

## ***Session 14. David Experiences Beauty in Depression***

### **INTRODUCTION**

We're looking at 1 Samuel 22: David experiencing beauty in the ash heap of depression. David here hits his all-time low. He actually hits it once or twice more, but it's all in this period called the Adullam years. The Adullam years have officially begun, because David has left Gibeah never to return again as he was before. He has been at Gath, at the city of Nob, and he has had a few disasters in a row. In Gath he had to act in this very unbecoming way, in compromise, in fear, and then obviously what happened in the city of Nob we just covered.

“David therefore departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam. So when his brothers and all of his father's house heard it, they went down there to him. And everyone who was in distress, everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him. So he became captain over them. And there were about four hundred men with him. Then David went from there to Mizpah of Moab; and he said to the king of Moab, ‘Please let my father and mother come here with you, till I know what God will do for me.’ So he brought them before the king of Moab, and they dwelt there with him all the time that David was in the stronghold.

“Now the prophet Gad said to David, ‘Do not stay in the stronghold, depart, and go to the land of Judah.’ So David departed and went into the forest of Hereth” (1 Sam. 22:1-5).

### **GOD DEVELOPS IN DAVID THAT WHICH WILL UPHOLD HIM IN THE DAY OF ADVERSITY**

What's happening in this season of David's life is that he's officially beginning the Adullam years. Again, he has been out of Gibeah for maybe some weeks now, maybe a month or two. It's hard to know exactly, but the Adullam years lasted a full seven years. They began at around age twenty-three and they went on until he turned thirty years old. He spent seven years running from cave to cave. At least in the wilderness he spent sixteen months in Ziklag, which was his one moment of natural security, but he was out of the will of God. That was the problem. This begins that principal in David's life where he experiences depression, but it's the principal of God's strategic delays. Because He wants to work into David something that will uphold him in the day of his prosperity.

### **GOD PROTECTS US WITH PROBLEMS FROM THE PERILOUS PITFALLS OF PROSPERITY**

One key principal is this: that God will always give us the easiest path possible to prepare us for prosperity. God has a certain prosperity that He wants us to walk in different arenas of our life. The Lord says, “I will give you the easiest path possible to get you ready for a little prosperity with the least amount of damage.” Honestly, prosperity always damages human beings except for the grace of God. Prosperity always damages human beings. We're simply made that way with sin. God has a counter program to keep us from being damaged with prosperity. He protects us with problems. It doesn't look that way because we're on this side, but He's protecting His authority in our life with problems. I know that sounds like a strange principal, but He does it.

### **“MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR YOU; FOR MY POWER IS MADE PERFECT IN WEAKNESS”**

He told Paul the apostle when he was complaining about thorns in the flesh, “Paul, the thorns are there because you exalt yourself, even though you're a mature apostle. The thorns are there to protect you, because you have My authority on you to protect you from yourself, Paul. Without these problems protecting you, you'll do what all men do. You'll get out of the will of God because of your pride.” God has these strategic delays that He uses

to work grace in our hearts for the purpose of protecting us. He protects us with problems. We're always trying to get out of the problems. God allows them, however, so that we solve them and get a testimony in God. We get a testimony of God's deliverance and we get roots deep in our hearts that God is real. When a problem comes, we kick into the automatic gear of getting out of the problem and the struggle of the caterpillar and the cocoon. The struggle to get free from the problem creates a testimony in God and leads to God delivering us in due time. It creates reality, because we have to realize, "I'm loved and I'm a lover; therefore, I'm successful." We have to do that to get out of the problem and to get out of the pain, the incessant spin of the problem.

### **DAVID WAS TRAINED IN THE SEMINARY OF ADVERSITY IN THE CAVE OF ADULLAM**

David was just beginning that. The prayer closet that God had ordained for David was called the cave of Adullam. Adullam is a city, and the cave is just outside the city. It's about twelve miles from Bethlehem. The cave of Adullam was David's seminary. The cave of Adullam is the seminary that He plans for us, even if we go to seminary formally. Going to seminary doesn't get us free from God's seminary. In this cave he has plenty of time to ponder. Maybe he has more time than is good for him. He makes it clear in Psalm 142, which we'll look at here in a few minutes, that Jonathan has left him. This has dawned on him. Everyone has left him, is what he says at the end of the day. He says, "Every one has left me." He's thinking about the fact that he acted with madness before a king, a neighboring king. He is the great anointed of the Lord, faking madness. He's thinking, "What was I doing? That was so dumb, and now the story is everywhere." He's thinking about the fact that he lied at the city of Nob and so many people were killed and the city was wiped out before him.

### **WHY DID ALL DAVID'S HOUSE COME TO SEE HIM AT THE CAVE OF ADULLAM?**

It says in Psalm 142:1 that he escaped to the cave of Adullam, and his brothers and all his father's house heard of it and they went down there to meet him. Not his brothers that were in the military; several of them were in the military, but those aren't the ones he's talking about. He's talking about the other ones who were not in the military at this point in time. It's an issue, but why did all his father's house, aunts, uncles, cousins, the little six-year-olds, all gather to David at the cave of Adullam? That doesn't make sense. Why would they go to the cave of Adullam and leave their houses? Why would they go to David?

