

Sermon Title: "On Making Your Next Move"

Date: January 24, 2021

Scripture: II Samuel 5:17-25

Passage Background and Summary

The events in this passage take place during David's second reign. Once his staunch enemies, the Philistines, learned of his anointing, they targeted him. When David heard about this, he immediately went to a stronghold, place of security. While there, he asked God what he should do next. God instructed him to "Go up; for I will certainly give the Philistines into your hand." (v. 19) David "went up" and defeated the Philistines at a place that was then named Baal-perazim. When the Philistines rose again, David again asked God what he should do. This time God told David he should not go up but should instead go around to the rear, and "when you hear the sound of the marching in the tops of the balsam tree, then be on the alert; for then the Lord has gone out before you to strike down the army of the Philistines." (v. 23-24). David followed God's instructions and successfully defeated the Philistines.

Sermon Summary

At various points in our lives, even after God has opened a door, delivered us, placed us in a new position, like David, who had been anointed king over Israel, we have to ask ourselves the question: What's next? What would God have me to do? Who would God have me to be? David is a model of a "man on the move" who sought God for his next move. In II Samuel, we learn that David's anointing as king made him a target of his enemies, the Philistines. When David learned that his enemies were after him, his first move was to go to his "stronghold," his secret place, to seek God's guidance. Like David, when seeking to know what God would have us to do next, we need to go to our "stronghold," our secret place, our prayer closet to seek God's guidance:

1. Don't act until you hear from God.
2. Once you hear from God, don't fail to act.
3. Keep listening for the sound. Hear the voice of God, the "sound of the genuine."

Reflection Questions

1. Read and discuss the following quote from theologian, Dr. Howard Thurman from his 1980 commencement address at Spelman College:

There is in you something that waits and listens for the sound of the genuine in yourself and sometimes there is so much traffic going on in your minds, so many different kinds of signals, so many vast impulses floating through your organism that go back thousands of generations, long before you were even a thought in the mind of creation, and you are buffeted by these, and in the midst of all of this you have got to find out what your name is. Who are you? How does the sound of the genuine come through to you? (Source: [The Sound of the Genuine, by Howard Thurman \(dailygood.org\)](http://dailygood.org))

2. In which areas of your life are seeking God for "what's next"?
3. What obstacles have you met on your way?
4. What challenges do you face when listening for God's voice?
5. What challenges do you face when acting upon God's voice?