

“Persistent Prayer Pays” (Luke 18:1-8)

Perhaps you’ve noticed that the world around us is not getting better. Mankind is not evolving into some “new and improved” creature. When we watch the evening news, we are bombarded with stories of men and women who kill strangers, co-workers, students, neighbors, and even their own children. As a result, we no longer feel as safe as we once did to leave the doors of our home unlocked. Some of us have a weapon that we keep in our home to protect our family. When we go jogging, we consider what route is the safest. We don’t want to risk being mugged, raped, or assaulted. Furthermore, it seems when we watch television, listen to the radio, or read a magazine we are made aware of the conflicts and wars that are going on in our world. War and rumors of war abound. There is never a sense of peace or rest. Tragically, when we examine the church, we discover that church attendance is on the decline. Even Christian writers and preachers are saying that the church is no longer relevant. With this type of encouragement, many Christians are abandoning the church. Some are even falling away from Christ. In other parts of the world, Christians are being persecuted. On account of their faith in Christ, believers are being killed, tortured, raped, and imprisoned. *The world that we live in is a dangerous and depressing place.* To make matters worse, the Bible tells us that things are not going to remain as bad as they currently are...they are only going to get worse.¹

In light of the dark and tragic days that lie ahead, how should we deal with injustices that will abound? Should we fight, desist and play dead, compromise with the world? What action should believers take as the world deteriorates? How are we to prepare for the end? Jesus will answer this question for us. In the passage that we will look at Jesus has been describing to His disciples the conditions that will prevail at His second coming.² In that day, mankind will be going through the usual habits of life as they did in the times of Noah and Lot. As in those days, indifference to God and immorality will prevail.³ Suddenly, Christ will return in power, glory, and judgment and will shatter this indifference. Having instructed His disciples on the nature of these end times, Jesus proceeds to give practical lessons to His followers.

In Luke 18:1-8, Jesus tells His disciples (cf. 17:22) one of His most memorable parables. Today, I want us to see that Jesus is telling us, “If we do not pray we *will* give up.” In order to be encouraged in our praying and to persevere in our faith, Jesus exhorts us to (1) pray with persistence and (2) pray with an accurate view of God.

1. Pray with Persistence (18:1-5). Luke introduces Jesus’ parable in 18:1 with these words: “**Now He [Jesus] was telling them [His disciples] a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart.**”⁴ Luke provides us with a one-verse commentary that includes the interpretation prior to the parable. This is very unusual. It would be similar to providing an answer key on page one and the problems to be solved on page two. If all the parables were this easy to interpret, Bible students would have it made.

Luke informs us that Jesus told the following parable to show His disciples and us that at all times we should not “lose heart” or “grow weary.”⁵ When we read the phrase “at all times,” it is easy to think, “That’s impossible! I’ve got to go to work for at least eight hours every day. I’ve got to pay bills, to eat my meals, to talk with my spouse and others, to take care of my house and lawn and car, and a hundred other things to do each week. How can I possibly pray at all times? What am I supposed to do, join a monastery or something?”

No, that is not the point! Jesus modeled for us the kind of life that we are to live in dependence on the Father. As we look at His life, He did not live in the desert as a hermit so that He could pray around the clock. Rather, prayer was something that Jesus frequently engaged in, even though in one sense, of all people who ever lived on this earth, Jesus had the least need to pray! He did not have to wrestle with the inner lusts of the flesh as we do, since He was born without sin. And yet He often prayed.

I know your hearts. You are people who believe in prayer. I do too. Yet, for all of us it is easy to neglect prayer. We don't want to, we just get busy. I'm here to tell you, there's hope. Even if your prayer life is currently non-existent, you can grow to have a productive prayer life. Here are some action steps that have helped me in my prayer life:

- ***Set aside a regular time each day.*** Your time can be in the morning, afternoon, or evening. Pick a time that works best for the way that God has wired you. I would recommend making an appt. in your day-timer or palm pilot. This may seem strange, but you will be more likely to pray if you look at your calendar and see an appt. that says, "God." You won't want to cancel that appt.
- ***Make a daily prayer list.*** One of the greatest challenges to praying is a wandering mind. Perhaps you're like me and your mind is always working. If you have trouble focusing when you pray, write down your prayer requests on a piece of paper or use 3x5 cards. I find it helpful to pray out loud and be active (e.g., walk, ride a stationary bike, rock in the rocking chair). This does wonders to free you from distraction and keep you focused.
- ***Pray for requests on the spot.*** When someone asks for prayer, offer to pray for the person on the spot. This is a wonderful habit to get into because then prayer becomes a part of your life. Furthermore, praying with people is one of the greatest ways to build community. Many of us may receive email prayer requests. If so, before you reply to the email or delete it into cyberspace, why not take a moment and pray for the request. This will further strengthen your prayer muscles.

