

# SEEKING GOD IN PERPLEXING TIMES

## (Sermon Summary)

### **Reading: Psalm 60.**

We have been looking at the life of David in our Evening Service sermon series. This Psalm is actually one that the Lord moved David to compose. It comes from early in his reign as king, after engagement in battle with Edom, referred to in 2 Samuel 8:10 and 1 Chronicles 18. Though there had been overall success, there had been difficulties too which is what this Psalm refers to. Some of those problems might have related to ongoing troubles with the house of Saul, amounting to close to civil war breaking out. The questions David puts to the Lord in verses 9 and 10 show David's perplexity as to how future victories will be accomplished if the Lord is not with His people. But, as we see in this Psalm, perplexity can be the source of heartfelt prayer.

#### **1. Perplexing times do befall God's people.**

David had the Lord's promises to him (v6) which foresaw victory over enemies and the securing of territory for the Lord's people. But the process of securing those promises had suffered setbacks. David is now perplexed as to how they could proceed if the Lord was not with them. This is reflected in his observations in verses 2 and 3, and in his puzzlement as to how they would be able to secure victory and the capturing of Petra, the fortified mountain-top city of Edom.

Sometimes in church life there can be setbacks and frowning providences. Family life can present challenges and perplexities. Our health can take sudden changes of direction for the worse. But in all these things we note how David looks on these setbacks. Behind them he sees the hand of God. He says of the Lord, 'You have brought these things upon us,' (vv 1-3, v10). It is difficult at times to accept this, but it is right to see the hand of God behind all the events of life, including the hard knocks that might come. Things are not randomly happening to us and with these setbacks, the Lord will give us grace. The Lord has not promised us a life of ease but one that involves hardship and soldiering. The Lord reserves the right to remove our health and our comforts from us. We should not be discouraged but, like David, we should see the Lord is at work in all the details of our lives, however perplexing those things might be.

#### **2. We are to make enquiries.**

Like David, we should ask the Lord questions (vv9-10). This was not an indication of lack of faith on the part of David. He fully believed in the Lord's plans to accomplish victories for His people (vv6-8). But when those plans fail seemingly to come to pass, we are right to enquire of the Lord to find out what is happening. And in asking questions, we should fully expect answers from the Lord. He is a God who hears and answers the prayers of His people, including the questions they have.

We should follow David's pattern when 'things are not working out' and make enquiries of the Lord. When we have a degree of inner turmoil, we should seek Him in prayer. Sometimes the absence of inner spiritual pressure is not a good sign but is an indication to us that we have grown spiritually idle and that we are not properly engaging with Him. After all, we want the Lord to 'go out with our armies' and to see Him win great victories in the world. There are plenty of enemies that need treading down (v12). There are plenty of pressure points where confrontation is needed against the ways of the world. There is more ground that needs taking for the Lord. We need help and we should not be too shy to ask questions of the Lord until we have the answers we need.

### **3. We are confident of progress.**

Whatever might be the hardships and attendant perplexities that we encounter, we are confident that our relationship with the Lord is nevertheless in tact and secure.

See how David knows that he is beloved in the sight of the Lord (v5). This he still knows to be true whatever else might be happening to him. David knows the Lord has put up a banner of truth (v4) which is His word to which people flock and find shelter there. It is the place where we find others too who are of like-mind and where we can enjoy fellowship together. Under His banner of truth, things make more sense to us. What before did not make sense now begins to make sense.

We should always, however perplexed we are, expect to find the Lord's help and power (v12). The Lord will enable His people to prevail. We discard the help of man (v11) and push that away when it does not fit in with the word of God. The Lord does love His people and is extending His kingdom through us. We are part of that great work and, confident of these things, we can do bold exploits for the Lord. We are right to have courage and show faith. We are right not to be put off by others. Times of perplexity are times to learn more about the Lord's ways and His faithfulness. We are able to move forward in our understanding through what we have learnt in these times.