



SESSION SNAPSHOT

BELIEVING IN THE ONE WHO SLAYS GIANTS

NARRATIVE PASSAGE:

1 Samuel 17:38-51

GOSPEL FOCUS:

Luke 9:23

TAKEAWAYS:

- Prepare in private so you're ready in public
- Your identity is in Christ

LAST WEEK'S READING:

- 1 Samuel 17-18
- 1 Samuel 19-20
- 1 Samuel 21-22
- Psalm 22; 1 Samuel 24-25:1
- 1 Samuel 28; 31

KNOW THE WORD

PASSAGE OVERVIEW

1 Samuel 14:52 tells us about how fierce the conflict between the Philistines and Israelites had become, and that King Saul's response was to enlist any strong or brave man he encountered into the army to fight them. But King Saul had repeatedly proven himself unfit for leading God's people, so God removed His Spirit from Saul and put it into David. The first time that we saw David was when Samuel was anointing him over the rest of his brothers; today we will see him as he takes his first steps toward being the powerful, godly king that he eventually became by standing up to Goliath when nobody else would.

COMMENTARY AND STUDY MATERIALS

v.38 In this ancient culture, it was a common belief that wearing the clothing of another person imbued the wearer with that person's essence: it made those to people essentially share the owner's very being. In this way, Saul would have traditionally received part of the glory for David's victory. David is extremely clear on this matter, though: the Lord will share His victory with nobody, not even David.

v.40 David could have done everything leading up to this point perfectly. He could have spoken boldly in defiance of Goliath, rejected Saul's armor, trusted in God's armor, and selected his battle weapons, but if he hadn't approached Goliath, it would have just been talk. Real faith is what made David draw near him and, later, run up to the battle without fear.

Regarding the five smooth stones, commentators are divided. Some suggest that these stones represent Goliath and each of his brothers (2 Samuel 21:18-22 suggests that he had four brothers). Others believe that by grabbing multiple stones, he was not putting God to the test by "limiting" Him to a single outcome. Still, others argue that the five stones represent the books of the Torah. Regardless of what the significance of the five stones is, we know that David showed up prepared to do his part and knew that he could trust God for the rest--regardless of the outcome.

v.51 In an ironic twist, David did not kill Goliath with an Israelite weapon or even with one of the stones selected from the riverbed, but with Goliath's own sword. The shot from the sling incapacitated the giant, triggering his defeat, but his death came when David walked over, unsheathed his own sword, and finished the job.

STUDY THE WORD

Every now and then, we get a chance to put a skill we've spent time developing and honing in a time when that skill is needed the most. You might have trained for an athletic event, developed a specific skill set, or seen time spent in preparation pay off.

Have you ever trained for something or honed a skill and then gotten to use it? Tell us about it.

Is there anything you're preparing for now that you might not need until sometime later?

OUT LOUD, READ 1 SAMUEL 17:34-40

Remember that David has had no military training. He isn't even the oldest of his brothers. But he has received something that puts him in the exact right position to face Goliath: God's Spirit.

What about David's life had prepared him to face Goliath?

Why do you think it was important for him to remember the times the Lord had protected him in the past? When has it helped you to do the same thing?

David had spent his entire life up to that point being a shepherd in his father's fields. That meant he devoted his day to protecting and caring for the wellbeing of a flock of animals. When he had empty hours in the day (as he undoubtedly would have), he spent them preparing for things to come so that, should a threat arise, he would be ready. But even more importantly than that, he was careful to cultivate a close relationship with his Heavenly Father, whom he served throughout his entire life.

When a large, seemingly impossible obstacle showed up in Israel's path, the first thing they did was tremble. But the first thing David did was step up. When have you encountered an obstacle that seemed impossible to overcome?

Though Goliath was certainly an obstacle, David didn't focus on him like that. Instead, he saw this as an opportunity to make God's name and power known to those around him. He never prays for the obstacle to be removed. He doesn't ask for an easy road out. Instead, he

OUT LOUD, READ 1 SAMUEL 17:41-51

Pay attention to the way David conducts himself and speaks in the face of Goliath's insults. Also notice how David never once takes an opportunity to take any glory for himself.

What do you think David's ultimate goal was when fighting Goliath? What makes you say that?

What do you think it looks like to accomplish something with the Lord's strength instead of your own? When have you experienced that in your own life?

What are things you can do today that will make "the whole world know" that we have a victorious God?

Up to this point, David's life has been one of focus. It's crucial for a shepherd to be focused on the task of keeping his sheep protected; he has to be ready at any moment to defend them from a predator or rescue them from a dangerous situation. But his life was also completely focused on the Lord and ensuring anything he did was dedicated to bringing God glory.

What do you think gets in the way of our focus on the Lord?

When do you feel the most easily distracted? What are some of the things that distract you most easily?

What is a step you can take today to prepare yourself in private for a spiritual battle that will come your way in the future?

We have no shortage of distractions that crop up to take our focus off of the Lord. In fact, it isn't much of a stretch to say that most of us have no problem taking our eyes off of Jesus, whether it is out of fear of what is in front of us or out of a desire to make a name for ourselves.

It might be easy to see ourselves as David in this story, but what is more difficult to admit--and what might be more true--is that we look more like Goliath than we think. We were born enemies of God (Romans 5:10) who constantly look for ways to bring ourselves glory. We must put that to death every single day.

Read Luke 9:23. How does this relate to the account we read today of David and Goliath?

What can we do to die to self every day? Why do you think this is so important if we want to follow Jesus?

APPLY THE WORD

In order to put Goliath to death in our own lives--the spirit that rebels against God and seeks, instead, to glorify ourselves--we need to live like David did. We must focus. We must prepare. We must seek out and destroy that which lives in contradiction to the Lord. And we can only do that with the Lord's help.

Before you close your time in prayer, encourage those in your group to take a few minutes when you are done to answer the following and share updates next week:

Where does my mind go when it begins to wander?

What areas of my life are ones that I need to surrender to the Lord if I want to follow Him?

How can I glorify God in both my public and private life?

PREPARE FOR NEXT WEEK

Next Week's Reading:

- ***2 Samuel 1; 2:1-7***
- ***2 Samuel 3:1; 5; Psalm 23***
- ***2 Samuel 6-7***
- ***Psalm 18; 2 Samuel 9***
- ***2 Samuel 11-12***