



## The God Who Strengthens

Can you imagine having the Lord God Almighty as King? What would that look like? What are the implications of having that type of relationship?

We live in a cultural structure that has been stripped of the throne. A king back in Biblical times was far more than a strong leader.

*“At that time, there was a real understanding of a King. For us we don’t know what it means to have a king and a kingdom. We live in a world of fragmentation where the majority of the people don’t appreciate or care about the people or person who is running things. The king was the people, meaning that all the people were apart of the king and the king loved the people with his whole heart, he would do anything for them. He wasn’t just a politician but he was a warrior, a general on the front line, he would die for his people. A singer, writer, a poet-a real person.”* -Matisyahu

In 1 Samuel we read the sad story of the Israelites begging Samuel to appoint to them a king. Up until then, it was the Lord Himself who led them, who ruled over them, fought for them, delivered them.

*But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, “Give us a king to judge us.” So Samuel prayed to the Lord. And the Lord said to Samuel, “Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them.”* 1 Samuel 8:6,7

This was the pivotal moment when the Lord ceased to be enough and thus ceased to be their strength as a nation. One nation, one people under God was the recipe for prosperity. We were designed to be under the rule and reign of God together as one people. There is strength in community with God and with one another.

Psalms 79 and 80 were written under major duress. A plea for restoration of a people, freedom from the circumstances that were oppressing and suffocating the people.

*Help us, O God of our salvation, For the glory of Your name; And deliver us, and provide atonement for our sins, For Your name’s sake!* Psalms 79:9

When we step out from under the rule of the Lord, who is then in control? When we humbly submit to the rule and reign of our God, strength comes! Perspective shifts and we see that our situation or hardship is not the catastrophe that we may have once thought, but a great opportunity to mature and grow in our walks with God.

We all have circumstances that are difficult and have all experienced this pandemic and hardship. When we get our eyes off our immediate surrounding and cast ALL our cares upon Him who sits on the Throne, we will be comforted. Anxiety will flee, fear will be subdued and His peace and perspective will be a great strength under our feet and wind in our sails.

Living on His strength as a humbled and surrendered people is the only way to overcome what we will face as a Church. We are not meant or designed to fight our battles independent of one another, but rather to share with one another’s burdens and seek Him together for that corporate power to continue to move forward and see His kingdom thrive.

The Israelites were called to be set apart and their life was to look different than the other nations. The Church is no different. We are called to be set apart and our life is to look different than other people. We have a King who reigns from His Throne. We have a King who has defeated death. We have a King who desires to be one with His people and for His people to be one with Him.

Do we know this church? Do we have the faith to believe and allow that truth to penetrate our hearts and minds and souls and beings? To live any other way is to live beneath the heavenly standard of our purpose and design. We will not flourish or partake in the promise of overcoming if we will not humble ourselves one to another, and submit ultimately to the authority the Lord has upon us, His people!

*“So we, Your people and sheep of Your pasture, Will give You thanks forever; We will show forth Your praise to all generations.”* Psalms 79:13

## **DISCUSSION**

- How does your life reflect the reality of living under a King? Who dictates how your life will look?
- What steps can you take to let go of the reigns and let Him reign?
- In what areas of your life do you need His strength?
- How can you invite others into that need and be strengthened in community?

## **POSTURING**

*“Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.”* James 5:16

Confession: (admit, acknowledge, reveal, make known)

- In light of our conversation, is there anything that the Lord is asking you to confess and be made known?

*“Praise the Lord! Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever!”* Ps 106:1

Thanksgiving: (a prayer expressing gratitude)

- Thank Him for all that He has promised and for His faithfulness upon your life.

## **EMPOWER**

*“God will strengthen you with His own great power so that you will not give up when troubles come, but you will be patient. And you will joyfully give thanks to the Father who has made you able to have a share in all that He has prepared for His people in the kingdom of light.”* Colossians 1:11,12

- Pray for each other for strength, strategy, wisdom etc.
- Listen in prayer for words of encouragement and edification.
- Spur each other on!

