

God's Friendship Above All Job 29:2-4

1. A Prayer Tent

In 2021 David Jeremiah told about a creative mother in Chicago who noticed her son was anxious during the pandemic. She came up with a biblical solution. Together they made a homemade pup tent called a "prayer tent." The two of them set it up in the corner of the boy's bedroom. If the boy felt afraid, he could go to the prayer tent, read his Bible or kids' devotional book, pray, and feel enclosed in safety.

The mother's idea originated with Moses. In **Exodus 33:7**, when Moses stressed out over the idolatry of the children of Israel, he "*took his tent and pitched it outside the camp.*" This tent wasn't the Tabernacle, the Hebrews would build that later. Moses' tent was an ordinary tent. Though the tent was ordinary, whenever Moses entered it, the presence of the Lord descended and met with him.¹

2. Another word for tent is "tabernacle." It is generally a temporary dwelling place. [**Feast of Tabernacles**]
 - a. Camping trips involve temporarily living in tents.
 - b. Jewish people celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles/Tents, remembering the temporary dwellings their ancestors lived in while in the wilderness before they found permanent dwellings in the Promised Land.
 - c. Jesus came to temporarily dwell or *tabernacle* among us – **John 1:14**
 - d. We have a temporary tent as well – **2 Corinthians 5:1** (NKJV):
For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.
 - e. Bedouins live their lives in tents, but the location changes.
3. Tents give a sense of security. We certainly need that sense of security today – by **faith that conquers fear.**
 - a. As the Prayer Tent story
 - b. Protection from the weather
 - c. [As a group on safari in Africa found out. One night as they camped, lions entered their camp. They dared not exit their tents for fear of the lions. That little piece of the canvas gave them a sense of security.
4. Tents can give identity to those living inside. People knew Moses' tent, etc. They weren't the same.
5. **Job 29:2-4** (NKJV)
*² "Oh, that I were as in months past,
As in the days when God watched over me;
³ When His lamp shone upon my head,
And when by His light I walked through darkness;
⁴ Just as I was in the days of my prime,
When the friendly counsel of God was over my tent;*

I. A Temporary Moment of Reflection

A. Temporary Acclaim and Respect – Appreciation for God is easy when all is going well; harder when it is not – **Job's story**

B. We Can Get Stuck in the Past

1. [**Old man retelling glory stories of his high school football days/Me repeating stories**]
2. We crave respect and approval

C. Don't Let the Past Negate the Present or Future – **Philippians 3:13-14** (NKJV)

Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

¹ Jeremiah, David. "Prayer Tent." *Turning Point*, 19 May 2021, www.davidjeremiah.org/magazine/daily-devotional.

II. A Trusting Matter of Relationship

A. Is It Better to Be a Great Person or God's Person?

1. Job remembered his great days
2. Actual greatness comes when we belong to God regardless of our station in life

1 Corinthians 1:27-29 (NKJV)

²⁷ But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; ²⁸ and the base [or lowly] things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, ²⁹ that no flesh should glory in His presence.

B. What Makes Great People? Friendship with God!

1. Abraham – James 2:23 (NKJV)

And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God.

2. Moses – Exodus 33:11 (NKJV) *So the LORD spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.*

3. Us? John 15:13-15 (NKJV)

¹³ Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. ¹⁴ You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. ¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.

III. A Timely Message of Reality Job 30:9 (NKJV) – After losing his wealth and health

*And now I am their taunting song;
Yes, I am their byword.*

A. Life Cycles

1. We go from glory to nothing or from nothing to glory
2. JOHN QUINCY ADAMS: THE DECAYED TENEMENT

In 1846 former president John Quincy Adams suffered a stroke. Although he returned to Congress the following year, his health was clearly failing. Daniel Webster described his last meeting with Adams: *"Someone, a friend of his, came in and made particular inquiry of his health. Adams answered, 'I inhabit a weak, frail, decayed tenement; battered by the winds and broken in upon by the storms, and from all I can learn, the landlord does not intend to repair.'"*

B. Times of Testing

1. No Exceptions 1 Corinthians 10:13 (NKJV)

No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

2. Jesus Sets the Example for Us

- a. Hebrews 4:15 (NKJV)

or we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

- b. 40 days in the wilderness to identify with Israel; Tested by Satan (Matthew 4; Luke 4)

1. We talk about our "forever homes" and "permanent addresses." I have had many in my lifetime, every time I bought a house. In a way all of my houses have been like "temporary tents."
2. We also have physical bodies which God describes as "tents." 2 Corinthians 5:1-5 (NKJV)

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For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. ²For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, ³if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. ⁴For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. ⁵Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

3. We are blessed if we have the Friendly Counsel of God over our tents and in our hearts.
4. A greater blessing to have the Friendly Counsel of God in HIS Tent
 - a. Tabernacle/Temple/Presence
 - b. As Priests
 - c. Affirmed by the “down payment or guarantee” of the Holy Spirit – His presence in us.
5. How to have God's friendly counsel – **John 15:14** (NKJV)
You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.