WHAT CAN THE RIGHTEOUS DO?

**DATE: 10/9/2011 am**

**TEXT: Psalm 11:3, I Samuel 18, 19**

**INTRODUCTION**

Things are not always what they appear to be

We can be deceived, if we won’t trust the Lord to give us the discernment and wisdom we need

There are times when it appears as if the foundations have been destroyed

Don’t be troubled

It only appears that way

When David wrote **Psalm 11** he said in -

**v.3 – *“If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do”***

David must have been feeling very discouraged

It is believed that this Psalm was written after David had a couple of close calls with King Saul (I Sam.18, 19)

He was young man playing his harp to soothe the troubled king

The leader of Israel was not thinking right

And King Saul tried to kill David out of jealousy

David’s friends advised him to flee – **v.1**

But David would not run, at least not just yet

He would wait for the Lord’s direction

David was learning not to trust in men

But rather in the God of all Men

As we near the end of this age (I want you to notice something)

Turn with me to **Revelation 4:1, 2**

It may appear as if all the foundations have been destroyed

But the Bible says when we come to the end of this age

God is still on His throne!

The reins of the universe are still in the hands of Almighty God!

I would like to ask 4 questions this morning and then try to answer them

Let’s pray and look at **Psalm 11** and this thought –

***“What can the righteous do?”***

**~~~Prayer~~~**

The first question to be asked is -

**I. WHAT SHOULD DAVID DO? – v.1**

***“In the LORD put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?” …***

When the crisis came, David was advised to leave Jerusalem and head for the hills

They didn't seem to have faith that the Lord could see David through

**Psalm 3:2 – *“Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God”***

**Psalm 4:6 – *“There be many that say, Who will shew us any good?”***

Notice that David uses the imagery of the bird

They told him - ***“flee as a bird”***

This is not the only time that David uses this kind of imagery

**Psalm 55:6, 7 – *“And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest”   
“Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness”***

But David didn't need wings like a dove;

He needed wings like an eagle

**Isaiah 40:31 – *“But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint”***

Why? So he could rise above the storm

Rise above the storms by faith and defeat his enemies

It's right for us to flee from temptation -

**II Timothy 2:22 – *“Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart”***

As Joseph did

[**Genesis 39:11, 1**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ge+39%3A11-13)**2 – *“And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within”   
“And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out”***

But it's wrong to flee from the place of duty -

As Nehemiah was invited to do so

[**Nehemiah 6:**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ne+6%3A10-11)2, 3 **– *“That Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono. But they thought to do me mischief”   
“And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?”***

The leader who flees needlessly from the crisis is only a hireling and not a faithful shepherd

[**John 10:12, 13**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+10%3A12-13) **– *“But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep”   
“The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep”***

Beware of listening to unwise counsel

Put your faith in the Lord, and He will protect you and direct your paths

**WHAT SHOULD DAVID DO?**

David said – ***“In the LORD put I my trust”***

The second question is -

**II. WHAT DOES THE ENEMY DO? – v.2**

***“For, lo, the wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may privily shoot at the upright in heart”***

**V. 2** is a continuation of the though in **v.1b**

***"For, lo”*** or *look* suggests that these people were walking by sight and evaluating the situation from the human perspective

Turn to **II Kings 6:8-23** (Elisha discloses plans of a Syrian invasion)

It's good to know the facts

But it's better to look at those facts in the light of the promises of God

There was a secret plot afoot (By King Saul, against David)

In some cases the bows and arrows may have been literal

But it's more likely they are metaphors for deceptive and destructive words

**Psalm 57:4 – *“My soul is among lions: and I lie even among them that are set on fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword”***

**Psalm 64:3, 4 – *“Who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words:”   
“That they may shoot in secret at the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not”***

**Jeremiah 9:3, 8 – *“And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the Lord”***

***“Their tongue is as an arrow shot out; it speaketh deceit: one speaketh peaceably to his neighbour with his mouth, but in heart he layeth his wait”***

Look at who they shoot their words at –

End of **v.2 –** ***“that they may privily shoot at the upright in heart”***

David was upright before God

And righteous

**Vs. 3 & 5a**

He knew that the Lord was righteous and would do the right thing

**V.7**

**WHAT SHOULD DAVID DO?**

**WHAT DOES THE ENEMY DO?**

Next, let’s answer -

**III. WHAT CAN THE RIGHTEOUS DO? – v. 3**

***“If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?”***

David was God's appointed king, so anything that attacked him personally would shake the very foundations of the nation

