

Place: Lurgan Baptist 3:11:2002

Reading: 1 Samuel 17:4-11 28-31 38-54

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF DAVID

3. THREE VICTORIES IN ONE DAY

Dudley Tyng was a young uncompromising preacher in Philadelphia during the great spiritual awakening in the middle of the nineteenth century. Periodically he organised noonday meetings at the YMCA in downtown Philadelphia at which great crowds came to hear the dynamic young preacher. At the meeting on Tuesday 30th March, 1858, over five thousand men gathered to hear Tyng preach from the text, "Ye that are men go and serve the Lord." (Exod 10:11) over one thousand men committed their lives to Jesus Christ. During the course of his message the young preacher exclaimed,

" I must tell my Master's errand, and I would rather that this right arm was amputated at the trunk than that I should come short of my duty to you in delivering God's message." A week after this event Dudley Tyng visited the Pennsylvanian countryside and watched men at a corn threshing machine in a barn.

Accidentally, the young preacher caught his loose sleeve between the cogs of the machine. His arm was severely lacerated. The main artery was severed and the median nerve was severely damaged. As a result of the severe injuries and shock Dudley Tyng died. A group of sorrowing friends and ministers gathered at Tyng's bedside, and one of them asked him for a final statement. Mr. Tyng feebly whispered, " Let us all stand up for Jesus." On the following Sunday after Tyng's death his close friend and colleague Pastor George Duffield, pastor of Temple Presbyterian Church, in Philadelphia, preached the morning sermon as a tribute to his ministerial colleague. He concluded his message by reading a poem that he had just written in tribute to the final words of his great friend.

" Stand up, stand up for Jesus ye soldiers of the cross,

Life high His royal banner it must not suffer loss

From victory unto victory His army shall He lead,

Till every foe is vanquished and Christ is Lord indeed,

Is this not exactly what David did that day in the valley of Elah when he faced Goliath of Gath ? Indeed

(17:50) " So David prevailed." Are you failing or prevailing in your Christian life ? This well known story of David and Goliath provides us with an incentive to go on and prevail. You know the story. The Philistines were in high glee, they had produced a champion in the person of Goliath of Gath, a man of massive strength and armour, a composition of brawn and blasphemy. Israel's army had camped on one side and the Philistines on the other. Between the two was a valley into which the giant with his armour-bearer strutted daily taunting Israel with the boast that none in their camp was brave enough to fight against him. He cried, " I defy the armies of Israel this day, give me a man that we might fight together." (17:10) This was an approach that was used in those days to settling disputes.

Instead of the two armies engaging in battle each side picked a champion, and the two men fought each other. When the champion won, his whole army was considered to have won. David proved to be the right man, in the right place, at the right time. It so often happens that there is but a step from the Menial to the Miraculous, from catching fish to catching men, from carrying a basket to killing a giant. " So David prevailed." But my that was not the only victory that day. In fact, there were three victories in one day, and it is likely that the great victory over Goliath was only possible because of the two earlier victories. Look at:

(1) VICTORY NO 1: VICTORY OVER THE FLESH:

In his epistles Paul speaks a lot about " the flesh." What does he mean ? Well, he does not mean the body. The human body is not sinful, it is neutral. If the Holy Spirit controls the body, then we walk in the Spirit, but if the flesh controls the body, then we walk in the lusts or desires of the flesh. You see, the flesh stands for that part of mans nature wherein his natural desires have free rein. " I know that in me," says Paul, " that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." (Rom 7:18) Sometimes the Bible refers to this flesh nature as " the old man." Our old man is our old nature. It is our old or natural nature. It is everything our physical birth makes us. Now David's first victory that day was a victory over the flesh. In obedience to his father he had gone to the Valley of Elah with provisions for his brothers, and to see how they were doing. He was astonished as he noticed the fear of the Israelite soldiers (17:24) and when he saw and heard Goliath defy the armies of the living God, his blood boiled within him. David knew that God's honour was at stake, and at the critical moment when he was about to offer his services, the first temptation of the day came upon him. Look at:

(a) The CHARGE Which Could Have Irritated Him:

1. Look at the SOURCE of this Charge:

Eliab ! You see, this was probably Eliab's reaction to the anointing by Samuel of David as heir to the throne of Israel. Jealousy was just waiting the opportunity to express itself. " Look David, why have you really showed up here ?" Then he asks the second question which was designed to humiliate David, " Hey, David where did you leave that handful of sheep ?" Just sort of twisting the knife ! Doesn't that sound like a big

brother ? Do you ever feel picked on by an older brother or sister ? Is it not in the home that we so often show our true colours ? Is it not there in the home environment that we're tempted to retaliate and vent our anger ?

2. Look at the FORCE of this Charge:

You see, David's motives were being questioned. Eliab imagined that David's object was to provoke someone else to fight that he might see the battle. He wanted to damage David in the eyes of others. My are people even out of your own family, trying to put you down and discourage you ?

