A PSALM FOR SLEEPLESS NIGHTS
PSALM 6: 1-10

Introduction

Remember that prayer you used to pray when you were a little kid?

“Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep,
If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take.”

There is nothing quite like a GOOD NIGHT’S REST. But what happens when you LAY DOWN TO SLEEP and YOU CAN’T GO TO SLEEP?

Sleepless Nights Are So Frustrating

-The Tossing and Turning
-Flipping Your pillow over a dozen times or more.
-Throwing the blankets off.
-Checking the time on the clock every five minutes.
-Getting up to go surf through the channels on TV.
-Looking out your window to see if any of your neighbors are still up.
-Realizing it is too late to take that TYLENOL PM without ill effects the next day.
-Going back to bed and giving yourself that “Pep Talk”......
“OK, I’m tired now.......I’m going to fall asleep now........Here I go....” only to still be awake two hours later.

ITS ENOUGH TO DRIVE A SANE PERSON CRAZY ISN’T IT!
All of us has a “sleepless night” every now and then don’t we?

In fact studies have shown 7 out of 10 Americans have trouble sleeping one or more nights a week.

- Over 70 MILLION Americans suffer from chronic insomnia.

- Another 30 MILLION suffer from occasional insomnia.

- 18 MILLION Americans have OBSTRUCTIVE SLEEP APNEA, a potentially deadly disorder that causes one to stop breathing many times in the night.

- Over 100,000 automobile accidents each year are caused by people falling asleep at the wheel.

- And studies have shown most accidents in the workplace occur between 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. when workers are fatigued or sleepy.

Never underestimate the importance of a good night’s rest!!!

*************************************************

TRANSITION

When you read through the BOOK OF PSALMS you discover that KING DAVID suffered through a lot of SLEEPLESS NIGHTS.

As DAVID writes this SIXTH PSALM he is going through one of those AGONIZING sleepless nights.
How could HE SLEEP? His conscience is wrestling with the GUILT of his ADULTEROUS RELATIONSHIP with BATHSHEBA and DECEPTIVELY ARRANGING THE MURDER OF HER HUSBAND URIAH.

He is LIVING OUTSIDE THE WILL OF GOD. His ENEMIES are CLOSING IN ON HIM. His FRIENDS have TURNED THEIR BACKS ON HIM.

How Could David Possibly Sleep When His Spirit is so DEEPLY TROUBLED?

As we look more closely at this SIXTH PSALM, let me point out THREE THINGS David did on this “Sleepless Night” that might help you and me the next time we can’t go to sleep.

First of all on sleepless nights...........

I. CONFESSION YOUR SINS TO GOD

   vs. 1 O Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger or discipline me in your wrath.

   vs. 2 Be merciful to me, Lord, for I am faint; O Lord, heal me, for my bones are in agony.

   vs. 3 My soul is in anguish. How long, O Lord, how long?
1. This sounds very similar to DAVID’S Psalm of Confession and Repentance in Psalm 51. Listen carefully......

   *Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.*

2. In the SILENCE of this SLEEPLESS NIGHT.......David is all alone with HIS SIN. His guilt is screaming at him. His conscience is tormenting him. His sin is pointing its finger in his face.

3. DAVID realizes SLEEP is not going to come to HIS WEARY BODY until he stops hiding his sin and confesses it to GOD.

4. One of the things that you and I need to do on SLEEPLESS NIGHTS is CONFESS any and all sin to GOD.

   As a matter of fact, sometimes the CAUSE of a SLEEPLESS NIGHT is UNCONFESSIONED SIN in our life. One of the reasons we may be TOSSING AND TURNING in bed is because our TROUBLED SPIRIT is tossing and turning inside of us over some un-confessed SIN in our life.

   *It has been said, “There is no softer pillow than a clear conscience.”*

5. In the day time we are often so distracted by everything going on around us that we give little or no thought to our sins.

   But when we are ALL ALONE WITH OUR SIN in the middle of a sleepless night.........its hard to think of anything but our sin.

6. So any time you can’t sleep at night CONFESS YOUR SINS TO THE LORD.
Secondly, ON SLEEPELESS NIGHTS........

II.  CAST YOUR CARES UPON THE LORD

vs. 4 Turn, O Lord, and deliver me; save me because of your unfailing love.

vs. 5 No one remembers you when he is dead. Who praises you from the grave.

vs. 6 I am worn out from groaning; all night long I flood my bed with weeping and drench my couch with tears.

vs. 7 My eyes grow weak with sorrow; they fail because of all my foes.

1. DAVID is under a tremendous burden here. The consequences of HIS SINS have complicated his life so much that he can’t bear up under the load any longer.

