

## Scripture Reading

### A Reading from the First Book of Prophet Samuel (1 Samuel 17:47)

(David said to Goliath): All this multitude, too, shall learn that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves. For the battle belongs to the LORD, Who shall deliver you into our hands. The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

### Reflection - The battle belongs to the Lord

**The intimidation of the Philistines against the Israelites.** The Israelites were frightened by the bold and arrogant threats of Goliath of Gath, the champion of the Philistines, who had been taunting them for 40 days. The pagan Philistines were age-old enemies of the Israelites, who in the past captured the Israelites' Ark of the Covenant and profaned it. Goliath was awesome in his height and strength, and was heavily, powerfully armored. He had been a seasoned warrior for many years since his youth. Against this giant of a man, David, a young shepherd boy had decided to a duel that would pitch the fate of the Israelites against that of the Philistines. With great faith, David said Goliath: *All this multitude, too, shall learn that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves. For the battle belongs to the LORD, who shall deliver you into our hands* (1 Samuel 17:47).

**Armed only with simple but powerful faith.** David was a young man who was tending the sheep of his father, Jesse, at Bethlehem. He was the youngest son, so he was not favored with roles of authority and power in his family. Yet, God chose David to manifest His power and favour. His three oldest brothers were sent to help King Saul fight in the battle of the Israelites against its enemies. When David heard the insulting threats of Goliath, he decided to take up the challenges of Goliath despite discouragement from his eldest brother and King Saul. David had no extraordinary encounter with the Lord but he had the faith to recognize the hand of the Lord in his life. In the past when he was shepherding the sheep, he had defended the sheep from wild predators like lions and bears. He had killed a lion and a bear and retrieved sheep from the mouths of these predators. David knew that it was by no ordinary human power that he was able to do this but he attributed it solely to the power of God. It was on the basis of this simple faith that David took up without hesitation the taunting challenges of the formidable giant, Goliath. David assured King Saul: *"The same LORD Who delivered me from the claws of the lion and the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine"* (1 Samuel 17:37).

**God is involved in every battle between good and evil.** David knew God is on the side of those who remain in His truth. He knew that the battle with Goliath would be the one in which Goliath would have to contend with the Lord Himself. Instead of arming himself with strong, protective armor, David only took his staff, five smooth stones and a sling for his battle against Goliath. It was no wonder Goliath derided the sight of the unarmed, young David coming up against him. David answered him: *"You come against me with sword and spear and scimitar, but I come against you in the Name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel whom you have insulted* (1 Samuel 17:45). Putting his trust in God and his life into His hands, David had no fear in his heart as he let the Lord fight the battle. Thus, David managed to kill Goliath with sling and stone when the stone embedded itself in the forehead of Goliath. Instead of Goliath's feeding David's corpse to the scavengers, as he had earlier threatened, it was Goliath's own dead body that would provide food for the wild animals.

**Letting God fight our battles.** David could have been frightened at the mighty human power of Goliath. In every aspect, from the human perspective, David could not provide a fair match for Goliath. However, David had the faith which the arrogant Goliath lacked. David's simple faith and trust opened the way for the Lord to come in and fight the battle on his behalf. The Lord did not disappoint David. On that day, the Lord manifested His power mightily and showed us that faith in Him could do what is humanly impossible because with God, nothing is impossible if He wills it. We only have to prove our faith in Him, and let God be God instead of trying to rely solely on our own capability and human power, and bringing unto ourselves stresses, useless worries, anxiety and unholy fears. Faith and trust in God will secure peace amidst storms and earthquakes in our lives.

**Conversation with Jesus:** Precious Lord, *many are the troubles of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him from them all.* (Psalm 34:20). Give me the faith and courage of young David so that in every battle that I find myself in, I can pave the way for You to come in and take control, believing that You will help me overcome all temptation, break all vices, bad habits or bondages, control my unruly passions and feelings, discern evil and choose good over evil, and light up the way to the truth. Let me not be discouraged or frightened by the fearful signs of the storm but always have the faith to believe that You are in the same boat as I. Even if You were sleeping in my boat, You would still be in control because of Your mere presence. My faith in Your abiding Presence is all I seek so that You are my God who fights my battles. Mary, Mother of Salvation, give me a lion's share of your faith in God. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus. [www.twohearts.hk](http://www.twohearts.hk)