

Heroes & Giants 2 Samuel 21:15-22

By Phillip G. Kayser at DCC on 6-15-2014

Introduction – heroism should be chronicled

A reporter was interviewing a man on his 100th birthday, and at one point he asked the old man what he was most proud of. The man says, “Well, I don’t have an enemy in the world.” “That’s wonderful,” said the reporter. “Yep,” added the 100-year-old, “I’ve outlived every last one of them.” David outlived quite a few of his enemies. In this chapter, they almost got the better of him.

But what is clear is that he did not outlive his enemies by being naive. He trained himself for battle and trained his men to be ready. He surrounded himself with a group of mighty men who delighted in battle and were always seeking to outdo each other in valiant deeds. Chapter 23 will outline quite a few more of the valiant men that were attracted to David. But this section highlights those who had taken on the last of the fearsome giants. And it is my prayer that God would help us all to grow in Him as we look at this wonderful passage on heroes and giants. And we will start by looking at a theology of the enemy:

I. A theology of the enemy (vv. 15-16)

A. *Our enemy never gives up (v. 15a)*

Verse 15:

2Sam. 21:15 ¶ When the Philistines were at war again with Israel, David and his servants with him went down and fought against the Philistines; and David grew faint.

There are four things that this verse reminds us about with regard to our enemy. The first is that our enemy never gives up. In 2 Samuel chapter 8 it may have seemed like the Philistines were forever subdued. You may remember that in that chapter the Philistines had gathered a massive coalition of other nations to wipe Israel off the face of the map, and it almost looked like they would succeed. Well, David miraculously won a resounding victory against them and chapter 8:1 says that David subdued them. He subdued them so thoroughly that we don’t hear another word about the Philistines until this chapter (other than a brief memory of that event in chapter 19 where the people say that David had delivered them from the hand of the Philistines). Surely after such a resounding defeat, the Philistines

would leave the Israelites alone. But they did not. Verse 15 says, “When the Israelites were at war *again* with Israel.”

We are in a cosmic battle for keeps, and either *Christ* will win or *Satan* will win. Now, we know from the book of Revelation that Jesus will help the church to win the war, but that is not necessarily true of every battle. The church has lost a lot of battles in this cosmic war. And it is clear from world history that Satan has never given up his attempts to either neutralize or destroy the church. It doesn't matter how many battles we have won in the past, Satan will try another tactic to take us down. In the wilderness Satan tempted Jesus over and over again. Jesus won every battle, but Luke 4:13 says, “Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.” Satan is always looking for that opportune time.

In the culture wars of America today we can count on constant attacks from Satan. Yes, we have won many homeschool liberties, but Satan will do everything in his power to raise up more of his warriors to take those homeschool liberties away. Yes we have won some concessions to protect churches in Omaha from the GLBTQ attacks, but as soon as they can consolidate their powers, they will go on the attack again, just like they did last week in Denmark. Denmark passed a law forcing all churches to perform homosexual marriages, and making any refusal to perform such a marriage a crime. It's scary times for pastors in Denmark.

B. Our enemy must not be ignored (v. 15b)

And whether you think of that battle or a hundred other battles that are seeking to destroy every vestige of Christianity in our nation, we must not be naïve and think that it won't impact us. It will. The second phrase of verse 15 shows that our enemy must not be ignored.

When the Philistines were at war again with Israel, David and his servants with him went down and fought against the Philistines...

When the Philistines attacked, the Christians counter-attacked. It only makes sense. But the apathetic response of the American church to virtually every Philistine attack of the past 50 years makes absolutely no sense. It's insane that the church has been ignoring the enemy. The Church has become a bunch of mild mannered people teaching other mild mannered people how to become more mild mannered. We are wimps. With the least resistance, the church caves in. And my question is, “Where are the Davids and where are the warrior friends of David who are willing to engage in the culture wars of our day?” They are hard to find. But our spiritual enemy must not be

ignored. And to the Christians who keep telling us that we can't talk about culture wars, I say, "You are fools if you think that you can hide your head in the sand without having the enemy spear you in the backside." The culture wars will happen whether you call them that or not.

