

December 21, 2015 senior officer on the scene radioed for permission to fire. His request went to the TOC, the tactical operations center. There the "battle captain," or the senior officer in the chain of command, would decide — shoot or don't shoot. But first there was a call for the battle captain to make, all the way to brigade headquarters, where a JAG officer — an Army lawyer — was on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. His job was to **analyze the request, apply the governing rules of engagement, and make a recommendation to the chain of command.** One particular event in Iraq, in this case, the lawyer said no — insufficient evidence. No deadly force. Move to detain rather than shoot to kill. The commander deferred. No shot. Move to detain. American soldiers dismounted from their MRAPs, and with one man in the lead, weapons raised, they ordered the Iraqis to surrender. Those who were in the TOC that night initially thought someone had stepped on a land mine. Watching on video feed, they saw the screen go white, then black. For several agonizing minutes, no one knew what had happened. Then the call came. Suicide bomber. One of the suspects had self-detonated, and Americans were hurt. One badly — very badly. Despite desperate efforts to save his life, he died just before he arrived at a functioning aid station. Another casualty of the rules of engagement.

Battles are an inevitable part of life- the mistake is made when we obey the enemies rules of engagement-wrong thinking God can only move in a certain way or certain timeframe otherwise there is no hope for me. Our text we find an underdog fight of the century David vs Goliath- impossible odds on the surface however when we engage our faith and trust in Gods ability then we can also see victory in our lives.

I. BATTLES OF LIFE

A. Truth about the enemy:

1. The enemy will exploit our own limitations/weakness

1 Samuel 17:4 *And there came out from the camp of the Philistines a champion named Goliath of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span.*

- a) I doubt very much we need to be reminded of our own weakness/failings/problems
2. the enemy will challenge our confidence in God
 - a) *our text: two armies facing each other- but it was the enemy that initiated this one on one battle/ man vs man*
 - b) What Goliath uses was words to bring intimidation and doubt in who the Children of Israel
3. The enemy will play into our pride
 - a) King Saul would not quickly ignore this man simply because it was a challenge- and how he responded to the challenge would effect how people viewed him

1 Samuel 17:16 *For forty days the Philistine came forward and took his stand, morning and evening.*

B. Men Here - We all have limitations- areas where we lack

1. Goliath challenging the entire army brought out a severe flaw
 - a) We measure our effectiveness in defeating the enemy based on what we can do on our own
2. Limitations become the defining factor of our lives
 - a) King Sauls army looked at Goliath and compared themselves to him rather than comparing Goliath to God
 - b) The enemy attacks our finances and the conclusion is- *I need to work more hours/* The enemy attacks our self worth and we think *I need to make my self look better* - The enemy attacks our marriage/ the conclusion can be *my spouse is no good.*

1 Samuel 17:23 *As he talked with them, behold, the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, came up out of the ranks of the Philistines and spoke the same words as before. And David heard him.*

C. Our limitations become ultimate authority in our lives

1. We measure our **response** in life based on our **limitations**
 - a) *I wish I could give/witness/be involved/ pray/ but I just can't/ too weak/ no talent/ limited abilities*
2. The size of the enemy determines our response to him
 - a) For forty days- the Israelites did absolutely nothing and the enemy kept doing the same thing over and over
 - b) The mistake is made when we think- well just give it time/ just let it be and it will work itself out
3. We begin to accept life the way it is
 - a) Attitude towards the enemy begins to change- what is happening in our relationships/ in our finances/ in our church/ in our marriages/ *in our ministries- the enemy is allowed to occupy those areas and we do nothing*

II. THE ENEMIES RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

A. The enemy will try and set the terms of battle

1. Terms of surrender

- a) The enemy says if you do this then we will do this- which is crazy/ why would you believe the father of lies would tell the truth?

1 Samuel 17:9 *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."*

John 8:44 *You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.*

2. Terms of battle style
 - a) The terms Goliath set was for the purpose of giving him the greatest advantage possible- close quarters combat
 - b) This is what the enemy can do to us- we come to wrong conclusion on how we should fight
 3. Terms of attack
 - a) Only fight at a certain time in a certain way
 - B. **The point:** To cause us to only see the size of the obstacle
 1. Incorrect view of the battle
 - a) Feeling of hopelessness can set in- the feeling that there is no chance/ no hope of winning against this enemy
 2. Incorrect view of ourselves
 - a) I am too weak/ maybe I'm not even really saved/
 3. Incorrect view of God
 - a) God must not want me to win against this Goliath
 - C. Truth about the enemy:
 1. The enemy is not all powerful
 - a) our text: two armies facing each other- but it was the enemy that initiated this one on one battle/ man vs man- we could accurately deduce that it was the Philistines who most likely knew the chances of victory were far more likely if they avoided an all out battle- outnumbered? outmatched forces?
 - b) The enemy assumed an easy win with Goliath
 2. The Weapons of the enemy are flawed
 - a) Goliath many scholars believe had several medical problem: poor vision- needed a shield bearer to guide him/ wanted David to come in close to him to fight/ thought David was careering multiple sticks
 3. The enemy does not anticipate your ability being effective
- 1 Samuel 17:44** *The Philistine said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and to the beasts of the field."*
- a) What Goliath failed to realize was that David had experience in killing creatures far greater than him- David engaged the enemy on Gods terms rather than the enemies.

III. GODS RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

- A. The Battle belongs to God : Remember the God factor
 1. Gods desire is to help defeat the enemy you face
 - a) David understood this powerful dynamic- **God wants me to win**

1 Samuel 17:36 *Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God.*

 - b) Areas of our lives where God wants to bring a victory to you: Finances, relationships, fruitfulness, personal growth, habits or addictions that need to be broken.
 2. Davids obedience plus Gods power brought the victory
 - a) the expectation in life is that if God wants me to win then He should just keep struggles from ever happening to me
 - b) this is incorrect- Gods desire is that we trust in Him- but this requires faith but also obedience
- B. We are not the underdog
 1. We have the advantage because God wants us to win
 2. We set the terms of the battle- Nothing less than absolute victory
 - a) The enemy must be annihilated/ completely destroyed/ initiate a scorched earth policy on the enemy
 - b) anything less than victory is unacceptable
 3. A posture of Faith must be engaged against the enemy

1 Samuel 17:45-46 *Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword and 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 down and cut off your head. And I will give the dead bodies of the host of the Philistines this day to the birds of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel,*
- C. People that are effected
 1. Davids Obedience equaled victory for the nation
 - a) Because David developed a correct view of life that played out into a larger area of his life
 - b) v.6 David says "He has defied the armies of who? The armies of God

1 Samuel 17:47 *and that all this assembly may know that the LORD saves not with sword and spear. For the battle is the LORD's, and he will give you into our hand."*

 2. Your personal decision to do right will effect other people
 - a) Men around you - spouse - children - your friends
 - b) What enemy are you facing this morning? what has God told you to do that you haven't done yet?