

When God Is Silent and Evil Prevails

by Shane Idleman

When God seems silent and evil prevails, we must remember that He is always with us, refining us and removing impurities, and that His timing is not always our timing.

Duration: 42:17

Scripture: Psalm 10, Proverbs 10:2, Isaiah 1:17, Romans 14:1, Hebrews 11:6

Topics: "God's Silence", "Trust in God's Timing"

Description

Shane Idleman addresses the feelings of abandonment and confusion when God seems silent amidst the prevalence of evil in the world. He emphasizes the importance of venting to God, as seen in Psalms, and acknowledges the struggle for immediate justice in a world filled with pride and wickedness. Idleman encourages believers to trust in God's timing and to recognize that challenges often serve as training for spiritual growth. He reminds the congregation that God is always present, even in difficult times, and calls for prayer and encouragement for those in leadership positions. Ultimately, he urges the faithful to remain thankful and to seek God's presence amidst the chaos.

Transcript

■ Hope is yours to take, peace is found in grace ■ I'm gonna talk to you tonight in what we wanna do with the book of Psalms. It's not necessarily a long teaching, maybe sometimes, but more of an exhortation. So to take a break from worship, look at God's word, and then go back into a time of worship and prayer at the altar.

And it's encouraging that you are here tonight, because I know your hearts are hungry for God. You wanna hear from God. But the title is, When God is Silent and Evil Prevails.

Anybody ever feel that way? Just look at the news headlines. And we'll put up Psalm 10. The psalmist here says, "'Why do you stand afar off, O Lord?' Have you ever felt like that? "'Why do you hide in times of trouble?' The wicked in his pride, and that's what it is.

They persecute the poor. And he's saying, "'Lord, let them be caught in the plots "'which they themselves have devised.'" And so what you need to realize as we go through the Psalms is it's very healthy to vent to God. It's okay to vent to God.

You're not gonna hurt His feelings. Because He knows it's a true cry. It's a true... Do you ever have kids ever come to your grandkids and they vent? Mom, I don't understand.

Why is this happening? And we want to many times explain to them what is happening. But why do you stand afar? Why do you hide in times of trouble? And the reason we often feel this way is we want immediate justice. Something was done that is wrong.

We want it to be corrected. We want justice to be served immediately. But on God's timetable, it doesn't quite work that way.

There's a method behind why He's doing what He is doing. And you look and you go, this is just... I can't understand what is happening. And I spoke on this.

You can find it on YouTube to get more information. The title of the message is When Kingdoms Collide. And that's what's happening today.

You see the kingdom of God, light, and you see the kingdom of darkness colliding. So on one hand, obviously, we're going to see a lot of things that don't make sense. Because you have one kingdom that is hell-bent on darkness.

And you have us trying to spread the light. It's always gonna be at odds. And what I mentioned earlier, you saw actually our sheriff, who I highly respect.

He was actually here a couple weeks ago answering questions with one of the county board supervisors as well. And he put out just a scathing article today, very brief, to the board, the LA County Board of Directors. And we're in Los Angeles County.

And they want to get rid of, basically fire, terminate 4,000, I believe, at LASD, Lancaster Sheriff's Department, because they're not vaccinated. So most of us are like, have you lost your mind? And so when you weigh it on the scale, I mean, fear is causing a lot of these decisions. There is so much trust in the messenger RNA.

Hopefully it sends the right message to the protein to hopefully send the right message to the cell to hopefully ward off COVID. Hopefully that's our only hope. So there's so much fear against the virus.

And there's so much hope. And I allow Romans 14 to speak to this issue. Many of you know my background in health and fitness, so I'm not gonna get in debate on it all.

And I just let God's people choose what they think is best. I think it's good. You're not gonna end up judging others because many, many solid believers who are walking with the Lord, who I look up to, decided to get the vaccine.

And many, many other solid believers who I look up to, decided not to. And so, you know, you've gotta just leave it at that as far as opinions go. But what is happening is there is so much trust.

By the way, go and check out Pfizer's stock increase if you get a chance this week. And the most money they've ever made, I believe last quarter. And so, but you see fear.

