

## Psalm 142

### I. INTRODUCTION

#### a. A Maskil

- i. Comes from a Hebrew word for “making wise” or “making successful”
- ii. May mean general instruction to the people of God
- iii. Typically referred to as a “contemplative” or “skillful poem”
- iv. Thirteen of them in the anthology (32, 42, 44, 45, 52, 53, 54, 55, 74, 78, 88, 89, 142)

#### b. Psalm of David

- i. Most believe in the cave during the events of 1 Samuel 22
- ii. Some believe in the cave during the events of 1 Samuel 24
- iii. Regardless, David is under duress
  1. He is being pursued by Saul
  2. The exact events aren't exactly important
    - a. This keeps in line with Eastern literature
    - b. The point is more important than how the facts are organized/included/omitted
  3. It appears like everything is closing in on him
  4. At this point, he pens this maskil
    - a. Some people contrast this with Psalm 57
      - i. Similar subscript in regard to timing
      - ii. Suggests an emotional rollercoaster
        1. May be true
        2. Not the point of a maskil
    - b. Modeling how to pray
    - c. Modeling how to posture oneself before God

- c. David provides this model through a concise, almost pithy psalm
  - i. Portrays the problem
  - ii. Portrays the solution
  - iii. Portrays the response
- II. The problem (vv. 1-4)
  - a. Verse 1-2
    - i. Notice the repetition
      - 1. Parallel structures
      - 2. In eastern literature this is also done for emphasis
    - ii. “With my voice”
      - 1. This is not an internalized prayer
      - 2. We can feel free to pray audibly in times of trouble
    - iii. Pouring out
      - 1. These feelings are welling up within David
      - 2. They are poured out in the proper place
        - a. We don’t need to be “woe is me” to everyone
        - b. Bring our plight to the God who fights for us
  - b. Verse 3
    - i. God sees
      - 1. In the midst of this, God sees him!
        - a. This is a great encouragement for God’s people
        - b. We can know that God sees us even in our darkest moments
      - 2. But even God’s eye only sees him and the snares around him every which way
  - c. Verse 4
    - i. “look to the right” indicates the position of defense/point of attack
    - ii. He declares nobody is there

1. Reminds of Jesus (Ps. 22, Mark 14:50)
  2. Also reminds of Paul (2 Tim. 4:9-17)
  3. Reminds of the witnesses (Rev. 6:10)
- iii. How sorrowful it is to be alone without any help
1. Ecc. 4:9-10, speaking out against oppressors
- iv. Do we ever feel like this?
- v. The idea of intense trials, or loneliness, should be an expected experience for the people of God.
- vi. In the midst of these intense trials and loneliness, our default reaction should be to bring these things to the Lord.

### III. The solution (vv.5-6)

- a. Acknowledges the situation
- b. Declares God as refuge
  - i. “portion in the land of the living”
  - ii. Denotes a temporal dearness and fondness
  - iii. “Anything which leads us to cry unto God is a blessing to us.” - Spurgeon
- c. David’s life
  - i. “Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands”
  - ii. Jonathan is still alive
  - iii. Yet in the king’s rage, everybody falls in line
  - iv. Despite this, he has a deliverer!
    1. Rich Mullins song
    2. David *knew* this deliverer would come through
      - a. The lion and the bear
      - b. Goliath
      - c. This is an example of asking in faith (James 1:6)
- d. Our lives

- i. Individual trials
- ii. Individual enemies
- iii. Collective trials
- iv. Collective enemies

IV. The response (v.7)

- a. The ultimate bringing out of prison
  - i. Salvation from sin
  - ii. The most important thing!
- b. Peace in times of trouble
- c. He is not the only righteous one there
  - i. Elijah and the 7,000 men who hadn't bent the knee (1 Kings 19)
  - ii. He knew all along he wasn't alone
  - iii. This is looking at God's chosen people

V. APPLYING THE WORD

- a. What does this psalm instruct me about life's circumstances?
  - i. This is not a statement to read ourselves into the passage – that's bad Bible study!
  - ii. What do the strong feelings in this first part of the psalm stir in my experiences?
- b. What does this psalm instruct me about how God cares for me?
  - i. Personal story as to why I picked this psalm
  - ii. "In this world you will have trouble..."
- c. What does this psalm instruct me about praising God for what he has done, and what he will do?