By adopting even one of these action steps, you will grow as a man or woman of prayer. And you will come to the realization that it is possible, even in the frantic pace of contemporary American life, to make prayer a priority.

Before we leave 18:1, I'd like you to notice that Luke says disciples "ought" to pray at all times. The word "ought" (*de*, "it is necessary") has the idea of necessity. Prayer is not an optional activity for the more committed. It is a necessity for *every* believer because it acknowledges our total dependence on God. We can't say, "Prayer is not my gift" or "I'm not comfortable praying." Not to pray is arrogant, because we're really saying, "Thanks, God, but I can handle this by myself." But the truth is: We can't handle anything by ourselves, apart from God's grace and power!

Jesus says that we "ought to pray and not to lose heart." The use of the term "lose heart" in the rest of the New Testament is often closely linked with adversity.⁶ When we go through adversity, it is so easy to lose heart and give up. If you're going through a trial, this passage is for you. The theme of this parable is the vindication of God's misunderstood and suffering people. Does this describe you today? Are you suffering? Do you feel misunderstood? Do you wrestle with God's timetable and the need to wait on Him? Do you agonize over the problem of evil and God's sovereign control? Difficulties like these may cause us to want to give up on prayer, but we should continue in prayer until the end. Instead of losing heart and giving in, Jesus wants us to hope in Him and persevere in prayer. To do otherwise, guarantees that we will lose heart and give up. Prayer is a means of perseverance.

Now in 18:2-3, Jesus introduces the characters in His story: an unjust judge and a poor widow. Jesus begins His parable by setting the stage: "**In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God and did not respect man**" (18:2). This judge did not have the two characteristics that God esteems the most: love for God and love for man (Matt 22:37-39). This judge cared only about himself.⁷ He didn't determine the cases before him on the basis of testimony or law. Hurt or suffering people didn't bother him at all. He was a man without a conscience, a man without religious faith. Think of him as tough, selfish, unfair, and powerful.⁸ Given the attention focused on this judge both at the beginning of the parable and at the end (cf. 18:6) I take it that Jesus wants us to view him as the central character.

But the secondary character in this parable is also important. Jesus brings her to the forefront in 18:3. He tells us that in the same city, a widow was seeking help from the judge.⁹ Jesus put it like this: **“There was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, ‘Give me legal protection from my opponent.’¹⁰”** As we study this parable, try to see it in its Eastern setting. The “courtroom” was not a fine building but a tent that was moved from place to place as the judge covered his circuit. The judge, not the law, set the agenda; and he sat regally in the tent, surrounded by his assistants. Anybody could watch the proceedings from the outside, but only those who were approved and accepted could have their cases tried. This usually meant bribing one of the assistants so he would call the judge’s attention to the case. The widow in Jesus’ story had three obstacles to overcome. First, being a woman she had little standing before the law. In the Palestinian Society of Jesus’ day, women did not go to court. They were not highly esteemed. Second, since she was a widow she had no husband to stand with her in court. Though we probably think of this widow as an older woman, in the ancient world a widow could be as young as her thirties.¹¹ In biblical times, girls were married at the age of 13 or 14 and so a widow could be quite young, without grown children to care for her.¹² Finally, she was poor and could not pay a bribe even if she wanted to. Widows were especially vulnerable, in that there were not many vocational opportunities for women. Life insurance was nonexistent. She was dependent on whatever her husband had left her. It is no wonder poor widows did not always get the protection the law was supposed to afford them!¹³

The fact that the main petitioner in the story is a widow means that the judge does have a cultural and moral obligation to be sensitive to her. She is in an exposed and vulnerable position. God expected the poor to be defended.¹⁴ The widow makes her appeal again and again. She intends to get the justice she is entitled to receive from her adversary.¹⁵ So Luke records that this widow “kept coming” to the judge.¹⁶ She wanted justice and would not take “no” for an answer. The judge thought that by initially rejecting her she would go away. Wrong! He no sooner leaves work to go home for lunch than this woman dogs his steps all the way to his house. When he comes out to go back to work, there she is. When he goes home at night, she’s there again. Every morning she is waiting for him to show up. Every day he tells her to get lost, but she keeps coming back. He can’t get rid of her! She’s beginning to dominate his life. He begins to hate going to work, because he’s going to be confronted by this nagging woman! Jesus also says that this widow cries out, “Give me justice!” The verb used here suggests immediate action. The widow declares, “Give me justice and I mean NOW!” She didn’t take “no” for an answer. She was a squeaky wheel demanding oil.

