

# The Way Through Your Trouble

Psalm 17

1

**Main idea:** The righteous cry/appeal to Yahweh for vindication, examination, protection, and confrontation of those who wickedly oppress them.

The first sound released into the world when baby is born is that of a cry. With some, the cry is only a *whimper*. With others, it is a *scream*! A cry is the most natural expression in the world. It requires *no skill* or *eloquence*. It is the most basic way of letting our needs be made known. So it is with the prayer in this Psalm of David. Every word is a prayer to God. Spurgeon once wrote,

“The cry is a brief thing and a bitter thing. It has in it much meaning and no music. You cannot set a cry to music. The sound grates on the ear. It rasps the heart; it startles. It grieves the mind of those who hear it. Cries are not for musicians, but for mourners.”

This Psalm is the sudden cry of a downtrodden soul. It is the spontaneous outpouring of a troubled heart. The content reveals that **the occasion** of this Psalm was during one of those *outlaw periods*, either at the beginning of his life when running from Saul (1 Sam.18-31), or during the end of his life when running from Absalom (2 Sam.15-18). Either way, it reminds us that troubles can sandwich the whole of one's life, even in the life of the most dedicated saints. The *best* of saints can suffer the *worst* of sorrows. And when they do, David teaches us that we can cry out to God.

I am speaking to some who are bearing heavy sorrows. Some of you are wrestling with deep grief, pain, and physical affliction. I am talking to some who are battling dark despair, loneliness, discouragement, and depression. Especially, during this time of year, when the tune of Andy Williams is heard,

It's the most wonderful time of the year  
With the kid's jingle belling  
And everyone telling you be of good cheer<sup>1</sup>

The truth is, you're not happy. It's not the hap-happiest season of all in your life. In fact, it is a time of *energy-draining burdens*. David was in that state of mind when he wrote this psalm. He was *downcast—depressed—*because people who should have supported him *abandoned* him. What was rightfully his was being *withheld*. Public disgrace was his breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and he did not deserve it because he had not done anything wrong. Instead of turning to *wine* or *women*, or choosing to wander away from God, David turns to *God*—and in doing so, he models for us the way through your troubles.

It is a prayer of *candor, simplicity, passion, and brevity*, and more than that, it teaches us how a man or a woman who is after God's heart prays—and thus, makes their way through the river of troubles. It is *urgent, emotional, and honest*. What can we learn about God, faith, and prayer that will help us today? Come with me now, let's present our minds and hearts to God as we examine Psalm 17.

---

<sup>1</sup> Andy Williams, *It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year*

**The language of this psalm** takes us into *the courtroom*. David sees himself as a defendant who is being *unjustly accused*. He has suffered serious charges against him. His enemies are like *prosecutors* who have placed him on trial in the court of public opinion. Rather than answering his critics, David makes his appeal to *the only Judge* and *the highest court* that there is—*the court of heaven*. To help us organize our thinking, let's center our thinking around *the main verbs of this psalm* and then bring them down into the nitty-gritty of our everyday lives. I think we can all follow these five simple cries for action.

## Outline:

- Hear me. (vv.1-2)—A cry for vindication
- Try me. (vv.3-5)—A cry for examination
- Protect me. (vv.6-12)—A cry for protection
- Defend me. (vv.13-14)—A cry for confrontation
- Change me. (v.15)—A cry for glorification

## Exposition:

### A. Hear me (vv.1-2)—A cry for vindication

Notice, there is a tone of urgency. "*Hear...give heed to my cry, give ear to my prayer...let Your eyes look...*" Do you hear the pleading? The issue is *immediate*. The situation is *real*. The circumstance is not down the street, but it is in his life. Observe the way David responds. He does not mumble a prayer or passively shrug his shoulders as if to say, "Well, by the way, God..." No! There is a depth to his cry—"Hear a just cause, O Yahweh."

Notice that David's prayer is not based upon *anger, envy, selfishness, or pride*, but He appeals to *God's righteousness*. And this is where our appeal must begin as well.

