

In a Pit with a Lion – Pt. 1
2 Samuel 23:20-23

Introduction: Taking note of this text after reading book by Mark Batterson “In A Pit With A Lion On A Snowy Day.” Batterson is pastor of the National Community Church in Washington D.C.

1. Review story of Benaiah

- a. Man encounters lion – normal reaction is to run away
- b. Benaiah gives chase to the lion; lion falls into pit
- c. Now a chance to collect his thoughts “what was I thinking?!” but no, Benaiah jumps into the pit
- d. It was a snowy day... making things more treacherous (Jan. 2008 – 8” in Jerusalem)
- e. Benaiah comes back out; wounded, bloodied, but alive; carrying a dead lion.

Initial lesson from this story is:

2. God is in the business of strategically positioning us in the right place at the right time
 - a. But here’s the catch – the right place often ‘*feels*’ like the wrong place; and the right time often ‘*feels*’ like the wrong time.
 - b. Encounters with man-eating lions is typically a bad thing
 - i. Story of man wanting to be lion tamer who read all the books – one morning they discovered a torn up book and a satisfied lion at the zoo
 - c. Benaiah did not see it then, but this encounter; on a snowy day; was in God’s timing.
 - i. There are days of divine appointments
 1. Today is the day of salvation
 2. Today, harden not your heart
 3. It is appointed unto man to die once
 - ii. This encounter with a lion was a divine appointment for Benaiah
 - d. Vs. 23 – David made Benaiah leader of his guard

- i. What a job reference... “I killed a lion in a pit on a snowy day.”
- ii. David knew about killing lions after having experienced it himself – 1 Samuel 17:36
 1. “I killed a lion and a bear and this uncircumcised Philistine will be as one of them.”
- iii. David needed someone who could see beyond the problems to the possibilities – someone to seize opportunity when it knocked on their door.

3. God uses past experiences to prepare us for future opportunities – two points to make here.

- a. First, often, God-ordained opportunities come disguised as man-eating lions
 - i. How we react will determine our destiny
 - ii. We can cower in fear and run away from our greatest challenges
- b. Or, we can chase our God-ordained destiny by seizing the God-ordained opportunities
- c. Secondly, God wants to redeem our past lion encounters to use them in new ways and opportunities.
 - i. There have been lion encounters in my past. At the time, I didn’t know what purpose they served. Later, God used them to help me help others.

4. Spiritual maturity is seeing and seizing God-ordained opportunities – whether from current encounters or past battles

- a. Every opportunity is a gift from God
- b. What we do with the opportunity is our gift back to God.
- c. Benaiah went on to greatness: but it all started “apparently” in the wrong place at the wrong time
- d. Benaiah faced a choice – run away or give chase
- e. God is calling us to give chase today!