



# STORY TIME

Discovering the Parables of Jesus



# 41 Parables of Jesus

PARABLES	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE
Salt of the Earth ✓✓	Matthew 5:13	Mark 9:50	
Lamp Under a Bowl ✓✓	Matthew 5:14-16	Mark 4:21-22	Luke 8:16, 11:33
Wise and Foolish Builders	Matthew 7:24-27		Luke 6:47-49
New Cloth on an Old Coat	Matthew 9:16	Mark 2:21	Luke 5:36
New Wine in Old Wineskins	Matthew 9:17	Mark 2:22	Luke 5:37-39
The Two Debtors			Luke 7:40-43
The Sower ✓✓	Matthew 13:1-23	Mark 4:1-20	Luke 8:4-15
The Good Samaritan ✓✓			Luke 10:25-37
The Friend at Midnight			Luke 11:5-13
Growing Seed		Mark 4:26-29	
The Rich Fool ✓✓			Luke 12:13-21
The Watchful Servants		Mark 13:35-37	Luke 12:35-40
Unfruitful Fig Tree			Luke 13:6-9
The Weeds ✓✓	Matthew 13:24-30, 36-4		
The Seed ✓✓	Matthew 13:31-32	Mark 4:26-30	Luke 13:18-19
Yeast ✓✓	Matthew 13:33		Luke 13:20-21
The Concealed Treasure	Matthew 13:44		
The Pearl	Matthew 13:45-46		
The Casting of the Net into the Sea	Matthew 13:47-50		
Owner of a House	Matthew 13:52		
The Lost Sheep ✓✓	Matthew 18:12-14		Luke 15:3-7
The Unforgiving Servant ✓✓	Matthew 18:23-35		
The Vineyard Workers ✓✓	Matthew 20:1-16		

PARABLES	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE
Lowest Seat at the Feast ✓✓			Luke 14:7-14
The Great Feast ✓✓			Luke 14:16-24
Cost of Discipleship			Luke 14:28-33
The Lost Coin			Luke 15:8-10
The Prodigal Son ✓✓			Luke 15:11-32
The Shrewd Manager			Luke 16:1-13
The Rich Man and Lazarus			Luke 16:19-31
Master and His Servant			Luke 17:7-10
Persistent Widow			Luke 18:1-8
The Two Sons	Matthew 21:28-32		
The Vineyard Owner	Matthew 21:33-44	Mark 12:1-11	Luke 20:9-18
The Marriage Feast	Matthew 22:1-14		
Fig Tree	Matthew 24:32-35	Mark 13:28-31	Luke 21:29-33
Faithful and Wise Servant	Matthew 24:45-51		Luke 12:42-48
The Pharisee and the Tax Collector			Luke 18:9-14
Ten Virgins ✓✓	Matthew 25:1-13		
The Talent ✓✓	Matthew 25:14-30		Luke 19:11-27
The Sheep and the Goats	Matthew 25:31-46		

One-third of the recorded sayings of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels are in parables.



# Luke 18

Now He [Jesus] was telling them [His disciples] a **parable** to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart, Luke 18:1

“pray without ceasing” 1 Thessalonians 5:17



saying, “In a certain city there was a judge **who did not fear God and did not respect man.**”

Luke 18:2

\*The Lord is merciful and full of grace. God is the opposite of a corrupt judge. Jesus is teaching about prayer by illustrating the divine character. God is a righteous judge. As a judge He is fair. God is unlike human beings, who in their weaknesses are consumed by their self-interests and show little concern for other people. — Brad H. Young

# How did one become a judge? What was their role?

He [King Jehoshaphat of Judah] appointed judges in the land in all the fortified cities of Judah, city by city. He said to the judges, “Consider what you are doing, for you do not judge for man but for the Lord who is with you when you render judgment. Now then let the fear of the Lord be upon you; be very careful what you do, for the Lord our God will have no part in unrighteousness or partiality or the taking of a bribe.”

2 Chronicles 19:5-7 (about 850 BC)

Jesus continued the parable...

