

There are times in our lives when we face some negative things that we do not deserve. When this happens it is depressing. That certainly was the context of Psalm 5. In that Psalm, David walks us through the steps he took to get out from the discouragement when he had not done anything to deserve it.

But there are other times in our lives when we face negative things and we do deserve it. We have done wrong and made wrong decisions and as a result we deserve the negatives. When God chastises His people because they have done wrong, he will often use enemies as part of the disciplinary process.

When that happens, God's people can become very depressed and discouraged and in fact we should be in this condition. **But there is a way out of it. Psalm 6 is the key to getting out of depression and discouragement when we deserve to be depressed.**

It is a psalm of David and it is a prayer for God's grace and mercy when in trouble which we deserve to be in. This psalm was originally written for the choir director and was to be accompanied upon an eight string instrument. The point the psalm communicates is this:

WHEN WE ARE DESERVEDLY DEPRESSED AND DISCOURAGED BECAUSE GOD'S CHASTISING HAND IS UPON US, THE WAY OUT OF IT IS TO PRAY TO THE GOD OF GRACE AND REALIZE HE WILL HEAR, ANSWER AND DELIVER HIS PEOPLE.

One thing God wants His people to do when they are being chastened by Him is to run to Him. If we had been doing that more in the first place, we would not have done the thing for which He is chastening us.

As we journey through these psalms, it becomes more and more evident that the key to getting out of any form of discouragement and depression is to go to God. Our first action should be to go to God, not a psychologist, not a psychiatrist, not a help group, not medication. We should go to God. This is a great lesson David learned in life and if more people would learn this lesson, much of their depression would vanish.

This psalm breaks down nicely into three main psalm segments:

PSALM SEGMENT #1 – David's prayer request for relief. **6:1-5**

This is the first of seven "penitential psalms" (32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143). David was suffering great mental anguish over his sin and what he had done. There are five requests David makes here:

Request #1 - David's request concerning God's rebuke and chastisement. **6:1**

David apparently knew that he deserved to be rebuked and he deserved to be chastised by God. In fact, **he does not ask God to spare him of His rebuke and chastisement. What he does ask God to do is not to deal with him out of his anger or wrath.**

My translation of the Hebrew here is that David is saying "not in the anger of you rebuke me or not in the wrath of you chasten me." The construction emphasizes the manner of chastisement. David does not want God punishing him out of his anger or wrath, so he prays and asks God not to do this. This is the same kind of prayer Jeremiah prayed, "Correct me, O LORD, but with justice; not with Thine anger, lest Thou bring me to nothing" (Jer. 10:24).

It is one thing to be disciplined by God; it is quite another thing to be disciplined by God out of His anger or wrath. Any believer who thinks it is not possible to do things that stir the fiery anger of God need to carefully consider this verse.

There are some who say that as a N.T. believer we never need to be concerned about discipline that comes from a God who is angry. Those who take that position cite a text like Hebrews 12:6 that says "whom the LORD loves, He disciplines." So any discipline comes from the love of God, not the anger of God. However, in Hebrews 10:31 the writer warns that it is a "terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God," and he addresses believers with this warning.

So we need to govern ourselves wisely so that we do not make God angry.

Request #2 - David's request for God's grace. **6:2a**

Every saint, whether O.T. or N.T., is a sinner and is in need of God's grace! The closer one actually is to God, the more he realizes this fact. In fact, H.A. Ironside said if one actually thinks he is becoming more and more perfect, he is totally out of fellowship with God because the closer one gets to God, the more one is overwhelmed with how far short of God's holiness he truly is (*Psalms*, p. 37).

The Scriptures, both O.T. and N.T., abound with the grace of God. Even when God has caused calamity to hit one of His servants when they deserve it, God is willing multiple times to deliver from His inflicted discipline by His amazing grace.

The Hebrew word "pining away" is one that means David was totally sad and feeble. The word literally presents the idea that David was so depressed his head was hanging down (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 58).

David appealed to the grace of God that he did not deserve or merit. The grace of God is able to help a struggling child of God when he is brought low because of his own rebellious choices.

Request #3 - David's request for God's healing . **6:2b-3**

The word “dismayed” that appears twice is one that means to be terrified to the point of trembling because one believes he will soon be destroyed (*Ibid.*, p. 104). David literally believed he was dying.

The bones refer to the material part and the soul refers to the immaterial part. David was in a terrible physical and emotional state of despair. He needed a healing from God and that is exactly what he asked God for.

We may observe that **verse 3** ends with a question “How long?” David is so emotional and frustrated that he does not even finish the thought. He needed God's deliverance and he needed it now.

