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Psalm 142

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Psalm 142.

Topics.

- When my spirit faints I pour out my complaint and trouble before God.
- There is no one who takes notice of me; no one cares for my soul.
- I am brought low! Deliver me from persecutors too strong for me.
- The righteous will surround me, for God will deal bountifully with me.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

INTRODUCTION

Psalms are songs and prayers offered to God by the nation Israel, they cover the range of human emotion, expressing praise, faith, victory, sorrow, despair, depression, frustration and the troubled heart of a mourner. They contrast the righteous with the wicked, and include the wisdom and the treasure of God's word. Psalms were written at the beginning of the 15th century BC and probably collected in their final form in the 3rd century.

BOOK FIVE (PSALM 107-150)

PSALM 142:1-3

A Maskil of David, when He was in the Cave. A Prayer.

When My Spirit Faints I Pour Out My Trouble Before God.

- **Psalm 142:1-3:** With my voice I cry out to the LORD; with my voice I plead for mercy to the LORD. ²I pour out my complaint before him; I tell my trouble before him. ³When my spirit faints within me, you know my way! In the path where I walk they have hidden a trap for me.

The heading of this Psalm tells us that it refers to that period of history when David was hiding in a cave in the mountains from King Saul and his armies who were hunting him to kill him. At some point King Saul went into a cave to relieve himself and unknown to him David and his men happened to be in the cave. David's men told him to kill Saul, but David said he would not do such a thing against the LORD'S anointed. Instead of killing the king David stealthily cut off a corner of Saul's robe. Saul unaware rose up and left the cave and David showed him the cloth and told him he was not seeking his harm. King Saul replied, "May the LORD judge between me and you and reward you with good for the good you have done to me." Then said, "I know you will be king and that the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hand. (The full story is in 1 Samuel 24).

In the path where I walk, they have hidden a trap for me: (v3) these words of David show that he is, desiring to go a particular way, but king Saul and his armies are plotting evil against him. In verse six he prays that God would, "Deliver him from his persecutors, because they are too strong for him, showing that Saul and his armies are far more powerful than David and his band of men, because of this David is in a

state of deep despair, misery, anguish, gloom and even worse he is filled with a sense of hopelessness. It is interesting to notice even though David knows God is fully aware of his low spiritual and mental condition and his troubling circumstances and that he is not only in a state of despair, misery, anguish and gloom, but also has a sense of hopelessness his faith in God is not dented in any way. This is because the faith of Old Testament believers was not dependent upon their circumstances, but upon the truth that the God they believed in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of Israel is the only true God and as such worthy of all honour and praise regardless of what was happening in their lives good or bad. They saw God as the King of their life and every circumstance, good or bad as being in the hand of God, David, Job and Habakkuk (as did all the faithful of the Old Testament) had this same great faith. Even though Job suffered great affliction his attitude was:

- Though he slays me, yet will I trust in him (Job 13:15).

Habakkuk begins his prayer saying, "Even though his body trembles at the power of the LORD and he feels weak and feeble because of the enemies who are coming to invade his land, he will quietly wait for the day of trouble." He then ends his prayer with the following great words of faith.

- Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, ¹⁸yet I will rejoice in the LORD; I will take joy in the God of my salvation. ¹⁹GOD, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like the deer's; he makes me tread on my high places. (Hab. 3:17-19).

David, Job and Habakkuk made the LORD their fortress and refuge by making him their greatest love, their best thought and the passion of their heart and mind and rested in the knowledge that if everything fails in this life they would be raised to be with the Lord in eternal glory where happiness everlasting dwells and while living in this life rested in the confidence and faith that the Lord was with them by his Spirit, his love and his grace.

A PERSONAL NOTE

I have seen a man born with no legs and no arms, (Nick Vujicic) who to the natural mind would appear a mistake made by God, but this man lived his life before God worshipped him and kept a right attitude as did David, Job and Habakkuk. He is an amazing testimony to the Lord Jesus Christ and went on to become one of the world's greatest motivational speakers. He is an encouragement to hundreds of thousands of people who are suffering their own difficult circumstances. I have heard testimonies of teenage girls who have suffered absolute horror, terror and abuse find the love of God and go on to become the source of comfort to many hurting girls in similar circumstances and help them live a life of mental and emotional freedom and joy. We may not all reach hundreds of people, but if we take the right attitude to difficult circumstance, we can all be an amazing testimony to God and to those who know us. While on this side of eternity no-one is exempt from trouble and difficulty, it is the attitude and who we go through it with that makes the difference. God does not promise freedom from trouble but He does promise comfort, love and strength to cope and grow from it.

