

# Finishing Well

Lesson #12

Valley of Elah: My Inheritance? April 6, 2022

Joshua 1:1-3,5-6,9 Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, <sup>2</sup> Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. <sup>3</sup> Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread [warfare; do battle] upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.

<sup>5</sup> There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life:

as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

<sup>6</sup> Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give them.

<sup>9</sup>Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

Consider: Did God give the Israelites their Promised Land flowing with milk and honey?

Did God command them to go in and possess it?

Did God promise to go before them and give them victory over all their enemies?

Was there a continual struggle for possession of the land, their inheritance?

Was flesh and blood capable of victory without God?

God planted a garden and placed His creation in it.

Gen. 2:15 And the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

Perfect peace, order and innocence characterized their lives because initially they were only influenced by God whose presence was directly there. Adam and Eve enjoyed perfect fellowship with God. Sin had not yet entered the human realm until the serpent entered.

Gen. 3:4-5 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

Gen. 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Recall: The Elah Valley connects the Philistine city of Gath, Goliath's hometown, with the Judahite city of Bethlehem, David's hometown. Control of this valley is crucial!

Valley of Elah is the battle line. King Saul and his army are endeavoring to hold the lines.

Mankind needs a champion to defeat the enemy's champion.

A Champion = "a man between the two camps:" one who did not fight in the ranks like an ordinary soldier, but he enters the space between the hostile camps to challenge the mightiest man of his enemies to come and fight him.

The contest is decided by a single contest. [like a duel] Winner Take All!

Consider: Does this Promised Land belong to Israel? Does it represent their inheritance? Had God given it to them? Did God promise to fight their battles and give them victory over the enemy? Were they to participate in the battle?

Application: Has God promised His children all spiritual blessings in Jesus Christ? [Eph. 1-3] Has God promised His children a future inheritance in His kingdom? [Rev. 5:10] Has God promised to fight our battles and give us victory over the world, the flesh & the devil? Are we to participate in the battle?

Consider: Could the Valley of Elah and the epic battle between David and Goliath be a picture of the struggle in my life to live in victory in my inheritance, my abundant life?

John 10:10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy:

I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

Enter Goliath > type of the seed of the serpent who symbolizes Satan our mighty adversary who appears as a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

- Goliath challenges and terrorizes God's people in their inheritance that God had given to them. A battle for control
- the Uncoverer or Exposer; to expose the weakness of Israel and God's people

Truth: God's children need a champion to defeat the enemy's champion.

- A Champion = "a man between the two camps:" one who did not fight in the ranks like an ordinary soldier, but he enters the space between the hostile camps to challenge the mightiest man of his enemies to come and fight him.

What is at stake? My living in victory - the abundant life now; My future inheritance

I Pet. 5:6-10 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time [the proper time]: <sup>7</sup> Casting all your care upon Him; for He cares for you.

<sup>8</sup> Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: <sup>9</sup> Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.<sup>10</sup> But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. [First the cross; Then the glory]

I Sam. 17:4 And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath...

#### The Battle Terms Defined

I Sam. 17:8-10 He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel and said to them, "Why do you come out to draw up in battle formation? Am I not the Philistine, and you the servants of Saul?

Choose a man for you and have him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants and serve us. Then the Philistine said, "I have defied the ranks of Israel this day! Give me a man, so that we may fight together."

The name Philistine means Grievers, Burrowers, Weakeners. It comes from the verb (*palash*), which originally described the digging of burrows in riverbanks by rodents such as rats. By doing so, these creatures weaken the shore and may ultimately cause it to collapse. In Hebrew, it came to denote the verbal expression of intense grief brought about by a sudden destruction:  
Consider: Goliath uncovers and exposes. What weakness will he expose in me?  
What is at stake? My living in victory - the abundant life now; My future inheritance

As champion of the Philistines, he immobilized an entire army of Israelites by challenging one of them to duel with him. Goliath held the entire Israelite army at bay by intimidation and derision. The earth must have seemed to shake each time Goliath came out. He approached 10' in height with 125 pounds of armor plating, an oversized spearhead of 15 pounds, a bronze javelin over his shoulder.

Strapped to his side was a mighty sword. Goliath was a fully loaded fighting machine. An armor bearer with a full-sized shield to ward off any arrows went before him.

His accoutrements [additional items of dress or equipment] figured the fact that the resources of flesh and blood cannot overcome Satan. [Repeats: Give me a man.]

