

The Anguished Man

Jesus in the Psalms

Psalm 77

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I. The Song of Simeon (Lk 2:29-32)

Psalm 77 - To the Chief Musician. To Jeduthun. A Psalm of Asaph.

¹I cried out to God with my voice—To God with my voice; And He gave ear to me. ²In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord; My hand was stretched out in the night without ceasing; My soul refused to be comforted. ³I remembered God, and was troubled; I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. *Selah*

⁴You hold my eyelids open; I am so troubled that I cannot speak. ⁵I have considered the days of old, The years of ancient times. ⁶I call to remembrance my song in the night; I meditate within my heart, And my spirit makes diligent search. ⁷Will the Lord cast off forever? And will He be favorable no more? ⁸Has His mercy ceased forever? Has His promise failed forevermore? ⁹Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has He in anger shut up His tender mercies? *Selah*

¹⁰And I said, "This is my anguish; But I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High." ¹¹I will remember the works of the LORD; Surely I will remember Your wonders of old. ¹²I will also meditate on all Your work, And talk of Your deeds. ¹³Your way, O God, is in the sanctuary; Who is so great a God as our God? ¹⁴You are the God who does wonders; You have declared Your strength among the peoples. ¹⁵You have with Your arm redeemed Your people, The sons of Jacob and Joseph. *Selah*

¹⁶The waters saw You, O God; The waters saw You, they were afraid; The depths also trembled. ¹⁷The clouds poured out water; The skies sent out a sound; Your arrows also flashed about. ¹⁸The voice of Your thunder was in the whirlwind; The lightnings lit up the world; The earth trembled and shook. ¹⁹Your way was in the sea, Your path in the great waters, And Your footsteps were not known. ²⁰You led Your people like a flock By the hand of Moses and Aaron.

II. The Anguished Man

A. I Cried Out to God (1-3)

This is a psalm that begins in deep lament. The psalmist reports that he had cried out repeatedly to God because he knew God would listen to him – this is a prayer of _____. He knew that God was the only one who could answer his prayers and deliver him from *trouble*. So he *stretched out* his hands to God and *refused to be comforted* – whether by friends or food or distractions.

B. The Day of My Trouble (4-9)

In verses 4-9, Asaph describes what his day of _____ looked like: sleeplessness, silence, pain, anguish.

C. I Will Remember (10-15)

But Asaph was a man of faith. Hence, he wrests his eyes away from his troubles and redirects them to *the years of the right hand of the Most High*. He forces himself to *remember the works of the Lord* – God’s wondrous *works* that reveal His love for His people and His mighty power (11). He *meditates* on God’s *work* and forces himself to _____ *of God’s deeds* (12 - contra v. 4).

D. The Right Hand of the Most High (16-20)

Asaph closes by giving us an example of the type of works he was meditating upon: he describes the Exodus with vivid poetry.

III. Dealing with Anguish

_____ is a time of waiting - we recall the waiting of our fathers and we ourselves await the fullness of God's redemptive work - we are not _____. We do not believe that a perfect society can be achieved in this life – it can only be achieved when Christ returns in glory to restore all things.

A. Cry out to God who hears

First, cry out to God who hears. Asaph reminds us to be men and women of faith who pray, who cry out to God in trouble, who lean in toward God in times of anguish rather than moving away from Him. Paul tells us that Jesus, *“in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him...”* (Heb 5:7-9). Through His anguish, Jesus learned obedience and became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.

B. Remember God and His Redemptive Works

Second, redirect your attention away from your _____ and to the redemptive power of God. When we are facing trouble, our mind reverts to that trouble again and again. And this attention to our troubles can quickly become idolatrous; we descend into anxiety and worry. We forget Paul's injunction, *“Don't be anxious about anything but in everything with prayer and petition with thanksgiving present your requests to God and the peace of God which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus”* (Phil 4:6-7). Lay your troubles before the Lord and recount God's mighty acts of salvation.

C. Revel in God's Christ (cf. Jer 23:1-8)

Asaph meditates on the greatest of God's redemptive works to His day – the Exodus from Egypt. But the Exodus is a mere shadow of the far greater deliverance accomplished by our Christ. The prophet Jeremiah prophesied of the coming of God's Christ:

¹“Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture!” says the LORD. ²Therefore thus says the LORD God of Israel against the shepherds who feed My people: “You have scattered My flock, driven them away, and not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for the evil of your doings,” says the LORD. ³“But I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them, and bring them back to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. ⁴I will set up shepherds over them who will feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, nor shall they be lacking,” says the LORD. ⁵“Behold, the days are coming,” says the LORD, “That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. ⁶In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. ⁷“Therefore, behold, the days are coming,” says the LORD, “that they shall no longer say, ‘As the LORD lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt,’ ⁸but, ‘As the LORD lives who brought up and led the descendants of the house of Israel from the north country and from all the countries where I had driven them.’ And they shall dwell in their own land.”

The salvation that the Lord has accomplished in and through Jesus, our Davidic King, makes the original Exodus pale in comparison. So revel in Christ's incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension.

IV. Conclusion