

We have certainly been learning that God will allow trouble to hit every one of us even when we have not done anything to deserve it. One reason why God does this is to bring us to the point where we totally and completely depend on Him for victory and not depend on ourselves.

When we are hit with trouble, it is critical that we respond in a way that keeps things moving favorably with God. We want the course to continue to the point where we survive the trouble and receive the blessings of God. That is the essence of Psalm 44.

Now you will notice that Psalm 44 is a “maskil.” What that means is that this is a Psalm that is to be studied very carefully and understood accurately because this is a Psalm that can lead to great happiness and blessing. By virtue of the fact that it was a maskil “of the sons of Korah,” we know that one does not need have a perfect pedigree to experience the blessings of God. The family of Korah had its share of problems, but by God’s grace they still served. By virtue of the fact that this Psalm is for the choir director, we know that this Psalm was to be publicly taught and understood.

What we learn from this Psalm is this:

GOD WILL, AT TIMES, PERMIT HIS FAITHFUL PEOPLE TO EXPERIENCE TERRIBLE TROUBLE FROM ENEMIES SO THAT HIS FAITHFUL PEOPLE MAY LEARN TO TOTALLY DEPEND IN HIM.

Whether it was King David or the nation Israel, both had seen God do some dramatic things in the course of history. David had personally fought a lion and a bear. David fought Goliath and the Philistines and his hands had literally won the fight. Israel had physically beaten one power after another. Apparently God permits His faithful people to experience trouble from a variety of enemies so that His people will remember and learn that they did not bring about the victory, He did.

Now suppose God sends trouble into our lives for this purpose—to teach us that victory is solely and totally from Him. What should we do? How should we respond? That is precisely what this Psalm is all about.

Now there are five points that are communicated in this Psalm:

POINT #1 – Remember God’s past acts of deliverance . **44:1-3**

The first thing we notice from **verse 1** is that the truth about God was communicated to the children by their fathers. When fathers are doing their job, they will tell their children about God and that does tend to make a lasting impression.

Now specifically what the fathers taught them was that God was the one who took Israel to a land and drove out the nations from that land and planted them in different places because He favored Israel (**44:2-3**). Remembering this is a critical key to survival.

When David or Israel found themselves surrounded by trouble, one of the things they did was to remember how God had delivered them in the past, which they had heard from their fathers. They thought back to the days of Exodus and the dramatic way that God delivered Israel and led her to her land. She was not delivered by military prowess; she was delivered by God.

One of the rich benefits of reading the Word of God is that we read real life accounts of God's supernatural deliverance in some of the darkest hours. We read about three young Hebrew men who were thrown into a fiery furnace and came out unsinged. We read about a Daniel who was thrown into a lion's den but came out unbitten. These are great stories to remember because those stories teach us that God does deliver those who love Him. Those stories teach that those who are faithful to God can depend on God for help.

When surrounded by insurmountable forces, it is good for us to remember these things. Someone has said, "If we forget God's past, we will be ignorant of God's present."

POINT #2 – Tell God that our trust is in Him for deliverance. **44:4-8**

In **verse 4**, there is a specific mention of Jacob. We may remember that it was Jacob who became the nation Israel. Now it is specifically stated in this verse that Israel's King is God. Jesus Christ is our Savior, but He is Israel's King and He will give her a land.

Notice also from **verse 4** that the noun victories is a plural noun. God will give several victories over enemies to establish His ability to deliver. Not just one victory but multiple victories.

It is clear that the writer was certain that God could and would do what He had done in the past, specifically bring about deliverance.

God wants His people totally dependent on Him. One of the best things we can do is to remind God that we believe that victory totally and completely belongs to Him. God does not want His people trusting in themselves for deliverance; He wants us boasting about Him and His deliverance.

It is God who delivers from adversaries and sometimes he permits adversaries to be numerous so that He can demonstrate this reality. J. Vernon McGee said there are many people we should turn over to the Lord, not only for salvation but for vengeance, especially those who are trying to hinder from spreading God's precious Word (*Psalm*, p.749).

Now we may notice that the end of **verse 8** ends with the word "selah" which means stop and think about it. I specifically think the primary thought is for Israel and for the fact that her God/King will come and save her nationally.

This does have application to the Great Tribulation. God will allow the whole world to turn against Israel. There will be an extermination edict against the Jew that will be worldwide and in the eleventh hour, He will step in and show His strength and His love for Israel.

The problem with Israel is the same problem with us; our pride. We want to lay claim to victory because we have been involved in the war. But God wants the glory and sometimes He permits His people to be surrounded by adversaries so that He can get it.

POINT #3 – Acknowledge God’s sovereignty in our difficulties. **44:9-16**

We may, at times, fight a battle and we may lose it. According to **verse 9**, it is possible for us to go out to battle completely armed with everything except God. We can get out in the battle and be so scared we turn back. Yet, even in those moments our God is still sovereign. Make no mistake about this point—even when we are being dishonored and reproached, God is still sovereign and He is the one who permits the presence of enemies in our world.

If people dishonor us, God permits it (**44:9**). If people take advantage of us, God permits it (**44:10**). If we are scattered and wounded, God has permitted it (**44:11**). If we seem to be of no value, God has permitted it (**44:12**). If we are laughed at and scorned, God has permitted it (**44:13-14**). If we are humiliated, God has permitted it (**44:16**).

One reason why God permits this is because He is trying to teach us to totally and completely depend on Him for our deliverance and not ourselves. Spurgeon said, “It is well to trace the hand of God in our sorrows, for it is surely there.”

POINT #4 – Acknowledge the truth of our faithfulness to God. **44:17-22**

Whatever the immediate battle which was lost, it was not due to faithlessness.

Here is an extremely important point. The Psalmist establishes that he has remained faithful to God. He had not turned from the Word of God even though these enemies were doing these terrible things against him.

If he or others had forgotten God or had fallen into idolatry, then the difficulties would be deserved. But he had not. Even during difficult times the writer remained faithful to God.

Faithfulness to God is proved during times that are difficult, not times that are easy. Maintaining a high regard for God and continuing to pursue His Word when you are surrounded by hostile forces is real spiritual integrity. That is the kind of integrity this writer had.

The tug is a tug of the heart (**44:18**). Trouble can cause some to turn back to Egypt, but not those who will see God do great things. It is very important that we talk to God openly and honestly.

We need to make sure we have not done things to bring the terrible trouble onto ourselves. If we remain faithful through difficult times of great opposition, we may expect we will see a miraculous deliverance just like the fathers of old.

If we are faithful, there will be enemies who will come after us. We will wander around and be hunted and hounded. There will be those who will desire to attack and destroy one faithful. In fact, it is just as **verse 22** says; there will be those who want to slaughter you. All we have to do to prove that point is to read *Foxes Book of Martyrs*.

POINT #5 – Specifically ask God for His help. **44:23-26**

Having learned these lessons and having established his faithfulness, the writer asks God to deliver. The spiritual climate was very low (**44:25**). There was real emotional and physical depression and it was time for God to intervene.

There are some key steps to take in times of trouble:

- 1) Remember God's past deliverance.
- 2) Continue to believe God can and will deliver.
- 3) Acknowledge God's sovereignty in everything.
- 4) Stay faithful and committed to God and His Word, no matter what.
- 5) Ask God to deliver.