

Psalms 18-09-13

Well, this is Thursday, the 13th of September, 2018, and we continue our study in the book of Psalms. We're starting Psalm 13 tonight, and as you might expect, the pattern seems to be following that the Psalms are arranging themselves in pairs. We saw each of the first 10 Psalms, 1 and 2, all the way up through 9 and 10, connecting together, 11 and 12.

We're very complementary, and 13 and 14 are going to be the same way, and we get a little bit of illumination that enlightens us. You'll see why I'm using the word enlighten here shortly, for Psalm 13 out of Psalm 14. Psalm 14, of course, is the famous, the fool has said in his heart there is no God, and we have an interleaving of the singular and the plural at the beginning of that Psalm that's quite interesting, but we haven't gotten there yet.

We're in Psalm 13, and it is subtitled in many of your versions as the cry of the afflicted, and it is certainly something of that order. In my New King James, it's called Trust in the Salvation of the Lord, and those two superscriptions sort of map the progress from the cry to the trust. This is going to be a progressive Psalm, as we'll see when we get into its text.

Let's take a moment as we approach our time of Fellowship in the Word to ask God's blessing on it, that He'll superintend in the presentation and the reception, and that we will all come away with something to chew on in terms of our spiritual food, that it will sustain us and motivate us and do good things in our souls as we take a fresh look at this very important material from the pen of King David. It still amazes me to think that we have the thoughts of a man that lived 3,000 years ago and it's just as though he shared these thoughts with us the way I'm sharing thoughts with you. To span that distance, I think, is a wonderful provision of God, and under the influence of the Holy Spirit, we can benefit from what the Apostles bring forward, what the Lord Jesus has said, and going further back in time, David and Moses and the prophets of the Old Testament.

Let's go to the Lord in prayer and then we'll begin. Father, we are grateful to spend this time together and we offer it before You as a dedication and a purpose that we will seek and knock at the door of what You have laid before us here in this psalm. We ask that Your Holy Spirit will minister it to our hearts in a way that will be meaningful and memorable and that will educate us and inform us as we look around at our own circumstances and situation the way David did and where we find those areas of challenge.

May this be an inspiration and an encouragement to each one of us to a life of faith and patience and endurance looking for the reward that comes only and fully from You. We pray that our time of fellowship will reflect the glory of the Lord Jesus, and we pray these things in His name, amen. Psalm 13, this is once again dedicated to the chief musician.

I'm fascinated by the words and our translation of them. I always wonder how close we've gotten to what this would have given us in the early day of speaking Hebrew. Let me check

something right quick here.

This is the word, translated chief musician, is *manatzeach*, *manatzeach*, and the *seach* portion of it is translated in many cases, the one who brings order, the one who imposes discipline, who looks out over a thing. He can be an administrator or an overseer and one who brings order out of chaos. It's a very fitting word for the chief musician because all of these musicians of course could go off on their own behest, but instead there is someone who organizes them.

Throughout the word of God and throughout the plan and purpose of God, there is a structure that is imposed that is designed to keep order and maintain order. People who have that order are responsible or have that responsibility, are tasked with organizing and bringing this into focus. Every time we see this dedication, and there are some 57 Psalms that are dedicated to the chief musician, and it's a reminder.

It's not there for no purpose. This is something that is to be brought to the attention of Israel in a meaningful and organized way. Worship in that day was not haphazard, it wasn't free form, it wasn't people that just gathered together and did their own thing.

So we want to keep in mind that especially on these Psalms that are dedicated to the chief musician, there are ones that David especially wanted to commend to everyone's attention. This one in particular seems to be a personal predicament of his, but it reminds me of what the Apostle Paul says in the New Testament where he says, follow my example, what you have seen in me do, and it is a commendation in this aspect of David's life. David doesn't say, well I looked over the rooftop and saw Bathsheba, follow me in that, or I got scared and feigned madness in Gath, follow me in that.

But when he says to the chief musician, he says, here's something where I do want you to follow my example. And I think his greater son, the Lord Jesus, may have often looked to these Psalms to get the content of them and benefit from it. So I guess what I'm saying is, this is not just autobiographical on David's part.

He commends it to our attention as a pattern to follow and a way to get through things that we might face. So as we begin the Psalm here, to the chief musician, a Psalm of David, how long, O Lord, will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? How long will my enemy be exalted over me? Consider and hear me, O Lord my God, enlighten my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death. Lest my enemies say I have prevailed against him.

Lest those who trouble me rejoice when I am moved. But I have trusted in your mercy, my heart shall rejoice in your salvation. I will sing to the Lord, because he has dealt bountifully with me.

And that verse is your refrigerator magnet, coffee cup verse. But what's often missed is the context and what precedes it. That's the last verse in a Psalm that has quite a bit of discomfort

and discomfiture in it.

