



Lesson 13 ~ Yahweh Sabaoth – The LORD of Hosts 1 Samuel 17:20-50

♥ Heart Talk

When you meet with your small group, share something about your continued experience of **being silent for 5 minutes with God** OR share something about praying the *Daily Prayer* from **Lesson 11** or something about the exercise of *Lectio Divina*, praying and listening over Scripture from **Lesson 12**. How have any of these exercises enriched your relationship with God or helped you in facing difficult circumstances?

Introduction

The English translation for *Yahweh Sabaoth* is **LORD of Hosts**, with *host* meaning "a large number of something." (*Yahweh Sabaoth* is translated **LORD Almighty** in the NIV and NLT, but as **LORD of Hosts** in other English translations.) **LORD of Hosts** is a title of **great power**, just as some of the other names of God imply; but, the idea of **power** in the name **LORD of Hosts**, means that God has supreme command over every created thing, including the *hosts of heaven* (angels), the *hosts of humans*, the *starry hosts* (sun, moon, stars, etc), the *hosts of animals* (including birds and fish) and even the *Satanic hosts* that make up the kingdom of darkness.

LORD of Hosts carries the image of a mighty military commander, one who can at a mere word, summon rank upon rank of protective powers. All creation is under *Yahweh's* control and obeys his sovereign command. The **LORD of Hosts** has at his disposal the entire created universe with which to accomplish his purposes. All creation fights on behalf of *Yahweh Sabaoth* – and this ultimate power over the whole universe is often shown strong on our behalf. We see many examples of this in the Bible where *Yahweh Sabaoth* commanded the sun to stand still, the earth to swallow up the guilty, the lion's mouths to close, the rescue from danger by angels – and a stone to find its mark, bringing down a giant.

♥ Heart Preparation

Jesus' Encouraging Words to You . . .

When things seem to be going all wrong, stop and affirm your trust in Me. Calmly bring these matters to Me, and leave them in My capable hands. Then, simply do the next thing. Stay in touch with Me through thankful, trusting prayer, resting in My sovereign control . . .

Jesus Calling (August 6) by Sarah Young

Be still and acknowledge that I am God, supreme over nations, supreme over the world. **Yahweh Sabaoth** is with us, our citadel, the God of Jacob (**Psalm 46:10-11 NJB**). Continue to practice the discipline of **sitting quietly before God, in silence, for 5 minutes** in order to prepare your heart to receive from God. In this time of quietness, don't try to **do** anything – just **be**. Even though it may seem that nothing is happening, God uses our gift of silence before him to work his purposes deep in our heart.

A Prayer to Help Prepare Your Heart

*A mighty Fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;
Our helper He, amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing:
For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great,
And, armed with cruel hate, on earth is not his equal.*

*Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing,
Were not the right Man on our side, the Man of God's own choosing:
Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is He: **LORD Sabaoth** His name,
From age to age the same, and He must win the battle.*

Martin Luther – *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*

Questions

Historical Background – The setting for this lesson and the story of **David and Goliath** takes place two hundred years or so after the **Book of Judges** (*Gideon* in **Lesson 12**). After the time of the "judges," Israel asked for a monarchy and **Saul** was anointed as the first king of Israel. However, **Saul** disobeyed God on a number of occasions and eventually lost the royal line to **David**, whom God chose to be his successor. But at the time of this story, Saul is still king and David is an adolescent boy whose main job is caring for his father's sheep.

Throughout Saul's reign, Israel was in a continuing war with the Philistines, an aggressive tribal group that occupied part of southwest Palestine. In **1 Samuel 17**, we read about a battle in this war, in which the two armies were at a standoff, facing each other over a valley. During this standoff, a giant Philistine warrior named **Goliath**, would regularly come out and taunt the armies of Israel, offering to battle any Israelite warrior, with a "winner-take-all" proposition (**17:1-11**). **King Saul** and the Israelites were terrified of this Philistine champion and their fear paralyzed them from taking any action at all. It was into this situation that the young boy David came to deliver a care package from home to his older brothers who were fighting in King Saul's army.

Read **1 Samuel 17:20-31**.

1. Read the description of Goliath in **1 Samuel 17:4-11**. Compare David's response to Goliath's taunts (**17:26**) to that of Saul and his army (**17:24**). What do you think accounts for the difference?

- ♥ What circumstances can cause a person or group of people to lose heart? What usually causes you to lose heart? What situations in your life have caused you to be paralyzed with fear and uncertainty?
 - ♥ Name three of the biggest "giants" you have faced in life so far. What is your most typical reaction to facing a situation that is way bigger than yourself?
 - ♥ What affect, if any, does your knowledge of God have on you when you face a challenge or difficulty?
2. What could be some reasons why David's older brother reacted the way he did (**17:28-29**)?

- ♥ How do you feel when someone casts doubt on your ability to do something? Do others have more or less confidence in you than you do yourself? How so?
- ♥ What do you do when someone says "you don't belong here" or questions your motives (**17:28-29**)? What does your response tell you about yourself? What do you think is the "right" response?

Read **1 Samuel 17:31-40**.

