

(How to Understand the KJV Bible) 35 Psalm 142

by Keith Simons

In Psalm 142, David expresses his desperate need for God's help while reflecting on his isolation and the importance of vocal prayer in seeking refuge.

Duration: 24:33

Scripture: 1 Samuel 22:1, Psalm 142:1

Topics: "KJV Bible", "Seeking Refuge in God", "Prayer"

Description

Keith Simons teaches on Psalm 142, emphasizing David's desperate prayer while hiding in the cave of Adullam from King Saul. He highlights how David cried out to the Lord, expressing his overwhelming troubles and seeking refuge in God rather than in the cave. Simons explains that David's heartfelt supplication was not just a call for help but a deep yearning for God's presence and support in his time of need. The sermon illustrates the importance of vocalizing our prayers and the assurance that God knows our paths even when we feel trapped. Ultimately, David's faith in God as his refuge and portion serves as a powerful reminder of God's faithfulness in our struggles.

Transcript

Where do you go when you must escape to save your life? Well, in 1 Samuel 22 and verse 1, it says, David therefore departed thence and escaped to the cave Adullam. That's the cave which is referred to in the heading of today's Psalm, Psalm 142. But of course, where David went when his life was in danger, was not to a cave, he went to the Lord in prayer.

Welcome, my name is Keith Symons, I'm a Bible teacher from England and I present these talks on how to understand the King James Version of the Bible by going through each week a psalm, verse by verse, and word by word. The heading of Psalm 142 is Maskil of David, that means a teaching psalm, a psalm or a poem that David wrote in order to teach people. Then the heading continues, a prayer when he was in the cave.

So this is a specific prayer that David either prayed while he was in the safety or seeking the safety of the cave Adullam, and it may be a prayer to remember the time when he was in that cave and he was seeking God for help in his desperate situation with King Saul and an army of soldiers chasing after him, trying to find him in order to kill him. Verse 1, David writes, I cried unto the Lord with my voice, with my voice unto

the Lord did I make supplication, with my voice. In other words, this was not a silent prayer.

God knows the prayers that we pray in our minds and in our hearts. God hears our prayers even though we don't speak them aloud, but David emphasises by repeating it twice that he cried with his voice, he prayed with his voice, he prayed aloud. He wasn't ashamed for other people to hear it, but he wanted God to know it.

He wanted to declare it from deep within him and pour out his needs before God. Now the two halves of this verse may sound almost as if David said the same thing twice. I cried unto the Lord with my voice means the same as with my voice unto the Lord did I make my supplication.

It means I prayed to God. But there's a deeper meaning here and if we look into the meanings of the Hebrew words, we get an idea of that deeper meaning. I cried, that means literally both in English and in Hebrew a call for help.

If you cry to someone, you shout help, help, you express your desperate need. But if you make your supplication, well that means to seek someone's favour, that means to ask someone to show kindness to you, that means to make a request to them. Yes a call of help may attract someone's attention, but David needed to do more than to attract God's attention.

David needed to make his supplication, he needed to tell God what support and what kindness he needed for God to rescue him. Verse two, I poured out my complaint before him, I showed before him my trouble, I poured out my complaint. In the Hebrew, the word for complaint there means his meditation, his inner thought.

It wasn't enough for David just to have his request in his mind, no, David wanted to express it, so he expressed his inner thoughts, like you take a cup of water and the water remains in the cup until you pour it out, and then it becomes clear what it is in the cup or what has been in the cup. So David wouldn't just think about his troubles, he wouldn't just meditate on what to do, no, he expressed it to God, he poured it out before God. I showed before him my trouble, should of course is the old spelling for showed.

My trouble, that means literally tightness. David was in a restricted space, he was in a cave and he couldn't just go anywhere. If he left that cave, maybe because he needed food or he needed water, he was placing himself in great danger, maybe he only felt safe to leave at night, maybe he didn't even feel safe then, he was restricted.

We'll see the word prison appearing later on in verse 7. David was restricted and he expressed that before God, but it wasn't just his body that was restricted, this was a on his inner self, his real person, on his spirit, on his soul and we'll see references to the spirit and to the soul of David in verses 3 and 4. David was in trouble, he needed help and he needed freedom, not just for his body but for his spirit, for his soul, for his inner self. Verse 3, when my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path. My spirit was overwhelmed, my spirit, the part of me that should, the part of me that should be in the closest relationship with God, the part of me that knows God and that loves God, felt overwhelmed.

