



Crises

CRISES AND CRISIS INTERVENTION

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(Zephaniah 3:14-17)



A friend once told about these experiences in a yearly family newsletter: That year, her father died. Two friends died of cancer and she knew of seven others who received a cancer diagnosis. She and her husband were in a head-on car crash. Her husband had kidney stone surgery. Two friends went to prison. Her brother was alcoholic and suicidal, but entered an AA program. Her brother-in-law left his wife and family due to cocaine abuse. To top it all, one day she was having lunch with a friend at a nearby ocean pier when, right in front of them, an elderly man in a wheelchair pitched himself over the rail into the ocean in an attempted suicide.

You're probably thinking, "How could anyone survive all that?" But she is surviving her year-long series of crises—with God's help.

By contrast, another friend's crisis threw him into a tailspin that lasted years. He was driving home from work when he came upon an accident between a car and a motorcycle. As he approached the downed motorcycle, a disturbing recognition washed over him. It was his 19-year-old son. Dead.

Our crises are probably not so severe; even so, they are still major events for us, and we hurt.

FACING CRISES

A crisis is a sudden upsetting event—sometimes foreseen, often not—that strikes people in a vulnerable place at a bad time. The English word is based on the Greek term *krinein*, which means "to decide." Crises are life-changing, in part, because decisions must be made that nearly always alter the course of life. The Chinese term for crisis is made of two symbols that denote both danger and opportunity. Crises are dangerous opportunities for new living.

Crises are experienced in a vast num-

ber of ways, depending on the person experiencing them. Generally however, *the crisis state* is an experience of acute stress, a discomfort that often involves high anxiety, mental confusion, sweating, gastric distress, elevated heart rate, depression, catastrophic thinking, hopelessness, fear, and apathy. People in crisis often behave in counterproductive ways—showing poor judgment, making rash decisions, abusing alcohol or drugs, driving dangerously, becoming easily angered, being too aggressive and argumentative, or being too passive and helpless.

The Outcomes of Crises

There are three possible outcomes to every crisis. Life eventually gets better, gets worse, or returns to the same level. Which outcome people experience has a lot to do with how they decide, act, and live through the crisis.

Often the difference between a good or bad outcome is whether people draw closer to God or push Him away. Many reject the Lord, blaming Him for the crisis. Or they grope for a spiritual anchor without finding it, because they are not disciplined in their relationship with God. On the other hand, a crisis can crush coldheartedness

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and shake people out of spiritual lethargy, perhaps making them amenable to a deep work of the Holy Spirit. The psalmist put it this way, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I may learn Your statutes" (Ps. 119:71).

Coping with Crises

We cannot avoid crises, so we would do well to let God work His wonders in us for good and glorious outcomes. There are also positive steps people can take to help them weather the crisis.

They should accept that they are in crisis and admit that it hurts. Denial doesn't help. They must expect that they will experience strong feelings of anger at God, guilt, self-blame, blame of others, bewilderment, apathy, desperation, and helplessness. Some people in crisis also struggle with deep misery, intense self-loathing or self-hatred, and suicidal feelings. These are not abnormal, and should not raise a major alarm unless they begin to dominate a person's life or one begins to cross the threshold of self-destructive behavior.

They should surround themselves with truly helpful people. Crisis helpers do not give unwanted advice and are not shocked by feelings and attitudes. They can handle anger toward God and even tears. They can empathize, yet remain hopeful of a good outcome. They know that working through a crisis takes time and that recovery involves many slips and falls. They know how to invite God into the mess, but do not spiritualize everything. Real helpers are there to honestly shoulder part of the burden and help others carry what would otherwise be a crushing grief.

Since crises come and go throughout life, it is especially important for people to develop a mature resilience, an increasing ability to cope with, learn from, and help others in the crises of life. Crisis requires

change. We should all learn to plan and prepare for change, becoming less and less *reactive*, and more and more *proactive* in living. We can get out of debt and salt away some money to alleviate some potential future crises. We can improve our health and carve out time to read, play, and enjoy life more effectively. We should have a plan for the major life transitions that we know we will face—marriage, having children, changing jobs or careers, children leaving home, mid-life transitions, old age and retirement, illnesses and surgeries, death in the family.

