

# Great Songs for Bad Days

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Preacher: Jon Gemmell

[ 0 : 00 ] Well, as we sit, we're going to join our hearts together in prayer. Let's pray. Great art thou, O Lord, and greatly to be praised.

Great is thy power, and thy wisdom is infinite. Thee would we praise without ceasing. Thou callest us to delight in thy praise, for thou hast made us for thyself.

And our hearts find no rest until we rest in thee. Who with the Father and the Holy Spirit, all glory, praise, and honor be described, both now and forevermore.

Amen. Well, we are delighted to welcome you this evening, as I've said, and delighted also to welcome a guest preacher this evening. We've got John Gemmell joining us.

John is currently working in London at the Proclamation Trust, but happily he is going to be coming back to Scotland, where he ministered for many years, and coming to join the staff at Cornhill Scotland.

[ 1 : 09 ] He's going to work alongside the rest of our team there, teaching at Cornhill and serving with us in ministry. So we're looking forward very, very much to him coming to be with us as of the summertime.

But he's up here for a few days this week for meetings with Cornhill and teaching Cornhill during the week. And so it's great that he is with us this evening. I'm going to hand over to him in just a moment to read one of the Psalms to us that he's going to be speaking on this evening, and then to speak to us.

And we're going to be looking together at Psalm 129, 130, and 131. So you might like to turn those up as John comes to join us. Welcome, John. It's lovely to have you with us.

It is so lovely to be here. Such an encouragement. Thank you so much to the Tron. What an encouragement this congregation has been over many years of gospel faithfulness.

Let me read Psalm 129 for us. A song of ascents. Greatly have they afflicted me from my youth, let Israel now say.

[ 2 : 23 ] Greatly have they afflicted me from my youth. Yet they have not prevailed against me. The plough was ploughed upon my back. They made long their furrows.

The Lord is righteous. He has cut the cords of the wicked. May all who hate Zion be put to shame and turned backwards. Let them be like the grass on the housetops, which withers before it grows up.

With which the reaper does not fill his hand, nor the binder of sheaves his arms. Nor do those who pass by say, the blessing of the Lord be upon you.

We bless you in the name of the Lord. Let me pray and then we'll dive in together. Merciful Father, nourish us with your word, we pray.

Grant to us listening ears, attentive minds, open hearts, malleable wills and humble attitudes. May Jesus be glorified and may we be transformed in these precious moments together.

[ 3 : 32 ] Please send your Holy Spirit to make these living words that he inspired alive in each of us this evening. Merciful Father, nourish us with your word, we pray.

In Jesus' exalted and ever-powerful name. Amen. What I want us to do together this evening is quite ambitious. I want us to look at three psalms together.

This lovely little triplet of psalms 129, 130 and 131. Spent a lot of time looking at psalms individually, but I hope tonight might just whet your appetite for seeing how the psalms have been masterfully edited and compiled together.

As I said, it is lovely to be with you in Glasgow. I've been down in London now for four years. And one of the unfortunate side effects of living in Southeast London for so long is inadvertently becoming a fan of Millwall FC.

To be a Millwall football fan is to know what it is like to be a leper in the New Testament. That is why our song is this.

[ 4 : 45 ] No one likes us. No one likes us. No one likes us. We don't care. We are Millwall, super Millwall. We are Millwall from the den.

It is true. Nobody likes us. My first taste of football at Millwall FC was for the 2017 third round FA Cup clash with Barnsley.

Eleven minutes in and Barnsley took the lead through their striker Brad Potts. And as one man, the away stand in their thick Yorkshire accents, take up this chant, Everywhere we go, everywhere we go, we're the Barnsley boys making all the noise, everywhere we go.

However, 50 minutes later, and Millwall had scored their fourth, and were absolutely dominating the tie. And the 13,000 people gathered in the den, took up their age-old classic football anthem.

It goes like this. You're not singing anymore. You're not singing anymore. You're not singing. You're not singing. You're not singing. You're not singing anymore.

