

Sunday 9am & 11:15AM Notes 8/18/19 – Jeff Lyle

“Getting Honest With God” Psalm 6 | 9AM

If you will think all the way unto that moment when every human will have stood before God after life on earth has ended for us all, you will see that all questions will then be completely answered. All debates will be ended. All differences will have been reconciled. Every human opinion will have been reduced to dust in the presence of final and undeniable truth. Yes, there is coming a reality for all of us where the scales will be perfectly balanced, and every score settled. In the end, God brings us all into an unassailable honesty and every human will find themselves in God’s presence, acknowledging that He was right all along. The Sixth Psalm reveals the real-time process of what it can look like for us to get honest with God. As the psalmist finds himself way in over his head, he begins to get gut-level honest with his Maker. The Church in America needs a dose of this same kind of honesty with the Lord. Where are we these days? Have we erred? Is the Father waiting for us to quit refusing to own up to some things? What will happen if the Church that is crying out for revival would first become honest in repentance? Maybe some of these answers can be uncovered in this ancient Psalm. Maybe we can step into the breakthrough into which the psalmist himself stepped.

I. The Honest Assessment Within The Prayer (1-3)

A. A sense of divine anger (1) - “O LORD, rebuke me not in Your anger, nor discipline me in Your wrath.”

Like us, the psalmist knew he had done some things to offend his God. Instinctually, he understood that God is holy and does not trifle with sin. There is an invisible line that any of us can cross in our indifference or rebellion towards the ways of God. Something in our spiritual gut tells us that, once that line is crossed, God’s intense discipline follows. Certainly, He is a good Father. And good fathers never let their children persist in disobedience, negligence or indifference. The psalmist sensed he was in a little trouble with the Almighty.

B. A sense of hazardous weakness (2) - “...I am languishing; heal me, O LORD, for my bones are troubled.”

Whatever had been occurring in the psalmist’s life, the results were becoming increasingly troubling to him. He felt himself growing weaker in both spirit and body. He may have been struggling with a legitimate physical illness, therefore he cried out to God for healing. There is also a clear internal, spiritual issue taking place with him as he felt his weakness deep on the inside of him. He cries out to God for relief from whatever was

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troubling to him that it felt like it was in the very marrow of his bones. The psalmist was awakening to find that his weakened state was now a powerful hazard. He felt like he was being consumed.

C. A sense of gnawing dread (3) - **“My soul also is greatly troubled. But You, O LORD - how long?”**

When an external problem, a mental weariness or a physical sickness works their way into our soul, we are in dire straits. Such was the pressurized reality of the psalmist. He now felt the intensity of his reality all the way down into the invisible part of who he was. His soul was greatly troubled. Please remember that the thing that was weighing him down so much was somehow connected to God's discipline of him. Part of the discomfort was that he sensed the displeasure, anger and wrath of God in the midst of whatever he was enduring. Like us, he wanted to know how long it would be before the Lord let him experience some relief. The psalmist's honest assessment was that he was in some level of trouble with God and that only God could bring him relief and escape.

II. The Honest Confession Within The Prayer (2a, 4-5)

“(2a) Be gracious to me, O LORD... (4) Turn, O LORD, deliver my life; save me for the sake of Your steadfast love.

(5) For in death there is no remembrance of You; in Sheol who will give You praise?

Lifting a statement from verse-two and pairing it with verses four and five leave us with a healthy awareness of the foundation for the psalmist's prayer in his time of need. He did not declare that he deserved God's favor. He did not make excuses for any wrongdoings he may have committed. We read of no blaming of God or other people for why he may or may not have done things to welcome the displeasure of God. No, the psalmist is entering into a fully surrendered honesty with God. As he prays for his own life to be delivered from his dilemma, he anchors his prayer in the very grace of God. Be gracious to me, Father! Deliver my life! Save me! Do not let me die and go to the grave! His petitions to God are for intervention and reversal but notice there is not a hint of him *deserving* the things for which he is asking. He appeals to God's grace and steadfast love. He knows he has nothing to bargain with, so He aims his prayers at the heart of God's unassailable character. He asks God to help him for God's own name's sake. He wants to be able to praise God upon the earth a little longer. He doesn't want his

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praise silenced in death where nobody on earth could hear it. The psalmist has an open, honest confession of his complete dependence upon the mercy of God. This should also be our platform for prayer when we find ourselves reaping an undesirable result from an unapproved course of action. We do not deserve anything good from God. The wages we have earned are death. Yet, God has displayed His love to us by sending His Son to us while we were still bound in our sin. How much more should we have hope that our redeemed lives will be tended by Him in mercy, grace and love?

