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Hour of Power vom 15.11.2020

GOOD MORNING/INVOCATION – Bobby & Hannah

BS: This is the day the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it.

HS: Welcome visitors and church family. I recently read a meme that said if we can just get through this month, we only have one month to go before we need to get through another month. And it can kind of feel that way, can't it? But my prayer has been that during this time, every time we feel that just need to survive, that we would turn that toward clinging to God, and that this would be a season that we would draw closer to God than we ever have before, and experience His majesty like never before. Thank you for joining us today. You are loved.

BS: Let's begin with a word of prayer. Father, we thank you so much that you have called us into this place, and we want you to know, Lord, that we love you with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, with all our strength, and I ask, Father, that your Holy Spirit would fill the hearts and minds of everybody who's watching this broadcast, wherever they are, pray God that you would give us power, the kind of power the world doesn't see, to be over comers. Lord we love you, it's in Jesus' name we pray, amen.

HS: Amen. Turn around and shake the hand of the person next to you and say God loves you and so do I.

SCRIPTURE – 1 Samuel 17:32-37 - Hannah

In preparation for the message, 1st Samuel 17:32:

David said to Saul, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him." Saul replied, "You are not able to go against this Philistine and fight him; you are only a young man. He has been a warrior from his youth." But David said to Saul, "Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized its hair, struck it and killed it. Your servant has killed both lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. The Lord who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine." Saul said to David, go and the Lord be with you.

Church family, the little things you are going through right now are preparing you for your Goliath. Amen.

INTERVIEW – RYAN ELLIS

{VOICE OVER: Ryan Ellis is a musician, songwriter, and worship leader from San Diego. He discovered a love for the arts at a young age, and after five years of service with the U.S. Navy, he became a worship pastor. A gifted songwriter, he's composed tunes for Chris Tomlin and Matt Redman, and has won an ASCAP award, and been nominated for a Dove Award. In 2019, he released dual albums, "Lyfe" and "Rysponse," and he continues to actively lead worship today. Please welcome, Ryan Ellis!}

BS: Ryan, hi, welcome. Thank you for joining us.

RE: Thanks for having me.

BS: It is an honor to have you here and we're excited. I wish we could have a full church here who could hear you lead worship with us this morning, but times are what they are. Tell us about yourself and sort of how you got started in music and ministry. How did that all happen?

RE: Thanks for having me. It's an honor to be here, too, and we do got this whole room filled with all of heaven, so I'm singing like that every morning wherever I go. But it's great to be here. I started leading worship when I first got out of the Navy. I got saved when I was in and I just started..

The Chutzpah of a Shepherd!

BS: Wait, hold on. So as you were in the Navy, you were saved? How did that happen?

RE: I was a sailor living a gnarly life and I was like knowing the depravity I was going on inside. I almost got kicked out of the Navy for something stupid, and it just was a wakeup call and I was just like okay, and then my mom got saved. During that time, she was sending me Bible verses and I was deleting the text messages and stuff. And then eventually the Holy Spirit just planted this seed and then I eventually just kind of gave in and started going to church, and then I really got an encounter and then I just started singing. I couldn't write a song until after I got saved.

BS: Were you a musician when you were in the Navy?

RE: I was a musician before, I was like you know in school choirs and did musical theater and different things like that, but I never like wrote a song and it wasn't until I got saved that I actually wrote a song.

BS: That's awesome. What a great story. So you're not only a gifted musician, but a lot of people may not know this, but you're also a big songwriter. You've written for I think Chris Tomlin, and some other well-known worship leaders. How did you get into songwriting and how did that kind of come to be?

RE: Again, I sang most of my life, but I never really sat down and wrote a song, and then it wasn't until back in 2011/2012 when I started to watch, I think like any worship leader back then, Phil Wickham was pretty hot on the streets and I was like okay I'm going to try to be like this guy. I just started picking up a guitar and just started playing his songs, and then I started singing on my own, doing just kind of alone prayer time and singing to the Lord. And then I'd come up with little tags and then I'd just incorporate that. I just started writing by myself and then along the way, I just met amazing people who kind of brought me under their wing, or just getting into a writing room, writing with the guys that are out doing this professionally, you write with them once and you feel like you get a lot of tools.

BS: What do you think is that connection there for David as a worship leader? Is there something about that you think that gave him power to defeat Goliath, for example, or other things like that?

RE: Yes, I think music holds a power, and that I think anybody, I mean when I was in Afghanistan, you're listening to something to get you hyped up to go out into the battlefield. And I think music is a big part of who we are as beings. There's a lot that goes into it, I don't want to get too theoretical, but I believe there's a special thing that happens when a song's created. You get a couple people in the room, whether it's just one person who wrote the song and then you have the producer and then you have the A&R people, there takes a team and a unification that is needed to release a song. I feel like even just in that, there's power in that because there's unity and it says where two or three are gathered in my name, so we'll be done. And I think a lot of people don't know that they're operating with the spirit of God sometimes. Not knowing that unification is a big part of God, and so when you're hearing songs and you're hearing these different type of things, you're listening to something God did in the spirit, and then in that it fills your spirit, too. I feel like they played worship before they went off to battle, and it just gets you ready to get in the right mind state or right state of mind to take on the day.

BS: Your album is awesome and one of the things I love is you're able to go deeper in your lyrics. Your music is dynamic. We love your music, that's why you're here. I think that you do a great job at helping people through those times. You're not afraid of going deep in your lyrics, are you?

RE: I was afraid when I was writing it because it's scary whenever you're doing something that's vulnerable and not kind of the norm. A lot of Christian music just is a lot of hymns and talking about the goodness of God, which is great, but I think what's powerful is when you're actually able to confess in your songs, too, what you're going through. A lot of the songs that I have on my last two albums: Lyfe and Rysponse. The Lyfe is more of like a poppy type of like album, and then the Rysponse is more of a worship. The dynamic of the two was when I was writing the worship album, I was like well I'm also writing these songs that are really real, and so I wanted to put both of them out to where you could kind of hear the whole journey like David in Psalms where I'm worshipping but you're also hearing the real stuff as well.

BS: That's awesome. Great. Thank you, Ryan, for being here. Thank you for bringing your wife and your son, as well and worshipping with our community around the world. It really means a lot. If you want to know more about Ryan's music, you can check him out at RyanEllisMusic.com. Ryan, thank you. You're going to lead us in a song now and thank you so much for being here.

The Chutzpah of a Shepherd!

RE: Awesome, yes. This song is called "Simple Truth," and it's just a great song, talking about the gospel and the title says it all – the Simple Truth.
BS: Awesome.
RE: Yes.
BS: God bless you. Thank you.
RE: Thank you.

DECLARATION – Bobby Schuller

All of you who are at home or even here, would you stand with us? We're going to say this creed together as we do every single Sunday. Hold your hands out like this as a way of receiving from the Lord, and let's say this together: I'm not what I do. I'm not what I have. I'm not what people say about me. I am the beloved of God. It's who I am. No one can take it from me. I don't have to worry, I don't have to hurry, I can trust my friend Jesus and share His love with the world. Amen!

MESSAGE – Bobby Schuller "The Chutzpah of a Shepherd"

It's an interesting time. We are remembering how special things were. Perhaps, the silver lining of this all is that we are remembering really one of the hearts of the scripture, one of the hard lessons that the scripture always says, that God opposes the proud and protects the weak. That there are things in this world that seem strong, powerful, amazing, but are actually fragile. I mean you actually see that a society that we thought was so strong and that an economy that we thought would just maybe go forever, maybe a lot of us didn't think that, but that it was actually quite brittle. That all it took was one tiny germ to bring down this whole system, just one tiny invisible thing to bring everything to a screeching halt. Maybe the silver lining in all of this, is to remember that there are some things in this world that seem robust that are actually fragile, and there are other things that seem fragile that are actually quite robust. Things like your relationships, things like your faith, and especially things like the human spirit. To wake up in the morning and to believe that there is a world before me full of opportunity and to believe that God has called me to be something in that world. And God has called you to be something in that world. All of this to simply say I wonder if COVID is in a way a reset. It's a way for us as Americans or whatever nationality you are, to think about what really matters. What does it really mean to be strong? What does it really mean to be a tough person in a tough situation? And what does it mean to grow in here, and in here, rather than out here.

I feel like living in the greater Los Angeles area; we live in Orange County, but Southern California, I feel like many times can be a very shallow place where what matters is what's out here – how you look, or your social media, or your popularity, or being young. But in the kingdom of God, really those things don't matter. They're not bad, but they don't matter. They're not an indicator of what's happening in your heart, and what's happening in your mind and that at the end of the day, God wants disciples who, although they may enjoy some of those other things, they don't really matter. What really matters is your will, your heart, and your mind – what you think about, what you're learning, how you're growing as a person. See those things are anti-fragile. Those are the things that truly make you tough. This is at the heart of Jesus' rabbinic teaching when He talks about the wisdom of life. Jesus says that those who are last will be first and those who are first will be last. Those who try to save their lives will lose it, but those who lose their lives for the sake of the gospel will gain it. And this is the theme of the whole Bible, and it's not just in the New Testament, it's in the Old Testament, as well. That God wants to do something more than what we see on the outside; He wants to do something within you that's going to make you tougher than a coffin nail. You've got something in you that's going to help you get through the other things that are coming.

It's interesting because one of these famous Old Testament stories kind of bothered me a lot until I saw a rabbi talk about it on You Tube. It's a story about Moses, maybe the greatest prophet in the Old Testament. Certainly in Judaism considered the greatest one. Moses does all of these amazing things for God and wanders through the wilderness and leads these people, and in the end, he is punished by God and not allowed to enter in the Promised Land. Do you know why? To me, when I read this in college or whatever, it bothered me so much. It seemed like such a silly thing.

There are two times that Moses hits a rock and water comes out. The first time, God tells him to do that. They're in the wilderness and they're thirsty, and God tells Moses hit this rock and water will come out. He does this WHAM and the rock breaks and water comes out and they drink of it and they're nourished.

But then there's a second time later on in the book where God tells Moses to speak to the rock – speak to the rock and water will come out. But Moses doesn't speak to the rock, he hits the rock. He's also angry at the time, and it doesn't break. And it's like God gives him a second chance. 'Don't do it, don't hit the rock, speak to the rock', and still Moses hits the rock. And interestingly enough, water still comes out, and the people still drink of it, but God says because you hit the rock and didn't speak to the rock, I will not allow you to enter the Promised Land. What on earth does that mean?

I didn't know this because when I had read it, I was reading it through the eyes of a westernized Christian, a modern Christian. But when I saw it through the eyes of an ancient Israeli through a rabbi, he said many rabbis believe that this is God's way of saying that before you entered the Promised Land, it was all about mind is right. It was all about what's on the outside. But in order to enter the Promised Land, I want you to be a thinking people. I want you to be a speaking people. In other words, it was a lesson that brains over brawn; a lesson of the pen is mightier than the sword; these other axioms that we live by, that God wanted the Israelites to trust that there's something more than just 'I hit rock, water come out.' God wanted the Jewish people to understand this idea of what would later be called rabbinic Judaism, and that would morph for us into Christianity.

All of this to simply say, I believe at the heart of so much of the Bible, is this idea that the hidden strengths, the hidden strengths in our society, in our lives, are the most powerful ones. You have so much strength within you. You have so many things that you've learned that people don't even know about. So many experiences that people don't know about. And God is going to maybe invite you into environments that you might feel uncomfortable. Everybody's going to look down on you, and people aren't going to think you can do anything, but God has you there for a reason and God's going to use the things that He's carried you through to be a leader in those situations. I believe that for you. We finally get to the passage I get to preach on: David and Goliath. Maybe the most preached on passage in the Bible. It is so wrapped up in bronze age history, which is stuff that I really enjoy, and many people, many pastors in particular, get this passage wrong. They see it as a miracle story. There are many miracle stories in the Bible and they all really happened, but I don't think David and Goliath is a miracle story. It's a moral story. It's a story about how people see the outside and not the inside. It's a story about how the truest soldiers are the ones who understand the weaknesses of their opponents.

Ironically Malcolm Gladwell, secular author is one of the few people who got this right and I would recommend that you read his book. Its more on business than it is on theology, but it's interesting David, the first king of Israel, God's people wanted a king. They didn't want judges and they didn't want God to be their king, they wanted an actual king so they could be like the other nations of the world. And Samuel finds this guy named Saul – Shaul. And Saul, the Bible says, is the best looking man in Israel. It'd be interesting to know what that guy looked like. It's interesting because beauty things change over time, but I bet you anything we saw a picture of him, it'd be like that guy?

But anyway, Saul in his day is considered the best-looking man in all of Israel. And the Bible wants you to see this, that this is important. And that he stands a head taller than everyone. So he's this tall George Washington type good-looking guy and he's chosen to be the first king.

And believe it or not, the Holy Spirit comes upon Saul; Saul even prophesies and leads in the spirit. But eventually loses his walk with God, does evil against God and God says I have turned my face away from Saul and I'm going to find someone else. He tells Samuel, the prophet, go to Jesse's house in Bethlehem, the future king is there.

