

[pressing forward]

:: 1 chronicles 18.1-13 ::

We've come to the end of our battle studies. These accounts are given to us so that we might learn how to effectively live out our Spiritual lives, which are constantly presented with temptations, trials, enemies, difficulties and dangers. Victory *is* available, if we are willing to go the Lord's way and walk in the strength, the power, the wisdom and the Spirit which He has provided us.

Today we close this series with a passage in 1 Chronicles chapter 18, where we learn that the final step in living life in victory is **pressing forward**.

We're always short on time, but this morning I'd like to read this passage before we make a few closing comments.

1 Chronicles 18.1-13

After this David defeated the Philistines and subdued them, and he took Gath and its villages out of the hand of the Philistines.

And he defeated Moab, and the Moabites became servants to David and brought tribute.

David also defeated Hadadezer king of Zobah-Hamath, as he went to set up his monument at the river Euphrates. And David took from him 1,000 chariots, 7,000 horsemen, and 20,000 foot soldiers. And David hamstringed all the chariot horses, but left enough for 100 chariots. And when the Syrians of Damascus came to help Hadadezer king of Zobah, David struck down 22,000 men of the Syrians.

Then David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus, and the Syrians became servants to David and brought tribute. And the Lord gave victory to David wherever he went. And David took the shields of gold that were carried by the servants of Hadadezer and brought them to Jerusalem. And from Tibhath and from Cun, cities of Hadadezer, David took a large amount of bronze. With it Solomon made the bronze sea and the pillars and the vessels of bronze.

When Tou king of Hamath heard that David had defeated the whole army of Hadadezer, king of Zobah, he sent his son Hadoram to King David, to ask about his health and to bless him because he had fought against Hadadezer and defeated him; for Hadadezer had often been at war with Tou. And he sent all sorts of articles of gold, of silver, and of bronze. These also King David dedicated to the Lord, together with the silver and gold that he had carried off from all the nations, from Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, the Philistines, and Amalek.

And Abishai, the son of Zeruiah, killed 18,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt. Then he put garrisons in Edom, and all the Edomites became David's servants. And the Lord gave victory to David wherever he went.

There is tons of great stuff in here. What we see is that twice there is this statement:

And the Lord gave victory to David wherever he went.

God has victory for you. We are to remember that God has saved us not only *from* death, but *for* a life that He has been preparing for us since before the foundations of time, as He looked forward and purposed in His heart a work to do through your life, that you might be used to shine His light and show His love and seek His will here on the earth.

Though the backdrop is different for us then it was for these Old Testament saints, you must not forget that *you* are David. *You* are Joshua. *You* are Moses. *You* are God's man today, His power is within you today and His desire is that you turn this world upside down because of your relationship with Jesus Christ.

No, not all of us are called to great fame or prominence in the human sense, but each of us are called to partake in the greatness of our God, men who are active, bold, battle ready, pressing forward in what the Lord has presented to us.

Remember, in these battles we see again and again that the Lord had provided victory from the beginning. Again and again we saw that phrase, "I have delivered them into your hand." God has given you this life that you might go out and conquer ground for Him. Are you on the battlefield? Or are you in the grandstand, watching other men triumph with our Lord?

Where David found victory, we can find victory. This passage is a great battle plan for daily living.

First, it says "after this." After what?

In the beginning of chapter 17 God made a covenant with David. The Lord spoke to him and revealed His will to him. After that, David went to prayer. He was prayed up when chapter 18 began.

After that, David enjoyed these incredible advances and victories.

Men, are you hearing from God? Are we listening to the messages that He gives us in His word? Are we praying? What victories can we know if we are not receiving instructions from our Commander? What advances can we make if we don't know which direction our enemy lies? You cannot live victorious without the Word and prayer being a regular part of your daily living. Without those resources we are open to temptation, open to stumbling, open to discouragement, open to defeat.

David heard from the Lord and got prayed up about it.

After this, he defeated the Philistines and subdued them.

The Philistines are a great symbol for us today of the huge problems of life. They were David's chief enemies, complete with armies, fortifications and **giants!** They were a fantastic foe.

If you are facing a great crisis, a huge problem, some difficulty that seems insurmountable, we should remember that in God's economy, a little shepherd boy can fell a giant. Faith the size of a mustard seed can move mountains. In Christ, you are man enough to overcome what seems to be insurmountable to others. Press forward against those giant problems, step out in faith and watch God's deliverance come to pass.

David then moved on and conquered Moab. We remember how, during the time of Moses, the wicked Moabite women seduced the men of Israel, drew them away from God and into sexual sin, which brought on anger and severe discipline from the Lord.

This morning, the Moabites are a symbol and reminder for us that we must conquer our lust. As men we are prone to that which is sensual. We are prone to weakness in this area, and this weakness must be conquered. The lust of the eyes has brought down many men, as we're warned of in the Proverbs. The lust of the eyes has destroyed families and split churches and broken lives. It caused David to become a killer. It is a dangerous enemy men, and we must conquer it.

The Moabites fell before David as he walked in God's strength. Are you subduing your lust? Are you butchering it on the altar of the Lord or are you feeding it by watching things you shouldn't, reading things you shouldn't, clicking on things you shouldn't? The lust of the flesh cannot be shown mercy men. Your families, your church, your very lives depend on conquering this foe.

You conquer it by living in the power of God. By applying these battle characteristics of discipline and endurance and boldness and the others to your daily living. Do those things and you will see the Moabites fall before you.

After this victory, David engaged King Hadadezer. Not too much is known about this Syrian king, but we see that he was named after Hadad, which was the chief idol of the nation, a sun god.

