

**Israel's Songs of Hope**  
*The Book of Psalms*

**Preparation for Battle**  
*Psalm 144*

*A Psalm of David.*

- <sup>1</sup> Blessed be the LORD, my rock,  
Who trains my hands for war,  
And my fingers for battle;
- <sup>2</sup> My lovingkindness and my fortress,  
My stronghold and my deliverer,  
My shield and He in whom I take refuge,  
Who subdues my people under me.
- <sup>3</sup> O LORD, what is man, that You take knowledge of him?  
Or the son of man, that You think of him?
- <sup>4</sup> Man is like a mere breath;  
His days are like a passing shadow.
- <sup>5</sup> Bow Your heavens, O LORD, and come down;  
Touch the mountains, that they may smoke.
- <sup>6</sup> Flash forth lightning and scatter them;  
Send out Your arrows and confuse them.
- <sup>7</sup> Stretch forth Your hand from on high;  
Rescue me and deliver me out of great waters,  
Out of the hand of aliens
- <sup>8</sup> Whose mouths speak deceit,  
And whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood.
- <sup>9</sup> I will sing a new song to You, O God;  
Upon a harp of ten strings I will sing praises to You,
- <sup>10</sup> Who gives salvation to kings,  
Who rescues David His servant from the evil sword.
- <sup>11</sup> Rescue me and deliver me out of the hand of aliens,  
Whose mouth speaks deceit  
And whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood.
- <sup>12</sup> Let our sons in their youth be as grown-up plants,  
And our daughters as corner pillars fashioned as for a palace;
- <sup>13</sup> Let our garners be full, furnishing every kind of produce,  
And our flocks bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our fields;
- <sup>14</sup> Let our cattle bear  
Without mishap and without loss,  
Let there be no outcry in our streets!
- <sup>15</sup> How blessed are the people who are so situated;  
How blessed are the people whose God is the LORD!

## Questions

1. Who are David's enemies?
  - a. 'Aliens' or foreigners in v.7. Probably Philistines. They are outside the covenant.
2. David asks God to appear, in some sense, in v.5 – 6. What appearance of God is he asking for?
  - a. The following verses seem to be a literary reference to the Exodus out of Egypt, God's paradigm for 'salvation' and 'rescue' (v.10):

<sup>5</sup> Touch the mountains, that they may smoke.

<sup>6</sup> Flash forth lightning and scatter them;  
Send out Your arrows and confuse them.

<sup>7</sup> Stretch forth Your hand from on high;  
Rescue me and deliver me out of great waters,  
Out of the hand of aliens

I believe this is not a *literal*, but a *literary*, reference. It is Exodus language.

3. What does David mean when he says that God 'trains my hands for war and my fingers for battle'?
  - a. Is this referring to actual skills with the sling and sword? Is he referring to physical strength? Is he referring to character qualities like courage?
  - b. How is this different than walking into a battle cold-turkey, with no preparation?
  - c. Sometimes people say that, in order to rely on God, you should not prepare. What would David say to that?
4. Notice that in v.12 – 15, David speaks for Israel and not just himself.
  - a. What kind of life is he envisioning for his people?
  - b. How does this relate to David being a shepherd over his people, like he was once an actual shepherd over his father's flock and fought to defend the sheep from wild animals?
  - c. What is in David's heart as he trains for battle and defense?
5. Application: How has God met you in preparation for spiritual battle? Even if you didn't sense Him there before?
  - a. Illus: During the summer between my junior and senior year of college, my parents were finalizing their divorce. There was a lot of arguing. I prayed for them a lot. Perhaps all that praying put me in touch with God's heart more than usual. For there was one night that I woke up at 1:18am, and was instantly wide awake. I couldn't go back to sleep. So I went downstairs to get a drink of water. That's when I saw a light under the doorway to the garage. I looked inside to see if I should turn off the light. I discovered my mom crying in the car, which was running, and the garage door closed. I quickly turned off the car and talked with my mom. I've looked at that situation from different angles and I think Jesus woke me up. The training in prayer connected to being more prepared for the battle.
  - b. Is there some way that you 'trained for war' under God's tutelage and coaching?