

How to Encourage Yourself

04 - Overcoming Stress: The Biblical Way
Sun, 06 OCT 2013 | Church on the Park

Text: 1 Sam. 30:6

Theme: No matter what stress you are under, you can learn the secrets of strengthening yourself in the Lord.

Intro: The last few weeks we've been focusing on Biblical ways to overcome stress. We've learned about prayer, praise and pure thinking. When we effectively put these things into practice, we experience God's supernatural peace. Today, we are going to discover how to **encourage** ourselves through **David's example**, especially seen in 1 Samuel 30.

3 Facts About Stress: 1) Everyone experiences stress 2) Stress is can damage you and 3) Stress can strengthen you if you handle it God's way.

1) David's distress is an example of what God can do in our own stress.

- The story of David in **Ziklag** (1 Sam. 30:1-20)
- First, we see David and his men's **devastation**
 - Their base and home are destroyed—burnt to a crisp
 - Their wives and children stolen
- Second, we see David's **distress**
 - They wept until they could weep no more
 - Moreover, his men were talking of stoning him—they were strongly bitter toward him
- *How can a situation like this turn around? Why didn't David just give up all hope and hide in a cave?*
- The third thing we see is David's **devotion**.
 - David's devotion was the pivotal thing that turned this whole situation around
- Through David's devotion we see he is inwardly **renewed** and able to **recover** everything that was lost (1 Sam. 30:18-20)
 - **Devotion** to God through all circumstances is the secret of every great man.
 - "Do not lie in wait like an outlaw against a righteous man's house, do not raid his dwelling place; for though a righteous man **falls** seven times, he **rises** again, but the wicked are brought down by calamity" (Prov. 24:15-16).

2) Inward renewal is the key to outward recovery

- 1 Sam. 30:6
- David **found strength** in God though all **odds** were against him
 - **You** can also find that same strength.
 - If David did it in the **Old Covenant**, how much more can we find strength in the **New Covenant**—a covenant filled with better promises.
- Inward **strength** precedes to outward **victory** (1 Sam. 30:18-20).

- Once David was **renewed** through his **devotion** to God, he was able to **seek** God for **direction** and **do** what God **said** (1 Sam. 30:7-9).
- Devotion --> Direction --> Doing --> Restoration
- David's strengthening of himself in the Lord was the **bridge** from wreck to restoration.
- Like David, we need **inner** strength to find the outward battles. If the devil can leave us in **discouragement** and **depression**, he can **defeat** us. We must find our strength in God.

3) The Psalms show us specifically how David found strength in God. You can find your strength in God the same way.

- The Psalms are beautiful because they show us the **secret** life of a man of God.
- You've heard it said, "An apple a day keeps the doctor away." I'd like to say, "**A Psalm a day keeps the psychologist away.**"
- ***Psalm 27***
- David found strength in the secret place of God's **presence**. Seek his **face**. (The word presence and face are the same in Hebrew, *paniym*)
- How can you encourage yourself? **Get into God's presence, seek God's face.**
 - Though everything is **dark** around you, his face is always **beauty and light**.
 - God's **presence** will change your **perspective**. It will make you into a **warrior**.
 - Specifically, I mean boldly entering into his **throne room privately** and coming into his **house publicly** (Heb. 10:19-25).
- Discover also the presence of God **within** you.
 - Before you are **saved**, you do not have the presence of God within you. But when you accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior, the Holy Spirit takes up **residence** in you—you are now his dwelling place.
 - The Holy Spirit is within you. Learn to **drink** from the fountain within. If sin is blocking that well, dig out the **dirt** through repentance.
 - The Holy Spirit within is the **power** of God to enable you to overcome.
 - "You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is **in** you is **greater** than the one who is in the world" (1 John 4:4).

4) There are four specific things you can do to encourage yourself in the Lord.

- 1 - Get into God's presence both privately and corporately
- 2 - Read and pray through a Psalm a day
- 3 - Speak God's promises and recall his prophecies over yourself
 - You'll find that David often did this in the Psalms
- 4 - Drink from the Holy Spirit's fountain within

Conclusion: David's example of extreme stress and his renewal in the midst of it, gives us hope. You also can find your strength in God through getting into God's presence, delighting in the Psalms and recalling his promises and prophecies.

