

Thought for Today: October 11, 2007

Psalm 54 (NASB)

**Save me, O God, by Your name,
And vindicate me by Your power.
Hear my prayer, O God;
Give ear to the words of my mouth.
For strangers have risen against me
And violent men have sought my life;
They have not set God before them. (Selah.)**

**Behold, God is my helper;
The Lord is the sustainer of my soul.
He will recompense the evil to my foes;
Destroy them in Your faithfulness.**

**Willingly I will sacrifice to You;
I will give thanks to Your name, O LORD, for it is good.
For He has delivered me from all trouble,
And my eye has looked with satisfaction upon my enemies.**

If you've been reading my comments on the psalms so far, you've noticed that many of these psalms contain laments and pleas for help. We can learn a lot just by listening to what these psalmists are saying. If nothing else, we learn that it is okay to cry out to God in any situation. If the inspired writers of the psalms can beg for help, justice, and faithfulness from God, then so can we. That's comforting.

When we read the first section of this psalm, however, this psalmist doesn't sound comfortable at all. The first seven lines could be summarized by the cry, "Please, God, save me from my wicked enemies!" The next section, composed of four lines, could be summarized: "God will certainly rescue me!" We could summarize the final four lines of the psalm by saying, "I will praise you, God, for You have saved me!"

This may be a bit simplistic, but the clutter and chaos of life sometimes moves me to search for the simple things. In this psalm, I find the simple progression of a faithful heart that finds itself in trouble. The faithful heart (1) pleads for God's help, (2) remembers with certainty that God will help, and (3) confidently praises God for the help that has come or is on the way.

Grace and peace,
Patrick Barber