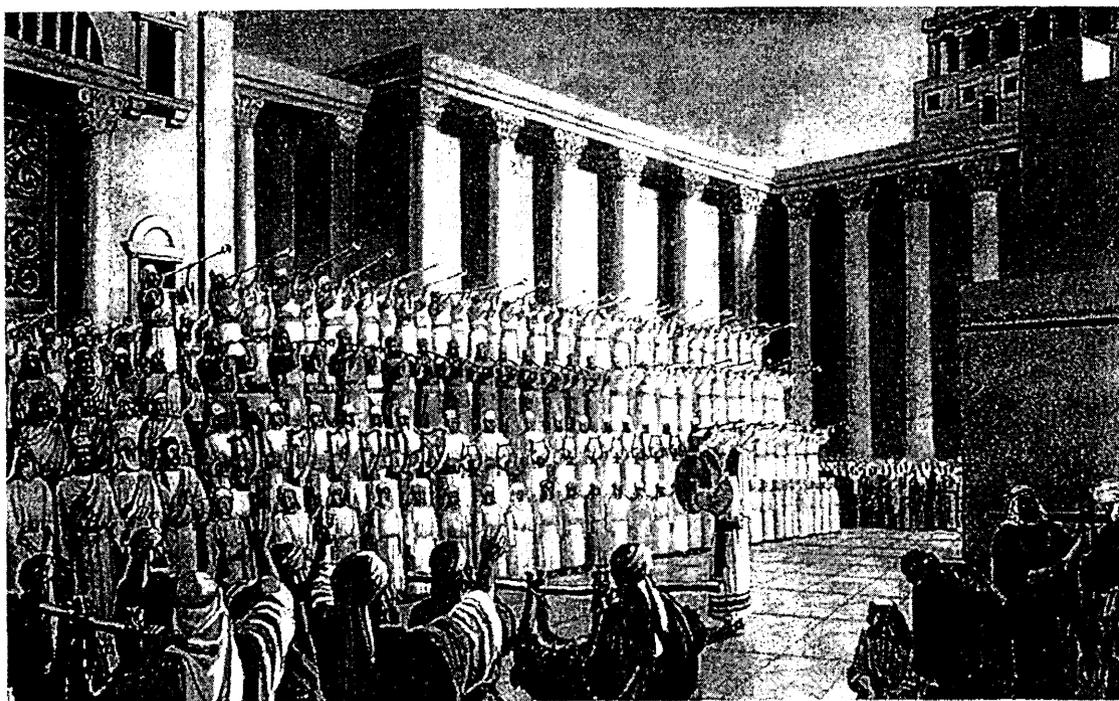
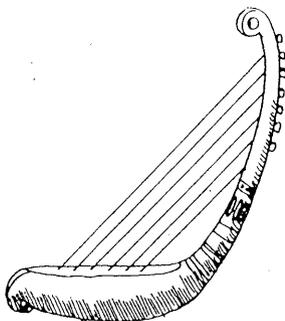


The Saint's Song of Devotion — Psalm 144



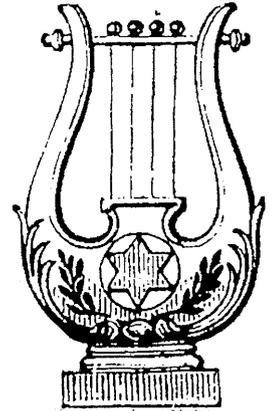
Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

The Saint's Song of Devotion — Psalm 144

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OUTLINE

- 1A. Past Vindications: 1-2
 - 1b. Strength: 1
 - 2b. Safety: 2
- 2A. Present Vicissitudes: 3-11
 - 1b. Relief: 3-6
 - 2b. Rescue: 7-11
- 3A. Prospective Victories: 12-15
 - 1b. Prosperity: 12-14
 - 2b. Piety: 15



1A. Past Vindications: 1-2

- 1b. Strength: 1

“Blessed is the Lord my instructor in warfare”

“Blessed are the peacemakers” (Mt. 5:9)

These beatitudes don't contradict but complement each other.

- 2b. Safety: 1-2 Nine appellatives of our covenant-keeping God

- 1c. Strength: literally, rock
- 2c. Teacher: instructor
- 3c. Goodness: hesed, “loyal love”
- 4c. Fortress: impregnable ramparts
- 5c. High Tower: watch tower, keep
- 6c. Deliverer: way of escape
- 7c. Shield: buckler for protection
- 8c. Confidant: one in whom we can trust
- 9c. Conqueror: one who subdues the enemies

We are not to trust in our own skills. Any success we have in life comes from God.

