

SERMON 1 SAMUEL 17 'YOU ARE MY VISION' - Series David #3 IBC Eindhoven, 22 September 2019

INTRODUCTION

Bible stories are not just for kids - essential for adults as well - new insights all the time - if only you open your heart for God's living word, identifying yourself with what is happening in the story

SETTING

- * The army of Israel with king Saul and the army of the Philistines have taken positions and ready for war.
- * Then comes this impressive and tough man Goliath (verses 4-7). For 40 days he bullies the army of Israel (verses 8-10), during morning and evening sacrifice (verse 16), with predictable response of Israel (verse 11).
- * Then comes David: still called the smallest (14), has not been recruited like his big brothers Eliab, Abinadab and Samma.
- * Note the returning theme of outer appearance in the book of Samuel! The Bible is teaching us an important lesson: Saul's appearance was impressive (10:23f), Eliab (16:6). It seems that Saul doesn't even know David (17:55-57) in spite of 16:21.

SHORT SIGHTEDNESS VERSUS FAITH IN THE LIVING GOD

- * Goliath's big mouth (focus on his own strength)
- * David's emphasis on the God of Israel, the great deliverer (verses 26,37,46,47)
- * Note the name of Goliath only mentioned twice (verses 4,23) and the name of David 36x (Hebrew text) >> teaching us not to focus on the enemy's strength

OUR GOD IS TOO SMALL

- * Our culture has great impact upon our idea about God. In the west: church irrelevant. It's all about science and technology. And if things decline we look for someone who can make us great again
- * But we are called not to think according to the patterns of this world - Romans 12:2 - and renew our minds
- * Review your prayers - they reveal in whom you believe. Not often our prayers go beyond asking for healing, counsel, and a sense of his presence. But David's God is much more than a doctor, match maker, psychotherapist or job coach.

FAITH IN THE LIVING GOD

David calls God the living God (verses 26 and 36).

Story of the Jew Levi visiting his rabbi for the first time. When he returns home, his father in law asks him what he learnt, what he could not have learnt here at home. That God is the Creator of the universe. Asking the maid 'what do you say, is God the Creator of the universe? Of course He is! Well? Levi responds saying: she says He is, but I know He is.

So often our knowledge is second-hand. David knows the living God. How can we grow in our faith in the living God?

1. **Experience.** Open your heart to hear God's words and pass on. Remember God's saving acts in history. David's language reveal his 'experience' of the exodus (verse 26 >> Exodus 14:14). Opening your heart means trying to enter the story, where are you, how would you respond? Learning from stories is often more powerful than learning doctrine. Re-read stories of the Bible, the parables of Jesus, talk, study and sing about them.
2. **Discern** True <> False, Real <> Unreal, Facts <> Fake news We need to be quiet, to reflect on what we hear in daily life in the light of God's word, to pray. We need each other - the church, the fellowship group, the Bible study and the Holy Spirit in order to distinguish between real news and fake news, between truth and lies. If we fail to do this we will be dismayed and terrified when the Philistine opens his mouth again.
3. **Obey** God's words, doing good, for God, will make your faith in Him grow! The same David who comes against Goliath in the name of the Lord, is also the man that loves God's commandments and sings 'The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul' etc, etc Psalm 19:7 and many others. Great example are the 3 friends of Daniel in Daniel 3, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah... verse 17,18: *'If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty's hand. But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.'*

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSIONS

1. Reading/listening to this famous story, where do you fit in and what does it teach you?
2. Discuss the phrase 'Your God is too small'
3. Share with each other which Bible stories have (had) impact on you and why. How does this inspire us to **experience** God's word?
4. How can we help each other in church to **discern** True <> False, Real <> Unreal, Facts <> Fake news?
5. How does **doing good for God**, make your faith in Him grow?