



“It is a test [that] genuine poetry can communicate before it is understood.”

T. S. Eliot, Dante (1929)





**Have confidence in the Lord,
our righteous Deliverer and Judge.**

PSALMS
OF
ASCENT

**1. The Psalmist Remembers
the Lord's *Deliverance***

**2. The Psalmist Prays for
the Lord's *Justice***



**1. The Psalmist Remembers
the Lord's *Deliverance***

**2. The Psalmist Prays for
the Lord's *Justice***



- 1 "Greatly have they afflicted me from my youth"
– let Israel now say–
- 2 "Greatly have they afflicted me from my youth,
yet they have not prevailed against me.

Psalm 129:1-2

PSALMS
OF
ASCENT



The plowers plowed upon my back;
they made long their furrows."

Psalm 129:3

PSALMS
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"Picture Israel, the person of faith, lying stretched out, prone. The enemies hitch up their oxen and plows and begin cutting long furrows in the backs of Israel. Long gashes cut into the skin and flesh, back and forth, systemically, like a farmer working a field. Imagine the whole thing: the blood, the pain, the back-and-forth cruelty. "

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**"Greatly have they afflicted me from my youth,
yet they have not prevailed against me."**

Psalm 129:2



The Lord is righteous;
he has cut the cords of the wicked.

Psalm 129:4



⁸ We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed;
perplexed, but not driven to despair;
⁹ persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but
not destroyed;

2 Corinthians 4:8–9





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the Lord's *Deliverance*

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May all who hate Zion
be put to shame and turned backward!

Psalm 129:5





And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"

Acts 9:4



6 Let them be like the grass on the housetops,
which withers before it grows up,
7 with which the reaper does not fill his hand
nor the binder of sheaves his arms,

Psalm 129:6–7

PSALMS
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³ He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.

⁴ The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away.

Psalm 1:3-4



nor do those who pass by say,
“The blessing of the Lord be upon you!
We bless you in the name of the Lord!”

Psalm 129:8



² And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Genesis 12:2–3

PSALMS
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“So we will not make excuses for the psalmist’s vindictiveness. What we will do is admire its energy. For it is apathetic, sluggish neutrality that is death to perseverance, acts like a virus in the bloodstream and enervates the muscles of discipleship. The person who makes excuses for hypocrites and rationalizes the excesses of the wicked, who loses a sense of opposition to sin, who obscures the

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difference between faith and denial, grace and selfishness—that is the person to be wary of. For if there is not all that much difference between the way of faith and the ways of the world, there is not much use in making any effort to stick to it.

...

Eugene Peterson



For perseverance is not resignation, putting up with things the way they are, staying in the same old rut year after year after year, or being a doormat for people to wipe their feet on. Endurance is not a desperate hanging on but a traveling from strength to strength. ... Perseverance is triumphant and alive."

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¹⁰ For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.” ¹¹ Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for “The righteous shall live by faith.” ¹² But the law is not of faith, rather “The one who does them shall live by them.”

Galatians 3:10–14

PSALMS
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¹³ Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”—
¹⁴ so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

Galatians 3:10–14

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