

Psalm 144

The bible is mainly about two things. It is about God and man. This Psalm tries to fit both of those very different components into David's life as a reference point. How can we see God in the life of a man?

Here is the basic outline of this psalm:

1. (vv.1-2) I see God in my life. I have unseen support.
 - a. I see how God supernaturally makes me keep winning and living.
2. (vv. 3-4) In reality, I am almost nothing.
 - a. The bible describes us like a mist, which is 99.999% empty space. My atoms are also 99.999% empty space.
3. (vv. 5-8) God has mighty power to save me.
 - a. We can only use lightning and thunder and volcanoes to compare his power.
4. (vv. 9-11) All of this blessedness is coming together and deserves a fitting song of praise
5. (vv. 12-15) Here is the description of the blessed man.

One cartoon that kind of describes this phenomenon is the Dr. Seuss story called Horton Hears a Who!. The premise is that there is a miniature (invisible) group of people living on a speck of dust who get together and yell in unison, so that someone can hear them. God is like big Horton, and we are like the microscopic Whos.



Read Psalm 144:1-2: David is an observer of the life of men. He is not as much of a student of nature as his son Solomon. He has the ability to see himself outside of himself. This is a healthy thing to do. People who are ignorant to their impact on others are sometimes called *nose blind*. David has a high conscience and awareness.

David sees the supernatural things that God has done in his life. He feels like he is somehow caught up in something much larger than himself. He does not falsely see himself as a hero or superstar. He knows very well that he is protected beyond what man can do. He has seen deliverance from impossible odds. Perhaps the people were elevating him too high.

Now it had happened as they were coming home, when David was returning from the slaughter of the Philistines, that the women had come out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with joy, and with musical instruments. ⁷ So the women sang as they danced, and said: “Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands.” (1 Samuel 18:6-7)

God cannot use a successful person if it goes to his head (like Sampson). **God has many ways that he can help us.**

1. God can send **allies** across my path. Perhaps I am trying to get something done that I am not making headway on. Perhaps it is a skill set that I do not possess. This is a very common way that God humbles and helps me. God will send a skilled person across my path who handles the problem efficiently.
2. God has encouraged me to **man up** a little lately. I may conclude that a situation is doomed; only to see God rescue it. I may start to complain, just before God reverses the curse (which is embarrassing). Sometimes there is a *kick to the shins* that goes with the solution. In other words it got handled in a way that didn't leave me as satisfied as I thought. I have a lot of ugly victories and messy accomplishments.
3. **God can teach me a skill.** He can give me a new competence in something that I was previously unable or ignorant to fulfill.
4. God can create a **paradigm shift**. God can change my reality by changing my world, or veering off of a collision course. I could be on my deathbed, praying my heart out. I could wake up and it just seemed like a dream. We have all been disturbed in the middle of the night over some issue. Perhaps our subconscious just realized that we were heading for trouble. Perhaps an

angel had to startle us into prayer or action. Sometimes I will have a great time of prayer which precedes a rough day.

Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way. (Matthew 2:12)

While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, “Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him.” (Matthew 27:19)

For God may speak in one way, or in another, Yet man does not perceive it. In a dream, in a vision of the night, When deep sleep falls upon men, While slumbering on their beds, Then He opens the ears of men, And seals their instruction. In order to turn man from his deed, And conceal pride from man, He keeps back his soul from the Pit, And his life from perishing by the sword. (Job 33:14-18)

David seemed indestructible. He looked like a goner so many times. Somehow he always survived. Do you believe that you are indestructible as long as you are following God's plan? Paul was on a mission from God; and a deadly viper bit him. It did not effect him.

But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat, and fastened on his hand. So when the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand, they said to one another, “No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he has escaped the sea, yet justice does not allow to live.” But he shook off the creature into the fire and suffered no harm. However, they were expecting that he would swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But after they had looked for a long time and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds and said that he was a god. (Acts 28: 3-6)

The apostles were able to cast out demons and heal diseases in the course of their God-given duties. They were given supernatural powers by God.

Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.” And He said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.” (Luke 10:17-20)

The bible does not say that we become like superman; and do what we want. We can get hurt; or worse; like anyone else if we are acting on our own. King Josiah went all out for God; but he then went beyond what God told him...and he died taking matters into his own hands.

