2 Samuel Chapter 8

**The Victory!**

2 Samuel 8:1-18

**The Lord gave David victory wherever he went (8:14b)**

Today’s passage is about king David’s victories. Everyone likes and wants victory. When I named Victor, I was reading the book of Revelations. And one repeating phrase touched me. It was repeated eight times. “The one who is victorious”. (Rev 2:7, 2:11, 2:17, 2:26, 3:5, 3:12, 3:21, 21:7) So, I suggested the name Victor to my wife. ‘Honey, how about Victor? It’s kind of old style, but I think it’s not bad.’ Then, Lizzy goes, ‘Oh, there you go! Yes’ She was happy with that. It was the very last night before the delivery date, and until then every time I suggested names she was like ‘Not sure... I don’t know...’ But finally she loved the name Victor. Yes, we love to be a victor, a winner. We love to be victorious. We love to be successful. We love to be fruitful. We want to win. However, it’s not that simple to be like that. I pray that God leads us to his truth this morning.

Can we read the key verse again together? **(2 Samuel 8:14b) “The Lord gave David victory wherever he went”** When we read this chapter, we feel thrilled since it is full of victories. Do you see the “verbs” used in this chapter? ‘defeated’, ‘subdued, ‘subjected’, ‘stuck down’. “Defeated” is repeating five times. It sounds like Taekwondo breaking. **(Picture #1)** It’s so powerful.

David conquered all the enemies of Israel. If you name it, it is Philistines in verse 1, Moabites in verse 2, Hadadezer in verse 3, another Aramean kingdom of Damascus in verse 4, and Ammonites, Amalek, Edomites in verse 12-13. They are all surrounding pagan countries. **(Picture #2)** For several centuries, they troubled Israelites. Throughout the days of Judges, Samuel and King Saul, Israelites were harassed by these enemies. Even the first king Saul was killed by the Philistines. But, in David’s time, they were all finally defeated. It was not a mere minor victory, but a fatal blow to his enemies. It’s like knockout KO punches. **(Picture #3)**

For Philistine, David took Metheg Ammah, the famous city of Gath, according to **1 Chronicles 18:1**. Gath is the home of Goliath. David killed Goliath before he became a king, and now David took his hometown after he became a king. In 2 Samuel chapter 21, we see David killed all four giant warriors at the battle in Gath.

For Moabites, David wiped out two thirds of the army by measuring them off with a length of cord. Hadadezer was a great king in the Syrian world. His name means “Hadad is a help.” “Hadad” is an ugly pagan god. “Ezer” is help. So, Hadadezer means Hadad is help. But he never helps. He was a useless fake god. There are many Hadadezer in this world. But they are all fake. They never help. There is only one God. Our God is the one and only true God. Amen. David captured a thousand of his chariots and seven thousand charioteers and even hamstrung the chariot horses. Chariot is like a tank in our days. David completely disarmed the enemy. Even though the Aramean ally came to help him, they did not match with David. David put garrisons, troops in the Aramean kingdom of Damascus, and they brought tribute to David.

When David defeated the entire army of Hadadezer, king of Hamath, Tou, who had been at war with Hadadezer, sent his son to King David with lots of gold, silver and bronze. He was wise enough to be humble. **Psalm 2:12 states, “Kiss his son, or he will be angry, and your way will lead to your destruction, for his wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.”** Tou humbled himself, not against David while all other surrounding countries were destroyed being hostile to David.

Look at verse 6b. **“The Lord gave David victory wherever he went.”** This repeats again in verse 14b. **“The Lord gave David victory wherever he went.”** Wow… wherever he went! East, West, South, North, Northeast, Southwest, wherever he went, God gave victory. In Genesis, there are very similar verses regarding Joseph. **(Genesis 39:3b) “the Lord gave him success in everything he did.”** Again, **(Genesis 39:23b) “the Lord gave him success in whatever he did.”** ‘Victory in every way’, ‘Success in everything’. Isn’t it so good even just to think about it? It sounds too good to be true.

What are the things God wants to tell us? David’s life challenges us to look to God who gives us victory. And there are several things we are reminded of here.

