HOW TO STAND UP IN THE CHURCH UNDER THE PRESSURE OF RELIGIOUS POWER POLITICS



A helpful treatment of a universal problem based on the power struggle between Saul and David. Written with sensitivity and charity. Anyone who has felt the scourge of jealousy will find encouragement here.

SAUL-DAVID

POWER STRUGGLE

TWENTY SEVEN

"An Inspirational Exposition of Psalm 27"

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Chapter 1
When the Pressure Is Turned On

While making a study of David's life, I have found four things about him that were outstanding; things that kept him going in all the tests and trials that he had to endure.

First, David used wisdom. The Bible tells us that David behaved himself wisely.

Second, David did not meet wrong with wrong. He allowed God to do the fighting for him, rather than retaliating himself. He kept a sweet spirit and God always brought him through.

Third, David hung on to his faith. He always believed that God would help him. The Scripture tells us that when our faith is tried, it will come forth as gold. David not only had the necessary wisdom and the right spirit; he hung on to his faith in God.

Fourth and last, David kept a joyful spirit. Out of all his tests and trials came the Psalms. He didn't write the Psalms when he was on the throne. He wrote them in difficulty—when he was in a cave; when he was on the run. He wrote them because God had done something in his soul. They were the fruit of his experience.

David determined to praise God. *"His praise shall be continually in my mouth."* He praised God when Saul was on his heels. He praised Him whether it was morning, noon, or night time.

When he was a mere lad, David was anointed to be king over Israel. Saul was still in power, but God had Samuel anoint David to be king over Israel. It was not until nine years later that he was moved into that position, however.

When you study those nine years that David waited, you see that he went through terrible trials. He was hated, deceived, attacked, and pursued. David's reaction to it all is summed up in this 13th verse: *"I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living."*

This pattern of trials following anointing should be one that you and I come to know and recognize. Many times this is God's *modus operandi.*

It happened to Jesus.

After Jesus was baptized by John in the Jordan River and the Holy Ghost descended in the form of a dove, the Bible says that Jesus was led of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. Now why does God do this? Why

after the blessing does all hell break loose?

Many times God gives us the blessing and then tests us to see if we can stand the fire. If we come through the trial, He knows that He can depend on us enough to put us in a place of leadership when we rule with Him for eternity.

When we are saved and washed in the blood of the Lamb, when God fills us with His Holy Spirit, then He gives us a backbone. We are able to go out and stand face to face with the devil and let him know that *"greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. "*

Some folks are just playing church, though. They stand and testify. They thank the Lord that they are saved, sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost. They ask for prayers of the saints that they might be the Christian that God is looking for. But, they've been giving that same testimony for years. As a matter of fact, when they stand up you know what they're going to say.

These are people who can't stand the pressure. When someone starts to talk about them, they backslide! If anyone calls them names, they run to the pastor and ask him to pray. "I don't know whether I can stand this," they tell him.

If you can't stand it, you'll never reign with Christ! God has given you the power of the Holy Ghost so that you can stand against anything that the devil throws your way. You can stand up and know that God is going to bring you through victoriously.

Chapter 2
The Unleashing of Jealousy

I Samuel 18, tells us what happened after David was anointed. Verse 9 says, *"And Saul eyed David from that day forward."* From that day on, Saul watched David carefully. It happened because *"the women of Israel sang one to another as they played and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands"* (verse 7).

Saul was the king. David was nobody—just a young upstart. But all of a sudden, he was gaining prominence. Saul was jealous and threatened. He began to hate this young man. David met that hatred head on. He acted in a godly manner. The Bible says, *"And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the Lord was with him"* (I Samuel 18:14). This is the first remarkable thing I noticed about David.

How do you meet hatred? Sometimes the simple fact that we are saved and washed in the blood of the Lamb makes members of our own household hate us. They can't stand the Christ inside us. Saul quickly forgot how David defeated Goliath and got him out of a jam. He forgot what David had done for the nation.

Too many people have short memories. They call when trouble comes and ask you to pray. They call when they are sick and ask you to anoint them with oil. They call when a problem arises and ask you to pray because they know your prayers get through. But then, all of a sudden, they get jealous of you because they see how God is elevating you—and they can't stand it.

David knew how to take jealousy. He reacted sweetly in his spirit and God brought him through victoriously.

Some homes are on the verge of breaking up. Either the husband or the wife has gotten saved and the unsaved one doesn't like it. When you first got married, you were like two little humming birds. Now the devil is still in one spouse while the other one belongs to Jesus. Although your unsaved spouse acts as though he hates you, it's not true. It's not you he hates; it's the Christ inside of you that he despises. Why? Because he sees the change in your life. You don't go to the places you used to go; you don't say the things you used to say. There's been a change and Jesus has brought it about. But Jesus is going to bring you through victoriously! Just the same way He will bring each one of us through, no matter who rises up against us. God has victory for each one of his children.

David says in verse 6: *“And now shall my head be lifted up above mine*

enemies round about me. Therefore will I offer in His tabernacle sacrifices of joy." In the Hebrew, the word joy is translated "shouting." *"I will offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of shouting. I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord. " I* believe that this is the secret of David's success. No matter what came against him, he knew how to praise the Lord. He never lost the joy of the Lord. We need to remember that the joy of the Lord is our strength. If we ever get to a place in our Christian experience where we lose our joy, then distress comes. When distress comes, that allows the devil to put fear in our hearts and frustrations will begin. But joy melts away frustration, distress, and fear.