Finally, we can treasure these words: "Do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you . . . but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy" (1 Pet. 4:12, 13).

FURTHER MEDITATION:

Other passages to study about the issue of crises include:

- Deuteronomy 33:27
- Psalms 18:30; 34:19; 55:22
- Isaiah 43:2
- Habakkuk 3:17-19
- Romans 8:28
- 2 Corinthians 1:3-11; 4:7-10
- Hebrews 13:5
- 1 Peter 4:19

To Learn More: Turn to the key passage note on crises at Psalm 46:1 on page 717. See also the personality profile of David and Absalom on page 415.

² Therefore we will not fear,
 Even though the earth be removed,
 And though the mountains be carried
 into the midst of the sea;
*Though its waters roar and be troubled,
 Though the mountains shake with its
 swelling.*

Selah

⁴ *There is* a river whose streams shall
 make glad the city of God,
 The holy *place* of the tabernacle of the
 Most High.
 God *is* in the midst of her, she shall not
 be moved;
 God shall help her, just at the break of
 dawn.
 The nations raged, the kingdoms were
 moved;
 He uttered His voice, the earth melted.

⁷ The LORD of hosts *is* with us;
 The God of Jacob *is* our refuge. Selah

⁸ Come, behold the works of the LORD,
 Who has made desolations in the earth.
 He makes wars cease to the end of the
 earth;
 He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in
 two;
 He burns the chariot in the fire.

¹¹ Be still, and know that I am God;
 I will be exalted among the nations,
 I will be exalted in the earth!

¹¹ The LORD of hosts *is* with us;
 The God of Jacob *is* our refuge.

Selah

PSALM 47

PRAISE TO GOD, THE RULER OF THE EARTH

*To the Chief Musician. A Psalm
 of the sons of Korah.*

¹ Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples!
 Shout to God with the voice of triumph!
 For the LORD Most High *is* awesome;
 He *is* a great King over all the earth.

³ He will subdue the peoples under us,
 And the nations under our feet.

⁴ He will choose our inheritance for us,
 The excellence of Jacob whom He loves.
 Selah

⁵ God has gone up with a shout,
 The LORD with the sound of a trumpet.
 Sing praises to God, sing praises!

⁷ Sing praises to our King, sing praises!
 For God *is* the King of all the earth;
 Sing praises with understanding.

⁸ God reigns over the nations;
 God sits on His holy throne.
 The princes of the people have gathered
 together,

The people of the God of Abraham.
 For the shields of the earth *belong* to God;
 He is greatly exalted.

KEY PASSAGE



Crises

A MIGHTY FORTRESS

(46:1)

In ancient Israel, God told the people to set aside six cities of refuge to whom a person could run for safety in a crisis (see Num. 35:9-15). This psalm pictures God as a "refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." During any crisis, God is our refuge. Even when it seems as though the world is coming apart like mountains crumbling (Ps. 46:3), God's people need not be afraid. Like the protective walls of a city, God is our refuge, surrounding and protecting us. David faced many crises, and he knew to run to God for safety. To "be still" and know that He is God (Ps. 46:10) means to rest in Him, even as the crisis swirls around us. Knowing who God is helps us to remember that He is ultimately in control.

To Learn More: Turn to the article about crises on pages 1194, 1195. See also the personality profile of David and Absalom on page 415.

out! For if we flee away, they will not care about us; nor if half of us die, will they care about us. But *you are* worth ten thousand of us now. For you are now more help to us in the city."

⁴Then the king said to them, "Whatever seems best to you I will do." So the king stood beside the gate, and all the people went out by hundreds and by thousands. ⁵Now the king had commanded Joab, Abishai, and Ittai, saying, "Deal gently for my sake with the young man Absalom." And all the people heard when the king gave all the captains orders concerning Absalom.

⁶So the people went out into the field of battle against Israel. And the battle was in the

woods of Ephraim. ⁷The people of Israel were overthrown there before the servants of David, and a great slaughter of twenty thousand took place there that day. ⁸For the battle there was scattered over the face of the whole countryside, and the woods devoured more people that day than the sword devoured.

⁹Then Absalom met the servants of David. Absalom rode on a mule. The mule went under the thick boughs of a great terebinth tree, and his head caught in the terebinth; so he was left hanging between heaven and earth. And the mule which was under him went on.

