

PSALM 25 – Trust in the LORD! (part 3 of 3)

7. The LORD will Show the Covenant (25:14-15) – The secret of the LORD is with the ones who fear Him. The word “secret” means “intimate knowledge”. The will of the LORD will not be revealed to unbelievers. The reason is that they are God's enemies who remain in sin and rebellion against Him when they reject Christ as their LORD and Saviour. In the case of the ones who fear the LORD, which is the beginning of wisdom, they are born again and they do not want to anger God by living in sin. He who fears the LORD wants to obey the Word and will of God. He wants God to be pleased with his life. He seeks to discover God's will by studying God's Word and live it out in his life. Using synthetic parallelism, the psalmist says that the LORD will show, i.e. make known clearly, His covenant. The covenant of God is found in the Word of God. It is centred in Jesus Christ. It is God's love for sinners through Jesus Christ His only begotten Son. The moment a sinner accepts Christ as his Lord and Saviour, God enters into a covenant with him that is sealed by the blood of Christ and will last forever. The covenant cannot be broken by anyone, not even death and Satan. However, this covenant has conditions that must be obeyed first before the blessings of God can follow.

There are truths kept hidden through the many typologies in the Bible such as the entire Levitical system of sacrifices. The child of God who desires to obey the LORD and to please Him will never be turned away by God. The LORD will embrace him with open arms. But he has to come under God's terms. One of the terms is to fear Him. To fear God includes being afraid of Him as well as to be in awe of Him in a reverential and respectful way. He is God almighty even as He is our loving heavenly Father. The awe must always remain whenever we approach God in prayer and worship.

Verse 15 (synthetic parallelism) – The psalmist's response reminds us of the human responsibility in our relationship with the LORD. Even though the LORD is the One who holds us and the One who keeps us in the path of righteousness, the Bible also teaches us that the believer is to focus his eyes on the LORD at all times. This symbiotic relationship between the believer and the LORD has a twofold perspective. If the relationship between the believer and the LORD is faulty, it is the believer's fault alone. He is to turn his eyes to the LORD no matter what he faces in life. He must not look anywhere else. The moment he takes his eyes off the LORD, he will stumble and fall. This was the case with Peter when he walked on water after being granted permission by Christ to join Him. The moment Peter took his eyes off Christ and started to hear and see the howling wind and the turbulent waves of the storm, he began to sink. The psalmist shares the same experiences with us. He must not allow the enemies who taunt him to shift his focus. He must not listen to the wrong counsel to shift his focus from the LORD. To focus on the LORD means to do what the Bible says, every jot and tittle.

When his eyes are on the LORD, the result is that the LORD will pluck, i.e. snatch, his feet out of the net. The LORD knows how much we can take in terms of the temptations that we encounter. Otherwise, he would not allow it to happen. When it is

time, i.e. after our faith has been strengthened, the trial will stop. If that is the case, then why do believers still stumble and fall into sin? Believers fall into sin, even though the LORD does not allow temptations that are beyond the strength of their faith, because they do not keep on focusing their eyes on the LORD. Their eyes keep shifting to the man-made philosophies of this world. They choose to listen and to allow these carnal philosophies to overwhelm them and to cause them to fall into sin. They sin because of their disobedience and failure to trust the LORD to take care and work all things out for their own good.

8. The LORD will Show Mercy (25:16-18) – The psalmist cried urgently to the LORD to turn toward him, i.e. to see his dire state and help. He will keep on looking at the LORD and will not turn his eyes away from Him and here he cried to the LORD to look in his direction. This means to ask the LORD to take action. It is like a person who is crying out for help to someone who keeps looking away as if he does not hear. The delay of help makes the trial very unbearable for the distressed one; it is as if he is about to be crushed by it. The psalmist knew his place before the LORD; he did not deserve the LORD's attention. He admitted this here. He cried to the LORD to look his way because of His mercy upon the psalmist. The psalmist knew that he deserved judgement as he was born in sin and was a sinner until the day he was born again. After salvation, he understood that his salvation was based upon God's grace and mercy alone. This is the basis of his salvation which the psalmist appealed to his LORD for help. This is a wonderful understanding of a believer's relationship with God that is practically expressed here in prayer for our learning!

