

The Sling-Shot of David

By Glenn Clark

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"The Battle is Jehovah's"

And Saul clad David with his apparel, and he put a helmet of brass upon his head, and he clad him with a coat of mail. And David said unto Saul, "I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them." And David put them off him. And he took his staff in his hand and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in the shepherd's bag which he had, even in his wallet; and his sling was in his hand; and he drew near to the Philistine.

Then said David to the Philistine, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a javelin: but I come to thee in the name of Jehovah of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. The battle is Jehovah's, and he will give you into our hand."

And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hastened, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine, and David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in the forehead; and the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell upon his face to the earth. Then David ran, and stood over the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled.

First Samuel

The Sling-Shot of David

David had a sling-shot. He trusted it beyond the trust that others reposed in swords and spears. With it he did not need armor for protection. With it he did not need shield and buckler.

What David's sling-shot was to him, prayer is to me. I trust it beyond the trust that others repose in armies and navies. With it I do not feel the need of battleships and machine guns. Prayer, if properly used, I sincerely believe, is the most powerful force in the universe.

No one seemed to share this faith with David. They tried to put the king's armor on him, but he threw it down. He picked up his sling-shot. "I have experienced its power," he said. "When I was a lad I used it to slay a lion and a bear." He gathered five smooth stones from the brook. He slew Goliath. He demonstrated what he believed. But while he demonstrated the power of the sling-shot in his own hand, no one else followed him. They said it would not work in their hands. They all continued to use armor and swords and spear. He was a freak, they said. They spurned the sling-shot, saying that what worked for him would not work for them. So they said, and so they believed.

Hardly any one today seems to share my faith in prayer. I try to persuade people. They ask for proof, so I tell of some answers to prayer that I have had. As

a lad, I too, saw it slay a lion and a bear. But they go on building battleships and machine guns. They say I am a freak. What works for me will not work for them, and will not work for the world, especially in a time of crisis like this. So they go on building tanks and bombing planes. "A time of crisis is exactly the time when prayer is most needed," I tell them. Listen to Isaiah. He lived in a time of crisis:

"Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not to the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord!

"As birds flying, so will the Lord defend Jerusalem; defending also will He deliver it; and passing over He will preserve it." (Isaiah 31:1,5)

They listen to me respectfully. This is the Bible I am reading from and it is a sacred book, so it should be listened to respectfully. "The Bible was written for men thousands of years ago," they tell me. "It is not meant for men of today. At least it was not meant to be acted upon today... Do you have anything more to say? If so, say it quickly; we have important work to do."

"They didn't let Isaiah use his sling-shot, and were taken away into captivity. They did let David use his and they were delivered from captivity."

"Fairy tales," they say.

And they go their way and I go mine.

So people will not let me use my sling-shot. At least the people in power in the governments are not willing to give me the right of way. And so I have called together a Gideon's Band to try to do what I alone cannot do. May I count on you as one who believes in the sling-shot of prayer?

We must not expect to win a person to prayer in one sitting. One article in a magazine will not do it, for I have tried it. Even two won't; I have tried that, too. Rufus Jones, Muriel Lester, George Washington Carver and I, together, wrote two articles for the "Christian Century" calling the attention of the ministers of America to the power of Prayer and the power of Love. We asserted that Love was the strongest force in the universe, so strong that it required no other force to protect or to sustain it, and that Prayer was the supreme energy of the Christian. The only printed response from the ministers that appeared in later issues were letters of cynicism and scoffing. In these articles, we made an appeal for all those who believed in the power of prayer to join our little army of God's Minute Men. Hundreds of laymen joined this movement; of ministers only ten or twelve. If the ministers of the Christian Church do not believe in sling-shots, who will?

I spoke for two days to the Methodist ministers of the State of Kansas. The first day a committee of them waited upon me and said, "It is only fair to tell you at the outset, that only one-tenth of us at the most believe that there is such a thing as answered prayer. We all accept prayer as the normal and beautiful and acceptable way of communion with the Heavenly Father. We believe in our daily heart-to-heart talk with God. But as a power in our lives, as a power to change events, heal the sick, or influence governments, our experience is very limited indeed."

