

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Psalms: God's Nurture Of The Inner Man In The Life Of Faith

XIII. Responding Well To The Wear Of Prolonged Exposure To Ungodly Oppression (Psalm 13:1-6)

I. Introduction

- A. The difficulty in facing *prolonged exposure* to oppressors is the **wear** that they can have on the inner man.
- B. David addressed this difficulty with God's solution in Psalm 13:1-6, and we view it for our edification:

II. Responding Well To The Wear Of Prolonged Exposure To Ungodly Oppression, Psalm 13:1-6.

- A. The Hebrew text at Psalm 13 has the introductory remarks found in the English translations as verse 1, but it combines verses 5 and 6 found in the English Bible into a single verse 6 (Kittel, *Biblia Hebraica*, p. 984). Thus, to avoid confusion with this lesson, we will stay with the numbering system of the English Bible.
- B. Accordingly, we translate Psalm 13:1-6 as enumerated in the English Bible (as follows):
 1. "How long, O Jahweh, will You forget (*shakah*, Ibid.; B. D. B., *A Heb.-Eng. Lex. of the O. T.*, p. 1013) me? Forever, perpetually? (*nesah*, Ibid., p. 664) How long will You conceal (*satar*, Ibid., p. 711) Your face [figure of God's expressed blessing, favor, cf. Num. 6:24-26] from me?" (Psalm 13:1)
 2. "How long must I 'take counsels' ([onomonopoetically as '*asit 'esot*'], from '*asah* ("do, make") and '*esah* (plural of "counsel"), Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 793-795, 420) in my *nepesh* (mental, emotional, spiritual seat of life, Ibid., Kittel; R. B. Girdlestone, *Syns. of the O. T.*, 1973, p. 56-59) [How long must I brainstorm how to face oppressors], having grief (*yagon*, Ibid., B. D. B., p. 387) in my heart daily? How long will my hostile foe ('*ayab*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 33) be exalted over me?" (Psalm 13:2)
 3. "Show regard (*nabat*, Ibid., p. 613) for me, O Jahweh [Covenant Lord], my Elohim [Creator God]; lighten my eyes [fig. of God's encouraging blessing, cf. Num. 6:24-26] lest I sleep the sleep of death," Psalm 13:3.
 4. "Lest my hostile foe ('*ayab* again, cf. v. 2) say, 'I have prevailed over (*yakol*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 407-408) him!' and lest my vexing adversary (*sar*, Ibid., p. 865) rejoice (*gil*, Ibid., p. 162) when I totter, shake, slip (*mot*, Ibid., p. 556-557)," Psalm 13:4.
 5. "But I myself (emph. pr.) now fully rely on [instant. perf. - at the time of speaking] (*batah*, Ibid., p. 105) in Your loyal love [grace] (*hesed*, Ibid., Kittel; H. A. W., *T. W. O. T.*, 1980, v. I, p. 305-307); my heart will rejoice [proph. perf.] (*gil* again, cf. v. 4) in Your deliverance (*yeshu'ah*, Ibid., B. D. B., p. 447)," Psa. 13:5.
 6. "I will sing unto Jahweh, for He has recompensed, dealt fully or bountifully with (*gamal*, Ibid., p. 168) me," Psalm 13:6.

Lesson: (1) David's obvious concern in this psalm was the long time of suffering he faced from a hostile foe, and the wear it produced on his inner man, seen in his repeat use of the question "How long" and the switch from "hostile foe" ('*ayab*) in ver. 2, 4a to "vexing adversary" (*sar*) in ver. 4b. (2) David expressed the sinful attitude of one who suffers with a lack of faith when he asked why God had forgotten him in perpetuity (ver. 1) and why God was concealing His blessing, favor from him, false statements typical of the believer who is weak under trial and who so struggles to view God as good or upright. Thus, extensive oppression can bring out the expression of our sinful nature, so we must handle oppressors by God's unmerited favor, His grace alone ("hesed," ver. 5) instead of human effort. (3) The cure was for David fully to rely on God's grace, His "loyal love" (*hesed*), ver. 5a. (4) The great contrast between David's former grief in heart (ver. 2) and weariness (ver. 3, 4) with his final rejoicing and singing of God's fully delivering and recompensing him in the situation (ver. 5b-6) reveals God's ability to renew the inner man though it has suffered significant wear in intense trials over a long period of time, cf. Psalm 23:3a.

Application: (1) Since God the Holy Spirit produced this psalm through David (2 Peter 1:20-21; 2 Timothy 3:16), we know God is SENSITIVE to the WEAR that prolonged oppression produces on His people, so the believer must follow 1 Peter 4:19 in this matter, trusting God knows the effect of the suffering on His creatures so as to let the Creator God deal with the harmful effects of oppressors on His created believers! (2) The ability and willingness of God to refresh a victim of prolonged oppression so that he can sing and rejoice emotionally in appreciation of the Lord's bountiful resolution to the problem is a testimony of God's power and greatness. The believer must thus trust God to be BIGGER than the prolonged oppression and its oppressor(s). (3) He must also fully rely on (*batah*, ver. 5a) God's faithfulness to HIMSELF (the loyal love in "hesed" pictures God's unmerited favor, His grace that is totally independent of human merit, ver. 5) instead of relying on any supposed goodness in himself to enjoy God's deliverance and renewal of his inner man from such trials.