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# SLAYING GOLIATH

LESSONS FROM DAVID



“Then Goliath, a Philistine champion from Gath, came out of the Philistine ranks to face the forces of Israel. He was over nine feet tall! I defy the armies of Israel today! Send me a man who will fight me!” ...When Saul and the Israelites heard this, they were terrified and deeply shaken.”

1 Samuel 17:4, 10-11

1 Samuel 17 includes the well-known narration of Israel’s battle with the Philistines and specifically David’s victory over the Philistine champion Goliath who was over 9 feet tall and a formidable opponent being a seasoned warrior. He terrorized Israel for 40 days nonstop, instilling fear which paralyzed an entire army until David came to the camp and defeated him.

Today we may not have to fight physical battles, but there are giants in our lives we need to slay. These giants like Goliath may seem unconquerable, but we will learn from David’s story how Goliath can be defeated.

## Day 1 Overcoming the Fear Factor

“So the Philistines and Israelites faced each other on opposite hills, with the valley between them.” 1 Samuel 17:3

The battle at the valley of Elah wasn't Saul's first war or the first time Israel would face the Philistines in battle, so it's very likely then that both Saul and his army felt this would be a quick victory as with the other times. However they didn't bargain for the presence of Goliath which was a game changer.

“Why are you all coming out to fight?” he called. “I am the Philistine champion, but you are only the servants of Saul. Choose one man to come down here and fight me! If he kills me, then we will be your slaves. But if I kill him, you will be our slaves”... When Saul and the Israelites heard this, they were terrified and deeply shaken.” 1 Samuel 17:8-11

Goliath at over 9 feet tall was imposing and terrifying enough to immobilize Saul and his seasoned soldiers. What was most frightening wasn't just his size or war record, but the fact that Goliath changed the rules of engagement. Instead of the two armies fighting one another, victory would now be won by Israel only if one man could slay Goliath. Israel clearly hadn't anticipated this and had no response to the challenge. Similarly, there are times life may throw us a challenge we didn't anticipate or prepare for in our health, finances, family, or other areas.

“Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.” 1 Peter 5:8

Note that Israel's first reaction was fear and terror. This is how the enemy works: throwing up issues that put terror in our hearts, immobilizing us so we become focused only on what we're facing. Remember at this stage Goliath was still taunting Israel and there weren't any actual casualties yet as no one even tried to go against him. Let's reflect: Are there things in your life that just thinking about them have immobilised you? Fear is an enemy tactic, but we can move in spite of it.

**Prayer:** Lord help me realise that the things I'm facing may be more frightening in my mind than in reality. Grant me boldness to take a step in spite of the fear I may feel

## Day 1 pt 2

### Understand the Enemy

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Goliath's presence was a game changer. At over 9 feet tall he was imposing and terrifying enough to immobilise both Saul and his seasoned soldiers. What was most frightening wasn't just his size or war record, but the fact that Goliath changed the rules of engagement. Rather than the two armies fight one another, victory would now be won by Israel only if one man could slay Goliath. Israel clearly hadn't anticipated this and had no response to the challenge.

“Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.” 1 Peter 5:8

There are times life may throw us a challenge we didn't anticipate or prepare for. This challenge could be in our health, finances, family, anywhere really. It could be in something we've been doing for a while, so we thought it was business as usual until the unexpected came up. Note that Israel's first reaction was fear and terror. This is how the enemy works, showing up seeking to devour believers by putting terror in our hearts and immobilizing us as we become focused only on what we're facing. Remember at this stage the enemy is still looking for who to devour - Goliath was still taunting Israel and there weren't any actual casualties yet as no one even tried to go against him.

**Reflect:** Are there things in your life that just thinking about them have immobilised you? The enemy is still prowling, he hasn't bitten yet.

**Prayer:** Lord help me realise that the things I'm facing may be more frightening in my mind than in reality. Grant me boldness to take a step in spite of the fear I may feel

## Day 2

### Strategic Focus

Goliath stood and shouted a taunt across to the Israelites...For forty days, every morning and evening, the Philistine champion strutted in front of the Israelite army. 1 Samuel 17:8,16

Goliath taunted Israel consistently morning and evening for 40 days. Even though he hadn't laid a finger on any of them, he'd broken them in their minds by wearing them out daily, such that even those who may have harbored hope of defeating him would have been discouraged by the fears of others. What assault has the enemy launched against your mind? Are you surrounded by people who are also fearful? Or do you speak words of faith to one another? Who's in your corner to tell you what you're striving for is possible? Are you focusing on God's promise or the problem?

