

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Psalms: Living By Faith In God
LV. Handling A Great Betrayal Of Trust
(Psalm 55:1-23)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Today, we face a betrayal of trust on a huge scale:

(1) We face it in the president: (a) Americans expect their president to tell them the truth, but in his recent State of the Union Address, he said, “‘Republicans want Medicare and Social Security to sunset.’” (“‘Republicans want Medicare and Social Security to sunset,’” New York Post, Feb. 10, 2023, p. 31) The New York Post countered, “‘Biden knows full well that GOP Speaker Kevin McCarthy took cuts to Social Security and Medicaid ‘off the table,’ yet he nonetheless tried to scare the public (and goad Republicans) with this outrageous fib. Ironically, Biden himself once pushed to sunset these and other programs.” (Ibid.) (b) When President Biden began his presidency, he promised to unite the nation, but “‘(h)ow are you going to unite people when you take a slew of policies that are so antithetical to the view of Americans? And then (President Biden) calls tens of millions of Americans naziesque bigots and racists.’” (Ben Weingarten, February 9 Newsweek op-ed, “‘It Wasn’t Republicans Who Pushed the Breakdown of Traditional Etiquette,’” cited in “‘Quotable,’” Republican-American, Feb. 15, 2023, p. 6A)

(2) We face it in the State Department: “‘The State Department is financing a foreign advocacy group that aims to cut off funding to American journalists’ who are ideologically conservative. (Daniel McCarthy, “‘Cash for Censorship,’” Ibid., New York Post, p. 37) “‘The ‘Global Disinformation Index,’ or GDI . . . a British organization . . . receives hundreds of thousands of dollars from the State Department’s Global Engagement Center and the taxpayer-funded National Endowment for Democracy . . . But GDI is in the business of doing what the First Amendment doesn’t allow our government to do . . . It blacklists news organizations to deny them advertiser dollars,” and “‘(a)ll 10 of the news organizations GDI classifies as ‘riskiest’ or ‘worst’ are outside of the left-liberal media club . . . Yet none of the outlets that misled readers for years about ‘Russian collusion’ involving Donald Trump’s 2016 campaign appears on the list.” Accordingly, “‘(d)isinformation’ in this case is “‘information that does not conform to a liberal view of the world,” and “‘(f)reedom of the press’ is “‘at risk as never before in this environment.’” (Ibid.)

(3) We face it in academia: “‘What’s pushed as ‘Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion’ is ‘toxic,’ yet ‘DEI initiatives have proliferated in higher education,’ fumes Matthew Spalding in The Wall Street Journal. ‘It divides us by social identity groups, ranks those groups on privilege and power, and excludes those who fail to honor the new orthodoxy.’ And ‘it deadens the academic mind’ as college administrations push this agenda . . . It shuts out ‘divergent voices,’ forces ‘chilling self-censorship’ and mandates ‘ostracization and exclusion’ for those who defy its ‘pieties and homilies’ – making it . . . ‘Orwellian,’” or Marxist! (“‘Conservative: DEI Is Death for Academia’s Ideals,’” Ibid., p. 35)

(4) We face it in leadership in Christendom: “‘Pope Francis criticized laws that criminalize homosexuality as ‘unjust,’” and speaking of Catholic bishops who support the laws, he said, “‘These bishops have to have a process of conversion.’” (“‘AP interview: Pope says homosexuality not a crime,’” Ibid., Republican-American, January 26, 2023, p. 9A) Yet, Jude 7 with Genesis 19:1-26 in the Bible teach that God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah for this very sin!

Need: So, we ask, “‘How does God want us to handle the vast and great betrayal of trust that we face today?!”

I. Psalm 55:1-23 is David’s response to the betrayal of a close friend, and it expresses anguish with respect to himself (v. 1-8), anger with respect to his foes (v. 9-15) and assurance with respect to God (v. 16-23). (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, footnote to Psalm 55)

- A. In verses 1-8 on David’s anguish, “‘(o)nlly the first three lines are a prayer; the rest is a complaint . . . in the framework of a prayer . . . It is as though a man began to pray but found his situation so overpowering that he had first to unburden his heart of the grief that was upon him.” (H. C. Leupold, The Psalms, 1969, p. 421)
- B. In verses 9-15 on David’s anger with his foes, he expressed astonishment that the one who betrayed him was one with whom he had known spiritual fellowship in God’s temple, Psalm 55:12-14; Ibid., p. 422-423.
- C. In verses 16-23, David expressed confidence in God’s help while further describing the evil of his foes. This mingling of trust in God with reports of his foes shows that the psalm was written under duress. (Ibid., p. 424)

II. The introductory notes, part of the Hebrew text, claim that the psalm is a *maskil*, “‘a contemplative poem” that “‘gives insight.” (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 1021; H. A. W., T. W. O. T., 1980, vol. II, p. 877)

III. Thus, verses 22-23, the instructional part of this psalm, is rich in helpful insight for us (as follows):

- A. We clarify the translation of key words and phrases in verses 22-23 from the original Hebrew text as follows:

