

“What man can live and never see death? Who can deliver his soul from the power of Sheol? Lord, where is your steadfast love of old, which by your faithfulness you swore to David?” (Psalm 89:48-49)

I. Psalm 90 is a response to the cry of Psalm 89 and Book 3

- A. “LORD, where is your unfailing love? *Where are you God, in my time of trouble?*
- B. How can we live in the absence of God's anointed king?” (Futato, p. 292) *Who should I vote for? Isn't there anybody out there that honors truth and integrity?*
- C. How can we find meaning and hope in this life? *This world seems to be getting worse and worse. How can I manage whatever the outcome?*

II. Our lives are short because of our sin.

- A. God is angered by my sin.
- B. Nothing is hidden from Him.
- C. I am dust and God Himself at some time will command me to return to the earth.

III. Our lives are short and filled with pain and suffering (“Woe to us, for the day declines, for the shadows of evening lengthen!” Jeremiah 6:4)

- A. I am like a dream, soon forgotten. *I am like photographs of people whose descendants no longer remember their names or how they connect to the family.*
- B. I can be easily swept away like flooding waters.
- C. I am like Middle Eastern grasses – springing up in the morning, dead and withered by the end of a hot day.
- D. My life is so short that 70 or 80 is considered quite old (Remember Methusaleh, who lived 969 years, or Noah who fathered three sons after the age of 500)
- E. Worse, my short life is all toil and trouble – It is “as though human life passed its noontide when Adam fell, and has ever since been growing steadily darker and more chilly.” (Wilcock, p. 76)

IV. Psalm 90 longs and prays for the return of the I AM's covenant relationship with His people.

- A. God, as you will return me to the ground, so return in mercy toward me.
- B. Teach me, LORD – short lives should make us wiser, more careful with how we live. Teach us how to properly reflect on our lives, our certain death, and the reality of God.
- C. The answer to suffering and trouble is only found in the I AM. Only You, God, can satisfy me with Your hesed, – Your Never Stopping, Never Giving Up, Unbreaking, Always and Forever Love. Only Your covenant hesed can overpower Your wrath, so I ask for Your hesed.
- D. Return from judgment, LORD, and make me glad “with blessings in proportion to my afflictions.” (Wilcock, p. 77, *pronoun changed*) The psalmist “begs for a reversal of what has gone before.” (Kidner, p. 362)

V. Psalm 90 brings the possibility of hope

1. “Before there was a Temple, before there was a Davidic king on the throne, before Moses, before the mountains were created, before God made the earth, the LORD was there.” (Futato, p. 293)
2. And the LORD has been my dwelling place in all generations (Psalm 90:1) He is always and forever my refuge, my home.
3. God, reveal yourself to me in your works, your power displayed in faithfulness, your love and mercy in me and in the lives of my descendants.
4. Let your favor (your beauty) again be upon me.
5. Make what I am doing worthwhile, God. Give my short life meaning. Make me a person devoted to You, serving You. That is the only legacy that lasts forever.

VI. To Israel, Psalm 90 is part of a greater picture of God's sovereign intervention in the lives of His people

- A. Psalm 90 is the first psalm of Book 4 – Psalms 90 – 106 (Wilcock calls it the “Exodus Psalms”)
 1. Psalm 90 is the first, attributed to Moses – The psalm “invites the singing congregation to picture Israel around the time of Deuteronomy, as they were about to cross the Jordan River and enter the Promised Land...For the Israelites to accomplish their mission and for God to establish the work for their hands would require that the people embrace the covenant and live in faith toward God.” (ESV notes, p. 1052)
 2. Psalm 91 reflects on Israel's experience in Egypt, and God's protection. *God is protecting.* “Because he holds fast to me in love, I will deliver him; I will protect him, because he knows my name. When he calls to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honor him.” (Psalm 91:14-15)
 3. Psalm 95 refers to Israel's journey in the wilderness and their rebellion. (Exodus 17) *Learn from those who have gone before you. Do not be like them.*
 4. Psalm 99 refers to Moses and Aaron, and the pillar of cloud. (Exodus 24) *God is leading, directing.*
 5. Psalm 103 mentions Moses and quotes from Exodus 34:6. *God's hesed love is real and active. He is merciful and gracious.* “If the LORD had not been my help, my soul would soon have lived in the land of silence. When I thought, ‘My foot slips,’ your steadfast love, O LORD, held me up.” (Psalm 94:17-18)
 6. Psalm 105 sums up the whole Exodus story from the promises made to Abraham to the possession of Canaan, and puts Israel's story in a positive light. *God will preserve you. He remembered his promises to Abraham, and you will come out singing with joy.* “Know that the LORD, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.” (Psalm 100:3)
 7. Psalm 106 reviews Israel's history from Egypt to the Judges in a negative light. *He knows I am a grave sinner, yet still chooses to save me.* “Nevertheless, he looked upon their distress, when he heard their cry. For their sake he remembered his covenant, and relented according to the abundance of his steadfast love.” (Psalm 106:44-45)

VII. To All of Us that are God's People, Psalm 90 whispers the Gospel

A. *Where are you God, in my time of trouble?*

1. God has *always* been my refuge, my dwelling place, from before the foundation of the world – Ephesians 1:3-14
 - a. “He chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.”
 - b. “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ.”
 - c. “In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of our salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.”

B. *What about my sin?*

1. God sees my sins, and none are hidden. (Adam's sin, and ours, has condemned us all to God's wrath.)
2. But there is an Anointed King greater than David – Jesus Christ, who rules forever, just as God promised (2 Samuel 8-17), a King who not only leads me, but saves me. Christ took my earthly and my spiritual death on Himself. God laid His wrath on Christ.
 - a. “Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned – every one – to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.” (Isaiah 53:4-6)
 - b. “Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.” (Philippians 2:5-8)
 - c. “Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.” (Romans 5:18-19)

C. *Do I have your steadfast, hesed love, God? Do I truly belong to you, in good times and bad?*

1. Christ's resurrection frees me to face my earthly death, to live with joy and grace in my short earthly lifetime, and embrace my coming eternity in Christ. “Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 3:12-14)
2. “For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed,” says the LORD, who has compassion on you.” (Isaiah 54:10)
3. “The Lord is at hand: do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will guard your hearts and yours minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:5b-7)

4. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God’s power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith – more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire – may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.” (1 Peter 1:3-9)
5. *Does my life have meaning and hope?*
 - a. “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:10)
 - b. “And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.” (Philippians 1:6)
 - c. “Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.” (Jude 24)

Questions:

- 1) Which verses in this lesson spoke the most strongly to you of God’s unfailing love and care for you? How should that change the way you are thinking and living?
- 2) How has the Word of God spoken peace and hope to you in earlier times of stress and trouble?
- 3) How can you best “mutter, mutter,” – integrate the truths of God’s Word into your daily trials as powerful teaching, reproof, correction, training in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16) and hope?

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