

A CRY FOR MERCY

INTRO: We do not know the author or the time of the composition of this psalm, nor is it necessary. Always God's people look for mercy.
 -We have in this Psalm a cry in distress, a look of faith and hope inspired by listening to his Word, and leads to a pious walk.
 -Alienated from God by our sins, we have reconciliation in our Savior, Jesus Christ. He is our salvation and deliverance.

I. PROMPTED BY KNOWLEDGE OF FORMER MERCY

- A. The gracious covenant known.
 - 1. The Psalm begins with the name of our covenant God.
 - 2. It is God who has chosen his people.
 - 3. It is Jehovah who has established his relationship with us.
 - 4. It is Jehovah who will maintain and perfect that covenant fellowship.
- B. The wonderful forgiveness from sin in the past.
 - 1. God had forgiven his people in the past, both individually and collectively through the shedding of blood.
 - 2. There was forgiveness of sins by God NOT imputing them, Not bringing them forward to be reckoned.
 - 3. Instead there had been a wonderful covering of them by the imputation of righteousness by the redeemer.
 - 4. Therefore God's wrath was turned away.
 - 5. Old sins or new ones, old judgments or present wrath must not keep God's people from running to him in prayer.
- C. Jehovah's unchangeable faithfulness.
 - 1. Forgiveness and deliverance in the past encourages us to expect it in the future: fresh & continued tokens of love.
 - 2. God keeps covenant: no sins can make the LORD forget his covenant.
 - 3. Therefore the faithful are inspired and confident in prayer:
 - 4. Nothing contributes more effectually to encourage us to God's throne than remembrance of God's former benefits
 - 5. God's grace is the only ground of God's bounty and also of our prayers for new experiences of this grace.

II. DESPERATELY NEEDED BECAUSE OF SIN

- A. Sin estranges us from God.
 - 1. The Psalmist keenly feels distance between himself and God, between God's people and their God.
 - 2. He says, "Turn us, O God of our salvation, and cause thine anger toward us to cease (vs. 4)."
 - 3. "Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee (vs. 6)?"
 - 4. It is NOT that the LORD leaves us, but we have removed ourselves from him.
 - 5. We feel his just anger for our sins.
- B. The desire to be restored to fellowship.
 - 1. It is God's grace that causes us to miss his fellowship and to cry out to him.
 - 2. It is not in our power to be restored, but we look away from ourselves to him who has the power to deliver us.
 - 3. Salvation rests secure in his hand. He can easily do it.
 - 4. We ask for the removal of his anger. God smites us with his little finger, and we groan & cry for him to spare us.
 - 5. What ought to engage our thought is that God would deliver us from our guilt and sin, not the consequences of it
 - 6. How often are we reluctant to descend into our hearts and examine ourselves!
 - 7. Sin is the barrier between us and God. It is sin that brings his wrath and chastisements upon us.
- C. The reason for hope.
 - 1. God in his covenant proclaims that he is merciful & gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness & truth.
 - 2. He keeps mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and sin (Ex. 34:6,7). We must dwell upon these promises!
 - 3. Moreover, his anger endureth but a moment; in his favor is life (Ps.30:5, Ps 103:8,9).
 - 4. It seems to the Psalmist that the LORD's anger was very long. He is long-suffering toward us.
 - 5. If the LORD does not immediately make known manifestations of his love, we must persevere in our prayers.
- D. The need to be quickened.
 - 1. The request to be quickened admits of our own deadness in sin.
 - 2. The request that thy people may rejoice in thee admits that we are worn out in sorrow over our sin.

III. THE RELATION BETWEEN MERCY AND SAVLATION RECEIVED

- A. Mercy is appropriately put in first place.
 - 1. Neg: God's anger is turned away not because if anything that we have done. That only leads to condemnation.
 - 2. Positively: The only reason why God shows himself our Savior is that he is merciful.
- B. Salvation follows.
 - 1. God's salvation is the work and the fruit of his mercy.
 - 2. God looks down upon our helplessness and need, and is moved to help and rescue and save us.
 - 3. This is in showing us our sin, working in us a sorrow for sin, and then blotting it out completely through blood.
- C. The request: "Shew us thy mercy, O LORD..."
 - 1. This must be our request every morning and every evening, and also as we prepare to come to his table.
 - 2. God be merciful to me, On thy grace I rest my plea; Plenteous in compassion thou, Blot out my transgressions now
 - 3. Wash me, make me pure within, Cleanse O cleanse me from my sin.