

## **What to do when Adversity Comes**

**Key Verse: "David was greatly distressed...But David encouraged himself in the LORD his God." (1 Samuel 30:6 KJV)**

This lesson is based on 1 Samuel 30:1-6. We will consider a period in David's life when he was in great pain and trouble, and see what he did in his time of trouble and how the Lord wonderfully bore all of it for him. Suffering affects all people equally (John 5:7; 14:1). Perhaps you are going through a difficult time right now; if so, this lesson will help you. And if you are not in trouble today, this lesson will prepare you in advance for the day in the future, because trouble will come to all of us, and it is a good thing if we know what to do when trouble comes. Notice, from 1 Samuel 30:1-6, we read:

### **1. David's suffering was very real**

From these Scriptures we can see that it is not at all fictitious. How do you compare your troubles with his? Is your suffering related to some great loss in your life? (30:1); Is it related to what you love (30:3)? Is it so great that you cry until you have no more strength to cry (30:4)? How real are our troubles! They are not made up at all, and there is nothing wrong with crying, or using this method to relieve pain when we cannot bear it (John 11:35).

### **2. Although David was a son of God, he still encountered troubles**

It is important to note this. The Lord loved David (see Acts 13:22); yet David was still in these very painful circumstances. We Christians must never expect to be immune to suffering. Think of how much the Lord suffered (Heb. 13:12) and how much the apostle Paul endured (2 Cor. 11:23-30)! Really, can you think of a true child of God who has not experienced the sufferings of trial and testing? When we encounter troubles in our life, we should not think that God does not love us (see 1 Peter 4:12).

### **3. The Lord allowed David to suffer**

He allows trouble to happen. He allows pain to come into the lives of His children, just as He did with Joseph (Gen. 39:20), Jeremiah (Jer. 37:15), Peter (Acts 12:5-6), and John Bunyan, and God does the same with many of His servants today. How strong Job's faith in the Lord was when he

was struck by pain, and how he could say that since God is the Most High, nothing has happened or will happen in life without God's permission (Job 13:15). The Lord could have prevented Job's troubles, and He could have prevented all of our troubles; but He did not do so. The greatest lesson He wants us to learn is to trust Him when He treats us this way, even when we cannot understand many of the "whys." Romans 8:28 is true, and it always will be true.

#### **4. In a real sense, David's troubles were due to his own fault.**

This is a serious matter because David sinned and fell, and no child of God can escape God's discipline by doing this. It is clear that the Lord allowed affliction to come upon David's life so that he could repent (see Ps. 55:19, and compare Deut. 8:2-3 and Heb. 12:6). The story of Saul, recorded in the same book, was that he, like David, disregarded God's authority, "but in both cases we see the difference between judgment and discipline. In Saul's case, his life and career were ended as punishment for his sin; but in David's case, the rod was lifted up to discipline – not to destroy; to bring him back, not to drive him out completely; to make him a vessel for his good, not to break him down." Your affliction may be the result of your own fault (look up Genesis 42:21, and note the word "therefore"), but God may also use punishment as discipline for his own glory and our good, working out his righteousness in the tests and trials of our lives.

#### **5. David's suffering was actually a blessing in disguise.**

You say, "How can this be? He lost his wife, his home, and his friends?" This is a blessing in disguise, for verse 8 tells us that David inquired of the Lord; and any experience that drives us to the Lord is valuable (see Psalm 119:67 and Hebrews 12:11). There is one thing God is looking for in your life and mine, and that is complete surrender to Him. He wants us to love Him and His will and to trust Him completely. What did David do when he was in trouble? Verse 6 tells us that he "encouraged (or strengthened) himself in the Lord his God." It's good to encourage others, but sometimes we need to encourage ourselves in the Lord as well. How can we do this?

- i. Remind yourself that you belong to Him. "David encouraged himself in the Lord his God." Rest in the assurance of this relationship.
- ii. Recall His past mercies. Just as He wonderfully bore you, led you, blessed you, provided for you, and used you in the past (1 Samuel 7:12), He will not change today.
- iii. Turn to Him. Through confession of sin (1 John 1:9), prayer (Psalm 34:6), humility before

Him, and simple hope in His salvation (Psalm 69:17).

- iv. Ask Him (verse 8). Ask Him what you should do in your testing situations.
- v. Obey Him (verse 9). Notice how this verse begins – “Then David came...”
- vi. Trust in Him. God promised David complete victory at the end of verse 8, and when he went (verse 9), he trusted in the Lord to fulfill His word. All of God’s promises to us are designed to cause us to fully trust Him and His Word and to trust Him to fulfill what He has promised in our lives (see Psalm 37:5, Proverbs 3:5-6, Matthew 11:28, Romans 8:28, Philippians 4:19).
- vii. Thank you for His goodness (verse 23). (See Psalm 9:9, 27:5, 46:1, 143:11; Nahum 1:7).

“The LORD is good, a refuge in the day of trouble; He knows those who take refuge in Him.”