¹⁰Now a certain man saw *it* and told Joab, and said, "I just saw Absalom hanging in a terebinth tree!"

PERSONALITY PROFILE



Crises

DAVID AND ABSALOM— A CRISIS IN THE MAKING

(2 SAMUEL 18:5-19)

Before he died, David had the crushing experience of watching at least three of his sons destroy their own lives. Two of them tried to replace their own father as king by force.

The third-born son, Absalom, attempted the first coup. He paid for his temporary success with his life. David loved Absalom deeply, but failed to discipline his son or give him wise direction. He stood by helplessly after Absalom killed his half brother Amnon and then fled the country. When he finally returned, Absalom suffered no consequences for his past behavior.

David's passivity allowed Absalom to shape their relationship. He bluffed his father into forgiving him. In fact, he began to lay the groundwork for taking over the throne. He used his considerable charm and "stole the hearts of the men of Israel" (2 Sam. 15:6).

Once he had gathered key allies and the support of the people, Absalom rebelled. David did not resist his son's revolution; instead, he fled Jerusalem. Eventually, however, the superior military strategy of David and his generals defeated Absalom's forces. Even then, David's intention was to spare his son. But Joab, David's chief of staff, killed the traitor.

Although the crisis for the kingdom was over, David mourned Absalom, a son whose undisciplined life had drifted from crisis to crisis. David remained silent when he should have intervened. Fear of losing his son clouded David's ability to see that his son was already lost. David's love was so full of fear that it unintentionally brought about the very thing David feared most.

Some crises come into our lives from situations beyond our control. In those situations, we trust in God, knowing that He is "a very present help in trouble" (Ps. 46:1). Some crises come from unwise choices that we make. In those cases, God is still a "very present help," but He may not take away the natural consequences of those choices. In a crisis, turn to God. Seek what He may want to teach you through it. Change what needs to change, then trust God for the rest.

To Learn More: Turn to the article about crises on pages 1194, 1195. See also the key passage note at Psalm 46:1 on page 717.

will. ²⁹If these men die naturally like all men, or if they are visited by the common fate of all men, *then* the LORD has not sent me. ³⁰But if the LORD creates a new thing, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that belongs to them, and they go down alive into the pit, then you will understand that these men have rejected the LORD.”

³¹Now it came to pass, as he finished speaking all these words, that the ground split apart under them, ³²and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and all the men with Korah, with all *their* goods. ³³So they and all those with them went down alive into the pit; the earth closed over them, and they perished from among the assembly. ³⁴Then all Israel who *were* around them fled at their cry, for they said, “Lest the earth swallow us up *also!*”

³⁵And a fire came out from the LORD and consumed the two hundred and fifty men who were offering incense.

³⁶Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ³⁷“Tell Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, to pick up the censers out of the blaze, for they are holy, and scatter the fire some distance away. ³⁸The censers of these men who sinned against their own souls, let them be made into hammered plates as a covering for the altar. Because they presented them before the LORD, therefore they are holy; and they shall be a sign to the children of Israel.” ³⁹So Eleazar the priest took the bronze censers, which those who were burned up had presented, and they were hammered out as a covering on the altar, ⁴⁰*to be* a memorial to the children of Israel that no outsider, who is not a descendant of Aaron, should come near to offer incense before the LORD, that he might not become like Korah and his companions, just as the LORD had said to him through Moses.

COMPLAINTS OF THE PEOPLE

⁴¹On the next day all the congregation of the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, saying, “You have killed the people of the LORD.” ⁴²Now it happened, when the congregation had gathered against Moses and Aaron, that they turned toward the tabernacle of meeting; and suddenly the cloud covered it, and the glory of the LORD appeared. ⁴³Then Moses and Aaron came before the tabernacle of meeting.

⁴⁴And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ⁴⁵“Get away from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment.”

And they fell on their faces.

⁴⁶So Moses said to Aaron, “Take a censer and put fire in it from the altar, put incense *on it*, and take it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them; for wrath has gone out from the LORD. The plague has begun.”

⁴⁷Then Aaron took *it* as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the assembly; and already the plague had begun among the people. So he put in the incense and made atonement for the people. ⁴⁸And he stood between the dead and the living; so the plague was stopped. ⁴⁹Now those who died in the plague were fourteen thousand seven hundred, besides those who died in the Korah incident. ⁵⁰So Aaron returned to Moses at the door of the tabernacle of meeting, for the plague had stopped.

