



Podcast Show Notes

Watch Your Mouth - BULLY

In this episode our "That Was Then" segment features one of the biggest bully defeats in history - the full Biblical account of David and Goliath. Although we mostly tend to focus on Goliath as the bully, the full text shows us that David had to make it past several people who sought to put and keep him in his place - just to get to Goliath. Throughout these verses, there was a constant push and push-back ranging from "you can't do that" to "yes I can", to "you don't have what it takes..." to "yes I do, to "you aren't big, strong, old or smart enough" to "yes I am"! Although we all know how the story ended (back then) we explore what modern ballistic reports would say about David's "sling" today and how that same courage and tenacity could stop the biggest bullies of our time.

Our "This Is Now" segment features a first-hand testimony of a cyber bullying victim who turned vicious web comments into one of the most successful anti-bullying campaigns in the world.

Opening & Overview (3½ minutes)

THAT WAS THEN (16 minutes, 3 seconds)

[Lead into episode's content]: (1 minute, 9 seconds)

- **DEFINITION:** According to the Oxford dictionary, BULLY means "to use superior strength or influence to intimidate (someone), typically to force him or her to do what one wants".
- **APPROXIMATE # OCCURRENCES IN SCRIPTURE:** 29 times
- **BIBLICAL ACCOUNT TAKEN FROM:** the first book of Samuel chapter 17 in the Message Translation from Bible.com read by Kelly Ryan Dolan
- **FEATURED TEXT:** First Chronicles chapter 16 verses 21 and 22 which says: **But he didn't let anyone push them around, he stood up for them against bully-kings: "Don't you dare touch my anointed ones; don't lay a hand on my prophets."**

Full Biblical Account of 1 Samuel chapter 17 (MSG) read by Kelly Ryan Dolan: (8 minutes, 13 seconds)

Commentary by Dorma Guice

- This Biblical account tops the annals as one of the greatest **bully** defeats in history. The story of David and Goliath has been retold countless times spanning from children's books to business books. And while there is so much we can glean from this account, I'd like to zero in on the "war within the war" – the "war of words" that took place before a single weapon was discharged.
- Although we mostly tend to focus on Goliath as the **bully**, the full text shows us that David had to make it past several people who sought to put and keep him in his place just to get to Goliath. Throughout these verses, there was a constant push and push-back ranging from "you can't do that" to "yes I can", to "you aren't [big, strong, old or smart enough]" to "yes I am"! First out of the gate was his oldest brother, Eliab who stopped short of calling him a failed sheep herder and accused him of showing up just to ogle the live blood and gore. (Never mind the fact that there was no UFC Fight Night for David to view because all these so-called "mighty men of valor" spent about 6 weeks cowering like Scooby and Shaggy running from someone wearing a bedsheet.) You know, whenever you step out in faith to push back against an enemy (whether it's a person, system, culture, ideology or even your own self-defeating thoughts and beliefs), quite likely you'll encounter some opposition – and often like David, you won't have to look any further than your own home. Another person he had to contend with was King Saul, who unable to see past his own fear didn't hold back in pointing out the obvious to this young inexperienced lad.
- What's key is how David handled each of these individuals' condescension differently:
 - a. First, he didn't meet his brother's insults with sarcasm, but shrugged it off with awe shucks light-hearted innocence. Nonetheless he also didn't back down or retreat to his sheep pen either. Knowing all his brothers were stressed and frightened, he didn't judge them for not taking a stand against Goliath. In fact, when he showed up, he didn't ask these soldiers what they were doing, but rather what Goliath was up to. He also knew better than to escalate the situation. Instead, he responded according to Proverbs chapter 15:1 which says **"a gentle response diffuses anger, but a sharp tongue kindles a temper fire"**. BTW, this was written decades later by his son King Solomon (who likely picked up this nugget of wisdom from his dad).
 - b. Second, King Saul, also a tall man who was described as handsome and (standing head and shoulders above all the men in Israel) decided to cower in style, rather than lead his men into battle. Like many people of means, he simply chose to hang back in his palace and throw money at this problem ("hey fellas, anyone want an upgrade?... you can have some sick cash, bling, a trophy wife and a tax-free lifestyle... all you have to do is single-handedly save us from becoming Philistine slaves... who's in?!). Still, he had no problem undermining David's faith and courage. Even so, David was laser-focused and understood that there was only one enemy – Goliath. There was no time to entertain Saul's offensiveness or even nurse his own bruised ego. He simply made his case (without boasting) and when the king played sideline head coach by trying to convince David to fight Goliath the way **he** would do it, David respectfully declined and stayed true to himself – plowing forward the entire time.
 - c. Lastly, David didn't respond to Goliath's blasphemy-laced rant in kind, but in faith. Understanding this provocateur wasn't insulting him personally but defying the armies of the living GOD, he knew better than to internalize this hate speech. But instead, knowing the fight was not his, but the LORD's, and allowing GOD to speak through his lips and fight with his hands, David delivered the scathing rebuke followed up by the beat-down that was rightly due Goliath and the entire Philistine army – one that he would never have been able to achieve on his own.
- I don't want to close out this segment without bringing two things to light that can easily get dwarfed in this story. First, is David's weapon of choice. Goliath, judging strictly by David's appearance, expected he would be as easy to take down as one of the cute, cuddly sheep he