- Hear a just cause, O LORD, give heed to my cry;  
Give ear to my prayer, which is not from deceitful lips.  
<sup>2</sup> Let my judgment come forth from Your presence;  
Let Your eyes look with equity.

Now the keyword is found in the opening phrase "**a just cause**," which literally means "the righteousness" or "the right." Notice, the same word is found at the end of the psalm in verse 15, "*I shall behold Your face in righteousness.*" David begins with *a righteous plea* in verse 1, and he ends in verse 15 with *a righteousness position*. Together, they form what is called an "*inclusio*," which was a technique Old Testament authors used to arrange their materials to end, with the same theme or words mentioned at the beginning. They work like "bookends" to center our attention on the substance in the middle. Like arrows, they point us to the keyword at the core of this psalm in verse 7. Underline it in your Bibles. It is the familiar term, "*lovingkindness*," which means *love faithful to a covenant* (Cf. Lam.3:19-40).

David's intent is to see *how the righteous present their case to God*. Keep in mind that the righteous in the Old Testament, never implies *total sinlessness*, but *total commitment* to Yahweh. They *petition* the *Righteous Judge*, to hear their *righteous cause*, and to answer in *His righteous way* or with *equity* (v.2).

The righteous (*which is an Old Testament description of the saved in the New Testament*) do not take matters into their own hands. We do not fight fire with fire. We do not sink to the same level as our opponents and *argue, accuse, yell, and gossip*. We plead with God! We take our case to Him in prayer.

There is both a *crisis* and a *concern* in David's life.

1. **David's crisis.** What is a crisis? A part of the crisis appears in the form of "**deceitful lips.**" It is coming from those who *misrepresent reality*. This may be the case with you today. Your kids, co-workers, or family members are falsifying the data. They are not being truthful with the facts about you. Remember, dear friends, one of the chief weapons that the devil uses is *lies*—"for he is the father of lies," according to Jesus (*John 8:44*). David says, "What they say is not true, but my prayer is not from deceitful lips." It is totally the opposite. David cannot defend *everything* people are whispering throughout the kingdom. He cannot go on television, Instagram, or Twitter and dispute the charges. So, what does he do? He takes the matter *immediately* to God. He appeals to the Lord. This is what the righteous are to do.
2. But notice in the second place, **David's concern.** Verse 2, "**Let my judgment come forth from Your presence. Let Your eyes look with equity.**" David is concerned about *what God sees, what God knows, and how God feels* about it. He wants God to decide on the case. The word "*equity*" means justice—a true verdict. The word "**judgment**" means *vindication*—and David desires that God would judge his life. David knows that he is not righteousness in an *absolute* sense, but in a *relative* sense. In other words, as it relates to the charges against him. He knows that the charges brought against him are not accurate, but he is concerned with *God's verdict*.

**Application:** Here is an excellent lesson for all of us, especially young people. Often, we are more concerned about *what people think about us* than we are about *God's verdict on our lives*. Let's hit the pause button and ask ourselves:

- What is God's view of your life? How does He truly see you?

The most *durable foundation* and *confidence* you can have in life is knowing where you stand with God.

- **Proverbs 16:7**—When a man's ways are pleasing to the LORD,  
He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.

God's vindication appears in different ways in our lives. In some cases, He turns the hostility of your enemies into favor. This is beautifully illustrated in Genesis 33:4ff in the story of Jacob and Esau. In other cases, God removes your enemy and spares you from the sin you could have committed by acting in the flesh and taking your own revenge. This is illustrated in the story of Nabal and Abigail (*1 Sam.25*). Whichever way God chooses to vindicate His children—whether it is in this *life* or the *next*—as believers, the first step on the pathway through troubles is to cry out to God, "Hear me."

