THE “***AIDS***-ENDOWING” POWER OF GOD!

Would not be surprised if that audacious, weird, puzzling “HEADLINE” raised your eyebrows right past your hairline to the very crown of your head! God has well-known, awe-inspiring attributes like “HEALER”, “COMFORTER”, “DEFENDER” & “PROVIDER”. We are also used to hearing Him being referred to as “ALL-KNOWING”, “LOVING”, “GIVING” & “FORGIVING”; but “*AIDS*-AFFLICTING”? Well, before you condemn me to be burned at the stake for heresy & blasphemy à la Jeanne d’Arc, or dispatch straight jacket-armed Centre Jamot orderlies to pick me up and have me institutionalized, HEAR ME OUT!

First off, I am pretty sure you noticed that the Acronym “*AIDS*” is in ITALICS; Well that’s because it has ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO DO WITH HIV!!! The “***AIDS***” I am talking about is a coined/adapted acronym for this “condition” that God, in His Grace & Mercy, can and does actually BLESS us with, especially when we are struggling to come to terms with the loss of a loved one for whose recovery we prayed fervently: It is the **ACQUIRED INSCRUTABLE DAVID SYNDROME**. If I could put it any simpler, I would say it is this “unnatural”, surprising, strange ability to RESIGN, SURRENDER and SUBMIT oneself to God’s Sovereign Decisions, trusting that whatever He has willed, allowed or brought to pass is not just “UN-APPEALABLE” but What’s best for us ULTIMATELY!!!

Let’s head back to The Source of my “assessment”; the passage in The Bible on which my entire premise is based: 2 Samuel 12:15-20

***15 After Nathan returned to his home, the Lord sent a deadly illness to the child of David and Uriah’s wife. 16 David begged God to spare the child. He went without food and lay all night on the bare ground. 17 The elders of his household pleaded with him to get up and eat with them, but he refused.***

***18 Then on the seventh day the child died. David’s advisers were afraid to tell him. “He wouldn’t listen to reason while the child was ill,” they said. “What drastic thing will he do when we tell him the child is dead?”***

***19 When David saw them whispering, he realized what had happened. “Is the child dead?” he asked.***

***“Yes,” they replied, “he is dead.”***

***20 Then David got up from the ground, washed himself, put on lotions,[[a](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Samuel+12%3A15-20&version=NLT" \l "fen-NLT-8283a" \o "See footnote a)] and changed his clothes. He went to the Tabernacle and worshiped the Lord. After that, he returned to the palace and was served food and ate.***

As a child, and even later in life, any time I would read this passage, my reaction when I got done reading verse 20 would be “AH NGANA! Which one you dey, ah Tata David??!!” Worship which Lord? For de Lord e good wetin? Chop? Which kind chop? A more realistic, “normal” version of verse 20 would have been scripted thus:

 “As Tara David juss hear so eh? E tear closs, naket e self for public, troway e skin for ground! E start roll from Jerusalem sotey go reach for Jericho. Before dem wan catch’am for Nazareth, no so cut-cut and poto-poto don cover e skin from head to toe. E krobo e head all; E no wash wata; E no comm’ot for upside; e no drink even wata …”

Of course, his puzzled and flabbergasted attendants expressed their surprise at his “strange” reaction to the news of the death of his child, his cool, calm and collected response to their query was:

***“I fasted and wept while the child was alive, for I said, ‘Perhaps the Lord will be gracious to me and let the child live.’ 23 But why should I fast when he is dead? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him one day, but he cannot return to me.”***

WOW! Any wonder God called this David, “A Man after His own Heart”??!! Talk about TOTAL SURRENDER TO GOD’S WILL, IMPLICIT TRUST IN HIS SOVEREIGNTY as “THE POTTER”, and a CRYSTAL CLEAR UNDERSTANDING of “How Things Work”, Biblically speaking. In recent months and years, as I have had to deal with, first the illness and then the death of Loved Ones, I have to say that this “David Syndrome” that I have progressively acquired has helped me “put things in perspective”. Here are just a few of the Questions, Issues, Challenges and Christian Truths it addresses or explains so well to me:

1. **PRAYER & FASTING:** While David’s story strongly backs the importance of Prayer & Fasting as a way of seeking God’s Grace & Favor, the outcome clearly shows that they do not GUARANTEE “desired” or “anticipated” outcomes. David was well aware of God’s ability to heal his son, (King Hezekiah’s own plea was heard, and he was granted a 15 year extension to his life); However, his use of the word **“PERHAPS”** shows that he was also aware that the final decision was UP TO GOD who might, ***or MIGHT NOT*** grant him his wish. More revealing and instructive to me, actually, is David’s preparedness to accept EITHER of God’s decisions with equanimity!!!
2. **LIFE AFTER DEATH & REINCARNATION:** While this may not be any Preacher’s favorite passage for a sermon on the existence of “life after death”, I think David’s statement: “I will go to him one day, but he cannot return to me.” not only implies that there is life after our SHORT stay here on earth, but also negates the idea of “re-incarnation” that other Faiths believe, whereby people RETURN to earth, albeit as “sombus”, “grong beeps” and “bush fawuls”!
3. **MOVING ON:** The passage says that David, after his child’s demise ceased his fast, washed, rubbed him his manyanga and changed his agbada him. However, I don’t think he suddenly stopped feeling the pain of the loss or that he never ever shed a tear from then on. He must have had his “moments” and his “days” but what is clear is that he did not launch into any sustained state of “arches fire” and “sand-sand in the hair” mourning.
4. **GOD’S FORGIVENESS OF OUR SIN DOES NOT ELIMINATE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THAT SIN!:** Earlier on in Chapter 12, Nathan the Prophet confronts David, boldly pointing out that he is guilty of both Adultery and Murder. A remorseful and repentant David declares: “I have sinned against the Lord.”, and goes further to pour out his heart in Psalm 51. Nathan’s response?

***"The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die. However, because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also who is born to you shall surely die."***

Furthermore, God, still through the Prophet Nathan, let David know that this same sin would cause strife and bring great calamity upon his household:

***"Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife."***

1. **TOTAL SURRENDER TO GOD’S WILL & COMPLETE TRUST IN HIS JUDGMENT:** David, like Job, certainly had the “Curse God and Die” option available to him. (So do we, too, by the way). He could very easily have reasoned this way:

“Yes, I committed murder & adultery; But, not only am I not the only man or King ever to be guilty of both sins, I repented when the Prophet Nathan confronted me! There are others who have done worse things, and who have not even bothered to confess them or repent. They seem to be doing just fine! What about ALL the good things I have done?”

As for dear old Job, his case is even more amazing; He who was “guilty” of nothing else but being a GOOD & UPRIGHT man!! If anyone was “justified” to “shake his fist” at God, it certainly was him; Yet he did not. He understood what some of us struggle to grasp; a FACT that will not change, whether or not we accept it:

Our Loved Ones are a LOANED GIFT from Him to us, and we do not determine the terms, conditions and duration of “THE LOAN”. We enjoy the BLESSING of having them in our lives for as long as He sees fit, this side of the Jordan. When He calls them Home, He understands that the separation is HARD, but He expects us to take comfort in the fact that they are SAFELY HOME where they – and us, REALLY BELONG, and that the day IS coming when we will be reunited FOREVER!

MAY THE SOULS OF THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED CONTINUE TO REST IN PEACE, & MAY THE LOVED ONES THEY HAVE LEFT BEHIND REMAIN COMFORTED BY THE ASSURANCE THAT THE SEPARATION, THOUGH PAINFUL, IS TEMPORARY!