

**FAITH OVER FEAR: A YEAR LATER // Psalm 13***Morning message from Pastor Neal*

Do we still need Psalm 13? A year ago, we were learning to wait on the Lord in the beginning of a pandemic. But the emotions expressed in this psalm—broken-heartedness, exhaustion, and depression—are relevant not only in a pandemic, but at other stages of life as well. We all need to know how to wait on the Lord. David wrote this psalm at a low point in his life when he was on the run from King Saul. His expression of difficult emotions and challenging questions have real applications for believers in many circumstances.

**1. David's situation (v. 1-2)**

**a. David feels frustrated (v. 1a).** David's question of "Will you forget me forever?" expresses his frustration, but also reveals a truth by implication—he has been on God's mind, and he knows from experience that there were days in his past when God certainly had not forgotten him. God doesn't forget anything or anyone.

**b. David feels lonely and abandoned (v. 1b).** David asks "How long will you hide your face from me?" Here, it is not that God can't see David, but that David can't see God. It feels like the Lord has left. We may also experience this feeling in times of spiritual drought and loneliness.

**c. David feels discouraged and depressed (v. 2a).** David asks, "How long must I take counsel in my soul and have sorrow in my heart?" We notice the repetition of personal pronouns: I, me, my. David is self-focused, but also trying to seek the Lord.

**d. David feels defeated (v. 2b).** David now asks, "How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?" Who is his enemy? Is it an external, physical enemy, like King Saul? Or could this be a reference to God himself? David feels frustrated, lonely, discouraged, and defeated. It looks like God has turned against him. When we feel like this, we must turn to prayer rather than turning away from the Lord.

**2. David's supplication (v. 3-4)** Look at the verbs used here: "consider" and "answer." In asking God to consider him, David is putting everything out in the open. This allows him to reflect whether he is blameless or if his suffering is due to his own sinfulness (Psalm 139:23-24). David trusts that when God sees what he shows him, he will not turn away, but will answer him. He knows that God will "light up [his] eyes," by giving him a new perspective because God sees us in a way we don't see ourselves.

**3. David's salutation (v. 5-6)** What has changed between verse 4 and verse 5? Prayer changes David's perspective. You cannot pray right and live wrong. The Lord wants us to trust him. Sometimes we think God just wants us to obey him, but we must understand the order: trust leads to love and love leads to service and obedience. It's a terrible thing to have to obey someone you don't trust. David's statement in verse 6 that he will sing to the Lord is a declaration—his life will display whether he is at peace with the Lord, and he acknowledges that the Lord has dealt bountifully with him.

In Acts 2:34-35, Peter's first sermon makes clear the identity of the Messiah promised in the Psalms (Psalm 16 and 110): it is Jesus. David's prayer (Psalm 22) becomes Jesus' prayer on the cross. And God answers Jesus' prayer. For believers, this means that all the promises of Jesus are "yes and amen" (2 Cor. 1:20), and we can claim Psalm 13 as our psalm, knowing that all of those promises apply to us right now.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Have you ever asked God "how long"? What circumstances in your life have made you feel frustrated, lonely, or discouraged? How did God answer you in that difficult season?
2. Do we often ask God to "consider" or examine our hearts? Why should this be a habitual practice when faced with challenging circumstances?
3. Why is it important to understand that God is first calling us to trust him? What is the relationship between trust and obedience?