God promised us: *"I will give you the oil of gladness for the spirit of mourning."* The best thing for a mourning or a tormented spirit is praise because the devil cannot stand the joy of the Lord that God puts in the heart of his children. If you study the 18th chapter of I Samuel, you will see that Saul did everything in his power to destroy David. But David never lost his joy and the blessing of the Lord was on him. God was getting him ready for service. He had been anointed for service, but he was not serving as king yet.

The trials David went through were part of getting ready for service. This might be the reason you are not out there in service to the Lord. You can't stand the pressure and the tests. You can't stand it when somebody hates you and despises you. When the call of God is in your life, Jesus is your example.

He knew what the Father wanted and He kept on going. People despised Him; they spit on Him, they hung Him on a cross. Jesus never turned back.

Saul had a jealous rage in him against David because he knew that someday David was going to succeed him as king. Samuel already had told Saul that he was through. The Bible tells us that the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David.

There was a star going down while another was rising up. God always has a man that He's getting ready for work in the field. But if you, as a believer, want to be used of God you have to learn how to stand the pressure. One of the first lessons is about jealousy. The second is about deception.

Chapter 3
A Marriage of Vengeance

When David asked to marry Saul's daughter, Michal, Saul determined to deceive him. Saul said to himself, "I'll fix him. I'll make the dowry so difficult to get that there's no way David will get her. He'll die first."

When David came in and asked for his daughter's hand, Saul had it all fixed. The disguise was ready. Saul was so low that he used the affection of his daughter to get to the man he envied. Saul told him, "If you want my daughter's hand, then in return I want 100 foreskins of the Philistine army. Go out and get them."

David said, "Goody. If I can whip Goliath, then I can take 100 on." He went out with the anointing of the Holy Ghost and destroyed 200 of the Philistines and brought those 100 foreskins back to Saul. Saul had no choice but to give David his daughter.

Saul played right into the hands of God. The man he hated, the man he was jealous of, is now his son-in-law and heir to the throne!

If you are a child of God, sinners will try to deceive you. On the job, they will lay snares for you. They want you to stumble and fall. You see, they've heard your testimony about how God saved you. and they want to make you out to be a liar. But don't worry! God will make a way. They will dig a hole for you, but they will fall in it themselves. God said your enemy shall come out against you one way but he will flee seven ways.

Just handle your problem David's way. No matter how you are deceived, don't retaliate. Never try to get back at them.

David wasn't out to get even. He met it head-on with sweetness. He stayed sweet in his spirit. He *"behaved himself wisely."*

This is one of the reasons God gives us the Holy Ghost.

Some people believe that receiving the Holy Ghost simply means talking in tongues. I want you to know that the Baptism in the Holy Ghost is more than that. The Holy Ghost will give you power so that you can live above sin in this evil world!

When Jesus was led of the Spirit into the wilderness, He fasted for 40 days. Then old slew-foot came out against Him head-on. The devil said, *"If you are the Son of God, command these stones to be made bread."* Could Jesus have done that? Sure! Instead, he took out His sword, (the Word!) and said, *"Satan, it is*

written: Man shall not live by bread alone." Jesus knew how to use that sword; in fact, He was a skilled swordsman. *"Man shall not live by bread alone, " He* told Satan, *"but by every word of God. "* (Luke 4:4).

We have the same weapon that Jesus had—the Word of God. And that Word will cut Satan down and put him under our feet.

The devil came out against Jesus again. He took him out on a pinnacle of the temple and said,

"If thou be the son of God, cast thyself down from hence: For it is written, He shall give His angels charge over thee,... lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone" (Luke 4:9-11).

You know, the devil was right! That's always puzzled me. How in the world can the devil quote truth? But you see, he didn't quote it completely. He left something out.

Jesus came right back at him and said, *"It is written, thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."* This is what God has given us. He has given us His Word to put the devil where he belongs. And He has given us the power and the anointing of the Holy Ghost, so that we might use the Word as a skilled swordsman would. He wants us to keep the devil defeated and where he belongs—under our feet.

Verse 5 begins:

"For in the time of trouble, he shall be in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; and he shall set me upon a rock. Now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea I will sing praises unto the Lord" (verses 5, 6)

David had problems. For nine years after he was anointed the king over Israel, he had trouble. But he stayed true and God put him on the throne. If you're going through deep waters, think of David's nine years of trouble and hang in there. Help is on the way! God knows just how much you can bear and with that temptation or with that test, He will make a way of escape. (1 Cor. 10:13). He will always make a way.

Chapter 4
Learn To Duck the Javelins

David was not only hated. He was deceived. As if that wasn't enough, he was physically abused and attacked.

David had been taken into the king's confidence; he became the king's minstrel. He sang and played cunningly on the harp. No one played like David. He played with the anointing of the Holy Ghost; and even drove out demon spirits with his playing. That was Holy Ghost noise!

One day while he was playing under the anointing of the Holy Ghost, Saul got so mad, he threw a javelin at David twice. Saul is not just jealous of him now, his anger has gone so deep that he wants to kill him.

If you are filled with the Holy Ghost, you are a marked man; you are a marked woman. The devil has you on his list because you have the only weapon that can destroy him. Now you are in for a battle because now he wants to destroy you before you can put him where he belongs.

