

The Lord Gave David Victory

2Samuel 8:1- 18 (Key verse 14b)

“...The Lord gave David victory wherever he went.”

We all desire and want victory, however what is victory? What does it mean the lord gave David victory? In this passage the lord grants David victory over all Israel enemies. David was able to defeat and subdue all Israel enemies and expand the territory of Israel. May we learn what this means practically for our lives through this passage. I pray the lord may renew our faith in king Jesus who has been given all victory. Amen.

Let us look at verse 1-2a “In the course of time, David defeated the Philistines and subdued them, and he took Gath from the control of the Philistines. 2David also defeated the Moabites.” David defeated the Philistines and took over Gath which was capital city of the Philistines. Not only did David defeat the Philistines he also subdued them. To subdue means to overcome or bring under control. In other words the Philistines power was taken from them. They were paralyzed by David. David also defeated the Moabites, not only did he defeat them they became subject to David and brought him tribute. That means the Moabites started paying taxes to Israel.

From verse 3-6, we read that David defeated Hadadezer son of Rehob king of Zobah, David captured thousand of his chariots, seven thousand charioteers and twenty thousand foot soldiers. Hadadezer had come fully prepared with advanced military gadgets to overthrow Israel, however David defeated his army. When the Arameans of Damascus came to help Hadadezer, David struck down twenty two thousand of them. David placed garrisons in the Aramean kingdom of Damascus and the Arameans became subject to David and brought tribute. Even when Hadadezer received help from another nation they still could not defeat Israel. David struck them down, twenty two thousand of them. Not only did he strike them down David put garrisons in their territory. Garrisons are some group of soldiers what we would call a setting of a military base in today’s terms. This means that David had full control and access to this region. For they even became subject to David and brought tribute.

Let us look at bit at the history of some of these nations of which I think the Philistines ranks tops as Israel past enemies. It is believed that the dominance of the Philistines continued over a period of fifty years before King David. They were actually driven out of the Israel territory in around 980 BC. The first battle between Israel and the Philistines was the Battle of Aphek described in 1 Samuel 4:1-10. In that battle the Philistines defeated Israel and also captured the Ark of the covenant. It was from that battle that Eli the Priest who raised Samuel the prophet also died from falling from his seat. Since then the Philistines had been a thorn on Israel. For instance at one time, a champion named Goliath from Gath came out of the Philistines camp and terrorized Israel under king Saul. Goliath would shout, “why do you come out and line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not the servants of Saul? Choose a man and have him come down to me if he is able to fight and kill me, we will become your subjects, but if I overcome him and kill him, you will become our subjects and serve us” [1 Sam 17:8-9]. Israel was paralysed from fear by this great champion from the Philistines, no one from Israel army could dare fight Goliath even Saul. In verse 1Sam 17:24 it says “when the Israelites saw the man, they all ran from him in great fear.” At that time David was still a young boy however when he heard the challenge Goliath brought, David accepted to fight him by faith and God granted David a win over Goliath. However still this was not the end of the Philistines, they would somehow regroup as a nation and be a terror for Israel. King Saul even died while he was at war with the Philistines. Even when David became king they came in full force against David.

The Moabites on the other hand were the descendants from Moab, the son of Lot (Gen 19:37). King Saul in the 13th century fought the Moabites (1 Samuel 14:47) and ever since then has been tensions over the territory. The Edomites are the discendants of Esau, one of Jacob’s twins. They controlled a region east of the Arabah, their capital was Bozrah. All these kingdoms and nations fought against Israel over territory. And for many years Israel could not enjoy peace because at any point one of these nations could attack.

Israel and these nations come from far with wars that were never ending. These nations knew the region better than Israel and they had better military technology than Israel. It just seemed impossible that Israel would ever defeat and subdue them. However, king David was able to defeat them and not only defeat them but also subdue them. There was no longer a come back fight, through king David the Philistines and all these nations were for the first time finally defeated and their power collapsed.

Look at verse 13-14, "And David became famous after he returned from striking down eighteen thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt. 14He put garrisons throughout Edom, and all the Edomites became subject to David. The Lord gave David victory wherever he went." Wherever David went he became victorious. How could this be possible? What was David's secret, lets look again at verse 6b & 14b, "...The Lord gave David victory wherever he went." David was able to capture the regions which Saul could not take hold of. This shows that it was not a matter of military strength of Israel but a matter of the one who gives victory. King David could defeat all Israel enemies and the enemies of God because the Lord gave him victory wherever he went. Whether the enemy brought advanced military artillery, great numbers of foot soldiers, whether the enemy received re-enforcement from their allies, wherever David went the Lord gave him victory. It did not matter how many years before under king Saul Israel suffered under these nations. When David became king, the Lord gave David victory over them.

Now let us see how David responds to the plunder and gifts he receives because of his victory. Look at verse 7-8, "David took the gold shields that belonged to the officers of Hadadezer and brought them to Jerusalem. 8From Tebah and Berothai, towns that belonged to Hadadezer, King David took a great quantity of bronze. When Tou king of Hamath heard that David had defeated the entire army of Hadadezer, he sent his son Joram to congratulate David and brought David articles of silver, of gold and bronze [9-10]. Look at verse 11-12, "King David dedicated these articles to the Lord, as he had done with the silver and gold from all the nations he had subdued: 12Edom and Moab, the Ammonites and the Philistines, and Amalek. He also dedicated the plunder taken from Hadadezer son of Rehob, king of Zobah." All these were dedicated to the Lord by David. Which means that, instead of using the plunder for himself, he used the plunder to serve God. This means that, David may have used some for the future construction of the temple. The other to provide the needs of the priests, the poor or people of Israel. David's response to the plunder from his victories and gifts from Tou shows that he indeed understood where his victories came from.

