

**PSALMS**

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Psalm 142 as we continue our study through the Word of God. We are told in the introduction to this Psalm that this Psalm is *“A contemplation of David. A prayer when he was in the cave.”* Some feel that this was when David hid out in the cave at En Gedi from King Saul who wanted to kill him. We see this played out in I Samuel 24:1-2 as we are told, **“Now it happened, when Saul had returned from following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, ‘Take note! David is in the Wilderness of En Gedi.’ Then Saul took three thousand chosen men from all Israel, and went to seek David and his men on the Rocks of the Wild Goats.”** That is a possibility.

I think this is more like the time when David hid out from King Saul in the cave of Adullam. Remember that David was a servant to the King, and as Saul’s kingdom was rejected by God for his disobedience, Saul began a downward spiral where at times a distressing or evil spirit would come upon him. And David would come in and play the harp for Saul and his soul was refreshed.

David also slew the Philistine giant, Goliath, and David became known as a military leader. In fact, the people were so impressed with David’s accomplishments that they made a song that was sung throughout the land, it was on the Middle East top-forty! This song went like this, **“Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.”**

You can imagine coming back from this battle against the Philistines and defeating their warrior Goliath, and as they are coming home King Saul is leading the way. And all of a sudden he hears the people singing and what he hears is, **“Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.”** That did not sit well with him as you can imagine. Pride got the better of him and he became angry at David, and that anger grew and he said, **“... ‘They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed only thousands. Now what more can he have but the kingdom?’ So Saul eyed David from that day forward.”** I Samuel 18:8-9.

Saul wanted the praise, he wanted the honor and because he sees his control, his favoritism in the eyes of the people decreasing and David’s increasing, he attempts to kill David by throwing a spear at him, which missed. He then sent soldiers to David’s house, but David escaped before they got there. And for some 10 years or so David is on the run from King Saul, not because David did anything wrong, but Saul was fearful that David would usurp his position as King, and so he tried to hold on to it with all his might!

And David flees from Saul to the city of Nob, which was a city of priests just a short distance Northeast of Jerusalem. There he meets up with Ahimelech, a priest. And David, this great man of faith, lies to this priest. He tells him that he is on a secret mission for the King and needs food and weapons to continue on. And the priest sees no reason not to trust David’s words and he gives him the sword of Goliath and some of the showbread to eat.

Now there was a big problem here because we also see in the city of Nob a man by the name of Doeg, the Edomite. And Doeg overheard all that David had said and reported that news to King Saul. And Saul was not a happy King to say the least and he went to Nob and confronted the priest at what he had done.

And the priest did not have any idea that there was trouble between Saul and David, he was unaware. But Saul is so mad that these words fall on deaf ears and he orders his men to kill all the priests of the city. His men refuse, but standing there was Doeg who was more than happy to kill all 85 priests, women and children. Only one person of the city of Nob escaped, one of Ahimelech's sons, Abiathar. And Abiathar informed David of all that had transpired and he felt responsible for the death of all these people, including the priests of God.

As David continues to flee from Saul he heads down to the Philistine stronghold of Gath, another bad decision on David's part. And while there the people began to recognize David as the one who is killing their people in battle, the one who is being sung about throughout the land. And David figures that his cover is blown and he is in trouble now. So he pretends madness, letting saliva drip down his face and banging himself against the wall, and the King of Gath lets him go. He does not want an insane person in his kingdom!

So David high tails it out of Gath towards the wilderness area by the Dead Sea, to the cave of Adullam. And it is in this barren wilderness where you can still see today thousands of these caves to hide in. It is here that David gathers together his army, these are the ones who are drawn to David and their resumes went like this, “**And everyone who was in distress, everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him. So he became captain over them. And there were about four hundred men with him.**” I Samuel 22:2.

Not the kind of group of soldiers that you want, and yet, these would become David’s mighty men, strong soldiers. How did they get that way? They spent time with David, they developed David’s heart and they became David’s mighty men.

