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PSALM 13

Do you like sad songs? When a song comes on the radio that makes you want to cry or tells about the experience of a broken-hearted person, what does that do to you? Sad songs touch people in ways that joyous songs do not. Sad songs can make one look inwardly to examine oneself. Sad songs can make us upset at the “establishment” or an oppressor. Sad songs allow us to sympathize with the singer. I believe Psalm 13 is one of the saddest psalms we read. David asks if God will forget him forever (v. 1). How sad! Have we been in situations where we felt alone or abandoned? This is how David feels. Can we sympathize? I like the way *The Israel Bible* translates verse two. It says, “How long will I have cares on my mind, grief in my heart all day? How long will my enemy have the upper

this? Verses 3, 5, and 6 show us that within this man still beats a heart of hope. Unlike sad songs men might write today that leave us crying or simply feeling bad for the condition of the singer, David writes a psalm that declares that in such overwhelming sadness, there is hope. “*I have trusted in thy mercy*”(v. 5). He didn’t deny God had any mercy left! There is still mercy for God’s people, and it abounds. Are we aware of God’s mercy, or are we only seeing the sadness? Often, when we are hurting the worst, is when God is the closest. He cares! Such times have been compared to when a storm rolls through the land. Lightning flashes, the thunder rolls, violent winds blow, and the rains drench the earth. Yet, we all know that that bright, shining sun is on the other side of the clouds. It has not gone

after the storm is gone. So it is with God! *"I will sing unto the Lord, because he hath dealt bountifully with me"* (v. 6). Amen! I know this is not the only sad song in the Psalms, but this song definitely causes us to look inward and examine and see where our faith really lies! Psalm 13 shows us where our hope needs to be! Where is your hope? Is it in men or God? Where is your faith when the storms rage (Ps. 13:6)?

"Enemies From Within" (Ps. 7). The seventh psalm reminds us that while enemies can come from "without," they can also come from "within"! Paul warned the Ephesians about this reality with Christians in Acts 20:28-32. Please note that the seventh psalm was penned as a result of the actions of *"Cush, the Benjamite."* There is some confusion about who "Cush" might have been, but there is no mistaking the term "Benjamite." Remember that David was from Judah. Benjamin was one of the other Israelite tribes. This means David was crying to God for deliverance from his own people! Sadly, harm will come to us at times from those closest to us. This is something we do not like to think about, but remember that even Jesus went to *"his own, and his own received him not"* (Jn. 1:11)! It was Paul who warned the elders that *"of your own selves*

shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:30). Another example is Diotrophes (III Jn. 9-10). He would have been among the brethren John addressed in his letter. He would not have been someone from "outside" but a member of the congregation who loved the *"preeminence"*! As we read Psalm 7, it doesn't escape my notice that David cries for God's justice in this case. Punishment needs to come from the Lord in this matter (Ps. 7:10-11). It is not for us to take vengeance on others (Rom. 12:19). *"The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God"* (Jas. 1:20). We need to read the pronouns carefully in this song, but notice how the men who turn to wickedness will hurt themselves in the end (Ps. 7:15-16). This is the way of the wicked. Wicked schemes and actions will ultimately fail! Sin will not prevail, but righteousness will (v. 9-10)! David declares this knowledge, but no doubt, it is still hard to endure under such conditions (v. 1, 14). How much harder is it when we see people acting in an evil way who should know better? Remember, this was a *"Benjamite"* who had done this to David! It was not a Philistine, Ammonite, Moabite, or some other "heathen" from a foreign nation! A few things we

