



[Psalms 142-144](#)

Psalm 142-144
Tape #7215
By Chuck Smith

As we look at the 142nd Psalm, this was again one of those times in David's life when he was facing great distress. His life was on the line. Saul was pursuing him, bent upon killing him. And David was fleeing for his life. And there were those who were against David, Doeg, who informed Saul of how the priest had helped David when he was in need. The Ziphites came to Saul and said, well, David is down here in the wilderness. Thus David was faced with those enemies who were informing Saul of his moves. And David really was despairing of his life. He said, I know one day, Saul is going to kill me! He had really just figured he had run as far as he could, but ultimately, you can't escape forever, was David's feeling. And I know one day he is going to get me. He is going to kill me. But as he was fleeing from Saul, he would hide in the caves that were in that wilderness area.

When you go down into that area of the Dead Sea, all along the Dead Sea, there are high cliffs. And there are multitudes of caves in these cliffs. As you are driving along the shoreline of the Dead Sea, looking up, you can see so many caves, up there in the cliffs. And thus they were a place of shelter. And also they were a place in which one could hide. And so David hid in the cave. And it is thought that this was the cave of Adullam, that you'll read about as David was fleeing from Saul and hiding in the cave.

So the Psalm is entitled: *Maschil of David*; (A prayer of David.) *A Prayer when he was in the cave*. It's instructions of David, a prayer offered when he was in the cave.

I cried unto the LORD with my voice; with my voice unto the LORD did I make my supplication. In the Hebrew, it is, I cried aloud unto the Lord, with my voice. With my voice did I make my supplication. Now, there are some people, who when they pray, pray rather loudly. As though God was hard of hearing. There are others when they pray, they pray very soft, so that it is hard to agree with them because you don't know what they're saying. They might be praying for God to wipe you out. You might be saying, Amen, and you can't hear them, you know. So it's hard to say, yes and Amen!

There are other times when it is just a prayer that arises from our hearts to the Lord. Now the volume has nothing to do, as far as God hearing and answering my prayer. Many times it has a lot to do with me. When I am really desperate, I'm excited, things are really in a desperate condition, sometimes in my emotion and desperation, I get a little louder. But not for God's benefit, it's always for my benefit. There are many times when my prayer is not even uttered, as far as verbalized. It's just in my mind and in my heart. I just offer up a prayer unto the Lord. A lot of times when I'm in a, you know, one of those kind of situations that you get yourself caught in every once of while. Traffic jam, traffic is just parked there and all. I'll just sit there and pray. I figure, well, you know, don't waste the time. Spend it beneficially! So I will just sit there in traffic and pray. I don't pray real loud at that time. People would think you're crazy, you know, if you're praying real loudly. So I don't even move my lips, because I don't want people to look over and think, you're crazy, talking to yourself, you know. So, I just pray in my heart to the Lord in those times.

David is in the cave. He is crying out to the Lord, making his supplication, his request. ²*I poured out my complaint before him; I shewed before him my trouble.* Now again, we oftentimes look at prayer as sharing time, information time. I spell out my problem to the Lord. I articulate my difficulties, as though God didn't know. And again, it's really not for God's benefit, that I articulate the situation. It's for my benefit. You know, it's amazing when you articulate something, it becomes so much clearer to you! You begin to see things more clearly when you articulate them. So the purpose of articulating to God, your trouble, isn't that God might know the trouble you're in, because God knows all about you! He knows every problem you're facing. And thus it really isn't for God's benefit, I articulate my problem. It for my benefit so I can really come to a better understanding of just what I am facing. And sometimes it gets rather terrifying when begin to articulate it. My, I didn't realize it was that bad! You know, this is desperate!

What are we going to do, Lord, you know? So I've poured out my complaint. I just open up my heart. I just share and this is what prayer is all about, it's just sharing your heart with God. It's being brutally honest with the Lord. It's just opening up your heart and just sharing those things that are troubling you. The problems that you are facing, the doubts that you have, the difficulties that are facing you. And it's just opening your heart and baring your heart to the Lord. Your fears, your anxiety, your concern—just pouring out your complaints. And telling Him your troubles.