THE BUDDING OF AARON'S ROD

17 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ²“Speak to the children of Israel, and get from them a rod from each father's house, all their leaders according to their fathers' houses—twelve rods. Write each man's name on his rod. ³And you shall write Aaron's name on the rod of Levi. For there shall be one rod



Go Directly to God (17:10, 11) When Aaron's rod miraculously “sprouted and put forth buds” (17:8), God was showing clearly that He had chosen Aaron to serve as Israel's high priest. The high priest served as the intermediary between the people and God. This important position foreshadowed Christ who is our great High Priest (Heb. 8:1–6; 9:11–22). Instead of offering sacrifices of animals, however, Christ offered Himself as the final sacrifice for sin. Because of Christ, believers can go directly to God for forgiveness and help. **Topic: Crises**

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PHILISTINE GIANTS DESTROYED

⁴Now it happened afterward that war broke out at Gezer with the Philistines, at which time Sibbechai the Hushathite killed Sippai,^a who was one of the sons of the giant. And they were subdued.

⁵Again there was war with the Philistines, and Elhanan the son of Jair^a killed Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver's beam.

⁶Yet again there was war at Gath, where there was a man of great stature, with twenty-four fingers and toes, six on each hand and six on each foot; and he also was born to the giant. ⁷So when he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimea,^a David's brother, killed him.

⁸These were born to the giant in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.

THE CENSUS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

21 Now Satan stood up against Israel, and moved David to number Israel.

²So David said to Joab and to the leaders of the people, "Go, number Israel from Beersheba to Dan, and bring the number of them to me that I may know it."

³And Joab answered, "May the LORD make His people a hundred times more than they are. But, my lord the king, are they not all my lord's servants? Why then does my lord require this thing? Why should he be a cause of guilt in Israel?"

⁴Nevertheless the king's word prevailed against Joab. Therefore Joab departed and went throughout all Israel and came to Jerusalem. ⁵Then Joab gave the sum of the number of the people to David. All Israel had one million one hundred thousand men who drew the

sword, and Judah had four hundred and seventy thousand men who drew the sword. ⁶But he did not count Levi and Benjamin among them, for the king's word was abominable to Joab.

⁷And God was displeased with this thing; therefore He struck Israel. ⁸So David said to God, "I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing; but now, I pray, take away the iniquity of Your servant, for I have done very foolishly."

⁹Then the LORD spoke to Gad, David's seer, saying, ¹⁰"Go and tell David, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "I offer you three things: choose one of them for yourself, that I may do it to you."'"

¹¹So Gad came to David and said to him. "Thus says the LORD: 'Choose for yourself. ¹²either three^a years of famine, or three months to be defeated by your foes with the sword of your enemies overtaking you, or else for three days the sword of the LORD—the plague in the land, with the angel^b of the LORD destroying throughout all the territory of Israel.' Now consider what answer I should take back to Him who sent me."

¹³And David said to Gad, "I am in great distress. Please let me fall into the hand of the LORD, for His mercies are very great; but do not let me fall into the hand of man."

¹⁴So the LORD sent a plague upon Israel, and seventy thousand men of Israel fell. ¹⁵And God sent an angel to Jerusalem to destroy it. As he^a was destroying, the LORD looked and relented of the disaster, and said to the angel who was destroying, "It is enough; now re-

^{20:4} ^aSpelled *Saph* in 2 Samuel 21:18

^{20:5} ^aSpelled *Jaare-Oregim* in 2 Samuel 21:19

^{20:7} ^aSpelled *Shimeah* in 2 Samuel 21:21 and

Shammah in 1 Samuel 16:9 ^{21:12} ^aOr *seven*

(compare 2 Samuel 24:13) ^bOr *Angel*, and so

elsewhere in this chapter ^{21:15} ^aOr *He*



SOUL NOTE

In His Hands (21:13) God dealt severely with David for his sin of numbering the people, and He gave him three choices of punishment. David's response was that he would rather "fall into the hand of the LORD" than into the hands of his enemies. Yet David still agonized because, either way, many people would pay for his sin. Even in the anguish of the moment, however, David realized, as we all must, that our lives are ultimately in God's hands. **Topic: Crises**