So which cave is it? It doesn’t matter, the thing is that David is hiding in a cave, his life is on the line and out of this we see that Psalms 57 and 142 are written. And keep in mind that there is a lesson that the Lord wants to show us out of all this. What do I mean? Maybe you feel that you are in a cave all closed in. Maybe you feel that things are caving in all around you, your life is a mess! What should you do? As you will see, you need to do as David did, cast all your cares at the feet of the Lord, cry out to Him, tell Him what you are feeling and just pour your heart out to Him. And then, praise Him even before He answers your hearts cry!

It is as David said in Psalm 61:1-4, **“Hear my cry, O God; Attend to my prayer. From the end of the earth I will cry to You, When my heart is overwhelmed; Lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For You have been a shelter for me, A strong tower from the enemy. I will abide in Your tabernacle forever; I will trust in the shelter of Your wings.”** Who are you going to cry out to when your heart is overwhelmed? Who is the one who will be able to answer your hearts cry? It is the Lord! So with that in mind, let’s begin reading in Psalm 142, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word this evening!

### **PSALM 142**

#### **VERSES 1-2**

1. Do not lose sight that David is in distress and if this was the time that he was in the cave of Adullam, then we know his men were in distress also. Remember, **“And everyone who was in distress, everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him. So he became captain over them. And there were about four hundred men with him.”** I Samuel 22:2.

And what does David do in this difficult situation? He cries out to God, David is pouring his heart out to God. Now I realize that many times the things we go through, the caves we find ourselves in are not because of what we have done but because of what others are doing to us. And that is exactly what was happening with David here. He did nothing wrong to King Saul and yet Saul wanted David dead.

The thing we need to remember is that when we find ourselves in these “cave experiences” that we need to cry out to God and for David, his cries were out loud! And please understand he did not cry out loud for God to hear him better, but so that he could hear. Sometimes just speaking out loud ministers more to us than just speaking silently and David did that a lot!

2. The problem for us many times is we keep silent, we tell no one what we are going through, not even God. And what happens when we do that? We become discouraged, we become depressed. We end up losing hope! Make no mistake about it, God wants to hear from you because He can take that downcast spirit and lift it up!

Remember what the Psalmist said in Psalm 42:5, “**Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him For the help of His countenance.**” Our hope is not found in a person or possession, it is found in the living God and thus, we need to bring our requests to Him, we need to cast our cares at His feet because He cares for us!

3. And I don’t care who you are or how spiritual you think you may be, no man is an island, we can’t isolate ourselves from people and we can’t isolate ourselves from God. He is our Rock! A great example of someone we may see as a spiritual giant, and he was, but he too was human and had his weaknesses when he took his eyes off of God, and that man was Elijah. Here was a man who also had a “cave experience.”

Remember the story, it was after he defeated and killed the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah on Mount Carmel in a clear showing of who is the true and living God. He stood strong in the Lord, rested in the Lord and the Lord gave him a great victory.

But that is not the end of the story. You see, the wife of King Ahab, Jezebel, supported these prophets of Baal and when Jezebel heard about what Elijah had done, she was mad. She said, “. . . ‘So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time.’” I Kings 19:2. Make no mistake about it; Jezebel wore the pants in this family! She was a very evil woman and her husband, King Ahab was no saint!

And imagine the high that Elijah was on and then word gets to him that Jezebel wants him dead and she is coming after him! What does this spiritual giant do? Remember, he just defeated and killed the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah on Mount Carmel, 850 false prophets and now one woman is after him. And what he does is mind boggling when you think about it. This spiritual giant runs with his tail between his legs from this woman, Jezebel! Now I know that women can get pretty mad, it can be scary, but really!

And Elijah ends up hiding in a cave, I call this the cave of self-piety and the Lord asks Elijah a very interesting question. He says, “. . . **‘What are you doing here, Elijah?’**” I Kings 19:9. And I do love Elijah’s response because it is something we do many times. He tells the Lord, “. . . **‘I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life.’**” I Kings 19:10.