³*When my spirit was overwhelmed within me*, Now, David speaks about this in Psalm 143, his spirit being overwhelmed. These are those times in life when it's more than you can handle. You've done your best. It's not good enough. You're still short. It's one of those things where you don't know where to turn now. You've done everything you know to do and it's still not happening. And so my spirit becomes overwhelmed.

When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, *then thou knewest my path*. Then you knew my path. I told You my troubles, but Lord, You knew all about it.

In the way wherein I walked have they privily (privately) *laid a snare for me*. He talking now, about probably the Ziphites, who had just reported to Saul, David is down here in the wilderness of Ziph. And they were laying a trap for David, trying to catch him.

⁴*I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know* (help) *me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul*. David felt very much alone in this. He did have four hundred men, who were outlaws. Guy, that were running from the law, running from trouble. And they gathered around David, just a rag tag band of fellows. Saul had thousands of those with him from Israel. People will go with the winner, as the rule. And it looked like there was no way David could win. And so in order to gain Saul's favor, they were turning against David. And he felt that. He felt very alone. He felt there was no one that really taking his part. These guys that were with him, were just there because they were in trouble and they were escaping from the law themselves. David really didn't have that much confidence in them.

Refuge failed me. No man cared for my soul. ⁵*I cried unto thee, O LORD: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living*. No help from man. So I look to the Lord! No refuge in man. They are trying to lay a trap for me. They say, oh come on in. We'll protect you, David, and then they say, send to Saul, we've got him! You know Saul had a reward out on David's head. They were all trying to get it! So they were trying to lay the trap. So there was no place to hide. No refuge, but Lord, You are my refuge.

⁶*Attend unto my cry; for I am brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I*. And so David's prayer, his cry to the Lord. He was down at the bottom. But he's praying that God will deliver him, because he realized the forces he faced were stronger than he was. David in another Psalm, said, when my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock that is higher than I. How wonderful it is when faced with situations that we're not able to handle, we acknowledge that this is too much for me, I can't handle this. How wonderful it is to be able to just cry out to the Lord. And know that He is able to bring me victory over forces and powers that are greater than I.

⁷*Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: the righteous shall compass me about; for thou shalt deal bountifully with me*. Now notice how that David had prayed and things were still looking, he was still in the cave and Saul was still after him. But yet having prayed, he now has that confidence that God is going to answer. And so often we are encouraged and strengthened through prayer. There are so many times when I am faced with desperate situations and my heart is in turmoil. My spirit is overwhelmed. And I take it to the Lord in prayer. And I articulate it to the Lord, the problems that I'm facing. The things that I'm disturbed about. And as I lay them out before the Lord, even as I am praying, the Spirit of God ministers to me. So that by the time I am through with my prayer, I have victory! God is going to take care of it! I just have that assurance that the Lord is going to work it out. And the fears are gone, the anxiety is gone. I end up, most of the time, just rejoicing because even in prayer, I experience the help and God's victory!

Several years ago, when we had built the little church on the next corner. And it proved to be entirely inadequate for God was wanting to do. We were setting up the chairs in the patio. The place was just

packed. People were parked clear back to the freeway and up to the LA Times building and all. God was just working in such a marvelous way. We knew that winter was coming and we were going to have to get larger facilities. It was at that time it was suggested that this ten acres, here, was for sale. We had basically a bunch of hippies. And there were a lot of them to be sure, but it's hard to buy expensive property with the offerings that hippies can give. Things were going great. There was enough money coming in that, you know, we were paying all of the bills and things were going well.

A fellow in our church, Ed Riddle, who was on the church board and a realtor here. He and a group of fellows had purchased this ten acres. They had planned to turn it. They had purchased it for \$356,000. They had planned to just turn the thing and make a profit on it. They held it for five years and paid the taxes and paid the interest on this amount to the lady that they had purchased it from. And after five years, they hadn't sold it and there was the due date on the note. They couldn't handle the due date. And so they were going to just turn the property back over to her. And Ed said to me, you know, I think the church ought to have that property. Well, you know, almost one half a million dollars! And by the time you put in the street improvements, it would be over a half a million. And you know, I thought that there is no way, you know that you do that. It would be nice, of course. But, you know, it's such a big piece of property too. Who would need ten acres? So I just would smile and say, yes, that would be nice, wouldn't it? But, I didn't do anything because I just figured that there was nothing that we could do.