They've gotta get this shot or else we're all gonna die. The virus is gonna kill us all. And so this fear is making them make these terrible decisions.

But they don't weigh the fear of criminal activity on the other side, which is going to far outweigh what is going on. Especially when you see the Omicron and how it wasn't as bad as people thought and we see people getting through it. And yes, people have died.

People are sick. I know people just like you. But at the same time, we have to use common sense and wisdom and God's Word and not fear.

Precautions, use wisdom, but at the same time not fear. So that's what's happening. That's this big push that you're seeing is fear.

This vaccine is our only hope. You gotta get the jab or we could kill somebody. And they're letting fear.

Trust me, I've talked to a lot of these people. That's what it is. It's fear.

And so you see, fear is a wonderful motivator. Hitler used it to silence the churches. And fear, you will give up freedoms.

You will give up freedoms when you're in fear. Do you know the freedoms we lost after 9-11? I mean, I can get into, there's quite a few with security issues, wiretapping, surveillance, but even at the airport, you ever get any of those freedoms back? I mean, they still are implementing many of those things 22 years later. Funny story, it's not in my notes.

I just thought of it. But TSA pulled me over last week when I was in Texas. And they flagged me.

Sir, get over here, they're watching you. I gotta undo your bag here and search it. I'm like, that's fine.

And so you got a TSA officer, the other guy there, and they pulled out a Ziploc bag filled with white powder. And they said, what is this? I said, it's Kajava health-based protein powder. But we're gonna have to test it.

I'm like, that's fine. So they have it on their little machine. They test it and like, okay, you're good.

And give it back to me. But, you know, everybody's watching. My daughter's like, what is going on here? But, you know, they're in tune.

I'm kind of glad security's increased a little because there's some interesting things that can happen in airports and things like that. And so that's just a side note. But fear is what is happening.

You're like, how have they lost their mind in these areas? And what is going on? The darkness, they are so driven by fear because they're not ready to meet their Maker. And so they're gonna make decisions and policies and procedures. And it's a lot of pride and rebellion.

Let's show these 4,000 officers who's really in charge. And we're going to just get rid of them because the Board of County Supervisors and politicians in general need to realize is they are servants of the people. They work for you.

And that's what they forget. So I'm sure I'll get an email on this Monday, but Spurgeon said, the presence of God is the joy of His people. Oh, if I could get the presence of God, I don't know about you, but I come here sometimes in a bad mood.

And when you get worship going and once you pray, Lord, I want Your presence. I don't want to play church anymore. I've been in many dead churches and it's not fun.

I've been in many dead prayer meetings and it's not fun. We want the presence of God where He comes down and literally baptizes His people with His presence. They have the fire of God in their heart and they're hungry for righteousness.

They want more of His Word. Oh, the presence of God. You wouldn't want to leave at eight o'clock if God truly visited this place.

The presence of God is our joy. But any suspicion of His absence is distracting beyond measure, correct? When I don't feel His presence and when fear and doubt come in, that's when we really begin to get distracted and discouraged. And I want to encourage you, you can find it online.

It's called The Treasury of David by Charles Spurgeon. And he walks through the psalm. I mean, it's big volume.

And I'm going to be using him quite a bit. And so, because he's done such an exceptional job here on commentaries on this area. He also said the refiner.

The refiner. We don't know what a refiner is as much today, but 150 years ago, there was a job where a person was a refiner. So you would bring to them gold and silver and things and they would refine it.

They would remove the dross. They would take out the things, the impurities and leave you with the pure gold and the pure silver. He said the refiner is never far from the mouth of the furnace.

In other words, he's got the gold in the furnace and he's right there by the fire. He's watching it because he has to watch what's taking place and the Son of God is always walking in the midst of the flames when His holy children are cast into them. And so we have to remind ourselves of these promises of God.

That God is with us regardless of what we're going through. He doesn't just go to some other far away galaxy. I almost said universe.

That's an inside joke. Let them be caught in the plots which they have devised. Proverbs 10, 2 again.

