

Psalm 25 The Need for God's Guidance

By Pastor Roy Hogan

This is a Psalm of David. The time of the writing of this Psalm is not precisely known. Since it is a plea for guidance, was it penned down at a time when David was under attack from son Absalom? Or, was it a plea for guidance when David was about to take the throne as king over his people?

We, as children of God, reach times in our life when we tend to put our Christian walk on autopilot. Man is working diligently to develop a driverless car. From time to time I read where the testing has gone wrong and the vehicle has wrecked. The difficulty in setting your Christian walk on autopilot is twofold. First, the Devil is the master of disguise. He can make crater look like a pothole. Secondly, the Devil is alive and as such, he is capable of providing targets. Just when you think you see your way clear, he tosses a stick into the bicycle wheel. To think a Christian life can be put on autopilot is wrongful thinking. All God's children need the guidance of God 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

25:1-3

Unto thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul. 2 O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph over me. 3 Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause.

I am glad we can go to our heavenly Father in time of need regardless of the nature of the need. Jehovah God is the God of all things. I once had a Buddhist explain one small portion of his religion. He explained to me that there are hundreds of gods, maybe even thousands. He told there was a god of health, a god of finances, a god of marriage, a god of joy, and on and on. So, in time of need, one was instructed to pray to the appropriate god. I prefer the "one call does it all" God that I serve.

David prayed to the LORD (verse 1) and to God (verse 2). This is the same person. "LORD" is Jehovah God, the God of covenant, that is, the God bound by his own word to provide for his own.

“God” is the God of creation. The God who has *creative power* has power over all, including power over David’s enemies and over my enemies. Why would one pray to a lesser god?

Verse 2 points to the never-ending conflict that surrounded David’s life. Seem wherever he went, an enemy was lurking nearby. The enemy sought him in the field, in the forest, and even in his father-in-law’s house. You have enemies. You may argue that you do not. I say you do have enemies- you just have not yet met them. You will get the chance to do so eventually.

David prays, in verse 2, “let me not be ashamed.” Each time the Devil wins victory over a child of God, it is a *shame*. It is a shame Christian boys and girls are victims of the Devil’s drug. It is a shame the Devil is wrecking marriages even where both the husband and wife claim to be Christians. Why should we not hate the Devil?

David asked God to make his enemies ashamed, not him- *let them be ashamed which transgress without cause*. “Shame on the Devil” was one of my preaching father’s favorite sayings. Look around you. Do you see all the carnage littering the land? Do you see the tears of shattered dreams? Do you hear the cry of hopelessness?

Look at the word “wait” in verse 3. I have little or no patience. I want everything yesterday. I arise in the morning wishing my entire day’s tasks could be complete in five minutes. Patience is a virtue of the Spirit. I must pray often for God to endue me with patience that I certainly do not possess. In the Hebrew, the meaning of the word wait is no surprise. The meaning is *to look eagerly, to lie in wait*. God’s timetable seems never to match ours. I do not know the mind of God. What little I do know about his mind I read in the Bible.

Hebrews 11:6 reads: *But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*. Isaiah 40:31 provides a great promise for those that wait: *But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up*

with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint. We live by watches and calendars, not by faith. We are *going* people, not waiters. Waiting on God is not something a person is born to do. A person must be taught of God.

25:4-5

Show me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths. 5 Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.

Some want a new car. Some want a new house. Some want a raise and promotion on the job. Some want a vacation. David wanted some things very strange to most. He wanted God to “show,” “teach,” and “lead” him. David wanted to be shown a map. He then wanted God to teach him how to read the map. The, he wanted God to make the trip with him.

Once, my family and I had a wonderful trip to see some parks of New York City. It was the first trip I have ever been on that had a tour guide. This was fabulous. We had to make no decisions. They were made for us. We never had to decide where to stay. This was decided by others. We were told the time we needed to board the bus. We greatly enjoyed this trip.

There is sometimes a problem when being led by God. To be led of him brings him to our side constantly. We have little or no say in the journey. He makes decisions for us. This all sounds fine like the guided trip to New York City. But, suppose God leads you through places you desire not to go? “God, why did you take this road?” What if God travels slower than the pace you prefer? “God, I sure wish you would speed up.” I, like you, have said to self “wonder where this road leads?” Or, like children traveling in a car “when are we going to get there?”

Be careful if you ever decide to make God the captain of your ship. Before you ask him to *show, teach, and lead* you, realize you have given control of your life to another force.

25:6-7

Remember, O LORD, thy tender mercies and thy lovingkindnesses; for they have been ever of old. 7 Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O LORD.

God had never mistreated me. God has never given me bad advice. God has always had my best interest in mind. David reminds God of how good God really is. In verse 6, David reflects on God's tender mercies and loving kindnesses. What a good God we serve! Forty times in the King James Bible we find the precious words "his mercy endureth forever." For eternities past, God has been merciful and loving for "they have been ever of old." God will for eternities to come be merciful and loving. Rivers run dry but God's mercy and love cannot be exhausted.

