

Deuteronomy 26:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when we cried unto the LORD God of our fathers, the LORD heard our voice, and looked on our affliction, and our labour, and our oppression:

Analysis

When we cried unto the LORD God of our fathers, the LORD heard our voice—the liturgy emphasizes that deliverance began with Israel's cry (nitzaq, a desperate outcry), not their merit. The doubling of the divine name (YHWH Elohei avoteinu... YHWH) stresses covenant continuity: the God who heard is the same God who made promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Their cry appealed to covenant relationship, not bargaining or negotiation.

The phrase **the LORD heard our voice** (vayyishma YHWH et-qolenu) echoes Exodus 2:24-25: "God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant." Divine "hearing" isn't passive acknowledgment but active intervention—hearing leads to seeing, and seeing to action. The parallel structure—**looked on our affliction, our labour, and our oppression**—uses three terms (oni, amal, lachats) to comprehensively describe their suffering.

This confession teaches that prayer isn't manipulating God but appealing to His revealed character and covenant promises. Israel's cry wasn't sophisticated theology but desperate plea—yet God responded not because their prayer was eloquent but because He is faithful.

Historical Context

Israel's cry occurred during the intensified oppression under Exodus 2:23-25, after Moses fled to Midian but before God called him at the burning bush. The 'groaning' lasted decades before deliverance came, teaching that God's timing differs from human urgency. The exodus generation at Sinai experienced this firsthand; Moses's audience in Deuteronomy 26 heard it from their parents. The liturgical recitation ensures each subsequent generation claims this salvation history as their own.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 – God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. When facing prolonged hardship, do you persist in crying out to God, or do you assume He isn't listening?
2. How does God's covenant faithfulness to past generations assure you of His present commitment to hear your prayers?

Interlinear Text

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ עָלָיו וְשָׁמָעْ בָּקָר
the LORD God of our fathers heard us when we cried to him
H3068 H430 H1 H8085 H3068
And when we cried to him H413 the LORD God of our fathers heard us when we cried to him

למצה

and our oppression

H3906

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 3:9 (Parallel theme): Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

Psalms 50:15 (Parallel theme): And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.

Psalms 119:132 (Parallel theme): Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name.

Jeremiah 33:2 (References Lord): Thus saith the LORD the maker thereof, the LORD that formed it, to establish it; the LORD is his name;

Exodus 4:31 (References Lord): And the people believed: and when they heard that the LORD had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped.

Exodus 6:5 (Parallel theme): And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembered my covenant.

1 Samuel 9:16 (Parallel theme): To morrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel, that he may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines: for I have looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me.
