

Daily Devotional, November 11, 2020 God is Our Armor

***46 This day the Lord will deliver you into my hands, ... and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. 47 All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give all of you into our hands."* 1 Samuel 17:46, 47 (NIV)**

This popular Bible story of David and Goliath has everything a reader could want. A young, ruddy shepherd boy in a death match against a grizzled giant of a man as tall as an NBA center and as broad and powerful as an NFL defensive lineman, seasoned with years of hard fought battle and his gods on his side. How could he lose to this child toting a leather strap, with no armor, shield or weapon? In this story we have comedy, drama, action, and *spoiler alert*: **triumph!**

It is no wonder Hollywood has borrowed from this story for more than a century for every type of action movie from the Star Wars franchise to the sports classic Hoosiers. That film actually includes a brief reading of 1 Samuel 17 in a locker room scene in which a form of a prayer is used to psyche up a basketball team of smallish country boys up against tall burly young veteran players in a legendary Indiana state championship game. Spoiler alert: **Victory!**

Who could ever grow tired of reading this story which is so much more than “the underdog wins.” David, it is assumed, will need armor and a king’s sword to win this fight. He tries on the over-sized protective covering and clanks around, stumbling and tripping under the cumbersome weight of it all. Forget it! He returns the sword to Saul, dumps the chain mail and helmet, and takes up his shepherd’s staff and sling. He arms himself with five smooth stones that he finds in a nearby brook. But he has something more, much more. He has his love for the Lord—and the Lord’s love for him.

How many times have we skipped over David’s most important line in these verses: “*All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves*”. Fade forward to a Garden where Jesus is betrayed. In every Gospel version, at least one sword appears with someone swinging it, perhaps imagining he is just like young David against the giant of Gath who brags of his gods and blusters on of how strong he is.

In every one of the Gospel accounts Jesus dismisses the sword just as David does. Matthew 26:52 reads, “Put your sword back in its place,” Jesus said to him, “for all who draw the sword will die by the sword.” From the garden to the trial to the sentence, and through the empty tomb and on down the road to Emmaus and way beyond the Pentecost, we find that sword and armor are essentially useless. God’s tender mercies through Christ’s love and grace is all we need to bring us victory forever and beyond. Thanks be to God! Let us always seek the Armor of God for protection from all of our adversities in life.

Prayer: Gracious God, we thank you for each and every day that comes with your love, mercy, comfort and protection. Help us to always remember that our strength comes from You through Christ. Amen.