

LV. HOPE FOR THE DISTRESSED, THE SLAVE, AND THE DISCONTENT: 1 Samuel 22:1-2

INTRODUCTION. What kind of man was David? How did others view him? He is detailed as skilled musically, physically strong, courageous and brave, able to fight, prudent in speech, physically fit, chosen by the Lord, and strengthened by the Lord. He is a true man of valor—imagine how intimidating he must have been.

Yet in this passage of Scripture, David shows that he is not only strong and ferocious, but also kind and gracious. These qualities are not mutually exclusive. The toughest and mightiest man in Israel was also the one who received the distressed, the enslaved, and the discontent into his company. In this passage David is an excellent picture of the Lord Jesus Christ.

CON(TEXT). David, the Lord's anointed, is on the run from the current king, Saul. And by God's grace David was delivered from Achish, the king of Gath (see Psalm 34 and Psalm 56).

1 Samuel 22:1-2

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

I. EXPOSITION (1 Samuel 22:1-2).

- There are at least six particulars we need to take notice of in these verses.

I) The Lord's anointed received his *family* (1 Samuel 22:1b).

1 Samuel 22:1b "And when his brothers and all his father's house heard it, they went down there to him."

- **TRAPP:** "Who had, it is likely, suffered for his sake, by Saul's cruelty." — **Trapp, John. John Trapp's Complete Bible Commentary (p. 2885). Kindle Edition.**

II) The Lord's anointed received the *distressed* (1 Samuel 22:2a).

1 Samuel 22:2a "And everyone who was in distress,"

III) The Lord's anointed received the *enslaved* (1 Samuel 22:2b).

1 Samuel 22:2b "and everyone who was in debt,"

- **TRAPP:** "Heb., That had a creditor or an oppressor, extortioner, usurer,

who cruelly handled him." — **Trapp, John. John Trapp's Complete Bible Commentary (p. 2886). Kindle Edition.**

IV) The Lord's anointed received the *discontent* (1 Samuel 22:2c).

1 Samuel 22:2c "and everyone who was bitter in soul,"

V) The Lord's anointed received *all who came to him* (1 Samuel 22:2d).

1 Samuel 22:2d ". . .gathered to him."

VI) The Lord's anointed *became commander over all who came to him* (1 Samuel 22:2e).

1 Samuel 22:2e "And he became commander over them. And there were with him about four hundred men."

Now I want you to turn with me a few pages to the right—to **1 Samuel 25:13-16**—and see what kind of men these became under the protection and command of the Lord's anointed:

1 Samuel 25:13-16

"13 And David said to his men, 'Every man strap on his sword!' And every man of them strapped on his sword. David also strapped on his sword. And about four hundred men went up after David, while two hundred remained with the baggage. 14 But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, 'Behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to greet our master, and he railed at them. 15 Yet the men were very good to us, and (i) we suffered no harm, and (ii) we did not miss anything when we were in the fields, as long as we went with them. 16 They were a wall to us both by night and by day, all the while we were with them keeping the sheep.'"

DOCTRINE. The Lord's Anointed gladly receives the distressed, the slave, and the discontent if they will gather to Him and receive Him as commander.

II. APPLICATION.

Six Uses for Instruction.

I) Those who are in Christ's family will suffer cruelty for His sake (2

Timothy 3:12; John 15:20).

- David's family likely received cruelty from king Saul (1 Samuel 22:1b), yet Christ's family will surely receive cruelty from those who do not love Christ (2 Timothy 3:12).
 - **2 Timothy 3:12** "Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted."
 - **John 15:20** "If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours."
 - Believers, you are like wheat among thorns. You have to endure the stabs of persecution for Christ's name, yet, at the same time, you are yielding a fruitful harvest.

II) Christ receives the *distressed* and gives them peace (Matthew 11:28-29).

- Just as the distressed gathered to David for physical peace and safety, so can the distressed come to Christ for both physical and spiritual peace and safety.
 - **Matthew 11:28-29**
"28 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."
 - Christ is the Shepherd of Psalm 23. He leads His weary and heavy laden sheep beside still waters. He restores their souls with His gentle care.

III) Christ receives the *enslaved* and forgives them their debts (Colossians 2:13-14).

- Just as those who were literally or metaphorically enslaved by their debts went to David for liberty, so those who are enslaved with their sin debts can go to Christ and find both forgiveness and freedom!
- **BOYS AND GIRLS, Sin puts us in God's debt. It is like borrowing something that you are supposed to pay back, but you never can.**
 - You were created and commanded, both in your conscience and in the written Word of God to love God and neighbor for God's glory and other's good. **Luke 10:26-28** "26 [Jesus] said to [the Lawyer], "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?" 27 And [the Lawyer] answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." 28 And [Jesus] said to [the Lawyer], "You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live." Do this and live!

Disobey this and die. The truth is you have not done this. You have not loved God and neighbor as you should. You have sinned against God and man. **Romans 3:23**, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" and "The wages of sin is death" (**Romans 6:23**). What you and I have earned for our sin is death and God's punishment. And each time you and I sin, our debt grows bigger and the punishment we deserve for our rebellion against Holy God gets more severe.

