

A Psalm From Prison

Holy Father, it is You who created all things, and by Your hand all things are made; to You I make my plea,

Father, plead my cause, O Lord, with those who strive with me, fight against those who fight against me. For ever from the pit, we are still yours, and You have promised mercy on those who call upon You. You have promised that Your eyes are on the righteous, and Your ears are open to our cry².

For nowhere in Your word have I found that a person in prison is to be tormented, not by another human being, yet they exceed in such practice. My enemies are vigorous, and they are strong; and those that hate me wrongfully have multiplied³. Father, hear the groaning of the prisoner, and release those appointed to death⁴. Why then, do You hide Your face, and forget our affliction and our oppression⁵? My tears have been my food day and night, while these oppressors continually say to me, "Where is your God"⁶?

They mock us Father, discounting our dignity, as if they were employed to torment, yet their hearts are blacker than the night. There is no compassion, no mercy in their ways, and they act as if all the captives are worthless. So righteous men perish, and no man takes it to heart; merciful men are taken away, while no one considers that the righteous is taken away from evil⁷.

But You say to us to present our case, and to bring forth strong reasons, this from You, the King of Jacob⁸. It is You who also promises that You, even You, is He who blots out our transgressions for Your sake, and will not remember our sins⁹. It is You who says "Put Me in remembrance, let us contend together, state your case, that you may be acquitted"¹⁰.

You have made no commandment for any man to torment another in prison, for You are love. Your commandment is to love one another. For You are a just judge, and You are angry with the wicked every day¹¹.

My Father, I will put my trust in You, I will praise You, O Lord, with my whole heart, I will tell of your marvelous works¹²; You who execute justice for the oppressed, You who gives food to the hungry, and gives freedom to the prisoners¹³, because You are gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and great in mercy¹⁴.

Those who work in prisons do not know this, nor do they understand Your ways. They →

believe it is right to persecute the captives, as if it was by Your command. They have cast off mercy, and clothed themselves with hatred.

Princes persecute me without a cause, but my heart stands in awe of Your word¹⁵. So in You, I will put my trust, I will not be afraid, what then can man do to me¹⁶? I will then praise You Father, because You have delivered me out of all trouble, and my eye will see its desire on my enemies¹⁷.

Praise the Lord, for the Lord takes pleasure in those who fear Him, in those who hope in His mercy¹⁸. I will stand in faith, believing that it is God, not man, who has compassion on the captives, and will bring justice on the heads of abusive and black-hearted tormentors in the prisons.

Prisons who forsake mercy, true rehabilitation, and compassion do not stand with God, for it was never God's will for one man to torment another. His commitment was simple: to love one another¹⁹.

- | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Psalm 35:1 | 8. Isaiah 41:21 | 15. Psalm 119:161 |
| 2. Psalm 34:15 | 9. Isaiah 43:25 | 16. Psalm 56:11 |
| 3. Psalm 38:19 | 10. Isaiah 43:26 | 17. Psalm 54:7 |
| 4. Psalm 102:20 | 11. Psalm 7:11 | 18. Psalm 147:11 |
| 5. Psalm 45:24 | 12. Psalm 9:1 | 19. John 15:17 |
| 6. Psalm 42:3 | 13. Psalm 146:7 | |
| 7. Isaiah 57:1 | 14. Psalm 144:8 | |