dants of Abraham Your friend forever? ⁸And they dwell in it, and have built You a sanctuary in it for Your name, saying, ⁹'If disaster comes upon us—sword, judgment, pestilence, or famine—we will stand before this temple and in Your presence (for Your name *is* in this temple), and cry out to You in our affliction, and You will hear and save.' ¹⁰And now, here are the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir—whom You would not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them and did not destroy them— ¹¹here they are, rewarding us by coming to throw us out of Your possession which You have given us to inherit. ¹²O our God, will You not judge them? For we have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes *are* upon You."

¹³Now all Judah, with their little ones, their wives, and their children, stood before the LORD.

¹⁴Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jehaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, in the midst of the assembly. ¹⁵And he said, "Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem, and you, King Jehoshaphat! Thus says the LORD to you: 'Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle *is* not yours, but God's.' ¹⁶Tomorrow go down against them. They will surely come up by the Ascent of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the brook before the Wilderness of Jeruel. ¹⁷You will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the LORD, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem!' Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, for the LORD *is* with you."

¹⁸And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the in-

habitants of Jerusalem bowed before the LORD, worshipping the LORD. ¹⁹Then the Levites of the children of the Kohathites and of the children of the Korahites stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel with voices loud and high.

²⁰So they rose early in the morning and went out into the Wilderness of Tekoa; and as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem: Believe in the LORD your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper." ²¹And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who should sing to the LORD, and who should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army and were saying:

"Praise the LORD,
For His mercy endures forever."^a

²²Now when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated. ²³For the people of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir to utterly kill and destroy *them*. And when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, they helped to destroy one another.

²⁴So when Judah came to a place overlooking the wilderness, they looked toward the multitude; and there *were* their dead bodies, fallen on the earth. No one had escaped.

²⁵When Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away their spoil, they found among them an abundance of valuables on the dead bodies,^a and precious jewelry, which they

20:21 ^aCompare Psalm 106:1 **20:25** ^aA few Hebrew manuscripts, Old Latin, and Vulgate read *garments*; Septuagint reads *armor*.

SOUL NOTE



A Desperate Call (20:20) Jehoshaphat faced a serious crisis when he was attacked by his enemies on all sides. In his greatest moment of desperation, he ordered the nation of Israel to worship the Lord and call upon Him for deliverance. He said, "Believe in the LORD your God, and you shall be established." We can call on God even in the greatest crises and challenges of life. Jehoshaphat knew that he was inadequate to win this battle without God's help, so he focused the nation's attention on the only One who really could deliver them, the Lord Himself. **Topic: Crises**

⁹So the king's scribes were called at that time, in the third month, which *is* the month of Sivan, on the twenty-third *day*; and it was written, according to all that Mordecai commanded, to the Jews, the satraps, the governors, and the princes of the provinces from India to Ethiopia, one hundred and twenty-seven provinces *in all*, to every province in its own script, to every people in their own language, and to the Jews in their own script and language. ¹⁰And he wrote in the name of King Ahasuerus, sealed *it* with the king's signet ring, and sent letters by couriers on horseback, riding on royal horses bred from swift steeds.^a

¹¹By these letters the king permitted the Jews who *were* in every city to gather together and protect their lives—to destroy, kill, and annihilate all the forces of any people or province that would assault them, *both* little children and women, and to plunder their possessions, ¹²on one day in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, on the thirteenth *day* of the twelfth month, which *is* the month of Adar.^a ¹³A copy of the document was to be issued as a decree in every province and published for all people, so that the Jews would be

ready on that day to avenge themselves on their enemies. ¹⁴The couriers who rode on royal horses went out, hastened and pressed on by the king's command. And the decree was issued in Shushan the citadel.

¹⁵So Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, with a great crown of gold and a garment of fine linen and purple; and the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad. ¹⁶The Jews had light and gladness, joy and honor. ¹⁷And in every province and city, wherever the king's command and decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a holiday. Then many of the people of the land became Jews, because fear of the Jews fell upon them.