III. The Honest Emotion Within The Prayer (6-7)

A. Weary (6a) - “I am weary with my moaning;”

The battle had gone on too long. The psalmist could not bend any further under the weight of God’s discipline. If he was to be bent any more, he would break. His fight was gone from him. The emptiness, sadness and weariness from the disciplining hand of God had become too much. He was exchanging his moaning for honest, heartfelt intercession. These groans were acknowledging God’s glory. He would not hide his utter exhaustion from God. Something needed to change for him.

B. Weeping (6b) - “...every night I flood my bed with tears; I drench my couch with my weeping.”

Not only was the psalmist weary and tired, he was in a deep state of depression and sadness. Grief had overwhelmed him. At night he would cry in his bed. In the day he would weep on his couch. There was such a profound sense of heaviness that he would not try to hold back his tears. As sad as he was, there was no point in trying to hold it together another day. He was tired of the pain and the pressure. He did not wish to live any longer in despair.

C. Wasted from warfare (7) - “My eye wastes away because of grief; it grows weak because of all my foes.””

Grieved in his soul, was the psalmist from his never-ending battles. He was not imagining things. He had very real enemies who seemed to be winning the fight. Whatever had occurred between the psalmist and God, the result was a reduction of protection from the actions of his enemies. They were gaining ground. God was not defending him. If he had presumed upon the protection of God from his foes, he now felt the honest, raw emotion of

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fighting his battles without the help and defense of his God. The weeping was connected to his circumstances. His circumstances were being dictated by his opposition. His opposition was being allowed to win by his God. No wonder the psalmist felt wasted from the warfare!

IV. The Honest Confidence Within the Prayer (8-10)

A. Confident that God is listening (8-9a) Depart from me, all you workers of evil, for the LORD has heard the sound of my weeping. 9a The LORD has heard my plea...

Having submitted that he was fully relying upon God's grace and mercy instead of his own worthiness, the psalmist here declares that he is 100% confident that God was listening to what he was praying. So confident is he that he warns his enemies that they had better leave him alone and stop their opposition of him. He rebukes the enemy and declares that his great God was now involved on his behalf. This is an awesome place for all of us to arrive: a complete inward assurance that we have not been abandoned by God in the midst of our failures and inward struggles. This is what it means to rely on God as He fulfills His promises to us as His children.

B. Confident that God accepts us (9b) - "...the LORD accepts my prayer."

In spite of our failures and struggles, we can know that God is for us and will accept us in His grace. Our prayers are precious to Him, and He is not indifferent to our cries. When answers do not immediately come, the true believer will not retreat from God. We press in further. Like the psalmist's experience, we will also discover that we become more aligned with His heart when we continue to pursue God and His answers. Our prayers are the process through which God purifies our hearts, stills our souls and welcomes us into all that He is doing. The Father not only hears our prayers as we press in to Him, He accepts them when they become aligned with His will.

C. Confident that we are being sustained (10) - "All my enemies shall be ashamed and greatly troubled; they shall turn back and be put to shame in a moment."

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Here is the final crescendo from this Psalm! What began with his weakness, his weeping, his weariness and his warfare has now turned into his winning! The shame has now been removed off of him and placed upon those who opposed him. He proclaims that great trouble is coming to those who opposed him. How can one who has struggled so mightily in this Psalm arrive at this place of bold and courageous confidence? It is because he has humbled himself, acknowledged his wrongdoings, confessed his sins and fully surrendered to the mercy, grace and goodness of God. This is the place for all of our victories. Becoming honest with God about who we are and where we are invites great blessing upon our lives. The psalmist foresees a moment in time when his God will arise and send his enemies running. In this confidence, we do not find a single expression of the psalmist's own worthiness or power. Every ounce of his confidence is derived from who God is. If you, your family, your church, your city or even your nation will consecrate a season of open honesty and humble repentance before God, there can be the expectation of a similar response from Him. We can experience an end to sin, sorrow and dread of the future. We can watch God begin to remedy our personal or national ills. We can witness a reversal of all the opposition from the enemy as we resist him and he flees from us. Perhaps most importantly, our repentance aligns us back with a gloriously good God who delights to show mercy. This is a Psalm 6 season for the Church. If we humble ourselves, confess our sins, and turn from our iniquity then God will forgive us and bring healing to our land.

11:15AM Notes Below

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“An Unusual, Unpopular Confession” Daniel 9:1-13 | 11:15AM

Does God hold entire people groups accountable for sin? Is there any biblical foundation for something like national repentance? Are Christians so individually viewed by God that there is no connection between the sins of our ancestors and us living today? These questions are all in play as we approach a portion of the story from that Old Testament great, Daniel. As Israel had been suffering for their sins for nearly seven full decades, Daniel, a devout and faithful servant of God, did something peculiar. He confessed the sins of his ancestors as if they were his own, and he repented on behalf of generations who went before him. From Daniel’s example we need to consider if our own families, churches, cities or nation might be missing God’s very best for the present hour, simply because nobody has ever owned the sins of our forefathers. Daniel’s honesty, humility and thirst for righteousness compelled him to leave no sinful stone unturned as he went before his God with an unusual, unpopular confession.

