

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Psalms: Living By Faith In God
XLII. Handling Intimidating Harassment
(Psalm 42:1-11)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Many people today harass those who differ with them in ideology to try to intimidate them into submission:

(1) It reportedly occurs with some officials in the Federal Bureau of Investigation: “‘Bombshell allegations by FBI Special Agent Steve Friend contained in a whistleblower complaint filed (Sept. 21) with the Department of Justice . . . reveal a politicized Washington, D. C. FBI field office cooking the books to exaggerate the threat of domestic terrorism, and an ‘overzealous’ Jan. 6 investigation to harass conservative Americans . . .’ the New York Post reported . . .’” (“Biden’s constitutional circumvention,” Republican-American, September 28, 2022, p. 6A)

(2) The mainstream social media giant Facebook has also become involved: “‘Now (Facebook) appears to be monitoring private messages and suppressing material related to the whistleblower complaint,’ the New York Post subsequently reported Sept. 25 in a story noting Mr. Friend’s wife was suspended from Facebook for sending a private message to a nonprofit organization that had offered its support to her husband.” (*Ibid.*)

(3) Such intimidating harassment occurs locally: “. . . (T)he . . . Winsted . . . Board of Education . . . recently approved a ‘Pregnant Employee in the Workplace’ policy that refers to pregnant employees as ‘persons’ rather than ‘women’ . . . Salvatore . . . Lovetree, one of two members of the school board to vote against the policy, said, ‘I will once again point out that a man cannot have a baby. It seems so crazy to me that I have to say it and it feels like I’m the one that’s being looked at like I’m the crazy person in the room’ . . . (A) culture of common sense” is “quickly and efficiently being replaced by a culture of conformity” as Mr. Lovetree’s “colleagues have been pressured into bowing before an anti-science regime.” (“Gender madness reaches Winsted,” *Ibid.*, September 26, 2022, p. 8A)

(4) Intimidating harassment likely occurs at the national level: “. . . (T)he Sept. 18-21 ABC/Washington Post poll shows” that “(a)pparently, ‘shy Trump’ voters have been refusing to be polled – an attitude possibly fortified by the denunciation by President Joe Biden in his . . . Independence Hall speech on Sept. 1 of ‘MAGA Republicans’ who ‘represent an extremism that threatens the very foundations of the republic.’ That chilling rhetoric . . . with federal nonprosecution of leftist violence against pro-life pregnancy counseling centers and Supreme Court justices’ homes, might be making many Republicans unwilling to divulge their views to pollsters affiliated with media organizations or universities.” (Michael Barone, “Are polls understanding GOP’s support?”, *Ibid.*, September 30, 2022, p. 6A)

(5) Intimidating harassment afflicts the police: In 1967, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover told Congress that even then, ““(c)ommunists”” were trying to ““incite . . . hostility toward law and order”” in order to ““advance the cause of communism”” in America. (Brannon S. Howse, Marxianity, 2018, p. 178-179) Last week’s ambush of three officers in Bristol, Connecticut, like many recent shootings of officers across the country, have Marxism as their root cause!

A caller on “The Talk of Connecticut” radio talk show hosted by Gary Byron last Friday morning referred to this ambush of the Bristol police officers, claiming it was a symptom of a much broader deterioration in our society, and he asked, “How do we get **back** to the peaceful, orderly society we **used** to have – how do we do **that?**”

(6) Intimidating harassment now affects churches: In recent years, several believers in our Church have expressed fear over retaliations that I or our Church might face for my giving out religious exemption letters or for exposing and denouncing from the pulpit the evils of influential people!

Need: So, we ask, “How does God want us to handle harassment that is meant to intimidate us into submission?!”

I. The author of Psalm 42 struggled under the burden of continual intimidating harassment from his foes:

- A. He was “exiled in the far north of Palestine (42:6)” by foes who often taunted him by asking, “Where is your God?” Who could deliver him from them, Psalm 42:3, 10. (Ryrie St. Bib., KJV, 1978, ftn. to Psalm 42 and 43)
- B. As a result, the psalmist was “bowed down” (*shahah*, Psalm 42:5, 11; Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 1011; H. A. W., Theol. Wrdbk. of the O. T., 1980, v. I, p. 914-915) with “restless disturbance” (*hamah*, Psalm 42:5, 11; B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 242; *Ibid.*, H. A. W., p. 219), suffering under intimidation pressure.

II. This repeat intimidation harassment had spiritually, physically, and emotionally drained the psalmist:

- A. Since the Lord had not quickly delivered him, the psalmist struggled with doubt about God’s goodness v. 9.
- B. The psalmist’s whole body, figuratively called his “bones” (B. K. C., O. T., p. 795), hurt, Psalm 42:10.
- C. He longed for former happier times when he joyously worshiped the Lord in God’s temple, Psalm 42:4.
- D. The experience of exile and steady taunting by his foes had emotionally exhausted the psalmist, Psalm 42:7.