can learn from this psalm include: 1. Let us make sure we are not acting as the Benjamite. Let us be a people who are living right and speaking right (Phil. 4:8-9; Jn. 13:34-35). 2. Let us understand that even brethren can disappoint us at times. Sometimes, they do worse than this and berate and hurt us. Let us be like David and trust that God sees and knows what is happening in those situations. He will take care of things if we are patient and allow Him to do His work (Ps. 7:1, 9-11)! Reread Psalm 7 and take comfort in God who sees and knows. Trust Him, and let us find the good even when hard times are upon us, and people (especially brethren) wish to hurt us (II Tim. 3:12). Take all of your care to God as David did (I Pet. 5:7), and know God sees and is ready to help us in our troubles. **"Change Your Way Of Thinking!"** Last week, our young people studied Romans 12:1-2 in our Sunday afternoon study. Romans 12 teaches us that we must not be *"conformed to this world, but transformed"* if we are to please God. Furthermore, this transformation comes from the *"renewing of your mind."* Put simply, if we are going to please God, we need to change our way of thinking. We need to stop thinking worldly thoughts and following worldly schemes and instead think as

God thinks! How can I think as God thinks? Some say this is impossible, but it is not. For example, I can think like others in my peer group. I think like them as I am around them and begin to adopt their way of thinking or reasoning. This is why Solomon warns against going with angry people (Prov. 22:24-25). In like manner, if I wish to think as God thinks, then I need to spend time with Him. I need to spend time reading and studying His inspired word (Eph. 3:4; I Tim. 4:13, 16; II Tim. 2:15). I need to spend time in prayer to God (I Thess. 5:17). The longer I spend time with God, learning how He thinks and reasons, the more I will think like Him and have a "renewal" in my mind. Of course, once my mind changes, my life must follow (Phil. 4:8-9; Heb. 5:12-14)! Are you ready for that kind of change? I hope so! Change your way of thinking to reflect God's truth and see the blessings that come into your life as a result! – Jarrod Jacobs

People, Places, and Things of the **BIBLE**



1st Jerusalem Evidence of Quake From

Archaeologists excavating in Jerusalem, near the Temple Mount and a First-Temple-era wall unearthed evidence of an 8th century BC earthquake. The earliest floor of the southernmost room of a building bore evidence of destruction, but not by fire, and was dated to a time period when no known conquest of Jerusalem occurred. Stones from an upper part of the northern walls had collapsed, shattering a row of vessels that had been along the wall beneath. The excavation directors from the Israel Antiquities Authority, Dr. Joe Uziel and Orit Chalaf, believe this corresponds to the great earthquake which occurred in the days of King Uzziah, and is mentioned in Amos 1:1 and Zech. 14:5. Archaeological evidence for “Uzziah’s earthquake” has been found at other sites in Israel, including at Hazor and Tell es-Safi/Gath, but this is the first time archaeologists have identified evidence of this earthquake in Jerusalem. A similar 8th-century destruction layer was noted in a collapsed building 100 meters south of the current dig, which was excavated by Yigal Shiloh in the 1970’s, but it was not associated with Uzziah’s earthquake at that time. The multi-year coronavirus pandemic is now firmly branded as a benchmark in modern memory. Likewise, in the first verse of the Book of Amos, the 8th century BCE biblical prophet referred to “two years before the earthquake” as an anchor to the events he was about to relate. Two centuries later, the prophet Zechariah again referred to this destructive earthquake period, so deeply was it ingrained in the collective psyche. Now, for the first time, a team of Israel Antiquities Authority archaeologists in Jerusalem’s City of David report that they have found unprecedented concrete evidence of this 8th century BCE earthquake in the ancient capital. In an upcoming research paper, the archaeologists chart, for example, that in one particular 8th century BCE structure the destruction layer did not show signs of fire, yet other factors suggested the building had been damaged in a traumatic event, apparently in an earthquake. “This was most notable on the earliest floor of the southernmost room,” they write. “In this room, a row of smashed vessels was uncovered along its northern wall, above which fallen stones had been found. It appears that these stones were the upper part of the walls of the room, which had collapsed, destroying the vessels which had been set along the wall.” Until now, the earliest destruction layer of Jerusalem comes from the Babylonian conquest of 586 BCE. For archaeologists, an earlier historical anchor — if proven through hard, securely dated evidence — serves as an important

