

## *In God We Trust?*

*Now it's November! Our nation distorts and contorts in the politics of a presidential election amid a worldwide pandemic. A pervasive weariness covers nearly everyone's attitude affected by a changed life style that has arisen out of endless cancellations of cherished traditional events ranging from family gatherings to all types of music, theater, sporting and political events. All the while the country embroils in nearly universal, political tribalism over virtually every issue. On our nation's currency it says, "In God We Trust." During this tumultuous 2020 year with millions over the world either directly affected physically or fiscally by COVID-19 has there been a universal, genuine turning to God? A prayerful trust that whatever has happened or will happen to us individually or as a nation is regarded as part of His plan by believers, no matter how difficult the situations surrounding us. Current conditions from COVID-19 have become dire for the countless seemingly innocent whose jobs and businesses have been severely curtailed or outright eliminated.*

*I believe there is a tendency in human nature to regard present situations with their unique problems as having greater importance than those that affected previous generations. History relates that no generation has existed problem free, often quite the contrary, with horrendous national afflictions. Perhaps one could label our distorted concern due to the power of the "now," meaning "the here and now" overpowering a distant "then." Such a tendency often gives more credence to the old adage, those who deny history are destined to repeat it.*

*King David, thousands of years ago, often became engaged in truly complicated situations, some that physically threatened him. There was his father-in-law King Saul and many other challenging political and military operatives who constantly challenged him during his reign as king. Throughout these ordeals that at times seemed hopeless, David steadfastly put his trust in God. I feel effecting such a trust in God is beautifully, poignantly expressed in the majority of David's psalms. Such a trusting relationship with God, I am convinced, is crucially needed by all of us as a divine aid to successfully cope with our depression and disillusionment burgeoning within us during these personal and national wrenching times.*

*Before continuing, some definitions may be in order. I should add that in Hebrews, Chapter 11, "the faith chapter," lists a panoply of individuals down through biblical history who were exemplars of faith based action. Anyone of them relates their life story of both faith and trust. The "meaning frontiers" of both words, "faith" and "trust," merge into virtual indistinguishability allowing word specialists full latitude in ascertaining their respective meanings. But for our purpose, I have taken the noun meanings for each word from "The American Heritage College Thesaurus, First Edition. Faith defines the mental acceptance of the actuality of something whose absolute certainty will not fail. Trust is the absolute certainty that a person or thing will not fail. Additional definitions of each word emphasize that faith can be more related to a belief in God while trust seems more "thing" orientated like having trust in a person or object like a bridge that will far exceed its calibrated weight load threshold. Ultimately each word defines the other as its primary synonym.*

*So to avoid dwelling in this confusion of word meanings, I'm back to specifically highlight the example of King David's trust in God. I feel that David's life closely parallels our contemporary life as our lives often become involved in complex messes*

*that frankly spin out of control, beyond us. Just look at divorce rates, abortions, suicides and pervasive mental breakdowns. Children and just about everyone else are experiencing stressed out damage over the fact their lives are being lived without God's priceless influence as our Master Parent. David's active trust in God often seemed more like God assuming a parental role in getting David out of a "situation." Many psalms feature David asking for defeat of an enemy, or specifically that his illicit child not die because of his murder-indicted affair with Bathsheba. Such petitions almost position God to act as a spiritual mechanic to "fix" things. Yet in these prayers to God, David was acting "dead pan" honest in his praying to God. Not holding anything back in a total "reveal" of genuine repentance over each sin. And expressly for these reasons, God loved David as a man exhibiting genuine faith and trust despite him often acting more like the incorrigible child. David reels in his guilt after the prophet Nathan comes to him at God's direction exposing David's murderous intent of Uriah as expressed in Psalm 51 verses 3-5, 10-14 and Psalm 139. (Note: You can read the entire Uriah-Bathsheba story spanning 2 Samuel Chapters 11, 12.)*

Ps 51:3-5 For I know my crimes, my sin confronts me all the time. **4** Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil from your perspective; so that you are right in accusing me and justified in passing sentence. **5** True, I was born guilty, was a sinner from the moment my mother conceived me.

Ps 51:10-14 Create in me a clean heart, God; renew in me a resolute spirit. **11** Don't thrust me away from your presence, don't take your Ruach Kodesh (Holy Spirit) away from me. **12** Restore my joy in your salvation, and let a willing spirit uphold me. **13** Then I will teach the wicked your ways, and sinners will return to you. **14** Rescue me from the guilt of shedding blood, God, God of my salvation! Then my tongue will sing about your righteousness.