I love the quote attributed to the famous 19th century missionary, David Livingstone. He did everything in his power to stop the slave traders in Africa, and as a result they hated him and tried to kill him numerous times. Of course, he didn't believe in being a martyr. When they would shoot at him, he would shoot back. And they didn't like it. That didn't seem very fair. He had the latest weaponry. And Christians criticized him for that and said that he needed to be more peaceable. His response is classic. He said, "I love peace as much as any mortal man. In fact, I go quite beyond you, for I love it so much I would fight for it."¹ Lying down and letting the enemy walk all over you *is not peace* – it is abdication of this world to Satan and it is a recipe for slavery. Yet that is exactly what Christians are doing on almost every issue. They are abdicating. Now, I am not talking about shooting people (unless they shoot at you – I strongly believe in the right of self-defense). But I am talking about a battle of worldviews, a battle for the heart of this nation, spiritual warfare, and being willing to compete in the marketplace of ideas. I don't believe in rolling over in any of those areas. Certainly this passage could be used to preach to the military, but I am mainly going to be making applications to spiritual warfare.

The Philistines come in with their agendas of dismantling the American Christian Republic, and what do Christians do? Nothing. They don't even write a letter of protest. The Philistines in America have won battle after battle – not because the church can't win but because the church won't fight. This past Monday, after the Denmark law was passed that made it a crime for a pastor to refuse to perform a homosexual marriage, Theodore Shoebat wrote a wake up call to the church. And, by the way, Theodore Shoebat is the son of Walid Shoebat, a former PLO terrorist who repented of his terrorism and became a Christian. And he understands how the enemy is in this war for keeps. After describing the Danish law that basically criminalizes Christian morality, he said this:

...Christians must become militant against the sodomites in America, because this is exactly what the degenerates want in the United States, to force churches to conduct homosexual weddings. [Look at the decree](#) that was just passed in San

¹ Cited by Peter Hammond at http://www.frontline.org.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1383:faith-and-firearms&catid=28:gun-control-self-defence-cat&Itemid=195#sthash.Onn5irtb.dpuf

Antonio, TX, which now prohibits all those in political office from being bias toward homosexuals.

Absolute equality is absolute despotism. Christians must fight to have Christianity supreme, and not an equal amongst slaves. The ancient kings of Israel understood this, and this is why they suppressed the sodomites and extinguished them from the land. Why can't the governments of today's dead Christendom do what King Asa did?

And Asa did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, as did David his father. And he took away the sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made. (1 Kings 15:11-12)

Today's Christians have no problem with praising David's killing of Goliath, but why don't we ever praise the actions of King Josiah, when he destroyed the pagan brothels of the sodomites?

And he brake down the houses of the sodomites, that were by the house of the LORD, where the women wove hangings for the grove. (2 Kings 23:7)²

And that's the end of my quote from Theodore Shoebat. Now, Shoebat is not talking about private citizens tearing down Sodomite whorehouses and banishing them. He's talking about a worldview that allows civil magistrates to do so - like Asa and Josiah. That's not our role. Romans 12 calls us to love them and preach the Gospel to them and to call them to repent. So Romans 13 is the civil government's responsibility and Romans 12 is ours. But if the civil magistrates do not protect us from the Philistines, America will be completely subjugated. And we need to realize that they are completely dismantling Constitutional America, which was founded on Common Law, which has always made sodomy a serious crime.

Now, just reading that article from the pulpit might have made some of you a bit squeamish. Really? Suppress sodomy? Yes. It must be recriminalized. And we need to encourage our civil magistrates to do so, while we lovingly preach the Gospel and hope they convert. But it is a culture war for keeps, and if we do not see the real agenda of the Sodomites, Christians will become a persecuted minority. It's why sodomy is one of the few crimes listed in the Bible, and it's why every state in the union made sodomy a crime up until recent years. It is a moral issue that disintegrates society, and since article VII of the Constitution's Bill of Rights makes Common Law the law that is supposed to govern every court in the nation, it is still a crime whether states call it so or not. But they are trying to change that, and Romans 1-2 indicates that sodomy is a tool that Satan always uses to make a culture his for keeps.

² Read more at <http://freedomoutpost.com/2014/06/homosexuals-force-christian-pastors-perform-homosexual-weddings-churches/#ZOgviMqUP1cu07JX.99>

You see, Satan is behind these culture wars, and I can assure you that Satan is not interested in peaceful coexistence. He is not even interested in toleration, which is what the Bible mandates. Satan is interested in obliterating every vestige of Christianity from our culture. And it is high time that Christians stop ignoring the culture battles and start fighting – first on our knees in spiritual warfare prayer, and then fighting to promote the Biblical worldview, which alone can bring true peace and liberty for all men – including for non-Christians. But one cultural worldview must win, and if humanism wins, it *will* be slavery for all. David understood that, and he fought to keep a foreign paganism from overtaking his country. It is a foreign ideology that has taken over Christian America. And by the way, it's not as if Israel discriminated against pagans within its society. The law of God protected pagans in the land in exactly the same way it protected Israelites. There was one law for all. It just didn't allow them to get away with crimes. In the history of mankind, Christianity is the only religion that has given maximum liberty to all. And that is why we must fight to keep the Christian worldview in this nation. Humanism will bring bondage.

