

Psalms 86:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto thee daily.

Analysis

Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto thee daily. The appeal for mercy (chonneni, חֲנֹנֵנִי, show grace/favor) uses a verb from chen (חֵן, grace), emphasizing unmerited favor rather than earned reward. David seeks not justice but grace, recognizing that survival depends on God's compassion, not his own deserving.

The term **O Lord** here is Adonai (אֲדֹנָי, Master/Sovereign), emphasizing God's authority and David's submission. As servant to Master, David has no rights to demand but every reason to appeal to God's character. This master-servant framework undergirds biblical prayer—we approach the King who has bound Himself by covenant to care for His people.

I cry unto thee daily (kol-hayom, כָּל-הַיּוֹם, all the day) reveals persistent, sustained prayer, not occasional crisis petitions. David's practice anticipates Paul's exhortation to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17) and Jesus's teaching on persistent prayer (Luke 18:1-8). Daily, continual prayer demonstrates dependence as lifestyle, not emergency measure.

Historical Context

The daily prayer pattern reflects Jewish devotional practice that developed into fixed prayer times (morning, afternoon, evening). Daniel prayed three times daily facing Jerusalem (Daniel 6:10), and the early church continued this rhythm (Acts 3:1, 10:9). David's example established prayer as regular discipline sustaining

covenant relationship, not merely crisis response. This foundation shaped Jewish and Christian spirituality.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. Does your prayer life reflect daily dependence on God or primarily emergency appeals during crisis?
2. How does praying for mercy rather than justice change your attitude toward God and others?
3. What practical steps could help you develop 'all day' prayer consciousness like David practiced?

Interlinear Text

הֵיְיָ	אֲדֹנָי	כִּי	אֶל־יְיָ	אֶקְרָא	כָּל־	הַיּוֹמִים:
Be merciful	unto me O Lord	H3588	H413	for I cry	H3605	unto thee daily
H2603	H136			H7121		H3117

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 57:1 (Grace): Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.

Psalms 88:9 (References Lord): Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction: LORD, I have called daily upon thee, I have stretched out my hands unto thee.

Ephesians 6:18 (Parallel theme): Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

Psalms 25:5 (Parallel theme): Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.

Psalms 55:17 (Parallel theme): Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.

Psalms 56:1 (Grace): Be merciful unto me, O God: for man would swallow me up; he fighting daily oppresseth me.

Psalms 4:1 (Grace): Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.

Luke 2:37 (Parallel theme): And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.

Luke 18:7 (Parallel theme): And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?