



Psalms 43-45

Psalms 43-45
Tape # 7180
By Chuck Smith

Psalm forty-three.

JUDGE me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation: O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man (43:1).

David here again is calling out for righteous judgement from God. That God would plead his righteous cause against an ungodly nation. It is sad to see a nation come under the influence of evil. It seems like the voice of evil cry loud. It seems like the forces of evil often times triumphs over good.

I think of the evil causes that are espoused by the ACLU and how they stand for just about everything that I am against. If a school district decides to establish some kind of a moral standard to help the children develop some kind of morality the ACLU steps in and threatens the school district and cows them into relenting from any kind of a program that might embrace some form of morality. It seems like those that are involved in litigation in the ACLU are determined to destroy anything that is pure, holy or good. In the name of freedom they have brought our nation into the worst kind of bondage and slavery, the bondage to the flesh. Yet it seems like they triumph in almost every court case as they present their liberal causes to the liberal judges. The legislature is not really the law making body of our nation always but many times it is the interpretation of the courts that establishes the law of land rather than the legislative processes. David is facing that kind of a situation, he's asking God to work and plead his case against this ungodly nation. Lord, you take up the cause.

For you are the God of my strength: (43:2).

David declares. He recognizes his own weakness, he is relying upon the strength of the Lord. That is an extremely important thing for us, to recognize our limitations and our weaknesses in order that we might put our trust in God. He is our strength. Then David asks a question.

why dost thou cast me off? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? (43:2).

God why aren't you working? Why don't you defeat these forces? Lord, why is it that it seems like the righteous cause is suffer and the ungodly cause is prosper? Why Lord you cast me off? Why am I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; (43:3).

A tremendous prayer of David here. As we sang this evening, "Send out thy light and truth. Let them lead me Lord that I might walk in God's light, that I might walk in his truth". He wants God to lead him to the holy hill, to the tabernacle of God.

let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles (43:3).

Lead them to the house of God, the place of God. The tabernacle, in the Old Testament, was called the tent of meeting. It was the place where the people gathered to meet God. This is a building of meeting. We gather here to meet God. There are those who call this the house of God. I sort of object to that term in that this is no more the house of God than anyplace else. God dwells and fills the universe.

I think that is wrong for us in our minds to seek to localize God as to a place. It is a part of our innate idolatry I think to sort of hold in reverence a place or spot where at one time God met me there in a

wonderful way. If you have such a place, you have a special feeling towards that place because of some experience that you have with God there and you find yourself going back to that place, it's sort of a sad commentary on your current spiritual condition. It means that you lost that consciousness of God, that sense of his presence that you once had and you're trying to recapture it by going back to that place where God moved in your life on a particular occasion.

Yes God dwells here but God dwells outside, in your home, in the universe and sometimes we think that as we come in now we have to act differently. I can't laugh because I'm in the house of God and I have to change my behavior because I suddenly come into the presence of God. That's not good. I need to realize that as I go out of here I am in the presence of God, as I'm driving home I'm in the presence of God. "Where can I flee from thy presence O Lord? If I ascend into heaven thou art there, if I descend into hell thou art there, if I take the wings of the morning and flee to the uttermost parts of sea even there you encircle me, you surround me. We need to have the consciousness of the presence of God whenever and wherever we are and not in one place more than in another. Living in the conscience presence of God is so vital to our holiness and to our Christian walk. The place where we meet God, the place where we gather to worship God.

Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: (43:4).

I love this way by which David expresses God he is David's exceeding joy. A joy of David's life, that relationship with God.

yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O god my God. Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted with me? (43:4-5).

In the modern language you would say, "Why am I so depressed? Why am I filled with such anxiety?" We are depressed often when we feel trapped. We are under pressure. Living in this society there are pressures of many sorts in a personal relationship, financial pressures, spiritual pressures. When we are in a situation where we are overwhelmed, we can't see any way out, we are uncomfortable with what's going on but we can't see any changes or any possibility for changes, it leads to depression, it leads to anxiety.