END NOTES

How to encourage yourself? 1) Get into God's presence 2) Read a Psalm a day 3) Drink from the Holy Spirit's fountain within 4) Speak God's promises and recall his prophecies over yourself

- Psalm 105:4; Ps. 27:8

How did David find strength in God?

The fountain within. Unblocking the well. The Holy Spirit within. God's presence within. The power of the Holy Spirit.

"He who speaks to everybody except himself is a great fool!" (Spurgeon)

Get into God's presence, speak his promises and recall his prophecies.

You need a higher power to overcome the powers of evil that are pressing on you.

You need a higher power to overcome the power of evil in you. The Bible refers to this power of evil as the flesh.

The Holy Spirit's help, comfort and strengthening.

Realize that God's power is much greater than the powers that come against you.

- It's that power that will strengthen you in your pressure (your tight spot where it feels like the walls are closing in on you).

"Wait until you are clothed with power from on High"

"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you."

Learn to draw from the well within.

Salvation is the Holy Spirit coming into the inside of us. When you receive Christ as Lord, his Spirit comes to dwell inside of you. There is a greater power within you than is within the world. "Greater is he who is in you than he who is in the world." (1 John)

After the weeping you need to find God's strength, otherwise the enemy will rob you even more.

(*ṣārar*) **I, bind, be narrow, be in distress** (Qal); **make narrow, cause distress, besiege** (Hi phil).

Derivatives

1973a **רָצַר** (*ṣar*) **I, narrow, tight.**

1973b שָׂרָה (*šar*) **II, distress.**

1973c שָׂרָה (*šārā*) **straits, distress.**

1973d שָׂרָה (*šārar*) **suffer distress.** This denominative verb occurs only in the Piel (Jer 48:41; 49:22).

1973e שָׂרָה (*šērôr*) **bundle, parcel, pouch, bag** (e.g. Gen 42:35; Hag 1:6).

1973f מֵשָׂרָה (*mēšar*) **straits, distress** (Ps 116:3; 118:5; Lam 1:3).

šārar may refer to anything which is narrow or confining. A place may become too small for people to inhabit when they increase in number (II Kgs 6:1; Isa 49:19f.). Isaiah speaks of a blanket too narrow to wrap oneself (28:20). It also refers to being restricted (II Sam 20:3), and it may signify “to hamper something” (Prov 4:12).

šārar means “to bind up” or “to tie.” It is used for binding a stone in a sling (Prov 26:8), tying a kneading trough to a mantle (Ex 12:34), or mending an old torn wine skin (Josh 9:4, Pual). God is said to bind up the water in thick clouds (Job 26:8; cf. Hos 4:19).

Hosea describes the sin of Ephraim as bound up; i.e. it was kept in store for the time of judgment (13:12). Since the people reject his message, Isaiah exhorts his disciples to preserve his teaching among themselves saying, “Bind up the testimony, seal the teaching among my disciples” (8:16). It further is used for preserving one’s life (I Sam 25:29); “the life of my Lord will be bound in the bundle of the living.”

It also may refer to the strong emotional response that one experiences when pressed externally by enemies or internally by wrong decisions or passions; e.g. Jacob’s confrontation with Esau (Gen 32:7 [H 8]). Israel was frequently placed in sore distress by her enemies during the period of the Judges (Jud 2:15; 10:9). Even a great leader may be distressed by reaction to controversial decisions (cf. I Sam 30:6). One can be obsessed with a passion and be so bound up emotionally that he becomes ill; e.g. (Amnon’s distorted desire for his sister (II Sam 13:2).

One curse for violating the covenant states that enemies will besiege Israel’s towns (Deut 28:52). Similarly God brings distress on any who have sinned (Zeph 1:17; Jer 10:18). Some under such distress become more faithless, as did Ahaz (II Chr 28:22), while others humble themselves and seek Yahweh, as did Manasseh (II Chr 33:12; cf. Deut 4:30f.).