So Ed said, you know, I really believe that Lord wants us to have that. I said, well, Ed, you know you realtors with all your money can't buy it. How in the world can the church buy it, you know? Well he said, I just feel somehow that the Lord had us tie that up just so He could have it for the church. And if the church had it, then I don't mind losing the money I've got in it, you know. I just say, well, praise the Lord! The Lord got it! And we just held it for the Lord's purposes.

So, our need was getting desperate, more and more of the people were coming. So one of the fellows said, Chuck, I think that the lady would take \$300,000 for that property because she is desperate. They've been paying the taxes. And now that she's foreclosing, they haven't paid the taxes. The taxes are overdue. She doesn't have any money. And I really think that she would accept the \$300,000 cash offer on that property. I said there's no way she would accept \$300,000. No way! That 's valuable property! He said, would you give me the permission to offer her \$300,000 cash in the name of the church. I said, well, sure. Why not, you know? And so he called me up. He said, she's accepted the offer! I said, great, now what have you done? You know where are we going to get \$300,000? He said, well, it's such a valuable piece of property, he said, (he was on the church board at the time), we have \$60,000 in the bank. I'll loan you \$90,000 interest free for a year. That's half of it. I'm sure the savings and loan will give you half of it on a land loan for two years.

So we went to the savings and loan. They said sure, they would go interest only for two years, then the balloon at the end of the two years. He loaned us the \$90,000. We put in our \$60,000 and we bought it. But then you've got, you know, all of the money to put in the parking lot, to put in the street improvements, sidewalks and the whole thing. So I would be going home. I would drive up to the signal over there, waiting for the left arrow to turn. I would look over and see this huge field. And I would think, what's wrong with you, Smith? You've got a growing church, but you don't know how long it's going to last. And you've got money in the bank and all, you're obligating those people. That's going to cost well over a million dollars to get developed and all, over there. What are you doing to those people? What if you bankrupt the church? What if you get over your head and you can't pay the bills? What are you going to do, then? Great thing! You sell the church out from under the people. And then you go bankrupt and they have no place to go. And you're going to look great, you know!

I'd already sold one church out from under this congregation. We started out on the little church on Church Street, down in Costa Mesa, the only church on Church Street. So evidently Church Street was named after the church that we were in. And we thought we had a deal on some property. The city fathers of Costa Mesa, said, yes, it looks good, or the planning department did, at our plan. So, we were all excited. We put the church up for sale. It sold the first week! Then the city fathers turned us down on the place where we wanted to build. So here we were facing, you know, having to turn the thing over at the close of

escrow, a growing little congregation at time. We had grown to about a hundred. And we had no place to go. I thought, oh man! They are going wonder who they got here as a pastor! You know, sell the church right out from underneath them. And now no place to meet and all. But God took care of that.

But now we've got a thousand people or so. And selling the church out from under the people. You've got a big old vacant lot over here. What are you going to do you know? What if you can't make the payments? What if? What if? What if? And I would get so discouraged there. You know, man, maybe I could run and find a South Sea island someplace, you know. Just get lost. I would be so worked up. I'd be so worried! Just sitting there at the corner, waiting for the green arrow. I did a lot of sweating over there on that corner. Your hands get sweaty you know, and clammy. What if things go bankrupt? What will you do? How are you going to face the people? And I'd pray, Lord, you know! Help! What if we go bankrupt, Lord? What if, you know, we can't make the payments? What if?

I would start laying it out before the Lord and the Lord would speak to me and say. Whose church is it? I would say, well, it's your church Lord! He said, why then are you worried about it? If it's My church, it's My worry. Why should you worry about it? I don't know! Why should I worry? There's no reason to worry! Lord, if You go bankrupt. You've got a problem! Not me, you know! And sitting there at the corner, I would go this whole gamut of emotions, from despair and despondency to real victory! By the time the arrow would turn green, Lord, you've got a lot back there. I don't know how You are going to pay for it, but you know.