Now what you have done in such a situation ? Would you have rolled up your sleeves and punched your brothers lights out ? No, fighting with your brothers and sisters does not happen in your home, that only happens in ours. Do you see what David does ? He just turns away. " What have I now done ? Is there not a cause ?" (17:29) (a) Led to:

(b) The CAUSE Which Must have Animated Him:

" Whats going on here ?" David said to himself.

" Who's going to champion the cause of the people of God ? Who will knock over this uncircumcised Philistine ?" You see, there was a cause it was God's cause and David was committed to it. As he looked around that day he saw the DEFIANCE on the lips of God's Enemy. Goliath strutting around like a peacock, all ten feet of him. He was impressive, his head, shoulders, chest, legs all clothed in brass. He seemed so invincible, and defiance was on his lips as he mocked the armies of the living God. (17:10) As David looked around he saw the DISMAY in the hearts of God's people. And he said, " Is there not a cause ?" Is this not where we are in the world today ? On the one way, we have Goliath, Satan who arrays himself in all kinds of fascinating garbs. We find him in modern education, literature, civilisation, a fascinating, clever, subtle seemingly invincible giant. But what do we find on the other side of the valley ? The Church of Jesus Christ filled with fear ! My in the light of such circumstances is there not a cause ?

Is there not a cause for Prayer, for Bible based Ministry, for Aggressive Evangelism, for Holy Living ? Is there not a cause for Truth, for the Bible, amidst all the Ecumenical and Charismatic tendencies that surround

us ? Tell me, does God's cause animate you the way it did David ? It would have been so easy for David to retaliate would it not ? But " he turned from him." Is that what you do when someone turns the knife in you ? During the last war a famous poster was displayed. It said this " Careless talk costs lives." The Government was concerned about the

foolish conversation of folk who might easily leak official secrets and bring disaster upon innocent millions. That war is over, but these words remain a challenge for those of us engaged in spiritual warfare. Many a soul has been wounded by a nasty word that could have been left unsaid. David,

" turned from him." Do you do that ? Do you follow the

example of David, of David's Lord, " who when He was reviled, reviled no again." (1 Pet 2:23) (1)

(2) VICTORY NO 2: VICTORY OVER THE WORLD

Now when we speak of " the world," what do we

mean ? When John says, " Love not the world neither the things that are in the world " (1 Jn 2:15) what he is talking about ? Well, the English language often uses the word " world," in the sense of a system. When we speak of the world of sports, politics, or the world of medicine we refer to a system of ideas, activities, and purposes that relate to a specific area of society. So

" the world," can refer to Satan's activities, ideas and purposes as they are revealed on earth.

Its just the invisible spiritual system of evil. Now the suddenly changes here from Eliab and David to Saul and David. Its interesting to notice that initially his own brethren try to Discourage David, (17:28) Now the King tries to Dissuade David. " Thou art not able."

(17:33) Is that what Satan has told you through someone ? " It can't be done." " Son, you don't have the size for it, you're just a kid. Look over there at that giant." As I see it, David was blinking and thinking. " What giant ? The only giant in my life is God. Thats a dwarf over there, Saul." Then Saul says, " Now wait a minute, we have to fix you for battle." Imagine it. " Saul armed David with his armour." (17:38) Here's Saul, a 52 long, and David a 36 regular. And so Saul drags in all this heavy armour and then says, " Put this on, son." And David says, " Saul I can't fight with this stuff. I can't even walk in it, and I haven't tested it in battle." You see, that which was spoke of:

(a) THE CARNAL DAVID PUT OFF:

You see, Saul is thinking like a carnal person would think. Saul thinks that the way you win the battle against a carnal giant is by carnal means. There are a lot of people who think that way. During the hippie years a young Christian tried to reach those hippie people for Christ, commendable. But he became a plastic hippie to do it. They would scream, he would scream, they would demonstrate he would demonstrate. Do you know what ? He lost ! My are you trying to win spiritual battles with carnal armour ? Paul reminds us,

" The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." (2 Cor 10:4) (a)

(b) THE SPIRITUAL DAVID PUT ON:

The staff, the stones, the sling. These were the things through which David had proved the power of God privately, (17:34) now he would prove the power of God publicly. Victory number 2: victory over the world.

Sometimes in our desire to take on the forces that are arraigned against us, we decide we need to use the same methods their same armour. We decide to adopt the enemy's methods ! But we cannot win our battles against the world by using the world's methods. " But we must not be thought too different," I hear someone say. " Why not replace the Gospel service with a film," I hear another argue. " Why not specialise in drama, and mime, and dancing," says someone else. " After all they're doing it everywhere else." Why not ? Because we cannot use the weapons of the world to fight the Lord's battles. My do you know what we need ? We need the well tried weapons of Prayer, and the Word, and Preaching, weapons ordained of God to win the world for Christ. You see, the

simplicity of David in his shepherd garb as he walked to meet Goliath is a pattern we do well to follow, David did not claim to be better than Saul, he just knew he was different. (1) (2)

(3) VICTORY NO 3: VICTORY OVER THE DEVIL

You see, we are facing a three fold enemy. There is the Internal Enemy: the Flesh, the External Enemy: the World, and the Infernal Enemy: the Devil. " The devil," says Peter " as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour." (1 Pet 5:8) My is the great Goliath not a type of Satan in his pride and power ?