But the devil won't bother you if you're playing church. A lady came into my meeting one night in Chicago and told me, "Brother Schambach, I can't understand these people. I've been in the church 30 years and the devil has never bothered me. I always hear people saying that the devil is after them, but he's never bothered me."

I said, "Woman, stop! Run down here quick! Move! Get out of your seat and come!" She did what I told her. She ran to the altar.

She asked, "What shall I do?" I was frank with her. "Get on your knees and get saved," I told her. "If the devil never bothered you, you haven't got anything he wants! When you get saved, the devil gets on your trail trying to destroy the salvation

God gave you. You are open to the attack of the enemy."

If the devil is after you then you have something from God. You ought to start shouting. If you didn't have anything from God, he wouldn't bother you. Just to know that the devil is after you is a sign that God has given you something. That blesses me!

I was saved as a young lad. It took me a while to learn how to fight the devil. When I was a sinner, the devil never came around to tell me I was a sinner—not once! But just as soon as I got saved, there he was—telling me that I wasn't saved.

He said, "Don't you remember what you used to do?" I said, "Yeah."

"Do you think you can get rid of it that quick—just by asking God to have mercy on you? You're still a sinner."

And I said, "Yeah." So you known what I did? I ran back to the church altar and got saved again!

I really didn't know it then, but the devil was playing games with me. I didn't know him. I didn't know how he runs his operation. Anytime he came around and told me I wasn't saved, I ran back to get saved again.

Then I got the Holy Ghost! The devil wasn't far behind. He said, "You don't have any Holy Ghost."

You see, the devil is not saying you are not saved while you are a sinner. But every time you take a stand on the promise of God, you can count on him trying to do a number on you.

Especially for healing: when you say, "Lord, I take you as my healer because by your stripes I am healed," old "slew-foot" will put you in a vice and start tightening it up so you feel the pain like you never felt it.

He will say, "you are *not* healed."

And you will answer, "I know it. I can still feel the pain."

It's nothing but a trick of the devil. He never tells you you're not healed until you claim your healing. He never tells you that you are not filled with the Holy Ghost until you talk in tongues. He will never tell you that you are not saved until you get saved.

So if the devil is on your trail, if he is telling you that you don't have it—go ahead and shout! The miracle is yours. God has given you the desire of your heart. You have just learned one of the devices of Satan.

Look at verse six again. *"I will offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy."* You know what that means? That means to shout when you don't feel like shouting. Anybody can shout when he feels like it. This is for you who say you don't feel like shouting. Well, shout! Make it a sacrifice. But shout! When you don't feel like praising, praise Him anyhow. When you don't feel like singing, sing anyhow. Let the devil know the joy of the Lord is your strength.

David's secret is revealed in verse 13: *"I had fainted unless l had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living."* He was so bitterly hated by Saul. He was deceived, and he was attacked. In the end, David had to run. But he believed through it all.

Chapter 5
A Time to Run and a Time to Fight Back

When the devil finds out he can't kill you, then he will pursue you. He will put you on the run like David.

Sometimes it's good to turn around and run. Sometimes it's good to turn around and face the enemy. This is why we need the leading of the Holy Ghost in our lives. Sometimes God just wants you to leave it and go. But other times He wants you to stay right in the middle of it. That's when you have to stand still and let God fight for you.

David ran to the protection of Samuel. He knew that he would find shelter with the prophet of God who had anointed him king over Israel. But that didn't stop Saul. Saul sent some men from his army after David and they pursued him right into the house of Samuel where all the prophets were. And when they arrived, the spirit of prophecy came upon those soldiers. Instead of taking David back to Saul, they went home prophesying!

Saul dispatched another troop of soldiers. But the same thing happened. It happened three times with three different troops of men before Saul got mad enough to go himself.

Saul said, "I'll fix him. I'll go myself." But no sooner had he put his "number twelves" in the camp when the spirit of prophecy came upon Saul and he began to prophesy. God knows how to confound your enemy. Quit worrying. No matter what you are going through, God has nothing but victory for you. Just learn to hang in there. Hold on to the horns of the altar. The devil might be on your trail; but God has given you power over all the works of the devil.

God's people don't seem to understand that the devil has been stripped of his power. Christians come to me and say, "Brother Schambach, don't you know the devil is powerful?" I have to confess that I don't! What I DO know is that my brother, Jesus, whipped him 2,000 years ago. He put his foot on the neck and rendered him powerless. But today the devil has the church backed into a corner.

Many quote the Scripture about the devil going about like a roaring lion. I always tell them, that's all he can do. He only roars because Jesus pulled out his teeth at Calvary. He can't really hurt you.

"But," someone else says, "what about the Scripture that says, many are the afflictions of the righteous?" I have only one answer for that. That Scripture also says: "But the Lord delivereth them out of them all."

We've got to get the whole picture. I tell you God is a deliverer. He promises us that when we go through the water, it won't overflow us, and when we go through the fire, it won't burn us. He will never leave us nor forsake us. He will bring us through victoriously.

When I was in high school, there was a fellow who loved to knock me around. He was 6' 6" tall and weighed 250 pounds. I was only 6' and weighed about 156 pounds. I felt like a midget beside him, and he took advantage of that.

Every time he came near me, he'd hit me on the head or trip me. If he slapped me, I'd say, "Pardon me, I ran into your hand." If he tripped me, I'd say, "Pardon me, I ran into your foot." There was no way I was getting mixed up with this guy!

