

Depression

Psalm 6 (NLT)

- ¹ O LORD, don't rebuke me in your anger or discipline me in your rage.
- ² Have compassion on me, LORD, for I am weak. Heal me, LORD, for my bones are in agony.
- ³ I am sick at heart. How long, O LORD, until you restore me?
- ⁴ Return, O LORD, and rescue me. Save me because of your unfailing love.
- ⁵ For the dead do not remember you. Who can praise you from the grave?
- ⁶ I am worn out from sobbing. All night I flood my bed with weeping, drenching it with my tears.
- ⁷ My vision is blurred by grief; my eyes are worn out because of all my enemies.
- ⁸ Go away, all you who do evil, for the LORD has heard my weeping.
- ⁹ The LORD has heard my plea; the LORD will answer my prayer.
- ¹⁰ May all my enemies be disgraced and terrified. May they suddenly turn back in shame.

MESSAGE NOTES

How do we face depression?

1. Seek God.
2. Be honest & vulnerable with God (and godly friends).
3. Pray God's Word.
4. Rest.
5. Trust in God and be grateful.

Praying Our Pain - Psalm 6

(Excerpt from *LifeGuide Topical Bible Studies - Suffering: Receiving God's Comfort*)

In the book *Early Widow*, Mary Jane Worden describes some of the physical and emotional pain of losing her husband:

I find that some of the very physical symptoms of those first days are diminishing: extreme shortness of breath, that choking sensation, involuntary moans, the bone-weary feeling that my whole body is made of lead, a dry mouth, heart palpitations.

There is still the stabbing, piercing pain as the realization that Jim is indeed gone sweeps over me again and again. I sometimes find myself moving about as though I am enshrouded in a thin casing of ice, like a sapling after a winter storm. *Fragile. If I move suddenly or in the wrong way, I will shatter. And then, like Humpty Dumpty, who could put me together again?*"¹

Sometimes our pain is so great that we feel overwhelmed. During such times, we can find welcomed relief in the psalms. Eugene Peterson writes that the psalms "are provided not to teach us about God but to train us in responding to him. We don't learn the Psalms until we are praying them." **Psalm 6** provides a wonderful medium for expressing our pain, anguish and doubts to God. The psalm provides very few "answers," but rather gives full vent to our questions.

1. What are some of the benefits of expressing our pain rather than internalizing it?
2. Read Psalm 6. How would you describe the mood of this psalm? What words or phrases reveal the depth of David's suffering?
3. Why do you think David assumes that his suffering is due to God's anger or wrath (Psalm 6:1; see also Psalm 38:1, 4, 18)?
4. Should we normally assume that our suffering is due to God's anger? Why or why not? Why do people often jump to that conclusion?
5. What questions does David bring to the Lord (Psalm 6:3, 5)?
6. In addition to "How long, O Lord," what other questions do you tend to ask during difficult times? Explain.
7. What specific requests does David make of the Lord (Psalm 6:1-4)?
8. What do David's requests reveal about God's character?
9. What aspects of God's character do you cling to in times of anguish? Explain.
10. How does the mood of the psalm suddenly shift in Psalm 6:8-10?
11. Why do you think David is so certain that God has heard and accepted his prayer?
12. In what situations have you felt assured of the Lord's answer before it actually came? What gave you that confidence?
13. If you are suffering or oppressed, make David's prayer your own. Quietly pray the words of the psalm. Because of God's unfailing love, trust that he has heard your prayer and will answer it.

¹*Early Widow: A Journal of the First Year* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1989).