

1 Samuel 16 & 17 – Are you fighting for God’s glory all the time

Introduction:

- 1) Come with me to the Shephelah region in Israel and specifically the valley of Elah.
- 2) Let us turn to 1Sam 16 & 17 and see what the narrator is **doing** with what he is **saying** in the text.
- 3) **Blaise Pascal said: “People are generally better persuaded by the reasons which they have themselves discovered than by those which have come into the mind of others.”**
- 4) Today, I intend to be a **stagehand** that peels the curtain for you to experience the divine play being played out through the eyes of the narrator.
- 5) I want you to hear the sounds, smell the dust, feel the tension and experience the text as the author intended, under divine inspiration.
- 6) I believe you will pick the main point of this story and the sermon without me explicitly stating it as we progress through this narrative.
- 7) **So then, the text becomes yours and its claims yours too as you experience by yourself the clarion call on your life for change.**
- 8) I want you to experience with me the entire gamut of emotions I went through while I was preparing this sermon.
- 9) So, I, as a mediator will then be a **co-explorer** of the text with you and not just the **chief explainer** of the text such that **I want the way the text affected me to affect you.**
- 10) OT narratives are sometimes presented non-chronologically to create character empathy or to prove a point.

Body of the Sermon:

- 1) There are 3 major lines of thought traversing 1Sam 16 that revolve around 3 words:
 - a) **SEEING**
 - b) **SENDING**
 - c) **HOLY SPIRIT**
- 2) I am only going to dwell on the “SEEING” aspect in ch. 16 because it becomes relevant in 1 Sam 17.
- 3) **16:1**
 - a) Ch. 16 begins with the Lord telling Samuel to stop mourning for Saul because the Lord had rejected Saul as King.
 - b) **1 Sam 8:22 – “The Lord said to Samuel, “Listen to their (people) voice and appoint them a king.”**
 - c) The people **SAW** a king but that was not what God wanted.
 - i) What did the people **SEE**?
 - ii) **1Sam 9:1-2 (10:23) - Now there was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish...a mighty man of valor. He had a son whose name was Saul, a choice and handsome man, and there was not a more handsome person than he among the sons of Israel; from his shoulders and up he was taller than any of the people.**
 - iii) The people **SAW** the HANDSOMEST, TALLEST man among them and that was the people’s choice.
 - d) Then God tells Samuel at the end of v1 that God **SAW** another King, among the sons of Jesse.
- 4) **16:4**
 - a) Notice what they ask him, “Do you come in peace, O **SEER**?” The Septuagint adds the “Seer” because Samuel was addressed as the SEER in 9:9, 18, 19.
- 5) **16:6, 7**
 - a) Now Samuel **SEES** Eliab and thinks he is the Lord’s anointed.
 - i) because he **SAW** Eliab’s stature and height (v7). The same thing the people saw in Saul.
 - ii) The anointed **SEER** of Israel did not **SEE** rightly!
 - iii) **v7 - the Lord said that man SEES the outside, but the Lord SEES the inside (the heart)!**
- 6) The people did not **SEE** rightly neither the anointed **SEER** of Israel **SAW** rightly!
- 7) **Have you started seeing a picture of yourself in this story; how you make your choices in life?**
- 8) Samuel goes through all of Jesse’s sons, but they were not the selected one until David is brought.
- 9) **16:12**
 - a) The narrator is again courting with the **SEEING** theme.
 - i) He describes David as ruddy, beautiful eyes, an almost effeminate description or at least definitely not the look of a warrior-king.
- 10) **16:13, 14**
 - a) Samuel anoints David and we can see the narrator clearly indicating to the reader a change of guard,
 - i) By indicating that the Spirit of God came upon David and
 - ii) the Spirit of God left Saul and an evil spirit came upon him
- 11) **16:16-18**
 - a) All the people who were supposed to **SEE** rightly, did not.
 - b) The people of Israel did not **SEE** rightly in their choice of King
 - c) The anointed **SEER** of Israel, Samuel did not **SEE** rightly in his choice of Eliab.
 - d) They did not **SEE** rightly because they saw the outside, but the Lord **SEES** the inside

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12) I want to pause here and allow you to ponder. What is that you **SEE** in your choices?

- a) Have your choices in life been based on what you saw on the outside?
- b) That is not a heart that Jesus intends for a Christian and that is certainly not the heart that God saw in David.