I took it all through ninth, tenth and eleventh grade. He dished it out and I took it. And then something happened.

One night I was standing in front of the mirror, flexing my muscles. I began to give myself a good talking to. "Schambach" I told myself, "There's nobody who can whip you." It wasn't long, I had myself believing it. I was "psyching" myself up. The next time he lays a hand on me, I said to myself, "I'll turn around and hit him. I'll do it!"

In school the next day, I didn't have to wait long to find out if it was true. I found myself in this long hallway, and you don't have to guess who I saw coming down that long hallway. I thought, "there are giants in the land!"

As we approached each other, something inside of me said, "remember what you said now. If he lays a hand on you, let him have it." And I said, "quiet in there!" It's easy to get tough when the devil isn't around.

As he got closer, it looked like he wasn't going to do anything. When he passed by I went, "whew." What a relief! I wasn't going to have to fight after all.

Just then, BAM! Something hit me alongside my head. That was it! I threw my books down and before I knew what I was doing, I shouted, "Hold it!" He turned around and hit me again. He said, "I've been waiting for somebody to call me."

I was so scared I could hardly talk. Finally, I got it out. "You hit me for the last time," I told him.

He started running at me. There were two hits. I hit him and he hit the floor! He was out like a light! I couldn't believe I had actually done it.

That's exactly what Jesus did to the devil 2,000 years ago. He destroyed the devil. We have to remember we can deliver a knock-out blow when he challenges us because *"greater is he that is in us than he that is in the world."*

Chapter 6
When the Enemy Makes Your Spiritual Life Look Bad

Very few people have gone through a series of tests like David did before he ascended the throne for which he had been anointed. There were nine years of severe testing and trials. God proved him, to see whether or not he had what it takes to be a king. The Book of Samuel records these tests.

He had been hated. He had been deceived. He had been physically attacked. But there was more—Innocent blood would be shed because he asked for spiritual counsel and bread for his men from the priest, Ahimelech.

David was on the run and he figured he could find some solitude by going to Nob, the city of the priests. That's where he found Ahimelech. Ahimelech knew the danger but he helped David. What David didn't know until later was that an Edomite by the name of Doeg was there. He heard what Ahimelech said and saw what he did; and like the talebearers in the church today, he ran back and told Saul. (There's always somebody that is going to squeal on you!)

Saul was furious. He commanded his soldiers to go down to Nob and wipe out all the priests. But the soldiers refused to touch God's anointed. But Doeg, the talebearer, volunteered because he was an Edomite. And he went down there and killed eighty-five priests and every living creature. It was a slaughter.

When David got word of it, you can imagine how he felt. A slaughter, just because he made a visit to find some help ... just because of a ruthless talebearer. The Bible says David felt responsible. But in all this, he did not retaliate. He still kept the sweetness of God in his soul. He just kept moving because he knew God was with him.

You might be going through deep water in your life. It may be that you lost a loved one. You may have had your home broken up. And you're wondering why this has happened to you.

I want you to know that God is with you. He never left you! He will never forsake you. This is a test you are going through. When you come through, you will come out shouting because you are a child of God, and Jesus said every hair on your head is numbered.

Maybe your name has been cast out because of some talebearer. Maybe lies have been told about you. You would like to retaliate. Somebody's done you

wrong and you want to give it back to them. You need to remember that you are a child of God. The Bible tells us. *"Beware when all men speak well of you."* God is still on your side, and He's the one who's going to vindicate you.

Read the history of David and see what he went through. See how God brought him through. When you study this, it will thrill your soul; and it will help you carry the load and bear the burden that you're carrying. You will come through shining like a jewel.

You know, some Christians aren't worth a dime! (I was going to say two cents, but with inflation being what it is, I'll stick to a dime.) They can't stand the pressure. They can't stand the test. They can't stand the fire. Everything's got to be right or they're not going to church. Pastors know all about this. If the pastor or the Sunday school teacher doesn't shake hands with them on Sunday morning, they get mad and won't go back. Or if a brother walked past them without so much as a "Praise the Lord," they suspect he has something against them.

These are small things. If you can't stand them, you'll never make heaven your home. David took the blame for this particular incident, and the responsibility weighed heavily on his shoulder. But God brought him through victoriously. If you're going through a struggle: you might have a son that's hooked on drugs, a daughter who's run away from home—and everything looks dark; listen to me—God said that His will is to save you and your household. Those children have been dedicated to God. The devil couldn't get to you directly, so he's trying to get to you through your children. Hold on to the horns of the altar. The devil might have his hand on your children, but if you keep your hands on the horns of the altar, God will bring them out safely.

Chapter 7
Friends Sometimes Abandon You

David was further tested by the loss of his dearest friends. Did you ever feel alone and friendless? Did you ever think that nobody cared for you? David must have felt that way. After all his other troubles, he lost his wife. Saul took Michal away from him. He probably reasoned that if he couldn't kill David, he would take away the person closest to him. To make matters worse, Saul gave his daughter, Michal, to be the wife of a neighboring king in the hopes that her new husband would kill David. What a predicament!

I've had people come and tell me that they felt alone. Their husband or wife left them when they decided to follow Christ. They said, "It's either me or this God you claim to have. Here's the ultimatum; now choose." Keep hanging on to the horns of the altar. God will make a way where there is no way.

