

## PSALM 142

*Prayer for Help in Trouble.*

### INTRODUCTION.

- A. From Roy H. Enoch (2-12-97). A Contemplation of David. A Prayer when he was in the cave. "...O Lord...You are my refuge..."
- B. This psalm of David is similar to others when he was in distress, and especially to Psa. 57 which has a similar superscription. It is likely that he was fleeing from Saul as described from 1Sam. 22-27. This seems to be supported by his statement in 142:6 that his persecutors "are stronger than I." In most of David's reign, he was stronger than his enemies, but before becoming king, he was at the mercy of Saul and had to flee.
- C. We shall use the following divisions and headings for the psalm:
  1. "Hear my cry" (142:1-3).
  2. "You are my refuge" (142:4,5).
  3. "Deliver me from my persecutors" (142:6,7).

### THE TEXT.

- 142:1** I cry aloud with my voice to the LORD;  
I make supplication with my voice to the LORD.
- 2** I pour out my complaint before Him;  
I declare my trouble before Him.
- 3** When my spirit was overwhelmed within me,  
You knew my path.  
In the way where I walk  
They have hidden a trap for me.
- 4** Look to the right and see;  
For there is no one who regards me;  
There is no escape for me;  
No one cares for my soul.
- 5** I cried out to You, O LORD;  
I said, "You are my refuge,  
My portion in the land of the living.
- 6** "Give heed to my cry,  
For I am brought very low;  
Deliver me from my persecutors,  
For they are too strong for me.
- 7** "Bring my soul out of prison,  
So that I may give thanks to Your name;  
The righteous will surround me,  
For You will deal bountifully with me."

### COMMENTS.

- A. "Hear My Cry."
  - [v1]** "I cry to the Lord with my voice..." When we speak out loud in our prayers we may express our feelings more forcefully than when we only do so mentally. Coffman notes, "Nothing embarrasses the devil like a loud prayer. The classical example is Bartimaeus' yelling at the top of his voice, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" This sent the Pharisees into a frenzy trying to hush him up, but Jesus loved it, and said, "Bring the man to me" (Mk. 10:47).
  - [v2]** "I pour out my complaint before Him; I declare... my trouble." The synonymous parallelism gives greater force by repetition.
  - [v3]** "When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then You knew my path." There are times when we cannot express our feelings, or needs, but we can be assured that God knows and understands (Rom. 8:26,27).

Since God knows our situations, I suspect that this statement that the Spirit makes our groanings known to God is to give man greater assurance when his faith may be weak. Just as God confirming his promise with an oath should give man more assurance, but God's word is just as immutable as His oath (Heb. 6:17,18).

B. "You are My Refuge."

**[v4]** "Look on my right hand..." The right hand was the place of the advocate who would plea his case for him. "...there is no one who acknowledges me... no one cares for my soul." He felt alone except for God.

**[v5]** "I cried out to You, O Lord... You are my refuge..." We are the strongest when we depend most completely on the Lord by following His instructions exactly. When we feel self-sufficient so that we believe that God will except what we want to do, we are weak.

C. "Deliver Me from My Persecutors."

**[v6]** "Attend to my cry, for I am brought very low... for they are stronger than I." When David was fleeing from Saul in the Wilderness of En Gedi, David had 600 men and Saul had 3,000 (1Sam. 24).

**[v7]** "Bring my soul out of prison..." David was not claiming that his body was in prison, but he felt confined and restricted by those pursuing him.

"...You shall deal bountifully with me." He was confident that God would treat him well regardless of the circumstances.