

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

From the smoldering ruins of Jerusalem, the psalmist lifted his eyes to heaven and said, “God my King is from old, working salvation in the midst of the earth. You divided the sea by your might; you broke the heads of the sea monsters on the waters. Yours is the day, yours also the night; you have established the heavenly lights and the sun” (Ps 74:12–13, 16). No matter what life may bring, I choose to rejoice in your majesty and glory in your power! “Let everything that has breath, praise the LORD!” Hallelujah!

Today in Your Word

Today you told me what happened to Jeremiah in the aftermath of the fall of Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar himself sent word that Jeremiah should not be harmed, but “deal with him as he tells you” (Jer 39:12). Nebuchadnezzar had no doubt heard of Jeremiah’s ministry in Jerusalem—that he had foretold Babylon’s victory over Judah and the other nations, that he had urged Zedekiah and the princes to submit to Babylon’s rule, and that he had suffered greatly at the hands of his own people. But his kind treatment of Jeremiah was ultimately due to your promise: “I am with you to deliver you, declares the LORD” (Jer 1:8, 19). You took Jeremiah from the guardhouse and placed him in the care of Gedaliah. Gedaliah’s father, Ahikam, had saved Jeremiah’s life twenty years earlier (Jer 26:24), and his grandfather Shaphan was none other than the secretary (scribe) of Josiah (2 Kgs 22:3)! This shows me that you take care of those who are faithful to follow your will, and that even in the midst of ruin, you can prosper and protect me. Today’s reading includes two psalms of Asaph that speak of the devastation of Jerusalem. The first, Psalm 74, begins by asking, “O God, why have you rejected us forever?” The author then poignantly described the destruction of your once beautiful city. Yet he did not spiral into despair. Instead he recalled the greatness of your past deeds and the power of your creative acts. He ended by urging you to repay the enemy for what they had done and to vindicate your people. This psalm teaches me that it’s appropriate to call you to action on the basis of your character and your covenant. I should never give in to despair; rather, I should meditate on your promise and your power. The second, Psalm 79, begins by announcing that the nations had defiled your holy temple: “they have laid Jerusalem in ruins” (Ps 79:1). The author then pleaded with you to “help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of your name; deliver us, and atone for our sins, for your name’s sake!” (Ps 79:9). This psalm teaches me that your judgments are designed to draw me to your side. I should run to you, ask for your forgiveness, and then call on you to restore and refresh. Then I will be able to praise your name (Ps 79:13).

Reflection

From my finite, limited perspective, you often seem slow to intervene on my behalf (cf. Ps 74:1). But what appears slow to me is actually perfect timing on your part. Am I quieting my soul before you and waiting patiently for you to meet my needs?

Request

Father, I can’t help but smile when I think of you using Nebuchadnezzar to rescue poor Jeremiah! Whenever I get worried about the future, remind me of how you cared for the weeping prophet.

Thanksgiving

Thank you for giving me the psalms of Asaph. They teach me how to turn despair into hope and tragedy into praise. Truly you are the God of my salvation! Praise the LORD!

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: “[God Will Take Care of You](#)” – Civilla D. Martin.

Meditation Verse: Psalm 74:22.