**Pastor Tim’s Message Notes 8-29-2021
David as Dependent on the Lord**

Last week I was blessed to go to Hershey Park as one thing that we were doing to celebrate Leah’s birthday.

And by the way, we used three of the complimentary tickets that Deb Bell kindly gave to our family; she is given a certain number of complimentary tickets as an employee there.

So Deb, thank you again for your pure heart and your desire to bless us in this way. We had a very good time.

And Leah and her cousin Lexi and I made the most of our time that day, going on several rides and getting wet around the water area quite a bit.

But there was one ride that I got on that I regret. It was called The Howler. I know for one that I did not make a lot of howling on that ride. Now the Howler may not seem like a very scary ride to most people, but for some people like myself, who do not do the greatest on rides that spin you around and around like a tea cup for several minutes, it was not the most fun to say the least.

I should have known it while I was in line, but I went on nonetheless.

And I knew pretty quickly that this was going to be a difficult ride to get through as we were spinning a good bit before the ride even started.

And besides asking Leah and Lexi to please stop spinning the wheel that was between us, my thoughts went to the Lord and my need to ask for His help to keep my nauseousness to a minimum. And thankfully He did. He was there at Hershey Park and He is with us everywhere that we go.

**Truly friends, in our weaknesses, He is strong.**

David, whom I have been sharing on for several weeks now, was a man who recognized his dependence on the Lord. This is such an important part of being a person after God’s own heart. Jesus Himself lived completely dependent on God the Father and on the Holy Spirit. We are to recognize our dependence on our Triune God and to live daily dependent on Him.

While David was a fugitive for about 13 years, as King Saul was seeking to take his life, not only did David have to live life on the run, but David also was fighting battles against various other nations.

And in the midst of all of this, at one point David and his 600 men return to the town of Ziklag – where they had left their families and possessions while they were out fighting. And sadly their return to Ziklag was a devastating one.

Let us read about this now in 1 Sam. 30:1-20

**1 David and his men reached Ziklag on the third day. Now the Amalekites had raided the Negev and Ziklag. They had attacked Ziklag and burned it, 2and had taken captive the women and everyone else in it, both young and old. They killed none of them, but carried them off as they went on their way.**

**3When David and his men reached Ziklag, they found it destroyed by fire and their wives and sons and daughters taken captive. 4So David and his men wept aloud until they had no strength left to weep. 5David’s two wives had been captured—Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail, the widow of Nabal of Carmel. 6David was greatly distressed because the men were talking of stoning him; each one was bitter in spirit because of his sons and daughters. But David found strength in the Lord his God.**

**7Then David said to Abiathar the priest, the son of Ahimelek, “Bring me the ephod.” Abiathar brought it to him, 8and David inquired of the Lord, “Shall I pursue this raiding party? Will I overtake them?”**

**“Pursue them,” he answered. “You will certainly overtake them and succeed in the rescue.”**

**9David and the six hundred men with him came to the Besor Valley, where some stayed behind. 10Two hundred of them were too exhausted to cross the valley, but David and the other four hundred continued the pursuit.**

**11They found an Egyptian in a field and brought him to David. They gave him water to drink and food to eat— 12part of a cake of pressed figs and two cakes of raisins. He ate and was revived, for he had not eaten any food or drunk any water for three days and three nights.**

**13David asked him, “Who do you belong to? Where do you come from?”**

**He said, “I am an Egyptian, the slave of an Amalekite. My master abandoned me when I became ill three days ago. 14We raided the Negev of the Kerethites, some territory belonging to Judah and the Negev of Caleb. And we burned Ziklag.”**

**15David asked him, “Can you lead me down to this raiding party?”**

**He answered, “Swear to me before God that you will not kill me or hand me over to my master, and I will take you down to them.”**

**16He led David down, and there they were, scattered over the countryside, eating, drinking and reveling because of the great amount of plunder they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from Judah. 17David fought them from dusk until the evening of the next day, and none of them got away, except four hundred young men who rode off on camels and fled. 18David recovered everything the Amalekites had taken, including his two wives. 19Nothing was missing: young or old, boy or girl, plunder or anything else they had taken. David brought everything back. 20He took all the flocks and herds, and his men drove them ahead of the other livestock, saying, “This is David’s plunder.”**

This is a lesser known story of David, but also a very important one. **And the key was how David responded to the very difficult situation that he found himself.**

Picture what it would have been like to be David. You are successful in battle after battle, you have hundreds of loyal soldiers committed to you, and then you return to find not only your family having been taken as captives to the raiding Amalekites, but also that the families of your solders were also now captive.

And not only this, after everyone was wailing and weeping over their families, David discovers that there is talk within his army of stoning him. People were probably thinking, if it wasn’t for David, our sons and daughters would not have been taken from us.

But again, the key to this entire passage is how David successfully responded to this very difficult situation. It is found in the second half of verse 6.

Let us hear this sentence again:

**But David found strength in the LORD his God.**

David could have chosen to respond in rashness. He could have gone around trying to find out and punish whoever was talking of stoning him. He could have run away in fear. He could even had taken his own life in despair.

**But he does none of these things. Instead, David finds strength in the LORD his God.**

And the next thing we are told is that he went to Abiathar the priest to inquire if the LORD wanted them to pursue the Amalekite raiders.

And the story goes on to describe how God told David to do just that and David and his men recover all that was lost.

But the turning point of the story came when David found strength in the LORD his God.

Now we are not told how David specifically found strength in the LORD. Scripture doesn’t tell us that.

But we do know that after this happens, he then inquired of what God would have him do in this situation.

Even before David knew what to do specifically in his situation, he found strength in God.

I believe that him finding strength in God came from him turning his heart towards God, rather than away from God. He chose to remember that God was good and God was for him and that God would be with him.

He remembered that his life was dependent on the LORD. Even in not yet having the answers on what to do in this very difficult situation, God was giving him strength.

This is so important. He looked up. He didn’t have all the answers, but He knew that God was good and God loved him and God was for Him.

We do not know how long this took, whether it was minutes or hours or even days -- but God gave David strength as David turned his heart towards Him.

I believe that David was able to weather this sudden storm that came upon him because he had learned to be dependent on the LORD every day --- whether in sunshine or storm.

One message from the Scriptures is that we all get worn down and our strength gets depleted and we grow weary. The prophet Isaiah writes about this in chapter 40. He said that we all get weary and even young people stumble and fall, but those who hold in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

So as we think about this passage of Scripture, besides admiring David for turning to God rather than away from God when facing a devastating situation, what are some practical ways that we can glean from this text of Scripture for our lives today?

**It is simply this. True strength comes from God and we must live each day dependent on Him and finding our hope in Him.**

I pray that none of us ever have to go through a similar circumstance that David went through in the story that we heard earlier, but we all go through challenges.

Maybe it is beginning something new, like a school year – which starts tomorrow around here.

Maybe it is stress at work or in relationships. Perhaps it is the craziness of the world right now, with the chaos in Afghanistan or the stress with everything related to covid. Or maybe it is, like me at Hershey Park, finding yourself in that daunted Howler at Hershey Park. Whatever it is, let us learn from David and find our strength in the Lord.

It is our Triune God alone who offers us peace that passes understanding.

So let us look up to Him when we are in distress. He alone can give us true strength for our journey.

And may we learn to find our strength in Him every day and in every circumstance – good or bad – for He alone is the One who can give us true strength --- deep within our soul.

Let us pray…

Sources:

BibleGateway.com