

FIRST SAMUEL (Chapter 22)

Lesson 37: Psalms from the Cave of Adullam (Psalm 142, Psalm 57)

The Importance of Fellowship

17 March 2017

Many Christians fail to appreciate the value and the privilege of being in fellowship with other like-minded saints and gathering together in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. For some, going to church is only a secondary option, when it ought to be a top priority.

Today we will observe the contrast between two Psalms of David; one that was written when David was alone in the cave; the other, written after many faithful brethren “**gathered themselves unto him**” (1 Sam. 22:2). If you are one who is trying to live for God and serve God, you ought not to forsake the frequent fellowship of the saints (Heb. 10:24-25). Together we can distance ourselves from carnality and be provoked unto spirituality.

PSALM 142: David's early days in the cave

- Vs. 1** The benefits of *verbal prayer*; using your voice to speak unto God: helps to keep you focused; aids concentration; limits distractions;
- Supplication*; praying to God to supply your needs.
- Vs. 2** *Pour out* your complaints before the Lord. Don't hold back; let your guard down and *cast* all your cares upon the Lord (1 Pet. 5:7). Let the Lord carry your burden.
- Show *Him* your trouble. Pour out your complaint *before HIM*. This is not done in the fellowship of others, but in your prayer closet with the Lord. We are instructed to bear one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2), but God is the one who truly supplies all our needs (Phil. 4:19).
- Vs. 3** When your troubles *overwhelm* you, the Lord knows all about it. In fact, He knows exactly how you feel (Heb. 4:15). Many of God's men have despaired of their life and even wished to die (Paul, Moses, Job, Elijah). Jesus is the One who can comfort you in your times of trouble; He knows exactly how you feel and He has grace to get you through it.
- Vs. 4** In your despair, if you look for a *man to care for your soul*, —don't be surprised to find yourself alone. The Apostle Paul went through a time when many of his friends had forsaken him (2 Tim. 4:10-11). Jesus is acquainted with that grief (John 6:66, Mat. 26:56). When all men fail you, Jesus will always be there for you (Heb. 13:5, Mat. 28:20, 1 Sam. 12:22, Psa. 37:28, Judges 6:16).
- Vs. 5** God is your *refuge*; your shelter; your protection from danger. Whether you're in a cave or a palace, you're still in Christ.
- God is your *portion*. Webster's 1828 Dictionary renders one definition of portion: “*a wife's fortune.*” You may have nothing in this world, but in Christ, you not only have shelter, but you have the “riches of the glory of his inheritance” (Eph. 1:18).
- Vs. 6** It is when you are *brought very low* that you will finally turn to God and begin to forsake your ways and trust Him.

When things are going well in our lives and the blessings are flowing, we tend to trust in ourselves more than we ought to. We neglect the counsel and guidance of God and act out in our own flesh. Suffering, afflictions, and heartaches serve a wonderful purpose in our lives. They help us to put away our self-confidence, self-trust, self-will, and self-dependence and turn our eyes upon Jesus.

Vs. 7 The *righteous* were gathered unto David (1 Sam. 22:1-2) after David came to realize that God was the one who must lead the way in his life and in the lives of everyone in the kingdom. At this point, God can begin to establish the kingdom for David.

PSALM 57: How David benefitted from the fellowship of the brethren.

Vs. 1 When you begin to trust the Lord, you'll begin to move forward with your confidence placed in Him.

Vs. 2 When you stop trusting yourself, you'll see that it is "**God that performeth all things for me.**" If you ever accomplish anything for the Lord, it's not really you doing it, it is Christ which liveth in you (Gal. 2:20), it is God which worketh in you (Phil. 2:13).

Vs. 3 "**He shall...save me.**" Salvation is of the Lord (Jonah 2:9). Not only eternal salvation, but temporal; salvation from troubles and from enemies, etc. He is able to do what no man can do for me (Phil. 3:20-21, Titus 2:11). We look to heaven for salvation and for a changed life.

4-6 When surrounded by enemies (vs. 4, vs 6), remember that God is right there in the center (vs. 5). God doesn't get you out of the trouble, but He'll be right there with you as you go through it (Dan. 3:25, 6:22). God will comfort us IN all our tribulation (2 Cor. 1:3-4). God enables you to triumph in your troubles.

7-11 Your troubles may not be fixed, but your heart can be fixed in the middle of your problems. You can even sing and give praise to the Lord while enduring a trial. When you trust in the Lord, you'll be able to praise Him, no matter your circumstances. This is the definition of joy. Joy does not diminish even when something bad happens to you.

God doesn't change your circumstances to suit you; He changes **you** to be able to triumph in them. You can praise the Lord "**among the people**" (vs. 8). Fellowship encourages the praise of God.

God may lead you into trouble—and there are plenty of examples (Joseph, Israel, Moses, Shadrach, Meshach, Abed-Nego, Daniel, David, Jesus Christ, Lazarus, Paul and Silas), but it will be God who will help you to triumph in that trouble, if you'll trust Him.

Trouble will lead you to stop trusting yourself.

Trouble often brings deliverance and salvation to someone.

Don't try to bypass the fellowship of His sufferings (Phil. 3:10). It's a necessary part of our spiritual growth. And don't bypass the fellowship of the saints (1 Thess. 5:11, 1 Jn. 1:4, Heb. 3:13). They will stay with you and give you comfort and support as God performs His work in you.