



Be Exalted, O God
Psalm 57
November 11, 2018

Have you ever participated in “Anti-Valentine’s Day?” What about “Anti-Thanksgiving”? What do we do about Thanksgiving when the troubles in our lives make it hard to be thankful? Psalm 57 shows us a pathway:

1. Cry out to ____ (v. 1). That is clearly who David is addressing in the Psalm. God is referred to eight times in it.
2. Tell Him your _____ (vv. 3, 4, 6). Some of these descriptions are probably figurative. They would not be inappropriate for describing Saul’s army coming after David (the heading, plus 1 Samuel 23-24). We do not emphasize our troubles, but neither do we deny them. We describe them to God.
3. Ask God for ____ (v. 1). One reason it is so right to tell our troubles to God is that he is able to help. The refrain is repeated (vv. 5, 11) and so is an emphasis in the Psalm. Primarily the refrain is an appeal for God to intervene and help. Exalted means elevated, and glory means radiance, but both are metaphors for greatness. Neither God nor a human king is considered great for no reason, however. They are great because of their power and deeds (humans: 2 Samuel 5:6-12; Joshua 4:1-14; cf. Job 4:22-24; God: Exodus 15:1; Job 37:22-24; Psalm 47; 113:4-9). Thus when David says “be exalted,” it is an appeal for God to do again

things like he has done before that exalted him. At the same time, though, the very fact that David asks and believes God can do this is a form of praise. Thus the line between praise and appeal is blurred (cf. Psalm 18:46-49; Nehemiah 9:5-6). The gist is sort of like “show them how it’s done.” The fact that David asks God to be exalted *above the heavens* and his glory to be *over all the earth* seems to put his personal request for help in the context of the ultimate consummation of God’s rule (cf. Matthew 6:10).

4. ____ God because of who he is. He is our refuge (v. 1) and God Most High (v. 2). He vindicates us (v. 2), and like a king commissions his servants, so God sends his love and faithfulness to do his bidding (v. 3). In light of who God is, David fully expects to be delivered (v. 6), and so his heart is steadfast (v. 7). This trust is paramount. It is what changes the tone of the Psalm from the feel of mere lament and enables David to praise God even while he is still in the midst of his troubles.
5. Based on that trust, give praise and ____ (vv. 7b-10; also 5, 11). The stated reason for the praise is God’s love and faithfulness (v. 10). David expects these to manifest themselves again in his deliverance. The praise is as universal (nations and peoples, v. 9) as the appeal for God’s ultimate exaltation over everything (5, 11).

So what if you’re just not feeling it this Thanksgiving? The pathway outlined above is a good way to pray and live. Don’t deny your troubles, but make sure you don’t focus on them either. And don’t focus on trust either. Instead, focus on God who inspires trust. In short, even during _____ your _____ in _____ can lead you to _____.





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