Does he answer the Lord’s question? No, he is just telling the Lord that he is the only one who loves the Lord, there is no one else and now they want to kill him. It is a pity party, like God was not aware of what was going on! The problem for Elijah and for us many times is we don’t bring it to the Lord we just go into the cave of self-piety and there is nothing good that goes on there, you are not doing anything for the Lord. You are hiding out from life!

You see, that was the answer to the question the Lord gave to Elijah, he was not doing anything in this cave and he needed to get up and he needed to get out! Don’t isolate yourself in a cave of self-pity but pour your heart out to God, and allow Him to direct your steps so that you can continue to be used by Him in the work for His kingdom. It is really when our strength is all gone, when we can do nothing else that our Lord knows exactly what we are going through and He can bring salvation to the situation!



VERSES 3-4

1. Notice what David is going through here. He is overwhelmed by his enemies. When he looked and saw that they were around him he fainted! They had set traps for him, traps that he was not aware of. He thinks he should walk this way and look out, another trap! No one seems to be able to help him. No one seems to care. And when everything looked hopeless, David says, “**Then you knew my path.**”

The reality was that God knew the path that David was going to take all along and He was waiting for David to cry out to Him so that He could show Him where to walk, the path to take! It is as Psalm 16:11 said, “**You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.**” But we must look to Him!

2. Have you ever felt that way? Have you ever felt overwhelmed by a situation and it seems that no matter which way you turn, it gets no better? Please understand that the Lord knows the path that He has for you to walk in and you need to look to Him to guide you. It is as Proverbs 3:5-6 tell us, “**Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.**”

We tend to trust in our own understanding of situations instead of trusting in the Lord. It is like this story shows us. We are told,

A brochure put out several years ago by the Durham, N. C., County Public Library explained the use of the card catalogue, acknowledging that this can be mystifying at times. The brochure told of one patron who, upon reading “See Main Entry” on a catalogue card, went out to the front steps of the library.

- Durham, N.C. Herald

We laugh at that but the reality is, that is us! We go by our own understanding and we are standing there and God is saying, “Look to Me, I am that Main Entry to the path you are to take.” You see, He wants to direct our paths but we need to acknowledge Him or we need to come to Him, look to Him so He can guide us. That is what Psalm 32:8-9 tells us, **“I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye. Do not be like the horse or like the mule, Which have no understanding, Which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, Else they will not come near you.”**

And yes, there are times that God leads us and we think that this path is the most ridiculous way to go and yet, it is the way we need to go. That is why we need to be sensitive to His leading, not trust our own understanding of a situation, but acknowledge Him, look to Him and He will direct your steps because He knows the path you are to take!

VERSES 5-7

1. David rightly understands that there is no help, no refuge for him to run to on the human level. But he also understood he could run to; take refuge in the Lord because He is the One who will be able to help him no matter what he is going through! Was David at the end of his rope you might say? I think so and yet He knows that the Lord is with him and that he will praise the Lord for the salvation that He will bring to this situation that he is in!

2. And keep in mind that David has been on the run from King Saul, and maybe he was not literally in prison, but it felt like it and he gives it to the Lord to deliver him. Matthew Lawrence sums it up like this for us. He wrote,

As if he should say, O Lord, I confess I am a poor prisoner to sin and Satan, I would fain be set at liberty to believe thy word, and to do thy will; but, alas, I cannot. I find many a door fast shut upon me in this prison, and many a lock upon the doors, many lets and impediments which I am never able to remove; and therefore, gracious Lord, do that for me, which neither I myself nor all the friends I can make are ever able to do for me; pay the debts of thy poor prisoner in my blessed Surety, and set open the prison doors: *“Bring my soul out of prison, O Lord, that I may praise thy name!”*

- Matthew Lawrence, *The Use and Practice of Faith*, 1657

God wants to deliver us but we need to bring our requests before Him and let Him guide our path! And not only will praise come forth from our lips, but others will see the work of God and they too will praise Him!