Romans 2:5 "[you, unrepentant sinner,] are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed." This is why Christ teaches us to pray, "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" (**Matthew 6:12**).

And this is why Christ died to payback our sin debt and make us free!

- **Colossians 2:13-14** "13 And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, 14 by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross."

USE FOR COMFORT, BELIEVERS.

Look into my eyes. If you belong to Christ by a simple faith,

Every one of your sins are forgiven—Christ transferred your debt to Himself and died.

Every one of your sins are forgiven—Christ piled up the wrath you had been storing up and carried it into the deepest sea.

Every one of your sins are forgiven—Christ wrote down each one of your sins on His body and allowed Himself to be nailed to the cross to cancel the record of debt that stood against you.

NOTE, When you and I pray daily "Forgive us our debts," we are not praying for renewed justification, but for renewed relationship and fellowship with the God who has already forgiven us for Christ's sake.

UNBELIEVERS, this is what is offered to you. Complete forgiveness. New life. Freedom in Christ. New power to live as you were created to live. A new family, the church, to walk with and bear one another's burdens. Eternal life that begins here and lasts for eternity.

IV) Christ receives the *discontent* (Philippians 4:11-13; Isaiah 58:11).

- Just as those who were bitter in soul, discontented because of life's brutality or their own covetousness, went to David and he received them, so does Christ receive the discontent and then satisfies them with Himself.
- **Philippians 4:11-13** "11 I have learned in whatever situation I am to be

content. 12 I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. 13 I can do all things through him who strengthens me."

- **Isaiah 58:11** "And the Lord will guide you continually and satisfy your desire in scorched places and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail."
- **THOMAS WATSON:** "Christ is all in all; He is a treasury and storehouse of all spiritual riches. In Him you have wisdom for your direction, righteousness for your justification, sanctification for your growth in grace, and redemption for your deliverance from all misery."
— **Thomas Watson, a Body of Divinity**

USE FOR EXAMINATION

Q1. Are you anything like Christ? Do the distressed come to you and get help? Do the enslaved come to you and get freedom? Do the discontent come to you and pointed to Christ? If not, perhaps because you lack the grace and mercy you should be showing to those in real need.

Q2. On the other hand... Do the distressed come to you and get worldly wisdom rather than gospel truth? Do the enslaved come to you and get help with their excuses? Do the discontent come to you and get coddled? If so, perhaps because you lack the truth and love you should be showing to those in real need.

V) Christ receives all who come to him by faith (John 6:37).

- Just as David received all who came to him, so Christ receives all who come to Him.
 - **John 6:37** "All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out."
 - **BOYS AND GIRLS...**

It does not matter who you are or what you have done—there is room at the foot of the cross for you; there is enough inheritance to go around; the New Earth is big enough; all is grace—everything is here for the asking and nothing can be bought. Come to Christ and He will save you.

VI) Christ becomes commander over all who come to him (John 14:15).

- **John 14:15** "If you love me, you will keep my commandments."
The cross and the crown go together.
If you are truly cleansed by Christ's substitutionary death, you will voluntarily submit to His Sovereign Lordship.

USE FOR EXHORTATION

Go forth trusting Christ as Savior and gladly placing His yoke upon your neck. Study His Law and make it your delight to obey by the strength that he supplies. He is the Good King who not only commands you, but the King who willingly died and rose again to set you free. You can trust Him every step.

Helps

- **11:28, Matthew** - George Whitefield - Christ the Only Rest for the Weary and Heavy Laden [Matthew 11:28] - *The Sermons of George Whitefield* (2 vols.) by George Whitefield. Edited by Lee Gatiss. Published by Crossway, Wheaton, Illinois, 2012. vol. 1 pg. 355

STUDY AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Introduction

- **Reflection:** The sermon describes David as a man of valor who was skilled, courageous, and chosen by God, yet also kind and gracious. How do these characteristics challenge common stereotypes about strength and leadership?
- **Discussion:** Why might it be significant that David, a mighty warrior, is portrayed as a figure who welcomes the distressed, enslaved, and discontent? How does this reflect the character of Jesus Christ?
- **Personal Application:** Are there areas in your life where you can better balance strength and compassion, as David did? How can you cultivate both qualities in your relationships or leadership roles?

Context

- **Study:** Read 1 Samuel 22:1-2 and Psalm 34 or Psalm 56 (referenced in the sermon). How do these Psalms provide insight into David's emotional and spiritual state while he was on the run from Saul?
- **Discussion:** Why do you think David's family and others were drawn to him in the cave of Adullam? What does this suggest about David's reputation and leadership, even in a time of personal distress?
- **Reflection:** Have you ever been in a situation where you felt like you were "on the run" or in a low place, like David in the cave? How did God provide for you during that time?

