

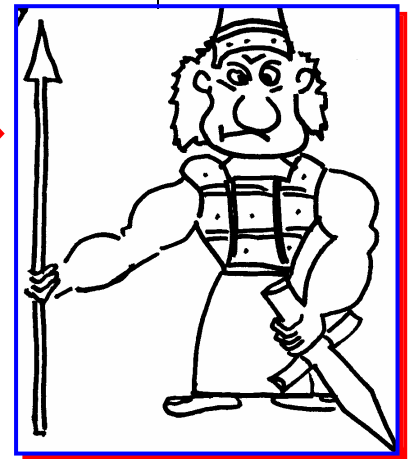
THE VALLEY OF DECISION

(1 Samuel 17:1-11 NKJV) “Now the Philistines gathered their armies together to battle, and were gathered together at Sochoh, which belongs to Judah; they encamped between Sochoh and Azekah, in Ephes Dammim. {2} And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and they encamped in the Valley of Elah, and drew up in battle array against the Philistines. {3} The Philistines stood on a mountain on one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side, with a valley between them. {4} And a champion went out from the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, from Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. {5} He had a bronze helmet on his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail, and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of bronze. {6} And he had bronze armor on his legs and a bronze javelin between his shoulders. {7} Now the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and his iron spearhead weighed six hundred shekels; and a shield-bearer went before him.

A VERY BIG PROBLEM!



{8} Then he stood and cried out to the armies of Israel, and said to them, “Why have you come out to line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and you the servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me. {9} “If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants. But if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall be our servants and serve us.” {10} And the Philistine said, “I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together.



{11} When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.”

*“dismayed
and
greatly afraid”*

(Verse 3) “The Philistines stood on a mountain on one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side, with a valley between them.”

Faith for the Valley of Decision

Faith Issues

1. Will you go down into the valley?
2. Can you face the giant?
3. Or, will you be paralyzed with fear?

The answers depend on what kind of spirit is in you ... a spirit of fear, or a spirit of faith. (which is a Warrior Spirit!)

Characteristics of Trouble

LOOK again carefully at verses 8-10. You can see the intentions of the spirit behind the trouble.

1. Trouble is something that disrupts your sense of well being and threatens or prophesies harm is coming your way.
2. Trouble characteristically will defy you, torment you, intimidate you, and scare you. The spirit behind your trouble will do whatever it can to drive you away from God.
3. If you believe it has superior power over you, it will ultimately defeat you. It may even scare you to death.
4. **Trouble always issues a report intended to destroy your resolve to fight the good fight of faith.**
(1 Samuel 17:11 NKJV) "When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid."

Whose report will you believe?

Confronting Your Trouble

Do not run away from your trouble, no matter how it may threaten. Instead, run into the place of your obedience. Obedience will take you to the ground where giants fall. David was not just sent to the ridgeline with food for the troops. God sent him into the valley with a word to speak in the face of his trouble. He went where he was sent. When he got there, he said what his faith already knew.

- Christian obedience is the mark of a Christian warrior!
- Confident faith-filled victory in Christ is the expectation of a warrior.

- A warrior for Christ will ultimately prevail. He or she will be a winner for Christ.
- David recognized the voice of his trouble for what it was. It was nothing new. It was **the same old message. It was the only message trouble ever sends.**

(1 Samuel 17:23 NKJV) "Then as he talked with them, there was the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, coming up from the armies of the Philistines; and he spoke according to the same words. So David heard them."

When trouble speaks, faith answers and trouble falls! David understood his advantage. The giant only towered over him if David allowed appearances to sway and deceive him.

Trouble tries to deceive by outward appearance.
 Trouble is defeated through inward faith that projects itself in ways that alter outward appearances.

II. A WARRIOR SPIRIT

A Contrast: Two Spirits

Warrior Spirit	Fearful Spirit
<p><i>(2 Timothy 1:7 NKJV) "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Three Things</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Power when you need it. 2. Love when you need it. 3. A sound mind in all things... A sound mind sees the situation as God sees it! <p><i>(1 Samuel 17:26b NKJV) "...What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?"</i></p> <p>When the devil is horrified by your words, God is about to be glorified in your deeds.</p>	<p><i>(Job 3:25 NKJV) "For the thing I greatly feared has come upon me, And what I dreaded has happened to me."</i></p> <p><i>(Psalms 55:5 NKJV) "Fearfulness and trembling have come upon me, And horror has overwhelmed me."</i></p> <p>A fearful spirit invites two other spirits. A threefold cord is not quickly broken.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spirit of dread • Spirit of horror <p>A fearful spirit sees the situation through blinded eyes. When you are horrified in your doubt, the devil is gratified and soon will be satisfied (with your defeat).</p>

David did not allow the others to determine his level of faith. Fear had stopped the other men of Israel. He was having no part of it! Do not allow others' fear and unbelief, or their criticisms of you to stop you.

(1 Samuel 17:27-28 NKJV) “And the people answered him in this manner, saying, “So shall it be done for the man who kills him.” {28} 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.””

A Warrior Spirit or Brawler's Spirit?