We won't look at this passage, but I'll just give it to you. It's in 2 Samuel 23:13, which tells us what happened when David was lodging in the cave of Adullam. The Philistines made one of their usual raids. The Philistines throughout Saul's reign were constantly raiding the nation of Israel. When Israel was relaxing, suddenly 500 soldiers would come through a little town and decimate it, kill everyone and take all the livestock, etc. It was really, really cruel and brutal in those days. We read in 2 Samuel 23:13-14 that the Philistines had just raided Bethlehem when David was in Adullam. They said, "We can't go to Saul, because if we go to Saul he will kill us to get to David. We can't stay in Bethlehem because we're not warriors and we can't withstand the Philistines." David was up in the cave and the whole gang came up, aunts, uncles, cousins, the whole bit. Here they came, marching up the hill. "David?"

David said, "Guys, this is not a good place to live. This cave isn't good. This is not a good place." Yet they all stayed with him, and his brothers who weren't in the military joined him at that time. We've already read this, but in 1 Samuel 22:3-4 he takes his parents to Moab, to the king of Moab. The reason he takes his parents to the king of Moab, if you'll remember if you just think about it, is because Jesse is his father. Jesse is elderly, and he had David late in years. Jesse might have been in his seventies or eighties, who know for sure. Jesse's grandmother was Ruth, Ruth the Moabitess. She was from Moab. She married Boaz and became the richest woman in Israel. She had tremendous relationships in the last two generations between Israel and Moab. David,

who was the great grandchild of Ruth, said, “Hey, the king of Moab likes us. He likes our family. We’ve been sending him good gifts for years. They like us.” All of that’s already established, and he brings his elderly parents there and they go to the strongholds in Moab.

### **THE LORD THROUGH THE PROPHET GAD FORBAD DAVID FROM GOING TO GATH**

Gad breaks in on the scene in 1 Samuel 22:5. Gad is one of the three prophets in David’s life. I mentioned the last time that when David was young, he was mentored by an older prophet, Samuel. When David was in his twenties, he had a prophet of his own age, Gad. He was with him all his days. When David was old, Nathan was the young prophet to the older king. There were three different prophets emphasized and pronounced in David’s reign here. Gad appeared on the scene right here in 1 Samuel 22:5. The prophet Gad came to David and said, “The Lord wants you to know that He doesn’t want you in the strongholds of Moab. He wants you in Judah. He doesn’t want you in Gath and He doesn’t want you in Moab. ‘I want you in Judah,’ says the Lord.”

David said, “Judah? That’s where Saul is going to get me!” If I go to Judah—”

Gad interrupted him. “You have to trust God every day, right?”

“Well, yes, but Judah is dangerous. It’s not very big. There are 3,000 assassins.”

Gad might have said, “Well, the Lord insists on you staying in Judah. He really wants to give you a testimony so that you’ll be a godly king when He gives the nation to you.” I’m sure he didn’t say it just like that, but that’s what it essentially meant. He couldn’t hang out in Moab and he couldn’t hang out in Gath.

### **THE DISTRESSED, DISCONTENTED, AND INDEBTED BECAME THE MIGHTY MEN OF DAVID**

The key part of this passage is in 1 Samuel 22:2. It says in 1 Samuel 22:2 that everyone who was in distress, everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to David. There were about 400 of them. All these men had no money and a chip on their shoulder against the government. They were discontented. They didn’t like Israel. They didn’t like Saul. They didn’t like the policies of the nation. They were angry and depressed, or distressed; they were angry, broke, and discontent about everything. These are the men who gathered to David and became David’s army. We find in 2 Samuel 3:3 that this army was transformed into the mighty men of David. This is often referred to as the most powerful youth group in history. Most of them were young men, and they came really rough. They came angry and without any spiritual depth. It was David’s life before them that transformed them. Not all of them were transformed, but many of them became mighty men of David. They became mighty in God and mighty in war under the leadership of the Lord.

There are all kinds of different pictures that are derived from these young, the motley crew of David. I said that once in a youth group; they said, “No, you can’t say that!” because apparently that means something bad to them or something, so it’s a messed up group of young people. David transformed them under the power of the Holy Spirit. This passage is often depicted as a picture of Jesus. David was homeless and Jesus was homeless. David was hunted and hated. Jesus was hunted and hated by the Pharisees. David was gathering a very small, broken, and messed up army. Jesus gathered a small band of people. David’s were in distress, in debt, and discontent. “Not many are noble and not many wise among you,” Paul the apostle would say (1 Cor. 1:26, paraphrased). David was outside of the structure of Israel, outside of the camp. Jesus’ group was outside of the structure of Israel as well. It’s easy to find the similarities between Jesus and David. David was a type of Jesus in this context here.

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**PSALMS 142 AND 143: DAVID’S PATH TO BEAUTY IN ADVERSE CIRCUMSTANCES**

Turn to Psalm 142 and we’ll find out what was going on in David’s heart. Psalm 142 and Psalm 143 go together. The flip side of this is Psalm 57. All three of these Psalms have to go together to make sense. The order is important as well. He wrote Psalm 142, then Psalm 143 and then Psalm 57. Psalm 142 and Psalm 143 are the depression side. He’s seriously depressed. In Psalm 57 he breaks through the depression and walks in the beauty of the Lord. He walks in power in his heart. He finds his way through the depression in these most difficult circumstances. Severe disappointment has settled in. Remember, David was the darling of Israel. All the young maidens were singing his praise. He was over the entire army at one time. He was the favored of the nation, and now he was being chased and pursued. A city had been slaughtered and he had been humiliated in another nation in Gath. Everything was going badly. Everyone had forsaken him.