I am thankful God does not dwell on our sin of the past, verse 7. If my today was predicated on my yesterday, I would not exist.

When a person "messes up," people tend never to forget. God is not that way. How dreadful the thought that our sin is *not* under the blood of the Son of God. What if God refused to hear David's prayer of repentance prayed in Psalm 51 for his affair with Bathsheba?

As a child my mother would remind me of my past. I can hear her saying now "the last time I brought you in the store, you cried for everything in there." By her reminding me of the past, she was leveraging me to behave for the present time. David prayed God's treatment of him today would not be based on David's past behavior. Rather, he desired God treat him according to God's plan of mercy. I, too, prefer God treat me today not according to yesterday's behavior but according to God's infinite mercy.

25:8-9

Good and upright is the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way. 9 The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way.

We have all sinned. We will all sin today. I do not mean we will use vulgar language or drink strong drink or steal from our neighbor. We will have a sinful thought. We will develop a bad attitude. We may say something we should not say. I do not sin because I like sin. I sin because I am not perfect in my flesh. However, my soul is perfect and sinless. A person who lives in sin and whose sin is a willful practice has never taken Christ as personal Savior. I am glad, as we seen in verse 8, that God is willing to lead us even though we are not perfect. In fact, I believe we get God's attention when we bow before him and admit "I am just a sinner saved by your grace." The self-proclaimed perfect person certainly does not need God's leadership.

Meekness, as seen in verse 9, is required in order to get the hand of God as leader. Moses was a meek man as we read in Numbers 12:3- (*Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.*). The proud, haughty, and high-minded do not need God. God does not play games.

25:10-11

All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies. 11 For thy name's sake, O LORD, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great.

The leadership of God in one's life requires keeping *his covenant and his testimonies*, verse 10. Do you have a problem with conforming to the Word of God, the Bible? The Bible was given that man may know how to live a life pleasing to the Lord. The Bible is the roadmap of the believer. I have met folk who know the Bible. They know what it has to say regarding the circumstance in which they are living. Yet, they choose to ignore to written instruction of God, that is, the Bible, and continue in *the way that seemeth right unto man*.

We all claim to pray and we all should pray. Yet, there is no use to pray for it to rain if the Bible says it is not going to rain. You cannot keep your pet sins that are clearly forbidden by the Bible and have access to God's leadership in your life. I have often

wondered if some folk even know that the Bible is connected to God?

We all sin and come short of God's glory. God does forgive sinner's sins. Certainly, he does not have to forgive. However, he does so for his name's sake, verse 11.

25:12-14

What man is he that feareth the LORD? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose. 13 His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth. 14 The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant.

There is little fear of God in today's world. Men look God in the face and dare him, spit upon him, and use his pure and holy name to punctuate their curse words. Verse 12 says those that have no reverence for God he cannot lead. A man who does not fear God is on his own. He is out on a limb by himself.

What are you doing for the future of your children? Verse 13 makes it clear that the seed of a man can be blessed by his good behavior toward God. Men strive to build an inheritance for their children. In some quarters, folk find it shameful if the children don't have a significant inheritance. A great thing you can do for your children is to live your life under the leadership of God walking closely with him. I had godly forefathers. To this day, I have never been left any money, real estate, vehicles, or any significant material item. Yet, I know for a certainty that I have received manifold blessings from God that came my way as a credit to the Christian walk of those before me.

25:15

Mine eyes are ever toward the LORD; for he shall pluck my feet out of the net.

When we see the mention of net, we think of a trap. I am reminded of the hunters of the past who had no guns or arrows to get game. Large nets were made and hung from tree branches. A trigger was in place. When the wild game tripped the trigger, the net fell and

trapped the animal. The Devil is no dummy. Many are the nets, the snares set for God's people. Absalom set a net to trap his father David and steal the kingdom.

25:16-17

Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I am desolate and afflicted. 17 The troubles of my heart are enlarged: O bring thou me out of my distresses

These words of form the mouth of a man who was once a national hero. He was once serenaded with throngs of people dancing in the streets in recognition and honor of him. Look at David now. He is no longer popular among men. Friends have forsaken him. His family is divided. The situation with Bathsheba has cost him popularity, respect, and power. Sin is awful. My sin is the worst.

25:18

Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins.

David's sin had long been forgiven. However, the memory of the sin and the consequences of the sin linger. The scars of David's affair with Bathsheba never left his presence. His family was scared as well.

25:19-22

Consider mine enemies; for they are many; and they hate me with cruel hatred. 20 O keep my soul, and deliver me: let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee. 21 Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee. 22 Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.

These verses are powerful. I can feel the pleading and pain of David. Pitiful David had plenty of enemies and they are described as having cruel hatred toward him. No man has likely ever seen hatred to the degree David did. However, we know the greatest display of hatred toward an individual was experience by our Lord at Calvary.

Verse 22: *Redeem Israel, o God, out of all his troubles.* The leader of a nation needs prayer. If the leader of a nation goes down, the nation suffers. Not only is David in trouble personally, he is in trouble as King of Israel. He reminds God of the fact that it is not only him, but his nation Israel standing need of guidance.