

Engagement

Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.

Psalm 143:8

This psalm of David is a model prayer for anyone afflicted or persecuted by an enemy. His desperate cries from an overwhelmed spirit and desolate heart reveal the honest recognition of his trouble, as well as his unworthiness and inabilities. Yet it also shows his confidence in the Lord's power to deliver, not for his own righteousness, but because of the Lord's faithful righteousness. In this state, he appeals to the Lord's past works and deliverance, as well as His mercy. And in the midst of his petitions, here in our text, he admits his need to be engaged in the deliverance that he craves.

First, he desires to hear the lovingkindness of the Lord in the morning, in the beginning of his day, before the clamor and necessities of the day crowd his mind and distract his attention from that need of his soul. Before making his first major decision, he needs guidance based on the word of the Lord, providing confidence that the Lord's direction embraces His love for His own. David's basis for such desire is his trust in the Lord, which is reinforced by his previously described meditations on the works of His hands. Second, he asks to know the way wherein he should walk, i.e., how to live according to what he has learned from the Lord throughout the day. It is one thing to understand with the mind the principles and precepts of God's word, but the next step must be to apprehend with the will how to apply them in our daily behavior. In the context of this psalm, this includes walking in a path that is safe from the enemy's influence. He later requests, "teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God" (v. 10). Finally, he explains his attitude in these requests, as he "lifts up his soul" unto God. As the Levitical priests would wave their appointed portions of the offerings before the Lord, previous to their consumption, so David metaphorically lifts up his own soul as an offering unto the Lord, before embarking on that day's endeavors.

Whether we may deal with a physical enemy or with the spiritual enemy of our soul, we have a model in this psalm to follow. Let us seek the Lord daily with these desires and attitudes, that we might lift up our redeemed souls unto Him, engaging with His direction in our daily living, as we seek His good spirit of deliverance.