

- 1 <<To the chief Musician on Neginoth upon Sheminith, A Psalm of David.>> O LORD, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.
- 2 Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I am weak: O LORD, heal me; for my bones are vexed.
- 3 My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O LORD, how long?
- 4 Return, O LORD, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies' sake.
- 5 For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?
- 6 I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears.
- 7 Mine eye is consumed because of grief; it waxeth old because of all mine enemies.
- 8 ¶ Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the LORD hath heard the voice of my weeping.
- 9 The LORD hath heard my supplication; the LORD will receive my prayer.
- 10 Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed: let them return and be ashamed suddenly.  
(Psalm 6)

We have before us the prayer of a man who has sinned and knows it. As a child of God, he knows the Lords chastening and scourging to be forthcoming. He does not reject God's chastening (the obedient child expects it), but pleads that it will be *loving* and *merciful* chastening. He requests that he be spared God's anger, His hot displeasure. Such is the distinction between those who are God's children by faith in Christ and those who are not. God lovingly and mercifully chastens His own, but those who have not Christ can expect nothing but God's unmitigated wrath.

Notice the condition of this repentant sinner: He is *weak*. He has no more power to rebel against God any longer. He has given up. Nor has he power to forsake his sin. He trusts in God to deliver him. He is *vexed*, physically and emotionally sick. Sin, disobedience, alienation from God and consequent alienation from fellow man, will vex your bones and destroy your health. He is *weary*. He has had no rest since losing his peace and fellowship with God. He tosses, groans and weeps all the night. He is *grief-stricken*. His sins have become hateful to him. He would undo them if it were in his power, but it is not. They have been done, cannot be undone, and so he grieves over them. He *fears*. The person who trusts in God knows that his safety lies in God, and in God alone. Feeling now that God has turned away from him because of his sins, he fears his enemies will take advantage of him. He feels vulnerable without God's protection.

Five things he cries for: Mercy. God's forgiveness and forbearance. Mercy is for sinners, transgressors. He counts himself among that number. He cries for God's return to him. Only a child of God can pray this prayer. Others have never known the fellowship of God and must cry for Him to come to them. He asks for deliverance from the evil that has befallen him and might yet come upon him as consequence of his sin. He prays for salvation from all that would bring him down to the grave in disgrace. And he prays for healing. He would not only be forgiven of his trespasses, saved from their consequences, but would have his former physical and spiritual health restored. He knows there is full salvation in Christ.

Such prayers by repentant sinners will always be heard. God will surely forgive, He will save, heal and restore, and once again be the Protector and Keeper of His own.

-C.M.