

CHAPTER 8

SELF-PITYING DAVID

In the last chapter we learned how King Saul chased David week after week, month after month, seeking to kill him. David had to live the life of a fugitive. Sometimes he had to hide in caves and other hiding places. It was a difficult way to live.

It's one thing to be a fugitive and it's another thing to be an innocent fugitive! David had done nothing wrong. He was not guilty of any crime (see 1 Samuel 26:18). It would have been quite different if David had murdered the king's own son or stolen the king's gold, but David was innocent. He was being chased "without a cause."

So what did David do? Often when David was chased by King Saul he did the right thing. He trusted the LORD and kept His eyes on His God. We learn of David's wonderful trust in God as we read many of the Psalms which he wrote. But there was one occasion when David did the wrong thing! He took his eyes off the Lord and began feeling sorry for himself: "And David said in his heart, I shall now _____ one day by the hand of Saul: there is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines." (see 1 Samuel 27:1). David was all concerned about himself and so he decided to have his own "PITY PARTY." He refused to believe that the God who had taken care of him in the past would continue to take care of him in the future. His pity party lasted for a long time and resulted in much trouble for David, but finally he got his eyes back on the Lord (see 1 Samuel 30:6).

David is not unlike us. There are many times when we do just what David did. There are times when we get our eyes off the Lord and we start feeling sorry for ourselves. This is called SELF-PITY and this is what we want to study in this chapter.

What Is Self-Pity?

The word "PITY" means "to have compassion, to feel sorrow, to feel for someone, to be concerned, to be sympathetic (to put yourself in someone's shoes and feel with them and suffer with them)." PITY is something that is good and something that God wants us to have. God wants us to "suffer" with another person and to feel with them out of compassion and sorrow and deep concern.

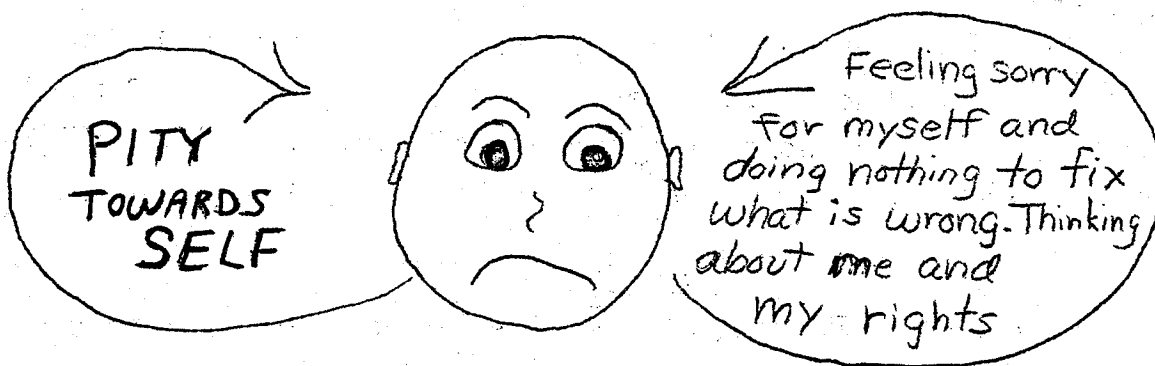
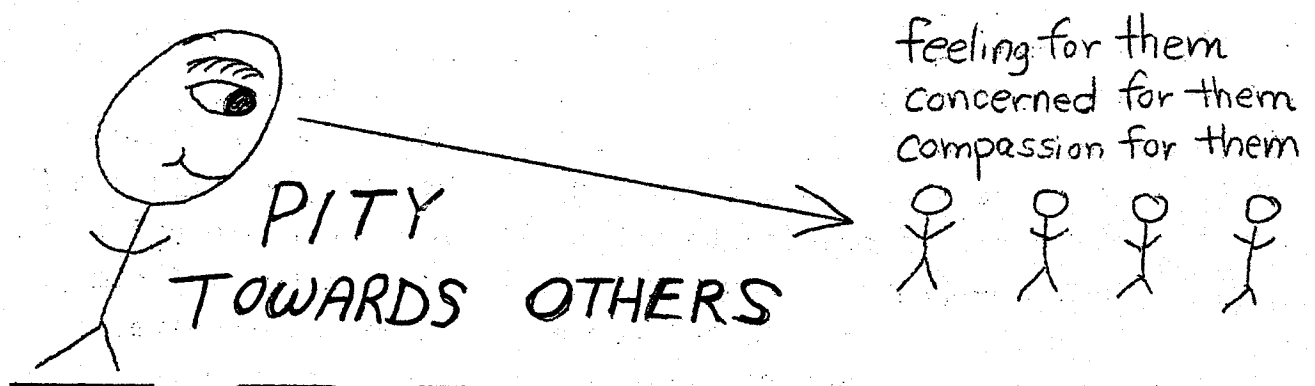
God even commands the believer to have PITY: "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having _____ one of another, love as brethren, be _____, be courteous" (1 Peter 3:8).

