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Turn, LORD, and deliver me; save me because of your unfailing love. Psalm 6:4

Main Idea: When one is falling apart, when we are discouraged, confused and in trouble, when we are helpless and all seems hopeless, what do we do? What do we do when we did the right thing, but it failed? When we suffer something done to us, what do we do? When sickness strikes, what do we do? When we can't take it anymore, what do we do? Here, David, in all of this, cries out to our Lord, seeking His attention and His love. Hear David, who cries out to our Lord, seeking His attention and His love. David's is a heart cry out to God for His understanding, listening, and to turn away from anger.

God's anger is just. It can be nothing else. God's discipline is well deserved. It can be nothing else. David knows this, so he seeks the Lord's compassion. Then, David steps up his plea and asks for mercy for David is out of energy and his body is about to give out. He seeks healing even as he knows he does not deserve it. His time is short, his anxiety is high, his soul is in anguish. He urgently pleads for deliverance. David pleads God's unfailing love and mercy. He wants to be saved before it is too late. David's enemies are numerous and powerful and laughing at him; however, David knows this truth--God is even more powerful.

Now the reprieve, God hears David's humble heart and desperation, and He answers his appeal. God hears us when we cry and mourn; He cares for us when we are hurting and in pain. So, cry out to Him, make your prayers sincere and true, allow Him to fight your enemies and put evil to shame.

Contexts and Background:

This Psalm 6 is attributed to David. Perhaps, he wrote it, gathered it, or used it. It is considered 'Penitential,' confessional; yet, it contains no confession of sin or seeking of forgiveness. Rather, this is a personal lament, a heart cry--"Why?!"--out to God in one's situation. For David, it may refer to a personal painful illness. There was so much suffering, David just collapses. There was no place to go or turn to other than weeping to God. And, it ends with his great comfort in that he can trust God, even when he can't see beyond the situation. God does hear his cry and takes him through. It was used as a hymn for confession and getting ourselves real with God. We are to pray for the endurance of our leaders and our challenges (Psalm 6;32;38;51;102;143).

Commentary—Word and Phrase Meanings:

- *Rebuke me/disciplines.* This is a plea to God for relief, whether it is natural or self-caused or if God is the one Who put it there. God's discipline is to help us see what we did wrong, to make us stronger and more mature by faith and will just like the training of a child to learn to correct faults so to develop well for future benefit and the benefit of society. As we grow in Christ, we prosper in the faith and handle life better; others are positively affected; God is glorified. God's desire is to make us holy and righteous. His wisdom and help are accessible and available to us; we have only to reach out for it. He gives. And, it is up to us to put what He mercifully gives in our lives and work it out. For the Christian, this is not to be feared! This comes from Christ and from what we have before us, as we partake of His Word so we can apply it to our lives to grow and mature. When we are in it, pray hard and ask God what is it I need to learn and grow in? What have I done wrong or left undone? God's discipline is always temporary to get us lined up for what is important. If He did not do this, we would certainly fall into worse situations. God's good discipline is always done in love; to those who are wicked and refuse to repent, the discipline is severe and eternal (Phil 2:12-14; 1 Pet. 1:15-16; Heb. 12:1-13).

- *Anger*. An appeal that God would not impose His just anger for the penalty for sin. The psalmist does not seek immunity from judgment; rather, tempering (Psalm 130:3).
- *Mercy / gracious*. Knowing God's righteousness and a conviction concerning His character, an appeal is made for God to listen to his pain and give clemency. This is also a hope in His favor and a trust in one's conviction that God is there.
- *Faint / languishing*. A personal word for pain, like from an illness or injury. It can also mean spiritual distress, when one realizes our helplessness and emptiness and need for our Savior.
- *Bones are in agony... deep anguish*. One's skeleton; though, here in context, may mean the whole body, as the ancients had a rudimentary knowledge of anatomy. A hint what it is about--sickness.
- *How long, LORD*. A bold request before God, as, why, how much longer until relief, like a desperate plea to make sure that He hears. This is also a statement of trust, knowing that God is able to give it (Psalm 90:13; Hab. 2:6; Rev. 6:10).
- *Turn*. A statement of almost an embarrassment, or a fear that God has forgotten about him or does not care anymore. As Christians, we do not need to fear this as suffering, disappointment or setback does not mean Jesus has turned away; He only may if one is not repentant (Psalm 6:3; 42:11; John 14:1-4; 2 Cor. 5:21)!
- *Save / deliver me*. Meaning to extricate, to draw off. Not just relief from pain, but bold confidence in God's ability to intervene, heal and make things better. Also, a prelude to what Christ will do ultimately save us from our biggest problem, sin (Job. 36:15; Psalm 6:3; 18:19; 42:11; 116:8; John 12: 20-50; 14:1-4; 2 Cor. 5:21)!
- *Unfailing / steadfast love*. The psalmist knows God's mercy and kindness and seeks to make his appeal there. Means how God is deeply bound and devoted with His love and care for us as His children, as a covenant. This points us to what Christ has done for us, God's special and unfailing favor being poured out to us. This favor is His love, kindness, and mercy as promised in the OT and fulfilled here in the NT. (Duet. 7:9, 12; 2 Sam. 7:15; Isa. 55:3; Psalm 6:4; 89:24, 28, 33; Matt. 8:28-34).
- *Among the dead no one proclaims / no remembrance*. Not annihilation. The dead are silent to those who are alive (Psalm 30:9; Isa. 38:18).
- *Grave / Sheol*. The realm of the dead, that takes everyone regardless of status or wealth. This is a hint of the coming resurrection of Christ (Prov. 1:12; 9:18; Isa. 5:14; 14:9-11).
- *Groaning*. This is a prayer to God so He can feel the pathos of our plight.
- *Drench my couch*. A sign of wealth, as the regular person had a cot and a poor person had a mat on the floor like many third world countries have today; while the rich had an elevated bed, some even reclining couch that turns into a bed. Yet, agony sees no bank account or one's position.
- *Eyes grow weak*. Meaning failing strength, the physical and mental ability to go on (Jer. 14:6).
- *Sorrow*. Our grief by illness and hope seems deferred (Psalm 31:9; 69:3; 88:9; 119:82, 123; Job 17:7; Lam. 2:11).
- *Foes*. Perhaps a reference to the so called friends of Job, who give bad advice and no help.

