



BBC UPDATE

IRELAND MODULE



Dr. Thomas M. Strouse

During the week of January 1-5, 2024, Dr. Thomas Strouse taught two modules at River Valley Baptist Church in Mulnooth, Ireland. In the AM module, Dr. Strouse taught elementary Biblical Greek and oversaw the exposition of different passages that the students presented. In the PM module, he taught through Acts 10-19, using his commentary *The Lord Added to the Church*, Vol. II. On Sunday before seminary week, Dr. Strouse preached in Blanchardtown Baptist Church two messages from Ps. 55:1-23 and a devotional at the cottage meeting of the home of Pastor and Mrs. Derry O'Sullivan. The morning module on Biblical Greek had about twelve students, seven of whom gave exegetical interpretation and commentary on different NT passages. The evening class on Acts 10-19 had twenty-five students. Mrs. Bob Zemeski was the gracious host along Mrs. Moor as chaperone, as two other students stayed in her home. Pastor Alexsei Jusev is the new pastor of host church River Valley Baptist Church in Mulnooth.



Class Photo from Ireland Module



Cottage prayer and Bible meeting at the O'Sullivans



Pastor preaching

Introduction

The title gave the backdrop of this prayer in another episode of betrayal. Whereas Doeg was an Edomite (Psalm 52) the “*Ziphims*” were from the town of “*Ziph*” (“*battlement*” [10x]) southeast of Hebron in Judah (Josh. 15:24).¹ David suspected betrayal by the herdman from Edom but not from his own tribal brethren. As David had escaped Saul, he went to “*Keilah*” (“*fortress*” [18x]) and then onto the wilderness in Ziph. There he met and covenanted with Jonathan who encouraged the anointed king. Scripture revealed the betrayal, saying, “*Then came up the Ziphites to Saul to Gibeah, saying, Doth not David hide himself with us in strong holds in the wood, in the hill of Hachilah, which is on the south of Jeshimon?*” (I Sam. 23:19). In the wilderness of Maon, Saul trapped David on the side of a mountain with his men coming to David from opposite sides. His doom was imminent! But the good LORD in the “*nick of time*” sent a messenger to Saul, saying, “*Haste thee, and come; for the Philistines have invaded the land. Wherefore Saul returned from pursuing after David, and went against the Philistines: therefore they called that place Sela-hammahlekoth*”² (I Sam. 23:27-28). The son of Jesse escaped to one of his favorite spots at Engedi (I Sam. 23:29; Song 1:14).

Structure

The LORD kept David in precarious places and predicaments to show the anointed king His loving care and deliverance. Numerous times David petitioned for deliverance and Jehovah habitually answer the king’s prayers. The structure revealed this pattern:

- A. His Petitions (vv. 1-3)
 - B. His Proclamation (v. 4)
- A.’ His Praises (vv. 5-7)

Exegesis

A. His Petitions (vv. 1-3)

To the chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil, A Psalm of David, when the Ziphims came and said to Saul, Doth not David hide himself with us? Save me, O God, by thy name, and judge me by thy strength. Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my

¹ Later, in this area David took the spear and cruse of water from sleeping Saul and spared his life (I Sam. 26:1 ff.).

² The Hebrew means “the rock of escapes.” The LORD was David’s “rock of escapes,” as he averred, saying, “*The LORD is my rock (sela), and my fortress, and my deliverer*” (Ps. 18:2a).

PSALM 54 CONTINUED

mouth. For strangers are risen up against me, and oppressors seek after my soul: they have not set God before them. Selah.

David addressed this plea for help to Asaph, his friend, colleague, and appointed chief musician (I Chr. 16:5). He desired that the *Neginoth*,³ or the stringed instrument, would produce the music for the lyrics. The anointed David wrote this upon the betrayal of his own tribal men (I Sam. 23:19; 26:1), the *Ziphims*⁴ reported to King Saul of his location in “a mountain in the wilderness of Ziph” (10x), presumably about four miles southeast of Hebron. David was aware and cited the treacherous statement of the Ziphites who said, “Doth not David hide himself with us?” (I Sam. 23:19). How did he know what these men of Judah said?

The immediate request of David was “save me, O God, by thy name” (*Elohiym beshimeca hoshiy`eniy*). David testified about the Lord’s name, saying, “The God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my **salvation**, my high tower, and my refuge, my **saviour**; thou **savest** me from violence” (II Sam. 22:3). The *Hiphil* participle “saviour” and the *Hiphil* imperative “save me” (cf. Ps. 69:1) come from the verb *yasha`* (205x). The strength (*gevurah* [61x])⁵ of the LORD was sufficient to deliver the psalmist and to “judge” (*diyn*) him favorably or with vindication (see Ps. 7:8).

