

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### **Psalms: God's Nurture Of The Inner Man In The Life Of Faith**

#### **CXXIII: Handling Fatigue From Facing Extensive Scorn**

(Psalm 123:1-4)

#### **I. Introduction**

- A. Verbal and emotional abuse is not only difficult to face, it is very wearing if faced long-term.
- B. The psalmist expressed fatigue from facing extensive contempt and scorn from enemies, and the solution to this problem is supplied in Psalm 123:1-4. We thus view this psalm for insight and edification (as follows):

#### **II. Handling Fatigue From Facing Extensive Scorn, Psalm 123:1-4.**

- A. The introductory remarks are part of the first verse, so the numbering system in the Hebrew text matches that of the English Bible (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 1088), so we stay with the English Bible's numbering system.
- B. We thus translate Psalm 123:1-4 (as follows):
  1. "A song of ascents. I will lift up my eyes to You Who sits (enthroned) (*yashab*, B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 442-443) is in the heavens," Psalm 123:1.
  2. "Behold! As the eyes of servants, slaves look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maidservant looks to the hand of her lady queen, mistress (*geberet*, Ibid., p. 150), so our eyes look to Jahweh our Elohim until He shows favor, is gracious (*hanan*, Ibid., p. 335-336) unto us," Psalm 123:2.
  3. "Show favor, be gracious (*hanan* again, cf. v. 2) unto us, O Jahweh, show favor, be gracious (*hanan* again, cf. v. 2, 3a) unto us, because we are greatly wearied, have in excess of (*saba'*, Ibid., p. 959) contempt," Psalm 123:3.
  4. "Great satiety [weariness] (*sabah*, noun form of verb *saba'*, Ibid., p. 960) [has occurred] to us, to our life principle from the mocking (*la'ag*, Ibid., p. 541) of the arrogant who are at ease (*sha'anan*, Ibid., p. 983), from the contempt of the proud (*ge'eh*, Ibid., p. 144)," Psalm 123:4.
- C. We consider significant observations regarding this psalm (as follows):
  1. The author expressed how not only he, but his fellow pilgrims in Israel had become mentally and emotionally exhausted, "satiated," with the burden of facing much contempt and ridicule from ungodly, proud people who were at ease. They were beyond the level of patiently enduring to where they had no more reserves even to handle the contempt they faced.
  2. To deal with this utter emotional and mental exhaustion from such persecution, the psalmist with fellow pilgrims acknowledged that they had no way of handling this oppression themselves, that they were at the complete mercy and kindness of God to deliver them out the trial.
  3. Accordingly, the afflicted humbly submitted to God's lordship over them, relying on the fact that just as the master in their culture was responsible for the provisions of his or her slaves or maidservants, the afflicted were relying on God to show favor and be gracious unto them. The psalmist thus also looked to the Lord who sits enthroned in the heavens over all of their oppressive persecutors who are at ease and who relentlessly mock and show contempt for them (v. 1) in trust that God was sovereign over all.
  4. They also realized that only God could determine just **when** He would provide the deliverance they needed (v. 2b), that they had to wait upon the Lord to act in their defense and come to their aid.

***Lesson:*** (1) *To deal with utterly exhausting pain upon being relentlessly and greatly ridiculed and shown contempt by parties that were at ease and arrogant in life, the pilgrims of Israel ceased trying to rule even their own lives and emotions to view God as sovereign over all creation, including their foes, and simply wait upon Him to rescue them in His time and sovereign will.* (2) *Accordingly, this psalm hints that God can utilize prolonged, exhausting persecution to teach His people not only to rely on Him versus handling difficult issues themselves, but to realize His complete sovereignty over their very existence that they simply relax and rest in the Lord.*

***Application:*** (1) *If we face arrogant foes who are at ease and who relentlessly mock or show contempt for us, God wants us to cease trying to deal with the problem and just wait upon Him to address it in His time and sovereignty as God.* (2) *We should also realize that God may be letting such oppression occur that we might cease leaning on our own efforts to succeed in life and/or ministry and simply wait on Him.* (3) *We should also realize that God may be letting such oppression occur to us that we might realize that we are not owned by ourselves, but that we belong to Him as His servants and maidservants, that we simply heed Him and look to Him as our Lord and Master to provide all we need to fulfill His service assignments for us.*