

# Facing Your Giants – Slump Guns

1 Samuel 30:1-6

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## INTRODUCTION:

It is never too late to get up when you have been knocked down.

Introduction: It was not David’s finest hour. David had been hiding from Saul who wanted to kill him. David became weary and decided to flee to the enemy. Have you ever given up? Been in a slump? Most of us have. Goliath owns a slump gun: a custom-designed, twelve zillion scope. It fires, not bullets, but sadness. It takes, not lives, but smiles. It inflicts, not flesh wounds, but faith wounds. Relationships sour. Skies darken and billow. Your nights defy the sunrise. You’ve been slumped. Problems are Sioux. You are Custer. You feel like you’re on your last stand.

**David feels like this is his last stand.**

## I. DAVID WORE OUT

Saul has been getting the best of David, leaving him sleeping in caves, lurking behind trees. Six hundred soldiers depend on David for leadership and provision. These six hundred men have wives and children. David has two wives of his own (all but guaranteeing tension in his tent).

Running from a crazed king. Hiding in hills. Leading a ragtag group of soldiers. Feeding more than a thousand mouths. The slump gun finds its mark. David reasons that Saul will kill him one day. So, the best thing to do is to go to the camp of the enemy, so that Saul will stop searching for him. (1 Sam. 27:1)

No hope and, most of all, no God. David focuses on Saul. He hangs Saul’s poster on his wall and replays his voice messages. David immerses himself in his fear until his fear takes over: **“I will be destroyed.”**

He knows better. On brighter days and in healthier moments, David modeled heaven’s therapy for the tough days. The first time he faced the Philistines in the wilderness, “David inquired of the Lord” (1 Sam.23:2). When he felt small against his enemy, “David inquired of the Lord” (1 Sam. 23:4). When attacked by the Amalekites, “David inquired of the Lord” (1 Sam. 30:8). Puzzled about what to do after the death of Saul, “David inquired of the Lord” (2 Sam 2:1). When

crowned as king and pursued by the Philistines, “David inquired of the Lord” (2 Sam. 5:19). David defeated them, yet they mounted another attack, so “David inquired of the Lord” (2 Sam. 5:23). David kept God’s number on speed dial.

Confused? David talked to God. Challenged? He talked to God. Afraid? He talked to God . . . most of the time. But not this time. On this occasion, David talks to himself. He doesn’t even seek the counsel of his advisers. When Saul first lashed out, David turned to Samuel. As the attacks continued, David turned to Samuel. As the attacks continued, David asked Jonathan for advice. When weaponless and breadless, he took refuge among the priests of Nob. In this case, however, David consults David. Poor choice. David had forgotten that God led. But in a wave of weariness, David hits the slump button and gives up.

**Once David gives up, he gets out.**

## II. DAVID GOT OUT

So David leaves, and Saul calls off the hunt. David defects into the hands of the enemy. He leads his men into the land of idols and false gods and pitched his tent in Goliath’s backyard. He plops down in the pasture of Satan himself.

Initially, David feels relief. Saul gives up the chase. David’s men can sleep with both eyes closed. Children can attend kindergarten, and the wives can unpack the suitcases. Hiding out with the enemy brings temporary relief. Doesn’t it always? Stop resisting alcohol, and you’ll laugh - for a while. Move out on your spouse, and you’ll relax - for a time. Indulge in the porn, and you’ll be entertained - for a season. But soon guilt, loneliness, heartbreak rushes in. “There is a way that seems right to a man , but its end is the way of death” (Proverbs 14:12).

**David “wore out”, so he “got out”, and finally he “sold out.”**

## III. DAVID SOLD OUT

David strikes a deal with Achish, the king of Gath, that if the king would give David a city to dwell in, David would become his “Servant” (1 Sam. 27:5). Note David’s self-assigned title: the “servant” of the enemy king. The once-proud son of Israel and Conqueror of Goliath lifts a toast to the foe of his family. Achish welcomes the deal. He grants David a village, Ziklag, and asks only that David turn against his own people and kill them. As far as Achish knows, David does. But David actually raids the enemy of the Hebrews (1Sam. 27:8-9).

Not David’s finest hour. He lies to the Philistine king and covers up his deceit with bloodshed. He continues this duplicity for sixteen months. From this season no psalms exist. His harp hangs silent. The slump mutes the minstrel.

When the Philistines attack King Saul, they do not want David in the battle. He and his men are sent home. David leads the men back to Ziklag and finds the village burned to the ground. The Amalekites had destroyed it and kidnapped all the wives, sons, and daughters. When David and his men see the devastation, they weep and weep. David’s men became angry and decide to stone David. Now, in the ruins of Ziklag with men selecting stones to throw at him, does he regret his prayerless choice to get out and sell out?

**David wore out, got out, and sold out.**

#### **IV. WHAT ABOUT YOU?**

Slumps: the Petri dish for bad decisions, the incubator for wrong turns, the assembly line of regretful moves. How we handle out tough times stays with us for a long time.

How do you handle yours? When hope takes the last train and joy is nothing but the name of the girl down the street . . . when you are tired of trying, tired of forgiving, tired of hard weeks of hardheaded people...how do you manage your dark days?

With a bottle of pills or scotch? With an hour at the bar, a day at the spa, or a week at the beach? Many opt for such treatments. So many, in fact, that we assume they re-energize the sad life. But do they? No one denies that they help for a while, but over the long haul? They numb the pain, but do they remove it? We may fall headlong into bars and binges and beds. Like David, we crash into Gath, only to find that Gath has no solution.

He failed to pray. Do the opposite: be quick to pray. Stop talking to yourself. Talk to God, who invites. “Come into me, all ye who are weary and heavy-laden and I will give you rest” (**Matthew 11:28**). God, who is never downcast, never tires of your down days.

David neglected good advice. Learn from his mistake. Next time you lack the will to go on, seek healthy counsel. You won’t want to. Slumping people love slumping people. Hurting people hang with hurting people. We love those who commiserate and avoid those who correct. Yet correction and direction are what

we need.

David gave up. Don't!

Transition: Don't make the mistake of Florence Chadwick. In 1952 she attempted to swim the chilly ocean waters between Catalina Island and the California shore. She swam through foggy weather and choppy seas for fifteen hours. Her muscles began to cramp, and her resolve weakened. She begged to be taken out of the water, but her mother, riding in a boat alongside, urged her not to give up. She kept trying but grew exhausted and stopped swimming. Aids lifted her out of the water and into the boat. They paddled a few more minutes, the mist broke, and she discovered that the shore was less than a half mile away. “All I could see was the fog,” she explained at a news conference. “I think if I could have seen the shore, I would have made it”.

## **CONCLUSION:**

Take a long look at the shore that awaits you. Don't be fooled by the fog of the slump. The finish may be only strokes away. God may be, at this moment, lifting his hand to signal Gabriel to grab the trumpet. Angels may be assembling, saints gathering, demons trembling. Stay at it! Stay in the water. Stay in the race. Stay in the fight. Give grace, one more time. Be generous, one more time. Teach one more class, encourage one more soul, swim one more stroke.

David did. Right there in the smoldering ruins of Ziklag, he found strength. After sixteen months in Gath. After the Philistine rejection, the Amalekite attack, and the insurrection by his men, he remembered what to do. David found strength and encouragement in the Lord (1 Sam 30:6).

It's good to have you back, David. We missed you while your were away.

## **God's Plan for Man's Salvation**