

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Psalms: Living By Faith In God
LIX. Handling Threats By Elitists
(Psalm 59:1-17)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

In today's world, we face "a regime marked by cooperation between political and economic elites for their mutual benefit at the expense of the masses. Among the benefits pursued by elites, of course, is maintenance of their positions of power." (Veronique de Rugy, "Welcome to the age of political capitalism," Republican-American, March 11, 2023, p. 6A) This elitist complex affects us in a variety of realms:

(1) It affects us in the realms of housing and income security: "It has now become common for our state government to step into private contracts to unlevel the playing field in favor of" allegedly "'sticking up for the little guy' – by favoring a renter or an employee or other 'group,'" but "'it is ultimately the renter or employee who suffers most. Providers and job creators are dis-incentivized to invest in their existing property or businesses that would create new opportunities, ultimately hurting our economy and limiting outcomes.'" (Ibid., "Quotable," March 7, 2023, p. 6A, citing State Sen. Rob Sampson, R-16th District, column in the March CT Inside Investigator, 'More government will never be the answer')

(2) It affects us in the realm of banking security: Were it not for the "domino-like series of government interventions – starting with unprecedented near-zero interest rates which encouraged (Silicon Valley Bank) to buy Treasuries, and followed by unprecedented lockdowns, government-stimulus-fueled consumer spending, runaway inflation and rising interest rates that devalued those Treasuries – this bank failure would never have happened." (Mark Thiessen, "Government set the stage for Silicon Valley Bank's collapse," Ibid., March 18, 2023, p. 8A)

(3) It affects us in the realms of health cost and retirement income security: "The Medicare problem that needs fixing is the program's cost . . . (Its expenditures as a percentage of gross domestic product will grow by almost a third in the next 10 years, while the percentage of GDP collected by the payroll taxes that fund Medicare and Social Security will stay roughly flat. (Social Security . . . has the same problem.) And this will take place in the context of massive deficits . . . that will make it impossible simply to paper over those gaps with transfers from the general fund indefinitely. Some combination of spending cuts and higher taxes will be needed," but "there's no political will to fix the actual problem." (Megan McCardle, "Medicare needs saving, but not from GOP," Ibid., March 15, 2023, p. 8A)

(4) It affects us in the realm of personal adequate budgeting: "The grocery store is organized to help you spend money, not save money" says Wayne W. Williams, associate professor of accounting at Temple University's Fox School of Business. (Erin McCarthy, "Spending habits a bit out of hand? A few tips for control," Sunday-Republican, March 12, 2023, p. 1C) Such influences in the marketplace negatively impact a large part of the country's population: "36% of households live paycheck-to-paycheck – even though they earn \$250,000 + a year. The number of Americans who use all their monthly income to pay expenses and save nothing is on the rise – up to 61% versus 52% in 2021." ("Did you know that . . .," Bottom Line Personal, March 15, 2023, p. 13)

(5) It affects us in the realm of our exposure to dangerous criminals: ". . . (T)he state Board of Pardons and Paroles . . . 'has approved commutations in 97 cases,' the Republican-American's Bruno Matarazzo Jr. reported March 8, 'most charged with murder or manslaughter' . . . If the board persists . . . in flinging open the jailhouse gates to killers, one will have to wonder who is really in charge of state government – elected leaders like Gov. Lamont or the 'woke' bureaucrats who see no point in sustaining lawfully administered punishment and fulfilling their duty to protect the public." (Ibid., the Republican-American main editorial, "State GOP is putting victims first")

Need: *So we ask, "How can we handle the threats to our welfare by self-serving political and economic elitists?!"*

- I. The introductory notes to Psalm 59:1-17, part of the Hebrew text (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 1025), report that David composed this psalm when elitists king Saul and his officials watched David's house to kill him!
- II. David thus asked God to deliver him from these men since he had done nothing wrong, Psalm 59:1-5.
- III. Though David's foes acted like snarling dogs that prowled about the city at night, proudly thinking that even God was unaware of their intentions, David said that he would watch for the Lord, His Fortress, his *misgob* or "High Safe Place," to deliver him, Psalm 59:6-10; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 835, 828.
- IV. Referring to God has his *magen*, his "Personal Hand-held Shield" that was used in close combat (B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 171; Roland deVaux, Ancient Israel: Vol. 1 – Social Institutions, 1965, p. 245), David asked that God might punish his foes in a way that witnesses would not forget that

God was sovereign over such enemies, causing them to be humbled, v. 11. David also asked that his foes' sins be exposed in a way that witnesses would know that God rules in justice over Israel, Psalm 59:12-14.

