

## **“Persistence”**

### **Psalm 123**

**Introduction:** We have all felt the oppression of others and the need for an answer from God during trials and suffering. We look towards the throne and seek an answer from God. It is my belief that the Jews had been oppressed by their enemies and may have been in captivity. Nonetheless, the call and prayer for help is not unnoticed. Where else do we go when we are hurt and in need of raising up. God has all we need. That’s is essentially the lesson from the need. Just make Jesus your all and everything. If He is enough, you will be fine. The call is to persist or “till” He shows us His mercy, v. 2.

**Studlight.org:** Regarding the date and authorship of this psalm, nothing is definitely known. "The only circumstance which throws any light on its origin is the statement in [Psalms 123:3-4](#) that the people of God were exposed to derision and contempt."<sup>[1]</sup> Of course, that could have been the case in a number of circumstances in the long history of the chosen people.

We cannot fully agree with Leupold who said of this psalm that, "There is nothing powerful, moving, or sublime that finds expression here. A quiet submissive tone prevails throughout. It is subdued in character; there is no loud complaint, or impetuous plea."<sup>[2]</sup> It is these very qualities which, to us, makes the psalm so attractive. McCaw found in this psalm, "A glad certainty of mercy for the defamed,"<sup>[3]</sup> which he contrasted with the "Sad theme of expectation of God's judgment on the defamers in [Psalms 120](#)."<sup>[4]</sup>

**Treasury of David: TITLE.** A Song of degrees. We are climbing. The first step (Ps. 120) saw us lamenting our troublesome surroundings, and the next saw us lifting or eyes to the hills and resting in assured security; from this we rose to delight in the house of the Lord; but here we look to the Lord himself, and this is the highest ascent of all by many degrees. The eyes are now looking above the hills, and above Jehovah's footstool on earth, to his throne in the heavens. Let us know it as "the Psalm of the eyes". Old authors call it Oculus "Sperans", or the eye of hope.

(Added), **Keil and Delitzsch OT Commentary**

## Upward Glance to the Lord in Times of Contempt

This Psalm is joined to the preceding Psalm by the community of the divine name Jahve our God. Alsted (died 1638) gives it the brief, ingenious inscription *oculus sperans*. It is an upward glance of waiting faith to Jahve under tyrannical oppression. The fact that this Psalm appears in a rhyming form, "as scarcely any other piece in the Old Testament" (Reuss), comes only from those inflexional rhymes which creep in of themselves in the *tephilla* style.

It is a short Psalm, written with singular art, containing one thought, and expressing it in a most engaging manner. Doubtless it would be a favorite song among the people of God. It has been conjectured that this brief song, or rather sigh, may have first been heard in the days of Nehemiah, or under the persecutions of **Antiochus**. It may be so, but there is no evidence of it; it seems to us quite as probable that afflicted ones in all periods after David's time found this psalm ready to their hand. If it appears to describe days remote from David, it is all the more evident that the Psalmist was also a prophet, and sang what he saw in vision.

**Verse 1:** To lift the eyes is to feel accepted from the Lord. The oppressed and prisoner of the enemy does not lift his eyes. The head stays bowed and afraid that there may be violence as in a smack or punch.

The eyes that find the face of God will be blessed. The God we serve is in heaven. We not only can look into heaven but we may send our voices there. Our God is in heaven; He lives there. When we seek the Lord in heaven we are seeking all that is there. Our voices will say what we need from the Lord but the eyes peer into the existence of God. We find His mercy with the eye. Will He not release all the resources of heaven for the least of His children?

### **Rom 8:32**

32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all — how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

NIV

**Heb 10:19-22**

19 Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience

NIV

No man prays to a false God and has His voice enter heaven. We are blessed to have the only God in the universe that lives in heaven. That's pretty cool.

Here is a reminder of who you are looking at when you lift your eyes to His throne:

**Ps 9:4**

4 For you have upheld my right and my cause;  
you have sat on your throne, judging righteously.

NIV

**Ps 9:7**

7 The Lord reigns forever;  
he has established his throne for judgment.

NIV

**Ps 11:4**

4 The Lord is in his holy temple;  
the Lord is on his heavenly throne.

He observes the sons of men;  
his eyes examine them.

NIV

**Ps 47:8**

8 God reigns over the nations;  
God is seated on his holy throne.

NIV

**Ps 89:14-15**

14 Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne;  
love and faithfulness go before you.

15 Blessed are those who have learned to acclaim you,  
who walk in the light of your presence, O Lord.

NIV

**Ps 93:2**

2 Your throne was established long ago;  
you are from all eternity.

NIV

**Prov 20:28**

28 Love and faithfulness keep a king safe;  
through love his throne is made secure.

NIV

**Isa 6:1-7**

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. 2 Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. 3 And they were calling to one another:

"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty;  
the whole earth is full of his glory."

4 At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.

5 "Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty."

6 Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. 7 With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for."