Using synthetic parallelism, the psalmist stated that he is asking for an urgent intervention by God because of the desolation and affliction that he faced. He felt all alone, as if no one cared! No one could help and no one seemed to want to come and help. On top of his loneliness, the psalmist also felt that he was under affliction, i.e. being harshly treated. He was under mental as well as physical persecution. The former was probably worse than the latter.

Verse 17 (synthetic parallelism) – The psalmist made his request absolutely clear to his LORD. The troubles of his heart were enlarged, i.e. the tightness within his soul had increased in intensity. He appealed to his LORD because he was about to be overwhelmed by the trials that he had to endure all alone. No one on earth could help. The only One who could was the LORD. But the LORD appeared to have forgotten the psalmist. The pressures within him to succumb to the temptation to sin against his God by murmuring and complaining or by some sinful action were mounting. He would not be able to take it anymore if the LORD did not come immediately to relieve him! He used the plural tense for "troubles" which means that the trials were multifaceted and from different directions.

The psalmist came straight to the point. He asked the LORD to bring him out of his distresses (again in the plural). The word "distress" means "narrowness". It is like being squeezed or boxed in. He could not move at all! Literally, the second line of this verse means "out of the distresses, deliver me!" The emphasis was not on the act of

deliverance but on the phrase "out of the distresses." The psalmist was crying to the LORD that he could not take it anymore. "Come NOW! I am very desperate!"

It seems that the only way believers learn to have such an intense desire for the LORD and learn the reality of their faith and trust is through adversity. If there is another way to soften this heart of flesh, the LORD would surely do so. Adversity that draws us closer to the LORD turns head knowledge into priceless experiential knowledge. With a deeper experiential knowledge of God, our faith and trust in God grows. We learn that we can trust God not only in good times but in adverse times as well. The extent of our adversities will increase as we mature. This is the way of growth for every believer without exception! By all means cry to the LORD from your heart, like the psalmist crying to the LORD in Psalm 26. All he wanted from the LORD was to not sin against Him even as the trials were to cause him to fall into sin, being allowed by God but sent by the evil one and carried out by his devilish minions.

Verse 18 (synthetic parallelism) – The psalmist cried to the LORD to look (imperative) upon his affliction and his pain. The word for affliction (noun) is used here as it was in verse 16 (verb). The psalmist basically asked his LORD to take pity on him. He was very badly bullied, persecuted and boxed in! When we, the children of God, undergo persecution, realize that our heavenly Father sees all. The reason He delays in helping is because you and I have not yet learned the meaning of patience and trust in Him under all circumstances. The pain is therefore good for us as it will draw us closer to the LORD which is what trials are for. We must guard against falling into sin at all costs. No matter how deep the wound and how intense the pain, we must endure. The word "pain" here means "to work severely and with irksomeness." Imagine a person being forced to work under the hot sun for hours without water. He would be extremely thirsty and physically exhausted to the point of passing out!

Then the psalmist asked the LORD to forgive all his sins. The psalmist knew that he had not committed any particular sin that would bring about this trying consequence. This means that his use of the word "sins" was generic. That is why the word "all" is used and he was not referring to one particular sin. He knew that even a child of God could still sin in this mortal flesh. Just in case he might have sinned, the psalmist asked for forgiveness. He knew that the LORD would not hear his cries and prayers if he regarded iniquity in his heart.¹ The psalmist cried in the imperative to the LORD to forgive him of ALL his sins! This is the best way to pray all the time. God's children can never confess their sins enough, because we sin so easily and frequently. This is what we must do also in times of trials. We must not blame others, no, not even our persecutors when we struggle with sin. These persecutors cannot force us to do anything even though they will try their best. Believers must at all costs try, with much prayer to the LORD for help, to be strong and not succumb. This is the best way to learn how good God is to all His children. He will never leave them to be lonely even though at times it might appear to be so!

