

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Psalms: God's Nurture Of The Inner Man In The Life Of Faith CXL: Trusting God To Handle Secret, Manipulative, Destructive Foes (Psalm 140:1-13)

I. Introduction

- A. Paul in 2 Timothy 3:1-5 with 2 Timothy 2:24-26 predicted that in the latter days of Church History, hard times would occur for the godly, for abusive people would oppose them, committing destructive, evil deeds.
- B. This experience is not unique to Church History, for David faced secret, manipulative, destructive foes, and Psalm 140:1-13 is his testimony on addressing the problem. We view this psalm for insight and edification:

II. Trusting God To Handle Secret, Manipulative, Destructive Foes, Psalm 140:1-13.

- A. The first verse of the psalm in the Hebrew text is the introductory note in the English Bible (Kittel, Biblia Hebraica, p. 1096), so we stay with the English Bible's numbering system for clarity with this lesson.
- B. We then translate Psalm 140:1-13 as follows:
 - 1. "Rescue (me) by pulling me out from (a position of being vulnerable to harm by) the wicked man of low estate (*'adam*, Ibid.; Robert B. Girdlestone, Synonyms of the O. T., 1973, p. 45-50), O Jahweh; guard me from the nobleman of high estate (*'ish*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., Girdlestone) of violence," (Psalm 140:1)
 - 2. "(from those) who devise evil plans in their hearts and every day stir up war," Psalm 140:2.
 - 3. "They make their tongues as sharp as a serpent's; the poison of vipers is under their lips. Selah," v. 3.
 - 4. "Protect me, O Jahweh, from the hands of the wicked; guard me from the nobleman of violence, (from him) who plans to trip my feet," Psalm 140:4.
 - 5. "Proud men have hidden a snare for me; they have spread out the cords of their net and have set traps for me along my path. Selah," Psalm 140:5.
 - 6. "I say to Jahweh, You (emph. pron.) are my Elohim; give ear, O Jahweh, to my cry for mercy," v. 6.
 - 7. "O Jahweh Adonai, my Strong Deliverer, Who shields my head in the day of battle --" (Psalm 140:7)
 - 8. "do not grant to the wicked their desires, O Jahweh; do not let their plans succeed lest they become proud. Selah," Psalm 140:8.
 - 9. "Let the heads of those who surround me be covered with the trouble their lips have caused," Psalm 140:9.
 - 10. "Let burning coals fall upon them; may they be thrown into the fire, into miry pits, never to rise," v. 10.
 - 11. "Let slanderers not be established in the land; may disaster hunt down the nobleman of violence," v. 11.
 - 12. "I know that Jahweh secures justice for the poor and upholds the cause of the afflicted," Psalm 140:12.
 - 13. "Surely the righteous will praise Your name and the upright will live in Your presence," Psalm 140:13.
- C. We note significant observations regarding this psalm (as follows):
 - 1. Similar to what is today known as a verbally abusive person, one who keeps his "victim" confused and unsettled, isolating him from supportive friends so he can control his thinking and so dominate him, David in this psalm spoke of the threat of secret, harmful plans being formed (v. 2) by men of both low and high degree (v. 1) intended to trip David up in his behavior (v. 5) so they could slander him (v. 11a) and isolate him from his supportive friends so they could more easily destroy David (v. 1b, 4b, 11b with 2b).
 - 2. This is a formidable challenge of dangerous, personal intrigue. It involves a threat one cannot readily confront, for though the victim knows his foe will indeed perform evil against him, he does not know where, when or how it will occur, a demoralizing form of evil that the victim cannot really handle.
 - 3. The solution is for the victim to rely on the Lord to have Him deliver him from such foes, v. 1, 4-8, 12-13. God is such a victim's Strong Deliverer, v. 7-8. Only He can thwart such evil enemies.

Lesson: *When facing secret, warlike opposition from men who tried to entrap him into performing a behavior they could misrepresent before others and thus discredit David to his supporters so he could be isolated and more easily destroyed, David relied on the Lord, His Strong Deliverer, to rescue him from such foes and their plotting.*

Application: *(1) If we face abusive parties who skillfully by craft to try to trap us by goading us to act in a way that discredits us before our supporters in order to destroy us for their gain, may we realize that our only deliverance is the Lord Himself, one's Strong Deliverer, Who knows what the wicked do and can and will handle them. (2) This psalm was authored by a man who had been promised by God to rule Israel (2 Samuel 7:1-17), so his foes were likely influenced by Satan in the angelic conflict. May we thus realize that if we face such intriguing opposition, we may face angelic conflict issues, so we must apply Ephesians 6:10-20, utilizing the armor of God for victory.*