Five Smooth Stones- Part 4

# When You’ve Got a Giant to Fight

## (1 Samuel 17:31-37)

We are continuing today with part four of our series Five Smooth Stones, focusing on the story of David and Goliath. We have spent a lot of time learning about David, the process of God preparing him for his calling; and today we discover that he has now moved from the background, behind-the-scenes, to now being in the spotlight.

He’d been asking, “Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God? And what will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and removes this disgrace from Israel?” As we turn to the Word of God, in first Samuel, chapter 17, reading from verse 31,

“What David said was overheard and reported to Saul, and Saul sent for him.

David said to Saul, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him" (1 Samuel 17:31-32).

“Saul replied, "You are not able to go out against this Philistine and fight him; you are only a boy, and he has been a fighting man from his youth" (1 Samuel 17:33).

“But David said to Saul, "Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it” (1 Samuel 17:34-35).

“Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine" (1 Samuel 17:36-37).

In our text today, David finds himself in a compromising situation, because what he had said was overheard and reported to Saul. And so, he had drawn attention to himself from the King and his response in this moment was of extreme importance. This is where the rubber meets the road, for David this is that moment of fight or flight, because his brave and boastful remarks had made their way to the king.

David had been called out and he was put on the spot because what he had been saying about this giant Philistine was overheard. And so, his response was critical, because what we think about God and what he is doing in our lives is so much more important than the situation or the circumstance that we find ourselves in. In other words, God wasn’t surprised that David had been taken to the king, because he had prepared him for just such a time as this. And so, David didn’t pray to get out of the situation, he didn’t ask God to change the circumstances, but he made himself available to what God might do through him. In the same way, when we find ourselves in a uncomfortable situation, we don’t want to ignore what God is doing in us, limiting what God can do through us, because then we won’t have the opportunity to develop our prayer life, growing in our faith and our commitment to God and others.

In this text, we find that David went from the pasture to the battle line, and now finds himself standing before the King. We’ve got to remember that he hadn’t made any plans to fight as he rose early that morning, he simply went out in obedience to his father who told him,

“Take this ephah of roasted grain and these ten loaves of bread for your brothers...” (1 Samuel 17:17).

And so, David is on the battlefield delivering bread and cheese and doesn’t have a clue as to what was about to unfold. In other words, he doesn’t know that this was his destiny, that he’d been prepared for such a time as this, that he was going to hear Goliath taunting the army of God and it was going to provoke something in him.

And honestly, I think this is where most of us live, because we don’t go out in the morning looking for a giant to fight. We’re just kind of living life, doing our thing, doing what we do, and usually it is the giant that chooses us. And so, you didn’t choose the fight, you didn’t choose the battle, you didn’t choose the mountain, but you were backed into a corner. And so, even though it’s the giant that chose you, you can stand confidently in the presence of God, because in the midst of the battle, the Bible says Jesus is with you in the fight.

“The Lord your God is the one who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to give you victory" (Deuteronomy 20:4).

And so, even though we didn’t get to choose the battle, he will sustain us in the battle, and we can walk in victory in the presence of God.

Now, I know that some of you don’t like the giant you are facing, you didn’t choose the battle, you may not like your circumstances or the situation you find yourself in today, but when you’ve got a giant to fight you can stand in the presence of Jesus. And so, like David, we all have a Goliath in our lives, we’re all going to face giants, but if you try to avoid the battle, avoiding the conflict, you may miss where God is trying to advance you, stretch you, and grow you, and you’ll miss seeing your giant fall. And so, we must choose not to worry about the giants and trust God who promised,

“I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you” (Isaiah 46:4).

And so, God promises to be with us, to sustain us, and to see us through to the end.

In our text, David is brought before Saul, he’s brought before the King of Israel, and the first thing he says in verse 32 is don’t worry, I’ve got this.

"Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him" (1 Samuel 17:32).

And so, he’s not saying that it wasn’t going to be difficult or even that he wasn’t fearful and trembling at the thought of facing this giant, but when he said, “Let no one lose heart”, he’s saying that I refuse to let worry and fear dictate my response to the threats of this Philistine.

In other words, David’s not referring to an absence of fear, because courage is not fearless, courage is the ability to put more faith in what God promised than in the threats of the giant. In fact, you may remember when Joshua brought Israel into the promised land, God told him,

"Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land…” (Joshua 1:6).