**First, Fight**. These days, there is a trend of “less is more” and “less is better”. In the beauty industry I am working in, there is a “no-no” ingredient list. We do not put preservatives, we do not add chemicals, we don’t use artificial pigment, something like that. We call it ‘clean beauty’, or ‘conscious beauty’. Also, people seek ‘gluten free, paraben free, oil free, fat free, caffeine free,’ so many ‘something free’ items. Likewise, sometimes we would desire a problem-free life, stress-free life, worry-free, conflict-free, exam-free life. But, there is nothing like that. It’s discontinued. It’s out of stock. At least in this broken world. Somebody may dream of sitting in a first-class seat, having a delicious drink and watching a fun movie, and flying to the heavenly kingdom, non-stop, of course, with no turbulence. But what is reality? **Deuteronomy 32:11 “like an eagle that stirs up its nest and hovers over its young, that spreads its wings to catch them and carries them aloft.”** “Spreads its wings to catch them” means that the eagle drops its young from the nest. God trains his people to become like an eagle. No matter how fierce storm is coming, no fear, an eagle flies over the storm.

Or, we tend to have a mindset to receive God’s words passively. ‘As God promised, so he would do everything’ kind of mindset. But what did David do when he received God’s promise in 2 Samuel 7 that wicked people would not oppress Israel anymore and I would give you rest from all your enemies? Did he just sit back and wait for God to rain down fire on all those enemies? No. He claimed the promise with faith. **(2 Samuel 7:25) “And now, Lord God, keep forever the promise you have made concerning your servant and his house. Do as you promised,”** He claimed the promise. And then? He went out and fought the fight that needed to be fought to the end with faith. God promises. So, we should act with faith. God promises to give a victory. So, we fight. God promises to answer. We pray. God promises to forgive our sins. So, we repent. God promises to make you fishers of man. We go fishing. We fight to trust him. We fight to obey him. We should receive God’s words with active faith. That is a very important key to a victorious life.

God wants to make us a victor through the process of fighting. So, when we face a problem, we should not run away or try to avoid it. When we face an enemy, we should not be intimidated. When we stumble, we should not be discouraged. It is a great opportunity to learn and grow and experience God’s blessing. Keep on fighting, and never give up. **Proverbs 24:16a, “Though the righteous fall seven times, they rise again”** As long as we determine to fight, God gives us victory. Amen.

**Second, Patience**. We need to be patient. Look at verse 1a. **“In the course of time”** We may think that David’s victory happened overnight. Maybe the first one or two years of his reign? Nope. “In the course of time” means several decades. At least 20 years I believe. For example, the defeat of Ammonites is recorded in chapter 10 and 11. And David and Bathsheba’s incident happens during the war against Ammonites. It is when about 15 - 20 years passed since David became a king. We see the God-given victory was taking place over the course of time. Actually, it happens throughout our lives. So we should learn to be patient. There is no simple fix to our life. Our sins, our problems, relational, emotional, spiritual whatever, health issues, finance, career, ministry, family, children. There is no one-time simple solution to that. It takes time. But God is doing his work slowly but surely. So we should learn to be patient with faith. We can also be joyful and thankful in patience and faith. Joy upon victory is thankfulness, and joy in advance is called faith. Faith, patience, and joy go hand in hand. And the fruit is victory.

**Third, Honoring God**. Look at verse 11. **“King David dedicated these articles to the Lord, as he had done with the silver and gold from all the nations he had subdued.”** David honored God. He acknowledged his victories came from God. And he joyfully dedicated the plunders to the Lord. I would say this is about the priority of life. Priority is a very important concept in our life. If we set the right first priority, the remainders get in order naturally. But, if we do not set the first priority, life gets messy. Everything would battle to win our attention. It would be like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. Double-minded. It’s never going to be victorious or successful. The Lord is the one and only true God who is worthy of our love, honor, worship, and dedication. Amen. David loved God. He put his trust in God. **Psalm 44:6-7,
“I put no trust in my bow, my sword does not bring me victory; but you give us victory over our enemies, you put our adversaries to shame.”** And he gave glory back to God. I think David is the almost only person in the Old Testament who confesses his affection to God so boldly and plainly. **Psalm 18:1a “I love you, Lord”.** He really loved God. And he really sought God. **Proverbs 8:17 states, “I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me.”** Again, **Psalm 149:4, “For the Lord takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with victory.”** David loved God who loved him. God loved David who loved him. David humbled himself before his God. And God crowned David with victory. This is a very beautiful relationship. This intimate loving relationship is where God wants to lead us into. When we stand in the right relationship with God, we can enjoy a truly victorious life.