## B. Try me. (*vv.3-5*)—A cry for examination

In this next section, we discover that David's plea was based not only on *God's righteousness alone*, but also on *his integrity*. He invites God's investigation of his own "backyard." He calls upon God to conduct an internal inquiry into the inner "closets" of his heart with His penetrating standard of holiness. And this is where we all become a little "shaky." We have become skilled experts at judging and scrutinizing others, but we don't apply the same scrutiny to our lives. David did. Notice what he says.

- <sup>3</sup>You have tried my heart;  
You have visited *me* by night;

You have tested me, and You find nothing;  
I have purposed that my mouth will not transgress.

It sounds like David is “tooting” his own horn, doesn’t it? He is not. It feels as if David is “boasting” in his own self-righteousness, doesn’t it? He is not. All the Psalmists were aware of every *man’s inability* to stand up to the full blaze of God’s scrutiny. Do you remember?

- **Psalm 130:3**—If You, LORD, should mark iniquities,  
O Lord, who could stand?
- **Psalm 143:2**—And do not enter into judgment with Your servant,  
For in Your sight no man living is righteous.

David knows he is not *sinless*, but he is *blameless*. He is not proclaiming the *perfection* of his life, but the *direction* of his life. “He is not claiming sinlessness, but steadfastness; he is not boasting of his perfection, but he is arguing for his consistency; he is saying, he has been loyal, not impeccable.”<sup>2</sup>

Notice the verbs, “**tried me...visited me...tested me...**” The past tense indicates that God has already done this IN his life and FOR his entire life. And the same of true of us. God does not discover anything new about you or me; He already knows us perfectly in every way (*Ps.139:1-4*).

These verbs could also be *a request* in the Hebrew: “...try me NOW, visit me NOW...test me NOW...” The first and the last words (“tried” and “tested”) come from *the realm of testing metals*. The ancient practice of smelting is to take metal and put it in the furnace and turn the heat up so that the false alloys begin to separate and rise to the surface. Then when the dross appears at the top, it is skimmed, and what you are left with is a pure precious metal. That is the testing process. David is aware of God trying his life *every moment of every day, testing his motives, and refining his soul*. The same is true for us. God sees the false alloys in our lives, and He sees what is genuine. He knows our *secret thoughts, inner motives, and hidden desires* (*1 Cor.4:4-5*). And the question is: are you willing to pray this way right now? “Lord, try me, test me, visit me.” Why should we pray this way? Because we need to know what needs to be addressed in our lives (*Ps.26:2; 139:23-24*).

Now, if the verbs “try” and “test” indicate *God’s refining process*, then the middle verb “visited” describes *God’s careful scrutiny*. In other words, David says, “You have visited me by night,” meaning when no one else is around. When no one is looking, and when the crowd is gone, God, you see the real me. People are often a restraint in our lives during the day, but when *the night falls*, and you are all alone with your *thoughts and desires*, with no *appearances* to make, who are you? David acknowledges, “God, you are there, and You see what others don’t see about my life.” The enemies go to sleep, but not God. “Behold, He who keeps Israel, will neither slumber nor sleep” (*Ps.121:4*). He is always present, and He is *refining, testing, visiting, and scrutinizing* my life. But what exactly is God examining? David identifies the objects of scrutiny: his *heart* (*v.3a*), his *mouth* (*v.3b*), and his *paths* or *steps* (*vv.4-5*).

Next, David says, “**You have tested me, and You find nothing,**” that is, *nothing of which I am being accused of*. For, “**I have purposed that my mouth will not transgress,**” in other words, as others have slandered me, I have chosen not to retaliate in like matter. I have purposed that I would not step over the line with my mouth. Now it takes wisdom and maturity to control the tongue, according to James (chapter 3). You’ve

---

<sup>2</sup> Dale Ralph Davis, *Slogging Along in the Paths of Righteousness: Psalms 13-24*, p.71

heard it said that *"loose lips sink ships..." but they also blow up homes and ruin testimonies*. David says I have pre-decided not to *overreact, shift blame, or make excuses* for my behavior or my words.