And so, even though the spies went in and reported that there were giants in the land, saying we were like grasshoppers then, God said to be strong and courageous, because he wants us to trust him more than the giants.

That’s what walking by faith is, isn’t it? I know that doesn’t make it easy when you’re standing on the shore of something that looks impassable. It doesn’t make it easy when you’re facing off against your giant, but I believe that is what the apostle Paul meant when he said,

“Therefore, we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So, we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen” (2 Corinthians 4:16-18).

In other words, there’s something greater going on here, and so our focus needs to be on God and not the giant. We fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen.

And so, it’s not that we’re supposed to deny our feelings, because our emotions are real, but what he is saying is that his promise is greater than our feelings. What he said about you is stronger, it is greater, then the fear that you feel in that moment. And when David said,

"Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine” (1 Samuel 17:32).

He may have had butterflies in his stomach, his knees may have been trembling, but there was something greater rising up in him that knew, that believed, that he would get through this, because of what God had already done in his life.

Saul said, “No way, this is crazy, you can’t fight this Philistine and win.”

“You are only a boy, and he has been a fighting man from his youth" (1 Samuel 17:33).

In other words, Saul was being realistic, he recognized the impossibility of David standing up against a nine-foot-tall giant, but you and I need to see it differently.

I am reminded of the time when the prophet Elisha prayed for his servant as they were surrounded by the enemy. His servant saw an impossible situation, he was distraught because an army with horses and chariots was surrounding the city, but Elisha said to him,

"Don't be afraid, those who are with us are more than those who are with them" (2 Kings 6:16).

And so, Elisha prays, but watch this, he doesn’t pray against the enemy, instead he prays for his servant. He says,

“Lord, open his eyes so he may see." Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha” (2 Kings 6:17).

You see, Saul recognized the impossibility, but he needed to see it differently because faith sees another way. Faith makes a way where there is no way. Faith looks for the possibility in the impossibility.

There’s always going to be an excuse why you can’t fight your Goliath. David could have looked at Goliath and said, “No way!” But genuine faith is not moved by what is seen, faith moves in spite of what is seen. Faith is moved by the unseen, in fact, the Bible says in Ecclesiastes chapter 11,

“Whoever watches the wind will not plant; whoever looks at the clouds will not reap” (Ecclesiastes 11:4).

In other words, you can’t keep waiting for perfect weather, you’ve got to step out in faith even when it looks like rain. You see, you don’t need faith when the sun is shining, but when you can’t even see the sun because your giant is so big, when the circumstances don’t look good, you’ve got to see things differently. You see, faith will give you an imagination, because faith is creative, faith looks at things differently. And you’ve got to see the same issue in a different way, with a different perspective, a different outlook.

David and Saul saw the same giant, the same problem, but they saw it differently. Saul could only see it one way, he said,

“You are not able to go out against this Philistine and fight him; you are only a boy" (1 Samuel 17:33).

Because that was all that he could see in David, and I understand why he said that, I understand his thought process, I understand his reasoning, but God said,

“I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do” (Acts 13:22).

And so, Saul saw a boy, but God saw a man, which is why it is so important that you are part of this church, that you serve in this church, that you give in this church, because so much of your life, your successes or your failures, are going to be determined by who you allow to speak into your life.

In other words, are you going to listen to your brother Eliab, to Goliath, or Saul, or are you going to come here week after week and hear the Word of God? You see, you need somebody with enough faith to declare what God says about you. Somebody who is going to open the Word of God and tell you who God is and who you are. Because when you stop allowing that influence in and you start listening to your enemies and even your family and friends, there’s always going to be a Saul to tell you all the reasons why you can’t, why you don’t measure up, and why you’re not qualified.

And so, if you are here or if you are listening, you need the Word of God in your life, and you need someone to declare the promises of God over you. You see, not everyone is going to be able to see that, but you need to know what God sees in you, and you need someone to declare the warrior in you, the king and the priest in you. You need to know who you are, whose you are, and that God has a Word over your life that is greater than the opinion of Saul.

David had been overlooked, ignored, and rejected but he knew what God had said, and so he pushed back and told Saul,

“Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it” (1 Samuel 17:34-35).

“Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine" (1 Samuel 17:36-37).

David refused to be talked out of it, and so he persisted in spite of the mocking of his brother, the taunting of Goliath, and the doubting of Saul. He pushed back from the voices that were trying to stop him from walking in victory because he knew that Goliath was an opportunity for greatness.

