

'The Rise of the Kings Series'

Sermons in the Book of

1 Samuel

Message 26 - 'Living for God's Glory'

1 Samuel 17:1 - 51

We know the story well, and so this is going to be very short because we all know the application don't we, God gives us the strength to defeat the giants in our lives. That's it isn't it...actually, no, that is not the point of the verses we have before us. Despite all the detail of the emergence and victory of God's man, David, the true heart of the passage is that God's glory was at stake. Goliath's words and actions had dishonoured the God of Israel. This is a matter of the glory of God. Are you a person who is concerned for God's glory? Is that your chief purpose to glorify Him? It was David's purpose! We saw the following:



The Announcer of the Challenge (v1-11) - We are introduced to Goliath in the first part of the narrative, and it is a hefty introduction so that the reality of the enemy is very clear and vivid in our minds. He strides forward to break the silence, the Philistine champion, and challenges the Israelites to a 'winner takes it all' battle of single-handed combat, one champion against another. Goliath makes a real impression, and as the narrative unfolds the description, we are left in no doubt that this was an awesome individual. We are told of Goliath's size, His armour, His weapons, the weight of His weapons in v4-7. Then from this mighty man, come the words of bravado, of arrogant challenge, for someone to take him on. No-one would at this moment. What has been the purpose of the previous chapter, have we not just been reminded of the need to look beyond appearance? Have we not just been reminded that we do things not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of God? Here again people are taken with the external appearance. In so many things we can be consumed with the external appearances, where we need to consider things from a spiritual perspective as God reveals to us in His Word. Arriving at v12, on the back of the mounting tension and humiliation, we see that God's hand is bringing His man at just the right time. God always has a habit of sending forth His servants 'for such a time as this'. When we look around at these times of darkness, where the enemy boldly opposes, the churches seem to be looking for the panic button, we need individuals who like David, have a grand view of God and His glory, and not only that but are willing to live for God's glory.

The Acceptor of the Challenge (v12-51) - Goliath's babblings continue, only this time, David heard in v23. David's reaction shows his faith, and we need to consider it, but don't forget that behind it is the hand of God, and also that concern for God's glory is the driving element in David's words and actions. In v26, David speaks, this is the first time David's words are actually recorded in the Scriptures, and what a first, his comments reveal the driving purpose of his heart, this man after God's own heart. Here we see a clear aspect of that, David was concerned for God's glory, and God is concerned for His glory, for His name's sake. Surely the reality of the living God should impact on Israel's actions? Israel looked upon Goliath as undefeatable, yet David trusts in God who is sovereign, and living in the light of this, David has a completely different view of things. The lesson is clear, Christianity is not just some abstract theology and system about God, it is God revealing Himself to us in the glory of the Gospel, and the preciousness of the Truth, and being a Christian is to live each day in the light of the reality of God, His sovereign hand, His loving care, and His providential ways. As we continue in the narrative, unfortunately we have to take a moment to listen to the jealous babblings of Eliab. One commentator makes the excellent point that we should see Eliab as a mirror. He had mirrored handsome Saul before Samuel. Here he mirrors Goliath. Do you see the contempt in his words as he tries to belittle David? He mocks his role as shepherd (you're a shepherd, this is a place for real men), whilst also placing himself on a par with God, as he apparently can see the depths and motivation of David's heart. David has to fight a pre-Goliath fight with Eliab, Goliath will express contempt for David, but then Eliab has already done so.

(Please continue to page 2 for the rest of the notes!)



