

SERIES TITLE: **SURVIVAL SONGS**

PART ONE: **SURVIVING GOD’S SILENCE**

TEXT: **PSALM 13**

INTRODUCTION.

This series focuses on seven songs from the Hymnal of Scripture—the Psalms. This collection was written and compiled over a period of perhaps 1,000 years. King David wrote 75 of the Psalms. Asaph and the sons of Koreh were also major contributors, while Solomon, Moses, Heman, and Ethan are also named. In 48 cases, the author is not identified. The seven psalms in this study have a survival theme. In each one, the human author expresses some desperate longing or need. We can identify with these feelings of abandonment, fear, guilt, and distress. These honest songs have much to teach us about how God works during such times.

DISCUSSION.

When you hear the words “God’s silence” what might that mean? In what ways could the invisible God, who has given us his written word, be considered silent?

EXAMINATION.

V.1 While a number of the Psalms begin, not only by indicating the human composer, but also the circumstances in which it was written, this Psalm does not. The very fact that this information is left out, invites us to identify with David’s experience of abandonment. Though written by a king, this song was used by all of Israel for worship and prayer. In this expression of David’s misery, why or why not would this song have been appreciated by the average Israelite?

- God, by his very nature, cannot forget, or else he would cease to be God. How can we reconcile this with David asking if God will forget him forever?
- David also accuses God of hiding his face. Consider the following passages and how they inform this concept of God hiding: Isaiah 8:17; Psalm 10:1.

V.2 David is concerned that his enemies “triumph” (a word that is used of the ark floating on the water, Genesis 7:17). Since we aren’t told specifically which time in David’s life this might be, list some of the adverse circumstances he experienced, and identify some of the enemies he faced.

- Notice the repetition of “How long.” What does this suggest about David’s emotional status?

Vv.3-4 David paints a picture of desperation if God does not reveal himself in some way. The “fall” refers to stumbling under a load that is too heavy to carry. (Compare Numbers 14:13-19.) Why would God respond to such reasoning?

Vv.5-6 Why this dramatic and sudden change in tone?

APPLICATION.

- While a frequent cause of God’s silence is our unrepentant sin, that is not the case in this Psalm, for there is no confession or admission of guilt. Why would God employ “silence” as a way to reach us when we are being willfully disobedient?
- In what ways could it possibly be spiritually healthy to yell at God?
- Why aren’t there (m)any songs like this one (lament) used in our worship services? Should there be?
- What is the difference between a lament (which this Psalm is) and a complaint?
- In what ways could God’s silence ever be a trust-builder?
- FACT: What is a key truth that you understood from this passage?
- REACT: What did you feel?
- ACT: What are you going to do?