

The Sure Source of Courage

By Dr. Sam Wolfe
Huntsville, Alabama

And David was greatly distressed; for the people spoke of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but ...

DAVID ENCOURAGED HIMSELF IN THE LORD HIS GOD

(1 Samuel 30:6)



Introduction:

Pause now to recall who David was. He became the greatest king ever to ascend to the throne as King in Israel. As a young shepherd boy, he manifested great courage in challenging and defeating Goliath, the Philistine giant who struck fear in the heart of the army of Israel. A man after God's own heart, David was destined to greatness, but the Bible reveals that even great men have feet of clay. This was revealed in some dark days in David's life.

Our text reflects upon David's frailty and his dependence on the Lord. When David and his fellow soldiers returned from battle to their home in Ziklag, they discovered a desperate situation. While they were away, an invading enemy had come to destroy their town and leave it in ruins, and had taken their families and possessions captive. Strange, but characteristic of carnal nature, David's men blamed and turned on him, and were threatening to stone him to death. A grave situation, but we find valuable guidance in David's response. How many times have you faced desperation in situations that were beyond your natural strength to cope? What David did was simple, but not simplistic.

Throughout his life, David experienced storms of trial—situations in which God prepared him for His purposes. He knew grief and heartache, disappointment and failure, family problems, not to mention that he was fugitive from the murderous King Saul who sought to kill him at every opportunity. In the midst of all of these things, David learned spiritual truth and grew in wisdom and understanding. Therefore, he knew what to do in the time of trouble and fear. He relied upon what he knew about his God. Let's take note of these things he knew about his God:

A. David Was Confident that God Was Aware.

Throughout my life, I have experienced many seasons of trouble and trial. Some I brought on myself by negligence and disobedience; some the Lord imposed and allowed for His purposes; and others were the work of Satan and the world, but regardless of the source, I had the blessed privilege of sharing with my earthly father who cared for me—and oh the comfort it brought to know that he was aware of my situation. But the greatest comfort and courage can come from the awareness that our Heavenly Father knows about us in such times of distress. So, child of God, follow the exhortation in Hebrews 4:14-16:

Seeing then that we have a great high priest, who is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

How did Zacchaeus feel when Jesus called his name to come down out of the tree where he was perched for a better view of Jesus? —*He sees me; He knows me; He wants me; He cares for me?*

Jesus, our high priest who came in human flesh, was touched with deep compassion for us. So complete was His identification with us that He felt all that we feel in our tribulation. We have no greater friend and confidant—He knows all about us; we should not hide nor cover anything from Him. Just go to the throne of grace and find the mercy and obtain the help you need. He already knows. David wrote: *You have considered my trouble, You have known my soul in adversity* (Psalm 31:7).

B. David Was Assured of God's Care.

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he cares for you (1 Peter 5:7).

According to the 51st Psalm, David knew the same Holy Spirit who inspired Peter to write these words. Therefore, he was aware of God's care and cast his situation upon the Lord his God and thus, he encouraged himself in His God. A man of understanding, David wrote in the Psalms, *He knows my frame* (Psalm 103:14). Again David wrote: *My times are in His hand* (Psalm 31:15).

Now take note of the counsel Peter gave to people in trouble scattered abroad by persecution and who needed courage: *Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God*. WHY? Because He cares and will exalt you in due time. What does it mean to be under God's hand? First, it means to be under His authority, to be surrendered to Him and His purposes for your life. Then, under His hand is to be under the Hand of all He is—love, mercy, grace, power, understanding, and direction, etc. There is no better place to be for courage and security. There, you have the privilege of casting all your care upon Him.

I have found great joy in searching for the references on the *Hand of God*, especially the *Mighty Hand of God* and highlighting them – and to discover what God accomplished with His Mighty Hand. Do this for yourself and you will do as David did, **Encourage yourself in Him**.

C. David Believed What God Would Share.

Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he has torn, and he will heal us; he has smitten, and he will bind us up (Hosea 6:1). **What a promise!!!**

But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. (1 Peter 5:10).

What a title Peter gave to God!!! – The God of all Grace. And He is just that.

God is more than equal to the Seasons of Suffering we experience. God has His purposes, and His plan to provide for us. It is amazing what He will do. After or during a season of suffering, He will:

- ❖ **Perfect us:** This means to supply the means of maturity.
- ❖ **Stablish us:** This has to do with our foundation of truth by which we bear up under tribulation.
- ❖ **Strengthen us:** Satan's work is to vex us—to so wear us down that we have no strength to resist.
- ❖ **Settle us:** By this God secures us in His grace and power.

Now to close this article read David's 23rd Psalm. Meditate by thinking long thoughts on it.