

Getting the Nod

Pre-Sermon Video: [Hope is Here](#)

Hope is here!! There's light at the end of this tunnel! And this quarantine period sure has been a learning curve for us all. There have been benefits like: **closer relationships... a reboot in faith and priorities... work around the house finally got done.** **But not all has been beneficial.** **Employment loss... fears about the virus... economy anxiety... relational conflicts... and uncertainty with the future.** And because of these realities... **some of us have endeavored to be brave in the cave. And bravery is impossible without hope!**

Just ask a soldier what bravery is and he will tell you that **bravery is not the absence of fear; it is doing what needs to be done in spite of our fear.** **Ask a saint of old what faith is** and he will tell you it is **"trusting God enough to obey even when you're not sure it will work out in the short run".**

Transition: We find a story in the Bible that shows us bravery in a cave. It's **King David** hiding out in Psalm 142.

God's Take

This Psalm is called a maskil Psalm. Now, scholars differ on what that means. Some say it refers to a **musical term** that may have told how it was to be played. Other scholars believe it means it is **a teaching Psalm.** For me, I feel confident that it is the latter.

NKJV | Ps 142:1-7 (A Contemplation Of David. **A Prayer When He Was in the Cave.**) 1 I cry out to the LORD with my voice; with my voice to the LORD I make my supplication. 2 I pour out my complaint before Him; I declare before Him my trouble. 3 When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, Then You knew my path. In the way in which I walk, they have secretly set a snare for me. 4 Look on my right hand and see, for there is no one who acknowledges me; Refuge has failed me; No one cares for my soul. 5 I cried out to You, O LORD: I said, "You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living. 6 Attend to my cry, for I am brought very low; deliver me from my persecutors, for they are stronger than I. 7 Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Your name; The righteous shall surround me, For You shall deal bountifully with me."

Back Story: (This Psalm is out of the story that comes from David's life in **1 Samuel 22-24.**)

- **David is in a cave hiding from Saul.** Saul has become **paranoid over David's popularity** and upset that **his own son, Jonathan sides with David.**
- **Saul is pursuing David to kill him.** He is so jealous that he **even kills the priest Ahimelech and 85 other priests and their families** because Ahimelech had given David some bread and a sword.
- **There were two caves mentioned with David in 1 Samuel.** There was the Cave of **Adullam** and the cave at **En Gedi.**
- **Adullam was the cave** that David ran to **after Gath** and it was there that David's brothers and **whole family joined him there.** And in addition, **a unique band of fighters** made up of **those desperate, in debt, and discontent joined David... around 400 men.** (What an army!!)

- **En Gedi is one of David's life changing stories.** Still being chased by Saul, David and his group hide in a cave there. While hiding in there, Saul stops with his army of 3,000 soldiers... **long enough to go to the restroom. (Imagine the scene!)**
- **And where did King Saul go to relieve himself??? That very same cave! What a chance!!!** David's army see this as a chance for their leader to kill Saul and take his rightful throne.
- **But David didn't. David instead cuts a piece of the king's robe off and lets him go.**
- **And after Saul left the cave, David felt guilt about shaming Saul and came out and called out to Saul. David told Saul that he was not a threat to him. (Integrity)**
- **He held up the piece of the robe** and told Saul how he could have killed Saul but did not.
- **He declared that Saul was his master** and he would never raise his hand against him. When he finished, **Saul stated the obvious. "You are more righteous than I."**
- **Because David was brave in the cave... it became the place where his answer arrived.**

Let's take a look at David's cries from the cave in Psalm 142...

David's Cries from the Cave:

1. His soul was overwhelmed. (vs.3)

- **3 When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, Then You knew my path.**
- The word "**overwhelmed**" means "**shrouded**", "**overshadowed**". David was in a dark cave, yet, **the greater darkness was in his soul!** He was overwhelmed inside!
- It reminds us that **anyone is subject to periods of darkness, despair, discouragement, or depression! Even a promised King!!!**

2. His Steps were at risk.

- **"...they have secretly set a snare for me."**
- **David had been nothing but loyal to Saul!** He had done nothing to deserve the jealous rage that Saul felt for him. Now David's steps are in danger because Saul is seeking to kill him!

3. His spirit was deserted. (vs.4)

- **4 Look on my right hand and see, for there is no one who acknowledges me; Refuge has failed me; No one cares for my soul.**
- The reference to his right hand speaks of those who really understand what David was going through. This is a sad description of David's loneliness and sorrow.
- **Quote by Mother Teresa of Calcutta said....."Loneliness and the feeling of being uncared for and unwanted are the (world's) greatest poverty."**
- Is there a more empty feeling in the human heart than to be lonely, and feel that no one cares?
- **Illustration of a Hasidic Rabbi and his young disciple:** A Hasidic Rabbi was **beloved by his young students** and one day one of them shouted **"Master, I love you!"** He looked at the young man and asked this question, "Do you know what hurts me son?" Puzzled, the young student says, "I don't understand your question, Rabbi." The Rabbi walked to the boy and made this statement, **"If you know what hurts me, then you can know what it is to love me."**
- **Application: Although accompanied by his band of fighters, they didn't understand his personal fears and pain. That's why being brave in the cave is so hard.**

Examples of those trying to be brave in the cave: Those in hospital beds without family and friends; the elderly in nursing homes who haven't felt the love of children; those in hospital parking lots wondering about the condition of their family members; kids and students missing their friends from school; etc. Those unemployed. **There are so many trying to be brave in the cave!**

Maybe we can learn from David's bravery in Psalm 142. Here are some...

