

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Psalms: Living By Faith In God
LXXIV. Handling God’s Silence Amid Long Trials
(Psalm 74:1-23)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Some of the trials we face today have confronted us for a long time, making them burdensome to handle them:

(1) For years, we have heard reports of corrupt business dealings that President Biden and his son Hunter have had with foreign entities with various federal agencies apparently protecting the Bidens from prosecution: Senior Editor of The Federalist David Harsanyi in his piece, “The feds were protecting Joe Biden, not Hunter” (Republican-American, July 22, 2023, p. 8A) observed, “Two veteran IRS agents with impeccable records have testified under oath that federal officials not only slow-walked the Hunter Biden probe but nixed efforts to investigate Joe’s role in the family business . . . Any real political journalist with access would be pressuring the White House daily to explain what services Joe Biden’s son, brother and grown grandchildren – and virtually every other member of his family – rendered foreign entities” in “Romania, China and Ukraine that were worth over \$17 million.” Mr. Harsanyi added, “Frankly, I don’t expect to ever find out. It is what it is, but please stop telling me no one is above the law.” (Ibid.)

(2) Leftist indoctrination has been as relentless as it is vast: A letter by Richard E. Adamski of Waterbury (Ibid., July 20, 2023, p. 10A) grieved that the “Supreme Court recently struck down affirmative action and President Biden’s plan to cancel or reduce federal student loan debts, impacted gay rights, and overturned *Roe v. Wade*,” adding that the rulings were “a reversal of the ideal and principles the country was founded upon,” Ibid. In reality, just the opposite is true: Affirmative action is discrimination in contrast to the Declaration of Independence claim that all men are endowed by their Creator with the unalienable right to pursue happiness; cancelling or reducing student loan debts obligates taxpayers to pay for the loans without their consent similar to a complaint in the Declaration of Independence against the King of Great Britain; the alleged impact on gay rights was the ruling that a Christian baker did not have to write pro-gay statements on a cake that violated her religious beliefs in line with the First Amendment of the U. S. Constitution; and overturning *Roe v. Wade* ended the federal right to kill unborn babies that had violated the Declaration of Independence claim that all men are endowed by their Creator with the unalienable right to life!

(3) Damaging Biblical compromise and error in Christendom is another prolonged trial that we face: A letter by transgender woman Roberta M. Crispino of Waterbury (Ibid., July 18, 2023, p. 8A) announced his recent withdrawal from a church where he was initially “welcomed” as a “child of God” for “four years,” with the minister praising his “amazing faith” and adding, “Would that all of us seek the Lord and spread the good news of the Gospel with enthusiasm” like Roberta. However, Roberta left that church because that minister recently called for him to “follow Scripture and ‘Come up higher’ (Luke 14:10)” morally when the minister also “made it clear that he does not endorse or even promote secular society’s current transgender beliefs.” (Ibid.)

The minister’s initial words to Roberta not only violated 1 Corinthians 5:9-13 where believers are told not to let immoral people into the church’s fellowship, but those words also left Roberta thinking that the minister approved of his immoral orientation when the very opposite was true, what discredited the minister in Roberta’s view.

Also, the minister misused Luke 14:10: That verse does not call one to “Come up higher” in the sense of improving one’s morals, but that if one is invited to a feast, he should sit in a less honored seat so that the host can ask him to “Come up higher” to a more honored one! Such unbiblical compromise and error is commonplace today!

Need: *So, we ask, “How can we respond to God’s apparent silence amid the prolonged trials that we face?”*

- I. Psalm 74 was composed after the 586 B. C. Babylonian destruction of the temple, for its total devastation by Israel’s enemies is described in Psalm 74:4-8. (Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 848)**
- II. Along with the shock of this traumatic event was the report in verse 9 that there was “no prophet to give spiritual counsel to the people or to explain how long this problem would last,” Ibid., p. 849.**
- III. Jeremiah 32:26-44 explains that God had warned Judah that He would let Babylon destroy Jerusalem and take His people captive in punishment for their long rebellion against Him, but that He would eventually deliver them from captivity, bring them back to their land and bless them.**
- IV. Thus, Psalm 74 is the godly minority’s response to Babylon’s destruction of the temple, exemplifying how godly people in any era of upheaval should handle God’s seeming long silence in times of trouble:**
 - A. In verses 1-2, the psalmist cried out for God’s help, asking why God had “perpetually” (*nesah*, B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 664) seemingly spurned them as a people.**

