

# FACING THE GIANTS WITH GOD ON OUR SIDE!

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1 Samuel 19: 1-30  
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## INTRODUCTION

Did you know that David was listed in the heroes of the faith along with other great men of God? Here is what we read in Hebrews 11: 32-34, ***“And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.”*** His victory against Goliath is not specifically mentioned here, but we know that he fought against this giant in the name of the Lord. As we have already seen, faith has nothing to do with age. Hebrews 11: 1 tells us what faith is, ***“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”*** This is the kind of faith David displayed when he courageously faced Goliath. He believed that God was with him. He believed that God was powerful enough to grant Israel the victory over their enemies. As I listened to Pastor Tim’s message last week, I had to think of some of the giants in my life and in our family. I was surprised at the contrast between David’s attitude with that of the men around him in the Israelite camp. Many of these men were trained and courageous warriors. Yet none of them dared to face the giant. Fear paralyzed them. Once again, their eyes only saw the outward appearance of this very impressive warrior. They did not examine the situation in light of God’s power and God’s word. As we were reminded last week, they could have remembered how Samson was able to kill the princes of the Philistines. They could have remembered the great victory of Gideon who defeated a great army with only 300 men. Or they could have remembered what Jonathan had accomplished not too long ago when he was courageous enough to attack the Philistines, who then fled before the Israelites. Despite these great victories, they stood there and did not know what to do to about Goliath. They felt as we so often do. The challenges of life and the many trials seem just so big that we sometimes just avoid them and do not face them. What would have happened if David had not fought and vanquished Goliath? The text does not say. If Israel had lost this battle, they would have been even weaker and even more fearful of the next confrontation with the Philistines. David, who seemed so insignificant and so young, accepted the challenge and won the battle because he believed that God was with him. Fear was no option for David, but faith was. To refuse to face and confront the giants in our lives will only weaken us. David had a stick, a sling and 5 stones to confront Goliath. Here is how the apostle Paul described the armor we have to face our great enemy, ***“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints” (Ephesians 6: 10-18).***

David won this important battle and was now ready to win many more. As we will see in coming weeks, he also made a number of mistakes. But he could always reflect on God’s faithfulness and the victories He granted him. His victories brought him fame and honor, but also conflict and even hatred. As we read his story, we are reminded that our lives are made of joys and pains, victories and defeats. Yet we also learn that God is with his faithful servants. He grants them victories and is gracious to them when they fail and repent. If you belong to God, remember He is preparing you to reign with His son. Like David, Saul was anointed to be king of Israel. We know that Saul did not walk according to the commandments of the Lord and the Lord rejected him as king. When the reader of 1 Samuel learns that David was anointed as king, he is eager to know whether he is going to take the same route as Saul. Yet he soon discovers that David was indeed a man after God’s heart. Our chapter this morning describes how Saul and others reacted to David’s victories. After killing Goliath, David was probably not aware that his next challenge would come from his own king, he served faithfully. This brings us to chapter 18.

First like we are going to look at Jonathan's love for David, then see how Saul's hatred against David played out and finally we are going to look at the leitmotiv of this chapter, namely that God was with David.

## **1. JONATHAN'S LOVE FOR DAVID**

Jonathan was Saul's son. He was also Saul's heir and was the crown prince. He was probably much older than David and yet he was so impressed by David that he loved him as himself. He may have known David before that event since David went to the palace from time to time to play music for Saul, when he was afflicted by the evil spirit. The author of 1 Samuel spoke of a covenant Jonathan made with David. At this point, we are not told what the terms of the covenant were, but we see what Jonathan did for David. I would like you to see the contrast between the attitude of Saul and Jonathan in regard to David in verse 2 and 4. In verse 2, we read that Saul took David and did not let him return home. Saul probably took him because he saw in him a way to consolidate his own power. What king would not want someone like David as a warrior next to him on the battlefield? David could be very useful to strengthen Saul's kingship, so he took him. On the other hand, we see what Jonathan did. In verse 4 we read, ***“Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, including his sword and his bow and his belt.”*** One took for himself, the other gave away. Who is the one who loved David for himself? Saul “loved” him for what he could do for him. Jonathan loved him for who he was. I wonder if David had ever been loved this way by his own family. We know that he was the youngest son of Jesse. We remember also that he was not considered worthy enough to be presented to Samuel, when he came to their town to worship the Lord and anoint one of Jesse's sons. He probably did not feel loved unconditionally.

