

The Giant of Self

Sunday, September 22, 2019

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1 Samuel 17

- I. Killing the giant was not the first great trial David had encountered.
 - A. David had conquered himself before he conquered the giant.
 - B. David was the youngest son of Jesse and therefore the least esteemed.
 - C. He was used to being considered inferior, incapable, and unqualified.
 - D. He had a brief moment when he was anointed by Samuel that he was exalted, but that was followed by immediately going back to his father's sheep by himself away from everyone else, and everything continued as before – nothing changed.
 - E. Then he was called to the king's court and exalted again, and for a time was somebody that others noticed and praised.
 - F. But again, he was suddenly back with the sheep in the wilderness when Saul's mind was filled with concerns of war and didn't need him.

1 Samuel 17:15 But David went and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem.

- G. It is an unusual man who can be exalted and then abased and still retain his faith in God and control over his wounded pride and self-esteem, and not become bitter and angry and envious and fight back.

Philippians 4:12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

- H. David also learned early in his life this basic lesson that would get him through the worst trials of his life.
 - I. These were the foundational moral issues that became the very character of David and made him a man after God's own heart.
- II. David faced the same trials when he came to that valley that day and saw the situation with the armies of Israel and the giant.
 - A. David did not just show up and slay the giant, he had to first deal with the opposition of his own close family and being slandered, discredited, mocked, and belittled by them publicly.
 - B. Eliab publicly slandered and insulted David and accused him of pride and selfish interests and motives.

1 Samuel 17:28 And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle.

- C. David's own brother (and probably his other brothers, as well) envied him and did not support him.
- D. It is a common thing for one's own brothers to be against him if God has chosen him and set him apart. (Cain against his brother Abel, Joseph's brethren, and even the brethren of Jesus)

Hebrews 12:3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

E. David had to deal with the discouragement and lack of confidence from Saul.

1 Samuel 17:33 And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.

F. The victory David won by answering his brother the way he did in spite of the offensiveness it was to him was probably a greater victory than the giant he slew a few minutes later.

Proverbs 16:32 He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.

1. The way he answered Saul's lack of confidence and faithless view of the situation was a result of previous trials from which he had learned things Saul knew nothing about.
2. It was a victory over himself that would arm him for future battles that he himself knows nothing about at this point.

III. David kept being tried in this same matter over and over for years to come.

- A. The most important things that God teaches us He usually takes us through the same hoops over and over.
- B. This is the way any training is accomplished in any matter of life – repetition.
- C. David is publicly humiliated over and over.
- D. David was to be the king's son-in-law, and then sees his promised bride given to another.
- E. He marries another of Saul's daughters without the knowledge that her father is using her to be a snare to him.
 1. Then he is again humiliated as she is given to another man, also.
- F. Nabal humiliated David and his men and that time David almost failed the test, but for Nabal's wife who intervened and talked him out of doing what he had never done before – avenge himself and fight and kill for his pride.

IV. All of David's public and private humiliations were brought about by the envy of others, with the exception of his sin with Bathsheba.

A. Envy is most cruel and hard to deal with for the one who is the object of it.

EN'VY, to see against, that is, to look with enmity.

1. To feel uneasiness, mortification or discontent, at the sight of superior excellence, reputation or happiness enjoyed by another; to repine at another's prosperity; to fret or grieve one's self at the real or supposed superiority of another, and to hate him on that account.

- B. It is a most unjust thing to be hated for excellence or success, or favor that has been given by God.
- C. Envy is one of the ugliest of human traits, along with pride, and both are the products of sin.
 1. To hate and wish evil upon someone else because they are better or in a higher place shows the evidence of a black and selfish heart.
- D. We see envy clearly in Saul, and in David's brother, and in others who affected David's life.
- E. But we do not see envy in David – this was David's greatest victory.

- F. To be repeatedly humiliated for years while the vilest men around you are exalted, and you are doing right and being faithful, is the greatest temptation to envy.
 - 1. David conquered that in himself, and that is a bigger giant than Goliath.
 - 2. David did not just conquer that temptation once, but many times.
- G. To remain faithful to God through all the humiliation and hateful envy of others was the greatest victory on display that day in the Valley of Elah.
- H. Israel won that day because David was in the camp.
 - 1. If we are to be of any benefit to the church we must be people of God as David was and win the victory over our own selves like David did.
 - 2. If we had people in the camp like David some of these giants around us would fall, just like Goliath did.