

## A Wonderful Demise

### Scripture Reading — 1 Samuel 2:1-10

*“It is not by strength that one prevails ...”*  
Samuel 2:9 —

Henry, who is incarcerated in Alabama, had a poem printed in the Crossroad Network News (Fall 2007). The poem, “Mercy and Love,” describes the close relationship he has with the Lord, who overflows in mercy and love for him. But the poem begins elsewhere:

Coming to prison seemed like a demise, Only to have my soul to rise. Rise to heights I've never known, The way to salvation I've been shown.

Let's assume that Henry had a fair trial and is being punished justly for a crime he committed. If so, then all of us are a lot like him. We might not commit crimes that risk time in prison, but we head out in directions that God disapproves. In times like that, God loves to remind us that “it is not by strength that one prevails.” Sometimes God speaks with a whisper, but sometimes God speaks with the wail of a siren?and in the voices of those around us: the spouse we betrayed, an auditor who discovers our “creative” accounting, a teacher who catches us cheating. Getting caught seems like a demise. We feel humiliated and angry, but God does not abandon us. Wise men and women see that in our darkest moments our souls can rise to heights we've never known. Those moments can lead us straight into the arms of God.

### Prayer

*O Lord who sees all, I hate getting caught. But thank you. It's just what I need. Guide me, Lord, by the strength of your everlasting arms and keep me close. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

**Devotion topics:** [Life](#), [Trials & Challenges](#), [Weakness](#)

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