**“WITH MY VOICE TO THE LORD I MAKE MY SUPPLICATION”**

He says in Psalm 142:1, “I cry out to the Lord with my voice; with my voice to the Lord I make my supplication. I pour out my complaint before Him; I declare before Him my trouble” (Ps. 142:1-2). It’s right to express our complaint. As a matter of fact, the Lord would rather we would express it to Him instead of express it to everyone else. When we express it to everyone else, it’s called a complaining spirit; when we express it to the Lord, it’s called prayer. Again, when we try to meet our pressures and anxiety outside of God, it’s called anxiety. When we meet it in God, it’s called prayer. It’s called faith. The Lord says, “I don’t want you voicing your complaint around. Take your complaint to Me.” That was of course, as we’ve said, one of the great qualities of David’s life: his ability to bring his complaint to the Lord. Here he starts and gets really specific

“My spirit was overwhelmed within me” (Ps. 142:3). This isn’t an exaggeration. David says, “I was utterly despairing.”

“But David, you have all these great promises.”

“Well, they didn’t happen for twenty years.”

“I know David, but you’re going to be one of the main men. Hang on and be quiet!”

“Well, *you’re* going to live in eternity for the next billion, billion years! *You* hang on and be quiet!”

**“ALL THE DAYS ORDAINED FOR ME WERE WRITTEN IN YOUR BOOK”**

Your promises are as great as David’s were in reality. Just a moment from now, in a breath, you’ll be in the celestial city in a breath. That’s what the Scripture says, that our life is a breath. Whatever logic we would give to David, we have to use on ourselves. In a moment we’re all going to be crowned as kings as well in the grace of God.

“Yes, but that’s different.”

David was going to get his a few years before we got ours, so why are we complaining? The deal is we get to see the whole story with David. We don’t get to see our whole story. With the whole story laid out, it only makes sense. Psalm 142 doesn’t seem like a tragedy, but when you’re only half-way through the story, it does seem like a tragedy. Let me tell you, as clearly as David’s story is finished, so is yours. David said in Psalm

139, “All my days were already written in Your book” (Ps. 139:16). Your days are all written in the book. The story is as complete for you as it is for David here in the Word.

### **“LORD, LIFT UP THE LIGHT OF YOUR COUNTENANCE UPON ME”**

David says, “My spirit was overwhelmed within me. I completely lost the hope that this thing would ever change.” Even David with the power of the Spirit on him was overwhelmed. God was hiding His face from David. God was testing David. It was the dark night of the soul, if you will. The Spirit of God wasn’t manifesting on David’s heart as He had in days gone by. David would know the presence of God again. The number one thing in David’s life through the whole journey was, “Lord, show me Your face. Don’t hide Your face. Oh, I rejoice in the countenance of God shining on me.” The countenance of God, or the face of God, means His manifest presence on his heart. It ebbed and flowed in David’s life, as it does in our lives. When it was strong, David could stand before anything. When the presence of God wasn’t manifest strongly in his heart, he was weak as other men, and he is in a time of weakness.

### **PROSPERITY RUINS US, SO GOD GRACIOUSLY PROTECTS US WITH PROBLEMS**

However, God is using all these seasons to prepare David for prosperity. That’s really what He’s doing. He’s preparing David for prosperity. Prosperity ruins us, so God protects us with problems. It gives us a testimony of deliverance so that God seems real, and it causes the roots of our communion with God to go deeply. Those two things protect us in the day of calamity, which is the day of prosperity.

Of course, you’re all like me. I always tell God, “I’m different from all you guys.” I say, “Lord, I’m different than them. I won’t do what they do.” We all imagine ourselves to be different. Every one of us says we would be different. We would keep sane, objective thinking with options. We’re not like the other folks. Prosperity brings more options. That’s what prosperity is. When you have the favor of God upon you in relationships, you have a lot more people who want stuff from you. Your options to burn your life out or to handle that position of influence in a self-serving way are multiplied and no one will stop you. If we have more money, then we can do more things and go more places. Many, many things happen when we prosper. We have more anointing. We fill up stadiums if we have enough anointing. We fill up auditoriums all over the world. That creates money. That creates options. That creates decisions. It’s all called *temptation*. *Option* is a nice word for *temptations*. They come everywhere. Most people under temptations, when they’re not hemmed, just yield to them. Prosperity itself with the added options breaks them. There are thousands of instant success stories in the entertainment and athletic world; the young guy or gal who was twenty or twenty-two and they now have millions, but by the time they’re thirty they’re broke and dead. They couldn’t contain the options and they just went with them. They imagined they never would, but then they did. They’re like us; we don’t have power in our hearts to stay in front of options without breaking under the power of options. Options are prosperity: more anointing, more favor, more money, more ease, is way more options and all of us would be broken under them. The Lord says, “I will protect you, David. These options will really mess you up.” David messed up a few more times, but the Lord said, “I will make it as easy as possible for you to mess up as little as possible without killing you in the process.” David still messed up and hurt the nation, although his legacy was greater than his damage. He did damage as king as well, even with all this training.

### **PETER SUCCUMBED TO THE FEAR OF MAN EVEN AS A MATURE APOSTLE**

Peter did some of that. Peter, the mighty apostle, had a huge controversy in Galatians 2. He yielded to the fear of man. You know that thing before the little servant girl where he became afraid and denied the Lord? Well, it didn’t exactly get fully cured in Peter. In Galatians 2, Paul and Peter had a controversy. Peter yielded to the fear

of man in Antioch and caused tremendous problems in the early Church for a season. He was a mature apostle when this was happening. The Lord said, “Well Peter, you have to go back and rework that through one more time.” It’s a little tough when all the main guys like you, and when you have to tell them no under pressure, Peter said, “It’s tougher than I thought it was. I thought I could tell them no. They really like me and they’re really the main guys; it was just harder than I thought.”