[ 5 : 59 ] It was a deeply rousing, deeply passionate moment. And unbeknownst to them, the 13,000 Millwall fans were making a deep theological point. It's true, isn't it?

We sing when we're winning, and we don't when we're not. We sing when we're winning, and we don't when we're not.

You don't hear much singing in the surgery, and you don't hear much singing in the cemetery. You don't hear much singing from people under the heel of a cruel dictator, and you don't hear much singing in the midst of life-changing tragedy.

You don't hear much singing in a fracturing marriage, or a strife-filled workplace, or in the battle against chronic illness, or in the pit of severe depression.

We sing when we're winning, and we don't when we're not. Yet I want to encourage us this evening that as Christians loved by an eternally faithful God, with a glorious Lord Jesus ahead of us, with absolute security and imperishable hope, we must be the exception to the rule.

[ 7 : 27 ] Christians of all people must be those who sing all of the time. We should sing always. And I want to suggest that these three psalms, 129, 130, and 131, are a brilliant medley that we can sing in any and every situation.

These songs will resonate with us, and if we learn to sing them, and practice singing them in the good times, they will give us vivifying hope, even on the darkest of days.

I want to say that these three psalms are great songs to sing on bad days. And we must learn to sing them well. These three psalms are in a collection of 15 psalms called the Psalms of Ascent. They're in Book 5 of the Psalter. They're properly used by post-exilic Israel on their re-entry to the country, and they were used on their three times a year pilgrimage up to the temple in Jerusalem. Of the 15, three are written by David, one by Solomon, and 11 are orphan psalms, who we don't know who wrote them. They are written by anonymous pilgrims.

[ 8 : 48 ] And these 15 are definitely arranged into threes, and I want us to look at the triad before us this evening. I want to suggest that Psalm 129 is about hope in affliction.

Bad days brought about by things done to us. When affliction rains down and rains in. I want to suggest that Psalm 130 is about hope beyond iniquity.

Where bad days are not done, brought about by things done to us, but brought about by things done by us. And I want to finish off with the little psalm, Psalm 131.

Hope through humility. When bad days just happen, when they come out of nowhere and they blindsides us. So enough wiggling on the T.

Let's have a look at Psalm 129 together. Hope in affliction. Look with me at verses 1 to 3 and see oppression.

[ 9 : 53 ] They've writ large upon the page. Greatly have they afflicted me from my youth, let Israel now say. Greatly have they afflicted me from my youth.

Do you see the repetition? Do you see the emphasis? Great affliction. Over many years from their youth. Real oppression.

Hard oppression. A chorus for the nation of Israel. It would have resonated with them. When the anonymous pilgrim picks up the tune, greatly have they afflicted me from my youth.

Suddenly everyone's joining in because Israel's history is one shrouded in oppression and affliction. Bondage in Egypt under Pharaoh.

Battles in the wilderness during the wanderings. Conquest for the promised land against entrenched enemies. Oppression throughout the period of the judges. The Philistine wars. [10:57] The kingdom splitting civil war. The Assyrian invasion. The Babylonian siege. Defeat and exile. And then return. Returning home, but home doesn't feel like home.

Oppression on every page of Israel's history. So when the pilgrim starts, greatly have they afflicted me from my youth. Everyone's going, yes.

That is our history as a nation. It really resonates with them. Opposed and oppressed for much of their shared history.

And verse three details the horror of the oppression. The plowers plowed upon my back. They made long their furrows.

This oppression was up close and personal. Israel used and abused, domineered and exploited. They made long their furrows.

[11:56] This is oppression on an industrial scale. Long furrows to maximize yield and minimize effort. Israel rinsed to within an inch of its life as the affliction reigns in.

But see verse two. What a defiant sentence. Yet, they have not prevailed against me.

Oppression from their youth, but they have not prevailed against me. In the words of Elton John, we're still standing even after all this time.

Oppressed, most definitely, yes. Obliterated, certainly not. We are still here. Greatly oppressed over a long period of time up close and personal.

Yet, we're still standing. We're still singing this song loud and proud. Verses one to three, oppression. But then see verses four and five, the pivot of the psalm and overturning.

