



## PSALM 13

Vs. 1 How long, LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?

Vs. 2 How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart?

How long will my enemy triumph over me?

Vs. 3 Look on me and answer, LORD my God. Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death.

Vs. 4 And my enemy will say, "I have overcome him," and my foes will rejoice when I fall.

Vs. 5 But I TRUST in your unfailing love, my heart rejoices in your salvation.

Vs. 6 I will sing the LORD's praise, for he has been good to me.

Psalm 13, is a "lament psalm," written by David, the master psalmist. Lament psalms pour out complaints to the Lord. In Psalm 13 there are four questions that give us insight into David's emotional state of mind and the challenges he was facing. He takes his complaint to God, addressing him with raw honesty. Note: that he doesn't receive an immediate answer in this psalm. When we have a genuine relationship with the Lord, we then have the freedom to challenge, vent and cry out to God in an expression of human emotions. Even Jesus, cried out from the cross: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

David's "How long" questions express the following:

**Verse 1a** – How long will you forget me forever? David felt abandoned by God.

**Verse 1b** – How long will you hide your face from me? David felt rejected by God.

**Verse 2a** – How long will I have sorrow of heart? David felt depressed, even suicidal.

**Verse 2b** – How long will my enemy triumph over me? David felt defeated.

**THE PROBLEM:** There are three phases to David's lament: The Problem – The Petition – The Praise. These three steps should always be taken when bringing our complaints and frustrations to the Lord. In David's case he first presents the problem. No one is sure which of David's many trials was the focus of Psalm 13. It might have been when King Saul was trying to kill him (1 Samuel 19). Whatever the circumstance, David felt abandoned by God. How well I know the feeling. When God is silent, it's easy to believe that we've done something wrong and God is angry with us. (Read Psalm 27:9).

Question: Have you ever felt abandoned by God? Have you felt that God allowed you to be treated unfairly or failed to answer your prayer? Explain.

Verse 2:

The psalmist continues to address the problem: “How long will my enemy triumph over me?” My translation: “God, I don’t deserve this! Why are you allowing my enemy to win?” Anxiety and depressed can come in like a flood when your life is threatened. Perhaps you’re dealing with a disappointment or you’re in an abusive situation. You’re may smile on the outside, but only God sees your troubled heart. I can picture David standing in a deserted place, looking up at the heavens shouting at God: “How long?”

Question: Waiting for God to change an unwanted circumstance in your life can seem to take an eternity. What has been your “how long” prayer to God?

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**THE PETITION:** Verses 3-4:

Look on me and answer, LORD my God. Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death, and *my enemy* will say, “I have overcome him,” and *my foes* will rejoice when I fall.

Verses 3 and 4 reveals two critical facts: David speaks of enemy (singular) and foes (plural). His greatest “*enemy*” was King Saul, the man that David loved like a father (1 Samuel 19:11). His “*foes*” were possibly those who joined Saul in his attempt to destroy David. It only takes one strong enemy to push you to the point of wanting to die. Especially when your enemy gathers foes to join in. When God is silent in the midst of a deep longing, rejection, abuse or deception, it may seem like He has abandoned you. It may seem like your enemy is getting the victory, while you’re in defeat. In spite of the bleakness of the situation, David, in faith, presents his petition to the Lord.

Question: David took his pent-up frustrations to God in a heartfelt petition. What is your petition to the Lord, concerning the challenge you are facing?

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**THE PRAISE:** Verses 5-6:

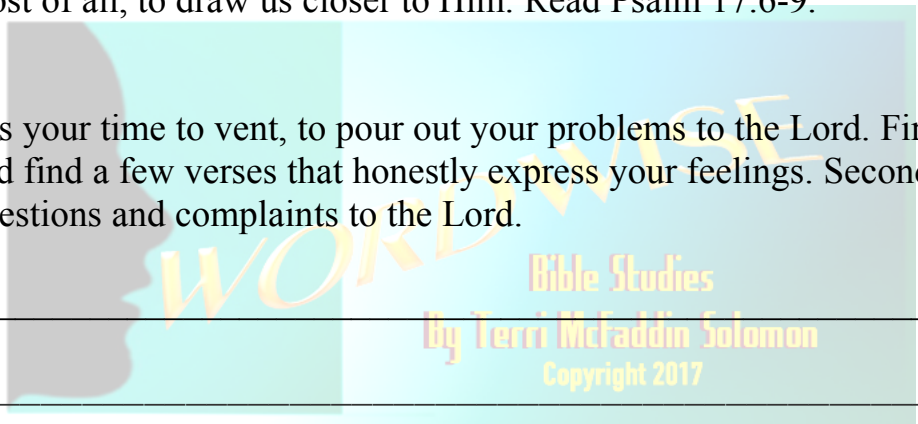
But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. (6) I will sing the LORD’S praise, for he has been good to me.

How did David suddenly go from wanting to die, to trusting in God’s unfailing love? The secret may be found in 1 Samuel 30:6-9. *Now David was greatly distressed...but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.*

In your worse moments, encourage yourself in the Lord by **psalming**. Recall how he has been “good to you.” Read the psalms out loud. Sing praises to God in spite of your circumstances. Satan will do his best to convince you that you’re wasting your time. But as continue in worship, the Holy Spirit will restore the joy of your salvation and your confidence in God’s faithfulness will be renewed.

So why does God appear to be silent and out of reach in the midst of a crisis. One observation is that during times of testing, God uses the attacks that come from our enemies or the personal issues that we face to build our faith and to make us stronger and wiser. Most of all, to draw us closer to Him. Read Psalm 17:6-9.

Task 1: This is your time to vent, to pour out your problems to the Lord. First, search the psalms and find a few verses that honestly express your feelings. Secondly, write down your questions and complaints to the Lord.



Task 2: Write down your petition. What is it that you need from the Lord?

Task 3: Finally, call someone and share Psalm 138, a song of praise and thanksgiving.

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