So he's saying let the wicked be caught in the plots which they have devised. And I almost wanna take you through a lot of examples in history where there's one famous example where there was a well-known atheist who died, said he's gonna get rid of Christianity and now they're building, I don't know if they are now, but they went and started printing Bibles in his house when he died. And it became a Bible printing facility.

You have so many examples of this. What about when Haman was hung by the same gallows that he was preparing for Mordecai in the book of Ruth? He prepared the gallows. He prepared, here's where he's gonna hang.

And he ended up hanging. What about Goliath? He said, I'm gonna feed you to the birds instead of his carcass was fed to the birds. And we have so many examples.

David eventually sat on Saul's throne and death was sent to destroy Jesus, but we know the outcome. And so I'm convinced, although we might not see it immediately, but there is a day of recompense. God

told one of the prophets, prepare to meet your Maker, O Israel.

So no matter, even though it's difficult now, we don't see the justice and our hearts cry for justice. The millions of children that have been slaughtered in the abortion mills and our heart, oh Lord, it's coming. It's coming.

But also our heart can't be go get them, God. It should be go save them, Lord. It's hard.

It's hard to pray for Pelosi and Biden and Newsom. I can keep going. But it's hard because you see kingdoms are colliding.

They don't have, it's a different lens they're looking through. And we're called to pray for these people. When I begin to really repent before God and say, Lord, forgive my heart.

I don't wanna be one of those people, say, Lord, cast down fire, get rid of them. I know there's gonna be justice and judgment, but I also, Lord, would you save them? And God, do something in their hearts. We're called, actually the Bible tells us to pray for those in positions of leadership above us.

But what could God be teaching us when He seems distant like He did in this case? And I went through, the reason I started in Psalm 10 is because I already did Psalms one through nine. And then the pandemic hit. Oh, the pandemic, pandemic hit.

So anyway, you can find those online, couldn't resist. You can find those online. And then now we're at Psalm 10.

But the last, when the first nine chapters of the book of Psalms, we talked about this area. And it could be that it's not yet God's timing. Or in your own life, something's challenging happening.

It's not the right timing yet. And we want the comfort, the convenience. God, fix this problem.

I've got a bill today. I need the money tomorrow kind of mentality. And God often relies on timing.

I shouldn't say often, He always relies on His timing. It's either His timing or no timing at all. Also, He is training us.

I call it the four T's. Timing, training, transitioning, and tearing. He could be training us.

I don't know about you, but the stronger I get in my faith, it's often because of the challenges. It's because of fighting evil and facing evil and picking myself back up and fighting again and strengthening my faith and strengthening my trust in God. And though I can't see anything, Lord, I have faith in You.

Without faith, it's impossible to please God. And He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him even when you don't feel like it. So that's actually for you workout buffs.

This is spiritual working out is when you exercise faith. It's training. There's difficulties every day.

And then there's transitioning. Often God is transitioning us maybe to some other type of maybe vocation or it could be moving. It could be getting into ministry.

It could be, we don't know, but sometimes that pressure will cause us to transition into a different direction. For example, when I finally left 24 Hour Fitness in 2000, I was making good money in Custom House and

the new Dodge truck was out back then. I had my truck and I had another vehicle so I could keep my truck in the garage and keep it clean.

Men, you ever do that? And so everything's going good, but I knew God wanted to get me out of that. I was like, the struggle within, like I need it. I just, I don't want it.

I can't do this anymore. I don't love this anymore. I love God, but I'm uncomfortable.

I don't want to leave this. And I fought it for a few months. And then God brought more difficulty and more challenge and the pressure from the corporate office and hitting certain numbers and just the pressure and evil's prevailing and people are lying about things.

It's just, what is going on? Well, it forced me to transition. Without that, I might still be there because it's comfortable. You can, most of you can relate.

If things are going great, why ruin it? But God ruins it and then you transition. Now, I would encourage you if God is encouraging or prompting you to do something, obey. Don't have to wait for the transitioning to come.

But many times we don't know until that transition takes place. And then there's a tearing. Sometimes when God is distant, Lord, I don't hear you.

I don't see you. I don't know what your plan is for this area of my life. God is tearing my heart.

