

Sermon Notes

WORSHIP SERVICE - 4.7.2024

PSALM 6 - THE LORD HAS HEARD MY PLEA

I. INTRODUCTION

Psalm 6:1-10

To the choirmaster: with stringed instruments; according to The Sheminith. A Psalm of David.

1 O Lord, rebuke me not in your anger,
nor discipline me in your wrath.

2 Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am languishing;
heal me, O Lord, for my bones are troubled.

3 My soul also is greatly troubled.
But you, O Lord—how long?

4 Turn, O Lord, deliver my life;
save me for the sake of your steadfast love.

5 For in death there is no remembrance of you;
in Sheol who will give you praise?

6 I am weary with my moaning;
every night I flood my bed with tears;
I drench my couch with my weeping.

7 My eye wastes away because of grief;
it grows weak because of all my foes.

8 Depart from me, all you workers of evil,
for the Lord has heard the sound of my weeping.

9 The Lord has heard my plea;

the Lord accepts my prayer.

10 All my enemies shall be ashamed and greatly troubled;

they shall turn back and be put to shame in a moment.

- The title tells us that David is the author.
- "According to The Shimenith" is probably a musical or liturgical term.
- This is the first of what is referred to as the penitential psalms; psalms where the author confesses his sin and asks God for his mercy and forgiveness.
- This is a subcategory of the Psalms of Lament.
- Other penitential psalms: 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, and 143.

II. A DISTRESSED SOUL

- Though the title of this psalm does not indicate the specific events that were the occasion for its writing, its placement in the first book shows its continuity with the events of Psalm 3—When David fled from Absalom his son.
- This psalm should also be interpreted with that event in mind (2 Samuel 15-17).
- David describes his condition. It is a portrait of a distressed soul in exceedingly great pain.
- Some of you can readily identify with David's anguish and you may find a past or present experience of your life matches with what David's feeling and experiencing.
- What we read in this psalm is an expression of grief over something the psalmist has done wrong and what he is presently experiencing as a result.
- You get a sense from the words expressed, that this is a deeply vexed soul.
- It is what some have referred to as the "the dark night of the soul." A term broadly used to describe an extremely painful or difficult time in one's life where one feels like God is distant or that he has forsaken the person.
- If you have experienced such a dark night of the soul, you can readily identify with David as he gives full vent to his feelings in this psalm.
- David is fleeing for his life. It seems like God's promises to David are in jeopardy.
- The kingdom is imperiled, the king is on the run, how will God bring about all that he promised?
- This is David's dark night of the soul.
- And this psalm expresses the deep distress of soul and body David was in.
- David has a sense of God's disapproval and wrath
- V1 O Lord, rebuke me not in your anger, nor discipline me in your wrath.
- He senses he is under God's judgment for his sin.
- He feels the Lord's rebuke and discipline.
- But He isn't asking God not to rebuke him or discipline him.
- He's asking God NOT to do it in a way that should be reserved for his enemies.
- There is a strong resonance in this line with Psalm 2.
- Psalm 2:4-5 He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision. 5 Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury

- David feels like what has come upon him is what his enemies deserve—they deserve God’s hot displeasure and fury.
- Have you ever felt like David? You’ve blown it in some way. You’ve sinned.
- And you’ve confessed your sin but you’re walking through the consequences of your sin and your life is upended.
- Maybe your circumstances were not caused by sin, maybe something was done to you.
- And you feel like God is punishing you.
- You feel like you are out of God’s will.
- And all you want is relief from your distress, but you feel like God isn’t there.
- David is experiencing spiritual and physical fatigue.
- V2 “I am languishing”
- He feels weak; he lacks strength.
- He is tapped out physically, mentally, and emotionally.
- Some trials in life will do that to you.
- V2 “My bones are troubled, my soul is greatly troubled.”
- V6 “I am weary with my moaning”
- David is weary in mind and body. He feels the pain to his very bones.
- In times where we are undergoing severe trials and afflictions, we feel spiritual, mental and physical exhaustion.
- Psalm 32:3-4 For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. 4 For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer.
- Psalm 38:3-8 There is no soundness in my flesh because of your indignation; there is no health in my bones because of my sin. 4 For my iniquities have gone over my head; like a heavy burden, they are too heavy for me. 5 My wounds stink and fester because of my foolishness, 6 I am utterly bowed down and prostrate; all the day I go about mourning. 7 For my sides are filled with burning, and there is no soundness in my flesh. 8 I am feeble and crushed; I groan because of the tumult of my heart.
- The distressing situation David is encountering has caused him to lose sleep.
- 6 I am weary with my moaning; every night I flood my bed with tears; I drench my couch with my weeping. 7 My eye wastes away because of grief; it grows weak because of all my foes.
- When he is in the quiet of his bed, his mind replays all of the events, Absalom’s betrayal, his transgression, and how he is going to get out of this.
- What David was going through was severe. When you are in the thick of a distressing situation, nights are often filled with deep soul groanings and tears.
- If you’ve walked through real depression and soul distress, this resonates with you.
- When you are going through it—sometimes you feel like you’re all alone. Like God’s not even present.
- V3 But you, O Lord—how long?
- David, in writing this psalm, doesn’t complete the sentence.
- “But you, O Lord...” and words fail. What he meant to say is left unspoken in his grief and sorrow.
- And he asks the question we all ask in distressing moments. How long?

- How long will this go on, Lord? How long till my enemies get what they deserve? How long will you permit me to go through this suffering? How long before you rescue me?
- God’s Word doesn’t portray any of the Bible characters with zero flaws and who don’t experience any real problems in life.
- The psalm reminds us that God does not dismiss our feelings and emotions when we are in the thick of things.
- There is no divine mandate to “just get over it!”
- We can be brutally honest before God.