“There was a widow in that city, and she kept coming [imperfect tense Greek verb ἔρχομαι *erchomai* - indicates continuous action] to him, saying, ‘Give me legal protection [Greek verb ἐκδικέω *ekdikeo* - justice, vindication] from my opponent.’” Luke 18:3

- Persistence was her only weapon. – Joseph Fitzmyer
- We are not told how long she was persistent in her pleas and that could be intentional. It is not about the amount of time we spend but the character of our actions. - Rabbi Jerry Weinstein



- We are not told what the widow's case is about.
- Who is the widow's opponent/adversary?
- "Does she want money from her adversary? Access to property? Or does she want her opponent thrown into jail, or to suffer, or to be executed?" – Amy-Jill Levine
- "The parable gives no indication of the widow's economic status. She may be poor and perhaps lacks money to bribe the judge; on the other hand, she has access to the court, and she does not invoke poverty as a reason for her appeal." – Amy-Jill Levine
- The widow is never described as holy or unholy, righteous or unrighteous, religious or non-religious.



“Probably the woman was bringing a financial case to the judge and he refused to listen because he was waiting for a bribe; she was too poor to pay, and persistence was her only weapon.” - New Bible Commentary

“The widow cannot plead her case on the basis of justice. She does not have an advocate who can represent her problem to a fair judge. As a widow she needs an influential intermediary who can approach the unjust judge and convince him to act in her behalf. Clearly her adversary occupies a position of power and superiority. Apparently her adversary dominates a corrupt court through his influence on an unscrupulous judge. The depiction of the widow in the Old Testament often refers to her vulnerability in a society insensitive to her needs. She is a forgotten member of the community. Her adversary controls the court to the extreme disadvantage of the widow. But the widow has faithful perseverance, which proves to be more effective. She would not give up. Against all odds, her headstrong tenacity wins the court’s favorable decision.” – Brad H. Young

“For a while [imperfect tense verb in Greek – continuous action] he [the judge] was unwilling [refused]; but afterward he said to himself, ‘Even though I do not fear God nor respect man, yet because this widow bothers me [literally “causing me labor” or “giving me work”], I will give her legal protection [vengeance – her original request], otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out [Greek noun κόπος *kopos* – to beat, strike someone, literally or metaphorically... give them a black eye].’ ” Luke 18:4-5



“A physical blow from a widow in the public arena of his courtroom would be the ultimate disgrace. The judge is aware that he could not respond to such a physical attack. He must give her what she wants before she becomes uncontrollable and actually punches him in the eye.”

– Brad H. Young

And the Lord said, “Hear what the **unrighteous** [unjust] judge said; now, will not God bring about justice [vengeance] for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them?  
Luke 18:6-7

- If a corrupt judge finally gives in to a widow’s pestering, how much more will God, who is altogether just, respond to His chosen people’s continual prayers (as opposed to the widow’s occasional visits).



- “If an unscrupulous magistrate will be moved to act justly because of the unrelenting tenacity of a helpless widow, how much more will the one true God answer persistent prayer? If a corrupt judge can be influenced for good by someone of little importance and no worldly clout, how much more can the person created in the divine image pray expectantly to the compassionate God?”  
— Brad H. Young

- “If even a judge who does not honor the laws of God and man can be induced to act by the incessant appeals of a widow, how much more will God act to uphold His people when they cry to Him.”  
- New Bible Commentary

There are some who believe that asking God to grant justice in a situation more than once means you do not have faith. However, as we see in this parable, this belief is opposed to what Jesus actually teaches. Those who have faith will regularly pray to God until He grants them justice, patiently and humbly waiting on God.

On the opposite side, there are those who believe that God will grant them whatever they want if they ask enough times. This belief is also untrue, since there are many prayers that God would never answer. God is not a magical genie, and believing that He is responsible for heeding to our every wish is blasphemous.

- <https://www.messiah-of-god.com/parable-of-the-persistent-widow-parable-of-the-unjust-judge.html>



Jesus said, “I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?” Luke 18:8

\*Why the apparent change in topics?

\*Read Luke 17

Now having been questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or, 'There it is!' For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst." And He said to the disciples, "The days will come when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. They will say to you, 'Look there! Look here!' Do not go away, and do not run after them. For just like the lightning, when it flashes out of one part of the sky, shines to the other part of the sky, so will the Son of Man be in His day. But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation." Luke 17:20-25



“And just as it happened in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: they were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. It was the same as happened in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building; but on the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. It will be just the same on the day that the Son of Man is revealed.” Luke 17:26-30

- Unlike this unjust judge, the True Judge of all cares for us deeply. He cares about justice and shows mercy to those who are His disciples. Justice will be done, but it is based on Adonai's timetable, not our own. As we read in His Word about the great Day of The Lord, justice and judgement will happen quickly. We know that the Lord is completely faithful to His promises and whatever He sets out to do happens. If even an unjust judge eventually does what is right, then how much more will the Lord carry out His justice and how much more quickly?
- The “quickly” in this passage though has been an issue for many who read it. Every generation, starting with the Apostles, prayed and hoped for Messiah Yeshua's return in their lifetime and until now we still wait. We pray that speedily and soon He will return, and while we hope we will live to see it, this parable reminds us not to give up. We are called to be alert and ready for His return. But Yeshua's question at the end of this parable is a sobering reminder that faithfulness requires diligence. If the Lord returned right now, this very moment, how many would He find faithfully waiting? Would He find us faithfully waiting like the widow or absorbed in ourselves like the judge?