[13:15] As the covenant God acts on behalf of his people to rescue his people and to judge his enemies. The Lord is righteous.

The sovereign, omnipotent, omniscient God will ensure perfect justice in the end. The oppressors will be punished and the oppressed will be vindicated.

He has cut the cords of the wicked. The handcuffs will come off. Their seemingly endless affliction that has lasted so long will come to an end and the oppressors who thought they would get away with it are in full retreat.

May all who hate Zion be put to shame and turned backwards. They will be held accountable for every stroke, every act, every word directed against God and his people and the only thing they'll have to show for it is the shame from which they can never escape.

Oppressed. But God steps in and all that oppression is overturned in the end. And the psalm finishes with overcoming.

[14:42] A real warning to people oppressing God's people. It says three things that will be the result which will come to the oppressors.

Do you see it? Verse 6. Transitory. They'll be gone. They won't last. Like grass on a rooftop they will be scorched and wither and die and become dust and be blown away in the wind.

It will come to nothing. Nothing. The oppressors are the ones who will be obliterated.

It will be so transitory. What else do we see about the oppressors? Well it will be utterly fruitless.

Verse 7. With which the reaper does not fill his hand nor the binder of sheaves his arms.

Do you remember what these oppressors were doing to Israel in verse 3? Plowing upon a back making long furrows to maximize their yield and minimize their efforts.

[15:51] And yet when the oppressors go to the field to gather in their grain it's not even worth firing up the Massey Ferguson to go there. There's nothing. No fruit gone fruitless was their oppression.

The oppressors won't last and will come to nothing. And see also verse 8. Nor to those who pass by say the blessing of the Lord be upon you we bless you in the name of the Lord.

a psalm that started with two things that Israel are to say ends with two things that the people are not to say to their oppressors. The oppressors outside of Israel's covenant blessing because of their opposition to God and his people is not the way of blessing it's the way of cursedness. because they stood against him and are no longer welcome but banished no longer blessed but cursed.

That is why this is a great song for a bad day when affliction is reigning in the original hearers would be reminded of God's sustaining grace in the midst of affliction.

[ 17 : 11 ] they would be assured of God's soon and certain intervention on their behalf to bring about perfect justice and they would be assured that he is the God who will punish his enemies and vindicate his people.

Why does this song do us such good in affliction? Because it brings an eternal perspective to our momentary troubles and reminds us that the God of justice is all over this like a rash and in the end he wins and he always wins.

I'm sure Psalm 129 would have been one of Jesus' favourite 150 psalms. He could sing louder than anyone about affliction before his youth born into the crosshairs of an infanticidal King Herod spending his early years as an asylum seeker in Egypt afflicted by the devil in the wilderness at the beginning of his ministry an attempted assassination after his first sermon in Nazareth a plot to kill him after his first miracles opposed by religious leaders throughout his ministry impeded by Roman officials threatened by his unstoppable mission mocked spat upon beard pulled out the epitome of absolute affliction one who knew a ploughed back not as a metaphor but as a reality nailed to a cross in ignominy and shame where he suffered and died though absolutely innocent and spotlessly sinless and yet with what joy he would sing verse 2 yet they have not prevailed against me as three days later he bursts out of the tomb to conquer death and ensure the conquering of all his enemies forever

Jesus is the great overturner who puts flesh on the bones of the overturning of Psalm 129 guaranteeing our vindication ensuring that if today you are in the Lord Jesus affliction will one day end and that in him you too will overcome eternally affliction transitory fruitless cursed will be the bottom line conqueror vindicated eternally safe will be the final word in the life of God's people until that great day we sing loudly and proudly in faith in the Lord Jesus that affliction will not be the definitive and defining feature of any of our lives

Psalm 129 is a great song for a bad day when things are done to us ministering eternal hope even when the actions of others really hurt us I remember speaking to I remember preaching down in London and a little girl just started sixth form college she wasn't that much of a little girl she was called Lydia and she was as far as she knew the only Christian in her entire college and she started to see you to try and reach her friends with the gospel and they were merciless to her calling her names graffitiing her locker making her life miserable and I remember saying to her how do you feel about that she said she said it's really tough but I know that Jesus is worth it and that I'm on the winning team and therefore I'll go through this for him asking that he might be merciful to those who are pressing the gospel right now