13) 16:19-23

- a) Notice then in the final verses of ch 16, we see the narrator impinging upon the reader the credentials of David
 - b) In v19 – We see in David, the **SHEPHERD**
 - c) In v21 – We see in David, Saul's **ARMOURBEARER** (a hint of a warrior that will be developed in ch 17)
 - d) In v23 – We see in David, the **PSALMIST**, as he plays music to soothe the nerves of Saul.
- 14) So, as we close ch 16, we see that David has transitioned from the pasture land, grazing sheep, to the king's courts
- 15) The narrator has heightened the tension of the story because **David is now in the palace but not yet a king**
- 16) On the physical front, there is one more credential that needs to be addressed, the **KING** needs to be a **WARRIOR** and that is what the narrator is going to present in ch 17.
- 17) Also, on the theological front, the narrator reveals what God was attracted to in David's heart and that is the same heart that God wants to be developed in you too.
- 18) Before we step into the battle scene, let me remind you that we are called to be warriors.
- 19) The fiery darts of the world, flesh and Satan are aimed right at us, 24x7. There is no downtime. The minute you drop your guard, in comes the arrow.
- 20) In the past 3 months, even in our midst, in this small room, we have seen 2 warriors drop.
- 21) How do we fight this battle? How can we sustain this fight?
- 22) Let us look into the mother of all battles in the Bible: The battle of David and Goliath

23) 17:1-4

- a) **v4**
 - i) Notice how the text lingers on the giant's impressive **stature, wardrobe and weaponry**
 - ii) **SEE** and soak in the feelings of **invincibility, impenetrability**, and the **impossibility** of beating this hulk of a man.
 - iii) **Many versions put the height of this Philistine at 9'9" but the Septuagint puts him at 6'9".**
 - iv) I would go with the shorter height for reasons that would be evident soon.
 - v) To put 6'9" in perspective. LeBron James is 6'8" and Shaq O'Neal is 7'1" and I am 5'4".
 - vi) Assuming David to have the height of an average middle-eastern man, his height would have been 5'6"!
 - vii) Goliath is still a giant by all accounts.
- b) **17:5-7: Let us have a quick look at Goliath's weaponry**
 - i) **5 items:**
 - (1) A brass helmet
 - (2) Scale armour
 - (3) Bronze greaves
 - (4) Spear
 - (5) Shield
 - c) Notice a key item missing here
 - i) You can see the aircraft carrier, frigates, destroyers, bombers and submarines but the attack weapon, the **MISSILE** is missing
 - ii) All the defensive wardrobe was explained but there is no mention of the attack weapon - the **SWORD**.
 - iii) It is intentional.
 - iv) **How can Goliath fight without a sword?**
 - v) It is not that Goliath did not have a sword but the next time we see the sword, it not in Goliath's hand.
- d) **17:10-11**
 - i) v10 - I defy the armies of Israel, give me a man that we may fight "DUEL" (monomoxia) together..."
 - ii) He was challenging Saul to a duel, a single combat, one on one.
 - iii) v11 – When Saul and all Israel heard these words, they were all dismayed and greatly afraid.
 - iv) Here is a giant equipped with the latest weaponry, armed to his teeth asking for a duel.
 - v) Who wouldn't be afraid?
- e) Let us slow down here a bit
 - i) In 1 Sam 9:2, we read earlier that Saul stood a head above all of Israel.
 - ii) Saul would have been around 6'6", just a few inches shorter than Goliath
 - iii) Also, in Israel only 2 people had swords – Saul and Jonathan (1Sam 13:19-22)
 - iv) So, here is Saul, of the same height as Goliath, equipped with the same wardrobe and weaponry as Goliath
 - v) Saul was indeed the giant of Israel
 - vi) When Goliath was asking for a man from Israel to duel, Saul should have been the ideal person for that
 - vii) **Will the real giant of Israel stand up?**

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viii) No. We read he was terrified. He was a cowardly king.

ix) The narrator is slowly moving Saul out of the minds of the reader to introduce a better coming king

f) 17:12-13; 23-24

i) It is at this juncture we see a new character, David being introduced into this story

g) 17:26

i) David breaks the silence and speaks for the first time in the Scriptures

ii) David brings a whole new "Weltanschauung" or worldview into the picture.

iii) God is mentioned for the first time in this narrative

iv) The first time David speaks, God is mentioned

v) God is now infused into this hopeless situation

vi) David is asking, "does not believing in Yahweh make a difference?"

vii) Everyone, including Saul, David's family and all of Israel are **SEEING** their enemy with their own eyes

viii) But David saw the enemy with God's eyes

ix) It is not about weaponry or wardrobe, but it is about God.

