

## Thou Art My Refuge and My Portion

*I cried out to Thee, O LORD;  
I said, Thou art my refuge,  
My portion in the land of the living.*  
Psalm 142:5

David wrote Psalm 142 while he was in a cave hiding from his enemies. Here was a man who, by earthly standards, had virtually nothing even though he had been anointed to be king. His friends had deserted him, he was running for his life, and his home at the time was a cold, damp cave. He had every right to be disheartened and discouraged, and he voices his discouragement to the Lord. However, he knows that ultimately the answers for his needs and his encouragement must come from the Lord. So, he says, “Thou art my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.” He is declaring that only in God can he consider himself well cared for and safe.

David also realizes that the kingly crown he has been promised is but a poor portion on earth—to this time it has only brought him trouble. His full and best portion comes from God, providing answers to his needs in all circumstances. While reflecting on this truth David becomes refreshed and encouraged, and he finishes Psalm 142 with, “The righteous will surround me, for Thou wilt deal bountifully with me.”

It is easy to look at our circumstances and become discouraged and weary. When this happens, we often look to other people to provide refreshment or encouragement. We tell ourselves,

- “My husband should be noticing all the things I do for him and tell me how much he appreciates my hard work.”
- “All I do is pick up dirty clothes off the floor; why can’t the kids do something for *me* for a change?”
- “I follow the rules at work and work hard, and no one notices; my co-worker, who always stays out longer than she should during lunch break, seems to get all the accolades from the boss.”

While it is great to get compliments and “Thank You’s” and rewards from the people we serve, we must not rely on that as our only source of encouragement and refreshment. Why? Because people are going to let you down. They will be selfish, only taking from you and not giving anything back. They will walk in the door after you have slaved all day to clean the house and they will throw themselves in the chair in front of the TV and ask you what’s for dinner. They will find something to criticize instead of to praise. They *will* let you down. And, if you open the door to it, they will make you more discouraged, and that may lead to bitter feelings against them and against your circumstances, even against God. It can also make you retreat into selfishness yourself, and you will be less likely to serve them in the way you should.

What we must remember is that our duty before God is to do what is right in each circumstance, even if your husband and kids don’t notice, or if your boss gives someone

else a pat on the back. When you do what is right, then all the encouragement you need comes directly from the Lord. In addition, when you do what is right you will be defended by the Lord, and He will often work in the situation to get the husband or the kids to be better at showing love and encouragement and to turn away from selfishness.

He who walks righteously, and speaks with sincerity,  
He who rejects unjust gain,  
And shakes his hands so that they hold no bribe;  
He who stops his ears from hearing about bloodshed,  
And shuts his eyes from looking upon evil;  
He will dwell on the heights;  
His refuge will be the impregnable rock;  
His bread will be given him;  
His water will be sure.

[Isaiah 33:15-16](#)

Note here in Isaiah that the basic needs of the righteous one are cared for; he will have bread and water as he takes refuge in the Lord. Think of the bread and the water as any of your basic needs, including encouragement. We all need encouragement to fight the good fight (2 Timothy 4:7). Our ultimate source of encouragement and refreshment *must* come from God. God will *never* fail in this area. We should run to Him when we are tempted to become discouraged, for He alone is our safe refuge and full portion. He is always there to encourage us and give us what we need each day in great measure as we walk righteously.

The LORD'S lovingkindnesses indeed never cease,  
For His compassions never fail.  
They are new every morning;  
Great is Thy faithfulness.  
"The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I have hope in Him."  
The LORD is good to those who wait for Him,  
To the person who seeks Him.  
It is good that he waits silently  
For the salvation of the LORD.

[Lamentations 3:22-26](#)

God not only is our portion in the land of the living, fulfilling all our needs here on earth, but He also is the portion of our inheritance.

The LORD is the portion of my inheritance and my cup;  
Thou dost support my lot.  
The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places;  
Indeed, my heritage is beautiful to me.

[Psalm 16:5-6](#)

My flesh and my heart may fail,  
But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

[Psalm 73:26](#)

When we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and make Him Lord of our life, we are adopted as sons and daughters of the Father God. As part of that adoption, we actually inherit eternal fellowship with God; He is the portion of our inheritance. So, even when our

struggles here on earth seem particularly difficult, we should be encouraged and refreshed in the knowledge that our time in this world is only a temporary journey, but our eternal home in heaven with the Lord. Hallelujah!

**Questions for personal study:**

1. Read Ruth 2: 8-13. Ruth received a blessing through Boaz from the Lord because of how much she had done for her mother-in-law. She left her homeland as a widow. She and Naomi were very poor, necessitating that she glean from another person's field. She could have let her circumstances discourage her, but she continued to do what was right, and God cared for her needs and blessed her. What things do you need to change in your home, at work, in your relationships to do what is right before God?
2. The refrain to the beloved hymn, *Great is Thy Faithfulness*, states: "Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness! Morning by morning new mercies I see; All I have needed Thy hand hath provided—Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!" In what areas are you feeling discouragement today, or what needs do you have? List them specifically, and then hand them over to the Lord in prayer and ask for Him to be your refuge and portion.
3. Write out a praise offering to the Lord, thanking Him for your inheritance of eternal fellowship in heaven with Him.