Request #4 - David's request for God's return . **6:4a**

Now this is a request for God to personally return to David and start blessing him and using him again. God had left David in the sense that He was not blessing him or using him as He once had. David's soul was in total despair so he asked God to return to him and bless him again. This teaches us something important—a person's soul only has a sense of purpose when God is at the center of it. When God isn't, life is lonely and empty.

Request #5 - David's request for salvation . **6:4b-5**

David cried to God for deliverance from his terrible depression. Only God can save one from deep depression that has been brought on by wrong choices.

Notice from **verse 4** that David did not believe he deserved to be delivered, he appeals to the loving kindness and mercy of God. David presents himself as a totally helpless, needy person who is in desperate need of the mercy of God.

Now **verse 5** begins with a conjunction “for” which presents a reason or explanation why God should deliver him—if he died he would no longer be in a position to defend God, testify for God, or offer praise and thanksgiving to God.

If God would deliver David, David could become a great witnessing agent for the grace and mercy of God. Here is a tremendous reason to ask God to deliver us when we have blown it; it enables us to testify of the wonderful grace and mercy of God in having power to deliver us.

PSALM SEGMENT #2 – David's description of himself. **6:6-7**

David describes himself in these verses as an emotional wreck. He was very weary with sighing and groaning. He was physically and emotionally exhausted. He cried himself to sleep just about every night. David shed so many tears that his couch-like bed was drenched.

He cried so much that it affected his eyesight (verse 7). **This is the state sin will leave you in. Sin will not leave you happy. It will leave you totally and completely depressed.**

One thing that added to the weight of the sin and caused his depression was he was surrounded by adversaries. God was chastening David and adversaries were making life so miserable for David that he was crying and aging.

When you find yourself surrounded by enemies it can wear you down physically and emotionally. It can cause you to get old real fast.

Three observations:

- 1) At one time there was no stronger mind or confident person as David, but sin destroyed his confidence, his emotions and his life.
- 2) The depression David was in, he deserved. God was chastening David for his sin and instead of being happy in his sin, he was miserable because of his sin.
- 3) David did the one thing every believer who deserves to be depressed should do—he went straight to God. Sometimes people get emotional and irrational and start blabbing to other sinful, goofed up people when they should be praying to God.

PSALM SEGMENT #3 – David’s warnings to his enemies. **6:8-10**

Whenever David talked to God about his enemies, he always did so with a full expectancy that God would hear and answer. He had such a confidence in God that he would actually warn his enemies. There are three admonitions:

Admonition #1 - David warns his enemies to depart from him. **6:8-9a**

David warns his enemies to get away from him and stop making his life miserable. Their attack against David was something God classified as iniquity.

Now the basis for them getting away from David is that God had heard David’s prayer and He would answer it. David had an inward conviction that God was about to answer his prayers.

Their plotting and planning and their persecution was about to be punished by God so they would be very wise to back off and depart from saying and doing negative things against David.

Admonition #2 - David warns his enemies about their future shame . **6:9b-10a**

A.G. Clarke, in his commentary on the Psalms says, “Those who augment the sufferings of saints under discipline shall suffer shame. In the experience of God’s saints, the sun always breaks out after the showers” (*Studies in the Psalms*, p. 41).

Even if a servant of God deserves the chastisement of God, woe to the enemy who causes it because if that servant cries out to God, God will hear and he will answer and he will bring the culprits to sudden shame.

Admonition #3 - David warns his enemies about their future dismay. **6:10b**

That Hebrew word “dismay” is the same used in **verses 2-3**, which means to be terrified to the point of trembling because one senses he will soon be destroyed (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 104). David is warning his enemies that what they have done to him, God will do to them.

Whatever it was that they did in their attempt to destroy David, God would turn it back against them.

This is a very serious psalm. It is dangerous to lash out against one of God’s chosen servants.

Concluding Thoughts:

- 1) Believers who are depressed ought to be spending more time talking to God in prayer.**
- 2) Believers who are depressed because they have sinned and deserve to be depressed ought to honestly confess it to God and appeal for God’s loving kindness and mercy to deliver them from the depression.**
- 3) Adversaries who are opposing faithful servants of God, even if those servants deserve negatives, need to be forewarned that God will settle the score for the evil they have done.**
- 4) When God chastises us, He has His reasons:**
 - 1. To drive us to depend on Him.**
 - 2. To train us to be better soldiers in Christian war.**
 - 3. To intensify our hatred for sin.**
 - 4. To add to our knowledge of our own depravity.**
 - 5. To cause us to grow more and more in grace.**
 - 6. To wean us away from a love for this world.**
 - 7. To heighten our expectation of Glory.**
 - 8. To enable us to be great witnesses for God’s grace.**