

Cautions, Counsels and Consequences lessons learned from Old Testament passages.

Introduction:

When I grew up in Camden, New Jersey a sling shot was considered a necessary part of a boy's equipment along with a handcrafted wood sword and a trash can lid to protect your-self from the bullies in the neighborhood. Most of us kids fashioned our sling shot after Dennis the Menace and we all carried one in our hip pocket. This was perhaps different from the type used by David. With a little practice one could become quite accurate, however I am sure David spend countless hours with his sling shot while watching the sheep. He undoubtable became extremely proficient. God prepared David for this exact battle when David was a lowly shepherd boy. David's Goliath was terrible he was a 9'9" tall man with armor weighing 125lbs. carrying an iron spearhead that weighed 15 pounds and an appropriately sized shield. We frequently use this story allegorically. Any time we are facing a problem bigger than us, we are "facing our Giants."

I "God Is Faithful"

1. Our Goliaths don't carry swords or shields they carry weapons of unemployment, health problems, family problems, worry, bills we can't pay and grades or scores we can't make. Our Goliath's don't prance and parade about the hills of Elah, they are up close and personal they are in the office, the home, the classroom, our marriages and even in the church. These giants bring with them the fear of the past we can't escape and a future we do not want to encounter.
2. When Saul asked David why he thought he could slay the giant, the young boy replied with a story about God's faithfulness. He recalled God's faithfulness during his days as a shepherd and that faithfulness in God gave him courage to believe God would deliver him even once again. **"The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine"** (1 Samuel 17:37). David knew God could deliver him in this situation because He had done so many times in the past. God prepares us to face our giants.
3. A lion had attacked the littles lambs that David cared for and so David fought the lion. A bear came against the sheep and David battled the bear. All along, God prepared David to fight Goliath. All along God was preparing David to fight Goliath. This is generally God's pattern for preparation. He calls us to be faithful right where we are and then uses our faithfulness to accomplish greater things.
4. If David ran scared at the lion or the bear, he would never have been ready to fight Goliath. As a shepherd facing lions and bears, David had no idea he was being trained to fight a giant. In the midst of our preparation we rarely see how God will use it. Yet now, David can look back and know that the same God who delivered him before will also deliver him now. David knew that God's help in times past is a prophecy of His help in the future. Dr. Erwin W.

Lutzer once said, “God's investment in us is so great he could not possibly abandon us. Our faith is always rooted in God’s faithfulness.

II. God’s Faithfulness never Wavers

1. Let me give you a simple definition of this word. God’s faithfulness means that because he is the truth, everything he says and does is certain. That means he is 100% reliable 100% of the time. He does not fail, forget, falter, change or disappoint. In the words of Lewis Sperry Chafer: “He not only advances and confirms that which is true, but in faithfulness abides by his promises, and executes every threat or warning he has made.” He says what he means and means what he says and therefore does everything he says he will do. God cares about you!

2. The word of God declares this truth in several Old Testament passages... Numbers 23:19 -- **God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?** “Exodus 34:6 -- He is “abounding in love and faithfulness.” Deut. 32:4 -- He is a “a faithful God.” Ps. 89 [8] **O LORD God of hosts, who is a strong LORD like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?**

When you are discouraged, remember God’s faithfulness.

3. Remember how God has answered your prayers. Consider who it is who fights for you. Because he is faithful, we can trust him even in the most desperate moments of life. Faith in God, then, provides the answer to those "Goliath sized" problems we face; even those "impossible" situations for which no solution exists; even those tasks that everyone else avoids. The Goliaths of life attempt to intimidate: David's faith urges us to be unafraid ...

Heb 10: [23] Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;

I Co. 1 [9] God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

I Thess. 5[24] Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

4. We can be sure God will do all He said He would do (1 Th. 5:24; 2 Th. 3:3). His promises are backed up by His flawless character. In those times when you don’t feel close to God, remind yourself that His feelings for you haven’t changed. It’s not a matter of how you feel at the moment, but the fact of the rock-solid faithfulness of God. When you are tempted to give up, to sin, remember God’s faithfulness.

II Thess.3 [3 But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.

III. Our faith must be rooted in God’s Faithfulness

1. God’s faithfulness is tied directly into the temptations of life that trouble you. God’s purpose is to give you the strength you need to stand up against satanic attack. Just as Jesus had to endure trial and temptation, so will you. But just as he resisted and triumphed, so may we. God will give you what you need in the moment of that need or grace. “He is faithful.” Those three words guarantee God’s grace, forgiveness and provisions to his children.

What wonderful words these are. All of us will face moments sooner or later when we simply cannot find the strength to go on. Perhaps you feel overwhelmed by circumstances or perhaps life begins to tumble in around you. Sometimes if we are honest we give up or throw in the towel. We fail to keep our promises to God... yet he continues to be faithful to us. Why? **LA 3:22 It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. [23. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.**

2. When David was in the midst of crisis facing Goliath note what he rely on in verses 45-47. David was careful to say the LORD will deliver you into my hand. David was bold, but he was bold in God, not in himself. He knew that the battle belonged to the LORD. Saul and the soldiers of Israeli army thought that the LORD only could save with sword and spear. They didn't really believe that the battle is the LORD's. David was about to give them some living proof! The Goliaths of life attempt to intimidate: David's faith urges us to be unafraid because our faith is always rooted in God's faithfulness.

David had the calm hand and peace of mind by trusting in God. He used the sling a leather strap with a pouch in the middle to fling a stone, killing the giant Goliath. It's easy to see where this battle was won: out with the sheep of David's father. In those lonely hours alone with the lambs, David would talk to God and take a lot of target practice with his sling. Now his communion with the LORD and his skill with the sling are both used by God!

Conclusion:

God has created an incredible universe, it is astonishingly magnificent. Right now the moon is spinning around us at nearly 2,300 miles an hour. The Earth is spinning around the sun at 66,000 miles an hour. Our sun is one of 200 billion other stars and trillions more planets in our galaxy, and that galaxy is just one of 100 billion others hurtling through space. Astounding!

Yet according to Scripture, God created only one of you and He saw you before you existed (Ps. 139:13-16); He watches you as we go about our days and listens for our every thought. It can be hard to believe this sometimes. God cares in times of personal suffering and He will be faithful to deliver you because you are a precious one of a kind to the heavenly Father.

Our past victories give us confidence of future success. David's experiences protecting sheep from predators emboldened him to deliver Israel from her enemy. The God who had empowered him previously would enable him in the contest with Goliath. "I can tell by my past experience with God that he will help me now." Do we learn God's faithfulness from past experiences, so we can trust his faithfulness in present and future difficulties? If past experiences with God teach anything it should be his unfailing faithfulness!