Samuel goes to Bethlehem. They're all afraid of him because he's this powerful man of God and they're 'do you come in peace?' He said 'I come in peace.' And he goes before Jesse's house and Jesse brings before him seven of his eight sons. The first son that he sees named Eliab, Samuel sees him and just like Saul, he's good-looking, he's tall, and Samuel looks at him and says 'surely this is the Lord's anointed.' And God's response to Samuel is one of my favorite Bible verses. God says 'do not consider his appearance, or his height, for I have rejected him.' The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance but the Lord looks at the heart. The Lord looks at the heart. When we hear heart as westerners, we hear emotions. In the Bible, the heart is the moral center. It's the will. It's is this a good person, and is this is a brave person. It is a person that chooses what is right even when it's hard. And this is who God is going to choose as Israel's next king: someone with a good heart; someone like you.

The world looks at the outward appearance but the Lord sees the heart. You know what the Lord sees in you? He sees someone that is so capable of doing what is right when it is so easy to do what is wrong; someone who is willing to stand in the gap. That is who God's called you.

God says no, it's not Eliab. And all of these sons come before Samuel and most of them are good-looking and burly and strong, and all of the things that would have value. And finally, Samuel, after seeing seven sons says is there no one left? And Jesse says oh yes, there's David. He's out taking care of the sheep. Can you imagine if your dad talked about you that way? You're the youngest of eight sons, he's like oh I guess there's David. He's the guy that's doing all the work out in the back, taking care of the sheep. And so Jesse says bring him before me.

Now I always want to point out that David is good looking because some of you are very good looking, I'm just going to be honest. Some of you dress very nice, you look very nice, and David is good looking, too, so you don't want to be like oh its bad to be good looking. But it's more that looks are just such a stupid indicator of what's really going on inside of a person. There's just almost nothing you can derive from how a person looks truly, and how God sees their heart and what's happening in their mind. And that very often, it's easy to be deceived. You can hire or pick the wrong person based on their looks. I think we have several politicians who fit that category. This happens all the time where people win popularity contests, even though their incompetent.

David comes before Samuel and he's anointed as king, and then it says that the spirit of the Lord comes upon David, and then after that it says and the spirit of the Lord leaves Saul. It's almost like the spirit of God goes from Saul to David, even though Saul is still king, and then in replace of that comes an evil spirit that begins to torment Saul. And guess what happens: Saul hears about David, he invites him into his court, and David plays the lyre and sings to Saul whenever the spirit, this evil spirit comes upon him, the good spirit, the Holy Spirit from David overcomes and brings peace to Saul.

We all know the story. Eventually there is this great standoff between the Philistines and the Jews, and they are lined up as two armies. And days have gone on where the two camps, there's like a valley in the middle, and there's like two hills and they're on either hill and no one wants to ascend the other hill. And there is this soldier, this Philistine soldier named Goliath, right? And Goliath for 40 days, every single day, he's this giant guy, and he comes out and he begins to curse the armies of God for 40 days continues to shout and mock, and mock God, and mock the Jews, and just continue to belittle. And what are they going to do? This guy is a giant. He's nine feet tall. Let's talk a little bit about Goliath. Goliath had all of this armor. He's a Philistine. Philistines are originally from the island of Crete. They came over to Israel. It's where we get the name Palestine from. He's a heavy infantryman so he's like just a giant; like he's like a tank. So not only is he a huge guy, he's got armor and he's got weapons. And the Bible says that he's six cubits tall. Listen to these numbers, okay? Not everybody agrees with this, but Jews love to point this out. Remember they memorize this passage. He's six cubits tall, has six weapons, and his spearhead is six thousand shekels. Did you catch that? Let's name those three numbers: six, six, six thousand. The Bible's trying to show you that in Goliath, he epitomizes everything that is Satan, or everything that is the kingdom of darkness, or everything that is evil. Strong on the outside!

Big, burly, scary. I will defy you, insulting, proud, right? But what we find is that what's actually going on with Goliath might be something else. He's terrifying, he's terrifying, but maybe there is something else going on in Goliath's body. When I read about Goliath, I can't help but think of the icon Andre the Giant. I already liked Andre the Giant when I was a kid. He was a professional wrestler, and he played this character in The Princess Bride where he says.. he keeps rhyming, and it's just a fun character. Andre the Giant was this larger than life guy, I think he was French, an amazing documentary on him from HBO that I really enjoyed, and you get an understanding for. In this wrestling he was always the bad guy, but in real life he was a good guy. On the outside, you would see it's just like BRAWL just big strong. We have a picture of his hand holding a can of beer that gives you an idea of how massive this guy.. that is a 12-ounce can of beer in the hands of Andre the Giant, okay? Now Goliath would have been a little bit bigger than Andre the Giant, but look at that. Imagine that thing coming at you like a fist towards your head. That would be a scary thing.

