

---

A Psalm by David.

PSALM 143: 1 Hear my prayer, LORD. Listen to my petitions. In your faithfulness and righteousness, relieve me.

---

The psalmist prays for mercy, and deprecates judgment, Psa 143:1, Psa 143:2. His persecutions, Psa 143:3. His earnest prayer for deliverance, Psa 143:4-9. Prays for God's quickening Spirit, Psa 143:10, Psa 143:11. And for the total discomfiture of his adversaries, Psa 143:12

The Hebrew and all the Versions attribute this Psalm to David; and the Vulgate, Septuagint, Ethiopic and Arabic state that it was composed on the rebellion of his son Absalom: nor is there any thing in the Psalm that positively disagrees with this inscription. This is the last of the seven Psalms styled penitential.

Verse 1

In thy faithfulness answer me - Thou hast promised to support me in my difficulties, and, though my children should forsake me, never to withdraw thy loving-kindness from me. See the present unnatural rebellion of my son. Lord, undertake for me!

---

PSALM 143: 2 Don't enter into judgement with your servant, for in your sight no man living is righteous.

---

Verse 2

Enter not into judgment - אל תבוא al tabo. Do not come into court, either as a Witness against me, or as a Judge, else I am ruined; for thou hast seen all my ways that they are evil, and thy justice requires thee to punish me. Nor can any soul that has ever lived be justified in the sight of thy justice and righteousness. Had I my desert from thee, I should have worse than even my unnatural son intends me. O what a relief is Jesus crucified to a soul in such circumstances!

---

PSALM 143: 3 For the enemy pursues my soul. He has struck my life down to the ground. He has made me live in dark places, as those who have been long dead.

---

Verse 3

He hath made me to dwell in darkness - Literally, in dark places. This may be understood of David's taking refuge in caves and dens of the earth, to escape from his persecuting son; yea, even to take refuge in the tombs, or repositories of the dead.

---

PSALM 143: 4 Therefore my spirit is overwhelmed within me. My heart within me is desolate.

---

Verse 4

Therefore is my spirit - I am deeply depressed in spirit, and greatly afflicted in body.

My heart within me is desolate - It has no companion of its sorrows, no sympathetic friend. I am utterly destitute of comfort.

---

PSALM 143: 5 I remember the days of old. I meditate on all your doings. I contemplate the work of your hands.

---

Verse 5

I remember the days of old - Thou hast often helped me, often delivered me. I will therefore trust in thee, for thy mercy is not clean gone from me.

---

PSALM 143: 6 I spread out my hands to you. My soul thirsts for you, like a parched land. Selah.

---

Verse 6

I stretch forth my hands - This is a natural action. All in distress, or under the influence of eager desire, naturally extend their hands and arms, as if to catch at help and obtain succor.

As a thirsty land - Parched and burned by the sun, longs for rain, so does my thirsty soul for the living God.

---

PSALM 143: 7 Hurry to answer me, LORD. My spirit fails. Don't hide your face from me, so that I don't become like those who go down into the pit.

---

Verse 7

Hear me speedily - מהר maher, make haste to answer me. A few hours, and my state may be irretrievable. In a short time my unnatural son may put an end to my life.

---

PSALM 143: 8 Cause me to hear your loving kindness in the morning, for I trust in you. Cause me to know the way in which I should walk, for I lift up my soul to you.

---

Verse 8

Cause me to hear thy Loving-kindness in the morning - This petition was probably offered in the night-season. David had despatched his messengers in all directions; and prays to God that he might by the morning get some good news.

Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk - Absalom and his partisans are in possession of all the country. I know not in what direction to go, that I may not fall in with them: point out by thy especial providence the path I should take.

---

PSALM 143: 9 Deliver me, LORD, from my enemies. I flee to you to hide me.

---

Verse 9

I flee unto thee to hide me - That I may not be found by my enemies, who seek my life to destroy it.

---

PSALM 143: 10 Teach me to do your will, for you are my God.

Your Spirit is good. Lead me in the land of uprightness.

---

Verse 10

Teach me to do thy will - רצונך retsonecha, thy pleasure. To be found doing the will of God is the only safe state for man.

Thy Spirit is good - The Author of every good desire and holy purpose.

Lead me - Let it lead me by its continued inspirations and counsels.

Into the land of uprightness - "Into a right land," Chaldee. Into the place where I shall be safe. The old Psalter has, Thi goste gude sal lede me into rygt lande.

---

PSALM 143: 11 Revive me, LORD, for your name's sake. In your righteousness, bring my soul out of trouble.

---

Verse 11

Quicken me - I am as a dead man, and my hopes are almost dead within me.

---

PSALM 143: 12 In your loving kindness, cut off my enemies, and destroy all those who afflict my soul, For I am your servant.

---

Verse 12

And of thy mercy - To me and the kingdom.

Cut off mine enemies - Who, if they succeed, will destroy the very form of godliness. The steps he has already taken show that even morality shall have no countenance, if Absalom reign.

I am thy servant - Whoever is disloyal to me, I will love and serve thee.

For a full explanation of this Psalm, as applied to penitents, see the analysis.