

Psalms for the Soul

Mercy

Jim Hoffman

Questions

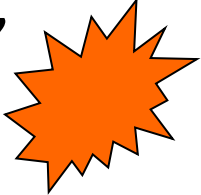
What is the value, or effect of anticipating a visit from God?

Is the English language big enough to describe God?

Some background.

- ***Our title for this book is 'Psalms', but the Hebrews knew it as the book of praises.***
- ***Many were written in the 10th century by David, but at least one was written earlier by Moses (Psalm 90) and others were written later.***
- ***They were intended to be sung; often times with musical instruments. (Psalm means 'poem set to music')***

Some background.

- ***The emotions of the Psalms are all over the map; joy, praise, anger, sadness, and frustration.***
- ***In many cases, the writer ‘pulls no punches’ with what is on his mind and he speaks in a very straight forward manner to God.*** 
- ***When we read the Psalms sometimes we say “yes!, that’s how I feel”.***

Emotional Psalms

- ***Ps 10:1 Why , O Lord, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble? NIV***
- ***Ps 42:9 I say to God my Rock, "Why have you forgotten me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?" NIV***
- ***Ps 44:23-24 Awake, O Lord! Why do you sleep? Rouse yourself! Do not reject us forever. 24 Why do you hide your face and forget our misery and oppression? NIV***

Emotional Psalms

- ***Ps 74:1 Why have you rejected us forever, O God? Why does your anger smolder against the sheep of your pasture? NIV***
- ***Ps 88:14 Why, O Lord, do you reject me and hide your face from me? NIV***
- ***Ps 13:2 How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me? NIV***

Our approach.

1. ***Psalms that tell us of MERCY. (Psalm 123)***
2. ***Psalms that tell of God's PROTECTION. (Psalm 121)***
3. ***Psalms that tell us of PRAYER. (Psalm 3)***
4. ***Psalms that tell of God's BLESSING. (Psalm 1)***
5. ***Psalms that tell us about LOVE. (Psalm 36)***
6. ***Psalms that tell us God's MAJESTY. (Psalm 97)***
7. ***Psalms that tell us of PEACE. (Psalm 120)***
8. ***Psalms that tell of God's WORD. (Psalm 119)***
9. ***Psalms that tell of the MESSIAH. (Psalm 110)***
10. ***Psalms that tell of WORSHIP. (Psalm 89)***
11. ***Psalms that tell of PRAISE. (Psalm 145)***

Psalm 123

- 1. Ps 123 Unto You I lift up my eyes, O You who dwell in the heavens. 2 Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their masters, As the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, So our eyes look to the LORD our God, Until He has mercy on us. 3 Have mercy on us, O LORD, have mercy on us! For we are exceedingly filled with contempt. 4 Our soul is exceedingly filled With the scorn of those who are at ease, With the contempt of the proud. NKJV***

Mercy

- ***OT:2603 chanan (khaw-nan'); a primitive root [compare OT:2583]; properly, to bend or stoop in kindness to an inferior; to favor, bestow; causatively to implore (i.e. move to favor by petition):***
- ***OT:2583 chanah (khaw-naw'); a primitive root [compare OT:2603]; properly, to incline; by implication, to decline (of the slanting rays of evening); specifically, to pitch a tent; gen. to encamp (for abode or siege): KJV - abide (in tents), camp, dwell, encamp, grow to an end, lie, pitch (tent), rest in tent.***

Mercy

- ***For years I have taught that mercy is best described as “God withholding what is due to us” and I stand by that truth still.***
- ***However, these O.T. meanings open up a new facet of mercy for me that I can best describe as “God coming down to camp with us”.***

Psalm 123

- ***We are never told of the exact circumstances that led to this Psalm, but we do know that God's people were being ridiculed, scoffed at, and held in contempt.***
- ***The remedy here is a good lesson for us; the Psalmist does not return the treatment in kind, but rather appeals to a higher authority.***
- ***The Psalmist is asking his God to come and camp with him in his circumstance. He is convinced that life will be better just by the presence of God.***




***Ps 123:1 I lift up my eyes to you,
to you whose throne is in heaven. NIV***

- ***He looks to his God, and his God is the one whose throne is in heaven.***
- ***His God is no pretender to the throne; He is already on the throne proving that He is God.***
- ***And if He is God, then He is also able to help those who call upon Him.***