God had abandoned Saul as king, which had weakened the foundations of divine government

**Psalm 82:5 *–“They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course”***

Society is built on truth, and when truth is questioned or denied, the foundations begin to shake

The question is ***"What can the righteous do?"***

The answer to the question is, *"Lay the foundations again!"*

Each new generation must see to it that the foundations of truth and justice are solid

Samuel laid again the foundations of the covenant in

**I Samuel 12**

Ezra laid again the foundations of the temple in

**Ezra 3**

In spite of all his trials …

David lived to make preparations for the building of the temple and the organization of the temple worship

During the history of Judah …

Godly kings cleansed the land of idolatry and brought the people back to the true worship of the Lord

Christ's messages to the churches in **Revelation chapters 2 & 3** make it clear that local churches need constant examination to see if they're faithful to the Lord

And we need to pray for a constant reviving work of the Holy Spirit

**Jude 3 – *“Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, …***

***… it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints”***

**WHAT SHOULD DAVID DO?**

**WHAT DOES THE ENEMY DO?**

**WHAT CAN THE RIGHTEOUS DO?**

And the last question to be asked is -

**IV. WHAT WILL GOD DO? – vs. 4-7**

When we look around, we see the problems

But its not until we look up (by faith)

That we will see the answer to the problems

When the out-look is grim, try to look up!

Remember ***“In the Lord we are to put our trust,”***

David knew that God was still on the throne in Heaven

**v.4 – *“The LORD is in His holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven”***

**Habakkuk 2:20 – *“But the Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him”***

**Isaiah 6:1 – *“In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up,”***

From His throne, God sees everything the enemy is doing

The word ***“try”*** in **v. 4** carries the idea of *testing metals by fire* -

**Zechariah 13:9 – *“And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God”***

God's Words penetrate into man’s hearts and minds

**Hebrews 4:12 – *“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart”***

The Lord tries the righteous to bring out the best in them

Satan tempts us to bring out our worst

When we trust the Lord in the difficulties of life,

Our trials work for us and not against us

Turn to **II Corinthians 4:7-18**

David uses three images to describe the judgment that God has prepared for the wicked

**1.** First, he saw fire and brimstone descend on them

Such as the Lord sent on Sodom and Gomorrah

**v. 6 – *“Upon the wicked He shall rain snares, fire and brimstone”***

**Genesis 19:24 – *“Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven;”***

**2.** Then he beheld a terrible storm destroying the enemy

**v. 6b - *“a horrible tempest”*** such as often blew from the desert or upon the sea

David used the image of the storm in his song about his deliverance from his enemies and King Saul in **Psalm 18**

**3.** The third image is that of a poisonous potion in a cup

***“Drinking the cup”*** is often a picture of judgment from the Lord

**Psalm** [**75:8**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+75%3A8) **– *“For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them”***

[**Isaiah 51:17**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Isa+51%3A17) **– *“Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of His fury; thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out”***

[**Revelation**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Rev+14%3A10) [**16:19**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Rev+16%3A19) **– *“And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath”***

What does God have planned for His own people?

The end of **v.7** tells us –

***“His countenance doth behold the upright”***

**1.** The upright will behold His face

[**Psalm**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+17%3A15) **17:15 – *“As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness”***

**I John 3:1-3 – *“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not”   
“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is”   
“And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure”***

To see someone’s face means we have access to a person,

For Him to look upon us with delight means He is going to bless us

**Numbers 6:22-27**

**2.** For God to turn His face away is to reject us,

**II Samuel 14:24** (Absalom being sent away)

When Jesus returns, those who have rejected Him will be cast away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power

**II Thessalonians 1:8-10**

**Matthew 7:21-23**

While His own children will be welcomed into His presence

**Matthew 25:34 – *“Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world”***

**Prayer**

**WHAT SHOULD DAVID DO?**

**WHAT DOES THE ENEMY DO?**

**WHAT CAN THE RIGHTEOUS DO?**

**WHAT WILL GOD DO?**