

Psalms 142:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: the righteous shall compass me about; for thou shalt deal bountifully with me.

Analysis

Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: the righteous shall compass me about; for thou shalt deal bountifully with me. This concluding verse of Psalm 142 moves from present confinement to anticipated deliverance, from individual prayer to corporate worship, from desperate petition to confident expectation of God's bountiful dealing. David expresses both the purpose of deliverance (praise) and its result (restored community).

"Bring my soul out of prison" (הוציאה ממסגר נפשי / hotzi'ah mimasgyer nafshi) is urgent petition for deliverance. Yatsa in Hiphil form means to bring out, lead out, deliver. Masgyer means prison, dungeon, place of confinement. Nefesh (soul) represents the whole person—life, being, essential self. David pleads for God to bring his entire being out of confinement into freedom.

The "prison" may be literal (the cave) or metaphorical (circumstances of persecution, internal bondage of overwhelming spirit). Likely both—physical confinement in the cave represented larger spiritual and circumstantial imprisonment under Saul's persecution. Prison represents any circumstance of limitation, bondage, confinement where freedom of movement and life are restricted. David needs God's liberating intervention to escape.

"That I may praise thy name" (את-שםך להודות / lehodot et-shimkha) expresses purpose of deliverance. Yadah means to give thanks, praise, confess. Deliverance

isn't for David's comfort or convenience but for God's glory. The purpose of liberation is worship, thanksgiving, testimony to God's character (His name). This reflects biblical understanding that God's ultimate purpose is His own glory, and our deliverance serves to magnify His name through our grateful praise.

"The righteous shall compass me about" (בְּכָתְרוּ עָלִי צַדִּיקִים/yakhtiru alay tzaddikim) anticipates restored community. Kathar means to surround, encircle, crown. Tzaddikim (righteous ones) refers to fellow believers, the community of faith. David envisions being surrounded by the righteous who will join his praise, celebrate his deliverance, and participate in worship. Deliverance isn't merely individual blessing but restoration to worshiping community.

"For thou shalt deal bountifully with me" (כִּי תִּתְמֹל עָלִי/ki tigmol alay) expresses confident expectation. Gamal means to deal fully with, recompense, reward, treat generously. This isn't uncertain hope but settled confidence: God WILL deal bountifully. The basis for this confidence isn't David's merit but God's character—His covenant faithfulness, His pattern of delivering His people, His commitment to those who trust Him.

Historical Context

The prison imagery resonates throughout biblical history and David's experience. While likely not literally imprisoned in a dungeon at this point, David's cave confinement functioned as prison—limited freedom, constant danger, isolation from normal life. Later biblical figures faced literal imprisonment: Joseph in Egypt (Genesis 39:20), Jeremiah in a cistern (Jeremiah 38:6), Peter and John (Acts 4:3), Paul frequently (2 Corinthians 11:23).

Yet Scripture consistently presents deliverance from prison as opportunity for testimony and praise. When the angel freed Peter from prison, he went to the praying church (Acts 12:5-17). When earthquake opened prison doors for Paul and Silas, they didn't flee but stayed and led the jailer to Christ (Acts 16:25-34). Prison doesn't silence God's people's witness but amplifies it.

The purpose clause "that I may praise thy name" reflects biblical theology that

connects deliverance with doxology. Israel's exodus from Egyptian slavery led to worship at Sinai. Return from Babylonian exile produced renewed temple worship. New Testament salvation results in praise (Ephesians 1:6, 12, 14). We're delivered FROM sin and bondage FOR worship and service.

The vision of the righteous surrounding David in celebration anticipates corporate worship as ultimate context for individual testimony. While David prayed individually in the cave, he envisioned deliverance leading to community worship where righteous ones gather to celebrate God's faithfulness together. This reflects biblical understanding that faith is communal, not merely individual. We're saved into a body, delivered into a family, brought into the congregation.

For imprisoned believers throughout history—Roman persecution, medieval dungeons, Communist gulags, contemporary imprisonment for faith—this psalm has sustained hope. Physical prison cannot prevent spiritual freedom. Circumstances of confinement become opportunities for testimony. Individual suffering leads to corporate celebration when God delivers. The prison becomes the testimony.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What kinds of 'prisons'—whether physical, emotional, spiritual, or circumstantial—might believers experience, and how does this verse speak to various forms of bondage?
2. How does understanding that deliverance's purpose is to praise God's name rather than merely personal comfort change our prayers for deliverance?

3. What is the significance of individual deliverance leading to corporate worship ('the righteous shall compass me about')?
4. How can believers maintain hope that God 'will deal bountifully' when present circumstances seem hopeless or permanently confining?
5. In what ways have you experienced God bringing you 'out of prison' (any form of bondage or confinement), and how did this lead to praise and restored community?

Interlinear Text

בְּ	שָׁמָמְתָּ	אֶת	לְהֹדֵד וְתִּ	נַפְשִׁי	מִמְסָגֵתִי	הַזְּכִירָה
Bring	out of prison	my soul	that I may praise	H853	thy name	H0
H3318	H4525	H5315	H3034		H8034	
יְכַתֵּתְךָ	צָדִיקָם	כִּי	תְּגַמֵּל	עַלְיכֶם		
shall compass me about	the righteous	H3588	for thou shalt deal bountifully	H1580		H5921
H3803	H6662					

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 143:11 (Righteousness): Quicken me, O LORD, for thy name's sake: for thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble.

Psalms 146:7 (Parallel theme): Which executeth judgment for the oppressed: which giveth food to the hungry. The LORD looseth the prisoners:

Psalms 13:6 (Parallel theme): I will sing unto the LORD, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.

James 5:11 (Parallel theme): Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

Isaiah 61:1 (Parallel theme): The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

Acts 2:24 (Resurrection): Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

Psalms 9:14 (Resurrection): That I may shew forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy salvation.

Psalms 142:1 (Parallel theme): I cried unto the LORD with my voice; with my voice unto the LORD did I make my supplication.

Psalms 119:17 (Parallel theme): Deal bountifully with thy servant, that I may live, and keep thy word.

Psalms 31:8 (Parallel theme): And hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy: thou hast set my feet in a large room.