And to arrive at that place from the starting point, how long, O Lord, will you forget me forever, is quite a journey. So we're going to see that most of the people who comment on this Psalm, it would be wrong to say commentate, right? Just because there are commentators doesn't mean that they commentate, they comment. There are other words that people say like orientate, orientate yourself, orient yourself.

You don't need the eight on the end, just a little English note, free no charge. But commentators that look at this see this as sort of in three movements. And there's a really wonderful quote from one of them who talks about how the Psalm moves from this cry, almost a desperate cry for help, to peace and calm.

And he says it's like the first stanza sort of crashes like a wave, the second one has greatly receded, and by the time you get to the third part it's a limpid glassy pool that reflects the glory of the stars and the moon and that it makes that journey. And of course, this is our goal, isn't it, when we're vexed and stressed and kind of frantic, we hope that we can move from that state to one of peace. As the Lord did when He calmed the sea, we want Him to say, peace be still, and we want the chaos to minimize.

So, you'll see that in the first two verses here, verse 1 and 2, there is this sort of frustrated cry, if you will. And a good translation of this begins with just, how long, O Lord? And that's how you have it in your New King James. How long, O Lord? And then a fresh question, will you forget me forever? And the word translated forget here is one that means to forget in the sense of to ignore.

And to accuse the Lord of ignoring us is bold. As you review what this psalm says, you notice that there is no indication of wrongdoing or confession or that this is some sort of deserved suffering that David is asking for deliverance from. He feels like there ought to be more attention being paid to him by the Lord than there is.

And this is picked up in the next verse. But this imperfect tense from Shakat, S-H-A-K-A-T, Shakat is often translated forget, but it means to forget in the sense of forget about. To ignore, to pay no heed, to pay no mind.

And from David's point of view, he's a good guy doing what he's supposed to do and he's in some extremis and there doesn't seem to be any response from the Lord. My mental picture of this is your two or three year old in the shopping cart while you're doing the last of the week's shopping and it's getting close to supper time and, Mom, I'm hungry. I see food all around me.

Can I have a candy bar? I want to eat. They're getting cranky. And the mother pushing the cart or the dad pushing the cart is sort of insensible to the increasing levels of stress coming from the child who can't understand what's the delay? Why don't we get in the car and go home and have some supper? And the parent has got a different priority at that point.

I can't just drop everything and feed you a Twinkie. If I do, it's not good for you. You'll get a sugar rush.

You'll peak and crash. You can get diabetes if you make a habit out of that kind of thing. It's not healthy.

You've got to wait. The healthy food I have for you has got to be cooked and prepared. We'll have supper in half an hour.

In the meantime, you've got to be patient. But in the limited perspective and knowledge sphere of the child, it doesn't make any sense. What's the holdup here? I smell hot dogs over at the stand they've got in the corner of Walmart.

Why can't I have one of those? Well, you could. You could eat a Twinkie. You could have a piece of fruit or something out of the produce section.

But the parent has a plan that involves something else, and you just have to wait. There's nothing intrinsically wrong with making your complaint known, is there? It's helpful to know. It might kind of hasten the program if you realize the kids are really getting antsy and their tummies are growling and you are being kind of mean if you're reading all of the headlines on the magazine rack and finding out what happened to Oprah lately instead of moving on through the line and getting home.

It's a helpful reminder. Nothing wrong with them speaking out as long as they're respectful and they don't throw a fit, which seems to happen more and more. But this is the idea.

So, how long, O Lord? In other words, when do we eat? When am I going to hear from you? When will I get some relief here? Will you ignore me? Will you seemingly be deaf to my plea? La'olam, forever. How long will you hide your face from me? And notice, this is different than your iniquities have separated between you and your God and your sins have hidden his face. This is God not putting his face in David's direction.

He says, you are hiding your face. I'm not obscuring your face with sin or malfeasance on my own part. So, this seems to be a legitimate plea.

And he doesn't say anything imprecatory toward God. He just says, how long is this going to last? It's a fair question. If you're expecting deliverance, if you're expecting succor, if you're expecting mercy and some relief and a removal of the pressure, well, this has been going on a long time.

How long? So, nothing wrong with the question. And there's nothing wrong with us asking that question. We can go to the Lord and say, Lord, you know, it seems like this test is just endless.

How long are you ignoring my pleas? Or how long will you seemingly ignore my pleas? And we find this out in more detail in verse 2. And some of the other versions really, I think, kind of

mess this up. If you read this in the NIV, for example, they say, how long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts? There are others that say, they read pain into this. And they'll actually repoint the word because they think, well, this doesn't make sense in the parallel.

To have sorrow in my heart because the soul, the nephesh, that's in the first line of verse 2, is a place of emotion and feeling rather than thought. And so they say, well, if this is going to be in the nephesh, then the word can't be counsel. And they want to throw a bait in there that they think fell out and make it, say, pain instead of counsel.