C. Our enemy takes advantage of our weakness (vv. 15c-16a)

The third feature of a theology of the enemy is to recognize that our enemy will always take advantage of our weakness. Beginning with the last phrase of verse 15:

...and David grew faint. [There was his weakness.] Then Ishbi-benob, who *was* one of the sons of the giant, the weight of whose bronze spear *was* three hundred *shekels*, who was bearing a new *sword*, thought he could kill David.

When he saw David growing weak from the fighting, this giant saw his opportunity, and came after David. Some people see this as taking place just before the Bathsheba event, which would make David 48 years old. And they say that is why he did not go to war in that chapter. Well, much as such a theory answers certain problems, it raises far more. And so other people, like Floyd Nolan Jones, see this as taking place right after the three-year famine, which would make David 64 years old. Because of the waw consecutive grammar in the Hebrew of each verse, I tend to lean in that direction. The Hebrew seems to mandate that all of this happens after the three-year famine. But either way, the enemy saw a weakness and began to exploit it.

And there are many weaknesses that the enemy is exploiting today. I think the biggest weakness is theological. The modern church has theological anemia. They don't have a robust theology like in centuries past,

and it has made them weak. Why get involved if you are convinced theologically that it is hopeless, or as Salem Kirban worded it, “what future do any of us have?”³ Why get involved if (as one prominent theologian worded it) “God has not given the Church a proper dose of grace to Christianize the world.” (House & Ice)⁴ Why get involved if Walvoord is right when he said, “Christians have no immediate solutions to the problems of our day.”⁵ Walvoord feels that Christianity is no match for the giants that we face – that we don’t have any solutions. Much of the modern church has become passive because they are convinced that Satan is ordained to win. Their eschatology robs them of hope, and their rejection of the blueprints of Scripture convince them that we don’t have answers to America’s problems. And because they have no faith they pull back. And when Christians pull back, the humanists automatically fill the vacuum. When you look at some of the losers who have gotten into Congress or gotten into state capitols, it makes you wonder why. How on earth could people vote these losers in? But they got in because there was nobody good running against them. Christians no longer have a theology that enables them to compete. We need to get back to the old doctrines and the old paths that were successful.

The second weakness of the church is its prayerlessness. When you see a prayerless church, look for its defeat. Think of the image of Moses with hands lifted in prayer on behalf of Israel when they were fighting the Amalekites. Exodus 17 says that every time his hands got tired and they came down, Israel immediately began to lose the battle. When he would raise his hands, Israel would start winning again. And finally, Aaron and Hur helped Moses to keep his hands raised in prayer. And Israel won that battle resoundingly. What a wonderful symbol. It is an image that should be burned into your minds. It should remind us that when the church grows weary in praying, we immediately start losing. When we are driven to prayer, God gives success. This church has been losing some pretty significant battles, and it is likely because of prayerlessness and/or praying without faith. And Satan will take advantage of that.

The third weakness in the American church is loss of power through sin. It’s hard to fight lawlessness in our nation when the church itself is compromised and ignores the law of God. Just as David’s sin with Bathsheba previously weakened his ability to stand firm, the carnality of the modern church has eviscerated its will to fight.

³ Salem Kirban, *Your Last Goodbye* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1969), p. 252.

⁴Wayne House & Tommy Ice, *Dominion Theology: Blessing or Curse?* (Portland, OR: 1988), p. 340.

⁵John F. Walvoord, in Charles Lee Feinberg, *Prophecy and the Seventies* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1971), p. 212.

And there are other strategic weaknesses in the American church. These three weaknesses weren't the weakness that David was experiencing here. Here he was just weary. And some of *you* have grown weary. And it is one of the reasons why we need stand together on behalf of the church and pray for it, and seek to bring reformation to it, and resource it.

D. Our enemy can be intimidating (v. 16)

The fourth point under a theology of the enemy is that our enemy can be intimidating. In fact, when you look at the battles that Christians have won over the last 2000 years, you realize that most of those wins were against overwhelming odds. Who would have thought that the nation of Armenia, that persecuted the saints unbelievably, would be one of the first nations to become a Christian nation? Who would have thought that Rome would be Christianized? Yet, the church fathers of the first three centuries, despite torture, martyrdoms, and slander from the enemy, were universally convinced that the church would win. And they had the theology of the hymn that we are going to be singing at the end of the service that was not intimidated by threats of the Coliseum or other forms of martyrdom. They were sold out to Jesus. But Satan certainly wants the church to be intimidated. Verse 16.