To David it seemed like God wasn't working. He was mourning because of his enemies who were oppressing him. It seemed like God wasn't answering his prayer, that God had forgotten him, had cast him off. Thus he was cast down, he was depressed and he was filled with anxiety. David, talking to himself and asking himself the question, "Why are you cast down? Why are you disquieted?" he gave to himself the solution.

hope in God: (43:5).

The reason why I am depressed and cast down is I lost sight of God. God has been removed out of the equation. I am trying to figure out the answer apart from God, I'm trying to find the solution, and I haven't put God in the equation and thus I am trying with my strength, with my ability, to somehow cope with this situation. It's beyond me, I can't do it. Therefore I get depressed, I get upset, I get filled with anxiety. The answer to that is to come back and put God in, factor God into the equation; "Hope thou in God". When you put God back into the situation then suddenly it's not impossible anymore. Suddenly you see the solution. "Hope thou in God" and your soul quieted, you're encouraged, you're strengthened because you know that God is on the throne and that God is going to take care of it. As God is factored in, as David said what happens?

for I shall yet praise him, (43:5).

The moment I factored God into the situation. I know now that I am going to come out victorious and I'm going to come out praising God. I don't know yet how he's going to do it, I don't know how he's going to work, I don't know what solution he is going to bring to the situation but I know that he is. I know that it's going to be good and I know that it's going to be rejoicing my soul and I shall yet praise him. So factor God

in and it turns your depression into praise. Turn your fear into hope, “hope thou in God for I shall yet praise him”.

who is the health of my countenance, and my God (43:5).

Psalm forty-four begins the first eight verses with the declarations of the things that they have heard about God as far as their national history is concerned. Through the years, from parent to child, the stories of God’s power and God’s deliverance for the people of Israel have been rehearsed. The parents sharing with their children how God worked, how he brought their fathers out of Egypt, how they came through the wilderness after wandering there for forty years, how he drove the enemies out of the land and they gave them the land as a possession and how he had defeated their enemies. They have heard the glory of the eternal God in gathering the nation and in giving birth to the Nation of Israel. So the first eight verses deal with the history of God’s working, as they have heard it, and the confidence that it inspires. Then beginning with verse nine he takes a nose dive. Let’s look at it.

WE have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their days, in the times of old (44:1).

How God has worked in the past. The glorious revivals in the past. The way the spirit of God in the past. We have heard about these things.

How thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand, and plantedst them; how thou didst afflict the people, and cast them out (44:2).

We heard Lord how our fathers came into possession as you went before them driving out the heathens.

For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save the: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of the countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them (44:3).

We’ve heard about this Lord. It wasn’t by their strength, not by their power but Lord, your hand brought them into this place. You favored them.

Thou art my King, O god: (44:4).

I’ve heard about you and thus I make you my king.

command deliverances for Jacob (44:4).

That is the tribes of Jacob.

Through thee will we push down our enemies: through thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us. For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me. But thou hast saved us from our enemies, and hast put them to shame that hated us. In God we boast all the day long and praise thy name for ever (44:5-8).

Man, it sounds like this guy can’t be defeated. He’s on top, he’s heard how God has blessed and thus you’re going to be my God and I’m going to trust in you and your deliverance. I am not going to trust in my bow or spear but Lord, I’m just going to trust in you because you will deliver. Now David takes a nose dive.

But thou hast cast off, and put us to shame; and goest not forth with our armies. Thou makest us to turn back from the enemy: and they which hate us spoil for themselves. Thou hast given us sheep appointed for meat; and hast scattered us among the heathen. Thou sellest thy people for nought, and dost not increase thy wealth by their price. Thou makest us a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and a derision to them that are round about us. Thou makes us a byword among the heather, a shaking of the head among the people (44:7-14).

