Shalom AZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption

"Are We There Yet?"

Rabbi Cosmo Panzetta

Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): Psalms 30, 60, 90, 120, 150; *Is. 61:1–3.*

Anyone who has traveled with children knows the question: "Are we there yet?" To a child, an hour can feel like forever. I remember being five years old and hearing that something I wanted might have to wait until my next birthday. A year??!!! It seemed like an eternity. And if we are honest, we still ask that same question, even if we use different words. How long is this going to last? When will things change? Lord, when are we finally going to get through this?

There are seasons of life that are difficult and distressing. Marriage vows acknowledge both the better and the worse, both health and sickness, both richer and poorer. We hold on to hope precisely when the journey becomes hard. Psalms 120, 60, 30, and 90 take us on a journey from a land of hostility toward the house of the Lord. And Psalm 150 gives us a glimpse of where the journey ends: in the fullness of His presence, overflowing with praise. The question is not merely how quickly we can get through the difficulty, but what the Lord is forming in us along the way.

1. KEEP WALKING TOWARD HIS SHALOM (PS. 120)

Psalm 120 is the first of the Songs of Ascents, the songs associated with the pilgrimage toward the house of the Lord. Yet notice where this journey begins. It does not begin in a peaceful place. The psalmist cries, *"In my trouble I cried out to ADONAI, and He answered me"* (Ps. 120:1). He asks to be delivered from lying lips and a deceitful tongue. He speaks of dwelling among the tents of Kedar and sojourning in Meshech, names that communicate how far away he feels from the safety and familiarity of home. *"My soul has too long dwelt with those who hate shalom"* (Ps. 120:6). He desires wholeness and peace, but those around him are intent on conflict.

Is that not a recognizable picture of the world we walk through? Deception, self-interest, hostility, people doing whatever it takes to get their own way. It is not the kingdom of God. Yet the psalmist does not decide to become like the people around him. He says, *"I am for shalom and thus I speak, but they are for war!"* (Ps. 120:7). He is going toward the Lord, toward His presence and His ways. We may walk through unfamiliar places, through opposition and disappointment, but we do not have to allow the atmosphere around us to determine who we become. Lord, I am for what You are for. I want Your shalom. Keep my feet moving toward You.

2. LEARN THROUGH THE BATTLES WHO REALLY LEADS US (PS. 60; 30)

The journey does not become effortless once we decide to walk in the Lord's ways. Psalm 60 is a psalm of David written for teaching, against the backdrop of battles. Its opening cries are urgent: restore us, heal the fractures, save us. The land is shattered; the people have experienced hardship. David does not pretend otherwise. He cries for the Lord to rescue His beloved ones. Even after hearing God's declaration that the land and the nations belong to Him, David asks who will lead him into the fortified city. He knows that having a promise does not always mean that our fears immediately disappear. The battle is still in front of us, and sometimes it feels as though God is not moving quickly enough.

But David brings the question to its proper conclusion: *"With God we will do mighty things, and He will trample our foes"* (Ps. 60:14). Not through our own cleverness, our strength, or humanity's empty promises of rescue. Through Him, and Him alone. David says ADONAI lifted him out of the depths, heard his cry, and healed him. He confesses that when he felt secure, he had assumed he would never be shaken. Then he learned how desperately he needed the Lord's presence. *"Weeping may stay for the night, but joy comes in the morning"* (Ps. 30:6). The morning will come. The Lord transforms mourning into dancing and clothes us with joy. We do not praise Him because there was never a night of weeping, but because He has been faithful through it.

3. ASK FOR WISDOM TO NUMBER THE DAYS OF THE JOURNEY (PS. 90)

Psalm 90 is a prayer of Moses, a man who understood a long wilderness journey. Israel did not always have a land, a temple, or even a settled place to call home. Yet Moses begins, *"My Lord, You have been our dwelling place from generation to generation"* (Ps. 90:1). When they were slaves in Egypt, the Lord was their refuge. When they wandered in the wilderness, He was their dwelling place. And as they looked toward the promise ahead, He would still be their refuge. That is a perspective we desperately need. Our ultimate security is not a location, a circumstance, or a season in which everything finally works out. Lord, You are our dwelling place. We want to be where You are.

Moses then considers how brief our lives are beside the everlasting God. We are like grass that flourishes in the morning and withers by evening. Even our hidden sins lie exposed in the light of His presence. Who really understands the holiness of God or the shortness of our own days? So Moses prays, *"So teach us to number our days, so that we may get a heart of wisdom"* (Ps. 90:12). He wants wisdom to live them rightly. He asks the Lord to satisfy His people with love in the morning and establish the work of their hands. Instead of merely praying, "Get me through this," we can pray, "Lord, shape me in this. Teach me to value today. Form Your character in me, and make these days count for You."

CONCLUSION

We are not there yet. Psalm 120 reminds us that we are walking through a world that often opposes shalom. Psalm 60 teaches us that the battles are not won by our strength. Psalm 30 reminds us that weeping does not get the final word. Psalm 90 teaches us to

see the days of our lives with wisdom. Then Psalm 150 opens our eyes to the destination. *"Let everything that has breath praise ADONAI. Halleluyah!"* (Ps. 150:6). It will overflow from hearts made whole in His presence. Imagine the joy of finally being there, with the pain of the journey behind us and the Lord before us forever.

But while we are still on the journey, there is an invitation. Perhaps you have been so occupied with getting past the battle that you have stopped asking what the Lord wants to form in you through this challenge. Perhaps disappointment has made you bitter, fear has driven you to trust in yourself, or the passing days have been consumed by things that will not last. Look to the LORD today. Acknowledge the fractures. Confess what His light reveals. Ask Him to restore you, heal you, and save you. Surrender the need to control the journey. If you have wandered from His ways, turn back toward Him. Place your trust in Messiah Yeshua, and ask His Holy Spirit to shape you as you walk. You can say, "Lord, I am not there yet, but I want to walk with You all the way. Teach me to number my days, keep my eyes fixed on You, and let my life become praise."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why does Psalm 120 begin the pilgrimage toward the Lord's house in a place of deception and hostility?
2. How do David's prayers in Ps. 60 teach us to face battles without relying on our own strength?
3. Where are you currently asking, "Are we there yet?" How might your prayer change from simply wanting out to asking God to form you during this season?
4. What modern distractions, fears, or false sources of security make it difficult for you to number your days with wisdom?
5. Looking back at Ps. 30 and ahead to Ps. 150, how can remembering God's faithfulness and anticipating His presence reshape your praise today?

CLOSING PRAYER

ADONAI, You have been our dwelling place from generation to generation. You know the length of this journey, the battles we face, the nights when we weep, and the questions we carry. Forgive us for trusting our own strength, for allowing the hostility around us to shape our hearts, and for living as though we have endless days. Restore us. Heal the fractures in our lives. Rescue us by Your right hand. Teach us to number our days so that we may gain a heart of wisdom. Satisfy us with Your lovingkindness in the morning, and establish the work of our hands. Through Messiah Yeshua, keep us walking toward Your shalom. Make us more like You along the way, until the day we stand in Your presence and our hearts overflow with praise.

B'Shem Yeshua, In the name of Yeshua, amen.