
Remaining Strong When You're Downhearted

Psalm 61

No matter how strong we think we are, life's disruptions can cause our soft hearts to grow faint and weary. In Psalm 61, it is David, the giant killer, the fearless shepherd, the victorious military commander, the courageous king of Israel who speaks of being overwhelmed and downhearted (cf. Jonah 2:7; Psalm 142:1-3, 143:1-4).

David's very own son Absalom rebelled against him, seeking to dethrone and even killing him. Fleeing Jerusalem, David went into exile (2 Samuel 15-17). Like David, Christians are not immune from becoming downhearted. But regardless of our circumstances, God is present in the midst of all our troubles. Consequently, we must learn to cherish the blessings of His presence.

1. *I must _____ to Him in prayer (vv. 1-2)*

In his utter helplessness, David realized that no one else could help him and rescue him except the Lord. Even when he feels that God is so far from him, that didn't stop him from calling upon His name. Our Lord Jesus said that we always ought to pray and not lose heart (Luke 18:1). We are to persevere in prayer (Luke 18, Gen. 32:24-32). Prayer is our precious privilege (Psalm 50:15), therefore we should cherish it.

2. *I must _____ His care for me (vv. 3-5)*

David reminds himself of God's faithfulness. Every fulfilled promise is God's way of showing us that He cares for us. David recounts and rehearses God's previous blessings and His sure promises for the future, describing God's intimacy using different metaphors for God being his refuge (from a rock, to a high tower in verse 3; from a tent to the safe wings of a hen in verse 4). God cares for us (1 Peter 5:5-7; Psalm 56:8), comforting us in times of trouble by His Words (Psalm 56: 4,10,11).

3. *I must _____ His wondrous character (v.2)*

David speaks of God as His rock, who is his source of strength and stability (Psa.18:2; 62:2). As our shelter God is sufficient; as our tower, He is strong. No enemy can reach us because He is the God Almighty (Exo. 6:2) and nothing is too difficult for Him. Knowing who God is, is the key to our Christian living and personal growth.

4. *I must _____ His grace by faith (vv. 6-7)*

David speaks of an eternal king, a king who abides before God forever - the Lord Jesus Christ. As David's heart was overwhelmed, he looked in faith to the coming Savior and saw all of his sufferings in light of the greater suffering and the victory of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 4:12 ff.), Who now can identify with all our pain and sorrows (Heb. 4:15).

David in this Psalm begins with a sad heart (v. 2) but concludes with gladness (v.8) He begins with prayers and tears but ends with songs of praise. And it's not that his disruption was all of a sudden erased. It was still there. What made the difference is a realization of the power, the promises and presence of God.