

Waiting, Waiting, Waiting... How Long?

Psalm 13

<p style="text-align: right;">13:1 זְמוֹר לְדָוִד:</p> <p>2 עַד־אָנָּה יְהוָה תִּשְׁכַּחֲנִי נָצַח עַד־אָנָּה תִּסְתִּיר אֶת־פְּנֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי: 3 עַד־אָנָּה אֲשִׁית עֲצוֹת בְּנַפְשִׁי יָגוֹן בְּלִבִּי יוֹמָם עַד־אָנָּה יָרוּם אֵיבֵי עָלָי:</p> <p>4 הַבִּיטָה עֲנֵנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הָאָרֶזֶה עֵינַי פֶּן־אִישָׁן הַמָּוֶת:</p> <p>5 פֶּן־יֹאמְרוּ אֵיבֵי יִקְלְתִּיו צָרִי יִגִּילוּ כִּי אֶמּוֹט:</p> <p>6 וַאֲנִי בַּחֲסֶדֶךָ בְּטַחַתִּי יִגַּל לִבִּי בִישׁוּעָתֶךָ אֲשִׁירָה לִיהוָה כִּי גָמַל עָלָי:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">14.1 לְמַנְצֵחַ</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">A psalm by David</p> <p>1 How long, I AM? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?</p> <p>2 How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart day after day? How long will my enemy be exalted over me?</p> <p>3 Look [on me] and answer me, I AM; my God, give light to my eyes, lest I sleep the [sleep of] death,</p> <p>4 lest my enemy say, “I have prevailed over him,” and my adversaries rejoice when I am shaken.</p> <p>5 But I in your unfailing love (<i>hesed</i>) trust; my heart rejoices in your salvation.</p> <p>6 I will sing to I AM, for he has dealt bountifully with me.</p> <p>For the director of music.</p>	<p>A Lament: Feeling Abandoned (vv. 1-2)</p> <p>a God promises of protection unanswered b Loss of God’s presence c Shut up and isolated to his own counsel d Experiencing shame in the enemies exultation</p> <p>B Petitions + Motives (vv. 3-4)</p> <p>a’ Answer me fulfilling your covenant promise b’ Restore my soul with your presence c’ Do not abandon me to death d’ Remove my shame by granting me victory over my enemies</p> <p>A’ Confidence and Vow (vv. 5-6)</p> <p>Note escalation of verbs and objects of praise: <i>trusting</i> in God’s loyal-love—> heart <i>rejoicing</i> —> full throated <i>singing</i>—> exuberant <i>praise</i></p> <p>God’s <i>covenantal love</i> (ie. his unfailing commitment) God’s <i>salvation</i> (the actual deliverance) God’s <i>generosity</i> (“deal bountifully”)</p> <p>Teach every generation this song!</p>
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A Possible Context for Psalm 13: Ziklag (1 Sam 30:1-19)

Then it happened when David and his men came to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had made a raid on the Negev and on Ziklag, and had overthrown Ziklag and burned it with fire; and they took captive the women and all who were in it, both small and great, without killing anyone, and carried them off and went their way. When David and his men came to the city, behold, it was burned with fire, and their wives and their sons and their daughters had been taken captive. Then David and the people who were with him lifted their voices and wept until there was no strength in them to weep. Now David's two wives had been taken captive, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite. Moreover David was greatly distressed because the people spoke of stoning him, for all the people were embittered, each one because of his sons and his daughters. **But David strengthened himself in the Lord his God.** (Psalm 13?)

David was greatly distressed because the men were talking of stoning him; each one was bitter in spirit because of his sons and daughters. But David found strength in the Lord his God.

Then David said to Abiathar the priest, the son of Ahimelek,

"Bring me the ephod."

Abiathar brought it to him, and David inquired of the Lord,

"Shall I pursue this raiding party? Will I overtake them?"

He answered,

"Pursue them."

David and the six hundred men with him came to the Besor Valley, where some stayed behind. Two hundred of them were too exhausted to cross the valley, but David and the other four hundred continued the pursuit. They found an Egyptian in a field and brought him to David. They gave him water to drink and food to eat— part of a cake of pressed figs and two cakes of raisins. He ate and was revived, for he had not eaten any food or drunk any water for three days and three nights.

David asked him,

"Who do you belong to? Where do you come from?"

He said,

"I am an Egyptian, the slave of an Amalekite.

My master abandoned me when I became ill three days ago.

We raided the Negev of the Kerethites, some territory belonging to Judah and the Negev of Caleb.

And we burned Ziklag."

David asked him,

"Can you lead me down to this raiding party?"

He answered,

"Swear to me before God that you will not kill me or hand me over to my master, and I will take you down to them."

He led David down, and there they were, scattered over the countryside, eating, drinking and reveling because of the great amount of plunder they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from Judah. David fought them from dusk until the evening of the next day, and none of them got away, except four hundred young men who rode off on camels and fled. David recovered everything the Amalekites had taken, including his two wives. **Nothing was missing: young or old, boy or girl, plunder or anything else they had taken. David brought everything back.**

How long,
how long must the poet wait
alone?
How long to have his own counsel
stirring within with no place to go?

But just one glance,
eyes meeting Yahweh
a connected lens of *hesed*
and the poet is alive again
with the thought of *gamal*.

I am awed by so great
a change of mood
with but a glance
that breaks through
the tension taut pain.

rabbi morganescu