

How to Get God's Work Done – I Samuel 17:45

I. Introduction:

- A. I make no apology for bringing another lesson from the battle between David and Goliath.
 - 1. There is so much to learn from this event, and I continue to see new things in it.
 - 2. For this lesson, I'm going to assume that you are familiar with the basics.
- B. Let's briefly consider Goliath and the Philistines, Saul and Israel, and David and his Lord.

II. The Philistines were not God's people, and they were happy to remind everyone of that fact.

- A. They worshiped several idol gods, with Dagon, a half-man, half fish, as one of them.
 - 1. As you know, the Philistines had been in conflict with Israel, the people of Jehovah, for many decades.
 - 2. A century before, they had dueled with God's Judge Samson.
 - 3. They ultimately lost that battle, along with the destruction of Dagon's temple, but the war carried on.
 - 4. They captured and carried off God's Ark of the Covenant, putting it in a rebuilt Dagonian temple, but the Lord kept pushing the useless old idol onto its face.
 - 5. Then God afflicted the Philistines with disease, punishing them for their familiarity.
 - 6. But since those people still had their unregenerated hearts, all their earlier defeats just made them more jealous and more angry with Israel and the Lord. Now they are back once again.
- B. Goliath, a giant of a man, was now their champion.
 - 1. He was probably not the man in charge, but he was the face of this nation of idolaters and Jehovah-haters.
 - 2. Over and over again he said, *"I defy the armies of Israel... give me a man, that we may fight together."*
 - 3. Day after day, Goliath thumbed his nose at Israel and spat his insults toward Jehovah.
 - 4. But do you know what the Philistines didn't do? They didn't attack.
 - 5. How many days did this go on? How many days might it have continued if David didn't put a stop to it?
- C. Satan has many ways to bring glory to himself and to try to bring shame upon the King of kings.
 - 1. The forces of Satan in this case were quite willing to maintain the status quo, since the people of God were cowering in fear and doing nothing in the defense of God's honor.
 - 2. The situation gave the appearance that God was incapable of defeating these idolaters and their idol.
 - 3. Much of the world of the wicked and the unbelievers is happy to permit you and me to worship our God behind the closed doors of this building, just so long as we don't go out there and stir the waters too much.
 - 4. Don't publish the truth. Don't confront people in their homes. Don't take the gospel into all the world.
 - 5. Not every Muslim, not every Sikh, not every atheist, is a radical terrorist with a desire for your death.
 - 6. Most are quite happy for God's people to live in their caves and sheepfolds, leaving the unbelievers alone, so they can shout their blasphemies whenever they like.

III. What were Saul and Israel doing during this time of insults?

- A. They were dressed in their camo uniforms with swords, shields and bows at their sides.
 - a. Saul was in his palatial royal tent – his church building with the dancing reader board, manicured lawns and flowered gardens.
 - b. Israel pretended to fight the fight, but it was more like playing the game.
 - 2. *"They set the battle in array against the Philistines,"* but they didn't attack.
 - 3. They set their sights on the enemy, but they failed to pull the trigger.
- B. Some of the people of Israel might have been patting themselves on the back for at least standing on the hill across the valley from the Philistines.
 - 1. They were on record as being opposed to idolatry, adultery, communism and socialism.
 - 2. They may have rejoiced in what Samson had done so many years ago; what Spurgeon had done, what Shubal Sterns and Daniel Marshal had done.
 - 3. They laughed when they thought about what God did to Dagon when confronted by the Ark.

4. Those Philistines shipped the Ark back to Israel by way of cows crying for their calves.
 5. Some in Israel might have pictured themselves as actually defying the enemy and denying him access to the interior of their nation.
 6. But they weren't doing anything of the kind.
 - a. They were no more stopping the Philistines than a field of grass is stopping the wind.
 - b. It just happened that the wind hadn't been blowing for a week or so.
- C. Israel had crowned themselves a king – a pastor, if you like.
1. Oh, what a man he was. Head and shoulders taller than any other in the land.
 2. He was no Goliath, but he wasn't a pigmy either.
 3. His uniform was more splendid than any other in the army with his long sleeve shirt with its button down collar, dress tie and wing-tip shoes.
 4. And they paid him a really nice salary. He ate like a king. He **was** the king.
 5. So why wasn't he out there behaving like a king, standing up to face Goliath?
- D. What can we learn here about getting the work of God done?
1. We can't learn anything at all from studying Saul and Israel.
 2. We see that we'll never have victory if we don't go out and get at it.
 3. As long as we rattle our swords, puff out our chests, and point at the enemy's heresies, but we stay on our side of the valley, there will never be any victory.
 4. Someone is going to have to swim across the moat between the two armies, while the eyes of the giant watch. Goliath will not fall until someone is willing to take action.
- E. And what was Saul's idea when it finally came to taking action?
1. Let us let George do it, or in this case let David do it.
 2. Saul was expecting the young man to use the same tools and the same force that Goliath was using.
 3. Saul wanted David to don armour, which essentially wasn't any different from the armour of the Philistines.
 4. That hadn't been working for Israel. It isn't working today. Satan is not being pushed back.
 5. We can't use the same tactics that worldly governments use, big businesses use, Satan himself employs.
 6. We need something different. We need something from the Lord Himself.

