

WHEN DEFEAT COMES KNOCKING

Friday, April 27

Reading: Psalm 60

Psalm 60:3 *You have shown your people desperate times; you have given us wine that makes us stagger. 4 But for those who fear you, you have raised a banner to be unfurled against the bow. 5 Save us and help us with your right hand, that those you love may be delivered.*

What do you do in the face of defeat? That is the question raised by Psalm 60. David had been king of Israel for many years. He and the army were in the far north battling a Syrian threat. With David occupied, the Edomites decide to take advantage and invade Judah from the south doing a great deal of damage, trying to tear Israel apart. David will send Joab and Abishai to defeat the Edomites, but this psalm appears to be written before that victory was accomplished (see 2 Samuel 8; 1 Chronicles 18).

The defeat at the hands of the Edomites brought David to his knees. The land had been “shaken and torn open” and it is a “desperate time.” David saw this defeat as coming from the hand of God (60:1-3: notice the repetition of “You”). David feels that it is a sign of God’s rejection and cries out for Him to restore and save them.

Despite the anger of the Lord, David holds on to the truth that they are still “Your people” (60:3) and “those You love” (60:5). Because of this, David is confident that God will save, help, and deliver them. The people fear the Lord and rally around His banner (60:3-4). In ancient warfare a banner or standard was a visual rallying point during a battle. If soldiers were confused in the heat of battle they could look to the banner to see where their forces were assembled. God’s people look to Him for their strength and victory (60:4-6, 11-12).

David also looked to God’s Word. He had promised His people victory over their enemies and He would come through (60: 6). He declared that the tribes of Israel (represented by Gilead, Manasseh, Ephraim, and Judah) belonged to Him (60:7). He also states that Israel’s enemies are also under His control. He pictures them as servants, washing His feet and taking care of His shoes (60:8). These promises allowed David to triumphantly state that God would go with them in the battle against Edom and give them victory (60:9-10).

When defeat comes knocking we can learn from David’s example. He did not complain or pout. He took the matter to the Lord and pleaded for His help. He reminded himself of their position as the people who God loves. And he remembered God’s Word and took strength in His promises.

We too must remember who we are in Christ. We are God’s chosen people called to be His light in the darkness (1 Peter 2:9-10). When you feel defeated strengthen your heart with God’s love and purpose for your life.

We too must rest in God’s Word. It is our source for knowing and doing God’s will. It is God’s love letter to us to make us complete and ready to serve Him (2 Timothy 3:14-17). When you feel defeated rally around God’s Word for help and guidance.

THRU THE BIBLE Reading: 1 Samuel 22-24; John 17