

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Psalms: Living By Faith In God
CIX. Handling Abuse And Abusers
(Psalm 109:1-31)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

2 Timothy 3:1-9 predicted that abusive people would arise in the latter era of Church History. They are here:

(1) They exist in the judicial realm: “(A) New York City jury, prompted by the legal coordination between Manhattan DA Alvin Bragg and Judge Juan Merchan – both partisan actors – convicted Donald Trump on 34 felony counts having to do with falsification of business records. Or election fraud. Or more tax issues. Or . . . something. Nobody really knows, and apparently it was unnecessary for the jury to agree on the crime in order to find Trump guilty of one.” (Ben Shapiro, “Of ‘convicted felons’ and lying frauds,” Republican-American, June 5, 2024, p. 7A)

(2) They exist in Congress: Hans Von Spakovsky and J. Christian Adams’ piece, “Yes, noncitizens are registering and they’re voting” (Ibid., June 7, 2024, p. 6A) told of their recent testimony to the House Administration Committee on their findings that illegal aliens are registering and voting in American elections “across the nation.” They reported, “Our written and oral testimony documented, in all, scores of aliens who registered, and many who voted, sometimes repeatedly, especially in presidential elections.” (Ibid.) In fact, Spakovsky and Adams found cases where people had “asked to be taken off the registration list because they aren’t citizens . . .” (Ibid.) However, “(t)he reactions of some Democrats on the committee were outlandish. They ignored or belittled the hard evidence we presented, changed the topic to Donald Trump and hurled inaccurate insults at us.” (Ibid.)

(3) They exist in the entertainment industry: “Actor Zachary Quinto . . . known for playing the unemotional and logical Mr. Spock, was apparently much less restrained than his ‘Star Trek’ character when he allegedly yelled at staffers at Manita restaurant” in Toronto recently “‘like an entitled child,’ disrupting other diners as he demanded a table.” (“Zachary Quinto: Actor Banned From Toronto Eatery,” Ibid., June 6, 2024, p. 8B)

(4) They exist in the workplace: “The embattled chief of Connecticut’s public defenders was ousted” recently “after a contentious two-year tenure marked by . . . 16 misconduct allegations, ranging from accusations of improper conduct to retaliation and favoritism within the division . . . Among the most troubling allegations is her purported directive for an IT staff member to access the emails of high-ranking colleagues, an act perceived as a breach of trust and violation of privacy.” (Bruno Matarazzo, Jr., “Chief public defender fired,” Ibid., June 5, 2024, p. 1A)

(5) They exist in our public schools: “Naugatuck school officials are seeking solutions to address students being bullied after parents in the borough made a plea for change.” (Andreas Yilma, “Officials take on bullying,” Ibid., June 10, 2024, p. 3A) “Megan Bonessi said she and her family had an awful experience at Western Elementary School,” and her husband, “A. J. Bonessi said ever since he posted on social media what was happening to their son, many parents have reached out to say that they are also facing similar issues.”

(6) They exist in even some evangelical schools for missionary children: James Gould, son of missionaries with SIM International who also attended the mission’s boarding school of Kent Academy in Nigeria, in his article, “How to Say ‘I’m Sorry’ and Mean It” (SIMROOTS, Vol. 41, No. 1, 2024, p. 21), told of “the *Christianity Today* report of SIM USA opposing a lawsuit against it” in “2022” over alleged boarding school abuses. Nevertheless, in 2023, the mission acknowledged in a letter that “‘physical, emotional and sexual abuse’” had indeed occurred “at its boarding schools,” and that “‘many perpetrators of abuse have avoided accountability.’” (Ibid.)

Need: *So, we ask, “How does God want us to respond to abuse and abusers?”*

I. In Psalm 109:1-5, David called on the Lord to punish his enemies who verbally abused him:

- A. David’s wicked enemies were verbally abusive, deceptive, lying, hateful, opposing him without cause, and returning evil and hatred for David’s goodness and love toward them, Psalm 109:2-5.
- B. Thus, he called on God not to remain silent, but to answer him by punishing his adversaries, Psalm 109:1.

II. One foe was so troublesome that David fervently urged God to punish him severely, Psalm 109:6-20:

- A. In a long section, David called on the Lord to level severe punishments on one verbally abusive foe, going so far in verse 6b as to ask God to let Satan stand at that abuser’s right hand to afflict him severely, Psalm 109:6, 7-19 (Zechariah 3:1). David looked to God for vengeance (in harmony with Romans 12:19-21 for us today).
- B. David concluded this section by asking that the curses he had called down upon his enemy might come as God’s recompense for opposing David by speaking evil against him, Psalm 109:20.

