

• *Simple and practical testimonies*

• *David is depressed*

**1. Reasons for discouragement**

• *Trials and conflicts*

• *Physical reasons – health issues, hunger, fatigue*

• *Guilt*

**2. The remedy for depression**

• *Prayer*

(i) *God's character*

(ii) *God's honour*

One of the important things about the book of psalms is that they put things to us in a very practical and easy manner. We need to have clear doctrinal principles. But sometimes we need to have things put to us very simply, especially when we have many troubles. It is sometimes easier to sing a song than to think about Christian teaching. It is easier to read a story than to think about teaching. These psalms are testimonies that help us. Psalm 6 is part of the small group of psalms we have in Psalms 3-7 (or maybe 3-8!). It **probably** comes from the same occasion, and it **certainly** comes from a similar occasion. David is depressed.

**1. What are the reasons for discouragement?** One reason is that we tend to be surprised by trials and conflicts. We tend to think the Christian life should be problem-free. If we are not ready for troubles we shall end up in discouragement. There might be **physical reasons**. David mentions his bones.

*Yahweh, do not rebuke me in your wrath.  
Do not discipline me in your burning anger <sup>1</sup>.  
Yahweh, be gracious to me, for I am fading away.  
Heal me, Yahweh, for my bones are in pain <sup>2</sup>.*

<sup>1</sup> 6:1

<sup>2</sup> 6:2

We need to care for ourselves physically. Our 'bones' need looking after! We need to put some margins in our lives. In a busy life, leave time for recovery. Take good rest at night. Make sure you have time to pray. Remember how when Elijah was depressed, the angel gave him food and sleep <sup>1</sup> before anything else

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings 19

But there might be **reasons of guilt**. David was worried that perhaps God was angry with him <sup>1</sup>. Many of his problems with Absalom arose from what had happened in connection with Bathsheba and Uriah. They were partly his own fault. If he had not sinned with Bathsheba <sup>2</sup> he would not have caused such resentment among his children. If he had been in a better position as a father he would have been closer to Absalom and the theft of the kingdom would not have happened. Guilt leads to many difficulties in life: it might affect us physically; it takes away the sense of God's presence; it brings emotional distress, tears, sleeplessness, fear of death. All of these can be found in David's psalm.

<sup>1</sup> 6:1

<sup>1</sup> 2 Samuel 11,12

**2. What is the remedy for depression?** Prayer is one of them - although I do not say it is the only thing that is needed. See how David prays.

*But, Yahweh, what about you? How long will it be? <sup>1</sup>  
Yahweh, turn around! Save my life!  
Rescue me for the sake of your steadfast love <sup>2</sup>.*

<sup>1</sup> 6:3

<sup>2</sup> 6:4

Notice **the content of his praying**. He asks for freedom from chastening, grace from God, deliverance. Notice **the basis of his praying**.

(i) He appeals to the character of God (God's steadfast love; God's graciousness). Greater pray-ers always argue with God on the basis of his character. See how the Canaanite woman appealed to Jesus' mercy <sup>1</sup>; the army officer in Matthew 8:9-10 appealed to Jesus' authority.

<sup>1</sup> Matt 15:22-28

(ii) David wants God to be honoured.

*For in death there is no remembrance of you;  
in Sheol who will give you praise? <sup>1</sup>.*

<sup>1</sup> 6:5

These lines have nothing to do with the Old Testament theology of the afterlife! What David fears is being cut off from the temple. from the

privilege of being involved in public worship on earth. Earthly temple worship ceases when you die! In addition it is a statement in depression, when David fears dying under the anger of God. We should not get our doctrine of life-after-death from Psalm 6!

David's point is that God ought to be praised on planet earth. If his life is lost God will get no honour or praise. There is no praise of God **in the temple** once David's life is ended.

*(iii) David's desperate plight*

(iii) And David appeals to his own desperate plight (God is affected by our distresses; remember Exodus 2:23-24). God is affected by our pain. We can tell him our troubles. David is not ashamed to tell God everything that he feels.

*I am weary with my sighing;  
every night I flood my bed with tears;  
I drench my couch with my weeping <sup>1</sup>.  
My eyes have become weak from distress;  
they have become worn out because of all my enemies <sup>2</sup>.*

<sup>1</sup> 6:6

<sup>2</sup> 6:7

### 3. The answer comes by faith

• Supernatural peace

3. **The answer comes by faith.** Eventually David is lifted out of his depression and the answer to his prayers comes to him. He becomes confident that he will triumph over his many opponents and enemies. We notice how sudden is the change of atmosphere. Suddenly God answers David's prayer. He receives supernatural peace. There is such a thing as the peace 'that passes understanding'. If we learn to pray 'with prayer... supplication ... thanksgiving' <sup>1</sup>, we shall discover what it is to be given supernatural peace..

<sup>1</sup> Phil.4:6,7

*Get away from me, all you who do evil,  
because Yahweh has heard the sound of my weeping <sup>1</sup>.  
Yahweh has heard my plea for help;  
Yahweh accepts my prayer <sup>2</sup>.  
All my enemies shall be horribly ashamed and terrified;  
suddenly - they shall turn around and be ashamed <sup>3</sup>.*

<sup>1</sup> 6:8

<sup>2</sup> 6:9

<sup>3</sup> 6:10

• The logic of faith brings God's answer and recovery

How does David reach this position? It comes through what I could call the logic of faith. He has been thinking about the character of God. He knows God answers prayer. If he has sinned, he may be forgiven. If God has given him promises they may still be trusted. By faith in the promises of God, David recovers! Suddenly everything turns around! We remember the end of the story in connection with Absalom. He was defeated and David got his kingdom back – and Jesus was the descendent of King David.



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