

God's Pattern of Preparation

"The Lord, who kept me safe from the grip of the lion and the bear, will be my Saviour from the hands of this Philistine" (1 Samuel 17:37).

The other day I was reading, 1 Samuel 17 (David & Goliath). It was one of those where I can't stop thinking about it. We all have things in life that challenge us, and what a great story to boost your faith to conquer the things coming against you. The verse that jumped out at me was:

"The Lord, who kept me safe from the grip of the lion and the bear, will be my Saviour from the hands of this Philistine" (1 Samuel 17:37).

I want to break this down (just a little bit) using the lion and bear.

Lions have almost no predators and often hunt together. That means if David encountered a lion, there were probably others close by! Lions are incredibly fierce predators that tend to stalk their prey before attacking. So David's sheep were being stalked before the attack. This lion was completely ready when it attacked.

Bears have thick skin and layers of fat that act as a buffer against most physical attacks. The Syrian brown bear (which David probably fought) grow to 550 pounds and had a reputation for behaving in an unpredictable manner. Bears are highly territorial, strong, and their paws alone can rip human flesh to shreds with one strike.

In verse 35 and part of 36, David tells Saul, while he was keeping his father's sheep, a lion and a bear came and they took a sheep. David goes after them. Friends, not just once, but on two different occasions David ran after one of these wild animals. Most people would be like, go ahead- take it. But not David, he went after them both times!!! And both times he grabs the lambs back.

Seriously, think about that. He chases after them, and takes his sheep back. Just imagine the fury of each animal when David grabs it away. According to scripture both rise up against David. Gulp. Rise up? A ticked off Lion or Bear?? What chance does a young man stand against either? Somehow

David grabs these wild animals by the beard, striking it hard, and managing to kill it. Doing all this with his bare hands! Geez. Bears have such a thick skin and layers of fat...remember....

So, once again...I am in awe at what transpires. After this incredible, daring rescue, another phase comes into—- play- hand to hand combat (or hand to paw) with a bear and lion. Did you ever wonder if David got any bites, scratches or wounds from the ordeal? They were wild, angry beasts. Surely one of them nipped him or clipped him with their paw? Yet, that didn't stop David, he was determined.

David, didn't see these animals from afar, they were up close and very personal. He had to engage and fight it through to the end. Yet, David's confidence was completely rooted in God knowing what the end would be.

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Over the past few days verse 37 took new meaning for me. I began to think of all the times God has helped me through serious situations and minor ones. Maybe not a lion or bear (oh my), but I can surely identify with this.

Today's message is simply this— hold fast to your faith and be encouraged with the truth! Just as God prepared David for each battle, you are no different. The lion prepared David for the Bear, the Bear prepared David for Goliath! Whatever you are facing you are able to overcome. It's all part of God's pattern of preparation.

Don't stop now. Press on until you have complete and total victory. Finish the battle! Face this "giant" knowing that all your previous battles have prepared you! Allow God's continual faithfulness in your life to help you strike this Giant down.

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