BIG PROBLEMS? BIGGER GOD!
Part 13: The PROBLEM WHEN EVIL STRIKES
Psalm 140

INTRO: We live in a fallen, evil world all around us, isn't it? 1 Jn. 5:19. It's hard even for the mature believer to stay strong and stand firm. Easier to complain, or worse yet, to compromise. What can we do when (not if) "evil" attacks us? Often, we become disoriented, disillusioned, and discouraged. What is the Christian response when (not if) "evil" strikes? Remember, "evil" has many faces, but only one goal: to attack God's people and to thwart the purposes of God. Jesus. . . Look at these verses: 1 Pet. 4:12; 5:8; 2 Tim. 3:12; Jn. 10:10; 15:18-20; Rev. 13:6. All warnings to believers.

Jesus told us to pray in the Lord's Prayer, "deliver us from evil" (Matt. 6:13). More accurately, "Deliver us from the evil one." Jesus makes no attempt to explain the origin of evil. ILLUS— house on fire . . . put out! From my book, "Every NT writer . . ." (pp. 57-58). Paul warns us not to be ignorant of his designs (2 Cor. 2:11).

SETTING: In Psalm 140 the writer, David, is hounded and hunted by King Saul, who had become embittered, jealous, and hateful toward David (1 Sam. 18:5-9). David wants to see all violence and wickedness eliminated (esp. at him). I agree. He desires to see no more hostility, destruction, and suffering. Again, I agree. Probably, not going to happen in a fallen and evil world. To rid the planet of evil, He'd have to eliminate all of us! But one day He will do away with all attacks, evil, pain, etc. But until then, David gives us insight from his own experience of what to do when under attack, esp. when evil strikes. Let's learn from him. WHEN (not if) EVIL STRIKES what should we know and do?

I. IT DOES SO WITH GOD'S PERMISSION (vv. 1-5)

A. Evil Happens – God is never the source, but He does allow it. Look at the wicked and their ways of evil. They are "evil", "violent", "wicked", and "proud." They "plan evil", "stir up wars", "have sharp tongues", and "poison lips." They "set traps", "spread nets", "set snares."

B. God is in control. Though He is never the source of evil, He permits it. R.C.H. Lenski writes . . . Sometimes evil strikes from the Evil One himself (Job 1:6-12; Peter – Luke 22:31-32). Stuart Briscoe states, "For reasons we don't understand, God allows Satan to engage in evil functions, but only under a tight divine control. Yet, God makes everything, even evil serve His purpose, and he brings eternal good out of temporal evil" (Rom 8:28). When evil strikes, we must remember it has God's permission. Every evil attack is Father-filtered! He permitted some of His choicest to be assaulted (Job, Paul, Jesus).

II. IT SHOULD BE TAKEN IT TO GOD IMMEDIATELY (vv. 1, 4, 6-11)

A. Prayer is our most powerful weapon when we are attacked or evil strikes. This is exactly what David did. Notice: "deliver me, O Lord. . . preserve me" (v. 1), "guard me, O Lord . . . preserve me" (v. 4), and vv. 6-11 (All a prayer). Weapons of warfare include? Praise, Scripture, Holy Spirit, Whole Armor.

B. Ask God to battle for you (vv. 8-11). Do NOT take matters into your own hands. Never retaliation, revenge, or vengeance (Psa. 11:5-6; Deut. 32:35-36; 2 Tim. 4:14-15; Rom. 12:17-21). Let God act on your behalf. 5x "Let" God do His thing (Heb. 10:30-31). David is only requesting what God said He'll do.

III. LET GOD PROVIDE AND PROTECT (vv. 12-13)

A. Ways of God? He: "delivers . . . preserves" (v. 1), "guards me . . . preserves me" (v. 2), "gives ear" (v. 6), . . . vv. 7, 12 . . .

B. David did not have a "victim mentality." He knew he could be victorious. This same David wrote Psalm 23 (read. . .). Also Psalm 27.

LESSONS:

1. Be alert to attacks (1 Pet. 5:8). Watch and pray.
2. Seek God's help immediately (1 Jn. 4:4).
3. The victory is ours with Him (1 Jn. 5:4-5; Jn. 16:33; Rom. 8:37-39; 1 Cor. 15:57). As His children we don't fight *for* the victory but *FROM* the victory.

CONC: Under attack? Has evil struck? Don't seek revenge. Let God come alongside to protect and secure you. One day no more attacks. One day no more attacks or evil. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil (1 Jn. 3:8; Col. 2:13-15). Judgment has been pronounced, victory has been secured; all that awaits is execution of that sentence! Until then, we battle as His soldiers, knowing the ultimate victory is ours through Him.