NIV

### **Heb 1:8**

But about the Son he says,  
"Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever,  
and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom.

NIV

### **Heb 4:16**

16 Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

NIV

### **Heb 8:1-2**

The point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, 2 and who serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by man.

NIV

### **Heb 12:2-3**

2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

NIV

### **Rev 3:21-22**

21 To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne. 22 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

NIV

**Verse 2:** Here lies the title of this devotion message. Be persistent in all that you do when it comes to seeking God mercy. Don't give up or give in. Seek the Lord until the mercy drops fall. The Hebrew word here is **du ( `ad)**. This word is used as a terminus. The duration of something. Even eternity. Perpetually or world without end. Usually used as an adverb, or preposition. Even as a conjunction. (Strong's 5703 and 5704). This means to keep pressing the Lord until the mercy comes. Seek the Lord as the most needy. Perpetually if needed.

The use of the term slaves or mistress is not in derogatory terms. The lives of the ancients were accustomed to serving. The days in which we live are days that have put a negative connotation to the terms we use for servants. The ancients served with joy and gladness. The master has all the slave needs for sustenance, protection, and mercy. This is the way we are to look to the Lord.

The maid looks to satisfy her mistress and we seek the blessing and opportunity to serve our Jesus. I seek God's mercy, and I also seek to please the Lord who helps me. To look to the Lord is a special phrase.

**Illustration:** As I read the salvation experience of Spurgeon, He told of a specific use of the word "**look**" from a layman that woke the heart of Spurgeon unto salvation. He was walking to church but could not get there due to a terrible snow storm. He turned into a Primitive Methodist church where the preacher was absent

due to the storm. A layman stood in and led the man that moved the world to Christ. The layman's text was Isaiah 45:22

**Isa 45:22**

22 Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.

KJV

**Read excerpt from Look Unto Me: How They Found Christ, p.51ff. Spurgeon's conversion**

**Why was the layman successful:**

- Love for the lost
- Willing to be used of God.
- He was just filling in, ha.
- Knew what was important.
- Committed to worship. He showed up and stood up.
- Was he a great orator? No! Was he used by God in a mighty way? Yes!

If you can move mountains and have not love you are just noise.

**1 Cor 1:18-22**

18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 19

For it is written:

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise;  
the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate."

20 Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.

NIV

### **1 Cor 1:26-31**

26 Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. 28 He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things — and the things that are not — to nullify the things that are, 29 so that no one may boast before him. 30 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God — that is, our righteousness, holiness, and redemption. 31 Therefore, as it is written: "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord."

NIV

### **1 Cor 13:1-3**

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

NIV

Let us look to Christ until the mercy drops fall. Be persistent. When we wait upon the Lord great things happen. God can teach us so much when we wait upon Him. Persistence, patience, trust, determination, desire, and so much more.

### **Prov 13:12**

12 Hope deferred makes the heart sick,  
But when the desire comes, it is a tree of life.

NKJV

The Hebrew word for slave is **`ebed**. This is quite equivalent to the NT word for slave. This refers to a servant. This is a bond

servant. The Greek word is **doulos**. Our word deacon is **diakonos**. In Romans 1:1 Paul calls himself a doulos, slave. Paul uses all these words to describe his relationship to his Master. He is a slave, a servant, and a table waiter.

The word Master is also pretty cool. The Hebrew word is **'adown**. This is the first part of the word **Adonai**.

The nature of God is to care for us. He is a God of mercy and compassion. In spite of all circumstances and what may seem out of place, we know our God has shown through the millennia that He cares. The cross is the ever-present reminder that we are His servants.

### **Matt 6:19-34**

19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

22 The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

- 27 Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?
- 28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:
- 29 And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.
- 30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?
- 31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?
- 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.
- 33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.
- 34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

KJV

**Verse 3:** The Jews had been through a lot and don't forget it was their own fault. Nonetheless, God loved them and was merciful to them. Now they were wanting to go home and sing to the Lord as they came into the temple ascent. The Hebrew for mercy is **chanan**. This refers to the pity and favor of God towards an inferior. This is why many men will not be saved. They do not understand their inferior existence. I am glad to be a slave of the Lord Jesus Christ, and I for one, seek the mercy of the Lord so I do not have to receive His judgment.

The word contempt refers to being despised, disrespected, and shamed. (**Buwz**)

**Verse 4:** The oppressor had come after the Jews in several ways.

- The proud are always with us. Puffed up legalists and nitpickers. Always no better but never lead a soul to Jesus.
- Ridicule- scoffers
- Arrogant. The prideful. This comes from a word that means to be at rest or quiet. This is a false sense of security in one's own ability. Secure in a bad sense.

### **2 Peter 3:3-16**

3 First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing, and following their own evil desires. 4 They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation." 5 But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. 6 By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. 7 By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

8 But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. 9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.

11 Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives 12 as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. 13 But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

14 So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him. 15 Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. 16 He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

NIV