And He [Jesus] also told this **parable**  
to some people who trusted in  
themselves that they were righteous,  
and viewed others with contempt:

Luke 18:9

# “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.” Luke 18:10

- In the New Testament era Herod the Great levied a tax on the produce of the field and a tax on items bought and sold. Other duties owed to foreign powers were a land tax, a poll tax, a kind of progressive income tax (about which the Pharisees tested Jesus, Matt. 22:17), and a tax on personal property. In Jerusalem a house tax was levied. These taxes were paid directly to Roman officials.
- Export and import customs paid at seaports and city gates were farmed out to private contractors who paid a sum in advance for the right to collect taxes in a certain area. Such were Zacchaeus (Luke 19) and Matthew (Matthew 9). Rome apparently placed little restriction on how much profit the collector could take. An enrollment for the purposes of taxation under the Roman emperor brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem where Jesus was born (Luke 2:1–7). In addition to the taxes owed occupying powers, the Jewish people also had to pay religious duties. A half shekel was owed to the Temple by all Jewish males throughout the world (Matthew 17:24). The second tax was a tithe, 10 percent of everything the soil produced, collected by the Levites.
- The Israelites resented most deeply the duties paid to the occupying powers. Many zealous Jews considered it treason to God to pay taxes to Rome. When questioned about paying the poll tax, Jesus surprised His questioners by saying that the law should be obeyed (Mark 12:13). – Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary



- The **Pharisees** constituted the largest and most important political group among the Jews in the days of the New Testament, Josephus stating that they numbered about 6,000. They appear in the Gospels as opponents of Jesus. Paul was a Pharisee (Philippians 3:5). They controlled the synagogues and exercised great control over much of the population.
- No surviving writing gives us information about the origin of the Pharisees. The earliest reference to them is in the time of Jonathan (160–143 BC) when Josephus refers to Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes. Their good relations with the rulers ended in the time of John Hyrcanus (134–104 BC). They came to power again when Salome Alexandra became Queen (76 BC).
- The term “Pharisee” means “separated ones.” Perhaps it means that they separated themselves from the masses or that they separated themselves to the study and interpretation of the law. A common assumption is that they developed from the Hasidim, the ultra-orthodox loyal freedom fighters in the time of Judas Maccabeus. They apparently were responsible for the transformation of Judaism from a religion of sacrifice to one of law. They were the developers of the oral tradition, the teachers of the two-fold law: written and oral. They saw the way to God as being through obedience to the law. They were the progressives of the day, willing to adopt new ideas and adapt the law to new situations.
- The Pharisees were strongly monotheistic. They accepted all the Old Testament as authoritative. They affirmed the reality of angels and demons. They had a firm belief in life beyond the grave and a resurrection of the body. They were missionary, seeking the conversion of Gentiles (Matthew 23:15). They saw God as concerned with the life of a person without denying that the individual was responsible for how he or she lived. They had little interest in politics. The Pharisees opposed Jesus because He refused to accept their interpretations of the oral law. – Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary

“The **Pharisee** stood and was praying this to himself: ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.’” Luke 18:11-12

\*This Pharisee felt he was doing something special and unique for God, for which God owed him thanks and reward. Such a mentality is, of course, neither peculiar to Pharisees in particular nor unbelievers in general; on the contrary, it is those who consider themselves believers who seem to be especially susceptible to this sort of false pride.



Jesus said, “But the **tax collector**, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, the sinner!’” Luke 18:13

\*He experienced the depth of his own sin and was utterly remorseful and repentant, and as a result God forgave him. - Jewish New Testament Commentary

Jesus said, “I tell you, this man [tax collector] went to his house justified rather than the other [the Pharisee]; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted.” Luke 18:14

- God is always ready to receive the unrighteous when they call to him, but He closes His ears to those whose pride in their religious practices and good works makes them feel self-sufficient. - New Bible Commentary



To first-century Jewish ears, a “righteous” or “justified” Tax Collector would have been an oxymoron. “Unbelievable!” They would exclaim.