**Application:** What pre-decisions do you need to make today?

Now David is not claiming that he has been able to do this by the fortitude of his own moral will and efforts. Notice what he says in verse 4.

- <sup>4</sup> As for the deeds of men, by the word of Your lips I have kept from the paths of the violent.

How did David avoid going down to his enemy's level and being pulled away from God? Answer: **"By the words of Your lips, I have kept from the path of the violent..."** this refers to *the written law of God*. God's word had to be *"treasured in his heart so that he would not sin against God"* (Ps.119:11). God's Word was memorized and meditated upon so that he would bring his thoughts captive—for he prayed, *"Establish Your word unto Your servant as that which produces reverence for You"* (Ps.119:38). Here David is testifying of the sufficiency of God's word and the reality of Psalm 1. It was because God's Word had a *central place* in David's life that he was able to stay off the broad *path* of the wicked and stay on the *narrow track* of the righteous. Notice verse 5.

- <sup>5</sup> My steps have held fast to Your paths. My feet have not slipped.

**"His steps"** speaks of his *decisions* and *choices*, which he makes on a daily basis. **"His feet"** speaks of his *conduct*, his *behavior*, and his *lifestyle*. Although David is suffering and struggling, he is not getting away from God's Word; rather, he is drilling down deeper into a commitment to the truth and prayer, and God is using His Word as a means to help David persevere in faith. *"My feet have not slipped."*

**Application:** True spiritual self-examination is not morbid self-introspection, which results in self-absorption and self-wallowing pity. Biblical self-examination is necessary for two main reasons:

1. To make sure there is integrity in my life so that God hears my prayer. Psalm 66:18 says, *"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear."* My behavior, as well as my attitudes, can become a barrier to God hearing my prayer, so examination enables me to bring together what I *profess* and what I *practice* so that there is a "togetherness...wholeness" (which is what integrity means).
2. To make sure that I am not deceiving myself about the reality of my faith. Paul said, *"Test yourselves [as opposed to everyone else] to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test?"* (2 Cor.13:5). The implication is that if Christ is in you, there ought to be some visible and tangible evidence!

Most people know who Willie Mays is. But in case you don't, he was an outstanding, all-star centerfielder for the New York (San Francisco) Giants in the '50s and '60s. Mays played part of his career under a manager who was a professing Christian, and who was very verbal about his faith. He did not smoke or drink liquor, but everyone knew he was a married man, who was carrying on an affair with a flight attendant. Willie May said that not only did that manager not win anyone to his faith, but no one took him seriously when he talked about it. They thought consistency was crucial.

If sinful, imperfect men feel this way, how much more the perfectly holy God?

**God hear me**—"You know the truth, and Your opinion matters to me more than anyone else." **God try me**—"I come before You and spread out the evidence of my life." Now, God...

### C. Protect me. (vv.6-12)—A cry for protection

Notice that David's prayer is made *in faith*. He believes that God is a prayer-hearing and prayer-answering God.

- <sup>6</sup>I have called upon You, for You will answer me, O God;  
Incline Your ear to me, hear my speech.

David not only *believes* that God hears and answers prayer, but that belief *enables* him to cry out boldly and earnestly. He is not a stoic, cold, and quiet librarian in his prayer. David is sincere and intense. Picture the little boy or little girl who is determined to get the parent's attention, and so they cry out..."Hear me..." David does not approach God like a beggar on the streets asking for a handout; he comes to a Savior who is full of lovingkindness.

- <sup>7</sup>Wondrously show Your lovingkindness,  
O Savior of those who take refuge at Your right hand  
From those who rise up *against them*.

This word, "**lovingkindness** (hesed)," is one of the most important words in all the Old Testament. It represents *the loyal, stork-like, never-changing, never-breaking love that God has toward His own people*. It is irrevocable, sovereign, and eternal. It is not a love that God has for the world, but it is reserved exclusively for the elect—it began in *eternity past*, came down into the time, and will continue into eternity.