But the word is counsel. It's a perfectly good word. And, for example, here's one.

The NRSV says, how long must I bear pain in my soul? And there's a long text note about this. For example, I'll read you one. This atzot, which is the word translated counsel, is in your New King James.

Now, this is important, by the way, because are we talking about, how long do I have to put up with this pain in my heart? Or how long must I take counsel or make counsel or establish counsel? It's a completely different sphere of thought. And I'm going to argue that counsels is right here, and I'm going to tell you why. But let me give you the argument for pain.

It sort of rhymes with, semantically, sorrow in the next one. And they say, well, there's pain in my soul and sorrow in my heart. Well, that's fine, but I don't think that's what David is saying.

But here's what some of the commentation says. Atzot, literally counsels, provides a curious sense. I will set counsels in my soul is the literal translation.

And though such a translation is in accord with many of the versions, it leaves the unusual combination of counsels, which is intellectual activity, with soul, here implying the seed of emotions. Several scholars, following the suggestion of the Syriac Old Testament, amend, they add a letter into this word, to make it mean hurts or griefs, which would provide good sense and assumes only the loss of a bait from the continental text. De Hood has suggested an alternative solution, namely that the term should be translated doubts, on the basis of an Arabic cognate, blah, blah, blah.

Well, this is, I want it to mean a certain thing, so I'm going to start monkeying with the text until I get it to say what I want, in my view. Counsels is fine, and here's why. David is not out of line, he's not out of sorts, he's not in sin, he's not in an unconfessed state, he's not suffering for discipline.

He's suffering for growth, right? We know that there's at least five reasons why Christians suffer, and this is not because David messed up. He's a good guy, in a good place, doing the right thing, and he's going to the Lord and saying, Lord, how long am I going to undergo this particular test? And in verse two, he says, How long must I, and the verb here means to set or appoint. We have seen it with that meaning earlier in these psalms.

So, will you ignore me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long shall I, and this is the verb sheath, S-H-I-T-H, sheath. It means to set, to stand, to emplace, to ordain, when it's used of God. God has ordained, he has put something in place, he's set it up as an unshakable foundation.

That's the verb that David uses here with counsels, in the plural, as its object. Counsels, as I said, is the word etzot. The ot ending is feminine plural, and this takes what might be literal and puts it in the realm of ideas.

It makes it intangible, and so while the word itself means plans, counsel, advice, purposes, it means to get together and figure out what you're going to do. So David says, in the first case, the first two how longs are in God's direction. See them in verse one? How long, O Lord, how long will you forget me? Is it going to be forever? And forget in the sense of not respond.

God is unresponsive at this point. How long will you hide your face? If God's face were manifest, there would be a response. It isn't just looking at his face like you gaze at a painting.

If God is facing you, he's granted you an audience. You're going to come in and make your case, and there's going to be an adjudication. There's going to be some action taken.

No substitute for getting face-to-face with somebody. When you need action, you can talk to them on the phone, and the bank won't reverse an error or whatever. If you go down and get across from the desk, and you behold their face, they've got to deal with you.

A lot of us learned this early on. If you want something done, get face-to-face with somebody who's got some authority, and don't leave until they act. God's face being hidden means, how long do I have no place to get action from you? It's interesting that you can be on good terms with God.

There can be no sin or evil in your life, and yet God seems to be withholding grace or withholding action. It's a great thing that the Bible teaches us that it's legitimate to go ask God about that. Lord, I'm doing everything right, and I'm not getting a resolution.

I'm just kind of curious. Is there going to be an end to this? Is it la olam? Will I ever see your face in the sense of having this resolved? The first two how longs are in God's direction. Then he says, Lord, because you have suspended action in my behalf, I am setting counsel in my soul.

The soul is the seat of emotions. The nefesh in the Old Testament is typically the place where you've got feelings. What is David doing as a solution, since God is not intervening in a mighty way? There's not seas parting and walls falling and lightning from heaven and hail and fire falling on enemies and so on.

David says, How long do I have to build these plans and counsels as a buttress against my emotions? To avoid going off an emotional deep end, so to speak, my nefesh expressing itself, I

keep building these constructions of truth, of doctrine, of counsels, of what I know I should do. But I don't seem to have a lot of divine help in this. I'm taking what you've given me in the past, and I'm appointing this.

I'm doing my thing. You gave me these things to build in my soul, and that's what I'm doing. Day after day, I'm building in my soul.

I'm building a buttress against these waves of adversity. How long do I have to do this? You've given me the bricks, and I'm building the wall. Well, that's great, but forever? Can we get a cessation? Can we have an ending to this test and something fresh? It's a great question, don't you think? I would love to ask this question sometimes.

