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Psalm 63

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Psalm 63.

Topics.

- God, you are my God; I seek you; my soul thirsts for you.
- Early in the morning my soul and flesh thirst for God.
- I looked on God in the sanctuary, his steadfast love is better than life.
- God is my help, and in the shadow of his wings I will sing for joy.
- All who seek to destroy my life shall go down to the depths of the earth.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

INTRODUCTION

Psalms are songs and prayers offered to God by the nation Israel, they cover the range of human emotion, expressing praise, faith, victory, sorrow, despair, depression, frustration and the troubled heart of a mourner. They contrast the righteous with the wicked, and include the wisdom and the treasure of God's word. Psalms were written at the beginning of the 15th century BC and probably collected in their final form in the 3rd century.

BOOK TWO (PSALM 42-72)

PSALM 63:1

A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.

God, you are my God; I Seek You; My Soul thirsts for You.

- **Psalm 63:1:** O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.

David draws the picture of himself as a thirsty man in a waterless land. This may be a literal statement of his condition since the wilderness of Judah which he wandered as an exile through is a desert land of arid mountains and deep ravines where there are no pools or streams of running waters and all is hot and dusty where men and beasts faint, and their tongues thirst for water. Such was the wilderness of Judea where he now was, and where he was destitute of God's house, and wanted comfort and refreshment for his soul, which he thirsted and longed after, as a thirsty man longs after water in a desert place. Most believers will at some time during their spiritual journey experience dry and thirsty times where instead of there being running streams of living water and gushing fountains of God's grace in the heart there is dry deserts and barrenness of Spirit and they know that only God is able to allay the emptiness so their whole being thirst and longs for Him, such was the condition of David at this time. The expression, "O God, you are my God," (v1) carries the following ideas:

- David's strong and firm faith enabled him to claim God as his very own. He has no doubts about his possession of God as his very own personal God, nor should any other faithful believer have any doubt that God is their personal God. An earthly father may have many children, but

each of his children has only one father. Likewise, God the heavenly Father has many children worldwide, but they only have one heavenly Father therefore all can pray, "God my God."

- God is David's highest esteem, his best thought, his most fervent desire and it is only in God that he places his trust and confidence.
- While we may refer to God as our God and to his general character as we pray to him, we can also have in our minds some specific attribute of His character such as His power, mercy, love, truth, faithfulness, etc., as the special focus of our appeal.

Early in the morning: (v1) carries the following ideas:

- Before the dawn of day, my waking thoughts are toward you.
- Before the beginning of the day and before all other things begin, I will set my mind upon you.
- Before all other influences and things come in to distract and divert attention or control and direct me I will seek you.

God's favour was the supreme desire of David's heart and from that desire he made God the earliest and first focus of his search and the focus of his first and best thoughts. A believer's desire to seek God and make Him the first in their life and in their affections and desires and the desire to spend time with Him at the dawn of each returning day is certain evidence that true faith and love is flourishing in the heart and mind.

NOTE: seeking God early in the morning should not be made a dogmatic or legalistic law, since God can be sought in morning at noon and in the evening and the faithful walk with Him every moment of every the day and know that their happiness from God is with them always as they walk in the weary desert of this fallen corrupted world.

My soul thirsts for you: (v1) implies the utmost intenseness and fervency of desire as one's whole body languishes and thirst for water in a desert wilderness where there is no supply of water to refresh the body. In this Psalm David's cry, "My soul thirsts for you," carries the following four ideas:

1. My soul thirsts for you. (v1).
2. My flesh faints for you. (v1).
3. My soul will be satisfied with you. (v5).
4. My soul clings to you. (v8).