It seems that when the devil starts messing in our lives, he doesn't know when to quit. First Michal was gone. Then Jonathan left. Jonathan was his closest friend and Saul's son. David and Jonathan had been closer than brothers. But now he was gone. David suspected Saul might seek revenge against his parents, so he even had to move them to another town. He was absolutely alone. Isolated from everyone that he knew and loved —even Samuel who poured the anointing oil over his head and announced he would be king of Israel. When Samuel died, Saul barred David from the funeral. It must have seemed like the "last straw."

If you have ever felt like this; if the pain is great and the heartache deep, then God is getting ready to use you.

Learn to hold your peace. Learn to not retaliate. Learn to let God take care of things. The anointing of God will come upon you and He will use you in His service.

Sometimes when a person makes up his mind that he is going to live godly and holy, that's when he is the most alone— even in the church. Some of your greatest battles will come in the church. Church people sometimes will turn away from you, because they don't want to have anything to do with holiness. They are happy to play church and you're about to ruin everything by *"following after holiness without which no man shall see the Lord."*

Thank God there still is a remnant that want the old-fashion holiness way. It's either holiness or hell.

Some of your greatest problems will come from within the church. They won't even speak to you. They just look down their noses at you. When you shout, "Hallelujah," they sit there with their arms folded and say, "I wish he would shut up." They don't have any joy and they don't want anybody else to have joy. They are not free, and they don't want anybody else to be free. They are not healed and they don't want anybody else to be healed.

Well, you've got to make up your mind that you want God's best. And when you do, He will bring you through victoriously.

Holiness. We're living in a day when you can't tell the world from the church or the church from the world. The church has gotten worldly and the world has gotten churchy. Some folks have one foot in the church and one in the world. On Sunday mornings they sing "Amazing Grace" but on Saturday night they can dance to "Saturday Night Fever."

But Jesus said that if the world hated him, it would hate the believer, too. He said, *"Come out from among them, and be ye separate ... and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you."*

Beloved, today you have to be careful with whom you drink tea. You need to be careful who your friends are and who you fellowship with. Once you start telling people that you believe in miracles, some of your friends will fall by the wayside. Once you start showing that you believe in holiness, you will lose some more. It's a lonely walk. Jesus said, *"straight is the gate and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."* (Matthew 7:14). But, *"Broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in there at. "* They're not willing to make the sacrifices to walk God's way.

I've even had preachers come to me and tell me that it's all right to drink. They say, "Everybody's doing it." That's a lying devil! Everybody's *not* doing it! Why, when I was a sinner, these lips never tasted beer or liquor. And now that I'm saved, no preacher is going to tell me that it's all right! I don't care if it is the "in thing." I got a sip of the new wine of the Holy Ghost. Once you get the new wine of the Holy Ghost on your lips, there is no bottle of junk that can take its place!

It can be a lonely walk.

If you are going to trust God, you have to do it all by yourself. If you ask some people to pray for you, they will look at you as though you are crazy. Their first reaction is to suggest you can't believe God for this. You've got to go to the doctor; or you've got to run off here or run off there.

You have got to learn how to stand on the Word of God for yourself. It is a lonely walk. But when you stand alone, you will find out you really are not alone. You have somebody by your side, and He will give you the victory over

every trial.

Chapter 8
Forced to Work With Losers

David had to leave his land...the land over which God had anointed him to be king. He went down to the king of Gath who was a Philistine. It was the first time he left his country. His enemies there remembered him. "Oh, yes," they said, "is not this the one that they sang about? Did they not say that Saul had slain his thousands and David his ten thousands? Isn't this the one that slew Goliath, our champion?" They teased, taunted and threatened. It didn't take long for David to realize this wasn't the place for him.

David escaped with his life only because he pretended madness. The king of Gath said he didn't want a madman around him; so they made him leave the camp. They thought he was crazy. But that is what saved him.

In what must have seemed like the last straw, David found solace in a cave like a fugitive. Here he is: anointed by one of the greatest prophets who ever lived to be king over Israel. But his throne room is only a cave, and his only subjects, the 400 outlaws, bandits, and discontented people who shared the caves in the area with him.

You need to ask yourself, what you would do if God put you in a mess like that. Would you leave or stay? David made up his mind; he stayed. He didn't run from this band of discontented people. He accepted the challenge of leading them. He picked them up to his level. He trained them. And do you know what these men became under David's rule as king? They became the noble men in his kingdom.

You need to think about that when you complain about the people where God put you. It makes no difference how low they are. You might have the harlots living up above you, the drug addicts on one side, alcoholics on the other, and homosexuals underneath you. But God can give you power to live His life among them and help you raise their level of living to where you are in God. You don't have to stoop to their level of sin. But you can bring them up to a standard of holiness. That's the way Jesus did it. Don't forget what you used to be until God got a hold of you. You were a mess! Paul admitted he was chiefest of sinners.

I find too many church people have a sanctimonious spirit, a holier-than-thou attitude. They forget the pit God dug them out of and look down on those who are having problems with sin. But God saved us. He reached down into the very

depths of sin with His strong right hand and He washed us in the blood, clothed us with His righteousness, wrote our names in the Lamb's Book of Life and now He calls us SONS. We *are* the children of God!

John said,

"Beloved, now we are the sons of God, for it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

Through all his problems, David stayed sweet in his spirit and humble in his character. When they were over, he didn't look down his nose at others. David remembered those who had shared his hardships.