A couple weeks ago, we mentioned that this is how our children need to be loved. They are not entrusted to us by the Lord for us to take them for our benefit. They are not given to us to accomplish our dreams through them. They are not given to us to consolidate our reputation or increase the family's riches. They are not given to us to serve us and our purposes. They are given to us for a time so that we prepare them to face the challenges of life and to serve the Lord. In our homes, they must be given a strong biblical foundation so that they know the Lord and His Word. They must see unconditional love so that they are strong emotionally. We prepare them to teach and train the next generation of Christians. So many young people are emotionally weak. They have no strong boundaries. They were raised without a loving and consistent discipline. They feel lost. They do not know what it means to love and be loved. Many of them are raised by a single mother. Others live in homes where parents are just too busy to take time for them. The result is that they are very fragile. What they know about love is what they are taught by television and the internet. They have not been taught or shown that real love means sacrifice, perseverance, repentance, grace. Many of them crave to be loved and are ready to do anything they can to feel loved. This often leads them to make very bad choices. It seems that David did not receive that kind of love either in his youth. This did not mean that God could not use him powerfully. However, he repeated some of the mistakes of his father in his own family.

What Jonathan did for David was more than giving him a special present. The robe and the armor of Jonathan were part of his royal attire. When he gave them to David, he implicitly declared that David deserved to be part of the royal family and even be king. Some commentators think that when Jonathan made this covenant, he gave up his royal prerogatives in favor of David. In other terms, he accepted that David would one day reign and not he. Maybe for the first time in his life, David knew and understood that he was both important and loved. Jonathan was one of the first to acknowledge and believe that God had indeed chosen this young man from Bethlehem to rule over His people. Jonathan should have seen him as a rival. But instead, he looked at him as his ally and even his best friend. We know that at some point, Jonathan saved David's life. Without being aware of it, Jonathan pictured the kind of love Jesus Christ, a descendant of David, would one day show to the entire world. Jonathan renounced the throne in favor of David. Here is what Jesus, the Son of God, did for us, ***“although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross (Philippians 2:6-8).”*** Jesus humbled Himself to serve us and glorify His Father. Jonathan had a similar attitude. The glory and the will of God were more important than his place in the kingdom.

To become best friends, they must have had things in common. 1 Samuel 14 tells us about Jonathan's victory over the Philistines. Here is a little excerpt of that battle, ***“Then Jonathan said to the young man who was carrying his armor, ‘Come***

*and let us cross over to the garrison of these uncircumcised; perhaps the Lord will work for us, for the Lord is not restrained to save by many or by few.’ His armor bearer said to him, ‘Do all that is in your heart; turn yourself, and here I am with you according to your desire.’ Then Jonathan said, ‘Behold, we will cross over to the men and reveal ourselves to them. If they say to us, “Wait until we come to you”; then we will stand in our place and not go up to them. But if they say, “Come up to us,” then we will go up, for the Lord has given them into our hands; and this shall be the sign to us.’ When both of them revealed themselves to the garrison of the Philistines, the Philistines said, ‘Behold, Hebrews are coming out of the holes where they have hidden themselves.’ So the men of the garrison hailed Jonathan and his armor bearer and said, ‘Come up to us and we will tell you something.’ And Jonathan said to his armor bearer, ‘Come up after me, for the Lord has given them into the hands of Israel.’ Then Jonathan climbed up on his hands and feet, with his armor bearer behind him; and they fell before Jonathan, and his armor bearer put some to death after him. That first slaughter which Jonathan and his armor bearer made was about twenty men within about half a furrow in an acre of land. And there was a trembling in the camp, in the field, and among all the people. Even the garrison and the raiders trembled, and the earth quaked so that it became a great trembling (1 Samuel 14: 6-15).”* Later there was such a chaos and confusion in the camp of the Philistines that they pretty much killed one another. Like David, Jonathan was not afraid of the enemy. Like David, he believed that God was able to deliver despite their apparent weakness. The bond between these two men was their faith in God. They both believed that the honor and reputation of God was more important than their own lives. That’s why Jonathan submitted to the will of the Lord and did everything he could to help and protect his friend. The will of God and His glory had priority over any other considerations.

What would our families look like if husband and wife shared this same goal, namely that the glory of the Lord had priority over anything else? The husband would sacrifice his free time, money, his hobbies, his games and toys to support his wife and make sure she can accomplish her God-given ministry. In the same way the wife would do everything she can to support her husband in his role as a leader. What would the relationships among siblings look like if all of them did all they could for to help each other accomplish the will of God in their lives? We would no longer see any jealousy, nor unnecessary competition. Everyone in the family would make sure that the other grows in the Lord. Everyone would be willing to make sacrifices so that the will of the Lord can be done in the other’s life. But instead our families look more like a battlefield where all members fight to make sure they have first place or get the biggest portion of ice cream. And instead of building each other up, we end up destroying one another. Let us have the kind of love Jonathan had for David.

