**July 25, 2021 1 Samuel 17:40-58**

***Seeing God***

**Scripture:** 1 Samuel 17:40-58 NRSV

*(40)Then he took his staff in his hand, and chose five smooth stones from the wadi, and put them in his shepherd's bag, in the pouch; his sling was in his hand, and he drew near to the Philistine. (41)The Philistine came on and drew near to David, with his shield-bearer in front of him. (42)When the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him, for he was only a youth, ruddy and handsome in appearance. (43)The Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. (44)The Philistine said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and to the wild animals of the field." (45)But David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with sword and spear and javelin; but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. (46)This very day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head; and I will give the dead bodies of the Philistine army this very day to the birds of the air and to the wild animals of the earth, so that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, (47)and that all this assembly may know that the LORD does not save by sword and spear; for the battle is the LORD's and he will give you into our hand." (48)When the Philistine drew nearer to meet David, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine. (49)David put his hand in his bag, took out a stone, slung it, and struck the Philistine on his forehead; the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell face down on the ground. (50)So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, striking down the Philistine and killing him; there was no sword in David's hand. (51)Then David ran and stood over the Philistine; he grasped his sword, drew it out of its sheath, and killed him; then he cut off his head with it. When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. (52)The troops of Israel and Judah rose up with a shout and pursued the Philistines as far as Gath and the gates of Ekron, so that the wounded Philistines fell on the way from Shaaraim as far as Gath and Ekron. (53)The Israelites came back from chasing the Philistines, and they plundered their camp. (54)David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem; but he put his armor in his tent. (55)When Saul saw David go out against the Philistine, he said to Abner, the commander of the army, "Abner, whose son is this young man?" Abner said, "As your soul lives, O king, I do not know." (56)The king said, "Inquire whose son the stripling is." (57)On David's return from killing the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul, with the head of the Philistine in his hand. (58)Saul said to him, "Whose son are you, young man?" And David answered, "I am the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite."*

**Notes:**

1. We must have God’s ***vision***.
   1. We can see God working in our ***location***.
   2. We can see God working through our ***gifts*** and ***talents***.
   3. We are able to see God working in our ***circumstances***.
   4. We are able to see God working through our ***faith***.
   5. We are able to see God working through us just ***knowing***.
2. God will not let you be tested beyond your ***strength***, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to ***endure*** it.
   1. God can and will ***defeat*** any enemy no matter how impossible it may seem.
   2. God had been ***preparing*** him while he served as a shepherd.
   3. God uses your knowing to give you the ***courage*** to get into the battle.
3. We are all facing ***battles***.
   1. God is ***preparing*** you to be victorious in the battles of life look through the eyes of your Savior, and know that you will have victory.
   2. God is all around us, and placed each ***person*** here to stand beside you in this battle.
   3. Enter the battle with the ***tools*** and ***allies*** God has given you.

**Script:**

I remember a time when I was traveling back to California University. It was a Sunday Evening after dark, roughly 9 pm. I remember it was a very foggy night, and as we traveled the Pleasantville Mountain, I remember the fog being as thick as I ever had seen it; so thick that I could not see the lines on the road right in front of me. The guy riding with me stuck his head out of the car window and tried to direct me until we were able to see better. In many ways I look back now and think that was stupid. But when you are traveling in a fog, you struggle to see and I needed to get to my destination.

Now days, they are developing cars that are able to drive themselves automatically. I do not know how it is done. I do not know if they need a line of sight or if it is all done by GPS. But I know they have been testing them and they have been effective; so effective that they claim even a blind person would be able to travel alone in one.

Now I do not know if this is such a good idea. I am not sure I would feel comfortable putting Denny in one of those cars. I’m not sure I would trust it to get him to a destination alone. It is important to see if a deer would jump out in front of a vehicle, or being able to see a pothole and steer past it. Just having the ability to see would be enough. We must be looking and paying attention to where we are going, seeing the obstacles in our way and the road signs directing us to our destination.