They were going through hard times. They have heard how God had helped them in the past, how God was with them and gave them the land, driving out the enemies, it wasn’t by their strength it was by the hand

of the Lord. We are going to trust you Lord. But Lord, how come? When we placed our trust in you you've cast us off and put us to shame. You don't go with us as we face our enemies.

One of the problems that we have in our relationship with God, one of the major problems, is somehow I have the concept that because I serve God that God should somehow then be my servant, that by the fact that I am seeking to please God by serving him that he should do the things that I want done. We think that prayer is a device established by God whereby I can see my will accomplished on this earth.

Somehow, somehow we got things twisted where we have lost the concept of the sovereignty of God. God is not under any obligation to fill my will. In fact, in his wisdom, he so often goes against my will. I have in my mind a way I feel God should be working in this situation because I've been thinking over it, I've worried about it and I've finally figured out a plan. So I present my plan to God. This is the best way to go because I thought of every angle. So I present this plan to God saying, "Here's what I want you to do" and I start laying out this complicated solution that I have conjured in my head and I'm wanting God now to get working on it because I have it all scheduled out for him.

As I look back over my life, those things that I thought I needed, those things that I wanted so desperately, those things that I prayed so earnestly for and yet never got an answer. Well I did get an answer but I didn't like the answer I got. I didn't want him to say no, I wanted him to say yes. Where it would appear to me that God wasn't coming through. Now from the vantage of hindsight, as I look back, how I thank God that he said no to a lot of my prayers. I think of the mess that I would be in today had God answered my prayers.

The purpose of prayer is not getting my will done, it is getting God's will done. The purpose of my serving God isn't that God might become my servant but that I might be his servant to do those things that he desires. Thus it is me yielding to God's will and to what he wants rather than insisting that God does what I want. That's where I get into trouble, I start getting insistent. I start demanding and then I start threatening. Happened an awful lot. Like the little Catholic boy who said, "Lord if you will give me that new bicycle I'll put the holy mother up on my nightstand where I come into the bedroom" and he prayed and prayed but no bicycle came. He said, "If you'll just give me a new bicycle I'll pray to the holy mother every night". Still no bicycle. He finally took the statue and held it up like he was going to throw it down and said, "Do you want to see your mother again?" I think of how I have threatened God "If you don't come through, you no I'm walking" and yet learning to trust God.

There is no difficulty in trusting God when he is doing things the way I think he ought. Is that really trust? You see trust really begins when God is working in the way that I don't understand. It's like Habakkuk when he was complaining to God over the conditions of the nation they were deteriorating rapidly and the he had insights to what was going on. He, in his position as a prophet, was privy to a lot of the inner workings of the government. He saw things deteriorating and going from bad to worse and he finally said, "Lord, please I would just as soon you not let me anything else. Don't show me anything else. I can't handle it Lord because the whole thing is deteriorating, going down the tubes and you're not doing anything to stop it. I can't handle it God. I can't handle seeing these things going down and you just standing aloof" So the Lord said to Habakkuk, "Habakkuk I am doing something and if I told you what I was doing it would make your ears tingle because this is what I am doing. I am going to bring the Babylonians and their army and they are going to come against this city and they are going to destroy it and carry away the people away captive. They will be my instruments to bring judgement upon these evil people". That really shook Habakkuk. He said, "Lord just a minute. That's not fair. I mean we are bad that's true but those Babylonians, they are the worst. Why would you use a nation that is even more evil to bring judgement against us?"

It would be like us praying about our situation here in the United States. The abortion issues and all these other issues and we say, "God I don't want to hear anything, I don't want to know anything. It's horrible what is happening and yet you are doing nothing Lord". The Lord says, "Hey I am doing something. I'm preparing Russia and they are coming with a nuclear attack. They are going to be coming and wipe this place out". "Lord! They are atheists you know". That's much the situation that Habakkuk was facing.