Goliath stood and shouted a taunt across to the Israelites... "I am the Philistine champion, but you are only the servants of Saul..." 1 Samuel 17:8

"We even saw giants there, the descendants of Anak. Next to them we felt like grasshoppers, and that's what they thought, too!" Numbers 13:33

Goliath belittled Israel to the extent that an entire seasoned army agreed with one man that they were only servants. Something similar happened when Israel was scanning the promised land and they saw the giants. They immediately felt the land couldn't be taken and saw themselves as grasshoppers, so they disqualified themselves from entering their promise. What promises have you disqualified yourself from because of the giants in the land?

"Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand." Isaiah 41:10

The constant taunts we're not by mistake it was a deliberate strategy to take Israel's eyes off the God who had won previous battles for them and shift focus to self rather than the power of the Most High. This strategy hasn't changed, and while it may not be a philistine taunting, some circumstances will challenge who we really believe is in charge.

**Prayer:** Lord help me focus on the truth that I don't have to rely on my strength, but in Your unlimited power which You've made available to me.

### Day 3 Contention & Expansion

'So Saul established his sovereignty over Israel, and fought against all his enemies on every side...and against the Philistines. Wherever he turned, he harassed them... Now there was fierce war with the Philistines all the days of Saul...' 1 Samuel 14:47,52

The valley of Elah wasn't Saul's first battle with the Philistine army which should make us ask: where was Goliath during the other battles? Given Israel's previous victories over them in previous wars, the Philistines may have decided it was time to bring out their champion so they wouldn't be defeated again. Sometimes the giants we face reflect previous battles we've won and the contention concerning where we're going.

"There is a wide-open door for a great work here, although many oppose me." 1 Corinthians 16:9

"For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places." Ephesians 6:12

Life is spiritual and as believers we have adversaries. This means we must function with the understanding that as we grow and take on more territory there will be opposition. We must also understand that there is almost a direct correlation between the size of the opportunity and the size of the adversary. So as we pray for breakthroughs, promotion, expansion, etc we should also pray for the requisite strength to take on the giants we will face.

"Praise the Lord, who is my rock. He trains my hands for war and gives my fingers skill for battle." Psalms 144:1

Note that the Bible says 'trains' not 'trained'. Training is ongoing as we are meant to take on ever increasing territories for God's kingdom. We must also understand that opposition is not all at the same level, in fact the Bible shares the hierarchy in Eph 6:12. This isn't to scare us but to equip us to function with spiritual intelligence so we can recognise the workings of the enemy and even pre-empt certain battles. Remember what you're facing is a result of both where you're coming from and where you're going.

**Prayer:** Lord train my hands for war and give my fingers skill for battle so I can fulfil my divine mandate and take possession of all you've assigned to me.

## Day 4 God's Perspective

'David asked the soldiers standing nearby, "What will a man get for killing this Philistine and ending his defiance of Israel? Who is this pagan Philistine anyway, that he is allowed to defy the armies of the living God?"' 1 Samuel 17:26

When David showed up on the scene he came with a totally different mindset from the soldiers who had been facing Goliath for the last 40 days and this is where David initially won the battle before even facing Goliath. While the soldiers saw a giant that was to be feared, David saw an insolent individual defying God's army and he believed the giant could and should be taken out of the picture. What gave David this audacity of belief?

'But now, thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine.'" Isaiah 43:1

'God has spoken once, Twice I have heard this: That power belongs to God.' Psalms 62:11

David didn't see himself or the soldiers as 'servants of Saul' as Goliath had taunted them. He saw Israel as God's covenant nation. As far as David was concerned Goliath wasn't insulting them, he was insulting God Himself. This is the same God who had given Israel many victories in the past, yet they forgot this and started looking at the situation within the context of their own capacity, rather than that of God. This is the same way we can get so overwhelmed by what we're facing that we forget that it's not about us, but about the power of God He's made available to us, and God can never be defeated.

'The wicked flee when no one pursues, But the righteous are bold as a lion.' Proverbs 28:1

Because of this perspective, rather than run from Goliath, David was more interested in the reward for defeating him because in his view it was a done deal. When we face challenges in life, our boldness shouldn't come from who we think we are/know/have, rather it should come from Whose we are. The One who has promised never to leave or forsake us, who is faithful, who has all power and can never be defeated. It'll be impossible to do this if we don't spend time in the word of God because that is the primary place He reveals Himself to us. When we position ourselves to see from His perspective, we will respond as He would have us do.

**Prayer:** Lord help me to steep myself in Your word so I know who I am and whose I am so I can face every situation with the boldness of a lion.

## Day 5

### The power of preparation

“Don’t worry about this Philistine,” David told Saul. “I’ll go fight him!.. The Lord who rescued me from the claws of the lion and the bear will rescue me from this Philistine!” Saul finally consented. “All right, go ahead,” he said. “And may the Lord be with you!”” 1 Samuel 17:32, 37 NLT

David’s boldness wasn’t from a place of wishful thinking or youthful exuberance. Though he wasn’t trained as a soldier, David had fought lions and bears in the wilderness more than once, so he knew first-hand what God’s deliverance looked like. This built his faith in God and gave him the audacity to challenge Goliath because he knew the God who did it before would do it again.

