

Psalm 6

Theme: This is one of the 7 “penitential” Psalms (32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143), expressing his sorrow over his sin, a cry of repentance, and a plea for forgiveness, Lord be merciful to me.

Title: Neginoth is a stringed instrument, possibly a lyre. It is to be played in Sheminith, or in octaves.

Background: Uncertain - some say that this follows David’s sin with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah. It could certainly have been during Absalom’s rebellion, others think it was earlier when he was living in the Philistine city of Gath, living in the enemies camp. We don’t know for sure.

V: 1 8 Times in this Psalm David addresses God as “LORD” - Jehovah, the covenant name of God, relying on the promises of God.

- David starts off with a petition / request: “Don’t beat me!” Please be gentle with me.
- When God deals with His children, generally He first rebukes, then He chastens; just as parents usually first declare to their children what they’ve done and why it’s wrong, then apply the correction or discipline.

Hebrews 12:5-6 “⁵... my son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: ⁶For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.”

- Being chastened of the Lord is not pleasant, but one of the comforts that we get from it is that we know we’re His, He takes the time to chasten us because we’re His.
- I can also tell you that my earthly daddy loved me a lot when I was little, a lot!
- Not being chastened, corrected, no conviction - these are bad signs!
- Sometimes God chastens us to deal with some issue of disobedience, but at other times, He chastens us to prepare us for what lies ahead. Kind of like training an athlete for a race.

Hebrews 12:11 “Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised / trained thereby.”

- David knows that he's sinned, and that he deserves God's judgment. He doesn't deny that God has a right to be angry...
- It is always better for a parent to correct their child when they are calm as opposed to doing so when they are angry or caught up in the emotion of the situation.
- The punishment is usually harsher or more severe when heated emotions are involved.
- God doesn't do this; David is equating human frailty to God in his attempt to obtain mercy.
- He's not saying don't rebuke me or don't chasten me - he's asking for God to be gentle or merciful.

Jeremiah 10:24 "O Lord, correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing."

V: 2 The real point of this Psalm - "Have mercy upon me, O Lord..."

- I was wrong - yes, I have sinned - yes: but please don't give me what I deserve! (Justice, mercy, grace)
- David is appealing to the character of God as opposed to his own innocence or lack of guilt.

Psalm 103:8 "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy."

God describes Himself:

Exodus 34:6-7 "6And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, the Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, 7keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin ..."

- Confession: "I am weak..." Lord, what do you expect, I'm just a dumb sheep..."

Psalm 103:14 "He knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."

"O Lord heal me..." This can be taken a couple of ways.

1. Lord, heal me because I'm in pain, I'm suffering from my sin. Sin always brings pain.
2. Lord, heal me from the condition that led to my sin, heal me of my sin nature...

- Jesus would actually do both.

2 Corinthians 5:21 “For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”

“... *for my bones are vexed.*”

- The effect of sin on the human body. Cops see it all the time. People that started off young and full of life, then later, and not always that much later, having been involved in drugs, or promiscuity, or whatever, the hardness of their countenance, the premature aging, a ravaged body as a result of their sin.
- That consciousness of guilt, the attempt to cover our tracks, as David tried to do.

Psalm 32:3-4 “³When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. ⁴For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer.”

V: 3 “*My soul is also sore vexed...*” My mind is troubled, my spirit is grieved, I’m unsettled, in great turmoil.

- David may have been battling with anxiety and or depression, and all the things that come with that.
- There are those that would say that if you’re a real Christian then you won’t get depressed or suffer from anxiety or those kings of things.
- Christians do in fact deal with those things at times. This is not an opportunity or excuse to go down the path of psychology and all of it’s false teachings, but this is a heart check to see where we are with the Lord.
- Depression or anxiety is like the warning lights going off on the dashboard of your car, when they light up it means that something is not right and you need to investigate further before the problem gets worse.
- They are an indication that something is not right in our relationship with God.
- Our relationship with God is the vertical axis in our life, all our other relationships exist on the horizontal axis. If the vertical axis is off, then everything on the horizontal will be off also.
- When the warning lights come on, we need to investigate:

Psalm 139:23-24 “²³Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: ²⁴And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”

- Often times it's an issue of focus, what are we looking at? Focusing on God, or people, or things, a wrong focus. Sometimes, perhaps as it is with David at times it's a matter of dealing with sin, dealing with it in a Biblical manner.

“*Oh Lord, how long?*” How many of us have asked that question, cried that question. The answer is: however long it take for you to learn this lesson...

V: 4 “*Return, O Lord...*” Come back Lord...

- Perhaps in David's mind or from his perspective the Lord has departed from him, but the reality is that God hasn't moved, if anything, David has. (Break) David is the one who needs to return.

David expresses a similar thought later on in the Psalms.

Psalm 51:10-12 “¹⁰Created in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. ¹¹Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. ¹²Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.”

“...*oh save me for thy mercies' sake.*” Again appealing to the character of God, for His reputation's sake.

- There were times when God would hold back judgment, not because the children of Israel deserved it or were honorable in some way, but because He'd made promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob - and because of those promises He held back. The same would later be true after David, to his descendants because God had made promises to David, for His mercies' sake.

Part of the prayer of the nation:

Nehemiah 9:31 “Nevertheless for they great mercies' sake thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them; for thou art a gracious and merciful God.”

V: 5 David probably would not have talked this way unless he felt like he was close to death, or at least felt that way, whether it was physical danger, or just that he felt like he was dying.

- Graveyards are generally pretty quiet places. I assume David is talking about physical death and the tombs where people are buried.
- In hell, it's probably not too quiet there. In hell there is the sound of weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth, the cries of the tormented.

- In paradise, in Abraham's bosom, in the time of David, there would be rejoicing as it is in heaven, the constant praise and worship, neither of those places is quiet.

V: 6-7 Remembering that David is waxing poetic, this is hyperbole, an intended exaggeration, figurative language. His bed is awash in his tears. David is truly grieved, he's cried himself to sleep, his pillow bears the marks of his tears.

Psalm 42:3 "My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, where is thy God?"

- Commenting on this psalm, C. H. Spurgeon said that tears are liquid prayers that need no interpretation. I like that!

V: 8-10 Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity, because the Lord has heard my prayer (2X), and he's coming to rescue me - you're in big trouble.

- Surrounded by wolves / bad guys / siren...
- You're going to be ashamed, defeated, you'll be surprised suddenly!
- The past work of God builds faith and confidence in the continued or future work of God. Because He has been so faithful in the past, we can count on Him for the future.

2 Corinthians 1:10 "Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that He will yet deliver us;"

2 Peter 2:9 "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished."

- Because of all of that, like David we simply look to the Lord.

1 Peter 5:7 "Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you."