And so often in prayer, during prayer, the Spirit of God ministers to your heart. It brings assurance. It brings comfort. That's really what prayer is about! It's a meeting together with God, laying out your complaints, laying out your burdens, telling God your feelings. And then letting God speak to you, and Minister to you, the strength, the comfort of His Spirit. The assurance that God is going to take care of it. So that prayer then ends in confidence and in victory.

So this prayer of David, he was still in the cave. Saul was still looking for him. And the Ziphites were still ratting on him. And Doeg was still after him, but he said, the righteous shall surround me for you will deal bountifully with me! Lord, you are going to take care of it. The wicked aren't going to overwhelm me. I'm going to be surrounded, Lord, by the righteous, because Lord, You will deal bountifully! So that assurance that comes in prayer. And you will notice that in so many of David's prayers, the last verse, though he goes, you know takes the dive down into the bottom—to the pit—the last verse is often a verse of confidence! God, You are going to take care of it! Lord, you know, You are going to come through!

143:1 A Psalm of David. The 143rd Psalm is another prayer of David. David had a life that was filled with problems and troubles. Thus David was a man of prayer. It's amazing how difficulties and problems can sort of drive people to their knees.

Don McClure, who pastors our Calvary Chapel in Redlands, speaks of his mother as being a very Godly, praying woman. In fact, she's in charge of our women's intercessory prayer group here at the church. And teaches the ladies concerning intercessory prayer. And Don seeks to take credit for his mother being such a woman of prayer! He said that he was the one that drove her to her knees, all the years that he was growing up! So he goes around boasting how that he made his mother such a spiritual, Godly, praying woman.

David had all kinds of problems, and thus, was driven so many times to pray. He was a man of prayer! And he begins the 143rd Psalm by asking God, *Hear my prayer, O LORD, give ear to my supplications: in thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness.* To give ear to his supplications and in God's faithfulness, answer him, and in God's righteousness.

2 And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified. He says, well Lord, I don't want judgment because if You would judge, then no one could stand before You. He's really asking for mercy. And prayers never, well, I guess there are times when we pray for justice, in a situation, but most generally for ourselves, we are asking for mercy. David is saying Lord, I don't want really to enter into judgment in this situation. I don't want You to enter into judgment with your servant, because I know that in Your sight, that no man, no living man can be justified.

The story is told how that Napoleon was riding down in a parade down the streets there in France, and a young girl came rushing out of the crowd that was watching the parade. When he came to that area, she

came rushing out, up to his horse. She began to cry, mercy Sire, mercy! Mercy for my father! He said, who is your father? And she named her father. He said, your father is a traitor to France, he deserves to die! She said, I didn't say justice, Sire. I said mercy!

And just to say, we deserve to die, but by the mercy of God, we have eternal life through Jesus Christ! So Lord, we're not really asking that You would enter into judgment with me, because I know that no living man could stand before Your judgment, but Lord, I desire Your mercy.

³*For the enemy hath persecuted my soul;* Again, in the previous chapter, David's enemies were the cause of his seeking the Lord. And so we find it again, the enemies persecuting him.

he hath smitten my life down to the ground; David, again, is at the bottom. David surely went through the wide gamut and spectrum of emotions. I suppose he must have been sort of a sanguine. He just, you know, I mean he could hit the peaks in praise and in glory, in celebration, dancing before the Lord, the excitement, I mean, just really at the top. But then also, he could go way down to the bottom. I mean, you know, just like the bottom has fallen out. And Lord, it's smitten my life down to the ground.

he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead. That darkness that comes when all hope is gone. Now, there is that phrase, while there is life, there is hope. In fact, David sort of used that at one time. When he had had this illicit relationship with Bathsheba and she became pregnant as a result. When the baby was born and David had gone over and tried to cover his sin. He had Bathsheba's husband put to death in battle. He had sent him to battle in such a way, that he surely would be killed. Then David took Bathsheba as his wife and as far as the people around Jerusalem, they were none the wiser. They just figured that David was a very magnanimous person. Here's one of his soldiers who got killed in battle, his wife was pregnant, so just being gracious, wonderful David married. Isn't that a marvelous thing for the king? Not really knowing the whole story.