It’s called “the fear of man.” We all have it. The reason I’m saying this to you is that problems really seem overdone when they’re related to us. They seem really reasonable when we read the big picture of someone else’s life. Yet the Lord is whispering to our hearts, “I’m making it as easy as possible so I can give you some prosperity with the least amount of damage.” When the story is done, then it makes so much sense.

“When my spirit was overwhelmed within me,” David said, “then You knew my path. In the way which I walk they have secretly set a snare for me” (Ps. 142:3). He says, “God, the only thing that has sustained me when I was totally depressed is that I knew that You knew what I was going through.”

### **“O LORD, YOU ARE ACQUAINTED WITH ALL MY WAYS”**

This is the perfect time to put in Psalm 139. We’ll probably look at Psalm 139 next week. David said, “I knew that You knew.” You can read Psalm 139:1-6 right now. You can put it there where he says, “God, You know my path. You know my lying down and my rising. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me. It exhilarates me to know that You really know and that I really know that You really know. It gives me a sense of inward security.” That’s where David’s beginning out of depression starts, right here. It’s that he knows with revelation that God knows what’s going on and that God knows with care. This thing has strategy to it. It has purpose to it. That’s why I’m explaining this truth about problems. It has purpose. Our problems have purpose to help us. We just never really believe that. We never really know that God knows what He’s doing. Our problems always seem exaggerated and too extreme. David connected with the reality: “You know my path. You know what I’m going through and it makes sense to You, O God. You know the way in which I walk. You know my weaknesses and my strengths. You know the manner in which I walk before You and what I need and what I don’t need.” When God convinces you that He knows your frame, like Psalm 139 says, it is then that He says, “A little more of this and a little less of that.” He knows the way you walk and He knows your particular aptitudes to good things and bad things. God has a tailor-made plan just for you. I assure you that He has the easiest plan possible for you to have prosperity with the least amount of damage. When I believe that, then something is exhilarating inside of me.

### **WHEN THE FIRE OF GOD’S REALITY IS THE ONLY CRUTCH WE HAVE TO LEAN ON**

I look on my right hand and see David talking to the Lord. He says, “Look, no one acknowledges me.” I believe in his heart he was saying, “Jonathan tells me he’s with me to the end, but Jonathan is in the king’s palace right now and I’m in the cave of Adullam. He keeps telling me he’s for me, but he won’t come and stand with me. No one knows what I’m going through.”

“David, you have 400 men alongside you.”

“These men? Forget it! No one knows what I’m going through. No one acknowledges me.” Listen to that next line: “Refuge has failed me; no one cares for my soul” (Ps. 142:4). None of my safety systems. Boy, when you hit rock bottom and your spirit’s overwhelmed, when not one person knows what you’re going through, when none of your safety mechanisms are working, when all your refuges have failed, when no one even cares what

you're going through, remember that David said, "I'm utterly abandoned." And that the Lord said, "I have you right where I want you. I'm your only way out of pain, Me and Me alone."

This is divinely orchestrated. I'm sure every one of us in this room has felt a number of times in the last ten years that no one understood what we were going through. It's a very, very strategic, divinely-designed place for you. This is where God puts men and women after His own heart so that the fire of His reality is the only thing we can lean on. We say, "O Lord, You're my portion. You're all I want."

He says, "Then why do you not come to Me when it's going well like you say you will?"

"Well Lord, I always tell people I come to You..."

"I know that you always tell them you come to Me. You even bring the books around that talk about coming to Me, but you don't come to Me until you get in pain." You're just like all the others; all of us are like this.

### **OUR CUP, OUR PORTION, OUR REWARD, OUR INHERITANCE, OUR HOPE**

I mean, imagine really saying, "Not one person understands what I'm going through" (Ps. 142:4b, paraphrased). What did David do? He had one option (Ps. 142:5), to cry out to God. Look at this: he made God his safety and made God his portion. For the word *portion* write the phrase, "My reward." One of the great Davidic themes throughout the book of Psalms is that God is David's reward, not his kingship. The unfolding of God to his spirit was David's primary reward. In Psalm 16:5 and actually all through the Psalms David constantly calls God his inheritance, his reward, his portion, his cup. It's all the same idea. "You're my cup, my portion, my reward, my inheritance, my hope." It doesn't mean, "You're the way out of trouble," but, "You're what sustains my inward life. Interacting with You is my pleasure, my primary pleasure in life."

### **DAVID'S MIGHTY MEN ADMIRER, BUT DID NOT UNDERSTAND HIS WAYS**

Beloved, there's a direct correlation of Psalm 142:5 to Psalm 142:4. Psalm 142:5 happens when Psalm 142:4 takes place. The reality of God being your main reward happens when you're abandoned, even though you're in the midst of 400 people. It's tight living quarters and no one knows who David is. They don't understand. No one knows what he's about in the Lord. As a matter of fact, when David wants to perform an act of righteousness, they're always trying to talk him out of it. They say, "David, you're fanatical. Calm down. Kill the man."

David says, "I can't kill Saul."

They say, "Kill him. We don't like Saul and Saul doesn't like us. Just call it even."