tended. At first glance, everyone saw this matchup from a lens akin to pitting an NBA Center against a middle-school Point Guard.

- *But David was lethal. A great misconception is that David entered battle with “only a sling”, but words spoken with full assurance of faith in GOD’s ability to do what He promised is greater than the most powerful assault weapon. However, let’s address the “sling” for a moment. David’s sling consisted of a leather pouch with two long cords attached to each end. A projectile (rock or hard, smooth object) would be shot from the pouch. Well modern ballistics reports predict that David got the sling up to approximately 15 rotations per second, causing the velocity and impact upon release to be equivalent to the stopping power of a .45 caliber handgun. Additionally, he maintained the accuracy of an expert marksman while running toward his target the entire time. Even while in perpetual motion, he lined up and hit Goliath right between the eyes. Now you tell me GOD was not guiding that rock! Secondly, are the “five smooth stones”. Another common misconception is that David chose “five smooth stones” in case he missed his first shot, he would have a backup or two in his arsenal. I’ll let you in on a little secret, David didn’t intend to miss. In fact, he deliberately selected five because that was just enough to take out Goliath and his 4 brothers who were sure to come for David after he killed him. Now it’s unclear whether those stones were used in the same battle because all the Philistines turned and ran after Goliath fell dead. However, Goliath’s brothers eventually met their fate. You can find this little-known nugget in the last verse of 2 Samuel chapter 21. **“These four were descended from Rapha in Gath. And they were all killed by David and his soldiers.”** Overall, in this account, we learned that a combination of sticks, stones and choice words spoken in faith can break even the biggest bones.*

THIS IS NOW (10 minutes, 56 seconds)

Transition:

*I hope you got something from our “That was Then” segment. For my contemporary listeners, thanks for hanging in with me. As King Solomon often said, “there’s nothing new under the sun”, let’s fast-forward a couple thousand years to explore an account of the same Verbal Activity – **BULLY** in our “This Is Now” segment. (21 seconds)*

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L3izXoPGrPw> Contemporary **bullying** has taken on a different form. The fight ring has migrated from the schoolyard to larger arenas like cyberspace, big tech, big government and big pharma. And for millions across the globe, the biggest bullies can be found in their own homes. (In 2020, domestic violence cases worldwide tripled during the COVID-19 shelter-in-place orders.) The stakes have been raised exponentially higher than lunch money and bruised self-esteem to character assassination, career blackballing, fortunes litigated, health endangered and even lives claimed. The instigators now meddle from twitter feeds, web comments, cable news and media broadcasts, hostile takeovers, boardrooms, and opposing counsel. But a couple of things about **bullying** remain unchanged – one is big guy vs. little guy. Although nowadays even this is not limited to the proportions of one’s physical stature; but can be attributed to the size of his/her bank account, military, social network or team of lawyers. The other is nomenclature. Whether they’re playing the dozens or employing more urbane tactics to dominate the audience’s perception of their opponent, **bullying** is more a combat of words than anything else.
- *No one would know more about that than Elizabeth Ann “Lizzie” Velásquez. She was born with neonatal progeroid syndrome, a condition so rare that she shares it with only three other people on the planet. In addition to limitations like impaired eyesight and early signs of aging, this syndrome essentially prohibits weight gain. Now 32 years old, Lizzie recalls her max weight was 64 pounds. Upon her birth at a little over 2 lbs., the doctors set an expectation for her parents*

that she would never be able to talk, walk, or do anything for herself. Boy did she prove them wrong!