These four expressions of emotion are all embraced in the song of this little Psalm. Each one of them expresses to some degree the emotions of all the faithful, every heart that knows its own needs will thirst after God. Human nature is such that we are a bundle of appetites and desires that are always active. One season our spiritual walk is like a hungry man walking through a dry and barren desert where there is no water and then the season changes from dry ground to lush green grass and the dark silence is broken by the song of merry birds and a table of the most tasty foods is seen spread where once there was only wilderness. Those who thirst after God will be satisfied, they can have as much of God as they desire if they:

- Do all they can to live a lifestyle that honours God's name and brings a good testimony to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Love their neighbour as themselves (meaning do-good to others and not harm).
- Trust in Christ's righteousness and God's grace and not in their own righteousness, self-effort and or in strictly adhering to ceremonial rites, holy days and religious customs and traditions.

- Make God the supreme desire of their heart and mind.
- Set Christ upon the throne of their heart and mind and make him their best thought and supreme King.

The heart and mind thirsting after God is satisfied by God's nearness to us. When we have God we have enough, this is not true about anything else worldly goods which most run after seeking to fulfil the empty space in the innermost being are not the fulfilling of the need of the human heart. Nothing except God Himself will fill all the corners of the heart. There is always something lacking in all other satisfactions. Clearly it is true that earthly good will satisfy certain sides, angles, and facets of our complex nature, but they will always leave others unsatisfied. The table that is spread in the world satisfies certain longings, but will always fail to provide for the greatest of them, but the heart that thirsts for God will be fully satisfied when He enters it. God's love is an infinite desire to give Himself, but we must with longing open our hearts to have him enter. When all doubt is removed and we believe that He is willing to give Himself to us as an earthy father is willing to receive with open arms his repentant child back into his home God the heavenly father will surely come and make his home with us.

Isaiah wrote:

- Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. (Isaiah 55:1).

Since it is in God humanity lives and moves, and has their being, it takes all of persons' pride, obstinacy and indifference to keep God out of their heart. Thirsting, in all languages is frequently used for earnestly longing after, or passionately desiring anything. Here it carries the idea of eagerly desiring to approach God, to have access to Him, and to enjoy His presence, His enjoyment and communion with Him. It expresses the idea of the heart desiring to be glued to the LORD like a strong adhesive and pressing onwards for more and more. Thirst for water is a longing and hungering after what is one of the most essential sustainers of life; the whole person must yield to its power there is no overcoming the thirst without tasting and drinking water. Likewise, it is with that thirst for God only God himself can satisfy the craving of the heart and mind that hungers after Spiritual life here in this world and on into the next.

My flesh faints (longeth in KJV) for you: (v1) the New Testament teaches that the flesh never longs after the Lord, but rather it lusts against the Spirit

- For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. (Gal. 5:17).

The expression "my soul and my flesh longs for the LORD" as used by David in this Psalm is not in the context of teaching doctrine, but used as an expression to signify that David's whole body, mind, heart, thoughts, emotions and passions (i.e., the sum total of his whole being) longs for God's presence, love and grace to flood every part of his body from head to foot. David was fully aware that only God can fully satisfy the longings of his heart and that all other methods of satisfying human appetites (whether lower or higher) fail in their promise to do so. Those who love silver are not satisfied with silver and those who love abundance and gain will find that no matter how much they increase in wealth it continually loses its power to fulfil and the less they can do without it the less it does for them. In contrast to the promises and lure of worldly riches too drink of God not only removes all thirst, but our capacity for receiving Him can be indefinitely expanded because He is eternal neither age or circumstances diminish His infinite love and grace and the more we have of God, the more we long for Him, and the more we long for Him the more we possess Him. It is a good spiritual exercise for us to use this Psalm of David's to examine our own hearts and ask ourselves, "Do I thirst after God?"

I Looked on God in the Sanctuary, His Love is better than Life.

- **Psalm 63:2:** So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory.
³Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you.

