

**OUR
FIRST
RESPONSE**

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July 28, 2013

Sermon in a sentence: In every situation we face, our first response must be prayer, praise and worship to God.

Scriptures: Heb. 4:14-16; 1 Sam. 30:1-20 (Psalms 22, 41, 56, 34); Acts 5:12-42; Luke 22: 24-32

Heb. 4:14-16 NASB Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as *we are*, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

A. What should we do when we're in trouble (1 Sam. 30:1-20)?:

When David went to live with the Philistine King Achish, it was a real coup for him to have a man of David's stature as his servant. In fact he made David his personal bodyguard for life! David asked for space in one of his cities for himself and his men to live, but instead Achish gave him the whole city of Ziklag, (which at the time 1 Samuel was written, was still occupied by kings of Judah).

During this time, David fought with the Amalekites and at a strategic moment, they were able to enter Ziklag, burn it and capture all the inhabitants alive. David and his men returned to the city, saw the carnage, and wept until they had no more strength. At that point, his men turned on him and wanted to stone him. Alone and discouraged, he

found that spiritual place where he “strengthened himself in the Lord his God” (1 Sam. 30:6).

Even in the midst of this trouble and crisis, it is clear that God was taking very good care of David’s interests. Not one of his (or anyone else’s) wives or children was harmed. They had all been preserved alive!

Of course, at the time, David didn’t know he would recover everything he had lost. All he knew was that it was best to turn to the Lord and not to man. In fact, any of the men he could have turned to were all ready to kill him.

Although we are not completely sure which of the Psalms was written at this time, 22, 41 and 56 have been suggested as ones that have a clear Ziklag feel to them. Psalm 34 is one clearly identified as having been written during the Philistine period when David had to feign madness to save his own skin. It is one of the most uplifting and praise filled psalms in the Bible!

Psalm 34:1-10 KJV I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise *shall* continually *be* in my mouth. ² My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear *thereof*, and be glad. ³ O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together. ⁴ I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. ⁵ They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed. ⁶ This poor man cried, and the LORD heard *him*, and saved him out of all his troubles. ⁷ The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. ⁸ O taste and see that the LORD *is* good: blessed *is* the man *that* trusteth in him. ⁹ O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for *there is* no want to them that fear him. ¹⁰ The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good *thing*.

So what happens if we do not recover everything as David did? How do we make it through long periods of pain and loss?

Job 1:20-21 NASB Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head, and he fell to the ground and worshiped. ²¹ He said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I shall return there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD."

Our first response to trouble and trials must always be prayer and praise, worship and singing.

B. What should we do when we're in trouble for doing right (Acts 5:12-42)?

The apostles were consistently engaged in preaching the Word of God and the Lord confirmed the Word with many signs and wonders. They were revered by the common people and hated by the High Priest and the Sadducees, who arrested the apostles and threw them in jail. That night, an angel opened the doors and released them all from prison without any of the guards seeing or hearing anything.

The next morning, as the guards and temple officials were scratching their heads trying to understand what had happened, someone reported that the apostles were right back in the Temple, preaching Jesus. They were re-arrested and brought back before the Council. They were beaten and sent away with strict instructions to cease and desist preaching in the name of Jesus. What was their response?

“So they went their way from the presence of the Council, **rejoicing** that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name” (v. 41).

Thus, our response to persecution for the sake of Christ is praise and worship.

C. What happens when we don't even know we're in trouble (Luke 22:24-32)?:

Just before Jesus died, He shared the Passover Supper with His disciples. They were busy arguing about who would be considered the “greatest” among them, and Jesus *did* promise that they would have prominent roles as judges in His future kingdom.

However, at the same time, Peter had no idea of the precarious position he was in, as Satan had demanded permission to attack him!

Here's the good news. Even when we don't know what is happening around us and the spiritual dangers we face, nothing escapes the attention of the Lord! Knowing all things as He does, He is the One who actually has to permit anything the devil and his angels want to do in our lives. These things are sent to test us, try us, prove us, strengthen us, and build a deeper relationship between us and our God. And at the same time, we remember Jesus's words to Peter:

Luke 22: 31-32 NASB “**Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded *permission* to sift you like wheat; ³² but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.**”

The writer to the Hebrews highlights the point with his statement:

Heb. 7:25 NASB Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

As a man, Jesus experienced everything we go through. He totally understands our thoughts and actions and in His humanity, intercedes for us before His divinity. How does this happen?

Just as a parent remembers the folly of his or her own childhood, they are able to respond with mercy and understanding to their children's mistakes, indiscretions and sins. In the same manner, through Jesus Christ, our Heavenly Father is able to show mercy to us. The human life, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ form the basis of His intercession for us.

So, we conclude that whether or not we know we are in trouble and whether or not we are being persecuted for righteousness sake, our first response must always be the same – prayer, praise and worship to our loving God.