This root or a very similar one describes the emotional distress of a woman in travail (Jer 48:41; 49:22).¹

Embittered - [*marar* /maw·rar/] v. A primitive root; TWOT 1248; GK 5352; 16 occurrences; AV translates as “bitterness” three times, “bitter” twice, “bitterly” twice,

¹ *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. 1999 (R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer, Jr. & B. K. Waltke, Ed.) (electronic ed.) (778–779). Chicago: Moody Press.

“choler” twice, “grieved” twice, “vexed” twice, “bitterness + 4751” once, “grieved him” once, and “provoke” once. 1 to be bitter. 1a (Qal) to be bitter. 1b (Piel). 1b1 to show bitterness. 1b2 to make bitter. 1c (Hiphil) to make bitter, embitter. 1d (Hithpael). 1d1 to embitter oneself. 1d2 to be enraged. 2 (TWOT) to be strong, strengthen.²

.mārar) I, be bitter, strengthen, be strong) È ◀

Derivatives

- 1248a מַר (mar) **bitter**.
- 1248b מֹר (mōr) **myrrh**.
- 1248c מַרְרָה (morrâ) **bitterness**.
- 1248d מֹרָה (mōrâ) **grief**.
- 1248e מַרְרֹר (mārôr) **bitterness**.
- 1248f מְרֹרָה (měrôrâ) **bitter thing**.
- 1248g מְרֵרָה (měrērâ) **gall** (only Job 16:13)
- 1248h מְרִירִי (měrîrî) **bitter**.
- 1248i מְרִירֹת (měrîrût) **bitterness**.
- 1248j מְמַר (memer) **bitterness**.
- 1248k מַמְרֹר (mamrôr) **bitterness**.
- 1248l תַּמְרֹר (tamrôr) **bitterness**.

The verb *mārar* is used fifteen times, always with man as subject, never God, unless the verb describes an interpretation given by man to God’s actions and will. For example, Job (and this root plus its various derivatives appear more frequently in Job than in any other ot book [ten times]) complains: The Almighty has vexed my soul (27:2), Hiphil of *mārar*. Similarly, Naomi says, “Do not call me Naomi, call me ‘Mara’ for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me” (Ruth 1:20).

It is interesting to note that the Hebrews expressed tragic, unpleasant experiences in terms of the sense of taste, the bitter. Actually, we employ the same figure of speech in our English language; It was a galling experience; his actions were not in very good taste, I thought; your wife is always so tastefully dressed.

For the root *mārar* we suggest not only the traditional translation “to be bitter/ embitter” but also the translation “to be strong/strengthen.” The reason for this is that in **Ugarktic/Arabic/ Aramaic** the root *mrr* may mean one of “to strengthen, bless, commend.” In at least four ot passages this seems the preferable translation. Thus, Ex 1:14 might better read not “they made their lives bitter,” but “they strengthened their lives,” i.e. the Egyptians, by imposing hard labor, only toughened the Hebrews. The context suggests this. Judges 18:25 refers not to “embittered men” but “tough men.”

² Strong, J. (2001). *Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

Ecclesiastes 7:26 traditionally reads; “I found more bitter than death the woman whose heart is snares and nets.” It will be observed, however, that the author is not stressing a woman’s bitterness but her strength; hence, “I found stronger than death” (cf. Song 8:6). Finally, Ezk 3:14 reads, “I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit.” But why should the prophet be “bitter” especially in light of what he saw and heard in vv. 12–13? We suggest the translation, “I went forth strengthened by the fervor of my spirit.”

mar). Bitter, strong. Thirty-seven times in the OT. Most frequently the adjective is used in a figurative sense, as is the verb, to describe an emotion, though a few examples of mar in a literal sense may be found. The Scriptures speak of bitter grape clusters (Deut 32:32); bitter water (Ex 15:23); food in general (Prov 27:7), which, though bitter, is palatable to the hungry (cf. Isa 5:20