x) For David, the battle is not physical but a theological battle

xi) **And so also even in your lives, you lose the physical battles because you lose your theological battles**

xii) See v25 – Israel thinks Goliath is defying the nation of Israel, not its army

xiii) See v26 – David thinks that Goliath is defying the armies of the living God

xiv) While everyone was operating in a physical dimension, David was operating in a spiritual dimension!

xv) David understood that it was God's name at stake

h) **In your workplace when you ridiculed about your faith and your honesty**

i) **In ministry when your character is maligned**

j) **In missions, when hostility is palpable**

k) **At home when addictions afflict loved ones**

l) **Situations where God's name, God's reputation and God's glory are maligned and dispatched.**

m) **Every facet of your life affect God's glory**

n) **So like David you should be concerned with God's glory in everything in your lives**

o) **When temptation comes knocking at your doors, we should remember it is God's glory at stake**

p) **Keeping that perspective will help you win many of life's battles against the flesh, world and Satan.**

q) **David was passionate about God and that is why he is questioning this uncircumcised Philistine.**

r) **Has God gripped your heart sufficiently for you to realize that everything in your life affects God's glory?**

s) **Are you willing to risk everything for God's honour?**

t) **Is Israel's eyes, Goliath was unbeatable but in David's eyes. Goliath was just an uncircumcised Philistine.**

u) **David was fighting for God's glory.**

v) **That was the heart the God saw in David that pleased him.**

w) **How about your heart?**

24) 17:28

a) At this point David's elder brother Eliab making a guest appearance.

b) He is found ridiculing David for being negligent with the sheep assigned to him

c) Anyway, Saul hears of David's words and he summons the young lad.

25) 17:33

a) Saul tells David that you do not have any experience to fight this giant

b) You have no resources, no resume and no reputation

c) You are just a young kid

26) Now you can see that David is actually fighting 3 opponents

a) Goliath for certain

b) Eliab, his elder brother

c) And now Saul, His King!

27) That describes us most of the time does it not

a) **No stature, No resources and No experience**

b) **How can we fight for God?**

c) **David's faith was not in his stature, resources or experience**

d) **David really meant it when he penned that Psalm 20:7, "Some boast in chariots....name of the Lord our God."**

28) 17:35-37

a) Notice the words what David tells Saul

b) Just as I removed the lamb from the Lion and bear's mouth, I will remove this giant.

c) David's victories in his private battles gave him the confidence to fight the public battles

d) **How is your private life, my dear brothers and sisters?**

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- e) What kind of a life do you lead when no one is watching?
- f) David won those battles in the fields where no one was watching, and he attributes those private victories to God
- g) You cannot win on your own strength.
- h) Just like David, you must realize that it is God that gives you the victory in your battles
- i) David was confident not because he was skilled
- j) But he knew that it was God that strengthened him to win his private battles
- k) and so he was confident that God will also give him victory in the public battle.

29) 17:38

- a) Let us come back to the battlefield
- b) Please compare 17:5 and 38
- c) Saul is trying to match the weaponry of the giant
- d) He is trying to match weapon with weapon, bronze with bronze
- e) The only way to beat this giant is to match him in his wardrobe and weaponry
- f) The only way to beat this giant is to match him in his stature, resources and experience
- g) That was the only way Saul knew to fight Goliath
- h) How about you dear brothers and sisters?
- i) How do you take on this world as it closes in on you?
- j) Do you fight the world with worldly weapons?
- k) Fight fire with fire, bronze with bronze.
- l) You want muscles and might and guns and swords and uniforms and resume and degrees and reputation, and position and possession and performance....
- m) Anything else and you are doomed. You lose.
- n) That folks is the ideology of power
- o) The reliance on force and the obsession with might
- p) This world is in conflict and the one with the most toys wins...
- q) Have you felt your need to go that way often?
- r) David understood and trusted in the power of God
- s) David was fighting for God's glory with God on his side
- t) Never forget whose battle it is. If you look at things as if it was "you vs the world," you will lose.
- u) The battle belongs to the Lord (1Sam 17:47)
- v) Remember again that we are fighting for God's glory, for his reputation.
- w) And when we fight for God's glory, we do not need toys and trinkets and resources and experience
- x) That is the kind of heart that God wants from us.
- y) A heart that fights for God's glory in all aspects of life
- z) A heart that gravitates toward him in all things and at all times.