After introducing the two characters and laying out the setting for us, Jesus shares the response of the unjust judge. Initially, he was unwilling to help the widow, but over the course of time her persistent requests broke him down. In 18:4-5 Jesus says, **“For a while he [the unjust judge] was unwilling; but afterward he said to himself, ‘Even though I do not fear God nor respect man, yet because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out.’”** I like this! This widow gets the job done! Margaret Thatcher is quoted as saying, “In politics, if you want anything said, ask a man; if you want anything done, ask a woman.” Men, perhaps there is a lesson here for us. Most of the women I know are especially hard workers and are faithful and persistent in the duties that they take on. Ladies, you have my respect. You know how to get the job done!

This judge did not share my sentiments for women. Though defending widows and the defenseless was the judge’s primary job (Ps 82:2-4), he heartlessly shrugged her off.¹⁷ He was independent, or thought he was. He wasn’t overly concerned about public opinion. He was concerned with himself—his own opinions, his own comfort, his own income. And this judge was the widow’s last resort. Remember, Luke makes a special point of emphasizing in 18:2 and 18:4 that this judge didn’t fear either God or man. The word “yet” is emphasized in the Greek text. It is the critical point in the story. It is the widow’s “continual coming,” not a change of heart on the judge’s part that persuades him. This widow persisted, pressed, and persevered. In her pleading for justice, she broke the man down.

Incidentally, the word translated “wear me out” in 18:5 is a word that literally means “to hit someone in the eye, to give that person a black eye.”¹⁸ This is a tough widow—the judge was afraid she would beat him black and blue! Actually, the judge was not worried about a physical assault; he was just tired of the bother. Used figuratively, it means to wear someone down emotionally or to beat down someone’s reputation. Since this judge is not concerned with loss of reputation (18:2, 4), the term here refers to the woman wearing him down emotionally.¹⁹ She is a nuisance. She is sucking the life out of him. The judge foresees that the woman’s constant requests will eventually break him down, and so he purposes to take up her cause. He wants to avoid the hassle of her coming on a regular basis. He knows if he continues to refuse, she will continue to come. This judge met his match. Finally, he relented and gave the widow what she wanted just to shut her up.

In 18:6-8, Jesus brings His story to a close and applies the parable to the lives of His disciples. He assures His disciples that God is not like the unjust judge. He will not put them off. Rather, He will respond to the persistent requests of His children. The question is: Will God’s children remain faithful until He returns?

2. Pray with an accurate view of God (18:6-8). In 18:6-8a Jesus says, “**Hear what the unrighteous judge said; now, will not God bring about justice²⁰ for His elect²¹ who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them?²² I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly.**”

The Lord asks us to “hear what the unrighteous judge says,” that is, to reflect on his reaction to the persistent requests of the woman, which in turn pictures the prayers of the disciples. Listening carefully to the judge’s words is important, because only then could the disciples see that Jesus was teaching by contrast. Jesus’ argument is from the lesser to the greater: If an unjust, selfish judge will see that justice is done in response to persistent requests, how much more will the just God bring justice to His own beloved people who pray constantly for relief.

Jesus’ argument here is classic! If a base, pigheaded, earthly judge will finally succumb to the urging of a defenseless widow, for whom he couldn’t care less, how much more will the righteous Judge speedily come to the defense of His own children who persistently cry to Him for justice.²³ First, we are not like the widow. In fact, we are totally opposite from her. She was poor and powerless; we are rich and powerful. She was abandoned; we are adopted. She was forgotten; we are chosen. This widow had no relationship with the judge. She was just one more item on his to-do list. But we are God’s sons and daughters, Jesus’ brothers and sisters. We have been chosen as disciples. We are in God’s family and we matter to Him.

Second, in sharp contrast, our loving heavenly Father is nothing like the judge in Jesus’ story. The unjust judge is unrighteous and impartial; the just Judge is holy and true. The unjust judge is selfish; the just Judge is selfless. The unjust judge is uncaring; the just Judge is caring. We don’t need to pester God for every need until He reluctantly responds. We don’t have to pester God to get His attention. We don’t have to grovel. We don’t have to flail ourselves. We don’t have to bite our lips and groan and moan and all of these kinds of things people do to show God they really mean business.