You see, David needed his Goliath, he wouldn’t step into his calling without Goliath, he wouldn’t become king without Goliath, and so Goliath was revealing the truth of who David was. And my prayer today is that some of you are starting to recognize the importance of the giants you are facing in your life right now, because without your Goliath, without that impossible situation that you found yourself in, you never would have known who you are. And you may have been tempted to avoid facing your giant, but you are better for it, more anointed because of it, praying like you never prayed before, because when you faced your Goliath, he revealed to you the greatness of your God. And so now you realize that your God is a prayer answering, mountain moving, way making God, because you stopped comparing yourself to the giant and started comparing the giant to your God.

But there are others of you who have heard what your Goliath said, because every morning and every night he “stepped out from his lines” and he knows how to get to you, pushing your buttons, because he knows your weaknesses, your temptations, and he will come after you day after day with “his usual defiance”. For some of you it may come in the form of a fear, for others lust or anger, but however it comes, or whatever form it comes in, he will keep working you, taunting you, as long as you let him talk. You see, as long as you allow the enemy to speak, he will taunt you, reminding you, coming at you over and over and over again. Telling you, you can’t do it, you’ll never make it, it’s always going to be this way.

And so, you’re going to have to make a choice, either to live in the fear of what might happen and never take a step of faith, or to choose to be like David and not to let anything stop you from doing what God has prepared for you. You see, the enemy will keep taunting you day after day, morning and evening, talking you out of your dreams, causing you to retreat, to give up, to quit and play it safe. But today I want to encourage you to be strong and courageous, because you can do it, you can get it back, and so it’s time to begin to fight back.

David went to see Saul and spoke up confidently because genuine faith is always accompanied by doing something. In fact, many of the miracles that we read about in the Bible are accompanied by something crazy God wants us to do. And often the thing that God asks us to do will push us out of our comfort zone because it just sounds so crazy. And I believe that many of us miss out on the answered prayer, the miracle, and the victory, because we don’t like what God is telling us to do.

Naaman in second Kings wanted to be healed of his leprosy, and so he went to the prophet Elisha who told him,

"Go, wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored” (2 Kings 5:10).

The Word of Lord through the prophet Elisha was so crazy that Naaman got mad and stomped off. He said I’ve got better rivers at home than the dirty Jordan. He wanted God to do a miracle, but God gave him instructions, and he didn’t like what he heard, he didn’t want to do that.

But Naaman's servants went to him and said, "If the prophet had told you to do something great wouldn’t you have done it? How much more than if he tells you to, 'Wash and be cleansed'! And so, he listened, and the Bible says,

“He went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times… and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy” (2 Kings 5:14).

Jesus was at a wedding feast when they ran out of wine, his mother asked him for some more wine, and nearby there were 6 stone water jars each holding up to 30 gallons. Jesus said to the servants,

“Fill the jars with water” so they filled them to the brim” (John 2:7).

Mary and Martha called for Jesus to come and heal their brother Lazarus, but he waited until it was too late. Lazarus died, he didn’t need to be healed, now he needed a resurrection. And so, when Jesus came to the tomb he said,

"Take away the stone” (John 11:39).

In other words, he says if you’ll do something crazy, if you’ll roll away the stone, I will raise the dead. If you will do what you can do, I will do what only I can do. If you’ll do something that stretches you, like giving in the offering, serving in children’s ministry, helping the poor and needy, loving on somebody unlovable, he says I will raise the dead.

You see, he doesn’t just want to do something for you, he wants to do something in you, but if he just gave you everything you asked for, you would never change. And so, he says serve in the church, give generously and cheerfully, do something even if it doesn’t make sense, and then you will see God do the miraculous.

Some of you have been listening to the lies of the enemy too long, you’ve been fearful and defeated, because he’s worn you down coming at you morning and evening, day after day. But today you’re going to face your giant, praying like you never prayed before, doing something crazy, coming face-to-face with your Goliath, because it is there that you are going to discover that the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world (1 John 4:4). And so, you’re going to realize how small he is and how great your God is.

I don’t know what you are facing today, but I know who is greater, and I know that after I faced my Goliath, I could say what Paul said in Romans chapter 8,

“In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us” (Romans 8:37).

In other words, don’t worry about this, because when you’ve got a giant to fight, after you face your giant, you are better after the battle. You are better after the conflict, because you have become more than a conqueror. Let’s pray together as we close.

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