If we want to learn how to keep a singing spirit, to avoid bitterness, we should read the Psalms. Many of them were born out of a life of running, the life of a fugitive. Yet God built a wall of protection around David who wrote many of them and He kept him.

It makes no difference what you are called to go through. God will not allow you to be tested above that which you are able. He knows just how much you can stand. He will never take you to the breaking point, because God would never get any glory out of your nervous breakdown! But you can be assured that with that test, He will make a way of escape. (I Cor. 10:13) The One who made us, knows exactly how much we can stand!

Are you going through deep waters? Is the valley deep and dark? Then I've got good news for you. If you belong to the Lord, victory will be yours. Just don't lose your joy and don't lose your praise. God promised to give us a garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. If you're feeling that spirit of heaviness right now, take a moment to praise Him. You don't need an organ; you don't need a tambourine. All you need is a voice and a heart that loves God.

Chapter 9
The Sting of Treachery

The series of tests had not yet ended for David. The next thing he came up against was treachery. Read the story in the 23rd chapter of I Samuel.

David was ready to go to battle. The Lord had instructed him to go and fight the Philistines at Keilah, but David's men hung back. *"Behold, we are afraid here in Judah, " they* told him, *"how much more, than, if we come to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?"* (verse 3)

So, David again asked the Lord for instruction and the Lord replied, *"Arise, go down to Keilah, for I will deliver the Philistines into thine hand"* (verse 14).

Thank God, that David had enough faith and spiritual sense to go back and ask God again what HE wanted. A lot of us, in our warfare, usually ask everyone else but God. We ask the pastor, the evangelist, the church mother or the one we hold in high spiritual esteem. They might help, but they don't have the answer. They're not going through what you are going through. They can't understand all the circumstances. But you have a God who's always near, and His ear is open to your cry. When you call upon Him, He will answer. He will lead you in the path that you should go.

Fear gripped the hearts of David's men. When we surround ourselves with people who are fearful, sometimes that spirit of fear rubs off on us. We need to be careful. We know we should believe God; we should trust Him, but our faith can be paralyzed by our fears.

So, David inquired of the Lord a second time. He obeyed what God told him and David and his men were victorious. They drove the enemy out.

Now, you would think that the people of Keilah would be thrilled because somebody came and saved them and delivered them from their enemy. Instead, they committed an act of treachery. They sent word to Saul and told him that his son-in-law, David, was in their city. "Come and get him!" they said to Saul. Sometimes that happens to us.

How much can a man stand? We befriend someone and we even fight their battles for them, and then they turn around and betray us. When the woman you've been kind to tries to steal your husband or the man you helped to get a job tries to get yours, you have to remember that God expects us to conduct ourselves with wisdom.

It's important to keep the sweetness in our soul. The only way we can do that

is to hang on, believe and keep the joy of the Lord in your soul. Believe that God is on your side. Believe that with Him you are more than a conqueror.

When Saul heard that David was in Keilah, he rejoiced and said. *"God hath delivered him into mine hand; for he is shut in, by entering into a town that hath gates and bars"* (verse 17). But that same chapter tells us that God delivered David out of Saul's hands.

There are four elements in the pattern David followed to keep his victory over jealousy and hatred. We need to remember them in our struggles with the same vices.

Chapter 10
Hounded Like an Animal

It seemed David's misery would never end. Saul was an unrelenting foe. David was hunted—hounded like an animal by Saul. With his 3,000 men, Saul kept on David's trail.

Is the devil on your trail? That means you've got something that he wants. When you get something from God all hell has got you on its "hit list" If Satan and his imps are after you, you've got to learn how to stand on the Word of God and declare with Job: *"Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him. "*

Sometimes I ask myself if I could react the way David did to Saul. Seems to me that when you know something body's out to destroy you, if you have an opportunity, you get him before he gets you. We call that self-preservation.

Yet, twice David had Saul in a place where he could have killed him without Saul even waking up. Once Saul went into a cave and was so tired that he lay down and covered his face. He didn't know it, but David was in the same cave. (I Sam. 24) David had Saul right where he wanted him. He could have stopped this foolishness right there. But what did David do? Did he kill him? Did he even wound Saul? No, he simply cut off a piece of his skirt! That's a whole lot different from the fighting that's going on in some churches, and against some pastors.

And when David had done that, he began to weep. He got under conviction! He prayed, *"Oh Lord, forgive me for touching your anointed. "* When I read this, it kind of made me mad, and I said, "Now Lord, Saul wasn't your anointed at this point." The Bible says that the Spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul. And if the Spirit of the Lord departs, you are no longer God's anointed. But the important thing is that *David* felt that Saul was still God's anointed. He respected Saul because of God's call in Saul's life, even though Saul messed it up.

David's reaction was unusual but not impossible.

Think back over the four things that I mentioned about David in an earlier chapter. That's the way David did it. He showed wisdom and the right spirit, along with his belief in God and he kept up his joy by his praise for God.

You don't get those characteristics by being born of a woman. You get them by being born of God! Only God can give you a love for somebody that's out to destroy you.

That morning David called to Saul from a nearby hillside.

"Why are you trying to destroy me? I haven't done you any harm." David held up the piece of Saul's skirt. *"I could have killed you ifI had wanted to, "* David told Saul.

The Bible says Saul stood there and wept like a baby. Then he admitted the truth: *"You are more righteous than I"* (verse 17).

Wouldn't it be wonderful to have your enemy come up to you and tell you that you are more righteous than he? He'd be telling you in essence: You've been acting like a Christian and I've been acting like a devil!

