Five Smooth Stones – Part 5

# The Battle Is the Lord’s

## (1 Samuel 17:38-54)

Today, we’ve finally made it to the closing message of this series as we’ve been on this journey through the story of David and Goliath. I hope this series has been a great encouragement to you and you’ve come to realize that this story is so much more than just the story about a shepherd boy or even Goliath. The focus is fully on the Lord, and it should be, but since the devil can’t keep you from the victory, he will try to distract you and keep you from praising God for it.

David recognized the importance of remaining focused on the Lord and praising him in every moment. That’s why we have so many beautiful Psalms of praise, and David declared,

“With God we will gain the victory, and he will trample down our enemies” (Psalms 108:13).

But too many times I find myself guilty of trying to fight my own battles in my own strength, and so I leave God out of the fight. You know, maybe it’s just for a few moments, but in my own naivety, I think I can do it on my own. But David knew that the battle is the Lord’s, and so he knew exactly where his help came from. He said,

“My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth” (Psalms 121:2).

And so, as we come to the conclusion of this amazing story, we begin knowing how the story ends, because the story of David and Goliath is so famous. In fact, it’s often used as an analogy in sports because it’s a story of the underdog winning a great victory and so in a very real sense it is our story too.

Now, the truth of the matter is that whenever God is about to promote you there is going to be a giant in front of you. And so, metaphorically, Goliath is the gatekeeper on the next great move of God in your life; he is the alarm system, your GPS letting you know that you are close to your goal. And so, when you find yourself face-to-face with your giant you have arrived at your destination, you have found where God is calling you, and it’s important to recognize that because you don’t want to run from your giant. Your calling is too great and if you run from your giant, you will be running from your destiny.

What we’re going to discover today is that while everybody else was running away from Goliath, David was running toward him, because he knew in his spirit that Goliath was the key to his throne. Now, in the church we often refer to Goliath as any stumbling block, obstacle, or hindrance to the breakthrough we want in our lives, but literally here in this context, Goliath, this giant of a man is opposing the purpose of God. In other words, he’s defying the armies of the living God, standing against the people of God, and therefore he is opposing the very purpose of God.

Now, remember, David didn’t come here to fight. He didn’t know that God was about to use him in a mighty way. He didn’t know that he was about to hear a conversation that was going to unlock his destiny. And the truth of the matter is that none of us know. We don’t know when we’re going to encounter a burning bush. We don’t know when we’re going to walk into a situation that spontaneously ignites with the presence of God. We don’t know if the circumstances that we stumble upon are going to give us directions for the next step of our lives.

And so, David had hurried down to the Valley of Elah, leaving the bread and the cheese with the keeper of supplies, before running down to the battle line. He’s there on the front lines when he hears Goliath cursing and shouting threats at the army of Israel. Now, this was something new for David, he hadn’t heard this before, and it stirred the Spirit of the Lord in him.

He’s like, “Wait a minute, this giant said what about my God?”

You see, he knows that nobody is supposed to talk about God like that, and so he’s like, “What will be given to the man that kills him?” The soldiers replied that Saul said he would give his daughter in marriage and his family would not have to pay taxes. And so, David was like, “Are you serious?” And he kept talking, he kept asking questions, and he kept persisting until Saul heard about it.

That’s when Saul sent for David. As David was giving Saul his resume, telling him how the Lord had delivered him from the lion and the bear, Saul said, “You’re only a boy”. But David persisted saying, “I’m pretty good at killing things a lot bigger than myself.” He said, “Put me in coach.” He said, “If the lion and the bear didn’t stand a chance,

“The Lord… will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." And so, eventually Saul said “Okay, go, the Lord be with you" (1 Samuel 17:37).

“Then he dressed David in his own tunic. He put a coat of armor on him and a bronze helmet on his head. David fastened on his sword over the tunic and tried walking around, because he wasn’t used to them” (1 Samuel 17:38-39).

David quickly realized that he’d get in a lot of trouble trying to fight like everybody else fights, and so he said to Saul,

"I can’t go in these. I’m not used to them." And he took them off” (1 Samuel 17:39).

He recognized that if God brought him to this place, he was going to have to fight Goliath as himself. It might not be the way they fight, but he couldn’t fight his battle pretending to be somebody else. This wasn’t somebody else’s fight, this wasn’t somebody else’s battle, this wasn’t somebody else’s situation, and so David showed up as himself.

You see, it was God who had called David, anointing him, and preparing him for such a time as this, and so he showed up as himself. Verse 40 says,

“He took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, and put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag” (1 Samuel 17:40).

Now remember, David hadn’t come down here to fight, he hadn’t prepared for battle, and so he went over to the stream and began picking through the stones. You see, he was looking among the crayfish because he didn’t know anything about shields, armor, and swords, but he knew how to fight with rocks. And so, when you’re in an emergency you’ve got to work with what you have and so he crouched down in the stream and chose five smooth stones.