If one of my children ran up to me and said, “Daddy, please, please, please, I beg of you, I petition you, I’m pleading with you to listen to my need.” I would say, “Time out. I don’t like the underlying assumption here. You don’t have to go through all those gymnastics. What can I do for you? You mean everything to me.” I want to meet my children’s needs—there is no greater pleasure.²⁴

For you and me to have an effective prayer life we must be convinced that our God is a loving Father that wants to give good gifts to His children. How can we think that our heavenly Father loves us less than our earthly fathers? God cares about us. He wants what’s best for us. And He longs to answers our prayers.

You may say, “This just doesn’t ring true. My own experience is just the opposite. I lost a promotion because I refused my boss’s sexual advances. I did what was right and he did what was wrong. I tried everything to be the perfect employee and nothing ever worked. Now, I’m right where I was four years ago. He’s become vice-president of the company. I’ve asked God thousands of times to make this right and it stays wrong. I have the impression that God either doesn’t care or is powerless to act. He’s anything but speedy. I want to believe what the Bible says, but I have to tell you that I think God is a lot more like the unjust judge than Jesus says!”

These are hard statements to answer. Yet, I believe what Jesus says. God will bring about justice for His elect who persistently cry out to Him and He will do so speedily. The tension lies in the fact that God doesn’t see things as we see them. He sees time as a whole. We see time in bits and pieces. Compare it to seeing a man with a knife cut open another person’s chest and slice out that person’s heart. If that was all you saw you would feel pity for the victim and anger toward the assailant. But if you were to see more—the time before and after—you would realize that the victim is really a patient and the assailant is a surgeon. Without cutting there could be no transplanting. Without present pain there could be no future years of life. Furthermore, the conversations after the surgery amaze you with contradictory perceptions. For the patient and family the procedure was extraordinarily long, while the surgical team delights in how quickly and well everything went.

So it is with God. He sees the whole picture. Time is not to Him as it is to us. What we think is too many years He knows to be speedy indeed. What we reckon as needless and disastrous, God sees as necessary and purposeful.²⁵ “Quickly” is determined by God’s timetable, not our own. “Quickly” doesn’t mean we can snap our fingers and God will speed up the process; it means that God will answer our prayers on time. He’s not late. He’s never in a hurry, but He’s never late.

Therefore, when we suffer injustice, our primary recourse is persistent prayer. God does not always answer prayer immediately. If God answered prayer the first day we asked Him, we wouldn’t have to encourage people to pray. It would be like buying a ticket to the lottery and winning every time. But the God of the Bible is sovereign, and He wants us to love Him. One reason He doesn’t answer our prayers immediately is because He wants us to keep spending time with Him.²⁶

Jesus closes our parable in 18:8 with these challenging words: **“However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”**²⁷ Jesus’ question here is whether upon His return believers will still be looking for Him. Persecution can cause the faithful to lose their enthusiasm. In asking this question, Jesus is exhorting believers not to lose heart (cf. 18:1). The question ties in with what Jesus taught in 17:22-37: “Shall He find [that kind of] faith on the earth?” The end times will not be days of great faith. Eight people were saved in Noah’s day, and only four out of Sodom (and one of them perished on the way). Passages like 1 Tim 4 and 2 Tim 3 paint a dark picture of the last days.

Perseverance is hard for us. We belong to a culture and a generation where patience is unusual. We want everything immediately. Impatience causes us to give up on marriages that might be reconciled, become hopelessly discouraged with problem children before God is finished with them, and quit jobs when something goes wrong rather than persevere and see the good God plans to do.²⁸ Yet, interestingly, God’s delays often mean that He is planning something better than the deliverance requested.²⁹

For us the pressing question isn’t whether God will hear our prayers and make everything right. The question is this: Will we keep praying? Until God says “no” in a clear and unmistakable way, will we continue to pray? Remember, God won’t quit on us, but will we quit on God? Jesus is wondering if anyone will still be praying and believing when He returns to earth to answer our prayers and make all things right.

There is only one way you will buy into all of this. You've got to have faith. You must believe that Jesus knew what He was talking about. You have to believe that God is all He claims to be. You must accept God's promises even when they contradict your experiences. What do you think? What do you say? How do you answer Jesus' question, "When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?" Say, "Yes! I believe. I won't quit. Jesus will find faith in me. I'll keep on praying!"³⁰

Persistent prayer is the demonstration of faith in the character of God's attributes and the chronology of His actions. Persistent praying is similar to our placing an order with a catalogue merchandising house and our daily looking for its arrival (CBD). The condition of persistent praying is for OUR benefit. Persistent praying expresses our confidence that God will answer; it prepares our hearts for the answer; and it gives God time to work with other people to bring about the answer.