PSALM 142:4

There is No One who Takes Notice of Me.

- **Psalm 142:4:** Look to the right and see: there is none who takes notice of me; no refuge remains to me; no one cares for my soul.

David had been anointed to be the King of Israel, it is certain he had great plans and goals for the Kingdom of God, but Saul and his armies are opposing him. David shares his desires, but no one seems to take any notice (at least no one who has power and authority) and because of this he not only feels alone, but also feels that no one cares for him. This is one of the main reasons he feels distressed and mentally and emotionally weak. He sees all the evil king Saul has brought upon God's Kingdom, but instead of being able to change it for good he is fleeing in caves in the mountains. As the reader travels through David's Psalms two things become very clear, firstly that David was far from being a perfect man and he knew it and Secondly that David did care about the well-being of those in his kingdom and hated it when he saw the rich and those who had great authority and power cheating the helpless out of what was rightfully theirs by preventing justice and oppressing the poor for their own personal gain. This is one of the reasons God said of David:

- I have sought out a man after my own heart to be prince over my people. (1 Samuel. 13:14).

Paul after the reading from the Law and the Prophets said:

- God raised up David to be their king, of whom he testified and said, "I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will." ²³Of this man's offspring God has brought to Israel a Saviour, Jesus, as he promised. (Acts 13:22-23).

Imperfect as David was in his own personal life he had a heart of compassion for those in his kingdom and for the helpless and the poor. This is why he feels so depressed and alone he knows the right way to go and the right thing to do for God's people and the Kingdom, but not only is no one listening to his counsel, they are also opposing it.

PSALM 142:5-6

I am Brought Low! Deliver me from Persecutors.

- **Psalm 142:5-6:** I cry to you, O LORD; I say, "You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living." ⁶Attend to my cry, for I am brought very low! Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are too strong for me!

The statement, "God is my refuge and my portion in the land of the living," means God was David's protection, shelter and help in this mortal world. Since most in David's generation died of sicknesses that we survive today because of ambulances, modern medication, skilled doctors and surgeons and hospitals and David faced many battles he (as most were during their generations) was fully aware that his life was fragile, mortal and could be taken at any moment he looks to God as his refuge, meaning he does not trust in man, but trusts in God for his victories in this world, especially against king Saul since he would not go to war against the LORD'S anointed and trusted the LORD for his salvation in the eternal world to come.

PSALM 142:7

The Righteous will Surround Me, for God will be Bountiful with Me.

- **Psalm 142:7:** Bring me out of prison, that I may give thanks to your name! The righteous will surround me, for you will deal bountifully with me.

Hiding in dark caves and mountains David feels mentally trapped by Saul that he feels like he is a man locked up in a prison meaning he cannot find anyway out or see anyway of escaping from Saul and his fearful and powerful armies. There are various times when the faithful feel as David did, trapped in the difficulties and hardships of life, trapped in hurtful emotions and painful memories with no clear way of escaping. It is in

these moments when our back is against the wall that like David, we have no other option, but to make God our only refuge and secret place of spiritual comfort and strength. My own personal experience and testimony upon looking back is that in the moments of deepest hurt and loneliness with no way of escape God by His Spirit comforts in a manner that surpasses understanding or any special expression or formula of prayer that cannot be taught or explained, except to perhaps say that it is as if warm love had been poured into the heart. David's words, "The righteous will surround me, for you will deal bountifully with me," apply to his confidence that God would deliver him from Saul and his armies hunting to kill him and to his faith that a day would come when the people would exalt him to the throne of Israel and all the righteous submit themselves to him as the king of their nation. Sometimes even after Christians have done all they can do, life can still get so far out of their control, their backs are up against a wall, there is no place to go, nothing we can do, and no one who can help. In these moments the only thing to do is do what David and the faithful of old did, turn to the LORD and find refuge in Him. To find peace in these moments' believers yielded to God in prayer and surrendered everything to Him, meaning they accepted the crisis, the circumstance or the situation and then trusted that God is in control of the outcome even when it seemed to appear that He is not. This is what faith is, believing God is in control regardless of how things appear or work out, it is knowing somewhere in all the confusion God has a purpose.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.