His blatant challenge symbolized the roaring of the lion, our great adversary, as he goes about "seeking whom he may devour." [I Pet. 5:8]

Luke 11:22 Jesus pictured Satan as a strong man in armor, guarding his palace and his goods. But Jesus invaded Satan's territory, destroyed his armor and weapons, and claimed his spoils.

- Our Lord has led captivity captive [Eph. 4:8] and set the prisoners free. [Luke 4:18]
- Though Satan is permitted limited authority, Satan is a defeated enemy. [Col. 2:9-15]

In I Sam. 17:8 Why do you come out to draw up in battle formation?

Am I not the Philistine, and you the servants of Saul?

Sadly, this was true. The Israelites were no longer in subjection to the Lord. [I Sam. 8:7] Saul, the king of Israel, represents the world. His dependence upon carnal weaponry of the flesh resulted in him being powerless to even attempt to come up in battle against mighty Goliath who would have easily overpowered him.

I Sam. 17:11 When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid.

- The dismay of Saul [I Sam. 17:11] is in solemn contrast to his boldness in I Sam. 11:5-11 and 14:47 when the Spirit of the Lord was upon him.
- Without the Spirit of the Lord, he had nothing with which to face Goliath.

Israel's response: They were dismayed and greatly afraid. The enemy made them forget they had an absolute champion in the Lord their God. They forgot the wondrous works of the LORD their God. They failed to remember. It will take a bold shepherd boy, David, to remind them all they were the armies of the living God.

I Sam. 17:12, 14-15 Now David was the son of that Ephrathite of Bethlehem-judah, whose name was Jesse; and he had eight sons: [The champion of Israel, a type of Jesus Christ, must be of the tribe of Judah and a Bethlehemite. David met the requirements.]

And David was the youngest: and the three eldest followed Saul.

- David, the representative warrior of Israel, God's people, represents Jesus Christ who by His mighty victory over the enemy upon the cross of Calvary opened the way that we as God's people may have victory over our all our foes.

<sup>15</sup>But David went and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem.

- The son of Jesse returned to the sheepfold, leaving it with God to work out His will concerning him.

I Sam. 17:16 And the Philistine came forward morning & evening and took his stand for 40 days. Over a period of 40 days, the Israelites seem to become increasingly fearful and reluctant to oblige Goliath who seems to become bolder. His offer is first a challenge.

Then it seems to become a taunt. Is he trying to goad the Israelites into action?

*It only takes one giant to stop you as long as you look at life from the human level. Our lens picks up a giant ahead and suddenly he fills the whole screen until the giant is all we can see.*

At ground level, giants unglue us and we can't go on.

We're defeated because we "feel like a grasshopper in their sight."

What is at stake? My living in victory - the abundant life now; My future inheritance

I Sam. 17:17-18 & Jesse said unto David his son, Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched corn, & these 10 loaves, & run to the camp of thy brethren; And carry these 10 cheeses unto the captain of their thousand, and look how thy brethren fare, and take their pledge.

- David came to this battle from his father's house with gifts in his hands.
- David came with a commission from Jesse to benefit the brethren.

It was said of the Lord Jesus: "The Father hath sent the Son to be the Savior of the world."

Another type of our Savior going about His Father's business, seeking the good of his brethren.

I Sam. 17:19-21 Now Saul, and they, and all the men of Israel, were in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines. And David rose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a keeper, and took, and went, as Jesse had commanded him; and he came to the trench, as the host was going forth to the fight, and shouted for the battle.

<sup>21</sup> Israel and the Philistines drew up in battle formation, army against army.

Consider: Day after day, the children of Israel keep assembling themselves in battle array against the Philistines. But they were paralyzed from actually going to war to battle them.

- Christians get all pumped and fired up when they are together yet that seldom carries over to being effective witnesses for Christ and winning souls for Christ.
- Churches often are dressed in their religious garb, just as the Israelites were dressed in battle array. However, the end result: They end up being and acting religious. There is no spiritual victory.

I Sam. 17:22-23 And David left his carriage in the hand of the keeper of the carriage, and ran into the army, and came and saluted his brethren. <sup>23</sup> And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, out of the armies of the Philistines, and spake according to the same words: and David heard them.

Note: Saul listened to Goliath defy his God 80 times!! On the other hand, David could only stand to hear Goliath's defiance once, because he was so zealous of God's name.