The persistent widow would have loved the shortest speech Winston Churchill ever gave. Churchill was asked back to his old school. Churchill, in fact, had been quite a failure at that very school, yet he found within himself a passion for excellence, a talent for turning failure into success through perseverance. As you know, he became the Prime Minister of England and a heroic WWII figure. As the schoolmaster introduced this man, one of the greatest orators of all time, to the auditorium full of schoolboys, he said, "Young men, be sure you take copious note, because this will probably be one of the greatest speeches you'll ever hear. Short, stout Winston Churchill stood behind the podium and said, "Never give up!" And then he paused for almost a minute. Catching his breath, he continued even more boldly: "NEVER give up!" Another lengthy pause followed, and then pounding his fist on the podium, he shouted at the top of his lungs: "Never, Never, Never, Never give up!" And then he turned and quietly sat down. That was the sum total of his speech that day—perhaps one of the most unforgettable speeches of all time. Jesus tells us that *Persistent Prayer Pays*, therefore, let us never give up.

Copyright © 2006 Keith R. Krell. All rights reserved. All Scripture quotations, unless indicated, are taken from the *New American Standard Bible*, © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1975, 1977, and 1995 by The Lockman Foundation, and are used by permission.

Permissions: Feel free to reproduce and distribute any articles written by Keith Krell, in part or in whole, in any format, provided that you do not alter the wording in any way or charge a fee beyond the cost of reproduction. It is our desire to spread this information, not protect or restrict it. Please include the following statement on any distributed copy: by Keith Krell, Timeless Word Ministries, 2508 State Ave NE Olympia, WA 98506, 360-352-9044, www.timelessword.com

Scripture Reading

Luke 18:1-8

Luke 17:22-37

Luke 11:1-13

Deuteronomy 32:4

Psalm 89:14

Isaiah 30:18

Acts 17:31

Study Questions

1. What persecution have I experienced that has adversely affected my prayer life? Why is it so easy to give up praying? What kinds of things can happen that cause me to lose hope, and lose any heart to pray consistent and believing prayers? How can I change my perspective? Read Romans 5:3-5; 2 Corinthians 4:16-18; and James 1:2-4. Can I identify a personal struggle that keeps me from persistent prayer? Who will I share this struggle with? Will I ask that person to pray for me?
2. Is it right to pray once in faith and drop the matter, knowing that God will answer? Do I need to keep bringing my prayers to God? Why or why not? Samuel Chadwick once said, "Hurry is the death of prayer." Do I agree with this statement? Why or why not? Read the following biblical case studies: Abraham (Genesis 18:16-33); Jacob (Genesis 32:24-32); Moses (Exodus 34:27-35); Elijah (1 Kings 17:1; 18:1, 45-46); a Canaanite woman (Matthew 15:21-28); and Anna (Luke 2:36-38). Which of these accounts is most meaningful or challenging to me? Why? What items have dropped off my prayer list that I need to put back on?
3. In what ways have I had an inaccurate view of God? Have I ever thought of Him more like the unjust judge? Today, what is my view of my Heavenly Father? If it is not what it should be, how can I see God as He is portrayed in the Bible? Read Exodus 34:6; Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 89:14; 45:6; Isaiah 30:18; Lamentations 3:22-23; and Acts 17:31.
4. On a scale of 1-10, am I a person of faithfulness and perseverance? How would those who know me best rate me? Am I a person of stability and consistency? If so, what personal examples come to mind that demonstrate this? Corrie ten Boon once asked, "Is prayer your steering wheel or your spare tire?" How would I answer this question? How will I make an attempt this week to grow in my prayer life? Who will I share my commitment with?

Notes

¹ See Matt 24:9-12; 1 Tim 4:1-5; and 2 Tim 3:1-9.

² Luke 17:22-37.

³ See Gen 6:1-14 and 19:1-29.

⁴ All Scripture quotations, unless indicated, are taken from the *New American Standard Bible*, © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1975, 1977, and 1995 by The Lockman Foundation, and are used by permission.

⁵ Since an activity is in view, “growing tired or weary” is a more natural translation of *enkakeo* than is “losing heart.” Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*: ECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 1448.

⁶ See 2 Cor 4:1, 16; Gal 6:9; Eph 3:13.