III. Acknowledging his vulnerably to harm by his foes, David asked for God’s help and judgment, v. 21-29:

- A. He asked the Lord to deliver him for His name's sake out of the goodness of His loyal love, Psalm 109:21.
- B. David admitted that he was oppressed and needy, that his inner man was greatly wounded, that he felt like his life was ebbing away like an evening shadow or like a despised locust that is shaken off of a plant, v. 22-23.
- C. He was weak from fasting over being an object of scorn to accusers who shook their heads at him, v. 24-25.
- D. Thus, David called on God to deliver him and to punish his enemies with due justice, Psalm 109:26-29.

IV. In Psalm 109:30-31, David closed with a vow to praise the Lord for His deliverance:

- A. David vowed that he would greatly praise God with his mouth before a multitude of people, Psalm 109:30.
- B. His praise would be about God's commitment to stand at the right hand of anyone who needs his emotional, mental, spiritual and physical life (*nepesh*, Kittel, *Biblia Hebraica*, p. 1074; Robert B. Girdlestone, *Syns. of the O. T.*, 1973, p. 56-59) delivered from verbal abusers who wrongly condemn him, Psalm 109:31.

Lesson: *David called on God to render judgment for him for the verbal abuse he suffered from evil foes, trusting God to deliver him or any believer who needs his inner man delivered from crushing abuse and abusers.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. (2) May we rely on the Lord to be found willing and able to deliver us from humanly overwhelming abuse and abusers.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message and provide additional guidance . . .)

(1) God's Word provides the instruction we need to handle abuse and to deal with the people who perform it (as follows): (a) Patricia Evans' book, *The Verbally Abusive Relationship*, states that abusive people are themselves emotionally depleted due to some emotional problems they have faced and have been unable to handle, so they feel powerless to relate to others without exerting "power over" them to control them. (b) Such people obviously function by their sin natures, so they can be (i) self-centered (2 Tim. 3:2a), (ii) envious (James 3:14-15), (iii) cause others to be restless (James 3:16 NIV), (iv) verbally abusive (2 Tim. 3:2e), (v) loveless (2 Tim. 3:3a), (vi) irreconcilable (2 Tim. 3:3b), (vii) controlling (2 Tim. 3:6), (viii) brutal (2 Tim. 3:3e), (ix) treacherous (2 Tim. 3:4a) and (x) reckless (2 Tim. 3:4b). (c) Scripture directs us (i) to pull back from, avoid such people for our welfare (2 Timothy 3:5b) and (ii) to let their own errant behavior in time expose their folly to everyone else and thus defuse their harmfulness (2 Timothy 3:9). (d) Abusers (i) need to trust in Christ for salvation from sin and hell in order to receive eternal life and become indwelt by God the Holy Spirit, John 3:16; Romans 8:9. (ii) At salvation, God creates a new nature in a believer so that he becomes a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 4:24). In addition, (iii) the indwelling Holy Spirit, Who is God, provides God's power for one to live righteously so that the one-time abuser no longer needs to abuse because he has the power of God available to live and to relate well to others (Romans 8:3-4) and for serving God (Acts 1:8) with a spiritual gift for service (2 Timothy 1:6-7; 1 Peter 4:11). (iv) For one who has been abused, God's new creation in him coupled with the Holy Spirit's enabling and gifting equips him to live in newness of life in the new nature in Christ that God has created in the believer so that by faith in God, he can boycott living by means of his old sin nature that is has been so badly wrecked or distorted by past abusive suffering (Romans 6:6-11 with Galatians 2:20).

(2) As an example of how these truths can be applied for victory in one's life, the story, "The Islamist Who Studied God's Word" in the April 2024 issue of *The Voice of the Martyrs*, p. 8-9, gives the testimony of a man in Uganda named Mohammad. He was once a religious leader in Islam, an Imam, and he was selected by his religious overseers to learn about jihad and killing Christians. In this assignment, Mohammad was forced to study the Bible in order to learn how to twist its verses so as to mislead Christians to reject the Christian faith and turn to Islam. However, in being forced to study the Bible, he came to see the truthfulness of the Bible's God so that he put his faith in Him and in His Son, Jesus Christ. For his faith, he was severely beaten and threatened with beheading. However, when given the opportunity to press charges against his Muslim persecutors, Mohammad refused to press charges to demonstrate the love of Christ to his persecutors. Mohammad now serves as a part-time preacher at his church and occasionally visits other churches to preach and share his testimony of how Scripture led him out of a violent Islamist organization and into a relationship with Christ. "In addition, he teaches believers how to study the Bible and how to help Muslims understand the eternal truth of God's Word. 'I know a lot of tricks [the Muslims used to use], but now I can defend the gospel even better,' Mohammed said." (Ibid., p. 9)

God saved Mohammad from becoming an Islamic abuser of Christians to suffering abuse for Christ as a Christian, and to be victorious in it all through the Lord.

May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life. May we then trust the Lord to deliver us from humanly great abuse and to handle abusers.