IV. Then along came David.

- A. He was just a kid. For this reason among others, not even his brothers had respect for him.
1. He wasn't built like a swordsman or a bowman. He hadn't been trained to attack an enemy.
 2. He was nothing but a sheep-keeper.
 3. But in keeping those sheep, David spent days, weeks and months alone with his flock and with the Lord.
 4. With the Spirit's blessing he taught himself how to trust God and how to worship God with heart-felt music and poetry.
 5. He had never fought with any Goliaths before, but he had definitely been in battle.
 6. Probably when he tried to tell Eliab about facing lions and bears to protect his sheep, the older brother just sneered and thought it was all in David's mind.
 7. I wouldn't be surprised if David stopped telling his family about what he experienced out there in the field.
- B. David was just as much a patriot as Saul or Eliab, but he was something more: he was a child of God.
1. His citizenship was in Heaven from whence he looked for the Lord's power and direction.
 2. *"What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine?"*
 3. *"Is there not a cause?"* Isn't there a good reason to bring this idolater to his knees?
- C. The revival which swept Wales at the turn of the 20th century was not the first in that country.
1. I am reading about Welshmen from a century and a half earlier, almost three hundred years ago, through whom revival was brought to that area west of England.

2. Once again, I am reading about God using young people, young Christians and setting them on fire – just like David.
3. The old guard, the older saints, for whatever reason had lost the spark – lost their first love.
4. Maybe they were looking at their Philistines merely as untaught neighbors, but not as God's enemy.
5. Maybe they were rejoicing in their own salvation and had lost any concern for the spiritual needs of others.
6. Maybe there was no spiritual life in them at all. Maybe they were living in fear of the Devil.
7. Then along came David, or Evan Roberts, or James A. Stewart or William Fetter, or Shubal Sterns.

V. Notice what David said to Goliath about getting God's work done.

- A. *"I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied."*
1. *"Mr. Philistine, I see that you have a sword, a spear, a shield and guardsman to protect you."*
 2. *You're as tall as a pine tree and as broad as live oak, but the Lord can blow down any old tree."*
 3. *"I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts."*
 4. Goliath's strength was in his size, his armament, and his ego.
 5. David had no ego, no size and no armor, but he represented the omnipotent LORD of hosts.
 6. David's strength was unseen, unlimited and undeniable.
- B. It is interesting that Goliath's strength and force was somewhat hidden behind a shield and an assistant.
1. Force usually has supporters, because it is often not as strong as it claims to be.
 2. David, all alone without any support whatsoever, laid his faith out in the open before the people on both sides of the valley.
 3. David had strength, but it was in the Lord, unseen except to those with faith – *"the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."*
 4. Apparent weakness in God's hands is strength; strength in human hands is actually weakness.
- C. When he spoke of God, David called Him *"Jehovah,"* but our Bibles display that as *"LORD"* in capital letters.
1. The words *"the name of the LORD"* or *"the name of Jehovah"* are found over a hundred times in the Bible.
 2. In reading through them, it is easy to see why Israel refused to pronounce that name of God.
 3. There is just so much about that name – it is so holy, so powerful, so awesome.
 4. At the name of the Lord, the spiritual people of Israel took off their shoes, and if they stood at all it was with a bowed head.
 5. David was essentially saying, *"I am coming to you, Goliath, with the authority of the Creator, Sustainer, Governor, and King of all things."*
 6. *Your scrawny little arms aren't to be compared with a single hair of Jehovah's pure and holy white head."*
- D. *"Thou shalt not take the NAME of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."* God's name is so holy that any misuse of it means judgment and death.
1. It was on the name of the Lord that Elijah called before fire fell from Heaven onto his sacrifice.
 2. David was approaching Goliath with that same divine fire.
 3. Later he said, *"Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the NAME of the LORD our God."* The name of the Lord is mightier than an F-16 or an F-22 military jet.
 4. *"The NAME of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe."*
 5. When Moses asked to see the glory and power of God, *"the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the NAME of the LORD."*
 6. One of the Psalmists said, *"Our help is in the NAME of the LORD, who made heaven and earth."*
- E. David, descended from the Israelite side of the valley, stopped at the brook running through it, picked up a few perfectly round stones and walked up toward the devil's champion.
1. It was all in the name of the Lord; David was claiming the help that is found in the name of Jehovah.
 2. And Jehovah blessed that day: Goliath fell and the Philistines were beaten.

- F. How did the work get done that day?
1. David was the aggressor; he didn't wait for the enemy to approach or attack.
 - a. He considered the very presence of the enemy to be that man's attack.
 2. David's trust was in the Lord, not in his sling or the rock it contained.
 3. The Lord could have used anything to bring the enemy down as David was walking up the slope.
 - a. He could have sent a bee under the giant's armour and killed with him with an allergic shock.
 - b. He could have sent a lightning bolt down and electrocuted the man.
 - c. David could have dodged the big guy's attack and used a Swiss Army knife to slice his femoral artery.
- G. God has no limitations, and when we trust Him, we access that omnipotence, becoming one of God's mighty men of valor.
1. David was perfectly safe throughout the whole *"battle."*
 2. The safest place in all the world is in obedience to the will of God; safety is in the line of duty.
 - a. Ask Daniel after his night with the lions.
 - b. Ask Daniel's friends after warming themselves in the burning fiery furnace.
 3. Paul, in speaking to the Corinthians, said, *"Such trust have we through Christ to God-ward.*
 - a. *Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God.*
 - b. *Who also hath made us able minister of the new testament..."*
 4. *"Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God."*

VI. Conclusion

- A. We live in a world dominated by spiritual Philistines with more than one Goliath representing them.
1. Some Christians get bogged down trying to keep them off their land and away from their constitution.
 2. But the most dangerous aspect of those unbelievers is their idolatry and their blatant hatred of our God and Saviour.
- B. We need some young men to throw aside the world's armour and strength, picking up whatever is available and in faith walk up to the enemy to do battle.
1. We need people, young and old, to trust the Lord, expecting God to bless.
 2. This world needs men to preach God's Word without fear, empowered by the Holy Spirit.
 3. And we need to join them in prayer, beseeching the omnipotent God to display His power in the salvation of souls and in the reclaiming of lives.