

Psalms 123:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the LORD our God, until that he have mercy upon us.

Analysis

A simile illustrates dependent watching: 'Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the LORD our God, until that he have mercy upon us.' The double comparison (male servants, female maidens) emphasizes universality - all who depend on masters exhibit this attentive watching. Servants watch the master's hand for signals, commands, provision, and protection. The hand symbolizes power, action, and provision. This watching is active, not passive - alert readiness to respond to divine direction. The phrase 'until that he have mercy' reveals the specific need: divine compassion and intervention. Waiting 'upon' the LORD combines expectation with submission. The comparison to servants might seem demeaning in modern contexts, but it accurately depicts human dependence on God - we are creatures serving Creator, subjects before Sovereign. Dignity comes not from autonomy but from relationship with the Master.

Historical Context

In ancient household structures, servants' welfare depended entirely on masters' disposition. Attentive service resulted in provision; neglect brought punishment. The comparison would resonate powerfully in a culture familiar with master-

servant dynamics. The emphasis on 'hand' reflects how non-verbal communication directed servant activity.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does the servant-master relationship illuminate the believer's relationship with God?
2. What does it mean to watch God's 'hand' for direction and provision?
3. Why is waiting 'until' God shows mercy important rather than demanding immediate response?
4. How does modern emphasis on autonomy conflict with this posture of dependence?
5. In what ways can believers cultivate attentive watching of God's direction?

Interlinear Text

הֵן ה	עַיִנַיִנו	עֲבָדֵי יָם	אֶל	לְדָד	אֲדֹנֵיהֶם
H2009	Behold as the eyes	of servants	H413	look unto the hand	of their masters
	H5869	H5650		H3027	H113

עַיִנַיִנו	שִׁפְחָה	אֶל	לְדָד	גִּבְרֶתָהּ	כִּי
Behold as the eyes	of a maiden	H413	look unto the hand	of her mistress	H3651
H5869	H8198		H3027	H1404	

עַיִנַיִנו	אֶל	יְהוָה	אֱלֹהֵינוּ	דַּע
Behold as the eyes	H413	wait upon the LORD	our God	H5704
H5869		H3068	H430	

שְׂחָנָנו׃
until that he have mercy
H2603

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 25:15 (References Lord): Mine eyes are ever toward the LORD; for he shall pluck my feet out of the net.

Genesis 49:18 (References Lord): I have waited for thy salvation, O LORD.

Luke 18:1 (Parallel theme): And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;

Genesis 32:26 (Parallel theme): And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.