Psalms 13:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

> I will sing unto the LORD, because he hath dealt bountifully
> with me.

Analysis

I will sing unto the LORD, because he hath dealt bountifully with me. The psalm concludes with vow of praise, moving from future confidence ("my heart shall rejoice," v.5) to committed action ("I will sing"). The progression is complete: lament → petition → trust → anticipated joy → committed praise. This demonstrates the psalm's purpose—not merely venting frustration but moving through complaint to renewed faith and worship.

"I will sing" (ashirah, אָשִׁירָה) uses emphatic future: "I myself will certainly sing." Shir means to sing, often in the context of worship and celebration. This is not private humming but vocal, public, worshipful song. Singing in Scripture is the natural overflow of joy, thanksgiving, and celebration (Exodus 15:1, Judges 5:3, Psalm 98:1, Colossians 3:16). David commits to future worship based on present trust in God's character, not waiting until feelings catch up with faith.

"Unto the LORD" (laYahweh, לַיהוָה) directs the song to God, not merely about God. This is worship—ascribing worth to Yahweh, acknowledging His character and works. The covenant name emphasizes personal relationship. The God who seemed to have forgotten (v.1) is the same God to whom David commits worship.

"Because" (ki, כִּי) provides the causal connection—reason for singing. This is not arbitrary praise or manufactured emotion but response to recognized reality. The singing flows from perception of God's action.

"He hath dealt bountifully with me" (gamal alay, גָּמַל עָלָי) uses perfect tense, indicating completed action: "He has dealt, He has acted." Gamal means to deal with, recompense, bestow upon—often with connotation of generous, abundant action. "Bountifully" captures the sense of lavish generosity. Significantly, David uses perfect tense even though circumstances may not yet have changed. This could be:

1. Prophetic perfect—speaking of future deliverance as already accomplished because certain
2. Recollection of past deliverances as basis for trust in present crisis
3. Recognition that God's past faithfulness itself is bountiful dealing, even before present deliverance.

The personal pronoun "with me" (alay) concludes the psalm as it began—personally.

David doesn't speak in generalities about God's dealings with others but testifies to God's personal involvement in his own life. The psalm models moving from feeling forgotten (v.1) to experiencing God's bountiful dealing (v.6) not through changed circumstances but through renewed perspective gained in prayer.

Historical Context

The vow to sing praise was common in lament psalms. Often, the sufferer would vow to offer public thanksgiving in the assembly once delivered (Psalm 22:22-25, 35:18, 66:13-15, 116:12-14). These vows motivated hope—the worshiper anticipated future deliverance so confidently that they committed to future praise. This wasn't manipulating God through promised praise but expressing faith through anticipated worship.

Singing was central to Israel's worship. The Levites were musicians (1 Chronicles 15:16, 25:6-7). The temple featured extensive musical liturgy. Psalms were sung, not merely recited. David himself was "the sweet psalmist of Israel" (2 Samuel 23:1). When David wrote "I will sing unto the LORD," he spoke from expertise—this was his ministry, his calling, his gift offered back to God.

The phrase "dealt bountifully" appears throughout the Psalter (Psalm 116:7, 119:17, 142:7) and describes God's generous treatment of His people. It recalls God's abundant provision during wilderness wandering, His generous giving of the Promised Land, His faithfulness through multiple deliverances. Even in distress, Israel could recount past instances of God's bountiful dealing.

For Christians, this psalm's movement from lament to praise anticipates Christ's own experience. Psalm 22 opens with "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"—words Jesus spoke on the cross (Matthew 27:46). Yet Psalm 22 also moves to confidence and praise: "I will declare thy name unto my brethren" (Psalm 22:22). Jesus, through death to resurrection, embodied the pattern of moving from apparent abandonment to vindication and praise. Believers, united to Christ, share this pattern—present suffering with confident hope of future glory.

The psalm's conclusion validates honest lament while refusing to end in despair. Modern Christians, sometimes uncomfortable with complaint, need permission to bring pain, confusion, and protest to God. Psalm 13 grants that permission while modeling faith that ultimately turns toward trust and worship.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How can believers 'sing unto the LORD' even before circumstances change, and what does this reveal about the nature of faith?
2. What is the relationship between recalling God's past faithfulness ('he hath dealt bountifully with me') and trusting Him in present crisis?
3. Why does David use past tense ('he hath dealt') when the immediate crisis may not yet be resolved? What does this teach about prophetic faith?
4. How does the movement from lament to praise in this psalm provide a pattern for believers working through suffering?

5. What would it look like in your own life to move from 'How long?' (v.1-2) to 'I will sing' (v.6), and what spiritual disciplines facilitate this movement?

Interlinear Text

אָשִׁירָה	לַיהוָה	כִּי	גָּמַל	עָלָי:
I will sing	**unto the LORD**	H3588	**because he hath dealt bountifully**	H5921
H7891	H3068		H1580	

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 21:13 (Sin): Be thou exalted, LORD, in thine own strength: so will we sing and praise thy power.

Psalms 116:7 (References Lord): Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee.

Psalms 119:7 (Parallel theme): I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments.