

## Be Strong! Strengthen Others!

Scripture Reading: I Samuel 23:7-18

God had rejected Saul as king over Israel (I Samuel 15:1-35). God called David to be the next king (I Samuel 16:1-13). Saul, who originally loved David, gradually became a deadly enemy to David (I Samuel 16:14 – 18:15, & etc.). David was humbled by God's calling and was determined not to bring any harm to Saul. Rather, he sought to serve Saul and bless him. David left the matter in God's hands. God would handle the way Saul's reign would end, and David's begin. So, as Saul got to the point of trying to kill David, David simply fled from him, avoiding combat. Most unusual in this story, is the fact that Jonathan, Saul's son, had become great friends with David and sought to help him (I Samuel 18:1).

Our Scripture reading shows Saul acting oblivious to God's rejection of him. He boasts that God had delivered David into his hand for destruction (I Samuel 23:7). Scripture clearly states that Saul was mistaken (I Samuel 23:14). On the other hand, God allowed Jonathan to find David, so that he could encourage him (I Samuel 23:16). Let's see the effect of Jonathan's ministry to David.

### **David received strength and encouragement from Jonathan (I Samuel 23:16-18).**

- He sought David deliberately. He did not just "bump into him" (vs. 16).
- He pointed David to God and His promises. It was not just a "pep talk" (vs. 16).
- He encouraged David to fight fear (vs. 17).
- He reminded David of his calling from God and his position in the future (vs. 17).
- He committed himself to be a friend and ally of David in the future (vs. 17-18).
- He pointed out the weakness of David's enemy. Saul had a tormented conscience (vs. 17).

Consider how ministry needs to be happening between believers. See Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; I Peter 4:7-11; I Thessalonians 5:11; Hebrews 3:13; 10:19-25; Romans 15:1-7.

### **David learned how to strengthen and encourage himself (I Samuel 30:1-6).**

In I Samuel 30, David was in serious trouble. His own team was ready to turn against him. Jonathan was not around to help encourage him. David needed to take what he knew and focus on the Lord and His promises all by himself. The way Jonathan had previously helped him certainly gave David the heart to do this alone. See Psalm 1:1-3; Philippians 4:4-9; Ephesians 6:10; II Timothy 2:1; Jude 1:20-21; Colossians 2:6-10.

### **David would later be able to strengthen and encourage others (Psalm 51:10-15).**

Much later in life, David would experience great personal failure (II Samuel 11:1 – 12:25). Psalm 51 shows how David handled that sin before the Lord. After true humility and repentance, David is desirous to be strengthened by the Lord, so that he can teach others and help them (Psalm 51:13 cp. Psalm 32:1-2,5,7-11; 34:1-11). See II Corinthians 1:3-5; Romans 15:13-14; I Timothy 4:13-16.

**Heed these words which our Lord Jesus Christ spoke to His churches through John in the book of Revelation.**

***“Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.” – Revelation 3:2***

***“...These things says He who is holy, He who is true, He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens: I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, and have kept my word, and have not denied my name.” – Revelation 3:7-8***