



## PRAYER SERVICE WEDNESDAY, August 11<sup>TH</sup>, 2021

Join us at 7pm in the Sanctuary or on [Facebook](#) and use this guide to pray along with us.

- **INTRO**

Welcome to Prayer Service! Tonight in our journey through the Psalms we're looking at Psalm 44: it's a cry for help after a time when Israel seems to have suffered a devastating defeat, but it begins by praising God for past victories. As we find so often in the Psalms, there is so much wisdom here for the life of prayer and the life of faith. Take time to breath it in, relate it to your own journey, and let it guide your prayer for others. Let's feast on God's Word and seek his presence. *Let's pray.*

- **PAUSE**

"As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-center my scattered senses upon the presence of God." (Pete Greig, Lectio365)

"Jesus, I give everything and everyone to you. I give everything and everyone to you, God."  
(John Eldredge, Daily Pause)

*Pause and pray.*

As we read **Psalm 44** together, be open with the parts that confuse or challenge you; meditate on the parts that stand out to you:

***<sup>1</sup> We have heard it with our ears, O God; our ancestors have told us what you did in their days, in days long ago. <sup>2</sup> With your hand you drove out the nations and planted our ancestors; you crushed the peoples and made our ancestors flourish. <sup>3</sup> It was not by their sword that they won the land, nor did their arm bring them victory; it was your right hand, your arm, and the light of your face, for you loved them. <sup>4</sup> You are my King and my God, who decrees victories for Jacob. <sup>5</sup> Through you we push back our enemies; through your name we trample our foes. <sup>6</sup> I put no trust in my bow, my sword does not bring me victory; <sup>7</sup> but you give us victory over our enemies, you put our adversaries to shame. <sup>8</sup> In God we make our boast all day long, and we will praise your name forever. <sup>9</sup> But now you have rejected and humbled us; you no longer go out with our armies. <sup>10</sup> You made us retreat before the enemy, and our adversaries have plundered us. <sup>11</sup> You gave us up to be devoured like sheep and have scattered us among the nations. <sup>12</sup> You sold your people for a pittance, gaining nothing from their sale. <sup>13</sup> You have made us a reproach to our neighbors, the scorn and derision of those around us. <sup>14</sup> You have made us a byword among the nations; the peoples shake their heads at us. <sup>15</sup> I live in disgrace all day long, and my face is covered with shame <sup>16</sup> at the taunts of those who reproach and revile me, because of the enemy, who is bent on revenge. <sup>17</sup> All this came upon us, though we had not forgotten you; we had not been false to your covenant. <sup>18</sup> Our hearts had not turned back; our feet had not strayed from your path. <sup>19</sup> But you crushed us and made us a haunt for jackals; you covered us over with deep darkness. <sup>20</sup> If we had forgotten the name of our God or spread out our hands to a foreign god, <sup>21</sup> would not God have discovered it, since he knows the secrets of the heart? <sup>22</sup> Yet for your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered. <sup>23</sup> Awake, Lord! Why do you sleep? Rouse yourself! Do not reject us forever...***

***24 Why do you hide your face and forget our misery and oppression? 25 We are brought down to the dust; our bodies cling to the ground. 26 Rise up and help us; rescue us because of your unfailing love.***

• **SONG**

**“It Is Well”**

**VERSE 1**

When peace like a river  
Attendeth my way  
When sorrows like sea billows roll  
Whatever my lot Thou hast taught me to say  
It is well, It is well with my soul

**CHORUS**

It is well with my soul  
It is well, it is well with my soul

**VERSE 2**

Tho' Satan should buffet  
Tho' trials should come  
Let this blest assurance control  
That Christ hath regarded  
My helpless estate  
And hath shed His own blood  
For my soul

**VERSE 3**

My sin O the bliss  
Of this glorious tho't  
My sin not in part but the whole  
Is nailed to the cross  
And I bear it no more  
Praise the Lord  
Praise the Lord O my soul

**VERSE 4**

And Lord haste the day  
When the faith shall be sight  
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll  
The trump shall resound  
And the Lord shall descend  
Even so it is well  
With my soul

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• **PSALM 44:1-8**

***1 We have heard it with our ears, O God; our ancestors have told us what you did in their days, in days long ago. 2 With your hand you drove out the nations and planted our ancestors; you crushed the peoples and made our ancestors flourish. 3 It was not by their sword that they won the land, nor did their arm bring them victory; it was your right hand, your arm, and the light of your face, for you loved them. 4 You are my King and my God, who decrees victories for Jacob. 5 Through you we push back our enemies; through your name we trample our foes. 6 I put no trust in my bow, my sword does not bring me victory; 7 but you give us victory over our enemies, you put our adversaries to shame. 8 In God we make our boast all day long, and we will praise your name forever.***

