

# 1 Peter 5:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God,  
that he may exalt you in due time:

## Analysis

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This command calls for active, voluntary humility before God's sovereign authority. 'Humble yourselves' (*ταπεινώθητε*, *tapeinōthēte*) is an aorist imperative—a decisive, urgent command. The reflexive nature indicates self-humbling is required, not passive waiting for God to humble us. The sphere is specified: 'under the mighty hand of God' (*ὑπὸ τὴν κρατιὰν χεῖρα τοῦ θεοῦ*, *hypo tēn krataian cheira tou theou*). God's 'mighty hand' (*κρατιά χείρ*) is an Old Testament metaphor for His powerful, sovereign working—used for deliverance from Egypt (Exodus 3:19, Deuteronomy 9:26) and discipline of His people (1 Peter 5:6). To humble oneself under it means accepting God's sovereign control over circumstances, timing, and outcomes. The purpose clause follows: 'that he may exalt you in due time' (*ἵνα ὑμᾶς ὑψώσῃ ἐν καιρῷ*, *hina hymas hypsōsē en kairō*). God promises eventual exaltation—vindication, honor, glorification. But timing belongs to Him: *ἐν καιρῷ* (*en kairō*, in due season) indicates God's appointed time, not our preference. This echoes Jesus's teaching: those who humble themselves will be exalted (Luke 14:11, 18:14).

## Historical Context

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Peter addresses believers enduring persecution and facing powerful, hostile authorities. In Roman society, honor and status were supreme values—public humiliation was unbearable shame. Christian confession brought social humiliation: loss of position, economic exclusion, public mockery. Peter's command to humble themselves seemed counterintuitive: shouldn't they fight for their rights

and reputation? But Peter offers God's alternative economy: voluntary humbling under God's sovereign hand positions believers for divine vindication. The connection to verse 7 is crucial: casting anxiety on God presumes submission to His sovereign timing and purposes. Believers humble themselves by accepting God's mysterious providence, trusting His timing for vindication rather than demanding immediate justice. Historical examples abound: Joseph's humiliation preceded exaltation (Genesis 50:20); Jesus's humiliation at the cross preceded resurrection glory (Philippians 2:8-9); early Christians' martyrdom preceded eternal reward. Church history records countless believers who accepted temporal humiliation, trusting God's eventual vindication.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

## Study Questions

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1. In what specific areas of life are you resisting God's 'mighty hand,' demanding vindication or change according to your timing?
2. How does trusting God's 'due time' for exaltation free you from anxiety, bitterness, and self-promotion?
3. What's the relationship between humbling yourself before God and how you relate to human authorities or oppressors?

## Interlinear Text

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Ταπεινώθητε	οὖν	ὑπὸ	τὴν	κραταιὰν	χεῖρα	τοῦ	θεοῦ
Humble yourselves	therefore	under	G3588	the mighty	hand	G3588	of God
G5013	G3767	G5259		G2900	G5495		G2316
ἵνα	ὑμᾶς	ὑψώσῃ	ἐν	καιρῷ			
that	you	he may exalt	in	due time			
G2443	G5209	G5312	G1722	G2540			

## Additional Cross-References

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**James 4:10** (Parallel theme): Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

**Luke 14:11** (Parallel theme): For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

**Proverbs 29:23** (Parallel theme): A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.

**Matthew 23:12** (Parallel theme): And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

**Luke 18:14** (Parallel theme): I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

**Luke 1:52** (Parallel theme): He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree.

**2 Chronicles 32:26** (Parallel theme): Notwithstanding Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the LORD came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah.

**2 Chronicles 33:12** (References God): And when he was in affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers,

**2 Chronicles 12:12** (Parallel theme): And when he humbled himself, the wrath of the LORD turned from him, that he would not destroy him altogether: and also in Judah things went well.

**Isaiah 40:4** (Parallel theme): Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: