

Psalm Series Pt 5 How Long

CENTRAL QUESTION:

How do we move from despair and feeling forgotten by God to worship, praise, and renewed faith?

I. THE PROBLEM WITH ME (VERSES 1-2)

Key Scripture: Psalm 13:1-2 "How long will You forget me, O Lord? Forever. How long will You hide Your face from me?"

Hebrew Insight: *Shakhach* (shaw-KAKH) = to forget, to lose sight of

The Reality of Despair:

- David references himself 7 times in the first four verses
- Self-focused pain blinds us to God's presence
- We lose sight of God because we're consumed with our own circumstances

What's Happening:

- Depression and despair are real (not just spiritual weakness)
- When we take counsel only in our own soul, we spiral deeper
- Worry is both demonic and fleshly—it disconnects us from God's reality

Key Insight: Our greatest problem isn't our circumstances; it's that we've lost sight of who God is and what He's already done.

II. DESPAIR SHOULD DRIVE YOU TO YOUR KNEES (VERSES 3-4)

Key Scripture: Psalm 13:3-4 "Consider and hear me, O Lord my God; lighten my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death."

Hebrew Insight: *Nur/Enlighten* (noor) = the same word used in Genesis 1 for God creating light; also appears in Exodus 14:20 and Numbers 6:25

What David Does Right:

- He doesn't stay in despair—he cries out to God
- He moves from complaint to prayer
- He asks God to "lighten his eyes"—to give him vision and clarity

The Power of Prayer:

- Despair should always drive you to prayer, not deeper into darkness
- Prayer is the bridge from despair to praise
- As believers, we should have "tender knees"—ready to pray in good times and hard times

What David Is Really Asking:

- "Don't just give me a flicker—I need a fire"
- "Give me the same light You spoke into creation"
- "Help me see You again—Your face, Your presence, Your promise"

Key Insight: The Hebrew word for "lighten my eyes" connects to God's creative power. When we pray, we're asking God to re-create clarity and vision in our spiritual sight.

III. UNDERSTANDING WHO GOD REALLY IS (THE REVELATION CONNECTION)

Key Scripture: Revelation 4:1-3 "After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven... and He who sat there had the appearance of Jasper and carnelian. Around the throne was a rainbow..."

Why This Matters:

- David lost sight because he forgot WHO God is
- God is seated on a throne—He's not anxious or pacing
- God has already formed a plan from the foundation of the earth

- God's appearance is beyond comprehension—yet He sees and cares for us

The Problem of Losing Sight:

- When we lose sight of God, we forget His face and presence
- We forget His Word and His promises
- We get caught up in ourselves instead of seeing the bigger picture

Biblical Truth:

- The Bible says: "I have hidden Your Word in my heart that I might not sin against You"
- We must be people of the Word
- We must know God's character, not just our circumstances

Key Insight: Depression and despair often come from spiritual blindness—not seeing God for who He really is.

IV. THE POWER OF PERSPECTIVE SHIFT (VERSES 5-6)

Key Scripture: Psalm 13:5-6 "But I have trusted in Your mercy; my heart shall rejoice in Your salvation. I will sing unto the Lord, because He has dealt bountifully with me."

Notice the Dramatic Change:

- Verse 1-2: "me, me, me" (7 references to self)
- Verse 5-6: "You, Your, Your" (focus shifts to God)

The Three-Fold Shift:

1. From self-focus to God-focus
2. From despair to trust
3. From complaint to thanksgiving and worship

What Changed?

- Not David's circumstances (we don't know if they improved)
- David's focus changed through prayer
- He remembered God's mercy, salvation, and faithfulness

Key Insight: Prayer demands a response—not works for salvation, but a response of the heart that shifts our perspective from self to God.