I. Daniel, Discerning The Season (1-2)

“In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, by descent a Mede, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans- 2 in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, perceived in the books the number of years that, according to the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.”

Daniel had been carried away as a child from his homeland in Israel. God had allowed the enemy to invade and subdue His own people nearly seven decades prior due to the national sin and unrepentance of Israel. Jeremiah had prophesied during that time of the coming destruction and it had come to pass. Jeremiah had also prophesied that there would be a restoration of God’s people to their land after seventy years of captivity by their enemies. Daniel, in his study of Jeremiah’s inspired writings, discerned that the time of Israel’s release from their captors was approaching. He began to sense that he was living in the midst of an extremely significant season. Now an old man, Daniel, through the revelation of the scriptures, knew that he must begin to intercede for his countrymen so that they could be restored back to alignment with the will of their God. When God is about to move, He will invariably begin to awaken some of his children to His intentions to foster a season of significance. He will use His written Word and the voice of His Spirit to awaken those who will intercede and proclaim the year of the Lord’s visitation. Daniel was living in a time such as this.

II. Daniel, Broken In Confession (3-15)

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A. Daniel embraced the heaviness (3) - “Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes.”

This is an interesting response from Daniel who was a devoted and righteous servant of the Lord. He knows that God has already proclaimed that this release from captivity will occur when the seventy years prophesied by Jeremiah have been completed. Yet, Daniel does not sit back and passively wait on the Lord to accomplish this on behalf of Israel. Daniel, sobered and humbled by what he has read, begins to fast and enter into a heart-posture of mourning. Both inwardly and outwardly, Daniel displays his personal grief over the sinful history of his people. He embraces a season of consecrate prayer, seeking the face of the Lord.

B. Daniel associated with the sins of his ancestors (4-8) - “I prayed to the LORD my God and made confession, saying, "O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love Him and keep His commandments, 5 we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from Your commandments and rules. 6 We have not listened to Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. 7 To You, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us open shame, as at this day, to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel, those who are near and those who are far away, in all the lands to which You have driven them, because of the treachery that they have committed against You. 8 To us, O LORD, belongs open shame, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against You.

As Daniel rests in the faithfulness of God who keeps His promises, he immediately begins to confess the historical and ancestral sins of his forefathers. His confession is not an act of finger pointing. Daniel places himself squarely in the confession of Israel’s historical rebellion. He uses the word **WE** instead of **THEY**. *We have sinned. We have done wrong. We have acted wickedly. We have rebelled, We have turned aside from God’s commandments. We have silenced the prophets.* Can you see how Daniel engaged God on behalf of his nation? Daniel had not personally been guilty of the specific transgressions he was confessing, but he viewed himself as a part of a whole and, consequently, was compelled to repent. Daniel also specifically mentions the sins of those who once ruled in authority in both the civic and religious sectors of Israel’s history. Kings, princes and nobles of Israel had intentionally turned

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from God and had invited His discipline on the whole nation. They had never repented. Daniel now confesses and repents on their behalf. Daniel was a child when these sins were being committed. He was not personally guilty of violating these aspects of how God led His people. Yet, without nay hedging, Daniel declares that ALL OF ISRAEL was guilty. He saw himself as part of a corrupted whole. His prayers sought to honor God by confessing, national, historical, ancestral sin.

C. Daniel saw history through his faith (9-12) - “To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against Him 10 and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God by walking in His laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets. 11 All Israel has transgressed Your law and turned aside, refusing to obey Your voice. And the curse and oath that are written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out upon us, because we have sinned against Him. 12 He has confirmed His words, which He spoke against us and against our rulers who ruled us, by bringing upon us a great calamity. For under the whole heaven there has not been done anything like what has been done against Jerusalem.”

Here, Daniel continues his heartfelt repentance by further honoring God. He even retains his confidence in God’s mercy and forgiveness in spite of the fact that God had judged Daniel’s people. He declares again (with the collective WE) that Israel was guilty of rebellion against God and his written commandments. They refused to obey God’s voice. Daniel acknowledges that God had warned them of the national curses attached to their rebellion, and that He had been faithful to execute discipline upon them just as He had promised. All of their longstanding national trouble was the result of God being true to His warnings to them. The end was result was a great calamity that had never been envisioned by Daniel’s ancestors. Daniel did not excuse the treachery of his nation’s history. He did not protest that he had never been part of the problem. Daniel brought the full confession before the Lord and viewed past national history through the eyes of his present-day faith.

