

A PRAYER FOR PROSPERITY

Intro: Several weeks ago we began looking at the Psalms under a title: Psalms for Praise and Prayer. On this Independence Day weekend, I was drawn to the last line of Psalm 144: *How blessed are the people whose God is the LORD*. No doubt we at some point will hear or sing, “God bless America,” a recognition that everything good that we have in this country is in fact a blessing from God. More than “spacious skies or amber waves of grain, for purple mountains’ majesty,” there’s the matter of God’s grace. Just what is the blessing that the Lord grants to a people? From Psalm 144 we can see that God’s blessing is more than nature, land, beauty, riches, or even freedom. David shows us God’s blessing as something we fight for, we wait for, and we pray for.

We Fight for the Blessing (1-4)

- *Blessed be the LORD who trains my hands for war, and my fingers for battle.*
 - War, struggle, opposition, and evil are a fact of life, involving physical, emotional, & spiritual.
 - This claim comes from the messianic king David. Ps. 2 shows the King deals with evil.
 - We could wish God’s blessing exempts us from struggle against sin. [*But if you are putting to death the deeds of the flesh, you will live* (Romans 8)]
- The blessing is that God equips and trains us for this spiritual holy war contest.
 - God Himself blesses us for an in the struggle with Himself.
 - David lists ten aspects of God’s equipping and training:

▪ Rock	Trainer	Lovingkindness (<i>chesed</i>)	Stronghold	Deliverer
▪ Shield	Refuge (tower)	Upholds	Knows us	Cares for us
- Blessing is God’s care, love, empowering presence in our struggles to combat evil with good.

We Wait for the Blessing (5-11)

- Divine intervention necessary. *Bow Your heavens O LORD, touch the mountains that they may smoke.*
 - God the Creator is implored to split the heavens to rescue His servant.
 - In the past, He demonstrated His power to save, for example at the Flood, at Sinai, etc.
 - David recognizes that “deliverance by man is in vain;” mankind can’t fix ourselves.
 - We live in a culture that essentially denies the supernatural, that there is a God who created and rules over His world. The god of this world is science, empirical knowledge, and Nature; religion is consigned to the imaginative, psychological, the not-real.
 - For example, the search for aliens is more scientifically plausible than faith in God.
 - Even “Christians” can lose sight of the truth that God is reality, life, and truth.
- The greatest divine intervention into our world is the Incarnation, Passion, and Victory of Jesus.
 - Part of David being equipped for holy war was his willingness to wait on the Lord.
 - Repeatedly he calls out for deliverance *from aliens whose mount speaks deceit, and whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood.*
- The blessing is God’s sending Jesus to rescue us. The blessing of America is not America but Jesus!

We Pray for the Blessing (12-15)

- How should we pray? Note that we pray from a posture of all that has gone before, engaged in the struggle against sin and evil by the power of God, relying on the divine power of God to finally rescue us, and now we are blessed to pray for prosperity.
 - Sons and Daughters, our first priority in seeking the blessing of God
 - Who would have thought we’d need special revelation to recognize genders, or value of children.
 - Illust: Zulmira’s prayer
 - Productivity and abundance in the material realm
 - Protection and peace in society.
- What is the blessing? God Himself, His presence protection, power, and love.
 - How can we honor the LORD as we celebrate July 4th? Psalms for Praise & Prayer!
 - Praise the LORD for His help in the struggle, for His intervention through Jesus, for saving us here.
 - Pray that we will be faithful in the fight, in waiting, and praying that the LORD will bless our country with a spirit of repentance and return to Him.