- V. Though David's enemies returned the next evening, prowling about to kill him, he expressed confidence that he would yet praise God for His attributes that would be expressed in his behalf, Psalm 59:15-17.
- VI. In the historical record, 1 Samuel 19:11-17 reports how David escaped from this conspiracy by Saul's men when David's wife Michal, Saul's daughter, let him down from a window so he could flee to safety.

Lesson: When David faced self-serving, murderous efforts by elitist king Saul and his officials to watch David's house to kill him, David relied on the Lord as his High Safe Place and Personal Hand-held Shield to deliver him.

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) To handle threats by self-serving political and economic elitists, may we (a) call on the Lord, our High Safe Place and Personal Hand-held Shield to deliver us, as modified by God's plan for us today in view of the current "Mini-Great Tribulation" that we face (as explained below).

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

Though we like David should ask God for deliverance from self-serving elitists, we have before noted that Revelation 3:21 with 7:17 predict that we will face a "Mini-Great Tribulation" where leaders in institutions who are full of intrigue will oppress their subordinates, what God will allow to a degree to drive people to Scripture for balm.

We thus note a Scripture verse that addresses *all* of the issues of concern in our introduction – Proverbs 28:19 NIV. It renders the Hebrew text well (Ibid., Kittel, p. 1190) and reads: "***He who works his land will have abundant food, but the one who chases fantasies will have his fill of poverty.***" We apply this verse (as follows): (a) The word "*his*" in Proverbs 28:19 NIV addresses *all* of the issues of housing and income security, banking security, health cost and retirement income security, budgeting, and protection from dangerous criminals because it deals with God's assigned calling for us (as follows): (+) The people of Israel had received a land inheritance from God (Leviticus 25:23) that had been passed down to them by their fathers (Numbers 36:7) so that God wanted each man [except the Levites and Levitical priests who lived off of the tithes from the other tribes so that the Levites could study Scripture, Numbers 18:24; Malachi 2:7] to work his own plot in his tribal land for his livelihood. Applied to us, heeding God's calling brings us under His protection in all realms of life so that we can fulfill God's assignment for us. (+) Also, a great contrast exists in the **degree of security** in the two men who are contrasted in Proverbs 28:19 NIV: (-) He who tills the land he already possesses from God is assured abundance of food where (-) he who chases after fantasies that he has not even obtained has no assurance that he will even acquire any of his fantasies, nor of being productive were he ever to gain any of them! One is thus far more secure to work with what he already has from God! (b) On banking security and protection from dangerous criminals in particular, the words "*his land*" in Proverbs 28:19 NIV suggest a **local** focus, for each man's plot in his tribal land kept his focus **local**, Numbers 36:7. Similarly, (+) banking security is enhanced by using **local** banks that have a state charter that directs such banks to keep attuned to local affairs and be competitive with other local banks versus larger banks that face less competition and are tempted to take more risks over wider realms of the economy that they might not fully understand. (+) Also, we can stick to **local** areas for recreational and business activities to lessen exposure to criminals as opposed to going to places that are unfamiliar to us so that they leave us more unaware of their perils, Proverbs 27:8! (c) On housing and income sufficiency, health cost and retirement income security and budgeting sufficiency in particular, the word "*works*" in Proverbs 28:19 NIV refers to tilling with rich applications: (+) Tilling around olive trees (so their roots can absorb more rain to withstand crop failure in dry months) or to prepare for field crops in the next growing season ran from September to December, non-crop-growing months that ended in cold, wet weather. (+) Tilling thus required planning, budgeting for survival in non-crop-producing-months, self-discipline and work when one could neither see nor gain access to the fruits of his labor! (Zon. Pict. Ency. Bib., Vol. One, p. 75) One can perform these practices by relying on the Holy Spirit for the motivation and power to do them, Galatians 5:22-23. (d) In addition, a **big contrast** occurs with the **results** of tilling versus chasing fantasies, for tilling produces "***abundant food***" where chasing fantasies produces one's "***fill of poverty***." (+) These contrasting results occur over the **long-term**, so we should (+) ***faithfully*** perform God's calling, focus on local functions, practice self-discipline, plan, use a budget, and work!

May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life. To handle threats by self-serving political and economic elitists, may we call on God, our High Safe Place and Personal Hand-held Shield for deliverance as modified by God's Biblical plan in our current "Mini-Great Tribulation" era!