

DAVID'S PRAYER FOR GOD'S SUSTAINING POWER

[BIBLE TEXT](#) : Psalm 17:1-15

LESSON 135 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "In the time of trouble he shall hide me his pavilion" (Psalm 27:5).

[BIBLE TEXT in King James Version](#)

Psalm 17:1-15

¹ Hear the right, O LORD, attend unto my cry, give ear unto my prayer, *that goeth* not out of feigned lips.

² Let my sentence come forth from thy presence; let thine eyes behold the things that are equal.

³ Thou hast proved mine heart; thou hast visited *me* in the night; thou hast tried me, *and* shalt find nothing; I am purposed *that* my mouth shall not transgress.

⁴ Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept *me from* the paths of the destroyer.

⁵ Hold up my goings in thy paths, *that* my footsteps slip not.

⁶ I have called upon thee, for thou wilt hear me, O God: incline thine ear unto me, *and hear* my speech.

⁷ Shew thy marvellous lovingkindness, O thou that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust *in thee* from those that rise up *against them*.

⁸ Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings,

⁹ From the wicked that oppress me, *from* my deadly enemies, *who* compass me about.

¹⁰ They are inclosed in their own fat: with their mouth they speak proudly.

¹¹ They have now compassed us in our steps: they have set their eyes bowing down to the earth;

¹² Like as a lion *that is* greedy of his prey, and as it were a young lion lurking in secret places.

¹³ Arise, O LORD, disappoint him, cast him down: deliver my soul from the wicked, *which is* thy

[BIBLE REFERENCES:](#)

[NOTES:](#)

Saul's Jealousy

David had been anointed to be the king of Israel when he was a very young man; but God did not permit him to take the throne until about seven years later. Saul continued to be king during that time; and although he had once been a humble servant of God, he had lost the love of God out of his heart and was now very wicked. He was jealous of David because of David's goodness, and wanted to kill him.

David had proved that he was a good soldier, and Saul had made him the leader of his armies and had asked him to live in the king's palace. One day when David was returning from a successful battle with the Philistines, the people went out to meet Saul, and sang, "Saul hath slain his thousands," and then the great chorus answered, "And David his ten thousands." It made Saul very angry to have the people notice how much greater David was, and he tried again to kill him.

Jonathan, the king's son, was one of David's many friends. He loved David so much that he was willing to let him be king in his own place. He was not jealous, but did all he could to help his friend; and promised to love him until death.

David's Army

When David left the king's court many of the soldiers went with him. They wanted to fight against King Saul and have David set up his kingdom right away, but David always waited upon the Lord and asked Him to guide his steps. Saul did come with his army against David's army, but God never let him win. One time David could have killed Saul; he was near enough to cut off some of his clothes. But David felt that although Saul was now a sinner, he had once been anointed of God as the king, and he would wait until God removed him before he would take the throne.

The Lord's Battle

During all the years that Saul fought against David, David prayed to God for help. That is why God never let Saul win. David had no doubt read about the battles of the Children of Israel which God had won for them, and he knew God would do the same for him. When he had been but a shepherd boy with a sling shot he had not been afraid to fight against the giant. He had already known God then, and as he went out to meet Goliath, he said, "All this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD'S, and he will give you into our hands" (I Samuel 17:47).

Never since that day had David forgotten to pray. He did not take God for granted and trust that he would be helped without asking, just because he had been helped once. In one of his prayers he said, "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice" (Psalm 55:17). He spoke of the things the wicked people were doing; but, he said, "As for me, I will call upon God; and the LORD shall save me" (Psalm 55:16).

sword:

¹⁴ From men *which are* thy hand, O LORD, from men of the world, *which have* their portion in *this* life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid *treasure*: they are full of children, and leave the rest of their *substance* to their babes.

¹⁵ As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.

How happy we should be if we could always trust in God to help us! When difficulties come to us we should tell God about it and ask Him to help us. Instead, many people will tell their friends, and perhaps murmur about the hard times they are having. Jesus wants us to take all our cares to Him, "for he careth" for us. He will comfort us in our sorrows, and help us to gain good from them. When we are happy He wants us to share our joys with Him. As we praise Him for the blessings He has given us, He will give us greater ones.

Jesus once lived on earth as man does, and He understands our joys and sorrows, our pain and labor. He wants us to walk close to Him. Then He will listen to what we say. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:7). "And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming" (I John 2:28).

Unfeigned Lips

At the opening of the prayer we are studying today, David shows us that he knew God could see his heart and there was no use for him to pretend. He said his prayer was not coming from "feigned lips." That meant that he was not saying one thing with his lips while his heart said something else.

Jesus scolded the scribes and Pharisees for their long prayers while they stood in the market place where people could hear them pray. He told them they were making long prayers for a pretence, just pretending to worship God when their hearts were full of sin. Jesus could look right into their hearts and see that those prayers did not come from the heart at all. They said their prayers instead of praying them from the heart.

Even if Jesus can look into our hearts and see what we desire, and although He knows what we have need of, He still wants us to ask Him. We read, "Ye have not, because ye ask not" (James 4:2). The Apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians: "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Philippians 4:6). But our prayers must come from unfeigned lips and be according to His will if we expect to get an answer. We quote again from James: "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts" (James 4:3).

Proved of God

David was not afraid to let God prove his heart to see for Himself that what David said was true. He had power to live without sin; and because his heart was clean he knew God would answer him. He said, "Thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing" — nothing wrong, no deceit hidden there, no pride covered up. What joy it brings to our hearts when we can pray with a clear conscience, knowing that there is nothing wrong in our lives for Jesus to see! "If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (I John 3:21, 22).

David had separated himself from wicked men. He did not compromise with sinners. He chose for his friends the people who loved God. Those soldiers who had come to join him after he left the court of King Saul wanted to see the righteous cause win. They, too, loved the God whom David

served.

Under His Wings

God has promised to take good care of His children. He told the Israelites one time, "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself" (Exodus 19:4). David perhaps had that same figure of speech in mind when he prayed, "In the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his, tabernacle shall he hide me" (Psalm 27:5).

What a wonderful comfort it is to the Christian to have that assurance of safety in time of trouble! We shall not only walk under protection now but when the Great Tribulation comes upon the earth God's chosen people will be carried above all the trouble, and have a good time with the Lord. Isaiah prophesied of that time when he said: "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast" (Isaiah 26:20).

Saul's army was well equipped, and his soldiers were well fed. They had families at home, and children who had everything they needed. David's men were but a small band, and he had no supplies to offer them. They hid in the mountains and caves, and had to forage for food. Sometimes they went to war against the heathen, and the spoils of battle they kept to help sustain them.

David felt that Saul's army was surrounding them and getting ready to attack them as a lion stalks its prey. But he had God on his side, and he prayed, "Arise, O LORD, disappoint him, cast him down." We know God heard his prayer, because David wanted to please the Lord.

David did not care for any worldly gain, nor prosperity in this earth. After he mentioned the wealth of his enemies, he said, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."

QUESTIONS

- 1 How did David happen to be fighting against Saul?
- 2 To whom did David believe the battle belonged?
- 3 What were the first battles David fought as a boy?
- 4 How had he won?
- 5 What was David's desire when he died?