David was constantly being resisted by these 400 men when he wanted to walk in righteousness, but he continually praised the Lord in front of them. They were looking at him saying, "We don't get you, David." Think of the annoyance of having people think you're off the wall. You're all living in the same cave and you're all sharing the same bats and rats. Psalm 142:5 is deeply related to Psalm 142:4. It really is. When God brings you to Psalm 142:4, it's a divine strategy; it's not an accident.

He goes on in Psalm 142:6 and says, "I am brought very low." He's saying, "I'm very low. My enemies are stronger than I am."

The Lord says, “I wanted it that way. It’s not an accident, David. You’re now defeated, David.”

**DAVID IS ENMESHED IN THE COCOON OF ADVERSITY, AND NONE CAN HELP HIM OUT**

Look at this; this isn’t an accident. The Lord says, “I am Your strength. You’re going to learn things in Me, David. You’re going to have experiences of Me delivering you in circumstances. You’re going to find reality in your heart because of this lonely place.” How many of you feel the reality of Psalm 142:3, “My spirit is overwhelmed?” Or of Psalm 142:4, “No one knows, no one cares”? Or of Psalm 142:6, “I am brought very low. My enemies are stronger.” But it gets even worse. Here in Psalm 142:7 he says, “Bring my soul out of prison.” The Lord allows our soul to be held in prison for seasons so that in the struggle—again, it’s the caterpillar and the cocoon. It’s the struggle to get out, the interaction with God, the struggle. If you go and cut open that cocoon, the caterpillar dies. If you let the caterpillar struggle, it becomes a butterfly. If you help it out, it dies. Literally, it never flies. It dies. You’re struggling and the Lord says, “I’m too wise and I care too much to cut the cocoon open. Struggle, and at the end of the day you’ll live in the reality of praise. You’ll know Me at the end of the day. Bring my soul out of prison.”

David goes on in Psalm 143 and stays right with it. “Hear my prayer, O Lord...In Your faithfulness answer me” (Ps. 143:1). He just goes on and on. I tell you, this is a man of God in the prison of pain, hurting.

“But if you’re really a man or a woman of God, you shouldn’t be in the prison of pain hurting...”

No. If you’re really a man or a woman of God, you’ll be brought very low because you’ll discover the core reality of life that God is your portion. It’s all about bringing us to Psalm 142:5.

David says to the Lord, “Do not enter into judgment with Your servant.” Remember, the incident with the city of Nob was just a few weeks earlier. “For in Your sight no one living is righteous” (Ps. 143:2). That’s what I was saying in the last session: Just settle the issue. You’re never going to produce something that gets God’s attention, to say, “Wow, this is a different set up.” That’s never going to happen. David says, “Don’t enter into judgment.” The reason he says that is because he’s going to ask for his enemies to be crushed (v. 12). I mean, here he’s caused the city of Nob to be slaughtered, and now he’s asking for the evil ones to be crushed. It’s like, “David, let a little time go by.”

**DAVID KNOWS THAT GOD KNOWS HIS PATHS AND PROPENSITIES**

“For the enemy has persecuted my soul; he has crushed my life to the ground” (Ps. 143:3). Instead of “crushed my life” write the word *heart*. “He has crushed my heart.” “He has made me dwell in darkness, like those who have been long dead.” Of course, David was literally in the darkness of a cave, but he means, “My heart is crushed. I can’t see the end right now. I know that Samuel promised I would one day be king. I know that things will get better and I know that God’s spirit of revelation, that I’m so familiar with, will rest on me again. But I’m in darkness. I can’t feel God at all. My soul is in prison. No one cares about me. The only thing I know is that God knows the way in which I walk. God knows how I’m made on the inside. He knows what I need. That’s the only thing that I can live by right now, is that God knows this.”

Crushed, his heart is crushed. Anyone have a crushed heart tonight? Anyone dwelling in darkness to where you can’t see what two years will bring? There’s no way out. You can’t see the way out. You’re living in darkness. The Lord says, “Well, I’m training you like David then.” This is the path of a man or woman after God’s own

heart. He says it again in Psalm 143:4: “My spirit is overwhelmed.” Really, it’s the same flow as Psalm 142. “My heart within me is distressed.”

Now he puts his foot down and he starts his recovery process right here. The only thing sustaining him up to now has been Psalm 142:3. He knows that God knows his path and his propensities, the good ones and the bad ones. He says, “I know that You know; therefore I know what You’re doing is tailor-made.” When David said, “I know that You know the way in which I walk” (Ps. 143:8, paraphrased), he’s saying, “I know this is a tailor-made plan.” That’s what David is really saying, but now he’s about to say three very, very significant things that are the next stages of his deliverance. See, stage one is Psalm 52. He knows that God is good and God has done it and it’s mercy that he lives by. That’s step one. Stage two of coming out of depression is Psalm 142:3: He knows that it’s a tailor-made plan. God knows his way, the way in which walks, his strengths and weaknesses, and God is doing something to protect him. David knew that. He knew it was mercy because of his sin, and he knew it was a tailor-made plan. He knew the plan was good.

### **REMEMBERING THE DAYS OF OLD BRINGS REASSURANCE IN THE PRESENT MOMENT**

Then he’s about to give three more things right here. “I remember the days of old” (Ps. 143:5). He remembers his history in God. He says, “I remember when by grace You were moving on me and the memory of Your work in my life in the past actually helps me right now.” David purposefully recalls the activity of God in the earlier days of his life in the Lord. “I remember the good old days and how You moved. Because You’re the same God. If You did it five years ago, nevertheless, you’re the same God today. That means it’s in Your heart to do it again.” So David recalls. He purposefully remembers the journey on which God has taken him.

The next thing he does: “I meditate on all Your works” (Ps. 143:5b). “I remember all Your works.” This speaks of God’s redemption. This is what we get from the Word, the whole history of redemption. We remember what God did in David. See we’re remembering God’s works right now by reading the life of David. That’s what we’re doing. We study the life of Joseph. We study the life of Paul. We study the great men and women throughout history and we remember God’s works through history, through redemptive history.

Then he says, “I muse on the work of Your hands” (Ps. 143:5c). He meditates on the works of God’s hands. And now David takes it up to Psalm 19, to Psalm 29, when he gazes on the beauty of God in natural creation. He says, “I’m going back to the old tried and true method of worshipping God by connecting. Wait a second. You’re beautiful and filled with splendor. What am I doing?” This isn’t an accident. What David is doing is connecting with the beauty of God in the big picture. That’s what he’s doing.

### **THE HOLY SPIRIT REVELATORY DIVINE PATTERN OF HOW TO ESCAPE THE TAILSPIN**

In Psalm 52 he gets the mercy, the awareness that God is good. He doesn’t have to earn forgiveness. That’s massive. That’s always step one. That was literally only a few weeks before he wrote this. Then he goes up a notch. He knows in Psalm 142:3 that God has a tailor-made plan. It’s not too severe. It’s made according to the way David walks, the way David is designed but number three (Ps. 143:5), he remembers the way God has dealt with and led him in the past. He remembers victories in the good old days of his life. Now he’s meditating on redemptive history. He has to go look back at Moses and how God delivered Moses and anything else in redemptive history. We have the whole Word of God. This is where we put the Word of God. That’s the fourth step: David meditated. The fifth step: He beheld the beauty of God in natural creation. He purposefully reconnected with the big picture. There are three ways he does so in Psalm 143:5. You connect with the big picture of the beauty of God and you add to that the fact that God has a tailor-made plan that’s not too severe

and that He has forgiven you; that's the way out of the tailspin. This is a Holy Spirit revelatory divine pattern of how to get out of the tailspin. Some people say, "OK," and go home. They turn on the TV channel, surf, eat, their potato chips, and stay depressed. We need to lock our minds into the Word of God. That's what David did. This isn't just something to make us say, "Yes, that's a good verse." This is something we do. We really do this. We don't just say, "Wow, cool, and then remember it on the test."

**GOD WILL SATISFY THE THIRSTY HEART, AND FILL THE HUNGRY WITH GOOD THINGS**

In Psalm 143:6 David basically says, "God, let me just say it: I long for You. I'm thirsty for You. I'm thirsty for that feeling of God again. I'm thirsty for the face, the countenance of God."

The Lord says, "You just keep doing those three things you mentioned in Psalm 143:5 and your thirst will be touched like it was in the old days. You keep doing the three steps of Psalm 143:5 and connect yourself with the big picture."

I can't stress this enough. It isn't enough just to learn these three things and say them. We literally have to do them. God says in Psalm 143:6, "David, if you keep spreading your hands out to Me, if you long for Me, I will touch your thirst" (paraphrased). "You'll know My countenance shining on you again. You'll know the release of My presence again."

David says, "My hands are up to You all the time. I'm reaching. I'm reaching. I remember how to connect with You. I'm reaching. I'm posturing myself. I'm reaching. I'm reaching."

**"CAUSE ME TO HEAR YOUR LOVINGKINDNESS IN THE MORNING"**

Remember how he ended it last session, in Psalm 52? He waited on the Lord in the midst of the people, but it's not just that he had confidence to wait on the Lord. He actually waited on the Lord as well. It wasn't just that he felt the liberty to do it; he did it. He actually put his heart, his cold, cold heart, before the blazing fire. "Answer me speedily, O Lord; my spirit fails! Do not hide Your face from me" (Ps. 143:7). It always comes down to the manifest presence of God, the face of God, the countenance of God.

"Cause me to hear Your lovingkindness in the morning, for in You do I trust" (Ps. 143:8). In other words, "I want to feel the loving kindness in the morning again, God. I want to wake up in the morning feeling the new mercies, as I once did."

The Lord says, "You keep following Psalm 143:5 then. You keep putting yourself in front of Me."

"Lord, why do I ever lose the feeling of You?"

"Because I'm working in you humility. If all you have is victory, victory, victory, then you'll look at people who don't have freshness with Me and you'll criticize them and judge them, and I am meek and lowly. I want you meek and lowly. I will withhold it and produce gratitude in you when I give it back to you, and you won't have judgment in your heart towards people who don't have the presence of God on their hearts."

The reason I know that one is because there were times when I felt the presence of the Lord when I was younger in my twenties and I had a healthy, regular prayer life. I fell into this state of thinking, "Well, that guy, you know..." Then the Lord took the anointing off of me. My problem is that I was arrogant enough, I announced

often enough how dedicated in prayer I was and the whole church knew. So I had to keep going to prayer meetings and I was tortured. My pride kept me in prayer meetings and the Lord was dealing with my pride, so He lifted His presence off. I went for about three or four months. I mean, I was dry toast. I said, “God, I’ll never, never, never again think that Your presence on my heart was about me, never. I promise.”

I promise, when someone says, “Oh, So-and-So doesn’t even pray,” I say, “Hey. Go talk to someone else, man. I’m not going there. No way, I’m not going there.”

I remember that happening in my early twenties when I was pastoring a church. I was preaching on prayer and everyone thought I was the man of prayer. The Lord hid His face from me. So I know Psalm 143:8: “Cause me to hear Your lovingkindness.” “Let me wake up feeling that impulse in the Word, that tenderness in the Word, O God.”

The Lord says, “You just put your heart in front of Me and let Me teach you by releasing and withholding My presence. I will teach You the path of humility through it.”

Of course, that’s a lifelong journey. He says, “Let me know the path I’m to walk in, God. I lift my soul to you” (Ps. 143:8b, paraphrased). He’s really putting his heart before the Lord.

### **“FOR YOUR RIGHTEOUSNESS’ SAKE BRING MY SOUL OUT OF TROUBLE”**

Look at Psalm 143:10: “For You are my God, and You are good. Your Spirit is good” (paraphrased). “You’re my God. Your spirit is good.” David is connecting. He’s warming up. Now go down to Psalm 143:11: “Revive me, O Lord, for Your name’s sake! For Your righteousness’ sake bring my soul out of trouble.” He doesn’t just, “Cause the mean men to disappear.” His soul was barren.

### **THE THREE FOREMOST DESIRES OF DAVID EXPRESSED IN THE BOOK OF PSALMS**

There are basically three things that David wants in these Psalms. Number one: He wanted a renewed heart. That was always David’s number one priority. He wanted his heart communing with God with the anointing. Number two: He wanted blessed circumstances. There’s nothing wrong with that, but that was really number two. Number three: He wanted wisdom in what to do and in what choices to make. That’s listed a few times as well. He wanted to know the way in which to walk. In other words, “Do I go right or left? Do I go here? Do I go there?” He wanted direction. The first thing all through these two Psalms is the cry for his heart not to be crushed in the presence of God.

### **“I WILL CRY OUT TO GOD MOST HIGH”: THE HOPE AT THE END OF DESPAIR**

OK, very quickly let’s go to Psalm 57. This is the other end of it. It was written at the same time; look at the titles at the top of each. It’s when David is in the cave of Adullam. Psalm 57:1-5 is the prayer. Psalm 57:6-11 is the confidence that David has. Although it’s written at the same time, now he has a note of victory in his voice. “Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me! For my soul trusts in You” (Ps. 57:1). He already has his bearing, but he has this awareness of mercy as well. Again, I can’t say it enough. Everywhere you go, in every season of David’s life, mercy is the number one attribute David speaks about and rejoices in. He says, “For my soul trusts in You” now. He has made his way through. He doesn’t have the despair any longer. He says, “In the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge, until these calamities have passed by” (Ps. 57:1). He says, “I have faith now. I’m not overwhelmed. I know they’ll pass. I know they’ve come for a season and they’ll pass in

God's time." He's crying out to God here: "I will cry out to God Most High" (Ps. 57:2). He's not scheming. He says, "God, my trust is in You alone. I have no way out of this thing. I'm hemmed in."

**"TO GOD WHO PERFORMS ALL THINGS FOR ME"**

I love this; it's a famous phrase of David's: "To God who performs all things for me" (Ps. 57:2b). There it is! David is always talking about God doing it for me. He wrote Psalm 56 when he was in Gath. In Psalm 56:8-9 he writes, "All my tears are in Your bottle" (Ps. 56:8, paraphrased). Then he says, "I know You will defeat my enemies. This I know, because You are for me" (v. 9, paraphrased). David had this sense of, "You delight in me. You're for me." One of David's favorite phrases is, "I know You'll do it for me, O God. I know I'm Your favorite." Every believer in Christ Jesus can claim they're God's favorite, but David really claimed it. He says, "I know that You're going to do it for me, not just for Your glory. You like me. I know You like me." David had this line that God would establish His glory. Saul wasn't the Most High. Obviously we know that because Saul isn't chasing us, but the Sauls in our lives seem like the Most High. We think the pressure is the Most High, but it's not; God is.

"I know, but this thing is never going to go away." That's not the Most High. God is the Most High. David calls God the Most High.

"My soul is among lions; I lie among the sons of men who are set on fire" (Ps. 57:4). He's talking about Saul. They hunt to devour him like a lion. They're on fire to kill David. Do you know why they're on fire? They're going to be rewarded. Saul always rewarded the people who did the dirty work; he even rewarded David on several occasions, like when he slew Goliath. "Whoever gets Goliath gets my good daughter!" David killed Goliath and Saul gave him the challenging daughter. He was always offering rewards if people would do the dangerous work. These men were on fire. They had one thing on their mind. They wanted to get the reward of killing David. David said, "They have fire in them for me. They're lions. They're hunting me to devour me."

Then in the next verse, he reconnects with Psalm 19. David always returned to the beauty of God in the heavens. He never got free from that. When he was under pressure, he said, "The one thing I count on is that early revelation You gave me." He would look up and just be lost in wonder. He says, "Yes, you know, it refocuses me on the reality of the One who is leading my life."

Psalm 57:6-11. Now he is expressing his confidence. "They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down; they have dug a pit before me" (Ps. 57:6). His soul being bowed down this time is in humility. I don't think he's crushed like he was in Psalm 142 and 143. The whole language is different. He has been humbled. He's finding the Lord and he has humility.

