

Psalms 129:0 ¶ A Song of degrees.

Three times each year the men of Israel were to come to the temple and present themselves before the Lord.

Deuteronomy 16:16 "Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the LORD empty...."

The fifteen Psalms that are called the songs of *degrees* (elevation, journey to a higher place, go up) were to be sung as they ascended the temple mount.

Psalms 129:1 ¶ Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say:

Psalms 129:2 Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth: yet they have not prevailed against me.

Psalms 129:3 The plowers plowed upon my back: they made long their furrows.

Though these words were penned from the perspective of the psalmist of long ago, they are as applicable to the people of Israel now as then. Except for a period of a few years under a few kings, the people of Israel have suffered attack and/or persecution from their enemies since their inception as a nation. Though they have endured terrible persecution and even seeming destruction as a nation, they endure as a nation today.

EBC NIV Commentary: "The psalmist likens the enemies to a farmer who plows the fields with long rows. The "plowmen" are the warriors, the long furrows are the wounds and adversities, and the field is "the back" of Israel."

Guzik: "The Egyptians, the Canaanites, the Philistines, the Syrians, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Roman Catholics, the kings of Europe, the Muslims, the Czars, and the Nazis all did their best to wipe out the Jews. Yet they remain."

Psalms 129:4 The LORD is righteous: he hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked.

It is only due to the mercy and will of God that Israel endures as a nation. It is He that has intervened on their behalf to assure that they did not disappear from the world scene for good. And scripture foretells that they will experience an even more miraculous deliverance at the hand of God in the future—both from the invasion of

Gog's coalition as foretold by Ezekiel and from the armies of the Antichrist as recorded in Revelation.

Spurgeon: "Sooner or later a righteous God will interpose, and when he does so, his action will be most effectual; he does not unfasten, but cuts asunder, the harness which the ungodly use in their labour of hate. Never has God used a nation to chastise his Israel without destroying that nation when the chastisement has come to a close: he hates those who hurt his people even though he permits their hate to triumph for a while for his own purpose."

Psalms 129:5 ¶ Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion.

Psalms 129:6 Let them be as the grass *upon* the housetops, which withereth afore it groweth up:

Psalms 129:7 Wherewith the mower filleth not his hand; nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom.

Psalms 129:8 Neither do they which go by say, The blessing of the LORD *be* upon you: we bless you in the name of the LORD.

In these verses the psalmist is asking God to destroy the enemies of Israel. He prays that they will never experience the blessings of the LORD.

Since the coming of Jesus, we now know that we are to hate the sin that God hates, but we are not to hate the sinner. We are to look at each person through the eyes of God and pray that each one will come to saving faith in Jesus. We can rest assured that God will ensure that His justice is satisfied. I have to admit that though I can say that with confidence, it is much easier said than done when witnessing the cruel actions of the enemies of God against others.