I think, oh, whether it's bearing my own self-affliction burdens or circumstances that are just beyond your control. I worked for a month to get myself transferred from California to Oklahoma when I had a wife that was pregnant with our second child and a toddler, and I just thought, what am I doing sitting out here at an empty room? They made me range control officer, but there was nobody to go to the range because everybody was in Iraq, and they had lined us all up, and we were almost literally standing in line to get on the plane, and then they had the mother of all retreats, and so I was just stuck. They said, don't send anymore.

The thing has turned, and we don't need any more guys, but all the guys were there, and at Camp Pendleton, there was nobody doing training. Well, all you go up there and sit in a quonset hut and be a range control officer, and all you're going to do is answer questions from the people who were concerned because pop tops were endangering a snail darter on the edge of the impact area or something like that, and I thought, this is just a waste of time. How long, oh, Lord, am I going to be stuck in this quonset hut when I've got a wife and a child and another one on the way and things to do and places to be, and at least put me somewhere where I can be productive instead of just staring at these yellowing, curling, old Marine Corps orders from years gone by.

What a deadly waste of my gifts and talents. And so I spent a fair portion of the time sort of asking the Lord how long and pushing against the bureaucracy in the Marine Corps and in that case the Army to get myself transferred someplace where I could actually do some good and be closer to my family at the same time. It took perseverance and I think divine intervention, but I was asking for it.

So it's this kind of a thing. That's what comes to my mind. How long shall I take counsel in my soul? I've checked myself out.

I've examined myself. I'm in the faith. I'm doing what I'm supposed to do.

I'm keeping short accounts. I'm confessing my sins. This isn't resolving.

How long, oh, Lord, do I have to keep building my own wall here out of the stuff you've given me, and I appreciate it and it's great, but I keep setting counsels in my soul and I don't arrive at

joy. I am sorrowful. I'm enduring grief here.

This is anguish, and it's not so much sorrow in the sense of loss. It's anguish in the sense of what I would call stress. How long am I going to have stress in my heart? I'm not happy.

I can't experience the joy of my salvation in this ongoing wall-building effort. So that's verse 1 and 2. And he concludes in verse 2 with the fourth how long. Now, for reasons unknown to me, a lot of your commentators have said that this refers to disease.

They think my enemy, that David is sick and sick unto death. And it's because he mentions something about the sleep of death in the next verse. So they say, well, David's sick.

Well, David doesn't say he's sick. And he doesn't make mention of his bones rotting or his eyes withering or whatever else. I think this enemy is going to go on in verse 4 to talk.

And disease doesn't know that it has triumphed and prevailed, and it doesn't boast and rejoice at your calamity. Viruses don't know what they're doing. They're just little bits of code, right? Bacteria don't realize that they've killed their host.

They live, they die, they don't know any better. So I just don't think personally that disease is in view. And part of that depends on going back and changing that line in verse 2, how long will I have pain? But he talks about his nephesh and his heart, his soul and his heart.

He doesn't talk about his body. So I just don't think disease is in view, a host of other interpreters notwithstanding. I think there is an actual opposition here, and I think it is sort of representative in the world.

It's nonspecific because there are those who love to see believers fall. Well, that Christianity, you get your invisible friend, and you're weak, you need a crutch, you're scared of death, you're scared of life, you're scared of this, you're scared of that. And so you put everything on your imaginary genie in the bottle, and people are just waiting for us to crash and to fail and to give up on God or give up on our faith or whatever.

And there are believers that have done. The test is too severe, and they roll over, wave the white flag and go off into something else or into nothing. But he says, how long will my enemy be exalted over me? And what this indicates is that the nature of the opposition is human, and this exaltation is a prevailing.

They're getting their way. Why do the wicked prosper? Why do these that take underhanded measures and have lack of integrity and who cheat, who lie, who misconstrue, who do all of the worldly evil things seem to be exalted, and I'm down here building forts in my soul and in anguish? I'm in genuine stress here. How long are these people going to get over and get by and take the easy way? You sit in traffic, and the thing says form one lane, so you get over, and then dozens and dozens of cars pass you on the left and then force themselves in in front, and because you obeyed the sign and got in, it takes you three times as long to ever get past the

choke point as these people who willfully disregard the fact that you've been sitting there.

They came five minutes later, and they're just cutting in line. Nobody would ever do that standing in line at Walmart. Nobody would ever do that standing in line at the bank.

Nobody would just walk to the front of the line and say, excuse me, and make themselves second, but they'll do it in a car. Why? Why will they do it in a car, and they won't do it in person? They would do it in person if they didn't think somebody would say something, but you can't say anything to them in the car. I've often wished I had a bullhorn mounted under my hood, and I could say, hey, what do you think you're doing? I'm writing your license plate down.

But you can't shame people like that. They figure they can get away with it because, in essence, there's no penalty. When there's a lot of people standing around, you know, it's just not done.

