

## Praying for Deliverance

Psalm 44: 17-26

Our text today comes from a psalm of uncertain origin. Some scholars think it was written by David. Some have suggested it was written during the inter-biblical period, dealing with the rebellion of the Maccabees. Many believe it was written by Hezekiah as he faced the siege of the Assyrians against Jerusalem. Whatever the case, and regardless of the timing, it was clearly written during a time of national calamity in Israel.

Had we read the entire psalm, we would have discovered the mindset of the psalmist at this moment. It is clearly a psalm of prayer that was intended to be sung in worship. The psalmist began with a remembrance of God's faithfulness in bringing the people into the land and driving out their enemies. Although God had been faithful, their peace and prosperity in the land did not last. Israel soon faced enemies invading the land, dispersing the people, stealing their abundance, and causing them to be a reproach. (Clearly Israel's sin and rebellion had brought the chastening hand of God.) However, the writer closed this psalm with a prayer for deliverance from God.

Our circumstances are much different, and yet there is much we can learn from this particular psalm. The attitude and commitment of the psalmist should challenge our walk with the Lord and reliance upon Him. As we discuss the [expressions](#) revealed by the psalmist, I want to consider: [Praying for Deliverance](#).

**I. The Purity Displayed** (17-19) – As the psalmist prayed unto the Lord, he mentioned the purity they tried to maintain throughout their difficulties. He spoke of:

**A. Their Faithfulness** (17) – [All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant.](#) We must bear in mind that God is always just in His dealings with men. He would not have chastened them without cause. Israel's rebellion had brought the judgment of God. However, the psalmist sought to remind the Lord that a remnant had remained faithful through it all. They had faced much adversity, and yet they had not forgotten the Lord or forsaken His ways. They desired to honor the Lord and live pleasing unto Him.

- This statement was not made to bargain with God, and should not be viewed as such, but it does serve as a challenge for believers today. God abides faithful to us, and we must remain faithful to Him. There will be seasons in life when we too face adversity and hardship. That is no time to abandon our faith or walk in a way contrary to God's Word. He is never the enemy, nor is He the reason for our difficulty. He may allow burdens within our lives to mature our faith, but God is always faithful. We must abide faithful to Him!

**B. Their Fervency (18) – Our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from thy way.**

This goes hand in hand with their faithfulness. The psalmist declared they had not forsaken God or walked in a way that was contrary to His Word. These were committed unto the Lord, regardless of the actions or attitudes of others. Many had forsaken the Lord, choosing a path that pleased the flesh, but these refused to falter.

- Many in our world do not follow the Lord or care to please Him. In fact, many who once made a profession of faith in Christ no longer live for Him. I pray that will never be said of anyone here. We must remain committed to the Lord, refusing to turn our backs on Him or depart from the ways of truth.

**C. Their Fortitude (19) – Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death.**

The psalmist reveals the enormity of their despair and affliction. They had been broken before the Lord, within a place where wild beasts roamed, while facing death. Through all of their difficulties, these refused to abandon the faith. They remained committed unto the Lord.

- When we pause to consider the struggles these faced, our difficulties pale in comparison. We have not endured a hostile siege by enemy forces, standing on the brink of starvation. Our homeland has not been decimated by those who seek to destroy us, becoming the haunt of wild beasts seeking to find an easy meal among the dead and wounded. We have been blessed beyond measure, and yet many abandon the church and no longer serve the Lord. We need the fortitude of the psalmist and others to abide faithful, whatever the cause!

**II. The Inquiry Discerned (20-22) – Here the psalmist acknowledged the inquiry of their lives, being known of the Lord. Consider:**

**A. The Confession (20-21a) – If we have forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a strange god; <sup>[21a]</sup> Shall not God search this out?** The psalmist confessed the wisdom and knowledge of God in every area of their lives. If they abandoned their faith and served strange gods, the Lord would surely know. Their lives were open before Him, and the psalmist knew God observed every aspect of their lives.