You see, David put Saul in God's hands. He refused to touch the Lord's anointed. David didn't try to retaliate. Because of this, God vindicated David.

You want God to forgive you; but you really don't want to forgive somebody else. Perhaps someone in the church has wronged you. Now you don't stop to talk to them; you don't even speak to them when you pass them in the hall. Forgive? Never! You tell your friends, "You don't know what a terrible thing he's done to me."

But you've forgotten! You were a sinner when God forgave you. Now, God expects you to forgive those who trespass against you just like He forgave you all *your* trespasses.

David is showing us something here. And I'm going to confess it makes me feel how much I need the Lord to keep working on me. He behaved himself wisely and kept the sweetness of the Holy Ghost in his life. He kept his faith even when he was going through fire. He kept his eye on the throne for which he was anointed and he refused to get bitter or touch the Lord's anointed.

You may be lying on the flat of your back reading this right now. I want you to know the devil can't kill you before God is through with you. You may have been fired from your job. You may be on the verge of divorce. Perhaps your wife has left you, or maybe your husband left you with the kids and you've got to pay all the bills and don't have enough money. Remember the devil might steal your money and your marriage. He might steal your job and your friends. But, the devil can't touch what you have locked up inside of you! He can't touch your soul.

The joy of the Lord can be your strength, no matter what you're going through. If you have to offer up the *sacrifice* of joy, God will give you the deliverance that you're looking for!

Chapter 11
When Your Kindness Is Mocked

Let's look now at what happened between David and Nabal, the herdsman. David and his men had protected Nabal and his flocks for three months. Nobody could steal or harm what Nabal had.

One day David sent some of his men down to ask Nabal for a little something to eat. Nabal refused. As a matter of fact, he insulted them: *"Who is David?"he* asked the men.

"Who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants nowadays who break away every man from his master. Shall I, then, take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers and give it up to men, whom I know not from where they are?" (I Sam. 25:10,11)

That was the straw that broke the camel's back. David wanted to retaliate! I'm sure you know the feeling.

Have you ever come out of a real Holy Ghost service, praising the Lord, and telling everyone what a fine time in the Lord you had? Then somebody cusses at you, and you find out that, no matter what happened in that service, you want to make a fist and knock their teeth out! Sometimes a little fly can disturb you more than an army that's coming against you. You can't take it. *"It's the little foxes that spoil the vine. "* And the devil knows our weaknesses!

When his men came back and reported what Nabal had said, David's response was simple: "Put on your swords. We're going to get that rascal and kill him!" Now he is sounding human, isn't he? Just like the church folk. It's time to retaliate.

But Nabal's wife, Abigail, got into the picture. What a woman she was! Some men are real rascals. You ought to thank God you have a good wife. When she learned David intended to wipe out Nabal and his household, Abigail knew what she had to do. She gathered together some food and goodies, loaded the asses and went out to meet David. She didn't tell her husband.

When she reached David, she fell at his feet and begged him to let Nabal's guilt be put on her. "I take full responsibility," she told David. She pointed out what she had brought; food for him and his men and reminded David that he was the Lord's anointed. "God's got better things for you than this," she said to him.

She preached him right under conviction! Thank God for a woman preacher who knows how to preach you under conviction! I don't believe in women

preachers or men preachers. I believe in Holy Ghost preachers—people who will stand up and let the Holy Ghost use them to bring the message of God.

But Abigail did something else. She made David confess his error. This is why the Bible calls David a man after God's own heart. When David made a mistake, he didn't try to cover it up. He brought it right out in the open and asked the Lord to forgive him.

We need to be like David. It's foolish to try to hide our mistakes. We shouldn't try to cover them up. Instead, take the lid off the thing, confess it and get it out in the open. Only then can the blood of Jesus cover it and restore us to our position in Christ Jesus.

David had his moment of unbelief, however. And in that hour, he made a foolish decision. "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul," he lamented. "There is nothing better for me than that I should escape to the land of the Philistines." (I Sam. 27:1) After all he had been through, he now decides that he's going to leave the country that God had anointed him to be king over. Think about it!

The devil finally got through to David, and for a year and four months he lived in the land of the Philistines. He lived there under false pretenses! He allowed the Philistines to believe he was on their side and was going to fight his own people. In fact, he did the opposite and fought against the enemies of Israel. But, David was living a lie.

There are a lot of people living just like David was in Philistia. They claim to be saved, but they're not living it. They say that they believe in holiness, but they're living like the devil's crowd. They've got one foot in the world and one in the church!

You can't claim to believe in divine healing and be content to stay sick. You can't claim to have the Holy Ghost if you're afraid to speak in tongues. I believe it's time for every Christian to stand up and let the world know who they believe in. God is looking for people who will stand up for their testimony. Beloved, it's time to live like a Pentecostal person.

God is looking for people who are real. If you're claiming salvation, live like you're saved. Don't live a lie. Too many people are going around saying: "I'm born again," who live like they have been born of the devil. It's the born-again syndrome. "It's so hard to live holy where I am," some people say. But Jesus promised that He would live through us, that He would walk with us and talk with us. He's our God and we're His people. He helps us to live a holy life.