But in traffic, you know, and why are you a different person in traffic than you are standing in line? So I got an amen from the dog there. So he says, how long shall my enemy be exalted over me? Somebody else is getting a human viewpoint victory, and here I am, a child of God, and I'm not prevailing. I'm still struggling.

That's the complaint. Verses 1 and 2, that's sort of the first movement. If this is a three-movement symphony here in miniature, that's the first movement.

It is the legitimate, I think, request to God for an answer as to why this situation is the way it is. Nothing wrong with it. It's not sinful to ask.

I think sometimes we feel guilty questioning why God is allowing things to drag out. All kinds of people in the Bible go to the Lord and say, Lord, what's going on? Look at the Lord Jesus in Gethsemane, Gath, Shemeneth, remember that? What does He pray to His Father? If it's Your will, it'd be great if this cup could pass. Did the Lord have doubts? Remove them.

It's one thing to have a house church. It's another thing to have a house kennel. Be gone, four-footed friends.

So, verse 3, consider and answer me. This is the beginning of the second movement here. There is a question.

Now there is a request. And notice that there is a difference between a question and a request, right? You can ask God why things are the way they are, and then you say, here's my petition. Here's what I am asking for you to do.

In order for God to respond to this petition, He must show His face. He must smile upon the requester. So, He says, consider and answer me.

Answer here is a word that has a couple of N's and a couple of Y's in the middle of it. And N and Y are very similar in Hebrew. And there is a suggested emendation.

If you change one of these letters, it becomes, consider my affliction, O Lord my God. And that's been suggested. But I am happy to take the text as it stands here, because David is making two... In your New King James it says, consider and hear me.

Consider is the word that means look upon. He just said, how long are you hiding your face? If your face is hidden, you are not looking upon a thing. Well, this is the verb nabat, N-A-B-A-T, nabat.

And it means to regard, to see, to look down or look about or look upon or look back. You look at something. And sometimes you turn your head to do it.

You make a change. There's lots of words for look. There's ra'a, to see, and so on.

But nabat means you do something in order to look. You have to turn your head. You have to change your angle of view.

You act in order to see. Maybe there's an obstruction, and so you have to move something out of the way. Nabat means take some action so that you can get a good view.

Have you ever done this? You're in a crowd, and everybody's standing in front of you taller than you, or you're at the movie theater, and some great big six-foot-five guy sits right in front of you, and so you move a seat over so that you can see. That's nabat. Oh, Lord, move so that you can get a better view of my situation.

This is what David literally asks. He asks God to sort of get up and make his face visible. Get your face where you can see me, oh Lord, is a good literal translation of this.

But it's only half of the request. He says nabat, move in order to see me, and it's translated here in your New King James, but this verb, which is anah, is one of its forms, anah, and it means to answer. It means to hear in the sense of I heard you, and now I'm replying.

It means to reply, to answer, to respond, to bear witness. A lawyer asks you a question, you answer. So it can mean hear, and it's sometimes translated here, but it means hear in the sense of respond.

Have you ever had somebody tell you dinner's ready or something else, and if Patty comes and says supper's on, we've worked out an arrangement over the years because of my failure to show up and the food getting cold, that in order for her to be sure that I actually registered what she said, I need to respond. I need to say something to acknowledge that I heard that dinner is ready. Otherwise, there's just frustration on both sides.

I'm late, she's worked hard on the food, and it's cold, and I don't get as good a meal because it's not as hot. But those of you who know me know that I can get my head so far down inside a thing that I'm tuned out. And I might even make some acknowledgment sound, but I didn't really know that I did.

So I have to say, okay, I'm coming, or something that indicates I heard. That's what David is asking God to do. Lord, give me some sign that you're hearing my request.

I need a response here. You've hidden your face. I'm building these forts in my soul out of previously provided material, but I could really use a response.

So move to where you can see me and let me know that you're hearing me. That's all in this Hebrew. Hebrew is just such a beautifully expansive and yet economic language.

You say one thing, and it just speaks volumes. So he's asking for a response. He has laid out the problem.

This is one of the things you learn in the Marine Corps especially, maybe the rest of the military. But if you notice a problem, don't just complain, yeah, there's a problem. I'm so tired of this problem.

Why can't somebody do something? Come up with a solution. Proffer a course of action. Suggest a remedy.

Sir, here's where things aren't working right. I propose we do X. And you will get your head and other parts of your anatomy bitten off if you point out a problem. And they say, well, lieutenant, what do you think we should do? Well, I don't know, sir.

I was just going to let you know we have a problem. That doesn't wash. And David says, Lord, here's what I would like to have happen.

If you can see and if you can hear my situation, here's my suggestion. If you've got a better one, oh, Lord, wonderful. But I am praying in accord with what I know and what I've learned.

And we're not unacquainted. So consider and hear me, oh, Lord, my God. Look at me and answer me, oh, Lord, my God, is a really good translation.