He's ripping my heart open and so I begin to repent and call on Him. And this happens to many people who are not quite walking with the Lord. They've drifted and God begins to just remove His presence and let all hell break loose and it begins to tear their heart.

It begins to rip them apart in a good way because remember, God doesn't tear you down to keep you there. He gets you to, do you remember in math, I didn't do really good in arithmetic, but you had to reduce it down to its lowest common denominator. So sometimes He will reduce you down before He's going to begin to multiply and build back up.

And I've seen this more than anything. We want the Joel Osteen type of Christianity, right? My best life now. Everything's going great.

I'm happy. I'm healthy. Positive thoughts.

I'm a good guy and I'm going to be a millionaire and I'm going to have my best life right now and I want things to go well and I want the trophy spouse and I want just everything. And then God says, that's not Christianity. Now some of those things might happen.

I believe God blesses His people. There's nothing wrong with encouraging, hey, God will bless you. But He might not.

What's your definition of blessed? And so the true biblical Christianity is say, I pick up my cross, I die to self, and I follow you, Lord, wherever that may lead. That is true biblical Christianity. And when we're doing that, the challenges aren't as difficult because it's not a threat to my comfort.

It's not a threat to my way of life. And then verses three and four, for the wicked boasts of his heart's desire. Don't they? They boast, I mean, oh, I shouldn't say this.

All those guys getting fired from CNN was kind of fun to watch. The mayor of New York a year ago, boom. His brother, boom.

The CNN producer, boom. Now this other head of CNN, boom. I mean, just, I'm working through that, so help me.

I'm going to pray for him too. But they boast, don't they? They boast, they boast, and there comes a time where God will drop the hammer and even the prideful man will bow before him and be humble before them. That's why God says, you humble yourself, don't let me humble you.

And with the pride, there's a season where they boast until God breaks them down. And I see this a lot when an athlete is so arrogant. LeBron James.

But, and then God, bam! Just smacks them. Injury, missing shots, just boom, can't hit anything. There's a humbling that goes on there.

The wicked, they boast. He blesses the greedy and he renounces the Lord. And the wicked in his proud continence does not seek God.

God is in none of his thoughts. Again, Spurgeon, see the effect of pride? It kept the man from seeking God. It is hard to pray with a stiff neck and an unbending knee.

I'm telling you, you've got to download Treasuries of David. It's like a good reading every day. God is not in all of his thoughts.

He thought much, but he had no thoughts for God. The only place where God is not is in the thoughts of the wicked. That is profound because God is everywhere.

But in the thoughts of the wicked, he is not there because they are God. That is pride, that's the destructive nature of pride. This is a damning accusation for where the God of heaven is not, the Lord of hell is reigning and raging.

And if God is not in your thoughts, then our thoughts will bring us to eternal perdition. Eternal damnation. Is that not true? If the thoughts of God, the right thoughts, are not in our hearts and not in our thinking, that person is condemned already.

Pride kept the man from seeing, hearing, and experiencing God. If you didn't hear Sunday's message, go back and rewind that from a few days ago. I already talked about this, but we talked about the destructive nature of pride, and it can prevent even the Christian from truly seeing, hearing, and experiencing God.

You can be a believer. Did you know that? You can be a believer, have the Holy Spirit, but because of pride, you're quenching the Holy Spirit, and you're grieving the Holy Spirit. And we don't see things with our spiritual eyes.

We don't hear things. We don't experience God at a very deep level because pride, a form of pride is self-preservation. Preserving self.

And you can spot it real easily, especially when you get couples together. The blame game. A truly repentant, broken, humble person does not play the blame game.

They own it. Now, they're not a doormat. They'll lovingly challenge some things, but they own it.

Because at the heart of repentance is taking responsibility. You take responsibility, you own it, and you want to fix the damage you did. It goes along with that whole concept of repentance.

And then verse five. His ways are always prospering. They're really not, but this is what the psalmist sees because it appears, does it not, that the wicked are always prospering? Amazon stock up.

Tesla stock up. All these guys and actresses, and it's like they're just experiencing tons of success. Your judgments are far above, out of His sight.

So this person, this wicked person is always prospering. So God's judgments, God's principles, His commandments, they're always out of His sight. He's not looking to God.

