

SERIES TITLE: **SURVIVAL SONGS**

PART FOUR: **SURVIVING TOMORROW'S FEARS**

TEXT: **PSALM 55**

#### **INTRODUCTION.**

This series focuses on seven songs from the Hymnal of Scripture—the Psalms. This collection was written and compiled over a period of perhaps 1,000 years. King David wrote 75 of the Psalms. Asaph and the sons of Korah were also major contributors, while Solomon, Moses, Heman, and Ethan are also named. In 48 cases, the author is not identified. The seven psalms in this study have a survival theme. In each one, the human author expresses some desperate longing or need. We can identify with these feelings of abandonment, fear, guilt, and distress. These honest songs have much to teach us about how God works during such times.

#### **DISCUSSION.**

One study has shown that 30% of our worries are over things from the past that cannot be changed. In addition, at least 40% of our fears and worries are about things that never happen. Does this information help in dealing with the issues that concern you? Why or why not?

#### **EXAMINATION.**

Vv.1-3 David cries out to God over his troubled thoughts. He describes himself as distraught, which means distracted. In what ways can fear and worry distract us?

David's distractions are not only his inner thoughts, but the voices and stares of enemies. Review some of the times when David would have experienced such opposition. For example, look at the text and title of Psalm 54. The incident referred to is 1 Samuel 23:19-23. Another example is Psalm 56, which refers to 1 Samuel 21:10-15.

Vv.4-5 His emotions are twisted in knots. It is not merely the "what ifs" but fear of death itself.

Vv.6-8 David's initial reaction is to run away. When is it inappropriate to flee, to hide from our fears and worries? Are there any biblical principles to guide us in the decision?

Vv.9-11 Some of the fears David describes are "in the city" and on "its streets." The safety and stability of his society are at risk. His concerns sound familiar to ones we hear and maybe express ourselves. How should the people of God respond?

Vv.12-15 What increases David's pain is that his enemy was a close friend. This person is not named, but the betrayal is also mentioned in Psalm 41:9. This is the Scripture Jesus

quotes hundreds of years later, in reference to Judas Iscariot (John 13:18). The king of Israel and the King of kings both experienced the betrayal of someone close to them. This Psalm covers a range of fears from those that are widespread and societal, to concerns that are individual and intimate. To what extent is the combination of those fears the cause of David being overwhelmed with horror?

Vv.16-23 David returns to the common theme of crying out to God. Evening, morning, noon are three regular times for prayer (Daniel 6:10). It begins with evening because that was the start of the Jewish day. He expresses the victory God gives, but also the judgement of God against his enemies. What do we do with that information? Is it ever right to pray in that manner? Jesus has called us to a much different response and modeled it himself in the face of great pain and injustice. David's verses of vengeance are echoes of entire psalms given to vengeful attitudes. Psalm 69, 79, 109, 139 are examples. These are called "Imprecatory Psalms." One important feature is that these words of judgement are not an expression of personal revenge or private vindictiveness. They leave vengeance in the hands of God. David is zealous for God's cause. What is the difference?

#### **APPLICATION.**

- In what ways do you hold on to or hoard your fears and worries?
- What does it look like to "cast it away," to practice the truth that is repeated in 1 Peter 5:7?
- FACT: What is a key truth that you understood from this passage?
- REACT: What did you feel?
- ACT: What are you going to do?