

PSALMS: DIARIES OF GODLY OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS

Psalm Thirty-Five: Handling Irreconcilable Oppressors

(Psalm 35:1-28)

I. Introduction

- A. Scripture commands the believer to **try** living at peace with all men, Rom. 12:18. If we are wronged, we should not avenge ourselves, but give way to wrath, leaving it up to God to take vengeance, Ro. 12:19-21.
- B. However, **some** parties are **irreconcilable**, and that makes even trying to live peaceably with them an impossible task. What happens **then**?!
- C. Psalm Thirty-Five is David's example of dealing with irreconcilable oppressors as follows:

II. Handling Irreconcilable Oppressors, Psalm 35:1-28.

- A. Psalm 35:1-10 records David's call to God for help from his oppressors.
 1. David asks God to do battle with those who are doing battle against him, Ps. 35:1-3.
 2. He asks for these opponents to be humiliated in shame, v. 4.
 3. He also asks God to catch them in their opposition efforts against David so that they will be overthrown in said efforts in surprise, Ps. 35:5-8.
 4. Upon being thus delivered, David intends to rejoice in God's deliverance, Ps. 35:9-10.
- B. Just why David would pray this strong a prayer about his opponents is revealed in Ps. 35:11-17: David notes his oppressors to be **irreconcilable** toward him, Ps. 35:11-17:
 1. First of all, David's oppressors were incredibly **unjust** in their dealings with him, Ps. 35:11-16.
 - a. These oppressors did evil towards David, Ps. 35:11-12: they put forth ruthless witnesses to condemn David by innuendo in asking him leading questions on matters about which he knew nothing, v. 11; they repay David evil for his good to them, leaving him really smarting in the process, v. 12.
 - b. Yet, all of this was done after David had done good unto them, 35:13-16: when these oppressors had been ill, David grieved and interceded to God on their behalf, Ps. 35:13-14; but when David had a setback, these same people gathered together in glee in secret to malign and mock him in sheer hatred, Ps. 35:15-16.
 2. Second, this **unjust** relationship had gone unchecked and unchanged for a **long** time, Ps. 35:17!
 3. Thus, with such injustice with David's one-sided effort to help these people, and with it going on for such a long time, it was clear that he was dealing with **irreconcilable** people!
- C. The **RESOLUTION** to this crisis was handled by David's simply turning to **God** for help, Ps. 35:18-28.
 1. In faith, anticipating divine intervention, David promises to give thanks to God for deliverance in his current crisis with these irreconcilable oppressors, Ps. 35:18.
 2. David then appeals in prayer to the Lord for help, Ps. 35:19-27:
 - a. David asked the Lord to hinder these oppressors from being allowed to gloat in victory over him, 19.
 - b. This appeal is justified due to the unrest and deceit in his oppressors' hearts, v. 20-25.
 - c. Rather, David asked God to put such enemies to shame in their opposition efforts, v. 26.
 - d. On the other hand, he asked that his supporters be able to rejoice in his deliverance, v. 27.
 - e. Again, David closes the psalm with an expressed hope of being able one day to praise God, v. 28.

Lesson: (1) If we have done our best to be considerate and helpful toward a difficult party, and we have been treated in turn with contempt or destructive, censorious politicking responses over a very long period of time, we must conclude that we are dealing with IRRECONCILABLE people. (2) In this case, our hope is to look to the Lord alone, cf. 2 Tim. 3:3a,5b: (a) pray for divine intervention to stop the damage by these oppressors not only to ourselves, but to other innocent people related to us; (b) ask God to check the damage by tripping up the needless wreckage by such oppressors by tripping them up in their false efforts; (c) rejoice in God's deliverance instead of taking vengeance, cf. 2 Timothy 2:24-26. SUCH A PARTY IS IN THE HANDS O F GOD, AND WE MUST BE CAREFUL TO FOCUS ON GOD'S INTERESTS IN THE MATTER, NOT OURS!