

Is God Your Therapist?

‘When the new patient was settled comfortably on the couch, the psychiatrist began his therapy session. “I’m not aware of your problem”, the doctor said, “so perhaps you should start at the very beginning”. “Of course”, replied the patient. “In the beginning, I created the heavens and the earth. ...”’

From this perspective, God could conceivably be the neediest psychiatric patient of all time! Why? Because of the utter mess the very people He perfectly created have made of His equally perfect creation! Rejecting Him at nearly every turn, despite His bending over backwards to bless them, fulfill their every need, giving them clear guidance on how to live life beautifully and successfully, despite all this, the very people He chose out of all the peoples of the earth to be the very apple of His eye, before turning their back on Him, poked His eye! Would that not turn anyone into a psychiatric patient with no hope of recovery? Post traumatic stress disorder would be the order of the day! Right?

Well, that would all be true if God were human. But, praise God, *thank* God, God is God and we’re not! Turns out, we’re the psychiatric patients who need to be in Dr. Jesus’ office, lying on His couch, confessing to Him all of our sins, starting at the beginning!! For Lord Jesus is the healer of our every ill. In Matthew 14

we read that at Gennesaret, Lord Jesus healed everyone who came and touched Him. Likewise, He will work His power in our lives in the ways that are absolutely perfect. He will make us perfect, just as He is. This often entails things we don't want, which make no sense at all to our limited, imperfect understanding. Sometimes, we seemingly suffer for no reason. It often seems the wicked get away with murder and mayhem. But their comeuppance will come to them at the absolutely perfect time. Those they've harmed will witness it and be completely satisfied. For as God has unequivocally stated, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay" in Deuteronomy 32:35 and Romans 12:19. As much as we might want revenge, it's guaranteed that when God repays, it will be vastly more terrifying, appropriate and relevant to the lawbreaker!

In today's psalm, David experienced in his life extreme highs and excruciating depths. The youngest of seven surviving sons, practically the "runt of the litter", not the tallest, certainly not the handsomest, nevertheless God knew what was in David's heart, and chose him out of all the people to be king to succeed Saul, establish an everlasting dynasty carried on and continuously increased and expanded without end by a single, glorious-beyond-description, descendant Who would be revealed to be the very Son of God and Man, Christ Jesus the Lord, the Messiah.

The Lord God chose David because he was a "man after God's Own heart" (Acts 13:22). He was a man like we all are, but particularly devoted to God, perfectly suited to be king once

molded by the Spirit of God. Though he majorly sinned one time, worse than most of us, with Bathsheba, David had to live with the consequences of his sin for the rest of his life. The ill-conceived, bastard son died shortly after birth. And David's family was plagued with violence for the rest of his life. Can you imagine dealing with a son trying to usurp your throne, and kill you in the process? Your own son trying to kill you! Disfunctional family!

Despite it all, David lived his life in God's presence. So much so that he was what we now call a "psalmist", one who not only composes worship music and songs, but performs them in public and by one's self. While in worship playing the harp and singing, David was given visions of God and Heaven, of the future, and understanding of the spiritual realms. This is no different today with modern day psalmists and prophets. Reread the awesome words that David used to describe the indescribable God and His holiness and actions. Do not make the mistake in thinking that these words and phrases are simply metaphorical, poetic portrayals of God. They are literal! But neither do they encompass the whole of what David saw and what God is. For words will never be adequate to describe the Infinite God.

David was first and foremost a worshipper. Indeed over half of the psalms in the Book of Psalms are from his pen. The power of music, sacred music, to reorient our hearts and minds to God and His heavenly places, is extraordinary and can not be overestimated. Do you listen to hymns, or modern Christian worship

music? You should put on a CD or stream Christian worship music and let it play on. It's guaranteed to create a worshipful, peaceful atmosphere that puts your whole being in a receptive state that welcomes Holy Spirit to come and allows Lord Jesus, your Everlasting Friend, to minister to your soul. In such times, He will heal us of our worries, cares and concerns, putting them in proper perspective, revealing to us that He really does have everything in our lives under control. If we but let Him. This is something no earthly therapist could possibly hope to achieve. For what is impossible with man is absolutely possible with God.

When Joram began his reign as king over Israel, the northern kingdom, note he was a younger son of wicked king Ahab. For the older son, Ahaziah, we read last week, had suffered an ignominious end by falling to his death through a latticework at the palace after less than two years on the throne. So a second son of Ahab is now reigning. Joram was another wicked king, but not as nearly as bad as his father.

King Mesha of Moab, a vassal king to Israel, took the opportunity of this seeming instability and distraction within Samaria, Israel's capital, to rebel against Israeli rule. Mesha no longer wanted to continue as a protectorate of Israel, the "privilege" to which his country had to pay 100,000 sheep and the wool of 100,000 rams annually. Nice arrangement for Israel, but hard for the Moabites to bear year after year. Point of context: remember that Ruth was from Moab, the descendants of Abraham's nephew, Lot,

and after Ruth's marriage to Boaz of the tribe of Judah, she became an ancestor of King David. Now some 120 years later, vassal King Mesha rebelled. King Joram could not take this lying down. At the very least, he would lose all that income from the sheep and wool from Moab. So, he called upon his brother kingdom of Judah, the southern kingdom, whose king was Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat quickly agreed to join him in an attack upon Moab to put down the revolt. The king of Edom also joined the coalition, obviously to both curry some long-term favor with Israel and Judah, and possibly gain some plunder and booty from the Moabites, once they were defeated.

Well, the coalition armies assembled and marched from within Edom's wilderness northern territory bordering Moab. But on the way, they found no water for the troops and horses. Unbefitting for a meticulously planned military operation, in the face of impending dehydration and death, the kings panicked! How painfully obvious that they had neither sought the Lord's blessing nor His direction in all of this. Well, in this instance, better late than never, they sought out a prophet of God who could tell them what God would have them do. Elisha "just happened" to be in the area. The company of kings went to him. Elisha retorts that they should be consulting the remaining pagan prophets that former King Ahab and Queen Jezebel had so lavishly fed and housed in the royal palaces. Joram, king of Israel, insists that the Lord had called them all to this mission, implying that they could

only survive with a word from the true God. Elisha relents, saying that it's only because he, and God, still has any respect left for Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, that he will seek the Lord for a word.

Elisha calls for a harpist to play. A musician is found. After the music begins, Holy Spirit comes in power upon Elisha, and he prophesies about the miraculous provision of water, and total victory over Moab. Well, starting the very next day, everything came to pass exactly as Elisha had prophesied. Except, when Mesha, in the face of defeat and death, sacrificed his own son and crown prince as a burnt offering. This act of sacrificing the heir to Moab's throne signified Mesha's defeat, and submission to the allied forces. However, Israel's acceptance of Mesha's pagan, unclean, act of sacrificing a first born, his own human son, underscored their deficient, faulty fealty to their own God, the One and Only Living God, which left them open to God's great wrath upon them. Though they had defeated Moab as Elisha prophesied, God's wrath caused them to leave Mesha's capital city intact and return to their own lands. Thus Moab continued to exist for the next two centuries before completely disintegrating and fading from history, absorbed into the Assyrian Empire.

Was God Israel's therapist then? Absolutely not. For we never approach God for His help and advice to succeed in our own plans and agendas. He *is* our therapist when we approach Him to learn of *His* plans and agendas for our lives. Since God is your ultimate therapist, are you seeking Him for the right reasons?

