

SERIES: 'NEVER HEARD THAT'- -8/4/24 (#2) PASTOR Lee

- Today's story: Abishai.....he is one of many Biblical people, with significant roles, that we tend to gloss over. Introduced to us in 2 Samuel as one of David's 'Mighty Men'...a extraordinary group of superior, heroic and elite warriors...akin to our Seal Team 6. The focus today is on this one man....the premier warrior of this top 30 band but just beneath the (super) "mighty" three of all David's formidable warrior chiefs. Inferred and as you read the Scripture, this one warrior, exemplifying his prowess and on behalf of David, killed 300 men at one time....by himself?!!

2 Sam 23:18-19- - Now Abishai, the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was chief of the thirty. And he wielded his spear against three hundred men and killed them and won a name beside the three. (19) He was the most renowned of the thirty and became the commander, but he did not attain to the three.

- In 1 Samuel, he shows up in fascinating moments within David's conquests as a key commanding officer.. Remember and as we study, all Scripture is God-breathed, inspired, etc.so how is these verses helpful in any of the purposes of Scripture?
- In the OT, we see these events with real people In real time...living their lives.....but how could it apply to us so many millennia later? BUT, what happened then, historically and considering human nature, repeats it even today. So God gives us a structure and offers these events as a sort of training guide as we confront analogous situations today.

1 Cor 10: 11- - Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come.

- So....even these more obscure characters in scripture serve a purpose and are instructional.
- Background: this all takes place during the period of time when the Israelites were intent upon having a King....God relented and Saul assumed this role.....initially, very well and faithfully.....until he stopped following God's ways. Example: God commanded him (in His ultimate wisdom) to completely destroy the Amalekites....Saul didn't.
- Ultimately, Saul is replaced by David....the same David, a shepherd boy, who first came to fame by killing Goliath and saving the day for Israel. Scripture says David was a man after God's own heart. Notwithstanding, David was a man who, over time, failed miserably and greatly sinned.
- Prior to his encounter with Goliath, David becomes part of Saul's court. As Saul turned away from God, the wonderfully powerful Holy Spirit left him (unlike post-crucifixion Christ who gives believers , forever, the GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT....prior, the HS's presence could be transitory). Note: Are we routinely conscious of the Holy Spirit indwelling within us...His power to help us live Godly lives.....or, do we take His gifts for granted?
- David, in playing his music (lyre) at the King's Court, began filling the void in Saul's now evil-spirited heart. (See 1 Sam 16) ((Note: David became, also, one of his 'armor-bearers' all the while still shepherding for his father)). After the defeat of Goliath and the Philistines, David received much acclaim...Kings Saul, rather inexplicably considering he is King, becomes angry, intimidated and jealous.....and begins his quest to chase down David and kill him.
- In 1 Samuel: 22, David has to leave Israel for Moab, a godless, bitter and distressed country but which hailed David as sort of the 'anti-Saul' and became their Commander. He proceeds to train this 'rag-tag' group out of which emerged 'David's Mighty Men'.

- Thus appears Abishai, the mighty and powerful warrior. You would expect, from David's perspective, their role would be to destroy the enemy. But his instructions and response tell us otherwise and reflect a message for us today. Remember, things that happened then....even today have guiding value. Instruction and response then....instruction and response now.
- Referencing 1 Samuel 26: 6-25.....Saul is chasing David...its evening...David spots Saul's camp/army ...Abishai volunteers to accompany David and sneak into the sleeping camp (Abishai assumes the purpose of which is to sneak up to Saul and kill him). With opportunity in their hands, David commands Abishai to not”destroy him! Who can lay a hand on the Lord's anointed and be guiltless? As surely as the Lord lives”, he said, “the Lord himself will strike him, or his time will come and he will die.....or he will die in battle and perish”. (Which happens). David goes on to say that the Lord forbids that I lay a hand on the 'Lord's anointed'. Abishai, so counter-intuitively, obeys. Saul.....acknowledging David's power and mercy, retreats (temporarily). So, David abides in God's Will.....Abishai abided in David's will.
- Saul eventually dies in battle....David becomes King.....victorious, anointed, powerful, immaculately comfortable...yet, disturbingly, in 2 Samuel 15/16, David is running again! This time, from his 3rd son, Absalom who has betrayed David for his own ambitions to be King. Can we imagine being betrayed by your own 'flesh and blood'...(of course, it happened even today).
- In 2 Samuel 16: 5-12, a man from David's past re-appears (Saul's family).....cursing/stoning David.....Abishai angrily readies to defend David and kill him...David commands that he not.....and again motivated by and recognizing God's will (even to torment him!).
- 2 Samuel 18, Abishai is put in charge of a third of David's entire army. In 2 Sam 21: 16-17, in battling the Philistines, David is exhausted and losing a fight with a great warrior (and descendent of the giants) called Ishbi-benob. Abishai comes to his aid/saves David's life and kills this formidable warrior.
- Pastor Lee repeats 2 Samuel 23:18.....'but he did not attain to the three'. Just as, notwithstanding our own aspirations, no matter what you trying , qualifications, etc. there's always someone above in accolades, accomplishments, stature, etc. You, yourself are not at the top....not 'amongst the three'.
- These stories are told to encourage us so we know how life works!

1 Cor 1: 26 For consider your calling, brothers,: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth (27) but God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; (28) God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are., (29) so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. (30) And because of Him, you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, (31) so that, as written, “let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

-In the total scheme of things.....its not about ourselves...not our will...our talents....our anything.....its about the power, will and righteousness of God and the justification we receive through Jesus..... Its Christ who has redeemed you and lifted you up through the Holy Spirit. It is all in Jesus Christ! Look to Him...not ourselves!

BOAST IN THE LORD!

