



"Who's Fighting Who?"

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by Pastor Tim Dodson

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The story of David and Goliath is one of the most well known stories that grace the pages of scripture. It is for

sure one of the greatest universally recognized events in the Bible...at least in the western culture in which we dwell. There are comic book versions and cartoon depictions...all seemingly to have devolved into mere children's fodder complete with pictures and creative license. And thus in the framework of hyper-familiarity, years of embellishments, and all sorts of attempts at extreme analogies, one can only wonder what it was we as believing adults were supposed to have taken away from this event and it's record.

I am struck by the fact that so often in scripture we see people who are ultimately destroyed by an enemy that was encountered early in their lives and should have been killed then, but instead that enemy was in some way "accommodated." Something was tolerated on some level when it should have been destroyed. With a hearty "spoiler alert" we look ahead in the story of Saul, and we find him on the field of battle with fatal injuries inflicted by the Philistines...the very boys who stood in front of him on this day. Saul's sons would die that day, and he himself ...in his last moments, was executed by another enemy...an "Amalekite" ...a member of a people group that God called Saul back in chapter 13 to essential erase all traces of off the face of the earth!

But Saul did not finish it that day...just as he will fail to finish this battle either, and both of these events would do more than come back to haunt him, they would in fact *kill him*. Today many of us are facing enemies that if we do not complete finish them they will likely come back and one day finish us. That is the way Satan works. We have seen it so many times here over the years...enemies of pride, sexual bondages, idolatries, drugs, alcohol and addictions of all kinds, money mis-management, sloppy marital practices and poor child-rearing, etc etc. All essentially "Amalekites" and "Philistines" ...all should have been "put down" with "severe prejudice" years earlier only to rise again to finally take us out!

This day, Saul faced the Philistines, as he had many times before. And Saul was *afraid*. Of course he would be, as we know back in mid chapter 16 that the "*spirit of the lord had departed from Saul*" (1 Sam 16:14). Saul had been "shelved" because he had compromised God's instruction. He tried to play the middle and get what he wanted while still *sorta* fulfilling God's directions. In the book of Hosea, God spoke in a manner that reflects upon this state of being...chapter 5, verse 4 (NLT) says "...*your deeds won't let you come to God again, for the spirit of adultery is deep within you and you cannot know the Lord. The very arrogance of Israel (or you and I!) testifies against her in my court...she will stumble under her load of guilt...*"

With a divided heart Saul is heading down that road which will eventually end on Mount Gilboa in the first chapter of 2nd Samuel: Saul dying from injuries sustained at the hands of these Philistines and ultimately executed by someone who should have not even been alive to have been there. That final curtain is waiting for many of us because we fail to move to finish certain aspects, sin and issues in our lives.

Colossians 3:5 "So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires. Don't be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world - Because of these sins, the anger of God is coming. You used to do these things when your life was still part of this world. But now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, and dirty language. Don't lie to each other, for you have stripped off your old sinful nature and all its wicked deeds. Put on your new nature, and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like him."

The valley of Elah was a wide valley that existed fifteen miles outside of Jerusalem. Appearing "center stage" was this Philistine 'Goliath' who was an intensely big individual! According to the scriptural account, his height was "six cubits and a span", which would have made him about nine feet, nine inches tall. He was a member descendant of a race of giants, known as the Anakim who the Jewish nation believed to be descendants of the Nephilim, a powerful race who was prominent in the pre-Flood world...a people that were commonly understood to be the offspring of earthly women mating with fallen demonic angels. The Anakim would ultimately be wiped out in Israel by Joshua during the conquest of the promised land. Joshua 11:22 states that after which one could only find Anakim in Gaza, Ashdod, and Gath, places far from Jewish territory.

