

Psalm 6

To the Chief Musician. With Stringed Instruments.
On An Eight-Stringed Harp. A Psalm of David.

- ¹ O LORD, do not rebuke me in Your anger,
Nor chasten me in Your hot displeasure.
- ² Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I am weak;
O LORD, heal me, for my bones are troubled.
- ³ My soul also is greatly troubled;
But You, O LORD—how long?
- ⁴ Return, O LORD, deliver me!
Oh, save me for Your mercies' sake!
- ⁵ For in death there is no remembrance of You;
In the grave who will give You thanks?

- ⁶ I am weary with my groaning;
All night I make my bed swim;
I drench my couch with my tears.
- ⁷ My eye wastes away because of grief;
It grows old because of all my enemies.
- ⁸ Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity;
For the LORD has heard the voice of my weeping.
- ⁹ The LORD has heard my supplication;
The LORD will receive my prayer.
- ¹⁰ Let all my enemies be ashamed and greatly troubled;
Let them turn back and be ashamed suddenly.

The text of the psalm does not tell us the occasion upon which David wrote. Was it illness (v2, 5)? Some attack of an enemy (v7, 10)? Some spiritual trouble (v3–4)? Perhaps the Spirit did not tell us, so that we might make better use of this psalm in any of the above circumstances. And perhaps it is because sometimes God's good providence to us is for all of these come upon us at once!

Addressing God's heart, v1. One of Job's biggest problems was his friends' suggestion that he was suffering because God was repaying him for sin. Of course, God said that they had not spoken rightly of him. But there is a tremendous difference between God's vengeance upon an enemy and chastisement upon a son, and v1 is highlighting that difference. While the verse uses the negative, we could also cry the positive, "rebuke me in love, O Lord, and chasten me in fatherly wisdom!" When His hand is heavy upon us, we must come to Him through Christ to know that the warmth moving His heart is adopting affection, not burning wrath.

Appealing to God's compassion, v2–3, 6–7. Our God is One of such grace that "for I am weak" is an argument to be used with Him. He is merciful to the weak! So if we are physically ill, we may plead that (v2b); and if we are spiritually ill, we may plead that (v3a). Even knowing that God has appointed the correct duration for our trouble, we may yet plead the painfulness of that duration (v3b)! "How long?" is a holy thing to pray, as evidenced here and by the saints under the altar in the fifth seal (cf. Rev 6:10). Both the duration and intensity (v6–7) of our suffering matter to our God.

Aspiring to God's glory, v4–5. He shows mercy, so that we can praise mercy (v4). He gives and restores life especially to those who remember Him (v5a) and thank Him (v5b), because we exist to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. So whether addressing God, or even addressing our own souls, believers may always marshal to our aid the fact that we will indeed praise Him in glory for unending ages (cf. Ps 42:5, 42:11, 43:5, 71:13, 73:28, 130:4, etc.).

Indeed, that which ought to bother us most about our afflictions is how, due to our weakness, they hinder us from properly praising God. And it is precisely at this point that Psalms like this one are often their own answers to prayer, for by directing our attention to Him and His relation to us in the affliction itself, such prayers open our mouths with His praise and stir our hearts up to the same.

There is also implied here a desire for the preservation and purification of the church, since it is she alone on earth who praises God through Christ, and who therefore remembers and thanks Him aright.

Assuming God's answer, v8–10. "Yahweh has heard... Yahweh has heard... Yahweh will receive..." We don't have to wait for the Lord's perfect answer to respond to it. For David, having prayed was enough to taunt the enemies from which he had not yet been delivered. Theological facts about the future are part of a believer's present circumstances because he has already the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen (cf. Heb 11:1). This is not a plea to the workers of iniquity, but a defiant and triumphant—even kingly, in union with Christ—declaration (cf. Jesus's use of it in Matt 7:23)

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are welcome to listen to the audio recording, which you may find via tinysa.com/hopewellarp)

So this week, we have Psalm 6.

To the chief musician. With stringed instruments. On an eighth stringed harp. A psalm of David.

Oh, you always do not rebuke me in your anger. Nor chasing me in your hot displeasure. Have mercy on me. Oh y'all away from weak. Oh, you always heal me. For my bones or troubled my soul also is greatly troubled. But you owe y'all way how long return? Oh y'all they deliver me.

Oh, save me for your mercy sake. For in death, there is no remembrance of you in the grave who will give you thanks. I am weary with my groaning all night. I make my bed swim I drenched my couch with tears my eye wastes away because of grief it grows old because of all my enemies.

Depart from me all you workers of iniquity. Free always has heard the voice of my weeping. Yahweh has heard my supplication? Yahweh will receive my prayer. With all my enemies be ashamed and greatly troubled. Let them turn back. And be ashamed suddenly.