He continued his petitions using the two imperatives “hear” (*shama`*) and “give ear”⁶ (*azan*). David had used the imperatives elsewhere, for example, he prayed, “**Hear** my prayer, O LORD, and **give ear** unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were” (Ps. 39:12).⁷ The prayer of the psalmist consisted of “the words of my mouth” (*le`imrey piy*). This psalm gave the very words of David and not merely his thoughts as he spoke to the LORD. The expression “words of my mouth” occurs nine times in the Scripture. Moses gave the words of his *Song* (Dt. 32:1 ff.), David gave the words of his mouth in contrast to his meditation of his heart (Ps. 19:14), Asaph used the expression (Ps. 78:1), Solomon employed expressed his words four times (Prov. 4:5; 5:7; 7:24; and 8:8), and Hosea cited the Lord’s words (6:5). The Bible contains the preserved inspired words of God through the instrumentality of the human authors so that man may live by every word (cf. Mt. 4:4; Lk. 4:4).

³ The singular noun *negiy nah* in the plural *negiy noth* refers to stringed instruments and occurs 14x as *Neginoth* (6x), “song” (5x), “stringed instruments” (1x), “music” (1x), and “*neginah*” (1x).

⁴ The *Ziphims* (1x) or the *Ziphites* (2x) were inhabitants of *Ziph* a town in Judah (Josh. 15:24).

⁵ Cf. the similar language of David, saying, “Now know I that the LORD saveth his anointed; he will hear him from his holy heaven with the saving **strength** of his right hand” (Ps. 20:6).

⁶ The *KJV* rendered the *Hiphil* verb form with the singular noun “ear,” as if the psalmist wanted the LORD to lean his head so that one ear were in the direction of the mouth of David.

⁷ The combination of imperatives occurs 20x in the OT.

His dilemma was that the Ziphims, whom he designated as “strangers” (*zur*) and “oppressors” (*ariytz*), rose up and sought him, respectively. Why did David call those of Ziph in the land of Judah “strangers” when they were of the same tribe? Some translations, apparently challenging the legitimacy of the title, opted for the textual variant wherein the scribe “mistook” the *resh* (“r”) in *zariym* (“strangers”) for the *daleth* (“d”) in *zadiym* (“proud”).⁸ Nevertheless, Job gave the sense of *zur* concerning his own household, saying, “*They that dwell in mine house, and my maids, count me for a stranger: I am an alien in their sight*” (Job 19:15). David recognized that the Ziphites had a spiritual problem because “*they not set God before them*” (Ps. 53:4). They were practical atheists as was Doeg (Pss. 52-53)! He concluded his petitions with the uplifting “*Selah*” (see commentary on 44:8).

B. His Proclamation (v. 4)

Behold, God is mine helper: the Lord is with them that uphold my soul.

The psalmist David proclaimed the great truth of the saints that the Lord is the believer’s “helper” (*azar* [82x]).⁹ He had asked previously for the LORD to be his “helper” (Ps. 30:10), and then subsequently realized the truth to the request. The Apostle Paul asserted, saying, “*So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me*” (Heb. 13:6). Furthermore, the Lord was One of them that would “uphold” (see Ps. 51:12) his life. Jehovah used many others to support King David through his trials. For instance, he had “*six hundred men*” (I Sam. 23:13), “*thirty*” mighty men (II Sam. 23:13), Jonathan (I Sam. 18:1), Abigail (I Sam. 25:23), and scores of others to uphold the anointed king. However, the modern versions omit “*with them,*” assuming that God does not identify with human helpers. The *NASV* reads the “The Lord is the sustainer of my soul.”¹⁰

⁸ Cf. (“foreigners”) NET, (“arrogant men”) NJB, and (“insolent men”) RSV.

⁹ The proper noun “Ezra” (see Ezra 7:1) comes from this source as “Ebenezer” means “stone of help” (I Sam. 7:12).

¹⁰ See also NIV, RSV, and NJB.


PSALM 54 CONCLUSION

A.' His Praises (vv. 5-7)

He shall reward evil unto mine enemies: cut them off in thy truth. I will freely sacrifice unto thee: I will praise thy name, O LORD; for it is good. For he hath delivered me out of all trouble: and mine eye hath seen his desire upon mine enemies.