When the lord gave David victory, David ruled with righteousness and justice, look at verse 15, "David reigned over all Israel, doing what was just and right for all his people." This shows that David was a servant leader for Israel. When the Lord gave David victory, it humbled David to be a servant leader. So now Israel enjoyed victories from their enemies and also a kingdom that cared for their needs and was just.

Though the Lord was giving David victory, still David had a very organized kingdom. David made Joab commander of the armies, Johoshaphat a recorder, Zadok and Ahimelek were priests, Saraiah a secretary, Benaiah was over the Kerethites and Pelethites and David's son's were royal advisers [16-18]. Though the Lord granted David victories, still David had to have a committed and reliable co-workers whom God could work through in order to defeat the enemies of Israel. For example lets look at Joab and Johoshaphat. Joab played a very great role in leading the armies for victory (as we shall see in the chapter 10). Johoshaphat did a great job as the recorder, today we have the full account of how God gave David victory.

In this passage we can see what victory looks like when God gives a person victory. The question for you and me is, who is or what is our enemy? what victory has the Lord given us? What is the meaning of David's victory for us? Our enemy is sin (utter rebellion and contempt against God), and the wages of sin is death [Rom 6:23]. It was because of sin that death rained on the earth. So I believe our physical death is pointing to something fundamental spiritually. Fundamentally we all want a life and will do whatever it takes to live. We will do whatever it takes to breathe. Those who have had a strong Covid symptoms will tell you. When those lungs feel like failing and there is little you can do, it can be a terrible feeling. We all desire to live but not simply live but to have a meaningful life. However, sin stands in the way because sin leads to death. Death of meaning and God given purpose, in other words sin separates us from God. However, we read in Matthew 1:21, "She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." Just like king David, king Jesus has victory over the power of sin. For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. Jesus became sin for us, died because of our sin and rose again from death as a sign of victor over the power of sin. In other words, for those in Christ Jesus sin no longer has power that leads to death. King Jesus has victory over sin. Even though we may die, we will rise again to eternal life. God has given Jesus all the victory and by faith in king Jesus we all have victory. 1 Cor 15:57 reads, "But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Our sin is similar to how the Philistines and these other nations year in year out terrorized Israel. No matter how Israel fought their enemies they could never have victory under king Saul. The Philistines, Moabites and other nations were like the constant power of sin that could not be defeated. Before Jesus, Israel made animal sacrifices as a sin offering that was constantly offered by Israel before God. Through this they could not collapse the power of sin. It was only through king Jesus that the power of

sin could be defeated. David represents the picture of our Lord and king Jesus. Through Jesus Christ, God has given us victory. Just like David was the key for Israel to experience victory over their enemies. Today we too through Jesus can experience the victory from our enemies and the enemies of God. Jesus has defeated the power of sin over our lives through the cross. Whether we believe it or not, just as God gave David victory, God has given Christ Jesus victory over the power of sin. I pray that we may repent and submit ourselves to king Jesus who is victorious over the power of sin.

What does this mean to you and me? It does not mean that we will not have challenges and sin struggles, however it means that nothing in this world has a hold over your life. In some African believes you can be told that you will never succeed because either one of your relatives, uncle or aunt who passed on some time ago is holding your blessings. That you need to do some ritual to release blessings for your life. Also many times in pursuit of a good life, we become fatalistic when we experience failure, either failure of an exam or having to repeat a year at school, or a sense of failure based on norms of the society. When we are either not validated by others we respect, or when we are terribly failing to achieve the standards we set for our selves. Young people are taking their lives, South Africa ranks in the top ten countries for high suicide rates. One of the reasons in one of the top ten countries is high levels of pressure to succeed academically among young people. In Japan men are more likely to commit suicide than females, because of high societal expectations to have a job, so losing a job is a great failure. We may feel all kinds of things from morning to evening, however since our feelings change like weather they cannot be absolute and should not be allowed to command authority in our lives. Same time we do not deny what we feel, however, whether the nation of Israel felt victorious or not, the truth was that David did defeat all their enemies and subdued them. I like one of Wiston Churchill quote, "Success is not final, failure is not fatal", I believe this is true because Jesus has worn the victory. Nothing has power to claim our lives.

Through Christ Jesus our king, God has given us victory. All principalities and powers are subjected to king Jesus. This is a truth we simply have to believe, whether we feel victorious or not. Our faith must rest on what Jesus has accomplished, and not on our feelings, our standards or norms of society. I pray we may repent and renew our faith in Jesus, accept him as our king who has proven to rule with righteousness and justice.

In conclusion, God granted David victory wherever he went. It did not matter how advanced the military artillery of the enemy was. Because God gave David victory, he could defeat and bring them all under subjection. This is a picture of what Christ Jesus achieved through his death and resurrection. Prov 21:31 reads, "The horse is made ready for the day of battle, but victory rests with the LORD." It is God who gives victory, and for our generation, God has sent Jesus through whom we are all victorious. This is God's love and grace for all of us, I pray that we may accept this truth in our hearts by trusting and believing in king Jesus. Amen.