In Psalm 57:7 he speaks twice. It's like how in Psalm 57:1 he called for mercy twice, and in Psalm 57:7 twice he says, "I'm steadfast." "My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast" (Ps. 57:7). He's broken through. I believe the bowed heart of Psalm 57:6 is the humility God was after in this season of David's life. In Psalm 57:7 he's resolute and he says, "My heart is set, O God." "My heart is fixed," it says in another version. "My heart is fixed on Thee, O God." I remember hearing a sermon on that when I was twenty-one or twenty-two. I heard it and this became a phrase that I used for years and years. I don't know that I've used it in the last ten years, but for ten years I used Psalm 57:7. I used to write it down all the time in my prayer notes: "My heart is fixed, O God." I would feel the pull and the tear and I would say, "I don't know what to do. I'm just putting the anchor down. You love me. You like me. You're with me. I'm fixed. I can't go by anything else. I'm just putting an

anchor in the ground and that's my compass. I'm fixed. I would quote this. I heard someone preach a sermon on it and it deeply impacted me." David in the Adullam spinout put that anchor down. He put that stake in the ground. He said, "My soul is fixed." When he worked through the heavy parts of the depression, he got back to level ground a little and he set his soul. There's a place where we set our soul. I would to God that young people would take this. That verse did so much for me in my twenties and early thirties.

**YOU CAN'T MAKE YOUR HEART PASSIONATE, BUT YOU CAN POSITION IT TO BECOME SO** "I will sing and gave praise." I love what he says next: "Awake, my glory!" (Ps. 57:8). He's talking about the deepest parts of his part. He's talking about his deepest recesses of affections when he says, "Awake, my glory!" In Psalm 16:9 it's clear that he's talking about his heart when he calls it his "glory." Psalm 30:12 is the same thing, when he talks about his glory. He's talking about all the affections within him. He says, "I am steadfast; I am fixed," in Psalm 57:7. He says, "O heart, awaken to full-heartedness." He can't do that in his own power. You can't make your heart passionate, but you can make decisions that position your heart in the right way and put your heart in front of the Word of God. He has made two decisions. His heart is steadfast and he wants his heart to be awakened. He says, "Awake, lute and harp!" (Ps. 57:8b). "Awake, these two stringed instruments!" He has been in the city of Nob and he has been in Gath. He's in the cave and he's pulling out the instruments. He's saying, "I will get back into the flow. It has been a dark night for a season. I'm pulling out the instruments again. My heart will flow in the river. Awake, O my glory!" That means, "Let my heart flow in that river again. I will start singing unto the Lord again. I will restore the place of my personal devotions."

He says, "God, I will awaken the dawn" (Ps. 57:8c). "I'll wake up in the morning with my devotions before You. I won't wait and see how the day goes. I'm just going to wake up and give myself to You. I will awaken the dawn."

Of course when he started playing the guitar to awaken the dawn, he had 400 men in the same cave. They said, "Well hello, David." He woke up everyone else as well. He made the cave of Adullam ring. He made it sing.

He said, "I will praise You, O Lord, among the peoples" (Ps. 57:9).

The 400 said, "Yes, this is true." He did this. "I will sing to You among the nations" (Ps. 57:9b). This is really interesting, because he's singing among the Gentiles, the unbelievers.

### **DAVID DISCOVERED THE BEAUTY OF THE LORD IN THE ASH HEAP OF DEPRESSION**

Then he returns to the old main stream, the old tried and true. It's His mercy again. He returns to Psalm 36:5. We looked at it a few of weeks ago. It's the five concepts of Psalm 36:5 that David always looked at: "For Your mercy reaches unto the heavens, and Your truth unto the clouds" (Ps. 57:10). He uses that a lot, mercy that's so extreme in its vastness. It's so vast, it's going clear to the stars. That's what he means. In Psalm 57:11 he talks about the glory of God and the beauty of God. He's now entering into that beauty of God dynamic where he's singing of His beauty. He's connecting with it. He connected in the big picture back in Psalm 143:5; he decided to meditate on those three things and it brought him out of the despair cycle. I'm not saying it did it in a day, but David did what the Scripture says to do to help pull us out of these negative mindsets. What we do is get into despair if we don't do what David did. We stay in despair year after year after year after year. David discovered the beauty of the Lord in the ash heap of his own depression.

Amen. Let's stand.

**MINISTRY TIME**

Some of you are in despair right now. You're struggling in your heart. You're saying to the Lord, "Lord, I want to do this thing. I want to get back to being connected to You, O Lord." Just open your heart before the Lord. Instead of coming up let's just worship the Lord privately, because all of us need to reconnect. There's nothing wrong with watching TV and a little entertainment here and there, but we need to connect our hearts with the fire. David was overwhelmed and in despair. He said, "Lord, You're good," in Psalm 52. "I will lay that condemnation down." He said in Psalm 142, "It's tailor-made for me, O God. It's tailor-made for who I am. It's not too severe. That cuts off the self-pity. I know it's wise. I started remembering my history in the Lord and deliberately remembering it, drawing it up, looking at it again." Look at the old dreams, the old journals, the old places where the Lord visited you, touched you, and warmed your heart. David studied redemptive history. I don't mean history itself, but there are acts of God recorded in the Word: the book of Acts, the gospels, the life of David, the life of Joseph, the book of Psalms. He filled his mind. He studied the beauty of the Lord in creation. He asked to be revived. He said, "Oh, revive me. I'm putting my heart in front of the fire. I'm steadfast." He got the courage to be steadfast. He asked for his heart to be awakened: "Awaken my glory, awaken, flow in the river like you once did. I'm pulling out the instruments again. I'm putting on the worship music. I'm waking up the dawn with worship. I don't care what they say. I'm locking into the mercy of God again." He ends this whole dilemma with the mercy of God at the end of that psalm.