2Sam. 21:16 Then Ishbi-benob, who *was* one of the sons of the giant, the weight of whose bronze spear *was* three hundred *shekels*, who was bearing a new *sword*, thought he could kill David

There are four things that *could* have been very intimidating.

1. A giant

First, he was a giant, or as some translate it, one of the sons of the Rapha. And when we are talking giants, we are not talking about modern gigantism where there is a pituitary gland malfunction and the people spurt up tall and skinny and can hardly walk. There are some pretty tall people that way today, but they would not instill much fear in you at all. Most of these people afflicted with gigantism wouldn't be able to fight. In contrast, the hundreds of giants that have been well documented down through history were huge, well proportioned, strong, and fast. We've talked about these giants in the past, so I won't get into it too much today. But the giants that the Bible has given measurements for have ranged from 9 feet tall to 18'6"

tall.⁶ And some of the Anakim seemed to be taller than that. In Amos 2:9 God said,

“Yet *it was* I *who* destroyed the Amorite before them, whose height *was* like the height of the cedars [How tall are cedars? That’s pretty tall. And it goes on to say], and he *was as* strong as the oaks; yet I destroyed his fruit above and his roots beneath.

No wonder the ten spies complained that they were like grasshoppers in their sight (Numb. 13:33). If you met an 18-foot tall giant (that’s three times bigger than me), you would feel like a grasshopper. And there have actually been taller giant skeletons discovered in the last 100 years. Obviously there are a lot of hoaxes on the web that are discrediting the legitimate discoveries. In your outlines, I’ve included a picture of Charles Byrne, the Irish giant. He was puny in comparison. He was only 8’2” tall. A giant who served the king of Scotland was 11 foot 6 inches tall. But if these giants that David and his men fought were in the range of 12-18 feet (or more), you can see why it would be scary to have one of those beating on David’s shield and trying to do him in. It would be incredibly intimidating.

2. 7.5lb spearhead

The second intimidating feature about this giant is that his spear (or as some understand it, his spearhead) was 7.5 lbs. The largest spearhead discovered to date in Canaan is pictured in your outlines and it was 4.5 lbs and 26 inches long. So this 7.5 lb spear was a pretty massive weapon. Big weapons for big boys.

3. new weapon

But when it speaks of bearing a new sword, you will notice the word “sword” is in italics. That’s because the word “sword” is not in the Hebrew. He was bearing something new, and most believe that since it doesn’t mention the weapon, it may have been a weapon that nobody was familiar with. It was a new thing (which would be a more literal translation) or a new weapon of some sort. And this in itself could be intimidating. How do you know how to defend yourself against a new weapon that you have never practiced with?

⁶ Knowing exact heights is complicated by uncertainty about the size of the cubit being used in any given text. There was a shorter cubit that was 17-18”, the royal cubit of 19.8”, an Egyptian cubit of 17.6” and a longer Egyptian cubit of 20.65. See *ZPEB*, s.v. “WEIGHTS AND MEASURES,” n.p. Sir Isaac Newton, John Taylor, and others believe that the sacred cubit was 24.88” long. If King Og’s 9 cubits was a sacred cubit, then he was 18’66” tall. If it was the shortest cubit, he would be 13’2” tall.

4. very confident

The last intimidating feature was that this giant was very confident. He thought he could kill David. With those four intimidating features, it would have been easy for David to back down. But David was not the kind of guy who backed down to anything. 64 years old or not, he was up for the fight. And I wish that Christians would be less intimidated by the giants of our own day.

While I agree that the Philistines of abortion, homosexuality, socialism, the United Nations, and our own Philistine agencies in DC are powerful, and though I agree that they are rather intimidating, I simply cannot agree with Salem Kirban when he says, “We have reached the point of no return. We are on an irreversible course for world disaster.”⁷ Well, who made him a prophet that could tell us what is impossible or irreversible? It’s not helpful to tell your soldiers that there is no point in fighting. I simply cannot agree with Herman Hanko when he says, “The world [is] filled with sin and getting worse, a hopeless situation beyond repair and impossible to salvage.”⁸ Well, I don’t believe that anything God has commanded us to do is impossible for God to achieve. Instead, I appreciate the attitudes of Charles Spurgeon, who said,

I myself believe that King Jesus will reign, and the idols be utterly abolished; for I expect that the same power which turned the world upside down once will still continue to do it. The Holy Ghost would never suffer the imputation to rest upon His holy name that He was not able to convert the world.⁹

II. Enter hero #1 – Abishai

So that is a theology of the enemy that spurs us to action. Well, Abishai was a can-do kind of a guy, and despite the fact that he saw king David being beaten to the ground by this giant, he came to the rescue. Verse 17:

2Sam. 21:17 But Abishai the son of Zeruiah came to his aid, and struck the Philistine and killed him...

