

Source: Jerusalem Bible

PSALM 74

v 73

Lament on the destruction of the Temple

Poem Of Asaph

- 1 God, have you finally rejected us,
raging at the flock you used to pasture?
- 2 Remember the people you long since made your own,
your hereditary tribe whom you redeemed,
and this Mount Zion where you came to live.
- 3 Pick your steps over these endless ruins:
the enemy have sacked everything in the sanctuary.
- 4 They roared where your Assemblies used to take place,
they stuck their enemy emblems over the entrance,^a
emblems we had never seen before.
- 6 Axes deep in the wood, hacking at the panels,
they battered them down with mallet and hatchet;
7 then, God, setting fire to your sanctuary,
they profanely razed the house of your name to the ground.
- 8 Determined to destroy us once and for all,
they burned down every shrine of God in the country.
- 9 Deprived of signs, with no prophets left,
who can say how long this will last?
- 10 How much longer, God, is the oppressor to blaspheme,
is the enemy to insult your name for ever?
- 11 Why hold back your hand,
why keep your right hand hidden?
- 12 Yet, God, my king from the first,
author of saving acts throughout the earth,
13 by your power you split the sea in two, sea = Yam (in Hebrew)
and smashed the heads of monsters on the waters.
- 14 You crushed Leviathan's heads, monsters = Tanninim, plural of
the monster Tannin (in Hebrew)
leaving him for wild animals to eat,
15 you opened the spring, the torrent,
you dried up inexhaustible rivers.
- 16 You are master of day and night,
you instituted light and sun,
17 you fixed the boundaries of the world,
you created summer and winter.
- 18 Now, Yahweh, remember the enemy's blasphemy,
how frenzied people dare to insult your name.
- 19 Do not betray your turtledove to the beast,
do not forget your wretched people for good.
- 20 Respect the covenant! We can bear no more—
every cave in the country is the scene of violence!
- 21 Do not let the hard-pressed retreat in confusion,
give the poor and needy cause to praise your name.

73 a. As in the prophets, the expression refers to religious unfaithfulness.

74 a. Probably a description of the destruction of the Temple by "the mad king," Antiochus Epiphanes; if so, he is the "madman" of v.22.

- 22 Rise, God, say something on your own behalf,
do not forget the madman's daylong blaspheming,
- 23 remember the shouting of your enemies,
this ever-rising clamor of your adversaries.

PSALM 89

v 88

Hymn and a prayer to God's faithfulness*Poem For Ethan the native-born*

- 1 I will celebrate your love for ever, Yahweh,
age after age my words shall proclaim your faithfulness;
2 for I claim that love is built to last for ever
and your faithfulness founded firmly in the heavens.

87 a. In the ceremonial celebrations in the Temple.

3 "I have made a covenant with my Chosen,
I have given my servant David my sworn word:
4 I have founded your dynasty to last for ever,
I have built you a throne to outlast all time."

Pause

5 Yahweh, the assembly of holy ones in heaven
applaud the marvel of your faithfulness.
6 Who in the skies can compare with Yahweh?
Which of the heaven-born can rival him?

7 God, dreaded in the assembly of holy ones,
great and terrible to all around him,
8 Yahweh, God of Sabaoth, who is like you?—
mighty Yahweh, clothed in your faithfulness!

9 You control the pride of the ocean,
when its waves ride high, you calm them;
10 you split Rahab^a in two like a carcass
and scattered your enemies with your mighty arm.

Yam (in Hebrew)

11 The heavens are yours and the earth is yours,
you founded the world and all it holds,
12 you created north and south;
Tabor and Hermon hail your name with joy.

13 Yours was the arm, and yours the prowess,
mighty and exalted your right hand;
14 Righteousness and Justice support your throne,
Love and Faithfulness are your attendants.

15 Happy the people who learn to acclaim you!
Yahweh, they will live in the light of your favor;
16 they will rejoice in your name all day
and exult in your righteousness.

17 You are their glory and their strength,
you, by your kindness, raise our fortunes,
18 since both our shield and our king
belong to Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel.

19 Once you spoke in vision
and said to your friends,^b
"I have conferred the crown on a hero,
and promoted one chosen from my people.

20 "I have selected my servant David
and anointed him with my holy oil;
21 my hand will be constantly with him,
he will be able to rely on my arm.

22 "No enemy will be able to outwit him,
no wicked man to worst him,
23 I myself will crush his opponents,
I will strike dead all who hate him.

24 "With my faithfulness and love,
his fortunes shall rise in my name.
25 I will give him control of the sea,
complete control of the rivers.

26 "He will invoke me, 'My father,
my God and rock of my safety,'

27 and I shall make him my first-born,
the Most High for kings on earth.

28 "I will keep my love for him always,
my covenant with him shall stand,
29 I have founded his dynasty to last for ever,
his throne to be as lasting as the heavens.

30 "Should his descendants desert my Law
and disregard my rulings,
31 should they violate my statutes
and not keep my commandments,

32 "I will punish their sins with the rod
and their crimes with the whip,
33 but never withdraw my love from him
or fail in my faithfulness.

34 "I will not break my covenant,
I will not revoke my given word;
35 I have sworn on my holiness, once for all,
and cannot turn liar to David.

36 "His dynasty shall last for ever,
I see his throne like the sun,
37 enduring for ever like the moon,
that faithful witness in the sky."

Pause

38 And yet you have rejected, disowned
and raged at your anointed;
39 you have repudiated the covenant with your servant
and flung his crown dishonored to the ground.

40 You have pierced all his defenses,
and laid his forts in ruins;
41 anyone may go and loot him,
his neighbors treat him with scorn.

42 You have let his opponents get the upper hand,
and made all his enemies happy,
43 you have snapped his sword on a rock
and failed to support him in battle.

44 You have stripped him of his glorious scepter,
and toppled his throne to the ground,
45 you have aged him before his time
and covered him in shame.

Pause

46 Yahweh, how much longer will you hide? For ever?
How much longer must your anger smolder like a fire?
47 Remember me, the short time I have left
and the void to which you destine mankind.
48 What man can cling to life and not see death?
Who can evade the clutches of Sheol?

Pause

49 Lord, where are those earlier signs of your love?
You swore your oath to David on your faithfulness!
50 Lord, do not forget how your servant was insulted,

51

how I take these pagans' taunts to heart,
insults, Yahweh, that your enemies have offered,
insults to your anointed wherever he goes.

Blessed be Yahweh for ever.
Amen. Amen!^c