

**Yahweh, the Almighty God of Israel, is with us**  
"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet,  
and shew my people their transgression,  
and the house of Jacob their sins." Isaiah 58:1

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# Prayer, Praise & Thanksgiving

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## Perseverance in Prayer

**Reading: Luke Chapter 18: 1-14**

The Oxford dictionary's definition of the word '**perseverance**' is "to continue steadfastly especially in something that is difficult or tedious." Coupled with the right understanding, perseverance can be an extremely valuable thing. Here is a list of some of the elements that constitute perseverance; each is accompanied with an example in '**prayer,**' the subject of our sermon this Sabbath.

### 1. Knowledge

Before any meaningful progress can be made - in any enterprise - knowledge is required. One may of course learn by trial and error; but this is the long way to success and too often ends in failure. The first thing you ought to do before embarking on a new enterprise is to learn as much as possible about it. Here is what you must know if you want to be successful in prayer.

#### Knowledge of God and His ability

Job 19: 25: *"For I know that my Redeemer liveth..."*

Job 23: 10: *"But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."*

Job 42: 2: *"I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee."*

There was a multitude of things that Job didn't know (see chapters 38-40) but there were three important facts that he did know.

1. That his **Redeemer** was alive;
2. That his **Redeemer** knew everything about Job
3. And that His **Redeemer** could do anything.

## Ignorance

Ignorance, especially of what constitutes right and wrong, is one of the main causes of defeat in matters of moral character.

Proverbs 29: 18: *“Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.”*

Hosea 4: 6: *“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge:...”*

## Wilful Rejection of Truth

Another cause for failure is that God's Spirit and direction is not welcome. Many just don't want to know. **In deed they think they know it all.** The results are inevitable.

Hosea 4: 6: *“...because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.”*

## 2. Application

We may explain the word ‘**application**’ as action, effort, work etc. Most people know that knowledge is an important preliminary to success. But when it is not followed by positive action, then even knowledge is just so much excess, mental baggage. It is wasted. Perseverance always expresses itself in action. Indeed we only really recognize the presence of perseverance by some outward action. The action may be a call, a request, a visit, a knock on the door or something far more demonstrative; but something must be done, some outward expression must be exhibited before results can be obtained. In (Luke 18: 1-8) we see a good example of perseverance.

- This widow came to the one person whom she knew had the power to help.
- She asked - knowing she had a good case. **“Avenge me of mine adversary.”**
- Initially the unjust judge was not interested.
- But her persistence paid off and she obtained what she wanted.

## 3. Persistence

Just as the repeated blows of a hammer eventually have an effect, in the same way persistence in prayer produces results. Note in our example of the widow:

- She was not easily put off; she kept coming, well aware that her request was a worthy one which deserved attention.
- Her persistence unarmed the unrighteous judge. **Note his words:**
- 4: *“...but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;*
- 5: *Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.”*

### **The Almighty is infinitely more eager to answer prayer than was that unjust judge.**

Another example of persistence is found in the story of Elijah.

1 Kings 18: :41: *“And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain.*

42: *So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees,*

43: *And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again **seven times.***

44: *And it came to pass at the **seventh time**, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.*

45: *And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a **great rain.**”*

## Vain Repetition

By persistence we do not mean **vain repetition**, which is the countless mouthings of the same phrase or sentence over and over again. **Pagans go in for vain repetition.** They say the exact same words over and over again. This is not the kind of perseverance that Yahweh calls for. Perseverance is spiritual endurance governed by reason. Vain repetition is a mindless reiteration of the same words - without reason and without respect to the intelligence of the hearer. **Beware of people who use vain repetition!**

Matthew 6: 7: ***“But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.”***

## 4. Patience

It is a characteristic of valuables, that the more worthwhile they are the longer they take to produce. In other words, time is involved in the making of everything of worth. And this is where patience links hands with perseverance.

### We must Wait on the Lord

Proverbs 20: 22: ***“Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee.”***

Psalm 40: 1: ***“I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.”***

Daniel 12: 12: ***“Blessed is he that waiteth...”***

Habakkuk 2: 3: ***“For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.”***

Psalm 27: 14: ***“Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.”***

## 5. Another Aspect of Perseverance

### Tenacity - Hold Fast

To hold on when all around are letting go is most essential for final victory. Perseverance in prayer usually pays off; but even when it doesn't, we must never give up our faith in God. Hold fast!

Revelation 2: 25: ***“But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.”***

Daniel 3: 17: ***“If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.***

***18: But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.”***

Here is evidence of faith without presumption. In other words: **‘Our God can save us. But even if He decides not to, we will not break His law and worship your golden image.’**

My prayer is that we will all be as steadfast as those three Hebrew worthies were.

**AMEN!**

**In the Son's Name - For the Father's glory.**

**Elder: Max W. Mader**

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