Exposition (1 Samuel 22:1-2)

- **Study:** Identify the six particulars outlined in the sermon (David receiving his family, the distressed, the enslaved, the discontent, all who came, and becoming their commander). How does each particular point to a characteristic of Jesus Christ as the Lord's Anointed?
- **Discussion:** According to 1 Samuel 25:13-16, how did David's leadership transform the men who joined him? What does this transformation suggest about the impact of being under the command of the Lord's Anointed?
- **Reflection:** Which group mentioned in 1 Samuel 22:2 (family, distressed, enslaved, discontent) do you most identify with, and why? How might coming to Christ address your specific needs or struggles?

Doctrine

- **Study:** The sermon's doctrine states, "The Lord's Anointed gladly receives the distressed, the slave, and the discontent if they will gather to Him and receive Him as commander." How do the cited Scriptures (e.g., Matthew 11:28-29, Colossians 2:13-14, John 6:37) support this doctrine?
- **Discussion:** Why is it important that Christ not only receives people but also becomes their commander? How does this dual role of Savior and Lord shape a believer's life?
- **Reflection:** What does it mean to "gather to Christ" and "receive Him as commander" in your daily life? Are there areas where you struggle to submit to His lordship?

Application

I. Suffering for Christ's Sake

- **Study:** Read 2 Timothy 3:12 and John 15:20. How do these verses connect to the experience of David's family, who likely suffered under Saul's cruelty?
- **Discussion:** The sermon compares believers to "wheat among thorns." What are some examples of persecution or challenges you've faced for your faith, and how have they produced a "fruitful harvest" in your life?
- **Personal Application:** How can you prepare yourself to endure persecution or cruelty for Christ's sake, as David's family did?

II. Christ Receives the Distressed

- **Study:** Reflect on Matthew 11:28-29. How does this passage illustrate Christ's invitation to the distressed, and how does it connect to David

receiving the distressed in 1 Samuel 22:2?

- **Discussion:** What are some practical ways believers can find "rest for their souls" in Christ when they are distressed or heavy-laden?
- **Reflection:** Are there burdens or distresses in your life that you need to bring to Christ? How can you trust Him to provide peace in those areas?

III. Christ Receives the Enslaved

- **Study:** Explore Colossians 2:13-14 and Matthew 6:12. How do these passages explain the concept of sin as a debt and Christ's role in forgiving it?
- **Discussion:** The sermon emphasizes that Christ's forgiveness is complete and final for believers. How does this truth provide comfort in the face of guilt or shame over past sins?
- **Personal Application:** For unbelievers, the sermon offers "complete forgiveness" and "new life" in Christ. If you are a believer, how can you share this message with someone who feels enslaved by their sin? If you are not a believer, what holds you back from accepting this offer?

IV. Christ Receives the Discontent

- **Study:** Read Philippians 4:11-13 and Isaiah 58:11. How do these verses show that Christ satisfies the discontent, and how does this parallel David's reception of the "bitter in soul"?
- **Discussion:** The sermon cites Thomas Watson, who describes Christ as a "treasury and storehouse of all spiritual riches." How can believers find contentment in Christ during times of scarcity or dissatisfaction?
- **Reflection:** Are there areas of discontent in your life (e.g., unmet desires, life's hardships)? How can you turn to Christ to find satisfaction in Him?

V. Christ Receives All Who Come

- **Study:** Reflect on John 6:37. How does this verse reassure believers and unbelievers alike about Christ's willingness to receive them?
- **Discussion:** The sermon states, "It does not matter who you are or what you have done—there is room at the foot of the cross for you." How can this truth encourage evangelism and outreach in the church?
- **Personal Application:** Is there someone in your life who feels unworthy of Christ's love? How can you share the message of John 6:37 with them?

VI. Christ as Commander

- **Study:** Read John 14:15. How does this verse connect submission to Christ's commands with love for Him?
- **Discussion:** The sermon states, "The cross and the crown go together."

Why is it essential for believers to accept Christ as both Savior and Lord? What challenges arise when these roles are separated?

- **Reflection:** Are there areas in your life where you struggle to obey Christ's commands? How can you rely on His strength to submit to His lordship?

Examination Questions (from the Sermon)

- **Personal Reflection:** The sermon asks, "Are you anything like Christ?" Do the distressed, enslaved, or discontent come to you for help, and do you point them to Christ? If not, what changes can you make to reflect His grace and mercy?
- **Discussion:** The sermon challenges whether we offer "worldly wisdom" or "gospel truth" to those in need. Can you think of a time when you gave or received unhelpful advice instead of pointing to Christ? How can you ensure your counsel aligns with the gospel?

Exhortation

- **Study:** The sermon encourages believers to "go forth trusting Christ as Savior and gladly placing His yoke upon your neck." How does studying Christ's Law (e.g., Scripture) and obeying it by His strength reflect this exhortation?
- **Discussion:** How does knowing that Christ "willingly died and rose again to set you free" inspire trust and obedience in your daily walk with Him?
- **Personal Application:** What is one practical step you can take this week to trust Christ more fully as your Savior and obey Him as your Commander?