

# Psalm 13



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## PSALM 13 TO THE CHOIRMASTER. A PSALM OF DAVID.

- 1 How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever?  
How long will you hide your face from me?
- 2 How long must I take counsel in my soul  
and have sorrow in my heart all the day?  
How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?
- 3 Consider and answer me, O LORD my God;  
light up my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death,
- 4 lest my enemy say, "I have prevailed over him,"  
lest my foes rejoice because I am shaken.
- 5 But I have trusted in your steadfast love;  
my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.
- 6 I will sing to the LORD,  
because he has dealt bountifully with me. <sup>1</sup>

## Psalm 46 – STUDY QUESTIONS

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### vs 1 – How long, O Lord?

This Psalm starts with a question that is no stranger to most of our hearts. "HOW LONG" ... is a question that must come from a heart of submission, though surely a heart of desperation. Interestingly, in the Hebrew it is literally "until when?" Its almost as if David is asking God to give him some kind of timeline ... some kind of light at the end of the tunnel. David is looking for some HOPE that this agony is coming to an end.

Have you ever been in suffering so long you thought you would not be able to bear it any longer? Describe that briefly.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*. (2016). (Ps 13:title–6). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

How well do you relate to the idea of “until when” God? Why do we feel the need to see the end so much when we are suffering or being hurt? Why is this not necessary or to be expected?

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But don't miss the second half. We ARE addressing the GOD and LORD of the universe. The one who all things are from and for His glory. This is a good way of showing what I mean by a “submissive attitude” in the question above. Do you honestly feel that you can cry out to God in desperation and pain and do it in a way that acknowledges that He IS God and He IS worthy and trustworthy? How do you find that balance in your mind? What Scriptures guide and border that thinking?

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vs 1 - How long will you hide your face from me?

Remember, the Psalms are poetic and express emotion not always “fact”. God has NOT hidden His face from David, but ... as many of you understand ... David feels as *if* God has totally turned His back on him.

Why do we feel that God has abandoned us some times? What kind of circumstances and thinking bring us to that conclusion?

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Does God “hide His face” from us? What truths from Scripture assure you of God’s care and presence ALWAYS?

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Vs 2 - How long must I take counsel in my soul  
and have sorrow in my heart all the day?

No matter the circumstances and trials we face, the greatest trial is no doubt what goes on within. David expresses that very issue in verse 2. He is facing the turmoil of his mind during his suffering. He is trying to

reason within himself. He is trying to “counsel” himself how he might remedy this problem or endure it. No matter the effort, his day is filled with sorrow seemingly all day every day.

What are the things you tell your self when life is “falling apart” and there is no end in sight?

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What are the truths from scripture that you should be “counseling” yourself with? What are the truths you MUST believe to keep God’s glory foremost in your mind and life when you are suffering?

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Why do we allow our hearts to have sorrow so often? Though it is not a sin to feel sorrow, it is a sin to dwell on and nurture those feelings. What kinds of thoughts keep our hearts in a state of sorrow? Why do we allow ourselves to dwell on and simmer in those thoughts so often?

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**Vs 2 - How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?**

Unfortunately, a great deal of our suffering is at the hands of others. We know David’s story and how he innocently was doing his best to glorify God each day, but Saul went after him ... to the point of literally trying to kill him.

Why do you think that those who seek to honor God are hurt by those who have selfish agendas so often?

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Why do you think God allows this state to linger so long and so hurtfully in so many lives? What possible way could this bring glory to God?

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vs 3 - Consider and answer me, O LORD my God;

“Consider” is probably not the best word in English for this. Other versions use the terms “look” or “turn” which come closer. The idea is that David is pleading with God to pay attention to him and his situation. The idea is perhaps a bit like one of those TV shows where people with failing businesses write in and ask the show to look at their particular situation and send help.

Why do we often take so long to really pray about our issues? Why do we often worry, complain, get angry, lash out, fear, etc. often for days on end before we actually come to God and leave it in His hands?

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We are all familiar with what Peter says about “casting our anxieties” on Him...

*1 Pet. 5:6-7 <sup>6</sup> Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, <sup>7</sup> casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. (ESV)*

Remember that the command in this verse is to “humble ourselves under God” and the participle that explains HOW we humble ourselves is “by casting our cares on Him”. Why do you think that humility is evidenced by the act of “throwing” our burdens on Christ?

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vv 3-4 light up my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death,  
lest my enemy say, “I have prevailed over him,”  
lest my foes rejoice because I am shaken.