**Fourth, Serving Others**. Look at verse 15. **“David reigned over all Israel, doing what was just and right for all his people.”** David served his people as a king. He did not indulge in his own glory. He was not selfish. His first priority is to love and honor God. His second priority is to serve his people. This is what God is pleased with. When God gives us something good, it is not just for ourselves. There is always God’s good purpose when giving us good things. It is to serve others. Whether it is money, talents, success, authority, or anything, we should think about the purpose God meant for our lives. We all know why God gave Solomon amazing wisdom. When God said to Solomon, **“Ask for whatever you want me to give you.”** Solomon answered, **“Give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may lead this people, for who is able to govern this great people of yours?” (2 Chronicles 1:10)** God was very pleased with Solomon’s desire and promised to give him wisdom and knowledge, and also wealth, possessions and honor. This is God’s heart. When we have the right purposes and right motives, he blesses us abundantly. But like **James 4:3 states, “You do not have because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.”** So, God first, others next, me last. Keeping with the right order of life is a key to a victorious life.

There is one more thing left, the most important one. Let’s read verse 14b again. **“The Lord gave David victory wherever he went”** Actually, chapter 8 is not about David’s victories. It’s all about God’s victories. The real Hero of David’s story is God. God defeated all the enemies as he promised. David’s life is foreshadowing our Lord Jesus Christ. The true Champion. What is the ultimate victory God has given us? **1 Corinthians 15:24-26 states, “Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.”** Again, **1 Corinthians 15:56-57 states, “The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”** God has given us the victory over sin. God has given us the victory over death. Jesus defeated the power of sin and death. Jesus defeated our arch enemy, the devil. He crushed the head of Satan. The utmost and foremost victory is the Victory at Calvary. The capital “V” Victory. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died for our sins and he set us free from all the condemnation, and all enemies. And, he resurrected from the grave. He has overcome the power of death. Here is the declaration of the Bible. **(John 3:16) “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.”** All our day-to-day victories flow from this Victory at Calvary.

Do we recognize the victories God has given us? The victories God has given in my soul? In my character, in my thought, in my language, in my family, in my marriage, in my child, in my career, in my ministry? God has and is and will give you victories wherever you go in Jesus Christ. So, like David, give thanks to God, dedicate his blessing back to God. There are things we are now praying for a victory? Are you praying for the victory in our children’s life? Are you praying for a certain sin problem in your life? Keep praying and fighting the good fight of faith. Our God knows it. He knows how our children are doing. He knows my marriage. He knows my weakness. He knows my stumble. He knows the one I am loving and praying for. When we put our trust in Jesus, and grab hold of his promises, he never disappoints us. As he promised, he would never leave us, he would never forsake us, he would give you victory wherever you go, whatever you do. Amen. **1 John 5:4-5 states, “for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.”** Praise the Lord.

When I was asked to deliver this message, honestly, I was reluctant to do that. Because no matter how I think of myself, I couldn’t think I would be the right person to deliver this message. My life never seemed victorious. I felt like I was totally wretched. Last March, my wife passed out in the middle of the night due to shock. She remained half-conscious for an hour. I had to call 911 and she was brought to Emergency Room in an Ambulance. That night, we fought, and I was about to leave home. I almost gave up on my marriage, even on my children. It was because of me. I was unfaithful, unloving, and proud and weak. My life seemed falling apart. My wife could come back to normal after several hours and we started the following day as if there had happened nothing. But, my heart was empty. I didn’t know what to do. I only cried for help to God. I knew I didn’t have any strength or hope on my own. But I couldn’t give up because God didn’t give up. When thinking about Jesus’ love on the Calvary, his love was so amazingly great, and had me not give up. I only prayed. ‘Lord, I know only you can restore us. Only you can help us. If we love each other and unite with each other, it is purely your miracle. But Lord, please do the miracle. You built up this house church. You have upheld us until now. You have given us our beautiful children. I believe you have your plan, your pleasing and perfect will. Please show your miracle.’ I am still praying. ‘Lord, please give your victory to our home. Drive out all our enemies from this house and help us only love, serve, and become one.’ These days there is one more confession I make when praying. ‘Lord, my wife is better than me. She is better than me. Please bless her.’ (Philippians 2:3) I believe only by God’s love and grace, we will defeat all our enemies. Hatred, pride, selfishness, disobedience, dissension, lust, worry, fear. Thank God for Jesus, the real Hero of my life. In Jesus, we will all be a victor. No, more than a conqueror.

Let’s read together Romans 8:37-39. **“No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”** Amen. Praise be to the Lord Jesus, our Hero, our Champion, our King. Amen.