**PSALM 143**

David is very transparent, he let's us know what he was going through and what he was feeling in the Psalms and because of that we can learn lessons for our own lives. He had struggles just as we do and here in Psalm 143 we see David deal with another trial in his life. Now we are not sure which one this is speaking of and again, I don't think that is the issue. The main issue through this all is the lessons that God is teaching us, things we can apply to our own lives, the things that David learned as he was going through this difficult time. And we will see that David is asking God to teach him the ways he should go, to lead him down the right path as he is going through this tough situation. And I am sure we all want that for our own lives as we are going through difficult times.

**VERSES 1-2**

1. This was most likely written later on in David's life, after his sin with Bathsheba. The reason I say that is that early on in his life he went before God in his own goodness, but after his sin with Bathsheba he realized that he was not righteous and all he could do is come before God asking for God's mercy to be poured out upon his life. And so we see David coming to the Lord not on the basis of his own righteousness, but upon the Lord's faithfulness, the Lord's righteousness. That is how we are to come before the Lord, we don't deserve anything and if you do come before Him in your self-righteousness, it is not going to be good. He answers our hearts cry because of His grace and mercy that He extends to us and never because of our righteousness!

2. I think that is a hard concept for many people to understand. They think of themselves as being good but David makes a very important point, that no one living is righteous; there are none who are good! And thus, it is right for our righteous God to defend His defenseless servants, not because we are good, but because He is good!

#### VERSES 3-4

1. Look at what David was going through. He was persecuted by his enemies. He felt like his life was being crushed by his enemies. He feels like he is walking in darkness because of what they have done to his life. In fact, he feels like the walking dead! And he is just overwhelmed, he is distressed. Have you ever felt that way? I am sure you have, we all have at one time or another and maybe some of you are feeling that way right now. What can we do about it? Let's read on and see!

#### VERSES 5-6

1. I want you to notice here all that David is doing because of the condition that he is in. He is overwhelmed, he is in distress and because of that He is remembering "the good old days"? Well, yes and no. We tend to look at the so-called "good old days" as the best times of our life and the reality is, we make them out to be better than they really were.

That is not what David is doing here. He is remembering the past and how God has delivered him to give him strength in this present situation that he was facing. He remembered how God delivered him before and he believed by faith that God could do the same in his present situation. Something that we should do! For David and the lesson for us, **“I remember the days of old”** May we not forget what God has done in our lives!

2. David does not stop there. He says, **“I meditate on all Your works.”** David is speaking of meditating upon the things that God has done. Why did he do that? He did that so that he would get a better perspective of things. If God can deal with the entire universe down to the smallest atom, then He can deal with my life! As we mediate on the things of God, how powerful He is, it does give us assurance that He can handle our problems!

3. He then tells us that **“I muse on the work of Your hands.”** Now when we think of this word **“muse”** we tend to see it mean ponder or think over but in the Hebrew it can also mean to speak of, to let others know. I think that is a wonderful thing to do because as you talk about God, as you speak of His power and the things that He has done in your life, it not only blesses those who are listening, but it also encourages you!

4. Then David says, **“I spread out my hands to You.”** That is speaking of praise and worship and that will flow as you meditate and speak of the things of God. As you focus on Him it gives you a correct perspective of things and praise and worship will follow.

And lastly, David says, “**My soul longs for You like a thirsty land.**” Look at the picture that David is painting for us here. I lived in Arizona for about 3 or 4 years right after High School and in the desert, when it rains the ground drinks up that water. That is what David is saying here. Do you long for God like that? Do you soak Him into your life?

Now it is also true that after a while the desert can turn into a raging river and it is powerful, how does that fit in? Very simply, as you fill yourself up with the Lord, as you are taking Him into your life, then out of your life will flow rivers of living water that will impact all those you come in contact with!

5. So the solution to the problem of being persecuted, crushed, in darkness, like the walking dead, overwhelmed and in distress is that we need to **REMEMBER** what God has done in the past. We need to **MEDITATE** on all his works. We need to **MUSE** or let others know of what God has done. We need to **SPREAD OUT OUR HANDS** or praise and worship the Lord. And we need to **HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER GOD** and He will fill our lives, He will lift us up!