'being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ' Philippians 1:6

David didn’t know when he was saving his sheep from wild animals that he would one day save Israel from a giant. He just kept doing what he was meant to do as a good shepherd. If he’d run away each time the lions and bears showed up, he wouldn’t have the spiritual or mental fortitude to address the Goliath situation. This tells us that some battles we experience act as a training ground for what’s to come. This is why rather than keep asking God to take challenges away, we should ask Him to give us the strength and the strategy for the battles that form our preparation process.

There’s safety in letting God lead us into opportunities, even if they may seem unpleasant at the time. David’s experience in the background wasn’t known or celebrated, so he was able to mature in the areas that mattered before coming into prominence. This teaches us that we shouldn’t be in a hurry to get into the limelight without letting God prepare us first. God is very process driven, and if we try and short circuit His process by getting ourselves involved in what we’re not ready for we will struggle.

**Prayer:** Lord help me realise that today’s challenges are preparing me for tomorrow’s elevation. Teach me how to stand firm and win the battles you take me through, trusting that it’s Your desire for me to be victorious.





## Day 6 The Winning Strategy

“So Saul clothed David with his armor, and he put a bronze helmet on his head; he also clothed him with a coat of mail. David fastened his sword to his armor and tried to walk, for he had not tested them. And David said to Saul, “I cannot walk with these, for I have not tested them.” So David took them off. Then he took his staff in his hand; and he chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in a shepherd’s bag, in a pouch which he had, and his sling was in his hand. And he drew near to the Philistine.” I Samuel 17:38-40

When David showed up he didn’t just jump into the battle, he first tried using Saul’s armour but even though it was perfect for Saul, it was too unwieldy for David. We may all be fighting battles, but our weapons for success may differ. This is why following the leading of the Holy Spirit is critical because we may follow what worked for someone else and fail even though that method worked for them.

“So David inquired of the Lord, saying, “Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will You deliver them into my hand?” And the Lord said to David, “Go up, for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into your hand.” II Samuel 5:19

“Then the Philistines went up once again and deployed themselves in the Valley of Rephaim. Therefore David inquired of the Lord, and He said, “You shall not go up; circle around behind them, and come upon them in front of the mulberry trees.” II Samuel 5:22-23 NKJV

“I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye.” Psalms 32:8

David fought against the Philistines several times and each time a different strategy was deployed. He could have used the same strategy that worked a previous time, but David had learned not to assume and to ask the Lord for guidance. This is why David never lost a battle and it also teaches us that a key prayer point when we’re facing challenges is to ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the specific strategy for the battle as the winning strategy for each battle may differ. Sometimes we lose battles because we’re using the wrong strategy. Some battles require wisdom, others need fasting added, while some require wise counsel, or a change of process in order to win, the options are endless and only the Holy Spirit can guide us to the right one.

**Prayer:** Holy Spirit help me look to you first to reveal the strategy for any challenge I face, because this way I know I’ll always win.

## Day 7 Victory

“So David triumphed over the Philistine with only a sling and a stone, for he had no sword. Then David ran over and pulled Goliath’s sword from its sheath. David used it to kill him and cut off his head. When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they turned and ran.” 1 Samuel 17:50-51

As unorthodox as the strategy was, David triumphed and opened the door for Israel’s victory. When their champion was slain, the rest of the Philistine army fled and Israel pursued them and won the battle. It’s important we understand that Goliath wasn’t just a man, he represented a major stronghold in that battle.

“Then the men of Israel and Judah gave a great shout of triumph and rushed after the Philistines, chasing them as far as Gath and the gates of Ekron... Then the Israelite army returned and plundered the deserted Philistine camp.” 1 Samuel 17:52-53

Remember Goliath taunted Israel nonstop for 40 straight days and no one could stand up to him. Once he was slain, the army that was terrified became bold and able to rush forward and chase down the enemy. Wealth creation also occurred as Israel plundered the philistine camp and the soldiers carried off whatever they wanted. Similarly many issues in life will disappear once we deal with the ‘giant’.

“Then the Lord reached out and touched my mouth and said, “Look, I have put my words in your mouth! Today I appoint you to stand up against nations and kingdoms. Some you must uproot and tear down, destroy and overthrow. Others you must build up and plant.”” Jeremiah 1:9-10

We have the authority to uproot anything in our lives not planted by God and have become negative giants in our lives. As we uproot, we must also ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to us how to keep the door closed so they don’t return to our lives, so we must understand how to man our boundaries effectively. We must also intentionally maintain a close walk with the Holy Spirit as He leads us along the best pathway.

**Prayer:** Father in the name of Jesus I uproot and tear down anything planted in my life that is not of you and decree that it is Your counsel alone that will stand in my life.

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