

When the Foundations are Destroyed - 07/21/19

TEXT – Psalm 11:3 *If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?*

INTRO – To the chief Musician, *A Psalm* of David. **We don't know exactly when David wrote this psalm. Many connect it to the time when Saul chased David in the wilderness 1 Sam. 23:13-14. We know the psalm comes at a desperate moment when his enemies seemed to be closing in on him and his friends encouraged him to run away.**

This psalm is best known for the question in verse 3: **“When the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?”** Many preachers have taken this text and used it to show that when the foundations are destroyed, there is nothing the righteous can do. They are left in a hopeless situation. But that is not what David says.

When the foundations are destroyed, there are many things the righteous can do, but above everything else, they must first get a right view of God.

When a nation celebrates what God condemns, judgment from on high must eventually come. No one can say how or when or where that judgment will come. But as certainly as God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, as certainly as the great empires of history have fallen, America will not escape God's judgment.

I. Our Commitment

As we look at the first three verses that describe David's predicament, let's consider the commitment we must make as we face an uncertain future.

A. We Must Not Flee vs. 1

Psa 11:1 *In the LORD put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?*

1. It is not wrong to flee persecution. Jesus told His disciples, **Mat 10:23** *But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: . . .*

2. Sometimes the Lord calls you to stand and fight
God's people are not required to prove their faith by staying in one place when they could save their lives by fleeing to the countryside.

- **David hid from Saul for years until the time came for him to become king.**

The "perilous times" of 2 Timothy 3 are upon us

When David's friends encouraged him to flee the country, he replied, *“I have taken refuge in the Lord.”* If God cannot protect him, then running to Egypt won't keep him safe.

- **Are you facing your trials?**

Kim Davis, the Kentucky County Clerk, ended up in jail because she refused to put her name on a gay marriage license.

Their itching ears will lead them away from the Bible into the depths of moral compromise. Professing themselves to be wise, they will become fools.

We have to stand and fight for what we believe.

We leave the results in God's hands.

This is no time to flee.

B. We Must Not Fear vs. 2

Psa 11:2 *For, lo, the wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may privily shoot at the upright in heart.*

David is being quite literal. At one point Saul tried to kill David with a spear. Later he sent his army after him. The arrows they were shooting were not metaphorical. When those arrows hit, they drew blood.

C. We Will Not Fret

“If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?” (v. 3)

The word translated “foundations” refers to the moral and spiritual underpinnings of any society. What can the righteous do when the foundations crumble beneath them?

Do they quit? Do they despair? Do they run away? Do they become bitter? Do they resort to violence?

What will the righteous do? What can we do?

What do you do when the foundations are destroyed? Answer: It all depends on how big your God is.

II. Our Confidence

Notice what David doesn't say. He doesn't call for the army to mount an offensive. He doesn't say, “Let's run for the hills.” He doesn't raise money for a big political campaign. In modern terms, he doesn't organize a social media blitz.

If you've got a small God, you've got a big problem

For David (and for us) it's not about the what; it's about the who. *There is certainly a time to go to war to protect your nation. But in times like these, we need God first and foremost.* When the foundations are being hacked away, we've got to go back to the First Principles.

That's what David does in verses 4-7.

- **God's Presence**

Psa 11:4 *The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.*

God is everywhere. He is sovereign over the whole universe.

- **We need God first and foremost**

We believe there is a God who sits on the throne of the universe, a God who is absolutely sovereign, a God whose ways are far above our ways, a God to whom the whole human race must someday give an account.

Was God shocked by our circumstances?

- **God is never surprised by anything that happens**

The hardest verse in the Bible to believe is Genesis 1:1, **“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”** “If you can believe that, you won’t have any trouble with the rest of the Bible.”

Deu 4:24 *For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.*

Perhaps we should keep Isaiah 6 in mind. Uzziah was one of the best kings Judah ever had. When he died, the nation was plunged into turmoil. *A golden age in Israel’s history was drawing to a close.* Would the people continue to walk with God or would they return to idolatry? Isaiah came face to face with the living God. **Isa 6:1** *In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.* Where is God? He’s not nervously pacing heaven wondering, “Who will I get to replace Uzziah?” God is where he has always been. Seated on his throne.

- **God’s Judgment**

Psa 11:4-6 *The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD’S throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men. 5 The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth. 6 Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup.*

No one gets away with anything.

Though the wheels of God grind slowly, they grind exceedingly small. Be sure your sin will find you out. **No one gets away with anything**

These words of David remind us that there is a solemn and eternal difference between the righteous and the wicked.

God sees everything. He reads every heart, knows every thought, hears the words whispered in the darkness, and he knows us better than we know ourselves.

In an image that reminds us of Sodom and Gomorrah, God promises to rain burning coals and sulfur on the wicked. The scorching wind of judgment will wipe the smile off their faces.

We dare not water down these solemn words.

- **God’s Deliverance**

Psa 11:7 *For the righteous LORD loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright.*

The Lord stands up for those who stand up for him.

He takes the side of those who side with him.

David stands on the peak of faith and says, “Though the battle may be hot and we may be surrounded, God will win in the end.”

If God is on the throne, then we should rejoice because these are our times.

We don’t have to ask, “What will America be like in a hundred years?” The great good news is, I don’t have to stay alive for another hundred years because I serve a God who is eternal. He will still be on the job long after I go down to the grave. *That’s David’s final answer to the many perplexing problems of this life.* Those who know and love the Lord will see his face.

We will behold the Lord in the most personal way possible.

Today we walk by faith. Today we stumble along through this life.

Today we struggle. But today is not the last day.

- *There is a better day coming for the people of God when all will be made right.*

Between now and then we will have many days when the foundations seem to be crumbling around us and the wicked rise up and threaten us.

- *But the wicked will not have the last word.*

“When the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?”

We cannot retreat, and we will not run away.

We will not give in to fear.

We need a fresh view of God and a long view of history

But our God is faithful to keep every one of his promises.

God has opened a huge door for gospel proclamation. When the foundations of society are destroyed, we can say to men and women everywhere, “Christ is the firm foundation, the cornerstone that will never be shaken.”

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