V. THREE MAIN POINTS OF THE MESSAGE

POINT 1: THE THING ABOUT ME

The Problem: Self-focus blinds us to God

- We take counsel in our own soul instead of God's Word
- We're consumed with our own pain, circumstances, and worries
- This is how we lose sight of God

POINT 2: DESPAIR SHOULD ALWAYS DRIVE YOU TO YOUR KNEES

The Solution: Prayer is the response to pain

- Don't stay in despair—cry out to God
- Prayer crucifies the flesh
- When we spend time in God's presence, sin loses its power

POINT 3: PRAYER ALWAYS DEMANDS A RESPONSE

The Result: From despair to praise

- Prayer is the bridge from "How long, Lord?" to "I will sing unto the Lord"
 - God is waiting for His people to respond
 - Your response determines whether you stay in despair or rise to worship
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VI. WHAT GOD IS WAITING FOR (THE CALL TO RESPOND)

Key Message: "I'm waiting on My people to respond."

What This Means:

- There's a time for waiting on God

- There's also a time to get up and respond
- You have direct access to the throne through Christ's blood

The Example of Jesus:

- Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane had a "David moment"
- He asked His disciples: "Could you not pray with me one hour?"
- Even Jesus needed intercession and support

Who Needs God to Open Their Eyes:

- Those dealing with financial struggles
- Those facing sickness and medical issues
- Those battling recurring sin
- Those grieving lost family members
- Those weary in witnessing and preaching the Gospel

Key Insight: God has already done His part through Christ's sacrifice. Now He's waiting for us to respond—to get on our knees, open our eyes, and join Him in what He's doing.

VII. THE POWER OF CONSISTENT PRAYER

Biblical Examples:

- William Seymour (Azusa Street Revival): Prayed 8 hours daily until revival broke out
- Evan Roberts (Welsh Revival): Prayed through the night; 100,000+ converts in early 1900s
- Reinhard Bonnke: 70-100 million decisions for Christ through prayer-empowered ministry

The Testimony:

- The speaker's own journey: Hours of prayer at summer camp led to future ministry opportunities
- Prayer alone changed his trajectory—not programs or planning

- "The reason I'm here where I am right now is one thing: Prayer"

Key Insight: Consistent prayer doesn't just change you—it changes everyone around you. True revival starts with individuals who will pray.

VIII. LIVING IN THE REALITY

Three Daily Declarations (Based on Psalm 13):

1. **"Open my eyes to see Your presence that's already here"**
 - You're not forgotten; God is omnipresent
 - Learn to see Him in every moment
2. **"Make me a conduit for Your kingdom work"**
 - God wants to use you
 - Your words and actions matter
3. **"Create in me the Jesus-version of myself"**
 - You're chosen, redeemed, and blood-bought through Christ
 - You're a royal priesthood
 - You're more than a conqueror

The Challenge:

- Will you stop taking counsel only in your own soul?
 - Will you get on your knees in prayer?
 - Will you shift your focus from "me" to "You"?
 - Will you respond to what God is waiting for?
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KEY TAKEAWAY:

"Never say 'How long, Lord?'" means:

- Stop focusing only on yourself

- Start crying out to God in prayer
- Shift your perspective to see God's faithfulness
- Respond to God's call on your life

The bridge from despair to praise is **prayer**.

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION:

- What area of your life are you taking counsel in your own soul about?
 - When was the last time you spent significant time in prayer?
 - What would it look like to shift your focus from your circumstances to God's character?
 - In what ways is God waiting for you to respond?
 - How can you cultivate "tender knees"—a lifestyle of consistent prayer?
 - What is the "Jesus-version" of you that God wants to create?
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SCRIPTURE REFERENCES FOR FURTHER STUDY:

Psalm 13 (full passage) | Psalm 139:7-10 | Genesis 1:14-18 | Exodus 14:20 | Numbers 6:25 | Revelation 4:1-3 | Psalm 104:27-30 | Genesis 2:7 | Ezra 9:5-8 | Psalm 42 | Matthew 26:38-41 (Jesus in Gethsemane) | 1 Peter 2:9 | Romans 8:37