

**Psalms 143:0 ¶ A Psalm of David.**

This is yet another prayer of David he set to music.

EBC Abridged: "This psalm is classified as one of the seven penitential psalms (6; 32; 38; 51; 102; 130; 143)."

Guzik: "It is numbered among the Seven Penitential Psalms – songs of confession and humility before God. It was a custom in the early church to sing these psalms on Ash Wednesday, the Wednesday before Easter."

**Psalms 143:1 ¶ Hear my prayer, O LORD, give ear to my supplications: in thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness.**

**Psalms 143:2 And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.**

As with several other psalms, David opens this one with an immediate cry for the LORD to hear his prayer, implying a feeling of great urgency and need. He bases his request on God's faithfulness and righteousness, both of which are inseparable from His character. He follows his cry for help with the request that God not base His answer on His judgment of David because he knows that no man can stand justified before Him.

*Deuteronomy 7:9 "Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God...."*

How blessed we are as followers of Jesus to know that we stand before God justified in His Son through faith!

*Romans 5:1 "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...."*

*Galatians 2:16 "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."*

**Psalms 143:3 For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground; he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead.  
Psalms 143:4 Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me; my heart within me is desolate.**

David now presents the reason for his prayer; he is suffering persecution by an enemy that is seeking to kill him—probably Saul or Absalom. He is in the pit of despair.

Obviously, David is making reference to a person as his enemy. As I read these verses, I couldn't help but make application to how Satan, the enemy, and his forces for evil are ever at work doing the same, seeking to destroy those that have placed their trust in Jesus as their Savior.

**Psalms 143:5 I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands.**

As he prays, David's thoughts turn to the works of God as recorded in the scripture, the Torah (Genesis-Deuteronomy). The book of Deuteronomy in particular is full of exhortation for God's people to remember what God has done as a motivation to stay true to their covenant with God. To meditate is to ponder or spend time thinking about something; to muse is the same thing, but also includes the idea of talking about your thoughts. David notes that he meditates on all that God has done for His people and, I am sure, for him particularly. He also meditates and talks about the wonderful things that God has created.

If we would but follow David's example more, I am sure we would not be as apt to worry in light of how faithful and powerful our God is.

**Psalms 143:6 I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul *thirsteth* after thee, as a thirsty land. Selah.**

I think David is painting a picture of how he longs for God's favor and protection. He compares his desire to feel God's presence to dry land needing water.

Selah - a pause in the music, a time for meditation

Spurgeon: "It was time to pause, for the supplication had risen to agony point. Both harp strings and heart strings were strained, and needed a little rest to get them right again for the second half of the song."

**Psalms 143:7 ¶ Hear me speedily, O LORD: my spirit faileth: hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit.**

Once again, David expresses an urgent need that requires the LORD's provision. He is losing all hope and fears he is close to death.

**Psalms 143:8 Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.**

I get a picture of David praying during the night hoping to have a loving answer from God in the morning. He declares that his only hope rests in the LORD. He is trusting the LORD to guide his steps and show him what to do.

**Psalms 143:9 Deliver me, O LORD, from mine enemies: I flee unto thee to hide me.**

David repeats his plea for the LORD to deliver him from his enemies because he is counting on Him as his refuge for protection.

Spurgeon: "That which makes us flee to our God may be an ill wind, but it blows us good. There is no cowardice in such flight, but much holy courage."

**Psalms 143:10 Teach me to do thy will; for thou *art* my God: thy spirit *is* good; lead me into the land of uprightness.**

David is aware that he has much more to learn about living in accordance with God's will, so he asks Him for instruction. He declares himself to be God's servant. He knows that God is good. He asks God to help him to walk in uprightness, in accordance with His will.

**Psalms 143:11 Quicken me, O LORD, for thy name's sake: for thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble.**

**Psalms 143:12 And of thy mercy cut off mine enemies, and destroy all them that afflict my soul: for I *am* thy servant.**

As David closes his psalm, he asks the LORD to "quicken" him. The Hebrew for this word includes many things—"to live, revive, nourish preserve, save." David wants to live, he wants to be revived to full strength and be nourished to preserve and save his life. I think application can be made to both physical and spiritual quickening in context with the whole psalm. He asks that God answer him for His righteousness' sake. In that day, a person's "god" was often judged in accordance to how "he" provided for that person. David adds the request for God to destroy his enemies in light of that perception.