So David, when the child was born, the child became very sick. And David for days lay with his face in the dirt, weeping and crying before God to spare the child. And God did not spare the child. God took the child. And the servants were standing around. And when the word came to them that the child was dead. Here's David lying with his face in the dirt, weeping and wailing before God, and the child was now dead. And they said, what shall we do, you know? My, if we tell him the child is dead, he's going to, ooh, you know. You really! He's wailing, you know. Who's going to tell him? How shall we tell him? And David heard the guys whispering and he realized something was up. He could feel it. He said, is the child okay? They said, David, your child died. And David stood up and he said, well, I'll get a bath. He said, have dinner ready. Man, what's wrong with you? You know, while, how come—this dramatic change? He said, well, as long as the child was alive, I'd hoped that maybe God would be merciful and heal the child. Now that the child is gone, I can not bring it back. I shall go to be where he is. But I can't bring him back to me. And thus there is nothing more I can do. As long as the child was alive, he had hoped. He had hoped, you see. But death brings that end to hope.

When Jesus was crucified and on the road to Emmaus, He joined with the two disciples that were walking along. He said, what's wrong with you guys? You like, you know, death warmed over. What happened? They said, are You a stranger around here? You don't the things that have been going on in Jerusalem the last few days? He said, what things? What are you talking about? Oh, how Jesus of Nazareth, a man who went around doing good—a marvelous man. We had hoped in Him for the salvation of Israel. Death ends the hope.

So David is talking about that hopelessness that happens at death. I was in that darkness of hopelessness. As those who had been long dead.

⁴*Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me;* The enemies were pressing him. His spirit was just overwhelmed. I don't know what to do.

my heart within me is desolate. It's just empty! There's nothing left inside.

⁵*I remember the days of old;* I remember how God has worked in the past. And that's always good! To reflect on what God has done, because the past blessings of God are prophecies of the future. If God has worked in the past, He has not brought me here to just leave me perish at this point. The Lord will perfect that which concerns me.

So I remember the days of old; *I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands.* I look around and I can see the work of God in my life. I can see how God had His hand upon my life. I can see in those situations that were so dark and I didn't know how I was ever going to get out of it. But I see how God provided! I see how God came through! I see how God met the need! And I just meditate on these things. God has been faithful. God has brought me this far.

Therefore, ⁶*I stretch forth my hands unto thee:* A form of prayer. Tonight we sang several songs that said, I will lift up my hands unto Thy name. And this was a cultural kind of thing, I suppose. And yet, the Bible tells us we should lift up holy hand unto the Lord. The lifting of hands is a sign of supplication, also, a sign of surrender. It's one of those things of just lifting up your hands in supplications to the Lord.

my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land. Selah. As the deer panted for the water brook, David said, so panteth my heart after Thee, oh, God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God. And here again, my soul, Lord, just thirst after thee. How true this is! Not only of David, but of every man. Every man has a thirst deep within for a relationship with God. Man basically is incomplete when his spirit is dead. Man is not a total being until the spirit is alive. And sin is spiritual death. Sin brings about spiritual death.

God said to Adam, in the day that you sin, or eat, which was the sin, you will surely die! It brings spiritual death. And thus, you has He made alive who were dead in your trespasses and sins. You were two-thirds of a person. You were body and consciousness, but your spirit was dead. And thus you were functioning on an animal level, a body conscious level. It was not until you received Jesus Christ, and your spirit came alive, that you became then, a total person. Now, the body has its thirst, the physical thirst of the body. The emotions have their thirst. The thirst for love, the thirst for security, the need to be needed, but the spirit also has its thirst. My soul thirsteth for God. And way down deep in every man, there is that thirsting after God. Jesus said, if any man thirsts, talking about the spiritual thirst, let him come to unto Me and drink. For he that drinks of the water that I give, as the Scripture says, out of his innermost being there will flow rivers of living water. My soul thirsteth after God.