He said, "I will just go into my tower and I will wait to see what the Lord will do". I will watch. The Lord came to him and said, "The just shall live by faith". So Habakkuk prayed and said, "Lord I cried to you out of reason of the problems that I saw and you assured me that you were working. I don't understand what you are doing but Lord just keep doing it". That's trust. You told me that you were working, you told me what you are going to do, I don't understand it but Lord please just keep working. Keep alive your work, "revive thy work and in the midst remember mercy". Basically he's saying Lord I don't understand it but you go ahead and keep doing it but don't forget to be merciful Lord, don't forget mercy.

Trust is saying Lord I know you are working I don't understand what you are doing but you keep doing it. That's real trust. When you don't understand but saying I don't understand it and I can't tell you what God's doing but he's working.

David could not understand. If God delivered their fathers, if God brought them into the land and drove out the enemy and we put now our trust in God, why has God allowed the enemy to make a spoil of us? Why has he scattered the people among the heathens? Why has he sold them into slavery? Why are they a reproach to their neighbors, thy byword among the heathen and a shaking of the head of the people? He confesses that he's confused.

My confusion is continually before me, and the shame of my face hath covered me (44:15).

I bow my head in shame, I'm confused and I can't understand.

For the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth; by reason of the enemy and avenger. All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant. Our heart is not turned back neither have our steps declined from thy way; Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death. If we have forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a strange god, Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart. (44:16-21).

If we've really done something wrong shouldn't God reveal it to us. He knows what's going on, he knows the secrets of our hearts.

Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter. Awake, (44:22-23).

I don't know that I would talk to God this way.

Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord? arise, cast us not off for ever. Wherefore [why] hidest thou thy face, and forgettest our affliction and our oppression? For our soul is bowed down to the dust: our belly cleaveth unto the earth. Arise for our help, and redeem us for thy mercies' sake (44:23-26).

Interesting psalm in that it starts out with such confidence and ends in such a dilemma. Again Paul picked up this phrase "we are killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter" (44:22) to use it to describe the experiences that the early church was going through. It is interesting the context in which Paul uses it. It's there in Romans chapter eight where he's talking the glorious position of the believer in Christ where he asked those questions; "If God is before us, who can be against us?" Romans 8:31.

"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? God has justified us. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ who has died, yea rather, that is risen again, even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril or sword? Nay, in all these things we

are more than conquerors through him that loved us.(Romans 8:33-35,37)
As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter, we are more than conquerors. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor any other creature, shall be able to separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:36-39).

He is talking about that glorious place of being so secure in the love of God in Christ and yet persecution, tribulation, peril “as it is written for thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are counted as sheep for the slaughter” (Romans 8:36). The Christians went through heavy persecution, they love God. It was because of their love for God that they were persecuted. It was because of their faith in Jesus Christ that they were placed on the racks, that they were fed to the lions and that they were burned at the stake.

God has not promised us a bed of roses in this life. He’s promised us the glorious eternal life with him in his kingdom. Walking the committed life is not the popular walk. It’s not going to make you the “hail fellow” to the worldly crowd. It’s going to be unpopular and it’s going to take real courage to live a committed life for Jesus Christ. You’re not going to understand the things that transpire, you must trust and just commit yourself to him.

I love this forty-fifth psalm. I’m glad to get out of forty-four.

MY heart is inditing a good matter: (45:1).

Good to let your heart indite good matters. I don’t like to dwell on the negative. I’d rather my heart would muse over good things.

I speak of the things which I have made touching the king [Jesus]: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer (45:1).

I’m ready to declare these things concerning the king. Then he begins to describe Jesus.

Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever. Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible [awesome] things. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king’s enemies; whereby the people fall under thee. Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right [righteous] sceptre (45:2-6).

Now here is the description of Jesus Christ. In the New Testament, the book of Hebrews chapter one, in showing the superiority of Christ over angels. The writer of the book of Hebrews said, “For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee?” (Hebrews 1:5) or again “Thy throne, O God is forever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre (45:6). The author of the book of Hebrews points out that God calls Jesus God here in the Psalms, as God is speaking of him, inspired through the prophets, God himself calls him God. “Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever” (45:6).

