

## READ

Psalm 34:1-10  
1 Samuel 21:1-22:5

## CONSIDER

We know God. We have professed our faith in Jesus. We know that our Father in Heaven is the sovereign Lord of all. We strive to follow Jesus in all that we do. But often life is not easy. Over and over again we come face to face with adversity. Sometimes we feel like we have come to dead ends with nowhere to turn. It is the reality of life that things can get out of control. How do you cope with such difficult circumstances? How can you resolve such situations with faith?

These two Sundays, we are going to take a look at the turn of events that David went through in 1 Samuel 21:1-22:5 and the cries of his heart in those moments from Psalm 34. Earlier on in chapter 16, David, an unknown shepherd boy, was anointed by Samuel to succeed the king. He started serving Saul in the king's court, got famous with his heroic killing of Goliath, defeated the Philistines, and won the love of Saul's daughter Michal and the friendship of Saul's son Jonathan. All went well until jealousy and anger took over Saul who decided to kill David. In 1 Samuel 21, David was running for his life. Now a fugitive being hunted by Saul's men, he came to Nob empty handed, pleading for food and weapon. Then he came to Gath, a Philistine city where he was recognized and rumoured as "the king of the land". Overwhelmed with fear, he pretended to be insane. Imagine what would David be thinking and feeling under such circumstances. Could it be fear, doubts, desperation, disillusion and confusion. What would you do in such situations?

Life seems to be in total disarray for David by now. What could he make of such happening after his anointment and rise to fame? Would he not be confused about God's plan for his destiny? In Psalm 56 David cried out to God when he was seized by the Philistines in Gath:

*Be merciful to me, my God, for my enemies are in hot pursuit; all day long they press their attack.  
My adversaries pursue me all day long; in their pride many are attacking me...  
All day long they twist my words; all their schemes are for my ruin.  
They conspire, they lurk, they watch my steps, hoping to take my life. (Ps 56:1-2, 5-6)*

Have you ever been badly misunderstood or even wrongfully attacked and oppressed, your words twisted by slanders? Read this psalm and find out what David pray for in such situations. Examine his faith and knowledge of God. What are the things about God that David counts on in his prayer.

*When I am afraid, I put my **trust in you**. In God, whose **word** I praise—  
**in God I trust** and am not afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?  
On no account let them escape; in your anger, God, **bring the nations down**.  
Record **my misery**; list **my tears** on your scroll— are they not in your record?  
Then my enemies will turn back when I call for help. By this I will **know** that God is for me.*

*In God, whose **word** I praise, in the Lord, whose word I praise— in God I trust and am **not afraid**.  
What can man do to me?*

*I am **under vows** to you, my God; I will present my **thank offerings** to you.*

*For **you have delivered** me from death and my feet from stumbling, that I may walk before  
God in the light of life. (Ps 56:3-4, 7-13)*

David's faith is substantiated with personal knowledge and experience of God that assure him that God sees his misery and can deliver him from trouble. His vow to God is not to be smashed or vanquished by circumstantial situations because he knows and trusts in God's mercy and power. The sovereign will and purpose of God will prevail.

May we see God above and beyond all circumstances, and experience his mercy and grace every step along our way.

See you this Sunday in worship.

Josephine Chow

## **P R A Y**

### ***Psalm 56 (the psalm of David)***

Be merciful to me, my God.... When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.

In God, whose word I praise— in God I trust and am not afraid.

What can mere mortals do to e?

Record my misery; list my tears on your scroll— are they not in your record?

In God, whose word I praise, in the Lord, whose word I praise— in God I trust and am not afraid.

What can man do to me?

I am under vows to you, my God; I will present my thank offerings to you.

For you have delivered me from death and my feet from stumbling,  
that I may walk before God in the light of life.

## DIVING DEEPER

Read 1 Samuel 21:1- 22:5.

If you were in David's shoes, how would you feel and what would you do?

Have you ever experienced similar situations when you were wrongfully accused, oppressed, attacked or misunderstood? How did you feel and react? How may one's faith be tested in times of adversity?

Learn from David's prayer in Psalm 56. What does it tell us about David's faith? How can we pray in times of desperation?

Examine this Psalm carefully and list out all the qualities and attributes of God that David knows and counts on without losing hope? How can such knowledge help in face of adversity and hardship?

Reflect on your life journey and the circumstances and challenges that you are facing today. Pour out to God the cries of your heart. Examine your relation and knowledge of God and reflect on how your faith can be deepened through all kinds of circumstances in life.