

**Psa. 25:0 A Psalm of David.**

(8/08) Personal note – Every time I read through this Psalm I can't help but begin singing in my heart the chorus from my youth that was simply the first two verses put to music.

**Psa. 25:1 Unto thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul.**

LORD = YHWH, the self-existent eternal God, the covenant God of Israel

God is the only one worthy to petition. He is the only One with power and ability to respond with action on behalf of His petitioner. *Lifting up his soul* is an expression that he is approaching YHWH with the deepest longing of his being.

**Psa. 25:2 O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph over me.**

**Psa. 25:3 Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause.**

David is addressing *his* God, *elohiym* (plural), The Three in One. He declares that his trust (security, confidence, hope) is focused solely on God. As one who publicly acknowledges YHWH as his God, David is trusting God to protect him from his enemies. David's thought is that no one who places all their expectations in God should be brought to shame—not because of their worthiness, but because of God's worthiness.

The word for *transgress* is referencing those who deal deceitfully and treacherously towards others without provocation. God is faithful; those who trust Him should emulate Him. It is those who are unfaithful and deceitful, those who reject Him that should be brought to shame.

**Psa. 25:4 Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths.**

**Psa. 25:5 Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou *art* the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.**

David is asking God to guide him into right living; he wants to journey through life in the footsteps of the Lord. *Shew, teach, lead, teach*—These words all express a desire for personal instruction from God. I would like to know what David was thinking as he expressed these thoughts. How did he expect God to give him personal instruction? We have the whole canon of scripture; he had only part. We have the Spirit indwelling us; the indication is that he enjoyed the presence of the Spirit in his life, but knew that he could lose that privilege.

Psa. 51:11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

David knew that God's direction for him would be according to *truth*. The root word for *truth* includes "to build up or support; to foster as a parent or nurse... to trust or believe, to be permanent or quiet; morally to be true or certain...." Truth strengthens us; truth nurtures us; truth produces trustworthiness in us, makes us someone others can believe. Living according to truth makes us dependable and enables us to have a quiet spirit/conscience. A truthful life will result in a moral life before God.

David recognizes God as the source of his salvation (liberty, deliverance, prosperity). In the last phrase of verse 5, David seems to be indicating a practice of the presence of God in his daily living.

**Psa. 25:6 Remember, O LORD, thy tender mercies and thy lovingkindnesses; for they *have been* ever of old.**

**Psa. 25:7 Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O LORD.**

It's interesting that David is asking God to *remember*; he is relating to God on his level of understanding—not God's. As David acknowledges that he has sinned, he wants God to look at him through eyes of mercy (tender love, compassion, pity) and lovingkindness (kindness/pity to an inferior being)—attributes that God has exhibited toward man from the time of his creation.

*The sins of my youth* seems to be referencing the many ways he “missed the mark” through his actions as a child, the time when one is learning about God's commandments and expectations. His *transgressions* reference the times he actually rebelled--willfully disobeyed God's law and chose to reject God's authority in his life. As David reflects on these past sins, he wants God not to remember those parts of his life; he wants forgiveness. I liked the statement in the NIV commentary, “Forgiveness is that act of grace whereby God extends his love, as if the sin had never taken place!”

In the last phrase of verse 7 David again asks for God to respond to him in mercy because of His goodness. The KJV doesn't include the Hebrew for *goodness*; it is included in the NIV and NAS. It always confuses me when the translators decide to supply words/phrases for which they give no Hebrew basis.

Jesus considered the goodness of God as a unique characteristic; one that only God possesses.

Matt. 19:17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.*

Mark 10:18 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is none good but one, that is, God.*

Luke 18:19 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *none is good, save one, that is, God.*

The Hebrew from the NAS indicates “best” in comparative terms. Webster defines *good* as “Possessing moral excellence or virtue...Kind; benevolent...merciful; gracious...Not blemished or impeached; fair; honorable...”

All these thoughts help define the character of God, and it is on the basis of God's character that David is pleading for forgiveness and mercy. God is the only Being that inherently possesses goodness. The only way we can exhibit true goodness is through the working of the Spirit in our life. We can become deceived about ourselves through “good” works, because often those works aren't done for the purest motives and with absolutely no thought of reciprocity. I truly believe it is only through dying to self through submission to the Lord Jesus that we can exhibit true goodness.

**Psa. 25:8 Good and upright is the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way.**

**Psa. 25:9 The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way.**

David continues to acknowledge the character of God. To the character trait of *goodness*, David now adds *uprightness*. The Hebrew for that word indicates “straight or even.” It’s another word picture of the character of God that illustrates the fact that He never changes; He never moves to the right or the left.

Mal. 3:6 For I *am* the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

Heb. 13:8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

David knows that God teaches *sinners* and the *meek* the right way to live because as a sinner and one who has humbled himself before God, he has been taught. He’s expressing truth through experience. When we are humble before the Lord, we respond in repentance and renewed commitment to God when He decrees judgments/punishments for our sins. Again, David has experienced this truth as well.

We are told in the scripture that the Lord chastens those He loves.

Prov. 3:11 My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction:

Prov. 3:12 For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son *in whom* he delighteth.