[ 21 : 21 ] Psalm 129 a great song for a bad day when things are done to us let us learn to sing it well so it will minister hope into our trembling hearts when affliction rains down I'm going to pause there for a minute and we're going to sing together he will hold me fast let's stand together when I fear my fear will fail Christ will hold me fast when the temptation will fail he will hold me fast I could never keep my want through my spiritual blood love for my love in after once he passed hold me fast he will hold me fast he will hold me fast for my saving of my soul he will home will trust stop

Movie Sponsored glory He will God Is his ■ Christ will hold me fast he■■jacks in his voice will sound he will hold me fast he will make But when my soul be lost, his promises are lost.

But by him that's such a cross, he will hold me lost. He will hold me lost.

He will hold me lost. For my son, he loves me so. He will hold me fast.

For my life he better died. Christ will hold me fast. Just as does it satisfy.

[ 24 : 26 ] He will hold me fast. Praise to him till I was alive.

He will hold me fast. Till I've made this time to set. He will hold me fast.

He will hold me fast. He will hold me fast.

For my saving has me so. He will hold me fast.

Well, let me read Psalm 130 for us. Psalm 130, a song of ascents. Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.

[ 25 : 29 ] O Lord, hear my voice. Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my pleas for mercy. If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?

But with you there is forgiveness. That you may be feared. I wait for the Lord. My soul waits for the Lord.

And in his word, I hope. My soul waits for the Lord. More than watchman for the morning. More than watchman for the morning.

O Israel, hope in the Lord. For with the Lord there is steadfast love. And with him is plentiful redemption. And he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

What if the reason that you're not singing anymore is not because of things done to you, but because of things you've done? The bad day brought about by the secret sin that you've been feeding comes to the surface and you've been found out in devastating ways.

[ 26 : 45 ] What about the addiction that you thought was being managed has spiraled out of control and has taken everything from you? The affair discovered that has shipwrecked your marriage.

The shady business deal that is being scrutinized by the FSA. Those kind of bad days and a million more besides. What do you sing on those days?

Where is the hope in those kind of depths? With that kind of iniquity? Well, I want to suggest Psalm 130 is a beautiful song.

To sing on bad days like those. The original readers would know the feeling. They've just come out of 70 years of bad days, bored about by their own sin, sending them to exile.

They're home, but home doesn't feel like home. And it doesn't see that the mass spiritual reforms that they were supposed to learn from have taken root in their lives.

[ 27 : 46 ] This psalm is in full movements mapped perfectly by the stanzas in the ESV. Look with me at verses 1 and 2.

They're pleading. They're pleading. These words are uttered by the psalmist at the end of his rope. He's in the metaphorical depths, cold, alone, sinking with the surface ever further away, sunlight becoming a distant blur, drowning in the depths of his iniquity.

And what is he doing as he slinks down? He's pleading. I cry to you, O Lord.

Hear my voice, O Lord. Let your ears be attentive to me. The last gasp cries of a sinner from the depths. And what's he crying for?

Look with me at verse 2. He's crying out for mercy. And in that declaration is both a confession of wrongdoing, but also acknowledging that he's exactly where his sin, where he deserves to be on account of his sin.

[ 29 : 12 ] And so he cries to his God. He cries to the Lord. The desperate cries of a drowning pilgrim directed to his covenant God that he's heard so much about.

Mercy. God, deal mercifully for me. Deal with me better than my sins deserve. It's that great story from the life of Napoleon about a mother coming before Napoleon the Great to beg for the life of her deserting son.

And she says to the emperor, Napoleon, my son is a good boy. He deserves mercy. To which Napoleon says, well, two things. Number one, if he was a good boy, he wouldn't have deserted. And number two, if he deserves mercy, then it wouldn't be mercy. Mercy is completely undeserved. That is what this pilgrim is crying for as he slinks below the surface.