Of special interest in the literal category is the phrase “water of bitterness” in Num 5:18–19, 23–24, 27. Combined with dust and ink, and hence decidedly unhygienic, it was used in an instance of investigation to determine whether a husband’s jealous suspicions of his wife’s unfaithfulness were correct or not. The idea is, of course, that often consciousness of guilt will produce somatic symptoms, the principle behind our modern lie detector testing of suspected criminals. This investigation is sometimes called trial by ordeal, but that is not quite accurate. The trial by ordeal, used in antiquity and up to the Middle Ages, required the accused to undergo obvious physical danger like walking through fire or being thrown bound into the river. The person who was unharmed was presumed innocent. Trial by ordeal was common in Assyria, but the OT used rather the more sensible rules of evidence we are accustomed to. The “water of bitterness” is indeed more like a lie detector test as suggested above. Only a woman who was innocent could normally undergo this solemn ceremony without breaking down. The further effect, apart from the unhygienic water, was caused by the providence of God punishing the guilty.

As we have indicated, the more frequent use of *mar* is a figurative one, to express the emotional response to a destructive, heart-crushing situation. Some of these situations are: (1) in the case of a woman, barrenness and sterility, I Sam 1:10; (2) an unfulfilled death-wish, Job 3:20; (3) family turmoil, Gen 27:34; (4) the exploitation and deprivation of minority peoples, Est 4:1; (5) personal suffering and hardship, Job 7:11; 10:1; Isa 38:15; (6) a hostile and precarious situation, Ps 64:3 [H 4]; grief over the apostasy of believers, Jer 2:19; (7) the Lord’s judgment on unbelievers. Zeph 1:14; (8) discontentment with lacklustre leadership, I Sam 22:2; (9) the thought of death, I Sam 15:32; (10) the crumbling of dreams and aspiration, Ezk 27:30, 31.

morrâ). Bitterness, grief. Used only in Prov 14:10. “Only the heart knows its own grief.” The form of the word in Hebrew is unusual, with a dagesh forte in the reš (mōrâ). Grief (in the sense of disappointment). Only in Gen 26:35, expressing Isaac’s chagrin at Esau’s decision to marry Hittite women

mārôr). Bitterness, bitter herb. According to Ex 12:8 and Num 9:11 the bitter herb was to be eaten on Passover with the passover meal. At first the bitter herbs signified the haste with which the meal was prepared (Ex 12:8) and later Jewish

tradition saw in the bitter herb a reminder of the bitter treatment to which the Jews were subjected in Egypt. Cf. Lam 3:15

mě'rôâ). Bitter thing, herb, poison(ous). In Job 20:14 the word pictorially) ֵאָא אֵא
.describes the viper's venom. Cf. also Deut 32:32; Job 13:26; 20:25

mě'rîrî). Bitter, bitterness. Deuteronomy 32:24. The reading in Job 3:5 is) אֵא אֵא
problematical. Instead of kaph plus the root mārār what we most likely have is the root
kāmar II, "to be dark," and hence the translation, "O 'Eclipse' terrify it (i.e., the day of my
".(birth

.[mě'rîrût). Bitterness. Only in Ezk 21:6 [H 11] אֵא אֵא

".memer). Bitterness, grief. Only Prov 17:25, parallel to ka'as "sorrow" אֵא אֵא

.mamrôr). Bitterness. Only in Job 9:18 אֵא אֵא

tamrûr). Bitterness. The best known verse in which this word appears is Jer) אֵא אֵא
.[31:15 (=Mt 2:18). Cf. also Jer 6:26 and Hos 12:14 [H 15

Bibliography: Dahood, M., "Qoheleth and Recent Discoveries," Bib 39:302–18, esp. pp. 308–10. Gordon, C. H., UT 19: no. 1556. Michaelis, W., "Pikros," in TDNT, VI, pp. 122–25. On *môr* "myrrh": Van Beek, G. W., "Frankincense and Myrrh," BA 23:70–95. — — — "Frankincense and Myrrh in Ancient South Arabia," JAOS 78:141–52.³

