

Kev's sermon notes for eGroups

Sunday, Jan. 31, 2021

Elevation Church - Broadcasting from Ballantyne Campus – Charlotte, NC USA

Pastor: Pastor Steven Furtick

Sermon Title: "Room to Receive – Part 4 – "Same Devils/New Levels – You are running out of time to upgrade your weapon system – you can't fight 40-year struggles with teenage tactics – shift the strategy to master the season – Don't push your Abishai away – Don't revert back to a season when you had no help – Put down the sword and put on the armor.

Elevation Worship:

- It Might Get Loud
- (Kev note: Dang! What a song!) - Bless the Lord/Son of Man – here is one version by Tye Tribbett & G.A.: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EzQuwfoeTx8>
- Goodness of God by Bethel Church - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n0FBb6hnwTo>
- Graves to Gardens - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KwX1f2gYKZ4>

Scripture for this week:

- **2nd Sam 21: 15 to 17:** Wars Against the Philistines - 15 Once again there was a battle between the Philistines and Israel. David went down with his men to fight against the Philistines, and he became exhausted. 16 And Ishbi-Benob, one of the descendants of Rapha, whose bronze spearhead weighed three hundred shekels and who was armed with a new sword, said he would kill David. 17 But Abishai son of Zeruiah came to David's rescue; he struck the Philistine down and killed him. Then David's men swore to him, saying, "Never again will you go out with us to battle, so that the lamp of Israel will not be extinguished." 18 In the course of time, there was another battle with the Philistines, at Gob. At that time Sibbekai the Hushathite killed Saph, one of the descendants of Rapha. 19 In another battle with the Philistines at Gob, Elhanan son of Jair the Bethlehemite killed the brother of Goliath the Gittite, who had a spear with a shaft like a weaver's rod. 20 In still another battle, which took place at Gath, there was a huge man with six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot—twenty-four in all. He also was descended from Rapha. 21 When he taunted Israel, Jonathan son of Shimeah, David's brother, killed him. 22 These four were descendants of Rapha in Gath, and they fell at the hands of David and his men.
- **Rev 2: 5:** To the Church in Ephesus - 2 "To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands. 2 I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. 3 You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary. 4 Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first. 5 Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. 6 But you have this in your favor: You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. 7 Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

- Ephesians 6: The Armor of God - 10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. 14 Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, 15 and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. 16 In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Sermon Title: "Room to Receive – Part 4 – "Same Devils/New Levels – You are running out of time to upgrade your weapon system – you can't fight 40-year struggles with teenage tactics – shift the strategy to master the season – Don't push your Abishai away – Don't revert back to a season when you had no help – Put down the sword and put on the armor.

- **Please consider joining an eGroup (small group) so you don't have to walk this walk alone? – See www.elevationchurch.cc.**
- **Interested in joining Elevation Church: See: www.elevationchurch.cc**
- **Interested in leading an eGroup? See: www.elevationchurch.cc**
- **Interested in serving at Elevation Church: See: www.elevationchurch.cc**
- Here Comes Church:
 - Profile of Maria that started attending Elevation Church at Nations Ford Road and led a "snack pack event" – which in turn led to 90 families attending church – God will ask you to commit and then God will bless and multiply what you start with.
 - Sermons also available for Spanish, in Spanish, Russian, and Portuguese.
 - Watch Party outreach tour – Danny visiting a watch party in Tampa, FL.
 - Interested in serving or volunteering? See www.elevationchurch.cc
- **Opening Prayer #1 by Pastor Steven Furtick on 1/31/2021: *"God still exchanges graves to gardens – This is Gods résumé – it was true in 2019 and is true in 2021 – nothing has changed about god – there are so many unstable things that can knock you off balance in life – let me stand behind this big sturdy pulpit and remind you that this is still true: no matter what you've been through – no matter what the locusts have eaten – no matter what time has slipped through your fingers that you have wasted – it is still true – and I emphasize the word still – you're still going make it – you are still going to fulfill God's purpose for your life – you are still chosen – and we thank you Lord that you are still with us – even now. Lord you still believe in us and you have a good plan for our lives – you are still ordering our steps – so today Lord we thank you for the power of stillness – His name is God and He is exalted – we are not looking back and we are not looking over our shoulder – and if we did, the only thing we would find his goodness and mercy running after us – that chased us into this very place – I thank you Lord that you are still God – nothing can change that and nothing can alter it – I thank you that my life is by design – and that I fit into the big picture that you were doing – exactly as I am supposed to – I speak that over us every son and daughter in this place – Lord give them the grace to receive it and the***

boldness to act like it. Now we give you praise because that is what you are worthy of. We give you praise because you deserve it – Thank you Lord.