Look at me and answer me. Parents say this to children sometimes. I know David has much more respect.

But that's basically what he's saying. Look at me. Answer me.

Then he says, here's the proposed course of action. Enlighten my eyes. This is a wonderful verb.

This is the verb or, which is also the noun or. Remember Genesis? Barashit bara ha Elohim. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

The earth was without form and void, darkness on the face of the deep. The Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters. And God said, let there be Yahi or.

Let there be light. It's glottal stop O-R, or. Us Americans can't make this sound.

But there's a catch in the back of your throat right before you say or. So he says, light for my eyes. Isn't that a great request? I think we can identify with the situation as he has outlined it.

And with the seeming lack of response on the part of God. And you say, Lord respond. And here's the response I would appreciate.

Light for my eyes. Shine a light. If I can see better, I'll know what to do.

He's not asking God to intervene in the physical sense. O-Lord, blight them, smite them, knock down the walls. Split the earth and swallow them up O-Lord.

He just says, help me see better. I'm building these forts in my soul. But I'd like to walk forward.

I'd like to emerge from the valley of the shadow of death. Give me some light. Enlighten my eyes.

It's a fine translation. Enlighten my eyes lest. And this can also be translated otherwise.

Remember where it says, seeing they see and do not perceive. Hearing they hear and do not understand. The heart of this people has grown callous.

Then this word. Pen. Otherwise.

And they translate it lest there. Lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and turn. And I should forgive and restore and so on.

But it means otherwise. This is going to be the consequence if something doesn't happen. If you don't enlighten my eyes O-Lord.

And this has the idea not only of. He doesn't say, light my path. He says, charge my eyes with light.

Give me the ability to see with light. And to energize or illuminate. It's the first thing that entered the world when God was creating the earth was light.

It creates potential. It's energy. So you could almost colloquially translate this.

Energize my eyes. Otherwise, I sleep the death. Otherwise, I will sleep the death.

That's what it says. And because a lot of this is in figurative terms. I don't think David is saying.

If you don't enlighten my eyes, I'm going to die. I think what he's saying is to sleep the death. When you're asleep, you get nothing done except to rest.

But this isn't even a beneficial sleep. This is a death sleep in the sense that you're unproductive. I will be utterly unproductive.

I'm in a defensive position here. But I'm making no advance. I'm fortifying in my soul.

But I'm not getting anything done. I'm just enduring. There's an old song.

Hold the fort for I am coming. Well, sometimes it gets tiresome just holding the fort. You want to advance from the fort.

You want to take some higher ground. You want to do more, be more, achieve more, enjoy more, experience more. You want to leave the walls.

And this is poetry. It's figurative. And again, if you think that he's talking about a disease, then you could say, well, maybe he thinks he's going to die.

But because of the heart and the soul, that's where the fortification and the anguish is. And I think what he's saying is, Lord, giving light to your eyes doesn't keep you from dying. If anything, people on their deathbed often see light from beyond.

I see my departed loved ones on the far shore. I see an angel coming to bear me on his snowy wings. But in this case, enlightenment prevents unfruitfulness and sleep.

That means I'm not moving. I'm not doing. I'm not achieving.

I'm not applying. I'm not laying hold of righteousness by faith. I'm just sleeping the death.

And it's very pungent. It's a very powerful metaphor, I think. Otherwise, I will sleep the death.

Otherwise, verse 4, my enemy will say, I have overcome him. It does not say prevail against. It says, I've overcome him.

It's a verb with a prefix. I mean a suffix, a direct object suffix. Lest my enemy say, I overcame him.

And it's overcome in the sense of outdo or almost I'm better than him. Yakol, that is translated prevail, it's the word that often just means to be able, to be able to do a thing, to I can. Yakol in the first person means I can.

I have the ability. God is able to deliver. It's yakol.

Well, lest my enemy say, I can compared to him. I'm doing great. My way works.

He's relying on God. Remember what they said to Jesus? They mocked him on the cross. And it's in the Handel piece.

Let him deliver him if he delights in him. How come God isn't delivering him? I'm standing here in my fine robes and I'm vindicated. I told him he was wrong.

I told him he was corrupting the law and on the wrong track and leading people astray. And look where he ended up and look where I am. If he's trusting in God, well, let God deliver him if God delights in him.

And the implication is, see how God's not delivering him? God doesn't delight in him. He's wrong and I'm right. And, of course, this is similar to the situation that David has painted here.

The enemies are saying, that's what you get for trusting your God. And he says, Lord, how long is this going to go on? My enemy is going to say he's right and I'm wrong. Lord, vindicate yourself and vindicate your watch care and your salvation and your deliverance and your provision and your strength in the lives of your people.

Otherwise, my enemies are going to think they've got a better way. My enemy says, I'm able compared to him. I'm outdoing and overcoming him.

