jesus into the hands of His enemies. The Ziphims proposed to themselves Saul's favor and a reward; and likewise, Judas' language was, "What will you give me, and I will deliver him unto you?" If we compare 1 Samuel 23:19-20 with Matthew 26:14-16 – keeping our eye upon Jesus as we read this Psalm – we shall trace several things which will serve to keep Him and His unequalled trials in remembrance.

The Lord God is faithful, even though no mortal man is to be trusted; and it is good for us that it is so. David had no other plea (verses 1-3) to depend upon than God's holy name, and no other power to depend upon than His Almighty strength; and he makes these his refuge and confidence. As we look unto David, as he was betrayed by the men of Judah; and also to Jesus, as He was betrayed by one of His very own Apostles – what can we expect from any human being who has not set God before their eyes, and whose hearts are full of ingratitude and treachery and cruelty? What bonds of nature, friendship, gratitude, or covenant will hold back those who have broken through the fear of Jehovah? There-

Overview of the Psalm, adapted from Charles Spurgeon:

This is another "Psalm of David." His productions were as plentiful as they are profitable. His varied life was for our benefit; for from it, we derive these songs, which are as fresh and as precious at this hour as they were when he wrote them. This particular composition was penned "when the Ziphims came and said to Saul, Doth not David hide himself with us?" In order to curry favor with Saul, these traitors were guilty of gross inhospitality. What did they care what innocent blood was shed, as long as they earned the graceless monarch's smile! David came quietly among them, hoping for a little rest in his many flights; but they observed him in his solitary abode, and betrayed him. In such a situation, however, he turns to God in prayer; and so strong was his faith that he soon sang himself into delightful serenity!

From verses 1-3, where the Selah makes a pause for us, the Psalmist pleads with God; and then, in the rest of the song, he lays aside all doubt and chants a hymn of joyful triumph. The vigor of faith is the death of anxiety and the birth of security.

fore, let us set the Lord before us at all times; for if we do not, we are in danger of despair.

“Behold, God is mine helper,” the Psalmist declares in verse 4. If we are for Him, He is for us; and if He is for us, then we do not need to fear at all! The Lord will save His people in due time; and in the meantime, He sustains them and bears them up, so that they shall not fail or fall.

David’s present deliverance from the treachery of the Ziphites was a pledge and a foretaste of further deliverance. He speaks of the completion of his deliverance as a thing that was already done, even though he still had many troubles before him. Why? Because he had God’s promise for it, and so he was as sure of it as if it was done already. The Lord would deliver him out of all his troubles. O that He may help us to bear our cross without repining! And may He bring us at last to heaven, in order to share His victories and glory! Let us never allow the voice of praise and thanksgiving to cease in the Church of the redeemed ones.



Lord, we repent of instances and circumstances when we have placed our trust in mortal man, instead of in Your holy name and Almighty strength as our sole refuge and confidence. We praise You as the One Who is our Helper; for You save us from all our troubles in due time, and You bear us up and sustain us in the meantime. Give us grace to be continually looking unto You, and deriving our strength from You; so that we may discover Your gracious hand delivering us out of all our troubles, and making us more than conquerors in the power of Your might! Amen.