Psalm 6

An Exegesis

We shall begin with the Inscription to the Psalm. “To the chief Musician on Neginoth upon Sheminith, A Psalm of David.”The phrase “To the chief Musician,” is one that is common to the Psalms. It simply refers to the person in charge of the choir. It’s root means “to glitter”, which infers the preeminence of this chief of the musicians. However, though he is in a position of leadership, he is still given specific direction as to how the Psalm is to be performed. He is told that it should be played upon “Neginoth,” which scholars believe to be a stringed instrument, and that it should be upon “Sheminith,” which is believed to be the key or octave in which it is to be played. It is authored by the sweet psalmist himself. Therefore he has all the rights to instruct those beneath him in the performance of his Psalm. The same rings true of those in leadership in our local assemblies. Whether they are pastors, choir leaders, teachers, or what have you, they are under the authority of their Lord. He maintains the right to direct the carrying out of service unto himself in detail and specificity as did David in the performance of his treasured Psalm.

The Psalm should be classified as a Psalm of Lamentation or a Penitential Psalm. It is readily divided into two parts.

The first division contains the first seven verses and is sorrowful in its’ nature. The Psalmist conveys his *sorrowfulness on account of sin and the chastisement it has brought into his life*. We see, first of all, *the manner in which God deals with the transgressors.* He first rebukes them, (“O lord, rebuke me not in thine anger,”) and then chastens them. Rebuke is the proving of guilt, while chasten is correction for the offense. Next, we see the *Psalmists only resource for relief*. It is the mercy of Almighty God. This is his plea in verses 2-4. He offers no price for this relief, nor makes any excuse for his sin, but calls upon the Lord to deliver him for “mercies’ sake.” In verses 5-7 the *depth of the Psalmist grief* is illustrated. He expresses the inability of dead men to praise God in the earth and longs for another chance to do so. He is become physically ill from groaning over his sin and has wept until he can weep no more. Oh, that men would weep over sin, that they would once again hate even the garment spotted with the flesh.

The second division contains verses 8-10. In these verses, the *Psalmist expresses his confidence in the mercy of God upon which he has called*. The certainty of forgiveness produces a desire within him to be separated from all temptation and iniquity around him. He wishes no longer to be in the presence of the wicked, nor to be involved in their evildoings. He informs them of his certain forgiveness and pronounces a curse upon his enemies. This may we also do in light of the promise of 1 John 1:9, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

On top of this, we may remind our enemy Satan of his impending doom.

Our primary understanding of this Psalm is the heinousness of sin and its’ effect upon the transgressor, while emphasis is made as to the mercy of God upon the afore mentioned transgressor. May we rejoice in the forgiveness of sins daily and remember what is said in one Psalm, “Blessed is he whose sin is forgiven.”