D. Daniel got specific in confession (13-15) - “As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this calamity has come upon us; yet we have not entreated the favor of the LORD our God, turning from our iniquities and gaining insight by your truth. 14 Therefore the LORD has kept ready the calamity and has brought it upon us, for the LORD our God is righteous in all the works that he has done, and we have not obeyed his voice. 15 And now, O Lord our God, who brought your

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people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and have made a name for yourself, as at this day, we have sinned, we have done wickedly.”

These verses are crucial. Daniel realizes that there had never been a formal acknowledging before the Lord of Israel’s national transgressions against Him! The nation had been heavily disciplined, but Daniel sees that there had never been a national moment of repentance. Nobody had honored the Lord by confessing the sins of their ancestors. They had been broken by God but had never humbled themselves to acknowledge their sins. Daniel decides that this longstanding oversight could not continue under his watch. He honors God with a historical reference to God’s delivering of His people from Egypt, and then Daniel attaches his forthcoming confession to the glory of God’s name. He makes it plain and simple when he confesses, “We have sinned. We have done wickedly.”

This lone confession lets us know that we have found a thoroughly biblical foundation for individuals taking ownership of corporate sins committed by families, churches, cities and nations. Contrary to the American virtue of hyper-individualism, there are times when God is calling His people to own the sins of the past, even when those owning those sins were not personally guilty of committing them.

III. Daniel, Audacious In Expectation (16-19)

A. An expectation of mercy (16) - “O Lord, according to all Your righteous acts, let Your anger and Your wrath turn away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy hill, because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people have become a byword among all who are around us.

As Daniel confesses on behalf of Israel, he now intercedes on behalf of Israel. Appealing to the righteousness and covenants of God, he petitions God to show mercy to Israel. Note that Daniel did not withhold his prayers even though God had already recorded His promises to restore Israel after the seventy years of captivity had finished. Daniel did not presume upon the grace and mercy of God. He aligned his heart-posture and prayers with those promises. Daniel entered into what God was doing. This is a mark of someone who is a holy and humble intercessor. No pride, no presumption, no blaming, no shrugging off the sins of our forefathers. Daniel was both brave and bold in his prayers. He was interceding on behalf of a people who had been distant from God for a very long time. Because he had done the unusual and unpopular acts of owning the sins

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of his forefathers, Daniel now had confidence to expect that God would mercifully accomplish all of the coming restoration that had been promised.

B. An expectation for favor (17-18) - “Now therefore, O our God, listen to the prayer of your servant and to his pleas for mercy, and for your own sake, O Lord, make your face to shine upon your sanctuary, which is desolate. 18 O my God, incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes and see our desolations, and the city that is called by your name. For we do not present our pleas before you because of our righteousness, but because of your great mercy.”

How beautiful this part of the prayer rests upon us! Daniel was now asking God to initiate the very activity of all that would comprise the national restoration of Israel back to their land of promise. He asks God to turn His seventy-year frown into an immediate smile as He caused His face to once again shine upon Israel. He mentions the sanctuary which had been destroyed by the Babylonians decades before. He again anchors the hope for Israel’s restoration in the mercy and grace of God, rather than pridefully assuming they deserved anything from the God whom they had collectively offended in the past. Daniel, in confessing the sins of his nation, found himself emboldened to expect new favor from on high.

C. An expectation of God responding (19) - “O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act. Delay not, for Your own sake, O my God, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name.”

As this portion of Daniel’s prayer for his people closes, notice that all the focus has moved off the historical failures of Israel and onto the present faithfulness of God. He petitions God to move quickly to perform His promises to Israel. Daniel has received revelation from the Word of God that the time for restoration is soon. Having confessed and repented for his ancestors’ sins, in which he also declared himself guilty by association, Daniel now begins to ask God to make His glory known again through the people known as Israel. He asks God to do all that must be done for His own sake, for the good of the city known as His own (Jerusalem), the people with whom He had established covenant, and Israel who were forever considered in the context of His own holy name.

This chapter and prayer in the Book of Daniel removes all doubt that there will come times when a present-day people must acknowledge the sins of their ancestors. They must repent for those sins as if they were their own sins. They must honor God by confessing what has been done by their ancestors. There can be no hedging, excusing or blaming. We own up to our national failures before the eyes of a holy God. When we have done

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that, we enter into intercession that God would forgive us, heal our land and restore us into alignment with what He is presently doing in our generation. The Church in the United States of America must soberly consider the historical, national and ancestral sins that have violated the heart of God. Our enslavement of Africans for the purpose of wealth generation has never been nationally repented from. The slaughter of Native Americans is little more than a historical footnote that is usually viewed as a necessary activity that was required for colonists to take over the land. Abortion continues to take place at horrific levels, becoming more barbaric every year. Oppression and injustice against minorities is glossed over by the majority culture. The Church must become the voice of confession, repentance and intercession regarding our guilt in these national and ancestral sins. To be silent will only invite the God of holiness and mercy to release His own humbling wave of justice to balance the scales.