

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 13TH 2023.

The Defender – David.

Scripture: 1 Sam 17:12-28

Last week we looked at the battle between the Israelites and the Philistines. Each nation had established a battle line, but each side was waiting for the other to

attack first. This meant the stand-off had been going for 40 days. This was all about fear.

Perhaps they were both looking at the what if's – what if there were more giants like Goliath? Maybe the Philistines had heard things about the Israelites' God and what He had done – and were hesitating just in case.

Decisions are always a challenge to make. According to Psychology today, the average adult makes 35,000 decisions every single day. So, if you get 8 hours sleep a night that means every waking hour you make over 2000 decisions.

Have you ever faced a giant and had a couple of decisions to make. We often over-analyse our choices to the point of fear, or you rush ahead and end up making the wrong choice. This then leads to lack of confidence when faced with future decisions and giants. You continue to hesitate, continue to mull over the what if's!

What if I don't get the money to cover this? What if I get there and they have already left? What if no-one likes me? What if I am not ready when



they call on me? What if's look to the future and fill you up with all the possible dooms so you feel literally frozen in fear.

Imagine in this battle – what might have happened if Goliath chose to give up, just turned his back and left? Or if David didn't take the food to his brothers on the battlefield? Or if David saw Goliath and ran away in fear?

But this didn't happen. David, a quiet boy who spent a lot of time alone with the sheep, his music and God obeyed his father and came to where the battle lines were drawn. When David got there, he was angry as he saw and heard Goliath challenging Israel and defaming the name of God. David asks, "Who is this man that he should challenge the army of the living God?"

His fellow Israelites and his brothers dismissed David's comments. David was not skilled or tall enough and Saul tried to convince David he wouldn't have a chance against Goliath. But to the amazement of his fellow Israelites, David steps up and volunteers to accept the giant's bold invitation. He stood ready to defend the name of the Lord. He was insistent on fighting.

Have you felt stirred to speak up about an issue and others put you down, saying your idea or view is rubbish, you don't know what you are doing? We tend to judge a book by its cover, and don't even bother to get to know someone before we have prejudged them. Have you persevered anyway because it is not what others think or believe – it is what God believes about you! God does not look upon people as the world does – God looks deeper, at our hearts.

David ignored his critics knowing that God had chosen this moment for him and he had past experience of God protecting him. Saul finally agrees, "Go, and may the Lord be with you." Saul and everyone else believed David was heading into a suicide mission. But David didn't. Maybe right now you are struggling with problems so huge that you think you can't overcome them. Whatever or whoever your giant may be, they often seem so big that you run from them, much of life is spent in battle with personal giants.

We all will face giants, huge obstacles, or opportunities that we fear. We may feel from time to time that we are David attempting to defeat the mighty Goliath. So what can we learn from this incident?

David remembered the size of God. The Israelites' fear grew because they were comparing Goliath's size against their size. From that perspective, they were terribly outclassed. But David was comparing Goliath's size with God's size! The only way we will ever defeat the giants in our life is to get a good look at the size and power of our God! We've got to get our focus off our problems and onto the God of heaven! ***1 John says: Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world."***

David's focus was never on the army, nor on the opponent. David's faith in God was so much bigger than the giant he faced.

To defeat giants like addiction, resentment, fear, lust, pride, envy or anger it helps to understand the temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. Often giants are little sins we overlooked and indulged until they took on a life of their own and keep coming back to haunt us. As you begin to say no to them, you will gain strength to say

no to bigger ones. But don't wait until you are faced with a huge giant – you must also trust God to fight the lesser battles of your life.

Many times, we hide our giant, keep it behind closed doors. But you must force your giant out into the light and not let them back in. Establish boundaries; ask someone else to help you be accountable; stay away from the wrong environment or company. View your problem in the light of God.

You are not in this fight alone – God wants to help you overcome old habits and establish new behaviours. When you repent, you are doing an about-face to turn and walk with God. God will give you strength to conquer the giant you are facing.

David went up against Goliath with nothing more than a sling shot and five stones. David got his confidence from God, as challenges came up, he turned to God to help overcome them.

Too often we sit around waiting for the big issues, thinking that we'll really pour on the steam when something big comes along. But when it does, we're out of shape spiritually, so we flop! So many times, we focus on the defeats we've had instead on the victories in the past.

There is a temptation to run from giants in our lives. Usually, the best approach is to attack quickly. Someone said, "If you have to swallow a frog, don't look at it too long." Sometimes the longer you wait the bigger the giants appear in our lives.

God says: "All I ask of you is five smooth stones and a sling of faith. I'll take it from there. Just trust Me and I will give you victory. But you have to trust Me to do it my way and in My time." You don't

know what lies ahead and what giants you will have to battle. But remember this: the battle is the Lord's.

Goliath is insulted by the way David comes to fight. The bell rings, the fight is on. Next week we will finish reading the Scripture to see how the fight ends.