As for all of His enemies, He sneers at them. The wicked are deceived. They confuse God's patience with His approval.

I've said that many times before. Is that not what's happening? The wicked confuse God's patience with His approval. Well, nothing's happening to me.

And I can't tell you how many times I've heard this talking to people who are not in a good spot or don't know the Lord. Well, Shane, I know what you're saying, but look at it, my career's never been better. We're going to Cancun next week.

My stock is just incredible. Marriage is pretty good. Cars are paid off.

What are you talking about, I need God? That's deception. Because eternity is forever. You're talking about like a piece of sand on all the beaches of the world.

And they look at that little pebble of sand. They say, look at my life. No, compare it.

Compare it to the beaches of the world and you still don't hit eternity. The wicked are deceived. So stay to the compass even in the midst of the storm.

Stay to the compass. In other words, hold your ground even in the midst of that storm. Verse 6, He said in His heart, I shall not be moved.

I shall never be in adversity. Boy, this guy. The pride, I can feel the pride and this was 3,000 years ago.

The wicked say, I shall not be moved. Nothing's going to happen to me. I shall never have challenges and adversity.

I'm a self-made man. None of this is going to happen to me. And we know that false security opens the door for godlessness to enter.

False security. Boy, false security, we take security in things and we rest and rely on things that have no eternal value and really aren't secure. I was reading about a general by the name of Pompeii.

Many of you, maybe you've read of him. He was actually, I think, 60 years or so before Jesus. He actually conquered Jerusalem as well.

But what would happen is when he could see he's not winning a battle, you know, he's trying to siege the city. Oh, this is going to be tough. This is going to take a while.

What he would do is say, listen, I'll make a peace treaty with you. I don't want to kill you. You don't want to kill me.

All I need is for you to take in these wounded and dying soldiers and sick soldiers and care for them because I can't do it out here. And so they would do that and then these soldiers would eventually open the city gate and let the army of Pompeii in. Check your history.

False security. You see how compromise works? We tell people who have a lot of money and have a problem with addictions this all the time, don't go back to that one drink. Don't go back to that one hit.

Don't, because see, that's a false sense of security. And often you might have something or do something and say, oh, that wasn't too bad. Hey.

And then the devil just, come on. He's looking for an opportune time to take you out. So, and this has to do with all areas.

A false sense of security. I hear this a lot. I talk to people, I've lived here all my life.

So I know a lot of people in town. That's good and bad. But haven't seen them at church in a long time.

Like, oh yeah, I go now and then to such and such church or yeah, I'm doing good spiritually and you know Shane, my favorite line. You ready for my favorite line? I love this line. You know, I don't have to go to church to be a Christian.

True, but you'll never operate efficiently as a Christian. You will never be mature to the degree you can be as a Christian. You will never grow spiritually at all as a Christian because usually what happens is like, I've been hurt by people.

I'm not going back. I don't have to. And they never grow.

They just stay stuck on stupid. Can I say that? Let's back up. They stay stuck on immature.

And there's a false sense of security. I know the man upstairs. I don't have to go every week.

And now, on the other side of that, just going to church doesn't make you a Christian either. But there has to be a desire to want to fellowship with God's people in corporate worship. And you get something here corporately that you don't get alone.

Maybe you do. I sure don't. There's a dynamic that takes place.

It's incredible. You know, no matter how often I put YouTube on and worship and my earbuds on and at four in the morning on my couch, it doesn't feel like Blessing and Madeline and Jennifer. God gives us that atmosphere.

But a false sense of security. A lot of Christians too right now are taking security in their stock or their retirement or their employment. Oh, I work at such and such.

I could never get fired. I'm tenured. You know what that means? Or Boeing, Rockwell.

I mean, this is job security for 25. You know how many times I've heard that and then a month later, they were being fired? The only place to find true security is in a deep and abiding relationship with your Savior. That's the only place you're going to find true security.

Because then if they take your job, Lord, it's on You. We have too much hope in our job and in our homes. And don't get me wrong, I don't want to lose those things, but if Christ's before you, who can be against you? And you can move on with your in-laws.