One more piece of advice here. Choose your best friends among those who share your faith. Love them for who they are and help them to do what God wants them to do!

David was not only loved by Jonathan. Michal, a daughter of Saul, also loved him. And he also found favor in the sight of the all the people and even Saul’s servants.

## **2. THE HATRED OF SAUL AGAINST DAVID**

Unfortunately, David did not only have friends. Saul, who took him to be with him and serve him, became jealous. He “loved” him as long as he served his interests, but when he felt threatened he became very angry.

Note how his feelings developed:

a. He became very angry. He was jealous, because the women who came out to greet the soldiers when they returned from killing the Philistine ascribed David ten thousands and to him only thousands

b. He looked at David with suspicion. He changed his mind on David. David became a threat for him. He did not trust him anymore.

c. He hurled the spear to pin David to the wall. From one day to the other, his anger led him to want to murder the man, who had just delivered him from the Philistines. We are told that an evil spirit of the Lord came upon him. We do not know exactly what this spirit was. However, we know that the Lord sent it upon him when he departed from him and rejected him as king. The only one who could calm Saul when that spirit came upon Saul was David by playing the harp. Saul was out of himself. Although, we do not know much about that spirit, we see clearly what happens when someone refuses to be led by the Spirit of God. Saul did not want to obey the Lord. He wanted to work for his own fame and God abandoned him

to his own desires. Now, the darkness of his heart was revealed. He was selfish, arrogant, controlling, insecure, afraid, bitter and filled with hatred. He was no longer able to discern right from wrong and was led by his emotions. That day no one could appease him, not even David. He did not examine his life and motives. He based his life on his most basic “instincts” instead of true principles. The text says that David escaped from him twice.

Again, note the contrast in verse 10. David held a harp in his hand, whereas Saul held his spear in his. David played to bring peace to his master and Saul hurled his spear to kill his servant. What are we holding in our hands? What is leading our lives? Is it love or anger? One will lead to peace, the other to destruction or even murder.

When Saul could not kill him himself, he sent him to war secretly hoping that he would be killed. Later David used a similar strategy to cover up his own sin with Bathsheba. But that did not work either. Instead, David prospered and became even more famous.

Saul had two secret weapons. He might have noticed that David loved women. So, he decided to use his own daughters to get rid of David. He had already forgotten that he had promised his daughter to David when he defeated Goliath. But now he required even more. He first offered his older daughter. In order to receive her, David was to be valiant and fight the wars of the Lord. David felt unworthy to become the king's son-in-law, so we can imagine how hard he fought. But when the time came for Merab to be given to David, she was given to another. Then Saul decided to increase the price of the dowry even more for his daughter Michal. She loved David and therefore Saul knew that David would take even more risks for her. Now the price was one hundred foreskins of the Philistines. How bloody and disgusting this must have been. Saul's imagination was without limits when it came to destroy David. In his zeal, David brought two hundred. Now Saul had no other choices than to give him his daughter. Everything he undertook against David turned against him.

When you read all Saul did, you may wonder how he could fall so deep. He was ready even to use his own daughters. What were his options? In my opinion he had only two. He could either accept the will of the Lord and do the same as his son Jonathan did. Or he had to see David as an opponent and kill him. He picked the second option. The consequences were terrible for him and his family as we will see in later chapters. We should not live unexamined lives, but make sure we are looking for God's truth. How far are we going to get what we want even when we know what we want is not what God wants? If we fight against God and His will, we may very well end up destroying our lives and our families. When we go astray and refuse to repent, we can never know how far our deceptive hearts can lead us. Let us be careful not to harden our hearts to a point where we would destroy ourselves and others.

## **CONCLUSION: THE LORD WAS WITH DAVID**

This truth comes as a leitmotiv all along the chapter. It was wonderful that David was loved by Jonathan and many others, but it was not enough to be victorious over all his enemies. He needed the presence of the Lord.

The animosity and hatred of Saul against Him were terrifying but not powerful enough to destroy him. The Lord was with Him.

When Saul knew and saw that God was with David, he was afraid. Our giants will also be afraid when they see that God is with us. Whatever trial you face in your lives and families, trust in the Lord. He is on your side and wants you to be victorious. David had to face many challenges before he became king. And even then, he still had many struggles. Be faithful and patient.

The Lord allows giants to attack us, yet He is on our side. Our giants can come from the outside like Goliath, or from very close to us like Saul. However, our greatest Goliath is often our own deceptive heart. If we let the Lord model it, it can become like that of Jonathan. If we resist God's grace, we may well end up like Saul. Whatever the giants we have to fight, let us remember to fight with the armor of God and never forget that the Lord is with us!