Our God is a God of pity and compassion. He is a God of **MERCY** and He is a God of **C** _____ (Romans 9:15). When the Lord Jesus saw the crowds of people, what was He moved with (Matthew 9:36)? _____

We have a Saviour who feels with us and who sympathizes with us and who knows what we go through. We have a High Priest (the Lord Jesus) who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities and weaknesses (Hebrews 4:15). There is a God in heaven who pities man on earth.

The Wrong Kind of Pity

Pity is something that is very good. Pity is a God-given emotion. But when pity is turned toward **SELF**, then becomes ugly and sinful and destructive:



Self-pity is taking that compassion and pity and concern and turning it the wrong way (toward **SELF**). Pity should reach out towards **others**. Self-pity does not reach out in a healthy way at all. The believer who indulges in self-pity is complaining about what God has allowed to come into his (or her) life.

Fret Not

The Bible does not use the word "SELF-PITY" but there is a word in the Bible that carries this idea. It is the word "FRET." The **SELF-PITYING PERSON** is the person who **FRETS**.

Consider Psalm 37:1--" _____ not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity." The word "FRET" means "to be angry, to burn up with passion, to feel sorry for oneself (SELF-PITY) to the point of being very upset and bent out of shape." The word is also found in Psalm 37:7-8: " _____ not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way" (verse 7). The person who FRETs is the person who gets all heated up and burned up and irritated and disturbed. This person gets all agitated and disturbed (like the movement of a wash machine).

In Psalm 37:1 there are two things that God tells us not to do:

- 1) Don't F _____ 2) Don't be _____

These two words carry similar ideas:

TO FRET	TO ENVY
"to burn up with passion"	"to burn up with jealousy" (feeling sorry for oneself because of another's advantage or prosperity)

The Right Kind of Pity

The right kind of pity and sorrow is that which will seek to **solve** and **fix** my own problems and reach out to the **ills** and **aches** of others. There is a right kind of pity and sorrow and there is a wrong kind of pity and sorrow.

In 2 Corinthians 7:9-10 we read about two kinds of sorrow. Which is the healthy kind of sorrow? Which is the unhealthy kind of sorrow? The right kind of sorrow should produce something that will make me a better person! It should help me to solve my problems. It should produce a true repentance (a genuine change of mind and change of heart that will lead to a change of life). The wrong kind of sorrow (the sorrow of the world) only produces _____ (2 Cor. 7:10). Read Matthew 27:3-5. Did Judas have sorrow? _____ Did he have the right kind of sorrow? _____ Did he really fix his problem? _____ Did he really turn to the Saviour? _____ He felt sorry for himself to the point where he ended his life! **THE SORROW OF THE WORLD WORKETH DEATH!**

In the last chapter we learned about the sorrow of King Saul after David had spared his life. Read 1 Samuel 26:21. Was Saul's sorrow a "godly sorrow"? _____ Was Saul sorry enough to change his ways? _____ Did Saul do anything to solve his problem of envy and hatred towards David? _____ Did Saul's sorrow lead to repentance or to death? _____

The Prosperity of the Wicked

Let's return to Psalm 37. A person is not to fret because of the prosperity of the wicked (verses 1 and 7).

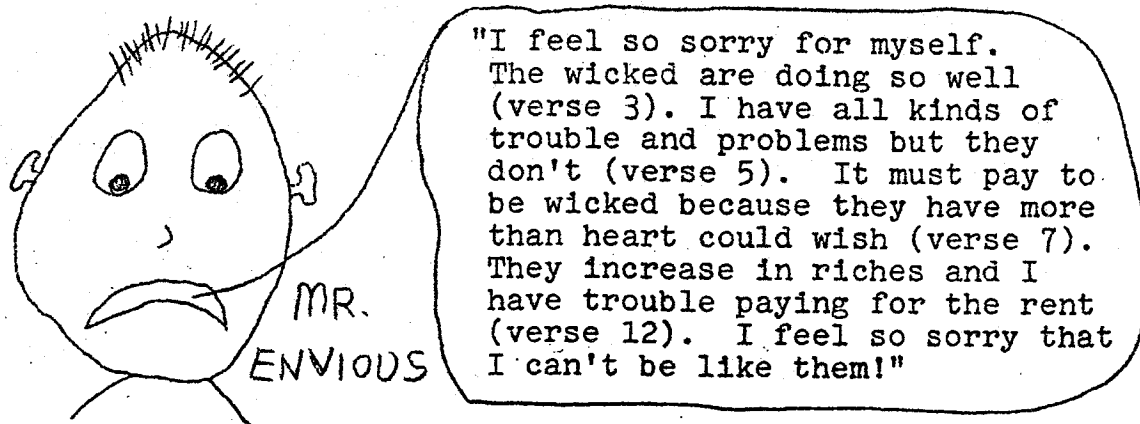


What is one thing that Mr. Fret should realize about his neighbor (Psalm 37:2)? _____ Instead of
 FRETTING, what are four things that Mr. Fret should do (see Psalm 37:3,4,5,7)?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Should Mr. Fret really feel sorry for himself (Psalm 37:9)? _____ Who should Mr. Fret really feel sorry for (Psalm 37:10,13,17,20)? _____