Lord, hear me. Lord, be merciful to me. Lord, save me. I am desperate. Then verses three and two.

[ 30 : 38 ] He moves from verses one and two, pleading to verses three and four, remembering what he's heard about God and the fact that his God is pardoning.

Do you see the rhetorical question in verse three? If you, oh Lord, should mark iniquities, oh Lord, who could stand? He's saying, God, if every time we do wrong, you mark it down.

If every time I do something that I shouldn't and don't do something that I should. If every time I say something that I shouldn't or don't say something I should. Or every time I think something I shouldn't or don't think something I should.

Or every second. I don't love you with all of my heart, soul, mind and strength. If every time I do that, you noted it down.

Who could stand? And the answer is no one. Definitely no one. Our rap sheet is very long and getting longer every moment.

[ 31 : 41 ] That nobody in their sin can stand before a holy God. I am 39 years old. If I had sinned only once every day of my life, which let me tell you is a ridiculously low number.

Then I would have already accrued 14,384 capital offenses before the God of the universe. He pleads for mercy, understanding God's holiness with the rhetorical question.

But verse 4. But. But. With you there is forgiveness.

That you may be feared. This drowning pilgrim pleading from the depths. Remember something about the very nature of God that he is forgiving.

He's heard it. And now he's moving towards trusting it. Note the order. It's very interesting, isn't it? Verse 4.

[ 32 : 53 ] But with you there is forgiveness. That you may be feared. Do you see that is all of grace. Forgiveness first and then relating to God rightly. Second.

God initiates with forgiveness. Then we respond with right relating to God. Fearing him. Being conscious of his consciousness of us.

God is a pardoning God. God is a pardoning God. He is a pardoning God. He is a pardoning God. And that is his cry from the depths. With you there is forgiveness.

The desperate cries of a drowning pilgrim met by the eager ears of a forgiving God. There are no depths too deep to conceal the sound from his ever attentive ears.

No matter what you've done. No matter what you've done. Or how many times you've done it. A cry for mercy to a forgiving God will always be heard.

[ 33 : 57 ] And so everything's changed in verses 5 and 6. We now move to patience. It was pleading. Remembering. Pardoning. And now it is patience. Having remembered what God is like.

He now trusts. That God is true to his word. I wait for the Lord. My soul waits. And in his word I hope. My soul waits for the Lord more than watchman for the morning.

More than watchman for the morning. He is waiting for the Lord. Even in the depths. Hoping in his word that God is exactly who he reveals himself to be.

He is resting in the hope of God's merciful forgiveness. He may well still be in the depths. He may well still be reaping the consequences of his sin.

But he knows on the strength of God's word. That the depths won't be his final resting place.

Because God is forgiving. He waits. Clinging to God's word.

[ 35 : 01 ] If this is true. Then God will be good to me. Even though I'm so undeserving. Hoping soon that the truth he knows about God will become a reality in his life.

We then get the picture of his eager waiting more than watchman for the morning. A few years ago me being a hopeless romantic decided to take my wife Aileen glamping on the Isle of Skye in a yurt in October.

Well at least there were no midges. But it was unbearable. I mean it really was. We went to bed with every item of clothing, blanket or water bottle we could find.

And for two hours we just about survived. And then the hot water bottles became just water bottles. And it was just unbearable.

About 11 o'clock the bone cold set in. It was the longest night of my life. Made worse by Aileen confiscating a majority of my blankets in a desperate act of self-preservation.

[ 36 : 14 ] I looked at my watch through the clouds of my own breath. After an hour and realized only five minutes had elapsed. 12 o'clock, 1 o'clock, 2 o'clock, 3 o'clock.

4 o'clock, 5 o'clock, 6 o'clock, 7 o'clock, 8 o'clock. And then at 8.17am. The beautiful Scottish sun rose.

And its first ray hit me. And it was absolute euphoria. The coldness was over. I was alive. It was a miracle.

