

Psalm 13

by Henry Law

The sermon explores the cry of the troubled soul, the purpose of discipline in the school of grace, and the source of true joy in God's salvation.

Scripture: Psalm 13:3

Topics: "Faith And Prayer", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

Henry Law preaches about the soul's journey from troubled to finding peace in God, emphasizing the need for faith to remain steadfast despite challenges and the assurance of joy that awaits believers. Through discipline in the school of grace, God detects lurking sins, repairs weaknesses in faith, and matures believers' experiences, leading to the ripening of fruits of righteousness. Despite moments of feeling abandoned by God, faith perseveres in prayer and dependence, seeking God's light and salvation to overcome the enemy's triumph.

Transcript

The soul long troubled here at last finds peace. Lord, may our faith never fall! Joy is at hand.

1, 2. "How long will You forget me, O Lord? forever? how long will You hide Your face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? how long shall my enemy be exalted over me?"

Discipline is needed in the school of grace, and therefore it is not withheld. A loving Father orders it--a loving hand applies it. The purpose and the result are increase of grace. Lurking sins are thus detected. Weakness in faith's fabric is repaired. Secret foes are dragged to light and slain. Prayer and dependence and matured experience gain power. Fruits of righteousness are ripened. A shaken tree takes deeper root.

To effect this, tokens of God's presence are withdrawn. The much-loved smile smiles not. The tender whispers are no longer heard. Precious communion fails to cheer. The sighing spirit mourns desertion. It is as a forsaken dwelling. No ray of love illumines the surrounding darkness. Fears whisper, 'God is forever gone.' Dreary days drag on their dreary length. In the morning there is the wail, "How long?" In the evening it is still, "How long?" The soul is much perplexed. Harassing doubts intrude. Questions arise. What is the purpose? When will be the end?

Thus daily sorrow is the daily bread. Thus grief and heaviness pervade the day. The cry is often repeated, "How long? how long?" Affliction deepens because the enemy appears to triumph. It is his joy when saints are sad. He rears his head when they lie low; his cause is crowned when adversity fills their cup. This knowledge aggravates their misery. The cry continues, "How long! how long?" David is here. This is a path which his feet often trod. Each child of God is here. In this darkness they often walk. But above all, the Man of Sorrows is here too. There is no cup of anguish which His lips tasted not. These words anticipate the bitter cry, "My God, my God! why have You forsaken Me?"

3. "Consider and hear me, O Lord my God; give light to my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death."

In every state faith has its sure employ. In darkest night, amid the howling storm, in dreariest solitude, in racking pains, from the whale's belly, in the battlefield, when the foes rush with overwhelming might, when hope seems hopeless, when all remedy is fled, when heaven seems closed, in agonies of death, in jaws of hell, it prays. There is no state which excludes prayer. There is no place without an access to the mercy-seat. Faith never forgets, The Lord is my God. I have a property in Him. Thus it can ever cry, "Consider and hear me, O Lord my God." Relief and comfort are implored. The present gloom seems like an instant death. A ray of love is sought to give reviving light. The smile of God's countenance is desired to keep the eyes from closing in dark death.

4. "Lest my enemy say, I have prevailed against him; and those who trouble me rejoice when I am moved."

There is fear lest the enemy shall triumph, and the tottering cause of truth should fill the wicked with malicious joy. Thus David trembled; but his fears were visionary. Opposing foes could not detain him from the throne. Thus Satan seemed about to triumph when Jesus was dragged to trial and uplifted on the cross. Truth seemed about to fall and victory to crown hell's efforts. But how short the hope! The conquering Savior bursts detaining bonds. He rises omnipotent to vanquish all hell's arts and might. In Him His people live. In Him they will prevail. In Him they soon will sit on thrones of glory. In Him they soon will place victorious feet on Satan's neck. Therefore we will trust and not be afraid.

5. "But I have trusted in Your mercy; my heart shall rejoice in Your salvation."

God's mercy is sure ground of trust. It cannot fail. It is higher than the highest heavens. It extends throughout all space. Its one delight is to alleviate misery. Under its sheltering wings may we delightedly repose! Joy is ever ready to refresh the soul. But true joy does not grow in the field of earthly things. This fruit does not hang on carnal trees. It is not quaffed from goblets of wealth, and luxury, and worldly pleasures. It lives in a heavenly climate. It feeds and feasts on God's salvation. Is it not joy to clasp this boon to the heart, and to know assuredly, By grace am I saved, through faith, and that not of myself; it is the gift of God! By grace am I saved, through the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus, and the covering of His glorious righteousness. By grace am I saved, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

6. "I will sing to the Lord, because He has dealt bountifully with me."

Joy is not silent. It lifts up the voice. It sends forth the incense of praise. It has a boundless theme. It tells of all God's dealings. They are infinite, even as God Himself. He gives until He can give no more. He spares not His only-begotten Son. He adds His Holy Spirit. Shall He not also freely give us all things? Let us now commence our endless song. Let us now strike the harp which never shall grow tuneless. Let us sing to the Lord, who has dealt bountifully with us. Help us, O God, the Holy Spirit!

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