

When God Gives Courage

1 Chron 19:10 Now when Joab saw that the battle was set against him before and behind, he chose out of all the choice of Israel, and put them in array against the Syrians.

1 Chron 19:12-13

12 And he said, If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will help thee.

13 Be of good courage, and let us behave ourselves valiantly for our people, and for the cities of our God: and let the LORD do that which is good in his sight.

I. Introduction

1. When do people need courage? At a time of crisis when facing an insurmountable foe. Now is that time.
2. Consider some of the many obstacles that have faced recently: like the president's first order limiting gatherings to 10 and under, and eventually stay at home, our governor's order to stay at home, the empty shelves in grocery stores, the rising concerns as the sickness strikes friends and family, and the strain on our health care workers and systems to near breaking point, have all led to unprecedented changes to life on our planet.
3. Honestly, if I had read that statement I just made as recently as Christmas, I would have called it overdramatic fiction.
4. Would you say the corona virus epidemic has reach the point of being an insurmountable foe?
5. Well if we consider only the human ability to respond, maybe so. While there are great efforts going forward by multitudes of brave people, from specially trained janitors to first responders and health professionals, that is our human best.
6. But when we put our trust in God as we go forward, we will see that God offers a great dose of bravery and courage to those who are facing insurmountable foes. And in that we can take heart that victory lies ahead.
7. Take these examples for consideration of When God Gives Courage.

II. When does God give courage? When we wait on Him

1. Goodness will come but sometimes we must wait with courage:

Ps 27:13-14

13 I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

14 Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

2. And you are familiar with this one:

Isa 40:31 But 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; and they shall walk, and not faint.

III. When does God give courage? When facing new discoveries

1. When Moses sent the spies into Canaan, they didn't know what to expect in this new land, for none of them had ever been there before.

2. But God had sent them on the mission to claim that territory regardless of the obstacles.
3. Starting on a new venture is a good time for courage:
*Num 13:20 And what the land is, whether it be fat or lean, whether there be wood therein, or not. And **be ye of good courage**, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now the time was the time of the firstripe grapes.*
4. Scope the territory with open eyes, but be of good courage.
5. Courage literally means to fasten upon, to seize, be strong, be alert.
6. Don't face the new territory and uncertainties with fear, be of good courage and go ahead.
7. We are all facing new adventures these days. Our lifestyle has had to adjust, but don't panic in the face of new things. Take courage and face them head on in Jesus' name!

IV. When does God give courage? In time of transition

A. From Moses to Joshua

1. Not just when something new is before you, but also when you are facing transition. Making the journey from one thing to another thing is a challenge as well.
2. Look at how Moses' commissioned Israel as he approached the end of his life:
Deut 31:6-8
*6 **Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid** of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.*
3. The fact that God will not fail those who purposefully lay their hope in Him, is reason enough to face a situation with courage without paralyzing fear.
4. It is like when you are facing a surgery and the doctor tells you, "It's no problem. I've done 500 of these procedures and have never had a problem with your kind of situation."
5. Ok, a doctor that has a 100% success rate is one thing. But a God who has never failed anyone at any time is a great place to put your trust with courage.
6. Moses repeated the encouragement to Joshua in front of all of Israel:
*7 And Moses called unto Joshua, and said unto him in the sight of all Israel, **Be strong and of a good courage**: for thou must go with this people unto the land which the LORD hath sworn unto their fathers to give them; and thou shalt cause them to inherit it.*
*8 And the LORD, he it is that doth **go before thee**; he will be with thee, he **will not fail thee, neither forsake thee**: fear not, neither be dismayed.*
7. There is that assurance again. He **goes before us**. With Israel that was significant because God was preparing the way before them.
8. He does that for us. He is not constrained to time as we are. He is in your tomorrows because your entire design of life is in His hands.
9. **God will not fail or forsake you**. Repeat that to your situation. Speak it out loud and over again and it will replace fear with courage.
10. At the point where Israel was hearing this, the conquest of Canaan was still future, so when courage comes in handy is before you face the situation while you are still in transition:
*Deut 31:23 And he gave Joshua the son of Nun a charge, and said, **Be strong and of a***

*good courage: for **thou shalt bring the children of Israel into the land which I swore unto them: and I will be with thee.***

11. Say it out loud, “God’s got this! He will move me from here into my promise.”
- B. From David to Solomon
1. In the transition from David to Solomon, we find another time when courage was encouraged, but here we see something significant that we all must grasp at such a time as this.
 2. What was that courage based on? Did the Apollo astronauts have courage to face the unknown in spaceflight to the moon because they were convinced they were going to be able to bring back a bunch of cheese?
 3. There once was a myth that the moon was made of cheese.
 4. No, their courage was based on important truth.
 5. Notice how David directs Solomon’s courage:
*1 Chron 22:13 Then shalt thou prosper, **if thou takest heed to fulfil the statutes and judgments which the LORD charged Moses with concerning Israel: be strong, and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed.***
 6. Our confidence can be strongest when we are standing on a truth declared by God.
 7. We don’t encourage a robber to be courageous when going about to commit a crime. That is not conduct God will bless.
 8. I wouldn’t ask God to give me courage to fly off the roof top. These things are not based on God’s truth.
 9. But if we are on a task that God started, know this—He will finish the work He began.
 10. David’s words to Solomon continue in chapter 28:
*1 Chron 28:20 And David said to Solomon his son, **Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the LORD God, even my God, will be with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD.***
 11. When does God give courage? In times of transition.
- V. When does God give courage? When surrounded by enemies
1. Another time when God gives courage is when we are surrounded by enemies.
 2. This would be the most likely time to dread because there is no escape. The enemy has you surrounded.
 3. There is only one way out, painful confrontation.
 4. The king of Ammon hired the help of the Syrian army and surrounded David, the Ammonites before and the Syrians behind.
*1 Chron 19:10 Now when Joab saw that the battle was set **against him before and behind**, he chose out of all the choice of Israel, and put them in array against the Syrians.*
 5. Does it look like the dreaded thing is surrounding you? Like looking at the map of areas where COVID-19 has spread.
 6. Notice something about the next passage, when an enemy on the outside threatens us, it helps us to have greater unity and cooperation among us.

