

Psalms 88:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up: while I suffer thy terrors I am distracted.

Analysis

I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up (עַנִּי אָנִי וְגֹועֵעַ מִנוֹעָר)—"Afflicted" (ani) means poor, humble, oppressed—suffering from the earliest days. "Ready to die" (goveya) suggests expiring, breathing out one's last breath. This is lifelong trauma, not temporary hardship. **While I suffer thy terrors I am distracted** (נִשְׁאָתִי אֶמְיִיכָּא אֲפֹתָה) —The "terrors of God" (emim) are overwhelming fears, perhaps night terrors, panic attacks, or profound dread of divine judgment.

"I am distracted" (afunah) could mean "I am bewildered, dazed, not knowing which way to turn." The cumulative effect of divine terrors is disorientation and confusion. This psychological torment anticipates Christ in Gethsemane, who experienced such anguish that His sweat became like drops of blood (Luke 22:44), and who drank the full cup of the Father's wrath on the cross.

Historical Context

Lifelong affliction was often interpreted in ancient Israel as divine judgment for sin (though Job and this psalm challenge that simplistic theology). The "terrors of God" language appears in Job's complaint (Job 6:4) and reflects the experience of feeling targeted by divine hostility—a reality that Jesus Himself would experience as He bore our sins.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How do you maintain faith when suffering seems to have been your constant companion "from youth up"?
2. What does Christ's experience of divine terror in the garden teach about God's empathy for your own fears and dread?
3. How can you minister to those who are "distracted" or disoriented by prolonged suffering?

Interlinear Text

אָחָת יְהִי	תְּשִׁאָל אֶת־	מִבְּעָרֶת	מִבְּעָרֶת	מִבְּעָרֶת	תְּשִׁאָל אֶת־	אָחָת יְהִי			
I am afflicted	H589	and ready to die	H1478	from my youth	H5290	up while I suffer	H5375	thy terrors	H367
	H6041								

אָגִיטָה:

I am distracted

H6323

Additional Cross-References

Job 6:4 (Parallel theme): For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.

Psalms 73:14 (Parallel theme): For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.

Luke 22:44 (Parallel theme): And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

