

150 Days in the Psalms

*I remember the days of old;
I meditate on all that you have done;
I ponder the work of your hands.*

Nostalgia is a part of every Christmas season. I mean, when else are songs from the 1940s heard daily on the radio. I mean, what comes to mind when you hear the line *here we are as in olden days/ happy golden days of yore*? Memories of rushing downstairs on Christmas morning, eager to open presents? Or maybe the smell of a crackling fire? Perhaps it's going out to get a Christmas tree, or staying in to weather a snowstorm? Regardless, at this time of year, our minds often wander back to the days of old.

But those days of old are more than just days gone by, especially where God is concerned. As we read throughout Scripture, God is always hard at work to save and redeem His people. Indeed, he was hard at work throughout David's life doing just that. However, in those tough moments as he was on the run from Saul, or even during his reign, King David would often find it helpful to turn back to God and *remember* all that Yahweh had done for him. For from plucking him out an obscure life as a shepherd to seeing him to victory over Goliath, God had never failed David before, and he certainly would not do so in this, the hour when his enemy has made him sit in darkness like those long dead.

In the throes of the Second World War, the late Roman Catholic bishop Fulton Sheen wrote: "Evil may have its hour, but God will have His day." I cannot think of a more succinct summation of human existence. We've been through so much this year. Evil has had its run over this earth. But, in the grand scheme of things, it is only an hour. History teaches us that, in the end, God wins. The cross teaches us that, for it was followed by the resurrection. When we ponder what God has done, from Creation to Christmas; when we remember the lessons of old, we can know for certain that our deliverance is at hand. His name is Jesus. And He is all for you.

A blessed Christmas to you!

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Psalm 141

Monday



The 141st Psalm is a psalm of prayer. The psalmist prayed that he may be preserved from the ungodly teachers who appear to be friendly and speak with smooth word, when threats do not work. It is better for me, he says, that righteous teachers rebuke and condemn my righteousness than the godless praise me. And if, in the meantime, evil comes upon me, and I suffer cross and death and I must be uprooted and torn apart, still it is better that I trust in the Lord. For their hypocrisy will finally break their neck on a rock, that is, be suddenly overthrown, and come to an evil end. Then they will see how bitter is their sweet teaching, and how precious is their sour doctrine. Their own doctrine, in which they are caught as in a net, will bring them down, while the righteous passes by safely.

¹ O Lord, I call upon you; hasten to me!

Give ear to my voice when I call to you!

² Let my prayer be counted as incense before you,
and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice!

³ Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth;
keep watch over the door of my lips!

⁴ Do not let my heart incline to any evil,
to busy myself with wicked deeds
in company with men who work iniquity,
and let me not eat of their delicacies!

⁵ Let a righteous man strike me—it is a kindness;
let him rebuke me—it is oil for my head;
let my head not refuse it.

Yet my prayer is continually against their evil deeds.

⁶ When their judges are thrown over the cliff,
then they shall hear my words, for they are pleasant.

⁷ As when one plows and breaks up the earth,
so shall our bones be scattered at the mouth of Sheol.

⁸ But my eyes are toward you, O God, my Lord;
in you I seek refuge; leave me not defenseless!

- ⁹ Keep me from the trap that they have laid for me
and from the snares of evildoers!
- ¹⁰ Let the wicked fall into their own nets,
while I pass by safely.

Prayer

O Lord, our trust and confidence, come quickly to us, and consider our voice when we call upon You in our trouble and necessity. Let our prayers ascend up to You as incense. We beg of You nothing but grace to fulfill Your will. Let not our hearts be inclined to any evil. Set a watch, O Lord, before our mouth and keep the door of our lips that we, escaping all the snares of wickedness, may forever hear and obey Your sweet words, and our souls never be cast out of Your presence, but forever may rejoice in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Psalm 142

Tuesday



The 142nd Psalm is a psalm of prayer, as of one imprisoned under the false teachers who forcefully push them away from the true faith and life. For among the people of Israel it was a constant, commonplace occurrence, that the true prophets were persecuted and condemned for the sake of the true worship and Word of God. Of his all their histories show and Christ and St. Stephen also bear witness. Therefore, it is no wonder that so many psalms are written against the false prophets and teachers since it so commonly happened. It has happened in the church also since the beginning and always happens, so that one may well indeed pray to God, that He would deliver us from false teachers and from error. The history of the time of Elijah, Ahab, and Jezebel serves and an example for these psalms, that all prophets must hide themselves and crawl away. For the devil will not tolerate God's Word and His servants. Fortunately, while the devil and his servants will not endure, the Word of the Lord endures forever.

