

DAVID IN THE CAVE OF ADULLAM

1 Samuel 22:1-2; Psalms 142, 57,34

Between the time David was anointed king and when he was crowned, he was forced to go into hiding. Saul vowed to kill him (1 Sam 20.33). As a result, David panicked and his faith failed him, causing him to flee. He was on the run for ten long years.

It is interesting to read of how David describes himself during this very dark time in his life.

I am hunted like a partridge, 1 Samuel 26:20.

I am like a pelican in the wilderness, Psalm 102:6.

I am like an owl in the desert, Psalm 102:6.

My soul is among the lions, Psalm 57:4.

They have prepared a net for my steps, Psalm 57:6.

David during that stage in life had lost sight of God, giving way to *falsehood, fear, and folly* (1 Sam 21.10-15), touching depths of shame and humiliation.

David having fled his angry father -in -law, went to Achish king of Gath. But the servants of Achish said to him, ***“Isn’t this David, the king of the land? Isn’t he the one they sing about in their dances:***

***“Saul has slain his thousands,
and David his tens of thousands?”***

David took these words to heart and was very much afraid of Achish king of Gath. So, he pretended to be insane in their presence; and while he was in their hands he acted like a madman, making marks on the doors of the gate, and letting saliva run down his beard (21:10—13).

When your faith and your heart are steadfast in the Lord, you will act like a child of God. But when, for whatever reason, your faith fails and you lose heart, your behaviour will change.

But David was afraid of staying in Philistine territory and so he escaped and hid in a cave in Adullam where his faith was renewed. Let us visit this cave this morning, so that our faith too may be renewed. The cave suggests at least 5 helpful thoughts for us.

- 1. It speaks to us of refuge**
- 2. It speaks to us of a rally**
- 3. It speaks to us of rejection**
- 4. It speaks to us of resources**
- 5. It speaks to us of rewards**

1) It Speaks to Us of Refuge

Psalms 142, 57 and 34 are recordings of his inner man experiences in the cave. It would be to him *a place of safety, seclusion, and supplication*.

The proper order to read the 3 corresponding Psalms is Psalm 142, 57, 34. You will discover the context is this:

In Psalm 142: David is on his face / his lowest moment -looking down.

In Psalm 57: David is on his knees still, he's still low, but looking up.

In Psalm 34: David is on his feet

Excerpts-

Psalm 142- on his face

I cry aloud to the LORD;

I lift up my voice to the LORD for mercy.

²*I pour out before him my complaint;*

before him I tell my trouble.....

⁵*I cry to you, LORD;*

I say, "You are my refuge,

⁶*Listen to my cry,*

for I am in desperate need;

rescue me from those who pursue me,

for they are too strong for me.

Psalm 57- on his knees

*Have mercy on me, my God, have mercy on me,
for in you I take refuge.
I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings
until the disaster has passed.*

⁶ *I was bowed down in distress.*

⁷ *But My heart, O God, is steadfast,
my heart is steadfast;*

Psalm 34- on his feet

*I will extol the LORD at all times;
his praise will always be on my lips.*

² *I will glory in the LORD;
let the afflicted hear and rejoice.*

*I sought the LORD, and he answered me;
he delivered me from all my fears.*

⁵ *Those who look to him are radiant;
their faces are never covered with shame.*

⁶ *This poor man called, and the LORD heard him;
he saved him out of all his troubles.*

*Taste and see that the LORD is good;
blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.*

¹⁸ *The LORD is close to the brokenhearted
and saves those who are crushed in spirit....*

²² *The LORD will rescue his servants;
no one who takes refuge in him will be condemned.*

In the cave of despair, loneliness and emptiness, David sought God's protection, forgiveness, deliverance, and restoration. David in an amazing way turned the cave into a "holy place of prayer and worship", a divine sanctuary, for the Lord

was his portion and his refuge. He did not ask God to provide a refuge. He exclaimed the Lord is my refuge.

Have you made the Lord God your refuge? Has he become your hiding place? Only He can save you out of your troubles and deliver you from your fears and your foes.

2) It Speaks to Us of a Rally.

God called an unlikely and unique group of men to David while he hid in the cave. Men that David would have not chosen for himself. But they were the ones God called to him.

About 400 men, who were weary of Saul's reign, "***gathered themselves unto David and he became leader over them***" (1 Sam 22.2). The bible says that those who rallied around David were the *distressed, the debt-ridden, the discontented*.

The cave became the birthplace of his kingdom. The cave became the training ground for his army.

(a) Those in distress. We are not told what these people were in distress about. Perhaps they were in distress over the state of their nation; perhaps they were in distress because they, like David, were being put unbearable pressures upon by the king.

Whatever their problem was, they came to David out of sheer necessity; they believed he could help them; they sensed in him a kindred spirit. How many of us seek the Lord out of sheer necessity? If it were not for your problems or your unmet needs, how many of you would have prayed today?

The fact is the dark times that beset us occasionally, are blessings in disguise when they bring us to a position of having to seek the Lord. It sounds funny yet it is true: misfortune enables us to share in the blessings of the Lord! People who have everything they think they need; those who are self-satisfied, have no need of God.

(b) Those in debt. In that day, if a man got into debt, he could lose his property and he could be sold into slavery. Men should have been protected but were not. Protection under the Mosaic law was provided, but under Saul, the Mosaic law was ignored. They were probably overtaxed by Saul. These people came to David out of desperation, like David, they had lost everything.

There are many forms of debt; it's not always about being broke. But all debt is like a disease that eats a person up.

