



STRENGTHENING OURSELVES IN GOD

By Bill Subritzky

As Christians we are often tested in our faith. God permits these tests to strengthen us in Him. Just when we think everything is going all right some obstacle, problem or person seems to get in the way of us enjoying our walk with God.

Some of this is of the flesh but much of it is a spiritual battle. We are in this type of battle and we do not wrestle against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers, the rulers of darkness of this age and spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenlies. (Ephesians 6:12).

Our enemy is a real person, namely the devil, and he does not want us to succeed in our walk with God. He wants to distract us, defeat us, make us feel unwanted. He tries to fill us with doubt, fear and rejection. Sometimes we cannot see over the hill ahead because of the obstacles that appear to be in our way.

The good news is that there is always an answer in God.

We read in 1 Samuel chapter 30, that David discovered this many times in his walk with God before he became King of Israel. For example, because of the persecution from King Saul, he fled to the land of the enemy of Israel, the Philistines. There he stayed in a town named Ziklag. Together with his wives, children and followers he found refuge.

One day with his troops he was present at a massive gathering of the Philistine army. He had left Ziklag undefended. All the wives and children, including his own, had no protection.

On his return he discovered that the town had been invaded and burned with fire. All the women and the children had been taken captive. David and his troops mourned and wept until they had no more energy to weep.

David's two wives had been taken captive. David was greatly distressed. The people spoke of stoning him because they were grieved for their sons and daughters.

He had been stripped of everything. His wives and children as well as his possessions and those of his followers had been taken away by the invaders. He was absolutely bereft.

Perhaps you are feeling bereft today. Perhaps you feel that God is not with you, that you are on your own and everything is against you. You are hurting and people are speaking lies about you. The enemy is filling you with thoughts that you are defeated and that you are going to die of your illness or that you are going to be defeated in your walk with God. You are going to lose all your money.

All these kinds of ideas are flooding your mind and heart. You don't know what is going to hit you next.

Here was David being attacked by his own followers. They were thinking of killing him because they blamed him for the loss of their wives, children and possessions. However David strengthened himself in the Lord.

What did David do to strengthen himself at this time of trial? He went back to God, humbled himself before God, called out to God, and in his absolute desolation he asked God to help them.

When we humble ourselves before the Lord, especially when there is no hope anywhere else if we confess our sins before God, He begins to move in the situation. As we call upon Him to be our Lord and Saviour and submit absolutely to Him the mountains of despair disappear.

As we rely upon Him totally, calling out to Him for help, believing and confessing His Word, then the Holy Spirit moves mightily upon us.

And so it was with David. He began to pursue the enemy.

Are you putting the enemy to flight with the help of the Lord? Or are you letting the enemy walk all over you as you wallow in despair and lack of faith.

David is our example.

Having strengthened himself in the Lord, he found a doorway opened to him. He met an Egyptian who had been with the enemy as they invaded Ziklag but who had been left behind. He was starving. David gave him some food and this man then led them to the enemy camp.

With 400 men David overcame the enemy and recovered everyone unharmed.

Have you a real expectancy that God will hear your cry and open a door of salvation for you? Are you crying out to Him in your trouble and believing for an answer? Are you doing this with the power of God? Are you pursuing the enemy or letting him stand over you? Are you activating your faith in God?

Jesus also shows us what faith can do. When Jesus had said to the fig tree that no one would eat fruit from it ever again, by next morning it was withered away. The disciples were amazed.

Jesus said, "Have faith in God."

"For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says.

"Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them." (Mark 11:22-24).

James 4:7-8 says, "Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you."

We can call upon God at anytime to help us. Together with the Holy Spirit we can face the enemy, and strengthen ourselves in the Lord. As we call out to God He will move in our situation and the enemy will flee.

In the name of Jesus we can command the enemy to take his hand off our lives and those of our family. We can walk in victory.

"No temptation (trial) has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it." (1 Corinthians 10:13).

The key to our victory is calling upon the Lord, trusting Him, praising Him, worshipping and submitting to Him. Then the enemy will flee as we put our trust in the Lord and come under the shelter of His wings. (Psalm 61:4)

The presence and power of God will save us.

Like David you will be singing a Psalm of thanksgiving.

"Behold, God is my helper;
The Lord is with those who uphold my life.
He will repay my enemies for their evil.
Cut them off in Your truth.
I will freely sacrifice to You;
I will praise Your name, O Lord, for it is good.
For He has delivered me out of all trouble;
And my eye has seen its desire upon my enemies." (Psalm 54:4-7).

May God bless you mightily as you trust and obey Him.

Compiled by Bill Subritzky and produced by Dove Ministries
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