Warmth was here. That's what our psalmist envisions. In the coldness of the depths. He's waiting. But he is sure.

That the warmth of God's word becoming true in his life. Is in the mail. And it will arrive. And will soon be a reality in his life.

[ 37 : 17 ] Crying from the depths to a pardoning God. And then patiently trusting that his word is true. And it is. Pleading, pardoning, patience.

And finally he turns to a preacher. Look at verse 7. O Israel, hope in the Lord. For with the Lord there is steadfast love. And with him is plentiful redemption.

And he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities. From the depths, the psalmist turns to a preacher. One certain of being forgiven.

Now preaches about the forgiving God at the top of his voice. What a cocktail of characteristics we find in this psalm. A God who is forgiving.

Who has plentiful redemption. How much redemption is that? More than you could ever need. He will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

[ 38 : 21 ] Who is and of himself steadfast love. That is the cocktail of characteristics that perfectly meets. The sinful pilgrim crying from the depths for mercy.

Samuel Davies in his hymn is absolutely right. Great God of wonders all thy ways. Display attributes divine. But countless acts of pardoning grace. Beyond thine other wonders shine.

Who is a pardoning God like thee? Or who has grace? So rich and free. No one. No one is like this God.

Just imagine Jesus singing this in the Saturday school in the synagogue in Nazareth. During his earthly ministry. Think of him.

And verse 3. If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? And Jesus, the only person who ever lived, could put his hand up and say, me.

[ 39 : 29 ] I've got a perfectly spotless rap sheet. I can stand. Now think of Jesus. I can stand. I can stand. Now think of Jesus plunged into the deepest, darkest depths of God's judgment on account of every sin committed.

Jesus who willingly dives into the depths and suffers so that those in the depths will one day reach the surface.

And no complete forgiveness, steadfast love and plentiful redemption forever. It is Jesus and his righteousness in whom we're able to stand.

From whom an unending flow of mercy flows. And one day that word of the gospel will come true and the depths won't be our resting place.

But he will be our resting place. But how do we know this is true? If we're going to trust all of our lives and all of our sin to this God, how do we know that he's good for his word?

[ 40 : 37 ] How do we know that he will forgive us? And be steadfastly loving towards us and show us plentiful redemption? Well, I think there's a wonderful encouragement that's slightly hidden in our translations.

If you look at the verses, do you see in each of the three stanzas, Lord is mentioned twice. The first Lord in capitals, the second Lord, capital L, lowercase O-R-D.

Different words for God, right? Lord in capitals, the covenant God, Yahweh, the I am who I am and I will be who I will be. The immutable God who never changes.

And the other Lord, capital L, small O-R-D, Adonai. Literally the sovereign Lord, the unstoppable Lord. The all-powerful God.

Do you see what a potent combination those two are? When God said he's forgiving, he is the God who never changes and cannot be thwarted. So if he says I'm going to forgive, he's going to forgive.

[ 41 : 48 ] He won't change his mind about it and no one can change his mind about it because he's unstoppable. Entrusting yourself to this God, entrusting your sin to this God.

It's sure and certain, hope-filled and wonderful. This God is forgiving to you if you cry to him for mercy.

This God is steadfastly loving to you if you cry to him for mercy. This God's redemption for you is more than enough. You can be absolutely sure.

So even in the depths we can cry to him. Because he's kind and merciful and loving and redeeming. That's the end of Psalm 130.

We're now going to listen to the musicians. Play a rendering of that psalm called I Will Wait For You, recently written by the Gettys. And then we'll finish up in Psalm 131. .

[ 42 : 59 ] . . .

. . Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 45 : 20 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. A P45 slid across the desk, an accident, a disaster, a complication, a pandemic.

What do we sing on these days? Psalm 131 is perfect for those kind of days.

See verse 1, three postures that David rejects. Oh, Lord, my heart is not, I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me.

[ 47 : 06 ] My heart is not asking the why me questions. He's not occupying himself.

He's not occupying himself. It's a mind word. He's not trying to reason it out or bargain with God as a way to escape. Things too marvelous.

