

Affliction & Redemption

Psalm 129:1-8

July 31, 2022

Psalm 129:1-8

“Greatly have they afflicted me from my youth”—let Israel now say—“Greatly have they afflicted me from my youth, yet they have not prevailed against me. The plowers plowed upon my back; they made long their furrows.” The Lord is righteous; he has cut the cords of the wicked. May all who hate Zion be put to shame and turned backward! Let them be like the grass on the housetops, which withers before it grows up, with which the reaper does not fill his hand nor the binder of sheaves his arms, nor do those who pass by say, “The blessing of the Lord be upon you! We bless you in the name of the Lord!”

I. To the afflicted, God is faithful (vv. 1-4)

Hosea 11:1

When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.

Psalm 129:2b, 4

...yet they have not prevailed against me. The Lord is righteous; he has cut the cords of the wicked.

Exodus 2:23-25

During those many days the king of Egypt died, and the people of Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help. Their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. God saw the people of Israel—and God knew.

“The God of the Old Testament is arguably the most unpleasant character in all fiction: jealous and proud of it; a petty, unjust, unforgiving control-freak; a vindictive, bloodthirsty ethnic cleanser; a misogynistic, homophobic, racist, infanticidal, genocidal, filicidal, pestilential, megalomaniacal, sadomasochistic, capriciously malevolent bully.” – Richard Dawkins

Hebrews 2:14-15

Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

Isaiah 53:4-7

Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

II. To the wicked, God is just (vv. 5-8)

John 16:33

“I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

“If they rehearse how God has delivered them in the past, and if they remember that he will ultimately destroy the wicked in the future, their prayer in the present threatening time will be with confidence.” – Allen P. Ross

Main Idea: In the midst of temporary affliction God gives true redemption.