

THE DEER IN THE HEADLIGHTS

I came down the hill at about ten miles per hour. On a normal day, I would have roared down to the stop light at about 45 mph, but everything had been out of sync today. The light was green, and my signal was screaming at the opposing traffic that I was turning left. I was tired of the in-town traffic, and I was ready to hit the throttle and git-outa-town quick. As I approached Main Street, Barstow, California, my ADD mind switched to memories of old Route 66, and what it would have been like to travel the "Mother Road" back seventy years ago. That was how my ancestors had come to California in the first place. I was thinking how it would have been to drive a Model T or ride four kids in the rumble seat of a Chevy roadster for that 2000 miles across the desert waste. Wow, can you imagine coaxing an old Harley across the mountains and through the barren valleys, armed with a desert water bag and bailing wire? Most of those old-timers who came across had only enough money for food and fuel, so they didn't stay in "motor courts" or even campgrounds. Many just pulled off the road and found a flat spot for a tent or sleeping bags, and spent the night with the snakes and scorpions. To think of fighting off the savages of the frontier west - you know, the coyotes, 'coons, and skunks! That's where my brain was as I approached the intersection at the busiest time of the day. About as close to a rush hour as we ever had in Barstow. Those were the good ol' days . . . and today is NOW!

In the midst of my reverie, I faintly remembered that my family came to California from Oklahoma where there was a lot of oil. A whole awful lot of oil - all over the road! Somebody had blown an engine in the middle of the intersection, and there was oil everywhere. No place to go - oil, curb to curb. Can't stop. Green light. Left turn. Not gonna' make it. There she goes. I'm standing in the middle of the busiest intersection of town, right on old Route 66, straddling my wounded steed, waiting for the show-down. The light is about to turn four lanes of traffic loose. Those soccer moms and cell phone addicts are frantic to get wherever they are going, and I'm the only one standing in their way. As I stare them down, daring them to come in and finish the job, the guy in the semi rev's up his four hundred horses. Somehow this shocks me out of my kung fu stance, and I'm thinking, "I'd better get outta here!" These cagers are crazed by the desert heat and are inching toward my prone scooter like ravenous wolves eyeing a cornered quarry. Is there any way to get outta the way? Can I get it up? I mean, the 600 pounds of oily metal at my feet! I give it a yank, and fall to my knees. The oil is everywhere. I can't even stand up! Maybe I can slide it over to the curb? No way. Since I am on my knees, now would be a good time to pray. Hurry. There are only moments until the light turns, and a bloodthirsty mob of maddened cagers descend on one helpless biker. I rise and set my feet for one mighty last stand. I think of George

Armstrong Custer at the Little Bighorn. I would like to have someone with strong arms about now. That idiot in the SUV needs to get off his big horn. One last shove. Ugh! There she comes. Almost there. Green light! Push, shove, drag, run - just made it. Park, sit, shake, rest, relax.

Sometimes we get ourselves into situations that seem impossible to handle on our own. We look around, and find that there is no help for us, aside from the One who is always available when we turn to Him. The Bible tells us that God is our refuge and fortress - our protector. He is our ever-present help in time of need. If we trust him with our lives, he will not disappoint us. Read Romans 10:13. When we are about to be run down by forces beyond our control, even if it is our own fault, we can still turn to God in faith. He will not turn us away. Our minds often wander far away from His will for us, but He is only a prayer away. When you are the deer in the headlights, where will you turn? How about God?

Pastor Sam

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