

Psalm 63

7-16-00

“Turning a Wilderness experience into a Worship experience!”

1. **Intro:**

1.1. Opening:

- 1.1.1. I bet each one of us have run across a small child, that has been separated from his parent. Standing in one spot, crying, frightened, & thoroughly exhausted. They have one thing on their mind, they have an **intense longing** for his parent to return & find him.
- 1.1.2. Here in this Psalm David expresses a similar experience. He felt separated from his heavenly parent!

1.2. The superscription: The setting is again in a time of trouble!

- 1.2.1. In The wilderness of Judah.
- 1.2.2. David finds himself on the run one more time.
- 1.2.3. It would have to be either at the time of running from Saul, or during his son Absalom’s rebellion?
 - 1.2.3.1. He calls himself “king” in vs.11 so this would rule out Saul.
 - 1.2.3.2. This places us during the time of 2 Sam.15

2. **A Living Faith! (1)**

- 2.1. (1a) There are 3 types of people at Christian gatherings:
 - 2.1.1. [1] Name only (5 foolish virgins)
 - [2] Those who follow at a distance (Peter)
 - [3] Those who, *as Murdoch Cambell suggest*, “in storm & sunshine, cleave to Him & enjoy daily communion w/Him.”
 - 2.1.2. David moved beyond Awareness to Intimacy when he said “O God, You are my God!”
 - 2.1.2.1. This is what set David apart!
- 2.2. (1b) This is a wonderful expression of the very heart of religion!
- 2.3. This is a strong physical metaphor he gives, of being thirsty in a desert w/no sign of agua! (not even a mirage to wet your minds appetite!)

- 2.4. Do you think this is an appropriate metaphor of what it feels like to be separated from God?
- 2.4.1. It can give the sense of **dying!**
 - 2.4.2. It can give the sense of intense **suffering & longing!**
 - 2.4.3. It can give the sense of a person w/a **single-minded focus!**
 - 2.4.3.1. There is only **one thing** a dehydrated person wants!
 - 2.4.3.2. Remember **the Rich Man** who cried out to Abraham "...send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger **in water** and **cool my tongue**; for I am tormented in this flame.' **Lk.16:24**
 - 2.4.3.3. **Is.41:17** "The poor and needy **seek water**, but there is **none**, Their tongues **fail for thirst**. I, the LORD, will hear them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them."
- 2.5. Many things can create this sense of separation!
- 2.5.1. It can come as a result of **loss** or **crisis** in our lives.
 - 2.5.2. It can come during a time of **personal sin** or **failure**.
 - 2.5.3. It can come as a result of **being removed** from other believers.
- 2.6. David was longing for connection w/God!
- 2.6.1. And being in the same area(the desert along the dead sea) I know exactly what he means!
 - 2.6.1.1. It is **one of the most barren regions...ON EARTH!**
 - 2.6.1.2. **Qumran** experience one time. **Ein Gedi**.
- 2.7. **Early/earnestly - Q:** Do you have that desire for God? (prob. not) - But do you want to? - Are you willing to develop it?
- 2.7.1. Start each day with devotion, meditation, & prayer!
- 2.8. What did David miss most?
- 2.8.1. Not his Throne or palace, not family & friends, but Gods house was **#1** on his list!
 - 2.8.1.1. Interesting when he was fleeing from Absalom (2 Sam. 15:24-29) **Zadok & Abiathar** came along w/the Ark of the Covenant. David was appreciative yet told them to take it back.
 - 2.8.1.2. David wasn't superstitious – He needed God not the ark!
 - 2.8.1.3. David had the substance, so why retain the shadow!

- 2.8.2. **Q:** If we were driven out like our friends in Kosovo were...what would you miss most?
 2.8.2.1. Your home, furniture, car, comforts? - Or would you miss going to church & meeting w/the people of God?

3. **Turning your Wilderness into Worship! (1-11)**

- 3.1. Because David longs for connection w/God...he commits to 7 things:
 3.1.1. **Seek, Bless, Praise, Satisfy, Remember, Cling, or Rejoice, in God?**
- 3.2. **[1] To Seek God! (1)**
 3.2.1. **Q:** How do I?
 3.2.1.1. Seek Him in the sense of **awareness!**
 3.2.1.2. Seek Him in the sense of **being on the lookout for Him!** (Do you see Him in the circumstances that surround you?)
 3.2.1.3. Seek Him in the sense of **being open to!**
 3.2.1.4. Seek Him in the sense of **being motivated to find Him!**
- 3.3. **[2] To Praise God! (2,3)**
 3.3.1. This is how David Praised God, because he experienced God in the past.
 3.3.2. **Q:** What did he experience? (see vs.2,3)
 3.3.2.1. He experienced His **Power, Glory, & Longsuffering!**
 3.3.3. **"There was no desert in his heart, though there was a desert around him."** (Spurgeon)
 3.3.4. **Better than life...How?**
 3.3.4.1. Physical life itself **can** be lost. But His eternal love (**Lovingkindness**) **can never** be lost!
 3.3.4.2. Paul said, **"For I am persuaded that neither death nor life,...shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."**
 3.3.4.3. **"better than life"** because it secures for us the life to come, life in a new dimension of eternal bliss!"¹
- 3.4. **[3] To Bless God! (4)**
 3.4.1. David shows **"7 ways"** he used to **bless God**, by using each part of his **physical & emotional** makeup!
 3.4.2. [1] **His lips** – **"My lips shall praise You."** (3b)
 3.4.3. [2] **His tongue** – **"Thus I will bless You while I live;"** (4a)
 3.4.4. [3] **His hands** – **"I will lift up my hands in Your name."** (4b)
 3.4.5. [4] **His will** – **"My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness,"** (5a)
 3.4.6. [5] **His mouth** – **"And my mouth shall praise You with joyful lips."** (5b)
 3.4.7. [6] **His memory** – **"When I remember You on my bed,"** (6a)
 3.4.8. [7] **His intellect** – **"I meditate on You in the night watches."** (6b)²

