

A Prayer for Guidance

by Chuck Smith

David's prayer for guidance and protection in the midst of desperate situations, trusting in God's sovereignty and love.

Duration: 25:05

Scripture: Genesis 1:1, Exodus 20:3, Psalm 46:1, Psalm 143:7, Matthew 6:33, John 14:26, Revelation 22:21

Topics: "Guidance"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor Chuck Smith reflects on the vastness of God and the insignificance of human beings in comparison. He describes sitting on the beach, contemplating the sun, the earth, and the stars, and feeling overwhelmed by the creator of the universe. Pastor Chuck then transitions to the petitions of David in Psalm 143, where he prays for God to hear him and bless his people. He asks for protection, prosperity, and peace, and acknowledges the fleeting nature of human life. Ultimately, Pastor Chuck encourages listeners to draw near to God and seek His power and guidance in their lives.

Transcript

Oh, let the Son of God enfold you With His Spirit and His love Let Him fill your heart and satisfy your soul
Oh, let Him have the things that mold you And His Spirit like a dove Will descend upon your life And make you whole
Now with today's message, here's Pastor Chuck. Now the petitions, this is the background to the prayer. Now the petitions of David are, first of all, hear me.

Hear me speedily. How many times does David pray, Lord, make no tearing, you know. Hurry up, Lord.

If you would pray before you got into such a desperate situation, it probably wouldn't be so that I would have to pray, Lord, right now. It's too bad that we wait so long before we pray about a situation. We wait until it's absolutely desperate and hopeless, and then we pray.

And thus, as we pray, usually it's at that point where we need help immediately. Hear me speedily, oh Lord. For my spirit, fail it.

I'm just wiped out, Lord. I have no reserve left. I'm empty.

Hide not Thy face from me, lest I be like those who go down to the pit. Lord, if You hide Your face from me, I'm through. I've had it.

I'm dead. Cause me to hear Thy loving kindness in the morning. Lord, let me hear Your words of comfort, Your words of assurance in the morning.

There is that scripture that says that crying endureth for the night, but joy cometh in the morning. It seems like when a person is very, very ill, it's the night hours that are the hardest. If they can just make it through tonight, you know, tomorrow, with the dawning of a new day, seems to be no hope and new strength.

And so, Lord, let me hear Your loving kindness in the morning. For in Thee do I trust. No place else to turn.

My trust is in God. Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk. Because, Lord, I lift up my soul to You.

I'm turning to You, Lord, for guidance, for direction for my life. Deliver me, O Lord, from my enemies, those that are persecuting me and have driven me down to the ground. For I flee unto Thee to hide me.

So, he gives the petition, and then he states his position in relationship to it. Hear me speedily, O Lord, because my spirit is failing. Hide not Thy face from me.

That's the petition. And the circumstance is, lest I be like those who go down to the pit. Cause me to hear Your loving kindness in the morning.

That's the petition. And here's the circumstance. For in Thee do I trust.

I'm trusting in You. I'm looking to You. Cause me to know the way in where I should walk.

Because, Lord, I'm lifting up my soul to You. Deliver me, O Lord, from my enemies, because I'm fleeing to You to hide me. You are going to be my place of refuge and defense.

Teach me, Lord, to do Your will. For You are my God. I am surrendering my life to be mastered, to be controlled.

And therefore, Lord, teach me to do Your will. Thy spirit is good, and that's why I find it easy to submit myself to God. You know, they say that God is sovereign.

God rules. That the purposes of God are established and set. They don't alter or change.

God's purposes stand. And who can resist Him? And so what God is going to do, He's going to do. What God wants to do for my life, He can do.

I mean, who am I to resist God? God is sovereign. He knows all about me. He knows all about my life.

He knows the end from the beginning. And I am like a piece of clay on a potter's wheel. And my life is, and the shape of my future is completely in the hands of God.

He can make out of me anything He wants. He can make of me a vase to hold beautiful flowers, or He can make of me a spittoon. I mean, He can do what He wants with me.

And I don't have any power to say anything about it. That awesome, sovereign power of God over a person's life. And that would be absolutely terrifying to me.

To think that I really don't have any say-so concerning my destiny, my future, as far as that goes. God is sovereign and God rules. And this is looking at the one side of the coin.

As I told you, there's another side of the coin. That's the human responsibility. But looking at the sovereignty side of the coin, it's rather awesome.

Very awesome. In fact, it scares me. Except, as David said, thou art good.

And God loves me. So because God is good and God loves me, I can say, okay, God, You do what You want in my life. I can surrender to God.