So far the written word of God. So to the chief musician even though it's a psalm of David let's to the chief musician means it's given especially for public worship. All of the Psalms are given for public worship as the whole. Word of God is given for public worship.

The Apostle says, let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly so all words of Christ are given for public work but. We're not exactly sure about these stringed instruments, it's negative whatever that means and chime in it means the eight-ish thing and so at one point in time.

There were those who thought it meant an octave since one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, and then eight is your next one, although we don't know if it was an Octavio scale that they used an ancient Israel. There are other types of scales. And it's actually quite Western to have the.

The scale that we use. But we know that it was to be some and it's a psalm of David and it doesn't tell us the occasion upon which David wrote and it's interesting to consult the commentators because some of them think it was on the occasion of an illness versus two and five or the attack of an enemy verse seven and ten or maybe the enemy was delighting in his illness or perhaps some spiritual trouble of his soul.

Versus three and four. Feeling like goddess distant. Well perhaps the spirit did not give us in the superscript the particular occasion so that we might make better use of this psalm in any of the above circumstances, so if we're in any one of these three kinds of circumstances. The physical ailment spiritual distance from God attack under attack by enemies.

This psalm is useful or perhaps it is because sometimes goods good. God's good providence to us is for all these things to come upon us at once. And now, here's a psalm in which we can cry out to him call upon him in all of them at once. Well, we see the psalmist here.

He teaches us in such trouble to address God's heart to appeal to God's compassion to aspire to God's glory and to assume God's answer. First he's addressing. God's heart. God's hand is heavy upon him but it's not the heaviness of God's hand upon him, but what is moving God's hand that bothers him.

She says, oh you always do not rebuke me in your anger nor chasing me in your heart displeasure. Yeah, we should be careful not to think from this that we should not want the Lord to rebuke or chasing us because we also have Hebrews 12 which tells us that he rebukes and chastens his true children and the children that he loves and that if we don't have his chastening then we are illegitimate children.

The emphasis is on what is moving the rebuke and the chastening. That it would not be from God's anger or God's wrath as hot displeasure. One of Job's biggest problems was his friend suggestion that he was suffering because God was repaying him for sin. Of course God said about his friends that they had not spoken rightly of him.

Indeed jobs hoped that there was someone who could go between and that he might have an audience with God and that he would learn that God was doing these things not because he was treating him according to his sin but for some other reason those hopes were eventually realized although part of that realization was Joe putting his hand over his mouth and abasing himself for speaking about things that he did not know.

But there is a tremendous difference between chastening and God's anger or displeasure and the chest chasing that he gives his children. Verse one is highlighting that difference. It says do not rebuke me in your anger or chasing me in your heart displeasure. I think maybe we can hear it a little bit better if we take those things that are stated in the negative and cry them out in the positive as well.

Rebuke me in love. O Lord chasing me and your fatherly wisdom. When his hand is heavy upon us we must come to him through Christ. To know that the fire that moves God's heart is the fire or the warmth of adopting love not burning wrath. The love of God does move him to put us through suffering.

And when we are suffering one of the things we want to cry out is that it would be in that love because of Jesus Jesus has taken the fire of the wrath of God. In Toto completely for all those who belong to God through him. So first addressing God's heart crying out that God would be bringing these things upon us in that fatherly love.

Second appealing to God's compassion. Have mercy on me. Oh, you always for I am weak. This is not the kind of argument. That works with fleshly men. I'm weak. That's a good reason for a fleshly man not to help you because you can't do any help him back but it is a very strong argument with the God who loves to help the weak.

He is merciful to the weak. So if we are physically ill we may plead that we are weak and ask God to help us. In fact, the language there New King James says my bones are troubled. Is more literally my bones are afraid or my bones are quaking. In the same with his soul in verse 3.

So if you're physically ill you can say have mercy upon me Lord for I am weak. We have the kind of God with whom our weakness is a strong argument for his help. If we are spiritually ill we may plead our weakness. Even knowing that God has appointed the correct duration for our trouble we may plead the duration of it, but you owe a how long.

We may yet plead the painfulness of the duration. How long is a holy thing to pray we're taught to pray it here verse 3 by David spirit inspired example, and we can see also the perfected saints under the altar in the fifth seal in Revelation chapter 6 and verse 10 crying out how long.

The duration of our suffering matters to God and the intensity of it matters to God as well skipping briefly over verses 4 and 5. I'm weary with my groaning all night. I make my bed swim. That actually might not be tears many commentators think it's tears because they're borrowing from the third stroke or the third line.

There in verse six. I drenched my couch with dew with my tears. But that second line might actually be night sweats. As he is wearied himself with his groaning. My eye wastes away or literally is sunken in because of grief and this may actually be the origin of the the idea or the phrase.

