

The Power of Persistence in Prayer

(Psalms 88)

When we talk about persistence, we all are very familiar with the experience of some of our children, keep repeating how they want a certain toy or a game they want. You may hear that request sometimes 10 times a day, perhaps even more. They are ready to do anything you want them to do, meet all your expectations of them and patiently keep waiting and asking you again and again, until they get what they want. To be frank, sometimes we as parents may end up buying that item, or grant that request for the ‘peace of your ears’, even if we didn’t want to buy that item in the first place for various reasons.

The bible portion for this week’s reflection, Psalms 88 talks about the persistent cry out of sons of Korah in distress, to the Lord almighty. During his ministry, Jesus also stressed the importance of persistence in prayer. Prayer is the food for the soul and the best nourishment for spiritual strength. In fact, by the forty **days of fasting** prayer before entering the public ministry (Mathew 4:1) and by the historical **blood sweating** prayer by Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane (Mathew 26:36), once again Jesus showed us that even as a **Son of God**, how important it was for him to continue to pray so that he gets the power to overcome the satanic temptations, and fulfill his father’s promise through his death on the cross. Here Jesus demonstrates even though his Godly mind and spirit was ready for the sacrifice, how his weak human flesh needed the strength of prayer. Another great example about the power of persistence in prayer is illustrated in the old testament that we read about is the Lord’s answer to Hannah’s prayer. Even in the midst of her rival Peninah’s constant taunting and provoking and Elkanah’s constant reassurance about his love, Hannah continued to pray with a broken heart for that one desire and the scripture further tells us the answer to that powerful persistent prayer, **Samuel** the great prophet and the high priest who lead Israel. (I Samuel 1-2).

Sometimes, in this high speed high tech touch screen modern era, we want everything really fast. Often the same happens in our prayer life. We want our prayers to be answered right away. We have no patience or perseverance left in

us to keep asking to God. Psalms 88 gently reminds us about the need for crying out to God day and night. "My eyes are worn out from crying, Lord, I cry out to you all day long. I spread out my hands to you"(Psalms,88:9)

The fruit of the prayer is an experience, which is difficult to describe in words. It is an unloading experience of the heart, when we are burdened with grief and troubles. A heartfelt prayer is an innocent cry out to the lord that gives comfort and relief even in the midst of most unthinkable experiences and tribulations. Fortunately, in our personal lives we were able to experience this power of persistent prayer. It is the power of prayer that kept us together as a strong family during the difficult times in our lives. To name a few experiences where we grew stronger in prayer is the faith challenging situations in Saudi Arabia that questioned our freedom to read a bible and worship our lord, Immigration delays and problems after 9/11 attacks, and seven years of waiting for our beautiful children. So when we pray, let us have the persistent attitude of a child who wants a new toy.

May God almighty continue to strengthen us spiritually in this lent season, to have more strong roots in our prayer life and experience this miraculous power of prayer in our lives.