

Series: God Cares #1480

Title: Psalm 57

Danger!

Thank you for joining me today from wherever you are and by however you listen as we meet together coast-to-coast here in the United States and all the way around the world! Welcome back. Last time we established that God cares for us. 1 Peter chapter 5 and verse 7, **"He cares for you."** In these days together we are looking at several ways in which God cares for His people. And today I want to speak with those of you who are in danger. You live with the fear of suffering some kind of harm or injury. For you, it is crucial you know that God cares for you. You are a care to Him concerning you. That's the New Testament Greek way of saying it. You are His concern. The Lord takes responsibility for your welfare unto Himself. I hope this will be a comfort to *you* or perhaps this is something you can pass along to someone else you know who is in danger.

Let's see the protective hand of God on a man in the Bible who was in great danger. It got so bad this man faced serious death threats. His name is David. Yes, King David. In the Book of 1 Samuel and the first verse of chapter 22 we read this, **"So David departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam."** (1 Samuel 22, verse 1.) And then over in 1 Samuel chapter 24, verses 1-3 we read this, **"Now when Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, he was told, saying, 'Behold, David is in the wilderness of Engedi.' ² Then Saul took three thousand chosen men from all Israel and went to seek David and his men in front of the Rocks of the Wild Goats.³ He came to the sheepfolds on the way, where there was a cave; and Saul went in to relieve himself. Now David and his men were sitting in the inner recesses of the cave."** (That was 1 Samuel 24.1-3.)

From these verses we learn that the young man David was in danger. King Saul was on the move against him. Saul wanted to kill David. And so David ran and hid out in a cave. Now if a cave is your hide out, then you know you're in trouble. And David is. It will fascinate you to read the full story in the Book of 1 Samuel and I commend this to you. That is the background to a Psalm where I want to spend most of our time. And the Psalm is Psalm 57. So, flipping forward in the pages of my Bible I come to the fifty-seventh Psalm. Let me read verses 1-6. Again, we are going to be in Psalm 57, beginning in verse 1.

As you find it in your copy of God's Word, let me say that in my Bible I find this little title before the reading. It says, "For the choir director. Do not destroy. A Mikhtam of David when he fled from Saul in the cave." So, the reader knows to which episode in the life of David this Psalm refers. David is the author of many, many Psalms. This one begins, **"Be gracious to me, O God, be gracious to me, for my soul takes refuge in You; and in the shadow of Your wings I will take refuge until destruction passes by. ² I will cry to God Most High, to God who accomplishes *all things* for me. ³ He will send from heaven and save me; He reproaches him who tramples upon me. *Selah.*"**

God will send forth His lovingkindness and His truth. ⁴ My soul is among lions; I must lie among those who breathe forth fire, *even* the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows and their tongue a sharp sword. ⁵ Be exalted above the heavens, O God; *let* Your glory *be* above all the earth. ⁶ They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down; they dug a pit before me; they *themselves* have fallen into the midst of it. *Selah.*"

Here we have David's literary description of the danger that was all around him; pursuing him. In verse 4 he uses the analogy of the lion. He is like Daniel in the lion's den. These are wicked men and they breathe forth fire. Their teeth are like spears and arrows and their tongue is like a sharp sword. These are their weapons which they will not hesitate to use. Proverbs chapter 30 and verse 14 describes such men, **"There is a kind of *man* whose teeth are *like* swords and his jaw teeth *like* knives, to devour the afflicted from the earth and the needy from among men."** (Proverbs 30.14.) Do you know someone like this who has it out for you?

In Psalm 57, verse 6 David continues to describe his enemies and says they prepared a net for his steps. His soul is bowed down. They dug a pit for him to fall into. Maybe someone is setting a trap for you? You live in a constant state of fear and having to always be on the alert. You are surrounded by lions with weapons and a net has been set, a pit has been dug, for *you*.

David was certainly in danger. But listen to the way the Psalm begins. I hope you will really hear and internalize David's appeal to the God of all Grace. "Be gracious to me, O God, be gracious to me..." Hebrew scholars tell us the repetition of thought emphasizes David's intense earnestness and his complete trust in God's love for him. "Be gracious to me, for my soul takes refuge in You..." This tells us that David trusts in God. The Lord is his refuge. Not the cave, but the Lord. Perhaps I can put it this way. The soul taking refuge in God speaks to an inner sense of security. The cave where David hid speaks to an outer sense of security. People in danger need both: an inner sense that God is their refuge and an outer, practical place to go hide where it is safe, like a safe house or a shelter.

If you are in danger, do not just spiritualize it and say, "The Lord will take care of me!" Yes, He *will* take care of you. But He is also expecting you to use the brain He gave you and to take advantage of His practical provision such as a safe place you can go.

Verse 1 continues, "in the shadow of Your wings I will take refuge until destruction passes by." What a beautiful picture of the protection God provides! This is reminiscent of what Jesus says over in Matthew's Gospel chapter 23 regarding His heart towards the Jewish people, **"How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings..."** We live under the shadow of God's wings and we take refuge in God until the destruction passes by. This is who God is. This is what God provides to His people who are in danger. This is an image I hope will stick with you when you feel threatened.

In Psalm 57, verse 2 David says, "I will cry to God Most High..." To cry is to pray with passion. And the name God Most High, as we have learned before, speaks of God as the possessor of heaven and earth. He is *The One True God* who reigns and who rules heaven and earth. This is the God, David continues, "who accomplishes all things for me." That is quite a statement and speaks to the dependency David had on God. Did you know or did you know and forget that God will accomplish all things for *you*? Verse 3, "God will send from heaven and save you; He will reproach [the person] who tramples upon [you]." Whatever you face is too difficult for you, in your own strength and power, to deal with. Appeal to Mighty God, my friend. As David then writes, "God will send forth His lovingkindness and His truth."

We are talking about Psalm 57 as evidence that God cares for you who are in danger. I do not know the nature of the threats against you. It could be domestic violence. Or are you bullied at school? Maybe you are in trouble with a gang or you are trying to leave a gang and live a life for Christ and other gang members are having none of it. Or perhaps you listen as someone going through a rough time at work. You really cannot afford to lose your job, but you are getting stabbed in the back by colleagues something fierce. And you're in danger of unemployment. Maybe you listen from somewhere around the world and you are being persecuted for your faith in Christ? There are many possibilities.

1 Peter 5.7, God cares for you. Psalm 57, here is *how* He cares for you.

And let us not pass over Psalm 57, verse 5 when David breaks into praise. He writes, "Be exalted above the heavens, O God; *let* Your glory *be* above all the earth." Even amidst danger we are to be worshippers of God Most High. Amidst your fear have you bowed down on your knees today and lifted your eyes and hands to heaven and praised God in prayer? If you are desperate for privacy, go into the bathroom and lock the door if you have to. In there, give God praise. By just praising Him you will feel better about your circumstances. Trust me, you will. Indeed, let us say with David, "Be exalted above the heavens, O God; *let* Your glory *be* above all the earth."

We live in a dangerous world, don't we? These days we never know what a day will bring. But as Christians we take comfort and we find refuge *in God* who cares for us. In sincerity and with much prayer, I hope what I have shared will help you. Next time we will look at another way in which God cares for us. It is not too late for you to invite someone to join us. I hope you'll do that as we meet right back here next time because God Is.

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