Shrouded or covered with darkness, it felt as if darkness was trying to take away my spirit and take my life from me. David wasn't just concerned about his body dying, he knew that King Saul was trying to kill his body but he also knew the promises that God had made to him, he also knew that God had promised to make him king and ruler over Israel, he knew that his death would defeat those promises and his

relationship with God for which he'd been set apart by anointing by the prophet Samuel was therefore in danger by King Saul's plans. David's felt overwhelmed, it felt covered with darkness, with the great danger he was in.

How could David escape? How could David leave that cave that had become his prison? How could he ever become king of Israel? But God knew his path, then thou knewest my path. God knew where he was going, even though David felt as if he couldn't go anywhere, even though David felt totally trapped, yet God knew where he was, God knew where he was going, God knew everything about him. David continues, second half of verse three, in the way wherein I have, sorry, in the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me.

The way wherein I walked, that's another way of expressing a path, as we had in the first half of the verse. The way that David was going, the route he had through life, and maybe literally in the paths that he took to leave the cave and get his food, they had privily laid a snare for him. A snare is the kind of trap that you use for catching a small wild animal or a bird, and they've privily laid it.

In other words, privily means secretly, so they've hidden this snare, they've hidden this trap. And if there is a trap hidden in the way wherein you're walking, if there is a trap hidden in front of you, well then you might fall into it. And because it's privily laid, because it's laid secretly, because it's hidden, because you can't see it, you can do nothing to avoid it.

Your life is in danger and you can do nothing about the situation that is nothing but trust in God. Now there's a story here about a friend of mine who was a landlord, the owner of a house, and his tenant decided that he didn't want to pay his rent. So the landlord was coming to collect the rent, and this tenant dug a trench, a deep hole, in front of his house and covered it over because he thought his landlord was going to fall in, and that way maybe he could escape paying the rent.

Well I have to tell you that here in England we have postmen, and it wasn't the landlord who fell into the hole, but in England, postmen come right to your door and they put the letters through a letter box, a little hole in your door, and this postman, I'm afraid, didn't see the trap and fell into it and he broke his leg. Well that was the kind of trap that was laid for David, but they wanted to do much more than to break his leg. This was a trap to catch him so that they could kill him.

We don't know whether Saul's soldiers did actually make traps in the hope that David would fall into them, or whether this is just a word picture, but he uses this word picture in a number of the Psalms. That's how much danger David felt to be in. But maybe there was someone who could help David, maybe there was another person who would look after David in these troubles and defend him from these troubles.

Well David did look for that person. Verse four, I looked on my right hand and beheld, but there was no man that would know me. Refuge failed me.

No man cared for my soul. David looked and he beheld. That's a typical Hebrew form where the words are used much more carefully than we would use them.

To look is to glance, to take a little look, not to look much, but to behold is to look very carefully, to look in detail, to study the situation. David both looked and he beheld. He looked on his right hand.

Why did he look there? Well David was a soldier and he knew how Israel's soldiers fought, of course, in war. And they fought in pairs. The two men would support each other and the one man would carry a

spear typically and the other a sword.

David would carry a sword and the man with the spear would stand on his right hand to defend him from any enemy who tried to approach him so that David could fight in a safer way. But the reference might be to other things too because in a court of law the person who was defending you, your lawyer, would by custom stand on your right hand side and then at a meal you would invite your friend to sit next to you and he would sit, you've guessed it, on your right hand side. And so maybe David means friend.

Maybe he means a defender who would support him in court. Maybe he means that he looked for another soldier who could fight with him against these enemies. He looked but there was no one who would do it.

There was no one who knew him. There was no one who was willing to support him and look after him in that situation. Maybe there was no one who even could.

Now if we look at the history of David escaping on this occasion, he went first to the chief priest and the chief priest was worried because there was no one with him. He came to the chief priest on his own. 1 Samuel 21 verse 1. The chief priest said to David, why art thou alone and no man with thee? But we know that soon afterwards David did have people with him.

When he arrived at the cave for Dullam, it says 1 Samuel 22 verse 1, second half of the verse, he escaped to the cave for Dullam and when his brethren and all his father's house heard it they went down thither to him. So there were people who went to help David and to support him and in the end while David was still in that cave he was the leader, the captain, over 400 men. So maybe David is remembering here the time when he initially escaped and he was alone but maybe he's describing something else because he says in verse 4, refuge failed me, no man cared for my soul.

Refuge failed me, refuge means a safe place. If refuge fails you then the safe place is not safe at all. This cave for Dullam where he looked to be safe was a place of great danger but what's the second half of the verse? No man cared for my soul.

