

PSALM 74

A Contemplation of Asaph.

¹ O God, why have You cast *us* off forever?
Why does Your anger smoke against the sheep of Your pasture?

² Remember Your congregation, *which* You have purchased of old,
The tribe of Your inheritance, *which* You have redeemed—
This Mount Zion where You have dwelt.

³ Lift up Your feet to the perpetual desolations.
The enemy has damaged everything in the sanctuary.

⁴ Your enemies roar in the midst of Your meeting place;
They set up their banners *for* signs.

⁵ They seem like men who lift up
Axes among the thick trees.

⁶ And now they break down its carved work, all at once,
With axes and hammers.

⁷ They have set fire to Your sanctuary;
They have defiled the dwelling place of Your name to the ground.

⁸ They said in their hearts,
“Let us destroy them altogether.”
They have burned up all the meeting places of God in the land.

⁹ We do not see our signs;
There is no longer any prophet;
Nor is there any among us who knows how long.

¹⁰ O God, how long will the adversary reproach?
Will the enemy blaspheme Your name forever?

¹¹ Why do You withdraw Your hand, even Your right hand?
Take it out of Your bosom and destroy *them*.

¹² For God *is* my King from of old,
Working salvation in the midst of the earth.

¹³ You divided the sea by Your strength;
You broke the heads of the ^[d]sea serpents in the waters.

¹⁴ You broke the heads of ^[e]Leviathan in pieces,
And gave him *as* food to the people inhabiting the wilderness.

¹⁵ You broke open the fountain and the flood;
You dried up mighty rivers.

¹⁶ The day *is* Yours, the night also *is* Yours;
You have prepared the light and the sun.

¹⁷ You have set all the borders of the earth;
You have made summer and winter.

¹⁸ Remember this, *that* the enemy has reproached, O LORD,
And that a foolish people has blasphemed Your name.

¹⁹ Oh, do not deliver the life of Your turtledove to the wild beast!
Do not forget the life of Your poor forever.

²⁰ Have respect to the covenant;
For the dark places of the earth are full of the haunts of cruelty.

²¹ Oh, do not let the oppressed return ashamed!
Let the poor and needy praise Your name.

²² Arise, O God, plead Your own cause;
Remember how the foolish man ^[f]reproaches You daily.

²³ Do not forget the voice of Your enemies;
The tumult of those who rise up against You increases continually.

Psalms 74:1-23

WHERE GOD SEEMS TO HAVE CAST AWAY HIS PEOPLE

¹ *O God, why have You cast us off forever?
Why does Your anger smoke against the sheep of Your pasture?*

² *Remember Your congregation, which You have purchased of old,
The tribe of Your inheritance, which You have redeemed—
This Mount Zion where You have dwelt.*

Psalm 74:1-2

1. The Psalmist's worry

- a) That God had cast off His people
- b) That God's anger was smoking against His flock

2. The Psalmist's Plea

- a) That God would remember His congregation
- b) That He had "purchased" (redeemed) His people
- c) And that He had chosen Jerusalem as His dwelling place

THE RAVAGE OF JERUSALEM

³ *Lift up Your feet to the perpetual desolations.
The enemy has damaged everything in the sanctuary.*

⁴ *Your enemies roar in the midst of Your meeting place;
They set up their banners for signs.*

⁵ *They seem like men who lift up
Axes among the thick trees.*

⁶ *And now they break down its carved work, all at once,
With axes and hammers.*

⁷ *They have set fire to Your sanctuary;
They have defiled the dwelling place of Your name to the ground.*

⁸ *They said in their hearts,
"Let us destroy them altogether."
They have burned up all the meeting places of God in the land.*
Psalm 74:3-8

1. The enemy had seriously damaged the Temple
2. They were making all kinds of noises in the sanctuary
3. They had even set their banners in the Temple grounds
4. They laid their axes on the Temple things
 - a) All the carved things were being severely damaged
 - b) They had even set fire to the sanctuary
 - c) They had defiled the Temple
 - d) They had voiced their plans to destroy the Temple

NO PROPHETS IN SIGHT

*We do not see our signs;
There is no longer any prophet;
Nor is there any among us who knows how long.*

Psalms 74:9

1. No prophets to give words of warning
2. Nobody knew how long this problem would last
3. There were prophets, but they had not been heeded!

PLEADING WITH THE LORD

*¹⁰ O God, how long will the adversary reproach?
Will the enemy blaspheme Your name forever?*

*¹¹ Why do You withdraw Your hand, even Your right hand?
Take it out of Your bosom and destroy them.*

Psalms 74:9-11

1. How long would the adversary reproach>
2. How long would they blaspheme God's name?

3. Why had God withdrawn His hand?
4. A plea to God to destroy the enemies

A CONTEMPLATION ON THE LORD

*¹² For God is my King from of old,
Working salvation in the midst of the earth.*

*¹³ You divided the sea by Your strength;
You broke the heads of the 'sea serpents in the waters.*

*¹⁴ You broke the heads of Leviathan in pieces,
And gave him as food to the people inhabiting the wilderness.*

*¹⁵ You broke open the fountain and the flood;
You dried up mighty rivers.*

*¹⁶ The day is Yours, the night also is Yours;
You have prepared the light and the sun.*

*¹⁷ You have set all the borders of the earth;
You have made summer and winter.*

Psalm 74:12-17

1. The Psalmist declares his trust in the LORD

- a) He is King
- b) He brings salvation (deliverance)

2. Meditation on the Power of the LORD

- a) He divides the sea
- b) He breaks the heads of sea serpents
- c) He determines the state of rivers and seas
 - i) He can bring a flood
 - ii) He can also dry up rivers
- d) Both day and night belong to the LORD

e) He controls the seasons/weather

STRONG PLEAS TO THE LORD

*¹⁸ Remember this, that the enemy has reproached, O LORD,
And that a foolish people has blasphemed Your name.*

*¹⁹ Oh, do not deliver the life of Your turtledove to the wild beast!
Do not forget the life of Your poor forever.*

*²⁰ Have respect to the covenant;
For the dark places of the earth are full of the haunts of cruelty.*

*²¹ Oh, do not let the oppressed return ashamed!
Let the poor and needy praise Your name.*

*²² Arise, O God, plead Your own cause;
Remember how the foolish man reproaches You daily.*

*²³ Do not forget the voice of Your enemies;
The tumult of those who rise up against You increases continually.*

Psalms 74:18-23

1. To respond to the foolish enemies who had blasphemed His name
2. To save and deliver His beloved people ("turtle dove")
3. To remember the life of the poor and needy
4. To deal with the oppressors who ill-treat the helpless poor
5. To not ignore the enemies:
 - a) They reproach God's name daily
 - b) The tumult that is there increases daily