David is in such a desperate state that he believes he will die if he is not rescued by God. He believes he is near death. He believes that his enemies will claim victory and actually rejoice over his demise. What a horrible and hopeless state to believe. This doesn't mean what he believes is true ... but in his mind ... this is true.

This whole Psalm is a prayer. Now David is telling God that there will be horrible outcomes (in his opinion) if God does not rescue him. I don't think that David is exaggerating or making up scenarios that aren't likely in his situation. So, he appeals to God on the basis of his life and on the basis of the injustice of his enemies “winning”. These are valid arguments for the fact that God's glory is at stake if He doesn't intervene soon. What are the ways you pray for God's glory to be protected in your suffering? Or do you normally pray for YOUR comfort and pleasure to be protected?

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vs 5 - But I have trusted in your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.

Here's the key to this whole passage. David's circumstances have not changed. David has not received any indication from God that He will be acting in David's behalf based on the prayer. BUT David is trusting. NOT in the circumstances of life getting better ... DAVID IS TRUSTING IN THE CHARACTER OF GOD. It is God who is to be fully trusted ONLY because He is God and He is perfect and He is trustworthy. God does not deserve our trust because He will do something we want or make our lives FEEL better.

How much do you really trust God? I know many of you will respond immediately that you DO trust God. But look at how you respond to suffering and trials and harsh circumstances ... do your responses, your thoughts, your attitudes, your embracing of life PROVE that you really trust God? If God is truly Sovereign ... then how you respond to the circumstances of life is a direct response to God. Interact with that claim. Do you believe it? Explain how it is or isn't true?

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We see David not only having strong faith in the covenant loyalty of God, having seen His character and His works over the years...we also see David showing confidence in the future help God will show to him. The term salvation does not mean David is assured he will have everything back to "how it should be", but rather a confidence that God will make all things the way that will use David's life to bring Himself glory. Do you have confidence that God is working all things according to the pleasure of His will (Eph. 1:11) and in a way that will bring the greatest good to your life (Romans 8:28-29)? Applying that principle to your current suffering, how should you be viewing life and how should you be viewing your circumstances?

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vs 6 - I will sing to the LORD, BECAUSE he has dealt bountifully with me.

Here we see David making the heart commitment IN THE suffering to not simply trust God ... not simply to hang in there or stick to it ... no, David has committed IN his suffering that he CAN and WILL sing and praise his God. Again, NOTHING has changed in his circumstances ... except ONE thing...his heart / mind / perspective. David has gotten his heart and mind off his horrible circumstances and has "preached to himself" about the God who rules all of life. NOW he sings. David goes on to REMEMBER how good and faithful God has been. Remembering is a very common command from God to His people all through Scripture ... and this is why!!!! How quickly we forget that life is ALL about God and NOT about us and our happiness and wants.

No matter how horrible life may be, one who is truly running hard after God should be able to genuinely SING and praise God from a heart that is trusting and resting in Him. List the reasons God is trustworthy. Based on Scripture ... what should your perspective on life be IN your suffering?

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What can you do today to SET your thinking on truth and not on feelings? How hard are you willing to fight against your feelings of entitlement and self-pity and fight to let God get all the glory? How will you do that?

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REMEMBER. Have you ever noticed how often that is told to us in Scripture? From the children of Israel in the wilderness instructed to teach the generations to follow so they would not forget, all the way to 1 Corinthians where we are instructed to do the Lords Supper to “remember” his death until he returns. In your suffering you need to fight hard to REMEMBER how faithful and worthy God is. List examples here of things you can look back on and remember how trustworthy God is.

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**WHAT ARE THE PRIMARY LESSONS YOU HAVE LEARNED FROM PSALM 13?**

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**WHAT ARE THE PRIMARY CHANGES YOU NEED TO MAKE IN YOUR THINKING AND ACTIONS BASED ON PSALM 13?**

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**Psalm 13**  
*For the choir director: A psalm of David.*

<sup>1</sup> O LORD, how long will you forget me? Forever?  
How long will you look the other way?

<sup>2</sup> How long must I struggle with anguish in my soul,  
with sorrow in my heart every day?  
How long will my enemy have the upper hand?

<sup>3</sup> Turn and answer me, O LORD my God!  
Restore the sparkle to my eyes, or I will die.

<sup>4</sup> Don't let my enemies gloat, saying, "We have defeated him!"  
Don't let them rejoice at my downfall.

<sup>5</sup> But I trust in your unfailing love.  
I will rejoice because you have rescued me.

<sup>6</sup> I will sing to the LORD  
because he is good to me. <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Tyndale House Publishers. (2013). [Holy Bible: New Living Translation](#) (Ps 13). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.