

Psalms 44:0 ¶ To the chief Musician for the sons of Korah, Maschil.

Spurgeon: "The title is similar to the forty-second, and although this is no proof that it is by the same author it makes it highly probable. No other writer should be sought for to father any of the Psalms when David will suffice, and therefore we are loathe to ascribe this sacred song to any but the great psalmist...."

I agree with his conclusion. The whole tone of the psalm is one of the king approaching the LORD on behalf of his people.

Psalms 44:1 ¶ We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, *what work thou didst in their days, in the times of old.*

Psalms 44:2 *How thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand, and plantedst them; how thou didst afflict the people, and cast them out.*

Psalms 44:3 For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them.

The psalmist opens with words acknowledging that the people of Israel had heard from their forefathers how God had given them their land. It wasn't because of their own might and power that they had been able to defeat the people living in the land. It was because God had favored them and empowered them to drive the people out of the land.

Spurgeon re the importance of sharing one's testimony with one's family: "When fathers are tongue tied religiously with their offspring, need they wonder if their children's hearts remain sin tied?"

Again, from Spurgeon: "The tribes fought for their allotments, but their success was wholly due to the Lord who wrought with them. The warriors of Israel were not inactive, but their valour was secondary to that mysterious, divine working by which Jericho's walls fell down, and the hearts of the heathen failed them for fear."

Psalms 44:4 Thou art my King, O God: command deliverances for Jacob.

Psalms 44:5 Through thee will we push down our enemies: through thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us.

Psalms 44:6 For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me.

The psalmist declares God to be "my" King and asks that He once again deliver His people from their enemies. The psalmist knows that only with the provision of God's power will they be able to defeat their enemies. He publicly declares that he is trusting the LORD, not his own skill with the sword. I think he is also speaking on behalf of the people as well.

Psalms 44:7 But thou hast saved us from our enemies, and hast put them to shame that hated us.

Psalms 44:8 In God we boast all the day long, and praise thy name for ever. Selah.

I think the psalmist is again referencing how God has saved Israel from their enemies in the past, and for that they will praise His name forever. He is taking hope from how the LORD had interceded for His people in the past.

Selah – This Hebrew word means “to lift up, exalt.” The pause here offers an opportunity to praise the LORD.

Psalms 44:9 ¶ But thou hast cast off, and put us to shame; and goest not forth with our armies.

Psalms 44:10 Thou makest us to turn back from the enemy: and they which hate us spoil for themselves.

Psalms 44:11 Thou hast given us like sheep *appointed* for meat; and hast scattered us among the heathen.

Psalms 44:12 Thou sellest thy people for nought, and dost not increase *thy wealth* by their price.

It seems that the people of Israel feel that the LORD has turned against them in their current battle. The enemy is winning and taking spoil as a reward. Verse 12 seems to indicate that they feel that the LORD no longer values His people.

If we are honest, I think that mirrors our mindset sometimes when we find ourselves in the valley of depression. It seems like the LORD has turned against us and does not value us—especially when we can’t fathom why.

Psalms 44:13 Thou makest us a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and a derision to them that are round about us.

Psalms 44:14 Thou makest us a byword among the heathen, a shaking of the head among the people.

Psalms 44:15 My confusion *is* continually before me, and the shame of my face hath covered me,

Psalms 44:16 For the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth; by reason of the enemy and avenger.

Not only are the enemy winning, but it has made the surrounding nations taunt and mock the people of Israel. The psalmist is feeling the disgrace personally.

Wicked men still like to take advantage of any opportunity to mock the faith of the Christian—especially when they are down. The enemy likes to attack us when we are most vulnerable, hoping to get us to dishonor our Savior in the process.

Psalms 44:17 ¶ All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant.

Psalms 44:18 Our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from thy way;

Psalms 44:19 Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death.

In spite of the circumstances that seem to indicate that the LORD has turned against them, the psalmist declares that the people have not forgotten or turned against God or broken covenant with Him. They are still striving to honor Him with obedience.

This is an example of how we should respond when confronted with situations that we would describe as “bad things happening to good people.” It is evil men that perpetrate evil—not God. And sometimes that affects God’s people. Our response should be to trust even though we do not understand, because scripture is clear in declaring that we are not able to understand the ways of God and why He would allow it. We should go to Him in prayer with faith.

Isaiah 55:8–9 “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

It should also be noted that the scripture qualifies God’s actions as being for good for those that love Him.

*Romans 8:28 “And we know that **all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.**”*

Guzik: “The mention of the **covenant** was of special purpose. Under the Old Covenant (sometimes known as the Mosaic or Sinai Covenant) God promised to bless an obedience Israel and curse a disobedient Israel (as in Deuteronomy 28). The psalmist implied that God must now be faithful to His part of the covenant because Israel had been faithful to their part.”

Deuteronomy 28:1–2 “And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God”

Psalms 44:20 If we have forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a strange god;

Psalms 44:21 Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart.

The psalmist is fully aware that God knows the secrets of the heart; He knows whether or not what the psalmist says is true.

Psalms 139:1–2 “O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.”

Isaiah 66:18 “For I know their works and their thoughts: it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory.”

Hebrews 4:12 “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

1 John 3:20 "For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things."

Psalms 44:22 Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.

The psalmist declares that the attack of the enemy is an assault against the God of Israel.

The Apostle Paul quoted this verse in making the point that though the Christian will suffer in this world, nothing can separate us from the love of Christ.

Romans 8:35–36 "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

Psalms 44:23 Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord? arise, cast us not off for ever.

Psalms 44:24 Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and forgettest our affliction and our oppression?

Psalms 44:25 For our soul is bowed down to the dust: our belly cleaveth unto the earth.

Psalms 44:26 Arise for our help, and redeem us for thy mercies' sake.

The psalmist is asking the LORD to come to their help. He doesn't understand why the LORD is allowing them to suffer at the hands of their enemy—His enemies. It's like He is asleep. He declares that they can no longer stand on their own. He begs the LORD to help them and rescue them out of His great mercy.

Spurgeon: "God's saints may be thus abject, they may be not only in the dust, but on the dunghill with Job and Lazarus, but their day cometh, and their tide will turn, and they shall have a brave summer after their bitter winter."