Chapter 12
Friends Threaten Like Enemies

David was betrayed. He had suffered treachery, insults, and exile. Now comes the finality of it all—disaster has struck. You should be able to identify with this. You've wept bitter tears, You've asked, "How much do I have to suffer?" You've felt that you were at the end of your rope; that you couldn't stand it any longer. Hang in there then. Because when you get that low, God's got to move. When it gets that hot, help is on the way!

When David was on his way back to Ziklag, the place where his wives and his children lived and where all of the families of his men lived, the enemy came in. The city was destroyed, burned to the ground. Nothing was left but smoldering ashes. All the wives, all the children, all the valuables had been carried away by the Amalekites. (I Sam. 30)

When David and his men arrived and discovered what had happened, the Bible tells us that they wept. They were grown men—seasoned soldiers—but they wept. They wept until they could weep no more. (v. 4)

Then the human thing happened. When the weeping was over, they turned on David. They blamed him. "It's your fault this happened," they told him. They even spoke of stoning David. (v. 6)

David called for the priest and he asked for the ephod. David told the priest simply, "I must have a word from the Lord."

Oh, aren't you glad for the Word. We don't have a human oracle. We have the Word of God. You can find comfort in the Word. You can find help in the Word when friends turn their backs on you; when the church puts you out; when your wife or husband won't have anything to do with you.

God says, "I'll pick you up. I'll do for you what man cannot do."

When the priest brought the ephod, David inquired of the Lord, *"Shall I pursue this troop?"*

God answered: *"Pursue. For thou shalt surely overtake them and without fail you shall recover all. "*

It doesn't matter what or how much you've lost; how much the devil has stolen from you, God says that He's going to give it back.

David RECOVERED ALL! I believe that this is when David wrote the 23rd Psalm:

"The Lord is my shepherd: I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in

green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou are with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. "

Chapter 13
The Purpose For It All

God gave David the promise of the kingdom, then He put him to the test for nine years. They were bitter years until David was disciplined and trained for his high calling.

If you're going through some deep water, God's got you in mind for a high position. Now, don't blow it. Just hang in there and remember the four virtues that David had in his life.

Behave yourself wisely, remembering that you're not going through this test as a result of your foolishness. Make sure there's nothing blocking communication between you and your Saviour. Then when you're sure that you are saved and washed in the blood, you can go through anything.

Don't charge God foolishly with your lips. Hang on to His promise and keep the sweetness of God in your soul. Learn how to be sweet. Don't be bitter. Don't complain. Just hang on to the horns of the altar with your faith.

Don't lose your faith. David's advice was to wait on the Lord. *"Be of good courage, "* David admonished, *"and He shall strengthen thine heart. Wait I say on the Lord. "*

Unfortunately, we're living in a day and age when no one wants to wait. Everybody wants a quick way out—instant healing, instant sanctification. We all just want the preacher to lay hands on us and—instantly—we have the victory. Of course, sometimes it happens that way. But not always.

Sometimes we have to wait on the Lord. The Bible says *"they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint. "*

David said, "Wait on the Lord." His message was, "Help is on the way." And I know that victory shall be mine if I wait.

You say you don't have that kind of wisdom. Then ask God for it. He said, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask for it"— God will give it. Stay sweet, hang on in faith and keep your joy-level high by praising God.

The time to shout is when you don't feel like praising the Lord. Shout when you don't feel like it. Praise the Lord when you don't feel like it. Praise the Lord when you are feeling aches and pains all over your body. Praise the Lord when you can't even change a quarter. Praise the Lord when your children run away from home. Praise the Lord when the doctor says there is no hope. Praise the

Lord when friends forsake you. Praise the Lord when people envy and hate you.

Never let your troubles get you down. When life's problems come your way, hold up your head and shout. Grab hold of God's Word. Believe it. Your kingdom will come just as certainly as it finally did for David.

"You don't have any trouble. All you need is faith in God."

THE REV. R. W. SCHAMBACH is one of America's dynamic pulpiteers. Daily his "Voice of Power" is beamed from radio stations throughout the United States and in several foreign countries. Thousands attend each of his Miracle Crusades in great auditoriums and in his 160'x350' Gospel Tent, witnessing some of this generation's most unusual miracles. Thousands have been led to Christ through this trans denominational ministry Lasting congregations of new believers also have been founded, and hundreds of churches have-been blessed with additional members ps a result of his evangelistic ministry. His regular missions abroad result in some of the largest gatherings witnessed in the nations visited.

All of his sermons are released in cassettes in a globe encircling ministry. Books by Brother Schambach are also available. Each month more than one hundred twenty thousand copies of "Power" Magazine carry the exciting testimonies of what God is doing through Brother Schambach's ministry. He appears regularly on TV shows such as the PTL Club and the Phil Donohue Show as an advocate of healing through faith in Christ.



A graduate of a Bible College himself, the Rev. Schambach is deeply committed to the development of ministers who are both Apostolic in their power and Academic in their understanding of the Gospel. East Texas Bible College was founded upon this vision in 1976 in Tyler, Texas, the beautiful rose capital ot the nation. Already graduates are making their mark "in demonstration of the spirit and of power." Tyler is also the location of the modern international headquarters facility of R. W. Schambach Revivals, Inc.

The Rev. Schambach is married to the former Winnie Donald of Philadelphia. They have three children: a daughter, Donna, involved in Christian Education, and two sons, Robert, who shares in the crusade ministry with hie father and Bruce, a collegian. Brother and Sister Schambach, who make their home in Tyler. Texas, have shared together in life and ministry for 32 years.