

PSALMS: DIARIES OF GODLY OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS

Psalm One Hundred And Forty-Four - Succeeding In Conflicts With Menacingly Ungodly Opponents (Psalm 144:1-15)

I. Introduction

- A. Though any conflict with others is difficult to face, and should be avoided if possible (Rom. 12:18), inescapable conflict with ungodly people is fraught with pitfalls, for such often do not "play according to the rules" of usual conduct. That can put the godly at a disadvantage as the opponent can use the godly one's predictable fidelity to righteousness to maneuver in deceit to gain an advantage (cf. Daniel 6:4-11).
- B. However, such conflicts should not be an automatic signal of defeat for the upright, and in Psalm 144:1-15, David reveals God's route for the godly to come out of such conflicts **victorious**:

II. Succeeding In Conflicts With Menacingly Ungodly Opponents, Psalm 144:1-15.

- A. David faced menacingly ungodly opponents who did everything they could in wicked deceit to harm him:
 1. Both in verses 7b-8 and then again in verse 11, David stated that he faced Gentile opponents, people who did not fear his God nor function in accord with the Mosaic Law's ethics.
 2. These same passages show that David's Gentile opponents were full of deceit in their efforts to manipulate and control people around them against David's welfare.
 3. These passages also reveal that these opponents **at their best** were treacherously deceitful:
 - a. David twice noted in these verses that the "right hands" of his enemies were deceitful.
 - b. The "right hand" can be used of one's inclination to do **right** where the **left** can implies his tendency to do what is **evil**, Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible, vol. Three, p. 28.
 - c. Thus, David was saying that even **at their best**, these opponents were **deceitfully evil**!
- B. Against such menacing opponents, David found sure success in a route involving God's help as follows:
 1. Step One - David **BEGAN** his reaction to the threat by recalling **God** was his **sure Provider** in the conflict, Ps. 144:1-2: David recognized and praised Jahweh as his Rock Cliff, or Rock Mountain (**sur**, cf. Theological Wordbook of the O.T., v. II, p. 762). Such a fortress protected a warrior, Ps. 144:1a.
 2. Step Two - He also admitted that Jahweh trained his hands (to handle a spear?) for war and his fingers (to handle a bow and arrow?) for battle, Ps. 144:1b. Thus, David recognized the **equipping** that **God** had supplied to him for handling open ward with such ungodly people.
 3. Step Three - David recalled that all of his enemies were insignificant problems for his God, Ps. 144:3-4:
 - a. Lowly men (**adam**) and noblemen (**anosh**) were **alike** so insignificant compared to God that it was a marvel to David that God would even **notice** that **both** even **existed**, Ps. 144:3.
 - b. Besides, such men are transitory: like a vapor or a fleeting shadow, they soon depart this life, 144:4.
 4. Step Four - Thus, having noted the way of victory lay in David's great God and His provisions for David, David asked God to use His great power to overcome his enemies **for** him, Ps. 144:5-8, 11.
 5. Step Five - In the process, David so **believed** God, Ps. 144:7-15:
 - a. **While** praying, David expected to praise God for eventual victory, v. 9-10 in the midst of v. 7-8, 11!
 - b. David expected future blessings for his nation in contrast to the wishes of his opponents, 144:12-14.
 - c. He made the observation of how blessed was Israel to have such a sure Providing God, 144:15.

Lesson: *To face and come out victorious in ALL unavoidable conflicts with "unfair," menacingly evil opponents, we must follow David's route: (1) BEGIN by recalling that GOD is our sure Provider INSTEAD of trying to "do battle" on our OWN, Ps. 144:1 a. (2) Stay WITHIN God's PRESCRIBED calling and spiritual GIFTING ministries and activities for sure victory, Ps. 144:1b with 2 Tim. 1:6-7, 8-9, 14 with 2 Tim. 2:1. When we do God's will for us in God's enabling in those areas of life, then GOD has to insure our victory over opponents to the contrary as the opponents then are put into the disastrous position of countering God's WILL FOR us! (3) Recall that our opponents are powerless before GOD although they may be overwhelming for US, and TRUST God to bring victory, Ps. 144:3-4. (4) Then, request God's help, Ps. 144:5-8, 11 in (5) FAITH of God's eventual provision and blessing to come, Ps. 144:9-10, 7-8, 11-15 with James 1:6.*