(Lk 11:14-23) Goliath was seeking to frustrate the purposes of God for His people ! Is that not Satan's aim for you ? To frustrate God's purposes for your life ?

How can you overcome ? Well, there are two things here that stand in contrast to each other that we need to see. Notice:

(a) THE STRENGTH OF THE ENEMY:

Can you see his Height ? He's almost 10 feet tall. The Belfast Giants would love him. Can you grasp that the weight of his armour is more than 150 pounds ? The head of his spear is 18 pounds ! I can almost see him

as he lifts those big hands like hams to heaven and cries,

" I defy the armies of Israel this day." (17:10) That sent a shudder or two throughout the Israeli camp. Israel has what I call giant phobia. My all of us face giants in life. Sometimes its giants in the realm of emotions. It may be the giant of fear, or jealousy or prejudice. Sometimes those giants are other people, and the problems we have with people. My what is your giant ? What is the giant that challenges you ? Of course, all of us face the Devil. The world today treats the Devil as though he were a joke. But the Scriptures take the Devil seriously. Sometimes we underestimate the Devil. The Result ? Our hearts are filled with self-

confidence ! Then we overestimate the Devil and our hearts are filled with fear ! How can we tackle him ? How can we prevail ? We'll look at:

(b) THE SECRET OF VICTORY:

David did three things here. He:

1. Remembered God's Unfailing Power:

Look at (17:37) My so often we forget what we ought to remember, and we remember what we ought to forget. We remember our defeats and we forget the victories. Is it not true that most of us can we recite the failures of our lives in detail, but we're hard-pressed to name the specific, remarkable victories God has pulled off in the past. Not so with David. He says, " You know why I can fight Goliath, Saul ? Because the same God who gave me power over a lion and a bear will give me power over Goliath. It is God who will empower me so just let me at him." Do you ever take time to enumerate God's blessings ? To think of the various times when the Lord has been your Helper in the past ? My when the battle is fierce, think about God's power in the past, and it will be an incentive to you in the present ?

2. He Trusted in God's Unchanging Character:

" The Lord that delivered me (past tense) He will deliver me." (present tense) (17:37) Can you see David going forth to meet Goliath armed with but a sling and five smooth stones ?

All the others were mumbling, " Look how much bigger Goliath is than we are." But David was thinking,

" Look how much smaller than God Goliath is." The others were saying, " He's too big to hit." David was thinking, " He's too big to miss." David is not intimidated. Do you hear him shouting to Goliath ?

" Hey, big boy quit your laughing and prepare to die, you come to me with a sword, a shield and a spear, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of Hosts."

(17:45) He knew that the same God who had stood with him as he fought with the wild beasts would not fail him now. (b) So many of us believe in the God of History, we believe all the great things that God did in our forefathers day. So many of us believe in the God of Prophecy, but how few of us grasp that He is the God of today, a present living reality in our hearts ? Is God real to you today ? Yes, you look backward with thanksgiving, you look forward with anticipation but do you ever look upward with faith believing that He is sufficient for you today ? (Mal 3:16)
1. 2.

3. He was Concerned for God's Unrivalled Glory:

David knew that immense spiritual issues were at stake that day. You see, this was a conflict of faith. Goliath

" cursed David by his gods." (17:43) Who were his gods ? Dagon the fish god was one of his gods (5:4)

and Baalezebub, the Lord of the flies, the dung god was one of his gods, for when you turn your back on the living God, you end up with the dung gods, you wind up on the manure pile. You see, David knew that if Goliath were to win the name of Jehovah would be ridiculed, and the fish god, and the fly god would be revered. Thats why he cries, " this day the Lord will deliver thee into mine hand that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. (17:46) Does this question of God's glory concern you ? My in 2002, Defiance is still on the lips of God's enemies, and by in large Dismay is still in the hearts of God's people. Is there not a cause ? God's cause. Are you committed to it because God's glory is at stake ?

How did win this 3rd victory ? With a sling and stone.

Dr. G. Scroggie used to say, " It took Goliath completely by surprise such a thing never entered his head before." " So David prevailed." Victory no 1: Over the Flesh: Victory no 2: Over the World: Victory no 3: Over the Devil. " So David prevailed." Bless God, so did David's greater son. Both were sent by the Father: both were born in Bethlehem: both were rejected by their brethren: both were taking the place of others and both wonderfully prevailed. Do you know something ? When Jonathan looked on that day and saw David taking his place, his heart was captivated and in loving gratitude stripped himself of everything, and laid it at David's feet. My as you contemplate Calvary, and see the Lord Jesus going into the battle for you, taking your place will you do the same ?

" Love so amazing so divine

Shall have my life my soul my all."