

Psalm 44

The theme of this Psalm is a plea for victory for the battle-weary and often defeated, today in our battle against Satan and the influence he can have on our human nature to sin, [Ephesians 6:10-20].

Psalms 44:1-8 [New King James] *“We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, the deeds You did in their days, in days of old: You drove out the nations with Your hand, but them You planted; You afflicted the peoples, and cast them out. For they did not gain possession of the land by their own sword, nor did their own arm save them; but it was Your right hand, Your arm, and the light of Your countenance, because You favoured them. You are my King, O God; Command victories for Jacob. Through You we will push down our enemies; through Your name we will trample those who rise up against us. For I will not trust in my bow, nor shall my sword save me. But You have saved us from our enemies, and have put to shame those who hated us. In God we boast all day long, and praise Your name forever. Selah”*

The series of articles on our ancestors on this website is designed to help us in our fight against Satan and his influence on our lives. These are listed under the main heading ‘Ancestors’.

This Psalm may have been sung at an occasion like the one in **2 Chronicles 20:18-19** where the faithful Jehoshaphat was surrounded by enemies and the Levites sang to the Creator God before the battle.

Note the word “*selah*” at the end of these verses telling us to pause and meditate on what we have just received to value its importance.

Psalms 44:9-16 [New King James] *“But You have cast us off and put us to shame, and You do not go out with our armies. You make us turn back from the enemy, and those who hate us have taken spoil for themselves. You have given us up like sheep intended for food, and have scattered us among the nations. You sell Your people for next to nothing, and are not enriched by selling them. You make us a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and a derision to those all around us. You make us a byword among the nations, a shaking of the head among the peoples. My dishonour is continually before me, and the shame of my face has covered me, because of the voice of him who reproaches and reviles, because of the enemy and the avenger.”*

Israel had been defeated and the Psalmist could **not** understand why God had allowed this to happen, but he did **not** give up hope of discovering the answer as to why this had happened.

The people were not only defeated but they were demoralised. This can happen to Christians today as it did in this incident to God’s people in the past.

Psalms 44:17-22 [New King James] *“All this has come upon us; but we have not forgotten You, nor have we dealt falsely with Your covenant. Our heart has not turned back, nor have our steps departed from Your way; but You have severely broken us in the place of jackals, and covered us with the shadow of death. If we had forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a foreign god, would not God search this out? For He knows the secrets of the heart. Yet for Your sake we are killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”*

In these heart-searching statements an important fact begins to emerge that disaster is one thing, and disgrace quite another.

The defeats which seem to prove God’s withdrawal in wrath, when we read the next verse 23, now suggest only His refusal to be hurried, or to do what everyone expected Him to do.

Romans 8:36 [New King James] *“As it is written: ‘For Your sake we are killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.’”*

Paul quoted this **verse 22 of Psalm 44** to the Roman church who were suffering persecution, but reminded all of God’s people through every generation that nothing can separate us from the love of the Creator God, [**Romans 8:35, 38-39**].

The key to all of this situation is in **verse 22 of Psalm 44**, the words *“yet for your sake.”*

The thousands of faithful people of God have suffered and been martyrs to give a good witness for their Saviour, [Hebrews 11:35-40].

Their lives did not end in the way they expected but none of them lost faith in the Loving God they loved and served.

All these people looked on their suffering as battle-scars rather than punishment from God.

The price of loyalty to Jesus Christ in a world that hates Him and His people, true Christians, [**John 17:8-19**].

What we are being told is that painful experiences may be a sign that we are in fellowship with our Saviour, who suffered beyond that of any other human being that we may be saved from eternal death, [John 3:16-17].

1 Peter 4:12-19 [New King James] *“Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people’s matters. Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter. For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? Now ‘If the righteous one is scarcely saved, where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?’ Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.”*

Suffering in some form is part of our being made perfect, [James 1:2-4; Romans 8:18].

Hebrews 12:1-10 [New King James] *“Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin. And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: ‘My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; for whom the LORD loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.’ If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, **that we may be partakers of His holiness.**”*

Notice the goal of this chastening, **verse 10** *“that we may be partakers of His holiness.”*

Psalms 44:23-26 [New King James] *“Awake! Why do You sleep, O Lord? Arise! Do not cast us off forever. Why do You hide Your face, and forget our affliction and our oppression? For our soul is*

bowed down to the dust; our body clings to the ground. Arise for our help, and redeem us for Your mercies' sake."

God seems to be asleep only from a physical human viewpoint, the **delay in God's response, as always, is to test our faith in Him.**

Revelation 21:22-25 [New King James] *"But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honour into it. Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there)."*

The description of God's residence when He returns to take up His rule on earth, gives us insight into God's throne in heaven where there is no night in which God's sleeps.