

Psalm 6 – In Death There Is No Remembrance of You

- 1 O YHWH, rebuke me not in your anger,
nor discipline me in your wrath.
- 2 Be gracious to me, O YHWH, for I am languishing;
heal me, O YHWH, for my bones are troubled.
- 3 My soul also is greatly troubled.
But you, O YHWH—how long?
- 4 Turn, O YHWH, deliver my life;
save me for the sake of your steadfast love.
- 5 For in death there is no remembrance of you;
in Sheol who will give you praise?
- 6 I am weary with my moaning;
every night I flood my bed with tears;
I drench my couch with my weeping.
- 7 My eye wastes away because of grief;
it grows weak because of all my foes.
- 8 Depart from me, all you workers of evil,
for YHWH has heard the sound of my weeping.
- 9 YHWH has heard my plea;
YHWH accepts my prayer.
- 10 All my enemies shall be ashamed and greatly troubled;
they shall turn back and be put to shame in a moment.



Structural Analysis

- A1. O YHWH, rebuke me not in your anger,
nor discipline me in your wrath. (1)
- B1. Be gracious to me, O YHWH, for I am languishing;
heal me, O YHWH, for my bones are troubled. (2)
- C1. My soul also is greatly troubled. (3a)
D1. But you, O YHWH—how long? (3b)
E1. Turn, O YHWH, deliver my life; (4a)
F1. save me for the sake of your steadfast love. (4b)
* **For in death there is no remembrance of you; (5a)**
F2. in Sheol who will give you praise? (5b)
E2. I am weary with my moaning;
every night I flood my bed with tears;
I drench my couch with my weeping. (6)
D2. My eye wastes away because of grief;
it grows weak because of all my foes. (7)
- C2. Depart from me, all you workers of evil, (8a)
B2. for the YHWH has heard the sound of my weeping.
The YHWH has heard my plea;
the YHWH accepts my prayer. (8b-9)
- A2. All my enemies shall be ashamed and greatly troubled;
they shall turn back and be put to shame in a moment. (10)

A. Do not chastise me

Chastise my enemies

Contrasting Parallel – do not vs do

B. Be gracious to me

YHWH has heard me

Continuing Parallel – question/answer

C. Greatly troubled

Depart from me

Continuing Parallel – the problem/ more details

D. How long?

I'm tired of my grief

Similar Parallel – how long/so long

E. Deliver my life

I suffer

Continuing Parallel – deliver me/more details about why he needs delivery

F. Your steadfast love

Give you praise

Similar Parallel – David praises YHWH (the only time in this psalm)/praise

* **For in death there is no remembrance of you;**

The center – Here David is reminding YHWH that he would be unable to offer praise from the grave.

Wow! Think about that for a minute. David is assuming his praises would be missed if he were dead. That implies that he frequently offered praise, if not continually. In Revelation it is said that the saints will sing and praise continually. Our prayers are offered to YHWH with the incense in the heavenlies as a sweet-smelling aroma. This is a reminder for us to praise Him continually.

Heb 13:15 Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge His Name.

Complex Analysis

There are at least two other poetic devices used throughout this psalm that draw our attention to deeper thoughts. We will examine one pattern here and another in the Interpretive Analysis.

Repetition

- 1 **O YHWH**, rebuke me not in your anger,
nor discipline me in your wrath.
- 2 Be **gracious** to me, **O YHWH**, for I am languishing;
heal me, **O YHWH**, for my bones are troubled.
- 3 My soul also is greatly troubled.
But you, **O YHWH**—how long?
- 4 Turn, **O YHWH**, deliver my life;
save me for the sake of your **steadfast** love.
- 5 **For in death there is no remembrance of you;**

In verses 1-4, the first half of the chiasm, “O YHWH” is repeated five times and the grace/steadfastness (compassion) of YHWH mentioned twice. This is intentional. Five is the number of grace or compassion. (Think of the famine with Joseph – 2/5 years, Yashua feeding the 5,000 – 2 loaves, 5 fishes)

With this repetition, we see David is relying on the compassion of YHWH to cause YHWH to deliver him from his troubles.

The calling out YHWH's name five times is contrasted with a subject in the center of the chiasm “no remembrance” of Him in death.

For in death there is no remembrance of you;

In the second half of the chiasm, there are three sets of three, another important number – the number of life or resurrection. This is contrasted with the other subject of the center: death.

