

Release my Soul

*“When I begin to lose hope, you [already] know what I am experiencing...
Release my soul from prison so that I may give thanks to your name”
(Psalm 142:3,7)*

The Lord wants to release your soul today from some circumstances that have been pressing in on you. David felt imprisoned in his soul because of the circumstances when he wrote Psalm 142. Beloved, God does not always deliver you out of circumstances which may seem too difficult for you, but He is very much with you.

And let's face it, these are truly difficult days where finances, work pressures, family pressures, and uncertainty fills hearts. Many are feeling hopeless, frazzled and broken, not to mention there are multitudes who are discontented with life.

Discontented is a picture of today's church, is running rampant among the Christians. All one has to do is look at the denominational church system which seems to be in the throes of death with almost no influence in the secular world because of it. No wonder we've lost most of our influence in the world! The Hebrew word for discontented means “bitterness of the soul” (nephesh), which can translate to mean the seat of your emotions and passions which is the core of your very being.

The “bitterness of the soul” can enter through a variety of ways bringing painful consequences in our life if we don't deal with it. So many times we face an enemy or circumstances that evolve into a huge obstacles. Much of it is due to today's world where we are surrounded continually by the pressures that drive our society. More and more we are seeing distress written all over people (believers and non-believers).

People hearts are full of grief from deep disappointments or deep distress. These arduous trials require great exertion filled with laborious lifestyles of difficulty. Many believers have been wounded by church leaders with selfish and vain ambitions. The toll of these pressures are mounting as people are harassed from the mental, emotional and physical pressures.

We see in I Samuel 22, the setting behind Psalm 142, and the location where it was written (Cave of Adullam). David wrote this Psalm while on the run from Saul from which he was experiencing the bitterness of the soul. Living in a cave, running for his life, now betrayed by those he loved! And you know what? This isn't the only Psalm he wrote there. Psalms 34, 57 and 142 are often coined “from the Cave Psalms.” These Psalms are songs of lament.

A lament psalm is composed under the darkest times of the soul when it is believed that lostness, anger, or despair is deeply felt (*Mark D. Futato, Interpreting the Psalms: An Exegetical Handbook, Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2007, pg 150*).

David cried out to God in deep emotional and physical distress because of the life he was being forced to live. His life was in danger. He had lost his wife. He was ostracized from the king's household and lost his place of honor. He had lost his dignity and was forced to hide in a cave (1 Samuel: 20). David speaks of being overwhelmed and has no person on whom he can depend.

“When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, Then You knew my path. In the way in which I walk They have secretly set a snare for me. 4 Look on my right hand and see, For there is no one who acknowledges me; Refuge has failed me; No one cares for my soul!” (Psalm 142:3-4).

Often during times of affliction, a person feels despondent, alone, and friendless. We must remember that this is a spiritual battle. We can learn so much from the Word of God!!! God's word is written to guide us as we press through in our personal lives, and encourage others with that same hope. We are never truly alone even when we feel like it!

Only twice in this short psalm does David present the positive side to his ordeal (v.5 he recognizes that God is his true refuge and in the second half of v. 7, David recognizes that he is surrounded by guardian angels and that God will bless him.

“Pay attention to my cry for help because I am very weak. Rescue me from those who pursue me because they are too strong for me. 7 Release my soul from prison so that I may give thanks to your name” (Psalm 142:5,7).

David's confessed he could not see into the future, but he knew that God could and that God would order his future as well (Psalm 142:5-7). Yet David, while in a hopeless situation, calls out to God pouring out his heart to God and appealing to God for help to release his soul.

*Heavenly Father,
I come to you in Jesus name. I ask you to release my soul from prison like David. Forgive me for allowing circumstances to burden my heart and soul. Lord help me to avoid idolizing my problems. Thank you for reminding me today that it is not my problem that should be the center of my thought and focus. I ask You to help me make You be the center of my affections, I ask that You would renew a right spirit in me. Lord, I confess there is no refuge but You my God. You must be the center of my focus and my only guide. You are the One who is my refuge and the One who direct my steps. You are the One who brings clarity and changes my heart. You are the One who re-organizes my priorities and sorts out my selfishness. When I turn to You and focus on You my problem will become inconsequential in the shadow of Your beauty and grace. I want to worship You my God. I confess only you oh God can revive my faint spirit and restore my heart. In Jesus Name.*

Rev. Dr. Gina Cobb

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q51DxEKU30>