

## Blessed in Longing Devotion

Bible Readings: Matthew 5, Matthew 23:37, Matthew 27:46

Longing hardly feels like a blessing. The desire to have and raise children when it goes unfulfilled and meets with loss rubs the heart raw. Wanting the deliverance of death and the delight of heaven when chronic discomfort or terminal diagnosis sets in weighs heavy. Our Heavenly Father never seems more silent or absent than in circumstances like these.

Yet Jesus blesses even longings. "Blessed are the poor in the spirit ... blessed are those who mourn ... blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness" (Matthew 5:3-4, 6). He does not let us long alone: "O Jerusalem! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!" (Matthew 23:37). He carries our broken mortal soul's cry before the face of Almighty God: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46). And His longing ensures that all our longings will have an end in an atonement that consumes all human emptiness.

Blessed are the longing, for they recognize when things should not be so. Blessed are the longing, for they know it is not all up to them. Blessed are the longing, for they are driven to prayer and drawn to the Word of the Lord's assurances. Blessed are the longing, for they appreciate how precious and fragile each life is. Blessed are the longing, for they are compelled to consider the variety of God's abundant and other gifts. Blessed are the longing, for they learn the strength of hope and the relief of trust, and they teach us the joy of carrying each other's crosses. And blessed are the longing, for they know the mind of Christ and the heart of the Heavenly Father, who Himself longs to hold us forever.

Lord Jesus Christ, sanctify our longings with Your own and save us from despair by the comfort of sins forgiven, the fellowship of the saints, and the promise of everlasting life. Amen.