- Outside of her hometown, Lizzie was virtually unknown until age 17 when she discovered an 8 second muted video of herself at 11 years old on YouTube with the caption “The World’s Ugliest Woman”. More shocking than the fowl heading was the fact that it was viewed over 4 million times and contained ‘thousands upon thousands’ of comments – all negative. Cyber **bullies** from around the globe chimed in with insults ranging from “burn it with fire” to offering Lizzie suggestions and advice on taking her own life to spare the world the torment of looking at her. She associated their malicious verbal attacks with someone reaching through the computer and punching her repeatedly. ** ... let’s get to know Lizzie a little better as she shares her remarkable story during a Ted Talk a few years ago”
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QzPbY9ufnQY&t=210s>
- What a rock star! As if Lizzie hadn’t accomplished enough leading up to this December 2013 TED Talk, she has since published her fourth book, released her first documentary called “A Brave Heart – the Lizzie Velazquez Story”, purchased her first home and has had to revise her now 16-year public speaking title to include the word “international” as her anti-**bullying** campaign is in demand around the globe. You go girl! To learn more about Lizzie, you can check out our shownotes on our website at watchyourmouth.blog, or you can find her on social media and subscribe to her YouTube channel – the place where it all started.

WHO SAID THAT?!!! (1 minute, 13 seconds)

- This brings us to our “Who Said That?!” segment where today’s quote took on a bit of a twist. I initially wanted to use a specific quote from Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the brilliant South-African cleric, 1984 Nobel Peace Prize winner and part of the moral muscle that helped dismantle one of the biggest **bully** systems of our lifetime – Apartheid. He said “if you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has his foot on the tail of a mouse and you say you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality.” But during my search for an audio clip of him saying that, I stumbled upon a treasure that is much more apropos – take a listen: <http://wallenberg.umich.edu/medal-recipient/2008-archbishop-desmond-tutu/> Well how’s that for perspective? You have five of the biggest **bullies** of the 20th century and they all have one thing in common – they all lost and are now gone! And we’re still here with our humanity, morality and democracy in tact, reflecting on them from our proverbial rear-view mirrors. Thank you, Desmond Tutu for such an important reminder.

WHAT DID YOU SAY?!!! & Closing (6 minutes)

Outro: “What Did You Say?”:

- In our final segment: “What Did You Say?”, we will now examine our choice of words and decide to eliminate unhelpful and hurtful speech from our dialogue. The fastest way to decide what to say is to know “WHAT NOT TO SAY”. And the best way to determine what not to say is to see what the Bible says about what we say.
- Although there are many relevant scriptures to choose from, here are two that instruct us how to respond when we are being bullied. The first is Deuteronomy chapter 31 verses 6 and 7 in The Message translation, which says “**Be strong. Take courage. Don’t be intimidated. Don’t give them a second thought because GOD, your God is striding ahead of you. He is right there with you. He won’t let you down, he won’t leave you.**” And if that doesn’t give you some encouragement, here’s another from Isaiah chapter 41

verses 11 through 13, which says **“Count on it. Everyone who had it in for you will end up out in the cold – real losers. Those who worked against you will end up empty-handed – nothing to show for their lives. When you go out looking for old adversaries you won’t find them – Not a trace of your old enemies, not even a memory. That’s right. Because I, your GOD, have a firm grip on you and I’m not letting go. I’m telling you, ‘Don’t panic. I’m right here to help you’.** Armed with this Divine backing, we can stand flat-footed, look our **bully** square in the eyes and deliver a retort that will shut down all the mocking, torment and oppression that comes our way.

