

A Why does God allow sin and suffering to exist? (Psalms 74 and 79)

- ❖ When King Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the Temple and razed Jerusalem, God's people were totally confused (Ps. 79:1-4; 74:3-8).
- ❖ How long would God allow suffering? How long will the victory of the wicked? How long will the name of God be blasphemed? How long will he not forgive sin? How long will he remain silent? (Ps. 79:5; 74:9-11).
- ❖ If God's people were destroyed, where was the honor of God's Name? (Ps. 79:6-7, 12; 74:13-19).
- ❖ Aware that sin had brought them to this situation, he asks God to listen, remember his covenant, forgive sin, remove suffering, and act on behalf of his people (79:8-9, 11, 13; 74: 20-23).

B Why does God allow the innocent to suffer? (Psalm 88)

- ❖ The psalmist, sick, awaits death, and does not understand why God does not respond (Ps. 88:3-4, 9-14). He even accuses God of being the cause of his illness and pain (Ps. 88:6-8, 16-18).
- ❖ There is no mention in Psalm 88 of the sins that could have caused his illness. In reality, his suffering (as often happens with our suffering) did not derive from any sin of his own. This reality makes suffering something difficult to understand, inexplicable.
- ❖ There is only one solution: cry out to Him who controls everything, and wait for Him to act in due time (Ps. 88:1-2).

C Why doesn't God put an end to our current suffering? (Psalm 69)

- ❖ To what extent does the psalmist feel the distance from God?
 - It is like a deer that cannot find water to drink (Ps. 42:1-3)
 - He is distressed, hurt, without the will to live (Ps. 102:2-4)
 - He seems to live in a desert, like the pelican, the owl or the solitary bird (Ps. 102:6-7)
 - He feels sunk in the mire, unable to stand, without help from God (Ps. 69:1-3)
- ❖ He does not remain silent, he persists in prayer (Ps. 69:13). He examines himself (Ps. 69:5-6). He declares his love for God (Ps. 69:7, 9). He is sure that God will not remain silent forever (Ps. 69:33-36; 42:5; 102:13).
- ❖ The psalms demonstrate that communication with God must continue, regardless of life's circumstances.

D Have His promises in Scripture failed? (Psalm 77)

- ❖ Have you ever felt like the psalmist (Ps. 77:1-6)? He cries out to God hoping for an answer, but he does not find it; in his desperation he refuses consolation; he remembers the moments when he sang to God and meditated on Him. And he says: "Now, has God forgotten me? Where are your promises?" (Ps. 77:7-9).
- ❖ The answer is in the past (Ps. 77:10-12; Josh. 21:45). God has done wonders before the nations (Ps. 77:13-17). He made a way in the sea and led his people by the hand of Moses and Aaron (Ps. 77:18-20).
- ❖ However, not all of his actions were obvious. At times, he acted without his hand being noticed: "your footsteps were not known" (Ps. 77:19). Whether openly revealed or hidden, God acts. Let us trust Him.

E Why do the wicked prosper? (Psalms 37 and 73)

- ❖ Many wicked people prosper and do not suffer, although they have God removed from their lives (Ps. 73:3-9); but those who seek to serve God suffer and suffer (Ps. 73:13-14).
- ❖ This almost caused Asaph's feet to slip (Ps. 73:2). But, when God led his steps to the Sanctuary, he finally understood (Ps. 73:17).
- ❖ We must see the prosperity of the wicked in its true perspective. We should not look at "today", but "at the end". When the wicked face divine judgment they will cease to exist, they will lose the happy eternity reserved for the righteous.