

PSALM 143

Prayer for Deliverance and Guidance.

INTRODUCTION.

- A. A Psalm of David. "Longing for Mercy in Times of Disappointment."
- B. This psalm of David seems to describe a much later time in his life than Psa. 142. In 143:5 he says, "I remember the days of old..." or the former times when God had blessed him. This seems to indicate that this later in life and he is now receiving consequences for sin. In the last psalm, he did not mention sin or guilt, but was pursued and weary. Here he acknowledges that "in Your sight no one living is righteous" (143:2).
- C. This description fits the rebellion of Absalom when David was more conscious of his own guilt, than when Saul was pursuing him.
- D. The psalm divides naturally into two parts as marked by "Selah" at the end of verse 6:
 1. David gives his complaint (143:1-6).
 2. David's petition for deliverance (143:7-12).

THE TEXT.

- 143:1** Hear my prayer, O LORD,
Give ear to my supplications!
Answer me in Your faithfulness, in Your righteousness!
- 2** And do not enter into judgment with Your servant,
For in Your sight no man living is righteous.
- 3** For the enemy has persecuted my soul;
He has crushed my life to the ground;
He has made me dwell in dark places, like those who have long been dead.
- 4** Therefore my spirit is overwhelmed within me;
My heart is appalled within me.
- 5** I remember the days of old;
I meditate on all Your doings;
I muse on the work of Your hands.
- 6** I stretch out my hands to You;
My soul *longs* for You, as a parched land. Selah.
- 7** Answer me quickly, O LORD, my spirit fails;
Do not hide Your face from me,
Or I will become like those who go down to the pit.
- 8** Let me hear Your lovingkindness in the morning;
For I trust in You;
Teach me the way in which I should walk;
For to You I lift up my soul.
- 9** Deliver me, O LORD, from my enemies;
I take refuge in You.
- 10** Teach me to do Your will,
For You are my God;
Let Your good Spirit lead me on level ground.
- 11** For the sake of Your name, O LORD, revive me.
In Your righteousness bring my soul out of trouble.
- 12** And in Your lovingkindness, cut off my enemies
And destroy all those who afflict my soul,
For I am Your servant.

COMMENTS.

- A. David Gives His Complaint.
[v1] "Hear my prayer, O Lord, give ear to my supplication..." About all of the parallelisms in this psalm are synonymous. He continues to balance the lines with similar terms for emphasis and clarity.

“Your faithfulness... Your righteousness.” He does not make his appeal on the basis of deserving the blessing, but of the nature of God’s mercy.

[v2] “Do not enter into judgment with Your servant...” He does not want what he deserves, but mercy and forgiveness that he might be delivered. The only way anyone can be righteous before God is to be forgiven.

[v3] “For the enemy has persecuted my soul...crushed my life to the ground... made me dwell in darkness like those who have long been dead.” The repetition here intensifies the agony he feels.

[v4] “Therefore my spirit is overwhelmed...my heart... distressed.” This describes the depression of a spirit that has lost hope in himself.

[v5,6] “I remember the days of old... all Your works... I spread out my hands to You...” With no confidence in himself for deliverance, his only hope is in the Lord.

B. David’s Petition for Deliverance.

[v7,8] “Answer me speedily, O Lord; my spirit fails!...cause me to hear Your lovingkindness in the morning...” David seems to feel that if God doesn’t deliver him soon, it will be too late.

[v9-12] “Deliver me... teach me to do Your will.... revive me...” We should realize that the basis of any deliverance from sin is to learn and do God’s will. The basis of the petition is not David’s righteousness, but God’s. “...for You are God; Your Spirit is good... for Your name’s sake! For Your righteousness sake...” Our only hope is in God’s merciful nature and His love and desire to bless us.

[v12] “In Your mercy cut off my enemies, and destroy all those who afflict my soul; FOR I am Your servant.” Our being God’s servant does not earn the blessing of forgiveness and deliverance, but is required to receive it.