

## Psalm 143

Morning Prayer Thursday Week 4

Night Prayer Tuesday

This is a supplication of one who is in a grave situation, persecuted by enemies (verse 3). It is possible that he is to face judgment 'in the morning' (verse 8), and is pleading with God to be there on his side. Like a vassal with his lord (verses 2 and 12), he relies on the faithfulness and justice of YHWH. He is aware that he is not innocent and so recognises that he deserves some punishment, but not losing his life. The title reads: 'A Psalm\* of David.'

Verse 2 expresses the central theme of the Book of Job:

How can a mortal be just before God?

– Job 9:2

Who can say, 'I have made my heart clean; I am pure from my sin'?

– Proverbs 20:9

Surely there is no one on earth so righteous as to do good without ever sinning.

– Ecclesiastes 7:20

No human being will be justified in his sight.

– Romans 3:20

Whether life lasts for ten years or a hundred or a thousand, there are no questions asked in Hades.

– Sirach 41:4

He has made me sit in darkness like the dead of long ago.

– Lamentation 3:6

**<sup>1</sup>Hear my prayer, YHWH\*: be attentive to my supplications in your faithfulness; answer me in your righteousness\*.**

**<sup>2</sup>Do not enter into judgment\* with your servant, for no one living is righteous\* in your sight.**

**<sup>3</sup>The enemy pursues me, crushing my life to the ground, making me sit in darkness like those long dead.**

**<sup>4</sup>My spirit faints within me; my heart\* within me is appalled.**

**<sup>5</sup>I remember the days of old, I think about all your deeds, I meditate on the works of your hands.**

**<sup>6</sup>I stretch out my hands to you; my soul thirsts for you like a parched land.**

Thirsting for God

**<sup>7</sup>Answer me quickly,  
YHWH; my spirit fails.  
Do not hide your face from  
me, or I shall be like those  
who go down to the Pit.**

If you are silent to me, I shall be among those  
who go down to the Pit.

– Psalm 28:1

How long, YHWH? Will you forget me forever?  
How long will you hide your face from me?

– Psalm 13:1

‘Come, seek his face!’ My heart says to you: ‘I am  
seeking your face, YHWH. Do not hide your face  
from me. Do not turn your servant away in anger,  
you who are my help. Do not cast me off, do not  
forsake me, O God my Saviour!

– Psalm 27:8-9

You hid your face and I was confused.

– Psalm 30:7

Why do you hide your face?  
Why do you forget our affliction and oppression?

– Psalm 44:24

Do not hide your face from your servant,  
for I am in distress – make haste to answer me.  
Come close, I long for you. Redeem me.  
Free me from my enemies.

– Psalm 69:17-18

Do not hide your face from me in my distress.  
Listen to me; answer me speedily when I call.

– Psalm 102:2

Why do you hide your face, and count me as your  
enemy?

– Job 13:24

**<sup>8</sup>Let me hear of your kindness\* in the morning,  
for in you I put my trust\*.  
Teach me the way I should go,  
for to you I lift up my soul\*.**

**<sup>9</sup>Save me, YHWH, from my enemies;  
I have fled to you for refuge.**

**<sup>10</sup>Teach me to do your will, for you are my God.  
Let your good spirit lead me on a level path.**

**<sup>11</sup>For your name’s sake, YHWH, preserve my life.  
In your righteousness\* bring me out of trouble.**

**<sup>12</sup>In your kindness\* cut off my enemies,  
and destroy all my adversaries,  
for I am your servant.**