

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Psalms: God's Nurture Of The Inner Man In The Life Of Faith

XI. Responding Productively To The Godless Destruction Of The Social Order (Psalm 11:1-7)

I. Introduction

- A. The Supreme Court ruling that legalized same-sex marriage is foreboding to a number of conservative Christians who have heard various legal experts and even some of the dissenting judges on the Court claim that it is a potential threat to their future religious liberties.
- B. Israel's king David faced the same pressure in his era, and his Psalm 11:1-7 instructs us on handling it:

II. Responding Productively To The Godless Destruction Of The Social Order, Psalm 11:1-7.

- A. Part of verse 1 in the Hebrew text comprises the introductory remarks in the English Bible (Kittel, Biblia Hebraica, p. 983), so we will stay with the numbering system in the English Bible for this lesson.
- B. Accordingly, Psalm 11:1-7, authored by David (cf. Psalm 11:1a in the Hebrew text), translates as follows:
 - 1. "In Jahweh do I seek refuge (*hasah*, B. D. B., A Heb.-Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 340). How [then] (*'ek*, Ibid., p. 32) can you say to my life principle (*nepesh*, mental, emotional, spiritual, physical life, Ibid., p. 659-661; Robert B. Girdlestone, Syns. of the O. T., 1973, p. 56-59), "Take flight away to your mountain like a bird," Psalm 11:1(b).
 - 2. "For look, the wicked bend their bows, they make ready their arrows upon the bowstrings to shoot from the shadows those who are morally, ethically, legally upright (*yashar*, Ibid., B. D. B., p. 449; Ibid., Girdlestone, p. 100-101) in heart," Psalm 11:2.
 - 3. "Because if the foundations [of established laws, usages] (*shit* ["sheet"], Ibid., B. D. B., p. 1011) are torn down (*haras*, Ibid., p. 248), what are the righteous to do, make, achieve (*pa'al*, Ibid., p. 821)?" Psa. 11:3.
 - 4. "Jahweh is in His holy temple; Jahweh is on His heavenly throne. His eyes behold (*hazah*, Ibid., p. 302), His eyelids examine, try, scrutinize (*bahan*, Ibid., p. 103) the sons of men," Psalm 11:4.
 - 5. "Jahweh examines, tries, scrutinizes the righteous, but the wicked and those who love violence His life principle (*nepesh* again, v. 1) hates (*sane'*, Ibid., Kittel, p. 984; H. A. W., Theol. Wrdbk. of the O. T., v. II, p. 879-880; God's hatred is not against people innately, but against sinful people, Ibid.)," Psalm 11:5.
 - 6. "On the wicked He will rain fiery coals and 'burning sulfer' [NIV] (*gaprit* & *'esh*, "brimstone" & "fire," Ibid., Kittel; also in Genesis 19:24 of Sodom and Gomorrah and Ezekiel 38:22 of Gog and Magog, Ibid., B. D. B., p. 172, 77) and a scorching wind: [this will be] the portion of their cup [their lot]," Psa. 11:6.
 - 7. "Because the Righteous Jahweh loves righteousness, the morally, ethically, legally upright (*yashar* again, v. 2) will behold [in ecstasy after this life] (*hazah* again, v. 4) His face," Psalm 11:7.
- C. The psalm offers edifying insight on responding well to the destruction of the social order by the godless:
 - 1. If the social order is being torn down by the wicked (v. 3a), the godly must resist the lure of the faint in heart to flee from society in self-defense (v. 1-2) as if they can no longer function well there (v. 3b).
 - 2. Such courage arises from faith that God is in His holy temple in sovereignty over godless religious entities (v. 4a), that He is on His heavenly throne in sovereignty over godless civil entities (v. 4b) [and that He is thus also over angelic conflict issues, Eph. 1:20-23]. [Note: The believer may need to flee attempts by the wicked specifically to harm him as in the case of Acts 8:1. The point of Psalm 11 is that the godly must not flee the disorder itself, but counter the disorder caused by the wicked via his stabilizing uprightness.]
 - 3. The believer must focus not on how powerful are the ungodly, but on God's infinite sovereignty, revering Him over the destructively wicked for nurture and encouragement in retaining a potent, upright influence.
 - 4. We can trust God to deal out judgment and reward to all the parties involved, for He is a Righteous God, and the morally, ethically, legally upright will behold His face in eternal ecstasy opposite the ungodly.

Lesson: *In response to the destruction of the social order by the ungodly, David resisted the lure of the fainthearted to flee from the disorder and from the ungodly who caused it by trusting in the infinitely sovereign, Righteous God Who was over all religious and civil wickedness to the contrary so as to judge sin and reward righteousness.*

Application: *In response to the Supreme Court's socially destructive ruling to legalize same-sex marriage, we must not heed the fears of the fainthearted to flee from the disorder and the ungodly who cause it, but to rest in God's sovereign, righteous rule over all religious and civil evil, trusting He will judge sin and reward righteousness. We must focus on our eternal reward, shifting our love away from this world system to live for Him, 1 John 2:15-17.*