¹ With my voice I cry out to the Lord;
with my voice I plead for mercy to the Lord.

² I pour out my complaint before him;
I tell my trouble before him.

³ When my spirit faints within me,
you know my way!
In the path where I walk
they have hidden a trap for me.

⁴ Look to the right and see:
there is none who takes notice of me;
no refuge remains to me;
no one cares for my soul.

⁵ I cry to you, O Lord;
I say, "You are my refuge,
my portion in the land of the living."

⁶ Attend to my cry,
for I am brought very low!
Deliver me from my persecutors,

for they are too strong for me!
7 Bring me out of prison,
that I may give thanks to your name!
The righteous will surround me,
for you will deal bountifully with me.

Prayer

O Lord God, You are our hope, and our portion in the land of the living. Hear our cries, for You are our place to flee to, You alone are our sanctuary; Hide us under the cover of Your wings, keep us from all the dangers which multiply upon us when our spirits are heavy, and our bodies pressed with infirmities. Be always at our right hand, and assist us with the strength of Your grace, that our soul may with confidence go forth from prison and give eternal thanks to Your name, in the companies of the righteous, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Psalm 143

Wednesday



The 143rd Psalm is a psalm of prayer. The psalmist prays for grace and forgiveness of sins, in the terror of his conscience. He is nearly pressed to despair by the enemies of faith. These especially plague the distressed and timid conscience and drive it into darkness, that is, into despair and death with heavy burdens and unbearable doctrine of works, which they do not so much as touch with one of their fingers, as Christ says

But here, the psalm shows that grace must provide deliverance, not the judgement before which no man alive can stand. Of this, all the ancient histories and works of the Lord also gave witness. For all of the holy fathers of old placed their hope on God's love and grace and not on judgement. We consider the works and examples of old and are comforted, for they were delivered from sin purely by grace, just as we are.

- ¹ Hear my prayer, O Lord;
give ear to my pleas for mercy!
In your faithfulness answer me, in your righteousness!
- ² Enter not into judgment with your servant,
for no one living is righteous before you.
- ³ For the enemy has pursued my soul;
he has crushed my life to the ground;
he has made me sit in darkness like those long dead.
- ⁴ Therefore my spirit faints within me;
my heart within me is appalled.
- ⁵ I remember the days of old;
I meditate on all that you have done;
I ponder the work of your hands.
- ⁶ I stretch out my hands to you;
my soul thirsts for you like a parched land. *Selah*
- ⁷ Answer me quickly, O Lord!
My spirit fails!
Hide not your face from me,
lest I be like those who go down to the pit.

⁸ Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast love,
for in you I trust.

Make me know the way I should go,
for to you I lift up my soul.

⁹ Deliver me from my enemies, O Lord!
I have fled to you for refuge.

¹⁰ Teach me to do your will,
for you are my God!

Let your good Spirit lead me
on level ground!

¹¹ For your name's sake, O Lord, preserve my life!
In your righteousness bring my soul out of trouble!

¹² And in your steadfast love you will cut off my enemies,
and you will destroy all the adversaries of my soul,
for I am your servant.

Prayer

O Lord, our maker and our redeemer, come near to us for Your truth's and righteousness' sake. Deliver us from the guilt of all our sins and the great punishments which are due to us for the same. Enter not into judgement with us, for in Your sight no man can be justified by any worthiness of his own. Endue our souls with the righteousness of a holy faith, living and working by love. Show us the way that we should walk in, teach us to do that which pleases You, and bring Your Spirit to us, that it may never leave us till we be brought forth from this world into the land of righteousness to dwell with You eternally, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Psalm 144

Thursday



The 144th Psalm is a psalm of thanks for kings and those in authority. David, a king who must wage war and rule, gives thanks to God with this psalm. He confesses that good fortune, victory, and success, whether in conflict or in government – are the gift of God and do not come from our power and ability. Little does human wisdom know how to keep subjects under authority and to rule land and people well. For how should he handle these great things when he is nothing and passes away like a shadow?

Instead, the Lord does this. He sends forth lightning, sending discouraged and frightened hearts to the army and humble hearts among the people. Where He thus touches the mountains and the multitudes, there it is good to fight and rule, for there victory and good fortune follow – as well as this fear. Yet how can one, being only a man, bring about this fear? Only by faith, and only by God's hand can the victory be ours.