After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple, Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against Carchemish by the Euphrates; and Josiah went out against him. But he sent messengers to him, saying, “What have I to do with you, king of Judah? I have not come against you this day, but against the house with which I have war; for God commanded me to make haste. Refrain from meddling with God, who is with me, lest He destroy you.” Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him, but disguised himself so that he might fight with him, and did not heed the words of Necho from the mouth of God. So he came to fight in the Valley of Megiddo. And the archers shot King Josiah; and the king said to his servants, “Take me away, for I am severely wounded.” His servants therefore took him out of that chariot and put him in the second chariot that he had, and they brought him to Jerusalem. So he died, and was buried in one of the tombs of his fathers. And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah. (2 Chronicles 35:20-24)

It is not even so much that God may not appoint us to die in action or experience failure. It's more that whatever God has appointed for us will happen.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: “For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.” Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:35-38)

Read Psalm 144: 3-4: God is willing to accept us in our lowly state if we can be honest in our assessments. An acceptable conclusion is that God is perfect and good; and I am helpless and sinful. In truth, we are impossibly small and helpless. We cannot measure up to any performance standard. The bible tells us that we are comparable to something that only exists under certain conditions, for a brief period.

As a father pities his children, So the LORD pities those who fear Him. For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. As for man, his days are like grass; As a flower of the field, so he flourishes. For the wind passes over it, and it

is gone, And its place remembers it no more. But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting On those who fear Him, And His righteousness to children's children, (Psalm 103:13-17)

Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'— and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked— I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. (Revelation 3:17-19)

I will not take a bull from your house, Nor goats out of your folds. For every beast of the forest is Mine, And the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the mountains, And the wild beasts of the field are Mine. "If I were hungry, I would not tell you; For the world is Mine, and all its fullness. Will I eat the flesh of bulls, Or drink the blood of goats? Offer to God thanksgiving, And pay your vows to the Most High. Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me." Psalm 50: 9-15)

Not only are we helpless; but we are physically almost nothing. We are dirt and water, re-mixed with life breathed into us. Why would God mess around with such unprofitable followers as us?

It is also hard to sincerely gain our attention. God has created an endless universe as a backdrop for this human project. Earth gets lost in our own solar system.

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse (Romans 1:20)

He holds us together at the sub-atomic level. He is the author of us and the universe. He has stamped a pattern on both.

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good testimony. By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible. (Hebrews 11:1-3)

For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. (Colossians 1:16-17)

All of this universe is just staging which will be burned up as soon as God is done harvesting human relationships on earth. That is a lot of set up and take down.

But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. (2 Peter 3:8-13)

What in the world does God see in us to make all of this; to accompany our short lives? Not only are we almost non-existent. We are also unfaithful.

All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:6)

What satisfaction can God have in a people who frequently disobey? How many humans have to be born to harvest a few souls for eternity?

“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it. (Matthew 7:13-14)

And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. (Genesis 2:7)

Read Psalm 144:5-8: David is comparing his own rescue to scenes in the Bible when God came to earth. There is just too much power to contain. It is like having an unstoppable friend.

Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the LORD

descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice. Then the LORD came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain. And the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up. (Exodus 19: 16-20)

Mankind has a hard time envisioning God. They see thunder and lightning in the heavens. It is a pattern of greater things in heaven. In reality, the seraphim have voices like thunder; and the cherubim look like lightning flashing back and forth. We see a glorious sunset and think of what heaven looks like. David feels that he has all of these resources in God at his disposal.

Read Psalm 144: 9-11: David feels the inspiration of a song coming on. How do you express yourself when you can see God taking on your burdens? The whole world is his canvas. His own life has taken on supernatural force. He sees himself caught up in God's purposes; and delivered. Somehow he finds himself as the tip of the sword in the LORD's army. Even the angels are fighting his battles.

Then the Philistines went up once again and deployed themselves in the Valley of Rephaim. Therefore David inquired of the LORD, and He said, "You shall not go up; circle around behind them, and come upon them in front of the mulberry trees. And it shall be, when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the mulberry trees, then you shall advance quickly. For then the LORD will go out before you to strike the camp of the Philistines." And David did so, as the LORD commanded him; and he drove back the Philistines from Geba as far as Gezer. (2 Samuel 5:22-25)

God's friends get the privilege of seeing some pretty amazing stuff. Abraham spoke to Jesus about saving Lot before a meteorite storm wiped out Sodom and Gomorrah.

Then he said, "Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Suppose ten should be found there?"

And He said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of ten." So the LORD went His way as soon as He had finished speaking with Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place. (Genesis 18:32-33)

When the morning dawned, the angels urged Lot to hurry, saying, "Arise, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be consumed in the punishment of the city." (Genesis 19:15)

Then the LORD rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the LORD out of the heavens. So He overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. (Genesis 19:24)

Read Psalm 144: 12-15: David describes the blessed man. That has to include a blessed society. When God is with you, you have it all.

We all want a legacy. We want our lives to have counted. We want something to show for our time. We are supposed to leave a flourishing and reproducing Christian family on earth. We are supposed to prepare the next generation for life and eternity.