¹ John Phillips, pg.502

- 3.5. **[4] Be Satisfied w/God! (5)**
- 3.5.1. What a **stark contrast** from vs.1! {vs.1 spoke of a **Thirsty** soul, here we have a **Satisfied** soul!}
- 3.5.2. With one, no hope of finding water; w/the other, fat w/"**the richest of foods**"(NIV)!
- 3.5.3. This contrast pictures the experience of being **separated from God** & the experience of being **close to God!**
- 3.5.3.1. It's the "**Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again,**" vs. "**but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst.**"
- 3.5.3.2. **Q:** What words would you use to describe a time when you felt **separated from God?**
- 3.5.3.3. **Q:** What words would you use to describe a time when you felt **close from God?**
- 3.5.4. **Quote** story pg.503 Phillips.
- 3.5.5. "**Satisfaction doesn't come by Circumstances on the outside – it comes from Blessings on the Inside!**"
- 3.6. **[5] To Remember God! (6,7)**
- 3.6.1. **Q:** What does **vs.6,7** teach us about remembering God?
- 3.6.1.1. **When?** – Night watches.
- 3.6.1.2. **Where?** – Bed.
- 3.6.1.3. **How?** – Meditation.
- 3.6.1.4. **In What way?** – By rejoicing/singing. And, by remembering past experiences.
- 3.6.1.5. Turn **sleepless nights** into **quiet times** of reflection & worship (LAB)
- 3.6.1.6. As Saint Augustine said, "**Our hearts are restless till they find rest in thee.**"
- 3.6.2. **(7) Wings** – A picture of a mother bird protecting her baby birds; **or** speaking of the 2 Cherubim on top of the ark of the cov.
- 3.7. **[6] To Cling to God! (8)**
- 3.7.1. **Q:** What picture does **vs.8** conjure up in your mind that would best illustrate this?
- 3.7.1.1. **I picture** a small child walking one step behind its parent, barely tall enough to hold their hand, & being gently pulled along & held up from falling.

² Thomas Le Blane, from Boice Ps.63, pg.519.

- 3.7.1.2. Cling! - "that you may love the LORD your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days;" **Deut.30:20**
- 3.7.1.3. **Jer.13:11** "For as the sash **clings** to the waist of a man, so I have caused the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah to **cling to Me,**' says the LORD, 'that they may become My people, for renown, for praise, and for glory; **but** they would not hear."
- 3.7.1.4. Or, like a husband is to cling to his wife **Gen.2:24** "Therefore a man **leaves** his father and his mother and **clings** to his wife," (NRSV)
- 3.7.2. He **hides** you(7/wings) & **holds** you(8/rt. hand),so you don't have anything to fear!
- 3.8. (9-10) **His enemy!**
- 3.8.1. "a **portion for jackals**" – For a Hebrew man there would be nothing worse than for his body to remain unburied & become prey to scavenger beasts & birds.
- 3.9. **[7] To Rejoice in God! (11)**
- 3.9.1. **See** "joyful" or "rejoice" in vs. 5,7,11.
- 3.9.1.1. **Hab.3:18** "...I will **rejoice** in the LORD, I will **joy** in the God of my salvation."
- 3.9.2. If you can't **rejoice** in your **Situation**, you can rejoice in your **Savior!**
- 3.9.2.1. **Rejoice** in His **Past Help!** (6); His **Present Protection** (7); & His **Future Guidance** (8)!
- 3.10. **Q:** Which of these 7 actions closely describes what would be most helpful to you at this time? (Seek, Bless, Praise, Satisfy, Remember, Cling, or Rejoice, in God?)
- 3.11. **End:** So David turned a "Wilderness experience" into a "Worship experience"!
- 3.12. Let our motto be . . . "We are hard pressed on every side, **yet** not crushed; we are perplexed, **but** not in despair; persecuted, **but** not forsaken; struck down, **but** not destroyed;" **2 Cor.4:8,9**
- 3.12.1. **Knocked down but not knocked out!**