David looked through the veil of ceremonies to the invisible One behind them. Often David's heart had been gladdened by communion with God in outward ceremonial rites praises and worship and for this blessing he cries again. It is a glorious truth that God's power and glory, love and grace are not confined in religious places or localities, but can be found and felt in the home and at work and enjoyed wherever there is a heart that longs and thirsts to behold God. In a wider sense the faithful are always in a weary land, for this world is not their home or their place of rest since their true citizenship is not of this world, but a heavenly one in a country that lies far beyond the river in a land so blessed they shall hunger and thirst no more, but shall see the face of their God, and his name shall be in their foreheads. David understood he was not a citizen of this world, but of the heavenly world to come he did not thirst for worldly riches or any earthly thing, but only for God's steadfast love and grace nothing short of these would content his heart.

PSALM 63:4-7

God is My Help, and in the Shadow of His Wings I will Sing for Joy.

- **Psalm 63:4-7:** So I will bless you as long as I live; in your name I will lift up my hands.
⁵My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich food, and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips, ⁶when I remember you upon my bed, and meditate on you in the watches of the night; ⁷for you have been my help, and in the shadow of your wings I will sing for joy.

David finishes his prayer as he almost always does by joyfully praising God and thanking him for his help and comfort. The words, "In the shadow of your wings I will sing for joy," (v7) mean that in the midst of hardships troubles and sorrows David takes refuge in the shadow of God's wings. The picture is of a baby eagle gathering under the wings of the king of birds and of the parent eagle feeding and protecting the helpless little chick from every type of predator that seeks to devour it. In the book of Deuteronomy, it is written of Israel:

- The LORD found him (Israel) in a desert land, and in the howling waste of the wilderness; he encircled him, he cared for him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. ¹¹Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, that flutters over its young, spreading out its wings, catching them, bearing them on its pinions (Deut. 32:11).

Here the LORD is pictured as an eagle caring for his young and building nests of warmth and spreading out his wings over them to shelter and protect them from harm and when they do fall catching them and lifting them up to be with him and his family. The nest being built can be seen to symbolise God's love, grace and mercy, His wings can be seen as His Spirit and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and He lifts us up by His forgiveness.

NOTICE: God encircled His people and cared for them as the apple of His eye, meaning they are His greatest love. The faithful who belong to His global family will make up His treasured possession in the Lord's Kingdom.

The prophet Isaiah wrote:

- They who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint. (Isa. 40:31).

This can be applied to a particular trial, sorrow or grief that we are patiently praying will pass, but its ultimate fulfilment will be when the Lord Jesus Christ returns in glory to gather those who are his to himself. Those who endure to this glorious day will be raised to immortality and eternal life where happiness is everlasting and suffering, sorrow and grief is swallowed up in joy and laughter and weariness and strife is replaced with endless vitality and peace.

PSALM 63:8-11

All who Seek to Destroy My Life shall go down to Depths of Earth.

- **Psalm 63:8-11:** My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me. ⁹But those who seek to destroy my life shall go down into the depths of the earth; ¹⁰they shall be given over to the power of the sword; they shall be a portion for jackals. ¹¹But the king shall rejoice in God; all who swear by him shall exult, for the mouths of liars will be stopped.

Three keys to David's life, strength and joy was:

1. He was forever aware that whoever persecutes the faithful and speaks lies and deception against them and plots their ruin and destruction will go down to the darkness of the grave, but he will rise to immortality and eternal happiness and everlasting glory.
2. His ever-present attitude was one of thirst; he was constantly seeking after the LORD, not for worldly riches and earthly goods, but to know God's steadfast love, for him it was better than life itself since it satisfied his heart and mind.
3. David would reflect on the help God had been to him and cling to Him as a vine clings to a branch for its strength and life.

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David's life was one of opposites; on the battle field he was probably one of the greatest warriors of the Old Testament who with courage faced the enemy without fear. Even at a very young age he took on the Philistine Giant Goliath with only a few stones and yet as we read his Psalms we see a humble man devoted to God with a tender heart, sometimes broken, other times tearfully repentant and in deep despair seeking and hungering after the LORD'S steadfast love, forgiveness and grace.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.