Lest my enemies say, I have overcome and those who trouble me rejoice when I am moved. And those who trouble me, this is really kind of an interpretive translation. It's a single word, tsar, T-S-A-R.

And it's this phrase, you have *lest* in italics there. What it really means is, lest my enemies say I have overcome him and my afflictor, my persecutor, my oppressor, my distressor rejoice when I am shaken. This is removed.

This is the word mot, M-O-T or M-O-T-H. And M-U-T-H is muth and it's death. And my weight is death.

And this is closely related. It's a primitive root in Hebrew. And this means to be removed, to slip and fall, to fall down.

To totter, shake, slip. In the nifal, which you have here, the passive. It's to be shaken, to be removed, to be knocked down, to be overthrown.

When I am moved, it doesn't quite catch it. I might be moved into a better position. This is to be removed.

This is to be knocked out, knocked down, flattened, shaken so as to come apart. To unravel, come unglued. So lest my persecutors, my afflictors celebrate as I am or because I am undone.

I'm flattened and unsuccessful. So that's the second movement. The first one was the questioning, getting God's attention.

The second one is the petition and the request. Lord, act lest you and I be wrongly understood as ineffectual and not victorious. Not worth doing.

Faith is not worth having. Now the third movement is in verse 5 and 6. And he says, they translate it here, but I have trusted in your mercy. And it begins with the wow, which is just the conjunction that's translated and, now, but, then, therefore.

I wouldn't translate it adversatively here. I would just say and. Lest my enemy say I've overcome him.

Those who are my persecutors celebrate when I totter and fall. And I have trusted in your mercy. How can you let them celebrate and I am one who trusts you.

There aren't that many people who are committed in their trust. And, Lord, how could you let this happen? And I have trusted. Trust here is *batak*.

And it's one of the strongest words for trust. It's sometimes translated to be bold. This is bold trust.

This is confident expectation. I trust and it's even translated careless once. In the sense of, I disregard the consequences.

I trust no matter what. I am a bold truster. I'm a confident truster.

I fly in the face of human rationalization in my trust. It's a bold trust. *Batak*.

In your *kesed*. In your loyal love. In your faithful mercy.

I trust. And the pronoun is here, *ani*. And it's very emphatic.

Most of the time Hebrew gets by just with the form of the verb to let you know that it's first person or whatever. If it includes the pronoun, it's emphatic. I myself have boldly trusted.

I have committed myself in no uncertain terms to your mercy. I have trusted without reservation in your grace. And my heart that up above was full of anguish.

He says, my heart shall rejoice. Don't let my enemy rejoice that I'm shaken and totter and fall. My heart is going to rejoice in your deliverance.

If there's going to be any rejoicing, let it be my heart looking at your deliverance. And this, of course, is from *Yeshav*. This is *Yeshua*.

And it's easy to transition from my heart will rejoice in your salvation to my heart will rejoice in your Savior, your *Yeshua*. Christ is the embodiment of salvation. But he says, I have boldly put my trust in your grace, your mercy.

And I am confident. My heart is going to celebrate your salvation. That's the background for the culminating verse here.

I will sing to the Lord because he has dealt bountifully with me. And this just flies in the face of the situation at the beginning. He sounds pretty low at the beginning.

But he is essentially demonstrating the faith that will bring God's face and bring God's attention and bring God's deliverance to him. And his confidence is, now that I have sketched out the situation and I have made my appeal, I have every confidence that I'm going to be singing and rejoicing when I get the answer to my prayer, which I confidently expect. And so he takes himself from stress and anguish to confidence and expectation by working himself through this

prayer.

You can see now why God enjoins us to pray often. Pray without ceasing. Because prayer is spiritual therapy.

Prayer cycles the word of God through our soul and gives the Holy Spirit something to do in both conveying our prayer to God and conveying God's answer back to us. Yet a little while. Hang on.

I have not forgotten. And it's time. It's coming.

Patty and I were listening to the old 2 Samuel study from back in 1996. I realized I hadn't digitized it, so we're listening and putting them up as we go. And the first half dozen of those are up on the website now.

But there's a point at which we were looking at the difference between Saul, who gets anointed, and simultaneously starts operating as king. Samuel anoints him, and he tries to go back to Plow with his oxen, but here's a problem over here. You've got Nahash, and so Saul is king.

And he gathers everybody and goes and fights Nahash. And he's king right away. Then after some years and a lot of intervening episodes, he fumbles away the kingdom and God's promise of a dynasty and the rest of it.

And so God sends Samuel to anoint David. Well, it's years and years and years between the anointing and being crowned. And even when he is crowned, he's only crowned king of Judah.

And it's five, seven years where he's only king of Judah. You realize, we often say, well, who are the kings of Israel? And it's, well, there was Saul, then there was David, and then Solomon, and then you have the divided kingdom. And you forget all about Ish-bosheth.

