

PSALM 28

AN EMERGENCY PRAYER

“Unto thee will I cry, O Lord my rock; be not silent to me: lest, if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit” (verse 1). A cry is the natural expression of sorrow, and it is a suitable utterance when all other modes of appeal fail us. But the cry must be directed to the Lord alone, for crying out for help from man is doing nothing more than wasting our entreaties upon thin air. When we consider the readiness of the Lord to hear, and His ability to aid us, we shall see good reason for directing all our appeals immediately to the God of our salvation. It will be in vain to call to the rocks on the Day of Judgment, but our Rock listens to our cries.

“Be not silent to me!” the Psalmist prays. Mere formalists may be content to receive no answers to their prayers, but genuine suppliants cannot be. They are not satisfied with the results of prayer itself, in calming the mind and subduing the will; they must go further and obtain actual replies from heaven, or they cannot rest! And they long to receive those replies at once; they dread even a little of God’s apparent silence. His voice is often so terrible that it shakes the wilderness, but His silence is equally full of awe to an eager suppliant. When Jehovah seems to close His ears, we must not therefore close our mouths; but rather, we ought to cry with even more earnestness than before – for when our note grows shrill with eagerness and grief, He will not delay to give us a hearing. What a dreadful case we would be in if the Lord would become forever silent to our prayers! “Lest, if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit.” If we were deprived of the God Who answers prayer, we would be in a more pitiable plight than the dead in the grave; we would soon sink to the same level as the lost souls in hell. We must have answers to prayer! Our case is an

Overview of the Psalm, adapted from Charles Spurgeon:

Again, the title of this composition – “A Psalm of David” – is too general to give us any clue to the specific occasion upon which it was written. Its position, following the 27th Psalm, seems to have been intentional; for it is a most suitable pendant and sequel to it. It is another one of those “songs in the night,” of which the pen of David was so prolific. The main pleading here is that the suppliant may not be confounded with the workers of iniquity, for whom he expresses the utmost abhorrence; it may suit any slandered saint who – being misunderstood by men, and treated by them as an unworthy character – is anxious to stand aright before the judgment-bar of God. The Lord Jesus may be seen here as well, pleading before His Father’s throne as the Representative of His people.

The first and second verses earnestly beg for the Lord’s ear to listen in a time of dire emergency. From verses 2-5, the portion of the wicked is described and condemned. In verses 6-8, praise is given for the Lord’s mercy in hearing prayer; and then the Psalm concludes (verse 9) with a general petition for the whole host of militant believers.

urgent and dire necessity! Surely the Lord will speak peace to our agitated minds, for He can never find it in His heart to permit His own children to perish!

David prays that he may not be numbered with the wicked, and that he may be saved from being entangled in the snares that they had laid for him (verses 3-5). He also asks that he may not become infected with their sins; he does not want to do the same evil things that they do. Nor does he wish to resort



to using such arts of deceit and treachery for his safety, as they were using to plot his ruin. Believers dread the way of sinners; even the best of saints are sensible that they are always in danger of being drawn aside, and so we should all pray earnestly to God for His grace to keep us. Those who are careful to not partake with sinners in their sins have reason to hope

that they shall not take part in the plagues that are sent upon them, either.

Has God heard our supplications? Then let us bless His name! (verses 6-8) The Lord is our strength to support us and carry us on, through all our services and sufferings. The heart that truly believes in Him shall, in due time, greatly rejoice; we have good reason to expect joy and peace in believing.

The Psalmist concludes this composition with a short but comprehensive prayer (verse 9) for God's people – not only those who lived during his own times, but also His people in every age to come. They are His inheritance, and they are precious in His eyes. He prays that the Lord would save them, and he asks that He would bless them with all good – especially the plentiful abundance of His ordinances, which are food for the soul. Moreover, He beseeches the Lord to direct their actions and overrule their affairs for good; and he desires that they may be lifted up forever – lifted up to heaven. There, and there alone, will the saints truly be lifted up forever – never again to sink or become depressed.

Save us, Lord Jesus, from our sins! Bless us, O Son of David, with the blessings of righteousness! Feed us, O Good Shepherd of the sheep; and lift us up forever from the dust, for You are the Resurrection and the Life!

Thank You, O Lord, that we never need to fear that You will become forever silent to our prayers; for when we cry to You, we may rest assured that You will speak peace to our agitated minds, since You can never find it in Your heart to permit Your own children to perish! Amen.