

He Listens

Psalm 86:5-10

Dr. Paul Cannings

A. Throne of Grace (v. 5):

1. For you, Lord, are good (Adonay not Yahweh) – The One who has all authority and power but genuinely desires a relationship with us (John 15:13) is by His very nature excellent, committed to provide, those whom He has a covenant with, practical benefits for their day to day lives.

a) David repeated his call for the LORD to hear him. His confidence that in his trouble God would answer him was strengthened by his knowledge that the Lord is incomparable (there is none like You; cf. Ex. 15:11), fully able to do what he asked (no deeds can compare with Yours).^[1]

b) Citing the words of the Lord's self-revelation to Moses in Exod 34:6 ("abounding in faithful love"; see also v. 15), the psalmist indicates that it is the goodness of the Lord that prompts his appeal. The Lord has made himself known as the God who is kind to people like the psalmist who call on him. Knowing that the Lord has acted toward his people throughout history as he had revealed himself to be, the psalmist is emboldened to turn to him in his time of need.^[2]

c) This humble, teachable man of prayer had a deep consciousness of belonging to God. Seven times he used the term “Lord” (vv 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 12, 15) when addressing God. The title emphasized God’s sovereignty and authority over his life. In contrast, he referred to himself as God’s “servant” and “the son of thine handmaid” (vv 4, 16).^[3]

2. Ready to forgive—This word only relates to God pardoning us of our sins. The Psalmist wants to remind us that it does not matter what we have done. Even though He is sovereign, powerful, and mighty, God is willing and always fully prepared to create a pardon for our sins if we humbly come before Him.

3. He is good - ready to forgive - God is the best Father we can ever have, but He is Holiness. Respect who He is and trust He is committed to providing us His best when we approach His throne.

4. An abundance of lovingkindness - The Lord’s steadfast, gracious kindness toward us is very generous. He is loyal to us and deeply committed to never turning away His affection and compassion toward us. Even when He seems distant, He is ever present (1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; Ps. 28).

a) David trusted in the great revelation of God given so long ago to Moses in Exodus 34:6 (Ps. 86:5, 13). The Hebrew word translated as “devoted” (86:2) can also be translated “loyal” and refers to one who is faithful to his covenant relationship with God. In 86:11 David prayed that his heart would be totally focused on God’s awesome reputation (“truth”), not distracted by other interests or desires.^[4]

b) The Hebrew for this phrase denotes befriending. Appeal to God’s “(unfailing) love, kindness, mercy” is frequent in the OT since it summarizes all that the Lord

covenanted to show to Israel (Dt. 7:9, 12) as well as to David and his dynasty (89:24,28,33; 2 Sa. 7:15; Isa. 55:3). (NASB)

5. To all who call upon – The Lord’s attitude is the same to all those who loudly provide a specific request to Him.

B. Pray With Confidence (vs. 6-7):

1. Give ear, O Lord – Because of the Lord’s steadfast kindness and forgiving nature, we can come before Him boldly (Luke 11:5-13), requiring He gives us His full attention with the expectation that He will respond.

- a) That God’s ear is always attending to the prayers of his people does not make it superfluous for them to entreat his attention. He will listen more favorably when besought to listen. ^[5]

2. Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer – When we worship the Lord through prayer (meaning making our petition before Him amid worship), we can command Him and know with complete confidence that He listens with a loving heart.

a) Only the Lord can meet his need, and the psalmist is totally dependent on him. He realizes that “to pray is an act of faith in the almighty and gracious God, who responds to the prayers of his people.”^[6]

3. Give heed to the voice of my supplications!! Our boldness should inspire us to ask God for His attention, especially when we beseech Him and plead with Him to extend His mercy, kindness, and power toward us. Our trust in Him is manifested not just when we make a request but also when we loudly and actively remain before Him, pleading with Him to respond, especially since He has the power to address our troubles.

4. In the day of trouble I shall call upon you – In the midst of distressful circumstances, it is natural for us to focus on the anguish we are experiencing and seek to find the quickest resolution for our troubles. Because the Lord is all-powerful, forgiving, and merciful, we must continuously provide Him with specific petitions, confidently believing He listens and understands.

5. In the day of trouble I shall call upon you – Whenever we are distressed by unfavorable circumstances, we must loudly and continuously make specific petitions to the Lord because we know He cares, listens, and forgives.

a) The nature of the trouble is not distinctly stated; but it appears to have been caused by domestic rather than foreign enemies. For thou wilt answer me (comp. ver. 5).^[7]

b) Sometimes our trouble or pain is so great that all we can do is cry out to God for protection (86:2). And often, when there is no relief in sight, all we can do is acknowledge the greatness of God and wait for better days ahead. The conviction that God answers prayer will sustain us in such difficult times.^[8]

6. You will answer me – Unquestionably, God will respond to those who come humbly before Him, continuously seeking Him with specific requests, pleading before God in a heartfelt manner. They are guaranteed that He listens and will respond.