The bible says we are debtors under the Law; sin has made us all debtors to God. In the Lord's Prayer, —we told to pray to the Father and say, "**Forgive us our debts...**" (Matthew 6:12). We are all spiritually bankrupt before God because we cannot ever pay our debt of sin. We must turn to Christ. Christ alone can clear it out and pay it for us and He did at Calvary. He can forgive us because the debt has been paid.

(c) The discontented. This refers to a kind of "bitterness of soul." These people were surely mistreated by Saul. Many things in life can make a person bitter. Disappointments can make one bitter. Unmet needs and unfulfilled dreams can lead one to discontentment.

A lot of discontented people try to find contentment in the things of the world; entertainment, alcohol, drugs, sex, relationships, employment, even family and religion can be used improperly in the quest for contentment. The problem is *lasting* contentment is found in only Person: Jesus Christ.

These are the kind of people who flocked to David, looking for help.

Why did they come to David?

(a) They believed in him. These embittered, thirsty -restless and unsatisfied men believed that David was God's appointed King and had the right to rule over them. They remembered how much they owed him; they sought and found refuge with him.

(b) They decided to follow him. Their belief led to action. They not only recognized something divine in David, but they also pursued their beliefs. Jesus

taught that wise people not only hear the truth, but practice it—***Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.*** (Matthew 7:24).

Untold millions claim to believe in Jesus, but few take their stand for Him or with Him. In casting their lot with David, his followers also had to bear his reproach. In following Jesus, we bear the same disgrace He bore—***Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore.*** (Hebrews 13:13)

(c) They were prepared to submit to him. They claimed David as their king and in doing so recognized his authority over them. They would do all they could to advance David's kingdom. They would even fight for their sovereign.

David told them: ***Stay with me; do not fear. For he who seeks my life seeks your life, but with me you shall be safe.*** (v23).

In due time the army grew to be 600 men. The cave, also known as the stronghold or fortress, must have been so large. Under David's wise leadership they would become known as the "Mighty of Men of David."

In 2 Samuel 23:13-17, many of their names and exploits are mentioned. They would do anything for their king. Even endangering their lives to get him water to drink, scripture tells us. They were lovers of David, *attracted by him, admirers of him, attached to him.*

1 Chronicles 12:8 calls them ***...mighty men of valor, men trained for battle, who could handle shield and spear, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as gazelles on the mountains.***

Under an undisciplined leader, these men might have turned into a rebel army of cutthroats, ready to rebel against Saul and kill him is possible. But under the wise guidance and leadership of David, God's man, they became mighty man of valour for God, and learned God's ways.

Our experience as believers corresponds with all this. David is a type of Christ. When we turned to Christ, Christ in love and grace has received us, removed our discontent, relieved our distress, and most importantly remitted our debt of sin.

For similar reasons we have gathered unto our heavenly David, our Beloved, in a place of refuge; the assembly is our place of refuge, where He fits us for service and suffering.

God has made us to be a strong army against foes. Paul speaks about the church being soldiers of the cross of Christ.

3) It Speaks to Us of Rejection

For David it was a time of suffering and sorrow, reproach and rejection, training for reigning, and these men were prepared to share David's afflictions, "the fellowship of his sufferings". Having come under the protection of David, they exposed themselves the wrath and fury of Saul.

This parallels our situation as we identify with the rejected Christ. Satan, the ruler of this world declares war against us. his hatred as no limits. And those who are his because they are unsaved yet, will always be at war in the heart, with the followers of Christ, the Anointed of God.

However, we have nothing to fear from those who may be against us. We are on God's side, and behind us stands the mighty army of heaven. A child of God cannot possibly lose in life. David told his new friends—

"You will be safe with me." (Verse 23b)

We will be safe with God.

For the one in us is greater than the one in the world. If God be for us who can be against us. What can man do to us?

4) It Speaks to Us of Resources

The troubles and worries of these men who had joined David were soon forgotten in his company. They had ample resources - the grace of David as their present portion, the glory of David their future prospect. What of our present portion? We have "the God of *all* grace"; and for the future, "eternal glory" (1 Pet 5.10).

We all the resources needful - "his divine power hath given unto us *all things* that pertain unto life and godliness".

5) It Speaks to Us of Rewards

The men who came to David at great risk to themselves served him faithfully and defended him valiantly. Under David's leadership and example, they became *separated, strong, skilful, steadfast, swift* (1 Chr 12.8). They were rewarded when David came to the throne (1 Chr 11.10-47), and still remembered at the conclusion of his reign (2 Sam 23.1-39). They were honored because they took their palace next to David and suffered with him in the day of his rejection.

The day is coming when the Despised and rejected One shall be crowned Lord of All, and those who have followed Him in the His rejection will be abundantly rewarded when they enter the "Joy of the Lord" (Matt.25:11). ***Then the Lord shall divide the spoil among the strong*** (Isa. 53:12).

Let us aim to be among God's mighty men and women in our day and generation. Such men and their works will be remembered and rewarded at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Let us bear in mind that we cannot all do *great* exploits for God, but we can all endeavour to be more like our blessed Lord in character, conduct, and conversation. "***What does the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God***" (Micah 6.8).

The cave of Adullam is a picture of the refuge in the time of storm which GOD gives to His people. It is "the secret place of the Highest." It is the "shadow of a great rock in a weary land." It is the quiet secret place of prayer. Those who were in distress, despondent and in debt came there to David for relief. So, we may go to our "cave of Adullam," into the presence of our wonderful Lord to find rest and relief from the troubles, cares, problems, and griefs of life.