



Psalm 129: Prevailing Faith

¹"They have greatly oppressed me from my youth, "let Israel say;"²"they have greatly oppressed me from my youth, **but** they have not gained the victory over me."³ Plowmen have plowed my back and made their furrows long.⁴ **But** the LORD is righteous; he has cut me free from the cords of the wicked."⁵ May all who hate Zion be turned back in shame.⁶ May they be like grass on the roof, which withers before it can grow;⁷ a reaper cannot fill his hands with it, nor one who gathers fill his arms.⁸ May those who pass by not say to them, "The blessing of the LORD be on you; we bless you in the name of the LORD."

The context of great oppression from this Psalm stands in tension with the context of God's blessings in Psalm 128 yet both are the experience of God's people. Together they help us gain a realistic view of life following after God.

Verse 1-4: We will face Spiritual Attacks.

Verse 5-6: We will face Spiritual Anger. C. S. Lewis writes this of these verses, "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...Perseverance must eventually confront evil. "

Verse 4, 8: We are to take hold of Spiritual Absolutes. 1) The cornerstone sentence of Psalm 129 is 'The Lord is Righteous' 2) The righteousness of God, in Jesus Christ, is the answer to all the evil done to us and our response to it. 3) The retaliation is **not** ours, but God's.

Scripture calls us to the necessary element for a life of prevailing faith – **perseverance**. Read and meditate on the following scriptures for yourself, the Body, and for Israel; Ephesians 6:13-18, Titus 2:2, James 1:2-4, Phil 3:12-14, Luke 11:8-10, Gen. 32:24-26, Hebrews 3:6,

Read this Psalm slowly a number of times. Identify with the emotions expressed by the Psalmist and consider; What is the need or experience he is describing? What are his various responses? What counsel does he give us? In light of your own spiritual formation what does the Lord want to form in you as He prepares you for our time together in Herrnhut? Pray 2 Peter 1:3-11

In verse 6-7, the wicked are likened to grass that withers, leaving nothing for the harvesters to harvest. It is for this reason the psalmist prays for the refusal of the traditional harvesters blessing (Ruth 2:4) for them. May this not be so for us. May we be fertile soil for His good seed already planted inside of us and may what comes out of our hearts, our mouths and our actions bring with it life that bears good and mature fruit. May we hear our Father, the Gardener of our lives, Himself speak the "harvesters blessing" over us individually and together. And in Herrnhut may we experience nothing less than His Holy presence with us and His blessing and mandate upon us to be a blessing in His Great Name.