

Encourage Yourself

By Anthony N. Wade

In 1 Samuel Chapter 30 we have the story of David and his army at Ziklag. The Amalekites had invaded it and set it on fire. They had taken the women, wives, sons and daughters captive. That was such an emotional disturbance that David and his men wept. They wept so much that it drained them of their strength their weeping wore them out.

David was in a serious predicament, because the men that were with him got so indignant, that they spoke of stoning him. One writer says that they were in an ugly mood. It has been said that everything rises and falls on leadership. Certainly David had no control over the Amalekites but the overall outcome was in his control; under his watch. When the going got tough, David got rough. What did he do? The King James Bible says that he encouraged himself in the Lord his God (1 Samuel 30:6).

Other translations put it this way:

David emboldened himself ... Rotherham
...doth strengthen himself ... Young's Literal Translation
...relied on the Eternal his God and took courage ... Moffat

If David encouraged, emboldened, strengthened himself and took courage, how did he do that? Where did he get his ability?

- (1) He talked to himself
- (2) He sang to God, and himself
- (3) He played on his harp until his troubles went away

There are a number of Psalms that confirm that this was exactly what he did.

Save me, O God, by Your name, and vindicate me by your strength. Hear my prayer O God; give ear to the words of my mouth. For strangers have risen up against me, And oppressors have sought after my life; They have not set God before them. 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 54:1-7 NKJ).

Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me! For my soul trust in You; and in the shadow of Your wings will I make my refuge, Until these calamities have passed by.

I will cry out to God Most high, To God who performs all things for me. He shall send from heaven and save me; He reproaches the one who would swallow me up. Selah God shall send forth His mercy and His truth. My soul is among lions; I lie among the sons of men who are set on fire, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword. Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; Let Your glory be above the earth. They have prepared a net for my steps; My soul is bowed down; they have dug a pit before me; into the midst of it they themselves have fallen.

My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast; I will sing and give praise, Awake, my glory! Awake, lute and harp! I will awaken the dawn. I will praise You, O Lord, among the peoples; I will sing to You among the nations. For your mercy reaches unto the heavens, And your truth unto the clouds. Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; let your glory be above all the earth (**Psalm 57:1-11**)

The results of David encouraging himself can be found later in 1 Samuel 30.

And David inquired of the Lord, saying, shall I pursue after this troop? Shall I overtake them? And he answered him, Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all. And David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away: and David rescued his two wives. And there was nothing lacking to them, neither small or great, neither sons nor daughters, neither spoil, nor anything that they had taken to them: David recovered all (**1 Samuel 30:8, 18-19 KJV**).

Everything that David did was under the Old Covenant. Hebrews 8:6 says that you and I have a better covenant, established upon better promises. If God came through for David, He certainly will deliver you and me.

In John 14:18, Jesus said that He would not leave you comfortless (KJV).

Other translations put it this way:

“I will never forsake you or leave you helpless. I will come back to you...”, Johnson
“I will not leave you desolate” ... The American Standard Version
“I will not leave you orphans” ... New King James

In the Acts of the Holy Ghost; Chapter 16, we find the story of Paul and Silas who were thrown into prison because the Apostle Paul cast the spirit of divination out of a slave girl that was possessed. As the story goes, at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God; better yet they were encouraging themselves, and everyone was listening. Suddenly, there was an earthquake; the place quaked so much that the foundation of the prison was shaken. Immediately the doors were opened, and everyone's chains were loosed.

When the keeper of the jail was awakened he saw that the doors were opened and knew for certain that everyone had fled. He drew his sword and was about to kill himself when Paul the Apostle yelled, “DON'T DO IT... WE ARE ALL HERE.”

That was such a testimony to the Philippian jailer that he wanted to know what he must do to be saved? They said “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you and your household will be saved.” The word was preached to his whole family and they got saved and baptized immediately. What a turn of events. The man who was in charge of their incarceration was now washing their stripes, feeding them his food, and received the Lord Jesus Christ into his life.

When you are bold enough to encourage yourself, many times there will be others that are set free as well as you. Time and again our deliverance is only a small part of why we should encourage ourselves. We never know who is watching, or who is listening to us as we deal with the things that we are sometimes faced with. A part of me would like to think that the Philippian Jailer became the Pastor of the church at Philippi. It is recorded that Paul had an on going relationship with them. They supported his missionary work, and were commended for their generosity.

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