Andre the Giant was this big guy, but in real life if you were to spend time with this giant, you would find that he has actually a disorder that most giants have called acromegaly, or something like this. It's this thing that happens when a tumor begins to grow on one of your glands and just causes your body to continue to release human growth hormone.

And though it makes you big and it makes you really strong, it also makes, in some ways, your bones can become brittle, your organs can become weak. People that have this giant-ism tend to struggle with blindness, they can't see very well, and most of all they're constantly in pain. One of the sad things about Andre the Giant is he was an alcoholic and it took a lot of alcohol to get him drunk. And the reason he was getting drunk was to help treat the daily pain that he was suffering, not from wrestling, but just because of this disorder that he had.

There was a story that whenever he would go to a bar, he would have them bring a trash can, fill it with ice and fill the whole thing with beers, and by the end of the thing, he would have finished the beers and it took all of that to get a man that size drunk, and then he would have some relief from his pain.

Historians believe that Goliath was like Andre the Giant. That he probably had the same disorder. He was nine feet tall, and that although on the outside he was strong, there was probably something else about him that made him very weak. He has to get close to David, the Bible says, in order to see him. Is he partially blind? Is he brittle? Is he struggling with pain? Everybody thinks he's amazing. He's this champion, obviously he's expecting a fight that's going to be like two heavy infantrymen going back and forth, but that's not at all what he's about to get. Instead, after 40 days, he's been mocking Israel, mocking them, and then finally on that 40th day, David arrives. Don't think for a minute, by the way, that David is a boy. He's called a young man but his dad Jesse, the Bible says, is very old. David is probably college age, early 20's, so he's a young guy and he's a shepherd, which is considered in those days, the lowliest of all professions. Most shepherds in the Bible era are actually young girls; they're teenage girls. It's almost always given to like 11 or 12 year old boys, or like 15/16 year old girls. So actually in the Christmas story, the shepherds that the angels come to are probably women. Sorry for that little thing. You always see the old men with the beard, it's not historically accurate. Anyway. David is this college age guy, but he's doing this lowly profession of caring for the sheep. Why? Cause he's the youngest. And he overhears that finally Saul, in anger says, if anyone can kill that giant, his family won't have to pay taxes anymore, and my daughter will marry him. David goes WHHAAT? It's this.. excuse me? What giant? And he goes out.. he's like what giant you talking about? He runs out and he sees this giant cursing God, cursing the Israelites, and he looks at Saul and he goes I'm going to go fight that guy right now. And he looks at everybody, he's like why is nobody fighting this guy? Take this guy down. What is going on here? And Saul says you can't fight this guy. And David looks at him, he says I have killed a lion, I have killed a bear. Now think about this: a bear? We live in the bear state. A giant sounds tough. But I think I would rather fight a giant than a bear and a lion. And when David says this, his brothers are all around him. You imagine that Saul kind of looks at his brothers and they're like yes, David killed a lion and a bear. And he's like all right, go for it! He tries to give David his armor and his weapons and David's like no, I don't need that stuff. All I need is five round stones. Actually all he needed was one. We'll get to that in a minute. But he grabs five just in case. David is just wearing his normal tunic, he's got a staff in one hand, and he's got his little slinger. It's weird because we so often think a slinger, like that's not a big deal, like a slinger? Historians say that slingers, which pre date archery at close range are actually more powerful than archery. The reason they get replaced with archery is because archery has a longer range. But at a close range, a slinger that is strong and a professional within twenty yards can be as intense as a 44 pistol. I found this video of a southern guy who's just an amateur - he's got a great YouTube page - showing an example of what an ancient slingshot looks like, and he's breaking Coke bottles or beer bottles or something. Do we have that video ready? Here, show that real quick. (VIDEO PLAYS: hey everybody, me again, and today is slinging tips while I'm slinging at targets.) Let's show it one more time, watch this again! (VIDEO PLAYS) Look at that!

