

Psalm Twenty-Five
A Psalm of David
Plea for Mercy and Deliverance

David is pictured in this Psalm as in a faithful miniature. His holy, his many conflicts, his great transgression, his bitter repentance, and his deep distresses are all here; so that we see the very heart of “the man after God’s won heart.” It is evidently a composition of David’s latter days, for he mentions the sins of his youth, and from its painful references to the craft and cruelty of his many foes, it will not be too speculative a theory to refer it to the period when Absalom was heading the great rebellion against him. This has been styled the second of the seven Penitential Psalms. It is the mark of a true saint that his sorrows remind him of his sins, and his sorrow for sin drives him to his God. (Charles H. Spurgeon)

In these four Psalms (22, 23,24 and 25), which immediately follow one another, we may find the soul of David presented in several postures of piety-lying, standing, sitting, and kneeling.

In the Twenty-Second Psalm, he is **lying** all along, falling flat on his face, low groveling on the ground, even almost entering into a degree of despair; speaking of himself in the history of Christ in the mystery, “My God, why has Thou forsaken me?”

In the Twenty-Third Psalm, he is **standing**, and through God’s favor, in despite of his foes, trampling and triumphing over all opposition: “The Lord is my shepherd, therefore shall I lack nothing.”

In the Twenty-Fourth Psalm, he is **sitting**, like a doctor in his chair or a professor in his place, reading a lecture of divinity and describing the character of that man, how he must be accomplished “who shall ascend into the holy hill,” and hereafter be partaker of happiness.

In this Twenty-Fifth Psalm, he is **kneeling**, with his hands and voice lifted up to God, and on these two hinges the whole Psalm turneth; the one is a hearty beseeching of God’s mercy, the other a humble bemoaning of his own misery. (Thomas Fuller)

Versus 1 and 2 is a prayer that reveals the dependence that David had upon God.

Psalm 25:1 “Unto thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul.”

“I lift up my soul”: This is a vivid picture of David’s dependence (compare Psalms 86:4; 143:8). In worshipping God, we must lift up our souls to him. It is certain that none who, by a believing attendance, wait on God, and, by a believing hope, wait for him, shall be ashamed of it. The most advanced believer both needs and desires to be taught of God. If we sincerely desire to know our duty, with resolution to do it, we may be sure that God will direct us in it. The psalmist is earnest for the pardon of his sins.

The first thing that stands out in this, is the fact that it was a voluntary act to lift up his soul. Lord here is Jehovah. Every time we pray in earnest, we lift our soul to God. Prayer in a very real sense, is fellowship with God. The soul of man has to do with the will of man. Sometimes our soul struggles whether to follow the flesh, or the spirit.

Psalm 25:2 “O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph over me.”

He claims his interest in God, and expresses his faith and confidence in him, in the midst of all his troubles (see Psalm 7:1).

Psalm 25:3 “Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause.”

The prayer passes from the particular to the universal. What David desires for himself he desires also for all the true servants of God. All who wait on him, look to him, seek for indications of his will (compare Psalm 123:2).

“Let them be ashamed which transgress without cause”: Let shame be the portion, not of thy servants, but of thy adversaries. Of those who transgress (or rebel) without reasonable cause. Such persons deserve to be brought to shame.

Psalm 25:4 “Show me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths.”

“Teach me thy paths”: A petition the same with the other, in different words.

Jesus is the Way. He is the bright and shining Light that we are to follow. The way is very narrow, and sometimes obstacles are in the path. Get your eyes off the obstacles and the fact that the path is narrow. Fix your eyes on Jesus Christ the Light. Follow His lighted path as the next 3 Scriptures state and you will make it all the way.

John 8:12 “Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”

Ephesians 5:8 “For ye were sometimes darkness, but now [are ye] light in the Lord: walk as children of light:”

1 John 1:7 “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

Psalm 25:5 “Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou [art] the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.”

“Thy truth” would seem to mean here “the true, right path”, the “way of godliness.” The prayer is that God will both teach this to the psalmist and “lead him in it”. And cause him to walk in it, and never stray from it, so long as he lives.

“For thou art the God of my salvation”: Who, in infinite wisdom, contrived scheme and method of it in his Son, and by him effected it, and by his Spirit had made application of it to him. And since the Lord had done such great things for him, he hoped the requests he had made would be granted. He adds:

“On thee do I wait all the day”: In the midst of all my concerns, however important, I am always desiring and expecting thy teaching and direction. Being continually disposed and determined to comply with thy will, as far as it is made known.

The God of our salvation is Jesus. The name, Jesus, means Savior.

John 1:17 “For the law was given by Moses, [but] grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”

John 14:6 “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

The Holy Spirit (the Comforter), will teach us all truth.

John 16:13 “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, [that] shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.”

The best thing I see here is that those who are willing to be taught of God, will be taught of God. David wants to be taught of God. We must desire to be taught of the Spirit, before we can be taught.

Psalm 25:6 “Remember, O LORD, thy tender mercies and thy loving-kindnesses; for they [have been] ever of old.”

