

Psalm 130

“My soul waiteth for the Lord”
A Song of degrees.

Psalm 130: The first four words of this psalm would form an appropriate title: “Out of the depths”, and that is the title by which it is known in Latin (*De Profundis*). This is the initial position of the psalmist as he offers his petition to the Lord for deliverance (verse 1-4). He then quickly moves to an expression of expectation (verses 5-6), and ends with an outward focus consisting of exhortation to others to hope in the Lord (verses 7-8).

Verses 1-8 (see note on Psalm 120:1-7). The author and occasion are not mentioned. This is the sixth of 7 penitential psalms (compare Palms 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 143).

- I. Urgent Prayer of the Psalmist (130:1-2);
- II. Magnified Forgiveness of God (130:3-4);
- III. Waiting Patience of the Psalmist (130-6);
- IV. Unique Hope of Israel (130:7-8).

Verses 1-4: Thankfully, God does not “mark”, or makes nothing of “iniquities” that are repented of. Even one would incur a judgment so overwhelming that “who shall stand” up to it. Yet in this brief summary of the gospel is this truth: He hears His people’s cries and comes, not with judgment but with forgiveness.

Psalm 130:1 "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD."

“Out of the depths”: A figurative expression of severe distress.

The word “depths” in Hebrew refers to the deep parts of the sea, picturing the watery chaos of life and floundering despair.

We have discussed before that the best place to reach the Lord is from our depth of despair. When we are at the very bottom, then we cry out to the Lord, and He hears us and answers our plea. There is one good thing about the bottom, there is no way but up to go. When we reach the end of ourselves, we reach up to God. This is the cry that the Lord hears, because it is sincere.

Psalm 130:2 "Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications."

His prayer, which was vocal. God is a God hearing prayer; sometimes his people think he does not hear them. But he always does, and in his own time answers. For to hear prayer with him is to answer it; which he does likewise in his own way as well as time. And not always in the way and at the time his people would have him.

"Let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications": His prayers put up in a humble suppliant manner, for grace and mercy. Not pleading merit and righteousness. These he desires God would hearken to and hear, listen unto, bow and incline his ears, as he is sometimes said to do. Which is a wonderful instance of his condescension.

He is always attentive to our cry. If we are not used to calling His name, we are not aware of that fact. The Bible says He knows our needs even before we cry out to Him. He is there waiting for our cry.

Verses 3-4: The psalmist basks in the glow of God's never-ending forgiveness (compare Psalm 143:2).

Psalm 130:3 "If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?"

Or "observe" them. Not but that God does observe the sins of men: he sees all the evil actions of bad men done in the dark, which cannot hide them from him. And all the iniquities of good men, so as to correct and chastise for them, but not with his eye of vindictive justice. Or "keep" them; should he keep a watchful eye over them, make strict inspection into them, enter into a critical examination of them, and of all their aggravated circumstances? Should he keep them in mind and memory, retain them in the book of his remembrance? Should he lay them up, and keep them sealed among his stores, in order to be brought to light? And brought out as charges another day, and to the condemnation of men. Should he set them before him in the light of his countenance, and not cast them behind his back and into the depths of the sea? Should he visit for them in a way of wrath, or enter into judgment on account of them, with men in their own persons? Demanding satisfaction for them at their own hands, without any regard to the sacrifice and satisfaction of his Son. All a man's righteousness, repentance, humiliation and tears, would stand him in no stead, would not answer for him, or atone for his sins. Still his iniquities would remain marked before God; the consequence of which would be eternal damnation (Jer. 2:22).

"O Lord, who shall stand?" Not one; since all are sinners. The Arabic version adds, "before thee"; in his presence; in the house and courts of God. There to minister before him; to pray and praise, to preach and hear. Or at his bar hereafter, with any boldness and confidence; so as to litigate the point with him in his court of judicature. Before angels and men, and so as to carry the cause. The wicked shall not stand in judgment (Psalm 1:5). Or who can stand before his vindictive justice, or bear his wrath and vengeance? No one can (see Nahum 1:6, Mal. 3:2).

The answer to the above question is no one.

Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"

Praise God! There is a solution to this dilemma. He took my sin upon His body on the cross. My sin died upon the cross. I only have to accept Him as my Savior to receive full pardon.

Psalm 130:4 "But [there is] forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared."

