

When Evil Comes Against You

My wife, Jewel, stood guard in the square of an old European city over a one-legged pigeon lying on the ground.

I had ventured down a side street and, while waiting for my return, she saw other pigeons ganging up on this injured member of their own species. If not for her quick intervention, the poor bird would have been quickly pecked to death.

How like life, I thought. When you are down, others jump on you. Why? Because you are vulnerable—a Latin word whose root, *vulner*, means “wound.” A wounded person (or pigeon) is much more susceptible to further danger because of an already weakened condition.

David writes this psalm during a season of vulnerability when he feels insecure, unprotected and exposed to life-threatening enemies. He’s as helpless as a one-legged pigeon.

What can you do when there are no human solutions? Ask God for His solutions. That’s what David did.

My Trouble Is Real

Psalm 64 begins with a passionate outburst, “Hear my voice ... Hide me” (vv. 1-2).

At the outset of perilous times, we often find it difficult to believe that what seeks to destroy us will itself be destroyed. So, we ask first not for God to destroy what has come against us, but for His protection instead. Indeed, God himself often does not remove the danger, but instead shelters us from its annihilating force.

Only later in the process will God dispatch the enemy (vv. 7-8).

Is it possible the Lord allows our problems to remain just long enough to get a psalm from us, to genuinely shape our character, to forever change us, to provide an occasion of remembrance of His acts on our behalf so we might forever praise Him?

Source (v. 2). Who takes the attitude life would be better for them if you weren't around? It hurts to know you are not wanted.

David notes the irony of the conspiracy against him as one "from that noisy crowd of evildoers." Normally coups d'état are hush-hush, but this one is loud because the plotters feel the king is powerless and vulnerable—they have nothing to fear.

Who's in your noisy crowd of evildoers? Have you been defrauded, conned, or manipulated by others you trusted?

Methods (vv. 3–5). Conspiracy begins with talk. David's imagery is vivid: "They sharpen their tongue like a sword" (v. 3). And, their words—carefully targeted arrows to hit the center of the bull's-eye.

The innocent are ambushed. They never see a conspiracy coming because they genuinely trust people. It is the conspirators who are one step, or many steps, ahead. They have predetermined their course and "shoot suddenly at him and do not fear" (v. 4). They are "laying snares" (v. 5).

Attitude (v. 6). They always think they will get away with it. "Who will see? . . . We have devised a perfect plan."

Perpetrators of wrong seem so smug and secure. They have thought of every angle, considered all the options and now brim with confidence.

Do you have people like that in your life? They hold all the cards. They are unjust, but they have advantage over you. You

feel discouraged and defeated.

Keep praying this psalm. It's not over at verse 6.

My Faith Is Also Real

Yes, your trouble is very real. But how about your faith? Do you think God will let this evil against you go unpunished? Is He going to remain entirely on the sidelines, passive over injustice?

No.

If my enemies have arrows, so also does God (v. 7). But they are God's arrows, not mine. The truly vulnerable are without defense or offense, so I must do nothing except rely on the Lord alone.

Does God have good aim? Read verse 7. Is there poetic justice? Read verse 8.

What an incredible turnaround! Moments or days before, the evildoers were on top. They were winning. But God turned the tables on them. Now, they get no respect: "All who see them will flee away" (v. 8). Shame has replaced pride. They didn't get away with it after all.

When God is done with the conspirator, others will fear. It's something we all must ponder (vv. 9-10). What status do we seek for ourselves: innocence or conspiracy? The difference between the two is simple: The latter hides secrets which, if brought to pass, bring destruction or despair to another. But the innocent hurt no one—their goal is to build up and they will sacrifice their own comfort to make that possible.

My wife protected the one-legged pigeon as long as she could, and then we had to leave. We hope another protector took her place. How different with the Lord. When we lie vulnerable and picked on, He never has to leave and go to another appointment. In strength, He ever watches over us.

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