When I began the second day of speaking, they asked me if I would start at 9:00 o'clock in the morning and continue talking until 9:00 o'clock at night with mere intermissions long enough for lunch and dinner. I said I could stand it if they could. When night came, they told me that all of them believed in the sling-shot of David and

would join my Gideon's Band of praying souls. So I know that people can be persuaded if only we have time enough with them. What is needed is not a speech, however, but a campaign... Let us have a three-year campaign to bring the Kingdom into the hearts of men...

A good sling-shot user is not made in a day. David was not permitted to take off Saul's armor and take up his sling until he had first furnished proof that he had already learned how to use the weapon. He related, you remember, how he had, while still a boy, slain a *lion* and a *bear*.

Now, a lion stands for pride, and a bear stand for selfishness. Not until one has attained true humility and true unselfishness can he expect to see great giants fall before him. Not until we have enrolled an army of soldiers who are skilled in the use of the sling-shot of prayer, and who have proved it by defeating conceit and selfishness in their own lives, can we truly say that we are prepared to topple over the enemies that threaten mankind today.

We can take a leaf from the notebooks of the generals of this world. They do not expect to achieve results with untrained recruits, with men who are soft and pampered with lives of ease. We, too, must require a discipline of the spirit, a training of the soul...

David selected five smooth stones from the river. Those five stones represented Faith, Hope, Love, Humility and Gratitude. These virtues are what are needed today.

Put Love in the sling-shot of prayer, and put the sling in perfect alignment with God's plan for us and direct it at the enemy we would destroy, and all we need to do is to "let go." The stone does the rest. And the evil itself will lie there till its head is cut off by the sword of its own forging.

But stones and sling-shots and swords sound very militant. Let us use as our ammunition, Paul's "fruits of the spirit" and his beautiful "whatsoever things are lovely."

With these nine forms of spiritual ammunition we shall be adequately equipped to meet any giants that Selfishness and Greed can send against us.

Weapons of the Spirit

*"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."
Galatians 5:22,23.*

LOVE: "There is as much difference between the self-seeking love and the self-giving love as there is between a bucketful of water standing stagnant by the sink and one striking against the mill wheel. One is the same old gallon in the same old bucket. The other is every second of time a new gallon. One has no power, the other has infinite, unmeasured, endless power – power that will last as long as the stream lasts, as long as the mountain from which it comes lasts, as long as vapor continues to be drawn up and comes down in the form of rain." – *Fishers of Men*

JOY: “Laughter that is compounded of love and joy and gratitude is divine laughter, whose echoes are heard in heaven. It is such laughter that sends us tripping higher and higher up the mountain. The more evil that comes upon us and the more we find ourselves able to laugh at it lovingly and joyously, the quicker we shall reach the stage where no evil can touch us; for as the touch of Midas converted everything into gold, so can the touch of heavenborn laughter convert every shadow and bit of darkness into golden bits of sunshine to brighten and gladden our path.” – *The Soul’s Sincere Desire*.

PEACE: “A seed if it lets itself fall into the ground and is properly still does not have to do anything else – all is done. A setting hen, if properly quiet, needs do nothing else. The same with us. If we are properly still, God does all the rest. Out of quietness with God all is done. Where two or three agree asking in the stillness of Christ’s name, all is done.” – *The Lord’s Prayer*.

