

A New Perspective - Sermon

The perspective of the Israelites

- **1 Samuel 17:8-11** Then he stood and cried out to the armies of Israel, and said to them, “Why have you come out to line up for battle? *Am* I not a Philistine, and you the servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me.⁹ If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants. But if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall be our servants and serve us.”¹⁰ And the Philistine said, “I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together.”¹¹ When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.
- They were afraid
- Why? The problem before them was so big it took all of their attention.

David’s Perspective

- **1 Samuel 17:26** Then David spoke to the men who stood by him, saying, “What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?”
- David had no fear of Goliath. Why?
- **1 Samuel 17:37** Moreover David said, “The Lord, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.”
- David’s eyes were on what God has done for him; not what Goliath is.

Martha’s Perspective

- **John 11:21-24** Now Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.²² But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.”²³ Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”²⁴ Martha said to Him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”
- Martha is in mourning for her brother

- She is relying on her limited understanding. (To her credit, it would have been really hard to know more than she did).

Jesus' Perspective

John 11:25-26 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. ²⁶ And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

- Jesus had a different perspective on Lazarus
- Jesus walked in complete faith and perfect knowledge

The perspective of Gideon vs. the Angel of the Lord

Judges 6:11-12 Now the Angel of the Lord came and sat under the terebinth tree which was in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, while his son Gideon threshed wheat in the winepress, in order to hide it from the Midianites. ¹² And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him, and said to him, "The Lord is with you, you mighty man of valor!"

- The Angel of the Lord saw Gideon with a different perspective than he saw himself or than we would have seen him.
- The Angel of the Lord saw Gideon's true identity (and later helped Gideon see it).

Caleb (and Joshua's) perspective vs. the other spies.

- **Numbers 13:30-33** Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, "Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it." ³¹ But the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we." ³² And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, "The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature. ³³ There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants);

and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.”

- Caleb had a different perspective on the situation than everyone else.
- Caleb again had his eyes on the Lord, while the others saw the obstacles.

David, Jesus, The Angel of the Lord and Caleb all had different perspectives on situations than everyone else. They had perspectives of victory, even victory over death.

Why?

How did they spend their time prior to the situations?

- **David** – A skillful musician who played psalms to the Lord. Spent his time worshiping and shepherding.
- **Jesus - John 5:19** Then Jesus answered and said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.
- **The Angel of the Lord** – Well, this is Jesus prior to being sent to the earth. Or if an angel, in the throne room praising God.
 - **Revelation 5:11-12** Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, ¹² saying with a loud voice: “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!”
- **Caleb - Numbers 14:22-24** because all these men who have seen My glory and the signs which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have put Me to the test now these ten times, and have not heeded My voice, ²³ they certainly shall not see the land of which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who rejected Me see it. ²⁴ But My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit in him and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it.

All of these people (and an Angel) had a history of being with God. Resting in His presence before the battles came up.

A Tale of Two Battles:

Battle 1

- **1 Samuel 4:1-3** And the word of Samuel came to all Israel. Now Israel went out to battle against the Philistines, and encamped beside Ebenezer; and the Philistines encamped in Aphek. ² Then the Philistines put themselves in battle array against Israel. And when they joined battle, Israel was defeated by the Philistines, who killed about four thousand men of the army in the field. ³ And when the people had come into the camp, the elders of Israel said, “Why has the Lord defeated us today before the Philistines? Let us bring the ark of the covenant of the Lord from Shiloh to us, that when it comes among us it may save us from the hand of our enemies.”
- The Ark of the Lord represented the Presence of the Lord. It was supposed to go into battle with them.

1 Samuel 3:1 Now the boy Samuel ministered to the Lord before Eli. And the word of the Lord was rare in those days; *there was* no widespread revelation.

- People did not know what God’s will was. There was no revelation.
- **1 Samuel 3:11-13** Then the Lord said to Samuel: “Behold, I will do something in Israel at which both ears of everyone who hears it will tingle. ¹² In that day I will perform against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. ¹³ For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knows, because his sons made themselves vile, and he did not restrain them.
- Even the priests were rebelling against God
- Back to chapter 4 – Three main things wrong here:
 - Went to battle without asking God’s desire for them.
 - Blamed God for their failure, even though He was never asked to be a part of it.
 - They are now trying to force God’s hand by invoking spiritual rites from past experiences.

1 Samuel 4:7-8 So the Philistines were afraid, for they said, “God has come into the camp!” And they said, “Woe to us! For such a thing has never happened before.”⁸ Woe to us! Who will deliver us from the hand of these mighty gods? These are the gods who struck the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness.

– The Philistines knew of God’s power before going into battle and had respect for it, even though they did not understand it.

1 Samuel 4:10-11 So the Philistines fought, and Israel was defeated, and every man fled to his tent. There was a very great slaughter, and there fell of Israel thirty thousand foot soldiers.¹¹ Also the ark of God was captured; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, died.

– The result is defeat and devastation.

Battle 2:

- **Joshua 3:5-9** And Joshua said to the people, “Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you.”⁶ Then Joshua spoke to the priests, saying, “Take up the ark of the covenant and cross over before the people.” So they took up the ark of the covenant and went before the people.⁷ And the Lord said to Joshua, “This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you.”⁸ You shall command the priests who bear the ark of the covenant, saying, ‘When you have come to the edge of the water of the Jordan, you shall stand in the Jordan.’”⁹ So Joshua said to the children of Israel, “Come here, and hear the words of the Lord your God.”
- Success! – They were listening to God. They obeyed. They moved in His timing.

We talk a lot about Freedom. We believe that what we do does not give us salvation. Nor do we believe it gains us favor with God.

God does not accept us or love us based on our actions.

But do not get me wrong. What we do matters.

- **Galatians 5:13** - For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

What we are doing before the battle even comes up determines the amount of victory we will have in that battle.

Christian disciplines are important. Just for different reasons than we may have believed. You don't have to pray. You don't have to read your Bible. You don't have to attend church. You don't have to tithe. And you don't have to have victory or abundant life either.

God loves people who live in defeat just as much as those who are victorious. I just would rather live victoriously.