Strengthened - [*chazaq* /*khaw·zak*] v. A primitive root; TWOT 636; GK 2616; 290 occurrences; AV translates as "strong" 48 times, "repair" 47 times, "hold" 37 times, "strengthened" 28 times, "strengthen" 14 times, "harden" 13 times, "prevail" 10 times, "encourage" nine times, "take" nine times, "courage" eight times, "caught" five times, "stronger" five times, "hold" five times, and translated miscellaneously 52 times. 1 to strengthen, prevail, harden, be strong, become strong, be courageous, be firm, grow firm, be resolute, be sore. 1a (Qal). 1a1 to be strong, grow strong. 1a1a to prevail, prevail upon. 1a1b to be firm, be caught fast, be secure. 1a1c to press, be urgent. 1a1d to grow stout, grow rigid, grow hard (bad sense). 1a1e to be severe, be grievous. 1a2 to strengthen. 1b (Piel). 1b1 to make strong. 1b2 to restore to strength, give strength. 1b3 to strengthen, sustain, encourage. 1b4 to make strong, make bold, encourage. 1b5 to make firm. 1b6 to make rigid, make hard. 1c (Hiphil). 1c1 to make strong, strengthen. 1c2 to make firm. 1c3 to display strength. 1c4 to make severe. 1c5 to support. 1c6 to repair. 1c7 to prevail, prevail upon. 1c8 to have or take or keep hold of, retain, hold up, sustain, support. 1c9 to hold, contain. 1d (Hithpael). 1d1 to strengthen oneself. 1d2 to put forth strength, use one's strength. 1d3 to withstand. 1d4 to hold strongly with.⁴

(*hāzaq*) **be(come) strong, strengthen, prevail, harden, be courageous, be sore** (meaning be severe). (ASV and RSV similar.)

³ Hamilton, V. P. (1999). 1248 מָרַר. In R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer, Jr. & B. K. Waltke (Eds.), *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer, Jr. & B. K. Waltke, Ed.) (electronic ed.) (528–529). Chicago: Moody Press.

⁴ Strong, J. (2001). *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

Derivatives

636a הָזָזָה (*ḥāzāq*) **strong**.

636b הֶזְזָה (*ḥezqâ*) **strength** (once in the masc. form הֶזְזַעַק (*ḥēzeq*)).

636c הֶזְזַעַק (*ḥōzeq*) **strength**.

636d הֶזְזָה (*ḥōzqâ*) **force**.

The basic meaning of this word in the Qal stem is “be(come) strong.” In general, the Piel is causative of the Qal, “make strong,” “strengthen.” The Hiphil is “take hold of,” “seize,” while the Hithpael stem is “strengthen oneself,” hence, “take courage.” The use of *ḥāzaq* is similar to *’āmēš* and *’āzaz* except for the Hiphil which is more like the Qal of *’āḥaz*. This verb is used 291 times.

The Qal form, used eighty-two times, means to “be strong” or “become strong.” **In most cases it can be so translated, but often the variety of contexts encourages or necessitates a variety of renditions.** Most often the word is used for strength in battle (I Kgs 20:23). The admonition to be strong in combat may simply be an exhortation to be of good courage (and is so translated in II Sam 10:12).

In Gen 41:56 “strong” is used in the sense of “severe” (RSV; KJV and ASV “sore”) in reference to a famine. Similarly a battle may be “severe” (II Kgs 3:26). “To be stronger than” in context comes to mean “prevail,” as the word of David “prevailed” against Joab (II Sam 24:4), David against the Philistine (I Sam 17:50), and Jotham over the Ammonites (II Chr 27:5). When used of Pharaoh’s heart the meaning is “harden” (Ex 7:13f.).

[The hardening of Pharaoh’s heart is an old problem, one that is more theological than linguistic. The verb ḥāzaq is used twelve times in the narrative (Ex 4–14), mostly with the Lord as the agent, but four times in the passive or stative sense (“Pharaoh’s heart was hardened”). Also, the verb kāhēd is used five times, both with the Lord as the agent, with Pharaoh as the agent, and in the passive sense. The verb qāšâ is used once with the Lord as the agent. There is no discernible difference here in the usage of these words. It is clear that Pharaoh was an unrepentant sinner at the start (chapter 5). It is perhaps enough to point this out and remark that all of God’s hardening of an obstinate sinner was judicial and done that God’s deliverance should be the more memorable. And this, too, was in God’s plan (Ex 9:16), though it is also inexplicably true that Pharaoh sinned freely and was therefore terribly guilty (cf. Acts 4:25–28). r.l.h.]
Other resultant meanings include “be sure” (Deut 12:23), “be steadfast” (Josh 23:6, RSV), “catch hold” (II Sam 18:9, Absalom’s head in the oak; the causative of this is common usage in the Hiphil), “recover” (Isa 39:1, Hezekiah from sickness), “stout,” (of peoples’ words against God, Mal 3:13).