So now the petitions. This is the background to the prayer. Now the petitions of David are, first of all:

⁷*Hear me speedily, O LORD:* How many times has David prayed, Lord, make no tarrying, you know? Hurry up, Lord! If you would pray before you got into such a desperate situation. It probably wouldn't be so that I would have to pray, Lord, right now! It's too bad that we wait so long before we pray about a situation. We wait until it's absolutely desperate and hopeless, then we pray. And thus as we pray, usually it's at that point where we need help immediately.

Hear me, speedily, O Lord, for *my spirit faileth:* I'm just wiped out, Lord! I have no reserve left. I am empty.

hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit. Lord, if You hide Your face from me, I'm through! I've had it! I'm dead!

⁸*Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning;* Lord, let me hear Your words of comfort, Your words of assurance, in the morning. There is that Scripture that says that crying endureth for the night, but joy cometh in the morning. It seems like when a person is very, very ill, it's the night hours that are the hardest. If they can just make it through tonight, you know,...tomorrow! With the dawning of a new day seems to be no hope, and new strength. So Lord, let me hear your lovingkindness in the morning.

for in thee do I trust: There's no place else to turn. My trust is in God.

cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for (because) I lift up my soul unto thee. I'm turning to You, Lord, for guidance, for direction for my life.

⁹*Deliver me, O LORD, from mine enemies:* Those who have persecuted me and have driven me down to the ground.

For I flee unto thee to hide me. So he gives the petition and then he states his position in relationship to it.

Hear me speedily, O Lord, because my spirit is feeling.

Hide not Thy face from me. That's petition. And the circumstance is, lest I be like those who go down to the pit.

Cause me to hear Your lovingkindness in the morning. That's the petition. And here's the circumstance.

For in Thee do I trust. Lord, I'm trusting in You. I'm looking to you.

Cause me to know the way in where I should walk. Because Lord, I'm lifting my soul to You.

Deliver me, O Lord, from my enemies because I'm fleeing to You to hide me! You are going to be my place of refuge and defense.

¹⁰*Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God:* You are my God. I am surrendering my life to be mastered, to be controlled. Therefore, O Lord, teach me to do Your will.

thy spirit is good; That's why I find it easy to submit myself to God. You know, they say that God is sovereign. God rules. That the purposes of God are established and set. They don't alter or change. God's purposes stand. And who can resist Him? And so what God is going to do, He is going to do! What God wants to do for my life, He can do! I mean who am I to resist God? God is sovereign. He knows all about me. He knows all about my life. He knows the end from the beginning. And I am like a piece of clay on a potter's wheel. And my life and the shape of my future is completely in the hands of God. He can make out of me anything He wants. He can make of me a vase to hold beautiful flowers or He can make of me a spittoon. I mean He can do what He wants with me. And I don't have any power to say anything about it, that awesome, sovereign power of God over a person's life. And that would be absolutely terrifying to me to think that I really don't have any say-so, concerning my destiny, my future, as far as that goes, God is sovereign and God rules! This is looking at the one side of the coin. As I told you there is another side of the coin, that's the human responsibility. But looking at the sovereignty side of the coin, it's rather awesome! Very awesome! In fact it scares me, except, as David said, Thou are good! And God loves me! And so because God is good and God loves me, I can say, okay, God, You do want You want in my life. I can surrender to God. I can surrender to the purpose and plan of God for me, though I don't know what it is. I can surrender to it because I know that God is good. I know that God loves me and His plan for me is good. And therefore, teach me to do Thy will, for You are God. You are sovereign. But Thy Spirit is good! Because of that I can surrender!

lead me into the land of uprightness. Lord, lead me to the right life. I don't want to be crooked. I want to be upright. I want to be honest and forthright in the things that I do. Lord, lead me into that forthrightness.

And ¹¹*Quicken me, O LORD, Make me alive, O Lord, to the things of the Spirit.*

for thy name's sake: for thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble. Now, notice David isn't saying for my sake, Lord, but because I have committed myself to You, my life is in Your hands for Thy righteousness' sake. Because God is a righteous judge. And if I commit myself completely to Him, He will do what is right. If I'm surrendered and yielded to Him, what He does will be right, so Lord, for Thy righteousness' sake, bring my soul out of the trouble.

