

Psalm 6 – “Deliver My Soul, O LORD!”

INTRODUCTION

Feeling “boxed in” by the many trials of life is part of growing up. We are “stretched” emotionally, physically and spiritually in ways unimaginable. Despite the stress and strains of growing up, we will find ourselves stronger for it if we endure to the end. Sadly, in some instances, we buckle under the load and collapse. Some are “crushed” by the load, and they run and hide from their troubles; others pick themselves up with renewed zeal and fervency, encouraging themselves that never will they fall again. The “ups and downs” of life are inevitable in this sin-sick world. As long as there is sin, trials will remain. No one is exempt from such trials.

However, the life of the Christian can be different, and is different. The struggles he faces can be elevated to a different and higher plane. As a believer in the LORD Jesus Christ, his mission by God is to be His witness everywhere he goes. He must shine for Christ wherever he is. In so doing, he will face trials and difficulties. These are sufferings for not sinning against God. The enemies of God are in spiritual darkness. They hate Him “with a vengeance”. However, He is beyond their very limited reach. God’s enemies have to take it out on the followers of Christ. Hence, they will afflict Christians in order to retard and hinder the work of God. David, in Psalm 6, experienced such an affliction. His enemies buffeted him. The reason for their attacks was not stated. David was convinced that he did not deserve their venom and assault upon his body and soul. We know this because in verse 8, David described these evil enemies as “workers of iniquity.” David’s character was beyond reproach. If David had sinned, he would not point an accusing finger but would repent of his sin. David would not have written Psalm 6 if he were in the wrong! His response to Nathan’s rebuke of his sin with Bathsheba attests to David’s honesty and integrity, as a man after God’s own heart.

From Psalm 6, we glean three general truths about the believer’s struggles in the face of unjustified attacks and persecutions.

I. GOD ALONE CAN DELIVER – verses 1-3 – When persecuted for the faith, the believer can always appeal to God for help, for He alone can help. It does not mean that man cannot help the believer who is in trouble. However, the help of man is finite; man can only do so much, whereas God’s help is limitless, and can help to the uttermost. God can help us through man. Many of us can testify to this truth. However, there will come a point in time in our struggles when the closest and most able human beings cannot help. It is not a lack of desire on their part but rather one of inability. For example, when King Saul hounded David like a rabid animal, David had absolutely no one but God to turn to for help. His wife could not; neither could any of his wandering friends who were in the same situation. David cried to God.

Not being presumptuous, David cried to God to not to rebuke him in His anger (synonymous parallelism in verses 1 & 2 - the 2nd line restates the thought mentioned in the 1st). Every believer can be persecuted either because of sins committed or as a form

of trial allowed by God to strengthen his faith. David cried to the LORD as his sovereign God who was ultimately in control of his life, to overcome the conduct of David's enemies. David understood that his enemies could not hurt or harm one hair on his head without his LORD's permission. However, if David had sinned (not that he had but assuming that he might have) against the LORD, then the only way was to repent and appeal to the LORD for His mercies. This was exactly what David did. He appealed to the mercies of the LORD, which in this case is a word for "grace" rather than "mercies." Mercies and grace seem to apply here as David was under some form of persecution from his enemies, and he cried to God for relief. Yet at the same time, David asked the LORD for healing and strength, which implies God's grace.

Realizing that he did not deserve God's strengthening David cried for mercy! His enemies must have physically hurt him. It was not only physical but also emotional and spiritual. Verse 3 confirms this interpretation as David declared that his soul was very sorrowful. His physical, emotional, and spiritual turmoil was more than he could bear alone. He cried to God asking Him how long he had to endure before help from the LORD arrived. In such a circumstance, only God could help. No man could.

Whenever we ask God for help, it should always be an appeal for God's mercy and never a right or a demand! We should serve unconditionally and expect nothing in return from God. We give and love God unconditionally, even if He does not reward us or bless us. God alone can help at all times and under all circumstances.

II. MAN ALONE NEEDS DELIVERANCE –verses 4-7 – Of all God's creatures, man is the only one who needs His help. Not all will cry to God for help. Men who are proud and whose hearts are full of sin will refuse to cry to God for help. They would rather die in their sin and self-righteousness than cry to God in humility. Those who reject Christ cannot cry to God for help, because God will not hear their cries. God will only hear their cry for salvation. The reason is, until they become God's children and not His enemies, God cannot answer their prayers. The transformation comes instantaneously when they become Christians. David was a Christian.

His cry was for God to hear him and come back to him. The use of "LORD" (Jehovah), the covenantal Name of God, argues for a close relationship that David had with God as his Saviour, Protector and Lord. This is the basis of his requests, which were all in the imperative, depicting urgency. David was "yelling" for his LORD to intervene. "Come quickly to my aid and deliver!" was David's cry. Again, the basis was for mercy's sake. David desired to remember God. After he was dead and gone, he would not be able to thank the LORD, even if he wanted to. David wanted to thank the LORD while he was alive. However, he found it hard to thank God when he had to endure sufferings so grievous that he was groaning and swimming in his own bed with tears! This reflected the great pain that David endured because of his faith in the LORD! We do not know what the circumstances were. It is not important. However, David's cry to the LORD is.

The weeping was so intense that David described his eyes as being "consumed"; they had shrunk and could not open any more. His eyes were becoming old. They were sunken and

he looked aged because of the long nights of grief and tears. It was because of the grief in his heart! This grief was the deliberate and hurtful provocation by David's enemies. They probably taunted him with all sorts of attacks and discouragement. Their provocation was to undermine his faith and trust in the LORD. David refused to succumb to temptation and capitulate to their mocking.

David wanted very much to thank God. However, if the LORD did not deliver soon, and he succumbed to his grief, then he could do so in his lifetime. David found it difficult to give thanks to God in times of grief! He realized that those who yearn for God's deliverance are those who are obedient and are being persecuted for their faith. David was going through such a persecution. He very badly needed the LORD's deliverance so that he could thank the LORD for his mercies, genuinely and experientially.

III. GOD ALONE HAS DELIVERED – verses 8- 10 – With confidence, David demanded that his enemies leave him alone. In modern terms, it means to get out of his sight! He refused to be moved or swayed by their torments. David would hold on to his LORD regardless of their efforts to bring him grief. He called his enemies “workers of iniquity”, for that was exactly what they were in their attempts to destroy his faith and trust in God. His confidence was not because God had already answered his prayers; David knew that his LORD had heard his prayer! David would patiently wait with longsuffering for his LORD's timing to be accomplished in his life.

David knew that he could not demand that God worked within his timeframe. As long as God heard, God would be in time; never would God be too late such that David would be crushed under the load of his trials, or too early that David might miss and not see that it is the LORD alone who can deliver. David was confident in the LORD's promises that He would not turn aside the prayers of His children who approach Him in humility and righteousness. To receive the prayer of His children means that God will surely answer. This was David's faith. God's power was not in doubt; neither were God's compassion and care for His children.

CONCLUSION – The result is that all of David's enemies will be ashamed and sorely vexed by the LORD. Let them return and be ashamed for what they have done to David. Let this shame come upon them suddenly. Please note the use of the verb “return” in verse 4 and the concluding verse 10. When the LORD returns to David's side to deliver him, then David's enemies will surely return in shame to where they came from. God will deliver suddenly and swiftly. This is the power of God Almighty when he delivers!

Christians, be encouraged by Psalm 6. The assurance is the presence of the omnipotent God, who is also our covenantal LORD. Safety and security are in God's hands. Sinful men will do their utmost to God's children who serve Him. We must not sin in unbelief. Wait upon the LORD and His perfect timing to deliver! Amen.