

TAKE TIME OUT - Pastoral Retreat

Half Acre, Horton Heath, Wimborne, Dorset. BH21 7JS

Tel: 01202-824834

Email: janice.morgan@methodist.org.uk

Web-site: taketimeoutretreat.org

Monthly Message – June 2021

Reverend Janice A. Morgan MA. BSc.

Scripture: 1 Samuel 17:47

⁴⁷that all this assembly may know that the Lord does not save by sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's and He will give you into our hand.

In the days of the Exodus, the Israelites became afraid to enter the Promised Land because of the giants living there. King Og of Bashan was over 13 feet tall and Goliath was 9 feet tall. King Saul, as the tallest of all the Israelites, was nowhere near that height. Kings often avoided the high cost of battle by pitting their strongest warriors against each other and abiding by the outcome. When we stand in faith on the Word of God we tend not to think of the inevitable spiritual attack that ensues. Jesus experienced such conflict in many different forms, so we must expect our witness to provoke the same. *Do we get others to fight our battles to avoid the cost of conflict? Does fear of failure or reprisals from forceful people make us blind for self-preservation? Is our trust in God to face His enemies lacking in strength of faith?*

Perspective can make all the difference. King Saul only saw a giant and a young boy. Goliath only saw an army of small, fearful soldiers easily intimidated, and a small boy he could squash like an insect. But David saw a mortal man defying God. His faith perspective knew he would not face this giant alone; the Lord would stand and fight with him. David went out to meet an enemy three times his size and strength, with no weapon of war or armour. The giant had a sword in one hand, a spear in the other, and a shield bearer in front of him. David carried only the tools he used to protect the sheep in his care and trust in God to give him victory. Goliath had a physical advantage over David, but he did not realise that in fighting David he would also be fighting God. Viewing seemingly impossible situations from God's perspective enables discernment of Truth. When we see the spiritual aspect of a person or situation we will also see God's way through and find the strength of faith to trust Him for victory. *What giants might we need to face in faith today? Whose perspective are we seeing? Where might God's hand be in it all?*

David spoke God's Word of Truth with the spiritual confidence of faith. While the whole of Saul's army were detained by fear, David knew the importance of taking action. With God at his side there was no reason to question or delay. He went forward to do what he knew was right before God with divine strength. Goliath stood in arrogant mocking defiance to undermine David's confidence with sarcastic, demeaning ridicule. All bullies resort to personal insult when faced with Truth from a person of integrity. No criticism, ridicule, fear, or potential death could stop David following the will of God. Wrong behaviour, no matter who or how many are doing it, must prevent us from doing what we know is right by God. Living in a right relationship with God is all that matters; righteousness, according to God's Word, pleases Him. David went forward, just as he was, to meet the enemy standing in faith before a giant assured that God had called him to do so and would be with him. His faith fulfilled prophesy; the enemy was miraculously brought down, the giant was killed and his head cut

off with his own sword as a warning to others that seek to defy God. *Do we speak God's Word in the spiritual confidence of faith? Are we suffering bullying tactics of personal insult to undermine our confidence? Will we be detained by fear or walk forward to meet our enemy?*

The greater our faith, the more Satan attacks. Evil may be busier, more seductive, but never stronger than faith. When we proclaim the Truth of God's Word, go forward in the name of the Lord, and stand in faith, we too will gain victory over His enemies. It matters not how gigantic, strong, sarcastic, or mocking they are or how many weapons they have or sharp their edge may be. We need not fear or shrink from the battle because no enemy will be allowed to stand against the people of God. The battle belongs to the Lord! *If God is with us then who can stand against us?* And all God's people say, "Amen! Amen! And **Amen!**"

Yours in Christ Jesus, Janice.

Poem: How Long? ©Janice Morgan-1993

How long O Lord, how long?
In anguish, I cry out,
In pain and anger, shout,
My foes are all around,
My hands and feet they've bound,
How long O Lord, how long?

How long O Lord, how long?
I've called to You at length,
I've used up all my strength,
Please answer when I call,
Please save me from the fall,
How long O Lord, how long?

I'm here My child, I'm here!
I've heard you call My name,
I've heard you cry in shame,
I've been here all along,
I weep to hear your song,
I'm here My child, I'm here!

How long O Lord, how long?
I long to see Your face,
I need Your warm embrace,
This battle lays me bare,
This burden I must share,
How long O Lord, how long?

How long O Lord, how long?
My heart is torn in shreds,
My web of life in threads,
Oh how can I prevail?
Oh surely I will fail,
How long O Lord, how long?

How long O Lord, how long?
I am so very weak,
I have no strength to speak,
Why do You stay away?
Why can't You pass this way?
How long O Lord, how long?

I'm here My child, I'm here!
Your ways are not My ways,
Your plight will last few days,
My hand will set you free,

My miracle you'll see,
I'm here My child, I'm here!

I'm here My child, I'm here!
Just rest, and trust in Me,
Just watch, and you will see,
You are My precious gift,
You in My arms, I'll lift,
I'm here My child, I'm here!

June Calendar:

Thursday 2nd	Corpus Christi
Sunday 20th	Father's Day
Sunday 26th	Armed Forces Day