A. *God can use ornery cusses (v. 17a)*

There are three quick lessons that I see in that first clause. First, God can use ornery cusses. Both Joab and Abishai were hard to get along with, and though Abishai was a bit better, the Scripture does portray him as an ornery cuss. And I think that we need to put up with ornery cusses who are

⁷Salem Kirban, *Countdown to Rapture* (Irving, CA: Harvest House Publishers, 1977), p. 11.

⁸Hanko, “The Illusory Hope of Postmillennialism,” p. 159.

⁹Charles Spurgeon, quoted by David Chilton in *Paradise Restored* (Fort Worth: Dominion Press, 1987), p. 129-130.

valuable for the kingdom. It's true that Joab had committed a crime and deserved a penalty, but not Abishai. And though he had rough edges, God used him. And He continues to use people who are rough around the edges. I could identify several Reformed people on the web whom I believe need to be listened to and valued. Most people just write them off because they are so harsh. But that is being shortsighted when you understand what God does with Abishais.

B. Despite David's frustration with him (2 Sam. 3:39; 16:10; etc.), he still helped David (v. 17b)

And Abishai himself must have had a degree of loyalty to David. Over and over David had said, "What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruah." Now he knows why. It was obvious that previously David was somewhat frustrated with Abishai, yet when the need came, Abishai was there to help. He didn't fight for his own fame. The text says that he came to David's aid. That shows a degree of loyalty.

C. He was a giant killer (v. 17c)

And of course, Abishai succeeded in killing this massive giant. He took on an impossible task because he was needed, and God gave him success. And we need heroes who will take on the impossible challenges of our own day.

III. Side note – division of labor, calling, and seasons of life (v. 17d)

But the last part of verse 17 gives a side note. David's mighty men no doubt appreciated the fact that David was willing to mix it up on the front lines of the battlefield. But they realized that the time had come to ask him to quit fighting. And this highlights the fact that there is a legitimate division of labor, different callings, and even seasons of life that we need to be sensitive to. Verse 17 ends by saying,

...Then the men of David swore to him, saying, "You shall go out no more with us to battle, lest you quench the lamp of Israel."

A. Sometimes followers must bring reason to leaders

Sometimes followers have to disagree with leaders and encourage leaders to do something different. Generally speaking David's 600 men were quite willing to do whatever he asked them to do. But they put their foot down on this issue. Because it was important to the survival of David, Israel, and their own future jobs, they did not want David on the front lines

anymore. If he wanted to manage from a distance, he was welcome to do so. But at age 64, it was time to retire from fighting. When it is time for my kids to tell me to quit driving, hopefully I will listen.

B. They worried about David's survival and the survival of Israel

Anyway, the text indicates that they did this out of concern for David as well as out of concern for Israel. When they said, "lest you quench the lamp of Israel," they were calling David the lamp of Israel. They were saying that David's survival was as valuable to the nation as a lamp was on a pitch-dark night. "We need you David." It wouldn't do the nation any good to be foolishly heroic.

C. Seasons of life – there is no shame in being forced to step down from one line of work to take on another

But David's age was showing as well. Verse 15 had said that David grew faint. And at 64 years old, I can understand it. This speaks to the different things we do at different seasons of our lives. When I preach about the responsibilities of the church, sometimes moms with little kids feel guilty and think that they need to be more involved in the culture wars, when they are barely managing their own housework. When your children are older, you might have more discretionary time, but for sure you shouldn't feel guilty if you can't do everything you are passionate about right now. I have to keep reminding myself of this. When I go to work days, I sometimes suffer for a couple weeks, and I just have to remind myself that my back can only handle so much. But it is hard on my pride sometimes, just as I am sure it was hard on David's pride to be told that he was becoming more of a liability on the field than he was an asset. They wanted him to focus on leadership. So the issue of being sensitive to seasons of life is an important lesson as well.

IV. Enter hero #2 - Sibbechai

A. Just because you have won a battle does not mean you have won the war – persevere (v. 18a)

But let's take a peek at the second hero, Sibbechai. Verse 18:

2Sam. 21:18 ¶ Now it happened afterward [and that's another hint that Nolan Lloyd Jones is correct that there is sequence throughout this narrative – "Now it happened afterward"] that there was again a battle with the Philistines at Gob. Then Sibbechai the Hushathite killed Saph, who *was* one of the sons of the giant.