- I am sure we are all aware of the omniscience of God, but often our lives do not reflect that awareness. He sees our lives and is well aware of our actions. Others may be unaware of particular behaviors or beliefs, but God sees and knows all things. That is quite humbling when we

pause to consider it. [Heb.4:13 – Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.](#)

**B. The Examination** (21b) – [for he knoweth the secrets of the heart.](#) The psalmist was aware that God not only knew the lives they lived, He also knew the inner desires and secrets of the heart. God knew their passions, their lusts, and their thoughts. Their inner desires may never have been revealed openly, but they were not hidden before God.

- This too is humbling and convicting. God is aware of the secrets of our hearts. He knows the desires we have and the thoughts we think. We may never act upon our desires or reveal particular attitudes and feelings we have, but God is well aware of them all. [Heb.4:12 – For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.](#) [Rom.2:16 – In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.](#)

**C. The Submission** (22) – [Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.](#) Although their circumstance was dire, and they did not know if they would survive, the psalmist declared their commitment and resolve for the Lord. They were willing to die rather than abandon their faith and bring reproach upon the Lord. They were fully submitted to Him.

- That is a sobering thought. Such devotion and surrender were rare then, and it seems even rarer today. We have no way of knowing what we might face in our future. We must abide faithful unto the Lord, totally submitted unto Him. Man may kill this physical body, but they can never remove me from His sovereign hand.

**III. The Mercy Desired** (23-26) – As the psalmist closed his prayer, he desired God's mercy in their lives. Consider:

**A. The Plea** (23) – [Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord? arise, cast us not off for ever.](#) Apparently feeling forsaken of God, he plead with the Lord to rise and meet their need. It seems apparent the psalmist recognized the sin of Israel, knowing she had faced the chastening hand of God, but he prayed for the Lord to rise and meet their need, showing mercy unto them.

- We know the Lord will never forsake us, but we have felt like the psalmist at times as well. We must understand and know that the Lord is our only help and hope. We must seek Him!

**B. The Perplexity (24)** – *Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and forgettest our affliction and our oppression?* The psalmist was honest with God, sharing his complaint against Him. Clearly, he realized the Lord knew the secrets of his heart and there was no need to try and hide his feelings. He questioned why God had hidden His face and seemingly forgotten their affliction.

- We may want to deny it, but I am certain we all have shared similar emotions. Have we not questioned why the Lord has not moved in our situation or answered our prayer? We maybe haven't accused Him of such, but we too have been convinced that He has hidden His face from us and seems unconcerned with our need. We know that is never the case and yet we accuse God of forgetting or ignoring our needs.

**C. The Pain (25)** – *For our soul is bowed down to the dust: our belly cleaveth unto the earth.* The psalmist admitted their great anguish of soul. At that moment, they were as low spiritually and emotionally as they could be. Their souls were bowed in despair and it felt as if their bellies were cleaving to the earth, laying prostrate on the ground. This was a desperate situation.

- I have experienced moments such as these in my spiritual walk, and I am sure most of you have as well. There are times when we reach the end of our rope, so to speak. We feel cast down in soul and hopeless in spirit. We feel as if we have reached the depths of despair and cannot possibly sink any lower.

**D. The Provision (26)** – *Arise for our help, and redeem us for thy mercies' sake.* The psalmist admitted the Lord was their only help and defense. He sought God's mighty provision in their lives. He sought the Lord to be merciful unto them in their time of need. The psalmist acknowledged they were not worthy of God's favor, so he appealed to God's mercy.

- We stand in need of the Lord's provision daily. Were it not for His grace and mercy, we would surely perish. Like those in days of old, we are unworthy of God's provision, but I am thankful He freely provides for those who seek and serve Him. We too stood in need of deliverance, bound by sin and despair. The enemy stood at the gate, ready to destroy us. Through His mercy and grace, God sent His Son to bear our sin and deliver us unto eternal life. He alone was our hope for salvation and He alone is our hope for security and life. What a gracious, merciful Savior we serve.

**Conclusion:** Life will have seasons of difficulty and despair. If you are in the midst of a trial today, Jesus can deliver you from your anxiety and fear. If you are yet unsaved, He alone can deliver from sin. If you need deliverance, for any reason, come to Jesus today!