- ¹ Blessed be the Lord, my rock,
 who trains my hands for war,
 and my fingers for battle;
- ² he is my steadfast love and my fortress,
 my stronghold and my deliverer,
my shield and he in whom I take refuge,
 who subdues peoples under me.
- ³ O Lord, what is man that you regard him,
 or the son of man that you think of him?
- ⁴ Man is like a breath;
 his days are like a passing shadow.
- ⁵ Bow your heavens, O Lord, and come down!
 Touch the mountains so that they smoke!
- ⁶ Flash forth the lightning and scatter them;
 send out your arrows and rout them!
- ⁷ Stretch out your hand from on high;
 rescue me and deliver me from the many waters,
 from the hand of foreigners,
- ⁸ whose mouths speak lies

and whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood.

⁹ I will sing a new song to you, O God;
upon a ten-stringed harp I will play to you,
¹⁰ who gives victory to kings,
who rescues David his servant from the cruel sword.
¹¹ Rescue me and deliver me
from the hand of foreigners,
whose mouths speak lies
and whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood.

¹² May our sons in their youth
be like plants full grown,
our daughters like corner pillars
cut for the structure of a palace;
¹³ may our granaries be full,
providing all kinds of produce;
may our sheep bring forth thousands
and ten thousands in our fields;
¹⁴ may our cattle be heavy with young,
suffering no mishap or failure in bearing;
may there be no cry of distress in our streets!
¹⁵ Blessed are the people to whom such blessings fall!
Blessed are the people whose God is the Lord!

Prayer

O Lord, our strength, our hope, our fortress, our castle and deliverer, our defender in whom we trust: O Lord, come down and save us, send down Your hand from above, deliver us, and take us from the great waters, from those miseries and afflictions which come upon us by reason of our sins, from the condition of mortality, and from the hand of those, whose right hand is a right hand of wickedness. Give us, O Lord, victory and peace, and all the blessings of Your peace, with which You use to adorn & beautify the dwellings of the righteous, that we may be happy in the continual descent of Your favors, but above all, our happiness may consist in being Your people, and You being our God, that we may be blessed for ever in so blessed a relationship, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Psalm 145

Friday



The 145th Psalm is a psalm of thanks for the kingdom of Christ which was to come. It strongly urges the high exalted work of praising God and glorifying His power and kingdom. For Christ's kingdom and power are hidden under the cross. If the cross were not extolled through preaching, teaching, and confession, who could have ever thought of it, to say nothing of knowing it? But such is His kingdom and power that He aided the fallen, called the needy to Himself, made sinners godly, and brought the dead to life. Yes, He is the one who gives food to all, who hears His saints, and protects them.

- ¹ I will extol you, my God and King,
and bless your name forever and ever.
- ² Every day I will bless you
and praise your name forever and ever.
- ³ Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised,
and his greatness is unsearchable.

- ⁴ One generation shall commend your works to another,
and shall declare your mighty acts.
- ⁵ On the glorious splendor of your majesty,
and on your wondrous works, I will meditate.
- ⁶ They shall speak of the might of your awesome deeds,
and I will declare your greatness.
- ⁷ They shall pour forth the fame of your abundant goodness
and shall sing aloud of your righteousness.

- ⁸ The Lord is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
- ⁹ The Lord is good to all,
and his mercy is over all that he has made.

- ¹⁰ All your works shall give thanks to you, O Lord,
and all your saints shall bless you!
- ¹¹ They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom
and tell of your power,
- ¹² to make known to the children of man your mighty deeds,

and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.

¹³ Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and your dominion endures throughout all generations.

The Lord is faithful in all his words
and kind in all his works.

¹⁴ The Lord upholds all who are falling
and raises up all who are bowed down.

¹⁵ The eyes of all look to you,
and you give them their food in due season.

¹⁶ You open your hand;
you satisfy the desire of every living thing.

¹⁷ The Lord is righteous in all his ways
and kind in all his works.

¹⁸ The Lord is near to all who call on him,
to all who call on him in truth.

¹⁹ He fulfills the desire of those who fear him;
he also hears their cry and saves them.

²⁰ The Lord preserves all who love him,
but all the wicked he will destroy.

²¹ My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord,
and let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.

Prayer

O God our King, You are marvellous and worthy to be praised, and there is no end of Your greatness. Give us sanctify our hearts and lips that we may sing of Your righteousness and magnify Your glory, Your worship, and Your wondrous works. All Your works praise You, O Lord, and Your saints give thanks to You. Make us holy and righteous in Your sight. We are already the works of Your hands, and then, we have a double title to praise You. Uphold us, O Lord, that we may not fall, and lift us up when we are down; give us food for our bodies and souls, that we, being filled with the plentifulness of Your mercies here, may have our desires fulfilled and satisfied hereafter among those who fear You and give thanks to Your holy name forever. Grant this for Jesus Christ and his sake, to whom with You, O Father and Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory now and forever. Amen.

