

**Kirkwall Presbyterian Church**  
**'Battles won by God's Intervention'**  
**James 5:13-20**  
**January 18, 2026**  
**By Keith Marcy**

*I am greatly disturbed when I read our world news. I know many of you are too. So today I want to look at 4 examples of how God has worked in situations that looked very hopeless. He brought victory to His people in unusual and miraculous ways. He can do likewise still today—if His people call on His name....!*

**1. The Setting:** Egypt

**The Context:** God, through Moses and Aaron are leading the Israelite nation out of slavery.

**The Situation:** The Israelites have come to the Red Sea. They look behind. Far across the desert they see clouds of dust. Pharaoh has changed his mind. His army – chariots, horses and swordsmen are coming after them. Israel is trapped. God speaks to Moses – “Stretch out your staff over the sea.”

A strong east wind began to blow. A very strong wind. The waters parted, creating a channel at least 2 kilometers wide. The entire nation, about 600,000 people plus animals crossed as if on dry ground.

The Egyptians followed. When the army was about halfway through, the wind stopped blowing. The water rushed over them – killing the entire army. *God gave the victory!*

**2. The setting:** Jericho near the Jordan River.

**The context:** God is leading His people – descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob into the land He promised to Abraham and his descendants.

**The situation:** After 40 years of wandering in the desert, the Israelites are finally ready to obey God and enter the Promised Land. Moses has died. Joshua is their leader. The Jordan river is at its highest level. God parts its waters so that the Nation crosses as though there was no river. The walled city of Jericho is ahead of them. God says to Joshua: *“March my people around the city once a day for 6 days. On the 7<sup>th</sup> day, go 7 times around the city – and stand back.”*

God knocked the walls down. The inhabitants were killed. Israel's first victory because they obeyed God and did things His way.

**3.The Setting:** In the Jezreel Valley near Orphah and the Spring of Harod.

**The Context:** Israel had no king except God. It was ruled by Judges. Gideon was a judge.

**The situation:** One would think that in the Promised Land the Israelites would have steadfastly obeyed God. Not so. They turned from God to worship idols. God punished them by bringing enemy nations to plunder their crops and livestock. For 7 years they had been under oppression. Finally, they called upon God for forgiveness and deliverance.

God sent an angel to speak to Gideon who was threshing a bit of grain in a winepress shack to keep it hidden from the Midianites.

*"Oh, mighty warrior," the angel said, "God is going to save His people from oppression through you."*

*"Through Me? I am a weak man. My clan is weak."*

But God reassured Gideon that this message was from Him. So, Gideon sent word throughout the area. Farmers, shepherds, stone masons and carpenters answered his call and assembled at the Spring of Harod. They numbered 32,000. Meanwhile the Midianites and Amalekites joined forces and assembled in the Jezreel Valley, near the hill of Moreh.

God said to Gideon: *"You have too many men."*

Say what??

*"Yes, if any of them tremble with fear, send them home."*

22,000 left.

Gideon had 10,000 men left and a big knot in his stomach.

God said, *"If you win the battle, the people will say, 'It was by our own strength.' Therefore, send your 10,000 men down to the river. Those who cup the water in their hands to drink, stay. Those who kneel and suck the water with their mouths, go home."*

300 stayed!

How many Midianites? Scripture tells us their camels were as numerous as the sand on the seashore. The army, therefore, was massive.

Gideon divided his 300 men into 3 groups – 100 in each group.

Every man was given a clay jar, a trumpet and a torch. Put the lighted torch in the upside down jar and sneak down around the Midian camp. Follow my lead. Gideon smashed his jar. Immediately the smoldering torch burst into flames. 300 men did the same.

Gideon shouted, "For the Lord and for Gideon."

300 followed suit.

Gideon blew his trumpet. 300 did the same.

The enemy grabbed their swords and began swinging. Remember, it is dark.

When the sun rose, thousands lay dead, killed by panic-stricken comrades.

Those who did escape were pursued and killed.

Who won the battle?

*God did.*

His people enjoyed a time of peace and the fruits of their labors – until they turned away from God again.

**4.The setting:** Socoh in Judah, northeast of Bethlehem.

**The context:** The Philistine Army is attacking Saul's army. There is a stand-off at Socoh.

**The situation:** The Philistines have a very large, very strong soldier standing over 7 feet tall.

He has challenged Saul's army, *"Send a man to fight me. If he wins, you win the battle. But if I win, you become our slaves."*

King Saul was afraid. All his men were afraid. It seems no one remembered to call upon God.

The shepherd boy, David, from Bethlehem, was sent by his father, Jesse, to take food to his older brothers fighting for King Saul.

He arrived on the scene to hear Goliath's daily challenge and mighty laugh – or taunt.

*"What's this all about?" asked David.*

His brothers explained.

Read 1 Samuel 17:37 – *David said to King Saul... "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." Saul said to David, "Go, and the Lord be with you."*

*The giant saw David approaching with only a staff and a sling.*

Verses 43-49 – *‘He [Goliath] said to David, “Am I a dog, that you come at me with sticks?” And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. “Come here,” he said, “and I’ll give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!”*

*David said to the Philistine, “You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the Lord will hand you over to me, and I’ll strike you down and cut off your head. Today I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord’s and He will give all of you into our hands.”*

*As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him. Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell facedown on the ground.’*

A familiar story to many of you. This story is sometimes explained that David had perfected his aim with a sling through years of practice.

But what did David say?

*“I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty. This day the **Lord will hand you over to me.**”*

With that faith in God, David went toward Goliath and slung the stone, but God guided it to hit the giant.

We will look at 3 or 4 more examples next week.

In the 4 we covered today we have seen God’s supernatural intervention in 4 different ways to give His people victory over an unbelieving enemy.

But we also see several Biblical principles:

1. The people had to **do** something. The Israelites had to step into the channel and walk across the Red Sea. They had to walk around Jericho. Gideon’s people had to reach the point of turning from idols and calling upon God for deliverance from the effects of their sin. Gideon’s army of 300 had to follow the careful plans of their

commander and go down into the valley. And David had to believe God would go with him and he had to move towards his enemy.

In these examples, no one could sit in their lazy boy chair, feet in the air, with a beer in one hand and the T.V. remote in the other and expect God to work!

2. In the example of Gideon, the people were under God's punishment because they had turned away from Him to serve other god's The verse on the front of our bulletin today tells us what was required of them – to turn from their wicked ways (that means to repent) to humble themselves, to admit they have sinned, to pray that the God of Heaven will hear their cry for mercy and forgive them, and heal their land. They did. And God dealt a harsh blow to their enemies. And for many years the Israelites lived enjoying the fruits of their labor. Clearly The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob won the battle and destroyed their enemies.

God has not changed.  
He can do that in our world.