1. The words “thy burden” (v. 22 KJV) translate the noun **yehab**, that refers to the “care, anxiety, etc., which is the portion one was [unjustly] given” in being betrayed. (B. D. B., *A Heb-Eng. Lex. of the O. T.*, p. 396)
 2. That care, anxiety, etc., is to be “cast” (v. 22a KJV), or “thrown, flung, cast” (**shalak**, *Ibid.*, p. 1020-1021) upon the Lord, Psalm 55:22a. The idea is that in one great thrust, the troubled believer is to unload the whole trial and his accompanying burdensome thoughts and feelings with that trial upon the Lord!
 3. The first personal pronoun rendered “he” (v. 22 KJV) is written separate from the verb and in front of it, emphasizing that pronoun so that we should read the phrase as “and **He** will . . .” (*Ibid.*, Kittel, p. 1023)
 4. The verb “sustain” (v. 22b KJV) renders the word **kul** in the intensive Pilpel stem (**yekalkeleak**, *Ibid.*, Kittel), meaning “sustain, support, nourish, supply” (*Ibid.*, B. D. B., p. 465; *Ibid.*, H. A. W., vol. I, p. 432).
 5. “Suffer” (v. 22 KJV) renders the verb **natan** that here means “permit” (*Ibid.*, Kittel; *Ibid.*, B. D. B., p. 678-681) and “moved” (v. 22 KJV) renders **mot**, “a shaking, tottering [in insecurity],” *Ibid.*, B. D. B., p. 557.
- B. We summarize these findings by giving a translation of verse 22 (as follows): “Throw, fling, cast your care, anxiety, etc., which is the portion you were unjustly given [in being betrayed] upon the Lord, and **He** will sustain, support, nourish, supply you: He will never allow the righteous to be shaken, tottered in insecurity.”
- C. Verse 23 follows this rich promise with God’s added assurance that He will shorten the lives of the wicked who betray the righteous where David in contrast claimed, “I myself” (emphatic pronoun) will “trust” (KJV), **batah**, “securely trust; fling myself down upon my face and lie extended upon” (*Ibid.*, Kittel; *Ibid.*, B. D. B., p. 105; *Ibid.*, H. A. W., vol. I, p. 101-102) the Lord.

Lesson: *To handle a great betrayal in trust, David taught that we should fling down our care, anxiety and portion we were unjustly handed in being betrayed upon the Lord, that He Himself will sustain, support, nourish and supply what we need, that He will never allow the righteous to be shaken or tottered in insecurity. God will then adequately discipline the betrayers in His time while we fully trust in the Lord.*

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) If facing great betrayals of trust, may we heed David's Psalm 55:22-23 instructions as stated in the “Lesson” section above and applied in the “Conclusion” section below.*

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

We apply this sermon’s lesson to the issues of concern expressed in our sermon introduction (as follows):

(1) In **general**, when the president does not speak the truth, when our State Department tries to control the press to push an unbiblical agenda, when academia promotes Marxist objectives, and when leaders in Christendom counter basic Scriptural morals, may we fling our care, anxiety and portion we were unjustly given by these parties on the Lord, trusting that He will sustain, support, nourish and supply us with all that we need, that He will never let us be shaken or tottered in insecurity as we rely on the Holy Spirit. May we be sure that God will punish the betrayers in time while we resolve to trust securely in the Lord, figuratively to lie face down fully extended upon Him for safety.

(2) **Specifically**, (a) President Biden’s (+) claim that the Republicans are trying to sunset Social Security and Medicare, what he himself once tried to do as a senator, should be met by our seeking to function as independent of these “at risk” programs as we can, for 2 Thessalonians 3:10 calls us to work for a living, and 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12 directs that working independently will lead us to have no material need and have a good testimony. The more we free ourselves from relying on government programs, the less harm we risk facing. (+) The President’s clear violation of his promise to unite the nation is to be countered by our obedience of Romans 13:8-10 to love all men as we love ourselves, working no ill to any fellow citizen! (b) The State Department’s effort to control how we think by influencing the press is to be countered by our exposure to Scripture according to 2 Timothy 3:13-17. That passage directs how we are to overcome deception that is predicted to go from bad to worse in this world through our use of Scripture! (c) On secular academia’s strong promotion of the Critical Race Theory, Galatians 3:28-29 contradicts this theory, especially in the Church, and 1 Corinthians 12:1-31 teaches that using our spiritual gifts as believers in the local church gives practical value and meaning to every individual believer regardless of his or her race, ethnicity or gender! (d) On the pope’s call to convert Catholic bishops to accept homosexuality as not being criminal opposite God’s judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah for that sin, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 claims that believers in Corinth were saved out of deviant sexual orientations and deeds by faith in Christ. It is not the conversion of “straight” people to accepting homosexual orientations and deeds that is needed, but the conversion of homosexuals to faith in Christ!

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 handle betrayals by relying on the Lord for His deliverance and heeding His Word.