Things too marvelous. That marvelous. That marvelous word is always about things that God is in control of and things that God is doing. He rejects these days.

He rejects these ideas when the bad day happens. He is humble. He's remembering his place in the cosmic food chain that he comes a long way below the throne room of heaven.

He's not overstepping his station. This is a king and yet he is a humble king. His eyes are not raised too high.

[ 48 : 28 ] His heart is not lifted up. His mind is not occupied with things above his pay grades. He rejects those three postures, but he adopts one posture.

Verse 2. I have calmed and quieted my soul. Like a weaned child with its mother. A calmed and quieted soul.

Not something that's naturally calm, but something he's preached into himself. I have calmed and quieted my soul. Resting in God and who he is rather than reasoning.

Or trying to rescue himself from the situation. Humble before God. Trusting that he is in control.

Trusting that he knows what he's doing.

Trusting that even in this, he is working out his purposes for my eternal good and his eternal purposes.

[ 49 : 33 ] In this situation and in that situation. And in any and every situation. David, the king, when tragedy strikes, adopts a humility.

Even when his world is collapsing around him. And what's the picture? Like a weaned child with its mother. Aileen and I have a six month old boy called Isaac.

We are just on the cusp of weaning. We think we're feeding him. He thinks he's redecorating our kitchen. But what's the significance of a weaned child?

Well, he's not crying to his mother for sustenance. He's resting in his mother's presence. He knows that it might be difficult surrounding, but if mum is there, I'll be alright.

Similarly, David. This might be horrible. It might be horrendous. Might have completely capsized and altered his life forever.

[ 50 : 45 ] But he remembers who God is. And like a weaned child, he says, God, I trust that you're in this. And if you're there, it'll ultimately be alright.

Resting in God's presence. And trusting that he will see him through. And the only way that's unlocked in his life is through humility.

Not raised up, not lifted high, not occupying himself with things above his pay grade. Again, isn't this the Jesus, the perfect example of this humility?

Who entrusts himself to the one who judges justly, even amidst the most horrible day of the cross.

Submitting to his father's will and trusting him, even as his life ebbs away.

And no wonder David now calls out to all of his people, Oh, Israel, hope in the Lord. From this time forth and forevermore.

[ 51 : 57 ] Isn't that comforting? What is the biggest thing that happens when tragedy strikes while the horizon narrows, doesn't it? And we think this is the end. This is game over. Game over.

This is it. And yet coming humbly before this God. And trusting in his grace and his goodness. With this God, even on the darkest day, there are forever more.

It's a wonderful psalm when tragedy strikes. When tragedy strikes, you don't want a long song.

Three verses will about do it.

And a psalm that if we sing it well, will cause us to have calmed and quieted souls. Resting in God's presence and his goodness and his character. Even when the world seems to be collapsing in.

What a potent medley psalms 129, 130 and 131 are. As we sing hope in affliction. Hope beyond iniquity. Hope.

[ 53 : 04 ] Through humility. Humility. Never forget a guy called Scott who came to our church in Edinburgh. He'd come from a very enthusiastic, vibrant church full of young people.

And then tragedy struck his life and he realized he didn't want to go. And it was too much for him to sing jubilant songs when he felt so bad. I'll never forget speaking to him. He said to me, your people, they're not as excitable.

I was like, alright, you've only just arrived. You don't have to start criticizing. Your people is not as excitable. But at least you give them something to hold on to in the darkness of a night.

I think that's what these three psalms are, aren't they? Songs we can sing. Even on the worst days.

And if we do, they minister hope in affliction. Hope beyond iniquity.

And hope even amidst tragedy. May we sing them often. May we sing them to each other. To encourage our frail and failing hearts.

[ 54 : 11 ] Let's pray. Father God, please give us the grace to sing these great songs even on the worst days. So that we might have your hope.

Ministered. Deep within us. Thank you that because of the sure and certain hope of the gospel, we never need to be silent. That we always have something to sing.

May Jesus Christ continuously be the chorus of each of our lives. And we pray this in his ever sweet and certain name. Amen. Amen.