⁷ In Luke 18:6, Jesus calls him “unjust” (*adikia*). Though it isn’t explicit, there was probably a reason that the judge wouldn’t give the widow justice—it probably had to do with money. I consider it likely that the judge was either taking bribes to fatten his purse or had an “arrangement” with a wealthy citizen who stood to lose if the widow won her case. The judge was arrogant, self-absorbed, and unjust, a powerful man facing down one of the weakest members of society—a widow.

⁸ Leith Anderson, *Praying to the God You Can Trust* (Minneapolis, Bethany House, 1996), 172.

⁹ Throughout the books of Luke and Acts, Luke often takes special note of the plight of widows. So it makes sense that Luke’s gospel would be the one place where this parable is recorded (see Luke 2:37-38; 4:25-26; 7:11-17; 20:45-47; 21:1-4; cf. Exod 22:22-24; Deut 14:28-29; 16:9-15; Ps 146:9; Isa 1:17, 23; Jer 7:6; Acts 6:1; 1 Tim 5:3-10; Jas 1:27).

¹⁰ In 1 Pet 5:8 Satan is described an *antidikos* (“opponent” or “adversary”). Elsewhere in the NT, the term is found only in Luke 12:58 and Matt 5:25 [twice].

¹¹ Darrell L. Bock, *Luke*: NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 454. See also NET Study Bible Notes.

¹² David Wenham, *The Parables of Jesus* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1989), 185.

¹³ Since Jesus didn’t tell us this widow’s particular plight, we can only guess. Perhaps some powerful landowner confiscated her property. Maybe she was denied a rightful inheritance from her husband’s estate. Perhaps one of her children was illegally sold into slavery to pay for her debts. Apparently, she was poor, powerless, and desperate. If the judge didn’t help her no one else would or could. Persistence was the only tactic she had left. Anderson, *Praying to the God You Can Trust*, 173

¹⁴ See Exod 22:21-24; Deut 24:17-18; Pss 65:8; 82:2-7; 146:9.

¹⁵ Bock, *Luke*, 454.

¹⁶ The phrase “kept coming” is the common Greek verb *erchomai* (“come”). Here it is in the imperfect tense, indicating repeated or continued action in the past. She hadn’t come just once, but many times. The word is used elsewhere to describe the persistent way in which the crowds followed Jesus around the Galilean countryside. The result of the crowd’s persistence was Jesus relented and “taught” them.

¹⁷ Stanley A. Ellisen, *Parables in the Eye of the Storm* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2001), 207.

¹⁸ Gk. *hupopiazete me*, cf. 1 Cor 9:27.

¹⁹ Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1449-1450.

²⁰ The phrase “bring about justice” is the noun form, *ekdikesis* (found here and in 18:8), of the verb *ekdikeo* used in 18:3 and 5 above. It means “giving of justice, see to it that justice is done.” BDAG, Electronic Ed. God is just—that is why prayer will be answered (e.g., Deut 32:4; Ps 89:14; 45:6; Isa 30:18; Acts 17:31).

²¹ The “elect” or “chosen” ones is a term taken from the OT for the people of God and applied to Christians in the NT. Notice that these chosen ones are those who “cry to Him day and night.” C. Marvin Pate, *Luke*: Moody Gospel Commentary (Chicago: Moody, 1995), 337.

²² The remark is stated emphatically with a double negative (*ou me*): God will *definitely* vindicate His people. If an unjust judge responds to such pleas, God will certainly respond to such cries from His own chosen ones.

²³ Ellisen, *Parables in the Eye of the Storm*, 208.

²⁴ This idea came from Bill Hybels, “God’s Attitude Toward Prayer,” *Preaching Today*, Tape No. 97.

²⁵ Anderson, *Praying to the God You Can Trust*, 175.

²⁶ R.T. Kendall, *The Complete Guide to the Parables of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Chosen, 2004), 294.

²⁷ Jesus’ final question suggests that there will be few on the earth who believe in Him when He returns (17:22-18:1). Remember that the Second Coming is in view, not the Rapture. The phrase “Son of Man” links this question with Jesus’ former teaching about His return (17:22, 24, 26, 30). This is all the more reason disciples need to keep praying. Prayer not only secures God’s help during persecution, but it also demonstrates faith in God.

²⁸ Anderson, *Praying to the God You Can Trust*, 178.

²⁹ Ellisen, *Parables in the Eye of the Storm*, 208.

³⁰ Anderson, *Praying to the God You Can Trust*, 179.