- **Opening Prayer #2 by Pastor Steven Furtick on 1/31/2021: Our Lord is a rock in the wilderness and he still is – Our God was a covenant keeper for the people of Israel – and He still is for the church – Praise the Lord – the Israelites tell us that God can rescue us – and we have faith that He will – and even if He does not, we still trust him. We have to be resolved – we have to be committed – we have to be dependent on God all at the same time – don't be discouraged or dismayed in this process – God is still with you in the fire – God is still with you in the furnace – God is still with you in the storm – We come today to praise God and give Him glory.**
- Over the last month we've been talking about making room for God in our lives – and today we will continue in this stream of thought.
- The story I am about to share with you is a lifesaver and please do not underestimate the power of this story. Although this story in the bible is not well known, it is very powerful.
- See 2nd Samuel 21: 15 to 17.
- There are many clichés that preachers share (a.k.a. mother goose bible spin offs) – here are a couple:
 - “I do not know what tomorrow holds – but I know who holds tomorrow.”
 - “It's not a setback – it is a set up or Your setback is a setup”
 - “When you're moving forward in your relationship with God you'll experience increased resistance”
 - “Every time you go higher you'll have to fight harder.”
 - “New levels = new Devils” – this is true with interactive games as well.
- Today I want to talk to you about “Same Devils/New levels.”
- Recall Pastor Furtick sharing the story of Thanksgiving visiting an aunt and uncle in Florence-SC with the NFL Football (Detroit Lions) playing on TV – where his Grandfather said: “they are still going at it after all of these years.”
- **See 2nd Samuel 21: 15-17. Once again signifies a cyclical struggle that we all have. Once again – The Israelites are still going at it with the Philistines – even after killing Goliath in 1st Samuel 17 about 30 years prior – David is fighting a different Philistine in 2nd Samuel 21. The same enemy – different situation. Do you have these moments in your life where you say: Really? I'm still fighting this?**
- We can all get around the concept of new levels and new Devils.
- However, what about the times when we discover that we're fighting the same insecurities that we had when we were 15? – and the same insecurities are running after us?
- It is a challenge when you realize that things are still chasing at your heels even after 25 years of living a Christian life.
- Every once in a while we look at ourselves in the mirror - and we see some things that have changed much to our chagrin (distress or embarrassment) – and ask ourselves – Still? I am still dealing with this?
- With a generous portion from God I want to get us from verse 15 to verse 17 in 2nd Samuel 21 – where we transition from once gain (vs. 15) to never again (vs. 17).
- David is fighting the same enemy that is kind of like Goliath – but it is not Goliath – and yes David has changed but somethings are still the same.

- David has come a long way to be the King of the united Israelite monarchy – at the age of 40 – yet he still fighting the same giants two decades later – the same giant that he killed at the age of 17.
- And David provides a good example for us to study today.
- And I relate to David in certain ways – I can relate to the fact that God instructed him early in his life – in the story of David always points to a bigger picture of what God is doing.
- Here's another title to consider for the sermon: It's the same devil – but it's just dressed differently.
- **Here's an important point: The devil is not creative – God is. We typically can easily discern when the devil is bringing the same temptation into our lives in a different season. And it is exhausting to fight every re-packaged devil in a new season.**
- **Once we recognize that it is the same fear that triggers us to drink too much – or the same fear that makes us push people away – we deal with the same stuff every day – they are the world, the flesh, and the devil – there are only three enemies – the world is the system – the flesh is the pattern – and the Devil is that other thing.**
- Once we understand that the devil only has these three things – and keeps coming back into our lives – and dresses up in different disguises in order to visit us in different seasons – BTW: when we are younger the devils are less expensive – like when were in middle school we want to get attention we act out in class and then we go to detention – however let's consider 25 years later when have the same need for attention outside of your marriage – and this ends in divorce (much more expensive)
- Here's the key point: it is the same devil that is coming at you but just at a different level and a different expense – because the stakes are higher – this is why I love elevation youth – because while my children are young – they can learn to trust God and go to God for anything – where they can discover all the things that are falsely advertised in the world – where we don't have to run from our calling because we have God on the inside.
- **The same passion that made David great to kill goliath (the first giant that he killed) – almost got him killed later in his life – David is conflicted and 2nd Samuel 21 – because he's not a shepherd boy anymore – He is a King now – it doesn't say in 2nd Samuel 21 that David was weak – He was exhausted. David was not weak and he was not lazy – David was not careless either – the Bible says that David was weary. There's a big difference between weak and weary.**
- Recall the story of Pastor Furtick and his son talking about working out in their home gym called the "pound" – place of ultimate natural development – while doing 5 lb curls as part of exhaustive 4th round super set – walking in the gym during last set – they were not weak – just weary from a long workout.
- Why we did the dumb thing that we did yesterday – we were not weak we were just weary.
- It's impossible to have Christ live inside of you and still be weak – how can "The Great I am" that brings the spirit of life inside of you mean that you are weak? David was not weak and neither are you – we are merely tired and weary. And we all get weary when we fight the same battle over and over again – we are treasures of earthen vessels (Kev note: See 2 Corinthians 4:7) – but we get tired.
- **What is frustrating is getting tired or battles that we did not have to fight. When you're running back-and-forth to the nursing home where your mother is located - that is a battle you have to**

fight – what's hard is fighting the imaginary battles that you have to fight along-side the real ones.