You see, God will always use something you’re familiar with, something you’ve got in your hands. For Moses it was a staff and for David it was five smooth stones. And so, he made himself a weapon, it wasn’t as sophisticated as a slingshot, it was just a rag, but the Bible says, with his sling in his hand, David approached the Philistine.

“Meanwhile, the Philistine, with his shield bearer in front of him, kept coming closer to David. He looked David over and saw that he was only a boy, ruddy and handsome, and he despised him” (1 Samuel 17:40-42).

In other words, David was just a cute little boy, and the contrast between the two was so extreme that Goliath laughed. But David was not about to be deterred, he kept coming closer and said, “What did you say?” Goliath replied,

“Am I a dog, that you come at me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. "Come here," he said, "and I'll give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!" (1 Samuel 17:43-44).

In other words, Goliath was insulted that the army of Israel would send a little boy with a bag of rocks. But he didn’t know the Scriptures, or the power of God, and he was about to discover that God was going to use David in a mighty way.

In fact, there are some of you here today and the enemy doesn’t know what God is about to do through you. He doesn’t know that God is going to use you in spite of your background and your insecurities. And so, in spite of your childhood, God is going to use you to confound the enemy, and I hope you understand that whatever you thought was going to happen, whatever you thought God might do,

“(He) is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us” (Ephesians 3:20).

Some of you know this and you know this is a word for you. You know it’s going to be so much bigger, so much greater, even though it’s just a bag of rocks, just five smooth stones.

Mary and Martha said, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” But what they didn’t realize yet was that Jesus is so much more than a healer, he is the resurrection and the life. And so, they were about to discover that nothing is impossible with God, that he’s the God of new beginnings and new endings, because he’s the author and perfecter of our faith.

And so, David approached the Philistine, encouraging himself in the Lord, because the Scripture says,

“The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you…" (Deuteronomy 31:8).

And so, the scene is set, the Lord had prepared the way, and David said to Goliath,

“You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the Lord will hand you over to me, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. Today I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give all of you into our hands" (1 Samuel 17:45-47).

Now, I think it’s a real shame that this story is considered by most to be a children’s story, because there are so many applications to our lives. In fact, here in this passage there is really only one interpretation and that is that David did all that he did for the glory of God.

And so, David came down on that battlefield in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, because he wanted Goliath and the whole world to know that there is a God in Israel. And that’s the application for us today, because God wants to use us, he wants to use the Church to magnify his name among the nations. He said it this way to Ezekiel,

“I will show my greatness and my holiness, and I will make myself known in the sight of many nations. Then they will know that I am the Lord” (Ezekiel 38:23).

And this was God’s purpose involved in the call of Abraham, in his choice of the people of Israel, in the Exodus from Egypt, sojourning in the wilderness, and settling in Canaan, because it was a witness to the nations that Israel’s God was the one true God. And so, David said,

“Glorify the Lord with me; let us exalt his name together” (Psalms 34:3).

And so it was that when David confronted Goliath, he declared his purpose announcing that he came in the name, in the power, and in the authority of the Lord Almighty. That he was representing the God of the armies of Israel, because that was the name that Goliath had insulted. And so, David wanted everybody in the armies of Israel and the Philistines to know that the Lord doesn’t need swords, spears, or javelins to deliver his people. That…

“His pleasure is not in the strength of the horse, nor his delight in the legs of a man; (but) the Lord delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love” (Psalms 147:10-11).

In other words, David didn’t come pretending to be someone else, pretending to know anything about horses or swords, but he did know the Lord who was mighty in power. And so, he said to Goliath, “I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, in the name that you have defied” and he stood there strong and courageous, trusting in the Lord and in his mighty power.

“As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him. Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell face down on the ground” (1 Samuel 17:48-49).

The Bible says that David, that little David, the not quite 5-foot David,

“Triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone…” (1 Samuel 17:50).

In other words, you could say he took him down with a spiritual spitball, it was just one small stone perfectly placed on his forehead, but David wasn’t finished yet because there was something else he needed. You see, he thought he had just come down there to bring cheese and bread, but he wasn’t the delivery boy, it turns out that Goliath was. Because Goliath had something that David needed, verse 50 says that David came to the battle without what?

He came to the battlefield “Without a sword in his hand…” but he was about to leave with one. And with one smooth stone, one little stone “he struck down the Philistine and killed him” (1 Samuel 17:50).

I know that some of you came to church so that you can feel good for a few hours. You came to get a word from God, but you’re going to go home, back to the same battle, the same conflict and forget about it, because you’re going right back to the same cycle, the same stuff, the same problems, and the same pretending. But I want to declare to you today that your story doesn’t have to end that way, because Goliath has your sword, your enemy’s got your sword, that giant has your grace, and if you want to see victory, you’re going to have to defeat what’s standing before you.

