



### The God of the Unexpected

God's character and faithfulness never change, but the Christian life is a dynamic and ever-changing journey of faith. This week we explore two instances of God working in unexpected ways to use small things for great impact.

**NOTE:** I filmed the video for this week several weeks ago when the scheduled sermon for 10/13 was about David. I've updated this lesson to include Pastor Tim's sermon from 10/6 on David and Pastor Ryan's 10/13 sermon on Zechariah.

**1 - Think About life changes** - Fall sports season always brings some wild results as upsets in college and NFL games and baseball playoffs shake up expectations! Big changes are not as fun in our daily lives, however! What's an unexpected change you've experienced in recent years, and how did impact you?

**2 - Watch the Video for Week 5 with Pastor Scott**

**3 - Read & Discuss David & Zechariah -**

- **Setting the stage** - The picture & map on the right show the terrain and also why the advance of the Philistine Army created anxiety for the Israelites living in the Hill Country of Judah just a few miles away!
- **Read 1 Samuel 17:1-3** - The Philistine Army had camped *inside* of Judah's territory! If you lived in Bethlehem, this was a threat to your life and family.
  - What emotions would you be feeling?
- **Read 1 Samuel 17:4-11** - The Israelite Army knew standing in lines for battle, not a 1v1 "winner take all" contest like the Philistine/Greek style (*think Achilles vs Hector in the Trojan War*). Saul and Israel were confused by the tactic!
  - Have you ever felt like life threw some unexpected stuff your way, things you didn't feel prepared for?
- **Read 1 Samuel 17:12-14, 26-27** - Goliath challenged Israel, but David saw the spiritual battle - the "living God" has been insulted. Ancient battles were considered a spiritual contest between deities.
  - What can learn from David about the spiritual nature of our conflicts?
- **Now read Zechariah 4:7-10** - The prophet Zechariah spoke during the rebuilding of the Jerusalem Temple that was destroyed 70 years earlier in the Babylonian invasion. God's people had returned, and King Zerubbabel now ventured into the burned out ruins on Temple Mount with a plumb line to begin the process of setting a cornerstone to rebuild the Lord's Temple. It seemed like an insignificant event, but it began the process of rebuilding!
  - Is there something in your life God wants to restore, renew, or rebuild?
  - What is a "small beginning" or first step you can make in faith?
- **Pray for each other! Share with your group how they can pray for you:**



Pastor Scott with sons Caleb & Josiah hiking in the Elah Valley, choosing stones at the stream bed between Socoh and Azekah



Central Israel: the Coastal Plain was controlled by the Philistines, the Hill Country by Judah. The Philistine Army had moved into the Shephelah foothills, directly threatening Bethlehem & Jerusalem

