

PSALM 11:1-7

CHAPTER STUDIES ON THE PSALTER

"To help us remember this short but sweet Psalm, we will call it, "The Son of the Steadfast."

(Ps. 11:1-3) David, on some unmentioned occasion, faced a temptation to distrust God; these verses (1-3) are about that experience. Perhaps in Saul's court he was advised to flee; flight would have been a breach of duty or a cowardly act. His case was like Nehemiah's enemies, who, under the garb of friendship, tried to trap him by advising escape. Had he done so they would have found grounds for accusation. Nehemiah bravely replied, "Should such a man as I flee?" (Neh. 6:11). David, in the same spirit, refuses to run. He exclaims, **In the LORD put I my trust: How say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?** When Satan can overthrow us by presumption, how craftily will he attempt to ruin us by distrust! He will employ our dearest friends to argue away our confidence. He will use such plausible logic that, unless we assert our immovable trust in Jehovah, we will be like the timid bird that flies to the mountain when danger threatens.

Forcibly the case is put! **For, lo, the wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string,** Flee, flee, defenseless birds, your safety lies in flight. Go, for your enemies will send their arrows into your heart. Hurry; hurry, or you will be destroyed! David seems to have felt the force of the advice. It came home to his soul. Yet he would not yield to it. He would rather face danger than

exhibit a distrust in God. Doubtless, the perils that surrounded David were great and imminent; it was quite true, his enemies were ready to shoot him.

It was equally correct that the foundations of law and justice were destroyed under Saul's government. Yet what were all these things to the man whose trust was in God alone? He could brave the dangers, escape the enemies, and defy the injustice. What can the righteous do? David's answer would be the counter question, "What can't they do?" When prayer engages God on our side, and when faith secures the promise's fulfillment, there is no reason to flee. With a sling and a stone, David killed a giant that frightened Israel (1 Sam. 17:50). If the Lord delivered him from the uncircumcised Philistine, He could surely deliver him from King Saul and his ruffians. There is no such word as impossible in the language of faith. Martial grace knows how to fight and conquer. It does not know how to flee.

(Ps. 11:4) The LORD is in His holy temple.

The heavens are above our heads in all of earth's regions, and so the Lord is ever near in every state and condition. This is a strong reason not to adopt the vile suggestions of distrust. There is one in the temple above, who pleads His precious blood on our behalf. There is one on the throne, who is never deaf

to the intercession of His Son. Why should we fear? What plots can men devise that Jesus will not discover? Satan has desired to have us that he may sift us as wheat, but Jesus is in the temple praying for us (Luke 22:31-32). How can our faith fail? What attempts can the wicked make that Jehovah will not see? He is in His holy temple, delighting in the sacrifice of His Son. He will defeat every device and send a sure deliverance.

The LORD'S throne is in heaven. He reigns supreme. Nothing can be done in heaven, earth, or hell that He does not permit. He is the world's great Emperor. Why should we flee? If we trust this King of kings, is not this enough? Can He not deliver us without our cowardly retreat? Yes, blessed be the Lord our God; we salute Him as Jehovah-nissi. We set up our banners in His name, and instead of flight, we again raise the shout of war.

His eyes behold. The eternal Watcher never slumbers; His eyes never sleep. **His eyelids try the children of men.** He scrutinizes their actions, words, and thoughts. As people, when intently inspecting some minute object, almost close their eyelids to exclude every other object, so the Lord looks all men through and through. God sees each perfectly, as if there were no other creature in the universe. He sees us always. He never removes His eye. He sees us from the recesses of the soul to the glance of the eye. Is not this a sufficient ground of confidence and an abundant answer to depression? My danger is not hidden from Him. He knows my extremity. I rest assured that He will not allow me to perish while I rely only on Him. Why should I

fly like a frightened bird and flee from the dangers that surround me?

(Ps. 11:5) The LORD trieth the righteous. He does not hate them; He only tests them. They are precious to Him, and so He refines them with afflictions. None of the Lord's children can escape from trials. We should not want to, for trials are the channels of many blessings.

But the wicked and him that loveth violence His soul hateth. Why shall I flee from the wicked? If God hates them, I will not fear. Haman was great in the palace, but when he lost favor and the king abhorred him, the lowest servants suggested the gallows for the man they once feared (Esth. 7:9). We will not run away. If God is in the quarrel, questioning the result would be foolish. Sodom and Gomorrah perished by a fiery hail and a brimstone shower from heaven (Gen. 19:24); so will the ungodly. They may gather like Gog and Magog to battle, but the Lord will rain down "overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone" (Ezek. 38:22).

(Ps. 11:6) Some expositors think that the burning wind is an allusion to the simoon, a burning, suffocating wind that blows across the Arabian deserts. "A burning storm," is what Lowth calls it, while another great commentator reads it "wrath wind." In either version, the language is full of terror. What a storm that will be as it overwhelms the despisers of God! What a shower that will be as it pours on impenitent sinners in hell! Repent, rebels, or this fiery deluge will soon surround you. The horrors of hell will be your inheritance. A drop of hell is terrible. What will a

full cup of torment be? Think of it, a cup of misery but not a drop of mercy. Oh, people of God, how foolish to fear the faces of those who will soon be fuel in the fire of hell! Think of their end, their fearful end, and all fear of them turns into contempt and pity.

(Ps. 11:7) The delightful contrast of the last verse is worth our attention. It gives another overwhelming reason why we should "be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58), not carried away with fear or led to adopt carnal expedients to avoid trial. **For the righteous LORD loveth righteousness.** It is not only His obligation to defend righteousness; it is His nature to love to do it. He would deny Himself if He did not defend the just. It is essential to the being of God that He should be just. Fear not, God approves, and if men oppose, what difference would it make? Are we tempted to put our light under a basket or under a bed? (Mark 4:21). Is it suggested that there are ways to avoid the cross and shun the reproach of Christ? Do not listen to the charmer's voice. Seek an increase of faith that you may wrestle against principalities and powers (Eph. 6:12). Follow the Lord outside the camp, bearing His reproach (Heb. 13:13). Mammon, the flesh, and the devil will all whisper, "Flee as a bird to your mountain" (v. 1). Defy them. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). There is no room or reason for retreat. Advance! Let the vanguard push on! On! On! In God's name, on! "The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge" (Ps. 46:7). (*The Treasury of David*, Charles Haddon Spurgeon,

updated by Mark Wash) Our danger, like that of Peter, lies in looking at the wind and the waves instead of looking to the Lord.

Should we dare to burden our minds with the administration of His providence?

What should we do with present dangers and entanglements?

What penalty awaits the wicked? Job 18:9

Job 22:10 Ps. 11:5-6 Prov. 22:5 Isa. 24:17, 18