



"Bring my soul out of prison!"

DAVID WAS HIDING FROM King Saul—hiding in a cave. He was on the run from a powerful king who wished only that this young man would, once and for all, die. For, you see, the Lord God had already expressed His displeasure with Saul, and had already anointed the *new* king to replace him: David, hiding in a cave. Anointed by the Lord, but not yet on the throne. King Saul wanted only to destroy this one who, in his eyes, was nothing more than a usurper of power.

So, stuck in a cave, the future king cries out to his God. Does he ask the Lord to save his skin, his life? Does he ask the Lord to send down fire on those pursuing him? No, his concern is for his spirit, and his soul.

I cry aloud with my voice to the Lord;
I make supplication with my voice to
the Lord.
I pour out my complaint before Him;
I declare my trouble before Him.
When my spirit was overwhelmed
within me,
You knew my path.
In the way where I walk
They have hidden a trap for me.
Look to the right and see;
For there is no one who regards me;
There is no escape for me;
No one cares for my soul.

Psalms 142:1-4

When we are being pursued, when we are alone and full of fear, we feel it down to our very soul. But we have a God who knows, His Spirit connected to ours, the straits we are in. And when those who surround us care nothing for our soul, our God does.

I cried out to You, O Lord;
I said, "You are my refuge,
My portion in the land of the living.
Give heed to my cry,
For I am brought very low;
Deliver me from my persecutors,
For they are too strong for me.
Bring my soul out of prison,
So that I may give thanks to Your name;
The righteous will surround me,
For You will deal bountifully with me."

Psalms 142:5-7

The cry of every human being on the face of this earth should be, "Bring my soul out of prison!" Every person is born behind bars. We are not born good and innocent, then turn bad as we grow up because of external influences. No, we are born depraved and locked inside the prison built by the lord of all flesh: Satan. We come into this world his, and it is a miserable existence.

But Christ holds the key to that prison. Those who call upon Him, who place their faith and trust in Him, are released from that dank and dispiriting dungeon.

Still, so long as those believers remain on earth, remain in flesh, they remain, in a sense, imprisoned. The oppressive culture of this earth still bears down upon those in Christ; just like David, Christians are every day surrounded by the enemy's minions seeking to ridicule, harass and persecute those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ. So the cry of every child of God in Christ should also be, "Bring my soul out of prison!"

But there is one more reason for that

cry to be on our lips, for there is one more kind of prison beyond the prisons of original sin and persecution. That prison is *self*.

There are no prison bars more lamentable than the bars we erect ourselves. These keep us from the full glories available to us in Christ. They keep us from the fullness of His presence, His influence, His grace. They effectively lock away His Spirit, that tender comforter yearning to minister to ours even as we ignore Him.

Whenever it becomes necessary, our cry should be, "Lord Jesus, bring my soul out of prison!"

For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness.

Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.

Romans 8:6-10, 1-2.