David's prayer is in *faith*. David's prayer is *bold*. David's prayer is *guided by the truth of God's faithful love*.

Now, why does David need God's protection? The end of verse 7 explains that David is facing enemies who "*rise up against them*," that is, God's people.

David described them as "**deadly enemies who surround**" him in verse 9. They are not playing dodgeball; they are dangerous. Like a pack of hyenas, they stalk David, and there are people in the world who are like that. They won't seem to go away, and David can't seem to escape them. He further explains in verse 9, that they are "**wicked**" unbelievers who seek to "**despoil**" him or *ruin* him like spoiled milk.

They are *dangerous, deadly, and dead in their trespasses and sins*. In verse 10, he says they are *dark*, "**they have closed their unfeeling heart...**" Literally, in Hebrew, their hearts are enclosed with fat. A double play on words is taking place here. They are *fat with the abundance of this world's possession*. They are *indulgent*. They *live for this world, and they are consumed with their career, their material gain, their economic success, and they have no self-restraint*. And therefore, they are "fat with pride, fat with vanity, fat with insensitivity," and they have "fat heads with fat hearts." They are stuffed with the things of the world—no concern with the things of God.

Because they have some clout in the world, "**with their mouth, they speak proudly.**" They are so high-minded in their thinking that they *disdain the righteous*—Steve Lawson calls them, "egomaniacs strutting their way to hell." They are *dangerous, deadly, dark, disdainful*, and they are *determined*—verse 11, "**they**

**set their eyes to cast us down to the ground.**" They determined to bring harm to David's life, take him out of his ministry and leadership, and to tear his faith to shreds.

There is such hatred in the hearts of unbelievers and, many times, they are the most religious people. They will stop at nothing to take God's people down. Verse 12, **"He is like a lion that is eager to tear..."** that is they are bloodthirsty—like the starving lions of ancient days who were weaponized to strike terror and destroy people's lives. They are as, "...**a young lion lurking in hiding places.**" They seek to ambush those in the faith.

The personal pronoun **"He"** at the beginning of verse 12, is a clue that there is a ringleader. And this is always the cause of those who are seeking to destroy and divide the people of God. There is generally one person who starts the mess and then influences others to join with them. Watch out for the dogs, Paul said.

The enemies of God are stalking David, and like a *"young lion cub"* in his youthful pride, they are eager to *surprise* and *strike* so as to make a name for themselves.

**Application:** What are the righteous to do when attack comes? Notice, David prays for protection.

- <sup>8</sup> Keep me as the apple of the eye;  
Hide me in the shadow of Your wings

Two vivid pictures or metaphors are used to make the truth plain. Both images show how we are so vulnerable and in need of real protection.

1. The **"apple of the eye"** is *the pupil of the eye*. God made the eye as the most sensitive part of the body. Surrounded by bone, tucked away under the forehead, and sunken back into your head, the eye is protected by eyelids and eyelashes to bat off the smallest objects. It is *so sensitive* that it feels the tiniest particle of dust. It is that part of our anatomy that we guard against most *instinctually*. Our eyelids blink in an almost involuntary reflex to keep it clean and safe. Someone has said, "the human eyeball alone is one of the greatest evidences of the creative genius of God."

In Hebrew, the phrase ("apple of the eye") literally means "the little man of the eye." If you look into a mirror very closely at the pupil of your eye, you won't see a little man or woman, but you will see yourself. It is like a mirror. What David is saying is, "Protect me, God, the way a man would protect the pupil of his eye. Without delay. Without hesitation. Tenderly. Dearly." The moment the threat appears, David prays, "defend me swiftly and quickly."

Now David stacks a different metaphor on top of the previous one to convey the same truth in a more profound way. *"Hide me in the shadow of Your wings."*

2. The **"shadow of Your wings"** depicts the protection that a large bird gives to its little ones by it spreading its wings over them. This is one of the most frequently used images in the Old Testament to teach us about *the way God protects His people*, not only from the threat of the enemy, but also from *the sight of that which would frighten us*. Both are images are found in Deuteronomy.
  - **Deuteronomy 32:10-11**—He found him in a desert land,  
And in the howling waste of a wilderness;  
He encircled him, He cared for him,  
He guarded him as the pupil of His eye.



