

Our theme for today: The message to the powerful and to the weak

Have you ever heard the story of the stag? It's unknown who wrote it, but it goes like this. A stag was drinking at a pool, admiring his stately antlers, but feeling ashamed of his spindly legs. Suddenly he heard an approaching mountain lion, and those spindly legs propelled him into the safety of the forest, however, his antlers became caught in the underbrush and soon he was killed.

Scripture

- ⁵¹ *He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.*
- ⁵² *He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;*

Luke 1:51-52

Thought provokers

- Mary's song reveals how God deals with two types of people: the proud and the lowly. What does God do with each? How does God level things?
 - Think about a current situation you are facing. Are you proud or are you lowly?

Reflections

If you think about it, there is only one being in the whole universe who can handle absolute power and that is God Himself. He alone is the great leveler, because He alone has pure power. In His pure love, in His pure holiness, only He can wield such power. In our impurity, in our self-absorption (self-love), we could not grasp this kind of power at all without it likely destroying us or those around us; we would abuse it.

In God's perfect love and wisdom, God knows when and exactly how to use His power. He can bring down those powerful from their thrones, He can lift up the lowly. He is the great leveler.

The apostle John spoke about three major sins: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life (1 John 2:15-16). These things don't come from the Father, they come from the world. That last one, the pride of life is a most damaging force. As the proverb says, pride comes before a fall. In our opening illustration, the stag proudly admired his strength, he admired his power. But there was a greater power than him, there was a powerful mountain lion! Dangers beset us all and at every turn, don't they? There is always someone or something bigger or stronger than you. The stag's downfall? It was his pride. In your situation today, are you proud, or are you of humble estate?

Brother and sister, if you are in lowly estate, then there is always that temptation to put your weight on your own strength. But that can lead to pride. And, pride can lead to a fall. So, where comes the joy? *What hope is there to be found that might recover joy when we are in lowly estate?* There is a pathway to joy. God's strength! He will lift the lowly up! He is the great leveler!

Prayer and Song

Take time to pray and sing praises to Him. Here is a carol by James Montgomery.

Angels from the realms of glory

*Angels, from the realms of glory,
Wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation's story,
Now proclaim Messiah's birth:*

Refrain:

*Come and worship, come and worship;
Worship Christ, the new-born King.*

*Shepherds, in the field abiding,
Watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with man is now residing;
Yonder shines the Infant Light: [Refrain]*

*Sages, leave your contemplations,
Brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great Desire of nations,
Ye have seen His natal star: [Refrain]*

*Saints before the altar bending,
Watching long in hope and fear,
Suddenly the Lord, descending,
In His temple shall appear: [Refrain]*

*Tho' an infant now we view Him,
He will share His Father's throne;
Gather all the nations to Him;
Every knee shall then bow down: [Refrain]*