The good news is that you’re not going to have to do it on your own, because God is going to get the glory out of every situation in your life. You see, “even now” Lazarus’ sister said to Jesus,

“I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask" (John 11:22).

Even now, whatever sin, whatever struggle, whatever giant you’re facing; the Bible says, David knocked down that giant, and he ran over and stood over him.

“He took hold of the Philistine's sword and drew it from the scabbard. After he killed him, he cut off his head with the sword” (1 Samuel 17:51).

And I know that’s kind of gruesome, it’s like the videogames those other people play, but Goliath is down, and his head is off. David’s got the trophy, but that’s not how the story ends. You thought that was how the story ended, but it can’t be over, because the Lord said,

“No weapon formed against you shall prosper” (Isaiah 54:17, NKJV).

And he is the author and perfecter of our faith. The weapon was formed, but it won’t work, it won’t succeed, because I know who wrote the story. The Lord is the beginning and the end, the Alpha and the Omega, but this isn’t the end of story.

David is leaving the battlefield, but he’s not leaving empty-handed, he’s leaving with a sword in his hand, he’s leaving with a testimony, he’s leaving with a song in his heart and a spirit of praise. And you know, the thing that’s crazy about this story is that it really has nothing to do with David to begin with, because David was an extra that walked on the scene. But…

“We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28).

Now, the children’s story ends here, that’s where Ms. Gilmore stopped in Sunday school, and so it’s natural to stop reading here, but that’s not how the story ends. In fact, there’s still much more to obtaining victory, because victory requires us to finish the job.

You see, whenever there is a victory there is also a time of transition, there is an opportunity to take the plunder, the spoils of battle, because the plunder is the provision to rebuild and pay for the transition. And so, even though Saul is still on the throne, we know that Israel is in transition, because we’ve already seen that David was anointed to be the future King of Israel; and this battle, his victory over Goliath would serve as a turning point.

Even though we are tempted to stop short in our reading, the Israelites did not stop, they finished the job. The Bible says,

“When the Philistines saw that their hero was dead, they turned and ran. Then the men of Israel and Judah surged forward with a shout and pursued the Philistines to the entrance of Gath and to the gates of Ekron. Their dead were strewn along the Shaaraim road to Gath and Ekron. When the Israelites returned from chasing the Philistines, they plundered their camp” (1 Samuel 17:51-53).

The Israelites overtook their enemy, they plundered the camp, and they finished the job.

I wonder how often we pray for God to deliver us from a certain enemy, from a certain situation, but we don’t see it through to the end when the answer comes. I want to encourage you today to finish it because we can’t afford to stop short of victory in our lives. Almost done or almost finished is not good enough. David killed Goliath with his own sword, stripped him of his armor, and joined Israel in chasing the enemy. When the Israelites returned to the Philistine camp, they claimed the spoils of the victory that the Lord had won for them.

“David took the Philistine's head and brought it to Jerusalem, and he put the Philistine's weapons in his own tent” (1 Samuel 17:54).

As I close this message today, I want you to understand that whatever you had in mind, whatever you thought God was going to do, whatever you thought was going to happen, erase that from your mind, get rid of it, ignore it, because whatever you thought is just too small. What God is getting ready to do in your life is bigger than you could ever ask or imagine in your little, insecure, intimidated self, but you’ve got to finish it.

You see, the weapon is formed against you, but it won’t succeed, because what your enemy is trying to use on you God is going to use on him. And so I want to encourage you, even if you feel so small, so inadequate standing in the shadow of the giant before you, don’t be afraid to throw a stone. It may look small compared to your enemy, but throw it, put it in the sling and let it go, because Goliath has your sword. That little stone may look small, but invest it, plant it, because it’s just a seed, just a mustard seed, and it’s going to grow and produce a crop, multiplying thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times (Mark 4:8).

My prayer is that this series has been growing your faith, positioning you, putting you in place before the armies of the living God, and things are about to shift for you because the battle is the Lord’s. In spite of how you feel, in spite of how big your giant looks, your victory is not in your feelings, your victory is in your faith.

“We live by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7).

David received everything that was promised to him, his faith was a seed planted, and he ended up with Saul’s daughter, he ended the rich and wealthy, his family didn’t have to pay taxes, and he ended up on the throne of Israel. But it all began in such a little and insignificant way, just doing what his father told him to do, just taking an ephah of grain, 10 loaves of bread, and some cheese to his brothers on the battlefield.

For some of you today, the enemy may have formed a weapon against you, but the Lord has said it will not prosper. There is nothing that the enemy can bring against you that will prevail, because you know how the story ends. Let your faith rise up, pray in the Holy Spirit, and tell your giant, “You come against me with lies, you come against me with fear and anxiety,

"You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel” (1 Samuel 17:45).

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