7. Listen to Joab's words of encouragement before battle:
1 Chron 19:12-13
12 And he said, If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will help thee.
 8. It is possible for brothers to work together when an enemy is picking on them from the outside. It causes us to quit focusing on our complaints against a brother or sister because your way of life is being threatened.
 9. It is like that puzzling picture we have seen of Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Joseph Stalin in the same picture taken in 1943, working together as allies.
 10. When we are threatened, we can work together with our brothers.
 11. And Joab gave this encouragement to his brother:
*13 Be of good courage, and let us **behave ourselves** valiantly for our people, and for the cities of our God: and let the LORD do that which is good in his sight.*
 12. When they stood together, the enemy fled and David and Joab conquered.
 13. When does God give courage? When surrounded by enemies
- VI. When does God give courage? When we are outnumbered
- A. Preparation before battle
 1. An Ethiopian army of 1 million soldiers came against Asa, and Asa had half as many soldiers.
 2. This was Asa's prayer before battle:
*2 Chron 14:11 And Asa cried unto the LORD his God, and said, LORD, it is nothing with thee to help, whether **with many, or with them that have no power**: help us, O LORD our God; for **we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this** multitude. O LORD, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee.*
 3. And miraculously, Asa conquered the Ethiopian army and sent them retreating back to Africa.
 - B. Post battle fatigue
 1. Following the victory, when Asa was worn out from the battle, the Prophet Azariah spoke these words to the king:
*2 Chron 15:7 **Be ye strong** therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded.*
 2. I thought about this as a word for those work so hard to make keep our food supplies and other supplies available, those who work to keep us safe, or those who provide medical care.
 3. That is a good way we can pray for these important people right now.
 - C. Revival in duress
 1. But the stress of the situation led the people back to God.
*2 Chron 15:8 And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of [Azariah, son of] Oded the prophet, **he took courage, and put away the abominable idols** out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the cities which he had taken from mount Ephraim, and **renewed the altar of the LORD**, that was before the porch of the LORD.*

2. Do you see that? During a time of great national stress, the people put away what was false and returned to what was true.
3. You see, during good times, false idols don't appear harmful, and can be fun to have around because they are the popular thing.
4. But you get into a crisis and someone needs help, that is when it becomes obvious that those things are useless for what we really need in our soul.
5. The Holy Ghost is telling someone tonight, renew the altar of the LORD! Put away the false idols.
6. Right now, many people are turning to God for the hunger they feel. We need to be there to give them a witness of Jesus, and the courage He can give us in this dark day.
7. He can make a dark day into a sunny day through the hope He places in our soul.

D. The need of a teaching priest

1. Look further at the words that the Prophet Azariah told King Asa; it is relevant to where we are today:
2 Chron 15:3-5
3 For a long time Israel was without the true God, without a priest to teach and without the law.
4 But in their distress they turned to the Lord, the God of Israel, and sought him, and he was found by them.
5 In those days it was not safe to travel about, for all the inhabitants of the lands were in great turmoil. NIV
2. But at a time of distress, when it is not safe to travel about, when the lands are in great turmoil, people are turning to the “teaching priest”, those many Facebook resources for the Word of God that are now available more than ever before.
3. Do you realize that you are living at the point in world history of the world where more of the Word of God is being published than ever before?
4. I just want to ask this question, when in the history of the world has this verse ever been more true than now?
Matt 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.
5. King Asa and all Israel took courage when they **turned to the God of Israel:**
2 Chron 15:4 But when they in their trouble did turn unto the LORD God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them.
6. Let me ask you this: When does God give courage? When we are overwhelmed with the odds stacked against us, yet we turn to Him.
7. Because in reality, when we turn to God, there are more on our side than against us.
8. This is how the Lord encouraged Hezekiah when he was outnumbered by an enemy:
2 Chron 32:7 Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him: for there be more with us than with him:

E. Take courage, the Lord shall preserve

1. *Ps 31:23-24*
23 O love the LORD, all ye his saints: for the LORD preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.
24 Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD.
 2. Take courage, the Lord shall heal:
Ps 103:1-4
103 Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.
2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:
*3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; **who healeth all thy diseases;***
4 Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;
- VII. Conclusion: Pass it on to others
1. What **Joshua** received, he passed on
 2. *Josh 23:6 Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left;*
 3. The prophet **Isaiah** shows a proper response to God—spread encouragement to neighbor and brothers!
Isa 41:6 They helped every one his neighbour; and every one said to his brother, Be of good courage.
 4. When **Paul** had been an encourager all his life.
 5. Near the end of his life, as he arrived in Rome to face Emperor Nero for his trial, brethren arrived to greet Paul:
*Acts 28:15 And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii forum, and The three taverns: whom when Paul saw, he **thanked God, and took courage.***