The first lesson we see here is that just because you have won a battle does not mean you have won the war. Throughout our whole lives we must persevere in fighting against the world, the flesh, and the devil. Charles Spurgeon said, “It strikes me that conflict is the principle feature of the Christian life this side of heaven.” Those of you who are conflict-averse need to listen to Spurgeon. He said, “It strikes me that conflict is the principle feature of the Christian life this side of heaven.” Now, I don't like conflict myself, but I know that we must never let down our spiritual guard. The hymn writer called us to spiritual warfare saying, “Onward Christian soldiers, marching as to war, with the cross of Jesus, going on before.” In other words, it is grace that leads us into the conflict, not away from the conflict. And our response should be,

Lead on, O King eternal, the day of march has come
Henceforth in fields of conquest, thy tents shall be our home;
Through days of preparation thy grace has made us strong,
And now, O King eternal, we lift our battle song.

B. God catapults a courageous man into prominence (v. 18b; 1 Chron. 27:11)

But the second thing that we see in verse 18 is that God used this triumph to catapult a courageous man into prominence. We aren't told what he was before this. But with this courageous act of taking on a giant, David put him in charge of 24,000 troops. And that's recorded in 1 Chronicles 27:11. You never know what opportunities God will set before you that have the potential of expanding your borders. The key is whether you will shrink from the opportunity or seize it by faith.

V. Hero #3 - Elhanan

Hero #3 is Elhanan. And his killing of the giant has raised criticism and critiques by liberals and atheists. Verse 19 says,

2Sam. 21:19 Again there was war at Gob with the Philistines, where Elhanan the son of Jaare-oregim the Bethlehemite killed *the brother of Goliath* the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear *was* like a weaver's beam.

Liberals are all over this verse. First of all, you will notice that the words, “the brother of” are not in the Hebrew. They are in italics here. So the text literally says that he “killed Goliath the Gittite.” And liberals say that this is a blatant contradiction of 1 Samuel 17. 1 Samuel 17 says that *David* killed Goliath the Gittite and this says Elhanan killed Goliath. And so they claim that there is a contradiction. But if you follow the chronology of the text, the first Goliath was killed 46 years ago when David was 18 years

old, and long before he had become a king, and this passage shows David to be 64 years old or perhaps older. And the first Goliath was killed in Elah and this one was killed at Gob. So it is obviously a different Goliath. Other liberals realize that whoever put this book together is not going to be stupid enough to write a whole chapter about David's slaying of Goliath and then forget that he wrote about that and accidentally say that Elhanan did that job. Even I am not that stupid.

So these other liberals try to find other contradictions. But because liberals themselves are Philistines in Israelite clothing, they are always looking for contradictions. It is Satan's strategy to undermine the church from within. So when you are reading commentaries, watch out how they treat the text. If you turn to 1 Chronicles 20 you will see a second proposed contradiction. 1 Chronicles 20:5 says,

1Chr. 20:5 ¶ Again there was war with the Philistines, and Elhanan the son of Jair killed Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear *was* like a weaver's beam.

In 1 Chronicles he clearly kills Lahmi the brother of Goliath whereas 2 Samuel 21 says that he killed Goliath himself. And this has given heartburn to some conservatives, and they immediately suppose that the Hebrew for "brother of" must have been lost. And so the NKJV inserts "the brother of" in 2 Samuel 21, even though it is not in the Hebrew text. Even though I believe that the words they inserted are true, it is not acceptable to add to the Hebrew. Since Jesus infallibly promised that not the smallest letter of the Hebrew Old Testament would be lost and that every jot and tittle would be preserved till heaven and earth pass away, we cannot take the easy way out and claim that it was a copyist error. There is no evidence of that. It's always good to look for the reason why we have these two bits of information. And by the way, it is clear that the writer of 1 Chronicles had 1 and 2 Samuel in front of him. Any time there is an apparent change, it is deliberate, and is highlighting something important.

I think 1 Chronicles is clear that Elhanan killed the brother of Goliath, and our text is just as clear that he killed an individual called Goliath the Gittite. So what is the explanation? Three possibilities have been offered without resorting to changing the text. The first is that he killed *two* giants. The first giant would have been the son of the original Goliath, who took his dad's name, and then later he either killed the first Goliath's brother or this younger Goliath's brother. I don't favor this theory, because the reference to the weaver's beam makes me think it was the same giant. But it is possible.

Maybe he inherited that spear and made one just like his brother's. So that is one possibility.

A second conservative theory also says that Goliath was likely the son of David's Goliath and took his dad's name, but that this second Goliath was born from relations between the first Goliath and the first Goliath's mother (in other words, he was the product of incest between mother and son). So he would indeed be Goliath's brother by his mother, but also Goliath's son. Technically possible. And if that theory is true, it would be highlighting the perversity of these giants. Things like that have clearly happened before.