The Qal form of the verb is used twice (II Chr 28:20; Isa 28:22) in the Piel sense of “strengthen.”

The basic meaning of the Piel stem (used sixty-four times) is causative of the Qal, to “make strong,” “strengthen.” As with the Qal it is used often in the context of battle or combat. Often the object of the verb is the hands or the arms of an individual. “To strengthen the hands” may mean “to aid” (Ezra 1:6), or, more often, “to encourage” (I Sam 23:16). The person encouraged may be the object of the verb (II Sam 11:25; Isa 41:7). Strengthen may be translated simply “help” (II Chr 29:34).

The Piel is used sixteen times in the sense of “repair” (II Kgs 12:5f.). As in the Qal, when the object of the verb is the heart (ten times), the verb is translated “harden” (Ex 4:21f.). It is used twice in the sense of “fasten” (or “support”) as with nails (Isa 41:7; Jer 10:4). The Hiphil frequently (sixty-three times) means “take hold,” i.e. “grasp,” “seize.” It is used thirty-four times in Neh in the sense of “repair,” referring to the rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem. Other uses are varied: “prevail” (Dan 11:7), “support” (Lev 25:35), “receive” (II Chr 4:5), “retain” (Jud 7:8), “constrain” or “urge” (II Kgs 4:8), “confirm” (Dan 11:1), “strengthen” (II Sam 11:25), “aid”, i.e. “strengthen the hand” (Ezk 16:49), “join” (Neh 10:29), “hold” (Neh 5:16).

The Hithpael (used twenty-seven times) is translated in a variety of ways but is usually reflexive of some use of the Qal stem, i.e. “strengthen oneself,” “encourage oneself.”

ḥāzāq). Strong, mighty, hard. This adjective means “strong” in the sense of), “powerful” (including the power to resist). Of its fifty-seven occurrences, twenty-three refer to a “strong hand,” most often to God’s power, as in the Exodus. The word refers also to the strength of a man (Caleb, Josh 14:11), the wind (Ex 10:19; I Kgs 19:11), and a sword (figurative, Isa 27:1). Although the word often refers to God’s powerful hand it .(does not seem to be used as a substitute for deity (as ʿelyôn is
It is translated variously because it occurs in many different contexts. Applied to the blast of a trumpet the word is translated “loud” (Ex 19:16). When applied to sickness (I Kgs 17:17) or famine (I Kgs 18:2), it is appropriately translated “severe” (RSV; the ASV reads “sore”). The KJV also refers to “sore war” (I Sam 14:52), but translates a similar phrase “hottest battle” (II Sam 11:15). The RSV uses “hard(est) fighting” in both references.

When referring the face, forehead, or heart ḥāzāq implies an unyielding stubbornness or strong resistance (Ezk 2:4; 3:7–8, variously translated: “stiffhearted,” “stubborn,” “impudent,” etc.). It is also used as a substantive, “mighty one,” “strong one” (Ezk 34:16; Job 5:15).

ḥeqqâ). Strength, strengthen self, strong, was strong. (ASV and RSV) ḥ - similar.) A noun, used four times meaning “strength,” but translated as a verb in some .contexts

ḥozeq). Strength. (ASV and RSV the same.) The noun, used five times, means), “.strength,” always in the sense of “military prowess

(“.ḥozqâ). Force, mightily, repair, sharply. (ASV similar, but RSV “violently) ḥ -

⁵ Weber, C. P. (1999). 636 קַרְטָּ. In R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer, Jr. & B. K. Waltke (Eds.), *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer, Jr. & B. K. Waltke, Ed.) (electronic ed.) (276–277). Chicago: Moody Press.