That's what we could do, hon. We actually wouldn't mind that. We have a great relationship with our in-laws.

Praise God for that. Verse seven. His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and oppression.

Under his tongue is trouble and iniquity. This is the wicked, evil person. Beware of such a man.

Have no dealings with him. None but the silliest of geese will go to the fox's sermon. You've got to love how they used to write 150 years ago.

Because the fox is going to eat the geese. And none but the most foolish will put themselves in the society of deceivers and frauds. And I really felt this strongly all week, well, since Monday.

I've been working on it for two days. Take inventory tonight. Who is near you? Who is influencing you? Because although we do minister to people in all settings, if our friendship is with the wicked, and the cursing, the deceiving, and there's a friendship there, there's a camaraderie, be careful because that often can wear on you.

I've shared this before. It was 2003 or 2004. Actually, it's common knowledge, but I was a heavy equipment operator for Quartz Hill Water District.

And hopefully, another guy still worked there. But that atmosphere was... I mean, I'm coming from, I'm leaving 24-Hour Fitness. I'm living with my mom.

Back following the Lord. I'm going to church. I'm just loving the Lord.

And then I go, boom! Into this atmosphere of six or seven, working with six or seven guys who don't know the Lord. Construction guys. Boy, oh boy, oh boy.

I was not prepared for that. And I could tell the more I would... Maybe let's go to lunch. And let's laugh at their jokes.

And I started to become, I became an abomination like the thing I loved. Hosea talks about that too to God's people. And as much as I wanted to influence them, that pull was too strong.

It was just too strong. And I had to make some difficult decisions and just cut. I'm going to show up for work.

I'm going to go home. But that can slip in, can't it? Often. Especially in the lives of young adults.

That's why it's good for parents to be very cautious of what friends are around your children. Remember, you call the shots. They don't.

If you don't like little Tommy that's 14 because he's a bad influence, well, then you just don't... You don't have little Tommy come over. Well, maybe come over to your house because you can watch it better there. But we're leery if you go to other people's houses you don't know well and things you don't know.

You're that shepherd. You're that guardian of your child. That evil influence.

And I've seen, especially in young adults and teens all the way even up, if it's easier for me to be pulled down, right? I mean, Jennifer could probably pull me down easier than I could pull her up. Always easier to pull someone down to their level than for you to try to pull them up. Now, I know that's difficult because it's important for us to have relationships with unbelievers.

We're not supposed to just go live in a tent somewhere and only go to Christian churches, Christian schools, and oh, the world's bad. But if that, I've heard it said before, that are you affecting the world or is the world infecting you? See, now I can go back to these people in my high school reunion and who I used to work for. Now I can minister to them, but there was a point where they were pulling me down and I had to make some hard decisions because I wasn't at a good spot spiritually.

And so be careful. Be careful who is near you, who is influencing you. And then verses 8-10.

He sits in the lurking places of the village. Look at this imagery of this evil person. They always hide in the darkness, correct? In the secret places, he murders the innocent.

He murders the innocent. Is there a Planned Parenthood on the west side in a great area? It's in a poor area. Often.

Do the research. His eyes are secretly fixed on the helpless. That's what I don't like about evil people.

Their eyes are fixed on the helpless. They're fixed on the innocent because that's who they can go after. Also, you see it in the political scene.

Republican, Democrat, whatever it is, they often go for the helpless and those who will, we call them sheeple, right? They're like sheep. They just follow whatever they say. Free money.

Free this. He catches the poor when he draws them into his net. He crouches.

He lies low that the helpless may fall by his strength. In other words, he's low. He's kind of back.

He's not positioned. That evil always hides itself. Spurgeon again, there are always evil men lying in wait for the saints.

We are never safe except when the Lord is with us. Before a lion pounces, he often crouches. So be careful in this area.

The enemy's often crouching and hiding. Many give the appearance of humility before they attack. Be careful of the soothed talker.

You ever hear those people? They're just too good to be true. Just a smooth talker. Kind of like a snake oil salesman.

That's what the evil is like. Verse 11, He has said in his heart, again, he's challenging God, God has forgotten. He hides his face.