- Where are we stronger than what we are acting like?
- So much of this is solved (as we read in 2nd Samuel 21) when we allow the strategy to match the season – and this is what drew me to the challenge of this text – David is doing what he has always done – and what has made him successful up to this point – and it almost gets him killed.
- Here's how God showed it to me: The thing that got David crowned as king almost got him killed – he was crowned for killing a giant – which what he was supposed to do in this season of his life.
- **David was an anointed man of God and almost died before he was able to do all that God called him to do – it is possible to be both anointed and exhausted – and if we don't know how to handle this – what crowns us in one season can kill us in another season.**
- At the start of the global pandemic I was very scared because we couldn't open any of our doors to the church – where I lacked strength to thrive in a new season – and I became exhausted.
- I had to adapt – just like how a single person has to change their habits once they become married.
- Perhaps you have a version of this in your life – where we are so exhausted it kills the creativity to do what God calls us to do – can you relate to this?
- I think we can all relate to the problems associated with using an old strategy in a new season.
- For those of you that have lived through any kind of scarcity in your life, we can have enough but not know what to do with it – this is a big temptation – consider having a phone full of people that would love to connect with you – but nobody wants to talk to you.
- **David is now in his 40's – and like David we are running out of Time to upgrade weapons. Because Ishbi-Benob (See 2nd Samuel 21) is coming after you – and some of you even feel cornered right now – and we need to figure out what to do in this weird place – that same instinct that God gave you for survival – the methods of fighting in the prior season are no longer working – possibly leaving David to die at the hands of his own instincts.**
- **Here is the important question: where are you using an old strategy in your new life? Where do you need an upgrade? You're fighting with an inferior weapon – you're being defensive and no one is attacking you.**
- I feel sorry for David in this passage of scripture – he did not know how to be a king in this way – And Saul was a bad example for him – He is only the second king that Israel ever had – the whole reason that the Israelites wanted a Kings was because the Philistines were oppressing them – and the whole reason that the Philistines were oppressing them was because they were metal workers and had superior weapons – and the first King was a bad king – and David had the heart to be a king however he did not know how.
- **We all have the heart and passion to break chains, to be a good parent, and to be a good employee – and we just need to know how – but we can't fight 40-year-old Giants with 15 year old tactics – nor can we fight grown-up battles with teenage tactics – we have to grow into the season – we have to grow into this challenge – we have to grow into this assignment – we have to grow into the anointing that we've had all along – and it is not automatic.**
- **It is not new devils and new levels - When we are confronted with the same devil – we typically sink back to the same level – back when we were emotionally homeless and had nothing to eat – and seek council in the most unreliable person that we know of – ourselves.**

- Yes David has grown – and in 2nd Samuel 21, David is not finding the old Goliath – and David has grown – now let's look at what God did for David.
- Just as David is dealing with Ishbi-Benob – we all have to deal with some Ish – issue. New Ish – same God.
- Ishbi-Benob had a sword that weighed 7 lbs. – ½ the size of Goliath's sword – so why can't they defeat them this time – and this is the part that sucks – every time we regain control of a situation the strategy shifts – think about the shifting expectations of parenting – We need to shift the strategy to match the season.
- **See 2nd Samuel 21:17: "17 But Abishai son of Zeruiah came to David's rescue; he struck the Philistine down and killed him. Then David's men swore to him, saying, "Never again will you go out with us to battle, so that the lamp of Israel will not be extinguished."**
- I wish someone would name their baby Abishai.
- **Abishai means father of a gift. When the enemy is closing in on us and we are weary – and we are out of ideas – and we are sick of people – we need God to send us an angel – God could not send an angel to rescue David – however God sent Abishai – God did not send an angel he sent a person. Are you pushing your Abishai away? Recall the old preacher story of a man in the water that refuses all of the help that God gave him. Why do we keep reverting back to a period of time when we had no help?**
- Do you know how stupid we look when we try to fight things in the flesh? When we confront in the flesh all we get is anxiety and 2 hours of an elevated heart rate.
- Is somebody close to you carrying the father's gift? Your Abishai.
- Say this for the next seven days: Lord make me aware of the Abishai (the help that you send) in my life – Pray this and see what happens.
- Also send out some thank you cards for people in your life that have been your Abishai.
- **Abishai states that David is symbolic of the lamp who keeps the covenant for the people of Israel. David is the one that God gave to them – and they were compelled to protect him. Are you protective of your light? David is told that he cannot go out to battle like this anymore – David has to upgrade how he does this – or the light is going to go out.**
- **And if I could be honest with you – What I am seeing in this season as your pastor is a lot of people's lights going out – I am seeing the light in their eyes go out – I'm seeing the light in their minds go out – not thinking clearly and just tripping over stuff – and getting reckless – going to stuff that they had left alone for over six years – going back to stuff they haven't thought about in a long time – because this is what we do when we were in survival mode.**
- **But we are in a different season now – Abishai is with us now – God has put something between you and your enemy – I am talking about Jesus and the grace of God – God tells us that if we do not have a human Abishai then God will step in and be the Abishai – God says that Jesus will stand between us in the pestilence – and the depression – and the darkness – stop pushing the Abishai away – God has given you some help in the form of humans – and if you keep pushing people away you will die at the hands of a giant that is below your feet.**
- I have one more layer that I want to share with you in this sermon.
- **Same Devil new level – yes we are dealing with the same uncertainty – yes we are dealing with the same thing – and no there is no abracadabra anointing – if I had that power I would sprinkle**