VERSES 7-8

1. I am sure we have all felt this way before, “Lord help me now! Answer me speedily!” And there is nothing wrong with that. The thing we have to remember is God will answer in His timing and thus, we need to be able to rest in Him, trust in Him as David was doing! And David’s cry is that the Lord would continue to speak to Him and comfort Him until He does answer his hearts cry. There really is no one that is going to be able to help like the Lord, thus, trust in Him and wait upon Him!

VERSES 9-10

1. Here is something that David prayed and I think we need to be in prayer about. David said in the midst of his enemies coming against him, “**Teach me to do Your will.**” Why is that important? Because in situations when we are under stress, when things have heated up, we blow our top and let people have it. David wants God to be in control of his life and not be out of control! He wants to be lead by the Spirit of God and not by his own flesh, which will be ugly if he goes down that path and he knows it. Do you know it? You should, you have had many examples in your life of boiling over and blowing up. May we do as David did, “*Lord, teach me to do Your will!*”

VERSES 11-12

1. David is asking God to awaken him, refresh him. How is that done? By being attached to the giver of life and allowing His Word to refresh us. In Psalm 119 we are told, “**This is my comfort in my affliction, For Your word has given me life. . . . I will never forget Your precepts, For by them You have given me life.**” Psalm 119:50, 93.



Now let me ask you this. When you are in situations like this, do you really feel like reading the Word of God, do you really feeling like praying? Be honest! Probably not and we tend to sit around, think about all the wrong in our life, the mess we are in, and we get depressed, discouraged and that is where the enemy wants you. He wants you all alone, he does not want you coming to the Lord, reading the Word of God and yet, that is where our help comes from!

2. I like the way that David concludes this Psalm. He says, “**I am your servant.**” What does that mean? It means that the Lord was his Master and he had surrendered his life to the Lord and no matter what came his way, he was going to trust the Lord. We are bondslaves of Christ; we have freely given our lives to Him. Thus, if He is our Master then we need to obey Him. We need to trust in Him because He has what is best for our lives. And so, may we be able to daily say, “*Lord, teach me to do Your will!*” The battle is going to continue on until we go to be with the Lord, thus, may we learn to rest in Him and walk in His ways and not ours!

### **PSALM 144**

Psalm 144 is another Psalm of David that looks at man compared to God and what God does through man. It is a Psalm that puts things into perspective and some of it comes out of Psalm 18. So let's see what David has to say as we study through Psalm 144.

VERSES 1-2

1. David starts out by speaking of the Lord being a Rock, a stable force in his life, someone that he can place his feet upon and not be moved. And he says that it is the Lord who prepares him for battle, equips him to fight the enemy.

God does the same with us. We do not necessarily fight a physical enemy, but there is a spiritual battle going on as Paul said in Ephesians 6:10-13, **“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”**

2. David also looks at the Lord and sees Him full of love, a place for safety, one who delivers, a shield of protection in which we can take refuge. We need to remember that especially when we are going through those battles in life!

VERSES 3-8

1. David is comparing man to God and there is no comparison. He is wondering how an all powerful God can even care about man since he is nothing, his life is here one day and gone the next. And yet God loves us. How do we know that? Because God intervenes in our lives, He delivers us from our enemies, He takes care of us!

And make no mistake about it, God is all powerful. Some 33 years ago or so, after Julie and I were first married; we went camping in the mountains out in Arizona, where we lived. And one evening we sat on the mountainside and off in the distance was this fierce thunderstorm with tremendous lighting shooting across the sky. Well, before too long we went to bed and that storm that was in the distance was now upon us and we were in a little pup tent and I thought we were going to get blown away. The power of that storm, and yet, that is nothing compared to God. We need to have that perspective! God is all powerful!

2. David compares the Words of God, the faithfulness of God to the vain or empty words of man. We think we are so strong, so powerful and yet, we are nothing compared to God. And please understand that when the world fights against us, against those who love the Lord, they are fighting against the Lord and they will not prevail!

