

## PSALM 144

### *Prayer for Rescue and Prosperity*

#### INTRODUCTION.

- A. From Roy H. Enoch (2-26-97). A Psalm of David.  
“Thanksgiving for Israel’s Happy and Prosperous Morning”
- B. Coffman gives as a setting for this psalm:  
“This glorious hymn of thanksgiving came upon the realization of David and all Israel that “the morning” he had so earnestly prayed for in the preceding psalm (143:8) had indeed dawned. A united, happy Israel were enjoying great prosperity and peace following the defeat and death of Absalom. Upon the horizon of Israel’s future, there still appeared the external threat of foreign enemies; and the psalmist includes a prayer to God for their defeat (144:5-8).”
- C. It seems foolish for some to try to place this psalm in “post-exilic times” as does the *Interpreter’s Bible*, and other modern sources. There was never a time after the Babylonian captivity that had the exuberant happiness and prosperity pictured in this psalm. It breathes with the style and vocabulary of David, and fits his deliverance from Absalom exactly.
- D. We divide this psalm into three parts:
  1. The Exaltation of the Lord (144:1-4).
  2. A Prayer for the Defeat of Foreign Enemies (144:5-11).
  3. David’s Prayer for All Israel (144:12-15).

#### THE TEXT.

- 144:1** Blessed be the LORD, my rock,  
Who trains my hands for war,  
And my fingers for battle;
- 2** My lovingkindness and my fortress,  
My stronghold and my deliverer,  
My shield and He in whom I take refuge,  
Who subdues my people under me.
- 3** O LORD, what is man, that You take knowledge of him?  
Or the son of man, that You think of him?
- 4** Man is like a mere breath;  
His days are like a passing shadow.
- 5** Bow Your heavens, O LORD, and come down;  
Touch the mountains, that they may smoke.
- 6** Flash forth lightning and scatter them;  
Send out Your arrows and confuse them.
- 7** Stretch forth Your hand from on high;  
Rescue me and deliver me out of great waters,  
Out of the hand of aliens
- 8** Whose mouths speak deceit,  
And whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood.
- 9** I will sing a new song to You, O God;  
Upon a harp of ten strings I will sing praises to You,
- 10** Who gives salvation to kings,  
Who rescues David His servant from the evil sword.
- 11** Rescue me and deliver me out of the hand of aliens,  
Whose mouth speaks deceit  
And whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood.
- 12** Let our sons in their youth be as grown-up plants,  
And our daughters as corner pillars fashioned as for a palace;
- 13** Let our garners be full, furnishing every kind of produce,  
And our flocks bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our fields;
- 14** Let our cattle bear  
Without mishap and without loss,

*Let there be no outcry in our streets!*  
**15** How blessed are the people who are so situated;  
How blessed are the people whose God is the LORD!

## COMMENTS.

- A. The Exaltation of the Lord (144:1-4).  
[v1,2] “Blessed be the Lord my Rock... my lovingkindness... my fortress... my high tower... my deliverer... my shield... refuge.” These are typical terms of David’s exaltation of the Lord.  
After describing WHO God is, David then describes what God DOES for him: “...Who trains my hands for war and my fingers for battle...Who subdues MY people under me.” This last expression seems to clearly identify the deliverance from a rebellion of his own nation. This certainly does not fit any period after the captivity, as they had no king, and there was no general rebellion against their leaders.  
[v3] “Lord, what is man, that you take knowledge of him: Or the son of man that you are mindful of him?” This is almost an exact quotation of David’s Psa. 8:4, which is quoted and applied to Jesus in Heb. 2:6-9.  
[v4] “Man is like a breath; his days are like a passing shadow.” These are two common figures to describe the brevity and frailty of man’s life.
- B. A Prayer for the Defeat of Foreign Enemies (144:5-11).  
[v5] “Bow down Your heavens, O Lord, and come down...” This is accommodative language that pictures God in man’s circumstance of being in a single place. There is also the figure of mountains smoking and lighting flashing as a result of God touching them, which reminds us of Mt. Sinai when God gave the Law to Moses.  
[v7,11] “...rescue me and deliver me...from the hands of foreigners. David had thanked God in v2 for delivering him from his own people. Now he asks God to also deliver him from the hand of foreigners. We do not know exactly whom he had in mind, but in 2Sam. 21:15-22 there is a description of his defeat of Philistine giants, and 2Sam. 22 is a song David wrote after their defeat. That would fit the promise to “sing a new song” mentioned in v9.
- C. David’s Prayer for All Israel (144:12-15).  
[v12] “That our sons may be as plants grown up...” Strong, healthy, mature young plants are appreciated. “...that our daughters may be as pillars, sculptured in palace style...” This image is of the marble pillars in temples and magnificent buildings that are sculptured as ideal women. It is the description of the family that is strong and beautiful.  
[v13,14] Bountiful harvests are pictured with several metaphors. Such prosperity that is added to the peace from enemies just prayed for, would seem to represent the ideal condition of a nation that was blessed by the Lord.  
[v15] “Happy are the people who are in such a state; happy are the people whose God is the Lord.” Many point out that the present tense here seems to indicate that this is Israel’s condition when this is written. The reason for the prosperity and peace is in the last line.