it all over you – and spread it all through the hospitals and all through the streets – and spread all through the divorce courts and the child custody courts – however God sent an Abishai.

- Here is what spoke to me: Not only did Ishbi-Benob have a sword that was have the size of Goliath, see what it says in vs. 16 – it says he was armed with a new sword – Question: why does it matter if it's a new sword or an old sword? Believe that God is using the new sword that the enemy had to point to a deeper reality – not only did the enemy have a new weapon – so did David.
- Recall that this is the same David that struck down a lion, bear, and goliath.
- David tells us to keep our enemies at a distance and keep our Abishais close.
- Many of us do the exact opposite – keeping our enemies close and our Abishais distant.
- So we will spend five hours on Facebook – having imaginary battles – with people we don't know and wouldn't like if we did – or somehow we owe the universe a detailed account of how we spent our day – and how we spent our money – and how we spent our week.
- A Pastor Steven Classic relating to social media: Do I want to be involved in a digital gang fight inside of a fish tank? If I participate in this, things get so absurd – and cultivates more anger. It is better not to yield free space in the movie theater of our heads? Don't Let all of these voices in through your front door – If we do, we will be pushing away the gift of the father.
- It's complicated and it's not easy. David got this far by fighting – however - to stay alive – God tells David to fight the same friggen Philistines at a different level. Because if we don't come up higher to see things at Gods perspective – to start our day differently – to end our day differently – and make some adjustments – we will be walking around with a slingshot and we are supposed to be wearing armor. The Lord tells us today to put down the sword to put on the armor.
- When David was 17 he tried on the armor and it was too big for him – well the armor fits him now.
- You're not that scared and defeated little girl or boy anymore – the armor fits now – so step into the season with the confidence that you have the anointing for this assignment. We have the victory – we have it right now.
- We have the shield of faith and we have the helmet of salvation – we have a new wardrobe – we are dressed different now – WE no longer carry the rags of our filthy unrighteousness – come into the presence of a God that has clothed us with a garment that is white with righteousness.
- Same David - new sword.
- Same you - new altitude.
- Same you - knew focus.
- Same devil – same insecurity – same problem – new passion.
- Closing Prayer: I want you to protect your light this week – Take Abishai's advice – don't keep going out over and over again to fight the wrong battles – and push the right people away – Are you pushing your Abishai away? Abishai was not an angel – he was just one of David's guys – stop people from stealing your light – stay committed to your first love (See Rev 2:5) – some of us are cornered on the battlefield and we are tired and weary – not weak – just weary because we have been fighting all of our lives – God gives us a warning – to repent or he will remove our lampstand – light represents perspective – light represents passion – and light represents purpose – stop fighting battles using old and outdated methods – we all need some help – God tells us to repent – to change levels and come up higher – keep your enemies at a distance and keep your Abishais close – and if we do this - God will bring our light back - God will give us an

open door to reinvent ourselves – to change the situation from once again to never again – It is not about a devil - it is a decision – and we have a decision to make – I thank today that Abishai is coming for us – Lord I ask that you assign an Abishai to everyone in this room – I thank you Lord that there is an Abishai that is standing by for anyone that is willing to open their eyes – to recognize they do not have to do this alone - and no longer have to fight a certain way - that there are new levels, new weapons, new means of leverage, and new conduits of awareness. We have the blood of Jesus as a new weapon – we have the righteousness of Christ – we are a new creation in Christ – We can now put on the full armor of God. We are all weary – Let us receive the help that God has given us. Amen.