

PRAYING PSALM 142

"I cry out to the Lord... When my spirit was overwhelmed within me..." (Psalm 142:1, 3).

The heading of Psalm 142 says four things: It is by David. It is a contemplation. It relates to a time when David was in a cave (either Adullam or En-gedi). It is a prayer. It was likely written after the experience. The psalm has three parts. 1. DAVID'S CRY TO THE LORD (1-2). I declare before Him my trouble. 2. DAVID'S COMPLAINT THAT NO ONE CARES (3-6). They have secretly set a snare for me...no one cares for my soul. 3. DAVID'S CONFIDENCE IN THE LORD'S DELIVERANCE (7). Bring my soul out of prison. You will deal bountifully with me.

Does it ever seem your soul is in prison? David was overwhelmed by feelings of helplessness. In a sense, he was in prison. He was hiding from Saul. However, physical imprisonment was nothing compared to the fear of being captured and executed for guiltless crimes. When you are accused unjustly, emotions easily get out of control. When your spirit is overwhelmed your feelings are running wild, and you can't rein them in. The worst thing you can do is make a major decision when you are under emotional pressure. Prayer not only places your problem in God's hands, it releases your feelings. It is both spiritual and therapeutically helpful. Determine ahead of time what to do when your spirit overwhelms you. Pray. Begin with what you are feeling. Allow the Spirit usher you into the presence of God. Let contemplation help you. Sometimes when you pray, just listen. Listen to what you are saying. Listen to what God is saying. Get into His Word and plant yourself on His promises. Then pour out your complaint to God (2).