The third theory is the one I favor. It is that the term Goliath is actually a title rather than a name, and that Goliath's brother took the title of Goliath once his brother died. Thus, even though Elhanan did indeed kill the first Goliath's brother, that brother inherited the first giant's title of Goliath. I prefer this last explanation for its simplicity, but the fact that there are three perfectly credible explanations shows that no contradiction has been proved. But I have included my explanation in the outline.

A. Lahmi was the brother of Goliath the Gittite (1 Chron. 20:5)

B. But his fearsomeness gave him his brother's title (1 Sam. 21:19)

Lahmi was the first Goliath's brother. But because of the fearsomeness of this second giant, he took on his brother's title. And he likely took it on because he was just as fearsome as the first Goliath.

C. Even his spear shows his massive size

Even his spear was a massive size. It was 2 inches in diameter – the size of a weaver's beam. So this was a dude of a soldier.

D. But even Goliath's can fall to men of faith

Yet we see that even Goliaths can fall to men of faith.

VI. More theology of the enemy

A. Don't get worn out by war (v. 20a)

And that's a good point at which to get more theology of the enemy. Verse 20 says, "Yet again there was war at Gath." Men of faith do not stop having faith because the evil seems endless or because things look bad in the newspaper. They do not stop having faith because they are confronted with impossibilities. They get their cues for faith from God. And God has already

forewarned us that we would receive opposition and to not get weary with it all. Galatians 6:9 says,

Gal. 6:9 And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.

Some of you have been facing a lot of difficulty, stress, and opposition. It's easy to want to give up when that happens, but don't give up when Satan keeps after you. In fact, I would say that you are likely doing something that Satan considers scary or he would not consider you to be a worthwhile target. So cheer up.

B. Huge stature does not equal invincible

Second, huge stature does not equal invincibility. Verse 20 continues, "...where there was a man of great stature..." We aren't told how big he was, but he was obviously big enough for the chronicler to make a note of it. We too have enemies of huge stature. When you fight against Federal Agencies you are up against unlimited attorneys at their disposal, unlimited money to harass you, unlimited access to information, unlimited time to wear you down, lack of accountability, and it is downright scary to have them start coming after you. I had a pastor friend who had the IRS taking him to court several times claiming that he owed \$65,000. And he said, "That's impossible. This is harassment." And the fines kept racking up, and he finally had to hire a top DC attorney to defend himself. He resoundingly won in court on each occasion, but it would have been easy for him to settle out of court because winning seemed so impossible. But he was like these men of old – he fought, and it ended up that he owed nothing. In fact, the IRS owed him. But many people will tell you that the IRS seems to have the power to ruin your life in the process – and often without due process. OSHA seems to have the power to close down your business. You are guilty until you prove your innocence.

Read the Declaration of Independence some time and tell me that things are not worse today. I really think that they are. The Declaration complains about King George, saying, "He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our People, and eat out their substance." I wonder what they would say about the agencies of today. We have far more swarms of Officers. Back then they complained, "He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies, without the Consent of our legislatures." I wonder what they would say about FEMA, NSA, BATFE, INS, DEA, and other organizations that run roughshod over state legislatures and monitor every facet of American life. We have giants of

such huge stature that some Christians think that resistance is futile. But even the metaphorical Borg can be resisted. Whether we will be successful or not is up to God, but it can be resisted. The Borg must be resisted.

C. Strange makeup does not equal scary

This giant also had a strange makeup that might have been thought to be equally scary. It says, "...who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot, twenty four in number..." In case you think that is not possible, I have given two pictures to show that this genetic mutation continues to the present day. There are many six fingered people in the world today. But it is another indicator that something was not normal.

Do we have weird DNA in our American agencies and in the various lobbies in our nation? Yes. The DNA of the agencies I have outlined bears no resemblance to the DNA in the Constitution. And certainly the lobbying organizations range from the normal to the extremely bizarre. What are Congressmen to do when bombarded with Transgender lobbyists? The lobbyists in DC are way stranger than 24 digit giants.

D. Relationship to the giant

The fourth thing was that this huge enemy was also born to the giant, or as some translate it, to the Rapha. Whether this is a reference to the giant in verse 22 and that his name was Rapha, or whether all of them were simply descendants of the scary Rephaim in Genesis, we do not know for sure. Because the article is put before Rapha ("the Rapha") most commentators think that it is not a name, and that it should either be translated as "the giant" or "the Rapha." If it is "the Rapha" it simply means that they were four descendants of the scary Rephaim in the book of Genesis. But I take it the way the NKJV takes it – that they were all brothers and sons of one giant.