In Psalm 73 we learn about another man:



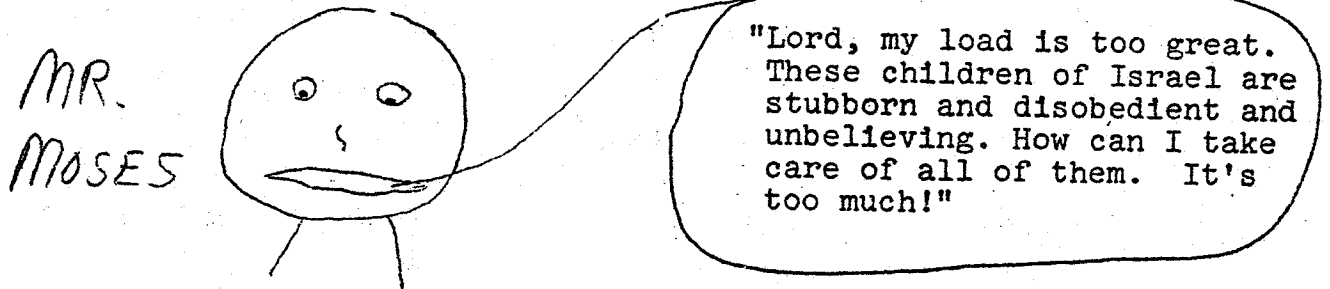
Mr. Envious was all troubled and bitter and burned up as he thought about how well the wicked were doing and how poorly he was doing! He was all wrapped up in self: "Why can't I have it as good as them? Why do they have to be better off than me? Mr. Envious was having quite a PITY-PARTY! But then something happened that brought this pity-party to an end:

"Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their _____" (Psalm 73:17--"end" means "that which shall happen to them after")

Suddenly Mr. Envious saw these people from God's point of view! He saw where they were headed! And that changed the whole thing. Instead of feeling sorry for himself he began to feel sorry for the wicked. Why did he feel sorry for the wicked (Psalm 73:18-19)?

Moses

Godly men can fall into self-pity. This is what happened to David as we have already seen. This also happened to Moses in Numbers chapter 11. You can read about his PITY-PARTY in verses 10-15.



Moses was complaining to God. He lost sight of God and saw only the load and the problems. Did Moses pray for God's solution to the problem or did he just air the problem?

_____ His pity-party even reached the point where he said "KILL _____" (verse 15). We must remember that God will have no part in our pity-parties!

What About My Rights?

Self-pity focuses in on my personal rights. Self-pity is when I think about myself and the rights that I think I should have:

"I HAVE A RIGHT TO HEALTH!"	(and I feel sorry for myself that I'm sick today)
"I HAVE A RIGHT TO COMPANIONSHIP"	(and I feel sorry for myself that my friends are not more friendly)
"I HAVE A RIGHT TO HAPPINESS"	(and I feel sorry for myself that I'm so sad so often)
"I HAVE A RIGHT TO BE APPRECIATED FOR THE WORK I DO"	(and I feel sad that no one seemed to notice)

Can you think of other "RIGHTS" that we often feel we have?

What should we do with all of these rights that we have? In Luke 9:23 Jesus said that the person who comes after Him must "DENY _____" (say "NO" to self and say "NO" to his personal rights). Read Luke 9:24. If you want true rights then you must lose your rights. If you insist on claiming your rights then you will lose them. If you lose your rights you will gain them. We need to realize this: "GOD HAS EVERY RIGHT OVER ME AND I MUST LET HIM DO WHATEVER, HOWEVER AND WHENEVER!" He knows what is best for me!

What happens when **what I want** overrides and is more important to me than what God wants. What happens when I choose my rights over God and reject what God wants for me? **IF I FEEL THAT WHAT GOD SAYS AND WHAT GOD WANTS INTERFERES WITH MY RIGHTS** (what I want and what I choose), **THEN I AM IN TROUBLE!** I am going to have a continual problem with self-pity! And self-pity that is not dealt with will always lead downhill to deeper and deeper sin (anger, envy, depression, fear and worry). Worry is feeling sorry for myself **in advance** (ahead of time)!

God's answer to self-pity is found in Philippians 4:6! Is this what David did (1 Samuel 30:6)?
 _____ Are you doing this? Should you be doing this?