But today, here stood a giant that seemed to be undefeatable. Complete victory was...*well*, 'impossible.' But today was the day of battle! On this day everyone knew who was the enemy and that he need to die. This is that moment...*a passing moment*, in which we are called to fight, empowered to fight, and filled with the Spirit of God to win. If such a day is shunned...if our hearts are fearful and we withdrawal from finishing things, then we will only live to face the same enemy another day. And on that day, it is the enemy who will likely finish us! Saul had disobeyed...he did not follow all that God had instructed...he wanted something so bad as to compromise what he knew full well God was telling him, and because of it "the spirit of God left him." At the point, I have found that counsel is useless, history is meaningless, and my love for that individual is meritless. One might as well talk to a brick wall!

Saul's victories in the years past had come not at *his* hand, but at the bowing before the Spirit of God that dwelt in him and in his midst. Perhaps he failed to hold that truth in his hand to be remembered every single day as we should do! But there came a day where what HE wanted was more important than what GOD wanted. He did not openly reject God. He did not throw out all that God had said and instructed. He just compromised a little. Just 'fudged' a bit. As if God is a fool or blind...maybe He would not see or maybe He would not notice. Saul compromised because of lust...desire...idolatry. And it would cost him *everything*.

David however, had little going for him on the natural realm. He lacked the size, the expertise, the training. He had no certificates of achievements, no diplomas...no badge of authority. But he had the one thing he needed...he had the "Spirit of the Lord." He lived out the truth of Christ hundreds of years before Jesus was born and hundreds of years before Paul said "*having begun in the Spirit are you now made perfect by the flesh?*" He did not abandon the spirit for a sword and a shield. He did not take matters into his own hands and attempt to force an outcome of his own design. How we try to design our own lives outside of the perfect loving will of God. I have seen God give people the world on a platter, and watched them throw it away because they believed they could do better.

David, like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego who would follow years later was not going to compromise out of fear or want: *"O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God whom we serve is able to save us. He will rescue us from your power, Your Majesty. But even if he doesn't, we want to make it clear to you, Your Majesty, that we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up."* (Daniel 3:16-18)

For David...he would never serve anyone other than God and would trust only in HIM and HIS strength. He also did not postpone what needed to be done. He didn't say "Hey Goliath....hang tight and I'll get back to you after I live some of my dreams, fulfill some of my physical wants and take some Krav Maga classes and maybe invent hand grenades." No...he had only ONE DAY that he knew of, and that was the one he was living, so **today** is the day that he would serve the Lord. Today the fight was on! James 4:13-14 *Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.*

For David, the worldly odds were against him. The wise money would be on Goliath. But the world would have been wrong. And **that**, is what we are to take away from this story 'adult believer.' No matter what it looked like, the world would have been wrong. Because one plus God is always a majority. 1 Corinthians 1:27 *"But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty..."*

The words of Goliath angered David. The lies brought out of David a righteous anger because Goliath was taunting the living God as well as all the individuals within the army of God. It was not just that Goliath was an enemy...it was not just that he came from the "other side." It was his pride against God and his disregard for God's people. For that, David knew he had to fight. For Goliath was not dis'ing David...He had been dis'ing God.

Now, does God need you to defend Him? Certainly not. Jesus said in Matthew 26:53 *Don't you realize that I could ask my Father for thousands of angels to protect us, and he would send them instantly?* And is there a time to "shut up in the spirit?" Oh yes...often I think! But there also comes times in our lives that if we really love Jesus and we are really children of God, and we love our brothers and sisters, that we must speak up. We cannot in such situations say we care about any of it if we find it easy to keep our heads down and out of the fray. David had to argue with his own blood brother in this matter! "Standing in the gap" was going to cost him. Eze 22:30 *"So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one."* David would be subject to verbal abuse from his brother, King Saul, Goliath, and seemingly from the other members of the army of Israel. But he knew something that is critical to this entire story. He had the ace...He had the answer. In verse 47 David says "the Lord saves not with the sword or the spear...*the battle is the Lord's.* The "battle is the Lord's."

Yes, it is...

Acts 1:8 *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you...*

1 Samuel 16:14 *"But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and a distressing spirit from the LORD troubled him."*