E. He defied Israel just as the original Goliath did

The last thing that is noteworthy about this giant is given in the first part of verse 21: "So when he defied Israel..." This is exactly what Goliath did to Israel under king Saul – he defied Israel and God.

And we have numerous giants in the land who are defying Christianity today. Let me list some of the organizations that have bullied pastors and taken churches to court and tried to destroy Christian businesses:

- First of all there is the ACLU, which has brought numerous lawsuits against churches and businesses for their Christian

beliefs. I believe it is a giant that needs to be taken down. And we can start by praying that Jesus would wield his iron rod of Psalm 2 against them.¹⁰ And there are other imprecatory Psalms that can be prayed.

- Americans United for the Separation of Church and State has been incredibly aggressive in attacking churches that speak out on any conservative social issue.¹¹ They are a giant that has destroyed the lives of many.
- The organization, American Atheists, are constantly bringing lawsuits designed to systematically take away every aspect of Christianity from our culture. They are the ones who filed a lawsuit against the government to remove churches as tax-exempt organizations. The irony is that they themselves are a tax-exempt organization that is begging people to give tax-deductible gifts to continue their warfare against Christianity using the courts of America. They are Philistine giants that just won't leave Christians alone. They are constantly declaring war. Then there is:
 - The American Humanist Association¹²
 - Council for Secular Humanism¹³
 - Committee for Scientific Examination of Religion¹⁴
 - Fellowship of Humanity¹⁵

And I have 16 pages of similar organizations and individuals that are Philistine in character and are doing everything they can to take down the church. It is high time that the church wakes up and starts to fight back. Thankfully, there are organizations like Alliance Defending Freedom, the Rutherford Institute, American Vision, Answers in Genesis, and others that are resourcing Christians and helping them to get back into the fight. They are the heroes of today. And we need to pray for them and financially resource them. Alliance Defending Freedom has a matching grant that doubles anything you give before June 30. And they have been spectacular

¹⁰ See <http://www.aclu.org/> to see their vile agendas.

¹¹ <http://www.au.org/site/PageServer>

¹² For some of what they are doing see <http://www.americanhumanist.org/index.html>

¹³ See <http://www.secularhumanism.org/> They also run the International Academy for Secular Humanism, Society of Humanist Philosophers, African Americans for Humanism and the Robert Green Ingersoll Memorial Committee

¹⁴ <http://www.centerforinquiry.net/cser>

¹⁵ <http://www.HumanistHall.net/>

in the battles they have won. I consider them to be a hero organization, and definitely worth contributing to.

VII. Enter hero #4 – Jonathan

The hero who took on this giant was Jonathan. Verses 21-22:

2Sam. 21:21 So when he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimea, David's brother, killed him.

2Sam. 21:22 ¶ These four were born to the giant in Gath, and fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.

Here was a guy whose father was intimidated by Goliath in 1 Samuel 17. Shimea was afraid to fight and he got rather angry with his brother David when David suggested that Goliath needed to be taken on. In effect Shimea called David a smarty-pants and told David that he needed to know his place. But Shimea's son was inspired by David, and when this giant started defying Israel just like Goliath had done 46 years before, his spirit was stirred up to do something, and God gave him success. And this indicates to me that even if our generation has dropped the ball and refused to fight, that doesn't mean that the next generation has to. And to the next generation I say, "Yes, go ahead and put us to shame. Do something to take on the giants of the land. Imitate these heroes."

Conclusion

We need more heroes who are willing to take on the giants of our own day, and who are willing to suffer and die if need be. I am glad that God is starting to raise up organizations with a passion to advance the cause of Christ, and we should lift them up before the throne of grace. There are literally hundreds of ma and pa ministries that have faith that God can take on the giants and who are willing to be used. But one Jonathan by himself will not win. We need an army of supporters to get behind these Jonathans.

And we must be watchful. The Puritan, George Downname, said,

The Christian soldier must avoid two evils – he must not faint or yield in the time of fight, and after a victory he must not wax insolent and secure. When he has overcome, he is so to behave himself as though he were presently again to be assaulted. For Satan's temptations, like the waves of the sea, do follow one in the neck of the other.

And so my final admonition to you this morning is to not be disheartened by giants in the land. They are no match for God or for the Christian who walks by faith in God. Though they may try to wear you down, keep at it and by God's grace we may finally see the Philistines

subdued in our own lifetime. And ultimately, though it is appropriate to celebrate heroes, it will be God who gets the glory. Amen. Let's pray.