Are we zealous for the Lord, or are we cowards like Saul?

- The giants of fear and rejection can create the giant of complacency.
- Our desire for comfort can create the giant of complacency.

<sup>24</sup> And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid.

A Frightened People: A pathetic picture emerges when you observe the Israelite camp.

They are a people in covenant relationship with God, who belong to God, fighting in a territory which belongs to them, and they are petrified with fear as Goliath lashes out with his hateful words of defiance.

The Israelites were well trained, well-equipped and well acquainted with the situation.

They set themselves in array to meet the enemy. However, they were utterly helpless to do anything about the powers of darkness which were arrayed against them.

The church is largely well-equipped and well organized. The battle is set in array, but when it comes down to face the enemy, we seem to be presently fighting a losing battle.

Question: When Goliath, the greatest and most powerful of Philistine warriors, paraded himself back and forth asking the Israelites to send out their greatest and most powerful warrior, who should have stepped on to the battlefield? Saul.

Note: The Spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul. He does not show courage in any battle. He sits on the sidelines watching everyone else fight.

- Many Christians sit on the sidelines and watch other believers do all of the fighting.

A.W. Pink The bravest of men, are no more than what God makes them.

When He renews not his courage, the stoutest heart is a coward. Yet God does not act arbitrarily, rather is cowardice one of the consequences of lost communion with Him:

Prov. 28:1 "The righteous are bold as a lion."

*"Something huge and covered with glittering bronze is moving down the slope. It approached the middle ground near the ravine and suddenly a shudder ran through the men of Israel. It's the biggest man they've ever seen."*

This scene illustrates an impressive picture of Satan and his power. He is impressive, scintillating, glittering, and far too powerful for any human being to stand against him.

- Many say they don't believe in Satan. That is only proof of his power!

II Cor. 4:4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

Note: Israel is facing a crisis situation with Goliath's confrontation. Saul who represents the world and the flesh makes a generous offer to the man who would silence Goliath.

I Sam. 17:25 And the men of Israel said, Have ye seen this man that is come up? surely to defy Israel is he come up: and it shall be, that the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel.

### David's View Of The Situation

I Sam. 17:26 And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that kills this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?

Note: Goliath's trust was in his gods [v. 43]. This is another instance of the "no-gods" of the heathen versus the living God of Israel. To David, Goliath is as good as dead for this reason. Uncircumcised Philistine dared to defy the armies of the living God.

➤ This is about God, His name, His glory, His honor, His power.

*"David was no match for Goliath but when that uncircumcised Philistine took on God, he got in over his head. David's screen was filled with God and therefore everything else was whittled down to proper size. He saw Goliath but he also saw God. That made all the difference."*

As David prepares to battle against Goliath, he faces opposition on every side. His brother chides him, Saul tries to discourage him, and Goliath ridicules, curses, and threatens him.

What happened shortly after David arrived at the Israelite camp? Scorned by his brethren

I Sam. 17:28-29 Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab's anger was aroused against David, and he said, "Why did you come down here? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride and the insolence of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle."

And David said, What have I now done? Is there not a cause?

Note: No one had stepped forward to accept Goliath's challenge!

A.W. Pink Blessed it is to mark David's reply to the cruel taunt of his brother: it was a real testing of his meekness, but when he was reviled, he reviled not again.

Nor did he attempt any self-vindication, or explanation of his conduct.

Consider: Jesus came unto His own but, His own received Him not. [John 1:11]

Isa. 53:3 Jesus was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

I Sam. 17:31 Saul sends for David.

I Sam. 17:32 Don't be intimidated by negative voices. And David said to Saul,

Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.

I Sam. 17:32 I will not lose heart.

II Chron. 20:15 I will not be afraid or discouraged

II Chron. 20:17 I will stand firm and anticipate the deliverance the LORD will give me

Joshua 4:24 The hand of the LORD is almighty and all powerful

When we take a stand for the Lord, opposition arises. Many times, the worst opposition comes from God's people. The ones who are the most critical of us are usually the ones who aren't serving. They are standing on the sidelines criticizing those who are in the battle.

- Saul challenges young David for his credentials as a warrior.

I Sam. 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.

Note: Saul was really echoing the report of the 10 unbelieving spies who saw the giants in Canaan & decided that it was impossible to enter the land

Saul and the armies of Israel were afraid because:

They saw it as a conflict of their puny muscle against Goliath's mighty muscle.