*“We have heard it with our ears, O God; our ancestors have told us what you did in their days...” We know from reading the whole Psalm that this prayer is coming from a place of devastating loss and frustration—the community feels abandoned, like God is letting them down and rejecting them even though they think they’ve served him faithfully. If you’ve ever felt something like that in your walk, you know how difficult that. Yet, the profound wisdom of the Psalms reminds us again and again that we need to *look back to look ahead*. When times of trouble come, times of doubt, struggle, loss, hardship, and we face the battles: *remember all that God has already done* as a foundation for trusting in the unknown future. *“You are my King and my God, who decrees victories for Jacob. Through you we push back our enemies...I put no trust in my bow, my sword does not bring my victory; but you give us victory...in God we make our boast all day long, and we will praise your name forever.”**

Is there a situation you're facing right now that threatens you, looming like a big storm cloud or an army of enemies on the march against you? Or do you know someone who's in the midst of this? Claim these words as your worship for your life and those you love: *"You are my King and my God, who decrees victories for Jacob. Through you we push back our enemies...I put no trust in my bow, my sword does not bring my victory; but you give us victory...in God we make our boast all day long, and we will praise your name forever."* Pause and Pray.

- **PSALM 44:9-22**

***<sup>9</sup> But now you have rejected and humbled us; you no longer go out with our armies. <sup>10</sup> You made us retreat before the enemy, and our adversaries have plundered us. <sup>11</sup> You gave us up to be devoured like sheep and have scattered us among the nations. <sup>12</sup> You sold your people for a pittance, gaining nothing from their sale. <sup>13</sup> You have made us a reproach to our neighbors, the scorn and derision of those around us. <sup>14</sup> You have made us a byword among the nations; the peoples shake their heads at us. <sup>15</sup> I live in disgrace all day long, and my face is covered with shame <sup>16</sup> at the taunts of those who reproach and revile me, because of the enemy, who is bent on revenge. <sup>17</sup> All this came upon us, though we had not forgotten you; we had not been false to your covenant. <sup>18</sup> Our hearts had not turned back; our feet had not strayed from your path. <sup>19</sup> But you crushed us and made us a haunt for jackals; you covered us over with deep darkness. <sup>20</sup> If we had forgotten the name of our God or spread out our hands to a foreign god, <sup>21</sup> would not God have discovered it, since he knows the secrets of the heart? <sup>22</sup> Yet for your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.***

It's incredibly painful to face defeat and loss when it feels like you've been doing everything right. Job knows about this kind of suffering, Paul and the New Testament Christians know about this kind of suffering, *Jesus knows about this kind of suffering.* And Jesus *transforms* this kind of suffering. When Paul quoted this Psalm to the Christians facing great hardship and persecution in Rome, he followed it up with this: *"No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord,"* (Romans 8:37-39). Reread the passage above slowly and prayerfully. See what word or phrase stands out to you, and take time to reflect on it, pray on it. Pray for your walk of faith or for others who come to mind. *Pause and Pray.*

- **PSALM 44:23-25**

***<sup>23</sup> Awake, Lord! Why do you sleep? Rouse yourself! Do not reject us forever. <sup>24</sup> Why do you hide your face and forget our misery and oppression? <sup>25</sup> We are brought down to the dust; our bodies cling to the ground. <sup>26</sup> Rise up and help us; rescue us because of your unfailing love.***

Another common theme we see the Psalms teaching us about prayer is *honesty and boldness*—sometimes a shocking level of boldness! The truth is, whatever your thinking and feeling as you pray, *God already knows it*—so just go ahead and say it, don't hold back, God's big enough to handle your scattered emotions through all the ups and downs. Just be real and let him meet you where you are, you'll often find faith and hope rising in you as you're honest with yourself and God about what you're really going through. Think again about a challenge you're facing, a challenge someone else is facing, or an issue in the world you want to intercede in prayer for. Make these words your own: *"Rise up and help us; rescue us because of your unfailing love."* Pause and Pray.

- **SONG**

**"Defender"**

### **VERSE 1**

You go before I know  
That You've even gone to win my war  
You come back with the head of my enemy  
You come back and You call it my victory

### **VERSE 2**

You go before I know  
That You've even gone to win my war  
Your love becomes my greatest defense  
It leads me from the dry wilderness

### **PRE-CHORUS**

All I did was praise  
All I did was worship  
All I did was bow down  
All I did was stay still

### **CHORUS**

Hallelujah You have saved me,  
so much better your way  
Hallelujah great Defender,  
so much better your way

### **VERSE 3**

You know before I do  
Where my heart can seek to find Your truth  
Your mercy is the shade I'm living in  
You restore my faith and hope again

### **BRIDGE**

When I thought I lost me  
You knew where I left me  
You reintroduced me to Your love  
You picked up all my pieces  
Put me back together  
You are the defender of my heart

### **ENDING**

All I did was praise  
All I need to do is worship  
Lord I will just bow down  
I'm just gonna stay still

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### • **CLOSING**

***“Father, help me to live this day to the full, being true to you in every way. Jesus, help me to give myself away to others, being kind to everyone I meet. Spirit, help me to love the lost, proclaiming Christ in all I do and say. Amen.”*** (Pete Greig, Lectio365)