<p><i>(1 Samuel 17:32 NKJV) “Then David said to Saul, “Let no man's heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine.”</i></p>	<p><i>(Genesis 4:23-24 NKJV) “Then Lamech said to his wives: “...For I have killed a man for wounding me, Even a young man for hurting me. {24} If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, Then Lamech seventy-sevenfold.””</i></p>	<p>The left hand box shows a servant's heart. The right hand box shows a brawler's heart.</p>
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Servants fight for their Master's glory and honor. They are warriors, who defend the name of the Lord. They advance His kingdom cause, and are qualified to be in His army. **God's servants have warrior spirits.**

There was one thing both armies had in common. They were **without faith**. Saul's men became intimidated and did not feel the name of their God was worth defending or worth trusting. Think about it! If you think you have a warrior spirit but do not have a servant's heart, you really only have a brawler's spirit. Goliath was the biggest example of a brawler with a spirit of Lamech.

III. THE LION AND THE BEAR

(1 Samuel 17:32-36 NKJV) “Then David said to Saul, “Let no man's heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine.”{33} And Saul said to David, “You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.” {34} But David said to Saul, “Your servant used to keep his father's sheep, and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, {35} I went out after it and struck it, and delivered the lamb from its mouth; and when it arose

against me, I caught it by its beard, and struck and killed it. {36} Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God.””

Kindred Spirits: The Lion and the Bear

The Lion’s Spirit	The Bear’s Spirit	
<p>A lion is a fearsome creature. He is a ruthless killer. His clutches will bring certain death ... he will devour you!</p> <p><i>(1 Peter 5:8 NKJV) “... your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”</i></p>	<p>A bear is only interested in three things...</p> <p>[1] eating [2] sleeping [3] making little bears</p> <p>The bear is a self-centered, self-satisfying, lazy creature.</p>	<p>A warrior’s spirit always defeats a brawler’s spirit if there is:</p> <p>No pride No doubt No fear or panic</p>

(1 Peter 5:6-9 NKJV) “Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, {7} casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. {8} Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. {9} Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.”

David overcame. So do we, when we walk into our valleys of decision with the faith of a warrior for Christ. A warrior spirit is an overcoming spirit!

IV. UNTESTED WEAPONS

(1 Samuel 17:38-39 NKJV) “So Saul clothed David with his armor, and he put a bronze helmet on his head; he also clothed him with a coat of mail. {39} David fastened his sword to his armor and tried to walk, for he had not tested them. And David said to Saul, “I cannot walk with these, for I have not tested them. So David took them off. {40} Then he took his staff in his hand; and he chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag, in a pouch which he had, and his sling was in his hand. And he drew near to the Philistine.”

Lessons to be Learned

1. Do not try to fight in someone else’s armor.
2. A warrior spirit selects the weapons that others may reject.

3. A warrior spirit recognizes potential in the problem he or she faces, and seizes the opportunity.
4. God's ways are higher than man's ways.

Use the weapons you have practiced with, such as... prayer, boldness, the power of a word spoken in faith, etc.

V. SAY WHAT YOU KNOW.

David said what he knew.

(1 Samuel 17:41-46 NKJV) “So the Philistine came, and began drawing near to David, and the man who bore the shield went before him. {42} And when the Philistine looked about and saw David, he disdained him; for he was only a youth, ruddy and good-looking. {43} So the Philistine said to David, “Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?” And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. {44} And the Philistine said to David, “Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!” {45} Then David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. {46} This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.”

Remove the problem by speaking to it. Then, follow with action!

(Mark 11:23 NKJV) “For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.”

Faith and fear both come by hearing.

(Romans 10:17 NKJV) “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

Who you will listen to ... and then, what you say? You can speak faith-filled words or fear filled words. It is your choice.

THE BATTLE IS THE LORD'S

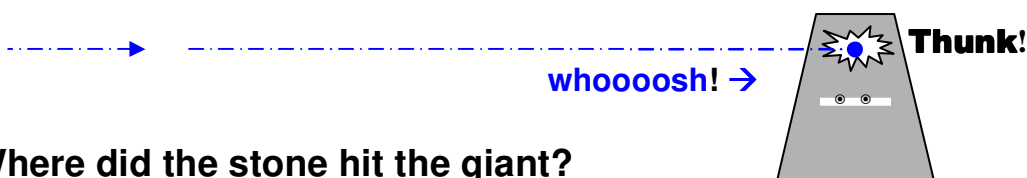
(1 Samuel 17:46-48 NKJV) ““This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the

birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. {47} Then all this assembly shall know that the LORD does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's, and He will give you into our hands." {48} So it was, when the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, that David hastened and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine."

The Miracle of the Smooth Small Stone

(Faith moves mountains, but it will also move small stones!)

(1 Samuel 17:49) "Then David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone; and he slung it and struck the Philistine in his forehead, so that the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the earth."



Where did the stone hit the giant?

1. In the eye-slit opening?
2. Through the hardened metal helmet?

Philistine
helmet

Philistine metal technology was far superior to the Israelites'. Their helmets, shields and swords were made of improved metals that were much harder than the armor the Israelites had. **It was impossible for a small river stone to have the velocity and hardness necessary to penetrate the metal of a Philistine helmet.** Only a fool would sling a stone at Goliath. It was an act of certain death... Or, was it? **David knew that the battle was the Lord's. He had faith for his miracle!**

Take what you have and let it fly!

The Holy Spirit will empower your weapons to get the job done. **What seems insignificant in your hand will make a significant penetration in your situation.** Nothing can defeat what God anoints. Take what you have and let it fly! You will see your faith rewarded with a great victory. Do not hesitate.

**With God, little stones can bring down
big mountains!**