



“Defend Your Cause”: (Psalm 74)

October 21

RECAP: [Psalms](#)

CONTEXT: Thematically, this Psalm was written just after the fall of Jerusalem. It is very similar to Psalm 76, though without a recognition of guilt. It is a Psalm that is appropriate for God’s people to cry out/lament whenever they are feeling small, assailed, persecuted or abandoned. It is not the easiest of Psalms to understand, yet it offers some profound encouragements.

FIRST, A.M. SERMON RECAP (Jer 34:17):

- How are these verses to be understood in context?
- How do people define liberty today? How is this different from the classic small “l” liberal view of freedom?
- How free are people actually (Ro 6:15–23)?
- How does God’s Word lead to freedom (Dt 6:24)?
- What is Christian liberty? How can it be abused?
- Other?

READ: Ps 74

QUESTIONS:

1. What tips us off to the utter destruction of Jerusalem in vv. 1–8?
2. How are we to understand the great deeds of old mentioned here and the great present disaster? (e.g. “smoke against the sheep”). Can you think of any contemporary examples?
3. **Have you ever prayed/felt “why do you cast us off forever”?** (v. 1a)
4. Why might we feel this way? Is feeling alone a trustworthy guide?
5. *Vv. 4–8- Under the Old Covenant the Temple represented God’s presence on earth.* Why did God remove His presence to allow such destruction? What judgement would come on God’s instruments of justice (e.g. Assyria and Babylon)?

6. *Under the New Covenant, believers are given the sure deposit of the Holy Spirit (Eph 1), God’s presence amongst His people today.* How do the enemies of God assail this from without? How can we grieve the Spirit from within? (Eph 4:30).
7. *Vv. 9–11- For 400 years after the last prophets there would be silence until the time of Christ.* From a human perspective why might this have been (or be) the case? What about from God’s perspective? Why does it appear as if His justice is sometimes delayed?
8. **Why does God sometime do nothing when people scoff and revile Him?**
9. **Vv. 12–17- In times of great darkness, why is it helpful to remind ourselves what God has done?**
10. **How has C2C helped you be able to do this so far as Biblical stories are concerned?**
11. **What do you think of this phrase, “Yours is the day, yours also the night” (v. 16a).**
12. *Vv. 18–23- “Remember this” (v. 18a) is linked to the “covenant” (v. 20a). How is Israel (“the dove”) to praise the LORD, bring glory and be a blessing to the nations, if the “wild beasts” (i.e. foreign Gentile powers) suppress her?*
13. In that vein how is Ps 85:4–7 a legitimate prayer/desire that we should have, especially as visible Christianity is in such a sunken state?
14. *The lament ends with two interesting phrases: 1) “uproar...which goes up continually,” and 2) “defend your cause.”* **What uproar exists against God’s people, the Church, today? How might we pray, “defend your cause”? What might this look like?**
15. Why is it foolish to stand against God’s people?

NEXT WEEK: Judgement upon the nations