



OUT OF THE DEPTHS

Whoever wrote Psalm 130 was in deep trouble. His beginning words are “Out of the depths I cry to You, O LORD!” (v. 1). He is like a man sinking into a deep whirlpool. Unless he is rescued, he will surely drown. The psalmist feels like he is drowning in his own sins. In his misery, he cries out to God for help.

All of us at times may feel like we are drowning in our troubles. We simply can’t handle the illness, the family problems, the financial woes, or whatever. We are up to our necks in trouble. We realize we must turn to the Lord for help.

The psalmist knows that he cannot demand help from God. He confesses, “If You, O LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?” (v. 3). We must all honestly face our unworthiness in the sight of the holy God. We do things that are against God’s will, and we fail to do the good things that God expects.

However, we should not think when we fall sick or experience difficulties in life that these are in every case a direct punishment from God. In Luke 13:4, Jesus tells of eighteen people who were killed when a tower collapsed. He says that they were not worse sinners than all the others living in Jerusalem at that time. Instead He warns, “No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish” (Luke 13:5).

The good news is that the situation is by no means hopeless. The psalmist joyfully speaks to the Lord, “With You there is forgiveness, that You may be feared” (130:4). We note here that *feared* does not mean that we must be afraid of God. Instead it means that, as His forgiven children, we honor, worship, trust, and serve Him.

Where do we find this forgiveness? The psalmist supplies the answer. He writes, “I wait for the LORD, my soul waits,



and in His word I hope” (v. 5). The psalmist means the good Word, the Gospel. The apostle Paul writes, “Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand” (Romans 5:1-2). Yes, forgiveness is all ours because of our redemption by our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Therefore, as we encounter life’s difficulties, we follow the example of the psalmist and turn to our loving God for help. Psalm 130 continues, “My soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning” (v. 6). The writer is using the picture of the soldiers upon the wall surrounding old Jerusalem. All night long, they watched lest an enemy sneak up under cover of darkness and attack. As the night wore on, they longed to see the first streaks of dawn. So, too, we often have long illnesses or other problems that seem to stretch further and further out. But the psalm tells us to cheer up: the sunrise is coming.

The psalm closes with the advice, “Hope in the LORD! For with the LORD there is steadfast love, and with Him is plentiful redemption. And He will redeem Israel from all his iniquities” (vv. 7-8). So we rejoice. God will do for us what is best in this life. He will give us strength to bear our burdens, and He will surely lead us safely to our heavenly home. We have been redeemed!

Lord Jesus, thank You for becoming our redemption. Thank You for giving Yourself to us in Your holy body and blood. Comfort me now in my affliction, and remind me always that You are my hope and my salvation. Amen.