

Summer in the Psalms

Overcoming Despair

Psalms 13

To the Chief Musician....

Psalm 13 KJV To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

- Depending on your translation, Psalms 13 opens with, "To the Chief Musician", "For the Choir Director", or "For the Music Leader", A Psalm of David
- What does this mean?
- Many of the psalms were meant to be sung in temple worship
- The Chief Musician played a key role in ensuring that the worship service was conducted in an orderly and reverent manner
- Knowing that Psalm 13 was intended for the Chief Musician tells us that this psalm was meant for public worship
- The Chief Musician was responsible for interpreting the psalm musically; determining how it should be sung or played, which would impact the spiritual response of the worshippers
- What it means for us today is that the worship leader plays an important role in how we connect with God through music and song

Tell God How to Feel

Psalm 13 KJV To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David. 1 How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me? 2 How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? how long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?

- The context of Psalms 13 is David is in a desperate situation
- Bible historians believe this psalm was written when King Saul is pursuing David to take his life
- Bible scholars believe Saul was chasing after David for nearly 12 years!
- The stress, anxiety, and frustration was magnified by the fact that David was praying to God and God was not answering his prayers!
- David's frustration is evident as he pours out his souls to God
- Four times David complains to God, *how long?*
- *How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever?*
 - David felt God was ignoring him and seriousness of what he was going through
 - If we're going through a trying and desperate time with no answer or help from God, it can feel like we've been forgotten by God
 - Our prayers may sound more like complaints when God is not answering or helping us
- *How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?*
 - In addition to feeling forgotten, David felt abandoned by God
 - In the Bible, the face or countenance of God is symbolic of the presence, the favor, and blessings of God
 - Instead of feeling blessings, presence, and favor of God on his life, David felt he was being *cursed* by God

Summer in the Psalms

Overcoming Despair

Psalms 13

- When we are going through an extended time of trials and troubles, we can feel abandoned by God
- We wonder how long we will it be before we experience the presence, favor, and blessings of God again?
- *How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily?*
 - Saul's pursuit of David put him under a lot of mental stress
 - The enemy often attacks through our mind
 - David was struggling mentally with negative thoughts, fear of the unknown, and desperation every day
 - We can identify with David, sometimes when we're going through problems with no end in sight, our thoughts can take a negative, doubtful, desperate turn
- *How long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?*
 - The struggles David has endured has him convinced that the enemy is going to win
 - Many times, because we're in a season of extended trials, troubles, and problems, we can't see any way out of them
- There are several observations from David's lament:
- *God can handle it when you express your frustrations*
 - Psalm 13 and many others follow a pattern:
 1. The psalmist pours out their feelings to God
 2. The psalmist prays for God to do something about their situation
 3. Once the psalmist shares their burden, their load is lightened, and their heart is filled with praise
 - What's interesting is the crisis is not resolved by the end of the Psalm, but the psalmist find joy to sustain them during the problem
 - When we seek the Lord, even in frustration, God gives us His strength and sustaining grace in our hearts
- *It's impossible for God to forget us*
 - God is aware of every detail and every need in our lives
- *God will never forsake us*
 - God says throughout the Bible His promise to be with us
- We may go through fiery trials, lengthy illnesses, family problems, etc. where we feel all alone, but with God we are never alone **Matthew 28:20 "...and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."**
- *The enemy will not ultimately prevail over us*
 - We may get knocked down, but we will not be defeated
- *We should not allow doubt, depression or despair to control us*
 - Tough times will happen in our lives, but they must not control us
 - We can stay strong in tough times through prayer, staying in the Word of God, being accountable to other believers and staying connected to the church

Summer in the Psalms

Overcoming Despair

Psalms 13

- God promises to lead us to victory **2Corinthians 2:14** **"Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, ..."**

Cry Out to God

³ Consider and hear me, O Lord my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death; ⁴ Lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him; and those that trouble me rejoice when I am moved.

- David desperately needs the Lord's help
- David cries out to God *consider him* or to look at him
- David wanted God to look intently at him and all he was going through
- David doesn't want God to just stare at him, he wants God to *answer* him
- The names David uses in addressing God are significant because despite his struggles and frustrations, you can still see David's faith
 1. David called God, *Lord* (Jehovah), it expresses David has a covenant relationship with God
 2. David also called God, my God (Elohim), meaning the strong powerful One
- Despite our trials, frustrations, unanswered prayers, we must maintain our faith to continue to call on the Lord, our God to help us because we He is the God who keeps His promises and has the power to deliver us from any trial
- David has gotten the point where felt he was going to die, and he needs to hear from God
- David asks God to *lighten* or give light to his eyes
- David is asking God for:
 - *The light of understanding*
 - David wants answers to his questions
 - *The light of strength*
 - David is tired, frustrated, weary, and unable to hold on much longer
 - *The light of God's presence*
 - David is feeling lost and forsaken, and he needs God to turn His face toward him again
- David is certain that without God's help, he will die
- He asks God to give him strength and to intervene in his situation
- David did not want his enemies to think that God was powerless to help or to save him
- Sometimes God has to allow desperate situations and circumstance to occur in our live before we recognize our need for Him
- God will do whatever it takes to get our attention, to wake us up, to bring us to point of desperation and helplessness
- God desires fellowship and communion with us not only in times of crises, but daily

Trust and Praise God

Summer in the Psalms

Overcoming Despair

Psalms 13

⁵ But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation. ⁶ I will sing unto the Lord, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.

- Suddenly David's attitude changes
- The *same man* that was saying how long will I have to go through these trials, the *same man* that was pleading to God for help has been suddenly *transformed* into a man that's full of joy and singing!
- It's important to note David has not received answers to his questions nor has he been delivered his desperate situation
- But after he poured out his hearts to God, and openly confessing his frustrations, and pleading with God for help; something amazing happened, the peace of God flooded his soul ***Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT) 6 Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. 7 Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ***
- David waited on the Lord and his strength was renewed ***Isaiah 40:31 (KJV) But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.***
- David said he trusted in the Lord's *mercy* or unfailing love
- The sorrow, frustration and despair that filled David's heart has been replaced with God's salvation
- God's salvation refers to two things here
 1. It speaks of God's deliverance from his current crisis by giving David peace that will see him through until he's finally delivered from his enemies
 2. It's also speaking of David salvation, the forgiveness of his sins and the saving of his soul
- David's sorrow and laments have been replaced with a song
- David could sing now because he took his eyes off of his troubles and sorrows and fixed them on the Lord
- Like David, our focusing on our problems will lead us to believe that God has forgotten us and doesn't care about us
- When we truly see the Lord, we'll see His faithfulness, His love, His salvation, and we'll see his blessings!
- As believers, we're not exempt from problems, trials, grief, troubles, relationship problems, money problems, etc., but we can do what David did in times of despair:
 1. Tell God exactly how you feel
 2. Tell God what you need
 3. Receive the song of praise He wants to give you in your midnight hour
- God wants to take your sorrows away and replace it with praise to Him