Amy-Jill Levine provides a modern analogy to help modern readers grasp this; “the Tax Collector would have been viewed as someone like that of an invading foreign government sent to your local community to take your money and the Pharisee as someone as well respected as that of Mother Teresa or Billy Graham in our times.”

The purposes of the Parable were to show that one cannot trust in himself for righteousness and should not view others with contempt (Luke 18:9). The Pharisee's prayer was concerned with telling God what a good man he was, for not only did he keep the Law by fasting and tithing (18:12), but also he considered himself better than other people (18:11). He was using other people as his standard for measuring righteousness.

On the other hand the tax collector used God as his standard for measuring righteousness. He realized that he had to throw himself on the mercy of God for forgiveness.



- The two prayers reflect two types of character. The Pharisee was a pious man, living an honest and upright life. He did more than the law required. He fasted twice a week—on Mondays and Thursdays—although the law required people to fast only once a year on the Day of Atonement. He gave tithes of all his income and not just of the required parts. But he stood up in a prominent place to pray, he commended himself for his piety (his prayer is all about 'I'), he despised his neighbors and he suggested to God that there was nothing he needed.
- By contrast, the tax collector stood far away from the holy place in the temple. He did not dare lift up his eyes, still less his hands, to God in prayer, but simply poured out a confession of his sinfulness and appealed for God's mercy. Jesus' verdict was that he went home justified, i.e. accepted by God, but the Pharisee was not accepted at all.