III. The solution came from the psalmist's decision to live a life of faith in the Lord:

- A. The psalmist sensed his great need for the Lord and His deliverance as if he thirsted for God, Psalm 42:1-2.
- B. He repeatedly directed himself to wait on the Lord to deliver him from his trial, Psalm 42:5b, 11b.
- C. Accordingly, the psalmist spiritually became aware of God's "loyal love" (*hesed*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., H. A. W., p. 305-307) by day that by night he could sing songs and pray to the Lord for His help, Psalm 42:8.

Lesson: *Though facing exile and constant taunting by his foes that eventually emotionally exhausted the psalmist, by focusing on his need for God and directing himself to wait for His rescue, the psalmist experienced the Lord's spiritual nurture of assuring him of God's loyal love for him that led the psalmist to sing and pray in the night.*

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 debilitating, intimidating harassment, may we realize our great need for God as if thirsting for Him and direct ourselves patiently to wait for the Lord to deliver us.* (3) *God will provide assurance of His infinite loyal love for us, resulting in joyful praise and prayer to God on our part even before He delivers us from the debilitating, intimidating harassment.*

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

Scripture provides us encouraging guidance and promises that demonstrate God's loyal love for us as it relates to concerns over the intimidating harassment issues that we mentioned in our introduction (as follows):

(1) On the FBI's Washington, D. C. field office alleged harassment of an FBI whistleblower, on Facebook's alleged harassment of the whistleblower's wife, on the Winsted Board of Education's cave-in to intimidating pressure on its "Pregnant Employee in the Workplace" policy statement, on the "shy Trump" voters who are refusing to be polled by the mainstream media and universities, and on efforts to intimidate the police seen in last week's ambush of three Bristol officers, as we have often noted, Revelation 3:21 with 7:17 implied that leaders in the world religious-business-government complex who are full of intrigue in our era would oppress their subjects in a "Mini-Great Tribulation." The issues listed immediately above merely signal that we are witnessing what God said would occur! The **answer** to this dilemma, what was sought by the caller to "The Talk of Connecticut" radio talk show on Friday, is given in Revelation 3:21 with 7:17 as follows: local church pastors as "overcomers" are to nurture their hearers who reel from oppression by the godless complex through Bible teaching! (We show **how** this is achieved in "(2)" below!)

(2) We just noted in "(1)" immediately above that God wants pastors to nurture people who reel from the oppressive world complex. (a) This is done by preaching the Word and applying it by correcting, rebuking, and encouraging their hearers with great patience and careful instruction, be the time opportune or not, 2 Timothy 4:1-2! (Ibid., Ryrie, ftn. to 2 Timothy 4:2) (b) In view of the world complex's harassment of people today, this **also** requires that pastors expose the **evils** of the complex that their hearers who reel from oppression can discern the truth about what they face and take Biblical steps to handle it! (This is why we name such evils from the pulpit!) (c) However, a pastor is **also** to "walk in **wisdom** toward" the world (cf. Colossians 4:5), (i) what requires that he cite publicly recognized reputable sources that name the evils of the complex to keep the pastor free from charges of slander, what we are always careful to do! (ii) Also, **wisdom** dictates that a pastor may **then** make a moral judgment from the pulpit to call the **cited** "evils" as "sins," and the Bill of Rights protects his speech. (iii) This way, we minimize cause for retaliations from the complex while obeying Scripture on preaching God's Word with application as 2 Timothy 4:1-2 directs! (d) Applied to COVID-19 exemption letters we give out, (i) we cite reputable sources that show how each company that produced a vaccine used aborted fetal cell lines to produce it, and then (ii) we cite Scripture and state our conscientious objection to the vaccine. We do **not even pretend** to **give out** an **actual exemption**, for only secular institutions can legally do so! We are upright with our letters! (e) If the time ever came that our current rights no longer existed to minister as we do now, a pastor is **still** required by **God** to preach the Word, to reprove, rebuke and exhort with great patience and careful instruction (2 Timothy 4:1-2), so I will **still** practice that ministry in obedience to Christ! (f) As encouragements, (i) we have Christ's Matthew 16:18 promise that He will build His Church so that the gates of hades will not prevail against it. The Jews in Jesus' era "would understand hades' gates to refer to physical death" (Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 57), so until the Rapture when the true Church universal is taken to heaven, we know that Christ will continue to build His Church no matter what the world and Satan try to do to hinder it! (ii) Also, Revelation 3:21 promises that the "overcomer(s)" is/are promised great influence by ministering "in" Christ's figurative earthly throne, what **will be fulfilled!** *That promise motivates me to keep on keeping on!*

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 intimidating harassment from the world by a walk of faith in a great God!