- B. In verses 3-11, the psalmist noted the “perpetual” (*nesah* again, Ibid.) ruins (v. 3a), asking if the enemy would revile God’s Name “perpetually” (*nesah* again, Ibid., v. 10) and noting God’s silence in not explaining how long this state would continue or how long God’s foes who had ruined His temple would revile Him (v. 9-10).
- C. However, verses 12-17 take a positive turn, noting how God had been the psalmist’s King from antiquity Who had delivered Israel, v. 12. The psalmist referred to Scripture’s record of those divine works, telling how God had rescued Israel at the Red Sea (v. 13-14; Ibid., B. K. C., O. T., p. 849), how He had supplied drinking water and dried up the Jordan River so Israel could enter the Promised Land (v. 15), how God had established day and night with the sun and moon (Genesis 1:13-5, 14-18; Psalm 74:16) and after the Noahic Flood had set the bounds of the seas and land and made summer and winter, Genesis 8:1-22 with Psalm 74:17.
- D. Thus, the psalmist asked the Lord not “perpetually” (*nasah* again, Ibid., B. D. B.) to forget His afflicted people but to rescue them and punish His enemies who had destroyed His temple, Psalm 74:18-23.

Lesson: *After the destruction of the temple, the godly minority handled God’s prolonged silence over this disaster by relying on past Scripture records of God’s gracious provisions to hope that He would still help them again.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God’s gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. (2) When facing prolonged trials amid God’s apparent silence about them, may we rely on past Scripture records of God’s gracious provisions in hope that He will help us again.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message and provide additional guidance . . .)

Though we do not have the reputable Old Testament prophet Jeremiah today to comment on the prolonged trials we face amid God’s apparent silence today, we **do** have the complete canon of Scripture that gives us all we need for life and service, 2 Timothy 3:15-17. We thus view Scriptures on the issues of concern in our introduction:

(1) On reports of the Bidens’ alleged corrupt business dealings with foreign nations that were apparently shielded by several federal agencies, (a) we have often taught that Revelation 3:21 with 7:17 predicted that we in our era of Church History would face oppressive leaders who were full of intrigue in the government-business-academic-religious complex. For balm for afflicted people, God will give an “overcomer(s)” in a Biblical church(s) nurturing influence via Bible teaching. (b) ***God’s current seeming tolerance of and silence on such evil leaders can be explained from Scripture:*** God hid Jesus from public view for most of His earthly life and led Him to go public only when the public stage was ripe for His ministry to achieve God’s goal, Isaiah 49:1-3, 4-7. (c) Applied to our era, “(a)s our elite institutions embrace left-wing ideology as their predominant ethos, Americans en masse are in the process of abandoning them. Trust in institutions has entirely collapsed . . .” (Jarrett Stepman, “‘Small Town’ lesson: Don’t capitulate to cancel culture,” Ibid., Republican-American, July 26, 2023, p. 6A) (d) Thus, God may be giving godless leaders opportunity to do wicked things to create a huge reaction in society so that people crave credible leaders, that when God fills that leadership vacuum with His overcomer(s), the overcomer(s) will have maximum impact for God!

(2) On the ideological indoctrination seen in Mr. Adamski’s complaint about recent rulings by the Supreme Court, Scripture supports each of the rulings (as follows): (a) Affirmative action is still discrimination, what God opposes, Acts 10:34; (b) reducing or canceling student debts results in stealing from taxpayers in violation of Exodus 20:15; (c) impacting gay rights by ruling that a Christian baker does not have to write pro-gay words on a cake that contradict her religious beliefs is supported by 1 Timothy 1:19 where believers must hold to a good conscience; and (d) overturning *Roe v. Wade* that had given federal support for the murder of babies is upheld by Exodus 21:22-23.

(3) On unbiblical compromise and mixed signals of an area minister on transgenderism, in 2 Corinthians 1:17-20, Paul exemplified teaching that was **not ambiguously** “yes” **and** “no,” but **forthrightly** “yes” in Christ to produce the “Amen” response from godly hearers! Pastors and teachers must thus give **straightforward** messages!

(4) On the area minister’s mishandling of Luke 14:10, 2 Timothy 2:15 directs Bible teachers to do their best to present themselves to God as approved workmen, rightly handling the Scriptures. The means to do this begins with (a) the teacher’s believing in Christ as his personal Savior from sin and hell so that he is given the Holy Spirit of God to guide him into all Biblical truth, John 3:16; Romans 8:9b; John 16:13. (b) Then, relying by faith on the indwelling Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16), the Bible teacher must use Jesus’ method of interpreting Scripture in its literary, grammatical and historical contexts like Jesus did in Mark 12:18-27. Another name for this method of interpretation is the “common sense” method, the method we use to interpret a newspaper editorial or a letter from a friend.

May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God’s gift of eternal life. When facing prolonged trials amid God’s apparent silence, may we rely on past Scripture records of God’s gracious provisions to hope that He will still help us again.