2A. Present Vicissitudes: 3-11

- 1b. Relief: 3-6

- 1c. Helplessness of man: 3-4

- 1d. In comparison with God's might: 3

“what is man” (adam) “and the son of man” (enosh)
 Adam—mankind in general Enosh—man in his frailty and
 weakness

2d. In comparison with God’s eternity: 4

- 1e. Man is a fleeting breath
- 2e. Man is a fleeting shadow

How insignificant is man’s existence! 3
 How inconsequential is man’s experience! 4

Scroggie quotes the Nonsuch Professor on the lowliness of man,
 “In the *earth*, he is as fleeting dust; in the *air*, he is disappearing
 vapour; in the *water* he is a breaking bubble; and in the *fire* he is
 a consuming smoke” (*Psalms*, 96-97, italics in the original).

2c. Hope for deliverance: 5-6

1d. A prayer for personal deliverance: 5 Parallel with Psalm 18

2d. A petition for the defeat of the enemies: 6

- 1e. The powerful verbs in 5-6 show David’s desire.
- 2e. The destruction parallels that of the event at Mt. Sinai
 (Ex. 19:11, 18-19; Ps. 18:14).

2b. Rescue 7-11

1c. The destruction of the enemies: 7

- 1d. The source of deliverance: 7a “the hand from above”
- 2d. The specifics of deliverance: 7b “from the hand of the
 enemy”

2c. The description of the enemies: 8

David’s enemies affirm fidelity but practice treachery.
 “vanity” v. 4 breath “vanity” v. 8 falsehood

3c. The delight of the psalmist: 9

- 1d. The composition of a new song:
 David lives above his troubles and the song reaches a
 crescendo in the closing of the psalm. The Holy Spirit then
 carries the doxology through the final five psalms.



2d. The content of the new song: 10-11

1c. Deliverance by the Lord: 10
Of kings and of David

2c. Deliverance from the enemies: 11
The Septuagint (LXX) adds to the superscription of the psalm “against Goliath” (1. Sam. 17: 45, 47, 51)

3A. Prospective Victories: 12-15

1b. Prosperity: 12-14

A picture of peace and prosperity includes the family, the farm and the fatherland.

1c. Vigorous sons:

2c. Graceful daughters:

Spurgeon says of such godly family life,

Home becomes a palace when the daughters are maids of honour and the sons are nobles in spirit: the father is king and the mother queen, and royal residences are more than outdone. A city built up of such dwellings is a city of palaces, and a state composed of such cities is a republic of princes (Cited by Scroggie, 101).

3c. Full barns:

4c. Healthy animals:

5c. God’s protection:

1d. Israel’s well-being internationally: 14b

1e. No invasion: “no breaking in” (Neh. 6:1)

2e. No deportation: “no going out” i.e. captivity
(Amos 4:3)

2d. Israel’s well-being internally: 14b

No complaining in the streets.

A prayer for a people free of complaints and full of contentment.

2b. Piety: **“Happy is that people whose God is the Lord”**

“Happy is the people whose ELOHIM is YAHWEH (Jehovah),”
that is, “Happy is the people whose **powerful deity** is the
promise-keeping deliverer.”

**God is the true promise keeper and never disappoints those who trust
in Him.**

Conclusion:

1. Few people enjoy temporal prosperity.
2. Every believer can enjoy spiritual prosperity, Prov. 14:34

It is good to remember Calvin’s words,
“It does not follow that those believers are miserable who struggle through life in
want and poverty, for this want, whatever it be, God can counterbalance by better
consolation” (Cited in the *Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, 859).

3. Political stability and national well-being are related to God.
4. Departure from God results in disunity, discontent and dissolution.

Psalm 144 Part 1 - Poem by Isaac Watts

Psalm 144 part 1

v.1,2

C. M.

Assistance and victory in the spiritual warfare.

For ever blessed be the Lord,
My Savior and my shield;
He sends his Spirit with his word,
To arm me for the field.

When sin and hell their force unite,

v.1,2

C. M.

Assistance and victory in the spiritual warfare.

For ever blessed be the Lord,
My Savior and my shield;
He sends his Spirit with his word,
To arm me for the field.