As we go through this life, what can we do to make sure that we are seeing clearly? Life goes by quickly and there are a lot of things that happen without warning. In fact, we don’t usually get a warning when something really bad comes along, we usually get blindsided. We need a plan, we need a vision, but, we must also pay attention to the things before us. What we must have is God’s vision, so when obstacles lie before us, we are able to see clearly what we must do. When we are able to see God’s hand at work in the situations before us, we can realize that he is with us; that we can lean on his knowledge, his grace, and his guidance; and know that He is working for us and move forward for His glory, honor, and power. Today we continue our series on potholes; Turn with to 1st Samuel 17:40-58**.**

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Last week we read of Samuel anointing David to be the next king of Israel. As soon as David was anointed, the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul. In its place, was and evil spirit that tormented him. Saul desired relief from the torment and his servants suggested somebody to play soothing melodies to calm Saul’s spirit. Wouldn’t you know it, somebody suggested one of Jesse’s sons who was very skilled with the Lyre; his name was David. Now who believes in coincidences? David came and played music for the king and it gave Saul comfort. Saul was so comforted by the music that he asked Jesse if his son David could remain there; and whenever Saul was troubled David would soothe his soul with music.

Now the Philistines gathered in preparation for battle. Saul responded by forming his army and ranks in the valley of Elah. The Philistines were on the mountain top on one side of the valley. Saul and his armies were on the mountain top on the other; with the valley between them. Now David did not stay with the encampment, but traveled back and forth from Saul to care for his father’s flocks. However, David’s three oldest brothers followed Saul. Now among the Philistines was a giant named Goliath. He was estimated to have stood over 9 feet tall. He was clothed in armor and carried a spear. Each day he would come to the front and taunt the Israelites. He begged them to send one man out to fight against him; the winner of that fight would determine the victor of this confrontation, sparing many lives in the process. For 40 days the army’s faced off and each day Goliath would come out, hurl insults and beg for one man to come against him. And each day, King Saul and the Israelite army would be dismayed, they did not see a way to defeat this giant.

On one particular day Jesse sent some supplies with David, essentials, grain and bread for his brothers and cheeses for the commanders of the army. Jesse also asked David to bring back a token from them. David rose early that day and left the sheep with a keeper. When he arrives at the encampment the armies are gathering at the front line, Goliath steps forward as he had done 39 times before and makes his challenge. The Israelite army withdraws in fear of Goliath. David makes several inquiries, including, “*… who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the army of living God?*” Saul summoned David and David volunteered to go and defeat Goliath. Saul told David that he was not able to do such a thing because of his age, but David explained that he has fought and killed bears and lions in the past, “*Your servant has killed both lions and bears; and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, since he has defied the armies of the living God*”

Saul thinking, he was doing David a favor equipped him with his own armor and weapons. But David could hardly move with the weight of it all; so, he stripped the armor off. He went to a stream and picked up five smooth stones and proceeded to confront Goliath. When David stood before Goliath, Goliath began his ridicule of David. What you think me a dog that you come after me with a stick, come here boy and I will give your flesh to the birds and animals. And David responded to the big guy, “*You come to me with a sword, spear, and javelin, I come in the name of the Lord of Hosts. The God of Israel that you have defied. This very day the Lord will deliver you into my hand and I will strike you dead. And the dead bodies of the philistine army will be given to the birds and animals all will know that there is a God in Israel, and he does not save by the sword or spear*.”

Goliath began to draw close to David and with that David ran at Goliath; reaching in his bag, taking his sling and one smooth stone, and planting that stone in the center of Goliaths head. Goliath drops face down to the earth but David continues running to the fallen giant. He grabs Goliath’s sword out of his sheath and removes Goliaths head from his shoulders. When the Philistines saw there fallen champion, they began to run away and the army of Israel followed after, defeating the Philistines as they traveled across the land in retreat

As I said before we need to have a plan, a vision, and paying attention to what God is doing. We must have God’s vision; and when we do, we will understand more clearly what is happening. When we are able to see God in the circumstances around us, then we can truly know that he is working in our midst, and we can move forward doing his will for His glory, honor, and power.