And Ish-bosheth was king after Saul for the ten northern tribes for somewhere between two and five years. And David wasn't king right after. Can you imagine him in a dolom, and as he's getting chased from pillar to post by Saul, and eating showbread and all the rest of it? How long, O Lord? How long are my enemies going to say, that anointing doesn't mean anything? And we move ourselves from questioning to confidence.

We move ourselves. Once we start looking at the Lord and we make our appeal, we leave it in His hands. Jesus criticized the Pharisees for making long prayers.

This is a really short prayer. And in the space of these half dozen verses here, David goes from anguish and constant fortification building to rest and confidence. That's where we want to go.

That's what we want to do, I think. And it's realizing that we have acknowledged the source of deliverance. We have acknowledged that God is in His heaven, and He knows our situation, and we put our request before Him, and we let Him know I'm confident in the result, and we're done.

That's our model. That's what Psalm 12 gives us. Psalm 13, rather.

But, let me just tell you that there's an extra line in the Septuagint that's not in your Bible and not in the Masoretic Text. Did it drop out at some early point? But the Greeks got it. And then it further disappeared.

But the second part of verse 6 in the Septuagint says, And I will sing psalms to the name of the Lord Most High. I will sing to the Lord because He has dealt bountifully with me, and I will sing psalms to the name of the Lord Most High. And, is it original? I have no idea.

But it's not inappropriate at this point. And it does give a little balance to the line length here. I will sing to the Lord because He has dealt bountifully with me.

I will sing psalms to the name of the Lord Most High. Let me close by just giving you a little insight into dealt bountifully. I thought, well, there's going to be a great big bunch of Hebrew in here.

I will sing to the Lord because He has dealt bountifully with me. All of that is a translation of one word, Gamal. G-A-M-A-L And it's suspiciously close to the noun that is translated camel.

And camels were a sign of prosperity and riches and wealth. They brought good things. They were the 18 wheelers of the ancient world.

But this verb Gamal is an early and primitive word that means to deal fully with, to recompense. There's no word for bounty. There's no word for deal.

It means to reciprocate and reciprocate completely. And David says, I will sing to the Lord because I believe that God rewards the faithful. I have just demonstrated my faith and my confidence in this prayer.

And God is going to reciprocate. It doesn't mean He's going to heap bounty or I'm going to sing because I've got all of these overflowing blessings. This is not the cup running over.

This is, I know that God is fair. I know that God has loyal love. And I am qualified to be a recipient of that loyal love.

And I have a confident expectation that He is going to come through. I would colloquially translate this. I will sing to the Lord because He has come through for me.

And David's thinking about the past. I've been in this situation before. And God has come through.

We say, again, colloquially, He was there for me. He's been there for me. When I had a need, I could count on Him.

And David says, I will sing to the Lord. I can count on Him to come through. He will

recompense.

He will do what is needed at the right time and in the right way. And then you have that potential line from the Septuagint, which I personally kind of like. If I had to flip a quarter and decide should it be there or should it not, I would say it probably should be there.

And it could easily have dropped off. I will sing psalms to the name of the Lord Most High. Because this is really what David implies is on the line.

The name of the Lord, the reputation of the Lord. Do those who place their trust in Him fall down and are rejoiced over and set aside as ineffectual and silly for trusting their God? Or is the name of the Lord extolled because He is a faithful, consistent, and loving God who works out His salvation in His time? So I will say at the very least there's nothing wrong with this line. I will sing psalms to the name of the Lord Most High.

I've been brought low. People want to rejoice over me. But God and His name are above all.

And it's a great thought to end on. Well that is Psalm 13. And we haven't really heard too much about the fate of the oppressor and the one who is on the other side of this equation mocking and rejoicing.

And David says don't let them prevail. Well we're going to get a full dose of them next time in Psalm 14. The fool has said in his heart.

And your homework for next week is to look at this first verse and answer the question why is the fool singular? And the next two lines are plural. And then the final line is singular. The outside bracket is singular.

The fool has said in his heart, no God. There is not a single one, singular, who does good. And then in the middle it says they are corrupt.

They have done abominable works. Why the shift in pronoun? Well we'll see if we can at least propose an answer to that question next time. But let's close here in a word of prayer.

Father we thank you for the wonderful privilege we have to approach your throne and represent ourselves. To bring our questions and our petitions and requests. And to bring our expressions of confidence and praise before you personally and directly.

We know that we have the Lord Jesus to thank for that privilege. We have your Holy Spirit to appreciate as the means by which we are represented in your presence. And your presence is represented in us.

We pray that as we reflect on the content of this wonderful psalm of David. That it will be meaningful and an encouragement and an inspiration to us. As we face our own situations like unto that which David faced.

And that we can arrive at that same place of confidence and peace. That you grant to those who place their faith in you boldly and with every expectation of recompense. We pray these things in Jesus name.

Amen.