When sin and hell their force unite,
He makes my soul his care,
Instructs me to the heav'nly fight,
And guards me through the war.

A friend and helper so divine
Does my weak courage raise;
He makes the glorious vict'ry mine,
And his shall be the praise.

Isaac Watts

v.3-6

C. M.

The vanity of man and condescension of God.

Lord, what is man, poor feeble man,
Born of the earth at first?
His life a shadow, light and vain,
Still hasting to the dust.

O what is feeble, dying man,
Or any of his race,
That God should make it his concern
To visit him with grace?

That God who darts his lightnings down,
Who shakes the worlds above,
And mountains tremble at his frown,
How wondrous is his love!



v.12-15

L. M.

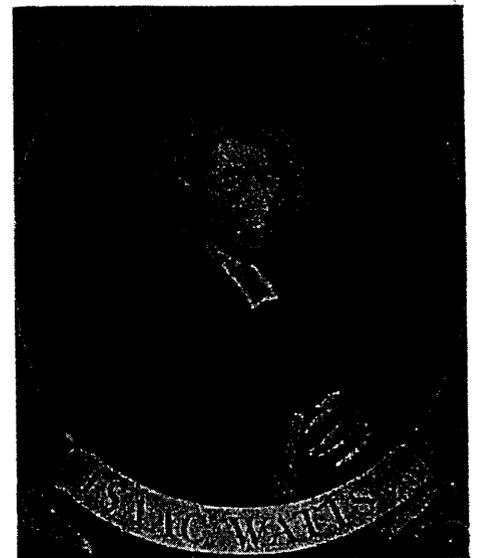
Grace above riches; or, The happy nation.

Happy the city where their sons,
Like pillars round a palace set,
And daughters, bright as polished stones,
Give strength and beauty to the state.

Happy the country where the sheep,
Cattle, and corn, have large increase;
Where men securely work or sleep,
Nor sons of plunder break the peace.

Happy the nation thus endowed,
But more divinely blest are those
On whom the all-sufficient God
Himself with all his grace bestows.

Isaac Watts



Portrait of Watts taken from life by G. White, 1727, 184



Pinners' Hall, London

Here Isaac Watts preached from June, 1704, to October, 1708

*Come, we that love the Lord,
And let our joys be known;
Join in a song with sweet accord,
And thus surround the throne.*

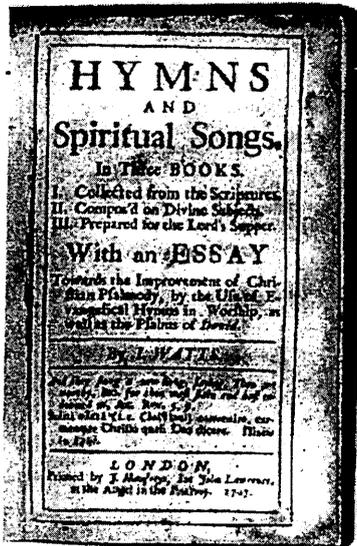
*The sorrows of the mind
Be banished from the place:
Religion never was designed
To make our pleasures less.*

– Watts, Hymn 20:1,2,10

Very early on his talent for rhyme and verse was apparent and intrigued his mother. Thinking that the rhymes he brought her might be “borrowed” from some other source, she challenged him one day as to his integrity, whereupon he sat down in her presence and composed the following acrostic:

I am a vile polluted lump of earth,
So I've continued ever since my birth,
Although Jehovah grace does daily give me,
As sure this monster Satan will deceive me,
Come therefore, Lord, from Satan's claws relieve me.

Wash me in thy blood, O Christ,
And grace divine impart,
Then search and try the corners of my heart,
That I in all things may be fit to do
Service to thee, and sing thy praises too.



The title page of Watt's first hymnal published in 1707

When Watts returned home for two years after his studies at Stoke Newington concluded, he was attending his father's church and began to complain of the psalm singing. The metrical notes and chant-like singing carried no depth of beauty or heights of exaltation. Watts loved the Psalms but he saw them as not always illuminating the glories of the gospel. When the congregation would sing, one line would lift hearts in praise but the next would bring the mind to thoughts of despair. He was quite sure the church could do better. One Sunday as he was complaining, Isaac Sr. challenged him to provide something better for the church to sing. The young man was

already known as a poet, what about lyrics? The following Sunday he returned and the first hymn by Isaac Watts, “Behold the Glories of the Lamb” was sung at the Above Bar Congregational Church