There are those who following the Aryan heresy of the early church seek to deny the deity of Jesus Christ. Both Jehovah Witnesses and Mormons teach that Christ was a created being. The Jehovah Witnesses declare that he was Michael the Arch Angel and the Mormons suggest that that is a possibility. They deny really the fact that he is God an yet here, inspired by the spirit, in the description of him he is called God, “Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre” (45:6).

Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. All thy garments small of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad. Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of O'phir. Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him (45:7-11).

I love that. It is interesting how that we have such a false concept of true beauty. We look at a mirror and say, "I'm so ugly". It is interesting that we get magnifying mirrors to magnify the pores and we look at ourselves magnified and it magnifies the flaws. It seems like my attention is always drawn to the flaws. We measure beauty by appearance. In reality, some of the most physically beautiful people in the world are some of the ugliest in the world. They've learned to get by on their looks and they never developed any character, no depth.

When the Lord talks about beauty he's not talking about physical attractiveness or beauty. He's talking about that inward beauty of the spirit, that's the beauty desires in our lives "So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty" (45:11). That inward beauty that is created by the spirit of God and by my yielding to the spirit of God so that my responses and my reactions are tempered by God's spirits, that inner beauty of holiness.

Isn't it a shame that people spend so much money trying to make the outward physical parts of their bodies beautiful and yet they neglect the inward true beauty. They don't seek to develop it at all. Spend as much time in prayer as you do in aerobics, the beauty that would come forth in your life. So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty for he is your Lord, worship him (45:6).

And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour. The king's daughter is all glorious within: (45:12-13).

You see that's where it is. It's the inner beauty, the inner glory.

her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall be brought: they shall enter into the king's palace. Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth. I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: therefore shall the people praise thee forever and ever (45:13-17).

Glorious psalm. It's difficult of interpretation because surely we have allegories within the psalm, the king's daughters, the queen in the gold of O'phir, the daughter of Tyre and the virgins. It is difficult to make the applications in an allegorical sense to who these are referring to. I love this so much, the description of the king. His ivory palace, his glory and his righteous reign. Then the king's daughter and his desire of her beauty.

I really planned the morning message, I've been working on it all week, out of this passage here. Having spoke last week of how God thinks of you all the time, I thought I'd follow it up this week with how God desires you. As I tried to put it together I realized that I was stretching without biblical base. In other words, it is allegorical and I was making an application but the application was questionable. Rather than making a questionable application, as I started into it I thought I just can't do that, can't pull it together, I really had no spiritual base and rather than making a spiritual allegory or application the spirit drove me over to Psalms forty-three and the message that we gave this morning from forty-three. This is where I was meditating and musing all week. There's something there to be enjoyed and drawn out but I was unable to do it. I lacked a strong biblical base for doing it and because it was a question in my mind, I just sort of let that go. So you read it and it's open for interpretation.

As you'll discover, I really don't like when teaching the scripture to interpret. I like the scripture to interpret itself and if I can't interpret the scripture with a scripture then I will leave it and allow you to draw from it what you wish. I don't want to be guilty of teaching something for which I do not have a solid biblical base. I can see certain applications that are thrilling but I can't assure you that they are biblical applications. I will read it myself and thrilled as I believe it could be and you do the same. This one I have been meditating on all week and I've really been enjoying it. I suggest you meditate on it too and let the spirit speak to you out of this forty-fifth psalms.

Next week we'll begin with forty-six as we continue our journey through the Bible.

May the good hand of the Lord be upon your hand this week to guide you according His purpose, His will. May you be conscience of His presence and that you be filled until your life overflows with His love. May you be His instrument in bringing that love to someone else. May it be a wonderful week of fellowship with God as you grow in His knowledge and understanding of His love and grace towards you. Thus may you be strengthened in your walk and in your relationship with Him. In Jesus name.