King David stated by faith that the LORD would reciprocate judgment on the Ziphims, saying, “*he shall reward evil*” (*yashov hara'*).¹¹ Earlier, David claimed evil reciprocation on his enemy Cush, saying, “*His mischief shall return (yashuv) upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate*” (Ps. 7:17). The psalmist knew the law, as Moses declared, saying, “*To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste*” (Dt. 32:35; cf. also Rom. 12:19). Next, David implored the Lord with the *Hiphil* imperative to “*cut them off*” (*tzamath*) in the truth of divine vengeance.

Spontaneously and freely, King David dedicated himself to offering a sacrifice to Jehovah. He was thankful that the Lord would vindicate him from the betrayal of his own kinsmen, the Ziphites. The offering and following praise for the name of the LORD “*is good*” (cf. Ps. 52:9), the psalmist declared. David had recognized that the nature of the name Jehovah meant “*deliverer*,” as the LORD declared unto Moses. He said, “*And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them*” (Ex. 6:3 and especially v. 7).

He continued with the deliverance theme, since the psalmist David had experienced divine deliverance in the past. As a lad, he testified, saying, “*The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear; he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine*” (I Sam. 17:37). Later, he wrote, “*I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears*” (Ps. 34:4; cf. also I Sam. 24:18; II Sam. 22:18, 20, 24, and 49). The anointed king had many troubles and many enemies and yet he received faithful deliverance. David testified that “*mine eye*” (*'eyniy*) saw the fulfillment of “*his desire*”¹² upon the enemies. David knew that retribution would occur to those who opposed his heavenly calling and position as ultimate King of Israel. 

¹¹ The *KJV* translators apparently opted for the *qere* (marginal) reading rather than the *ketiv* (text) reading. They followed the *Geneva* rendering “He shall reward.” The *KJV* reflects editorial decisions based on the preserved Hebrew text. Interestingly, VanGemeren states, “the *Qere*...is supported by many MSS...” VanGemeren, *Psalms, the Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Vol. 5, p. 391.

¹² The italicized expression refers to the LORD's desire with which David's desire harmonized. The *Geneva* reads “my desire.”

HAPPY BIRTHDAY BRYCE

PHOTOS



August and Bryce engage in a good game of catch!



Peek-a-boo!



6

SCHEDULE

BBC/BBTS 2024 SCHEDULE

January 15-19
Fairhaven Baptist College
Chesterton, IN
Johannine Epistles

February 26-March 1
Philippines Module
Quezon City
Johannine Epistles

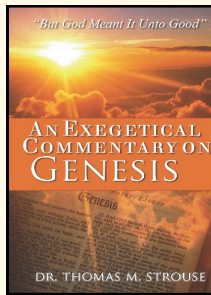
April 12
BBTS Spring Lecture Series
"TBA"

May 18
Bible Baptist Church
Graduation Banquet

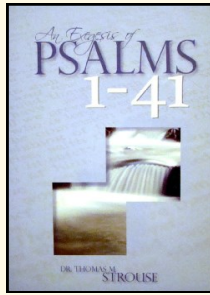
May 19
Bible Baptist Church
Commencement Service

