

Looking Up Instead of Looking In – Psalm 6

The Unknown Context of a Penitential Psalm

- **Penitential Psalm** – a psalm expressing deep anguish and a plea for God's mercy; expresses sorrow for sin and an appeal to God for his help and relief.
- **Power of the Presence of God** –
 - *"the Word of God is [alive], and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword..."*
 - *"thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path..."*
 - *"by thy Word I have conquered a troop and leaped over an hedge..."*

Keep in mind: David has understood what it is to sin and earn a rebuke for it, but also understands that though disciplines linger, the relationship is restored. God is not one to hold a grudge and bring up past faults once forgiven. (*"thou hast separated them as far as the east is from the west." "... iniquities will I remember no more..."*)

A Word Broken and a Rebuke Earned

1. **A Father's Correction (v. 1)**
Rebuke – sharp, verbal condemnation (judge correction), reproof (Prov. 9:8, Heb. 12:5)
Chasten – discipline, instruct, or chastise (father correction)
 2. **A Father's Mercy (v. 2a)**
These corrections, in a relational sense, are restorative and preventative, not destructive. *"Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth,"* and *"faint not... under his correcting."* (Hebrews 12:6)
 3. **A Child's Weakness (v. 2b)**
 4. **A Child's Pain (v. 3a)**
 5. **A Child's Suffering (v. 3c)**
 6. **A Child's Petition (v. 4)**
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A Heart Refocused

1. **Dependence on God (vv. 1-4)**
2. **Understanding of God's Character**
 - v. 1 – corrective
 - v. 2 – merciful
 - v. 2 – understanding
 - v. 2 – restoring

- v. 3 – mindful of the times
 - v. 4 – deliverer
 - v. 5 – savior
 - v. 6 – concerned with glory
 - v. 8 – listener
3. **Alignment with God's Desires (v. 4)**
 4. **Patience in God's Correction (vv. 2, 4, 8b-9)**
 5. **Confidence in the Answer (vv. 8b-10)**
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An Appeal Made and Mercy Given

Examine these appeals and consider what David is revealing with each one.

1. **Mercy! (vv. 1-4)**

Think of the difference in position here between David and God. David understands that he deserves punishment for his sin (whatever is being referenced here) and knows that God, in His justified anger, will pour out judgment.

- Is it wrong to complain to God about your pain?
- What is the attitude we should have toward God when it comes to our suffering?
- Is all suffering a result of God's displeasure?
- Is some suffering a result of God's displeasure?

2. **No Remembrance of You in Death (v. 5)**

What seems to be his focus here?

- Do we cease to exist after death?

3. **Give Me Strength (vv. 6-7)**

What is David's appeal here?

- Is he feeling genuine pain?
- Where does he go for help? Why?
- What are some physical effects of his suffering?
- Think of Jesus in John 11:35. He knew Lazarus would be raised, so why did He weep?
- How similar is that to us? Why do we weep even though we know God will work things out?

4. **Get These People Away from Me! (v. 8)**

How often do people cause more trouble in our distress?

- What do we do about it?
- How does Romans 12:18 play into this?

5. **Put Them to Shame (v. 10)**

What is the root of their shame here?

- How would David be "vindicated" while they are "shamed" in this?
- Is this a selfish prayer? Why or why not?
- How does James 4:10 play into this?