I can surrender to the purpose and the plan of God for me. Though I don't know what it is, I can surrender to it because I know that God is good. And I know that God loves me.

And His plan for me is good. And therefore, teach me to do Thy will. For You are God.

You're sovereign. But Thy Spirit is good. And because of that, I can surrender.

Lead me in the land of uprightness. Lord, lead me to the right life. I don't want to be crooked.

I want to be upright. I want to be honest and forthright in the things that I do. Lord, lead me into that forthrightness.

And then make me alive, O Lord, to the things of the Spirit for Thy name's sake. For Thy righteousness' sake, bring my soul out of trouble. Now, notice David isn't saying for my sake, Lord.

But because I've committed myself to You, my life is in Your hands for Thy righteousness' sake. Because God is a righteous judge. And if I submit myself completely to Him, He will do what is right.

If I'm surrendered and yielded to Him, what He does will be right. So, Lord, for Thy righteousness' sake, bring my soul out of the trouble. And of Thy mercy, cut off my enemies.

And so, David again gets back to those enemies. They've been persecuting him. They've driven him into the ground.

He prays for deliverance in verse 9 from these enemies. And now he prays, God, cut off my enemies. And destroy all of those that afflict my soul.

For I am Thy servant. Because I'm Your servant, Lord, take care of me. Protect me.

Be my protection. And you know, the glorious thing is, if you are a servant of God, He will protect you. He will take care of you.

No weapon that is formed against you will prosper. This is the heritage of the children of the Lord. If you're a servant of the Lord, God's going to watch over you.

God's going to protect you. You don't have to worry. Lord, take care of my enemies because I'm Your servant.

Psalms 144, another psalm of David. It begins with blessing. Blessed be the Lord my strength, which teaches my hands to war.

Wait a minute. You mean God teaches David how to fight? And my fingers to fight. My goodness, that is, he's referring to God.

God is my goodness. He is my fortress. He is my high tower.

He is my deliverer. He is my shield. And He in whom I trust, who subdues all of the people under me.

And so David sees God as that place of total and complete protection. God is a sanctuary for His people. The fortress, the high tower, my shield, the one in whom I trust.

Lord, what is man that Thou takest knowledge of him? Have you ever wondered that? Just who am I that God would take any thought concerning me or God would have knowledge of me? When I was a small boy, I grew up in the beach city of Ventura. We didn't live that far from the beach. I loved surf fishing.

And quite often in the evening, I'd get my pole and I'd get on my bike and I'd go down to the beach and do some surf fishing. And after I would fish, oftentimes I'd just sit there on the beach and I'd be all alone. And as I would sit there just watching the beauty of the sunset by myself, long stretch of beach, totally empty, Kildees running back and forth with the waves, the seagulls, and the whole thing, I'd look out over that vast expanse of ocean, the Pacific, as the sun was setting.

And I would think about the sun, that ball of fire 93 million miles away. I would think about this Earth, this little small planet, 8,000 miles in diameter, some 93 million miles from the sun, orbiting around the sun. And I would watch as the stars would begin to appear.

And I'd think about the other planets in our solar system and about the stars and the possible solar systems around the other stars. And I would be totally, totally overwhelmed with the vastness of God, thinking how vast he is, the creator of the universe. And sitting alone on the beach, I would think of how really nothing I was.

And I would think, that ocean is so vast. Here I am, this beach in Ventura is just such a small part of that whole ocean. And I'd think how big the ocean was, how big the Earth was, and yet really how small in comparison to the universe.

And then I'd think how big God was to create the universe. And then I'd think of me, sitting there all by myself, with these seagulls and the other birds around. And here I am, sitting here, and how nothing I am.

Who am I that God should be thinking about me? What is man that God should take knowledge of him? And that used to always just be to me such an awesome thought, that here I am, just nothing, a speck of dust on this little planet Earth. And yet God has knowledge of me. The God who controls and governs the universe has knowledge of me.

He takes thought of me. And that always, always just amazed me. And still does, still does.

Or the son of man that you would take any account of him. Because man is like nothing, emptiness. His days are as a shadow that passes away.

Your time here is just for a moment. Like a shadow, the sundial, the shadow that passes away. An hour that passes by.

And so, as the scripture says, what is life? It's just a vapor. It appears for a season and then vanishes. It's like grass.

It grows up today, but tomorrow is cast in the oven. It dies. And the cycles of life, they're so short.

And yet, God places such value and such importance upon me and upon you. He takes account of you. He thinks about you.

He has knowledge of you. And so, David prays, bow thy heavens, O Lord, and come down. Touch the mountains and they shall smoke.