We can see God working in our location. God has a way of arranging for you to be where he wants you to be. He may uproot you with little notice. He may make you stay somewhere that you don’t really want to be. He may send you to deal with people that you don’t really want to deal with. God uses your location as a place of preparation, preparing you for work in the future, allowing you a time of rest. God will use your location as a tool for His kingdom, and as a part of his schedule.

We can see God working through our gifts and talents. Let me say be careful with that word “your”. God has given you these abilities that you cannot explain, and he has given them to you for a purpose. Thinking that you done something on your own power, strength, or talents; that is a slippery slope we do not want to fall down. God uses these gifts and talents to minister to those around you; to those He chooses. God uses these gifts and talents to demonstrate his power, just like David did with Goliath. And God uses these gifts and talents on his time, according to his schedule.

We are able to see God working in our circumstances. David didn’t choose to be at the battle lines that day, David was following the directions of his father, and Jesse didn’t know what was happening at the front. But God arranged the circumstances and will use your circumstances to test your loyalties. Who are you loyal to? He will test your courage. Who do you listen to? And He will test your trust in His timing. He knows when the time is right.

We are able to see God working through our faith. Faith is believing and trusting in something that your senses can’t pick up on. It is having a vision of what God wants from you and for you. David had a spiritual vision about how to deal with Goliath. He had never fought in a battle before, let alone a giant. He had no clue how this whole thing would unfold. He just knew God was leading him, and he was determined to follow. He had confidence that the Lord would be with him, no matter what. God uses our faith to help us get past hurtful words from others. God uses our faith to help us get past the limitations we establish with our doubts. God uses our faith to keep us on His schedule.

We are able to see God working through us just knowing. About now you are wondering, “Knowing what?” Let us start with Knowing that God is in control. Knowing that God will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it. Knowing God will not let you go into a battle you are not prepared for. Knowing that God can and will defeat any enemy no matter how impossible it may seem.

As I shared, David went to Saul and told him he would go and battle Goliath. At first Saul had doubts, and he may have still had doubts after he sent David to meet Goliath. When Saul questioned his age and inexperience, Davids reply was that God had been preparing him while he served as a shepherd. If God could make him victorious over a bear or lion, surely this Philistine was able to be defeated and God will give him the victory. Saul gave David his blessing and then his weapons and armor. But it was obvious that these weapons and tools of warfare were not what David needed. David needed to enter the battle with the tools that God had given him. He took his staff, his sling, and 5 smooth stones.

When David was finally face to face with this giant; He was met with lies, ridicule, and profanity. These are all, Satan’s ways of distracting us from our true purpose. But David was prepared with the truth of God. David shared with Goliath what his intentions were and who sent him, and he wasn’t sent by king Saul, but the living God of Israel. As Goliath approached, David trusted the Lord to lead and guide him. David in a fluid and smooth motion, pulled the sling and stone from the pouch, swung it around his head to build momentum, and left it fly, striking the giant down. God uses your knowing to give you the courage to get into the battle. Knowing you are on God’s time, and that you will be victorious over the enemy.

We are all facing battles this morning, some of the battles we face are battles with the world, others are battles within ourselves and our own self image. Some of these battles may be dealing with family or friends. God has been preparing you to be victorious in the battles of life, no matter what the battle is you are facing. If you will look through the eyes of your Savior, you will be able to know that you will have victory.

Look around you; to your left, and look to your right, now look behind you, and then look in front of you. God is all around us, and he has placed each person here this morning, in your presence to stand beside you in this battle that we face. We do not need to face these battles alone, enter the battle with the tools and allies God has given you.