



## GUIDELINES DAILY COMMENTARY ON LIVING WITH DR. HAROLD J. SALA

Release: January 18, 2017

Subject: David/Character

### DARE TO BE A DAVID

*So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand he struck down the Philistine and killed him. 1 Samuel 17:50*

"We took on Goliath!" advertises a small business whose product is overshadowed by a major manufacturer. The David versus Goliath syndrome means the little guy goes against the giant. There are times when the little guy goes against the big one and gets flattened like a steamroller does a stray cat. But what's the real story behind the confrontation of David with Goliath long ago?

To the west of Jerusalem lie the gentle rolling hills between the coastal area and the Jordan valley. On these, long ago, two armies were gathered who were bitter enemies. The Philistines, who were a fierce and savage people, wanted to drive out the Israelis. Instead of wasting a considerable number of men in battle, the Philistines sent out a giant of a man who would have made Magic Johnson look like a midget—well, almost a midget. Goliath never played basketball, but a slam-dunk for him would have been an underarm shot. According to the record he was at least nine feet tall.

If you know the story, you remember that a youth who had taken a break from taking care of his father's sheep, brought provisions to his brothers in the Israeli army. When David saw the giant and observed that the men who were defenders of Israel cowered in the safety of their camp, preferring the insults of the enemy to doing battle, he cried out, "Is there not a cause?" And David took the battle to the enemy and won!

Possibly there is a foolhardiness in youth who haven't learned that something cannot be accomplished, but perhaps there is great strength in not listening to the nay-sayers who want to tell you that something cannot be done. On a personal note, had I as a young man listened to the voices of those who told me that I could not broadcast, that there was no market for Guidelines, you would not be listening to or reading this commentary today. David's remarkable feat was marked by four qualities, ones which we desperately need today: He was competent, he was courageous, he was committed, and he was confrontational. Focus on those four qualities.

**Quality #1: Competence.** Goliath wore heavy armor and carried a sword large enough to fell an oak tree in a single stroke, but David came against him on his own terms, exactly as he would face an animal who raided his father's flock. Simply put, he was his own man and refused to be like everyone else. For a weapon, David used a sling which held a stone or rock, and he hurled it with precise accuracy. Years of training helped, but David knew where his strength came from. "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD," he cried. Incompetence is never an asset which God reverses.

**Quality #2: Courage.** Others, no doubt, trusted the Lord but preferred to stay in the shade and pray. David had the intestinal fortitude to go for it. Real heroes are not individuals with superhuman courage but simply people who are confronted with a situation demanding action and then do what has to be done.

**Quality #3: Commitment.** This was not really his fight. He wasn't even a soldier, but his love for country and for God demanded he get into the battle. Edmund Burke once said, "All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing."

**Quality #4: Confrontation.** Hand-to-hand combat was necessary. Going one-on-one with the enemy, whether he is a teacher who is off limits or a government official who is corrupt, is never pleasant; but apart from confrontation, evil is sure to triumph.

A final thought: David learned that one plus God is always a majority, no matter how big the enemy--something every generation must also learn.

Resource reading: 1 Samuel 17.



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