III. A DETERMINED PRAYER

- David expresses how he felt but his situation was not as hopeless as he might have thought.
- And your situation is not as hopeless as you might think it is.
- David does what we must do in these moments—he calls upon the Lord.
- He calls out to the only one who sets things right.
- David is a man of deep conviction. It is the pattern of David’s life, as we’ve previously looked at, to turn to God, to seek Him for help at all times.
- David is calling upon the Lord—God’s covenant name—Yahweh.
- Five times in four verses he calls upon Yahweh.
- In the dark night of the soul, call upon the Lord.
- But not just in moments of deep distress and trials and temptations, and affliction, but even in times of victory and success. Praise him!
- David prays not for an end to the Lord’s disciplining work, but for the Lord to discipline him as a son and not as a rebel.
- David knew that because of God’s faithfulness and his covenant with his people, the Lord’s discipline was not vindictive wrath.
- God’s discipline is that of a Father. It is for our good, it is for our sanctification, it is in love, it is measured and right, and it is never in anger or fury.
- The Lord disciplines those he loves (Hebrews 12:6). He disciplines us for holiness.
- The distressing situation you are going through may be God’s loving discipline. And its painful as you’re going through it—but the Lord’s discipline will yield its intended result, the peaceful fruit of righteousness for those who have been trained by the Lord’s discipline (Hebrews 12:11).
- Isn’t it comforting to know that the Lord does not punish his people as they deserve.
- David appeals to God’s mercy. “Be gracious to me, O Lord...”
- David doesn’t appeal to any merit of his own as what makes him deserving of rescue.
- On the contrary, he is languishing, deeply troubled and in anguish.
- We too, in our moments of weakness and distress can cry out for mercy from the Lord.
- It is a confession of our utter weakness and inability to deliver ourselves.
- There is an abundant supply of grace in Christ to sustain us in the dark nights.
- Hebrews 4:15-16 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

- Are you in need? Draw near to the throne of grace!
- David prays for healing of body and soul. For strength and vigor to return to him.
- David prays for deliverance and salvation out of all his troubles, from his distress from all his enemies and even from the threat of death.
- “Turn, O Lord...” “Turn” is the word repent. He’s not saying that the Lord needs to repent, but for the Lord to bring upon his enemies what they deserve.
- David appeals to the Lord’s steadfast love as the basis for the deliverance and salvation he seeks.
- He appeals to the covenant faithfulness of the Lord.
- It is an appeal to the glory of God; for the Lord’s concern for his own glory.
- V5 For in death there is no remembrance of you; in Sheol who will give you praise?
- If he dies from his distress and troubles, he won’t be around to praise God, to declare the goodness of God to others, to proclaim the faithfulness of God among the living.
- Sheol is the grave. The dead cannot praise the Lord among the living.

IV. A DIVINE RESPONSE

- There is no explanation given how David comes to the determination that the Lord has answered his prayer.
- Two times he says, "the Lord has heard me plea, the Lord accepts my prayer."
- David’s confidence is restored. David is renewed in faith.
- One commentator writes, *“the confidence that returns in vv8-10 is like a shoot from a stump whose roots are firmly planted in the soil of Psalms 1 and 2.”*
- What the Lord decreed in Psalm 2 concerning the Lord’s anointed and what would happen to his enemies, and the blessing described in Psalm 1 emboldens David to warn his enemies that the Lord has heard his prayers and he will bring swift punishment upon them.
- He is certain that his enemies will experience what they have brought upon him, trouble and terror.
- Notice this is in the future tense. It is a prediction.
- Here’s what the people of God can be confident of, those who oppose God and his people, the enemies of God will be put to shame, if not here, then most certainly in the hereafter.
- When the righteous Judge appears, they will be ashamed and greatly troubled.
- **1 John 5:13-15** I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life. 14 And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.
- **Psalm 30:5** For his anger is but for a moment, and his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning.

CONCLUSION

- We will go through severe tests, trials, and afflictions in this life.
- We will feel at times as if the wicked are prospering while the righteous are suffering.

- We will feel at times as if God is distant, as if he is displeased with us, we will go through spiritual depression, trouble of body and soul and we will weep in the dark nights of the soul.
 - Draw encouragement from this psalm which models for us complete honesty before God, a boldness to call on God to keep his promises, and an unwavering trust and confidence in God to give us grace when we most need it.
 - The beauty of this psalm is that David's prayer points to the greater David--Jesus Christ.
 - One who weeps over those who have rejected him.
 - One who lifted up his voice in prayer and made supplication to his Father with assurance that he was being heard.
 - One who suffered, but unlike David, suffered not for his own sins, but for the sins of his people.
 - One who willingly takes upon himself the punishment that the enemies of God deserve.
 - One whose vindication will indeed bring shame and terror upon those who hate him and are against him.
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- God is near to the brokenhearted. To the sin-troubled soul. To the suffering saint. To the burdened believer. He sits with you in your sorrow. He is compassionate and kind to his children.
 - Like David, fling yourself upon the mercies of the Lord, call unto him in your distress, submit yourself to his loving discipline, and praise and thank him for all that he has done and is doing.
 - May the Lord bring to you his throne of grace, hear your pleas for help, and answer you from heaven.

APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

In light of today's message....

- What did I learn about the gospel?
- How can I apply what I learned about the gospel to my life?
- With whom can I share the gospel this week?