

Psalms 54:0 ¶ To the chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil, A Psalm of David, when the Ziphims came and said to Saul, Doth not David hide himself with us?

It is noted that this is another psalm of David sent to the chief Musician and designated to be played on a stringed instrument (from Hebrew for Neginoth). David wrote this prayer when he was on the run from Saul and hid in the wilderness of Ziph.

1 Samuel 23:14 "And David abode in the wilderness in strong holds, and remained in a mountain in the wilderness of Ziph. And Saul sought him every day, but God delivered him not into his hand.... Then came up the Ziphites to Saul to Gibeah, saying, Doth not David hide himself with us in strong holds in the wood, in the hill of Hachilah, which is on the south of Jeshimon?"

Psalms 54:1 ¶ Save me, O God, by thy name, and judge me by thy strength.

It always strikes me that David is often very direct and bold when He talks to God in prayer because He so confident in his faith and, even more important, in God's faithfulness. That is a comfort to this mom who often approaches the LORD the same way, especially on behalf of those I love.

David asks God to save him "by thy name." God's name is indicative of His power and authority over all He has created. Nothing is impossible for Him. He also asks God to judge him by His strength. The Hebrew for "judge" makes reference to a straight course. I think this is a plea for God's direction and provision as He gives Him victory (from Hebrew for "strength") over his enemy.

Psalms 54:2 Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth.

David pleads with God to listen to his prayer. Elsewhere in the psalms, David states that he knows that God knows what we are going to say before we say it.

Psalms 139:4 "For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether."

Frankly, this is one of the more interesting truths about prayer. There is nothing we can bring before God that He does not already know. He knows what's in our hearts and understands all our thoughts—without us ever having to say a word.

1 Samuel 16:7 "for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."

Psalms 139:2 "Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off."

There is never a doubt that God hears the prayers of His people. It would seem that prayer is more for our benefit. It's an opportunity for us to develop intimacy with our Father in heaven. A means by which He strengthens our faith.

Psalms 54:3 For strangers are risen up against me, and oppressors seek after my soul: they have not set God before them. Selah.

In light of the information at the beginning of the psalm, I believe the strangers being referenced are the men of Ziph. Although they were men of Judah, they were strangers to David because instead of protecting a brother from the tribe of Judah, they were ready to betray him to gain influence with King Saul. They offered to deliver David into Saul's hands.

Saul and his men would be the oppressors that sought to take David's life. They were acting in defiance of and in rebellion against their God, the God of Israel.

Selah – an opportunity to meditate

Psalms 54:4 ¶ Behold, God is mine helper: the Lord is with them that uphold my soul.

David was confident that God would protect him. He was confident that the LORD would sustain those that were with him and helped to sustain and defend him. The prophet Samuel had told David that he would one day be king, so he knew that God would do all that was necessary to bring about His will, His promise.

I loved this comment from Spurgeon: "It is a great mercy to have some friends left us, but a greater mercy still to see the Lord among them, for like so many cyphers our friends stand for nothing till the Lord sets himself as a great unit in the front of them."

Psalms 54:5 He shall reward evil unto mine enemies: cut them off in thy truth.

David knew that those that positioned themselves as his enemy were essentially positioning themselves as God's enemies since they were in direct rebellion against God's will. He asks that God destroy his enemies as necessary in faithfulness to His word.

Spurgeon: "Not in ferocious revenge is this spoken, but as an Amen to the sure sentence of the just Judge. Let the veracity of thy threatenings be placed beyond dispute, the decree is right and just, let it be fulfilled. It is not a private desire, but the solemn utterance of a military man, a grossly injured man, a public leader destined to be a monarch, and a man well trained in the school of Moses, whose law ordains eye for eye, and tooth for tooth."

Psalms 54:6 I will freely sacrifice unto thee: I will praise thy name, O Lord; for it is good.

Psalms 54:7 For he hath delivered me out of all trouble: and mine eye hath seen his desire upon mine enemies.

David closes his prayer with thanksgiving by declaring his desire to freely and willingly make sacrifice to God and praise His name for His goodness. The final verse is a declaration of God's deliverance.