PATIENCE: “I’ll tell you what we will do,” he said. “When our little child with his tiny hands dug a well upon the seashore, was he afraid that the well would not be filled? No, but instead he sat down beside it, and frail, but with faith, he waited for the ocean, miles wide and miles deep to stir through to its deepest fathoms and fill it for him. We shall be as wise as the child. If we have a well, the great tides of God must fill it. If we have not a well but only think that we have, then there is nothing to be filled. “In other words,” he continued, “if we have a need, then that need must be filled. It draws its fulfillment to itself inevitably. It becomes a great vortex, pulling to itself just the amount and kind to fill it, the exact fulfillment for the need, in right proportion with no more and no less. It cannot be otherwise. Our child did not lose faith when he sat by his well on the seashore. Perhaps the tides did not come as soon as he had builded the well, but the tides came and he knew they would come. We shall have as much faith as he.” – *I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes*.

GENTLENESS: “Force is no weapon,” said Nausicaa, “Whatever is hewn down by force only springs up again a hundredfold. When the Cyclops brings his great dragon of fire, belching forth poisonous gases before you to destroy you, raise no hand against it – only the actionless action of love can save humanity from this imminent destruction. Love alone can bring peace to the beasts of war. Keep the vine in your hand. Rest upon the purity of your own soul, trust in the sole magic of love.” – *Water of Life*.

GOODNESS: “It is not the prayer that creates the miracle – but it is the condition in *consciousness that the prayer induces...* When we are completely divested of self and relaxed to the power of infinite Love, we find ourselves like a conch, giving expression in our every thought and every wish, to the music of the spheres straight from the heart of God Himself. For God is so all-pervading, so all-infilling, that all we

need to do is to empty ourselves of our own little self, and with it, our little voice, and we shall hear His Voice speaking through us. Once empty ourselves of our little desire and we shall find God's great Desire echoing through us. The only thing that can keep God out of us is *too great fullness of self.*" - *Song of the Souls of Men*

FAITH: "Step off the top of a ten-story building and give yourself without question to the air, knowing that the parachute will open and save you. As the air is all about you and is sufficient to support the parachute, so God's Love is all about you and is sufficient to support your prayer. Let Love be in your prayer. Step into the atmosphere of Divine Love and give yourself unresistingly to its power." – *I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes.*

MEEKNESS: "You and I must be valleys – like the lovely valleys we are passing through now. There they lie at the feet of the giant mountains. Valleys are not curious, are not puffed up, are not climbing constantly to peep over to see how things are turning out in the great beyond. Valleys attend to their own humble business of carrying God's living water down to the lowlands beneath. They don't think of results. They know that the only important thing is that they be clear channels. They know that God can see to it that the water flows. We want to be valleys. We want to be channels, deep and strong and powerful channels, my friend." – *Water of Life.*

TEMPERANCE: "I believe in asking my Heavenly Father for only that which is mine to have, knowing that when the right time has come, it will be made manifest. This enables me to look forward to receiving only those things which are mine according to the Providential Plan. It releases my mind from all anxiety and uncertainty. It eliminates fear, jealousy, and anger. It gives me courage and faith to do the things that are mine to do. When my mind is attuned to the things that are mine, I become free from greed, passion, impure thoughts and deeds but when I look without or watch others to see what they are or are not receiving, I cut myself off from my own sources of supply and minimize my power to receive." – *The Thought Farthest Out.*

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Phil. 4:8

TRUE: "Perhaps one reason for our common mistake in thinking that Truth is something that can be confined in books is due to our dictionary-makers who treat Truth as a noun – something static – when it really has the positive, dynamic quality of a verb. This is peculiarly true of Truth as Jesus used it. For Jesus never dealt with people, facts, or formulae from the outside, but always from the inside – that is to say, from the point of view of the Spirit. This accounts for the fact that whenever He discussed

Truth He spoke not as the scribes, who clothed it with vestments of laws, dogmas, and outward things, but 'as one having authority,' because He spoke with that freedom with which only those who live and move and have their being on the unconditioned basis of Spirit can speak. In other words, when Jesus used the word Truth He always meant *The Spirit of Truth*. The Spirit of Truth, like the Spirit of Love, or the Spirit of Joy, is a condition of Consciousness or a state of Being. It is the Spirit which brings us into at-one-ment with All-Truth. It is a state of perfect discernment, perfect understanding, because of perfect unity with the Father." – *The Soul's Sincere Desire*.

