



## Lesson 11: Perseverance

Psalm 129 (The Message)

- <sup>1-4</sup> **129** “They’ve kicked me around ever since I was young”  
—this is how Israel tells it—  
“They’ve kicked me around ever since I was young,  
but they never could keep me down.  
Their plowmen plowed long furrows  
up and down my back;  
Then GOD ripped the harnesses  
of the evil plowmen to shreds.”
- <sup>5-8</sup> Oh, let all those who hate Zion  
grovel in humiliation;  
Let them be like grass in shallow ground  
that withers before the harvest,  
Before the farmhands can gather it in,  
the harvesters get in the crop,  
Before the neighbors have a chance to call out,  
“Congratulations on your wonderful crop!  
We bless you in GOD’s name!”

### *I. Tough Faith*

The people of God are no doubt tough. For centuries those of the world have waged war against the people of God and the way of faith and have yet to win. They have tried persecution, ridicule, torture, and exile but faith in God continues. As the Psalm says, “They’ve kicked me around since I was young, but they never could keep me down.”

- The way of faith is seen in the life of Jesus (Isaiah 53:1-3, 10-11)
- It was seen in the life of Paul (2 Corinthians 11:23-29; Philippians 3:13-14)
- The life of countless others (Hebrews 11)

Stick-to-itiveness. Perseverance. Patience. The way of faith is not a fad. It is a way that works. It already been tested and proven.

## ***II. Cut Cords, Withered Grass***

An interesting line and Psalm 129 provides a detail that is both fascinating and useful. The sentence is “then God ripped the harness of the evil plowman to shreds.” The previous verse provides the context : their plowman plowed long furrows up and down my back. Picture Israel, the person of faith, lying stretched out, prone . The enemies hitch up their oxen and plows began cutting long furrows in the back of Israel. And then, suddenly, the realization that there was no more hurting. The oxen were still trampling back and forth, the oxherds were still shouting their commands, but the plows were not working. The illustration is a cartoon, designed to bring a smile to the people of faith.

## ***III. The Passion of Patience***

There is one phrase in the Psalm that good taste would prefer to delete but with honesty must deal with: “Oh, let all who hate Zion grovel in humiliation.” However, we might feel about this passage for a person of faith it is still authentic . For who does not experience flashes of anger at those who make the way hard and difficult? There are times in the long obedience of Christian discipleship when we get tired and fatigue which draws our tempers short.

Perseverance does not mean perfection. It means that we keep going. We do not quit when we find that we are not yet mature and there is a long journey still before us. We keep obeying and God’s grace keeps us moving forward!

## ***IV. God Sticks With Us***

The cornerstone sentence of Psalm 129 is “God wouldn’t put up with it, he sticks with us.” That “he sticks with us” is the reasons Christians can look back over a long life of sufferings, disappointments, depressions, setbacks and tragedies and see it as a road of blessing. God sticks with His people! He establishes a personal relationship with us and stays with it. God is faithful (2 Timothy 2:11-13).

The central reality for Christians is the personal, unalterable, preserving commitment God makes to us. Perseverance is not the result of our determination; it is the result of God's faithfulness (Hebrews 12:1-2).

The Christian faith is the discovery of a God who sticks with us, the righteous God. Christian discipleship is a decision to walk in His ways, to follow His commands, and never give up. It is the way of life we were created for.