C. There Is No One Else (vs. 8-10):

1. Nor are there any works like Yours (vs. 8) – With all the gods that people choose to worship, it is impossible for any of their gods to match God's skillful, powerful, faithful actions.

a) The praise for the Lord's greatness in vv. 8–10 functions as a typical confession of trust in this lament psalm. The Lord is in a class all his own in who he is and in what he does. [\[9\]](#)

2. You have made (Vs. 9) - All the activity of God in the nations He has created is strategically executed so that He completely fulfills all the plans He had prepared beforehand each day. God obligates Himself to make sure His plans are completed.

3. Everyone shall come and worship before You, O Lord (vs.9) – Everyone in every nation will continuously, purposefully, and humbly prostrate themselves in God's presence, demonstrating complete respect for who He is.

4. And they shall glorify your name (vs.9) – The Lord who is faithful in His steadfast love and mercy toward us will continuously be honored for His surpassing great character

and nature in all the earth. This is because His reputation is superiorly more excellent than any other god.

a) *Name (5:11)* – The name of the Lord, but is synonymous with the Lord Himself in his gracious manifestation and accessibility to his people. Hence the Jerusalem temple is the earthly residence of his name among his people (74:7; Dt. 12:5, 11; 2 Sa. 7:13), and his people can pray to him by calling on his name (79:6; 80:18; 99:6; 105:1; 116:4,13, 17). The name of the Lord protects (20:7; Pr. 18:10); the Lord saves by his name (54:1); and his saving acts testify that his name is near (52:9).

Accordingly, the godly “trust in” his name (20:7; 33:21), hope in his name (5:9), “sing praise” to his name (7:17; 9:2; 18:49) and “rejoice in” his name (89:16). Both the “give” and the “fear” that belong alone to God are similarly directed toward his name (Love: 69:36; 119:132; fear; 61:5; 86:11; 102:15). NASB

5. You are great (vs. 10) – The Lord is distinctive because of His nature, His reputation is superior to any other gods.

a) The God to whom David appeals is the only true God. No other “god” acts with such sovereign power (115:3-7; 135:13-17) – that is why David appeals to him and why all the nations will someday worship him. (NASB)

6. Do wondrous deeds (vs. 10) – God completely creates (nothing left to do when He is done, and what is made is perfect) unusual acts that are astonishing because they are

beyond human powers and expectations. This is another reason all nations will bow before Him and talk about His superior creative works and power because it is above anything any man or so-called god has supposedly done.

a) Talk about the recent eclipse. No person can put that together, regardless of wealth, intelligence, or power.

7. You alone are God – Because of how great and wondrous God has demonstrated Himself to be that is unquestionably more magnificent than any other gods, we must pray, supplicate, and worship Him alone.

8. You alone are God – If God is our only hope, does His apparent delays intensify our prayer? Does His apparent delays lengthen our supplications? Does His apparent delays teach us how to wait on the Lord, or does it drive us to find other means to resolve our troubles?

9. You alone are God – When God is in Whom we place complete trust, our prayer life will never cease. The Apostle Paul, whose ministry was in constant turmoil, “prayed without ceasing.” (1 Thess. 5:18)

^[1] Ross, A. P. (1985). [Psalms](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 856). Victor Books.

^[2] Estes, D. J. (2019). [Psalms 73–150](#) (E. R. Clendenen, Ed.; Vol. 13, pp. 141–142). B&H Publishing Group.

^[3] Dilday, R. H., Jr., & Kennedy, J. H. (1972). [Psalms](#). In H. F. Paschall & H. H. Hobbs (Eds.), *The teacher's Bible commentary* (p. 328). Broadman and Holman Publishers.

^[4] Hughes, R. B., & Laney, J. C. (2001). [Tyndale concise Bible commentary](#) (p. 220). Tyndale House Publishers.

^[5] Spence-Jones, H. D. M., ed. (1909). [Psalms](#) (Vol. 2, pp. 213–214). Funk & Wagnalls Company.

^[6] Estes, D. J. (2019). [Psalms 73–150](#) (E. R. Clendenen, Ed.; Vol. 13, p. 142). B&H Publishing Group.

^[7] Spence-Jones, H. D. M., ed. (1909). [Psalms](#) (Vol. 2, p. 214). Funk & Wagnalls Company.

^[8] [Life Application Bible Notes](#) (p. 935). (2007). Tyndale.

^[9] Estes, D. J. (2019). [Psalms 73–150](#) (E. R. Clendenen, Ed.; Vol. 13, p. 142). B&H Publishing Group.