Ps 123:2

As the eyes of slaves look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid look to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, till he shows us his mercy. NIV

- ***Slaves and servant girls have no power or authority to change their circumstances.***
- ***If change is going to come it will be by the hand of their master.*** 
- ***When the slave and the servant girl know their master they also know how their master will react to their request.***

Ps 123:2

As the eyes of slaves look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid look to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, till he shows us his mercy. NIV

- ***There is an expectation, based upon their knowledge of the master, that help will come.***
- ***Their eyes watch the master's hand to see when, and how it will move.*** 
- ***In the natural, masters need servants, thus the servant has confidence that help will come so he keeps on watching.***

Ps 123:2

As the eyes of slaves look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid look to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, till he shows us his mercy. NIV

- ***So it ought to be for us; we should keep watching, keep expecting, and keep praying when we need help.***
- ***2 Chronicles 16:9 For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him. NIV***
- ***Here is a fact that emboldens us; our Master wants to bless His servants every bit as much as we want to be blessed.***



Ps 123:2

As the eyes of slaves look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid look to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, till he shows us his mercy. NIV

- ***The psalmist is committed to keep watching until his God shows him mercy.***
- ***In the context, he is committed to wait and watch until his God comes to visit with him.***
- ***Isa 40:31 But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint. NKJV***

Ps 123:2

As the eyes of slaves look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid look to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, till he shows us his mercy. NIV

- ***Since he is convinced in his own heart that life will be better when God shows up, he is willing to wait.***
- ***When was the last time we were content to wait until God showed up?***
- ***Most people will tell you that His greatest movings in their lives came after an extended period of waiting on God.***



Ps 123:2

As the eyes of slaves look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid look to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, till he shows us his mercy. NIV

- ***And when He does show up we are to see His presence as a manifestation of his mercy.***
- ***The psalmist waited and watched, should we expect anything any different for us?***
- ***Acts 1:4 "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised" NIV***

Ps 123:3-4

***3 Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us,
for we have endured much contempt.***

***4 We have endured much ridicule from the proud,
much contempt from the arrogant. NIV***

- ***Lord, come stand with us. If our enemies could just see that you know us they will no longer hold us in contempt.***
- ***Lord, come stand with us. If we can sense your presence it will not matter much how others view us.***
- ***Lord, we desperately need your presence.***
(Acts 4:13)



Ps 123:3-4

***3 Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us,
for we have endured much contempt.***

***4 We have endured much ridicule from the proud,
much contempt from the arrogant. NIV***

***What is the value, or effect of
anticipating a visit from
God?***

Ps 27:7

***7 Hear my voice when I call, O Lord;
be merciful to me and answer me. NIV***

- ***In verses 1- 6 of this psalm David makes some very bold statements concerning his confidence in God.***
- ***In verse #7 he asked specifically for mercy and in the rest of the this psalm he speaks of what it means to him to have the presence of God in his life.***
- ***Here again we see the mercy of God associated with His presence.***

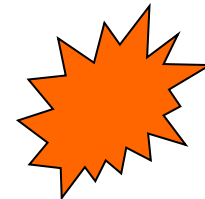
Psalm 27: 7-14

- ***Ps 27:7-14 Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me. 8 When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek. 9 Hide not thy face far from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation. 10 When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up. 11 Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies. 12 Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty. 13 I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. 14 Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD. KJV***

Ps 85:10

***10 Mercy and truth have met together;
Righteousness and peace have kissed. NKJV***

- ***In psalm 85 we see the more familiar meaning of mercy; God would be just to condemn based upon the truth, but is asked to forgive out of His mercy.***
- ***When His mercy collides with truth, His mercy generally wins out.***
- ***Hos 6:6 For I desire mercy , not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings. NIV***



Mercy is God withholding the judgment that we are due.

- ***Ps 103:8-11 The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy . 9 He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever. 10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. 11 For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. KJV***

Ps 147:11

The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy. KJV

- ***We sometimes wonder what it takes to please God; in Psalm 147:11 we have it in very simple terms.***
- ***Micah 6:8 He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God? NKJV***

What do you think?