HONEST: "What is your honest, sincere point of view when you face a problem? Don't try to stand in the place where your neighbor stands, or where your friend stands. Stand exactly in the place where *you* abide in consciousness and look from that viewpoint straight upward toward the solution and the fulfillment that God has in store for you. Every sincere, honest desire, if it be a 'grown-up' desire, in other words, if it is accompanied by the upward look, which prevents it from doing violence to any moral or social code, is a prophecy of that which God in His Kingdom wishes you to have." – *The Land We Vision*.

JUST: "You attract to yourself not the condition you ask, not the condition you expect, not the condition you want, but you attract unto yourself the condition that accords with what you are! Prayer, like friendship, is largely a divine recompense on a basis of fairness of exactly what you are. As I am in my heart, so am I in the world outside. As I measure to others, so shall it be measured unto me. It cannot be otherwise. Prayer, in so far as you hope it will change the outward conditions about you, must first of all change condition within you. If you want something in the world changed, first change yourself, then go and lay your need before the altar, and your Father who rewardeth in absolute fairness will reward you." – *The Thought Farthest Out*.

PURE: "If you expect to get a message from the Father of Love and Purity, you must see that your own receiving apparatus is also pure and vibrant to love. Any unloving thought or impure motive clogs the flow of God's love to and through you, just as rusty pipes retard or prevent the even flow of life-giving water from the spring. 'Only the pure in heart shall see God,' said Jesus. 'Now we see through a glass darkly,' said Paul. But by effort we can make the glass more clear, more transparent.

"The first step in giving the Lord's Prayer, then, is preparing the channel for the inflow of God's Love. This is best done, not by thinking too constantly of oneself, rather by fixing one's eyes on God. Think of Him as ALL LOVING, ALL POWERFUL, ABSOLUTELY PERFECT. Think that in Him is no imperfection, no selfishness, no hate, no anger, no distrust, - and then, by keeping your gaze steadily fixed upon Him feel the little petty annoyances and prejudices and selfish desires falling away from you as worthless garments. Remember that every residue of wrong thinking, of malice, of selfishness, in your heart or brain, clogs the reception of the down-pouring light of God's love. Wipe from the glass of your vision the mist of self-centeredness that clogs

the passage of the rays of light. Then, as Paul puts it, you will cease to see through a glass darkly, but will actually begin to see face to face.” – *The Lord’s Prayer*.

LOVELY: “The imagination is the power we all possess of seeing harmonies, unities, and beauties in things where the non-imaginative mind sees nothing but discords, separations, ugliness. It is the tool of the mind with which we build up our affirmations – the staff of the Shepherd Psalm that comforts us when all other faculties fail us. To look at life imaginatively, then, to see everything about us as a great parable full of deep inner meanings —meanings of love, joy, wholeness, symmetry, and perfection – is to see life truthfully, that is to say, spiritually. It brings us into a condition of continuous prayer, a condition of cosmic consciousness, which is conducive, above all else, to bringing into our life, those larger harmonies and unities that to our physical eyes appear to be miracles.” – *The Soul’s Sincere Desire*.

GOOD REPORT: “Let me stand in the market place with the physical culturists and demand, as they demand, fifteen minutes of your time every day for two months. And while I hesitate to promise, as they promise, that at the end of that time you will find yourself a new man, this I can say: at the end of that time you will find yourself in a new world. You will find yourself in a friendly universe, where religion will no longer be a thing to be believed or disbelieved, a thing to be worn or cast off, but where religion will be a part of life as blood is a part of the body. You will find yourself in a new world where your God no longer dwells in churches and meeting-places and forms and days, but where He governs every minute of every day of every year. You will find yourself in a new world where immortality will no longer be sought as something far away, to be found at some far distant time, for you will know that you are immortal now, and that the entire universe with all its good and with all its beauty belongs to you now and forever.”

– *The Soul’s Sincere Desire*.