Past mercies form a ground for the expectation of future blessings. God’s character cannot change. His action at one time will always be consistent and harmonious with his action at another. If he has been kind and merciful to David in the past, David may count on his continuing the same in the future.

“For they have been ever of old”: Not lately only or to David only, have his mercies been shown. But through all past time, to all his servants from of old.

God never changes. David is reminding Him of His lovingkindness in the past.

1 Chronicles 16:34 “O give thanks unto the LORD; for [he is] good; for his mercy [endureth] forever.”

Psalm 25:7 “Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness’ sake, O LORD.”

Job thought that God counted against him the “iniquities of his youth” (Job 13:26). David, with greater faith and a deeper insight into the true character of God, can ask with confidence that his may not be reckoned against him. An earthly father does not remember them against his son. How much less will our heavenly Father!

“Nor my transgressions”: His more notorious and glaring ones. Such as murder and adultery, in the case of Uriah and Bathsheba, and which now stared him in the face. And on account of these, and as a chastening for them, this unnatural rebellion of his son’s. Which was now raised against him, was suffered to befall him, as had been foretold to him (2 Sam. 12:11).

“According to thy mercy remember thou me”: For thy goodness’ sake, O Lord. He pleads no merit nor goodness of his own, but casts himself upon the mercy, grace, and goodness of God. In which he was certainly right; and on that account prayed and hoped for deliverance from his present troubles. And for discoveries of the pardon of his sins unto him, which is what he means by remembering him.

We, like David, could ask this same thing. There is none who has not sinned

Psalm 25:8 “Good and upright [is] the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way.”

Because God is “good, upright”, loving, and faithful, He will “teach sinners” and guides the “humble”, those who sense their need for divine help.

The best teacher there is shows us the way. Jesus was our example. If we are to be Christians, we must become Christlike.

Galatians 2:20 “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

The goal of every believer in Christ should be to learn to be more like Jesus every day.

Psalm 25:9 “The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way.”

What I took from this is that God's goodness, His love and His righteousness are revealed in His provision for salvation for you and me.

We know that the Lord does not like a proud and haughty spirit in a person. Jesus was meek, even though He was Emmanuel (God with us). We are told in the Scriptures that Moses was a very meek man as well. The meek can be easily taught.

1 Peter 3:4 “But [let it be] the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, [even the ornament] of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.”

We must humble ourselves and repent, then the Lord will save us.

Psalm 25:10 “All the paths of the LORD [are] mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.”

We are all sinners; and Christ came into the world to save sinners, to teach sinners, to call sinners to repentance. We value a promise by the character of him that makes it; we therefore depend upon God’s promises. All the paths of the Lord, that is, all his promises and all his providences, are mercy and truth. In all God’s dealings his people may see his mercy displayed, and his word fulfilled, whatever afflictions they are now exercised with.

Sin is disobeying God. Those who want to please God, try to obey all of His instructions.

1 Samuel 15:22 “And Samuel said, Hath the LORD [as great] delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey [is] better than sacrifice, [and] to hearken than the fat of rams.”

1 John 2:3 “And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.”

The sign then that we are a believer, is we keep His commandments

Psalm 25:11 “For thy name’s sake, O LORD, pardon mine iniquity; for it [is] great.”

“Pardon mine iniquity, for it is great”: A maturing disciple develops an increasing sensitivity to sin which drives him more consistently to an appropriation of the promises of God’s pardoning grace (compare verse 18b).

This was prayed in the name of Jesus. Forgive me Lord of my sin because you are the great God that forgives. We see an admission of guilt which is the first step toward forgiveness.

1 John 1:9 “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us [our] sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

When we pray, it is important to pray to the Father in the name of Jesus.

Psalm 25:12 “What man [is] he that feareth the LORD? him shall he teach in the way [that] he shall choose.”

The statement in this verse is intended to include every man; or to be universal. Wherever one is found who has the character here referred to, or whoever he may be, of him what is here affirmed will be true, that God will lead him in the way that he shall choose. This (Compare Psalms 15, 24) serves as an introductory vehicle to the hallmarks of genuine discipleship.

“That feareth the Lord”: That is, a true worshipper of Yahweh, or that is truly a pious man (Psalm 5:7). “Him shall he teach.” He will guide, or instruct him (See Psalm 25:9).

“In the way that he shall choose”: The way that the person ought to choose. Or, in other words, in the right way. It is not the way that God shall choose, but the way that the pious person ought to choose. God will so instruct him that he shall find the true path.

Proverbs 9:10 “The fear of the LORD [is] the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy [is] understanding.”

Wisdom is a gift from God. Knowledge is accumulated learning. To get knowledge, we must be willing to be taught. If we truly humble ourselves and ask God to teach us His ways, He will teach us all truth.

Psalm 25:13 “His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth.”

There is no greater peace than the peace that comes from knowing you are saved, and should you die to this world, you would be in heaven. Christians are the seed of Abraham and heirs according to the promise.

Galatians 3:29 “And if ye [be] Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”

Abraham was promised the Promised Land.

Psalm 25:14 “The secret of the LORD [is] with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant.”

