

When I Was in Distress

Psalms Chapters Three and Four

> + + + + + + + <

~ Our Spiritual Safari camel train will take steps three and four in this report as we continue to traverse the desert sands in this remarkable Book of Psalms. Our first three reports have been extremely difficult lessons; difficult to read, difficult to accept — and our previous report regarding chapter two was almost impossible for many people. There, we saw the rejection of God's anointed, and the rebellion of mankind against God Himself; and we learned how said rebellion will be dashed when of the Lord returns to establish His earthly Kingdom by literally crushing the opposition. I told you from our commencement in Psalms that this book was not going to be an easy leg of our expedition; and I also foretold how many will not agree with my interpretations of Psalms — but we are well-prepared by the Holy Spirit to make this trip. Pray now for wisdom.

We discovered the Lord Jesus Christ in chapter one — the Blessed Man; and we encountered the rebellious man in chapter two. From here to our next Messianic Psalm — chapter eight — we have a veritable stairway that reveals a well-planned organization of these songs. In chapter eight, the Messiah will put all things under His feet. The chapters in between are like a spiritual glue holding this together. The next five chapters describe primarily the Godly remnant of Israel during the time of the absence of the Messiah from the earth; and, in particular, the end of the age which the Lord Jesus Himself refers to as the Great Tribulation period. We're going to see Israel's record of their trials, sorrows, persecutions, problems — and sins. It is all here. We will also see their confidence in God through prayers for deliverance and the resulting further promises of God; as well as a historical background, and circumstances for the writing of each of the next five Psalms. One of the most notable features of Psalms is their spiritually systematic arrangement.

All saints in this world share the same problems, trials, sorrows, and difficulties that result from sin; these experiences are common to all of God's people. It really doesn't make any difference who you are, or where

you live, or even the time period of history in which you lived, there's nothing new under the sun. Thankfully, the comfort given in the Psalms is for all genuine children of God. The personal experience of the Psalmist is the primary interpretation we should always focus on. There is also the direct application to the remnant of the nation Israel during the Great Tribulation period. However, there is also direct application to the saints of God in all ages throughout the world. If we can grasp all of that truth, and observe the Psalms from that point of view, I promise you it will be much more meaningful to you....

DDD ~ (A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son)

~ Chapter three is the thinking of David when Absalom rebelled against him. Remember, David had to pack up and flee from Jerusalem in the middle of the night when his own son attempted a coup. David didn't even have time to grab his shoes, you may recall. It is a very real Psalm for a very real experience of betrayal. David was in a bad way when he wrote this Psalm; he was an outcast and a fugitive from his own city — Jerusalem — the City of David. He had to turn and run away from his own people to prevent the city from being destroyed. We examined this all very carefully in our Spiritual Safari through the historical books.

Remember, Shimei followed David's band of men out, and was cursing David, and throwing stones at him as David and his men went along barefooted. Joab, David's loyal captain, wanted to go over and shut Shimei up, but David wouldn't let him. See, David knew he was getting what Nathan the prophet had said would happen: God allowed this to happen to David because of his sin. David didn't get by with his sin, friends; no more than you and I will get by with our own sins in this world. Yes, they'll be blotted out at the Bema Seat of Christ, where we will answer for our works; but be not deceived, God is not mocked, whatsoever a man shall sow, that shall he also reap. Some people will have a blotted-out life because their entire lives were full of sin! Make a note. Absalom raised a hating heart and a murderous hand against his father — and David reaped *EXACTLY* what he had sown. That should make the hairs on your neck stand up friends.

2 Samuel 12: 11 *Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. 12 For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun. 13 And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD ~*

And there were other consequences David would endure as a result of the Bathsheba affair. Remember, God told David the first-born child conceived with Bathsheba would die. That's exactly what happened, too. Very harsh punishment, friends – very harsh. David had sinned greatly! God forgave David, and restored David to fellowship because David confessed his sins; but that doesn't prevent the reaping process, my friends – not even a little bit. All of these things happened — and the hearts of the men that once supported David turned against him and followed Absalom! Absalom was a great politician who promised the people many things; although he was never able to deliver on those promises. But, either way, David's own son rebelled, and the baby he had with Bathsheba died; and the people turned against him. It appeared there would be no more deliverance and that God had forsaken him; and that's when David cried out from his heart....

1 LORD, how are they increased that trouble me! many are they that rise up against me.

2 Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. Selah.

3 But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.

4 I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah.

5 I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the LORD sustained me.

6 I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about.

7 Arise, O LORD; save me, O my God: for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.

8 Salvation belongeth unto the LORD: thy blessing is upon thy people.
Selah ~

~ We can all thank God for this Psalm, friends. I hear people say they don't understand how God could abide with a man like David. Well, if God could put-up with David, then He just might tolerate me and you. We have a loving God that deals quite patiently with people like us; and He will forgive us — when we come to Him and confess our sins. If we don't confess our sins, God will deal with them even more harshly. This was *leniency* towards David; because David confessed. If David had not confessed, I am absolutely convinced God would have killed David at this time. You might want to think that all the way through. Those of you who do not believe in confession of sins are puerile, hard-hearted, impudent, jejune fools, my friend; I just don't know of any other appropriate label. Even with confession, David paid dearly for his sins.

The word “*Selah*” means to stop, look and listen. There have been many different opinions about what *Selah* means; and it occurs seventy-one times in Psalms. Well, all of the Psalms were set to music in the temple, and *Selah* means pause — where the choir and orchestra stop and look to the conductor for further instruction — and the cue of when to proceed. Well, after what we just read, we all need to really stop, look and listen to the Holy Spirit speak to our hearts. This was a morning Psalm; David only woke up this day because the Lord sustained him last night. This is a good Psalm to start any day with, too. David trusted God; irrespective of the punishment he was enduring and, through it all, David could sleep well at night.

The whole world seemed to be against David at this time, but he wasn't afraid. Let's meditate carefully on how this applies to us today. Salvation is unto the Lord – not you. David never saw salvation as something he could lose. David never had to work his salvation out – except in confession and concerning belief. David knew salvation was the gift of God. David spoke of

the help of God as if it had already happened; but while he was in great distress. David picked up the shield of faith in verse three. Honestly, I could easily type fifteen thousand more hundred-word paragraphs about this truth — but it's time we move along....

 ~ (To the chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm of David)

1 Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.

2 O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame? how long will ye love vanity, and seek after leasing? Selah.

3 But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto him.

4 Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.

5 Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD.

6 There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.

7 Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased.

8 I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.

~ So, our Spiritual Safari concludes this report playing a stringed instrument solo — on a Neginoth — with Psalm four. It is an evening Psalm; and presents the conflict between the seed of the woman and the serpent. This is what's happening in the world today. The first three verses are a prayerful cry, seeking refuge for the people in times of trouble; verse four and five are a correction, and verses six, seven and eight bring the confidence of God once again. Obviously, it is brief. We need the

confidence of encouragement that we can only find in the Word of God, friends.

Many people go to bed each night utterly consumed by the worries of the day and cares of this world. Well, the Lord is near to all who call upon Him in truth; and they will find peace and rest. I would stress the word “*truth*” here, though! David’s heart for God never failed him in times of trouble and, as a result, God never failed David. When we call upon the Lord in the day of our trouble - *in truth* - then Christ will deliver us – every time. I know it seems as if everything has gone crazy in the world — because it has. Only God can make good for us, my beloved. Only He has the answers to our questions and solutions to our problems. That’s what makes these wondrous promises of God throughout the Psalms priceless. May God be with us all today. Put your trust in the Lord now ~

> + + + + + + + <