

From the Tomb, the Giant Killers Are Emerging!

I've been stuck on the theme of "giant killers" for most of this year, unable to move from it – as if God has been trying to speak something to me about the church and where we're headed. This will come as no surprise though. If we look around us right now, we'll see that there are indeed giants before us. Whether we choose to see them as our problem to defeat or not, they are there. In this next year, God is doing a massive work to engage the church more than ever before to contest the assignments of these giants and serve them eviction notices going forward.

A "Valley of Decision" Moment – The Wrestle at Elah

One morning in June of this year, as I was feeling the thread of this word beginning to come, I had a vision of the events recorded in 1 Samuel 17:40 (NIV):

"Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine."

In the vision, I saw myself (representative of the church) picking up the stones. I could feel a flurry of emotions in this moment (emotions I imagine even David semi-wrestled with in his moment). It was a struggle between righteous, fiery passion and raw, risky faith. I knew then that God wanted to have a longer conversation with me about the moment we are now in. As a church, we are in the place of decision. Will we stand idly by and listen to the shouts of the giants in the land or will we go and collect our stones?

The fact is we, the church, like the Israelites of that day are at a crossroad. Our promise is straight ahead but we are surrounded by obstacles with seemingly menacing giants in our

path. The decision we need to make is this: Will we cave in defeat or will we take our inheritance? Just like when Goliath stood to defy God's people in the Valley of Elah, we too are in what looks like a low place – a narrow passage – but a place where we must pass through to further establish the kingdom of God and advance.

Dream of the “Reset Church”

As I was constantly facing daily news headlines that felt like the taunts of Goliath, I kept asking the Lord these two questions: “Where are we?” and “Where are we going?” But I didn't expect Him to show me what He showed me.

Seven weeks ago, I had a dream where the Lord showed me three scenes. He walked me through each of the scenes like a tour guide. I have personally wrestled with how to share this but for the sake of revealing where God wants us to go, I need to share this dream very candidly.

In the first part of the dream, I was in a busy marketplace (or shopping mall) and the Lord was with me. At first, we just simply stood and watched people going in and out of different stores and vendors. *“Who are these people?”* I thought to myself. Knowing what I was asking, the Lord replied, “This is the church.”

I noticed them going into fashion stores, hair salons, nail salons and other beautification services: and while none of those things were bad, I felt the grief on the Lord's heart and that something was amiss. As I tried to figure out what I was sensing, the word “comfort” came to me. This was the “comfortable church” who had created and chosen a lifestyle of comfort over the cause of Christ. This was the church who couldn't hear the cries of the lost, or the broken, because they were distracted.

What happened next took me by surprise. Suddenly, one by one, each store shut their doors and asked their patrons to leave.

These “comfortable” believers were instantly cut off from their comforts and unable to access them.

This part of the dream was sobering but it spoke so loudly of the things which God is doing. This is what I believe God is bringing about and where God is taking us:

- The church is heading into a greater shaking and a separation from our dependency on earthly things.
- We are going to see doors shut in areas that have been distractions to us and have made us numb to what is taking place around us.
- God is going to highlight more than ever before our need for dependency upon Him rather than on the systems of man.
- **There will be a RESET in the church, which will result in the RISING of the church.** This reset is the shutting of doors of commonality with the world, contractual fear and comforts that keep us in apathy and inaction, as the world needs the children of God to arise and shine (Rom. 8:19; Isa. 60:1)!

The shutting of the doors is like the end of the grace period for toeing the line between loving both God and the world. The pews will no longer be a hiding place, a feeding place or a fattening place but a place of travail, prayer and encounter – for the equipping of the saints.

This reset is a “eyes wide open” moment.

The “Emptying,” the Travail & the Resurrection

In the next scene of the dream, I heard the Lord audibly ask me, “Does My church have to be empty before they will rise? Is it only in crisis and when all is removed that they will step up to the front lines?”

Then I saw a scene flash before me of bloodshed, cries and screams in the streets. I saw murder, abortion and injustice.

I was grieved and I wanted to wake up but couldn't. I looked for the church to come and help but they ignored the cries. "Go and help the babies in the street!" I yelled. Then I realized I was doing nothing either. I fell to my knees and cried until it felt like I couldn't cry anymore. When I opened my eyes, I was surrounded by the church, who were also on their faces in travail. "Heal us and heal our land!" I heard them crying out.

Then I felt the ground beneath my feet begin to shake, as if the very earth was speaking. It reminded me of Romans 8:22 (TPT): "To this day we are aware of the universal agony and groaning of creation, as if it were in the contractions of labor for childbirth."

A mass move of repentance was taking place. People were taking their brands and idols and throwing them into a fire. They were taking their distractions and other loves and heaping them onto the altar. A true reformation was taking place. There was unity out of brokenness. Suddenly there was nothing to prove ... nothing to throw at one another ... no more "chips on shoulders." No longer were there any points of separation or demonic agendas to buy into. Veils had come off and eyes were opened ... a true movement had begun.

The Lazarus Church Is Being Rebirthed!

This part of the dream was similar to a vision I had in church that same week. I couldn't shake this intense grief and didn't know why. Then the Lord spoke to me so clearly: "Don't be sad. This isn't what you think it is. This is the *new beginning!*"

Then I went into a vision and saw people gathering around a tomb, mourning in sadness. Then I heard the words of Jesus from John 11:43: "Lazarus, come forth!"

Suddenly, I saw a man come out and stand at the opening of the tomb; bandages were unraveling from him. As the bandages came off, I could see/discern that they represented bandages from

the world and demonic assignments that had sought to bury the church and send it to an early grave.

As the bandages continued to unravel, I began hearing words such as “defeat,” “powerlessness,” “unworthiness,” “dreams unfulfilled” – even words and phrases like “culture,” “progressive Christianity” and other evil blindfolds that the church has had wrapped around her, choking the life from her.

As I witnessed this, I no longer felt sadness but relief. What had looked like death was actually brand new life and deliverance.

I could see the church in all her beauty; she was radiant and glowing, full of love for Jesus and nothing else. She had no other lovers. This was not just an awakening that I had witnessed ... this was a rebirth – a resurrection!

Sometimes we have to go through seasons where it feels like death, the dark night of the soul and an “emptying,” in order to really be able to go where God is leading us. The pure bride is in process right now and her best days are ahead!

Goliath's Brothers Are Going to Fall!

In the last scene of my dream, I felt...

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Nate Johnston is a prophetic voice and worshiper who has a heart to see sons and daughters unleashed into passionate friendship with God and an effective, supernatural lifestyle. Through his ministry school, *Everyday Revivalists*, he leads people from the basics of the gospel through to being sent and released into their mission field, as well as championing and raising up emerging prophetic voices around the world. His burning cry and desire is to see the body of Christ become a beacon for the lost by raising up a generation that walks in

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