5 For in death there is no remembrance of you;

in Sheol who will give you praise?

6 I am weary with my moaning;

every night I flood my bed with tears;

I drench my couch with my weeping.

7 My eye wastes away because of grief;

it grows weak because of all my foes.

8 Depart from me, all you workers of evil,

YHWH has heard the sound of my weeping.

9 YHWH has heard my plea;

YHWH accepts my prayer.

YHWH's name is called three times in verses 8-9.

In verses 6-7 David uses three synonyms to describe his sorrow: weary, tears, and grief. These three words represent the completeness of his life, the depth of his sorrow – using words that represent the mental, physical, and emotional aspects of his suffering.

Finally, in verses 8-9 David is confident that YHWH has heard his prayer. David says YHWH has heard, YHWH has heard, YHWH accepts. In this progression, David begins with the passive verb: YHWH heard. Hearing requires nothing from the other person. But finally, YHWH accepts. This is an active verb. Accepting requires an action – it is a choice.

Using the simple device of repetition, we are given a glimpse into the depths of David's sorrow, we see life amid the fear of death, and we find hope in the pit of despair.

Interpretive Analysis

Apostrophe

In verse 8 David employs an apostrophe. An apostrophe is a statement addressing someone not present.

In this psalm, David cries out to YHWH consistently, line by line, until verse 8. Here he stops and addresses his enemies.

8 Depart from me, all you workers of evil

Why does David do this? As with any break in pattern, the Ruach Ha'Qodesh is trying to get our attention. Let's see where this phrase leads us.

You may remember Yashua using this same phrase. In fact, He does so on two occasions.

- 1) **Mat 7:21** “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.
Mat 7:22 On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’
Mat 7:23 And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’
- Luk 13:23** And someone said to him, “Lord, will those who are saved be few?” And he said to them,
Luk 13:24 “Strive to enter through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.
Luk 13:25 When once the master of the house has risen and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, open to us,’ then he will answer you, ‘I do not know where you come from.’
Luk 13:26 Then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets.’
Luk 13:27 But he will say, ‘I tell you, I do not know where you come from. Depart from me, all you workers of evil!’
Luk 13:28 In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but you yourselves cast out.

- 2) **Mat 25:41** “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.
Mat 25:42 For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink,
Mat 25:43 I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’

These conversations may be a bit confusing. Remember we are looking at “Depart from me, you workers of iniquity.” Who is Yashua casting away? In one situation, Yashua rejects people despite their actions. In Mt 7 and Lk 13, “good” actions are dismissed: some prophesied, cast out demons, listened to His teachings, and even ate with Messiah. However, Messiah tells them to “depart.”

In Mt 25 the lack of action is condemned: they did not feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, or care for the needy. These people are also told to “depart.”

Both of these scenarios point to a lack of humility. In the first, works were done IN His name. His Name was being used as a tool for their works or as a mark of their authority. In the second, the needy are not taken care of. This is not a new rebuke. A quick survey of Scripture shows not caring for the needy is an on-going problem that is often tied to greed or pride – basically a focus on self. Followers of Yashua must die to self! Therefore, we can assume those who did not care for the needy had not died to self and therefore were not followers of Yashua. Both groups are focused on self and therefore are told to depart.

Now let's tie this back to David. Humility is at the heart of the Kingdom. In Psalm 6, David is a broken man. He is weak from grief. Therefore, in the midst of crying out to YHWH, David asks for evil to depart from him but the verse doesn't stop there:

- Psa 6:8** Depart from me, all you workers of evil,
FOR YHWH has heard the sound of my weeping.
Psa 6:9 YHWH has heard my plea;
YHWH accepts my prayer.

FOR (because) YHWH has heard.... David cannot save himself; he needs to be saved. We must embody that same humility. We cannot save ourselves, but we can do all things through Messiah who strengthens us. If we lose humility and think that our works, no matter how "good", save us, we will hear those fearful words: "Depart from me, you workers of iniquity."

In Conclusion

Even drowning in trouble, David did not take his eyes off YHWH. He recognized his dependence on the grace of YHWH. He trusted YHWH would hear and accept his prayer, bringing life and salvation. When do we remember YHWH? Will our praises be missed when we are in the grave?

I pray you begin to center your life around prayer and praise. In response, YHWH will hear you and accept your pleas. I pray that you hear the voice of YHWH calling you to His plan, His purpose, His Kingdom.