

## Faith vs Sense

*1 As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.*

*2 My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?*

*3 My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, where is thy God?*

*4 When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday.*

*5 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him for the help of his countenance.*

*6 O my God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember thee from the land of*

*Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar.*

***7 Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.***

*8 Yet the LORD will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.*

*9 I will say unto God my rock, why hast thou forgotten me? Why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?*

*10 As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me. Where is thy God?*

*11 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.*

I was taking golf lessons one day from a golf pro who taught me a very valuable life lesson while teaching me how to read a putting green. This particular green was anything but straight. In fact he lined me up at the 6 o'clock position and told me to putt it toward the 3 o'clock position. Now my common sense told me that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line, so why not putt the ball from the 6 o'clock position to the 12 o'clock spot where the hole was. His reply was every putt is a straight putt so you have to trust your read and forget what common sense has to say. In life we are often presented with challenges that are anything but easy but rather than doing what is the natural, instinctive thing to do we are challenged to do what faith in the word of God tells us to do which in many instances is contrary to what our senses tell us what to do. For example turning the other cheek or loving and praying for them that despitefully mistreats

us. Or maybe even something more challenging like giving your last to someone without any hope of ever getting it back, or finding yourself in a dark place for whatever reason and still trusting in God to deliver you when it all seems utterly hopeless.

If the book of Psalms be, as some have styled it, a mirror or looking-glass of pious and devout affections, this psalm in particular deserves, as much as any one psalm, to be so entitled, and is as proper as any to kindle and excite such in us: gracious desires are here strong and fervent; gracious hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, are here struggling, but the pleasing passion comes off a conqueror. Or we may take it for a conflict between sense and faith, sense objecting and faith answering. I. Faith begins with holy desires towards God and communion with him, *1 As the hart panteth after the*

*water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.*

2 My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? ) *What his faith here reveals is that he knows what can satisfy his longings because he has had experience with it in the past. II. Sense complains of the darkness and cloudiness of the present condition, aggravated by the remembrance of the former enjoyments. ( 3 My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, where is thy God?*

*4 When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday.)* In other words, he misses his water now that his well has run dry.

*III. Faith silences the complaint with the assurance of a good issue at last, (5 Why art*

*thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him for the help of his countenance.)*

IV. Sense renews its complaints of the present dark and melancholy state, *(6 O my God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar.*

***7 Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.)*** He knows that he is in a bad place and every ounce of his existence is screaming for a change that only the presence of God can bring.

*(. V. Faith holds up the heart, notwithstanding, with hope that the day will dawn, ( 8 Yet the LORD will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.)* Even in his condition of estrangement he knows he is not forsaken.

VI. Sense repeats its lamentations (*9 I will say unto God my rock, why hast thou forgotten me? Why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?*)

*10 As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, where is thy God?) And sighs out the same remonstrance it had before made of its grievances. VII. Faith gets the last word (11 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.)* For the silencing of the complaints of sense, and, though it be almost the same with that in verse 5, yet now it prevails and carries the day.

**When was it that David thus expressed his vehement desire towards God?** It was, (1.) When he was debarred from his outward opportunities of waiting on God, when he was

banished to the land of Jordan, a great way off from the courts of God's house. Note, Sometimes God teaches us effectually to know the worth of mercies by the want of them, and whets our appetite for the means of grace by cutting us short in those means. We are apt to loathe that manna, when we have plenty of it, which will be very precious to us if ever we come to know the scarcity of it. (2.) When he was deprived, in a great measure, of the inward comfort he used to have in God. He now went mourning, but he went on panting. Note, If God, by his grace, has wrought in us sincere and earnest desires towards him, we may take comfort from these when we want those ravishing delights we have sometimes had in God, because lamenting after God is as sure an evidence that we love him as rejoicing in God.

**What is the object of his desire and what is it that he thus thirsts after.** (1.) He pants

after God, he thirsts for God, not the ordinances themselves, but the God of the ordinances. A gracious soul can take little satisfaction in God's courts if it does not meet with God himself there: "*O that I knew where I might find him!* that I might have more of the tokens of his favour, the graces and comforts of his Spirit, and the earnest of his glory."

**What is the degree of this desire.** It is very importunate; it is his soul that pants, his soul that thirsts, which denotes not only the sincerity, but the strength, of his desire. His longing for the water of the well of Bethlehem was nothing to this. He compares it to the *panting of a hart*, or deer, which is naturally hot and dry, especially of a hunted buck, *after the water-brooks*. Thus earnestly does a gracious soul desire communion with God, thus impatient is it in the want of that communion, so impossible does it find it to be satisfied with

anything short of that communion, and so insatiable is it in taking the pleasures of that communion when the opportunity of it returns, still thirsting after the full enjoyment of him in the heavenly kingdom.

So what is the lesson to be learned here? What can we take away from this discourse that can sustain us now and fortify us for the days that yet lay a head? We must embrace today's blessings. Cherish today's opportunities and be proactive with them. We must be all the more mindful that what God is doing with us is not by happenstance but is a part of his divine design for us there not to be taken lightly and finally we must know that even if we are troubled on every side we must not be distressed, though perplexed we should not give in to despair, when persecuted know that we are not forsaken and when cast down rest assured that we will not be destroyed for even in our worst

circumstance the Lord has never broken His  
promise “ I will be with you all the way!”