¹²*And of thy mercy cut off mine enemies,* And so David again gets back to those enemies. They've been persecuting him. They've driven him into the ground. He prays for deliverance in verse nine, from these enemies.

And now, he prays God, cut off my enemies *and destroy all them that afflict my soul: for I am thy servant.* Because I'm Your servant, Lord, take care of me! Protect me! And be my protection. And you know the glorious thing is, if you are a servant of God, He will protect you! He will take care of you! No weapon that is formed against you will prosper. This is the heritage of the children of the Lord. If you are a servant of the Lord, God's going to watch over you. God's going to protect you. You don't have to worry. Lord, take of my enemies because I'm Your servant.

^{144:1}*A Psalm of David.* Psalm 144, another Psalm of David. It begins with blessings.

Blessed be the LORD my strength, which teacheth my hands to war, Wait a minute! You mean God teaches David how to fight?

and my fingers to fight: ²*My goodness,* (That is, he is referring to God. God is my goodness.)

and my fortress; my high tower, and my deliverer; my shield, and he in whom I trust; who subdueth my

people under me. And so David sees God as that place of total and complete protection. God is a sanctuary for His people. The fortress, the high tower, my shield, the One in whom I trust!

³*LORD, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him!* Have you ever wondered that? Just who am I that God would take any thoughts concerning me or God would have knowledge of me?

When I was a small boy, I grew up in the beach city of Ventura. We didn't live that far from the beach. I loved surf fishing. And quite often in the evening, I'd get my pole. I'd get on my bike and I'd go down to the beach. I'd catch some soft-shelled sand crabs and do some surf fishing. And after I would fish I would often times just sit there on the beach and I'd be all alone. There on the beach, I would watch the sunset. As I would sit there just watching the beauty of the sunset, by myself, the long stretch of beach totally empty, the Kildees running back and forth with the waves, the sea-gulls and the whole thing. I would look out over that vast expanse of ocean, the Pacific, as the sun was setting. And I would think about the sun, that ball of fire, 93,000,000 miles away. I would think about this earth, this little, small, planet, some 8,000 miles in diameter, some 93,000,000 from the sun, orbiting around the sun, and I would watch as the stars would begin to appear. And I would think about the other planets in our solar system and about the stars and the possible solar systems around the other stars. And I would be totally, totally, overwhelmed with the vastness of God! Thinking of how vast He is! The Creator of the universe.

And sitting alone on the beach, I would think of how really nothing I was. Not many people knew me. My mom knew I was down at the beach, and my dad. They knew that I had this habit. They knew I would be home soon because hunger would bring me home. But they knew my love, in fact they had helped create and instill that love for nature in my heart and life. I mean they were just that kind of parents. They loved outdoors. They loved nature. They taught us to appreciate it and love it. And they never worried about me.

I would think, that ocean is so vast! Here I am, this beach in Ventura, is just such small part of that whole ocean. And I think how big the ocean was, how big the earth was, and yet really how small, in comparison to the universe! And then I'd think how big God was to create the universe! And then I'd think of me, sitting there all by myself, you know, with these sea gulls and the other birds around. And here I am, and how nothing I am! Who am I that God should be thinking about me? What is man that God should take knowledge of him? And that used to always just be to me such an awesome thought—that here I am, just nothing, a speck on dust on this little planet earth. And yet God has knowledge of me! The God who controls and governs the universe, has knowledge of me! He takes thought of me! And that always, always, just amazed me, and still does!

or the son of man, that thou makest account of him! ⁴*Man is like to vanity:* Or the son of man that You would take any account of him, because man is like nothing—emptiness.

his days are as a shadow that passeth away. Your time here is just for a moment—like a shadow of a sundial, the shadow that passes away. An hour that passes by. And so as the Scripture says, what is life? It's just a vapor. It appears for a season and then vanishes. It's like grass. It grows up today, but tomorrow, it's cast in the oven. It dies. And the cycles of life, they are so short! And yet God places such value and such importance upon me and upon you! He takes account of you. He thinks about you. He has knowledge of you.