Jesus spoke in parables, so that the unbelieving world would not understand the secrets He was revealing to His children. Every time you look into the sky and see a rainbow, you should remember the covenant God made with man. The Bible reveals God to the believer. The Holy Spirit teaches us all truth. Jesus kept no secrets from His own. He showed them and us, as much of the Father as we can bear at this time. The Bible itself is a revealing of God to mankind.

Psalm 25:15 “Mine eyes [are] ever toward the LORD; for he shall pluck my feet out of the net.”

Believers are not at home in this world. We may be in the world, but we are not of the world. Our eyes, like David’s, should be turned to the heavenlies. We are told, when things in this world become almost unbearable, to look up and rejoice for our

redemption draweth nigh. We may be entangled in the flesh in this earth, but we must look up from whence cometh our help. Our help cometh from the Lord.

Psalms 121:2 “My help [cometh] from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.”

My trust is in him, and my expectation of relief is from him only.

Psalm 25:16 “Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I [am] desolate and afflicted.”

We may be looking toward heaven, and still be facing problems here on the earth. Desolate above, means lonely. Afflicted above, means depressed. If we start looking at the circumstances around us, it is enough to depress a person. Look with me at the next verse at what happens in the end.

Luke 21:26 “Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.”

As I said in the beginning: look up and rejoice, for your redemption draweth nigh.

Psalm 25:17 “The troubles of my heart are enlarged: [O] bring thou me out of my distresses.”

We are told of God not to let our heart be troubled. God will bring us out of our distresses, but we must have faith that He will. Trust God, and He will deliver you

Psalm 25:18 “Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins.”

See Psalm 25:16. This is a repetition of earnest pleading, as if God still turned away from him, and did not stoop to regard him. In trouble and distress piety thus pleads with God, and repeats the earnest supplication for His help. Though God seems not to regard the prayer, faith does not fail, but renews the supplication, confident that He will still hear and save.

David like so many of us, is connecting the sin he has committed with the affliction and pain he has now. Some illness is brought on by sin, but not all.

James 5:14-15 “Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:” “And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.”

Notice the word (if). We must also, notice that the prayer of faith shall save the sick

Psalm 25:19 “Consider mine enemies; for they are many; and they hate me with cruel hatred.”

They hated Jesus, so they will hate His followers. We like David, can say to God, consider these many enemies that surround me. They may hate us, but God fights our battles, and it does not make any difference how many they are. Look at the great promise from God that David could depend on, and we can depend on, too.

Psalms 91:7 “A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; [but] it shall not come nigh thee.”

Psalm 25:20 “O keep my soul, and deliver me: let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee.”

Or “life”, which was in danger, his enemies seeking for it. Wherefore he applies to God that gave it, and who had hitherto held him in it, to preserve it. God is the keeper of His people in a spiritual sense. They cannot keep themselves from sin, Satan, and the world. But he is able to keep them from falling, and therefore they pray to him that he would keep them. And they have reason to believe they shall be kept by his power, through faith, unto salvation.

“And deliver me”: As out of the hands of his present enemies, so from all evil, from the evils of the world. From the evil one, Satan, from the evil of sin, and out of all affliction and troubles.

“Let me not be ashamed”: For I put my trust in thee (see note on Psalm 25:2).

Psalm 25:21 “Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee.”

Though I have greatly offended thee, yet remember that I have dealt honestly and sincerely with mine enemies, whilst they have dealt falsely and injuriously with me. And therefore judge between them and me, and deal with me according to the righteousness of my cause, and carriage towards them.

“For I wait on thee”: In the use of means for deliverance and safety. The Targum is, “for I trust in thy word”.

Integrity in the verse above, means innocence.

Proverbs 2:7 “He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: [he is] a buckler to them that walk uprightly.”

Even the worldly appreciate a person who is honest and upright in all of his dealings. God appreciates these virtues even more than the world does. He will keep us in His loving care, if we are honest and upright. He said, “As ye have done it unto the least of these, ye have done it unto me”.

Psalm 25:22 “Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.”

David was not only concerned for himself, but for the whole nation of Israel, which was involved in trouble through this unnatural rebellion of his son, and many of his subjects. And no doubt he may have a further view to the redemption of the church of God, the spiritual Israel, by the Messiah. And his sense may be, that God would send the promised Redeemer and Savior, to redeem his people from all their iniquities. From the law, its curses and condemnation. To ransom them out of the hands of Satan, that is stronger than they. And to deliver them from all their enemies, and from death itself, the last enemy, which will put an end to all their troubles (Isa. 35:10).

The shift from the individual to the community is really not surprising, since the welfare of the theocratic people is inextricably connected to the covenant individual (compare Psalm 51:18-19).

David realizes that he is weak and has sinned, but God forgave him. He now is asking for forgiveness and redemption for his fellows. It is interesting to me that not only the physical house of Israel, but the spiritual house as well ask for this same thing. We Christians, as soon as we have been redeemed, begin to cry to God to redeem our families and our friends. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so. Let them bring all their friends and loved ones to be redeemed too.