# How Long, O Lord?



FIRST MELISSA

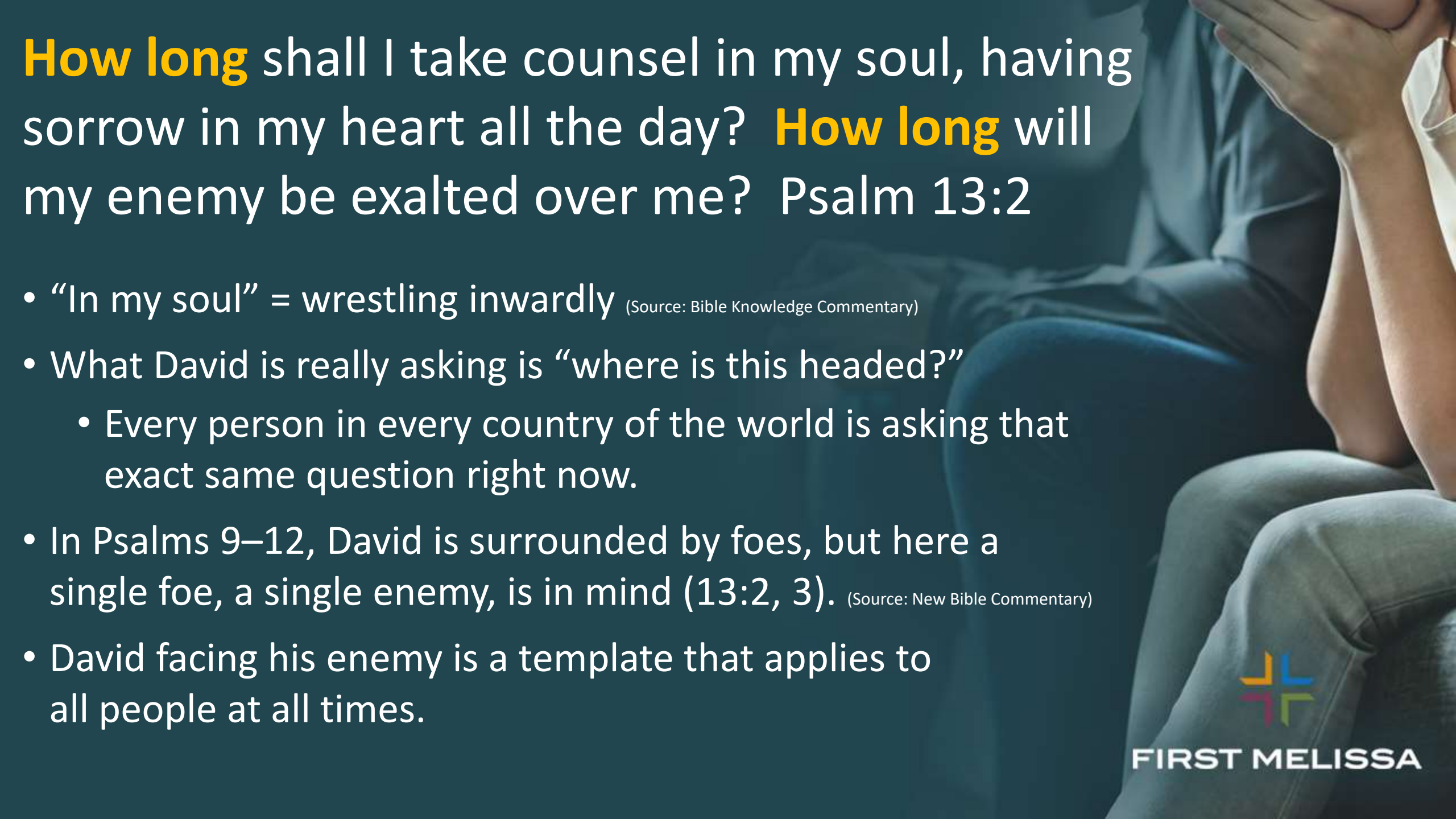
**April 2020**



**How long, O Lord?** Will You forget me forever? **How long** will You hide Your face from me? Psalm 13:1

- עַד-אֲנָהּ יְהוָה [ad anah Yahweh] is “How long, O Lord?”
- King David feels like God has forgotten him while knowing that He has not
- “How long will you hide your face from me?” means more than merely being forgotten by God. To say that the face of God is shining upon us is a way of saying that God is being favorable to us or blessing us. So, if God is hiding His face, what this must mean is that the times of blessing or favor seem to have ceased.





**How long** shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart all the day? **How long** will my enemy be exalted over me? Psalm 13:2

- “In my soul” = wrestling inwardly (Source: Bible Knowledge Commentary)
- What David is really asking is “where is this headed?”
  - Every person in every country of the world is asking that exact same question right now.
- In Psalms 9–12, David is surrounded by foes, but here a single foe, a single enemy, is in mind (13:2, 3). (Source: New Bible Commentary)
- David facing his enemy is a template that applies to all people at all times.