Ingredients for Being Brave in the Cave:

1. Emotional Praying. (An intimate prayer to the One Who loves us most)

- The first thing I want you to see is that **David got loud**. His prayer was emotional. It wasn't a quiet meeting with God, but an emotional appeal that would have been quite audible.
- I want you to look at the strong emotion that is descriptive of David's prayer...
 - "I Cry out!" / "With my voice I make my supplication" or "I beg out loud"
 - "I pour out my complaint" / "I declare before Him my trouble" or "I announce my distress to Him!"
 - **The Hebrew would lend itself to describing an audible prayer.**
- **My prayer testimony: I have a diverse prayer format.** Sometimes my prayer is **silent meditation** prayer while reading scripture; sometimes my prayer is **a whisper so my concentration and focus is better**; but there have been times when I have been driving or walking and the situation merits me **talking out loud to God**. **The latter format was David's in the cave.**
- **Application: God wants to hear from you... no matter the level of emotion.** When we get alone with God and our frustrations... He wants us to get honest about our need for Him to step in and answer. **Cast all your cares on Him... for He cares for you!!!**
- **Are you getting near a blowing point? Get alone with God and say it out loud to God!!!** Know this about David's prayer, when we appeal to God intimately it strengthens our hearts, our resolve, and our commitment to what we are praying.

2. Dependent Confession (It is hope that comes from dependence on God)

- David says that God already knows his path in his life. **He says in verse three that even when his spirit is weak God still knows his way.**
- **God still knows our circumstances**, but sometimes it is important that we confess **"I am weak, but thou art strong!"**
- **When we feel spiritually weak, we can only refill our souls at the throne of grace**, as we seek God's spirit, God's grace, God's help, and God's provision for our lives.
- **Admitting weakness is a sign of spiritual strength.**
- **David declares that his enemies had prepared a snare for him.** Essentially David was surrounded.
- **So, David cries to God, admitting that God is all he has. His forces are outnumbered, he doesn't have a clever plan to escape**, he is hiding in a cave, hoping the army will slip by him, but he knows that he is almost certainly trapped.
- **Application: When we are weak, God is strong.** **David's prayer is this... God, do for me what I cannot do for myself!!! God always answers that prayer!!**
- **Listen to Jesus' words...** NLT | Mt 11:28 **Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.**

3. Visible Praising (It is stepping out in faith for a future blessing from God)

- Now, here's another important point that I don't want you to miss. **Sometimes the greatest spiritual bravery is seen in how we worship!**
- **David was waiting for God to remove Saul from the throne and place David upon it and he would praise Him while he waited.**
- **This kind of praising is a dual kind. It is for us and the people who are around us when the tough times come need. They need to see us praising** God and hear from us that God is blessing our lives.
- **It shows spiritual bravery.** Your children. Your family members. Your neighbors and co-workers and friends.
- **Application: Praise is the highway to the throne of God!!!** Do those around you hear you speaking of the blessings of the Lord or do they just hear your complaints?
- Paul wrote to the Philippians that **they were to do all things without arguing or complaining.**
- If Christians would spend more time praising God in the tough times than complaining then people would be attracted to the faith that we depend upon.
- **Illustration of Mom in my Grandfather's backyard when God would meet her at night.**

4. Confident Trusting **(This is the confidence that God is working all things out.)**

- **God orchestrated this encounter** in the cave with Saul and David. There were no breadcrumbs for Saul to see. There wasn't a flashing neon sign that said "Restroom for a King".
- **If you've studied En Gedi you'll know that it has dozens and dozens of caves to hide in.** The probability for Saul to enter the right cave for David to be hiding would be at least a hundred to one.
- God's plan was to answer David's frustration and sadness in that cave!!! In the place of His most fearful and intense circumstances... God stepped in and proved His love for David.
- **Application:** In the cave that some of you are in, you can confidently trust God's love and His orchestration will prove to you that you are loved and heard.

Transition: Bravery in the cave may have some scars that come with it... but God will bless and heal and use us after it is all over. There's HOPE IN THE CAVE... let it fuel your bravery.

Conclusion

Final Story of Bravery: A tragic fire struck a home one evening. As the father awoke to the smoke alarms he began to rescue his family. He ran to his daughter's room, scooped her up, wrapped her in a blanket and made his way back down the flame-engulfed hall. The little girl came through without so much as a singed hair but her father's right hand and arm were permanently scarred by the inferno. From then on he would greet people with his left hand; keeping his right arm out of sight as much as possible. Whenever his daughter was with him, **even when she was a teenager, she would proudly reach, take her father's twisted hand and proudly tell the new friend of her father's bravery that had saved her life.**

Years later at his death, the funeral home, trying to be kind and kept his right arm out of sight. When the daughter discovered that the hand would not be visible, she insisted that his hand be placed front and center on his chest. As she stood by the casket she would say... **"That hand was wounded for me. I am alive because of the bravery of my father!"**

For those trying to be brave in the cave... remember this... We live with bravery because our Lord and King was brave for us!!! Never let the truth of Jesus' costly and redemptive rescue grow dim.

Prayer: God, some of us are trying to be brave in their cave. Stress has reached mountainous levels and they need help from you. So this morning we...

- **Cry out to you from a heart's volume... intimate and concern.**
- **Admit our dependence on you and trust your response by faith. Do for us what we cannot do for ourselves.**
- **Praise you for what is coming. By faith we worship you so that others know who we honor.**
- **Trust you to get all of us through this. Expose the truth and prepare us for you coming...**
- **In Jesus name, AMEN!**