Their little weapons against Goliath's impressive weapons

Their experience in warfare against Goliath's experience.

David doesn't need to know Goliath's strength because he already knew God's strength.

David saw it as a conflict between God and the forces of evil.

Saul and his men saw Goliath: He's so big we can never kill him!

David saw the same man: He's so big, I can't miss!

#### A Shepherd's Confidence I Sam. 17:34-37

I Sam. 17:34-37 And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: <sup>35</sup> And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. <sup>36</sup> Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God.

<sup>37</sup> David said moreover, The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.

And Saul said unto David, Go, and the LORD be with thee.

Note: As he had answered his brother's passion with meekness, so David answered Saul's fear with faith.

- David took the responsibility no one else would accept.

I Sam. 30:6 David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.

I Sam. 17:37b And Saul said unto David, Go, and the LORD be with thee.

I Sam. 17:38-39 And Saul armed David with his armor, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail. <sup>39</sup> And David girded his sword upon his armor, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved it.

- Flesh rises up to give its help to win battles.
- World's wisdom and men's ideas to overcome.

It seems the king was determined to omit no earthly means of securing victory to his young champion. These were doubtless the best-tempered and costliest that the camp of Israel possessed.

Use Saul's armor & sword?	Saul is a man who does not have the Spirit of the Lord.
Coat of mail?	Scale armor; just like Goliath's, the enemy
Saul's weapons?	Symbolize the weapons of man and of the flesh.

He assayed to go. He took a short walk thus arrayed, testing the equipment. It was so cumbersome that he felt he would have no chance against the Philistine except as a light-armed soldier. Goliath was a problem to be faced on his terms but NOT with his weapons. When David was given Goliath's kind of weapons, David quickly concluded he couldn't even function, much less fight, with those tools. Goliath's strengths would have been David's handicaps.

➤ The man of faith has no use for carnal weapons.

David knew that if he would have victory that his victory would come because of the Lord giving it to him, not because of his having superior weaponry. This symbolizes a historical and current problem for the church: Attempting to utilize the weapons of the world and of the flesh in serving the Lord. Carnal weapons will never win a spiritual conflict.

A.W. Pink: Let us never listen to flesh and blood! They always say to us, after the manner of Peter at Caesarea Philippi, when our Lord spoke of His crucifixion and death, Matt. 16:22-23 And yet Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You!"<sup>23</sup> But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's purposes, but men's."

Saul had no idea that faith opens new sources of power, touches new stops in the great organ, and accomplishes alliance with the Almighty.

Psalms 20:7-8 Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God. They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright.

Past Deliverance Begets Faith: Charles Spurgeon

David spoke a word which the Lord endorsed by making it true. He argued from past deliverances that he should receive help in a new danger. In Jesus all the promises are "Yea and Amen" to the glory of God by us, and so the Lord's former dealings with His believing people will be repeated.

Come, then, let us recall the Lord's former lovingkindnesses. We could not have hoped to be delivered aforesaid by our own strength; yet the Lord delivered us. Will He not again save us? We are sure He will. As David ran to meet his foe, so will we. The Lord has been with us, He is with us, and He has said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Why do we tremble? Was the past a dream? Think of the dead bear and lion. Who is this Philistine?



True, he is not quite the same and is neither bear nor lion; but then God is the same, and His honor is as much concerned in the one case as in the other. He did not save us from the beasts of the forest to let a giant kill us. Let us be of good courage.

Truth: God uses the weak so that He will get the glory when great things are accomplished.

TRUTH: Every giant in your path is also in God's path if you are abiding in Christ.

David's boldness is due to his REMEMBERING God's faithfulness in the past.

Ps. 77:11 I will remember the works of the LORD: surely, I will remember thy wonders of old.

Consider: We all are either in a storm, going in a storm, or coming out of a storm.

God wants to use these trials in my life for my good and His glory.

God wants to use His past faithfulness to fuel my confidence in His future faithfulness.

I Sam. 17:39b And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these;

for I have not proved them. And David put them off him.

The agility of his movements would then make him a match for one so heavily overweighted as Goliath.

Heb. 12:1-2 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup> Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

- Cross before Glory
- Suffering before the crown

Spurgeon: There are no crown-wearers in heaven who were not cross-bearers on earth.