

The Spirit of Discouragement



David Wilkerson (1931-2011) March 13, 2020

When King David was in a time of discouragement and struggle, he cried out: “I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long ... I am feeble and severely broken; I groan because of the turmoil of my heart ... My heart pants, my strength fails me; as for the light of my eyes, it also has gone from me” (Psalm 38:6, 8, 10).

This psalm shows us a godly, righteous man slumped in despair. David hungered for the Lord and poured out his heart to him daily in prayer. He revered God’s Word, writing psalms that extolled his glory, but now all he could do was cry, “Lord, I’m at the end of my rope and I have no idea why it’s happening.”

Like many discouraged Christians, David tried to figure out why he felt so empty and broken in spirit. He probably relived every failure, sin and foolish deed in his life. He finally reasoned that God must have been chastening him: “O Lord, do not rebuke me in Your wrath, nor chasten me in Your hot displeasure!” (Psalm 38:1).

David is not writing just about his own condition in this psalm. He’s describing something that all devoted lovers of Jesus face at some point in their lifetime. It is important to note that the spirit of discouragement is Satan’s most potent weapon against God’s elect. Most often, he uses it to try to convince us that we have brought God’s wrath upon ourselves by not measuring up to his holy standards. But the apostle Paul urges us not to fall prey to the devil’s snare: “Lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices” (2 Corinthians 2:11).

Paul tells us we must see our discouragement for what it really is — a demonic weapon. Satan knows he can’t get us to turn away from Jesus, so he swamps us with vicious lies. When this happens, the Holy Spirit will bring to our remembrance all the precious promises of Jesus.

“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him” (1 Corinthians 2:9). Dare to believe the incredibly good things the Holy Spirit tells you and let him flood your spirit with encouragement from the heavenly Father. He loves you and his promises are true!

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