

Luke 18:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

Analysis

The judge relents: 'Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.' The judge's motive is purely selfish: 'because this widow troubleth me' (διά γε τὸ παρέχειν μοι κόπον τὴν χήραν ταύτην, dia ge to parechein moi kopon tēn chēran tautēn, because this widow causes me trouble). The phrase 'lest by her continual coming' (ἴνα μὴ εἰς τέλος ἐρχομένη, hina mē eis telos erchomenē, lest coming continually) she 'weary me' (ὑπωπιάζῃ με, hypōpiazē me, literally 'strike me under the eye,' metaphorically 'wear me out'). He grants justice not from righteousness but exhaustion. If even selfish weariness moves an unjust judge, how much more does the Father's love move Him to answer His children's persistent prayers?

Historical Context

The judge's capitulation demonstrates that persistence works even on the worst possible authority figure. His motivation—avoiding annoyance—contrasts sharply with God's motivation: love, compassion, justice, and covenant faithfulness. The point isn't that we must wear God down or overcome His reluctance. God doesn't need persuading to care about His children. Rather, persistence demonstrates faith, develops character, and aligns our wills with God's purposes. Delayed answers aren't divine indifference but opportunities to deepen dependence and trust. The parable teaches that if even unjust judges eventually respond to persistence, believers can confidently persist in prayer knowing their perfectly just and loving Father will answer in His perfect timing.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does the judge's selfish motivation contrast with God's loving motivation to answer prayer?
2. What purposes might God have for delaying answers to prayer?
3. How does persistence in prayer develop faith, character, and spiritual maturity?

Interlinear Text

διά	γε	τὸ	παρέχειν	μοι	κόπον	τὴν	χήραν	ταύτην
because	Yet	G3588	troubleth	me	G2873	G3588	widow	G3778
G1223	G1065		G3930	G3427			G5503	

ἐκδικήσω	αύτήν	ἴνα	μὴ	εἰς	τέλος	έρχομένη
I will avenge	her	G2443	G3361	by	her continual	coming
G1556	G846			G1519	G5056	G2064

ὑπωπιάζῃ	με
she weary	me
G5299	G3165

Additional Cross-References

Luke 11:8 (Parallel theme): I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

Luke 18:39 (Parallel theme): And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me.

Judges 16:16 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass, when she pressed him daily with her words, and urged him, so that his soul was vexed unto death;

Matthew 15:23 (Parallel theme): But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.