

Finding strength in a crisis

Psalm 142 records one of David's lowest moments in life. He was tired, alone and in total despair. He wrote:

**1 I cry out to the Lord with my voice;
With my voice to the Lord I make my supplication.
2 I pour out my complaint before Him;
I declare before Him my trouble.
3 When my spirit was overwhelmed within me,
4 Look on my right hand and see,
For there is no one who acknowledges me;
No one cares for my soul.**

David was a man of vision, a wise military leader, a man gifted in poetry and music, but he went through many painful battles in his life and experienced great pressure at times.

I would like to show you in the Bible how David found strength in the crisis of his life.

David, like many of us who love and trust God, sometimes struggled with discouragement, despair and fear.

When David wrote this Psalm, he was fleeing for his life from the anger of King Saul.

David was hiding in a cave. He was in need of a respite and to think about his distressed life. But then something unexpected happened, and more pressure was coming David's way!

In 1 Samuel 22:1-2

David therefore departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam. So, when his brothers and all his father's house heard it, they went down there to him. 2 And everyone who was in distress, everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him. So, he became captain over them. And there were about four hundred men with him.

Most scholars believe that during this time King Saul had put a heavy tax on the people of Israel, and the general population was very upset and unhappy.

People were looking up to David for leadership and strength, but David was not in a good place. But this was not the end for David, when you read the whole story, you will see that David found the strength to get out of the crisis.

How did he do it?

Psalm 71 gives us some clues.

Psalm 71:5

**5 For You are my hope, O Lord God;
You are my trust from my youth.**

Psalm 71:17

**O God, You have taught me from my youth;
And to this day I declare Your wondrous works.**

David had learnt very important things in his youth that helped him overcome serious challenges later in life.

So, let's look at the younger David to find out what he learnt.

In 1 Samuel chapter 17 we have the account of the great standoff between the armies of Israel and the armies of the Philistines, long time enemies of Israel.

The Philistines had a champion, Goliath.

1 Samuel 17:10

And the Philistine said, "I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together." 11 When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.

David was not part of the army of Israel, he was still very young. His father had asked him to take food to his 3 older brothers who were soldiers.

We read in verse 23 that when David was talking with his brothers:

23 Then as he talked with them, there was the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, coming up from the armies of the Philistines; and he spoke according to the same words. So, David heard them.

David heard the words of Goliath and something was stirred up in his heart!

Then David heard the men around him say:

25 "Have you seen this man who has come up? Surely, he has come up to defy Israel; and it shall be that the man who kills him the king will enrich with great riches, will give him his daughter, and give his father's house exemption from taxes in Israel."

Honestly, I believe that what really gave David the courage and strength to fight that man was what David said, look at verse 26: **"What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach (shame) from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?"**

Right here we have a clue of what David learnt from his youth:

1. DAVID KNEW WHO HIS GOD WAS.

Knowing who his God was gave him the strength and courage to overcome this challenge.

When David went to King Saul and volunteered to fight the giant he said:

1 Samuel 17:36-37

36 Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God.” 37 Moreover David said, “The Lord, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.”

David understood that this was no ordinary battle. There was more to this battle than just a fight between two armies. Goliath was not merely representing his own army, he was representing his gods.

The first thing that Goliath said to David when he came to confront him was:

43 So the Philistine said to David, “Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?” And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.

David didn’t pay any attention to Goliath’s curses.

Then David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. 1 Samuel 17:45

2. DAVID ACKNOWLEDGED THAT GOD WAS THE SOURCE OF HIS STRENGTH.

“The Lord, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, (...)

David wrote much about God being the source of his strength:

Psalm 18:1-2

I will love You, O Lord, my strength.

2 (...) My God, my strength, in whom I will trust;

Psalm 18:39

For You have armed me with strength for the battle;

Psalm 140: 7

O God the Lord, the strength of my salvation,

Psalm 28:7

The Lord is my strength and my shield;

Psalm 138:3

In the day when I cried out, You answered me,

And made me bold with strength in my soul.

Psalm 71:16 I will go in the strength of the Lord God;

3. DAVID HAD FAITH IN GOD

Moreover, David said, “The Lord, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.” 1 Samuel 17:37

Hebrews 11:32-34

32 How much more do I need to say? It would take too long to recount the stories of the faith of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and all the prophets. 33 By faith these people overthrew kingdoms, ruled with justice, and received what God had promised them. They shut the mouths of lions, 34 quenched the flames of fire, and escaped death by the edge of the sword. Their weakness was turned to strength. They became strong in battle and put whole armies to flight.

4. DAVID ALWAYS GAVE CREDIT TO GOD FOR HIS BREAKTHROUGHS.

1 Samuel 17:46

46 This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, (...)

He didn't say: I'm very strong or smart. He said: the Lord will deliver me.

David wanted everyone to know that God was the One who would give him the victory.

1 Samuel 17:46

(...) And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.

Psalm 71: 18

Now also when I am old and grey headed,
O God, do not forsake me,
Until I declare Your strength to this generation,
Your power to everyone who is to come.

How do you find strength in a crisis?

1. Know your God. Go deeper in your knowledge of God.
2. Acknowledge God as the source of your strength.
3. Have faith in God.
4. Give God all the credit for every breakthrough in your life.

Psalm 31:24

“Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all you who hope in the Lord.”
Trust in your Champion – Jesus Christ.