   In verse 6 he is admitting to GOD that all he can do is GROAN and CRY........GROAN and CRY.

2. He has tried to carry this burden all by himself and he now realizes he can’t. And so HE CAST HIS CARES UPON THE LORD.
3. One of the REASONS why you and I can’t sleep some nights is because we are TRYING TO CARRY BURDENS the Lord never intended for us to carry.

   How many NIGHTS of SLEEP do we lose trying to figure out ANSWERS to ALL OUR QUESTIONS.......
   ...........and SOLUTIONS TO ALL OUR PROBLEMS?

We BURDEN ourselves down with everything that’s going on at WORK. We BURDEN ourselves down with everything that’s going on AT HOME. We BURDEN ourselves down with OUR PAST. We BURDEN OURSELVES down with OUR FUTURE.

How can we POSSIBLY SLEEP at night under that kind of LOAD?

   Analogy: I mean, can you imagine trying to sleep at night with a BACKPACK full of bricks hanging over your shoulders?

4. The next time you have one of those SLEEPLESS NIGHTS ask yourself, “What is it that’s bothering me?” “What burden am I trying to carry all by myself?” “What is it the Lord is asking me to hand over to him?”

5. Once you figure out what it is, say a little prayer:

   “Father, I confess to you that I have been trying to carry my burdens all by myself. Lord, right now I want to CAST ALL MY CARES on you. Father, lighten my load and give me rest from these burdens.

   In Jesus Name I ask it, AMEN
III. COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS FROM THE LORD

vs. 8 Away from me, all you who do evil, for the Lord has heard my weeping.

vs. 9 The Lord has heard my cry for mercy; the Lord accepts my prayer.

vs. 10 All my enemies will be ashamed and dismayed; they will turn back in sudden disgrace.

1. On this SLEEPLESS NIGHT, David may not have a whole lot to be THANKFUL for.......but he is THANKFUL for what blessings he does have.

* He is thankful GOD still cares for him.
* He is thankful GOD has heard his cries.
* He is thankful for GOD’S mercy.
* He is thankful GOD has accepted his prayer.
* And he is thankful GOD is going to give him victory over his enemies.

2. Isn’t it funny how we COUNT things on NIGHTS WE CAN’T SLEEP.

- Of course we’ve always been told to COUNT SHEEP when we can’t sleep.

- Sometimes we COUNT the TICKS on the CLOCK.
-Sometimes we COUNT the CHIRPS of a CRICKET.

-Sometimes we COUNT how many times the FURNACE or the AIR-CONDITIONER kicks on.

-Or we can COUNT how many times we hear the faucet drip..........or how many cars go by the house.....or how many times your mate snores over the course of an hour.

3. Do you realize one of the best things we can count on those SLEEPLESS NIGHTS is our BLESSINGS from GOD.

   In fact, when you start COUNTING YOUR BLESSINGS don’t be surprised if you don’t doze off into a peaceful sleep in no time at all.

4. When you focus on YOUR BLESSINGS instead of your PROBLEMS......it has a way of CALMING YOUR SPIRIT and GIVING YOU PEACE OF MIND AND HEART....which sets the TONE for PEACEFUL SLEEP.

   Paul wrote in PHILIPPIANS 4: 8  Finally brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable---if anything is excellent or praiseworthy---think about such things.

5. The next time you find yourself WIDE AWAKE in the middle of the NIGHT, start counting your blessings.

----------------------
ILLUSTRATION: For years I have kept a personal journal. And not long ago I came across an entry I had written on Wednesday, February 5, 2003. Let me share it with you.

Last night was a sleepless night. Symptoms of a bad cold kept me awake the entire night. When you can’t sleep, your mind thinks about anything and everything. Things like, “Boy, am I gonna pay for this tomorrow” “Sermon ideas” “Sunday School lessons” “Am I keeping Linda awake?” “What’s that scratching coming from inside our bedroom?” “What time is it?” “If I fall asleep right now how much sleep will I get before I have to get up?”

Sleepless nights produce hundreds of random thoughts. But the one thought that comforts me most is that God is the God of my sleepless nights. God never sleeps or slumbers. Through all my tossing and turning, God remains calm and steady. The thoughts that trouble me on sleepless nights are the matters God wants me to turn over to Him. Lord, thank You for the lessons I learned on this sleepless night.

Though few of us probably think of a SLEEPLESS NIGHT as a good thing, sometimes A SLEEPLESS NIGHT can bring us much closer to the LORD, especially when we………..

Confess Our Sins to the Lord….Cast Our Cares Upon the Lord ….And Count Our Blessings From the Lord.

And this is what we learn from this Psalm For Sleepless Nights.