Ps 139 **1** ADONAI, you have probed me, and you know me. **2** You know when I sit and when I stand up, you discern my inclinations from afar, **3** you scrutinize my daily activities. You are so familiar with all my ways **4** that before I speak even a word, ADONAI, you know all about it already. **5** You have hemmed me in both behind and in front and laid your hand on me. **6** Such wonderful knowledge is beyond me, far too high for me to reach. **7** Where can I go to escape your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? **8** If I climb up to heaven, you are there; if I lie down in Sh'ol, you are there. **9** If I fly away with the wings of the dawn and land beyond the sea, **10** even there your hand would lead me, your right hand would hold me fast. **11** If I say, "Let darkness surround me, let the light around me be night," **12** even darkness like this is not too dark for you; rather, night is as clear as day, darkness and light are the same. **13** For you fashioned my inmost being, you knit me together in my mother's womb. **14** I thank you because I am awesomely made, wonderfully; your works are wonders -I know this very well. **15** My bones were not hidden from you when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. **16** Your eyes could see me as an embryo, but in your book all my days were already written; my days had been shaped before any of them existed. **17** God, how I prize your thoughts! How many of them there are! **18** If I count them, there are more than grains of sand; if I finish the count, I am still with you. **19** God, if only you would kill off the wicked! Men of blood, get away from me! **20** They invoke your name for their crafty schemes; yes, your enemies misuse it. **21** ADONAI, how I hate those who hate you! I feel such disgust with those who defy you! **22** I hate them with unlimited hatred! They have become my enemies too. **23** Examine me, God, and know my heart; test me, and know my thoughts. **24** See if there is in me any hurtful way, and lead me along the eternal way.

*David on countless occasions did not hesitate to petition, almost demand God to give him divine aid. We as part of God's family of believers have also been afforded the same right to call on God for aiding us in overcoming seemingly unsolvable difficulties in our lives. Why shouldn't we take such a priceless gift of divine aid!*

Psalm 22 verses 2, 4, 5, 10, 11

Ps 22: **2** My God, by day I call to you, but you don't answer; likewise at night, but I get no relief. **4** In you our ancestors put their trust; they trusted, and you rescued them. **5** They cried to you and escaped; they trusted in you and were not disappointed. **10** Since my birth I've been thrown on you; you are my God from my mother's womb. **11** Don't stay far from me, for trouble is near; and there is no one to help.

Psalm 18 verses 17-21 David's appreciation for being delivered from the power of all his enemies including the power of Saul.

Ps 18:17-21 **17** ADONAI rescued me from my powerful enemy, from those who hated me, for they were stronger than I. **18** They came against me on my day of disaster, but ADONAI was my support. **19** He brought me out to an open place; he rescued me, because he took pleasure in me. **20** ADONAI rewarded me for my uprightness, he repaid me because my hands were clean. **21** "For I have kept the ways of ADONAI, I have not done evil by leaving my God;

*The above are just a few verses extracted from hundreds written by David praising God. The fact that David poured out his heart to God tells me that many of us similarly stressed must also need to pour our hearts out to Him in humility and repentance becoming acceptable through obedience to Him. Friendship knows all sides of a person including all moods, all situations, yet remains true to the bond that accepts each other regardless of circumstances.*

*Listen as you read out loud this prayer of David, Psalm 86.*

Ps 86:1-16 Listen, ADONAI, and answer me, for I am poor and needy. **2** Preserve my life, for I am faithful; save your servant, who puts his trust in you because you are my God. **3** Take pity on me, Adonai, for I cry to you all day. **4** Fill your servant's heart with joy, for to you, Adonai, I lift my heart. **5** Adonai, you are kind and forgiving, full of grace toward all who call on you. **6** Listen, ADONAI, to my prayer; pay attention to my pleading cry. **7** On the day of my trouble I am calling on you, for you will answer me. **8** There is none like you among the gods, Adonai; no deeds compare with yours. **9** All the nations you have made will come and bow before you, Adonai; they will honor your name. **10** For you are great, and you do wonders; you alone are God. **11** ADONAI, teach me your way, so that I can live by your truth; make me single-hearted, so that I can fear your name. **12** I will thank you, Adonai my God, with my whole heart; and I will glorify your name forever. **13** For your grace toward me is so great! You have rescued me from the lowest part of Sh'ol. **14** God, arrogant men are rising against me, a gang of brutes is seeking my life, and to you they pay no attention. **15** But you, Adonai, are a merciful, compassionate God, slow to anger and rich in grace and truth. **16** Turn to me, and show me your favor; strengthen your servant, save your slave-girl's son. Give me a sign of your favor, so that those who hate me will see it and be ashamed, because you, ADONAI, have helped and comforted me.

*I have amplified the word "TRUST" with appropriate letter meanings: The first "T" could mean our thought of or thinking about God actively entering our lives, the "R" involves the righteous attitude we receive when we actually begin obeying His inner voice within*

*us, the “U,” the universal applicability of God’s laws in regulating our lives positively affecting everything we do. The “S” sanctification received through active, loving obedience to God the Father and Son on route to becoming a new creation. And the final “T” truth absolute of God’s Holy Spirit living within us in full contrast to the world’s hypocrisy, division and pervasive demonic influences.*

*After reviewing these samplings of David praising his loving friendship to God, it is massively evident that no human friendship could ever rise to such a totally idealized loving commitment! With God as a friend, we are truly never alone no matter what conditions we have faced or will have to face in this life. Thus we must trust, have faith that through sustained, loving obedience to His ways our life is purposed by God for our ultimate benefit, salvation. Please continue to think about that! Selah*

*All Scripture from Complete Jewish Bible unless otherwise noted.*

Proverb to ponder:

Proverbs 17:17: A friend shows his friendship at all times – it is for adversity that [such] a brother is born.

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