Psalm 146

Saturday



The 146th Psalm is a psalm of thanks. It teaches at the same time that one should trust in God and not in princes or men, as the abominable word, flesh, and blood do. For God is the only one who can truly help in all kinds of need, and He helps so that it can really be called being helped. Human help is so uncertain, and does not last, for man himself does not know the length of his life. But the gifts of God last for, and propell us, into eternity.

¹ Praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord, O my soul!

² I will praise the Lord as long as I live;

I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.

³ Put not your trust in princes,

in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation.

⁴ When his breath departs, he returns to the earth;

on that very day his plans perish.

⁵ Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob,
whose hope is in the Lord his God,

⁶ who made heaven and earth,
the sea, and all that is in them,
who keeps faith forever;

⁷ who executes justice for the oppressed,
who gives food to the hungry.

The Lord sets the prisoners free;

⁸ the Lord opens the eyes of the blind.

The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;
the Lord loves the righteous.

⁹ The Lord watches over the sojourners;
he upholds the widow and the fatherless,
but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

¹⁰ The Lord will reign forever,
your God, O Zion, to all generations.

Praise the Lord!

Prayer

O Lord God, you reign as King forever. Give us grace that we may make You our help and fix our hopes on You, for You only are able to give deliverance. Feed our souls, O Lord, and satisfy us with Your salvation when we hunger and thirst after righteousness. Help us when we suffer wrong, heal our backslidings, raise us when we are fallen, enlighten the eyes of our souls that we walk not in darkness and the shadow of death, that when we take our last breath and turn our face to the skies, we may reign with You in Your celestial habitation forevermore, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Psalm 147

Sunday



The 47th Psalm is a psalm of thanks for various kindnesses and mighty works of God. First, toward Israel and Jerusalem, and then to all who thirst. He gives rain and water to all creatures and does not let the least little bird go hungry, even the most obscure raven. How much more, then, shall He care for men, especially those who trust in His goodness and not in men or horses. But, above all, to Jerusalem, where His word and dwelling are, He gives peace, grain, and all they need. For Jerusalem and Israel have the advantage that they have God's Word and worship before all the nations. Therefore, He has done miracles for them. He will be more known there, in the daily wonders such as rain, snow, and ice than by the faithless who do not have God's Word, or do not heed it. These people cannot see any work or wonder of God, though they enjoy them daily with their five senses, root in them, and devour them like swine. For they do not know God because they do not hear or pay attention to His Word.

¹ Praise the Lord!

For it is good to sing praises to our God;
for it is pleasant, and a song of praise is fitting.

² The Lord builds up Jerusalem;
he gathers the outcasts of Israel.

³ He heals the brokenhearted
and binds up their wounds.

⁴ He determines the number of the stars;
he gives to all of them their names.

⁵ Great is our Lord, and abundant in power;
his understanding is beyond measure.

⁶ The Lord lifts up the humble;
he casts the wicked to the ground.

⁷ Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving;
make melody to our God on the lyre!

⁸ He covers the heavens with clouds;
he prepares rain for the earth;
he makes grass grow on the hills.

⁹ He gives to the beasts their food,

and to the young ravens that cry.

¹⁰ His delight is not in the strength of the horse,
nor his pleasure in the legs of a man,

¹¹ but the Lord takes pleasure in those who fear him,
in those who hope in his steadfast love.

¹² Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem!

Praise your God, O Zion!

¹³ For he strengthens the bars of your gates;
he blesses your children within you.

¹⁴ He makes peace in your borders;
he fills you with the finest of the wheat.

¹⁵ He sends out his command to the earth;
his word runs swiftly.

¹⁶ He gives snow like wool;
he scatters frost like ashes.

¹⁷ He hurls down his crystals of ice like crumbs;
who can stand before his cold?

¹⁸ He sends out his word, and melts them;
he makes his wind blow and the waters flow.

¹⁹ He declares his word to Jacob,
his statutes and rules to Israel.

²⁰ He has not dealt thus with any other nation;
they do not know his rules.

Praise the Lord!

Prayer

O Lord God, whose power is great, and whose wisdom is infinite, give us broken and contrite hearts, meek spirits, a fear of Your Name, and a trust in Your mercy, that You may rise upon us with healing in Your wings, giving us medicine to heal all our sicknesses of the soul, feeding us when we call upon You. Give us knowledge of Your Word, that we may build up Jerusalem and repair the breaches of Your Church, that we may sing praises to You, O God, and be thankful to all eternity, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.