Penzance Baptist Church
'Upholding the Ordinary Means of Grace'

Pastor Jonathan Stobbs

The Acceptor of the Challenge (v12-51) Continued - Then we come to the conversation with Saul, and what turns out to be a second pre-Goliath fight. Saul says he is too young to fight, come back in thirty years time and you might be ready. Saul focused on the human, but David was trusted in the Lord's deliverance. There is great purpose in David's words in v34-37. It is here that we see the driving force in David's faith, so much so that he is willing to face Goliath. It is steeped in what we spoke of last time, God prepared David in the field. David speaks of how he has tasted the Lord's deliverance as a shepherd, how he has lived with a constant threat to himself and his flock, how he has proved the good hand of the Lord. He faced the raging lion, the bear, and knew victory. It is the Ebenezer moment, God has helped me thus far, and He will lead me through. What a lesson this is for us to grasp! As our faith keeps us in the present, it is fuelled by the Lord's provision in the past. As we dwell on the goodness of God in the past, it gives us confidence to face the future. No experience is wasted, but rather they serve as testimonies of the goodness and glory of God in His dealings with His people. This wasn't theology to him, for David, his theology was the practical outworking of his faith in his day to day life, and his God-given understanding helped him to walk in God-honouring ways. The key element is found in v37, 'He will deliver me'. It is not about David's grit, it is not about his courage, but it is about the delivering power of a mighty God! Circumstances will change, but the faithfulness of God to His people is unchanging, and why is God like this? Why does He uphold His people? For the honour and glory of His name. Even as David comes to combat with Goliath, His words are full of faith, and full of the glory of God as he refutes the mockery of Goliath. His concern is that all the world will know that there is a God, a real God, in Israel. In this speech, we also see that David underlines that it is through the weakness of His servants that Yahweh saves. Goliath came with his array of fine armour, whereas, David comes with but a sling, and actually has to borrow Goliath's sword to finish the job. This element has run through the chapter. All the big characters have dismissed David as weak. Eliab thought he was an insignificant pain. Saul thought him to be inexperienced and too green to face Goliath. Goliath laughs at the challenge from this mere boy. Yet God uses David to deliver Israel, David didn't have the right equipment, he refused man's imposed suggestion of armour, why? All the experts suggested he would not succeed unless he used the man-made provision. He trusts that God will bring deliverance without a display of man's strength. This is a reality throughout the Scriptures. It is not about having the best weapons, it is about whether you have the real God. Understanding our own inadequacy is fertile ground for God to work. When He works through weakness, it brings glory to His name. The primary concern of this chapter was God's honour, His glory was at stake. Goliath mocks the living God, and Israel's troops acknowledge this in v25. It is David who stands apart and recognises the disgrace of such mockery. He asserts this point in all his dealings with people in this chapter. David is driven by a passion for the glory of God, and when we see the chapter through this lens, we realise, it is not about David's cleverness, it is not about his bravery, or his courage, it is about God's adequacy in David's weakness. David himself has underlined this. He refuses to steal any of the glory away from God as the Scriptures underline. How do I catch this vision? How do I have a desire to live for God's glory? By having a real, living encounter with Him. How? Through Jesus Christ, full of glory, grace, and truth, by coming to the cross. In 1 Samuel 17 the promised king defeats the enemy of His people. He does it for the glory of God and the deliverance of His people. The enemy needed to be defeated, the victory to be won. As I said last time, in this chapter, we are in the presence of Jesus, David's greater son. He it would be who would face the enemy at the cross, the blazing centre of the glory of God, and in the darkness of Calvary would cry, 'It is finished!' Christ was the victor, and He it is who has made a way, for sinners such as you and I, to come into the presence of a holy God. When we see ourselves in all our sin, we are undone, yet in love and grace, God breathes life into us, we are changed forever, through faith we claim the promises, and a submission to the will and ways of God. He will change us from glory unto glory. Why? For His names sake. As God reveals Himself to us, and we catch a glimpse of His glory, our position is such that as Warfield says, '*that sight of the majesty of God pervades all of life and all of experience.*' God saves sinners so that we no longer live for sin, but for His glory, and as such we are enabled to enjoy Him forever. This was David's experience, and may it be ours.



Penzance Baptist Church
'Upholding the Ordinary Means of Grace'

Pastor Jonathan Stobbs