

February 13

"Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I am desolate and afflicted. The troubles of my heart are enlarged: O bring thou me out of my distresses. Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins." — Psalm 25:16-18.

Surely this book is addressed to the heart and requires sensibility rather than talent to understand and explain it. How tender here is the language of David. And how instructive too. He was a sufferer, though a king, and a man eminently godly. And his sorrows were not superficial, but deep and depressing, "the sorrows of the heart." And while hoping for their diminution, they were "enlarged."

But he is a petitioner, as well as a sufferer; and those sorrows will never injure us that bring us to God. Three things he prays for:

First. Deliverance. This we are allowed to desire, consistently with resignation to the divine will. But we must seek it, not from creatures, but from God, who has said, "Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee." Nothing is too hard for him; He can turn the shadow of death into the morning. Therefore, says David, "O bring thou me out of my distresses."

Secondly. Notice. A kind look from God is desirable at any time, in any circumstances, but in affliction and pain, it is like life from the dead. Nothing cuts like the neglect of a friend in distress; nothing soothes like his calls and inquiries, and sympathy, and tears. But to say, Thou God seest me; thou knowest all my walking through this great wilderness; to be assured that he is attentive to my condition, and is smiling through the clouds, fills the heart, even in tribulation, with a peace that passeth all understanding. Therefore, says David, "Look upon mine affliction and pain."

Thirdly, pardon. He does not think himself sinless, and trials are apt to revive a sense of guilt, and to make the sufferer fearful, and to induce the prayer, "Do not condemn me." We will also venture to say, that however a Christian may feel his sorrows, he will feel his sins much more. These, these are the burden and the grief. Therefore, David says, "Forgive all my sins."

This was his meaning, and I hope I can make it my own. If it be thy pleasure, release me from my complaint. If not, and the distress is continued, to try me, be near to afford me a sensible manifestation of thy favour; let me see thy countenance; let me hear thy voice, saying, "I remember thee still." Or, if this be denied, and I have no claim upon thee for such an indulgence, let me, for the Redeemer's sake, be absolved and justified. Remove my guilt, whatever becomes of my grief; grief then cannot be penal, cannot be injurious "If sin be pardon'd, I'm secure,
Death hath no sting beside:
The law gives sin its damning power;
But Christ, my ransom, died."

Morning Exercises For Everyday In The Year
By Rev. William Jay