This morning he symbolizes our fight against idolatry. In a place like the United States where we are blessed with incredible freedoms, incredible opportunities and incredible wealth we must remember that we will have to continually fight against the snare of idolatry. We can think we are impervious to this sin all we want, but in blessing we always run the risk of drawing away from God and toward something else.

We need to inspect our lives for materialism. For greed. For the love of money. We need to inspect our lives for any obsession with career or pleasure or politics or leisure. We need to take to heart the message we heard a few Sundays ago from 1 Corinthians where we found that idolatry can come in almost any package, thus careful inspection must be made to how we are living so that we do not wake up one day having deserted the kingdom of God for the pursuit of some created or temporal thing.

David conquered this idolator, just as we must conquer idolatry in our own lives.

After this, the Syrians of Damascus came to assist King Hadadezer against David, they too were given into the hand of God's chosen man.

22,000 fell before him. This morning, the Syrians symbolize old enemies that linger in our lives.

The Syrians were among those who contended with Abraham at the beginning of God's relationship with His special people. Throughout the Old Testament the Syrians keep showing up to cause problems, to harm and to do battle against Believers.

Perhaps you have an enemy or two from your old life that is lingering, waiting to sucker punch you at a moment of weakness.

God is with you to overcome those old temptations, those old character traits, those old battles. God is prepared to deal with your past, but you must be ready to deal with it as well. Take comfort in the fact that God is strong to bring you out of your old life and He is strong to transform you, as He did David and Peter and others. Your old enemies have no power over you when you're walking with Jesus.

David put garrisons in Syria. Are we fortifying our defenses or are we letting our guard down? Though we are protected by God, we must remember that vigilance is necessary when subduing the flesh, avoiding temptation and pressing forward through trials. Men, our faith is to be active, and, like David, we must search out our enemies, overcome them and replace them with strong defenses that keep hearts and our thoughts and our activities in check.

Aside from his destruction of the Philistine and Syrian armies, verse 11 says that David overcame the Edomites, the Moabites, the Ammonites and the Amalekites.

The Edomites were the descendants of Esau, Jacob's twin brother. In the Scriptures these two brothers symbolize living in the Spirit versus living in the flesh. Esau and his descendants are a type for us of living in the flesh and the evil that is produced.

This morning, we see David's victory and we remember that we will never be tempted beyond what we can overcome. We remember that our old sin nature is subject to the Spirit of God which dwells within us. We remember that the old man has been crucified with Christ and we have been given a new nature.

Now, today, we choose which nature we will indulge, which lifestyle we will follow after. God has given you victory over the old man, so do not show him mercy or indulgence.

The Ammonites were closely akin to the Moabites. They had also hired Balaam against the Israelites at the time of the Exodus.

David overwhelmed them in the power of God.

The Amalekites would have been an especially important battle for King David. King Saul had lost his kingdom after failing to wipe out the Amalekites and their king. After this final failure, God gave the nation to David.

The Amalekites represent for us the past failings of others or ourselves. God desires that we press forward in our lives. When we fail, our duty is to repent and return to God, who is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins.

If you are living in sin this morning, you should not feel condemned, but you *should* feel convicted. You are living under the bondage of an enemy that was defeated at Calvary. If you want your life to have the meaning and purpose and power that God has offered to you in His word, then all you need to do is to repent of your sin, receive God's forgiveness and press forward, overcoming those old failures, leaving them behind and moving on toward the finish line set before you by Jesus Christ.

We see all these different conflicts and enemies in this little passage. And what we find is that in each situation David was given the power and the plan necessary to overcome his enemies.

Whether they were greater or smaller, whether they were stronger or weaker, no matter what he faced, David overcame them all. God gave him victory wherever he went.

Whatever each of us face today, God has promised guidance. He has promised strength. He has promised power. He has promised wisdom.

Will you move forward in that knowledge? Will you press forward in this life or will you relent, retreat and retire to a life oppressed by your enemies? You decide. I decide. Today, right now, we make the decisions whether we're going to walk in Christ or whether we will *not* walk in Christ.

Two quick thoughts as we close.

We talk about money very seldom here at Calvary. We are very careful how we talk about it and work hard to bring it up only when our text brings it up.

But here in these verses we must ask ourselves the question of how we are investing our resources. David took the shields of Hadadezer and consecrated them to the Lord. The bronze and the silver and the gold that he acquired he brought before the Lord for His use. With this bronze, Solomon made the sea, the vessels and the pillars for the temple.

Are we investing in God's ministry? Are we investing in the spiritual future of our children? David's consecration of these materials made it possible for the temple to be furnished. God guides, God provides, but each of us must take an honest, personal look at how we spend our money and see what we're investing in.

Finally, there is a wonderful principle that we see demonstrated here. It is the simple fact that the way we live our lives impacts the people around us. The way we live our lives will either attract them to Jesus or will repel them from Him.

King Tou saw David's life, he saw David's power and strength and he came to him and started a relationship with him. We can only speculate, but I am sure that the poet king of Israel shared much with Tou's son of the power and the grace and the nature of the God of heaven, who was the source of David's life and victory.

In verse 12 we read of Abishai overcoming 18,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt. Abishai was David's nephew. David's leadership and example paved the way for victory in his family.

The way we live our lives impacts those around us. Are we providing them an example of victory through a loving, dynamic relationship with Jesus Christ, or are we providing an example of apathy? Idolatry? Indifference?

Men, you are important. The lives that you lead are important. Your jobs are important. Your families are important. You are the key to God's plan for evangelism and ministry and outreach in this world. We face many difficulties. We face many dangers. We face many discouragements and obstacles. But God has won us victory and He has given it into our hands if we are willing to receive the life He has for us and press forward, gaining ground, fearing nothing as we do battle in the name of our King.