Now you need to see something. We think oh it's a miracle, he's like a little boy with like a slingshot. No, it was a guy like that! A guy who understood that if you're accurate with a sling and you hit it at close range, it's like having a gun! He's like I don't need all this armor. I don't need a sword. Look at this big, ugly, slow, blind giant. I can take that guy. I can take that guy. And he did.

David gets out there and Goliath comes down, lumbering down, slow mo, like a turtle. He has a shield bearer: that either means he can't carry his shield probably, because most shield bearers were just for archers, or he was too blind and was afraid he would trip. He needed the shield bearer to guide him. And he's cursing army and he looks at David and he goes 'am I a dog that you come at me with sticks?' and he begins to curse David and curse God, and he says 'come here and I'll give your flesh to the birds and wild animals.'

The Chutzpah of a Shepherd!

And David looks at this guy because he's got heart. And it says David said to the Philistine, 'you come at me with the sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel whom you have defied. This day the Lord will deliver you into my hands and I will strike you down and cut off your head. This very day I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds and the wild animals, and the whole world will know that it is not by the sword or the spear that the Lord saves, for the battle is the Lord and He will give all of you into our hands.' And with those words, David takes the thing, runs at Goliath going (MAKES SLINGSHOT SOUNDS) throws this thing at like a 44 pistol, hits Goliath right between the eyes. Like a tree falling down, BOOM he falls. David climbs on top of him, takes his sword, cuts his head off, rips it off and shows that bloody head to the army, and they flee like crazy. That's a good story. That's a good story. This is not a miracle story, guys. This is a story about how it's better to be smart than to be big. This is a story about how it's better to be trained than to be giant. Everybody on that battlefield believed the same thing – that no one could beat Goliath, but David saw something different. He knew that spears and heavy weights and all of this stuff made you slow, it made you lumbering, and furthermore he just knew that God had called him to do this in this moment. Perhaps when David was fighting that lion, and when David was fighting that bear, he was asking God why am I going through this? He had no idea that God was preparing him to understand something – that a slingshot can kill a giant. No one else on that field believed that or knew it was possible, but David did. Maybe what you're going through right now, you're like why am I going through this? This has no meaning, no purpose, nothing at all. Someday you're going to see that when you slayed this lion or slayed this bear, it was a part of God preparing you for one of the most pivotal moments in your life; to slay the Goliath, not for you and not for a bunch of sheep, but for a bunch of people, to help people that needed you when no one else could help them. We forget that God very often allows us to go through these difficult things to create in us something that no one else has.

And by the way, David did slay that lion, and he did slay that bear, and you're going to slay it, too. I believe in you. I think you're going to get through this, and I think that the Holy Spirit of God is going to come upon you, even now as you're watching, and carry you through whatever it is you're going through. Maybe you're shaking your fist at heaven and you're saying why God, why have you abandoned me? That's okay, sometimes that's a good thing to do to get mad at God. God's not offended by you getting mad at him. What He's offended by is you crawling back into bed and going to sleep, and walking away and slinking away in fear. Trust that God is going to use whatever it is you're going through; to make you tougher and stronger so that for the sake of the gospel, for the sake of His kingdom, maybe for the sake of your family. For some of you, the sake of your city or your country – to defeat the giant no one else will stand up against. I'm so proud of you, and I want you to know just in general, that the world sees the outside, but the Lord sees the heart. God is proud of you. God is for you and not against you. God is with you. He's heard your prayer, He's not abandoned you, He's going to carry you through, and every battle He carries you through, you're going to get tougher, maybe not on the outside, but in here and in here. Let it be so. You have what you need to overcome whatever it is that's standing before you. And if you don't, ask the Lord and He'll give you what you need. Sometimes it's a friend, sometimes its knowledge, sometimes it's a little bit of luck. But whatever it is, He's going to come and He's going to help you and He's going to carry you through.

Let me pray for you: Father, we thank you so much for this iconic story that has worked its way into so many stories. Lord, we understand, God that you love to prepare us for these moments. Lord, I pray that those of us who have just gone through a tough time would not waste that experience but we would continue to learn every time we fail that we would fail well. Every time we fall, we would fall forward. That everything we go through would build us up into stronger people in our hearts and in our minds. Lord, we love you so much. Help us to love our neighbor as ourselves. Help us to be kind and gentle with one another, and to always do the next right thing, even when it's hard. Lord, we love you, it's in Jesus' name we pray, amen.

BENEDICTION – Bobby Schuller

And now the Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift His countenance upon you and give you peace in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, amen.