¹Psalm 66:18 (KJV) "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:"

9. The LORD will Deliver (25:19-22) – The psalmist directed the LORD's attention to his enemies. He used the word "consider" (imperative) which means to see and look at them. Is there any justification for what they have done to God's people? They are being unjust and most destructive without a just cause. They might think that they are doing God's will by persecuting believers but they are deceived. Their sincerity in what they think is right cannot be acceptable and right in the sight of the LORD! Their attacks on God's people are most unfair. There are many of them who are against God's people. They outnumber God's people. They are in the majority! Do not use the "majority card" when dealing with right and wrong or truth and error. Use the Bible only! Those who call themselves Christians and use the "majority card" sin against God by this approach. The right understanding of God's Word and God's will cannot be determined by the raising of hands! If we are deciding where to eat for dinner or lunch then majority wins; but not when it comes to God's truth! Will God have pity and help?

Using synthetic parallelism, the psalmist said that these enemies hate him with cruel hatred. The words "hatred" and "hate" originate from the same root which means a strong hatred. Adding the word "cruel" makes it worse because the word "cruel" means "violent." The enemies were many and they were trying their utmost to hurt and kill God's people. Evil abounded against Israel. We know that the psalmist was praying on behalf of the nation of Israel because of verse 22. There was no basis for their hatred and cruelty against God's people who have repented of their sins. If it was for the growth of their faith, then the LORD must intervene now because the psalmist had already shared earlier that he was about to be crushed by the depth of the trial. If it was for sins committed, the psalmist had already repented of all sins that they might have committed against the LORD and had also pleaded with Him to be merciful!

Verse 20 (synthetic parallelism) – The psalmist asked the LORD to keep his soul and deliver him. Both these verbs are in the imperative for urgency! The word "keep" used here is different from the word "keep" used in verse 10. Here it means the soul is precious, please protect it. Because the soul is precious, may the LORD deliver! The word "soul" as used here refers to the physical life so that he might be preserved to continue doing God's work for the blessing of God's people. The "keep" in verse 10 relates to his spiritual life so that he will not sin against the LORD. The psalmist knew that his life was in God's hands. To him the enemies might be many, but to God they are nothing in His sight! The LORD could easily deal with all of them in a moment.

He appealed to the LORD to deliver as he has put his trust and faith in Him and no one else. He pleaded with the LORD to not let him be ashamed because he has trusted in Him. The word "ashamed" means to save face; he did not want his trust in the LORD, based upon God's manifold promises in Holy Scriptures, to be empty! The Word of the LORD cannot fail. The psalmist appealed to the LORD for His glory through His unfailing Word and promises! Trusting in the LORD means exactly this! The LORD's holy Name is at stake. If the children of God take God at His Word and obey Him, and His Word does not come to pass, then His Name would be shamed! The psalmist did not want this! This is the basis for his appeal for deliverance!

Verse 21 (synthetic parallelism) – Then he turned his attention to the attributes of the LORD. The LORD's integrity, i.e. perfection, and His uprightness, i.e. righteousness, had to be the basis for preserving the psalmist. This word "preserve" has the same meaning as the word "keep" in verse 10. It means to guard something by preserving it. Just as the psalmist preserved God's Word in his life by obeying it at all times (verse 10), the psalmist here wanted the LORD to preserve him. The basis to be delivered from his trials is obedience to God's Word!

God's perfection would not allow Him to do wrong. The psalmist knew that the LORD will always do what is right! It is in His character to always do what is right. He will not change and never will. He is immutable. The psalmist knew the LORD well. This is a good way for believers to pray and appeal to the LORD when undergoing trials. The psalmist knew that after repentance and obedience, his LORD would deliver. Therefore, he would wait for Him no matter what and however long it takes because His LORD will always give to His children the very best! Patient waiting is the only way to learn patience!

Verse 22 (synthetic parallelism) – The concluding verse is very touching. David said that he would wait and then he pleaded with the LORD that it was not for his own sake but Israel's. The king of Israel was in trouble, and thus Israel the nation was in trouble as well. He asked the LORD to save Israel out of all her troubles! This is what every biblical church and believer needs to ask the LORD to do, but to do it in His time! God's people must wait patiently and continue to search their own souls and pray to the LORD. David began this prayer with a promise that he would always look up to Him because he would always trust his LORD. He concluded by asking the LORD to redeem in His time!

God's people must always be sensitive to the LORD's leading and prompting. The LORD will see His people through. The enemies want to see God's people sin by hurting their flesh. David wanted to glorify the LORD. His plea was for God to save him for Israel's sake so that he could continue to do God's will and for God's glory. This is always the best motive for prayer and for deliverance! Amen.