And with God only; not with angels, nor any of the sons of men. And which flows from his grace and mercy, through the blood of his Son. It appears to be with him by his promise of it in covenant; by appointing his Son to shed his blood for it, and exalting him as a Savior to give it. By proclaiming it in the Gospel; and by the numerous instances of it, both under the Old and under the New Testament. Or, there is "a propitiation with thee"; as the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions render it. God had found out Christ to be the propitiatory sacrifice for sin, and the ransom of his people; and in the fullness of time he sent him to be the propitiation for it. And he is become so; and has made reconciliation for sin, and reconciled his people to God by the sufferings of death. And reconciled all the divine perfections of justice and holiness, grace and mercy, together, in the salvation of men. And is now an advocate the Father for them, pleading the propitiatory sacrifice of himself before him.

"That thou mayest be feared": Were it not for pardon, and the hope of it, men would be desperate. And, having no hope, would resolve upon taking their swing of sin, and be entirely negligent of the worship and service of God. Was there no forgiveness of sin, there would be no more fear of God among men than there is among devils, for whom there is no forgiveness. There might be dread and trembling, as among them, but no godly fear. Yea, if God was strictly to mark iniquity, and not pardon it, there would be none to fear him, all must be condemned and cut off by him. But, in order to secure and preserve his fear among men, he has taken the step he has to pardon sin through the propitiatory sacrifice of his Son. And a discovery, and an application of his grace, teaches men to fear to offend him. Influences them to serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear, and engages them to fear him and his goodness, and him for his goodness's sake (Titus 2:11, Hosea 3:5).

This forgiveness is not just a covering of our sin with the blood, but our sins have been removed from us and put as far away from us as the east is from the west. They are so far away; we can never find them again. We have taken on His righteousness. We are a new creature in Christ. We now have no sin. He (Jesus Christ), has bought and paid for us with His precious blood.

Verses 5-8: The word "hope" in our present thinking most often carries the idea of wishful thinking, but in biblical thought, hope was synonymous with certainty (Heb. 11:1). The psalmist puts his hope in God's Word; he is standing on the promises of God.

Psalm 130:5 "I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope."

"In his word do I hope": The psalmist expresses a certain hope since God's Word cannot fail (compare Matt. 5:18; Luke 16:17; John 10:35).

In His Word (Bible), I am promised everlasting life in Him, forgiven forever of my sin. I read His Word, I believe what I read and I wait for that blessed day when He will return for me, and I will ever be with Him.

Psalm 130:6 "My soul [waiteth] for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: [I say, more than] they that watch for the morning."

“They that watch for the morning”: Probably refers to shepherds with a night watch which ends with the sun’s rising.

This morning is that beginning of that eternal day. We may pray all night and wait for days, but this is speaking of more than a normal day. This is speaking of like a bride waiting on the bridegroom to come. This is the church of the Lord Jesus, who are watching and waiting for the trumpet to blow in the sky, when we will begin that one eternal day with Him.

Verses 7-8: “Redemption” is deliverance from sin, at a price. Jesus paid the full price for all sin on the cross, purchasing the freedom of each one who believes. He is not miserly with his forgiveness, it is “plenteous”.

Psalm 130:7 "Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD [there is] mercy, and with him [is] plenteous redemption."

“Hope in the Lord”: The psalmist’s hope in God’s Word (verse 5), parallels Israel’s hope in the Lord.

This Israel is that spiritual Israel (believers in Christ), who hope in the Lord. We received redemption by the mercy of God. Redemption is offered to all. Only those, who do what it says in (Romans 10:9-10), receive this redemption.

Psalm 130:8 "And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities."

“He shall redeem Israel”: This can be taken in both a historical and as soteriological sense (compare Matt. 1:21; Luke 1:68; Rom. Chapters 9-11).

The sting of sin is death. Death is the penalty for sin. All who believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, have no sin. Jesus took their sin upon His body on the cross. He traded them a robe of righteousness washed in His precious blood for their sin. He redeemed all who will receive it, freedom from sin and death, and gave them everlasting life in Him.

Psalm 130 Questions

1. When is He attentive to our cry?
2. What happened to the sins of the Christians?
3. How did Jesus purchase us?
4. What is the Word, in verse 5?
5. Let Israel hope in the _____.

6. What is the morning, in verse 6, speaking of?
7. We received redemption by the _____ of God.
8. The sting of sin is _____.
9. What happened to the sin of the believer?