

Encouragement

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Good Morning Friend,

Have you ever felt you were "in the pits"? David, the Psalmist, had such feelings. One such case is recorded in Psalm 40:1-3 . . . *I waited patiently for the Lord; He turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; He set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear and put their trust in the Lord.*

David vividly described his pit as a slimy pit with mud and mire. Job, too, knew about pits. He wrote about a slimy pit in Job 9:31. In Job 33:22 he wrote about a soul pit. Whether the pit was literal and physical or spiritual and emotional, it was devastatingly miserable. Our pits are often uncomfortable . . . sometimes almost unbearable.

In Psalm 40, David said that *God turned to him, and heard him, and lifted him out of the pit.* Further, notice that God's intervention included the following:

1. God gave him a **PLACE TO STAND**. David says, *God set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.* He was no longer standing on sinking sand. Nor was he standing on rumbling ground. He was standing on a rock . . . *a firm place.* Repeatedly in the Bible, God is called the Rock. When Paul in I Corinthians 10:4 mentioned the usage of the Rock in the Old Testament, he clearly said that *Rock was Christ.* In Matthew 7, Jesus tells the parable of the rock and sand. He taught that when storms come into our lives, we will stand or fall depending on the foundation on which we are built. The hymnist rightly states . . . *On Christ the solid Rock I stand; all other ground is sinking sand.*
2. God gave him a **SONG TO SING**. *He says, God put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God.* The new song was a hymn. It was a *hymn of praise.* It was a hymn of praise to God. Even in tough times, there was a song to sing. A few hundred years later, Paul and Silas, while in prison, sang a hymn at midnight. Listen to Acts 16:25, *Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening.* And now a few hundred years later yet, John Peterson, Bill Gaither, and Andraé Crouch write songs of praise for us to sing when we are going through tough times.
3. God gave him a **STORY TO TELL**. As David lived through the pit experience, he was aware that people were watching him and were responding to what they saw. It says, *many saw, feared, and put their trust in God.* He is saying that as people observed him, they were in awe. And amazingly . . . they

put their trust in God. People saw David's pit **but they also saw what God did**, and their response was truly awesome. People turned to the Lord.

Each of us, as we travel through tough times, also have a story to tell. The story is not about us, but about HIM . . . about His sufficiency, His trustworthiness, and His presence. As others see us and hear our stories, some of them will turn to the Lord. What a powerful reality.

That was true as people heard David's story. It is still true as they hear the stories of Corrie ten Boom, Dave Dravecky, Tommy John, Joni Eareckson Tada, and others. I have seen the same response as I share the story of my accident and God's intervention.

And what about you? In your tough times, expect that God will be at work. Like David, you will see that God will give you a **Place to Stand**, a **Song to Sing**, and a **Story to Tell**. People will be watching and some of them will put their trust in the Lord.

Betsy ten Boom, while still in her prison cell, wrote these words about her pit . . . *There is no pit so deep but God's love is deeper yet.* Remember those words. You will never be alone in your pit. He will be there with you.

Be encouraged,

Lareau Lindquist