Lord, bring me close to you. Let me see your power. Cast forth your lightning, and he's thinking about his enemies, and scatter them.

Shoot thine arrows and destroy them. He sees the lightning as God's arrows. I like that.

It's a beautiful picture of speech. As I see it, it's sharp. God, you know, send your arrows, your lightning.

Those arrows, oh man, who can dodge it? And God's arrows. I love that. Lord, scatter them.

Cast forth your lightning. Send your hand from above and rid me and deliver me out of the great waters and from the hands of the aliens. Now, this was probably written at a time when David was fighting against maybe the Philistines or the Edomites or the Ammonites or those other strange children, the aliens that surrounded them.

And so he's asking for God's help. Lord, you've taught me to war. You've taught my hands to fight.

You are my strength. You are my defense. You are my high tower.

Lord, I'm really nothing, but yet you think about me. You have knowledge of me. And yet I'm just like nothing.

My days are like a shadow that passes. But Lord, bring me close to you. Send your hand from above.

These aliens whose mouth speaks emptiness and their right hand is the right hand of falsehood. Now, even then, they had the practice of raise your right hand and swear. And so these guys would raise their right hand and they'd swear, but they'd be lying through their teeth.

And so their right hand is the right hand of falsehood. I will sing a new song unto thee, O God, upon the psaltery, an instrument of ten strings. And David, of course, played upon the psaltery.

He played the harp, skillfully actually, the ten-stringed harps. And so I will sing praises unto thee. For it is the Lord who gives salvation unto kings, who delivers David, his servant, from the hurtful sword.

Lord, you're the one that brings salvation. You're the one who has delivered me from that sword. So rid me and deliver me from the strange children or from the aliens whose mouth speaks emptiness and their right hand is the right hand of falsehood.

He's already gone through that up above. Verse 8, whose mouth speaks emptiness. That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth.

That our daughters may be as cornerstones polished after the similitude of a palace. That our garners, storage bins, may be full with all manner of supplies. That our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands.

That our oxen may be strong to labor. That is, may the harvest be so heavy that they really have to pull hard in bringing in the harvest. That there be no breaking in or going out.

That there be no complaining in our streets. That crime would be over. No complaining in our streets.

For happy is that people that are in such a case. A case where your children can grow up in peace. Your children can grow up in safety.

You don't have to worry when they are playing out in the neighborhood. That our sons may be able to grow up as plants. That our daughters will be like cornerstones polished, beautiful, in the manner of a palace.

That there be sufficient for everybody. That the garners are full. That there's plenty of supplies so that no one is stealing or has to steal from anybody.

No complaining in our streets. Happy is that people that is such a case. Yes, happy is the people whose God is Jehovah.

The people who make Jehovah their God are people that will be blessed of God. They have God's promises of blessing. No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly.

Our God shall supply all of your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus our Lord. Happy are the people whose God is Jehovah. So, that just leaves really one conclusion to make Jehovah your God.

We'll return with more of our verse-by-verse study through the Psalms in our next lesson as Pastor Chuck Smith continues with A Song of God's Love. And we do hope you'll make plans to join us. Now, for those of you that would like to secure a copy of today's message, simply order Psalm 143, verse 7 when visiting thewordfortoday.org. And while you're there, we encourage you to browse the many additional biblical resources by Pastor Chuck.

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Again, that's 1-800-272-9673. And if you prefer to write, our mailing address is The Word for Today, P.O. Box 8000, Costa Mesa, California, 92628. And now, on behalf of The Word for Today, we'd like to thank all of you who share in supporting this ministry with your prayers and financial support.

And be sure to join us again next time as Pastor Chuck continues his verse-by-verse study through the Bible. That's right here on the next edition of The Word for Today. Now once again, here's Pastor Chuck with today's closing prayer.

Father, we thank you for the joy and the blessing of being your children, having you as our defense, as our place of strength and refuge. Lord, as David speaks of the experiences of his life, and he sings about your watchful care, your blessings, as he pours out his complaints, as he speaks of the depths of despair, but yet, Lord, his hope and trust in you, so we, as we pass through life, go through similar experiences, Lord,

where the enemy presses us down, where we feel under tremendous pressure, and yet, Lord, you're there, and you lift us out, and you strengthen us, and, Lord, you bring such joy as you work in our lives. And as we see, Lord, the work of your hands, we rejoice in that which you have done.

Bless, Lord, your people that they might be happy because Jehovah is their God. In Jesus' name we pray, amen. I have a question for you.

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