#### VERSES 9-14

1. David is looking forward to a day that we long for. He is longing for a day when the enemies of God, who are our enemies, will be gone. He is longing for the day when there will be plenty of food. He is longing for the day that evil will be gone. He is longing for the day when there are no more wars, no crimes, no people crying out because what has been done to them.

Yes, we long for that day but it will not come until the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ returns to set up His Kingdom on the earth and He will rule and reign from Jerusalem as King! We see this Isaiah 2:4, which says, **“He shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore.”** We will also see creation itself restored to the time before sin entered the world. Things will be lush and the animals will not be carnivorous. What do you think people will be like when that happens? We don’t have to guess, look at verse 15!

#### VERSE 15

1. This will be a time when happiness, joy will fill our lives. But let me ask you this, what state are you in right now? And please don’t say Wisconsin! In Habakkuk 3:17-18 we are told, **“Though the fig tree may not blossom, Nor fruit be on the vines; Though the labor of the olive may fail, And the fields yield no food; Though the flock may be cut off from the fold, And there be no herd in the stalls - Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.”**

You see, the secret to happiness, to joy is not in material prosperity. Look at the guy in Illinois that won the million dollar lottery and then was found dead the next day. At first they thought he died of natural causes and then they found he died of cyanide poisoning. And they are looking into a family connection in his death, go figure! Material things can be taken away, but the Lord can never be taken away. And so, if we are focused on the Lord, if we can rest in Him, no matter what comes our way, we will have that joy of the Lord in our lives here and now!

### **PSALM 145**

Psalm 145 is titled, “*A Praise of David*” and of course, this praise is unto the Lord. Let’s see what David has to say.

#### **VERSES 1-2**

1. Make no mistake about it, David was a man of praise. David loved worshipping God as you can see by the number of Psalms he wrote. And here in Psalm 145 David is extolling the praises of God, the greatness of God!

In Isaiah 61:1-3 we are told, **“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, Because the Lord has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.”**

This is what the Lord has come to do and one of the things that I believe David is speaking of here is **“The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness”** In other words, if you are feeling the spirit of heaviness in your life, if you are feeling down, then wrap yourself in praise, fill yourself up with thanksgiving unto the Lord and that spirit of heaviness will be lifted from your life!

### VERSES 3-7

1. God’s grace and mercy is rich and it is deep. And our responsibility is to pass the truths of God found in the Word of God to the next generation. If we don’t then that next generation will have a distorted view of God, and in the days we are living in, many have no idea who God is. And take a good look at what people hear when you speak of God. Take a good look at what your children or family hear when you speak of God. Do they hear you moan and complain about God or do they hear you praise the Lord for all He has done? David is praising God and declaring the goodness of God to those around him and so should we!

VERSES 8-9

1. David is speaking of the grace, the mercy, the patience of God and how thankful we should be. Let me share this with you.

According to a traditional Hebrew story, Abraham was sitting outside his tent one evening when he saw an old man, weary from age and journey, coming toward him.

Abraham rushed out, greeted him, and then invited him into his tent. There he washed the old man's feet and gave him food and drink.

The old man immediately began eating without saying any prayer or blessing. So Abraham asked him, "Don't you worship God?"

The old traveler replied, "I worship fire only and reverence no other god."

When he heard this, Abraham became incensed, grabbed the old man by the shoulders, and threw him out his tent into the cold night air.

When the old man had departed, God called to his friend Abraham and asked where the stranger was. Abraham replied, "I forced him out because he did not worship you."

God answered, "I have suffered him these eighty years although he dishonors me. Could you not endure him one night?"

- Thomas Lindberg

I don't know about you, but that hit me hard. When I think about how patient, how longsuffering God is towards me and yet, I am not towards others. One more point regarding this idea of the patience of God. We are told,

The purposes of God often develop slowly because His grand designs are never hurried. The great New England preacher Phillips Brooks was noted for his poise and quiet manner. At times, however, even he suffered moments of frustration and irritability. One day a friend saw him feverishly pacing the floor like a caged lion. “What’s the trouble, Mr. Brooks?” he asked.