3. How did David persuade Saul to let him fight Goliath and why did David have such confidence in his abilities (**17:34-37**)?
- ♥ How do past battles encourage you in a present difficulty? How do you think your present difficulties will encourage you in future battles? How can you rely on God and his power to deliver right now?
 - ♥ David's past experiences with God led him to believe that God would deliver him. What past experiences lead you to believe that God will deliver you? What past experiences cause you to doubt?

- ♥ When facing a difficulty, is your attitude usually more like Saul's or David's (17:32-36)? Why? What would help you become more confident like David? Is there something you need to do?
- 4. Why do you think the story emphasizes David's inability to do battle in the king's armor (17:38-40)?

- ♥ What did Saul's reasoning in 17:33 and his provision for David in 17:38-39 reveal about his belief in God? When facing a difficulty, what do your actions and attitudes reveal about *your* belief in God?
- ♥ When you face an enemy, on what or whom do you usually depend? Your own resources? Expert advice? Your wits? Manipulation and control? Gamesmanship? Cleverness? Brute force? Other? What would it look like for you to truly depend on God?
- ♥ What do you usually do when you don't feel comfortable with what is going on (17:38-39)? What does this reveal about yourself? What do you wish was different about yourself? How might this happen?

Read 1 Samuel 17:41-50.

- 5. Despite the "mismatch," why was David absolutely sure that he would overcome the giant (17:45-47)?

- ♥ What made it possible for David to have this kind of trust and faith in God? Does this kind of faith just happen? What would it take for you to have the same kind of faith in God that David had?
- ♥ Goliath taunted David (17:41-44). How do your "giants" taunt you? What do you fear *could* happen if you turned and faced the "giant" that taunts you? What do you want to believe *would* happen?
- ♥ What is the difference between trusting in "sword, spear and javelin" and trusting in the name of the *LORD of Hosts* (17:45)? How do you know in which "weapon" you are placing your trust?
- 6. What was David's motive in wanting to defeat Goliath (17:45-47) and why is this important?

- ♥ Who else, besides yourself, might benefit if you were to fight your battle trusting in the *LORD of Hosts*?
- ♥ Share a time when your *faith* and *courage* during a hard time brought glory to God.
- 7. **All creation** is under the *LORD of Hosts'* control and obeys his sovereign command. What part of the victory over Goliath depended on David and what part of it depended on God (17:48-50)? What does this teach you about your own battles?

- ♥ Consider a present difficulty with which you are struggling. What is the worse case scenario? Having imagined that, what might be the end result with the *LORD of Hosts* intervening on your behalf?
- ♥ What is the hardest part of the battle with a "giant" you are facing? Trusting God? Courage to advance? Using God's weapons? Battle fatigue? Feeling alone? Too many battles at once? Would believing that *the battle is the Lord's* (17:47) change anything? Why or why not?

David faced Goliath with *certainty* and *courage* because he believed in the **reality** of God's power over all creation **and** God's **willingness** to intervene on the behalf of his children. Although Goliath was a superior soldier with better armor and weapons, David knew he was not fighting alone. He came against Goliath in the name of the *Yahweh Sabaoth – The LORD of Hosts* – Commander over all the powers in the universe, including all the protective powers of mighty angel armies – the *hosts of heaven*. The *LORD of Hosts* only had to speak the word to guide David's pebble to Goliath's forehead – giving David the victory. David proved his faith by living and acting as if everything he knew about God was actually true! That is what it means to trust in the name of the *LORD of Hosts* as we face our "giant," whether it be a weakness, a person or a hardship. We *live* and *act* as if *what we know about God is actually true!*

8. Read each of the following Scriptures. What, specifically, does the *Lord of Hosts* have under his power and command and how does knowing this about God encourage you to trust him? (Remember that *Lord of Hosts* is translated *Lord Almighty* in the NIV and NLT.)

Psalm 91:11; Psalm 103:20-21; Hebrews 1:14 -

♥ Read **2 Kings 6:8-17**. What might we see around us if we would ask the Lord to open our eyes?

Isaiah 40:25-26; Psalms 147:4; Genesis 15:5 -

1 Kings 17:2-6; Genesis 8:6-9; Daniel 6:21-22

♥ Read **Numbers 22:21-33**. Share a time when a "roadblock" turned out to be God's protection.

Isaiah 14:24-27; 46:9-11

Hebrews 2:14; 1 John 3:8; Job 1:8-12; 2:3-6

Isaiah 9:6-7; Revelation 19:11-16

♥ Heart Therapy

Are you facing a "giant"? Do you have an impossible situation? Are you completely without resources? Are you living with a difficulty that has altered your life? Has a weakness, a person or a hardship gotten the best of you? Tell the *LORD of Hosts* exactly what you are up against and ask him for his help. You might want to pray this prayer:

Yahweh Sabaoth – LORD of Hosts,

*All power in heaven and earth is yours. You alone are in charge of all things and have at your disposal all the resources of heaven and earth. Send me help today, I pray. I run to you for deliverance and I ask that you deliver me **in** my impossible situation, **through** my impossible situation and **out of** my impossible situation. You are able to fight my battle today, for you are stronger than any enemy I face. Today, with your help, I can do all things through Jesus, who gives me the strength I need. Amen.*

Be strong in the Lord, and in his mighty power – Ephesians 6:10