Heb. 12:5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

Heb. 12:6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

Rev. 3:19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

**Psa. 25:10 All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.**

When we allow the Lord to direct our journey through life, He will only guide us in ways of mercy and truth. How does He direct us? Through His commandments and his testimonies— the faithful witness of His truth through the scripture, the witness of His faithfulness in His dealings with us.

**Psa. 25:11 For thy name’s sake, O LORD, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great.**

Again, David is asking for forgiveness of his sin based on the character of God, which is represented by His name. Evidently, David is approaching God at a time when he is overwhelmed by the sin in his life; his sin is *great*.

Again, I can associate. There are times when I am communing with the Lord and become so in touch with His greatness and holiness, that I become totally

overwhelmed by my own sinfulness. All I can do at those times is thank God for His love and mercy in sending His Son, Jesus, to shed His blood in sacrifice for my sin. An act I'll never truly understand this side of heaven—if then. It's just not possible for me to understand that kind of love.

**Psa. 25:12 What man *is* he that feareth the LORD? him shall he teach in the way *that* he shall choose.**

**Psa. 25:13 His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth.**

I wonder if this is a type of poetic expression—to ask a question and answer in that indirect way. I think the implied answer from the context of the Psalm is that the man who fears the Lord is one who obeys Him (v10), is meek/humble (v9), is a repentant sinner (v8); and one who acknowledges God as LORD—the one and only (v1) and personally (v2).

The man who fears the Lord is the one that God will teach how to live an acceptable and excellent life (from the Hebrew for *choose*). The soul of this man will be at ease—this equates to me with peace of mind, a clear conscience, and a joyful spirit. The children of the man who fears the Lord will inherit/possess the earth. I would think that David is thinking of God's covenant with both him and Israel as he penned these words. The interesting thing is that Jesus repeated this truth in the Sermon on the Mount.

Matt. 5:5 Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

I think when you consider the two verses, there is more truth to be found. Those who fear the Lord will produce children who fear the Lord.

**Psa. 25:14 The secret of the LORD *is* with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.**

The person who fears the Lord will get to experience *intimacy* (from the Hebrew for *secret*) with Him. The Hebrew root for the word “covenant” was very interesting—“**to select**; also (as denominative from 1250) **to feed**; also (as equivalent to 1305) **to render clear** (Eccl. 3:18):—choose, (cause to) eat, manifest, (give) meat.” This seems to express what comprises that intimacy:

- He will be chosen.
- He will be fed.
- He will be given spiritual understanding.

**Psa. 25:15 Mine eyes *are* ever toward the LORD; for he shall pluck my feet out of the net.**

Again, I think David is speaking from experience. When you keep your eyes, your focus, on the Lord, He will deliver you when you are ready to step into the trap/snare of the enemy. It's another expression of David's faith in God as his only source of salvation.

**Psa. 25:16 Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I *am* desolate and afflicted.**

**Psa. 25:17 The troubles of my heart are enlarged: O bring thou me out of my distresses.**

**Psa. 25:18 Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins.**

David is asking for God's individual attention. That reflects an interesting thought process. We know that God is omnipresent (everywhere present at all times), yet we expect His individual attention—and get it. Again, this is something I'm not sure I'll ever understand.

Again, David expresses his desire for mercy. I think his repetition is due to his heaviness of spirit. He is *desolate*; he knows he is beloved by his Lord, but he feels lonely. He is *afflicted*—depressed and feeling totally worthless.

The first phrase of verse 2 seems to indicate that he is sinking deeper and deeper into depression. He feels helpless; he needs God to rescue him.

Again, David asks God to look at his spiritual condition and the sorrow / misery it is causing him. (Again, that need for God's individual attention.) Again, he asks for forgiveness.

David is not making vain repetitions as he calls out for deliverance to God. He is truly crying out from a place of great spiritual need. He is desperate for God to answer him.

**Psa. 25:19 Consider mine enemies; for they are many; and they hate me with cruel hatred.**

David now turns his attention back to his enemies—which at this point in time he considers to be many. The Hebrew for *cruel* implies *unjust*. David feels like his enemies have based their hatred toward him on unjust reasoning.

**Psa. 25:20 O keep my soul, and deliver me: let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee.**

**Psa. 25:21 Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee.**

David is again expressing his desire for God's protection and salvation.

“let me not be ashamed” – Takes us back to verse 2. The basis for this request is his trust in God because of His character (see verse 3).

Integrity is a reference to perfection, and *uprightness* speaks of unchanging—as in God's character. It's obvious David is appealing to God's character for his preservation. David is patiently waiting for God's answer. I thought the Hebrew for *wait* was interesting; it included the idea of being bound together. David's faith and patience was evidence of his confidence in his relationship with God; he was connected in spirit to God's spirit. The Lord affirmed that in scripture:

1Sam. 13:13 And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly...

1Sam. 13:14 But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart,

1Sam. 16:12 ...And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he.

1Sam. 16:13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward.

Acts 13:22 And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found **David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart**, which shall fulfil all my will.

**Psa. 25:22 Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.**

As David completes his prayer, he asks for deliverance/preservation for the nation as well as himself. This statement tells me that this Psalm was written at a time when David's depression and overwhelming sense of sin was associated with events that were causing trouble to the nation, such as the time that Absalom tried to take over his kingdom.