

The Lord Fights

2 Samuel 3:1

Where is the Lord working in your life today?

Be on alert for spiritual sloth and pride.

You are in David's palace in Hebron. Surrounded by violence and foolishness, David remains steadfast, prioritizing God's glory above his own. We must resist being sucked into the vortex of confusion and continue to seek the Lord in prayer and work within his timing.

Pray that the Lord draws you out of sloth to embrace the kingly mission he has given you. Pray for the grace of freedom and humility for all Exodus Men, just as they are praying for you.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lord and Master of my life, spare me from the spirit of indifference, despair, lust for power, and idle chatter. Instead, bestow on me, your servant, the spirit of integrity, humility, patience, and love. Yes, O Lord and King, let me see my own sins and not judge my brothers and sisters; for you are blessed forever and ever. Amen.

A Reading from the Second Book of Samuel

There was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David; and David grew stronger and stronger, while the house of Saul became weaker and weaker.

Reflection

Once again, David finds himself in conflict with the house of Saul. The death of Saul did not rid him of trouble. You can imagine David wondering in exasperation whether he will ever be able to get on with life. When we continually struggle with the same sins, so too do we wonder whether we will ever be free, whether there is any point in continuing to fight. Maybe we should just make peace with our faults as so many counsel us today.

According to Evagrius, the idea that we will never succeed in holiness and that there is no use in hoping or trying is from the devil. It is a seed of doubt. It is a temptation to become comfortable with or at least expectant of sin. One of the tactics that Evagrius recommends to deal with any deadly sin is the memorization and quotation of Scripture. When an evil thought enters our minds, we should quote a passage of Scripture that contradicts it. It is a tactic that Evagrius learned from Jesus himself, who quoted Scripture against the devil.

A key text to keep in mind whenever we feel we are fighting in vain or that there is no hope for victory is, according to Evagrius, found in Deuteronomy 1:29–30: "Do not be in dread or afraid of them. The Lord your God who goes before you will himself fight for you, just as he did for you in Egypt before your eyes."

While David may be frustrated by the continuation of hostilities and barriers to his reign, and while we may be frustrated by the ongoing warfare against sin and the obstacles to our holiness, we must remember that God fights for us and gives us His grace. At first glance, David faces another war, but in fact, his house is being blessed with strength while that of his enemy is diminishing.

Are you wearied from fighting sin in your life? Are you irritated by having to repeat the same sins over and over in the confessional? Do you wonder whether God cares? Do you feel abandoned or unaided? These are seeds of sloth, which, if allowed to grow, will choke out the seeds of the Word. In your prayer time, ask the Lord to remind you of how you are growing stronger and stronger while the enemy of your soul is growing weaker and weaker, how you have overcome so much, and how the Lord is indeed fighting for you while allowing you the freedom and personhood to participate in his grace. Give him thanks and store away a verse like Deuteronomy 1:29-30 to use when thoughts like these threaten to demotivate your spiritual efforts.

Now place yourself before God, and converse with him.

Week 2 Action Items

Form a spiritual plan for vacation time.

Meditate on how sloth impacts your spiritual life.

Schedule fraternity time.