

## Psalm 130 From despair to rescue

**<sup>1</sup> From the depths of my despair I call to you, Lord. <sup>2</sup> Hear my cry, O Lord; listen to my call for help!**

**<sup>3</sup> If you, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand their ground? <sup>4</sup> But with you there is forgiveness; therefore you are honoured.**

**<sup>5</sup> I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his promise I put my hope. <sup>6</sup> My soul waits for the Lord**

**more than watchmen wait for the dawn,  
(yes), more than watchmen wait for the dawn.**

**<sup>7</sup> Let God's people put their hope in the Lord, for with the Lord is unfailing love and with him is full redemption. <sup>8</sup> He himself will save his people from all their sins.**

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How easy do you find it to admit you are wrong?

Is there something you have done recently, that eats away at you & bothers you? Is there something you have done – that you wish it would just go away, and never be remembered again by anyone?

It's easy for us to feel cornered at times – often by our very own mistakes. We do things that we wish we hadn't done. We say things that we later regret. Our thoughts can play havoc with us. Just when we feel strong, we can get caught off guard and find ourselves feeling vulnerable amongst our closest companions.

Where do you turn to when you have messed up and you can't see a safe way out?

Psalm 130 is a Psalm that helps us get back on track, when we have messed up – when can't see a clear way forward.

Most Sundays, we have a Psalm in our Bible readings. The Psalms help us to express a full range of emotions that people feel about life from day to day. They are songs of the heart – helping us to bring everything before God, or before other people – whether it be good or bad.

Some of the Psalms are an expression of pure joy to God. But overall, the Psalms tend to start in a bad place filled with fear; and then finally the end up in a good place supported & carried by God.

As people, we are incredibly privileged to be able to speak to God our Creator at any time – knowing that God hears our prayers... whether it be prayers of joy, or cries of desperation.

Psalm 130 today certainly starts with desperation - yet it ends up on a strong note of hope & trust – trusting in God’s willingness to help us.

The opening lines are an honest cry to God. There’s no bottling up of emotions here... The Psalmist says,

*<sup>1</sup> From the depths of my despair I call to you, Lord.*

*<sup>2</sup> Hear my cry, O Lord; listen to my call for help!*

Clearly this is not a Psalm from a self-reliant heart.

This is not a Psalm from a self-sufficient spirit.

This is not a Psalm from a puffed-up person ready to defend themselves in every argument.

But quite the opposite - this is a Psalm from a humble spirit. This is a Psalm from a vulnerable spirit that cries out to God. This is a Psalm from a defenceless spirit that knows the human condition all-too-well. This is a Psalm from a spirit that is fragile. Yes, this Psalm is realistic. It’s from an open, honest-to-God, searching heart.

The Psalmist here, had good reason to be ‘pleading’ with God. This person was bothered by their own mistakes, and maybe the mistakes of others - just wanting it to all go away. The Psalmist prayed to God, saying,

*<sup>3</sup> If you, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand their ground? <sup>4</sup> But with you there is forgiveness; therefore you are honoured.*

I wonder how many people have never felt free & safe to express their sins to God? And yet, what safer place is there to share our mistakes than to start talking with God?

Very early in this Psalm, we have this turning point – a person in deep despair, knows their mistakes, knows they have messed things up, they feel the tension of sin between ‘them & God’.

It is always a turning point for us, every time we realise that we can’t stand our ground with a list of mistakes hanging on our shoulders. No-one needs the burden of sin hanging around any longer than necessary. And how dark it is when people visualise God holding a grudge against them, because certain expectations have not been met.

It may well be that we are the ones who keep a record of our own sins or the sins of one another. At the same time, God is the only one who is guaranteed not to keep a record of sins against us! With God there is forgiveness - therefore God gains our respect, our honour, our reverence, & our worship.

What we often have trouble realising is that the forgiveness was always there first. This forgiveness is grounded in the cross & resurrection of Jesus Christ, and it spoken to us again & again & again as we embrace what the Lord keeps teaching us. God's forgiveness is grounded in the entire life of Jesus, and it spreads from person to person as people are baptised with the name of the Father, Son & Holy Spirit. God's forgiveness is grounded in the efforts of Jesus Christ alone, and we eat & drink of this forgiveness in a the most unique meal ever – the meal of holy communion in the body & blood of Christ. The forgiveness has always been there first – as a gift from God to each & every person. The ancient Psalm is renewed in our time as we give-up trying to prove ourselves to God, to now receive all the forgiveness God has sent in Christ Jesus.

For anyone who was visualising God holding a grudge against them, this picture is no longer a true picture. The true picture is God embracing each person, for Jesus has fully paid the price of every sin.

And what does this forgiveness mean for daily living?  
How does this forgiveness impact our thinking each day?

The writer of Psalm 130 knew he was forgiven. All was okay between God & the psalmist. So, in the realities of life, the psalmist could patiently wait for God to make the best way forward in God's chosen time. And this is how forgiven people can live. When our mistakes are too hard to fix, when our troubles are too hard to work out – we wait upon God; and put our hope & our trust in Him.

How much do we wait upon God when we feel like we are out of options?  
Psalm 130 teaches us to wait,

more than watchmen wait for the dawn,

(yes), more than watchmen wait for the dawn.

This is not about how much or how little you do. It is about your friendship with God. It is about your prayer life with God. It is about trusting in God, hoping in God, looking forwarding to something genuinely good & holy & helpful for you & those around you. Trusting God to bless you & use you for good things is what we call the sanctified life. We learn to trust God in every kind of situation – all day, every day.

In this way, God not only rescues us from sin in the heavenly places, but God is also keen to guide us - even in the middle of our mistakes that plague us in daily life.

Psalm 130 leaves us with hope & encouragement. Just think how much God can do with one person. God can take a person in deep despair, and renew them with forgiveness, refresh them with hope, and guide them daily as they trust in his help.

God bless you as you seek his help in your life today. Amen.