So David is worried here not so much about his body but about his soul, his inner life. David, as I've already said, was a soldier at this time. As such he knew about life and death, he knew his life was constantly in danger, he accepted the danger of his life.

He accepted that he might die at any time in fighting his battles. He wasn't worried about the death of his body, he was much more worried about his soul, his inner life, his relationship with God. No man could see him in this desperate situation.

Yes they understood he was in danger, yes they went to support him but could they care for his soul? Could they support him in the emotional disturbance that he felt in the cave of Dullam? Could they support him when his hopes to become king of Israel, God's promised him that he would become king of Israel, seemed in such danger. With David's life would be the defeat, with David's death would be the defeat of God's promises to David. So no wonder David turned to God, no wonder he prayed for him, to him, no wonder he cried to the living God.

Verse 5, I cried unto thee O Lord, I said thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living. If the cave of Dullam, the cave called it Dullam, that refuge had failed David, well he knew a refuge who would not fail him. He knew a safe place where he could be, that safe place was with God.

Thou, God, art my refuge. David had confidence in God and he also prayed to God, thou art my portion in the land of the living, my portion, my place, my inheritance. Other people in Israel looked to the land as their inheritance but David looked to God himself, he said God it's you who keeps me alive, it's you who looks after me, it's you who I desire, it's you who can rescue me, you are the living God, you can save me.

Verse 6, attend unto my cry, attend here means hear my cry, my prayer, my desperate prayer, but David's more specific when he says attend to, to attend means to be present with someone, he's asking God to be present, to act in response to his desperate prayer and why should God act, why should God attend his prayer, why should God choose to save David from this situation because David's situation is desperate, David cannot save himself, I am brought very low says David, to be in the word picture, to be in a high place, is to be in a great place, to be in a place of David was in a place where he was just a refugee, just an escapee, just a prisoner, he was brought very low, he'd been reduced to nothing we might say, he was so unimportant, so David turned to God, he prays deliver me from my persecutors for they are stronger than I, David didn't think that he could defeat these enemies, he knew they were more powerful than him, he calls them my persecutors, the Hebrew literally means my pursuers, those who are chasing after me, those who are trying to catch me, to kill me, deliver me, save me from them.

Verse 7, bring my soul out of prison, now David was not literally in a prison but that cave felt like prison and his soul, his inner life felt trapped in it, and David prays to God that he could be freed from that situation, and he declares to God that I may praise thy name, yes when God rescues David that's going to be a wonderful reason for David to praise God, he wants to bring honour to the name of God, to God's reputation, to the report about God's greatness, he wants to declare that, and he wants to declare that on the basis that God has rescued him, and God has carried out his promises to him, now we've heard that David's brethren and his father's house, in other words David's relatives had come to support him, but more people than that would support him, because all of, the end of the verse, the righteous shall compass me about, for thou shalt deal bountifully with me, to compass me about means to surround me, the righteous means good people, it means God's people, it means the people who are loyal to God and to serve God, they're going to join with David, and David is no longer going to be alone, once David could say, verse 4, no man cared for my soul, but now he can say, yes God is answering my prayer, the righteous shall compass me about, God's people will gather with me and they will be a great company, a great crowd of people, who will join me to praise God with me, for they all shall have a reason to praise God, because thou shalt deal bountifully with me, you're going to deal generously to me, you're going to free me from this prison and bring me into the land of promise, where I will be with God's people and together we will praise God for the wonderful rescue that God has given to me.

In a moment I'm going to read you the whole Psalm, but first my email address, 333kjb at gmail.com, it will be wonderful to hear from you, just a brief note telling me which country you're in and which of these podcasts you've been listening to, and now I'll read you the email address again in case you're writing it down, 333kjb at gmail.com, but now here's a whole of Psalm 142, Maskil of David, a prayer when he was in the cave, I cried unto the Lord with my voice, with my voice unto the Lord did I make my supplication, I poured out my complaint before him, I shewed before him my trouble, when my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path, in the way wherein I have walked, in the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me, I looked on my right hand and beheld, but there was no man that would know me, refuge failed me, no man cared for my soul, I cried unto thee O Lord, I said thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living, attendant to my cry, for I am brought very low, deliver me from my persecutors, for they are stronger than I, bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name,

the righteous shall compass me about, for thou shalt deal bountifully with me.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/30/SID30051.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/keith-simons/how-to-understand-the-kjv-bible-35-psalm-142/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net