I cried my eyes out. It grows old because of all my enemies so not only the duration of our pain and diverse three matters to God, but also the intensity of our pain or the intensity of our suffering versus six and seven matter to God. Notice then all the different arguments that you can use with God when you come in prayer don't tell him I'm strong or I can mostly do it and I need a little help or like the Jews said of this and jury and he's a worthy man and he turned around and said, I'm not worthy that you would come under my roof.

No those aren't strong arguments with God strong arguments with God are things like I'm weak my bones are afraid my soul is afraid this is too long for me crying out in the in the sharp way how long and then the intensity of our suffering in verses 6 and 7 so appealing to God's compassion.

So we have addressing God's heart appealing to God's compassion aspiring to God's glory. Return, oh you always deliver me, oh save me for your mercy sake yes he loves to be merciful but his mercies are also worthy of being praised when there's only one kind of person who praises him and that's the kind that he redeems through Jesus so he says for in death there is no remembrance of you in the grave who will give you thanks.

He shows mercy so that we can praise mercy he gives and restores life especially to those who are going to remember him and thank him because that's why we exist what is the chief end of man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever. So. We can address God with the theological fact that we will yet praise him or as was said not too many minutes ago, we'll survive yes we will survive because we were made for his praise and not only will we survive we will be perfectly holy and perfectly happy and all suffering and all sorrow and all sin will be banished forever.

He makes that argument with God here in Psalm 42 and 43 the sons of Cora make that argument to themselves why oh my soul, are you cast down hope now and God. I will yet praise him it's the theological fact that we were created and redeemed to worship him.

And I gave a couple other references there maybe the most famous of those other references it's all 130 verse 4 verse 3, if you owe Lord marked iniquity who could stand verse 4 but with you there is forgiveness that you may be feared we've been created to worship him we've been redeemed to worship him and we know that our suffering ends not in our pain but in his praise and so we aspire to his glory, in fact what ought to bother us most about our, Afflictions and.

Think I mentioned from the pulpit recently and we're still in the middle of reading about some Huguenots and their trials and in our home and that which bothered them the most was the idea that they would ever come into a state of unthankfulness that they would ever come into a state of unbelief that they would ever even go so far as to deny their God or renounce their reformed faith.

When believers. Are are concerned in our afflictions that it might hinder our ability to praise him and so this psalm ends up being in part it's own answer to prayer because as he cries out to God he finishes with this triumph at the end and he's praising God's mercy and and bringing honor and glory to so many aspects of God's character and then there's also implied here desire for the preservation and purification of the church.

When the church is at a low end who is remembering God verse 5 who is giving God, thanks verse 5. The pagan does not remember God or give him thanks rightly because those things are only rightly done through faith in Jesus Christ. And so that which we cry out for ourselves and affliction we cry out for the church and her affliction.

That she would be preserved and purified to to carry on this worship of God remembering him and giving him thanks. So addressing God's heart appealing to God's compassion aspiring to God's glory and finally assuming God's answer. Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity he says and then three he makes this triple repeated statement he always has heard the voice of my weeping he always has

heard my supplication you all the way will receive my prayer speaks in the past tense of something that is presently happening speaks in the future tense of it as well past present or future doesn't really matter when you're talking about things that are true by God's word and promise and character because future.

Facts about God are just as certain as past ones there are no less sure for there being future. And of course one of our favorite instances of that is those whom he justified he also glorified says the man who just a few sentences earlier said who will save me from this body of this death and then he goes on to speak about his glorification in past tense because of how certain it is.

And so we don't have to wait for the Lord's perfect answer to respond to its perfection. David have it for David having prayed thus far was enough to taunt the enemies from which he had not yet been delivered theological facts about the future are part of our present circumstances as believers because our faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen and so we can use those future facts to deal with our present circumstances praise God.

This is not a plea to workers of iniquity depart from me all your workers of iniquity it is the defiant triumphant declaration of a king and we can say that on the authority of the Lord Jesus who actually quotes depart from me, all you workers of iniquity in Matthew 7 verse 23 for those who say Lord Lord, but do not do the will of his father who is in heaven.

And so great David's greater son. Has that confidence in his not just being delivered from death and delivered from the cross and delivered from physical weakness that belonged to his humiliation and the agony of his soul as we saw in the Garden of Gethsemane but he also is confident of his kingly glory and his casting judgment upon.

Those who had been his enemies there's a close connection there between what we saw in name one one through eight and Yahweh who takes vengeance upon his enemies very important for us always to remember that the Lord Jesus as Yahweh in the flesh. And he will say depart from me you workers of lawlessness and so this psalm ends with this triumphant declaration let all my enemies be ashamed and greatly troubled let them turn back and be ashamed suddenly.