

Psalm 13

Brothers and sisters in the Lord,

Over the last number of years we have seen tremendous change and upheaval in many countries in the world.

- whether it is in Syria, Iraq, Egypt.... many places.....torn apart by violence
- so many people are being affected....

What is especially concerning is the number of Christians that are being driven from their homes – being persecuted & killed

- open doors – 7000 last year alone....
- many others the numbers are even higher....
- amazing things is → goes largely unreported...

For ourselves --believers in the West....sheltered....something that we don't think about enough....pray enough about

- share in our brothers suffering....prayer....
- sometimes → Hard to understand
- encourage you....

Really what we are seeing today is nothing new is it?

- throughout history God has called the church to suffer→a lot of blood has been shed...
- this is a part of God's calling to us as believers....to be willing to suffer
- Even in our own country....increasing animosity and hatred towards Christians....

It is not something that we are to be afraid of---James says—"count it all JOY – that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold..."

- the reality is – it is FOR OUR GOOD!
- even though at the time it isn't always something that we enjoy....
- if take a long view of it – God has a purpose in it (either in our own life - for the good of the church)

This morning as we look at Psalm 13 (a Psalm of David)

- we have a very raw – very honest & intense account of the feelings of a Christian going through difficult times.
- we don't know exactly what the circumstances were.. (maybe when David was on the run from Saul)

What we **do know** is that he was struggling...

- a dark time....did not feel God at work....
- looking for answers because of things that had happened in his life

We are going to see 3 things:

1) Difficult questions 2) An urgent request 3) A heartfelt response

For those of you who have taught a class before...you know....

- those who have questions are usually some of you best students...
- they are thinking through the info they are receiving they really want to know...

This is true in spiritual things as well isn't it?

- I would often say to the church in Tepic....if you don't have any questions about what you are being taught you have a problem → I want to hear your questions!!!
- even if you have serious doubts

For every believer what you believe...what you hold to be true – it is put to the test....

- when you step outside of the church

--What I believe – when I live that out....
--what does that look like?
--?do what I believe and what I live and experience – do those 2 things coincide?

For the Psalmist - at this point in his life - those two things did not....he opens up about this
--this is what he expresses in a series of questions
--READ 1

First of all he voices a feeling of disconnectedness from God....
--he felt like a forgotten child...
--EG/ Lost in a shopping center ☺

Where are you? Why don't I feel your presence????
--right now in my time of need –I'm calling out to you.....
--WHERE ARE YOU???
--How LONG -4X!!!!

I'm sure for many of us we've felt the same way at times...right?
--why don't I feel close to the Lord....?
--why aren't my prayers being answered?
--that can be a reality for us can't it?

Secondly he describes the inward battle he was experiencing → READ 2
--the inward doubts...struggle....
--inward sorrows....
--maybe this was when he was on the run from after Absalom rebelled....

Perhaps he was thinking about his own sin....that because of that sin God had abandoned him....
--perhaps he was thinking about the ways that he had offended God....
--thinking – THAT is why!!!

Sometimes when you are in a spiritual drought that's what you begin to think right....
--you struggle with your sinful thoughts...
--you struggle with the sins from the past....
--you think that might be the cause...

But it is especially bad when you feel like the battle you are in --you are on the losing end.
--David questions God again and says here "How long will my enemies triumph over me?"

David – the king that God had placed on the throne to rule his people.
--David --who had sought to serve the Lord and to do what was right
- This same David many times saw those who opposed God and his kingdom be successful.

This B & S is probably the hardest thing for the Christian to deal with....
--to see God's enemies seemingly win the battle.
EG/ Egypt.....27 people killed.
--in many places in Iraq & Syria – eradicated.....
--how hard that must be!!!! (I can't imagine)

Something that seems so contrary to God's will – how can that be a good thing....?
--this is something that can and does happen in our own lives as well....
1) that one thing that you have so wanted – God doesn't give to you
2) when you find out from a doctor that you have a serious illness...or your perhaps your child....
3) when that person that you love the most gets taken away from you....

You want to scream out to the Lord – How Can THIS be a part of your will for my life!
--that is the natural response....

--that questioning → that sorrow → those doubts....

That's when you need to do what David did....

--in our passage he specifically asks for ONE THING!

--What is that? LIGHT (give me light to my eyes or I will sleep in death)

That is a good thing to ask for....because when things have all gone black in your life....

--everything has been turned upside down

--you feel like you fallen into a deep dark hole....and there is no way out.

-- you need to remember one thing – to look up – and see the light once again (the light that only God can give)

This is what Christ has come to come to do isn't it– to call sinners out of the darkness, into his marvelous light.

Luke 1:78 says: “Because of the tender mercies of our God by which the rising son will come to us from heaven, to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace.

And this what we see isn't it – David's heartfelt response of faith.

--God granted him that light once again

--David was to see what God was doing once again....

It says in vs 5 that David remembered two important things → LOVE and SALVATION

--“I trusted in your unfailing love – my heart rejoices in your salvation”

--those were the two things that he needed to remember – that couldn't be separated

First of all → GOD's UNFAILING LOVE

--**Jer. 31:3** says “I have loved you with an unfailing love – I have drawn you with lovingkindness.

--that is the truth that every true believer understands isn't it?

--that God is the one that draws us....

---that he is the one who forever is faithful...

(even when we are not...when we stray)

Secondly → God's amazing salvation for sinners such as ourselves....

--The work of Jesus Christ on the cross has paid the price....

This is what God calls us each of us here today to remember today.....during those dark days...

--get back to basics....get back to the most important things...

--Who am I?

--What have I received?

B&S – that is the purpose that God has for trials in our life- isn't it?

--God has called every X in every age...

--yet is something that is necessary....something good....not by accident...

--“Intolerable hardship leads to bliss and victory”

That refining process – working through your faith – causes us to grow in our faith

To REALLY have to trust.

To need to pray fervently. (better to be praying in a whales belly that asleep in the s)

To understand that God DOES not abandon His children

I Peter 1: 7 says: These trials have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith--of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire--may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

I pray that this would be your experience → if it is not....

→ if it is is – encourage you

The end of this Psalm is so beautiful....READ 6

--He wanted to sing again....he wanted to praise God's name....

Why? Because HE HAS BEEN GOOD TO ME!

--in the dark times we tend to forget about all of the good things we have received...

--many --many blessings....

EG/ Joni Erickson

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