June 3-7
Community Baptist Church
Coopersburg, PA
Bibliology

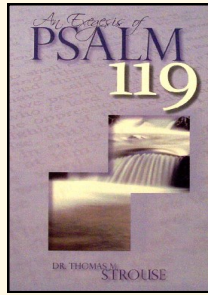
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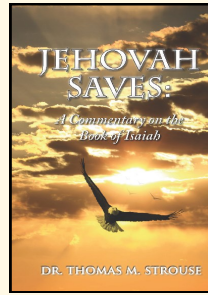
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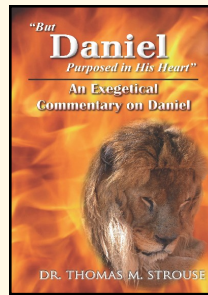
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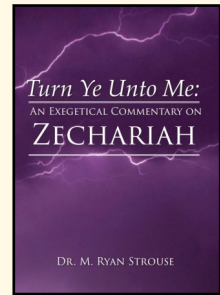
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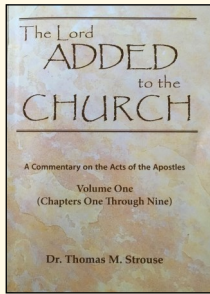
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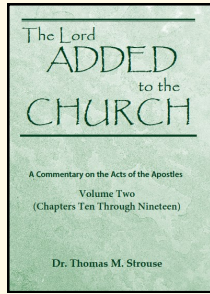
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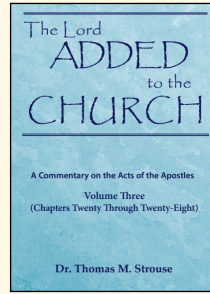
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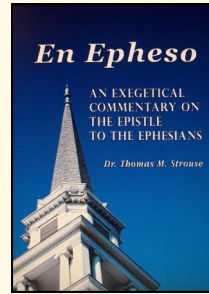
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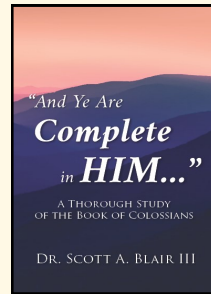
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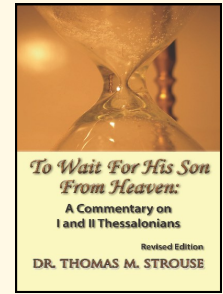
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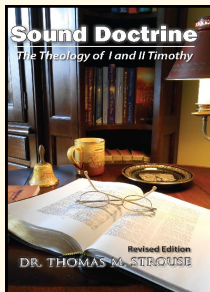
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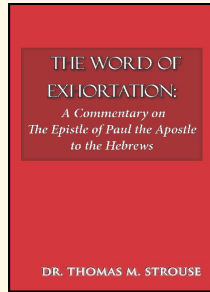
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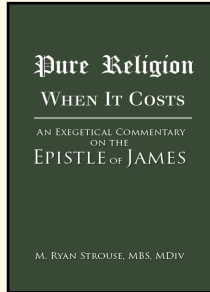
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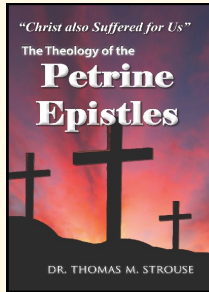
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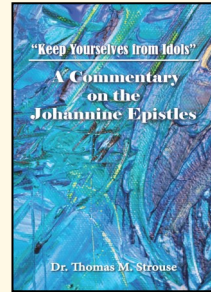
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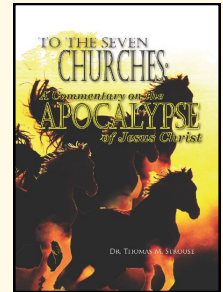
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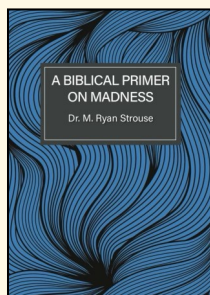
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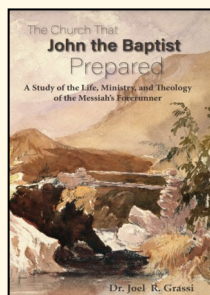
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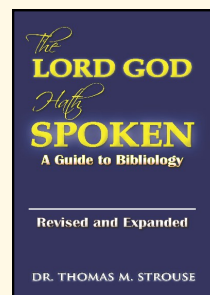
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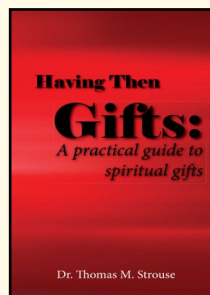
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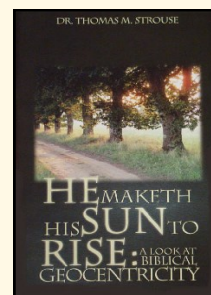
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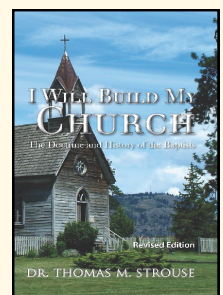
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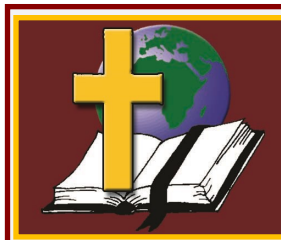
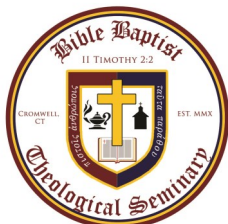
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