

Finding rest in God alone

Stress is a major feature on the landscape of modern living isn't it? If I asked you to put your hands up if you have experienced something stressful in the last month I can almost guarantee that 99.9% of you would put up your hand.

Pressure can come from many sources - at work because of short term contracts or targets or deadlines, stress at home because of the rising cost of housing and mortgages, stress from self imposed high expectations of standard of living sometimes media driven that can lead to spiralling debt, relational tension within the extended family, immediate family, in neighbourhood, or in the work place can make life very stressful. The worries that come with aging and living alone and so on. Some of the things we can easily change by simply changing our expectations or better time management or sometimes just admitting wrong and saying sorry but others are out with our control. It is a vast topic but I think everyone is affected by it in one way or another. Of course sometimes a little bit of stress can be our friend – it gets the adrenaline pumping and can help us achieve things we never thought possible but at other time it can cause all the systems to shut down and be overwhelmed.

The thing that is causing stress or worry here is not because of a physical conflict but an attack on a persons reputation and honour. Look at verse 7

vs 7 *“my salvation and my honour depend on God”*

tie that in with verses 3 and 4

vs 3 *“ How long will you assault a man?
Would you throw him down –
This leaning wall, this tottering fence”*

The sense here is that the person has been already subject to some kind of verbal attack and left feeling vulnerable so he is a tottering, on the verge of collapse. The attackers are smelling blood so Vs 4

*“They fully intend to topple him
From his lofty place;
They take delight in lies.
With their mouths they bless
But in their hearts they curse”*

The reference to lofty place may give the impression of a person who is needing to be pulled down a peg or two but rather it is a continuation of the tottering wall metaphor. The wall will be toppled like the wall of a defeated city – scattered and dispersed.

This psalm has come undoubtedly from David's own experience. It might be tempting to think the psalm is

about Jedutun because it is for him but Jeduthun was one of the choir leaders appointed by David¹ Chron 16:41-42.

1 Chronicles 16:42 ⁴² *Heman and Jeduthun were responsible for the sounding of the trumpets and cymbals and for the playing of the other instruments for sacred song.*

So we can see there he had particular responsibility for the instrumentations.

Now as Christians we should be being honourable people – true to our word, speaking truth not lies, things of weight not unsubstantiated gossip and so on. People of honour not so much that people will speak well of us but more that people may be drawn to the one who under girds our lives. The Lord Jesus and his saving power.

But if you start standing up for that which is right and true you can be sure others will not like it. For the Christian living this way is more than just being moral and certainly not self righteous, it is striving to be Christ-like. And when we strive to Christ likeness you can bet your bottom dollar some people will not like it.

What do I mean? I remember one lad coming and asking what to do when others in the office were sending him porn in his computer. It was not a hate

campaign, the other blokes were trying to be friendly, join in the fun. Another person was asked to fill in a false receipt so that they other person could claim more on their expenses. Another was asked to lie in court – told to say they saw something they did not see. Another to lie about completion dates on a council project to save someone else's political neck.

Sometimes when you stick your head above the parapet you will get flack. It can almost become a game for some – how long will it take to tarnish your character. Vs 4 “They take delight in lies” deception and misinformation. “With their mouth they bless, (sickly insincere blessing) but in their hearts they curse.” What is a game to them can cause real anguish to the victim.

So what is to be done. The psalmist is telling us two things

- 1. Find rest in God**
- 2. The defender of the faithful.**