“The trouble is that I’m in a hurry, but God isn’t!” Haven’t we felt the same way many times?

Some of the greatest missionaries of history devotedly spread the seed of God’s Word and yet had to wait long periods before seeing the fruit of their efforts. William Carey, for example, labored 7 years before the first Hindu convert was brought to Christ in Burma, and Adoniram Judson toiled 7 years before his faithful preaching was rewarded. In western Africa, it was 14 years before one convert was received into the Christian church. In New Zealand, it took 9 years; and in Tahiti, it was 16 years before the first harvest of souls began.

Thomas a Kempis described that kind of patience in these words: “He deserves not the name of patient who is only willing to suffer as much as he thinks proper, and for whom he pleases. The truly patient man asks (nothing) from whom he suffers, (whether) his superior, his equal, or his inferior. . . . But from whomever, or how much, or how often wrong is done to him, he accepts it all as from the hand of God, and counts it gain!”

- Our Daily Bread



Lord, help us to be more patient, to have that compassion and longsuffering towards others as you have towards us!

#### VERSES 10-13

1. The best way you can witness of God is to tell people what He has done in your life. How He changed you. Paul said in II Corinthians 3:2-3, **“You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.”** In other words, we are living epistles to those around us of who God is and what He has done in us and through us. Thus, we need to make known what things God has done, is doing and will do in our lives!

#### VERSES 14-16

1. I like this. It does not say that God is going to walk away from those who fall. It does not say that He will push down and keep down those who are low. What it does say is that God will hold us up, put us back on our feet when we have fallen. It does say that God will raise up those who are low. In other words, God will take care of the down trodden, the broken and lift them up. He will also bring down the proud. And God takes care of all of His creation! That is our God!

VERSES 17-21

1. Here is a key that many like to leave out. It says that, “**The LORD is near to all who call upon Him, To all who call upon Him in truth.**” Do you see the key to all this. It is not just calling upon the Lord but it is calling upon Him in *TRUTH!* There are a lot of people who can speak of Jesus and yet they refuse to come to Him by the truth of His Word. Instead they believe the lie because they have rejected the love of the truth!

Make no mistake about it, the Devil loves to use truth mixed with lies to deceive people. You may have heard this story about the Devil. One day the Devil was walking along with one of his cohorts. They saw a man ahead of them pick up something shiny.

“What did he find?” asked the cohort.

“A piece of the truth,” the Devil replied.

“Doesn’t it bother you that he found a piece of the truth?” asked the cohort.

“No,” said the Devil, “I will see to it that he makes a religion out of it!”

We need the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and yet, how many have edited the Scriptures to make them say what they want them to say instead of taking the whole counsel of God! We need the whole truth folk’s, it doesn’t matter if you like it or not, it is the truth and a half truth is just a lie!

2. Notice how David opened up this Psalm. He said, “**I will extol You, my God, O King; And I will bless Your name forever and ever.**” Psalm 145:1. He started out with praise unto God. Now, notice how he finished this Psalm, “**My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord, And all flesh shall bless His holy name Forever and ever.**” Psalm 145:21. Not only is David going to praise the Lord, put all flesh shall praise Him forever!

It is as Paul said in Philippians 2:10-11, **“that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”**

In other words Paul is saying that you will either bow your knee willingly, out of love for Him as you submit your life to Jesus now or you will be compelled to bow your knee before Him if you reject Him now. You see, what you believe or don't believe about Jesus doesn't change who He is and because He is King of kings and Lord of lords, all will bow before Him in reverence!

And as you look at heaven it is filled with the worship of God and thus, may we join in now and worship the King of kings and Lord of lords for all He has done in our life, all He is doing in our life, and all that He will do in our life. David said that he is going to praise the Lord and thus, all flesh should join in! ***PRAISE THE LORD!***