<sup>11</sup> Like an eagle that stirs up its nest,  
That hovers over its young,  
He spread His wings and caught them,  
He carried them on His pinions.

- **Psalm 36:7**—How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God!  
And the children of men take refuge in the shadow of Your wings.
- **Psalm 57:1**—Be gracious to me, O God, be gracious to me,  
For my soul takes refuge in You;  
And in the shadow of Your wings I will take refuge  
Until destruction passes by.
- **Psalm 63:7**—For You have been my help,  
And in the shadow of Your wings I sing for joy.
- **Psalm 91:4**—He will cover you with His pinions,  
And under His wings you may seek refuge;  
His faithfulness is a shield and bulwark.
- **Matthew 23:37**—Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.

To those who listen and not saved, let me ask you...if you don't come to Christ, who will shield you from the wrath of God to come?

When those who threaten are *so aggressive, so near, so cruel and proud and brutal and resourceful*, what hope do the righteous have? They have great hope in God! When they are *so thirsty for blood* like a young lion cub, and their *arrogance* parades through social media and your *reputation, livelihood, or testimony* are threatened, is there recourse for the righteous? Yes, there is. We pray...hear me, God. Try me, God. Protect me, God.

**Application:** The truth is there are some of you who will never go through this kind of attack for your faith because you are not on the front lines of the battle. I say this with all love; you are not even in the fight of faith because you are a secret disciple like Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea. Right now, you think this is irrelevant and impractical. But if you are to know and follow Jesus truly, you need to be willing to break from the social club of religious fakers, and refuse to compromise with your kids, and *"deny yourself, take up your cross daily and follow Jesus"* (Luke 9:23). When you do, the heat will rise. The war will intensify. The attack will mount, and here God has provided for us, *the way through the trouble*. Pray—hear my righteous cause. Try my righteous life. Protect me—O righteous Savior! Here is what the New Testament says God will do:

- **Philippians 4:6-7**—Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Standing like sentinel guard watching over the gate of your heart and mind, God's peace will keep you from being terrorized by fear. The way through is to pray, *hear me. Try me. Protect me*. There is a fourth cry.



## D. Defend me. (vv.13-14)—A cry for confrontation

Now instead of ramping down, David ramps up under the inspiration of the Spirit. He cries out for *confrontation*.

- <sup>13</sup> Arise, O LORD, confront him, bring him low;  
Deliver my soul from the wicked with Your sword,

The language is military in tone—“**Arise, O Lord...**” by stepping from behind the divine judicial bench. “**Confront him,**” that is, *remove his pride*. “**...bring him low**” or *expose his weakness*. Humble them to the ground. David is not taking matters into his own hands; he is trusting that the righteous Judge will deal with his enemies and “**deliver his soul,**” that is, bring salvation to his life.

God is pictured here as a *Mighty Warrior* with His sword drawn to execute justice. He dressed in the full, well-tested armor of God, and He has the discretion to deal with men either by *sword*, or by *His strong hand*.

- <sup>14</sup> From men with Your hand, O LORD,  
From men of the world, whose portion is in *this* life,  
And whose belly You fill with Your treasure;  
They are satisfied with children,  
And leave their abundance to their babes.

The very men who are attacking David are *worldly men*, and all they have is in this life.

The contrast is startling in verses 14-15. See if you can trace it. *They...their...their...they* will see their children, I will see Your face. They will see Your face *in wickedness*; I will see Your face *in righteousness*. They will be *satisfied with children*; I will be *satisfied when I awake*. They will be satisfied *by living in this life*; I will be satisfied *when I awake in Your likeness*.

In this world, they have *sons*, but David has *God*. In this world, they have *clout*, but David has *Christ*. In this world, they have *stuff*, but David has *the Sovereign God*.