- *Who do evil / workers of evil.* Here, the psalmist was perhaps being blamed for his illness, the social custom of Judaism at the time, not Scripture, believed bad things and sickness was the result of one's sin. Although, mostly true, but not always, this caused a cruel outlook to those in suffering, and an excuse to not help. At the same time, many trials do come from God to get us to think, trust, and obey, so to produce faith and character, like David after his adultery or Saul after disobeying God (Ex. 20:5; Num. 12; 14:18; Deut. 5:9; 2 Sam. chps. 12-21; Job 2; Luke 13:1-5; John 9:1-5; 1 Cor. 11:30; 2 Cor. 12:7; Gal. 4:13; James 5:15).
- *LORD has heard.* God indeed does hear our sincere supplications, when we are authentic, humble and contrite. A call to press on and receive our strength from our most gracious Lord. We need to wipe away those doubts and fears that distract and stress us for no reason. We can endure hardship; when we go through tough times, we have the opportunity to see how God's Son suffered for us. His example of fortitude will enable us to learn and grow and produce a deeper relationship with God, yielding more faith and fruit (Psalm 6:3; 42:11; 119:67-71; Prov. 3:11-12; John 14:1-4, 15-31; 2 Cor. 5:21).
- *Mercy.* God receives his prayer! And it is given, we can be at ease with those fears, for which we have no need (Psalm 6:3; 42:11; John 12: 20-50; 14:1-4; 2 Cor. 5:21)!
- *Shame.* A request for his antagonists to be embarrassed for a big "I told you so; it was not my fault". Now, Christ asks us to pray for our enemy, not against them (Matt. 5:44).

Devotional Thoughts and Applications:

We all have been in the dark places of life--loneliness, emptiness, trials and pain, in the midst of agony, chaos and dysfunction, desperately seeking an answer, or better, reprieve. We should know that our only useful argument before our Lord is to know our true terror because of our depravity and that we are undeserving of His grace and intervention. Yet, it can be had. So, we humble ourselves with our tears, and our unworthiness, offer our true confession. We can cry out in a desperate attempt, hoping for clemency from our situation.

Sometimes, we have so much in life that goes wrong, so much suffering we just collapse with no place to go or turn to other than weeping to God. It does not end there! We are given the great comfort is that God does hear our cry and takes us through!

How do we do this? We are to concentrate on Jesus and not wander; we are to ask for forgiveness via our confession. He is our goal and Reason. Allow Christ to empower and inspire you as He is our Savior and Lord, and in so, our main trainer and equipper. He is far greater than any mere encouragement from either outside or inside the church. We are to look to Him as our motivation, not circumstances or obstacles (Isa. 53: 10-12; Phil. 3:10-14; Heb. 1:3; 2:10; 1 John 1:9).

Remember in many places, we are told, "*Do not be afraid, do not let your heart be troubled*". This means that we are not to be stirred up and upset by the expectation of something bad happening or suffering. Jesus faced both physical and metaphysical sufferings that bore the undeserved wrath of God the Father for our sins. In addition, when Jesus departed, He gave the Holy Spirit which became more valuable in multiplicity for Kingdom building. So, let us wipe away those doubts and fears that distract and stress us for no reason (Psalm 6:3; 42:11; John 14:1-4, 15-31; 2 Cor. 5:21)!

Christian Life Principle: When life is falling apart and we are in hardship or discouraged, or confused, or in trouble, we are not to fret; rather, make a heart cry out to God with a humble heart for His unfailing love, mercy and deliverance (John 14:1-4).

The Essential Inductive Questions (for more Inductive questions, see Inductive Bible Study):

1. What does this passage say?
2. What does this passage mean?
3. What is God telling me?
4. How am I encouraged and strengthened?
5. Is there sin in my life for which confession and repentance is needed?
6. How can I be changed, so I can learn and grow?
7. What is in the way of these precepts affecting me? What is in the way of my listening to God?
8. How does this apply to me? What will I do about it?
9. What can I model and teach?
10. What does God want me to share with someone?

Additional Questions:

1. Have you ever experienced a time when your life is falling apart? What did you do? What did you learn?
2. How have you seen mature Christians handle discouragement, confusion and times of trouble?
3. Have you ever done the right thing, but it failed? Or suffer something done to you, like a sickness? So, what does this Psalm tell us?
4. Sometimes we may feel that God has forgotten about us or does not care anymore. Why is this not true?
5. What would be an authentic heart cry out to God for His understanding? Why should we ask Him to listen and to turn away from anger?
6. How does it make you feel that even when our deepest troubles and enemies are numerous and powerful, God is even more powerful?
7. What does it mean to your faith that God hears us when we cry and mourn, He cares for us when we are hurting and in pain?
8. What can you do to be real, when suffering hits and cry out to God? Why is it important, to make our prayers sincere and true?
9. How does it make you feel that God is deeply bounded and devoted with His love and care to us as His children?
10. When we can't see beyond our situation and can't take it anymore, what should we do?
11. What does it take to fully know God's mercy and kindness so when we seek to make an appeal, we can be bold with the request and humble in heart? What would that look like?
12. What can you do to make sure when the dark times come, you concentrate on Jesus and not wander, confesses then ask for forgiveness?