

MESSAGE NOTES

VALLEY OF VISION

Part 6: Caving In

1 Samuel 21-22; Psalm 142

August 25/26, 2018

Pastor Daniel Hahn

- *Why, O Lord, do You stand far off? Why do You hide Yourself in times of trouble?*— Psalm 10:1
- *Why have You forsaken me? Why are You so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish?*
— Psalm 22:1
- *Why have You forgotten me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?*
— Psalm 42:9
- *Why do You hide Your face and forget our misery and oppression?*— Psalm 44:24
- *Why do You hold back Your hand, Your right hand?*— Psalm 74:11
- *Why, Lord, do You reject me and hide Your face from me?*— Psalm 88:14

How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me? — Psalm 13:1-2

Taking a crazy chance

Escaping to Adullam

What David teaches us from inside a cave – Psalm 142:

1. He expresses his feelings about the situation (Psalm 142:1-2).
2. He affirms his ultimate belief that God knows and cares (142:3).

How terrifying it is to face my naked and needy self—the self that longs for love and knows it can do nothing to manipulate the universe into providing the only kind of love I really need. The crux of the problem is that I cannot feel the love of God because I do not dare to accept it unconditionally. To know that I am loved, I must accept the frightening helplessness and vulnerability that is my true state. This is always terrifying. This is the only knowing of love that is strong enough to cast out fear. And this is the only knowing of love that is capable of offering us the radical transformation we need. Mere belief is simply not strong enough to do the job. — David Benner, Surrender to Love

3. He moves the attention from his problems to God's provisions (142:5).

Midway in our life's journey, I went astray from the straight road and woke to find myself alone in a dark wood. How shall I say what wood that was! I never saw so drear, so rank, so arduous a wilderness! Its very memory gives a shape to fear. Death could scarce be more bitter than that place! But since it came to good, I will recount all that I found revealed there by God's grace.
— Dante, Inferno

4. He re-calculates his future hope in the Lord despite current challenges (142:7).

It is good that we sometimes have griefs and adversities for they drive a man to behold himself and to see that he is here but as in exile, and to learn thereby that he ought not put his trust in any worldly thing ... Keep yourself as a pilgrim and a stranger here in this world, as one to whom the world's business counts but little. Keep your heart free, and always lift it up to God, for you have here no city long abiding. — Thomas à Kempis, The Imitation of Christ

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. Since the whole episode of killing Goliath, what are some of the major losses David has experienced?
2. Now he's running from Saul and tries to create an alliance with Achish, King of Gath (1 Samuel 21:10). Why would this have been so attractive to David? Why would it have been a disaster?
3. What sort of things in our own lives can present us with the temptation to make compromises even though we know they go against God's best directions?
4. David escapes and goes to a cave out in the wilderness. In your group, read over Psalm 142, written during this time. Why is David so discouraged?
5. What situations in your own life right now make you feel overwhelmed or discouraged? How have you dealt with that? Why do you think God gave us prayer as a way of dealing with our stress? How does it help?
6. Take some time to read over and discuss the implications of Philippians 4:4-8.
7. Ultimately, David comes to affirm what He knows is true. What truths do you recall to mind when you're under stress?
8. God sends some men to David in the cave. While they too are discouraged, how might God be providing for David through these men?
9. How have you seen God meet you in unique ways when your own life has been hard?
10. What is one thing God may be trying to impress on you through these stories and through Psalm 142?