They enjoy God’s treasures, but they don’t give Him thanks. They have children, and their hope is in their legacy, but David’s hope is in the Lord. Stuart Olyott describes wickedness as “loving what God created more than God.” But David says, You are so good and kind, You cause rain to fall on the just and the unjust (*Matt.5:45*), yet my hope is You. For them, despite God’s goodness showering down upon them, they are not brought to repentance. They refuse to turn from their sin, and the only hope they have will be to leave their “borrowed stuff” to their children. But the hope David nurses in his heart during times of trouble is an eternal hope.

**Application:** There are times that we are to pray for God to intervene in a very decisive way and confront the wicked and to humble them—and God reserves the right to do it how He pleases and when He pleases. And all the people of God said...

- Hear me. (vv.1-2)—A cry for vindication
- Try me. (vv.3-5)—A cry for examination
- Protect me. (vv.6-12)—A cry for protection
- Defend me. (vv.13-14)—A cry for confrontation

## E. Change me. (v.15)—A cry for glorification

- <sup>15</sup> As for me, I shall behold Your face in righteousness;  
I will be satisfied with Your likeness when I awake.

The high point that this psalm ends by revealing that David is *looking beyond the troubles*. “**As for me...**” he says, meaning, juxtaposed to those who would attack him, David realizes that he has a sure and steady anchor. “**As for me, I shall...I will...**” He has *eternal hope*. It is not a wish or a dream, but confidence! An assurance! His enemies are satisfied with having sons, but David says, “**I will be satisfied with Your likeness when I awake.**”

Resurrection is pictured here as *awakening* (*Is.26:19; Dan.12:2*). To “**behold the face of God**” is the beatific vision of Revelation 22:4, “*they will see His face.*” This is what Philip was speaking of when he said to Jesus, “*Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.*” *Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’*” (*John 14:8-9*).

One day, the believer will stand before God—with all the battle scars of following Jesus—and the sacrifices and suffering for the sake of righteousness. But it is not the relief from troubles that will bring us the sweetest reward. No, what will fill our hearts with such divine contentment, spiritual pleasure, and eternal joy is to share in the glorification of Christ Himself.

- **2 Thessalonians 2:13-14**—But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. <sup>14</sup> It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>15</sup> So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of *mouth* or by letter from us.
- **1 John 3:1-3**—See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and *such* we are. For this reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. <sup>2</sup> Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. <sup>3</sup> And everyone who has this hope *fixed* on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

## Conclusion:

When troubles come. True believers cry out,

- Hear me. Try me. Protect me. Defend me. Change me.

On February 14, 1747, Jerusha Edwards, daughter of Jonathan and Sarah Edwards, died after a week-long fever. She was seventeen. She had come to know God in Christ savingly and evidenced that in her life. Among many things that testified of her faith, one thing stood out. She devoted herself to nursing David Brainerd, her father’s friend, in his last days until he had died four months previously. Her parents buried her next to Brainerd’s grave, and Jerusha’s gravestone bears these words which her parents chose:

“I will be satisfied with Your likeness when I awake.”

They knew that’s what Jerusha would say if she could. Is that what you can say?

© November 22, 2019 The Church at South Mountain

You are permitted and encouraged to reproduce and distribute this material in any format provided that you do not alter the wording in any way and do not charge a fee beyond the cost of reproduction.

For web posting, a link to this document on our website is preferred. Any exceptions to the above must be approved by The Church at South Mountain. Please include the following statement on any distributed copy:

© The Church at South Mountain. Website: [casm.org](http://casm.org)

While all reasonable attempts have been taken to trace the literary and biblical sources used by the author, due to the nature of some of the original materials (old audio/radio or live preaching events), some have been impossible to locate. Any information regarding the origin of any unreferenced statements or quotations is welcomed and will be included in the next revision of the study.

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture references are from the New American Standard Bible: 1960, 1962, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1975, 1977, 1995 by the Lockman Foundation.