30) v40

- a) David rejects Saul's toys and picks up his own weaponry
- b) Count with me the weaponry David chooses: 5 of them: stick, stones, bag, pouch, sling
- c) Look back at vs 5-7 at the giant's weaponry: 5 of them: helmet, armour, greaves, spear and shield
- d) Truly it is a mismatch where this puny inexperienced shepherd boy with sticks and stones is going against a seasoned warrior armed to the teeth and ready to devour him.
- e) You need to sense the tension here as the readers contemplate on what it looks like fighting the world with a smile and grace and mercy and kindness when the world comes upon them like a roaring lion wanting to devour them
- f) Do you think you will stand a chance in this world when you turn the other cheek?

31) v45-47

- a) David has one more weapon up his sleeve
- b) He said, I have someone that backs me that you don't have. I have God as my wingman. He has my back.
- c) There is David fighting for God's glory and trusting God to bring him through

32) You know the rest of the story. David brings the giant down proving that God does not look on the outside and does not need helmet, armour, greaves, spear or shield

33) v51

- a) We now encounter the missing Goliath's sword in vs 5-7. It is now in David's hand.
- b) What a reversal of fortunes
- c) That was because David trusted God and not his weapons.

34) God was looking for a heart who trusted him to fight his battles

35) God was looking for a king whose heart was right with the Lord

36) He found that in David.

37) God is looking for someone who fights for God's glory in all facets of his life: in school, at home, in the ministry, at work

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- 38) In case you are thinking how you can fight for God’s glory; powerless, resourceless, statureless, poor, puny and insignificant as you are
- 39) I encourage you to be reminded of this story and that God does not need any of those things
- 40) He just wants your heart. A heart that pants for him during your dry seasons. He will quench your thirst.
- 41) God is your weapon. He alone is your Rock.
- 42) David has now accomplished the last requirement of a King
 - a) In v19 – We saw in David, the **SHEPHERD**
 - b) In v21 – We saw in David, Saul’s **ARMOURBEARER** (a hint of a warrior that will be developed in ch 17)
 - c) In v23 – We saw in David, the **PSALMIST**, as he plays music to soothe the nerves of Saul.
 - d) In v51 – We see in David, the **WARRIOR**, a fearless warrior who leads the battle for Israel

Gospel

- a) I want to return v4
 - i) Look at the word “champion.”
 - ii) It means a mighty man or more specifically in Hebrew “**a man of the between**”
 - iii) That is an interesting word-play because in v3 we see that there was “**a valley between them**” i.e. between the Philistine and the Israel army.
 - iv) So, a champion is a “man of the between.”
 - v) A man who can stand between and mediate your impossibilities.
 - vi) Job 9:33 - Job longed for such a man.
 - (1) Job was saying, "Oh God, you are holy; I am sinful. I need You. God, I can't argue with you.
 - (2) If you bring me into court, I can't answer any of your questions.
 - (3) I'm a sinner. I need somebody to go between.
 - (4) I need somebody to bring me to You.
 - (5) I need somebody who can lay his hands upon us both.
 - (6) I need a mediator
 - (7) Paul reveals to Timothy an invincible champion, “a man of the between.”
 - (8) We read in 1Tim 2:5 - For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus
 - (9) Is there any here who has not put their trust in this mediator between man and God?
 - (10) I ask you to consider him.
 - (11) Your sin has alienated you from a holy God.
 - (12) None of your good works can bridge this gap, this chasm.
 - (13) Heb 9:27 - The bible says that man is appointed to die once and after that comes judgement.
 - (14) Your sin will lead to an eternal separation from God
 - (15) You need a “a man of the between.”
 - (16) Look to Jesus, he can save you from that eternal separation from God.
 - vii) We saw the removal of a bad King for a new King but we see that this new King also disappoints as he becomes an adulterer and a murderer.
 - viii) The author is not asking us to be like David but he is posting the coming of a greater King of the line of David, King Jesus.
 - ix) That King will not disappoint you.
 - x) Don’t fight your battles on your own strength. Trust the Spirit of God

Conclusion

- 1) The OT narrative creates a tension by delaying the resolution of the story through various literary nuances. If we distill that narrative to a single point and preach the distillate, the unique experience that the narrative is meant to create could be lost.
- 2) I, as facilitator have curated the picture and exposed the nuances that points to the theological thrust of the Word such that you experienced yourselves the power and pathos as intended by the human and divine author.
- 3) And I believe, you, through the story have discovered for yourselves the intended lesson God wants to communicate to you through this story.