

PSALMS: DIARIES OF GODLY OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS

Psalm One Hundred And Forty-Three - The Cause And Cure For Deep Depression From Great Harassment (Psalm 143:1-12)

I. Introduction

- A. As our society experiences increasing amounts of social decay predicted by Paul in 2 Timothy 3:1-5, the need exists to address the needs of those suffering massive depression following harassing abuse by others.
- B. Psalm 143:1-12 addresses the need directly, and works as a how-to manual for the harassed as follows:

II. The Cause And Cure For Deep Depression From Great Harassment, Psalm 143:1-12.

- A. David claimed his enemy pursued his life principle (*nephesh*) and that he felt crushed and dwelt in darkness like those long dead, Ps. 143:3. This description reveals David was depressed in association with abuse.
- B. To **solve** this depression, David **abandoned** all "self-help" and sought God's help at **every** turn as follows:
 1. David prayed unto the Lord for help, a great starting place for finding a solution, Ps. 143:1.
 2. He then asked for God's mercy in case sin had led to God's abandoning David to his enemy in judgment, Ps. 143:2. For us, use of John 3:16 for salvation of the lost or 1 John 1:9 for the believer to confess his sin is crucial in case sin in our lives has left us without God's blessing and help.
 3. David exposed his deep need, naming it and all of its suffering unto the Lord, Ps. 143:3-4. This step gets the sufferer to face the fact that he needs **God's** help so he will end his own futile efforts.
 4. David then recalled the works of God of long ago, works that lay a **precedent** of God's actions upon which David could **hope** for help in his current situation, Ps. 143:5. Accordingly, it is imperative that the sufferer get into Scripture and identify with an event there or a teaching there that closely addresses his situation for the purpose of building his faith in God, cf. Romans 10:17.
 5. Looking to God alone as his lifeline of help out of dismay, David abandoned himself to God instead of seeking other "self-help" resources that were only deceptively false crutches of help, Ps. 143:6-7. This is extremely important as often people who are depressed have ended up that way out of being "let down" by the false idols they have themselves made of other people or ideas besides the Lord!
 6. David anticipated God's encouragement that He still loyally loved him as a reward of his faith in the Lord, Ps. 143:8a. Note how similar this action is to the Hebrews 11:6 promise of God blessing the believer for believing He exists and will become a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. It is important that the depressed party believe God will help so he can hope for a solution.
 7. David requested God's **specific** (Hebrew word *dzu*) way or steps to take, Ps. 143:8b. It is important that the very depressed, abused party be given **clear, detailed** insight from God because his **viewpoint** is often distorted due to his suffering. He can be misled easily by his own estimations, so he must seek God's **step-by-step** insight, and **heed** it in place of his own viewpoints at the time!
 8. David requested deliverance from the clutches of his enemies, Ps. 143:9. Note that this deliverance is requested **following** David's **already** taking **SEVEN** steps to check his relationship with God. That implies that depression is partly the cause of the **sufferer's** not being properly related to the Lord or to the Lord's leading in his life! His **reaction** to abuse is **overly** errant, making for his depressed state!
 9. David then requested instruction from the Lord as an **ongoing** experience, asking to be **regularly herded** on level and hence clear and attainable paths, Ps. 143:10. It is important for the oppressed to put himself into a **perpetual "follow"** mode to God to avoid future depression crises!
 10. David depended on God's plan and interests in his welfare as the sure basis for deliverance from his oppressors, Ps. 143:11-12. It is important to avoid **self-centered** interests and to be lost in God's will as a sure-fire way to deal with oppressors and thereby escape depression pits!

Lesson: *Though the OPPRESSOR bears HIS blame, the OPPRESSED one's REACTION to his oppressor actually causes his depression as he has evidently failed to tap the irrepressible God for help!*

Application: *The DEPRESSED party must come to have a greater dependence on the irrepressible GOD before the removal of the oppressor from his experience offers any lasting benefit for him! Thus, one must expect to "dangle" in his depressed state before the oppressor's harassment until he learns to look to GOD for ALL of his needs as an invaluable DEFENSE against suffering ANY depression!*