FIRST MELISSA

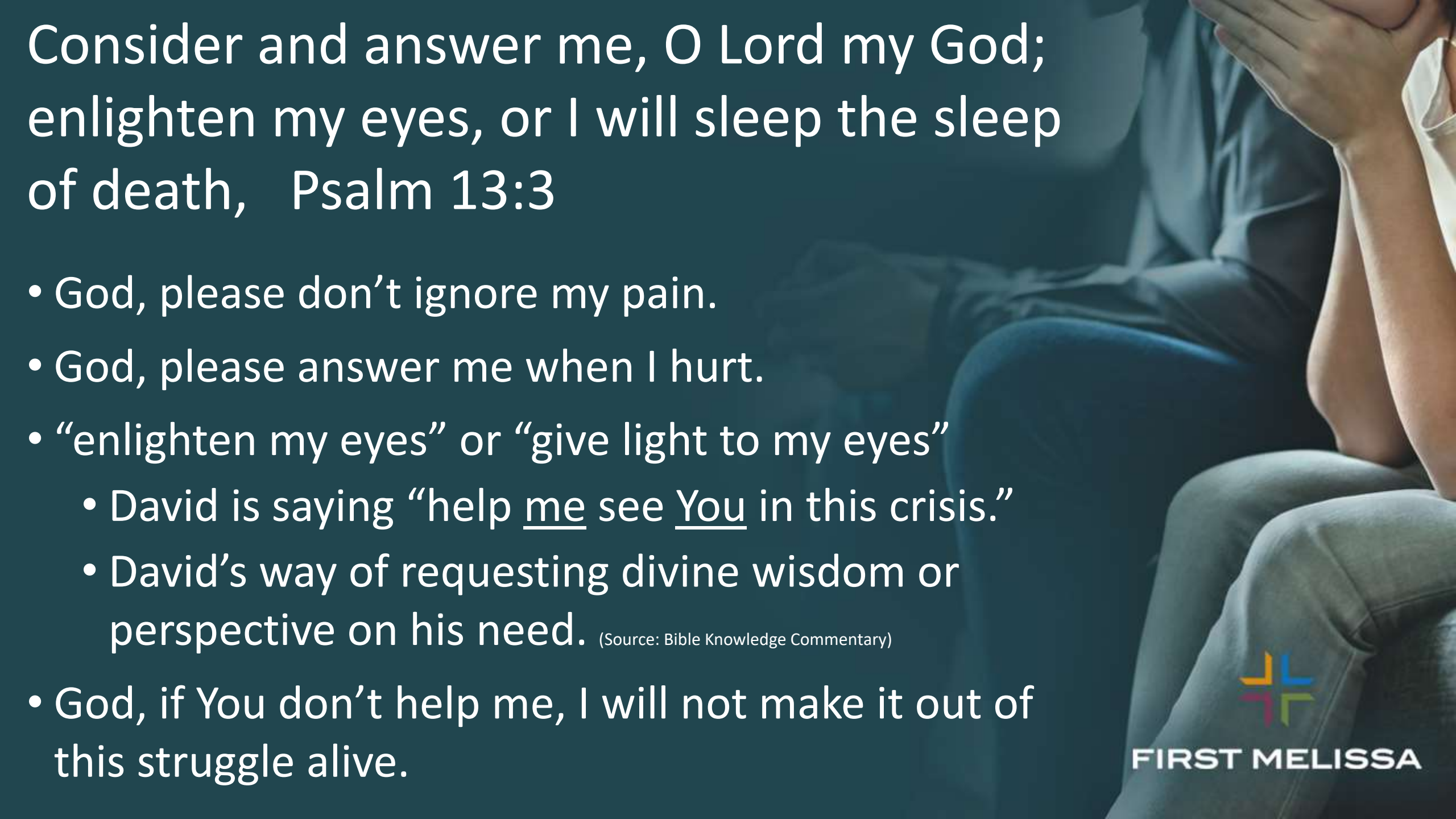


# 4 times in 2 verses (Psalm 13:1-2)

## David says “How long?” ad anah עַד-אָנָה

- These statements from David echo the 4 times in the Torah when God says to His people “**How long** (ad anah עַד-אָנָה) will I have to put up with your rejection of Me?”
- Then the Lord said to Moses, “**How long** do you refuse to keep My commandments and My instructions?” Exodus 16:28
- The Lord said to Moses, “**How long** will this people spurn Me? And **how long** will they not believe in Me, despite all the signs which I have performed in their midst?” Numbers 14:11 (twice in one verse)
- The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, “**How long** shall I bear with this evil congregation who are grumbling against Me? I have heard the complaints of the sons of Israel, which they are making against Me.” Numbers 14:26-27
- God called out to the people 4 times; David called out to God 4 times.





Consider and answer me, O Lord my God;  
enlighten my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep  
of death, Psalm 13:3

- God, please don't ignore my pain.
- God, please answer me when I hurt.
- “enlighten my eyes” or “give light to my eyes”
  - David is saying “help me see You in this crisis.”
  - David's way of requesting divine wisdom or perspective on his need. (Source: Bible Knowledge Commentary)
- God, if You don't help me, I will not make it out of this struggle alive.



FIRST MELISSA



and my enemy will say, “I have overcome him,” and my adversaries will rejoice when I am shaken.

Psalm 13:4

- You may have adversaries who rejoice when your family suffers
- We all have a spiritual adversary, known as Satan, who continually seeks to steal, kill and destroy



FIRST MELISSA

What should we do now?

How should followers of  
Messiah Jesus respond to  
hurt and pain?



FIRST MELISSA



David prayed...

But I have trusted in Your  
**lovingkindness** [חֶסֶד *chesed*]; my  
heart shall rejoice in Your **salvation**  
[יְשׁוּעָה *yeshua*]. I will sing to the  
Lord, because He has dealt  
bountifully with me. Psalm 13:5-6

These 2 verses are said everyday in Jewish prayers  
before the Shema in a section called “verses of praise.”



FIRST MELISSA

But I have trusted [past tense] in Your **lovingkindness**; my heart shall rejoice [future tense] in Your **salvation**. I will sing [future tense] to the Lord, because He has dealt bountifully [past tense] with me.

Psalm 13:5-6

\*David trusted God and praised God even before the deliverance happened

(Source: Rabbi Chaim Eisen)



FIRST MELISSA



The Apostle Paul wrote,  
“we are afflicted in every way, but not  
crushed; perplexed, but not despairing;  
persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down,  
but not destroyed; always carrying about in  
the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of  
Jesus also may be manifested in our body.”

2 Corinthians 4:8-10

# Prayer at First Melissa

- Our staff and prayer team pray weekly over prayer slips / emails
- Our prayer room is open before and after worship services
- Our prayer team is available to pray for you after worship services
- **Prayer, Praise, Lord's Supper service on Wednesday, September 6**





# How Long, O Lord?

Jesus the Risen Savior said, “Therefore you too have grief now; but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you.”

John 16:22

## Until He is finished with me