

A Year in Review

For he has not despised or scorned the suffering of the afflicted one;
he has not hidden his face from him but has listened to his cry for help.

Psalm 22:24 (NIV)

At this time of the year we often reflect on the past 12 months and consider how the Lord has been faithful to us. It is a good thing to rehearse the past blessings as we look forward to a new year.

If we read the entire Psalm from which our verse today is taken, we quickly recognize it as a Messianic Psalm. That is to say, there are words and prophecies in this Psalm that reflect the words and work of Jesus.

The Psalmist appears to move back and forth between despair and hope as he thinks about his situation. Such is the experience of us all in life. We have seasons of confidence in the Lord, and then we slip into a time of depression and hopelessness.

It is so important not to create a view of God based on our experiences in life.

Our hope must be based on the revealed character of

God, and not circumstances we may find ourselves in.

Judge not the Lord
by feeble sense,
but trust Him for His grace;
Behind a frowning
providence,
He hides a smiling face.
William Cowper
(1731-1800)

The temptation to judge Who God is by looking at our situation can be so strong at times.

But we need to resist and wait for the Lord to unveil the reasons for our sorrow when He decides we need to know what He is doing with us.

God does not turn His back on the humble one who is suffering.

God never turns a deaf ear to the one who cries for mercy. Instead the Lord acts—as Cowper puts it in his poem in the following words;

Ye fearful saints

fresh courage take,
the clouds you
so much dread,
Are big with mercy
and shall break
with blessing
on your head.

God never scoffs at the afflicted.

Rather, His tender heart is full of grace and love for those who are in pain. Turn back to Him today and find the solace and comfort you need to endure, until the “clouds” break with blessing—as the poet suggests.

He is listening, so come and make your complaint to Him. Pour out your prayers of frustration. He wants to hear from you today. He will listen and He will bless. Come in faith and receive all you need for the journey.

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