- On the other hand, here’s a scripture that will help us be mindful of our behavior and speech when we cross the line into **bullying** others. It can be found in the book of Romans chapter 2 verses 1 through 8 again in The Message translation, which says **”Those people are on a dark spiral downward. But if you think that leaves you on the high ground where you can point your finger at others, think again. Every time you criticize someone, you condemn yourself. It takes one to know one. Judgmental criticism of others is a well-known way of escaping detection in your own crimes and misdemeanors. But GOD isn’t so easily diverted. He sees through all such smoke screens and holds you to what you’ve done. You didn’t think, did you, that just by pointing your finger at others you would distract GOD from seeing all your misdoings and from coming down on you hard? Or did you think that because He’s such a nice God, he’d let you off the hook? Better think this one through from the beginning. GOD is kind, but He’s not soft. In kindness He takes us firmly by the hand and leads us into a radical life-change. You’re not getting away with anything. Every refusal and avoidance of GOD adds fuel to the fire. The day is coming when it’s going to blaze hot and high, GOD’s fiery and righteous judgment. Make no mistake: In the end you get what’s coming to you – Real Life for those who work on GOD’s side, but to those who insist on getting their own way and take the path of least resistance, Fire!”**
- Across the board, **bullies** seek to identify their victims by “perceived” difference (emphasis on perceived), which is why they typically target characteristics like appearance, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, intelligence (or lack thereof), wealth (or lack thereof), social standing, etc. But unless you believe the negative taunts or buy-in to the perception of others, none of the **bully’s** tactics will ever work on you. **Bullies** never set out to provoke you to power. Their singular aim is to isolate you, to cause you to fear them or worse, to doubt yourself. Only then can they shut you down or make you their victim. But if today’s podcast has taught us anything, it’s that some of our greatest victors came into their own power by standing up to the very **bully** who sought to oppress them. So, to practically apply this in our lives today, let’s expose and uproot some toxic communication styles and manipulative or undermining catch phrases. First, if you’re addressing someone as if they are less than equal to you or are unworthy of the dignity and respect that you command, then you’ve already stepped out with a banana peel under your foot. Additionally, if your intent is to make someone feel alone, rejected, humiliated, confused, bankrupt, unloved, unappreciated, unwanted, unworthy, undervalued, afraid, worthless, hopeless or to disrupt their peace in any way, then guess what – you’re being a **bully**.
- Language like this is often chosen by **bullies on offense** by doling out insults like: “You’re sooo [fill in the blank] fat, weird, ugly, stupid, disgusting, etc.”; or “I can’t see why anybody likes you”; or “Who invited you!?”. Once confronted for their rude speech, a **bully on defense** may respond with something like: “Geesh, calm down. I didn’t know you were so sensitive”; or “You’re not gonna cry on me are you?”; or my personal favorite... the non-apology, apology – “Well I’m sorry you feel that way” [Flash2.wav].
- There’s no better way to cure **bullying** than to confronting it head on – stand up and shut it down. If you’re not able to do it alone, then seek help from a person or resource willing to stand with you. Being silent only empowers your oppressor, whose behavior stems from a

weakness that he/she is projecting onto you. And if you know or witness someone being bullied, remember: there's no such thing as an "innocent" bystander in the face of oppression – help them – in any way you can. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xBpuFspjh9Q>

Affirmation & Closing:

- Lastly, I'll leave you with an AFFIRMATION to ponder and say until we get together again. Ready?... "My appearance, education, financial or social status may not meet everyone's expectations; but I am fearfully and wonderfully made in GOD's image and likeness. And if someone threatens to hurt me because of it, I am unmoved. For GOD did not give me a spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind."

Closing remarks:

- Thanks for listening to this podcast. If you enjoyed it, feel free to share it with everyone and check out the corresponding blogpost at watchyourmouth.blog for more insight. Feel free to download the show notes from our [Podcast](#) page to get links and references to the information shared in this episode. You can also join our [Member](#) Community by subscribing and we'll make sure you never miss one. Members can also share comments, stories and keep the conversation going in our [Discussion](#) Forum. Additionally, please consider supporting this podcast by donating any amount on our [Donate](#) page. Your generosity enables us to keep delivering fresh content and reach more people. Lastly, like us on [Facebook](#), follow us on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Pinterest](#). Until next time... be well and watch your mouth!

Sources and Links:

www.watchyourmouth.blog

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BEKIND Campaign <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L3izXoPGrPw>

Lizzy Velasques Anti-Bullying TED Talk <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QzPbY9ufnQY&t=210s>

Archbishop Desmond Tutu on the biggest bullies of the 20th Century :

<http://wallenberg.umich.edu/medal-recipient/2008-archbishop-desmond-tutu/>

What the Bible says when we are being bullied: <https://www2.bible.com/bible/97/DEU.31.MSG>

What the Bible says when we are being bullied: <https://www2.bible.com/bible/97/ISA.41.MSG>

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Testimony of a survival of domestic violence: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xBpuFspjh9Q>

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