

WE WILL MAKE IT BACK

And everyone assembled here will know that the Lord rescues His people, but not with sword and spear. This is the Lord's battle, and He will give you to us. (1 Samuel 17:47)

June 25th marks the 70th anniversary of the Korean War sometimes called the "Forgotten War". The Korean War began on June 25, 1950 when 75,000 North Korean troops marched across the 38th parallel into South Korea. The country had been divided at the end of WWII. The Soviets occupied the North and the Americans took over the South. During the cold war era, this act by North Korean troops was seen as Soviet aggression and the spread of communism. The United Nations recommended military intervention and 21 UN member nations including Canada stepped up. Under the leadership of general Douglas MacArthur, UN forces battled the North Koreans back over the 38th parallel. Then China entered the war and their troops were able to push the UN forces back south. The war went back and forth like this until peace talks began and an armistice was signed in 1953.

Canadian troops distinguished themselves in the Korean War particularly in the battle of Kapyong when 700 Canadian soldiers held off 5,000 Chinese soldiers for two days. Some 27,000 Canadian soldiers served with 516 killed and 1,200 wounded.

I have gotten to know three of these soldiers very well at my coffee shop. Two of them have passed away in the last couple of years and one is still living. The three of them would gather most days at 9:00 a.m. to have coffee and breakfast. We would often joke with one another and with the waitresses. Over the span of a few years we shared a lot of laughs together. The three of them did not talk much about the war but I remember as one Remembrance Day approached one of these veteran's saying to the other, "We made it back!" The other veteran paused for a minute and replied "Yes, we made it back!"

I was reminded of these words this week realizing it will be the 70th anniversary of the start of the Korean War. One analogy that some people have made as we battle COVID-19 is it is like we are at war. I can understand why people might view the COVID-19 pandemic in this way

because this virus has attacked us aggressively. There have been many deaths and losses in this battle like what happens in war. There are times that it seems we are pushing COVID-19 back across safe lines only to see it push back against us as we have seen surges of cases in some countries. We have all been fighting hard in this battle against COVID-19 by isolating, practicing social/physical distancing and other things to stop the spread of this virus. Our back and forth battle with COVID-19 continues.

When a vaccine is finally discovered that proves safe and effective there will be a moment when we will be able to say what the Korean veterans said that day in the restaurant: "We made it back!" When we can finally safely return and worship together or have a meal with friends at a restaurant, or participate in our normal activities, we too will be able to reflect upon the battle we experienced with COVID19 and say, "We made it back". Imagine how good it will feel to be able to say this one day.

Until then may we find strength in something David said before he faced his battle with the mighty Goliath. David had complete trust and confidence that God was fighting with him and for him. David's faith in God is expressed in his final words before he battled Goliath:

AND EVERYONE ASSEMBLED HERE WILL KNOW THAT THE LORD
RESCUES HIS PEOPLE.

David's confidence and faith in God was well placed as we see how the Lord helped him defeat Goliath. Now it is our giant battle against COVID-19, and as we continue to fight may we be inspired by the faith of David to keep us going until the end. There will be an end to this battle with God's help. When that day comes perhaps the words you express might be the same as those veterans of the Korean war

WE HAVE MADE IT BACK

Until then let's keep remembering and believing that God rescues His people.

Take care and keep safe,

Pastor Dean