And so David prays, ⁵*Bow thy heavens, O LORD, and come down: touch the mountains, and they shall smoke.* Lord, bring me close to You. Let me see Your power!

⁶*Cast forth lightning, (He's singing about his enemies.) and scatter them: shoot out thine arrows, and destroy them.* He sees the lightning as God's arrows. I like that! It's a beautiful picture of speech, it's sharp. God, You know, set Your arrows, Your lightning—the arrows, oh man, who can dodge it you know? God's arrows—I love that! Lord, you know, scatter them! Cast forth Your lightning.

⁷*Send thine hand from above; rid me, and deliver me out of great waters, from the hand of strange children (aliens);* This was probably written at a time when David was fighting against maybe the Philistines or the Edomites, or the Ammonites or those other strange children, the aliens that surrounded them. So he's asking for God's help. Lord, You've taught me to war. You've taught my hands to fight. You are my strength. You are my defense. You are my high tower. Lord, I'm really nothing, but yet, You

think about me. You have knowledge of me. And yet, I'm just like nothing. My days are like a shadow that passes, but Lord, bring me close to You! Send Your hand from above.

These aliens, ⁸*Whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood.* Now even then, they had the practice of "raise your right hand and swear". And so these guys would raise their right hand and they would swear, but they would be lying through their teeth, you know. I swear the truth. I swear to God, man, it's true, you know. They would be lying through their teeth. And so their right hand is the right hand of falsehood.

⁹*I will sing a new song unto thee, O God: upon a psaltery and an instrument of ten strings will I sing praises unto thee.* The psalteries were a string type of harp, instrument. And David, of course, played upon the psaltery. He played the harp—skillfully, actually. It was a stringed instrument with ten strings. And I will use it to accompany the psalms. The minstrels would sing, accompanying themselves on these harps, the ten stringed harps. So I will sing praises unto Thee.

For, ¹⁰*It is he (The Lord) that giveth salvation unto kings: who delivereth David his servant from the hurtful sword.* Lord, You're the One that brings salvation. You're the One who has delivered me from that sword.

So ¹¹*Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children, (from the aliens) whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood:* He's already gone through that up above, verse eight, whose mouth speaks emptiness.

¹²*That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace:* ¹³*That our garners (storage bins) may be full, affording all manner of store (with all manner of supplies): that our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets:* ¹⁴*That our oxen may be strong to labour (May the harvest be so heavy, that they really have to pull hard in bringing in the harvest); that there be no breaking in, nor going out; that there be no complaining in our streets.* That crime would be over. No complaining in our streets.

For ¹⁵*Happy is that people, that is in such a case:* A case where your children can grow up in peace. Your children can go grow up in safety. You don't worry when they are playing out in the neighborhood, that our sons may be able to grow up as plants, that our daughters will be like cornerstones, polished. Beautiful, in the manner of a palace. That there be sufficient for everybody. That the garners are full, that there are plenty of supplies, so that no one is stealing or has to steal from anybody. No complaining in our streets!

yea, happy is that people, That is such a case. Yes, happy is the people *whose God is the LORD.* The people who make Jehovah their God, are people that will be blessed of God. They have God's promises of blessings. No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly. Our God shall supply all of your needs according to His riches in glory, by Christ Jesus our Lord. Happy are the people, whose God is Jehovah!

So that just leaves, really, one conclusion, make Jehovah your God!

Father, we thank You for the joy and the blessing of being Your children, having You as our defense, as our place of strength and refuge. Lord, as David speaks of the experiences in his life, and he sings about Your watchful care, Your blessings. As he pours out his complaints, as he speaks of the depths of despair, but yet, Lord, his hope and trust in You. So we, as we pass through life, go through similar experiences, Lord, where the enemy presses us down, where we feel under tremendous pressure, and yet, Lord, You're there. You lift us out. You strengthen us. And Lord, You bring such joy, as You work in our lives. And as we see Lord, the work of Your hands, we rejoice in that which You have done. Bless, Lord, Your people, that they might be happy because Jehovah is their God. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.