THE JEWS DESTROY THEIR TORMENTORS

9 Now in the twelfth month, that *is*, the month of Adar, on the thirteenth day, *the time* came for the king's command and his decree to be executed. On the day that the enemies of the Jews had hoped to overpower them, the opposite occurred, in that the Jews

8:10 ^aLiterally *sons of the swift horses*

8:12 ^aSeptuagint adds the text of the letter here.

SOUL NOTE



Communication Is Key (8:3–8) Esther pled with her husband, the king, on behalf of the Jewish people, all the while knowing she had very little status even though she was the king's wife. Their marriage was very different from marriages today, but Esther's attitude provides an excellent example of marital communication. She never presumed upon the king; she approached him with respect and courtesy. We can show the same courtesy toward a spouse by listening intently and speaking with respect and courtesy. Respectful, honest communication is important to a happy marriage.

Topic: Marital Communication

SOUL NOTE



Crisis Intervention (8:11) At times we must take responsibility for our own protection and the protection of others. Esther prayed for God's guidance, and then risked her life on behalf of her people. The king's agreement still needed to have a new law to put it into practice. So Ahasuerus granted Mordecai the use of his signet ring to issue a new edict. Crisis was averted through the intervention of individuals who cared enough to get involved. We must trust in God's guidance and protection, but then we may have to work and take risks in order to intervene in a difficult situation.

Topic: Crises

- And envy slays a simple one.
 3 I have seen the foolish taking root,
 But suddenly I cursed his dwelling place.
 4 His sons are far from safety,
 They are crushed in the gate,
 And *there is* no deliverer.
 5 Because the hungry eat up his harvest,
 Taking it even from the thorns,^a
 And a snare snatches their substance.^b
 6 For affliction does not come from the
 dust,
 Nor does trouble spring from the
 ground;
 7 Yet man is born to trouble,
 As the sparks fly upward.
- 8 "But as for me, I would seek God,
 And to God I would commit my cause—
 9 Who does great things, and
 unsearchable,
 Marvelous things without number.
 10 He gives rain on the earth,
 And sends waters on the fields.
 11 He sets on high those who are lowly,
 And those who mourn are lifted to
 safety.
 12 He frustrates the devices of the crafty,
 So that their hands cannot carry out
 their plans.
 13 He catches the wise in their own
 craftiness,
 And the counsel of the cunning comes
 quickly upon them.
 14 They meet with darkness in the daytime,
 And grope at noontime as in the night.
 15 But He saves the needy from the sword,
 From the mouth of the mighty,
 And from their hand.
 16 So the poor have hope,
 And injustice shuts her mouth.
- 17 "Behold, happy *is* the man whom God
 corrects;
- Therefore do not despise the chastening
 of the Almighty.
 18 For He bruises, **but** He binds up;
 He wounds, but His hands make
 whole.
 19 He shall deliver you in six troubles,
 Yes, in seven no evil shall touch you.
 20 In famine He shall redeem you from
 death,
 And in war from the power of the
 sword.
 21 You shall be hidden from the scourge of
 the tongue,
 And you shall not be afraid of
 destruction when it comes.
 22 You shall laugh at destruction and
 famine,
 And you shall not be afraid of the beasts
 of the earth.
 23 For you shall have a covenant with the
 stones of the field,
 And the beasts of the field shall be at
 peace with you.
 24 You shall know that your tent *is* in
 peace;
 You shall visit your dwelling and find
 nothing amiss.
 25 You shall also know that your
 descendants *shall be* many,
 And your offspring like the grass of the
 earth.
 26 You shall come to the grave at a full
 age,
 As a sheaf of grain ripens in its season.
 27 Behold, this we have searched out;
 It *is* true.
 Hear it, and know for yourself."

5:5 ^aSeptuagint reads *They shall not be taken from evil men*; Vulgate reads *And the armed man shall take him by violence*. ^bSeptuagint reads *The might shall draw them off*; Vulgate reads *And the thirsty shall drink up their riches*.

SOUL NOTE



Give It Up (5:8) In times of trouble, we should turn to God. Job had more than his share of trouble, and none of it was his fault. Eliphaz had the right idea when he said that, in trouble such as Job's, he would seek God. Sometimes we think we can handle everything by ourselves. Or we may be too self-centered to give our problems to God. A crisis may be just what we need to drive us back to Him. When we trust God in our crises, He proves Himself faithful and able to see us through. **Topic: Crises**