

David and Goliath: The Spiritual Essentials

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This wonderful account of courage displayed against all odds is for us a spiritual lesson of immense importance. The story unfolds in I Samuel 17 with four main characters, three of whom are visible while the fourth character remains invisible. The three visible characters are David, Goliath, and King Saul; the invisible character is God. In the visible, we have a shepherd boy, a giant who has intimidated the armies of God, and a King caught up in the intimidation to the degree that he cannot command his army against the Philistines because of fear. The boy was sent by his father to check on his brothers. Upon arriving he sees Goliath and the paralyzing effect he is having on the army of Israel. The king has made several promises regarding the man who slays the giant, and David wants to know what they are. *The king will give great wealth to the man who kills him. He will also give him his daughter in marriage and will exempt his family from taxes in Israel.* David's older brother chastises him. *"Why have you come down here? And with whom did you leave those few sheep in the wilderness? I know how conceited you are and how wicked your heart is; you came down only to watch the battle."*



In the first place, there was no battle but rather a standoff. Based upon Goliath's challenge, there needn't be a battle but only a challenge. *"Choose a man and have him come down to me.⁹ If he is able to fight and kill me, we will become your subjects; but if I overcome him and kill him, you will become our subjects and serve us."*¹⁰ *Then the Philistine said, "This day I defy the armies of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other."* This challenge left Saul and the army of Israel dismayed. *On hearing the Philistine's words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified.*

On that day Israel needed deliverance. We do not read where they prayed to God for it but God sent it. God saw their need for help and sent David. Jesse may have been sending his son to check on his brothers, but God was sending him to defeat the obstacle standing in the way of Israel. Note that Goliath was a **presence that prevented**. He stood in the way of victory. He stood in the way of the men of Israel returning to the families. He stood in the way of a peace of mind. He stood in the way of expressed courage. Because he stood in the way, he paralyzed those he challenged. His presence created only a dark shadow of gloom for Israel. For the armies of King Saul, there was no sunshine—only the dark presence of Goliath! But God sent sunshine in the form of Jesse's son. Now enters the shepherd boy a little later with words that should have earlier come from the mouths of Saul and his army.³² *David said to Saul, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him."* This is the voice of courage! How does such courage come about? Is it available to all?

This courage comes from God. It comes from an unwavering faith in God. It comes from experience with God. It is available to all who earnestly seek it. We, like the Israel of old, have our Goliaths to contend with on a daily basis. Worry is a Goliath. Depression is a Goliath. Health issues are a Goliath. Financial woes are a Goliath. Family cares are a Goliath. Work turmoil is a Goliath. The lack of safety is a Goliath. The world is a Goliath! The lack of self-confidence is a Goliath. We cannot be intimidated by our Goliaths! We must pray daily and earnestly in order to find the courage needed to face and slay the giant. We must ask God for the power of remembrance that we might establish a spiritual

foundation of assurance and faith. Do you remember all of the times that God visited you? He visited you when you called on him those many times asking for deliverance and mercy. Each time you were delivered from what seemed to be an impossible crisis, you need to mark that crisis and deliverance. Make a note of it and add it to that foundation. Anchor it tightly so that nothing may jar it loose. Each successive crisis and deliverance must likewise be added to the foundation in the same manner. Every time God has intervened in your life, and you have become stronger as a result, add that to your foundation. In all of these things, God has been with you and delivered you. Consider now the conversation David had with Saul. *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, ³⁵ 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. The Lord who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine.*

There is a gold mine in the scriptures filled with ore that promotes courage. I will list some of the scriptures that can be deposited into **YOUR Fort Knox gold reserve.**

- Psalms 56:3. *When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.*
- Psalms 56:4. *In God, whose word I praise—in God I trust and am not afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?*
- Psalms 56:11. *In God I trust and am not afraid. What can man do to me?*
- Psalms 118:8. *It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in humans.*
- Proverbs 3:5. *Lean on, trust in, and be confident in the Lord with all your heart and mind and do not rely on your own insight or understanding.*
- Proverbs 29:25. *The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever leans on, trusts in, and puts his confidence in the Lord is safe and set on high.*
- I Samuel 12:2. *My God, my Rock, in Him will I take refuge; my Shield and the Horn of my salvation; my Stronghold and my Refuge, my Savior—You save me from violence.*

We must be steadfast in believing these scriptures, being mindful that our obedience to God will anchor these very passages to our foundation. Out of every situation we will be delivered regardless how long it takes. ¹⁹ *Many evils confront the [consistently] righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all.* (Psalms 24:19). We may assuredly know that at the end of the crisis, **we will have the giant’s head in hand.**