He will never see me. In other words, he's committing all this evil. And he says God has forgotten.

He will not see me. Look at what I'm getting away with. And if you interview and you look into the lives of many people, people that have done time in prison, they didn't get caught usually on the first offense.

It was a history of, look what I got away with. Look what I did as a teenager. I mean, what are we talking about, prison? We all should be in prison, probably.

But there was this doing things that, look, I didn't get caught. That wasn't too bad. And this is the same thing that happens here.

God's forgotten. He hides his face. He will never see me.

Many comfort themselves with the idea that God is blind. And then verses 12 through 15, Arise, O Lord. Arise, that's funny.

Get up, God. Get up from your slumber. Get up and do something.

Oh God, lift up your hand. In other words, do something. Do not forget the humble.

Why do the wicked renounce God? He has said in his heart, you will not require an account. The wicked is saying, God's not going to require anything from me. And as we often see, you're going to see this throughout the Psalms, that there's often a call of desperation.

He's not really asking God to wake up. He's showing God what's in his heart. God, act on my behalf.

Would you arise? Would you do something? I'm at my wits end. I can't handle much more. God, hear the cries of your humble servant and do something on behalf of me.

But we see the wicked are brazen and shameless and filled with bold arrogance. And then verses 16 through 18. Now, this is something else you'll find as we go through.

There's a call of desperation. He gets real discouraged, but then he encourages himself. You don't read a lot of times Psalms like, they'll just get so discouraged.

Oh, where is God? I'm destroyed. I'm destitute. I'm never going to make it.

It never ends there, often. There's a few exceptions, but often there's like, okay, it's time to get up and fight again. Do you ever feel better after venting? Of course you do.

You vent to your spouse. Okay, now I feel better. He vented to God.

Lord, how did the wicked prosper? Why are they getting away with it? They wait for the innocent. Oh God, get up, wake up and fight for me. Fight, your humble servant is seeking you.

Okay, now that I've vented to God, which really, that actually becomes a prayer, does it not? That's a prayer. That's a heartfelt engagement with your Creator. God, help me, I'm struggling through these issues.

I'd rather be completely honest with God instead of trying to come up here and pray in the King James language and act spiritual like I have it all together. Because it's a true, genuine prayer. So he says, the Lord is King forever and ever.

He's changing his tune. The nations have perished out of the land, but our God will never leave. Even the nations will perish.

Kings will be risen up and kings will be dethroned and governors will come and presidents will come. Everything will change, but God sits on the throne. He will never change.

He is an ever-present help in time of need. His throne is from eternity past to eternity present. That's why I say at the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, and he's reminding himself of that great truth.

You have heard the desires of the humble. Listen, now he's saying, God, You have heard my humble cry. You have prepared my heart.

You have caused Your ear to hear me and You will do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of the earth may oppress no more. It's interesting, he talks about the fatherless often. Why is God's heart for the fatherless? Well, because God designed a protective covering for the family, that being the father.

As we know in many communities and for most people, the father is absent. They call the absentee father and most people in jail are there because of an absent father. Most men who engage in rape have displaced anger because of fatherless homes.

Suicide, fatherless homes. Marriage out of wedlock, fatherless homes. It's an epidemic.

And as I often remind the men, listen, you don't have to leave home to be absent. You can be absent emotionally from your family and you can be absent spiritually. Running from the very calling that God has given you.

So God has designed a protective covering in the father. This is why He fights for the fatherless. Those who have no protective covering, those who are, the other places in Scripture talks about the barren child or the child just having no protection and the widow with no security.

And God says, I will be that father to these people. And so we see here that venting to God can be very healthy and beneficial. He was discouraged, but then He encouraged Himself.

And so that's what I want to leave you guys with tonight. It's a time of being encouraged. Yes, a lot of things are going on.

All hell is breaking loose. But it's also time to encourage ourselves in the Lord. And remember, we are still so blessed beyond any other nation on the planet and any other nation that's ever existed.

We are still blessed of God. And my concern is that we start to grumble and complain instead of being thankful. And we all know the outcome of grumbling and complaining.

It's not good.

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